



**BRONCO CHARLIE
RIDES THE
PONY EXPRESS**

Bronco Charlie Rides the Pony Express © 2023

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Sing along to “Bronco Charlie and the Pony Express.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-Lg_74Easc

The comic book includes the lyrics of the song.

Story, music, lyrics, and accompanying literacy resources written by Mark Pennington. Comic illustrations by jbilcke-hf/ai-comic-factory

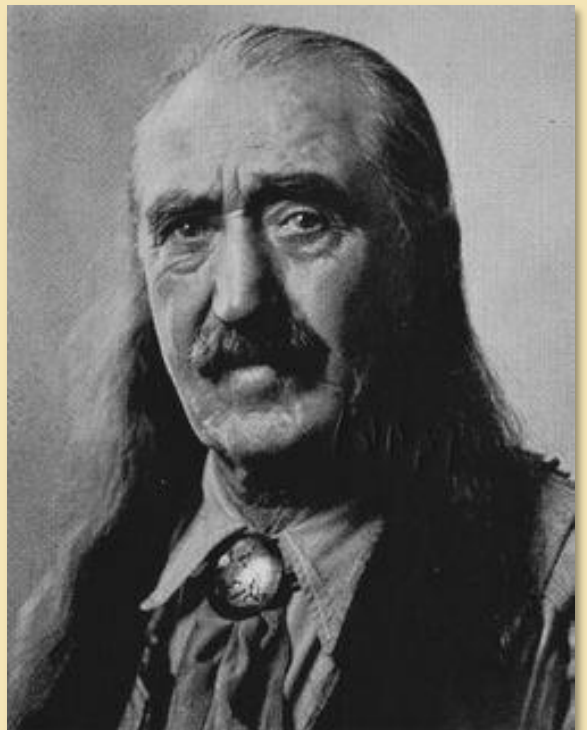
Now, Mark Pennington plays the role of “Bronco Charlie” in his visiting musical author program “The Gold Rush Musical,” but was there a real “Bronco Charlie?”

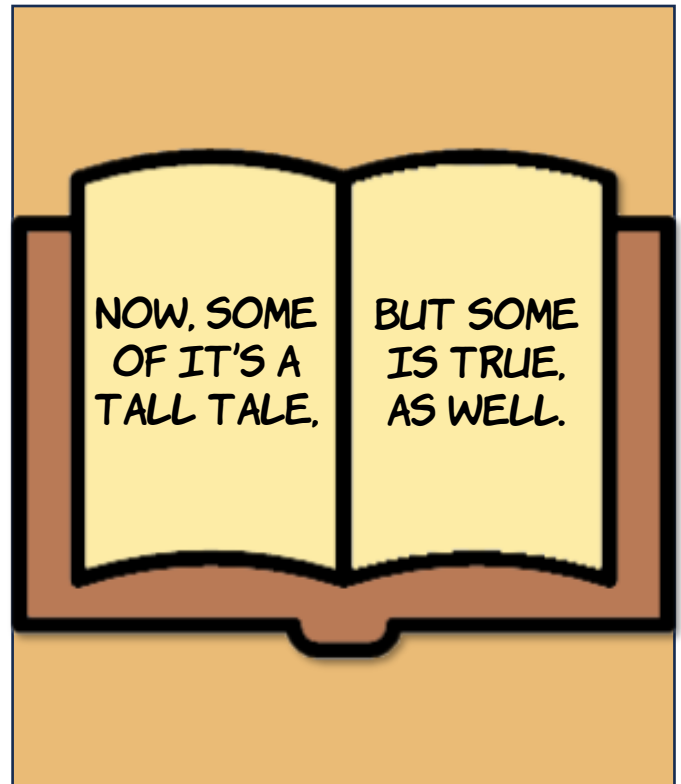
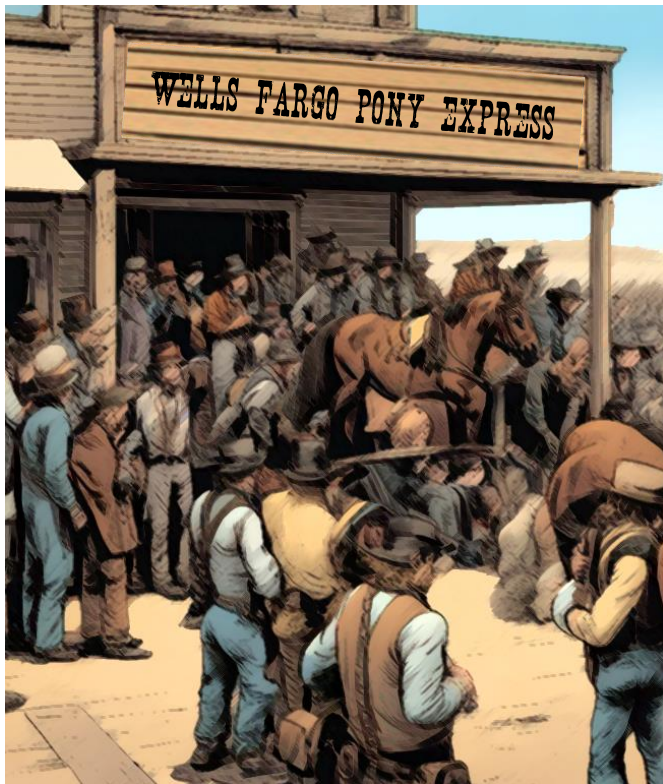
Yes! Julius Mortimer Miller, better known as “Bronco Charlie,” is an American folk hero. The details about his long life vary among historians, friends, family, and “Bronco Charlie” himself.

We do have the acknowledgment from the National Pony Express Association that Charlie was one of their riders, and we do know that he died in January of 1955. These facts support the claim that he lived to the age of 105 and rode for the Pony Express at age 11 or 12. However, some historians doubt his claim that he served as a permanent rider.

Charlie’s other adventures, described in his 1934 autobiography, *A Saga of the Saddle-The Life Story of Broncho Charlie Miller the Last of the Pony Express Riders* are no less certain: Riding for Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show, traveling in a circus, scouting for General Custer, and serving as a horse trainer for President Teddy Roosevelt are a few.

