

OUT OUR WAY

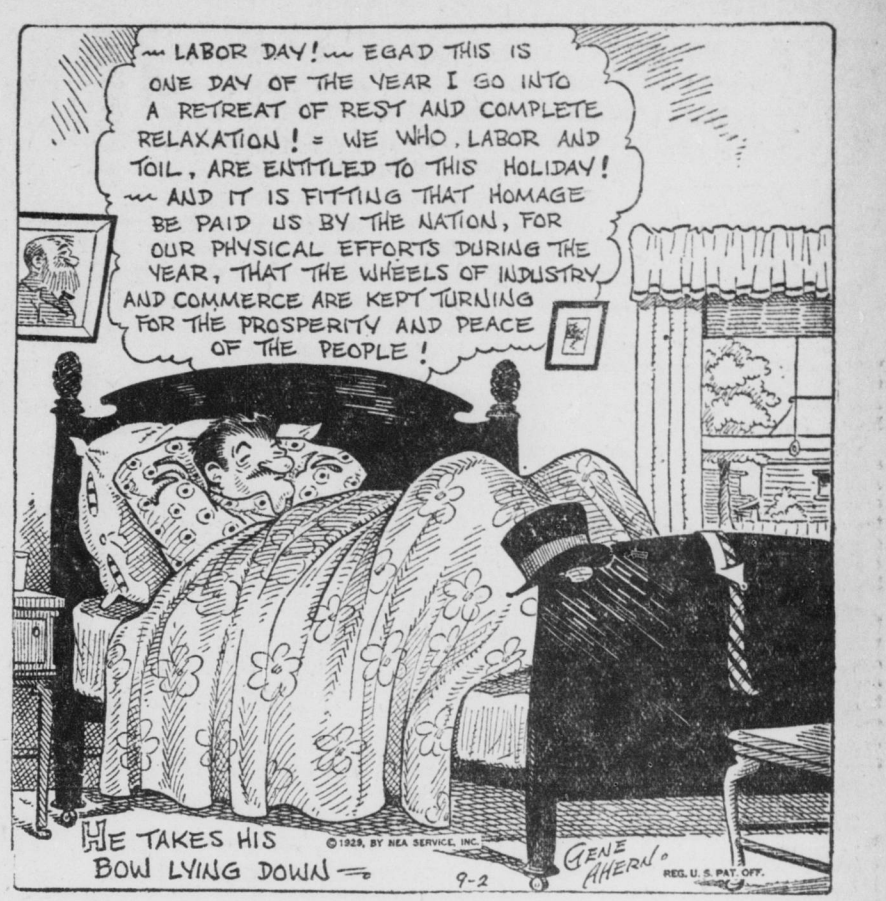
—By Williams

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

—By Martin

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

—By Blosser

The SHINING TALENT

By ELEANOR EARLY © 1929 By NEA Service Inc.

CHAPTER XLVII—(Continued)

Bob was pale and uneasy. He clutched at the edge of a desk, and teetered uncertainly.

"So that's it!" he repeated.

Red's face crimsoned wrathfully. His temper, among his intimates, was proverbial. But Bob had no way of knowing that. Neither did he know that Red's smashing left was more or less famous.

SUDDENLY a hairy fist caught him on the chin. The probability is that Bob did not recognize it for a fist. Because, at the moment it connected with his chin, he closed his eyes, and his powers of observation forthwith ceased to function.

After some moments he moaned weakly, and tried to raise his head. It collided painfully with the top of a chair. Then, mercifully, he passed again into oblivion.

A little later some one came and threw cold water in his face, and pressed brandy between his lips. And immediately other men came. They brushed off his clothes, and washed his hat, which had fallen behind a desk. Then they called a taxi, and when he had given them his address, they sent him home.

Bob was talking before that, rather incoherently, of police. He wanted a warrant. And he talked of assault and battery. He surprised himself by using oaths that had never before come to his lips. He did not, in fact, realize that he harbored such expressions in the remotest corner of his sub-consciousness. The ugly epithets he used were applied entirely to Red, on whom he vowed a deep and dreadful vengeance.

The men who were brushing him off were newspapermen. They took the affair with a very casual air, as though they were used to finding unconscious people strewn all over the place.

