

# MURDER ON THE BLUFF

**SYNOPSIS:** The mysterious shooting to death of Jude Blinshop, my old flame, opens our stormy weekend at Farrington Bluff, home of Michael's cousin. After a series of strange attacks, we find the body of Michael's mad father below the bluff. Aunt Martha is shot in the shoulder, then nearly dragged to death with sleeping powder. The Skipper, Mike's tall, tuxedoed young aunt, disappears and Cook takes over. William, the chauffeur, proves an ex-convict. I eavesdrop on Cook, William and Annie the maid, who are talking against Higgins, the butler, then I quit William.

### Chapter 4

#### What About Higgins?

"YOU'D better answer questions, all of you," I said at last. "How did you manage to get here, William? Did Cook arrange it?"

"No. I told you once, Mr. Blinshop did. Cook's been here a long time. She got Annie this job when they sent me up. And then—I just happened to get here. I might have known there'd be some hitch to a break like that."

"Did anyone else know that you were related?"

William shook his head. "I didn't want to take no chances."

Every word he uttered dovetailed with a wild idea forming in the back of my mind. Right then, it seemed too



I lost my temper. "This won't get you anywhere—where are the letters?"

bizarre to be true, but I was to think better of it.

"What did you do with those letters?" I said.

"What letters?" His face was bewildered.

"Don't be a fool," I snapped. "We searched your room just now and found the letters from your warden and from Mr. Blinshop. A few minutes later, when we came back, the letters were gone. What did you do with them?"

William's face was twisted in terror. "As God's my judge, Mr. Wells," he said, "I didn't have no such letters."

I lost my temper. "You had them or someone in your family did. I saw them. This won't get you anywhere. The first policeman who comes into this house can have you identified. Where are they?"

"Do you know what he's talking about?" William turned dazedly from Cook to Annie. They both shook frightened heads. "What—what was in them, sir? Where were they?"

"They were in your driving cushion," I said. Slowly, as accurately as I could, I repeated their contents. Before I was halfway through, my bewilderment redoubled. As surely as I was sitting there, not one of the three had ever heard my words before. It was insane and pointless. They had absolutely nothing to gain by denials. William voiced the conclusion that was formulating in my own mind.

"It's—Crazy!"

"SOMEBODY put 'em there! Put 'em there and then swiped 'em." "Did you ever have such letters?" I demanded.

His eyes clouded. "I don't know. I had references from the warden and Blinshop once, but I forget what I done with them. I—think—I showed 'em to Miss Barbara when I got this job and then chucked 'em. It's crazy."

It was all of that. I turned to Cook. "How long have you been down here?" I inquired.

"Huh?" Cook's heavy jaw dropped and then snapped together. "In this kitchen? I come down with Willie to get him some supper."

"Has she been here ever since?" I directed the question at William.

His face darkened. "Sure, she's been here. What do you think? You needn't try to pin anything on her, too."

"I'm not trying to pin anything on

anybody," I said patiently. "I'm trying to find out what happened. Two people are dead, and if we don't want to be in their shoes, we've got to find out what happened. We won't find out anything until everybody tells all he or she knows."

I paused to gauge the effects of my words. It was considerable.

"Now," I said quietly, "did either of you straighten up William's room after we searched it a few minutes ago? No one can hold it against you if you did. It will just keep us from running up any more blind alleys."

"No," said William earnestly. "I swear I didn't!"

Annie's negative was thin and wavery but Cook's came forth tentatively.

"Very well, Cook," I said curtly. "Annie, did you leave Miss Farrington alone—even for a second—after William came downstairs?"

Annie answered without the slightest hesitation. "No, sir. Not for a second event!"

**Only Higgins Could—**

ONE point was settled then. Almost anyone in the house might have placed those letters in William's room, but there was only one person who could have removed them—Higgins. Everyone else was carefully checked. Unless the Skipper was in the house or either Gay or Michael was withholding them for a purpose. The only purpose that I could imagine for such an act was to conceal the fact that either had put them there.

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

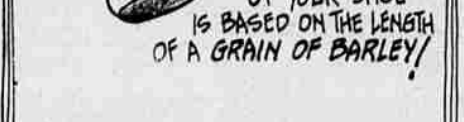
For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



THE ENORMOUS MORMON TABERNACLE, Salt Lake City, WAS BUILT WITHOUT ANY FORMAL PLANS!



