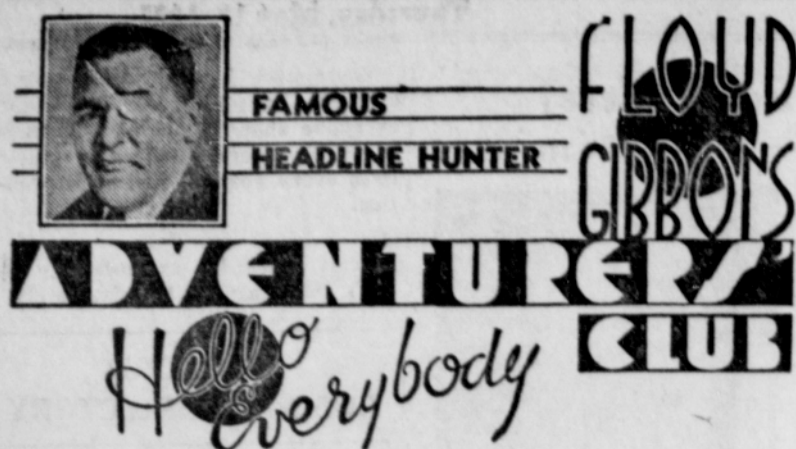




"Buried—But Not Dead"

By FLOYD GIBBONS

ADVENTURE sure laid an icy hand on the shoulder of Joseph Kurtiz, who sent me one of the best written yarns I've had to date. Joe lives in Brooklyn now and at last writing could have used a job. He gave up his youthful ambition to be a mining engineer as a result of events related in today's story, and switched to mechanical engineering. But, if you ask me, the magazines are looking for people who can write like Joe.

Accordingly, I'm following his script pretty close. In April, 1920, Joe was a surveyor with the Glen Alden Coal company, Scranton, Pa. It was his first job, and he was assigned to investigating "pillar robbing" in the Cayuga mine. I'll explain.

Miners must leave enough coal to support the roof of the mine, which consists of shale, a scaly rock, that caves in easily. Pillar robbing means stealing coal from these remaining supports, and is illegal, since it may cause cave-ins in which workers are killed, gas and water mains burst, even explode, and brick buildings standing on the land collapse. It's earthquake, fire and flood.

Fine Place for an Avalanche.

The Cayuga had been deserted for fifty years. Inside Joe and three companions found pillars cracked and crumbled by the weight of millions of tons of rock they had held up for five decades. As supports they were useless and might just as well have been mined out. Old timbers erected by miners to protect themselves in those far, bygone years were rotted, useless. A touch and they collapsed to fungi-infested, mildewed dust. Not much between Joe and the millions of tons of rock over his head.

Worse, the workings were of the "pitch" type—each chamber like a long, sloping tunnel, some very steep. The roof was dangerously cracked. Slabs of shale hung so loose a breath would send them crashing to the floor. Fallen rock covered the steeply-slanting floor in sizes from a fist to a dining-room table. This "gob" can start an avalanche on the slanting tunnel floor.

Joe's duties—lovely job!—were to climb over this loose rock, covered with slime. If he made it, it was safe for the others to come up. If he didn't and started a fatal avalanche—Joe forgot to tell about that.

A Pocket of Gas Was Ignited.

Well, sir, Joe climbed gingerly upward, clinging to the glistening coal pillar at the side, peering ahead by the faint light of the lamp fastened above his cap-visor. He stepped, light as a falling feather, testing every foothold. At the top our "human fly," as Joe calls himself, was to establish a point for the transit—a surveyor's instrument—to shoot at.

Joe never made it. Twenty feet from the top—Bom! An explosion like a giant bassdrum shook the earth in a bolt of livid flame. GAS! Joe's light had ignited a pocket of whitedamp!

Splinter! Crack! Crash! The shock jerked rock toppling from the roof, dropped it on the loose "gob" on the steeply-slanting floor! THE SLIDE WAS ON!

