

FORBIDDEN VALLEY

By William Byron Mowery

SYNOPSIS: Sonya Volkov has deserted Curt Tennyson and his partner, Paul, and is being taken by Tennyson to a new island camp. Kurokawa is the latter's wilderness refuge in northwestern Canada. Kurokawa is the creek. Curt is trailing, and Sonya is the girl Curt loves. Suddenly the Kioshoes Indians surround Curt's island camp, and the little party runs for a rock shelter, hoping to beat off the attack. Ralph, who had entered the wilderness with Sonya, is behind when she left.

Chapter 26

BATTLE

"RALPH!" Curt yelled at him. "What're you doing? Get in here with us!"

"Don't have any gun!" Ralph called over his shoulder. "Got to get gun!"

"Let it go. They'll cut you off!"

But Ralph courageously went on. Flinging himself behind the rock shelter, the two of them turned their rifles toward the canoes to the south.

Curt dropped a handful of clips into Paul's pocket. "Aim low, Paul. Bounce your slugs off the water. We can't hope to hit the men, but we can tear holes through those canoes and sink 'em."

They emptied their magazines at the six craft. The range was too long for dark shooting, and the moon reflection was wrong. The canoes came straight on and skimmed into the shallows. Reloading, Curt and Paul blasted into them again, frantically trying to knock them back. One canoe turned broadside and sank, but the two occupants leaped out and splashed ashore; and the other five canoes drove on in uncheckered.

Jumping to shelter on the island, the Kioshoes began snatching arrows at the rifle flashes, to cover the landing of the other parties.

Ralph came running out of the dark with rifle, belt-gun and three cartons of cartridges in his hands.

"I got 'em!" he panted. "Couldn't have helped out if I hadn't gone and—"

His rejoicing ended in an agonized gasp. Within two strokes of the barricade he suddenly stumbled and flung up his arms. The gun and cartons dropped with a clatter. Pitching forward with all the momentum of his dash, he smashed head-on against a rock, rolled over and lay still.

Curt vaulted over the barricade, grabbed him, lifted him into the shelter. "Ralph!" he cried, kneeling down and shaking his limp comrade. Ralph did not move. And then Curt saw a hard-driven arrow protruding from his back, and a stream of blood trickling from his mouth.

The suddenness of the blow struck Curt dumb. He shook Ralph's arm again but got no response. Dead or dying—he did not know.

The five canoes to the west were less than a hundred yards out. Paul had got the range. He was ricocheting his bullets off the ripples with a withering effect. One canoe wobbled crazily and collapsed. In another a figure leaped up and toppled overboard.

"Look north!" Paul cried. "Keep those backs. I'll handle these."

For the first time Curt noticed that three canoes were skirting in toward the upper tip. At his first shot a figure rose up in the leading canoe and shouted a command. The voice sounded to him like Tenn-Og's.

"Damn you!"—the thought flashed through his mind—"we patched you up and treated you white, when your buddies ran away and left you; and now you're leading men to spear us. I'll get you anyway!" He poured a whole clip of vengeful bullets at the figure. The Kioshoes still stood up waving his arms and shouting orders. The other two craft stopped and began milling about uncertainly. As Curt snapped in another clip, swearing savagely at missing Tenn-Og, all three of the canoes veered around and skimmed back out of sight.

THEIR sudden flight astonished him: he had hit nobody, done no damage that he could see.

He laid it to cowardice, and whirled to help Paul again.

Of the five canoes to the west, Paul had collapsed one, knocked a man out of a second and sent it drifting helplessly, and had sunk a third in the shallows. Together he and Curt ran a burst at the other two. They sank both of them in the space of five seconds, but the men jumped out into the water, sprang ashore and joined their confederates.

Grabbing their automatics, Curt and Paul tensed themselves for the hand-to-hand fight.

"Keep down!" Curt snapped, as Paul rose up to see better. "Don't expose yourself. We've got a chance to win this."

