

OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR

The Story So Far: Quonomet is aroused when its citizens are caricatured in the post office mural. The next night, the artist's wife, unscrupulous Marina Lorne, is murdered. Her sister, Pamela Frye, whose knife killed Marina, appeals to Assey Mayo, Cape Cod detective. She tells him she found \$50,000 worth of ambergis on the shore. After Pam threw the lump back into the surf, Marina agreed to drive Pam and the ambergis into Boston for \$5,000. But somehow Pam knew Marina was planning to keep the ambergis for herself.

Chapter Four

Mysterious Eavesdropper

"I DECIDED," Pam went on, "to get home as quickly as I could and tell Father, and somebody else—I sort of decided on this boarder named Carr who came today with his grandmother. He's a teacher, around 30, and an awfully decent sort. I also wanted to get the stuff to Boston, pronto."

"What did you tell Sister?"

"I said, as if in a burst of light, that I'd get the boarders' dinner, and then tell Father that I was driving up to Boston with Mary Kean. She has a flower shop and often drives up to the florist's mar-



And there was Sister—staring up!

ket, and I often go with her, and Sister knows it. I said that in that way Father wouldn't suspect a thing. We could start at eleven, park in a garage, then go to Jorammon's early. She agreed very quickly. That convinced me she had some plan afoot. But I figured, I could take the same time and thwart her connivings. And I did want to get the ambergis to Boston and into someone else's hands before anyone got wind of it. Wasn't that right?"

Assey hesitated. "Well, I don't know. Myself I'd—but I's pose the instant the news got around. Lord knows how many claimants'd come poppin' up."

"Exactly, as you said. It's not like dealing in registered bonds. So, we went to Sister's garage, and shifted the ambergis from Roddy's beach wagon into Sister's—hers hasn't soft tires—and covered it with the tarpaulin. Just as we finished, a roadster drew up with horns blaring, and one of Roddy's pals leaned out and yelled at her and asked where she had gone with the beach wagon, they wanted it, and he had Farstein waiting for her, and Farstein was flying to New York in half an hour with someone, and didn't she want to see him. And at that point, Marina could have screamed."

"Why?" Assey demanded.

"Because all her life she's wanted to model for Farstein, more than anything else. Her life ambition. Apparently some of Roddy's gang had collared him, and there was her chance. There was Farstein, the unapproachable, and there was me, and there was the ambergis. And then, she was the last in the roadster, yelling at her to make up her mind. She did. She grabbed the car keys, and said she'd be back by eleven."

"Why didn't you," Assey demanded, "take the ambergis?"

"Oh—That Face"

"I CAN'T drive," Pam said simply. "We never could afford an automobile. I beat it home to tell Father and talk with him, thinking we might harry this amiable

boarder into taking the stuff to Boston in his coupe. And I found a note on the door, saying they'd gone to a clam bake, and the movies later. Shall I pass over the dismal hours till eleven o'clock?"

"What did you do? Why'n't you snake the ambergis out of the garage?" Assey demanded. "I would have. I—"

"So would I, but, Assey, do you know Aunt Nettie Hobbs? She keeps the Woman's Exchange. She came, Assey, to call. She came as I finished reading the note and was just starting for the wheelbarrow. I could not get rid of her. I have never been so mortally rude to any living person. And she stayed. I couldn't tell her, naturally. It'd be like inviting the world to share my ambergis. I couldn't leave her, although I did, once, around nine o'clock. I whipped over to the garage and the ambergis was still there. It was then that I slid the garage doors off their rollers—I knew Sis couldn't get 'em on—about help. That was my one and only hope, that Sister, in her general greed, wouldn't tell anyone. And Nettie stayed. She left at ten-thirty. She told me, in parting, I didn't seem myself a bit. Assey, can you figure Nettie's story when this breaks? That alone'll hang me. The second she disappeared down the road, I grabbed the barrow and legged it to the garage. And there, on the floor—there was Sister. Staring up—oh, that—that face, Assey!"

"And the ambergis?"

"It was there," Pam said. "There, in the beach wagon. Just as we left it. And I looked at it, and I looked at her. And I thought of the things she'd done. She broke Mother's heart, Assey. Mother never got over that—well, I won't go into it. She took every cent Father had, literally, when she first ran away from town. She stole his first editions, the pride of his life, and pawned them. But mostly the things she'd done were things you couldn't put into figures. She did something to Father that he never got over. Something to his pride. Something to what she'd done, the—well, I didn't feel sorry for what had happened. That sounds inhumanly hard, I suppose it is. But little sister's had to live in the dregs of what Marina left behind. That's enough to make you a little inhuman, I think. And the irony of it got me, too. He couldn't even die, I thought, without a last F—"

"You Did It!"

