



KING OF THE COMICS

100 YEARS OF KING FEATURES



YELLOW KID
 IN **McFADDEN FLATS**
 BY **E.W. TOWNSE**
 AUTHOR OF **"CHIMMIE FADD"**
 AND **R. FOUTCAU**
 CREATOR OF **"THE YELLOW KID"**
 G.W. DILLING PUBLISHER NEW YORK

MUTT
 BY **PATRICK MCDONAGH**

adorable menagerie makes its debut in the NAME OF NEWSPAPER

DOES HAVE ONE EMING LITY...
 SHE HAS NEVER STABBED ME OR POSTED A BAD COMMENT 'BOUT ME OR TALKED ABOUT ME BEHIND MY BACK
 SHE ALWAYS WHAT SHE ME TO MY

WITH THIS VICTORY ALL ROME BECOMES OUR ENEMY. WE MUST TURN HOMEWARD WITH ALL SPEED... AND WE MUST SEPARATE, EACH TO

EDITED BY **Dean Mullaney** WITH A GREAT DEAL OF HELP AND KIBITZING FROM
ASSOCIATE EDITORS **Bruce Canwell, Paul Tumey, and Brian Walker.**
AS WELL AS ADVICE AND INPUT FROM **Brendan Burford.** COVER DESIGN BY **Frank Caruso.**
STRIP RESTORATION BY ART DIRECTOR **Lorraine Turner** and **Dean Mullaney.**

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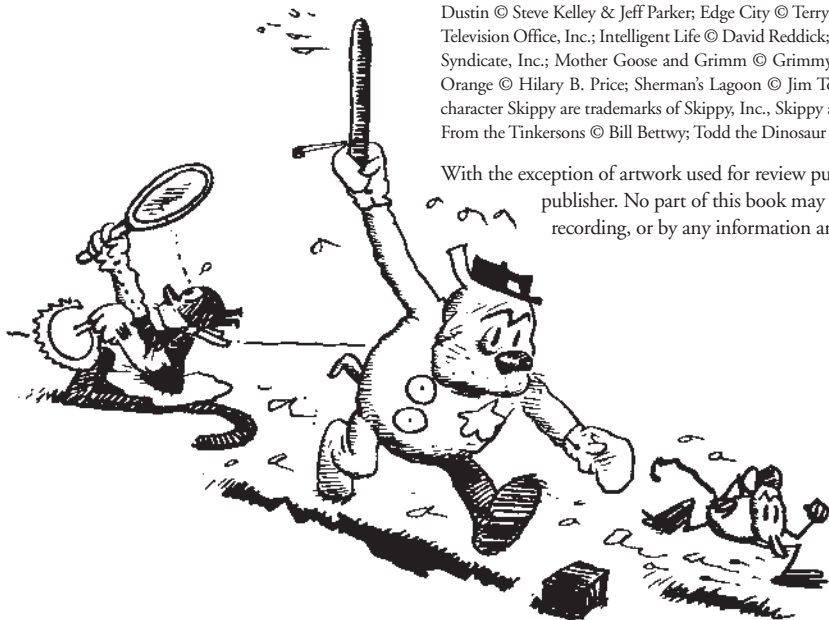
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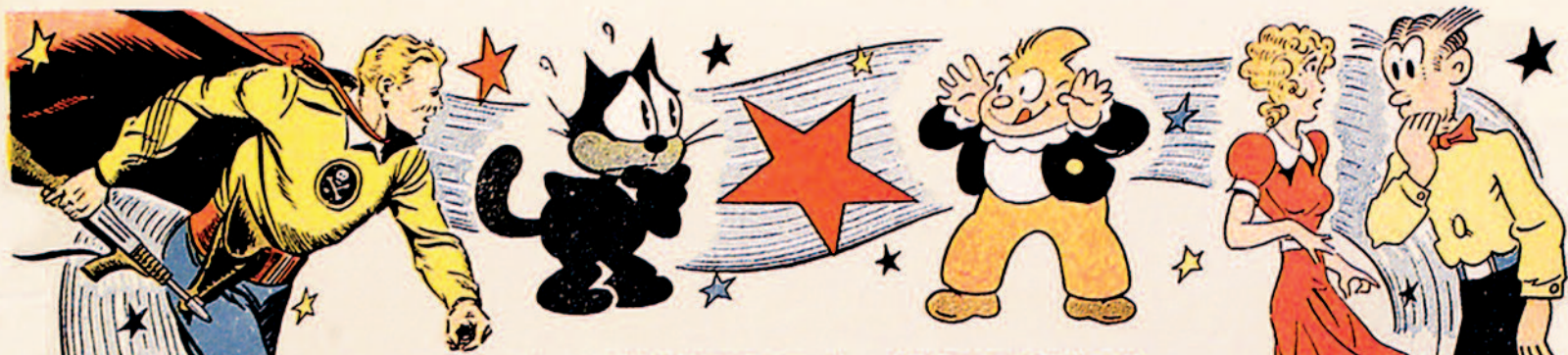
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◀ **LEFT:** Drawing by George Herriman from the program book for the first performance of "Krazy Kat—A Jazz Pantomime" at Town Hall in New York, 1922. The book contained the musical score and new illustrations by the cartoonist.

