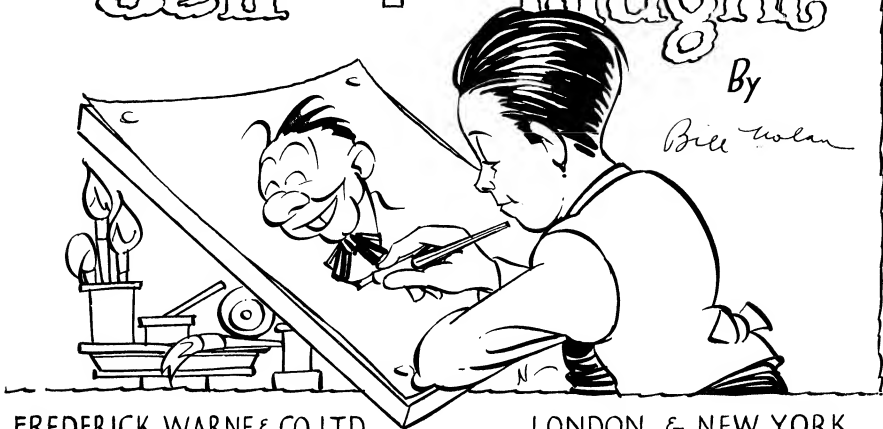


# Cartooning Self + Thought

By

*Bill Nolan*



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## *Strokes*

The materials necessary for making pen and ink comics are few. A bottle of India ink, paper that will accept the ink, a pen, pencil, and an eraser are all that are absolutely necessary. A common bread-board will serve for a drawing-board, but if one is not available, a smooth topped table will suffice. Thumb tacks to hold the paper on the board are convenient.

Comics are first laid out in lead pencil and then inked in. When the ink dries, the pencil lines can be removed with an eraser without injury to the ink lines.

Ability to handle a pen is acquired only by practice. The exercises on the opposite page are to be practised until you are able to accomplish the strokes with sureness and confidence. At first practise the strokes slowly, being careful that the lines do not run together. When you get the feel of the pen, increase the speed of your stroke. The arrows indicate the direction which the pen travels.

When you have mastered the various strokes, make simple landscapes, like the one on the right of the page, using different types of lines to get the various tones.



## *The Hands*

In the boxes marked (1) and (2) on the opposite page, you will notice that the first of each series of three drawings is a rough circle. In starting to draw the hand, always make this circle in pencil. It represents the centre of the hand, either the palm or the back, on to which you attach the thumb and fingers.

The second drawing in each box shows the thumb and fingers drawn over the original circle. This is also done in pencil. When the drawing is inked in, those parts of the pencil drawing which are not wanted in the finished picture are left out, as you will see has been done in the third pictures in the boxes.

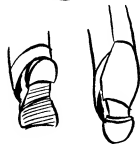
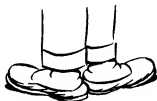
Study the hands on the plate and note how the fingers and thumb are attached to suggest a certain pose. Bear in mind that in drawing comics you merely suggest, and do not go into detail, as is done in illustrating.

Using the chart as a guide, practise making hands until you are able to draw them in any desired position. This will require patience, but you can do it.



## *The Feet*

Study the drawings on the opposite chart, and then make up a page of shoes from your imagination. It is necessary to be able to draw a variety of shoes, because each comic figure demands a type of shoe that fits the character. A tramp needs tattered footwear ; a dude requires shoes with spats ; a farmer, boots ; and so on down the line. In making buttoned shoes, be sure the buttons are on the outside of the foot. This is true, also, of spats.



## *The Head*

Start the simple comic head by making a rough circle in pencil, as shown on the opposite chart. Next, divide the circle, as shown. Add the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Study the first four examples on the page and note how this is done. Notice the relative position of each feature to the others, and to the dotted lines. The balance of the first line shows how the head looks in turning.

