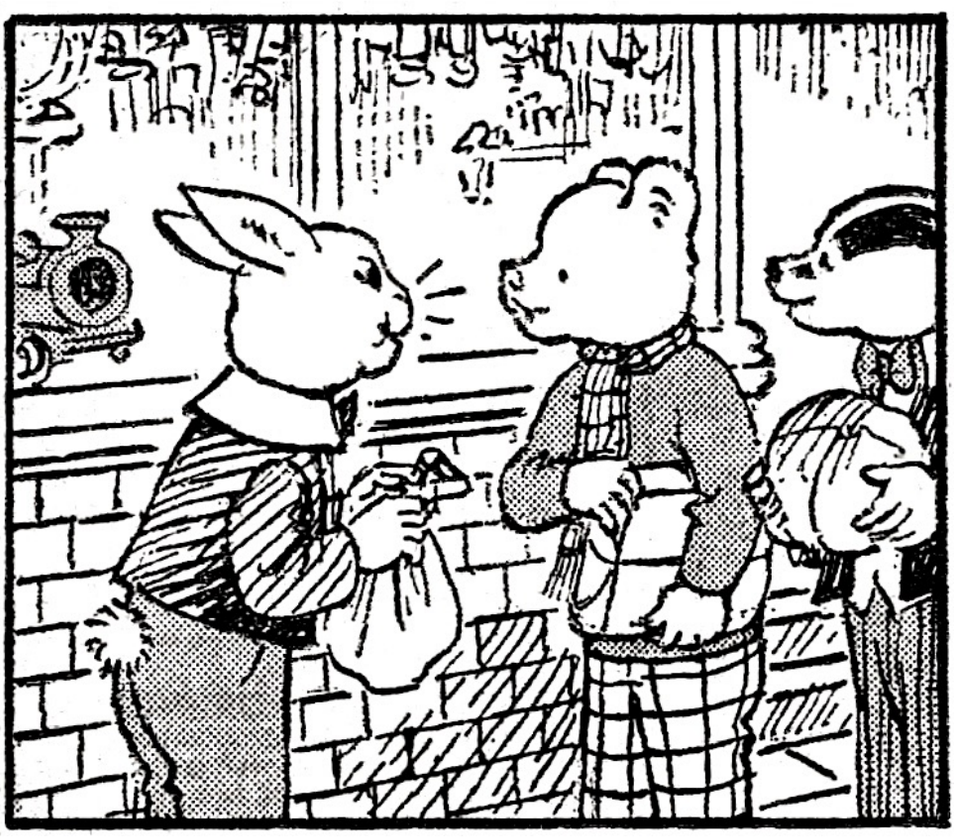
RUPERT

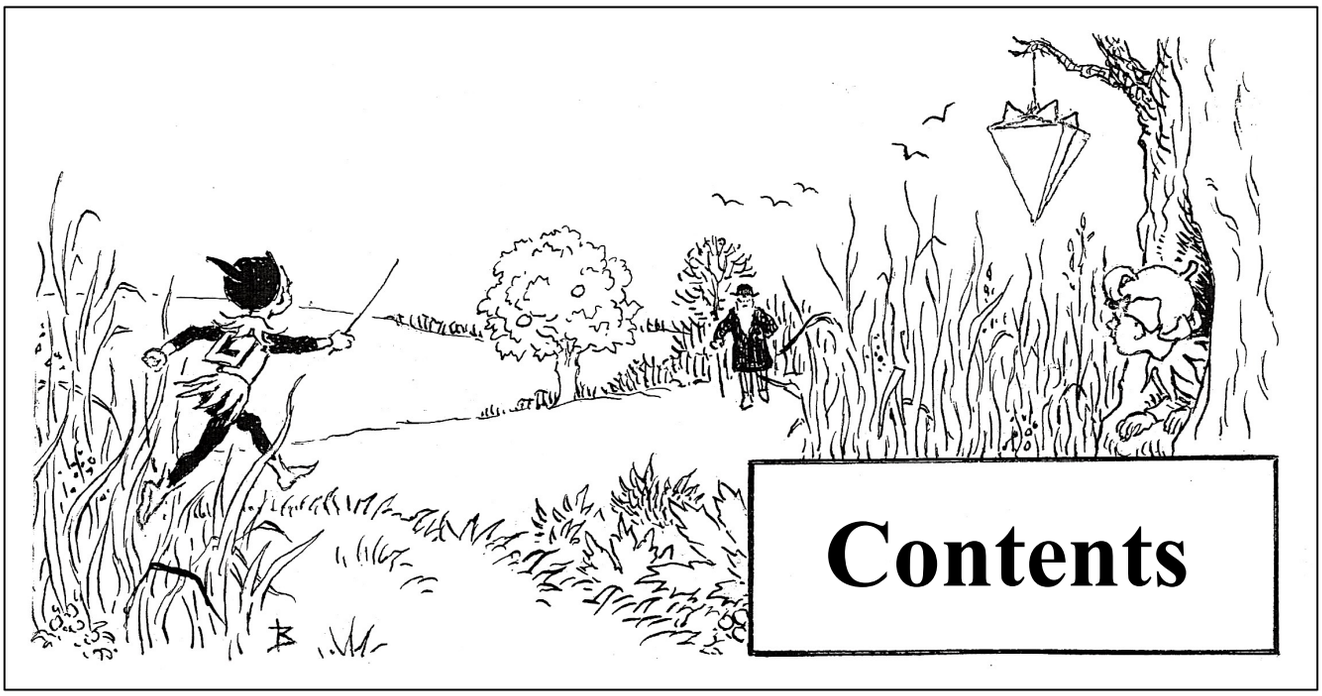
in the

Daily Express



Rupert and Miss Samantha

Followers' Supplement no 26 Issued Summer 2019 with Nutwood Newsletter 103



The story featured here is taken from the newspaper cuttings contained within the Freddie Chaplain archive records. The non-story images are black and white originals from the Daily Express's archive of Rupert material.

Page 3 – Contents
An original piece of black and white artwork by Alfred Bestall from the Daily Express archive.

Page 4 – Rupert and Miss Samantha (P59)
The story which is drawn by Alex Cubie was written by Freddie Chaplain and appeared in the Daily Express from 21st May 1973 to 10th July 1973. This 44 episode story was reprinted in the Daily Express from 5th April 1983 to 23rd May 1983 using 42 of the original 44 episodes.
It's Pompey Trunk's birthday and Mrs Bear has baked a birthday cake, but thinking of a suitable present proves problematic for Rupert and the chums. A search for Miss Samantha Clause, the sister of Santa Clause, ensues as she is the person who organises birthday presents. Rupert helps her deliver other birthday presents using her flying sofa. The chums then all get inspiration for gifts via magic bubbles, and then Pompey has a very pleasant birthday party at Rupert's house.

Page 19 – Follow Rupert in the Nutwood Newsletter
An original pen and ink image by Alfred Bestall from the Daily Express archive.

It is unlikely that these stories will ever be reprinted elsewhere and we would expect that many of you are reading them for the first time. We believe that this supplement neatly complements the current policy of the reprinting of Bestall classics in the Daily Express and the recycling of earlier Rupert Annual stories in the current Annuals.

Note: Story numbering relates to the listing of stories in **The New Rupert Index**. Stories selected by John Beck from the Freddie Chaplain archive and laid out in this publication by Pamela Stones; assistance with cleaning the newspaper images by John Kobylecky.

