

Death Treasure

By R. A. J. WALLING

Chapter 28 THE BAG'S SECRET

I locked the studio door, opened the safe and took out the bag. It was extraordinary heavy. That weight, when I first handled it, had astonished me. I felt it. I lifted it to a table in the window. Somerfield and I stared at the mysterious black bag. I hated to touch the thing.

"Better take it upstairs," said he, pointing "significantly through the window to the lawn beyond it.

I carried the burden upstairs and dumped it on my bed. Somerfield looked at it curiously and pointed to some worn indentation letters engraved on the side of the bag.

"Original owner's initials," said Somerfield.

The black bag was not even locked or strapped. It had a spring latch that burst open when I depressed it.

Somerfield looked over my shoulder. We saw at first nothing but what happened to be a mass of shiny fragments. But on one part of them there was a mark which turned me cold with apprehension. Somerfield did not realize the significance of the broad arrow.

"What's that mark?" he asked.

"The evidence that Laxton wanted—the broad arrow that marks a convict's dress."

I galled at the tough gray material, but it would not come. Impatient, Somerfield laid hold of the bag itself, turned it upside down, and lifted it away, leaving on the bed a rude parcel made up in a prison coat. He gave it a roll and it came apart.

Then we both staggered back, the two most astonished young men in England that day. Wrapped in the prison coat was what seemed to me to be priceless and unheard of things, golden trinkets with masses of jewels, rings, bracelets, brooches, and above all a golden goblet set so thickly with diamonds and rubies that its bowl was well-nigh hidden.

We stared at the display for a full minute. Somerfield spoke first.

"Pretty little haul, I guess. I don't know much about jewelry, but I'd say there was a considerable fortune there, Grenofen. Noticed whether there have been any big robberies lately?"

But the contents of the bag fulfilled my old fears and produced new ones.

"What can we do?" I said.

"That's easy," Somerfield picked up the bag and stuffed the coat into it. "Burn this right away."

It seemed good advice. I thought of my mother's incinerator in the garden. Somerfield volunteered to stand guard over what he called the jewelry store while I cremated the incriminating bag. I found some old papers, but them round the bag and soon had it in the middle of an incandescent mass.

The disposal of Aladdin's treasure, however, was going to be much more difficult.

When I got back to the bedroom, Somerfield met me with a little cry of excitement.

"Christopher—look here! These were under the ornaments."

He pointed to a number of stick tools—a fine saw, a jimmy, a pick lock, a hook, a silk rope. He held in his hand a book in quarto, bound in a white-yellow vellum.

"The book old Fotherbury missed from his library, I bet a dollar," said he.

I took it, and let the leaves fall over: a black-letter manuscript, and on the first elaborately ornamented page the words, "The Book of the Abbott John Deacon."

It had been bound up before the manuscript was finished, perhaps even before it was begun. Nearly a quarter of the pages at the end were blank. And on the last written page was a plan—apparently the ground plan of a church.

"That's a plan of Fotherbury's," said he.

"The book was stolen Saturday or

Sunday. . . . "You and Laxton saw a man prowling about the ruins Sunday night. . . . Laxton must have expected him. . . . Laxton is keen on getting the book. Grenofen, don't we begin to see that Laxton knew about Cousin John even before Cousin John gave them the slip in Devonshire?—but look here, Grenofen, we can't leave this stuff lying about."

But it was easier to say get quit of it than to do so. We hurriedly discussed many projects only to drop them.

Of a sudden, Somerfield seemed to be electrified. He leaped back from the window, cried, "Look out!" and dived into the corner of the room where I had an old full-plate camera on a yellow case.

"Watch 'em and tell me if they come in," said Somerfield, tearing at the buckles of the camera-case.

My view commanded the lane from a point near our gate to the place where it disappeared under the trees. What had excited Somerfield was the two men walking up the road. I had them in sight for two or three seconds.

One was young Fotherbury. The other I did not know. I kept an eye on the gate, while Somerfield in breathless haste got the camera out of the case, dropped it on the floor and piled the stuff into it.

"What will you do with it?" I asked.

"Never mind. Watch. The fellow with the cub is one of Laxton's men."

As he spoke, Fotherbury's head appeared above the shrubs that lined the little drive, and the next instant he had stopped by the gate, pointing. His companion pushed the gate back.

"He's coming in," I said to Somerfield.

"Here's a bluff, then, Grenofen. It's about an even chance. But I'll take it for 'Veronica's sake and yours. See me off the premises just as the door opens to him. Ready? Everything depends on bluffing the mount. Down you go! When he comes in, stand in the hall shaking hands with me."

Somerfield grabbed the camera stand, tucked it under his arm and took the case in his left hand.

The maid was coming through to answer a ring at the door when we reached the hall. As she opened Somerfield seized my hand and said:

"Well, goodbye, Grenofen. I know what you want—just the detail of the tower. I'm going down to Oxford from London this evening. Hope to be back on Thursday, Friday morning at latest. "Fine," I replied. "Goodbye Somerfield. Just the morning before there's much traffic about. And thanks!"

