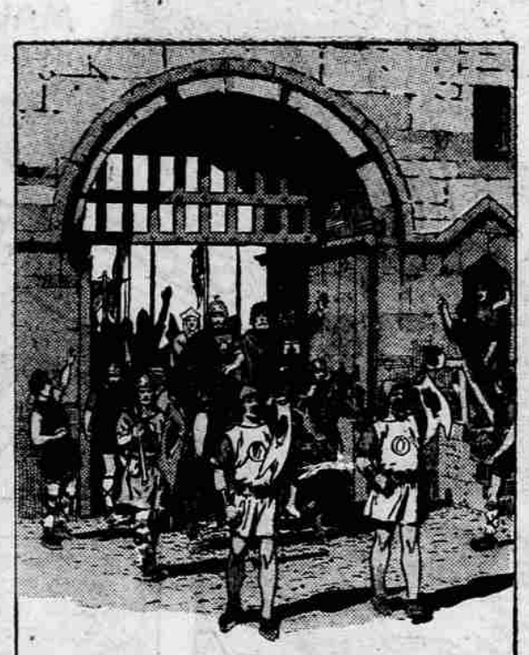
LI'L ABNER — Madame Queen — by AL CAPP

Prince Valiant — In the Days of King Arthur

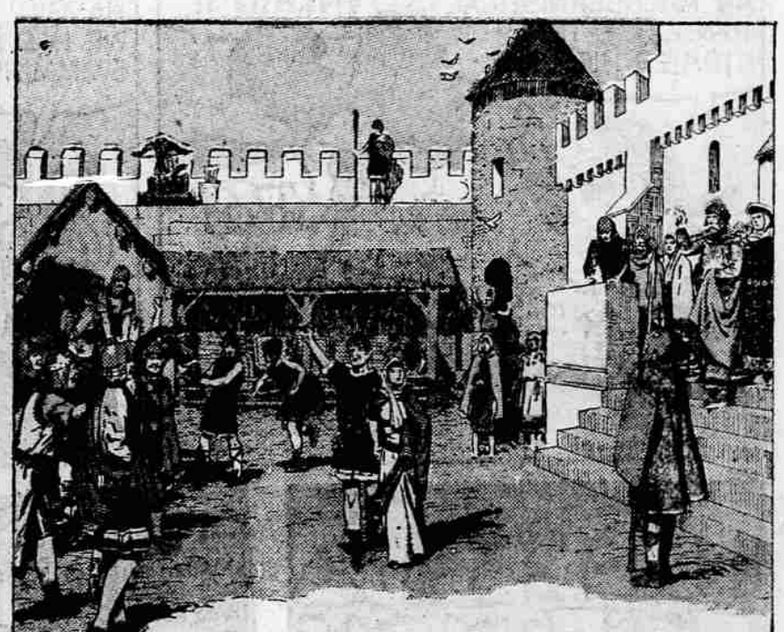
Written and Illustrated by Harold R Foster

Our Story: A HUMBLE SQUIRE HAS JUST WED JOAN, DAUGHTER OF THE COUNT OF RATHFORD, EVEN THOUGH HE KNOWS SHE HAS BEEN PROMISED IN MARRIAGE TO HUME OF AMESBRIDGE. THE SOLUTION IS SIMPLE; HER FATHER CAN FULFILL HIS CONTRACT BY MAKING HER A WIDOW AS SOON AS THE GALLOWS CAN BE ERECTED!



TOO LATE TO ESCAPE! THE GATES CRASH OPEN AND IN PRANCES THE GAY WEDDING PARTY TO THE SOUND OF TRUMPETS.

"GIVE ME YOUR HAND, JOAN; WE GO TO MEET WHATEVER FATE MAY HAVE IN STORE FOR US."



AS HOST AND GUESTS MOVE FORWARD TO GREET EACH OTHER, THE TWO YOUNG LOVERS WALK BETWEEN. INSTANTLY CHEERS RING OUT: *'WELCOME, HUME!'*

JOAN'S FACE GOES WHITE. *"ARE YOU INDEED HUME OF AMESBRIDGE? WHY DID YOU PLAY THIS CRUEL TRICK ON ME?"*
"BECAUSE I WAS BEING FORCED TO MARRY A MAID I HAD NEVER SEEN," ANSWERS HUME, *"A MAID CALLED JOAN. SO I CAME IN DISGUISE TO SEE WHAT MANNER OF GIRL SHE WAS. I AM QUITE CONTENT!"*

"YOU PLAYED WITH MY HEART, YOU TRICKED ME INTO LOVING YOU!" CRIES THE SPIRITED MAID. *"I WON'T MARRY YOU! GO TRICK SOME OTHER GIRL!"*

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"BUT WE ARE MARRIED!" THE CONFUSED HUME CALLS AFTER HER. *"DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT WOMEN, DO YOU, SON?"* ASKS THE OLD COUNT OF RATHFORD. THEN, SHAKING HIS HEAD, HE MUTTERS, *"OH, THESE WOMEN!"*

NEXT WEEK - **Gawain's new Squire.**

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