

DONNA of the BIG TOP

by BEULLAH POYNTER

MEAN HERE TODAY
DONNA CALLED
LINE SIDDAL who said
"The (fabulous) sisters" are
performers, are dead. Five
years earlier Madeline ran away
from the middle-western farm
where her grandfather, AMOS
SIDDAL, lives.

CON DAVID, the animal trainer
is in love with Donna who re-
gards him merely as a friend.
Madeline is in love with Con.
When Madeline's grandfather
writes asking her to spend the
week-end at his farm near Leba-
non, where the circus is playing,
she hesitates. She is to take her
place. Thus it is Donna (pre-
tending to be the other girl) who
meets BILL SIDDAL, Madeline's
cousin, and goes to dinner with
him.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER III

IN the moonlight the road was
like a silver ribbon uncoiling
with amazing rapidity. A heavy
perfume drenched the night air,
a perfume made of green things
rowing, of fruit orchards, wild
flowers and the moist fragrance of
newly turned earth. Though the
Siddal farm was but five miles
from Lebanon on the main road,
Bill had chosen a longer, more cir-
cuitous route.

The car was a battered one, bad-
ly in need of paint, but Donna, her
hat in her lap, rested her head
against the faded felt upholstery
and drank in the night air with
keen enjoyment.

"That's the Trager place," Bill
said. "Do you remember the Tra-
gers? Jim was at school with me."
And a little later Donna murmured,
"I'm glad there's a late train Mon-
day. One of the girls is going to
ride in my place in the parade."

"We might have asked your
partner to come along," Bill sug-
gested. "I didn't think of it. Did
she think it was strange we didn't
ask her?"

Donna felt a queer little stab in
her heart. "She almost did come,"
she said slowly, recalling the scene
in the dressing room when Made-
line, with a sudden change of mind,
had decided that Bill Siddal looked
interesting enough to risk a visit
homa. But for Con David's jealousy
Donna might have remained with
the circus and Madeline gone to
the farm. However, Con had ap-
peared and to please Donna (at
least he had hoped to do so) had
invited Madeline to have supper
with him and Madeline had ac-
cepted the invitation.

"Your grandfather may be in
bed," Bill said as he turned the
car into a road only a little wider
than a cowpath. "If he is, we
won't wake him. He's mighty
feeble these days and needs all the
sleep he can get. Your coming will
be a red-letter day in his life. You
don't know how much he cares
about you."

SHE had a sudden impulse to tell
him the truth then, an impulse
she crushed instantly for the
headlights of the car brought into
stark outline the narrow, austere,
brick building which was the Sid-
dal farmhouse.

"There's Grandpop," said Bill. "I
reckon the excitement of seeing
you again kept him awake."
He called, "Hello there!" and
the old man waved his hand.

Before the car came to a stop
at the front porch Donna had an
opportunity to look at her host. He
was tall and very erect. His snow
white hair curled slightly and
touched the collar of the dressing
gown that clung to his gaunt fig-
ure.

"Did Madeline come?" the old
man asked as Bill sprinted up the
three steps to his side.
"Here she is!" Bill beckoned to
Donna who was just behind him.
"Grandfather," she whispered
hushly, "Grandfather."

Groping garbled hands reached
for her; old arms enfolding her.
"Maddie, my little Maddie." The
girl pressed her face against his
shoulder, hoping he would not no-
tice how fast her heart was beat-
ing. "I've waited you for such a
long time and now I can't even see
you."

"I know," she choked, tears in
her throat. "Bill told me—you are
blind. Oh, I'm so sorry, so sorry!"
"That's all right, Maddie," he an-
swered, patting her curls with
trembling, affectionate fingers. "I'm
old and affliction doesn't matter
so much to an old feller. Only
I've missed you and wanted you.
But there, there! We're not going
to be sad for the little time you
are here. There must be a heap
more I want to tell me and a heap
more I want to know. Come in-
side. Mrs. Planter laid out some
supper for you."

In books Donna had read of just
such a room—quaint, homely in-
artistic, but containing something
between the four walls that he had
longed for all her life. There were
rocking chairs with lace squares
on their backs, a "whatnot" in the
corner with china bric-a-brac on its

