Edgar E. Martin Collection I

MU Ellis Special Collections Comic Collection 3
.25 linear feet, 365 original cartoons

Scope and Contents Note
The collection contains information about Edgar E. Martin and Boots and Her Buddies, the comic strip that he created. Included in the collection are original comic strips from 1942-1959, selected clippings of the strip and articles from the same period. Continuities written by son-in-law Thomas B. Harris are in the collection.

Provenance
The original Boots and Her Buddies cartoons; the newspaper clippings of the comic strips and articles from the 1930s to 1950s; the Harris continuities; and the photo were placed on deposit in the University Libraries by daughter and son-in-law Mary and Thomas B. Harris in 1991 and 1992.

Restrictions on Access
The collection is available to all researchers. Permission to publish materials in the collection must be obtained by the head of Special Collections. Additionally, permission to publish original Boots and Her Buddies cartoons that are still protected by copyright must be obtained from Universal Uclick.

Biographical Sketch
Edgar Everett ("Abe") Martin was born in Indianapolis in 1898. His family later moved to Monmouth, Illinois where his father was a biology professor at Monmouth College. Martin attended Monmouth, but left in his junior year to study at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts. He joined the Newspaper Enterprise Association in 1921 as a syndicated cartoonist.

Boots and Her Buddies, created by Martin, was introduced as a daily comic strip on February 18, 1924 and became popular immediately with NEA subscribers and their readers.

The Sunday comic strip originally was the top strip for the Our Boarding House page running from 1926 to 1931. Martin then began a full Sunday page of his own titled Girls. On September 9, 1934, the page became Boots though some newspapers kept the title Girls long after the name change. Popular paper cutouts were first featured on the Sunday pages first under the Girls title and later under Boots. The paper dolls continued until the early 1960s. Other toppers were Babe 'n Horace (March 19, 1939 to [?])

The most memorable characters in the strip are Boots, the college student and later glamorous, fashionable young lady, wife, and mother; Rod Ruggles, Boots' husband; and Davey, their son. Cora, Boot' longtime friend and her husband Professor Stephen Tutt appear regularly in the strip. Popular Pug first appeared in 1937 when Boots brought her to live with the Tutts after Pug's father J.X. "Bettem" High disappeared. Pug later became an established member of Boots and Rod's family. Irrepressible Dory, the maid, was a favorite of all readers. Boots and Rod were married on September 2, 1945 and Davey was born July 4, 1946.

During the 1950s the job of providing Boots story lines belonged to University of Missouri student and English instructor Thomas B. Harris. Working many weeks in advance of the preparation of the art work, Harris sent rough story ideas to artist Martin who approved them and sent them to NEA. When NEA approval was received, Harris wrote the daily dialogue for the entire story sequence.

Harris had a dual interest in the comic strip. He married former Mary Martin, daughter of Edgar E. Martin.

Thomas Harris' entire career was spent at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He served successively as Administrative Assistant, Assistant Dean and Associate dean of the College of Arts and Science from 1954-1984 and was an advisor in the Provost's Office from 1984 until 1988 when he retired.


Inventory

Box 1
FF 1. Biographical sketches and obituary of Edgar E. Martin.

FF 2. Photograph of Martin.

FF 3-9. Continuities of and correspondence regarding "Boots and Her Buddies" stories or fragments of stories. (22)

FF 10. Articles (6)

"'Boots' Goes to Yale." Jackson (Mississippi) Daily News, February or March 1939.

"Where Comics Come From." Unidentified newspaper article.


"Get a 'Flexible Larynx' to Woo the Gals, Advises Atlanta Charm Academy." Tampa Sunday Tribune, July 30, 1950?
"'Boots and Her Buddies' Speak from Brain of Local Student." (Tom Harris) Columbia Daily Tribune, [?]
1950.


FF 11. Catalog of Boots and Her Buddies original strips (3 lists). Prepared by Thomas Harris.

FF 12-20. Boots and Her Buddies newspaper clippings and photocopies


FF 14. January 14-February 6, 1950

FF 15. February 7-March 1, 1950

FF 16. March 2, 1950; March 23-April 12, 1950

FF 17. April 13-21, 1950; May 18-31, 1950; August 30, 1950

FF 18. August 31, 1950; September 7-29, 1950

FF 19. September 30-October 21, 1950

FF 20. October 23-November 4, 1950

Box 2
Original Boots and Her Buddies daily strips
Selected strips 1942 to 1948 and undated strips.
(See Box 1, folder 11 for complete lists of the dates of strips in the original deposit).

Box 3
Original Boots and Her Buddies daily strips
Selected strips 1956 to 1959.
(See Box 1, folder 11 for complete lists of the dates of strips in the original deposit).