

the dark ships

BY HULBERT FOOTNER

SYNOPSIS: Neill, a young federal agent, finds his beloved Janet, a gun and Prescott Fanning's freshly shot body locked in a cabin on Fanning's yacht at Absalom's Harbor, Md. Hiding her nearby in a choused liner, Neill joins Mark Bonniger, local investigator. Neill learns Janet didn't shoot the crazy sunder, but has to find out who did to save her. Queer little Eyster, who hated Fanning, Ira Buckless, Fanning's hulking bodyguard, and Kettering, a lawyer down from Baltimore to fish, all have alibis. Neill, suspected himself, is in a tight spot. He turns to Buckless seeking a clue to the murderer.

Chapter 37

The Googly Clue

"Now think," said Neill. "Go over everything in your mind that happened in Baltimore. Sure you can give me a clue." For several seconds Buckless kept shaking his head. Then he stopped in the middle of a shake. "Only a voice," he said. "If I heard it again I might recognize it. But how can you run down a voice?" "Well, what did the voice say? And under what circumstances?" "It was the same time I told you about when I hear the boss talking over the phone. The boss was in the bathroom when the

thought: Probably he doesn't believe a word I say. "I ran into Googly in his beer joint accidentally on purpose," Bonniger repeated dryly. "Sounds fantastic to me."

"We have often to build up a case on just scraps of overheard conversation," said Neill. "There is Fanning's saying to put with it: 'She never tells him anything.' 'She' obviously refers to Miss Rayner. I could go to her for further information."

Bonniger was silent. "If you approve, I'll go back to town and see what I can do." "Certainly is good of you to take all this trouble!"

Neill made believe not to notice the dryness of his tone. "Oh, that's all right. Will you come, too?" "You can go," he said at last, "but I've got to stay here."

Neill thought: He is willing to appear to let me off on my own in the hope that I may lead him to something. "Meanwhile I'll be questioning Eyster," Bonniger said, looking at him hard.

Neill knew that was hopeless. "Mattingly will drive you," Bonniger went on. "Get something to eat before you start."

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phone rings and I answer it. For a second the fellow thinks he is talking to the boss, then he pulls up and asks for Fanning. So I fetches the boss."

"What did the voice say during that one second that he thought you were Fanning?"

"He says: 'I ran into Googly in his beer joint accidentally on purpose.'"

"Is that all?"

"That's all."

"Sure you have it right?"

"Positive," Buckless repeated it.

"Did you figure anything from this voice?"

"Only that it was an educated guy. He didn't talk like me."

"What did Fanning say to him?"

"The boss just yessed him. This guy was making a report of some kind to the boss. Wait a minute! I hear the boss say one thing that struck me. He says to this guy: 'Oh, that don't matter. She never tells him anything.'"

Neill studied this over silently. "What do you make of it?"

"Not much. Did you ever hear 'Googly' mentioned again?"

"No."

Neill rose. "Well, I'll follow it up," he said. "It is all I can do."

Buckless was scowling blackly at Neill. "God damn! If you do nab the killer how do I know you will act square by me?"

"Nobody but you knows that I've got the stuff," said Neill. "If you were to split on me I would lose it. I am in your hands."

"Maybe you ain't got it. Maybe this is just a cop's trick to learn something out of me."

"You will have to trust me."

"Trust hell!"

"Well, you can be damn sure that if you give the girl away you'll never see a dollar of it."

"Lookit," growled Buckless. "You are free to go and come as you please. I'll give you 24 hours. If you don't show me that stuff by then I blow the works. See?"

Neill grinned hardily. In his desperate position he was, in 24 hours seemed a lot. "Okay."

'Sounds Fantastic'

UPON landing from the yacht, Neill went direct to Bonniger. "Did you get anything?" asked Bonniger. His face was stern.

Suppressing the first part of his talk with Buckless, Neill described the clue he had obtained. Bonniger considered it. Neill

Lord Baltimore as soon as you arrive, so that I can let you know if anything turns up while you're on the road."

"Sure," said Neill. He thought: His sleuths will be planted in the Lord Baltimore. Does he think I can't see through all this?

As soon as he had eaten something, Neill made another break-neck dash to town with Constable Mattingly at the wheel.

