



designed drawings of geese that we had seen on the storyboards were suddenly two very real personalities bustling about with their own private dignity—haughty, appraising, critical, and funny. They were real geese, with all the movements of real geese, but they had revealed the personalities that could be understood and shared by all humans.

Finding entertainment in a personality does not mean making a clown out of that character. It means only that one is relating to qualities common to all individuals, and there is no loss of dignity inherent in that process. The personality traits can be heroic, altruistic, or noble; it is the use made of them in the story situation that determines whether they are comic, or cute, or stupid, or mean. There are many ways of being entertaining, and the challenge is to the storyman to create situations where these individual traits can be brought out in an entertaining way.

Many animals have their attributes already defined by the legends and stories of various cultures. A coyote is a cunning and wise hero to the American Indian, and a villainous predator to the sheepman. To most people, a rabbit is nervous and almost completely helpless; a wolf is all villain, whether he is slaving or deceitful; and the beaver is hard-working with no sense of humor. When casting a picture with “good guys” and “bad guys,” these are important considerations. The “good guys” have to be small, ineffectual, cute, and associated with nonviolence. It doesn’t matter if the real animal is that way or not. You are playing off images in the viewers’ subconscious, and if people

grew up thinking a certain way that is where you must start. To have a mean and cruel kitten terrorizing a family of nervous, flighty bears is an uphill fight for everybody.

Still, there is considerable room for variations. In *Robin Hood*, some of us thought the Sheriff of Nottingham would be more interesting if he were a goat. As the story was structured, there was no need for him to be a crafty villain; he was only stupid, bossy, and unconcerned with the people he might be hurting. A goat with a thick skull could do this much and give the animators a new animal to draw that could open up fresh ideas.

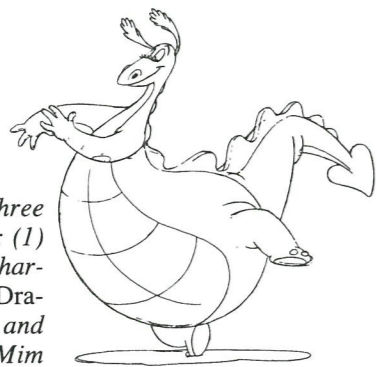
The director of that film felt just as strongly that the Sheriff should be a wolf, because the audience believes the wolf to be a villain. The fact that recent research has shown him to be a good family man and a fine fellow will do little to change ideas that are centuries old. In addition, the goat has no established role in legend, and we would have the burden of proving that he was good or bad or indifferent. Developing that image could waste precious footage that might be better used to show entertainment in the specific kind of villain he was.

The most provocative discussions come when the story calls for a mythical creature, or one that has not appeared in tale or legend. A dragon is known to be ill-tempered and sullen, so that is not too much of a problem. But other pictures may include creatures with no connotations. When Woolie Reitherman was animating the dinosaurs in *Fantasia*, Walt told him to

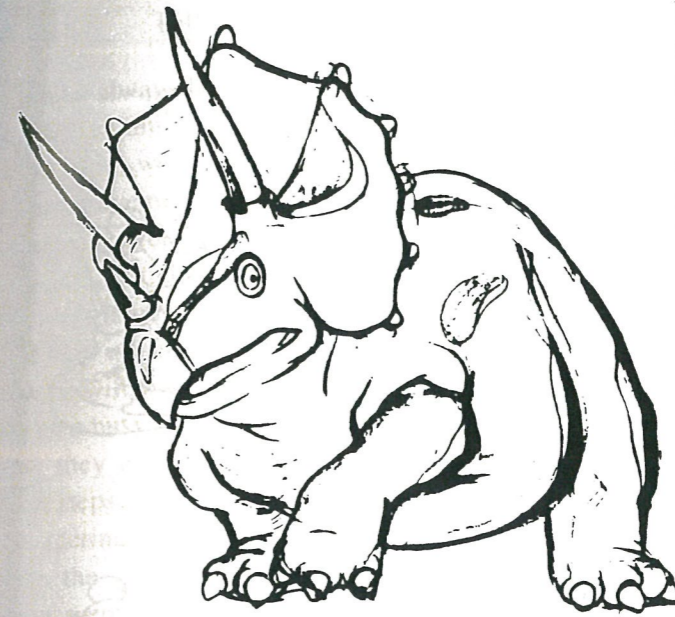


ARTIST: Ken Anderson—Robin Hood.

