

Leather Guns of Circle L

by Perry Westbrook

Fifth Installment.

SYNOPSIS: Slim Loyale is paroled from prison after serving 18 months for a crime he did not commit. He returns to his Circle L ranch to find his father dead and sinister forces at work, trying to make him vacate his parole so that he can again be railroaded to prison.

The Brockwells and their gang are plotting to gain possession of Circle L ranch and the property of Mona Hall, a neighbor and lifelong friend of Slim Loyale.

Slim discovers that Sheriff Starbuck has joined the plot against him. With the help of Dakota Blue and his cowboys, Slim Loyale defies the landgrabbers to do their worst.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

"But why can't we both ride a circle home?" demanded Slim.

"Because of this devil of a light-colored hoss an' hat of yore. Yuh loom up like a lighthouse, lad. Do as yo're told. Or does old Roy have to muscle yuh down an' make yuh do it?"

At last Slim was beginning to realize what was up. Somewhere along the home trail men were hiding out, waiting to throw a slug through him as he rode by. Roy had found it out, and the faithful Irishman was going to take Slim's risk upon his own willing shoulders.

"Damn it all, Roy, I can't let yuh do it," objected Slim huskily. "They'll plug yuh for me sure."

"Not if I sing loud enough," stated Roy. "I sing like nothin' else in the wide world. Besides I've got my guns an' I can use 'em with no worryin' about bustin' no parole. Now do as I say like a good lad. Yo're wastin' time arguin'."

The irony of his position, dug deep into Slim. It was maddening to be placed always thus, on the defensive with no way of fighting back. His pride was quick and fierce, more so perhaps because of the wrong which had been done him by the miscarriage of justice.

Blind, primal fury prickled at his brain. He did not want to run. He wanted to stand and fight, to rip and tear, to pour hot lead into the

vitals of those who were persecuting him. Yet his hands were tied. Once involved in a gunfight, regardless of whose making it might be, Slim knew that it would mean going back to that hell on earth.

It meant being enclosed between drab, gray walls of stone, way from the sky, from the warm stars, away from everything else worth while. Realization of this steeled him, and drove the fungus of rage from his mind.

"Okay, Roy," he said, his voice steady once more. Come day maybe I'll be able to pay yuh boys back for stickin' with me like yo're doin'."

Roy snorted. "Tis nothin' at all that we do, lad, exceptin' to be shore yuh git a square deal from now on out. Off with yuh."

"Don't take any fool chances, Roy," said Slim over his shoulder as he reined away. "Should they get yuh, 'Im comin' after 'em with hot lead, parole or no parole."

But Roy was not listening. He was climbing into Slim's saddle and urging the gray away into the darkness. Good old Roy! What a faithful, fire-eating fighting machine the jolly Irishman was.

Viewing the affair calmly, Slim knew that there was little chance of Roy getting the worst of the deal. He could be as wary and cunning as an Indian when the occasion required. Tonight, forewarned of what to expect, the odds were greatly in favor of Roy coming through with flying colors.

So Slim rode home, taking the roundabout route Roy had suggested, and arriving at the Circle L ranch buildings without seeing a soul. As he drew up at the corral and dismounted, a dark figure sauntered over from the bunkhouse. It was Dakota Blue again.

"Roy," Dakota called out tersely. "Where's Slim? Why—what the hell! Is that yuh Slim? How come yo'er ridin' Roy's bronc?"

Slim told him of meeting Roy and the subsequent changing of mounts and hats. Dakota grunted with approval. "Roy's usin' his haid all the time," he added.

"But I'm gettin' to the narrow edge, Dakota," said Slim wearily. "This ain't life; this is hell, pure an' unsweetened. It's almost as bad as bein' in prison. On the dodge all the time, afraid to call my soul my own; hidin' behind yuh fellers—it makes me feel like a damned worm. For all I know, Roy may be takin' a bullet right now that was meant for me."

Dakota's speculative gaze held a queer light in it. "I reckon I savy just how yuh feel, Slim. Shore, it's a fight an' a tough one. It takes a lot more nerve to handle this kind of a ruckus than it does to hit the ground with a gun in each fist an' talk it out through smoke. That-away yuh can let yo' self go—jest be darn good and mad an' let that mad run loose."

