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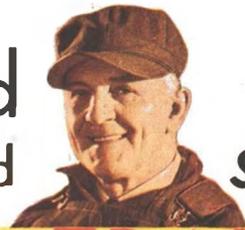
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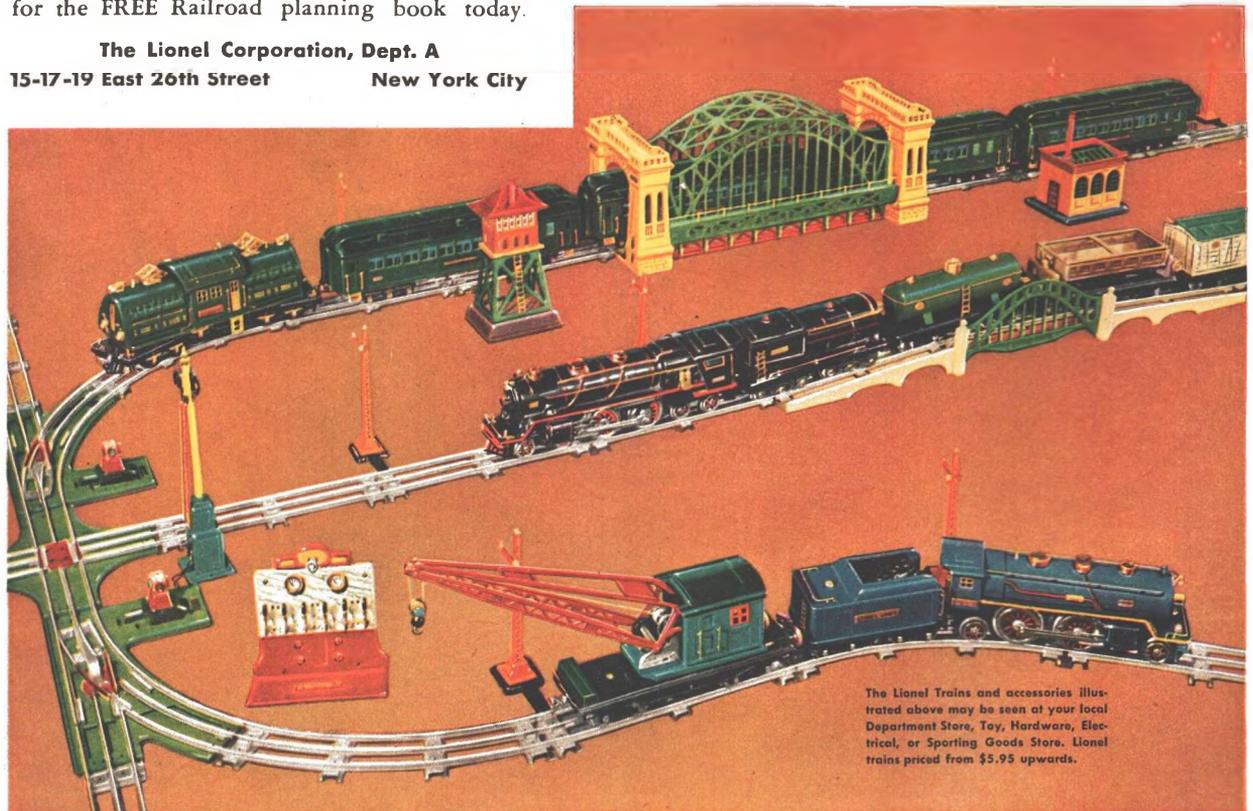
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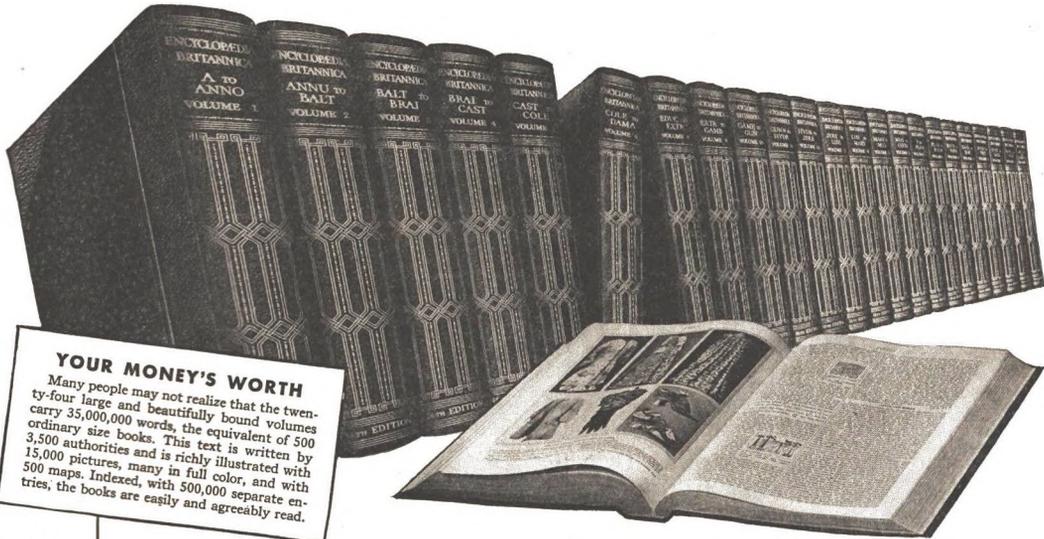
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Volume 105 November, 1931 Number 11

# The Master Minds of Mars

Chapter One

By Carl H. Claudy and Dr. John C. Page

Illustrated by A. C. Valentine

IN the anteroom of his private laboratory, Dr. Isaac Lutyens, Aberdonian professor of physics and higher mathematics, looked under heavy brows at two young men. The shock head of white hair, the huge beaked nose, and the enormous eyebrows were well known in scientific circles. There was in his intent gaze, an almost predatory quality until one noticed that his brown eyes were in reality mild. His ability to concentrate was a legend; it was said of him that he might lose a leg while demonstrating a mathematical theorem and not notice the loss. "You—" the professor spoke in a slightly Teutonic accent to the younger, slighter man—"are an orphan, graduate and postgraduate in science at the university. You hold three degrees and say you are willing to risk your life for great reward!"

The eyes of the youth lit up, and his brown head nodded.

"You—" now he spoke to the other man, larger-framed and less eager in manner—"are also an orphan and you say you can cook. You are strong like an ox and have been an adventurer in many lands. You are not college trained, but you say you care less for life than for great adventure?"

"I want to know about it before I commit myself," answered the man.

"You are the choice out of 137 who answered mine advertisement!" The professor's brows drew together in a slightly irritated frown; he didn't like to be interrupted. "Brains und brawn! Alan Kane, Theodore Dolliver."

Kane, the slender university graduate, looked interestedly at his companion-to-be on the unknown adventure promised by the professor. He saw a thickset young man about thirty years old, with reddish hair, freckles, keen blue eyes, and a face that seemed impassive until it lighted with a smile. Great strength was apparent in the broad shoulders and long arms. His hands were broad and stubby-fingered. He was carelessly dressed. Alan read him as independent, good-natured, courageous.

"Name is Dolliver—Ted for short." The adventurer shook hands with Alan unsmilingly; Alan felt he resented the implication that brawn might not possess brains.

"But you have yet to say you are willing to go with me on a so dangerous expedition!" continued the professor to Ted. "Come with me."

The two young men arose with alacrity and followed Professor Lutyens through the university laboratory—a large room filled with apparatus, coils of wire, a humming dynamo, and strange machines of glass and brass. The professor unlocked a door at the end of the laboratory, and they passed into a private room beyond.

A stout table covered with metal occupied the center of the room. A tangle of wires beneath the table suggested shadowy coils. There were glass plates and rods connected somehow with the wires. The professor carefully closed the door and locked it. Then he turned and pointed to a pair of large iron dumbbells in the corner.

His carefully schooled and precise English became

slightly confused. The young men soon learned that under excitement his scholarly phrases sometimes turned to excited and involved Teutonisms.

Ted Dolliver swung both bells easily to the table.

"Shades of Sandow!" gasped Alan. "They must weigh a hundred pounds each!"

Ted looked momentarily pleased; then his expression took on a careless indifference. Alan guessed that he was proud of his strength, even if he were resentful of having it over-emphasized.

The professor touched a lever in a quadrant on the wall and a faint humming sound filled the air. The two young men looked curiously at the table and the wires under it.

"Now each pick up a bell from the table," the professor ordered. "Be careful not to lift it beyond the edge of the table—it is dangerous!"

This cryptic statement brought a puzzled stare from Ted. Grasping a bell in his right hand, he heaved it upward. The heavy dumbbell flew from his hand, ascended to the ceiling, floated a moment, then descended to the table as gently as a feather. Ted held his pose, one arm upraised. He was paralyzed with surprise.

Knitting his brows, Alan placed two hands on his bell and prepared to raise it with a slow, steady pull, instead of a yank. To his mystification the heavy bell left the table as though it weighed only an ounce. Suspecting some hidden trick, he drew the iron to him to look at it more closely. The professor's sharp cry of warning was too late. As the bell passed beyond the table edge, it fell with the complete weight of its hundred pounds. Alan pulled his foot out of the way just an instant before the iron hit the floor with a room-shaking jar.

TED stepped forward with panther-like grace and picked up the dropped bell. As he carried it over the edge of the table it flew up toward the ceiling. But Ted held on to it. Then he laid it softly down.

"Know any other tricks as good as that?" he asked. "You'd be good in vaudeville!"

The professor looked at Alan. He too, experimented with the bell, finding it heavy when not over the table, but light as a feather when upon it.

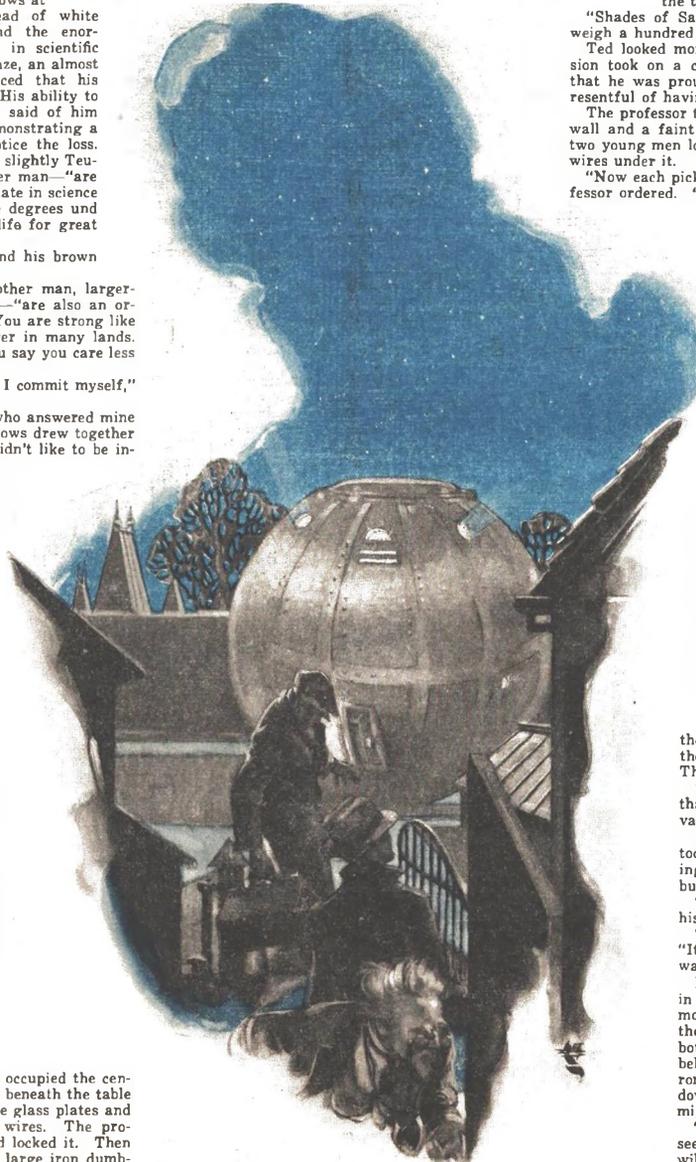
"Screen for gravity?" asked Alan, his brows knit.

"Goot, goot!" cried the professor. "It is not exactly a screen. It is—but watch, watch!"

Motioning to Ted to place both bells in the center of the table, he again moved the lever in the quadrant. To the uncomprehending amazement of both observers, the heavy iron dumbbells rose in the air like balloons, caromed gently off the ceiling, bouncing down and up, much as a rubber ball might bounce on the floor.

"I play no trick! It is real, what you see. You must believe; otherwise you will not go."

Both men sensed an impending revelation of awesome importance. Some-



In the starlight they crossed to the shining sphere—the ship that was to fall up to Mars.

Ted's feet left the floor—he swung, suspended in mid-air, weightless.



thing big—startling. Ted recovered first.

"Go where?" he asked.  
 "As Kane guesses," the professor went on, ignoring Ted's question, "I know how gravity to control. I turn the lines of force back upon themselves, so they work in the opposite direction. I make the dumb-bells fall up, instead of down. It was a simple discovery—so simple I cannot understand why others have not stumbled upon it. But with it—" he drew himself up, frowning, his English growing more and more accented—"with it I do what no man have efer done! I see what no man efer saw! I am of the solar system master!"

The excited man turned to the quadrant, moved the lever, and the dumb-bells floated easily down to the table. Ted moved close to Alan.

"The old boy crazy?" he whispered.  
 "So they called Galileo," responded Alan.  
 "Come!" commanded the professor. "You shall see—ach! But you shall see!"

They followed their guide up a small winding stair of iron to a penthouse atop the university building. Instead of opening to an empty roof, the doors of the penthouse gave on a roofless walled enclosure, in which was a spheroid of shining steel and aluminum some eighteen feet in diameter. It rested upon a flattened segment. It was slightly flattened at the top.

"Some football!" Ted commented, apparently surprised.

"Behold the *Wanderer!*" The professor pointed dramatically. "The key to the solar system! Will you go—will you?"

Knowledge burst on Alan in a blinding light. Gravity controlled—key to the solar system—see what no man had ever seen before—

"Mars!" he gasped. "Mars!"  
 "Yah, yah! Mars! What marvels may we not see! What animals, plants, minerals! What people may we find! I tell you, young men, if we get there, and if we get back, the whole world is yours and all the kingdoms in it! What you want, shall you have—fame, and fortune, and knowledge—"

"How do you know it'll work?" objected Ted, apparently unimpressed. "Hadh't you better try it out—say, with a little hop to the moon or something?"

The professor paused dramatically, his eyes gleaming.

"I have been *around* the moon," he answered, growing more calm. "I see what no human efer see—the far side of the moon!—and I know it work!"

ALAN suddenly sat down, feeling rather helpless. It was a dream, of course. Dumb-bells didn't get light or heavy at the throwing of a switch. People didn't go to the moon, except in stories or in lunatic minds. That great "football" was an illusion.

"Come inside!" The professor unfastened a door in the side of the spheroid—a door about four feet high—and crawled in. They followed him eagerly,

and found themselves standing upright in a low-ceilinged circular room, its walls lined with bins behind the bars of which was a miscellaneous hodge-podge of ropes, tools, food, cans, bags, boxes, hardware, pulleys, lanterns, blankets. The floor was knee-deep in chests and barrels, except for a small space in the center. Alan wondered why the bins had bars.

"Regular country store!" said Ted, interestedly looking around.

"Supplies!" explained the professor. "Come up some more!"

With unsuspected agility the professor mounted the iron rungs of a ladder that led upward through a crescent-shaped hatch in the flat ceiling of the room. Ted followed, and Alan came after him.

"Ah, now we get to it!" exclaimed Ted, quite unabashed, when they had reached the upper room.

"Three beds. Kitchen stove. Lights, dining table, chairs, bookcase. All we need is a cook and a cat and we move right in!"

"You are the cook. You said you could cook. Sit!" The professor indicated chairs.

Trying to move one, Alan found it fastened down. As he sat down, he found himself growing more confident. These familiar things—the beds, the chairs, stove—somehow made a trip into space seem possible. You could believe in chairs and stoves. They were real—and the trip, too, began to seem real. He imagined himself sitting here, while the spheroid shot through space.

"I go!" The professor's eyes glowed with the fire of a crusader. "It is dangerous. I deceive you not. If we strike an asteroid—zut! One flame—it is over. We are dust. If we lose our way—if the batteries give out—if the insulation of my spheroid is not good—if we find forms of life inimical to ours—if Mars has not enough air—if there is not enough water—if mine gyroscopes fail to act always—if, if, if, a thousand ifs, and we are dead!"

ALAN visualized each danger as the professor phrased it. Most he understood—the reference to batteries and gyroscopes was obscure. Ted stirred impatiently.

"I've fought a tiger shark with a dagger and wigged by—I should worry about danger!" He grinned at the professor.

It is doubtful that the scientist heard him, so rapid was he in his plans.

"I turn back the lines of force of gravity. I fall up as a stone falls down, with constant acceleration. You know Einstein? A certain drag is needed for control and not yet have I completely turned back gravity. But I have speed enough—speed enough—"

"Mars is thirty-five million miles at his nearest," murmured Alan. "It will take years to get to Mars!"

"So? I go the moon around und back—between sunset und sunrise," answered the professor, quietly. "The sphere gather speed und more speed. I fall up from the earth und down on the moon, und again I get more und more acceleration. There is nothing to stop! No air, no friction—ah, you think of asteroidal

dust! But the same reversing of gravity that makes me fall up, turn aside the dust! Unless a larger asteroid have too much mass for the small antigravity radiations, we are all right." He shrugged his shoulders.

"Why can't you use enough antigravity to make sure?" Ted's question won a smile from the professor, pleased that the less technical man was following his conversation.

"Too much retard. Alan Kane say we take years—we go fifteen, twenty miles per second after we are twenty-four hours getting up speed; perhaps more—1830 Groombridge go two hundred. We get to Mars in four weeks, maybe less!"

Alan shook his head. "Incredible!" he muttered. "You can't create energy like that! You—"

"I create nothing!" interrupted Professor Lutyens, violently. "A water wheel creates nothing, but it has power. A windmill creates no power, but it runs! I use only gravity, working *against* the globe, not *toward* it.

It takes but a leetle power. In two hundred six-volt storage cells—under the main floor—is ample power for a year's travel among the planets. After half a day we travel only by momentum!"

"What's 1830 Groombridge mean?" asked Ted.

"Star with the greatest observed proper motion," explained Alan, a bit impatiently.

"Oh!" Ted shook his head resignedly. "Well, when do we start?"

"Impatience for results is sign of a man of action!" The professor put a thin hand on Ted's mighty arm. Then he turned to Alan.

"Think!" he warned. "For years I work. Everything is here—all supplies, all possible contingencies I have thought of. Pneumatic suits and heavy insulation for the terrific cold of space. Diving helmets und oxygen if air on Mars is rare. Food und water enough for a year. But I do not—what is it my pupils say? I do not kid mineself. My life I wager against such fame as no man has had—

first man to visit a sister planet. Would you have money? Go und come, und the world will you mit gold shower. Fame? No ruler, no general, no conqueror efer has so much. But your lives you risk. If you come—come *knowing!*"

Ted grinned as he said once again: "When do we start?"

"December 20!" the professor answered, his eyes gleam.

"On January 25 Mars is nearest—sixty-one und a half million miles. We cannot wait until it is thirty-five million—that is too long. At twenty miles per second, we go in thirty-five days!" The professor shook with excitement. "Nobody knows what we shall see! But it will be stupendous, I promise you. Und if we come back, the world und the fullness thereof are ours—ours!"

Alan crossed to stand beside them. His mind was made up. Professor Isaac Lutyens' fame was worldwide. He wasn't insane. And if he said he had been to the moon, incredible as it seemed, Alan knew that he had been there. They could start out, at least. It was always possible to turn back.

"We might all just as well be crazy together!" he said. "I choose the bed nearest the cook stove."

AT 10:30 p. m., December 20, Ted and Alan met outside the laboratory, each with a small grip. Baggage was strictly limited as to size; weight the professor had told them was unimportant.

Alan started up the steps immediately, but Ted laid a restraining hand on his shoulder.

"Just a minute," he said. He pointed upward. "Do you really believe he will ever get there—or back again?"

"There's a fair chance of it—I think," Alan said slowly.

"It seems phony," Ted said. "How did the professor do all this work without the university learning about it?"

Alan understood that. Professor Lutyens had received an international scholarship for research. He had been given generous space in the physics building—including the roof—for his work. He had told nobody because he wasn't ready to tell anybody. The workmen who had built his machine didn't know what it was all about. To the university authorities Professor Lutyens had merely stated that he was working on a new type of aircraft. Nobody knew of the tremendous possibilities of the machine except the professor, Alan, and Ted. All this Alan outlined briefly to his broad-shouldered companion.

"Well," Ted said, scratching his head. "I never saw anything as neat as that dumb-bell stunt. And nobody cares if I come back or not."

"I'm a bit frightened!" Alan confessed. "It looks like a hundred-to-one shot that we freeze, starve, or blow up in smoke!"

"Why go, then?" retorted Ted.

"Same reason you're going!" answered Alan. "Come on!"

Up the stairs into the laboratory. Through the laboratory to the anteroom. A knock, and a guttural voice: "Who is it?"

Alan answered and the door swung open. The professor nodded and smiled. After matter-of-fact greeting he locked the door and led them up the staircase into the penthouse.

In the starlight they crossed from the penthouse to the shining sphere, dark and shadowy in the night. It looked heavy, substantial, immovable. How could such a heavy mass of metal and supplies, machinery and weighty batteries fall up?

As for the predicted speed—well, many heavenly bodies traveled with inconceivable rapidity. Alan knew that Mars swung at an orbital speed of fifteen miles a second—the earth at nearly nineteen. Many stars greatly exceeded such velocities. Without friction there is no limit to velocity until the unthinkable speed of light is approached. But the world-bound conception of speed and distance is hard to shake off. Alan believed with his reason, but not his imagination. He found himself growing tense.

Snapping on a center light in the ceiling of the supply room of the sphere, the professor led through the crescent-shaped opening to the second floor. But he did not stop.

"We go to the pilot house," he stated. "Leave your bags here."

ALAN and Ted deposited their bags beside a bed. Up another ladder they climbed through another crescent-shaped opening to a smaller room in the top of the sphere. Here many shutters sliding in metal grooves covered small portholes closed with heavy glass. A sort of electric apprehension flashed between Ted and Alan as they realized that the adventure was near.

"Why so small and so thick?" asked Ted, pointing to a porthole.

"Kane, explain to him!" The professor nodded to Alan.

"Air pressure from within—fifteen pounds to the square inch," Alan said promptly, controlling the tremor in his voice. "Beyond the earth's atmosphere no pressure compensates from without. That's why the *Wanderer* is a sphere, or nearly so. Then, too, the cold of space is absolute zero or near it. These glass portholes should be made of several pieces, with an insulating air space between—"

"I picked right!" muttered the professor. "He does know. But we will not keep our atmosphere at normal pressure. We will gradually reduce it, to accustom ourselves to the rarer air of Mars. . . . Attend!" His tone changed. "I am old and Gott has appointed my days that I cannot pass! You are young! We go into unknown dangers." His mild eyes grew big with something more like exaltation than fear. "You understand? It is freely you come?"

Alan nodded. Inside he felt suddenly cold as though he were caught in some inescapable, intangible menace. Ted, shaking off his doubt, refused to be serious.

"Oh, can the chatter and start the hike!" he proposed. "I don't believe this thing will work!"

It was the touch that relieved the tension. Alan smiled.

"It will work!" assured the professor. "See!" He pointed to wheels and levers. "This switch starts six gyroscopes spinning. Two control the sphere laterally, two horizontally, and two vertically. Thus we govern the movement of the sphere. The gyroscopes act like the steady mass of the seismograph that earthquakes measures. It stays still while the earth moves under it. The gyroscope keeps its axis in one plane—we can push against it to direct the sphere!"

"So! This hundred-pound rheostat controls power from batteries to gravitation circuits. At minus twelve the sphere have no weight! At minus twenty she fall up,

like a stone. At minus a hundred all her weight falls up mit constant acceleration.

"These are light switches. Here is air pump. There is water. Here is tube and valve to the space outside the sphere."

He turned to Ted as he pushed the rheostat lever over. A faint humming became audible. "Dolliver doubts. Get me that box!" The professor pointed across the little circular-domed room.

Ted took one step—then his feet left the floor. He wiggled, suspended in mid-air, weightless. He tried to get back to the floor, but movement but threw him into a more contorted position. He swung upside down, arms and legs working like pistons. The professor's hand moved the lever slightly and Ted descended slowly.

"You cut it off just as I was getting the hang of it," protested Ted.

"I put it on!" answered the professor. "You did not descend really—but the floor came up to meet you!"

Ted scratched his head. Alan sprang to a porthole. Only stars were to be seen through the thick glass,

but the whole firmament was moving slowly across his field of vision!

"We're off!" he cried, a chill of excitement chasing goose flesh up his back. "But we have weight now—I feel normal!"

"Constant acceleration!" explained the professor. "Every second we go faster. The sphere fall up faster than you do; it pressed on our feet and we have weight. Later we swim in the air—we stretch ropes. Come now—we go down!"

"Doesn't someone have to steer?" asked Ted. "All the airplanes I ever saw needed a pilot—"

"Ach, no!" cried the professor. "We fall up but slowly—five, six miles a minute, until we pass the atmosphere—one, two hundred miles—who knows? If we go too fast, we become as meteor and burn up with air friction. Nothing disturb the *Wanderer's* course—unless we strike an asteroid!" He muttered the last words.

"I want to see out!" demanded Ted. But the professor shook his head.

"Wait!" he commanded. "We are but a hundred miles up. In another half hour we beyond the atmosphere are, and I show you a miracle. I pull the rheostat over and we go! When we pass the earth's shadow you can look. Und we must our pneumatic suits put on until we get the sunlight—it chilly grows."

"I thought I was shivering with excitement!" cried Alan. He spoke cheerfully; yet he wondered. The cold of outer space—minus 460 Fahrenheit—would make a differential of almost four hundred degrees between the space outside of the sphere and lowest temperature at which human life could be maintained. How could the professor keep the sphere warm enough? How could they possibly live when they plunged into the space between the stars?

AS if catching his thought the professor spoke: "It will be cold—cold. But with no air to diffract the rays, the sun's heat on our shell will be fierce. With air suits we shall be warm enough—you see! I know—I have tried!"

Alan no longer doubted that Professor Lutyens had gone to the moon, incredible though it seemed. Had any doubts remained they must have evaporated when after an hour the professor beckoned them to the storeroom.

In the cleared space in the center a trap in the floor opened with a lever.

"Waste ejector," explained the professor. "Put garbage and cans in, close, pull this lever, and air pressure within shoots the waste out."

"And that lever?" asked Alan, touching another handle.

"It opens upon a miracle!" answered the professor, solemnly. "I show you a wonder no one has seen, save old Isaac Lutyens." He paused. Then, reverently: "Und Gott. He sees it always so—*wunderschön!*"

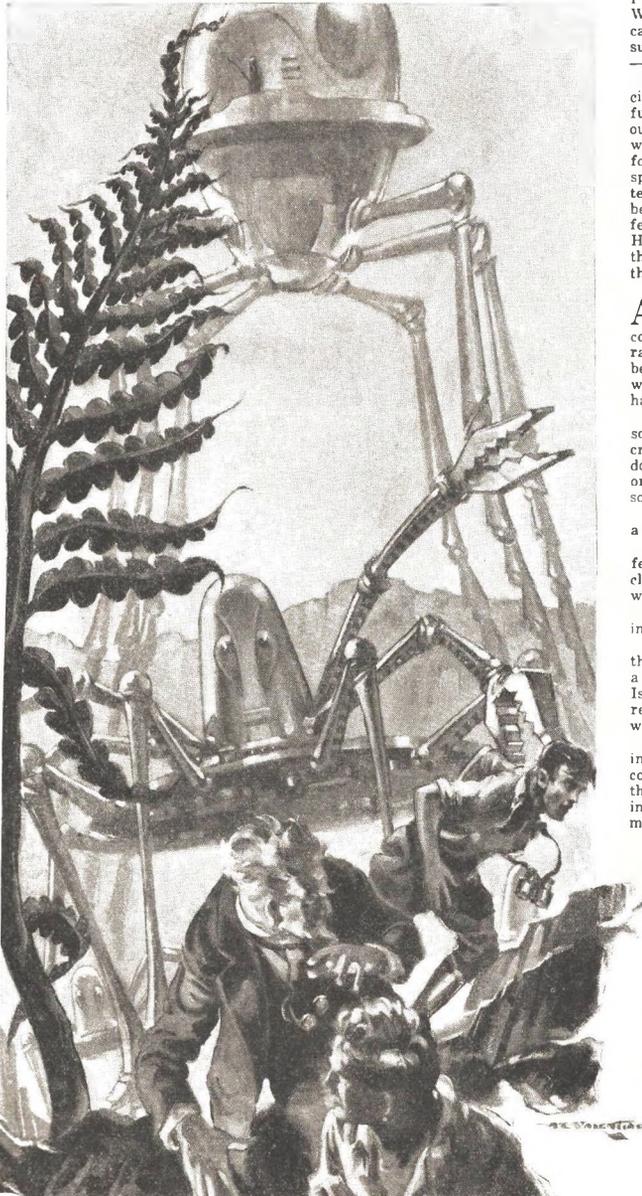
Professor Lutyens cut off the bulbs in the storeroom. He pulled the lever covering the port. Then he turned to them with a strange exaltation glowing in his eyes. "Look!" he commanded. "Brawn first!"

Ted lay flat in the cleared space, his eye to the hole. His body motionless and rigid, he looked and looked—

The professor touched him on the back after a minute or two. Alan glimpsed his face in a golden, glorious moonlight that streamed through the port as Ted rose, a curious awe on his normally impassive face. Then Alan stretched flat to look.

Filling half the horizon the earth lay, a gigantic half moon. Continent and ocean, familiar from map study, here glowed in reality. Polar caps gleamed white, oceans were dark, continents golden with sunlight. The awesomeness of the world as no other man had ever seen it filled his mind.

(Continued on page 53)



The three turned and ran—but the machines of Mars ran faster!

*The mail men in charge of the cars seemed suddenly stricken with a form of paralysis that froze their arms above their heads.*

THE mail train, east bound, was running on time. She had passed Solar Summit so exactly on her schedule that those waiting in the station could have set their watches by her. Now she was dropping down the twelve-mile descent to the bottom of the hill.

Young Chuck Herman was perched up on the seat box on the fireman's side. His cap was pulled off, and his thick blond hair waved in the wind that whistled in through the open front door of the cab.

Ahead of him, the release valves on the cylinders clicked as the steam from the drifting throttle exhausted through them. Speed, fifty-five miles an hour. He could tell that from the way the engine rolled, and the shimmering side rods below him confirmed it.

Chuck had been whistling softly through his teeth. Disconnected fragments of thought had been flitting through his head. He had not tried to connect the fragments until he happened to discover that he had a rhymed song at his command. As soon as he found that to be a fact, he began to sing:

"Oh, young Lochinvar he came a-riding from the west,  
On the whole O. S. Railroad, his bul-gine was the best,  
He shoveled lots of coal in her, and listened to her barks,  
And he watched the smoke come rolling out, with gobs of red-hot sparks."

Chuck grinned, and decided that his engineer, Old Square Jaw Davis, would appreciate the sentiment connected with the song. He looked across the swaying, heaving deck, and his affectionate glance lingered on the granite-like visage of the engineer. Chuck was the only man on the west end division who had ever seen Square Jaw smile. In fact, Chuck had taught him how to smile. A few months back, Chuck had fired a locomotive all the way over the road with a four-inch gash on his head, made when he was thrown against a projecting bolt on the side of the tender. That had won Square Jaw's heart.

"It's sure funny," grinned Chuck to himself. "I didn't have any idea I was a poet but it looks like I am." He softly sang the song again, to be sure that he had forgotten none of it.

Their engine rolled easily out on the beginning of the long curve that ended in a steep-sided cut through a low, timber-clad mountain about four miles below Solar Summit.

SUDDENLY the grin left Chuck's lips and his eyebrows drew together in a frown. Turning his head, he called across to Square Jaw.

"Stop her! Quick!"

There came the blaring exhaust of the air port on the automatic air valve, the grinding of high-speed brakes, and the seven-car mail train drew to a complaining halt.

Ahead of them, someone had deliberately piled several ties on the rails. Whoever it was had picked a strategic place in which to do it, for the ties could be seen for almost half a mile. It was apparent that the tie-pilers had no intention of wrecking the mail train.

"Well," said Chuck, as he crawled down from his seat box, "whoever did a trick like that, do you suppose?"

As if in answer to his words, there came the rattle of a machine gun, and the ominous hum of bullets as they passed harmlessly over the top of the mail cars and the engine. From directly ahead a tall man with a black mask fastened over his eyes stepped out into the center of the track, and advanced slowly



toward the engine with a heavy revolver in his right hand.

He was followed by two more. As they drew near, the machine gun rattled a deadly warning again, and Chuck looked back along the side of the train. It seemed to him that the mail men in charge of each car had been suddenly stricken with a form of paralysis that caused their arms to be frozen above their heads and their eyes to become fixed in their faces.

Chuck grinned. Here was excitement, and excitement was exactly what he always craved. He felt sure that the masked men would not bother him and Square Jaw, and he decided to watch it all from a place of vantage in the cab. Chuck was cool-headed enough to realize that any theatricals would immediately bring down the fire of the machine gun in his direction, and bullets were something he distinctly did not want flying round him.

He took a hasty glance across the deck at his engineer. Square Jaw was mad, and he was becoming madder with each passing second. It wasn't the fact that their train was to be robbed that was upsetting Square Jaw. But he felt that he had been insulted! That is exactly the way Square Jaw regarded the whole thing. This gang of common train robbers had deliberately made him stop his train! Square Jaw was proud of his on-time record, which he had been piling up for himself since the O. S. Railroad had cured the mail contract. These would be bad men were making him late—for the first time since he had been pulling the mail train.

Now the tall leader was even with the gangway of the locomotive. He halted, and his blazing eyes traveled upward until they glittered into those of Chuck. "Say, dumb-bell," snarled the bandit, "do yuh think this is a movie thriller? Shove them hands toward the ceilin' or I'll shove 'em up fer yuh!"

Chuck grinned cheerfully and thrust his hands into

the air. With his arms raised as high as they would go, he looked down, waiting for the bandit's next move.

The man climbed into the gangway of the engine. He was met by the most irate old gentleman he had ever had the doubtful pleasure of meeting. Square Jaw was mad all over. His keen grey eyes flashed fire, and his hands opened and closed at his sides.

"You—you—" he began in a voice quivering with rage. "What do yuh mean stoppin' my train like this? You cheap imitation of a would-be—"

"Aw, pipe down," snarled the masked man. Like a flash he raised the gun and brought it, butt down, on the gray head of Square Jaw Davis. Square Jaw fell to the deck like a stone, and lay quietly.

CHUCK had leaped as the blow landed. He was furious at such treatment of his old gray-headed engineer. All he could think of was getting at the throat of the masked man. But the bandit whirled and met Chuck's savage rush with a leveled revolver. "Stop!" he snarled.

Chuck stopped. He had suddenly realized his utter impotence in the face of that heavy gun. "If I didn't figure on needin' yuh, I'd have stopped you plenty with this gat!" the man growled. "Get over there on the engineer's side, and be ready to move when I tell yuh to!"

## A One- By Gilbert A. Lathrop



## Man Posse

Illustrated by Albin Henning

Chuck stepped over the prone form of Square Jaw and doggedly clambered to the designated place.

From the left side of the gangway, the bandit snatched a hasty look to the rear. Then he turned facing Chuck.

"All right—pull ahead!" he commanded.

Chuck did as he was told. The engine rolled easily down the grade.

"That's good!" barked the masked man. "Stop and stay here till we get our little job done!"

Chuck knew what had happened. The gang had cut the locomotive loose from her train so that the engine and train crew would be unable to co-operate in any way.

From where he was sitting on the engineer's seat, Chuck's eyes traveled past the unconscious form of Square Jaw, and rested on the bandit. The masked man was leaning against the side of the tender, holding his gun in readiness. Chuck looked ahead of the engine.

A short siding, with a single yellow refrigerator car on it, was the only thing to break the monotony of the rough country.

"I'm gonna walk back to the train now," barked the bandit suddenly. "Our machine gun is coverin' yuh yet, and the first move out of you means a volley of lead. Just stick around here in the cab as I'm advisin', and after we get away, yuh can go on back to

your train."

As if to punctuate his statement there came from behind, where the mail cars had been left, a dull, muffled explosion. Chuck gritted his teeth. He knew what that was. A shot of nitro breaking open a safe.

THE masked man silently dropped to the ground. Crouched forward, he ran lightly back

toward the mail cars. Almost before he was out of sight, Chuck was kneeling beside the form of his engineer. Square Jaw was breathing heavily but regularly, and Chuck heaved a sigh of relief. He was sure now that the engineer had only been knocked out for the time being, but the thought of the brutality of the blow started burning tangles of anger running up and down his spine once more.

His hot indignation made him ache to get into action. He lifted Square Jaw into a more comfortable position, and then got to his feet again.

"It's a cinch I can't do any good here in the cab," he reflected. "The engine will stand here till someone comes along and moves her. I'm just wondering whether that machine gun is really pointing down in this direction. If I could slip off a ways, maybe I could do a little job of followin' that gang."

With his gray eyes sparkling eagerly, he stepped to the left side of the cab and poked his head out of the window. A look back toward the train showed three masked men standing idly on the ground. The rest were evidently busy inside the mail cars.

"It's now or never," decided Chuck.

He crossed to the other side of the cab and slid down the grab iron. As soon as his feet touched the ground, he ran toward the pilot of the locomotive. He halted here to reconnoiter the situation. From where he stood he could not see anything that even remotely resembled a machine gun.

"If they do have that gun covering me, they'll probably shoot over my head the first time," Chuck told himself, and stepped forward a pace.

Nothing happened. He moved another step. Still no volley of shots in his direction.

"I'll bet that machine gun is placed to bear down on the mail cars and nothing else," he decided, and soon was in the center of the rails ahead of the engine.

Cautiously but quickly, Chuck hurried down the track. His eyes had picked out a projecting boulder. When he finally reached it, he dashed behind it, and took a careful survey of his position. A steep, rock-

covered hillside extended upward from where he was standing. It was well sprinkled with gnarled pinon trees and rocks.

Chuck began clambering up the side of the hill. He felt sure that the bandits wouldn't return to the engine. All of their business was in the mail cars, and as soon as that was finished, he believed they would make off, warning the railway employees to remain perfectly quiet for a time before they made any moves.

If he were right, Chuck realized, he stood to pull something quite clever. An older man would have shunned the idea of the course he had in mind, but Chuck was not old, and he loved anything that smacked of adventure. The mere fact that he had no weapon of defense didn't make him bat an eyelid. Everything would take care of itself in its proper time. Of that he was sure.

A SHORT, steep climb brought him to a rocky ridge that extended away from him at a gentle pitch. Chuck dropped down behind this and began moving forward on his hands and knees.

Suddenly he heard the whinny of a horse. He halted while his eyes searched the country ahead. Down in the bottom of a deep gully, six animals, saddled and bridled, were clustered in a small group.

"That means there are just six of 'em altogether," decided Chuck. He drew himself down behind a protecting boulder and waited for developments. In a few minutes, he heard the guarded voices of men and the sound of their boots as they came through the slide rock.

He peeped carefully over his shelter. One man staggered along under the weight of a machine gun. Two others bore large, heavy sacks. The remaining three protected the gang's retreat with ready revolvers.

Chuck waited until all of them were mounted and riding off toward the south. Then he began following them.

They seemed in no hurry. Chuck had felt sure they would thunder off as fast as their horses would carry them, but they picked a steady gait and held it.

Chuck trailed along behind them, keeping far enough away to be well hidden by intervening trees and rocks.

"Just a one-man posse after a bold, bad gang," he grinned to himself, ducking discreetly behind a boulder.

He followed them for almost an hour. Suddenly he halted, with a frown of surprise. He hastily dropped flat on his stomach behind a rock and peeped round the edge of it.

The gang had stopped in a small park and all but one had dismounted. That one was taking the reins of the other five horses. After a few words, the mounted man rode slowly off, leading the five horses.

The five men left proceeded to take off their shoes. After knotting the laces of them so they could be carried over their shoulders, they took up the two mail sacks and the machine gun, and set off at right angles to the direction taken by the man on the horse.

"Well I'll be gosh darned," breathed Chuck.

It was too deep for him. He remained lying behind his rock until the men were out of sight. Then he got to his feet and, crouching cautiously, moved toward the little park. As he halted at the edge of this, the bandits' ruse was startlingly plain. Straight onward led the prints of their horses' hoofs, making a broad, easily followed trail for pursuers. But the direction taken by the five men on foot was completely hidden. They had gone over a rocky outcropping, and their bare feet had left no sign of a trail!

"Pretty clever, pretty clever," mused Chuck.

He was of two minds. Should he go back to the railroad and wait for the sheriff's posse, or should he continue to the stronghold of the gang? He decided in favor of the latter.

"I might as well find out just where they hide out while I'm at it," he concluded, and moved cautiously onward.

He knew that he was flirting with death. The first suspicion on the part of the bandits that they were being followed would result in his being ruthlessly hunted down.

"Then there'd be another fireman missin'," grinned Chuck, as he halted and leaned against a tree. He was following the crooked winding course of a dry wash now. Both sides of this were covered with thick timber. No sign of the gang rewarded his most vigilant searching.

"Gosh," he said, running his fingers through his already rampant hair. "It'd be just too bad if I'd lost 'em."

He had been following the dry wash for almost a mile. Ahead of him it ended in a gently sloping hillside dark with pine and aspen trees. All around him was the forest, impenetrable and silent.

"I'll never locate 'em at this rate," barked Chuck, and moved off again.

WITH the closing of the day the gloom of the forest grew more and more dense. The sun went down behind the western hills. Chuck could not see over a hundred feet in any direction as he slipped silently through the timber. No sound came to his straining ears.

"I'm beginning to believe that I've pulled a boner," he mused, halting again and leaning against a pine tree. "As nearly as I can figure out, I'm lost."

By this time it was quite dark. Objects only fifteen feet off were mere blurs.

"No use growing fast here," Chuck decided. "And I believe I've come too far. I'd better back-track."

He accordingly doubled back.

All at once he was brought to a halt by the low voice of a man who seemed astonishingly near. Chuck froze in his tracks. Another voice spoke up, in a lengthy harangue on the cleverness of the afternoon's coup.

Without moving, Chuck stared into the enveloping darkness.

"They can't be far away," he thought, as he strained eyes and ears.

"Jerry won't have any trouble gettin' a posse to follow him clear down to the Colorado River," said the first voice.

"Jerry ain't gonna do that," said still another voice. "He's gonna lead the hosses for about thirty miles, and then he's gonna unsaddle and unbridle 'em, and drive 'em to the four winds. He's gonna hide the saddles and bridles where they won't ever be found, too. All we got to do is set quiet, and keep a good eye out for strangers to these parts."

While the man was speaking, Chuck was working his way carefully toward the sound of the voice.

Suddenly his outstretched hand came up against a pine bough. He moved to one side and felt again. Another pine bough there. He cautiously worked his way along. Wherever he felt, more of the pine boughs barred his way.

Then he tumbled. The men were concealed in a little shack that was completely camouflaged by its green covering. Hidden in the heart of the timber, no one would ever discover it save by accident.

The voices were coming to him from not over eighteen inches away; yet not the faintest flicker of light showed through any chinks or windows.

IT was fully an hour before Chuck found the entrance, and then it almost proved his undoing. He had stolen quietly round the little retreat several times. He was moving along as silently as a shadow when a door suddenly opened from the inside and a bright beam of light fell almost directly on his figure. With the speed of lightning, he sprang back into the shadows. A heavy-set fellow poked his head out and looked around.

Chuck had a slanting view of the interior. He could see a cartridge belt and a heavy gun hanging on the wall close to the entrance.

"Get back in here and shet that door!" barked a commanding voice.

"I thought I heard something," rumbled the man in the doorway.

"You'll feel something too if yuh don't do as I tell yuh!" growled the first speaker.

With a muttered imprecation, the heavy-set fellow closed the door, and Chuck felt the welcome blackness of the night enveloping him again.

After a long time, he moved to where the door had been opened. Like the rest of the shack, it was covered with pine boughs.

Chuck decidedly had no intentions of trying to capture the gang single-handed. He might call himself a one-man posse, but he wasn't clean crazy. He realized that on his first attempt to enter the cabin, a volley of lead would come shrieking out at him.

It was by the barest accident that he had run on the hiding place of the gang. He knew in which direction the railroad lay, but he couldn't find the way until daylight. There was nothing much to be done. He decided to stick around the cabin until close to daylight. Then he would put as much space between himself and the gang as he possibly could.

He felt confident that he could find someone who would help him get another crowd of pursuers together—he was sure the sheriff's posse would be far to the south, following the single bandit and the six horses—and then he would lead them to the stronghold.

That being decided, Chuck moved around to the far side and seated himself, using the pine-covered wall as a back rest. He soon found he had to fight to keep from falling asleep.

"How about postin' a guard?"—the words sounded close to his ears.

They almost brought him to his feet again. He realized that he had dozed off against his will.

"We never have posted one before," grumbled another.

"I can't see any sense in it," said a third.

"No one could find our little shack even in the daytime, let alone after dark," said the first speaker.

"I fer one won't stand no guard duty," said still another of the men.

"Better wait till someone asks yuh to," rumbled the voice of the man that Chuck was sure must be the leader.

"Then I'm gonna turn in," yawned the first.

A commotion inside, as of men turning in; a short period of drowsy conversation, and then one after another of the gang began to sleep heavily, some of them punctuating their rest with loud snores.

CHUCK started to his feet. More thoughts were working around in his head. He was wondering whether it would be possible for him to secure the gun and the belt of ammunition he had seen hanging just inside the door.

Quietly he worked his way around toward the entrance. With infinite caution he felt for the latch through the thick covering of pine boughs that blanketed the door. It was a long time before his fingers finally discovered it.

As silently as possible he lifted it. He exerted a gentle pressure against the door, and it slowly swung inward. With his heart beating loudly, he reached in and secured the belt and the heavy revolver. Pulling them outside, he fastened the belt about his waist, and

felt the reassuring touch of the butt of the gun beneath his fingers.

