

OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR

The Story So Far: Asey Mayo, Cape Cod detective, is investigating the murder of Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office mural has enraged Quannomet. She was killed by a left handed blow from the knife of her sister Pam Frye, who uses in Octagon House. Interested parties are: Tim Carr, once married to Marina; Jack Lorne, the artist; Roddy Strutt, whose plane crashed the night of the murder; Peggy Boons, another artist; Jennings, a state plumber; and persons unknown who smoke Turkish tobacco, burned down the barn, bigged Asey, Tim and Pam's father, and destroyed Jack's mural sketches. Missing is a \$50,000 lump of ambergris belonging to Pam's interviewing Roddy's injured pilot. Asey learns the crash was deliberate, and that Marina and a lot of others had probably seen the ambergris from the plane before Pam found it.

Chapter 38

Public Eyesore No. One

I HAD to hear the story of Roddy's pilot," Asey told the Congressman, "before I could do anything. But you don't need to worry about making the Struts mad. Just stick all the blame on me, and in the end, who knows but what you'll get a field house on a gym thrown in with the park? Elliott, I've just been thinkin'. I never did get a good look at the mural. I bust out laughin' so on my first view, I had to leave before I got to the party with the local boys in 'em. You got pull enough to get me into the post office on Sunday?" Elliott smiled.

"Have I got pull? Asey, I have a gold plated key, all my own. If you want to get into the post office, we'll go to my house and get the key, and have a private view of Quannomet's Public Eyesore Number One."

"I'll trail you over," Asey said. Elliott's house was a long rambling place with so many ells and additions that even an architect would have had trouble picking out the original Cape Cod half house that had been the basis of it all.

"My daughter's around some where," Elliott said. "I think she knows where the key is—Jean! Hey, Jean—where are you? Jeanie, you know Asey Mayo, don't you? My daughter, Mrs. Dunn. Jean, where's that gold post office key, d'you know?"

"That thing?" Jean wrinkled up her forehead. "Teddy had it last. He was playing St. Peter and the Gates of Heaven with it—didn't you give it to him?"

"Well, yes, I guess I did," Elliott said. "But I need it now. Find it for me, will you?"

"Father, darling, when Ted plays with things, it's not the easiest thing in the world to find them on two seconds' notice. You shouldn't have given him the key, if you really wanted it intact. But I'll see what I can do. Maybe Della'll know where it is—"

Della, a slightly distraught looking nursemaid, admitted that she hadn't seen the key since the baby played with it Saturday morning.

"Maybe he swallowed it," Jean said, as though that were the simplest solution.

"Oh, no!" Della protested. "I'm sure he didn't. He hasn't swallowed anything for a week. Perhaps the little Westover girl would know. She was playing with Teddy—"

"Come, come," Elliott said, "come, come. We've got to find that key! Really, Jean, I know I let Ted play with it, but I see no reason why the whole damn country-side has to use it as a plaything!"

"Darling, climb down," Jean said. "I want that key! You go find it. Go shake the children by their heels. Stand 'em on their heads. Peer into their tonsils, if you want. But go find that key!"

"Sometimes," Jean said, "I wish you were a simple taxpayer. Della, come on. We'll see if the Westover infant has any thoughts on the matter. What did he put in that mole hole, d'you know—"

"No respect, that's what," Elliott said. "They treat me like an elderly neighbor, the whole lot of 'em, and—"

"An' you love it," Asey said. "Well, yes, I suppose I do. Come on in, and we'll wait for 'em to find the key. It'll turn up. You can't lose things like that. I've got a collection of teeth I've been trying to mislay for years. I've often wondered why do people think that Congressmen want teeth? I've got whole teeth and dog teeth and Indian teeth. All kinds. But would that stand me a new upper set? Not on your tippy-toe."

Mad House
AT THE end of an hour, Jean wandered out to the barn game room.

"Oh, here you are," she said. "Look, it's awfully funny. The Westover child let the little Lake boy have the key, and he says with bland finality that someone took it away from him."

"Come now, Jean!" "That's true, Father. I won't go into the details of the game they were playing—"

They were playing jail delivery, and the Westover child was the gangster in prison, and the little Lake boy was the mob that was going to get him out—"

"The youth of this country," Elliott began.