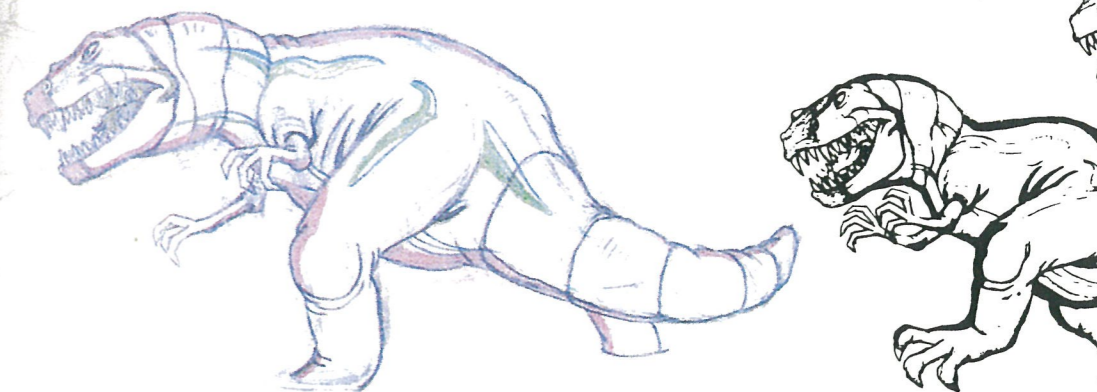
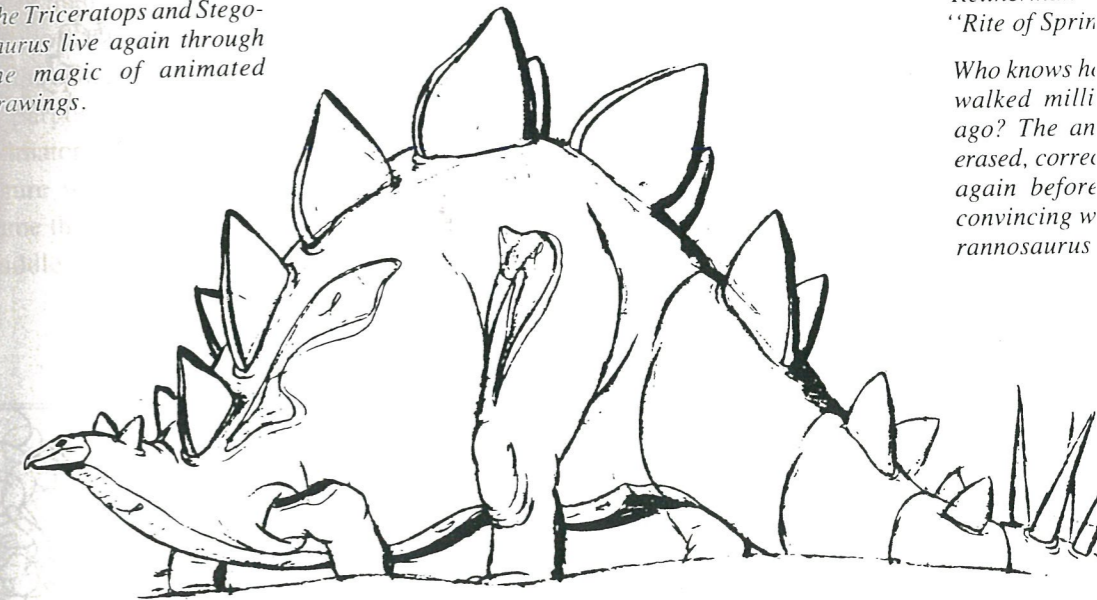
*How the Sheriff of Nottingham might look as a goat: in medieval finery appropriate to the period, and as a modern Southern highway patrol officer.*



Three dragons with three different personalities: (1) The refined and poetic character in *The Reluctant Dragon*; (2) The impulsive and undisciplined Madam Mim in *The Sword in the Stone*; (3) The spectacular transformation of the evil fairy Maleficent in *Sleeping Beauty*.



*The Triceratops and Stegosaurus live again through the magic of animated drawings.*



beware of any human personality traits, make them cute animal personalities. The brains, y’know; make them real!” It was a request since there was little research on a real dinosaur might have been like a real dinosaur. He dipped into his imagination and, working closely with Bill Reiterman, directing that sequence, came up with dinosaurs that seemed to be just the way we imagined these giants should be, but they thought about it before! Fortified by a magnificent score, they created, together, something that never can be forgotten.

ANIMATOR: Woolie Reitherman—*Rite of Spring*

*Who knows how long he walked millions of years ago? The an- erased, corre- again before convincing w rannosaurus*



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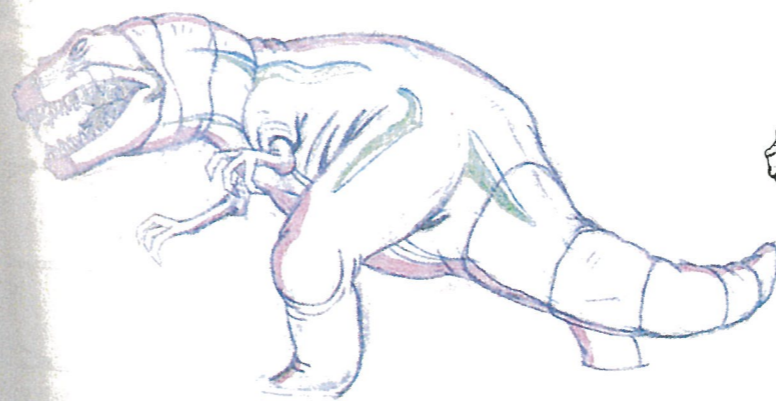
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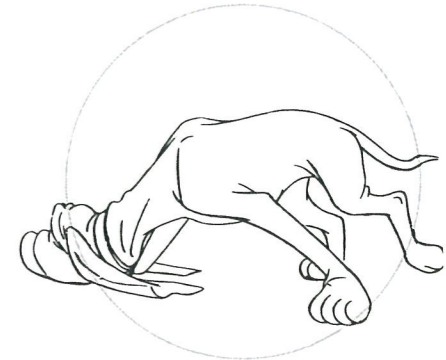
*The Triceratops and Stego-  
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beware of any human personality traits, “Don’t make  
them cute animal personalities. They’ve got small  
brains, y’know; make them real!” It was a disarming  
request since there was little research possible on what  
a real dinosaur might have been like, but Woolie was  
not bothered. He dipped into his imagination, combin-  
ed that with a few raw animal things he had seen,  
and, working closely with Bill Roberts, who was  
directing that sequence, came up with scenes of dino-  
saurus that seemed to be just the way people always  
imagined these giants should be, if ever they had  
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nificent score, they created, together, a stirring film  
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*ANIMATOR: Woolie  
Reitherman—  
“Rite of Spring,” Fantasia.*