"If I just had some rope, I'd finish up this job myself," mused Chuck, as he stood there in the entrance. The weight of the revolver on his hip had given him assurance.

He felt that the advantage was all with him. He was wide awake and armed with a gun. Every man inside the shack was sleeping, and men rudely roused from their slumbers are inclined to be panic-stricken for a few seconds.

"If I could just get the rest of their guns," ruminated Chuck.

Clutching his revolver, he stepped into the cabin. Now he saw how it was lighted. A small square window had been set in the roof, and a dim, pale light cast by the stars filtered in through this. It was not enough to show him what he was after, but it brought out the dim hulks of all objects about him.

Chuck stepped forward. He was brought up by the edge of a table in the center of the floor. His outstretched hands fell over the top of this, and he grinned into the gloom.

The men had placed their guns and belts on this table, where they could be quickly seized in an emergency. The very safety they felt was bringing about their undoing.

Chuck carefully took up three of the guns and belts, and stepped back out into the night. Laying these down near the entrance, he returned for the others. In the dim light, he misjudged the position of the table as he returned, and his toe struck a leg of it with a thud.

That thud, in the still shack, sounded to him like a dulled shot from a cannon! He froze, listening breathlessly. Something stirred in the darkness.

"What yuh lookin' for?" growled a very drowsy voice. "Can't yuh keep quiet and let the rest of us sleep?"

Chuck held himself rigid. Should he try an answer? Should he just stand still?

He decided to stand still. He stood there. Motionless. Scarcely breathing. Prickles ran up and down his spine and the taut muscles of his legs.

For ten minutes or more, he stood without stirring. At first he was afraid of another sleepy growl, but none came. The protester had evidently snoozed off again at once. When Chuck's eyes grew more accustomed to the shadowy dark, he counted the dim figures of the men in the rough bunks. Yes, just as he had thought, there were five of them. Two were snoring heavily.

"Darn that light-sleeping boy," Chuck said to himself.

At last, moving with infinite caution, he gathered up the other guns and belts and crept out of the shack. Outside he drew a long breath and leaned limply against a tree trunk for a moment.

But he had to go back into the shack once more. He was sure that the only weapon left inside was the machine gun. If he could get this, the gang would be at his mercy. He slipped back in—a stealthy shadow—to search once more. At last his groping hand found the gun. It was set in a corner of the cabin, with its muzzle pointing down the trail leading to the retreat. Chuck pulled it gently toward him. It came out easily. Picking it up, he carried it from the cabin, and set it down near the rest of the weapons.

Now he needed a good long rope. Well—he'd have to go back into the cabin again. He went.

For a moment he listened to the snorts of the two snorers and the regular breathing of the other three bandits. Dog tired, evidently, all five. It was lucky. Chuck began feeling along the walls. Surely they'd have a rope somewhere.

AT last he found it—a long coil of Aariat rope. He took it down, and stole out. He closed the door behind him, but did not allow it to latch. Outside, he seated himself and, with his knife, cut five lengths of the rope. These lengths he knotted and looped, so they could be drawn quickly about the wrists of the men when he was ready to use them. Then he settled himself to await the first faint banners of dawn in the east.

He knew that he must time his coup to a nicety, because the gang would be (Continued on page 31)

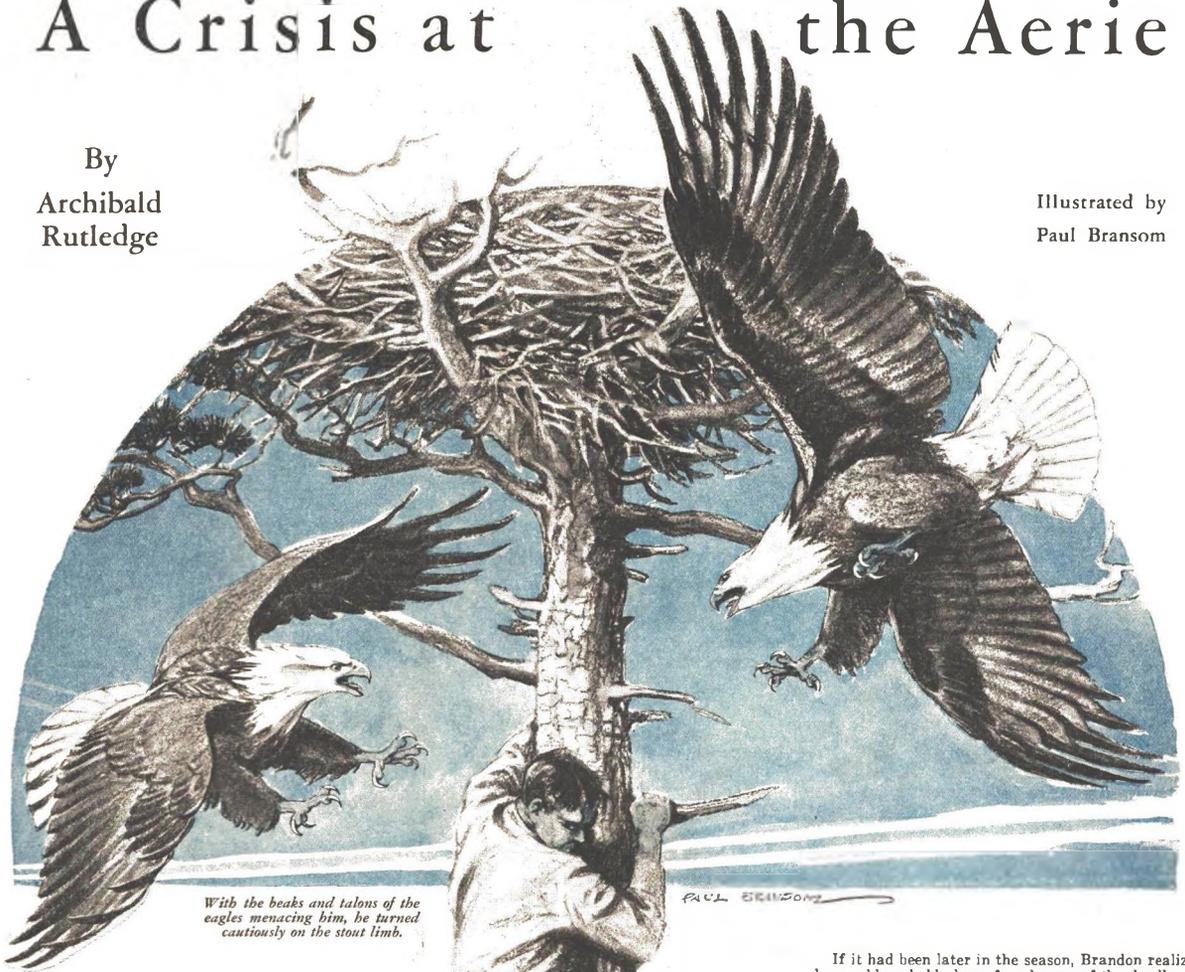


Brought to a halt by a low voice astonishingly near, Chuck froze in his tracks.

# A Crisis at the Aerie

By  
Archibald  
Rutledge

Illustrated by  
Paul Bransom



*With the beaks and talons of the eagles menacing him, he turned cautiously on the stout limb.*

FOR more than thirty years a pair of great bald eagles had nested on the crest of a huge short-leaf pine that stood on a lonely island in the Wando River. But no man had discovered it until young Allan Brandon, one of the assistant field naturalists of the Charleston Museum, found the nest in one of his bird-study rambles. When he first saw it, he was on the mainland, in the pine wood; and the aerie was on an islet, halfway across the dark waters of the Wando.

This must be the nest, Brandon felt sure, of the very eagles that sailed so much over Charleston harbor and frequently traveled above the near-by sea-island beaches in search of wounded wild fowl or of fish that had been cast up by the waves. Brandon had not supposed that there was an aerie so close to the city. This was something unusual in wild life, and he immediately felt a keen desire to get an accurate, scientific knowledge of the nest and its contents.

The lithe, muscular young naturalist did not consider it foolhardy to attempt to climb the great, smooth-boled pine, on the crushed top of which the eagles had placed their nest. He thought of the climb as merely part of the day's work.

So about a mile up the Wando, Brandon borrowed a small canoe from a negro, and in this he paddled down the narrow river and then landed on the island. Few men had ever set foot there. Though not far from the city, the island lay around three long bends of the Wando, essentially retired and remote. There was nothing to take men there. Haunted by alligators and moccasins, and sometimes half submerged by high tides, it was no place for pleasure expeditions or even for parties of exploration.

The young naturalist felt as if he were in a strange and distant land. But he tied the canoe and broke his way through the jungle until he stood beneath the colossal trunk of the great pine. He could not help

marveling at the bulk of the tree, and at the symmetry of the perfect shaft that shot sunward sixty feet without a limb, and even then sent out only a few gnarled branches. Set on the crest of the pine, more than a hundred feet high, was the eagles' home, supported in part by the top and in part by the arched branches.

The ground under the tree was strewn with litter from the nest. Eagles' feathers were there and the bones of many small animals. There were also the bleached skulls of countless catfish, with the sharp and dangerous spines, still projecting rigidly from the bone. Brandon carefully avoided these bristling remains of the eagles' luncheon specials. The great birds, he knew, had picked up the catfish heads after sharks had cut the fish in two, just behind the dorsal fin.

If it had been later in the season, Brandon realized, he would probably have found some of the deadly cottonmouth moccasins under the tree, waiting for the refuse thrown out by the eagles. But on that January day the snakes were hibernating.

THE young naturalist judged that there would be eggs in the eagles' nest, for eagles begin to lay in that latitude as early as November. Eager to make a scientific study of the aerie while the old birds were away, he sat down on the ground, strapped on his climbing irons with care, rose, stripped off his coat, walked over to the pine, and took hold of the slippery bark of the old island giant.

This kind of climbing was no new experience for Brandon; he had climbed many pines just as high and cypresses even higher; but the loneliness of his situation and the fact that he was invading the aerie of old eagles made him feel that he must be unusually cautious. He climbed slowly and steadily, at every step settling the iron grip firmly before permitting his weight to rest upon it.

When he reached the first gnarled branches he stopped to rest, and for the first time he took occasion to look down from the tree and survey the surrounding country from his lofty eminence.

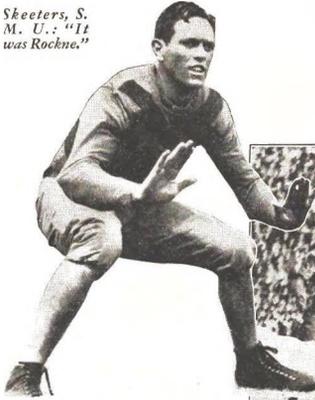
Forests of cypress and pine flanked the river on both sides; northward, the dark stream penetrated a wilderness of beauty and stillness; southward, there were gleams of brightness from the distant harbor and from the towers and spires of the city; and still farther away, faint violet headlands met the blue sea-line. Brandon drank it all in delightedly and then turned again to the business not in hand but forty feet above him.

After a climb that strained his muscles and tested his nerves he reached the bulky short limbs directly below the eagles' nest. On one of these he perched carefully, to rest a minute before attempting the difficult feat of getting over the sides of the big aerie so that he could examine its (Continued on page 39)

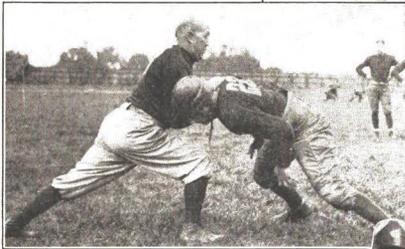
# Here's Why Notre Dame

## Let the Ten Captains Who

*Skeeters, S. M. U.: "It was Rockne."*



**B**ETWEEN October 4 and December 6, 1930, Notre Dame's great football team won ten games, thereby earning for the second year in succession the title: "National Champions." By large



*Rockne (left) showed his men how!*

*Schwartz slices off tackle against Pitt. Every Pitt man is covered. And Schwartz scores a touchdown.*



*Riblett, Penn.: "They let you move first."*

win. We were primed, fit and ready to deliver the best game of our season. We didn't feel the least bit like under dogs.

In that mood, we gave Notre Dame the hardest kind of pounding the first half and outplayed her consistently. In the third quarter we renewed the attack, although the great kicking of Carideo kept the ball in our territory. In this quarter he kicked the ball out of bounds on our 2-yard line, 5-yard line, and 11!

In the final quarter, up to the last five minutes of the game, we were playing on even terms—and were still expecting to win. And then Notre Dame, after 55 minutes of pounding, went to work.

The play that beat us ran Marchmont Schwartz off tackle. With his interference he got through the hole and came into my territory at halfback. A blocker drove at me, and I thought I saw a chance to dive over him and nail Schwartz. I dived, but just at that instant the blocker raised up, hit my legs, and flipped me sprawling to the ground.

I rose on one elbow to see Schwartz still running, and a Notre Dame man cutting across the field to take out Lee Hanley, our

Brien were the kind of ends that Rockne—himself an end—invariably turned out. Kurth and Culver were fine tackles. The small but mighty Metzger and Kassis were fast-moving, hard-blocking guards.

Yarr was a reliable center. To the men best able to analyze the greatness of Notre Dame—the captains of the ten teams that opposed the Ramblers last season—staff writers of *The American Boy* have gone. Their stories follow:

### "They've Got Staying Power"

(Notre Dame 14, Northwestern 0. Nov. 22, Evanston.)

By Captain Henry "Hank" Bruder, Halfback.

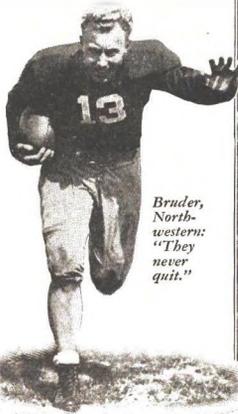
**N**OTRE DAME has stamina. To understand what I mean, you've got to understand the mood Northwestern was in before the game. We expected to

and small scores, the Ramblers moved down, on successive Saturdays, without a week's let-up, Southern Methodist, Navy, Carnegie Tech, Pittsburgh, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Drake, Northwestern, Army, and Southern California.

To a rare degree, the 1930 Notre Dame team combined the qualities of aggressiveness and team spirit with a thorough knowledge of fundamentals. There wasn't a weak spot in the entire line-up. Frank Carideo was one of the game's greatest quarterbacks. Savoldi at full, Schwartz and Brill at halves, with Mullins and O'Connor to step in when needed, have been ranked with the Four Horsemen of 1924. Captain Conley, Kosky and O'



*Dresbar, Carnegie: "They were alert."*



*Bruder, Northwestern: "They never quit."*



*Bruder, Northwestern, dives over the Notre Dame line.*

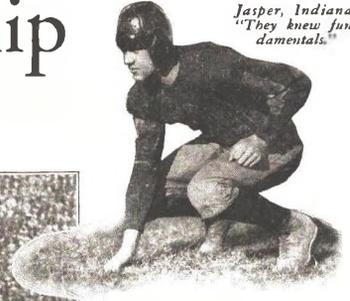


*Duffield, U. S. C.: "Two passes did it."*

# Won the 1930 Championship

*Opposed the Irish Tell You*

Jasper, Indiana:  
"They knew fundamentals."



the first play Carideo called a reverse, Mullins to Schwartz, and Schwartz went through the weak side of the line with a one-man interference for a touchdown.

That play took us completely by surprise. In the first place, a quarterback usually tries one line buck, at the beginning of the game, just to steady his men and give them the feel of things. Notre Dame cracked open with a reverse that required a lot of ball handling. Second, the play



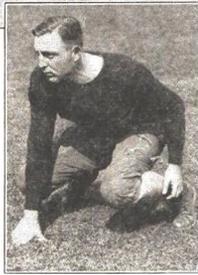
safety. And right there occurred a remarkable bit of football action. The Notre Dame blocker dived at Lee Hanley but left his feet too soon. He hit the ground and I thought he was out of the play. But not that boy. The moment he hit the ground he started rolling—and kept on rolling until he hit Lee's legs. That bothered Lee long enough to let Schwartz angle to one side and cross the line standing up.

In that play every Notre Dame man was on his toes. The man who blocked me guessed my move and countered it. The man who came from nowhere to block Hanley did his job even though he was on the ground. It was the kind of superplay you might expect from a fresh team, but Notre Dame did it after 55 minutes of the hardest kind of playing.

## "Carideo Uses His Head"

(Notre Dame 35, Pittsburgh 19. Oct. 25, Pittsburgh.)  
By Captain Eddie Baker, Quarterback.

To my mind, one of the big reasons for Notre Dame's 1930 record was Carideo. Notre Dame had powerful backs, a strong line, and good plays. But with Carideo



Humber, Army: "Don't forget a great line!"

O'Connor starts off tackle against U. S. C., the Trojans after him. Notre Dame blocks perfectly, and—

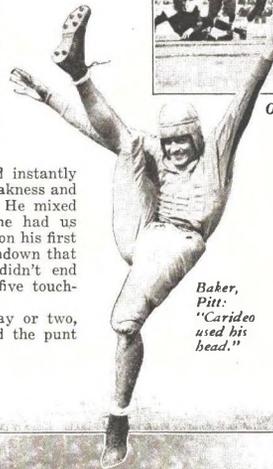
standing back of the line, one hand on the center's back, coolly sizing up his opponents, those fast backs, that line, and the plays reached their maximum effectiveness.

Carideo was great! He found instantly our points of weakness and pounded them. He mixed up his plays. At all times he had us guessing. In fact he fooled Pitt on his first play of the game, and the touchdown that resulted started a rout that didn't end until Notre Dame had scored five touchdowns.

We had received, tried a play or two, and punted. Schwartz received the punt and brought it back to Notre Dame's 40. The ball was just 10 yards from the side line. On



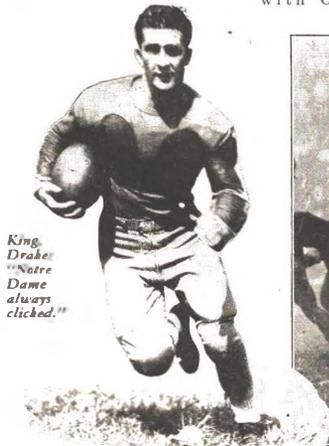
O'Connor gets loose for 80 yards and a score!



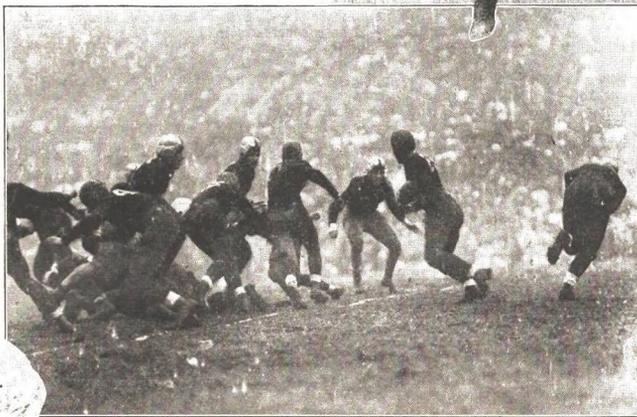
Baker, Pitt: "Carideo used his head."

went not only to the weak side, but toward the side line as well. We didn't expect tricky stuff like that on Notre Dame's first play of the game!

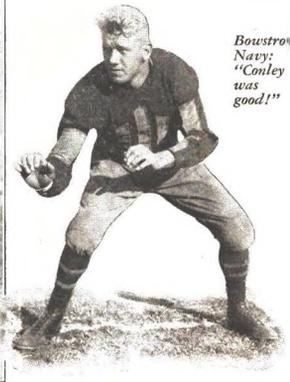
The play was well executed. The man leading Schwartz did some beautiful blocking. Never leaving his feet, he butted into the defensive left half and kept pushing him back. I was crossing over, and the Notre Dame man succeeded in butting the halfback into me, blocking me just long enough to let Schwartz through. And Schwartz didn't run his head off. He merely waltzed along easily, letting his blocker get in a few licks, and then when he got in the clear, put on steam for the goal. It was great football. (Continued on page 43)



King, Drake: "Notre Dame always clicked."



When Carideo started for the Army line—fireworks!



Boustrom, Navy: "Conley was good!"



From a certain spot on that high ground a steady drum of fire was coming!

## Tell 'Em Yourself

By Franklin M. Reck

Illustrated by Grattan Condon

Whitey interrupted, grinning. "I forgot to pay some bills when I enlisted."

"Won't he be mad if you get bumped the next time up?" Pinky murmured with faint irony.

Whitey looked searchingly at his friend. "Are we going up?" he said, finally, in a voice that had suddenly become quiet.

"Yes," Pinky replied, and barely moving his lips he explained. "Cap'n Anderson says keep the men close to the area after formations, from now on."

"Zat straight?" Whitey whispered.

"Yeh," Pinky replied.

"I don't think I can go it," Whitey murmured.

Pinky looked up to see a strange look, like that of an animal suddenly caught, in Whitey's blue eyes.

"G'wan," Pinky grinned.

"We can't always be lucky," Whitey went on, in a flat voice. "You an' I—we've already strained our credit with Lady Luck—"

Pinky mustered up a laugh. "Lady Luck'll ride right along. She's on our—"

"That's what Dombroski said—and Eggers—and Distler—" Whitey was living over old battles—"Wallace—Malik—Farrell—"

PINKY'S eyes became suddenly strained and the fingers holding his glass stem grew white at the tips.

"I thought we'd gone over all that," he cut in roughly. "Take what's coming to us and call it even. Not gripe."

"I ain't gripin'," Whitey said in a voice that somehow seemed far away and detached. "But now, with everybody sayin' it's goin' to end, I keep thinkin' about things I ain't thought of fr months. Like—home—malted milks. Movie shows. People you ain't seen. I don't think—" the corporal's voice broke—"I c'n stick it out."

Pinky stirred restlessly. "You'll be all right after a few shells fall and you get over your first case of shivers," he said shortly.

Slowly Whitey shook his head. "None," he said with conviction, "I've had all I can stand. I'm thinkin' of pay checks ev'ry week, ham an' eggs in the morning, drivin' the old bus—"

Pinky laughed loudly and a bit hysterically. "Swell guy you are!" he jeered. "Tryin' to cheat your mother outta ten thousand bucks! Why don't you give her a break!"

"Go on and kid," Whitey said in the same flat voice. "But just the same, if we gotta go up again, let's frame a private little agreement."

He paused, fumbled in his blouse pocket, and brought out a khaki-colored case. "You take this," he said.

"What's in it?"

Whitey colored slightly. "Some junk," he said noncommittally.

Pinky nodded. He could guess what was in the packet—a diary, Whitey's D. S. C., a few pictures.

"If I get bumped off," Whitey said in a matter-of-fact way, "you take 'em, yourself, to Allentown, and give my mother a good yarn about me. Now—give me your junk."

Pinky looked up inquiringly. "Come on," Whitey insisted, and he waited with his hand out, lying flat on the table.

Pinky felt a queer tremor inside him. "You tow-headed sap," he said huskily. "Snap out of it. What you gonna do? Trot up to the first machine gun you meet?"

"Nope," Whitey said, flushing. "I'll be huntin' holes as usual. But—"

The word trailed off and his face became thoughtful.

But Pinky knew what was in his mind. They'd gone up five times; six looked like one too many. A cold feeling settled around Pinky's heart and the conviction grew upon him that Whitey was right. Suddenly he felt weak and unstrung inside.

And then, because he was afraid of breaking, Pinky became indulgent. He smiled very tolerantly and pulled a fat purse from his pocket, opened it up, and emptied it. There were some francs, a Columbian half dollar, a couple of snapshots. In one compartment of the purse was a small diary. With the stub of a pencil he made an entry in his diary under October 29:

"Whitey got sentimental to-night and made me trade vanity boxes with him."

Then he replaced the contents and tossed the purse across the table.

"There she is," he said.

For a long moment, they looked at each other. Then, self-consciously, they finished their glasses and shoved back their chairs.

"Let's get outta here before the cap'n finds us," Pinky yawned. "I'm all in."

PINKY shoved his bayonet scabbard out of the way, turned over on his side, and looked at Whitey. It was five days after the chat in the cafe. The corporal was resting on one elbow, rolling a cigarette with blackened fingers. A three-day stubble covered his grimed face. His cheeks were flat and the skin seemed drawn over his features, making his cheekbones and the line of his jaw prominent.

As Pinky had predicted, they were in it again—in it up to their necks.

Whitey licked his cigarette, twisted the end, and lit it.

"Maybe we'll get relieved to-night," he said.

Pinky's cracked lips widened in a mirthless grin.

"You believe in fairies," he said. "We'll get relieved when we take the Maricourt railhead."

"You always was cheerful," Whitey remarked sardonically. "Fat chance we got to reach Maricourt without artillery."

Fat chance was right. The first battalion, reduced to 500 men, was stretched

A Long Story Complete in This Issue

across an almost flat field. A few hundred yards ahead, a partly destroyed railroad embankment ran parallel to the battalion front. Directly in front of "A" Company, the embankment entered a small woods. Here, the ground was higher, so that the embankment became a shallow cut.

Behind the embankment and in the woods were the Germans. From the volume of fire that arose at the slightest activity on the doughboy side of the line, Pinky knew that the German positions were strongly held. Probably, he reflected, they were defending that Maricourt railhead so that they could evacuate troops and supplies.

The first day of fighting had brought the regiment four kilometers to this spot. For the last two days they had vainly battered at the embankment and woods. The third battalion had attacked once. The first had tried it once—and had lost half its strength. With artillery it might not have been so hard, but so far there had been little artillery help.

Pinky reached down into the bottom of the shell hole and drew a caked and torn German blanket over his legs. The sun had gone down, and it was chilly. "Me for a snooze," he grunted, shivering slightly. His clothes were damp and muddy, the shell hole had a few inches of slop in the bottom, and the blanket was wet. Still, anything was better than being above ground. Resolutely he shoved his tin hat forward and relaxed his stiffened muscles. Whitey threw away his cigarette, thoughtfully patted his pocket where Pinky's valuables rested, and crawled over to get under his half of the blanket.

IT was pitch black when a hand, shaking Pinky's I shoulder, awakened him. Pinky opened his eyes in sudden panic, fought for a moment to locate himself, and then heard a voice repeating:

"It's Captain Anderson. Captain Anderson. Are you awake?"

Pinky mumbled something unintelligible, cleared his throat, and answered:

"Yes, sir."

"Who's that with you?"

"Corporal White. Hey! Whitey!"

The corporal sat up abruptly and looked dumbly at the almost indistinguishable form of the captain squatting in the shell hole.

"We're going to attack at five-thirty in the morning," the captain said in a voice that was hoarse from physical weariness. "First and second battalion. If they have to, they're going to throw in the third battalion."

The cold penetrated to Pinky's bones. "Any artillery?" he asked in a barely audible voice.

"They tell me two batteries are in position," the captain replied. "So we'll get some help."

"I'll tell the platoon." Pinky felt more awake, stronger, now.

"There's been the devil to pay back at headquarters." Captain Anderson was extremely frank with these two non-coms who had been with him through it all. "General raised Cain with the colonel and the colonel took it out on us. Says the whole line, for miles, is held up because we haven't taken the Maricourt railhead. Says he'll court-martial a few of us if we can't keep our companies going—"

There was a short burst of fire from the woods in front, and a flare burst high above, lighting the pitted landscape like day. The three in the shell hole crouched instinctively lower. Pinky caught a glimpse of Captain Anderson's face—long and gaunt and resolute. The flare died out, leaving the night blacker than ever.

"Colonel says that if we can keep Jerry on the run, we'll end the thing up—quick," the captain added. "Says the Germans're weakening fast."

There was another flare and another short burst of fire.

"Don't sound like they're weakening," Whitey snorted.

"No," the captain agreed. "I figure they're going to hold us here a week if they can. If we ever took Maricourt, they wouldn't be able to evacuate their troops and materiel from the west. What I'm afraid of is that Jerry's planning a counter-attack to shove us back out of this field. He must be uncomfortable with us so close."

Pinky recollected the two airplane scraps he'd seen in the last two days. Jerry was certainly trying to keep our planes out of the air. Why? So that we couldn't see his activities around Maricourt? The sergeant began to get cold again.

For a minute, the three were silent. Pinky felt, somehow, that the captain hadn't exposed all the odds against them in the coming scrap.

"We've got to know more about what's going on up there," the captain said, in a voice that was raw with anxiety. "I'm not going to send the battalion into a trap—court-martial or no court-martial." Captain Anderson was acting battalion commander.

The two non-coms felt themselves growing tense. What next?

"Do you think we can get patrols into the woods?" the captain asked Pinky.

So that was it! For a moment the sergeant didn't answer. When he spoke it was in a controlled, fatalistic voice.

"It's lousy with machine guns," he said, "but it's no

solid line of 'em. If we sent three in, one might get through."

It was the captain's turn to be silent. "I think it's worth it," he said finally. "We've got to find out how strong they are—and where our best chance lies."

Again, silence. Finally— "You pick 'em, sergeant," Captain Anderson said. "Have 'em get off about midnight. Don't go yourself—I'll need you." He paused. "I wouldn't do this if I didn't have to. Tell your patrols to report to me at Company P. C. when they come back."

Pinky nodded. "If they come back," he said to himself.

The captain started clambering out of the shell hole, threw himself flat as another flare lit the sky, and when it was again dark, moved on.

PINKY sat looking at the blackness that had engulfed the officer. That was the third flare the Germans had sent up. It meant that they were nervous—expectant. Did it also mean that they were busy behind their own front, and didn't want any Americans crawling forward on them?

Abruptly he turned to Whitey. "C'mon," he said. "Let's pick these patrols. It's after eleven."

Dragging their rifles, they crawled out and started on hands and knees for a near-by shell hole where a squad of men was stationed. It was pitch black, and for one tense moment Pinky had the hallucination that he was heading straight for the German lines. He took out his luminous prismatic compass and verified the fact that he was going generally west. The next instant, like a serpent, he was sliding over the edge of the hole.

With Whitey, he shook Corporal Walinchus and his squad into wakefulness and explained what he wanted Walinchus to do.

"Go for the right edge of the woods," Pinky impressed on the squat non-com. "You can tell where that is against the sky. The woods show a little darker."

Walinchus grunted that he understood. "Get back before five because we got two batteries going to pop off all over those woods at five. Report to P. C."

Again Walinchus grunted, and Pinky and Whitey crawled for the next shell hole, occupied by Acting Corporal Bill Summers. Here, Pinky repeated the instructions, except that Bill was to go to the left end of the woods.

"We'll get through some way, sarge," Bill said cheerfully. Pinky had never known Bill to be unduly



No need to point out the target. It was easy enough to see that gray-coated wave going up the hill.

downcast over anything. Bill was a good soldier. Pinky and Whitey were well on their way to the next shell hole when Whitey placed a hand on Pinky's shoulder.

"Where you goin'?" he demanded.  
 "To Gilbert's squad," he whispered.  
 Whitey snorted. "This is only Gilbert's second scrap," he said. "He won't do."  
 "He'll have to," Pinky said. "We haven't got anybody else."  
 "You ain't?" Whitey muttered facetiously. "Well, well."

Pinky colored in the darkness. He hadn't forgotten Whitey. But remembering that evening back in Les Ilettes, at the *Cafe du Balcon*, he had wanted to spare Whitey this patrol.

"You need old-timers on a thing like this," Whitey insisted.

Pinky gave up. Together they crawled to Whitey's squad where the corporal picked two experienced men to go with him—Potts and Dufresne.

"You're goin' for the middle of the woods," Pinky said, "and you'll have a tough time guiding yourself. Take this compass."

He handed over his prismatic compass. The lubber line was set on north, and if Whitey kept the movable luminous arrow directly under the lubber line, he could go straight north without even looking up. Once he got to the woods, he wouldn't need the compass.

"Might as well start now," Whitey said. "Sooner we go, the more time we'll have to go sightseen' in Germany."

Compass cupped in left hand and rifle in his right, he started forward on hands and knees. Behind him, Potts and Dufresne followed closely enough to touch the man ahead.

But they had gone only a few feet when Whitey turned around and called in a low voice to Pinky.

"Don't forget Allentown!" he said.  
 There was a jest in the words, but as Pinky patted the khaki kit in his left-hand blouse pocket there was a queer catch in his throat.

FOR an hour after Whitey had crept forward, Pinky was too busy to think about it. Guiding himself mostly by feel, he crawled through the wet, inky night, over the tossed-up ground, until he had passed the attack orders to every man in the first platoon, appointed new non-coms to take the places of those who had gone on patrol, and checked up on grenades and arms. He warned them, as well, not to fire upon returning patrols.

It was after one o'clock when he slid over the rim of his own shell hole and pulled the wet blanket over his body. There, as he lay alone, a nameless dread seized him—a dread such as he had felt the first time he had waited for an attack. He began trembling uncontrollably.

"It's sure cold," he muttered audibly, and then, as though to convince himself, he repeated: "Cold as heck. No wonder—November fourth."

He stared upward into the black pall and began reviewing the events of the past few days. The first take-off, on November 1. It had been easy—good artillery preparation, and a lot of prisoners without firing a shot. Then, suddenly, this resistance. Why couldn't they have been relieved a day ago, or at least been leappfrogged by the other regiment in the brigade? Why did his regiment always get the dirty jobs?

"Whitey's all right," he found himself murmuring aloud. "He can take care of himself."

His super-alert ears caught a chatter of rifle from somewhere in front.

"Whitey's all right," he repeated insistently.

There was a star shell, and Pinky had a sudden impulse to leap out of his shelter and see if Whitey weren't returning. A shudder shook his shoulders.

"Not time yet," he grunted. "Guess I'll take a nap."

It felt good to talk out loud. It wasn't so con-founded lonesome. Resolutely he shut his eyes and allowed his hands to unclasp. For fifteen minutes he lay that way, utterly relaxed, and then convulsively his hands clenched and he found himself restraining an impulse to yell. Sweat broke out on his forehead.

"You ninny," he whispered to himself savagely. "You yellow ninny!"

The conviction grew upon him that if he stayed alone much longer he might do something funny. He got to his knees and began chafing his wrists vigorously.

There was another burst of fire from in front followed by three rifle shots. Pinky froze into a statue like some dirty, khaki-clad Buddha, as he tried to interpret what the shots might mean.

"They're just shooting blind," he said aloud. "Whitey's all right. Heck."

He began laughing at the absurdity of Whitey's being in danger. He called himself an old woman and lay down on his side with his knees pulled up. Intermittently the minutes ticked by. . . .

"Hey, sarge!"

The hoarse whisper brought Pinky to his knees.

"Whitey?" he asked tensely.

"No—Summers."

A lean form slid down beside Pinky and breathed hard. A second form followed.

"I—" Bill gasped, "got back—all right."

Pinky looked at his watch. With a shock he saw that it was after four o'clock.

"We got through the woods," Bill went on, growing calmer. "There's a lot of movement in back. Three or four parties almost walked on top of us. Seemed to be going toward the railroad embankment—to the west."

Bill paused for breath, and then went on:

"Must have been fifty in one party. Just in back of the woods the ground is high, and it falls off pretty sharp to the west—down toward Maricourt. And plenty of men seem to be gathering down there."

"Counter-attack, sure as you're born," Pinky muttered inaudibly.

"That was about all we could see; so we came back. Bumped into a machine gun nest when we were almost through and cleaned 'em out. Wolters got hit and we had to leave him."

"See anything of the other patrols?" Pinky asked quietly.

"Not a thing. Heard some firing."

"Go back and report to the captain," Pinky said.

When the two had gone, Pinky lay on his stomach and looked toward the woods with wide eyes, wondering. Unconsciously his hand slid down toward his blouse pocket, where Whitey's packet lay.

MOVING with infinite caution, Whitey led Potts and Dufresne away from Pinky's shell hole toward the woods. If he so much as clanked his bayoneted rifle against his tin hat, he might bring down a hail of fire. So he dragged his gun carefully along the ground, bolt up, and felt ahead for uneven places as he crawled.

Within a half hour, the three were at the edge of the woods, stifling their breathing and listening for sounds. After ten minutes of patient waiting they were rewarded by a low-toned guttural voice speaking in German. It seemed to be to the left a few yards. Whitey waited tensely until he was sure the German was not alarmed, and then, flat to the ground, he wormed to the right a dozen paces, followed by Potts and Dufresne.

Then, after only a minute's wait, he headed into the woods. If he stayed on his hands and knees, he could feel for twigs and prevent any sudden noise. It was slower, but safer.

Halfway through the woods, his groping hand encountered a prone form.

He stifled a gasp as he realized that it was a dead man. A little exploration told him that it was an American—one of his own outfit, probably, who had been killed in day before yesterday's attack.

Potts closed up on his

heels and Whitey whispered the information to him. Silently the three made their way around the body and went on. Whitey took only occasional glimpses at his compass now. Its faint glow might give him away.

Once more before they were through the woods they heard a voice, near-by and low. At that instant, Potts broke a twig and a second voice joined the first in excited murmurs. The three waited motionless.

"Hope they don't investigate," Whitey prayed fervently.

They didn't, and again the patrol moved on, breathless and thankful.

At the rear edge of the woods, they got to their feet and froze against tree trunks. For five minutes they waited, and then, hearing no movement, they ventured out. It would be safe to walk erect, here, because the chances were strong that no machine guns would be trained at them. The machine guns were behind them now, except for possible support positions. And support squads wouldn't be expecting Americans here.

Whitey led the way, grinning in the darkness. If it was this easy getting into Germany, why hadn't he done it before? Suddenly a flare lit the sky. The three stopped stock still and stood without moving a muscle. In the bright light, Whitey saw a squad of men, two hundred yards away, marching off to the left. He turned his eyes that way and caught a glimpse of low land, and a group of wrecked buildings perhaps a half a mile distant.

"Maricourt," he murmured.

"They didn't see us," Dufresne whispered.

"Somethin' goin' on down in Maricourt," Whitey muttered. "I wonder if we could find out what."

"Are we goin' down there?" Potts asked, a note of fright in his voice.

"Mebbe," Whitey said noncommittally.

He'd noticed, in the brief light of the flare, that a sort of hogback ran back directly behind the woods. They were on its highest point now. He could go ahead a few hundred yards on the high ground, and then head down the slope toward Maricourt. It would be easy to find his way back. The slope of the ground was a sure guide.

"C'mon," he grunted.

THEY started off through the blackness, stumbling down into shell holes and out of them. They had just stumbled down into a deep hole when suddenly Whitey held out his hand and listened.

Unmistakably, there was the sound of tramping feet coming their way. Quickly he pulled the two down beside him, against the side of the shell hole. He could hear voices now. The muffled tread grew louder until it seemed almost overhead. Then it stopped.

Whitey held his breath. The enemy party was at the edge of this very hole!

"Hier ist es!"

"Nein!"

Whitey knew enough German to know that they were arguing about where they should go. There was a vigorous debate, and it gradually dawned upon the corporal that they were planning to settle down right there.

A moment of panic seized him. Then, as he realized how much more surprised the Germans would be than anybody else, he grinned. He wondered how many there were. Not more than three or four, certainly.

Cautiously he lifted his head a few inches and looked up. He could see nothing. He got to his knees and punched the other two. By tapping their bayonets and making other significant gestures, he indicated what he wanted them to do. Then, like a cat, he bounded to his feet and leaped out of the shell hole, gun at the port.

"All right, Heinie," he said coolly.

"Wer ist da!" came a startled voice.

Squarely in front of him, Whitey saw three dim forms, blacker than the almost-black sky behind.

"Don't kill 'em," Whitey growled, and in the same instant he leaped forward, stuck his foot behind the first man and threw him flat. Simultaneously, Potts and Dufresne were upon the other men. Something heavy banged on the ground and there was a groan.

"You guys move or yell and we'll stick you," Whitey grunted, placing the point of his bayonet on his man's chest.

The three Germans, utterly taken by surprise, were capable only of incoherent gasps and muttering.

"Tie 'em up," Whitey ordered.

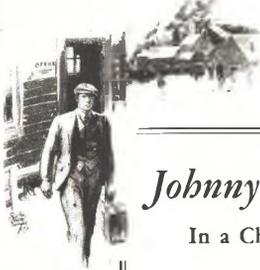
"What with?" wheezed Potts.

"Yer belt—shoelaces—anything."

Dufresne resourcefully proceeded to take off his gas mask, combat pack, and blouse, pull off his shirt, and tear it into strips. In a few minutes the Germans were securely bound and gagged and stretched out in the bottom of the shell hole.

"What was it dropped?" Whitey asked. "Machine gun?"

(Continued on page 46)



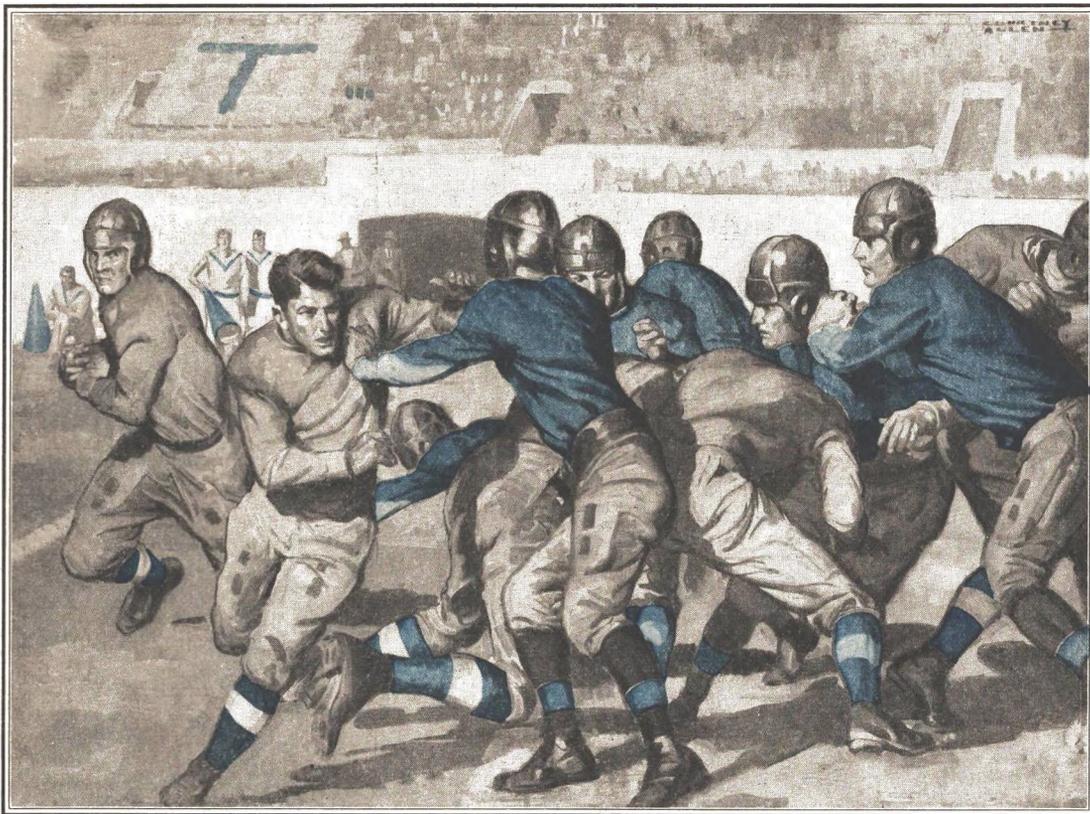
## Johnny Bree Returns

In a Christmas Special

Back at the mines,  
 on a puzzling mis-  
 sion, Johnny Bree  
 takes a wild ride  
 and digs into grim  
 difficulties . . .

## "Trouble Hunter"

By William Heyliger



Chris hurtled in front of him like a living barricade, driving his shoulder straight for the end.

**B**ETWEEN the halves of the Hastings game a sports writer from the Portsmouth *Star* sent in his card to Coach Parr. The coach met him for a fleeting moment at the gym door.

"What's gone wrong to-day?" the newspaper man demanded. He was looking for an "inside" story. "We all picked Portsmouth to swamp Hastings, and here they're tangled in a scoreless tie. What upset the dope?"

"Gil Cooper hasn't been breaking loose," Parr answered.

"But what's happened? He's always been some ball carrier."

The coach's eyes became inscrutable. "Just one of those things," he said, and went back to the locker room. If the sports writers couldn't see it, why tell them? Why give them something to write that would serve only to fill his players with apprehension? For it was apparent to Parr that opposing teams were beginning to play for Cooper, and that even the superb blocking of Chris Odom couldn't shake him loose.

Nothing in the locker room escaped the coach. Danny Steele, captain and quarterback, had a fixed smile on his face that was intended to deceive the team. O'Brien, the left tackle, wore the composed look of a player who has completely wiped the disappointments of the first half from his mind. And over on a rubbing table Gil Cooper, right half, lay staring at the ceiling with a puzzled frown, and Odom, the left half, sat beside him talking earnestly. The coach paused at the table.

"Hastings was a little tougher than we thought," he said quietly.

Cooper made a vague, harassed gesture with one hand. It was a new thing to find himself unable to make yards.

"No team can stop Gil all afternoon," Chris Odom cried in quick, loyal defense.

Parr stared at him curiously. He was thinking, at the moment, how much of Gil Cooper's reputation as a ball carrier had been built upon the interference that Odom had given him. But the nod he gave was

## Ball Carrier

By William Heyliger

Illustrated by Courtney Allen

vigorous and emphatic. "No doubt of that," he agreed. "We'll get the break in the second half."

But the break didn't come until two minutes before the final whistle. Then, with the score still tied, Hastings tried a forward pass from Portsmouth's 30-yard line. O'Brien intercepted the ball and ran with it to the Hastings 10 before he was downed.

The Portsmouth stands went wild with sudden hope. Gil, standing in the huddle, began to tremble as a hard game had never made him tremble before. Victory had to come now, or not at all—and he knew that he would be the man picked to carry the ball. If he could get past that half! The Hastings right half had dropped him on every run he had made to the left.

The thunder of cheers grew as Portsmouth bent over in the huddle. Gil's throat was dry and hot. Steele had to lift his voice to be heard against the din.

"Less than two minutes, fellows. Everybody in it. Gil's ball. Play Number 10!"

Chris Odom rubbed the sleeve of a dirt-streaked jersey across his sweating face. His twisted, confident grin went across the huddle to his roommate.

"Make some smoke, Gil."

