Contract Bridge

By Josephine Culbertson

CONCERNING THE BLACKWOOD CONVENTION

Theoretically, the player who initiates the Blackwood convention in any hand becomes captain pro tem and, after hearing his partner's response, has the sole privilege of determining the contract. There are occasions, however, when the responder himself can and should take the final voice in the proceedings. Here is a typical case:

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

North: ♠ A J 5 ♥ Q J 8 4 ♦ A 7 6 3 2 ♣ 5

West: ♠ Q 10 8 2 ♥ 9 ♦ J 9 4 ♣ K J 8 7 2

East: ♠ K 9 6 4 3 ♥ 7 2 ♦ Q 10 8 ♣ Q 10 6

South: ♠ 7 ♥ A K 10 6 5 3 ♦ K 5 ♣ A 9 4 3

An expert North-South pair bid as follows:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 N T	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♣ (!)	Pass	7 ♥ (!)	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Any fairly competent pair would reach six hearts on the North-South cards, but few pairs would arrive at the grand slam unless one of the partners simply "took a gamble." It is obvious that even better cards might have been held by one partner or the other without there being a sound play for thirteen tricks — the crucial point, aside from the excellent heart fit and the location of all the aces, was North's singleton club. It is in such distributional factors that most slam conventions fall down — but North-South overcame this defect with pure logic.

The "logic" was in South's shrewd selection of the six-club bid and (even more importantly) in North's imagination and sound interpretation of that call. South reasoned that his own failure to bid five notrump, after asking for aces, would alert North to the fact that South was not nearly so interested in kings as in the club situation, and since he obviously would not be asking for first-round club conrtol — North having already responded in that field — the club query could only concern subsequent club controls.

North, sure that he had read South's intentions correctly, and blessed with a singleton, club, boldly acted on his own understanding.

BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

By Thornton W. Burgess

NOT SO BAD

However bad things seem to be They could be worse you must agree.

—Old Mother Nature.

These were hard times for the Deer folk, Mr. and Mrs. Lightfoot and the well grown twins. Snow was deep in the Green Forest, so deep that they had to stay in the place where they had trampled paths in all directions so that they could get about to get their food. Such a place is called a Deer-yard. The two young Deer did not like having to stay in that yard. You see, they are quite like boys and girls. It had not been so bad at first. In fact they had felt quite contented. But after a while it grew tiresome to wander about in the same old paths. You see, before the snow came, they had all the Green Forest to roam about in. At first there had been plenty of tender twigs with next year's leaf-buds on them within easy reach. But as the days and weeks slipped by, they had to reach higher and higher to get enough. Of course mother and father, being bigger, could get their food without reaching for it long after the two young Deer were streching their necks for every mouthful.

"I hate this place," said one. "Yes, sir, I hate this place. I hate to have to reach for every mouthful of food. I hate having to stay in these paths. It is going to get worse. What will we do when we have eaten all the food we can reach?"

Some folks call him the Snowshoe Rabbit.

"I wonder if this stuff is going to last for always?" asked the other. He meant the snow. This was their first winter and they knew nothing as yet about the melting of snow and the coming of Sweet Mistress Spring. Perhaps mother had tried to tell them about it, but if so it didn't really mean anything to them.

"Mother says things are not as bad as they might be, but I don't see how they could be any worse If there are any folks in the Green Forest worse off than we are, I'd like to know who they are," said the first one.

"Look!" whispered the second one. He was staring off beyond the yard, off where there were no trodden paths. Jumper the Hare was moving along over the snow as easily as if he were on bare ground. He would take two or three hops, then stop, sit up, and look and listen. Then he would do it all over again.

"How does he do it?" asked one. He spoke as if he felt a little envious. Probably he did. That deep snow wasn't bothering Jumper in the least.

The other shook his head. "I don't know how he does it," said he. "I don't think it is fair. You and I are prisoners. That is, we can't go where we want to go That fellow can go anywhere. How in the world he can walk on this soft stuff, I don't know."

It was no wonder that the young Deer were puzzled. They knew nothing about Jumper's snowshoes. Of course they are not real shoes that he has. It is simply that his feet are so big, and his hairy toes spread so, that he doesn't sink into the snow and so gets around just as you or I would get around with snowshoes. Some folks call him Snowshoe Rabbit.

