

Story of African Rubber Plantation

(Continued from Last Week)

I had planned on getting another letter written to you before the Lashaway sails—which is tomorrow—answering all your questions but now it is difficult for me to write any other kind of a letter except this one, which contains unpleasant news. I shall go through your letters which remain unanswered and send answers to them on the next boat.

On July 16th the Plantation was stunned by the worst tragedy ever to have struck here. Joe and I lost three of our best friends to the sea and so far only one of their bodies have been recovered. Two of them were Bob and Bea Henningers, our neighbors and best friends out here and whom I have spoken of often. The third was "Van Vandermeer, the beachmaster at Marshall, whom we liked very much and who spent a lot of time with us and the Henningers.

It is Bob Henninger's job to board the S.S. Lashaway and the Humhaw when they are in port, inspect the ship's tanks for the loading of bulk latex and to supervise the loading of the latex during the ship's stay in port. He went down to the Lashaway on the 15th and spent the day, returning at night with a bunch of souvenirs which his friend the first mate, Princeauf, had brought for him from down the coast. The next morning Bea went with him when he returned to the ship as they came to Liberia on the Lashaway and have many friends among the officers on board. Charlie and Dotty Baar, also good friends of ours, went along. Bea and Bob were at the office just before leaving and Bea was so excited about all the pretty things she had gotten the night before. They left at 8 A.M. on the launch for Marshall and from there went via Lighter to the Lashaway. For some reason the Lashaway dropped anchor almost five miles from shore this time.

Because of Bob's work they stayed all day and were returning on the Lighter which left the ship at 4:30 P.M. the 16th. Vandermeer, Dotty and Charlie, Bob and Bea, and 15 natives were aboard. A strong wind had come up during the day and they were fighting heavy seas. Dotty had asked the ship to watch them to see if they came through safely.

At 9:00 P.M. the native launch captain arrived at Harbor landing, the Plantation's landing here, and rushed to the factory to tell the white man in charge that the Lighter "Los Angeles" had struck it's nose in the sand in the bottom of the sea and had capsized endwise and was now floating bottom up. The black boys at Marshall had seen it happen and the captain had taken the launch as close to the bar as possible but could see no survivors so in his fright he rushed immediately to tell the first white man—which is the best he could have done. Hagerty, the factory man, spread the alarm and Mr. Seybold, the General Manager, Mr. Vipond and a dozen others left immediately for Marshall which is over 12 miles from here.

Something happened to the steering cable on the launch enroute and it had to be repaired, consequently they didn't arrive at Marshall until 1:00 A.M. the next morning. In the

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meantime another boat loaded with white men and search lights left for Marshall on the chance that they could do something to save the lives. When the launch pulled in at Marshall the boys told them a white man and a missey were at Van's house. They rushed up the hill and found Dotty and Charlie sitting there bundled up and three or four black boys laying around resting. These were the only survivors from the disaster out of the twenty who were on board.

According to Charlie's narration of the accident they were fighting heavy seas but weren't especially

worried as these Lighters are about the most sea worthy vessels afloat. The wind, however, had constantly pushed them shoreward where the sand bar came out far into the sea. Just before the accident they took three very heavy seas and as the fourth piled up Van, who is an excellent sailor and can handle any boat, sensed the pending disaster and made a dive for the wheel. That is the last Charlie saw him for the next minute the nose of the Lighter stuck into the sand and the wave which was 20 feet high carried the lighter straighter up on it's nose, made a quarter turn, and went on over com-

brother-in-law and sister; Mrs. Nettie

pletely upside down. Because of the seating arrangement Dotty and Charlie were on the "upside" of the Lighter as she made the quarter turn just before plunging beneath the waves and therefore had their small chance of getting free. Charlie was tangled in the ropes and went down with the ship but freed himself somehow although now he has deep rope burns. Dotty came up twice and both times it was beneath the Lighter, the third time she came up she was free. They are both excellent swimmers which probably accounts for their keeping their heads. Charlie looked around for people to come to the surface and saw only the three or four black boys who were saved. No one else came up except Dotty. He told her to hang on to the upturned lighter and he would swim for help. They were about a mile off shore. He, with the aid of the sea, tore his clothes off himself and swam for shore. The Lighter went down again and Dotty had to swim for it. She managed to get out of her coat but swam to shore with her skirt and shoes on. She lay exhausted on the sand and finally staggered down the beach to where the black boys said a white man was laying and it was her husband Charlie. That is the first he knew that she was forced to swim for shore. The Henningers and Van never came up at all.

(To Be Continued)

Howard District By Mrs. Ella H. Leonard

Relatives of Fency Leonard from Alturas, Calif., spent the week end in his home: Mrs. Lizzie Leonard, mother; Mr. and Mrs. Jim Negley, mother; Mr. and Mrs. Jim Negley, mother; Mr. and Mrs. Jim Negley, mother.

Drane, sister. Mrs. Lucille Leonard drove the car, but spent the time in Medford with her sister. Mrs. Leonard is relief director for Modoc County. Mr. Negley has a wholesale house in Alturas, and a branch in Tule Lake, Calif. Mrs. Drane is a teacher in Modoc Co.

A small child said to her grandma, "My daddys dead, isnt he?" "No, honey", she was answered, "your daddy won't ever die. He is with Jesus." The child sat thoughtful a while. She had loved her daddy so. Suddenly, with eyes so big, she inquired, "Grandma, does a bus go to Heaven?"

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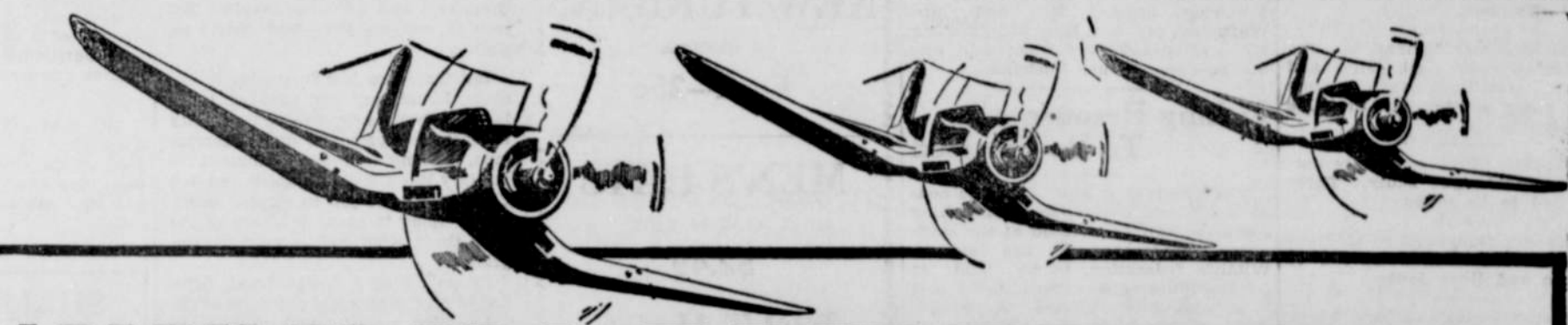
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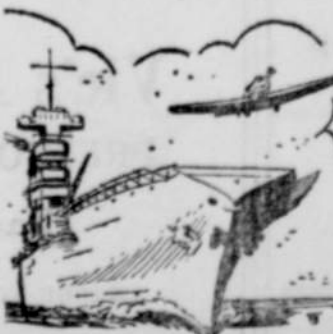


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