

**Famous Artists Cartoon Course**

**Westport, Connecticut**

# **Inking the head and figure**

Lesson



**Rube Goldberg**

**Milton Caniff**

**Al Capp**

**Harry Haenigsen**

**Willard Mullin**

**Gurney Williams**

**Dick Cavalli**

**Whitney Darrow, Jr.**

**Virgil Partch**

**Barney Tobey**









### Inking the head and figure

Up to this time you have been working in pencil only. Now it is time to start working and practicing with pen and ink. Nearly all newspaper and most magazine cartoons are drawn in ink, so as soon as possible you must learn to master those most useful and versatile tools — the pen and the brush. The great joy of inking with pen or brush is the clean effect you achieve. At first you will feel like throwing the bottle of ink through the window as you blot and scratch your way through page after page of inking. But — your blots will pay off in experience, and you will be drawing nice clean lines even before you know it. In no other phase of cartooning does practice pay off so rapidly.

Right from the start, work out a system for inking the figure. By system we mean the order of inking the individual parts that make up the figure. A system for inking has the great advantage of speed. If you were to ink the feet first, you would have to wait for them to dry before you could go on with the rest of the figure. Also, by always inking the parts of a figure in the same order (preferably from top to bottom) you will find there is much less chance of forgetting to ink some part.

You may be interested primarily in brush work, but you should also do these exercises in pen. If you master the pen, the brush will be no problem. Anything you can do with a pen you can do with a brush.

Remember that for pen work you will need a smooth or high surface board or paper to draw on. Use a good black waterproof drawing ink and a Gillott 170 or comparative pen point. Never be careless about materials. It will show in your work. You wouldn't want your dentist to use a carpenter's auger on your teeth. Use the proper tools to get the proper effect.



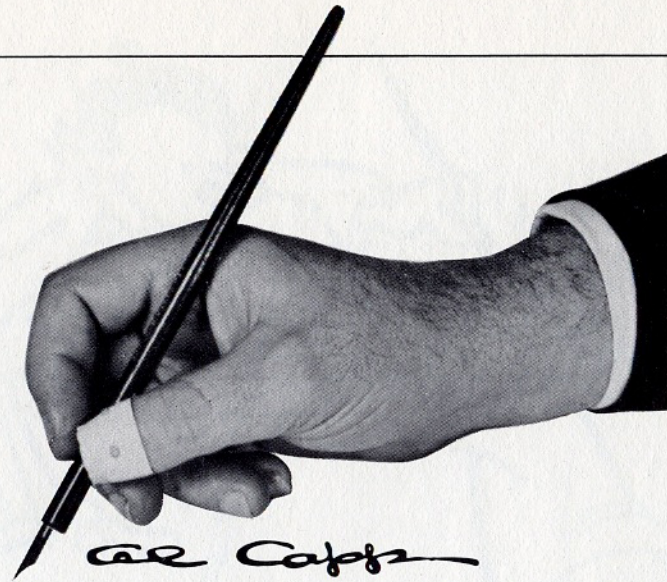
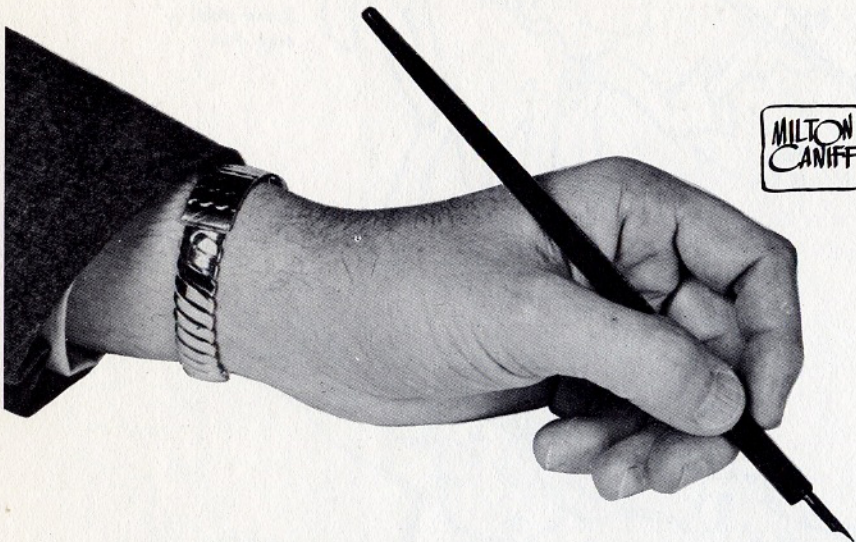
### Style by pen line

You are asked in this lesson to practice with the Gillott pen # 170, or a comparable point, because it is the easiest of the flexible pens to use. Here are a number of examples done with different pens (and a brush) to show you different styles resulting from the use of different tools

Peter Wells



**Holding and using the pen**



**Faculty hands holding the pen**

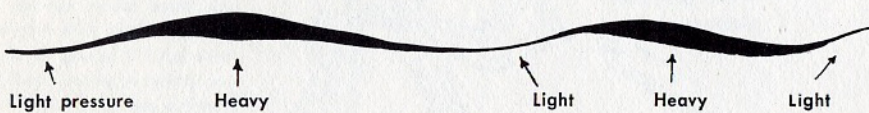
Here are three of the most famous hands that have ever held a pen. The owners of these hands all agree that the only way you will get a pen to feel free and easy in the hand is by practice — and plenty of it. Every one of us has a different natural grip of his own and must discover it for himself as he draws. Notice that Milton Caniff is left-handed. He advises all fellow south-paws to start inking on the right hand side of their drawings

**Basic pen lines**

We have prepared the basic pen lines for you on this page. Practice them to familiarize yourself with what you can do with a pen. Don't be satisfied with drawing them just once or twice — do them as many times as you think necessary. In shading with a pen you must be right the first time; there is no going back and fixing it. Nothing shows up quicker in a pen and ink drawing than a spot of crosshatching that has been gone over several times in an attempt to correct it. Shading and tone with a pen *must* look fresh. The quickest way to kill that look is to try touching up the drawing after it has been finished.

