

FLAME TRAIL

BY MARIE DE NEVAUD

SYNOPSIS: When Kay Crandon's Lazy Nine ranch house and barn burn, Josh Hastings, owner of the Flying Six, tries to buy her ranch and co-rt Kay. But she hates him and is determined to keep her ranch. Ted Gaynor, a puncher she impulsively hires, stirs the outfit to cut its own time and rebuild without pay. Hastings' co-hand, Scrap Johnson, molests Kay, but Ted rescues her and whips Scrap. When Hastings appears, Scrap takes his horse and gun and makes his getaway. Hastings pursues and at the central divide pass finds both Ted and Scrap wounded after a gun duel. He schemes his revenge.

Chapter 21 A Fight For Life

DENDING down, Josh Hastings loosened the fingers of the hand that still gripped the gun Kay had given to Ted. He held it gingerly with his bandanna, the Atlantic touch of incriminating fingerprints could possibly get on it, and slowly drew it from the loosened grip. Suddenly, and without any warning, he felt Ted's dark eyes upon him. Then, as suddenly again, the lids dropped, and the body he was bending over seemed as inert and lifeless as before.

Josh Hastings doubted the evidence of his own senses. But with his heart pounding suffocatingly in his ears at the memory of that strangely seeing look from those dark eyes, he held himself rigidly still.

The weird beauty of the scene was entirely lost on him, but something of the eery quality of that mysterious spot from which waters eventually flowed to the Atlantic and the Pacific made his breath come quicker and raised a momentary panic in him.

He stared at Ted Gaynor's white face, watching for any further sign of life, but it lay still as death in the moonlight.

His breath coming more normally again, and cursing himself for a fool, Hastings lifted up Ted's gun. Then he walked half way back toward Scrap Johnson, took careful aim and fired.

The shot reverberated from the rocky walls of the pass behind him, intensified by the preceding silence, so that it sounded like the blast of a cannon.

Scrap Johnson's body gave a convulsive jerk, horrible to see. A dark spot stood out on his temple, and slowly spread like a thirsty stain.

Ted Gaynor continued to lay utterly quiet. He could not have been more remote from this scene of violence had he been as dead as the man who had just been murdered.

Dropping the gun from which he had fired the fatal shot, Josh Hastings knelt down and deliberately crawled back to the spot where Ted Gaynor lay.

Raising his feet, he looked back critically over the trail he had beaten through the grass. He could see Ted's gun gleaming where he had let it fall, and a cruel smile twisted his lips.

He had framed Ted Gaynor, dead or alive. Whoever discovered the two bodies would find it impossible to escape the implication of that dropped gun. At one stroke he had been able not only to get complete revenge on Scrap, but to wipe Ted Gaynor from his path forever.

No matter what Kay might have thought of Ted, she was not the kind to let her thoughts linger over a proved murder. From now on, she felt sure the war with Kay should be clear sailing.

Walking slowly over to his horse, Josh Hastings swung into the saddle, and headed back toward the pass.

Burning Thirst And Pain
THE moon hung low in the western sky, and moonlight and dawn were mingling in a cold gray light, before Ted Gaynor opened his eyes again.

For a long interval he lay staring straight ahead, his eyes garkened with pain. Gradually the gentle trickle of the water penetrated to his consciousness, and he became suddenly aware of his burning throat, and the fever that blazed through him.

He tried to pull himself over to the water, but fell back with a groan at the intolerable pain in his chest.

A wild look came into his eyes, and he muttered incoherently. Slumping down again by the water that was so near and yet so far, he seemed on the point of giving up. But with a mighty effort, he roused himself and rolled over so that he was able to reach the edge of the stream.

Sucking in a great gulp of the life-giving drink, his mind cleared for a moment. He remembered distinctly where he was and what had happened in his third encounter with Scrap Johnson, on his way over to the Clear Water basin to collect his family.

Ted had dismounted to get a drink at the head waters of the pass. Just as he was in the act of quenching his thirst, he heard a rasping challenge behind him. Whirling about and drawing at the same time, he had seen Scrap Johnson standing a short distance away.

The next instant there had been the roar and blaze of two guns. Scrap Johnson's bullet had reached its mark first, while Ted's went wild. From that point, memory registered nothing but a blank void as he thruggled with excruciating pain and horror-filled nightmares. Doubtless Scrap Johnson had decided to ride on, and leave him here to die.

