



# Lawmen of the Lone Star State

**O**NE day in the eighteen-hundreds a mayor in Texas awoke to find his town a shambles—four men already shot to death, two lynchings, and bands of armed men rushing about the streets wildly, threatening death to everyone who came near them. It was a full-fledged holocaust, and the mayor hastened to telegraph the governor, requesting that a company of Texas Rangers be sent at once to quell the riot.

A little man, his clothes caked with dust, wearing two guns with the holsters tied down, got off the first train from Austin. The mayor, waiting at the station, stared at the arrival aghast. "What?" he cried. "Only *one* Ranger?"

The Ranger shifted his chaw of tobacco and regarded the mayor coldly. "Only *one* riot here, ain't there?" he replied.

This old story may not have actually happened but it has been current in Texas for a long time and illustrates several real facts about the Rangers. First, they were absolutely fearless in all kinds of dangerous situations. Second, they were held in such high esteem by ordinary Texans that a single one of the Rangers might easily

have been enough to pacify a whole town of rioters!

Just who were these fabulous armed horsemen called the Texas Rangers, and what was it about them that made them so fearsome?

A portrait of one regiment of Rangers in action should give some hint of the answers. During the Mexican War in 1847 a Colonel Jack Hays joined General Winfield Scott's expedition into Mexico with a regiment of Texas Rangers. The Rangers refused to be commissioned or enlisted in the federal army. Not being soldiers they therefore did not have to wear uniforms and could wear what they pleased.

Each man of this regiment of Rangers wore any clothes that appealed to him and carried whatever equipment he wanted. There were long-tailed coats, short jackets, black leather caps, and broadbrimmed Texas hats. Most of the men were bearded and many wore their hair down to the shoulders. But it was in their armament that the Rangers were most individual and most *awesome*.

Each Ranger carried a Sharps rifle and two newfangled six-shooter revolvers made by a man named Colt in New York. Many



carried a pair of old army horse-pistols besides—giving these worthies *four* pistols apiece. But that wasn't all. Every Ranger carried at his belt his long, razor-sharp sheath knife, and most had lassos of rawhide or horsehair tied to their saddles. They were a wild looking crew but the Mexicans feared these *diabolos Tejanos*—or Texas devils, more than whole battalions of ordinary American soldiers.

The Texas Rangers were originally organized in 1835 to fight Indians, which they did—with a vengeance. They soon earned a fiercer and more bloodthirsty reputation than any Indian tribe in the territory. They were decidedly not civilized fighters—but they did subdue the Indians. Then after Texas joined the Union in 1845, and the trouble with Mexico mounted rapidly culminating in the Mexican War which broke out in 1846—the Rangers turned their sights toward their southern neighbor.

One of the most amazing exploits of the Texas buccaneers consists of an invasion of Mexico by a tiny body of 800 men including Hays' Rangers. In 1842 enraged by some border raids by Mexican armies, some Texans simply decided to invade Mexico and subdue it. The 800 men with a General Somervell at their head plunged straight down into Mexico, but being wild and undisciplined they fell to fighting among themselves and General Somervell called the whole thing off and started home. But only 500 men obeyed his orders. The rest laughed at Somervell and declared they would "clean up Mexico regardless!"

This rip-roaring 300 led by a Billy Fisher made straight for a Mexican fortress at the town of Mier. But the Mexican cavalry was waiting for them and the poor Texans were cut to pieces and forced to surrender. The Mexicans marched their captives triumphantly to a place 100 miles west of

Monterey. Here suddenly the remnants of Texans rose up, attacked their guards and escaped, setting out for the Rio Grande and home. Most never got there. In the wild, rugged country they were hunted like wolves, without food or water. They chased snakes and grasshoppers for food, burrowed down into the earth for moisture to wet their swollen tongues. But they kept on, refusing to surrender. Out of the 300 who had begun the incredible invasion only *four men* at last reached Texas!