▶ **OPPOSITE:** King Features stationery from 1944 (courtesy Hakes Americana and Collectibles).

▼ **OVERLEAF:** "Hoist, the Friend of the Comic People," a centerspread cartoon by Louis Glackens in *Puck*, October 31, 1906. *Puck's* editors were relentless in their attacks on William Randolph Hearst and his style of journalism, as well as the Sunday comics supplement in general. Here, *Puck* ridicules the newspaper magnate's ambition to be Governor of New York. Hearst, however, had the last laugh, as he often did. He bought the faltering magazine in 1917 and closed it down a year later. Ironically, the "Puck" name, as well as its cherubic mascot, was later adopted for the King Features Sunday comics section—*Puck, The Comic Weekly*.



KING FEATURES SYNDICATE

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION by BRENDAN BURFORD / 9

CHAPTER ONE:
**WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST AND THE FOUNDING
OF AN EMPIRE** by BRIAN WALKER / 11

CHAPTER TWO:
**GAGS, SITUATION COMEDIES, AND
THE BIRTH OF KING FEATURES** by BRUCE CANWELL / 39

CHAPTER THREE:
**DEVELOPING A SOPHISTICATED
LANGUAGE OF COMICS** by JARED GARDNER / 71

CHAPTER FOUR:
THE GLORY DAYS: OR, BELIEVE IT OR NOT!
by RON GOULART / 105

CHAPTER FIVE: **COMICS AT WAR** by RON GOULART / 199

CHAPTER SIX: **THE TIMES ARE A'CHANGIN'**
by BRUCE CANWELL / 233

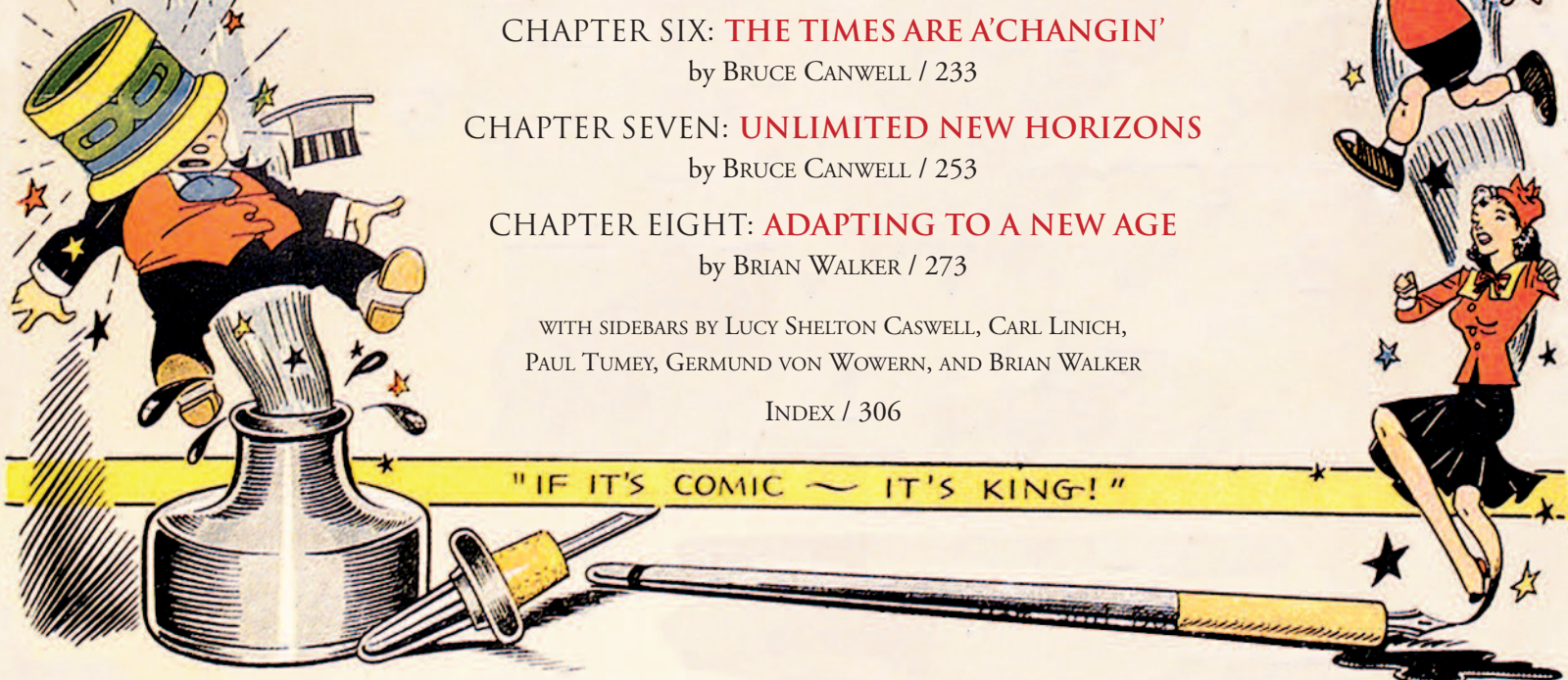
CHAPTER SEVEN: **UNLIMITED NEW HORIZONS**
by BRUCE CANWELL / 253

CHAPTER EIGHT: **ADAPTING TO A NEW AGE**
by BRIAN WALKER / 273

WITH SIDEBARS BY LUCY SHELTON CASWELL, CARL LINICH,
PAUL TUMEY, GERMUND VON WOWERN, AND BRIAN WALKER

INDEX / 306

"IF IT'S COMIC ~ IT'S KING!"



CHAPTER ONE

