

The HIDDEN DOOR

BY FRANK L. PACKARD

Colin Hewitt's letter to Joe Lazare, who lives in a mysterious "club" on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is a dangerous plot. He goes to ask Anatole Bouchard to guide him overland to the "club" and overhears a conversation which confirms his suspicion that the club is a den of thieves and informs him that a second gang of outlaws, under a man named Doltaire, plans to hijack it this same night. Two Doltaire men, Bolduc and Larocque, declare Doltaire has too many men for the force of 18 at the club.

Chapter 20 IN THE MUD

"YOU may not be too many," he said deeply. "It is only in the woods that they are children. They will fight like the devil and they are well armed. And, besides, they are looking for you. Yes! And before they ever saw me. Don't forget that!"

Colin instinctively leaned forward—as though in concert with Larocque and Bolduc. Larocque and Bolduc had thrust their bodies forward over the table, staring at Bouchard.

"What do you mean?" they demanded in chorus.

Bouchard laid a significant finger along his nose.

"I will tell you," he said; "but—another little drink, eh?"

"No!" decreed Larocque with a forceful oath. "You have had enough!"

"Zut!" complained Bouchard. "What is the use of bringing a bottle? Is it to look at? But I will tell you just the same. Listen! Someone in St. Pierre has talked too much. That is sure. One of the big power boats takes the stuff from the club here over to the Gaspé coast every two or three weeks, though sometimes it goes every week, and one of the gang is left there with it.

"Where he goes from there and what he does with it, I don't know; but it takes always maybe a week before he comes back. You see? Well, a few days ago, the boat brought back one of them, a man named Joe Lazare, and he said that one of their agents had told him that a fellow called Doltaire, who was a big bootlegger and a smart crook, was certain it would pay to make a little visit to the club.

"When Lazare told the story at the club they laughed at him. But since they saw me, I do not think they have laughed at all. They know it is not the police, or they would not be there now; but as it is, I tell you again, it is only in the woods that they are children, and they will fight like hell!"

"Good!" grunted Larocque. "Well, if we are not too many—we are enough! All right, we will go now and wait for Doltaire, and you will come along, too, Bouchard. But first, Bolduc, you and I will see what is in the bottle, and perhaps we may even let Bouchard have—"

Colin waited for no more. He turned, retreated noiselessly from the shack, regained the wagon track, and, once satisfied that he was far enough away so that his footsteps could not be heard, broke into a run. Halfway back to the village he missed the track again in the pitch blackness as he had done on the way out, but instead of merely going in over a boot top, he pitched headlong into the marshy ground, covering himself thoroughly with mud and water. Dripping, he picked himself up. He was in a state!—and humbly enough he swore again.

HE went on once more—but more circumspectly this time. Lazare must be warned. There was only one way, of course, to get to the club now, and that was by boat, secretly. God knew what the aftermath of tonight was going to be! A schooner full of thugs!

A dead Lazare was disaster. A live Lazare, backed by Reddy's letter, should be grateful—more amenable to an alliance. Meanwhile he already had an ally, Germaine! He was going now to ask Germaine to lend him her boat. But what were those "thousands" that Bouchard talked about, and what was—

His mind worked on, ignoring time and distance, until suddenly he was standing in front of the Tremblay home. There was a lamp burning in the living room. It was early yet, of course, and it was quite possible that Germaine was still expecting him. He smiled wryly at the thought of the appearance he presented, as he mounted the steps

to the veranda and piled the old-fashioned knocker on the front door. Germaine herself opened the door and stared for an instant in amazement, then burst into a merry peal of laughter—which she suddenly checked.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" she exclaimed contritely. "But you do look a sight! What on earth has happened to you?"

"Is anyone about?" he asked.

"No," she assured him. "not a soul—except Antoinette and Jacques, but they're at the back of the house. So come in."

"Not like this!" he said. "I couldn't sit down without ruining the furniture, you know! I have just come from Bouchard's shack."

"Bouchard!" Her hand reached out impulsively—and soiled itself hopelessly on his muddy sleeve.

"Too bad!" he said remorsefully. "Now see what I have done!"

"What does it matter?" Her voice was all anxiety now. "Something has happened. What is it? Tell me!"