"I HOPE," said Assey, "that you did, Pam, just the same."

"I did, because I knew I'd never have a chance to get it later. I look it. Then I phoned the state cops. We laid the phone up in again this morning. We can only afford it when we have boarders. I told the cops to come to Octagon House, then I dashed back to the garage. Jack Lorne was there, in the most terrific frenzy I ever saw. He pointed his finger at me and said, 'You did it! It's your knife—I hadn't even noticed that before. Assey. But it was my knife. You did it!' Jack yelled. 'You were jealous of her, always. It's true. I've called the police and told them so! I've told them you're the murderer!'

"Pam lit another cigarette. "And when he said that word, murderer, all of a sudden I thought of you. I suppose I connected you with him. Anyway, I raced out of the garage. He tried to follow me but I tripped him. I cut through the woods until I was so breathless I had to stop. I was just behind Chases'. I sneaked into their barn and stole Billy Chas's bike, and didn't she want to see him. And at that point, Marina could have screamed."

"Wait," Assey said softly, in her ear. "What kind of cigarettes are those you're smokin'?"

"Yes, have one? I hid—"

Assey's hand went over her mouth. So you pedaled here, did you? Quite a ride."

Pam listened in bewilderment as Assey, his hand still covering her mouth, casually chatted on about her feat of bicycling over. He was sniffing the air, and automatically, Pam sniffed, too. She understood then.

He had caught, before she had the whiff of Turkish tobacco smoke that meant that someone, very near, had been listening to every word. That someone, very near, was waiting for her to tell her she had hidden the ambergis.

Is Pam in danger? Don't miss tomorrow's chapter.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



Strange as it seems, no part of the Waldorf-Astoria, world's largest hotel, touches the sidewalks of New York which "surround" it!

In order to diminish traffic vibration, engineers who designed the structure laid plans to place it on huge "stilts" sunk deep into the earth. These strong girders, cushioned on lead and asbestos, support the Waldorf-Astoria about two inches above the sidewalk.

"Due to the fact that the New York Central railroad tracks run under Park Avenue," a hotel official says, "the traffic of trains below, if the building touched the sidewalk, would create vibration."

"Consequently, the foundations of the Waldorf-Astoria are sunk way below the road bed, and rest on lead and asbestos cushions. This is to kill any possible vibrations."

"The steel columns supporting the building stand in the fashion of stilts and clear the sidewalk for about a couple of inches. It is an amazing fact that the expansion or contraction of the steel caused by heat or cold will vary one or two inches throughout the year."

Beginning of Time.

Complicated but amazingly accurate was the calendar system of the ancient Maya. Strange as it seems, they used no less than five separate systems of counting:

1. A year of 365 days, made up of 18 months of 20 days each, plus five extra days, the latter being considered very lucky.
2. A year of 360 days.
3. A period of 260 days.
4. A lunar semester.
5. Periods of nine days each.

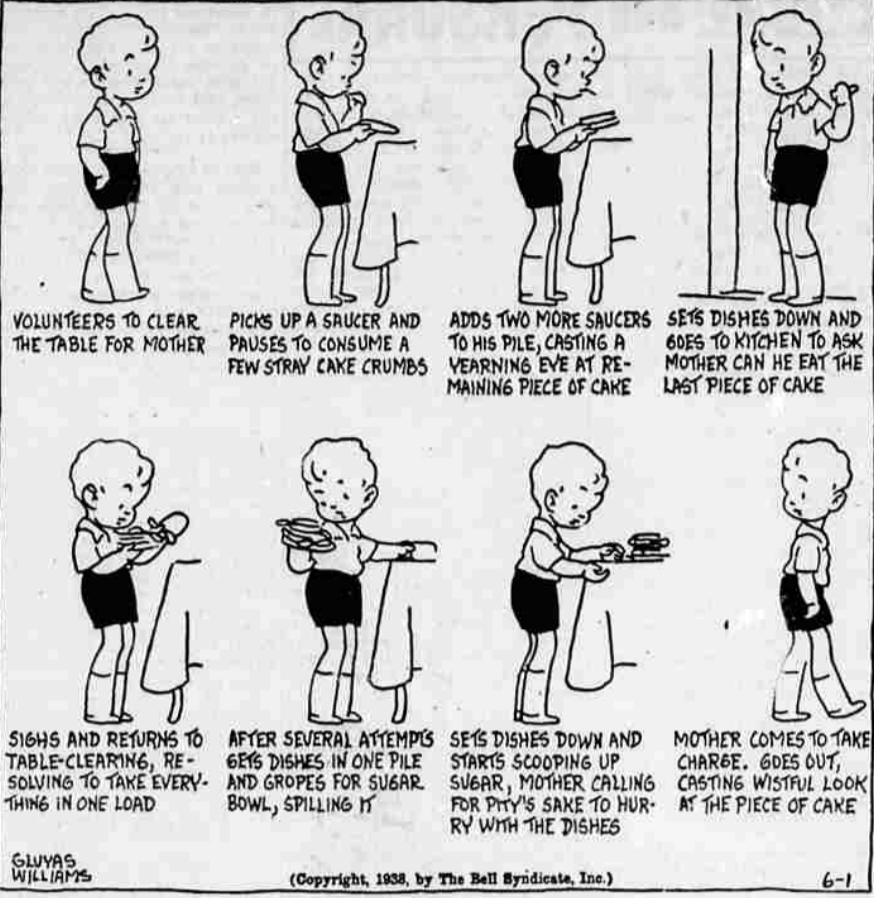
There was also a Venus calendar and other variations, according to Maurice Rios, Maya authority of Tulane university.

