

# FROME COUNTY REPORTER

LIBERTY, FROME COUNTY, NEVADA.

## THE STORY OF MARSHAL LARRY HOCK

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### LARRY HOCK'S EARLY LIFE

Larry Hock was born two years after his brother John, in 1840. When their father died, John inherited the Pontypine Ranch, and Larry went off to become a Marshal.

### 1875 SPRING

### THE ATTEMPTED ARREST OF PETE DAVIS (19)

#### INTRODUCTION

Pete Davis was wanted wanted for a variety of crimes in Frome County. Larry Hock, two other Marshals, and two Deputy Marshals hear that he is hiding at Dan Montgomery's farm close to the Stick Hills and go to capture him.

#### SHOOTOUT AT MONTGOMERY'S FARM

Marshal Larry Hock passed the reins of his horse to Deputy Marshall Ed Vernon, nodded to his men, and began walking west. To his front he could see, in the distance, the rundown farm that belonged to Dan Montgomery. There seemed to be smoke coming from the chimneys. Good...there was somebody there, and hopefully it was Pete Davis.

To his left was the Stick River, flowing towards him and onwards to the great town of Liberty. To his right were the foothills of the Stick Hills. He could see two of his men, Marshals Brady and Thompson taking up position on an outcrop that gave them a good view of the farm. They disappeared from view as they lay down and took up firing positions.

Deputy Marshals Bill Pendola and Henry Alston moved along quietly beside Hock. They were both nervous, but nowhere near as nervous as Deputy Vernon, which was good reason for Hock to give him the job of tending to the horses.

Hock paused for a second. He could see the fences and buildings of the farm quite clearly now. Scanning from left to right he could see: the toilet, with a barn behind; the open gate to the farm; and on the right, the farmhouse. There was an old wagon in

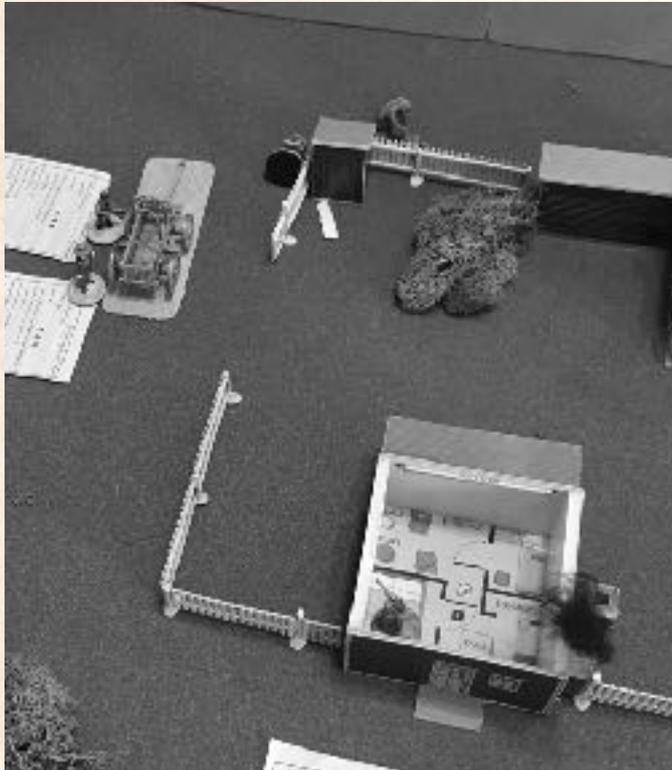


*Vulture's eye view of Montgomery Farm, with the Stick River in the foreground, and the Stick Hills in the background.*

front of the gate. He whispered to his men to sneak up to the wagon. Alston and Pendola set off, darting forward, using scrawny bushes for cover. He followed.

Soon the three of them were behind the wagon, peering over the top. "Alston, you move up to the toilet, see if you can see more than we can from here" Hock whispered.

Alston had just reached the toilet when they saw movement within it. Shots rang out and Alston fell to the ground, screaming and holding his stomach.



*Battle of the bog. Alston and Hamilton are down. Davis fires at Hock and Pendola from the farmhouse.*

Pendola opened fire with his carbine, peppering the toilet with bullets as fast as he could. The toilet door crashed open and a body fell out, bleeding heavily from a fatal head wound. Hock recognised the man as John Hamilton, a sidekick of Davis's.

Suddenly bullets whistled past Pendola, causing to duck down for cover behind the wagon. It was Davis, firing at him with a carbine from one of the farmhouse windows.

This had all been seen by Marshals Thompson and Brady on the outcrop. They began firing at Davis, who shifted his fire to them, wounding Brady in the chest. Thompson downed Davis with a well aimed bullet to the head, sending him toppling back into the darkness of the farmhouse. It became eerily quiet.

Pendola and Hock peered over the wagon. No sign of any movement, so Hock waved to Pendola, indicating that he should advance via the toilet. Pendola set off but before he had gone six paces he spotted movement at the door of the farmhouse. Another outlaw! Pendola rapidly fired but missed Harry Dougherty, another of Davis's cronies. Dougherty returned fire, injuring Pendola in the chest, not enough to down him, but enough to slow him.

Dougherty wavered. The odds didn't look good - he had better run. He rushed through the farmhouse and out the back door, away from Pendola and Hock. As he exited the building he could see Brady coming down the hill towards him. Brady was moving quickly, but was a long way away, so Dougherty had a good chance of making it to one of the horses and escaping. Before he could move Thompson, still on the outcrop, fired and hit him in the

chest. Dougherty fell to the ground, and was dead by the time Brady reached him.



*The last moments of Harry Dougherty.*

## EPILOGUE

Thompson and Vernon buried the three outlaws, Pete Davis, Harry Dougherty, John Hamilton close to the farm.

Hock took the injured men to Liberty for treatment. Their wounds, although not life threatening did take considerable time to mend.

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## 1875 WINTER

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### THE ARREST OF PAT LANG (20)

#### INTRODUCTION

A tip-off leads the marshals to Gate's farm, near to Browning, where the outlaw Pat Lang has been hiding. A chase ensues.

#### ON THE TRACK OF PAT LANG

Larry Hock walked across to the other marshals, who were standing next to their horses. They were outside the Gate's farm, just north of Browning. The marshals looked cold, backs to the bitter wind blowing towards them from the Grant Hills over to the west. Hock had been inside questioning the Gates; he had made the most of the offer of coffee, and of the warmth of the farmhouse.

The marshals had been tipped-off that the outlaw Pat Lang—originally from Amityville (way, way to the northwest) and wanted for a robbery in Liberty—was holed up with the Gates. The Gates had denied this, but Hock had seen the pile of dishes from breakfast and correctly guessed that visitors had been staying.

"You seen anything?" Hock asked the shivering marshals.

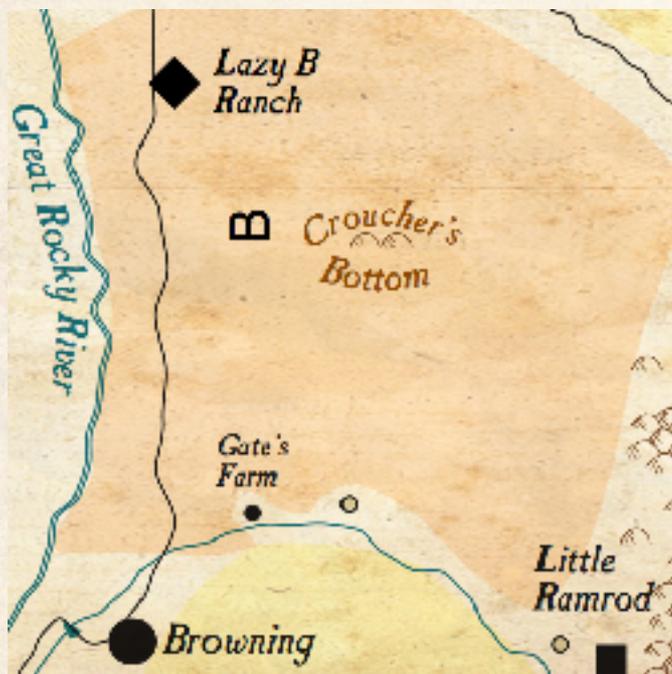
Marshal Hiram Brady and Deputy Ed Vernon shook their heads. Marshal John Thompson pointed back over his shoulder, towards the back of the farm. "Fresh horse tracks...two of them...heading north. Probably Lang and a sidekick".

"That's the land of the Lazy B ranch. I wonder where they are heading" said Vernon, looking puzzled.

"Probably to Croucher's Bottom; that would be a good place to hide. Let's get after them!". Hock swung himself onto his

horse, spurred it, and headed off northwards. Vernon quickly did the same. Thompson and Brady looked at each other, groaned, and reluctantly followed; they had hoped that the hunt for Lang would be abandoned so that they could settle down—temporarily—in the warmth of nearby Browning, with its saloons and dancing girls.

### HEADING FOR THE BOTTOM



Croucher's Bottom consists of two adjacent dome shaped hills, each covered with coarse vegetation and a few trees, and a strange, foul-smelling, bubbling mud pool between them. It was named after Ezekiel Croucher, the first cartographer of Frome County. Although not that high, the hills dominate the flat landscape, offering cover and good views. They therefore represented a very good place for some outlaws to hunker down in.

Pat Lang urged his horse on, shouting to Bill Helber to keep up. They had left Gate's Farm when they spotted the marshals approaching in the distance. Although Gates was a longstanding friend of Lang's family, and a man of relaxed morals, he wasn't one of the brightest steers in the herd, and Lang wondered if he might give away their destination. Up ahead they could see the twin domes of Croucher's Bottom and relative safety. However, glancing back, Lang could see a cloud of dust and some small figures on horseback, approaching at the gallop. Pat shouted a warning to Helber and spurred his horse to a gallop.

The marshals had seen their prey and were closing. Helber began to lag behind Lang. He whipped his horse trying to get more speed from the poor beast. Distracted, the horse caught its foot in a gopher hole, sending it tumbling and Helber flying. Helber hit the ground hard, slid along the hard soil. Lang kept riding. The marshals rapidly arrived at Helber motionless body. Hock ordered Brady to deal with the unconscious Helber, whilst he and Thompson chased their main target, Lang. Vernon, who had been lagging behind, joined Brady and helped him with Helber.

Lang's horse was beginning to falter too, limping and slowing down. Lang couldn't outrun the marshals, so stopped, pulled the horse down on its side, and took cover behind it, aiming his trapdoor carbine at the lawmen. He opened fire as Hock and Thompson came into range.

Ignoring the bullets, Hock decided to keep on horseback and close in on Lang. He drew his shotgun and began firing. Thompson did the same with his carbine.

The gunfight was short and sharp. Hock had several near misses, losing his hat to one bullet. But, two against one, it wasn't



*Marshals Hock and Thompson closed in on outlaw Pat Lang, had taken cover behind his poor horse.*

a fair fight, and the marshals closed in on Lang. Thompson's horse was wounded in the leg and went down, but Thompson landed safely and kept firing. Lang's horse was hit several times before a shot from Thompson reached Lang, badly wounding him in the gun arm. Lang, unable to fight, was disarmed and captured by the marshals.

### EPILOGUE

The marshals had to put down both Lang and Thompson's horses. They patched up Lang and walked back to the other marshals and Helber, who had come round and was now roped to Brady's horse. They headed back to Gate's farm, where Mrs. Gates treated the wounded. The Gates still denied knowing the two outlaws.

Lang and Helber were locked up in Browning, where both made a full recovery from their injuries. A trial date was set for Fall 1876.

# NOTES

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## GAME 19

Black book, pages 44 to 45.

Alston, gut OOF. Still recovering after one season.

Brady, chest wound. Still recovering after one season.

Pendola, chest wound. Still recovering after one season.

## GAME 20

See notebook page 42

Posse game.

Outlaw 2 characters.

Marshall 4 characters.

Larry Hock, pistol and trapdoor carbine

John Thompson, repeating carbine, no backbone

Hiram Brady, repeating carbine, no backbone

Deputy Marshall Ed Vernon, Trapdoor carbine, tough

Pat Lang, trapdoor carbine,

William Helber, Repeating carbine.

Gate's Farm, Lazy B ranch land

Chase begins at Farm just E of Browning, on Ramm River.

Chase heads towards Croucher's Bottom.

Lang and Helber will attempt to escape from Browning jail in 1876 summer. Their trial will be in 1876 Fall.