"Yuh can't do that. Yuh gotta keep yo're feelin' bottled up an' sidestep trouble every time yuh meet it. That takes spine an' plenty of it. Any danged fool can fight. It takes a real man to hold in when he's plumb w' 'an' achin' to bust the halter, ro' an' cut loose. We fellers appreciate how tough it is, Slim. But if we're willin' to see yuh through, yuh oughta be willin' to do yo're part."

Slim put his hand on Dakota's arm. "I savy, ol'-timer. I promise yuh I won't go muddin' around any more. It's my fight an' I gotta make it. One thing, I got some of the poison outa me tonight."

"Leo Brockwell was at the Dot H Dot, takin' over a cattle deal with Abe Fornachon. He butted into my vistin' with Mona an' got nasty. I saw red an' beat the day-lights outa him."

"I don't reckon he dares make a complaint to Jigger Starbuck about that. Brockwell had a gun an' me only my fists. But man, what a satisfaction it was to feel that polecat's jaw under my knuckles!"

Dakota stared gravely into the darkness. "If young Brockwell was half a man, I'd say he'd be ashamed to go to Starbuck with that yarn. But he's low enough to do anythin' to gain his ends, Slim. Trouble's liable to come of that."

"Don't think so," demurred Slim. "Abe Fornachon told Leo if he went to Starbuck about it he'd swear he did the fist-slingin' himself."

Dakota chuckled with relief. "Abe's plumb white. Looks like Starbuck is gonna have a very devil of a time tryin' anythin' against yuh, Slim. Bad as I figger he'd like to, I savy now why Roy ran into them dry-gulchers along the trail. Leo Brockwell evidently skinned out fast from the Dot H Dot an' rounded up some of his crowd to ambush yuh on yo're way home. Well, he'll be disappointed again."

Slim turned the bronco into the corral, the roll and lit a cigarette. He squatted on his heels beside the gate. "No use me goin' to bed until Roy gets back," he announced. "I couldn't sleep anyhow."

Dakota nodded, manipulated the makings himself and hunched down beside Slim. "Mona say anythin' to yuh about losin' cattle?" he inquired presently.

Slim nodded. "Uh-huh. Said Flash Courtney an' his gang had been workin' on her herd. I didn't tell her so, but that don't sound reasonable to me. Far as I know Courtney has allus hung out around Battle Mountain, an' that's fifty-sixty miles from here."

"No call for him to come clear over here to rustle stock when he's got all of Murgatroyd Valley right at his front door to operate in. I aim to find out of course, but somethin' tells me the real rustlers are a lot closer to home than Bat. . . ."

Dakota Blue frowned thoughtfully. "Think yo're shootin' close, Slim," he agreed. "There's been a wild hunch workin' for me for some time. An' the more I think an' figure, the more shore I get that it's a good one. Funny, don't yuh think, that of all the spreads in these parts, the Circle L an' the Dot H Dot are the only ones that have been mixed in trouble?"

"Here yuh got railroaded, on a frame-up. Mona's been losin' a lot of stock she can't afford to. Was I crooked an' wantin' to get my hooks on these two spreads, like as not I'd use the same tactics to get hold of 'em."

"I always will think that the real purpose of George Arthur on yuh think, that of all the spreads in these parts, the Circle L an' the Dot H Dot especially? There's plenty of other good

outfits in this neck of the woods."

"Don't savy quite yet," admitted Dakota, "but I aim to find out one of these days. An' when I do, I'll shore be in on the ground floor. I'll have somebody on my hip that I'll shore pile up."

Slim did not answer. He was staring off into the night towards the Dot H Dot. He stirred restlessly. "Dammit," he snapped. "I wish Roy would show up."

As if in answer to the wish, the low thump of jogging hoofs sounded, and presently the pale shape of Slim's gray bronco showed through the darkness. Slim stood up with a sigh of relief.

"Roy," he exclaimed. "Thank heavens."

"Roy it be," came the jaunty answer. "Slim yuh'll have to be after buyin' a new hat, bigorra. This 'un has got a hole through it. But the spalpeen who ruint it paid plenty, my lad. He'll never need a hat ag'in hisself."

