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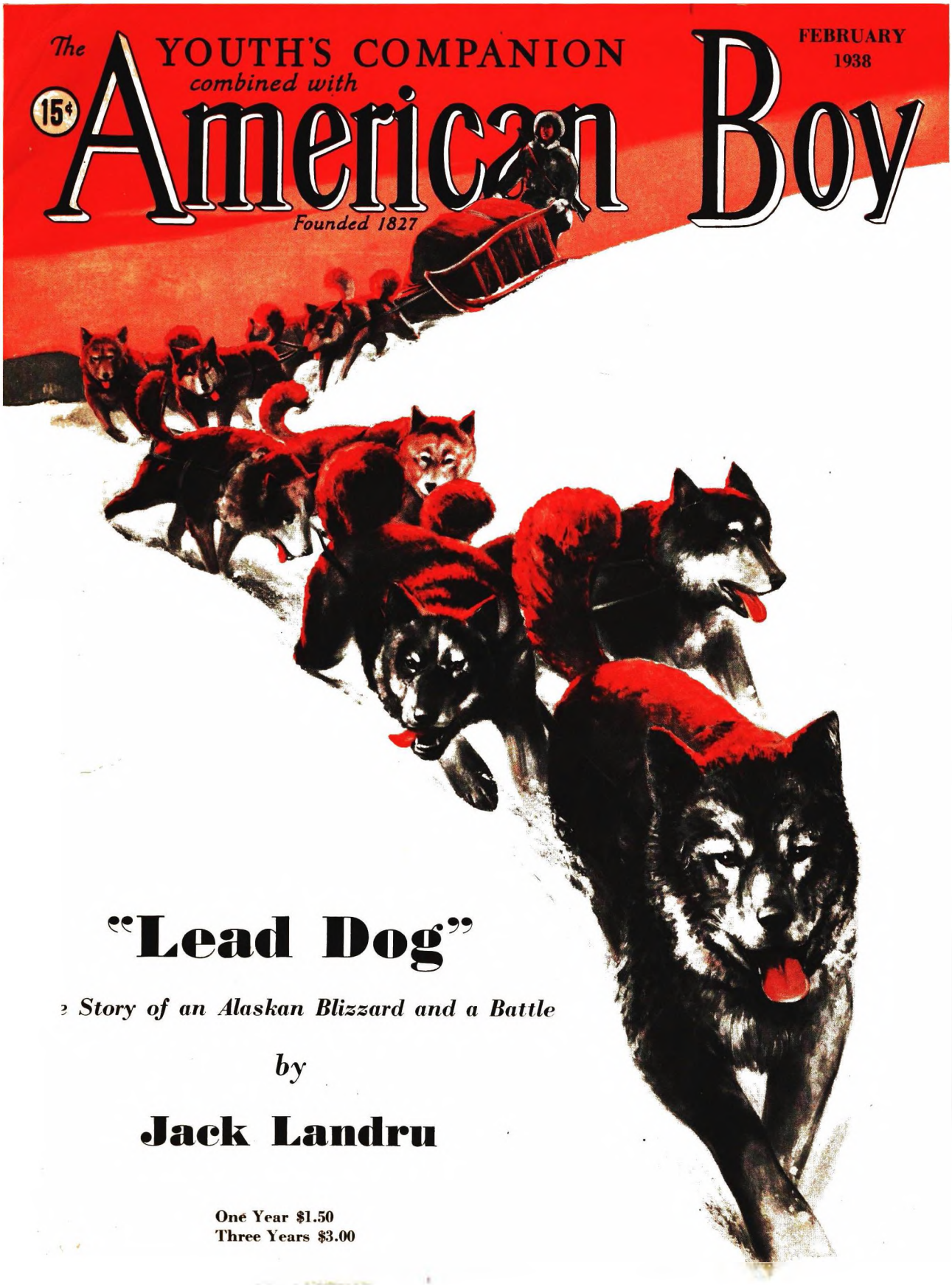

"Lead Dog"

a Story of an Alaskan Blizzard and a Battle

by

Jack Landru

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ALASKA Bound!

Join The American Boy Summer Cruise

You'll see top riders perform at Livingston, Montana.

NEXT July 2, a party of *American Boy* readers will leave Chicago for six thousand miles of fun and sightseeing in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Our Alaska Cruise is a low-cost travel vacation planned by the editors of the magazine to acquaint you with the ranch, Indian and mining life of the Rockies, the great cities of the northwest, and the rugged beauty of the famous Inside Passage to Alaska.

Willard Hildebrand, forester and famous football star, will lead the cruise.

The Cruise leader will be Willard Hildebrand, forestry expert in the U. S. Soil Conservation Service. Today Mr. Hildebrand is working to save our forests from destruction. A few years ago, wearing varsity armor, he was equally busy protecting the goal line of Michigan's national championship football teams of 1932-33. He has had four years of experience as a summer camp councillor and in 1933 toted a pack over a large part of Alaska. He knows the ways of moose, bear, and mountain sheep, and is equally conversant with the ways of opposing tackles.

Assisting Mr. Hildebrand will be David Irwin, who has spent five years in Alaska and the Arctic, and will show his Eskimo movies aboard the *Cordova*, our cruise ship. The story on page 9 tells you more about the experiences of Dave Irwin.

An experienced railroad man, a ship's doctor, and other leaders will assist Hildebrand and Irwin, and not the least of the staff will be Guto the Younger, Irwin's Husky pup, who is busy at the moment putting on weight and height at Lake Placid, New York. Guto will be almost a year old when he takes over the duties of ship's mascot—full-grown, frisky, and eager to meet you.

You will like the cruise program. A day of bronc riding at the Livingston Round-up in the shadow of the Rockies. . . . A day at Coulee Dam, gigantic water-power project in western Washington. . . . Sightseeing in Helena, Portland, Spokane, Seattle. . . . Nearly two weeks of cruising through the waterfalls and rugged peaks of southeastern Alaska, with movies, chats, deck games aboard ship. . . . Trips through canneries, herring salteries, and hospitable Alaska towns. . . . Hikes inland to the lakes, mountain streams, snowbanks, and waterfalls of Alaska's rugged shoreline. . . . It is an *American Boy*-planned trip under the magazine's personal guidance. Through co-operation with the Burlington and Northern Pacific Railroads and the Alaska Steamship Company we are able to offer the trip at a cost far below what you would have to pay if you went alone.

Full details of the cruise are in the folder. Fill out the coupon below and order your copy today.

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In The Morning Mail

CONDUCTED by PLUTO, the OFFICE PUP

The Youth's Companion, Combined With The American Boy for February, 1938. Vol. 112, No. 2. Entered as Second Class Matter Nov. 23, 1935, at the post office at Detroit, Mich., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Circulation, Business and Editorial offices: 7430 Second Blvd., Detroit, Mich. Published monthly. Copyrighted 1938 by The Syracuse Publications, Inc., Detroit, Mich. Price 15c a copy, $1.50 for one year, $3.00 for three years in the U. S., its possessions, and Canada. Elsewhere 50c a year extra.

"LOOK, boss!" Pluto said. "A letter to me from Hide-rack, Glenn Balch's collie!"

"Great," answered the editor. "Let's hear it."

"I'm not sure you're going to like it, but here goes: 'I was in the house today when my boss (Glenn Balch) opened his mail and got a look at your autographed portrait. My boss said, "Here, take a look at this if you want to see what a working dog looks like." Now, Pluto, I don't think that was exactly fair of my boss. Haven't I galloped through high water and snowstorms for him in more than twenty short stories? Didn't I let him throw me off a cliff one time with a parachute tied to me that I didn't know would open or not? Of course I'll have to admit that I've been putting on a little weight from inactivity of late, but doggone it, I'm ready to get going again any time my boss will saddle up and get started. He just keeps putting it off. Writers, I guess, are a lot like editors, Pluto. They pat themselves on the back for making you do all the work.'"

Ernest Gordon Muntz, Buffalo, N.Y., is Alaska-bound.

"Another dog getting out of hand, hey?" mumbled the editor.

"My answer to that," Pluto snorted, "is: 'Two dogs in hand aren't as good as one on the bushwhack,' or something equally funny."

The editor groaned. "If there's anything worse than puns it's puns in a scrambled axiom."

"I dare say," the Pup said, "that my supporters outnumber yours. In fact right here in my paw is a letter that will just burn you up. It's from my *very* good friend Robert Steideman of St. Louis. He says: 'The ed must be a brute. Why don't you bite him sometime? By the way, did he ever give you a vacation? Did he ever give you a raise in salary? If your answer to these questions is NO! then you should go on a strike. That would be a novelty—a dog walking up and down with a placard, and barking, "Unfair! Unfair!"'"

Joseph E. Greiner, Erie, Pa., has enrolled for the Alaska cruise.

"I guess everybody feels sympathetic to the underdog."

"Underdog? Who's an underdog?"

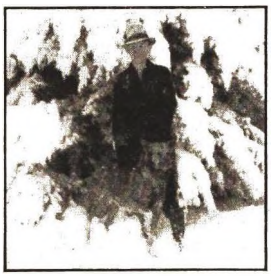
"Well, you seem to be under something there. All I can see is your ears and eyebrows, sticking above a stack of paper. What *is* all that, Pup?"

"Those are our batties," said Pluto. "And what in the world are batties?"

"Batties, for the Batty Corner. You see, the Battymaker sent out an appeal for ideas for his column, and they're coming in by the jillions. This battydrift that covers me is a mere nothing—just the overflow that came through the Battymaker's office transom. The Battymaker has been battybound in his office for three days now. I managed to get a sandwich to him early the first day, but that was before the battystorm of the afternoon. If he doesn't come out soon I suggest we send some St. Bernards after him."

"And we should by all means tell readers to send no more batties. Undoubtedly two roomsful is enough."

"Undoubtedly. Poor Battymaker—I knew him well."



As the picture indicates, Buddy Barker is from Frost, Texas. He's getting in trim for Alaska.

"SPEAKING of offices, suppose you announce the change that has taken place down the hall," suggested the editor.

"Yes, indeed. The desk Vereen Bell kept his feet on for two years is now being occupied by Frederic Nelson Litten, no less. Bell resigned his assistant managing editorship to devote his full time to fiction writing, and even now is way down in Georgia, mauling a typewriter around.

"The new editorial member needs no introduction to AMERICAN BOY readers. He comes pretty well recommended by Jimmie Rhodes of the army flying corps and, more recently, by the debonair Johnny Caruthers, ace pilot for Midcontinent Air Lines.

"Litten's association with the magazine is exactly eleven years old. His first story was 'Borrowed Legs,' a fine track yarn. In 1928 the magazine sent him to Texas army flying fields to get material for aviation stories. Litten went through all the routine of a cadet, formed permanent friendships among the aviators, and learned to fly. And subsequently Jimmie Rhodes, a flying fool who trusted his luck more than his brains, made his appearance in THE AMERICAN BOY. In 1933 Litten was sent to Haiti, where he lived in the barracks of the Marine flying corps and witnessed voodoo dances and blared over the Haitian jungles with a Marine pilot. Shortly thereafter, on the pages of THE AMERICAN BOY, Jimmie Rhodes began a series of Haitian adventures.

"In 1936 Litten created a new AMERICAN BOY character—Johnny Caruthers, a wisecracking ex-army cadet in the commercial flying game. Caruthers and his companion, Stub Macklin, did much exciting pioneer flying over Mexican jungles. Then last summer Johnny's creator went to Alaska and spent many weeks absorbing sub-arctic aviation lore, and Johnny, consequently, will return with friend Macklin in a swell new series of Alaskan flying stories. The first one, 'Pilots in Silver Shrouds,' comes in May."

Author Frederic Nelson Litten is bearing up well under his new job as assistant managing editor.

"SPEAKING of Alaska, Pup, brings to mind THE AMERICAN BOY Cruises. Did you know that Dave Irwin, Arctic explorer and cruise leader, is taking along a real Husky dog as mascot? His name is Guto the Younger."

The Pup growled. "If Irwin knows what's good for Guto, he'll keep him away from Pluto!"

"You're jealous because you weren't asked to be mascot."

"Me jealous? How funny, ha, ha," laughed the Pup out of the wrong side of his face. "Seriously, Boss, the cruise enrollment is getting away to a fine start. Here are some wide-grinned early enrollees: Buddy Barker, Frost, Texas; Joseph E. Greiner, Erie, Pa.; Ernest Gordon Muntz, Buffalo, N. Y. (first to enroll); William Engan, Rochester, N. Y.; S. Alex Parker, Jr., Maysville, Ky., and Donald Medley, Spooner, Wis.—all set for a swell time. Their pictures are on this page. There's an announcement on page 2 telling about the cruise and a story on page 9 telling about Irwin Doggonit, Boss, if that Guto can go, why can't I?"

William Engan, Rochester, N.Y., says, "Alaska, here I come!"

"You're needed here, Pup. You *know* we couldn't do without you. Who would read the mail and pull those stale puns, and get dog hair all over my topcoat?"

S. Alex Parker, Jr., of Maysville, Ky., has settled his vacation problem.

"I guess I *am* indispensable," Pluto agreed. "Well, to the mail: D. S. Mattiza of Houston, Texas, writes: 'I can stand more Claudy, Connie Morgan, Bonehead Jim, Ballads of Plu'e, Hide-rack, Litten, Pease.'

"Bob Elliott, of Tacoma, Washington, wants to congratulate us on our staff of swell illustrators. His favorites are Manning deV. Lee and Albin Henning."

"And here," the Pup continued, "is an AMERICAN BOY reader who is in luck. Bob Zimmerman of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, is the winner of nothing less than an airplane—a Taylor Cub! He won it in a contest conducted by the makers of Skyrider Shoes, announced in fall issues of THE AMERICAN BOY. All he had to do was write the last line of a limerick. How's that, Boss? Writing one line and winning an airplane?"

"Not bad. I suppose Bob is planning to become a pilot."

"As a matter of fact, he isn't. What he seems to want most is a college education. So, with the blessings of everyone he is selling his plane and applying the money on college."

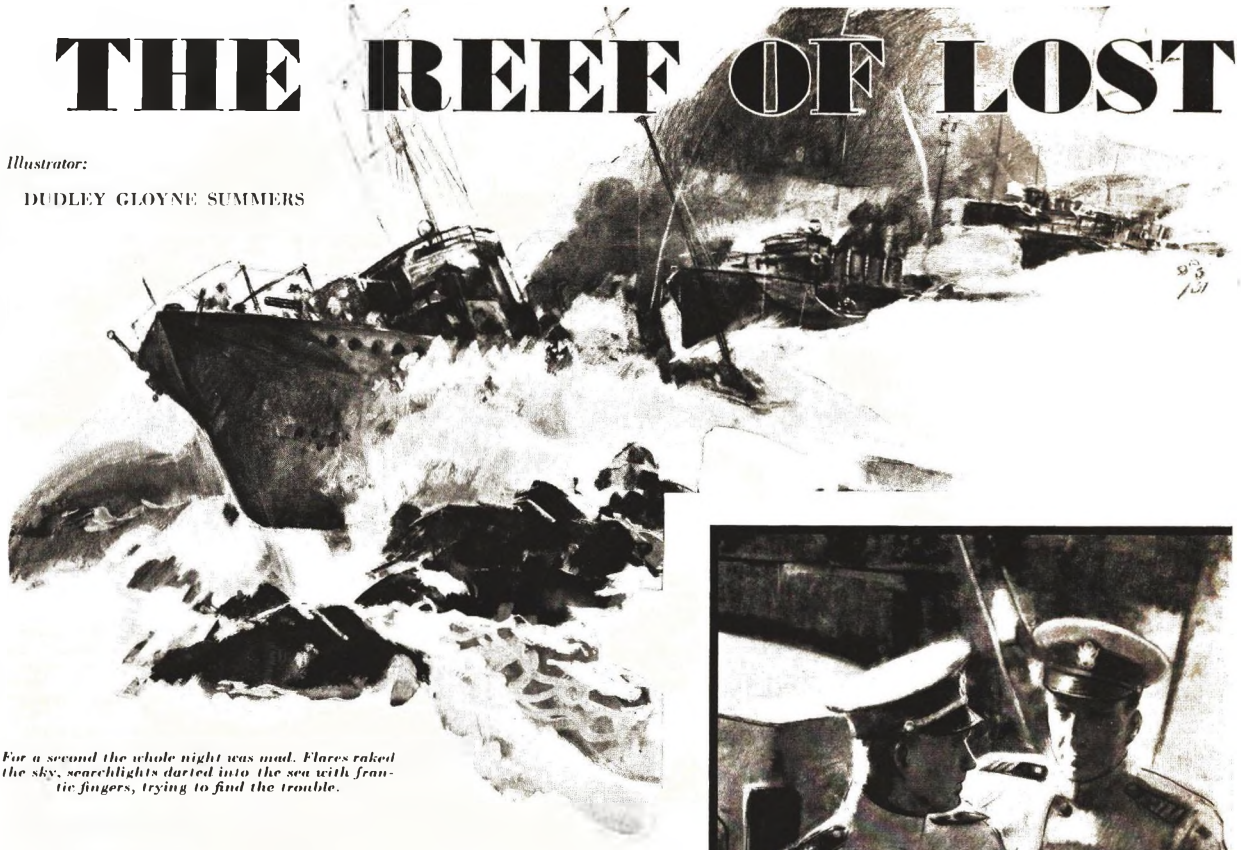
Donald Medley, Spooner, Wis., will be a cruiser.

HAVE you written Pluto yet? If not—loosen up. Don't forget that all letters quoted on this page are rewarded with Pluto's own portrait, with many exciting scenes from his adventurous life. Just write Pluto, The American Boy Office Pup, 7430 Second Blvd., Detroit, Michigan.

THE REEF OF LOST

Illustrator:

DUDLEY GLOYNE SUMMERS



For a second the whole night was mad. Flares raked the sky, searchlights darted into the sea with frantic fingers, trying to find the trouble.

OFF THE starboard beam Cuba was only a blue haze rising from the clean sea. Haiti had been below the horizon for an hour. The Atlantic stretched away from the two grey battleships, dwarfing their steel superstructures, on this August morning. The sea, after three days, was at last quiet, and the U. S. Navy could go about the business of battle practice.

The *Maryland*, towing the wooden target rafts well aft, seemed to glide over the water without touching it as the heat haze at her waterline cut a slice around her. The canvas targets, marked in black squares and stretched tight on frames, seemed pitifully small at five thousand yards and even the *Maryland* was dwarfed by the great waste of the empty sea. With nothing to mark movement and the *Texas*' speed exactly the same as the *Maryland's*, there seemed to be no motion at all, just two ships painted on the ocean with white, perfect clouds hung by strings above them.

On the firing ship, *Texas*, there seemed no movement either. Only Tommy and Cy, two white figures crouching beside the roll-and-pitch mechanisms, seemed to live on the *Texas* as her long gleaming guns swung level, their tompkins gone, their black muzzles waiting stolidly for the pressure of a man's thumb on a firing button somewhere far inside the heavy steel walls.

"What are you getting?" Cy asked, without moving his eye from the slit in the roll-factor rod.

"Pitching two. She hasn't settled to her speed yet, though," Tommy said.

Both of them jumped and, looking at each other, grinned nervously as the siren went off as a warning that at last the *Texas* was ready to start firing. "There she blows," Cy said.

Tommy nodded as he leaned to the telephone on his chest. "Spot One. Spot One," he said into the instrument, and waited until Spot One answered. "Roll and pitch—two," he said then, and looked again through the eyepiece. As the ship slid down the almost imperceptible swell the level of the eyepiece moved down from the red into the black numbers—two in the black, then slowly up again—two in the red. "Pitch two," he said.

"Roll two. Here comes Skinner," Cy said, as Lieutenant Skinner came out of the amidships hatch and walked toward them. "Wonder what he wants?"

"Nothing nice," Tommy answered, cheerfully.

"Roll and pitch?" Skinner asked.

"Roll and pitch two, sir," Tommy answered.

"Very well. Notify Spot One immediately of any change. Remain on your post until cessation of firing."

"Aye, aye, sir."

Cy watched the lieutenant hurrying aft to the hatchway. "You'd think *he* was the Navy."

"Some people get like that. "What's the dope?"

"Roll two."

"Stand by," Tommy said, as the whistle shrilled again. From inside the turrets came very dimly the orders of the turret officers and crews. Spotting telescopes swung slowly and were followed by the great tandem guns. Then a red flag broke from the aftermast of the *Maryland;* an officer's whistle cut through the silence aboard the *Texas*. For a few seconds the guns hung almost motionless from their barbettes and in the quiet a midshipman's voice cried, "Five o double o, closing slowly, sir!"

That was the last thing Tommy and Cy really heard. The next thing was not a sound but an impact. Directly above them two turret guns roared and leaped back against their recoil springs as two hundred pounds of high-

Suddenly, behind him, he heard Skinner: "Remove your insignia, Mr. Trenton, and remain in your cabin until notified."

SHIPS

by

Robb White, III

Orders! Just how far, Tommy wondered, did it pay to obey them?

Cy stepped forward, his fists clenched, his face drawn tight with rage. "Sure he did," Cy said, "and look what happened sixteen ships afloat!"

explosive powder drove thousand-pound shells out into space. For a split second the air around the two midshipmen seemed to evaporate and then it rushed at them, screaming and howling and clawing at them as though it were solid. It rolled them over and over across the deck and slammed them at last into the scuppers as the sound of the guns died slowly and left a thin screaming from the shells. Then, as though torn by invisible hands, two shreds of canvas appeared on the target—flashed out and hung waving. Behind it a huge spout of silver water leaped out of the sea, hesitated, curled and tumbled back.

Cy crawled to his hands and knees and looked at Tommy's smoke-blackened face. "Something told me we're in the wrong place," Cy said.

Tommy nodded. "Get your gear, Cy; let's move over to the other end of these guns. Keep low, though; those dopes in there might let loose another salvo."

On the other side it was much better. As each turret went off they were knocked flat by the explosion and the sudden lunging of the ship, but they weren't dragged around by the shell's suction nor blistered with smoke and powder. However, only three of the ship's turrets had been fired before Skinner came raging around the conning tower. "What are you people doing on this side?" he demanded. "Your orders are to report the roll and pitch from the port side."

"Yes, sir, but the explosion knocks us around so we can't report anything. So we set up—"

"Your orders—" Lieutenant Skinner said, unpleasantly, "are to report the roll and pitch from the port side. I do not want any further disobedience of orders."

Tommy straightened then and picked up his pitch-factor rods. "Aye, aye, sir," he said, staring at the lieutenant's angry face. Without saluting he stalked across the deck and past Number Three turret. As he set up his rods Number Four let fly a salvo which knocked him and the rods and everything else sliding across the deck. Without even looking around at Skinner who was standing watching him, Tommy set up again and began to read his factor, phoning it in after each salvo. At last Skinner, still looking displeased, went on aft and left them alone.

"Now what's the sense in that?" Cy asked, angry. "The ship rolls just as much on one side as it does on the other. He must have it in for us."

"Just orders," Tommy said. "If they order you to jump in the lake, it's orders."

"Orders or no orders—" Cy started to say, but Number Four's second salvo flattened him.

It was the last night of the cruise and the *Texas* was taking a driving off the Virginia capes when Tommy ran into Lieutenant Skinner again.

The sea was nasty, chopped and broken with the rollers coming from all points at once and seeming to concentrate on the plunging ships. A roller would catch the *Texas* across the port quarter and a pooping wave would slap under her stern; the wash from a comber would meet the breaking top of a wave pouring down across the beam until it was almost worth a man's life to walk from bow to stern topside.

Below decks, however, there was not much sign of the storm. In the engine rooms there wasn't even the sound to remind the men of the fury going on outside. With the blowers whining and the burning oil rushing into the boilers there was no room for any outside noise. The only way the black gang knew there was a storm was by the increased heat below as the deck ventilators were battened, and perhaps for some of them it was harder to keep upright on the oily steel deck plates.

Tommy knew there was a storm though. As he made his way down the steep ladders toward the engine rooms he debated whether it wouldn't be better to turn in at sick bay and not stand this last watch. But midnight was a hard time to break a substitute out of sleep and if he could hang on to his lunch for four more hours he'd be all right.

Below it was worse than he'd thought it would be. As he stood clinging to a hot steel stanchion listening to Skinner assign the watch to their posts the whole brilliantly lit, machinery-crowded space began to whirl slowly around. Flaming boiler fronts merged with one another, wheels spun, expanding and contracting in awful slow convulsions; even the deck plates rose and fell, bulging out like putty and shrinking back. Gritting his teeth, Tommy swallowed and tried to fix his attention on what Lieutenant Skinner was saying.

"You by the stanchion," Skinner said, shouting above the roar in the engine room. "Hey, punch that guy. What's the matter, is he asleep already? Oh, *you*," Skinner said, as Tommy reeled a few paces forward and stood at attention. "You're the midshipman who thinks he can run the Navy. What's your name?" Skinner leaned forward, trying to read Tommy's name on his faded jumper.

"Trenton, T. J., third class, sir," Tommy mumbled.

Skinner smiled unpleasantly. "I've got just the spot for seasick sailors. Go aft to the port main bearings and keep them oiled, Mr. Trenton."

"Aye, aye, sir," Tommy said, and stumbled aft. Some classmate put an arm around his shoulders, helping him along, but Tommy didn't have strength enough to see who it was. At last he pulled open the bulkhead door and went into the small space around the main bearings.

It was much quieter in there with the door closed. Quiet, and unbearably hot, with the smell of hot oil thick in the air. One electric light on a long cord hung from the ceiling and swayed around and around as the ship pitched and rolled. The midshipman on duty looked up weakly, his face ghastly white, as Tommy leaned against the bulkhead, panting.

"Take over," the other boy said, trying to grin. "You might as well crack your lunch now, Tommy. You can't stand it in here."

Tommy grinned too, as well as he could, and saluted. "I relieve you."

"Right. Here's the oil; give 'em a shot whenever you're able, captain," the boy said and reeled out.

For a second, while the door was open, the engine room roared at him, then it was quiet and still again. Tommy took the can and poured oil on the bearings and sat down on a hot channel beam to rest a little while. Except for the steady whine of the bearings there was not a sound. The thick steel hull kept out all noise of the raging sea, and the bulkhead drowned the engine room. But the huge, oil-covered propeller shaft turning endlessly over and over in the bearing whined with a high-pitched, nerve-racking sound that ate its way into Tommy's mind and stayed there. He stared up at the swinging light and tried not to hear the bearing, but it was insistent and shrill and awful and the light swinging around and around suddenly did things to his stomach.

TOMMY forced himself to his feet and searched on the oily deck for anything he could hold in his hands. Finding nothing he at last took off his jumper and began methodically to clean the propeller shaft with it. Feeling the huge rod of steel whirling under his hands, he wiped it fore and aft until it gleamed. Occasionally he would stop long enough to pour oil on the bearing. Then he would grab his jumper, now soaked with grease, and continue wiping the clean shaft.

For over an hour he fought his body until his jumper was nothing but an oily shred in his hands and the propeller shaft, now brilliantly polished, made him as sick as the swinging light, the smell of hot oil, the whining of the bearing. Then lying with his head over the sloshing oil and water in the bilge, Tommy gave up. With the whole place reeling and pitching, he collapsed and lay still and did not even hear the roar from the engine room as someone opened the door and came in. Even Skinner's sharp voice in the quiet place did not cut through Tommy's sick mind for a long time. Then he dragged himself to a sitting position and stared with wet eyes at the wavery figure of the lieutenant standing above him.

"Sleeping on watch, Mr. Trenton?" Skinner asked.

Tommy swallowed hard. "No, sir."

"Stand at attention when you address an officer," Skinner demanded, and waited as Tommy got somehow to his feet and stood there, his eyes glazed and unseeing and his whole body racked with nausea.

"You're on the report for

(Continued on page 33)

Your Portrait *in* Plaster

by

James Hargan

Pictures by DICKSON RECK

IF you'd like to see yourself as others see you, have a portrait mask made. A New York firm will do a splendid job for thirty-five dollars. Or, if you prefer, team up with a friend and make your own masks yourselves, for about forty cents. In a few minutes you can hang your face on the wall.

