

Today's True Story

RAILROADER

By Denis Morrison



THE first morning out from Chicago westbound on the Transcontinental Limited, Jerry Fallon sat reading his paper when the conductor arrived to collect his ticket.

Fallon observed that the conductor eyed him narrowly. He felt himself tempted to open a conversation but resisted the urge. Not many items escaped Fallon's attention. Back on the line they called him Eagle-Eye Fallon and for good reasons. He bided his time.

The conductor passed to and fro in the train repeatedly and each time Fallon felt the searching glimpse on him. It got to be a game. Finally the conductor sat down on the seat beside him and said:

"How come you're paying your way? Why aren't you riding on a pass?"

Fallon's eyes twinkled. "I knew you had me pegged," he said.

"You're exactly right. It's something about the eyes."

"Now, if you had handed me a pass I wouldn't have been in any doubt at all. But when a railroader shows me a pass, I'm just wondering where he got it from."

"I know you were a rich broker," the girl said.

"—ER—a speculator," said Mr. Fallon, managing to impart ponderous importance to the word.

"It must be wonderful to make fortunes just in one sort of fell swoop like you do."

"It is, and no fooling," Jerry agreed. "You know, I'm just wondering where I've seen you before. Has your picture been in the paper, too?"

"Oh, no. Why would the papers print the picture of poor little me? Dear me, goodness, no, nothing like that."

When Jerry retired to his compartment that night he had considerable loose money in his pockets. He locked the door. He was up early in his bathrobe to make his toilet ahead of the other passengers and because the habit of early rising was strong on him. When he reached for money to pay for his breakfast his pockets were empty. He told the train conductor about it.

"It's funny," the conductor said. "There's a thief aboard. You're the third passenger that has reported being robbed."

"They're all through passengers," the conductor said, "going to California."

At lunch time Fallon, back from the smoking compartment, saw the pretty girl weeping bitterly.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"I've—I've been robbed. Ooh, boo, hoo." Her tears were very convincing. "Whoever it was took all the money I had. Whatever am I going to do?"

THAT was too much for Jerry Fallon. It was bad enough for the thief to despoil passengers who could afford it, but to steal the last dollar from a pretty lady who couldn't—

"Never mind, little girl. I'll keep a careful lookout. I'll not be taking my eye off you."

"Oh, really? I'll feel so much better if I know you are protecting me."

The night the train passed through Arizona three more passengers were robbed. No one got off. The conductor was mystified. Telegrams flashed back and forth over the wires. Detectives prepared to descend on the limited. Consternation was in the air. But no trace was found of the thief.

The train rolled through the hot desert and over the mountain pass that led down into the sun-kissed valleys of California. There was a 15-minute stop at San Bernardino.

"I'm going out to buy some oranges," said the pretty girl whose name, she had informed him, was Rosalie Jones. "If it takes my last dime."

"Bring me a dozen," Jerry Fallon said, handing her a dollar.

He saw her slip across the maze of tracks and disappear. He followed her. In the crowded station he saw a dapper young man hurry up to her. Something passed between them. The girl turned to the fruit stand and the dapper youth started away toward an automobile parked in the station yard. Jerry Fallon collared him as he was entering the car.

"I was two days rakin' my memory to place that young lady," he told the conductor. "I knew I had seen her before. A long time ago. I knew it had something to do with cryin' and sheddin' tears."

"I knew it the minute she came to me weeping because her money had been stolen. Well, this morning it came back. In Times Square the cops call her Weeping Annie. She's a fake faint and when she now hurries to her rescue she has a hand into his pocket and takes his wallet. I caught her as she stunk once on my car."

"I," said the train conductor, "you're a hell of a good even if you're not a railroader."

Fallon smiled, too. "It's fun just like I would be," Jerry said.

