

BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

By Thornton W. Burgess

WHOSE FISH WAS IT?

Possession may go to the strong. But never can make right or wrong. —Old Mother Nature

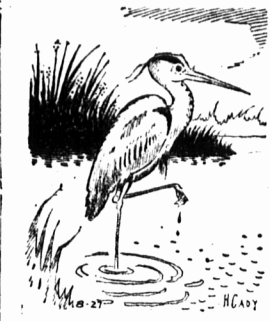
Longlegs the Heron was feeling out of sorts. He had missed a good breakfast. Missing a good breakfast is enough to make anyone feel out of sorts. He had been fishing for some time without any luck. He was wading at the edge of the Smiling

Pool, and keep perfectly still in the hope that a fish will not notice him and will swim within reach. You know he has a long bill like a spear, and he has a very long neck. He can strike quickly and it isn't safe for a fish to swim within his reach. It isn't often that Longlegs misses when he strikes. As a rule a fish that comes within reach is as good as caught. But this morning he had been a bit careless. He had struck the fish, but had failed to catch it. As a result, he had watched a good breakfast swim away, and it was very provoking. The fish was hurt, but could still swim.

A little later the fish had gone too near the big green lily-pod on which Grandfather Frog was sitting. Grandfather Frog had been more successful than Longlegs. He had caught the fish and had started to swallow it head-first. The fish had gone down easily for a little way. Then, though he had swallowed and swallowed, Grandfather Frog couldn't get that fish down any farther. That was because there was no more room in his stomach. So there was Grandfather Frog with half a fish out of sight in his mouth, and half a fish out of his mouth. It was a picture of greed, and no mistake.

Then along came Longlegs. He saw Grandfather Frog and the fish. Perhaps he would have that missing breakfast after all, and because of Grandfather Frog it would be an even better breakfast. Longlegs is as fond of Frogs as he is of fish. But once more Longlegs was out of luck. Grandfather Frog had plunged into deeper water than Longlegs could wade in. He still held that fish. The truth is, he couldn't let go of it. It was stuck in his throat.

"That's my fish!" cried Longlegs. Grandfather Frog said nothing. He couldn't say anything. If he could have he probably would have said that it was his fish. Certainly he had it, although I suspect he



You know he has a very long bill like a spear, and he has a very long neck.

had a feeling that the fish had him. Suddenly a black head popped out of the water a little from where Grandfather Frog was splashing about. A pair of black beady eyes were fixed on Grandfather Frog. Then that black head disappeared under water.

"Poor Grandfather Frog," said Mrs. Jerry Muskrat for the second time. "That was Snapper the Turtle, and I am afraid we are about to see the last of Grandfather Frog."

"Perhaps he didn't see Grandfather Frog," said Jerry. "Of course he did. How could he help it? What do you think he'd do suddenly for?" retorted Mrs. Jerry.

"Snapper has tried many times to catch Grandfather Frog, but the latter has been too smart for him. This time I fear his greed will be the end of him," said Jerry.

Just then Grandfather Frog began to splash frantically. Jerry and Mrs. Jerry couldn't see clearly what was happening but they did get a glimpse of Snapper's big black head, and for just a second of his big shell. He was struggling with Grandfather Frog.

"We'll miss him," said Jerry. "I never did like him, but we'll miss him. The Smiling Pool won't be the same without Grandfather Frog. He lived here longer than we have."

Now a strange thing happened. Swimming under water, Snapper the Turtle had come up under Grandfather Frog. He had snapped at him with those great jaws of his; and by chance they had closed on that fish instead of on Grandfather Frog. The water was churned about and about, so that Jerry and Mrs. Jerry couldn't see what was happening. When it stopped being churned, Grandfather Frog was nowhere to be seen. But Snapper the Turtle was still in sight. In his mouth he held half a fish. A moment later, he took this to the bottom to swallow it, as is his way. As for Grandfather Frog, he was safe in the mud at the bottom.

Now to whom did that fish belong? Longlegs the Heron who had struck it. Grandfather Frog who had swallowed half of it. Snapper the Turtle who was eating the other half?

Contract Bridge

By Josephine Culbertson

USE BLACKWOOD WITH DISCRETION

South's use of the Blackwood Convention in the following hand was not to be commended.



The bidding:
North East South West
1♥ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♥ Pass 3♠ Pass
4♥ Pass 4NT Pass
5♥ Pass 5♠ Pass

When South discovered to his chagrin, that North had only one ace, the information came too late. Six clubs would obviously be at the mercy of the two missing aces, so South had to put his hopes in a five-spade contract. Moreover, North had to accept that contract even though he disliked it, and for that matter, five hearts — if it could have been reached somehow after South's indiscreet Blackwood call — would also have failed.