"Better lay off Red," they admonished. "What chance have you got against a police court man? Naturally the boys will give him the breaks. It would be a lot of advertising that would do you no good."

Eventually he saw the wisdom of their advice. He realized that a story may be fairly presented, but with enough subtle humor to render either plaintiff or defendant absurd. Even for the sake of a verdict, he had no desire to appear ridiculous. As the reporters had said, it was natural that the newspapers should give Red a break. The inevitable conclusion would be his own presentation in the most ignoble of roles.

He was determined, however, to locate Molly and compel the return of his child. He considered consulting a detective agency, but decided to wait for a few days. For the present, it was better that people should think Molly had gone away solely to avoid the insistence of the press.

He called one of the papers and dictated a statement.

"Regretting the exploitation of her most personal affairs, Miss Burnham," he said, "has left Boston in a company with my small daughter. Neither Miss Burnham nor I have any further statement to make at this time."

Meantime, the re-write men, each fortified by a copy of "Ashes of Desire," were writing various "True Stories of Molly Burnham's Romance." Assuming that the book was autobiographical, they interpreted it as a message to Bob.

IT was a good story. Full of heart throbs. The re-write men did not know that it was not true. They put two and two together.

News was scarce, and a good romance is almost as good as a murder, any day. Besides, it is not often there is such a chance for an attractive layout as Molly's pictures furnished. Molly takes a very good picture, and she had been photographed by the best portrait photographers in the country. There were pictures, too, of Rita. She is a delightful child, and has been photographed often, probably than any child outside of the movies.

Considering all things then, the news editors can scarcely be blamed for plugging the story for all it was worth. On the second day, the stories were more complete than on the first. They traced Molly's phenomenal success from



WASHINGTON TUBBS II

—By Crane



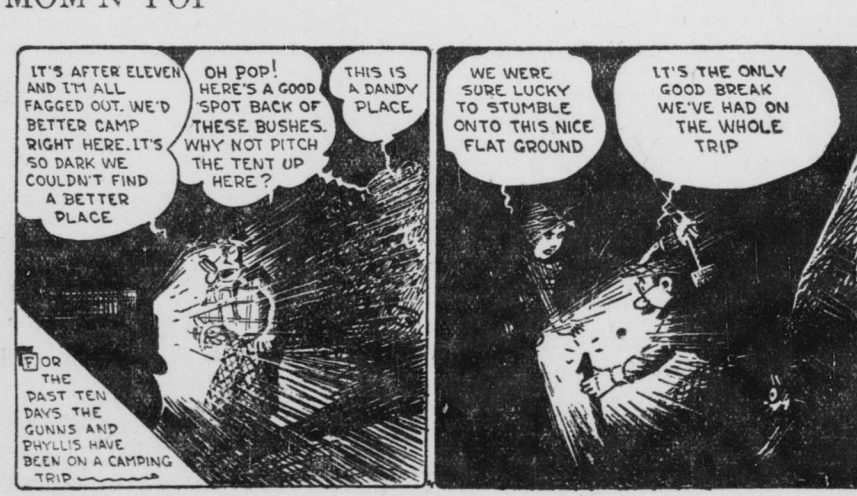
SALESMAN SAM

—By Small



MOM'N POP

—By Taylor



"Well," he drawled, "I knocked your fancy for a row of goals last night, Sweetness. Oh, he's all right now. Nothing to worry about. Just a little clip on the chin. Nice and clean, right out the picture."

"Red! You brute! What did you do that for?"

"Little private matter," he told her serenely. "I've been wanting to take a wallop at the guy for a long time. Last night he comes down to see me, and pretty soon he pulls a fast one."

"But you shouldn't have struck him!" she cried.

"Well, remorse isn't gnawing away at my vitals, so don't let that bother you, sweetness. The point is, the young man's a bit riled. Flung off, he was going to have me arrested for assault and battery. But I guess he thought better of that one, because there haven't been any process servers invading the sanctuary of our consecrated press room."

"It's nothing to joke about!" interrupted Molly sharply. "If you've infuriated Bob, he'll simply take it out on me—that's all."

"That being that, you might as well come home. What I'm afraid of is he might get some detective agency on your trail. Then there'd be the deuce of a rumpus."

