

Nothing Venture

by Patricia Wentworth

SYNOPSIS: A woman receives her husband's letter and the known facts of Jervis Weare's disappearance. Instantly she knows he is in grave danger. The fact that clothing and toilet articles are gone may indicate that he has left on a hurried trip. Nan can only wait—in agony.

Chapter 37

F. F. TRIES TO HELP

THERE was no letter from Jervis next day. Nan did not know that she was counting on one until the mail had come and brought nothing. She looked at Ferdinand, and Ferdinand exercised some ingenuity.

"Buck up, Nan, here's a thing he might have done—a thing I've done myself when I've had my mind all taken up with something. He might have written a note to leave here, and have gone away with it in his pocket. If he finds it, he'll send a wire—but he mightn't find it till he gets back home. It's a thing might happen to anyone.

"Why, in my own town there was the case of Reggie Lawson. Poor old Reg had got it bad. He was just a shadow—Cornelia Van Bie's shadow. And then all of a sudden he disappeared and everyone was sure Cornelia had given him the mitten.

know what time it was when he went out. We are—" She paused for a long time, and then said, "anxious."

"Yes, ma'am," said Mrs. Mellish. Her plainly handed hair made the neatest possible frame to her plump, pale face. The hair was iron grey. In the morning Mrs. Mellish dressed to match her hair, in a strong iron-grey material which suggested in the most insistent manner reliability and moral worth.

"Will you ask if anyone noticed anything?"

"Certainly, ma'am," said Mrs. Mellish.

She left Nan to a feeling that she had been knocking impudently upon a door that was not made to open. Then, as she stood waiting for Mrs. Mellish to return, it came to Nan that it was not so much that the door was not made to open, as that it had been deliberately slammed in her face.

She stood there and thought about this. Why do people slam doors? Either because they are angry, or else because they have something to hide. There wasn't any reason why Mrs. Mellish should be angry with her. Had Mrs. Mellish by any chance got something to hide?

COAST BUILDING CONTINUES GAIN

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 4.—(AP)—The Pacific coast building industry continued its forward march in September, gaining 6 per cent over August in the five largest cities. Permits issued totaled \$2,461,000, compared with 2,319,000 in August.

SMITH HAS LARGEST PERSONAL FOLLOWING

BUFFALO, Oct. 4.—(AP)—Former Governor Alfred E. Smith, Democratic candidate for President in 1928, was characterized by the keynote speaker, Congressman J. Hamilton Fish, as "the man with perhaps the largest personal following in the United States," as the Republican state convention opened today.

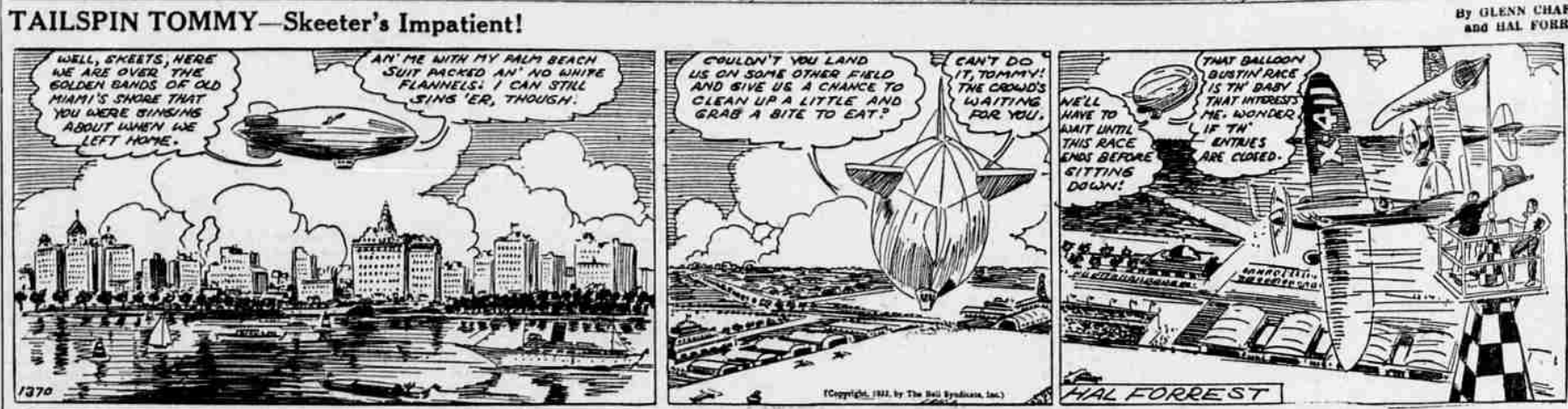
JACKSONVILLE LADS ARRESTED FOR THEFT

Albert E. Hueners and Cornelius Miller, both 18 year old Jacksonville youths were arrested Monday by state police, for alleged theft of a slot machine from the U. S. Hotel at Jacksonville, during the recent "Days of Gold" celebration. The slot machine was part of the celebration equipment.

