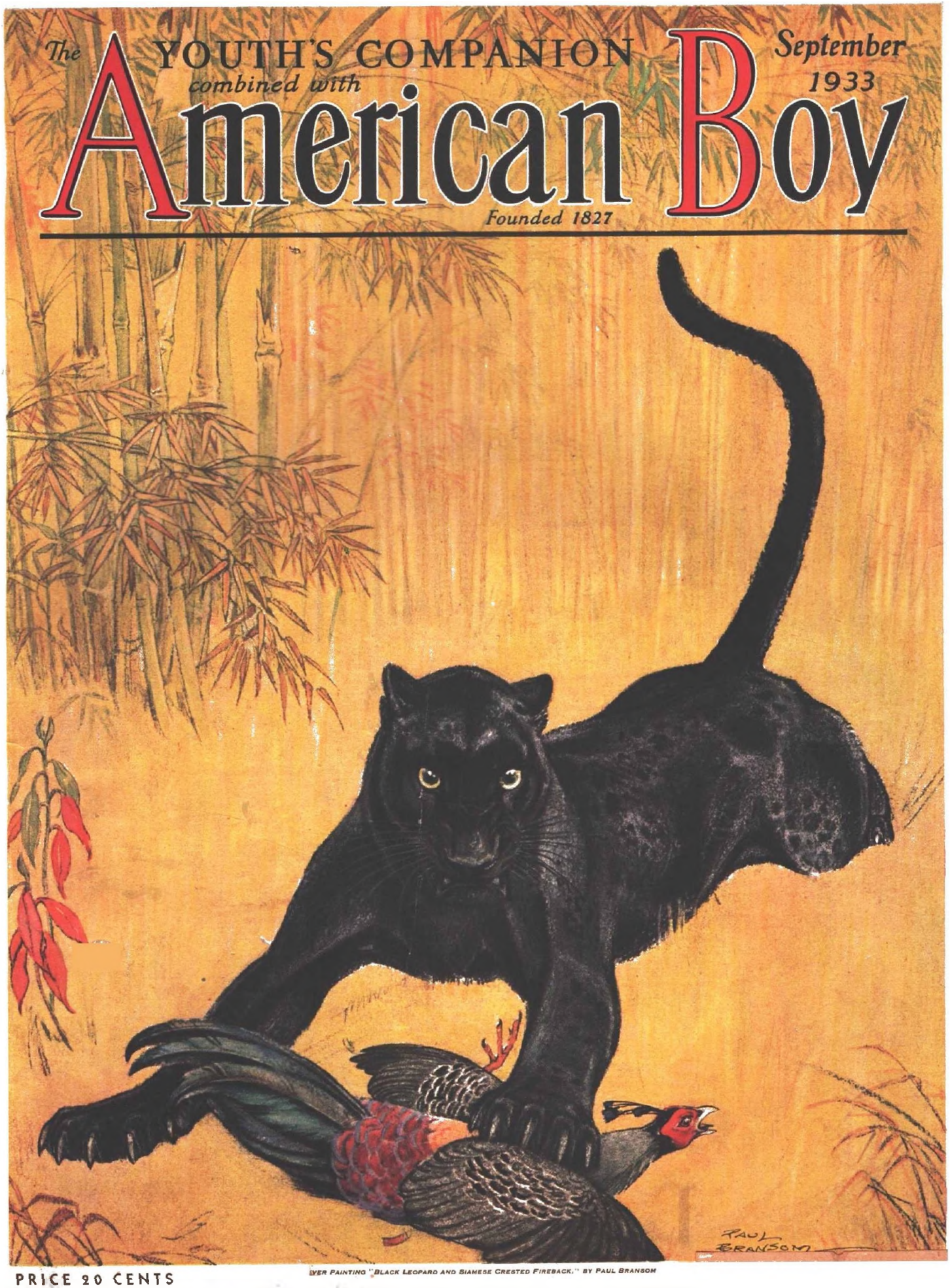
The YOUTH'S COMPANION
combined with
American Boy
Founded 1827

September
1933



COVER PAINTING "BLACK LEOPARD AND SIAMESE CRESTED FIREBACK," BY PAUL BRANSOM

PRICE 20 CENTS

Serial Beginning in This Number

"THE SHIP WITHOUT A CREW"

Hey! Get a Load of this

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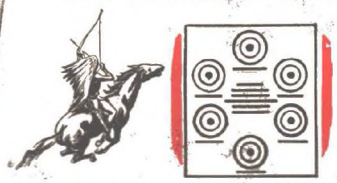
No kidding, gang, here's a chance for you air rifle hounds to do your stuff. The Open Road for Boys Magazine is staging a gigantic air rifle shooting contest, open to all under 18. And talk about prizes—more big cups and engraved medals than you can shake a stick at—official targets and everything. Just write "Air Rifle Contest, 130 Newbury St., Boston, Mass.", and you'll have all the information about this greatest of all contests by return mail. Be a winner—enroll now.



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Buzz and his Buzz Barton Special Daisy, taken on World Brothers Circus lot, Salem, Mass.

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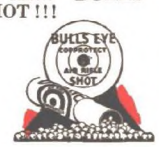

TRADE IN YOUR OLD AIR RIFLE

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Buzz Barton surrounded by youthful admirers and explaining to them the fine points of the Buzz Barton Special Daisy. Taken in front of Buzz' private car at World Brothers Circus, at Salem, Mass.

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DAISY MANUFACTURING COMPANY - 240 UNION STREET - PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN

DAISY AIR RIFLES

SEPTEMBER, 1933

The YOUTH'S COMPANION combined with American Boy Founded 1827

VOL. 107 No. 9

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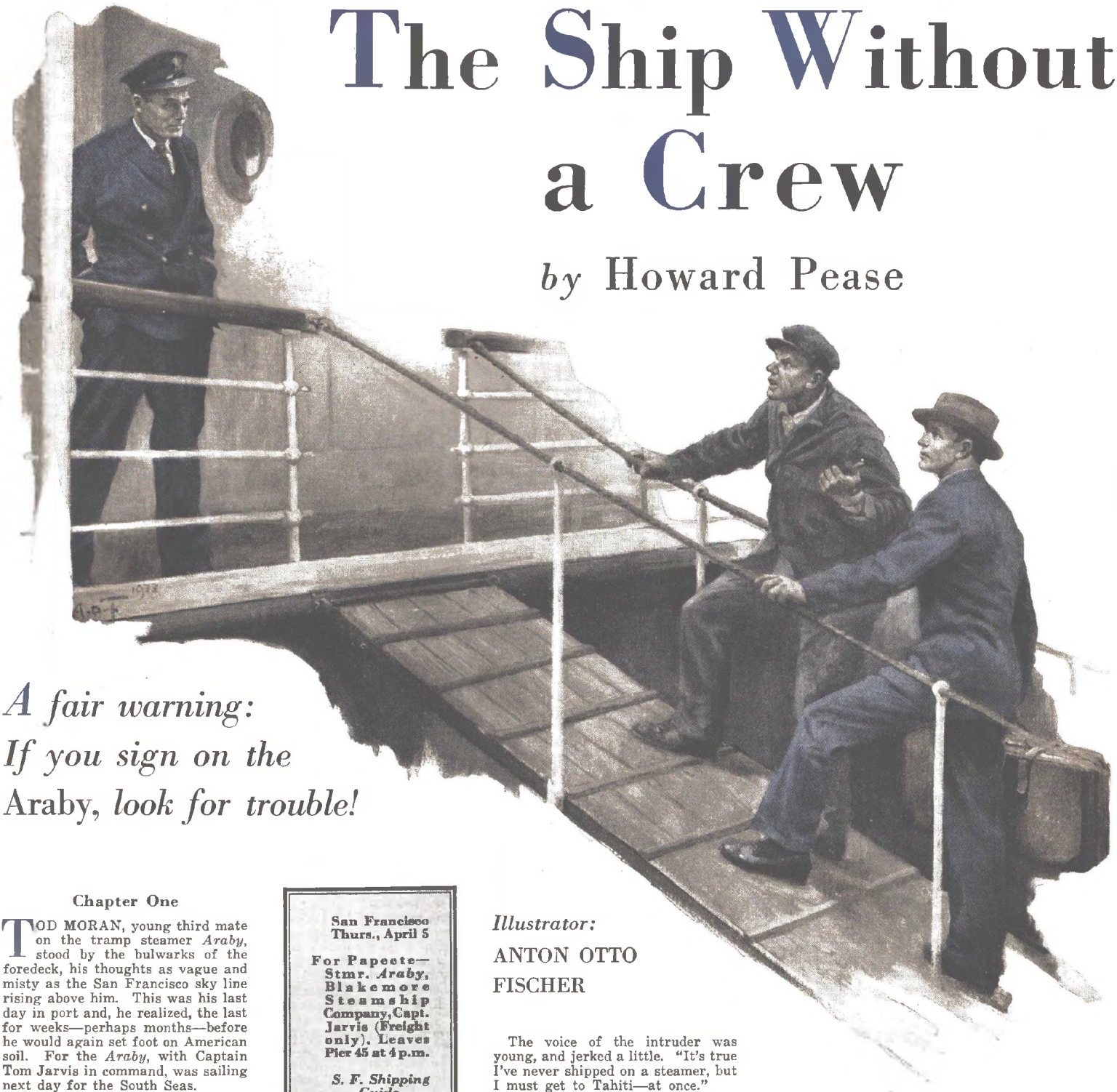
The Ship Without a Crew

by Howard Pease



A fair warning: If you sign on the Araby, *look for trouble!*

Illustrator: ANTON OTTO FISCHER

Chapter One

TOD MORAN, young third mate on the tramp steamer *Araby*, stood by the bulwarks of the foredeck, his thoughts as vague and misty as the San Francisco sky line rising above him. This was his last day in port and, he realized, the last for weeks—perhaps months—before he would again set foot on American soil. For the *Araby*, with Captain Tom Jarvis in command, was sailing next day for the South Seas.

Suddenly angry voices near-by attracted Tod's attention. He turned toward the gangway leading to the covered pier below; there, standing guard, was the little cockney quartermaster, his scrawny body twisted in an attitude of belligerence.

"Naw, there ain't no jobs left," he was shrilling at someone Tod could not see. "Blimey, we been full up fer a week. There's fifty real seamen arskin' fer every berth on board—an' yer don't look like yer ever saw the briny before."

San Francisco
Thurs., April 5

For Papeete—Stmr. *Araby*, Blakemore Steamship Company, Capt. Jarvis (Freight only). Leaves Pier 45 at 4 p.m.

S. F. Shipping Guide.

The voice of the intruder was young, and jerked a little. "It's true I've never shipped on a steamer, but I must get to Tahiti—at once."

"Strike me bline! Maybe if I speaks ter the skipper 'e'll give yer 'is cabin an' lift anchor right now."

"I'm willing to work my way," persisted the intruder. "I want to get to Papeete as soon as possible."

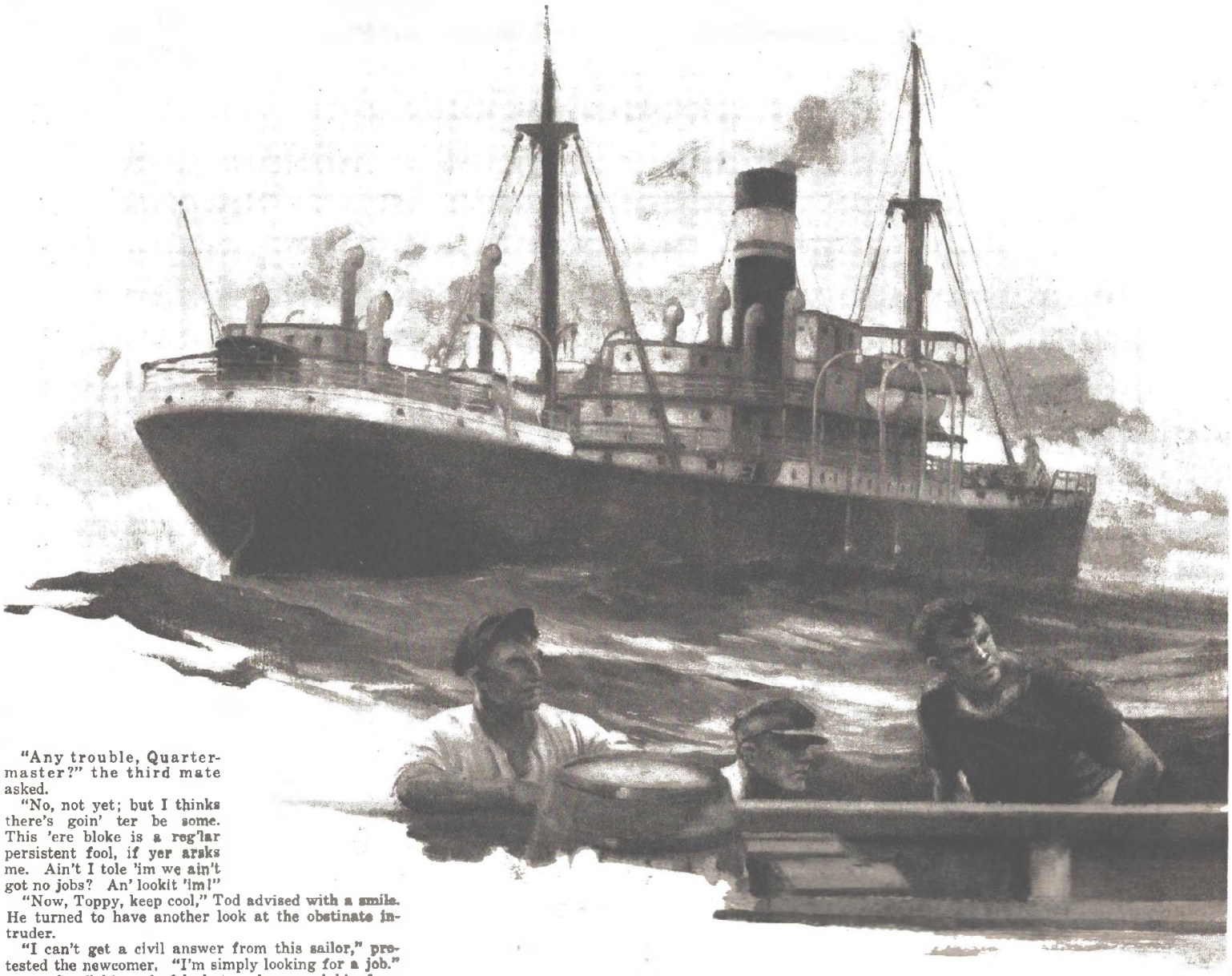
"Yeah? Wot yer means is that the cops is arfter yer an' yer gotta beat it quick."

"Let me speak to the captain." The young voice had sharpened.

"The cap'n, me eye! He ain't got time fer yer sort. Yer better run along—an' quick, too. Get me?"

Interested, Tod Moran strolled aft. Halfway up the gangway stood a slim, bronzed boy, well dressed and well groomed. His face, turned inquiringly upward, was thin and sharply etched; his dark eyes had a desperate look.

"This 'ere bloke is a reg'lar persistent fool, if yer arsks me," Toppy burst out.



"Any trouble, Quartermaster?" the third mate asked.

"No, not yet; but I thinks there's goin' ter be some. This 'ere bloke is a reg'lar persistent fool, if yer arsks me. Ain't I tole 'im we ain't got no jobs? An' lookit 'im!"

"Now, Toppy, keep cool," Tod advised with a smile. He turned to have another look at the obstinate intruder.

"I can't get a civil answer from this sailor," protested the newcomer. "I'm simply looking for a job." He took off his soft felt hat and mopped his forehead. "I've got to get to Papeete, to Tahiti," he went on in a low tone. "It's a serious matter. The passenger liner doesn't leave until next month, and anyway—I've got no money."

Tod leaned on the bulwarks, strangely drawn to this boy not much younger than himself. "Why must you get to Tahiti just now?" he asked.

The boy took a step up the gangway. "My name's Stan Ridley, and my home is on Taiarea, an island near Tahiti. I've been away at a school in the East. But now—I must reach home as soon as possible. Please help me in getting a job on your ship. I'll do anything."

Tod's ear caught an unfamiliar note in the boy's speech; though the English was faultless, there was a faint trace of some foreign tongue, perhaps spoken in childhood. Tod ran his fingers through his sandy hair. "Homesick?" he asked.

"No, it's not that. Something—something has happened at home."

"Serious?"

"Yes." The boy's voice fell even lower. "I don't know exactly what's wrong there; but it's—well, it might be terrible." He flung out his arms in a gesture that was akin to the strange sound of his words. "Oh, I can't tell you here!"

Tod looked him over. A boy from an expensive school in the East, he mused, a boy penniless in San Francisco. Had he any friends here? Tod put the thought into words.

"No," Stan Ridley answered. "I don't know anyone here. I'm alone, and broke. But I can take care of myself all right. Only I must get home. And the *Araby* is the only ship leaving for Papeete in the next three weeks."

Tod's gaze roved aft where gulls wheeled above the stern of the ship. Surely no one knew better than he how it felt to be alone and without money in a strange port. Hadn't he once found himself in just such a plight in New York, and once too in southern France?

"All right," he said abruptly. "If the quartermaster will let you come aboard I'll take you to the captain." He turned. "How about it, Toppy?"

"Anythink yer says goes with me," growled the little cockney. Grudgingly he moved aside. "Come aboard, me man!"

Stan Ridley stepped eagerly to deck.

Tod led the way aft. "I can't promise you a berth," he explained, "but I'll put your case before Captain Jarvis. The skipper's square."

Entering the starboard alleyway the two boys strode past the engine room, came out to an open deck again, dodged quickly past the cargo boom, loading cases of canned goods into number three hatch, and reached the after house rising in the stern. Here, at a door marked *Officers' Saloon*, Tod raised his hand to knock; then, remembering his new position aboard ship—for this was his first voyage as an officer—he checked himself and promptly led young Ridley into the presence of the *Araby's* master.

"Oh, it's you, Joe Macaroni," began Captain Jarvis, seated at his desk; then as he took in Stan Ridley he stared in surprise. "What's this?" he inquired good-humoredly. "One of your college friends?"

"No, sir. This fellow wants a job."

"But we haven't any left."

"That's what I was afraid of," Tod admitted. "Yet I thought you might have room for a workaway. You see, this chap's home is near Tahiti. He's broke, and something's happened there that makes it necessary for him to return."

Captain Jarvis leaned back in his swivel chair and stretched his great arms above his head. Tod, glancing at Stan Ridley, saw the boy's eyes widen in amazement as he surveyed the *Araby's* captain.

Tom Jarvis, long a friend of Tod's, was a figure well known in Pacific shipping. Over six feet in height, broad and blond, he had at some time allowed himself to be tattooed. Seated there he must, Tod knew, present a curious sight to a stranger: dark serge trousers accentuated his extraordinary length of limb; his blue shirt, open at the neck, disclosed a broad throat and chest on which could be seen the grinning heads of a dragon; on his right arm, extending from the rolled-up sleeve, was a network of stars; and on the left a green serpent coiled about the bulging muscles.

"Why the hurry to get to Tahiti just now?" he inquired.

Stan Ridley gulped in an effort to speak. "It's—it's this way, sir," he brought out at last. "I've been away from home for two years. My father sent me to school in Connecticut. Everything was going all right until about three months ago when his letters suddenly stopped. When he missed one mail steamer, I thought he might be at home on Taiarea—we have a coconut plantation there. But nothing came in the next mail—no letter and no money either, and I got—well, panicky, I guess." He paused and looked down at the floor.

Tod and Captain Jarvis listened in silence as the boy resumed. "I sent a radiogram to Tahiti, but got no reply from my father. Instead, a message came back that he couldn't be found. Then finally a line did come from him—and that's the strangest part. My father wrote that if I didn't hear from him I wasn't to worry. I was just to stay on at school, for my board and tuition were paid until the end of the term. On no account was I to return home."

"Hm." Captain Jarvis leaned forward. "And you don't know why he should write like this?"

"No." The answer was barely audible.

"What is your father's business? Is he a planter?"

"Yes. He has a plantation on Taiarea, just a night's sail from Papeete. Then he owns three small schooners that trade through the Society Islands and the Tuamotu group, too—the pearl islands, they're called." The boy paused abruptly, was silent for a moment, and then broke out: "Something has happened — something terrible, I know. But what — what!"

"You think you can't wait for the passenger liner next month?" Captain Jarvis asked after another pause.

Stan Ridley shook his head. "I'm broke, anyway. It took all I had to get here to San Francisco. When I got here, I went to the steamship company's offices —I thought somebody there might know my father and be willing to help me. But they were stand-offish. Maybe they thought I was an impostor. At any rate, they told me the place for me was back in school where I was supposed to be. Oh, perhaps I shouldn't have come; but I couldn't stay there in school, worrying day and night, and doing nothing."

Captain Jarvis turned to Tod. "Could we use this boy?"

"Yes, sir," Tod quickly returned. "We could sign him on as an ordinary seaman and put him on the day watch."

"Good." The master of the *Araby* reached for a large report book and flicked the pages. "Put your name down here," he directed. "The shipping commissioner will be here in the morning to sign the men on."

Eagerly the boy approached, took the pen that Jarvis proffered him and wrote on the indicated line. Tod, watching the little ceremony with unconcealed elation, became suddenly aware that Tom Jarvis was staring at the name scrawled across the page. The big man's eyes narrowed.

"Stanhope Ridley!" he exclaimed. With an abrupt movement he rose, turned his back upon the two boys, and faced the open porthole above the desk.

Tod, puzzled, alertly aware that a mysterious new element had arisen in the situation, glanced at Stan Ridley. The slim, dark boy was staring at the captain in surprise and bewilderment. Then his face took on a look of hope edged with dread.

"You—you know my father, sir?" he jerked. "You've heard news of him."

For the length of a dozen heartbeats the man made no reply; then he swung about and spoke with emphasis. "You'd better not return to Tahiti, young man. Get a job here in the States. Stay here!"

Tod listened blankly. Why this sudden change of attitude? What did Tom Jarvis know about this boy's father? Why should Captain Tom suddenly turn cool and aloof when he had been all ready to help the boy? There were hard places in Tom Jarvis' character, Tod knew, but he was also well aware that no one could be more understanding in times of need.

"But why shouldn't I go home?" Stan Ridley protested. "Why am I blocked at every turn?" He flung out his arms in a gesture of despair. "You know something about my father, Captain Jarvis! You're holding something back."

The big man did not move. His blue eyes seemed to grow dark, inscrutable. "And if I am," he said at length, "it is for your own good."

"But I'm not a child," the boy retorted in an unsteady voice. "I'm almost eighteen. Tell me the truth, sir. I can stand anything rather than this suspense."

Captain Jarvis' face softened. "If I'm keeping anything back, youngster, it's because what information I have isn't mine to give."

"Even to me?"

Captain Jarvis nodded. "Even to you."

For a moment no sound was heard in the cabin; then Stan Ridley slowly turned to the door.

To Tod, it seemed unbelievable that Captain Tom was ready to let the desperate-eyed boy go unbefriended. What was wrong? What chord of distrust had been struck by the name of Stanhope Ridley? Protest rose to Tod's lips, but something in the captain's grim face checked it.

Young Ridley's hand rested on the door knob. But there, abruptly he stopped. His shoulders drew back; his head went up. Swinging about, he faced the captain.

"I'm going home anyway!" he flamed. "Even though you can't or won't help me. I'll get there somehow on the next boat. I'll find out what's wrong! I'll find out!"

Tom Jarvis swept him with an appraising glance, and suddenly something kindled in his grim face. Perhaps he had thought the slim, immaculately

With an effort Tod pulled himself together. "Hello!" he called out. "Anybody aboard?"

dressed boy before him too soft for battle. But when Stan Ridley turned, his dark eyes blazing, his thin face tense, his determined voice hurling defiance, he looked far from soft. Tod, watching, knew why Tom Jarvis' face lost its impassive look. Captain Tom, himself a fighter, suddenly saw in the boy before him one of his own kind.

"Youngster," he said slowly, "what if I give you a berth?"

"On the *Araby?*" Stan Ridley's voice grew husky. "If you will, Captain Jarvis, I'll do anything. Anything!"

The captain sank into his chair again. "All right, Moran; see that he gets a bunk and suitable duds. We can't have him going round the decks in those things he's wearing." He shot another glance at the boy. "You'll probably be sorry, Ridley, if you go. I'm warning you! *Stay here!*"

Stan Ridley's thin, dark face set itself. "Thank you, sir," he said. "I'll go."

Chapter Two

THE next afternoon the *Araby* put to sea. Under a cloud-swept sky the old tramp passed through the Golden Gate, dropped her pilot outside the bar and steamed southward, the weather on her starboard beam.

Third Mate Moran came on deck after six o'clock mess to find the night already black and a stinging wind blowing. He crossed the foredeck to the port bulwarks and, leaning over, glanced down into the deep obscurity. There was joy in his heart. Once again he was off to sea, bound south of the Line to those tropic isles he had always dreamed of—the palm-fringed isles of the South Seas. In sheer ecstasy of spirit he lifted his head and gazed shoreward, where a string of lights marked the last glimpse of his homeland.

The sudden opening of the door of the seamen's forecastle sent a stream of light slanting to deck almost at his feet. Turning, he saw a pile of bedding hurtle through the air and fall into that patch of yellow brilliance. Two blankets came first, then a straw mattress, next an expensive leather hand bag. Shouts of laughter burst from the forecastle, and then a blue object was tossed out to lie inert on the pile of bedding.

As Tod Moran stared, the object moved. A white foot kicked out, an arm came into view, a dark head was raised. Tod found himself looking down at young Stan Ridley.

A seaman's form appeared in the lighted doorway and Toppy's voice shouted: "Thinks yer the cock o' the walk, don't yer? Blimey, yer can sleep on deck ternight. We don't 'ave no dudes an' swells in this fo'c'stle. Good-night, dearie!"

The iron door slammed shut. Darkness enveloped the deck.

At a loss for words Tod Moran stood silent. And in that silence, deepened by the whine of wind in the rigging and the splash of water along the steamer's strake, he heard a long-drawn breath that seemed to escape again between set teeth.

Tod took a swift step forward. "What's wrong, Ridley?"

Without replying the boy detached himself from the bedding and rose. On bare feet he started for the forecastle.

"Here—where you going?" Tod called.

In the darkness Stan Ridley flung around. "Who's that?" he demanded.

"Only me, the third mate. What's happened?"

"They threw me out of the fo'c'stle!—But I'll show them!"

Tod went forward and put a restraining hand on the boy's shoulder. "Cool down, Ridley. There are men in there who could knock you down with a finger."

"Oh, could they?" the boy shouted. "Just let them try!"

Tod parried for time. "What got them all riled up?" he inquired in a conciliating tone.

Stan Ridley faced him angrily. "I turned in early—that's all. I was dog tired from cleaning up these decks. Didn't I have a right to turn in?"

"Of course. But what did you say to them?"

"Nothing. I didn't feel like talking. Not to riffraff like them!"

"Maybe," said Tod, old in his knowledge of forecastle ways, "it was what you didn't say. And what are you wearing? Not—not blue silk—"

"Pajamas, yes," the boy cut in. "What of it?"

Tod suppressed a sudden desire to laugh. Blue silk pajamas in the *Araby's* forecastle! No wonder the boy had got in wrong.

"Ridley," he advised, "you'd better change your ways."

"You mean," young Ridley returned deliberately, "that I've got to fit into their way of living?"

"Just that. Better toss those things you're wearing overboard—the sooner the better."

Stan Ridley swung about defiantly. "Mr. Moran, you're the only person aboard who's given me a friendly word. The bo'sun's been cursing me all day, and the men razzing me! I suppose you can't blame them. I'm green—I don't know anything about this sort of life. And what's more," he finished hotly, "I don't want to!"

"What's happened?" Stan's voice rose to a high pitch. "Look—that table's set for my father's breakfast!"

"Then you don't belong here, Ridley. When you asked for a berth I thought you were on the square."

There was a moment of silence, and then the boy spoke in a changed tone. "I had that coming, Mr. Moran. But I am on the square. I'm willing to do anything in order to find out what's happened to my father. . . . You're right—I've plenty to learn. I'll take your advice."

Third Mate Moran took a step forward. "Shake on that, Ridley," he exclaimed. "If you'll do your part, I'll help you all I can."

In the darkness a strong, slender hand met his. The wind whipped the thin silk pajamas about Ridley's shivering body. "It's blamed queer," remarked the boy, turning to the bulwarks, "how a fellow can put on the trappings of civilization in two short years. Back home on Taiarea I'd go around all day wearing only a *pareu*, a native loin cloth, you know. I'd swim in the lagoon, dive for an octopus, paddle my outrigger along the reef looking for fish—and yet now I get mad as fury because those men laugh at my pajamas."

He stopped speaking and stripped the thin suit from his body. With a swift movement, he flung the fluttering garment out into the night to be swallowed up by the sea. "Good-by, Civilization!" he called out. "I'm waking up again." Turning to the surprised Tod he chuckled. "Where can I get singlets and dungarees?"

"The steward opens his slop chest every afternoon at five. You can get what you need; the charge will be taken out of your pay. Until tomorrow I'll lend you some duds. Come on. We'll go above to my cabin."

In the midship section to port, the deck officers had their quarters. The third mate's cabin was small and scrupulously clean. In the light from the single bulb fastened in the deck head the white paint shone, the brass glittered; for the *Araby*, recently reconditioned, was as spruce a little freighter as one of her age could be. Tod pulled out a long, deep drawer beneath his bed, disclosing neat rows of white singlets and shorts. "I've got plenty," he remarked. "One needs them in the tropics."

Stan Ridley slipped a sleeveless shirt over his black, tousled hair, then deftly caught a pair of blue dungarees that Tod threw his way. A moment later he stood up, barefooted. "Do I look like a bloomin' sailor now?" he asked, grinning.

Beside Tod's husky, more vigorous frame the boy seemed thin and frail; yet his arms were well rounded with muscles. Years of swimming and paddling an outrigger canoe in coral lagoons had evidently given him strength surprising in a figure of such slender grace. Tod thought with envy of his past life.

"Tell me about these South Sea Islands," urged Tod. "What's the most interesting thing you can think of?"

"Well," young Ridley said thoughtfully, "there are two things that always strike me as unusual. "One is the old place of worship on our island. The natives call the island Taiarea, the Sacred, and back in the jungle are huge stone terraces called *maraes*, where the old Tahitian gods were worshiped. There are stone figures there too."

"And the other?"

"Tahiti Jacques, a large, gray fish somewhat like a dolphin. For years he has piloted the island schooners in and out of Papeete harbor through the reef."

"Quite a fish," Tod grinned.

"Wait till you see him," Stan returned defensively. "He's impressive! You'll probably see him when we go through the pass in the reef. He'll be swimming just ahead of the steamer's prow, diving in and out of the water like a seal. He's a grand fish—and he seems somehow like a friend. The natives love him. They'd fight for him if—"

He was interrupted by a knock on the cabin door.

"Come in," Tod called.

As the door was flung open a gust of wind whistled through the cabin. A short, stout, swarthy seaman looked down at them. "The skipper wants to see you in his quarters, Mr. Moran," he announced.

"Be right there," Tod replied.

The man's eyes rested for an instant on Stan Ridley, widening as if in surprise at finding the third mate on such friendly terms with this new member of the crew. Then he said, "Very good, sir," and turned away.

When the man had gone Tod rose. "I'll be back in a few minutes, Ridley. If you're not too tired, I'd like to hear more about that fish."

Stan Ridley flushed with pleasure. "May I have a look at some of your books while you're away?" He reached toward the shelf of books, but turned back to Tod. "If—if Captain Jarvis mentions my father, could you tell him that I'm ready to hear—anything?"

Tod nodded, and went out into the stinging night.

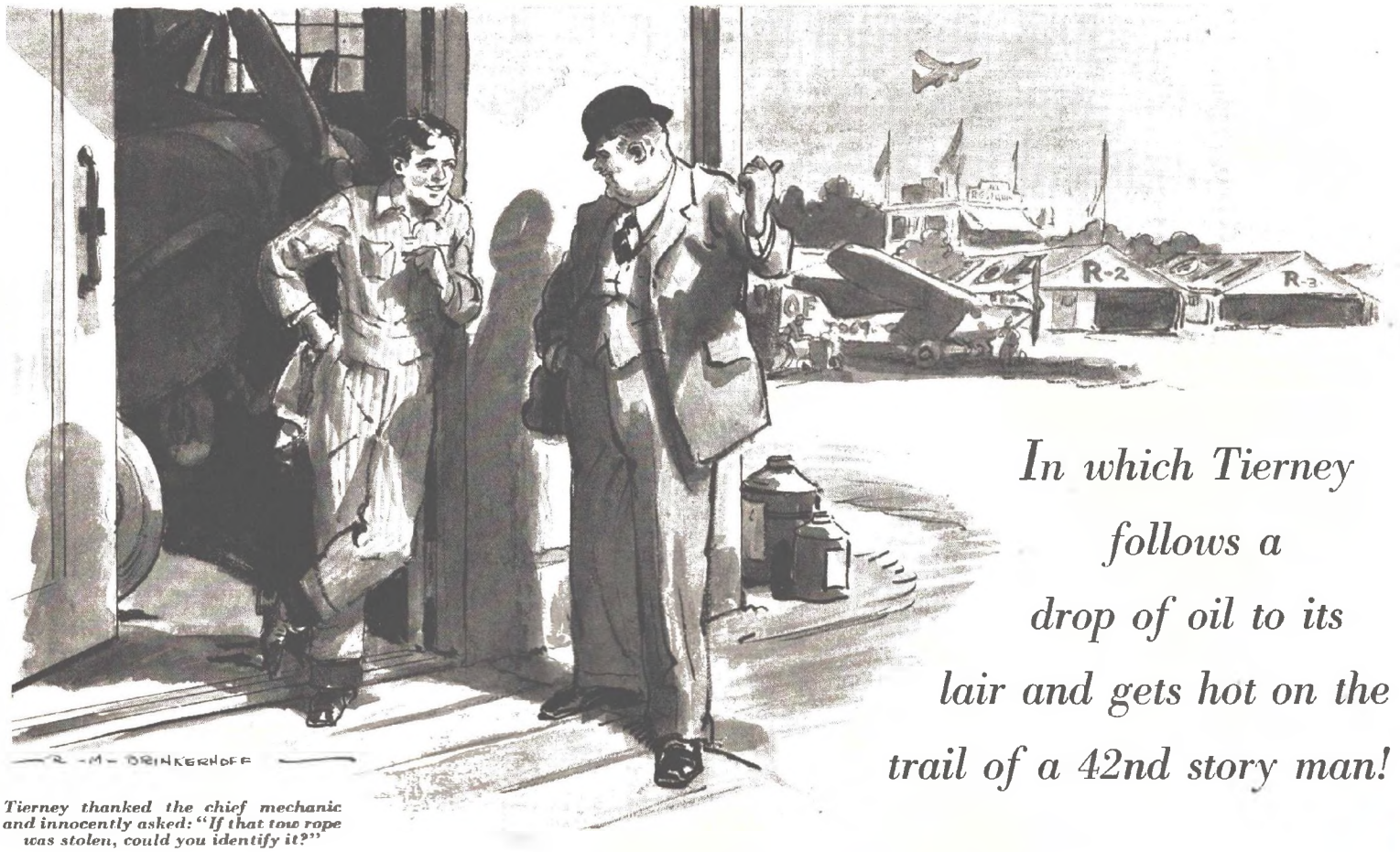
Chapter Three

WHEN Tod entered the cabin aft, Captain Jarvis was seated at a green baize table, a chart spread out before him.