One of the most interesting things about the Rangers is the part they played in the development of the famous Colt .45 six-shooter, known later all over the West as the "peacemaker." Samuel Colt had whittled out his first *wooden* model in 1831, but oddly enough it was a complete failure, turned down by the U. S. Army and civil authorities alike. So the Colt Company went bankrupt.

But somehow—no one knows just how—a Colt revolver found its way to Texas where it came to the attention of some Rangers who promptly declared it the greatest invention of all time! A Ranger Captain was despatched to New York to find Colonel Colt and arrange to buy firearms for the Rangers. Together the Captain and Colt made improvements on the six-shooter and large numbers were shipped to the Rangers. From then on two things happened: the Texans became really unbeatable and the Colt .45 won secure fame which it never lost thereafter.

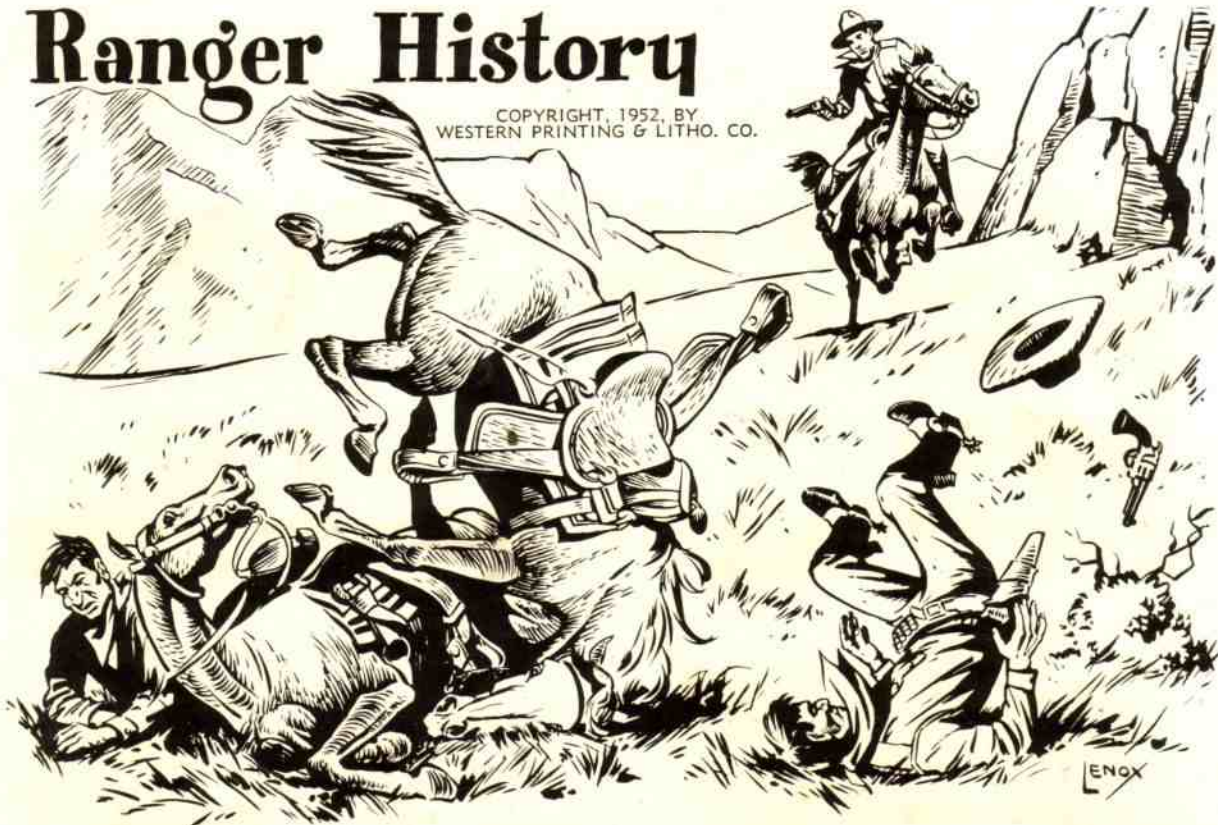
In 1919 the Rangers were reduced to a puny force of just 68 men, as the period for their extraordinary services was long since over—and this act just about ended the career of that most unique body of law enforcers, unexampled in this country or any other—the Texas Rangers!