"Beastly clumsy of me," he explained. "I missed my footing on the way back, and took a nose dive into the marsh. Bouchard is in the other camp. I came to ask you to lend me your boat."

"Tell me!" she insisted.

"Of course!" said Colin. "I was going to anyway. You remember those two fellows who landed from the Belle Fleur this afternoon?"

"Yes."

"Well, their room is next to mine at the hotel and I heard them talking in there this evening. They belong to a bootlegging outfit, or worse, that is captained by a man named Doltaire. This Doltaire has found out that the club is a camouflage for a bunch of crooks engaged in some profitable racket, and he sees no reason why he shouldn't muscle in and help himself to the profits! And tonight is the night.

"When I went out there just now to see Bouchard, I found those two men with him. Bouchard is the man they shot at and were looking for at the club yesterday. In short, Bouchard is Doltaire's spy."

"Oh!" she said tensely. "Yes—go on!"

"I overheard enough to know that in another hour or so Doltaire will be off the cape with a schooner. He will pick up those men here, get Bouchard's report—and then the club. I can't afford to let anything happen to Lazare, as you know. He must be warned, and there is only one way—by boat. So may I have yours?"

"You may," she said promptly, "and what is more, I'll run it for you. I suppose we should start at once, shouldn't we?"

For a moment Colin stared at her blankly, then his jaws clamped. Germaine at the club—tonight! She did not realize, of course, what it might mean.

"That's very good of you, but you don't start at all," he said firmly. "This is a one-man job."

"I don't see why," she pouted. "I was dragged in by the hair of the head, you know, yesterday, the way you said it always happened in your stories, so why can't I be again? I'd love to be a heroine."

"But that would mean," he challenged, "that you would have to fall in love with the hero—and the hero with you."

"Not at all!" she retorted serenely. "Don't you think it would be something at last really original in a story—if they didn't?"

"Well, that's an idea, of course," he admitted with a smile; then seriously: "But this isn't a story I'm writing, and so far as you are concerned you are henceforth definitely out of it. Quite apart from what might happen down there tonight, if you were ever suspected, they wouldn't have any more mercy on you than they had on—" he checked himself—"would have on anybody else. This is my job, and tonight particularly, as I told you, it is a one-man job."

"I am not going to drag anybody else into this—and least of all you. Bouchard would have been along in the capacity of a mercenary, as it were, and his blood would have been on his own head. As it is now, all I've got to do is sit and smoke and steer a boat, and—well, you understand—"

"It would seem then, that I am not to go," she observed.

"It would," he returned grimly. (Copyright, 1933, Frank L. Packard)

Tomorrow, Colin goes voyaging into danger.

LOAN APPLICATION SPEED NECESSARY

PORTLAND, Ore., Aug. 19.—(AP)—Promptness in filing application for

loans under the federal public works act was urged today by Marshall N. Dana, regional adviser for Oregon, Washington, Montana and Idaho. These applications, to be filed either by organizations or heads of municipalities, must be placed with the advisory board in each state.

"President Roosevelt declared he wanted a million men at work, by October 1," Dana said. "This means

that time is of the greatest importance, so these projects can be given immediate consideration. Engineers to the state advisory boards have been instructed to move in as rapidly as possible.

Reid, Murdock & Co., canners of the Monarch brand Bartlett pears, will be represented at Medford this season by Myron Root.

600 CHRISTIANS SLAIN BY KURDS

BAGHDAD, Iraq, Aug. 19.—(AP)—The killing of more than 600 Assyrian

Christians in conflict with the Kurds and the Iraq forces in northern Iraq, has climaxed an international situation in which Great Britain, as the former mandatory power over Iraq, has been moved to take a hand.

A total of 315 bodies have been found at the village of Simel and 300 more were discovered in different places in the vicinity of Doguk, fol-

lowing Kurdish raids on Assyrian communities.

EVERETT, Wash., Aug. 19.—(AP)—Spokane was selected for the 1934 convention of the Washington department of the American Legion and Edward Brigham, Newport, was chosen state commander at closing sessions of the convention here today.

