

A Trek Across America

Charles Lummis' 3500 mile Transcontinental Adventure—1884 -1885

CAS Shooting™ Match September, 2012

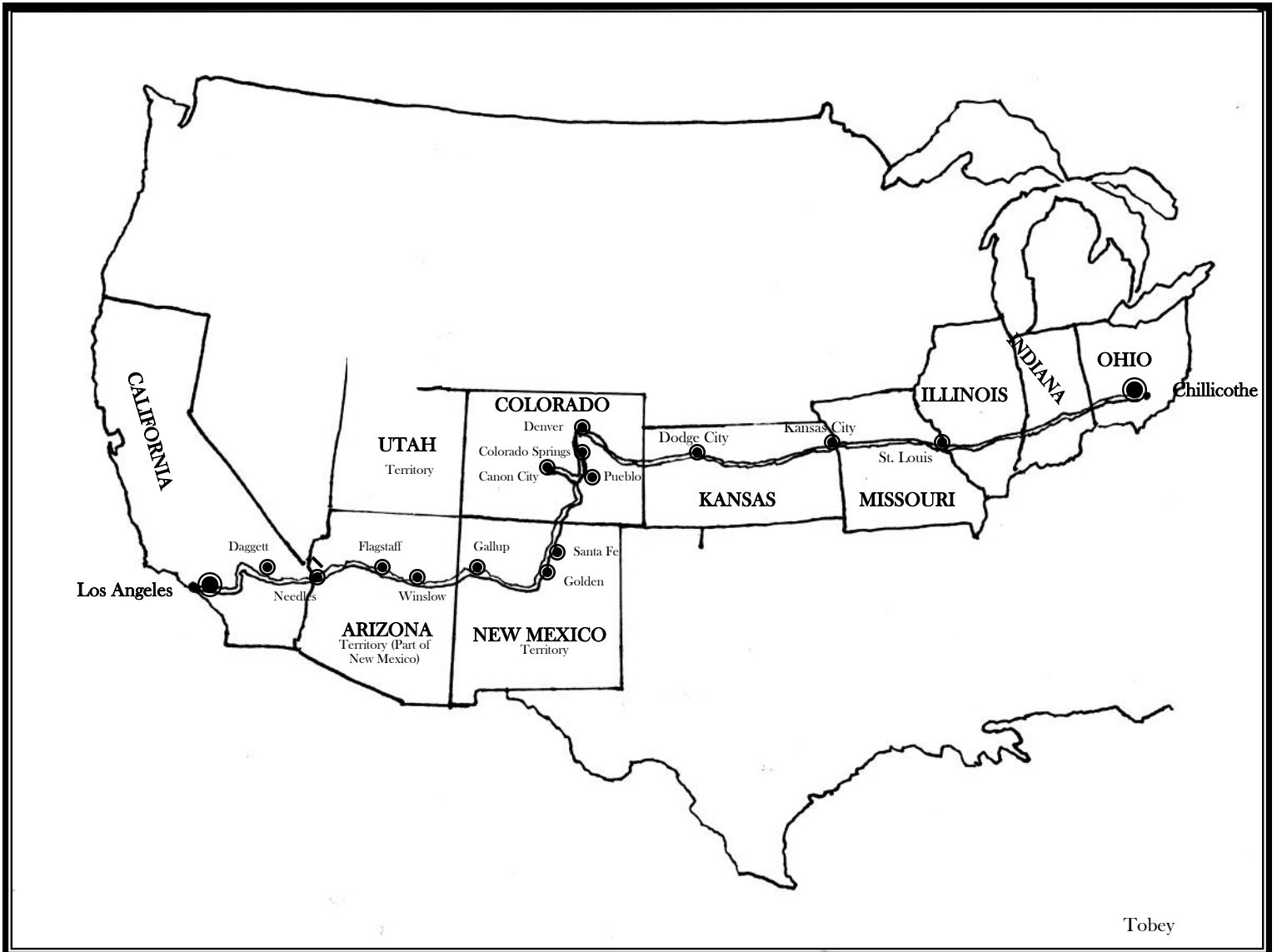
Notorious Dodge City, Kansas was still in full swing. It had been three short years since the shootout at the OK Corral. Somewhat impetuously, a 25-year old rural newspaperman, home schooled, but Harvard-educated Charles F. Lummis, decided that the proper way to show up for his new position as city editor of the *Los Angeles Times* was to *walk* to Los Angeles from Cincinnati, Ohio. Lummis later chronicled his adventures in a book entitled *A Tramp Across the Continent* and also in the individual stories he wired by telegraph to his newspapers while on his hike. Accompanied by pistols, including his .44-40 caliber Remington revolver, an 8-inch knife and an 1873 Winchester, Lummis often encountered a bit more flavor of the American West than he had bargained for.

