Abottan

COMICS HAT GUY YNCOPATES HIS SHOTS! I LIKE WALTZ TIME BETTER!

February

SCHOOL DAZE

TT WAS ODD, but, for once, Little Benny's eyes were glued to his geography book. Usually he found the view from the school window or a study of the ceiling much more interesting than the dull old print and maps to which he was supposed to pay attention. What then held his attention this sunny afternoon? Well, have you ever seen two, real, live, honest-to-goodness, no fooling caterpillars race across Australia? Not actually Australia, you understand, but the map of it that was in Little Benny's book. A caterpillar race took all of the watcher's attention. One couldn't risk a glance elsewhere, or the racers might fall asleep or go wandering all over the Bay of Fundy. Then, too, when you made bets with yourself, switching each time your favorite fell behind, it left no time to listen to noises such as teacher's voice.

So it was that Little Benny failed the first couple of times to hear teacher call him. Indeed, he failed the *third* time, too, for it unfortunately occurred at a very stirring moment in the caterpillar race across Australia. The racers were neck and neck, tail and tail, cocoon and cocoon and . . .

"LITTLE BENNY!"

This last command entered even Little Benny's wall of concentration. He closed the book hastily as the caterpillars slid to the floor. Darn, now he'd never know how the race came out! What could teacher want? He hadn't disturbed anyone this afternoon; hadn't tied a knot in a single pigtail; hadn't thrown a single eraser. Why, he had been as quiet as a mouse! In fact, he had been as quiet as two mice. He hadn't even . . .

"Young man, is it necessary to send you a written invitation every time I wish to speak to you? I have never encountered such a day-dreamer! I declare you are the most impossible of all the impossible pupils I've ever had! I should stand you in the corner, but you've worn out all our dunce caps now! I should . . . oh, never mind! Let's get back to our lesson. As for you, Master Little Benny, march right back to your seat and don't let

me catch you not paying attention again!"

Whew! That had been too close. He'd almost got into real trouble that time. Back in his seat, Little Benny resolved to turn over a new leaf. To prove it, he sternly ignored an excellent opportunity to knock over Jane's pencil box. Whatever the next assignment was he'd do it to the best of his ability. He wasn't going to mess up again. He'd show teacher that he wasn't as stupid as she thought he was. As if anyone could be! Ignored, the caterpillars raced across the Gobi Desert en route to Naples. Little Benny was concentrating now!

"Now then, pupils . . . and Little Benny . . . our next task is an interesting one. Have you ever wondered what you're going to be when you grow up? Of course, you have! By that I mean what profession do you intend to follow? Would you like to be a doctor? A lawyer? A policeman? Or perhaps a banker? At any rate, we're going to find the secret ambition of each and every one of you! How? You're going to write it down that's how! I want you to begin a composition of two hundred words entitled 'When I Grow Up I'm Going To Be . . 'All right, let's start. Remember, no less than two hundred words!"

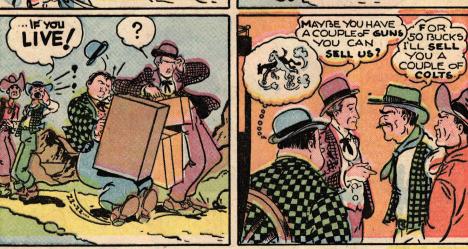
Golly, two hundred words sure was a lot of words! Little Benny wondered if he knew that many words. Nevertheless, the teacher's speech had held him fascinated. You see, he had never given the slightest thought to what he was going to be when he grew up. He had been much too busy just growing up. Still it was time a fellow gave some thought to those things. He wasn't getting any younger — not at six and a half, going on seven.

Teacher had mentioned being a doctor first. Now that was a very fine job. They wore nice white coats and he had always looked well in white. Take that white sweatshirt of his — well, it wasn't exactly white anymore since the exploring trip through the coal pile. Say, rather, his sort

(Continued on Inside Back Cover)











