

THE BOOMERANG CLUE

By AGATHA CHRISTIE

SYNOPSIS: Frankie Derwent and Bobby Jones are driving up to London from the Bassington-French place in Hampshire. Bobby is disguised as a chauffeur, Frankie's chauffeur, this ruse being part of their attempt to catch the man who pushed a fellow they believe was the explorer Alan Carstairs over a cliff in Wales—in his death. Of the two suspects as for Roger Bassington-French and Dr. Nicholson, Frankie is inclined to favor the second. He runs a drug cure near the Bassington-French house.

Chapter 24
FREDERICK SPRAGGE

THEY drove to Brook Street. Frankie rang the bell and admitted Bobby remaining outside. Presently Frankie opened the door again and beckoned him in.

"There's one other thing I forgot to tell you," said Frankie. "On the 15th, the day you were poisoned, Bassington-French was at Staverley, but Nicholson was away—supposedly at a conference in London. And his car is a dark-blue Talbot."

"And he has access to morphine," said Bobby.

"It's not exactly evidence, I suppose," said Bobby, "but it fits in nicely."

Frankie went to a side table and returned with a telephone directory. "What are you going to do?"

"I'm looking up the name Rivington."

She turned pages rapidly.

"A. Rivington & Sons, builders. B. A. C. Rivington, dental surgeon. D. Rivington, Shooter's Hill—I think not. Miss Florance Rivington. Col. H. Rivington, D.S.O.—that's more like it—Tite Street, Chelsea."

She continued her search.

"There's M. R. Rivington, Onslow Square. And there's a William Rivington at Hampstead. I think Onslow Square and Tite Street are the most likely ones. The Rivingtons, Bobby, have got to be seen without delay."

"I think you're right."

Frankie reflected for a minute or two. "I think," she said, "that you'll have to go. Do you feel you could be the junior partner of a solicitor's firm?"

"That seems a most gentlemanly rôle," said Bobby. "I was afraid you might think of something much worse than that."

She left the room and returned with a card.

"Mr. Frederick Spragge," she said, handing it to Bobby. "You are a young member of the firm of Spragge, Spragge, Jenkinson and Spragge of Bloomsbury Square."

"Did you invent that firm, Frankie?"

"Certainly not. They're Father's solicitors."

"What about clothes? Shall I ring up Badger to bring some along?"

Frankie looked doubtful. "I think, myself, that we'd better raid Father's wardrobe. His clothes won't fit you too badly."

A quarter of an hour later, Bobby, attired in a morning coat and striped trousers of exquisitely correct cut and possible fit, stood surveying himself in Lord Marchington's pier glass.

"SUPPOSING," said Bobby, pausing on the doorstep, "that Mr. M. R. Rivington of Onslow Square is himself a solicitor? That would be a blow."

"You'd better try the Tite Street colonel first," said Frankie. "He won't know anything about solicitors."

Accordingly Bobby took a taxi to Tite Street. Colonel Rivington was out. Mrs. Rivington, however, was at home. Bobby delivered over to the smart parlourmaid his card on which he had written "From Messrs. Spragge, Spragge, Jenkinson & Spragge. Very urgent."

The card and Lord Marchington's clothes produced their effect upon the parlourmaid. He was shown into a beautifully and expensively furnished drawing-room, and presently Mrs. Rivington, beautifully and expensively dressed and made up, came into the room.

"I must apologize for troubling you, Mrs. Rivington," said Bobby. "But the matter was rather urgent and we wished to avoid the delay of letters."

Mrs. Rivington was clearly a woman of more looks than brains, who accepted things as they were presented to her.

"Oh, do sit down," she said. "I got the telephone message just now from your office saying that you were on your way here."

Bobby mentally applauded Frankie for this last-minute flash of brilliance. He sat down and endeavored to look legal.

"It is about our client, Mr. Alan Carstairs," he said.

"Oh, yes?"

"He may have mentioned that we were acting for him."

"Did he now? I believe he did," said Mrs. Rivington, opening very large blue eyes. She was clearly of a suggestive type. "But of course I know about you. You acted for Dolly Maltravers, didn't you, when she shot that dreadful dressmaker man? I suppose you know all the details?"

"We know a lot that never comes into court," he said, smiling.