A dead silence fell. It lengthened to five minutes.

"What do you make of it?" Paul whispered.

"I don't know. Maybe they're pulling themselves together for the rush."

Curt bent down beside Nichols again and tried to rouse some sign of life. Ralph still lay motionless, limp and stricken. It was all Curt could do. He straightened up to help Paul watch.

"Seen anything of 'em?"

"Not a glimpse. I heard a noise down near the tents but saw nothing."

Curt sprang over the barricade, secured Ralph's two guns and the cartridges, came back, waited.

When the deadlock did break, it broke suddenly. Down at the lower tip, the canoes which had reached shore all at once went darting—through the shallows—escaping. Launched on the run, they were out upon the open lake and disappearing at top speed before Curt and Paul could realize what was taking place.

They stared at each other in amazement.

"They're gone!" Paul gasped.

Curt was more skeptical. He simply could not believe it. "Maybe they're gone. This thing has got the earmarks of a trap, to me."

"But we saw them go."

A suspicion of the truth struck Curt.

"How many canoes did you see?"

"Six."

"That's what I counted. Only five boats reached shore. Where'd they get that extra canoe?"

They left the barricade and hurried down to the camp site. Curt's heart sank as he glanced about. All their supplies had been destroyed. With Paul at his heels he turned and ran out to where they had abandoned their canoe. It was not there.

It was the loss of their canoe that really frightened them. Food, supplies, tents—those were not matters of life or death. But with a mile of water all around them and no craft to get away in, they were helpless prisoners on that bare strip of sand and boulders.

IN FRONT of the tents Paul hunted around and found one of the pine knots which they had used for starting fires quickly. Over in the barricade Curt lit it with a double match, wedged the taper between two rocks, and bent over Ralph's crumpled form.

Curt's hand shook and his eyes grew misty as he worked with his stricken friend. He decided to cut off the shaft of the arrow and let the rest remain, for he could never extract the dart without starting an internal bleeding that would speedily be fatal. When he had done that, he brought water and bathed Ralph's face and loosened his clothes to make him more comfortable. That was all they could do for him.

The remainder of the short night passed quietly. Several times Curt heard signal calls drifting across the lake, but he did not even bother to keep a lookout, for he knew they would not be molested. The Kioshoes would sit around on those neighboring islands and wait and wait till starvation and exposure had done the work for them.

His thoughts of Sonya were bitter thoughts, not so much because of the suffering she had brought him as what she had done to Ralph. With no thought of self he had accompanied her on her trip, helping her all he could; and then, without scruple or hesitation, she had abandoned him when it suited her convenience.

To sit there in terrible helplessness and watch his life ebb away when he might have a chance to live was the most maddening experience that Curt had ever undergone.

At a creek mouth on the mainland shore a wisp of smoke stood up above the trees from the central camp. Canoes came and went freely across the water. Once, when one of them came dancing past six hundred yards away, Paul seized his rifle in a fury, screwed up the sight on the long-range Savage, sank the craft with his ricocheting bullets, and sent its three occupants swimming for the nearest island. After that the canoes kept a respectful distance.

The noonday sun was a torture. It beat down on the rocks and sand like the glare from a furnace door. There was not a square inch of shade on the island, not a breath of air stirring. Their only relief was to immerse themselves repeatedly in the shallows and splash water around the shelter where Ralph lay.

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Curt decides, Tuesday, to relieve the situation by desperate measures.

GULLY SECRETARY EUGENE CHAMBER

EUGENE, Dec. 29.—(P)—H. E. Cully, former secretary of the Roseburg chamber of commerce and recently associated with the United States National Bank of Portland, was today appointed secretary-manager of the Eugene chamber of commerce. He succeeds E. O. Harlan, who resigned to administer the new state milk utility.

