

# Darling Fool

By MABEL McELLIOTT

BE-ING HERE TODAY  
**MONNIE O'DARE** loves **DAN CARDIGAN**, wealthy and handsome. Her list of friends, including the staid, **SANDRA LAWRENCE**, pretenses to be Monnie's friend, wants Dan for herself. His parents want him to marry Sandra and look down on Monnie because the O'Dares are poor. Monnie clerk in a drug store.  
 Miss **ANNIE** Cook, long a friend of the family, inherits \$50,000 and asks Monnie to go to Europe with her. The girl hesitates, hoping for news from Dan. At last a letter comes but it is a disappointment. Dan's love seems to have cooled. Monnie, pleased, accepts Miss Annie's invitation. The day they leave Belvedere Dan rains.

**NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY**  
**CHAPTER XXX**

It had been raining when Dan reached Chicago. Hard, cold, unfeeling rain, beating down on streets like black glass, making dazzling reflections in all the puddles. He sat moodily in the taxi which was hurrying him across town from one station to another. He'd been a fool to write that letter to Monnie, he told himself, when he was in that black mood two weeks ago. His mother had been "working on him" as she often did, whispering that he was to keep up the good work, devoting himself to Sandra because of Mr. Lawrence's approval depended all their future. After the talk with his father Dan was inclined to take her word for it. Dan knew as well as the next fellow how precarious business conditions were. He felt a slacker anyhow, off there enjoying himself while his father sweated at home over the bills.

Well, it hadn't been his own idea. He'd done it to please the family. Then, all hot and bothered, discouraged too, he had written to Monnie, telling her he thought they'd better not plan to be married in January. It was just a mood and moods pass. Person oughtn't to write letters when he felt that way. Curious that she hadn't answered. Dan would have sworn that Monnie would give you a come-back on a letter like that. Once she would have. He wondered what could have happened. Deep down he had a sneaking suspicion that one reason he'd written it was to get Monnie's answer, hurt, loving, assuring him she'd wait, asking what the trouble was. Didn't he care any more?

But he hadn't had a line—not a word. Dan hadn't to write letters, himself. Somehow he never knew sure she would write him often. All this fortnight he had watched for mail, expecting every day to have a line from her. Then when the month had been up and she had still remained silent he had told still remained silent he had told his mother he was going to run on home ahead of the rest of them. He had been, all of a sudden, impatient to see Monnie. Mother hadn't wanted him to do it, had complained that Sandra would think it queer. Dan swore softly to himself. What did he care what Sandra thought? Sure, she was good looking, smart but she left him cold. Whereas Monnie—and here Dan's deep set eyes glowed—he was crazy about Monnie. There was something about her that caught at his heart, squeezed it. Maybe she was sick. Oh no, he assured himself; lighting a cigaret in the cab's stuffy darkness, she was just sora. She'd been like this before about something he'd done.

He might write. He might phone her long distance. Then he decided against that. In a small place like Belvedere news got around so easily. No, he'd wait until he saw her and could talk to her. That was the best way.

**THE** big terminal seemed chilly and deserted. Dan strode along, glancing with casual interest at the little group of shawled immigrants huddled over their bags. It was a gloomy place. Gave him the shivers. Well, there wasn't long to wait. His train was already made up.

The wheels beat a tune into his brain. It was a tune he had danced to that last night at the Bar-A Ranch.

"Isn't it romantic, de-de-da-da-da-da-da-da-da!"

Sandra had been humming the words, her head thrown back, those queer, heavy-lidded gray eyes of hers on his face. Maybe Dan had held her a little tighter than necessary. He was, he told himself, doing everything to keep everybody happy. But as the wheels ground out the tune now he decided he wasn't going to have anything more to do with Sandra. It was the very Dickens, being pulled this way and that—but that was all. If Monnie hadn't been around he might even have fallen in the way of being in love with Sandra. He admitted that. But as things stood—well, it was just too bad. Dan grinned in the darkness.

He raised the shade and peered out into the rainy night. Nothing but blackness out there and occasionally the blurred lights of a station as they flashed past. The train hooted sarily at a grade crossing. Dan wished he could sleep. Why was it he couldn't? Usually he dropped off the instant his head touched the pillow.

He knew what he'd do. First thing in the morning after he'd reached home and had a bath and shave and seen Dad he'd go see Monnie at the store. He'd surprise her—not even phone. Maybe she could go to lunch with him. They'd drive out the Springs way. Then he'd tell her he was sorry he'd been such a dope about this trip. She'd understand, of course, and everything would be lovely. Curious he should feel rather nervous about it all.

**SALEM, Ore., (UP)—**Machine age has not affected agriculture as much as many other industries, but it has been felt. Each agricultural worker in 1932 cared for an average of 36 acres of land, compared to 26 acres in 1910 and 15 in 1900.

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He broke away. He had an irresistible temptation to telephone to Monnie. Let's see—it was nine o'clock. She would be at the store by this time.

He gave the number, sat drumming on the table, waiting. "Miss O'Dare?" His face went blank. "Where'd you say? Oh, I see. I see!"

He stood up, looking dazed. There was something queer here. That boy had said Monnie had gone away. That sounded like "abroad." But that was crazy. She was right here in town. Somebody was playing a practical joke on him. After he'd washed up he'd run around and see her mother, ask her what it was all about.

Kay O'Dare met him at the door, smartly dressed in blue. She stared when she saw him. "Oh, hello."

"Some idiot down at the store said Monnie'd gone away," Dan blurted out. "It isn't true, is it?"

Kay gave him a cool glance. "She's sailing for Europe with Miss Corey tomorrow," she told him. "They left for New York this morning on the 8:30."

(To Be Continued)

**Flapper Fanny Says**

Outdoor girls are always picking up a lot of pointers.

