

The Lawless Frontier

The Lawless Frontier is a 1934 American Monogram Western film directed by Robert N. Bradbury, and starring John Wayne, Sheila Terry, George "Gabby" Hayes, and Earl Dwire. It was the tenth of the Lone Star westerns. It was made on a budget of \$11,000, shot in less than a week at Red Rock Canyon north of Los Angeles, and released by Monogram on Nov. 22, 1934.^[1]

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Plot

The movie opens with a family shooting from the window of their home, as they are robbed of their cattle. John Tobin (John Wayne) arrives home later that night and discovers his family killed and their cattle missing. Tobin sets out in search of Pandro Zanti (Earl Dwire), the local bandito, for all appearances a stereotypical Mexican outlaw, though the script is twice careful to tell us he is half white and half Apache and only pretends to be Mexican.

Zanti plans to kidnap Ruby (Sheila Terry) for his lusty needs. This is an unusual villainous trait for 1930s matinee Westerns, aimed at young audiences who expected villains to be claim jumpers and killers, not rapists. Ruby and her father, Dusty (George "Gabby" Hayes), hightail it out of there before she falls victim of the killer, escaping by a clever ruse (hiding in a large gunny sack) in which Ruby almost drowns in a river. Tobin, tracking his family's killers, rescues the sack containing Ruby, and she, Dusty, and Tobin join forces.

Sheriff Luke Williams (Jack Rockwell) immediately takes credit for capturing Zanti when Tobin brings him in; he also arrests Tobin for the murder of Dusty, who took a knife in the back and collapsed. Later it is discovered Dusty only received a superficial wound and was knocked out. The sheriff, however, makes a series of mistakes, including handcuffing a bad guy's boot to a bed, so that all he has to do is take off his boot to escape, especially when Tobin made of point of telling Williams that Zanti can probably get loose.

The Lawless Frontier



Theatrical poster

Directed by	Robert N. Bradbury
Screenplay by	Robert North Bradbury
Starring	John Wayne Sheila Terry George "Gabby" Hayes Earl Dwire
Cinematography	Archie Stout
Edited by	Charles Hunt
Distributed by	Monogram Pictures
Release date	November 22, 1934
Running time	59 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English

A chase across the desert, partly on foot, ensues, with Tobin going after Zanti. The villain drinks from a desert watering hole, but in his fatigued state he does not see the sign marked "Poison. Do not drink." He dies soon after. With the chief villain now out of the picture, there is more hard riding and shooting, as Ruby and Tobin flee from Zanti's gang. When the happy ending finally arrives, Tobin becomes the new sheriff, replacing the inept Williams.

Cast

- John Wayne as John Tobin
- Sheila Terry as Ruby
- Jack Rockwell as Sheriff Luke Williams
- George "Gabby" Hayes as Dusty (credited as George Hayes)
- Jay Wilsey as second Zanti henchman (credited as Buffalo Bill Jr.)
- Yakima Canutt as Joe, Zanti's henchman
- Gordon De Main as Deputy Miller (credited as Bud Wood)
- Earl Dwire as Pandro Zanti, alias Don Yorba

See also

- John Wayne filmography
- List of American films of 1934

References

1. <http://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/81062/The-Lawless-Frontier/articles.html>

External links

- *The Lawless Frontier* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0025373/>) on IMDb
- *The Lawless Frontier* (<https://archive.org/details/TheLawlessFontier>) is available for free download at the Internet Archive
- *The Lawless Frontier* (<https://www.allmovie.com/movie/v28582>) at AllMovie
- *The Lawless Frontier* (<http://www.tcm.turner.com/tcmdb/title/title.jsp?stid=81062>) at the TCM Movie Database
- *The Lawless Frontier* (<https://catalog.afi.com/Catalog/moviedetails/4567>) at the American Film Institute Catalog

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