

Old Franny or What the Dickens

Drawn and Quartered by Mel. Bernstein



What chance has the little fellow these days?



Wind, Wind, glorious Wind,
You've made the lady's
skirt fly

A city slicker appears upon the scene to throw the calm sea of village life into chaos—also confusion. He was unlike the usual fellow from the city in that he was sophisticated, flashily dressed, tall, handsome, mustached and had a line like Notre Dame in 1930. A graduate of correspondence school, he had earned his letter and proved to be a man of good stamp and polished address.

He fell in love with the blooming bud of village womanhood. And she went for him like a commuter for the 7:59. The affair developed far beyond the normal birth rate. In fact, it averaged about 5 back-fence versions more per day than even the elopement of Elmira, Sadie Wiggin's sister's cook—Sadie lived in the green house down the road—no, not the hot-house, green house—You know, her husband—but never mind that. . . .

The city slicker—so-called because of being all wet—realized that a country Jake was trying to beat his time. The fact is. The fact is the only time he ever beat was with his feet when he played the zither at the Fourth of July community gathering the year the corn failed and the Sheriff died of thirst . . . the same year the Mayor had twins—I mean his wife did, consarn yer hide!

The Beau Brummel from the Big Burg raved and ranted . . . in his fury he even resorted to Kipling . . . could he kiple!

"There's a better man that I am butting in!" Quoth he, ravin': "Never more—never more shall I brook such interference!"

So he ups and pops the hick on the snout and marries the daughter and . . . and . . .

Say, Bailey, I thought you said this love affair had something to do with the village being deserted . . . and what's more you said *you* were going to write the story . . .

Hey, you put that Bearcat away and get some copy out—huh—so are you!

(Note: I was only fooling about Bailey reading the Bearcat.)

Editor's Addendum: We don't know just whatinell this is all about, but its art according to our boy Bernstein.

A deserted village—an uninhabited hamlet—at the very least one might describe it as a town in which no one lives. Or, conceding a point: *More* than one might describe it as such. Anyhow,—a deserted village.

This mid-western town was at one time full of the local color so familiar to Nobel Prize winners and Theodore Dreiser—local color ranging from straw blondes to black sheep—with no considerable range between them. But now it is deserted—you've gotten the idea by now?

Gone are the front stoops of the back street houses between which many a reputation was tossed back and forth, much to the chagrin and anger of those mentioned. (In English that means the village gossips gathered every evening in what they called a Sewin' Circle—So'n So is this and So'n So is that.)

Gone is the village commons where the children would gambol on the green. Gone is the general store with its back room where their fathers would gamble on the sly.

But now—yes, you guessed it, clever one, it's all—ah, need I say the heart-breaking word—Deserted! Watson—the kerchief!

This is no time-worn tale of the village maiden, the town boy and the villain from the nearby city. No, it is not; too many people have their doubts concerning the connection of a *maiden* with this story. But she was a beauty, nonetheless.

Mr. Charles, will you do the honors and leave the rassling till another time?

Her father was a real sugar papa—he used to raise Cain quite frequently. Papa owned the whole town and the whole town owed Papa. He always gave checks that were worth twice their face value—you got them two times. He was, all in all, a good scout—he did someone for a good turn every day. His ancestors came direct from the best stock in England—the pillories were all in use at the time.



Clonk! or words to that effect



Guess what?