

Meade and Penny Frierson, perpetrators of HUITLOXOPETL PRODUCTS, present (from the confines of 3705 Woodvale Road, Birmingham, AL 35223) for the measley sum of \$1 (50\$ in person - figure it out) this first non-illustrated (except for the cover) look at Pogoland

POGOLAND (May 1949 - Dec. 1972)

PRE-PROLOG

Maybe it hasn't been a full 30 years yet since I first met a distorted marsupial named POGO 'POSSUM in Animal Comics, but it feels like it. At any rate, precise or not, one and a half score years later I opened this evening (8-9-76, for you nosy ones) a volume yclept "POGO'S BODY POLITIC" with a tribute to Walt Kelly by Jimmy Breslin and 117 pages of familar drawings, but less than deathless prose, culled from 1970-72. This is the volume I'd rather they'd've left in the morgue. My abbrevaited collection of uncollected "dailies" (patience - later) from the mid-sixties produced far more yocks. Face it, the book is a re-culling of the less-than-Golden Age strips of 1970-72 whose thematically similar material had already ended up in the recent volumes (later! I tole you).

It, at least, inspired me to write a letter to Kelly's career-long publishers. Simon & Schuster, commending their attention to a "15-more-ever-lovin'-blue-eyed &c" collection (1960-75) with emphasis on the uncollected material (and modestly proposing me for the editorial...welll, uh, heh heh). I do not particularly fancy setting myself before a microfiche reader with stacks of pictures of metropolitan dailies and combing the material for omitted gems. but there are worse ways for a devout Pogophile to spend his hours (and my employers would doubtless recommend some of those worse ways - like standing in line for food stamps - if they caught me at such an endeavor).

Another thing it inspired me to do was this zine - a rehash of the comic book review (sort of) from the long out-of-print (since January 1973) genzine HUITLOXOPETL 8 and a revision of the still in-print article (since January 1975) in HUITLOXOPETL 9.

As the cover, Penny Frierson's cribbing of a detail from a strip, indicates, we do disservice to what Kelly tried to do with his life if we don't take this backward look with the joy that was intended.

Prolog and Glossary (mixed)

This cannot be described as a complete (or even compleat) look at Pogoland because that critter and his friends, including some dropped along the way, began in 1943 in ANIMAL COMICS some of which I read but did not save except for a long 1954 comic called THE POGO PARADE (not reviewed here). The main reason fo ignore the early days is two-fold: there was incomplete artistic development and undecipher-able jargon on the one hand and the more evil/obnoxious sides of some characters was emphasized for the bloodthirsty tykes in sh ort pants who plunked down their nickles for the rag.

I leave animal funnies to the completists - I am a Pogomaniac and not a completist (who else would stop 6 i-sues short of a complete EC collection?)

The sources for the following pages are a lovingly protected set of 16 comics, Dell's Pogo Possum [October 1949 - April 1954] which are cited by their number; Sunday strips from Nov. 7, 1965 to March 27, 1966 (incomplete) and daily strips from November 2, 1965- March 26, 1966 and miscellaneous ones from April, 1966 to late 1967; and the following 32 paperback books (plus 2 reprint collections) which will be cited by the underlined short titles:

1. Pogo - POGO, 182 pp, 1951
2. I - I GO POGO, 190 pp, 1952
3. Unc - Uncle POGO SO-SO STORIES, 94 large pp, 1953
4. Papers - THE POGO PAPERS, 192 pp, 1953
5. Goose - THE POGO STEPMOTHER GOOSE, 94 large pp, 1954
6. Inc - THE INCOMPLEAT POGO, 191 pp, 1954
7. Peek - THE POGO PEEK-A-BOOK, 94 large pp, 1955
8. Pot - POTLUCK POGO, 179 pp, 1955
9. Sun - THE POGO SUNDAY BOOK, 132 large pp, 1956
10. Party - THE POGO PARTY, 191 pp, 1956
11. Punch - POGO'S SUNDAY PUNCH. 138 large pp, 1957
12. Pos - POSITIVELY POGO, 189 pp, 1957
13. Parade - THE POGO SUNDAY PARADE, 127 large pp, 1958
14. G.O. - G.O. FIZZICKLE POGO, 191 pp, 1958
15. Brunch - THE POGO SUNDAY BRUNCH, 127 large pp, 1959
16. Ten - TEN EVER-LOVIN' BLUE-EYED YEARS WITH POGO, 288 pp, 1959 [of which new material is only as follows: pp 11-14, 2-28-50 on p.17, 5-1/2/50 on p.21, 22, 6-28-52 on p.51, 53-54, 94, 11-11-53 on p.100, 12-24-53 on p.103, 10-13-55 on p. 152, 188, 192-94, 206-09, 211-13, 218-21, 2-15-58 & 2-17-58 on p. 230, 240-44, 254-55, 258-62, 267-71, 277-80 and 283 - of course, much prose by Kelly]
17. Beau - BEAU POGO, 191 pp, 1960
18. Extra - Pogo Extra, 144 large pp, 1960
19. Ala - POGO A LA SUNDAE, 127 large pp, 1961
20. Gone - GONE POGO, 127 large pp, 1962
21. Jack - THE JACK ACID SOCIETY BLACK BOOK, 96 pp, 1962
22. Instant - INSTANT POGO, 127 large pp, 1962
23. Puce - POGO PUCE STAMP CATALOG, 95 pp, 1963
24. Deck - DECK US ALL WITH BOSTON CHARLIE, 127 large pp, 1963
25. Return - THE RETURN OF POGO, 192 pp, 1965
26. Poop - THE POGO POOP BOOK, 96 pp, 1966
27. Pre - PREHYSTERICAL POGO, 176 pp, 1967
28. Equal - EQUAL TIME FOR POGO, 128 large pp, 1968
- Love-29. POGO, PRISONER OF LOVE, 128 large pp, 1969
30. Poll - IMPOLLUTABLE POGO, 128 large pp, 1970
31. Enemy - WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY AND HE IS US, 127 lpp, 1972
32. Body - POGO'S BODY POLITIC, 128 pp, 1976

Reprints: POGO ROMANCES RECAPTURED, 309 pp, 1975 - #29 and #6  
POGO REVISITED, 318 pp, 1974 - #21, 22 and 26

So much for sources: what about a prolog? Broadly speaking, Pogo is a creature of the fifties and an influence more on people of my generation (and slightly older) than on younger folk. Never as caustic - or dated - as Al Capp, Walt Kelly's strips were many things to many readers. To the Harvard classes of '52-'55 (and doubtless other colleagues of the period, he was an inspiration for riots in the spring;

'I GO POGO' was that war-scared generation's answer to the politicians held over from the forties. To mid-fifties Liberals, Kelly's attack on the commie-hunting Senator Joseph McCarthy was endearing as were his school integration themes. Later on, liberals liked his attack on the John Birch Society and, of course, in the more recent days the opponents of Nixon/Agnew hailed him. But far from topicality, what countless hundreds of thousands are there around Christmas time who cannot hear "Deck the Halls" without conjuring up the numerous Kelly variants to that carol. But it is not my intent to search the journals of Popular Culture to try to construct the various favorable biases held by the masses of newspaper and book readers - this is a personal report of my own reactions to, and researches into, the body of the Pogo material described above.

Consideration of Kelly's work breaks down in several categories - the characters who have developed personalities of their own over the years as well as any in literature (take an extra t, they're small); Das Stoffe (Germanically speaking) of humor, that is, the materials or building blocks of humor in the strips; the "old tales retold", those faëry-tales now peopled by 'de swampland critters', and the Russian stories. Least appealing to me are the new fables (exception being the tale of Gnot-Even the Mouse in Poop) and the original poems/songs which are largely nonsensical and not take-offs on anything.