At first, with thumps scarcely audible above the rolling rumble of the waves of flame over his head, then, in a roaring crescendo, jagged rock raced, leaping and thundering downward past Joe, hurtling into the hell of darkness far below.

Buried—and in Inky Darkness.

Joe's lamp had gone out with the explosion. But above him was a blinding glare—a marching surf of blue-and-red-streaked fire, lighting up the chamber overhead. Blistering white heat above—thundering flood of angry rock below! Joe clung to the pillar on his stomach, ducking hurtling rocks, shrinking from the blazing heat above. With clawing fingers and toes that vainly sought foothold in the hard floor, he lay there—seemed ages—aching muscles a-torture. The slide diminished. The "carbonic oxide" above burned fitfully, threatening any second to seek out with its rainbow flames another pocket, spreading in chain explosions through the underground terrain, burying Joe and his companions.

Joe thought of the others. Had they been crushed to a jelly-smear under those tons of rock—trapped in some doghole or cross-cut in a pillar?

The rolling flames died, went out. In the inky black Joe groped for a match, lit his lamp. The floor was clear. He stepped out. Instantly he tobogganed down on a slab of rock he had overlooked. Four hundred feet below he brought up short on the heap of loose rock. It had blocked the entrance completely.

No Wonder Panic Seized Him.

Joe was CAUGHT LIKE A RAT. He sat on a rock, wondered that he was not frightened, began to figure his chances of seeing sunlight again. It seemed suddenly very precious, sun and open air. Air! The rock had sucked much out, the explosion had driven more out and the fire had burned he didn't know how much of the life-giving oxygen in that black pit. Would the rest last till they got to him?

Then, Joe says, panic did grip him. He shouted himself hoarse. He smashed a rock repeatedly against a pillar, listened. Not a sound. Just silence. TERRIBLE SILENCE. Joe saw slow death ahead—suffocation, thirst, starvation. Unwounded, he wished for death—swift death, rather than this drawn-out agony. Now he could only wait helplessly.

Joe says he prefers to forget the next nine hours. Imagination can be the most horrible form of torture. But—his companions had escaped. With all hope gone for Joe, they had notified the surface. A relay of rescue crews, working as only mine rescue crews can, dug through the pillar from an adjoining chamber and pulled Joe out nine hours later.

From that day on the only coal Joe can stand looking at is in a stove. He quit the mining engineer career cold. But I still say he can write like a professional. What do you think?

—WNU Service.

Bees Do Not Sting You if You Display No Fear

According to the popular notion, insects are physically unable to penetrate the human skin no matter how hard they may play their stingers, because the pores are then closed, notes a writer in the Indianapolis News. The United States bureau of entomology investigated and reported that the belief has no foundation in fact. The stinger of a bee does enter the skin through the pores, and these tiny openings may be slightly affected by breathing, but the difference is not sufficient to interfere with the operation of the bee's stinger. If bees do not sting a person while he holds his breath or clenches his fists it is not because they can not sting under such conditions, but because the person is then likely to be more quiet.

Bees seem to be able to detect the slightest sign of fear in a human being and are stimulated to sting by any quick, nervous movements. A person who remains quiet and who shows no fear is not in great danger of being stung. Bees, however, are repelled by certain body odors, and some persons do not excite and anger bees as others do.

Macaroni Club Figured in "Yankee Doodle" Song

The word "macaroni" in the song, "Yankee Doodle" is more than merely nonsense. It is a remnant of eighteenth century English slang, declares a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

About 1772 a group of young Englishmen of wealth and leisure, most of whom had spent considerable time on the continent and particularly in Italy, formed a fashionable organization which they called the Macaroni club. The name was taken from the fact that as one of their peculiarities or individualities, they served macaroni at the club dinners. The dish was then little known in England, and was practically introduced in that country by the Macaroni club.