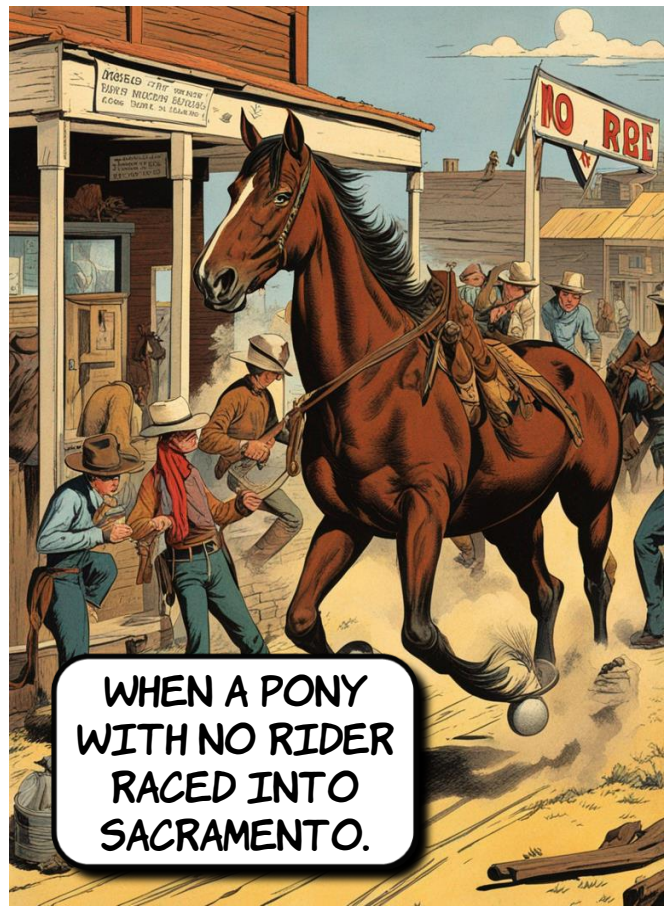
Whether all or some is true, we can agree that “Bronco Charlie” was quite the colorful character.