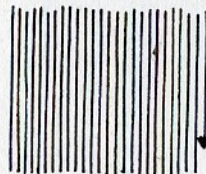
When practicing crosshatching and the other strokes shown, it is not necessary to use the pen illustrated. Try each of the squares with several different pens; you never know what a pen can do until you try it. In doing crosshatching of any kind be sure that the first set of lines is dry before you cross them with the next. After a while, the sureness of each line will indicate that you *know* what you are doing — skill will snuggle up to you before you realize it!

Pressure varies the thickness of pen lines

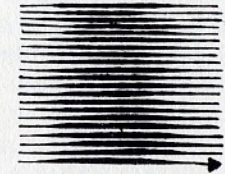
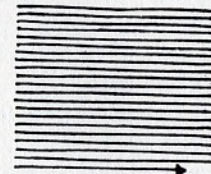


In practicing, try all types of pens — when doing cross hatch, be sure first set of lines is dry before crossing them with the next set

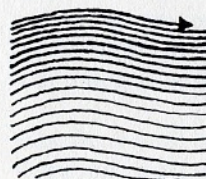
All examples are reproduced actual size.



Slowly drawn—Gillott 170



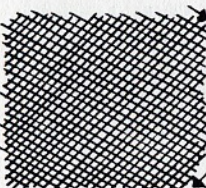
Increased pressure line—Gillott 290



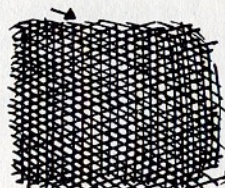
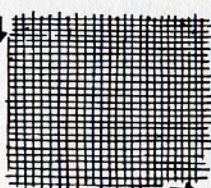
Curved lines—Gillott 170



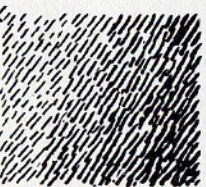
More paper than ink—Gillott 170



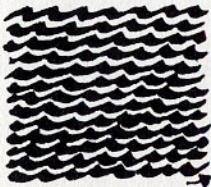
Cross hatch—Gillott 170



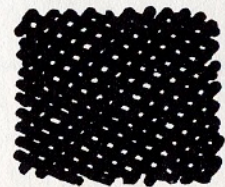
Triple cross hatch—Gillott 170



Short stroke—Drawing pen



Wavering lines—stub pen

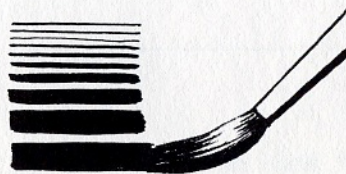
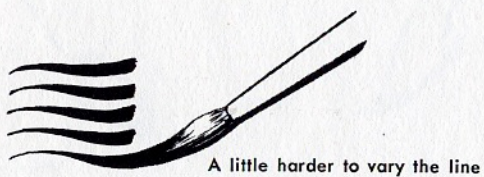


Deep cross hatch—Speedball pen





Example of brush work by Milton Caniff



### Brush drawing

The brush is a most versatile tool. It has become very popular in cartooning during the last ten or fifteen years, particularly in the field of magazine gag panel cartooning. Besides drawing with the brush, you will use it for filling in solid blacks and for applying washes. When dipping your brush in the ink, always press it gently against the inside edge of the bottle neck to remove excess ink. *Before* touching your brush to the paper try it first on a paper palette (a strip of paper thumbtacked to the top or side of your drawing board). Never let ink dry on the brush. Always wash it by rubbing the brush *lightly and gently* on a cake of soap, then rinse it in clear water when you are ready to put the brush away.

Press hard and you get the full width of the brush. For practice, do the same examples as shown for pen. The brush works the same as the pen except that a broader effect is achieved.



### Inking the head



After the drawing is complete in pencil, you are ready to ink it in



1. Ink the features first — they give the face its expression and are first in importance



2. Complete the outlines and details. Ink the hair and black accents last, since you may want to use a more flexible pen or a brush for these



3. When the ink is dry on your completed drawing, remove the pencil lines with soft eraser

### Inking the figure



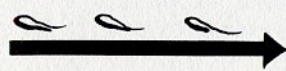
1. Ink in the face and head first



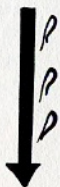
2. After the head — ink the upper body, arms and hands. Then the legs — feet last