All details of the night blurred into delirium, as the pain in his chest swept over him again. But while the delirium persisted, he did not completely lose consciousness.

Through the delirium ran a subconscious will to live, a determination to pull through for Kay's sake. She needed him. He mustn't fail her!

By a gigantic effort, and propelled by this insistent inner force, Ted pulled himself up on his hands and knees and began slowly and painfully to drag his aching body along the rocky edge of the stream.

Two thoughts possessed him above all others. He mustn't lose the trail of the water. He must stay by it, so that he could quench the thirst that burned in him. And he mustn't let himself relax and lie down. Once he did that, he would never get up again.

Gradually the dawn lightened into day. Dull clouds scudded across the sky and no sun appeared to gladden on the headwaters of the Bitter Root and Clear Water rivers. Ted had managed to drag himself 500 yards or more through the scrub pines that dotted the southeastern slope of the divide.

At the point of exhaustion, but still animated by that mysterious will to live that functions without any conscious control, he pushed on to a small clearing, that appeared unexpectedly through the trees.

At the far end of it he could see a tumbled down and apparently deserted shack. Making for it, in a blind instinct to reach shelter, Ted struggled over to the gate, muttering in incoherent delirious phrases.

As he approached, there was a slight movement behind the shuttered window. The next minute, a feminine figure appeared in the broken down doorway.

For a terrified second, the girl on the threshold and the exhausted and delirious man stared at each other. The girl clutched the sagging wooden frame of the door. Her brown eyes were wide, and her dark hair seemed in sharp contrast to her face, which showed up without an ounce of color in her startled surprise of the moment.

The amazement in her look gradually changed to concern as she took in Ted's desperate plight, and with a cry of pity, she ran over to him and stooped down to try to help him.

With a convulsive effort, Ted struggled to straighten up, but with a groan, he sank back unconscious.

Her first terrified surprise over, the girl proved herself equal to the emergency facing her. She could not have been more than 18, but she had a wiry strength in her tall slender frame.

Half carrying, half dragging Ted, she managed to get him to the door of the shack. The sky had gradually darkened with heavy clouds that piled up in the east and threatened a sudden down-pour.

After one glance at the lowering sky, the girl darted inside the tiny enclosure and quickly made up the cot on which she evidently had spent the night.

Then, with one last mighty effort, she pulled Ted inside and managed to lift him onto the cot just as the first heavy drops of the storm splashed on the roof of the shack.

Panting from her exertion, she leaned back a moment against the wall, and studied the face of the man she had brought in.

Evidently reassured by what she saw, she dropped to her knees with a murmur of pity, and examined his wound. Her fingers worked with a gentle expertness.

Rising in her feet, she took a basin and filled it with water. Then she pulled a clean cloth from the drawer of a rude wash-stand in one corner, and deftly proceeded to wash Ted's wound.

The rain, gathering with the swift intensity of mountain storms, beat a wild tattoo on the roof, and gusts of wind shook the tiny shelter to its foundations. But the girl was oblivious to the elements outside as she bent, with absorbed attention, to her battle with life and death.

Kay is disappointed when Ted falls to arrive, tomorrow.

state in the nation and the federal government giving notice that this county henceforth will be responsible only for its own indigents.

Caring for indigents from other states is proving so costly that taxes will become confiscatory, the supervisors said.

Protest Filed On Union High School
GRANTS PASS, July 29.—(AP)—Fourteen persons from Grave creek have signed protests to proposals for consolidating five school districts into a union high school. County School Superintendent H. H. Wardrip said today, if valid, an election will be required. Grave creek, Wolf creek, Leiland, Karg and Pacer districts are affected.

The liver-fluke, a small parasite that kills thousands of sheep annually, has attacked men in 28 recorded cases.

