

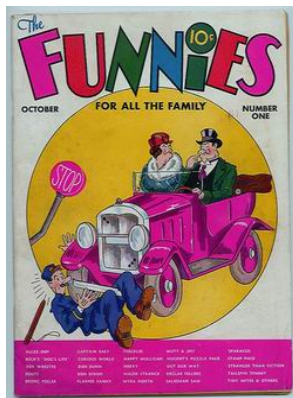


Today the earliest known comic book is called *The Adventures of Obadiah Oldbuck*. Originally published in several languages in Europe in 1837, among them an English version designed for Britain in 1841. A year later it was that version reprinted in New York on Sept. 14, 1842 for Americans, making it the first comic book printed in America. *Obadiah Oldbuck* is 40 pages long and measured 8 ½" x 11". The book was side stitched, and inside there were 6 to 12 panels per page. No word balloons, but there is text under the panels to describe the story. A copy of it was discovered in Oakland, California in 1998.

The Platinum Age 1897 - 1938



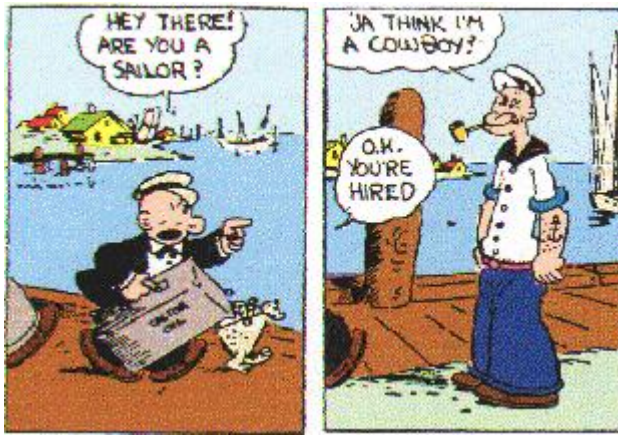
Early 1897 a book called *The Yellow Kid in McFadden's Flats* came out. The comic was 196 pages long, square bound, black and white, 50 cents and 5 ½" x 7 ½". It was published by G. W. Dillingham Company with permission from Hearst, the newspaper that had **Hogan's Alley** at the time. It was a part of a series that Dillingham did on American Authors, only he took special liberties with this one and created what is today known as a comic book. In fact this comic that coined the phrase "Comic Book" as it's written on the back cover. Inside we get an origin of sorts as it reprints the earliest **Yellow Kid's** appearances. There is some text within by E. W. Townsend explaining Outcault and the Kid. This comic book starts what is now called the Platinum Age of Comics.



In 1929 Dell Publishing took a crack at a regular Comic Book. The comic was called *The Funnies* and was done in a big tabloid-sized format. They were 16 pages and sold for 10 cents. It was distributed by the newsstands along with newspapers. Unlike *Comic Monthly*, this book was done 4 colours and had original comic strips instead of reprints. A new issue came out every Saturday, but it lost money. Issues #3 to #21 were 30 cents each. The price changed to 5 cents with issue #22 and lasted the final issue with #36.

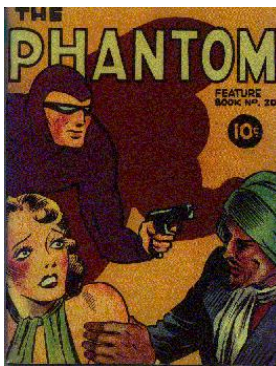


By 1940, Centuar Publications would be the first to publish titles devoted to a single theme. They were *Detective Picture Stories*, *Western Picture Stories*, and *Funny Picture Stories*.



Prior to Comicbook heroes we had pulp heroes. "Pulps" were small 10 cent books sold on the newsstands, usually filled with action heroes going to exotic places and having adventures. Among these heroes were Doc Samson and [The Shadow](#). They also had very popular radio shows. While they certainly did things that were beyond what a normal person could do, they weren't called superheroes or marketed as if they had abilities beyond a person at their

physical peak. Nonetheless, they had their influence on what was to come. Another pre-Superhero came from the comic strips, he is **Popeye**. He was created by Elzie Segar and first appeared in a strip called *Thimble Theater* in 1929. While he didn't go out and fight crime, he did eat his spinich and displayed some 'above average' feats of human strength while fighting his nemises **Bluto**. This picture is the first ever appearance of Popeye.



This comic is the first American publishing of **The Phantom**, who is now a worldwide hero. **The Phantom** made his debut on February 17th, 1936 and he was the first costumed hero. He was created by Lee Falk, who still today is working on his stories. **The Phantom** was the kind of hero that despite his normal "human" capabilities, fought crime with bravery and death defying stunts.

The Golden Age (1938 - 1956)

In June 1938, *Action Comics* #1 came out, featuring a man in a red and blue costume lifting a car over his head! This was **Superman**, the very first comic character to have powers far beyond a normal human being.