Roy reined in and dismounted. Slim caught him by the arm. "Yuh mean there was shootin'?"

Roy laughed. "A little. Three shots, to be exact, lad. When I left yuh, Slim, I eased along slow for a time, givin' yuh a chance to get well on yo're way. Then I struck straight fer home, singin' with all my lung power. I guess the lipid purity of my voice musta charmed most of them polecats hidin' along the trail, fer I got by all but the

Slim with a grin. "No, thanks; too early in the day for spirituous liquor, Spud," he added as Dillon began setting out a bottle and glasses. "What's new?"

Continued Next Issue.



He stopped me with a gun pointed at my middle.

"Strange But True"

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS EXUDES A REDDISH, OILY SUBSTANCE FROM ITS SKIN - THIS IS THE "BLOOD SWEATING" MENTIONED IN ANCIENT LITERATURE

MAINE IS THE ONLY STATE IN THE UNION THAT TOUCHES BUT ONE OTHER STATE

"Stylecraft"

WALL PAPERS OF TODAY

WATERPROOF — And — SUN-TESTED

This week we have sent out many sample books showing a few of the attractive designs in this modern wall paper, selling at low prices of, per single roll 5c Up

Choose the Wall Paper First, Before Thinking of the Selection of Curtains, Floor or Furniture Coverings.

Barnes & McCullough

"Everything to Build Anything"

Mother's Day

SUNDAY MAY 9TH



How long has it been since she heard your voice?

WHAT A THRILL IT WILL BE WHEN YOU TELEPHONE!

There's a touch of magic to a telephone call "back home." Particularly on special occasions, like Mother's Day. If you can't be with your Mother then, why not telephone — and give her the pleasure of hearing your voice? The reduced rates* make it very inexpensive.

*Typical Sunday rates and night rates after 7 P. M. for station-to-station calls:

100 miles . . .	about 35c
150 miles . . .	about 50c
200 miles . . .	about 60c
250 miles . . .	about 65c

Gulf States Telephone Co.
HICO, TEXAS

Dakota shrugged. "Looks like the lid's off," he granted. "Stoney Sheard was right when said hell was gonna pop on this range, Slim, lad. It's beginnin' to look like they won't pass up nothin' gettin' yuh. There's a hefty purpose behind all this an' I'm gonna find out what it is."

The next morning, not long after sunrise, Slim and Dakota Blue rode into Pinnacle. Slim had confided to Dakota his plan of taking up the mortgage on Mona Hall's spread, at which Dakota had shrugged.

"I know yo're bank balance is plenty big enough to cover the note, Slim," Dakota had observed. "But whether George Arthur will deal with yuh is another proposition. Me, I don't think he will. I don't believe he wants the five thousand dollars. What he wants is the Dot H Dot ranch."

Slim had avowed that he would tackle the lawyer just the same, so Dakota rode into town with him. The lawyer's office, a dusty, unkempt little cubby, three doors up from the Wild Horse Saloon, was still locked when they arrived. So Slim and Dakota went into the saloon where Joe Rooney was swamping out and fat Spud Dillon was yawning behind the bar, while poring over a tattered newspaper. "Hi, gents," hailed Spud. "What brings yuh to our fair city so early this fine mornin'?"

"Little business deal," answered

WHEN SPRING FLOWERS BLOOM

Summerize YOUR CAR!

AVOID REPAIR BILLS by using the correct summer Mobilgas and Mobiloil tuned for hot weather driving. Your friendly Magnolia Dealer is prepared to give your car a complete 7-Point Summerize check-up to safeguard your engine, transmission, differential, radiator and other vital parts. Summerize now at the sign of the Flying Red Horse!