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST AND THE FOUNDING OF AN EMPIRE

BY BRIAN WALKER

The story of King Features Syndicate begins with its founder.

William Randolph Hearst took New York City by storm in the fall of 1895. The son of a California silver miner who struck it rich in the Comstock Lode, Will had used the family fortune to transform the San Francisco *Examiner* into a successful West Coast version of Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World*. After his father died in 1891 he persuaded his mother to use a portion of the profits from the sale of their interest in the Anaconda copper mines to finance his newspaper career.

On October 10, 1895 *The Fourth Estate* announced the thirty-two-year-old publisher's arrival from San Francisco and his purchase of the New York *Journal*: "He has money and he is not afraid of spending it. New York is the field of his ambitions and with the resources of almost unlimited capital and absolutely exhaustless courage he has entered the fight."

Hearst came out swinging. He dropped the price of his then-struggling morning paper to one cent and in four months circulation rose from twenty thousand to one hundred fifty thousand. To compete, Joseph Pulitzer was forced to reduce the price of the *World* to a penny.

In January 1896 Hearst dined at the Hoffman House in New York City with Morrill Goddard, editor of Pulitzer's *Sunday World*, offering him a salary of three hundred fifty dollars a week to edit his new *Sunday Journal*. When Goddard balked, Hearst presented him with thirty-five thousand dollars in cash as a guarantee. In the following months Hearst lured away many more of Pulitzer's best people with lucrative salary offers, including Solomon



courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

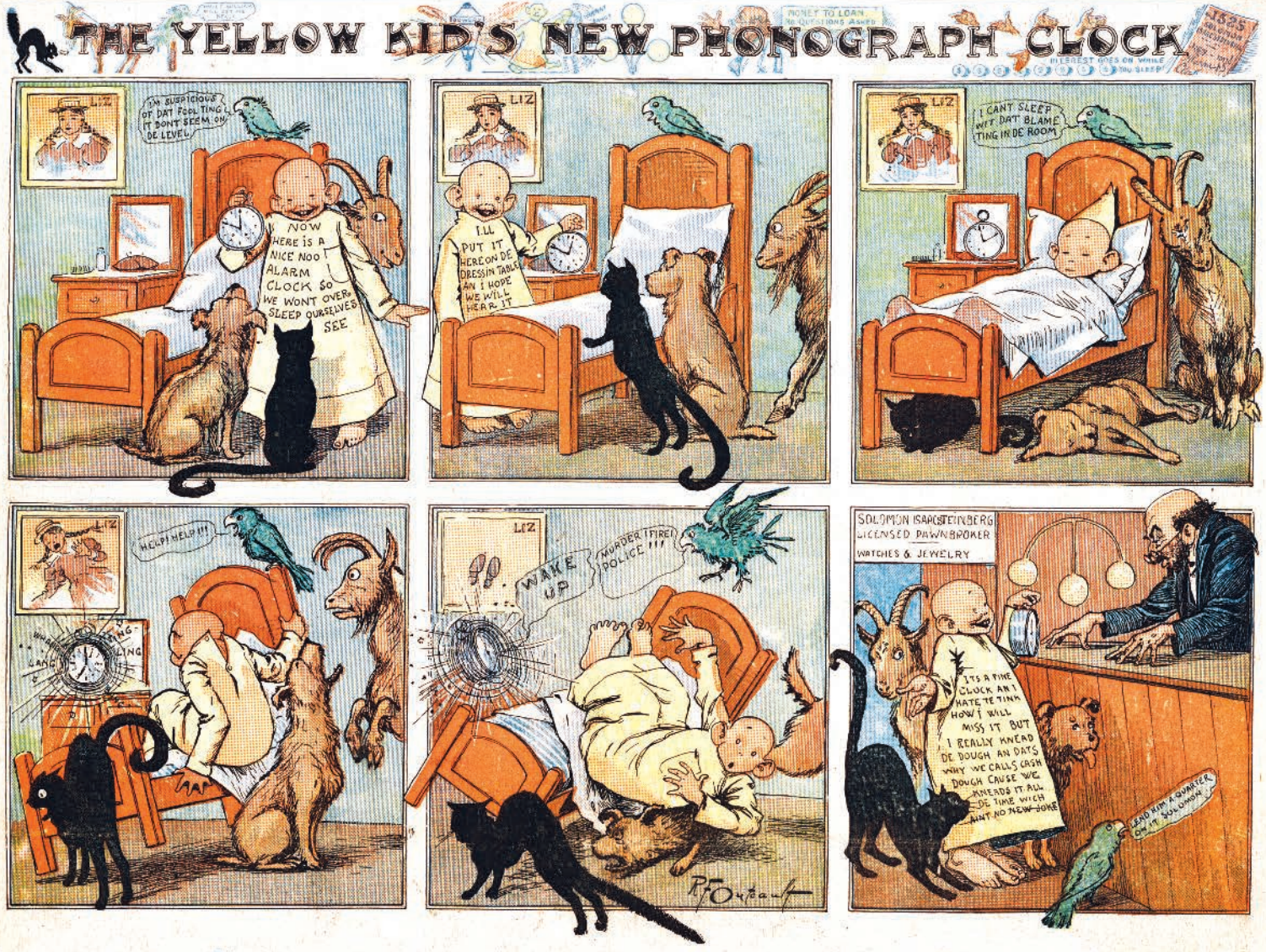
Solis Carvalho, the *World's* vice-president and publisher.

The New York *Journal—Evening Edition* debuted on September 28, 1896 and soon passed a circulation mark of one hundred seventy-five thousand. By this time the morning *Journal's* circulation was approaching the half-million mark.

After installing a new high-speed multi-color press, Hearst acquired the services of Pulitzer's most popular cartoonist, Richard Outcault. *The American Humorist*, an eight-page color comic supplement in the *Sunday Journal*, debuted on October 18, 1896, featuring Outcault's *Yellow Kid* as the star attraction. Hearst sold three hundred

▲ ABOVE: William Randolph Hearst in 1904.

◀ OPPOSITE: *McFadden's Row of Flats* by Richard Felton Outcault & W. E. Townsend from the first Hearst Sunday *American Humorist* supplement, published in the New York *Journal*, October 18, 1896. This was Outcault's first Sunday comic after leaving Pulitzer to join Hearst, and it featured his popular character, The Yellow Kid.



both images courtesy San Francisco Academy of Comic Art Collection, The Ohio State University Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum

▲ ABOVE: The Yellow Kid's New Phonograph Clock by Richard Felton Outcault, New York Journal, February 14, 1897.

► RIGHT: New York Sunday Journal poster by Richard Felton Outcault, 1897.

THE NEW YORK SUNDAY JOURNAL

February 14th.

Dear Sir
You just got to be my
Valentine an dats all
Dont think I mean a comse
Dont think an get mad at
William, an get mad at
me. I mean me too. I see
an dats what you
is de sweetest ever born
Micky

DON'T FORGET
That Every Woman Should Read
THE AMERICAN WOMAN'S
HOME JOURNAL,
A COMPLETE AND ARTISTIC PAPER
For WOMEN, CHILDREN, and THE HOME.

THE BEST CONTRIBUTORS, AND THE BEST AND MOST ARTISTIC EXECUTION.

A few of the Contributors are:
Mrs. WM. JENNINGS BRYAN, Mrs. ADLAI STEPHENSON,
AMELIA E. BARR, Mrs. JOHN A. LOGAN,
Mrs. BOOTH-TUCKER, MME. EMMA EAMES.