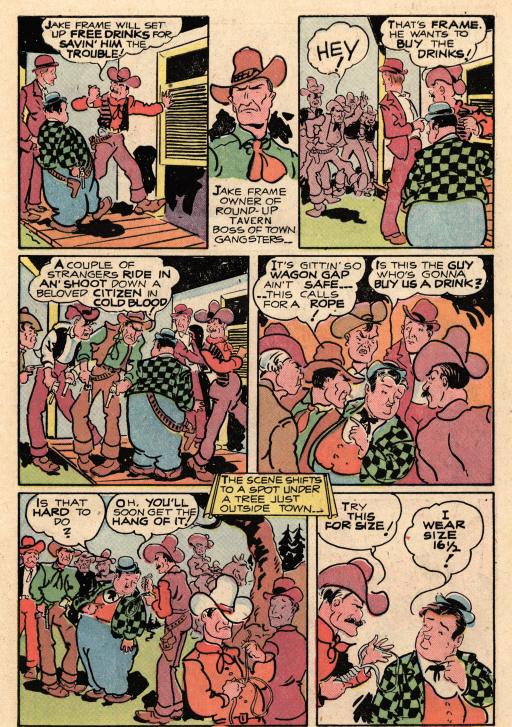
SAYS
COSTELLO:
WATCH ME
SELL 'EM!
SUPER
SALESMAN
COSTELLO
THAT'S ME!

"WE'LL SHOW EM WHAT HIGH POWER SELLIN'IS!"

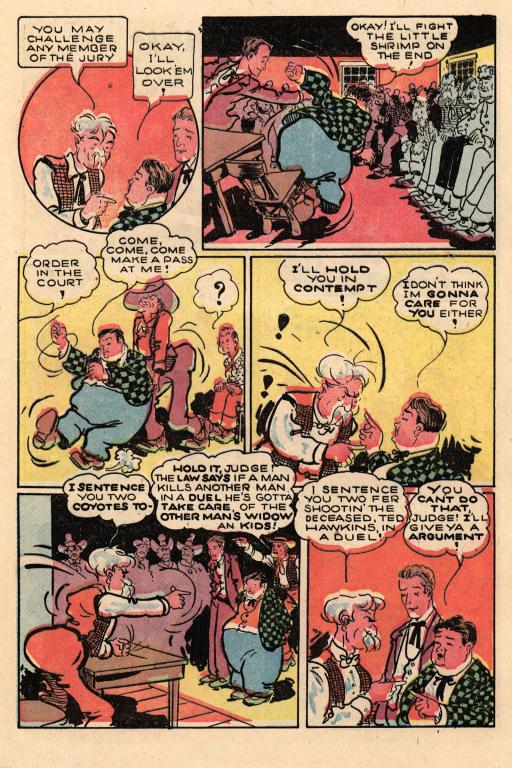
WAGON GAP FOLKS, HAVE YOUR MONEY PONT PUSH! THERE'S NO LIMIT TO A CUSTOMER!











