
Fred C. Ellis Plunges 5 Stories; Hits Walk: Cartoonist Escapes with Minor Fractures When Painters' Swing Rope Breaks.

by Robert M. Buck

Published in *The New Majority* [Chicago], v. 2, no. 5 (Aug. 2, 1919), pg. 5.
Unsigned article attributed to editor Robert M. Buck.

Not many men who fall 5 stories and hit a cement walkway live to tell the story. Fred C. Ellis, whose cartoons in *The New Majority* have placed him in the foremost rank of American illustrators, fell from a painter's swing, while working on an outdoor advertising illustration on a North Side building last Thursday [July 24, 1919].

He dropped like a plummet to the cement sidewalk, 60 feet below, and alighted on his feet. He suffered fractures of both feet and his right hand and slightly injured his spine. He was picked up by some passing autoists and rushed to Passavant Hospital, where he was given attention. Later he was transferred to the Presbyterian Hospital, where X-ray examination revealed the full extent of his injuries.

Marvelous Escape From Death.

That he was not killed or seriously crippled was a miracle. Ellis and a fellow worker had worked all morning on the swing attached by large hooks to the roof of the building, a 6 story structure. Ellis was standing erect when one of the lines holding the swinging bridge parted. His companion was on the roof. Ellis grasped at a window sill, but could not obtain a hold. The swing swung down like a pendulum when the

rope parted and Ellis shot feet foremost to the street.

"I knew I was due for a drop," he said Sunday [July 27, 1919] at the Presbyterian Hospital, where he

lay with his arm and feet in plaster casts. "I was too far over to grab the guide line — so I just set myself for the spill. I figured if I could keep my head up I would have a chance. It seemed like I was standing in the air while I was dropping to the sidewalk. I remember seeing the fellows come over and scoop me off the sidewalk — then I lost consciousness."

Similar Fall Kills Painter.

Another man engaged in similar work was killed a few days before, a short distance from the building where Ellis was hurt, falling from a similar height and crashing through the top of an automobile.

Ellis' cartoons will be missed by his many friends among the readers of *The New Majority*, while his clever right hand is jailed in its plaster cast. Notwithstanding Ellis' pluck and vitality it will be several weeks before he will again be able to resume his occupation.

Readers of this paper who have enjoyed his cartoons may help lighten his tedious stay in the hospital by writing him letters.



Edited by Tim Davenport.

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