

A LUCKY LUKE ADVENTURE

THE SINGING WIRE

BY MORRIS & GOSCINNY



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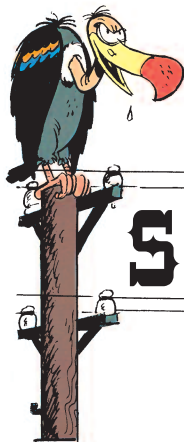
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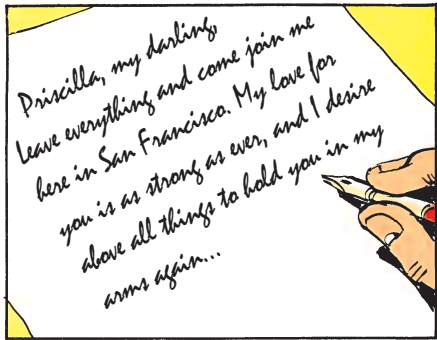
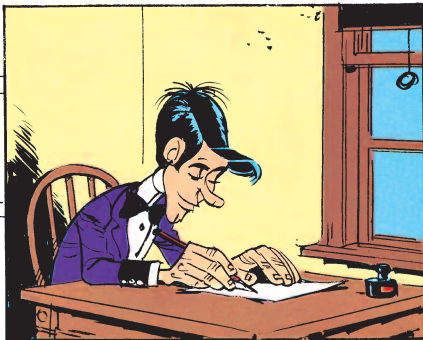


LUCKY LUKE

THE SINGING WIRE

ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS THAT HAD TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE YOUNG UNITED STATES WAS THAT OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

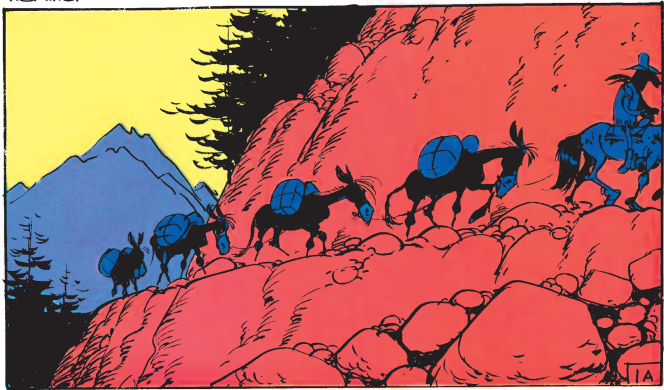
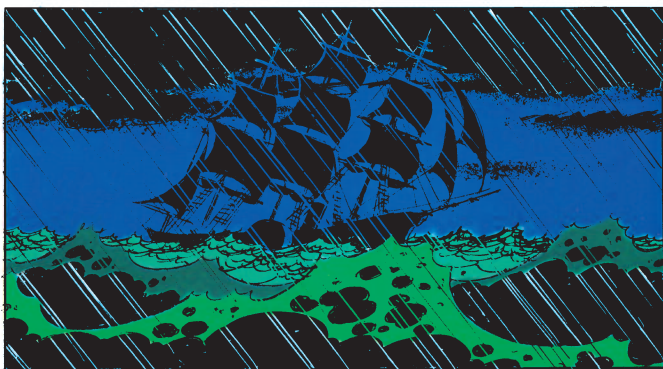
IMAGINE, FOR INSTANCE, THAT A YOUNG MAN RECENTLY SETTLED IN SAN FRANCISCO DECIDED TO WRITE A LETTER TO HIS FIANCÉE BACK IN NEW YORK...



*Priscilla, my darling
Leave everything and come join me
here in San Francisco. My love for
you is as strong as ever, and I desire
above all things to hold you in my
arms again...*