Rupert and Miss Samantha

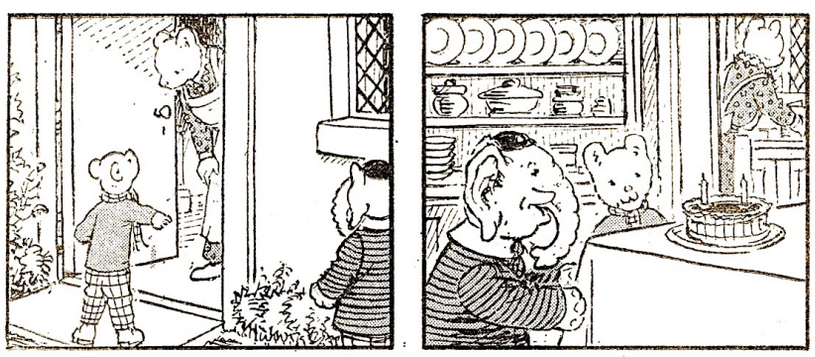
by Alex Cubie

and Freddie Chaplain

21st May 1973 to 10th July 1973
(P59)

reprinted (42 of the original 44 episodes)
5th April 1983 to 23rd May 1983

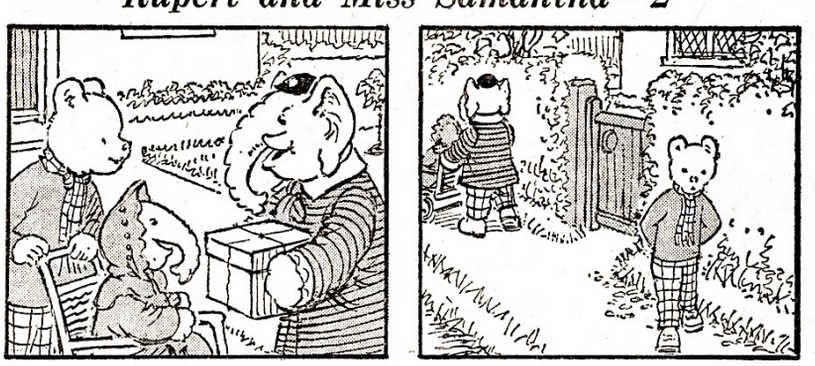
Rupert and Miss Samantha—1



"Please, Mummy, may Edward come in and see the cake you've made for Pompey's birthday?" Mrs. Bear is in the middle of her housework one morning when Rupert appears at the back door with his little elephant chum. "Why, of course," laughs Mummy. "After all, Pompey *is* his young brother. It's ready, the icing is set now." Rupert beckons Edward into the kitchen and together they gaze at the cake on the table. "Mmm, that's grand," says Edward. "You've even put two candles on it, Mrs. Bear. Thank you very much." "It was a pleasure to make it," smiles Mummy. "Just wait, and I'll find a box. You can take the cake with you."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—2

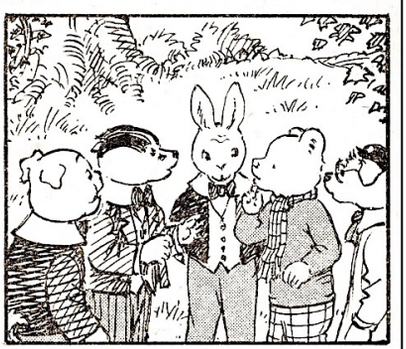


Edward carries the boxed cake into the garden where his young brother is waiting in his push-chair. "This is your birthday cake, Pompey," says Edward. "You shall have it the day after tomorrow. I hope you're coming to Pompey's party, Rupert," he adds. "Rather!" replies the little bear. "I've been trying to think of a present for him. What would he like?" Edward wrinkles his trunk. "H'm, that's difficult—there isn't much to choose for an elephant of his age. I'm just hoping that all the presents won't be the same." Edward's last remark sets Rupert thinking hard as he says goodbye to his pal and starts for the village.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—3



"Edward's right, it isn't easy to think of a present that Pompey would like." Making for the village shops Rupert ponders on his little problem. "Unless . . . of course! I know the very thing! A nice rattle." Just then he sees a group of his chums, but they are not their usual happy selves. "They all look rather solemn today," he murmurs. "I wonder what is wrong." "Hi, Rupert!" calls out Bill Badger as the little bear reaches them. "We've met to talk about presents for Pompey's birthday. But it turns out that each of us planned to buy the same thing—a rattle!" "Oh dear, so had I!" cries Rupert. "That makes five of us!"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—4

"I vote we meet again when we've thought more about Pompey's presents," declares Bingo. Everyone agrees and just as the group is splitting up, Algy turns to Rupert. "We don't have this trouble at Christmas," he says. "Santa always knows what to bring us." "Yes, I wish someone like him could be in charge of birthdays," replies Rupert. He is about to turn again for the village when Horace Hedgehog appears. "I overheard," he grunts. "Why not ask the Wise Owl's advice?" "What a good idea," says Rupert. "But I'm never quite sure which tree he lives in." "You can't miss it," says Horace. "It's the one with 'W. O.' carved on the trunk."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

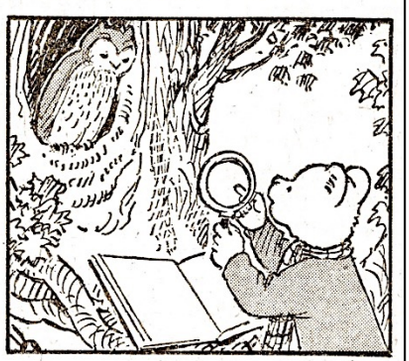
Rupert and Miss Samantha—5

Rupert makes for the nearby woodland and begins his search for the bird's home. "This must be the one" he thinks as he pulls aside a shrub and finds the letters "W. O." carved on the bark of a large tree. Clambering from bough to bough he soon discovers the Wise Owl dozing in a hollow. "Excuse me," says Rupert. "May I speak to you?" The Owl blinks and peers down at Rupert. "Aren't you doing that already?" he snaps. Rupert explains the difficulty of choosing Pompey's presents. "Heh, a birthday matter," says the Owl. 'Then you had best consult my Book of Secrets. Pray, fetch it from the upstairs hollow, little bear."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—6



Making his way to the upper branches Rupert finds another hollow, and in it lies a rather weighty book. "There's a magnifying glass too," thinks Rupert. He takes both articles back to the Owl. "Ah, I see you've remembered the reading glass," says the bird. "You'll need it, the writing's very small." But on opening the book Rupert finds nothing but blank pages. "That's because it's all secret," the Owl tells him. "It's invisible writing." "B-but this magnifying glass!" cries Rupert. "There's no glass in it!" "Tsk! What a contrary little bear you are!" says the Owl. "Don't you know that you need invisible glass to read invisible writing?"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

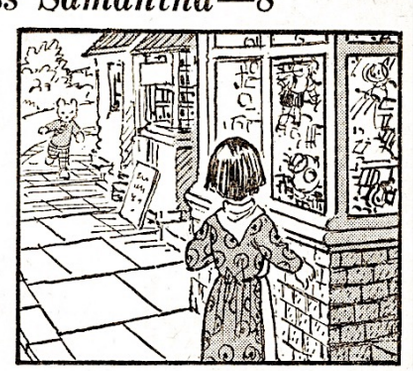
The Rupert painting contest will appear in the Express next week

Rupert and Miss Samantha—7

"You'll find what you want under 'Birthdays' on page nine," says the Owl. "Oh, dear, it seems such nonsense," thinks the little bear. "But I'd better do as I'm told." He counts the blank pages and finding the right one, peers at it through the strange magnifying glass. To his amazement the words appear as if by magic. "It says here 'Apply Miss Samantha,'" murmurs Rupert. "That's right," yawns the Owl. "Now you know what to do." "But I don't," says Rupert. "Who's Miss Samantha? And where does she live?" The bird has closed its eyes. "Come back another time," it says, "when I'm not in the middle of a nap."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—8