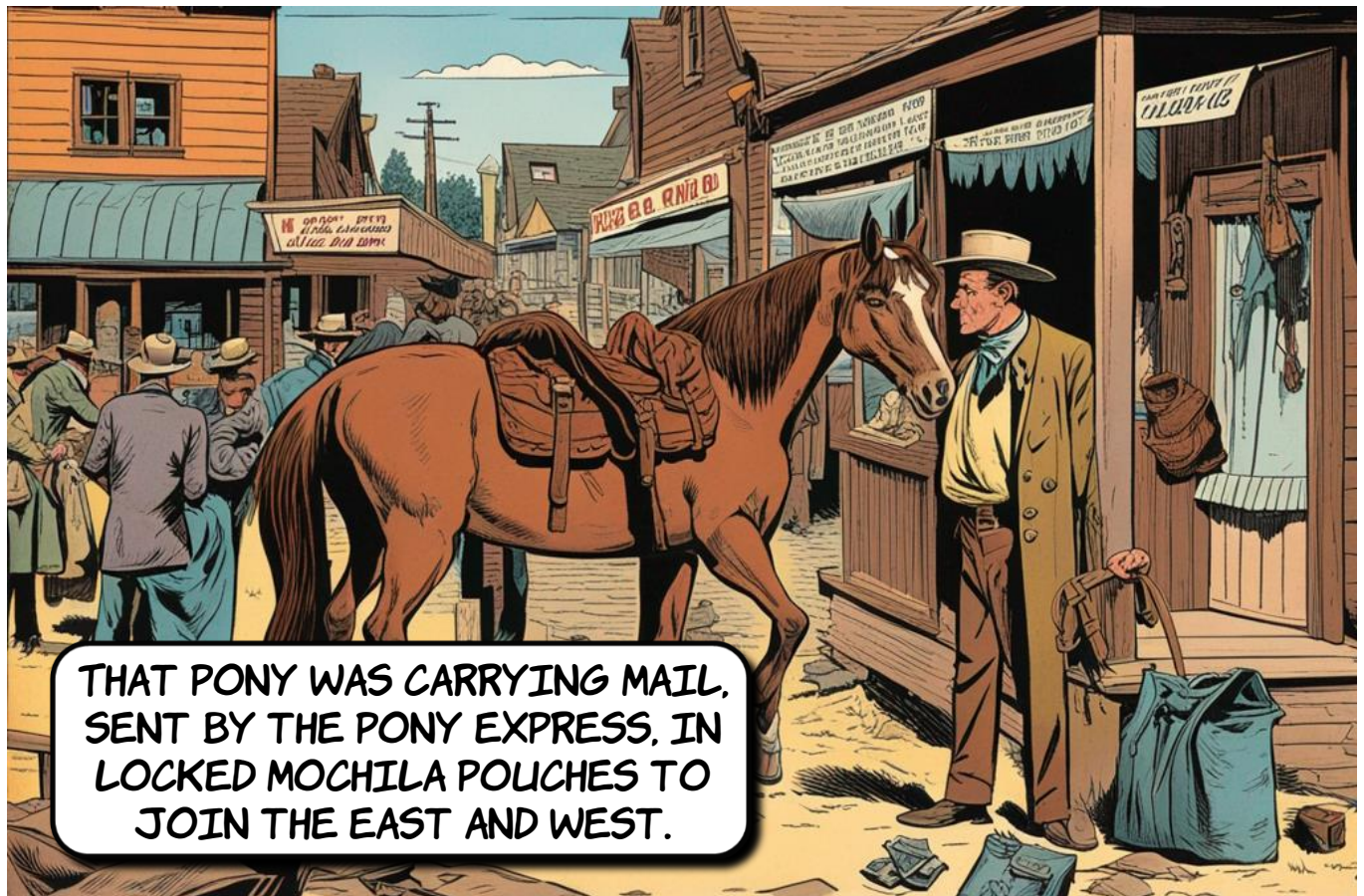




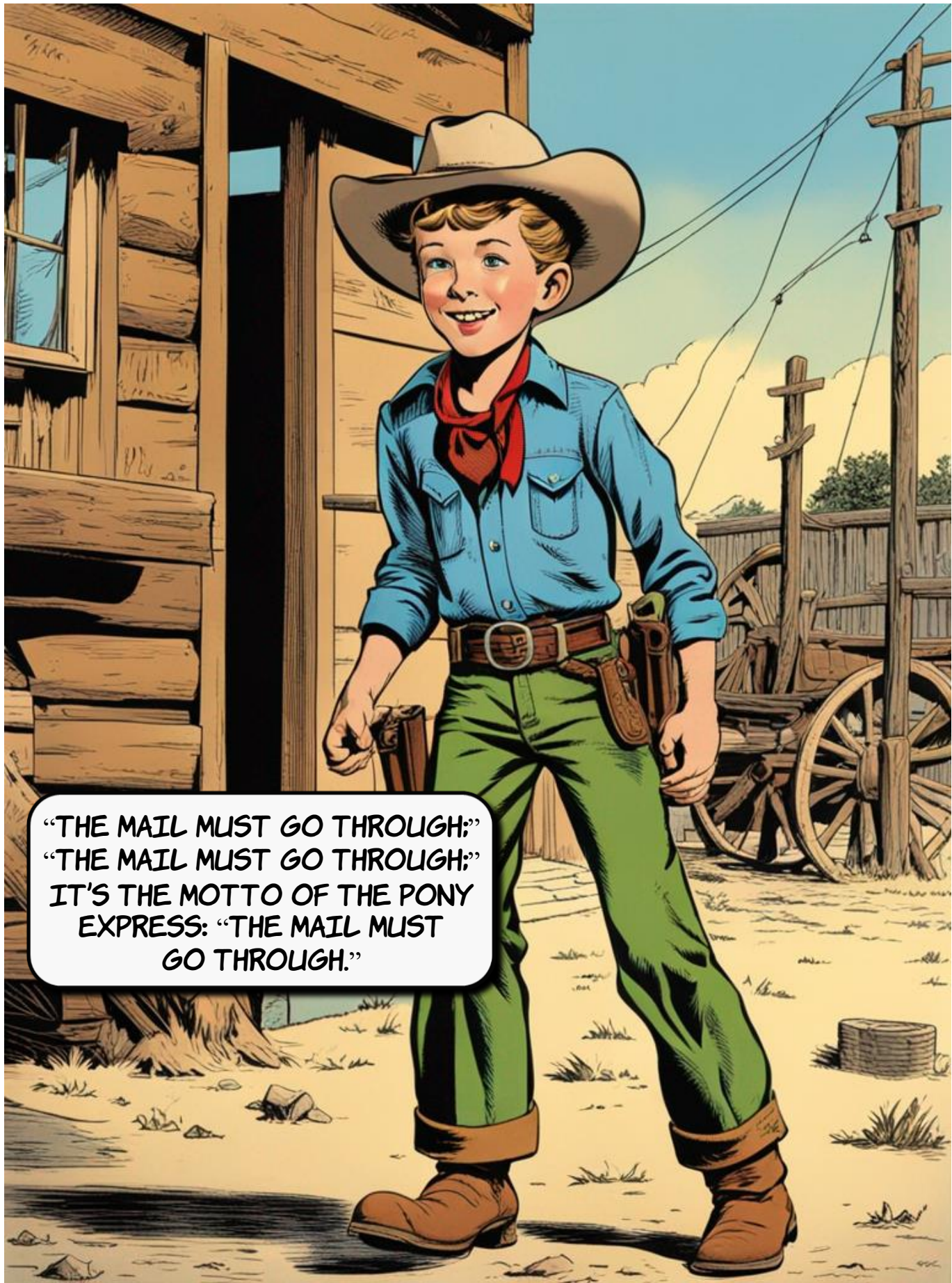
WAY BACK IN
1861, I WAS
ELEVEN
YEARS OLD



WHEN A PONY
WITH NO RIDER
RACED INTO
SACRAMENTO.



THAT PONY WAS CARRYING MAIL,
SENT BY THE PONY EXPRESS, IN
LOCKED MOCHILA POUCHES TO
JOIN THE EAST AND WEST.

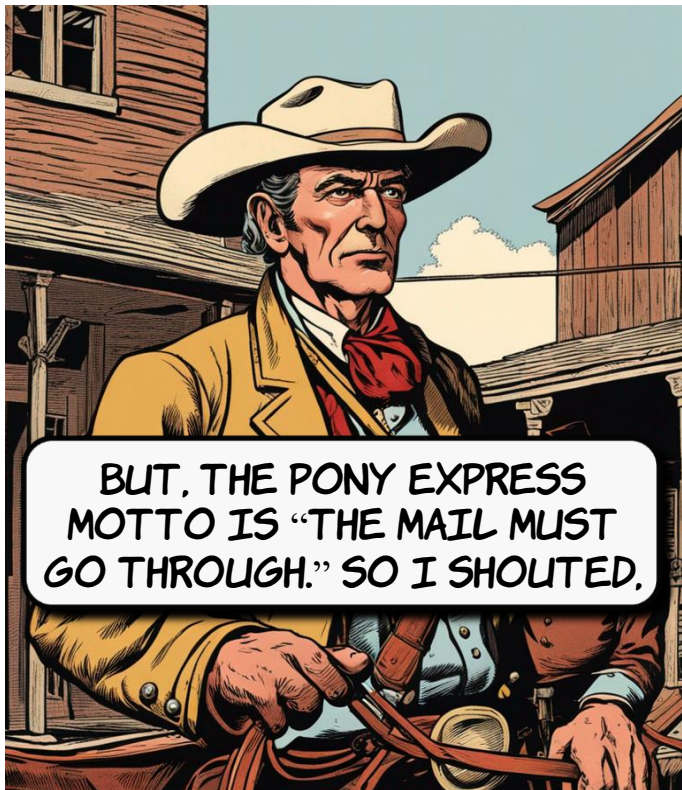


**“THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH!”
“THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH!”
IT’S THE MOTTO OF THE PONY
EXPRESS: “THE MAIL MUST
GO THROUGH.”**