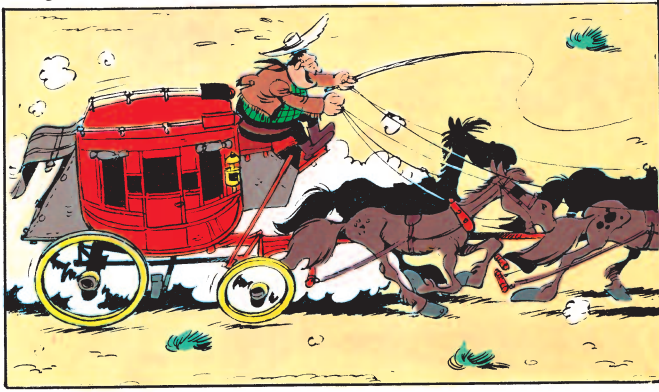
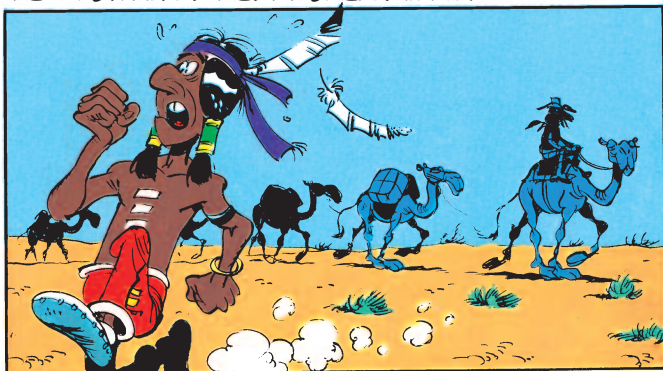
WELL, IN 1848, THIS LETTER WOULD HAVE TRAVELLED BY THE SHIPS OF THE U.S. MAIL STEAMSHIP CO. AND THE PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO.

FROM 1851 TO 1852, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED BY MULE TRAINS.



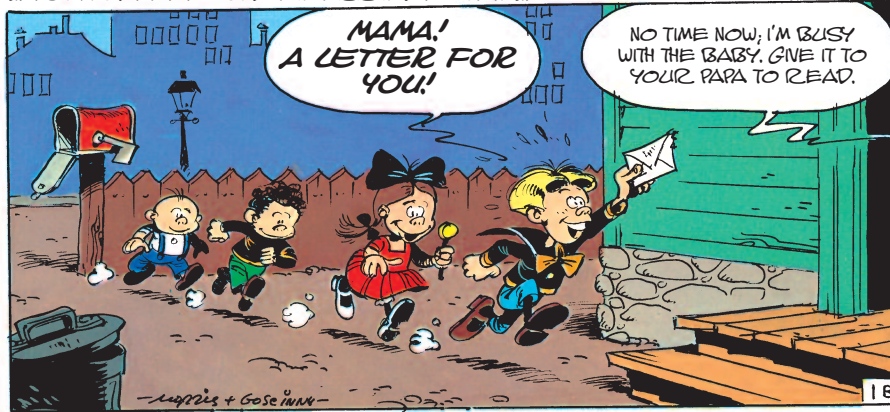
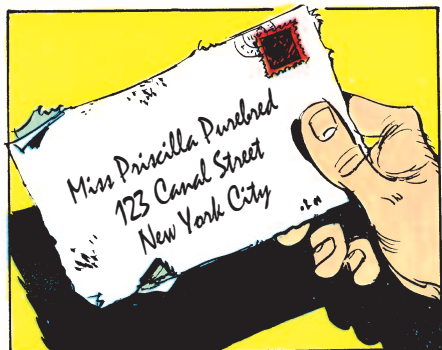
IN 1856, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PART OF THE LOAD OF A CAMEL CARAVAN—75 SHIPS OF THE DESERT THAT HAD BEEN IMPORTED FROM EGYPT BY EDWARD FITZGERALD BEALE.

FROM 1857 TO 1861, THE LETTER WOULD HAVE BEEN CARRIED BY STAGECOACH.



NOW, SUPPOSING THAT THE LETTER MANAGED TO AVOID SHIPWRECKS, MUTINIES, INDIAN WARS AND DESPERADOES...

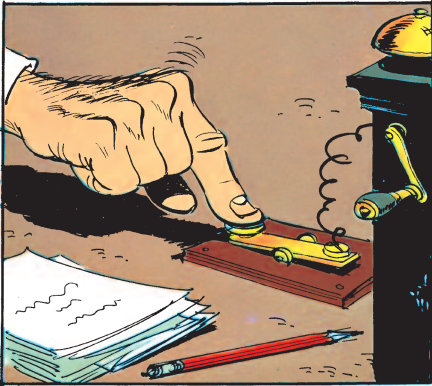
... IT'S LIKELY THAT IT WOULD HAVE ARRIVED TOO LATE...