"Sah, dear. It took hours to make sense out of things, and I want to tell you while I still have things straight. The Lake boy went off to consult with Ted—Ted was the G-man who was folling things, if he left the key with his gun, over by the lilac hedge. And someone took it. The Lake boy saw him running off, and yelled, but the person beat it, and the Lake boy thinks he went off in a car. Lake didn't dare tell anyone at the time. He just said he'd mislaid it, and Ted was so busy with his new croquet set that Ray brought him yesterday afternoon that he forgot all about the key. So there you are."

"It's a mad house, Asey," Elliott said sadly. "Other people's homes run all right. Why can't mine? Here's a simple little key. Can it be found? No. It's St. Peter's key to heaven, it's the prime factor in a jail delivery. Babies teethe on it. And finally, strangers swoop out of my lilac hedge and snatch it, leaving the mouths of babes and sucklings, or words to that effect. I ask you! What's the matter, Asey? What did you say?"

"I said," Asey told him, "that I wish you'd call up the post master, an' tell him to meet us over in Quannomet as soon as—"

"What—oh, Jonah, you mean? All right, I'll call him. But you don't really think anyone took the key, do you? What ever for? Who'd have known what key it was?" Elliott sounded a little anxious.

"Wasn't there a public presentation of keys, on the day the office opened?" Asey asked.

"Well, yes. It was a sort of incident in the opening. You know, sandwiched in after the soprano sang, and before the band had its fling. They gave out half a dozen keys to the Governor and a Senator or two, and me—"

"An' plenty of people," Asey said, "saw you bein' presented with it."

"Yes, yes, I suppose they did. But how would anyone know that the little Lake child was going to play jail delivery with it over by the lilac hedge the next afternoon?" Elliott demanded.

"What Are You Waiting For?" "They wouldn't," Asey said. "But if someone was waitin' around, waitin' for the chance to swipe your key, I don't see but what they could swipe it from the case. An' after all, it'd be easier to swipe from you than from the kid. They gave it to him, didn't they take the key, in the afternoon?"

"The early afternoon some time," Jean said. "Of course the children don't know the exact time. It's rather a wonder they remember the day. Look, I've been thinking it right to go to the post office keys around in any such loose fashion? I thought the interior of post offices were like altars, sort of sacred and all."

"They're just keys to the front part," Elliott said. "They don't let you to anything, but the part where the mural is. But look here, why wouldn't someone steal the keys from Jonah? From the post master? Why should they pick on me?"

"I wouldn't know," Asey said tactfully. "But it occurred to me that it would be far simpler to swipe a key from this easy going household than from the Quannomet post master, who took himself and his job with great seriousness."

"Oh, this is all a lot of nonsense," Elliott said. "I don't believe anyone took the key. Probably we can find it if we get out rakes and scrape around. I don't think anyone wanted to steal the key. I don't believe that they did steal it. I—what are you waiting for, Asey?"

He continued before Asey had a chance to protest that he was not delaying the expedition.

"What are you waiting for? Let's get over and get into the place and see if anything has happened. But of course it hasn't," he added, as though he were convincing himself on the point. "Of course not. The child made up that story. No one took the key—my key! My key! If someone has got into that place with my key—hurry up, Asey! But it's nonsense. They wouldn't dare break into the post office—"

"They wouldn't be breakin' in," Asey pointed out, with a grin. "They've got a key."

"Well," Elliott said, "I'm sure there's some law that covers it. Defacing government property—oh my God! This means still more headlines for Quannomet! Asey, can't we keep it out of the papers, don't you think?"

Half an hour later, in the front part of the Quannomet post office, Asey answered Elliott's anxious question.

"Nope," he said. "I don't think you can keep this out of the headlines. This is too complete." (Copyright, 1938, Phoebe Atwood Taylor)

What has happened to the mural? Read Monday's chapter.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

TOM MORRIS TOWED A BOAT WITH 6 PASSENGERS 1 1/2 MILES IN 1 HOUR, 8 MINUTES— WITH HIS HANDS AND FEET! — Murray River, Australia, 1933



NUMBER 1, ATLANTIC OCEAN — IS THE ADDRESS OF THIS HOUSE ON THE MILLION DOLLAR PIER, Atlantic City, N.J.



SHEEP LEAVE A TRAIL OF ODOR FOR OTHER SHEEP TO FOLLOW — WITH SMALL OIL GLANDS ON EACH HOOF...