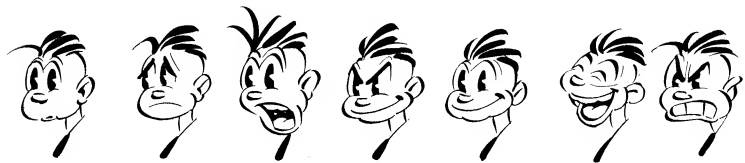
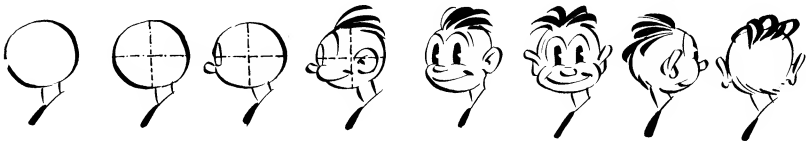
The second line shows the same head expressing different emotions—surprise, sorrow, fright, scheming, smiling, laughing, and anger. Study these drawings and you will see that the expression is changed, mainly, by altering the mouth, the eyes, and the eyebrows.

The bottom line shows the head tilted into various positions.

No doubt you will find this lesson more difficult than those prior to it, but stick to it and you will be surprised at your improvement.

After you have studied the drawings on the chart, make a whole page of pencil circles and add the features as you conceive them, to express the various emotions. Then try turning the heads, and next, try drawing them in tilted positions.

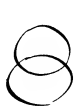




## *Character Heads*

When you have become proficient at making heads from simple circles, you are ready to put character into your heads. All types of heads cannot be suggested by a single circle, so we resort to a combination of circles to give us the framework for, what might be called, compound heads.

Note how the first four heads on the opposite page were first roughly pencilled out, and then completed. The completed heads on the chart were constructed originally on combinations of circles. Use them as examples and construct a page of heads from your own imagination.

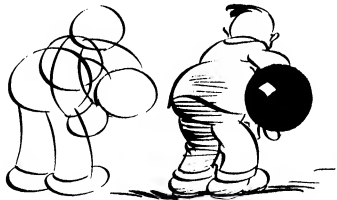
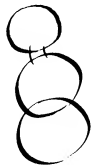


## *Comic Figures*

The comic figure is first roughed out as a combination of circles. On the opposite page you will note that one circle is drawn to represent the head; another, the chest; and a third, the buttocks. Notice the relative positions of these circles, and also, see how the arms, legs, and feet are attached.

Practise making simple standing figures of your own. But, as figures would appear stiff if they were all drawn in erect positions, it is necessary to bend and foreshorten your figures to get action into your drawing. Note how this is done in the two figures at the bottom of the page. The circles overlap one another, instead of being one above the other, as in the erect figure.

Try drawing figures in various attitudes, using the chart as your guide.



## *Action*

This is really a continuation of the lesson on comic figures. The drawings on the opposite page were first roughed out, as detailed in the previous lesson, but the circles were arranged to make the figures more animated. Comics are much more interesting if they seem to be doing something rather than remaining stationary.

Rough out a page of figures in action, making them perform as ball players, golfers, divers, and runners. Use the plate as a guide at first, then make up a page from your own imagination. You must eventually originate your own figures, so why not start early ?