Lummis later said it had cost far more to walk the trip than it would have been to engage rail transportation. Indeed, some of his family intelligently chose rail transport and met him at various points along the way. Charlie often decided to sleep on the ground or on a bare board floor rather in bug-infested beds offered to him. He hunted, boarded, fought, and fished his way across the frontier. Much of the time Lummis followed railroads, sometimes shipping his bundles and pack ahead. It seemed whenever he shipped his rifle ahead to make walking 40-50 miles a day easier, he found he was in need of it.

It is said that Charlie Lummis was unencumbered by the prism of disrespect through which his contemporaries viewed the Hispanic residents of the Old Southwest and the Pueblo tribes with whom he shared mutual appreciation in the Isleta and Acoma settlements along the way. He became an advocate for Native peoples of the Southwest and was instrumental in rebuilding and preserving early Spanish missions that now punctuate a trail up the western states from New Mexico through California. He was an occasional companion of President Theodore Roosevelt. He published magazines, partied hard, served as L.A.'s first librarian, lived down scandals, built a museum and a rock home named El Alisal (Sycamore in Spanish) in the LA area. Over his lifetime, he wrote or produced an estimated 450 books, articles, poems and translations.

Charles Lummis' Walk Across America

September, 1884 – February, 1885



The inscription on Charlie's burial place in California reads:

Charles Fletcher Lummis, March 1, 1859 to November 25, 1928.

He founded the Southwest Museum. He built this house. He saved four old missions. He studied and recorded Spanish America. It ends, "He tried to do his share." (LA Times article)

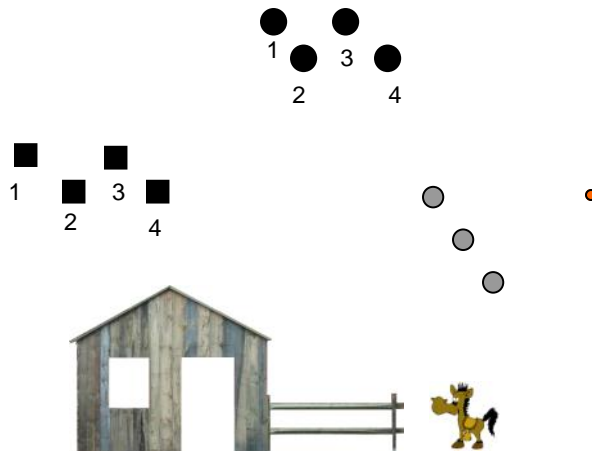
Few things are better said of any person.

Cowboy –Charles Lummis Match 2012 SHOOT

Story line: Charlie Lummis' book about his tramp from Ohio to California is typical of books written during that time. He takes great liberty with the facts, and the events are described in a style of prose that is freely sprinkled with his opinions. However, Lummis simultaneously dispatched reports at regular intervals to the *LA Times* and to his Chillicothe newspaper editor who approved his journey. These reports arrived at regular intervals by telegraph....and have a more true ring to them.

Today's shoot will feature a few of Charlie's more interesting experiences on the walk across the continent, usually covering 40-50 miles per day. Other than exposure to malaria in southern Ohio, Lummis' first experience with danger occurred in when two large men accosted him. They suggested that they relieve him of his load and belongings. Although Lummis had a pocket pistol handy, he judged the men to be untrained in physical defense. They probably underestimated Charlie's resolve since they outweighed him by 40 lbs each. When one came close to Lummis, he struck between the eyes with one fist and under the chin with the other. The tramp stepped back, hooked his heels on the railroad rail and fell down the grade. Lummis drew his belt knife with 8-inch blade and hurried them on their way.