*Who knows how a dinosaur  
walked millions of years  
ago? The animator drew,  
erased, corrected, and drew  
again before getting this  
convincing walk on the Ty-  
rannosaurus Rex.*

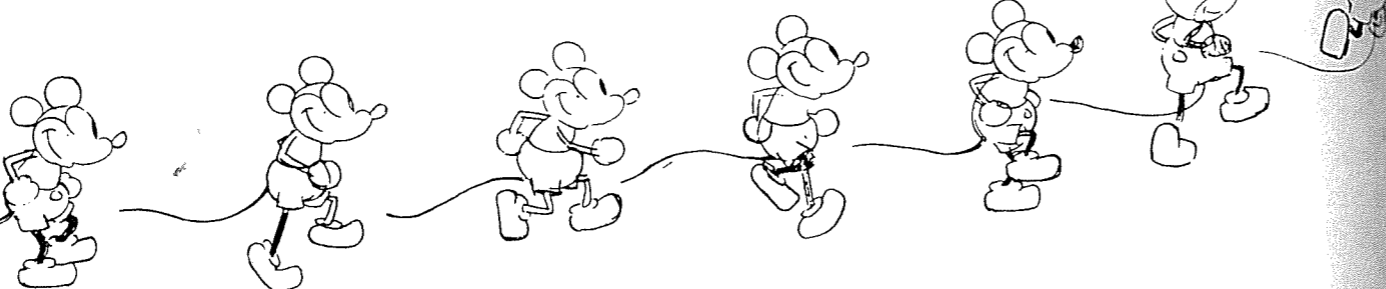
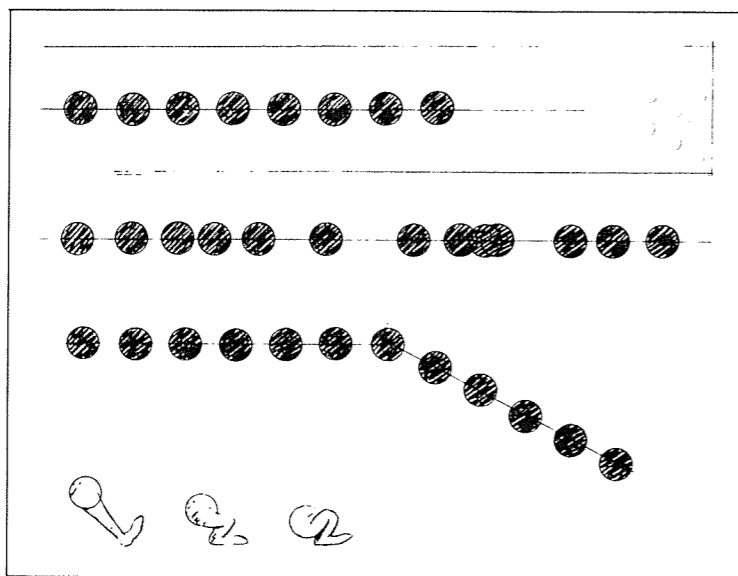




A 16 pound bowling ball is rolling down the alley. It has a smooth, continuous, evenly spaced progress. It is not erratic; it does not speed up and slow down, then speed up again. It does not change direction abruptly (unless it meets something stronger). How much an object weighs is shown by how much effort is required to move it, to stop it, to change its direction. These are shown through Timing, Arcs, and Squash and Stretch.

If the object is a character, a leg is put out to take the weight, squashing and absorbing the force of the move.

In 1928, Mickey had charm but no weight as he turned a corner without regard for support or gravity.