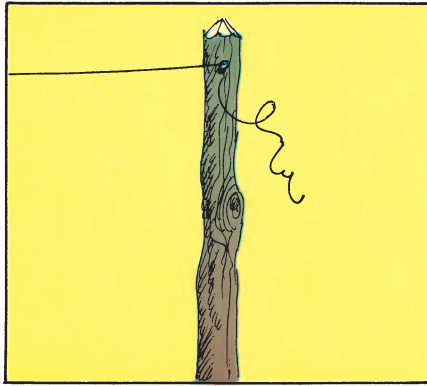
**MAMA!
A LETTER FOR
YOU!**

**NO TIME NOW; I'M BUSY
WITH THE BABY. GIVE IT TO
YOUR PAPA TO READ.**

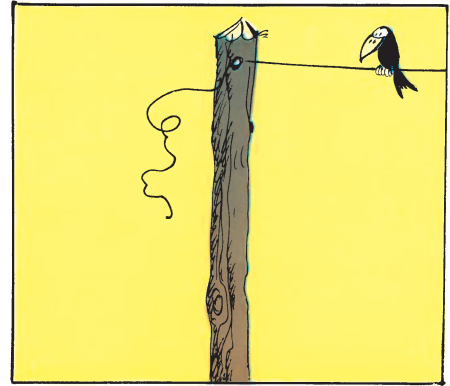
AND THEN THE TELEGRAPH MADE ITS APPEARANCE. BUT, UNTIL 1861...



... THE LINE FROM THE WEST ENDED AT CARSON CITY IN NEVADA TERRITORY...



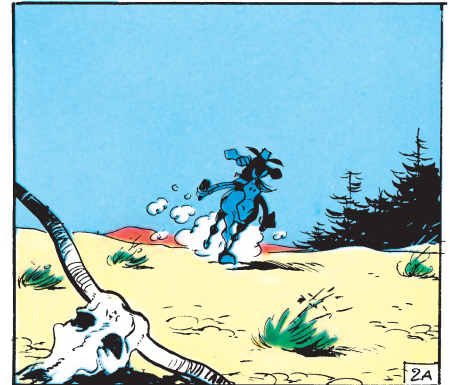
... AND THE LINE FROM THE EAST ENDED AT OMAHA IN NEBRASKA TERRITORY...



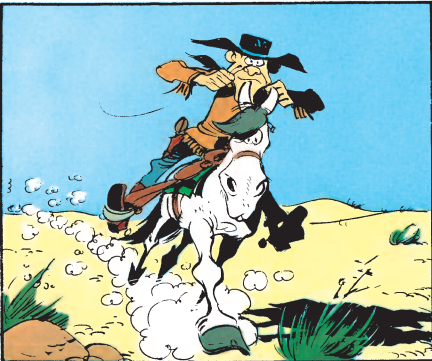
... LEAVING A GAP OF NEARLY 1,600 MILES TO CLOSE, WHICH PROVED PROBLEMATIC. THE GOVERNMENT WAVERED BEFORE THE COSTS OF THE OPERATION.*



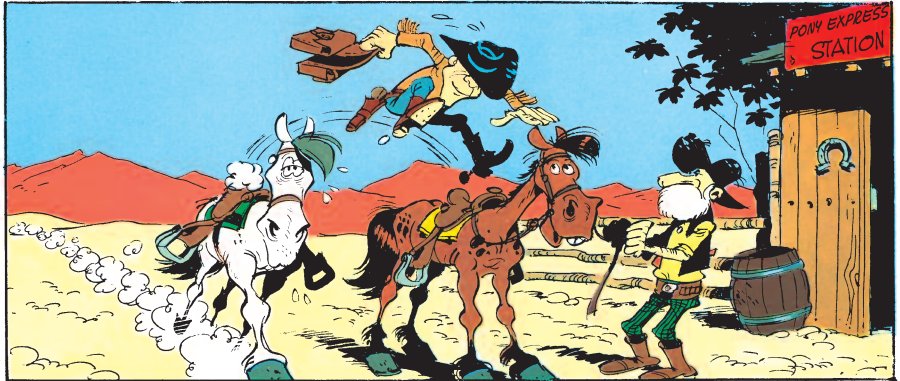
THUS, IN 1860, THE PONY EXPRESS WAS CREATED.



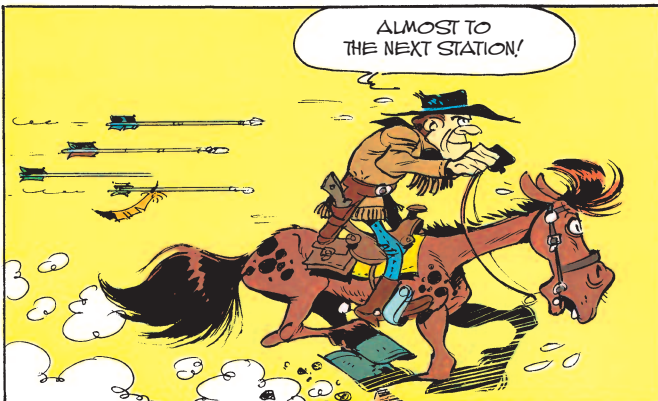
DARING RIDERS CARRIED THE MAIL, COVERING ENORMOUS DISTANCES IN RECORD TIMES.