Here is a sketch of a life mask made of John Keats by Haydon in 1818. Reproduced through the courtesy of the Robert Fridenberg Gallery, New York.

First, practice on simple objects, like an ear of corn. Later, you'll find other uses for your new skill. A grocery-store burglar was once identified by a model of his teeth—while burgling he stopped a moment to bite a tempting hunk of cheese, and his teeth left an impression so accurate that a detective reproduced them in plaster. Remember that, in case you run across a piece of burglar-bitten cheese.

1. Mix seven cups of plaster of Paris—which costs two or three cents a pound—with four cups of water to make a thin paste.

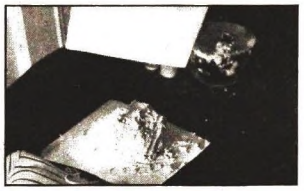
2. Put your subject on a flat couch and lubricate his face with vaseline. Protect his hair with a bathing cap.

3. Fit a cardboard ruff around his face to keep the goo from running into his ears and down the back of his neck.

4. Place breathing tubes of rubber or even macaroni in his nostrils. Cotton packing holds the tubes in place.

5. The subject may get nervous when the plaster begins to inundate him, but he should manage to have a cheerful look.

6. The plaster is applied to a depth of half an inch. If the subject swallows or blinks, the mold is distorted.



7. The chemical action of the mixture generates heat, so fanning will be appreciated by the victim. Radio music helps.

8. Try the plaster with your fingernail. If you can't make a dent, it's hard enough to be removed.

9. Lift the ruff carefully, and off it comes. Wash the subject's eyes before you let him open them.

10. Here's the negative, a face wrong side out.

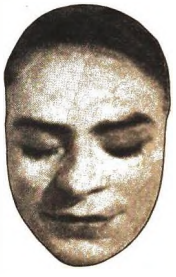
11. Coat the inside of the negative with more vaseline to prevent the mask from sticking.

12. In goes more plaster. As it hardens, inset a loop of string so that you can hang up the mask later.

13. The plaster expands as it hardens, so the mold has to be carefully chipped off.

14. A little rough in places, but the contours are right. Smooth up the mask and sculpture hair with more plaster.

15. When the mask is coated with paraffin or shellac, the job is done. Here's how the subject looks, whether he likes it or not.



Just to prove that he is willing to practice what he preaches, Artist James Hargan subjects himself to the mask-making process with this result.

A HOTHEAD ON ICE

by

Harold M. Sherman

Don O'Malley had a way of turning a hockey game into a brawl

Illustrator:
CHARLES LASALLE

DID YOU ever try to stop a hard-rubber disc, flying at you with the speed of a bullet? And did you ever get your shin bone in front of it instead of your hockey stick? And did you ever get your feet clipped out from under you by some opponent's hockey stick between your legs? Brother, I've been in some ice skirmishes that were real battles, from the opening whistle down to the final bang of the timer's gun . . . and I'm here to tell you that there's no faster, harder game on two legs than ice hockey!

And I'm also here to tell you that Don O'Malley, center on our team, was the greatest all-round guy on skates I've ever played with.

Don could do more things with a puck than a magician could do with a hat. He could baby it and roll it and spin it and jump it and do everything but make it talk . . . and the way he could bounce it off the sideboards and pick it up on the rebound, it's a wonder that little piece of punished rubber didn't yell "Ouch!" Gee, what a kick I used to get, teaming with Don—even if he was a hothead on ice.

Yep—that was his weakness. Don was cursed with a temper. When he got mad, he would play like blue blazes . . . only trouble was, he couldn't go at such crazy speed without getting penalized. Somebody was sure to get knocked down and run over or whanged against the sideboards . . . and then the referee would give Don the chase and motion him to the penalty box to cool his heels and his hot head. An ordinary penalty keeps you out of play for two minutes; a major penalty, five. Anything more serious than that sends you out for the rest of the game.

Don always had the possibility of any one or all of these penalties hanging over him, from the moment a game began.

And what made it funny—Don wasn't built like a guy who'd care to invite any more trouble than he could help. He was short and stocky, but he soon had these big boys whittled down to size.

I was the right wing on our Bedford High team and no slouch of an ice-hockey player myself, if you've got to know the truth. But I couldn't hold an unlighted candle to Don. And as far as our team was concerned, it was just Center Don O'Malley and five other fellows.

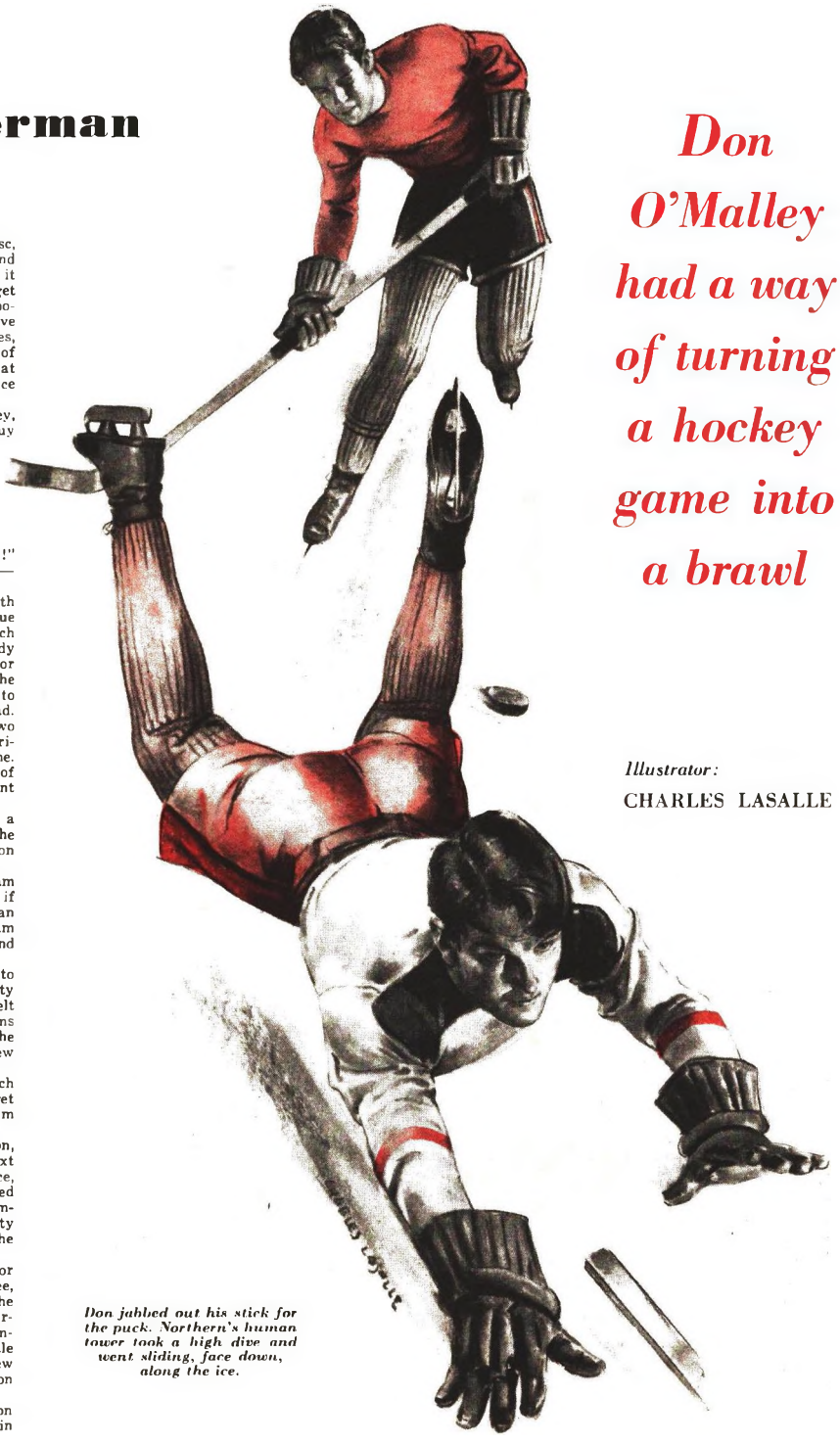
When Don was on the ice, we were plenty tough to beat . . . when he was off, either serving out a penalty or resting on the bench, our opponents always felt that they had a chance. And finally the rival teams began trying to get Don mad, so that he'd fly off the handle and be put out of the game. Then they knew their greatest threat was done for.

"You know what they're aiming at," the coach would tell Don, time and again. "Don't let 'em get you burned up. We can't afford to have our team weakened by your being on the sidelines."

"But they can't get away with that stuff!" Don, the hothead, would mutter to himself, and the next thing we'd know, he'd go streaking down the ice, bowling over the opposition, right and left, so darned rampageous that it wasn't long before he'd committed another foul and was skating for the penalty box, telling our rivals what he'd do to them when he got back on the ice.

But the last game that Don O'Malley played for the school, we *did* gang together on him. You see, we'd built up such a tremendous reputation in the four years he'd played with us that we won for ourselves a postseason game for the ice-hockey championship of the Midwest. And going into battle against this high-powered Northern outfit, we knew we were in for the fight of a lifetime, even with Don in the line-up.

"No monkey business this game!" we said to Don in the locker room beforehand. "We need you in



Don jabbed out his stick for the puck. Northern's human tower took a high dive and went sliding, face down, along the ice.

there every one of the sixty minutes. Hold that temper in check, Don. Here's the chance to end our hockey careers in a blaze of glory. . . . Let's don't spoil it!"

"If anyone spoils it, it won't be me," Don said, a bit on edge. "Why don't you guys worry about yourselves for a change? I always come through, don't I?"

"Sure," said I. "But we never met a team as good as this Northern bunch."

"What do they know about hockey?" Don scoffed. "We'll take 'em in stride. The only reason they haven't lost a game this year is because they haven't played us!"

"I wouldn't say that," warned Bill Avery, my running mate at left wing. "Northern's got two former Canadians on her team. These babies know their stuff!"

Don just laughed and gave Bill a shove as the whistle blew, calling us on the ice.

You know, playing away from your home ice against the strongest hockey team you've ever faced isn't the easiest thing in the world. Of course ice is ice . . . but the surroundings are different and you miss the big home crowd, pulling for you to win. At least that's how I felt.

Northern High rooters gave us a noisy welcome when we came skating out, and our little band of supporters tried to make themselves heard too. Everyone was pointing at our human whirlwind, like they always do, and wondering how a guy with his short and stocky build could do the things he was said to do.

Don put on a show for the crowd right off, backhanding the puck into the net from mid-ice with a spanking drive that made the eyes of Northern High team bulge. Then he skated around the rink, which had been laid out on the old baseball diamond, turning the puck up on end with his stick and rolling it. It's a neat little trick. Try it sometime.

The game got started with Don, at center, facing off against big Tom Terry—six feet three inches of muscle and brawn and Canada-trained hockey talent, and backed up by five other six-fonters. Darned if they didn't look like a college or semipro bunch!

"Either they grow them mighty big for their age around here, or you guys are so dumb you can't graduate!" I heard Don say to Tom when they met, crooking his neck to look up at Northern's man-mountain.

"It's corn-on-the-cob that does it!" Tom grinned down at him.

"That so?" kidded Don. "Well, when we get through with you, you're going to feel like you've all got corn-on-the-feet!"

Then the referee dropped the puck and the fun began. Tom Terry, with all his long reach, wasn't quick enough in that first exchange to get his stick on the puck. Quick as a hummingbird's wink, Don hooked the rubber disc and was around Tom, heading for Northern's goal. He dodged a defense man with me on one side of him and Bill Avery on the other, both of us ready to take his pass.

Gee, how that guy could skate! He veered off toward my side and I veered with him, almost to the boards . . . and he let me crash the other defense man who tried to crowd us into each other. Don squeezed through on the outside and swung around in front of the Northern net, where their goalie crouched, legs spread apart, his broad-bladed stick waving.

Don, whizzing in, fired as he came, sizzling the puck against the goalie's feet so hard that it upset him. The puck rebounded in front of the cage. Don's speed had carried him past the net by this time and he swirled around, sending up a shower of chipped ice, trying to recapture the rubber disc.

Bill Avery was in fast, though, to make the recovery, swooping in from the opposite side. As he did so, a desperate Tom Terry, who'd been cutting down center ice, came thundering through. Just as Bill reached out his stick to crack the puck at the cage he was struck from behind a terrific wallop and sent spinning. He landed on his back and slid up against the boards, just missing the iron post of the net, and Tom Terry took the puck, lacing it down the ice out of danger.

It was rough stuff. The referee's whistle blew, calling a penalty. But that wasn't enough for Don.

"You big stiff!" Don cried, skating up as the referee was waving Tom to the penalty box. "So that's the way you guys wins hockey games, is it? Wait till you get back on the ice!"

Don whirled and raised his club, and I thought to myself, "It's all over now."

"It was an accident!" Tom protested. "I couldn't stop!"

"Tell that to Sweeney!" Don raged. "Come on, gang! We know what to expect now."

"Easy, Don!" I warned, grabbing him by the arm.

"I know what I'm doing!" insisted Don, pushing me away. "And I know dirty work when I see it. He knocked us out of a sure score by that little stunt. Bill had a clear shot at the goal."

"Don . . . Don!" pleaded Bill, who'd picked himself up and skated over. "I'm okay. Maybe he *couldn't* help it. Anyhow, he's being penalized. Lay off!"

But Don followed Tom right over to the penalty box, telling him what he thought of him.

We were entitled to a face-off just a few feet in front of the goal. And with Northern High short one of their best players for two minutes, here was a chance for us to punch through an early score. But Don was too mad for his own good. He got his stick on the puck, after a fierce mix-up, but he slammed it wide of the cage. By the time we got hold of it again, Tom's penalty time was up and he came charging out on the ice to help defend his net.

"Here you are—a little of your own medicine!" said Don, and bolted into Tom, hitting him low.

Tom's six-foot-three-inch frame vaulted into the air and fell hard enough to crack the ice clear to the baseball diamond underneath.

"Off the ice, you!" ordered the referee, slapping Don on the back.

The crowd set up a terrific booing but Don didn't seem to mind. He crawled into the penalty box, apparently quite satisfied with himself. Tom Terry got to his feet, one hand to his hip, grinning. He shook a good-natured fist in Don's direction.

"That's going to cost you something!" he said.

And it did. Northern High went into action while our hockey star was forced to look on. And big Tom Terry had the extreme pleasure of putting the puck into our net on a swell angle shot, after taking a pass from one of his wings.

Score: Northern, 1; Bedford, 0.

And Don O'Malley was now fit to be tied. As for us, our worst fears were being realized. When you've got Don sore, you've got something!

Bill tried to calm the tempest.

"All right, Don—you're even now," said Bill. "I'm the guy who should've been peeved, if anybody. Come on—let's play hockey and go to town against these birds!"

"Sure I'll go to town!" Don replied, glaring daggers at Tom Terry. "You watch me!"

Northern High knew enough by this time to look out for Don. His reputation had traveled ahead of him. What he'd done so far had established him as not only a good hockey player but a bad egg on ice.

"Take care there, Donny boy!" joshed Tom, aiming to keep Don heated. "We'd hate to have to hurt you."

"You and how many other—" started Don, but he didn't have time to finish because the referee dropped the puck between them, and Don had been paying so much attention to what Tom said that he let Tom get the puck away from him.

Wow! Did Don burn at that! He sailed after Tom, who was heading down center ice toward our goal. Don skidded in close and raked out his stick, but Tom shifted just in time and kept on going.

Louie Deak, our right defense, blocked Tom's way and forced him to the side, with Don right on his trail. Tom looked around for one of his own players to pass to, but they were all covered, so he tried to get through. Meantime, Don—skating like the wind—came up fast and swooped in on Tom again. He jabbed out his stick for the puck and rammed it between Tom's legs. Northern's human tower took a high dive and went sliding, face down, along the ice.

Honest, I know Don didn't do it intentionally, but the referee pounced on him just as he recovered the free puck and was reversing himself to light out for Northern's goal.

"Penalty box for you!" barked the referee.

"What did I do?" demanded Don.

"Tripping!" said the referee. "You deliberately—"

"I did not!" raged Don. "Of all the—"

"Get going—off the ice!" ruled the referee.

"Bye, bye, black sheep!" taunted Tom, picking himself up and waving at Don. "That'll cost you some more!"

And it did. This time Northern's right wing took a pass from Tom and blazed it past our goalie for their second score.

At the end of two minutes, Don left the penalty box just in time to shoot himself in front of an advancing Northern formation and break it up—or we'd probably have been behind three goals to none instead of two.

But a two-to-nothing lead in the first period is a mighty tough hill to climb. All a strong hockey team has to do, ordinarily, is to *(Continued on page 22)*

DAVID IRWIN, who spent five adventurous years in the Arctic, is one of the leaders on the American Boy's Alaska Cruise. He will show his movies aboard ship and bring his Husky dog, Guto, as mascot.

On My Own

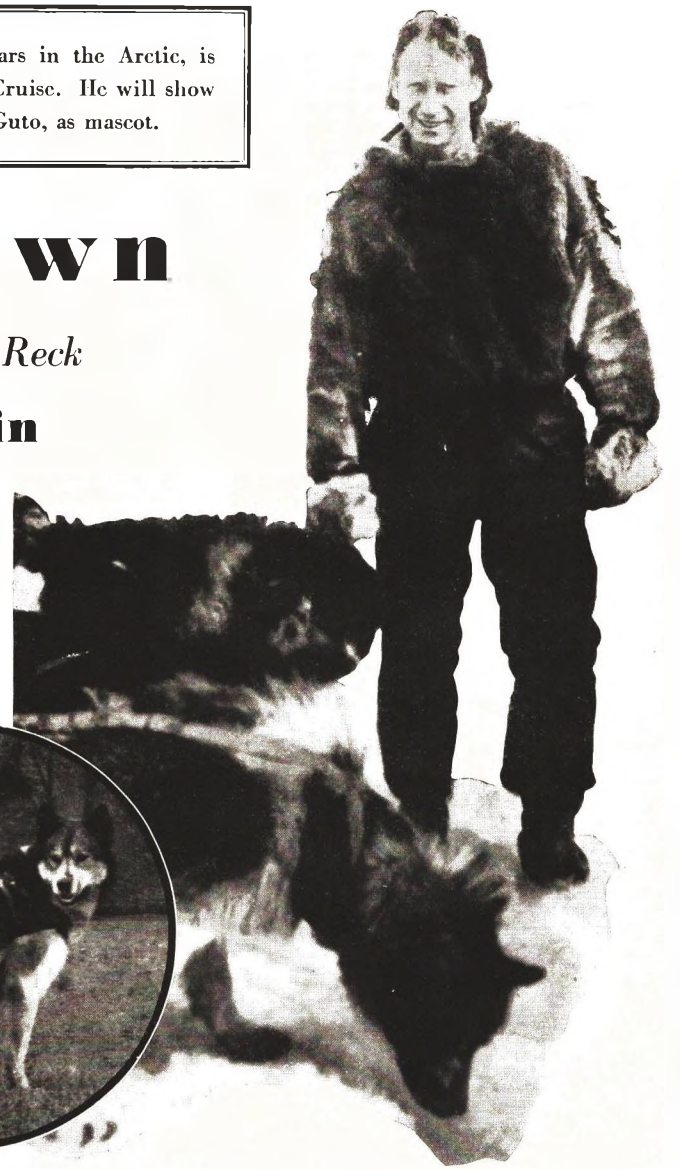
as told to Franklin M. Reck

by **David Irwin**

I SENSED that something was wrong the moment I joined Andy Bahr's camp at the mouth of the Canning River on the shore of the Arctic Ocean. The trouble was that I was young and I didn't know Eskimos. I had run a trapline for three years in the Endicott Mountains, and thought I knew all about the Arctic. I thought I could stand any hardship the North had to offer. The greatest ambition of my life was to join Andy Bahr's reindeer drive into Canada, get an outfit of dogs and equipment, and go on to some real exploring of my own. But my failure to understand Eskimo nature almost undid me at the start.

Andy himself was glad to add me to his staff of herders. I talked to him in his reindeer-skin tent, and looked at him with a great deal of awe as we talked. He was gaunt and wasted with pneumonia, but he knew as much about reindeer as any man living. Of all men in the North, he had been picked to drive 3,000 head of reindeer from Kotzebue, on the west coast of Alaska, to the Mackenzie Delta in Canada. He had been three years on the trail; he had gone through blizzards and near-starvation; his herders had deserted and his reindeers stampeded. But somehow he had got through the worst of it. The easiest half of the long trek was ahead.

"I'm short-handed," he told me. "I'll pay you $500 for a year's work."



Parka, dungarees, mukluks and mitts protected Dave from Polar weather.

Below: He brought Guto, his lead dog, back to the States.

Left: Allen, one of Bahr's Eskimo herdsmen, drove a reindeer sled in the great trek.

Below: Reindeer for the starving Eskimos of Canada, being driven across the top of the world!

That suited me fine. Five hundred was enough money for an outfit. I could buy a movie camera, take pictures of Eskimo life, ramble over the Arctic and go back to the States with some swell pictures and a fund of information on the North that would somehow earn me a living.

But when I met the chief herder, an Eskimo named Tom Wood—all of Andy's Eskimos took on white names—I had my first inkling that my future wasn't as bright as I thought it was. All six of the herders greeted me with the Eskimo handshake—one single pump of the arm. None of them showed any enthusiasm, but Tom was plainly hostile. Tom didn't want me around.

I sensed it and decided to show them, from the start, that I could stand the North as well as a native. It was August and the herd was grazing in a valley some miles away where the moss grew thick. There they would stay until the snows came and the mucky ground grew hard enough for traveling, and then we would start east for our destination. Meanwhile men and dogs had to keep the herd together, and I was sent out with an Eskimo named Allen to take my turn. Allen tried to walk the legs off me and I stayed with him. Score one to nothing, my favor.

Stray caribou gave me a chance to boost the score to two to nothing. The arctic caribou is similar to the reindeer but he's wild, and when he gets into a band of deer he's likely to lead them away. The remedy was to shoot any caribou we found associating with the herd.

While on duty one day I shot a caribou, skinned him, managed to hoist the two hundred pounds of carcass to my shoulder and stagger a quarter of a mile into camp. It was a feat of

(Continued on page 29)

LEAD DOG

by

Jack Landru

Illustrator:
FREDERICK MACHETANZ

JIMMIE O'BRIEN examined his racing dogs and their worn old harness carefully, tightening a cinch here, adjusting a collar more comfortably there, soothing a nervous young dog with low voice and steady hand. Half of the sports-conscious town of Fairbanks was gathered to witness the start of this annual Alaskan dog-racing classic. But in spite of the excited crowd pressing around him, in spite of all this race meant to him, Jimmie forced himself to move casually. Nothing must upset his sensitive, high-strung Siberian dogs. They must not sense that he was seething with an inner excitement kin to desperation.

Jimmie came to Jack Frost, his lead dog, a splendid big fellow whose spotless fur rivaled the surrounding snow in whiteness, whose eyes were the deep, clean blue of glacier ice. Jack Frost jumped up, laying his huge, snow-country paws on Jimmie's shoulders. Jimmie rubbed the base of the dog's ears, and heard Jackie's growling rumble of appreciation.

"If I don't win this race . . ." the phrase kept hammering through Jimmie's mind.

He turned up his running mate. The packed snow trail was wide enough to accommodate only two teams abreast, a brace starting each half hour. Jimmie and Russell Slade had drawn the two tickets for 8:30 a.m.

"Would you look at the one-hoss shay the kid's got his dogs hooked to?" Slade grinned. "If it wasn't for the bailing wire, that sled would be a pile of kindling wood, already split."

Several of the spectators laughed, not unkindly. Jimmie thought, "They don't know I'm racing to keep my team. They don't know my dad's mine is worked out, and that he needs a grubstake to prospect. He couldn't get a job, at his age. I've *got* to win this race, and send him the prize money. Or else—sell my dogs."

Jimmie tried not to think about that. Jackie, his leader—well, Jimmie had raised him from a fuzzy little beady-eyed pup.

Jimmie forced himself to relax. He moved to the back of his woefully patched little racing sled, gripped the curved Russian back in tight hands. One minute to go!

The starter, revolver in one hand and stop watch in the other, started counting the seconds. Jackie pranced nervously.

Russell Slade had uncoiled an eight-foot blacksnake, as the braided rawhide dog whips are called. He held the whip lightly, watching the starter. The starter's gun barked.

"All right, Jackie!" Jimmie shouted. His nine dogs leaped joyously ahead. At the same instant Russell Slade brought his whip up over his head in the showy double crack. Slade's whip-trained team jumped ahead in terror. The sixty-mile race was on.

The two teams raced side by side over the flag-marked course, up the Chena River, over the steep north bank, and onto the long, heart-breaking road to the turning point at Chatanika, thirty miles to the north.

A mile from town, beyond sight of the last of the spectators who had taken up stands along the course, Slade stopped popping his whip harmlessly above his head. He was beyond witnesses to an infringement of the rigid rule forbidding cruelty to dogs during a race, out where he could drive as he pleased. He snapped the biting leather into first one dog and then another, yelling at them. Slowly but steadily his terrorized team pulled ahead of Jimmie's dogs.

"He drives like a cheechako with his first team,"

Wind ballooned Jimmie's clothes and filled them with snow. He struggled to get his breath in air that seemed solid, as if he were breathing feathers.

Jimmie muttered, disgusted, "instead of a racer."

Jimmie did not worry about falling behind Slade's team. He knew that Slade's dogs were running from fear, running with fear-cramped muscles, using up energy out of all proportion to their speed. His own dogs were running because they were born to race, trained to it, and loved it. And in the long grind ahead, stamina would count for as much as speed.

Once their first burst of twenty-mile-an-hour speed wore off, Jimmie kept his dogs at a steady, ground-eating clip. The first twenty miles of the course were hilly, with gentle grades, the kind of trail that can tire dogs rapidly or leave them fresh, depending on the driver. Jimmie spared his team as much as possible. He ran behind the sled uphill, and rode the runners down. Where the going was level, he used a trick he had learned from an Indian, riding a runner with one foot, kicking the sled smoothly forward with the other.

Jimmie had found out all he could about the men and teams he was racing against. He knew that minutes, even seconds, might mark the difference between winner and loser.

Karl Jensen, an experienced racer from Nome, and an Indian, Johnny Big-Fox, who had won the race last year, had drawn tickets for 8:00 o'clock and so had started first. Thus they would be handicapped by having no freshly broken trail, no scent of teams ahead to excite their dogs and spur them on.

As for Russell Slade, Jimmie felt that he was abusing his dogs too much at the beginning for them to remain in the running on the home stretch, where races are won or lost. True, the man had an unsavory reputation for trickiness. But his only chance to win would be to have a confederate supply him with fresh dogs on the way, and the teams were too carefully checked at the beginning and finish of the race for that. Jimmie discounted Slade as a competitor.

Martin Deeping, the only other entrant, would start at 9:00 o'clock. Deeping was considered almost a sure winner. He would have a trail both fresh and "greased," as the mushers put it—a trail on which the night's sandy top frost was worn slick by the four teams ahead of him.

Thus, though the field was the smallest in years, many entrants having had to drop out when distemper struck their kennels, three of the best teams in Alaska were entered in addition to Slade's and Jimmie's teams.

Twenty miles north of Fairbanks, at the foot of the lofty mountain known locally as the Summit, Jimmie stopped his team, letting them gulp cooling snow and catch their breath for the five-mile climb. In practice runs Jimmie had discovered at which points along the course a short rest would do his dogs the most good, and had planned exactly how he would run the race. Hardened by many a long winter trail, the dogs tackled the pull as if fresh from a week's rest. Jimmie ran behind the sled at an experienced dogtrot, chin in, leaning loosely forward, Indian style, so that the weight of his body pulled him ahead and took the strain from his legs.

His lungs aching from the cold but his body clammy with sweat, he pulled up in front of the roadhouse on the crest of the Summit. He was greeted by the old sourdough stationed there to send telephone reports of the racers to Fairbanks.

