

the dark ships

BY HULBERT FOOTER

When flashy Prescott Fanning abducts Janet from Baltimore on his yacht, she gets word to Neill, a young federal agent who loves her. Dashing to Absalom's Harbor, he boards the yacht and finds, in a locked cabin, Fanning shot dead and Janet in a faint, a gun beside her. Neill hides her nearby in a disused liner, then joins Mark Boninger, keen local investigator, to keep tabs on developments. Returning from a trip to the ship, Neill is overpowered by a husky brute who binds him, taping his eyes and mouth, and carries him off.

Chapter 22 A Brutal Grilling

WHEN he was ready, the man turned Neill over on his face and cut the bonds on his wrists. He turned Neill again and, smothering him under his full weight, pulled his arms forward and tied them in front. He tied a second rope to the first one and, standing Neill on his feet, started pulling on the other end drawing Neill's arms above his head and higher until his feet began to leave the ground. He then fastened the rope, leaving Neill dangling, his toes just touching the ground.

The man then came close and, with his foul breath in Neill's face, started going through his pockets and through his clothes to the skin. He even unclipped his pants and felt inside his socks. He took out Neill's wallet, examined it and put it back. This was no ordinary robber. He was after some particular thing. When he failed to find it, he started low, savage cursing.

"Where is the stuff?" he muttered. "You damn fool!" Neill said, knowing that meaningless grunts were the only sounds he could make.

The tapes were pulled off his lips. Neill instantly shouted with his full voice. The man laughed. "Shout your lungs out," he said. "There's no house in a mile."

Neill shut his mouth. "Where's the stuff? . . . Come across or I'll kill you!"

"What stuff?" answered Neill. "I don't know what you're talking about."

The man's reply was a blow that almost jerked Neill's arms out of their sockets. He spun around helplessly.

"Where's the stuff?" growled the man. Neill knew he had been watched from the beginning. Evidently it was thought that he had secured something valuable on the yacht. Some loot of Fanning's. It was useless to protest that he didn't have it. He stalled for time.

"Loose me and I'll talk to you about it."

The man laughed. "What kind of a fool do you think I am?"

"You can come with me and I'll take you to it," said Neill.

"No, you don't! You tell me where it is and if I find it, I'll loose you. If I don't find it, I'll come back and kill you with my fist!"

Buried Treasure

NEILL thought: If I had an hour, I could release myself. It's worth trying. He said: "Do you know the wooden beacon that stands on Absalom's Point?"

"I've seen it."

"I buried it near there."

The man growled in pretended indifference: "Which direction?"

He's biting! Neill thought, and went on: "Stand with your back against the beacon and face the big locust that grows in the field. Take six full steps toward the tree, and dig in the sand. It's not buried deep. I didn't have time."

The man was silent, and Neill held himself tense for the outcome. "All right," he said at last. "God help you if you're lying!"

Neill relaxed. He pasted the tapes back on Neill's lips. They didn't stick so firmly this time. He then pulled himself up on deck and leaped to the shore. Neill heard his steps crunching away.

Neill, blind, speechless and bound, took stock of his situation. Unnoticed by his captor, the rope had stretched somewhat and his feet were now planted firmly on the ground. The strain had loosened the bonds on his wrists also.

He rubbed his mouth against his arm until he got rid of the loose tapes. His eyes were more firmly fastened shut, and he let them go for the present.

He maneuvered his hands until he got hold of the rope from above. It was a coarse hempen rope that afforded a good grip. With endless patient working, he drew himself up on it an inch at a time. The cross-beam was only a foot or so above his hands. He struck against it, and after several failures was able to hook his fingers over it and hang there.

He now caught the dangling rope between his upper arm and his teeth and, holding it there, started gnawing. It seemed like hopeless job. Minutes passed before he could feel even one fibre parting between his teeth. Meanwhile his strained fingers seemed

to pass beyond his control. Momentarily, out of sheer exhaustion, they threatened to lose their hold on the cross-beam.

But life was sweet and Janet infinitely dear to him. The thought of her fate if anything happened to him kept his hands gripping the beam, kept his teeth grinding automatically. The rope fibers parted one by one. He lost all count of time. He was only a chewing mechanism.

The rope, he thought, was about half chewed through when he heard his captor coming back. There was a heavy slide down the bank and footsteps on the shingle. A sickening feeling of rage and frustration filled Neill. All his pains for nothing! He drew up his legs and let go the beam. The rope broke and he fell to the floor.