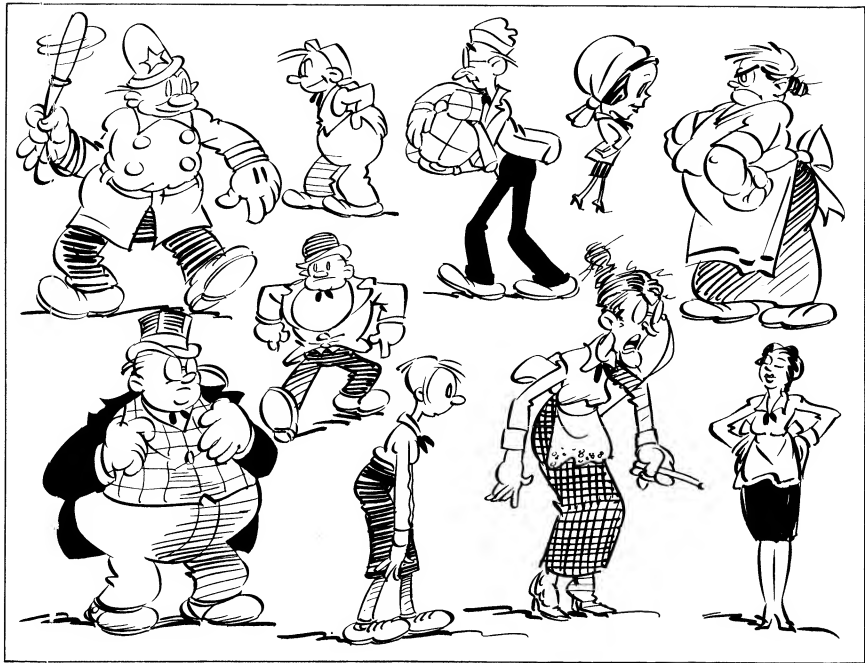
## *Comic Characters*

Up to now, all the comic figures have been simple and built on the same combination of circles. Your work would look monotonous if every figure was alike, so we now advance to character comics. Character is achieved by varying the size of the circles.

Note on the opposite page the various combinations of circles used to construct the different figures. The policeman is built by using a couple of large circles for the body. Next to him, the little fellow has a small chest and large buttocks. The long-legged character, with the bundles, is still another combination. Note the large head and tiny body on the next character. Below these is a chesty fellow. He was built by using a large upper circle and a small lower one.

Study these characters, and then make several pages of your own.

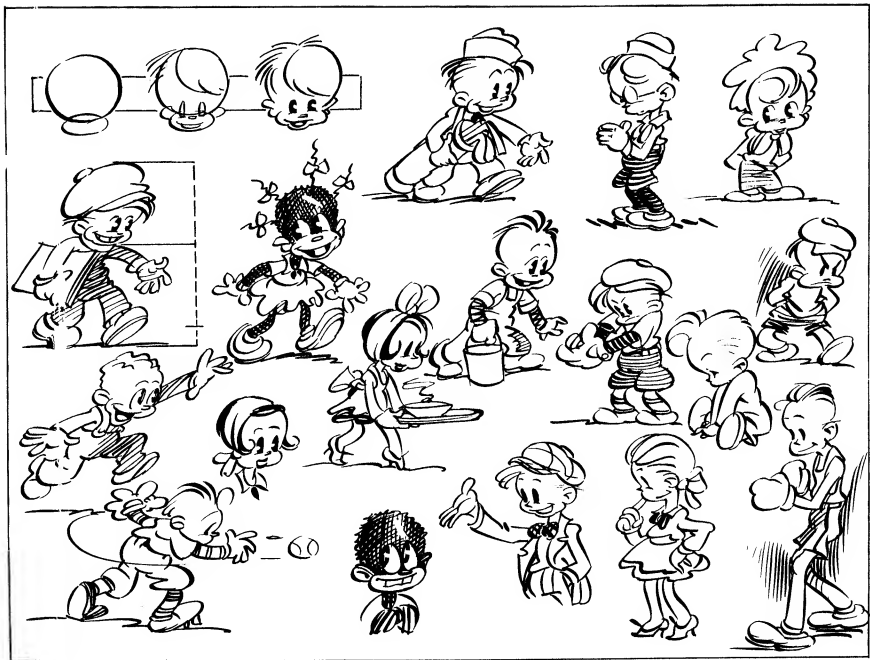




## *Children*

Children are the comic artist's chief stock-in-trade. There are two points to particularly note in the drawing of children. One is, that it is better to use two circles to make the head; the upper circle always being the larger. The other point is, that the head is large in relation to the size of the body. At the upper left of the opposite page, these points are brought out graphically.