"I'll try," Gil said huskily.

The team trotted briskly into position. Steele began to call signals, ending up with the familiar: "Hike!"

O'Brien shifted over to a position beside the right tackle. Willis, the left end, closed in toward the guard. Chris and Foxx, the full, shifted to the left of the quarter. Gil jumped out to the right wing.

Sharp warnings came from the Hastings backfield. Faced with an unbalanced line that was strong on the right, the team shifted to meet a play at right tackle or right end. It looked as though Portsmouth was massing all its strength at one spot to make one supreme smash for victory. Gil, watching with burning eyes, saw the Hastings right half shift, too. His lips drew back.

And then the play got into motion. For one step the backfield moved to the left—for just one short, deceptive step. The next instant the play swung toward the right. O'Brien pulled out of the line and raced around the left end to do business with the Hastings full. Gil, in motion, saw Chris Odom and Foxx ahead of him. As he passed Steele, he took the ball against his stomach and fell in behind his interference.

**T**HE HASTINGS end, as a good end should, came tearing in to scramble the interference. Gil held back an instant. In that instant Chris hurtled in front of him like a living barricade, driving his shoulder straight for the end. The end, swerving frantically, couldn't escape the block. A shoulder jarred him, and a rolling hip swept him from his feet. The end zone was clear.

Gil leaped ahead. Foxx was in front of him, and a wave of exultation sang in his blood. The safety man loomed. He left that threat to Foxx and shot to his right. A hand, reaching from somewhere, slipped along his thigh. He staggered, shook off the clutching fingers, and went on. He saw the safety man elude Foxx, but by sheer speed he outran him and crossed the line. And Chris Odom's voice came to him above the victorious shriek of the Portsmouth cheering section:

"Gil, old man, you've done it again!"

Yes, he had done it again. Later, in the locker

room, he wondered why he had been so worried. Parr was right. Hastings had been tougher than they thought—but not quite tough enough. He had always been able to break loose and score, and he had broken loose again to-day. After all, he was a ball carrier. In that moment a thought came to him that had never come before. If he was Portsmouth's ball carrier—the man who always got away—then he was the mainstay of the attack. He tried to shake off the thought, but it persisted and gave him satisfaction. This was his last season. He was going to State U next fall, and it would do no harm to end up in a blaze of glory.

Chris Odom mauled his back with affectionate poundings and spoke to Parr. "What do you think of him, Coach?"

"He gets there," said Parr.

The coach walked off and Gil turned to Chris.

"I suppose the morning papers will give all the credit to Hastings and rave about a moral victory," he said.

The Sunday papers did rave about Hastings a little, but not as much as Gil had expected. Good-natured cries greeted him in the dining hall when he came down to dinner with Chris. "Hey, Gil! I see your name's in the papers again. How much does it cost, Gil, to get in the headlines? What are you doing, Gil—running a football racket?" Gil grinned and enjoyed it. The coaches down at State U would be reading the papers too. In the afternoon he met Parr.

"The stories weren't bad, were they?"

"Not bad," Parr agreed.

In fact, the coach thought they were distinctly good. Not one of the sports writers had discovered that two men—a Hastings end and a half—had played for Gil and had tied him up. Perhaps Hastings' system of defense had been a happy accident; perhaps no other team would discover it. But Parr had decided to take no chances.

"Gil," he said, "we're going to work on Chris this week. We need another man who can do your trick around tackle and end. A double threat is always better than one good man. Sometimes a good man can be tied up. Hastings would have beaten us yesterday if she had had a scoring punch."

Gil knew that the coach spoke sense. He gave the

matter thought. And presently he shook his head.

"It won't work, Coach. Chris can hammer the line for a couple of yards like nobody's business, but he doesn't sell his apples on the wide swings. It just isn't his gift. How often does he get into the clear off tackle?"

Seldom. Parr knew that. But he also knew that Chris had never had much chance to get loose. Chris had specialized in blocking. No running plays had ever been planned for him.

"Perhaps," he suggested, "if we work a little harder we can make Chris dangerous around the wings."

"How?" Gil was honest in his belief that Chris was not a runner. There was only one real phantom on the Portsmouth team.

"If we—" The coach chose his words carefully. "If we work on a few plays with you doing the blocking—"

"But that's just the point," Gil argued. "Understand, I'd like to see Chris tearing up the turf. He's my pal and he's a white man. But all this special effort—why, it means that when he gets into the secondary he won't know what to do! The play won't snap. They don't have to do all this heavy blocking for me. I've just got the knack of getting loose."

Parr bit his lips. "Well," he said, with a note of suppression in his voice, "we'll try it, anyway."

ON Monday the coach gave the varsity a long practice drill, and on Tuesday the squad tried Chris' plays. In practice they went well. Gil swept out the end, and the scrub backs weren't keen enough to catch the play. Chris got away for half a dozen long runs. Gil was amazed.

"Good night," he breathed to Parr, "I didn't know the old boy could do that stuff. Where's he been hiding himself?"

Parr wasn't fooled. His keen eyes had watched Gil's blocking. To-day, against the scrub, it had been sufficient, but against keen, smart competition it might not do. Gil was saving himself on almost every blocking job. Friday night, on the eve of the Manor Hall game, he gave his instructions to Captain Steele.

"Not much of Chris on those pivots at tackle or end," he said. "Don't use him more than half a dozen times, and then try to pick spots where you can gam-

ble on a down. If it doesn't do anything else it will keep Manor Hall from watching Gil too closely."

"But—" Danny Steele's mouth hung open. "But Chris has been ripping 'em open in practice—"

"The scrub isn't Manor Hall," Parr pointed out significantly. "We're not ready to use Chris yet." He wondered if they ever would be.

And at that moment, in their room in Wallace Hall, Gil was talking a blue streak to Chris and predicting that next day, between them, they'd knock Manor Hall for a row of door knobs.

Danny Steele won the toss and chose to receive. Chris took the kick-off on the 10 and ran it back eight yards. On the first play Foxx hit center for a yard, and then Chris pounded through left guard for three more. Steele called for Number 10—Gil's play. The line shifted one man to the right, Gil sprang out to the right wing, and the ball was snapped.

Parr held his breath.

A quick backfield pivot, and the play struck to the left. The Manor Hall end came in, and Foxx and Chris made for him. Whichever one got him would leave the other free to go on with Gil—but first they had to get that end. The end came in wide, and drew them out. And while they were out with him, the half came through and dropped Gil behind the line. It was fourth down, with seven to go, and Foxx kicked.

Parr, on the side line, sighed. Manor Hall had taken a page from Hastings' book. Both the end and the half were playing Gil. For the second game in succession Portsmouth's ball carrier was spiked.

MANOR HALL, after two futile stabs at the line, kicked. Steele, taking the ball on a quarterback sneak, unexpectedly sifted through inside guard for eight yards. It looked to be the spot to try out Chris. The captain called for Chris' play. It was the same right shift, the same backfield formation, but now Chris was to run with the ball and Gil was to block.

"Murder them, kid," Gil called.

He went with Foxx to meet the end. The end feinted. Gil, fooled, left his feet in a blocking dive, only to find that the end wasn't there. Foxx started for the line as Gil left his feet. The end stepped around Gil's sprawling body and took Chris from the side, and spilled him hard.

"Parr had the dope," Steele murmured. "Manor Hall and the scrubs are different."

Gil's thoughts ran in another channel. True, he had missed blocking the end, but the end had come in wide and not too fast, and a good runner could have got by. Chris was no good unless he pounded the line. That was obvious. He ran over to help his roommate up.

"We'll get the range," he said confidently. No need to throw cold water.

But Chris had his mind on the next play. He hur-



"How many touchdowns are we good for this next half, Coach?"

ried to the huddle and spoke to Steele.

"Send Gil off on Number 10," Chris said rapidly. "Put one man on that end. One's enough. Somebody's got to handle the half."

Steele was doubtful. "We need only two yards. You might make it with a line smash, Chris."

"Gil can get away," Odom insisted. "How about it, Foxx? Can you take out that end?"

Foxx spat. "Sure thing."

"Then I'll get the half. Try it, Danny."

Steele made up his mind. "O. K. Number 10."

Parr, watching intently, groaned as the play started. Didn't they know they needed only two yards? Hadn't that pivot been stopped twice? And then he saw that this time there was a change. Foxx and Chris started, as usual, to make sure of the end, but Odom suddenly turned short and made for the line. The half, coming through, found himself met by a driving body that he could not avoid. He went down in a grotesque huddle. And Gil, to a delirium of shrieks from the stands, sidestepped the full and outraced the safety for 40 yards.

"Ball carrier," Gil told himself with a throb. Two men he had evaded—without help. No team could stop him. Back in the huddle his mind was on his roommate. Chris just didn't have a talent for that kind of stepping.

Foxx hit the center for no gain. Steele called again for the right shift, but now it was play Number 12, and while Manor Hall prepared to meet Gil coming around left tackle, Chris hit through the strong side of the line for six yards. Then, from that same formation, with Foxx blocking off the end and Chris doing a deadly job on the half, Gil got away for a 31-yard run and a touchdown. Chris pounded his back and he grinned in appreciation of his friend's enthusiasm.

AT the half the score was Portsmouth, 19; Manor Hall, 0. Parr met Steele as the team came from the field.

"Whose idea was it," he demanded, "to have Foxx play the end alone and leave the half to Chris?"

"Chris," said the captain.

Parr nodded. Somehow, he had expected the answer. In the locker room Gil threw his headgear on a bench.

"How many touchdowns are we good for this next half, Coach?"

"Ask Chris," the man answered.

Gil blinked. What was Parr doing, making a public target of Chris for failure to get somewhere on that pivot play? It wasn't like the coach to do that. Abruptly Gil's forehead cleared. Probably just one of Parr's obscure little jokes. He let it go at that.

The second half was a rout. That right shift formation kept Manor Hall bewildered. She never knew whether the play would be a smash at the line, a pivot play off left tackle, or a surprise swing around the right. Four times Gil got into the clear and ran riot through a broken field—and twice Chris was given the ball on the same play and met disaster. To the stands, to the sports writers, and even to Gil himself, the game was a Gil Cooper triumph.

He came from the game elated. "Ball carrier!" The words sang through his mind. He had been stopped in one game, but he wouldn't be stopped in any more. Chris plodded up the field weary and silent.

"You're some little line smasher," Gil told him. He felt that he ought to say something encouraging. Chris looked blamed tired.

Monday it rained, and the varsity got a blackboard talk. "The thing to do," Parr kept saying, "is to take out your man. Now, if that is done—"

Gil tried hard not to yawn. They didn't have to go through all this rigmarole for him to carry the ball. Either you had the knack or you didn't have it, and if it wasn't one of your football tricks, all the skull practice in the world wouldn't get you through. A fresh wave of sympathy for Chris ran through him. But Parr's words cut in on his thoughts. "There's no reason why Chris shouldn't—" He shifted in his chair. No reason, he reflected, except that Chris wasn't a ball carrier. The coach seemed blind to that.

During the week they prepared for Washington Military, and worked on Chris. Again the left half went through the scrub like a fish through a broken net. Parr, watching Gil's awkward, groping blocking, looked doubtful. For a few minutes he coached Gil on blocking, and after that Gil seemed to do a little better. And the coach's face brightened.

Chris, feasting on his second week of success against the scrub, took fire. "Gil! I have a hunch."

"About what?"

"Saturday's game. I'm beginning to think I might get loose."

"Good," said Gil. Inside he began to burn with resentment against Parr. What did the coach mean, stewing Chris up and getting him chasing rainbows? Couldn't Parr see that he was nothing more than a football plunger? Chris was a good player and a good

fellow—but not a good runner.

He went to Parr.

"Chris expects to sweep the ends against Washington."

"He should," the man said. "The play's going a little better."

Gil grunted. The coach, he thought to himself, was fooling himself.

NOTHING happened during the first ten minutes of the Washington game. By that time it was apparent to Parr that the teams were evenly matched—very evenly matched—and that victory for Washington or Portsmouth might depend upon a break and the ability to grasp it. The cadets were heavy, fast and alert. Twice Gil, with Foxx and Chris clearing the way for him, got off around the end, and twice cadet backfield men seemed to come from no place and hold him to eight and ten yard gains. In between those flurries Portsmouth hammered the line in vain.

Meanwhile Washington had her own troubles. Here and there Portsmouth bent, but never broke. If the cadets gained ground on one play, they lost on the next. And the ball rose in long, curving spirals as first one team and then the other found it could get nowhere.

"These birds are tougher than Hastings," O'Brien panted.

And yet, Gil thought, he was gaining ground. The only man on the team who was making distance. He hitched at his hip pads.

"I feel right," he said. "Try me on that Number 10 again."

This time, as Foxx and Chris wrecked the defense, he made twelve yards.

"Soon I'll get loose—soon I'll get loose." He told it to himself again and again. No team could stop him all afternoon.

Dietz, the Portsmouth center, had been hurt, and Gardner, the second string center, came out to take his place. Steele threw Chris at the line, only to run into a stone wall. And then the quarter was over.

Gardner was bursting with news. "Do you know who's piking off the game? Ban Taylor, the assistant State U coach. I saw him talking to Parr."

Something hot and cold ran along Gil's spine. Why, he and Chris were going to State next fall! If Ban Taylor was in the stands—His heart leaped. He was the only man making distance. Taylor would be sure to notice that. And once he broke loose—

"Show something, Gil," Chris' voice spoke into his ear.

"We'll both show something," said Gil. But he didn't believe it. He—yes. Not Chris. Chris wasn't even puncturing the line to-day. And if they called on Chris for a pivot run—Gil felt a pang of pity. It would probably look terribly bad to Ban Taylor.

Play began again. It was Portsmouth's ball, second down, ten to go.

"Give me a shot at them," Gil begged.

Steele sent him off on the right shift play that pivoted and went to the other side. But this time the defensive half broke through into the short side of the line, and Gil saw his chance for a run fading. Desperately he swung wide to avoid the half. He didn't see Chris do a miracle of contorting, of reversing to get the defensive half. The half escaped

the arm, the shoulder, the rolling hips, but couldn't avoid the leg that rode high in the air.

And Gil ran in triumph for fourteen yards, certain that he had avoided the half by his own speed and knack. Oh, he had Washington on the run!

"Same formation!" Steele cried. "Play Number 12. Right through the line. Chris' ball."

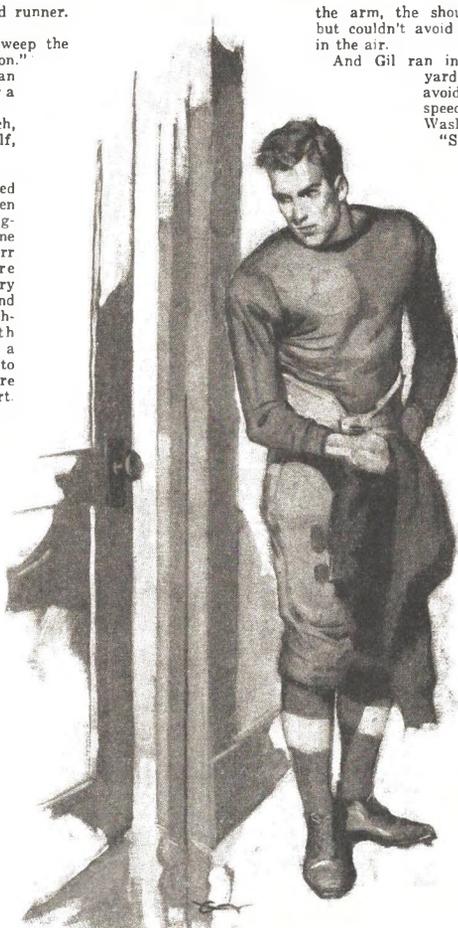
Chris, running low and putting everything he had into the charge, battered his way through the guard-tackle hole for three yards.

Gil caught the captain's eye. "Me, Danny. I can do it again."

This time he made nine yards. It was another first down. The stands roared as the linesmen moved the chain.

And Ban Taylor was looking on! Ban Taylor of State U!

"Danny!" Gil's voice shook. "Keep feeding me."



Gil heard a deep voice say, "He'll hit a hard road at State."

THE play was a fury. The lines met in a savage surge. Chris, pivoting swiftly, slipped and fell. O'Brien, leaving the line and going around the left end to take out the full, saw that there was nobody to handle the half. So he attended to that gentleman. Foxx, taking out the end, seemed to come to his feet with the same motion

and ran to do O'Brien's job in the backfield. Steele, whose business it was to protect the play from the rear after passing the ball, allowed the right end to get past him. Chris, who had come to his knees, rolled for that end and brought him down. And out of that wild tangle Gil emerged, not to be dropped until he had reached Washington's 35.

He was up at once, panting. He knew that the interference had got tangled; yet he had dodged every tackler. It was one of his hot days. "Danny!"

"No," said Steele. "You need a breathing spell." The captain threw Foxx at the line, but the cadets held. What now? The line was adamant. Gil was still breathless. Chris? He reached for that straw.

"Number 10A, fellows. Make it snap. Chris' ball." As they hopped to the shift, Gil's heart sank. Chris couldn't do that off-tackle stuff! That play took a runner, not a plunger!

The ball came back, went to Chris on the pivot, and Chris swung out to the wing. The end, coming in fast, lured Gil to the side and then, holding him off, went past him and wrecked the play.

Gil got up from the ground in something of a temper. What was Steele trying to do, throw away downs? What if they had worked on that play in practice?

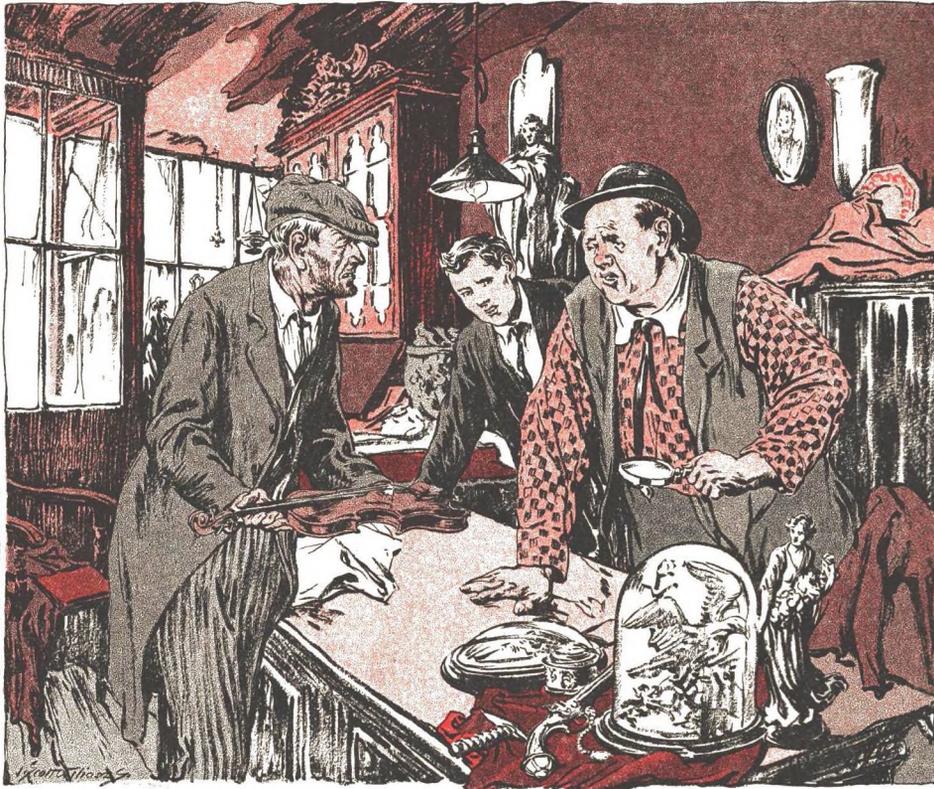
"Give me that ball again," he said savagely.

Steele shook his head. Portsmouth's ball carrier was still panting. The line? There was no sense in smashing at that—it was too strong. And he had no confidence in a forward pass. It would have to be Chris again—a desperate attempt to get the left half away.

"I'll take the end this time," Foxx said hoarsely. "Gil, you handle the back."

Gil, running ahead of Chris, suddenly found the half upon him. He was off balance and his lungs were weak, and he found himself forced back upon the play. Yet, as he

(Continued on page 57)



The curiosity shop owner regarded the object sneeringly, and named a niggardly loan.



# The Mystery in Four-and-a-Half Street

**Y**OU can't keep me here after to-morrow," Chuck Ames told the great ugly grandfather clock in the corner of the musty curiosity shop. "I'm quitting. I'm no antique clerk!"

It was a relief to say something aloud, even if you only growled it at the old clock. Sitting there on a high stool behind the cluttered counter, with an hour or more between customers, was the deadiest job on earth.

"And I thought I was pretty good to land it," Chuck reflected. "Pretty good! Well, that was over a week ago, and I was a lot younger. I know better now."

Chuck wouldn't have admitted it but he was talking to keep up his courage. He felt somehow unreasonably wary—on guard. Was there something queer about the dreary little shop and fat Utterback, its owner? Or was he just imagining it? Probably the latter. But it was uncomfortable to feel so wary.

Anyway, he was getting out. But that was depressing too. He had been so glad to get in.

It had been on the day after Chuck had been graduated from high school that he had found Utterback's advertisement in the *News*.

**WANTED:** Bright, reliable, discreet boy as clerk in curiosity shop. Good wages. Apply 13 Four-and-a-Half Street.

Chuck had applied immediately, he had landed the job, and the wages were good. It had been on the strength of those wages that he had packed off his mother, with whom he lived alone, down to the seashore for the first rest she had had in ten years.

For three days he had hopefully tried to sell some of the junk that filled the ramshackle narrow building on Four-and-a-Half Street, which was a slantwise alley one block long, almost lost in a dingy

By Donald and Louise Peattie

Illustrated by J. Scott Williams

quarter of the city. At the end of those three days he had waylaid his employer, a man with fat white flesh like lard and eyes like blue "mibs" set under colorless eyebrows.

"I'm sorry to inconvenience you, Mr. Utterback," Chuck had said, a little flushed, "but I'll be leaving you at the end of a week. I don't believe I'll ever be much good at work like this."

The fat man had given him an opaque glance, grunted assent, tilted his derby farther over his lashless eyes, and lumbered on out.

Utterback spent little time in the shop. Occasionally he was there to meet some special customers, and these men he led up to his living quarters on the third floor—the second was filled with second-hand furniture—and there transacted business.

What that business was Chuck had had plenty of time to wonder. He had had time enough to develop a puzzled distrust of the trade that went on under the dingy sign, *Antique Shoppes*, hung over the door of Number 13. Few customers came in for any of the tawdry wares of the shop—rocco lamps, plaster statuary, oil paintings of dead mallard ducks, goldfish castles, atrocious imitations of Chinese vases, shabby tables, crack-bottomed chairs, and cheap jewelry. The show window made some pretense of living up to the sign above it, holding a few candlesticks, some snuffboxes, and a tray of old semi-precious jewels of which the chief boast was a flawed square-cut emerald.

That tray, Utterback had impressed upon Chuck, was to be his responsibility. He was to keep his eye on it when strangers were in the shop, and at night he was

to put it into the desk drawer, lock that, and leave the key on the safe at the back of the shop. Sitting through the dull hours behind the cluttered counter, Chuck had rumbled his thick brown hair and wondered why Utterback didn't keep the tray of jewels in the safe. What else was the safe for?

To Chuck, the whole air of Number 13 was furtive. The dingiest of its secrets was brought to light when a shabby woman or a ragged man came slipping into the shop with something wrapped in crumpled paper or hidden under a worn coat. When Utterback was there he turned the offered object over in his fat hands, sneeringly, and named a loan of a few cents in a contemptuous grunt. When Chuck was alone, he gave a receipt for the proffered security, and told the customer to come back later to settle with the pawnbroker.

"It's a mean business," Chuck growled, sitting there frowning on top of his high stool. "I'd rather dig ditches."

Well, to-morrow was the last day. One hour till closing time to-night. He spent that hour watching the slow-moving hand on the face of the old grandfather clock. The clock had come to seem a jailer to him, a big stout ugly jailer breathing with a ponderous ticking.

At last it boomed six slow strokes. Utterback came lumbering down the stairs, let Chuck out the front door, and locked it after him. The boy stood in the dusty heat of Four-and-a-Half Street, and heaved a sigh of relief.

The gray-haired blind man who sold pencils on the opposite corner had shut up his box and was slowly, cautiously, starting for home. At the curb he paused, listening, his stick clutched anxiously. Chuck darted forward and took the man's arm.

"Thank you, boy!" The blind man's quick smile was pleasant, almost youthful, and his voice was silvery, like his hair.

"How did you know I was a boy?" asked Chuck, guiding him across the street.

"When this sense is gone—" the peddler tapped the black glasses—"this one gets sharper." He touched his ear. "A boy's lively, light step—it's as easy to read as a face. Well, here my way turns.





With a sudden plunge the burglar caught the hand that held the little black bag.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness."

And he went on up the drab street, the tap-tap of his cane vanishing in the city noises.

CHUCK got his dinner at a little restaurant and then, feeling lonely in the summer evening, dropped into a movie theater that was showing a promising Western. Carried away by the sweep of the desert and the gallop of hoofs, he was forgetting his mean job, and the problem of getting a better one, when a sudden recollection came upon him.

He hadn't put that window tray of trinkets into the desk drawer!

He ought to go back and do it, he thought reluctantly. Yet Mr. Utterback might take care of the tray, and anyway it would probably be safe enough. Chuck sat still. On the screen the sheriff's posse was galloping to the relief of the heroine locked in the blazing telegraph office. But at last a persistent prick of his conscience got Chuck out of his comfortable seat, and with a sigh he tramped back to the shop.

The summer dark was close and stuffy in Four-and-a-Half Street. The buildings down the block were lightless; they loomed up blackly—two warehouses, an old office building condemned as a fire trap, the greasy Greek fruit store, shut for the night, and Utterback's "Antique Shoppe." At the end of the block a single violet arc light sputtered. Distantly, Chuck could hear the clamor of street cars and the rush of traffic, but the slantwise strip of street seemed a sinister island of silence in the life of the city.

He could just make out the tray of jewels safe in the shop front. Scowling at it, he told himself he had been a fool to bother to come back. Still, here he was and if the pawnbroker were in, he might as well confess he had forgotten to put away the jewels. He rang the doorbell and waited, staring in the dim shop window.

The bell sent faint echoes through the rambling old house; beyond the dusty glass, shadows seemed to waver in the dark shop.

"This place gets creepier than ever at night,"

Chuck muttered. He had to persuade himself out of the notion that eyes were watching him from the black doorway of the warehouse op-

There was no time to fume at himself for his carelessness. More than ever, the responsibility for that tray of trinkets lay on his head. Police in this quarter were few and far between. Without hesitation Chuck slipped noiselessly into the shop and flattened himself against the wall behind the door.

Somewhere in that thick darkness, where the big clock tick-tocked in hollow monotone, stood the burglar, doubtless startled to cautious waiting by Chuck's peal of the bell.

Unarmed, as he was, Chuck knew he had no chance with the burglar in an open fight. That was why he had swiftly decided to wait there in the shadow by the door until the burglar should start to leave and then leap on him from behind and get a grip on his windpipe. A desperate scheme, but the best he could fix on at the moment.

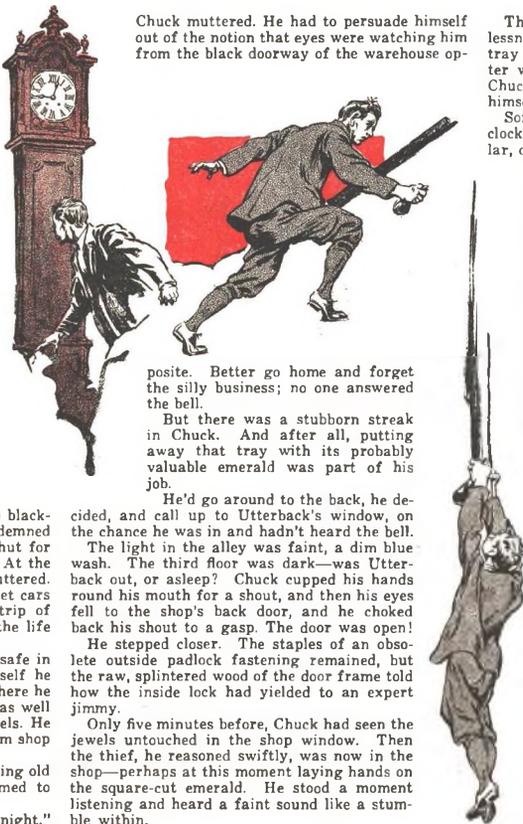
HE waited, trying to smother the sound of his uneven breathing, listening to the grim tick-tock of the clock, staring with baffled eyes into the murky room lit only by the faint light of the arc lamp down the street, filtering in through the dirty glass of the shop front. Then the faintest scraping sound in the alley caught his attention, and he turned, holding his breath, to see through the crack of the open door the sudden blue spurt of a match flame.

The flickering little light illuminated the fingers that held it, thin, steely fingers. The next instant, through the crack, were visible too the silvery temples and black glasses of the blind pencil vendor, bent toward the jimmied door. The match went out. But as the implication of that brief, searching little flame struck home to Chuck, his skin crawled. The next thing he realized was that the door was closing, closing, slowly—and in a second he heard the muffled rattle and click of a padlock slipped through the staples and snapped into lock.

Through the thudding of his heart Chuck heard down the alley the stealthy footsteps of the blind man departing—the blind man who lighted matches in the dark.

A board creaked. Chuck's mind snapped back to the imperative fact that he was locked in the deserted shop with an unknown housebreaker. He had no idea why the door had

(Continued on page 40)



posite. Better go home and forget the silly business; no one answered the bell.

But there was a stubborn streak in Chuck. And after all, putting away that tray with its probably valuable emerald was part of his job.

He'd go around to the back, he decided, and call up to Utterback's window, on the chance he was in and hadn't heard the bell.

The light in the alley was faint, a dim blue wash. The third floor was dark—was Utterback out, or asleep? Chuck cupped his hands round his mouth for a shout, and then his eyes fell to the shop's back door, and he choked back his shout to a gasp. The door was open!

He stepped closer. The staples of an obsolete outside padlock fastening remained, but the raw, splintered wood of the door frame told how the inside lock had yielded to an expert jimmy.

Only five minutes before, Chuck had seen the jewels untouched in the shop window. Then the thief, he reasoned swiftly, was now in the shop—perhaps at this moment laying hands on the square-cut emerald. He stood a moment listening and heard a faint sound like a stumble within.

# The YOUTH'S COMPANION combined with The American Boy Founded 1827

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November, 1931

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## Friendly Talks With the Editor

### Autumn

AUTUMN is a season of the year renowned for Columbus Day, sweet apple cider and thinking up things to be thankful for. It is a time of tang in the air and pleasant tingling in the toes. Autumn brings out fur on fur-bearing animals and on college boys at football games, and also provides dry leaves for bonfires in which potatoes may be inserted for roasting, though they are rarely found when wanted and are invariably reduced to charcoal. It was once possible to identify autumn by football, but they now play football in the spring also, leaving you hardly knowing where you're at. In autumn you usually spend half your time wishing summer hadn't passed and the rest wishing winter would come, which allows no time at all for realizing that autumn itself is one of the grandest seasons known to man and really deserves more favorable consideration.

### Good News!

FELLOWS who are going to be college freshmen in the next year or so ought to think it good news that many fewer meals are being eaten off fraternity mantelpieces nowadays than a few years ago. Paddling and that sort of "freshman training" is passing out of the picture in the American colleges. There used to be a lot of hazing of various kinds, particularly in connection with fraternity initiations, but college upperclassmen of 1931 are coming pretty generally to the conclusion that a freshman who has to carry a cushion around the campus with him isn't as useful nor as dignified as one who can sit down without acute agony. That's sense.

### Polo

WE saw our first game of international polo not long ago—between the Roslyn, Long Island, team and four hard-riding South Americans from Santa Paula, Argentina. And right from the first throw-in we found we had been a polo fan all our life without knowing. The very first dash goalward, with opposing riders leaning low in their saddles, with ponies stretching out their slim satiny legs and striving gallantly to reach the white ball, lifted us right out of our seat. And from then on, to the final minute of the eighth chukker, was just one thrill after another. We caught ourself shouting, time after time, at some especially fine bit of play. A splendid, exciting, heart-stirring game, this polo. We're going to see more of it.

### Supreme Effort

LATER, when we had time to think it over, we decided that polo is a glorious game for the spectator because it demands the utmost from both players and ponies. The polo player must be capable of supreme effort, mental and physical, and the co-ordination between mind and muscle can be little short of perfect if he is to hit the ball at all. You see this fine fusing

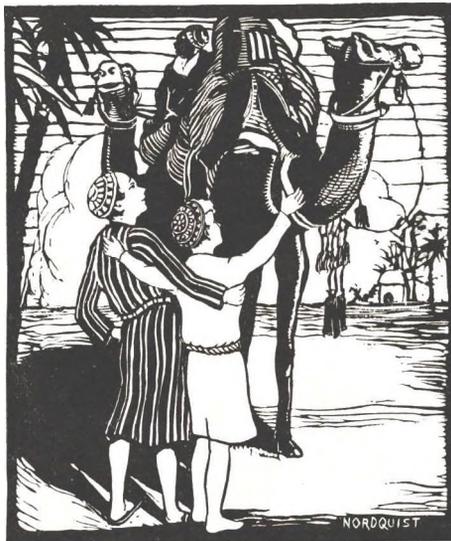
of intelligence and body when a golfer lifts a soaring drive down the fairway, when a sprinting outfielder leaps and takes a long fly, when a tackler dives low and brings a ball carrier smashing to earth. All these things are inspiring; more, they are beautiful. You sense the magnificent self-forgetfulness behind the action, you sense the brain directing that marvelously controlled machine, and you cheer. You can't help cheering, at a polo game, for there rider and mount must unite their intelligence and combine their strength to do their proper share—and they must be ready to make the supreme effort again and again.

### Give Your Best

POLO is thrilling because neither men nor horses are guilty of holding back. They do not stint. They give their best every moment. Suddenly, from a melee of plunging ponies, sweating riders, flickering sticks, the ball goes breaking across the field. A blue-shirted horseman breaks free. A length behind comes a player in white, his mount leveling out in a racing gallop. They are on the ball. A stick flashes down, and the race is on again, riders and ponies eager, intent, heedless of everything but the need of getting that white willow ball between the goal posts. Polo is played as it should be played—hard! Make up your mind to play your game, whatever it is, the same way. Then, whether you win or lose, you will have the satisfaction that comes from giving your best. There is no better, nor greater, reward.

### Always With You

LAST summer a young chap we know was telling us of the equipment he was going to take with him on a camping trip. He named all the conventional things—blankets and an ax and tea and mosquito chaser and so on—and then he concluded:



WOODCUT BY CLYDE NORDQUIST

## TWO BOYS

BY IMOGEN CLARK

In those old years, after their work was done,  
The two Judean boys would often meet—  
Drawn close by threads that destiny had spun—  
And share the life that filled the village street  
Sometimes on holidays they'd trudge the miles  
To where the *Via Maris* wound its way,  
And watch the camel trains in dusty files,  
Or trampling legions flaunting Roman sway.  
Then—when the sun dropped low, and tall palms showed  
Like moulded metal against the pale, still sky—  
Arms across shoulders, they'd take the homeward road,  
Hearts stirred with dreams, but silent-lipped and shy.  
No presage in such comradeship as this  
Of a dark wood—and of a darker kiss.

"—and I'll have my book, too." We wondered. When you're camping and canoeing, you want to travel light. A book's heavy. We asked about it. "I'm reading Lord Charnwood's 'Life of Lincoln,'" he said, "and it's too interesting to lay down. But even if I weren't in the middle of this particular book, I'd certainly have one in my pack. It may add a little weight, but it makes a lot of hours lighter!" . . . We got to thinking about that, and we realized that there are mighty few times when you don't consider a book "part of the pack." Roughing it or vacationing at Palm Beach, traveling or staying at home, books are always there. As a matter of fact, books probably rank right alongside tooth brushes as the things people *always* need to have with them. It isn't hard to find the reason. Good books are good friends—friends you can always rely on. They have entertainment, and they have information you want, and people you like to know. More people have known Tom Sawyer than ever knew any ten Presidents you might name!

### Reading Right

THERE'S a right way to read, and a wrong way. The wrong way is to take a book and say to yourself, arbitrarily, "I'm going to read every word of this if it kills me." Do it that way and it probably *will* kill you! Certainly it will kill the book for you. The right way is to say, "I'm going to read the parts of this book that are of interest and value to me. The parts that aren't useful I'm going to omit." That means exercising critical judgment, of course—deciding what is worth your time and what isn't. And it doesn't by any means mean reading sloppily. It doesn't mean, if you're reading Conrad's *Lord Jim*, skipping the splendid description and fine characterization that prove Conrad's greatness—those are the things you read Conrad for! It doesn't mean merely "getting the story." It means thinking as you read. There's a difference between reading carelessly and reading critically.

### Fifty Years

FIFTY years is three times as long as a lot of you fellows have lived. That's a long time. It's a third as long as the existence of the country itself. . . . It's the age of the American Red Cross, and it's our firm opinion that not many organizations in the history of the world have put fifty years to such good use. We've just been looking over a list of a few of the accomplishments of the Red Cross in just one year, and you'd hardly believe such a record possible. Nearly three million persons given drought relief. Two million visits by nurses and welfare workers to patients. Relief work in the disasters in San Domingo and Nicaragua. Sixty thousand life-saver's insignia awarded. And all of that doesn't scratch the surface of what they're doing.

### Proud

WHEN we're looking around for things to be proud about, we find ourself lighting on the Red Cross pretty often. We're proud of its glorious record of courage—of brave men and women walking under shell fire to relieve suffering, of carrying aid to peoples ravaged by pestilence, or plunging into cities shattered by earthquake, flood, fire. We're proud of its record of wisdom—of teaching life-saving and first aid, of carrying public health knowledge into the schools, of helping with social and financial problems of service and ex-service men. And this isn't all. We're proud, particularly, that this American organization is supported by an American people that believes in it.

### Roll Call

NOVEMBER 11 to 26—the dates for the Fiftieth Anniversary Roll Call. In a lot of windows you'll see that little red cross that means, "Everybody in this home has joined the Red Cross." You can bet there'll be one in our window! And we think we'd be about as proud as we've ever been in our life if we could hang one in the *American Boy* window—if we knew that every one of our gang had paid his dollar to help along. There isn't any better use for a dollar!

# Storm Warning: Double-Flagged

IN the Officers' Club of the Third Attack Group at Fort Crockett, Texas, Lieutenant Jimmie Rhodes leaned back in a soft-cushioned chair and listened to the waves beat against the sea wall outside. A salty gulf breeze blew through the window by him.

It was an August day, and hot. Jimmie had just finished a long cotton-dusting job with his friend Ziggy Burrell in northern Louisiana. Now, with three hundred dollars in his wallet and his leave almost ended, he was at Fort Crockett, where Ziggy was stationed as an attack pilot. And Jimmie hoped that a military plane would pass and give him a hop to his home station, Selfridge Field, in Michigan.

The recreation room of the club was filled with attack pilots, chatting, reading, or playing cards at the round tables. Jimmie looked idly around and wondered where Ziggy had gone to. He lazily observed the big shield over the fireplace, the insignia of the Third Attack, and yawned sleepily. And then a voice broke in on his calm—Ziggy's voice.

"Pursuiter!" said Ziggy, and as Jimmie rose to turn around, another voice—a soft, familiar drawl—asked: "H're you, Jimmie?"

The drawl shocked Jimmie into joyous wakefulness. It brought back his training days at Kelly Field. He sprang from his chair, staring at the trim, blue-eyed officer beside Burrell.

"Atlee! Uncle Walt!" he sputtered. "You—how did—when did—"

Then, giving up the vain attempt at speech, he gripped the other's outstretched hand.

"You wouldn't stir around and greet your friends," the newcomer said quizzically, rubbing his fingers to restore circulation. "Not even when they hop from Mexico to see you."

"Mexico?" repeated Jimmie. "What you doing in Mexico, Walt?"

"With the Army Good Will Tour," explained Walt Atlee, wrinkling his high, sunburned forehead. "Three of us bombers on a mission. Don't you read the papers?"

"I've been cotton-dusting with Ziggy here," said Jimmie. "Just made Crockett an hour ago. Haven't seen a paper for three weeks."

Ziggy explained. "Jimmie can't read much, Walt. There's nothing mental about pursuit flying."

Jimmie sized up Ziggy's big, broad-shouldered figure, and laughed. All through cotton dusting, he and Ziggy had jibed each other over the comparative merits of pursuit and attack flying. Now Uncle Walt—a bomber—was here! If only that other member of their Kelly quartet were here—George Chandler of the Observation!

He swung to Atlee. "It's great to see you, Walt. How long a stay can you chisel out of your flight leader?"

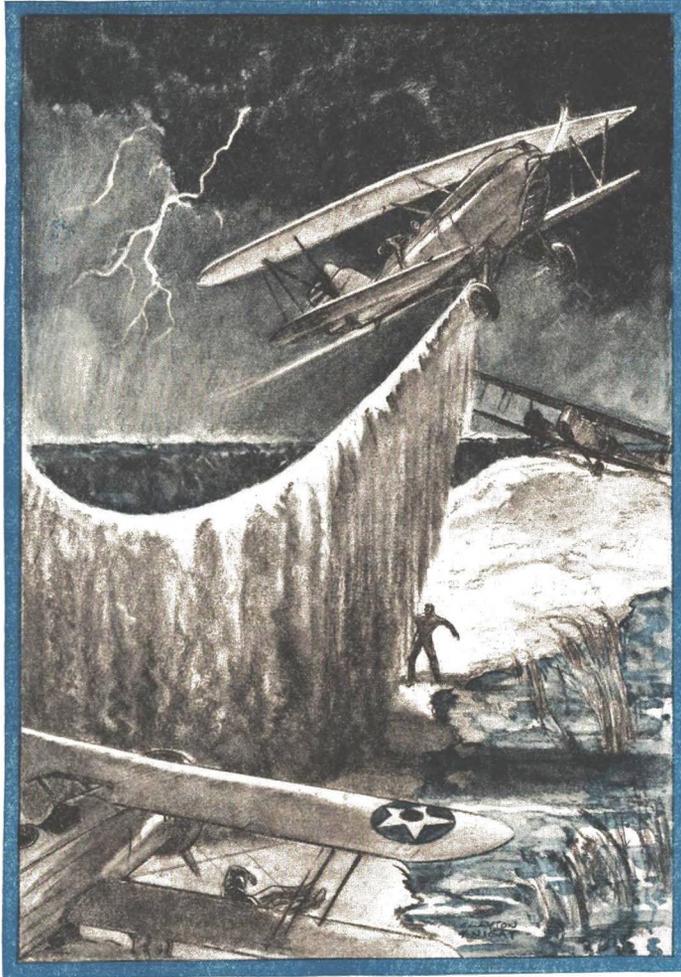
WALT frowned. "I'm overdue at Langley. And there's a new airport at New Orleans to be opened. Have to leave to-morrow, if I want to stay right with Melaney."

"Melaney?" echoed Ziggy. "Is he your flight leader? He won the Cheney Award last year."

"What's the Cheney Award?" asked Jimmie.

Ziggy, with a significant glance at Walt, murmured:

"I told you pursuiter's can't read. It's in the General Orders."



A great black cloud boiled beneath the ship . . . wrapped the man in its folds.

By Frederic Nelson Litten

Illustrated by Clayton Knight

"The Cheney Award's for valor, Jimmie," Walt explained. "A medal and citation. The highest honor in the Air Corps, egg."

At that moment, the mess sergeant called them in to lunch, and Ziggy introduced Walt and Jimmie to the pilots at his table:

"Gang, meet Rhodes of the 95th Pursuit, Selfridge. It's a small branch of the Air Corps, the Pursuit. . . . And the hairy one is Atlee—just a bomber."

Walt blushed to the top of his pink, prematurely bald head. As chairs scraped into place an officer at Jimmie's right whispered:

"Ask Zig about two-way communication with New Zealand."

Jimmie, though he did not understand, nodded thanks and waited. A lull came, and he said in a slow, distinct voice:

"Zig, how about your two-way radio to New Zealand?"

The effect on Burrell was electric. He whirled in his chair, glared at Jimmie, then at his brother officers.

"You birds would spill that. Why not dust off an-

other one? I'm fed up hearing of New Zealand."

"But you talked to 'em, Zig," a slender officer said, anxiously. Turning to Jimmie he added with pride: "Ziggy's communications officer, you know. And a clever one! He and a sergeant named Graves built a short-wave transmitter. They picked up the distress call, 'M'aiders,' from a tramp ship off New Zealand, last spring. Wonderful reception too. You could actually hear the sailors 'biting' their teeth. Am I right, Zig?"

"No," answered Ziggy. "What you heard, Whitely, was the wind whistling through your long fuzzy ears." He bent forward. "Believe it or not, jokers, we did pick up New Zealand. I've told you for the last time."

"Is that a promise?" asked another officer. "Will you put your fist on a pledge to that effect?"

"I might put my fist on a lot of places you sharpshooters wouldn't like," muttered Zig, and bent over his plate.

WHEN lunch was over, Ziggy led his two companions outside.

The three crossed the green parade ground, and mounted the steps of the brick headquarters building. At the mail case Ziggy drew a fat sheaf of letters from the pigeonhole marked with his name. He sorted through it and handed an envelope to Jimmie. Then he glanced at his own mail, and looked with widening eyes at the return address on one letter.

"Letter from George Chandler," he said. "And I've owed him one for three months."

He opened the letter eagerly. "George" has been transferred to Maxwell Field, Alabama," he said, while Jimmie and Walt gathered close.

Zig read on for a moment, then dropped the letter and seized Jimmie and Walt gleefully.

"George is coming via Crockett! This letter says he ought to make it here by August 12—and that's today!"

Jimmie jerked from Ziggy's grasp, his eyes alight. "To-day!" he cried. "Why then—we'll be together—the old 'Big Four' of Kelly!"

Walt stopped, retrieved the scattered pages of the letter, and handed them to Zig. He straightened, his solemn face smiling too.

"Same old 'Four'," he murmured.