S'MATTER POP—

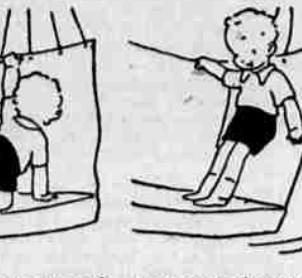
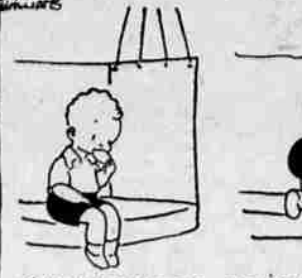
By C. M. PAYNE



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HAMMOCK SWINGING

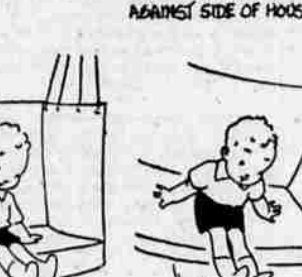
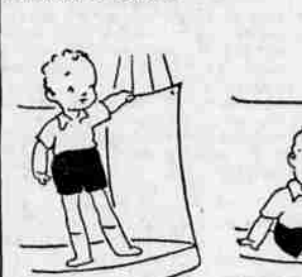
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



SITS IN HAMMOCK MUNCHING COOKIE WHILE MOTHER IS HAVING TEA ON FRIENDS VERANDA

FINISHES COOKIE AND GETS BORED WITH SITTING STILL. STARTS CLIMBING

FINDS THAT BY SWINGING HAMMOCK END TO END HARD ENOUGH HE CAN MAKE IT THUMP AGAINST SIDE OF HOUSE



IS DELIGHTED TO FIND THAT HAMMOCK, SWUNG GENTLY, MAKES A LOUD CREAKING SOUND

MOTHER SAYS FOR PITY'S SAKE SIT DOWN IN THE HAMMOCK, HOW CAN THEY TALK WITH HIM MAKING THAT NOISE. OBEYDYS

FINDS THAT SWINGING THE OTHER WAY, HAMMOCK MAKES NO NOISE. GETS GOING HIGHER AND HIGHER

MOTHER, SUDDENLY SEEING HIM, SHRIEKS AND SPILLS HER TEA. FOLLOWS HER HOME

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Jose Plays Cat To Tommy's Mouse!

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



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DO SOMETHIN' YOUSE GUY!

SACRE--PIMENTO! CAUGHT US FLAT-FOOTED--!

WELL, THEN I'LL DO IT-- THIS OUGHTER STOP 'EM!

THAT'S LIKE SHOOTING AT THE MOON, MY FRIEND!

BOUND TO WIN—Lotta's Decision!

By EDWIN ALGER

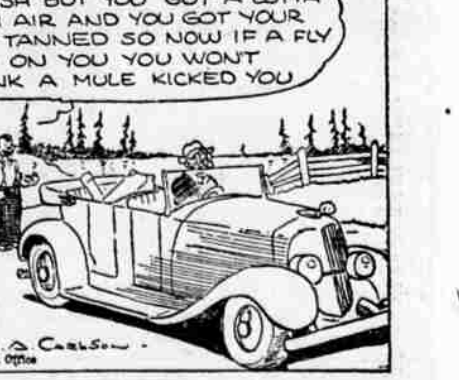
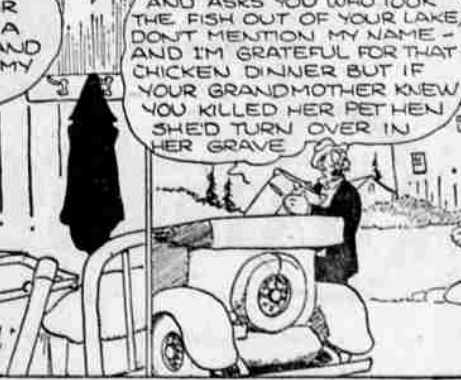


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NO-I WOULD SUGGEST GETTING INTO OUR PLANE AND FOLLOWING TOMKINS-- AND SAVING YOUR BULLETS UNTIL WE KNOW WE HAS THE TREASURE!

THE NEBBS—Home, James

By SOL HESS



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Tomorrow, Colin goes voyaging into danger.

BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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There's No Guesswork in Tribune A. B. C. Circulation

WERE WITH YOU!