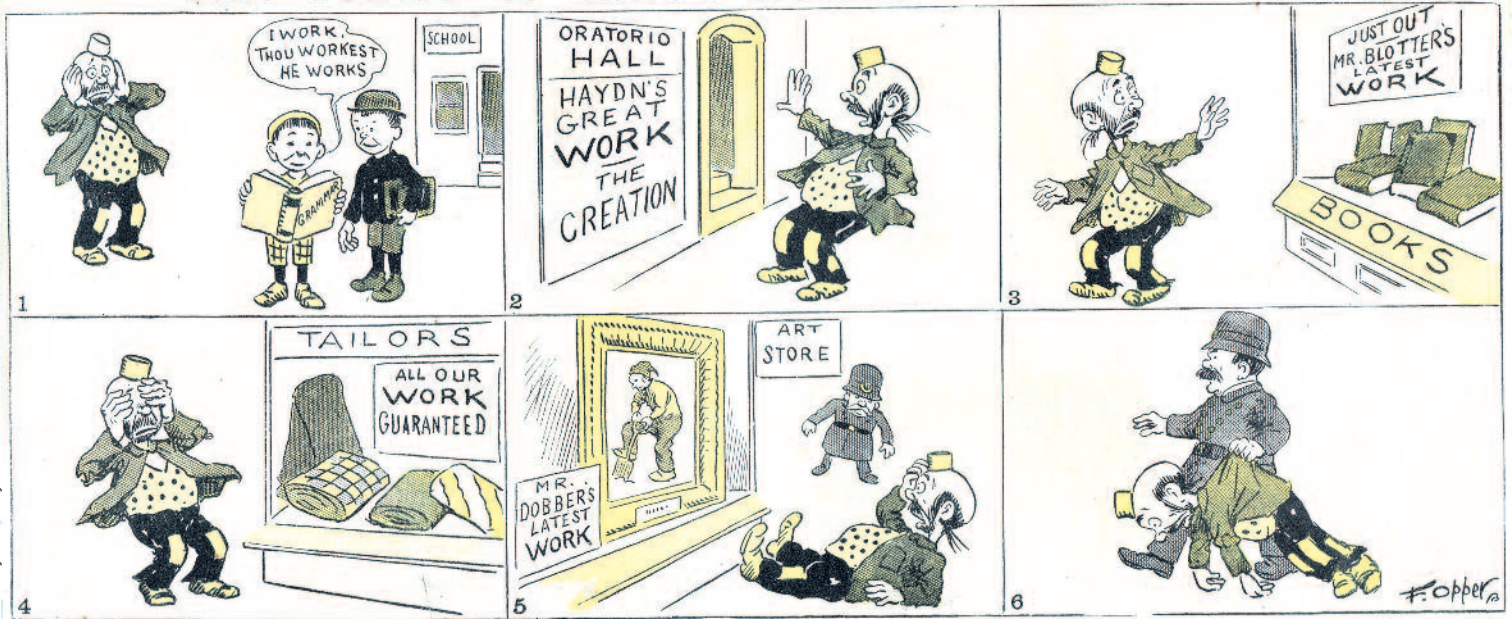
Be sure and read **THE YELLOW KID'S VISIT TO IRELAND**
"the Home of his 4 fathers."

Your Sunday will not be complete without... **THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE,** It is teeming with interesting and instructive articles.

R.F. Outcault

THE DOINGS OF HAPPY HOOLIGAN.

He Has a Painful Experience with the Awful Word "Work."



courtesy Paul Turney

seventy-five thousand copies of this edition, in spite of an increase in price. The public clearly believed the arrival of color comics was worth the two-penny increase, from three to five cents.

At the peak of his popularity in 1896 and 1897, the Yellow Kid's toothy grin showed up on hundreds of products such as buttons, crackers, cigars, and fans. Numerous songs were published in sheet music form including, "The Dugan Kid Who Lives in Hogan's Alley" (the fictional home of the Kid and his pals). The Hogan's Alley gang appeared on stage at Weber and Fields' Broadway Music Hall in 1896; a *Yellow Kid* magazine was launched in 1897.

In New York City the competition between newspapers raged on, while papers in other large metropolitan areas soon began publishing their own Sunday comic sections. Seeing further opportunity, Hearst began selling and shipping *The American Humorist* to other cities across the country. As a result, the Yellow Kid and other comic characters became national celebrities; entrepreneurs reaped huge profits from licensed products. Hearst expanded his newspaper empire

when he launched the *Chicago American* in 1900, the *Los Angeles Examiner* in 1903, and the *Boston American* in 1904.