Flapper Fanny Says



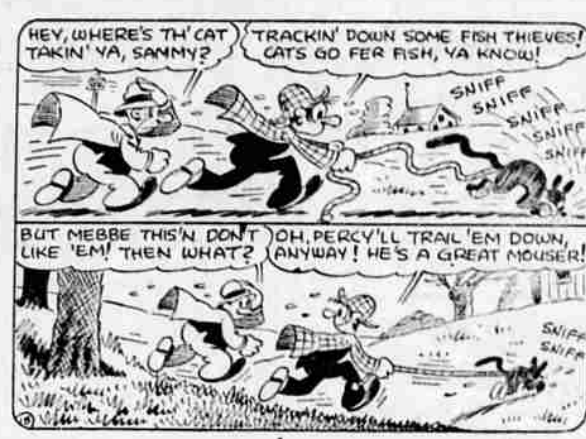
OUT OUR WAY



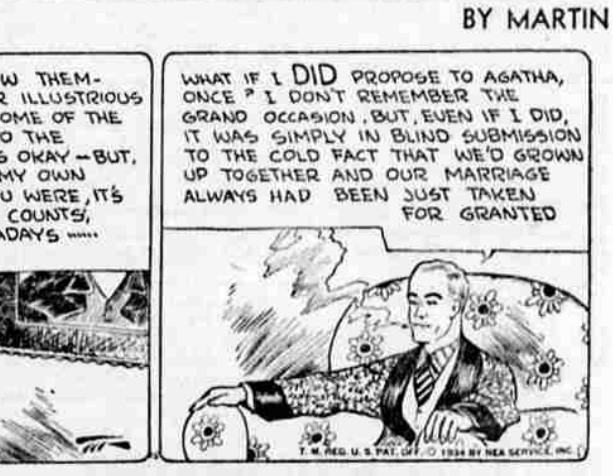
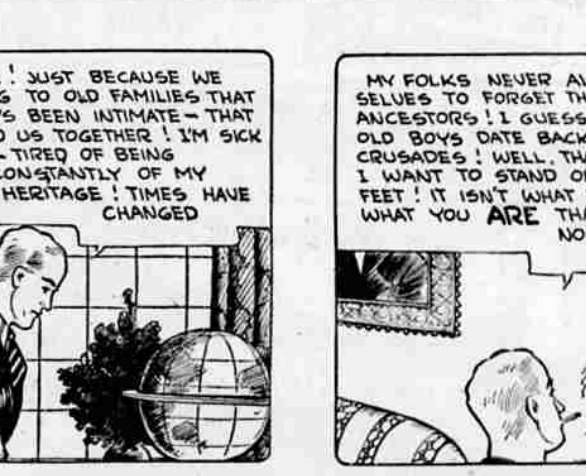
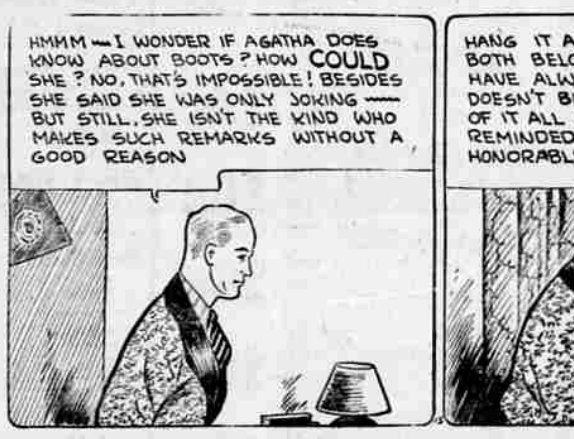
OUR BOARDING HOUSE



SALESMAN SAM



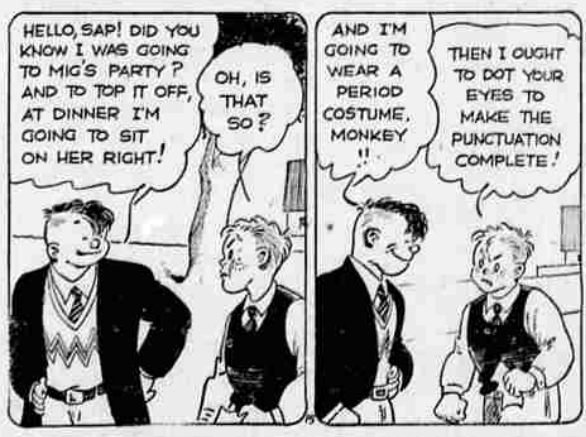
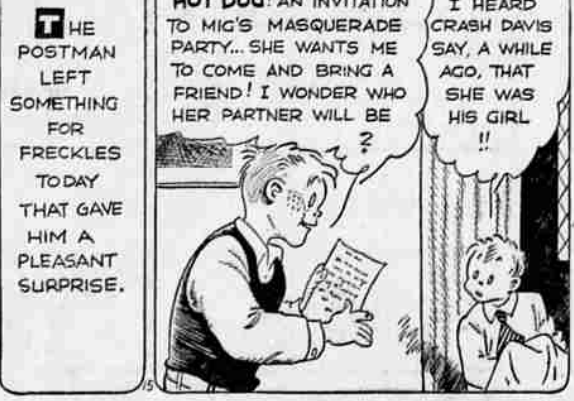
BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



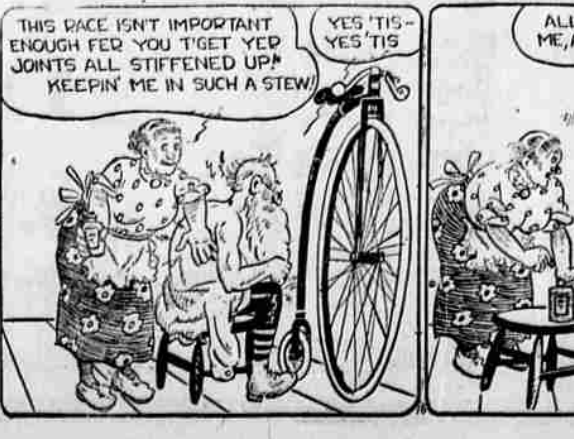
WASH TUBS



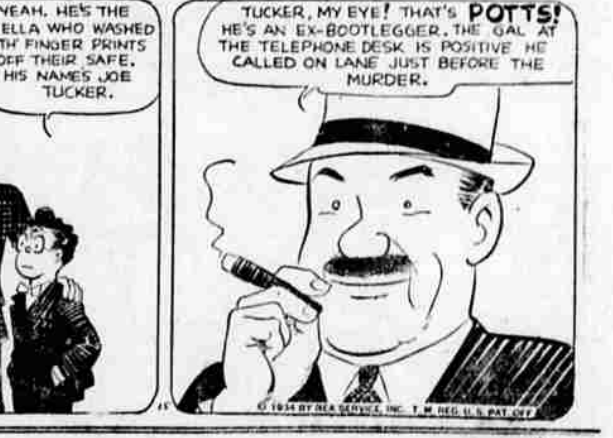
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



THE NEWFANGLES — MOM'N POP



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY COWAN