—JOHN OSGOOD



# Ranger History

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It has been said that a Texas Ranger can drop two outlaws with one shot. While this statement may be a trifle farfetched, it is certain that no Ranger has ever been deterred from duty by the odds against him.

The first Rangers were organized in 1823, when Texas was still a part of Mexico, to protect the settlers from the Indians.

When the Texans began their fight for independence from Mexico in 1835, Sam Houston recognized the Rangers and built them into a fighting force of 1600. These 1600 Rangers provided the nucleus of his army, and performed outstanding duty at San Jacinto, where Houston won a decisive battle over the Mexican general, Santa Anna.

The Rangers served again with distinction during the Civil War and were reorganized during the days of the Reconstruction.

Picked for their courage and marksmanship, they wore no uniforms, until more recently, and dressed mostly in buckskin with high leather boots and big hats. Each Ranger carried a pistol, a rifle and a knife. Salt and

ammunition were carried in a buckskin pouch, and wool blankets were tied behind his saddle.

Like the Indian, he shot wild game for food and slept on the open prairie. He could trail



as well as an Indian and was a superior horseman.

Today's Ranger patrols the big Texas boundary in a fast car, but he is still a horseman. His horse follows in a trailer hitched to his car and is used when the going gets too rough for wheels.





**T**EXAS was only a year old, but in that short time, the fighting republic had made two bitter enemies. One was the Mexicans, who made swift, bloody raids on the territory from below the Rio Grande.

The other was the Indians. This may cause some surprise, for President Houston was known to have been very friendly with the Indians of all denominations. The fact is, he was—but the colonists were not. They looked upon the red men as a menace, and one of the first acts of the new Texas Congress was to reject the Indian treaty that Sam Houston had made with the Cherokees and Comanches.

This meant that the land rights the Indians had enjoyed while Texas was under Mexican rule, no longer applied now that the territory was independent. The Indians didn't waste any time considering the matter. They daubed on their war paint and sharpened their tomahawks.

This Texas-Indian fracas actually continued for 54 years, but the first 10 years or so were the hardest. The Texans soon realized that without an effective fighting force, the territory would soon become a vast area of dead men.

It was at this point that they established themselves into a Ranger force, and looked about for a leader. They didn't have long to wait. Late in 1837, a 21-year-old youngster, by name, Jack Hays, suddenly showed up in

the capital on Buffalo Bayou and applied for the job.

Jack Hays was no stranger to the men of Texas, nor was his fighting family. His father and grandfather had both fought under Jackson in the Indian Wars, and Jack himself, when nineteen, had joined up with the Texas Army in its war for independence from Mexico.

When the Texas Army was disbanded because there wasn't enough money in the treasury to pay the fighting men, Jack Hays requested and was granted a captain's commission in the force of volunteer Rangers then being organized.

Captain Hays was a mere lad compared to the hard-fighting men he was given to lead, but in no time at all, they were proud to call him their leader. It is related that Hays never asked a man to take a risk he wouldn't take himself, and that his most common command was not, "Charge!"—but, "Follow me!"

Once, when Captain Hays and a dozen of his Rangers were out on a scouting mission, they spied an equal number of redskins on the range. The Indians were out on a similar mission—to hunt down Rangers.

The bitter enemies were not more than a hundred yards from each other when they suddenly spied the opposing force. Hays instantly



ordered his men to dismount and take cover behind a thicket nearby.

Then Hays and two men dived into the brush. The waiting Rangers heard a volley of shots, and soon saw Hays returning with one of the Rangers on his back. The other had been killed, and Hays was fighting mad.

Hays told his men to stay where they were, and dived back into the brush—this time, alone!

The Rangers, highly disciplined by Hays to obey orders to the letter, raged and fumed with impatience and worry for their leader as they heard three swift shots in rapid succession—then a long silence.