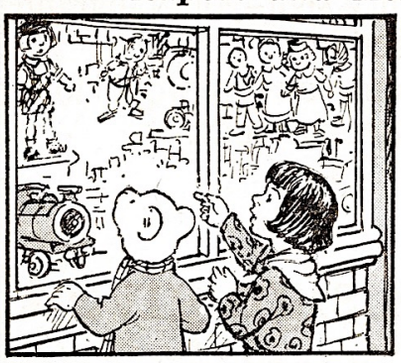


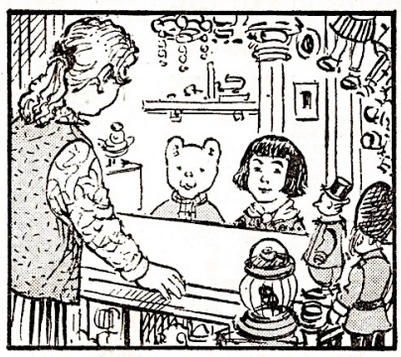
The Wise Owl has begun to snore, so Rupert climbs down the tree and continues his journey. "I wish the Owl hadn't been so sleepy," he sighs. "I'd like to have known more about this Miss Samantha. What has she to do with birthdays? Would she be able to tell me the sort of present to buy for Pompey?" On reaching the village Rupert pauses. "Now which is the best shop to go to?" he asks himself. "There's one in New Street that sells toys and gifts. I'll try there first." As he rounds a corner he sees Margot at the very shop he means to visit. "Coo-ee, Margot!" he shouts.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—9





"Hallo, Margot! Have you come to buy something too?" Rupert joins his chum at the shop window. "You can help me choose a present for Pompey's birthday." Margot looks wistful and points to a doll apart from the others. "I was hoping to buy that one with the money my Uncle sent me," she says. "But yesterday the shopkeeper said it wasn't for sale." "Perhaps he will change his mind," says Rupert. "Come in and ask him again." So the chums enter the shop and to Margot's surprise there is a young lady behind the counter. "The shopkeeper is away today," explains the assistant. "I'm here to serve customers. Can I help you?"

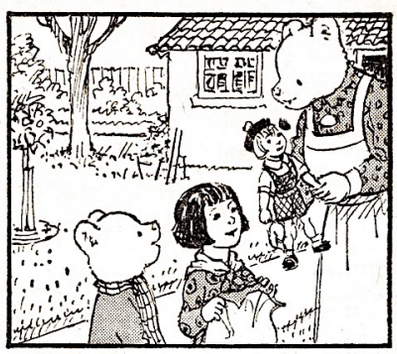
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—10

Timidly Margot points out her favourite doll. "I came yesterday to buy that one," she says. "But the shopkeeper——" "Oh, I expect you want to know how much it costs," breaks in the assistant. "It's not with the others and there is no label on it, but the shopkeeper told me the dolls were all one price, so I'll charge you the same for it." Hardly able to believe her good fortune, Margot carefully counts out her money while the young lady wraps the doll. Rupert looks on, pleased at his chum's happiness but wondering why the shopkeeper had refused to sell the doll the day before.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—11

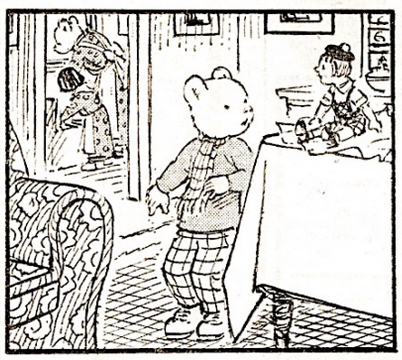


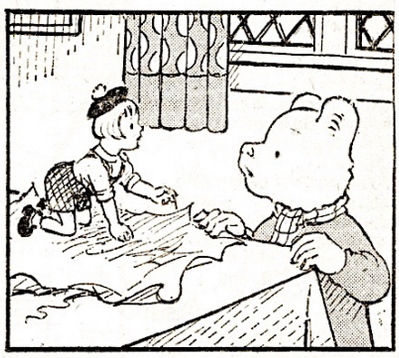
Margot hugs her parcel fondly. "I wonder why the shopkeeper wouldn't sell the doll yesterday," she says. "That's what I'd like to know," murmurs Rupert. "It's rather mysterious—oh, I forgot all about Pompey's present!" "Buy him a rattle," suggests Margot, "but not now, Rupert, let's show your Mummy my new doll." Rupert decides to visit the shop later that day in search of the right gift. "But it won't be a rattle," he laughs, on the way home. Soon Mrs. Bear is admiring the new doll. "That reminds me," she says. "I have some pieces of cloth to make nice covers for your doll's pram, Margot."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—12

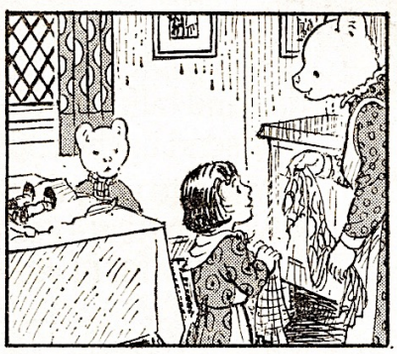


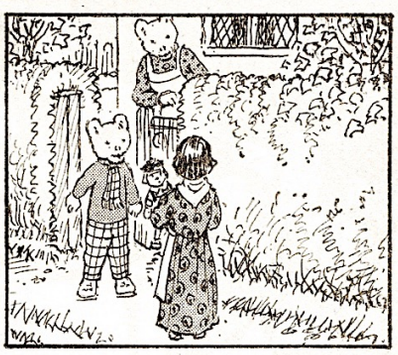


Margot leaves her doll on the parlour table while she goes with Mrs. Bear to another room. Rupert stays behind and almost as soon as he is alone he hears a faint rustling. Glancing round, he is taken aback to see the doll sitting up. And even more amazing, the toy begins to speak. "Your friend shouldn't have bought me!" it squeaks. "I'm not for sale. I'm one of Miss Samantha's helpers." "You are?" gasps Rupert. "Why, she's the very person I'd like to meet." "Then you'd better catch the bus to Dollscote," says the toy. "It stops at the Common crossroads every morning at sunrise. And you can tell her what has happened to me."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—13

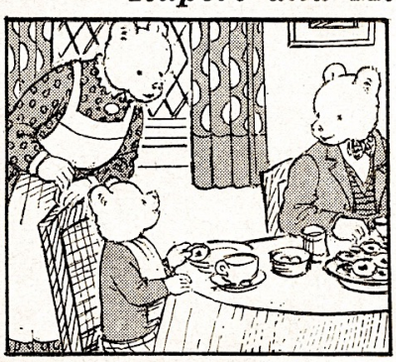


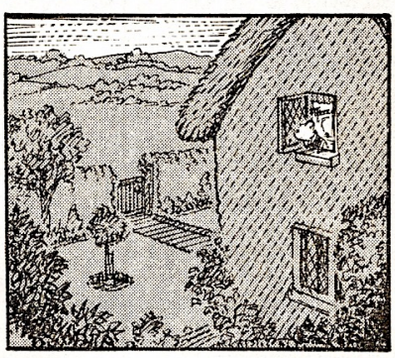


"Can I rely on you to tell Miss Samantha?" The doll gazes pleadingly at Rupert. "You see, somebody must sort out this muddle. I can't leave your friend now or she will be upset, but there is lots of birthday work to be done. How can I manage if I have to be a toy all the time?" "Don't worry, I'll find Miss Samantha if it's so important," says Rupert. "But who is she? And what is..." Mrs. Bear and Margot are heard returning and the doll flops back, keeping very still and toy like. The others notice nothing and when Rupert's friend sets off for home she carries the doll unwrapped. "I'd like everyone to see it," she smiles.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—14



