

Montana Rides Again

A RAPID-FIRE ROMANCE BY EVAN EVANS

SYNOPSIS: The Montana Kid and Mateo Rubric, famous Mexican Robin Hood, have left Brother Pascual to hold their horses, and are at a western gate of the fort of Durango. Montana has bridled Rosita, who tells him how to tap so that the gate will be opened. The two men hope to rescue for Bishop Emilio the emerald crown of Our Lady, which the governor has stolen from the church in Durango.

Chapter 17 OPEN DOOR

WHEN they were standing before the gate, Montana lifted his hand. Rubric at once stepped up against the wall, flattening himself against it. There he waited while Montana rapped twice, paused, rapped twice again, and then three times, rapidly and lightly.

There was only a moment's pause, and then a key was heard turning. Great bolts slid back, one by one, each making a light clanking sound as it disengaged; and finally the heavy door began to sag outwards. As it opened voices thrust out into the night.

"Be tender, Andres!"
"Be kind, Andres!"
"Be still, you fool!" panted a quick, harsh answer from close to the door.

It yawned wider, until the lamplight was glistening over the thick iron plates which shod the inside of the postern, studded with the heads of a hundred rivets big enough to have been worked into the side of the mightiest of liners.

He who was thrusting the door open could be seen at the same time, one of those men who are big from the waist up and hunched beneath, the legs bending as though to support and balance more easily the top-heavy bulk above.

He wore wrinkled cotton trousers, but above the waist, where his body became more important, his uniform grew splendid, also, and wound up in spangled shoulders fit to have graced a major, at the least. He wore at his belt a long sheathed knife and a revolver, and he carried a rifle slung over his shoulder, for that was the constant rule with all the men of that wary old fox, General Estrada.

"Sofortita—Rosita—my dear!" whispered the panting voice of the sergeant as he thrust himself at last through the gap of the opening door into the dark of the night outside. "Where are you, my sacred beauty?"

The blow that fell on him made a dull sound, because it struck on the padding of muscles just over the juncture of head and neck. Even then, only the extraordinary flesh of Sergeant Andres prevented him from sustaining a fracture of the spinal column or the neck vertebrae, because Rubric had struck from the side and with much enthusiasm.

Montana, gliding forward from the opposite side, received the toppling weight in his arms and laid it in a heap upon the ground.

"Well, close the door, at least," said a voice inside the door, "or we'll have to come and look out, Andres!"

"We've counted to ten, and the door is still not closed. Poor Andres, is this our fault or yours?"
The two began to laugh.

"Let me go first!" said one.
"Keep back, you fool! I've started already."

THEY came, scuffling, and struck their shoulders against the door, which shuddered open with a slight groaning of the hinges. Into the widening shaft of light which was allowed to escape into the night in this manner, stepped the masked face of Montana, with Rubric scarcely behind him.

Their leveled revolvers drove the soldiers back in a confusion. But they did not actually flee. Rubric was cursing them by all the names of his favorite saints.

"Run, you rats! Run, dog-stealers! Run, brinded swine—and give me a chance to jump on you behind and pull back your heads to cut your throats the better! Ay, run, fools! Don't stand waiting!"

But they could not run. The husky sobbing of his breath paralyzed them, for he seemed like a man already drinking blood.

Montana, unaided, lifted up the bulk of the fallen sergeant, dragged him inside the door, and let his loosened weight spill down on the floor. Startling at him, he pulled the door shut again to keep in the tell-tale, broadening arm of light that advanced into the darkness.

Montana stepped over him and saw that Rubric had turned his men

WATER SYSTEM IS BEING INSTALLED AT OREGON CAVES

CCC Men Making Many Improvements — Underground Pathway Made Safer — Trail Pushed.

CAMP OREGON CAVES, KERBY, Ore., Feb. 12.—(Sp.)—With clearing weather rapid progress is being made in the emergency conservation work program at Camp Oregon Caves. Excavation has been virtually completed at the site of the 38,000 gallon reinforced concrete water storage reservoir being installed in connection with the water system under construction to augment the present water supply to the Oregon Caves monument.

Nine thousand pounds of steel have been received and transported to the site and it is expected that forms will be set and concrete poured within the next ten days. Nearly two miles of three and four-inch pipe have been purchased for this project, delivery of which will be made for the part of next week.

Improvements on the trail system leading to major points of interest within and adjacent to the monument have been surveyed and work started on the rerouting of the trail to the Big Fir tree. It is planned

to have this trail completed within a month and the other important trails completed by the first of April.

Work on improving the trail system within the caves is going on apace. Headroom is being increased, rocks away with many "headache docks." Drainage system are being installed to eliminate sloppy conditions under foot. Where necessary the trail is being widened and steps are being constructed which, together with improved rampways, will prevent slipping and make it easier to climb the steeper portions of the trail.

The "Devil's Backbone" is being removed, thus doing away with one of the most difficult passages in the entire route through the caves. The water system that runs the entire length of the caves has been temporarily disconnected and an air compressor has been installed which is tied into the pipeline, making compressed air available for the use of compressed air tools at all required points.