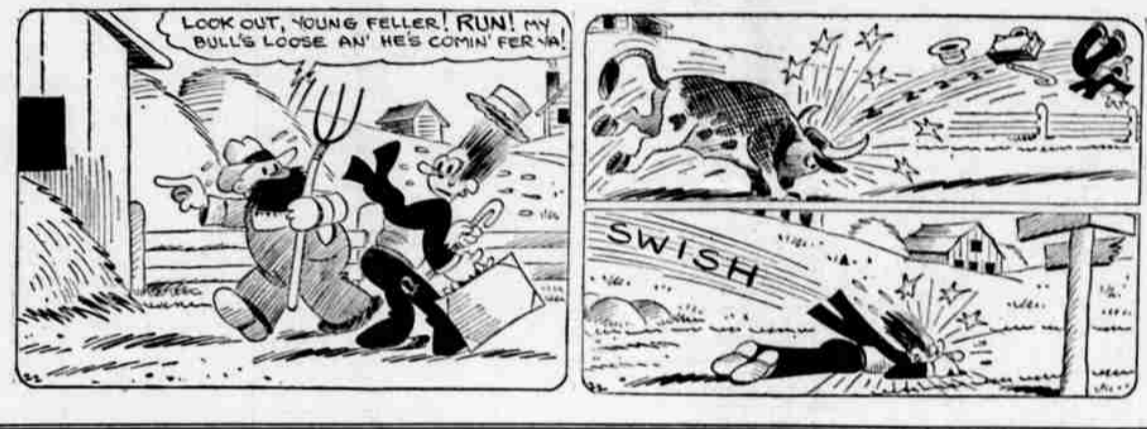
**OUT OUR WAY**



**OUR BOARDING HOUSE**

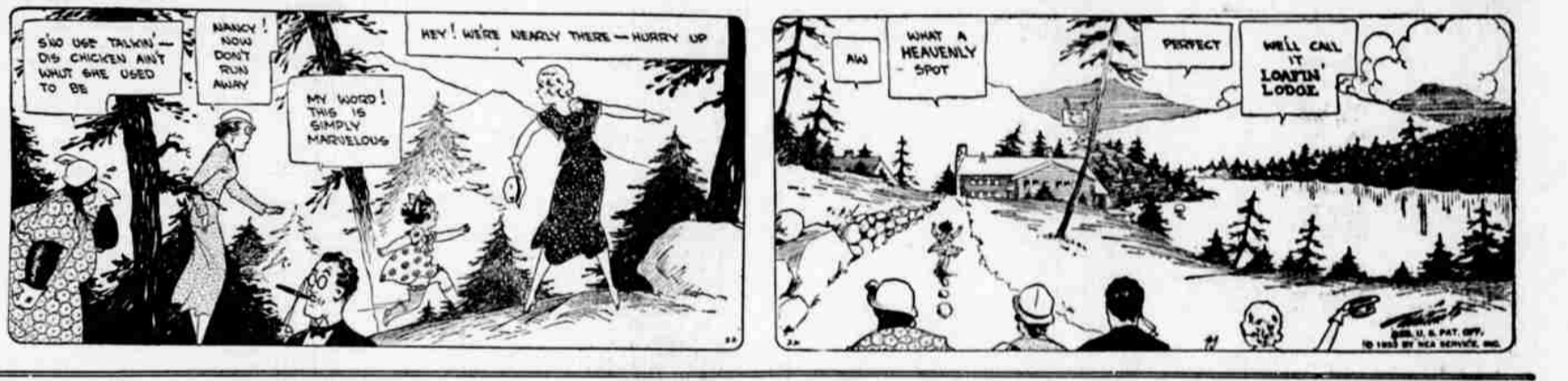


**SALESMAN SAM**



**By Small**

**BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES**



**By Martin**

**WASH TUBBS**



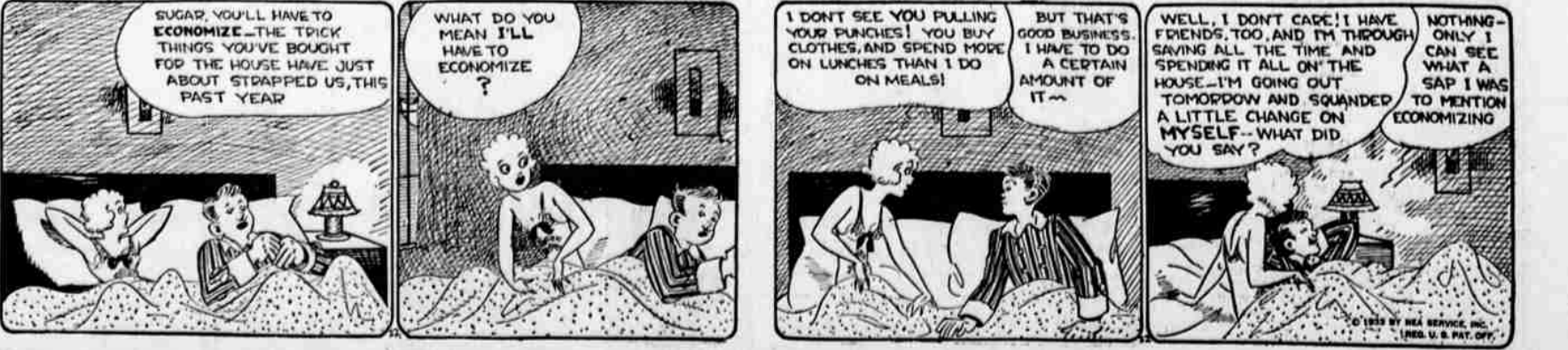
**By Crane**

**FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS**



**By Blosser**

**THE NEWFANGLES—MOM'N POP**



**By Cowan**