But having given this outline, we will now guide you through the COMIC BOOKS which are largely unavailable, I suspect, for a sample (ah, to spell) of the silliness and cutesy stuff I detest.

Before me lies a not unduly worn 52 pages (still intact) called Pogo #1 which I purchased from a newstand in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in 1949. How this comic survived the raids of house guests, parental cleanliness kicks, numerous moves, the inevitable sophomore "putting away of childish things", etc is quite a wonder in and of itself, but somehow this comic, and my interest in Pogo, has survived.

Three stories in Pogo #1, a 9, 15 and 24 pager, feature a typical cross-section of the Swampland Critters (Okeefenoque variety): Albert Alligator, Beauregard the Hounddog [unnamed herein], Porky Porkypine, Churchy LaFemme (the turtle), Toadie Frog, Mose Muskrat (a bit player), L'il Rackety Coon, the unnamed bear and the unnamed duck. The stories have sight gags and more subtle humor but here are a few quaint uses of language which appeal to me:

Pogo (to turtle and frog who've been singing): Hit the pitch - go ahead! If you was ball players, you couldn't bat your eyelids. (later) You bringin' tears to the eyes of my bait.  
Turtle: Coz we is so touchin' and talented?  
Pogo: No - he a music lover. [see also Inc in ROMANCES p.247]

Albert: Hmm...ate all your lunch...nuthin' but salt left.  
Pogo: Ketch you'self a bird - what's the great idea?  
Albert: A showboat! We puts on shows on a showboat and nex' thing we is millionaires.  
Pogo: Millionaires! I jes' DO admire being a millionaire or two.

Hounddog: The keen eye of the dog, ever alert, discerns the happy party approaching (over)

Porky: The bearsighted grumpy old porkypine seen the happy party five minutes ago.

Before leaving the oldest Pogoiana, note should be made of the origins contained in this - the Glee and Pilau ("perloo") club is seen; the plot device (twice yet) of retribution by one group on being excluded by another (any parent will not so dearly recognize this daily event); Albert's high esteem for his own good looks is exemplified for the first time (of many), for instance, while he and owl are dressing to try to frighten Pogo he tosses owl a jack-o-lantern saying: "Hre, try this on fo' size, boy --- 'course, YOU won't have any trouble lookin' terrifyin'. But with me it different - I looks GOOD in anything- gone be hard for me to be scary."

We shouldn't leave the world of Pogo #1 without the final philosophy told by Pogo to the Coon chile in answer to the question: "We started out to find the gold at the end of the rainbow - but us didn't get 'round to it - is there really truly gold at the reainbow's end?" to which Pogo replied: "You had fun lookin' and that's important - and what you found was a mess of swamplan' friends having fun and eating [they ended up chasing a fish-fry's smoke not a rainbow] - you got a cozy home to go to and a mammy to love you - what mo' you want, l'il tad?"

POGO #2 bust loose on us 'bout April 1950 being as they was quarterly den [stop that - it's infectious] add introduces some random bugs, doves and Willow the Whips (a firin' fly) and L'il Rackety Coon's parents. Lots and sight gags and some quotable lines:

Porky (coming up from studying fish): I was underneath of the water seein' how it is to be a fish...might damp! An' personal, I think them l'il fishes is frauds. It's un-possible to breathe down there. Them scapers must live someplace else.

The following dialog is staged to con Pogo out of some food by pretending that Albert is sick:

Turtle: There he be! A man smit witha rare attack of bouilla-baisse!

Owl: Bring the stereoscope - bring the pulmotor and push motor.

Pogo: He don't look good, I admit, but then he never do -he's faki

Owl: What? Look at that green color.

Pogo: He always got it. Always he is be green.

Owl: All right, you doubts the wor d of a expert - so I give you a real word about this case. Lean close - I don't want this to get around - this boy here is in a bad state of versimilitude.

Pogo: That's a awful big word! It hard to doubt a word like that.

Turtle: Medical science say they only one cure - plenty of molasses cake.

Pogo: How see - I just finished baking a big ol' gingerbread.

Owl: Gingerbread (hits turtle) My colleague, Doctor LaFemme, was thinking of the latin term - faugh! Of course he meant gingerbread is the cure.

Later, to escape a babysitting assignment from Mrs. Coon, Albert invents: "Yessir, that's true, we is got nuthin' to do UNTIL we we go gran'pappy's funeral in five minutes" to which is replied: "Why, Albert, your grandpa-py passed on in 1913" and he said: "Man! So he did! Come on, Pogo, that funeral due to bust loose any minute!"

POGO #3 features the confidence man, Seminole Sam, a fox by trade, and the mailman duck (later on called Regular Curtis). It presents the first variation on the theme of thinking it's winter when it's summer. Good stories but no real quotable quotes strike me.

POGO #4 uses the same animal-in-the-cake-batter as #3 did (but you didn't know that, did you?) and others since. It is a standard variation as well as the lost animal-in-the-carpetbag leading to suspicions of cannibalism. Seminole Sam is employed herein as are most of the others. You've got to see Sam's line in action:

Sam: (after Porky's rebuff of a product) You don't have it quite right.

Porky: Quite right, I don't have it and I'm NOT takin' any.

Sam: Well then, here's today's special - yours for a song.

Porky: I don't sing.

Sam: When you go to parties, do people sneer?

Porky: I don't have to go to parties for that- people seek me out

Sam: And what do they find? A mere untalented porkypine.

Porky: There's nothing mere about a porkypine.

Sam: S'pose you finish working for the company for 50 years and the management gives you a piano?

Porky: I don't play the piano.

Sam: (punctuated by "but"'s from Porky) That's exactly what I mean - 50 years of hard work and you can't even play the piano...the company goes to a lot of trouble...and what happens? You refuse to play!...Is that gratitude? No, that's pretty small potatoes, my friend, suppose the country elects you president...you would let the nation down. No piano lessons...where's your patriotism? Aren't you ashamed?...Now behold! We have today's jiffy giant-sized family economy offer...Instructions on how to play the piano in ONE easy lesson...think of it &c, &c

In this scene, Turtle is teaching L'il Rackety Coon about holes and borrowing his lunch in the process:

Churchy: What is the main and princibobble ingredient in a hole?

Coon: Cording to what kind of a hole you got in mind

Churchy: Take this donut outen yo' lunch basket - there, son, you is got a ornery, plain and unassumin' type of hole

Coon: Right - my ma made them holes by wrapping dough 'round them and fryin' the tar outen 'em

Churchy: (poking his finger thru the donut) Now, what is the leading ingredient in this hole here?

Coon: Your finger (biting it)

Churchy: (taking swiss cheese from a sandwich) Looky, another example of the quality of the hole.

Coon: Gimme back the principle ingredient in my samwich.

Churchy: (peering thru holes at Coon) Behole the holes. Note the vacuity - now what do you say goes into a hole?

Coon: (poking Churchy's eyes) Rabbits and woodchunks - gimme.

POGO #5 features one of those delightful features like MAD sometimes did when the characters know they are in a comic book. People have written to tell DELL how to make the book amusing and Albert decides they need the old pie-gag with Pogo as ~~xxxxxx~~ helper. Many sticks are slapped (as well as knees out here). They also make a play on swear words; if someone must swear, he gotta say the words like when he hits his finger with a hammer, such as: "ding bing you blackstabbing pickle bickling whippnackers anyway". We also have Albert and Pogo going into the taxi business:

Al: Have a see-gar, pardner.

Pog: A seegar? If you wants a dead, sick and disabled pardner, you is figgered out a sure-fire method.

Al: By jing - every businessman gotta smoke a see-gar...it's his badge of honor.

Pog: At these prices I is without honor.

Al: Is you tryin' to sabotage our business in the bud, bud? Now, another privilege of a junior executive, namely y-o-u, is the rare opportunity of bein' at the controls (handing Pogo an oar) allow me to present you with yo' badge of honor.