Another Avenue Closed

IN THE streets of Baltimore they heard boys calling an extra in the Fanning case. Neill bought a paper and learned that Miss Emma Rayner had fallen dead from heart disease in her apartment as a result of having been told by her attorney that certain securities which she had showed him were worthless. It was rumored that she purchased these from Fanning.

Neill felt profoundly sorry for the unfortunate victim, and also a little sorry for himself. Every way he turned he appeared to be blocked.

Mattingly had been keeping a sharp eye on him, but when they arrived at the Lord Baltimore he was willing to let him go. Neill sent Mattingly to a garage to wait until called for, and duly called up Bonniger and told him of the death of Miss Rayner.

"Too bad," said Bonniger. "Have you any other lead to follow?"

"Not yet. Give me two hours."

"Good luck!" Very dry tone.

Neill sat down in the lobby of the hotel with a cigarette, to doze out a course of action. Word by word he went over his cryptic clue. "I ran into Googly in his beer joint accidentally on purpose." Fanning was so extremely cautious in talking over the telephone that "Googly" was probably a code word, and it would therefore be useless to look for somebody who was called Googly by all. The name had no doubt been suggested by some physical peculiarity.

If Googly ran a beer joint, beer joint would have been taken for granted. The plain inference was that the beer joint was one frequented by Googly. It was also clear from "accidentally on purpose" that Googly was not a member of the gang. A kind of cat's-paw perhaps.

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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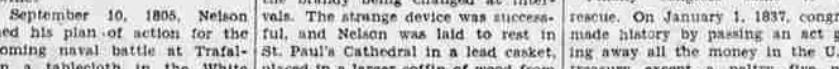
COME AN' GET IT!
CONGRESS ONCE GAVE AWAY \$28,000,000 BECAUSE OF AN OVER-BALANCED BUDGET! -1837-

IN THIS 16TH-CENTURY GERMAN TOWN HOUSES WERE SO BUILT TO AFFORD MAXIMUM PROTECTION...



THE BODY OF HORATIO NELSON—English naval hero, WAS SHIPPED HOME IN A CASK OF BRANDY AFTER THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR! HE WAS BURIED IN A COFFIN BUILT FROM WOOD OF THE CAPTURED FRENCH FRIGATE, L'ORIENT! -1805-

VERL STINCHCOMB—Maysville (Ky.) Golf pro, PLAYED 9 HOLES IN 35 (ONE UNDER PAR) BY MOONLIGHT... HE SCORED A BIRDIE AND AN EAGLE... AND DIDN'T LOSE A BALL -1937-



Neill, by a quirk of fate, was taken home embalmed in brandy from a battle he had planned with wine!

On September 10, 1805, Nelson sketched his plan of action for the forthcoming naval battle at Trafalgar on a tablecloth in the White Lodge Tavern, near London, using wine instead of ink.

Three days later—Friday the 13th—Nelson left to meet victory in death. Nelson's wine-planned strategy annihilated the French fleet off Cape Trafalgar, Spain, on October 21st, but Nelson himself was killed in the action by a French sniper's bullet.

The ship's surgeon aboard Nelson's flagship, "Victory," was forced by necessity to embalm Nelson's body in a large cask filled with brandy! In this manner he was returned home, the brandy being changed at intervals. The strange device was successful, and Nelson was laid to rest in St. Paul's Cathedral in a lead casket, placed in a larger coffin of wood from the captured French flagship L'Orient, as a final tribute.

Uncle Sam's Present

On January 1, just one hundred years ago, the United States was faced with a very unusual problem. It had too much money on hand! No red ink had crossed the treasury's books since 1833, and money had

been rolling in bountifully—so much money, in fact, that the nation's big-wigs were all agog.

Finally congress came to the rescue. On January 1, 1837, congress made history by passing an act giving away all the money in the U. S. treasury except a paltry five millions!

Some \$28,000,000 was apportioned to the states according to their representation in congress. The money was officially "deposited," but everybody understood it to be a gift and not a cent was ever repaid. The federal treasury, however, still carries the sum on its books as "unavailable funds."

magazine is published once a month by OSC students in agriculture in order to promote agricultural interests. The November issue will deal primarily with the foreign field of agriculture.