But he was still helpless. He tore the tapes off his eyes and



The blow made Neill spin around helplessly.

pulled savagely with his teeth at the knots that bound his wrists. If he could only free himself so he could put up a fight! Too late! The man was climbing aboard.

Rescued

THE round eye of a flashlight blazed in the hatch overhead. It dazzled Neill and he could not see what was behind it. He struggled to throw himself out of reach of its rays, but could not.

"Good God! What happened?" said a husky, uncertain voice.

This was not what Neill had expected. For an instant he was filled with stupefaction, then a surge of joy. "Eyer!" he yelled.

"What shall I do?" the voice queried.

"Come down here quick and untie me!" shouted Neill.

"I darsn't! I couldn't get out."

An ugly suspicion arrested Neill's joy. Was the man playing with him? Were the two in cahoots? "Let yourself drop," he commanded. "You can see that it's less than 10 feet. I'll boost you out when you untie me. Quick!"

Eyster finally lowered himself over the edge of the hatch and let go. Neill's spirits leaped up. He could have embraced the little man then.

Five minutes later the two of them dropped to the shingle. Eyster was shaking with nervousness. Neill turned to take a look at his prison. It was an old Chinooka puny which had been abandoned on the beach. The masts were out of her. She was a complete wreck.

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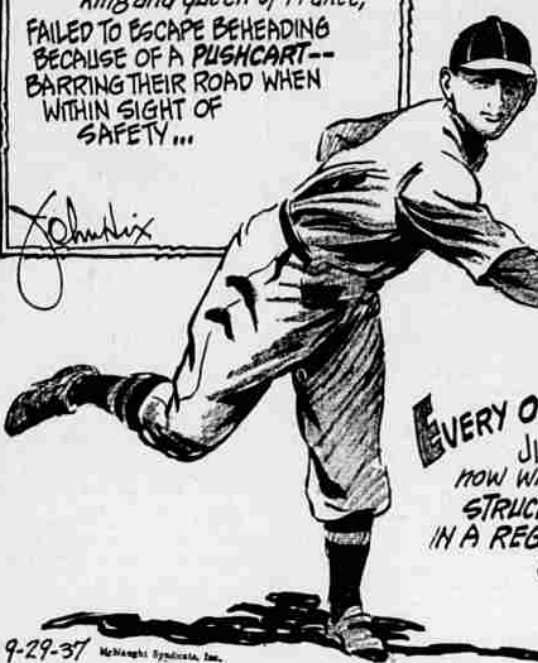
Neill learns the name of the spy in room 18, tomorrow.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



LOUIS XVI AND MARIE ANTOINETTE, King and queen of France, FAILED TO ESCAPE BEHINDING BECAUSE OF A PUSHCART-- BARRING THEIR ROAD WHEN WITHIN SIGHT OF SAFETY...



A 50,110-WORD NOVEL, Written by Ernest Wright, Sawtelle, Cal., DOES NOT CONTAIN THE LETTER "E" A SINGLE TIME!



EVERY OUT A STRIKEOUT! JIMMY CRANDALL—now with Indianapolis, A. A., STRUCK OUT 27 BATTERS IN A REGULATION 9-INNING GAME! Bell High School vs. Torrance High-California, 1931

9-29-37 McLaughlin Syndicate, Inc.

All Strikeouts.

Only 30 times at bat were allowed to the Torrance high school baseball team in a 1931 game against Bell high school. In perhaps the most astounding pitching record ever made, Jimmy Crandall, no pitcher with the Indianapolis Indians, put over 27 strikeouts, allowed only one hit and gave one base on balls. One man reached first base on an error. Jimmy is the son of Otis Crandall, old-time pitching great of the New York Giants and the St. Louis Cardinals.

Book Without an "E"

Told that the letter "e" is used five times as much as any other letter in the English language, 69-year-old Ernest Wright of the Soldier's Home at Sawtelle, Calif., decided to try his hand at writing without using any "e's." The result is his 50,110-word novel, "Gadaby—Champion of Youth."

To make sure he had not slipped up by using an "e" while writing his manuscript in longhand he copied it on the typewriter after tying down the "e" key.

Doomed by a Pushcart.

With Paris mobs grow . . . g more and more violent in their demonstrations for a revolution, members of the royal French family, including the king and queen, sought to flee from France across the eastern frontier where royalist sympathizers held an army in readiness for . . . defense. In sight of their goal they were recognized, a pushcart was shoved across the narrow road to bar the way and the flight was halted. Returned to Paris, the king and queen met death under the guillotine.