Pog: Another one?

Al: I goes high for the right man.

Pog: You is badgering me to death.

Al: Another badge of honor you gits is the 40-lb anchor.

Pog: Couldn't we share these kudos?

Al: Course not. The president of the company carries his burdens in his nautural-born brain

Pog: Why not? They's plenty of room (later) Now, I suppose you is too egg-zawsted to do anything but ride free?

Al: You is a master of free-hand s'posing.

Pog: "Cause I was about to pass back the latest honor I acquired

Al: I isn't interested in the oar but the other honor...namely, the see-gar, has got a certain amount of gaudy fascination.

Likewise, POGO #6 has a certain amount of gaudy fascination, more from the viewpoint of comments than quotes. Al's nephew Alabaster joins with Rackety Coon to play trucks on uncle albert; there is a dispute concerning THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT and a hacked-up dramatization is produced; there is more direct-to-the-reader commentary about being in a comical book; there is the debut of one of my favorite phrases, "like unto"; a brief version of the oft-used chicken little story; historically, it is of interest in complying with the postal regulation regarding printed matter in comics sold through the mail (which DELL was trying hard to do) so the inside covers bear text rather than one-shot strips which had appeared in earlier issues.

POGO #7 introduces the cow, later known as Horrors Greeley and the moose, elsewhere known as Uncle Antler. The first story is a prolonged play on "posse/posey" and a lot of word play and little bits like:

Bear: A common manifestation of the regimented mind - blaming one's superiors! What an intolerable characteristic!

Dog: I may not know what you mean, but I'll defend with my life your right to use that tone!

Then too there's the first appearance of the A-bomb Owl and Churchy are always trying to make (and Albert usually manages to eat). "It's bread and water for you" Reply: "Oh boy, food after all these months."

POGO #8 has a Cinderella and the Three Bears story (because #7 had Jack in the Beanstalk), as told by Albert, little tads playing tricks on Albert and Albert, Pogo and Rackety Coon chile looking for the big rock candy mountain. The unnamed Mouse is quite a popular character in later dramas and plays the mouse role in Cinderella (lead by Pogo) with Owl as the Furry Godmother, of whom it is said, in response to the question of where did she come from: "She popped in unexpected - before I could git away."

I particularly liked a unique sequence in which the tads trade insults:

Gator: I know why you is a orphan. Yo' mam and pap took one look at you and jumped offen the boat.

Turtle: Well, the wind blew a lil bit of ugly offen you and the whole town committed suicide.

Gator: [Coon] was so ornery-lookin' his mam and pap didn't go collect him when he was borned. They sent around a garbage picker and he say he couldn't take the chile 'cause his other garbage would feel bad.

Coon: [Gator] there fell overboard when he was a young'un 'cause his mam couldn't bear to look at him and so couldn't watch him. You know that l'il gator were SO ugly he scared the poor Chattahoochie river so's it had to back up and go down to the Gulf by the Mississippi? And it took 200 men with gas masks and shovels four days to scrape the ugly outen the river bed.

Turtle: You need a ladder to git down offen that story?

I always speculate that the course of that "insult" shtick was a black group's record in the 1950s called "Say, Man" but Kelly could well have encountered this kind of play eëewhere in his life.

The episode which MAD comics desided to parody in particular (about word play) is this one from #8 (catsup is applied to Al's hurt tail):

Pogo: I always add a sprig of parsely

Coon: Shh- we is using this [catsup] for iodine on account of iodine burns too much.

Al: As a ol' donkey friend [meaning Milne's Eeyore] said, 'I is become mighty attached to my tail, and it to me.'

Pogo: If it was sprigtime in the rockies, I'd git you some.

Coon: You'd need a parsley shawl.

Al: Don't lay all your eggs in one sequence...us got a couple miles of jollity to romp through before us is clear of this comic book.

POGO #9 spins a fable involving a dog in the cast who puts in a single-to-performance and in the closing story a heron is prominent, altho the bird's egg bit is repeated later. Also repeated later is this interchange (Pot 155):

Dog: Let's go over to your house      Al: What's the matter with yours?

You is mo' hospitabobble than

I is

My roof leaks

My floor caves in

My window's drafty

My place is smokey

Mine's a little bit on fire

Mine is overrode with mice and tigers      [they go to Pogo's]

POGO #10 begins with Lulu Red Ridey Hoops, then a project for Owl and Churchy, Albert as a cake judge, Owl and Turtle as dentists and Albert reciting the Jabberwocky. Kelly seemed much attuned to Lewis Carroll's madness as we shall see later. In this L'il Red variation Albert is the grandma-eating wolf and Pogo is L'il Red. Pog is leaning on a tree with the funnel in his ear (the better to hear grandma) and a sack in his hand. Albert picks him up, mistaking him for a telephone:

Al: Hello? Hello, operator?

Pog: Hello?

Al: Give me the Flatiron Building

Pog: It's yours - that'll be a dollar.

Al: (looking closer) Say, is you disconnected?

Pog: I holds together the best I can.

Al: (examining Pogo's tail) Well, this don't go nowhere.

Pog: It goes everywhere I do, an', brother, I git aroun'.

POGO #11 launched the year 1953 which, as will be noted later on, was a good one for Pogoites (even considering the fact it was not an election year). The Mother Goose rhymes suffer an interpretation as "Old Muddle Hupboard" which concerns a bug and Albert playing fast & free with Pogo's larder. This is followed by "Hearts of Oak and Heads to Match" featuring Turtle, Rabbit and Frog. "Dog Daze" is one of the several fire department stories. Owl and Turtle involve Miz Beaver in a fortune telling yarn called "Well Done Rare Old Medium". Churchy and Porky and a bait worm cavort in one of the better fishing tails and the closer is at first a repeat of Grundoon (the baby groundhog who speaks in consonants) as a fearless finger fanger and proceeds to involve Albert in another feud with the bear. Along the way we are treated to a concept that Albert stuck in a tuba on a wagon resembles a baby elephump with wheels. Fey stuff, this.

POGO #12 begins with "Little Green Robin Hood" in which Albert mixes the legend of Sherwood Forrest with that of William Tell and tries to shoot an apple pie off Pogo's head - which is basically forgotten during the middle of the story where Albert (unknowingly) acquires a birdnest as a hat, thinks his head is squawking (instead of the newly hatched bird) and gets a grease gun job from Owl before Pogo is found again. The birdwatching pasttime receives attention in the "Bung Starter" series of sight and sound gags which must rank high in the annals of silliness. A ten page extravaganza, there are four subplots or segments to the thing. First, Howland Owl is in a barrel and Churchy doesn't recognize him. While denying that the talking barrel is an owl, Churchy describes him: "[Owl] got a stupid look and two horns made of feathers and he talks a blue streak of rubbish...." Owl swings, Churchy hides his head in his shell, they chase and fall into the water with a SPLOP.

Churchy: What? Did you say SPLOP?

Owl: No! I said I'm stuck in the low muddy water. Get help.

Churchy: Sounded more like SPLOP to me - what'll I tell those who ask?

Owl: Tell them anything you please - but get help!

Churchy: I'll tell 'em SPLOP - that's what you said

And so on and so forth. Elsewhere, Albert and Pogo star with a bow & arrow, Churchy and Owl play doctor; there is the famous catalog - usually it is the Firehouse Rate Book but this time a bug is quoting prices on his advice. Hounddog playing detective runs afoul of the kiddies playing cowboys and indians. A book certainly up to par.



POGO #13 begins with a look by Howland Owl at what the Swampland critters are doing wrong in a comic book. Numerous things happen. So there! The long center story is preoccupied with a Pogo and Albert pajama party (one of several), Albert's lessons to an insect on how to be an insect. The central text (two pages) is the second "Hoodoo-man" story; Kelly used these in a later book as little creatures who talked pure Cajun but this story is early in the metamorphosis toward the final character. For no good reason, another long story turns up about Albert playing sheriff (again), Owl playing Bolshevick, chases and law-knows-what-all...about 10 characters in it.

