

to earn a living without letting somebody ride on them.

But they were smart enough, I guess. As a matter of fact, I sometimes think maybe they were smarter than the cowboys. If those cowboys were real smart, they'd have stopped being cowboys and would have put the horses to work untying knots and doing calculus.

But if this had happened a lot of good old-fashioned Westerns wouldn't have happened. The kids all believed implicitly in the premise that a cowboy who owned a trick horse would go on being a cowboy for \$60 a month, just for the sheer love of being a cowboy.

As Marshall Matt Dillon in the CBS's "Gunsmoke" series, Saturdays 10:00-10:30 p.m., WCAX-TV and WTEN. I do not exactly play a cowboy but the principle (and the pay) was about the same for U. S. marshals as for cowboys in those days.

It's different now in that Westerns have grown up. "Gunsmoke" is intended for a more adult audience, as you may have heard somewhere before, and thus could not get by-even if we wanted it to get by- with trick horses, or any other kind of trick.

So I have been forced sometimes to answer questions about my faithful old pony with another question:

'What faithful old pony?'

When the occasion demands, I ride a horse in "Gunsmoke." Usually it is a big buckskin gelding named Buck, chosen not because of his intellect, or his fidelity, but because he is very large and only a very large horse will fit me.

This horse is never identified by name in the show, simply because in "Gunsmoke," as in the real Old West, horses were cheap and a cowboy-or a U. S. marshal-seldom had a favorite. He didn't keep a horse that long. He'd swap hi off on a long trip for a fresh horse, or sell him between jobs knowing he could buy another when he needed it and avoid stable bills.

I'll never refer to Faithful Old Buck in the show because Buck is impersonating any one of a long, undistinguished line of horses used by Matt Dillon.

And another thing. You'll never catch Faithful Old Buck doing calculus on "Gunsmoke." Confidentially, Old Buck is kind of stupid. Can't even count to four.

'No Trick Horses' For Me

By James Arness

When I was a kid back in Minnesota I remember seeing a show with a trick horse that could count up to four and untie knots with his teeth. Since I could barely count to four myself, and had trouble untying my knots, using teeth and fingers, I thought this horse was probably the best horse there ever was.

I hung around after the show and asked the man who owned him if I could ride the horse.

"This ain't a riding horse," the man told me. "This is a smart horse. He's too smart to let anybody ride hi."

I often thought about this horse in later years whenever I saw movie cowboys with their big beautiful horses. The cowboys seemed to ride their horses all right, and the horses could even untie knots (those cowboys were always getting tied up by desperadoes). These movie horses were almost as smart as that horse in the show, but not quite. They weren't smart enough