The Macaronis also sought for singularity in dress and manners. They wore immense knots of artificial hair, projecting behind very small cocked hats; carried walking sticks adorned with tassels of bright colors, and affected very tight jackets and knee breeches. "Macaroni" soon came to be a derisive term for an effete man, but in its earliest popular use it had something of the suggestion of such expressions as "ritzy" and "high hat."

What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

Humane Fox Hunting.

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—In England it has been decided that fox-hunting is humane. This opinion emanates from the hunters. The foxes have not been heard from on the subject.

Maybe you don't know it, but there's a lot of fox-hunting among us, especially down south. Being but a lot of stubborn non-conformists, south-ers do not follow the historic rules. A party at large wearing a red coat, white pants and high boots would be mistaken for a refugee from a circus band. And anybody blowing a horn as he galloped across hill and dale would be set down as an insane fish peddler; and if you shouted "View, halloo! Tantiy, tantiy! Yoicks, yoicks!" or words to that effect, they'd think you were a new kind of hog-caller.

Down there they've chased the fox until he's wise. The foxes have learned that the hounds can't follow trail on a paved highway and so quit the thicket for the concrete when the chase is on. A fox has been sitting in the middle of the big road listening to the bewildered pack.

On second thought maybe Brer Fox isn't so smart, after all—not with automobile traffic what it is. 'Tis a hard choice—stay in the woods and get caught or take to the pike and get run over.

Courageous Republicans.

WHO, besides the writer, can recall when the Democrats held their jubilation rallies the night before a presidential election and the Republicans the night after the returns were in, when they had something to jubilate over? Now the situation is just the other way around. The Literary Digest poll was practically the only thing the Republicans had to celebrate during the entire fall season of 1936.

Still, we must give that diminished but gallant band credit for courage. Here, in an off-year, they're spiritedly planning against the next congressional campaign.

English Recruiting.

THE English are still having trouble inducing young fellows to join the colors. First, the government tried to increase enlistments by giving every recruit a giddy new blue uniform, absolutely free of charge, and still the lads refused. So now, as an appeal which, 'tis believed, no true Britisher can withstand, the military authorities announce that, hereafter, Tommy Atkins will have time off for afternoon tea.

This may be a new notion for peacetime, but, during the great war, the custom was maintained even up to the front. Many a time I've seen all ranks, from the brigadiers on down, knocking off for tea. However, this didn't militate against his majesty's forces, because, at the same hour, the Germans, over on their side of the line, were having coffee—or what the Germans mistake for coffee. And the French took advantage of the lull to catch up with their bookkeeping on what the allies owed them for damage to property, ground rent, use of trenches, billeting space, wear and tear, etc., etc.

Did it ever occur to our own general staff that guaranteeing a daily crap-shooting interval might stimulate volunteering for the American army?

The Job of Censorship.

ONE reason why moving pictures are so clean is because some of the people who censor them have such dirty minds. To the very pure everything is so impure, is it not? That's why some of us think the weight of popular opinion, rather than the judgment of narrow-brained official judges in various states, should decide what should and what should not be depicted. Anyhow, there are so many movies which, slightly amending the old ballad, are more to be pitied than censored.

Sponsors of radio programs also lean over backward to be prudishly proper. But without let or hindrance the speaking stage, month by month, grows fouler and filthier. Suggestive lines once created a shock in the audience mind. The lines no longer suggest—they come right out and speak the nastiness.

Sauce for the goose isn't sauce for the gander, 'twould seem—or maybe, after the reformers got through saucing radio and screen, there wasn't any left over for the so-called legitimate stage.

IRVIN S. COBB

—WNU Service.

Modern Language Course

The study of French, English and German has been introduced into El Azhar university, Cairo, the oldest university in the world, established in 972 A. D.

GEORGE VI AND ELIZABETH CROWNED

Five Million Voices Cry, "God Save the King!" as Guns Boom Glad Tidings From Historic Tower of London.

London, England.—"God save the King!"

As the great guns of the Tower of London boomed forth the news that the Archbishop of Canterbury had placed the weighty Crown of St. Edward, the Crown of England, upon the head of George VI, the cry came forth in a mighty swell from five million throats as from the throat of one man.