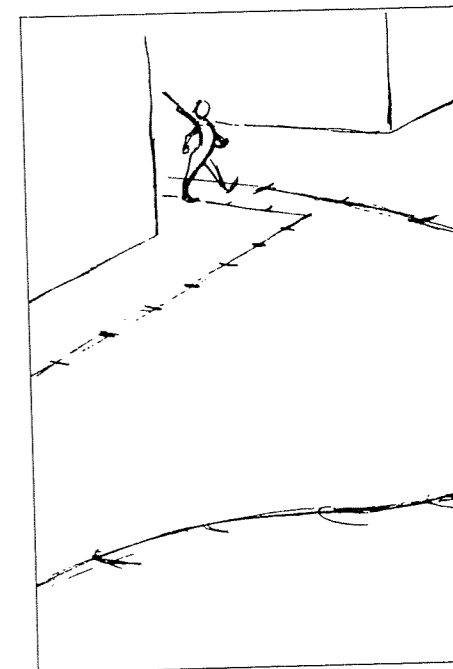


## Walks THE IMPORTANCE OF WEIGHT

Walks always have become troublesome and complicated to animate. The action can become so involved with weight distribution and balance and secondary movements that every single drawing becomes a headache, yet they can do so much to reveal personality and attitude that they are one of the animator's key tools in communication. Many actors feel that the first step in getting hold of a character is to analyze how he will walk. Even the most casual study of people on a busy street will reveal dramatic differences in how they achieve simple locomotion: long strides, short steps, determined waddling, bouncing, mincing, swaggering, rippling: there is no end to the variety.

In the early cartoons before sound came along, there were few attempts to make walking anything more than a means of moving the character to a new position on the screen. There was pacing back and forth, occasional dragging of feet in sorrow or despair, or purposeful striding as the hero fought back, but no animator tried to establish character by the way the figure walked. With the introduction of sound there came the "rhythm walk," with its extra bounce in the middle that gave life and spirit to a mundane character

in everyday activities. Once the character was in action, it was the same old business body where the animator wanted it to be, legs and feet underneath moving up



## The Rhythm Walk

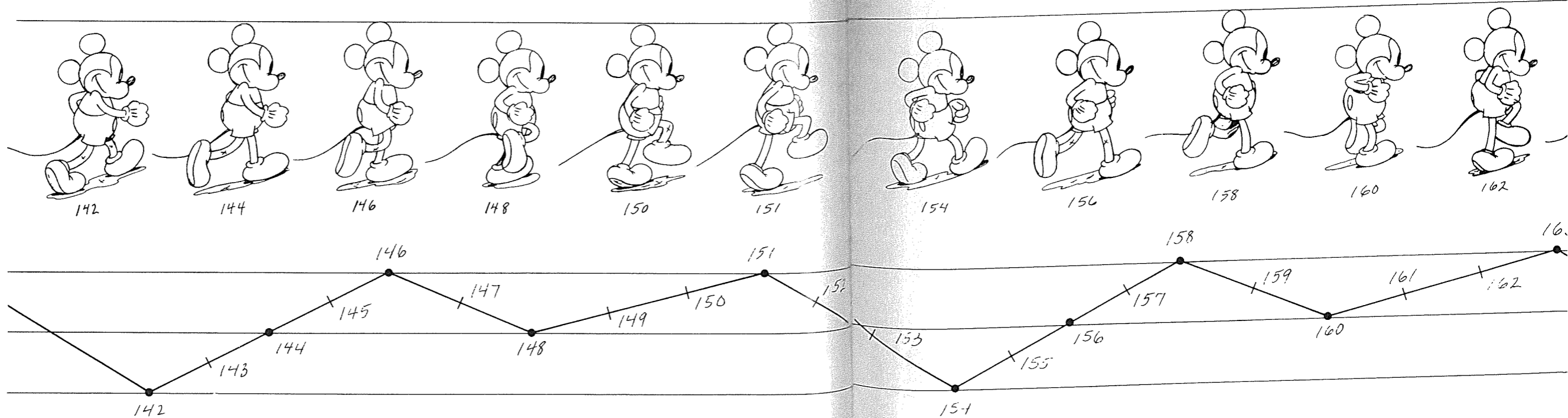
This spirited walk with the bounce in the middle was used by everyone in the early thirties. It was always done to a musical beat, giving a happy, energetic feeling to the action and a jaunty attitude for the character. Combined with some carefree whistling, it did much to establish Mickey's personality.