"Say, boy, you're doing fine!" he exclaimed in frank surprise.

Jimmie grinned his appreciation, but wasted no breath in conversation.

"That fellow Slade left here fifteen minutes ago—but his dogs looked all in. Jensen made it to the Summit in ten minutes less than your time, and his dogs was like yours—plenty of pep left. The Indian took a minute longer than you and his dogs weren't in as good shape as yours. Keep it up and you'll make a good showing.

"Look out for tricks, though," the sourdough went on warningly. "Someone in this race is out to win, and he don't care how. I just got a call from Fox. Martin Deeping had to quit the race there—his dogs all took sick. Not one or two dogs, but *all* of them! Didn't show up until he'd run them a ways—sounds like someone slipped them an extra big feed and some castor oil last night. If we ever catch the skunk that did it. . . ."

But Jimmie was out of earshot before the threat was finished.

So someone had doped Deeping's dogs! There had never been a hint of scandal about the Dog Derby before, never any but the best of sportsmanship shown by the racers.

Jimmie was too busy to wonder long about this astounding new development. He rode with one foot on the brake down the other side of the Summit Hill, keeping the dogs at a natural lope, making them pull just a little so that the strain would be on their toughened pulling muscles, not on their little-used "braking" muscles. He wanted to win, but not at the cost of permanently stiffened dogs.

He kept vigilant watch of his dogs as he rode down the hill. Nine young and healthy racing dogs can get into surprising mix-ups if their high spirits are not properly directed. Jimmie spoke sharply to a pair of pups who were playing a sort of king-of-the-dump game, trying to shoulder each other off the packed trail. He laughed at a dog who was trying to bite the tail of the dog ahead of him. He exploded a fluffy ball of snow over the head of a surprised pup who wasn't pulling an ounce, even though he was smart enough to pull the slack out of his trace; his plumed tail, curled smartly over his back when it should have drooped like a wolf's, was dead give-away.

Near the foot of the hill Jimmie met Jensen, who had made the turn beyond Chatanika. As the teams met and passed on the narrow trail, the dogs snarled savagely, threatening a massacre; but they were too well trained to so much as snap at each other in harness. The drivers grinned and wished each other good luck.

Two miles from Chatanika Jimmie met the Indian, Johnny Big-Fox. Jimmie thought Johnny's leader looked a little lame.

Jimmie was proud of his team as they swept triumphantly through the little town of Chatanika. The team rounded a corner so fast that the sled with Jimmie on it swung wide like the end of a crack-the-whip, grazing the high board sidewalk on the far side of the street. Every dog in the team was showing off.

He met Slade on the wide main street. Slade had turned and was heading back up the hill. That meant he had gained a good twenty-five minutes on Jimmie; but his dogs looked all in.

Jimmie's team whirled through town, circled, and came back, following the flag-marked course. Crowds lined the sidewalks, setting up a roar of frantically shouted advice and encouragement. Then Jimmie headed back up Summit Hill, once more in silence, save for the creak of the *(Continued on page 31)*

The Missing MacAndrew

Inspector Kelly takes a lonely road with a hunter riding hot on his trail

Illustrator: GRATTAN CONDON

Donn nodded, picked up the papers, and asked quietly, "It's my case?"

by

Thomson Burtis

and

Inspector Frank J. Ellis

IMMIGRATION Inspector Donn Kelly opened the door of the office he shared with his closest friend, and stopped in his tracks.

"Well, toss me around!" he grinned. "Did you sleep here, Hal, or are you hiding from somebody? It's a cinch nobody'd ever look for you in your own office this early in the morning."

Inspector Hal Peters elevated his long, sharp nose, settled himself deeper in his chair, and recrossed his very lengthy legs on top of his desk.

"I'm trying to figure out how to find a needle in a haystack," he stated savagely. "That Hindu I ran down got all the fortunetellers in town to put up his three-thousand-buck bail—and now he's gone where the wild wind bloweth as it listeth from whither to whence."

Obviously, Inspector Hal Peters, as new to his title and responsibilities at twenty-five as Donn was at twenty-one, was regarding the world and his Hindu problem through jaundiced eyes. But the hatless Donn, who persisted in looking like a college boy instead of a highly efficient federal expert, dropped into his own chair with a heartless grin. After all, he had a problem too.

"I hear tell that finding a needle in a haystack is a hard job," he drawled. "But did you ever think that finding a given sprig of hay in a haystack would be still harder?"

Hal glanced at the fair-haired, deeply tanned youngster suspiciously.

"When you start perpetrating epigrams, and prowling through the parts of speech, I get wary," he declared. "How come you get back from leave feeling so philosophical?"

"Because it's about time for something to turn up on Humphrey Baldwin." Donn tilted in his chair. "Now there's a man who takes finding. All you've got to find is a funny-looking Hindu who could be spotted in a football crowd. But I've got to locate an ordinary young fellow who looks like anybody else and may not even have a British accent! I wish the chief would get in so I could—"

As though in direct answer, the telephone rang, and the chief's voice summoned him. Donn thrust back the instrument and dashed for the door.

When he reached the office of Inspector-in-charge Ramsay, he found Captain Jack Naylor, the head detective of the Los Angeles police force, talking with his chief. They both greeted him cordially.

"Sit down, Donn," Ramsay invited him. "How did you find your father?"

"Swell, thanks. He'll be out of the hospital in a few days, and after a couple of weeks out in the sun at some beach he'll be back on the job."

"And we certainly need him." Ramsay turned to Naylor. "Donn's father is regional director of the department, you know."

Naylor nodded.

"Well, Donn," Ramsay went on, "after a month it looks as though it's time to break that Humphrey Baldwin case—if we can."

Donn settled a little lower in his chair, and a sudden subtle change came over him. His eyes became opaque and his ordinarily mobile face seemed congealed into a mask. He asked no question. He merely stared at his chief, prepared to absorb every word.

Ramsay patted a pile of papers on his desk. "Here's all the correspondence for you to study. Everything came in while you were away. And I've just learned from Captain Naylor that Humphrey Baldwin may be a much bigger fish to catch than we thought. Now let's bring you both up to date."

He took off his glasses and started polishing them as he turned to Naylor. "As you may know, Captain, Donn here discovered some weeks ago that a man who smoked Mallard cigarets had been smuggled into this country, probably disguised as a Chinese. This man is undoubtedly Humphrey Baldwin. And back in England, before he was sent to jail for a big confidence game, he was suspected of having a hand in a big jewel robbery. You can tell Donn your problem."

"It's just this," the heavy-set Naylor said slowly. "There have been three big jewel robberies in the last two weeks, and we all agree the thief isn't anybody we ever heard about. All crooks have certain ways of operating. Each guy's got a trademark, so to speak. We've been in touch with police all over the country, and nobody recognizes the way this bird works.

"So we figure he's a foreigner. But he's so expert he can't be an amateur. A foreign thief couldn't get into this country legally. So it's pretty clear that somewhere here in California there's a foreign crook or maybe a gang of foreign crooks, all speaking English well enough so they're not conspicuous, who either got smuggled into this country or came in on forged papers."

"And when you read the file on Baldwin, Donn," Ramsay put in, "you'll see why it's important that we nab him and see what makes him tick."

"You see, Inspector," Naylor said, "this Baldwin may be a logical suspect, but we haven't anything on him, and England doesn't want him for any crime—he's done his bit in Dartmoor and is in the clear. You immigration guys can arrest him. We can't."

Donn got to his feet. "But you'd be justified in giving us full co-operation in running him down, wouldn't you?"

"I'll say! Even if he didn't stage these jewel robberies, we don't want a bird like that loose in this country."

Donn nodded, picked up the papers Ramsay had shoved toward him, and asked quietly, "It's my case?"

"Your case," nodded Ramsay. "You broke it originally, and you are entitled to finish it."

"Very well, sir." And Donn walked out without further conversation, wholly intent on the trail.

Hal had left in search of his Hindu; so Donn found himself alone in the office. He removed his sport coat, loosened his tie, and instructed the operator not to ring his telephone. Settling himself deep in his chair, he went through the correspondence and dossier concerning Mr. Humphrey Baldwin, sheet by sheet.

He read reports from British and American consuls in out-of-the-way places and in famous centers like New York and Mexico City; reports from Scotland Yard, the headmaster of Harrow, and the warden of Dartmoor prison in England; reports from undercover men of all nationalities in Mexico. All had contributed their bit, if only to say, "No information." A world-wide machine that Donn had started into operation nearly a month before was pouring its grist into his trained mind.

When he had finished his reading he sat motionless for a time. Clearly, Humphrey Baldwin was a menace—a menace at large. Presently Donn reached for the telephone and asked for a number. Then he asked for Mr. Vernon Carr-Smythe.

"Can you get down to the office within an hour?" he inquired. "Good. I'll wait for you."

After that he called Ramsay. "I'd better go to Mexico, Chief," he said evenly. "And I'll tell you why."

Which he did, and Ramsay approved. Then Donn called Captain Naylor.

"Captain," he said, "this Humphrey Baldwin likes Bacardi cocktails, those thick English mutton chops, and theatrical people. There are two places in this country where there are a lot of English people, theatrical people making fairly big money, suitable victims for a confidence man or jewel thief. Those two places are New York and Hollywood. How about combing the restaurants and bars for a young Englishman who likes the things I've mentioned—you boys working out here and the New York detectives out there?"

"Consider it done!"

"You've got his description?"

"And photograph."

"O. K. I'm going to nose around in Mexico." Donn hung up and sat still, deep in thought.

He was aroused by the announcement that Mr. Vernon Carr-Smythe had arrived. In a moment, round-faced, tweed-clad Carr-Smythe swung in jauntily. A "bit" actor in pictures, he served occasionally as one of the immigration service's best undercover men. His picture assignments at $50 a day were far too infrequent to cover the cost of his well-tailored tweeds.

He listened casually to Donn's statement, studied Baldwin's photograph, and shook his head.

"Not an idea for you at the moment, old lad," he stated. "I don't know of a single strange Britisher in town. But next Sunday Charles Aubrey is giving a party for the Australian cricket team. They're passing through on their way from England. The whole British colony will be there. I can wangle you an invitation. You might turn up something there, you know."

"Good. I'll be there. You've got all the information?"

"Right. I'll nose around and see what I can turn up. Cheerio!" And Mr. Vernon Carr-Smythe departed.

An hour later, Donn was in a sheriff's airplane, borrowed for the occasion, bound for Tia Juana. Reaching that dusty little border town, he made his way to the office of the American consul.

Jim Kane, a fat and perspiring young man, greeted Donn with joy. "I haven't had anybody to talk to for weeks!" he declared. "Sit down and—"

"No time, Jim. Now listen carefully. I'm on the trail of an Englishman named Humphrey Baldwin. Back in England, after he got out of jail, he had one respectable friend who stuck by him."

Donn paused, got out his notes, and went on: "This friend was named Charlton MacAndrew. MacAndrew and Baldwin left England together, on passports visaed for Cuba. They left Cuba together, with visas for Mexico. Now get this. A study of our Mexican reports shows that Charlton MacAndrew arrived in Tampico—*but there is no record that Humphrey Baldwin ever used his legal passport to come into Mexico!* He got here, though, and was smuggled from here to Los Angeles!"

Jim Kane stared at Donn. "Baldwin's smart enough to know that an ex-convict couldn't get a visa into the States, and smart enough to know you boys have a record of every foreigner that comes into Mexico," he said slowly. "So he smuggled into Mexico and then into the States."

"And I'm getting interested in what happened to his bosom friend, MacAndrew," Donn went on. "Look up your records and see whether you visaed his passport for the States."

"By Jove, I believe I remember the name!" snapped Kane. "Wait a minute." He hurried off.

In less than two minutes he strode back into the private office. "MacAndrew was in here for a visa seven weeks ago, and I gave it to him," he said.

"What did he look like?"

"Tall, very blond, in his late thirties."

"Tallies with our description of him," Donn nodded. "Now let's call the border and see what we can find out."

He telephoned Inspector Young, in charge of the border patrol. Through Young's hands passed every traveler from Tia Juana into the States. A brief conversation, and Donn hung up the telephone. His eyes, clouded with thought, stared into Jim Kane's.

"Charlton MacAndrew never entered the States!" he said slowly. "He came to you, had a perfectly legal passport—and then never used it!"

"Changed his mind," suggested Kane.

"Or had it changed for him maybe. Know where he stayed while he was here?"

"No, but he'd probably stay at Caliente."

Donn nodded, and called a taxi. At the huge resort hotel in Agua Caliente he sought out the manager, and soon had the record of Mr. Charlton MacAndrew. He had checked out of the hotel on the day he had had his passport visaed.

"Did he have any friend who was with him a good deal?" Donn asked.

The middle-aged manager studied the youthful-looking inspector. "I would scarcely know about that," he said.

Donn's grin flashed out briefly. "I forgot that the manager of one of the great hotels of the world doesn't clean up his own rooms!" Then, grave again, he went on, "I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to let me interview every one of your employees who might have had any contact with Mr. MacAndrew."

"With pleasure. Consider my office your own."

For hour after hour, until nearly midnight, the tanned young man with the crisp blond hair talked to doormen, bellboys, waiters, clerks, cashiers, housemaids. Slowly he built up a picture of the quiet, very British MacAndrew—and at last, near midnight, came the break he needed.

"Yes, sir," said a middle-aged bellboy. "I carried his bag myself, and Juan and I put him in a taxi."

"Where is Juan?"

"He is off today, but he lives in Tia Juana."

Within a few minutes Donn was looking up Juan, and finally ran him down in a little coffee shop where he was gossiping with friends.

"The taxi of Miguel Romanes," the handsome young Mexican said positively. "We now find Miguel at home, I have no doubt."

They did find the taxi driver at home, and Donn questioned him in perfect Spanish.

"*Si, señor*—the *señor* hired me to drive him to Encino."

"Was he alone?" Donn asked tensely.

"When we leave the hotel, yes. Then in Tia Juana, on the corner opposite the Silver Dollar saloon, we pick up his friend."

"What did his friend look like?"

"Black hair and eyes, *señor*—"

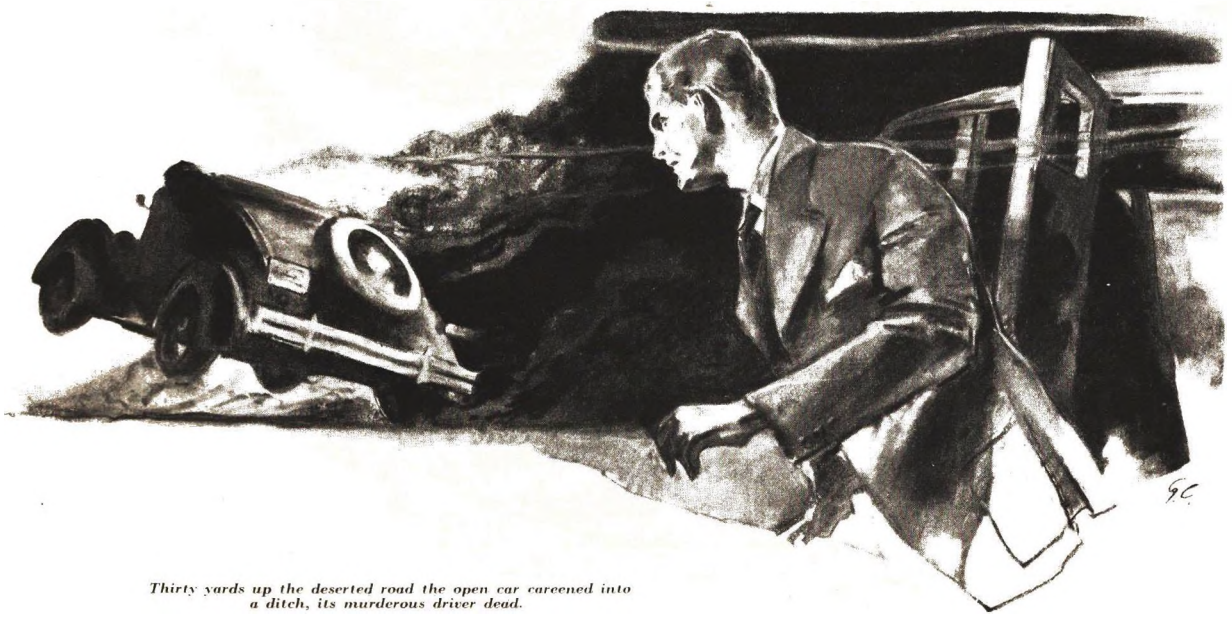
"English too?"

"I think so. His teeth were bad—wide apart, and stuck out like those of a gopher."

Donn took a long breath. "And you left them both at the big hotel in Encino?"

"*Si, señor.*"

(Continued on page 25)



Thirty yards up the deserted road the open car careened into a ditch, its murderous driver dead.

FUNNY THINGS HAPPEN

by

Vereen Bell

TO JOHNNY AMES, the swamp had become ominous and evil. It hadn't ever seemed that way to him before. Unfriendly, yes; and even openly hostile. But now there was an aura of unclean danger; pervading the swamp like a fog was the green smell of death.

The only hounds that were left lay sheltered from the eternal rain under the overturned boat, where they licked their mysterious wounds. Of the three, one was now valueless for the rest of the man hunt, with his right front leg gone as if by a cleaver. Johnny would have put him out of his pain with a pistol shot, but young Bill Yeager, with his queer intuitive knowledge of animals, had worked over the hound. Presently it had ceased to moan, and now lay quiet. Bill said he'd seen many a good three-legged hound. And after all, they *were* his dogs. What there was left of them, that is. There had been seven. Now there were three.

Maher, the dapper federal man who was directing the hunt for the last payroll bandit fugitive, got up and walked through the rain to the dogs for the tenth time. He knelt by the big red hound and examined the slashes again.

"Well," he said finally, "if it wasn't a gator or bear, it *must* have been a panther."

Johnny shook his head soberly. "Ain't no panthers in this swamp. Least I never saw one, nor a deer carcass left by one."

"Me either," said Bill Yeager.

They sat under the lean-to. The leaves and ground were sodden, but still the rain fell. One week ago there had been a terrific rainstorm, and it seemed that the heavens must have been torn open then and hadn't been patched up since.

"There's *something* in this swamp, I tell you," Johnny said, "that don't belong here. Maybe something that don't belong *nowhere*."

Maher looked at him. "Banshees, perhaps. Boogers. Voodoo nonsense! Use your brain for a change, Ames."

That stung. "I ain't said anything about boogers," Johnny answered slowly. So Maher wanted brains. Well, before this trip was over, he'd see *real* brainwork. "I only say that what's loose in this swamp don't belong here, and it don't. But there's a lot of things in these backwoods that cain't be explained. It ain't voodoo, though, and it ain't nonsense."

"For instance?"

"Well, you take Bill Yeager's mama. She was a foresight woman. Every calamity that ever came to the swamp country she had dreamed about beforehand—and *told* it beforehand."

"Has Bill got supernatural powers too?" Maher asked Johnny, sardonically.

Johnny didn't smile. "I ain't saying he has. But ain't you ever noticed anything about the way he handles animals?"

"No," Maher said, flatly.

Johnny pointed to the overturned boat, where the hound that had just come in on three legs lay in quiet sleep. The other two hounds shivered and licked their wounds fretfully.

"You think the turpentine Bill poured on that dog's leg made him go to sleep like that?" Johnny asked.

Maher stared at the dog for a moment. "Well—" he began. "It does seem funny."

"There's somethin' about me that they like," Bill said. "The Lord gave me the four-footed creatures for my friends."

The rain stopped for a few moments, and they began making preparations for sleep. They adjusted

Illustrator:

W. MACRAE GILLIES

Bill stared at the kicking body of the animal which lay at his feet. "You didn't have to shoot," he said, dazedly. "He wouldn't have hurt me."

the tarpaulin that was spread over the lean-to, and spaded the sodden leaves out of the drainage trenches.

One of the hounds limped painfully out from under the boat. Suddenly he raised his torn muzzle to the black, wet sky overhead and released an eerie, mournful howl that chilled the men.

"What's got into him?" Maher shivered.

"He's seen somethin' today, that dog," Bill Yeager said thoughtfully.

For a minute no one spoke. Then Johnny Ames said: "And whatever it is, *we'll* see it tomorrow."

All his life Bill Yeager had been fascinated by animals, and they by him. There seemed to be a strange kinship between them.

Johnny, who had always liked Bill, knew the story of the time Bill went to Atlanta to try to get a job with a private zoo. The owners had been unimpressed by Bill's qualifications. It happened, though, that a young wildcat had outgrown a collar which, unknown to anybody, had been around his neck since he was a kitten. The collar was slowly throttling the animal. Bill tied his pocketknife on a broom handle and walked into the cage, talking quietly. He walked to within three feet of the cat—closer than any man should—and began maneuvering the knife under the tight collar. The wildcat remained motionless, spitting angrily enough, but otherwise not objecting to Bill's ministrations. The collar was snicked off.

They probably would have hired Bill at once if he hadn't offered to prove his ability further by entering the cage of a Russian bear. They realized then, with some regret, that Bill was a bit cracked, and tactfully proceeded to get rid of him.

Bill came back and moved to Homerville, where he opened a filling station on the Valdosta-Waycross highway. Around the filling station he built a little zoo of his own, consisting mostly of swamp animals that he caught with his remarkable hounds.

Two days after the terrific rainstorm, Johnny visited Bill Yeager. He told him about the bandit chase. The capture of Shiapacasse, last of the original payroll bandits who had come into Okefenokee to hide out, had left only the suave McElvey to be caught. Shiapacasse's loose tongue had confirmed their suspicions about McElvey—that he was the secret brains of the criminal organization, and furthermore, in a position to use political levers which practically immunized the gang from the law. It was essential that he be caught.

But the swamp had closed about McElvey, and only a few obscure traces of him revealed themselves to Johnny Ames and Maher. Then Johnny remembered Bill Yeager's hounds, several of which could be used for man trailing. Bill agreed to join the hunt.

"Bring your bedroll, some old newspapers, and plenty of potatoes," Johnny told him. "You ain't got a high-power rifle, have you?"

Bill shook his head. "Never had use for one. Buckshot'll pull down anything I run up against yet."

"Well, it don't matter. I just thought we might have one along. McElvey's got a Springfield, I think, and might get to sniping at us from way off. But he oughta be out of bullets long before now, if he's been eatin' any meat."

With two boats and seven dogs, Maher and Yeager and Johnny had gone back up to Big Water to try to pick up the trail of McElvey. The dogs were going to be well tested, because the swamp was full of high water, in some places being at flood proportions.

The dogs picked up the trail easily enough and followed it all morning through the sloughs and treacherous lowlands of the Big Water country. At the beginning of the gloomy afternoon they lost the dogs. Then after a while they heard a dim confusion of animal sounds that meant conflict of some sort. But the sounds faded before they could locate them. About dark the three surviving hounds straggled into camp, badly and mysteriously torn.

There could be no normal explanation for whatever it was the dogs had met. The only certainty was that the thing blocked the trail that led to McElvey. And so, as Johnny said, whatever it was, they would see it soon.

They broke camp early the next day. While Johnny was wrapping the cooking implements in pieces of a week-old Atlanta newspaper, a small item caught his eye: "McELVEY STILL UNCAUGHT. *Bandit Higher-up Eludes G-Men in Swamp.* Waycross, January 12.—(AP)—Federal agents here today revealed that they were no closer to McElvey, alleged bandit head man, who escaped them in the swamp last week. Doubtless the floodwaters following yesterday's storm will hinder the man hunt, but the agents would give no indication as to the plans.

"The hunt is being carried on from several points about the eight hundred-square-mile Okefenokee swamp. The federal men are assisted by county officers."

"Did you see this, Maher?" Johnny called. But Maher had gone to the boat with a load of equipment. Johnny tore the piece out roughly and put it into his pocket, intending to show it to the federal man later.

They got into the boats and in an hour were across the stretch of water to the next highland. The dogs, today, were going to run on leash so that if they again met the mysterious thing which had fought them before, they could not attack or give chase.

By the time the fog-veiled sun was overhead, the dogs had reached the upper end of the island. Along the trail Johnny saw occasional splotches of brown stain—blood left yesterday by the returning wounded dogs.

Finally they came to an overflow of shallow floodwater that cut the island in half, making it two islands instead of one.

"Well," Johnny said solemnly, pointing to the trees beyond the floodwater, "our booger, whatever he is, ought to be right across yonder. And McElvey, if the booger didn't git *him*, is somewhere not far beyond."

"That looks like bogland beyond the island," Maher said.

"Bogland? I'll say it's bogland. A rabbit couldn't walk across it," Johnny answered.

"Then how could McElvey be in there?"

Johnny got down on his hands and knees and drew a map in the mud with a stick. The big island had near its north end a pond. Beyond the pond a small tip of land extended into the treacherous marsh country. That small tip, Johnny explained, might hide McElvey.

They moved around behind the screen of brush at the edge of the floodwater, started across it, and tried to decide what they should do. A foggy stillness flattened over the trees, broken only by the far-off melancholy cries of a whooping crane. Johnny listened and felt his flesh crawl.

Finally Maher brought out his binoculars. "Take these and see if there's anything on the upper half of the island. You can climb these straight cypresses. I can't."

Johnny took the glasses and walked south until he found a suitably high tree. He climbed into the thin upper branches.

The glasses were powerful. Slowly he moved his gaze over the upper half of the island. When he came to the tip of upland that projected into the bogs, he stopped.

The ground, because of the thick brush and the intervening trees, was of course not visible. He looked for a tendril of smoke that might mean McElvey, but there was none. Suddenly a spot of white caught Johnny's eye. He moved the glasses a bit and the white spot leaped into clarity. It was a piece of cloth, tied to a limb in the top of a sweetgum sapling. At first Johnny thought that it might have been accidentally torn from somebody's clothes, but a closer examination plainly showed the knot that held it. That white cloth was there to be seen.

Presently, when the puzzle became no clearer, he returned his gaze to the island. Along the west side, not far from the water's edge, lay what was left of a dog. Even as Johnny watched there was a flurry

of black wings, and a buzzard dropped with slow grace beside the carcass. Its wings still half open, the bird took a hop closer. Then abruptly it leaped into the air and flew away rapidly. Something had alarmed the buzzard. Something in those bushes.

A tremor shook Johnny so that the terrain in the glasses raced. Then he steadied, and fastened his gaze on the bushes beside the dog. He watched, nervously. Once he thought the top of a bush swayed slightly, but that might have been done by the wind.

Slowly he realized that there was color in the bushes. Color, when in the lifelessness of winter there should be only brown and drab grays. Dimly, then, he was able to make out a great form of something, lying there in the brush.

Johnny felt slightly faint. He tried to figure what the creature could be. But there was no animal in Okefenokee Swamp that could lie in the brush and not be completely camouflaged.

"See anything?" Maher called from the bottom of the tree.

Johnny began his descent. "I think I saw some kind of animal, but I'm not sure. I'll describe it to Bill. He'll know what it is."

But Bill was as puzzled as he was. "You got me stumped, Johnny. Yellow. You sure it wasn't kind of tawny, like a panther? Or maybe it was a bright-colored bird."

"Wasn't no panther, and wasn't no bird," Johnny said, stubbornly. "Say, somebody's hung a big white rag in a tree up on the tip. Reckon what that means?"

Maher said, "McElvey might've put that rag there."

"What for?"

"How should I know that?" Maher asked. "Maybe as a signal for an accomplice somewhere. Maybe—" he faced around "—as a flag of surrender!"

"*What?*" Johnny said. "What would he surrender for?"

"Listen," Maher said, and you could tell his shrewd, trained mind was clicking like a linotype machine, "what's to keep McElvey from being at bay there, with the animal waiting on this side for him and the boglands on the other? He heard the dogs yesterday, and knows we're after him. Wouldn't he want us to find him before the animal, whatever it is, got him?"

Johnny breathed a soft exclamation. "You might have hit it, Maher. But I'll believe McElvey's surrender when I see it. Maybe it's a trap. Where do we go from here?"