Soon, another shot rang out—and another long silence. This went on for some time until they heard the voice of Jack Hays, calling to them. The entire detachment stormed into the thicket at his summons, prepared to fight, but all they found were 11 dead Indians and another one fleeing across the prairie in a great hurry. One of the Rangers took careful aim and dropped him.

Captain Hays had killed three of the Indians when he first plunged into the thicket and found them together. Then, he had hunted them out one at a time. He had gone it alone because he felt it was too risky to send his entire detachment against the redskins.

Hays' habit of going it alone once almost cost him his scalp. He was fond of scouting by himself, and on a solitary jaunt suddenly discovered 15 Comanches riding hard on his trail.

Hays was no fool. He knew he couldn't outfight 15 armed Comanches. His only course was to try to outrun them. But he soon found out this was equally hopeless. Hays was in Indian country, and whichever trail he took, he kept running into more and more redskins.

Then he remembered the high rock since called, Enchanted Rock. Hays headed straight for it, and reached it just ahead of a flock of flying tomahawks. He fell off his horse, slapped

his animal, and scrambled to the hilltop. Then he waited.

The Comanches weren't long in arriving. They stormed the rock and began to climb. But the path to the top was such that only one Indian at a time could make the ascent. Hays let each one get as close to him as he deemed was healthy, then tumbled him over.

The hillside was literally littered with dead Comanches as the tumbling act continued for well over an hour. Then, suddenly, Jack Hays spotted a cloud of dust in the distance, getting closer and closer.

What had happened was, Captain Jack's horse had gone straight back to camp, and the Rangers had followed its trail back to the rock. The redskins fled in disorder. Hays made only one comment to his men!

"Why'd you fellers get here so quick? I was havin' more fun than I ever had in my whole life!"

Captain Jack's closest call came in a fight with almost 100 Mexican marauders. The Rangers had a much smaller force, but had succeeded in stalemating the battle. The Mexicans had holed up in a nearby village, and both sides kept picking off men on the other side.

But as we mentioned before, Hays valued the lives of his Rangers quite highly, and it caused him great anguish to count the small but steadily increasing losses.

At length, Captain Jack hit upon a solution. He challenged the Mexican leader to fight him in single combat. Now, either the Mexican leader was ignorant of Hays' reputation, or he overestimated his own ability as a fighting man. The historical fact of the matter is, the foolhardy man accepted the challenge, and was knocked out of his saddle with Hays' first bullet.

Is it any wonder that Captain Jack Hays established a precedent that all Ranger captains that followed in those early days on the Texas prairies were proud to emulate?



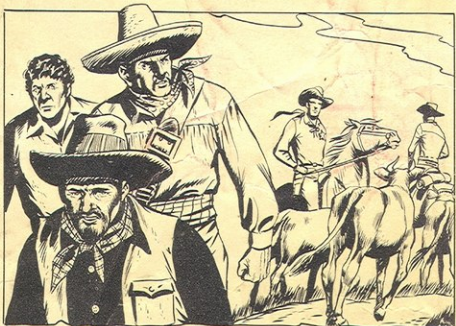
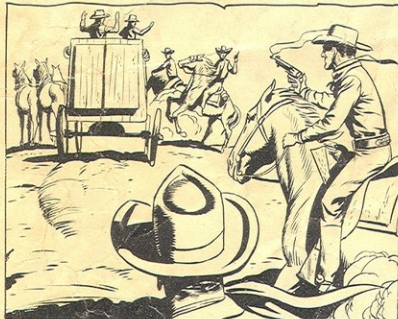
# The Texas Rangers



"WHEN I THINK OF THE LONG HISTORY OF THE TEXAS RANGERS, IT MAKES ME PROUD TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF THEM. WHILE TEXAS WAS STILL A PART OF MEXICO, THE FEW WIDELY SCATTERED SETTLERS LIVED IN CONSTANT FEAR OF INDIAN RAIDS. IN 1823, THE TEXAS RANGERS WERE FOUNDED TO PROTECT THE COLONISTS."



