

PART TWO
OF THREE

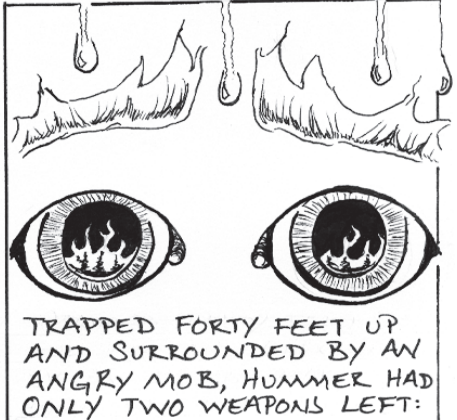
IN LATE SUMMER, 1848, ONLY WEEKS AFTER HIS MYSTIC MUMBO-JUMBO GOT HIM FIRED FROM HIS POST AS IOWA CITY'S FIRST PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER, MICHAEL HUMMER RETURNED WITH A LADDER, A HORSE, A WAGON, AND HIS FRIEND, DR. J.W. MARGRAVE. TOGETHER THEY PLANNED TO STEAL THE BELL FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. HUMMER FIGURED IT BELONGED TO HIM - AFTER ALL, HE'D RAISED THE BELL FUND...

AND BESIDES, THE CHURCH STILL OWED HIM \$650 IN BACK WAGES - JUST ABOUT THE PRICE OF A NEW BELL.

IA Confidential

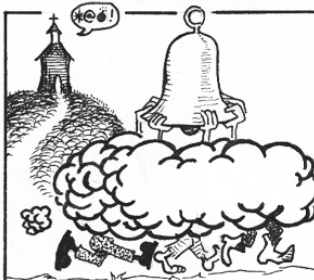
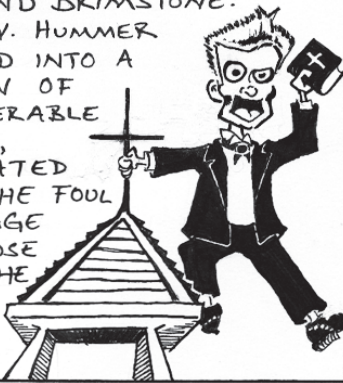
THE PAIR CLIMBED A LADDER TO THE BELFRY, SET UP ROPES AND TACKLE, AND LOWERED THEIR EVANGELICAL BOOTY TO THE GROUND. DR. MARGRAVE LEFT TO GET THE HORSE AND WAGON

... BUT BEFORE HE RETURNED, AN ANGRY CROWD OF CHURCHGOERS STOLE THE REVREND'S LADDER, STRANDING HIM.



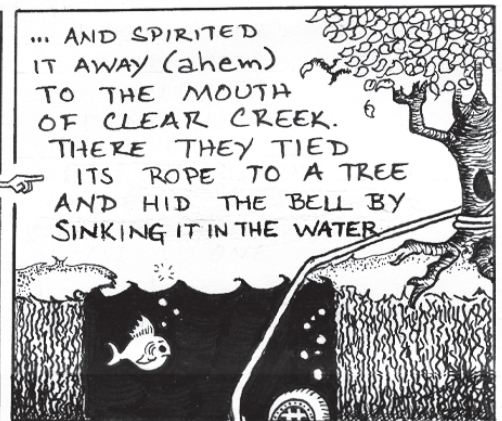
TRAPPED FORTY FEET UP AND SURROUNDED BY AN ANGRY MOB, HUMMER HAD ONLY TWO WEAPONS LEFT:

FIRE AND BRIMSTONE! THE REV. HUMMER LAUNCHED INTO A SERMON OF CONSIDERABLE WRATH, PUNCTUATED WITH THE FOUL LANGUAGE AND LOOSE BRICKS HE FLUNG AT THE CROWD.



MEANWHILE, A POSSE FROM THE CHURCH SCOOPED UP THE FALLEN BELL...

... AND SPIRITED IT AWAY (ahem) TO THE MOUTH OF CLEAR CREEK. THERE THEY TIED ITS ROPE TO A TREE AND HID THE BELL BY SINKING IT IN THE WATER.

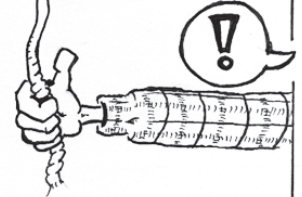


MARGRAVE RETURNED AND HELPED HIS FRIEND DOWN FROM THE BELFRY. WITH THE CONGREGATION IN HOT PURSUIT, THE WOULD-BE BELL THIEVES SCURRIED BACK TO KEOKUK.



HUMMER WAS THE LAUGHING STOCK OF IOWA CITY. THAT NIGHT, DRINKING AT SWAN'S HOTEL, LOCAL LAWYER JOHN COOK - INSPIRED BY THE ALE AND MOORE'S "THOSE EVENING BELLS" - WROTE THIS SONG:

"AH HUMMER'S BELL, HUMMER'S BELL
HOW MANY A TALE OF WOE 'TWOULD TELL
OF HUMMER DRIVING UP TO TOWN
TO TAKE THE BRAZEN JEWEL DOWN,
AND WHEN HIGH UP IN HIS BELFRE-E,
THEY MOVED THE LADDER, YES, SURE;
THUS WHILE HE TOWERED ALOFT, THEY SAY,
THE BELL TOOK WINGS AND FLEW AWAY!"



BUT THE JOKE WAS ON THEM: WHEN THEY RETURNED TO THE CREEK AND HOISTED UP THE BELL-ROPE, THE BELL WASN'T THERE ANYMORE! NEXT ISSUE: DING-DONG GONE