TO DO THIS, THEY GALLOPED DAY AND NIGHT, CHANGING HORSES IN AN ACROBATIC FASHION OUTSIDE THE RELAY STATIONS THAT LINED THE ROUTE.



ALONG THE WAY, DANGERS WERE NUMEROUS.

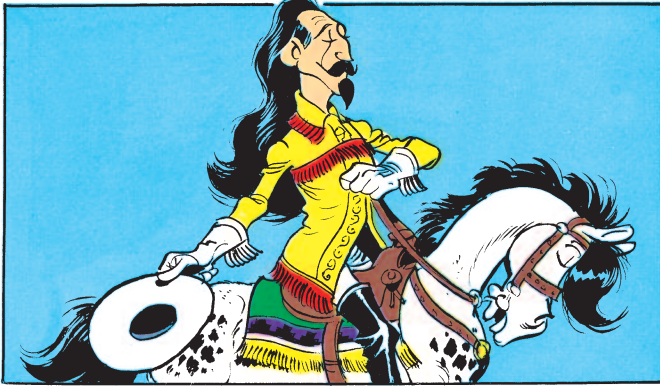


BUT, ABOVE ALL, THE PONY EXPRESS HORSES WERE PRIZED BY INDIANS AND BY BANDITS OF ALL KINDS.

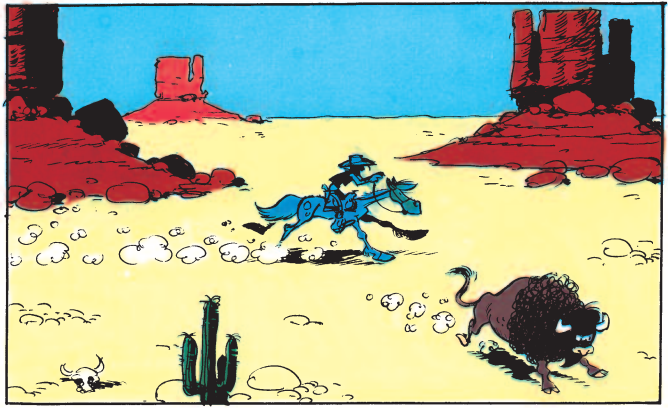


*THE TERRITORIES OF NEVADA AND NEBRASKA DIFFERED IN SIZE AND SHAPE IN 1861 FROM THE PRESENT-DAY STATES. THE MAP ABOVE IS BASED ON TODAY'S STATE BOUNDARIES.

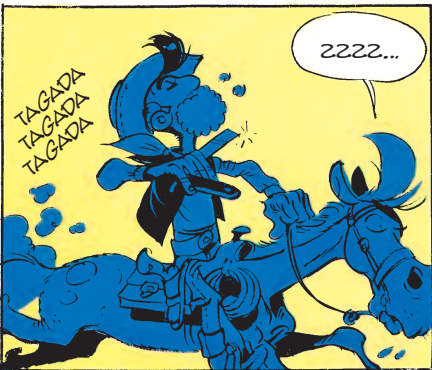
AMONG THE EXTRAORDINARY RIDERS OF THE PONY EXPRESS, SOME ARE STILL WELL-KNOWN, INCLUDING BUFFALO BILL...



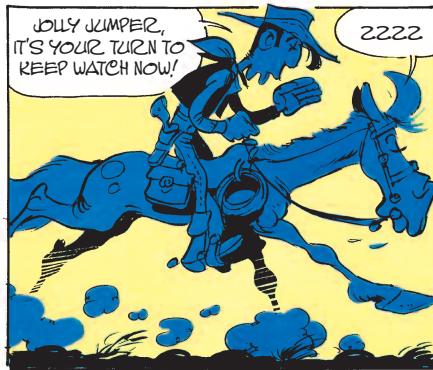
... AND LUCKY LUKE.



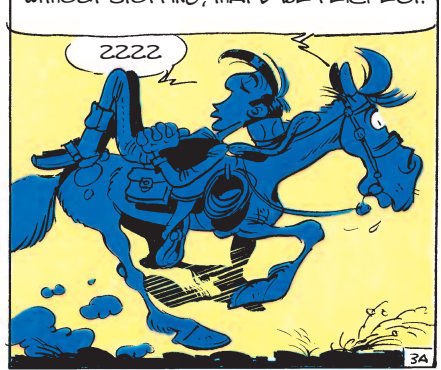
HIS HORSE, JOLLY JUMPER, RAN THE ENTIRE ROUTE WITHOUT EVER STOPPING.