WHEN THE STATION
KEEPER CAUGHT THE
REINS, A CROWD AROUND
HIM GREW. HE SAID,

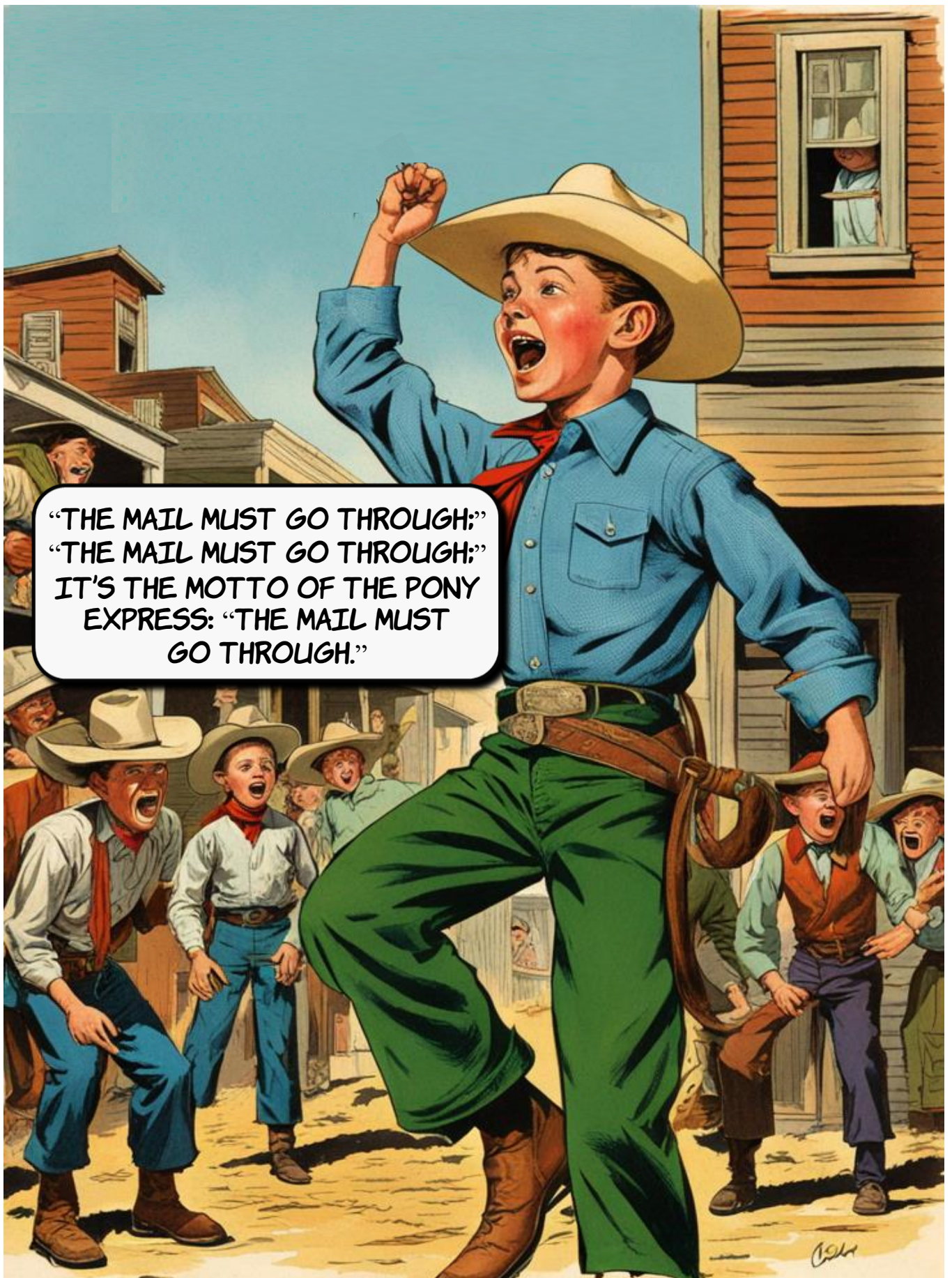
I HAVE NO
RIDER TO
TAKE THE MAIL
ON THROUGH.



BUT, THE PONY EXPRESS
MOTTO IS "THE MAIL MUST
GO THROUGH." SO I SHOUTED,



GIVE ME
HALF A CHANCE
TO SHOW WHAT
I CAN DO!



**"THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH;"
"THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH;"
IT'S THE MOTTO OF THE PONY
EXPRESS: "THE MAIL MUST
GO THROUGH."**

