He Found Gold In "Dogpatch"

By Peter Ronald

He receives an income of something around $250,000.00 a year—which would nearly be enough to satisfy most of us—yet he's suing the people who pay it to him for the almost unbelievable sum of fourteen and a half million dollars, revenue which, he contends, they've prevented him from getting in the past fourteen years or so.

Creating one of the most popular daily and weekly comic strips of all time—the sort of job which keeps most cartoonists continually scrambling furiously to keep even with ever-recurring 'dead-lines'—he still finds time to plot and write the story for another very successful strip, which he owns and takes half the revenue from.

Who is he?

* * *

Alfred Gerald Caplin, of course; and if you don't recognise him by that name, you probably will as "Al Capp" who directs the doings of the Yokum family, Daisy Mae, Moonbeam McSwine and all the rest of the queer but somehow loveable folks whose doings countless millions follow in the comic strip LI'L ABNER.

Just which is the most widely-read comic feature in the world depends, pretty much, on who you happen to be talking to—BLONDIE — DICK TRACY — JOE PALOOKA and LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE all having their adherents. But nobody who knows anything regarding such things denies that LI'L ABNER belongs right up in the front ranks — indeed, the general feeling is that it tops them all.

Al Capp

It is published in eighteen countries—and five different languages—in papers claimed to have a circulation of more than thirty million daily. When a prize of $500 was offered for the best drawing of "Lena the Hyena"—a creature, according to Capp, too repulsive for human eyes to see—more than a million entries came in. And as you probably know Sadie Hawkins Day—the occasion when Dogpatch spinsters have the privilege of capturing eligible males too slow to escape—has come to be annually observed on most of the College campuses of the Continent.

* * *

Al Capp is a dark-haired, heavy-set man of 38, who wears a seven and seven-eighths hat—a full size larger than average—and who suffered the loss of a leg, at the age of nine, in a street accident. This latter handicap doesn't prevent him from getting around very nimbly, either afoot by means of an artificial leg, or by means of one of his two brightly-colored Cadillac convertibles — with "AL CAPP" painted in big letters on the doors, just in case anybody should be in doubt as to the identity of the driver.

Born in Connecticut in 1909 Capp — when old enough — studied art for four years at Philadelphia and Boston. In this connection his comment is worthy of note by all boys and girls who believe, because their drawings get laughs from their families and friends, they should be able to move right into highly-paid jobs as comic-strip artists. "You cannot do humorous drawing until you've learned to do straight drawing."

Capp worked for a while as an illustrator on the Boston Post; and his first experience with humorous art was in connection with a 'single-panel'—which means one picture—feature know as "Mr. Gilfeather."

Just who is actually responsible for the invention of LI'L ABNER is a matter for doubt, even controversy. There was a time when Capp worked for Ham Fisher in producing the "JOE PALOOKA" colored Sunday strips; and in these there appeared a character "Big Leviticus," not unlike "Li'l Abner" as well as other hillbilly folk of the Dogpatch type.

Egypt is twice as large in area as France, but 97 per cent of it is barren sand and rock.

Anti Steel Trap Campaign of the Association For the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals

Very few people have ever thought about the cruelty involved in trapping fur-bearing animals, and when it is first brought to their attention, they are deeply shocked. It is a fact that the vast majority of animals caught in steel traps do not die at once, but are held by a wounded or broken paw until death comes, sometimes days later. The best death such an animal can hope for is death by drowning, if the trap is set under water, and even this is not a quick death, since the animals for which this is designed can exist for comparatively long periods under water. Otherwise death comes from freezing, which also is slow, as these animals are equipped by nature to live in very cold climates, or by starvation, thirst or gangrene, or by the hand of the trapper who may not visit his traps often. "Grey Owl" writes in "Pilgrims of the Wild" (page 49) that frequently birds will pick out the eyes before the animal is dead. In the meantime the trapped animal suffers the terror of a wild creature captured, and the agonizing pressure on the wounded paw. Is it any wonder that such animals sometimes escape by chewing or twisting off their own paw, and that animals have been caught by their one remaining foot?

Works Against Cruelty

The majority are appalled when first they learn of the cruelty involved in trapping, and the A.P.F.A., The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals, is an organization founded to work against this cruelty. The Association, though not yet as large as it must become to be truly effective, is growing, and has now been in existenece for thirteen years. It is a humane society which aims to protect the wild, fur-bearing animals of Canada from a lingering death in a steel trap. The Association is endorsed by the leading Humane Societies across Canada. In addition to the parent body in Toronto there is a well established branch of the Association in Vancouver.

We are willing to attack this enormous problem from any and all angles. The American Humane Society offered money prizes for the invention of humane traps. Scores have been tried, but so far, none has been entirely satisfactory. Most of them cost more, and those of the box-type are more difficult to transport, while still others take longer to set up than the old cruel trap. We have not given up hope however, of finding something as cheap and as effective, and more humane; a type of trap which would kill instantly would seem to most of us to be the ideal, something that would do away with the terror and agony now suffered.