Jimmie glanced at his own letter. It had been forwarded from Selfridge Field. The writing was a scrawl, almost illegible. He lifted the carelessly gummed flap and felt inside. At first he thought the envelope was empty. But his finger touched something. He removed a triangular-shaped paper—apparently a clipping from an old almanac. One side was crossed with lines of print, and on the other side was a picture of two flags—weather flags. He stared at it, and shook his head, mystified.

Meanwhile Ziggy was finishing the letter from George Chandler.

"Carney—who's Carney?" he muttered. "H'm—the radio sergeant who robbed Brooks hangar when we were on the DH stage. The fellow you and Walt caught." Ziggy read another sentence and gave a sharp cry. "George says this Carney tried to write you off at Crissy! Almost got George, instead—would have, if it hadn't been for you."

He glanced at Jimmie Rhodes, whose sober face held a reminiscent light. Well Jimmie remembered how Convict Carney had planted an explosive in

George's ship—explosive that would go off when the engine grew hot.

Walt looked reproachful. "You didn't write me of this, Jimmie."

Jimmie frowned. The thought of Sergeant Carney was like a shadow on the sun. He didn't want to think of Carney—not to-day. Nor any day. The man had tried twice for his life. Report had it that in attempting escape from prison, Carney had drowned in San Francisco Bay.

"Carney's dead. Let's forget him."

Walt, gazing into Jimmie's face, was silent. But Ziggy, reading further in the letter, nodded.

"Jumped from the parapet at Fort Barry into Frisco Bay. . . . Carried out by the undertow."

Jimmie shrugged his shoulders in dismissal of the subject.

"Your car's parked behind the building," he said to Ziggy. "Why not ride over to the field? Operations might have a wire from George."

He tucked the strange letter with the weather flags—the letter forwarded from Selfridge—in his khaki shirt. It seemed too unimportant to show the others.

Walt bent forward suddenly. "Listen," he said. "Is that an attack ship, Zig? It's a radial exhaust."

He turned, and with Zig and Jimmie at his heels, ran out to the concrete walk before headquarters.

Over against Galveston Bay an army ship was outlined, flying with a steady soberness that Jimmie knew. It swept above the gun pits of Fort Jacinto, dived primly on the row of Post buildings, then leveled and flew westward toward the landing field.

"Hey hey!" cried Jimmie. "That bobbing old maid's dive—no pilot in the world but George would pull that. Tumble in the car—let's go!"

ZIGGY drove a fast mile from headquarters to the field, but the plane had made her landing when he pulled in by Operations building at the end of the hangar line. As the three sprang out, a slender, pale-checked officer carrying a chute pack rounded the corner of the building. Glimpsing Jimmie Rhodes and Walt Atlee, his eyes grew wide. He broke into a run.

"Jimmie! Walt!" he cried. "And Zig! Am I seeing things? I'm dizzy."

Jimmie, first to grip his hand, shouted: "Dizzy! Why not? You're looking at the pride of the Pursuit; the king of the Attack, and—" he scowled at Walt, searching for descriptive words—"oh well, a bomber."

"Bombardment and Observation have no need of adjectives," said George, shaking hands with Walt and Ziggy.

"How long can you stay, George?" Ziggy asked the Observation officer.

"I'll be pushing on to-morrow," George answered with regret. "Hate to leave so soon, but this ship of mine's the first of the new 0-25's. They want a record cross country out of her. And the Crockett forecaster says dirty weather's brewing."

Jimmie stared into the sky. The sun was copper-colored. There wasn't a cloud in sight.

"Forecaster! Bet my concrete crash boots there won't be a storm for weeks."

"You don't know the Gulf coast, Jimmie," Ziggy replied quickly. "You get a gale in a half hour here. And it's August—drawing close to the equinox."

Walt's forehead wrinkled. "I bought some horsehair riatas—you know: lariats—in Mexico for my uncle's ranch. There wasn't room in the baggage coop, so I've got 'em in the gunner's seat. I hope it doesn't rain. A rain would kink the strands and ruin the whole works." Gazing at the cloudless sky, he murmured anxiously: "Sure worries me."

The three laughed. Walt Atlee—world's champion worrier!

They walked over to where a ground crew was towing in George's plane.

"Let's see what the Observation uses for their so-called flying," Ziggy said.

Obligingly George swung up on the wing plate of the 0-25.

"Geared prop—Wasp engine," he said enthusiastically. "Have a look at the radio equipment, gang. Telephonic two-way stuff. You can reach a hundred miles, ship-to-ship."

An enlisted man walked by the group, and Walt Atlee, catching sight of him, called out.

"Biggs! Check my ship and have her on the line when dawn cracks in the morning."

The man nodded, saluted sheepishly, and disappeared.

"Biggs, my flight sergeant," Walt explained. "Good man, but likes to stay out

late." He turned to George's ship. "Ship radio's oke, but not if you have a forced landing. About one 'Maider' and your battery'd be dead."

Jimmie blinked. "May what?" he said inquiringly.

Walt looked sad. George touched Jimmie's arm.

"'Maider' is the international radiophone distress call. Like the Morse SOS. French for 'help me.' 'Maider. Help. Pronounced May day. 'Maider—help. . . . Help—'Maider. Get it?"

"Help," said Jimmie thoughtfully. "Of course I wouldn't know that. The Pursuit needs no help."

Ziggy gave an ironic nod. "Take a landing in the sea marsh and you'll yodel May day plenty. Only there is no landing—just swamp and cane and a shell ridge. Miss the ridge—you sink out of sight."

"Why fly over the marsh then?" inquired Jimmie.

Walt's forehead was wrinkling again. "I've got to fly over it," he said. "On the airline to New Orleans there's two hundred miles of marsh. You know, that does worry me a bit. Maybe I'd better ship the riatas. Sure don't want to wet 'em."

"Why not take off with me, Walt?" George offered.

"I'm on my way to Maxwell Field, Alabama. We can stay together an hour or two, and we might try some ship-to-ship radio."

THAT night, going to bed, Jimmie recalled the mysterious letter that had been forwarded from Selfridge—the letter containing the almanac clipping with its two flags. With Uncle Walt, he was occupying one of the rooms of Ziggy's downtown apartments. George and Ziggy were in the next room.

He drew the letter out of his shirt and held it out to Walt.

"Here's something, Walt," he said. "You like Scotland Yard stuff. What's the answer? It was in the mail, forwarded from Selfridge."

Walt took the envelope, removed the triangular-shaped paper, and gave an exclamation.

"You got one too!" he murmured.

Jimmie stared. "Too?" he echoed.

"A letter like this to me came the third day I was in San Antonio," Walt went on. "Just a clipping. Some kind of a weather signal. But what's it mean?"

"You tell me," said Jimmie.

Walt frowned at the floor, tapping the envelope reflectively.

"A warning, maybe," he replied at last.

Jimmie, unlacing his shoe, paused.

"Warning? Of what?"

"I was thinking," Walt answered, as if half ashamed, "of—Carney."

Jimmie drew up. "Carney's dead," he returned, an almost angry tone in his voice. "I told you that, Walt."

"'Lost in the undertow,'" quoted Walt. "You don't know he's dead. Might have escaped. You don't want to talk about it, Jimmie. Nor do I. But this means something. Suppose he got away?"

Jimmie scowled. Then his sense of humor broke through, and he grinned.

"Suppose," he echoed, "suppose the British had come by air instead of 'by land or by sea.' They'd have made Paul Revere's horse look bad, wouldn't they?"

"You don't see it, Jimmie, but I do." Atlee's tones were sober. "Who else would send this—to both of us?"

Ziggy, approaching down the hall, poked his head

into the room. "Lights out, you two, or it's ten demerits and a tour."

Jimmie laughed, but Walt, holding up the paper, asked:

"What's this signal, Zig?"

The broad-shouldered attack pilot gazed at it. "If you were stationed at Fort Crockett, you'd know. A storm warning, double-flagged. It means disaster when you see that double flag along the coast. Where—"

Jimmie yawned and snapped off the light. "Haul in the tee, you guys. Night, Zig. And don't mind Walt. He can't help worryin'."

Hazy darkness that precedes dawn hovered over Galveston Island. At the flying field behind Fort Crockett two planes of Walt Atlee's bomber flight had already taken off for New Orleans. But Biggs, Walt's mechanic, had not yet appeared, and the scant-haired pilot's temperature was at fever heat.

"Never mind, Walt," soothed Jimmie. "Maybe he stayed out late again."

Walt muttered censored words. Then, catching sight of a slouching figure, he cried: "Here you are, eh? What's the idea, Biggs?"

A man wearing helmet and drawn goggles sneaked along the bomber's fuselage, and without answering or coming near Walt, went up to the wing. By the intermittent purple stabbing of the exhaust, Jimmie watched the mechanic climb humbly to the co-pilot's seat. Another soldier, with sergeant's stripes on the arm of his coveralls, saluted Atlee, bending toward him in the semi-dark.

"I'm Graves, sir. I help Lieutenant Burrell on Communications. We've built a short-wave set, as perhaps he told you. If you don't mind, I'll try picking up your note."

"24.2," snapped Walt. "But you can't raise me—my battery's weak. Try Chandler—his wave's the same."

Then, solemnly, he shook hands with Zig and Jimmie Rhodes. His face had become grave. No fun, this good-by. George Chandler's ship was taxiing to the line. For an hour or two he and George would be flying together, and when they separated the gang would be pretty well broken up again.

"I'll radio George after we're up," Walt said huskily, "and he can send a message down to you."

He buckled his radio helmet and mounted the bomber's step. The two engines of the big ship roared a powerful challenge as he gunned them. Day was streaking over a cloudy sky as the big ship rumbled out across the field and rose.

Ziggy and Jimmie strode to where George Chandler waited by his plane.

"Lucky landings, fellow!" Jimmie said.

George smiled. "Lucky landings, Jimmie," he replied, and still gripping Jimmie's hand, added: "A great day—the old gang—"

A strange sense of loneliness swept over Jimmie as he watched the ship lift and soar up into the grayling sky. He turned abruptly.

"It's over," he said. "Party's over, Zig."

Ziggy's face was solemn too.

"Wonder when we'll all gang up again—and where." A bugle, sounding faintly, broke the spell.

Ziggy laughed. "Getting mushy, eh? Let's have breakfast, Jimmie, then we'll see if we can't find you transportation north."

It was eight o'clock when they left the club. The sky outside was gray, with the sun half hidden in mist. As Zig moved to his car parked by the road, a man called questioningly:

"Lieutenant Burrell?"

ZIGGY wheeled, and the man came closer. He sent a quick, doubtful glance at Jimmie Rhodes. Jimmie stared as he heard the man say:

"Private business, if you please, Lieutenant."

The two drew apart from Jimmie, and for a moment they talked. Then, suddenly, Ziggy turned.

"Jimmie." The tenseness in the word put haste in Jimmie's stride. As he came close, Ziggy turned to the stranger and said: "Tell him."

The man was bareheaded. There were beads of moisture on his temple. He wiped them away with a hand that was unsteady.

"I had a brother in the service," he began, and looked at Jimmie. "He—went wrong. You knew him—Edward Carney. Lost in Frisco Bay."

Jimmie started, nodded.

"But—he wasn't lost," the man went on. "A Jap tanker picked him up and car-



## "A Debt to Sher Gul"

By Allan Swinton

It's real adventure, this story of border fighting in India, and of a one-eyed Pathan and the desperate young cavalry officer who owed him a debt.

IN DECEMBER

ried him to the China Sea." The man paused and wet his lips. "He's come back. I kept him in Houston, where I live, for a while, but last night he disappeared. Talked of Lieutenant Atlee all the time, and wrote him a letter. He hates him. I didn't know you were here. It was in the paper about Lieutenant Atlee, and I came to warn him. A soldier said I'd find him with Lieutenant Burrell."

Jimmie was silent, his mind a whirl of chaotic thoughts.

"Your brother's talked of me too?" he asked.

"Nothing else but how he hates you and your friend," the man said slowly. "I did wrong to let him stay. His mind's not right. When he disappeared, I went to the police. But—" his voice wavered—"be careful."

Jimmie nodded. "Thanks."  
"The military police ought to know of this," Ziggy said.

"No," Jimmie shook his head. "Walt's away, and I can take care of myself. Let's go."

A last glance as Ziggy's car rolled down the road showed the man standing, watching, just as they had left him. Ziggy stopped in front of the 60th Squadron headquarters, and sat staring out over the wheel of his auto.

"Should tell the M. P.," he said again.

Once more Jimmie shook his head. Ziggy sprang down to the road.

"I'll not be long," he promised.  
But Jimmie waited for a quarter of an hour. Then a sergeant, the one who had talked to Walt on the field, came out.

"I'm Sergeant Graves. Lieutenant Burrell's had a delay, inside, sir. Papers to O. K. If you'd like to come inside, I've picked up Lieutenant Chandler's wave."

Jimmie, his mind still busy with the thought that Carney was alive and loose, followed the sergeant through an office where two operators were bent over their keys, and on to a long room. At one end of this room a generator hummed a steady monotone. The sergeant halted at a table with a switchboard and a bank of dully glowing tubes. He slipped on head phones, sat down, and moved the dials on the board. After a moment he looked up at Jimmie. "He's off the air now, sir," he said. "But if you want to listen you may pick him up now. I'll call you when Lieutenant Burrell's through."

Jimmie sat down and drew on the head set. Only the brittle crash of static reached him through the phones. He raised the signal strength, adjusted the vernier, and waited. Minutes passed. The sergeant moved quietly about the room. He returned to Jimmie's side.

"It's a good set. We picked up a distress call from the Australian gulf last spring. The officers razed Lieutenant Burrell a lot, but—"

Jimmie lifted his hand. "Quiet," he whispered, and strained forward.

The sergeant leaned down too. A heavy buzzing note was coming in. Static crashed again. Then, crystal clear, George Chandler's voice:

"Maider!"

Once more the break of static interfered. And then, again, George's voice:

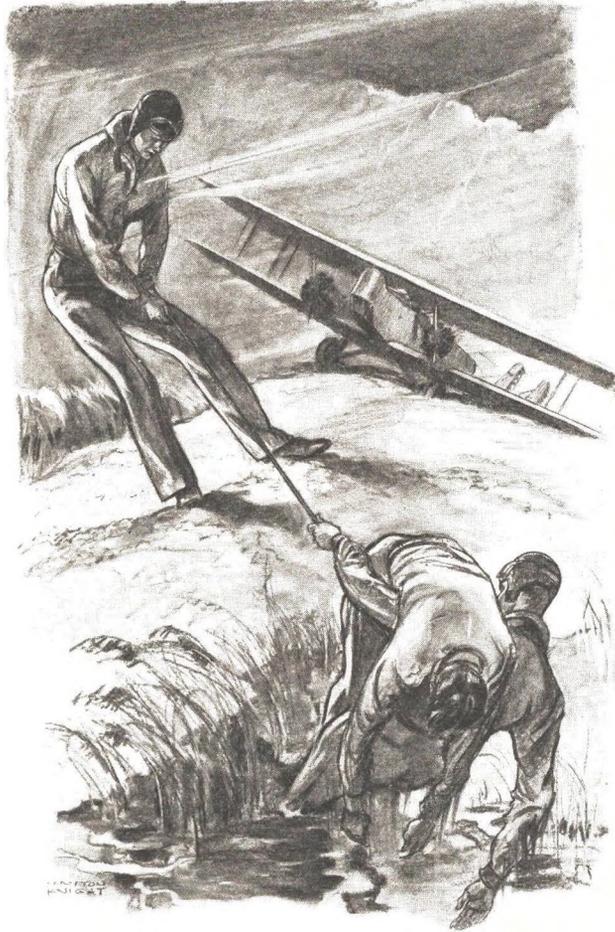
"Maider! . . . Alee reports . . . his ship down . . . Moccasin Island—" The buzzing note snapped off.

An instant Jimmie Rhodes sat quiet. Then he leaped to his feet and wheeled to see Ziggy in the doorway, his fingers twisting the collar of a man in dirty, mud-smeared clothes; a man whose face was bruised and swollen. But that face Jimmie knew. It was Walt's flight mechanic, Biggs. But Biggs had gone with Ziggy this morning! How could he be here? Zig shook the man.

"Tell him!" he cried furiously.

Biggs looked up at Jimmie, his face sullen, frightened.

"I met a guy last night. He took me in his car to Texas City—was goin' to show me a good time. He slugged me, I guess. I dunno. Frisked me for my helmet an' goggles."



Jimmie dug his heels into the shell ridge. The rope began to pay in.

"Describe the man," Jimmie ordered, his voice suddenly grown bleak.

But he hardly needed the answer. He looked at Ziggy.

"Carney," he whispered. "Carney climbed into Walt's ship this morning—in this man's clothes."

Slowly his face changed, became set, hard as steel. He pointed to the table. His voice was steady as he said: "George's call has just come through reporting Walt down, Moccasin Island. George doesn't know that Carney's there—with Walt."

Ziggy took a half stride forward and stared at Jimmie as if he were seeing ghosts.

"Moccasin Island! I know it—east in the Gulf sea marsh." Suddenly he hurled Biggs from him, and turned for the door. Over his shoulder, he called:

"My ship—on the line!"

In the office an operator closed his key to say: "Storm warning's out—double-flagged—" just as Jimmie sprinted past.

Then Jimmie was beside Zig in the seat of Zig's car, and they were racing through the streets to the Crockett landing field. In Operations locker room a soldier handed Jimmie a chute. In the office he watched Ziggy sign his clearance. Ziggy didn't tell the captain his exact destination. The captain thought he was going to Fort Sill.

"Keep due north, Burrell," the captain said. "Gulf storm on the way. Barometer's fallen ten points in the hour."

Ziggy didn't answer. Trotting out across the field, he turned to Jimmie, who was running beside him.

"He'd not have let me go, if I'd told him. It's bad flying weather on the Gulf."

But the air was still and the low clouds hung without movement in the sky. Only a queer coppery glow, a breathless dead oppression, hinted at the coming

storm. An attack ship stood on the line, propeller idling. A belly tank was hooked beneath her fuselage. Ziggy frowned as he looked at it.

"Smoke liquid," he muttered. "Three hundred pounds dead weight. But I can't cut her loose. Fasten that tee handle to a longeron—it's the smoke valve release."

He sprang to the front cockpit. Jimmie climbed into the rear seat, hooked up the tee handle, and drew down his goggles. The ship coughed and thundered into full power. She bumped jarringly across the field, took off.

ZIGGY rose north over Galveston Island, poked into the cloud layer, and when he was out of sight from Crockett, banked east.

For minutes the ship bored through the mist and never an air current rocked her keel. The coppery sky remained ominously the same. Then, on the horizon, the clouds began changing to a muddy brown. To his right over the cowl Jimmie saw the Gulf—an oily surface that gleamed menacingly. Lightning tore a sudden dazzling fissure through the chocolate clouds. Rain began drumming the fuselage and dimpling the water's surface. Below lay the brown, treeless marsh—miles of lonely barrens reaching out and disappearing in the haze.

Ziggy turned his head, pointed through the wing, to their right and slightly below. And then, with a start, Jimmie saw a ship—George Chandler's ship. It was sailing in slow spirals over a white shell ridge that cut through the barrens like a narrow sword blade. On the ridge sprawled a bomber—Walt's ship—one wing tip almost buried in the thirsty swamp.

As Jimmie watched, George rocked wings and, straightening from his spiral, planed swiftly for the ridge. Ziggy nosed down too.

Once more he pointed—this time at Walt's ship. Jimmie tensed. A man was crawling from the bomber's fuselage. Bent double, he edged along under cover of the steep shell ridge, close down near the green slime of the bottomless marsh. In his hand something glinted, dully black.

Ziggy's plane swept over the ridge. The man raised his head. Jimmie knew him—Carney! That was Carney, all right! But of Walt there was no sign. Walt must still be in the ship.

George Chandler's ship was landing. Wheel and skid struck, scattering a puff of white shell dust. The plane rolled on to within a hundred yards from that sinister crouching figure, and came to rest. George climbed overside. He couldn't have seen Carney, for he stepped around the wing, waved up at Ziggy, and started toward the bomber. George didn't even know Carney had gone with Walt.

Then Jimmie gave a sudden cry that rang above the hammering exhaust. Carney had straightened, pistol arm upraised. A puff of white smoke lifted from the ridge. George spun around, fell. Jimmie watched—and with relief saw George crawling for the protection of the wing. Not killed, then.

Ziggy turned and stared at Jimmie, his eyes dark with despair. He called something. What, Jimmie didn't know, for at that moment he was gazing at that steel handle hooked to the longeron beside him—the pull release of the smoke-screen valve.

He struggled fiercely for a thought, a thought that meant a chance for George. Suddenly he cried again, and, throwing free his belt, pulled himself against the forward cowering, close to Zig. He shouted. Zig's heavy shoulders tensed.

As Jimmie fell back in his seat, the ship reversed in a furious "chandelle," and whirled in over the ridge, squarely between Chandler's plane and Carney.

Jimmie waited; then, at the right moment, jerked the smoke valve.

A great black cloud boiled beneath the ship, fanning out behind the tail, growing denser, sinking toward the marsh. It grew to an inky curtain that wrapped Carney in its folds.

Ziggy threw the plane over in a twisty spiral. Motor wide, he milled above (Continued on page 50)

# Ghosts of the Scarlet Fleet

By Rear-Admiral E. R. G. R. Evans

Illustrated by Manning deV. Lee

## The Preceding Chapters

I AM Alistair Alvarez Ross, personal acolyte to His Eminence the Cardinal of Panama, and I tell you of the strange things that befell me in those evil days when the pirate Mistral sailed the Caribbean with his great fleet.

My story starts with the day of excitement and terror when we first heard that Mistral—or Barracuda, as many called the dreaded pirate—was beating up toward Porto Bello with his fleet, and meant to conquer that city and come on across land to Panama.

That very day I saw my beloved master, the Cardinal, fling off his scarlet robe when he believed himself unobserved in his vestry—and he stepped forth in the costume of a sea fighter. Then I saw lying on his table a dried and withered hand. A dead hand!

As I stared, the Cardinal picked it up, touched a stone that opened a secret passage, and vanished from my sight. He was gone, I realized, on what mission I knew not.

With my master out of Panama, there was nothing to keep me, an orphan, from making for that place of danger where I longed to be, Porto Bello. Day and night I marched, and reached the city in time to plunge into the great sea fight with Mistral's fleet.

Chance made me a captive on the ship of Mistral himself!

I carried powder under the direction of Doon, one of Mistral's men. I met a mocking troubadour known as The Laugh, who sang while others fought. I saw fierce pirates blanch at the sight of a dead hand—a dead hand I had beheld before—nailed to their mainmast.

"The Ghost!" they shrieked. "The Ghost nailed up that hand!"

With a cry of rage, Mistral seized the gruesome thing and hurled it into the sea.

But the fear of death was in those pirates' hearts, and they began to believe that I knew whence the hand had come. I was hailed before a pirate council headed by Mistral, who ordered me questioned by Teech, a man of unearthly quiet. In the midst of this, Midgley the cook, with whom I had been talking, hurried in to thrust a piece of paper before the council.

"The lad must have left this in my cabin!" he half screamed.

Teech held the paper before my eyes. "Can you explain this?" he asked in his silvered insistent voice.

## Chapter Four

THE light was upon that piece of paper I had never seen before, and as I read the message, something that I could not explain stirred in my heart and mind. There, boldly written, were words that will remain in my memory forever:

"You have lived by the sword, you shall die by the sword. You have despoiled the peaceful, you have sunk fine ships, and have shown no mercy. I am here upon your decks and you may not find me. You will hear the deep tone of my heralds and your fate will come closer. By the dead hand, I swear this." And the message was signed boldly: "The Ghost."

"And you still say you know nothing?" Teech had withdrawn the paper and was gazing deep into my eyes. I met them unflinchingly.

"I know nothing," I answered.

"Maroon!" It was Mistral who had snarled the words, and now, rising to his feet, he pointed toward me.

"See to him, Maroon," he cried to the big mulatto. "Guard him well, and if he escape your life shall be forfeit." He walked sharply toward me. "We have dainty ways aboard *The Lagoon*," he said in biting tones. "Sooner or later you shall speak."

Already Maroon was grasping my arm and I heard Teech laugh as he turned away from me.

"Elegant ways," said that silvery voice. "Ways that make death a pleasure."



He drew back from the table. "Who are you?" he whispered. "By the demon in the Pit what do you

His voice died away as Maroon dragged me to the deck. I found myself in the cool sea air one moment and in a foul hold the next, and, at the farther end of the hold, Maroon's lantern revealed a small door. This he flung open with a curse, and kicking me before him, cast me down amid some straw. Then I saw that here were iron chains and manacles.

Grimly he manacled my wrists to a chain that was fixed firmly into the ship's side. With a parting kick that shook every rib in me, he left me amid that unclean straw and slammed the door and bolted and barred it.

I was evidently in the prison of *The Lagoon*, and there was nothing to do but to review recent events and ponder over the fate that lay ahead of me. That it was going to be unenviable was only too patent. They would make me reveal things I did not know, or else they would slowly kill me.

I was weary from all that had gone, and Maroon had dealt most savagely with me, so that I felt bruised all over. Making myself as comfortable as I could, I tried to rest. But as I squirmed around, I found myself asking the same question these pirates were asking. Who had nailed the dead hand to the mast? And who had put the note of threat in Midgley's galley? Was there a Ghost aboard as these pirates seemed to believe? But the thinking made my head ache, and after a time I grew drowsy.

How long I lay in slumber I do not know, but when I awoke, I became aware that *The Lagoon* was rolling heavily in what I deemed to be rising seas.

I could picture myself left here, starved and thirst-maddened. But even as that thought came, there came also the rattle of chains, and the bolt was withdrawn and I was gazing into the bright light of a lantern.

Then I saw a pewter mug and a pewter dish with some bread upon it, and my eyes passed beyond the light to gaze into a malevolent face that looked down at me. It was the face of Doon and his right arm was banded where Mistral had slit him.

Painfully he laid down the two objects that he clasped in his right hand, and as he rose he kicked me savagely.

"Break the bread in half and drain the water; it may be your last meal," he ordered. "Break the bread and live to die the choicest death we've ever seen aboard."

With that he also placed the lantern down

amid the straw. He looked at me with evil pleasure, then turned and went out, slamming and bolting the door, and leaving me to look at my unappetizing meal with lacklustre eyes.

I wondered at the mercy of the light, and I was wondering still as I picked up the bread—and broke it.

I broke it, but I didn't eat. For there, laid across the middle of the bread, where, as I now discovered, it had already been partly broken, was a small piece of paper.

Plainly in the light from the lantern I could see the message, and it was written in the same handwriting that Teech had revealed to me. My heartbeats quickened as I read the words:

"Seek for the map of the Isle of Lost Secrets. I am at hand to aid you."

The paper dropped from my grasp.

By whose agency had this been brought to me? Had Doon written this note? I rejected the idea, for Doon seemed to me but a menial. He was merely obeying the orders of another.

Had Midgley written the note? It seemed unbelievable.

What was the Isle of Lost Secrets and how could I seek the map?

In slow wonderment, I munched absently on the bread.

"SO you know nothing? You are ignorant of the dead hand?"

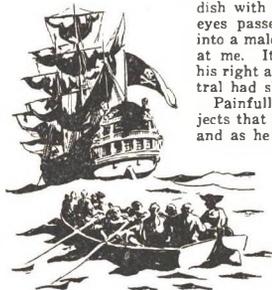
I was awakened from deep sleep by the sound of that soft voice, nor was it new to me by now, for day after day, as I had remained in this fetid place, subsisting upon bread and foul water, the speaker had come to me.

I had grown accustomed to the white-faced Teech, with the neat and scholarly appearance, who sat in the corner by a ship's lantern and played chess by himself with ever and anon a question coming to his lips. At first I had fancied that Teech would tire of asking me if I knew aught of the terror that stalked aboard *The Lagoon*. When first he had come to my prison, and had gone without learning anything, I had felt that he would not bother me again.

I had been wrong.

Day after day he had come, and in the confined space, had seemed overpoweringly near to me as he played with those pieces upon the board, sometimes laughing to himself, at other times cursing and fixing me with those strange magnetic eyes of his that seemed to look right into my mind and read my thoughts.

Now I understood why men talked of Teech. His eternal persistence, his precise, soft words, wore me





"Santa Barta died last night," he said slowly. "He was a strong man, was Santa Barta. First over the rails when boarders went away. Mighty agile with the cutlass was Santa Barta. Sometimes I envied him his strength."

Teech paused.

"I was watching the sea," he went on. "Santa Barta was as near to me as you are, little lad. I heard a scream and I saw a light, and there was Santa Barta dead upon our decks. Who killed Santa Barta? Our men think it was a Ghost—a Ghost that haunts our ship."

Then he laughed quietly.

"No, you would not know, of course," he added, turning again to his game of chess. "Yet you came aboard us."

Like a rapier flashing out, his white hand darted forward and gripped my manacled wrist.

"Tell me what you know," he whispered. "If you don't tell me, you will be tortured as no one has ever been tortured before."

IF he had hoped to find fear in my eyes he was mistaken, for his visits were a torture that I had grown to dread, and I could think of none worse.

"Santa Barta's was a happy death to the one you will have," he went on. "Speak now, or must I come again to tell you what the torture will be?"

"I have nothing to say," I answered. "Nothing at all. I came aboard at Porto Bello and my name is Ross, and that is all that I can tell you."

He rose to his feet.

"It is not enough," he murmured, with an assumed sadness. "Alas, we must know more. In Santa

Barta's interests and in the interests of others we must know and you shall speak yet, little lad. You shall speak."

Slowly he picked up his chessmen and his board, and then he left, as for so many days he had left me.

If only my hands had been free, that I could have got at that evil little figure and shaken it! Maroon, Doon, and those other buccaneers I had met were children in villainy compared to Teech. Even Midgley, who knew more about cruel knives than any other man upon the ship, was not so evil as this man was. But none of these came to see me. No one else saw me. No one at all. Only Teech.

His insistent questionings would come to me in the deep watches of the night and I would start to a sitting posture and look for the sheen of his lantern and that little figure bent over his board. And I could make no move to rid myself of his terrible, quiet voice.

But one day I learned that even the visits of Teech could come to an end. For on that day the door opened and another came in. It was Maroon, bearing a pistol, his lumbering hulk leaning half over me, and his unpleasant dark face bearing a strange look of satisfaction. I was conscious of a wave of relief that this was not Teech with his chess board. Indeed I felt almost cheerful.

"Tell me, Maroon," I asked him. "Do you play chess?"

The pirate, his mouth open to speak, did not answer.

"It is a good game," I raved on, "but it can be sadly overdone. Leave it alone, Maroon."

The pirate remained silent, and it seemed to me, slightly amazed at my good humor.

"What do you know of the Isle of Lost Secrets, Maroon?" I asked. "Where is it and why do people seek it?"

A LONGING look came into Maroon's scarred face.

"It contains all the gold of Spain," he whispered hoarsely.

My curiosity was piqued.

"Where does the island lie?"

"Nobody knows." Maroon's words were almost sad, but suddenly his manner grew brusque. "Enough questioning!" he growled. "They're planning sport above, and your turn has come to die."

All my cheerfulness disappeared, and I felt cold at the finality in his rough voice. I knew, from his manner, that he was angry at having let me question him. I gazed at the pistol in his hand, noted the twitching of his finger, and wondered if he were going to dispatch me here and now.

If he had any such intentions, he thought better of it, for the next moment he reached down, dragged me to my feet, unmanacled me, clutched at my wrist, and drew me from my prison out into the passageway.

His lantern he now gripped in his left hand, holding me with his right, and so we came to the decks above, to find a white mist swirling over the ship and making the lights in shrouds and stern gallery seem yellowish and vague.

Maroon raised the lantern so that its light beat upon my eyes, and now he glared at me.



I set my sail and, catching the wind, bowled forward on my dangerous mission.

want here?"

away like water, dripping, dripping. . . . My nerves were frayed. I longed to choke the unending question from his lips.

He smiled as he eyed me and then he leaned toward me.

"You're just a pawn, little lad," he whispered. "But whom do you defend; who is the king who leads you? Tell me that."

He laid those white and sensitive-looking hands upon my arm.

"Who told Porto Bello that Mistral was coming? Why did we find Porto Bello prepared?"

Then he laughed and made a move on the board, and countered the move by advancing a piece upon the opposing side.

"A pawn, little lad," he murmured, his eyes upon the board placed upon his knees. "That's what you are. But tell me, who wrote that threat? And who nailed up the hand?"

A thousand times he had asked those very questions, and now, when I heard them, I wanted to scream. If he would only get angry, and stamp, or even kick me! But no—he was ever quiet, and precise, and unruffled. And I knew that he would keep it up until I went mad.

He rubbed his hands, clasped them, and placed them beneath his chin as he looked at me.

"You're going to the tender mercies of Doon," he breathed, saying the words slowly so that they might sink in. "Amazing clever is Doon. A prince of torturers. He'll make you speak, even if Teech couldn't."

HE was dragging me toward the mainmast now, and I saw, clustered about it and evidently awaiting my coming, Mistral's men. Some were louncing against the rails, others were lying on the decks or leaning against the mainmast itself—and then I saw Doon!

He was stripped to the waist, and in his left hand he held a steel-thonged whip. The faint light from a lantern above him gleamed upon the knife in his teeth, and I had never seen him look more cruel than he did at this moment. Evidently a stage had been set for some play and I felt sure that I was the chief actor in it.

Knives and swords were brandished in my face as Maroon dragged me forward and lashed my wrists to some cordage on the mainmast.

It was an eerie scene with those misted lights and the swirling tendrils of fog that clung like a shroud to the ship. I was afraid. My heart was sounding wildly, and I sagged against the bonds that held my hands to the mast.

A break in the fog showed me Mistral . . . Barracuda . . . his green eyes revealed by a lantern near at hand, gazing down from the quarter-deck. As I glimpsed him he moved down toward the deck. Teech was standing at his side.

I looked around for The Laugh. Conscious as I was of my approaching ordeal, I could not help but wonder where he was. He had spared my life once. Perhaps he could help me now. But in all that crowd I could not detect him.

"Bid him open his lips, Doon, and soon."

Barracuda spoke, and as he spoke, from behind me I heard a swish and the next instant I was feeling the excruciating agony of that thonged whip, as it circled about my back and ribbanded my coat and struck to the flesh.

From the very first blow I was reeling, and I knew that Doon was not sparing me, and I wondered at the bread and the message, the lantern he had left, and the strange insistence he had laid upon my breaking the bread.

With agonized mind I tried to find some answer to that puzzle as the lash struck me a second and third time, and I heard the words that Doon gritted from behind the knife in his teeth. As I fought to keep from unconsciousness, determined to show a brave front to Mistral, Doon's words penetrated to my brain, and I found a new and amazing meaning in the monotonous chant that Doon kept up as he struck mercilessly at me. "Listen to the message of the whip. I am at hand to flay you. Listen to the message of the whip. I am at hand to flay you."

Over and over again to the rhythmic swing of the lash, he muttered those words, and as he did so, I seemed to see before me the message I had found in the bread, and had eaten with it.

"I am at hand to aid you," that message had read. Was there any connection in what Doon said and those words I had read?

"Hold, Doon, and question him."

Mistral's voice was coming as from a vast distance and here was Teech, his white face looking ghostlike as he held the lantern to my face. I almost screamed for he appeared so ghastly. But Doon was even more grim as he bent his face to mine.

"What do you know of the dead hand?" Doon shrieked. "Tell Barracuda or I'll cut your flesh to ribbands."

I raised my head, and as I looked at him, with my strength fast ebbing away, I told myself that this man was not my friend.

But, even as my head started to sag and the swoon approached, deep within those terrible eyes I saw a look of pity, a compassion that lay nearer the soul than the heart.

Then, in my bonds, I sagged forward with a dinning in my ears and I knew nothing else.

I must have hung manacled to the mast for hours, for when I opened my eyes, the buccaneers were no longer ringed about me and joying in my agony.

I was alone, a weary and sickened prisoner, bound to the mast. My head was throbbing, and when I

moved slightly I could feel where the torn shirt was clotted to my back with blood. My back, I knew, must be livid with welts, but I didn't care. I was past caring.

My face was pressed against the mast itself, and I could not stand. I had sagged down as far as my bonds would let me fall, and my arms felt as though they were being wrenched from their sockets. Gladly would I have welcomed a sword point that, piercing to my heart, would have ended the torture.

Vaguely I wondered where Doon was, and my other tormentors. Had they finally decided that I knew nothing of the dead hand and that message of threat that had made even Barracuda turn pale?

There was a mist over *The Lacon* and the ship sagged sluggishly in oily seas. But now my pain-racked brain became aware of muffled sounds. I listened, and the muffled sounds became cries that came from ahead and astern. I noticed the yellowish light of

the disjointed sentences of badly remembered prayers. Was it the scarlet ship that inspired this fear?

I saw the rogue at the rail lift his head, and at that instant a sound came to me—a swelling, sonorous song that came rolling through the mists. A song that made me forget for the moment my bloody back and aching arms.

No lilting ballad from the lute of The Laugh, this, but something far deeper and grander in its significance. There, from beyond that white barrier of mist that hid the amazing scarlet ship, sounded the rising glory of "The Magnificat."

It bore me back again to the cathedral at Panama. It rose above me and hovered like a benediction over this ship of cruelty and death. It enfolded me and sheltered me. It eased the pain caused by Doon's cruel whip.

And deeper than the sound of growling cannon, it was bringing stark terror into the hearts of those who clung to rail or stanchion or crouched fearfully upon the decks of *The Lacon*.

Slowly the song died away, but fear remained with Mistral's buccaneers, and hope sprang high in my heart.

I waited for the mist to clear again, but it had grown thicker if anything, and there was no sound now, and slowly I sank back against the mast. Would that ship pass on by?

Weakness was returning and my mind was seeing the blue seas covered with red ships. I struggled to fight against my weakness, and with the effort my eyes opened again and now I was on my feet. I peered into the mist to see that the decks of *The Lacon* were alive with Mistral's men and that here was Mistral himself amongst them, rapier in hand and angry threat upon his lips.

"WOULD ye be captured and sunk?" he roared. "Would one of you have a life worth a moment's purchase if we were captured, turned about, and taken in to Porto Bello?"

His words were bringing cringing figures from the deep shadows. I saw guns being made ready and powder kegs rolled up. The balls were ready to hand and the lanterns shone upon steel.

What was toward?

Already, from our starboard side, cannon belched grape shot and round shot into the fog.

Suddenly, while I listened to the growing sound of battle, and almost before I knew what was happening, a knife flicked past me and severed the bonds that held my wrists to the mast.

Even as I staggered round, another knife flicked, cut the cords about my wrists, and at the same time wounded me deeply in the palm of the hand.

So amazed was I that I could not even tell who my liberator was. I stifled the cry of pain that came instinctively to my lips, and drew into the fog toward the port side of

*The Lacon*.

Well for me that I did so, for as I left the mainmast, there came screams of men in mortal agony. Turning, I saw that a ball had cleft a lane through Mistral's men and had almost severed the mast to which I had been bound.

About me now was fog and powder smoke, and I knew that the crimson ship was giving battle. Whose ship she was, I did not know. But no matter who owned her, my one great desire was to get free of Mistral's evil craft, into some small boat, so that I might get to that other ship.

TO this end, I staggered down the deck with my head reeling and my wrist wet with the blood from my wound. I wondered who had freed me. Doon? The same man who had beaten me almost to death? He who had muttered: "I am at hand to flay you," and who had earlier brought me a message in a loaf of bread—"I am at hand to aid you?"

I could not believe it was Doon. He was too evil, too ruffianly to play the role of savior.

Was it The Laugh—the foppish troubadour who had dined with me in the cabin and then spared my life? Who was this Laugh, who sang while others fought, and who seemed to be in special favor with Barracuda himself?

So ran my thoughts in my rapidly clearing brain as I made my way aft along the port rail, away from the fight. And then suddenly, in the dark shadows, I brought up against a man. A man with a lute, leaning back against the rail and humming under his breath. He stopped when I bumped into him, and chuckled. It was The Laugh himself.

*'Twas the night before  
Christmas, and under  
the house*

*A creature was stirring  
—it wasn't a mouse,*

*'Twas Steven the pack  
rat. 'Twas Steven  
who told*

*Young Bill and old  
Shanty just how to  
find gold—*

## In the December American Boy

Emma-Lindsay Squier's story,  
next month, combines gold  
and an empty shotgun, prospec-  
ting and a wild Christmas  
Eve, in a manner to amuse  
and amaze you. Don't miss

# "EVEN-STEVEN"

lanthorns and now, with a pattering of feet, a bare-footed pirate rushed past me toward the rail, and showed a light seaward. I wondered whether, in the fog, other ships of Mistral's raiding squadron had come so near that a collision was impending.

Through the clearing mist I saw Barracuda gazing seaward from the quarter-deck, and ever and anon he would issue quick commands to set sails to catch the first wind that would come.

Turning to gaze seaward, I found a breach in the fog that gave me a view of open sea with the moon making silvery pathway across it, but it was not sea or moon that caught my attention and made me almost forget the torture of my wounds.

There, coming slowly toward *The Lacon*, was something that seemed unreal.

It was a ship. But such a ship! From the uttermost peak of her tallest mast, to the point where her sides met the sluggish sea, she was crimson. She was like some flame upon the bosom of the ocean, and she came head on toward us.

Scarlet sails flapped against her masts, and her ropes were of scarlet, and no sound came from her rails. A tremor of awe shook me, and I found strength to stand on my feet. But even as I gazed, the mist closed down and the scarlet ship disappeared.

### Chapter Five

YELLOW lights shined in ratlines and shrouds as the pirates frantically put on sail. A livid-faced pirate floundered past me, and sinking against the rail, covered his face with his hands. To my ears came the sound of shaken cries of terror and

"So," he said cheerfully. "You have no mind to fight in this battle."

"And you," I growled, for I had no wish to be interrupted now, when I wanted to escape. "Why do you hang back here?"

"And why not?" The Laugh replied, caressing his lute. "Why should the grandson of Merfil die for these rogues?"

I grew curious in spite of my wounds and my desire to escape.

"Who is Merfil?" I asked.

A touch of pride came into The Laugh's manner. "Merfil was the hardest buccaneer on the Main. After Red Castaban, Panama Too, and Rat o' the Main, came Merfil. The wealth of Spain fell into his hands, and where he hid it no one knows. For one day my grandfather disappeared, and with him all knowledge of the treasure became lost. And none of his company lives to tell us."

I was mightily intrigued, and suddenly a thought struck me.

"Is that why men seek the Isle of Lost Secrets?" I asked.

"That is why," said The Laugh, more soberly than I had ever before seen him speak.

"Mistral himself?"

"Aye!" The troubadour laughed. "And he thinks I can lead him to it!"

"Can you?" I pressed, for I now remembered that secret message handed to me by Doon in the loaf of bread: "Seek for the Isle of Lost Secrets," and I felt that it was almighty important.

"Why should I tell you?" The Laugh replied indifferently. Then he straightened and looked keenly at me. "You are planning to escape to that crimson ship that attacks us."

The confusion in my face must have told him that his guess was correct, for now he approached more closely to me, and weak though I was I prepared to fight for my life.

"Nay," he said. "I will not hinder you. You will find a small boat astern. And when you come to those others—if ever you do—tell them that the Pit will lead them to the Lost Secret."

"The Pit?" I asked, mystified.

"Aye, the Pit—if they dare enter it." The singer laughed grimly. "Tell them also that where my grandfather Merfil is—or where his bones are—there is the treasure. And where the treasure is the pirates will some day gather like vultures at the feast. Tell them that. And tell them to beware."

With that The Laugh left me and strolled forward, and I was free to find my way aft to the small boat he spoke of. But for a moment my head was so full of the fabulous treasure, the Pit, and Merfil, that I could not move. It was the sound of a round shot, thudding into the

wood of the cabin, that awakened me to the need for haste, and the next instant I was groping along the rail, feeling for the rope that should show me where the boat was.

AT last my hand found it, and I peered over the rail. The mist was deeper, and at first I could see nothing, but following the trail of the depending rope, I saw bobbing below me a boat of fair proportions.

I took a deep breath. I knew I must slide down the rope, and for the moment I was afraid that my arms, weakened by hours of hanging to the mast, would be unequal to the task. At last, chiding myself for my cowardice, I slid over the rail, grasped the rope tightly, encircled it with my legs, and started sliding down.

Once I felt that I must let go and fall, but in another moment I had come to the boat and weakly dragged myself over the side. I found that it was a craft some twenty feet long and containing, to my infinite joy, a number of sacks, a few empty water kegs, and two pistols, with a filled powder flask and a pouch of balls.

There were oars, too, and without delay I cast the boat loose and pulled a little distance away. The roar of cannon and the cries of suddenly wounded men still dinned in my ears, the orange flash of the guns still broke the night, and I didn't wish to find the other ship until a lull came.

For a full half hour more the fight lasted, and then the sounds diminished. *The Lagoon*, with the freshening breeze that was blowing away the mists, was pulling away. Now was my time. Gathering all my strength, I fitted the oars and started pulling the heavy craft toward where I conceived the crimson ship to be. It could not be far away.

But the minutes fled and no looming hulk showed through the clearing atmosphere. My thoughts grew frantic. What if I should miss it? How could I exist in this little boat without food or water? What mercy would I receive if I were recaptured by Mistral?

Summoning all my strength, I pulled on the broad blades, and then suddenly I saw it—the ship I sought—bearing down on me. With a strangled cry of joy, I saw that it would

pass close by, and I rose in the boat and shouted with all the power that remained to me.

Dim figures appeared at the rail that now was almost above me, slowly moving by, and then there were shouts and a rope was being lowered. I looped it about me, tied it, and shouted for them to pull, and in another moment I was dragged over the rail like a sack of meal.

As I scrambled to my feet and cleared the mists of weakness from my eyes, I saw a tall figure directly before me—a familiar figure in sea boots and tight-fitting leathern coat and breeches.

It was Gian da Garda, His Eminence the Cardinal of Panama!

#### Chapter Six

AS I looked at him in utter amazement, I saw a smile in his eyes, and the next instant I felt his hand upon my shoulder.

"Alistair Ross," he murmured, as though he, too, were wondering if he beheld a real or just a dream figure.

"Monseigneur!"

I knew then and there that here indeed was my master, and a deepening relief filled my heart.