What would YOU do if accosted by a worthless gang of robbers who preyed on travelers?



SCENARIO # 1

10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 4 Shotgun

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and **holstered**. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds is staged in window [A]. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged on the horse.

Start standing in the doorway [B].

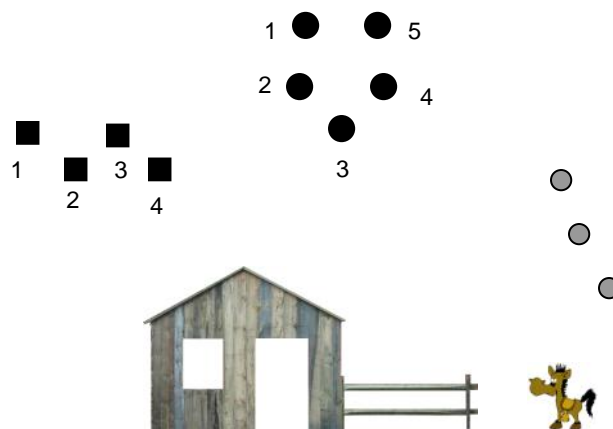
When ready say: **"You vultures are not worth the lead I'm slinging"**

At the buzzer, move to Window [A], draw your pistol and engage targets in the following order: 1,4,2,3,1 and continue the sequence with the second pistol (4,2,3,1,4)

Make pistols safe, retrieve your rifle and move to Doorway [B]. With your Rifle, put 10 rounds on the four rifle targets using the following sequence (which is opposite that of the pistols) 4,1,3,2, 4,1,3,2,4,1. Make Rifle safe.

Move to rail and knock down the 3 Shotgun targets, engaging **FROM FRONT TO REAR** and then shoot the stationary bird. If you miss the bird with first shot, you may reload and make up the bird, or stop shooting and count it as a miss.

Cowboy –Charles Lummis Match 2012 SHOOT



Storyline:

Charlie walked for a while in Kansas with a cowboy who lost everything except the clothes on his back at the game of Faro. Lummis said he didn't have much luck "Bucking the Tiger."

Lummis often slept in railroad section houses sprinkled along the tracks. In Larkspur, Colorado, he found the shack without heat although ice stood as thick under the water tower. He asked the lone resident of the shack about that and old man replied, "The bugs are too damned bad to have it warm, but when its cold they won't be bothering you too much." Lummis had no blanket so he built a fire in the little stove and slept on the floor in front of it.

Next morning he surveyed the Rocky Mountains spreading across the horizon. They were visible for 150 miles. He reflected on the fortunes of Horace Tabor, a store owner who provided a \$7 grubstake to a silver prospector and when the prospector struck paydirt shared that fortune...later building an opera house in Denver for \$800,000.

Denver had a population of 75,000, 13 separate railroad lines passing through it, and arc lighting placed on four 150 foot high towers lighted the downtown at night. As he passed through the streets of Denver, Lummis looked forward to Pike's Peak, which he would climb and descend in one day.

SCENARIO # 2

10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 2 Shotgun

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds is staged in window [A]. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged on the horse.

Start at window [A]. With arms crossed at Window [A], when ready, say:

"These durned bugs are as big as prairie dogs!!"

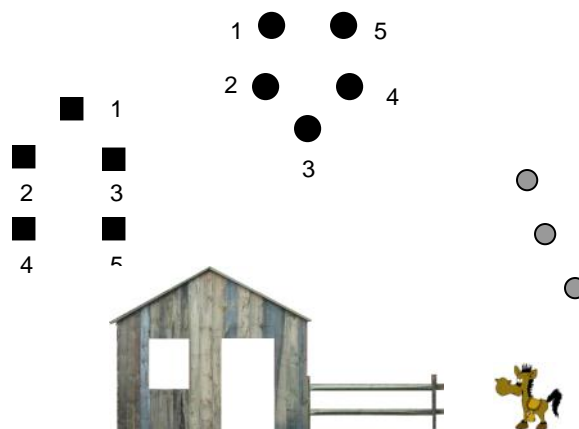
At the buzzer, draw your Pistols and engage the 4 pistol targets in the following sequence: One shot on 1, one shot on 4, two shots on 3, two shots on 2, one shot on 4, one shot on 1, one shot on 3, one shot on 2.

[Holster pistols and] Move to Doorway [B].

With your Rifle, put 10 rounds on the five rifle targets using the following sequence 1,5,2,4,3, and then REVERSE the order with second five rounds.3,4,2,5,1. Make Rifle safe.

Move to rail and knock down 2 Shotgun targets. **You must engage the middle one first. The second is your choice.**

Cowboy –Charles Lummis Match 2012 SHOOT



Storyline:

When Lummis reached Cañon City, Colorado on his trek he noticed the large stone Colorado State Prison beside the road and the prisoners working on a wall in their striped suits. He strayed a bit too close to the prison side of the road as he walked along. As the sun behind him cast a shadow in front, he saw the shadow of a prisoner behind him who was about to smash his head with a sledge hammer. Quickly moving out of the way and drawing his .44 revolver to protect himself, he was admonished by a guard who rode up on a large horse calling him a “Damn infernal fool” for gittin’ too close to men headed for the gallows or facing life imprisonment with the handle of his pistol sticking out. He was instructed to “Hurry on his way.” Although guards were heavily armed, escapes were regularly attempted. Sharps rifle-wielding shooters in the prison towers had picked off escapees as they ran through valley and over a hill up to 1000 yards away.

SCENARIO # 3

10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 2 Shotgun

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds is staged in window [A]. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged on the horse [C].

Start at window [A]. With hands on your pistols when ready, say:

“You durned fool watch out for them prisoners!”

At the buzzer, draw your first Pistol and engage the 5 pistol targets in the following “Over the Hill Sequence.” 4,2,1,3,5. Draw second pistol and engage the targets in the EXACT OPPOSITE ORDER (5,3,1,2,4).

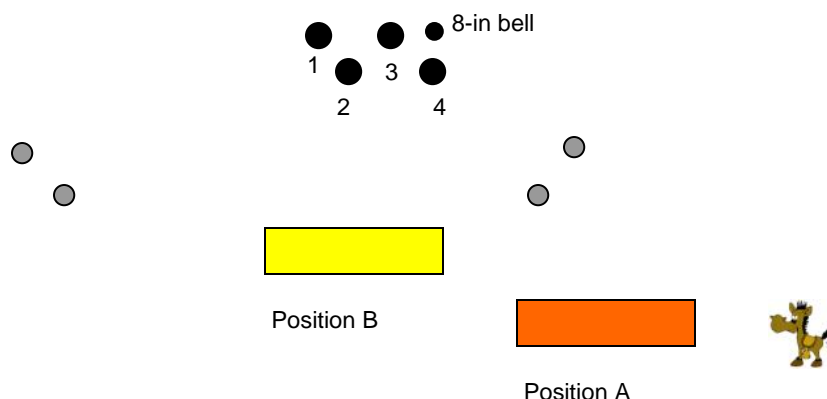
[Holster pistols and] Retrieve your rifle and move to Doorway [B].

With your Rifle, put 10 rounds on the five rifle targets using the “Through the Valley” sequence 1,2,3,4,5, and then REVERSE the order with second five rounds. 5,4,3,2,1

Make Rifle safe on horse. Pick up your shotgun

Move to rail and knock down any 2 Shotgun targets.

Cowboy –Charles Lummis Match 2012 SHOOT



Storyline: In a little dry canyon, Lummis met a grey-headed hunter who “hobbled out on a crutch as I drew near....His right leg from knee to hip joint, is practically gone. The hunter named Monny pointed back into the hills to a wild ravine from which he was carried...four years ago, crippled for life. Monny and a comrade were going up that gulch one spring day their rifles across their shoulders. They had passed a deep fissure in the rocks when suddenly, without a second’s warning, a huge brown-yellow beast of a Grizzly, bigger than a fattened steer lumbered out upon them. A despairing shriek from his chum turned him about, and there he saw the cinnamon bear—standing over the bashed corpse of the ill-fated associate. Monny threw his long, heavy barrel to a level and sent its leaden messenger through the lower half of the monster’s heart,. But a bear dies hard; and before the hunter could re-load or clamber up the steep rocks, the bear was upon him. Felling him to the ground with a single swipe that crushed his shoulder, the dying beast seized his thigh and chewed the limb...to mince-meat; at last dropping lifeless upon the man. He showed me the hide of his foe—11 feet, 7 inches from nose to root of tail, with the little round hole that had at last let out that great, savage life. It sent a chill through me to look at it hanging on the walls of that lonely cabin....” (*A Tramp Across the Continent*. by Charles F. Lummis)

SCENARIO # 4

10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 4 Shotgun

Both Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Shotgun is staged on the horse. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds is staged in your hands pointed down range. Start at Position A.