"Just having a look at the Society and Tuamotu Groups," he explained. "Sit down, Joe Macaroni. How's my new third officer coming along?"

Tod dropped into one of the swivel chairs. "Fine, sir. I've been helping to outfit our new ordinary, Stan Ridley."

"If I were you," returned *(Continued on page 36)*



Tierney thanked the chief mechanic and innocently asked: "If that tow rope was stolen, could you identify it?"

In which Tierney follows a drop of oil to its lair and gets hot on the trail of a 42nd story man!

The Rope Guy

by John A. Moroso

Illustrated by R. M. BRINKERHOFF

"HERE'S a guy, Maggie, who's getting away with murder." Jim Tierney, retired detective, snug in his little New Jersey cottage, was reading the evening paper before the log fire as his faithful friend and housekeeper darned socks under the lamp on the other side of the table. "Five big jewel robberies in three weeks, all inside of three blocks on Park Avenue where the swells live." He paused to be sure of Mrs. Murphy's undivided attention.

"Precede, Jim. All crimes is interesting."

"He's a rope guy," explained Jim. "The higher the better."

"Yes?"

"You see, Maggie, anybody can get to the roof of a tall apartment house because the roof ain't watched. All the doors at the street level are watched night and day and even an honest peddler ain't got any more chance of getting in one of them swell dumps than I got of being invited to play the organ in a cathedral when a new king is to be crowned or something."

"It would be swell to see you clawing at an organ with your hands and trying to hit the right pedals with thim flatboats of yours, Jim."

"I never tried it, Maggie," replied Tierney modestly, "and of course I wouldn't accept any kind of invitation like that. But I seen an organist play once and he was busier'n a spider with convulsions."

"I like the organ," sighed Maggie good-naturedly, "but I don't think a man weighing two hundred and twenty pounds with feet as big as hospital beds—"

"Never mind the feet again," he protested. "It's brains what counts and this rope guy is the boy with the brains. Nobody living on the forty-second floor, with everything watched below, is going to put in a burglar alarm. They can leave a bedroom window open for a little air at night and not feel uneasy. I mean they used to could do that until the rope guy comes along."

"I get you, Jim."

"This bird works from the roof. He might come in the sub-basement as a garbage or ash man. Up the servants' steps he goes and then up the stairs. Nobody uses the stairs because they got plenty of elevators. But they got to have stairs in case of fire or an elevator breakdown, see? The stair landings is hid from view. The elevators have beautiful walls. Nobody can see him walking up with his coil of rope and light steel grappling hook. Well, he makes the roof, the scuttle door of which is locked on the inside, and he puts the lock out of business. Are you listening, Maggie?"

"Sure, Jim. Would you like to have a cut of pie and a glass of milk?"

"Make it apple pie, Maggie," he said instantly, and turned his round, baby-blue eyes upon the newspaper with its story of the roof burglar.

The New York social season was in full swing—opera, horse, and dog shows, big dinners and balls. All the rich women were getting from bank vaults their genuine diamonds, emeralds, and pearls to replace the imitations they had used during the summer months. Park Avenue was a storehouse of gems. A clever thief had only to watch the news of society to know just where to lay his hands on a fortune if he could get to it. Through the rental agencies, a well dressed crook could get the location of any apartment to be reached from the roof.

In the five roof robberies the insurance companies estimated the loot at three-quarters of a million dollars, and the police were of the opinion that all the jobs were done by one man.

Maggie, handing Jim the pie and milk, was held for further comment.

"Maggie," he opined, "Inspector Sweeney in charge of the detective bureau in New York is all right, but the men working for him are a bunch of minnows playing around a whale. You see, Maggie, when I was young we learned crime from criminals, but nowadays, Maggie, they have a police college. A college, Maggie! Can you beat that? Making highbrows of cops and bulls! Wouldn't that rattle the cherries on grandma's bonnet?"

"Why don't you take a coupla days off and land this human spider?" Maggie asked. "A visit to the city and meeting old friends would do you a lot of good."

"What time is it?"

"Nine o'clock."

"Sweeney generally drops in about this time to see how the night shift is working. I'll ask him." He pulled himself from the big chair and in a minute or two had the inspector on the phone.

"Jim Tierney talking. . . . Yes, feeling fine, but how about this rope guy getting caught by James Tierney? Oke? Be in tomorrow, Chief."

"Do you want your swell clothes packed, Jim?" asked Maggie.

"Nix, Maggie. I'll just brush off the derby."

Tierney was hardly seated beside Inspector Sweeney's desk when one of the latter's staff entered with a report from the precinct station covering the field of the rope burglar.

"Another one, Chief. This is the sixth," said the detective.

"Did they close the place immediately?" asked Sweeney.

"Everything tight as a drum and waiting for you."

"All right. Get the camera men and identification men started. Come on, Jim." Sweeney, pink of face, white of mustache, firm of jaw, spick-and-span in his blue and brass buttons, was out of the office and into his waiting car with Tierney, without an instant's delay.

They found the case in the hands of capable precinct men. No one had been allowed to enter the handsomely appointed apartment under the roof of one of Park Avenue's tallest and finest apartment

houses. The apartment, with its garden terrace hanging out over the city, was more like a country estate than a cliff dweller's home.

As they stepped from the private elevator of the owner into the home's modernistic vestibule, the inspector noticed the old-time detective's eyes pop at the splendor of it.

"Babylon, Jim," said Sweeney, "was a shanty town compared to this burg."

The owner, J. Kilbreth Huntingdon, a pale, clean-shaven man of about thirty-five, dressed in silken pajamas under a lounging robe of grey and gold silk, welcomed them.

"The servants haven't come yet," he explained. "Not even the valet. We don't rise until eleven or later and Mrs. Huntingdon is visiting over on Long Island. Big party and all that." He invited none of the officers to a chair, nor did he extend his cigarette case. Evidently Mr. Huntingdon was bored with this forced contact with the police.

"SIT down over there," Sweeney said to his uniformed stenographer. "You other fellows just stand where you are for the time being." Turning to the rich man, Sweeney said simply: "Tell it."

Pacing up and down a Persian rug of the vestibule, the owner of the establishment told his tale, dropping cigarette ashes wherever they might fall.

"Heard a noise just before daybreak," he said. "Saw a man step into the bedroom from the terrace. Stuck a gun in my face and told me to show him the safe where Mrs. H. keeps her jewels. I showed him, of course, and he made me open it. He took out everything, value about two hundred fifty thousand."

"Covered by burglary insurance?" Sweeney asked.

"Surely."

"Then what happened?"

"He roped me to a chair and put adhesive tape over my lips so I couldn't yell. Then he walked out of the apartment."

"You say he entered from the terrace?"

"Yes. Evidently he came down from the roof by a rope. After I managed to knock over the telephone and central sent help, I looked out on the terrace and saw the rope hanging from the roof. It's there yet, I suppose. At least I haven't touched it."

"About what time was the robbery?"

"Just about daybreak."

"Can you describe the burglar?"

"Short man, heavy-set, dark cap, clean-shaven, age about thirty."

"Do you think you could identify him if you saw him?"

"I doubt it. The light was too faint to see clearly."

The identification men got busy with the brushes and powder, seeking finger prints. The camera man took pictures of the bedroom and the library with the open safe set in a wall between bookshelves. Mr. Huntingdon's valet arrived, and that gentleman then proceeded to array himself properly. Neither on the outer wall of the building nor on the tessellated floor of the terrace were signs of finger or foot prints.

"He's about the slickest we ever went up against," Sweeney told his old friend. "In all these cases he has used socks over his shoes and gloves for his hands."

"Yes, I read that in the papers," said Tierney. "We ain't got nothing but the rope to work on and the fences where he'll get rid of the loot."

"That's all, Jim."

It was a good stout half-inch rope that dangled from the roof. Evidently it had been used often, for it was splotched in places and in the middle was a heavy scar in the fibre. Tierney examined the scar with his enlarging glass in the brilliant morning sunshine. Then he put the glass over one of the splotches and smelled of it.

"Grease," he said. "Let's go up to the roof."

Above they found a heavy single hook of iron made fast under the coping, on the inside. Tierney carefully lowered his great bulk to the roof and lay on his back, looking upward and examining the fastening and the stone coping for any trace of finger prints. He found none. Then he examined the rope where it ran over the coping. It lay flat but not taut, and wearing cotton gloves, he lifted it and examined the under part.

"We better take the rope to headquarters with us," he said as he gently hauled it in and coiled it. "Get one of the boys to find some clean paper so we can wrap it up carefully."

"All right, Jim. Sometimes I think we fellows in the department live so close to the job that we don't see half the things that are under our noses. Go to it."

"All I can see is to trace this rope."

"That's some job, Jim."

"Well, Chief, it come from a garage and I'll bet a hat that no mechanic with a steady job is going to spend his nights doing this kind of work as a side line. Most mechanics are married and get good pay. Therefore it looks to me as if the man we want has a car and takes it to some garage when he isn't using it, where he has it greased, oiled, and cleaned, and where he might pick up the rope he wanted for this kind of a job."

"That's good sense, Old-timer."

"We gotta get men around to all the garages and find out which one had a tow rope and iron hook stolen recently."

"That's easy. As soon as we get back to headquarters I'll have each precinct captain report on every garage in his bailiwick."

The rich Mrs. Huntingdon, famous as an amateur aviator, had gone to her Long Island summer home with a party of friends to plan for a flight to Florida later in the season. The mechanics in the great hangar at Roosevelt Field were busy with her six-passenger plane, working under her direction, when she received the news of the robbery. The afternoon papers reported that she broke into tears, not over the financial loss but because among the jewels taken by the rope burglar were a brooch and necklace that had been handed down from mother to daughter through several generations. To the reporters she begged that wide publicity be given this fact in the hope that the thief would return these two pieces and keep the rest.

Tierney, who remained with the inspector while the search of the city's garages went on, read this interview and grinned.

"She's the generous old girl," he commented. "Why *not* let the rope guy keep the rest of the loot? The insurance company pays her husband for it and if she gets the heirlooms back that's velvet, huh?"

"These dames," laughed Sweeney, "are all generous that way. And a lot of the common run of us are, Jim, for that matter. It's easy to give away somebody else's stuff."

"That's right," nodded Tierney wisely. "I remember one time a rookie lost his gun and was almost crying. So I give him Paddy Gleason's gun."

At a table in a corner of the office, under a bright light, a little man with a slight hump to his back was busy with a stereoscopic microscope and a small knife. Very gently he was scraping off samples of grease and oil from the burglar's rope. He was a laboratory worker secured from one of the big oil companies, an expert in the things that make machinery sing instead of shriek.

Night had come and the precinct captains were reporting in turn. Their reports were the same—no rope and hook reported stolen or lost.

"We'll have to spread out to the suburbs—Westchester, Long Island, Connecticut, New Jersey," said Sweeney. He turned to the oil scientist. "How they coming, Mr. Truesdale?"

"Pretty well, Inspector," reported the little man. "The oil is a grade sold by my company. It's a very high grade, the latest developed in our own laboratories and not long put on the market. The national advertising has just started. It's for winter use and so far there wouldn't be a great deal of it sold."

"That's something," grunted Tierney. "It sure narrows down the field."

"It's hard to tell about the grease," continued Mr. Truesdale. "Grease is just grease and there has been no important improvement in it in recent years. I think it would be impossible to trace this sample back to the source."

Sweeney already had a rope manufacturer send a specialist to examine the fibre and he had reported that hundreds of thousands of feet of this particular weave of rope had been sold the country over.

The last of the precinct captains reported nothing doing. The out-of-town garages would be combed for miles around the great city, but to Inspector Sweeney the chance of getting results seemed infinitely small.

"That's all I can do for you, gentlemen," said Mr. Truesdale.

"Thank you, Mr. Truesdale," said Sweeney gloomily.

"But," said Tierney, "we ain't blocked yet, Chief. How about getting a list of the dealers in this new oil, and from them a list of the customers. There'd be a follow-up on new customers through the service men, wouldn't there?"

"That's the custom in the trade," said Truesdale. "From what a friend of mine in the sales department tells me the first problem is to get a new article started and then to keep behind it, holding every customer, making him satisfied so that he will make new customers. I think

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In the middle there was a heavy scar in the fibre. Tierney carefully examined it.

The Crestwood FEUD

by

Harold Keith

When Andy breezed into school with his Texas drawl, the team began going places!

"Say—" looking around our den admiringly— "y'all've got y'selves a swell place in heah. Not bad!"

Illustrated by ERNEST FUHR

ON the Crestwood college campus snow was floating down softly, drifting in the window casements of the men's dormitory, which lay dark and silent, its occupants asleep. The custodian's collie began to bark as a voice called up from the street entrance:

"Hello up theah!"

Nobody answered, whereupon the owner of the voice rattled the locked vestibule door and the collie redoubled its barking.

On the second floor we all were awakened by the noise. Art Bland, our last year's baseball captain, stuck his head out the window.

"What do you want?" he called down, somewhat gruffly. Art had always liked his sleep.

"What d'you care?" came the surprising answer from below. "Are y'all going to open this door or am Ah going to have to kick it in?"

Art's eyebrows lifted in sleepy amazement, but with his usual good nature he groped for his robe and house slippers and went bumping downstairs in the dark.

Ed Koy, our big right-handed baseball pitcher, raised up out of bed on one elbow, sore as a bear.

"Who's the fresh guy making all the racket?" he growled.

Soon Art and the stranger came tramping back up the stairs. Art switched on the light and we looked the newcomer over.

He was a lithely built, well-dressed 150-pounder with confident blue eyes and a cocksure smile. He wasn't a bit abashed at having pulled us all out of bed at two o'clock in the morning; he even seemed to enjoy it.

"Ah'm Andy Hinch," he told us. "Which one of you is Ed Koy?"

"Guilty," Ed replied, yawning.

"Did you get a letter sayin' Ah was comin'?" Hinch asked. "From Squeak Jones, down home?"

"Oh, yes!" Light dawned in Ed's eyes. "I thought you'd get in this afternoon and get yourself located." We could see that Ed was only politely interested, but Andy Hinch didn't seem to mind.

"Mah bus broke down," Andy explained. "Had to walk the last seven miles to town. Your address was the only one Ah had so Ah busted right up heah. Say—" looking around our den admiringly— "y'all've got y'selves a swell place in heah. Not bad!"

We noticed that a baseball glove was strapped to one side of his valise, and that renewed the pangs we all suffered every time baseball was mentioned. You see baseball was a major sport at Crestwood—until the board of regents abandoned it because of finances, just three days ago.

After shaking hands with all of us, Andy spied a newspaper clipping tacked up on the wall, a clipping that showed a picture of a track man crouching upon the mark. The fellow in the picture was Joe Starnes, our shortstop, who was also our fastest sprinter. Andy recognized Joe at once, and after reading the writeup turned to Joe, who was standing in the middle of the room, blinking sleepily.

"So you're the conference sprint champion? What's your time for the hundred?"

Joe named the Central Conference record.

Andy whanged Joe on the back.

"Mebbe Ah can cut a fifth of a second offa that next spring," he announced, and Joe looked like Andy had bit him. The rest of us couldn't help laughing, but there was no levity on the face of Andy Hinch. He turned to the rest of us.

"What's this Ah read about Crestwood not going to have a baseball team next yeah?" he wanted to know.

"It's true," said Art. "The president and the board of regents say there isn't any money available for baseball and refuse to go in debt to finance a sport that has never paid for itself."

"Wheah does your money for baseball come from?" Andy asked.

"From football receipts. But the football receipts fell off this year."

"What're your expenses?" persisted Andy.

"Well, Crestwood belongs to the Central Conference and plays a round-robin schedule against schools located several hundred miles from us. Consequently we've paid out hundreds of dollars in guarantees to visiting teams. Last year the coach got a salary of $3,600 and besides that we've had to pay our officials and buy a lot of new equipment each year."

"What're your admission prices?"

"Fifty cents plus the government tax," answered Art.

"Way too high!" snapped Andy. "Didn't y'all know theah's a depression on?"

By this time Joe Starnes couldn't stand it any longer. Andy's blunt questioning had aroused his ire.

"What's it to you?" he shot at Andy, pugnaciously. "We didn't draft the schedule, hire the coach, or buy the equipment! We didn't set the admission prices!"

"That's true," agreed Andy, pleasantly, "but you *ought* to set 'em from now on. If the school won't give us a baseball team, we can have our own team and run it ourselves! We can make it pay!"

"What d'you mean 'we'?" scornfully demanded Joe, still burned up over that crack Andy had made about his hundred-yard record. "You're not even enrolled here. And even if you were, what makes you think you could make our team?"

Andy grinned a cool confident grin, and I couldn't help but admire his poise under fire.

"Ah'll make your ball club when the time comes, don't worry about that," he said, quietly and easily. "That is—if you have a ball club. And we can have one if we'll cut down our ovahhead, do without a coach, play schools closah home, use our old equipment, and cut our admission prices down to wheah the average fan can afford to pay. If we go before the regents and show 'em wheah we can operate a baseball team without losing money, Ah bet they'd let us have a team at Crestwood this yeah."

We chewed on that for a moment while Andy looked at us expectantly. Then Art got up and began to spread the extra bunk.

"Let's talk it over tomorrow," he proposed. "We'll fix you up for the night, Andy, and tomorrow you can see Mr. Graddy and he'll assign you a room and give you a note to the registrar."

"Much obliged," said Andy. "Gosh Ah'm sleepy." And he began to unlace his shoes.

And that was how Andy Hinch came to Crestwood.

Well, we decided to try his plan. The more we got to thinking about it the better it looked, and whether we liked it or not, it seemed to be the only

way that we could save baseball at Crestwood.

We held a mass meeting and petitioned the regents for permission. They reluctantly gave it to us but with a number of conditions, the main one being that we wouldn't contract any debts.

We went over to the president's office to discuss it with him and the regents. We were all a little nervous—that is all but Andy Hinch.

"Frankly," the president told us, "I don't think you can do it. Where are you going to get the money to operate?"

"We're not going to need much money," Andy spoke up instantly. "We're going to operate within our means. We'll use our old suits, and gloves, and bats, and we'll dodge a great deal of the traveling expense by playing teams closer home. We're not going to buy anything we can't pay for."

The president looked at Andy with respect.

"I admire your optimism," he said, "and although I'm afraid the odds are against your succeeding, I believe you've chosen the best possible way to combat the problem. Now I'll tell you what we've decided to do. Much of a baseball team's expense is incurred at the start of a season and despite the fact you propose to operate without our help, we'd still be responsible for your debts because you're still the Crestwood University team. But we're going to give you a trial. You go ahead and schedule your first game, either at home or abroad, and play it, making all the arrangements yourselves. Then if you can come to us with a financial statement showing you have managed your season up past the first game without losing money, we'll let you go on, managing it yourselves."

Well, that was fair enough and suited us fine. We thanked him, and as we filed out, he shook hands with each of us.

Andy immediately rustled a bunch of rakes, hoes, and shovels and hired a team of mules and a road drag out of his own pocket. The first day it got warm, our whole squad got out in old clothes and began to work over the diamond. We didn't give him command—he took it. With Andy driving us, and working like a Trojan himself to set the pace, we buckled in and soon had the old field blossoming like a rose.

There didn't seem to be any limit to the things that guy could think up. He borrowed a plow and talked the university utilities department into giving him a bunch of old Bermuda, and in a month's time our infield was sprouting a level sward of green grass, just like a big league ball park. He saved us the price of a new batting cage by finding some old chicken wire, part of an old seine, and some rubber-tired wheels off of an old baby buggy and recasting it into a serviceable homemade backstop. He even found a red clay bank out east of town, and we hauled the clay in and strewed it along our base paths and in our pitching box.

It was a rare picture to see Andy riding that drag in an old pair of unionalls that flopped in the wind, juggling the reins and cracking the whip and yelling at the team in that Texas brogue of his. Soon it began to dawn on us that he was a natural mule-skinner—not only of horses but also of men.

"Whew!" said Ed Koy, one day, flicking the perspiration off his brow with his fingers, "we may not have the best ball *team* in the state, but I'm here to tell everybody we're going to have the best ball *field!*"

Soon as the cold weather was over Art called out the squad for the first practice. We ran into Andy in the dressing room. He was over in the corner, surveying himself in an old sweat shirt, baseball pants, and shoes.

"Hot dawg!" he called gleefully. "Ah guess old Andy don't look so bad in this outfit, hey?"

He didn't look so bad in it either, if you ask me. He was lean and brown, and he had a sweet pair of legs on him with calves that bulged like a boxer's.

"Wonder what he's got?" Art whispered to me, as we followed the mob out on the field.

We started off with hitting practice. Ed Koy was throwing 'em over, just laying a straight ball in there, high and low, inside and outside. I was receiving. My name, by the way, is Bill Gardner.

Andy was third up and you could tell from the way he handled himself that he thought he could hit the greatest pitcher who ever lived. He stood in a sort of relaxed slouch on the right side of the plate, way back in the box, regarding Ed with cool contempt.

"What have you got that Ah can't hit?" he taunted Ed.

"A lefty!" sneered Joe.

"So was Cobb," wisecracked Jimmy Donahue, our center fielder.

Ed looked Andy over and pitched low and outside. Andy fouled it off. He fouled off two more low ones. Then Ed tried him with a high one inside and Andy whipped a terrific line drive to right field. Ed gave him an outside ball and Andy shot a hit into center. Then Ed threw the low ball again, but Andy mauled it back at him, hot as fire, and Ed had to jump to keep from getting hit.

"Throw it and duck!" Art yelled through cupped hands, and out on the mound big Ed's perspiring face broke into a broad grin. He knew a hitter when he saw one.

It was a snappy practice. Andy's sharp hitting seemed to spur everybody, and for half an hour our bats played a tune that was good to hear. Finally Art called a halt and everybody was picking up his glove to go home when Joe Starnes came striding up to Andy, a hard look in his eye. A crowd began to form around them.

"How about a little foot race," Joe said quietly—but ominously.

Andy stood there grinning as though he didn't quite understand, but Joe quickly enlightened him.

"Remember what you told me that first night you came to Crestwood? That you could take a fifth of a second off my hundred yard record?" Joe's chin was sticking out aggressively. "Well, I'm from Missouri and you'll have to show me right now."

For just the fraction of a second Andy looked evenly at Joe, and then at the sea of faces around him. Then—

"O.K. champ," he said, and began to peel off his sweatshirt.

Art, feeling that the situation had got out of his hands, did the next best thing. He stepped off a hundred paces and appointed two judges. Somebody found a piece of twine and stretched it across the finish line.

I felt sorry for Andy. He was dead game, but in Joe he was stepping out against the crack hundred yard man of our conference. Joe was fast on the stretch and the quickest starter I ever saw.

Joe was slipping off his sweater.

"Bettah leave that on," advised Andy, as he stooped to tighten the knots in his shoes.

"Why?" Joe wanted to know.

"Because Ah'm going to go around you so fast the breeze'll give you pneumonia."

Joe gave him a nasty look but Andy only smiled. He seemed to be the only one in the crowd who was having a good time. They lined up, each in his baseball suit, there at the starting line. Art stood behind them.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Wait a minute," said Andy, rising on his toes and looking fixedly down the course to the finish line. "Is that string or yarn they're using down theah?"

"What d'you care?" flashed Joe.

"Plenty," Andy came right back at him. "If it's string Ah'm not going to run. Ah've been cuttin' my neck to pieces too often!"

Joe snorted but the rest of us couldn't contain ourselves. Even Art was chuckling.

"All right, Andy," Art said gently. "Let's be good for a minute now," and Andy subsided.

"On your marks!"

Joe took the crouching stance of the sprinter but Andy stood up straight, leaning a little forward.

"Set!"

Joe raised up, his back parallel with the ground. Andy never moved.

"Go!"

Joe got his sprinter's start and was out two feet ahead of Andy, but inside of twenty yards Andy laid back his ears and began to make knots. He ran beautifully, skimming behind Joe's elbow in a floating sort of way that didn't seem to tire him a bit. Thirty yards, forty yards, fifty they ran, and still Joe couldn't shake Andy off. We all began yelling. This *was* a foot race!

Then we saw the impossible. Andy began to overhaul Joe. And Joe, getting mad, was trying to look at him out of the corner of his eye and run too. From where we were standing it looked like both of them hit the string together, but when we all ran down to the finish, Pete Reid and Bob Denby, the judges, had a different opinion.

"Joe won by an inch," said Pete.

"Andy nosed him out," said Bob.

And neither could be swerved from his decision by all the argument in the world. While the crowd was pressing around them, Andy walked over to where Joe stood panting and clapped him on the back.

"Want to run it ovah, Joe? Ah'll give you anothah race."

But Joe didn't say a word. He just glared at Andy and walked off.

We elected Andy captain and the first game he scheduled was Dundee, the last college in the state we'd have been allowed to meet if we'd been playing under the supervision of our own university officials. Dundee was an "outlaw" school. It didn't belong to any conference, and it roamed far and wide for its high school baseball players. Most of the larger schools consistently refused Dundee's invitations for games.

We'd heard tales, too, of Dundee spectators. The student body was all right, but there were roustabouts from the oil fields, we'd heard, that weren't above breaking out on the field and chasing the visiting

teams off the premises. In other words Dundee liked to win.

Joe Starnes growled when he heard we were playing 'em.

"We might as well go stick our heads in a lion's cage," he protested. "It's quicker and less painful. Since when did Crestwood start playing schools like Dundee? Whose bright idea was it?"

"We can't get in shape playing weak opponents," Andy had replied without heat. "And besides, why should we turn up our noses at playing a team like Dundee? They've offered us a sixty-forty per cent of the gate and everybody says baseball draws ovah theah. And y'all know why we've got to make good on our first game."

Instead of going over on the train and traveling in style on a Pullman, like we used to, we drove the eighty miles to Dundee in an old bus Andy had chartered for forty dollars.

It was a long drive and we were ravenous when we arrived at eleven o'clock the morning of the game. Last year we'd have taken taxis to the Harvey house and enjoyed ourselves at one dollar per plate. But Andy had a different idea. He scouted around and found a place where they served meals country style, at twenty-five cents a head. It was plain food but there was lots of it.

But Joe Starnes' peeve was growing.

"Rotten grub," he grumbled. "I never go for these cheap John boarding houses."

"Maybe not," was Andy's comeback, his mouth full of roast beef, "but Ah notice you don't pull away from the plate none."

Everywhere we went we heard how good that Dundee team was.

"Our boys have won four straight already this year," the filling station attendant proudly told us. "They beat Barnett last Tuesday, 18 to 3, and Terrill a week ago Saturday, 14 to 0. You'll never beat our boys."

Two hours before the game we drove the bus to the park and put on our suits.

Then we heard a faint boom of thunder and the wind began to freshen. An instant later there was a patter of big raindrops on the window. For a moment, none of us seemed to realize what that patter might mean.

"Holy smokes," Andy muttered, leaping from his bench and walking swiftly to the window. "Ah hope that ain't permanent."

Even as he gazed out at the darkening sky, the patter of rain changed to the drumbeat of a deluge, and before Andy's wide-open eyes the field outside turned into a lake. All the bases disappeared under water, and the pitching mound became an island. Andy turned a white face toward us, and for once he had nothing to say.

Finally someone spoke: "Good-by ball game, and good-by ball team."

And that was correct. Here we were, 160 miles from home counting the round trip, the bus to pay for, all our pre-season expenses to be made up—and no game! And we'd promised the university authorities not to go in debt!

There was the sound of a door opening and we looked up to see our bus driver standing in the doorway.

"If you fellows think I'm going to haul you back to Crestwood for nothin', you're wrong," he said abruptly. "I can get a pay load from Dundee any time. I've already given you credit for half the trip, and you can pay me the forty bucks before we start back."

With a leap he reached the ball, scattering oil hands right and left. Then the fun began.

We stared at the driver's retreating back in silence. I don't suppose the whole bunch had forty bucks between us. We were all scraping through school on the skin of our teeth. On top of it all, through the thick gloom, came Joe's voice with an "I told you so" ring to it.

"All right, Hinch!" he said scornfully, "where's your fairy wand? How're you gonna get us out of this?"

The rest of the team was looking at Joe in that casual way you look at a guy who's making a fool out of himself, but Andy wasn't paying any attention. He was looking out the window at the sky, and thinking hard.

Suddenly a shaft of sunshine brightened up the room and then faded as the swiftly flying clouds hid it from view. But it seemed to electrify Andy. He jumped to his feet and tore right out into the middle of the rain, without a raincoat or anything.

While he was gone it cleared off slick and clean, the wind dropped, and the sun came out warm and hot. The meadowlarks were singing, the frogs croaking, and steam was rising from the ground. It was a peach of a day for baseball—if that Dundee field hadn't been soaked.

Thirty minutes later Andy came bursting back into the room, followed by the Dundee coach. We looked up in surprise for most of us had taken off our uniforms and put on our street clothes, and were all set to hitch hike home.

"Suit up!" was Andy's crisp command. "We're going to play!"

We didn't understand.

"Not me," laughed Joe, sarcastically. "I forgot my water wings."

"Yeah," snapped Andy. "But you didn't forget your hammah. Now listen everybody—"

You'd never guess what that guy had done. When he saw that it might clear off he had hustled out to the edge of town, and on the side of a hill had found a cow pasture that was thickly carpeted with short buffalo grass. He'd then hunted up the Dundee coach and talked him into playing the game out there. At first the coach had tried to back out, but Andy had talked straight to him.

"For ten yeahs y'all have been trying to get a game with us," Andy told him, "and now just because an April showah wets your playing field you want to back down on us, send us back home owin' fifty or sixty dollahs expense money. Is that your idea of opening friendly athletic relations with Crestwood?"

The Dundee coach had begun to hedge.

"But how am I going to let my fans know that we've shifted the game to Perkins' pasture?" he protested. "The game is supposed to start in half an hour."

"Send somebody around in automobiles with megaphones and tell people about it," said Andy. "Comb every street in town two or three times. Paint it on the sidewalks and announce it ovah your home radio station. It won't take long!"

Well, we played that Dundee team out there in that muddy cow pasture in a game such as I never want to play again. We didn't get started until four-thirty on account of having to peg down the bags, sprinkle sawdust over the wet spots, and build a temporary back stop. But when we did go to bat there was a quarter-mile string of automobiles parked along each foul line, and *(Continued on page 34)*

"In Other Years!"

by Stanley B. Paul

The trouble began when Skipe annexed his captain's date---it ended in a flurry of knuckles!

SKIPE ALBRO sat with his heels negligently perched on his desk. In his left hand he held the throat of a worn and battered mandolin. Outside, under his window, C Company was being dismissed after an hour's drill on the snow-covered parade ground of St. Christopher's Academy.

He strummed the steel strings with languid fingers, and then, with a disdainful thrust, whammed out a strong chord. His quavery tenor sounded out above the dying throb of the instrument:

"In other years, Saint Christopher's, we'll think of thee!
In other years, we'll love thee yet, and well—"

What bosh! What tripe to be singing about a crummy dump like this school! A lot of Middle West johnnies dressed up in monkey suits, hopping around saluting each other like Major Generals! The chords died away in dissonant measures.

Skipe sighed and searched his mind for a meaty word that would fully express his contempt for Saint Christopher's, the corps of cadets, the system, and Captain Bart Kent, cadet commander of B Company in particular. Cheesy! Wet! Scummy! Not good enough.

Why had Congressman Stebbins of Wisconsin ever suggested to Skipe's mother, the congresswoman from New Hampshire, that Saint Christopher's was just the school for Skipe? That it would straighten him out and make a man of him?

Skipe tossed his mandolin on the bed. With his left hand he unbuttoned the right sleeve of his blouse and drew it down to expose the forearm. On the smooth flesh of the under side was a small strip of dirty adhesive tape. He sat for a long time studying the mysterious letters inscribed thereon in varying shades of ink.

The letters "GTG" headed the column. These were an abbreviation for "Guys To Get." The next two or three inscriptions were crossed out, indicating past scores satisfactorily settled. Then appeared "HAH." That was Howe, the Andover tackle, who'd kicked him in the face last November. Next and last came "WCM" for Grub Merrill, his roommate back at Dale, the Eastern school he had attended before coming to St. Christopher's.

Skipe sighed again. Life was growing boresome with so few enemies. For a long moment he considered writing down "BK" for Bart Kent. But no! Not yet! If the mug kept riding him much longer, on he'd go, to join the doomed company. But give him a chance first. He might improve.

Skipe decided, as long as he had the pen in his hand, to write his once-a-week letter to his mother. He drew a sheet of paper from a drawer and spread it before him. He began to write with savage thrusts:

"Dear Mother:

I suppose as long as I promised you, that I'll have to stick it out, but of all the rotten holes this is the worst. Don't forget—you said if I got good marks here I could go back to Dale next September, providing Doctor Rathbun will accept me, and you know he said if I was ready to take myself seriously that he would.

"I beg your pardon," he said, stepping forward and bowing, "but aren't you Miss Moyer?"

"Tonight these yokels are having their midwinter hop and I have got to go with some goopy girl who I don't even know from Milwaukee. I tried to get out of it, but the dancing teacher is bringing her for me. I'll bet she will be a lulu. I hope you're satisfied.

Love, Skipe."

"Yay! Front, Scamp!" A harsh yell split the silence of the corridors. Skipe stiffened in his chair.

"Yay! Scamp!" The yell was louder, more imperious.

Skipe rose and tiptoed to the door of his room. Across the hall Peedee Perkins, another new boy, stood peering out with the same look of caution on his face as adorned Skipe's countenance.

"It's your turn." Skipe mouthed the words silently, and pointed a commanding finger toward Captain Kent's door.

"Nuts!" Peedee's mouth was likewise silent, but his lips moved emphatically. "You go!"

Skipe forgot to whisper in his indignation.

"Why, you little chiseler," he said, "I went last time—"

"Albro!"

Skipe looked up the hallway. Kent had come out of his room and was standing by the door.

"Yes, sir?"

"Did you hear me yell?"

"No, sir. That is—yes, sir. It isn't my turn, though."