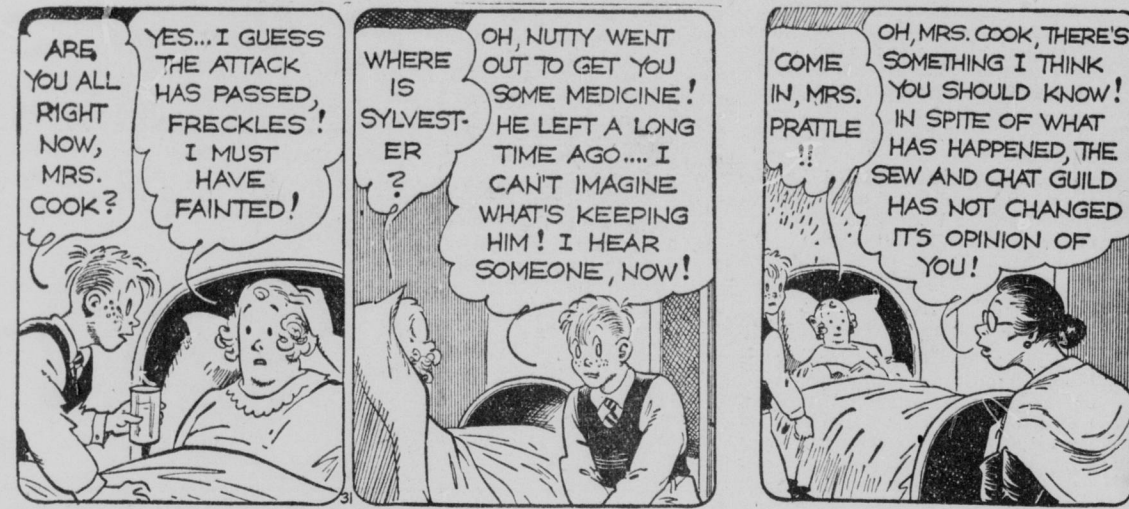
THE END.

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—



WASHINGTON TUBBS II



ALLEY OOP



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



THE TARZAN TWINS



When Dick realized that the ferocious hunting lion was upon him, he swiftly obeyed the first impulse that seized him. He wheeled about, facing the animal he could not see, and thrust his spear violently outward in the direction of that blood-curdling growl.

At the same instant he felt a heavy body strike the ground. Nearby, his cousin heard that frightful turmoil, followed by a deafening, earthshaking roar. "Dick! Dick!" he called frantically. But there was no answer!

OUT OUR WAY

—By Williams



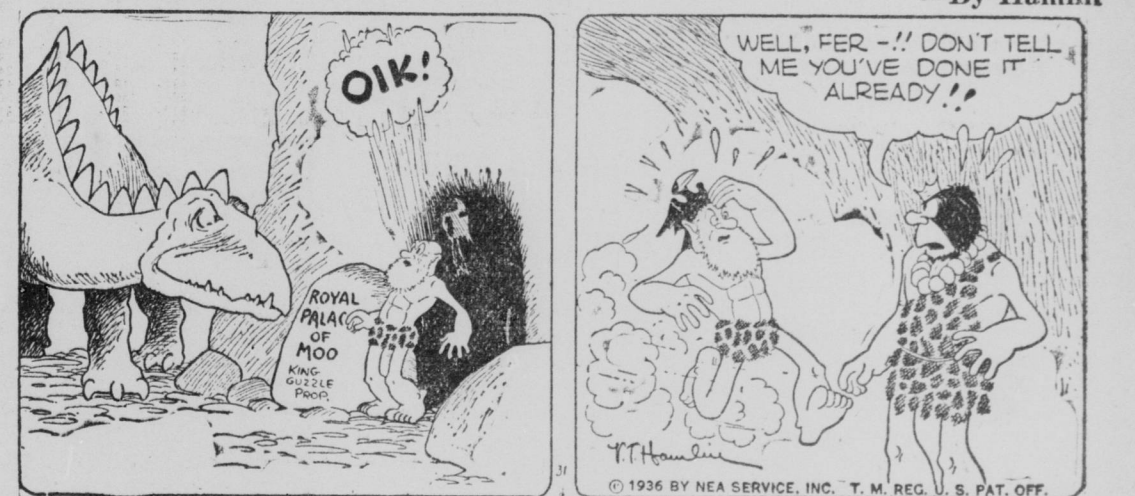
—By Blosser



—By Crane



—By Hamlin



—By Martin



—By Edgar Rice Burroughs



... Dick's encounter with the lion had at least the virtue of swiftness, whereas Tarzan's plight was a lingering torture, both physical and mental. Tighter and tighter Gudrah contracted his trunk, until Tarzan expected momentarily to feel his bones cracking!

Now the elephant Tantör, the ape-man's friend, was almost upon the mad beast. Gudrah knew he must rid himself of the man-thing and face his elephant foe. His great trunk whipped downward to dash Tarzan to the ground. This thought the Jungle Lord, was the end!

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