

Maggie And Jiggs

MARILYN MITCHELL

Every daily and weekly newspaper has a section devoted to "comic strip operas." Some people are extremely attached to certain comic strip characters. They refuse to buy a newspaper which omits a blow by blow description of the daily lives of their particular favorites. Of all the famous comic strip characters now living on inside pages of our great newspapers, two of the best-known and best-loved are Jiggs and his nagging, fault-finding wife, Maggie.

After the first world war, Mr. Jiggs suddenly became very wealthy. He and his family climbed from a place in the lower middle class to a rather insecure position in the upper strata of society. They moved to a luxurious hotel suite and began in earnest the roles that they thought would lead them to a permanent niche in the society world. By this I mean that Maggie eagerly accepted her role in the new routine. Jiggs did not relish the thought of leaving his old friends and old pleasures to climb a very unstable social ladder. He just wasn't that kind of person.

Maggie, however, wanted very much to become a social leader. She wanted to forget all her previous acquaintances and experiences and tried very hard to 'keep up with' the Canne U. Dances and the R. U. Thaires. Maggie liked the feeling of importance she had when these people were around, so they became the ones she wanted for friends.

Maggie continually nagged at Jiggs, because she wanted him to make a good appearance before their wealthy neighbors. Her nagging, however, did not affect him when he decided he wanted to see his old gang. The only way Maggie could keep him in the house was to tie him down or

lock him in his room. She was extremely expert at doing either, but Jiggs persisted in his old ways and never did adapt himself to fashionable living.

Jiggs and Maggie seldom agreed about anything. Sixty per cent of their disputes circled about Jiggs' conduct, but almost as many involved the relatives on both sides of the family. Mrs. Jiggs thought that her husband's relatives were insufferable and he thought his wife's brother and cousins couldn't be more worthless or more disgusting than they already were. It may have embarrassed Maggie to have her in-laws visit her, but Jiggs' emotions were much more violent than mere embarrassment each time his wife's lazy, good-for-nothing brother moved into the house.

Another point of friction was Maggie's voice lessons. Her teacher was a long-haired individual who couldn't have antagonized Jiggs more if he had tried. Jiggs may have had nothing against classical music in general, but he could not bear Maggie's irritating, ear-splitting singing.

Today Jiggs still has the same friends he had twenty-five years ago before he became wealthy. His favorite pastime is to sit in Dinty Moore's with several of them and reminisce about old times. Dinty serves them corned beef and cabbage and after a while they begin a card game, all of which Maggie would frown upon. Jiggs is always the only one who isn't dressed in the clothes of a streetworker, a builder, or a second-rate plumber. None of them, however, notice any change from the Jiggs they have always known.

After all these years, Jiggs still gets out of line quite often, and then Maggie

has to use drastic measures to put him back in his place. She used to use the rolling pin frequently, but lately nothing has been as effective as an antique vase or a few pieces of Haviland china.

Once in a great while Jiggs and Maggie have a few congenial moments. These usually follow a scene in which Maggie

has almost killed Jiggs because of some slight misdemeanor. At infrequent intervals, Maggie is reasonably pleasant if Jiggs remembers to call her "Me dear" often enough. Jiggs, on the whole, gets away with a lot more than Maggie thinks he does.

How I Learned To Ride A Horse

LEE M. HONTS

My first day in the corral at Ft. Riley, Kansas, "World's Largest Cavalry Post," was one filled with apprehension and dread. Learning to ride a horse was the objective of each rookie in the troop that day. The animal I was assigned to ride appeared like an elephant in size, with a reverse hump in his back. But that, the drill sergeant informed me, was the saddle!

In a deep booming voice that made each rookie shake in his individual boots and caused several horses to rear, the sergeant gave us instructions. "All that, and the horse, too." I mused to myself.

The thunder rolled again, "Mount up!"

Being on the left side of the horse, I reasoned: use the left leg first and throw it over the horse. Your body will follow. I found myself looking at the "gas tank" instead of the "engine." Once more the thunder broke and a gentle hand was laid on my quivering knee to inform me that I was sitting backwards

in the saddle. I bet that horse was laughing to himself. I dismounted and climbed "way back up there" again. Taking the reins in my left hand, divided between fingers, as per instructions.

I gave the starting order, "Giddap!" I moved not an inch. "Where's the starter on this Thing, Sarg?"

"In your boots," came back a laconic reply. "Squeeze his sides with your legs and give a slight tug on the reins."

I squeezed and I felt the movement of the machine. "It's alive, after all," thought I, and I began thinking about a far-off land. I absent-mindedly wondered what a slight kick with my heels would do for my ride. A minute later a galloping animal with a scared rider jumped the fence of the corral. The sergeant retrieved the horse down the road the corporal retrieved bruised rider by the fence. My lesson was learned, and in it lies the wisdom of any experienced driver: Don't shift gears unless you want to change speed.