



T-Bone Slim

(Note: Pronounce "elka-meeno-re-all"; accent first, third and last syllable (as in Mont-real) = Montreuil).

THE ARROYO SECO

El Camino Real!

*Man must be, know, see all,
Live and learn and recu't—*

And yet it cramps my style
To engineer a smile
The while I boil a mess of bile
In this golden vial:
This Hour of rampant guile!
This Age of sophist wile
This Life, predominantly vile,
The Mooney-Billings trial!
El Camino Real!
When and what will be all?
What grim "fate" shall befall?
The Royal Road itself is sweet
But not so sweet on royal feet
The sum beats you of treat, complete—
With heat replete steeped in deceit—
Ah, brethern, that was burning meat
Not of the kind the parsons eat—
Hitch-hiking blisters do not cheat
All that is left, the Royal Seat!
The great baboon now learnt to bleat:

El Camino Real!

When I was admiral in the Swiss navy
(or was it Irish?) I was almost elevated
to high position in the yard-arm by a crew
of irresponsible Kings Bosuns on account
of lifting anchor for the Battle of Penokee
Range without carrying aboard sufficient
grog for medical purposes.

I was also uplifted by the King to the
title, Royal Horse-Doctor to his Royal
Jackass which carried with it the title
Chirurgien-General of the King's Tubs and
Dubbs.

Now it happened a bunch of patriots
and halfwits got together and threw a
peruna-party in honor of us war-scarred
(not seared) heroes of the Battle of Penokee
Range, just outside the Port of Hurley,
Wisconsin—yes sir, sir.

And it also happened that peruna was
not the only steamulating elixir—we had
raisin-jack, hair-oil, bay rum and brasse-
polish—and it wasn't long till the world
resounded to the martial air of "The Old
Gray Mare" and other great melodies that
inspire men to "go off" and kill somebody.
Now peruna as I understand is not consti-
pating—I believe the company gives a
written guarantee to that effect—the
ladies present can also be absolved of all
responsibility for the terrible things that
happened—I lay it to peruna.

It is with mingled feelings somewhat
mangled I must confess I was never
caught breathing olive-oil and raw oysters
while murmuring "angela mia"—that's a
highly technical statement; I may have been
caught while not breathing the above
ingredients. It was only during the breath-
ing of oil and oysters that I was not
caught in the act of pronouncing those
fatal words. It doesn't say here anywhere
that I did not murmur "angela mia". It
doesn't say here I was never caught
breathing olive oil and raw oysters. In fact
the statement accounts only for a very
short fraction of my life—about 3 seconds,
for first offence. (What I've been doing
the rest of my life is nobody's business.)
(Our editors are growing cockeyed just
from watching our majestic flow of
language that doesn't mean a thing.) Do
you mean to say editor, that I should not
defend my character and uphold the honor
of the King's navy? How do you get that
way?

I have not admitted for a single instant,
in that statement, that I murmured "an-
gela mia" with or without; or anything
like it. Show me!

Now that my character once more is
above reproach we can take up these ter-
rible incidents that came within an ace
of scandalizing the whole seaboard. We
can't take 'em up just now, editor! Some
of our readers, which are legion, have
forgotten the immortal words of that
grand ballad of 49 years ago, The Old
Gray Mare:

It seems a young man was courting a
girl and the pair was deeply in love with
one another—almost too deeply. The old
man, the father of the girl, had a sorrel
mare that was gray. The young man not
knowing the old man had settled all his
wealth on the young pair, told the old man
he would not marry the girl unless he was
given the old gray mare. "It's yours," the
old man said, with hearty curse, "it's
yours," and he put his scads back in his
purse.

Quite a contretemps! He fought for the
mare and got it, but lost a fortune. Tough
titty!

The girl getting wind of his bone headed
play proceeded to take to the warpath and
kicked him the full length of Iron County
and into the discard—he didn't even get
the mare.

He lost out three ways.

As I said before, tough titty.

Us officers of the king's navy always
sing that sweet ballad, when shot and

shell are flying thickest—we feel that we
are fighting for the old gray mare.

The young man felt he could not re-
turn to his home port until he had built
up his rear and time had healed the spots
where she had heeled and trampled him—
I don't blame her—and it was twenty
years before he showed his schnozzle over
the backyard fence:

"Remember me? Sweet Alice shy,"

We hear him snort half in despair.—

"And shure I do, ain't you the guy

That came to court our old gray mare?"

Mebbe I don't get it word for word,
but then, what's the odds—our readers
have forgotten it word for word.

At the peruna-party this beautiful ballad
kept the girls in good humor and gave us
veterans of foreign scars an opportunity
to pay homage to the best tonic known
to human concoction: Suddenly as if the
ship had struck a rock there was a rumble
in the bowels of the navy's principle unit
that sounded ominous. Being an admiral
I immediately made a rush for the closet
to say my prayers—unfortunately I had
left the nickel in the flagship's strongbox
and it was one of those pay-closets where-
in prayers follow the contribution.

Before I could reach for succor there
was a terrific explosion like a crown
sheet dropping out of a steamboiler and
shooting out from both ends. The king's
admiral was a social, physical hygienic and
spiritual wreck—raisinjack and peruna
had had it out and I comited.

"Boy, call me a taxi, in the name of
the king!" On the way to the quay, me
rapidly recovering my wellknown sobriety,
we passed a jacksailor who was making
heavy seaway, tacking from side to side.—
"Stop! In the name of the king—pick up
that drunken lout." "Avast, me lad, can't
you see he can not navigate, pick him
up."—

Together we struggled through a verse
or two of the old gray mare and when
we reached the quay I was sober to the
point of superciliousness: "Officer of the
Guard, arrest that man, throw him in the
brig. Look at what he did to my cape and
uniform. Remember! you saw what he did
to my uniform. That'll be all—when we go
aboard come and get these clothes and
have them cleaned—that'll be all."—

When the clothes were returned to me
in the pure state, I reminded the corporal,
"you saw that he had comited all over
me, that'll be all."—"Yes sir, but that
isn't all he did—he dirtied your under-
wear, too.

"He did! I'll have him court martialed
and drummed out of the navy."

(Never mind how I got these—I've got
'em, ain't I? Possession is nine points in
law.)