"Who said anything about turns? Snap into it and shagtail up here!"

"Yes, sir."

Kent withdrew. Skipe buttoned up his blouse and started up the hall. Peedee made a soft but deprecatory noise with his mouth. Skipe doubled an eloquent fist behind his back and shook it menacingly, then straightened up and stepped into Kent's room to salute and stand at attention.

"Scamp, I've got a job for you."

Skipe smothered an impulse to say: "What is it, you big lug?" and inquired respectfully, "Yes, sir?"

"I have a young lady coming out from Milwaukee on the four-fifteen. I'm Officer of the Day and can't get relieved until five. I want you to meet her for me."

"Yes, sir."

"Try that mawvelous Eastern accent on her."

Skipe colored.

"Be sure she knows you're one of the Pawtsmuth, New Hawmpsheh, Albros. She'll love that! Tell her that Mr. Kent of Nebrawska will be along soon. That's all. Beat it!"

"You haven't told me her name, sir."

"Marilyn Moyer. Miss Moyer to you. Dark girl. Good-looking. Ask anyone to point her out to you."

"Yes, sir." Skipe saluted, about-faced, and marched out.

Pud Harkness, Skipe's roommate, had arrived during his absence and was planked comfortably on

Illustrator:
DUDLEY
GLOYNE
SUMMERS

Skipe's bed with his feet on the pillow.

"Hi, Pud," said Skipe laconically, as he drew off his blouse preparatory to donning the more formal jacket of semi-dress.

"Hi, Skipe. What's up?"

"Nothing much. Gotta go down to the village and meet Kent's woman for him."

Skipe crossed to his desk and picked up the pen he had been using, dipped it into the inkwell, and began to letter the initials of Congressman Stebbins on the adhesive tape.

"What're you doing?"

"Aw—nothing. Wouldn't you know that mug would pick on me to meet his drag? I'll bet she's a pip!"

"What's her name?"

"Marilyn Move Over, or something like that."

Pud sat up on the edge of the bed.

"Cripes!" he said. "The Widow!"

"The what?"

"The Widow! Hey, listen, Skipe! Do you want me to go down for you? I can fix it with Kent easy."

Skipe looked at his roommate and noted his excited eyes. He grew suddenly suspicious.

"Why?" he asked. "What's the idea?"

"Don't you know who the Widow is? Boy!"

"No. Who is she?"

"Why she's been playing the hops here since '29. She always fixes it to get a bid from a guy like Kent. Last year it was the crew captain. I suppose she picked Kent because he's captain of the football team next year."

"Yeah?"

"And can she dance! What do you say, Skipe? Want me to go for you?"

Skipe was doing a lot of rapid thinking. A vague idea was beginning to drift through the back corners of his brain. He'd beaten other guys' time where the competition was tougher than it was here.

"Naw, Pud. Thanks just the same, but I'll go. I want to see what kind of a dame it takes to make you hayshakers sit up."

Skipe watched the big interurban trolley roll in and discharge a load of excited girls. He decided that taken in the aggregate they weren't too horrible, although they'd never measure up to the smart crowd that infested Dale Prep during winter carnival week. They were better, probably, than the blind mice who'd come out on the seven o'clock with Mr. and Mrs. Wutzburger, the dancing teachers, and among whom Skipe would find his unwanted partner for the evening.

A tall and willowy brunette, clad in a costume of soft furs, appeared on the steps of the car and stood looking out over the noisy group with a here-am-I expression on her face. Skipe realized that this must be the Widow, Kent's deep breath. To Skipe's practiced eye she represented a type with which he was familiar. Too much mascara. Cheeks too bright. Clothes not just what they should be.

Skipe debated. She'd probably go for a dish of flattery like a tramp for roast beef. What could he best use on her? His Southern gentleman stuff that he'd learned to imitate on his vacations in Washington? Or the polished New England aristocrat? He decided in favor of New England. She'd probably been "you-alled" to death at previous hops.

"I beg your pardon," he said, stepping forward and bowing after the manner of the man from the French Embassy who attended his mother's teas, "but aren't you Miss Moyer?"

The big eyes regarded him and flickered with interest. To her, he was a new type among Saint Christopher boys. His air of worldliness was impressive.

"Why, yes! I am!"

"I'm Cadet Albro, sent by Captain Kent, and at your service. The captain is detained. May I suggest tea at the tavern while we wait for him?"

She batted the lush orbs which had wreaked such havoc in the corps of cadets, and chirped: "Oh, thank you! How delightful!"

As he told Pud Harkness later, it had been like taking candy away from a baby. She fell for him like a ton of brick. How was he to know, though, that she'd insist that Kent give him a dance? Or that she'd take three dances straight to learn the rhumba, which he'd picked up at the Cuban Legation from an attache's daughter? Or that she'd want him to show her the new chapel between dances?

All those things happened that night, and he admitted that it must have been tough on Kent to be bogged down with the big ox named Miss Kronk, that the Wutzburgers had produced as a partner for Skipe. But even that, in Skipe's opinion, didn't justify the slimy trick Kent played on him when he returned from the long expedition to the chapel with the Widow.

"You know, because you've told me so yourself, Pud," Skipe complained bitterly to his roommate, "that no cadet officer will report you for smoking unless he catches you in the act itself. And what did that guy do? Stepped right up to me as soon as we came back and said, 'Have you been smoking, Albro?' The big ape! Laying for me like that! He knew he had me, too. My breath reeked of it."

"Yeah. S'tough."

"I'll say it's tough! Fifty hours walking the guard path is plenty tough. And all because that Nebraska cornshucker couldn't hold on to his woman. I'll get him yet."

But opportunities for scamps at Saint Christopher's to wreak a horrible revenge on commissioned officers are few. Skipe had to content himself with petty annoyances such as whistling *The Merry Widow Waltz* softly when Kent was within earshot, or leaving his room untidy for inspection. That only added an hour or so to Skipe's time on the guard path and it spoiled Kent's chances of having a perfect floor.

Then too, Skipe discovered that a deft misstep, just before the company went by the reviewing stand, would throw out the whole rear rank to his left, with a subsequent reprimand from the staff for Kent's sloppy drilling of his company. That, thought Skipe, was swell, and he practiced it with unholy glee.

As time went by, there were other persecutions from Kent. There was, particularly, the night Kent read aloud a telegram from

Skipe gathered his entire power and threw it into his legs. The man ahead drew away a bit.

Skipe's mother that had been phoned over from the telegraph office. Instead of writing the message down and bringing it up, Kent stood at the foot of the stairs and bawled: "Telegram for Albro from Washington, D. C. 'Pleased with marks for April love to darling boy grandmother is sending you a fruitcake love Mother'."

That was the night Skipe rolled down his sleeve and underlined the initials "BK" on the adhesive tape. From then on he was out to "get" Kent.

"WHAT does Kent do in the spring when there's no football?" he asked of Pud, one afternoon a few days later.

"Track," Pud replied. "He's a swell quarter miler."

"Oh, he is!" said Skipe, with a glint in his eye.

A letter to his mother, written the following day, concluded with: "You ask what I would like for my birthday. I would like a stop watch. I don't know of anything that would please me as much."

His mother regarded this as a peculiar request, but she readily sent him the desired instrument. And Skipe made a practice of being on the fields when the track team was out, covertly fingering his stop watch. As often as he was able to do so unobserved, he used it on Kent. At the end of a week of this furtive observation he had yet to see Kent break 53 seconds.

A week later when the Chanute Engineers came up he clocked Kent in a meet. Kent ran a beautiful 440, with a smooth, clean stride and this time he wasn't coasting. Skipe snapped the watch at 52.3 and grinned. He felt pretty good. He had done 51.8 in the schoolboy meet at Cambridge a year ago. It looked as if things were beginning to fatten. Kent lacked drive at the finish and that was where Skipe could put it on. It was an exultant scamp who took his way back to the dormitories that afternoon.

At the entrance to the building his eye fell upon a leather wallet lying on the turf. He picked it up and opened it for identification. Under a sheet of celluloid a girl looked at him from a photograph. She was blonde and lovely with wide laughing eyes and a saucy head of sun-tumbled hair. Skipe opened the right flap and saw in gilt letters on the leather the name, "Hobart Kent."

So she was Kent's girl! Skipe whistled softly, with a new respect for his enemy's taste. But what a smodge Kent was to get excited about the Widow when he had a girl like this at home! Inscribed in a corner under the smiling face, were the words, "See you in June. Marcia."

Later, before evening mess, he heard Kent come up the stairs and go to his room. Skipe picked up the wallet and followed him down the hall.

"I found this, sir," he said, "just outside the entrance."

Kent looked at the extended wallet and wrath blazed in his eyes.

"Oh, you did! Well, how did you know it was mine?"

"Why, I looked to see, sir."

"Yeah?" Kent grabbed the wallet. "Next time don't have such keen sight. Beat it!" He shoved Skipe out into the hall.

There was gratitude for you! The cheese! Was he afraid that Skipe would beat his time with the photograph?

Skipe returned to his room. Just before he entered he glanced back to make sure that Kent's door was still open. He picked up his mandolin and his acute tenor sounded down through the corridors:

"Mer—ree Wi—dow, Mer—ree Wi—dow—"

Crash! Kent's door swung to with a mighty bang, followed by the squeal of metal as he closed the transom. Skipe collapsed on the bed and rolled his laughing face into the depths of a pillow. The meek, he remembered, shall inherit the earth!

The inter-company track meet at Saint Christopher's is held on the next to the last day of school. Each outfit can qualify three men for each event. There was great surprise when Skipe appeared, on the qualifying day, clad for combat.

"Hi, Fruitcake, what are you gonna do? Dance the rhumba?"

"That's not a track suit. That's his underwear. Ain't he got pretty biceps, though?"

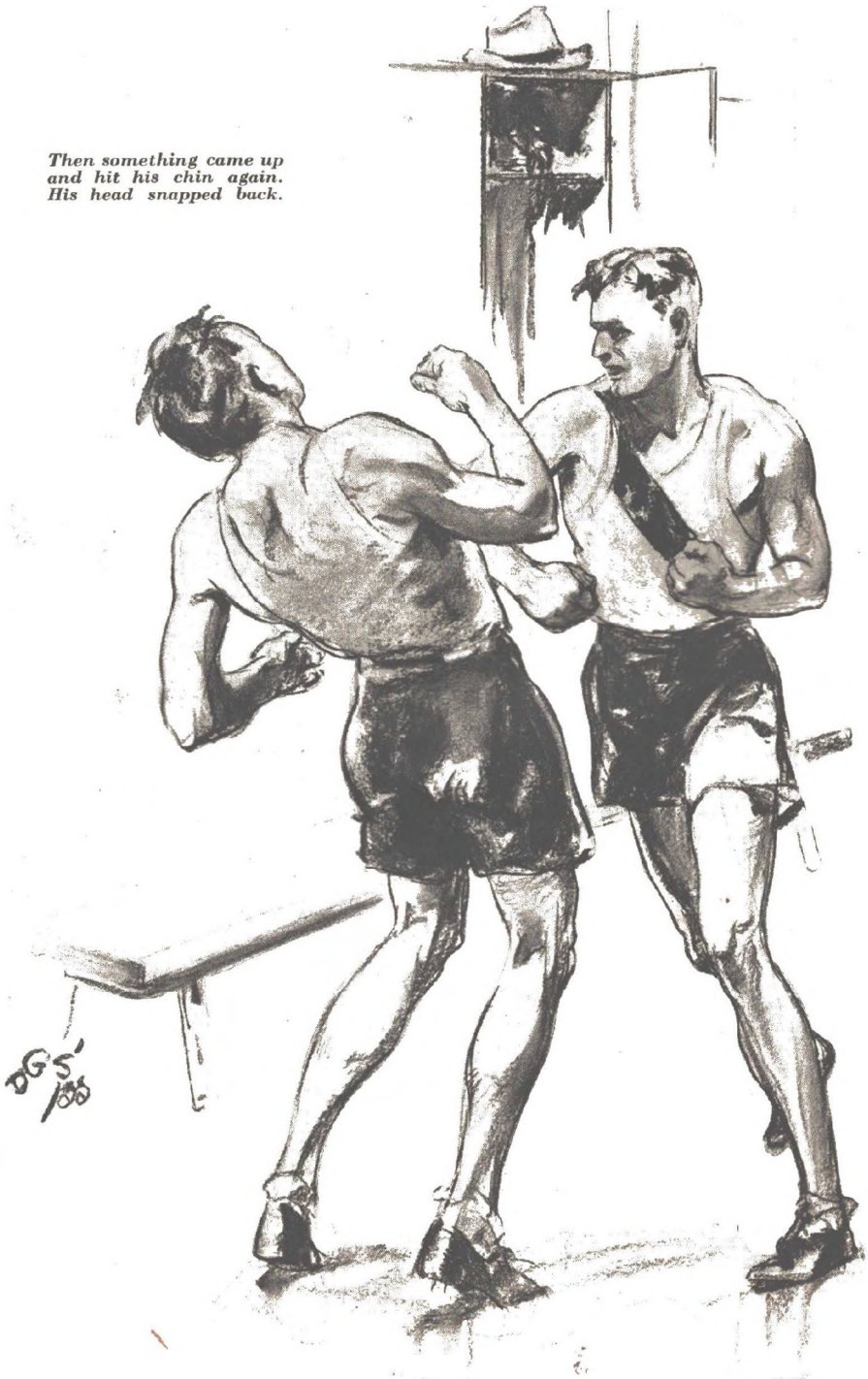
Skipe grinned. He ran his heats carefully, placing himself at second and third so that no great interest would be aroused.

"You do a nice quarter, Albro," said Kent. "Are you going out for any other distances?"

"Oh, no, Captain! Only this one. You see, I like it because you start way up the track and only have to turn once. I get awfully dizzy on turns, sir."

"You do, eh! Well, in my opinion you're dizzy anyway."

"Yes, sir. Quite so, sir." And then added to himself: "Like a fox!"



Then something came up and hit his chin again. His head snapped back.

The day of the finals—the day of Skipe's projected revenge—at last arrived. For Skipe, it dawned rich in promise, but the hours until three dragged by on gluey feet. At two-thirty, unable to contain himself longer, he started for the field house to change his duds. On the gravel path, which knew so well the tread of his suffering feet, he passed Kent, walking with a big red-faced man who, Skipe imagined, must be his father.

Skipe was so intent on delivering a sloppy salute that he failed to observe the girl at Kent's side until he was almost abreast. Then, for a moment, he felt a hot glow. She was the girl of the photograph, and much lovelier than her picture! All the way from Nebraska to see her hero collect medals! Skipe turned and looked after them for a moment. See the big lug making chests for her benefit! Well, he might get the medal for being the best set-up cadet, but all he'd get in the quarter mile would be crabs and icewater!

The race was called midway of the meet. Skipe felt, as he pranced at the starting line, that it was a shame that both he and Kent were running for B Company. It would have been added joy to have snatched a few points away from Kent's team as well. He took a moment to make sure that the blonde vision was in the stands. There she was, poor kid, all trembly with anticipation. It was just too bad, that was all!

The starter spoke to them softly. Skipe avoided looking at Kent as they crouched. He was afraid that some of his exultation might show in his eyes. Kent was third from the pole. Skipe was on the outside. He strained forward, the little gun spoke, and they were off.

From the corners of his eyes he could see Kent lacing out for the lead and the pole. Skipe ran easily until the captain was out front. Then, driving a little, he crossed in front of the pack to fall in behind him.

Things were going just as he'd planned. He dogged Kent down the long stretch into the turn, pacing rhythmically at his heels. Kent looked over his shoulder once as they came into the bend, and stepped up his rhythm a bit. Skipe did likewise.

The rest of the field was falling back. Over in the stands the crowd began the mounting cry that heralds the approach of the last stages of a race.

They came into the stretch stepping high. Now was the moment! Skipe swung out to get a clear path ahead and began to dig in. The distance between them didn't change a bit. He drove a little harder and glanced at the back of Kent's jerking neck. It still stayed away.

Skipe was worried. This guy wasn't supposed to have any finish drive! He gathered his entire power and threw it into his hips and legs, spending it wholly in a fierce effort. The man ahead drew away a bit.

Oh, moment of glory, where, for Pete's sake, are you? What's wrong? Skipe sucked his wind and held it, letting go with everything he had. It was no use. Kent broke the tape five yards ahead, and stepping away with every lift of his legs.

"What," asked Skipe between gasps a moment later, "was the time on that one, Coach?"

"A new academy record! Fifty-one seconds flat!"

Kent came up with an outstretched hand.

"Good trying, Albro!"

"Congratulations!" said Skipe, and then added: "I'd no

(Continued on page 34)

ROUGH COUNTRY

by

Laurie York Erskine

A grim enemy, the jagged wilderness that Renfrew faced!

Illustrations by FRANK E. SCHOONOVER

It was a toilsome conflict between the strength of man and the relentless forces of nature.

"IF it's rough travel you want, you've come to the right shop." Constable Nichols gazed with friendly curiosity through the hazy atmosphere of the little room at the quiet, athletic visitor who sat in the homemade chair. "There are stretches of country up the river," Nichols continued, "that have never been explored."

"That's the stuff I'm looking for," smiled the visitor. "Since I had a holiday from police work, I thought I'd look around and see if there were any places like that left in the world. But when they sent me up here to find it, I had my doubts. Seems so near civilization. It's scarcely a hundred miles north of Vermilion."

"Wait a minute." Nichols rose. "I'll bring the district map in from the orderly room."

The tall visitor stood up and stared down into the fire with a quiet smile playing about his firm lips. His eyes were alight with the outdoor man's pleasure at the prospect of visiting places unmarked on the map. Soon Nichols re-entered the room with the rolled map in one hand.

"Here you are, Major Renfrew!" he cried.

The two conspirators unrolled the map between them.

"Here's where we are now," explained Nichols, pointing with the tempered tip of a hunting knife. "It's marked on the map—Fort St. Roche. Now here's the trail we take tomorrow." The knife blade moved on. "We travel southeast to Sarvag Lake—that's about a twelve-hour journey in this weather. Then we turn almost directly northeast, following Tinder Creek to the height of land. After that it's easy traveling to this spot, marked Brandley. See, it's here on the Stareway, just a trapper's cabin; Old Brandley lives there all alone, and it makes a good overnight camp. We don't get to the Indian village at Wolf Lake till two days later."

"But hold on. What's the matter with following the river? I mean the Stareway. According to the map, it's the shortest route to Brandley's."

Nichols grinned broadly. "That's your rough country," he said. "As far as I know that river has never been followed from here to Brandley's by any mortal man who came out of it alive. There's an abandoned cabin up about seventy miles—here, where the river bends sharply. We keep a store of food there for emergencies. I've followed the river up as far as that, but the going was too rough for me from there on—colossal great gullies run off from the river bed, and what a bed! All granite, and spruce-littered jungle. What's up above the bend, no white man knows. And the Indians won't touch it. They say too many have lost their lives on the Stareway, up above."

"Stareway," said Renfrew thoughtfully. "That's a funny name."

"Yes. Likely a corruption of Stairway. There's probably a succession of falls up above."

"Why don't we follow it up?"

"Can't do it. I've got to make the winter patrol to Wolf Lake on time. The Indians expect it. You'll have to leave the exploring until after I come back—unless old Brandley will go with you."

"Nonsense!" cried Renfrew. "I came up here to make this patrol with you. We can explore after the patrol."

They set off on a clear winter's morning, with the

temperature at twenty-three below in a windless calm so still that the snaps and cracklings of the white-glazed wilderness sounded like the sharp reports of musketry. The well-fed dog team, masterfully controlled by the veteran Nichols, bounded forward in high spirits, whisking the laden sled over a smooth crust of wind-swept snow. The two men took turns at the hales of the sled, and by turns packed the trail or, as the dogs loped fast on the down slopes, rode the sled. They traveled fast, making Sarvag Lake late in the afternoon—an exhilarating, highly satisfactory day's run.

Good weather and good trail conditions continued. Three days later they crossed the height of land and loitered luxuriously for an afternoon and a night at the camp of Timbark Scantle, a Yankee trapper who roamed the North in winter with his sled and dogs as casually as an itinerant peddler might roam the Middle-western states.

Timbark proved to be an amusing conversationalist, ready as they sat round the evening fire to hold forth unceasingly upon the wealth of incidents and encounters that his keenly observant nature had recorded over a period of many lonely weeks.

"You'll be goin' on ter Brandley's," he remarked. "I'll be cur'us to know how old Wolf Bait's doin', and that new pardner of his."

"Didn't know Wolf Bait Brandley ever tied up with any partner," said Nichols.

"You didn't! But then it would be since October that you made yore last hike over. Well, Wolf Bait's got a pardner since then."

"Indian?"

"No," chuckled Timbark. "He's a white feller, and a mean-lookin' one. Must have come in through Hay River, or you'd 'a' seen him. He came to my camp down the Salty about the time of the first freeze-up. He was carryin' home some meat he'd killed."

"What's his name?" Renfrew asked lazily.

"Don't know. All I got out of him was he's winterin' with old Wolf Bait. He didn't talk worth listenin' to, and he wasn't pleasant to look at. Had a big cut across his face that twisted up his mouth peculiar. All dressed up in a squaw blanket coat, he was, and had a dumb, sour way about him. Plain bilious, he looked."

"From Hay River?"

"How else could he 'a' come? They say there's bad distemper among the dogs up there this year."

From which the conversation turned to dogs, and was lost in Timbark's claims for a lead dog he had once owned that couldn't exactly talk, but made up for it by identifying trees by their barks.

The next day Renfrew and Nichols traveled swiftly on and made camp late in the afternoon on a hilltop that sloped to the brush-lined banks of the mysterious Stareway River. Renfrew amused himself in the long evening by trailing a recent traveler along the river bank to the remains of a camp fire which he wagered with Nichols had been built and abandoned less than seven days before. Nichols took the bet, and then kicked himself on learning that Renfrew had judged by the obvious fact that the fire had been built after the snowstorm of a week ago, since otherwise the ashes would have been buried.

They arrived at Brandley's cabin the next day at noon, and found the copse of spruce trees in which it stood shrouded in silence. Their rousing hails brought no response, and they finally invaded the cabin, thinking that the man must be away on a trap line. But Brandley was not off on any of his trap lines. He was lying, swathed in blankets, on his roughly made bed, beside the stove. There was no fire in the stove and the horrible, fetid chill of the stale air in the tightly sealed cabin was charged with a stillness that set the two men to talking, involuntarily, in whispers. Nichols bent over the prostrate form.

"Is he sick?" whispered Renfrew.

"He's dead," answered Nichols, and he stripped the blankets from the trapper's body. The two men stepped back from the bedside, repelled by what they saw.

"This man's been beaten to death," said Nichols slowly.

With firm, reluctant hands Renfrew tore the heavy underwear from Brandley's body and studied thoughtfully the terrible bruises and lacerations that painted the man's form with ghastly, livid discolorations. Deftly he felt out the fractured bones.

"Horribly beaten," he agreed. "Ribs crushed, leg broken in two places, one wrist broken, and probably a fractured skull." He gazed gravely at Nichols, who stood staring at a garment he held. It was a heavy coat fashioned from a rainbow-striped "squaw blanket" of the Hudson's Bay Company. The front of it was soaked with a gruesome stain.

"Brandley's partner's coat," said Nichols.

Renfrew was silent, carefully and minutely examining the stained, discarded garment.

"Well," he cried, suddenly rising, "let's go!"

"Where?"

"Trailing Brandley's partner."

Nichols grinned. "No hurry," he said. "There are only two ways he can get out of this country. One's the way we came, and we know he didn't take that. The other's up through Hay River Settlement. All we've got to do is to make the first telegraph wire and have them hold him when he gets down to the railway line."

"But he didn't make for Hay River." Renfrew was very methodically repacking a small haversack from which he had taken several toilet articles to clean up with.

"But we'd have passed him—"

"We'd better pack some of this food," said Renfrew. "And we've got to hurry!"

"Why?" Nichols stared in bewilderment. "The man must have headed for Hay River. What else could he do? So what's the rush?"

"We've got to save him. He's trying to make Fort St. Roche by following the Stareway!"

With sudden, galvanic realization, Nichols sprang to help Renfrew pack pem- *(Continued on page 31)*

On the open bank of this stream a log cabin stood, tantalizingly near yet fatally beyond reach.

They could hear the siren plainly now, and the crowd in the lobby stopped milling to listen.

Morning Extra

by Robert *and* Hoyt Moore

Illustrated by GRATTAN CONDON

To the roar of presses the News *waged its own battle to save a city!*

THE Seminole Limited roared in from the south and clattered into the station on Track One. Phil Carter, *News* reporter, who had been on the outside track, was cut off from the station and waited near a baggage truck for the Seminole to pull out. The fast evening train stopped only two minutes in Winston.

Back in the darkened diner at the rear, a cook was standing in an open door smoking his pipe. As Phil watched him idly he saw a tall, fairly familiar figure step swiftly around the shadowy rear of the train and approach the dining car. The man paused and spoke a few low, rapid words to the cook. The negro stepped back and the man climbed the steps, then turned and disappeared inside the early-darkened Pullman ahead.

"Well!" Phil said to himself. "What's the idea? Why is Williams slipping on so softly?"

There came a warning blast from the whistle, a jangle of the bell, and the Seminole rolled away through the night, leaving the reporter frowning thoughtfully.

"Better see Big Jim about this," he muttered, and strode off toward the *News* office.

He made straight for the desk when he entered the local room. Big Jim Verity looked up sharply.

"What's the rush, kid?" he inquired.

"Know anything more about the City State Bank, Chief?" Phil asked in a low tone.

Verity's keen eyes bored into Phil's face, but he answered calmly. "Haven't caught a whisper since my financial journal friend in Chicago hinted that it might be shaky and I told you to keep your ears open. Heard anything?"

"No. But I saw something." Phil dropped his voice still lower. "I saw Arthur Williams, the cashier, getting on the Seminole a few minutes ago—from the wrong side. In the dark, through the diner. And for the past two nights I've seen lights burning in the rear room where the directors meet. Of course that didn't mean so much alone. But when I saw Williams getting on that train—"

Verity sat silent for a long minute.

"I don't know whether both things together mean anything or not," he said finally, "but I'm afraid they do. The City State would go to St. Louis for help. And if City State's in trouble, Winston Trust is also. The same people own both banks."

Phil's heart hammered nervously. "What do you think it all means?"

"Wish I knew." Verity leaned back in his squeaking chair. "Banks have been popping all around us, and you know how people are when a bank pops in a neighboring town. I've been afraid of trouble here. That's why I passed that murmur about City State on to you. But we haven't a line on anything definite. There's nothing we can do now but wait for the blow-off."

Phil moved restlessly. "I might just walk around and see if the directors are meeting again tonight," he suggested. "Of course, I couldn't get in, but—"

Verity nodded. "All right, kid. Hop to it and see what you can learn. But step carefully—remember that everybody's thinking about banks these days. We don't want to start any unnecessary worry. Go easy."

"Yes, sir." And Phil hurried away.

Leaving the office, he walked swiftly toward Church Street, where the two banks stood, almost opposite each other. Phil's seemingly casual walk up the City State side of the street and down the other told him that lights were burning in the rear of both banks.

Yet those two sets of lights revealed little, after all. Phil's newspaper training in accuracy told him he'd have to have more definite proof of something unusual going on. Slowly an idea came to him.

Turning back, he entered a small lunch room that faced the City State. From the lunch counter he could glance across the street and look straight down the corridor of the bank.

Climbing on a stool, he ordered a cup of coffee. The taciturn waiter shoved the sugar bowl towards him and went back to the far end of the counter.

Eyes alert, every perception quickened, Phil made his coffee last. He sipped, and watched the bank across the street. Finally he had his reward. He saw a door open from that rear room and a shadowy figure come down the darkened corridor. The figure entered the cage in front, where a single light burned.

"Going to the telephone," Phil thought with quick intuition, remembering that the instrument was at a desk inside the cage. "I wonder—"

He hurried into the pay telephone booth at the front of the lunch room, and called for the number of the City State. The "busy" signal came instantly. Check! Now for the other! Like a flash, he called the number of Winston Trust, and again the "busy" signal came! Double check! Both banks were occupied, and his guess was that they were talking to each other.

Phil dashed back to the office, a daring idea stirring his brain. If Big Jim would only let him carry it out!

The other three reporters were at their desks. Verity motioned Phil into his private office and asked:

"What did you get, Carter?"

"Plenty," Phil answered, and told what he had learned.

"Doesn't look so good," Big Jim rumbled when Phil had finished. "Not with a bank cashier getting on the wrong side of a train and two banks evidently holding directors' meetings at night, and talking to each other about things. Guess we're in for a blow, kid."

"What about the Winston National?"

"I don't think there's anything to worry about there," Big Jim said slowly, "provided old Tom Dowling gets wind of this soon enough. Of course, if these two banks fail to open tomorrow, Dowling will face a run. But I believe he can meet it. That old coot may be old-fashioned and hard-boiled—but he knows how to keep a bank going come good times or bad. . . . Yet a run is always dangerous. I wish we could do something to help Dowling."

"I've thought of something," Phil offered.

"What?"

"I thought an extra might help a lot—an extra issued just as soon as we know what those two banks are going to do."

"Wouldn't be time," Verity objected. "It would take a couple of hours, maybe more, to throw an extra—and a couple of hours might break a bank."

"My idea," Phil explained, "is to have the extra all ready to go. Write it, set it, and put it on the press tonight as soon as the final's out. Then we'd be ready to start at a minute's notice. With luck, we ought to be able to find out soon after eight o'clock tomorrow morning what the banks are going to do. Then we could throw the extra right into the crowd that may be at the Winston National at opening time."

Slowly Big Jim nodded his head. "It's an idea," he said briefly, and Phil knew this was high praise from Big Jim Verity.

Swiftly, Big Jim reached for a telephone, called Tom Dowling's home number, waited some time for an answer, then spoke:

"Mr. Dowling? . . . Sorry to bother you so late, but it's important. Could you come down to the *News* office for a few minutes? . . . Thanks. I'll look for you."

In less than half an hour Dowling came hobbling in on his crippled leg, snow-white hair standing up stiff and straight and frosty blue eyes looking straight at Verity.

"What's wrong, Verity?" he inquired sharply, resting his heavy cane against the desk.

"We don't know exactly, Mr. Dowling," Verity said slowly. "But we're afraid we may know more in the morning."

"What is it?" Dowling's keen gaze, never wavering, belied his seventy-five years.

Verity met that gaze. "I'm afraid your bank is going to be the only one to open here in the morning."

Old Dowling took the news standing up. His quick glance went to Phil's alert face; then his eyes went back to Verity. "Shoot," he said. "What do you know?"

Briefly Verity explained what he and Phil had learned. "Of course," he concluded, "all this doesn't prove a thing—but what do you think?"

Dowling stared at Verity for a moment before answering. "Yes," he said finally, "I imagine you're right—a storm's coming. Those two banks asked us this afternoon if we could help them. We couldn't. We wanted to—but we investigated carefully, and found them in too bad shape. They've reached their limits, too, with the city banks. I know that. No doubt Williams has gone to St. Louis to try to get cash. I'm certain he'll fail. He'll telephone back in the morning, and if he has failed, the banks won't open. It means a run on us."

Verity looked at the calm, determined face, and suddenly smiled.

"Can you ride out the storm, Mr. Dowling?"

"I think so," the old banker answered quietly. "We've been getting ready for this for quite a while, and I believe we can break a run."

"Suppose the run keeps on day after day?"

The fighting head came up, and the straight white hair seemed to crackle with life. "We won't close," Dowling declared. "We'll pay as long as we can and go down fighting. We'll have to get some money, of course, but I can get a million dollars here by airplane before noon tomorrow. Winston National doesn't owe a cent and we've got a tremendous cash reserve. And we've got nearly a million in government securities. We're willing to face a run."

Verity drummed on the desk for a moment. "I'm not a banker, Mr. Dowling," he remarked finally, "but a newspaper man gets to know a great deal about human nature. We'd like to help you."

"How?"

"I want to print what you've just told me—and I'd like you to get that million dollars here tomorrow."

"But you can't do anything," the banker objected. "It's almost press time now, and you can't print anything about those two banks until you know they're not going to open. The run will start on us as soon as we open in the morning—if the other two fail."

Verity's heavy face broke into one of its rare smiles. He nodded toward Phil. "There's the lad who gave me the idea," he said. "We can make up a first page after the final is out tonight, and throw it on the press. Then, with everything set to go, we'll simply wait until we know our ground. We should be able to rush out an extra in time to do something with the crowd that may be parked at your door tomorrow."

Tom Dowling's white head drooped a little and Phil could see a quiver of the tightly drawn lips.

"You're a good sort, Verity," he said huskily. "Always thought so and now I know it. . . . You're in Winston Trust, aren't you?"

Verity's face was sober. "Yes," he answered. "That bank financed me when I came here and I never felt like pulling out. You know how that is."

"Don't blame you," Dowling said. "And I'm sorry you're going to get caught. Those things—well, they happen sometimes."

"Yes," Verity assented, "but I'm not worrying over that now. The main thing is to save Winston National. It would be a catastrophe if all three banks should go down."

Dowling gripped Verity's hand. "I'm leaving the job in your hands. I'll have the money here before noon tomorrow—count on that," and he hobbled away, head held high.

Verity, after a moment, turned back to Phil.

"It'll be a hard night, kid," he said briskly. "The entire composing room force will have to spend the night here. We can't take a chance on starting anything. We may be all wet on this deal and, if so, it would ruin those banks if we had a leak. Call Higgins."