THE SIZE OF YOUR SHOE IS BASED ON THE LENGTH OF A GRAIN OF BARLEY!



THE REAL BIRD DOG—"NEBBY"—NATURALLY MARKED TERRIER, OWNED BY David N. Cooke, of Brentwood, Mo.

IT WAS SIMPLY MARKED OUT ON THE GROUND!!! THE DROP OF A PIN CAN BE HEARD FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER—A DISTANCE OF 250 FEET!



PINCH-HITTING PITCHER! CHARLES RUFFING PITCHED 38 GAMES FOR THE YANKEES AND PINCH-HIT IN 20 OTHERS IN THE SAME SEASON... -1930-

**Mormon Tabernacle**  
One of the largest auditoriums in the world, the Mormon tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah, seats some 8,000 people. It is 250 feet long, 150 feet wide and 80 feet in height—yet, strange as it seems, was built without any plans other than those marked out on the ground where it was built.

Construction of the architectural wonder began on September 1, 1853. It arrived at a sufficient stage of completion for religious services to be held in it about two years later. Practically the entire Mormon community took part in its erection, either through financial aid or by actual manual labor.

The huge roof of the tabernacle was constructed without the use of a single nail, bolt or screw. Consisting of lattice-arched bents, each of the roof's arches converge and meet at the highest given point of the main outside bents where they are fastened with wooden pegs and cowhairs. The roof was first covered with some 400,000 shingles, but a metallic covering replaced the shingles in 1900.

Perhaps the most amazing feature of the tabernacle is its acoustic properties. There is remarkably little echo in the building and a speaker's voice carries distinctly and with strong volume. A pin dropped at one end of the interior can be clearly heard at the other end.

**Shoe Measure**  
During the middle ages in Europe, the standards of weights and measures were a confusing jumble.

**Preacher's Son Killed**  
PORTLAND, June 21.—(AP)—Ivon Wahl, 13, son of the Rev. E. P. Wahl, pastor of the Second German Baptist church, was killed instantly when an automobile in which he was riding with his father and J. O. Wahl of North Dakota, collided with a trolley bus Saturday.

**Stork Beats Ambulance**  
PORTLAND, June 21.—(AP)—Barney Buck and Robert Norgard, Portland ambulance drivers, arrived too late when they were called to the home of Mrs. Grace Bartlett, an expectant mother—too late that is, to rush Mrs. Bartlett to the hospital. But they got there just in time to assist in the delivery of a baby girl.

**Vault Lock Sticks**  
SALEM, June 21.—(AP)—Officials in the county treasurer's office had to borrow money from a local bank to carry on Saturday's business when the lock on the vault failed to respond to the combination as usual. It was the first time in 68 years the lock had gotten out of order, officials said.

### TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy "On a Spot!"



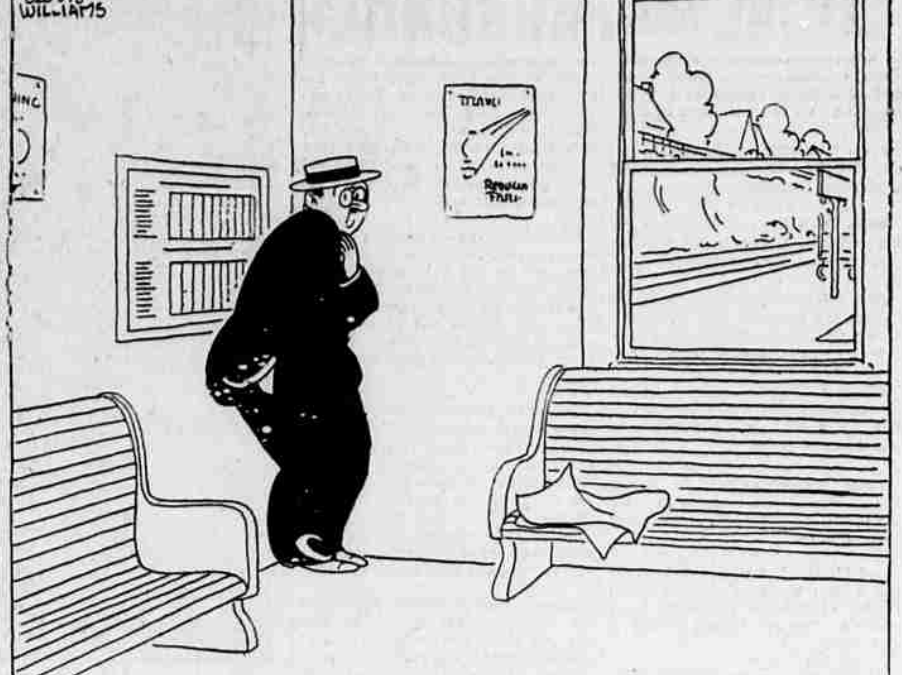
BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Preparations!