"Oh, I suppose you must," Mrs. Rivington looked at him enviously. "Tell me, did she really—I mean—was she dressed as that woman said?"

"The story was contradicted to court," said Bobby solemnly. He slightly dropped the corner of his eyelid.

"Oh, I see," breathed Mrs. Rivington, enraptured.

"About Mr. Carstairs," said Bobby, feeling that he had now established friendly relations and could get on with his job. "He left England very suddenly, as perhaps you know?"

Mrs. Rivington shook her head. "Has he left England? I didn't know. We haven't seen him for some time."

"Did he tell you how long he expected to be over here?"

"He said he might be here for a week or two, or it might be six months or a year."

"Where was he staying?"

"At the Savoy."

"And you saw him last—when?"

"Oh, about three weeks or a month ago, I can't remember."

"You took him down to Staverley one day?"

"Of course! I believe that's the last time we saw him. He rang up to know when he could see us. He'd just arrived in London, and Hubert was very put out because we were going up to Scotland the next day, and we were going down to Staverley to lunch and that night dining out with some dreadful people that we couldn't get out of, and he wanted to see Carstairs because he liked him so much, and so I said, 'My dear, let's take him down to the Bassington-Frenches with us. They won't mind.' And we did. And, of course, they didn't." She came breathlessly to a pause.

"Did he tell you his reasons for being in England?" asked Bobby.

"No. Did he have any? Oh, yes, I know. We thought it was something to do with that millionaire man, that friend of his, who had such a tragic death. Some doctor told him he had cancer, and he killed himself. A very wicked thing for a doctor to do, don't you think so? And they're often quite wrong. Our doctor said the other day that my little girl had measles, and it turned out to be a sort of heat rash. I told Hubert I should change him."

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"I think you're right."

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



BULL RUN MONUMENT STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BRIDGE ACROSS BULL RUN CREEK, AT THE SCENE OF THE FAMOUS CIVIL WAR BATTLE.



EARLY DAY TELEPHONE OPERATORS WERE BOYS—GIRL OPERATORS HAD TO BE SUBSTITUTED BECAUSE THE BOYS LIKED TO ARGUE WITH CUSTOMERS.



THE MAN WHO SHUNNED KNOWLEDGE.

DESCARTES—FAMOUS FRENCH SCHOLAR, MADE AN HONEST EFFORT TO FORGET ALL HE HAD LEARNED—BUT INSTEAD HE BECAME ONE OF THE MOST LEARNED MEN OF ALL TIMES!

Strange as it seems, the great thinker, Descartes, tried to forget what he had learned. It was not that he did not want knowledge, but rather that he disagreed with the methods then used in schooling. He believed that the old system was wrong in that it demanded of students the learning by rote and acceptance of the teachings of so-called authorities.

This system, he held, did not encourage constructive thought and, it was further pointed out, the "authorities" to whom students looked for learning did not always agree among themselves. Thus it was that Descartes, when he finished his formal schooling, threw aside his books and tried to rid his mind of whatever he had learned. He wanted his mind open and clear to receive the truth as he found it instead of the truth as others variously believed it to be.

With this as a starting point, and with a strong natural aptitude for mathematics, Descartes eventually became one of the most learned men of all times. He is called the father of modern philosophy and his contributions to many sciences were invaluable advances.

When the telephone was a novelty and subscribers were few, it was the practice to employ boys as operators. Boys were satisfactory as far as the mechanics of operating were concerned, but temperamentally they were untrained. Early day male operators quarreled so much with customers that girls had to be hired to replace them.

