

Floyd Gibbons' ADVENTURERS' CLUB

HEADLINES FROM THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF!



"Claws of the Coast"
By FLOYD GIBBONS
Famous Headline Hunter

HELLO EVERYBODY: Wireless Operator Barney Murphy of Richmond Hill, N. Y., brings us today the first yarn I've seen about the wreck of the ill-fated Red Cross liner Florizel off Cape Race, Newfoundland, in 1918. And the tale of that wreck is a grim and tragic story. It was on the night of February 23 that the Florizel poked her nose out of the harbor at St. Johns, Newfoundland, into a screeching gale. At one-thirty a. m., when Barney took his watch in the wireless room, she was all but looping the loop in the mountainous seas.

She pitched and tossed, and hit floating ice cakes with loud, resounding thumps. But at 4:50 a. m. there came a heavier thump than usual and a seaman burst into the wireless shack shouting, "Captain says send S O S."

Barney had hardly thrown the switch when Carter, his senior operator, burst into the room with two life belts. He threw one to Barney, crying, "Here, take this, Murph. Go get our position from the captain." Barney turned the radio key over to Carter and started out, feeling his way along the deck. The ship had run on the rocks ten miles off Cape Race and the jagged points had gone clear through her hull. Her bow stuck clear of the raging sea, but her stern was under water clear up to the stack.

Barney got the ship's position from the captain and took it back to Carter. Carter barely had time to tap out his message a couple of times when the seas carried away the topmast—and the wireless antennae along with it. They abandoned the useless instruments, went outside and hung on the rail on the lee side.

Took Refuge in Wireless Shack.

"About eight of us were hanging there," says Barney, "while the heavy seas came tumbling over the top of the wireless room, drenching us with icy water. One man, trying to cross the hatchway to shelter on the bridge was washed overboard almost immediately. We had left the wireless shack because we feared it might be carried away by the heavy seas, but the frequent icy drenchings convinced us it would be better to take a chance and go back in. Soon the room was filled to capacity with straggling survivors. Everything movable was thrown out to make room for them. The vessel quivered violently at every wave, and water poured in through a ventilator in the roof.

"We had a few blankets in the room and we spread them over everyone they would cover. One unfortunate man was wedged in directly under the gaping ventilator hole, and he finally lost consciousness under the icy deluge from above—and died there. Reluctantly we moved his body outside to make room for someone else."

Twelve Hours of Agonized Waiting.

Over the howling of the gale they could hear cries, but couldn't get through the pounding seas on the deck to go to the rescue. The second mate arrived in the wireless room, his face lacerated and his teeth knocked out, crying that the bridge and smoking room had been washed away carrying sixty-five people to their deaths. Everything on the decks had gone by that time but the wireless shack and the smokestack, and no one knew when they would go too.

They didn't even know if their S O S signals had been heard. They waited in that cramped little room for TWELVE HOURS, drenched to the skin, without food or water. It was late afternoon before they saw ships approaching from far off, and darkness had fallen before they arrived on the scene. The first ship to reach them was the S. S. Prospero, and they signaled to her with a flashlight while the Prospero answered with long and short blasts on its whistle.

All through the night one ship after another tried to launch lifeboats. They were battered to pieces by the seas the minute they hit the water. At last the Prospero's whistle signaled that nothing could be done till daylight. But with the first streak of dawn the volunteer Newfoundland seaman who manned the rescue ships lowered their dories in the still violent sea.

Gallant Work of Newfoundlanders.

Says Barney: "The first dory reached us after a battle which only a Newfoundland knows how to fight in an open boat. They threw a line aboard and scooted off hanging onto the end of it. That line helped the other dories to hold a steady course to us, and as each one arrived, bobbing up and down alongside, the survivors had to slide down the icy deck, now bereft of rails, and make a hit-or-miss leap into the boat below.

"In twos and threes we all finally landed aboard. Some of us got cold baths when we leaped for dories and missed, but we were fished out. I was taken aboard a whaling ship that was standing by, and I had to be undressed by the sailors for my hands were so numb with the cold that I couldn't use them. I went right to sleep and landed in St. Johns in about six hours, none the worse for the experience except that all my clothes, and everything else I owned were lost."