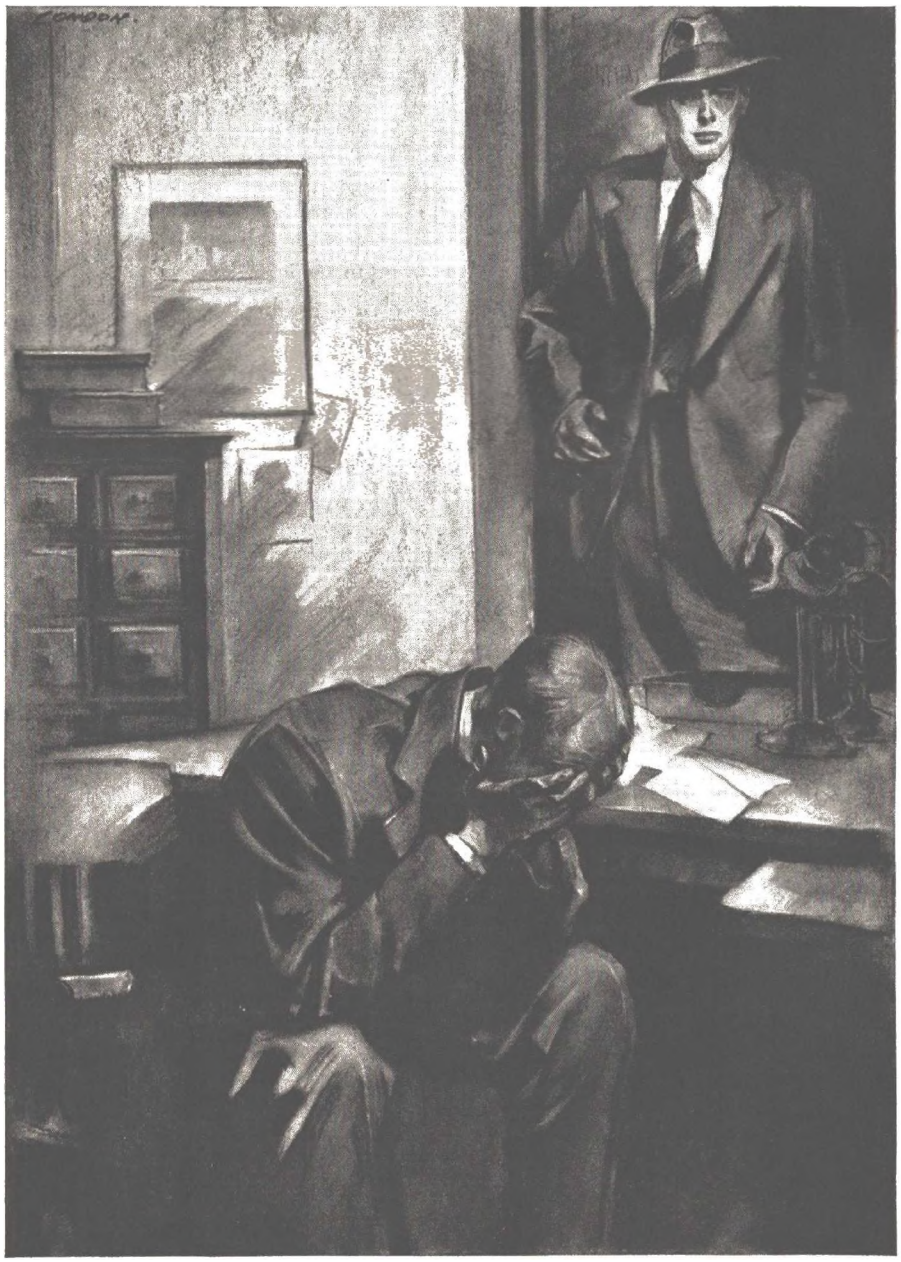
Phil stepped to the composing room and motioned to the grizzled foreman. Higgins came in and Verity laid the matter before him.

"You see how it is, Walt," Verity concluded. "We can't have any leak!"

"We won't have any, Chief," Higgins said briefly. "We'll roll the final in an hour. You might be getting your stuff ready and I'll tell the boys."

Verity snapped into action before the foreman was back in the composing room. He pawed through the copy on the desk, glanced through the telegraph that had come over the wire, scrawled a few headlines, and sent everything whistling back to the composing room.

"That'll wind up the sheet



Rutledge dropped his head into his hands, and Phil felt sudden compassion for him.

"In five minutes," he said distinctly, "this door will be open. If you want your money, come in and get it."

tonight," he said. "Now let's get busy on this other job," and he pushed a pile of copy paper near his worn typewriter and pulled down his eyeshade.

"Write the story of the closing of the two banks," he ordered Phil. "I'll hammer out the lead story."

"What are you using for the lead?" Phil asked.

Big Jim snorted impatiently. "The yarn that Winston National is going to get a million smackers by plane," he said. "That's the thing to hit 'em in the eye with."

Phil smiled to himself. That had been his guess. Turning to his typewriter, he began to write his story—of something that hadn't yet happened. At last he was getting ahead of Big Jim's eternal demand for news while it was news!

The two machines sent out their staccato clatter. Verity hammered on steadily. Phil, pausing once or twice, found time to marvel at Big Jim's intense concentration. Huge hands beat unceasingly at the protesting keys, and Phil knew that the chief was setting down faithfully the interview with Tom Dowling. At last Big Jim ripped the final sheet from the machine.

"How did yours come out?" he questioned, picking up Phil's copy. He gave a grunt as his racing eyes leaped through the typewritten sheets. "Okay," he said. "Now we'll lay out some smashing headlines. . . . Want to look at my stuff?"

It was a rare concession, Phil realized. He had never before known Big Jim to allow another to read his copy before it was in type. Tingling, he took the yarn and began to read.

Big Jim knew his way about! He had caught the dauntless spirit of old Tom Dowling and perpetuated it on paper. There was a ringing optimism about the yarn. No hint of failure—only an assurance that Winston National would stand. Yes, Big Jim was coming through for Tom Dowling!

With a full-sized sheet spread over his desk, Verity was now preparing a dummy layout. His red pencil scored swift lines across the top of the sheet and lettered in streamer heads:

MILLION WILL COME BY PLANE
"Ready to pay," says Dowling

Beneath that swift lines indicated that a double-column story of the coming of the plane and the interview with Dowling was to follow.

On the left-hand side of the page, beneath a single column head, was to appear the story of the failure of the two banks. Phil saw Verity's plan. First of all, the reader was to get the idea that Winston National was able to meet any demand—that was the story of the day! And the fact that two banks had failed was only an incident. Verity looked up at Phil.

"Dig in the files, kid," he said, "and get the last statement of condition of Winston National. We'll need some figures to balance up this yarn," and he began to box in a space.

Higgins came in again. "We're ready to start the extra, Chief," he reported. "I've told the boys and they'll all stick."

Verity thrust the copy into the foreman's hand. "I'll send the dummy back in a few minutes," he said. "Start the machines on this stuff."

In a short time the dummy layout was finished and Verity eased himself back in his chair. "Not a bad job, Phil," he said slowly. "Want to tell Higgins to lock up? Won't do to let some addle-pated loafer wander in and find out what we're doing. And you might close the office doors and turn out some of the lights. The boys out there gone?"

"All gone," Phil answered.

He locked the two outside doors, drew down the shades, and turned off all the lights except one at his own desk, and one at Verity's. There was utter stillness in the office. From the rear, however, came the steady clatter of the linotypes. The extra was on its way.

Verity stretched himself out on a long bench near his desk and, with the ease of long practice, dropped into sleep. Phil could not sleep. He was no veteran newspaper man.

After a while, restless, he rose and walked back to the composing room. Higgins, standing at a make-up stone, nodded to him. Phil roamed around.

Down the side of the building were the four linotypes, and their operators were working on the copy that Phil and Verity had prepared. A linotype always fascinated Phil. There was something almost human about such a machine. His eager gaze watched the busy fingers of the operators as they flashed back and forth across the keyboard, and slug after slug of shining type metal pushed out into the stick. . . .

Higgins, working at the make-up stone, had cut Big Jim's red-scrawled dummy into pieces, and handed the headlines to a helper, who was casting them at a machine that cast the large display type. A galley boy was taking proofs of the matter that had been set. . . .

An hour passed. Higgins was busy now at the stone. Heads had been placed in the allotted positions, boxes arranged for the tabular matter, and the galley boy was bringing up the corrected columns of slugs. Another half hour, and two of the machines shut off, the operators relaxing with sleepy yawns. Finally the other two ceased their clatter, and the galley boy rushed the final proofs to the proof desk. Then, corrections made, Higgins jammed the slugs into place and began to lock up the page. As he started to plane down the form, Big Jim appeared.

"Get a stone proof, Walt," he ordered.

The galley boy brought a hand ink roller and Higgins inked the shining metal page. Then, wetting a page-sized sheet, he placed it over the page and piled several sheets of white paper on top. He hammered it gently with a cloth-faced planer. With a quick flip, he turned the sheet, and Phil saw the page with its black streamer heads, its smaller heads telling of the failure of the two banks, the boxed exhibit of figures. Big Jim scanned it, marked a few corrections, and handed it back to Higgins.

"Make those changes," he said. "Then throw the page on the press. Destroy that proof and all the copy. Don't get another proof until the press starts. Then we can take things easy until morning." He turned back toward his office, and when Phil joined him there, he was again asleep.

The men at the back made themselves as comfortable as possible and also went to sleep. But Phil was wide awake. Like a sentry on guard, through the hours of darkness, he sat at his desk or paced around the office—while the whole town slept.

Gray dawn came creeping in at five o'clock and found Phil tired but still bright-eyed. Big Jim slumbered on peacefully, and there was no sound from the composing room. Outside the town was waking. Milk trucks clattered over the paving and street lights had flickered out.

Seven o'clock. Big Jim sat up with a prodigious yawn. "Reminds me of old times—this sort of sleeping," he said. "Been awake all night, kid?" he asked shrewdly.

"Yes, sir," Phil confessed sheepishly. "Wasn't sleepy, somehow."

Verity nodded. "That way myself one time," he remarked. "But you'll get over it." His gaze turned toward the clock. "Nearly zero hour, Phil."

"Yes," Phil assented. "Thought I'd better get out soon and see if I can locate any of those bank directors."

Verity nodded. "That's right. Rutledge, the City State president, gets down to his store pretty early. Try him."

Soon afterwards Phil set out toward the Rutledge department store. A few friends hailed him as he passed down the street.

"Been out all night, Phil?" one man called curiously, but the reporter merely waved at him and went on.

Rutledge, looking rather worn, was in his store when Phil entered. The reporter had decided that the best plan was to lay his cards on the table. Abruptly he fired a direct question.

"Is your bank going to open this morning, Mr. Rutledge?"

A sudden pallor came over Rutledge's face. "What do you mean?" he demanded.

"Exactly what I said," Phil answered. "I'm not trying to pry into your business, Mr. Rutledge, but we've got a red-hot tip that the City State and Winston Trust will not open this morning. We want to know at the *News* office."

"Why?"

(Continued on page 29)

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ESCA G. RODGER, *Fiction Editor.*
FRANKLIN M. RECK, *Assistant Managing Editor.*
MARTIN A. KLAVER, *Assistant Editor.*
MARK L. HAAS, *Art Editor.*

Friendly Talks With the Editor

Bad News From the Doctor

SUPPOSE yourself to be a young man in your early twenties. Suppose you have a particular liking for office work and you are intending to take it up. Suppose, then, your doctor looks at you gravely and shakes his head. "You have a bad heart," he warns you. "Under no circumstances must you stay in an office. You must find a job outdoors."

How Palmer Took It

It was a tough blow to Frederick Palmer, who was the young man in question. It didn't dismay him, however. He decided that, bad heart or no bad heart, he was going to lead a successful life. He was going to earn a good living, do an important job, and have a lot of fun. So he decided to become a war correspondent. He started out by covering the Greek War. Then he accompanied our own Spanish-American forces to the Philippines. He went around the world with Admiral Dewey. He was with the first Japanese Army afield in the Russo-Japanese war. During the World War he was on General Pershing's staff. Not many people know that, early in Frederick Palmer's life, his physician pronounced a sentence that would have ruined a less courageous man. But everybody knows Frederick Palmer as an internationally famous journalist. He succeeded because he was determined to succeed—bad heart or no bad heart.

It's Harmful to Worry

"A LOT of people have crazy notions about the dangers of fatigue," an eminent physician remarked to us the other day. "To a man or boy of normal health, physical fatigue is entirely without danger. A good night's sleep will erase it completely. But worry is a different matter. Five minutes of good hard nervous worry will do more damage than ten hours of heavy labor." So keep cheerful. If something is bothering you, find out the cause and get rid of it. Don't subject your body and mind to needless, dangerous strain.

Back to School

IT'S time to debunk once more the often repeated piece of inaccuracy to the effect that boys don't like school. We used to say we didn't, we remember, but secretly we always welcomed it. School days were great days, for us. School kept our mind active and growing. It disciplined us—taught us to do things on schedule and to do them acceptably. It taught us how to get along with other pleasant, ambitious young men and women. It gave us a chance to edit the student paper, to debate, to play football. We see school now (and we saw it then, though we rarely admitted it) as nothing less than a grand adventure.

Two Million a Week

WHEN we were in high school we used to carry papers. We got $5 a month, and we generally made about 35c extra on Sundays, selling the Sunday edition to our own private customers. We've always been grateful for the experience. It gave us some advance training in business, and in planning and sticking to our own personal budget. We are interested to learn that today 588,000 boys are engaged in the distribution of newspapers. Some of them deliver to homes. Others sell papers on street corners. These 588,000 boys earn $100,000,000 a year—nearly $2,000,000 a week. They devote, on the average, less than two hours a day to their work, and they earn, on the average, $3.31 a week. On the whole they're a good lot of boys. They come from thrifty homes. Newspapers report that their school grades are better than average. It thrills us to think that a great profession, journalism, and a great industry, publishing, depend so completely on a half million young Americans. It thrills us especially to realize how well these alert boys are living up to the job.

Why Kill Them All?

NOT long ago we were looking at the bird exhibits in the American Museum of Natural History. We saw a specimen of the splendid little heath hen, a grouse that once abounded in New England and the middle states. But the heath hen was too attractive to hunters; recently the last one died on Martha's Vineyard. The government took steps to protect it, but too late. Now Dr. William T. Hornaday, the indefatigable champion of wild life, warns us that our "abundant" supply of game birds is disappearing rapidly. Our upland birds will go first, he says, and our waterfowl next. He suggests what seems to us a very reasonable remedy—that birds be given a chance to multiply, and that sportsmen be permitted to shoot no more than the annual increase. He wants the secretary of agriculture to protect the birds, rather than individual states. This, too, seems reasonable. There is something shameful about all this extravagant killing. Hunting is a sport, and sport is worthwhile. But to exterminate an animal or bird, just for today's good time, is both short-sighted and disgraceful. We are for Dr. Hornaday, and for his program.

Jefferson Felt Different

MOST boys think of the presidency of the United States as the pinnacle of achievement. It is interesting to recall that in the past some very distinguished Americans have disagreed with this viewpoint. Thomas Jefferson was one of our greatest presidents. He was ambassador to France; he was showered with distinctions. But when he looked back on his long and rich life, he said he was proudest of three accomplishments. None of these had anything to do with the White House. Jefferson remembered with greatest pleasure that he had written the Declaration of Independence, that he had brought about religious freedom in Virginia, and that he had founded the University of Virginia. In other words, Jefferson felt that his efforts for freedom and for education were more important than anything he did as a mere president of the United States. True greatness seems to lie in adding to the welfare of the folks about you.

A Document Worth Watching

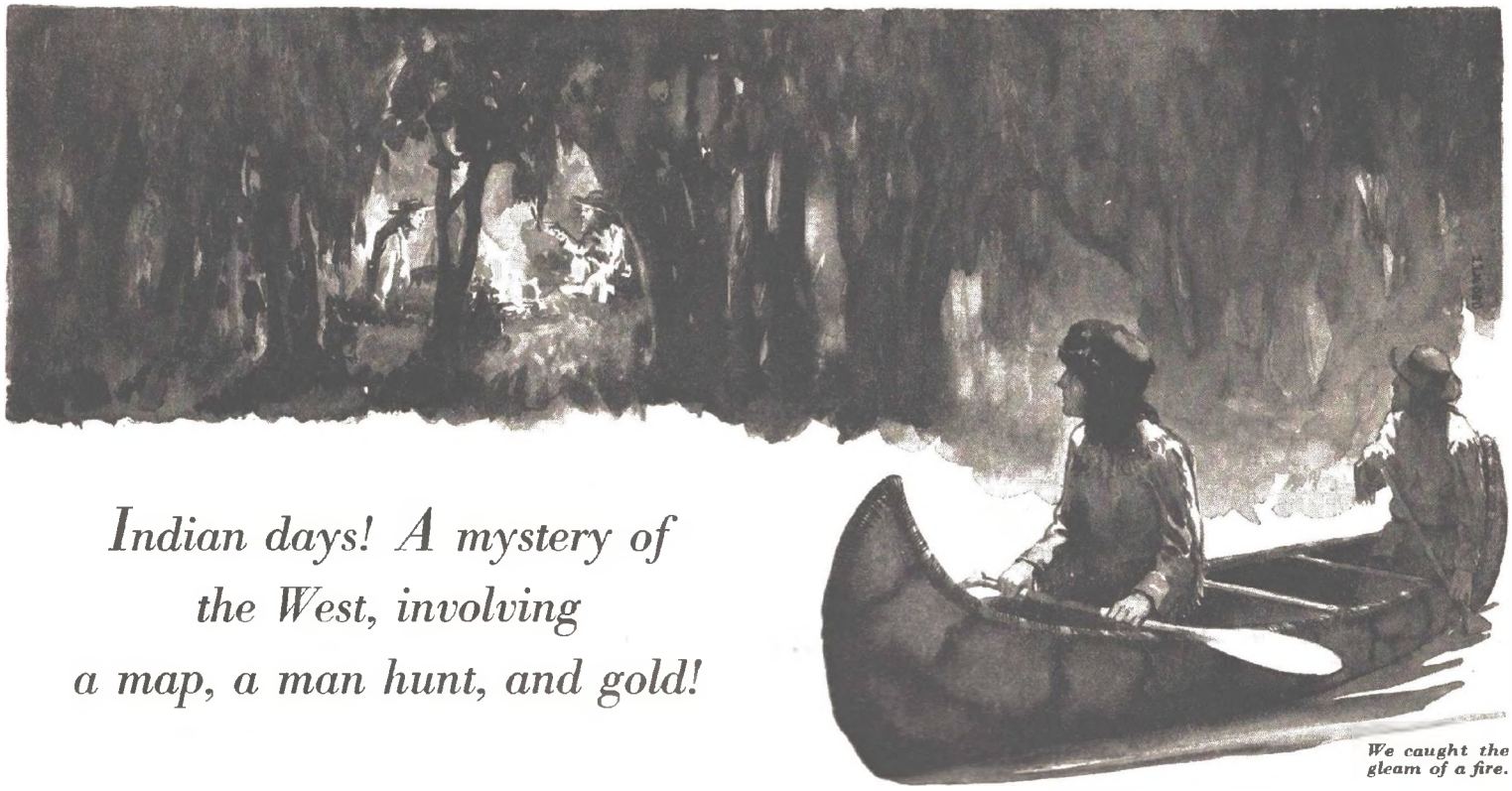
WHEN you think of the growth of the United States you think of certain documents. There is, for instance, the one that started everything—the Declaration of Independence. There is the Emancipation Proclamation, that freed the slaves. In the last few weeks there went into force another document, quite as interesting as any of its great predecessors. We refer to the Industrial Recovery Act. We won't attempt to discuss it in detail. It represents, however, another long step in the movement to free mankind. It states in effect that the benefits of mass production and improved machinery belong to every American, and not to employers and coupon clippers alone. It will result in higher living standards and shorter working hours. Mr. Roosevelt believes that everybody will benefit. There will be no losers even if there are some kickers.

Your Partners Abroad

THE world isn't yet ready to join hands and plan its industrial activity on an international scale. The London Conference, in session as we typewrite this editorial, proves that. Yet we see plenty of reason for encouragement. The delegates pretty generally realize that it is impossible for part of the world to prosper while the rest of it is impoverished. If Great Britain is broke she can't buy American automobiles. If the United States is broke, she can't buy Singapore rubber. And so on. You may believe that the United States should avoid political entanglements, and you may be right, but don't be foolish enough to suppose that the United States isn't a business partner of its foreign customers.

Don't Let Yourself Be Fooled

The people who keep repeating that the United States can get along very well without doing business with other countries give us a pain in the neck. These people point out that our foreign trade is less than ten per cent of the whole, and that ten per cent isn't important enough to worry about. But let's analyze that ten per cent. It includes, for example, 55% of our cotton crop. Forty-one per cent of our tobacco is marketed abroad. Likewise 35% of our kerosene, and 33% of our lard. We *do* need other countries, and badly.



Indian days! A mystery of the West, involving a map, a man hunt, and gold!

We caught the gleam of a fire.

At the Sacred Rock

by James Willard Schultz

Illustrated by STOCKTON MULFORD

The Preceding Part

DEATH waited for our little party on that summer's day in 1869. Idaho Jack, horse thief and bandit and worse, was watching for us on the very crest of the Rockies—his rifle ready.

When we rounded a bend below him on our horses, he sprang up from behind a low barrier of rocks, shaking his weapon and shouting to us to go back.

A cold, sick feeling came over me. If we pressed on up in the face of Idaho's rifle, some of us would not live to go down.

There were six in our little party, Gardner and his three partners and my father and I. My father, John Sargent, owned a trading post on the shore of a beautiful lake in the Rockies and I, at eighteen, was his assistant. Gardner and his partners were prospectors on their way to the Bow River placer diggings.

Idaho Jack claimed to be a prospector, but he was a roving desperado. He and Little Mart, his insignificant partner, had been hanging around our trading post just to see if they couldn't find old Andy Nolan's gold, we felt sure.

"White Head," our Indian friends had named courageous old Andy.

We had been a contented, friendly little colony there on the shores of the lake—my father and I in the five-room trading post; our close friend Lone Bull, his wife Apahki, and their son Black Otter in a lodge right back of the post; Lone Bull's father, Talks-with-the-buffalo, and his two old wives in their near-by lodge; and up on the mountain slope, in his cabin near a great rock held sacred by our Indian friends, white-haired Andy, the indomitable old prospector we had befriended.

We had all been happy together. Then Andy had been murdered!

We had found him dead in his cabin, the top of his head crushed by some heavy weapon. His cabin had been torn up as if someone had searched it; and nowhere could we find the piece of map that, put with the half he had given me, his heir, would show where he had cached his gold.

Who had killed Andy? Bitterly but quietly, we began our search for his killer. Apahki insisted that Idaho had killed him, and it did seem possible. Yet the killer might have come from a camp of the Stoneys not far from us, and one of the Stoneys named Big Lake had a blanket that looked like Andy's.

While we were searching, trying to find the map, earnestly seeking the killer, more grave trouble had arisen. Idaho and Gardner had unexpectedly met each other near our post, and Idaho had instantly tried to shoot Gardner. It seemed that he had stolen a horse from Gardner and so, fearing he would be shot for a thief, started shooting first.

Then he had galloped off, broken camp, and with his little partner had taken the trail that led up over the Rockies to the West side.

Our party had followed. Gardner wanted to get his horse back and punish Idaho. My father and I wanted to see if Idaho had any of Andy's things—particularly the map.

Now, here at the crest of the Rockies, we had caught up with him, and Gardner was bent on fighting, no matter what the cost.

We couldn't let Gardner plunge on alone. We must all attack together, I thought heavily. Well, we would make Idaho pay for the lives he would take.

Part II

BUT the next moment I realized that this could be no battle. We were completely at Idaho's mercy!

True, Gardner brought his rifle up to his shoulder, but before he could aim it, Idaho dropped down in the shelter of the rocks. From that barricade he fired his heavy Sharp's, the bullet striking the shale at our right and glancing on with a shrill whine. Then another *boom!* and a second shot plowed up the shale still closer.

Idaho was warning us that he could pick off the last one of us before we could climb halfway to him!

My thoughts raced. Why should we go on senselessly and be slaughtered? I was last in line; I must be first to turn. I might be called a coward, but I would not be a fool. Whirling my horse, I headed back down the trail as fast as the animal could go in that difficult descent. Nor was I alone. Looking back, I saw all the others following me—even Gardner!

But this was not to be the end. As we were nearing the foot of the mountain, Gardner called out, pointing to the west:

"Boys, we can climb that next mountain, and the top of it and of this one make just one ridge. What do you say to laying low till late in the day, then, climbing up and swinging around and tackling Idaho in his rear? He'll likely stick there where he can defend himself easy, and we can steal up on him when it gets dark."

"By mackerel, Tom, I'm with you!" his grizzled old partner exclaimed. "I'd like to show Idaho that he ain't so awful smart as he thinks he is."

More reluctantly the other two agreed to go, and my father also.

We went on down to the foot of the mountain. Then, to mislead Idaho, we back trailed to the lake shore, and paused there in plain sight for a few minutes. Taking the trail again, we entered the timber, reached the foot of the mountains we were to climb, dismounted, and rested for several hours. Finally, leaving our horses, we began the steep ascent.

It was nearing sunset, and we climbed as fast as possible, anxious to learn if Idaho were still watching the trail, expecting us to slip back when night fell.

About three-fourths of the way up, we topped a cliff that had a wide, well-timbered shelf and followed it around until we could see the top of the trail mountain and its breastwork of rocks. They were bare, apparently, of any living thing.

"Boys, he's gone!" Gardner exclaimed.

"No, he isn't!" snorted the grizzled old partner. "Look!"—for suddenly there was Idaho, rising to a sitting position behind the rocks, peering over them at the trail below.

"Still watchin' for us," drawled another, with satisfaction.

"Yep, and will keep on watchin'," said Gardner. "Come on, let's go."

To reach Idaho, we had to complete the ascent of our mountain, and cross the long ridge between it and the trail mountain. To prevent his seeing us, we went back and resumed our climb right where we had left off. Then night came, a moonless night, and we had increasing difficulty in struggling up. Above us and below, wolves called to one another, their long drawn melancholy howlings echoing and re-echoing upon the rocky heights.

At last we topped the summit of the mountain.

Dripping perspiration, we paused for a short rest.

"Well, boys," said Gardner, after a little, "we'll make good time now along the ridge until we near the other mountain. Then we must go mighty slow and quiet, and keep down on the West slope until we strike the trail. When we hit that, we'll just sneak up over the top and bust right onto Idaho. How does that strike you all?"

"All right," two of the partners replied.

"What about Little Mart?" the old partner asked.

"Little Mart doesn't count in this," Gardner answered. "I know that he's dead afraid of Idaho and will be glad to be free from him. Anyhow, he's probably a little way down the West slope with the outfit, and when he hears our shootin', he'll get out of danger."

With that, Gardner led us out upon the ridge. The going was far from good, but at last we reached the trail mountain and all of two hundred yards below the summit struck the trail. We gathered close together on it and Gardner said softly:

"Now then, boys, slow and quiet it is from here on up and over the top. And don't follow me too closely. This isn't your funeral. It's me and Idaho for it."

My feet lagged when Gardner led on up the trail. Within a few minutes, just over the summit, Idaho was to be shot; and though he deserved it, I felt a sort of pity for him, did not want to see him killed.

We ascended the slope with noiseless steps. The first faint light of dawn was in the east as we neared the summit, and Gardner signed to us to halt and let him go on. We watched him reach the top and pause there; then he moved stealthily down the other slope, and disappeared. But not for long; returning to the summit, he motioned us to join him.

And I said to myself: "Ha, Idaho has pulled out!"

"Yes, boys, he's gone," Gardner said when we reached him.

"He probably lit out soon after dark," said one partner.

"And is now 'way down on the West side and still goin'," said another.

"Well, what we goin' to do about it?" asked the grizzled partner.

"Give up. Quit right here. I can't ask you boys to take the time to chase after him away down in the West-side country," declared Gardner. "I'll run into him again some day."

Two of Gardner's partners made no comments, but the grizzled one said: "Tom, if you re'ly want to keep on after Idaho, I for one am right with you." And the other two nodded unwilling agreement.

"No. I've quit. We'll go back and go about our business. Bow River or bust!" Gardner replied with a grin, and we started down the trail.

We descended the mountain in quick time, then turned up to the foot of the other mountain and got our restless horses. In the early morning, we reached home, where we found Lone Bull and Black Otter, alarmed by our long absence, preparing to go in search of us.

When Apahki had discovered our approach, she had run in to cook breakfast for us all, and soon called to us to eat. As we told our story to our Indian friends, we did full justice to Apahki's broiled meat, pancakes, and strong coffee, our prospector friends marveling that an Indian woman could make such perfect cakes.

When the meal was ended, they made a few purchases from us and set out for their camp, and Bow River. As soon as they were gone, my father and I lay down and were at once asleep.

A few hours later: "*Aipokukit! Kahkitsoyit!*"—*Awake! You eat!*" Apahki called out to us three or four times.

We arose refreshed, and again hungry, and washed, and slicked our hair, and sat down to eat hugely of boiled dry meat, yeast powder dough fried in marrow grease, and tea.

"When do we again look for that which White Head buried?" Apahki asked.

"Not today," replied my father. "Tomorrow, for we are still tired."

Said Talks-with-the-buffalo: "Would that White Head had not moved up there, so near Sacred Rock. Maybe it will be angry that he did so."

"Be not foolish; what White Head did was naught to Sacred Rock," Turtle Woman, his elder wife, replied.

"Ha! Women are not all-wise," the old man muttered.

Lone Bull and Black Otter, returning from a visit to the Stoneys' camp, came hurrying in, Black Otter exclaiming:

"There was a fight in the Stoneys' camp last night. A big war party of Assiniboins attempted to enter it and take some of the horses. There was much shooting. Five Stoneys are dead, two others wounded. But the war party was driven off after three of them had been killed."

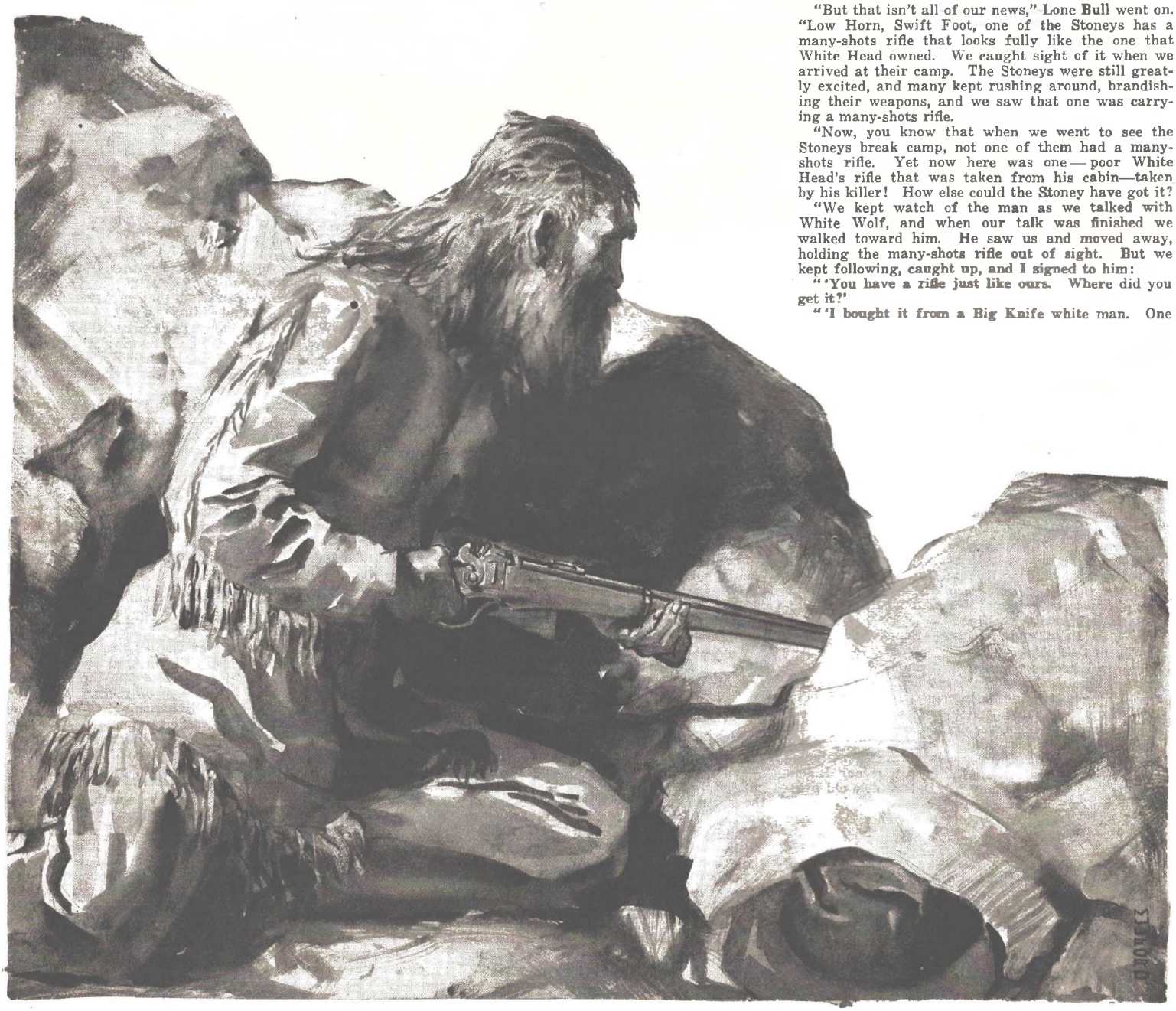
"But that isn't all of our news," Lone Bull went on. "Low Horn, Swift Foot, one of the Stoneys has a many-shots rifle that looks fully like the one that White Head owned. We caught sight of it when we arrived at their camp. The Stoneys were still greatly excited, and many kept rushing around, brandishing their weapons, and we saw that one was carrying a many-shots rifle.

"Now, you know that when we went to see the Stoneys break camp, not one of them had a many-shots rifle. Yet now here was one — poor White Head's rifle that was taken from his cabin—taken by his killer! How else could the Stoney have got it?

"We kept watch of the man as we talked with White Wolf, and when our talk was finished we walked toward him. He saw us and moved away, holding the many-shots rifle out of sight. But we kept following, caught up, and I signed to him:

"'You have a rifle just like ours. Where did you get it?'

"'I bought it from a Big Knife white man. One



horse is what I gave him for it,' he answered.

"'When? Where?'

"'Last summer. Where Bow River leaves the mountains,' he replied.

"So was it that we knew the Stoney lied, for no white man would sell so valuable a rifle for one horse. Moreover, there were no Big Knives here in the north last summer. Yes, the Stoney lied to us. But what could we do about it? We could not prove it."

"No," my father answered. "But it now seems almost sure that one of the Stoneys killed White Head."

"And that Big Lake, who has one of White Head's blankets, of course he lied when he told you about so strangely finding it," I said to Lone Bull.

"I believed him at the time—he spoke so straightly of it—but I am now sure that he lied."

I turned to my father and said: "If the Stoneys really killed White Head, they must have all the missing things, even his leather-covered many-paper-leaves. And in it may be the writing that will show us where the yellow metal stones are buried. But how can we ever learn for sure that they did it? And how recover the many-paper-leaves?"

"We can't," he shortly replied.

"Maybe we can," said Lone Bull. "White Wolf is half minded to move back into the mountains, away from discovery by the many war parties roaming the plains. He signed that he and his children were likely to be attacked by war parties of our own tribes. But if one of us were there to prevent such an attack, he would feel safe and remain. I think that Black Otter should go down there for a time, become very friendly with their young men, and so perhaps learn much."

My father and I thought well of the plan, and Black Otter said that he would be glad to go.

Said Apahki: "My son is not going down there alone. I shall accompany him; take presents for the women; be real friendly with them. Perhaps learn their secrets. Run in a horse for me, and we will be off."