3. When your outline is dry — and be sure it is — put in the details and shading, if any, and finally your solid blacks



Remember that you ink from left to right — unless you are left-handed



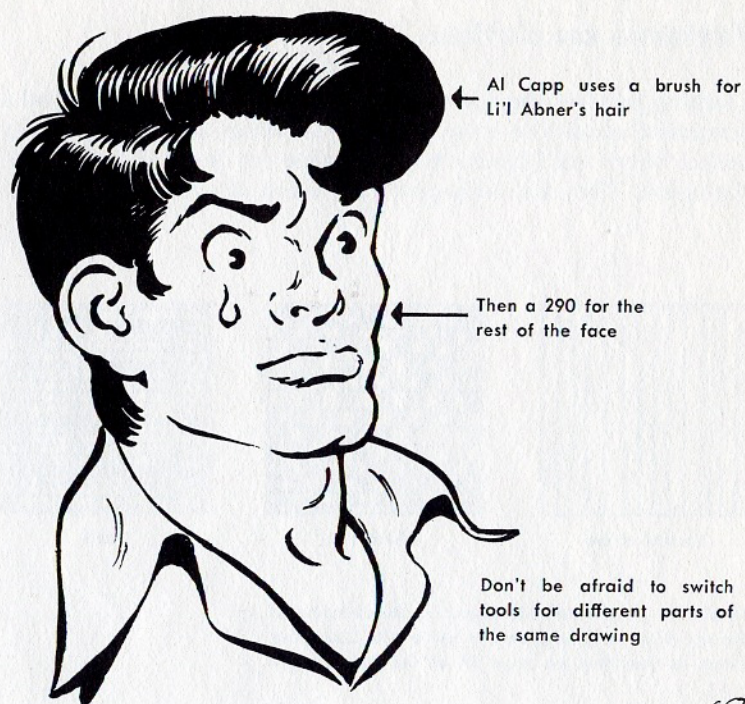
And that you ink from top to bottom

Be sure your ink is dry before erasing pencil lines: use art gum or other very soft eraser — so you won't rub off any ink



**Using the tools**

The pens and brushes may be identical, but the results of using them are always different in this business. Different hands automatically put different pressures on parts of the lines. As you practice, you will find strokes that come easily and others that will take some thought on your part. *Keep thinking*: every good cartoonist agrees that there is always something new and exciting to be learned from his pen. Now is the time to start practicing and experimenting until the skill of using your tools comes naturally to your hand. It will — in time.



← Al Capp uses a brush for Li'l Abner's hair

← Then a 290 for the rest of the face

Don't be afraid to switch tools for different parts of the same drawing

Don't try to work with too much ink on your pen

Experiment with thick and thin lines. Think of shadows underneath and on the side away from the light — try putting your pressure on those lines



Pressure here

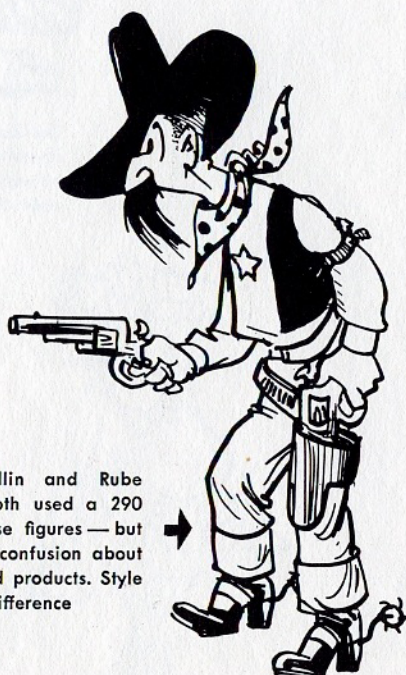
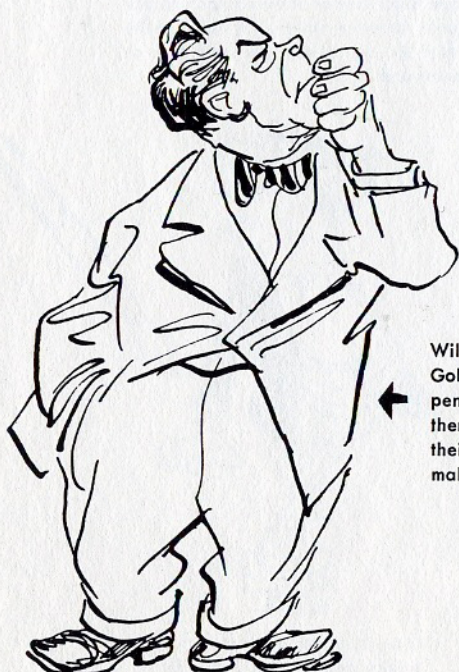
Pressure here

But when drawing a long line try to have enough ink to make it in one stroke



This is a do-it-yourself job: no one else can do your practicing for you!

Some men leave thin white outlines on the sleeves, etc., of blacked-in figures. If the figure has a carefully drawn, expressive outline, leave out the thin whites. In newspaper reproduction they tend to fill in and mess things up. Keep it clear, simple and right



← Willard Mullin and Rube Goldberg both used a 290 pen for these figures — but there is no confusion about their finished products. Style makes the difference →



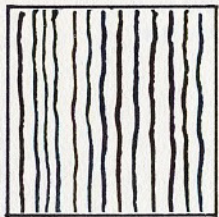
Practice pen lines every chance you get



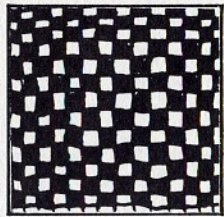
### Patterns on clothes

Clothing patterns serve several purposes. They give "color" and a decorative quality to simple outline drawings and are especially useful where solid blacks might confuse the form and action of the figure. They also help give an illusion of solid, three-dimen-

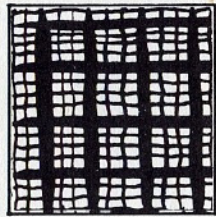
sional form to otherwise flat-looking figures and reveal something about the character of your cartoon actors. For instance, a loud checkered pattern on a suit suggests a sporty character, a tweed pattern an English country gentleman, a plaid a Scotsman, etc.