Only Forty-Six Survived the Tragedy.

But even so, Barney was running in luck. The final roll call showed that NINETY-TWO PEOPLE WERE LOST in the wreck. Only forty-six out of the original hundred and thirty-eight were saved. The general manager of the steamship line and his daughter were among the missing. The chief steward, when last seen, had been carrying a child in his arms, trying to get it to safety. Both of them were washed overboard.

Two Spanish firemen sought refuge on a grating in the fiddley, a room where the ashes are hauled up from the fireroom. Those two poor fellows, scantily clothed and coming up from the hot boiler room, gradually froze to death and tumbled back down into the ash pit. And a woman passenger, dragging a sea-sick friend out of her stateroom, got her on deck only to see her torn from her arms and washed overboard.

And those are just a few tragic incidents out of the ninety-two that occurred that dreadful night of February 24, out on the Newfoundland coast. "When it was all over," says Barney, "the water was full of the dead and a good sturdy ship was being beaten to pieces on the rocks. The Graveyard of the Atlantic had once more lived up to its name. And Newfoundland had once more proved what stuff her sons are made of."

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World's Oldest Pier

Pleasure piers were an invention of the Nineteenth century. The oldest in the world is probably that at Ryde, Isle of Wight, which was built by a private company in 1812, according to Pearson's London Weekly. Southend's remarkable pier holds the record for length. Blackpool was also a pioneer in the matter of piers, and the famous North Pier was opened on Whit Monday, 1863. The venture met with such success that two others were built at the same resort. The North Pier was the first to be illuminated by electricity, and it is one of the grandest and most spectacular in Europe. Piers are costly to build as well as to maintain. Brighton's West Pier, opened in 1866, cost 35,000 pounds, but its pavilion was not added until 30 years later. The pier at Southport, built more than forty years ago, cost over 100,000 pounds. This was the first pleasure pier in the world to be constructed entirely of iron, and it stretches nearly a mile out to sea—second in length only to the pier at Southend.

Among Famous Hymns

"Lead, Kindly Light" was written by Newman nearly 100 years ago, when he was on his way home from Rome. The boat on which he was traveling was becalmed for a whole week and it was during that time he penned his famous lines. Few hymns are more popular than Toplady's "Rock of Ages." One day the young curate was overtaken by a heavy thunderstorm in Barrington Coombe, and seeking shelter under the massive rock was inspired to write these beautiful words. "Abide With Me" was written in Devon by Henry Lyte, the beloved pastor of the fisher folk of Lower Brixham. A dying man, he wrote the words as the summer sun was setting one September evening. Tradition says that Wesley was inspired to write "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," by a dove, which was driven to the shelter of his bosom in a pitiless storm. Cecil Alexander's hymn, "There Is a Green Hill," was written amid the green hills of Ireland.—Pearson's London Weekly.

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What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

Cures for Communism.

SANTA MONICA, CALIF.—A certain rich man out here—rich but indulgent—got a letter from his heir, a sophomore at one of the big eastern colleges.

The lad announced he had been converted to communism and was contributing to the cause. So what about it?

The old man wrote back: "Son, you have a perfect right to follow the dictates of your conscience. But as a consistent communist you naturally would not continue to live on the ill-gotten gains of a wicked money-grabber. Today I am cutting off your somewhat generous allowance. You will also vacate the luxurious apartment you now occupy because I'm not paying the rent of same any longer. So go ahead, my boy, and commune freely—with my blessings! But from date that'll be about all from this end of the line."

Exactly four hours after the arrival by air mail of this ultimatum, the hard-hearted parent got back a rush telegram stating that the young man had been thinking things over and had decided not to take up the new doctrine.

The Art of Listening.

WE HAD a party at which there appeared what I may call the dumb poets—Sam Hoffenstein and Ogden Nash. At the studios where they're both turning out epics, there's a rule that neither shall burst forth into poetry while he's under contract—no thumbing of the harp, no sounding of the lute. Cinema's gain is creation's loss.