Old Talks-with-the-buffalo, sitting listening to our talk, got up and with a shrug adjusted his blanket and said: "I like not this mixing with the Stoneys; no good can come of it. And why so much trouble about dead White Head and the things he left? I advise that you put it all from your thoughts and be content in this our peaceful place." And he stalked from the room.

But we kept to our plan. Lone Bull escorted Apahki and Black Otter down to the Stoneys' camp and, returning, said that White Wolf was greatly pleased by their visit.

Late in the afternoon, several Stoneys, one of them the man who had the Henry rifle, came with a few beaver skins to trade. The man wanted cartridges for the rifle, and we had him take it from its new leather case, signing that we must know the kind of cartridges to give.

As Lone Bull had said, the rifle was just like Andy's. But we had never examined his and did not know if it had any peculiar marks or scratches.

The man watched us nervously while we were handling the weapon. We gave him twenty cartridges for his two beaver skins and, not waiting for his companions, he snatched the cartridges from the counter and hurried away.

I signed to the others: "What is the trouble with him? Why his haste?"

They looked at their feet, and one replied: "No trouble; he is just going."

"I'm sure that was Andy's rifle," said my father.

"If only we could prove it," I answered.

On the following morning, we spent the whole morning in another fruitless search for Andy's hidden wealth; and, while looking for it, gathered sufficient gum to pitch the seams of my rawhide boat.

In the afternoon, I boiled the gum with a little buffalo tallow and smeared it upon the sewed seams of the boat skin, then rubbed it all over with melted tallow, the while my father made a couple of paddles.

We finally carried the boat down to water, took our places in it, my father in the bow and I in the stern, and shoved out. The boat rode the water as lightly as a duck, was very stable, and responded quickly to every stroke of the paddle.

We came back well pleased with our trip on the water, and both of us foresaw that the boat would be very useful in taking us swiftly to any game our spyglass revealed near the shores of the lake.

We planned to put it to such use the very next morning, and got up at daylight to go after deer or elk. Right across from us, a band of elk was feeding, but the wind was too strong for my light boat, and we put off the hunt, had breakfast, and loafed about the post.

Toward noon, Lone Bull became restless, and said that he was going down and learn how Apahki and Black Otter were faring in the Stoney camp. He left, but was back in half an hour, bursting in with the news that Red Head and his outfit were coming up the big trail!

We could scarcely believe our ears. Those two again approaching our post! And coming up the trail instead of down it! Had they never crossed the range? Had they slipped back down the summit trail while we were circling up to get above Idaho? And if they were actually heading in to our place, what would Idaho say to us, what do?

Said my father: "Steady, son. We'll stick our six-shooters in our belts and be ready for him."

"Yes, and if he does come, let's be behind the counter when he enters," I replied.

Lone Bull went outside to watch, and presently called in, "They are coming, are near."

We slipped around behind the counter, and through the open doorway glimpsed Idaho coming up the hill.

We heard his gruff "Whoa!" to his horse, his surly command to Little Mart: "Git down and come in with me."

Then he suddenly bulked large in the doorway, paused there, staring at us, his hand upon the six-shooter at his waist. "How! How, fellers!" he said.

"How!" we answered.

And at that he stalked in, followed by Little Mart, slouched down upon the visitors' bench and drawled: "Wal, you see I'm back agin. It'll sure be a cold day when Tom Gardner an' them other Last Chance Gulch cutthroats git the best of me."

We made no answer, and he went on: "Yeah, I'm goin' to stay around here for a while. Do a little prospectin' an' maybe some trappin'. How much is them beaver traps hangin' up there?"

"Four dollars each," my father answered.

"Gi' me six. An' I want some grub—a fifty-pound sack of flour, a side of bacon, five pound o' coffee, pound o' tea, ten o' sugar, an' ten pounds o' beans, Sargent."

My father thought it best to let him have all that he could pay for, since by keeping on apparently friendly terms with him, we might learn his purpose in hanging around. So he began filling the order.

And Idaho slouched up to the counter, and pulled out a large roll of bank notes—doubtless the proceeds of one of his holdups.

He began to talk with my father, while I happened to glance at Little Mart. He jerked his head almost imperceptibly toward the door. Then he went out, and after a little, I followed. He was standing beside his horse, pretending to test the tightness of his saddle cinch, and as I drew near he began in a whisper:

"Say—"

But got no further, for Idaho, in the doorway, shouted to him: "Here, you! Come in here an' help with this stuff I'm buyin'."

With a meaning look at me, the little man obeyed, and after a minute I also returned to the trade room. It was clear that Idaho did not trust his helper, and would give us no chance to talk privately with him. What could Little Mart want to tell me?

From then on, Idaho had little to say. But as they got into their saddles after loading their purchases, he flung out: "Well, so 'long. I'll be back for more grub later on."

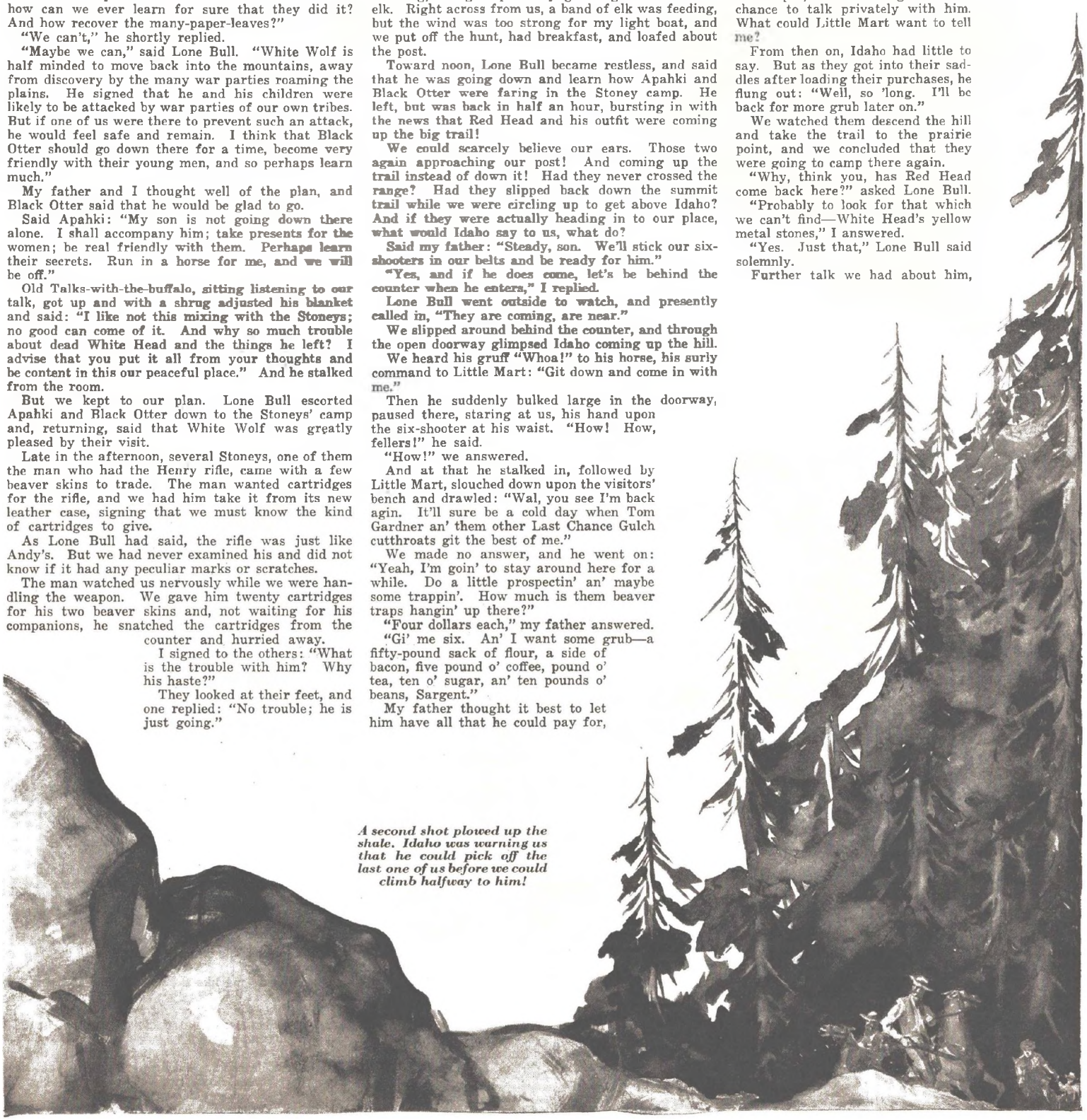
We watched them descend the hill and take the trail to the prairie point, and we concluded that they were going to camp there again.

"Why, think you, has Red Head come back here?" asked Lone Bull.

"Probably to look for that which we can't find—White Head's yellow metal stones," I answered.

"Yes. Just that," Lone Bull said solemnly.

Further talk we had about him,



A second shot plowed up the shale. Idaho was warning us that he could pick off the last one of us before we could climb halfway to him!

Lone Bull agreeing with us that, while we were climbing to get above Idaho, he had discovered us and hurried back down the trail with his outfit to some secure place from which he had watched the camp of the prospectors, and their departure for Bow River.

After a half hour, we saw Idaho come out upon the prairie point. But instead of camping there he led on up the timbered trail running to the head of the lake, and we soon lost sight of the outfit. Where, then, was he intending to camp?

Said Lone Bull: "I will find out."

"No. Go on down to the Stoneys as you intended to do, and this evening, with our new water instrument, Swift Foot and I will look for the bad one's camp," my father answered.

"Good!" said Lone Bull, and left us.

CAME to us old Talks-with-the-buffalo, frowning. "Here again that Red Head, that bad one. Why?" he said.

"He did not say. We think he comes to search for White Head's many yellow metal stones," I answered.

"Here within is heavy feeling," said he, tapping his breast. "Feeling that, somehow, this Red Head's presence here means ill to us." Then, muttering, he turned and went back to his lodge.

At dusk, that evening, my father and I embarked for our trip of discovery. We made good time with our paddles, but night had really come when we rounded the prairie point. Ahead of us and behind, beavers slapped the water with their broad flat tails; occasional pairs of staring fiery eyes were those of deer or elk, down at the shore to drink. They went snorting and crashing back into the timber at our near approach.

When a couple of miles above the prairie point, we neared the meadow-bordered mouth of White Goat Creek. Through a growth of willows, we caught the gleam of a fire. Noiselessly landing, we crept through the willows and saw Idaho and Little Mart sitting upon opposite sides of a fire that lit up their soiled old tent. Idaho was talking, with fierce gestures, and Little Mart, hunched over, seemed to be quailing from the flow of words.

We could not make out what Idaho was saying, and there was no way to get nearer unseen; so after a few moments we returned to the boat and paddled home.

A fire was still burning in Talks-with-the-buffalo's lodge, and we found Lone Bull there with the old people, awaiting our return. He told us, briefly, that Apahki and Black Otter were having a really pleasant time in the Stoneys' camp, and hoped soon to get the information that we wanted.

With that good news, we went to bed.

The next morning my father and I decided to make another search for Andy's cache, and were about to saddle our horses when four Stoneys arrived with a few beaver skins to trade, and announced that several others were coming later. So my father remained to wait on them, and I set out alone, except for Sinopah riding in his accustomed place, feet braced against the saddle horn.

Fearing that Idaho might see me, I rode only to the head of the prairie point, and there left my horse. A little later, with Sinopah at my heels, I cautiously arrived at the fallen cottonwood tree, stood upon it and again tried to determine whither Andy had gone from there.

Once more I carefully inspected every part of the ground under the various pine tree growths. Hour after hour passed, until at length, after hunting some time near Sacred Rock, I lost heart and decided to go home.

Then the whim took me to go to Andy's cabin and see if Idaho had been nosing thereabout. As I neared the open slope, Sinopah stopped suddenly, working his ears and sniffing, and I knew that he had heard something that was not to his liking. Presently, I also heard sounds—someone talking, coming toward me. Close on my right was a fine stand of rose-brush; I gathered Sinopah up in my arms, dived into it, and lay still. Peering out, I saw Idaho and Little Mart coming on very slowly with Idaho often pausing to stare at the ground. Little Mart always stopped too but he only stood dejectedly with vacant eyes.

Suddenly Idaho, changing his course, headed straight toward me! If he came close to the brush, he could not fail to see me. Or Sinopah might draw attention to me. And then? The thought of what might happen chilled me!

Idaho was only some sixty yards from me and coming on, step by step.

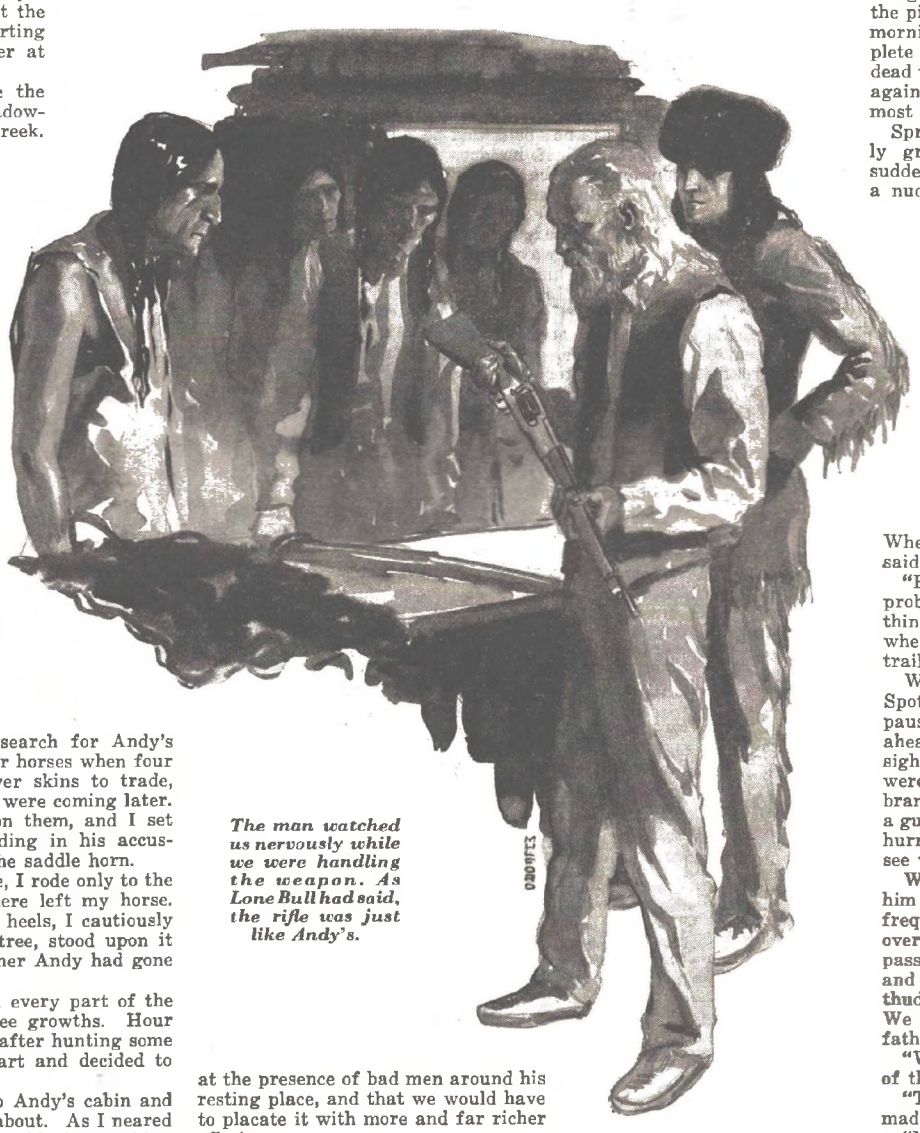
My rifle lay in front of me, its stock close to my right ear; with left hand and forearm I held Sinopah close, and with the other hand reached out and noiselessly cocked the weapon. Then again with both hands I firmly held the little one, alert to stifle any bark or growl. And now Idaho was not thirty yards from me. I tensed my muscles, ready in an instant to release Sinopah and dart up with rifle at my shoulder.

And still Idaho came on. Sinopah was beginning to struggle. I more firmly held his mouth shut, eyed both Idaho and my rifle and thought, "Here, now, is probably the end for me."

And then, less than twenty steps from my hiding place, Idaho paused, looked off to his right, and went that way swiftly. And after him dejectedly trailed Little Mart.

What relief was mine! Again I breathed freely, though I was wet with perspiration. I remained right where I was for some little time after Idaho and Little Mart vanished in the timber; then ran to my horse, and with Sinopah up before me, rode home as fast as possible.

When I told my tale, Talks-with-the-buffalo muttered that now Sacred Rock would surely be angry at the presence of bad men around his resting place, and that we would have to placate it with more and far richer offerings.



The man watched us nervously while we were handling the weapon. As Lone Bull had said, the rifle was just like Andy's.

I saw a flicker of amusement in my father's eyes, and then he said: "Anyhow, we now know for certain why Red Head first came here, and why he has returned. For the yellow metal stones. Well he knows White Head's ways; knows that he always kept the stones well hidden somewhere near his home." Then he added, "Son, Lone Bull also returned with news."

"Yes," said Lone Bull. "It is that Apahki has become good friends with one of the Stoney women, one named Yellow Bird. And this is what Apahki told me today. The two were sitting together under a tree, when went passing by them the man who has the many-shots rifle that we think belonged to White Head. Signed Yellow Bird:

"'I hate that man, that Spotted Bear. My sister was his woman. He was mean to her; he hit her many times with a big stick; she died.'

"'He is a bad man,' Apahki signed.

"'Yes, bad. Very proud, a big liar, a coward. And he is a thief—he stole that many-shots gun that he told your man he bought from a white man.'

"Then was Apahki about to ask where he stole it. But Yellow Bird's man had come out of his lodge and had seen what she had signed. And with loud voice he began scolding her. She was terribly frightened; she got up and hurried into her lodge, and her man followed her in and continued scolding. So Apahki got up and came away. But she believes that she can get Yellow Bird alone and learn from her where Spotted Bear stole the gun; learn perhaps, that he was White Head's killer."

"Good," I said. "Apahki is doing well."

That evening after our supper my father and I decided to make another search for the gold dust on the following day.

We started out on foot the next morning, Sinopah in the lead, darting here and there. Cautiously we approached our starting place, the dead cottonwood tree, stopping often to look ahead and listen, for we did not want Idaho Jack to see us searching.

Again we went over the floors of the pine growths; so spent the whole morning; and at last made the complete round and, returning to the dead tree, sat down, leaned our backs against it for a needed rest, and almost at once fell asleep.

Springing into my lap and hoarsely growling, Sinopah brought me suddenly awake. Giving my father a nudge, I signed: "Danger. Look out," and stifled the growling of the little one.

Then almost at once we glimpsed something moving in the pines a hundred yards or so off to our right. Snatching off our hats, we threw ourselves flat in the timber grass and weeds. And, watching, saw a man emerge from the pines and come on, slowly, watchfully. The Stoney, Spotted Bear! And carrying, ready for instant use, the Henry rifle that we believed had once been Andy's.

Why, why was he there? When he had passed on, my father said:

"He's going toward Andy's cabin; probably for some of the old man's things that he cached thereabout when he killed him. Come, let's trail him."

We had no easy task to trail Spotted Bear, for he frequently paused to look back as well as ahead. At times we almost lost sight of him. Suddenly, while we were in a thick stand of low, wide-branching pines, the loud report of a gun made us pause abruptly, then hurry to the edge of the stand to see what the man had fired at.

We got there just in time to see him returning at a crouching run, frequently looking affrightedly back over his shoulder. So going he passed the growth that we were in, and a moment later we lost the soft thudding of his moccasined feet. We looked at one another, and my father said:

"Well, Dick, what do you make of that?"

"That shot we heard was not made by a Henry rifle," I replied.

"No. It was too heavy for that."

"Sounded to me like the boom of Idaho Jack's big Sharp's."

"Exactly. But why would he be shooting at the Stoney? That tribe is a timid one, but I shouldn't care to have its enmity."

Puzzled, we decided to wait a little and then go on toward the cabin. Naturally, as if we had business there. And if we came upon Idaho, we'd just ask him what he was doing thereabout.

But when we moved on, a half hour later, we saw

no sign of Idaho except that we came to a large pine tree under which many small holes had been freshly dug. Idaho's work, of course—he was searching for Andy's hidden treasure. And he did not realize that others were searching too.

We arrived home at sunset, and found Apahki cooking supper for us, and Lone Bull and Black Otter and Talks-with-the-buffalo sitting comfortably smoking.

"Ha! You are back, you two. What did you learn?" I asked of Apahki.

"Nothing more than you know," she answered. "After Yellow Bird's man caught her signing to me about Spotted Bear, his badness, the Stoneys, all of them, became different to us. They were no longer pleased to have us sit with them, sign talk with them. So was it that we knew it was useless for us there longer to remain and it is not pleasant to be where one is not wanted."

Then I said that we had seen Spotted Bear that day and went on to tell all that had happened. When I had finished old Talks-with-the-buffalo broke out angrily:

"More disturbances there where Sacred Rock stands. I know that it likes not this intrusion of bad white man and bad Indians around its resting place. It is angry at us, and that is your fault—yours, my son, and yours, Low Horn! You should not have allowed Red Head to camp up there; you should have ordered the worthless Stoneys to turn back. You should have kept poor old White Head here with you, instead of building a home for him up there, and then he would be alive this day, and happy in possession of his yellow metal stones. Ha! What worthless things do white men treasure! Why, I would not trade one of my real-bear claws for all the yellow metal stones that ever white men gathered. I am drying those claws. I shall make holes in them, string them for a necklace, and sacrifice it to Sacred Rock, and so perhaps regain its protecting favor." With that, and followed by his women, the old man left the room.

Said Lone Bull, when the door closed behind them: "Old, old is my father, but still wise. We deserve the scolding that he gave us. True, I should not have given the Stoneys permission to camp and hunt down here in our country, and you, Low Horn, could have persuaded White Head to remain here in your post."

"Not so. He was determined to go up there," my father answered.

"Was obstinate; would have his way in everything," I put in.

"Kyi! He went, was killed, and no talk of ours can bring him back. And now, what make you of that which happened back of his cabin today? Why was that Stoney there, and why did Red Head shoot at him?" said Lone Bull.

"We think that the Stoney was after some of White Head's things that he hid, after killing the old man," I answered.

"And that perhaps Red Head shot at him because he saw him uncovering the things that he had cached, and thought that they were the old man's sacks of yellow metal stones," my father offered.

"Possibly. But perhaps Red Head fired at a deer or bear and but frightened the Stoney. And maybe someone else fired the shot; old muzzle-loading guns make a very loud noise.

"Our guesses may be all wrong. I think that we should go up there tomorrow, have a good look at the place where the Stoney turned back, and so perhaps learn what did happen," I said.

"You two do that. I will go down and visit with the Stoneys, and maybe learn something about it from them," Lone Bull decided, and with that we sought our beds.

Day came with a heavy fog sweeping in from the north; it was so dense that we couldn't see the lake shore at the foot of our hill. So we remained in the post, and when it did clear, around ten o'clock, we decided to have a noon dinner, and then go above.

After we had eaten, my father and I and Sinopah, of course, again struck out afoot. Making our round-about course to the fallen cottonwood tree, we arrived there about two o'clock. We sat upon the tree for a time, looking and listening for sight or sound of Idaho and then, with my little fox nosing about in the lead, we went on very slowly, following the faint trail of the Stoney to the point where he had turned around, searching very carefully for any signs that might explain the reason for his flight. Without result, however; and we were about to turn back when I noticed Sinopah, then trotting toward us, suddenly turn to his left, pause and put his nose to the ground, and then with a backward leap, come on again.

"Sinopah has discovered something that doesn't please him," I told my father, and led the way to the place and picked up an empty cartridge shell.

"Fifty caliber," I said.

"Yes. One of Idaho's all right, for his big Sharp's rifle."

I put it to my nose, got a strong odor of burnt powder and priming, and said: "Fired yesterday."

"Yes, of course. Now we know that Idaho fired that shot. But we can only guess why. Well, come on, let's make another search for Andy's cache."

We slipped back to our always starting point, the dead cottonwood, and until late afternoon searched fruitlessly.

"What did you learn?" we asked Lone Bull, when we got back home and found him with busy Apahki in our living room.

"Nothing," he replied. "I found that Spotted Bear in his lodge, gave him a whole plug of tobacco, and sign-talked with him a long time about one thing and another. Then I asked if he had made a killing in his hunting trip yesterday. He looked at me queerly and said that though he had seen five big-horns he had not got near enough to fire a shot.

"'That is surprising,' I said. 'My white friends heard a shot up the way you took yesterday.'

"'I heard no shot,' he shortly answered, giving me a short, afraid look that was proof enough that he was lying.

"So, after a little more of nothing talk with him, I came home. There. What make you of that? Why did he lie to me?"

"That is what we would like to know. It seems certain now that Red Head shot at him, or to frighten him. We found the shell of the cartridge that he fired."

"It must be that Spotted Bear has kept this secret from his own people," Lone Bull mused. "Or they would have gone up to Red Head's camp last night and killed him."

"Why, think you, did he not tell them about it?" my father asked.

"Maybe he still has hidden up there near White Head's cabin some things that he took from it, and does not want to share them with his people as he would have to do if he sought their aid in killing Red Head."

As we sat puzzling, frowning, in came Talks-with-the-buffalo and Black Otter.

"Well, my children of solemn faces, what are your disappointments of this day?" the old man asked as he seated himself and motioned to Lone Bull to pass him the pipe.

"It is that we made another search for the yellow metal stones, and did not find them," I answered.

The old man made no comment and we all sat silent until Apahki called to us to come and eat. Then when we had stuffed ourselves with meat and beans and bread, and Talks-with-the-buffalo arose to return to his lodge, he said to us:

"My children, I have completed the sticky-mouth claws necklace that I have been making, and tomorrow I go to Sacred Rock there to offer it to Sun. Then to Sacred Rock itself I shall also make further offerings, some of which I expect you to furnish. You know well that you owe it much, as it is by your fault that its sacred resting place has been trampled upon and dug into by those who have no least right to go there. I leave it to you, Apahki, to collect and bring to me, this evening, the offerings that you all are to provide, and I advise that they be things of real value."

"You, Low Horn, and you, Eagle Child, what will your offerings be?" Apahki said, when the old man had gone.

"From me, a plug of tobacco; go take it from the trade room," I replied.

"The same from me," said my father with a flickering grin that I alone saw.

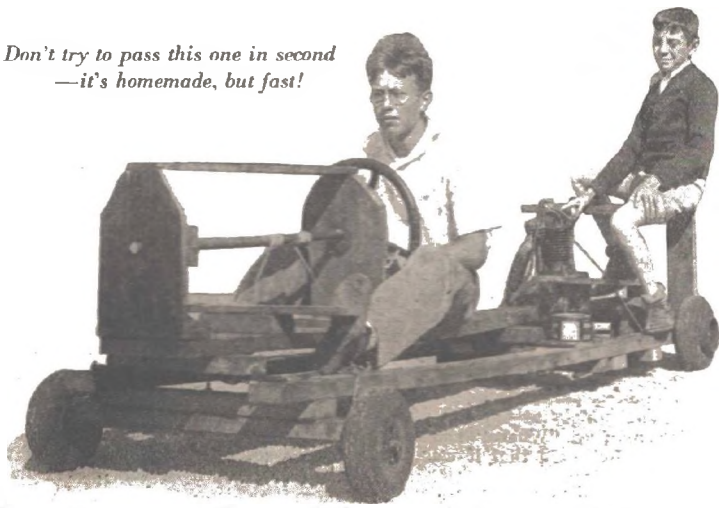
Apahki decided that her offering would be a beautiful quill-embroidered buckskin sack in which to put the tobacco, and Lone Bull and Black Otter went to their lodge to look over their belongings and decide what they would give. After washing the dishes and getting the tobacco, Apahki followed them, and my father and I went out and sat upon the wall bench to admire the beautiful lake lying in the shelter of its tremendous mountains, with their cliffs and pinnacled crests rising red in the setting sun. There we sat long after night had wrapped the world in a soft blanket of darkness.

Once my father broke our silence to say: "Tomorrow we'll stay away from the vicinity of the old man's Sacred Rock, let him have the place all to himself in making his sacrifices."

And with that I was in hearty agreement.

The next morning when we got up Apahki told us that Talks-with-the-buffalo and Turtle Woman, his sits-beside-him woman, had already gone to sacrifice our Sun offerings at the Sacred Rock. We spent the

Don't try to pass this one in second —it's homemade, but fast!



They Built Their Own!

IT'S not stream-lined. It lacks upholstery, rear-vision mirror, and silent transmission. But it runs.

Two Akron boys, Bill Jahant and Johnny Beery, were dissatisfied with their play auto, so Bill persuaded his father, who is Charles J. Jahant, vice-president of the General Tire and Rubber Co., to get him five airplane tail-wheel tires and wheels from the plant. The boys bought an old motorcycle engine, several two-by-fours, and a bag of stout screws.

They mounted the engine on the two-by-four framework, attached the wheels, and arranged a back-wheel chain drive. In front they rigged up a cable steering apparatus. In two weeks they were ready for a test ride.

It was a success. Without mishap of any kind they tooled their home-made auto downtown to the movie. Encouraged, they drove it all the way to a Scout summer camp, six miles away, and attained a speed of 25 miles an hour!

John is 15 and a sophomore in high school. Bill is 11, and in the seventh grade.

They fitted the motor in back.

morning idly at home, ate a big meal at noon, and then lay down and slept.

Late in the afternoon, Talks-with-the-buffalo and his woman returned, and slipped quietly into their lodge instead of coming in as usual to exchange the experiences of the day with us. So, later on, Lone Bull and I went to visit with them. But when we asked them about their day above, they shortly replied that they had gone to the Sacred Rock and had there placed our offerings with proper prayers and ceremony. They plainly showed that they wanted not our company; so we did not remain long; and on our way back into the post, Lone Bull said to me:

"Swift Foot, something happened to our old ones, up there at Sacred Rock, that they are keeping to themselves."

"You have spoken my own thought," I replied.

"Well, what can it have been that makes them so shut-mouthed about it?"

"Ha. What? I wonder."

Black Otter having returned from, as he said, a not pleasant visit in the Stoneys' camp, we sent him and his mother to try to learn the reason for the old ones' strange behavior. But they came away without obtaining an inkling of it. And so ended that day.

As we five younger ones sat at breakfast the following morning, my father proposed that we all make another search for the yellow metal stones. To which Lone Bull gave willing assent.

Came in then Turtle Woman and, refusing a plate of meat that Apahki offered her, sat solemnly staring at the floor, and occasionally looking searchingly, questioningly at us, and saying nothing. And then, "Where?" she asked, when Lone Bull said that it was time for us to be going.

"We all go again to look for White Head's hidden wealth," he told her.

"No. Not there, today. It is that my man has already gone up to Sacred Rock, and he asks that you keep away from there until he returns."

"But why? What reason has he for wanting to be up there alone?"

"It is not for us to ask a Sun priest's reasons for that he does. It is for him to order, for us to obey," she answered.

"True. True. But you know why he wants to be alone up there. Come, Mother, tell us about it," Lone Bull pleaded.

"As your father is the Otter Medicine man, so am I the Otter Medicine woman, and no more than he to be questioned," she evaded.

"Ah. Enough. There are plenty of other places for us to go. I know what I should do and I will do it—go once more to the Stoneys' camp and try to learn certain things about that Spotted Bear."

"Yes. And I shall go with you," said Black Otter.

The two saddled up and rode off. My father busied himself unnecessarily with checking over trade goods. I got out the spyglass and occasionally scanned the lake shores, the mountain cliffs, and the heights for game.

Old Turtle Woman came and sat facing me, the ground her seat, and asked me to try to find Talks-with-the-buffalo with my far-seeing instrument. I replied that even its powerful eye could not see the Sacred Rock and her man in the midst of the heavy timber of the mountain slope. And after a time she got up and went slowly, bowed over, to her lodge.

Several times that morning, and more and more often as the day wore on, the old woman came from her lodge and, with hand shading her eyes looked long and anxiously for sight of her man returning. And quite often came into our living room, sat for a few moments with knitted brow, looking appealingly at my father, at Apahki and at me, and nervously rose and went out as silently as she had come.

Said my father: "She wants to tell us something, and is afraid to do it."

"Yes," said Apahki, "but we will not question her. Give her time and she will tell us."

At about five o'clock she came in again, this time accompanied by the old man's younger woman and, having found a seat, drew her blanket over her head and cried into it forlornly. Apahki went to her, petted her, and at last so quieted her that she was able to tell us her trouble.

"Low Horn, Swift Foot," she began brokenly, "pity me, help me."

"Yes, yes," we answered.

"It is that Talks - with - the - buffalo should have returned from the Sacred Rock before midday, and it is now near night and he hasn't come. I want you to go up there, and quickly, for I fear that something dreadful has happened to him."

"What makes you think that?" I asked. "May be that he is this time praying there longer than usual."

"It is that bad men also frequent that place—Red Head, Spotted Bear, and no doubt others. And if they should see him with that which we yesterday found up there—oh, now I must tell you that which I was forbidden to tell! Low Horn, Swift Foot, we found there White Head's hidden yellow metal stones—"

"What?" my father all but shouted.

"You found them!" I exclaimed.

"It was a wolverine that really found them," she went on. "We had made the offerings, set them up against the Sacred Rock, finished our prayers and were resting when my man said to me:

"'Coming along is a sacred animal, a wolverine. Don't move, don't speak.'

"Came on slowly the wolverine and, passing us, went on to the edge of the pines just south of the Sacred Rock. There it suddenly stopped, under one of those great forked-top pines, and after loudly smelling of the ground began digging. And soon it stuck its head into the hole and pulled out a small and dark thing, dropped it, smelled it, pawed it, and went on. We then went to the place, and found that the thing the wolverine had dug out was one of White Head's sacks of yellow metal stones, dark-stained with earth. We looked into the hole and saw two more; and ourselves dug deeper and took out others until we had sixteen in all."

"Yes, yes. And what then?" I asked.

"We sat staring at the sacks, untied one, looked at the small, shiny yellow stones, retied it. And I said:

"'How pleased Low Horn and Swift Foot will be that we have found these!'

"My man made no answer at first. Just sat looking at the sacks. Then said: 'They would make a fine offering to Sun; to Sacred Rock.'

"'They are not ours to offer. You know White Head made a writing saying that all he left was to belong to Swift Foot.'

"'But he does not need them,' my man answered. 'He now has plenty. He does not need these sacks of yellow stones. And because of them Sacred Rock has been greatly disturbed; it is but right that it and the Above Ones should have them.'

"'But they are not ours to offer.'