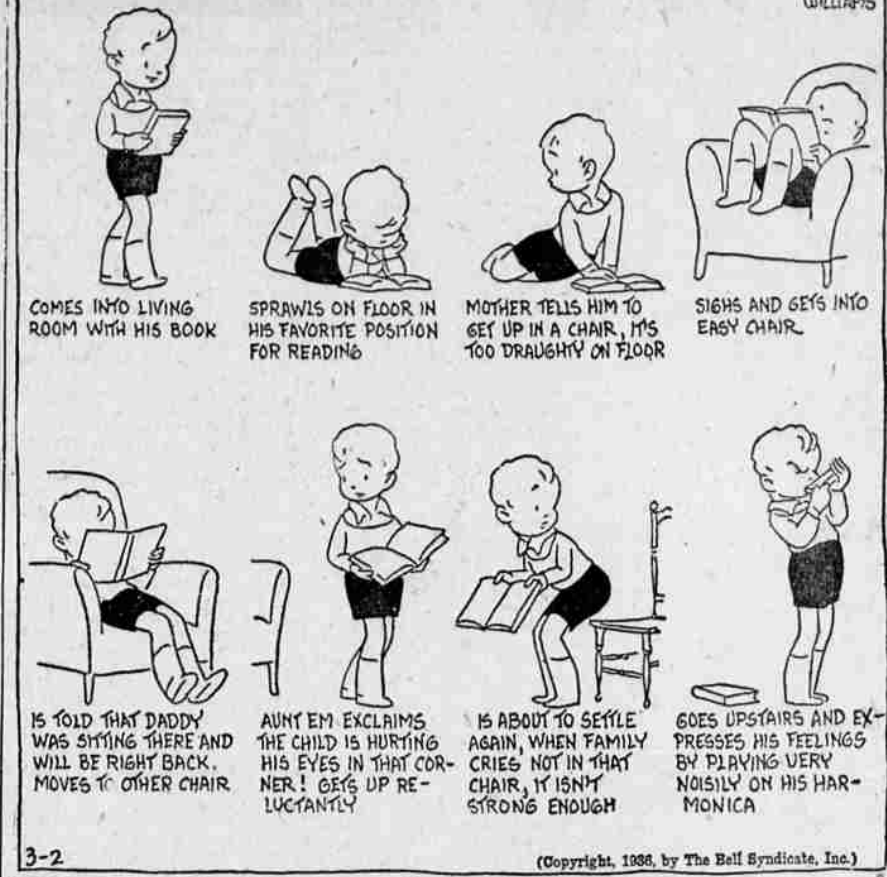
Tomorrow: The Exile Emperor.

WPA Pay Boosted
SPOKANE, Wash., Mar. 2.—(AP)—WPA workers' pay in all Washington counties headed today toward the level of the commercial and industrial counties. The increase will range from \$15 to \$33 a month.

WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT
THE PERFECT GUM
THE FLAVOR LASTS

INTERFERENCE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



COMES INTO LIVING ROOM WITH HIS BOOK. SPRAWLS ON FLOOR IN HIS FAVORITE POSITION FOR READING. MOTHER TELLS HIM TO GET UP IN A CHAIR, IT'S TOO DRAUGHTY ON FLOOR. SIGHS AND GETS INTO EASY CHAIR. IS TOLD THAT DADDY WAS SITTING THERE AND WILL BE RIGHT BACK. MOVES TO OTHER CHAIR. AUNT EM EXCLAIMS THE CHILD IS HURTING HIS EYES IN THAT CORNER! GETS UP RELUCTANTLY. IS ABOUT TO SETTLE AGAIN, WHEN FAMILY CRIES NOT IN THAT CHAIR, IT ISN'T STRONG ENOUGH. GOES UPSTAIRS AND EXPRESSES HIS FEELINGS BY PLAYING VERY NOISILY ON HIS HARMONICA.

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'MATTER POP-

By C. M. PAYNE



SOMETHING BITIN' HIM! YES, EVERY LIVING THING HAS SOME SMALLER THING TO BITE IT! YA MEAN SOMETHIN' IS BITIN' THE FLEA THAT IS BITIN' TOWER? QUITE LIKELY! AN' SOMETHIN' IS BITIN' THE THING WHICH IS BITIN' THE FLEA WHICH IS BITIN' TOWER? YES, AND SO ON, AD INFINITUM HELPIN' YA! BITE IT, TOWER! YA GOT SOMETHIN' HELPIN' YA? YEP!—BUT IF HE'S LIKE THE AVERAGE CIVILIZED POLITICIAN HOW DO I KNOW HELL KEEP HIS PROMISE TO TURN US LOOSE?

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Island in the Sky Disappears!