"Alistair," said that deep, rich voice which I had heard so many times in the cathedral of Panama, "how is it that you come to me thus? Out of the sea, and at night?"

"I come from *The Lagoon*," I said simply.

There was an audible gasp from the crew that circled us at a respectful distance. I saw then, for the first time, that these men each wore a white surcoat on which was blazoned a ruddy cross. My heart was thrilled.

In response to His Eminence's questions, I told eagerly how I had left Panama to join the fight at Porto Bello, how I had come aboard *The Lagoon* in the harbor, how I had been compelled to serve the guns against the very men I had wished to join, and how I had been tortured to persuade me to tell you had nailed the dead hand to the mast.

The Cardinal smiled, but when he noticed how I staggered slightly, and how my clothes were in tatters, his eyes filled with compassion.

(Cont. on page 32)



And now the stairs were alive with enemies—the end seemed near indeed!

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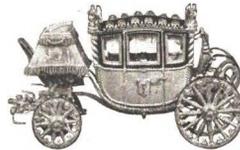
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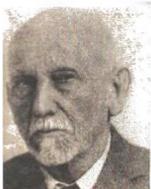
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1st State or District Metalcraft . . . . .	\$ 25 in gold	Every Guild member who submits a completed coach on or before midnight July 1, 1932, will receive the Guild Certificate of Craftsmanship.	
2nd State or District Metalcraft . . . . .	\$ 15 in gold		

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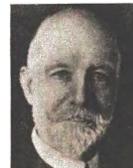
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## Ghosts of the Scarlet Fleet (Continued from page 29)

"You shall fight with us now," he said, and added, "when you are able to fight. You must go to bed."

"But there is something else," I said hastily. "A strange ruffian called Doon brought me a message in a loaf of bread—a message to seek the Isle of Lost Secrets!"

The Cardinal's eyes lifted with interest. "The Isle of Lost Secrets? Where lies this isle?"

"That I know not—but Mistral himself seeks it. And I met a strange person aboard *The Lagoon*. He calls himself *The Laugh*, and he sings and strums upon his lute while others fight. He said to tell you that the Pit would lead us to the Lost Secret, and that some day the pirates would gather there!"

I am afraid that in my eagerness I was incoherent, for His Eminence seemed able to make nothing out of the scraps I poured out so eagerly.

"The Pit! And *The Laugh*," he said, his brows drawn together in thought. "I know him not."

"A singer," I said, "who dresses in finery. Mistral himself will not touch him or order him about! But *The Laugh* told me that he was the grandson of Merfil and that where Merfil was—or where his bones were—there was the treasure."

For a moment His Eminence was silent. When he spoke, his voice was low.

"Perhaps, Alistair," he said, "you have brought us news of great importance. Doon I have heard of; *The Laugh* I know not. But if both give you the same message, then we will do well to ponder over it. But now you have need of care—and rest. Camponello!"

As the Cardinal finished, a man stepped forth. A giant of a man, well over six feet in height and almost as broad as I was tall. There was a great and shining brand in his right hand, and in the light of the lamps his face appeared to be one continual smile.

"Camponello, I am placing this lad, Alistair Ross, recently my acolyte at Panama, in your charge. See that his wounds are treated and that he is put to bed."

The men parted to let us through, and led by the great Camponello I went below decks, marveling at the cleanliness and orderliness aboard this scarlet ship, so unlike the noisy filth of *The Lagoon*. And now that I no longer had anything to fear, my strength left me, and I almost fell, and my companion had to support me.

As he almost carried me down to a small, neat cabin, he laughed cheerfully, and even in my pain his warm, rumbling voice comforted me.

"You and I, young Ross," he said, "will have great times together. I'll teach you to fight these rogues and repay them for the whipping and the long days in the hold."

And even as I fainted away, I smiled contentedly at the thought.

YOUNG as I am, and strong, it was a week before I was able to get out of bed. At such times as his duty permitted, Camponello was by my side, and from him I learned that I was aboard *The Emblem*, and that this ship was the flagship of a great fleet whose mission was to put an end not only to Barracuda, known also as Mistral, but to another evil pirate, La Touche, whose fleet

was larger than that of Mistral's.

His Eminence, Gian da Garda, came not to see me, but the jolly Camponello told me that the great man asked about me each day. He told me also that my name had become a legend above, because of my adventures aboard *The Lagoon*, and the way I had borne the worst treatment of the pirates. And it seemed that the Cardinal attached great importance to the message I had brought him, and was changing his course of action accordingly. This last information meant little to me, because the message I had borne seemed not to make sense. Yet I was pleased.

"We came up with them during the week, Ross," he exclaimed. "And it will be a mighty fine gathering that will witness your being made one of us!"

Then I did not know what he meant. I had fancied that I should serve Monseigneur as I had served him in a more peaceful vocation. I had yet to learn that such was not the case and that, at the moment, I was about to be admitted to an entirely different world.

To my ears there came the drubbing of drums, and I saw the men on the ship forming in regular lines. From the anchor ways there sounded the rattle of running chains and I heard drums

after man and in that uniform with the cross upon the breast. In orderly lines they formed, and there was something uplifting about their faces that I had seen only upon the faces of worshippers in the cathedral at Panama.

"Your sword, Master Ross!" Camponello had turned to me and he spoke as though I were some conquered foe, whose sword was demanded of him in token of defeat.

"Nay," he added, "you must not demur. You will understand a little while hence."

Suddenly the drums rolled and I drew from my baldric my sword and handed it to Camponello.

"Now your baldric, your coat, your belt, and all your other arms," he ordered.

I did as he bade me, handing him those objects as I divested myself of them.

He laid the clothes by the rail, drew out my sword from its sheath, and laid the sheath with the clothes. Then, with his hands cupped over my blade, and standing some few paces in front of me, he waited.

WITH growing wonder I stood there, conscious of eyes upon me, and slowly realizing that some ceremony was taking place.

I heard a quick roll of drums and I saw Camponello, my sword held flat against his breast, with the hilt just a trifle beneath his chin, march slowly down the deck to where, on the steps of the quarter-deck, stood the Cardinal. In that moment I had sooner dared the terrors of Teech, Doon, Mistral, and every rogue ruled by Barracuda, than this ordeal.

I watched Camponello raise the sword above his head and hand it toward Gian da Garda. I saw Gian da Garda take the brand and hold it outstretched, with the hilt in one palm of his hand and the point in the other. Upon the blade Camponello laid just such a surcoat as he and his companions wore.

How silent it was upon these decks as Camponello took his place at the head of the lines of men upon my right.

"Brethren of the Cross and the Sword!"

Those words rolled toward me as the Cardinal intoned them. His eyes were upon me, and as our gaze met, I be-

thought me of the humble little acolyte who had stolen a secret glance at a hero in the vestry of the Cathedral of Panama.

"We stand before thee!"

The response rolled toward me like the sound of drums.

"You whose knightly service is to fight for justice upon the sea; you whose aim is to maintain her freedom; you whose lives are dedicated to this cause, whom would you have a member of our brotherhood?"

Again there came a deep reply that sent the color racing to my cheeks.

"Alistair Alvarez Ross, lately your acolyte!"

How, as one man, they had learned my name and my position at Panama, I did not know but I inwardly named Camponello as their mentor.

"I name him too," called the Cardinal, in reverberating tones. "He has served us aboard *The Lagoon*, and has suffered, and escaped, and brought us valuable tidings. He has earned the right to be



NEW  
CONTEST

NEW  
CONTEST

### Last-Lineless Limericks

Pluto Announces a Contest for Versifiers

"If there's anything I go for," yammers Pluto the Office Pup, "it's a contest for poetics—and the poets eat it up! Now I've got some extra dollars, and they're burning up my jeans—why not offer them as prizes, so the poets can buy beans? We'll just print a set of limericks, each without a final line, and we'll let the fellows finish 'em—you bet that they'll do fine! Ten bucks first prize, five for second; for third I'll give 'em three; one for every line we print. I'll be grand high referee—"

"Enough!" surrenders the editor. "Anyway, their last lines will be a whole lot better than your stuff. We'll have a limerick contest, and we'll accept your generous offer for prizes. All a fellow has to do is fill in a last line (making

sure he has the right rhythm and rhyme), and send it in to the Limerick Editor so that it arrives before November 15. Name, age and address on each entry, of course. Mail the last lines (fill in just one, or finish the whole set, just as you choose) to the Limerick Editor, *The American Boy*, 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich. Now, Pluto, if we only had the last-lineless limericks—"

"That's the simplest thing you've mentioned," chuckles Pluto the Office Dog. "Here are four I just composed as quick as rolling off a log. Any chap will find 'em easy—any chap may win a prize if he doesn't try to rhyme such words as rhombus and capsize!"

And here's what Pluto offers:

#### Fill In Last Line

This marvelous bird, the combombus,  
Lays eggs that are shaped like a rhombus,  
And flies on its back  
So it can keep track

The whukkle's a very queer fish.  
It's a native of Ishpeming, Mich.  
It has soluble gills  
And celluloid frills

Now Pluto, when hiding a bone,  
Has methods distinctly his own.  
He stands on one leg  
And juggles an egg

Now, Piute has a huge appetite.  
It was only last Saturday night  
That he ate a Maltese,  
A hive full of bees

### Send Best Reading Ballot With Your Last Lines

At last came an hour when Camponello came down to see me, a broad smile lighting his face. I was fully dressed, lying on my couch, hoping that soon I might go above and meet others of this brave company.

"Up, Master Ross," Camponello said heartily, "and see what is toward above!"

I sprang from that couch, so hastily that I grew slightly dizzy—made my ablutions, set my baldric, found the sword that Camponello had earlier given me, and followed to see for the first time in more than a week the sun, the freshening breeze, and the filled sails.

Camponello laughed gaily as we came to the upper deck and following the directions of his indicating hand, I saw a sight that sent a thrill through every nerve of my body.

There, sailing in line behind us, were five other scarlet ships, and proud they were and rarely wonderful, with the morning sun shining upon sail and crimson sides.

in the distance and I realized that, in a calming sea, the fleet was coming to anchor.

There was a strange light behind Camponello's eyes as he looked at me, and I became aware that those silent lines of men were regarding me. And then I saw a stately figure upon our quarter-deck.

Clad in his red robes, his head high, his hands clasped and revealing his ruby ring, stood His Eminence the Cardinal. Evidently those drums upon our decks were signaling, for answering beats came from the other ships and I realized that boats were being lowered from our sister ships and that they were coming in our direction. I had no doubt that Gian da Garda had called a council of war upon this, his flagship.

How strangely silent was everything! Apart from the noise made by oars in their moving locks, I could hear only the song of wind through our sails, for even the drums had become mute.

They came to our decks at last, man

of our company and to him shall be given the honor he deserves. Alistair Alvarez Ross, you will come now to receive your reward."

"Was ever ordeal such as this? For an instant or so I hesitated, but that look drew me forward and I walked slowly down that pathway between the silent and orderly ranks.

In that moment I bethought me of my father and of his sword and of those gay adventurers who had died so gamely in their cause. I was standing before him and my eyes were raised to the Cardinal's.

"Alistair Ross," he said quietly and yet in tones that must have reached all those who were standing in that company. "First let me tell you that we are a Brotherhood of the Sea. Earlier our mission was to teach and to heal, to counsel and to guide, but there are times when it is greater to serve with the sword. A scourge came upon the waters. The ravaging sword left death and desolation on the coast and derelicts upon the seas. The evil force of Barracuda came as a threat to interfere with homely lives and to bring fear to those we sought to shelter. To remain at home was to serve a less useful purpose; boldly to arm and answer the challenge was the better course. It is our belief that in our strength we can drive these agents of the devil from the seas. Would you also serve that purpose, Alistair Ross?"

MY fears were gone. He had made the nobility of this cause so clear that I felt humble in his sight and unworthy of the honor that was being paid to me. I hesitated, but seeing the laughing eyes of Camponello upon me, I raised my head.

"I would!" I answered.

"So be it," he murmured.

He looked down toward those others drawn up in their regular formation.

"Brethren of the Cross and the Sword," he exclaimed. "It has been your wish that I should admit Alistair Alvarez Ross to our Knighthood of the Sea. I shall now bid him kneel and receive his sword as emblem of the Cross that guides us, and the steel that we shall use in the service of the weak."

His eyes were now on me.

"Kneel, Alistair Ross!"

I did as he bade me and I saw the hilt of the sword handed toward me.

He nodded and I knew his meaning. I touched with my lips the joining of blade and hilt.

"Serve both the cross and the sword," he said slowly, "and remain loyal as one of my Knights!"

Camponello's hand raised me to my feet, and as I stood up, with the sun shining upon our decks, from the lips of my companions there came one of the grandest songs I have ever heard in my life.

*"When danger comes on wind and wave,  
And stalwart souls must weaker save,  
Give us the strength to do Thy will  
And to our duty guide us still.  
Protect and keep Thy servants, Lord,  
Sons of Thy Cross, sons of the sword."*

*"When death her darkling shadow  
lowers,  
To speed our last few fading hours,  
Keep brave the lingering spark divine,  
And with the darkness make us Thine.  
Protect and keep Thy servants, Lord,  
Thy mercy be our sole reward."*

That song echoed about me, rising to a crescendo of glory and then dying away.

Camponello was at my side and he was vesting me with a uniform such as my companions of the Order wore. Over that he slipped my baldric and gaily he placed my sword in its sheath and the sheath in the baldric.

His Eminence the Cardinal had turned away, and as I also turned to

gaze at my new companions, I saw their rapiers flash out and the sun upon the steel. Silence was broken now by a cheer that was deafening in its volume, and here was Camponello at my side introducing me to those lines of happy-eyed men.

Something choked in my throat. The grip of stalwart hands, the keen and clear glances of splendid men, was an inspiration that, as long as life remained to me, I should never forget.

Thereafter I passed through those lines, shaking each of my new companions by the hand and finally, with a rather tired wrist, I was glad to be alone with Camponello.

"You'll find that we're a brotherly gathering, Alistair," he announced. "We keep ourselves in good health by a constant attention to arms and learning."

He laughed.

"I' faith," he exclaimed. "I am sadly dull at learning if an adept at arms."

He seated himself near me.

"You see," he added, "it was this way. My father was a most devout man and my mother was a most clever and admirable woman. It was their despair that I was a better student with the sword than at my books. Had my father been a swordsman and my mother less learned, I should probably have been a student."

I had to laugh, for Camponello's gaiety of mind was infectious.

"I can see that you have been tutored," he went on, "so what prowess I ordain you with in swordplay, you will perform repay by aiding me with studies and the discussion of learned matters."

He leaned forward and laughed into my eyes.

"I say perforce," he added, "because if you slacken in your payments I shall prick you with my rapier."

His eyes were dancing now, and his face was alight.

"To a great companionship," he cried.

"And may we be especial friends in this brotherhood. What say you, Alistair?"

Not trusting to my voice, in the fullness of my emotions, I nodded my head, and our eyes met, and we were pledged to comradeship.

Chapter Seven

THE days that followed were days of rest and wonder for me. True to his word, Camponello improved me in the art of fence and I felt that I should have pleased even The Laugh with my increasing talent.

In return I gave Camponello lessons from such books as were aboard, and he proved a slow, withal tenacious pupil.

I grew to know better the comrades of our knighthood, and rejoiced in their steadfastness, their humor, and their eagerness for the great clash that would some day come. How much finer was their courage than the cruelty and greed of Barracuda's men!

Thus we beat forward with fair winds. Camponello informed me that we were bound for a certain spot in the Caribbean Sea. His Eminence, interpreting wisely the fragmentary messages I had borne, hoped soon to discover the meaning of the Isle of Lost Secrets, the Pit, and the treasure, and with his knowledge lure the pirates to a grand final fight.

I saw little of the Cardinal. He kept very much to himself in the eagerness to perfect his plans and to devote himself to the work he had in hand. Camponello told me that our leader was never idle. Nor did this isolation on his part surprise me, for he could hold sway with a finer rulership if he kept aloof.

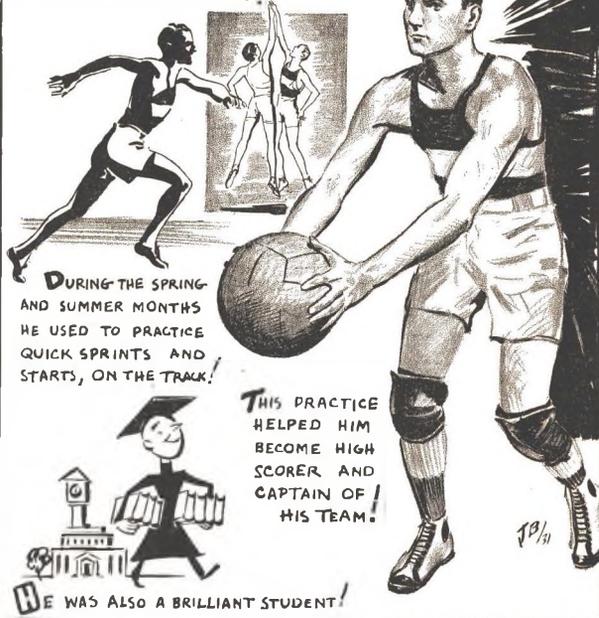
One day, rounding turbulent capes, we came into smoother water and then into calm and placid seas and we knew that we had come to the very middle of the Caribbean.

Through the night and her stars, our scarlet fleet stole forward and I was not alone in feeling the tension of approach.

Stories of Stars who were not "Born" but "Made". No. 18

By Jack Benson

**NOTED THE MOST VALUABLE MAN ON THE BASKETBALL TEAM AT A BIG WESTERN UNIVERSITY — YET JUST AN ORDINARY PLAYER WHEN HE ENTERED COLLEGE!**



**DURING THE SPRING AND SUMMER MONTHS HE USED TO PRACTICE QUICK SPRINTS AND STARTS, ON THE TRACK!**

**THIS PRACTICE HELPED HIM BECOME HIM QUICK SCORER AND CAPTAIN OF HIS TEAM!**

**HE WAS ALSO A BRILLIANT STUDENT!**

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Keds "Springstep," a star basketball model. Has a special orthopedic sole to fit the natural shape of your foot.

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There are good reasons. Keds aren't ordinary "sneakers," but real athletic shoes, made for hard-fighting players in any sport. You'll see that every feature of Keds' construction—Keds' special safety soles of tough, non-skidding rubber. Keds' snug, sturdy canvas tops and cool insoles—all are designed to help footwork.

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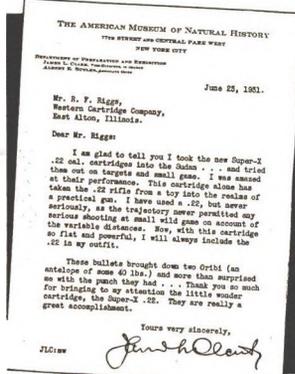
Big League Footwear

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(Continued from page 33)  
ing events, for Camponello had felt the thing himself and it was showing in his eyes as he approached me by the rail, and pointed ahead. We were traveling without lights.

"There is something ahead in the night, Alistair," he murmured. "Do you see what lies there?"

He was pointing with his rapier, and as I watched I saw a number of red and green lights that tokened the presence of a fleet. My pulse quickened. Was that the enemy, up there ahead?

Ere I could speak, a figure had come quickly down the decks and toward me. It was Anato, one of our companions.

"Alistair," he said, meaning in his eyes, "will you go below and see His Eminence!"

Camponello's hand rested upon my shoulder ere I moved to answer the command.

"Perhaps you go to your first great duty as a Brother of the Cross and the Sword," he murmured, and his eyes were strange as he spoke and I felt that he knew something that as yet I was ignorant of.

Anato's manner was urgent and I was all anxiety to hear the commands of the Cardinal. Therefore, with a speeding pressure from Camponello's hand, I hurried down the broad companionway, and came at last to where one of our number was on guard by a beautifully hand-painted door.

EVIDENTLY he was expecting my coming, for as he saw me beneath the ruddy light of a lantern that depended above his head, he tapped upon the door. I waited, a prey to no little nervousness now that I was approaching the moment when I should be alone with the Cardinal himself.

A voice sounded in answer to the knock. The sentinel opened the cabin door. Entering the cabin, I paused upon the threshold. His Eminence was seated at a broad oaken table. Behind him was a small altar, and to his right, beneath a lozenge window, lay a small trundle bed. Lying upon the bed was a sword, his surcoat, a baldric and a brace of pistols.

The cabin was plainly decorated, and beneath a swinging light aided by candelabra upon the altar, I saw that quiet-faced figure whose eyes were upon me and whose presence seemed to radiate courage and goodness.

"Come hither, Alistair!" I marched across the cabin and drew myself up before the table, as Camponello had bade me do if ever I should be summoned to the presence of Gian da Garda. The Cardinal of Panama eyed me critically.

"I would have seen you before, Alistair," he said, his large and mystic eyes lighting up gently, "but the affairs of our fleet and the work to which we have all dedicated ourselves gave but scant time until now."

Sitting back in his tall black chair patterned as a cross, he looked me up and down and then he smiled at me.

"I hope to be very proud one day of my acolyte," he said. "You have commenced well."

He paused. "The necessity of secrecy may provoke you to mystification, Alistair," he murmured. "That is only natural. We may have enemies aboard our ships, just as those who serve our cause are aboard the decks of Barracuda and La Touche."

At his words I wondered if The Laugh were one of the Cardinal's men. But His Eminence himself had said that he did not know such a man. And Doon—was he a Knight of the Sea? Surely not that surly, scarred ruffian! Those eyes had become keener as they gazed at me.

"For the moment Barracuda is not to be reckoned with," he said. "But La Touche is, and La Touche is strong, Alistair. How strong, I do not know."

As he spoke, he drew forward a map and indicated it to me.

"We are here in the Caribbean," he said, "and are anchoring, as you will know in a moment. Ahead of us lies, so I believe, La Touche's stronghold."

Gian da Garda leaned forward and held me with his gaze.

"Alistair," he said, in a serious tone. "I am sending you on ahead of the fleet, which will make for Tortuga and harbor there. I want you to find some means of getting upon this island. I want you to learn if La Touche knows where lies the Isle of Lost Secrets. I want you to learn of the Pit you mentioned, and Merfil, and the treasure. For if I know these things I shall be able to anticipate how the pirates shall act. Bring me, too, a report of La Touche's strength in ships and men and arms."

The Cardinal must have known how

### Get Those Facts!

1. Crack express train a smoking wreck—
2. City editor out with the flu—
3. And Phil Carter, unproved young cub reporter, thrust in charge of getting out the paper.

*A crackling newspaper year next month, with all the speed and thrill of a rushing newspaper office—*

### "FACTS—AND BY-LINES"

By Robert and Hoyt Moore

his words were firing me for he nodded and smiled.

"I know that you will behave as I would have you behave, Alistair," he murmured. "You will not betray us even though death might be the reward."

He rose to his feet and I knew that the interview was at an end.

"Camponello will provide you with a boat," he finished. "He will make all arrangements. You will return, sooner or later, to Tortuga with your report. Be on your guard and remember that you go to a post of great danger."

A smile, an inclination of the head, and the interview was at an end and I had my first commands from our leader. I felt that I was walking upon air as I crossed the cabin and came finally to the deck above. What lay before, I did not know, but I felt that he had signally honored me in selecting me for such a special task as this.

I FOUND Camponello awaiting me by the rail, and when I had told him of my visit to Gian da Garda, his face revealed that he knew already what I was to do.

"This is a feather in your cap, Alistair," he said confidentially. "Why, there are men on this ship, and the other ships, who would give their right hands for such a chance!"

Then his face became grave. "Of course," he added, "you are setting out upon a very dangerous mission. La Touche is noted for his cruelty and ferocity. He and Barracuda have been at daggers drawn, and La Touche's is the larger fleet. His brain, though, is not Mistral's brain nor has he the same power over his men that Mistral sways."

"Apparently, Camponello," I said, "little is known of La Touche's island.

There are secrets there for the finding." Camponello's eyes had become strange again.

"Aye, that there are," he agreed. "And those secrets you go to find."

Then he laughed and gave me a heartening clap on the shoulder.

"And now to speed you forward to your task," he added. "For I can see that you are itching to go."

I WAS, and without further delay we started for the cabin to get ready for the great adventure. I noticed, before we went below, that the fleet we had sighted in the distance had now entirely disappeared from view. Perhaps she also knew of our presence and had doused her gleams for the same reason as we had doused ours.

Whilst I remained below to remove my surcoat and to find some other clothes that would make me less conspicuous than I was now, Camponello saw to my boat and the provisioning of it. I came on deck to discover that it was already launched and stocked. There were water kegs, food, pistols and ball and powder flask stowed in it, and I found that my little craft had a sail as well as oars.

"Good luck and God speed you, Alistair," said Camponello in a whisper. No one else was near, for, as he had instructed me, I was to leave the ship with as little fuss as possible.

A grip of my comrade's hand, and I slithered down the rope and into my waiting boat, untied the tethering cable, and, a few moments later, with Camponello darkly above me, I set my sail and catching the wind bowled forward.

As I felt her respond to the breeze, I felt glad. Glad that I should not have to wait, inactive. Glad that I was on the service of His Eminence, and that I could do something to those rogues who were terrorizing the seas.

The Isle of Lost Secrets! The Pit! The treasure! What would I learn of these things? And La Touche—if he caught me, what fate would be mine?

The wind was freshening and my small boat was speeding forward at a splendid pace. I fancied that a storm was not far away, but that did not give me any qualms for I knew that mine was a stout craft. There was not a star to steer by, and the little map the Cardinal had given me would help me not at all until day. Yet was I thankful for the darkness.

With every passing minute, and the farther I got away from Camponello and the fleet, the meaning of my new work became more clear. Where the adventure had seemed so full of glorious possibilities, it now showed itself as a thing of responsibilities.

Keeping my lantern low in the boat, and steering carefully through the rising seas, I looked keenly ahead for a sight of ship or land. I was realizing now that *The Emblem* had brought me as near as possible to the island, and that it was only to avoid a big risk that the ship and her consorts had anchored.

Hours came and went and I looked ahead for the dawn, and at last, in a gray line that spread out into a golden flame, it came. With its light, and to my intense excitement, I saw, lying upon the horizon and slightly on my starboard quarter, some ships. They were disappearing from view, but I had the direction and I had the sun to steer by and I beat forward in that direction with a splendid wind to aid me along.

I had no doubt but that I had seen ships of that fleet whose lights Camponello had pointed out to me, and it seemed to me that they must be La Touche's command. But they were too far away to notice my small boat.

Midday came and went and not until the late evening, and with the aid of the sunset, did I see what suggested land to my eyes. Land or mirage, I

made toward it and blessed the clearing skies and the stars that gave me their aid as darkness settled down. There ahead of me, were land and the glitter of green and red lantern light! Was it indeed La Touche's island?

Careful to pass that harbor, for I deemed the lights to mean ships, I came nearer to the shore and sought for a landing place that was isolated from human eyes. Then I realized that it were better to wait for the dawn. A false landing and an encounter with one of La Touche's men and my whole adventure would be marred and I should have failed utterly in the task His Eminence had set me.

Sailing inshore, I lowered my sail, anchored, and prepared for sleep. I knew that I should need all my strength for the work that lay ahead of me. It was restful slumber with the wind blowing over the Caribbean Sea and fanning my cheek. If I did dream, the dreams were fair and filled with peace.

I AWOKE to find the sun in my eyes at a level almost with the rail of my boat, and before me, a palm-girt stretch of sandy beach. If island this were, it was a large one, for I could not from where I was anchored see where the land ended. Before me lay a small bay, and having brought my anchor up, I rowed into it and beached my boat.

Drawing my craft up the firm yellow sand, I cast about me for some place of concealment for her, and found a clump of palms near to the fringe of the sand. It was amid the lush undergrowth beneath them that I made my boat's hiding-place. And so I achieved the first step on my way to success.

I had yet to learn, though, if this were La Touche's island, and if those were La Touche's ships. It was quite possible that I had struck a civilized and peaceful portion of the Caribbean. Having partaken of a meal, I made sure first that there was not a soul in view, and then I commenced my voyage of exploration.

As I walked slowly forward, I saw no signs that told of human beings. At last I came from the shelter of the trees, and entered a glade, to see, lying in the center of it, the bones of two skeletons. From their attitude, from the knife in the white and bleached ribs of one, and the bullet hole in the skull of the other, I knew that there had been a fight to the finish. The scene also suggested to me that the island was the one I was seeking, and I could not help but feel that these men had been La Touche's.

The next instant I was out of that glade and flying for cover into the undergrowth, near enough for me to watch the spot I had just left. I was barely in time, for as I sank into the grasses, I saw a party of men come marching through the glade in orderly fashion. They were armed with sword and cutlasses, and the pistols in their belts, and the knives, and the clothes of the men told me all that I wanted to know.

They were buccaneers, there could be no doubting that!

Lying down in the undergrowth, I stopped my breathing until I felt that my lungs would burst. They came so near to me that I was sure they must discover me. Not until the sound of their footsteps was but a memory in the distance did I dare move from that spot, and when I did so it was with considerable speed.

I sprang to my feet, raced past the two skeletons, and into the trees beyond the glade. Here I discovered that the path was plain and



made by the passage of human feet. I knew that I had to be doubly careful now. Stealing away from the path, I did my best to get forward through the undergrowth.

I came finally to where the trees ended, and before me was a gradual slope going down to the sea. Far below lay a sandy bay with two high headlands to either side of it. At the water's side was a mansion whose windows glistened in the high sunlight. Between the house and the forest's edge, in well-kept gardens, flowers were blooming, and it was hard to believe that this could be part of a pirate stronghold. I stilled the furious beating of my heart, and as I grew calmer, my determination to go down to the mansion and explore grew stronger.

I looked about and saw that a line of palms ran down to the right of me, almost to the sea itself. These would afford me shelter, and before I had time to lose heart, I hurried over and stole cautiously down the line of palms until at last I was halted by the bay itself.

There were some ships in the bay, and the ugly snouts of their cannon told their own story. Boats were going to and fro between them, and I saw parties of men coming up toward the mansion. Near the mansion there was a veritable town of huts. It occurred to me that with so many people here my presence might not be particularly remarked upon, for I had taken the precaution to look as much like men of Maroon's kidney as possible.

Delaying not at all, I left the shelter of the palms and made my way to the back of the great palace, toward a great door that was wide open. None of La Touche's men were on this side of the house, but from within I heard the sounds of carousing and I decided that it was a good moment for me to act. Perchance I should find some fuddled men in their cups, with loosened tongues.

Carefully I ventured toward the door and a few moments later I was in a passageway, looking ahead toward a big banquetting hall in which a few sprawled figures lying recumbent against barrels told of the night that had gone.

One staggered to his feet, and mousing a curse, disappeared toward a door on the right. Making a pretense at unevenness in my step, I staggered into the great room that smelled vilely of rum and stale tobacco smoke.

As I did so, a small and foppishly dressed figure came from behind some tall barrels that had concealed him from view. Ere I knew what was happening, his sword was at my breast.

"And whom might you be?" he asked politely, baring his teeth. "My own name is La Touche."

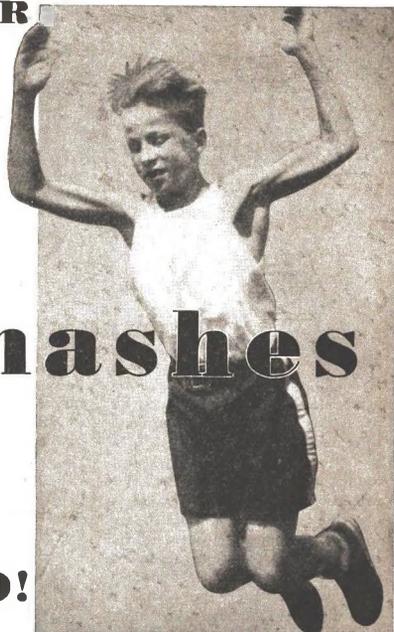
It is very strange how, even in a moment of great danger, one has time to take in trivial details. And here was a most amazing little man.

He wore a gray beaver hat with a sweeping red feather, and beneath the hat was the smallest face I had ever seen on a man. Large and childlike eyes were belied by the cruelty of a sagging mouth. His nose was long and very thin and his face was of the whiteness of chalk. He wore a pale pink satin suit with a crimson band, amid whose folds appeared the silver hilts of costly pistols. His hose were gray, and golden buckles studded with diamonds graced his shoes. At his knees were silver buckles with rubies in them.

As my eyes swept over him, I felt a

## BOY AFTER BOY . . .

# S mashes



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(Continued from page 35)  
sharp pain in my chest as he pinked me with his sword. And as he did it he smiled with youthful maliciousness, just as though we were good friends and this a good joke. He was a horrible little creature in very truth and I condemned myself for the sudden paralysis that the pain prompted. I could not understand how it came about that I did not drive the sword aside, and picking Master La Touche in my arms, throw him out into the sunlight.

Instead, I stood there and I must have looked exceedingly foolish, for he was laughing at me, and now the laughter turned into a leer and those eyes changed from friendliness to fierce intent.

"I'm La Touche," he mouthed. "And you, whom might you be?"

I forced a smile, watching his eyes the while, for I was preparing to act. And act I did! I fell backward and sideways, gripped the little brute's legs, and flung him clear. The next instant I was through that hall and out of the door by which the intoxicated pirate had lurched a few minutes since.

I had raised a cry behind me, and I tore into a square hall to find a guarded door to seaward, and facing it a broad oaken staircase. I heard La Touche's voice roaring commands, and as I took the steps of the staircase three at a time, the rush of footsteps sounded behind me.

Desperate as the situation was, I yet had time to realize how signally foolhardy I had been in entering this place as I had done. In a moment I had raised a hornet's nest about my ears, and the sight that presented itself to my eyes as I came to the topmost stair and turned, my sword out, was one that I was not likely to forget.

There stood La Touche, grimly white and more grotesque than ever, and behind him his pirates, still in their cups. In that instant one man sped a ball toward me, but he was staggering and provisionally he missed.

They were gazing up at me as though I were some ghost. But I knew that when their surprise passed they would be surging upwards to skewer me without mercy and make me the excuse for another buccaneer holiday amid the golden cups and tankards and the big and generous barrels.

Two men, one a great blond giant with the head of a Viking, and the other a short and dark-faced man with a cutlass in each hand, mounted slowly up the stairs.

The fair-haired pirate aimed a pistol at me, but even as he was about to fire there came a report just behind my ear and I saw him reel and fall like a sack of flour down the stairs. I had no time to turn and see who my rescuer was. With a shriek of rage, the small man roared upwards with those cutlasses whirling about his head.

I spitted him, for he was easy prey, but I almost lost my sword in one of the cleaving strokes that came from the dying man. Another rogue, spindleshanked and hard-featured, his clothes draped about him as one might drape a skeleton, took the stairs. A rakish-looking sword was his weapon.

"Bring him down to me, good Paravale," I heard La Touche's purring voice say. "Do not kill him, Paravale, but let us have him for our greater sport."

But at that moment I lunged, and Paravale impinged himself upon my rapier. My pistol meanwhile remained in my belt—I had no time to load it.

Paravale passed into the shadows as a stumpy individual, cross-eyed, cautious, gorilla-like, came carefully up the stairs. He held a knife in one hand and a pistol in the other, and he slowly raised and sighted the pistol and fired. But not at me! Evidently his target was toward the windows behind me, from whence had come that mysterious shot

that had robbed me of one of my adversaries.

Ere he could reload, I leaped toward him and gave him the shortened point and sent him to his fellows. Then came the reports of three shots and I felt a stinging pain on the cheek and I heard fire come from behind me and a scream from below, and now the stairs were alive with enemies and I fancied that my end was very near indeed.

"Take to the gallery and the third room on the right, and for your life!"

A voice was ringing in my ears, nor did I hesitate as I heard it. One flight of stairs led to a landing, and the landing formed a square off which lay rooms.

I swung to the right to avoid a pistol ball that struck the rail near where I had been standing. Others came hot after me as I rushed to the third door to the right. A moment later, as the sound of pistol answering pistol came to my hearing, I burst into that room and closed the heavy portal behind me.

Merciful good fortune revealed a key within the door and I turned it. For the moment I was secure.

**Chapter Eight**

I DREW a deep breath, and put my hand to my cheek to discover blood where a bullet had grazed me. Then I looked around.

I was in a room that was equipped in costly style. Lush rugs from the East, silken divans of all colors, costly tapestries, golden ornaments, mirrors and ornate tables and chairs, literally filled this great chamber. Glittering candelabra depended from above my head, and near at hand I saw some opened windows, and beyond them a wide wooden platform.

This was no place to remain. In an instant they would be breaking down the door, or rushing outside to prevent my escape. I was out of that room like a streak of light, and placing my sword between my teeth, I fell over the rail just above one of the pillars that supported this wooden gallery.

The next moment I was racing for the shelter of the trees. Arrived at a vantage point, I threw myself upon the grass and looked back from whence I had come. I heard the sound of shots and the noise of cries, and gazing down the slope, I saw buccaneers come swarming round the house, evidently searching for me. I chuckled to myself at the memory of La Touche. He had had a few surprises that merry morning.

But with my amusement came a feeling of chagrin. When His Eminence had sent me hither, it was not to decimate La Touche's hoard, or indeed account for any of them, but to learn such secrets as this island concealed. Now they would be on their guard and my work would be greatly hampered in consequence.

Consoling myself with the fact that I had been more the victim of fate than rashness, I withdrew farther into the grass, deciding that it would be well for me to lie quiet for a time. When I had crawled far enough into concealment to make me more secure, I rose to my feet and, turning, sped away.

Hours came and hours went as I made my way through tree and glade. I had decided to hide myself and find sustenance from such fruit as abounded on the island. Two days might have to elapse before I dared venture back toward the mansion, and when I did return it would be by night.

I did not pause until the sun was low over the sea, and when the sudden darkness came, I had found a rocky spot and a cave amid those rocks. Here I planned to make my headquarters for the time being, and with some grass I made myself a bed, found some fruit, had a meal, and immediately fell asleep.

Birds were singing when I awoke,

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and as I looked out from this higher ground toward the distant sea, it was hard to realize that the stronghold of a Caribbean buccaner lay upon this seemingly peaceful spot. For below me the sands dreamed away toward the smiling lips of turquoise blue wavelets, and the sun was laying heavy shadows beneath the palms.

I could have lost myself in that reverie, and belike I should have done so had not something happened that made me forget sea, bird, sky, and sand.

It was the sound of a song, a song that came to me as something might come in a dream. For a moment I fancied that I must be back again upon the decks of *The Lagoon* watching that gay pirate. The Laugh, come slowly down her decks amid those lines of dead and wounded pirates.

What did it mean?

I lay there, waiting and wondering, and then I detected a phrase in the song like unto the Magnificat. With bated breath I listened, and again the phrase was repeated. The Magnificat—the song of the Knights of the Sea—cleverly concealed in a ballad!

I started to my feet, a strange conviction growing within me. Whoever was singing those words was seeking me. I remembered the mysterious hand that yesterday had aided me. Was I upon the verge of meeting that friend whose timely shots had saved me and whose advice, cried to me in the heat of the moment and the heart of the danger, had saved my life?

LEAVING the cave, I ventured into the open, with the grass of a glade between me and the trees that formed a semicircle about the tiny plateau. I could not see the singer, and as I waited I realized that the song was coming from a constantly changing direction. First it would be ahead, then to the right, then ahead again, and now to the left, and I fancied that whoever was singing those words must be taking good stock of me before he revealed his identity. Well—I would take a chance. If he proved to be an enemy, I would be ready with my sword and pistol.

A few minutes later I saw, coming from the shelter of the trees, the song silenced now, the tall figure of a man, and his garish garb brought me instantly into a position of defense.

"Put down your sword," he laughed, as he came swaggering toward me. "I am your friend, young sir, and mayhap you can give me the sign that I require."

I was conscious of gray and clever eyes, of a face that, had it been cleaner, would have been good-looking. His puce satin suit was covered with stains and his baldric was frayed. The point of his steel showed through the end of his scabbard.

"You were seeking for me?" I asked. He nodded. "Aye, that I was," he answered. "And, as one of those sent out by La Touche to search for you, I shall, in the course of a short while, return and inform him that after a fight in which I was the victor, I drove you toward the sea, that you fell from a headland into it, are no more, and therefore of no great danger to him."

"My sword would prevent that!" I exclaimed, drawing back.

"Nay, nay," he laughed. "You do not understand me. I shall bear that story back, but it will be but a ruse to give you the greater freedom of action, provided, of course," he added, "that you can give me the sign of the sword."

I knew now to what he referred and

my heart beat fast as I knew for certain that I was in the presence of one of my own companions. Raising my sword, I held it hilt upwards and touched the hilt with my lips where it made a cross with the blade.

He did likewise with a knife he drew from his belt, and with that formality over, he laughed gaily.

"I did not think I had acted in error," he exclaimed. "Now tell me news of the fleet and I will instruct you in your duties, for I need aid here. I have searched, and have found little. Your quicker wit might prove the more fortunate."

"It were wiser to speak within here," I suggested, showing him my cave.

Nodding, he followed me into my hiding place. There I told him all that had transpired up to the moment when I had escaped from *The Lagoon* to *The Emblem*. When I had finished, he looked intently at me.

"I can see that His Eminence has chosen a worthy member of our order for this mission," he said. "My name is Sergrid, Ross; and there are three others of our order here. La Touche has plans, but he is chary to tell even his lieutenants. Those

plans and secrets we require, and to-night La Touche plans a great feast."

Sergrid smiled. "When he concentrates his ships, he gives these feasts at periodic intervals," he continued. "It is to keep the men happy, and when they are in their cups, La Touche sees to it that the over-ambitious are dispatched in quarrels that bear the stamp of brawls. In reality, they are carefully planned assassinations."

SERGRID rose to his full height, which was over six feet, and throwing out his chest, patted it.

"And La Touche chooses me as the picker of the quarrels, Ross," he laughed. "Can you imagine anything more ironic?"

Sergrid's laughing eyes were infectious and I instantly placed him in the same category as Camponello—a brave, carefree, loyal spirit.

"To-night I shall be busy at my tasks, alas," he added, sighing. "I have to dispatch Shantley, Barstabar, Cortez, and Meep. Such are my orders, and because I carry them out with such keenness and avidity, I am above suspicion, and that is just as it should be, young Ross."

"Did you save me upon the stair?" I asked.

Sergrid nodded. "I wore a mask," he explained, "and stayed behind the turning of the wall so that I wouldn't be recognized. And when they came up the stairs I leaped from the window on the landing to the ground."

Now his face became serious and, reseating himself, he leaned toward me.

"To-night," he murmured, "when you hear the guns from the ships announcing the landing parties' departure from the shore, you will meet me by the clump of palm trees nearest the sea and at the back of 'The Crystal House,' as La Touche calls his headquarters."

He paused.

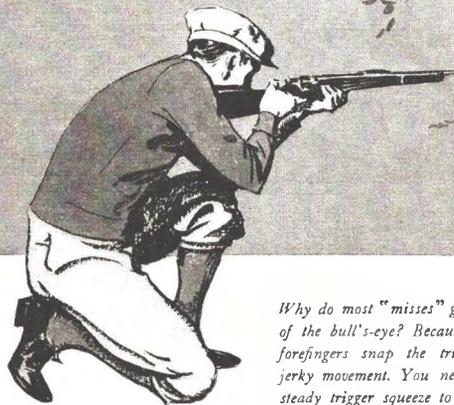
"Then," he added, "I shall let you into the mansion, for you to explore at will. It will be your last chance, for to-morrow I want to speed you off with dispatches."

"Do La Touche's men speak of an Isle of Lost Secrets?" I asked.

"Aye, that they do," Sergrid replied.

"But I can find no one who knows where

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(Continued from page 37)  
it is. They speak of a great treasure concealed on that mystic isle."  
"Does La Touche know aught of it?"  
"Perhaps you shall find that out tonight," Sergrid said.  
"Barracuda's minstrel," I went on earnestly, "he that is known as 'The Laugh,' speaks of his grandfather Merfil, and says that where his grandfather's bones lie, there lies the treasure. And The Laugh speaks also of a Pit. What do you hear of the Pit?"

At those words, Sergrid's face grew sober, and in a strange voice, like that of a man who has seen things that are not good to see, he repeated: "The Pit . . . The Pit."

Then he turned to me. "There is a Pit," he said, "but may you never have occasion to see it. It is—" he paused—"it is a sporting ground for rogues. The Pit yields no secrets; it swallows them."

On the subject Sergrid would say no more, and I wondered what this thing could be that so filled him with horror. Little did I know that I was soon to find out enough—and more!

Sergrid rose to his feet. "Now I must be gone," he announced. "And well met, Master Ross. To-night may well be fortunate for you and for our cause."

Then he had gone, rapidly and secretly, for, watching him from the cave, I saw him dart from cover to cover and so come lost amid the trees.

The hours that followed his leaving me were fraught with a hundred exciting speculations and memories. Now that I knew how the Cardinal's men served the pirates I wondered again if The Laugh were not one of our companionship. If so, how came it that he was the chosen favorite of Mistral? And why had His Eminence known naught of him? That was only one of the many riddles yet to be explained, and as the time moved forward to my meeting with Sergrid, I had found no answer for it.

It was late afternoon when I stole I from my hiding place and so came toward the clump of palms that Sergrid had named for our rendezvous. When darkness arrived I was still there, waiting the boom of guns from seaward.

With the passage of the sun, the ships within the bay took on the semblance of fairy craft, for their lights gleamed amid the shrouds, and above that blue bay the skies were fleckless and powdered with stars. The crystal moonshen was falling upon the many windows of that great and lighted mansion from whose interior already came the sounds of song as the buccaneers commenced their new carouse.

What secrets should I unearth? I hardly dared hope that I should bring any to light. How could I succeed when others, more skilled than I, had failed?

A shadow loomed up above me, and barely had I realized that it was Sergrid himself than from the bay there came the boom of guns.

"Come with me, Ross."  
Without question, I followed him. In silence we moved toward a small door at the back of La Touche's great and glittering house. Sergrid, his eyes gazing to right and left of him, opened the door.

"In with you," he whispered. I was through the door in a flash and barely in time, for I heard a light laugh and then that purring voice I had heard before. Someone had come up to Sergrid, who was still outside.

"Remember, Sergrid," the unknown said. "Shantley, Barstabar, Cortez, and Meep—and above all Meep. He grows too powerful upon his ship. You did well in dispatching the intruder."