Change Now to Summer Grade

Mobilgas Mobiloil

AT YOUR FRIENDLY MAGNOLIA DEALER

Gifts for the GRADUATES

FOR THE YOUNG LADY—

- Gowns in Satin, rayon & batiste
- Pajamas in satin, rayon & batiste
- Slips of crepe and satin
- Gowns and Negligee Sets
- Panties
- Costume Jewelry
- Purses in white and colors
- Handkerchiefs, perfume, powder
- Vanette Hose in new colors, in two and three thread chiffon

FOR THE YOUNG MAN—

- Belt Sets
- Ties, Gloves and Pajamas
- Fancy Sport Suspenders
- Sport Shirts in both plain and fancy colors
- Hosiery—all the patterns
- Genuine white gaberdine suits
- White shoes

A number of other things that will warm graduates' hearts

Let Us Assist You In Selecting Your Gifts, as we are sure our prices are very attractive on desirable goods.

GET THE HABIT OF COMING TO OUR PLACE

G. M. Carlton Bros. & Co.

The Home of Hawk Brand Work Clothes
HICO, TEXAS

News Of The World Told In Pictures.

He's a Human Being



Being ugly was a blessing in disguise for Norman Grusky, who, by popular vote was named the ugliest man on the North Texas State Teachers College campus. He was awarded with an all expense date as the favorite co-ed.

JOE GISH



Pressure Is On! One Month to Go

Navy Junior Champ

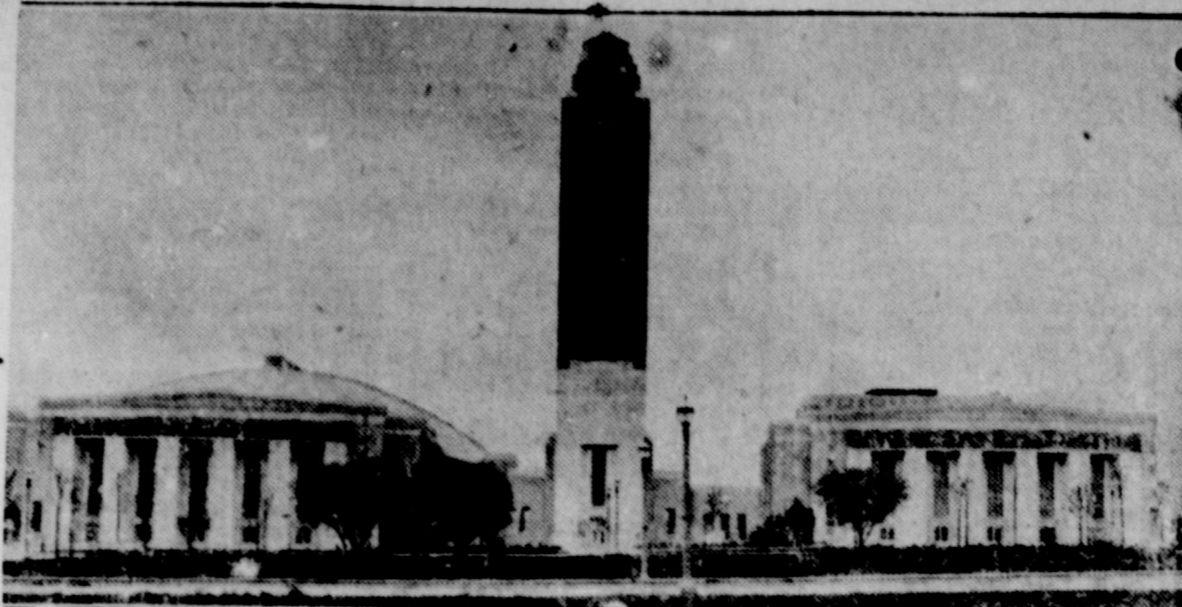


ANNAPOLIS, Md. . . Gracie Littauer, second and handier for Howard Caldwell, age 2 1/2, weight 30 lbs., wipes the junior champ's face between rounds at the championship bouts.



If she can keep it up till June 1, Miss Sara Bernice Honea, student at Texas State College for Women, will be able to point with pride to a Straight-A record in scholarship during her entire four-year college career. She has also taken active part in campus social life, being president of the Y. W. C. A. and an accomplished singer and pianist. Her home is in Austin, Texas.

NEW BUILDINGS AT FORT WORTH FIESTA



A new million-dollar array of buildings will be in use this summer when the Fort Worth Frontier Fiesta opens, "bigger and better than ever," on June 26.

In the picture appear the Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum, seating 6,000 (on left); Drivers Tower, 29 1/2 feet high, and (right) Municipal Auditorium, seating 2,500. The new structures are only a few hundred yards from Casa Mañana, where Billy Rose will present his big new show.

Holstein-Guernsey Cow Presents Rare Twins



SEATTLE, Wash. . . Twins in the bovine world are almost as rare as quadruplets or quintuplet human babies. "Lady," a Holstein-Guernsey cow, gave birth to twins here a week ago. They have been named "Jack and Jill."

Entire Nation Hails Peace in Auto Industry



PLATE GLASS	146,500,000 sq. ft.	72%
CRUDE RUBBER	960,000,000 lbs.	75%
STEEL	6,500,000 tons	20%
MALLEABLE IRON	290,500 tons	54%
LEATHER	12,000,000 sq. ft.	31%
COTTON	612,000 bales	10%
WOOL UPHOLSTERY	46,750,000 yards	
MINING: LEAD	215,000 tons	35%
COPPER	128,000 tons	17%
NICKEL	19,000,000 lbs.	28%

The vital importance to the entire nation of restored peace in the auto industry is shown by this latest survey of raw materials consumed during a single year. One out of every seven American workers now derives his daily bread—either directly or indirectly—from the automobile industry. Miners of lead, zinc and copper, cotton pickers in the South, sheep herders in the West, industrial workers in hundreds of cities—all owe a big part of their income to the modern motor car. Business in every state quickens with renewed activity in big auto plants like the Plymouth factory at Detroit, world's biggest single production unit for finished cars, as new Plymouth

models again move out to 12,500 dealer showrooms throughout the United States. A single low-priced car like the 1937 Plymouth, when it comes off the assembly line, contains 1,700 pounds of steel and 500 pounds of iron, 70 pounds of safety glass, 180 pounds of rubber including tires, 60 pounds of copper, 20 pounds of aluminum, and other materials too numerous to mention. Thus the automobile industry is now the No. 1 consumer of steel, malleable iron, rubber, oil, plate glass, mohair, nickel, lead and gasoline, the latest survey shows. Total amounts used by the industry in a single year are shown by the tables above, with the percentage of total production these figures represent.

Royal Family Ready for Coronation!



LONDON, England . . . Here is a new picture of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth and their two daughters, Princess Elizabeth (left), heir presumptive to the throne, and Princess Margaret Rose. Princess Elizabeth recently celebrated her eleventh birthday.

Ambassador Greets Foundation Head



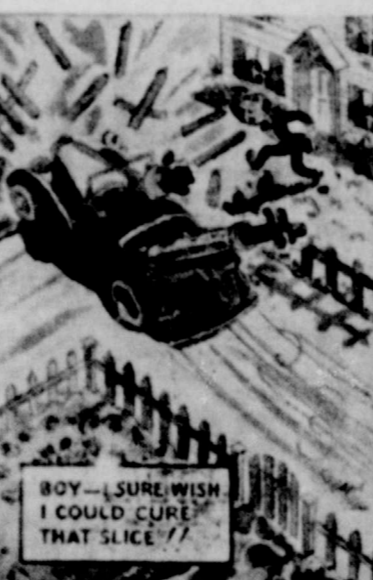
Hon. James W. Gerard, Special Ambassador for the United States to the Coronation of King George VI (left), greets Colonel Jacob Ruppert, owner of the Yanks and Chairman of the United Brewers' Industrial Foundation, at the luncheon in the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, which launched the brewers' program to align the industry with law enforcement, moderation and a recognition of the social welfare.

WHY AMERICA'S SHAMEFUL AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT RECORD?