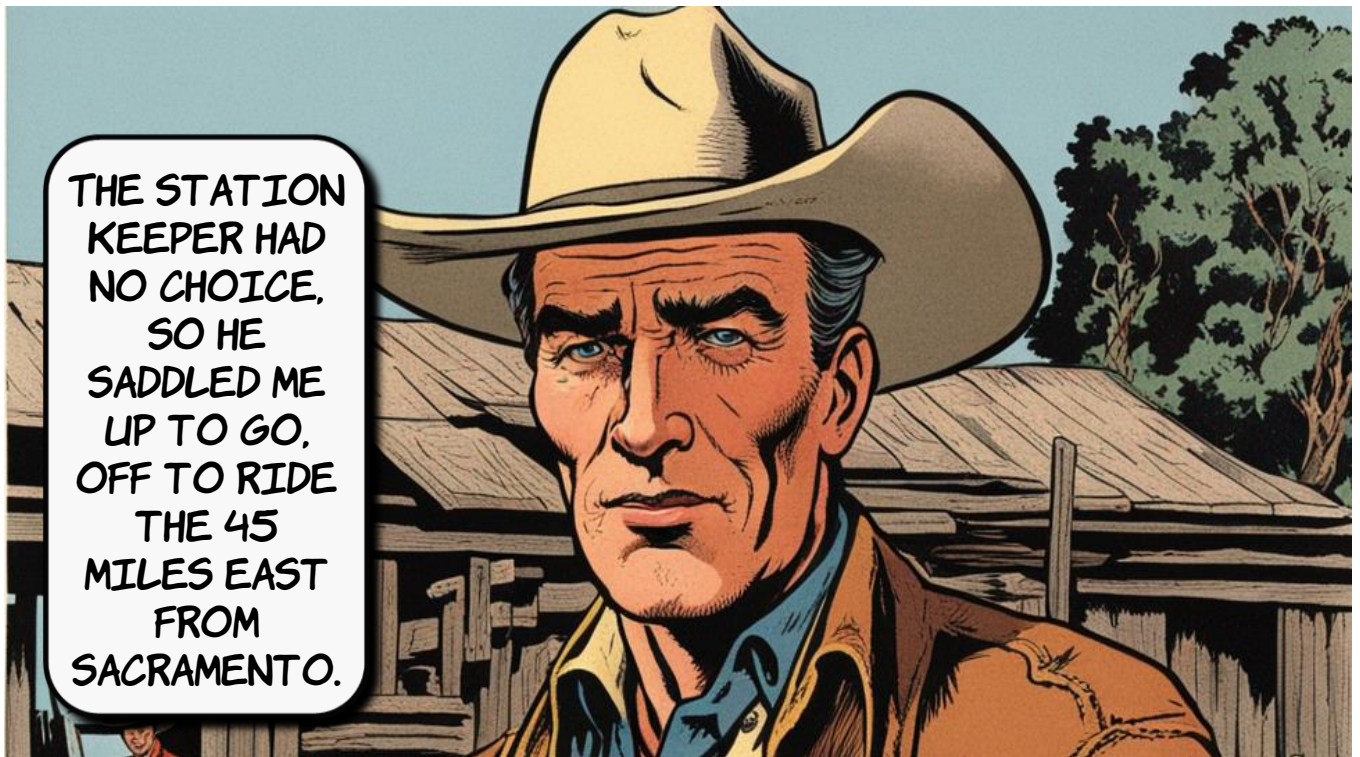
1964



I'VE RIDDEN
THE ROUTE
TO HANGTOWN;
I KNOW THE
PLACERVILLE
TRAIL.