POGO #14 starts with a feud between Pogo and Albert. Albert is always ready to go to war about anything but often (as here) decides to become a spy queen instead and to undo his enemies in that fashion. Things get pretty confusing along the way. Next, Owl plays doctor but the story quickly turns into a firehouse story with Dog and Rabbit in something sounding like Marx Bros. lines. Unfortunately, the hard days were upon the comics or Kelly took a vacation, because an old Animal Comics Albert story was reprinted from Dec-Jan 1945. The writing in those old episodes was much more elaborate but the drawing and diction were obstacles to full enjoyment. The backcover, significantly, was pushing (a little too late) subscriptions. And woe if one did subscribe, for the end was near.

POGO #15 has Albert becoming one of the three musketeers to rescue damsels; he has his customary fight with inanimate objects and gets into trouble with Miz Beaver during a rescue. Next was a classic visit to Bun Rab's deaf Uncle joined by the Firehouse gang.

Uncle: Well, nephew, what'd you bring me?

Bun: Them (shouted into Uncle's ear trumpet)

Uncle: Ugh. They all look hungry [they are after his sick basket goodies, especially Churchy] Do they know any stories?

Dog: One time off the Great Barrier Reef in Australia...

Uncle: That's not much of a story, young man, no plot, no characters!

Dog: I ain't finished.

Uncle: Poor excuse. Go ahead.

Dog: We was off the Great Barrier Reef...

Uncle: You said that!!

Dog: You made me forget where I was!

Turtle:( climbing around and into Uncle's bed) Where's the fruit?  
Good morrow, sir. Where's the fruit?

Dog: The ship bore north by east by north north north...the captain came out of the cabin with a scimitar...suddenly... pandemonium broke loose

at which point Turtle is jolted awake from sleeping in Uncle's bed and jumps out the window, running around crying "The Panamanians are loose." Turtle and Owl battle their inconsiderable wits in the next few pages and another reprint rounds out the issue.

POGO #16 is at hand - the last of an era - funny animal comics and horror comics and just any kind of comics were crowding each other off the stands, coming up for Congressional investigation, etc. Owl and Albert engage in a treasure hunt, Pogo tries to get Albert to dig

bait and fails, Owl tries to get Turtle to let himself be cooked into soup and there is another reprint from a 1947 Animal Comic (a story I remember from my sickbed reading that fall).

From this issue we have such memorable insults as "Albert! If brains was shoes, you'd be barefooted all the way to yo' knees!" Then the following absurd piece of business appears: Albert has a phony moustache wh ich has caught on fire and he exhorts Pogo to call the fire department "Quick!" . A couple of bugs, father and son as usual, come along and

Dad: Behold, Hermes, a duck witha red moustache.

Herm: It ain't a duck, dad.

Dad: It's a duck becuase it's goin' "quick, quick"

Herm: Ducks go "quack, quack" is how they go.

Dad: It is too a duck. Notice its red moustache.

Herm: It ain't no moustache, dad.

Dad: (chasing him with a stick) Wait'll I git my hands on you!

Herm: Sorry, dad, I can't wait.

From the comic books, let us know turn to a few typical samples of the rest of the book, selected only from the first four S&S books.

Turtle to Pogo: Owl will now give us a few choice words.

Pogo: What's wrong with my choice? (Pogo 5)

Albert: Well, another day, another dullard.

Sam: You don't have the right platitude. (Pogo 17)

Sam: Albert, how'd you like to buy a slice of Toronto?

Pogo: Toronto belong to Canada!

Sam: Incredible, and I bought it from such a nice old couple in Fort Worth...said it was in the state...well, until I can clear my deed, how about a small flask of dry water? See, I pour it out and my hand remains dry!

Al: No wonder! There's nothin' in the bottle.

Sam: Naturally...I just emptied it in the demonstration... (Pogo 15)

Porky (on bombs): They is no good. They puts everything too everywhere, and in l'il bits, too. (Pogo 53)

Albert and Bear finally grab Owl's lunch and Bears warns Albert with a knife: "I figger it better to dee-vide before yo' dee-vour, rathern go to all that fuss after you eats it!" (Pogo 61)

Hepzibah: You have no flair. You're not ze dashing type.

Cowardly Pidgeon: Gimme an open road and- you gone see some dashing what got a real flair to it! (Pogo 95)

Pogo (shooting at a foe while riding Dog): I should of tole you - this gun only shoots blanks.

Dog: That's okay...I'm not sure we're chasing the right ones anyways. (Pogo 132)

Bat 1: Peeking is Peiping.

Bat 2: Capital! Communist capital! (I, 108)

Deacon: I promise peace with Mexico by Christmas or 50 for 40 and fight...and I pledge never to impede the flow of the Miss. river...I only make promises I can keep, Pogo.

Pogo: Man, you can sure keep those...and you better keep 'em down the cellar in the cool so they doesn't spoil. (Pogo 136)

Caught by a mother bird while they are eating her eggs (they think - actually not), Dog and Duck are flustered into the following antics:

Dog: Nothing sharpens the appetite or improves the health like a day in the open air.

Duck: If you wanna im prove your health, drop the egg. Here comes its maw.

Maw: You cannibals, eating my eggs what was gone support me in my old age!

Dog: Oh...these? Is we eating these? Well, bless my soul, so you is, Duck.

Duck: Bless my soul too while you is up.

Dog: Go on home and fotch back her eggs which you taken home for safekeeping at home, didn't you?

Duck: I did? Oh yes I did? Didn't I did? How's she want 'em? Sunny sides up? (later) Where is I going? I don't live in the swamp nohow, and what's more those eggs wouldn't be home if I got there ! (Pogo 160-61)

PT: The circus is done...I'm going to convert the train into a lunch wagon.

Tam: You're all set for a wagon. What are you doing for lunch?

PT: Not a thing! I accept your invitation with thanks. (I, 65)

Deacon (conducting trial): To prove Turtle has been bootlegging mail, let me present Dr. Kidney of the Kidney-Garden Researches, who is an expert on the Sectional problems of the American mails...He has a word about Turtle.

Sarky (in disguise): Guilty! (I. 111)

A bun rabbit springs from a grandfather clock: "Cuckoo, cuckoo, four seventy-five and all's well."

Owl: He doesn't even know what time it is.

Bun: It's Saturday, bright eyes, wanna make something of it?

Owl: Yes, make it Wednesday and I'll settle for that 4:75. (I, 128)

A stork has chosen to build a nest in Albert's stovepipe hat and Bat and Porky are helping out -

Bat: It's good luck to have a stork.

Porky: Good luck for who?

Albert: Fer a momma stork. (I, 147)

Albert retells old tales: "They called for a speech...I responded with the story of the woman who asked the drug clerk for talcum. 'Mennens?' he asked; 'No,' she said, 'Wimmens.' 'Do you want it scented?' he inquired, and she say 'No, I'll take it with me.' (Unc 1)

Deacon: You seen my friend, Pogo...a mole by trade...squinty look on him...nobility stamped all over him.

Pogo: What'd they do that for? (Papers 124)

Bun: Good morrow, Maid Marian, why were we merry men called hither?

Dog: You are called Hither because it is your family name...your father and I were long on the Keith Circuit together...I was knowed by my maiden name of Marian Yawn...yes, Hither and Yawn were all over the place. (Unc 1st)

Embroided in a bragging contest, Owl asks a passerby: "What comes after a quadrillion dollars?"

Bug 1: If they hears you got it, the federable gummint in less'n a week

Bug 2: He means in numbers. I'd say a vermillion.

Bug 1: Isn't that going into the red a little?

Bug 2: With big figgers like that, it don't seem to matter. (Papers 117)

Mole (spraying Turtle instead of Owl): You, there, Mr. Owl, stop breathing germs at us. Are you trying to confuse me? I've got eyes, haven't I?

Churchy: If I answer that right and win another refrigerator, I'll just die! (Papers 134)

Mouse (as his group retreats from an armed confrontation): I'm going back - I'm too small a target to bother with.

Albert: 'Course this Malarkey fella [one of the opposition] is a backwoods feline...and has a sweet tooth for mice.

Mouse: (wandering away in a daze) Well, I admire his taste but I think it's illegal...so I won't contribute to the delinquency of a minor (in case he's underage)...I'll step off a ways and look up the statutes and... (Papers 165)

I could go on (and did in the earlier versions) but enough is enough. It is now time to fall back to some semblence of organization.

### The Characters

We will next examine the Okeefenokee denizens in order (approximately) of appearance on the scene, comics which preceded the strips first (if possible):

POGO POSSUM (1-1st) - Walt Kelly had much to say about his creation in Ten and it would be dull and repetitive to digest it here, save for this comment: he is the glue of the strip - Kelly tried to draw around him in response to criticism that he was "dull" but always found the 'dandy little marsupial' back in there at some point. He is the straight-man in gags, although not unknown to crack a snide comment or make a pun or two himself. He is a fishing, loafing critter, generous to a fault and not since October, 1949 have the evil-doers of the Swampland tried to do him harm. He is a possum for all seasons and all reasons, forced to run for President each time (I, 156; Party; Extra; Return 111; and Equal 89) except the last (Body 122).

ALBERT ALLIGATOR (1-1st) - an overgrown undereducated kid with many, many faults (most of which are forgivable and forgiven) and cigar butts in constant supply. He's an action character capable of silly antics, adventures, braggadocio, excessive laziness, the butt of insults (e.g., "who's the tall toad with the loud green sun-

burn"). He swallows things, inanimate and otherwise, which gives rise to plenty of adventures. The world without Albert would be a duller place.

HOUNDDOG (1-1st) - He is not fully named until Inc 157 as "Beauregard Montreal Bugleboy" (however, an apocryphal name appears as "Beauregard Frontenac Bugleboy III" on Instant 27 - an unforgivable inconsistency since the Frontenac is in Quebec, not Montreal even, and he is as southern as they come). Hounddog appears educated, quotes poetry (largely about dogs), is proud of his canine (and southern) heritage, is a detective and birdwatcher and finally was even allowed to campaign for office as an underdog. He's a good sort to have around; you're probably lucky enough to know a Beau'.

MR. BEAR (1-1st) - Here again, names are elusive - could it be that not until Puce 25 is he given the appellation "Barnstable"? Kelly is ambivalent about him; sometimes a gruff bully (although not toooo bright), a good feuding companion to Albert, he either can read or he cannot [Kelly discusses this inconsistency himself on Ten 219-220] but I tend to think of him as a bear who writes poetry and TV jingles, &c without being able to read, since his best laughs are garnered by that depiction.

PORKY PORKYPINE (1-1st) - the favorite of millions, his dour and sour attitude disguises a heart of gold, his key to popularity. He has a lot in common with A.A. Milne's Eeyore, in my opinion. He lacks a sense of humor most of the time and provides numerous chuckles to readers because of this characteristic alone, because the swampland abounds with tellers of abominably bad jokes to whom he is a suitable foil.

CHURCHY LAFEMME (1-2nd) - one of the more volatile members of the community, this carefree turtle is embroiled in many amusing adventures, funny feuds, fights and the like, as well as being a composer of much nonsense song and verse. His best known characteristic, probably, is being the [latin for 13]phobe of the swamp - his conviction that Friday the 13th occurs each month has provided Kelly with different gags 12 times a year.

HOWLAND OWL (1-2nd) - here is the repository of misinformation who will never admit it; he fancies himself a 'sightist' and is quite self-important, which does not keep him out of feuds, fights, etc. He is often the source of money-making propositions where "millions, possibly even hundreds" may be involved. He flies upsidedown and rarely.

RACKETY COON (1-2nd or Pogo 74) - he seems to be named "Deelicious" only in 2-4th where his ma and pa are likewise introduced (can it be that they remain nameless until 8-8-67 when she is addressed as "Elviranna"? Probably.) As leader of the youngsters of the swamp, to whom all of the foregoing are "uncles", he is typical youth, full of mischief and loud and always getting the best of his "betters" (notably the overgrown chile, Albert).

CHOO CHOO CURTIS (3-4th) - the duck mailman who is not named until I, 99. He carries some funny things in that mail pouch and Kelly has variously explained the sources of the mail he brings, mutually exclusive explanations, I might add. A character whose secondary importance (like Bear) can be debated, he is sufficiently regular (as this early appearance attests) to be considered a full-fledged denizen of the swamp (although introduced anonymously here).

SEMINOLE SAM (3-3rd or Pogo 13) - the confidence ~~man~~ fox of the swamp, Sam's role is a schemer and he hangs out in the quasi-evil company of the later political caricatures. I always liked satire on salesmen and ad-men, and I like Sam.

ALABASTER ALLIGATOR (4-3rd or Pogo 143) is Albert's nephew. This is an opportunity to refer (lumped together) to the blood nephews which parade through the swampland, because none of the others like Alabaster are quite as important qua individuals as Rackety. There is TACKY, Porky's nephew (Sunday 41); SOFT-SHELL, Churchy's nephew (1-1st) and much later POGONIA, Pogo's sister, and her five tads who visit in 1957 as recorded only in Ten 206-09 and 211-13. Even Mamselle Hepzibah, the skunk, has a nephew HUMPERDUNK (Enemy 67) who is a nontalking type (18 weeks old - why not?)

PUP DOG (6-4th, which probably precedes his introduction as 'Tasty' in Pogo 113) Here is a loveable non-talking typical puppy dog who plays animal while the rest of the critters are playing human. He is a necessary part of numerous entertaining tales and he is so darn cute, to boot. He certainly knows good from evil, which proves him to be more astute than many. [Of course, we know he did speak in one sequence of strips].

These are the ones, we feel relatively comfortable in saying, introduced from the comic books. The order of introduction of the next batch is less well established.

MIZ BEAR and BABY BEAR (8-1st or Uncle 3rd) - The bear family and the RacketyCoon clan are exceptions to the swamplands blood lines which favor avuncular and collateral directions. Huh? These bears appear most often as characters in some of the fables and retold tales.

MOUSE (8-1st or Pogo 116) - the cigar-smoking, tale-spinning little fellow is not the only mouse in the swamp; there is a family of church mice and a little fellow who pops out of trunks and has funny conversations implausibly turning upon his familiarity with events of the distant past. There is no doubt that this particular unnamed Mouse is essential to the success of the strip. He is not as stable as others and wanders in and out of the swamp on his (unseen) adventures he's always telling about.

MIZ BEAVER (11-4th or Pogo 74) - This widow is a crusty old soul, generous, providing female insight (a la Kelly, who is coyly chauvinistic) and plotting matrimony (for others) is a mainstay of the wetwash and pilau industry. Of late, she has taken up with Women's Liberation.

GRUNDOON (11-5th or Inc 25) - The consonant-speaking groundhog child (complete with a single permissive parent MIZ GROUNDHOG) with a proclivity to bite and catch fish by shouting 'grs', his function is largely to be tended to by 'uncles' and to be taught his trade (mainly circa February the Tooth). A brief glimpse was given to his baby sister with a very long name.

