

## Garé Barks' inking of Carl Barks' art

Carl Barks and Garé (née Williams) met by coincidence in 1952 at a county art show where she was in charge, years after they had met previously in 1943, when she was looking for work. They clicked at the chance meeting and started dating. On their second date, her back was injured in a car accident while Carl was driving. While she was recovering and unable to paint and do her own work, Barks suggested that she help him with his Disney stories until she was recovered, and he would pay her for doing so. In September of 1952 she inked much of "Somethin' Fishy Here", which was a rush job to fill a 5 page hole in **Uncle Scrooge** FC 456 (#2) due to 5 pages being censored from the story, "Back to the Klondike". In November, 1952, she inked parts of "Fish worms" in **Walt Disney's Comics and Stories** #153. She continued to do work for Carl. And they were married July 26, 1954.

Carl Barks, speaking years later and describing his working procedures, has been quoted as saying: "After I had the story laid out page by page, I would go back to the beginning and plan the drawing of each panel, and rough out with light blue pencil where the characters should go. Each panel had to be composed so that the characters were centralized in as tight a little group as I could get them, and so that whatever they were doing was very clear to the reader.

"Then I would letter in the final dialogue, just in blue pencil, and once I had the whole page all constructed that way in rough, then I would go back and ink these characters. I would ink each one starting with the head usually, and going down to all the different details of the body. And then I would hand the page over to my wife [Garé], who would do the lettering and ink in all the background details.

"She'd ink in all those things. And she would put in the solid blacks in the ducks' jackets, and the eyeballs, and so on. And she would hand it back to me for whatever finishing was required, like putting the little white dashes in the ducks' eyes, the highlights that showed what direction they were looking."

Garé Barks has written: "For quite a while I just did some of the blacking. I remember one of the first stories I worked on was a Gyro Gearloose in which he caught some mammoth fish [WDC 153]. Carl left all the scales for me to put on! I was so nervous because I'd never done anything that thousands and thousands of people would look at. I kept having visions of people opening these books and looking at all these scales on

the fish to see if they were in just the right places. The first few months I worked with Carl, I was almost as self-conscious as if I were up on a stage. ... I didn't always read the scripts before they were drawn, but after he'd drawn a few pages of them, I wanted to read it as Carl wrote it. I'd get interested enough so that I wanted to know what was going to happen. Sometimes Carl himself didn't even know how it was going to come out.

"Gradually I asked Carl, 'What is the worst part for you to do: What do you like least?' He said, 'What I'd like to get rid of is the lettering.' I didn't like to letter either, but I figured it would help him, so I started doing the lettering. He would rough it in with a blue pencil, and then I would letter so that it was spaced properly and in the right type of lettering."

This nails down fairly conclusively when Garé started inking backgrounds in Carl's work. This is reinforced by records of Carl's Payments for Garé's work on his stories during 1953 available at [cbarks.dk](http://cbarks.dk), which show payments for work in WDC 158-162, 164, 166, 167, 168, as well as U\$4, 5, and 6. And there is documentation for several other specific stories and those stories are listed on the [INDUCKS Garé Barks Index](#) page as having inking by Garé. Carl and Garé's interviews indicate that Garé continued to do background inking and ink the lettering as long as Carl continued to draw stories. Thus it is reasonable to conclude that she did background inking and inked lettering on every story Carl drew starting in 1954 in addition to the stories credited and otherwise documented on the [Garé Barks Index](#) page.

In addition, it is possible that Garé may have done some inking in other stories between "Somethin' Fishy Here" and "Fish worms". After she did inking on "Somethin' Fishy Here", it is possible that Garé may have done some inking on Carl's next two stories in WDC 151 & 152. After she did inking on WDC 153, she may have done some inking on WDC 154-157 and U\$FC 495 (#3). There is no known to me documentation of any of that, but given what she wrote as quoted earlier in this article, it is not unlikely that she did inking on at least some of those stories--it just isn't documented. Based on Carl's and Garé's words, it is highly likely that virtually all of Carl's drawn stories and gags after 1953 have at least some minimal inking and often much more by Garé.

There is strong visual evidence, in addition, that she started to ink the lettering on "Horseradish Ship" and did many of the pages. The lettering in all Carl's stories and gags from 1951 (before Carl and Garé became reacquainted) before "Horseradish Ship"

is basically the same. So are some of the pages in "Horseradish Ship". But the next story Barks drew is in WDC 158 and it looks significantly different from the earlier stories as do some other pages of "Horseradish Ship". So that story is where Garé started to ink the lettering. But she didn't ink the lettering on gag pages or backup "Money Tank" story in that issue of **Uncle Scrooge**. Excluding the "Money Tank" story, the lettering in every story after "Horseradish Ship" looks different from every story before it, but the later ones all look basically similar from issue to issue, though the lettering style does gradually change visibly over time. Sometimes there are noticeable changes from one issue to the next. The letter Y is lettered differently starting in WDC 164 than in 163 and earlier; and boldface lettering is different starting in WDC 182. I have examined every story from late 1951 through December, 1955. While I haven't done more than a little spot checking at this time of later years, again, based on Carl's and Garé's words, it is highly likely that virtually all of Carl's drawn stories and gags after 1955 also have Garé's inking over Carl's penciled lettering unless perhaps she was sick and Carl had to do the lettering himself.

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