Wheat Pledged

PENDLETON, Ore., Oct. 4.—(AP)—Ranchers of the Pendleton area have signed up 150,000 bushels for the proposed wheat sale to China.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter's Impatient!



BOUND TO WIN—The Madness Disappears



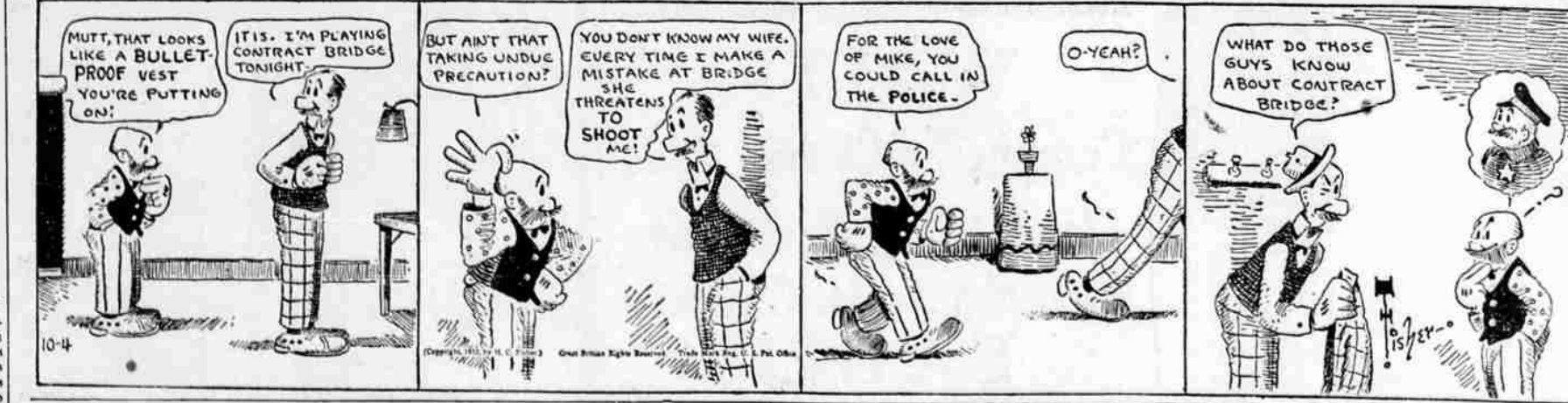
S'MATTER POP—Another Day Ruined For Ambrose



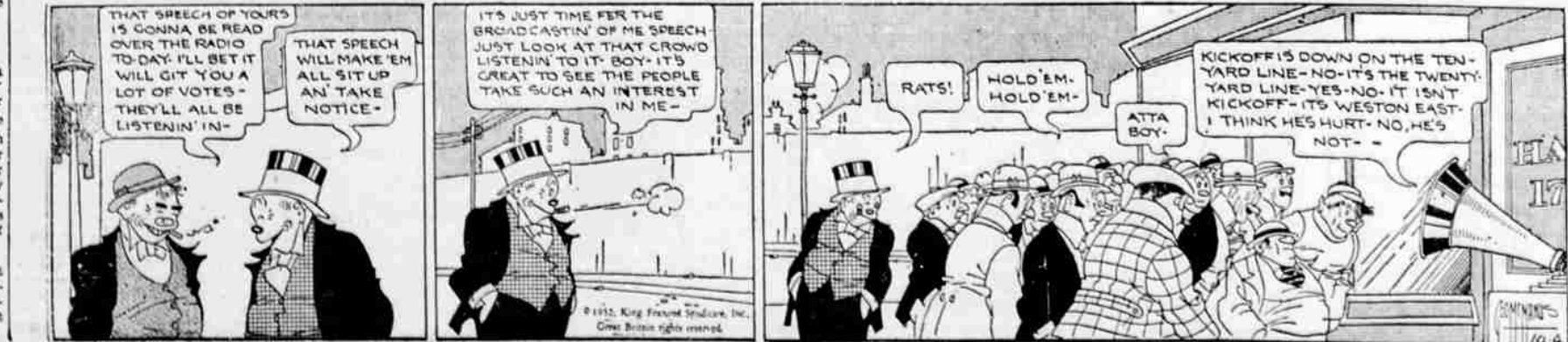
THE NEBBS—The Boss



MUTT AND JEFF—Mrs. Mutt Takes Contract Bridge Seriously



BRINGING UP FATHER



Nan and Ferdinand had a silent drive.