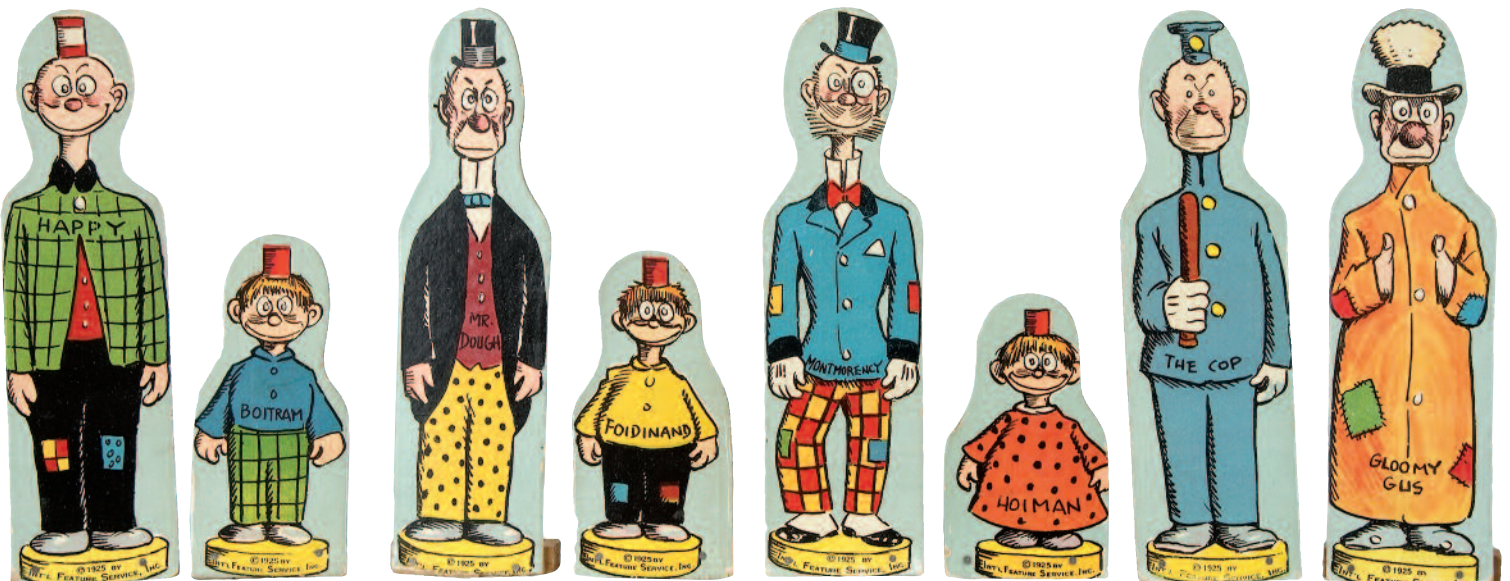
Newspapers provided a daily diversion for the harried city worker. In addition to news, the metropolitan press offered sports pages, advice columns, human-interest stories, women's features, and comics. Both Pulitzer's *World* and Hearst's *Journal* passed the one million mark in circulation after the 1898 sinking of the U.S. battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor created an unprecedented demand for news delivered in the daily papers. The total circulation of daily newspapers throughout America doubled between 1892 and 1914.