Maybe that explains why they made such good listeners the other night. And isn't a good listener a boon! I don't mind being interrupted, provided the interrupter chooses the right subject. Mute and rapt, I can harken for hours on hours, if someone is talking about me, say, or even reading from my published works. But these two minnesingers only broke in to ask that the pickled shrimp be passed or gently to suggest that another little drink or two wouldn't do any harm.

Ogden Nash has attained the highest peak of distinction attainable for a writer. His chief imitator has an imitator who is bringing up his oldest boy to be an imitator.

Resurrecting Old Words.

WHEN a word gets fashionable—especially a new word which some wordsmith thought up right out of his head—it gets too doggone fashionable. The same applies to old words which have been disinterred from their forgotten tombs in the dictionary.

I seem to see grave robbers prowling through the unabridged, starting in at "aard-vark," which is an animal formerly common only to Africa but not frequently found in cross-word puzzles; and working on through to "zythum," a very strong beer drunk by ancient tribes. I guess those old-timers imbibed copiously of the brew and then named it. It doesn't sound like the sort of word a dead sober party deliberately would make up.

Do you remember the run "intrigued" had? I never got so sick of a word in my life. And then along came "provocative," and it turned out to be a pest. People went around just looking for a chance to work "provocative" into the conversation. The only way to lick 'em was to pretend to be deaf and dumb.

And now the reigning favorite is "allergic." Folks spout it everywhere, whether they know what it means or not. I don't mind saying I'm getting awfully allergic to "allergic." There must be many others like me.

Campaign Books.

LET us not cavil too much because high pressure salesmen, working on commission, have been unloading upon the faithful, at fancy prices, the gift book put out by Washington headquarters to pay off campaign debts. In fact, 15 cents' worth would cover practically all the cavil I personally have used up in this connection.

The result tends to prove the gratifying fact that, while more Democrats may not necessarily have learned how to read and write, obviously more of us have got money than formerly was the case when the Republicans were in power.

Besides, think of what the strain would have been upon the poor postman if the national committee had been stuck with all this bulk literature and congressmen had started franking copies out to their constituents with Uncle Sam paying the freight. To give you a further idea about this franking privilege, I may state that it was named for Frank, Jesse's brother—and you'll remember how careless those James boys were with the United States mails! IRVIN S. COBB.

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FARM TOPICS

NEGLECTED BIRDS NOT GOOD LAYERS

Low Summer Production May Continue Into Fall.

By Roy S. Dearstyne, Head of Poultry Department, North Carolina State College.—WNU Service.

Low egg production in hot weather often causes poultrymen to neglect their flocks, with the result that production continues low in the fall when it should be increasing.

Good management in hot weather not only keeps birds in better condition for heavy production later, but it also keeps up production through the summer.

Shade to protect birds from the sun during the hottest part of the day is essential to thrifty birds. A portable range shelter provides shade where birds can feed and rest.

Since range crops usually become dry and unpalatable in summer, the birds need an ample ration in their feed hoppers. Plenty of fresh water should be available at all times.

Plenty of grain should be fed during the developing season. A good mash should be fed also as it contains vital food elements that are not provided in a grain diet alone.

Where crippled and subnormal birds are found in the flock, they should be culled out at once. Such birds never pay a profit and their low vitality often makes them the starting point for an outbreak of contagious disease.

Lice and mite infestations occur frequently in summer and result in heavy losses unless checked at once.

Fowl pox can be prevented by vaccinating the birds at an early age. The disease usually breaks out in the fall when the birds are in full lay and making a profit for their owner. Leghorns are especially susceptible to pox.

Creep-Fed Calves Thrive on Corn, Cottonseed Cake

Calves creep-fed made their best and most economical gains on a ration of shelled corn and cottonseed cake in a test by the United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Missouri state experiment station at Sin-a-Bar Farms, Grain Valley, Mo.

At the end of the 140-day test calves fed the shelled corn and cottonseed cake averaged 8 pounds more than another group fed ground shelled corn and cottonseed cake, 13 pounds more than calves fed ground corn, cottonseed cake, and alfalfa-molasses mixture, and 22 pounds more than a group receiving shelled corn, cottonseed cake, and alfalfa-molasses mixture.