I turned to speak to the man in the doorway.

"Yes," I said. "Did you want to see me?"

"My heart was beating hard when the visitor said:

"Are you Mr. Grenofen? I'm a police officer."

(To be Continued)

FLANER CHIEF LEAVES
Silverton—A. B. Carron, superintendent of the Silver Falls Timber company, local plant, left Wednesday morning for Massachusetts cities where he will spend a month visiting his parents and other relatives all of whom he has not seen for some years.

EATONS VISIT ALLENS
Woodburn—Guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Allen from Tuesday to Thursday were Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Eaton of Los Angeles. The Eatons are old time friends of the Allens whom they have not seen for many years, and were all residents of the state of Nebraska in their youthful days.

Stayton—Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Bennett and youngest son left Monday for a two weeks' vacation at Brettenhuah.

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Tubby Tucker

By Harold Gray



REG'LAR FELLERS

Study In Penmanship

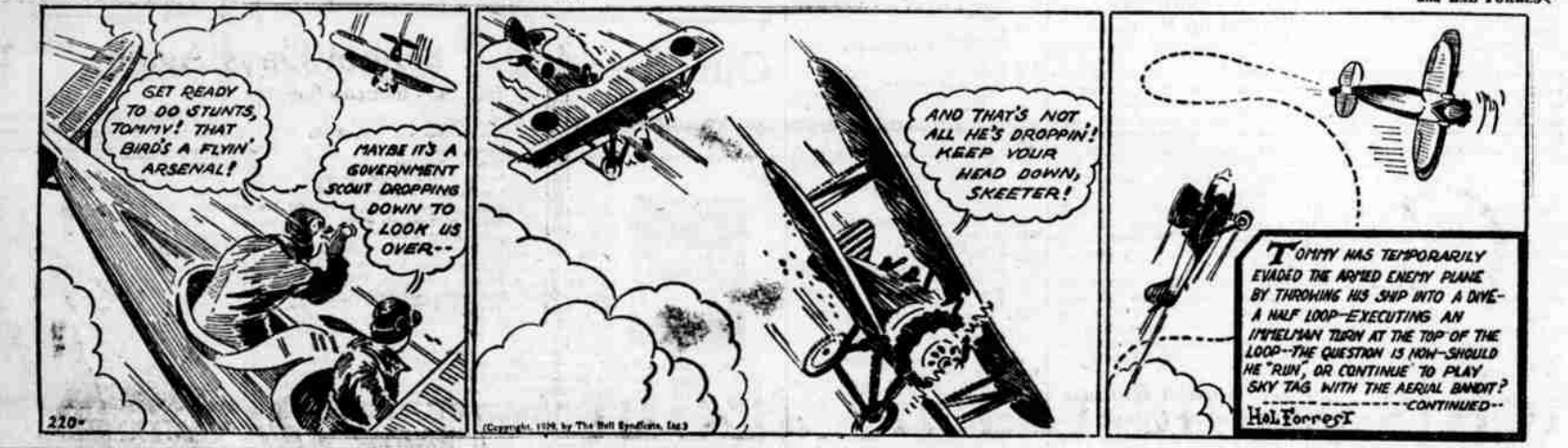
By Gene Byrne



TAILSPIN TOMMY

The Attack In The Clouds

By Glenn Chaffin and Hal Forrest



DUMB DORA

Gus Is Like An Eight Day Clock

By Chick Young



BRINGING UP FATHER

Jeff Thinks Feetage Is More Important Than Footage

By George McManus



MUTT AND JEFF

Jeff Thinks Feetage Is More Important Than Footage

By Bud Fisher



ACROSS

- Go separate ways
- Money for transportation
- Measure of weight
- Courty in New York state
- Neighborhood
- Hasten
- Contentment
- Compulsion
- Fasten
- Flower clusters
- Went rapidly
- Conclusion
- Asker
- Have idly
- Pleading to the wails
- At home
- Animal doctor
- Amusement
- Plaything
- Animal prefix
- Noise from
- Ventilate
- Cage for animals
- Overlasting
- Favorable
- Furnished food
- Grains
- Musical dramas

Solution of Yesterday's Puzzle

RIFF METAL ACRE
OLIO ANILE PLAN
TENDERS LEOPARD
AXE ARID TRADES
STYLES EL
SOOT ENOW LASH
ERRANT TROW SMA
PRAYERS ERECTOR
TIT TIER DELETE
ASEA MAIM ARES
DO SLOWLY
SLIDES LORE AKA
LITERAL TITHING
AVER CARET IDEA
PEAS SPUDS DEER

DOWN

- Vivacity
- Fast
- Two apart
- Coat of certain animals
- Like
- Teacher
- French river
- Quality of water
- Half an
- Free
- Embark on a voyage
- Evergreen tree
- These
- Army officers
- Allowance for wants
- Japanese coins
- Electro
- Bind
- Instruments for measuring
- Also
- Place again
- Spongy parts of stems
- Prize's vestment
- Monkeys
- Touching the surface
- Before
- Washed fabric
- Word of social

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