I stood there in the shadows, hardly daring to breathe, and then I heard a laugh in the distance, and the next moment, here was Sergrid himself at my side.

"Come," he whispered to me. "That was La Touche himself. I am taking you into his own room, and there you may watch him. He is going there now, but you shall arrive as soon as he, by secret passages. Come!"

I followed him through dark passageways that twisted and turned. We descended into the cellars beneath the house and then mounted stone steps. The lantern that Sergrid had provided himself with gleamed now upon a stone in the wall—a flat stone with a ring in it, and as I watched him he turned the ring and pushed the stone.

"Mount and enter that room and conceal yourself, Ross," he said, "And wait and watch. I must return."

I did not speak as I obeyed him. Our parting was a pressure of the hand, and now here I was with that stone returned to its emplacement and to find myself in a large furnished room.

It was empty, and hearing approach-

me that either Sergrid was busy at his work of picking quarrels for La Touche, or that some more sincere affairs were in course of progress.

What better time could have been selected for my affair with La Touche? I knew I was on the verge of learning all that His Eminence sought! I wondered that La Touche didn't hear the beating of my heart as I stepped boldly into the room.

The little man at the table was chuckling and pouring over the map with ever and anon a rub of his hands and a nod of his head. It seemed that the moment of his triumph did not appear to be far away. I set my teeth and, gripping my sword, prepared to explain to him that hope can be very transitory.

With my sword ready, I approached him. His ears must have been keen, for with a wolfish snarl he turned, and I saw the look of utter amazement upon his twisted face. Then a sudden cry of fear came to his lips and he sprang to his feet and jerked out his sword. I knew then that he fancied I must be some ghost come to taunt him, for he looked at me as though I were unreal, and he trembled. A scream escaped him and he drew back from the table.

"Who are you?" he whispered. "By the demon in the Pit what do you want here?"

His flickering eyes were gazing from me to the papers upon the desk, and I laughed, for there was no need to tell him what I wanted as I drove toward him.

"Your wicked little life, La Touche," I answered him, as I forced him backward. "Tis that I want—and some other things, and of those things, the secret, La Touche, the secret!"

He did not speak. His face was as white as chalk, and I could see that he was in terror for other things than his life. No doubt he feared for what lay upon the table before him. That map!

The next moment our swords met.

### More Airplane Models!

THE FIRST NEXT MONTH

Great news for airplane model builders!

The American Boy has for you plans for the best airplane models you've ever known. Next month the Red Flash—a fuselage glider that did two minutes on its first test flight. Then the Feinberg fuselage model that won at Dayton in June with a 30-minute flight. Later, a corking flying scale model which, simple enough for the novice to build, nevertheless embodies the newest principles. All described by Merrill Hamburg!

SOMEHOW I fancied this man a mean swordsman. It is thus that we undervalue little men, not realizing that what they lack in stature Nature often makes up to them in other ways.

With his original surprise vanished, knowing now that I was indeed flesh and blood, he bared his teeth, grinned wolfishly at me, and fought me backward with a sudden show of spirit. I countered, and in a quick riposte had the satisfaction of seeing him wince and of knowing that I had pinked him in the left shoulder.

Then a scream of rage came to his lips and he drove at me with venom and no little skill. It was as much as I could do to guard myself against those thrusting moves of his.

Once his rapier all but passed my guard, and I fancied that he had found my body, but with a desperate maneuver I deflected the blade and, shortening my arm, prepared to give him the point.

He was back in a moment, though, and awaiting my onslaught, nor was it delayed for a moment. Seeing the advantage I had won, I chased him across the room and fought him toward those same curtains behind which I had concealed myself some little time ago.

Once I had him at my mercy, for I saw approaching death in his eyes, and the curtains were making his own efforts vain. If only then I had given him the point! Instead, with foolish vanity that prompted me to consider my task simple, I spared him.

It was to my own undoing. Ere I could attack him again, I felt myself gripped by the legs, and I was flung upwards and over the head of whoever had attacked me from the rear. I crashed back against the oaken table and for a moment was stunned and limp.

(To be continued in the December number of The American Boy.)

## A Crisis at the Aerie

(Continued from page 11)

contents. His back was turned to the lonely pineland stretches, and he was facing the city and the harbor, now very plainly in view. A great tramp steamer was making her way across the bar, her smoke trailing lazily above the sea islands. The little white flecks on the harbor itself were the sails of the negro fishermen, returning from their morning's work on the banks off Morris Island.

Brandon was thinking contentedly that the view alone was worth the hard climb when a sudden sound made him grip the stout limb until his knuckles were white. He had learned long before that when he was climbing he must never let anything startle him into relaxing his hold; that whatever happened, the thing to do was to tighten his grip and keep his head.

The sound he had heard was the guttural call of fledgling eagles from the aerie above—the nest obviously held not eggs but young birds—and Brandon knew that the cry probably heralded the approach of the old birds. If they were coming, he was in a bad place. He remembered belatedly that the museum had cautioned its field naturalists against climbing to an eagles' nest when there might be young in the aerie.

Before Brandon saw the first eagle, a dark shadow sped over him. Then he caught sight of the great tawny bird as she dropped the gray squirrel she was carrying, and with a shrill scream bore down upon him. Brandon shouted and struck out with one hand. The eagle veered, and he glimpsed, not a foot from his face, the wide sharp talons. The breath of the dark brown wings fanned him, and vividly he saw the fierce hooked beak and the menacing white head.

By the time the female had veered off, the male, returning empty-taloned from a hunt, saw the fight and shot downward on roaring pinions. The young eagles, probably scenting the man and much excited by the actions of their parents, kept up a continual clamoring, and the old birds added their raucous screams to the general din.

BRANDON alone was quiet. He knew that it was dangerous to become excited; he must, first of all, permit nothing to make him break his hold—it would be far better to take some punishment from the big birds than to fall from that giddy height. Then he must calmly begin his descent; he hoped that if the birds saw him leaving the nest, they would not continue to attack him. Yet he realized that there was grave danger in starting down. He would have to turn his back to the eagles and so would expose himself unguarded to their menacing beaks and talons if they kept on with their attacks. Starting down, however, seemed the wisest course.

Cautiously and coolly, Brandon turned on the stout limb; kneeling there on one knee, he stretched down and sank his left climbing iron firmly into the bole of the pine. Then he began to lower his weight, easing it, however, by his grip on the limb above. Before letting go of this to grip the trunk of the tree, he looked carefully about for a branch or heavy stick to use as a weapon. There was none within reach; the sticks in the aerie were too small and were rotten, and the stout limbs of the pine were too big for him to cut off. He would have to climb down weaponless—and he must hold on, no matter what happened.

(Continued on page 40)

# How the Telephone Bell Rings

⌘ A Bell System Advertisement

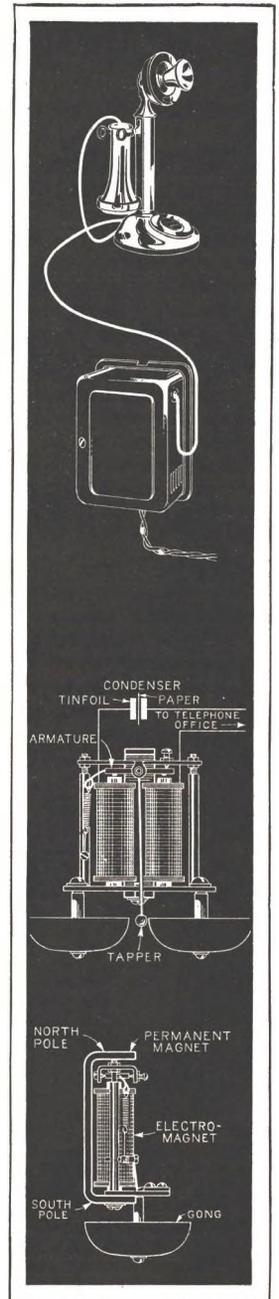
THE ringer on your telephone is an instrument which responds to the ringing current sent out by the operator but does not interfere with the electrical currents which carry your voice over the wires. The picture shows what the ringer looks like and this is how it works.

There are two electromagnets, or coils of fine wire wound around iron cores. The tapper which strikes the two gongs is attached to an iron armature and is mounted on a pivot. There is a permanent magnet which normally exerts an equal pull on each end of the movable armature.

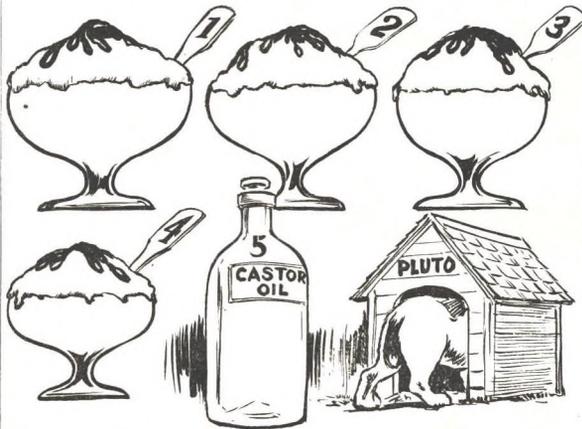
Now, if a steady current is passed through the coils, the electromagnet is energized and the pull on one end of the armature becomes greater than before. This causes the tapper to move and strike one of the gongs. If the current is sent through the coils in the opposite direction, the tapper strikes the other gong.

The ringing current sent out by the operator changes in direction very rapidly and causes the tapper to strike each gong about 20 times per second. This alternating current has the ability to pass through the condenser shown in the picture. The direct current which is used to signal the operator cannot pass through this condenser.

More than 5000 members of the Bell Laboratories staff are constantly engaged in research and experiments which improve the telephone art. They help to uphold the Bell System ideal of giving you the best possible telephone service at the least possible cost.



## Your Best Reading Diet

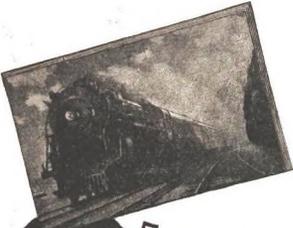


(Ballot idea by Lawrence Wales, Elmira Heights, N. Y.)

"OF course we like chocolate sundaes," the ed says to Pluto. "But why the bottle?" Pluto wags cheerfully. "The sundaes," he responds, "are the four stories you like best in this issue. The bottle—well, even I can't satisfy everybody! If there's anything in the issue you find hard to take—label the bottle too!" That's your job. Label the sundaes and the bottle according to Pluto's directions (draw your own sketch if you don't want to clip your magazine) and send the ballot to the Best Reading Editor, *The American Boy*, 650 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich. It'll help Pluto to make your future reading diet more exactly to your liking.

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(Continued from page 39)

The eagles, meanwhile, had been sweeping close above him, and when they saw their enemy begin to retreat they grew bolder. Brandon had hoped that the birds, if they struck at all, would not attack him until he had entirely turned and was flat against the tree. But while he was still kneeling on the limb, looking about for some kind of a weapon, the male eagle, heeling in as he swept past, struck the naturalist forcibly with the butt of his great wing. For a moment, the young climber swayed in his perilous position. Fearing that the same thing might happen again, he let his other foot downward; then, releasing his hold on the limb, he clung to the bole of the pine.

At that instant both eagles, coming from the same side, and immediately behind the other, attacked him. Brandon crouched to avoid their rush, and in doing so he overtaxed the pressure on his left climber. As it tore out of the bark, he gripped the pine desperately. It was a grim second. He frantically jammed the iron back into the bark—wrenched the whole mechanism, and broke the leather strap! The climber itself turned on his leg and slid down to his foot, where it hung swinging, a hindrance now instead of a help.

WITH only one climber left, his descent would be all the more perilous, if indeed he could make it at all. The eagles were crowding about his back. Their latest sweep had brought blood; the talons of one had raked his back, and he could feel the warm trickle going down and collecting at his belt. Brandon struggled against despair. Could any man climb down a hundred feet with only one climber when two bald eagles were fighting him for every foot of his descent?

But he had to try. Another step down, painful and slow—and again the great birds, apparently seeing now that he was in distress, were upon him. Brandon's head swam; it was all he could do to keep from striking out blindly and impotently at the sharp-taloned enemies that harried him. He looked down at the sheer distance; it was still more than ninety feet. He

looked off and saw the distant city, glimmering through the afternoon sunlight. He gazed with longing at the purple shadows of the peaceful pine woods. So far away, they seemed. . . .

But he must go on. He looked down again—and from his left foot he saw dangling the useless iron climber. A thought suddenly thrilled him. Here was the weapon he wanted! Clinging to the pine with his left arm, he lifted his foot and with his right hand pulled off the stout iron stays. Even as he freed them, ready for use, the eagles were wheeling for another attack.

Brandon, lying flat against the tree, with his newly secured weapon gripped in his right hand, waited until the first great bird was near. Then he struck out, not weakly and with futile anger but with a force that had iron in it. The blow caught the male eagle full on the breast, and staggered it. It dropped a few feet and then, flapping slowly off, alighted on a pine just across the river. The female eagle continued to sweep near; but deserted in the fight by her mate, she did not strike. Brandon shouted at her and shook the climber; then he began to go steadily down the tree as he swiftly as safety would permit.

It was an exhausting journey, that straining climb down, but it led to life. The young naturalist at last accomplished it. Safe on the ground, he leaned weakly against the pine trunk and reflected that only the thought of using his dangling climber as a weapon had brought him through the gravest peril he had ever met.

Allan Brandon's official report to the museum read: *On giant shortleaf pine, standing on small island in Wando River, three miles above city limits, found nest of old bald eagles. Aerie a hundred feet from ground. Not inaccessible, but dangerous climb. Young at present in nest. Do not advise investigating aerie further.*

His closest friend, another young naturalist, who had heard the story in more detail, chuckled when he read this report.

"Don't you worry, Allan," he said. "I'm not going up to call on your eagles."

## The Mystery in Four-and-a-Half Street (Continued from page 24)

been furtively padlocked on them. He had no idea where the thief was, or what his own next move should be. Why didn't his fellow prisoner make a sound—a move? Sullenly the answer to that hit Chuck like a blow. Sinking, he realized that that brief blue flame outside the door must have betrayed his presence, have shown his staring face in silhouette against the lighted door crack.

Yet, helpless, he still waited tensely in his corner. The silence was stifling. And out of that unbroken silence crept slowly to Chuck Ames a significance sharper than any outcry. The clock had stopped ticking.

In a flash he guessed why. That big clock case, with its long hinged door in front, held room for a burly six-footer, if he crouched. In his mind's eye Chuck could see the key in the clock door—he sent up an agonized prayer that it was in truth in the lock—and then slowly, soundlessly, he began to steal toward the clock. Six paces from it he caught the dim glint of the key in the lock—his eyes were now accustomed to the darkness—and then beneath his foot a board treacherously cried out in the stillness.

He stood there, holding his breath and as he stood he saw the clock door slowly open and two fingers slide round the edge of it!

Lunging, he flung himself on the door.

There was a strangled animal cry from within the case, the fingers jerked and vanished, and Chuck banged the door tight and turned the key in the lock. He heard the pounding of a shoulder on the stout oak door of the case as he ran to the wall switch and flooded the room with light.

Blinking, he stared at the tray of trinkets untouched in the window. He turned, and saw lying beside the safe at the back of the store a dark lantern, a chisel, a crowbar, and other tools less familiar. In another moment he was at the front door. It was locked, and the key gone.

Perhaps Utterback was in, after all—perhaps he had gone to bed, taking the key. It was a desperate hope, but Chuck dashed into the little back hall, took the two flights three steps at a time, past the cluttered second floor ghostly with piles of old furniture, up to the floor of the pawnbroker's bedroom, whence issued a steady snoring. It was music to Chuck's ears. He pounded on the door.

"Mr. Utterback! Get up! Burglars!" "Huh?" a thick sleepy voice grunted, and in a moment or two more a light flashed on in the room and the door opened on the pawnbroker's flabby figure, in a nightshirt hastily tucked into his trousers.

"They were trying to break into the

## GOSH! SKATING IS HARD ON SHOES



### BUT YOU CAN MAKE THEM SHINE AGAIN THIS WAY

CERTAINLY, skating is hard on your shoes. But keep them shined. A couple of minutes with a good shoe polish will make them neat and clean.

So get a tin of shoe polish today. It will keep your shoes shined, and it will keep a football or basketball in good condition. It's good for baseball gloves, too.

2 IN 1 or Shinola are the paste polishes to get. Ask for Bixby's if you want liquid polish.

## 2 IN 1 SHINOLA



Big 3 Ft. Telescope Five Sections, 1 1/2" Bore, 12 1/2" Mirror, 10" Eyepiece. Price for looking at the Sun, ALSO GIMON. Benner & Company, 7-8, Transit, N. J.

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World's Lowest Priced Repeater! Just the kind of a rifle that you have long wanted to own—a full-size, pump-action, hammerless repeater that fires 10 cartridges without reloading. A dependable gun that will outshoot either short or long 22 cartridge. Blue-black bronze-lined gun barrel, rust-proof and guaranteed not to pit. Black walnut stock and forearm. Length, 35 inches. A Wonderful Gun! The Hamilton Repeater has every feature that you would expect to find in a safe, fast, straight-shooting firearm. It has a safety lock, automatic ejector and a barrel that is accurately rifled and absolutely true. Free Circular of Complete Hamilton Line. Write today for FREE circular showing complete line of rifles. C. J. HAMILTON & SON, Plymouth, Mich. 3131 Hamilton St.

IN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS, BE SURE TO GIVE YOUR FULL NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS. CORRECTLY

safe! I've locked the fellow in the clock!" panted Chuck.

Utterback's sleepiness vanished. "Into the safe!" Then his milky blue eyes narrowed to a dangerous slit. "What you doin' here at this time o' night, anyway? How'd you get in?"

Chuck started to explain but Utterback didn't wait to hear it all. He stepped back into the room for a moment, and reappeared with the deadly blue-black gleam of a revolver in his hand.

"Good!" cried Chuck. "That'll keep him in the clock till the police get here. Give me the key to the front door, sir, and I'll slip out and call Headquarters from the first phone I can get to."

"Get this," said Utterback, and there was sudden cold menace in his voice. "The police ain't in this—see? And anything you seen or will see around here to-night you're goin' to forget the minute you see it—see? Or you won't live to see daylight, kid—that's fair warnin'. Now get on with you."

With the cold muzzle of the gun sending chills up his spine Chuck turned and started down the black stairway, moving as in a nightmare.

This wasn't true. It was a dream. He had often dreamed it before. Dreamed of being forced down a stairway in a strange house, a stairway that wound down into blackness. Before him lay always unknown horrors; behind him, with heavy tread, something moved relentlessly upon him, driving him on and down. At the foot of the stairs he always woke up, in a cold sweat of horror.

But now he was at the foot of the stairs, and light fell silently into the hall from the open door of the shop.

"Go on," said Utterback grimly, prodding him, and Chuck, a shield for the other's cowardly bulk, stepped into the room.

It was as before—the key still stood in the clock door.

"So there you are, Spike Brent!" Utterback addressed the invisible prisoner, with a malignant humor. "I see your favorite jimmy over there by the safe. Gettin' impatient, were you? Well, you can cool off in there till I get the stuff stowed away more secure, and then I'll see what to do with you."

No sound from the clock answered him. Utterback strode to the safe and with a few swift twists of the combination had the door open and, reaching in, drew out a little black felt bag. Except for some papers, there was nothing else in the big box of a safe. Utterback turned on the boy and motioned with his revolver.

Chuck stared at him in horror, and stood frozen.

"Oh, I'll let you out before you're smothered," the fat man said, with an unpleasant laugh that showed pink gums. "But I want you out o' the way for a while—I'll be busy. Get in," he repeated less pleasantly.

"I won't!" Chuck jerked out. Utterback's pink face changed to a menacing purple. "You young fool!" he growled. "You'll—"

AT that second came the crash of a report—a shot muffled slightly by the thick oak door of the clock case, and out of the case leaped a big burly figure that hurled itself full upon Utterback!

The burglar had shot out the lock. Chuck's mind registered that fact mechanically, as he leaped out of the onslaught and stood pressed against the wall, while the two men struggled, swaying, panting, cursing.

Utterback held the black bag high out of reach. With a sudden plunge the burglar caught the fat wrist. He bent and twisted it till the pawnbroker with a scream of pain relaxed his hold on the prize and the bag, half flung from his hand, fell with a thud six paces away. Chuck Ames dived for the light switch

and plunged the room in darkness. The next moment he had his hand on the bag, had caught it up, and was running noiselessly for the stairs.

Halfway up the first nightmare steps, however, he stumbled and fell with a clatter. He was up in a minute, but running feet pounded below, and just as he made the first landing the light hanging directly over his head went on, revealing him in its sudden glare plain as a target. With one leap and a swing of the heavy little bag, Chuck crashed out the light, and leaped on up into darkness.

On the dim second floor Chuck halted, panting. Clearly, through the turmoil of his mind, stood out the recollection of a gutter pipe running up along the back door of the shop. If he could find a window near enough to it—

This floor was thrown into one loft where the furniture loomed in piles like great distorted monsters. Taking swift bearings, Chuck slipped through this confusion toward the corner where the gutter pipe ran. Feet were pounding up the stairs. If there were only a window—

There was. But it was locked, and he couldn't budge it. The feet had halted uncertainly on the threshold. All at once, cruel and garish, the light of a bulb flashed on in the ceiling—and the next moment Chuck had crashed the black bag through the pane, smashed out the glass, and swung over the sill.

A shot seared past him as he caught the gutter pipe and swung out on it. As he hit the ground in a supple jump, another shot rang out and pain caught him agonizingly by the shoulder. Dazed with agony but triumphant, Chuck doubled up and ran down the alley—straight into the staring muzzle of a revolver.

"Hands up!" said a familiar silvery voice, and Chuck with one sick look of horror at the black glasses of the "blind" man, crumpled with a groan into his own blood on the cobbles.

HE opened his eyes upon cool daz-zling whiteness. A hospital, he drowsily concluded, and shut them again. He heard the rustle of a starched uniform, and heard a woman's low voice say:

"He's coming to. You may speak to him if you want to."

And then he heard that odd, light, silvery man's voice again, that last voice out of his nightmare adventure.

"Good work, boy," it said. "Very neat. How are you feeling now?"

Chuck lifted his heavy lids, and warm brown eyes twinkled into his.

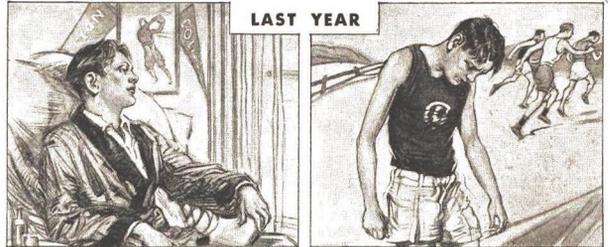
"Who are you?" gasped Chuck weakly.

"Tolliver's my name. Christopher C. Tolliver, investigator I'm sorry—I had you doped out wrong, youngster. All wrong. I thought you were a spy for that gang down on Four-and-a-Half Street."

"I had you doped out wrong, too," said Chuck, blinking.

"I don't wonder," laughed the man. "Nobody on Four-and-a-Half Street is what he seems to be. Utterback looked like a pawnbroker and was really a fence for a gang of jewel thieves. What looked like a common burglar turns out to be Spike Brent, whom we've been wanting for two years. Spike got rash because Utterback was double-crossing him, and made a play to get back the famous Bramwell jewels he stole six years ago. And a kid who looked suspiciously like a cat's-paw turns out to be a darn valuable fellow with wit and nerve enough to balk two of the smartest crooks in the gallery. When you're patched up, we'll talk about a job I've got for you. Now slip off to sleep for a bit—you've lost a lot of blood."

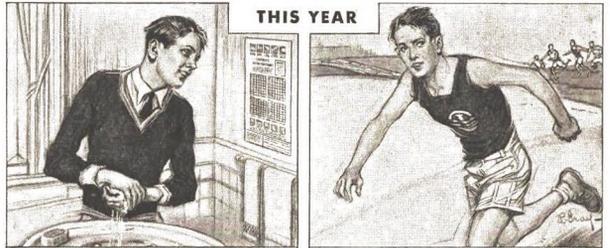
And Chuck Ames, drowsily reflecting that the end of the Western couldn't have been half so thrilling as his evening had turned out to be, dozed off with a sleepy grin.



A week before the big race a heavy cold kept Hal in his room



He started the race but dropped out at the half-mile mark, exhausted—no endurance



Hal learns that health makes winners. He keeps fit by washing hands often to remove germs



Wins the schoolboy cross-country run like a breeze—in the lead all the way

# Couldn't finish last year

... now a cross-country winner

HAL sprang a surprise this fall. He won the big cross-country run like a breeze. Jumped ahead right at the start—led the pack all the way—and in the last quarter mile he put on a spurt that made the rest look as if they were standing still.

Yet last year he couldn't stand the pace at all—dropped out at the first half mile. He was run down then—weakened by a long series of colds.

But what a different boy Hal is this year—right in the "pink"! He's found an easy way to help protect his health—to dodge strength-sapping sicknesses. And now he's one of the best schoolboy "harrriers" in the country.

### New training rule

What's his secret? Simple! Hal has made it a hard and fast training rule to wash his hands often—and particularly before eating—with Lifebuoy Health Soap.

For he, too, has learned that Lifebuoy removes germs. According to the Life Extension Institute 27 diseases may be spread by germs that hands pick up.

If you want help to keep well—to keep in the best of shape for any sport—follow Hal's lead, stick to Lifebuoy.

### Aids skin health, too

Lifebuoy is great for the bath, especially after exercising. It removes all dirt, sweat and body odor in no time—makes you feel fresh and peppy. And it's just bully for the skin—helps keep it free from blemishes—gives you that healthy, clean-cut look.

Get into the "Wash-up Game" now. Mail the coupon below for a free Wash-up Chart and a "get acquainted" cake of Lifebuoy. Keep your wash-up record. It will do a lot to keep you fit.

# LIFEBUOY

## HEALTH SOAP

for face, hands, bath.



LEVER BROTHERS CO., Dept. 2811, Cambridge, Mass.  
Please send me the Lifebuoy "Wash-up" Chart and a Trial cake of Lifebuoy—both Free.

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# In the Morning Mail



**EDWARD H. ACKERSON**, of Fort Benton, Mont.," says Pluto, wagging his tail. "Dorothy Poole, Winston-Salem, N. C. Ward Beers, Fort Wayne, Ind.—"

"Yes, yes," says the editor—"they're all readers. But why call the roll?"

The Office Pup throws out his chest. "I am merely reciting," he asserts, "the names of America's great men and women. Robert Bly, Morrill, Nebr. David Tefft, Diamondale, Mich. And lots more—"

"Are they in *Who's Who*," asked the ed, "or what?"

"If they're not, they ought to be," the Pup declaims. "They write to say they like my ballads. Well, so do I. And I feel as badly as they do that they've been deprived of 'em for a couple of months. But they're getting better and better—and they'll come regularly from now on, if you don't cheat me of my space! Now, my newest is so good it practically moves me to tears."

With which he rises to his hind feet, sticks a paw inside his vest (to scratch), and recites:

## THE BALLAD OF PLUTO, EXPLORER



The sky was clear and cloudless, that day not long ago,  
When Pluto, the Office Pup, set out to conquer ice and snow.

"I'm going to the Pole," he cried, and all the people hushed.

"No husky dogs for mine," growled Pluto, "for huskies must be mushed. To heck with planes and submarines, balloons that rock and sway, I'll take my trusty bicycle and pedal all the way!"

Amidst the cheers—and also tears—as well as catty snickers—

The Pup was off in a cloud of dust—and a pair of woolen knickers!

He pedaled up through Michigan and through Ontar-i-o;

He pedaled over hills and dales, and how that Pup did go!

He breakfasted in Labrador and lunched on Ellesmere Isle,

And when he reached the Arctic Sea, he rested for a while.

Ten minutes' sleep and up he sprang, once more to ride and ride—

He pedaled up an iceberg steep, and down the other side.

At last he came to open sea, and there, perplexed, he paused

To think how many polar flops an open lead had caused.

And then he saw a line that ran two feet above the sea—

"A parallel of latitude!" cried Pluto, "just made for me!"

He pedaled on the parallel, and pedaled over floes.

At penguins, polar bears, and seals, he lifted up his nose.

And thus he pedaled to the pole, and here he stopped in glee,

Just long enough to name the spot "Pedal Extremity."

"It moves me to tears, too," grunts the ed. "Have you picked the month's best letter?"

"Well," says the Pup judiciously, "there were hundreds of good letters

this month, and I had a hard time selecting the best. But I've finally decided to award five bones of my salary to William Allen, Portland, Ore. In a recent Morning Mail, Allen came to bat with some interesting statistics. In his latest letter he gives us more statistics, and to me they're far from dry."

Allen's prize-winning letter:

"Dear Pluto: I want to thank you for your statement in the Morning Mail that I'm a good mathematician. If you can convince my math teacher that you're right, I'll give you a diamond-studded, ivory-inlaid, gold collar."

"At any rate, I'll spout off some more statistics: In my exploring trips through the 1930 volume of *The American Boy*, I have discovered this hitherto unknown fact—that the Morning Mail quoted letters from every state in the Union except Nevada. I guess the boys in Nevada are of the strong, silent type. I can imagine their coming home from school and their mother's saying to one of them: 'John, aren't you going to thank Pluto for that nice story in the last issue?' And the boy's replying: 'No, Ma, I'm not. We men of the West speak with actions, not words!'"

"Also, you have quoted letters from 19 other countries, including Canada, India, Korea, England, Switzerland, Sudan, Japan, Argentina, Scotland, Alaska, Hawaii, Greece, Syria, Philippines, China, Uruguay, Canal Zone, Albania, and France. That's quite a bit of this old world."

"Olmostead's letter about stir-up-you-thinkers reminds me of an incident that occurred last month. I went to a meeting of our club, and for a speaker we had a man who was a major in the secret service and an international diplomat. He talked about the causes of the World War, and held our attention for an hour and a half. Ordinarily, everybody in the room would have been fidgeting after ten minutes, but there was hardly a stir until he had finished. The reason was that what he said made everybody think. I was so impressed with his talk that I asked him questions, and talked with him until the meeting broke up, more than an hour later. And I got more good out of that hour's talk with him than out of a lot of school lectures."

And the reason, Allen, that you got so much good out of it was because you asked questions. Try that in school some time!

"You'd think Admiral E. R. G. R. Evans had been a pirate, to read first 'Pirate's Doom' and now 'Ghosts of the Scarlet Fleet!'" writes Edgar Michael, of Birmingham, Ala. Admiral Evans has been just about everything that sails the seas but a pirate, Michael, as his thumbnail autobiography shows. Here's what he says of his exciting career:

"I joined the Royal British

Navy as a cadet in 1897 and after an exciting two years in the Mediterranean fleet and seeing something of the Turco-Greekish War, I served in H. M. S. *Repulse* and other ships as a midshipman, taking an eager interest in exploration. In 1902, as a sub-lieutenant, I was made second officer of the Antarctic relief ship *Morning*, and made two voyages to the south polar regions in search of the *Discovery* with Captain Scott on board. We located Scott, and I then, a boyish sub-lieutenant, made his acquaintance.

"Some years later he selected me to be his second-in-command in his final expedition to the South Pole. His tragic end left me to conclude his expedition and make known the details of his reaching the Pole just a month after Amundsen had done so.

"I took part in the Great War as a commander of destroyers—was promoted for my part in the Dover battle, when my ship, the *Broke*, with another destroyer, the *Swift*, engaged and defeated six enemy destroyers, sinking two and putting the rest to flight after severely damaging them. I had many adventures with the Dover Patrol, becoming chief of staff; I served for a short time with the first U. S. destroyer flotilla; after the Armistice I served on the Belgian coast, mine sweeping. Then I commanded the cruiser *Carlisle* in China—it was there I swam with a line to the wreck of the Chinese steamer *Hong Moh* on the Lamock rocks near Swatow in bad weather (226 Chinese were saved by my ship's company after this).

"I commanded the battle cruiser *Repulse* in 1926, and have just returned from two years in command of the Royal Australian Navy."

Admiral Evans has enough medals to cover a bigger chest than his photograph shows, among them the U. S. Navy Cross, the Croix de Guerre, awards from Edward VII and George V for his Antarctic feats, a gold medal from Lloyd's for taking that line to the *Hong Moh*, and a lot of others.

Every month fans have been reporting their hobbies, until the Pup has come to the conclusion that boys collect everything from jumping beans to railway locomotives.

This month, the Pup will mention only the more unusual hobbies. But before he does that, he wants to present an offer that every hobbyist will leap at. Here it is:

A few weeks ago, the Pup got a letter from Walter N. Durost, of the Teachers' College, Columbia University. Mr. Durost is making a study of boys' collections, and he invites all Morning Mail readers to send him a description of their hobbies. Send your letters to:

Walter N. Durost, 112 Wood St., Lewiston, Maine.

Pluto has told Mr. Durost that he will receive hun-

dreds of letters from you. So go to it! Here's your chance to unload an awful load about your collections. Tell what you collect, how much of it you have, how you go about getting it, and the ways in which the collection is educational to you.

One of the most interesting hobbies this month is that of Emery Wister, Charlotte, N. C. He collects finger prints! Besides having the prints of all the boys in the neighborhood, he has 17 prints of wanted criminals. Every



reader knows, of course, that no two finger prints are alike, and that through finger prints you can make a positive identification of any man whose print is on record at the police station.

Harold Brown, Tenn. (we couldn't read the name of the town, Brown—get to work on that handwriting!) makes a hobby of poems. He knows 29 by heart. Wallace E. Frohock, Jr., Hartford, Conn., has flags from 60 different countries.

William I. Treadway, Bristol, Conn., collects turtles and soap. (In the bathtub, Bill?)

Adam Smyser, York, Pa., collects stamps, match boxes, and marbles. Arrowheads and other Indian relics, found near his home, are the specialty of Harry N. Martin, Trinidad, Colo. Wilis Bacon, Belmont, Mass., goes for golf score cards; Harold O'Donnell, Hornbrook, Cal., for flashlight batteries; Patricia Tisdale, Grand Forks, N. D., for flowers. And Virginia Cox, Woodlawn, Va., studies and classifies magazine illustrations, while Jack Spollen makes his own room in Brooklyn, N. Y., his hobby. "I hope others get as much pleasure from their hobbies as I get from mine," Spollen writes.

Ed Nofzger, Long Beach, Calif., likes the travel contests we ran last spring. "To send some boy on a trip to Paris or the Orient," he says, "is just the same as sending a good-will ambassador on a peace tour. The value of such trips cannot be overestimated."

Incidentally, listen to the San Antonio, Texas, girl who last spring won one of the two European trips offered through *The American Boy* in co-operation with the United States Flag Association: "I don't know how, having had privileges denied even titled ladies, I shall ever settle down to being plain Ruth Eldridge; and what will please you when I start in about meeting the Prince of Wales, tea with Lady Astor and the Colonial exposition? . . . And then Ward Stone (the Portland, Ore., boy who won the other trip) and I became fast friends; and that is one more in a long list of things I have to be grateful for."

If you're interested in the Orient, you'll be interested in books by Upton Close, a foremost authority on the East. You'll like "Eminent Asians," published by D. Appleton and Co., with its sketches of leading men in the rapidly changing Asiatic countries. You'll like "In the Land of the Laughing Buddha," published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, a novel of China. And you'll want to read other books by Mr. Close, published by the above-named houses.

*The American Boy* has established a



Rear-Admiral E. R. G. R. Evans.

new high school newspaper department, with free advice on publication problems and a free twice-a-month reprint service. William L. Mapel, who comes to the magazine from the directorship of the Lee School of Journalism at Washington and Lee University, has charge of this department. Please be sure that your high school newspaper editor and your faculty adviser on publications both see this announcement.

Good news!—you can still get, for a dime apiece, two fine pictures for your room. *American Boy* cover pictures, free of printing! One is that stirring glimpse of a Roman legion on the march, all in gold and colors. The other is the glorious four-color picture of Sir Launcelot, clad in mail, riding forth on his charger. . . . Just put your dime in a homemade coin card and send that and your request to: Cover Editor, *The American Boy*, 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich. If you want both pictures, send two dimes. If you want only one, say which. Limited supply—don't delay!

Fans, this month, have broken out into a rash of departments. If the Pup were to install every department demanded, there'd be no room for Renfrew, Tidd, Tierney, Jimmie Rhodes, or any of the scores of characters in the magazine.

And to all these requests, the Pup cries "Halp!" Obviously, it's impossible for the editors to give each of you a department devoted exclusively to your particular hobby. There's just one thing we dare promise to give you—and that's better and better fiction. Every day in

the month we're scratching to dig up stories—stories that will grip and interest you; stories that will tell you important things about the jobs you'll some day be holding; stories that give you romance and adventure, a knowledge of far countries, an appreciation of courage, humor and resourcefulness.

"Couldn't you persuade Carl H. Claudy to write a sequel to 'The Land of No Shadow?'" asks Albert McCready, Portland, Ore. The Pup has done better, McCready. This month opens a Claudy thriller, "The Master Minds of Mars"—a four-part science serial that Claudy fans, and all the rest, are going to think a treat. And—speaking of serials, as the Pup likes to do—"Ghosts of the Scarlet Fleet" is a corker of a story; when (by special arrangement) it was published in England, it proved to be one of the best-liked yarns in years.

It's about time for the Pup to ring off. But he wishes to announce that his fleas aren't so troublesome any more, largely due to H. C. Voris, Litchfield, Minn. Voris sent Pluto a complete flea cure, consisting of two squares of plate glass, some swabs and an antiseptic solution. "Secure flea," instructs Voris, "place same on lower plate. Place second plate on flea, apply pressure until flea is crushed. Scrape remains into ed's pipe and cremate. Use swab and solution for cleansing purposes."

Write Pluto at *The American Boy*, 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich. The most interesting letter each month takes five bones from his umptious salary.

## Here's Why Notre Dame Won the 1930 Championship

(Continued from page 13)

Carideo used his head every minute. Our ends were weak, and to conceal that fact we left the middle of our line open. We wanted to decoy Notre Dame into throwing plays between the tackles where we were strongest. That didn't stop Carideo long. In a few plays he had discovered that our ends were weak and he started riding over them. That's where Notre Dame scored most of her touchdowns.

Carideo surveys the whole field of play before calling signals. If a man is out of position he spots it, and if necessary changes the signals to take advantage of the situation.

With Carideo at quarterback, Notre Dame last year was able to use every ounce of her strength to the best advantage.

### "They Played Like a Machine"

(Notre Dame 28, Drake 7. Nov. 15, South Bend)

By Captain Lynn King, Quarterback.

NOTRE DAME clicked. That was my first impression of the great team I saw in action several times last fall when I was scouting its games, and it was my clearest impression after it had beat us, 28 to 7. That team left nothing to chance. When it went into action, it knew what things to do and it did those things right; not only that, but it did them as one gliding, oiled piece of machinery.

It clicked, and that was that. Here's what I mean: Twice Notre Dame scored on us on one play, and many other times it gained ground on the same play. It was an off-tackle drive, with two men out of the line running the interference. The two men usually were Metzger, the fast little guard, and Culver, the tackle who played beside him. With them were two other blockers, the two halves;

Schwartz usually carried the ball on the play.

Not an unusual play, is it? But the way they executed it made it unusual. When Metzger and Culver came out of the line, they came like shots—fast as race horses—yet so perfectly timed that, play after play, they were exactly where they should have been exactly where they should have been there.

The backs worked just as fast and just as accurately. If the two blockers were Brill and Hanley, say, they fell into step with the linemen and all four moved as though they were on one crank shaft.

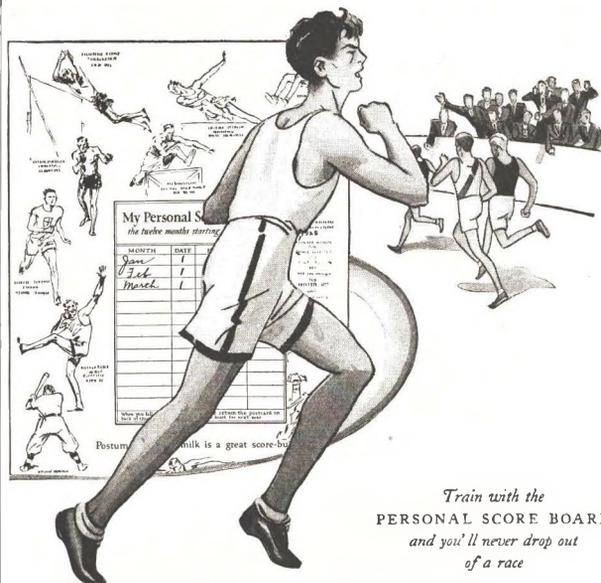
Meantime their tackle and guard were working our guard in; their end was charging our tackle out of the way. That left four blockers to take care of our secondary and the end—and how they did the job! It was the best example I've ever seen of how completely a finely trained team that plays together can make the gains for its ball carrier. . . . And that was typical of every play, defensive and offensive. Notre Dame always did things right.

"Clicking," it seems to me, means two things: First, knowing what to do; second, doing it at just the right instant. Notre Dame's players had mastered both sciences, and that's what made the great team that won a national championship.

Who was its most effective player? My choice is Marty Brill. I've never seen a man who played defensive back as he did. He didn't stop our plays after they crossed the line—he got the ball carrier before the play was really started. Believe me, I know, because he was about the toughest player I ever tried to get away from! And nobody needs to be told how well he carried the ball.

But I don't like to pick any one player. That was a team, and it seems to me that when a chap has ten other men

# Seven laps to go ...and Ted's all in!



Train with the PERSONAL SCORE BOARD and you'll never drop out of a race

POOR OLD TED! Eighteen laps to the mile on the indoor track—seven laps too many for him. Ted was a normal, healthy boy—but he had no staying power. He didn't know how to train, that's all. He needed a home coach! He needed the *personal score board!*

The PERSONAL SCORE BOARD will train you! Send for it!

You can have—free—the home trainer that Ted should have had—the *personal score board!* It is a trainer that comes right into your home and teaches you how to have the sturdy body, the firm muscles, and the stamina that every boy wants. Sixty-thousand boys are using the *personal score board* to-day! Join them—and begin your training under the best teacher you ever had.

The easy training rules are printed on the back of the *personal score board*. They are the rules recommended by coaches and followed by athletes. You follow them and every month you chalk up on your *personal score board* your gains in height and weight. Every month you'll see yourself getting taller, heavier, stronger. You'll have pep and vigor and punch!

Surrounding your own personal record are the records of athletic stars. Names of champions, dates—everything you

want to know about the famous leaders in every field of sport.

Your training rules are easy to follow: Plenty of exercise out of doors; nourishing food with plenty of fresh milk; sufficient sleep and rest. And—one more vitally important rule that no athlete would think of breaking—NO CAFFEIN-CONTAINING DRINKS! Drinks containing caffeine weaken the growing body—instead of building it up.

But there is a real training-table drink for you—Instant Postum-made-with-hot-milk! A fine drink for every athlete. A drink with flavor and warmth and zip! Easy to make, too. Put a level teaspoonful of Instant Postum into a warm cup. Add hot (not boiling) milk. Sweeten to taste—stir—and drink! Couldn't be better!

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(Continued from page 43)  
working with him just as though one brain and one set of muscles were operating the lot of them, anybody has a chance to be a star.

Notre Dame clicked, and I think that's the reason for its greatness.

**"Rockne Was Magnetic"**

(Notre Dame 20, Southern Methodist University 14. Oct. 4, South Bend.)

By Captain William Skeeters, Tackle.

SEVERAL weeks at Rockne's coaching school taught me why Notre Dame wins games. Never have I come into contact with a man who had as much personal magnetism as Knute Rockne. His two greatest talents, it seems to me, were uncanny ability to pick the good from the near-good, and to make his men deliver the best that was in them. He attracted men to him, and when they entered a game they were fighting for more than victory or glory—they were fighting for a man they loved and respected.

That fact was apparent in the S. M. U.—Notre Dame game. We went up to South Bend the under dogs, and we expected to catch the Irish off guard. Rockne started the game with his second team, and in the first two minutes we scored a touchdown against them on a 53-yard pass.

Rockne immediately sent in his first string. He must have said something to them, because on the kickoff after our touchdown Joe Savoldi took the ball and followed perfect interference from his own goal line 100 yards down the field to a touchdown that evened the score! And so perfectly did every Notre Dame man do his job that there wasn't an S. M. U. player on his feet when Savoldi crossed the goal!

That was coming back with a bang. You could almost hear those Notre Dame players saying: "There, Rock, we got that one back for you."

The entire Irish team was good. Carideo was like a second coach on the field. Schwartz, who scored two of Notre Dame's three touchdowns, was a great back. But the element that added a final touch of superplay to the Notre Dame team was Rockne's ability to inspire men. Rockne was magnetic.

**"They Let You Make the First Move"**

(Notre Dame 60, Pennsylvania 20. Nov. 8, Philadelphia.)

By Captain-elect Paul Riblett, End.

NOTRE DAME won the 1930 football championship because her men were taught to use their heads rather than follow hard and fast rules. They overwhelmed Penn. In the first half they scored 53 points. They were in a slaughtering mood, and we were the victims. But through the hail of touchdowns, I did manage to get a fair idea of how they operated.

When a Notre Dame running play gets under way, the man with the ball has more interference than any other football player in the country. The reason is that Notre Dame puts only one man on the opposing tackle—the end. Most teams devote an end and a wingback to the job of taking out the tackle. Notre Dame ends are good enough to do the job alone. And that releases one more man for interference.

On most plays two Rambler linemen come out for interference. That makes three backfield men and two linemen to help the runner through. And it's the teamwork shown by these blockers that gives Notre Dame her tremendous advantage. They keep their feet—and they let you make the first move.

The advantage of that is apparent. If a blocker leaves his feet and misses his man, he's out of the play. As long as he's on

his feet he may be useful. And if, on top of that, he waits for the tackler to move first, he knows which way to leap to take the man out. Notre Dame blockers don't miss.

I told you two linemen come out for interference. Let's see how Notre Dame blocks the hole left by the departing linemen. The hole must be plugged somehow to prevent an opponent from getting through and spoiling the play before it gets started. On some teams, the man left in the line is taught to throw his body across the gap.