"By and bye Cornelia began to look shadowy, too. She'd never been robust, but she got so postic-looking that she nearly wasn't there at all. And then one day she got a cable from Cape Town, South Africa. It said:

"Letter proposing marriage just found pocket winter suit can you forgive love you to distraction cable reply or shall go crazy Reg."

Nan had been looking down at her plate. She had made a very fitful breakfast. She heard Ferdinand's voice, but she did not really hear what he was saying, because her own thoughts were speaking so loudly all the time. She felt suddenly as if she could not sit there and listen to any longer. Her face changed, her mouth quivered. She pushed back her chair and got up.

"I must go and see Mrs. Mellish," she said.

She proceeded to the housekeeper's room, and was received with Mrs. Mellish's usual austere respect—a respect not in the least personal, but indicative of the fact that Mrs. Mellish knew her manners.

Today Nan approved the menu without so much as reading it. She stood, and Mrs. Mellish stood. She said, "Yes, that will do very well," and continued to stand, looking past Mrs. Mellish in a manner which was secretly resentful.

"Was there anything further, ma'am?" she said in such a polite-yet controlled voice that anyone less absorbed than Nan could scarcely have missed the offence behind it.

Nan did not start, but she came out of her abstraction and turned her eyes upon Mrs. Mellish's face. "Yes," she said. "I wanted to ask you whether you or the maids heard anything on the night Mr. Weare went away. We think he has written, and that the letter has been mislaid."

"Yes, ma'am!" Mrs. Mellish's tone was not really a very encouraging one.

"If anyone noticed anything," said Nan, "it would be a help. Someone may have heard him moving about. It would be a help if we

Mrs. Mellish came back into the room with the slow walk of a comfortably covered woman who is concerned with her dignity. It appeared that nobody had noticed anything.

"And you, Mrs. Mellish? Your room is the nearest."

"No, ma'am."

Her eyelids came down over her rather pale and prominent eyes. There was the effect of a blind being pulled down. First the door of the house had been slammed, and now the blinds were down.

Nan found Ferdinand in the study.

"I want to go and see Rosemund," she said.

"Why?"

Nan put her hand to her cheek.

"She talked too much on the telephone—I suppose it was yesterday."

"How do you mean, she talked too much?" Ferdinand's eyes darted questions.

Nan pushed back her hair.

"She doesn't talk—much—to me—as a rule. She wouldn't speak to me at all unless she simply had to. But when I telephoned to ask her if she had seen Jervis, she talked a lot."

"What did she say?"

"I think she was trying to make me angry. I can't remember what she said—it wasn't worth remembering." Her chin lifted a little. "I just wondered why she said so much."

Ferdinand frowned.

"Do you want me to drive you up there?"

Nan nodded.

They had a silent drive. When they came to the place where the wheel had come off Jervis' car two days before, Nan, on the seaward side, looked down over the cliff with a steady thoughtful gaze. She turned her eyes from the sea to the square ugliness of Robert Leonard's house.

"Leonard's been away," said Ferdinand.

"Where Nan should find sympathy, tomorrow, she finds only bitter scorn."

Representatives reported this afternoon that they are meeting with splendid cooperation in the various sections of the city. The business district was being canvassed this morning and tickets will be on sale at the Rex cafe. Those purchased at the box office will not benefit the relief work, so all theater-goers are urged to buy their tickets from the committee or at the Rex cafe.

THEATER PROJECT FOR RELIEF PRESENTED AT KIWANIS CLUB SESSION

Mrs. Donald J. Clark and Mrs. Gilbert Stuart appeared before the Kiwanis club Monday at luncheon at Hotel Medford, to announce the sale of tickets to the Fox theater theater by representatives of the women's division of the county council for relief of unemployment.

The drive to secure funds for relief work started October 1, and will continue through this week. Tickets purchased during that period will be accepted at the theater at pictures showing between now and November 5. Thirty-five per cent of the profits from the sales will be donated the women's division by the theater management. The work is in line with the other projects of the women's division, headed by Mrs. A. E. Reames.

Railroads Reduce Fares To Coast

CHICAGO, Oct. 4.—(AP)—Winter railroad excursion rates, good on the best trains, were put on the bargain table today for the first time. For a face and a quarter, the traveler may ride to the coast and back, any time between November 1 and January 25, with sleeping car privileges that were not granted the buyers of cheap tickets a year ago.

N.Y. N.Y., Oct. 4.—(AP)—Export clearance of wheat for the week ended September 23 were announced today as 6,654,701 bushels, the largest since May of 1930.