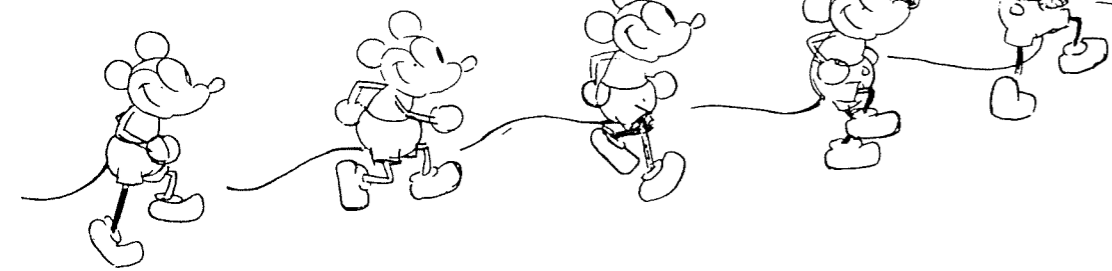
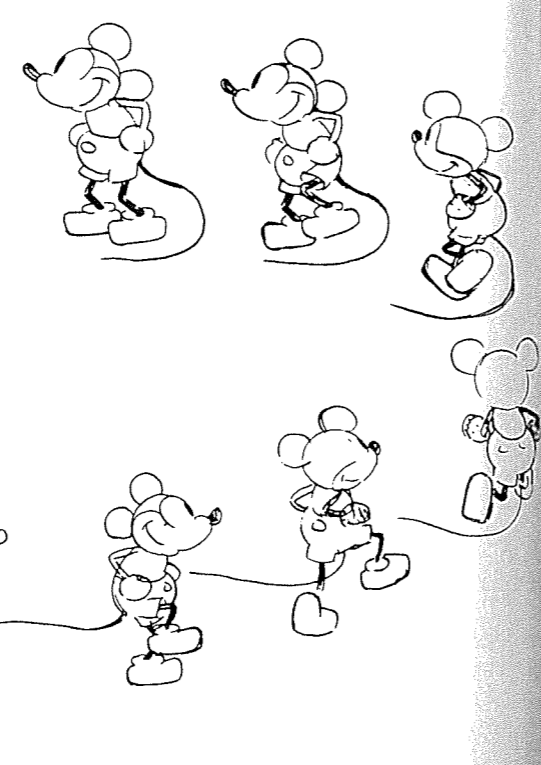
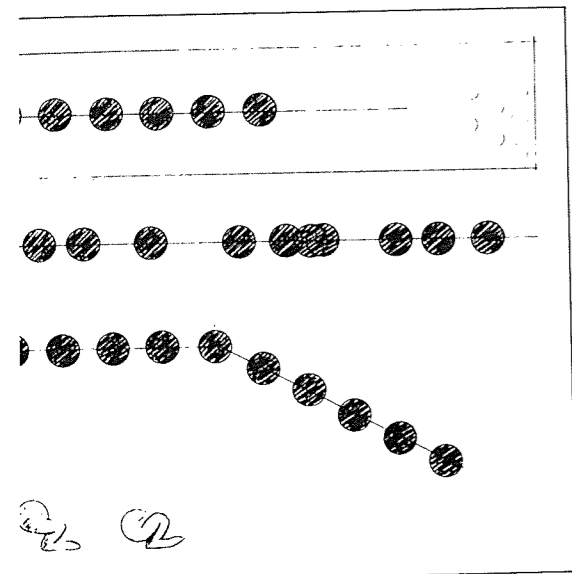
(146) Mickey starts a normal step, lifting his body high.

(148) In the middle of the step, he dips down.

(151) Then up again to a high position on head and body.

(154) Finally, the low, "squash" position as he places his foot to complete the step.



