



By Thornton W. Burgess

RAGGED-EAR GETS A HINT

Be careful where a hint is dropped. It could be where it can't be stopped.

—Old Mother Nature.

Reddy Fox is a sly one. Everyone in the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest knows this. What he cannot get openly he gets, or tries



to get, slyly. So whenever he is about he is regarded with suspicion. Suspicion always accompanies slyness.

Reddy had set his heart on catching Ragged-Ear, the young Rabbit who had recently come to the Old Pasture. Perhaps heart is the wrong word and I should have said stomach, for it was his stomach he was thinking of. He is very fond of Rabbit dinners, especially when the Rabbits are young and tender. Ragged-Ear was just that. Just thinking of him made Reddy's mouth water.

He had tried to appear friendly and get Ragged-Ear to take a walk with him. He had failed. He had tried to drive him out of his safe

retreat through fright. Again he had failed. Now he was trying slyness. He had allowed Ragged-Ear to overhear him talking about some delicious sweet clover. He was talking to himself as if talking to someone else. The young Rabbit didn't know this because he could not see the sly rascal.

"If I know Rabbits, and I think I do, that silly young fellow with the ragged ear will keep thinking about that sweet clover until he will have to go looking for it," thought Reddy. "Temptation will be too much for him. Probably he knows where there is plenty of clover easy to get, but there never yet was a Rabbit who won't wonder if the clover someone else has isn't better than the clover he has himself. I'll just drop a hint as to where that clover is to be found."

He told Mrs. Reddy what he planned to do. "Where is this wonderful clover?" she asked. Reddy grinned. "I don't know," he confessed.

"Then how are you going to get that Rabbit to go looking for it? He isn't going to unless he has some idea where to look," said Mrs. Reddy. "Once more Reddy grinned. It was a sly grin, a grin that Mrs. Reddy understood perfectly. "I'll drop a hint, just a hint, where to look," said he.

"But supposing there isn't any clover there," said Mrs. Reddy. Reddy's grin was more sly than ever. "That won't matter. It is the place, not the clover, that matters. There may be some clover there and there may not," said he. Mrs. Reddy's eyes glowed with understanding. "So that's it," said she. "You will drop a hint that that wonderful clover may be found in a certain place near which you will be hiding, and where you are sure you can catch the foolish young thing if he comes."

"You have guessed it, my dear," replied Reddy. "There may not be a leaf of clover there but I will be there, and that is all that matters. My dear, why did you call him a foolish young thing?" "Isn't anyone foolish who allows a mere hint to lead him to take chances that may cost too much, even life perhaps?" retorted Mrs. Reddy. Then she added, "Any Rabbit who believes anything a Fox may tell him is bound to be foolish." It was her turn to grin.

There is perfect understanding between these two, Reddy and Mrs. Reddy. She understood what Reddy was planning to do as well as if she had planned it herself. She would even help if there should be need. Reddy was sure there wouldn't be. He told her of the place he had chosen and she nodded approval.

"I don't see how you can fail," said she. "I can't and I won't. That silly young Rabbit who thinks he is so smart is as good as mine this very minute," declared Reddy.

"Only you can't taste him," said Mrs. Reddy and grinned again at Reddy. He grinned back at her. In one way or another Reddy managed to drop hint after hint a-

Contract Bridge By Josephine Cluberton CLOSE ANALYSIS REQUIRED It was not easy to find the killing defense in the following hand.

North dealer. East-West vulnerable. ♠ 643 ♥ K872 ♦ QJ65 ♣ A4 ♠ A ♥ 103 ♦ QJ10972 ♣ AK ♠ K85 ♥ AQ6 ♦ 9742 ♣ K83

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

No one can say that North's bidding was timid! The jump to two notrump was bold enough (even in view of North's original pass), and South then failed to bid either notrump or four spades it is hard to see how North could find the optimism to act for his partner. In the end, however, North could point to the result and grin. West opened the club jack. The four was played from the board and East put up the king. East then did what 99 players in 100 would do — he shifted to diamonds in the hope of finding West with at least the king. Then, a heart return through dummy's king figured to defeat the contract. Unfortunately for this line of reasoning, however, West did not get in very soon. South cashed his A-K of diamonds, then entered dummy with a club and discarded his hearts on the Q-J of diamonds while West was squandering his ace of trumps. Now South could concede the trump king to East and claim his remarkable contract.

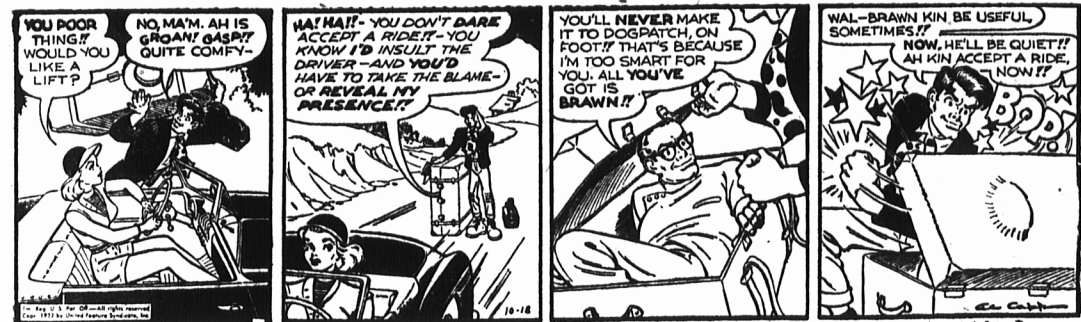
The diamond return by East was superficially attractive, but close analysis reveals the flaw in that defense. Granting that East could not conceivably place his partner with the spade ace, there was nevertheless no need for the diamond shift and there was danger in that play — as witnessed by what happened. If West really had a controlling diamond he would always get in with it in time to shift to hearts, and if East's trump king was trapped, it would not help matters for East to avoid leading a trump. Thus, the truly expert East would return a trump at the second trick.

about that sweet clover so that they reached the ears of Ragged-Ear. He grew more and more eager to find it. At last Reddy dropped a hint where to look and made sure that it reached Ragged-Ear.

KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED



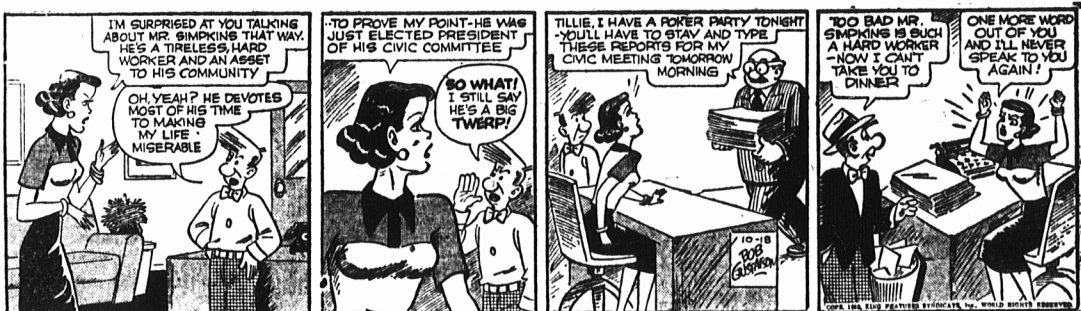
L'L ABNER



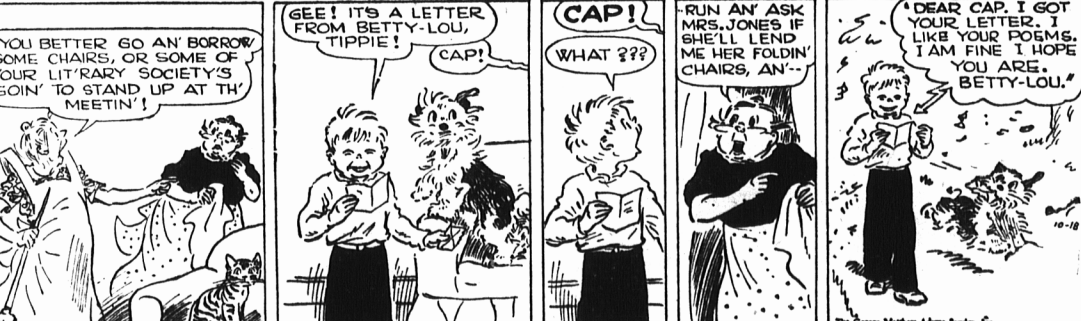
JOE PALOOKA



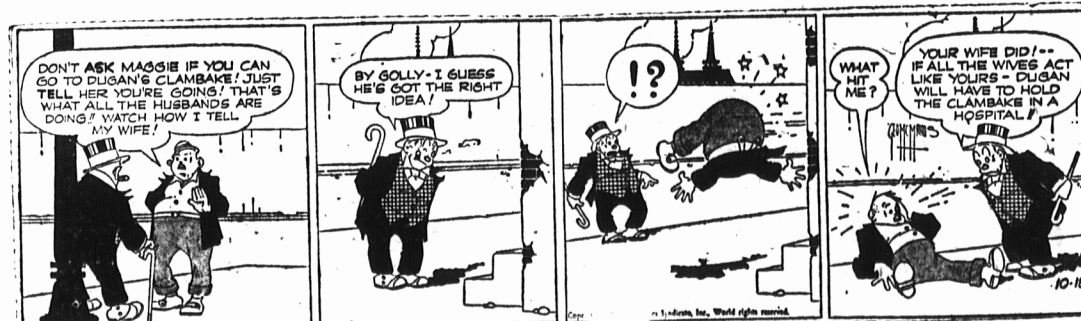
TILLY THE TOILER



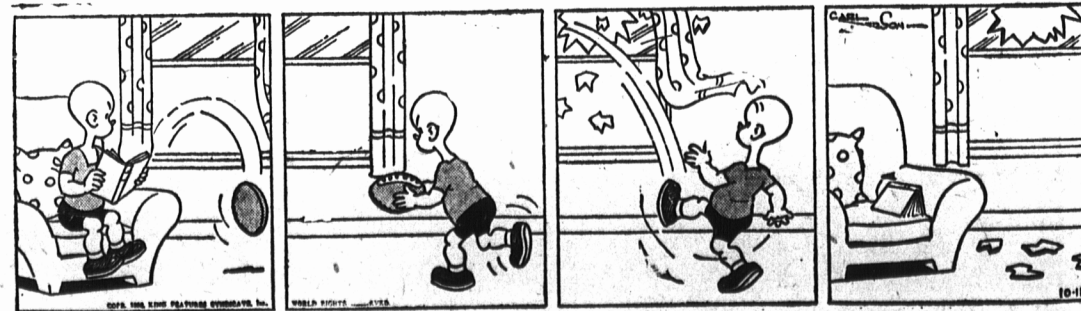
TIPPY AND "CAP" STUBS



BRINGING UP FATHER



HENRY



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