"Little sunbeam! You're so consoling. I guess you're right though. Exit Mrs. William Blake and entourage from Lenox. Now listen, Red." Molly's voice came carelessly over the wires. "Tell me honestly, 'haven't you seen Jack?'"

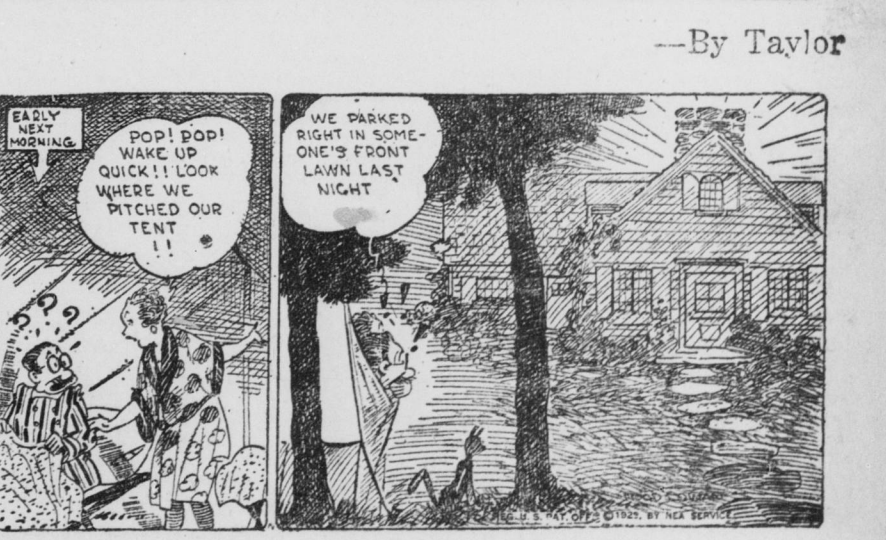
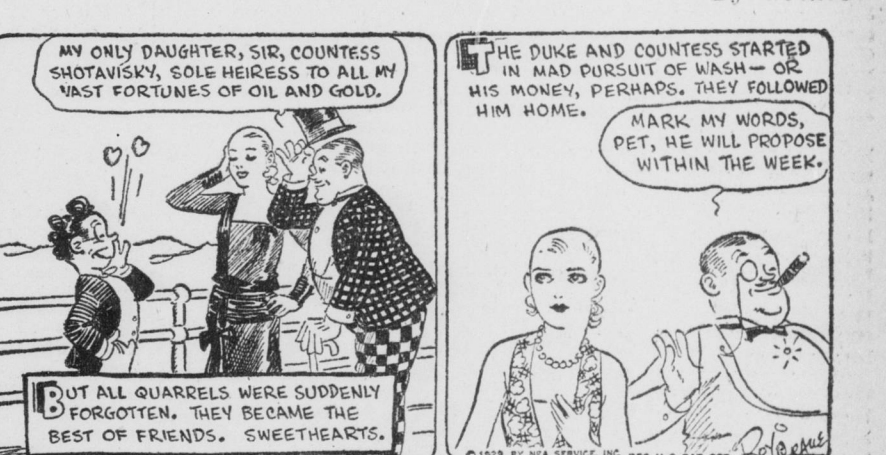
"Not hide or hair of him. I guess he's ditched you," he told her unfeelingly. "Serves you right. Molly getting yourself engaged to an Arab like Newton."

"Oh, Red, be nice to me," she begged. "I'm so upset. Rita has a perfectly dreadful cough, and I'm worried to death. Please be nice, just for a little while."

"All right," he promised. "Come on home, and I'll be nice. Better plan to get in some time after dark. It will give you a peaceful night, if the crowd doesn't know you're back."

It was raining when Molly reached Boston. A driving, furious storm, with the rain coming down like slim stilettos, and whirling, when it fell, in great, gray puddles. And an angry wind blew in damp, wet gusts.

THERE was the feeling of melancholy that comes so often with rain and darkness. Molly felt engulfed in a dreadful depression that foreboded, she feared more unpleasantness. She remembered the dead, when she was at college, that she and Jack talked of premonitions. And she told him that she could feel disaster in her bones. He had laughed at the notion. But now she felt sure that what she said was



TARZAN OF THE APES

—By Edgar Rice Burroughs