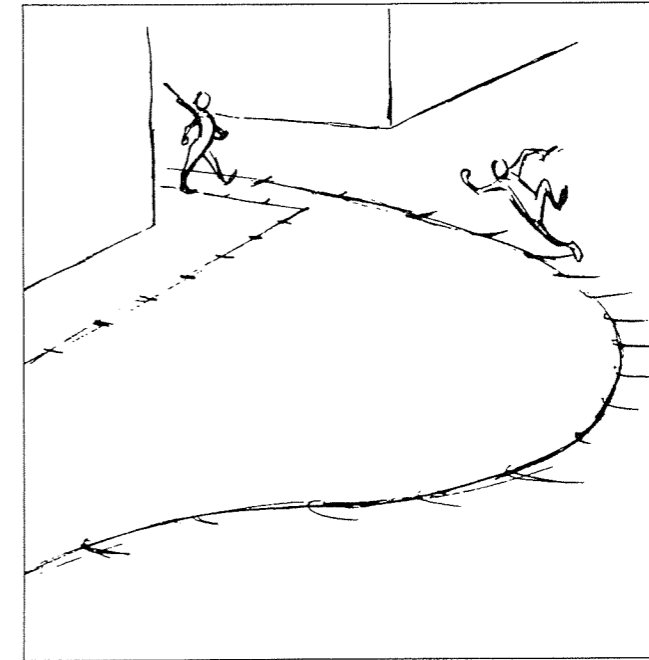


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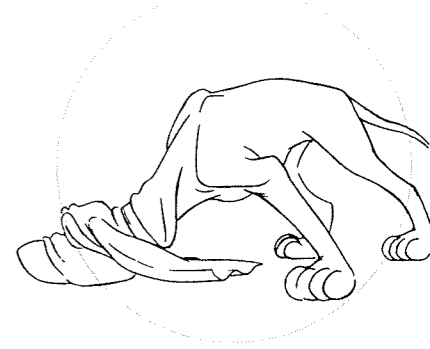
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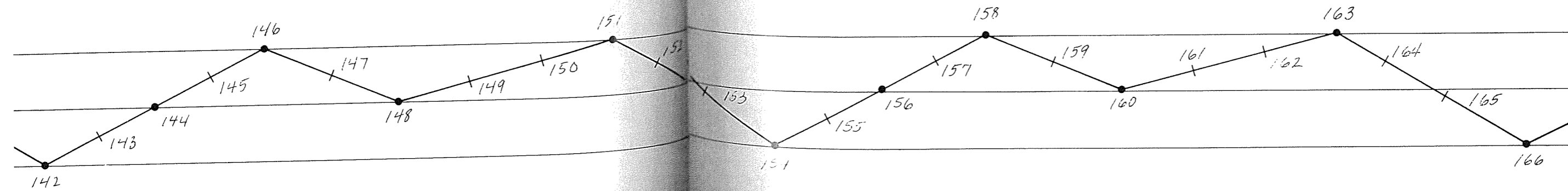
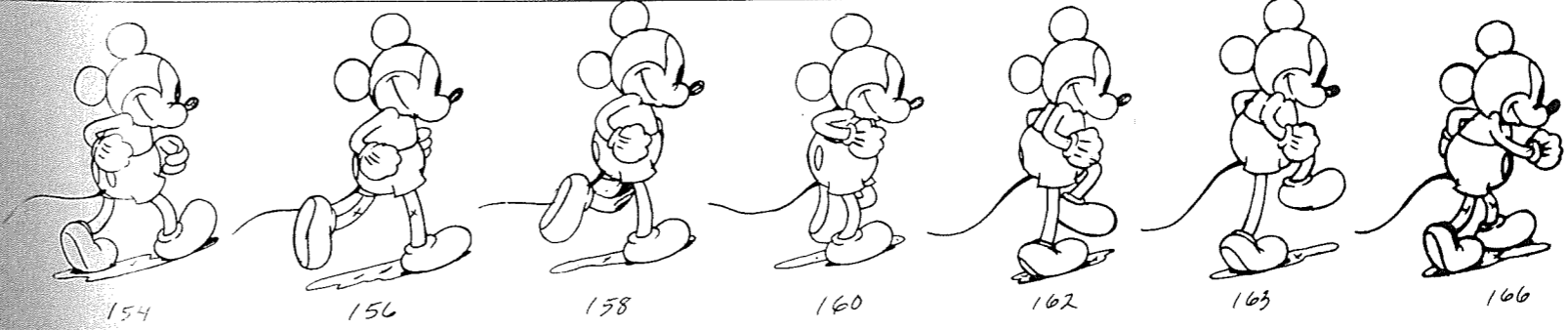
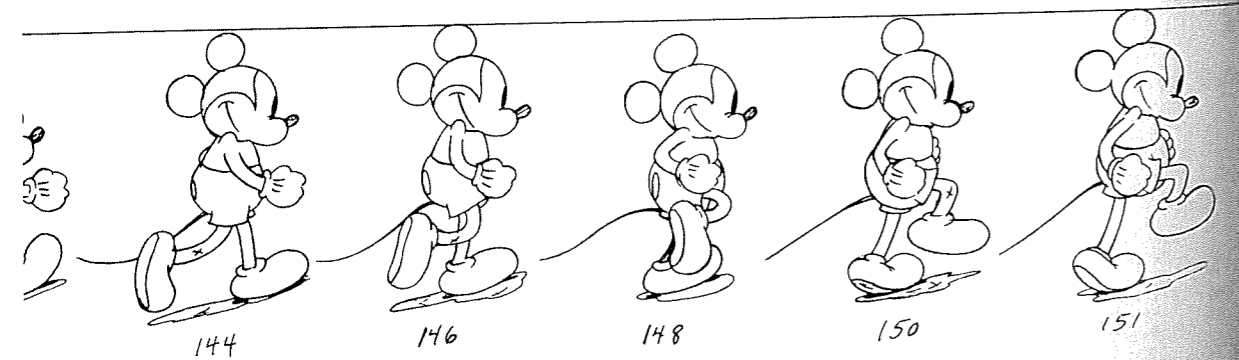
in everyday activities. Once the character went into action, it was the same old business of moving the body where the animator wanted it to be, then adding legs and feet underneath moving up and down.



*A marching soldier will make a sharp 90° turn at the corner. But if he is running fast, he will swing wide, slipping and skidding and leaning into the curve to keep his balance.*



## im Walk

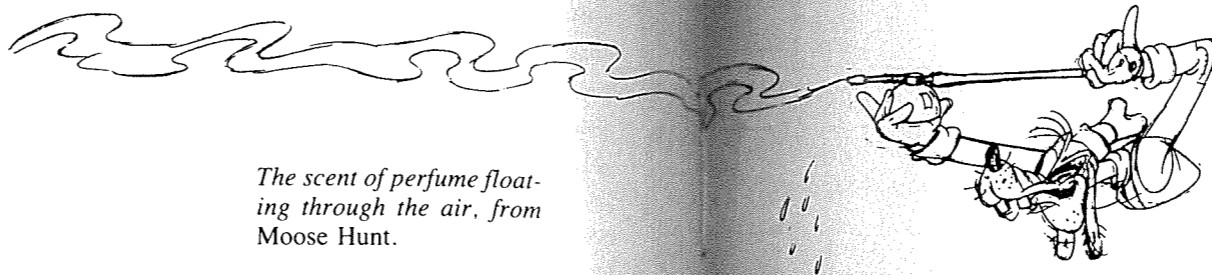
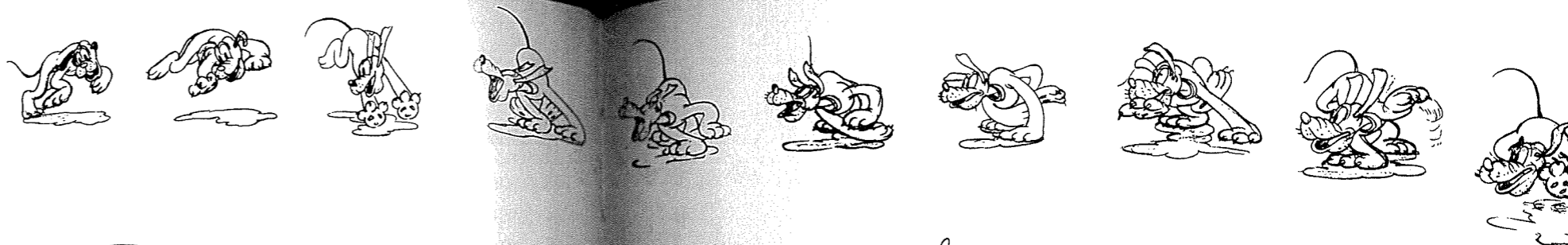


## Walks THE IMPORTANCE OF WEIGHT

ANIMATOR: Frank Thomas—  
Robin Hood.

