By Thornton W. Burgess

THUNDERER MAKES GOOD

Those children have the best of care
When in this both the parents share.
—Old Mother Nature.

Thunderer the Grouse felt foolish. He had just seen Mrs. Grouse walk out from beneath some pine boughs, and with her ten of the prettiest babies in all the Great World, and he had asked whose babies they were.

"Yours! And you're just in time to help take care of them!" was the tart reply of Mrs. Grouse.

"Of course, my dear. Of course," replied Thunderer, still feeling foolish, and looking it. "Where did all those come from?" Then he looked as if he felt still more foolish. Certainly that was a foolish question to ask. "I mean," he added hastily, "where have they been all this time? I mean the nest. Where was the nest?"

"In the safest place I've ever had a nest," replied Mrs. Grouse.

"Where was it?" Thunderer persisted.

"Right behind me at the foot of this tree I have just come out from under," replied Mrs. Grouse.

Thunderer peered under the low-hanging boughs and saw the empty nest at the foot of the tree. "That is a good place," he admitted, "but I don't see anything extra safe about it. You've had other nests just as safe."

Mrs. Grouse shook her head. "No, I haven't," said she. "This was the safest place in which I've ever built a nest."

Thunderer looked more puzzled than ever. "What is there about this place that's so safe?" he demanded.

"I guess you haven't looked high up in the tree," said Mrs. Grouse.

Thunderer looked up. For the first time he saw the nest of Redtail the Hawk. There was a startled look in his eyes. "If you ask me, it's the most dangerous place you've ever had a nest," said he.

"You're wrong. You're quite wrong," retorted Mrs. Grouse. "The proof of this is in the family you now have to help take care of. I laid ten eggs, and now there are ten babies. I never felt so safe in my life as I did sitting on these eggs. As long as those Hawks didn't know I was down below, and I took care that they shouldn't know, I felt safer than ever before. I was sure that no one would dream of looking for me or my nest in such a place, and no one did. Reddy Fox, and Jimmy Skunk, and several others walked right past, without so much as a glance under that tree. They were just like you."

Thunderer blinked. "What do you mean, just like me?" he demanded.

"They didn't dream that I, or anyone else, would make a home right under the home of those Hawks. Anywhere else they would have been always poking and prying about, looking under every tree that had low boughs like this tree. As long as those Hawks didn't know I was here, I knew nobody else would find it out. Now we must get these babies away from here before Redtail and Mrs. Redtail get back. I'll lead the way, and you follow behind, and keep the babies from lagging back," said Mrs. Grouse.

"Yes, my dear," replied Thunderer, meekly, and did as he had been told to do.

Proudly, very, very proudly, and a little bit fussily, Mrs. Grouse led the way. The ten babies scampered after her with Thunderer following in the rear. They made an odd, but lovely little procession. Mrs. Grouse kept under the bushes as much as possible. Every second or two she turned her head to see that the babies were following. The latter looked for all the world like very, very small barnyard Chickens. Just like Chickens, they ran back and forth, this way and that, stopping now and then to pick up something. For young as they were, they were already looking for something to eat and trying to find it themselves.

But could you have seen Thunderer as he followed behind, you might have thought it was he, not Mrs. Grouse, who had done the long sitting on those eggs. He was all puffed up. It was pride. He was puffed up with pride over this family he had just discovered was his own. He didn't even mind being behind instead of leading.

EASTER MONDAY

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Contract Bridge

By Josephine Clubertson

MASTER PLAY

Extremely skillful play was needed to make the optimistic slam in the following hand.

North dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

North: ♠ Q 2 ♥ Q 9 3 ♦ A K 7 2 ♣ K 6 5 2

West: ♠ K J 8 3 ♥ J 7 6 4 ♦ Q ♣ 9 8 7 3

East: ♠ 9 6 ♥ K 10 8 5 2 ♦ J 9 8 4 3 ♣ 4

South: ♠ A 10 7 5 4 ♥ A ♦ 10 6 5 ♣ A Q J 10

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 N T	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	6 ♣ (final bid)	

South's slam bid was a little rash, but he soon justified it.

West decided that a trump lead was safest. South won and led a spade toward the queen. West put up the king and, after long thought, led his diamond queen.

After putting up the diamond king, South cashed the spade queen, then led a low trump. East's showing out, however, meant trouble; now South could not even hope to run the spade suit, throwing off two diamonds from dummy and ruffing a diamond.

South launched a different plan — one that could succeed. He ruffed a low spade, drew the remaining trumps, discarding a heart from the board, and then cashed the ace and ten of spades, discarding the deuce and seven of diamonds. The final three-card position was: Declarer had the 10-6 of diamonds and the blank ace of hearts. Dummy had the diamond king and the Q-9 of hearts. East was squeezed. When he was forced to reduce to three cards, he had his choice of keeping the J-9 of diamonds and the blank king of hearts, or the jack of diamonds and the K-10 of hearts. He chose to blank the diamond jack, but South read the situation perfectly. He cashed the diamond ace, returned to the heart ace and could then cash the diamond ten for the fulfilling trick. If East had elected to blank the heart king, South simply would have led the heart ace before entering dummy with the diamond.