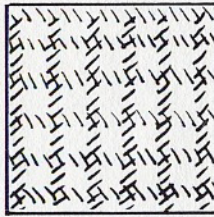
Vertical stripe



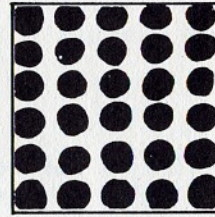
Checkered



Plaid



Tweed



Polka dot



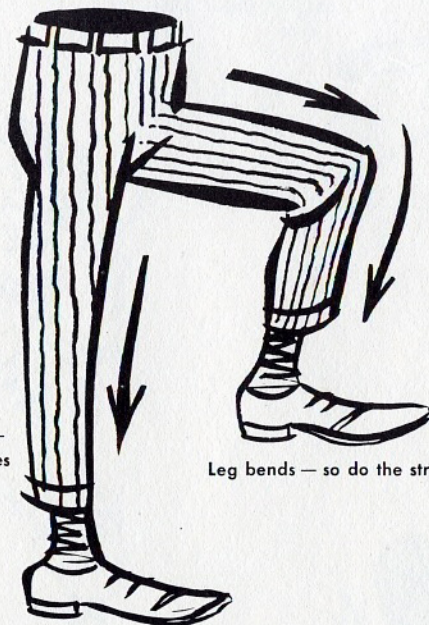
Flowered

Simple flat pattern with no regard for the direction of the leg. (Can be hand drawn or put in with Zip-a-tone sheets as described on page 26 of the Introduction)

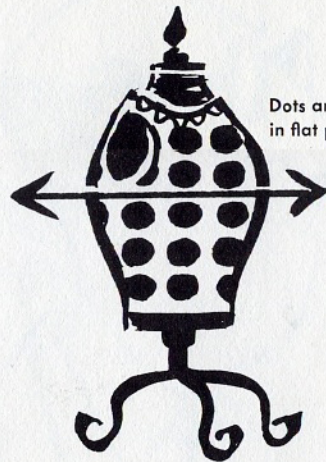


Leg is straight—so are the stripes

Here the stripe changes direction to show the direction of the leg



Leg bends—so do the stripes



Dots are all full circles in flat pattern

Here the dots are full circles in front but narrow to ellipses as they go around the form to give it a round, three-dimensional quality



See how stripes can help to give rounded form to the sleeve and to show its direction. At left, the curve of the stripes indicates that the arm goes away from us—at right, that it comes toward us

### Blacking in



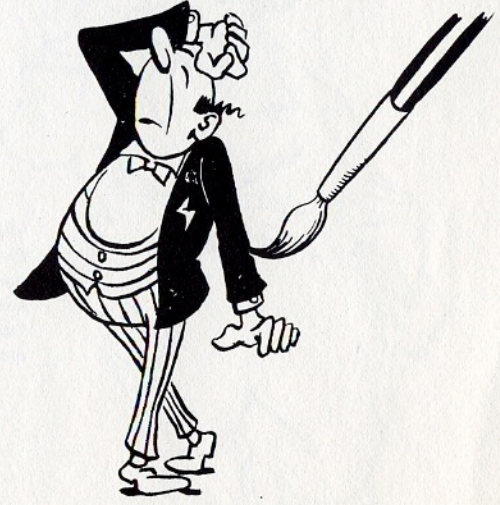
Carefully pencil in the pattern where you want it



Then ink it in



Most cartoonists indicate where they want solid blacks with an "X" while they are inking in the outline so they won't forget



