Death Treasure

by R. A. J. WALLING

Chapter 9

ENTER THE PROFESSOR

The whispered words almost echoed in the stillness of the library:

"It's a man—I don't know if he's dead!"

Wayne snapped an order to the constable:

"Go and see what it is, Sanderson, and report back here alone. Nobody else is to enter this room."

Wayne faced us across a high mountain of suspicion. If this was a trick, he seemed to say, the tricksters should discover that Wayne was not a man to be played with.

But it was no trick. The constable came back within a minute, and said something to Wayne. The inspector answered:

"Very well, I'll go. Keep guard, Sanderson. These gentlemen are to stay as they are—Dr. Eastley, will you please come with me?"

The minutes went on—two, four five—

There was a scuffle of footsteps outside. Wayne's voice called to the policeman to open. Wayne came in first, walking backwards. He carried the shoulders of a heavy man. Eastley appeared holding him under the knees. They lifted their burden to the table and stretched him out.

"There aren't two corpses on our hands," said Wayne, as though to relieve us. "This man's not dead. He's got a bit of concussion. He was found in a small passage off the corridor outside, leading to a wine cellar. How he got there the servants don't know. Your butler stumbled over him. And nobody seems to have seen him before. Do you know him?"

'No," said Mr. Fotherbury, "I've never seen him."

"And you, gentlemen?"

But nobody knew the man on the table except me, and I remembered that Laxton had asked me to keep his visit on Sunday night secret. I forgot that as I had met him a week before at the British Museum my denial must be confounded whenever his identity came out.

But I looked calmly down on Laxton's features and shook my head with the rest.

Eastley worked over them an with feverish haste, the inspector standing by fidgeting with a button of his coat. Presently he spoke to the constable.

"Sanderson, go and fetch the butler."

All of us save Eastley were looking at the door when the butler came in—a middle-aged man in black, extremely scared.

"You're the butler?" said Wayne. "Tell me what happened. Do you know this man?" But the butler did not know him.

"Where did you see him this afternoon?"

"Lying in the passage leading to the wine cellar. It's rather dark just there. I fell over him."

"Well? Go on."

"I picked myself up and went and switched on the light. Then I saw him. Thought he was dead. Ran out and called the footmen."

"And then you called me, I see. Now, Mr.—"

"Carter," said Mr. Fotherbury.

"Now, Mr. Carter, how did he get into the house? Did the footman see him come in?"

"Ferris says 'No.' Nobody came into the house after you and the constable."

The butler had nothing else to tell. Wayne guided him out of the room.

The footman could tell the inspector very little more than Carter. But the little was important.

He had been on duty in the hall all the afternoon. He admitted the inspector and the constable. After them, nobody. The last before them was Mr. Pell.

The footman had not shown Pell to the library, as he knew the way very well. The others were familiar with the room and the minute or two necessary to take me to the library and to return was the only time the hall had been left unattended since a quarter to three. On his way back to the hall he had seen no one.

Although one could certainly enter the house through the kitchen or the conversatory at the other end from the library, no one could reach the corridor without passing through the hall. So that, it seemed proven, in the two minutes I was being escorted to the library, two persons entered the house. One was Laxton, the other the person responsible for Laxton's present condition.

Wayne had a plateful—a murder and seven men any one of whom, in his suspicion, might have done it. And now an unconscious, unknown man, apparently the victim of another outrage.

Wayne dismissed the footman and turned to Eastley.

"What do you make of him?"

"Nothing serious, I think. He's taken a hard upper-cut fair on the chin. A basin of water and a teaspoonful of brandy—and that's that."

"Then for heaven's sake get him out of this. Here, Sanderson—help the doctor to carry him away."

Laxton was hauled off the table and carried out of the room. Wayne closed the door, and we were back again in the old posture of suspicion and defense, with the form of Pell on the floor before us, and the old oppression closing down.

Quite clearly, Wayne did not know what to do.

I became aware that Somerfield had pulled a piece of writing paper out of a stand on the table and scribbled a few words on it before pushing it to Royle, who glanced at it and nodded. Wayne was also aware of it.

"I'll see that please!" he rapped out in a voice that made us all jump.

"Surely," said Somerfield quietly, passing the paper to me. I handed it on. Wayne read it.

"What's the little game?" he asked. "You've written, 'He's forgotten the keyhole.' What d'you mean by that?"

"Just that. You've forgotten the keyhole," said Somerfield, "and nobody else has thought of it. I'm just guessing that Pell's message may have arrived from outside—that Roger Pell was shot through the keyhole!"

(To be continued)

REUNION AT GIGGERS

Hopmere—A reunion dinner was given at Joe Giggers Sunday. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Harry Haines and children, Billie and Mary Jane, Joe Gigger and wife and children, Francis and Kenneth, Victor Gigger, wife and children, Margaret and Earl, all of Portland; Willie Gigger of Salem, Miss June Gigger and brothers, and the host and hostess.

HOP PICKING CALLS

Hopmere—A. M. German, the South Prairie hopman, begins picking hops on August 19. The Hopmere merchant, Julian De Jardin, will have a branch store in the German hopyard and several Hopmere residents moved there Sunday to be gone for a month picking hops.

Maddux Airlines of San Francisco has begun a three-daily airplane passenger schedule to Los Angeles.