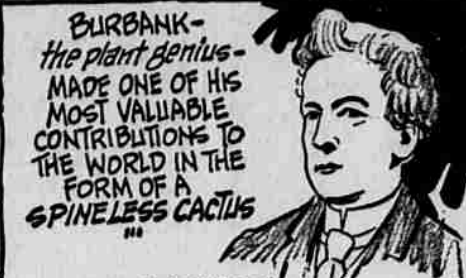
Kern County Cuts Scope Of Relief
BAKERSFIELD, Cal., July 29.—(AP)—Kern county supervisors unanimously adopted a resolution that will be sent to governors of every

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

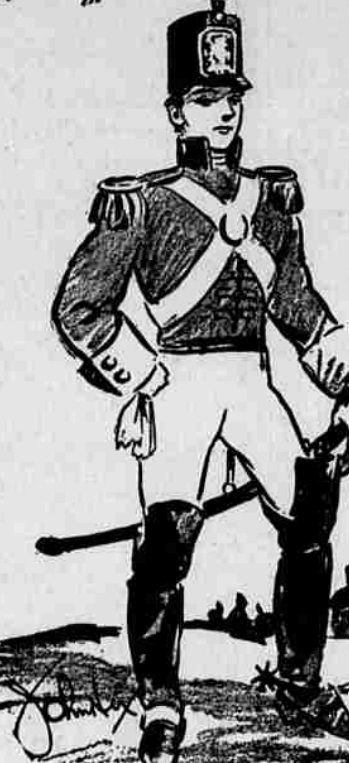
For further proof address the author, enclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



READING THE BIBLE TO THE LOWER CLASSES! WAS PROHIBITED IN ENGLAND! A LAW PASSED IN 1543 MADE THE ACT PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT



BURBANK—the plant genius—MADE ONE OF HIS MOST VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD IN THE FORM OF A SPINELESS CACTUS



INSULT TO INJURY! JOSEPH HANZLIK WAS RUN OVER BY HIS OWN CAR— THEN CHARGED WITH RECKLESS DRIVING! THE CAR HIT HIM WHEN HE CRANKED IT IN GEAR AND SMASHED INTO A HOUSE IN Baltimore, 1935

DR. JAMES BARRY—A GENERAL IN THE BRITISH ARMY, WAS A WOMAN! SHE SERVED 46 YEARS (1813-1859) WITHOUT HAVING HER SEX DISCOVERED AND ROSE TO THE RANK OF INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF ALL BRITISH HOSPITALS, THE HIGHEST POST IN THE MEDICAL SERVICE.

Woman Army Medic.
On July 6, 1813, a smooth-faced, slim waisted young graduate of Edinburgh university scrawled the signature, James Barry, M. D., in the records of the British army medical staff and became hospital assistant. Promoted to assistant surgeon two years later, Dr. Barry was made a staff surgeon at the Cape of Good Hope in 1827, was transferred to Jamaica, and subsequently saw service in Antigua, St. Helena, Barbados, and Trinidad.

Barry's true sex was discovered by a nurse. An official autopsy by the British war office made the astounding masquerade a matter of record.

Spineless Cactus.
Among all Luther Burbank's contributions to the world of botany, his spineless cactus, is generally considered the most valuable. It has enabled the raising of great herds of cattle on desert lands otherwise worthless, by supplying an excellent food for them in arid lands where other suitable vegetation cannot be raised. Before the development of the spineless cactus, the water supply stored up in the leaf-like stems of the cactus was useless. The spines killed any cattle that grazed on the plant.

Famed Indian Vet Is Called Beyond
KAMIAH, Idaho, July 29.—(AP)—Tribemen prepared today for the burial of Philip Evans, 93-year old Nez Perce Indian warrior.

Cow Responsible For Death Puzzle
GRANTS PASS, July 29.—(AP)—The mysterious "human bones" reported in the ashes of a Curry county wilder-

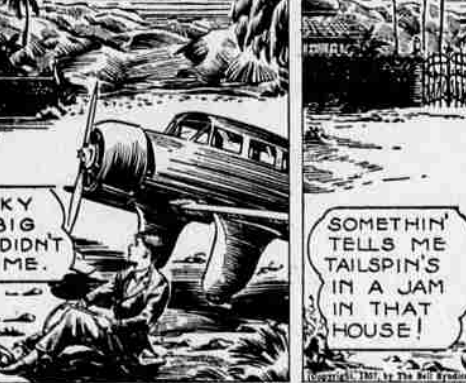
neous cabin have been identified, state police were informed today.

Investigation showed a cow died in the cabin and that a rancher preferred to cremate the carcass rather than drag it out the door any bury it.

Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter "Takes a Hand"

BESIDE THE PLANE, BOUND HAND AND FOOT, SKEETER HEARS THE GUN-FIRE IN THE SPY HEADQUARTERS, AND REASONS THAT TOMMY IS IN TROUBLE. HE WORKS FURIOUSLY AT THE LIGHT CORDS THAT BIND HIM AND SOON HIS LABORS ARE REWARDED...



2675

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Cat and Mouse



2676

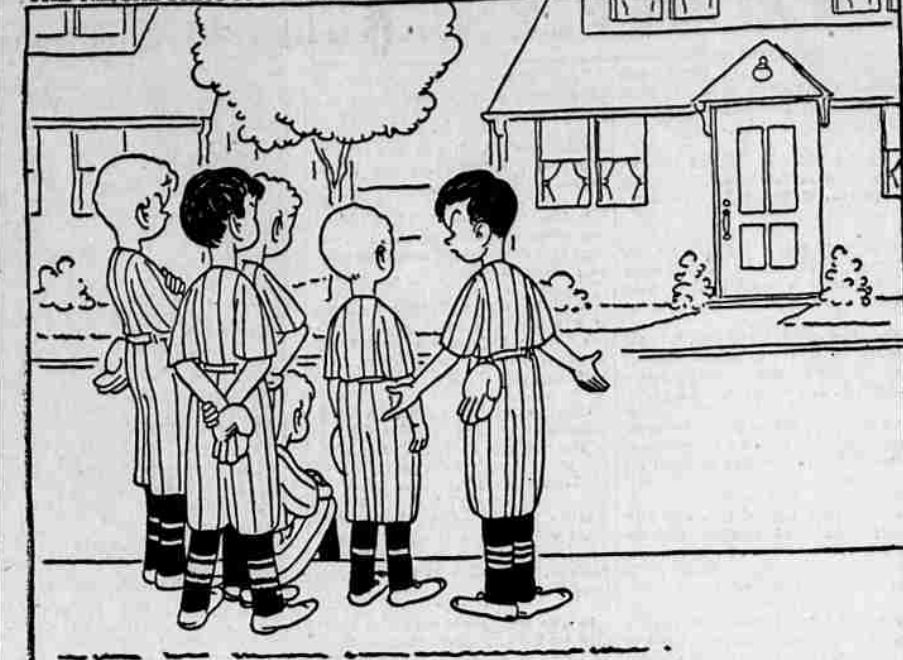
THE NEBBS—Oh, Happy Day



2677

THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEAGUE

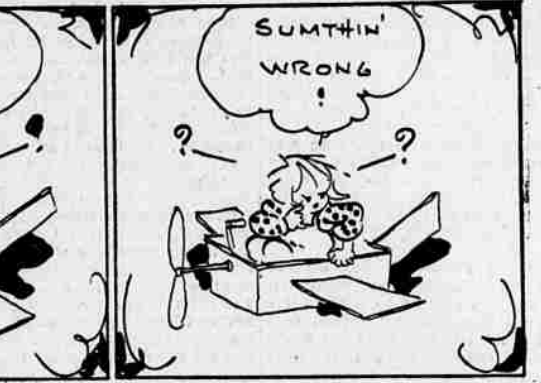
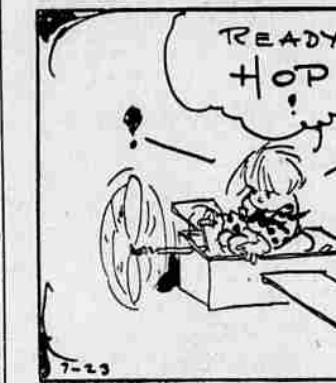
By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



THE TEAM WAITED HOPEFULLY WHILE ITS ONLY GOOD PITCHER WENT INTO HIS HOUSE TO ARRANGE POSTPONING DOING SOME CHORES HE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE DONE YESTERDAY; BUT AS TIME PASSED AND HIS DOOR DID NOT REOPEN, FEAR BECAME CERTAINTY THAT SOMETHING HAD GONE WRONG WITH HIS ARRANGEMENTS

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S'MATTER POP R. O. M. PAYNE



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By HAL FORREST

By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS