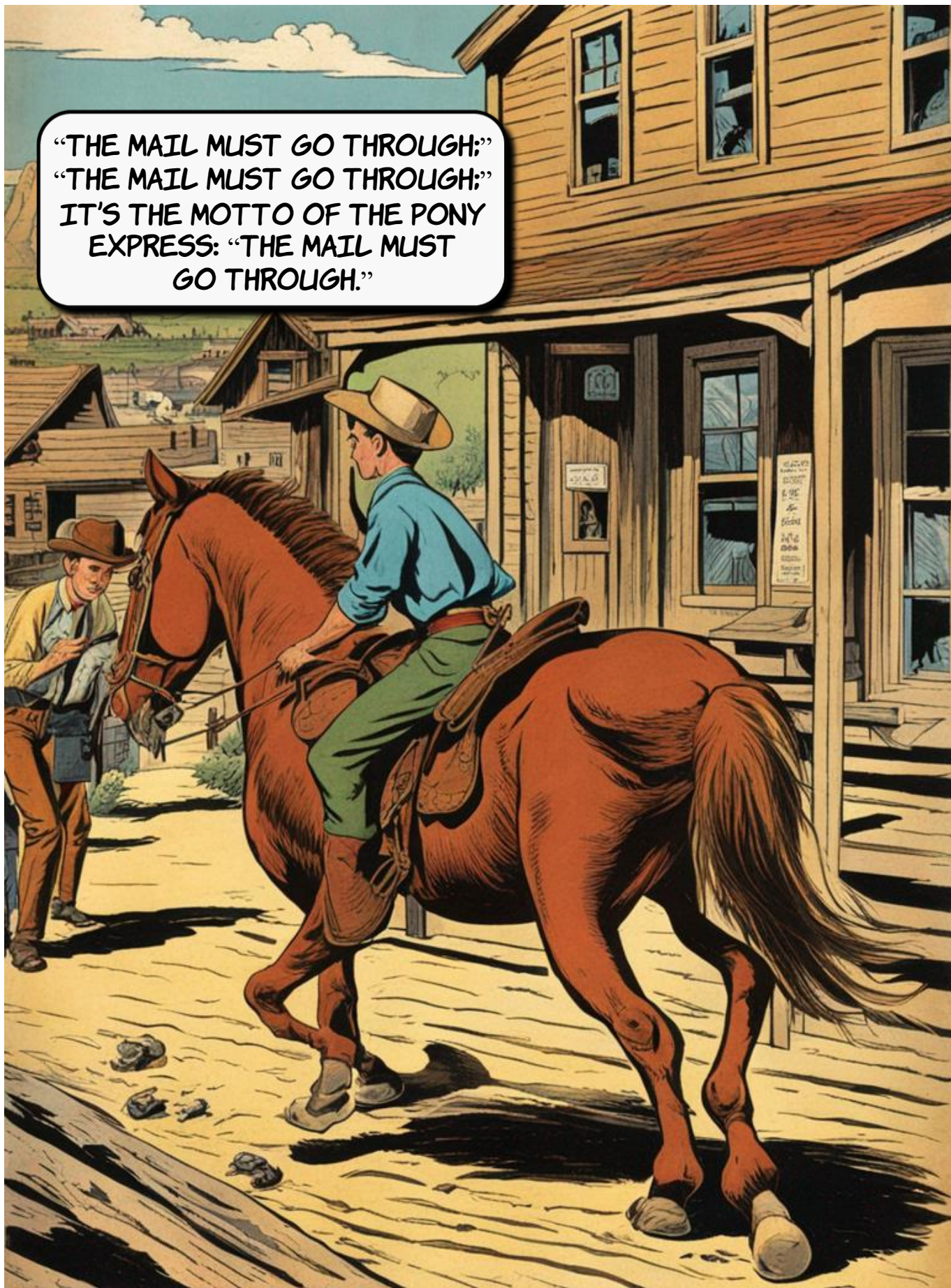
NO, YOU'RE MUCH
TOO YOUNG,
SAID SOME IN
THE CROWD,

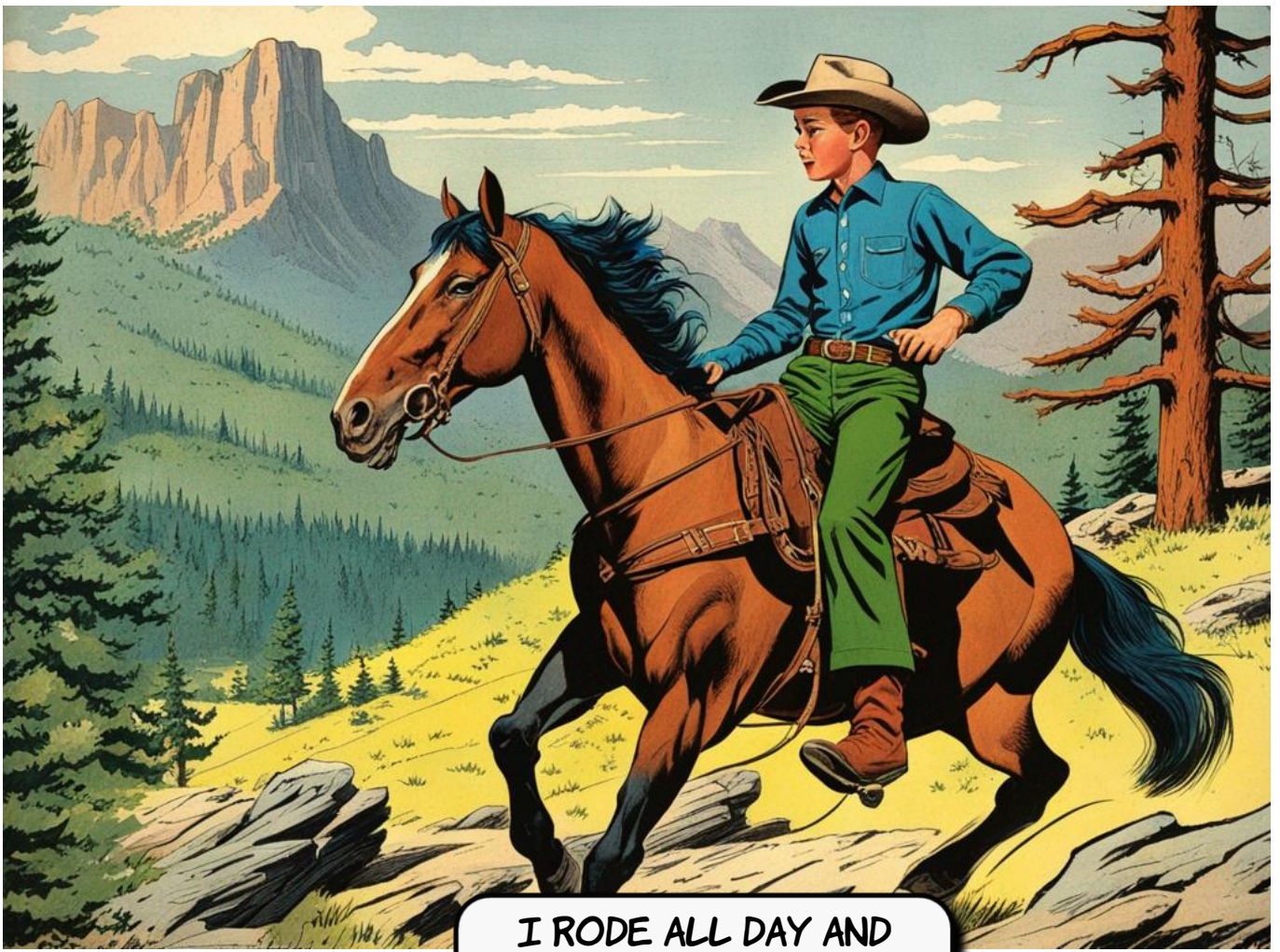
TO CARRY THE
U.S. MAIL.



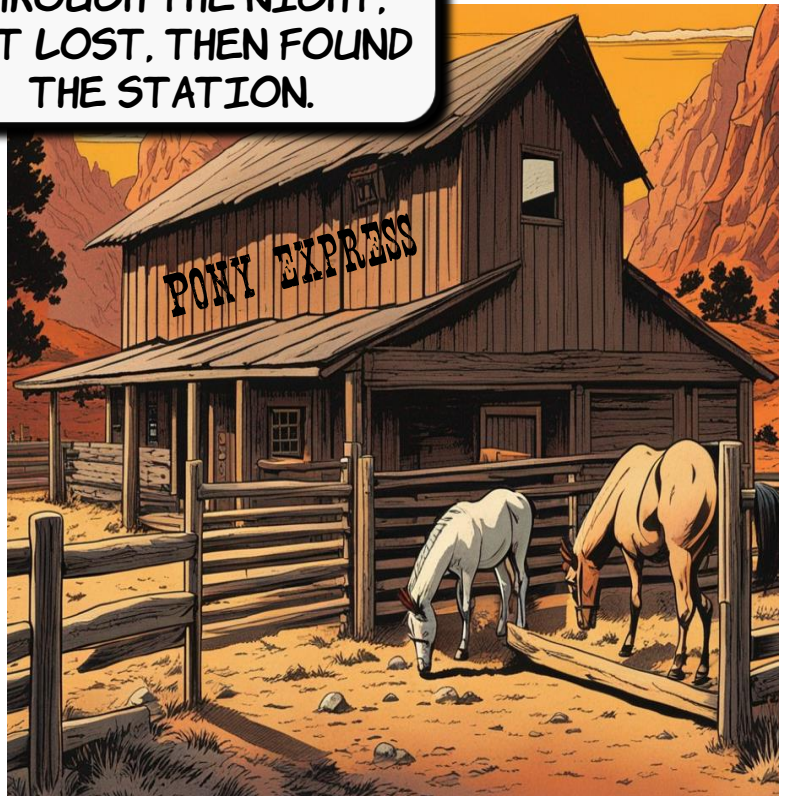
THE STATION
KEEPER HAD
NO CHOICE,
SO HE
SADDLED ME
UP TO GO,
OFF TO RIDE
THE 45
MILES EAST
FROM
SACRAMENTO.

"THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH;"
"THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH;"
IT'S THE MOTTO OF THE PONY
EXPRESS: "THE MAIL MUST
GO THROUGH."





I RODE ALL DAY AND
THROUGH THE NIGHT,
GOT LOST, THEN FOUND
THE STATION.