They sat down in the cover of the woods and stared at the ground in worried thought. Johnny reached in his pocket for his knife. He could think better when he was whittling. Something crumpled under his exploring hand—and he remembered the newspaper item he had torn out before leaving camp. He smoothed the paper and gave it to Maher.

"I see by the papers," Johnny said, "that McElvey ain't been caught yet."

Maher grunted. He didn't like newspapers. Closemouthed himself, he said they were always "blabbing." He read the item, then turned it over to see what newspaper the piece was from. "The papers always tell the criminal where the police are," he said, "but they never tell the police where the criminal is. If—" He stopped, held the scrap of paper closer, looking at the reverse side. "Hey, it looks like we've found something! A circus train jumped the track last week below Fargo and dumped a tiger's cage into the floodwater. They took for granted the animal drowned. But—" Maher, his eyes flashing, glanced toward the ominous brush to the north of them.

"Lemme see that paper!" Johnny exclaimed.

Maher held it out. "This was on the other side of the piece about McElvey. You tore about a third of it. But the facts are plain enough."

Johnny looked up, and jerked his thumb north. "It fits," he said excitedly.

"A *trained* tiger," gasped Bill, reading the paper.

"He don't seem very trained to me," Johnny grunted. "He's trying to get at McElvey over there, ain't he?"

"You don't even know McElvey's there," Bill argued.

"Then how come the dogs go right straight that way every time?" Johnny asked. He turned to Maher. "You got any ideas about a gun, Maher? A forty-five or buckshot neither one will do to use on a big thing like a tiger."

"Kill him?" Bill exclaimed. "That critter's worth money! The railroad'll give us eight or nine hundred dollars. Or if it won't, I'll put him in my zoo."

He seized Johnny's clothes frantically as the swamp boy's dead weight began sliding out of his arms to the ground, leaving him exposed to Maher's fire.

TIGER LOST FR CIRCUS

JACKSONVILLE, Jan. Included in damages railroad company by Circuses following thei their train two days ago Georgia, was the loss of tiger. The amount asked The animal was less some of the others, it Bought to be trained the famous animal acts liked circus life, and tame him. He seemed The animal's caged into the swirling flood undermined the trestle wreck. The tiger drowned instantly, they

Johnny and Maher looked at each other. "How are you going to get hold of him?" Maher asked, finally.

"He's trained, ain't he?" Bill asked. "We'll build a cypress cage and put him in it. Or if he won't go, we'll dig a pit trap for him. He ain't going to hurt nobody, no matter what. Cain't you see he's marooned over there hisself? He ain't after McElvey."

"Better forget it, Bill," Johnny said. When Bill looked away Johnny tapped his forehead significantly, and Maher nodded.

The question of ammunition with which to confront a full-grown tiger was really a pretty serious one. If they were attacked, a .45 pistol bullet or a load of buckshot would bring the animal down, but either would have to be used at such close range that a man could easily be killed before the ammunition did its work.

Night fell, and still the problem had not been solved. Johnny had a feeling Maher was more worried about McElvey than he was about the tiger.

"Say," Johnny Ames said suddenly. So it was brainwork Maher wanted. "What's wrong with making a shotgun slug? One of those will bring down an elephant."

He explained. His idea was to make a mold by pushing an empty shell case into the earth. Then pour melted bird shot into the hole and let it cool into a solid slug. And finally, reload a shell with the big slug and an extra supply of powder.

"It'll kill the tiger," Maher said, "if it doesn't blow you up first."

"I'll chance it," Johnny said.

The first difficulty was getting a fire hot enough to melt the lead. They finally managed it by fanning hot coals. The shot from half a dozen shells was melted and poured into the three neat holes in the ground. While the lead was cooling in the molds, they took the wadding from the shells and added powder to each charge.

With a pocketknife the rough slugs were cut smooth and bullet-shaped, then fitted into the waiting shells. During the work, Bill Yeager sulked. Occasionally he came into the edge of the firelight and watched moodily. Then he'd go back into the chill darkness and after a while they'd hear him mumbling, talking to his hounds.

"I'll be glad when we're rid of that fellow," Maher said uneasily. "Listen to him talking to those dogs as if they were human."

"Bill's okay. Just sort of nutty sometimes," said Johnny, complacently, without looking up. He shoved the three shells into his ancient pump gun. "*Now* we got a gun that'll bring down *anything*."

"It ought to, with those cannonballs in it," Maher admitted.

"Would you say I used my head, Maher?" Johnny asked, "or what?"

"Brainwork shows up in the clutch, Ames," Maher answered. "Anybody can think when there's no time limit."

Later, as he lay there huddled in his sleeping bag, Johnny's thoughts raced with the excitement of a hunter who is about to meet new and dangerous game. And beyond the tiger was McElvey—even more dangerous. But there was a remnant of that cold foreboding. Once there was a short coughing roar from the upper part of the island. The swamp seemed strangely clammy and evil. Johnny shivered, and turned over.

Some time later he sleepily noticed that Bill Yeager's bedroll was still empty. He listened, and heard Bill's voice out in the darkness where he sat with his hounds.

"Sort of nutty, sometimes," Johnny thought drowsily.

The gray of dawn was filtering down through the trees when a hard hand shook Johnny violently.

(Continued on page 27)

For two hours he slipped through the trees, until he was as close to the huge, golden dome as the protecting trees would take him.

DOOM TOCSIN

Somewhere in the dim world below earth Ted knew that Alan was a prisoner. Was he, perhaps, in a tomb of gold?

by

Carl H. Claudy

The Preceding Chapters

TOO much gold! That was what had started Dr. Alan Kane, forward-looking young scientist, and Ted Dolliver, experienced explorer, off on a secret expedition to the unknown interior of the earth. Too much gold—some ruthless gold runner was endangering the world with a flood of gold, adroitly distributing it through financial channels.

"We must stop him!" said Alan Kane. "If we don't, he'll upset civilization itself. Millions will suffer!"

Ted, incredulous at first, soon realized Alan was right. If gold became common, the world would have to find a new monetary base, and before one could be established, business would be ruined, no one would have work, children would be starving on the streets.

The high specific gravity of the alien gold convinced Alan that it came from no known source. He argued that it must come from the interior of the earth. He felt sure the earth was hollow, for in experimenting he had found that a dreadful far-off ringing—like the deadly ringing of a great bell—came from the depths of the earth. They must explore those depths!

Equipped with protective suits and helmets, he and Ted flew down a wild polar passage in the *Narwhal*, brought the great flying boat down on the waters of a weirdly lighted country, and set out to explore Subterrestria with a queer little skin-clad native as their guide.

Was the odd little Jamish a friend or an enemy? A friend, Alan thought. Ted doubted it.

One thing was certain—Jamish feared the bell as much as they did. Yet he went with them to find it.

Find it they must. The bell rang at regular intervals. That meant it was rung by sentient beings, and these beings doubtless served the gold runner. By watching them, the two daring invaders might learn the source of the gold.

The gold runner himself was an ominous unknown quantity, but surely someone from their own known world—a .38 shell Ted had found proved that. It seemed possible that he was the brutal Hall Steenerson Ted had encountered in Africa. Whoever he was, he was a menace.

But he was only one of the dangers that threatened them. There was the dreadful ringing of the bell—after each interval of it, Alan and Ted wondered if they could survive another. There were gigantic alligatorlike animals lurking in the ghastly forest. They fought off one. Could they fight off the next?

It was after they had come on the lifeless, horribly shrunken body of another native that they heard the sound of a plane in the sky overhead. The gold runner's plane, of course! And Jamish was pointing wildly up to the sky, then to the shrunken body, then to the unknown region that held the bell. Over and over he pointed. What could he mean?

Neither Alan nor Ted understood. "Evidently he connects them all—bell and plane and death. . . ."

The ending of this odd byplay was as unexpected as its beginning. As the sound of the invisible plane died to silence, Jamish crept forward and again offered the bitter root to his companions. When they refused he crawled back to the bier of his dead companion, curled up, and apparently was instantly asleep.

There was little more sleep for the two explorers.

Chapter Eight

WITH a heavy heart Ted packed their simple camp equipment the next "morning," as he called it. He loved adventure but he could not close his eyes to the curious danger of a sound that slew like a blow, a terror like none on the earth he had explored. Dangers queer and uncanny he had experienced with Alan many times, but never before one that he could not grasp with his mind. No psychologist, Ted gave too little consideration to the effect on his mind of the strange lights, substitutes for night and day; the oddity of the fauna; the ceaseless mist and the heavy air; the queer unreality of the little figure which had attached itself to them.

He thought of the great "map" he had seen unrolled through the torn ceiling of mist. It haunted him, that single glimpse of the far other side of the hollow ball he and Alan had invaded. It was unnatural to have earth above as well as underfoot. Suppose that hidden seven thousand-mile arch of earth should fall? It couldn't, of course; the earth was thousands, millions of years old. But—earth overhead, especially if hidden, is terrifying. . . .

Ted felt uneasy, and hated himself for it. Somewhat irritably he watched Alan warm their breakfast from the remains of the animal Jamish had contributed to their larder. A vagrant breeze blew out the alcohol flame.

"Matches?" inquired Alan.

"In that box under the stove," snapped Ted.

"Queer place for them, isn't it?" Alan spoke absently.

"Best place—then you don't have to hunt, and you always see them when you pack the stove!" snorted Ted. "Can't I ever teach you—"

Jamish put warning fingers to his lips and rose, fitting a stone from the pouch at his waist into a groove on the rod he carried. Through the trees wandered an animal with slender deerlike legs but the large head and predatory look of a lion or tiger. Ted raised his gun but before he could shoot, Jamish's queer weapon whished forward, and though the distance was a good forty yards, the beast gave a yelp of pain, then staggered and fell in his tracks!

"So *that's* what he carries—an arm-actuated catapult!" cried Ted, in admiration. "Some marksman!"

He approached the fallen animal cautiously, but Jamish's aim had been true—the creature's skull was smashed. Recalling the other animal with a broken skull, Ted was reverent before so uncanny a throwing skill. The deer-legged animal was quite dead, and its flesh, even though it might be highly flavored, promised a pleasant change from condensed food and the remains of the beaverlike animal.

They were soon trekking forward again, into the unknown country ahead. Ted was still uneasy. He thought he heard sounds, stealthy movements. A dozen times he halted his companions to listen—but only the whisper of the breeze was in the trees. Jamish acted slightly bored; his attitude seemed to say, "if anything's to be heard, I'll hear it." But Ted still distrusted the little wild man.

Abruptly they reached the end of the tree belt and looked out over a level plain several miles wide. On the far side of it, rising to a height of at least five hundred feet, a round dome gleamed, oddly yellow even under the spectral tints of the ceaselessly changing hues.

Jamish fell to his knees and bowed his head thrice in the dirt. Then he pointed and made a soft imitation of the tocsin.

"The bell!" cried Alan. "Great heavens, Ted, look at the size of it."

"I'm looking!" answered Ted grimly. "What's it made of?"

"What did we come for?" asked Alan. "Look at the color!"

"You mean that big dome is solid gold?" gasped Ted. "Nonsense! Gold is a soft metal—gold doesn't ring."

"What do you know about what heavy gold does?" retorted Alan. "And I didn't say it was solid. It must be hollow. Let's go!"

"Wait a bit!" Ted commanded. "I'm not satisfied with conditions. I don't like—things. That dead body—that cartridge shell. I'm conscious of sounds I can't hear. I don't trust your Jamish any too much. You sit tight here and watch Jamish. I'm going around toward that dome through the woods, so I'll have some cover—and see what I can see."

"Why don't all three of us go?" asked Alan.

"Because you move through underbrush like an elephant!" retorted Ted. "Besides, I'd rather not have Jamish along."

Alan protested, but Ted was adamant. Their unspoken agreement gave the experienced Ted the authority in such matters and at last Alan yielded.

Ted stole away through the trees, traveling swiftly, silently. He was a born tracker, as light on his feet as a feather for all his two hundred fifteen pounds. But he was hampered by the baffling conditions—by the rocky footing, by the shifting lights, by the weird colors of tree trunks and leaves. And sadness weighed him down; he was tormented by brooding horror, aware of the constant threat of the tocsin.

But the trip had to be made; Ted had no mind to go into a trap. He was perhaps two miles from where he had left Alan and Jamish when he saw tracks in a small patch of soft earth. They were many, and recent. Apparently they were the tracks of hands, hands with long fingers—or could they be feet? Ted thought of Jamish, and his monkeylike hands and feet, and knew instantly that within the past hour Jamish's tribe had passed that spot.

Ted studied the tracks. "There must have been at least fifty in the party," he concluded, "and they were in a hurry!" Then he froze, his face paling a little.

Half hidden under the many prints of naked feet was a single impression of a *shoe!*

Ted whirled and ran—tore back toward Alan, cursing himself for leaving him. No denizen of Subterrestria wore a shoe. That shoe print tied up with the cartridge shell and the airplane buzz. A white man, the man who was running gold out of this country, had been hurrying along with that horde of natives.

Careless of noise, Ted raced back to the breakfast place, thankful for the lightness and strength that enabled him to cover the ground in ten-foot strides. He was only twenty minutes in returning.

The camp stove was still burning. Alan's helmet lay beside it. But of Alan or Jamish, there was no sign.

"Alan!" cried Ted. "Alan—Alan!"

No answer.

Ted circled the spot half a dozen times—each time in a wider radius. No sign. He drew his automatic and fired, twice, pointing the gun up. The reports detonated sharply in the heavy air. He listened, every nerve taut, for an answering shot . . . there was none. On the last circle, he came across tracks again—and now there were the prints of two sets of shoes, inextricably mingled with the mass of long-toed footprints.

Ted stood still, thinking, half aloud: "Alan is captured. There's a white man in the group. He's certainly the leader. Probably Jamish is his spy—only pretending to be our friend. Alan wouldn't give up without a fight. He couldn't have shot or the ejected shell would be here. So he was taken by surprise. He was sitting down and had removed his helmet because it was more comfortable without it. Well—"

Ted dashed back to the stove and tried to pick up evidence of what had happened. But the spot was stony and he saw no footprints.

"Alan would leave me some sign if he had half a chance," he reflected. "He'd leave me a sign . . ."

He looked intently around. He crept about the stove, examining the terrain minutely. He circled the little camp a dozen times. But no stick nor stone, no paper nor rag, no cartridge shell could he find.

He stood still in desperate reflection. "I've got to figure this out! If I'd been the one captured, how would I leave word? No time, no chance to do anything—I'd drop something to show which way I'd gone. It would have to be out of sight—so my captors wouldn't see it—out of sight . . . where, where, could I leave something out of sight? . . ."

All at once he gave a cry and sprang to the little stove. It had not been touched. Hands jerking, Ted lifted it. Beneath, with its point toward the distant yellow dome of the mighty tocsin, lay Alan's pencil! Ted looked at it and then at the helmet close by on the ground, and his face grew rigid.

So Alan had been taken to the bell, to the very source of those death-dealing sounds—and there lay the helmet that might have helped save him.

Chapter Nine

IT TOOK less than a second for Ted to make up his mind. He would free Alan or go down trying.

Sitting on the ground, to rest as he planned, he thought things through. Alan was a captive at, near, or inside the golden dome, and he was Alan's only hope—he must be extremely cautious. He was one man against an unknown number of enemies. The terrain so strange to him was familiar to Alan's captors. Then there was the chance that he might meet another of the great reptilelike beasts. Alan wouldn't be there to come to the rescue in any wild chase. What could one man do alone against one of those hissing monsters?

Ted sat grimly considering. He still had his gun—but how often could he hit such a terror in the eye, apparently the only vulnerable spot? If he had dynamite he might, with luck, throw a lighted cartridge at the feet of the charging beast—but his dynamite was far away, in the *Narwhal.*

Ted shook his head, left the problem of fighting the monster unsolved, and began to estimate what advantages he had.

He had a gun, while the tribesmen, as far as he knew, had only their throwing rods and stones. Jamish had exhibited marvelous marksmanship but the range of the best arm-propelled stone is short compared to that of a thirty-eight automatic.

Then he had a distant advantage in the *Narwhal.* Of course it was two days' journey away, but it held food and weapons and dynamite, and offered quick transportation.

Still another advantage, Ted realized, lay in the fact that he had a trained mind while the Subterrestrians were savages.

Even so, the odds against him were appalling. But Alan needed help, quick help. Their two helmets seemed to stare at Ted and speak in a silent shout: "When the tocsin rings, what will happen to Alan without his protective headgear?" Ted shuddered. The suit of "mail" was not enough protection alone!

The probability of having only a short time determined Ted's course—the *Narwhal* could stay where she was. He would follow the pencil message and see if an unexpected attack could rescue Alan before the tocsin or the savages brought a dreadful death upon him. Swift action seemed the only course. If he met one of the great forest beasts, he must take his chances.

Tying both helmets to him, stuffing his pockets with enough concentrated rations for two days, and slinging his canteen over his shoulder, Ted loosened his automatic and retraced his journey of an hour ago. He would approach the golden dome by circling the plain, keeping under cover of the trees as long as he could. How he would manage the final unprotected lap of the journey, from the trees to the dome, could be settled later.

Ted strode in great leaps, thankful for his strength and the lightness resulting from the curiously lessened gravity pull. He felt quite sure no spying eyes would see him until he left the shelter of the thinning trees and ran across the last half mile to the shining dome that held so ominous a threat.

With an effort he kept calm but he was beset with fear for Alan. The spectral fires that ceaselessly changed and flowed, now lighting the landscape with a burst of yellow, now bathing it in tender blues, again painting it with savage red, were not quieting. Depression lay just beyond his conscious mind. He could not forget that *two* helmets hung at his belt. When the tocsin again set up those terrible vibrations, Alan would be helpless, unprotected.

"Got to be quick or I'll be too late," Ted muttered. "The suit won't protect his ears. . . ."

For two hours he slipped through the trees, speedy, silent, intent, until he was as close to the huge golden dome as the protecting trees would take him. The rest of the journey must be made without cover.

"If it only got dark in this ghastly place!" Ted fumed. "I don't believe that dome is gold. It's impossible. Why, it's a young mountain. That's rock, yellow rock."

If not gold, the mound gleamed and glistened as if it were, its surface throwing back the heavenly glow in a thousand reflections.

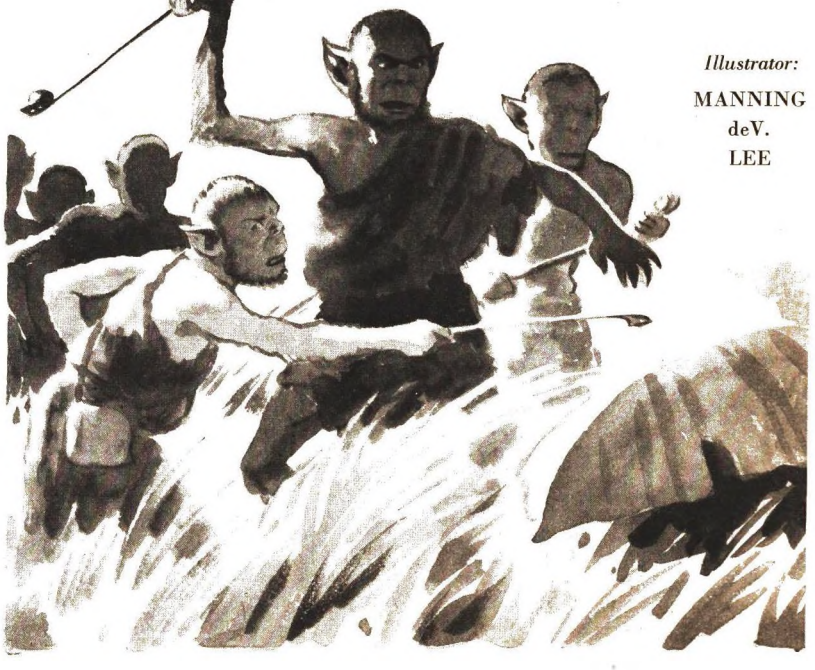
"Well—got to make a dash for it," Ted said grimly.

He tightened his belt, again loosened his gun in its holster, took a long breath and ran. Ran as if fiends were after him! It was a short half mile from the last tree to the foot of the great dome. If he were to make it at all, it must be swiftly. The simplest of savages have sentries. Besides, perhaps these savages were commanded by a white man, the ruthless gold runner—who might be Hall Steenerson. . . .

But he reached the foot of the yellow hill without seeing anyone.

The hill *was* gold! A brief inspection convinced Ted of that. He touched the yellow metal, awestruck. Here lay a mountain of gold, countless billions of dollars of it, gold enough to wreck financially the world outside a hundred times over.

He climbed up the hill of gleaming wealth for twenty feet, and then stopped in amazement before a horizontal opening that stretched around the hill as far as he could see. The opening was perhaps eighteen inches wide, a great crack of uniform width that



Illustrator:
MANNING
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LEE

looked mysterious and somehow dreadful.

"The part above must be the bell!" Ted gasped. "But if it's the bell, how is it hung? What can support a mass like that? It must weigh millions of tons."

Throwing himself flat, he wiggled into the opening to see how the mass was hung. It was dark inside; if the crack circled the hill, the circle was evidently slanted. His flash provided a feeble light, but he could see no supports. Puzzled, he wormed his way farther into the crack—only to be stopped by a guarding barrier of thick uprights. These did not touch what he believed was the bell; they seemed to be erected on the stony floor. But they were set close together, making an impassable palisade, and he could not see what lay beyond them in the dark interior.

Ted wriggled out and stared again at the crack. "If it runs completely around the hill," he reflected, "this is the bell all right."

The impulse to test his conclusion overcame him. Standing on the steep slope of gold below, with the butt of his gun he struck the metal above the crack.

The result blanched the blood from his cheeks. Faint, a mere whisper, the tocsin sounded—the strange reverberations began clamoring, clamoring. Even that bare breath of sound brought torture.

"So it *is* the bell!" Ted shuddered again.

But experiments would not find Alan! Methodically Ted followed the edge of the great bell, intending to circumambulate the hill. "There must be an opening somewhere, or else the mechanism for ringing the bell is outside," he reasoned. "Where there's an opening for a man, or a machine for striking, there'll be natives."

He traveled some five hundred feet, then suddenly came on a group of the tribe of Jamish—the little savages faced him less than fifty feet away. Swiftly he counted twenty-two of them. All held throwing rods, and their great ears twitched violently at sight of him. They cried out in thin, small voices that sounded odd in the heavy air.

With their twenty-two weapons drawn back, they watched Ted. Only too well he knew what would happen if twenty-two stones were slung at him by those deadly little marksmen! He couldn't shoot it out; his gun might account for a dozen, but he'd have no time to reload.

Swiftly he decided what to try. He had dealt with savages before. He knew that to show fear or fight would invite the stones. To express peace and indifference might work. He raised both hands above his head, then deliberately turned his back. It was hard to do—it is hard to be stoned to death from behind!

After a minute that seemed an eternity, Ted turned slowly around. With his hands hanging loosely, he walked slowly forward. At twenty-five feet or so from the group he extended both hands, palms out in a peace gesture, and stood waiting.

The little wild men moved forward as he had hoped they would. They came slowly, with their weapons ready, but they came—warily willing to meet him part way.

With a sigh of relief, Ted lowered his arms and waited for them to come up. But how was he going to make them understand? How ask for Alan? If only he could locate Jamish! Hoping for that, he allowed the little savages to surround him. If he could find Jamish, he might find Alan. He did not trust Jamish, but he could see no other hope.

As the little wild men pressed close, with their throwing rods in instant readiness, Ted spoke in a casual tone: "Jamish? Jamish?"

No answer. He asked again: "Jamish? *Jamish?*"

This time a native answered, "Jamish'n-erson. Jamish'n-erson!"

At the moment that meant nothing to Ted. So he stood and waited. And the natives stood and waited.

The situation could not last. Ted was almost ready to pull his gun and fight his way out, or go down trying, when the group slowly began to move. One side closed in; the other opened before him. Raising their throwing rods threateningly, the weird little men gave low, guttural cries of command. Evidently his captors—for so, Ted reasoned, they must think of themselves—wanted him to go somewhere.

Going anywhere was better than standing still; action might lead to Alan. Ted moved with the group, sauntering with apparent indifference. But he was keenly watchful and his great muscles were tensed ready for fight or flight or rescue or whatever might come.

The savages moved slowly—Ted felt they were in no hurry to get him wherever they were going. Yet their progress was purposeful. He saw with dissatisfaction that they were heading away from the great golden bell, back toward the tree belt. He wanted to get inside the bell!

His mind was full of questions. Why didn't the tocsin ring? Why weren't his captors afraid to be so near it? Or of all these queer little wild men, was Jamish alone afraid of the crushing sound? Ted wasn't at all sure that when he was so close to the source of those giant vibrations, his helmet and suit would protect him from insanity or disintegration or death. To be sure, the helmets and mailed suits *had* kept him and Alan alive, but they had been farther away from the huge bell. One thing was certain, Ted reflected heavily. Alan, without his helmet, was as good as dead if the tocsin began to ring. Or worse than dead, for the suit alone might even prolong the agony of death by vibration.

Ted thrust back the thought to consider what he should do next. They had reached the trees and to his amazement no one seemed concerned about what he did. He wandered here and there among the little ape men; once he hid himself behind a clump of underbrush—no outcry was raised. Perhaps they thought he was aware of growing danger back in the golden dome and would not return to it.

But danger or no, inside the bell Ted knew he had to go. Convinced that there must be a larger opening than that narrow slit, he wanted to circle the tocsin. Would these savages stop him if he tried to leave the trees? Could he drop flat, wriggle away through the underbrush for a short distance, then run for it? Would they stone him to death if he tried? Would they—

Ted turned and fled—fled in huge bounds directly into the woods. A shower of stones followed him.

His helmet! It would protect the back of his head. He'd take his chance on the damage a stone might do his body! He adjusted his head covering, looked narrowly to his gun, then sauntered slowly to the edge of the belt of trees.

But he had not taken a step toward the bell before he was surrounded by the little ape men. Their menacing looks and threatening sticks made him understand that he could not go in that direction. He turned back, and at once his captors ceased to pay attention to him.

He wandered deeper into the woods. A few of the little men looked at him curiously, but none stopped him. He strolled on into the glade. He tried to put as much indifference and casualness as possible into his attitude—could he sell the idea that he was not going anywhere?

For a few minutes, apparently, he succeeded. Then a cry from behind made him turn. With throwing rods raised, his captors shouted to him in queer, high voices, looking oddly like gnomes in the shifting play of colored lights. Ted knew they were telling him to come back. Instead he turned and fled—fled in huge ten-foot bounds directly into the woods.

A shower of stones followed him. Many hit the trees but some struck on his helmet, their combined force all but knocking him flat. Again he marveled at the ape men's marksmanship. But the stout material of the helmet deadened the blows, and before they could "reload" he was out of range. Glancing hastily over his shoulder, he saw they were not following him.

"They won't let me approach the bell, but they'll give in and let me go away from it," he reflected. "Then the bell is where I *must* get. But how?"

He strode through the woods, thinking hard. The answer seemed to lie in the *Narwhal*, floating quietly at anchor. If the bell rang now—and it might ring at any moment—Alan was lost. But if for some reason it didn't ring for a time, it might be possible to reach the *Narwhal* and do some reconnoitering from the air. They had traveled two "days" to get to the bell from the *Narwhal*, but their pace had been slow. Ted leaped forward. Alone, he could make the trip in one day! He tightened his belt and fell into the bush stride of African natives—half walk, half lope.

He made no stops to rest. Thankful for his condensed food rations, he ate as he raced along, grimly bent on saving time. If that monster bell didn't ring, he'd save Alan yet!

Chapter Ten

ALAN had wasted no time when Ted, bent on exploring, had left him behind with Jamish. At last he had a chance to jot down some notes!

He settled himself beside their simple camp equipment, took off his helmet and laid it on the rocky ground beside him, got out book and pencil, and began jotting down his observations on the spectral fires that waned and glowed above. Could they be the source of the *aurora borealis* and *australis* about which science had so long puzzled? Alan had never been satisfied with the accepted theory concerning the cause of the northern lights. Perhaps—

He wrote on and on, while Jamish busied himself with his throwing rod and the little bag of stones at his waist, apparently content to wait the pleasure of the strange beings to whom he had attached himself. . . .