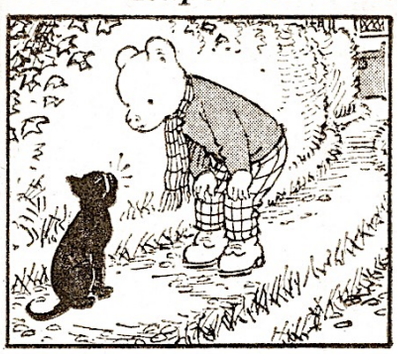


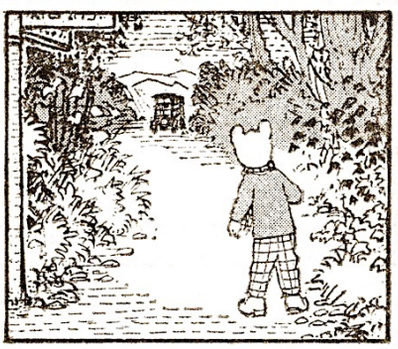
Rupert does not mention the doll's secret to Margot but later, during tea, he tells his story to Mummy and Daddy. "Margot would be disappointed if she knew she ought not to have the doll," he says. "What's this about Dollscote?" asks Daddy. "I've never heard of the place." "The doll asked me to go there," says Rupert, "and let Miss Samantha know what has happened. The bus stops at the Common crossroads at sunrise. May I catch it tomorrow?" Mummy and Daddy exchange glances, but at length they agree, so Rupert is early to bed that night. When he awakens, the first light of dawn is in the sky. "I'm in good time," he murmurs.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—15

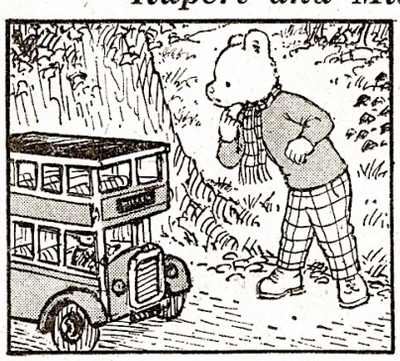


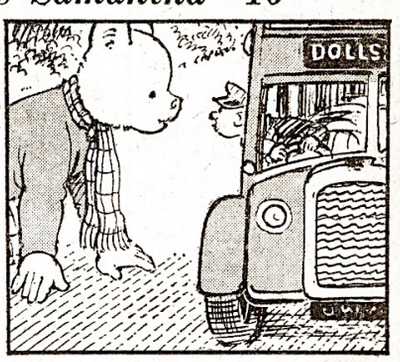


Rupert is soon dressed and, stopping only for the breakfast snack Mummy has thoughtfully left for him, he sets out to the Common. In the lane he meets Dinkie. "You're an early bird," says the cat. "Where are you going?" "To catch the Dollscote bus," replies Rupert. "Oh, that!" Dinkie gives an amused miaow as she stalks past him. "I've often seen it on my dawn strolls. You'll have a job to get on it, I can tell you!" Rupert goes on his way puzzling over the parting remark. "Will it be crowded?" he thinks. Reaching the crossroads he waits awhile and, sure enough, just as the sun comes up a bus appears in the distance.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—16

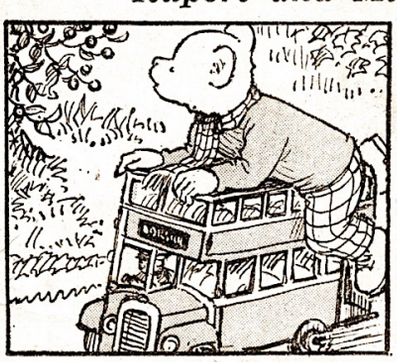




"Why, it's so small! It's only big enough for dolls!" Rupert can hardly believe his eyes as the double-decker bus draws to a standstill at the crossroads. "Now I know what Dinkie meant when she said I'd have a job to get on it!" The doll-like driver thrusts his head out of the cabin. "Express to Dollscote!" he calls. "Hurry along please!" Rupert crouches beside him. "But how can I get on?" he asks. "You'll have to sit on the roof," replies the driver briskly. "This bus is really for Miss Samantha's helpers, but I don't mind carrying other passengers sometimes."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—17

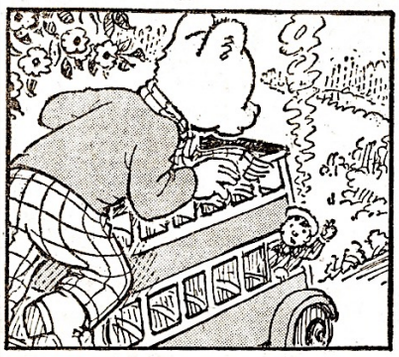


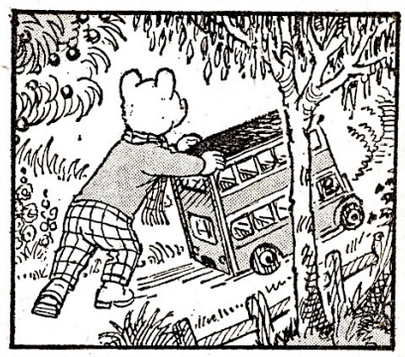
So Rupert sits astride the roof of the bus and away it goes through the quiet lanes. As they speed along Rupert glimpses the changing scenery and soon realises that he is being taken through parts he has never before visited. "I wonder how far it is to Dollscote," he thinks. "And the driver didn't ask for my fare. Perhaps I'm supposed to pay when I get off." They reach a steep hill and as the bus starts to climb its engine becomes very noisy with the strain of its load. "Oh dear, I know I'm too heavy for it," says Rupert anxiously. "I hope it doesn't break down."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—18

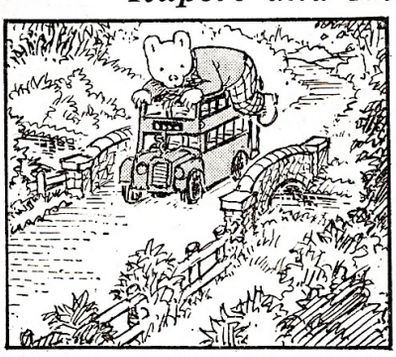


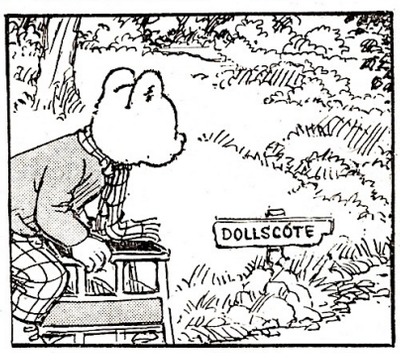


Halfway up the hill, steam pours from the bonnet of the bus and hastily the driver puts on his brakes. "Sorry, we can't make it with you on board," he tells Rupert. "You'll have to walk until we reach the top. It's all downhill after that, so you can get on again once we're over the ridge. Er, I could do with a helping hand, if you don't mind. Difficult to get going on a steep hill like this, y'know." When Rupert is off the roof the driver makes another start, and to help the bus on its way Rupert pushes from the back. "Whew, it's a long climb," he pants.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—19

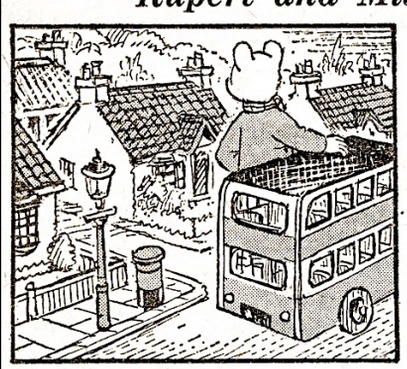


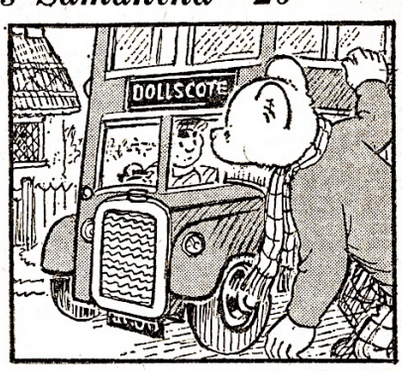


Rupert feels out of breath after pushing the little bus uphill, and he is glad when it is over the crest. "Thanks very much," shouts the driver, as Rupert again takes his place on the roof. "Shan't have to bother you any more." The lane ahead is downhill and the bus rattles along at a good pace while Rupert clings on. Presently they cross a little bridge and Rupert notices that even the fences and trees seem dwarfed. "And there's a tiny signpost," he murmurs, when the bus reaches a branch road. "It shows the way to Dollscote, but why is everything so small around here?"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—20



