

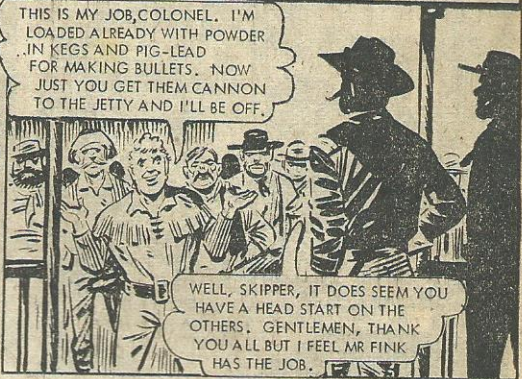
Mike sails to relieve an Indian-besieged fort— and to save time he sails overland!

KING OF THE KEELBOATS



A massive Indian uprising had forced all the settlers around the Missouri to seek shelter in Fort Leavenworth, which the Indians then besieged. Mike Fink, known as the King of the Keelboats, was at Fort Pitt, on the Ohio, when the news of the uprising arrived.

Word spread through the town that cannon, powder and shot were needed at Leavenworth and that a keelboat would be needed to transport them.



THIS IS MY JOB, COLONEL. I'M LOADED ALREADY WITH POWDER IN KEGS AND PIG-LEAD FOR MAKING BULLETS. NOW JUST YOU GET THEM CANNON TO THE JETTY AND I'LL BE OFF.

WELL, SKIPPER, IT DOES SEEM YOU HAVE A HEAD START ON THE OTHERS. GENTLEMEN, THANK YOU ALL BUT I FEEL MR FINK HAS THE JOB.

An hour later, the cannon arrived at the quay.



THERE THEY ARE, BOYS. GET THEM ABOARD AS FAST AS YOU CAN. BUT THESE AIN'T BUT HALF CANNON LIEUTENANT.

AH, BUT THEY'RE HALVES. THAT MATTER, SKIPPER. IT'S EASY TO MAKE WOODEN CARRIAGES OR PLATFORMS OF SOME KIND.



HEY, FINK. WORD'S JUST COME THROUGH THAT THE MISSOURI IS IN FULL FLOOD.

WELL NOW, THAT SHOULD MAKE FOR A RIGHT INTERESTING TRIP.



CAST OFF. PUSH OFF WITH THEM POLES. STAND BY AT THE BOW. STEERSMAN TAKE HER RIGHT OUT INTO MIDSTREAM.

GOOD LUCK, FINK.

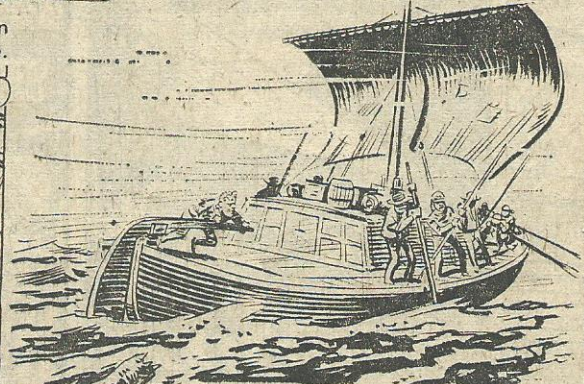
WISH WE WERE COMING TOO.

Mike Fink had made many trips down the Ohio, but never a trip like this one.



HOLD ON, BOY. I RECKON I'D BETTER TAKE OVER.

I JUST CAN'T HOLD HER.



With the flood current pushing the boat along, with willing hands at the oars and with the occasional help of a strong breeze, Mike completed the journey to the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi in record time.

At Brandenburg the river widened into a broad flood. The land on all sides was flooded to the horizon.



SAY FOLKS, WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

OWNSVILLE. THE WHOLE BLAME COUNTRYSIDE IS FLOODED. THE WABASH RIVER FLOODED US OUT AND I'VE HEARD TELL THAT THE KASKASKIA HAS BUST ITS BANKS AS WELL.



DOGGONE'IT, A MAN COULD SAIL CLEAN ACROSS TO THE MISSOURI, I RECKON—AND THE WIND'S JUST RIGHT FOR IT. GET THE SAIL HOISTED LADS—WE'RE GOING OVERLAND TO MISSOURI.



SORRY WE CAN'T STOP FOLKS, WE'RE AIMING TO RELIEVE FORT LEAVENWORTH.

WE'RE OKAY, SON, BUT YOU WATCH OUT FOR THEM REDSKINS.

At Lexington Mike got more news—and it spelt trouble.



WHEN I HEARD THE SHAWNEES WERE ON THE WARPATH, I SENT ALL THE MEN I COULD SPARE UPRIVER BUT THEY WERE BEATEN BACK. THE INDIANS HOLD BOTH BANKS OF THE RIVER ABOVE THE FLOOD LINE AND NOW I NEED ALL MY MEN TO PROTECT THE TOWN.

WELL THE SHAWNEES AIN'T GONNA STOP ME. I GOT A FEW TRICKS LINED UP FOR THEM.