CAUSE	REMEDY
DRIVERS AND PEDESTRIANS WHO HAVE NOT YET LEARNED HOW TO PROTECT THEMSELVES	EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TO TEACH DRIVERS AND PEDESTRIANS SAFE HABITS
INCREASING POWER OF CARS	INCREASING SELF-RESTRAINT AND LAW OBSERVANCE BY DRIVERS
DEFECTIVE CARS	SAFER CARS
LAWLESS DRIVERS	DISCIPLINE
BADLY EQUIPPED STREETS	BETTER TRAFFIC ENGINEERING
BADLY EQUIPPED HIGHWAYS	SAFER RUST HIGHWAYS

Nearly 40 million drivers, some good and some bad . . . Three times that many pedestrians, including the lame, the halt and the blind . . . More than 28 million automobiles, some in good condition and others nearly ready to fall apart . . . Three million miles of highways, with a score of physical hazards in every mile. Add all these together and you have America's traffic lottery, a complex game of life and death in which all of us, willing or not, must participate. America's shameful automobile accident toll, according to the latest figures issued by The Travelers Insurance Company, reached the staggering total of 36,500 dead and 967,840 injured in 1936. Why? Many individuals make the mistake of attributing this awful toll to one or two simple causes. The engineer says: "When we build better highways and cars, the accidents will stop." The law enforcement officer says: "The only way to teach motorists to behave is to crack down on them." Some persons say "Cut down speeds and you'll cut down accidents." Others claim with equal emphasis: "Eliminate drunken driving and you'll eliminate most of the accidents." Actually, there are many causes of accidents, and a natural remedy for each. Pictured above are a few. Many American cities are enjoying reductions in their accident rates each year in spite of the fact that the totals for the country as a whole are climbing steadily upward. These cities are seeking out all the causes and applying the correct remedy to each. They are carrying on a balanced program of education, engineering and enforcement.

In the Rough

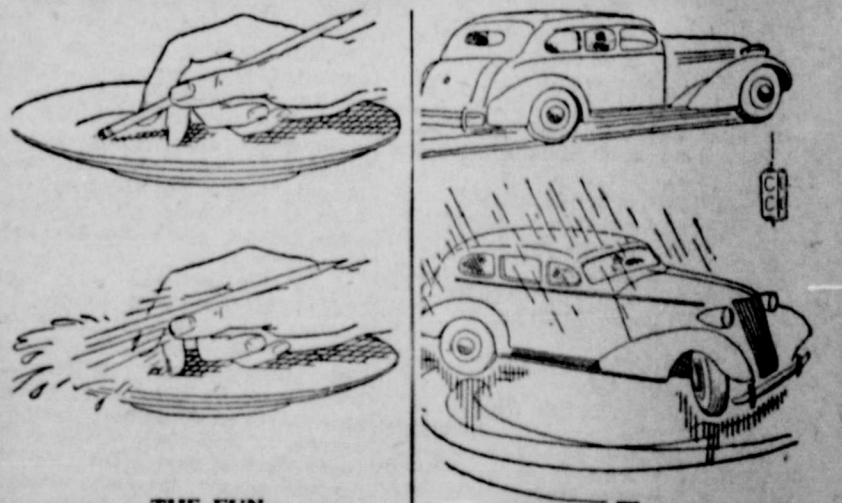


Inattention fills more hospital cots than almost any germ in the medical index. The absent-minded gentleman who kisses the umbrella goodbye and takes the baby out in the rain has no place on the highways. Inattention may serve some useful purpose when wife wants help in hanging the curtains or demands that the cellar be cleaned up. But the man who gets lost in reverie while driving is likely to be found in a ditch. Daydreams behind the wheel often become nightmares in a wheelchair. If you are in the throes of a post-mortem on last night's bridge game, wait 'til you get home to figure it out. Good drivers don't slice—on the fairway or on the highway.

The Sky's the Limit



FUN with FACTS



THE FUN
Place a clean, dry saucer or platter upon a table. Take a pencil eraser end down, and hold it against the platter at an angle of about 45 degrees. Push firmly in an endeavor to move the pencil across the platter. You will find that the platter moves and may even push the table-covering or table itself. Place a small quantity of water in the platter and repeat. You will find the pencil eraser now moves across the platter with very little effort. We might say that it "skids" across the platter. There will be no tendency to move the dish.

THE FACTS
On a clean, dry pavement, your tires exert a very strong push. It is this push which moves your car forward. When the pavement is wet, your tires have a tendency to repeat performance. This may prove to be dangerous if you try to stop quickly or change your direction suddenly. Other conditions which tend to cause similar results are wet leaves, car tracks, oil, ice and snow. Under such circumstances, whenever you feel impatient, just remember the wet eraser.

