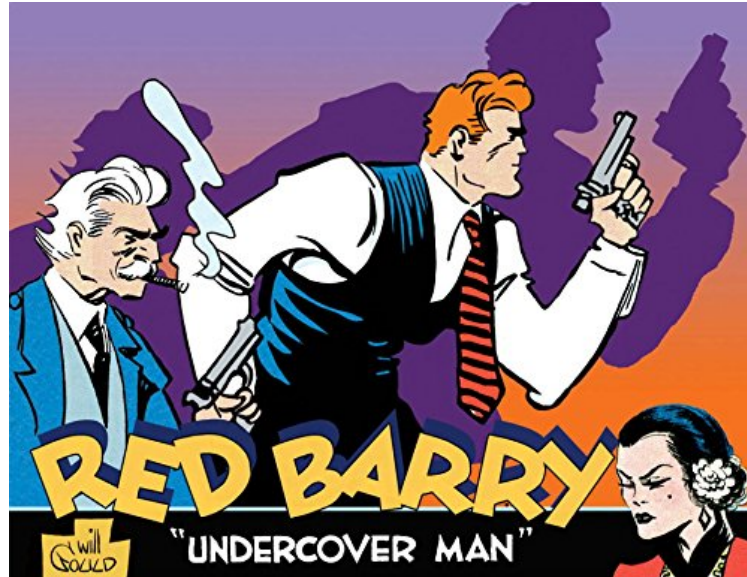


Red Barry: Undercover Man Volume 1

Will Gould

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Will Gould : Red Barry: Undercover Man Volume 1 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Red Barry: Undercover Man Volume 1:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A Beautiful Presentation of Lost Classic By Stephen Vincent Kempton The Library Of American Comics does the best presentation of Comic Strips Period. And this book is as good as it gets. This is the first of two matching volumes which will reproduce the entire four year run. This volume has the daily (1934 and 1935) Black and White strips reproduced in crystal sharp clarity. The Dailies are reproduced three strips to a page in the oversized Landscape format. While the Sundays which were a separate continuity and run in the back of the book in full glorious color. The coloring is faithful to the original, but when the source material has bleed over printing or smudging happened this has been computer corrected. So it all looks like a pristine copy of a 1935 newspaper supplement. Since the Sundays ran full page size this volume reprints them one Sunday for on two facing pages. Since the original Sundays ran initially four tiers then went to six tiers they all can be divided in half perfectly with no loss. The book runs almost 300 pages with a great introduction by Bruce Canwell lavishly illustrated by other early examples of Will Gould's work and other comic strips. You also get LOAC traditional book cover and attached linen book mark. The comic strip ran for 4 years and was a direct response to the success of the Dick Tracy comic strip. King Features desperately wanted a Hard Boiled Detective strip of their own so they set about creating Secret Agent X-9. Artist Will Gould was one of those trying out for X-9. When Will Gould (no relation to Dick Tracy's Chester Gould) submitted his work for X-9 he submitted a separate proposal for Red Barry. A strip he would be allowed to write as well as illustrate. King Features picked Alex Raymond for X-9, but also approved Red Barry at the same time. In 1934 the idea of a police man going Under Cover was considered very original and not the Genre Troupe it is today. The early strips very much emulate the gritty style of Dick Tracy. The first major supporting character is Ouchy McGouchy who is a kid Sidekick very much in the vein of Tracy's Junior. While some of the early villains were on the bizarre side like Tracy he soon switched over to more realistic characters like Killer Donniger

who was a thinly disguised John Dillinger. The violence in the strip was ramped up with grisly deaths. When Publisher William Randolph Hearst saw some early examples he was disgusted and asked Writer Dashiell Hammett (writer of X-9) to mentor him. This backfired and the two became good drinking buddies. For my money Will Gould wrote the superior comic strip. The one fault I noticed in some of the early strips is that Gould had major events happen "off camera" and not illustrated. We are just told about it in the captions. For example when Ouchy McGouchy is shot in a criminal crossfire. We only learn who it was in the next day's recap. Overall I think I enjoyed the Sundays more but that might be because it started almost a year later and Gould's storytelling skills had vastly improved. The only error I found was on page 203 at the beginning of the Sunday Section where the editors give the wrong year. Overall this is an excellent presentation of a little-known classic. The ending of the series which I am sure will be touched on more in the second volume has more to do with Gould's Socialite Lifestyle which put the strip constantly behind schedule and a lawsuit over Movie Rights than the number of readers and popularity of the strip. My Highest Recommendation. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very good. By J. A. T. This is a fun strip, with better artwork than "Dick Tracy" (at least many periods of it, in my taste) and a very interesting use of slang of its day. It seemed to me like the dailies for the first half of the book (very roughly speaking), looked softer than the second half of it, but overall this is another excellent edition from the LoAC/IDW guys. The artwork itself also evolves quite much from the beginnings of the strip to the latter part of it.

A forgotten gem, this underrated competitor to Dick Tracy will astound new readers with its innovative style and delight vintage comics fans to no end. Red Barry was one of the most visually innovative adventure strips of the mid-1930s, combining fluid brushwork and noir shadows (in bold blues and purples) with figures that were constantly in motion, plus a level of violence that brought cries of protest from its syndicate. Red Barry and Secret Agent X-9 were King Features' answers to the Tribune Syndicate's popular Dick Tracy by Chester Gould. While X-9 continued for decades under hands of various quality, Red Barry by Will Gould (no relation to Chester) was an auteur's vision that lasted less than four years (primarily because Gould couldn't meet his deadlines). Regardless, it is today considered one of comics history's great unsung masterpieces, one which famed mystery writer Anthony Boucher (Rocket to the Morgue, Nine Times Nine) said was "the only detective strip...worthy of any consideration from my scholarly viewpoint." This two-volume series reprints the complete dailies and color Sundays.

"Red Barry is the one successful detective comic strip and the only one worthy of consideration, from my scholarly viewpoint." —Anthony Boucher "I will not tolerate such disgusting violence on my comics pages!" —William Randolph Hearst "Why don't you leave him alone? He knows what he's doing. And it's goddammed good stuff!" —Dashiell Hammett About the Author Will Gould (1911-1984) was a sports cartoonist when he created a pair of sports-related syndicated strips before Red Barry hit the national stage. He worked in Hollywood in the 1940s and was a cartoon editor in the 1960s.