"THE HONEST AND FEARLESS RANGERS SOON WERE ROUTING CATTLE THIEVES, STAGE ROBBERS AND BORDER BANDITS AND TALES OF THEIR BRAVE EXPLOITS SPREAD..."



"PURSUING STOLEN CATTLE IN 1875, CAPTAIN MCNELLY LED A FEW RANGERS INTO MEXICO. OUTNUMBERED AND FIGHTING ON UNFRIENDLY SOIL, HE REGAINED THE ANIMALS HE HAD COME FOR."

"IT TOOK ONLY ONE TEXAS RANGER, LIEUTENANT JOHN B. ARMSTRONG TO TRACK THE FEARED GUNFIGHTER, JOHN HARDIN TO FLORIDA AND CAPTURE HIM SINGLE-HANDED."



"IN THE BEGINNING, TEXAS RANGERS TRAVELED IN GROUPS TO THE SCENE OF TROUBLE, BUT NOW SINGLE RANGERS ARE MATCHED AGAINST A GANG OF TROUBLE-MAKERS."



## "Buck a Bullet"

The Texas Rangers as an organization dates from the spring of 1836. After the fall of the Alamo, General Sam Houston organized among the settlers in the territory a troop of sixteen hundred mounted riflemen. This company, formed for the defense of the Texan borders, was the original Texas Ranger Unit. During the seven years that Texas had to maintain her independence, before she was admitted into the American Union, the rangers had a lot of work to do.

They repelled the Mexicans, fought the Apaches, Comanches, and Kowas, and administered justice to the outlaws and ruffians who flocked to the new republic. When the Civil War broke out between the North and South, Texas was drawn into the conflict on the side of the Confederacy. General Con Terry, an old ranger, organized the famous body of men known as Terry's Texas Rangers. This command was composed almost exclusively of ex-rangers and frontiersmen. From Bull Run to Appomattox, this organization rendered gallant service and lost seventy-five per cent of its original muster roll.

The return of peace and the days of reconstruction did not do away with the necessity for the service which only the ranger could render. Indian uprisings, banditry, and cattle thievery all flourished. From 1868 to 1873 the ranger companies were gradually reduced from one thousand to about three hundred men.

In 1874 conditions along the frontier had become so acute that the need for an organized mounted police for the protection of the settlers against the continued Indian raids became apparent. Early in 1874, the legislature appropriated the sum of \$300,000 for frontier defence, thus authorizing the formation of the Texas Rangers as now constituted. The governor immediately issued a call for four hundred and fifty volunteers. They were formed into six companies of seventy-five men each. Each of these units was designated A, B, C, D, E, and F and received the official name of the Frontier Battalion of Texas Rangers.

On this particular day, Company A, being the northernmost company, was camped on the main fork of the Brazos River. Captain John Lane was in command of the unit and was seated on a small chair in his tent. In front of him was a packing case which served as a desk. The flap of his tent moved aside and Ranger Jim Nevins appeared.

"He's here, captain," was the announcement. "The men are giving him the once over. Why he's nothing more than a kid. From what I heard I thought Al Caswell was something of a giant and about twice the age."

"Don't let appearances fool you, Jim," suggested Captain Lane. "When a fellow can out think a red-skin, then there's something mighty powerful inside his head. He doesn't just use it as a place to park his hat. I borrowed him from unit E for a special job. Now bring him to me."

Al Caswell was at that time a dark-eyed, dark-haired youngster whose youthful age was anybody's guess. The broad-brimmed white hat upon his head, the heavy-buckled cartridge studded belt that carried the six shooter on his hip, and the shop made boots on his feet were the hallmarks of his trade. He had a friendly smile and you liked him at once.

The original Ranger regulation for guns was the .50 caliber Sharps carbine and one .45 Colt's pistol. Later the .44 Winchester carbine was to be used in place of the Sharps. Al Caswell had purchased with his own funds one of the new Winchesters and had it on the right side of his horse in a scabbard, and on the left side in another scabbard, his Sharps.