Train Kills Aged Man.

BAKER, Oct. 16.—(AP)—Reimer Volkman of Huntington, who formerly engaged in farming near Al-

bany, Ore., was instantly killed Thursday afternoon in the Huntington railroad yards when struck by a westbound train. Volkman had evidently walked to the yards to watch the trains and then decided to cross the tracks. The man, who was 87 years old, was hard of hearing.

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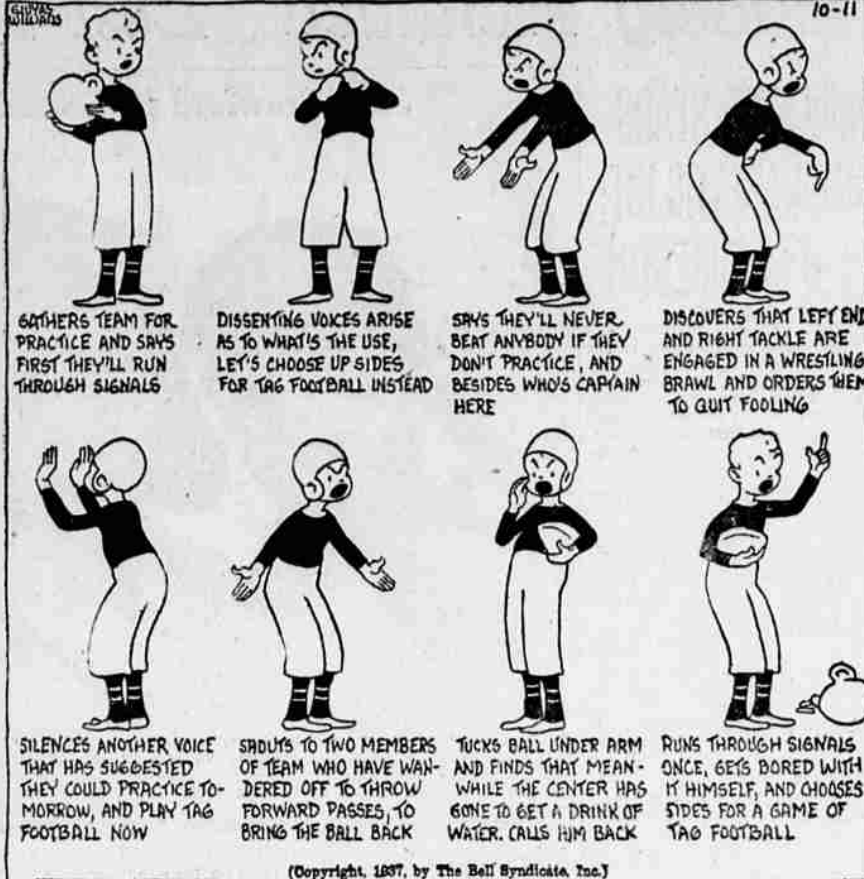
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PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Jason's Support

By EDWIN ALGER



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THE NEBBS—It Looks Bad

By SOL HESS



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BLOOD OF MARE AIDS NORMAL MOTHERHOOD GYNECOLOGIST AVERS

DALLAS, TEXAS, Oct. 16.—(UP)—Normal motherhood for thousands of women previously denied children is possible through intravenous injection of a sex hormone obtained from the blood of horses. Dr. M. Edward Davis, 38-year old scientist of Chicago, announced here last night at the annual meeting of the Central Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Davis is associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the Uni-

versity of Chicago and a member of the staff of the Chicago lying-in hospital.

Many women cannot bear children because ovulation, the process by which the egg is formed and released from the ovary, never occurs, he explained tonight.

The sterility has been overcome in a great majority of cases tested over a year, he said, by injection of a substance taken from the blood of pregnant mares.

Ship Out of Danger

HONOLULU, T. H., Oct. 16.—(AP)—Apparently out of immediate danger, the steamer Phyllis Soto early today reported she was wallowing toward Honolulu at a speed of three knots. The coast guard cutter Taney was steamed under forced draft toward the Phyllis Soto, which yesterday flashed an SOS.

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