No shadow warned Alan that danger threatened. There was a yelp from Jamish, and he looked up from his notes to see the little native fading into the trees. Then the stars came out and a great crashing resounded in his brain. . . .

When he recovered consciousness, he was dazedly aware of an aching head and a desperate dizziness. He was lying on his side, face close to the little stove, his notebook and pencil under his hand. Above and behind him, somewhere, a voice spoke.

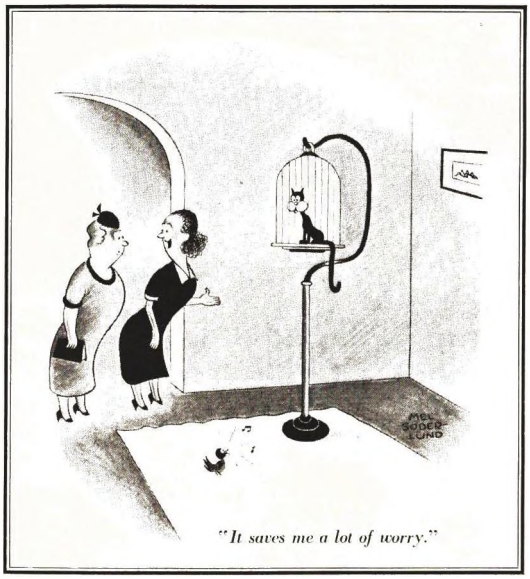
"So!" it said, in gloating reflection. "Your curiosity, Dr. Kane, shall be satisfied! You shall see the inside of the bell and—hear it when it sounds above you! I shall tie your hands, bind you tight, before you come to."

Alan's brain cleared swiftly. "I was struck on the head—this is a white man speaking—the gold runner, of course—I'm to be taken into the bell. How can I leave a message for Ted? . . ."

Cautiously he pushed the pencil. Could he get it under the stove, pointing toward the bell, without his captor's seeing the movement? He dared not turn over or look up—he must play dead. Hands were dragging at his free arm.

He pushed the pencil under the stove. Ted might find it—there was just a chance. Then both his arms were seized and bound; he was too weak from the blow to resist. He was jerked to a sitting posture and with his head ringing and the trees dancing before his dizzy eyes, he looked up at his captor. . . .

A weary Ted reached the shore of the little cove where the *Narwhal* was moored. Nothing, apparently, had been disturbed. The great ship nodded quietly at her moorings; the little rubber boat was still high on the shore. Ted was hungry and thirsty and his arms and legs ached, but before he ate, drank, or rested he rowed to the *Narwhal*, climbed aboard, and satisfied himself that no visitor, savage or white man, had been near her.



"It saves me a lot of worry."

A long pull at a water bottle and some bitter chocolate put new life in him, but he needed rest; and knowing that a weary man is of small use in a fight or a rescue, he gave himself up to the luxury of two hours' sleep.

He woke up promptly at the end of the time he had allowed himself, and soon the *Narwhal* roared into the air with a rush. Ted exulted at the swift power beneath his hands. He only half understood the physics of the strange region, with its lessened gravity and increased air pressure, but he knew that throttled motors and a stick well forward gave the same lift and speed that much greater R.P.M. and steeper inclination of surfaces provided up above the earth.

"Fuel lasts longer," he reflected. Then another thought occurred to him. "If our friend, the gold runner, flies a plane here, *he* must have fuel."

Down the coast Ted sped, but only for a few minutes. Then he turned the *Narwhal*'s nose to the right toward the great hill of gold. Nor did it take long to raise its shining dome through the mist. The *Narwhal* could cover in twenty minutes the distance that had meant a long day's travel for Ted on foot.

How he would land—if he wanted to land—Ted had not figured out. The *Narwhal* was not amphibian; and even if she had been he had seen no terrain smooth enough for forced landing on wheels. He wanted a chance for close observation of the hill from all sides, with no savages to stop him. Then he'd tackle the landing problem. The desperate plan of pancaking on the rocks if necessary crossed his mind. But first he must learn what lay on the other side of the hill.

He passed over its top at not more than five hundred feet, marveling at the play of color; kaleidoscopic fires from the mist above glowed in soft colors on the yellow metal. It seemed absolutely incredible that the metal so hard to find, so difficult to win from the outside of the earth, was there in such plenty. Yet the golden dome was not wealth to Ted but a terrible instrument of suffering and death—and Alan was in it, or near it, while an essential part of his protection was fastened to Ted's waist.

The tocsin had not rung. So Alan might be alive. Why the bell was no longer ringing regularly twice a day, Ted could not guess. "Perhaps," he thought, "the gold runner controls it and won't have it ring when he's near."

Suddenly Ted caught sight of a blue-gray glint below that made him gasp. Water! The golden dome, then, was not well into the interior, as Alan had thought, but on the coast. They might have saved themselves that two-day trek if they had only stayed in the *Narwhal* and flown down the coast! But of course Alan had been right in landing when the tocsin sounded as the *Narwhal* came within reach of its powerful vibrations.

"Water! I can beach her and explore from the other side!" exulted Ted. He flew once around the hill, looking down intently, wondering at a thin black line that seemed to stretch from the water side of the great bell into the woods. "Is that a path?" he wondered. "No—too little. Rope? Chain? Means of ringing?"

He flew closer to look at the black line. Obscuring mists, shifting lights, and changes of color all combined to baffle his eyes, but he satisfied himself that the thin black line was an actual thing—it might be either rope or chain. It began in a dark spot on the surface of the hill where the slit also showed a narrow dark belt, and led off into the woods to be lost among the trees.

"Suffering cats!" Ted ejaculated as he saw another arresting sight. "There's the other plane!"

Yes, moored two hundred yards from shore, nodding easily in the gentle breeze, there was another airplane. Ted circled her twice, dropping lower the second time. Apparently she was empty. He swooped to a landing, coming to rest a quarter of a mile from the rival plane. Cautiously he taxied close. He had no hope that the man who had flown that plane down to this weird, rich region would prove a friend. As he got nearer, he grew more certain that the plane was empty. He cast his anchor, noted that the water was not more than fifteen feet deep, dropped his boat overboard, and rowed to the other plane.

He spent but little time on her, but that little he devoted to good purpose. A pilot knows how to sabotage a plane in the quickest way. When Ted rowed back to the *Narwhal*, the stranger's timing gear vitals were safely in his pocket.

"Of course somebody heard me come," he reasoned. "Whoever is on guard at the entrance to the tocsin must have heard me and seen me. I'm exposing the *Narwhal* to the same sort of treatment. But it can't be helped. I've got to find Alan."

Ted spent a busy five minutes in the *Narwhal*'s storeroom. When he emerged he not only had extra ration, both helmets, and a fresh battery in his flash but also, hung around his waist, a bag containing ten Herculesiums, and fuses. Herculesiums being explosive cartridges with twice the power of the usual dynamite cartridge. In his mind a plan formed, and he longed for the strength of an army.

He rowed to shore backwards, facing the strand he approached. He expected to find a horde of natives waiting with the gold runner in command. He expected to shoot his way through and win the entrance to the tocsin by luck and *elan*. But what actually happened was entirely different.

He leaped ashore, pulled his rubber boat well above the watermark, and was turning toward the hill when he heard a low hissing. Whirling, he saw coming another great dragonlike animal even larger than the one he and Alan had fought. The beast slid, ran, glided over the rocky beach at incredible speed.

There was no time to run, no place to hide. Ted drew a desperate breath—then his automatic barked swiftly three times. He saw skin flake off where bullets hit, and at each blow the great beast hissed louder, but the thirty-eights did nothing more than irritate it.

With a final rush it was upon Ted! It swept him up with a huge arm that curled tight about him—then dragged him, struggling madly, down the beach to a cavern in the rocks.

It was dark inside and the heavy air was heavier and smelled of decaying flesh. Ted fought madly to get his right arm free—if he could only fire again he might through preposterous luck hit a vulnerable spot. The beast raised its great curling arm high

and flung him. Ted turned in mid-air and landed on his feet, escaping broken bones. But the animal was between him and the narrow opening of the cavern, its small eyes glaring savagely, its hissing filling the cavern.

Yet it did not move forward at once to seize him again—perhaps at the moment it was not hungry. At any rate, he had a breathing spell. He worked desperately at his bag. His thirty-eight had done no damage but what about explosive?

The beast advanced. Ted saw the eyes getting closer. With his flash to guide him, he worked rapidly. Two of the powerful cartridges were in his hands—fuses ready—a match! But did he have time?

Steady now. With swift fingers he lit the fuses, flung the pair of cartridges at the beast's feet, then threw himself on his face as far from the coming explosion as he could. . . .

A blinding double flash, a shocking roar, a shower of fragments. . . . Ted rose to his feet with deafened ears, shook himself to make sure he had all his arms and legs, then sent the beam from his flash around the stinking den.

Nothing was left of the great beast but pieces and blood—nothing blocked the opening of the den. He could go!

"So *that's* why they don't maintain guards!" was Ted's inconsequential thought as he picked his way carefully over rocks slippery with blood. "I wonder, do these brutes have a *family?*"

Emerging from the cavern, he looked swiftly around him. There were the two planes bobbing at anchor to the left, the golden dome to the right, and the thin black line that stretched from the dark opening in the dome, like a rope over small poles, and led off into the woods a quarter of a mile away. But no living thing was in sight.

Ted stepped back for a moment into the great beast's lair. Here he hid the timing gears of the other plane. Then he swung out into the pale spectral light again.

The situation looked brighter! He asked himself exultantly, "If the great beast is the only sentry, what's to stop my entering the hell?"

With gigantic strides he covered the short distance from the cavern to the black blob in the golden bell that he took for an entrance. He defied the danger he ran. He realized that if the tocsin rang now even his vibration-absorbing suit of mailed links and the miraculous nullifying buzzing of his helmet might not save him from the terrific effects of those awful vibrations. He recalled all too clearly the shrunken body of the little ape man, who had been killed by the vibrations, if the wailing Jamish could be believed. Yet he defied all risks. He must reach Alan. A final stride brought him in front of the black opening.

But it was barred with a heavy mass of gold.

Ted pushed—the mass would not give an inch. He looked for concealed mechanism, a knob, a hole for a key. There was nothing. Yet doorway this obviously was—a rounded opening perhaps eight feet high and four across, with a well-worn path leading into it. The black line proved to be a heavy rope. It hung down from a small hole high at one side of the "door," as Ted named the obstructing mass of gold.

There being nothing else to do, Ted again wriggled into the great crack that he believed must run around the bell. Marveling at the engineering that had provided support for such an enormous mass of metal he crept in, in. He hardly knew what to hope for . . . some break in the inner palisade of bars, some trace of Alan, some clue. . . .

As he lay on his back, thrusting his great body sidewise, progressing into the opening by a crablike motion of arms and legs, Ted inadvertently touched the gold above. The response was immediate—a low whisper of sound, a faint echo of the terrific vibrations he dreaded, a very ghost of a ring, yet a portent of doom. . . .

He shrank away from the mass above and proceeded more carefully.

The journey covered perhaps ten feet. Then it ended against upright bars of gold, as Ted discovered by a cautious use of his flash.

"Hm. They certainly don't want strangers inside!" Ted muttered. He called, very softly: "Alan. Alan? Alan!"

The dark interior echoed the cry. *Alan, Alan, Alan—Al'n, Al'n, Al'n.* But there was no other answer.

Ted lay there on his back, confined in that golden crack; before him, unyielding bars; behind him, an "outdoors" shot with strange fires, infested by terrible beasts and dangerous savages. What could he do? How was he to communicate with Alan? He thought of a shot and wriggled his gun from its holster, but he hesitated. Suppose the bullet should strike the golden bell? Wouldn't it act as a gigantic hammer? If Alan actually were within, bound, gagged, helmetless, the very shot he fired to tell him help was near might bring his death.

Ted shoved the gun back in its holster and crawled cautiously out again into the open. He had yet to circumambulate the bell on foot. There might be another entrance.

"If not, what about the explosive?" he asked himself.

Then he shook his head and shuddered. If a mere touch vibrated the bell, what would a crashing explosion do? Wouldn't the resulting vibrations blast all life for miles around? No, he wouldn't use the explosive to open the closed door of gold except as a last resort.

Standing there outside the crack, Ted once more looked swiftly in all directions. The two planes bobbing gently in the small waves, the golden hill before him, the impenetrable mist above, which so gently and yet so terribly hid the horizon from sight, the playing colors of the unseen lights behind the mist—these were all he saw.

Methodically he began to circle the hill. If any savages barred his way, he would shoot it out; bullets carry farther than stones. If he couldn't find another entrance—well, he could come back to the blocked door. He had his explosive.

Chapter Eleven

THE WALKING was easy, for the golden mound rose from rock that had either been tooled by natives or worn smooth by the feet of countless generations; and it was not more than three-quarters of a mile from start to finish around the tocsin. Yet Ted remembered few experiences more nerve-racking. With straining eyes, he watched the route ahead and the curve behind, expecting each instant to see a horde of the little wild men; he was haunted constantly by the menace of the bell, which might ring at any moment.

"Why doesn't it sound? What keeps it from its regular ringing?" Ted asked himself these questions for the thousandth time.

Every breeze that blew against the hill, every one of his own soft footfalls, wakened echoes and faint whisperings from the tocsin. He scarcely heard them but he felt them; felt them with every taut nerve, with every quiver of anxiety for Alan. Alan, so ready to risk exploring a new world because his country called; Alan, without protective headgear, lying somewhere bound, waiting for the bell to ring, or perhaps reserved for some horrible savage rite. Perhaps the tocsin was silent because the natives were gathering to see some awful sacrifice with Alan as victim. . . .

Three times in that frenzied walk Ted stopped and thrust himself through the wide crack, hoping to strike an opening to the interior, but each time the gold uprights barred his way. Three times he frantically called Alan's name—and heard in answer only metallic echoes, whispering, running up and down the unseen golden walls of an unseen terror-filled cavern.

At last he completed his circling walk, arriving back at the blocked doorway in a lather of perspiration, no wiser than when he started. There was no other entrance. Now what?

"Odd that I didn't see any natives," he thought, wiping his face. "First they run me off. Then they disappear and I find only a dinosaur or something on guard—not a native in sight. But now I'm here, what good am I?"

He would not risk using the explosive. Not yet. He considered the possibility of an entrance on top of the hill. He had seen none when he had flown over it, and the climb seemed impossible but he might be able to claw his way up with the help of his knife. He drew the knife and thrust it at the gold. It made no impression. He thrust again, harder. But the gold might have been steel for all the impress his knife made.

No shadow warned Alan that danger threatened. There was a yelp from Jamish and he looked up to see his little native fading into the trees.

"Hm," he grunted. "This heavy gold must be tough, like iron. Of course. That's why it rings."

He tried feverishly to think of something new to do. Inaction was torture. He strode savagely back to the beach, pushed off in the rubber boat, and rowed out to the *Narwhal*.

He climbed into the little cabin and stopped short, staring incredulously. Waiting for him, cowering away from his angry face, was a badly frightened Jamish, holding out a piece of paper.

Ted grabbed it, crying "Alan, Alan!"

He read: *In bell. Rings soon. Hurry. Look out for jailer.*

That was all, but instantly Ted was filled with hope. Alan *was* in the bell! And since Jamish had brought the note, he must have been there with Alan. He'd know how to get back in. And Jamish could be trusted — didn't his bringing the note prove that?

He sat down beside the small figure; it was something like sitting down beside a baboon. Pointing to himself: "Ted!" he said.

"Teed—Teed!" responded the savage, eagerly. Then, beating his skin-covered breast, "Jamish, Jamish!"

"I know—Jamish!" agreed Ted, trying to speak calmly. "Now — Alan! Alan!"

"Ah-lin—Ah-lin!" cried Jamish. He rose, pointing to the great hill of shining yellow metal.

Ted nodded violently. "Let's go!" he cried, and rose to step into the boat.

But Jamish laid a tentative paw on his arm. He pointed to the little rubber skiff, shaking his head. Then he laid his hand on the instrument board before him, pointing first into the air, then down the coast.

Ted had no difficulty in understanding—Jamish wanted him to fly, somewhere! He thrust Jamish over into the copilot's seat and stepped on the starter. The *Narwhal* roared into life. Giving her barely time enough to warm up, Ted hauled the rubber boat onto a wing, pulled in his anchors, and taxied out of the little harbor.

With a rush and scream against the heavy air, the *Narwhal* soared, and Ted was off on a blind sky trail with only the pointing hand of a savage to guide him. He wondered at Jamish's lack of fear. Was the little savage's natural fear on a first flight swallowed by a greater fear? Or—perhaps this was not Jamish's first flight!

Hardly were they in the air before Jamish pointed down—down. Obediently, Ted skimmed the surface and came to a stop, perhaps two miles down the coast. Jamish climbed to a wing, and dragged at the rubber boat. Ted helped him into the water with it, then anchored the *Narwhal*.

He debated swiftly: should he render the *Narwhal* impotent, as he had the other plane? No—better not. If he were captured, the gears, if he took them, would be captured with him. He might find neither time nor place to hide them on shore. Then, too, they might need the *Narwhal* for instant escape. He'd better leave her in commission, taking the chance of the enemy's stealing her.

Hustling Jamish into the little rubber boat, he rowed swiftly to the water's edge. Here the fronded gray trees, chameleon-colored in the spectral illumination, came almost to the shore. Jamish led him back up the coast for half a mile, then plunged into the woods over what Ted could see was a familiar trail, though one not often used.

Ted followed close. He made that swift trek with his hand on his gun. His conscious mind was all upon his surroundings: the path, the underbrush, the tall trees, the spectral lights. He watched sharply for lurking beasts, for hidden men, for waiting traps. But all the while his subconscious mind was with Alan, Alan who was waiting, perhaps in torment, but hoping, believing Ted would come.

Suddenly Jamish stopped, pointing to a small hole half hidden in the underbrush, a hole that looked disturbingly like the entrance to another cave. They were to go in there, were they? Ted swiftly checked over his equipment—the two helmets, his gun, the flash, and a small knapsack containing concentrated food, cartridges, cordite rolls, fuses, knife, and matches. All there. Ted nodded to Jamish and started to lead, but again Jamish shook his head and slid into the opening feet first.

Ted himself would have gone head first, to see what he had to face. But if Jamish thought feet should precede, Ted was willing. Giving the native a half-minute start, he dropped in after him—and knew at once why feet must precede. Down a steep drop, Ted slid over an earthy incline for perhaps twenty feet, to find himself in a dark passage. His flash gleamed on walls that made him gasp. Like the great hill, they were gold! His knife made no impression on them—evidently this was that same heavy gold, the strange yellow metal of Subterrestria that rang like steel.

Then Ted saw an odd sight. Jamish squatted on his hairy legs, twirling a stick between his hands, making fire just as the savages of the outer earth make fire. Smoke grew under the twirling stick, and soon, as Jamish alternately twirled and blew, a tiny flame rewarded his efforts. He grabbed up a knot that in the lands Ted knew would have been a pine knot but here came from an unknown tree. He lit it and held it high, a flaming torch. Its bright and smokeless flame made Ted's flashlight unnecessary. He was glad, for later he might need desperately illumination under his own control.

The passageway wound dimly ahead; Ted saw many marks of tools. In places the gallery appeared natural, and some of the golden walls seemed worn by water.

Jamish slipped along quickly, as if thoroughly familiar with the subterranean passage. Again doubts arose in Ted's mind—was the little wild man leading him into a trap? Had Alan intrusted a note to Jamish, only to have the native betray both? It seemed possible. Alan's captors might have left him somewhat free in the hope that a message from him would trick Ted into a trap.

But there seemed no other way of reaching Alan. Warily but doggedly Ted followed Jamish down the auriferous tunnel into the unknown depths of the mountain, convinced that the passage must end beneath the great golden tocsin of death.

For perhaps twenty minutes Ted followed his guide. Then Jamish stopped, laying a finger on his lips, shaking his head violently. Ted was puzzled; he saw no change in surroundings that seemed to make caution necessary. But he crept forward silently—and just around a small bend, the tunnel came to an abrupt end. Against that end Ted saw a rude ladder of boughs, the rungs bound to the upright with strips of skin.

Jamish pointed. In a small, thin whisper, oddly deep in the heavy air, he muttered, "Ah-lin, Ah-lin!" and gestured upward.

Ted nodded, motioning Jamish to go ahead. But Jamish would not. He slipped behind Ted, still gesturing upward. Then, as if he had done his duty, he fled back up the passage still carrying his torch. Its light flickered a moment around the bend—was gone. Ted stood in thick blackness.

Ahead was a ladder. Above, presumably, an opening into which the ladder led. In the bell, above, must be Alan—unless all this was a trap. Was Jamish a friend or an enemy? Why had he fled? From the Stygian depths of the thick darkness, Ted felt creeping upon him again the black depression that seemed a part of the very atmosphere of the strange, incomprehensible land.

The impulse to snap on the flash and rush up the ladder was strong. Instead he crept slowly forward to the end of the tunnel in the blackness. Finding the ladder by groping, he adjusted his helmet. A protection against the murderous sounds of the tocsin, the stout if thin metal might also be a fair defense against a blow. He longed to shoot his flash upward to see how many rungs of the ladder lay between him and wherever he was to go, but he sternly repressed the impulse.

"If I'm trapped and a gang of savages are lying in wait, watching for me to stick my head up that hole, a light will just warn them to get ready!" he reasoned.

In the blackness, rung by rung he crept upward, his ears strained for the least sound. But not a murmur reached him. At last his groping right hand found no rung above the one clutched by his left hand. Instead, the hard sheen of metal touched his fingers.

With his free hand, Ted untied Alan's helmet and tucked it under his left arm for a moment. Then he drew his gun, thrust it under the waiting headgear, and pushed the helmet slowly upward. If savage sentries could see in the dark, they might strike at what would look like a human head coming up through the hole. He waited.

No sound. No blow. No indication of enemies lying in wait.

But Ted was grimly cautious. For a long five minutes he stood in silence, waving the helmet above him on the end of his gun. At last he tucked the helmet under his arm again and thrust the gun back in its holster. He delayed only long enough to retie the helmet. Then with a spring and a jump he was up through the opening and standing on what felt like a smooth metal floor. The darkness was as thick about him there as it had been below.

Again he listened; again he heard no sound. Yet again and again some sixth sense flashed a warning. Within a few yards of him, he felt certain, *something* threatened — something was lying in wait.

(To be concluded in the March number of THE AMERICAN BOY.)

"I thought YOU were giving ME lessons!"

A Hothead on Ice

(*Continued from page 8*)

tighten up its defense and hang on the rest of the game so you can't break through and tie the score. We were in the hole, all right, as we left the ice for the intermission between the first and second periods.

"Well, Don, you ran true to form," Coach Randall said, the minute we hit the locker room. "You've got us in one awful jam."

"Game's not through yet," Don said.

"No, and what's worse—*you're* probably not through yet, either!" I handed him.

"You're darned right I'm not through!" said Don, banging his hockey stick against a bench. "I'm going to—"

"Don—listen to me!" I commanded, grabbing him and pushing him down in a chair. "There's no percentage in that temper business. We've all put up with this as long as we're going to!" I found myself being backed up by every fellow on our team. The coach kept an interested silence.

"That's right! . . . You said it, Jerry!" they said.

"You hear that?" I warned. "And we mean it, Don. You're the best man we've got, but if you don't control yourself from now on we're going to walk off the ice!"

"I'm glad to see how you boys feel," Coach Randall said. "Don, we've stood for your temper long enough. Stop it—or you come out!"

You should have seen Don's face. This was something new, getting a dressing down from his teammates and the coach too! He thought at first it was a gag—and gave us the laugh—but when he saw we meant it he commenced to argue. *This* was his thanks for not letting Tom Terry get away with his rough stuff on Bill. Ice hockey wasn't croquet, anyhow.

"I can't promise," finished Don, defiantly. "I always play my hardest and if—"

"All right, then—you might as well warm the bench right now!" said Coach Randall, clamping down. "Newt, take Don's place at center."

And if you ever saw anybody mad, you should have seen Don O'Malley right then! He took his hockey stick and banged it against a locker and busted it clean in two.

"Out on the ice, men!" said Coach Randall, disregarding this gentle little outburst. "We've got a two-goal deficit to overcome now—thanks to such antics as this—so let's get down to cases and play hockey!"

I'll never forget the picture of the one and only Don O'Malley, who'd been kowtowed to all his life, sliding up and down the bench, jabbing what was left of his hockey stick in the ice at his feet . . . and looking toward Coach Randall, thinking and hoping he was going to relent any minute and put him back in the game.

But Coach didn't weaken. Not even when Northern put through another score and led us three to nothing.

Newt Carlson, subbing for Don, was doing as good a job as anyone could, trying to fill the shoes of a guy that were really unfillable. It was finally Newt's pass to me, near Northern's cage, that gave me the chance to wham the puck in for our first score, just as the second period ended.

It had been darn stiff going, and I was all in. I stretched out on a rubbing table during intermission and let our trainer touch up a cut on my leg and a bump on my head. All of us fellows needed some kind of repairs. For all our efforts, we hadn't been able to make any headway. Northern was far out in front, and the game was two-thirds over.

"Where's Don?" I asked, raising up and looking around.

"Oh, he's not on speaking terms with us now," reported Bill, who was taping a wrist. "He's sitting out there on the bench, wrapped in a blanket, like a lone Indian on the prairie."

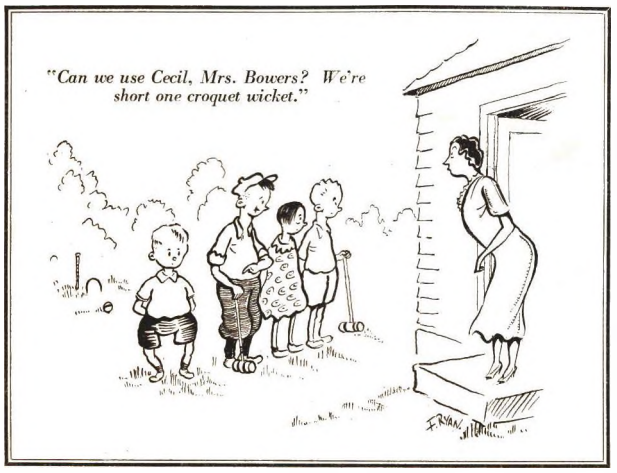
Our goalie, Ned Reese, lowered his voice. "We could sure use Don out there. Seems to me Coach is being too strict."

"Listen," I said. "Nobody's fonder of Don than I am, but he's been getting away with murder for four years. I'd rather lose than stand for more of that stuff."

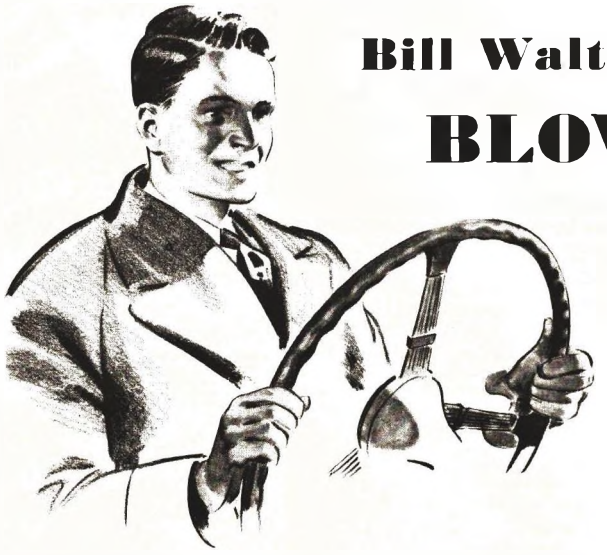
"You're right, Jerry!" said Bill. "That's my sentiments. When a guy lets his teammates down, let him go!"