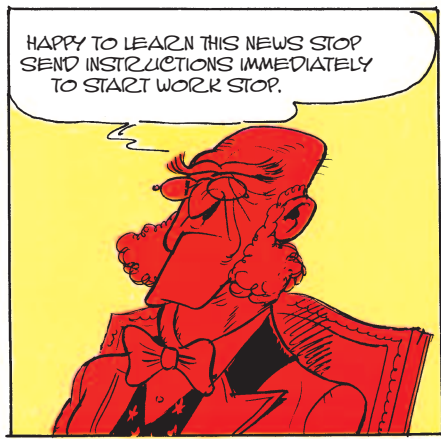
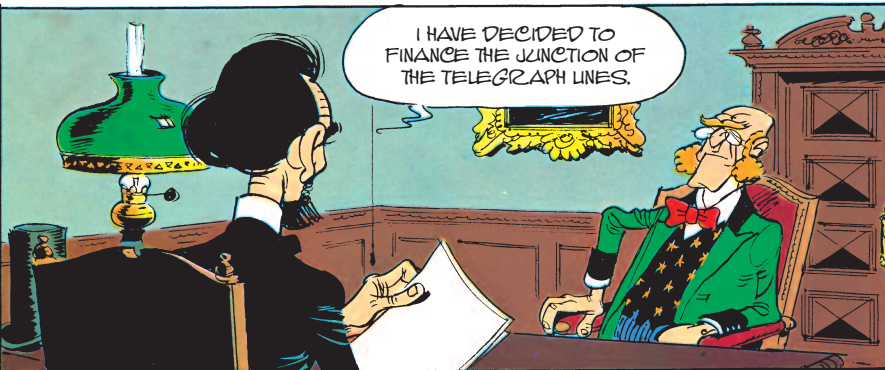
WE SHOULD CLARIFY, HOWEVER, THAT RIDER AND HORSE TOOK Turns SLEEPING.



IF I COULD FIND A WAY TO GRAZE WITHOUT STOPPING, THAT'D BE PERFECT.



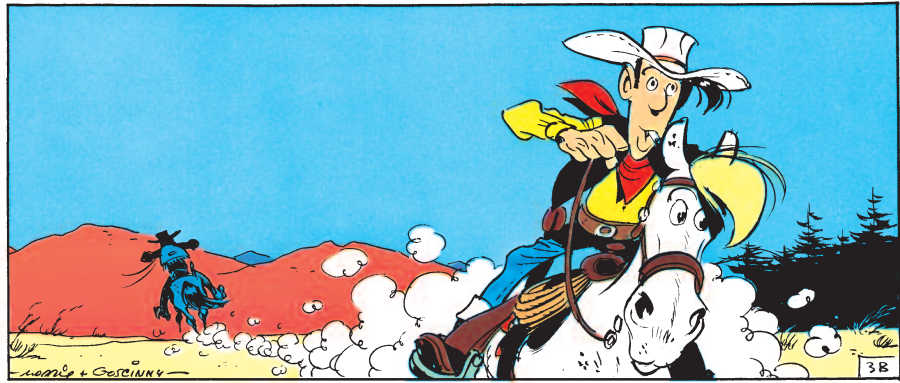
BUT THE SAGA OF THE PONY EXPRESS WAS TO BE BRIEF, FOR, IN WASHINGTON, PRESIDENT LINCOLN—WORRIED ABOUT THE START OF THE CIVIL WAR—HAD SUMMONED HIRAM SIBLEY, PRESIDENT OF WESTERN UNION.