The calves receiving ground corn, cottonseed cake, and the alfalfa-molasses mixture, at 25 per cent more feed and acquired a better finish at the end of the feeding period than those fed shelled corn and cottonseed cake. The difference in market price of the two groups, however, did not justify either the cost of grinding the corn or the additional cost of feed.

Calves from each group, when fed in dry lots for 196 days after weaning, on the same rations they had received before weaning, showed no significant difference in total gains. Those fed shelled corn and cottonseed cake were the heaviest at the end of the experiment although not so well finished as the ones fed ground corn.

High-grade Shorthorn calves were used in the feeding tests and the market value was estimated at the end of the feeding experiment by commission merchants on the Kansas City stockyards.

In the Farmplot

Careless handling kills live stock on its way to market.

The greatest boon to farmers and their wives is running water installed in the home.

Except for dresses, shoes represent the largest clothing item bought by farm families.

The horse's collar should be thoroughly cleaned each evening after the day's work is done.

For safety dairy products are best kept covered and in the coldest place in the refrigerator.

Alfalfa leaves are worth saving; they are about three times as valuable in nutritive value as the stems.

Unless cows have an abundance of pure water to which they can go at any time, milk flow will be affected.

The general belief that grasshoppers make an excellent turkey feed was not upheld in experiments at Oklahoma A. and M. college.

Except for air, water is the most common, most readily supplied, and often the most inexpensive substance that poultrymen can give to their hens.

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted By WILLIAM BRUCKART



Washington.—Political students and observers in Washington find themselves in a quandary concerning the objectives of the New Deal administration because of a series of late developments. Frankly, most students of politics have to confess their inability to fathom the various developments of recent weeks or to measure their significance.

I have written, heretofore, about the wide open split in the Democratic party and about the presidential moves to heal that split but, instead of the new developments being of a kind designed to heal wounds, they appear superficially at least to be doing directly the opposite thing. Confessing my own inability to understand the political strategy, if there be strategy, let me merely call attention to such things as:

The recent radio speech by Senator Guffey, Pennsylvania, Democrat, which thoroughly read out of the party such able men as Senators Wheeler of Montana, Burke of Nebraska and O'Mahoney of Wyoming.

The speech of Postmaster General Farley before the Young Democrats at their Indiana meeting, stating that there will be no reprisals against those Democrats who have seen fit or now see fit to object to parts of President Roosevelt's New Deal program.

The so-called harmony dinner of Democratic senators at a Washington hotel after the election of Senator Barkley of Kentucky as Democratic leader of the senate, and the absence of President Roosevelt from that meeting.

The renewal by President Roosevelt of his criticism of "Economic Royalists" in his speech in celebration of the birth of Virginia Dare, the first white child born in America, at Manteo, N. C.

The speech of Senator Guffey in New York declaring without equivocation that the Committee for Industrial Organization, headed by John L. Lewis, should provide a nucleus for an American Labor party. This party should have among its objectives the political destruction of any one who fails to carry through the New Deal policies or who opposes a program designed to make the court structure of the United States subservient to the President.

There are other phases, other circumstances that might be included in this list, but those enumerated serve to show the confusion that prevails. They present to me a wholly nonunderstandable and unexplainable hauling and filling—breathing hot and cold without a change of face.

There has been nothing of a purely political nature create quite so much of a stir in a long time as did the radio speech of Senator Guffey

Guffey Causes Stir

in which he called for defeat of all those who opposed the President's plan to reorganize the Supreme court of the United States by adding to it six justices of the President's own choosing. It was in this speech that Senator Guffey singled out Senators Wheeler, Burke and O'Mahoney for destruction. He did this because these three senators led the fight against the President's plan to pack the Supreme court. Senator Wheeler and Senator Burke conducted the fight on the floor of the senate; Senator O'Mahoney wrote the devastating report by which the senate judiciary committee advised the senate to kill the court packing bill.

Senator Guffey's speech was made at night. When the senate convened at noon the following day, Senator Wheeler took the floor and delivered one of the most vicious speeches of which he is known to be capable. It was excelled in bitterness only by the attack which came from Senator Burke. Senator O'Mahoney likewise made sure that the senate record revealed the feeling of those who were convinced the President had made a vital mistake in proposing the court reorganization.