Fences and guard rails are being installed at all points where there is any danger of a person slipping. A masonry wall and masonry seats have been placed in the "Ghost Room" to permit of a few minutes' rest for tourists through the Marble Hall of Oregon. It is expected that by the end of March the entire trail system will have been greatly improved. The caves will then be open to the most timid tourist while at the same time none of the natural picturesque features will be altered.

The truck trail built by employees from this camp for the forest service is being pushed rapidly forward and with improving weather it is expected that even better progress will be made than in the past. Timbers have been cut, excavations for footings started and materials

ordered for an 80-foot span timber bridge across Sucker creek to connect the trail with the state highway system.

Materials have been ordered for a community house to be built in the Grayback forest service public camp ground. The forest camp at this location has been cleared of down timber and dying trees and the whole site is being prepared for a large influx of summer tourists.

Visitors at the camp this week included Major Dark from the Medford army CCC headquarters on a periodic inspection of the camp, and "Mel" Lewis, assistant forest supervisor of Siskiyou national forest, on a survey of forest service work projects.

Tris Nail Suicide
NANAIMO, B. C.—(UP)—An unnamed Nanaimo man was saved from using a nail suicide by police intervention, authorities revealed. Constable Chris Johnson found the man seated before a mirror, attempting to drive a nail in his skull. He wounded himself seriously in the temple but will recover.

Bigamy Threat for Mrs. Fiermonte No. 2
NAPLES, Feb. 12.—(AP)—Mrs. Madeline Force Actor Dick Fiermonte was advised today by her attorney to leave Italy at once in order to avoid possible bigamy complications.

The former social registerite, who is the second wife of the Italian boxer, said that the attorney had informed her that she might face a sentence of from one to five years for participating in bigamy, since Italy does not recognize divorce.

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DIFFICULT DECISIONS

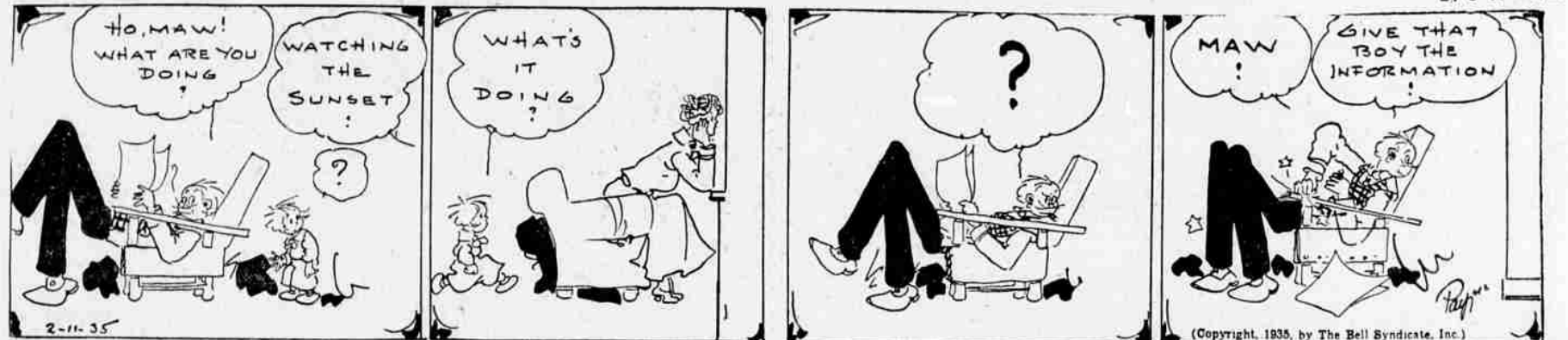
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



A SNOWBALL BATTLE BARRING THE WAY, AND THE 8:15 ALREADY WHISTLING FOR THE STATION

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S MATTER POP—



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Overhears a Plot!



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Comfort From Willie



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THE NEBBS—Is My Face Red?



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BRINGING UP FATHER



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ANOTHER 'OLDEST' CITY DISCOVERED ON ANCIENT SITE

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 12.—(AP)—Scientists who uncovered a city of 2,250 B. C. a couple of years ago thought they had found the world's oldest community, but they've learned recently that town was "sitting" on top of its "daddy" by eight centuries.

Archaeological expedition, which began its work eight years ago. Digging in the Topkawa, a prehistoric mound in northern Mesopotamia, the expedition discovered the heretofore "oldest" city back in 1927.

The scientists, however, kept on burrowing downward, and they have since unearthed twelve layers of civilization—the last few beneath the silt believed to have been left by the flood of Noah's time—and they believe there remain as many more of those strata.

Delving in the ruins, the archaeologists found walls of buildings, household utensils, receptacles for the beauty preparations of the women of the day, and other remains of the people's domestic life.

PENDLETON, Ore., Feb. 12.—(AP)—Indians on the Chinilla reservation today had completed temporary organization of a livestock association which will enable them to exercise better control over cattle received from the government.