ACROSS

1. Ardent affection
6. Slap
10. Peaceful
14. Tip
15. Nest of a bird of prey
16. Hawaiian royalty
17. Priestly caste of Persia
18. More rhythmically
19. Title
20. Shallow dish
22. Student at an English college
24. Dispatched
25. Feminine name
26. Arm of a crane
29. Card with a single spot
30. Standing room only: abbr.
31. Fine eggs
34. Need covering
36. Abstract being
38. Slumbers
40. Workers
42. Membranous pouch
44. Attack
45. Puts away for future use
47. Small explosion
49. French painter
50. Even
51. Watering place
53. Embrace

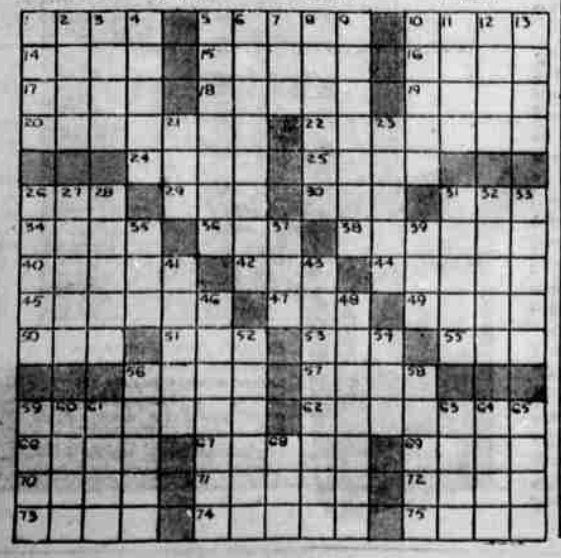
Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

B	L	A	M	E	S		G	L	A	N	C	E		
L	A	T	E	S	T		R	A	C	E	R	S		
A	D	E			E	P	A	C	T		E	N		
B	Y		S	L	E	A	V	E		S	E	E		
		W	H	E	R	R	Y		C	P				
	S	H	I	V	E	R		P	A	L	O	S		
S	T	O	N	E	D		T	U	N	E	R	S		
E	E	L	E	R		H	O	R	N	E	T			
		L	S		P	E	R	S	O	N				
S	L	Y		F	E	R	R	E	T		B	E		
P	I		B	L	A	S	E			P	A	L		
A	R	R	E	A	R		N	E	W	A	R	K		
T	A	I	N	T	S		T	R	E	N	D	S		

52. Strife
56. River dam
57. Assam silkworm
58. One who fastens firmly
60. Good pitches at quoits
66. Surface
67. Cures for
69. Ancient region in southwestern Asia
70. Black: French
71. Occurrence
72. Jog
73. Metals
74. Hires
75. Princely house of Italy

DOWN

1. Device for giving artificial light
2. Mineral
3. Bright star in The Harp
4. Passages out
5. Rhythmical flow of language
6. Encourages
7. The alder tree: Scot.
8. Potato mashers
9. Seesaws
10. Kind of lily
11. Regiment in the Turkish army
12. Kind of bean
13. Manner
21. Beverage
22. Coin of the Ionian Islands
23. Grass: Scot.
27. Angry
28. American buffalo
31. Seed again
32. Music drama
33. Compound ether
35. Gaelic sea god
37. Lifeblood of a tree
39. Terminate
41. Put in another setting
42. Consistent
43. Harker
46. Those overparticular about niceties of language
48. Come
54. Alcoholic liquor
55. Withstands
58. Kind of kitchen ware
59. Wife of a rajah
60. Common metal
61. Blood vessel
62. Is mistaken
63. Tumultuous disorder
64. Gist
65. Range of perception



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

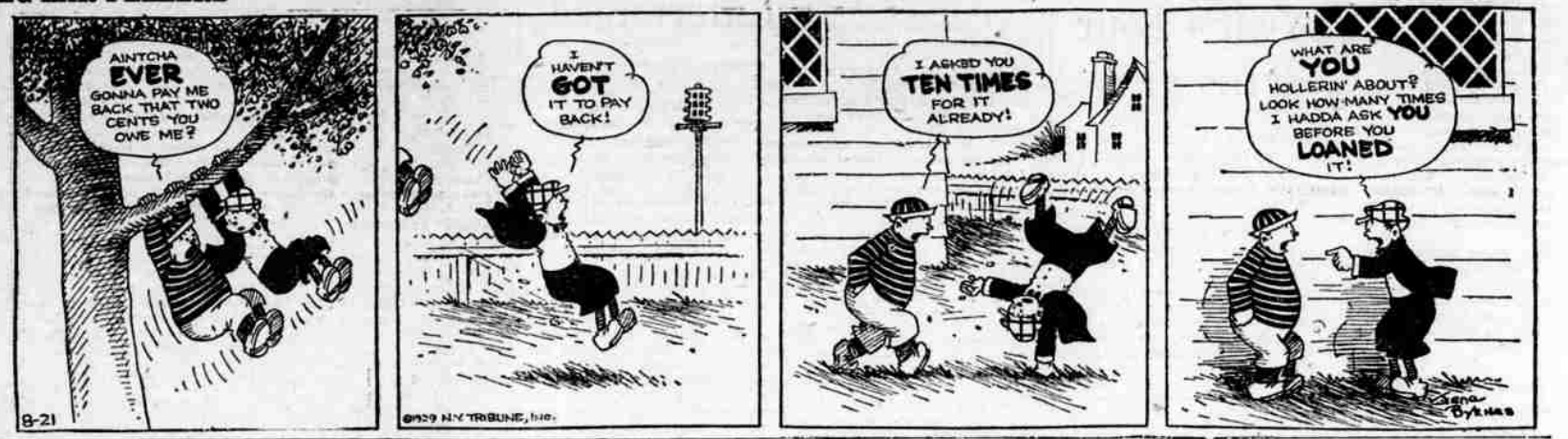
A Day Of Plenty

By Harold Gray

REG'LAR FELLERS

On Even Terms

By Gene Byrnes



TAILSPIN TOMMY

Tommy Decides To Use Strategy

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST

DUMB DORA

Just One Way Out

By Chick Young

BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus

MUTT AND JEFF

Look Who's In The Secret Service Now

By Bud Fisher