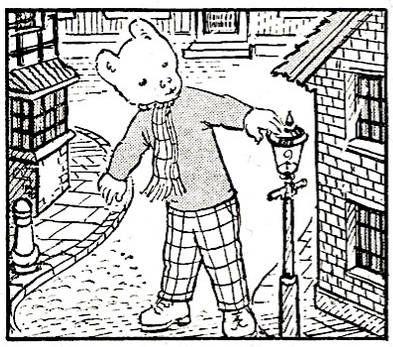


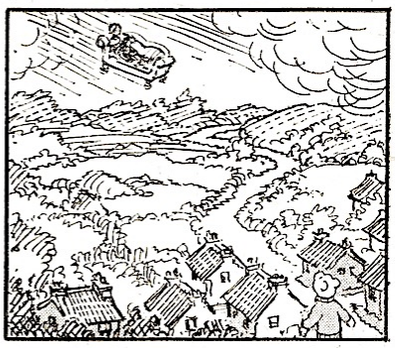
Another surprise awaits Rupert when, a little later, the driver stops his bus in a street lined with tiny houses. "It's a sort of toy village!" gasps Rupert, jumping down from the roof. "What a strange place!" He stoops to speak to the driver: "Please, is this Dollscote?" "That's right, it's the end of my route," says the little man. "I come here to pick up Miss Samantha's helpers when they have to go places. By the way, I'm due to leave in an hour's time. If you want to make the return trip you'd better not miss the bus. It's all free, both ways."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—21

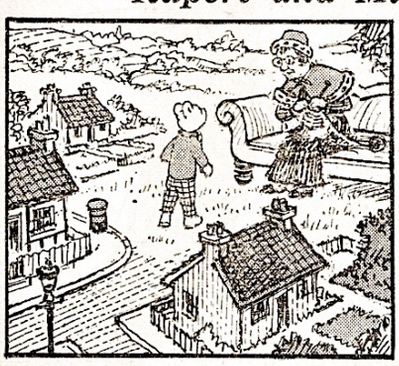


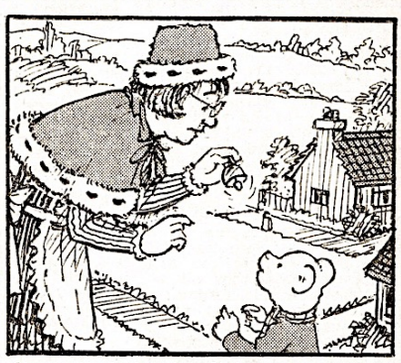


The driver moves off, swinging into a side road to turn his bus round, and Rupert is left in bewilderment. "Is this where Miss Samantha lives?" he wonders. "If so, she must be very tiny. I wish the driver had told me more about her." It is still early morning and as Rupert makes his way between the houses he sees that all the curtains are drawn. "Everyone must be asleep," he thinks, pausing beside a lamp-post only half his height. "My! I feel like a giant!" Hearing a sudden swishing sound he looks up. "There's something coming down from the sky!" he exclaims. "It looks like a sofa, but it *can't* be! And there is someone sitting on it!"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—22

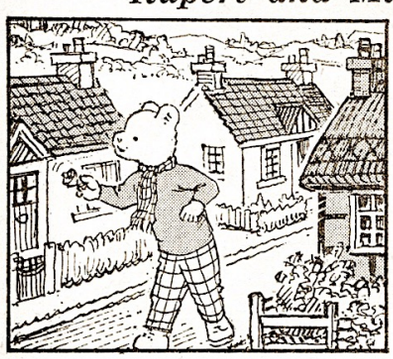


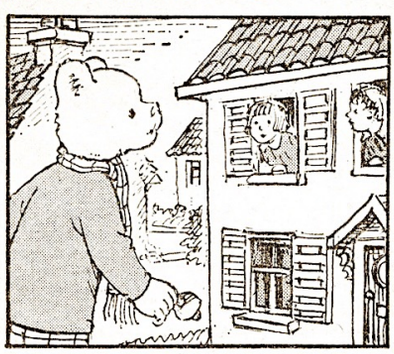


"It *is* a sofa!" The object from the sky lands a few yards from Rupert and he is amazed to see that it carries an old lady. She catches sight of him and rises from the seat. "Ah, a visitor," she says. "Allow me to introduce myself. I am Miss Samantha Claus. Of course, you have heard of my brother Santa Claus. He looks after Christmas matters, and I attend to birthdays. Pray, why are you here?" Rupert is about to blurt out his story when Miss Samantha hushes him. "Tell me later," she smiles. "First I must set my helpers to work. Would you like to waken them with this bell?"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—23



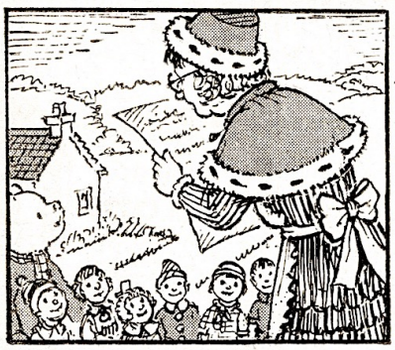


"Yes, I'll do it for you, Miss Samantha!" Willingly Rupert takes the handbell and shakes it as he walks between the rows of houses. "It's nothing but surprises today," he smiles. "I didn't know that Santa Claus had a sister. We all send letters to Santa for Christmas presents, but I've never heard of anyone writing to Miss Samantha about birthdays." The silvery tinkling of the bell soon arouses the sleeping helpers. "Oooah! Is it time to get up?" yawns one of the tiny folk. "Why, it's not Miss Samantha—it's someone else!" "Yes, I'm here on a visit!" laughs Rupert.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

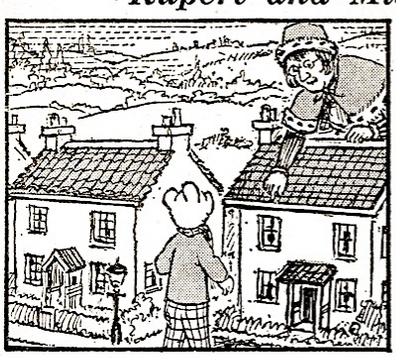
Rupert and Miss Samantha—24

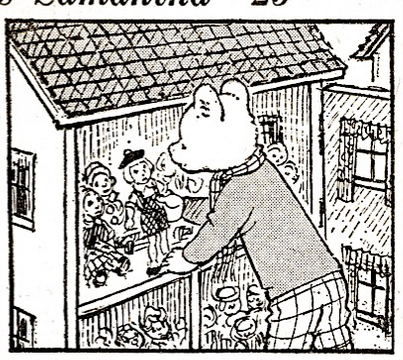


The helpers dress quickly and scamper from their houses, gathering around Miss Samantha. She unrolls a list and starts to read out ner orders: "Those in Number Five are to go to Nutchester to find out why some birthday presents haven't arrived. Number Six must go to Daisyham to repair a broken birthday toy. . . ." And so on until each helper knows his task for the day. As the little people hurry off to catch the bus Miss Samantha turns to Rupert. "Now I will hear your story," she beams. Rupert begins by telling her about Pompey's birthday and then goes on to explain how the old lady's Nutwood helper was sold to Margot by mistake.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—25





"So that's why I came to see you, Miss Samantha." Rupert ends his story and the old lady gazes at him in concern. "Dear me, your friend must have bought one of my helpers named Benjy," she says. "You see, some of them live in little villages, but others like Benjy are my scouts and send me news about birthdays." She leads Rupert to one of the tiny houses. "Benjy cannot stay with your friend," she smiles, "so we must replace him. Please look inside, little bear." Rupert obeys and as he opens the front of the house he gasps: "Why, it's filled with dolls—just dolls, not helpers!"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