OHMY AND SKEETER HAVE ALLIED THEMSELVES WITH THE FUGITIVE PRINCE, CALTUMAC, WHO SEEKS TO WREST THE THRONE OF AZTECO FROM HIS BROTHER, EMPEROR POPO-EXTUATL. CALTUMAC BELIEVES TOMMY IS QUETZALCOATL, MYTHICAL DEITY, WHO HAS RETURNED TO AID HIM.

THEY COULDN'T SEE US BECAUSE THE BUILDINGS WERE CAMOUFLAGED—BUT I CAN SEND AN SOS WITH THIS FLASHLIGHT.



HE DIDN'T GET IT, SKEETS!—GUESS OUR ONLY BET IS TO THROW IN WITH THIS PRINCE—AND HELP MAKE HIM KING— YEP!—BUT IF HE'S LIKE THE AVERAGE CIVILIZED POLITICIAN HOW DO I KNOW HELL KEEP HIS PROMISE TO TURN US LOOSE?

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Jabez Thorpe's Story!



JABEZ THORPE WENT ON WITH HIS STORY, PAINTING WITH GRAPHIC WORD PICTURES FOR BEN THE MANNER IN WHICH THE STRANGE DR. IVOR KILOVITCH HAD ENTERED HIS OFFICE. I HAVE READ, SIR, OF YOUR INTEREST IN QUIET, SOLITUDE AND GILENCE—YOUR MONEY WILL NOT BUY THESE THINGS FOR YOU—THAT, I ASSURE YOU—BUT, MY BRAIN CAN ACHIEVE THEM! PERHAPS, WITHIN EASY REACH OF EVERYONE IN THIS MAD BATTLE WE CALL CIVILIZATION, THERE IS AN AREA OF PEACEFULNESS, AN INFINITE AREA OF SOLITUDE, A WORLD OF GILENCE! YOU SHOW IT TO ME, DOCTOR! AH, MY DEAR SIR, THAT IS WHERE YOUR MONEY COMES IN—IT IS NECESSARY THAT I HAVE THE FUNDS TO ACHIEVE THIS!

THE NEBBS—Friendship of a Lifetime



IM SORRY YOU SOLD YOUR HOTEL—YOU'VE BEEN MY BEST FRIEND AND DON'T TAKE THIS AS CRITICISM BUT JUST HOW COULD YOU GET MAD ENOUGH TO WALK OUT ON ALL YOUR GOOD FRIENDS? WELL, GETTING DOWN TO BRASS TACKS, WE WANT TO GIVE YOU A GREAT FAREWELL PARTY—YOUR GOOD FRIENDS I MEAN—WHAT NIGHT WOULD BE CONVENIENT FOR YOU AND MRS. NEBB? WELL, ER...ULD...ANYTIME...MAKE YOUR OWN TIME—I'VE NOTHING MUCH TO DO FROM NOW ON AND DON'T PULL A LOT OF THAT 'SORRY TO SEE YOU GO' STUFF BECAUSE IM THE ONLY GUY WHO COULD MAKE THAT SPEECH AND MEAN IT.

DORMANT SPRAY FOR PEAR PESTS ADVISABLE SOON

The late dormant spray application for the control of scab, rust mite, blister mite and San Jose scale should be made soon, according to C. B. Corry, assistant county agent.

Use 12 gallons of liquid lime sulfur to 100 gallons of spray. For apples, add 1 pint of nicotine sulfate to control rosy apple aphid.

This is the most important spray in the control of pear scab. The buds are now in the right condition for spraying and will remain so until the

blossom cluster is exposed. After that there will be danger of spray injury.

If cool rainy weather follows this spraying, it will be necessary to spray again in the "pre-pink" and "pink" stage for scab control. Six pounds of vegetable sulfur to 100 gallons of water is recommended for these sprays. Burning and russeting are apt to result if liquid lime sulfur is used on pears that late.

Three gallons liquid lime sulfur to 100 gallons applied in the "pre-pink" and 2½ gallons in the "pink" is the best control for apple scab.

On apples where scab is not a factor, an oil spray containing 4% actual oil in the late dormant period is cheaper than lime sulfur and will control rosy apple aphid and San Jose scale. If lime sulfur sprays are to be used on apples after blossoming, it is necessary to use the dormant lime sulfur or, under certain weather conditions, sulfur shock may result.

Copies of the 1936 apple and pear spray programs are available at the county agent's office.

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