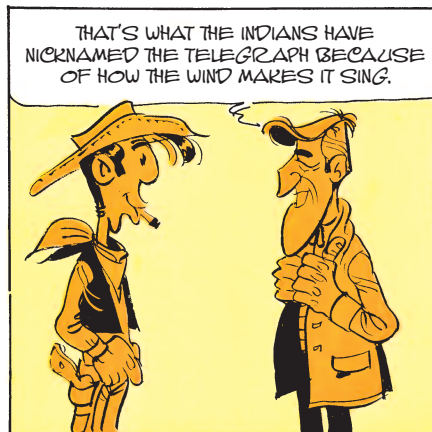
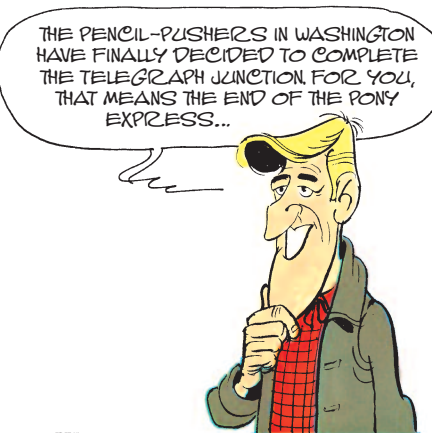
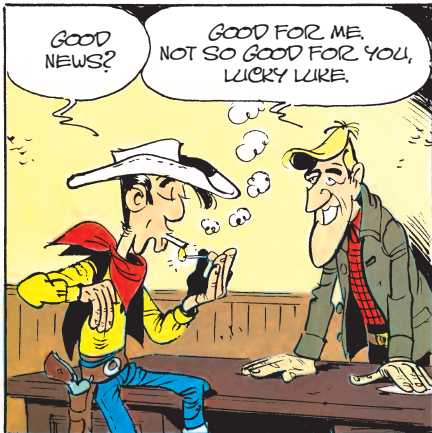
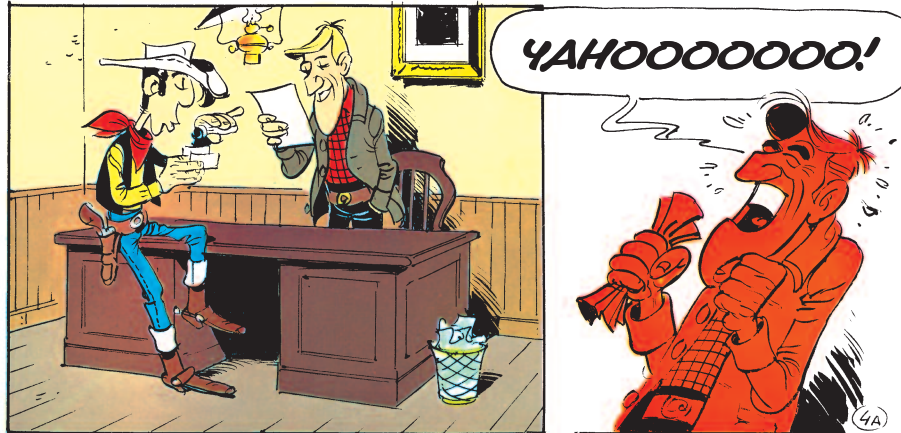
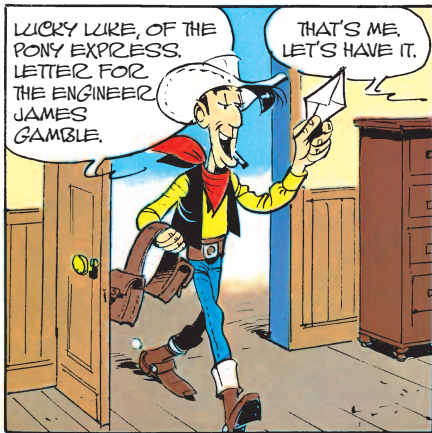
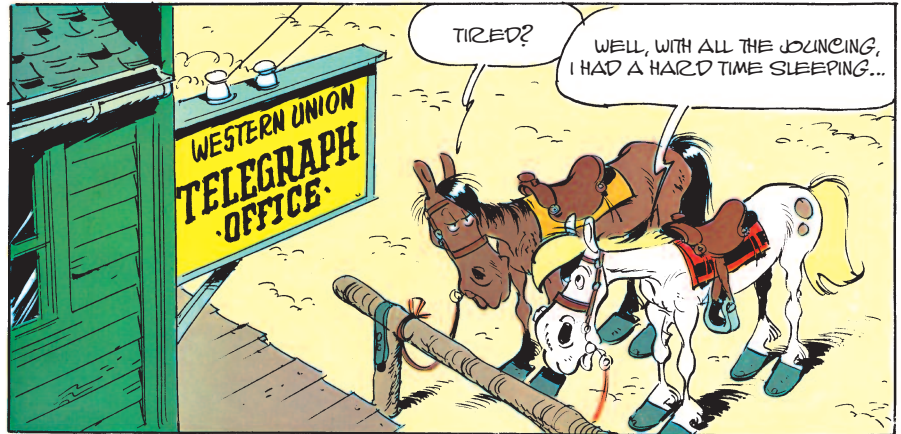
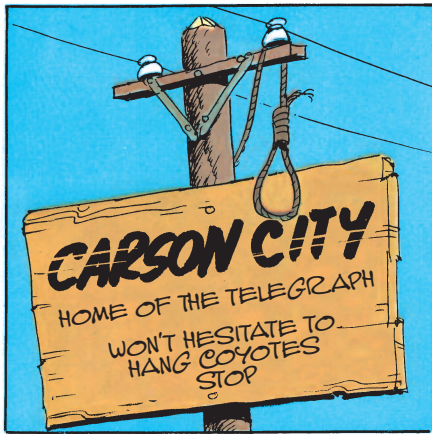


HAVE THE RESPONSIBLE PARTIES FROM BOTH ENDS COME TO WASHINGTON. WE SHALL SETTLE THE DETAILS.