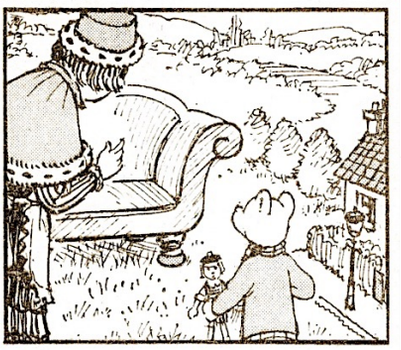
Rupert and Miss Samantha—26

Rupert picks up one of the dolls. "This one is exactly like your helper Benjy!" he exclaims. "But it's only a toy!" "All my helpers were once toys," says the old lady, "until I spoke to them in a secret way. These are spare dolls, and perhaps later on I shall make them my helpers too. Now, take that doll with you to Nutwood and exchange it for the real Benjy. But be sure your friend isn't looking." "Oh yes, I will!" promises Rupert. "Margot won't know the difference." Then Miss Samantha hands him a small sealed tube. "Give Benjy this," she says. "It will solve your worries over Pompey's birthday presents."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

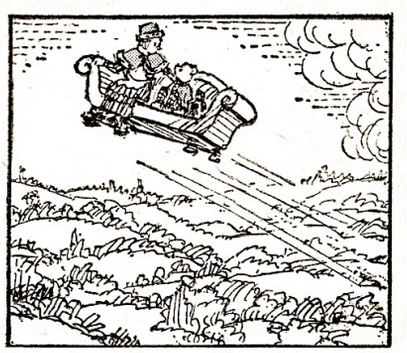
Rupert and Miss Samantha—27



Carrying the doll and the mysterious little tube, Rupert thanks Miss Samantha for her kindness. "It's lovely to know that you look after our birthdays," he says. "Now, I'll ask the driver to take me back to Nutwood." But Rupert is too late, for the busload of helpers is already moving away. "Please wait!" shouts Rupert, but his cry goes unheard. "Dearie dear, what a shame," sighs Miss Samantha. "You've missed it. There isn't another bus today. That means you won't get home. . . ." She pauses to think. ". . . unless I take you to Nutwood myself. Yes, that's what I'll do. It is out of my way, but I can spare the time."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

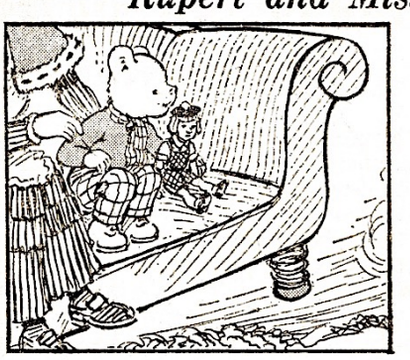
Rupert and Miss Samantha—28



Miss Samantha tells Rupert to settle himself on the sofa and then, sitting beside him, she pats one of the arm-rests, calling out: "Next stop Nutwood!" At her command the sofa leaves the ground, rising and moving through the air at gathering speed. "Ooo, do you always travel about on this?" gasps Rupert, trying to hide his nervousness. "W-we're a long way up, aren't we?" "You're perfectly safe, little bear," replies the old lady. "Just sit back and enjoy the journey. My brother Santa always uses a reindeer sleigh, of course, but I prefer my sofa. It's much more comfortable."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—29

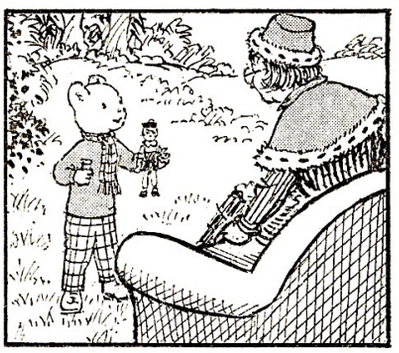


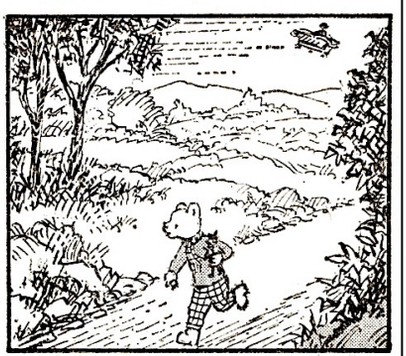
While the strange flying sofa carries the two passengers towards Nutwood, Miss Samantha chats to Rupert. "I love making little people happy on their birthdays, just as Santa loves his Christmas rounds," she says. "There are so many birthdays to look after." "Why, you must be busy all through the year!" cries Rupert. "I am, I am," agrees the old lady. "I have little villages like Dollscote in many parts, and I spend my time visiting each one in turn. Look, you are almost home," she smiles as they glimpse the tall house of the Chinese Conjurer and the village rooftops.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—30

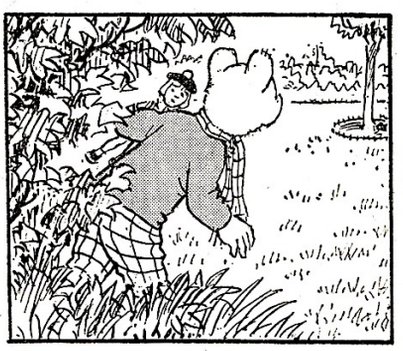




After a gentle downward glide Miss Samantha's flying sofa lands on a stretch of grass close to the village. "Thank you for that lovely trip!" laughs Rupert, jumping off the seat. "It was quicker than coming back by bus." The old lady looks pleased. "I must be on my way," she says. "Be sure to do exactly as I have told you. Goodbye, little bear." Once more she pats the sofa, utters a few soft words, and away she goes above the tree-tops and into the sky. Meanwhile, Rupert has started for the village. "There's still time to visit Margot's house before I go home," he decides. "I must exchange this doll for Benjy as soon as I can."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

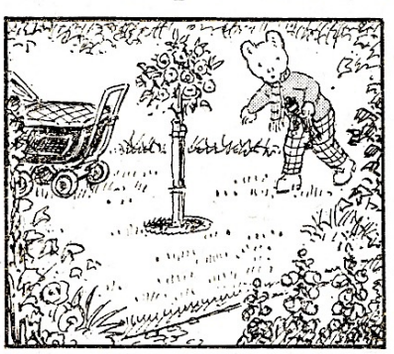
Rupert and Miss Samantha—31

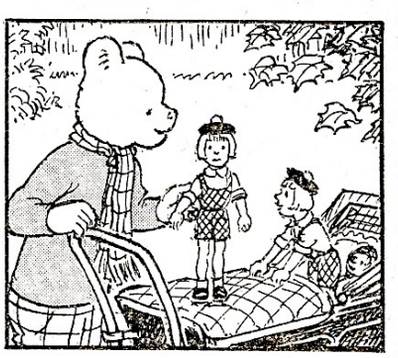


When Rupert reaches Margot's house he becomes cautious. "She mustn't see me now," he murmurs. "That would spoil everything." Peeping through a gap in the hedge he catches sight of his little friend by a flower bed. "And there's her dolls' pram," he breathes. "She has put Benjy in it." Stealthily he wriggles through the loose hedging without taking his eyes off Margot. "Oh dear, will she notice me?" he thinks as the little girl moves to another spot. Luckily, Margot still keeps her back towards him, and with soft slow steps he makes his way further into the garden.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—32