"'Woman, be still!' he crossly told me, and for a long time was silent; and then said: 'This will we do—put the sacks back into this hole, and go home and say not one word about them. I must have time to decide upon the disposal of them. I will try to obtain a vision that will show me the right thing to do with them.'

"And what could I say to that? Nothing. So was it that we put the sacks back into the hole, refilled it with the earth, sprinkled dead leaves upon it, and came home. Then this morning, right after eating, he said to me:

"'I had no vision. So is it that I am going up to Sacred Rock, there to pray, to decide what to do with the yellow metal stones. Remain you here, keep the others away from Sacred Rock, and say nothing about the sacks.'

"With that he hurried off up the trail. And, oh, I am sure that some terrible thing has happened to him—"

"Enough! Enough! We go!" I said.

I snatched up my rifle and ran out, and my father followed closely, calling back to the women to have Lone Bull and Black Otter come on with horses for us when they returned.

As we hurried along, I pictured what we would see upon arriving at the Sacred Rock: the old man sitting before it, brooding, praying over the find. We would not let him know that Turtle Woman had told us of his finding of the cache; we would come upon him, and he would then unhesitatingly hand them to us.

We passed the cabin, again entered the timber, passed the dead cottonwood tree, and soon came to the stand of pines just east of the Sacred Rock. Hurrying through it, we stopped short under an outer tree, for there at our feet was the spot where poor old Andy had so carefully concealed his treasure.

We stared down into the hole that he had dug, empty now, and then looked toward the Sacred Rock, and saw old Talks-with-the-buffalo lying at its base. Asleep? No! Dead, as his sprawled-out figure plainly showed.

We hurried to him. He lay flat upon his back, his head at the edge of a hole that he had dug at the base of the rock for reburial of his find. There was a bullet hole in his breast. He had, then, decided to make a sacred offering of the yellow metal stones, and had been surprised and murdered before he could complete the sacrifice. But he had tried to defend himself, for his left hand still firmly gripped his bow, and at his feet was the arrow that he had been fitting to it.

"Idaho killed him!" I cried.

"Probably. Still, that Stoney, Spotted Bear, may have done it," my father answered.

"No. It was Idaho Jack. I know it was! Come on, let's go up to his camp and shoot him—end his wickedness."

"No, Dick, we can't do that. We've no proof that he killed the old man; and even if we had it, we're not the ones to avenge his death. Lone Bull and Black Otter will want to do that. Let's wait. They should soon be here."

I happened to look up at the Sacred Rock and suddenly noticed a whitish spot on one of its reddish bands, about four feet from the ground. Leaping to it, I found, as I had thought, that it had been made by the spat there of the killer's bullet! And then at the base of the rock I picked up the flattened lead, heavy, large, and silently handed it to my father.

He turned it over and over, hefted it, and said: "Yes, son, it's too heavy for any other than Idaho's big Sharp's."

"Yes. And now we have proof!"

My father shook his head. "No, son. This isn't actual proof that Idaho fired the shot that killed the old man, though we know well enough that he did. But it will be proof enough for Lone Bull and Black Otter. They'll soon be here, and we'll let them take the lead in this."

Then, while we awaited their coming, we did all that we could for our old friend, dead there beside his Sacred Rock. We closed his staring eyes, removed the bow from his stiffened grip, gathered the outstretched arms at his sides, and laid upon his breast his carved, black stone pipe. Very gently we did these things, I with blurring eyes.

Sun was setting when our friends at last appeared, leading horses for us. We stood silent and solemn as they drew near and, seeing the body, drew sharply up before it, Lone Bull exclaiming: "My father! Killed! Who is the dog-face that did it?" And Black Otter wailing: "My poor grandfather! Gone to the Sand Hills! Woe! Woe!"

"Red Head killed him!" I cried.

"Yes. Of course. For the yellow metal stones that wolverine found for him; the women just now told me all about it," Lone Bull replied, and when he saw the bullet that had been flattened on the Sacred Rock, he was even more sure of it.

"Come, then," I urged. "Let us go up to Red Head's camp right now!"

"Ha! Not up there now!" exclaimed Black Otter. "Some of the Stoneys, out hunting, saw him and the Sun-marked One starting south."

"We will overtake him!" Lone Bull roared. And then, gently: "Come, let us get this poor body to the women."

So was it that a second time we loaded the body of a murdered man upon one of our horses and took it down to our post. There, with tears and wailings, the women took charge of it.

Meanwhile, Lone Bull told Black Otter to saddle two fresh horses and rope two others for leading. He himself hurried to his lodge to put on his war clothes. I asked my father which of our horses we would take.

"Dick," he answered, "this is likely to be a long chase—days long, perhaps. We can't go on it and leave these women and our post unprotected."

"But we've got to go—got to take the gold dust from Idaho. And pay him for his wickedness!"

"Well, I've thought it all out. I'll stay here, and let you go, but you must promise to let Lone Bull have the lead. It's his right. We don't know who killed Andy, but Lone Bull is sure that Idaho shot down his father."

"You're right," I jerked. "I promise."

Then I ran to the corral and led out our two best buffalo horses, my powerful sorrel, Red Nose, and my father's tireless black Nigger. I tied them to the hitching rack in front of the trade room and went inside.

Thoughtful Apahki was filling three small sacks with food for us, dried meat, pemmican, and bread. Lone Bull came in, red-and-yellow-painted as to face, gorgeously fierce in his suit of quill-embroidered, ermine-fringed war clothes and war bonnet of eagle tail feathers.

"Kyi! We go," he said, and followed by the voices of the women, crying and praying for our safety and success, and with last words of caution from my father, we were off.

The Stoneys were still sitting around their evening lodge fires when we arrived in their camp and halted to question the hunters who had seen Red Head and his outfit going south.

From what they told us we felt sure that Red Head had killed old Talks-with-the-buffalo quite early in the morning, soon after he had arrived at the Sacred Rock. Then Red Head, hurriedly breaking camp, had come down the valley well off the trail, finally crossing it to quarter out to the Foothills Trail. Doubtless he was pressing on as fast as possible.

"But never can he escape us!" roared Lone Bull.

Signing to our informants that upon our return we would give them some tobacco, we were off again. But as we rode away, I could not help wondering bitterly if poor Andy's killer were among those Stoneys who were putting us on Idaho's trail. Well, some day that killer should pay!

We crossed our first river before midnight and, with the aid of a couple of matches, discovered the tracks of Idaho's shod horses in the mud of both shores. Then we crossed a creek and saw more of the telltale tracks. Day came a short time before we arrived at the crossing of Many Chiefs Gathered River (St. Mary's River), and there we found the farther shore still wet with the water that had dropped from Idaho's horses as they came out upon it.

A little later, we topped the rim of the valley. Before us the plain sloped up, and about a mile ahead on it was Idaho and his outfit!

Lone Bull broke out with a mighty song of war, and urged his horse on. Black Otter and I kept right with him.

Then the outfit ahead came to a sudden halt. I knew what that meant even as Lone Bull exclaimed: "They have seen us and are putting their saddles on fresher horses! So will we."

Before we were ready to mount our fresh horses, we saw a lone rider leave the outfit and go swiftly up the trail—Idaho, of course, abandoning Little Mart to our vengeance, and hurriedly seeking some place where he might stand us off.

Leaving the horses that we had ridden, we went on at a furious pace, singing the Kaispah war song. As we neared Little Mart, he got down from his horse, threw his rifle one way, his six-shooter another, and raised appealing hands. Then when we were passing, and he saw that we were after Idaho alone, he shouted to us: "He's got your gold dust! Get him! Get him!"

Slowly but surely we were gaining on Idaho. He turned and fired his first shot at us while we were still so far away we didn't hear even the whine of the bullet. At that we began firing at him, while he twisted to fire back at us. At last one of our shots broke a hind leg of his horse and down they went. But Idaho, springing to his feet, fired a shot that killed Black Otter's horse, and sent him rolling upon the ground.

Then Lone Bull fired—while for an instant I held myself back, taut, waiting. My shot was not needed—Idaho staggered, dropped his rifle and, glaring horribly at us, fell upon it and lay still. He was dead by the time we had dismounted and reached him.

Reluctantly I thrust my hand in one after another of Idaho's filthy pockets. I found first his roll of bills; then, in an inner pocket of his coat, poor old Andy's notebook!

There and then I opened it and found between its leaves the missing part of the map, and explained it to Lone Bull and Black Otter, staring at it over my shoulder: *60 steps west to a lightnin' struk pine; 130 steps north to a big pine with forked top.* And under that: *Dick, yer gold dust is berried on the south side of it. git a eddication with it. Yer old frend Andy.*

With wet eyes I tucked the map back into the notebook and thrust it into an inner pocket. I had had a farewell message from my old friend. . . .

We had to shoot the broken-legged horse. It was the one Idaho had stolen from Gardner; well, he should have the roll of bills in payment for it.

"And now we must bury this bad man," I said.

"No. I have given him to Sun. You must not so much as touch him again," Lone Bull replied, and of course had his way about it.

Little Mart was coming, driving slowly the pack horses and our two with them, but coming without his weapons; and when he was near, he whimpered to me: "Don't kill me, Dick; don't let them two kill me."

"You are safe enough from them, and me too," I answered.

And then: "You all killed him!" he crowed. "I'm glad. Glad! He was a murderin', thievin' villain! But why don't you take yer gold dust? There 'tis, in them saddle bags."

So it was, the sixteen little sacks of it. And after I had counted them, put them back in the bags, and hung the bags across the horn of my saddle, I had Little Mart get down and sit with us, and questioned him about all that we wished to know.

As we had guessed, Idaho had learned where Andy was from one of the bull-whackers who brought in our trade goods, and had come on to rob him of his gold dust. With Little Mart he had sneaked in and camped deep in the timber below our place, and slipped up to Andy's cabin at dusk. The door had

been open, and Idaho had gone in, saying:

"Hello, Andy."

The old man, instantly on guard, had sprung from his bunk and seized his rifle. At that, Idaho had struck him with his own rifle—perhaps intending only to stun him. But the blow had killed the old man.

After hard-heartedly making sure of that, Idaho had searched the cabin, and so found the map — not in the yeast powder can but in the notebook.

"Up to his old tricks," Idaho had said. "Cachin' his gold dust away out from his cabin. Well, we can find it. It ain't likely anybody else knows about this map."

Then he had taken a few of the things in the cabin, and scattered others around, to make it appear that Indians had killed the old man. After that he had gone back to their camp. There he had thrown the Henry rifle into the river, and had burned the blankets, except one that they had lost when going through the brush.

"That explains the blanket which Big Lake said, and truthfully, that he had found," I muttered to Lone Bull. "But where, then, did the other Stoney, Spotted Bear, get the Henry rifle?"

Continuing his tale, Little Mart explained that after Idaho's escape from Gardner he had returned with Little Mart to their old hiding place and remained there until the Gardner party broke camp, and they could safely resume their quest for Andy's cache.

On that last morning of it, looking all the time for other forked-top pines under which it might be buried, they had heard an Indian singing and, slipping quietly on, had discovered old Talks-with-the-buffalo at the foot of a big rock, still singing or praying, and dropping one by one into a hole that he had dug, some small objects that looked suspiciously like gold-dust sacks. Then the old man had discovered them and, springing up and snatching his bow and arrow from the ground, was about to let fly the arrow when Idaho shot him—and ran to seize the treasure!

There Little Mart finished, for the rest we knew. But he whispered to me:

"Dick, ain't they goin' to do nothin' to me?"

"No. They have punished the killer of their old one. And the birthmark on your face protects you; they believe that the sun painted your face."

"Gosh!" he exclaimed. "Ain't I lucky! An' I allus hated it. Well, you all are goin' home now. What be I goin' to do?"

I pitied the little man, and so I told him that he could live with my father and me until such time as he could safely return to Helena or wherever he wanted to go. At that he cried a little. And when we were mounted and starting to go, he looked back at dead Idaho, and shuddered as if he still could not believe himself free of the ruthless man who had dominated him.

As we rode along, Black Otter said: "And still we do not know where Spotted Bear got the rifle he was afraid to have us see."

"Probably never shall know," I answered—but I was wrong.

A month later, Gardner and his fellow prospectors, unsuccessful and ragged and grubless, trailed in to our post. We told them of the passing of Idaho, and I handed Gardner the roll of bills.

"My, my! What luck! It comes just at the right time," he exclaimed. "And there's enough here to pay for both the horse and that rifle the Stoneys stole."

So then we learned about Spotted Bear's mysterious Henry rifle. He had stolen it from Gardner's camp while the prospector left on guard was for a short time at the river, fishing. And of course all the Stoneys had been close-mouthed about it.

"So ends the mystery of our good old friend," reflected my father, glancing up at Andy's distant cabin on the mountain slope. "Well — his memory lives on."

I nodded. Andy would always stand out among men, staunch as the Sacred Rock itself.

"Yes," I said. "Lives on."

THE END.

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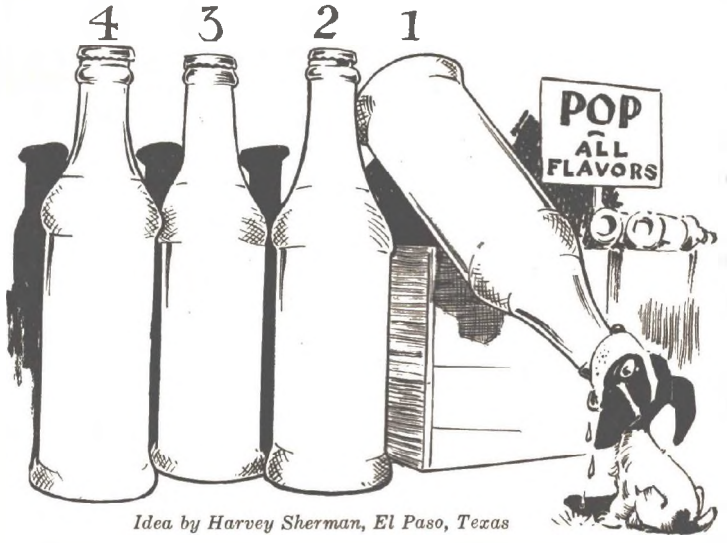

Idea by Harvey Sherman, El Paso, Texas

A GOOD story is like a good bottle of pop. It refreshes and stimulates you. What are the four best stories in this issue? Write their titles in order on the four bottles, *right to left*, and mail the ballot to the Best Reading Editor, 7430 Second Blvd., The New Center Bldg., Detroit, Mich., and the Pup will order some more stories with the same sparkle and flavor.

Your Name.....Age.....

Street.....

City.....State.....

He Shattered Records

And Model Aviation Bows to the Gas-Motored Sky Climber

Bassett's gas-driven ships won these trophies.

AND now the gasoline-powered model airplane rules the skies!

When 165 contestants from 20 states and Canada gathered in New York City late in June to settle the model plane supremacy for 1933, the familiar rubber-driven models seemed to have the inside track. But Maxwell B. Bassett, 18, Philadelphia, brought along a fleet of ships powered with tiny gasoline motors, and with them he captured three outdoor titles!

He won the national Mulvihill trophy for outdoor stick models, hand-launched, with a flight of 14 minutes 55 seconds. He captured the Stout outdoor trophy for fuselage, rise-off-the-ground ships, in 22:22.5. He took the Admiral Moffett International contest for outdoor fuselage, rise-off-the-ground models with a cloud-piercing flight of 28:18. On this flight officials estimated that his ship reached an altitude of 5,000 feet and traveled seven miles.

Bassett used two ships, an open stick model for the Mulvihill and a cabin ship for the fuselage contests, both planes powered with Brown one-cylinder motors, two cycle, ⅛ horse-power. His cabin plane was of the high-wing type, with a wing spread of 6 feet and a wing area of 912 sq. in. The ship measured 3¾ feet from nose to tail and the cross section of the fuselage was 7½" by 4½". The total weight, including gasoline, was 3 lbs. 15 oz., and on the record flight of 28:18, the motor used 1¾ oz. of gasoline. The 14" propeller turned up 4500 revolutions per minute. The motor and gas tanks were entirely inclosed in an aluminum cowling, and the cabin had real seats, windows, and shock absorbers.

The stick model had a wing spread of 6 feet 2 inches, with a surface of 900 sq. in. and a fuselage length of 3¾ feet. The wing was tapered and had a pronounced dihedral.

The Stout Indoor contest for stick models, hand-launched, went to John A. Bartol, 17, Roxbury, Mass., with the world record time of 17:47:6, beating the old record by more than four minutes.

Albert Levy, 19, Toronto, Canada, won the Bloomingdale contest for indoor fuselage models, rise-off-the-ground, with a flight of 8:56, also a world record. With a score of 98 out of a possible 100, Joseph E. Geigan, Washington, D. C., won the Exhibition Scale Model contest. His ship was a Curtiss Falcon.

The meet was conducted by the Universal Model Airplane News under the supervision of the National Aeronautic Association. The outdoor events were held at Roosevelt Field, Long Island, and the indoor at the 258th Field Artillery Regiment armory.

Morning Extra

(*Continued from page 19*)

"I'll tell you. If these two banks fail to open it's going to make a bad run on Winston National—unless we can stop it with an extra. We're trying to help that bank stand up. It would be a terrible thing to lose all three."

Rutledge dropped his head into his hands, and Phil felt sudden compassion for him. Finally Rutledge spoke.

"Your tip is right," he said slowly. "I'm waiting for a call from St. Louis now—and if we can't get help there we'll have to close."

"When is this call coming?"

"Any time after 8:30. Williams said he'd call as soon as possible after that. Stay until the call comes through if you like."

"I'll do it," Phil agreed. "Mind if I use the telephone and tell the chief how things stand?"

"Go ahead."

Phil called Verity and explained the matter. "I'll ring you as soon as the other call comes through," he concluded.

They waited, tensely. When the telephone rang a few minutes past the appointed hour, the banker's hand trembled on the receiver.

"Rutledge speaking," he said, and Phil saw the color drain slowly from his face as the call came through.

"Got to see the others," he muttered, turning away from the telephone. "We'll have to close. Hope your extra helps Dowling," and with faltering steps he walked toward the door.

Phil watched him, pity in his eyes.

But there was work to be done. Quickly he called Verity.

"Got the dope, Chief," he reported. "The notices are going on the doors right away. Tell Higgins to roll the extra."

"Okay. And I'll tell Dowling, too."

No use in going back to the office—Phil decided to walk down to Church Street. As he turned into the street he saw a few people gathered about the door of the City State. Approaching closer, he saw a white square of paper pasted on the glass, and realized that the curtains were drawn closely. Turning, he could see the door of Winston Trust — and another white square of paper. There were people at that door too, and the crowd was growing rapidly. Phil saw familiar faces that looked strangely white-faced and hopeless.

He went back across the railroad tracks, and came to the Winston National—the one bank that would open. Already a dozen or more men stood at the doorway. Minute by minute the crowd grew larger. And it was not hopelessness that Phil saw on the faces of these men. It was fear—fear and determination. These men were going to demand their money.

A sudden buzz of conversation made Phil turn. A block down the street he saw the upstanding figure of Tom Dowling, coming toward the bank, his white head held high. Reaching the group of men, Dowling nodded impartially and shouldered his way toward the door. One or two attempted to follow him, but he barred the way.

"In five minutes," he said distinctly, "this door will be open. If you men want your money, come in and get it. It's there for you." And he disappeared through the curtained door.

"He's got nerve," one man remarked. "You'd think he had all the money in the world inside."

"Just the same," snarled a thin-lipped man, eyes smoldering, "I want mine. And I'm going to get it."

Phil could see that the thin-lipped man spoke the sentiment of the entire group, which now blocked the sidewalk. And men and women were still coming. Dowling was facing a fight that might become a rout.

At exactly nine o'clock the door swung open and the crowd surged into the bank. Phil went in with the rush, and quick admiration for the old banker went through him as he saw the arrangements that had been made. Every window was occupied by teller or clerk, and lettered signs indicated that all were ready to pay out money. Stacked up on the counter were great piles of currency. No matter which way he turned, Phil could see money. Dowling stood outside the cage, white head still held high, no sign of fear in his rugged face.

With a rush the wave of men and women beat against the windows. Checks were hastily written, accounts consulted, money pushed through by swift-fingered tellers and clerks. In a few minutes the first wave was spent but Phil, looking outside, saw a steady stream of men and women still coming toward the bank. Phil wondered, in sick suspense, if all of Winston National's depositors would demand their money.

Then, cutting sharply through the air, came the sound of a familiar whistle. The whistle of the *News* carrier boys! Down the long street leading toward the bank, Phil saw them coming, running along on both sides, laden with papers. The Morning Extra was out!

The boys came dashing along, handing out papers to every person they passed. It was a free extra.

Right into the bank lobby came five of the boys. They plunged through the packed mass of excited, fearful men and women, handing out papers to every clutching hand. Then out they went to deliver the papers on along the street, in the stores, and all over the town. Phil knew the Comet press was turning at capacity speed. Big Jim would never stop until he had covered up the town with the extra.

Standing jammed against a door in the rear of the lobby, Phil watched the crowd closely. Hands tightened on the extra. Staring eyes took in the flaring headlines that told of the strength of Winston National; they read that Dowling was going to get a million dollars that very morning, and tense faces relaxed a little.

"Maybe we're wrong," said one old man. "The paper says this bank is all right."

Others seemed to agree with the old man, but the thin-lipped man approached.

"How does the paper know?" he snarled. "Better get your money while you can. This bank may not be open tomorrow."

Yet the extra had slowed up the run. Phil could see that. But there was still a steady stream of men and women drawing money. Phil was glad when the big bulk of Verity came plunging through the crowd toward him.

"What does it look like, kid?" Big Jim inquired somberly.

"The extra slowed 'em up, Chief," Phil answered. "But it's going to take more than that to stop it."

The smile that came so seldom lighted Verity's heavy face. "Wait until that million gets here," he said softly. "That'll break up this party."

"When will it arrive?"

"Half hour," Verity answered. "I've been talking to the airport, and they said a brisk tail-wind would bring the plane in at 10:30. Lucky break, that tail-wind—saved about an hour."

Then the two newspaper workers stood and silently watched the run go on. It seemed to be gaining momentum again, although many continued to read the paper.

Suddenly Verity dropped his hand on Phil's shoulder. "Listen, kid," he said.

Above the clamor of the crowd, Phil heard the siren of a police car. "Plane in?" he jerked.

Verity nodded happily. "And the money is coming in under police escort. Be here in a few minutes."

They could hear the siren plainly now, and the crowd in the lobby stopped milling to listen.

Then, from out in front of the bank, came the sound of grinding brakes. There was a sudden parting of the crowd as six brawny policemen pushed their way into the lobby. Within their closed ranks marched two strangers, and each carried a heavy leather case. The group of men marched in utter silence through the lobby until they came to a door that had been opened. Marching inside the cage, the two men snapped open the leather cases and began to toss out packages of currency. Bank officials checked over the money, receipts were signed, and the two strangers left the bank. The officers remained, taking up positions in various parts of the cage.

Over the restless, milling crowd in the lobby a great silence fell, and for a long minute no word was spoken. Then Phil and Verity saw the thin-lipped man approach a window again. He pushed a stack of currency through the wicket.

"Here," he said distinctly. "Any bank that can get such a wad of money that quick is good enough for me."

A cheer went up from others who stood waiting and old Tom Dowling, still standing in the lobby, nodded happily toward Verity.

Verity grinned at Phil. "A morning extra, plus a million smackers, turned the trick, kid," he said. "Now get home and go to sleep. You know, we're going to get out another edition tonight."

The American Boy occupies the entire tenth floor.

We Have a New Home

THE *American Boy* is moving to a new and finer home. After August 26 our address will be the New Center Building, 7430 Second Blvd., Detroit.

Thousands of our readers who have visited Detroit know that at the junction of two large boulevards, Grand and Second, a great civic center of white stone has risen skyward. There's the General Motors Building, covering an entire city block, on Grand Boulevard. Across the street, the marble and limestone Fisher Building rears its tall tower. And just one block above the Fisher Building, on Second, the New Center Building stands.

The entire tenth floor, 170 feet above the street, has been partitioned and decorated for us. From our bronze-framed office windows we can see southward past the downtown skyscrapers, across the Detroit River with its constant stream of ore boats and steamships, to Canada. To the east and north we can look over the roofs of apartments and stores to sprawling, busy automobile factories. Farther east we can see multi-motored airplanes circling down to a landing on the city airport.

If you drive up to the New Center Building to visit us, you will see a graceful office structure, the first floor of Connecticut granite, the upper floors of buff Bedford limestone. You'll go beneath the bronze grillwork of the doorway into an extrance lobby finished in 15 different kinds of marble. You'll enter a silent elevator and scoot up past shops and offices to the tenth floor, at the rate of 650 feet a minute. There you'll step out into the main lobby and reception room of *The American Boy*. On the walls you'll recognize oil paintings and cover designs that have appeared in the magazine, and by that sign you'll know that you're in Renfrew-and-Tierney land.

Don't forget our new address from now on: The American Boy, New Center Building, 7430 Second Blvd., Detroit, Mich.

Rough Country

(*Continued from page 16*)

mican, salt meat, and flour into burlap bags.

"Of course!" he cried. "The camp fire we saw last night!"

"Exactly," said Renfrew. "The man's heading into death."

"Can't let him do that." Nichols frowned over his swift packing. "He has to have his chance, no matter what he's done."

"Or perhaps because of what he's done," Renfrew murmured, his face curiously speculative.

But Nichols did not question his companion's comment, and there the subject dropped.

The trail of a man through the winter wilderness of the North is a trail well marked by the track of dogs and sled, by the print of the snowshoe, and by the confirming ashes of abandoned fires. Renfrew and Nichols followed their man swiftly until near the end of the second day. Then the white highway of the river was abruptly barred to them by thinning ice and a roaring thunder of water that leaped downward in a boiling of icy water upon ice-covered granite.

At this point the banks rose steeply upward, forming opposite walls of spruce-clad shale two hundred feet high. Assuring themselves by the telltale surface of the snow which way the man they followed had taken, Renfrew and Nichols undertook the heart-breaking job of surmounting the heights.

It was a toilsome conflict between the strength of man and the relentless forces of nature. The shale of the hillside was deeply covered with an accumulated litter of countless fallen, rotting branches, and boles of generations of spruce trees, and the trees that stood presented a thick, low, spreading barrier to the trespasser. This almost impenetrable tangle fought against them, tearing at them as they scrambled through the opposing branches, and stumbled and clambered over the interminable barricades, made treacherous and slippery by the frozen damp.

It was not long before the dogs had to be freed from the sled, and the heavy sled pulled, lifted, and shoved by sheer man power. And Renfrew and Nichols found themselves as night fell still hopelessly short of the top.

They made camp on an incline so steep that they had to build themselves in with the timbers that lay about them. Here they fed the dogs and boiled themselves some coffee, in a state of vast weariness — their clothing torn, their bodies lacerated and bruised by the Herculean struggle of the day.

All night the dogs whimpered and wailed, for so little snow had penetrated through the heavy spruce that they had no protection from the cold. Then, sometime in the dark hours, the howl of the dogs was answered, and shadowy forms came crashing through the brush, whining hungrily. In the morning a great fight occurred between Nichols' dogs and five strange dogs which

hungrily snapped at the food that Nichols threw out.

"The poor devil," said Renfrew, after the dogs were parted. "He's had to abandon his sled."

"Wonder how much more of this mountain climbing we've got to do?" said Nichols.

They couldn't tell. Under that thick canopy of spruce they were like men buried underground. "Like fleas in the fur of a dog," as Nichols put it. The summit might be only a few feet above them. They might be terribly near the river bed.

"I guess we'll leave our sled, too," said Renfrew.

Using the dog harness, and every inch of line and rawhide they could salvage from the sled, they made their duffle into neat packs that they lashed to the backs of the dogs. Then, relieved of the cumbersome sled, they were able to fight their way almost directly upward.

By noon they had discovered to their dismay that the top of the bank was as thickly clad with evergreen as the slope —and it was impossible to find the trail of the man they followed.

"He'd have kept to the course of the river," they agreed.

So they hugged the rim of the slope, battling all day with the ripping, bruising defenses of the forest. As the dimness about them became heavier and more oppressive with the evening, Nichols discerned a white glare through the narrow, tunneled vista that the low branches of the evergreen allowed them.

"There's open! Open!" he cried. "There's open country ahead!"

They surged forward toward the open snow and, reaching it, felt like men released from a cave. With a vast sense of elation they gazed upon the wide trough of snowy landscape that confronted them, falling away to their right into a spruce-filled ravine. It was some moments before Renfrew observed that the river was nowhere in sight.

"The rim of that hill has led us inland," he reasoned thoughtfully. "We're clear off the trail, Nichols."

"And three dogs missing," growled Nichols. "With food."

The two men looked at each other with the same thought.

"We'll have to go easy," said Renfrew.

They both knew that they now carried hardly enough food to see them safely back to Brandley's. If they went on . . . if they became lost . . .

"Look!" cried Renfrew.

He had strapped on his snowshoes and patrolled the edge of the forest. When Nichols reached his side, he found Renfrew staring at a broad, uneven blur on the face of the snow. Before them it was repeated again and again, a snowshoe trail that led across the wide trough before them. Instantly they put aside all thought of returning. The hunt was on again!

Rallying the remaining dogs, the two men goaded their weary bodies to the chase. They covered six miles before they camped for the night, but had hardly strength enough to feed the dogs and themselves before they slept.

The next day they arose painfully from their sleeping bags. There was a wind blowing that swept a constant stinging dust of icy particles into their battered and lacerated faces. But on bruised feet, they doggedly faced the merciless wind in a temperature thirty degrees below zero.

"If it blows up snow," grinned Renfrew, "it'll cover the tracks."

So they hurried.

It was a day of struggle. The wind tortured them, blinded them with a haze of punishing snow dust. The sharp stones and broken timbers of the forest made every step painful to their bruised, moccasin-clad feet. And their travail was augmented by the knowledge that they must press on, unresting, racing the coming snowstorm for their man.

Then, before the day's end, the earth opened at their feet, confronting them with a great chasm that fell away more than a thousand feet in descending steps of cliff and shale-banked shelves. Desperately they trod the rim of the gorge, striving to find a way around it, but it appeared to reach far inland from the distant river into which it apparently led. They returned to where the trail they followed halted at the rim, and despondently camped there for the night.

"If we try to get around it," said Renfrew, "we're through. It'll take

Storm Warnings!

Larry Marsh, high-hearted, red-headed and 21, went gaily to the Maine seacoast to claim a fortune—and found a smelly, deserted sardine factory and two thousand cash. Small capital, with which to declare war against the ruthless Jake Grimmer, sardine boss of the town!

October begins William Heyliger's six-part serial of sea-tanned Maine fishermen:

"Larry Marsh, Packer"

days. We've got to follow him." He pointed to the mark of the snowshoe trail.

"But how?"

"He crossed, or left his body at the bottom of one of those cliffs," observed Renfrew. "You can see where his tracks have displaced the snow on the shale. He's a man of nerve."

"But the dogs?"

"We'll have to leave the dogs."

Nichols stared at him gravely. "If we don't come out right—if we don't make the bend in two days, it'll mean the end of us," he said. "That's all the grub we can carry."

Renfrew said nothing, but quietly read Nichols' haggard countenance.

"Of course," cried Nichols suddenly. "Of course I'll do it!"

Renfrew smiled broadly, his eyes flashing with an indomitable spirit from the gaunt tensity of his beard-covered face.

They managed the apparently impossible descent in less than four hours. Death accompanied them hopefully, vaunting its leering presence at every slippery shelf down which they scrambled, at every cliff which they essayed with homemade ropes of plaited rawhide. When at last they found themselves safely in the bed of the chasm, they sank down on the rock and had to drive themselves to rise again.

The ascent of the further side was even more arduous, a struggle that tore almost intolerably at their hearts and muscles. But they were fighting for their lives now. Every hour counted in the race against imminent starvation, and they continued in their climb with a dogged disregard for pain and panting and fatigue.

Regaining the summit of the farther side they rested for only a few imperative minutes before continuing, in the gathering darkness, to seek the tracks of the man they hunted. They did not camp until they found them in the guise of dead ashes.

The following day the wind continued and the snow providentially held off. They crossed a high plateau and refrained from camping when darkness fell because the sound of a distant roar told them that they neared the river. Their unspoken doubts of the outcome of their struggle, their memories of starved bodies they had seen beside dead fires, were dispelled by that reassuring rumble in the distance. But bodily endurance called its limit, and they camped with the river still invisible.

It had begun to snow the next day before they saw the river; and then, under a leaden sky, they found themselves on the rim of a sheer precipice which fell hundreds of feet to the gorge of the thundering waterway. In that moment they understood why the course of the Stareway had never been charted. It was a turbulent volley of water that froze to the bottom and ran tumultuously through icy caverns of its own making, over a bed of ice, in cataracts of glacier-shattered granite. No man could follow it by canoe or raft or boat, and it offered no roadbed for the sled.

"If this barrier runs inland in another gorge," growled Nichols, "it's the end of the trail for us. Our food's almost gone."

"Come," said Renfrew.

Under the sullen sky that pressed like a weight upon their spirits the two men limped on, driven by an indomitable urge.

Two days later, in brilliant sunshine, they stood again upon a height. They had eaten nothing for twenty hours. Weak with hunger, tortured by swollen, bleeding feet, and a score of other hurts, they stood like doomed men, awaiting their end. It seemed a gesture of needless, wasteful energy that Renfrew should painfully fumble at his haversack and take out a pair of field glasses to scan the valley, a thousand feet below. Nichols resented it.

"What's the use?" he cried, reclining wearily against a bowlder. "We've followed this blighted precipice for two days now. If Vancouver itself lay beneath us, we could never get to it. The cliffs reach away from the river. Miles! And even the river's disappeared. We're done. We're through. Through!"

"Nichols!" cried Renfrew. "There's a cabin down there!"

Nichols sprang to his feet, lunged toward Renfrew, stumbled, regained his footing and lurched on, to take the glasses from Renfrew's hand.

"It's the bend!" he cried. "It's the cabin at the bend! There's food in that cabin!" He suddenly turned to Renfrew and threw the glasses down.

"What a way to die!" he cried fiercely. "There's food there! And we can't reach it!"

Quite calmly Renfrew threw himself down beside the glasses and, half reclining in the snow, adjusted them to his eyes again. The cliff on which they were perched fell in sheer precipice for about a thousand feet to a bank that sloped down to open country. A wide frozen stream swept down upon the palisade a mile or so to their left. On the open bank of this stream, immediately below the wooded slope, a log cabin stood, tantalizingly near yet fatally beyond their reach.

Suddenly Renfrew spoke again. "There's a man there," he said calmly.

Nichols excitedly shared the glasses with him. Sure enough, there was a form lying outside the cabin door. At first it had seemed like a log of wood. Then Renfrew had seen it move. And now it moved again. It was the figure of a man who lay in the snow outside the cabin door, feebly, with infinite, futile pathos, striving to brush away the huge bank of snow that barred the cabin door. As Renfrew watched, the figure became still again.