Not Notre Dame. The Irish lineman remains stationary or even moves back a half pace and squats on his haunches—and waits! Then, when he sees what the opposing lineman is going to do, he moves. If two linemen try to get through, he goes after the first one, or shoves one into the other, or takes the more dangerous man. Here's another case where the Notre Dame player lets you make the first move. How much more effective that method is than to throw your body across the gap and let your opponent vault over you!

You don't catch Notre Dame men dashing blindly, headlong into the fray. They deliberate—and brainy.

If I were picking out individuals, I'd take Savoldi. He's better than Grange. Where Grange went around, Joe goes both around and through. He can stop and turn on a dime. He can start up again at full speed. He's big and hard to hurt, and smiling all the time. He's a great football player.

But the big reason for Notre Dame's success is the skill of her players in waiting just that fraction of a second while you make the first move—and then blocking that move in the most intelligent way.

**"Hats Off to the Line"**

(Notre Dame 7, Army 6. Nov. 29, Soldiers' Field, Chicago.)

By Cadet C. I. Humber, Captain and Left Guard.

THE Army-Notre Dame game was a battle in the mud. Mud underfoot and a drizzling rain in the air. With conditions like that, it's hard for backfield men to keep their feet, and passing is out of the question. The game develops into straight football—a tough scrap without strategy.

In the first quarter the Army had the advantage. Through a poor Notre Dame punt and some good line plunging by Fields, we made two first downs and brought the ball to Notre Dame's 10. Then the Irish regulars came in, and from that moment on, we didn't make a single first down. Notre Dame made only five, but we made just two against the second team—and that's a tribute to the defensive play of the line.

Notre Dame linemen are given more leeway than on most teams. They play a floating line. In other words, they're allowed to rove back and forth to follow the play. That's dangerous for some teams, because the men may be drawn out of position. Notre Dame's linemen were experienced enough so that they could be trusted. You seldom caught them off guard.

Metzger is a good sample of how the Irish linemen play. He knows his fundamentals. He's shifty, fast, and aggressive. I played opposite him part of the time, and I never knew just how to take him out. He varied his position, or his tactics, on each play.

There are several ways for a defensive lineman to break through to the opponents' secondary. One is to subma-

rine—to go through below your opponent's charge. Another is to push the opposing lineman to the ground and step past him. A third way is to push one man aside, ward the other one off with your knee, and then bring the other leg through the hole. That's called "knifing." Notre Dame men knew all these methods, and used them.

The Irish won the game on an off-tackle smash by Schwartz. We made our touchdown by blocking a kick.

Don't overlook the defensive play of the Notre Dame line when you analyze the greatness of that team.

**"Conley Was Good"**

(Notre Dame 26, Navy 2. Oct. 11, South Bend.)

By Midshipman R. M. Bowstrom, Captain and Tackle.

TWO of Notre Dame's four touchdowns against the Navy went through my side of the line, and I can testify to the efficiency of the Notre Dame line. They know how to open holes.

Our job, if we were to stop Notre Dame, was to break up her off-tackle smashes. And we had been specially coached to do it. My position on defense was just inside Captain Tom Conley, Notre Dame's right end. Our left end was a couple of yards outside me. We were supposed to break up the interference and of course get the runner if we could. If we didn't do the job, our fullback and left half were to come up and help.

In spite of all our preparation, Notre Dame got through. On both of the touchdowns that came through my side Joe Savoldi carried the ball. Both times, Conley completely tied me up. He got the hook on me—that is, he got under my hands and got the side of his body against me and tied me up long enough to let the play through.

Meanwhile our end failed to break up the interference. One of the Notre Dame men—a wingback, I think—took care of him. And that left either three or four men to go through ahead of the runner and dispose of our fullback and half. They did their jobs, and Savoldi galloped on for two touchdowns.

On both plays, my interest was only academic. I had been accidentally rapped on the head early in the game and I was still somewhat in a daze. But I do remember this:

Conley was good.

**"They Know Their Fundamentals"**

(Notre Dame 27, Indiana 0. Nov. 1, South Bend.)

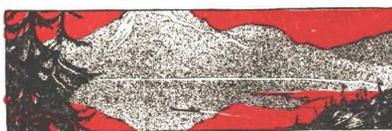
By Captain Paul Jasper, Tackle and End.

NOTRE DAME showed two outstanding qualities in her play against Indiana: perfect execution of fundamentals and a determination to win. Notre Dame loosed no bag of tricks against us. She won through a combination of good football and the most inspired type of competitive spirit.

The winning spirit, I think, is due to Rockne's ability to inspire men. And although Rockne is gone, I think that spirit will carry on for more than one season.

As an example of fundamentals, witness the long plays that brought scores to the Irish. In the first quarter we had held the second team even, and in the second quarter we got well into Notre Dame's territory against the first team. But in the third quarter, Notre Dame ripped us open for a touchdown. It was Joe Savoldi off tackle, with their end taking our tackle in, one of their backs taking our end, and a three-man interference leading Joe through our secondary.

But that wasn't all. The Notre



Dame end on the other side of the line was in the play. He checked our tackle for just a moment, and then went on to help out in the interference. Every available man got into the play and each man did his blocking well. He kept his feet, drove at you, made contact, and kept on driving.

That's why so many Notre Dame smashes go for touchdowns. The players know their fundamentals.

### "They Threw Two Passes"

(Notre Dame 27, Southern California 0. Dec. 6, Los Angeles.)

By Captain Marshall Duffield,  
Quarterback.

LET me tell you the sad story of two forward passes.

The scene is the Los Angeles Coliseum. The characters, Notre Dame and Southern California. The time, the afternoon of December 6, early in the first period.

We had kicked off to Notre Dame, and the Irish had made one first down. The ball was on the 38-yard line, and it was third down with six to go. In such a position, a team will often kick But Notre Dame wasn't kicking that day.

Instead, Carideo took the pass from center and handed the ball to Marchmont Schwartz, who faded back to his own 30 and tossed a long spiral that came down securely into the arms of Captain Tom Conley, Notre Dame's end.

Conley was my man, and when I saw him racing down the field to receive the pass, I ran over from the safety position to cover him. I hadn't taken more than a dozen strides when I collided with Ernie Pinckert, our right half, who was crossing over to cover Johnny O'Brien, Notre Dame's left end. Both of us were thrown to the ground by the impact.

Conley caught the ball just a yard inside the playing field and could do nothing but step outside on our 29. And that made it first down deep in our territory.

And now for that second pass. In the next four plays Notre Dame made nine yards and we took the ball on our own 20. On the very first play our fullback fumbled, and Al Culver of Notre Dame, one of the most underrated tackles in the country last year, recovered for the Ramblers on our 19.

By this time, Carideo was certain of two things. First, that we were considerably upset. Second, that our left end was charging in too fast on line plays. So Carideo called a play designed to take advantage of those two facts—a play that would take us unawares and make the left end pay for his rushing-in tactics.

Coming out of the huddle slowly, the Rambler forward wall and backs came up to the line of scrimmage with great deliberation. At Carideo's familiar "Hike!" the ends split a yard from their tackles and the backs shifted to the right, with Carideo directly behind his own right guard.

At the snap of the ball, Carideo faked to the left to receive it, but let the ball go back to Schwartz instead. Carideo immediately swerved to the right and raced past the Trojan left end who had again charged in heedlessly—evidently under the belief that Schwartz would run with the ball—and was easily taken out of the play by Marty Brill.

Schwartz faded back a little, took aim, and passed with unerring accuracy to Carideo on the 9. Carideo looked back just long enough to catch the ball on the dead run, and he outran the Trojan back in that territory for Notre Dame's first touchdown.

All through the season, Notre Dame hadn't done much with passes. Her most effective attack had been at the tackles. Yet against us, the Ramblers started the game with a long pass from their own territory and followed it with

a first-down pass deep in our territory. The first pass was just about perfectly executed. The second took advantage of a weakness in our defense.

After the first quarter Notre Dame used few pass plays. She didn't have to. Never, in my three years of football, have I seen an opponent gain yardage so easily through our line and around our flanks. And at least part of the effectiveness of the running attack was due to the success of those two first-quarter passes.

Don't let anybody tell you that the 1930 champions couldn't pass! They could run, they could block, they could tackle with the perfection of a Rockne-coached team. But they could also throw and receive passes.

### "They Play Alert Football"

(Notre Dame 21, Carnegie Tech 6. Oct. 18, South Bend.)

By Captain John Dreshar, Guard.

THERE are a lot of reasons why Notre Dame won the 1930 championship, but you can sum up most of them under one head: "Alert football." You don't catch Notre Dame players taking naps.

Let me give you a few illustrations of their alertness. On offense every Notre Dame player stays with his man. I play guard, and on defense I'm likely to move in one of several directions to stop the play. But no matter where I went—backward to stop a possible pass, to one side or the other, or through the line—the Notre Dame man assigned to me stuck with me. At all times he was prepared to block me out if I became dangerous. My man never went to sleep—never assumed that his job was done.

Another instance. On defense, Notre Dame linemen never rush blindly to where they think the play is going. They break through a pace or two, and pause there to see what's happening. They don't guess—they use their heads.

A more specific example. As the game got under way, I noticed that most of Notre Dame's plays were directed at tackle, and to help stop them I began playing a little wider. My opponent, Kurth, noticed that and went back to tell Carideo. Immediately Carideo called Savoldi over guard. Fortunately I saw Kurth talking to Carideo and snapped out of it in time to move in and submarine the play. But the minute I was drawn out of position they noticed it and attempted to take advantage of it. That's what I mean by alertness.

Another time I was caught gawking, and here's how it happened. On certain running plays, the job of Notre Dame's fullback was to block the end. On the shift, the fullback kept placing himself wider and wider, in order to get closer to that end. I got so interested in watching him that on one play I raised up. In that instant, Carideo called a play over me. Metzger and Kurth hit me and carried me five yards out of the play. Never was I so well taken out. You can't gawk when you're playing a heads-up team like Notre Dame. Luckily Morbrito, our fullback, came up and plugged the hole, so my napping wasn't disastrous.

We pulled one perfect play against the Irish. On our own 25 we tried Dutch Eyth off tackle. In this play my job was to come out for interference, go around, and take out the Notre Dame fullback. I did my part. Every other man did his, and Eyth went 75 yards for a touchdown. That play gave me my biggest kick of the season.

But you seldom find Notre Dame asleep. They keep their feet under them and their eyes open. They play alert football. In every respect they're a great team—a team that deserves the title:

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## Tell 'Em Yourself

(Continued from page 16)

"Yeh," gasped Potts. "Musta fallen on one of these guys' feet," Whitey commented unsympathetically. "I heard him groan." "That was me," Potts said, grunting with pain. "I don't think I can walk any more." "Huh?" Whitey exclaimed. He crawled over to where Potts was sitting, holding on to his ankle, and ran his fingers over the private's leg. "Oh-h," Potts groaned. "Break it?" Whitey asked anxiously. "I think so." "We'll wait here a while," Whitey said, after a pause. "Maybe it's just bruised."

FOR ten minutes the three sat there, eying their prisoners and chatting in low tones. "We can't exactly claim credit for these guys," Whitey murmured, "but anyhow they won't be goin' up to shoot at 'A' Company." "It was easy," Dufresne replied. "They were loaded down with junk an' not expectin' anybody. I doubt if they could 'a' fired if they'd had guns in their hands." "Sh-h!" Whitey warned. More feet were going by. For a moment they sounded close, and then they faded, going in the direction of the woods. After a few minutes of stillness, another squad marched by.

Whitey grunted. "The whole German army's goin' up." "We better be gettin' back," whispered Dufresne. "C'n you walk?" Whitey asked Potts. Potts tried it—and groaned. "You guys go ahead," he muttered. "I can't make it." Whitey sat staring into the darkness, thinking deeply. Potts' ankle was broken all right. If they went they'd have to leave him. On the other hand, if they stayed they'd see their finish when daylight came. Why had the Germans wanted to place a machine gun here? To cover the low ground in case the Americans got over the railroad embankment? This spot was on the downward slope, overlooking the low ground toward Maricourt.

"We ain't got much chance of gettin' back," Whitey said finally. "Too many Germans've gone into that woods."

There was a pause while the two privates digested the flat statement. Meanwhile, Whitey performed a rough job of bandaging on Potts' ankle, and as he worked, a dim idea began to form in his mind.

"C'mon, Dufresne," he said abruptly. "The Germans were gonna set up a machine gun here. Let's set it up for 'em. We gotta be decent."

With the help of the mystified private, he went out and hauled in the heavy Maxim gun. "Over on this side" he ordered, and they faced the gun toward Maricourt. "You know," grunted Whitey as he labored, "these guys weren't gonna fight on just a couple of belts of ammunition. We oughta have some more." "Where we gonna get it?" Dufresne asked.

"Jus' be patient," Whitey murmured. In an hour, patience was rewarded. A little distance off, a muffled voice called: "Heinrich!" A minute a silence, and then the call was repeated, much closer: "Heinrich!"

"Get ready," Whitey whispered. When the German appeared at the lip of the shell hole, he was startled to see two bayonets presented at either side of him. In a few minutes, at the sacrifice of another shirt, one more prisoner was lying bound and gagged in the shell hole. "The nice thing about this," grinned

Whitey as he disposed of the added supply of ammunition, "is that it's easy, safe work. No risk. But—" He was fumbling with the gun—"I wonder how you get the belt started."

He turned to the prisoners. "Hey, Heinrich," he said. "How do you work this thing?" For a moment the corporal scratched his head and tried to recall what he knew about Vickers and Browning machine guns.

"Never mind answerin'," he advised the gagged Heinrich. "I'll get it." More footsteps sounded in the night. "Hotel's full," Whitey murmured, as he listened. "You'll have to go some place else."

But the footsteps came straight to the lair of the three privates and four prisoners. Again Whitey called his welcoming committee into action, and ten minutes later there were two more Germans in the hole and the last shirt was used up. There was also a light machine gun, together with an ample supply of ammunition, added to the armament of the little fortress.

"If any more come, we'll charge higher rates an' scare 'em away," Whitey complained. "We'll have to bind 'em with our pants next." He turned to Potts. "You keep your rifle pointed at them guys," he ordered. "One of 'em might get loose."

The corporal crawled back to the guns. One of them was pointed in the general direction of Maricourt, and the other was directed approximately at the railroad embankment. A second flare helped him locate the two objectives.

"We gotta learn how to work these things," Whitey said, an edge of worry in his tone. "It's already four o'clock. Here we are, five hundred yards into Germany, with a lotta ammunition we can't fire."

For a half hour, the corporal and Dufresne worked on the guns, feeling in the dark for each projection and gadget, fumbling with the ammunition belts and the breach. The minutes passed swiftly now—too swiftly for the frantically working Americans. They became so absorbed in their labors that they didn't notice how regular Potts' breathing had become. Nor did they notice the slight movements of one of their bound guests.

A sudden scramble in the shell hole halted them, and they turned from their guns to see a form shoot upward out of the hole, and then to hear the sound of running feet growing fainter.

Quick as a shot, Whitey pounced over to where the prisoners were lying. He counted only five where there should have been six.

"What—what's happened?" cried the now thoroughly awake Potts.

"Nothin'," replied Whitey. "We just got one less guest to take care of."

"What'll we do?" cried Dufresne, a note of alarm in his voice.

There was a moment of silence. Whitey looked at his wrist watch. It was exactly five o'clock. The American barrage would start heaving its shells all over this area in a minute or so, and a half hour later, exactly, the attack would start. Meanwhile, the escaped guest would be fetching a detachment to annihilate this little fortress.

THE faintest beginning of dawn was lighting up the landscape. Not far away, a shattered tree stump looked like a grotesque demon, vague and unreal in the mist. Down in Maricourt, a yellow flash broke dimly through the fading night, and a second later came the sound of the explosion. That was a Jerry gun—the Jerries were starting their barrage first! It gave Whitey a queer feeling to be sitting back, watching the German barrage start.

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"What'll we do?" Dufresne repeated, in a panic.

"Stick it out," Whitey said, with fatalistic calm. "This is once where it's better to be with the hash slingers than the customers."

The growing day began to reveal the black, sinister outlines of the Maxim he couldn't get to work. Somewhere to the north was that escaped German. This little spot would be getting it from all sides, soon.

"Good-by, Allentown," Whitey murmured.

"What?" It was an anguished query from Dufresne.

"Get hold of yerself!" Whitey barked. "See what you can do with that light gun. Potts, you watch them prisoners—and keep an eye to the rear!"

WHEN the two barrages started simultaneously to pour shells on the two front lines, "A" Company was no longer in front of the woods. Bill Summers' report had convinced the colonel that the regiment was up against no easy task. Consequently, he had put "K" Company, of the third battalion, in front of the woods, and moved the reduced "A" Company over to the left, to join with the rest of the first battalion in the attack on the railroad embankment. If they got across, they were to keep right on for Maricourt. Farther to the left, the second battalion was to help envelop Maricourt, while the remaining three companies of the third battalion followed in support to be used where needed. And behind them, the other regiment of the brigade was to follow in reserve.

Lying in a shell hole beside the gaunt, tense Captain Anderson, Pinky experienced a momentary sense of relief. The German barrage was landing behind them. So far, nothing had hit close.

Overhead, the air was like a rustling curtain—a constant pulsing and swishing like a tremendous stir of wings. From somewhere behind the embankment came the muffled crash of exploding h.e.—the American barrage. Then, without warning, the air over Pinky's shell hole became a livid, searing blast. Dirt thundered down on him. Instinctively he knew it was a minenwerfer—a tumbling, high-trajectory shell of short range. Violent trembling seized him and an involuntary groan escaped his lips. He began to curse himself heartily. It wouldn't do to let the captain know he was this far gone. He buried his head in his arms and gritted his teeth.

For twenty minutes, the minenwerfer inaccurately pounded the first battalion's front. Pinky gradually regained control of himself and looked up. The captain's eyes were on his wrist watch. "Five more minutes!" the captain yelled.

Pinky looked at his own watch and nodded, forcing a grin to his lips.

A few minutes passed, and the captain got to his knees and took a look to the right and left. Pinky followed his lead, and as he gazed clear-eyed at the woods to the right and the embankment ahead, faintly visible through the growing light, a sense of weary gladness swept over him. The long night was finished. In a minute, there'd be action, and no matter how tough it was, it couldn't be worse than his hours alone,

under that wet German blanket.

When it was all over, if he still lived, he'd find Whitey no matter how long it took.

Suddenly, as if by pre-arrangement between the two enemies, silence fell. The barrage had lifted. It was five-thirty.

"All right!" yelled Captain Anderson. Simultaneously the two leaped out of their shelter. Whistles cut the air. All along the line, men started rising, dim queer shapes in the mist.

A feeling of lightness took possession of Pinky. It was good to have your head up instead of forever hugging the earth, inspecting grass roots, looking at little clods that seemed like mountains when your eyes were on a level with them. Surprising how close the embankment seemed when you were walking erect!

He glanced to the right and left. The battalion was moving forward in good order. Now, if the barrage had only been accurate—

Crack!

Pinky's head jerked toward the embankment. Red spots were dancing all along it. Good lord!

In dismay, he looked about him. Men were hesitating.

"Run!" Captain Anderson bellowed. "It's only a little way! Run!"

Some of the men were trotting half-crouched, heads bent toward the fire. More whistles began shrilling. A prayer in his heart, Pinky began stumbling and scrambling over the torn ground.

He saw Captain Anderson, to his left, stop suddenly, then sag in the middle and tumble limply into a shell hole. Pinky hit the ground and dragged himself down beside the officer.

The captain was breathing laboriously and his gray face was drawn. Pinky tried to turn him over, and as the captain changed position slightly, a sighing groan escaped his lips.

Pinky lifted the captain's lean hand and gazed at the slightly reddened tunic below the chest. He looked behind and saw a wider hole near the middle of the back.

The captain was as sick as if he'd been hit a terrific blow by a heavy-weight boxer in the pit of the stomach. In a minute, he'd come to—and learn that he was dying. There was no way to dress the wound. No way to get him back.

Pinky's eyes closed, and he swayed on his hands and knees like a weakened animal. This was the way it always happened—running into something you couldn't handle. One man after another—getting it. First Whitey—then Walinchus—now the cap'n.

And all for a messy little embankment that wasn't worth lifting a finger for. A lot of Germans behind that embankment, holding it at all costs. A lot of Americans trying to take it. Why? Who cared?

The sergeant's eyes opened and he laughed harshly. What was he crouching down in this wet hole for? He didn't have to stay here. He'd go and find Whitey, that's what he'd do.

Calmly he grasped his rifle and straightened up. With abstracted intentness he lifted himself out of the shell hole and looked ahead. He'd crawl behind the embankment and walk around behind the woods over to the right. Then he'd yell: "Whitey!"



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(Continued from page 17)

Not bothering to lift his rifle to the ready position, he walked forward. Vaguely he knew that he was alone, but it didn't seem important. He understood, too, that he'd gone a little mad, but that too seemed unimportant.

As he drew near the embankment, he became gradually aware that there were no dancing red spots in front of him. The air was light now. The mist was gone. And there were no red spots.

Yet there was firing. Most certainly there was firing from somewhere in front. He puzzled and continued to walk ahead. There was firing over in the woods, too, but directly in front there was none.

He reached the railroad embankment and started clambering up. On his hands and knees he crawled to the crest and looked to the right and left.

A few feet to the left was a Maxim gun. On each side of it, a bulky form clad in *feldgrau* was lying, face down. One of them was groaning. Slack-jawed in amazement, Pinky crawled to the nearest one and looked at him. He had a couple of bullet holes in the back, between the shoulder blades.

Farther to the left was another machine gun crew, dead. To the right, another. Part of the battalion must have got through the woods. Pinky's brows drew together in an effort to solve the mystery.

Then, for the first time, he looked ahead. The ground fell away sharply toward a group of ruined buildings. All the intervening space was clear of Germans.

But from Maricourt itself a long line of them was advancing—not this way, but toward the east—toward the high ground behind the woods! And from a certain spot on that high ground a steady drum of fire was coming!

Vague surmises, vague hopes began stirring in the sergeant's mind. A wave of exultation swept through him, clearing the cobwebs from his brain, giving him renewed life. Whatever was happening, it was good!

He leaped to his feet and yelled back toward "A" Company.

"Come on!" he screamed. "Come on!"

A few doubtful heads began poking above the ground. Leaping about like a dervish, Pinky beckoned them forward. In a moment they were rising hesitantly and gazing with something like awe at the figure of the sergeant.

Then, slowly, they began coming ahead. First in twos, then by platoons, cautiously expectant.

**PINKY'S** own company was the first to reach the embankment.

"Range five hundred yards," he bawled, and waved in the direction of Maricourt. No need to point out the target. It was easy enough to see that gray-coated wave going up the hill.

No sooner had the company got down to business than Pinky ran over to the left to meet the second battalion as it came up. He lo-

cated its commander, Major Emery. "Major!" he yelled, wild-eyed. "Maricourt's lousy with Germans. You can take 'em without losing a man!"

Incoherently, he poured out his story, pointing vehemently at the groups of Boche running out of the cluster of buildings toward the hill.

"Well, for—" the major exclaimed. "What—"

"They're all disorganized," Pinky urged. "In a minute they'll set up their fire this way. Right now they're bothered by somethin' up the hill! Get 'em now! 'A' Company's covering you!"

**WITHOUT** further delay, the major ordered his battalion forward. Pinky didn't wait to see them go. On his way back to the right side of the line, he induced "C" Company to start a platoon through the woods from this side, to help "K" Company.

That done, Pinky rejoined "A" Company and stood erect, scratching his head. From where he stood on the embankment, he was nearly as high as the crest of the hogback behind the woods. His eyes focused on the spot whence all the fire was pouring into Maricourt. Somebody up there had been playing hob with the German rear ever since the beginning of the attack. Some kind angel up there had knocked out the machine guns along this embankment.

"It's Whitey—or Walinchus—sure as you're born," he muttered in awe.

Then Pinky saw something else. From farther back on the high ground, a squad of pot-helmeted figures was running toward the spot from which the demoralizing fire was coming. Even as he watched, they dropped out of sight, and to their right another squad rose out of the ground and dashed forward. Pinky didn't know it, but those were the detachments being brought up by the escaped "guest" to wipe out Whitey's nest.

"First platoon!" Pinky yelled. "This way! Quick!"

Some twenty men ceased firing, and in a second Pinky was leading them down the railroad embankment and up the gradual slope toward the emplacement. It was a dangerous move. The woods were still being contested. Ma-

yor Emery hadn't yet reached the village.

Pinky looked at his watch. It was just six. The attack hadn't been under way more than a half hour! It seemed like an age.

"Where we goin', sergeant?" Bill Summers panted as they scrambled up the long slope.

"To relieve one of our patrols," Pinky explained grimly. "Walinchus—or Whitey. I don't know which."

At the top of the crest he had his men take cover while he searched the ground. There wasn't much time to waste. He had to get to a certain spot before the Germans did.

He counted the German squads advancing on the emplacement. Four—no, five—no, six of them! They were dashing forward alternately—a few yards at a time. No doubt more of them were crawling up. From the emplacement, Pinky could hear occasional single shots. He led his men forward swiftly as they could go on their hands and knees. He had to get as close as he could, so that when the Germans made their final rush he could beat them to it.

"Battle sight!" he hissed to his men. "And be ready to pop off!"

All of a sudden, the field behind the emplacement seemed to sprout German helmets.

"Fire!" Pinky barked.

And there, on their knees, the first platoon poured a volley across Whitey's emplacement into the advancing, gray-green men. Some of them dropped. Others, catching sight of Pinky's platoon for the first time, hesitated uncertainly. Still others rushed heedlessly toward the emplacement.

"Come on!" Pinky screamed, leaping to his feet and starting forward.

Mad with action, the first platoon charged. A potato masher burst ten yards in front of Pinky. The hot flame of it scorched his face. Heedlessly he ran through the smoke, dimly glimpsed a shell hole as he dashed past it, and found himself facing a short German with terror written on his face. Unable to halt in his charge, Pinky ran his bayonet into the man's stomach, bowed him over, withdrew his bayonet automatically, and staggered on. He fired at another figure, saw him stagger and sink to his knees, and then, red-eyed, he looked about him.

For a moment he could see nothing. Then, slowly, the battle mist cleared. Four or five Germans stood before him with hands half raised. Other groups were to his right. There was no more firing. The action was over. Trembling with the reaction, Pinky looked to the left. There, out of a hole, a familiar head popped.

It was Whitey. Helmet cocked to one side, and a cheerful grin on his freckled face.

"Hello, sarge," the pug-nosed corporal hailed cheerfully. "We been doin' a rushing business. We couldn't 'a' taken in another man."

# Headwork Counts

**HEADWORK** in football? Here's an instance of it.

You're standing on the side lines, watching Northwestern University prepare for her big game against Notre Dame. Northwestern is neglecting nothing in her preparation. In fact she even has Loyola University up—Loyola of Chicago—to take Notre Dame formation in scrimmage.

At the moment, Northwestern is on offense and Loyola is lined up in the Notre Dame defense formation. Northwestern is running plays at tackle—plays in which Baker, Northwestern's end, and Bruder, halfback, are co-operating to take out the Loyola tackle.

Bruder and Baker are having a good time of it. At the snap of the ball the Loyola tackle is charging in. Bruder and Baker are charging at the same instant. They get the Loyola man from both sides and carry him completely out of the play. It's easy! Simply charge at the snap of the ball, hit your man, and carry him out. What a surprise party they'll throw for the



Bruder was fooled!

Notre Dame tackle!

But just then a Loyola coach steps up. He motions the Loyola tackle out of the line and takes his place.

"Run that play again," he says. "I'll show you how the Notre Dame tackle works." Bruder and Baker lick their chops, and dig in to take out the Loyola coach. The ball is snapped. Like two arrows released from one bow Bruder and Baker lance out at the waiting form of the coach.

But the coach, sad to state, isn't there. He has stepped back a pace. Just far enough to fall

low the two Northwestern men to all on their faces at his feet. And that leaves the Loyola man free to step over their prostrate forms and stop the play. As Bruder and Baker rise, chagrined, to their feet, the coach grins.

"That's how Notre Dame does it," he says.

Aggressive charging isn't the whole secret of defensive line play. If you charge the same way every time, your opponent will get your number. Sometimes headwork helps.

Pinky breathed deeply and passed a sleeve over his face.

"Been runnin' a ho-tel here," Whitey elaborated cheerfully. "Free room 'an' no board. Got a full house."

Pinky stepped to the edge of the shell hole and looked down at the five bound and gagged Germans lying side by side. His eyes widened in amazement.

"A little crowded for bed space," Whitey apologized, "but it's time for 'em to get up anyhow."

He ordered Potts to unbind the prisoners. Pinky's eyes roved to the heavy Maxim pointed at Maricourt and the light gun aimed at the embankment. Empty belts of ammunition were strewn over the side of the shell hole.

"We didn't get them guns workin' till daylight," Whitey said. "Boy, you should 'a' seen what was happenin' back here about five-thirty! The minute the barrage was over, a whole regiment of Dutch poured out of Maricourt. A couple of officers dressed 'em all up, pretty as a parade. Got 'em all ready to start for the railroad embankment, when I pressed this gadget here. Dufresne, here, started sprayin' the embankment at the same time. We never did get onto the range settin', or nothin', so we just peppered the landscape impartial. Tried not to miss any of it. Even knocked out one minenwerfer squad in the courtyard down there."

Pinky listened open-mouthed. That was why the firing from the embankment had ceased! That was why Pinky had been able to walk up to it—and live!

"After a while they got wise to where their trouble was comin' from and organized a few parties to visit us. A departed guest had already told some more what a swell place we had here. Business was great till you come along and ruined it."

The sergeant looked about him. Firing had ceased back in the woods and at that moment a platoon from "K" Company came out from the trees and stopped to look at Pinky's platoon. Down in Maricourt the first battalion under Major Emery was rounding up prisoners. There was no firing within miles. Down on the embankment, men were sitting, opening boxes of hardtack. Pinky put a squad of men to work giving first aid, and organized the surviving Germans into a carrying party for the wounded. Just one man in the first platoon had been hurt in this last rush.

FROM the woods, a few men from the "K" Company platoon were striding toward them. Toiling up the slope from Maricourt two officers were approaching.

The "K" Company men arrived first. "Sergeant Greene?" one of them inquired.

"Here," said Pinky.

"We come across one of your wounded men in the woods—Corporal Walinchus. He was keepin' company in a machine gun nest with a couple of dead Germans. Looked about gone himself. Kept ravin' that he had to report to you. Out of his head, I guess."

Pinky choked. "About gone, is he?" "Yeh—all messed up."

The two officers appeared at the top of the hill. One of them was the Old Man himself—the colonel. The other

was a third battalion captain. The colonel looked very trim in his serge and shined boots.

"Where's the man who cleaned out the German machine guns on the embankment and prevented the counter-attack developing from Maricourt?" he asked, very briskly, and slightly out of breath.

"Corporal White, sir," Pinky answered. "With Privates Potts and Dufresne."

The colonel peered from beneath gray eyebrows at the dirty figures of Whitey and the two privates at the bottom of the shell hole.

"I want to say that that was one of the finest pieces of initiative I've ever seen in my life," he stated. "Who's your captain?"

"Anderson, 'A' Company, sir." "Where is he?"

Pinky spoke up. "Dead," he said briefly.

Silence fell upon the group. Finally the colonel cleared his throat. He turned to Pinky.

"Were you the man who first advanced to the embankment?" he asked. "And signaled the battalion to advance?"

"Yes, sir," Pinky said indifferently.

"Take their names, Warren," the colonel went on. "I'm going to recommend them for D. S. C.'s."

A feeling of weariness fell upon the sergeant. He thought of Walinchus, pouring out his life in a machine gun nest. Of Captain Anderson, tall and raw-boned and kindly, curled in a muddy shell hole, dead. A gust of unreasoning anger swept over him at the ease with which they handed

out medals and called it quits. He was thankful when the officers had gone. Weak-kneed, he collapsed clumsily beside Whitey and dropped his head in his hands. Whitey's arm went around his shoulder.

"Whaddya say, boy?" he asked. Pinky looked up and smiled faintly.

"Back in Les Isles," he said, "you told me you'd crack if you had to go up again. But it was me that cracked. When Cap'n Anderson was killed, I got up and walked straight to the embankment. If you and Dufresne hadn't cleaned it, I'd have been riddled."

Whitey grinned. "Now I'll tell you somethin'," he said. "When the Germans made that last charge we were all out of ammunition. Fired our last shot. If you'd come a minute later, we'd 'a' been dead heroes. So we're quits."

"In that case," Pinky said, "you can't expect me to run errands for you." He fished out Whitey's packet and handed it to him. "You can go back to Allentown yourself," he finished, "an' tell 'em how you won the war."

"An' you can go to Philly," Whitey said, fishing for Pinky's pocketbook, "an' tell 'em how you helped me do it."

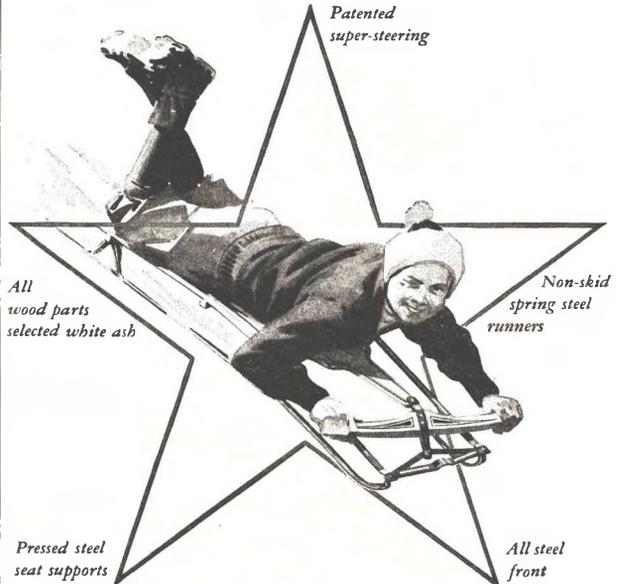
The air was uncommonly still. Somehow, the war seemed to have receded far into the background. They knew they would be relieved that night and by morning they'd be out of range even of long-range guns. There'd be coffee, and hot stew, and a shelter when they slept. The two non-coms looked at each other soberly, too full of gratitude to speak—or even to smile.

This is the last of the Sergeant Pinky series.—THE EDITORS.

## In the Okefinokee Swamp

Samuel Scoville, Jr. learned first-hand the ways of cottonmouths and rattlers. Next month, he tells you about his sinister acquaintances—

"THE POISON PEOPLE"



# Flexible Flyer

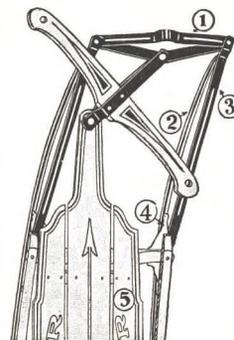
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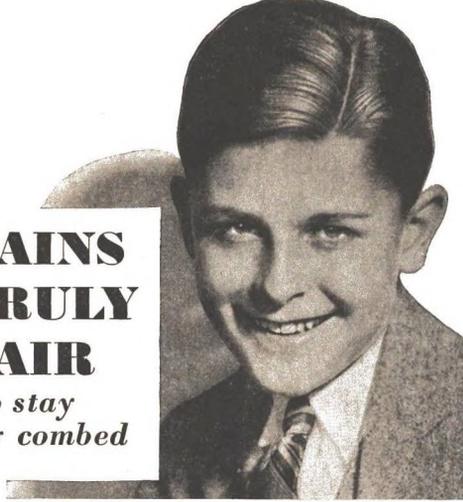
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A large bottle of Glostora costs but a trifle at any drug store.

# Storm Warning: Double-Flagged

(Continued from page 25)

the ridge, winding Carney in a labyrinth of night. Jimmie saw the man lunge blindly, topple from the bank. His figure vanished in the green ooze of the swamp. Jimmie saw Carney's head sink below sight. Carney was done. . . .

Ziggie gunned the ship and climbed. The smoke tank had emptied. He turned his head again and nodded. But with the movement, something like the fist of an angry giant flailed the ship. Her wings flipped up, she stalled, hung shivering in the air—then dived for the ridge below.

"The storm!" Jimmie cried, but his voice was lost in the roar of the motor and the shriek of the gale.

He felt wind cutting past his temples like a knife—felt a terrific driving shock. . . . The world went spinning from him, and dimly came the rending crash of metal. Jimmie felt himself hurtling out of the ship.

THE shriek of the hurricane roused Jimmie Rhodes, and he found himself lying on the shell ridge, bruised and dizzy. He sprang up, but the gale flung him down.

An eerie twilight hid the marsh. The sky was ugly saffron, the wind boomed like siege guns, laying the canebrake flat. Lightning split down, and wiped away the darkness. And as the reverberating thunder crashed, Jimmie saw that Zig's ship was lying near the bomber, half buried in the ooze. He saw George, sunk to his armpits, by her. George was carrying someone—Zig.

Jimmie rose again. Staggering, head down, he battled on along the ridge. He reached the bank below which Zig's ship lay. Between him and George Chandler stretched a span of not a dozen yards. But as he stared at that sinister quaking ooze, Jimmie felt that he had lost. The two men were slowly sinking deeper. They would go as Carney had gone—George and Zig.

The wind's scream momentarily stopped, and in the sudden stillness George's voice came:

"Look, Jimmie—Walt's ship! The wind's turned it. Walt's hurt—but you can fly her off—when the next gust dies. I thought I'd get Zig"—he checked—"but the marsh played us a trick. Can't get out." Then he added, with fierce despair: "Hurry—take your chance—before it's gone!"

"Nothing doing, George," Jimmie called. "I'll get you!"

But how? To venture out into that ooze would mean just another life lost. Roll a ship into the ooze? No chance—not time enough. Frantically, desperately he racked his brain.

Suddenly a light flamed in his eyes. He wheeled and ran back to the bomber. She was rocking, lifting in the gale. But her blunt nose now pointed straight along the ridge, away from George's ship. In the pilot's seat lay Walt sagged against his belt.

Jimmie drew out two coils of rope, kinked, twisted by the rain. The riatas Walt was taking to his father.

Once more Jimmie sped back, spreading the riata as he ran. He made a clumsy loop, tossed it. It fell short. Once more he threw—and this time George caught it.

Jimmie dug his heels into the shell ridge. A wrenching pull—another. Every ounce behind that pull. . . . The rope began to pay in.

Faster. Then, at last, George was beside him on the ridge, shouting through the mad fury of the wind:

"Safe—Jimmie—safe!"

But his right arm hung limp, blood trailing from the sleeve. Jimmie reached out, lifted the unconscious Ziggie to a shoulder carry, and stumbled to Walt's bomber. As he swung Zig to the gunner's seat, Walt's eyes opened. Through

the howl his words came, faintly: "What—it was Carney—he pulled a gun on me—"

A grim smile touched Jimmie's lips. Then he was around the wing, spinning the prop cranks, while George, white-faced, set the switches in the pilot's cockpit and helped Walt out of the seat. Thank goodness bombers were roomy crates. Three disabled pilots stowed in it—and Jimmie was rusty on bombers!

A quick battering gust swung the bomber as Jimmie climbed the wing plate. George had crawled forward to the nose. With steady hand Jimmie Rhodes fed throttle, and waited.

The gale screamed, died, screamed again. Once more the wind's clamor faded. At that instant Jimmie gunned, and the ship leaped down the ridge.

Rising sturdily, she met the charge of the air currents. Suddenly she plunged into a whirlpool of sky that tossed her like a dead leaf spinning down a forest path. She vanished in the yellow clouds. But crouching low above her wheel, Jimmie battled on, grimly satisfied that Walt couldn't do much better.

Time fled by unheeded. The storm fought for her prey, howled, and returned again to new assaults. Steady-eyed, Jimmie fought back.

Then, at last, the lowlands of Galveston Island marked the battle's end. The gale drew off with sullen mutterings of distant thunder, and Jimmie Rhodes planned for the landing field.

IT was May, with a bright blue sky above Selfridge Field. On the green grass before Operations office stood a line of soldiers, arms at port. The band of the 94th played a march tune—the Air Corps march. The music ended in a rattle of snare drums and a blare of brass. A group of officers stood in gray before the ranks. One, gray-haired, keen of face, wearing two stars on his shoulder strap, moved forward. "Lieutenant Rhodes," he said.

Jimmie Rhodes approached and saluted. He was sober, ill at ease. The Chief of the Air Corps pinned a medal on his tunic. But Jimmie heard only fragments of the speech:

"—valor . . . remained to bring your comrades out when each moment meant increased chance of death. . . . The Air Corps honors you . . . Cheney Award."

The words ended and Jimmie Rhodes was in the crowd, shaking hands with officers, making incoherent answers.

Then he was in his room at quarters. He sat down alone, and laid the Cheney medal on the table.

Thoughts came. He wished George and Zig and Walt could have been here to-day with him. They deserved this more than he.

A knock at the door. He rose. It was Cowboy McClellan, who glanced at Jimmie briefly.

"Beg pardon. Package for you." The door closed and he was gone.

Jimmie tore the wrappings from the package. A little box. He lifted the cover. Inside lay a watch—an aviator's wrist watch. It was platinum, with a four-numeral face, and a link wrist chain. Jimmie turned it over in his hand. There was lettering on the reverse. He read it slowly:

"From the old gang Zig—George—Walt."

And under this, the one word: "Maider."

For a long time Jimmie looked down at the watch, until the letters blurred. He laid it on the table with the medal, and gazed at both. And at last he spoke.

"A May day I won't forget," said Jimmie Rhodes.

This is the last of Mr. Litten's Air Corps stories.

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## A One-Man Posse

(Continued from page 10)

stirring around as soon as the gray of morning began sifting in. His lengths of rope were lying ready, each one tied in a slip-knot that when drawn tight would be impossible to loosen. It was a clever knot, and Chuck had spent days while working in the roundhouse in perfecting it.

At last, Chuck saw a narrow strip of gray sky appear over the eastern rim of the mountains. It was time for him to act. He tried to calm his beating heart, but it thumped so hard he could scarcely breathe.

Stooping, he picked up one of the small guns. Pointing the muzzle straight overhead, he pulled the trigger four times. The repeated roar shattered the quiet of the early morning, and Chuck heard feet plump to the floor inside the cabin, and the startled voices of rudely awakened men. He also heard them cautiously feeling over the table for their guns.

"Got your machine gun trained on this shack, ain't you, Bill?" asked Chuck in his deepest voice, speaking to an imaginary aide. "Then if any one of 'em tries to make a move to get away, riddle the walls with bullets!"

AFTER that he addressed himself directly to those inside of the cabin.

"You men are all under arrest. One of you at a time back up to the door and shove your two hands out, keeping them behind you. Understand?"

A surly grunt of assent came out to him.

"All right. First man! And don't try any monkeyshines unless you want your retreat riddled with machine-gun bullets. Poke your hands out!" He opened the door a tiny crack, just enough to allow a man's hands, and arms to be shoved through. He had his first looped rope ready to be slipped on and drawn up tight.

A pair of ham-like paws, followed by two hairy arms, was slowly and reluctantly shoved out. In a second, Chuck had slipped the rope over them and drawn it up tight.

He pulled this man out beside him. Then he picked up his second looped rope.

"Next man," he barked—and called toward the shadowy timber. "Keep that machine gun coverin' 'em, Bill!"

Another pair of hands was shoved out and he secured them. In a short time all five of the bandits were mustered in a small evil-faced group before him. Chuck called back toward the timber again.

"Keep 'em covered, Bill. I'm going into the cabin to get the mail sacks."

He had to take that chance, because he was afraid that if he left the plunder, the missing bandit might return and carry it away. He dived into the cabin, and soon reappeared, dragging the first of the sacks after him. A hasty look assured him that the bandits were still standing together, glancing off apprehensively into the timber, where the imaginary Bill with the machine gun was stationed.

In a few seconds, the second mail sack was alongside of the first.

"Back up here to me," commanded Chuck, addressing the largest of the five men with a flourish of his revolver. The big man backed toward him. Chuck hurriedly fashioned a sling, in which he fastened one of the mail sacks. The second one was disposed of in the same manner.

By this time it had grown quite light. Suddenly one of the bandits, who had been peering persistently into the fringe of timber that surrounded the cabin, gave a snort.

"By gosh, fellers," he ejaculated, "I believe he's alone!"

"That's all right, too," barked Chuck,

now master of the situation, "and the first man who tries to make a sneak will get plugged by this gun. I mean business. Face the dawn, and march!"

SOME two hours later, a group of five men, two of them bearing heavy sacks of mail slung on their backs, came painfully down through the slide rock at the side of the cut, and were headed by a grim-faced young fellow down the track toward a certain yellow refrigerator car that was sitting on a short spur track.

As they passed the side of the car, Chuck noted that the double doors were closed and locked in place. He herded his prisoners around to the other side. The doors there were open.

"In with you!" Chuck commanded.

He had to help the two men carrying the sacks, but the rest managed to scramble in. As the last of them disappeared inside, Chuck slammed the doors shut, and locked them. He felt a great wave of exultation sweeping over him. His prisoners were as safe as if they were behind the bars of a jail.

"Let's go!" he urged himself with a joyful grin. "It's time to eat—I'm three meals behind."

He hurried down to the switch, unlocked it with his switch key, and threw the rails over for the spur. Then he returned to the car. With a stout piece of wood, which would serve as a brake club, he clambered to the roof. With the letting off of a hand brake, the empty car started gently down the three per cent grade. Out on the main line, Chuck stopped the car, and clambered to the ground where he threw the switch back for the main line.

From there to the town at the foot of Solar Summit, the country was open, rolling adobe hills. Chuck was sure no train was coming, because any smoke made in that clear atmosphere could be seen for a long way. He dashed back up the side of the refrigerator car, let off the brake, and with dancing eyes, began to sing his song of the day before:

"Oh, young Lochinvar he came a-riding from the west,

On the whole O. S. Railroad, his bulgine was the best.

He shoveled lots of coal in her, and listened to her barks,

And he watched the smoke come rolling out, with gobs of red-hot sparks."

Then as the car gained momentum, he laughed gaily, and shouted to the breezes on the hills he flashed by:

"Look out, wind, here comes the train robbers' special! Clear the track for Police Patrol A. R. T. Number 12397!"—reading the number on the end of the car below him.

After turning the five men and their loot over to the town marshal and helping him place them safely in the jail, Chuck hurried down to the station. He had the operator send a message to the dispatcher, to be immediately telephoned to his father, roundhouse foreman at Sage.