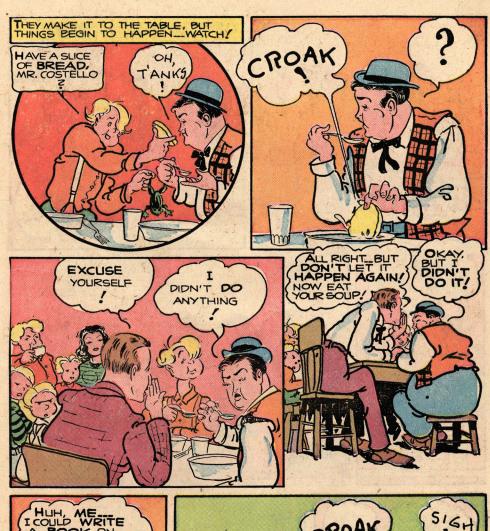






















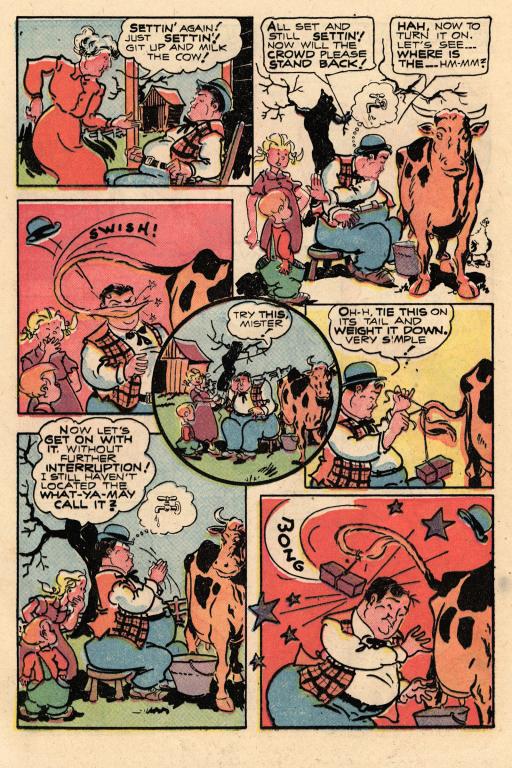






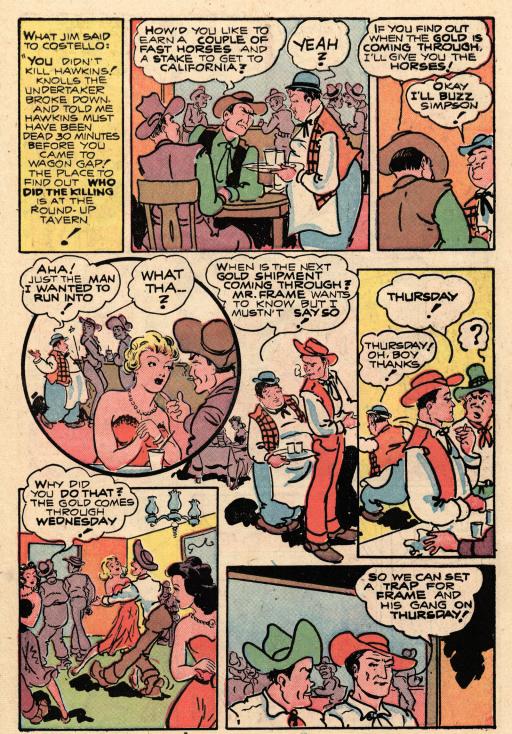








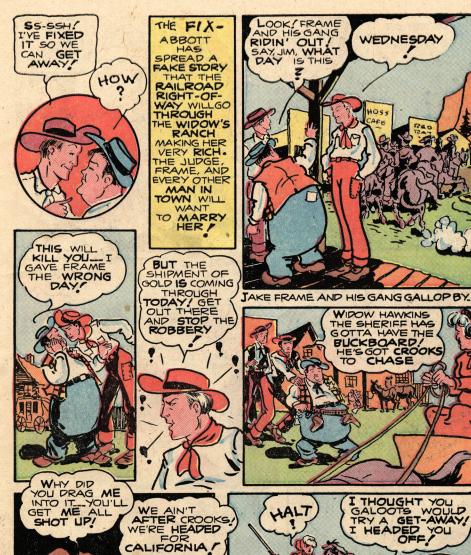






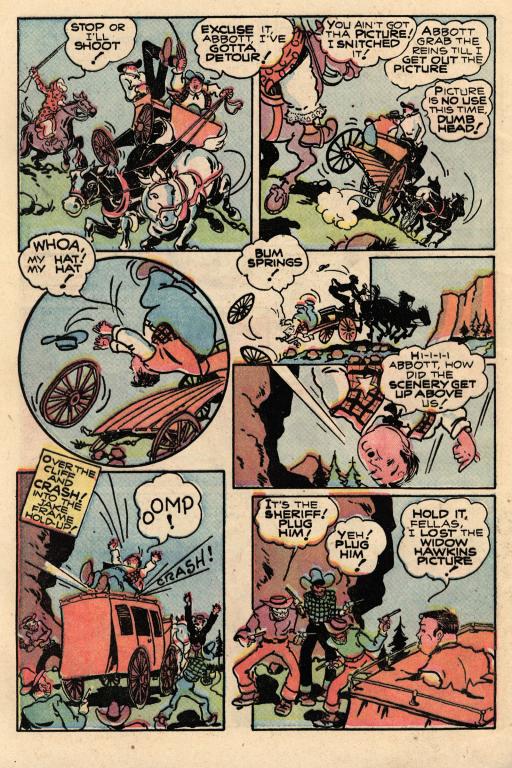




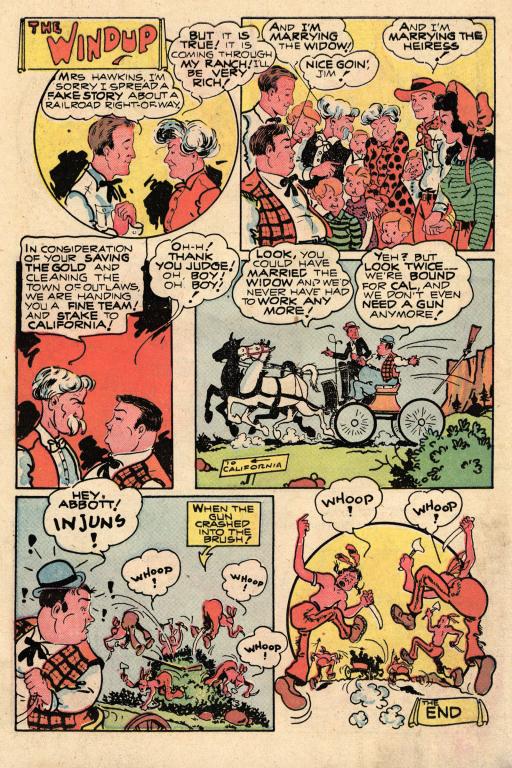












of white sweatshirt, he'd looked real snazzy in that! Then, too, a doctor had all the bandages he wanted. And couldn't you have fun with bandages! Boy, when you played Cowboys and Indians you wouldn't have to tie up the prisoners with rope! No, Sir, you could bind them to the stake with nice, clean bandage. But there was just one thing about being a doctor. They seemed to be forever washing their hands. It was bad enough having to wash your hands before meals, but to have to scrub them merely to cut out someone's appendix — nope, Little Benny couldn't see it. He decided not to be a doctor, after all.

A lawyer? Not bad. Lawyers helped people who got in trouble and got ever so much money for doing it. Little Benny didn't know anyone who got in more trouble than he did. Just think of all the money he'd save by being his own lawyer. To say nothing of the spankings he'd avoid! Once he was a lawyer he'd be able to convince mother that an empty cookie jar and crumbs on his mouth did not really prove him guilty. Still there was this to consider - lawyers worked in courtrooms and all courtrooms were indoors. Being a lawyer would make a fellow miss an awful lot of fun. Who ever saw a lawyer playing Follow-The-Leader or sleigh riding down Pilgrim's Hill? And what would happen if he had to try a case on the very same afternoon the gang wanted to go frog hunting? He couldn't afford to risk it. Becoming a lawyer was out of the question - at least, until people got sensible and had outdoor courtrooms.

What else had she mentioned? Policeman? Hmmm, very good! Policemen could arrest people and put them in jail. Little Benny wouldn't mind at all being able to arrest certain people, he thought, eyeing teacher. He couldn't very well do that, though, for she never did anything wrong. But what about those who did? How about the time Lefty Larson refused to give him "halfies" on that bag of taffy? And