"Reporting for duty, captain," was all that the youthful Ranger said when he entered the tent.

"I have a warrant here for the arrest of Hank Carling. Charge is taking some stock from the IT ranch. I want him arrested and brought here alive. We figured that such action would make the rest of the rustlers associated with him nervous. If you kill him, that ruins our plans. If he kills you, we lose a good man. Understand?"

"Yes," was the one word reply.

"You start tomorrow morning," explained Captain Lane. "You may take any Ranger with you from my unit."

"I'll take the fellow who sort of announced my arrival," smiled Al Caswell. "It ought to be an experience for him. We ride at dawn."

The sun was just up from the horizon the next day when the two men left the Ranger camp. Their destination was the small town of Hogarsville where it was rumored Hank Carling made his headquarters. The two men rode north with hardly a word passing between them. The trip lasted three days and early at noon of the fourth day approached their destination.

"You wait for me on the outskirts of the town," said Al Caswell to his companion Ranger. "This has to be a single man job. No matter what happens, just stay put. I'll be back before sundown with Hank Carling."

Al Caswell rode into town alone. He tied his horse loosely to a hitching post near a stable. Then he walked the distance on foot to The Palace. He entered and spoke to the bartender loudly.

"I'm looking for Hank Carling. You can see plainly I am a Texas Ranger. I have a warrant for his arrest. No need to create a disturbance here. Just tell me where I can find him. It all should be done peacefully."

Three men nearby almost didn't believe the words they heard. The bartender looked at the youthful appearance of the Texas Ranger. He moved a glass backwards and that was a signal. One of the three men left and entered a back room. Soon from it came the wanted man himself. In his hand he held a .45 colt which he inched right up to the spine of Al Caswell.

"Don't turn around," he suggested. "You can feel the muzzle. You walk right out of here. But first I'll take your gun. Don't be a fool and try anything. From what they tell me, you certainly must be one big fool coming here and announcing yourself the way you did."

Finishing those words, Hank Carling removed with his left hand the gun that the ranger carried. It was a beautifully carved weapon. He replaced his own gun in the holster and now held Caswell's sixgun.

"I'm going to walk you to where your horse is. Then get out of town pronto. Otherwise you might force me to shoot you with your own gun. I run things here so don't think you will be able to get any help."

The two men walked slowly to where Caswell's horse had been hitched. Hank Carling spotted the

two rifles in the scabbards.

"I'll remove those weapons also," he said.

"Can I turn around for just a minute," asked the Ranger. "There is something I must tell you. It is very important and might save your life."

Carling was curious. He figured he had nothing to lose so he told the Ranger to turn around. The muzzle of the gun was now levelled at the stomach.

"Listen carefully to what I have to say," said the Ranger in a stern tone of voice that contrasted with the way he previously had spoken. "You hold my gun in your hand. It has six empty shells in the chambers. You have the gun cocked. Pull the trigger and nothing will happen. But if you look carefully at the right hand you will see a deringer. How did it get there? A trick holster attached to my hand. It shoots a .50 caliber bullet. That will tear a big hole in you. Don't try to go for your gun. But pull the trigger and be convinced."

The startled man didn't know what to do. The confidence with which the Ranger had spoken completely unnerved him. Finally he pulled the trigger and heard the firing pin strike an empty shell.

"You got me, but how are you going to get me out of town?" he challenged.

"Simple," was the reply. "We are here at the stable. You will ask for a horse. Hold that gun in your hand as though I am still your prisoner. Then we ride out together. My partner is waiting for me."

Hank Carling obeyed and followed orders. On the outskirts of Hogarsville, they met the other Ranger. The prisoner was disarmed. The ride back to headquarters was uneventful. To save his own hide, Hank Carling talked all about his operations.

"What brains that Ranger has," he admitted. "But he did take a chance. Suppose I had not held his gun but my own. What then?"

Captain John Lane also wanted to know the answer to that question. And Al Caswell gave it to him.