THE NEBBES—A Bit Sarcastic

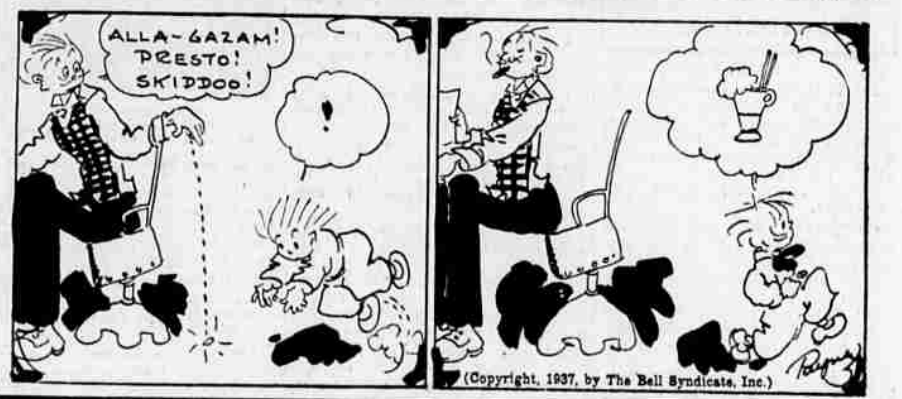


## SUBURBAN HEIGHTS By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



AT 7 O'CLOCK, WHEN THE COMMUNITY CLUB MEMBERS WERE GATHERING HUNGRILY FOR THE ANNUAL GARDEN SUPPER, FRED PERLEY, WHO WAS IN CHARGE OF ARRANGEMENTS AND HAD JUST DISCOVERED THAT THROUGH A SLIP-UP IN DATES HE HAD ORDERED THE CATERERS FOR TOMORROW NIGHT, WAS WAITING AT THE STATION FOR A TRAIN TO TAKE HIM ANYWHERE ELSE

## S'MATTER POP By C. M. PAYNE



By HAL FORREST

## BOUNTIFUL CROPS, PRICES, FORECAST

WASHINGTON, June 21.—(AP)—Government farm leaders forecast bright prospects today for a bountiful 1937 harvest—both in the fields and in congress.

Agriculture department market experts said that probable large crops of wheat, rye, corn, oats and other grains would cause a downward adjustment in prices to the farmer, but that greater volume would offset lower prices and increase total cash income.

Farm cash income in the first four months of this year amounted to \$2,591,000,000, a gain of \$541,000,000 over the same 1936 period.

Government economists said the 1937 12-month total is approaching \$9,000,000,000. This would surpass the \$7,865,000,000 total last year, highest since the depression. The 1929 peak was \$1,479,000,000.

## COUPLE HELD FOR DEATH OF INFANT

SEATTLE, June 21.—(AP)—Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Algeo were held for the corner late today after Dr. Leslie E. Wilson, county autopsy surgeon, said a postmortem examination showed a new-born baby boy had met death from a rag being stuffed in its throat.

The infant was found early today in a shopping bag resting on a second floor fire escape landing on the apartment house where the Algeos live.

Harlan S. Callahan, chief deputy coroner, said Mrs. Algeo told him the baby died at birth last night, and that her husband was unaware of the birth and death. She was sent to a hospital after questioning.

Algeo, 28, said he heard his wife scream last night but did not know the reason. He is an unemployed assessor. His wife is the daughter of a retired Tacoma sea captain.

By SOL HESS