The finished figure with blacks and pattern inked in

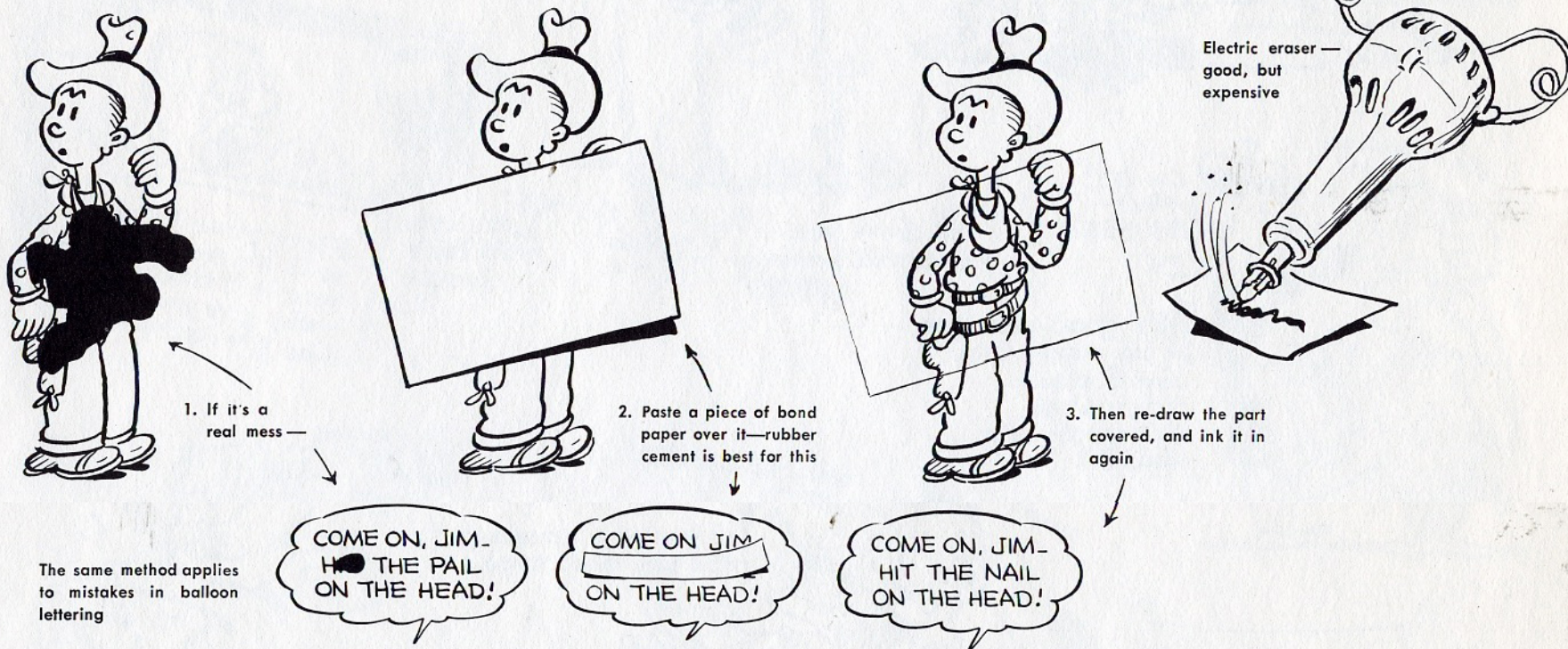
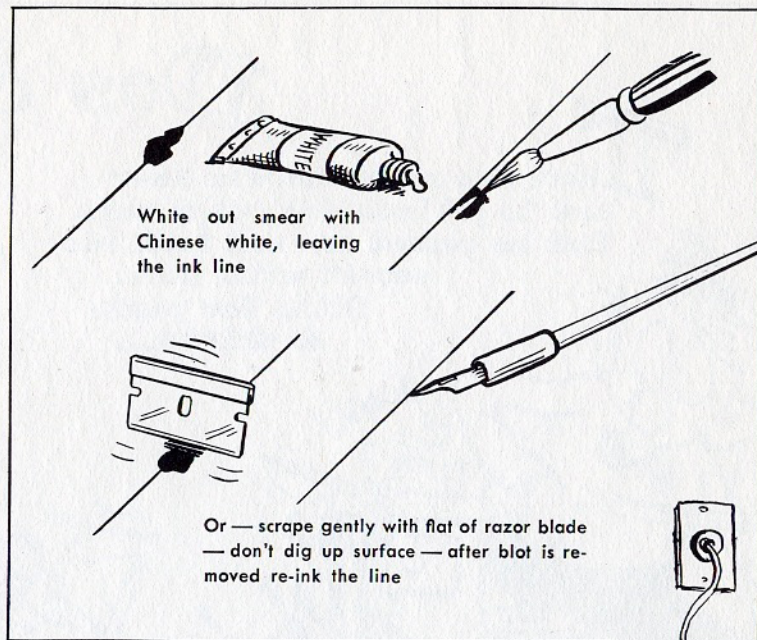


### Correcting mistakes on ink drawings

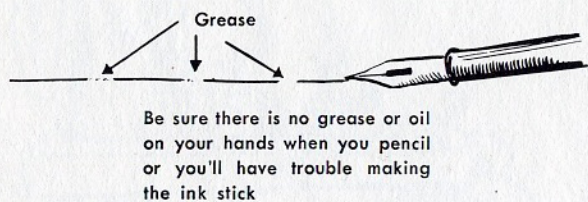
Every cartoonist loves to stick his finger into a freshly inked line to see if the ink is dry. As this creates a mess out of the line, we must have some way to clean up the smeared line we should have known was wet all the time.

As illustrated below, there are several good ways to clean up a messy line or spot of undesired ink. Regardless of the method used to correct an inked line, you should remember that your drawing is going to be reproduced. The camera will pick up any undesired marks left on the paper. Make a habit of developing a neat, clean, repair job.

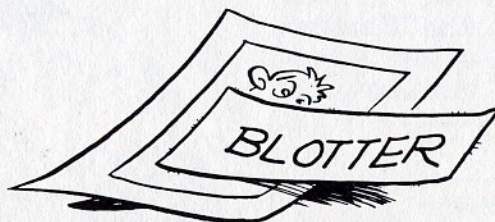
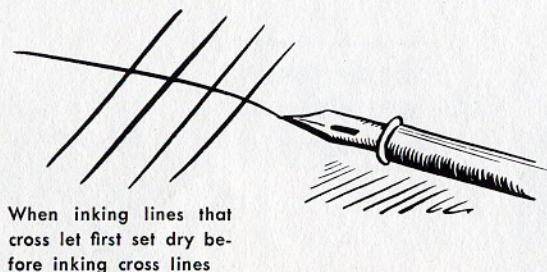
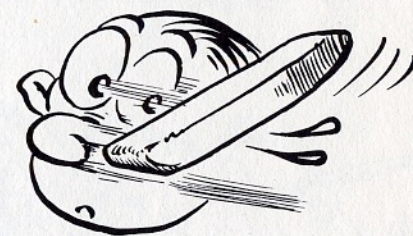
If the drawing is too badly smeared or splattered, it is usually better to tear it up and start over.