For years a mystery to scientists was the question: From what date did the Maya measure time? The answer to this—5,041,738 B. C.—was found by Dr. Hermann Beyer, an associate of Rios, who discovered a key hieroglyph which had been used as a headstone on the grave of an American archeologist, John G. Owens, who in 1893 died of fever while studying the Maya ruins of Copan!

Tomorrow: Knothole that caught a deer!

TABLE CLEARER

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



SMATTER POI

By O M PAYNE



By HAL FORRY

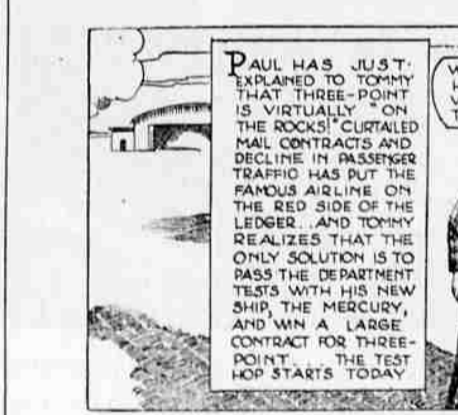
PRESBYTERIANS ELECT NEW ASSEMBLY CLERK

PHILADELPHIA, June 1.—(AP)—The Rev. Dr. William B. Pugh, of Chester, Pa., was elected state clerk of the general assembly of the Presbyterian church in the U. S. A., today.

THE CHESTER PASTOR, WHO IS 48, WAS CHOSEN FOR FIVE YEARS.

Wealthy members of the Dutch West India company, who received a charter of "privileges and exemptions" to settle anywhere in New Netherlands except on Manhattan Island, were known in colonial days as patroons.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Major Is Skeptical!



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Congratulations? Maybe!



By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Steve's Coming



COURT DELAYS ACTION ON MOONEY PETITION

WASHINGTON, June 1.—(AP)—The supreme court announced today

By SOL HF

MAHONEY CAMPAIGN COST \$3,265, SAYS CONTRIBUTION LIST

SALEM, June 1.—(AP)—Campaign contributions for Willis Mahoney, Democratic candidate for U. S. senator, totaled \$3,265.75, expense statements filed with the secretary of state showed today.

Today was the last day on which campaign contributions could be reported. Candidates must report their personal expenditures by next Saturday.

Contributions for the Mahoney campaign included: John D'Arcy \$1,301; George E. Dix and W. J. Conrad \$250 each; W. H. Treves, \$200 and the Willie Mahoney cam-

paign committee, \$1,214.

U. S. Rep. Walter M. Pierce, La Grande, spent nothing to win the Democratic renomination.

State Sen. F. J. Stadelman gave \$100 for the campaign of Rufus C. Holman, Republican U. S. senate candidate, and \$100 for Homer D. Angel, Republican nominee for congress in the 13th (Multnomah county) district. The Angel for congress committee spent \$200.

State Sen. U. S. Balentine spent \$109 to win the Republican nomination for congress in the second district.

J. E. Bennett, Portland city commissioner, spent \$212 for the campaign of Sam Brown, who lost the Republican gubernatorial nomination to Charles A. Sprague, Salem publisher.

WASHINGTON, June 1.—(AP)—The supreme court announced today