From the paperbacks alone, there followed these stable types in the following order:

MAMZELLE HEPZIBAH (Pogo 71) - a French skunk who gave Kelly the chance to fracture English from a Gallic slant, she is the belle of the swamp (with, by Miz Beaver's count, 19 eligible men and 11 husbands, guess who got 30 valentines one year? Naturally, people are trying to promote a wedding with Pogo.

HORRORS GREELEY (Pogo 81) is a cow who meows rather'n moos and plays in several fables.

DEACON MUSHRAT (Pogo 108) is a muskrat who speaks in a portentous tone (as shown by his Olde English lettering) and besides being well read enough to slaughter Latin and legalese, he is inclined toward conservatism, jingoism, and filthy lucre along with Seminole Sam and the more unsavory - however, he is the weak link in their team and is often double-crossed. He is also the head of the bird-watchers and, though he is never seen playing cards, the bats always seem to know more about this than we do.

WILEY CATT (Pogo 134 - though Ten shows him in October, 1949) is one of the evil ones and seems to have grown considerably in size as the strip wore on. He is the red neck of the swamp. 'Nuff said.

BEWITCHED, BOTHERED and BEWILDERED (a/k/a BEMILDRED) (Pogo 143) are the hobo bats blown in from Carlsbad Caverns who settle down to some great antics. They are hardy punsters, continually card-playing and losing their separate identities (mainly its a question of recognizing each other by the pair of pants worn). Kelly omitted twins (so far as I know) in favor of triplet gags with these guys.

THE CIRCUS THREESOME - BUN RABBIT, the stripe-hatted, drum-playing cut-up (I, 11); the bear promoter/showman, PHINEAS T. BRIDGEPORT or loveable PT (I, 50) who speaks like a signboard or flyer to show his showmanlike approach to language; and MR. TAMMANANY, PT's tiger protege (I, 58). These critters showed up with a folding circus and usually stick around - their political satire value has developed over the years as a campaign manager (PT) and his helpers. One endearing trait of PT is that he continually forgets people's right names, notably the BUN's (whom he calls anything handy) and later (in Extra) the candidate, Fremount, whose campaign he is handling.

SARCOPHAGUS MACABRE (I, 103) is an undertaker vulture who speaks in black-bordered balloons and whose grimness lasted until quite recently when he became more jocular and humane, although retaining a semblance of his evil associations of the past. [Bringing up the comment on Kelly, that the only thing black and white about his strips is the ink and paper, respectively, never values.]

COWBIRDS (I,149) - although they changed from round dock-worker-type tuffs into leaner Greenwich Villagers, their political sympathies remained strictly in the Red. Their elaborate Commie-intellectual language from earlier episodes is cute.

CHICKEN LITTLE (Uncle 3rd) is a do-gooder and an I-told-you-so. His Herbert Hoover collar and what it implies is amusing. In fables he has played a silly dictator, cowardly Prince Pompoodle (a/k/a Chicken Litter), and an establishment minister.

MOOSE (Papers 40) who is known as Uncle Antler (Pos 139) and is a hold-over from ANIMAL COMICS, mouths some political commentary and plays roles in various tales.

UNCLE BALDWIN, Porky's uncle (Papers 60) is quite as dour as his nephew but has more of a hand in money-making adventures which are not within Porky's character to indulge in (Baldwin might be on a mission - Porky and Pogo would typically follow with stretcher and first-aid equipment). He is also the most amorous critter there.

ALF & REGGIE, the cockney beetles (Papers 79 but Reggie is not named until Inc 138). Kelly had a bit of dialectical fun with this pair, who drift in and about without much of a justification; they are not so much prolonged as frequent players.

MOLE MACCARONY (Papers 124) is a near-sighted mole in the reactionary evildoer category; he stars in Jack (the John Birch Society take-off) as Molester P. Mole (what's in a name?). His appearance crystalized Deacon's function in the strip and a cadre of criminally-inclined was born, also featuring the next entrant.

SIMPLE J. MALARKEY (Papers 160) is the first clearly defined political satire creation. His appearance in Pot is accompanied by a sidekick, CHARLIE BEAVER, who looks like Senator McCarthy's advisor, Roger Cohn. His career ended (facelessly, to appease editorial pressure) on October 13, 1955 as reproduced on Ten 152.

SNAVELY, a tipling snake (Inc 109) is a friend of Mouse and a teller of tall tales, having apparently retired from an adventurous life. He also afforded Kelly the opportunity to unleash a lot of snake jokes ('bite my tail to make ends meet' and the ilk - ugh).

SIS BOOMBAH (Inc 151) is a large Rhode Island chicken who comes to the swamp as a poll-taker, stays to coach a bean-bag team and naturally mutates into a regular, making a pass at Deacon along the way. Of late, she heads the Women's movement.

COMMUNIST LEADERS - The pirate pig (Khrushchev) and his Gromyko-looking cockatoo appeared first in Pos 123; he returns in Instant speaking a more pseudo-Cyrillic broken Russian, accompanied by a bearded goat from Cuba named FIDO. By Beau 139 he is a bear (as which a guest appearance in Ala 34 is truly fine.) This is all a fine satire, as much on America of the period as on its foes.



THE REPORTERS - a cat (or fox) as writer and a chicken as photographer, this team of magazine reporters arrives on Party 156 and the contemporaneous strips on Ten 254 identify the chicken as "Vladimir", although by his reappearance in Extra and in an uncollected daily on February 6, 1966 he is called "Dmitri" (I keep having these doubts about Kelly's indexing of his work). They initially represent "Newslife" but by Instant 39 they represent "Dogslife" and the photographer sports the name "Crucible". Later on, on Return 148 the reporter resembles Goldwater (and is usually referred to as "Typo") and the chicken is "Terrence" or sometimes "Hypo". These later appearances were again on behalf of "Newslife".

THE AUSTRALIANS - The kangaroos from Australia are introduced on Pos 163 and are revisited under the guise of the Olympic Games before the male, BASHER, appears in the swamp (Gone 41). Kelly shows us his ear for the accents from Down Under, cobbler.

CONGRESSMAN FROG - the first appearance is under that name (Extra 28) and his first name is later given as "Jumphrey" (Return 101). He always has an administrative assistant or secretary, variously named "Chester" (Gone 70), Greavley (Puce 92) or left unnamed. Elections must occur in that part of the swamp called "Froggy Bottom" because by October 5, 1967 (from an uncollected daily) "Fenster Moop" the beloved folk singer and clairvoyant of Return 61, has become Congressman and his assistant is Feeble E. Merely (October 18, 1967) - this is the state of affairs in Equal. By Enemy 12 we are back to Congressman Frog and his assistant, Quimby. Traits? Well, phony voter identification, credit claiming, fence sitting, delusions of grandeur - just the usual for a politico.

FREMOUNT BEETLE, the boy candidate (Extra 11) who says "jes' fine", was apparently introduced earlier (Party 11) as "Toomey III". He challenged Pogo but after his expose' as an ant lion born in a box of popcorn, the perennial candidature of Pogo is again embraced by the political powers of the swamp.

PEANER (or PEANIE) BRICKLE, an elephant, appeared on Sundays in October 1965 and we learn his name later (Pre 13). He's just a fun character, but one of the thematic lapses, that is, some critters are at least probably found in the named swamp, but an elephant...? Maybe in a strip I didn't see, he, like the Circus Threesome, came from the circus.... or at least a large Southern zoo.

MR. MIGGLE (Pre 19) is a yankee trader vulture who set up shop in the swamp circa 1966. His inflationary pricing practices do not now seem as funny as they were 10 years ago (they are more frighteningly realistic). Running gags with him involve, in addition to his yankee tone, a hodge-podge of weird stuff in his emporium, his repricing of goods after someone has used them, and his cheating of everyone in sight (and out).