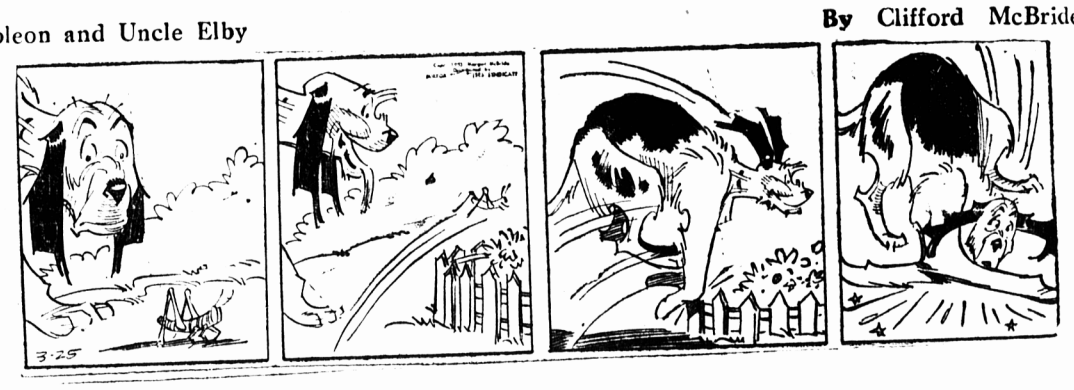
The hand would have had a different ending if West had opened or shifted to a heart. That would have broken up the squeeze.

King Of The Royal Mounted — By Zane Grey

Rip Kirby — By Alex Raymond

Joe Palooka — By Ham Fisher

Napoleon and Uncle Elby — By Clifford McBride



Li'l Abner — By Al Capp

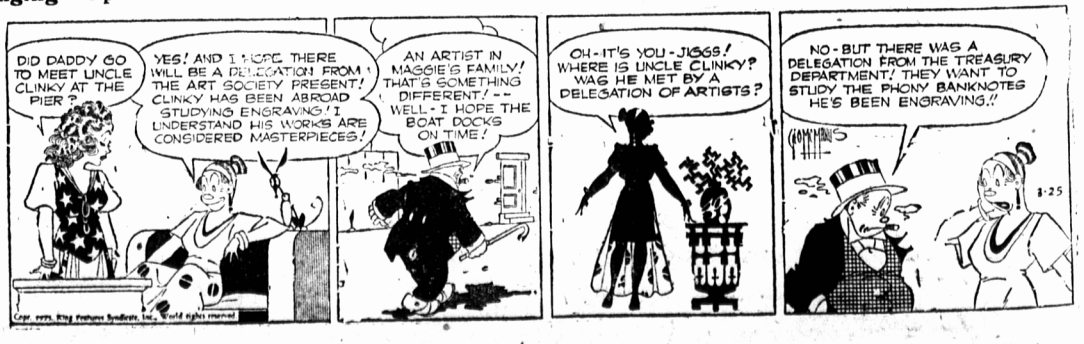
Pogo — By Walt Kelly

Tilly The Toiler — By Bob Gustafson

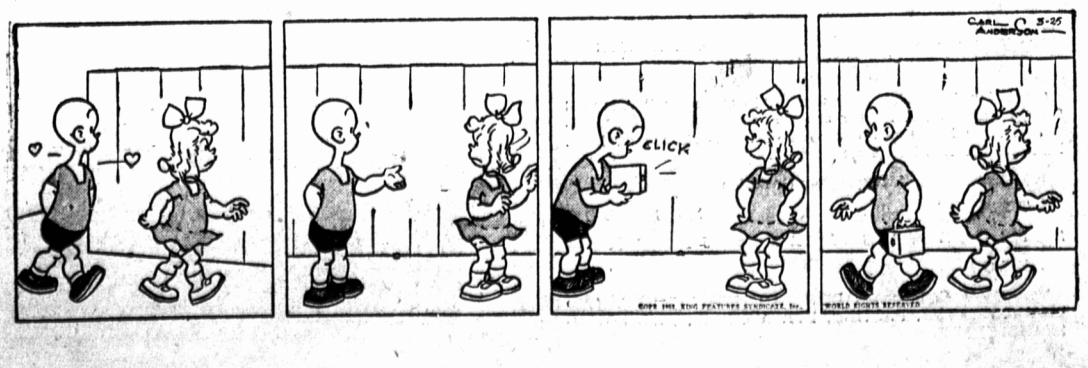
Tippy and "Cap" Stubs — By Edwina

Dotty Dripple — By Ruford

Bringing Up Father — By George McManus



Henry — By Carl Anderson



PENNY — By Harry Haenigsen