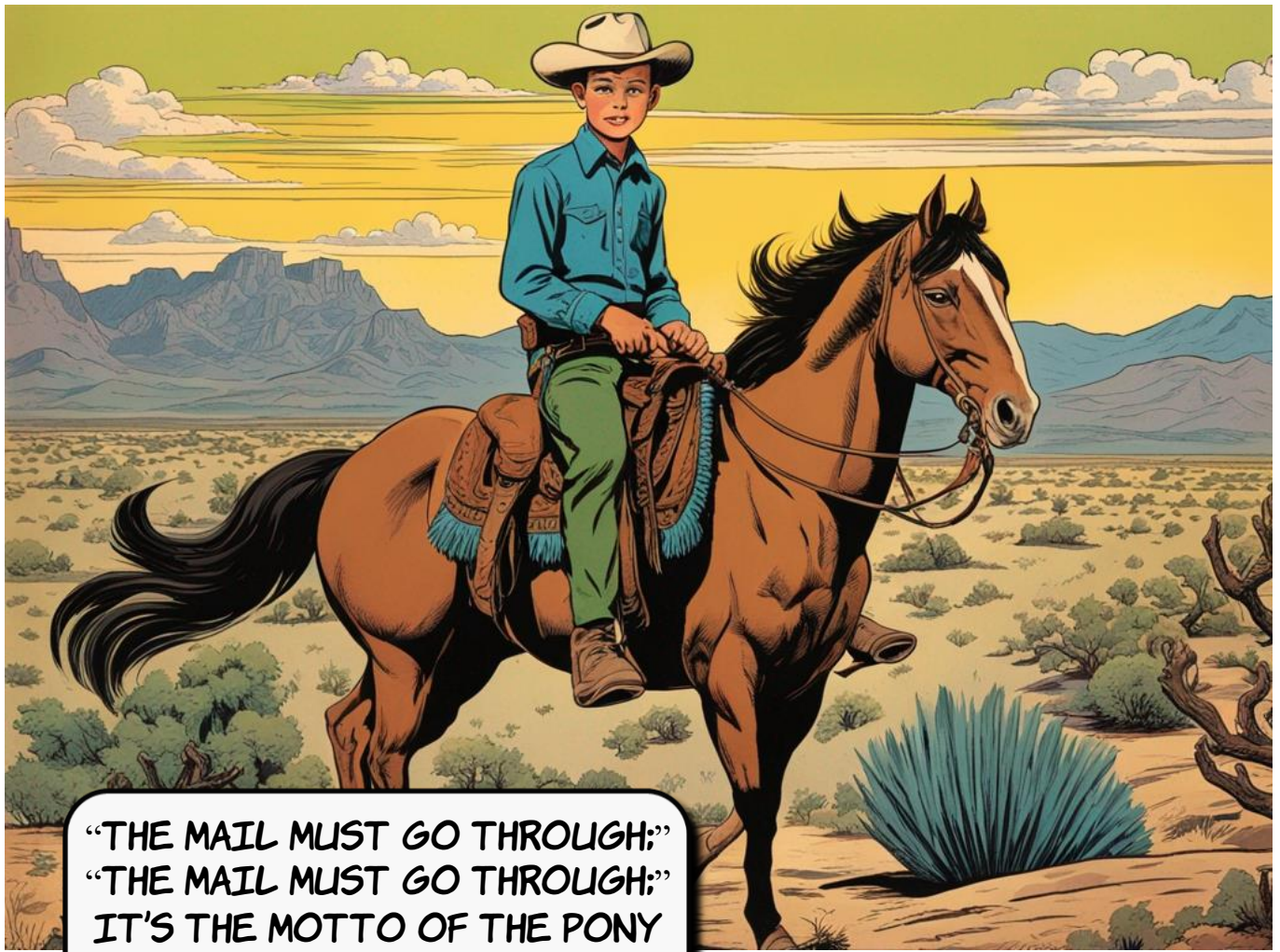


A NEW RIDER
STRAPPED ON THE
MAIL TO A FRESH
PONY WAITING.



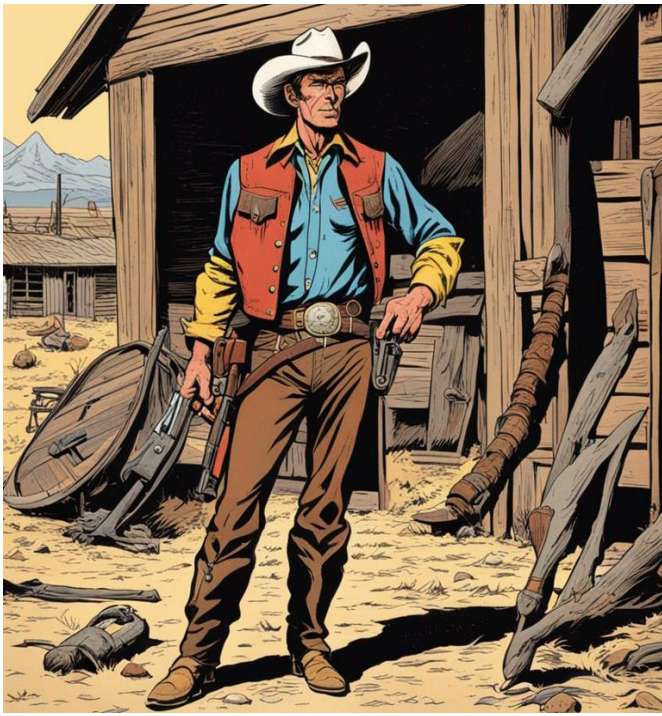
THE NEXT DAY
AT THE
STATION, THE
EASTERN RIDER
ARRIVED. BUT HE
COULDN'T
FINISH UP HIS
ROUTE WITH AN
ARROW IN
HIS SIDE.