Now it happened that there was a very light crust on the snow that morning, a thin crust, This made it easier still for Jumper to get about. They were still watching him when suddenly Reddy Fox sprang out from behind a little snow-covered heap of brush. Away went Jumper in long leaps. Away went Reddy after him. But Reddy didn't go far. That thin crust broke and he was floundering in the snow. Jumper sat up at a little distance, looking back and grinning. Reddy managed to get back on the crust. but only went a few steps before it broke under him again. Jumper grinned more broadly than ever. "Can't catch me! Can't catch me! Can't catch me!" cried Jumper in the most provoking way.

Reddy tried to grin back at Jumper. It was a feeble sort of grin. Reddy was hungry, very hungry. He was thin, which meant that he hadn't had much to eat for some time. The deep snow it very hard for him to get around.

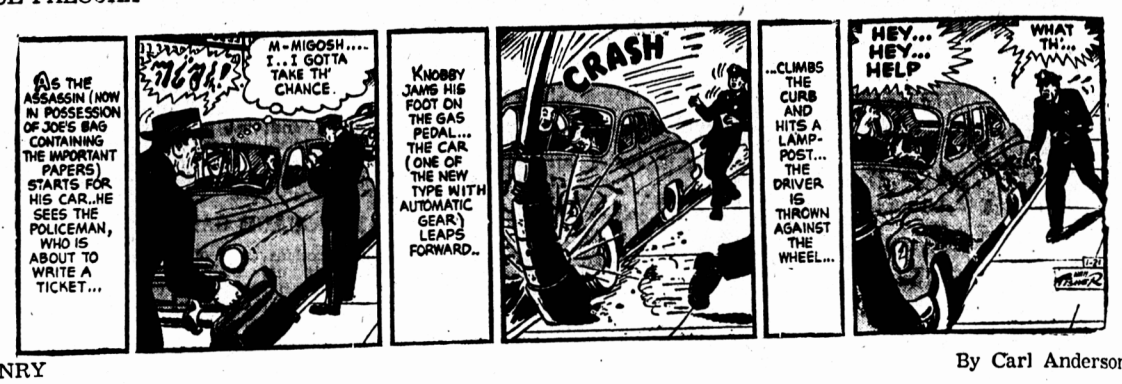
The two young Deer watched Reddy floundering off, then looked at each other. "I guess we are not so badly off after all," said one as Reddy floundered out of sight.

"I guess we're not." agreed the other. "We have enough to eat."

One of Mexico's most beautiful mountains, Popocatepetl towers 17,888 feet

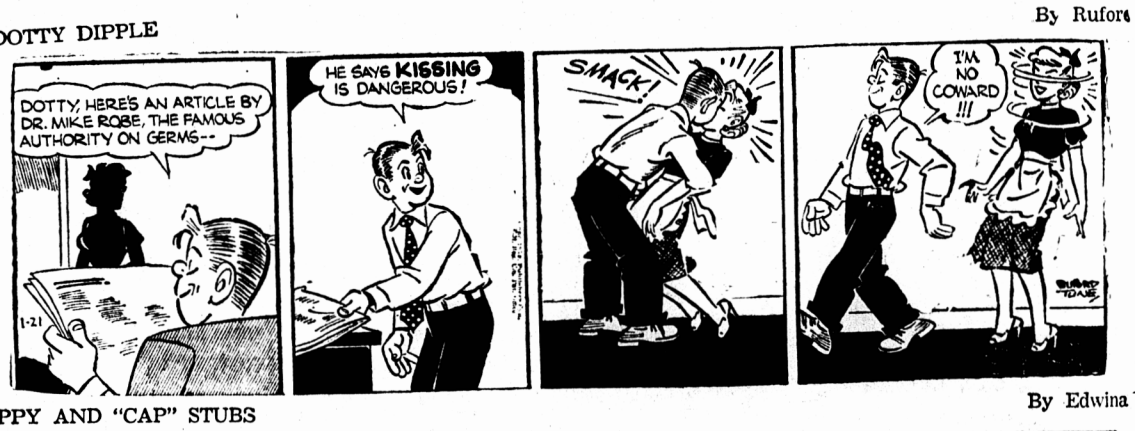
KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED — By Zane Grey