This was the climax of the greatest show on earth, a show for which a generous share of the throng which lined the six and one-half miles of the processional route had waited without moving from their places through the dampness of a London spring night and, indeed, through part of the preceding day.

Those of the King's subjects who had not been able to afford \$2 to \$250 for a seat that would assure them a glimpse of their new monarch on his proudest day began marking off space along the curb on the afternoon of May 11. Smart alecks who thought they could put off their vigil until sunrise of Coronation Day were doomed to stretch their necks an inch or two in twelve hours of straining to see over several rows of earlier arrivals.

"A Quiet Empire."

It was a heavy day of work at the end of many back-breaking weeks of preparation for the 9,000 gentlemen and ladies of the peerage whose rank and purse entitled them to sit for an entire day in 10 to 25 pounds of clothing per capita, on a hard seat 19 inches wide without ever moving. But it was a magnificent show.

"The Lord give you fruitful lands and healthful seasons," said the archbishop in the benediction which followed the crowning of the King, "victorious fleets and armies, and a quiet Empire..."

No one in Britain could deny that in a time of world-wide unrest, a time of urgent necessity for imperial strength and unity, the political expediency of "a quiet Empire" prompted the government to make of this the most splendid coronation in all history. The government expense in the crowning of George VI has been estimated to be double that in the coronation of his father 26 years ago; its backing of the dazzling pageantry required expenditures of \$2,620,000 of public funds, not counting an estimated \$500,000 spent by the royal household in entertaining royal and foreign guests.

In the vast coronation pageant the government hoped to lend new emphasis to that sentiment which is the real bond holding the empire together, and which is symbolized by the crown and the man who wears it. There is still an undercurrent of dissatisfaction over the abdication of Edward VIII. The new King and Queen must be popularized to the fullest possible extent. The coronation was an opportunity to accomplish this, and the government could afford to let none of it slip past.

The show and the crowd lived up to all advance billing. It was estimated that there were 300,000 visitors who had to cross the ocean. All London's 12,000 hotel rooms were sold out. Souvenir manufacturers and vendors did the expected land office business. The drink bill for toasting the new King was guessed at \$10,000,000.

Queen Goes First.

Pomp and regal solemnity were byword of the day from the time the King and Queen boarded the coronation coach at Buckingham Palace in mid-morning. Eight magnificent cream-colored horses drew the ancient four-ton vehicle down the streets it has traversed since 1761, when it was built for Queen Anne. In its heavily ornate gold and jewels it carried the spectators back through the pages of history to those days before the American colonies had revolted and prevented the British Empire from including the lion's share of North America.

The ancient coach, a tradition at coronations, bore the royal couple down the mall to the Abbey, where the Queen's procession left the King to enter first, so that she could stand and wait for him by the chairs of state, or recognition chairs, in front of the royal box where the other members of the royal family were seated.

Peers and peeresses were in their places before the central figures of the coronation drama arrived. And before them the real martyrs had assumed their positions. These were the eight newspaper photographers the government had permitted to be present.

Abhorring the thought of flash bulbs marring the solemnity of such an occasion, but still anxious that pictures be taken, officials hit upon a solution. They provided camouflaged quarters for camera men in false pillars and other positions which blended into the background of the Abbey. Narrow slits in the walls of these refuges enabled the cameras to peer out at the spectacle. But the poor "photogs!" They had to be "set up" before anyone entered the Abbey and maintain their



King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, officially crowned in one of history's most spectacular and colorful coronations.

cramped positions for eight or nine hours. They were not permitted to withdraw until everyone else had left.

A general color scheme of blue and gold with rich, soft velvet hangings made a brilliant background for the cast and for the spectators in their gorgeous uniforms and gowns. Peeresses wore robes of crimson velvet, trimmed in ermine, unless they happened to be of royal blood, in which event they were required to don the purple velvet of royalty. The court gowns worn underneath were of white, cream, silver or gold. Fashion experts estimated that the most economical of them cost at least \$1,200. Uniforms of the men started at about \$600 and went up from there.