"Eats" His Own Tail

During the period when a tadpole becomes a frog, the tadpole's tail serves as the animal's supply of nourishment. It is absorbed by the body in a process effected by certain elements of the blood.

Tomorrow: What Country's Entire Navy Was Sunk With One Torpedo?

KLAMATH VALUATION HAS HEALTHY UPTURN

KLAMATH FALLS, Sept. 29.—(AP)—Klamath county's assessed valuation for the current year shows an increase over the previous year for the first time since 1930, according to the annual report sent to the state tax commission today by Charles Mack, county assessor.

The total assessed valuation of property in the county, excluding utility assessments, is \$22,200,992. Last year it was \$22,154,210.

An increase of \$46,782 on personal property more than offset decrease through depreciation and cut over timber, the report showed.

Both the 60th and 78th wedding anniversaries are called "diamond weddings."

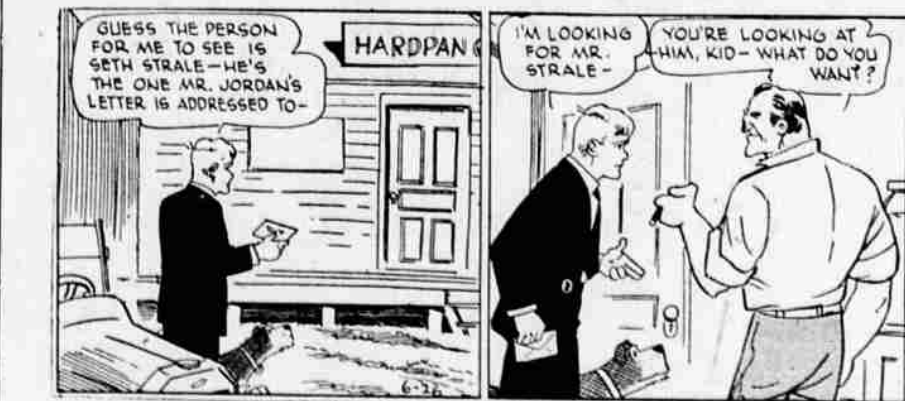
Road Bids Opened

PORTLAND, Sept. 29.—(AP)—W. H. Lynch, U. S. bureau of public roads district engineer, today said McNutt Brothers, Eugene, submitted a low bid of \$102,201 for construction of a new section of the Columbia River highway near Ruckel creek. Among the 16 bidders were E. C. Hall company, Eugene, \$117,834.30, and Clifford A. Dunn, Klamath Falls, \$128,520.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Has Bently Taken the Bait?



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Welcome?