In the following discussion North admitted that he had thought about "lying" in his response to the Blackwood four — not that he was tempted to bid five clubs, denying any ace — but after all, it was not his duty to "nursemaid" his partner. North went on to say that South should have realized that a one-ace response would force a hopeless club slam or an undesirable five-level contract in a major suit.

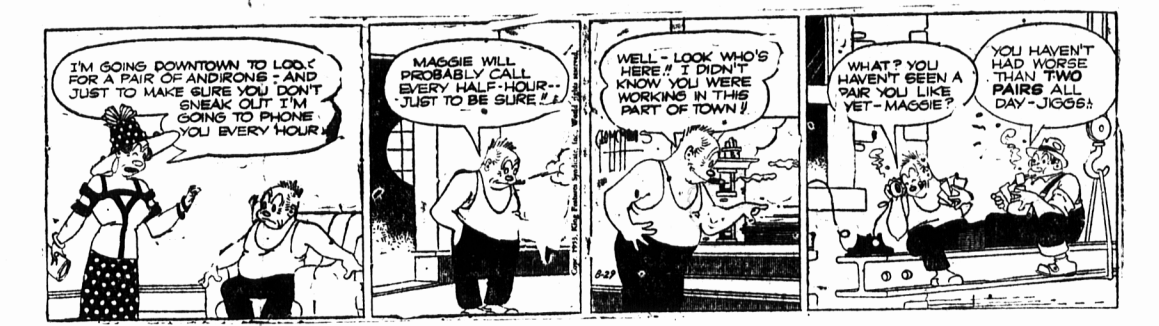
This, of course, was a sound observation on North's part. South did not stop to think about the possibilities. When the only fitting suit is clubs, the use of Blackwood must be restricted to hands that can stand an unfavorable ace-showing response from partner — and South's hand here was not in this category.

While blaming South, however, it should also be noted that North was not entirely without guilt. He had opened a hand that was weak in honor-tricks (and point-count), hence he should not have been so ready to support South's second suit. Another rebid of hearts over South's three clubs would have been the course of discretion.

Dotty Dripple



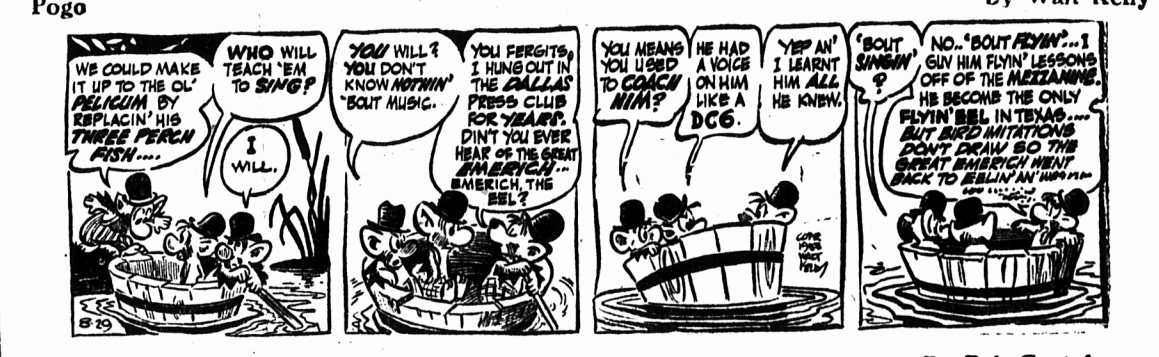
Bringing Up Father



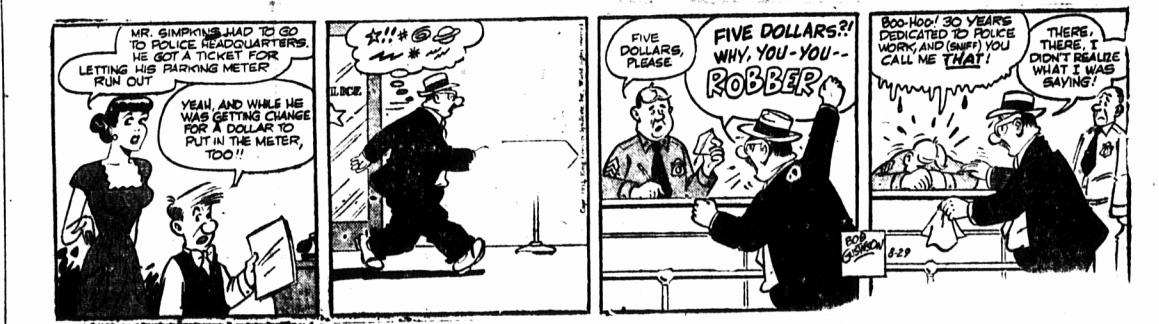
Tippy and "Cap" Scrubs



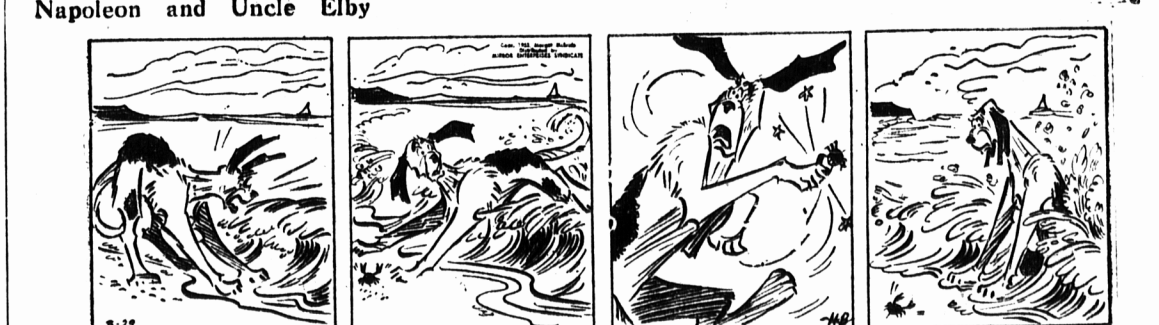
Pogo



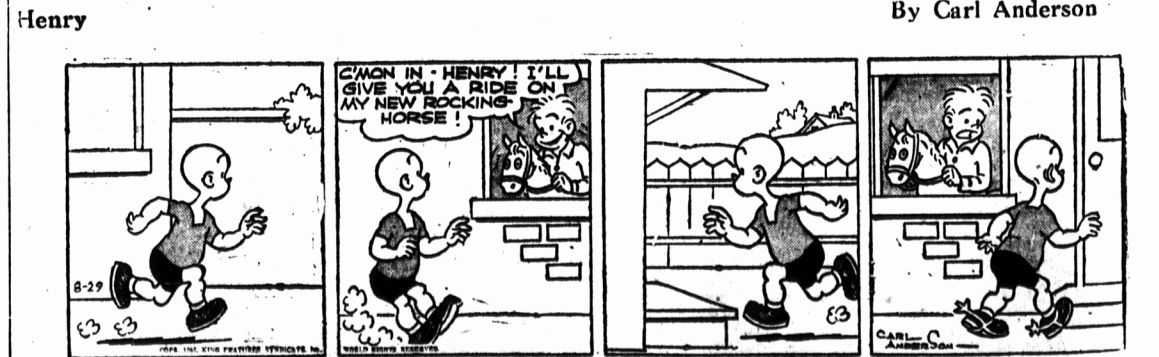
Tilly The Toiler



Napoleon and Uncle Elby



Henry



Penny



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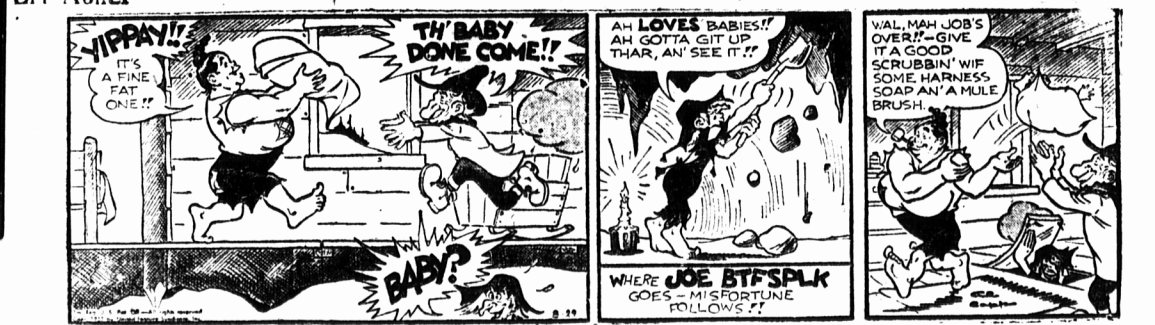
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