JOE PALOOKA — By Ham Fisher

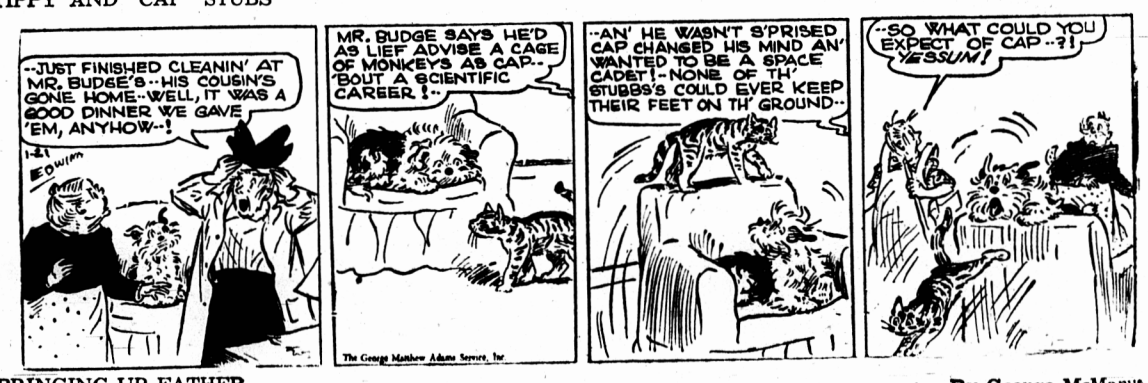


HENRY — By Carl Anderson

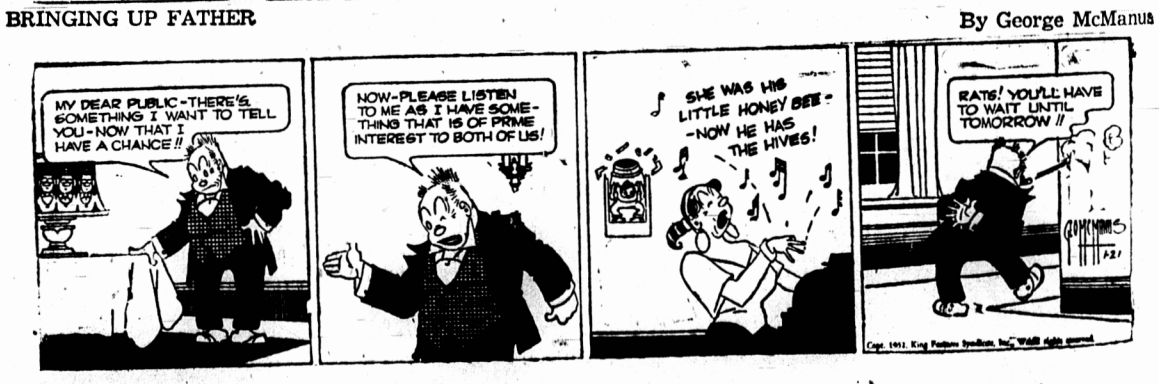
DOTTY DIPPLE — By Rufore



TIPPY AND "CAP" STUBS — By Edwina

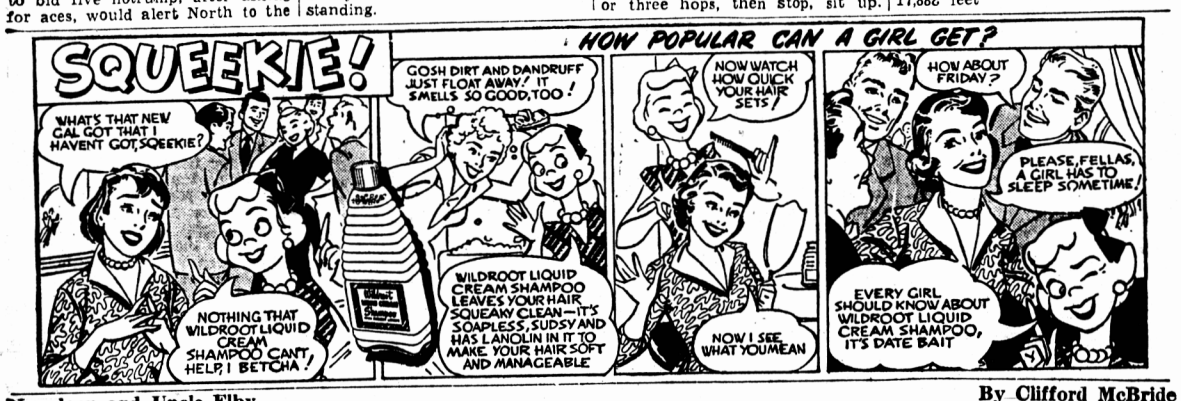


BRINGING UP FATHER — By George McManus



TILLY THE TOILER — By Bob Gustafson

SQUEEKIE! — By Clifford McBride



Napoleon and Uncle Elby — By Walt Kelly

POGO

LI'L ABNER — By Al Capp

RIP KIRBY — By Alex Raymond

PENNY — By Harry Haenigsen