Hard to track (because of poor notes and the confusion of a dream sequence appearance) is a duck family named the Sam Handwiches and a hat-like octopus (unnamed). Nonrecurring brief appearances are much too numerous - I refer only in passing to such folk as Alcyon Kingfisher, Mr. Pidgeon, the roadrunner, Sweeney the swallow, Roogey Baton, a pelican (and a later one named Peasleytry), a frog named Mouldy Mort and one named Lumpy Lou, fire-flies Willow McWisper

and the one from the comic books, Willow the Whips; there's a hornet named Hogarth and an earlier one named Mr. Horner, and a crayfish appeared yclept (yep, that word is used too) Clifford and later Cranford. Transients such as these persisted to the end: in Body there are introduced a pig named Rip (Dan Winkle (who awakes every 20 years to search for improvements on the American scene with predictable results), a Senator Bulfrog (we don't really see enough to judge whether Everett Dirksen is a model), and a Constabule Toad (a toady for the F-Bulldog-I).

Some of the bit players who play a more important role in a particular sequence should be noted. These would be such critters as the unnamed flea (G.O. 38), Russian seals (Beau 162) who arrived in a satellite in 1959, Basil McTabolism, a seedy roll-taking polecat (Extra 64), Queenie May (Ala 93), a bug who precipitates a bug war against bigger folk, Gai-Tsu, the chick from China who hatched from a Pi Dong egg (Puce 39), the TV Press featuring Herm Bandwaggin, a bird (Return 53), and the ants who become organized as the Blue Muslins (Return 127).

Next, from a handful of uncollected sixties' dailies, we find a week-old bunny, L'il Awry (11-9-65), a beatnik/hippie named Natural Ghastly (11-22-65) and his mother, Mrs. Husband (12-1-65) who mistakes Pogo for her own Harry Husband, and a pussy cat (1-29-66) called the Putty Tat Pwincess (2-9-66).

Back in the books, we come to Pre which is dominated (from at least page 33 on) by adventures in Pandemonia (actually, the Australian outback, mistaken for either Mars or the prehistoric past) which was preaged in a primer located on Poop 27-36, one of Kelly's original fables. Some of the essential characters are unnamed: the princess tyrannosaur (papa's rex, so...); the ape police chief; a sabretooth tiger; and a cavegirl. But there is also Dr. Noah and a caveboy, Banewort, and a host of satirical characters: Pre 80 reveals the Loan Arranger, a centaur bearing uncanny resemblance to LBJ (from the Bres-dent of the same initials); the symbol of Asia, a little oriental girl, Sha-Lan (Pre 92) who enters prusued by Hougng Loung, the chinese dragon, belonging to (or vice ve-rsa) Gwhan Shi Fo-ah (Pre 96), the Mao caricature as a Happy Buddha and his faithful helper (?), Red Guard (Pre 97). There is also the southeast asia military establishment represented by a tiny chicken, Da Gu, on a huge white charger (Pre 127). On the domestic front Auntie Goose plays a part (Pre 103).

More blatant poltical fun occurs in Equal. The candidates of 1968 are represented in part by wind-up toys: Romney (Equal 36), Nixon (Equal 38), Rockefeller (Equal 38), McCarthy (Equal 39) and Bobby Kennedy (Equal 73). In 1972 only Humphrey is shown (Body 78). LBJ appears as a loghorn (Equal 40); Reagen is a dog over a clown's body (Equal 42), and Wallace is Prince Pompadoodle, a feisty chicken (Equal 67). Miz Groundsquirrel (Love 54) becomes a symbol of women's lib and finally, in the last three books, we are treated to a hyena (Agnew, on Poll 27), the bulldog (JE Hoover on Enemy 49) and the eagle (John Mitchell on Enemy 73). There is a Nixon spider (with the body of a black kettle) on Body 17, the hit of that book.

Kelly's Kudos: Boat Names

Recognition is fun and good egoboo and Kelly was most obliging in that department. He dedicated 30 books and he mentions some people's names in conversations of his characters. By far and away, the most notable form of recognition was meted out through the medium of the names on the sides of the flat-bottomed swamp boats frequently used by the critters. Our study reveals that the paperbacks and Ten show 121 different names, the comic books 6 more (although these and the 7 in Pogo were not personal names) and the random sampling of uncollected strips, another 13. In all, a total of 116 different personal names are presented. Whose?

Kelly was a family man in a big way and as one would suspect we find: Kathryn Barbara (first born?) on Pot 109, Pos 150, Parade 78-79 and Ten 94; Stephen Kelly ('on his birthday') on Pos 147, 10-23-67 and Body 104; Stephanie on G.O. 154 and Equal 78; and Andrew Franklin Kelly on 12-30-65. Probably all the kids and Selby were named somewhere.

Scanning the list, we find some familiar names and lots that are not but as to which some guess may be ventured. First, Robert M. Hall, President of Kelly's publisher, The Hall Syndicate, is a natural on Party 49; Fred Waring, probably Kelly's kind of band leader, on Pos 78; and newsman Dave Brinkley on Pos 148. A Birmingham newspaperman Charlie Fell is known to me (Parade 45-46) and I can also recognize Deems Taylor (Ten 100), General Lucius Clay (Deck 65), songthrush Peggy Lee (1-15-66) and August Derleth (Equal 47). Many have a newspaper and/or town identified with them and must be newspapermen; others like Joe and Dora McGraw, mentioned at least twice, must be close friends.

Some Elements of the Kelly Comedy

There has been mention above of Kelly's inconsistencies in names and attributes. One instance of his awareness of these in Ten has been mentioned; he also points out in Ten 230-31 that he changed the shape of a flea from one day to the next saying merely that he had forgotten (how different things would have been if a copier were as cheap and prevalent as nowadays). Ones he did not mention are like baby limpkins (a bird species) which talk when newborn (Pogo 158) or else cannot (Pogo 35). In the anthologies he frequently drew new "bridges", extra panels between the reprints to explain how the composition of a group of conversants could have been changed overnight. Poking fun at himself in this way is as humorous as anything else.

His characters were often aware that they were in a comic book or strip. Porky says on Pogo 24, after being told by Pogo that he is fishing inside Albert for mice: "I guess that's a pretty funny answer. Somehow the humor in this strip eludes me." The characters pointed out to each other the attributes of their environment, such as the copyright notice, made disparaging remarks about their inability to be funny in a comic book, and even once started a rival strip across a dotted line in protest of how little was happening. Aware of this role they were playing, they frequently conspicuously resorted to slapstick as the epitome of comedy.

Kelly's magic with language and puns is well known, I trust. A few examples at hand should suffice before we get into some classic repartee and retorts: "finger of speech" (Pogo 2, 4); "Pensacola - It's the Spa" (Pogo 17, Party 80, Sunday 3rd, Pos 55); "lives off the fad of the land" (Pogo 82); a "martial plan of my own" (Pogo 136); the "sanity clause" (Equal 16); a "member of an underwater group engaged in submersive activities" (I, 109) and my all-time favorite: how it doesn't pay to "Tinker forEver with Chance" (see, e.g., Papers 163 and I, 66).

Then there are the recurrent phrases, the running gags which devotees began to search for, then expect -

- when things turn out to be not as they seem, a papa bug rebuffs the wrongly identified character: "Destroy a son's faith in his father, will you?" (Papers 55, Pot 47, Pos 95, Parade 45, Extra 61, Instant 119). There was even an episode on Pos 109 when, after telling his son that his own dad said there were no such things as sea serpents, papa bug claims that an inflated rubber horse beach toy had destroyed "faith in both our fathers".
- Bun Eabbits line with the firefighters: "I carry the hose" (Inc 88, Pot 133).
- "If I could write, I'd send a nasty letter to the mayor if he could only read" (Pogo 132, Pot 62, Sunday 9)
- Albert's pride is several times revealed by his "Funny how a good looking fella looks handsome in anything he throw on" (4-3rd, Pogo 8)
- The "Are we downhearted? Yes" sequence which began on Ala 106.
- Even so simple an expression of frustration or fear as "I hate this, hate it, hate it, hate it" comes to life when repeated on Sunday 85, Punch 3rd, Gone 103, Instant 95, 4-15-66, and Pre 30.