*Safe but hungry. Coming in on first train east. Am at West Water with Police Patrol A. R. T. Number 12397 and five train robbers. How is Engineer Davis? Chuck.*

He waited impatiently until his father's reply came singing in over the wires.

*Square Jaw Davis was bad off but got out of bed as soon as heard you had turned up and is on way down here now. Think he will live. Are you O. K.? Your Dad.*

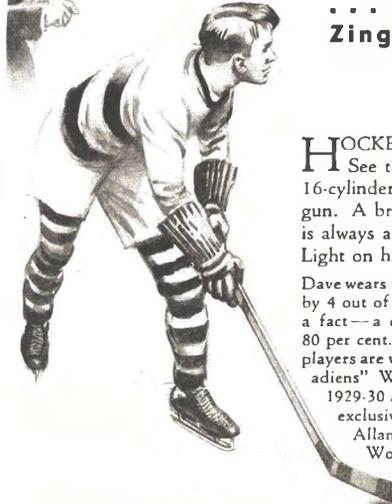
Grinning happily, Chuck scrawled the answer.

*Ain't now, but will be soon. Going to take a one-man posse out for a big feed. Signing off for same. Chuck.*



# Shoot!

See that bozo flash  
along the boards!  
... SHOOT! ...  
Zing! A goal!



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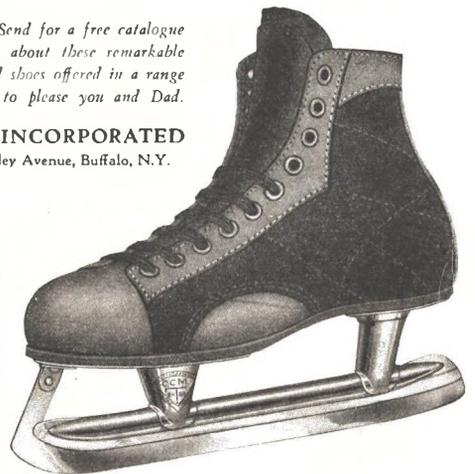
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**One-way Orders**

Johnny was sent to the store with instructions to hurry back. A long time later he came in panting and puffing as if he had been running. His mother was, of course, very angry.

"Johnny," she questioned, "what took you so long? I told you to hurry back."

"I did hurry back," said Johnny. "I ran all the way. But you didn't tell me to hurry both ways."

**O Brave Aunt Dora**



Aunt Dora was taking her first trip on a train. When the conductor came through the car, calling for tickets, Auntie readily gave up hers. A few minutes later the peanut butcher came down the aisle.

"Chewing gum," he shouted.

"Never!" cried Aunt Dora courageously. "You can take my ticket but not my gum!"

**Not So Funny!**

City Chap: "That cow over there—why hasn't she any horns?"

Farm Chap: "Well, it's this way. Some cows are born without horns and never grow any; some shed theirs; some we dehorn; and some breeds aren't supposed to have horns at all. There are lots of reasons why some cows don't have horns, but the main reason why that cow over yonder hasn't got horns is that she's not a cow—she's a mule."

**Girl and Cow**

The gum-chewing girl  
 And the cud-chewing cow  
 Are somewhat alike  
 Yet different, somehow.

But how can that be?  
 Oh, yes, I see now—  
 It's the calm, thoughtful look  
 On the face of the cow.

**Time-tested Integrity**

To the tramp who wanted to earn a bite to eat the housewife said, "If I thought you were honest I would let you go to the chicken house and gather the eggs."

"Lady," he replied with dignity, "I was a manager of a bath house for ten years and never took a bath."

**Put Him Away, Too!**

Bill: "Who was the last man to box John L. Sullivan?"

Sill: "The undertaker."

**Delightfully Shocking**

Passer-by: "What would your mother say if she heard you using such language!"

Small Male Imp: "Mister, she'd be tickled to death!"

Passer-by: "Gracious, how can you say such a bare-faced lie!"

S. M. I.: "That's no lie. She's stone deaf."

**No Need to Worry**



Bather (to old Negro sitting on bank): "Sam, there are no sharks here, are there?"

Sam: "No, suh."

Bather: "Are you sure?"

Sam: "Yes, suh. De alligators done chased dem all away."

**Count Him In**

Artist: "A thousand wouldn't buy this picture!"

Onlooker: "Well, I'm one of the thousand."

**Unequal Justice**

It was the first day of school and two seventh graders kept whispering to each other. Goaded beyond endurance, the teacher announced that both boys must stay after school and write their names 600 times.

To her surprise one wrongdoer almost smiled, but the other's lip trembled and his eyes shone with tears. Suddenly, through clenched teeth, he blurted:

"I won't. It ain't fair."

"You must learn to take your punishment like a man," said the teacher coldly. "Look across the aisle and stop whispering. For that and for your bad grammar, you shall write your name 1,000 times. What is fair for one is fair for both."

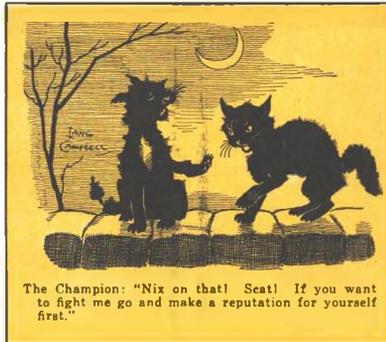
At this the rebel burst into tears.

"I don't care, it ain't fair," he sobbed. "My name's Benekendorffer and his name's Lee."

**It's a Small World**

"Haven't I seen you somewhere some time?"

"Quite likely. I've been there."



The Champion: "Nix on that! Seat! If you want to fight me go and make a reputation for yourself first."

**Almost Practically Certain!**

"Gus," said Bill, as he caught up with his tent-mate on the way back to camp, "are all the rest of the boys out of the woods yet?"

"Yes," said Gus.

"All six of them?"

"Yes, all six of them."

"And they're all safe?"

"Yes," answered Gus, "they're all safe."

"Then," said Bill, his chest swelling, "come on back. I've shot a deer."

**Informative, What?**

The night was dark. The lights of the tourist's car would not reach the top of the signpost, and the tourist was undoubtedly lost. Spurred by necessity, he climbed the post, struck a match. The sign read, "Wet Paint."

**A Born Leader**

A little boy, in church, tired of the long kneeling during a prayer, decided he could stand it no longer. Finally he leaped to his feet and shouted, "Last one up's a nigger baby!" His mother was not the last one up.

**Oh, Psquaw!**

Teacher: "Can anyone in the class tell me why an Indian wears feathers in his hair?"

Bright Pupil: "Yes'm. To keep his wig-wam."

**Good for Man and Beast**

A bored city slicker named Pratt Once stepped near a bored mule to chat. When he woke up in bed A day later, he said: "Well, we both got a kick out of that!"

**The Record Holder**

Employer (to new office boy): "You're the slowest youngster we've ever had here. Aren't you quick at anything?"

New Office Boy: "Well, I get tired quicker'n anybody elae."

**Stoocomplicated**

"Wathchagotna packidge?"

"Sabook."

"Wassanaimuvitt?"

"Sadickshunery, fullonaines. Gonna get-palcedog angottagetainferim."

**They Knew What They Meant**

At a political gathering in England, an orator, waxing indignant, said: "To ridicule the idea of this country being invaded is to follow the example of the camel, which buries its head in the sand when an enemy approaches."

The rival speaker arose and retorted: "Surely the gentleman, in giving utterance to this apothegm, must have meant to refer to the ostrich, which in those circumstances has a habit of putting its eye through a small needle."

**Safe!**

Restaurant Proprietor (beligerently): "Listen, Mister, when you eat here you don't need to wipe off the plate, see?"

Mid-mannered Gentleman: "I beg your pardon. Force of habit, you know. I'm a baseball umpire."

Did She Mean Senseless?

She: "Why, I can't marry you. You're practically penniless."

He: "That's nothing. The Czar of Russia was Nicholas."

**Costs More—Worth It!**

A kindly old gentleman met a little girl with golden curls out walking in the park with her mother.

"What a lovely little girl," he exclaimed. "I will give you a nickel for a kiss."

"No, thank you," replied the little miss scornfully. "Why, I get a dime for taking castor oil."

**Quick Action**



Youth: "I sent you some suggestions telling how to make your paper more interesting. Did you carry out my ideas?"

Editor: "Did you meet the office boy with the waste-paper basket as you came upstairs?"

Youth: "Why, yes I did."

Editor: "Well, he was carrying out your ideas."

**A Draw So Far**

"Where are you going, Jackie? Are you on your way to school, or are you going fishing?"

"I dunno yet. I'm just fighting it out with my conscience."

**Limited Influence**

He: "Does the moon affect the tide?"

She: "No, only the untied."

asked questions. Ted was referred to Alan. And when Alan asked questions, the professor put him off with, "Some other time when I can mine mind upon it put."

But none suggested turning round.

FROM a point the red planet became a circle, a fifty-cent piece, a saucer, a cart wheel. No longer did they sleep in regular watches. They ate only when hunger drove them to it. Three pairs of eyes watched constantly from the top ports, calculating, imagining. Even Ted, practical and unimpressible, felt that the *Wanderer* was tense with a sense of something impending; of hidden threats on that red surface. For they were drawing closer—closer—

At last, just when Alan's electric feeling of fear became unendurable, the professor snapped him out of it with one announcement. Reclining in the air at the port, and measuring with a sextant the diameter of the planet toward which they sped at the pace of the planet itself, he ordered:

"Alan, move the lever to zero! We are close enough to decelerate. No—" as Alan dived for the lever, hooking his hand in the quadrant to get a purchase—"get on the floor and hold on. Ted, too. I'm going to turn the sphere. When I do, move the lever back again. We'll begin to decelerate, and then we will weigh more than normal, instead of less!"

The next few hours were swift with portent. After a month of weightlessness, they felt sluggish. Having exerted little muscular energy for weeks, even a small bit of exertion now brought weariness. As they observed it through the bottom porthole, Mars filled the horizon. It was no longer a globe but a red surface with bluish-gray markings. Most of the surface was crossed with darker lines.

"Giant railroad tracks?" asked Ted. "Schiaparelli's canals!" explained the professor. His assistants smiled at his first normal word of explanation in days.

Deceleration was completed more than a hundred miles from the surface. Very gently and slowly, the professor let the sphere float down to within a mile of the surface. He climbed to the pilot house, bidding them follow. There he turned to a valve at the end of the small tube leading to outer space. Then he turned to them, and on his face was the expression of a man facing his greatest crisis.

"If the air comes in, our pressure—it is seventeen inches on the barometer—is lower than Mars. If air whistles out, it may show too low a barometer there for us to live without rubber suits and helmets—"

Grimly, Alan and Ted waited. The professor turned the valve. Apparently nothing happened. The professor put his face to the end of the tube.

"Air!" he cried. "Cold but not too cold! It comes in slowly! We can open the hatch!"

Alan felt like shouting. Ted's face broke into a grin.

"Open the hatch," the professor repeated, "but at the first feeling of faintness close it. That will mean insufficient oxygen."

For a moment, the three breathed carefully before the open hatch, waiting for the first indication of reeling senses. Nothing happened. In the cold air a faint odor was perceptible.

"Smells like seaweed!" guessed Ted.

As the sphere slowly descended, they looked through the open hatchway at a world fair in the sunlight, faint red here, gray-blush elsewhere—the colors rapidly taking on the appearance of vegetation. Of habitation, of moving objects, there wasn't a trace. Yet Mars didn't give the impression of a dead world; rather it seemed to be a quiet spot, a countryside. Apparently there were no high hills or mountains on this part of Mars.

Down, slowly down they floated.

Alan's mind was busy with the wonder of the moment. They were farther from all they called home than any man had ever been before, facing such an unknown as no explorer had ever faced

Ted nudged him. "First hundred years are the hardest," he grinned. "Do you feel kind of funny?" Alan asked.

"Kind of—but I can't think of any jokes," Ted replied.

They floated down. The vegetation resolved itself into treelike ferns or fernlike trees—some reddish, some blue-gray. Between the fernlike trees, a rank kind of grass.

The last slow hundred feet seemed interminable. Then came a slight jar,

asked Ted, looking about him. "Can't these Martians realize that this is a red-letter day? Think of the money a good chamber of commerce could make —"

He paused. From somewhere in the distance came a muffled sound, like the beat of a tom-tom.

"Over there!" Alan whispered. "That grove of ferns!"

Ted climbed back into the sphere to return with three automatics. The professor protested.

"We come not for war—" he began.

"Brawn is better than brain, and bullets than brawn, in a scrap!" Ted said, passing out the guns.

"I think it's unnecessary," answered Alan, but he took the gun.

The unknown sound from an un-

"But where is the pilot—the engineer? Look at them digging and hauling dirt! There's no place for a man inside those domes! They're nothing but frames and pistons and struts and—"

They watched the queer structures at work. Clawlike hands lifted scoops of the substance of Mars, pouring it into boxlike containers. Other machines picked up the boxes, carried them to the far bank of the cleft on the edge of which they stood—could it be a canal?—and dumped them. As far as the eye could reach labored an army of machines, apparently without direction.

"Martians must be little enough to be in those domes!" cried Ted. "They are—look—at that!"

A speck in the far distance approached at incredible speed. It looked to Alan like a huge ostrich. It ran as an ostrich runs on legs forty feet high. It had neither neck nor head—a mere egg-shaped bulb of metal, shining in the sunlight, supported by enormous stiltlike legs. At a speed of at least five miles a minute the mechanism flashed up the cut canal to stop not fifty feet from them. Three horrified faces saw in a sort of cockpit a *something* that might be a magnified ant, a man in a diving suit, or a gigantic cockroach! A six-foot being, looking down at them from a cockpit 40 feet in the air!

"There's your wasp!" cried Ted, gasping.

AT HIS voice the horror in the mechanical ostrich gave a raucous cry. It must have been a command, for down in the canal fifty machines stopped digging and began to move toward the side of the cleft. The watchers expected them to stop at the bank, but the buglike machines ran up its side as easily as if it were level. With one accord the three turned and ran.

But not soon enough! A clinking, clanking sound, growing momentarily louder, told them that the machines of Mars ran faster than a man. Fifty yards from the sphere a pair of huge pincerlike jaws caught Alan about the wrist. Another pair tripped Ted and flung him to the dust. A third grasped the professor about the waist.

With incredible dexterity the machines shifted the grasp of their mechanical hands, set the captives on their feet, and held them. Even in that moment of panic, Alan noted the heavy serrated jaws that clasped his wrist did not hurt him. Obviously their power was sufficient to squeeze his arm into pieces. But the machines only held them motionless, uninjured.

The great machine-ostrich stalked up and the antlike rider, as large as a man, climbed to the edge of his cockpit and uttered another curious cry. An enormous strut protruded from one of the near-by machines and swung up to the Martian. Standing in the jaws of this strut, the being had himself lowered gently to the ground in front of the three men. They looked into motionless unblinking eyes like the lights in a diving suit—eyes devoid of any feeling or humanity, but obviously intelligent.

A long and snakelike antenna extended from the center of this Martian beast, bug, or man. Three fingerlike claws protruded from its end. Curling gracefully through the air, the fingers fastened upon Alan's free hand—velvet-like and gently, but with a coldness of touch that made him quiver and jerk his hand away. The strange being uttered a sound. Pincerlike claws of the strange machines captured both of Alan's arms and held him motionless.

The buglike face with the great motionless eyes approached his own. With a sick horror Alan saw a slit that might have been a mouth and a beak-like jaw that reminded him of a parrot—

"Ted—Ted!" he cried despairingly. "Save me! He's going to—"

(To be continued in the December number of *The American Boy*.)

## Block the Passer

IN football don't ever assume that you're out of play. There's usually a job for you to do, if you can only see it.

For instance, suppose you're a tackle. The other team has the ball. It's third down and six to go, and you're certain the other team is going to try a pass.

Your job is to rush the passer, and at the snap of the ball you knife through and go for your man. Suppose, however, that he gets rid of the ball just as you reach him. You assume, immediately, that your job is done. You were supposed to rush the passer, but since he got off the pass, there's nothing more for you to do.

That's wrong. The thing for you to do is to throw your hip into the passer and block him out. Why? Because one of your teammates may intercept the pass and in that case you don't want any potential tacklers left on their feet.

Exactly that situation occurred

in the Princeton-Navy game of 1929. Princeton threw the pass and the Navy tackle took out the tosser. The Navy center intercepted the pass and came straight through the middle of the line—right over the territory occupied by the Princeton pass tosser. If the Navy tackle hadn't taken the tosser out the runner would have been tackled. As it was he galloped down the field unhindered.

There's always a job to do if you can see it. And it doesn't

take superhuman headwork to find it. Ordinary common sense, you'll find, will win a lot of football games for you.

the coils ceased to hum, and the sphere sagged, settling under its weight.

They had arrived!

Three men stared through a square hatch at an unnatural world. They saw great ferns growing seventy feet high. A gentle cool breeze stirred the fronds from which, apparently, came the odor of seaweed. Dropping through the hatchway, Alan picked up some dirt, apparently similar to that of the terrestrial sphere.

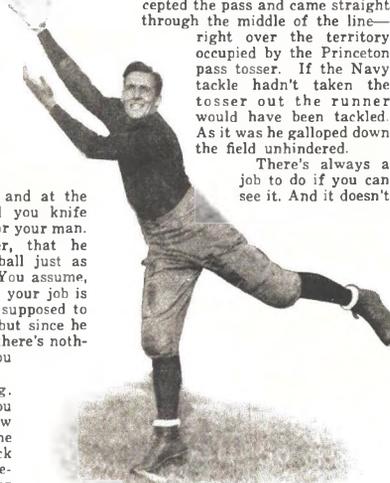
Ted and the professor climbed down to stand beside him. For a moment they were motionless, unbelieving. Then, all at once, it struck each one of them that they had accomplished their mission. They had arrived. The air was good. There was vegetation. They could walk about. They were alive!

Ted and Alan laughed aloud—a bit hysterically—and did a dance. Even the professor smiled.

"Columbus," said Ted, "was a piker. He paddled across a bathtub full of water back there on a little ball so small we can't even see it."

"At least," said Alan, "we didn't get seasick!"

"Where's the welcoming committee?"



# Stamps in the Day's News

By Kent B. Stiles

## Washington's Heads

**A**NNOUNCEMENT has been made of the portraits selected as designs of the series with which United States stamps will next year commemorate the birth of George Washington on February 22, 1732. They are:

- 1: a 1785 bust (now at Mount Vernon) by Jean Antoine Houdon, French sculptor.
- 1½c: Peale's 1772 likeness now in the Lee Memorial Chapel at Washington and Lee University.
- 2c: a 1796 portrait (now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts) by Gilbert Stuart, American artist.
- 3c: Peale's 1777 Valley Forge canvas now at the West Chester (Pa.) Normal School.
- 4c: Peale's 1777 portrait presented to Jonathan Swift and now owned by Swift's grandson, William Patton, Rhinebeck, N. Y.
- 5c: Peale's 1795 portrait owned by the New York Historical Society.
- 6c: 1792 portrait (now at Yale University) by John Trumbull, an American artist who served under Washington as an aide-de-camp.
- 7c: Trumbull's 1780 canvas, which is also in the Metropolitan Museum.
- 8c: crayon physiognotrace (portrait done in exact measurements) by Charles B.J.F. Saint Memin in 1798 (now owned by J. C. Brevort, Brooklyn).
- 9c: adapted from W. Williams' 1794 portrait painted for the Masonic Lodge, Alexandria, Va., and now owned by the lodge.
- 10c: Stuart's 1795 likeness, another canvas in the Metropolitan galleries.

This series, and the stamped envelopes with a view of Mount Vernon as the design, will be released on Jan. 1.

## Latakia and Morvi

**H**ERE are names new to philatelic nomenclature. Latakia is the title officially adopted to displace Alaoutia, with which collectors are familiar. Morvi is an Indian state which has never before had its own stamps. A little history and geography:

Before the World War, the empire which was Turkey included Syria. French forces occupied this territory, and at San Remo in 1920 the Supreme Council of the Allies allotted Syria to France under a mandate. From Syria have been carved a number of states—Syria (comprising the divisions of Damascus and Aleppo); Alawiya, otherwise Alaouites, now Latakia; Great Lebanon, or Grand Liban, which is philately's Lebanon; and Djebel Druze. All have had postal paper except Djebel Druze, and stamps are expected there shortly. Meanwhile the first Latakian adhesives are Syrian pictorials overprinted *Lattaque*, the native name, in both French and Arabic.

Morvi lies within the Western India States Agency in Bombay and has an area of 822 square miles. Its chief is Thakur sahib, and his portrait is

design of this native state's initial series—3 pies red, ½ anna blue, 1a red-brown and 2a chestnut.

## DO-X

**G**ERMANY'S great passenger airship DO-X carried out its adventurous journey across the Atlantic to South America and northward to Surinam, Cuba and New York. Of the countries which the craft touched, only Surinam issued special stamps, and these came as a complete surprise to philately. Surinam's 10, 15, 20, 40 and 60 cents and 1 and 1½ gulden of the current air adhesives were overprinted *P lucht DO-X 1931* in three lines. *P lucht* signifies *Post lucht*, or "air post."

## Other Newcomers

**A**NOTHER of the recent South American revolutions has brought new postal paper. This time it is Honduras. The rebels invaded many of the post offices and confiscated unused stamps. The government thereupon overprinted T. S. Patton, Rhinebeck, N. Y. and declared the stamps not so overprinted to be no longer valid for postage. The regular air paper were thus treated. The inscription signifies *Tribunal Superior de Cuentos* (Superior Tribunal of Accounts).

Abyssinia has begun a series of pictorials. Emperor Haile Selassie, or Ras Tafari, in robe and jeweled turban, is shown on the ½ and ¾ guercue values, and the Pont d'Aouache, a bridge, on the ¼g.

Albania recently inaugurated air mail service between Tiran, its capital, and Rome, and commemoratives commemorating the current air stamps overprinted *Tirane-Rome* and the date of the first flight.

Canada having raised its postal rates to certain countries, its 2-cent stamp, formerly green, is now sepia, and red has been adopted as the color for the 3c.

China is commemorating another of its revolutions, the set offering seven designs in seventeen values. There are portraits of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, Liao Chung Kai, Chu Chih Hsin, Sung Chao Jan, Teng Ken, Hwang Husing, and Chen Chi Mei, all identified with the effort to assure a stable political government.

Colombia is issuing stamps with designs to tell the world that it produces emeralds, coffee, petroleum, platinum and gold.

Estonia has distributed Red Cross semi-postals in two designs. The 2 senti plus 3s and 20s plus 3s illustrate the parable of the Good Samaritan. The 5s plus 3s and 10s plus 3s show a lighthouse surmounted by a Red Cross throwing off rays of light.

France has added a 2 francs brown pictorial presenting the Arc de Triomphe and the grave of the Unknown Soldier, in Paris.

The Zwinger Museum in Dresden illustrates a German 8 pfennigs plus 4pf charity adhesive issued on the occasion of the international hygiene exhibition held in that city.

Haiti will shortly issue stamps commemorating this island republic's entry

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Latvia announces a series of coming semi-postals to raise funds to provide funds for its Boy Scout organization.

Great Britain's Pacific island called Territory of New Guinea has issued stamps, with the bird of paradise as the design, in 13 values, to commemorate British occupation. This terrain, formerly German New Guinea, was seized early in the World War by Australian forces and subsequently was assigned to Australia under a mandate from the League of Nations. Meanwhile New Guinea's current postal paper has been overprinted with an airplane device, and these provisionals are for use on mail carried by plane between the seacoast and the gold fields in the Morobe district.

During Peru's recent national holidays the *Primera Exposicion Filatelica* (First Philatelic Exposition) was held in Lima, and special stamps so inscribed were issued as commemoratives.

The first definitives of the new Spanish republic bear portraits of men associated with the success of the overthrow—Vicenta Blasco Ibanez (2 centesimos), D. Francisco Pi y Margall (5c), Don Nicolas Salmeron (15c), Don Pablo Iglesias (30c), and D. Emilio

Castelar (40c). Ibanez wrote "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."

The Philippines' long-heralded pictorials are in seven designs—the Mayon volcano (2 cents), the new Bureau of Posts Building (4c), Pier Seven, where vessels dock (12c), Pagsanjan Falls (18c), rice-planting and a buffalo at Bontoc (20c), the rice terraces of Ifugao (24c), and the Benguet zig-zag highway (32c).

*Editor's Note:* What becomes of lost countries?

Every stamp collector knows that he's continually running across stamps issued by countries he never heard of—countries that he can't find on any up-to-date map. Behind these disappeared countries and their stamps there are always stories—stories fascinatingly interesting and historically important.

And Kent B. Stiles, *American Boy* stamp editor, tells many of these stories in his new book, "Geography and Stamps." He tells, too, how stamp enthusiasts know all about geography before the map-makers have done their work. The book is an engrossing one—jammed with interest for the philatelist or the layman. It is published by McGraw-Hill, New York, at \$3.00.

## Ball Carrier

(Continued from page 19)

stumbled backward he felt that he had blocked his man—he'd given Chris a chance to get away. Chris, to avoid running into his interference, was compelled to swing wide. He lost time and lost distance—and a Washington player, coming through from the strong side of the line, caught him from behind. It was fourth down and ten to go.

Portsmouth gambled on an almost impossible field goal, and missed. With the Washington cheering sections roaring and shrieking, the ball was brought out. Twice the cadets crashed the line, and then they in turn punted. The ball, riding low, took a bad bound and tumbled past Steele to Portsmouth's 25. Now Parr's team would have to march almost the length of the field again. A golden chance to score had faded.

In the huddle Steele spoke out of a sudden, bitter wisdom.

"Gil, it was a mistake to shoot you at them play after play. We used you up. Then, when we got into scoring distance, we didn't have a scoring play left. We've simply got to tear that line apart. They're only flesh and blood."

But Washington refused to tear. Portsmouth, having shot its bolt, couldn't seem to get going again. The play seasawed up and down the field, futile and ineffective. For Gil there was just one ray of comfort. He, at least, had carried the ball. He had lived up to his reputation. And Ban Taylor was looking on.

The half ended. The team ran over to the benches, and in the jostle, Gil couldn't find his sweater. When finally he fished it out from under a bench and thrust it under his arm, the team was almost at the gym door. He trotted down the field, and cheers accompanied him the length of the stands. He wondered if Ban Taylor was up there, joining in the demonstration.

The gym door opened on a hall that led to the locker room. The squad was already inside. His sweater, trailing behind him, was caught by the closing door and jerked from under his arm. As he pushed at the door to release it, he heard Parr's voice from one of the rooms off the hallway.

"What do you think of Gil Cooper, Ban?"

A deeper voice answered: "He's coming to State, isn't he?"

"Yes."

"I'm afraid he'll hit a hard road. He's a nice ball carrier, but he can thank Odom and Foxx for clearing out the left side and letting him through. Yet, when Odom has the ball, the defense runs over Cooper and kills the play. That's a bad weakness, Parr. We haven't much use at State for a backfield man who can't block."

Gil went up the hall, stepping softly for fear the two men might hear him. A sudden sweat was on his forehead. The locker room was noisy with an uproar of voices. He dropped his sweater on a bench, and sat down beside it—and was motionless.

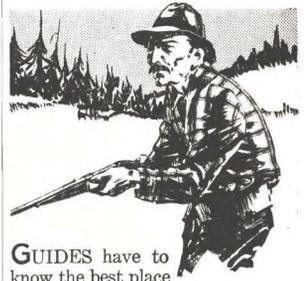
Steele shook his shoulder. "Wake up, Gil."

A fresh uniform was waiting. He kicked off his shoes and wormed out of sweat-soaked jersey and moleskins. So he could thank Chris for getting him loose, could he? He winced, and squeezed his eyes as though to blot out a picture. It was suddenly so clear and indisputable. And he had thought himself a natural, a back above and beyond the carefully built-up strategy of timed interference, a ball carrier that no team could stop. He held the moleskins in his hands and sat motionless again.

His mind picked out scenes. Chris in front of him taking some man from his path—Chris slipping and falling, and yet rolling from his knees and clearing a danger spot—Chris bobbing up with a change of tactics that had killed off the Manor Hall half. Gil swallowed. He hadn't broken loose in the Manor Hall game until after Chris had done that. Bits of conversation with Parr began to ring along the walls of his memory—Parr telling him that Chris should be able to go off tackle against Washington; and Parr, when Gil had asked between the Manor Hall halves how many touchdowns the team was still good for, saying to him, "Ask Chris." It had seemed like a joke at the time, but now it took on the acid bite of revealing truth. For it was Chris who had helped make all his own long runs possible.

"Ball carrier!" he said under his breath. He said it in lashing scorn. What had he done for Chris? Again his mind painted pictures—of an end feinting him into a premature dive, of an end holding him off and getting around him, and of a half crowding him into the play so that it could be nipped

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# PROBAK BLADES



For Gillette and Probak Razors

(Continued from page 57)  
 from behind. No wonder his roommate couldn't get away. Why, Chris had never had a chance. And he had pitied him. Poor Chris! His cheeks flushed. It was Chris, he thought sickly, who should have pitied him. What a miserable sight he must have been to Ban Taylor. And to Parr.

SLOWLY he began to prepare for the second half. Chris came over to the bench.

"Ban Taylor was in Parr's office. Did you see him?"

"I heard him."

"What did he say?" Chris' voice was eager.

"A mouthful," Gil answered. Oh, what a blind bat he had been! Blind, blind, blind! He thought to what he owed other men who carried the ball. Blind to the fact that no back could get away unless teammates made it possible. Wrapped up in the conceit of his own long runs. Blind, and dumb, and fatuous.

He finished dressing. Time passed. The call came from Parr, "All out." He stood up. Well, he had played football on one leg long enough. Now he'd play it on both. He fell into step with Steele.

"As soon as we get the ball, Danny, shoot Chris on that pivot—10A."

The captain's answer was a snap. "Gone crazy?"

"No—I've gone sane. I tell you, he'll make it. I know. I promise you this won't be a dud."

The force of his sincerity and faith was resistless. Steele wavered.

"Well, I'll try him once, anyway."

"The first play," Gil insisted.

Steele looked uncertain. "You have a reason?"

"Yes."

"All right—the first play."

Three minutes later Washington had been held, and had kicked, and Portsmouth was in a huddle. Gil, squeezing into the circle, threw an arm across Chris' back and pressed his shoulder hard.

"Number 10A," Steele said rapidly. "Chris on the wing to take the ball."

"I'll take the half," Gil said distinctly. "That means I'll take him."

There was a moment of silence.

"I guess that's good enough for this man's team," said Foxx.

Gil, crouching and waiting for the snap from center, was conscious of the beating of his heart. He saw things with a crystal clearness. If a back couldn't block, what good was he? Carrying the ball wasn't enough; you had to help other men to carry it, just as those other men helped you. You were a link in the chain, and if you had a weak spot, sooner or later the chain broke. If—the ball was snapped.

His mind, his soul, was on one Washington player. The defensive half came through confident and aggressive. Hadn't he made a monkey of this Cooper before? But it was a new Cooper who met him. This time there was no uncertainty, no awkwardness, about Gil's movement. He went for his man fast, and yet he was light on his feet, ready to swing to either side. The half never had a chance. A mountain was upon him. It rolled into him and he crashed.

On the side line Parr sucked in his breath.

A roar was in Gil's ears. That was the stands. He

sprang to his feet. Chris had broken loose. Running up the field in the wake of the play Gil saw the safety man cutting in to force Chris out. A switch to the right and Chris was headed for midfield. The safety man veered, too. The next instant Chris swung in his stride and was off on his original course, parallel with the side line. The maneuver had given him room, room to pound on for a few more yards. And it was not until he was passing Washington's 35 that arms and a shoulder smashed into him and rolled with him off the field.

Gil found himself crying choking words: "Oh, you Chris! Go on, Chris!"

THE ball was brought in. The team huddled. Foxx's eyes were snapping. Chris was breathing, open-mouthed.

"The same play," Steele barked. "They'll think it's a smash on the strong side. They'll never expect a run to the left—too close to the side line. Gil!"

"I'll get the half," said Gil. Why, this thing of blocking as a back should block, of building the foundation of the play, was as good as running with the ball yourself! You had your share in every foot gained.

Again the ball came back. The whole backfield made a strong feint for the right. Then came the pivot. All at once the play streamed for the other end, and left almost the entire Washington team reversed. Foxx got the end, but there was no half to meet the play. The half had gone over to back up the threatened line.

Gil ran into the clear with Chris. Behind him sounded the drum of feet—the half was in pursuit. But a glance showed him that they were holding their own. The 30—the 20! The safety man bore down, but Gil's plan was made. He'd force him to the outside or get him.

Gil changed his pace. The safety man, wary, edged to the right, and suddenly made a blazing bid for the runner. Gil, driving his legs, spurred and

threw himself at a figure that was coming too fast to dodge. Shoes, and shins, and knees raked him. And then the safety man was gone.

The stands started the song that always meant a touchdown, "Portsmouth's Running Wild."

Gil got up stiffly. His ribs ached. Past score sheets had given him credit for many touchdowns. To-day's score sheet would give credit to Chris. But no one man ever put the ball over. Touchdowns were made by teams. He was filled with clarity of understanding and a great sense of satisfaction.

Portsmouth had made its supreme effort, and something had gone out of the cadets. Up and down the field the teams surged, and heaved, and drove, and panted. But Washington's punch was gone, and her powder was damp. Toward the end Washington resorted to wild forward passes. Portsmouth, covering every eligible receiver, killed the plays. And then the final whistle blew.

"Chris!" Gil had him around the waist. "How do you feel to-day?"

"Great!" Chris breathed. And then, "Gil, you're a wonder."

THE team huddled and cheered the cadets, then broke and raced for the gym. Parr and Ban Taylor were already in the hallway. The State U coach greeted the players as they passed; but he held Chris, and presently he had Gil. Gil throbbled to the pressure of his hand, warm, and firm, and—and something else.

"I understand you two boys are coming up to State."

"Yes, sir," said Chris.

"Our schedule runs a week longer than yours. Try to take in our final game. You'll get a line on a State team in action."

"I'd like that," said Gil. He understood it as an invitation to watch State's tactics. It meant something. "I—I'll watch the blocking, Mr. Taylor."

The State coach gave him a quick, surprised look. Parr was close by, and Parr's eyes suddenly glowed.

Gil went to the locker room. He took his shower, rubbed dry, and began to dress. Somebody stood beside him.

"Gil," the coach said quietly, "I never saw you play as you played that second half. Something must have happened to you."

"It did," Gil answered.

"What?"

"I overheard Ban Taylor tell you that I wouldn't do because I couldn't block—that I couldn't do for other men what other men did for me. I guess I was so wrapped up in carrying the ball that I forgot that other men had to carry it, too. It was a jolt, like falling out of bed. It woke me up."

Silence. All at once a cold thought struck the boy. Good night—suppose Parr thought he had started to do some real blocking because it would do him some good at State? He sent a frightened glance at the man.

"Gil," Parr said, "to-day is the first day you haven't scored a touchdown for me this season. And yet—" He cleared his throat. "And yet, you were a bigger man out there to-day than you ever were before."

The words warmed Gil. They were like Ban Taylor's hand clasp, in the things they left unsaid.

"I don't know that I was any bigger," he said slowly. His lips twitched. "But I think I've begun to grow."

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# When Life Hangs by a Shroud Line!

By Dick Grace

Famous Movie Stunt Pilot

THE coolest piece of piloting it was ever my fortune to witness happened quite unexpectedly in an exhibition at Clover Field.

I had just made a change from one plane to another that hadn't given my pilots or myself even a slight thrill, and a group of us were standing around Jimmy Angel.

Jimmy was to pilot a girl to a height of several thousand feet, give her the sign to get out on the wing, and then signal her to pull the parachute ring and drop to the field far underneath them.

We all stood around as the ship was being groomed and the pilot was giving the jumper her last instructions.

"Be sure to go out to the rear strut of the second bay of the left wing," he said, "and don't forget to get completely set before you pull the ring."

A few seconds later they were off with a roar and soon were soaring into the air, with the nose of the ship pointed at its maximum angle of climb.

I know that Jimmy didn't expect more than the casual job of piloting that ship. As far as he was concerned this would be just another case of waiting until the ship got its altitude, giving a couple of signals, and then gliding back to earth. But this flight was to have a different ending.

AT AN altitude of some thousand feet, sufficient to achieve the women's altitude record for parachute jumps from airplanes, the pilot leaned over in the cockpit and gave the signal.

Instantly the girl arose in her seat and started to fight her way out of the cockpit, through the powerful draft of the propeller, to the section of the wing that Jimmy Angel had pointed out to her before leaving the ground. Cautiously she stepped her way along the leading edge of the ship to the first strut. After that it was an easy task to reach the second, for she was out of the rushing air stream from the prop.

Without the slightest hesitation she crawled in between the wires of the second bay of the left panel and finally emerged at the rear strut. There she planted her feet on the rear spar, held tightly to the strut, and reversed her position. She was now facing in the same direction as the ship was going, in the position Jimmy Angel had told her to assume.

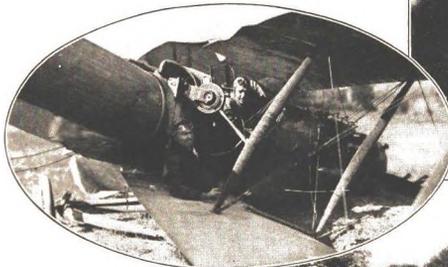
She looked to the pilot for the signal and got it immediately. One of her hands held to the strut, the other sought the ring that would release the 'chute. A decisive yank. The pack slipped from its folds, and she waited.

Then something got confused. The shroud lines wrapped around her. Part of the 'chute floated out in back—the rest billowed about her in an uncertain and extremely dangerous way. It wasn't opening properly. The lines were being tangled in the strut.

Instantly both knew that they were headed for a catastrophe—almost certainly. A look of horror passed between them, and then the girl was dragged from the wing by the flapping, half-filled 'chute, to hang from the wing in the mass of cloth.

The pilot thought she was lost. Not quite! She flapped back and forth like a pendulum. The entangled shroud lines were caught in the strut.

The pilot had to think quickly. How long would those lines hold? Would



Dick Grace has left behind him a trail of crashed planes. The lower right picture shows you how he does it—he lets a wing take the first force of the shock.



it be better to fly toward the ocean and attempt to plunge the ship in the breakers, or would it be better to try a stall landing on the field, where medical aid and help would come immediately?

Already he had throttled the motor and had headed slowly and systematically for sea level, and this was no easy task. The girl's weight and the flapping parachute compelled him to use all of his opposite rudder. The ship was nearly out of control.

His decision was to try to make the field. In large circles he made the approach, hoping that the shroud lines would not give away before he was able to stall or crash in.

Below he could now see the horrified crowd excitedly running about; yet he

maintained his same cool composure. Inwardly his heart was beating fast, but no trace of his anxiety, of his desperate position, showed in his actions.

Cutting in shortly he made the approach. He was just fifty feet above the ground. In a second it would be all over. Could he land without killing the girl?

With a spurt of the motor he stopped the sudden descent, at the same time lifting the nose of the ship. He was not even gliding now. The plane was in the position of horizontal flight, with scarcely flying speed!

The body of the girl didn't float directly out in back—it was in a position almost directly under the left lower panel. And still Jimmy cut down his

flying speed. He was stalling in—a landing that requires extreme skill. He had figured that a fast landing and a long roll would batter the life out of the girl.

The feet of the girl almost touched; then the ship's tail dropped and the wheels followed.

With a sudden impact the body dragged the ground, and the wheels of the ship came crashing down also. The landing carriage held. Neither wheels nor tires gave way, and a few feet further on the ship came to a stop.

Quickly the pilot cut the motor and jumped to the ground. The girl, unhurt except for scratches, was on her feet.

The excited, admiring crowd gathered around. They'd seen an exhibition of miraculously expert piloting. Only cool nerve and keen judgment had saved the life of that parachute jumper.

Jimmy went to the hangar to think the whole thing over.

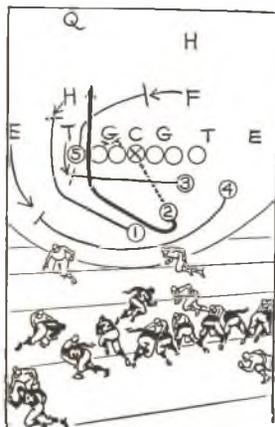
The next true adventure by Dick Grace is coming soon.

## Here's How Pitt Gained Against Notre Dame

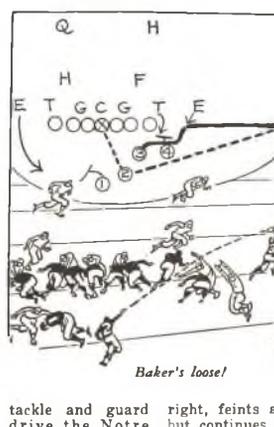
IN the first half of their 1930 game, Notre Dame swamped Pitt. But in the second half, Pitt came back to score three touchdowns, and she did it mainly through two plays.

The first of these plays was a spinner. Eddie Baker, Pitt quarterback, had noticed that Notre Dame's ends, on defense, were playing close to their tackles and charging outward at the snap of the ball. He called the spinner to take advantage of that fact.

Glance at the diagram. Pitt lines up in a single wing back formation to her right. The ball goes back to Clark, the fullback (No. 2). Clark turns and fakes a pass to the wing back (No. 4) who runs wide to decoy the Notre Dame right end. Baker (No. 3) charges straight across to take out the Notre Dame right tackle who is permitted to come through the line. The Pitt left



Clark goes for a touchdown!



Baker's loose!

tackle and guard drive the Notre Dame right guard in.

Clark, with the ball, turns and drives through the hole inside tackle, while No. 1 back is going around, faking a block at tackle, and running on to block the defensive halfback.

There are two elements of success in the play. First, the No. 4 back helps

the Notre Dame end run himself out of the field of action. Second, the Irish tackle, instead of being blocked in the regular way, is taken from the side by Baker. Both he and the end are decoyed into leaving a wide hole for the runner.

The play worked beautifully and was a big factor in Pitt's three touchdowns.

The second play was a flat zone pass. The formation is the same as in the spinner. Clark (No. 2) again receives the ball, and Baker (No. 3) dashes out to his

right, feints at the Notre Dame end, but continues into flat zone to receive a pass from Clark. The success of the play lies in Baker's feinting at the end, to make him think that the play is an orthodox run to the strong side.

If the Notre Dame ends had been playing wider, Pitt would have had a harder time getting away with this pass. As it was, the play twice brought the ball into scoring territory.



## When *Robin Hood* was tested

**I**N the cool shades of Sherwood Forest stood Robin Hood and his merry band of outlaws. Close by stood his gallant companions, Friar Tuck, the giant Little John, and the minstrel Alan-a-Dale.

A tension hung over the quiet glade. Breaths were stilled, eyes stood wide, and in all that gay company not a word—not a laugh was heard. For Alan-a-Dale had challenged his master to a test of skill, and to make good his challenge had sped his arrow straight to the center of the bulls-eye at three-score paces.

And now, deliberate and smiling, Robin Hood stood forth, his trusty long-bow in hand and his eyes on the target. Slowly he fitted a shaft to the string, while men watched with straining eyes—motionless.

He raised his bow. Slowly the tough yew bent. Twang! A whistling flash of light. For an instant there was a stunned silence, then a great roar, a clapping of hands on backs, shouts of laughter and triumph!

Robin Hood's arrow had cleft the shaft of Alan-a-Dale and buried itself in the very heart of the bulls-eye. Their leader was vindicated and Alan-a-Dale was smiling even in defeat—

History or legend, the gallant figure of Robin Hood has come down from the days of Richard the Lion-hearted as the greatest marksman of his time. Light-hearted, generous, with nerves of steel, he rivaled with his long-bow the accuracy of the modern rifleman.

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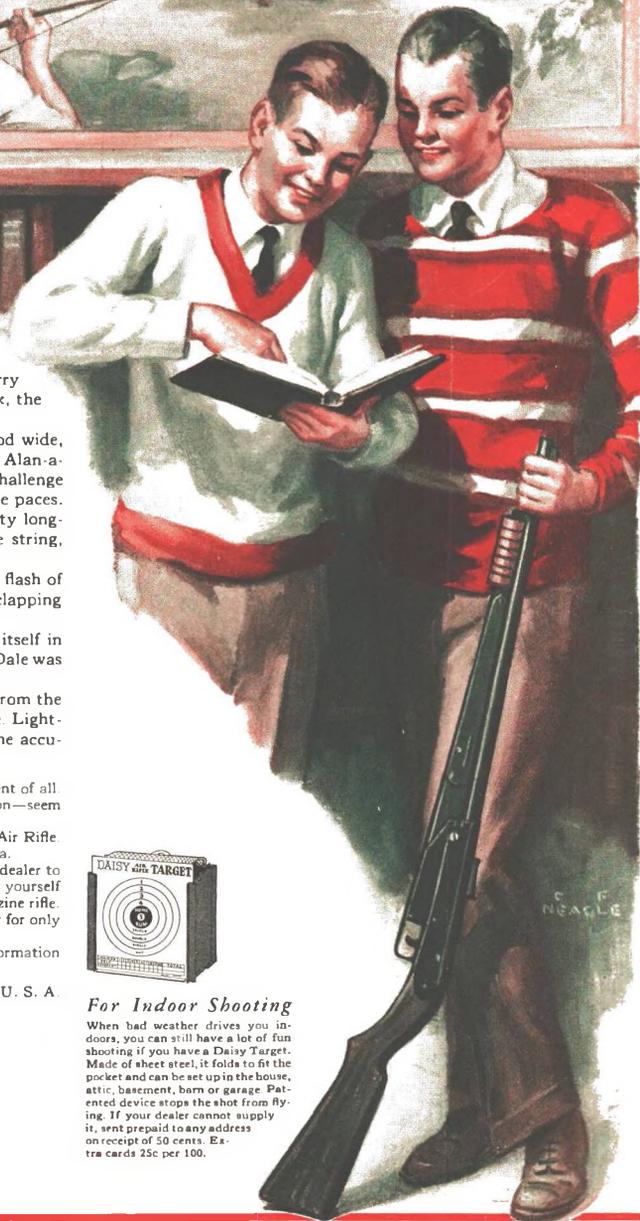
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