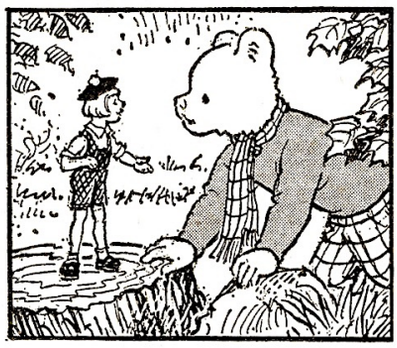


Margot's pram stands near by, but Rupert dare not let himself be heard. "Good, she is planting flowers now," he says, pausing between each step. "That will keep her busy for a while." At last he reaches the pram and at his appearance Benjy scrambles up from the covers. "So you've seen Miss Samantha," he whispers. "Yes, and she gave me this doll to put in your place," replies Rupert softly. "It's just like you, so Margot won't know the difference. Be as quick as you can but don't make a sound." And he lifts the little helper from the pram.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—33

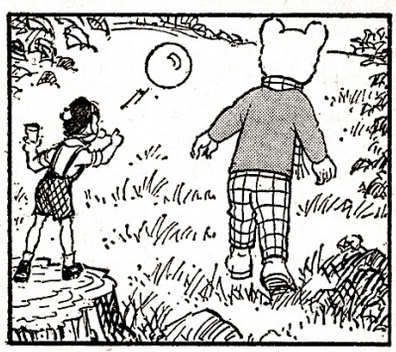


It takes Rupert only a moment to slip the doll under the pram covers, then he moves away with Benjy at his side. "We can get out through a gap in the hedge," Rupert tells the little helper. "But don't rush, we mustn't disturb Margot." The soft lawn muffles their footsteps and to Rupert's relief they reach the opening without being seen by the little girl.

Once out of the garden and away from the house, Benjy stops to thank Rupert. "You have done me a good turn," he says. "Now I'm free to get on with my birthday work." "Oh, that reminds me!" cries Rupert. "I've something for you in my pocket."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—34



"Ha, ha! How thoughtful of Miss Samantha to send me this!" Benjy chuckles when Rupert gives him the little sealed tube. "It's for making birthday bubbles." Rupert is mystified. "Birthday bubbles?" he echoes. "But Miss Samantha said it would save us from worrying about Pompey's presents." "So it will," grins Benjy. "I've known all along that you and your chums couldn't think what to buy Pompey for his birthday. Now just leave everything to me." Shaking his head in a puzzled way Rupert bids the helper goodbye, but as soon as he turns aside Benjy opens the tube and blows a large bubble with the aid of a metal ring.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

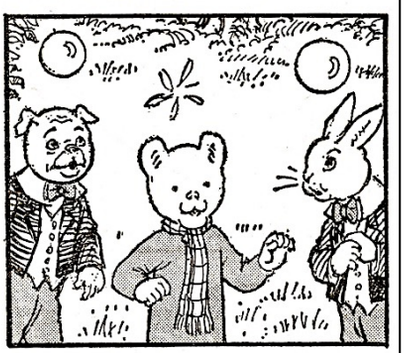
Rupert and Miss Samantha—35

Unknown to Rupert the bubble floats above his head, and it stays with him as he strolls along deep in thought. "I wonder how Benjy can help us," he muses, unaware that the little person is keeping pace with him behind the bushes. "Hey, Rupert! Have you been blowing bubbles?" The little bear stops in surprise as Algy Pug and Reggie Rabbit run to join him. "What *are* you talking about?" asks Rupert; and, looking up, he sees for the first time the bubble over his head. "Why, how did that get there?" he gasps.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

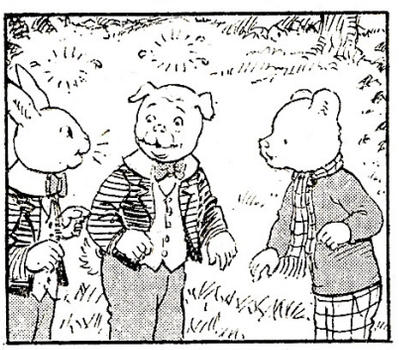
Rupert and Miss Samantha—36

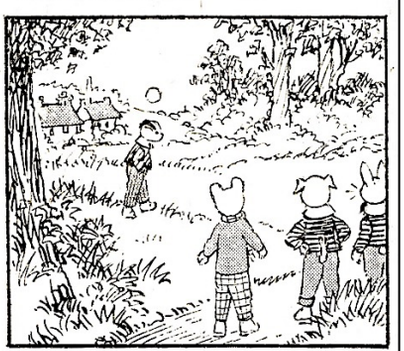


"Oh, come on, Rupert, do stop your joking!" Algy refuses to believe Rupert's surprise. "You *must* have blown the bubble yourself!" But Benjy, still hidden from the pals, has quietly climbed a bush and is blowing more bubbles. "I say!" cries Reggie suddenly. "There was only one before—now there are three!" At that moment Rupert's bubble bursts and his eyes begin to sparkle. "I've just thought of the right present for Pompey's birthday!" he exclaims. "I'll buy him a box of coloured bricks. That will be much better than a rattle."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—37

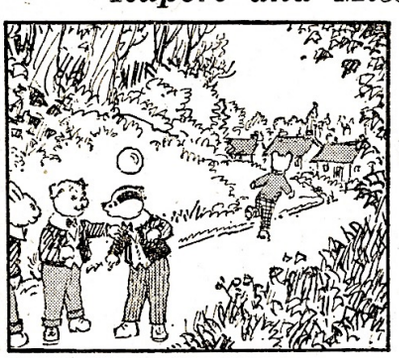


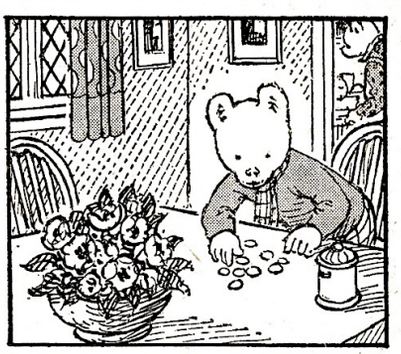


"Isn't that strange! The idea came to me just as the bubble burst!" laughs Rupert, turning to his chums. "Oh, yours have gone now!" The bubbles above Algy and Reggie disappear in tiny splashes, and the two pals begin to smile. "I've thought of a good present for Pompey!" cries Algy. "I'll give him a beaker and plate." "And I'll buy him a bag of tusk rusks!" declares Reggie. "Why didn't I think of that before!" The reason for the sudden bright notions is dawning on Rupert when Algy exclaims: "Look, here comes Bill Badger! There's a bubble following him too! He doesn't know yet!"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—38



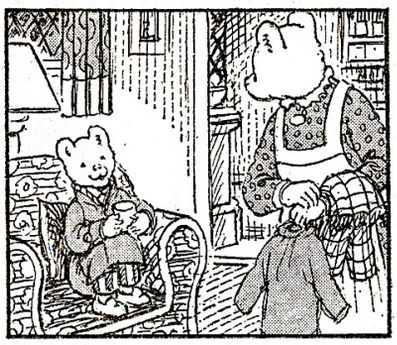


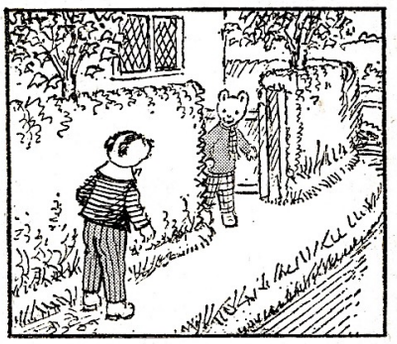
Algy and Reggie run to tell Bill of the bubble above his head, but Rupert, hearing the chimes of the village clock, decides he has been away from home long enough. "I can't stay now," he says, "though I'd like to know what will happen when Bill's bubble bursts. Let's all meet tomorrow." "Hey, what's this about?" demands the surprised Bill. "Who blew that bubble. . . ." But Rupert is already scampering away, leaving the others with the little badger. Reaching his cottage, he loses no time in opening his money-box. "There's just about enough to buy Pompey a box of bricks," he murmurs.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—39

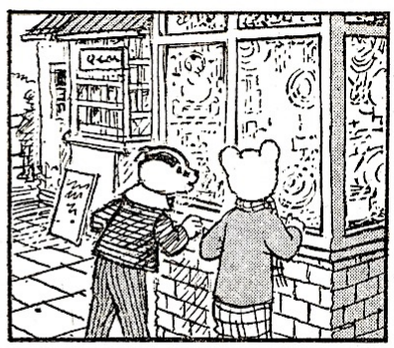




That evening Rupert and Mummy are still talking about the day's adventure. "It's quite a surprise to know that Santa Claus has a sister named Miss Samantha," smiles Mrs. Bear. "How nice to think that she looks after young people's birthdays." "And I've discovered how we get ideas for birthday presents," Rupert says. "It's done with birthday bubbles. Benjy said they would help us and they did!" Next morning, when breakfast is over, Rupert is all ready to set out to find his chums, but as he reaches the gate Bill Badger arrives. "I say!" he calls out. "Guess what I'm giving Pompey for his present!"