Sometimes Kelly changed his recurrent theme humor between the comic book and the paperbacks. In comics, a running gag was Albert's fight with inanimate objects (2-3rd, 4-3rd, 9-2nd, 12-3rd, and 15-1st) but only his wrestling with Basher's plane prop (Pre 157) seems to appear in the strips. More often, though, a good gag developed in the comic books were continued into the dailies. Examples are:

- Albert being scared by the sudden mention of "alligator" which he is one of started in 2-4th and is found on Inc 145, Ala 109 and Instant 66 (at least)
- The Firehouse Rate Book, presaged in the comics by the (hum)-bug's quotes in 12-4th and successfully continued on Party 58, Puce 58, Deck 54, Love 118 and Enemy 17.
- Seminole Sam's technique of stealing fish by cutting the stick used to cook them on under the guise of coaching cuisine was developed in 3-3rd and continued on Pogo 16-17.

-The play on swearing (an oath) and swear-words (cussing) started in 5-2nd and is found in Pogo 4 and 93.

-Ladybug's denying the applicability of the poem was in 2-1st and 4-3rd before entering the strips on Ala 90 and 4-11-66.

- Vice versa, Albert's thinking that a slide rule has something to do with skidding into a baseball base appears in Pogo 27-28 and later 16-1st of the comics.

Some of the running gags appear only in the strips, such as:

-Insulting by denying cannibalism on Pogo 2-4, Beau 21, and Extra 113.

-Mistaking raisins for tadpoles on Pogo 141-42 and 8-10-67

-A tail (usually Pogo's) is mistaken for a worm (Pogo 87, Inc 158, Pot 9, Deck 85)

-Card playing bats lose to someone they should beat: a mechanical man (I, 142), baby birds (Pogo 161), Grundoon (Deck 84), and naive Basher (Pre 167).

-a character loses his voice with amusing consequences (I, 22-23; Pot 153-54, Beau 110, Love 30)

-Albert swallows someone or is inhabited by someone (Ten 11-12, Pogo 18-25, Inc 75, Sunday 47, G.O. 170, and 8-14-67 which revisits the tadpole drinking of 1949 - recycled after 18 years.

-some unconscious body is mistaken for the dead - Pogo 10-12, Pot 137, Brunch 24 et seq.

There are some cute reversals of gags, too, like the jelly fish (spy queen) which turns out to be jelly (I, 113) and the jam jar containing a living jellyfish which was canned by mistake (9-1st)

More cute (and endearing to regular readers) than side-splittingly funny is the annual Christmas (very early) morning sequence between Porky and Pogo - (Pogo 178, Inc 179, Pot 179, Pos 189, G.O. 35, Ten 262, Deck 56, Pre 169, and Equal 127)

Speaking of recurrences, the annual world series ballgame reflected Kelly's interest in Americana - Ten 13 shows it first on October 1, 1949; then I, 95-98, Papers 187-91, Inc 128-33, Pot 145, Pos 80, Jack 46, 10-2-67 and Enemy 96 et seq.

The incongruity of mere swampland critters lapsing into foreign languages, the so-called 'gift of tongues', is exploited as follows: Latin (Pogo 132, Uncle 1st); German (I, 28), French (Sunday 91, Parade 61) and Russian (Beau 59).

Satire did not stop at the political caricatures mentioned above. One reference is made to Al Cappage, but "Little Orphan Annie" is a favorite of the artist and he romps his characters through similar adventures in Papers 30-52 & 165-72 and G.O. 79-104. Also the Mickey Spillane "Mike Hammer" books were acted out by the critters as Meat Hamburg (by Muckey Spleen) played by Albert in Uncle 2nd and Peek 2nd.

The swampland critters and in particular Churchy La Femme slaughter with nonsense sound-alike words several folk and Xmas songs, in particular "Deck the Halls" which has at least three variations. I refer the interested scholar to Pogo 66, 76, 180-81; Papers 86; Party 88-89, 94-95; Pos 163; G.O. 34; Ala 44; Pre 90 and Equal 121.

In the "Old Tales Retold" department, let us fondly recall (like unto a defective auto) the stories which were acted out by Kelly's folks - the Robin Hood stories of 10-1st and Uncle 1st; Chicken Little and the Falling Sky in 6-4th, Uncle 3rd (and loosely on Poop 81 et seq); Goldilocks on Sunday 63; Cow Jumping Over the Moon in Goose 3rd; Hansel and Gretel in Punch 2nd; Cinderella in Brunch 89-126 and 8-1st; the Travelling Musicians in Uncle 3rd; add Jack and the Beanstalk in 7-4th (at least).

Although some of those are staged in the swamp and some set in fairy-tale land and only peopled by our folks, we come to a series of tales which are only peopled by our troupe: THE RUSSIAN QUARTET:

Robin the Red-Breasted Hood (Goose 1st)

The Man from Suffern on the Steppes (or 1984 and

All That (Peek 4th)

Back to Earth (Parade 1st)

A Visit from St. Nicolas (to the Moon) (Gone 105-14)

In this very funny series of tales, our little thespians show that their own personal foibles are universal, because they can dress up in the garb of the "Other Side" and be just as realistic and human as they are in the swampland. Naturally, there are special jokes in addition.

Kelly also had his characters act out, straight, pieces he liked such as "Alice Through the Looking Glass". Albert did dramatic readings of "The Jabberwocky" and "Who Killed Cock Robin".

Kelly also wrote (as we said in the prolog and don't expect much more here) some nonsense verse which appears in the mouths of characters in the strips and as padding (with cute pictures) in the large -paged anthologies and a couple of excellent songs, one of which at least bears repeating on the next page, together with my favorite nonsense verse.

The time may come when PhDs in Pop Culture (and maybe they have already) will dissect POGO & CO and tell us what this or that generation was thinking, what was wrong with the politics of the day and other things weightier than fourteen tons of bituminous coal but I've no such illusion myself - the strip is a joy and it was fun to recount a few of the most appealing features here - thanks for listening.

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Selby Kelly, Executrix

A song so easy to sing, on one note, it was considered as a new  
national anthem for the seceded swampland:

O, I was eating some chop suey  
With a lady in Saint Looie  
When I sudden hears a knocking on the door,  
And that knocker he saidd, "Honey,  
Roll this rocker out some money,  
Or your daddy shoots a baddie to the floor."

(Poop 18 and Love 37 among elsewheres)

Actually, to call the following nonsense verse is a little harsh -  
it is much more coherent than most of the material:

Oh, roar a roar for Nora,  
Nora Alice in the night,  
For she has seen Aurora  
Borealis burning bright!  
A furore for our Nora  
And applaud Aurora seen!  
Where throughout the summer has  
Our Borealis been?

(Love 86-87 inter alia)

Neither of these can be laid at Turtle's doorstep and certainly no  
look at this kind of stuff can be complete without a quotation of  
Churchy's mauling of the familiar and unfamiliar alike:

Ma Bonny lice soda devotion  
may booney life saver D.C.  
McBoniface rover commotion  
Oh, Brickbat Mahoney Toomey ("Oog-" as Al said  
Instant on REVISITED  
page 181)

Oh, to reap in the weep  
Of the golden ripe Reap!  
All the sheep in the fold  
All asleep in the hold  
of the ripe weep we reap...  
Wipe the weep  
from your Reap!  
Ripe reap, ripe weep!  
Ripe the reap of the weep.  
Wipe weep! Ripe reap!

( It needs a kocker at  
the end" "Yeah, one who  
kin punt it 70 yard or  
more" Papers 130.

