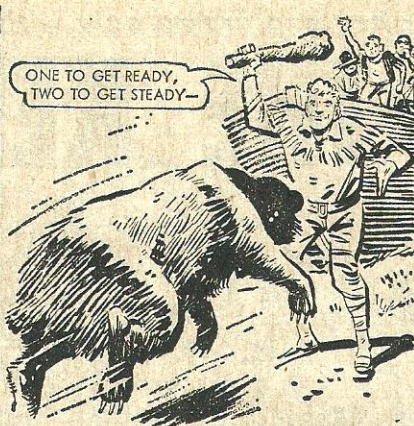


"Come on, Whisker Face, make a fight of it."



YAHOO!

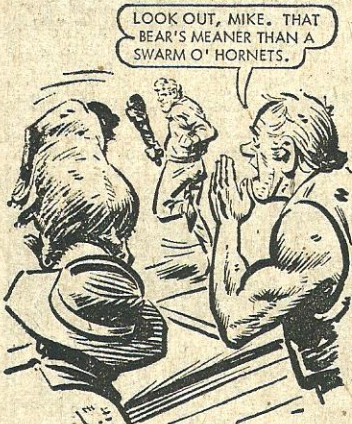


ONE TO GET READY, TWO TO GET STEADY--



THREE TO GO!

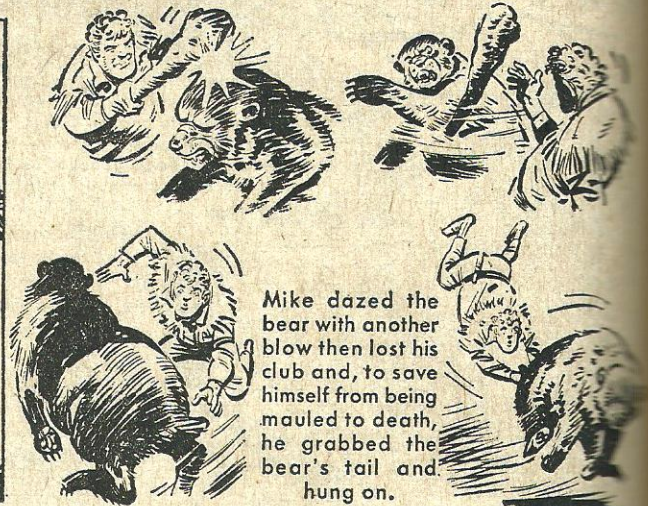
But the bear's skull was tougher than Mike figured.



LOOK OUT, MIKE. THAT BEAR'S MEANER THAN A SWARM O' HORNETS.



COME ON, WHISKER FACE, MAKE A FIGHT OF IT.



Mike dazed the bear with another blow then lost his club and, to save himself from being mauled to death, he grabbed the bear's tail and hung on.

The bear, whirling round to get at Mike, knocked itself out against a tree.

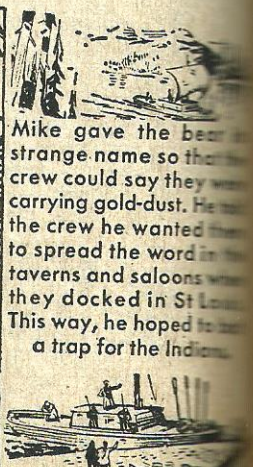


GOSH DURN IT, MIKE, THAT'S THE FINEST BIT OF BEAR-CATCHING I EVER DID SEE.

IT'S A RIGHT PITY THAT FUR-COATED GENT KNOCKED HIMSELF OUT—JUST WHEN THE SCRAP WAS GETTING INTERESTING.



I'M NAMING THAT THERE FELLOW GOLD-DUST, AND IF HE WAKES UP BEFORE HE'S LOCKED SAFELY BELOW, I'M GOING TO LET YOU DO YOUR OWN BEAR-FIGHTING. HURRY IT UP, AN' LET'S GET ON OUR WAY. WE'RE HEADED FOR ST LOUIS.



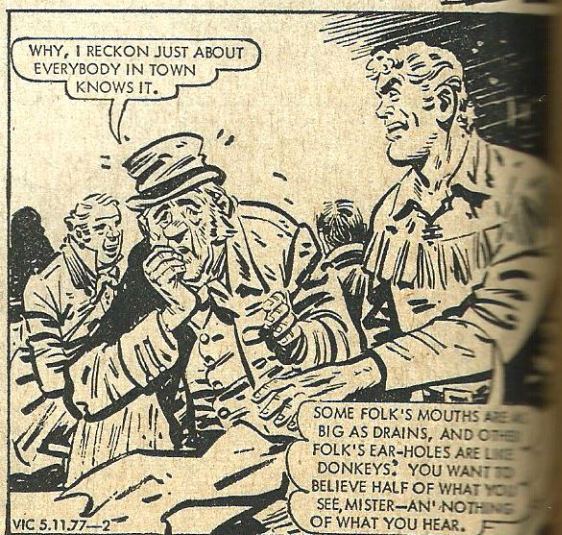
Mike gave the bear a strange name so the crew could say they were carrying gold-dust. He told the crew he wanted to spread the word in the taverns and saloons where they docked in St Louis. This way, he hoped to set a trap for the Indians.

At his favourite eating-house in St Louis, a wizened layabout sidled up to Mike's table.



HEARD TELL AS HOW YOU STRUCK IT RICH UP COUNTRY, MR FINK. GOT YOURSELF A LOAD OF GOLD-DUST IN THE HOLD, AIN'T YOU?

HOW DID YOU HEAR THAT?



WHY, I RECKON JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY IN TOWN KNOWS IT.

SOME FOLK'S MOUTHS ARE BIG AS DRAINS, AND OTHER FOLK'S EAR-HOLES ARE LIKE DONKEYS'. YOU WANT TO BELIEVE HALF OF WHAT YOU SEE, MISTER—AN' NOTHING OF WHAT YOU HEAR.