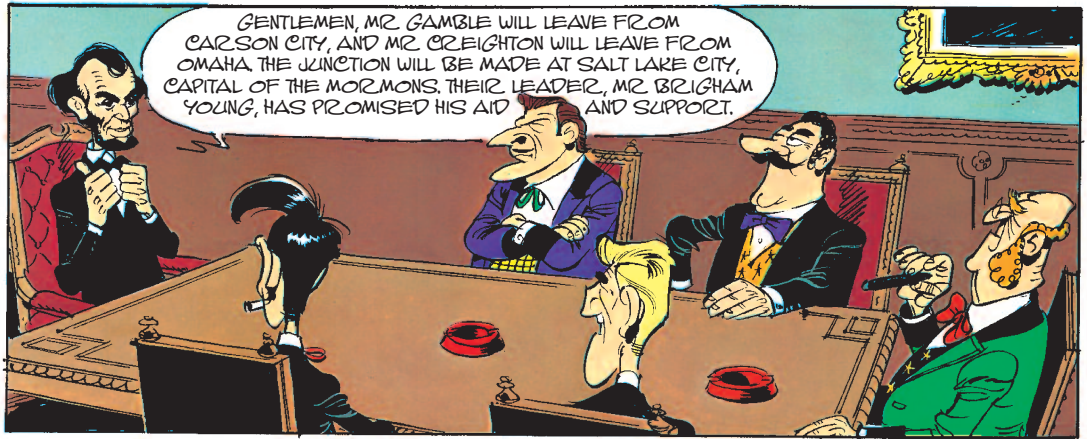
THE SAME DAY, TWO PONY EXPRESS RIDERS TOOK OFF IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. THE ONE HEADING FOR CARSON CITY WAS NONE OTHER THAN LUCKY LUKE.



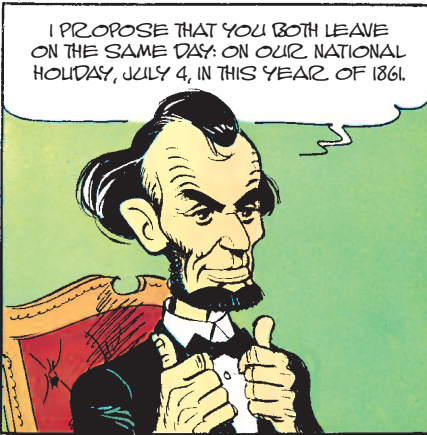


-MORRY + GOSINKY-

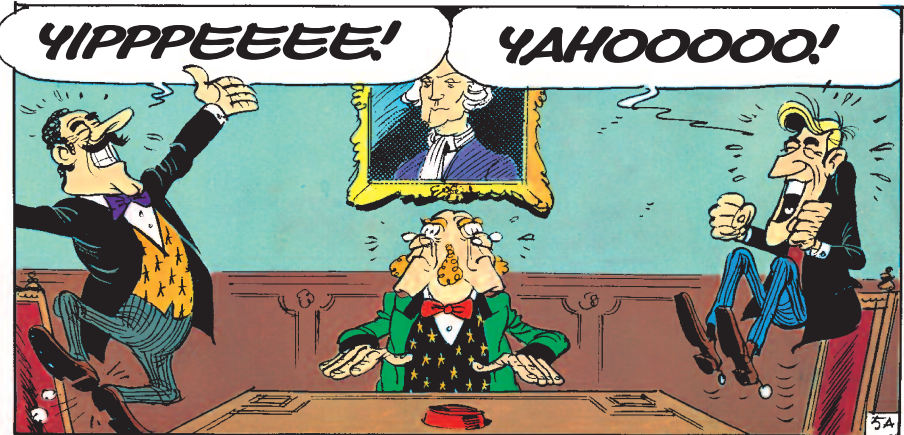
NOT LONG AFTER, THEY MET IN WASHINGTON WITH PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN HIMSELF. ALONG WITH JAMES GAMBLE, LUCKY LURE AND HIRAM SIBLEY, THERE WERE EDWARD CREIGHTON, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECTION TERMINATING AT OMAHA, AND HIS HEAD OF WORKS, WILLARD BRADWELL.