THE SPANIARD WHO WENT MAYA!
GONZALO GUERRERO, Spanish mariner, BECAME A POWERFUL MAYA CHIEFTAIN WHEN SHIPWRECKED ON THE COAST OF YUCATAN! FOR 20 YEARS HE SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED THE COUNTRY AGAINST SPANISH INVASION... (1511-1531)

Spaniard Who Went Maya
One of the strangest tales in the annals of exploration on the New World is that of Gonzalo Guerrero, Spanish navigator who forsook Christendom to become a Maya chief.

Guerrero was shipwrecked on the dangerous shoals of Las Viboras, south-southwest of Jamaica. With 17 other men, he escaped in a longboat and drifted through the Caribbean for days. Seven died and after nearly two weeks the survivors washed ashore on the coast of Yucatan.

Captured by a Maya party, the survivors on one were sacrificed to the strange gods of this western world. Guerrero and another, Gerónimo de Aguilar, escaped and made their way inland through the dense

Yucatan forest, only to become slaves of a Maya ruler. Shortly Guerrero was given or sold to another Maya chief, but de Aguilar stayed and rose to become an important figure. Guerrero, taken to Chetumal, Yucatan, was rapidly "going Maya."

In 1519 Hernando Cortes landed at the island of Cozumel, off Yucatan, and heard of the Christian captives held inland. He sent an order for them to come forth. Gerónimo de Aguilar was freed, and set out to tell Guerrero of the turn of events.

The man de Aguilar saw amazed him: Guerrero had married a Maya woman of high rank and had three children. The Maya looked on him as a chief and war leader. His ears were pierced and hung with heavy ear-

plugs. His face was tattooed after the Maya fashion and he wore the Maya costume. His lower lip was pierced for a labret and the sun had turned him the color of the Maya themselves. Fearing to return to his old civilization, Guerrero refused to leave.

Strange as it seems, Guerrero time and again led the Maya against Spanish invaders, saving Yucatan for his adopted people. He was last heard of about 1531 when he rebuked an attack of the Spaniard, Francisco de Montejo, on Yucatan. Guerrero's strange story was uncovered by Maurice Ries, associate of the Middle American Research Institute.

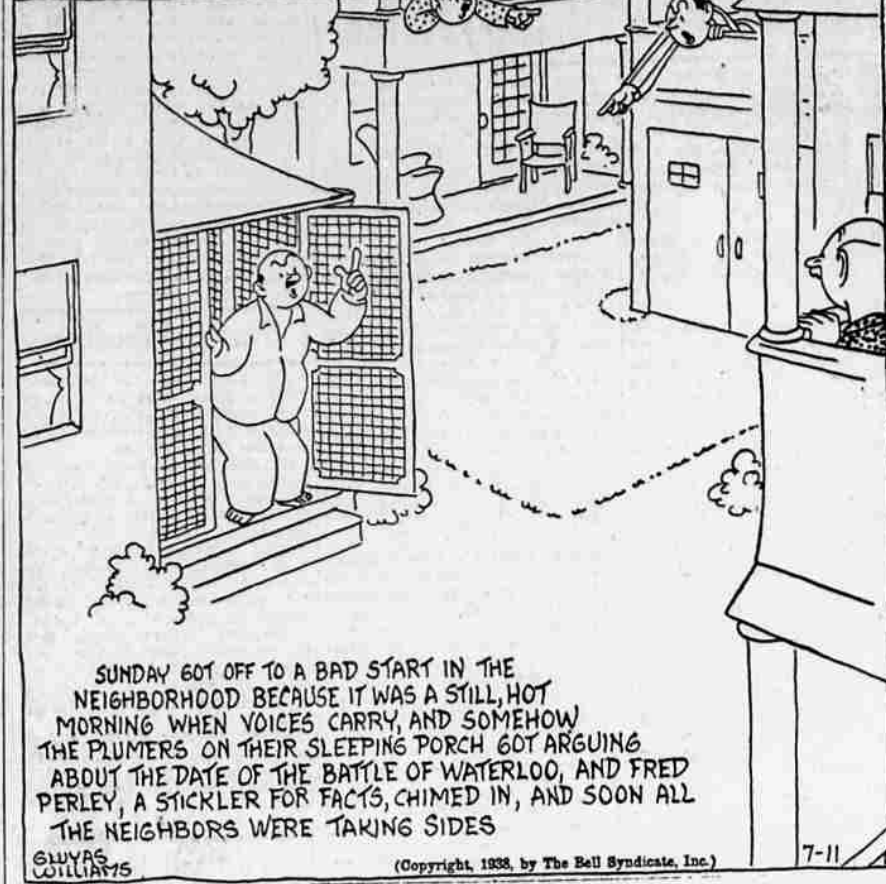
Tomorrow: The international fort-
braska, North and South Dakota and Oklahoma, declined more than 15 per cent during the first five months of this year, from the figures of 1937. Snell said.