"Do you realize what that is?" cried Renfrew. "That's our man!"

"A dead man," said Nichols.

"No, a dying man. That man is dying of starvation with food almost within his reach!"

"He doesn't know it," sighed Nichols hopelessly. "He's moving by reflex action. He's a dead man."

"No. He's still alive. We've got to get to him, Nichols!"

Again the two men were staring at each other, and again Nichols responded to the other's spirit.

"You bet," he said. And the two who

had become resigned to death were aroused once more to intolerable action to save the life of another.

Doggedly they plodded, stumbling, over the snow along the rim of the precipice.

"He got down there," Renfrew kept repeating. "We can get down. There must be a way." And occasionally he stopped to examine through his glasses that hopeless figure which still moved from time to time in its terrible, futile striving to exist.

After a time Renfrew stood in attentive silence.

"Do you hear anything?" he asked. "Stand still and listen."

Nichols stood for a moment and listened.

"It's water!" he cried eagerly. "It's water! There's a waterfall. No! We're crazy. We're going mad! How could the sound of water—"

"It comes from the woods," said Renfrew calmly. "Come on."

Together they plunged into the woods that grew thickly above the rim of the cliff. They stumbled on doggedly, and the moaning of distant water came nearer and nearer, until it seemed almost as if it came from beneath their feet. Then:

"Look!" cried Renfrew, and they found themselves staring at footprints that marked the old snow crust, protected here by the trees.

Eagerly they followed the new trail until it became lost in an increasing litter of broken rock and finally in a howlder-strewn runway—a runway that fell away, rushing steeply downward until it ended abruptly at a vast gash in the earth, a black hole from which arose the roar of subterranean waters. The two men stared down into the blackness of the hole.

At last Renfrew spoke. "I'm going to explore that hole," he said quietly.

"Not now!" The words came from Nichols in a protest and a confession. He was completely done. The mere thought of further action was intolerable.

But Renfrew had thrown off his pack and was unlashing the rawhide line they had fashioned for their descent of the gorge. With quick hands he divested Nichols also of his pack, and was soon lashing to a tree one end of a line he had fastened about his waist.

"Brace yourself and let me down," he said. "Put everything you've got into it, man."

Then Nichols found himself braced against a huge bowlder, clutching, with hands he had thought almost devoid of strength, a rawhide rope with the weight of a man upon it. And Renfrew was disappearing into a black hole from which emerged the thunder of unseen waters.

"Renfrew!" Nichols cried suddenly. "Renfrew! I can't!"—and the rawhide whizzed through his hands, ripped from his grasp. Renfrew was gone.

Horrified, Nichols dragged himself to the hole. "Renfrew!" he cried hoarsely. "Renfrew!"

"Cut the rope!" came a voice from the blackness below him. "Cut that fool rope and drop in!"

"You're all right?" cried Nichols.

"Yes. Plopped right into a sand bank. Cut the rope from that tree and follow me. It's a ten-foot drop into sand."

In a sort of daze Nichols cut the rope and drew close to the edge of the hole. The roar of the water came up to his ears. The blackness was impenetrable.

"I can't do it, Renfrew! I can't!" he cried.

"You must! You've got to! . . . What the—"

For Nichols had dropped suddenly, in complete blackness, at Renfrew's feet. Whipping all his nerve to the breaking point, Nichols had dived headlong into the hole.

"Come here," said Renfrew. Leading the shaken Nichols by one arm, he held him suddenly firm. "Look down," he said.

As Nichols' eyes became adjusted to the blackness, he saw that it was not unrelieved. Far below was a gleam of light which, as his eyes became more and more used to it, arose, lighting everything about him.

They were high up—a thousand feet high—on the walls of a great cavern. The air was icy cold, and the ledge on which they rested was like a small cave in the high summit of a larger cave. Far below them the river roared and ran, seeming to emerge from the cavern in a wide opening that allowed the light to enter below. And from the platform on which they rested there appeared, as their eyes became more and more accustomed to the subtle light, a succession of huge steps—a stairway that led to the floor of the cave.

"This," said Renfrew, as he started carefully downward, "is how the river got its name, I guess."

Fifteen minutes later, dazzled by the glare of sunlight, they stood in the snow blinking down upon the figure that still attempted with pathetic futility to brush the great bank of snow from before the door of the cabin that held food and life. The starving man turned up to them a face that was disfigured by a scar which twisted his mouth into an ugly and repellent leer. They carried him into the cabin.

For two days they nursed the man they had rescued. It was near the end of the second day that Nichols, shaven and stalwart again, though still limping, commented on the irony of a fate which demanded that they save this waif of the woods only to deliver him to justice.

"We nurse him to health," he said sadly, "only so that we can hang him."

"We won't even have to arrest him," said Renfrew quietly, "unless I've figured things out wrong. Wait till he talks."

They did; and the first words the man spoke were revealing.

"My father!" he cried. "He's dying."

"All right," soothed Renfrew. "You're in safe hands now."

"But my father!" cried the young man with the disfigured face; and Renfrew noticed that there was nothing evil in his eyes.

"What about him?" demanded Nichols gruffly.

"He was mauled by a moose. Terribly mauled! He needs help. A doctor."

"He is all right," said Renfrew quietly. "No harm can come to him now."

Later, after young Brandley was well enough to stand the shock, they told him. In return he explained himself.

"I joined my father," he explained. "From up at Great Slave Lake where I was working for the company. Then this happened. I managed to carry him to the cabin, but I could see he had to have a doctor—soon. And he told me about this stairway. I thought I might get through to Fort St. Roche in time, but I couldn't make it. The moose was wounded and it turned on him. I came up after it had mauled him. . . ."

"And you killed it with your hunting knife—at close quarters," said Renfrew, nodding.

"How did you know?"

"The animal's hair and blood were all over your blanket coat." Renfrew turned to Nichols. "You see, I figured that the evidence of the hair and blood, together with the fact that the man tried for the shortest distance to the police post instead of away from it, indicated that the man we wanted was in danger of something more than an arrest. I'm glad we arrived in time."

"Ask me!" said Nichols feelingly. "Nobody wanted to get into this cabin worse than we did if you ask me."

The Crestwood Feud

(*Continued from page 11*)

we settled down to the serious business of playing the ball game and winning the extra twenty per cent of the receipts—if we could.

They got the jump on us in the first. Andy, playing second base, threw out the first man, and Art made a pretty stop of a liner to retire the second. Then they hit two balls to Joe at short and he kicked both of them, chasing the last one all over the infield trying to find the handle to it. That rattled big Ed, and when the crowd began to whistle and ring cow bells, Ed uncorked a wild shot that hit the batter!

As the batter hopped out of the box, holding his arm, a howl arose from behind third plate. I looked over to see a little knot of men in overalls. Big fellows, thick-necked, brawny, and rough-featured. One of them was shaking his fist at Ed Koy and yelling something I couldn't hear. The roustabouts! The little band of shock troops from the oil fields! A sort of thrill scampered up my back as I turned back to the business of steadying Ed.

But Ed wouldn't steady. He walked two runs across the plate, and a bad bounce put Dundee four runs to the good.

They picked up two more in the second on an error by Art and a long home run. Then Ed began to get better. He blanked them in the third, fourth and fifth, working the corners and putting the ball just where I called for it.

Dundee had a pitcher named Bucky Dunn, a stocky little right-hander. He had a high hard one that he varied with a sweeping curve, and was mixing them up so well that the score was 6 to 2 against us when we went into the sixth.

Before we went to bat, Andy called us all around him.

"Listen, gang! We can read this Dunn if we watch his throwing hand just before he throws. He isn't covering up the ball. Now look! You can tell when he's holding a curve. His finger shows and his thumb sticks out this way. Savvy? Otherwise it's a fast ball. Let's watch his hand this inning and swing accordingly."

You can hit lots better if you know what kind of a ball is coming. With the first man up, we began to smack it right on the nose. We stepped into those sweeping curves and murdered the fast ones. The Dundee team couldn't understand. Dunn himself was more surprised than anybody. At first he thought it was because there was mud on the ball. He got the umpire to throw out a new one, but we kept hammering at him and before they got him out of there we had scored ten runs and gone ahead, 12 to 6. Andy's smart head had given us a lead!

All through the last half of the sixth, seventh, and eighth we held that lead. It was almost a single-handed job for big Ed—he knew that any kind of a solid smack meant a hit on that field. And in the ninth his overworked arm cracked. Base hits began rattling, and the roustabouts began yelling and crowding third base. With the score knotted at 14 all, Andy walked with Ed from the mound to the bench, and I liked the way he sent him in.

"Never mind, big boy!" he told Ed. "You've pitched a grand game."

Then he gave the nod to Lefty Campbell, our only relief pitcher. Lefty had a sweet curve ball, but you never knew whether he'd wrap it around your neck or throw it over the grandstand. It was dangerous, but Andy had no choice.

There were two down in the ninth when Lefty went in and the first ball he pitched went screaming away on a line drive. Art leaped in the air and got it—but it almost tore his glove off.

They made a mistake in the eleventh. They gave Joe Starnes a low ball and Joe murders that kind. He picked this one off his ankles and golfed it way out into deep left with Jimmy on the paths ahead of him. That ball went so far it never stopped rolling until it hopped into a herd of cattle grazing along a fence line. That put us ahead, 16 to 14, and Lefty went out to turn 'em back for the last time.

If they'd known how wild he was, they'd have waited him out, but they were too eager. Before they got wise, two men had struck out. Lefty's wildness grew. His curve ball hit the next two batters, and the second batter was knocked to the ground. An angry roar rose from the rabid group of prehistoric men behind third.

The next batter hit a mile-high fly to short right, and the crowd went stark mad. The whole game hung on that ball. Our sixty per cent hung on it. It was curving down trickily as Andy Hinch started running for it — you couldn't tell whether it would be foul or fair. The oil field gang crowded toward it. Intent on the ball, Andy was heading right at them.

I don't think a regiment of marines could have stopped Andy from reaching that ball. It was just unlucky for two roustabouts that they were in his way. Andy's shoulders caught them and bounced them ten feet.

With a leap he reached the ball, scattering oil hands right and left. Bearing the ball aloft in his glove, he ran jubilantly back to the diamond.

Then the fun began.

Out upon the field, like a Texas cattle stampede, poured the gang from the oil fields. Led by a big roustabout who must have weighed all of one hundred ninety pounds, they made for Andy and Lefty. They reached Lefty first.

Then Andy, his white hair flying in the breeze, leaped in front of the pitcher, right into the path of the big leader. The fellow launched a terrific blow but Andy ducked and flattened the leader's nose flat with a steaming left-hand punch. A half dozen men crowded in on Andy, fists swinging.

Then Joe Starnes, his eyes gleaming, dived into a fray.

But before the fight grew general, the Dundee students poured out to help, the sheriff ran up, and the oil field mob retreated in disorder. When the tangle was cleared, there was Andy on the ground and standing astraddle of him like a wild cat was Joe Starnes.

The Dundee coach walked up. He congratulated Andy on his victory and Joe on his homer and apologized for the behavior of the crowd.

"It's hard to control that bunch," he said, "especially when you're not in a regular ball park."

Then he picked a baseball cap off the ground, dropped it face up in Andy's lap, and poured a silver stream of money into the cap.

"There's your sixty per cent," he said. "Our crowd ran approximately $210 and your share figures out $126. Your man on the gate checked with our gate man and I believe you'll find it correct."

We gave a whoop of joy. We'd not only paid our expenses, but had something like $70 to go on! That was something to show the president and the regents! Baseball at Crestwood was saved.

Joe and Andy were still sitting side by side on the ground, panting heavily. Andy was ruefully examining the skinned knuckles on his left hand, while Joe brushed the back of his hand over his right eye, which was turning purple.

"How do you feel, Joe?" asked Andy.

"Not so hot," panted Joe. "How do you feel?"

"Mah knuckles seem to be pounded back into mah hand," said Andy, trying to open his swollen left hand and spread the fingers.

"Well," said Joe. "You put your mark on him, anyhow."

Then they looked at each other and for the first time Andy saw Joe's swollen eye, and the mud all over him. He began to laugh, weakly at first and then uproariously. Then Joe got a look at Andy and he began to laugh.

Andy hooked his arm around Joe's neck and playfully began to tussle. Joe retaliated, and soon both of them were rolling over and over on the muddy ground, tickling each other, flattening noses with the palm of their hands, and mussing each other's hair like a pair of fourth graders. Our $126 went rolling all over the place.

After they had finished we had to light matches to find the money. We found $125.85 of it, at that.

"In Other Years!"

(*Continued from page 14*)

idea you could do fifty-one!"

Kent laughed.

"No," he said, "I expect you didn't. You had me clocked around fifty-three, didn't you?"

Skipe looked at him with startled eyes. What was he driving at?

"Clocked?" he repeated, weakly.

Kent laughed again.

"Sure! The next time you buy a stop watch don't leave it around where it can be seen during room inspection. I wasn't positive what you had it for until I saw you out here on the fields acting as if you had the itch. So I held back when I knew you were around."

A slow flush mounted in Skipe's face.

"Listen, Kent!" he said in a cold voice, "I pick up a wallet of yours that you've lost outside and return it to you, and what do I get for it? A shove in the face! You come into my room when I'm out and poke your nose into everything, and what can I do about it? Nothing! It strikes me that you use your office for some pretty lousy stuff."

The cordiality in Kent's face died.

"Albro, you're a rotten loser!"

"Who wouldn't be with you on his neck all the time?"

"Listen, Albro! You say you're not coming back next year, so I'm going to tell you something you ought to know. You're not wanted back! There isn't a man in B Company who won't be glad you're gone! I've taken a lot from you. I've watched you act like a spoiled kid all spring. Do you think I'm not wise to your little tricks like snaking the rear rank on parade?"

Skipe was a little nonplused at such frankness.

"What of it?" he demanded, truculently.

"This! That you're a punk. You can't take anything but mollycoddling!"

Fire leaped into Skipe's eyes.

"I don't have to take that from you! School closes tomorrow, and if you're any kind of a guy you'll meet me and give me a crack at you."

"You don't need to wait until then. I'll forget I'm an officer right now."

"Jake! Come along to the field house.

There's no one there and won't be for an hour."

"I'll only need five minutes!"

"Yeah! To get unconscious!"

They stood in the empty shower room of the field house eying each other, all else forgotten. Skipe's eyes were raging. There was little difference between them in height and weight except that Kent had a deeper development through the shoulders.

Skipe tore in first, striking out at the face that had fuzzed to a white blob. Something came out of the spaces and hit his chin. He went down sprawling in a corner. He got up and tore in again. Once his fist landed on an iron shoulder and there was the subdued crack of bone against bone. Then something came up from below and hit his chin again. His head snapped back and down he went once more.

Kent stood over him.

"Albro," he said, "you can't box."

Skipe scrambled to his feet. He said nothing, but began to dance around the other boy, shooting out swift little jabs. Kent circled with him. Twice Skipe got set and let go, but each time Kent rolled with the blow. Then, tiring of the feinting, Kent came in, and as Skipe met him, he swung from the right to land a haymaker on Skipe's jaw. Poor Skipe. He walked right into it and hit the floor again.

The room spun around. Every once in a while Kent's face would drift by, and from the way the mouth was working Skipe knew it was saying something. When Kent's face came around once more, Skipe got to his knees and dived at the other boy's middle. They both went down. For the next few minutes it was claw and fang, with interludes of panting struggle.

And then Skipe felt himself being lifted to his feet. There was an explosion like the crack of a gun. Night came on swift wings. Stars streaked the sky. Skipe went to sleep.

When he came to, he was seated against the wall. Kent was bending over a basin across the room applying water to his own bleeding chin. He heard Skipe move and turned to look. A slow grin spread over his face.

"Easy now! Don't get up! I take it back! You're no pansy. I had to get you upon your feet to knock you out. If I hadn't we'd both be dead!"

Skipe gave up his struggle to rise and sank back against the wall again.

"Will you let me wipe that blood off your smush with my handkerchief, and autograph it for me?" he demanded.

"Sure! If you'll sign a snapshot of that left eye of yours for me."

"Oke!"

"Come on now! You'd better get under a shower. You'll feel better."

They stood side by side under streams of steaming water.

"I've been thinking," Skipe said, "I might come back next year after all. I'd have a lot to live down, though."

"Sure! Why don't you? You really aren't a bad guy at heart."

"I understand Culver's on the football schedule."

"That's right."

"I played a little back East last year."

"Sure enough? Well, let me tell you, we'll need every man we can get."

"I'm worried, though. I've gotten soft this spring and lying around a beach this summer isn't going to put me in shape. What do you do summers?"

"Follow a thresher. Boy! That puts sheet steel over your middle! And every night I get one of the hands to come down to the field where the heifers are pastured. He tosses passes to me. Did you ever try to snare a pass running through a bunch of frisky yearlings?"

"Say!" Skipe regarded the other boy hopefully. "Would there be any jobs out in your country for me?"

"Would there! Right on my dad's ranch, that's where!"

"No kidding?"

"No kidding! Could you come out?"

"Sure! My mother will be campaigning all summer. She won't care."

"Great! You and I could probably work up some swell stuff for next year."

"I'll say!"

There was silence for awhile, each of them intent on soaping. Finally Skipe spoke again, through the steam.

"Say, Kent. I've always felt a little cheesy about the Widow."

"Forget it! She was only a hop drag in my life."

"That's what I figured. I couldn't see why you got so sore."

"Oh, you were just fresh. Too much so for a scamp just out of the tinfoil. I had to land on you for something. Smoking was as good as anything. It wasn't the Widow."

"Well, if I ever thought so, I knew I was wrong when I saw your girl."

"That isn't my girl, Stupid — that's my sister."

"What!" Skipe dropped his soap and stared at the other, open-mouthed.

"Sure! She's a great kid, too. I'll lay you even right now she takes you at tennis this summer."

"But if she's your sister, why'd you get so burned up when I found her picture?"

Kent grinned shamefacedly.

"Well, I'll tell you," he said, and turned on the cold water. "Inside of that billfold I had three cigarettes. I figured you'd found 'em and had me down for a crummy hypocrite."

"Why, you—"

Suddenly there was the sound of feet descending the stairs. The doors flew open and a whooping crowd of trunk-clad cadets burst in.

"Yay! Captain Kent! B Company won by two and a half points!"

Someone spied Skipe and shouted, "If it hadn't been for old Fruitcake's second place we'd have lost. Yea, Skipe!"

"You see," said Kent, stepping out of his shower, "you did something for B Company after all."

"Say, Cap, where'd you fall down?" Kent grinned.

"Right on top of Skipe. Come on out, Skipe, and let 'em look at you."

Skipe turned off his shower and stepped out into the light with a sheepish grin on his face.

"Yeah," he admitted, "but we rolled over a couple of times before I stayed on the bottom."

"Wh-e-ew," someone whistled in the back of the room. "Did we miss something, though!"

"I'll say!" This was from Pud Harkness, who regarded them for a minute and then began to sing:

"Oh, the General and the Private went
out to fight the war.
The Private stepped on the General's
beard, and the General, he got
sore—"

"Shut up!" Kent heaved a wet towel at him. "You're terrible. Albro here has the only decent voice in the company. Come on, Skipe, loosen up and give us *Other Years*."

In the face of such inducement Skipe could not refuse to oblige. He threw his head back and lifted the voice that had cost Kent such untold agony:

"In other years, Saint Christopher's, we'll think of thee.

"In other years we'll love thee yet, and well."

On the next line Kent joined him in a soft baritone.

"And though a tear may fall at the sweet memory—"

The harmony they created was pleasing to them both. Kent threw an arm over Skipe's wet shoulder:

"With loving pride and joy our hearts will swell."

The last note died away. They looked at each other and grinned, delighted with their joint effect.

"Gee!" said Skipe. "We harmonize great! We should have got together before!"

The Ship Without a Crew

(*Continued from page 6*)

the man slowly, "I'd not get too much interested in that boy. You see, it's his father I'm to investigate in Tahiti."

Tod looked up in surprise. "His father!"

"This is a bad affair, youngster, and I want you to chart your course accordingly." Jarvis paused reflectively. "We've gone a long way, Joseph Tod-hunter Moran, since that early morning three years ago when you reported to the *Araby's* galley as mess boy, and I was cook. Remember?"

In silence Tod nodded.

"I christened you Joe Macaroni that morning. You were green with fright and seasickness. I thought you were simply a lubber without guts. But I soon learned better." He gave Tod an affectionate glance. "We've been through fire and water since then, youngster. That's why I'm explaining how things stand now. For this time it may be worse still. . . ."

There was a brief silence, and then Tod sought a better understanding of the problem at hand. "You mean, Captain Tom, that the company is sending you to Tahiti to investigate Stan Ridley's father?"

"Exactly. You see, Stanhope Ridley is the Blakemore Steamship Company's agent in the islands. And there've been too many lost cargoes down there to suit the company. Mr. Blakemore himself turned this job over to me. I'm to find out what's wrong."

"You'll find out, sir," Tod exclaimed. "If there's a mystery to solve, you're the man for the job!"

Jarvis smiled. "O youth! Always certain, always sure." Then his bronzed face grew stern. "But this is serious. Things look bad. I'm not the first man that the Blakemore Company has sent to Papeete."

"What—what happened to the others?" Tod asked.

"We're not sure. The first one, Mr. X—that's the only name Mr. Blakemore's office gave for this secret agent—went down to the islands ten months ago. At first his reports were optimistic. He wrote that he was right on the heels of Stanhope Ridley and his assistant, an American of questionable antecedents who acted as Ridley's confidential secretary. But after two months Mr. X wrote that the case he'd been building up against these two men had fallen to pieces. Everything appeared open and above board. The series of accidents to the company's cargoes were evidently unhappy coincidences, and so on.

"These were the findings of Mr. X, an experienced insurance investigator, expert in tracing lost cargoes, sunken schooners, and sudden fires on wharves. But—he never returned to the mainland, and Mr. Blakemore learned later that he was living in grand style on a large plantation he'd bought on the outskirts of Papeete. That was the end of Mr. X's investigations, and the hunt had to be taken up again."

Captain Jarvis paused to draw forth a pipe and pouch. "Next, the company sent down one of their lawyers—he was spoken of as Mr. Y. This time the investigator went incognito, so that the agent in Papeete wouldn't know of his activities. Papeete, you know, has the name of being the worst port in the whole south Pacific. Mr. Y disappeared—just vanished. Nothing's ever been heard from him." The captain ceased speaking. Slowly he filled his pipe.

Tod sat silent, strangely excited. Finally he asked: "And you're the next one to be sent?"

"No, I'm not the next. After the failures of X and Y, the insurance companies interested in this business, together with the Blakemore Steamship Company, decided to send down a private detective. He went down on the *Makura* as an ordinary tourist. He was clever, they say, one of the best investigators on the Pacific coast. He was known as Mr. Z."

"And what did he find?"

"What did he find?" repeated Tom Jarvis, and his great fists clinched themselves on the table. "He found a knife sticking in his back. . . . The French police picked him up one morning on the Papeete water front. He was lying beneath a coco palm—dead!"

An involuntary shudder shook Tod. He got suddenly to his feet with a feeling that he had been thrust into nightmarish unreality. But no—all this was only too real. And at that very moment he could feel beneath his feet the faint vibrations of the propeller driving the *Araby* southward toward Papeete, the worst port in the whole south Pacific. . .

With an effort he pulled himself together. "And you, Captain Tom? Are you the last one to be given this job?"

"I'm the next one," the big captain corrected wryly. "The company designates me as Mr. A. This time, you see, they're starting at the beginning of the alphabet so there'll be plenty of letters left."

"No—no!" Tod strode to the table and faced his commander across the green baize. "There won't be any more after you, Captain Tom. You'll find out!"

"I hope so." Tom Jarvis's smile flashed out. "After all, we've been through heavy weather before this, Joe Macaroni. We'll work this out. With half a chance we won't disappoint the company."

Tod nodded with silent enthusiasm. After a moment he asked, "But this agent, Stanhope Ridley — who is he?"

"An American planter and pearl trader—wealthy, powerful. The company doesn't want to take the agency away from him until they can catch him red-handed. After all, they can't be sure yet; they can only surmise. But things look bad. Those tropical islands of the South Seas often do something to white men that changes them completely. They forget the ways of civilization, forget their early training, lose all sense of decency and honor. Perhaps that's what has happened to Ridley. . . . And now he's disappeared, too."

"You mean he's vanished—like X, Y, and Z?"

Captain Jarvis looked up. "When I think of that boy forward, I hope that's the situation. But I'm afraid it's a case of willful missing. Ridley may have run for it. French steamers put in at Papeete once a month. In Paris such a man could live easily on his wealth."

"Stan Ridley's father!" Tod spoke impulsively. "I can't believe it. I—"

He stopped suddenly. Over him had crept a shivery feeling that they were being watched. Glancing abruptly upward at the skylight, he saw that the glass window to one side was being stealthily lowered, and through that glass was visible the blur of a man's face.

After a startled second, Tod sprang to Jarvis's side and spoke in low tones. "Someone's been listening to us! On the poop deck above—through the skylight."

Tom Jarvis leaped to his feet. "Outside!" he ordered. "See who it is!"

Tod flung open the door, raced into the darkness, sprang up the starboard ladder to the right, and halted an instant. Then, noiselessly, he moved aft to the taffrail. There he swung about and waited, listening.

In his ears sounded the rhythmic click of the patent log, the steady throb of the propeller, the swish of water churned up in the wake of the ship. His eyes, now accustomed to the dark, discerned the form of a man crouched low, gliding across the open deck. Even as he watched, the figure vanished down the port ladder.

Instantly Tod was in pursuit. Past the skylight he ran and, grasping the hand rail, swung himself down with a seaman's agility. At the bottom he was brought up sharply by a tall body that yielded to the impact.

An oath ripped across the dark deck. A voice rang out, "I've got you!" The arms of Captain Jarvis held Tod securely in an iron grip.

"It's me, Captain Tom. Someone ran down this ladder and forward. Did you see him?"

"Sufferin' whale oil! It's you, Joe Macaroni." With a snort of disappointment the captain loosed his hold. "I really think you've been imagining things, youngster. Sure you saw someone?"

"Absolutely," Tod declared with some heat.

"We're great detectives, aren't we?" The big man chuckled. "Well, he's gone now, whoever he is."

They peered forward. But no moving figure met their gaze. Across the wind-swept deck shone the lighted portholes of the officers' cabins facing aft, and above on the boat deck the two windows of the wireless shack gleamed like round eyes in the dark. The port and starboard alleyways, enshrouded by the night, gave no inkling as to where the man might be hiding.

"Come on," whispered the captain. "Let's reconnoiter. I'll go to port; you to starb'd."

At once the two separated. Tod hurried across the after deck, past the covered hatchways, ran through the alleyway, and came out finally on the fore-deck. There a seaman was standing at the rail.

"Seen anyone come forward just now?" Tod inquired.

"No, sir," the man answered in apparent surprise. "Everything's quiet here."

Tod, stepping closer to the man, recognized the short, heavy-set seaman who had summoned him to the captain's cabin. "What's your name?" asked Tod.

"Smith, sir."

"This is your first trip on the *Araby?*"

"Yes, sir."

Tod turned away, slightly troubled. Although the man's words had been civil enough, there was something in the tone of voice that Tod did not like.

At the opposite side of the deck Tod came face to face with his skipper.

"Nothing doing," Jarvis said softly. "Got away that time. But we needn't worry—probably some inquisitive fool who knows nothing about our affairs. Sure you didn't imagine that face through the skylight?"

Tod shook his head. A suspicion had entered his consciousness, a suspicion that spread a deep flush over his face to the roots of his sandy hair.

Far down in the engine room a bell struck once. "Ten to eight," Tod realized. "Time for me to go on watch."

"I'll go right up to the bridge to check the course," returned his commander. "Your first watch as third mate, Joe Macaroni. Good luck!"

But Tod's mind was not on his watch ahead. Thoughtfully he moved to the ladder leading to the cabin deck. When he opened his door, he found Stan Ridley seated on the bed reading a book on navigation.

"Sorry I was so long," Tod murmured. "I've got to go above now."

Stan Ridley rose. "Any news?" he asked in a casual tone.

Tod regarded him closely. Did he only imagine that the boy was breathing quickly as if from some recent exertion?

Tod's glance hardened. "Nothing," he answered. "Good night."

While Tod stood there watching, young Ridley stepped over the brass-shod storm step to the narrow deck. There, outlined against the deep black of the night, he turned, opened his lips as if to speak, then hesitated. His dark eyes were helpless, agonized, beseeching —and something stirred within Tod. But with an effort he stifled his impulse to answer that silent appeal. A sudden shower of rain broke the stillness.

Stan Ridley finally spoke. "Good night, sir. And—thank you."

A moment later Tod found himself staring reflectively through the open door at the dark heaving sea, hardly conscious of the whine of wind in the rigging or the patter of rain on the deck.

Chapter Four

IT was some time before Tod learned more about the happenings of that first night out of San Francisco. The days fell away behind them, the *Araby* took on the monotonous routine of a ship at sea, and still his suspicions remained unconfirmed. Yet during his twice daily watches on the bridge, thoughts of Stan Ridley's part in the mysterious events of that night kept forcing their way into his mind.

On the fifth day out, with the stormy waters of the north only a memory, the old freighter pushed her blunt nose into tropic seas. The officers now dispensed with their blue serge and appeared on deck in the white uniform of the tropics —that is, if a makeshift outfit composed of white trousers and singlet could be called a uniform. But that was all the *Araby* demanded.

The equator was crossed on the tenth day. "'Ear that bump?" inquired the little cockney quartermaster at the wheel. "Almost threw me orff me feet, it did. Ever been across this ole Line before, sir?"

Tod grinned. "No, this is the first time, Toppy. But it's hot, I'll say that."

"'Ot?" Toppy shrugged. "Say, if yer thinks this is 'ot, yer oughter steam down the Red Sea. That's wot I calls 'ot!"

Tod gazed down at the foredeck where the men, true to the ancient custom of the sea, were making merry at the expense of a lubber who had not before crossed the equator. A burly seaman, decked out to represent Neptune, was urging on his satellites who were boisterously shaving a man with a large wooden razor.

"Who's that getting initiated?" Tod asked.

"Aw, that's Goriller Smith. 'E thinks 'e's tough, 'e does. But he's a wise bird. Yer notice 'e ain't makin' no fuss."

Gorilla Smith, Tod perceived, was the seaman who had brought him the message from the captain when he and Stan Ridley had been discussing the strange pilot fish of Papeete harbor. Smith was taking this horseplay in such an easy manner that the men soon dropped him and turned toward a lubber named Chapman, who promised more fun. At once Chapman's voice, loud and protesting, punctuated the morning calm. The men smiled with delight.

"I feels sorry fer 'im, almost," Toppy observed, grinning broadly. "I expect they'll get out that blarsted lubber Ridley next."

"Oh, no, they won't," Tod replied. "Ridley's crossed the Line before. He comes from Tahiti. How's he getting along in the fo'c'stle, Toppy? Any better?"

"Blimey, no. That kid's too bloomin' secret. 'E sneaks around deck like 'e don't want ter talk ter us. No 'e ain't exactly popular yet."

"This is a new life for him," Tod hastened to put in. "He probably finds it rather hard."

"'E's soft, 'e is. I don't like 'is kind. 'E's a toff."

It was evident to Tod that Toppy was voicing the judgment of the men in the forecastle. Stan Ridley never mingled off duty with the crew except for talking to Gorilla Smith. Tod wondered if the unpopularity of the belligerent seaman might be a point that attracted the boy.

Two days after crossing the equator they had their first sight of land. Low on the port beam a South Sea island swam into view. It was no more than a dotted line on the far horizon, but to Tod, standing on the bridge, this was a moment he would never forget.

"It's a South Sea atoll, Joe Macaroni," Captain Jarvis explained at the young third mate's shoulder. "That's one of the Marquesas group — just a circle of sand with coco palms rising around a large inner lagoon."

Eagerly Tod watched the distant atoll take form. A row of graceful palms stood out clearly against the hot sky; the water below was the deep blue of southern seas. "An island at last," he breathed. "Think we'll see any natives?"

Tom Jarvis laughed. "Probably not yet. Even a native would find it hard to keep alive on one of those coral rings."

Every few minutes now other atolls were coming into view. To port of them the sea was soon dotted with these strange coral wreaths.

"Pearls there?" Tod asked.

"Not many here. You have to go south of Tahiti to the Tuamotu group to get real pearls."

All through the blazing afternoon the atolls lifted and fell astern, but by four bells the *Araby* was once more steaming across an unbroken expanse that stretched ahead to Tahiti, twenty hours distant.

That evening after mess Tod strolled up to the wireless shack to get a book from the ship's library, kept by the radio operator. Pausing on the boat deck near the funnel he saw Captain Jarvis standing just above him on the starboard wing of the open bridge, his binoculars raised to his eyes. Tod, following that intent gaze, made out a small white schooner in the offing.

A second later he grasped a stanchion and swung himself up to the bridge; there, with mounting interest he regarded the distant craft. The *Araby's* course from San Francisco to Tahiti traversed one of the loneliest sea lanes in the world, and since leaving the California coast they had sighted no ship of any kind until this moment. The two-masted vessel, perhaps a mile off the starboard beam, was acting in a strange manner, indeed. She jibbed and yawed in the faint breeze, coming up into the wind with a sudden rush, then stopping, her sails flapping languidly. Tod wondered what sort of lubber stood at her helm.

Captain Jarvis put down his glasses and rapped out a command. "Helm to port! Make for that schooner!"

At once Tod felt the old freighter swing to starboard; at half speed she circled round in the direction of the strange vessel.

"Something wrong aboard her, sir?" Tod questioned.

The *Araby's* master nodded. "I've been watching her for fifteen minutes. Sufferin' seagulls, but that schooner is acting funny! The quartermaster signaled to see if she needed help, but she hasn't answered."

The *Araby's* crew now lined the bulwarks, intent on the little vessel. Tod leaned on the rail, while through his mind raced a series of conjectures. Was this a native schooner with trouble aboard—sickness perhaps? Had there been a mutiny, with a fight that had left only wounded men below deck? Here was a mystery!

Slowly their ship moved nearer. "Signal *stop!*" the captain called out to

the mate in the wheelhouse. Far down in the engine room a bell clanged. At once the old freighter, losing headway, glided to starboard of the schooner.

Across the intervening hundred yards of water, Tod saw that everything aboard her was shipshape. She lay quietly in a trough of the sea, her mainsail and foresail flapping gently like tired wings, her jib and topsails furled.

Captain Jarvis lifted a megaphone to his lips and his deep voice boomed out across the water: "Ahoy, schooner!"