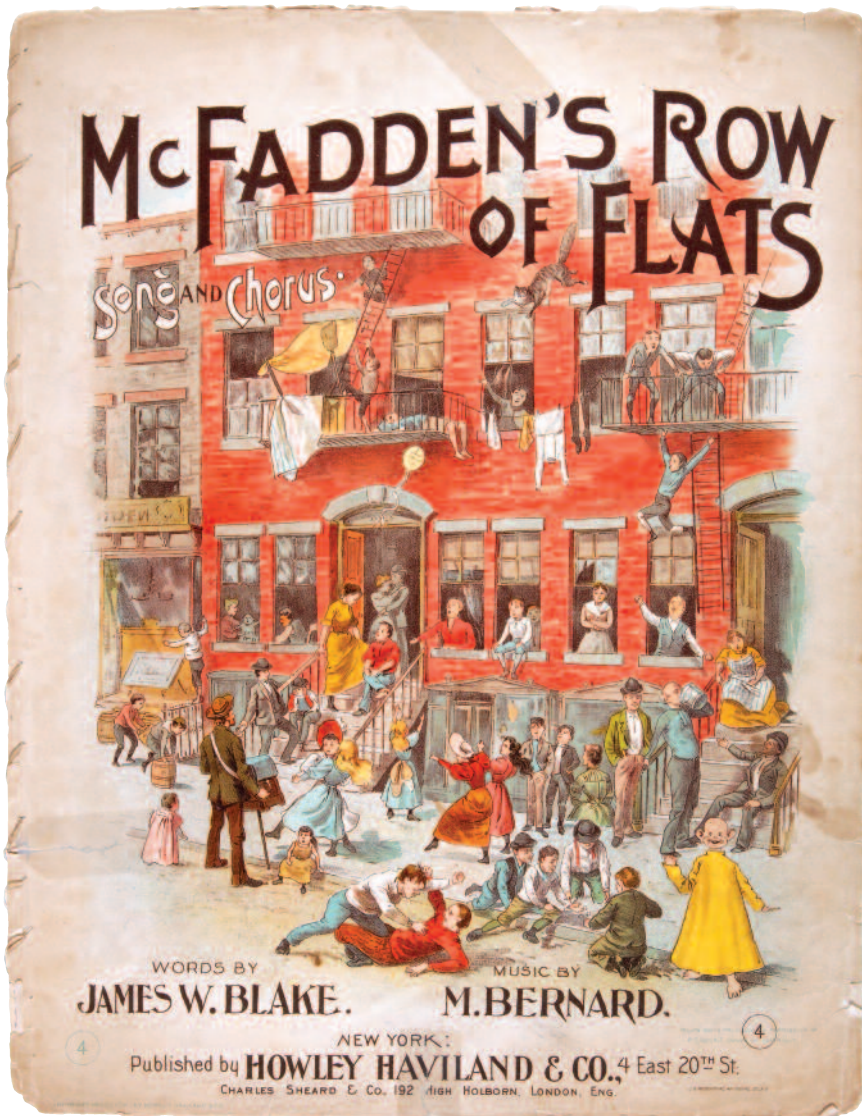
The success of the Sunday newspaper was even more dramatic. *Editor & Publisher* reported on April 5, 1902, "Year by year it has grown, until today its size is formidable. The regular issues contain from thirty-two to eighty-six pages and the specials, such as those of Christmas and Easter, from one hundred to one hundred thirty pages." The comic supplement had "caught the fancy of the public, and now every illustrated Sunday newspaper has one printed in colors."

▲ ABOVE: The seventh episode of *Happy Hooligan*, *New York Journal*, April 22, 1900. Opper's creation was the first Hearst strip to regularly feature speech balloons and sequential panels.

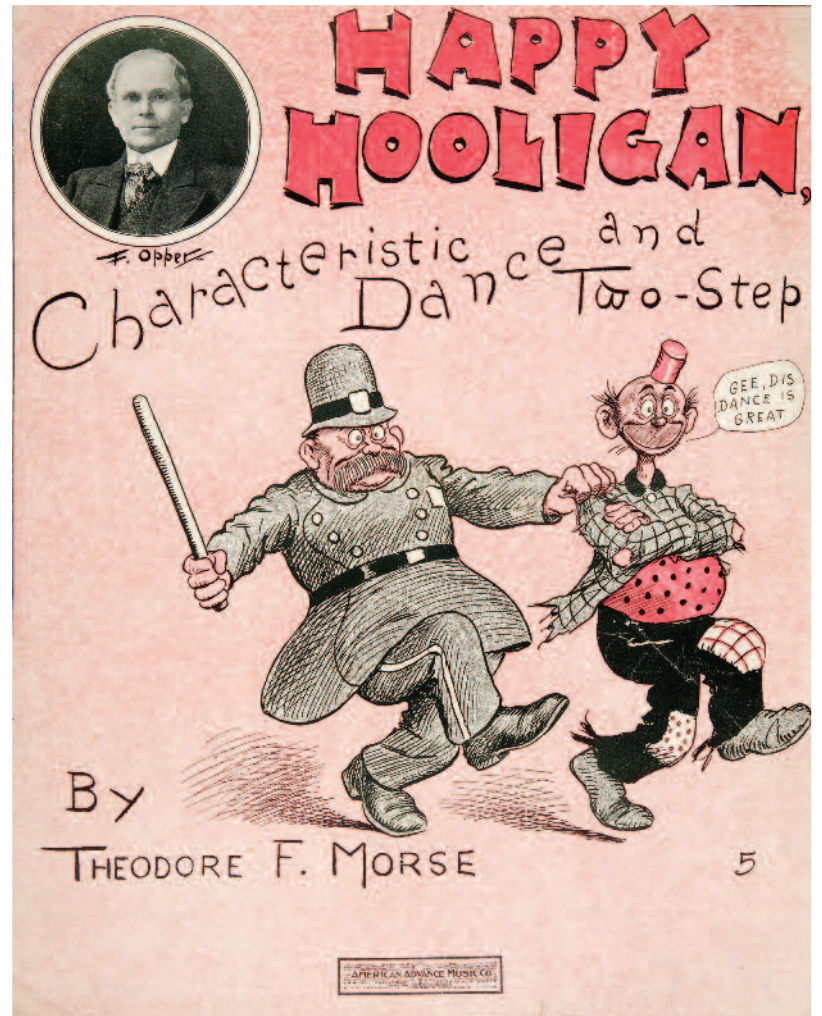
▼ BELOW: Pieces from a *Happy Hooligan* game produced by the Milton Bradley Company, c. 1925.