Postmaster Dies
THE DALLES, July 12.—(AP)—Howard E. Barr, 62, postmaster here for

Milk Used On Fire
BETHAL, Transvaal.—(UP)—Milk was used to put out a fire in a farmhouse near here when the water supply ran out. An explosion in a

Spinach Farm Record
WOODVILLE, Cal.—(UP)—Guy Lowe and Bert Jackson broke all state records by producing 19,653 crates with a total weight of 489½ tons of spinach, it was announced here.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS. By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



SUNDAY GOT OFF TO A BAD START IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD BECAUSE IT WAS A STILL, HOT MORNING WHEN VOICES CARRY, AND SOMEHOW THE PLUMBERS ON THEIR SLEEPING PORCH GOT ARGUING ABOUT THE DATE OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO, AND FRED PERLEY, A STICKLER FOR FACTS, CHIMED IN, AND SOON ALL THE NEIGHBORS WERE TAKING SIDES

GLUYAS WILLIAMS (Copyright, 1938, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.) 7-11

3 MATTER POT By O. M. PAYNE



MAW! YOU JUST GOTTA COOK THA SPAGHETTI LONGER LONGER! LONGER? TURNING INTO AN' EPIURE OR SUMTHIN' UH HUH

LOOK! I KIN HARDLY GET TO THA END OF IT TO START EATIN' IT! UH HUH

IT OUGHTA BE COOKED ABOUT THIS LONG? UH HUH

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Safe and Sound!



ARE YOU OKAY, TOMMY? SURE! WHY NOT? THE ELEVATOR CONTROL WIRE SNAPPED, BUT LADY LUCK GAVE ME A BREAK!

YES!... IT WAS ACID! WHAT'S THAT? A JURY WOULD HAVE CALLED IT MURDER... IF YOU'D WASHED OUT! I'VE GOT A HUNCH WHO DID THIS!

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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Proposition!



GOOD AFTERNOON, SON! FINE BIRDS YOU'VE GOT HERE— YEAH, THEY'RE PRETTY GOOD, BUT SPOSE YOU PARK THE HANDSHAKE, MISTER— OH, SHUCKS, SON! WE JIPPEMS AREN'T SUCH BAD FOLKS TO GET ALONG WITH— BY THE WAY, WHAT'S YOUR NAME? WHY, RUSTY'S WHAT MY FRIENDS CALL ME, BUT ON ACCOUNT O' YOU DON'T LIKE BEN WEBSTER, I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO BE ALGERNON MCGURK TO YOU— WILFRED HERE SAYS YOU STRUCK HIM FOR A JOB— IT SO HAPPENS WE'VE AN OPENING RIGHT NOW— AND WE'LL PAY A TOP PRICE TO GET A BRIGHT BOY LIKE YOURSELF!

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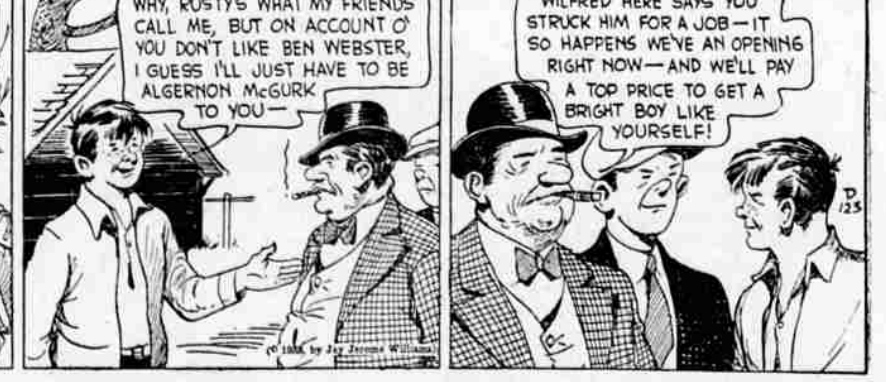
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THE NEBBES—The Flatterer