We went back on the ice hot under the collar with righteous indignation. And, boy, did we play that great Northern outfit to a standstill! But what a defense those babies put up! We wore ourselves out trying to crash through. Time and again we'd start our offensive rolling only to be battered back, almost on top of the cage. Seemed like we needed just that extra twist that Don's wizardry had always given us. And still, with only eight minutes

(*Continued on page 27*)



YOU'RE traveling along at fifty miles an hour. The road is open and the paving good. Suddenly, a front tire blows out with a bang, and to get the car under control you—well, what *would* you do? If you're a car driver, or expect to be one, read this article. Blowouts seldom happen, but when they do happen you must be ready. The teacher who runs your safe driving class will want to see the article too. It's the first of a right-to-the-point new series on safer driving.



Bill Walters and the BLOWOUT

by

Ray W. Sherman

BILL WALTERS had been driving with considerable success for a couple of years. He felt rather pleased with his record when he heard of fenders dented by other boys. Then one day as he was rolling along a clear road at forty-five or fifty, the right front tire blew out with a bang, and before he could figure what had happened he was headed for a stone wall.

The car slithered along the wall, the right front fender acquiring a weird shape and the right front wheel becoming a considerable mess. Bill got out, gasped at the damage, telephoned his father, and sent for a wrecking car.

Bill explained to his father that the accident was unavoidable. The tire gave out without warning. It all happened so quickly he was up against the wall before he knew it. Mr. Walters admitted that maybe he was partly to blame, for not having better, newer tires on his car. It was accepted as an unavoidable accident, and Mrs. Walters said she was happy that Bill hadn't been hurt. "But watch out for such things," advised Dad Walters. Bill promised he would, although just how he was to watch out he wasn't sure.

When Bill went down to the garage to see how much of a job it was going to be, and explained that it was just one of those unfortunate, unavoidable accidents, the service manager gave him a queer look. What the service manager didn't tell him—but could have, for he was one of the town's best drivers—would have been somewhat surprising to Bill.

For it was NOT an unavoidable accident. Had the service manager been driving the car there would have been no damage at all. He knew just what had happened. It happens to a lot of people—some of whom don't get out as lightly as Bill did.

Bill had never known the automobiles of the old days, with their hard tires inflated to seventy pounds' pressure and the brakes on the two rear wheels only. Bill had grown up with modern cars, and when he got behind the wheel he took the masterpiece of engineering for granted. The car rolled easily, the four-wheel brakes slowed it quickly, and the big, soft tires seldom blew out. In fact it was the first blowout Bill had ever had.

So, he was rolling along the road at a perfectly safe speed. It might have been forty-five—even fifty or fifty-five. The car seemed to drive itself. The road was clear and wide. No traffic either way. He could have gone even faster with no great danger. That is, had he been driving correctly—which he wasn't.

The thing that was wrong, and the thing that caused the accident, was Bill's posture. He was relaxed in the seat, both hands reposing on the bottom of the steering wheel. When the tire blew Bill tried to get hold of the kicking wheel and steer hard. But his hands were in the wrong position. He tried to fight the wheel, but his hands had no grip. After a couple of bad moments of this he tried to shift his hands to a better position. By this time he was off the road and the going was worse. The soft tire was even harder to steer on the shoulder of the road.

Also, in his excitement he jammed on the brakes and that made it still worse. Things got so bad that even a skilled driver would have had a hard job getting out of the mess, and Bill ended up against the wall.

Had the service manager been driving the car his arms would have begun to rise on the wheel as his speed increased above thirty. He would have had his left hand a bit above the center of the wheel, his right hand at or only a little below center and gripping from the outside. His body would have been firmly fixed in the seat, not all lounged down in relaxation and comfort.

Then, when the tire blew and that front wheel started trying to carry the car toward the right side of the road, the service manager would have gripped his fingers tight, his arm muscles would have tightened like iron and he would have *fought* that front wheel and *held* the car in the road.

Also, he would have let off on the gas and let the car roll without brakes. When it had slowed down a little and he felt he had it under control he would have begun to brake gently, but always keeping the car under control and in a straight line until he could slow it down to a stop.

Scientifically this is what happened. Bill, at fifty, was going seventy-three feet a second. His car weighed over a ton and a half. It was no light, feathery thing. Once that ton and a half started to cut up it would take strength to control it. Bill had the strength—*but he wasn't in position to use it.*

Any skilled driver, as soon as his speed starts to rise, realizes that a blowout, skid or any other mishap can throw his car off the course. He knows that if such a mishap occurs he will have to fight the wheel and fight it HARD. So he gets ready to fight. And thousands of old, skilled drivers roll millions of miles a year in an alert position. They are not tense but neither are they relaxed.

The skilled driver knows that seconds count—each means 73 feet

at fifty miles an hour—and he keeps himself in such a position that he wastes no seconds getting ready to fight the wheel. All he has to do is grip his fingers and tighten his muscles—and that is almost instantaneous. So, you see, Bill's "unavoidable" accident was in reality avoidable.

One driver of my acquaintance, who has covered many thousands of miles, has had tires blow out at speeds up to sixty and seventy miles an hour. But he has never let his car be thrown off the road. He fights it hard, lets it roll down to a low speed—and stops. He says, "It's tough on the tire," but you can get a new tire for a lot less than Bill's dad paid for repairs.

You'll find this too: Once you acquire the correct-posture habit at the higher speeds you'll find that it sticks—and you never drape your hands on the bottom of the wheel at ANY speed.

The factory engineers and the highway builders have done the best they can. The rest is up to you. It's you who has to drive the car. If you're going to drive—DRIVE!

Ever bump the car in front of you, or a pedestrian who stepped out from nowhere? Maybe it wasn't your fault. But you'll notice that things like that don't happen to some drivers. They're the drivers who know what George finds out in next month's safety article, "George Long and the Movie Sign."

The Missing MacAndrew

(*Continued from page 13*)

"*Gracias, amigo.*"

Donn gave both Miguel and Juan five pesos, and then inquired whether Miguel would like to drive him to Encino that night. The squat Mexican would be charmed. With Miguel's elderly automobile waiting outside, Donn went into the Spanish-American Hotel, got Inspector Ramsay on the telephone in Los Angeles, and said rapidly:

"MacAndrew, undoubtedly with full knowledge of Baldwin's illegal entry into Mexico and his plans to be smuggled into the United States, got a visa for the States and then drove almost a hundred miles south to another resort. He picked up Humphrey Baldwin and took him along. I'm on the right track, Chief, and I ought to go to Encino."

"Consider yourself there!" chuckled Ramsay.

A full moon rode high over the mesquite as the car bumped along the rough, winding dirt highway that ran down to Encino. There were occasional little roadside *cantinas* and restaurants, and an occasional clump of shacks. Otherwise the aged auto and its occupants might have been a thousand miles from civilization, with nothing but the *monte* to keep them company.

Then Donn became aware of the lights of an automobile behind, coming on fast along the uneven highway. The road was too narrow for cars to pass each other without considerable maneuvering.

"I do not drive this road at night like that," stated Miguel.

He slowed his car, and tooled it to the extreme outside of the road. Donn turned to observe the progress of the oncoming car—and that saved his life.

For the second car slowed too. Its top was down, its windshield open. While it was still twenty yards behind them, Donn saw the glint of moonlight on metal. The next second, red spots danced from above the steering wheel, and Donn shouted a warning to Miguel. He threw himself on the floor, opening the door as he did so. Six shots tore through the rear compartment of Miguel's car as it came to a stop.

Donn's gun was in his hand now, and as the second car roared by he leaped to the roadway. His six-shooter chattered—and death was the message it carried that night.

Thirty yards up the deserted road the open car careened into a ditch, its murderous driver dead.

His face expressionless, Donn studied his unknown assailant. About thirty-five, dressed in cowboy boots, overalls, and flannel shirt, he was American, with perhaps just a touch of Mexican or Indian blood.

The trembling Miguel came alongside.

"Know him?" demanded Donn.

Miguel shook his head. "Never have I seen him before. But, *señor*—who are you?"

Donn showed him his inch-wide badge. He was sure that while Miguel would not know exactly what it was he would be impressed.

"You drive on ahead to Encino," Donn ordered crisply. "I'll drive this man's car, and bring his body. When you get there, have the consul get out of bed, and meet me at police headquarters. I will report there. Clear?"

"*Si, señor,*" gasped the relieved Miguel.

Every foot of the long drive into Encino was an ordeal—each shadow in the *monte* seemed to hide an enemy, each whisper to carry a message of menace. He was glad to see the sun come up over one of the most beautiful bays in the world, and to see the tall young American consul come bounding down the steps of the police headquarters.

The consul led the way to the *jefe's* private office. The little chief stalked up and down as he listened closely to Donn's story and to his plans.

"We shall co-operate with you in every way, *señor!*" he said. "We cannot have our friends and patrons being murdered!"

Donn gravely agreed, and went on: "Miguel's testimony and my own satisfy you that I shot in self-defense?"

"Perfectly. And I shall give you a bodyguard."

The bodyguard, a chunky young Mexican with a blinding smile, reported for duty at once. Donn, after making arrangements to have the dead man fingerprinted and photographed for investigation, ate breakfast with the consul and the bodyguard and then, without taking time to sleep, proceeded to the huge, American-owned resort hotel that was the focal point of Encino's gaiety.

Within a half hour he knew that Charlton MacAndrew and Humphrey Baldwin, the latter under the name of Harold Beetson, had shared a room in the hotel overnight.

Again Donn settled down to interviewing employees. It was nearly noon when a cashier told him:

"Mr. Beetson checked out for them both at about two in the afternoon. He had a bellboy bring down all their baggage."

"You didn't see Mr. MacAndrew at all when they checked out?"

"No."

"Think carefully now. Had you seen either one that morning—before Beetson checked them out?"

The cashier had not, but the night clerk had. Both men, in ducks and shirts, had gone fishing shortly after dawn.

By two o'clock in the afternoon, the young inspector was staring at his bodyguard with thought-clouded eyes.

"The fact is that nobody in this hotel set eyes on Charlton MacAndrew after he left to go fishing," Donn said slowly. "Now, Jose, my boy, we find out where they got their boat, and what they did after they got it. You tell me where to go, and then go back to the station and tell your own police what is happening, and ask that they make inquiries around town, eh?"

A half hour later Donn had a complete list of boathouses and individual owners who rented their boats. Patiently, one by one, he checked them. He walked miles along the beach in the steaming heat, conversing in fluent Spanish with owner after owner. And finally he found his man—a salty old Mexican with two boats.

"*Si, señor.* They go for to fish on a foggy morning. In the motor boat. When the sun is high, the dark-haired *señor* comes back. He is alone. He say that he has landed his friend, the one with the yellow hair, up at the pier—two miles up the beach. See?"

Donn nodded reflectively, and trudged up the beach to the pier.

All the afternoon he casually questioned fishermen, boat owners, loafers. No one could remember one *americano's* landing another one there many weeks ago—but that proved nothing at all.

Then Donn, who had not eaten since early morning, proceeded to the office of the police *jefe*. There he leaned across the desk, his eyes burning, and summed up his conclusions:

"Humphrey Baldwin was smuggled into the States by a powerful ring. Baldwin is so important to a gang of criminals that they tried to kill me because I was on his trail down here. If he's that important, he'd do well to have a passport in case he was suspected. And his friend MacAndrew had a legal passport—and has never been seen since Baldwin took him fishing. Your Excellency, I believe Baldwin murdered MacAndrew on that fishing trip, and dropped his weighted body into the bay. And I further believe, that up in the States Baldwin has the dead man's passport to use in an emergency!"

"But, *señor*," protested the little *jefe*, "what can we do? If the one you call MacAndrew was dropped into the bay, the sharks and barracuda have now made him as though he had never been!"

"You can announce a reward from our department for any fisherman, beachcomber, policeman, or other person who finds any bit of debris in the water or along the beach that might be connected with MacAndrew," Donn told him. "And if you don't mind, you can send Jose with me to the hotel, now that it's dark."

Jose appeared, beaming, and the two headed for the hotel. Before Donn turned in, he made two telephone calls. One was to Captain Naylor in Los Angeles, and that call turned the full pack of hounds of the law on a certain angle of investigation. Then he telephoned Inspector Young, at the border, and made arrangements for borrowing a Navy plane the next morning.

Twelve solid hours' sleep, and Donn was winging up the coast, homeward bound. He was in his office shortly before noon, made a brief report to Inspector Ramsay, and then headed for the studio where Mr. Vernon Carr-Smythe was enjoying one of his infrequent days of labor before a camera. As luck would have it, the picture was being directed by Charles Aubrey.

On the set Donn found the great English director putting the two stars of the picture through a close-up. Out of range of the camera, a huge restaurant set was occupied by five hundred extras, seated at tables and relaxing while the close-up was being shot. At one of the tables was Vernon Carr-Smythe.

"I've really stepped about, old lad," he informed Donn. "Didn't raise a whisper anywhere. But I was up at Aubrey's house last evening—and I was introduced to Aubrey's house guest. No chance to get chummy or ask questions, but it struck me that every once in a while something of the public-school pronunciation slipped out."

"What does he look like?"

"He'll be here any moment."

"Tell me more about Aubrey. Great director, I know."

"Comes from a fine family back home. Was a great actor when the war broke out, but in he went. Decorated a dozen times—ended up a colonel. After the war he began directing plays, then turned to movies and made himself one of the greatest directors in the world. He's top-hole in every respect!"

"Then if he sponsors anyone, the man's O. K.," Donn said, disappointment in his voice. "What's the name of this guest of his?"

"Prince—Gerald Prince. Here he comes now."

Gerald Prince's perfect white teeth flashed in a cordial smile as he and Donn were introduced. But Donn took no liking to the famous director's house guest. With his long lashes, carefully made-up face, and wavy blond hair, Gerald Prince looked too pretty for Donn's taste.

"Mr. Aubrey's giving Prince here a test later today," Carr-Smythe explained.

The tall director came strolling toward them. Aubrey had a huge beak of a nose, but his smile was heart-warming as he threw an arm over Prince's shoulder.

"We'll be ready for you directly after lunch, my boy," he said, and Donn saw deep affection in his eyes.

Donn had lunch with Carr-Smythe, and told him the story of Charlton MacAndrew.

"That's that," he said as they parted. "Keep your ears open for that name. Now all I've got to do is go back to the office and see what Naylor and his men can turn up. Waiting's the hardest part of this business."

But there was little waiting. In fact, Captain Naylor and his men had worked to such good purpose that Donn went almost sleepless for the balance of the week, and was a very haggard young man as, with Carr-Smythe at his side, he entered the luxurious hillside home of Charles Aubrey late Sunday afternoon. Hal Peters had wangled himself an invitation, as well, and there was another undercover man besides Carr-Smythe present.

In addition to the Australian cricket team, more than half a hundred of the British colony were there. Donn saw many famous screen faces. It was a men's party, presided over gracefully by Charles Aubrey, who kept Gerald Prince at his side.

Suddenly Aubrey's voice rang through the room as he stood with lifted glass. "Your attention for a moment, please, gentlemen! Will you join me in a toast?"

Silence fell as Aubrey's countrymen waited curiously.

"Pardon me for a bit of a speech," Aubrey went on smilingly. "It will surprise most of you to know that many years ago, when I was an extremely young actor, I married a very charming young actress. The marriage was kept secret for professional reasons; then the exigencies of the profession, and other matters, caused us to part—without rancor or any but the kindest feelings for each other. Three months later our son was born."

Donn was listening intently, a curious compassion in his eyes.

"And now," Aubrey continued, "after all these years, the son I had never seen has come to me." His face radiant, he put his free hand on Prince's shoulder. "Gentlemen, a toast to my son, Charles Aubrey II, shortly to be known on the screen, I hope, as Gerald Prince!"

As voices rose in surprised congratulations, Donn drifted forward, wincing inwardly at the thought of what he must do.

He faced Aubrey. "It is very necessary that I see you privately, sir—at once."

The distinguished old Englishman gazed down haughtily at the young stranger before him. "I am very busy with my friends. May I ask why you wish to see me?"

Silently Donn showed his badge.

"You are about to arrest someone here?" Aubrey demanded. "Sir, I personally vouch for everyone in my house, and I will not have a happy occasion marred by—"

"As you wish," Donn said levelly. He raised his voice. "Gentlemen! I am Immigration Inspector Kelly, here on duty. I warn you all that twenty city detectives and policemen surround this house."

Absolute silence fell. Aubrey and Prince stood rigid.

"Under the peculiar circumstances," Donn went on, "I do not object to letting you all know exactly why we are taking one of your countrymen away with us. Please listen carefully, Mr. Aubrey, before you try to protect your guest."

Step by step, point by point, mentioning only Baldwin's name because he hated to mention that of MacAndrew, Donn told the story of what he had discovered in Mexico, and how Baldwin had lured his friend to Encino.

"Consequently," he went on, "we were sure that the first thing Baldwin did in this country would be to alter his appearance to make it conform to that of the friend he had murdered. We canvassed all doctors and dentists. We found that Baldwin had visited Dr. Morris Monroe, a plastic surgeon on Eighth Street. There he had the shape of his nose altered, his hair dyed and permanently waved, and false eyelashes adjusted. He then went to a dentist at Thirty-one Monnel Avenue, and had all his unsightly upper teeth pulled, and false teeth made."

Donn's audience seemed breathless. Men stole suspicious glances at their neighbors.

"All this done," Donn went on, "Baldwin had his photograph taken in a shop at Third and Minor Streets in Los Angeles. He removed the passport photograph of his friend and substituted his own. Then he forged that portion of the consul's signature which runs across the face of the photograph. We planted a servant in the house where he has been living, and secured the passport, which is now in my possession . . . Mr. Aubrey!"

The old gentleman's head was back. He had the look of a warhorse in battle. "Yes?"

"Information received from Scotland Yard in answer to our inquiry tells us that the actress you married so long ago was named Charlotte MacAndrew, and that your son was known as Charlton MacAndrew in England."

"That is correct."

"I hate to say it, sir, but the man we are sure was murdered in Mexico was your son, Charlton MacAndrew. And Gerald Prince here is Humphrey Baldwin, ex-convict, posing as your dead son on the strength of papers he stole from your son—who was his friend!"

There was absolute silence. Aubrey stood stricken-faced, holding himself magnificently erect. A low, unbelieving whisper swept through the room.

The blond, artificially handsome Humphrey Baldwin seemed frozen in his place.

"Shall we leave, Baldwin?" Donn asked steadily.

Then the young Englishman threw back his head, a mocking smile on his face. "As you wish," he said lightly. "May I have one more drink?"

His right hand lifted his glass. The left hand passed over the goblet, and the top of a heavy seal ring flew open. A white substance dropped into the liquid. A second later he had downed it in a gulp. As Donn leaped forward, Baldwin dropped to the floor, unconscious.

"Watch out for that ring!" Donn shouted warningly.

The guests seemed paralyzed. But Captain Naylor materialized from the shadows of the porch, and bent over the body.

"Dead," he stated. Then he grumbled, "Shucks, Kelly, I figured on breaking those jewel robberies through this man. Well, you did a good job of trailing anyway."

"Sorry, Mr. Aubrey," Donn said to the tragic-eyed director.

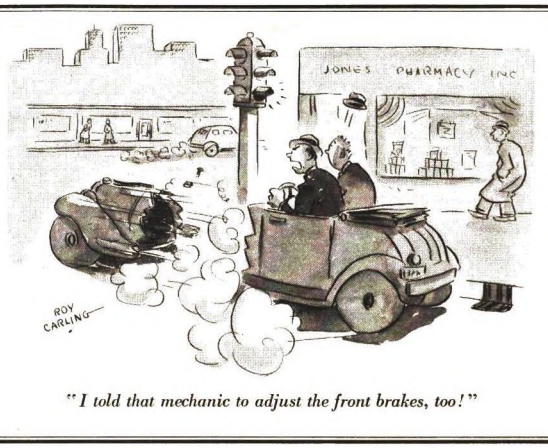
Aubrey nodded, pressed Donn's shoulder wordlessly, and walked from the room.

For a moment longer Donn stood there, with Hal and Carr-Smythe at his elbow, the three making a slightly isolated island in the sea of excited guests. Vernon Carr-Smythe looked from the body to Donn, and murmured in a tone of subdued congratulation:

"Case closed, what?"

Before Donn could speak, Hal muttered, "Baldwin's case is closed all right, but that doesn't end the affair of the Mallards. Don't forget that some duck shot at Donn down in Mexico."

Donn's strained face relaxed in a faint grin. "Duck shoots at man, huh? It takes the Mallards to make news. Let's go. I need some sleep before I try any more two-way hunting."



"I told that mechanic to adjust the front brakes, too!"

A Hothead on Ice

(*Continued from page 23*)

to go, Don O'Malley sat, unmoving, on our bench. He'd given up expecting to be called on, and his pride had frozen him to his seat.

And then, with five minutes to go, it happened. Tom and Newt collided, and Newt went down and didn't get up. A leg was buckled under him. Twisted knee, the trainer said . . . and we helped carry him off. Coach Randall never even glanced toward Don.

"All right, Roy," he called, "go in for Newt."

And right there is where a stone image, wrapped in a blanket, found its voice.

"No, Coach—put me back in!" cried Don. "I'll never lose my temper again!"

"The team may not want you," said Coach Randall.

"Listen, you guys!" pleaded Don, turning toward us. "Give me this one chance."

I looked around at the team and saw heads nodding.

"Okay." Coach Randall thumbed Don toward the ice. The greatest hockey player I ever hope to know tossed aside his broken hockey stick and reached for a brand new one.

"Well, if here isn't Little Boy Blue again!" kidded Tom.

"Enough out of you!" blazed Don.

I caught my breath. Didn't promises mean a thing to a guy like that?

Great suffering wildcats! That puck hadn't any more than dropped between them before Don started off with it. How he got it on his stick so quickly will always be a mystery. It looked like sleight of hand. And it was wrist magic and tricky footwork that took Don dodging and shifting through Northern's five-man defense.

The air was full of electricity—you could feel sparks flying—and you could see a hazy blue object cutting a zigzag course toward Northern's goal. Talk about excitement! Everyone was yelling bloody murder loud enough to bring out the police and fire departments but nothing could have kept Don O'Malley from carrying that puck, singlehanded, right up to the rim of the cage—and whistling it through between a frantic goalie's legs for a score!

And was Don mad! He could have spat fire! With the rink in the craziest uproar you ever heard, he skated back to center ice, shaking his fist in Tom's face and inviting the whole Northern team to do something about it. Don had gone absolutely nuts. All this pent-up feeling in him was coming out, and while he'd pulled us up to a three-two score there was no telling what his next move would do to us.

"Stop that bird!" ordered an awed Tom Terry.

And at the next face-off, Tom locked sticks with Don and wrestled him and threw Don across the ice. Don was up on his feet and pokechecked the puck right away from Tom . . . and Tom turned savagely on him and lashed out with his stick, trying to get the puck back. But he swung high and his stick clipped Don across the shoulder and head. Don whirled and raised his club . . . and I thought to myself, "It's all over now" . . . but it was Tom who jabbed with his fist, while Don simply warded him off. The referee rushed in between them, yelling at Tom: "Penalty box for you! Two minutes!"

"That's going to cost you!" cried Don.

And while a furious Tom Terry was compelled to watch proceedings from the sidelines, Don O'Malley hot-skated it through Northern's team to tie the game with his second goal in less than a minute's playing time.

"What did I tell you?" Don taunted, as Tom Terry came back on the ice with scarcely two minutes of the game remaining. "So you birds think you can play hockey, do you? Well, we're going to bust you wide open!"

The way Don glared at Tom, I was afraid he'd take a sock at him right then. Not that he'd ever gone that far in any game he'd ever played—but I'm telling you, I never saw a guy so steaming.

That referee, though, he got 'em faced off again, and Tom somehow got the puck and put on a solo dash of his own, straight for our goal.

He was body-checked at our line of defense, but bounded back and went through, jumping over Louie Deak, who went down under the impact. The puck was skidding free, just ahead of Tom—and he had an unobstructed shot at our goal, with our goalie all but helpless ahead of him. A goal now would probably mean the game.

"Shoot—shoot!" screamed Northern rooters as Tom drew back his stick.

But as Tom swung, that puck disappeared from in front of him. And a figure, going with the speed of an express train, sent up a spray of ice as it veered around behind our cage, with the rubber disc nursed at the head of a stick.

How Don had ever managed to get back into that play is another one of the miracles I'll never be able to explain. But as he came dashing up the rink, Bill and I fell in alongside and we formed a forward wall of three, passing back and forth between us as we crossed center ice and charged down into Northern territory.

Tom Terry, in giant strides, was giving chase now, and bearing down on Don from behind.

"Look out, Don!" I yelled, as Don, just having got the puck on a pass from Bill, was crouching to meet the defense man.

I could see at a glance that he was going to be hit in front and in back at almost the same instant. Don sensed the same thing—for he suddenly left his feet and dived along the ice on his stomach, spanking the puck through a narrow opening to me!

Northern's defense men got the charge of their own Tom Terry head on, and all three went down in a heap.

This gave me a chance to skate in close and fire away at the goal . . . but Northern's goal tender made a frenzied jab with his gloved hand and knocked the puck down. It fell right in front of him and he left his cage to brush it away. Northern's two defense men and Tom Terry unscrambled themselves . . . and went rushing to his aid.

But Don, still sliding along on the ice, with both hands clinging to his stick, swung in a prone position as the goalie batted the puck toward him. He connected, sending the puck back on an angle, just beyond the goalie's reach. The darned little rubber disc upended . . . and rolled right into the cage!

The red light flashed—and the timer's gun banged, almost at the same second. Don O'Malley had come through once more.

Hothead, did I say? Well, by the way he was laughing when he stumbled into the locker room, after being mauled by our small band of Bedford rooters and us, he didn't look much like a hothead.

"Say, guys," he said, sort of sheepishly, "I wish I'd discovered long ago how much more fun it is to pretend that you're sore—instead of really being sore! It doesn't get you into any jams and it—"

"You mean to say you aren't sore any more?" we all gasped in amazement.

"Well, yes, I am," Don admitted. "I'm darned sore—all across the shoulders, where you birds slapped me!"

Funny Things Happen

(*Continued from page 16*)

Maher's sharp voice startled him into instant consciousness:

"Ames! That fool Yeager is half way across the floodwater, heading for the other side!"

Johnny sprang up, stumbled, then straightened. Maher pointed to the boat that Bill Yeager steadily poled across the water.

Johnny's befogged brain couldn't quite reason it out. "What's he up to? Where's he going?" he asked.

"I don't know what he's up to, but it's plain enough where he's going," Maher snapped. "Come on!"

"That circus tiger—" Johnny stammered. "Has Bill got a gun?"

"He took the automatic out of my bed. I guess that's what woke me up."

Johnny grabbed up his loaded shotgun, and they shoved the second boat out into the gently flowing muddy water. Maher raised his hands to shout at Yeager, but Johnny, poling hard, stopped him.

"Bill wouldn't pay you no mind. He's going to see if he can handle that tiger."

"Crazy," Maher said between clenched teeth. "If the tiger doesn't get him, McElvey may take a shot at him."

Bill Yeager shoved his boat up on the opposite shore, and got out, with the long, forked push-pole in one hand and Maher's automatic in the other. He looked back and saw the second boat. Waving the automatic toward them in a gesture of silence, he turned and walked along the edge of the water.

"Be ready to hand me that shotgun," Johnny said hoarsely.

Suddenly from the brush there was an angry cough that chilled Johnny's blood. Bill stopped, apparently unworried, and shifted his pole so that it pointed ahead and a bit down. With the pistol in his right hand, he bent his knees slightly and waited.

Fifty yards up the beach, a huge gaunt tiger emerged from the brush. Then, with a horrible deadliness of purpose, he began trotting toward Bill with marrow-freezing little grunts. With the shotgun at the carry, Johnny leaped ashore and raced forward.

The animal saw Johnny and Maher, but kept trotting closer. When he was within twenty yards of Bill, he crouched slightly and with lips sliding over his saberlike teeth, advanced.

Johnny could hear Bill talking now, calmly, as if this terrible thing in front of them were only a house cat. Abruptly the tiger made a short rush, and drew up snarling and crouching, just beyond reach of Bill's pole.

