

Sunday, 17 February 2013

It's in the Bag

Was there ever an interview where Fred Allen was happy?

We've posted the handiwork of a number of newspaper columnists here who—rather easily, it seems—got Fred to gripe about any one of a number of the same old things. And I'm reminded how Fred told readers in *Treadmill to Oblivion* how annoyed he was when his radio show was expanded to an hour, then annoyed when it was contracted back to a half-hour several seasons later. He bent ears of columnists about network radio in general but then griped that shooting movies sucked compared to the fun of radio.

In the column below published October 17, 1944 in papers subscribing to the National Enterprise Association service, Fred grumbles about the method of making movies. As usual, he expresses amazement that absurdities of a given situation are accepted and allowed to flourish. The movie in question was "It's in the Bag." Its satiric concept (expressed only basically in this column) is very funny on paper. The film itself isn't as funny. The one time I saw it, I got the impression it was a movie that was *trying* to be funny while relying heavily on the familiarity of radio characterisations to get laughs. I kept wondering when a scene would end and the plot would lurch onward.

The column, by the way, seems incomplete. It doesn't come to a conclusion, it just ends. But that's the way I've found it in five different papers, so I guess that was the columnist's intention.

BY ERSKINE JOHNSON
NEA Staff Correspondent

Working in the movies annoys him, Fred Allen groaned. If it wasn't for those green hermans, he would rush right back to New York and make with the jokes on the radio. That's fun, he says. Working in the movies isn't. So today we give you Fred Allen's primer of minor Hollywood annoyances titled, "What the Heck Am I Doing in the Movies?"

There is, for example, Hollywood's quaint little habit of saying everything is great. That annoys Allen.

"They shoot a scene," Fred said, "and the cameraman says 'Great!' The sound man says 'Great!' The director says 'Great!' The assistant director says 'Great!'"

"And then what happens? They put the picture together and it stinks."

Fred was talking into a telephone the other day for a scene in his new flicker "It's in the Bag." It was a very intimate scene.

"So I looked up for a second and I'm looking right into the face of a sailor who is visiting the set. We both get a shock and I forget all my dialog.

"You can't move around in front of the camera," Fred moaned. "You have to stay in focus and you can't spoil the lighting. The perfect actor in Hollywood is one with rigor mortis in his body and a neon head."

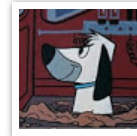
QUIET PLEASE

An airplane flew over the sound stage. The soundman yelled, "Airplane!" and director Richard Wallace stopped Allen in the middle of the scene.

That annoyed him. "The roof of this sound stage is so thin, he said, "that we have to stop shooting every time a sparrow walks across it."



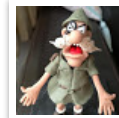
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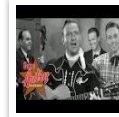


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safety measures. - ©2020 fernandollercartoons.com

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Movies with Michael

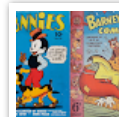


Cowboy Church #67 - Hello my friends and welcome back for another

service of cowboy church. Today's musical selection begins with Gene Autry singing "Dear Hearts and Gentle Pe..."

7 hours ago

Termite Terrace headlines



Question for All You Cartoon Collectors! - OK so I've been doing some

looking around. Bosko apparently had a comic book and I'm wondering if any of you know of

Rushes annoy Allen. "There's no use seeing them," he said. "Everybody says 'Great.' I like to wait until the picture is finished and get the full impact all at once." Getting up at 6 o'clock in the morning annoys Allen. "Today I got up at 6 o'clock to crawl through a window. They shot the scene of me crawling through the window at 2 p. m. I lost eight hours sleep. And will the scene be in the picture? No. They'll cut it out after the first preview because my fanny is out of focus."

Matching up scenes shot several weeks apart annoy Allen. "Two weeks ago," he said, "we filed a scene outside an opera house. I was mad about something. Next week we're going to film the rest of the scene—where I rush into the joint—and I'll have to remember how mad I was three weeks ago so it will match."

Fred plays the owner of a flea circus who thinks he is about to inherit 12 million dollars from his favorite uncle. Instead, he is willed five antique chairs and a phonograph record. He sells the chairs, then plays the record. His dead uncle speaks to him from the record, saying he was murdered and revealing that \$300,000 is hidden in one of the chairs.

MEATY PLOT—WITH RIBS

Allen's problems in retrieving the chairs from their new owners is the film's plot. Gangster Bill Bendix has purchased one of the chairs. Jack Benny has another one. The Benny sequence has promise of being the year's funniest film scene.

Allen poses as the president of a Jack Benny fan club, saying he wants the chair as a memento for their club house. Although flattered, Benny refuses to sell the chair but finally agrees, for a handsome fee.

There are plenty of ribs. When Allen asks for a cigaret, Benny points to a 15-cent cigaret machine in his living room. When Allen has to use the telephone, Benny asks him if he has a nickel and leads him to a telephone booth in the hall.

Posted by [Yowp](#) at [05:50](#)



Labels: [Erskine Johnson](#), [Fred Allen](#), [Jack Benny](#)

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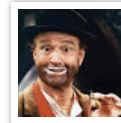
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Born on July 18, 1913 - [Red Skelton](#) - *Today's post

commences

with the Guzzler's Gin routine ...

1 day ago

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Sorry... - As far as I know, I do not have any diseases. I just have too much to deal with right now so I won't be blogging much if at all. I'm postponing all the web...

2 days ago

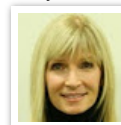
[Cartoon Research](#)

In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in [Technicolor](#) - Suspended Animation #276 Many references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)...

2 days ago

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Mary Turner 1985 - Mary Turner today Mary Turner really rocked the house.



Normally when any of the jocks got a reaction, it'd be split.

The ones that were really liked wou...

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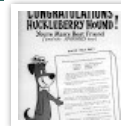
[The World of Knight](#)



TONIGHT, 11:54 PM. - COPYRIGHT 2020 BY MILTON KNIGHT

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Hanna-Barbera Birthday Did-You-Knows - 63 years ago today, some

forms were signed by George Sidney, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera creating what eventually became the biggest TV cartoon operation i...

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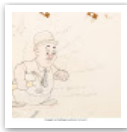
Wabbit Twouble: A Small Addendum to An Outstanding Podcast -

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Original animation drawing from Wabbit Twouble with color notations

for the ink and paint department. Release date: 12/20/41 Availability: Looney Tunes Gol...
3 weeks ago

Mark Kausler's CatBlog
The Lady and the Tiger - From the Cathy Hill Archive of Unpublished Comics comes "The Lady and the Tiger". This story was drawn before Cathy started the "Mad Raccoons" series. U...
4 weeks ago

What About Thad?
Cartoon Logic Podcast - And yet another distraction from this brick and mortar blog... I've entered the world of podcasting with renowned animation director and historian Bob Jaques...
10 months ago

 **Likely Looney, Mostly Merrie**
That's all, folks! - My posts have gotten thinner over the years. I'm aware of that. I've been hopeful for a long time, that I can remain active with blogging and sharing furth...
1 year ago

 **Dr. Grob's Animation Review**
The Flying Man - 'The Flying Man' is a very short absurdist film in which a man drops his coat to take a swim in mid air. Another man with a dog drops by, tries the same th...
2 days ago

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