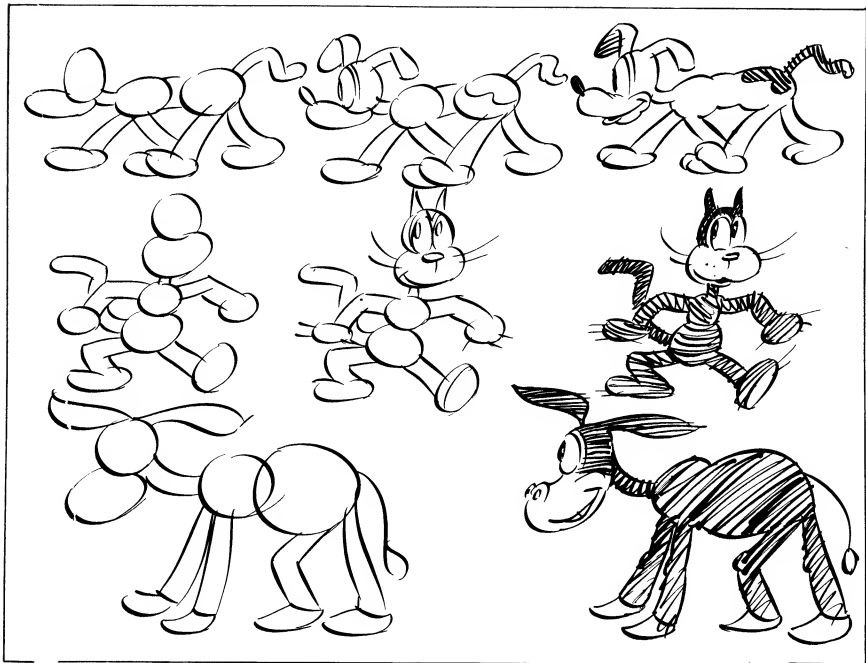
Study the drawings on this chart and then make several pages of your own conception of children. Use the knowledge that you have gained from the preceding lessons to make your "action" poses. Draw them running, jumping, playing marbles, and acting as children do. Children are seldom still, and if you draw them just standing, they will not look natural.



## *Animals*

Comic animals are constructed with a circle under-structure just as human figures are. Note on the opposite page how the cat, dog, and horse were first roughed out and then finished. Notice that the cat is walking like a human being. This doesn't happen in real life, but in drawing comics you can take many liberties.

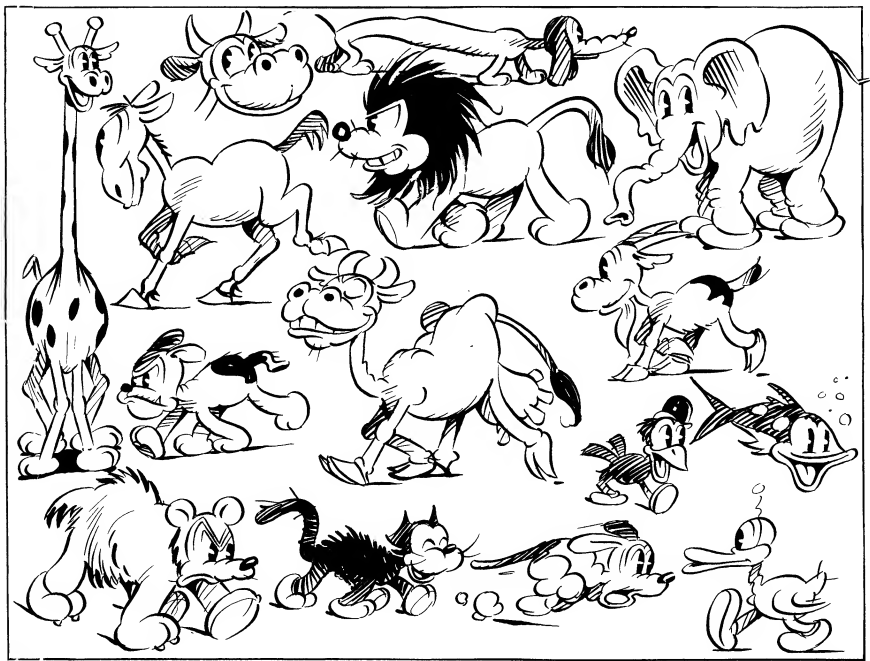
Try a few pages of these animals, using the same characters as are drawn here, but put them in different positions. Make the dog run instead of walk ; draw the cat jumping ; and make the horse walk as the dog is walking on the chart.



## *Conclusion*

On the opposite chart you will find a variety of comic animals. Study them, for they are all made from combinations of circles. There is no end to what you can do if you get firmly fixed in your mind the idea of building comics from the basic circles.

The system of drawing comics, presented in this book, is the one used by the famous motion picture cartoonists in creating their laughter-provoking characters for the screen. They have made comic art pay big dividends; but only by hard work and practice. Comic art will do the same for you once you master it. This you can do only by diligent practice.



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