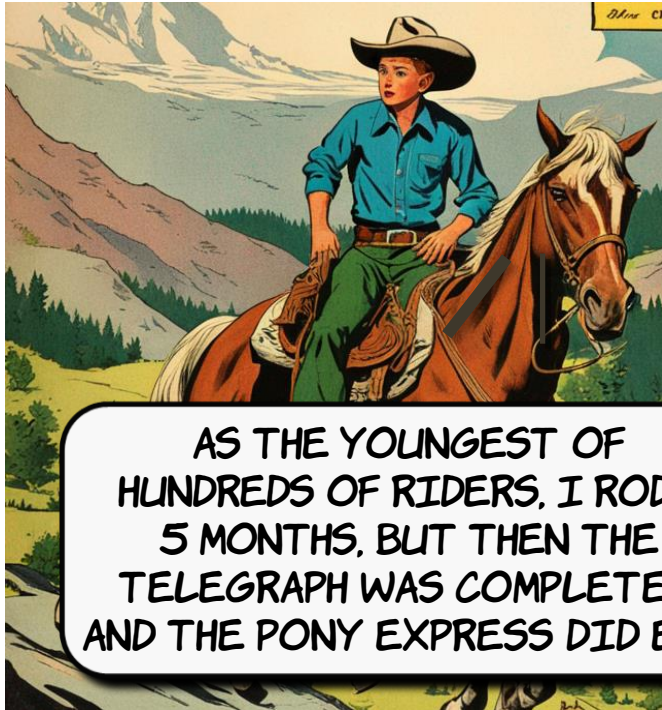
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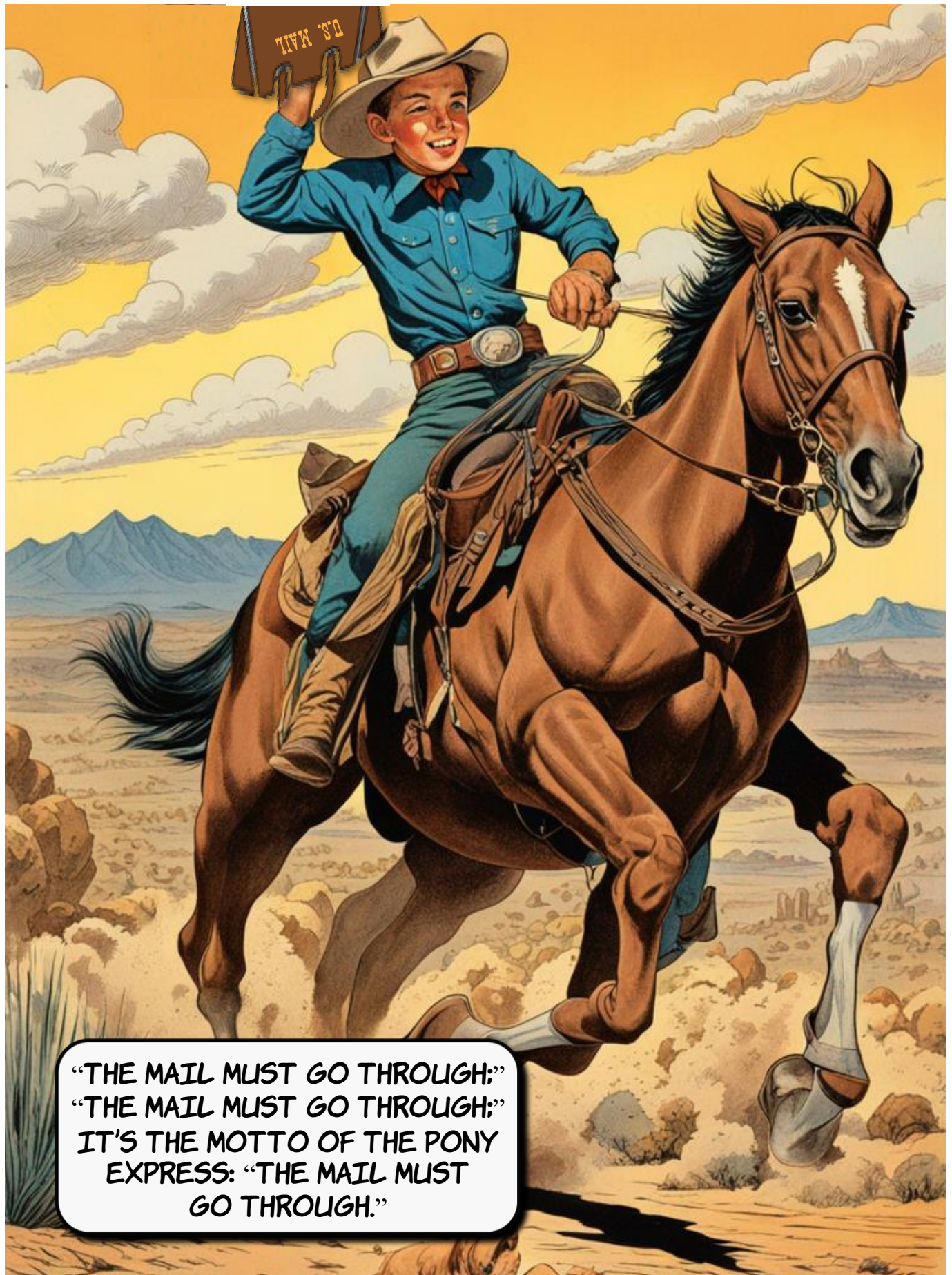
PONY EXPRESS OATH

THEN THE STATION
KEEPER TOLD ME, NOW
YOU WORK FOR THE
PONY EXPRESS, SO I
TOOK THE OATH AND
DELIVERED THE MAIL
IN RECORD TIME,
NO LESS.



AS THE YOUNGEST OF
HUNDREDS OF RIDERS, I RODE
5 MONTHS, BUT THEN THE
TELEGRAPH WAS COMPLETED,
AND THE PONY EXPRESS DID END.





**“THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH;”
“THE MAIL MUST GO THROUGH;”
IT’S THE MOTTO OF THE PONY
EXPRESS: “THE MAIL MUST
GO THROUGH.”**



ABOUT THE MUSICAL AUTHOR

Mark is a published songwriter and author, as well as a retired elementary reading specialist and history teacher. Mark and his family live in the heart of California's Gold Country.

THE GOLD RUSH MUSICAL!

Bring Mark to your school as a [visiting musical author](#) to accompany your students in a standards-based, historical and humorous readers' theater performance. Make sure to invite the parents! Mark also records your students' original Gold Rush song. Your students are published songwriters!

SCHOOL SONGS

Mark composes and records [custom school songs](#) (alma maters, spirit songs, and morning announcement lead-ins) to enhance your school brand and culture. Additionally, Mark provides assessment-based instructional resources at penningtonpublishing.com.

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888.565.1635



BRONCO CHARLIE RIDES THE PONY EXPRESS

SING ALONG WITH THE
ACCOMPANYING SONG:
"BRONCO CHARLIE RIDES
THE PONY EXPRESS."