These are good ways of correcting your mistakes. But — the best way is not to make them in the first place



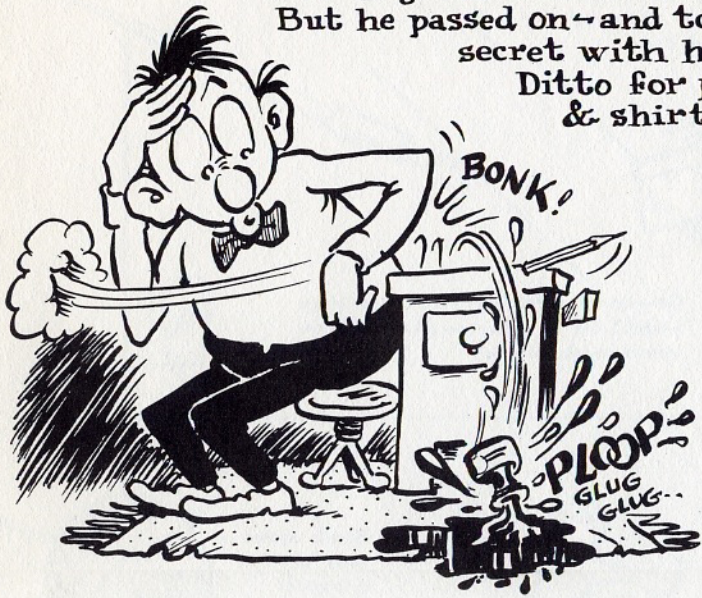
### Things to remember when inking



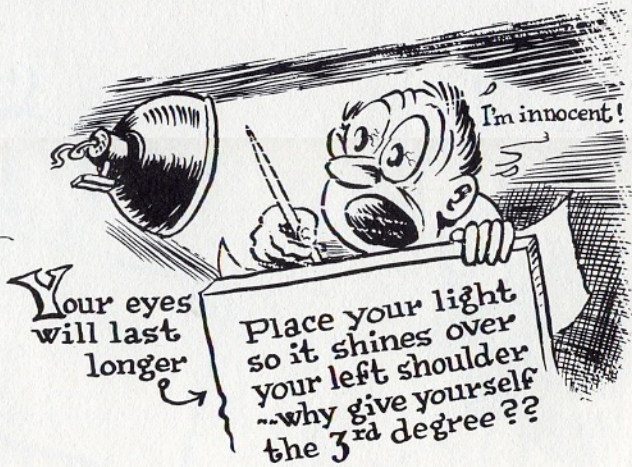
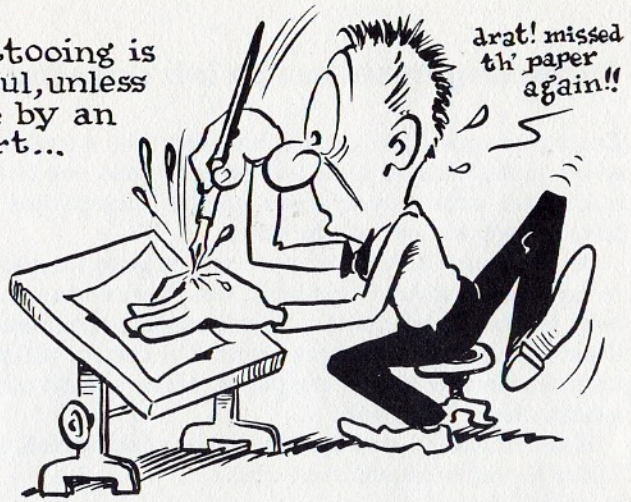


# Dos & Don'ts

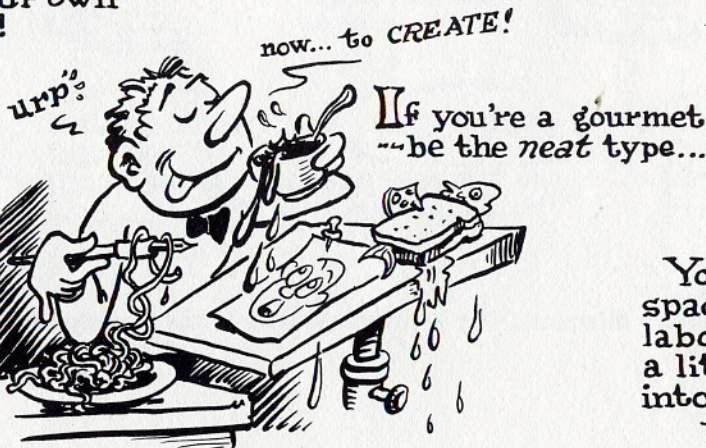
**T**here was once a man who knew how to get India ink out of rugs. But he passed on—and took his secret with him...  
Ditto for pants & shirts...



Tattooing is painful, unless done by an expert...



It's good practice to copy—but don't claim later that it's your own stuff!



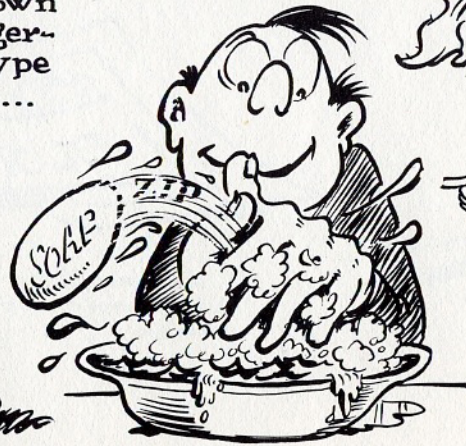
I can find my pens blind-folded-- there's one!!



Neatness is important to Sales!

♪...this time I can skip the ears!!

Editors frown on the "Finger-Painting" type of cartoon...