STEVE DOESN'T LOSE ANY TIME IN ANYTHING HE DOES— HOW ABOUT A NICE STEAK WITH MUSHROOMS OR FRIED ONIONS AND SOME COTTAGE-FRIED POTATOES? GO AHEAD— YOU ORDER, I'M ON A DIET BUT IT ISN'T LADYLIKE TO REFUSE ANYTHING THAT IS SO GRACIOUSLY OFFERED— ONLY DON'T LET ME KNOW IN ADVANCE SO I'LL HAVE TO REFUSE— OH, THIS IS WONDERFUL OF YOU TO COME HERE WITH ME... YOU'RE NOT ONLY BEAUTIFUL BUT YOU'RE AS GRACEFUL AS A FAWN— YOU MEAN A HIPPOPOTAMUS... I WISH I KNEW HOW MUCH OF YOUR FLATTERY IS SERIOUS— IT WOULD HELP A LOT— NO, HONEST, NELLIE... PARDON ME, I MEAN MRS. SONJOHN, I HAVE TRAVELED FAR AND WIDE— I HAVE SNIFFED THE BRINY WATERS OF FIVE OCEANS— I HAVE DANCED WITH DANCERS BUT THEY ALL FADE FROM MY MEMORY SINCE I'VE DANCED WITH YOU

HERE HE IS AT THE AWACOM INN WITH THE WIDOW SONJOHN

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Eccentric Facing Institution Cell

OKLAHOMA CITY, July 12.—(AP)—Woody Hockaday, 52, of Wichita, Kas., languished today in "my 48th jail" because he attempted to leap upon President Roosevelt's automobile and "shine his shoes."

Secret Service Agent John E. Osborn chased Hockaday as a "harmless eccentric" and added "we probably will attempt to have him sent to an institution."

Mahoney On Go

KLAMATH FALLS, July 12.—(AP)—Willis E. Mahoney, Democratic candidate for U. S. senator, returned here during the week-end from a pre-campaign political excursion to Washington but prepared to leave again to join Postmaster General James A. Frazier and party as they enter Oregon en route to the young Democratic national convention at Seattle.

Army Airman Dies In Bomber Crash

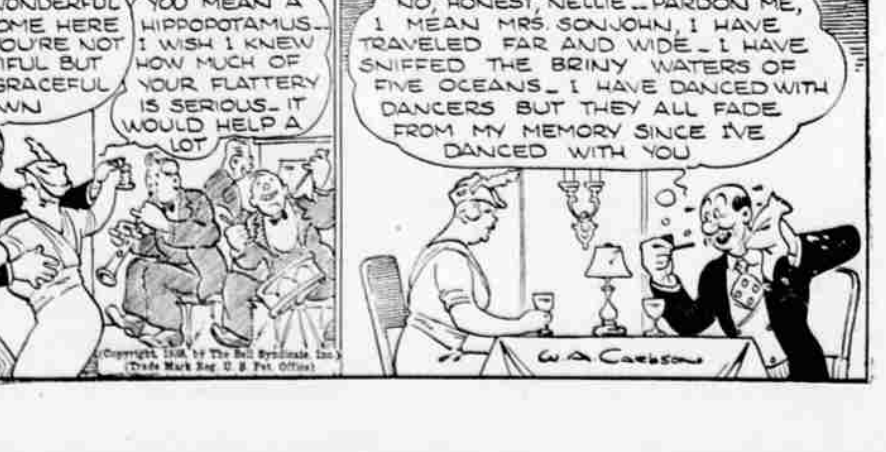
CRISTOBAL Canal Zone, July 12.—(AP)—Lieutenant Paul Gowen was killed today and two other army men were seriously injured when a United States army bomber crashed and burned on the beach at Paitillo Point, near Panama City.

Rain Halts Hegira From Dust Regira

FORTLAND, July 12.—(AP)—Rain has returned to the dust bowl of the midwest and as a result migration from that region to the Pacific northwest has slackened greatly. Secretary of State Earl Stroll said today.

Non-resident permits issued by motorists from Colorado, Kansas, Ne-

By SOL HERSH



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