GENTLEMEN, MR GAMBLE WILL LEAVE FROM CARSON CITY, AND MR CREIGHTON WILL LEAVE FROM OMAHA. THE JUNCTION WILL BE MADE AT SALT LAKE CITY, CAPITAL OF THE MORMONS. THEIR LEADER, MR BRIGHAM YOUNG, HAS PROMISED HIS AID AND SUPPORT.



I PROPOSE THAT YOU BOTH LEAVE ON THE SAME DAY: ON OUR NATIONAL HOLIDAY, JULY 4, IN THIS YEAR OF 1861.

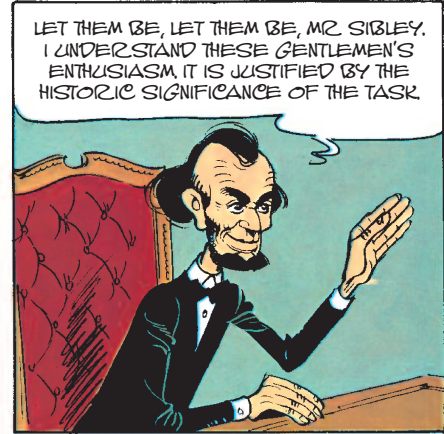


YIPPEEE!

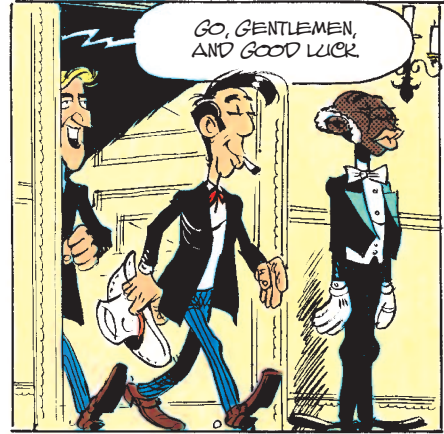
YAHOOOOO!



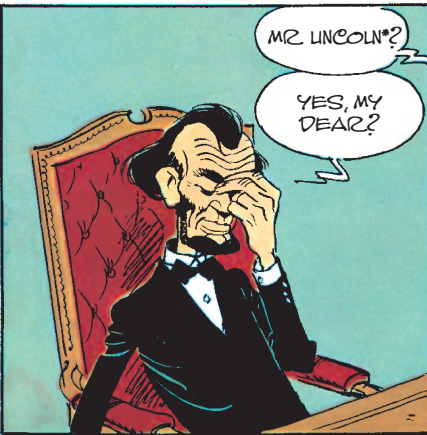
GENTLEMEN STOP YOU ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES STOP REPEAT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.



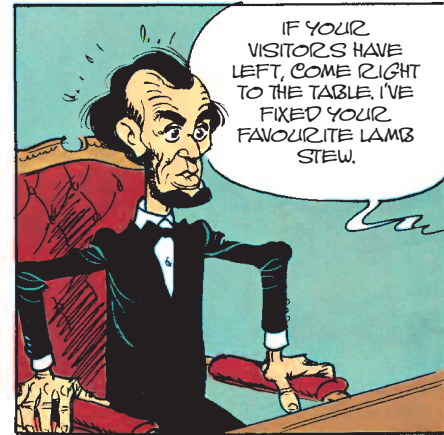
LET THEM BE, LET THEM BE, MR SIBLEY. I UNDERSTAND THESE GENTLEMEN'S ENTHUSIASM. IT IS JUSTIFIED BY THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TASK.



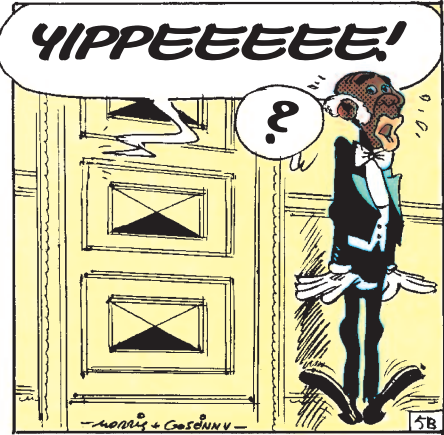
GO, GENTLEMEN, AND GOOD LUCK.



MR LINCOLN*?
YES, MY DEAR?



IF YOUR VISITORS HAVE LEFT, COME RIGHT TO THE TABLE. I'VE FIXED YOUR FAVOURITE LAMB STEW.



YIPPEEE!

?

*MARY TODD LINCOLN CALLED HER HUSBAND "MR LINCOLN" OR "FATHER."