Don'ts for Trappers

If you are a trapper in your spare time, we suggest that you follow these four DON'TS drawn up specifically for the spare-time trapper. 1. If snaring is still permitted in your county and you make a practice of killing predators and fur-bearers in this manner, DON'T in mercy's name use the hay-wire, home-made snare. Write us for particulars of a humane snare. 2. DON'T use snares of steel pinch traps where the box type will do. 3. DON'T neglect to visit every trap at least once in twenty-four hours. 4. NEVER under any consideration be guilty of using a "spring-pole" set.

To all trappers, vendors and purchasers of fur, and to the public at large we say, "Every sentient creature which contributes to the production of the things we use or enjoy deserves, at the very least, humane consideration."

The fur trade is the oldest established industry in this country: some historians claim that Canada was built upon it, but that is no reason why its appalling cruelty should be permitted to continue. Norway, Sweden, Finland and even Germany, have all abolished the steel trap. Why is North America so backward in this one particular?

Servicemen Supplied With Tools of Trade

The Australian repatriation commission supplied servicemen with tools of trade when they returned to civilian life.

A drover got a cattle dog (with pedigree).

An entertainer got a pair of roller skates.

A minister got a cassock and surplice.

A racing commentator and a stipendiary steward put in for binoculars.

A museum scientist asked for a .303 rifle to shoot crocodiles.

Insurance agents and time-payment collectors have asked for bicycles.

A ventriloquist asked for heads and bodies of dolls.

A waiter sought a salver.

Sixty thousand men have been supplied with their trade needs for 450 occupations.

STUFF AND THINGS

"Junior, stop trying to whistle! You're not that kind of wolf!"

Fiction Fun

SHORT STORY

Miss Letty Retires

By JANET M. HINZ

Letty Howard paused hesitantly before the warped oak door. When it closed, it would be for the last time—putting finis to the best years of her life. Yet she hadn't grieved too much. When one was the last of the family, and when one's income had ceased to exist, the inevitabe had to be accepted. But it had been unbearably hard to say farewell to the old rosewood piano.

The piano had been the last of her things to go. The sale of the piano had removed her sole means of livelihood—music teaching. However, it had brought a small measure of comfort, too. The money added to her small, painfully accumulated savings, would enable her to enter "Sunset Home-Haven for the Aged," with her head up—beholden to no one.

Old Sam Warner, waiting patiently at the curb with his rig, climbed down. "Better let me handle that, Miss Letty," he smiled. "Pretty big bag for a little lady."

Letty relinquished the bag gratefully. "Time was," she answered, "When I could carry twice that weight," She paused, recalling. "Why, I moved my piano around without any trouble. Nobody ever touched it. Not even at house-cleaning time."

"Set great store by that pianny, eh, Miss Letty? Long's I can remember, you were playing it every time I went by."

"Sam, I loved that piano more than I should love an inanimate thing," she answered. "It was everything I wanted. It was a wonderful friend."

Sam helped her into the rig, climbed in himself, lifted the reins and clucked gently to his horse.

"Bet there ain't a grown-up in Mill-

port but what don't remember that pianny," he chuckled. "How many young-uns do you figger you taught music to, Miss Letty?"

"Oh, dozens, Sam, I guess. And you know, I don't think there was one who didn't like music, deep down."

The two rode silently for a while. Occasionally Sam pointed out a clump of flowers, or a familiar tree, lifting its shy, green buds to the spring sun.

"I like flowers," he confided presently. "Anything that grows. I like earth. Seems like just feeling soil strengthens me. I can make anything grow."

She smiled. "Before the new folks move in the old place, why don't you go and get some slips from Lucy's roses."

"Why, thanks, Miss Letty. I'll do that." "Well" he said, looking ahead, "seems like there's a party at the Home!"

MISS LETTY'S hand flew to her quivering mouth. "Oh, Sam," she breathed, "take me around to the back! I c-can't face people. I just can't go in the front . . ."

"Now, Miss Letty," Sam said kindly, "it's not like you're going in free. Your way's paid . . . everyone knows that! You got a right to go in the front door!"

She hesitated, then opened the door. Moving timidly, she crossed the threshold.

Immediately, delighted voices greeted her as she paused, blinking and bewildered. Friendly faces swam before her blurred vision; kindly voices spoke affectionately.

Then came the miracle! It stole through her consciousness . . . the lilting strains of a beloved Chopin Waltz. With trembling steps, she walked down the hall, into a small room . . . a rosewood piano . . . her rosewood piano, polished to its full beauty — every dear outline beautifully visible to her half-believing eyes.

The girl at the keyboard rose swiftly, as Miss Letty bent to read the inscription on the carved music rack:

"To the reunion of two inseparable companions whose presence and teachings have forever enriched the lives of all of us . . .

Your Grateful Pupils."

Don't Worry

"I suppose this will be a dangerous operation, doctor?"

"Don't talk nonsense. You can't buy a dangerous operation for two guineas!"

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JITTER — By Arthur Pointer