History's Greatest Gem Display

This did not, of course, include the jewelry or the coronets. The cheapest coronet could hardly have been purchased for less than \$100. The total of all the rings, bracelets, necklaces, etc., worn by the 9,000 present must have run into the millions, and was probably the most costly and magnificent display of



The Crown of St. Edward, or Crown of England, made for Charles II in 1662 and worn, because of its excessive weight, for but a fleeting moment by George VI during the coronation ceremony.

gems ever worn in one place at one time in the world's history.

Rank of the members of the nobility was indicated by the amount of ermine on the robes of the women and the length of their trains. A duchess was marked by four rows of ermine on her robe, and a train two yards long. A marchioness was permitted three and one-half rows of ermine and a one-and-three-fourths-yard train; a countess half a row less of ermine, half a yard less train; rank was further graded down at half a row and half a yard per classification.

The head of the procession, which had included a great list of dignitaries, the King's representatives and royal persons with their families from all over the world had been waiting at the west door of the Abbey, and as the royal coach approached, filed in to await their monarch. Following them came the chaplains, deans and officers of Westminster, then the archbishops with the Queen consort and the ladies and gentlemen of the court.

Enter the King.

Noblemen close behind bore the staff and the sceptre, with the cross and the golden spurs, and the three swords which signify mercy, temporal justice and spiritual justice. These were the trappings of St. Ed-

ward, with which English kings are invested.

Then came more dignitaries, and the King's sceptre with the dove symbolic of mercy and equity; the King's gold and diamond orb, surmounted by the Christian cross; the crown of St. Edward, the patent and the chalice and the Bible.

Then entered George VI in the crimson robes of state, to join his Queen, and march through the choir and up the stairs to the theatre. Passing the thrones, they then knelt at the faldstools before the recognition chairs to offer prayers. Next they proceeded about the Abbey to all four sides before the view of the assemblage. The King went to his chair and once more faced each side of the Abbey as the Archbishop, in loud tones, announced him.

After the regalia had been brought and placed by the dean of Westminster upon the altar, the Archbishop asked the King, according to ritual, "Sire, is your Majesty willing to take the oath?" and the King answered, "I am willing." He gave his oath to govern the peoples of the British Isles and the Empire according to their laws and customs; to maintain the profession of the Gospel and the Church of England. After he had kissed the Bible and signed the oath, the King repeated and subscribed to the declaration required by parliament and, with the assemblage, prepared for the communion service.

Following this lengthy service, the King, having first removed the cap and robes of state, ascended to the throne of St. Edward, the ancient chair which contains beneath its seat the historic Stone of Scone upon which the kings of Scotland sat as they were crowned a thousand years ago. After a silken pall had been put over the King, the Archbishop anointed him upon the hands, breast and face with the holy oil, and he was ready to be presented with the spurs and the sword.

King Receives His Crown.

These given, George VI removed the pall and was clothed for the first time in the royal robe of purple. The orb and cross were brought from the altar by the Dean of Westminster and placed in the King's hands by the Archbishop. He was next invested with the ring and the sceptres.

Then as the King bowed his head the Dean of Westminster brought the Crown of St. Edward, and the Archbishop, receiving it from him, held it but momentarily upon the head of the King (its weight is terrific).

This was the signal for the trumpets and the guns in the Tower of London, for the peers and peeresses to cry "God save the King!" and for the millions who, along the processional line outside, had been waiting for that moment, to toss their hats in the air and cry likewise, "God save the King!" The peers were now allowed to put on their coronets.

There followed more religious ceremonies of great length and solemnity, and then the coronation of the Queen, following which the peeresses cried, "God save the Queen!" and donned their coronets.

Still more long hours of ceremony. Then, in the early evening the King's coach at last passed once more down the processional route, and the millions who had waited all day for the sight went home happy.

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