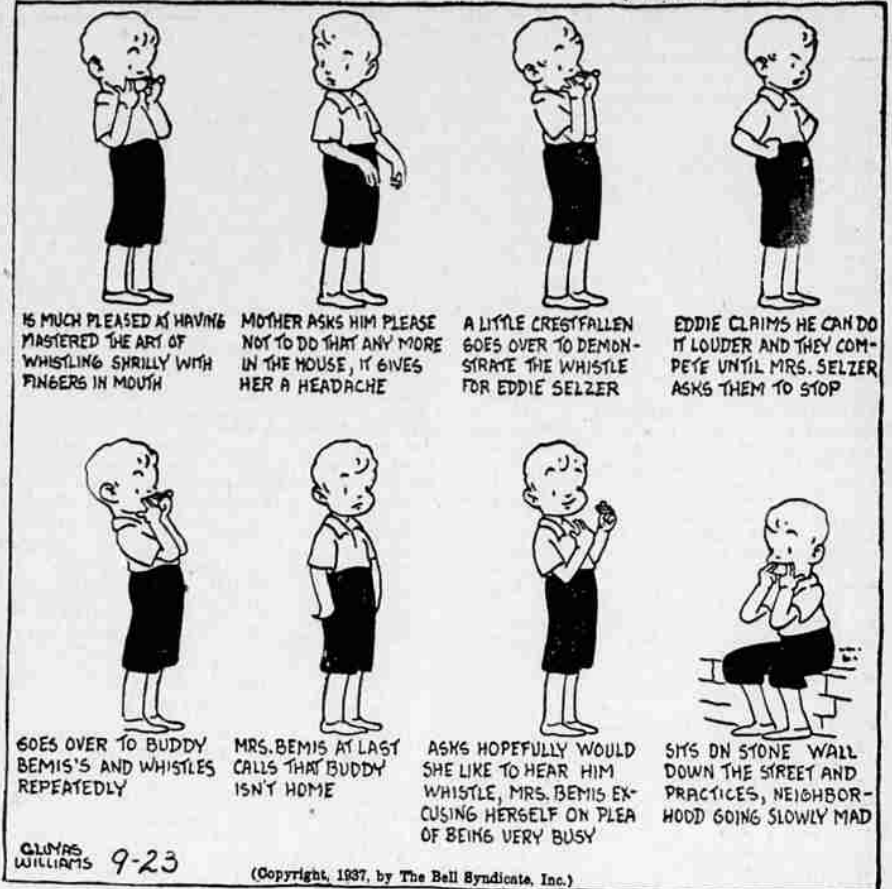


THE NEBBES—Now What?



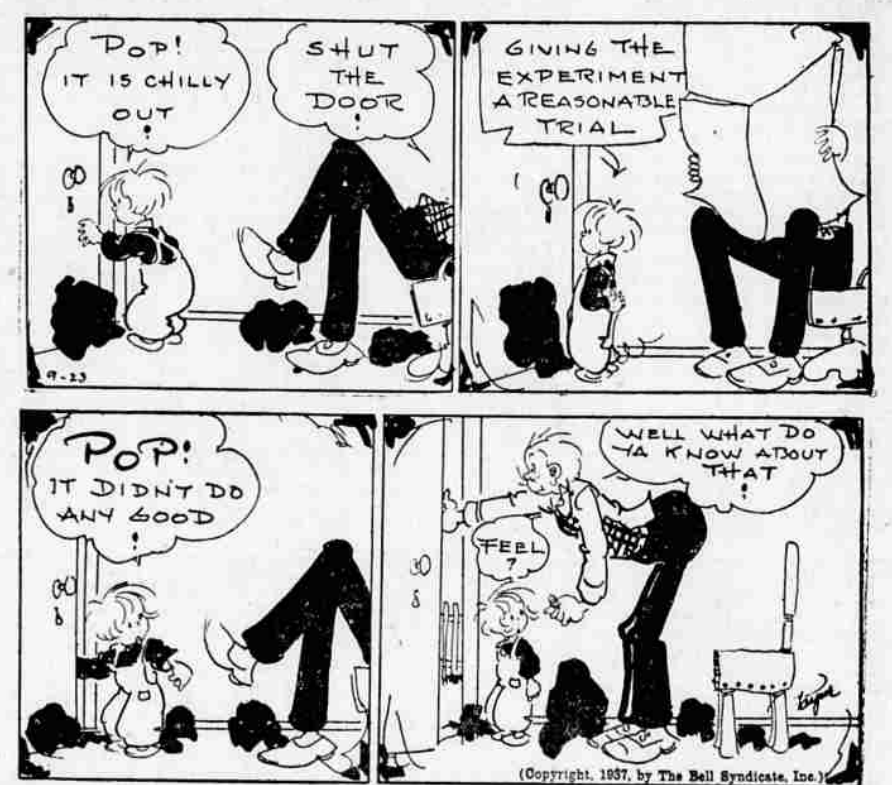
WHISTLER

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



S MATTER POE

By O. M. PAYNE



By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HEAR



Absence Of Pants

Excuse For Noise

PORTLAND, Sept. 29.—(AP) Because they had the evidence, Ronald Lutz and Edward Frederickson talked police out of enforcing an anti-noise ordinance. The police found them in front of a house blowing their automobile horn. They were pantsless. Some scandal, they explained, had stolen their pants while they went swimming after falling to catch any fish, and they were trying to get their friends in the house to come to their aid.

Educator Succumbs.

REDLANDS, Calif., Sept. 29.—(AP)—Dr. W. Edward Rafferty, 61, acting president of the University of Redlands, a city and state-wide-known church worker, died today of injuries suffered in an automobile accident.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

Cooter Gets Deer

With Bow, Arrow

SALEM, Sept. 29.—(AP)—Bow and arrow has claimed its second deer of the 1937 hunting season and the successful hunter was John E. Cooter, federal farm placement officer for Oregon. The second spotsteman to bring down a deer with ancient arms, Cooter shot the 100-pound buck in Grant county at a distance of 60 yards. To celebrate the feat, he gave a venison dinner here. Among the guests were Willis Mahoney, Klamath Falls, and Justice J. O. Hisey of the supreme court.

Quake Recorded.

NEW YORK, Sept. 29.—(AP)—An earthquake of severe intensity was recorded on the Potsdam university seismograph today, an estimated 2700 miles from New York.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.