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

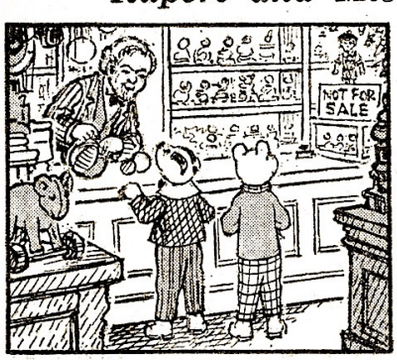
Rupert and Miss Samantha—40

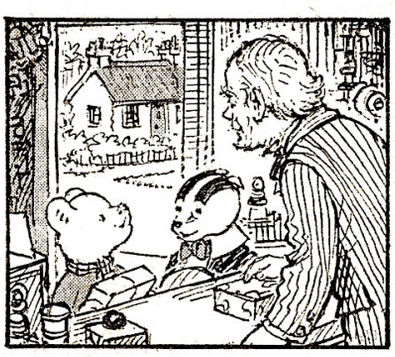


"I'm off to buy Pompey a nice woolly ball," says Bill. "I thought of it yesterday just after you left us." "Was that when your bubble burst?" asks Rupert. "Why, yes, it was," mutters Bill. "How did you know?" So on the way to the village Rupert tells his chum the story, and when Bill hears of the birthday bubbles the little badger is even more amazed. "Well, would you believe it!" he gasps. "So the bubbles gave us the ideas!" They make for the shop in New Street, and, pausing at the window, Rupert looks for Benjy. But the little helper is not in his usual place. "I was hoping he'd be back by this time," says Rupert.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—41



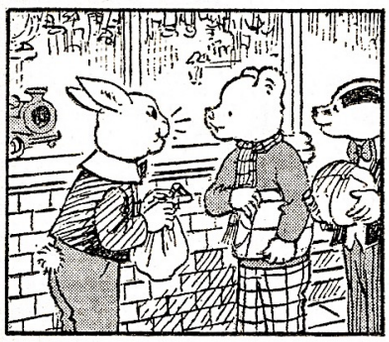


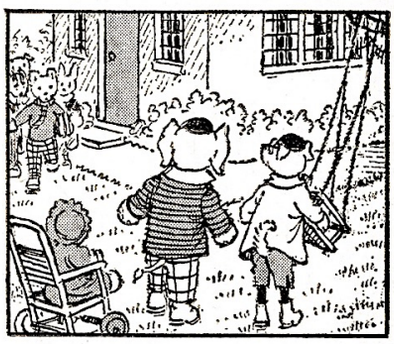
The shopkeeper is behind his counter when the chums enter to buy their gifts. And while Bill is being served, Rupert catches sight of Benjy now standing alone on a shelf with a large notice: "Not For Sale." Rupert nudges Bill and whispers: "There's the helper who blew our bubbles." When it is Rupert's turn to buy a present the shopkeeper smiles at him and says: "I see you've taken a liking to that doll. I'm afraid it's just for show. I can't tell you why, little bear. You see, it's a secret I share with someone." The shopkeeper knows nothing of Rupert's adventure the day before!

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha

Rupert and Miss Samantha—42

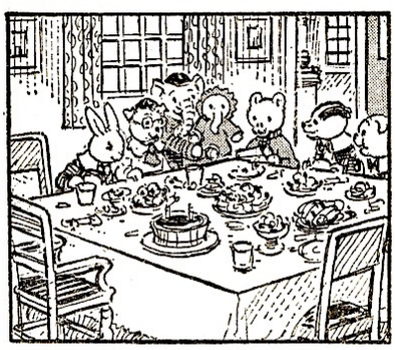




As the pals leave the shop they meet Reggie Rabbit. "I've bought the tusk rusks for Pompey," he says. "And Bingo has thought of something too. I was with him yesterday when he had a brainwave. Funnily, it happened just as one of those mysterious bubbles burst over him." "Ha, ha! So we've each had a bright idea!" laughs Rupert. "When we're all together you shall hear the whole story." The next day is warm and sunny, and in the afternoon Rupert and the others arrive for Pompey's party. They find Bingo already there, fixing up a safety swing in the garden. "It's Bingo's present to Pompey," says Edward. "He made it himself."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

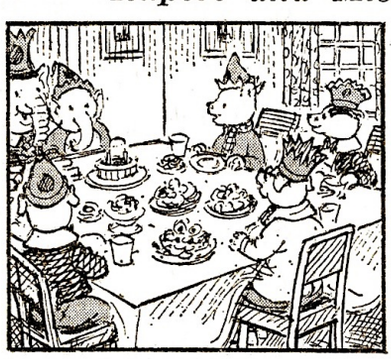
Rupert and Miss Samantha—43

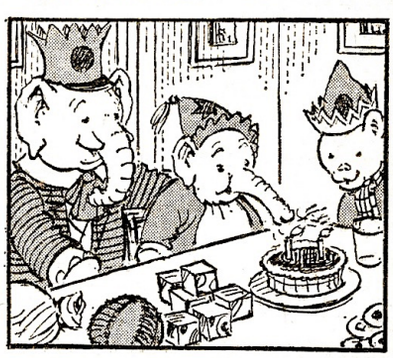


Pompey gurgles with glee when he is put in the swing and pushed to and fro. "Oh, he will enjoy this!" chuckles Edward. Near by Rupert is astounding his pals with the story of his journey to Dollscote, his meeting with Miss Samantha, and the secret of the birthday bubbles. "It's almost too wonderful to be true!" gasps Bingo. "You do discover some exciting things, Rupert." Soon Edward takes his chums indoors, where a lovely birthday spread awaits them. "See, there's the cake your Mummy made, Rupert," says Edward. "Pompey's just longing for me to light the candles."

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rupert and Miss Samantha—44





Pompey is given his birthday presents, then everyone puts on a coloured paper hat—and the party begins. "Each of you has brought him a different gift," says Edward. "You've done jolly well. How did you think of them?" "Ah, that's our secret," replies Rupert, smiling at the other pals. And while they all sing "Happy Birthday To You!" little Pompey stretches his trunk and blows out the cake candles. 'He's too young to tell us if he has made a birthday wish," says Algy. "I'm sure he has!" laughs Rupert. "That's why he is looking so pleased!"

THE END

(Another Adventure Tomorrow)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Follow Rupert

in the Nutwood Newsletter

. . AND SO TO BED.

Original Rupert text and images © Classic Media Distribution Limited/Express Newspapers.
All Rights Reserved.
This Followers' publication is a non-profit making periodical, compiled, published and ©The Followers of Rupert, 2019
Web page www.rupertbear.co.uk
Permission to reproduce any part of the publication must be obtained from:
The Secretary, John Beck, 29 Mill Road, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2RU (Tel: 01273 477555)
email – beck3861@gmail.com