When ready say; **“Aim for the heart!”**

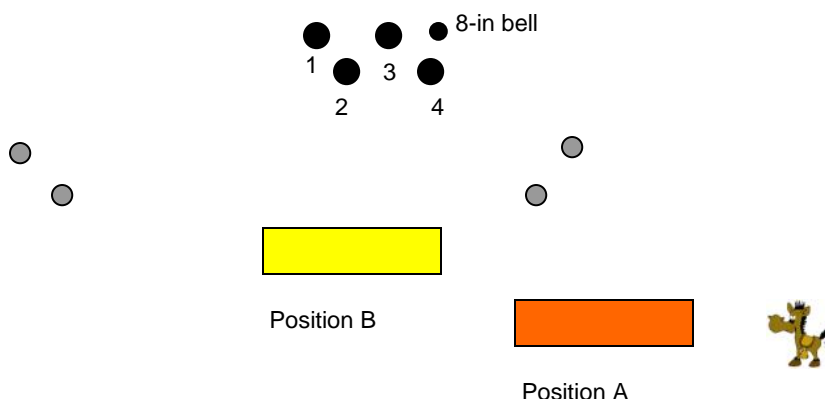
At the buzzer, with your Rifle put 10 rounds on at least 4 targets, starting on the left side, **No Triple Taps. AT YOUR OPTION**, you may shoot at the “Grizzly’s Heart” (the 8 inch bell). If you miss the Heart, the miss counts. If you hit the eight inch “Heart” twice, you will be awarded a 6 second bonus. Make Rifle safe

With your Shotgun, knock down 4 Shotgun targets in any order. Make Shotgun safe.

Move to Position B.

Engage the four large pistol targets with a 10 rounds IN ANY ORDER. No triple taps. Hits (or misses) on the 8-inch bell count, but are not mandatory, nor will they yield a bonus.

Cowboy –Charles Lummis Match 2012 SHOOT



Storyline: Charlie came upon an empty prospector's cabin in the Wet Mountains of Colorado. One window had no glass, and the miner's chickens roosted in the rafters overhead, but it had a fireplace...so Lummis built a big fire, ate a supper of plums he had picked, and smoked his pipe. Soon he fell asleep under borrowed blankets. Let's listen to the story as Charlie tells it: "Along sometime in the night I was awakened by an unearthly uproar in the room and jumped to my feet in sleepy confusion. The hens were terribly excited over something, and as my eyes got a little open I could see the reflection of the dying fire in a pair of big fierce eyes that burned like coals up on the rafters...Up went my revolver and "Bang!" There was a tremendous screech, and something dropped heavily at my feet then started for the window. I pulled the trigger again, but there was only a dull click. I had forgotten [to reload]. But a .44 makes a terrible club and without waiting to get my rifle, for fear the intruder would escape, I pitched in with the butt of the old Remington." (*Letters from the Southwest* by Charles Lummis). Turned out it was a "Wildcat" (probably a very large Bobcat, since it had spotted coat) and weighed 53-1/2 lb on a scale in the next town. After weighing the cat, Lummis skinned the carcass and had the hide shipped on to California.

SCENARIO # 5

10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 2 Shotgun

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds and is staged in your hands. Shotgun staged on the horse.

Start at Position [A].