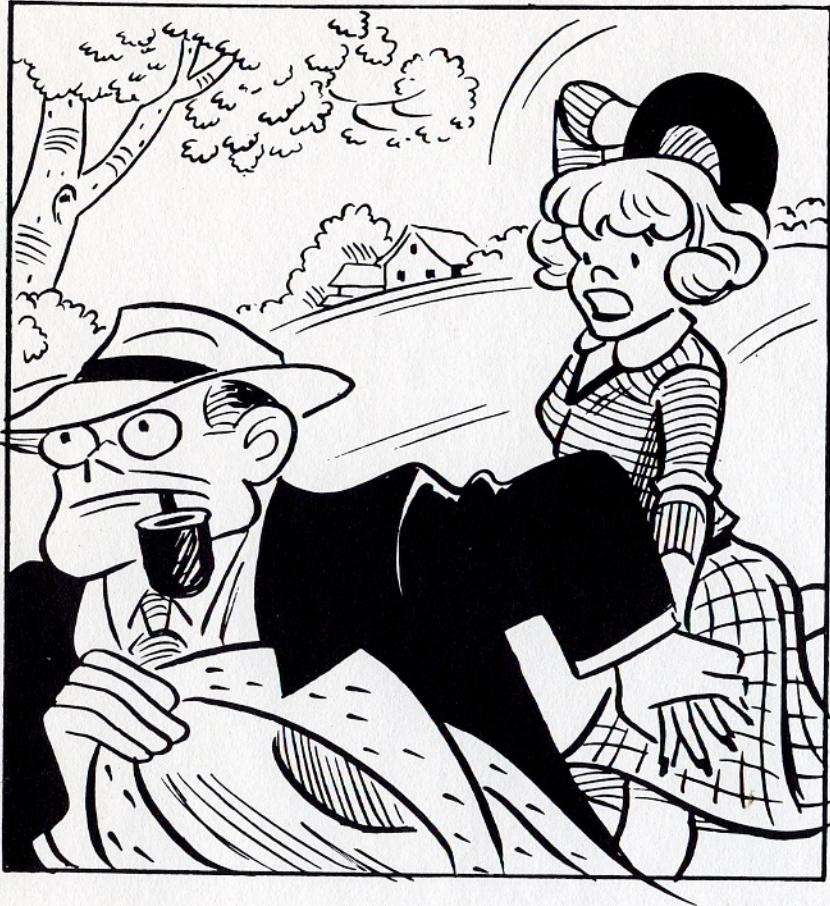


Wash your hands -- often --

-- and keep those pen-points clean!