Prior to coming to Oregon 19 years ago, Mr. Cully was associated with industrial associations in Hamilton, Ohio, and Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Students at the University of Missouri come from 118 of Missouri's 114 counties, and from 41 states.

bardines run from 4,000 to 8,000 a ton, a Monterey, Cal., packer has ascertained.

Mr. Cully will assume his new duties here Tuesday. Stanley T. Stevenson, president, announced.

BYRD'S FLAGSHIP BUCKS ICE CAKES

ABOARD ADMIRAL BYRD'S FLAGSHIP OFF ANTARCTICA, Dec. 29.—(P)

(Via MacKay Radio.)—The flagship of the Byrd Antarctic expedition this afternoon kept at reduced speed through iceberg-strewn seas. High winds which had buffeted her for 36 hours subsided.

Until 6:30 a. m. today the vessel was still headed into a northwest gale, in order to give the big seaplane cradled at the benefit of the lee of the midships deckhouse.

SOLDIERS MEMORIAL BURNS IN MINNESOTA

HIBBING, Minn., Dec. 29.—(AP)—Fire today destroyed the soldiers memorial building here valued at \$800,000, despite efforts of firemen and 250 citizens who fought the blaze in a 33-degree below temperature. The building was used as a community hall and sports building.

'SMATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



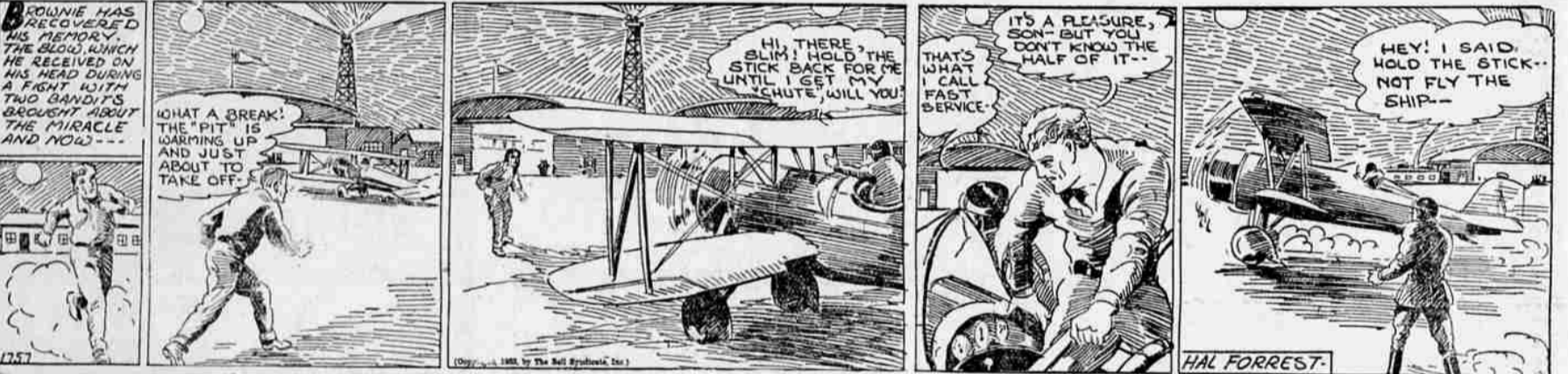
SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Brownie In His Own Element

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



BOUND TO WIN—Just A Test!

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—The Trusting Soul

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



PLANE PASSENGER DIES OF SMASHUP INJURIES

WALLACE, Idaho, Dec. 29.—(AP)—Hurt in an airplane crash, J. E. Murphy, died in a hospital here late last night.

Murphy was a passenger in a ship piloted by Russell E. Owen of Spokane, who also was injured when the plane sideslipped and fell 300 feet near the landing field at Osburn, Idaho.

Since its erection in 1930, 300,000 persons have visited the Pioneer Woman statue at Ponca City, Okla.

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT THE PERFECT GUM

The BIG 5¢ WORTH

THE FLAVOR LASTS

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