When ready say:

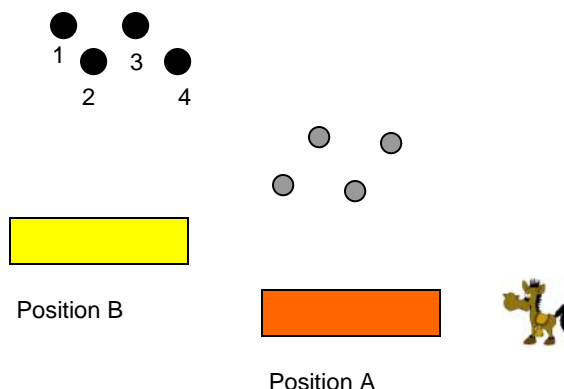
"Shoot fast or he'll get away!"

At the buzzer, with your Rifle, put 10 rounds on the four rifle targets using a continuous SINGLE-TAP Nevada Sweep beginning with target number 4 (rightmost large target) (4,3,2,1,2,3,4,3,2,1). **ALTERNATIVELY: IF YOU CHOOSE, YOU MAY BEGIN THE SWEEP WITH A DOUBLE TAP OF THE 8-INCH BELL.** If you do choose to do this, then you may engage the rest of the targets 4,3,2,1 with **double taps** instead of single taps. There is no additional bonus for hitting the bell. Any misses on the bell are counted as misses. It must be engaged twice to be able to double tap rifle targets, but it does not have to be HIT twice.

Knock down either two Shotgun targets, engaging the targets IN ANY ORDER. Make Shotgun safe.

Move forward to position B. Engage the targets with your pistols **IN THE SAME MANNER in which they could be engaged with the rifle.** For example, IF you engage the bell twice at start you can use double taps; if you choose not to engage the bell, then you must engage in left to right single tap Nevada Sweep, ignoring the bell.

Cowboy –Charles Lummis — 2012 SHOOT



Storyline: Charlie sat in a telegraph office at a wooden desk in Antonito, Colorado which is located on the New Mexico border not far north of Taos. A disturbance in the doorway caught his attention. A well-dressed man stood in the doorway about 3 feet from Charlie looking out. About four feet on the other side of that man was an agitated tough shaking a big .44 in his face yelling, “You SOB. You’ll shoot me will ye? Damn your eyes! I believe I will kill you anyhow...for luck! As I could see the well-dressed man slowly moving to draw his own revolver from beneath his coat, “Yes, you pull that gun on me and I’ll pump enough lead into you to pave a mile of hell.” Charlie slipped under the desk to “keep his legs from getting lonely,” figuring it would take more than one man to stop a .44 bullet and he was on the other side of the man likely to be shot. The well-dressed man left town on the next train. When asked who the ruffian was, the station manager replied, “That’s G. Myers, keeps a saloon across the street. He’s been constable for four years. Myers’d just as soon shoot as eat. That’s what he’s constable for—we have to have a pretty tough man to constable out here.” Lummis figured hiding under the desk had been prudent after all. (*Letters from the Southwest* by Charles Lummis).

SCENARIO # 6

10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 4 Shotgun

Pistols loaded with 5 rounds each and holstered. Rifle loaded with 10 rounds, chamber empty, and staged in your hands pointed down range. Shotgun, action open and empty, is staged on the horse.

Start at Position A with rifle at cowboy port arms.

When ready, say: **“I would just as soon shoot as eat!”**

At the buzzer, engage the 4 rifle targets in any sequence starting at target number 1 and continue engaging until all rounds are expended. TRIPLE TAPS ARE ALLOWED.

Make rifle safe and place it on the horse.

Knock down the 4 Shotgun targets, engaging the targets IN FOLLOWING ORDER: Left Front, Right Front, Left Rear, Right Rear. They do not have to fall in that order.

Make shotgun safe. Move to Position B.

Draw pistols and engage the 4 pistol targets, in any sequence, starting at target number 1 and continue engaging until all rounds are expended. TRIPLE TAPS ARE ALLOWED.

Although it seems that most of Charlie Lummis' adventures occurred in the expanses of Colorado and western Kansas, his trek continued through the Pueblo region and areas of the southwest with rich Hispanic colonial heritage. The journey and its experiences affected him for life. After almost losing his life crossing the Mojave desert, he walked into Los Angeles, cleaned up, shaved, had his hair "shorn", started wearing a boiled (starched) shirt, dress pants, lit up a cigar and assumed his job as city editor for the *LA Times*, working 14 hours a day.

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