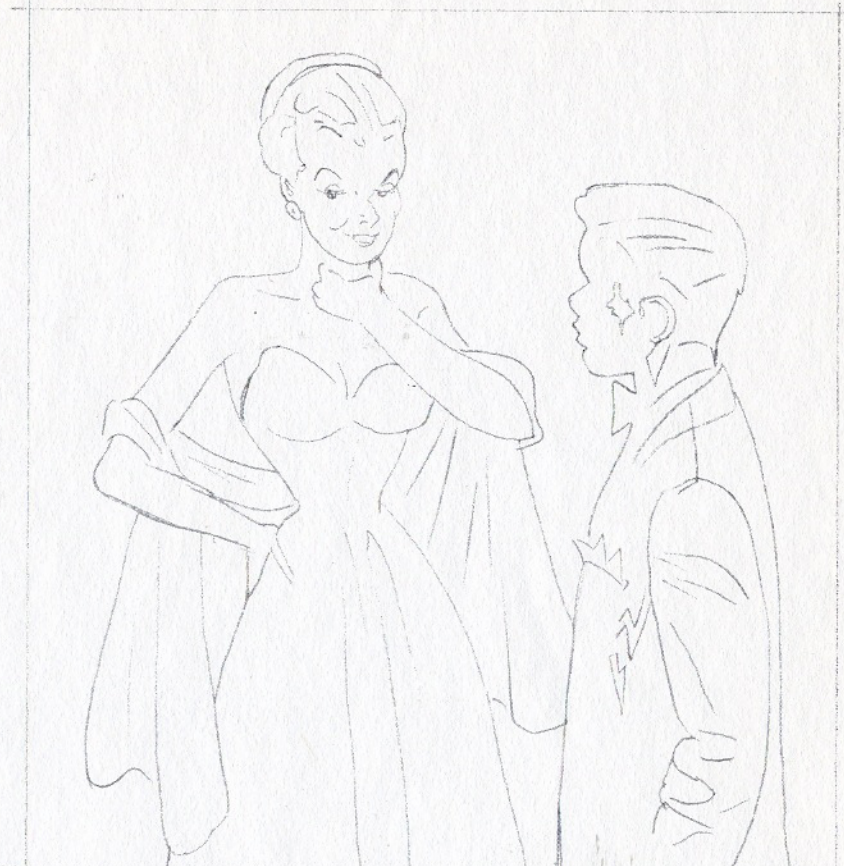


A

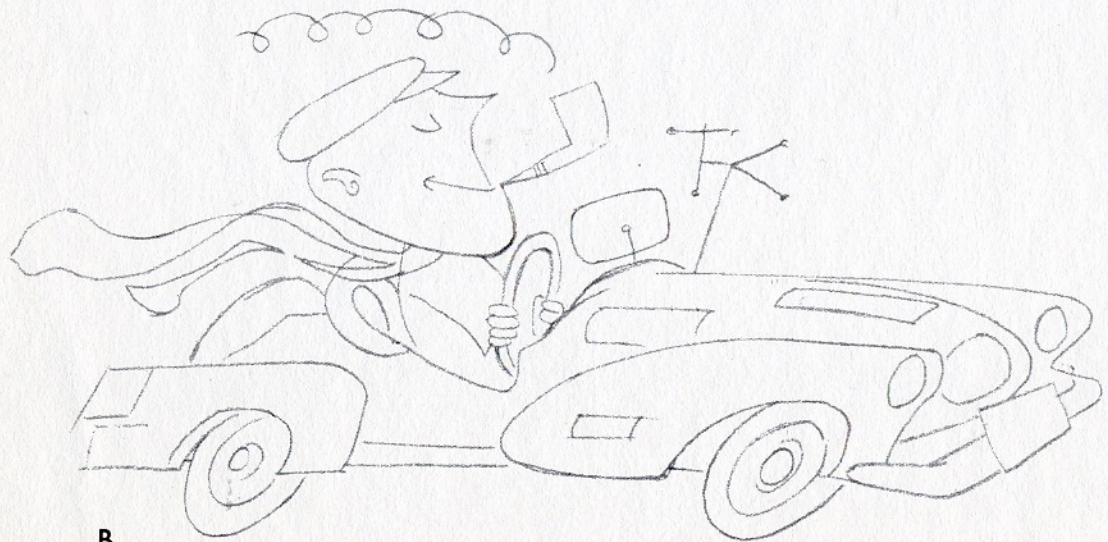
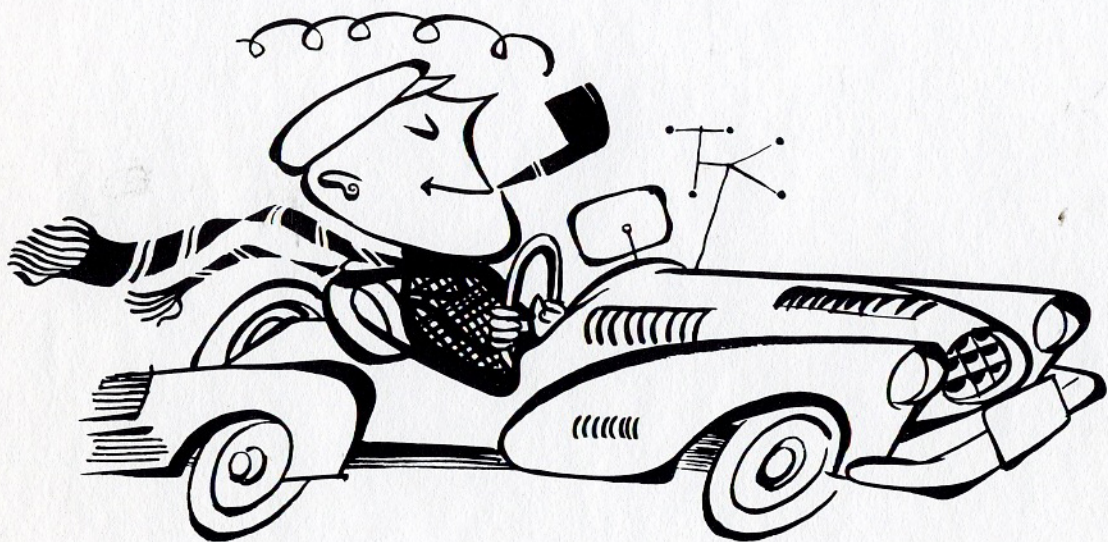


B





A



B



C



FAMOUS ARTISTS CARTOON COURSE  
Student Work  
Lesson 3

To study and practice

This lesson has been planned simply to start you on the right track in using the pen and brush. These are versatile tools -- there are so many possibilities for variation of line and style that it would be impossible to list them all. Just like every other cartoonist, you'll have to start experimenting with pen and brush lines until you find the kinds of lines that suit you and your style. For practice, pencil and ink the simple figures and heads you learned to draw in Lessons 1 and 2. When it comes to inking over your pencil lines, don't tighten up. Let your pen or brush swing freely: nothing looks so amateurish as a lot of unnecessary little multiple lines used where one bold line could do the job. Work for clean, simple expression with a minimum of details. Think as you ink.

The figures in the assignment plates at the end of the lesson were chosen carefully for one purpose: to free you from any problems of drawing and composition so that you can concentrate on control of your ink lines. Don't tackle the plates until you are confident that you know what your tools will do. We've given you two sets of the plate drawings. Use one for final practice and the other for doing the assignment to mail in to the School.

Your grade on this lesson will depend on the degree of control of pen and brush that you show us in your work.

The assignments you are to mail to the School for criticism

ASSIGNMENT 1

On the page marked Assignment plate 1, working line for line directly on the plate, ink over the pencil drawings marked A and B. Use a flexible pen and follow the originals just as closely as you can for width and direction of the pen lines. For the larger areas of solid black you should use a brush. If you feel that you need more pencil guide lines (on the girl's sweater, for instance), put them in for yourself. Do it lightly, however: this is rather soft paper. If you spoil one plate -- well, that's why we included an extra. Send the best one to us for criticism.

ASSIGNMENT 2

On the page marked Assignment plate 2, using a brush and ink, copy the drawings line for line. As you work, be alert for thickness and thinness of the lines. Your pressure on the brush and the direction in which you draw the lines are very important here. Again, we have included an extra plate page for you. Send in the one on which you think you've done your best work. Our only concern at the moment is to see how well you demonstrate your control of the tools.

Present your assignments in the same clean, professional manner you would use if you were submitting them to the cartoon buyer of a publication. Letter your name, address and student number carefully in the lower left-hand corner of each page. In the lower right corner, place the Lesson Number and Assignment Number. Mail to:

FAMOUS ARTISTS CARTOON COURSE  
Westport, Connecticut