Bill chuckled reasonably, placatingly, at the animal, and began talking to him again. His voice made sounds rather

than actual words. Strangely, the tiger hesitated and relaxed for a moment, as if feeling some peculiarly soothing hypnosis.

"Look!" Maher rasped.

Johnny saw it, too.

Then the tiger's moment of uncertainty passed. He spat explosively. From a half-crouch, he rushed. Bill thrust the fork of the pole straight into his face. At the same time he fired the automatic into the ground.

The enraged animal seized the pole in his mouth and splintered it with one twist of his head, hardly slowing in his charge, and leaped at Bill with his great claws exposed like meathooks.

Johnny's finger closed about the trigger, and there was a white roar. Instinctively he pumped the gun and pulled the trigger again. There was a terrific explosion right in his face, as if the gun had become a thing of dynamite in his hands.

Johnny dimly heard Maher's voice, then Bill's. Slowly the world righted itself and the haze passed. The first thing he saw was the former muzzle of his shotgun, now a twisted mess of stiff steel ribbons. The second shot had burst the barrel.

Bill stood staring at the kicking body of the tiger, which lay, with an ugly hole under its ear, at his feet.

"You didn't have to shoot," Bill said dazedly. "He wouldn't have hurt me. The Lord looks after me."

"Yes," Maher answered. "He sure does. The Lord rushed Ames up to you with a loaded cannon. *Come on—we've got to get McElvey.*"

Without wasting time, Maher picked up his automatic, and hurried grimly toward the pond at the north end of the island. Bill, after one last rueful glance at the dead tiger, followed them. When they reached the pond, there was no sign of life beyond.

Maher drew them back into the brush. "I thought McElvey would show up after he heard the shot."

"I tell you he ain't got any ammunition," Johnny said impatiently. "Let's git on over there after him."

"Just take it easy, hothead!" Maher snapped. "Maybe he hasn't got ammunition. But we'll go easy anyway, and use our heads—if possible. You stay here with that trapper's pistol while Bill and I swim across. Then we can watch while you come across."

Bill and Maher slipped off their boots, waded out into the pond and began swimming, Maher holding his automatic up out of the water with his right hand. Johnny backed up into the edge of the brush and squatted down with his long-barreled .22 alert and his eyes scanning the opposite shore.

When they were half way across, Johnny relaxed a little. No movement on the other side. His gaze fell to the boots at the water's edge, then wandered briefly along the near shore line.

Suddenly his heart gave a choking leap. Ten yards up the edge of the pond were tracks in the mud, half full of water in which bubbles slowly formed. The tracks led from bushes at the water's edge. Johnny's thoughts raced. As soon as he heard the shot, McElvey had swum the pond to keep from being hemmed. McElvey was on *this* side.

Johnny stood up and shouted, "Hey, he's—"

At that instant a bony arm encircled his waist and there was a sharp twinge in his back, as a hoarse voice rasped: "Hold that gun high, Ames! And stand still or you'll get the rest of this blade!"

In the momentary shock of surprise, Johnny obeyed. Even without turning he knew how McElvey looked—gaunt, red-eyed, bearded. Johnny's skin went cold all over, so that he could feel the warm blood that ebbed from the pocket-knife wound and rolled down his back inside his clothes.

McElvey took the pistol from Johnny's upraised hand and pushed the safety off with his thumb. He transferred the knife to his left hand, which was still around Johnny's waist, so that the blade was at Johnny's heart. In that way Johnny was held close in front of him as a shield.

Maher and Yeager, in the noise of swimming, hadn't heard anything. The pond bed shelved upward and they were able to wade. Johnny's thoughts raced absurdly—this was the clutch—*this* was the time for brainwork. As Maher's trim back rose in the water, McElvey leveled the pistol toward it. The gun was just at Johnny's left ear. Johnny saw McElvey's finger tighten-

"Didn't you understand? One goes on each corner."

ing on the trigger. At the instant the gun fired, he lurched upward.

McElvey swore and struck Johnny's head with the gun—but not too hard, because an unconscious man, sagging, would be a poor shield.

Maher whirled at the shot, belt-deep in the water, gun leveled.

"Throw that gun into the middle of the pond," McElvey said, "or I'll let the rube have a taste of this one in the back of the head!"

Johnny shuddered. McElvey had them cold.

But Maher answered sharply. "You figured wrong, McElvey. If I have to shoot Ames down to get at you I'll do it." His automatic came up again, its brutal black nose menacing. His eyes flickered. "Sorry, Ames. I'd want you to do the same."

Maher fired. Johnny's knees sagged, and McElvey felt him go limp. He seized Johnny's clothes frantically as the swamp boy's dead weight began sliding out of his arms to the ground, leaving him exposed to Maher's fire.

Maher was still firing, methodically. Suddenly McElvey released Johnny's body and, preparing to run, turned to throw a last shot at Maher. At that instant a bullet struck his right forearm. The impact seemed enough to tear away the arm, splintering the bone. He dropped to the ground in agony, and to prevent being shot again, waved his good arm in surrender.

By the time Maher and Yeager recrossed the pond, Johnny had got to his feet. He retrieved his gun and covered the amazed McElvey, who looked in vain for the smear of blood that should now be spreading across Johnny's shirt.

Finally it dawned upon McElvey that Johnny hadn't been shot at all, and the realization was so stunning that for a moment he forgot the pain of his wound. "You shot over Ames' head," he told Maher in awe, "and Ames fell, pretending to be hit!" He shook his head sadly. "I've been outsmarted this time all right."

Maher applied a bandage to the outlaw's arm. "Hold still."

McElvey grimaced in pain. "Maher, how'd that tiger get in here? The devil would have been hungry enough to swim across after me in another day."

"Circus tiger," Maher said. He glanced at Bill. "Absolutely tame."

"The paper said he was in an animal act," Bill protested.

"Lay off of Bill, Maher," Johnny said.

Maher turned. His eyes on Johnny were warm and friendly. "Okay, Brains," he said.

The following afternoon, Maher and Johnny, both shaved and cleaned up, stood beside Maher's little coupe. McElvey had been taken into Fargo the night before. Now, his job done, Maher was leaving the swamp country.

Johnny pushed his foot in the sand and swallowed. He remembered the day Maher had first come, in his polished riding boots and waxed mustache. Since then they'd gone through a lot together. Not all of it had been friendly going, but they'd managed to get along. Now that the time for leaving was here, Johnny was sorry.

"Come back sometime, and we'll go huntin'," Johnny said.

"Big game? With Ames Ammunition?" Maher grinned. "No, thanks."

"Nothing bigger than ducks," Johnny grinned back. "By the way, don't forget to tell the railroad about the tiger."

A cloud crossed Maher's blond face. "Ames—we haven't spoken of it—but did you notice how that animal acted just before he attacked Yeager? I remembered what you said about Yeager's queer power over animals. And for a moment there, I almost believed it. But of course, it wasn't as if the tiger was a jungle beast. The paper *did* say something about his having been in an act."

Johnny said: "I was up to Lem McManus' store this mornin' and found a copy of that same paper in the back room where he collects junk. Seems like we sort of guessed wrong on the words that was missin' from that piece. Look here." Johnny pulled two pieces of paper from his pocket. One, badly smudged by now, was the item they'd come across in the swamp. He laid it across the complete account:

TIGER LOST FROM CIRCUS TRAIN

JACKSONVILLE, Jan. 12—(AP)—Included in damages asked of the railroad company by Wayt-Barbeck Circuses following the derailment of their train two days ago below Fargo, Georgia, was the loss of a full-grown tiger. The amount asked was $1,000. The animal was less valuable than some of the others, it was pointed out. Bought to be trained as a member of the famous animal act, the tiger hadn't liked circus life, and no one could tame him. He seemed incurably vicious.

The animal's cage crashed and slid into the swirling floodwater which had undermined the trestle and caused the wreck. The tiger was probably drowned instantly, they said.

Maher stared at the paper. "Maybe," he said finally, "maybe there's something to what you say about Yeager."

Leaning back against the post, Johnny said. "There's lots of funny things in these backwoods."

"Something else better be cleared up, too, Ames," Maher said after a pause. "I made some cracks about brainwork. Well, I apologize. When I pretended to shoot at you, I *hoped* you'd catch on and fake an injury, of course. But plenty of smart men would have flubbed *that* play. Brains, Ames? You've got 'em." He held out his hand. "I'll be hustling, now. So long."

Johnny stood by the gate, hands in his pockets, until the car's white-sand dust receded in the distance and finally disappeared. A slight feeling of guilt would not leave him. He wondered if he should have told Maher that he hadn't faked an injury; that, in reality, he had fainted.

On My Own (Continued from page 9)

strength even beyond Tom Wood, but he gave no sign that he had even seen me.

Tom's hostility bothered me, but there was so much to see and learn that I didn't pay much attention to it. I liked to watch the great flocks of ptarmigan nesting on the ground, chuckling to themselves. White-and-brown birds they were, with feathers right down to their claws.

We saw white fox, white arctic owls and giant hawks. Later, when the ptarmigan started flying south, we stretched a wire across a narrow canyon and the flocks, beating down the canyon, ran into the wire. A half dozen would hit the wire and drop to the ground and we would gather them for a meal.

And Chappie helped me to forget that the Eskimo herders would have little to do with me. Chappie was a Lapp dog, a black and white little fellow who took a liking to me and proceeded to appoint himself my dog.

If anything, Chappie was too good a herder. Wave an arm to the right and he'd trot off to the right of the herd and keep them in place all day. Too bad for any reindeer who tried to break away from the herd on *that* side. But Chappie was so eager to bring the herd in close that I awoke one night

Left: Dave Irwin. Right: an Eskimo friend—slightly bashful.

to find a hundred or more reindeer standing around my sleeping bag, with Chappie wagging his tail and nudging me with his nose.

There was no stopping Chappie. Give him half a chance and he'd bring you some reindeer. Put him in the same country with a reindeer and he'd probably locate it and escort it into your bedroom. After a couple more demonstrations of Chappie's faithfulness to duty I tied him up nights and slept in peace. I never did enjoy sleeping in the middle of a snorting herd of reindeer.

So, without too much tension, the summer passed and the freezeup arrived, and we drove the herd down toward the ocean for the winter's march.

How even a reindeer can live through the winter in that country is almost beyond me. To the right (inland) rose the Endicott range, snow-mantled from ridge to foot. To the left, the booming and cracking barrier ice of the arctic shore. In between, a twenty mile strip of lowlands broken by shallow valleys. Bitter cold. No sun. No trees. No vegetation but a little moss down under the snow. The reindeer paws down to this moss, eats it, and lives.

It was an impressive sight, that great herd slowly flowing toward the Mackenzie. Up ahead, Andy Bahr led the way on skis. Flanking the herd, one to the north and two to the south, were sleds pulled by teams of reindeer. On two of the sleds huddled the wives and children of the herders. The dogs pranced along the flanks, keeping the herd together.

Here's Dave Irwin, with a four-dog sled, starting on a long trip.

I brought up the rear with a dog team and a sled loaded with a thousand pounds of duffel. And that's how we went, a few miles a day, floundering through drifts, bending to the wind, bringing deer to the starving Eskimos of Northern Canada.

We had other company too. Lean-flanked wolves followed a respectful distance behind us, to finish off the deer that fell from illness or exhaustion.

We ran out of coal oil and thereafter built few fires. For days dried fish and raw fresh reindeer was our only diet. But Andy Bahr, eager to make up for lost time, drove us on.

As we passed Barter Island, some twenty miles to the north, Tom Wood suggested he and one or two others go up there for ammunition, tobacco, and other supplies. On that island, just off the coast, lived Tom Gordon, a famous old Scotch trader who had spent forty years in the arctic. He had a well-stocked store, several Eskimo families lived with him, and it was only natural that Tom Wood wanted to go up there for a week. Who wouldn't want to toast his toes before a stove, after weeks of shivering in a sleeping bag?

"I'd be glad to go," I said without thinking.

It was the wrong thing to say, because all this time Andy Bahr and I had been getting more and more friendly, and Tom resented it. Anyhow, with considerable scorn, Tom replied:

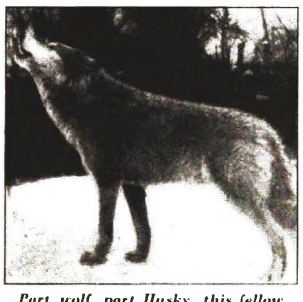
"Him no good. Get lost. No get back."

"Get lost my eye," I replied. "I can go anywhere you can."

Tom turned a look on me that for blackness could hardly be equalled.

Well, Andy didn't let any of us go. I think he half suspected that if an Eskimo got up there he'd like it so well he wouldn't come back. So we headed east some more, the herders grumbling and discontented.

We always camped for the night in the valleys where the moss was thickest. If we had camped up on the flats, the reindeer would have scattered to find feed, and we would have been days rounding them up. We finally came to a valley near Demarcation Point and here Andy decided to camp for a few



Part wolf, part Husky, this fellow answers the call of the wild.

days to give us a chance to rest and eat a few hot meals.

It was there that matters between Tom and me came to a head. By this time he was openly insulting. It's funny that up there on the edge of nowhere, in fifty below temperature, with ghostly mountains and a white ocean to overawe you, with the northern lights flashing and rippling overhead—up there where men need each other—two fellows can find anything to quarrel about.

It hardly seems possible to me now. Yet here was Tom, growling things at me in pidgin English, flicking his head my way and curling his lips in unmistakable fashion. And me, a few years over twenty years old, snapping back at him.

Dinners got so bad I hated to go into the tent to eat. And finally Tom, all through one meal, talked to the others in Eskimo about me. Since I understood very little Eskimo, I had only a sketchy idea of what he was saying, but knew that he carefully covered my personal habits, my appearance and my ability as a herder. He capped it by boasting to the others what he would do to me.

I found myself getting to my feet, all burned up.

"Suppose you and I go outside," I

A few miles a day, the herd of 3,000 reindeer migrated eastward.

told him, "and we'll settle this now."

Then I proceeded, by holding up my fists, to show him plainly what I meant.

Tom hesitated. He didn't want to fight. I know that now. But there he was, before his wife and the herders, being challenged by a white man. So he nodded and started outside.

As I followed him I had a cold, sober second thought. The Eskimos are extremely skillful with knives. They haven't learned the intercollegiate rules of boxing or wrestling. They want only to win. How did I know, if he found himself being licked, that he wouldn't pull a knife?

But it was too late to think of that now. There was no backing out. If either of us quit now, one of us would have to leave the camp. It wouldn't hold us both.

The scrap didn't last long, but while it lasted it was very good for the circulation. Slipping and sliding in the snow, lunging at each other, wrestling and pushing each other off, we had a merry time for a few minutes. He had me down once and I had him down twice. The last time was enough for him, and for a moment I felt pretty good as I stood over him. Then I caught a look in his face, bitter and cunning, and changed my mind.

A little later, in Andy Bahr's tent, the full meaning of what had happened dawned on me.

"He'll kill you," Andy said.

The words sounded rather awful, there on the rim of the continent. For a moment I felt very lonesome.

"You'll have to leave," Andy went on.

"Why shouldn't *he* leave?" I pro-

tested. "He started it. He kept nagging me."

Andy shook his head, and I knew what he was thinking. If Tom left, one or two—perhaps all—of his herders would go with him. They'd take the dogs and pull out. They'd leave Andy and three thousand reindeer in a little valley hundreds of miles from his destination, and three years of work and thousands of dollars would be lost.

Well, I had two choices. I could either go east seventy miles to Herschel Island where a Mounted Police station was located, or I could go back eighty miles to Tom Gordon's cabin.

The Mounted Police might hold me until spring and ship me out of the country. They didn't want tenderfeet without outfits in that country.

Then it had to be Tom Gordon's.

"Can I have a couple of dogs?" I asked.

"We need 'em," Andy replied regretfully. "We can't do without those dogs. We've got to carry our supplies."

"I've got some pay coming," I reminded him.

We bargained a little, and finally by the light of the lamp Andy scrawled a check for $75.

It was black night, forty below, on a windswept piece of treeless ground. I had on my wolverine parka stuffed into a pair of blue jeans. In my pack were my sleeping bag, an extra pair of sealskin mukluks, a hand axe, ammunition, some flour, a little driftwood, and an open pot. I had two guns—a 30-30 Winchester and a .22. Between me and my destination were eighty miles of deserted arctic waste.

In December, up there, the arctic night pales to a deep twilight at noon, but when I took leave of the little camp it was the blackest part of the night. There were stars and a white, clear moon. A wind picked up the surface snow and sent it whirling as high as my knees. Ground drift, we called it.

"Well, good-by, Andy," I said.

Chappie was tied up outside of one of the tents. I went over and roughed his ears. Then I started westward over the packed trail made by three thousand reindeer.

Time didn't have much meaning for me. I slid along over the flats and down into the shallow valleys, following the well-marked path of the herd. I came across a carcass of a deer half-eaten by wolves and stopped to hack a chunk of meat off it with my axe. When I got so exhausted that I was stumbling and half blind, I found a sheltered corner in an ice cliff, chewed on the frozen meat, crawled into my stiff sleeping bag, and slept for at least fifteen hours.

During my sleep a storm covered me and my sleeping bag with nearly a foot of packed snow. When I awoke I found myself unable to turn or move. What was the matter? I tried to see, but the snow pressed me down, shutting out all vision. For a moment I sweated in terror. Then I bounced and wriggled and twisted. Not until the snow cracked and fell away did my panic subside. Then I almost laughed out loud with relief.

That day the wind picked up and blew me off balance and I had to squint my eyes to keep out the snow. Day and night blended. Again, when I was worn out, I found a sheltered spot for my sleeping bag and dreamed the clock around. I don't know why I didn't freeze to death, but perhaps a chunk of frozen meat is enough to keep a healthy body going.

After my third long march I found a small sod igloo down in a bay close to the shore. Here was a chance for a warm night at last! I gathered some driftwood and carried it inside the smelly igloo. From my pack I took the bundle of dry driftwood and soon I had a small fire going.

Hot tea, fried meat, and a long sleep without a shiver!

During the next march I saw, far to the west and north, a tiny light glowing in the distance. I didn't know what it could be but I felt sure it was man-made. Maybe Tom Gordon's!

"It must be Gordon's," I thought. "It can't be anything else."

But when exhaustion overtook me the light still seemed far in the distance. I wasn't marching directly toward it. I had to stay on the reindeer trail. All I could be sure of was that the light was more to the north now than it had been.

Another sleep and another march brought me to a point where many tracks, blurred by wind and snow, led directly to the north. Directly toward that light. I knew that they must be tracks of Eskimo sleds, going up to trade with Tom Gordon.

I turned and followed them to the coast. Along the shore was a ridge of tumbled shore ice, fifteen feet high. I found a path through and struck out across the frozen sea, and now the light was getting larger.

I made out the outlines of a rough cabin sprawling in the snow. To you it would have looked like a tar-paper shack in the slums. To me it was a castle. On a pole above the door swung a gasoline lantern, the light I had followed for twenty-five miles!

My heart was pounding when I rapped on the door. After a wait it opened and a young man stood in the opening, peering out at me. When he saw a white man he was so surprised that he forgot his courtesy. He didn't even invite me in. He backed into the room, turned, and yelled:

"Kobluna!"

"Kobluna" is Eskimo for "white man," and almost instantly a tall man strode to the door. He had on deerskin clothes and his white hair fell to his shoulders. He was straight as a ramrod and his face was old, and I knew it was Tom Gordon. I had met him in Point Barrow months before.

"Hello, Mr. Gordon."

Inside the cabin he looked hard at me.

"Dave Irwin," he breathed. "What are you doing here? Where's Andy?"

I told him briefly.

"Where are your dogs?" He turned to his tall, half-Eskimo son. "Take care of his dogs."

"I haven't any," I answered.

It must have sounded foolish to Mr. Gordon—a young fellow going eighty miles without dogs and practically without supplies. He shook his head.

"I'm surprised you made it."

And maybe, if I'd been wiser, I'd have been surprised too. All I knew at the moment was that I had found warmth and food and a bed, and right then I felt that there was nothing in all the arctic wastes that I wouldn't tackle.

"I didn't really want my portrait done when I learned what it was costing me!"

Lead Dog (*Continued from page 11*)

hardwood sled and the musical notes of snow under his flying feet.

A storm was raging at the crest of the Summit. He watched with dismay as the gusty, uncertain wind roiled up tons of the powdery snow. Bare spots appeared and disappeared as the snow was lifted.

Jimmie must head directly into the storm and cross the miles of trail it had ruined. Perhaps his dogs would refuse to face the stinging blast of the wind. . . . On the other hand Slade probably had beaten the storm and was heading down the other side of the Summit by now.

Then they were above timber line. Wind ballooned Jimmie's clothes and filled them with snow. He slitted his eyes, bowed his head, struggled to get his breath in air that seemed solid, as if he were breathing feathers.

As the shrieking wind carried an ever thicker smother of snow, Jimmie could scarcely see his dogs. But he could tell from the jerky slowing of the sled that they were trying to burrow into the drifts.

Jimmie went up past the team to the leader. Jack Frost was the only dog that was not digging in.

"Come on, Jackie! It's up to you now, pardner," Jimmie muttered through stiffened lips. He unsnapped the leader from the towline. "Get 'em going, boy. Savage 'em out!"

Jack Frost took a few experimental steps forward—then realized he was loose. A snarl rumbling from his chest, he turned on the dog nearest him and snapped savagely at an exposed leg. That dog erupted from his nest with a yelp of fear.

"Atta boy, Jackie!" Jimmie shouted. "All right, Tango! Mush on there, Pork and Beans!"

Spurred on by Jimmie's evident approval, Jackie lunged in and out, nipping exposed parts of the team. They gave up all hope of hiding out the storm and followed Jackie, who ranged ahead to smell out the trail. Jimmie boosted the light sled over snowdrifts, threw a bewildered dog over to his own side of the towline, floundered through drifts, and stumbled into the clear. A minute lost might cost him the race. He fought the howling storm for another mile that seemed like five.

The instant he stopped the team in the lee of the Summit roadhouse, the dogs dropped to the snow and commenced chewing snow from between their toes.

The old sourdough popped out of the roadhouse.

"Say, what kind of storm hounds have you got," he asked, "to come through that blizzard? You're right up with the leaders, in spite of getting the worst of the weather."

"Jensen?" Jimmie queried anxiously. "Jensen pushed his team a little too much and now he's got a stiff dog in the sled. Johnny Big-Fox has a lame leader—tore off a dewclaw breaking through the crust. Them Indians will learn sometime to cut the dewclaws off pups.

"That fella Slade," the sourdough continued, "is making the best time right now. But he can't keep it up. He's pounded those dogs till they're near crazy. I've tipped the other officials off, but I suppose he's too slick to get caught at it."

Two miles from Fox the team was settling down into that dreaded jogging trot against which every dog musher must fight. The pace is too fast to rest the dogs, too slow to win a race.

Jimmie heard a report like a pistol shot. A dog yelped somewhere in the spruce trees along the trail ahead. His own team pricked up their ears, sniffed the wind, started a spurt that carried them swiftly into the trees, through them. Ahead were Russell Slade and his team.

Slade's dogs were running in loose formation, not pulling much, tired. Slade was feeding them leather as he tried to force a spurt out of them.

Jimmie's team pulled up quickly behind Slade's. Jimmie wondered, seeing Slade's tired team, how he had ever kept them going for so long.

He thought: no matter how careful I am about whom I sell my dogs to, if I don't win, they might be sold again and again until they get into the hands of a driver like that.

Slade turned, saw Jimmie's team close behind him, and deliberately maneuvered his team so that they were running in the middle of the trail, blocking it. One of the few rules of the race is that a driver, approached by another team, must clear at least half the trail for passing.

"I want the trail, Slade!" Jimmie called.

Slade turned and swung his whip menacingly.

Jimmie let his eager dogs pull up close, then shouted again. Slade swung his whip, and before Jimmie knew what he was about, slashed Jackie across the face.

Jackie slowed abruptly, in almost comic astonishment. Jimmie clenched his teeth and held his rage. A fight with Slade would cost him the race. And he *had* to win!

"Take him, Jackie boy," Jimmie shouted angrily. "Savage him! Hit the trail!"

Jackie had never bitten a man. But Jimmie was different today. Seemed to want unusual things. Jackie bared his teeth, tried to crowd past Slade.

Slade himself brought it on. He swung his whip again, Jackie was too quick for him. With the speed of a fighting wolf, he lunged to one side, behind Slade, and sank his teeth into the man's mukluk, through fur and socks and into the calf of his leg. Slade howled, hopped onto his sled to avoid the dog.

"All right, Jackie!" Jimmie shouted. "Mush on, boy!"

For Jackie the incident was closed. He bucked leather, dragging the team past Slade's weary dogs. They were in the clear before a dog fight could start. Jimmie drew a long breath, called Jackie a "vicious old renegade." The dog didn't understand the words. But he liked the tone.

The excitement carried the team at full tilt to Fox. They rocketed through the tiny town amid a thunder of assorted rebel yells, college cheers, and cowboy shouts.

The home stretch from Fox to the finish line would tell the tale!

The dogs were tired. Jimmie knew they had a fast finish in them, but it was up to him to draw it out—the acid test of a racer and his dogs.

He called upon every one of his tricks. He sang snatches of lively songs and imitated crows and whisky-jacks. He shouted "Rabbits!" excitedly at every slightest excuse.

And the team responded to all the strange excitement.

When Slade and his team reached Fox, the crowd stood silent. There was a tense stranger in the crowd, holding a female Siberian on a frayed leash. When Slade's team passed, she lunged against her collar. The old leash broke. In a flash she was ahead of the dogs. She knew just how to coax the most out of a team, by streaking out of sight ahead and barking furiously or by seeming to tire and almost letting the dogs catch her. For she was a thoroughly trained "loose leader" and her tricks had been rehearsed often on lonely trails.

Slade would tell the judges that she was a stray; that she had mixed up his team and started one fight after another. That would explain the whip cuts. His partner would stick to his story that he was an innocent spectator taking his pet dog for a walk.

One mile from the finish line! Jimmie rode one runner, kicked the sled forward. He was almost too tired to hold his head up. He saw a spectator standing by the road, heard him yell something. Another bystander. This time Jimmie heard: "You made the best time so far—keep it up!"

Three more spectators, all pointing down the back trail, yelling together so that Jimmie couldn't tell what they said. He looked back. There came Slade, riding the runners, popping his whip. How had he done it?

Slade drew up steadily. He was almost in position to demand the trail when Jimmie rounded the bend and hit the half-mile home stretch. Here two teams could pass and no driver could ask another to move over. Jimmie saw Slade's loose leader. He was too intent on his job to wonder about it.

"Beat Slade and you'll win!" It was almost a steady roar now.

Slade's team was at his heels. They moved over to pass.

"In line, Jenny!" Slade shouted.

The loose leader dropped back to run on the side away from Jimmie's team. Thus she would be hidden from Jimmie's dogs, and wouldn't spur them to a faster pace. She nipped at Slade's leader, crowded against him, licked his face.

Jimmie hopped off the runner and forced his rubbery legs to run. Relieved of all pull, the team speeded up. Slade's leader was even with Jimmie's wheel dog.

Slade dropped off his runners and yelled at the dogs. His leader slowly crept up on Jimmie's team.

The finish line was in sight. A wild crowd milled there.

Slade's dogs pulled abreast. Then ahead. The timer held his thumb to the stop screw on his watch.

Jimmie's breath came in great sobbing gulps that tore at his aching lungs. From somewhere in the small of his back he called forth a pitiful little final burst of strength. His push ran the sled into the back legs of his wheel dogs, made them jump forward and hit the next in line. Each pair of dogs passed on the impetus to the pair ahead. But all Jimmie could see was the ribbon of snow passing back between the runners, agonizingly slow.

Then there was a roar of sound, and presently all motion ceased. The race was over! Someone threw a fur coat over his heaving shoulders. Someone held a bowl of hot moose broth to his lips. Cameras clicked. A newsreel man urged him to pose.

Jimmie dazedly pushed his way through the crowd of strangers who kept thumping his back and telling him he'd won by the fastest time ever made. Jimmie didn't even see the president of the kennel club extending the silver trophy cup.