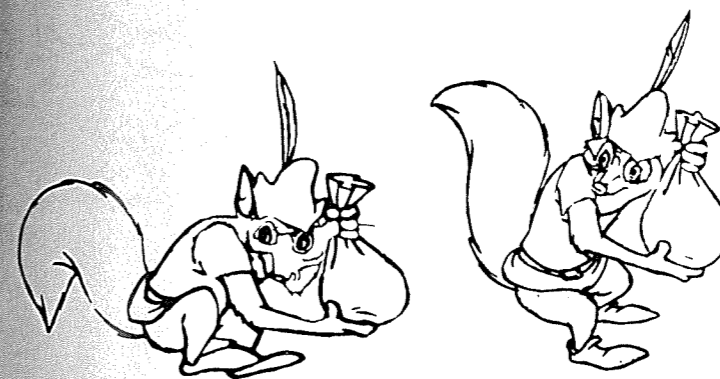
Robin Hood runs in to pick up the last sack of gold. He places his foot well in front of his body and slides into position, lifting the other leg and planting it to help support the weight of the gold as well as to start his change of direction.

It was the realization that the cartoon figure could not be believable without convincing weight that really changed the animators' thinking. The principles of squash and stretch were beginning to be understood and provided the procedures and the tools for displaying the new discoveries. Basically the principle was that a moving body could not be shifted in direction without encountering resistance from something in its present path of movement, causing it to turn.

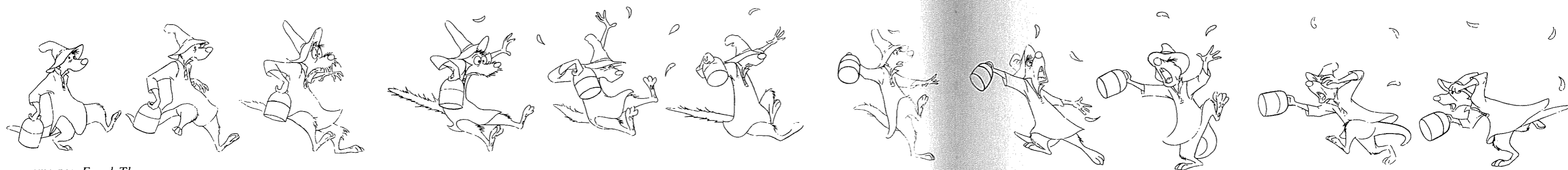


The scent of perfume floating through the air, from Moose Hunt.

(1) Objects or materials that weigh different amounts.

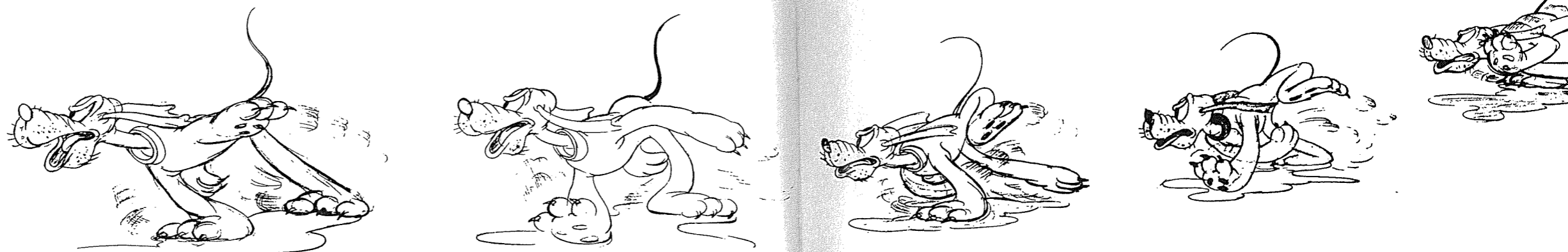


Maid Marian's scarf blows in the breeze in Robin Hood.