I have heard these questions asked many times: What can the President gain by making Senator Guffey or any man of his type a spokesman for the administration?

Further, can the President afford politically to strike at the very heart of the Democratic party by permitting even secretly the political destruction of such brilliant men as Wheeler, Burke and O'Mahoney?

The answer to those questions, as far as I can see it, or as far as I have been able to gather opinions on the point, must inevitably lead in the direction of a party purge. By that I mean, the President and his closest New Deal advisers must be seeking to drive out of the Democratic party, the machinery of

which he controls, and all Democrats who are unwilling to be one hundred per cent for the theories of economics and social reform which the New Dealers countenance. If that be true, and I repeat it is only an assumption, then the President evidently is hoping to create a class party, a radical party which can be made to include such outfits as the John L. Lewis following, the communists and half-baked nitwits who are opposed to the principle of individual employment, the accumulation of personal belongings and even the idea of owning homes by individuals, free from debt.

On the other hand I cannot convince myself that Mr. Roosevelt would make a political mistake of this gravity. For it would be a mistake in two ways, namely, a virtual destruction of the Democratic party and the blighting of any hope the President may have for being elected a third time. It is these combinations that make the whole situation so difficult to understand.

It may be that one result will be that Senator Wheeler or Senator Burke may find himself in a political situation where one or the other will be forced to seek the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1940. It is quite apparent now that the split in the party is going to cause a violent explosion in the next Democratic national convention. There is no way to avoid it. It may be added in the same breath that Mr. Roosevelt can go into that convention and force his own renomination because surely the Farley political machine cannot be dislodged unless the factional dispute spreads to the rank and file of Democrats throughout the country. This is to say that, having control of the party machine, Mr. Farley can muster the election of enough delegates to the party's national convention to assure the Roosevelt nomination, especially since Mr. Roosevelt demanded and obtained the repeal of the age-old Democratic rule that required a vote of two-thirds of all the sitting delegates before the convention nominates a candidate.

With further reference to Senator Guffey, Senator Barkley told the senate during the violent Wheeler-Burke-O'Mahoney attack that Senator Guffey had tendered his resignation as chairman of the Democratic senatorial committee a week previously. Senator Barkley's statement, however, was not accepted generally; it did not have the ring to make it convincing, nor did it appear to be anything more than an attempt by Senator Barkley to save Senator Guffey's face.

It may well be that the rupture in Democratic harmony will turn out to be a great issue as early as the 1938 congressional and senatorial elections.

There are a number of senators who opposed the court packing bill and, therefore, fall within the Guffey castigation, who will be up for re-election next year. If the Guffey attack is followed up at all in the state organizations, those Democrats who opposed the President's will necessarily must defend themselves. The only way they can defend their course of action is by a counter attack on the President and those policies of his which the candidate for the senate opposed. I predicate my prediction of continuation of the row in 1938 on the statement made by Senator O'Mahoney in answer to the Guffey radio tirade. In that statement of position, Senator O'Mahoney stated, to quote a single paragraph:

"I would rather walk out of the door of this chamber and never return, than to surrender any honest convictions I have. I say to you, senators of the United States, so long as I am in this body I shall raise my voice and cast my vote as my conscience dictates and nobody, whether he comes from Pennsylvania or from New York or any other state, can tell me or the people of my state what I should or should not do."

Contrast that statement with the following declaration by Senator Guffey in his radio speech: "I was elected to the United States senate in 1934 because I assured the voters of Pennsylvania that it was my intention to support loyally and without wavering the program of the Chief Executive."

And in calling attention to that statement of subservience, Senator Burke of Nebraska declared: "Pennsylvania may want that kind of representation in the senate, and, if they do, God bless them, let them have it; but to me it would seem that if the senate is to have that kind of representation, it might as well have a parrot in a cage in the secretary's office and bring it in when the senator's name is called and have him say, 'Yes, Mr. Roosevelt, count me for that, too.' That is not my idea of what a senator should do."

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