courtesy Hakes Americana and Collectibles





▲ ABOVE: Clockwise from top left: Sheet music for *McFadden's Row Of Flats*, 1896; *Yellow Kid Schottische*, 1897; flyer for the book *The Yellow Kid in McFadden's Flats* (Dillingham's American Authors Library No. 24), 1897; box for the *Happy Hooligan* game produced by the Milton Bradley Company, c. 1925.



The Yellow Kid dramatically demonstrated the selling power of a popular comic character and Hearst introduced new continuing characters into his comic supplement. Following Outcault's departure from the *New York Journal* in 1898, *The Katzenjammer Kids* by Rudolph Dirks became the anchor of Hearst's flagship *American Humorist* comic section. "Katzenjammer"—which means "cats' yowling" in German—was a popular colloquialism for "hangover." Dirks's pranksters, Hans and Fritz, were soon joined by the long-suffering Mama as well as the rotund mariner, Der Captain (1902), and his trusty sidekick, Der Inspector (1905); this quintet established the core cast of the strip. In the first few years Dirks rarely used speech balloons, preferring either pantomime or text beneath the panels.

Frederick Opper joined the Hearst staff in 1899 and was put to work drawing single-panel cartoons for the Sunday supplement. On March 11, 1900 Opper introduced his first newspaper comic feature, *Happy Hooligan*, which starred an irrepressible Irish hobo with a tin can balanced on his head. Opper incorporated speech balloons into his *Happy Hooligan* episodes from the beginning. He also created a number of other strips for Hearst's *New York Journal* and *American*, including *Our Antediluvian Ancestors* (January 30, 1900), *Alphonse and Gaston* (November 24, 1901), *And Her Name was Maud* (June 24, 1904), and *Howson Lott* (April 25, 1909).

Cartoonists around the country were soon imitating the successful formula pioneered by Outcault, Dirks, and Opper. The unique combination of recurring characters, sequential panels, speech balloons, and bright colors eventually came to be known as the "Sunday funnies."

Outcault created his second successful cartoon, *Buster Brown*, for the *New York Herald* on May 4, 1902, but

Hearst lured him back to the fold, adding the antics of Buster, his dog, Tige, and Mary Jane to his *New York American* on January 14, 1906. Bud Fisher, who introduced the first successful daily comic strip, *Mutt and Jeff*, in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on November 15, 1907, signed with Hearst's Star Company in 1909. Another pioneer, Jimmy Swinnerton, drew a comic feature, *Little Bears*, for Hearst's *San Francisco Examiner* beginning in 1893. "Swinnerton," as he was known, relocated to New York in 1897 and his *Little Bears* became *The Journal Tigers*. He eventually settled in Arizona, where he produced *Little Jimmy* until 1958. Other prominent artists who worked for Hearst during the early years of the 20th Century were Homer Davenport, T. E. Powers (*Charlie and George*), sports cartoonist "Tad" Dorgan (*Silk Hat Harry*), George Herriman (*The Dingbat Family*), Gus Mager (*Sherlocko the Monk*), and Walter Hoban (*Jerry on the Job*).

In less than a decade newspaper comics had grown from a local phenomenon in a few major cities to a nationwide mass medium. The most popular characters were familiar to millions of readers in cities across the country. By 1908 seventy-five percent of American Sunday newspapers were publishing comics. Three organizations—Hearst, McClure, and World Color Co.—serviced three-quarters of this market.

In these nascent years newspapers published comics

▲ ABOVE: Two sheet music folios from 1902: *Happy Hooligan's Reception* with cover art by both Opper and Dirks showing Happy in center surrounded by the Katzenjammer Kids and Mamma, Alfonse and Gaston, and Gloomy Gus in the background eating cookies; and a "Characteristic Dance and Two-Step" with a photo of the cartoonist on the front page.