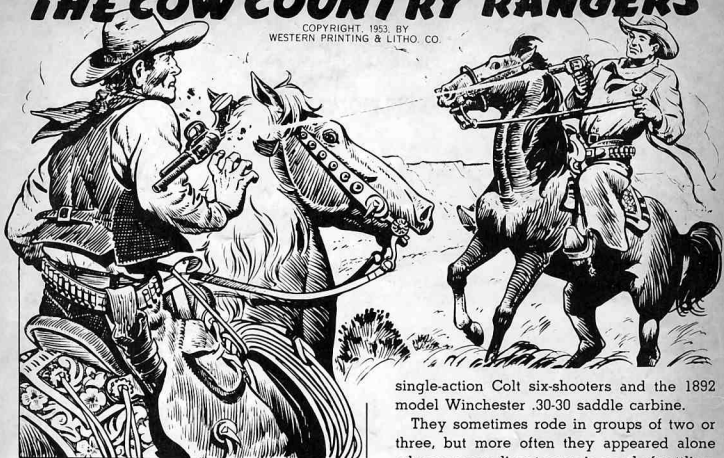
"I took that possibility into consideration," he explained. "I wore a heavy shirt. Why? Because around my body was a thick steel vest that could stop a bullet."

"Shows you a Ranger is prepared for anything," conceded Captain John Lane.



# THE COW COUNTRY RANGERS

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In the year 1902, many parts of the West had become virtual battlegrounds. Aligned on one side were sheepmen and rustlers, opposing them were the range-holding cattle kings. Conditions finally reached a point where it was necessary for the United States government to step in. Thus, a body of men under the control of the Department of Interior, called the United States Rangers, was formed to restore and uphold law and order on the range.

These Rangers were hand-picked rangers, cowboys, and mountain men. They were superb horsemen, superlative trackers and crack shots. It was said that a Ranger could shoot a badman's bullet back into his gun barrel and follow a cold trail to "where the eagles fly."

Though the Rangers, in many respects, were very similar to the Texas Rangers and the Northwest Mounted Police, they wore no distinguishing uniforms. Their dress was the common range garb. They carried .45 caliber

single-action Colt six-shooters and the 1892 model Winchester .30-30 saddle carbine.

They sometimes rode in groups of two or three, but more often they appeared alone when a range dispute was in need of settling. In seven years' time, the Rangers had stopped all range wars. They had become so valuable that the Ranger was maintained and is now known as the United States Forest Ranger.



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# BORDER PATROL

## Guardian of the Mexican Border

**T**HE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO EXTENDS 1600 MILES FROM BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS, TO THE PACIFIC COAST. THE BORDER PATROL HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GUARDING THIS VAST AREA AGAINST SMUGGLERS AND THE ILLEGAL ENTRY OF ALIENS. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT MORE THAN A THOUSAND PERSONS A DAY ILLEGALLY CROSS INTO THIS COUNTRY TO SEEK WORK. THOUGH PLANES AND AUTOMOBILES ARE USED BY THE BORDER PATROL, THERE ARE MANY PLACES WHERE HORSES ARE NEEDED TO PURSUE THE ALIENS ACROSS LONELY AND RUGGED MOUNTAINS. WHEN SCOUTING

PLANES SPOT A GROUP OF ALIENS WORKING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE HILLS OR SHADY CANYONS, THEY RADIO THE NEAREST PATROL STATION. AUTOMOBILES ARE INSTANTLY DISPATCHED TO ESTABLISH ROAD BLOCKS, AND THE HORSE UNITS TAKE THE TRAIL. GUIDED BY THE HOVERING PLANES, THE OFFICERS ALMOST ALWAYS

SUCCEED IN ROUTING THE ALIENS FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES. ALL BORDER PATROLMEN ARE ARMED WITH RIFLES AND REVOLVERS, BUT SELDOM USE THEM, EXCEPT IN RARE CASES WHERE THEY ENCOUNTER SMUGGLERS CARRYING VALUABLE ARTICLES AND NARCOTICS.