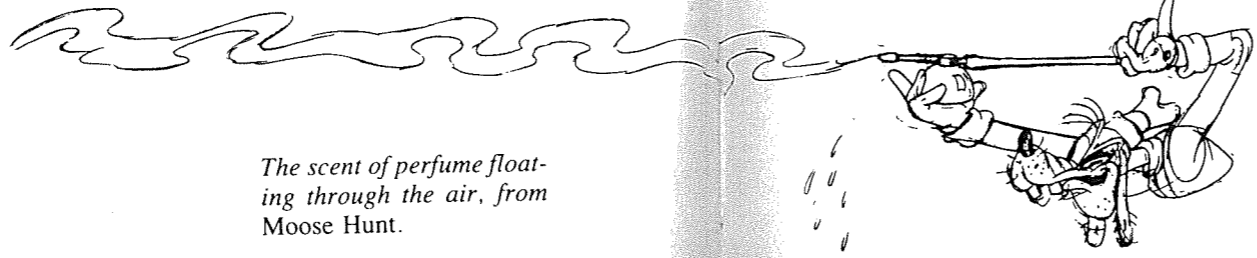
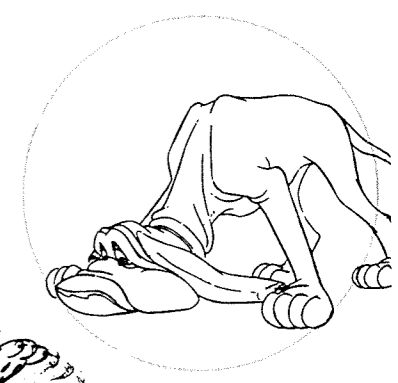
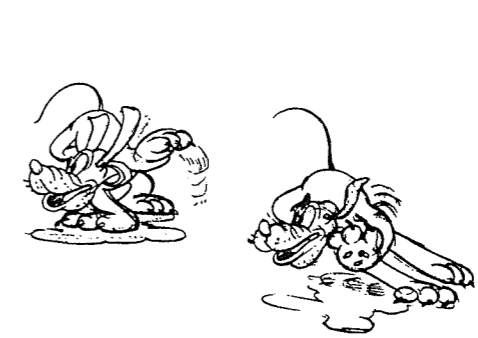
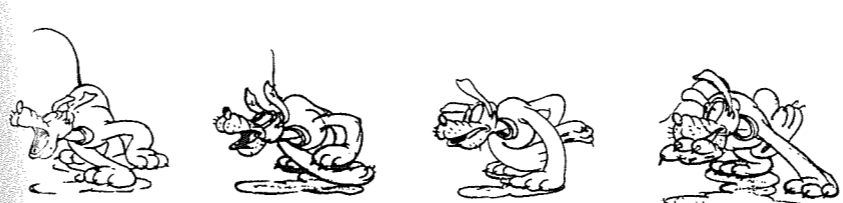
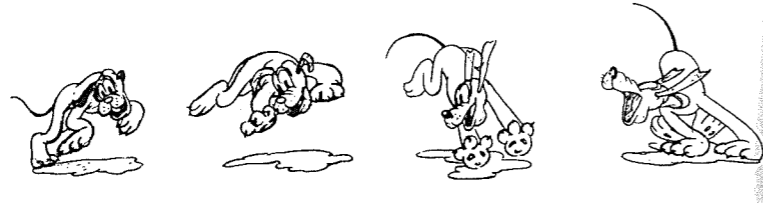
ANIMATOR: Frank Thomas—  
The Rescuers.

Luke, the muskrat, is running with his jug when he meets a crocodile, makes a wild, scrambling take, reverses direction and zips out. Through this impossible action, the jug is timed realistically, with a full arc and convincing weight, which makes everything else seem believable too. If the jug had flipped about like a piece of cloth the whole scene would have been another frantic



**IMPORTANCE OF WEIGHT**

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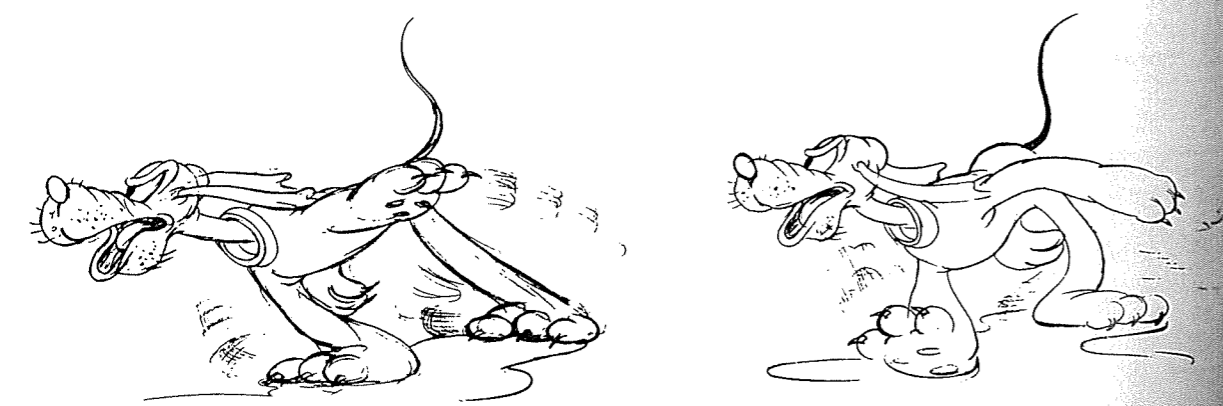


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*Maid Marian's scarf blows in the breeze in Robin Hood.*



*ANIMATOR: Fred Moore— Pluto's Judgment Day.*

*Even in cartoonland, Pluto weighs as much as a bowling ball. Here he skids around the corner until the force of his original direction has been absorbed and a new direction is established.*