He dropped on one knee beside Jackie, flung an arm over the dog's shoulders.

"Good dog!" Jimmie muttered. "Good dog!"

Jackie solemnly and wearily offered a paw in his only parlor trick. The crowd quieted, stepped back respectfully. They knew how it was, with a man and his lead dog.

STAMPS

WHETHER you are a beginning stamp collector with but a few stamps or a seasoned collector with a valuable album, it is important that you keep informed about the stamp market as reflected by the stamp advertisements in the columns adjoining this department. Read EVERY advertisement for somewhere in these columns you may find a bargain in the very stamps you need to round out your collection.

by **Kent B. Stiles**

THE philatelic news hounds at Washington are authority for statements, not yet officially confirmed, that the Post Office Department plans to release three stamps which would supplement the Constitution 3c issued last September. Also that further events identified with the development of the Northwest Territory will be commemorated. And that President Roosevelt is sponsoring the idea of postal "specials," along the line of the Army and Navy series, to honor noted American authors, artists, physicians, composers, clergymen, and so forth, with several portraits on each stamp.

Such reports are sometimes reliable and often otherwise. Many stamps predicted do not materialize. When we scan the philatelic record of the Roosevelt Administration during the past five years, however, it is safe to believe that 1938 is to be a crowded postal year at Washington, for aside from the proposed Delaware tercentenary stamp, which seems a certainty, the Government is committed to starting a new "regular" series. It is improbable that the "commemorative" phase of the program will be restricted to the Delaware stamp. The deluge of "specials" requested by individuals and organized groups is being analyzed, and other commemoratives of historical significance will undoubtedly be announced in due time.

In 1789, the first American Congress convened in New York City on April 6. On April 30, George Washington was inaugurated as the first President. In September, the Supreme Court was established. Thus the sesquicentennials do not occur until 1939. For stamp-issuing purposes, however, it is purposed to "advance" them by one year, in order to sustain public interest in the sesquicentennial celebration, and to issue, in 1938, three stamps, one to commemorate each of the dates—such postal paper thus honoring the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the government.

The Soviet Union's "Conquest" of the North Pole serves as the theme for this stamp.

RUSSIA is justifiably proud of the achievements of its aviators who risked death on flights across the North Pole last year, and stamps released by the U. S. S. R. reflect the daring of those intrepid pilots.

It will be recalled that three of them, Baidukov, Tchkalov (the leader) and Beliakov, made a transpolar journey in June, from Moscow to Portland, Oregon. Portraits of these "Heroes of the Soviet Union" are on 10, 20, 40 and 50-kopeck commemoratives released in January. Under their likenesses is a map of the North Pole region with their route traced. On the lower two values, Moscow is inscribed and starred; and on the other two, Portland. The Soviet flag flies at "the top of the world." Numerals inscribed tell the dates, and also the hour and minute of departure and arrival.

Commemorating "the conquest of the North Pole by the Soviet Union," 10, 20, 40 and 80k stamps appeared late in 1937. The design of the 10 and 20k shows a map of the region and depicts four planes approaching the Pole; that of the 40 and 80k, the planes at the Pole and the Soviet banner.

In celebration of these triumphs, Moscow staged a "Jubilee Aviatic Exhibition" on Nov. 15-20 and issued a souvenir sheet containing four 1-ruble stamps in a single design—a five-motored plane above Leningrad's skyline.

Commemorating the "Jubilee Aviatic Exhibition" at Moscow.

AUSTRIA in the Alpast has issued sets honoring musicians, poets, artists, military heroes and inventors. Now comes a series with portraits of men identified with medicine—on 5 plus 5-groschen sepia-brown, Gerhard van Swieten (1700-1772), a Dutchman who became the first physician of Empress Maria Theresa of Austria; 8 plus 8gr dark red, Leopold Auenbrugger (1772-1809), Viennese physician and medical writer; 12 plus 12gr dark green, Carl Rokitansky (1804-1878), founder of the Vienna school of pathological anatomy; 20 plus 20 gr blue-green, Joseph Skoda (1805-1881), distinguished physician and professor; 24 plus 24 gr blue-violet, Ferdinand Hebra (1816-1880), probably Austria's greatest dermatologist; 30 plus 30gr brown-carmine, Ferdinand Ritter von Arlt (1812-1887), founder of a world-famous school for oculists; 40 plus 40gr olive-green, Joseph Hyrtl (1810-1894), anatomist, professor and medical writer; 60 plus 60gr dark blue, Albert Christian Theodor Billroth (1829-1894), Viennese surgeon and medical and music writer; and 64 plus 64gr red-violet, Theodor Meynert (1833-1892), psychiatrist and brain anatomist.

Ancient Egypt's health-giving "sacred eye," called "Oudja," is appropriately the central design of 5-milliemes red-brown, 15m purple and 20m blue stamps which Egypt released in December to commemorate the *XV Concilium Ophthalmologicum 1937* (Fifteenth Ophthalmological Congress 1937), at Cairo. At the eye's left is the prehistoric goddess Nekhbet in the shape of a vulture wearing the crown of the Upper Kingdom; while at the right is the goddess Outo in the form of a serpent wearing the crown of Lower Egypt. Hieroglyphics at either side spell the word "Oudja;" and the inscription identifying the Congress is in four languages—French, Arabic, Egyptian and Latin. This is the first time Latin has appeared on Egyptian postal paper.

Gallery

ON A beautifully executed series, Italy presents four newcomers to philately's expanding panorama of portraits.

On 10-centesimi brown and 1-lira 75c orange is honored Gasparo Luigi Pacifico Spontini (1774-1851), composer. The 20c rose and 2L 55c plus 2L gray-green present a likeness of Antonio Stradivari (1644-1737), the famous maker of the violins. Giovanni Battista Pergolisi (1710-1736), composer, is remembered on 30c olive-brown and 75c red. Giotto di Bondone (more familiarly known as Giotto), painter, who was born in 1266 or 1267 and who died in 1337, is recalled on 1L 25c blue and 2L 75c plus 2L brown. Also appears, on 25c green and 50c violet, a portrait already familiar to collectors—that of Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837), poet.

Each stamp is inscribed *Centenario di* (centenary of), which is something of a misnomer on several of these commemoratives, as the anniversaries are the 600th for Giotto and the 200th for Pergolisi and Stradivari.

Meanwhile Ivory Coast has placed on a 65-centimes red-brown a likeness of Louis Gustave Binger, who, born in 1856, was a French explorer who became Ivory Coast's first governor-general. He died on Oct. 25, 1936, and the stamp recalls his passing.

As propaganda to the world that Germany has seized political control of Danzig, the German authorities supervising Danzig's postal system have, according to

STAMPS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Stamp Collectors, Notice!

When a stamp dealer mentions "approval sheets" or "approvals" in his advertisement, it means that each person answering the advertisement will receive sheets of stamps sent on approval.

An approval sheet contains stamps attached to it. Under each stamp is marked the dealer's price. The collector may purchase any of the stamps at the prices indicated. All stamps NOT purchased are returned to the dealer; and, at the same time, money is sent to the dealer in payment for any stamps which are kept.

Approval sheets should be returned within the time specified by the dealer. No stamp should be removed unless the collector intends to purchase it. When returning sheets, the collector should tell the dealer specifically whether he wants further ones sent on approval.

A dealer advertising in The American Boy is not supposed to send approval sheets to collectors unless his advertisement clearly states that they will be sent.

newspaper dispatches from the former capital of West Prussia, issued charity stamps, one of which (25 plus 25 pfennige red) bears the swastika, the Nazi symbol, for the first time in Danzig's postal history.

Condition

CONTINUING the chats (begun last month) for beginners, this present one will be devoted to condition.

Holes, tears, cut perforations, thin spots and heavy cancellations are involved in any discussion of "condition." When one or more of these affect a stamp, such a stamp is virtually without philatelic value if it is a common stamp; or if it is a rare stamp, the worth is diminished.

This stamp pictures the three Russians who flew from Moscow to the United States.

A stamp which was issued originally with perforations must have all the perforating intact if it is to have any value. A thin spot is just what the term implies—a thinning of a portion of the reverse surface, caused perhaps by careless removal of stamp from envelope or possibly because poor hinges have been affixed to the reverse when the stamp was mounted in albums. Postal clerks are responsible for heavy cancellations, and there is nothing much we can do about that—but we *can* avoid cluttering our collections with stamps so heavily daubed that the designs cannot be studied and the inscriptions read.

Whenever possible, avoid mounting stamps which are torn or have thin spots or are cruelly obliterated by cancelling. While we collect primarily for the fun of it, and because of the hobby's educational values, some day we may wish to sell the collection and we will hope to receive at least as much as we paid for the stamps when we bought them. That hope will never be realized if attention is not paid to condition as we go along.

If a damaged or too-heavily-cancelled stamp is picked up for nothing, keep it until a finer copy comes your way and then substitute the new one for the old in the album. But don't spend good money for trash! *Never buy* a poor stamp. Don't do business with a dealer who makes a practice of offering torn and heavily cancelled stamps on approval sheets. Such stamps have no investment value. And when swapping with fellow collectors, don't surrender perfectly conditioned stamps in return for poor copies. When you trade, use your duplicates for getting *only good* stamps. If you have a poor stamp in your collection, replace it with a good copy as soon as possible, even sacrificing some of your duplicates to that end.

It is not a good idea to trade stamp for stamp. Don't swap a stamp worth ten cents for one catalogued at only two cents—merely to add another variety to your collection. If your fellow hobbyist covets your ten-cent stamp, you are entitled to receive, in return, five stamps worth two cents each. Too many beginners follow the "stamp for stamp" swapping practice and are unfair to themselves.

When you discard an especially poor stamp from your collection by substituting a fine copy newly acquired, don't relegate the poorer stamp to your duplicates. Instead, *destroy it*. It will always be valueless anyhow, whoever may own it, if it is badly torn, so why leave it in circulation? And certainly it is unfair for you to try to trade off a poor stamp for a perfect one; giving nothing for something is a poor business in *any* line of trade.

One way to help preserve investment value is by using the *right* hinges. Use *peelable* hinges *only*. Don't let a dealer sell you hinges which are not guaranteed peelable. Peelable hinges may cost a few cents more per thousand—but they are worth it! Many a good stamp has been spoiled in the effort to remove a poor-grade hinge. The peelable hinge comes off readily and does not cause that hated thin spot.

If you acquire a stamp with a half-hinge still attached, remove the half-hinge—carefully, so as not to cause a thin spot—before affixing another hinge for mounting. Some collections are filled with stamps to which hinge after hinge has been attached, and a stamp thus mistreated soon loses its philatelic worth, as the piled-on thickness of the hinge paper eventually causes the paper texture of the stamp itself to become crinkled and cracked—and pfft! goes the stamp's value. Use of *only peelable* "stickers" solves this problem.

The Reef of Lost Ships

(Continued from page 5)

negligence while on watch, Mr. Trenton. You were stationed here to oil bearings. Instead you lie on the deck asleep."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Very well. See if you can obey orders this time."

But you can forget almost anything in time. Finally that dreadful watch was only an occasional unpleasant memory to Ensign Thomas J. Trenton, navigation and gunnery officer of the destroyer *Lafarge*, and on his second night aboard as the *Lafarge*, in a column of destroyers, steamed south off the coast of Mexico, Tommy thought of the watch for the first time in a long while. Looking across the narrow cabin at his old classmate Cy who was sitting on the desk in dungaree trousers and battered cap, Tommy remarked: "You know, it's funny thing about Skinner. But I guess I should have known I'd run into him again if I stayed in the Navy long enough."

"Of all the tin cans in the fleet we had to get the one Skinner's commanding. What was he dressing you down about when you came aboard yesterday?"

Tommy laughed a little and rubbed some pencil marks off a chart of the Mexican coast. "He said my record showed a tendency toward disregarding orders and doing things on my own hook and that he wouldn't allow it on the *Lafarge*. Sometimes I think he honestly believes I disobey orders just to cross him." Tommy shrugged. "It's a honey of a night, isn't it?"

"And time to go on watch. So long," Cy said.

Tommy relieved the officer of the watch on the tiny bridge of the destroyer and, after checking course and speed and the night's orders, settled himself near the window. The Pacific was living up to its name as it stretched away from the column of ghostly ships in a broad sheet of ebony. There was not a ripple on the surface except the gleaming, phosphorescent wakes of the ships ahead. At the edge of the night the black sea rolled up into the starlit sky and there was no line between them.

Standing there Tommy looked at the huge sea and wondered where the rest of the Navy was. Somewhere in a radius of a hundred miles was scattered the entire sea force of a nation and yet all he could find were the stern lights of three ships ahead of him in column, and one of the fourteen ships aft. Tiny, steady lights which did not seem to move, but to hang motionless above the white, dim wake.

Tommy turned away and snapped on the light above the plotting board. The ship's position at midnight was marked in pencil on the chart and, since fleet orders changed so rapidly, there was not much use advancing the position for four hours. However, he got the parallel rulers and a pair of dividers and began to lay down their course at twenty-eight knots for four more hours. Drawing the line lightly in pencil he found to his amusement that he had made a mistake and put the ship's course directly over Lost Ship Reef. Rubbing it out he began again, being careful to shift the rulers without slipping. Again his course line sliced the reef. Annoyed with himself, Tommy checked the chart for true, and used a T square and triangles instead of the rulers. Again the faint pencil line sliced the reef. Tommy checked the course and speed. Course 172, speed 28.

Systematically he went about finding the error. He checked the chart, the corrections, reread the pilot book and the *Notices to Mariners*. Lost Ship Reef was a rocky mountain top jutting up from the bottom of the sea some hundred miles from the coast of Mexico. Barely awash at high water it rose three or four feet at low tide. It had gotten its name from the old days, in which ships, trying to beat up to the rich Spanish colony of California, had killed themselves on that solitary reef in the otherwise empty sea.

Tommy found no error. The course of the eighteen destroyers led them directly into the reef.

Then Tommy began to flip voice tubes. "Radio. Radio—ask for confirmation of course one seven two, speed two eight—Engine room—make a careful check of your R.P.M. and let me know as soon as you can." In a few minutes the radioman brought an answer confirming the course and speed; the engine room reported a steady twenty-eight knots.

Carefully then, with dividers and a large-scale chart, Tommy laid down the course. If they held twenty-eight knots there would be exactly one hour and six minutes before the first ship of Destroyer Division Three would go piling into Lost Ship Reef. At their five-hundred yard cruising interval, Tommy thought sardonically, it would not take long for the other seventeen in line to pile up on their sisters. That would all begin at nine minutes to two.

Tommy turned the light off and stood looking at the black sea. His orders were clear, his duty was clear, and it was definitely not his business to question or change orders. Perhaps the C in C would change the course in time. If he didn't Tommy Trenton would be just one of eighteen junior officers who lost a ship and ship's crew of men, and the blame would not be theirs but the C in C's.

It was one-thirty before Tommy called the radioman again, but no change of orders had come through. At last Tommy, nervous, called Skinner.

"What is it?" Skinner demanded through the tube, his voice still thick with sleep.

"The course we're on will put us aground in another half hour, sir. With your permission I'll radio the C in C."

"You'll do nothing of the sort," Skinner shouted. "I've been expecting something like this. You're not running this fleet, Mr. Trenton." And with that he snapped the tube shut sending Tommy's last protest echoing hollowly.

For a second Tommy stood wondering what to do. The C in C knew his business. The course *must* be right. Somewhere Tommy had miscalculated. He wished Cy had been there, or that it was daytime so a man could see something besides that horrid black sheet of water spread around him.

Skinner would probably keelhaul him for doing it, but all the same, Tommy argued, perhaps the ship at the head of the column knew something he didn't. He rang for the radioman, who was slow reporting. When at last he came he handed Tommy a slip. It said they were in a theoretical war zone; lights were to be dead, radios had been blanketed with impenetrable static.

Tommy looked at the paper as the lights all over the ship went out. Ahead, the other destroyers suddenly disappeared into the black sea as their range and running lights were doused, and there was nothing to mark the presence of ships except the fading greenish tinge of their wakes.

But Tommy could feel them. Looking at the stars reflected on the surface of the sea he could feel the eighteen ships around him — three ahead, fourteen astern. Ships, though dark, alive with men — with men sleeping far below decks, with men in hammocks, officers in their bunks. All living men going now straight toward the reef through this black sea. Somewhere far up the line a man's pencil had slipped—had moved a fraction of an inch in error and now an entire division of destroyers would pile up one after the other on that reef.

Or would it? Whose boner would it be? Tommy's or the C in C's? Tommy was new at the game. The C in C an old-timer.

The clock hand leaped to eleven minutes before two o'clock. Two more minutes. Perhaps the course could still be changed in time. Those men—sleeping! Not walking and seeing, but sleeping in darkness. The thought of them was too vivid to allow any thought of his own career.

Tommy was surprised at his own calm voice as he said quietly, "Helmsman."

"Aye, sir."

"I'm going to change the course. On the order, change course to two six two compass. We will probably then stop, ships drawing out of line in succession."

The helmsman, his face lit dimly by the light from the binnacle, did not take his eyes off the compass face. "Aye, sir," and held her steady.

"Quartermaster, man the after-searchlight and order 'Ships column right in succession.'"

"Searchlights are ordered dead, sir," the Q.M. reminded.

"Man the searchlight, please," Tommy said, his voice flat and hard. "Lookout, set off flares for 'Emergency stop, ships draw out in succession.'"

From the mainmast there leaped a sudden long knife blade of light, slicing into the black heavens. Then, in furiously urgent dots and dashes, it flashed its message aft. Before it was through, the red emergency flare floated over the *Lafarge* and drifted slowly down to melt out in the sea. Once more the searchlight flashed the signal to execute the column-right movement. The *Lafarge's* bow hung for a second and swung hard to starboard.

Then, from the utter stillness of the night, there came one hoarse cry from a lookout on the leading ship. The cry was drowned by the awful crashing of racing steel against solid rock. With men shouting and steel grinding against the rock, the first ship drove at half speed into Lost Ship Reef. It swung to port, and hung there on the sloping, glistening rock. The second ship smashed into her sister. The third, her engines full speed astern, floated into the other two and then drew off.

In a second the whole night was mad. Flares raked the sky, searchlights darted into the sea with frantic fingers, trying to find the trouble. Man-overboard guns boomed and rattled in the motionless air and the cries of the men increased. The engines stopped and ships lay still on the water.

The cries were terrible to Tommy as he worked furiously getting his boats manned and over the side. He yelled at the man on the searchlight to order all lights out for they were only blinding each other. When only the *Lafarge's* lights were picking the scene out of the darkness, Tommy began directing the lifeboats toward the injured men he could see drowning in the water.

Etched in gray and black and white, the three ships lay together—two of them impaled on the reef, the other apparently helpless as she floated beside her sisters. Steel, once smooth and proud, was now twisted and ragged in the frozen glare of the light. But Tommy found a little comfort as he looked at the long, dim line of motionless watchful ships aft of his own.

Suddenly, behind him, he heard Skinner: "Remove your insignia, Mr. Trenton, and remain in your cabin until notified."

Tommy turned to face his superior but Skinner only beckoned toward the hatch with his hand and moved to the rail.

With a last look about Tommy walked slowly across the deck and into the dark passageway. Cy, still in pajamas, slammed into him, yelling, "What's happened? What's the matter?" but Tommy only said, "Nothing," and went on to his cabin. Without turning on the light, he took off his coat with the single gold stripe and his cap with the eagle, and laid them on his bunk. Then, pushing aside the port, he looked out at the painfully quiet scene of the wreck.

For a long time he stood watching until every living man had been rescued and the other ships had formed and were rigging collision mats on the two damaged destroyers.

At dawn, when all the ships were afloat again and the distant hulks of the battle fleet were beginning to show over the horizon, Tommy finally pulled the curtain over the porthole and sat down wearily on his bed.

At last Cy came in, his face still flushed with excitement. Stamping around he seemed to notice Tommy at last. "What's the matter?" Cy asked, sitting down beside him.

"I disobeyed orders," Tommy said, his voice dead and tired.

"How? What happened?"

"We were heading for the reef and I ordered them to turn off. Skinner sent me below."

Cy stared at Tommy in amazement. "You mean *you* turned off the last fifteen ships?"

Tommy nodded.

They sat in silence for some time. At last Cy said, his voice cold with anger, "I don't get it."

"Disobedience," Tommy said.

"Sure. And you saved sixteen ships and hundreds of men. What does Skinner want?"

Tommy lay back on the bed, staring at the bunk above him. "I don't know."

Cy went out of the room. In a few minutes he was back, his face dark with anger, his hands trembling as he held out a carbon copy from the radio room. "Read that. Skinner accepted that," Cy said, flatly.

Tommy read the words listlessly, hardly understanding them. "THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE BATTLE FLEET WISHES TO CONGRATULATE THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE *LAFARGE* FOR BRAVERY ABOVE AND BEYOND THE DEMAND OF DUTY. WELL DONE."

"Skinner took that himself. He took the credit for what you did," Cy raged as Tommy let the sheet drop and stared again at the bunk. "That dirty, low-down—"

Someone rapped sharply on the door. Skinner came in, stopping just over the threshold. Both ensigns stood up, facing him and for long, angry seconds the three of them stood there until at last Skinner said, "Trenton, with unwarranted assumption of authority you ordered a change of course and otherwise disobeyed the orders of your superior officer. I—"

Cy stepped forward, his fists clenched, his face drawn tight with rage. "Sure, he did," Cy said, "and look what happened — sixteen ships afloat now—all those men alive—only two ships—"

"Let it go, Cy," Tommy said, quietly.

"Yes," Skinner said, "let it go." He handed Tommy a radiogram, turned abruptly and left the cabin.

"What's it say?" Cy asked, as Tommy handed him the blank.

"THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE DESTROYER *LAFARGE* WISHES TO INFORM THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF THAT THE CHANGE OF COURSE WAS ORDERED AND EXECUTED BY THE NAVIGATION OFFICER, ENSIGN THOMAS J. TRENTON, WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OR AUTHORIZATION OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER. ALL CREDIT IS DUE THIS OFFICER FOR HIS FORESIGHT AND SPLENDID DISPLAY OF INITIATIVE UNDER ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES. JOHN M. SKINNER, COMMANDING."

Cy began to laugh. Tommy laughed too, a little, as he held the paper in his hands, looking at it with dimming eyes.

FUNNYBONE TICKLERS

"You told me to show the gentleman the door, sir!"

Resourceful

Scene, Editor's Sanctum (printer rushing in excitedly): "Here's a fine go! Giggiwigg, the murderer, has just been found innocent, and the Governor has telegraphed a pardon. We've got the whole account of the hanging set up, with illustrations, and the form is on the press."

Editor (coolly): "Don't get excited, man. Put over the story in large capitals, 'Giggiwigg pardoned. Full account of what he escaped.'"

At Court

"Have you ever appeared as a witness before?"

"Yes, your honor."

"In what suit?"

"I think it was my blue serge!"

Which One?

"Is that Peabody, Finchley, Longworth, and Fitzgerald?"

"Yes, this is Peabody, Finchley, Longworth, and Fitzgerald."

"I want to speak to Mr. Smith."

Recommendation

Bald Student: "You say you can recommend this hair restorer?"

Barber: "Yes, sir. I know a man who removed the cork from the bottle with his teeth, and within twenty-four hours he had a mustache."

Tit for Tat

A printer got slightly peeved at a letterhead from a doctor who wanted bids on several thousand letterheads, different sizes, different grades, and different colors, and wanted the printing form held standing. So the printer took his typewriter in hand and wrote:

"Am in the market for bids on one operation for appendicitis. One, two or five-inch incision—with or without ether—also with or without nurse. If appendix is found to be sound, want quotations to include putting back same and canceling order. If removed, successful bidder is expected to hold incision open for about sixty days, as I expect to be in the market for an operation for gallstones at that time and want to save the extra cost of cutting."

A Mystery

A farmer ran in to tell a neighbor that his wife had suddenly gone insane. "I don't know where she could have caught that insanity germ," he added. "She ain't been outside our kitchen for 25 years."

Reporter's First Effort

A man killed a dog belonging to another man. The son of the man whose dog was killed proceeded to whip the man who killed the dog of the man he was the son of. The man who was the son of the man whose dog was killed was arrested on complaint of the man who was assaulted by the son of the man whose dog the man who was assaulted had killed.

"Get grandpappy your flashlight—I think he wants a drink."

Advance Payment

"Rastus," said the judge, sternly, "you are found guilty of having stolen two chickens from Mr. Robinson's coop last week. The fine will be five dollars."

Smiling complacently, Rastus approached the clerk of the court and laid a ten-dollar bill on the desk.

"Yassuh, Jedge," he said. "So Ah gives you ten dollars, which will pay up to an' includin' nex' Sattidy night."

Service

The man walked into a restaurant ornate in its futuristic decorations and reeking with an atmosphere of high prices. He was ushered to a table and immediately ordered a glass of water. The waiter brought the water, which the man swallowed with one gulp, and asked for another glass of water. While the waiter was away the man took a small package of sandwiches and spread them on the table. No sooner was this done than a severe looking individual came to the table and said: "I beg your pardon, sir, but this isn—"

"Who are you?" interrupted the man.

"I am the manager," was the impressive reply.

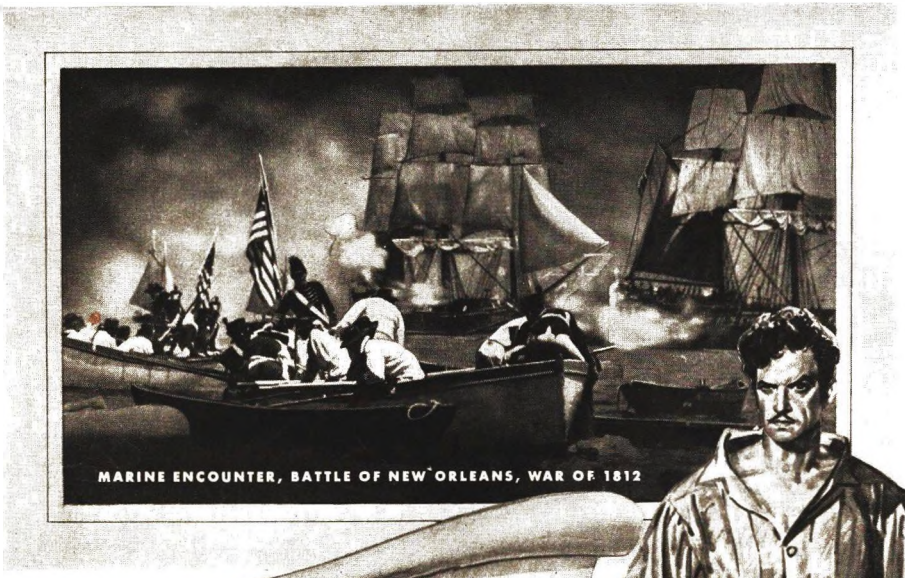
"Good!" said the man. "I was just going to send for you. Why isn't the orchestra playing?"

A New Specimen

"What is an octopus?" said a teacher during the last week of school.

"Why, it's a cat with eight sides," answered Willie.

Paramount's Flaming Story of the Pirate Who Saved the Nation



JEAN LAFITTE was the boldest pirate who ever scuttled a ship, carved a lad's ribs with his cutlass, or flew the skull and cross-bones in the teeth of an enemy broadside. Jean Lafitte had a price on his head, and a fancy one too, set by the nations whose merchant ships he plundered beneath the Caribbean sun. But when the United States, the country he loved with all the reckless devil-may-care abandon of his pirate heart, was in real danger, when a British fleet and a British army threatened New Orleans, and General Andrew Jackson (Old Hickory) needed men and powder, Jean Lafitte laughed at the gallows, laughed at the price they'd put on his head, manned the ramparts of New Orleans with his bold, bad buccaneers and helped hawk-nosed, steel-eyed Old Hickory drive the British from our shores.

A thrilling moment in American history . . . a thrilling moment in the grandest adventure picture Cecil B. DeMille has ever brought to the screen . . . the flaming, true life-story of Jean Lafitte, gentleman unafraid.