Silence, mysterious, eerie, rested like a pall upon the little ship. Tod's gaze fastened upon her intently. Her deck was deserted.

Again the captain sent a call flying across the water, and again the men waited, expectantly. No answer. She lay motionless in the dying breeze.

Captain Jarvis turned to Tod. "Maybe those aboard are sick below deck. Man the starb'd lifeboat, Moran, and board her. We'll lie here till you make a report."

Instantly the third mate sprang into action. Leaning over the rail he shouted down to the foredeck: "Bo'sun, send up men to lower the starb'd boat."

As Tod turned aft, Captain Jarvis put a restraining hand on his arm. "Watch your step, Third, when you board that vessel. I don't like the looks of her. No knowing what you may find below her deck. If there's no one alive aboard her, get hold of her log book, find the owner's name and her port of registry; then Sparks can radio for news of her. That's all. Good luck!"

When Tod reached the starboard boat the bo'sun was already directing the eager seamen. Under Toppy's and Jorgenson's expert hands the tarpaulin was removed, the ropes unlashed, and the lifeboat lifted sufficiently to clear the cradle. Tod's glance, running quickly over the men present, settled upon those he wished to take. "You, Toppy! Take your place in the stem, Jorgenson." He hesitated a moment as his eyes met the beseeching gaze of Stan Ridley, who stood next to Gorilla Smith.

Tod could not resist the silent plea. "All right, Ridley," he called out. "Smith, you too!"

Tod stepped lightly into the boat; the four clambered in after him, Toppy at the ropes of the after fall and Jorgenson at the forward. The men on deck now swung the boat out over the side.

"Stop a minute!" Tom Jarvis called. He swung down the steps from the wheelhouse door and strode across to the davits. "Take this automatic with you, Moran," he said earnestly, shoving the weapon across the gunwale into Tod's hand. "Gut me, if I don't think you ought to be armed."

"Lower away together," Tod sang out.

Down the black hull of the old tramp sank the lifeboat, while Ridley and Gorilla Smith held her away from the steel flanks of the ship.

"Ready!" called out Tod. "Cast adrift!"

Then, with the young third mate at the steering oar, the four seamen pulled for the schooner.

Tod's eyes rested upon that strange craft they were about to board. What secret lay beneath her deck? Where were her crew? Were they ill — or worse? His heart beat more quickly as they drew near the mysterious schooner. Evidently heavily laden with cargo, she lay so low in the water that Tod's glance could sweep across her deck. Still not a sign of life appeared there. She seemed a dead thing floating in the moveless sea. Behind her the sun dipped below the rim of the ocean, and shadows gathered about her hull.

Tod leaned on his oar; the lifeboat slid through the water toward the schooner's stern. There, painted in black letters, was the first clue to her past life:

Wind-rider of Papeete

So she was the schooner *Wind-rider*, registered at the port of Tahiti! Well, he'd better get aboard and see what else he could discover. He slid his boat up against the vessel's port side. Jorgenson, shipping his oar, stood up and grasped the small rail above him.

"Make her fast," Tod ordered. "I'll go aboard."

As he got to his feet and steadied himself he caught Stan Ridley regarding him with a strange expression that could be nothing less than fear, perhaps even terror. Well, Tod admitted, he himself wasn't any too sure of the reception ahead of him. Quickly he took hold of the rail, pulled himself aboard and, standing up, looked about, expectantly.

At a glance he took in the trim deck, the white sails looming like ghosts above him in the twilight, the lashed helm at the stern, the open door of the hatchway leading down to the cabin which he faced. Fore and aft were piled cases of canned goods—probably kerosene or gas, Tod decided. Then he became aware of a sweetly acrid odor emanating from the schooner. Could it be some South Sea cargo, he wondered, or was it something awaiting him below that deck? An obscure dread began tapping at the wall of his consciousness: *Something is wrong. Something is wrong. Something is wrong.*

With an effort he pulled himself together. "Hello!" he called out. "Anybody aboard?"

Breathless, he waited. Not a sound came from the open hatch. Dragging his gaze away from that dark doorway he glanced off to port where lay the *Araby*, her portholes already glowing in the gathering dusk. How distant she seemed! And how sinister this unearthly stillness brooding over the schooner's deck! Yet surely she couldn't be deserted. A fifty-foot vessel like this was worth several thousand dollars, even without her cargo.

Resolutely he opened his lips again. "Anybody here?"

This time there came an answer—the sound of laughter! It began softly, but rose to a high, shrill note that rocked mirthlessly across the narrow deck. Sweat broke out on Tod's forehead.

He stepped backward toward the rail, but his hand closed about the automatic Tom Jarvis had given him, and with the smooth steel of the handle under his fingers, he gathered fresh courage.

From the lifeboat came a smothered exclamation from Toppy, and then Swede Jorgenson's deep voice: "Yah, we better come aboard, sir!"

"No, stay there," Tod called back. "But be ready to shove off at any moment."

He moved resolutely forward toward the little hatch. "Who's there?" he shouted. "Who's there?"

No answer. Dead silence again in the evening twilight. Tod's lips came together in a straight line. Down the three steps of the companion he went.

He stood for a moment straining his eyes in the dim light of the low cabin until the narrow compartment took shape around him. Two empty bunks, one above the other, rose on the port side. Near these stood a square table. No human being was to be seen.

The table was set for one—with a knife, fork, and spoon, a single plate, and a cup containing what appeared to be black coffee. Half a loaf of bread lay on the oilcloth cover. Tod touched it. The bread was dry; it had evidently been lying there for days. Where was the schooner's master who had doubtless been eating here when—when something had happened? Yes, something unusual, unforeseen, had occurred. But what?

"Who's there?" he called.

In the silence his voice seemed to echo weirdly in the confined space about him. That laughter! Had he really heard it, or had he allowed himself to imagine it? Here, Tod Moran, he told himself, you're third mate now—third mate of the *Araby*. At the thought his chin went out and his eyes narrowed. He took a step forward past the table and entered a shadowy galley.

On a small kerosene stove lay a frying pan, and in a dish by its side were two eggs, unbroken. Yes, a meal had been interrupted, all right. Something in the homely atmosphere of this galley sent a feeling of everyday security surging through Tod's consciousness. Men had slept and eaten here. Yet for some unknown reason they had abandoned their vessel at sea. Why? It was up to him to find the answer.

He was about to turn back to the cabin when his gaze was caught and held by the sight of a tall wooden stand in one corner. Something perched atop that slender pole had moved, something small and green, with two round piercing eyes. A nervous smile flitted across the young officer's lips as he realized he had found the source of that mirthless laughter. A parrot was peering at him through the gloom.

Over him washed a sense of relief. "Hello," he said. "What's your name?"

In reply the parrot cocked one eye at him, raised a red-tipped wing and sidled along its perch. The little beggar was probably hungry, Tod decided. He moved closer to inspect the two thin cups that were fastened to the bar. Both containers were empty.

One step took him to a closed cupboard against the wall. Opening it he ran his eyes over its contents; with the aid of a lighted match he found almost at once a half-filled package of seed. He poured some into one of the cups and, detaching the other, moved over to the tiny sink above which hung a small galvanized-iron tank. He filled the container with fresh water and replaced it on the perch. The parrot, already busily skinning one of the large seeds held in a sharp claw, paused, stuck its curved beak into the water and raised its head to let the warm liquid trickle down its throat. Though the bird said not a word, its prompt action proclaimed its need.

With renewed assurance Tod began searching the cabin for the ship's log, that daily record kept by every vessel during its voyages. Finally in a locker between the cabin and galley, he came across a linen-covered book. Taking it from its nook he held it up to catch the last rays of light filtering through the porthole. When he read the words printed in English on the cover—*The Log of the Wind-rider*—he sighed with relief.

Eagerly he spread open the pages. Even in the deepening twilight he could make out closely written script. The owner's name was what he wanted; he turned to the fly leaf, stared at it intently, and his eyes widened in amazement. In clear, large letters on the thin paper a name seemed to leap at him through the dusk of the cabin: *Stanhope Ridley!*

A scuff sounded behind him. He whirled. Facing him in the gloom was the white figure of a man; then as he recognized that lithe, slender form with the tousled black hair, he swiftly closed the book. Stan Ridley stood before him.

"You know?" Tod asked in a whisper.

Slowly Stan nodded. "Yes. This is my father's pearl trader, Mr. Moran—I wanted to tell you sooner, but there wasn't any chance. He always used the *Wind-rider* in making trips among the islands. What's it doing here like this?" His voice rose to a high pitch of intensity. "What's happened? What's happened? Look—that table's set for my father's breakfast! What's happened to him?"

(To be continued in the October number of THE AMERICAN BOY.)

Stamps in the Day's News

By KENT B. STILES

THE appearance of the Newburgh and Chicago Century of Progress commemoratives so early in the Roosevelt Administration has prompted all sorts of suggestions for special issues. Some of the stamps would commemorate: the Battle of Quebec (to be celebrated next year at Wolfboro, N. H.); the opening of the Great Lakes-to-Gulf inland waterway; the tercentenary of the founding of Connecticut; and the departure of the last of the British troops from America at the close of the Revolution. More than 200 proposals have reached Washington in recent months. Probably the fall will bring a definite announcement.

Meanwhile the Department is planning a stamp with a likeness of Calvin Coolidge, but it is likely to take its place not as a commemorative but as part of the next regular series. The two Adamses —John, the second President, and John Quincy, the sixth— have never been pictured and their protraits may enter philately in the new set.

Another bit of news is that the Department has printed 15,000,000 more copies of the Oglethorpe commemorative. The original supply of 50,000,000 has been exhausted.

The American Philatelic Society held its annual convention at Chicago in August, and the Post Office Department printed, at Chicago, the Century of Progress 3c in sheets of twenty-five from a specially prepared plate. This does not mean a new major variety of the 3c but the entire sheets will be of interest to specialists by reason of the appropriate inscription placed in the sheet's margin. This was also done when sheets of the White Plains 2c were run off at the international philatelic exhibition at New York in 1926.

President Roosevelt, philatelist, has been elected to honorary membership in the Philatelic Society of Sweden.

A Vote for Peace!

IN Holland, if you want to vote for world peace, you can! All you have to do is buy one of these stamps instead of the regular stamps for the same amount. Your purchase registers your wish that the nations settle their disputes amicably, without resort to war.

An organization known as the World Peace Postal Association induced the Netherlands to print this 12½ cents, and other nations are to be asked to print similar stamps. An American, J. W. Hamilton, of St. Paul, is secretary of the association. He has received expressions of interest from post office authorities at Washington and from Australia, Canada, China, Cuba, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, and Newfoundland.

The design is a white dove in a circle inclosed by two triangles forming a six-pointed star. The dove symbolizes Peace and the star signifies Hope. The background is bright blue.

Balbo's Adventure

THE flight (mentioned on the August page) by Italo Balbo, Italian Air Minister, and his squadron of planes from Rome to Chicago by way of Holland, Great Britain, Iceland, Newfoundland, and Canada, continues to intrigue collectors. In addition to the special postal paper issued by Italy, Aegean Islands, Cyrenaica, and Tripolitania, 1, 5, and 10 krone stamps were put forth by Iceland.

Later our own Postoffice Department announced that the Italian Government had agreed to permit the Balbo planes to carry mail from Chicago or New York on the return flight. Letters so carried, the Department stated, must be prepaid with U. S. stamps—$1.70 for delivery in the United States, Canada, or Newfoundland, and $2.60 for destination in Europe. The Department, on June 15 and 16, made detailed instructions available at all postoffices.

Canada also arranged for letters bearing $3.20 in Canadian stamps to be carried from Shediac, New Brunswick, a scheduled stopping place for the squadron, to Europe. Each letter must be sent (inside an envelope) to the Shediac postmaster.

Cyrenaica's Balbo flight stamps—19 lire 75 centesimi green and blue, and 44L75c carmine and blue-green—illustrate planes in a star-studded sky. Tripolitania's, in the same values but respectively black and brown and blue and green, show an eagle, a winged lion, and a plane. Aegean Islands' set comprises Italy's Balbo stamps overprinted *Isole Italiane dell'Egeo.*

Around the World

OTHER new issues, received or promised, include (alphabetically by countries) the following:

Aegean Islands' trans-Atlantic *Graf Zeppelin* flight stamps mentioned on the July page are in six values with uniform design—the dirigible above ancient buildings.

Argentina has ordered a set with portraits of past heroes of the republic on the lower values, and pictures of products on the higher ones.

To "lighten the heavy burden of the treasury resulting from unemployment," Belgium has issued a 12-value series. In other words, collectors will be called on to buy these and thus contribute to a worthy project.

For postage on mail carried by the *Graf Zeppelin* on its return flights to Europe, Brazil has printed a 3,500 reis picturing the ship over a point of land.

"World's Grain Exhibition and Conference, Regina, Canada, 1933" was overprinted in blue on Canada's 20 cents brown-red of 1930 on the occasion of the Regina gathering of agriculturists from July 24 to August 5. The 20c was selected because, appropriately, its design illustrates wheat-harvesting.

"National Salvation Through Aviation" is inscribed on Chinese 1, 2, 5, and 10 cents stamps issued to raise funds to build military airplanes. A plane is the common design.

The Dutch West Indian island of Curacao, discovered in 1499 and occupied by the Spanish in 1527, has belonged to Holland since 1634 except on two occasions when it was controlled by Great Britain. Today it is a Dutch colony, and tercentenary postal paper will be issued in 1934 by both Curacao and the Netherlands.

A Czechoslovakian set, 50 haleru and 1 korona, recall Pribina, the Slovak leader who introduced Christianity into Slovakia.

Dominican Republic's recent "international air mail week" was commemorated with a special 10 centavos air stamp. Meanwhile a series has been ordered printed in honor of the birthday of President Trujillo.

The Tenth International Postal Congress will be held in Egypt next February and commemoratives are foreshadowed in denominations of 5, 10, 13, 15, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 milliemes presenting a likeness of the late Khedive Ismail, founder of the Egyptian postal department in 1865.

France's latest pictorial, 90 centimes,

Here's an elaborate Italian three-in-one stamp, overprinted for the Aegean Islands, used for letters that went across the Atlantic with Balbo and his fleet of 24 airplanes. Balbo, you'll remember, flew from Italy to the Chicago World's Fair, via Iceland.

offers a view of the city of Puy.

Great Britain's current regulars have been in use since 1912. Announcement is made that they will be replaced on January 1 by a set in new designs.

A Boy Scout world jamboree took place in Hungary from July 20 to August 20 and commemoratives appeared in values of 10 fillers green, 20f carmine, 32f yellow, and 40f blue. The one design is a stag against a background of the cross-and-crown part of Hungary's royal coat-of-arms. "Jamboree 1933" is inscribed and the stamps were to be good for postage through September 30.

The "Latvija-Afrika 1933" (so overprinted on the stamps) set mentioned last month were issued for a journey that never took place! The plane crashed at the start of its proposed journey to Gambia and the flight was abandoned. As the letters did not move by air to their intended destination, it remains to be seen whether the Scott catalog will chronicle the stamps.

Further Lithuanian "racket" postal paper has appeared—of the kind referred to last month. One set bears portraits of patriots—Avisteliauskas, Vilesis, Sliupas, and Basanavicius—identified with the building of the republic. Another comprises triangular airs (not recognized by Scott's) overprinted "Darius — Girenas — New York — Kaunas" for use on the non-stop flight of two Lithuanian aviators, Darius and Girenas, from New York to Kaunas, Lithuania, in which the aviators crashed and were killed after they had successfully reached Germany. The portrait series was printed by a stamp dealer in Lithuania; and the sale of the flight stamps was at the Lithuanian Consulate in New York. Both are speculative and probably will be banned by the catalog publishers.

Paraguay commemorated the Graf Zeppelin flight with this stamp, in red.

A lighthouse (1½ cents), a fishing smack against a background of red sun (3c), a hospital and ship church for sailors (6c), and a Dutch sailor, typifying commercial navigation (12½c)—these are the designs of a Netherlands semi-postal set. Each sells at advance of face value, and thus funds are raised in behalf of sailors' and fishermen's charities.

Panama's new 2 cents, sponsored by the Panama Academy of History, commemorates the birth, in 1833, of Dr. Manuel A. Guerrero, who was the republic's first president.

The Rope Guy

(*Continued from page 8*)

they do call it the follow-up."

Tierney reached for his derby, which rested on the floor beside him.

"Well, Chief," he said as he put the old iron lid on his round dome. "I'll go and eat. See you in the morning, nine o'clock."

"It looks hopeless, Jim."

"We got the oil traced, ain't we?" Tierney demanded, his round little blue eyes widening in astonishment. "All we got to do is follow the oil, Chief, and we'll locate the outfit using the oil that had a tow rope stolen. Good-night."

Inspector Sweeney had picked some of his brightest young men to investigate the Huntingdon robbery. They annoyed Mr. Huntingdon exceedingly in their efforts to get from him a better description of the man who had roped and robbed him.

"Of course I have nothing else to do in life but sit here and entertain you fellows," he protested.

"But you can spare one day from business," insisted Dick Bryan, one of Sweeney's best. "It isn't the jewels we care about and you don't have to worry about them because they are covered by insurance. But you see, Mr. Huntingdon, if this rope guy gets away with this sixth job, there'll be a seventh and an eighth and so on, and perhaps some of your friends may lose heavily. They may not all be thoroughly covered by insurance."

"My business!" exclaimed the rich man. "I'm a Wall Street broker as far as the telephone directory goes, but if I depended on business at my office I'd be in the bread line."

"But when the burglar was roping you to the chair," insisted Bryan, "his face must have been close to yours at some time. Was there any scar on his face?"

It was hopeless. The young detectives turned to the rope that had been used in binding Huntingdon, but that offered no clue. It was just the ordinary window sash rope that could be bought in almost any store.

The apartment house attendants gave no assistance. No one was seen to enter or leave the building that morning. But, of course, there was the cellar entrance from the ground floor and then the subcellar and the chutes for coal, and the doors for garbage and ash removal. They knew nothing about that. In cellar and sub-cellar only two people had been on duty at the time of the crime—the engineer and the furnaceman. They had never felt it necessary to keep the exit from the sub-cellar locked. A man could have gone from the passage between engine room and furnace room to the back court without being seen.

Bryan got his chief on the telephone.

"Yep," snapped Sweeney. "I know. I know. That's all I been getting right along—nothing doing. How about the heirlooms? You didn't know about them? Well, trot back and ask Mr. Huntingdon. His wife is weeping about the old family heirlooms. Get a good description. We might be able to trace the stuff through one of them. They'll probably be offered by some dealer in antiques or some collector."

Bryan knew his boss. When Sweeney ordered him to talk to a man he meant talk to him whether he was in New York or in the air flying for a long distance record across oceans and continents. He had telephoned from a shop on Madison Avenue. He turned and hurried back to the Huntingdon apartment on Park Avenue.

Mr. Huntingdon had left, the butler informed him.

"Where's he gone?" asked Bryan.

"To a party at the Chevy Chase Club."

"Where's that?"

"Washington."

Bryan counted the money in his wallet. He could make it.

Tierney was never intended to be a police inspector. Some people are born generals, brigadiers, or colonels, but Jim, along with the great bulk of the people of the world, was born a private in the ranks and was never intended to rise even to a corporalship. Sitting comfortably in Sweeney's office irritated him. In fact it gave him a pain in the neck.

Appearing promptly at nine, he placed his derby on the floor beside his chair, filled the seat of another chair with the morning papers, and proceeded to read every line of the Huntingdon story. The inspector had plenty of other things to look after and went at his job without a word to his old friend. He was satisfied that under that round skull and back of those innocent blue eyes a brain was working. Slowly, perhaps, but carefully and guided by inherent good sense. If anybody could help him in this case he felt sure that Tierney was the boy.

After a half hour Tierney looked up from his paper and remarked: "The wimmin have gone nerts, Chief."

"Yeh?"

"Up in the air."

"Flying, you mean?" Sweeney asked.

"Yeh. Mrs. Huntingdon has put off the air trip to Florida on account of the loss of those heirlooms. The paper says she's broken-hearted. Ain't it bad? Seems to me if she's that sentimental she'd be home taking care of her family instead of buzzing through the air."

"Uh-huh."

The retired man-hunter shifted in his chair, dropped the paper he was reading, and stared out the window into Centre Street. He wouldn't have made a model for a statue of "The Thinker." His big fat hands rested on his fat knees, his face was about as expressive as a half-baked pie, his noble brow was unruffled, his eyes glazed.

"Say," he grunted, "we're overlooking something."

"Shoot," said Sweeney, all attention.

"While I was reading the papers my eyes drifted to an advertisement of the new Superlative Oil Corporation, the company Mr. Truesdale works for. It's a half page ad and points out that Superlative Oil was used in that flight from Quebec to Mexico."

"Well?" asked Sweeney.

"We been looking up garages. Why not hangars? There's plenty of them in the outskirts of this town."

"Good dope," Sweeney approved.

"But they don't use tow ropes on planes any more. They just pull and push 'em." Tierney lapsed into profound silence for a few minutes. "But," he added finally, "where there's hangars there's garages. The fliers and their friends don't walk to these airports and private fields. And if they can afford to fly they don't use trains or buses."

The telephone rang loudly.

"Excuse me a moment." Sweeney picked up his telephone receiver.

"Dick Bryan," a voice came through the phone.

"Yes. Inspector Sweeney."

"In Washington, Chief. You told me to talk with Huntingdon and get a good description of Mrs. Huntingdon's heirlooms."

"Yes."

"While I was telephoning you yesterday he went to Washington to fill a social engagement with friends at the Chevy Chase Club. I followed. Got him late last night. He was feeling pretty good and didn't seem to remember me. I asked him for a description of the heirlooms and he said, 'What heirlooms'?"

"What did you say to that, Bryan?"

"Not a word. I beat it from the club."

"Now that's the stuff, Bryan. You're a detective. You'll get your promotion before long if you keep up that kind of work. Thanks, young fellow. Stay where you are and call me at twelve, at two, and at four."

Sweeney turned to Tierney. "Huntingdon doesn't know anything about any heirlooms, Jim," he said.

"Well, I'll be dog-goned!" exclaimed Jim, his face breaking into a broad grin. "I see right now I got to put on the old derby and get out on the job. This sitting around a comfortable office ain't for me!"

"Need any expense money?"

"I got plenty and I'm not going far. So long."

The Old-timer dropped into the subway and rode to Thirty-fourth Street, and took a taxi over to the Long Island railroad station. A smooth-riding electric train whisked him under the city and under the East River to Queens and thence to the Long Island country around Garden City and Mineola and the flying fields.

It didn't take him very long to locate the Huntingdon hangar and Mrs. Huntingdon's big passenger plane ready for its Florida flight. Nor did he find it difficult to mingle and swap sarcastic remarks with the mechanics, for one of Jim's chief assets in the art of detection was his simplicity and homeliness of appearance and manner.

To the mechanic in charge of the Huntingdon hangar and garage Jim explained that he was on his way to visit a brother "out on the island," and that his flivver had died on him. He wanted to save expense and could get a tow for nothing from a passing truck if he could get the loan of a tow rope.

"Surest thing you know, Old Son," said the mechanic. "Take a load off your feet while I get it."

Tierney perched himself on a box in the sun, enjoying the cold clean air, idly watching the planes as they landed or took off. After a few minutes he heard the mechanic yelling to his assistants. The tow rope that had been in a closet in the garage was gone. Not a man in the outfit had used it for weeks and all were sure that no one had borrowed it.

"Thanks just the same," said Tierney heartily. "I'll get one."

"I'm sure you can get a loan at the garage across the field."

"Could I look at the big plane inside?"

"Go to it."

Tierney walked into the hangar and while he may have seemed to have been studying the graceful lines of the ship he was in reality looking about for oil cans. He spotted a big one, and it bore the label "Superlative Oil Corporation."

As he was leaving he again thanked the chief mechanic and innocently asked, "If that tow rope of yours was stolen, could you identify it if you saw it again?"

"Surest thing you know. There's a heavy scar on the end and it's got grease and oil on it in splotches. And the hook I made myself—I ought to recognize that!"

"So long."

"So long."

There was no great hurry and so Jim climbed into a lunch wagon, carefully examined the contents of the pie case, selected the largest pie, and hoisted himself to a stool.

"Coffee," he said, "with the big pie."

"One up!" shouted the man behind the counter as he slid the pie to Tierney. The pie halted immediately under Jim's nose. The coffee followed and stopped without touching the pie plate. Jim made the pie disappear with a few simple gestures. Brushing the flakes from his lips, he then gave serious attention to the matter of food, for it was now two in the afternoon. "Two hamburgers with spuds. Milk. Rye bread."

"Double the hamburgers and make it rye!" called the waiter.

Jim felt better every minute, and when his plate and glass were empty he made another careful inspection of the pie case but held off. He'd be back in the sticks with Maggie not long after nightfall, and her pies were worth waiting for.

Contented with his work and his dinner, Jim boarded a taxi and rode all the way to Jamaica where he could hop into a subway and land in police headquarters in no time.

"What's doing, Jim?" asked Sweeney. "Plenty?"

"Yeh. What you got?"

"Well, I looked up the Huntingdons," Sweeney said. "Just another rich stock gambling family gone broke. That big insurance money on the jewels would help a lot."

"And I landed the rope. It come from the Huntingdon garage and the chief mechanic can identify it and identify the hook. He made the hook himself. You see it was this way. Huntingdon thought it a cinch, because of these rope robberies in the neighborhood. The problem was to get a rope with a hook. He knew of the one in his garage down on the island and when no one was looking he just dropped it in his car and slid the robe over it. Then he sticks it into a dress suit case on the way back to New York, takes it to the roof, and hangs it from the coping. The missus ropes him up and takes the jewels."

Dick Bryan interrupted for his four o'clock call.

"Bring Huntingdon in," ordered Sweeney. "Just tell him we have his rope identified. And tell him if his wife doesn't get the jewels back in his apartment by ten tonight the two of them will find it just too bad. Get me? Yes. And tell him not to bother about the heirlooms. Good work, Dick."

Tierney buttoned up his shabby overcoat and fitted the iron bonnet well down on the old bean. "I'll be hopping to the sticks," he said. "I'll get home just at the right time for the corned beef and cabbage. So long."

"So long and much obliged, Oldtimer."

Contents for September

Cover painting by *Paul Bransom*

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS—

Don't leave the job to your local post office. Notify us AT ONCE or, if possible, IN ADVANCE. Otherwise you'll get your magazine late or miss it entirely. Help us to serve you promptly. Notify Circulation Manager, American Boy Magazine, 180 N. Michigan Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, or 7430 Second Boulevard, Detroit, Michigan.

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FUNNYBONE TICKLERS

PURE FANCY

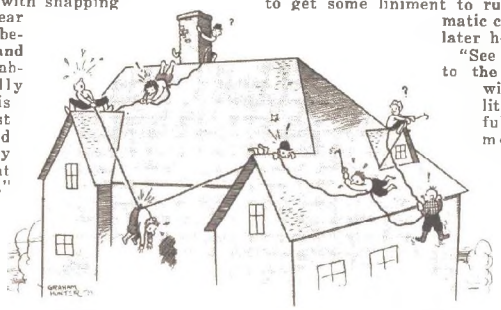
Fisherman: "It was a trout of enormous size. I tell you I never saw such a fish!"
Friend: "I believe you."

THE OWL THAT 'OWLED

The cockney in the wilds of Canada, away from the London streets for the first time, heard a weird scream in the night.
"What was that?" he asked, startled.
"An owl," was the reply.
"Yus, yus, hof course," he said testily. "I know it's an 'owl. But what's 'owling?"

TRIED AND FOUND GUILTY

The commuter boarded the train to Boston one morning and took a seat next to a rather tight-lipped young woman with snapping black eyes. Near his station it began to rain, and the commuter absent-mindedly reached for his umbrella. Just as his hand touched it an icy voice said, "That is *my* umbrella."
In confusion he jerked away his hand, mumbling an apologetic explanation. He was still blushing when he left the train.
The rain reminded him that his wife had asked him days before to get a half dozen old umbrellas that were being repaired. He got them, boarded the return train. Struggling with his armload he sat down, never noticing that his neighbor was the same young woman he had encountered in the morning. A moment later, when he glanced her way, he met contemptuous eyes.
"You did rather well today, didn't you?" came the frigid voice.



This year, the mountain-climbing family spends a quiet season at home.

THE BEST POLICY

Two boys in the intermediate grades were fighting in the school yard at recess time. A teacher separated them and sent them to the principal.
"He stole three cents from me," one shouted, glaring angrily at the other.
The other boy was more collected.
"No, sir, I did not," he said positively. "I only borrowed the three cents and defaulted like a gentleman."

THOROUGHLY TESTED

"Where did you find this wonderful follow-up system? It would get money out of anybody."
"Simple enough. I just compiled and adapted the letters my son sent me from college."

NONSENSE

Steno: "Howja spell sense?"
Boss: "Dollars and cents or horse sense?"
Steno: "Well, like in 'I ain't seen him sense'."

PROVE IT

Midnight came, but he was still talking "My boss says," he went on, "that I have lots of git-up-and-git."
"Let's see some of it," said she.

SO THAT'S IT!

"Pa," said son, "what becomes of a ball-player when his eyes begin to fail?"
"They make him an umpire," said Pa.

HIS KIND OF KINDNESS

"I cannot understand," the Young Man at College wrote to his parent, "how you can consider yourself a kind father. You haven't sent me a check in three weeks. What sort of kindness do you call that?"
The father's reply was brief. "Dear son," he wrote, "that's unremitting kindness."

HIS GENERAL ORDERS

Caller: "Is the boss in?"
New Office Boy: "Are you a salesman, a bill collector, or a friend?"
Caller: "All three."
N. O. B.: "He's in conference just now. He's out of the city. Step right in."

FORCE OF HABIT

Boggs: "Why aren't you going around with that school teacher any more?"
Baggs: "Couldn't stand it any longer. Every night I didn't show up, she wanted a written excuse from my mother."

ETERNAL FEMININE

The farmer stopped at the village store to get some liniment to rub on his rheumatic cow. Three days later he returned.
"See here," he said to the proprietor, "I wish you'd be a little more careful what you sell me after this when I ask for something. The other day you gave me eau-de-Cologne when I asked for liniment, and durn if I didn't rub it on afore I found it out."
"I'll fix that," said the grocer, "by exchanging the bottle. That eau-de-Cologne didn't hurt her, did it?"
"Can't say it has," answered the farmer, "but ever since I put that stuff on 'er she don't do nothing but look at herself in the duck pond and sigh."

BRAVE ADMISSION

She: "Are you cool in time of danger?"
He: "Sure, but at the wrong end."

AUTOMOTIVE MOTTOES

Pedestrians should be seen and not hurt.
A flivver is a gentleman—it rattles before it strikes.

DELIBERATE

Coach: "I want a man for quarterback who will never call a hasty signal."
Third Stringer: "H-h-here, C-c-c-coach, I-I-I'm y-y-y-your m-m-m-m-m-man!"

REGRETTABLE

"Boy, is that girl a dream! Watch my smoke! I've made up my mind to take her home."
"Sorry, old chap, but I've decided to do that myself."
"Oh, yeah! I spoke first."
"I know, but I happen to be engaged to her."

TEAM-PLAY'S THE THING

Learn to work with others! Remember the banana—every time it leaves the bunch it gets skinned.

GENEROUS MIKE

Ike (in a restaurant): "Hey, Mike, there's a fly in your coffee."
Mike: "I don't care, Ike. He won't drink much."

AT THE SENIOR BALL

She: "Oh, I adore that funny little step of yours. Where *did* you pick it up?"
He: "Funny, nothing. My suspenders are busted."

FOOTBALL BRAINS

Dumb Guard: "Boy, this liniment makes my arm smart!"
Critical Coach: "Take the whole bottle! Try it on your head."

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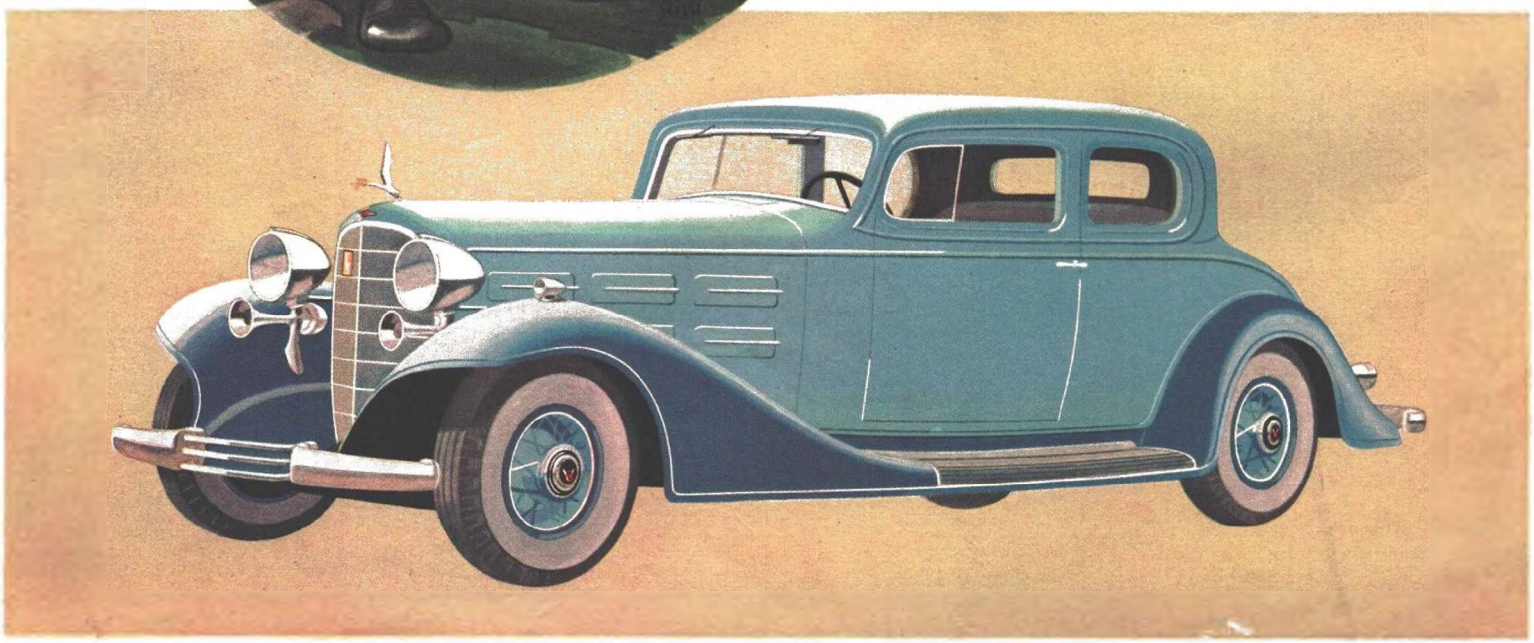

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