maybe the older fellows wouldn't laugh at his wanting to play third base if they knew he could arrest them for it. Yes, being a policeman seemed like a good idea, especially if you were a motorcycle policeman. You could give people rides and - no, you couldn't! In fact, you couldn't even be a policeman! Why? Simply because policemen had regular streets to

patrol and were easy to find when you wanted them. How could he be a policeman when that pesty Jane would know where to find him to play house? Jeepers, it was hard enough to hide from her now without being a policeman! It was too bad, but the city would have to struggle along with what policemen they had now.

Let's see. She'd said something about being a banker. That was okay. All you had to do was sit in a nice cool bank and people came in and gave you money. Just think even people you didn't know gave you money! It certainly would be a lot different than the way things were now. Why, he had all sorts of trouble getting money from mother. Oh, she did give him some, but look at the chores he had to do for it! Dull old things like mowing lawns and running errands, the very thought of them made him shudder. Say, wait, there was an idea! Was it possible that bankers had to do chores for the money that people gave them? Maybe they did! Little Benny wasn't sure, but he had to play it safe. Imagine having to mow a million dollars worth of lawns or run a million dollars worth of errands! Brr! No banking for him, thank you.

"Time's up, children," smiled the teacher. "I'm sure that you've all picked out perfectly lovely careers for yourselves. But I do hope you haven't forgotten the title of our little composition 'When I Grow Up I'm Going To Be . . .' Begin it just that way. That is: start with 'When I Grow Up I'm Going To Be . . .' then say what you'll be. First to read will be Little Benny!"

Little Benny fixed a blank stare on an equally blank sheet of paper. Golly, he had been so busy deciding *what* he was going to be that he hadn't written *anything!* But he couldn't possibly tell teacher that! She just wouldn't understand. He had to read something!

THE END





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