

LOVE ON THE RANGE

BY NELSON C. NYE

Difference Of Opinion

RATCHFORD reddened. Choking his anger down he said, "I guess there's one or two things you ain't found out. Evidently Streeter's identity's one of 'em. Did you ever hear of Blur Ankrom?"

"What about him?"

"Well, this Streeter's him! An you can take it from me that baby can get a hog-leg into action quicker'n hell could scorch a feather!"

"Were you giving me that information for some special reason?"

His habitual caution stirred the smoky gray of Ratchford's eyes. He hedged. "I kind of figured you'd want to know."

"Oh," Claydell expelled a cloud of smoke. Through it he eyed the sheriff coldly. "You thought I'd want to know, eh? I strikes me this sudden solicitude on your part's rather odd, Ratchford. You an' I ain't never hit it off together very well as I recall."

"Let's be frank, Claydell. You an' me both figure on gettin' Trone's spread."

Nothing was to be read upon Claydell's face. His yellow eyes displayed no more emotion than twin bits of colored glass. There was nothing left for Ratchford but to go on.

"You an' me," he repeated, "are both out to smash the Rafter. I know what you're thinking. You're thinking that I'm after that railroad money and the chance to rear a boom town along its tracks. I am—I'll put my cards on the table. I know what you're after, too. So that makes us even!"

Claydell took the information calmly. "Indeed?" was all he said.

Ratchford, gathering his nerve in both hands, remarked:

"Knowing all this, and knowing therefore that our interests cannot possibly clash, I suggest we join forces—rub Ankrom out an' take the ranch. I'll marry the girl so to make sure there ain't no hitch an'—"

He broke off in mid-sentence as Claydell came to his feet, a 38 gripped ominously in his fist, its muzzle pointing at the sheriff's stomach.

Claydell's thin lips barely moved, yet his words were plainly audible. "Get out, you rat, before I forget myself!"

There was a light burning in the ranchhouse living room when Ankrom and Windy braked the car to a halt before the veranda. As Windy reached out to switch off the ignition Ankrom, leaning toward him, asked:

"When you left for town to-night were the boys still out on the range?"

Windy nodded.

Ankrom took out his silver watch and held it beneath the dash lamp. He saw that the hands pointed to 2 A. M. Returning to the cluttered time-piece in his pocket, Ankrom thrust his legs across the door and over the car's side.

"Put the can up, Windy, get your rifle an' go sit in a shadow where you can keep your eyes open. Most anything's liable to happen round here before mornin'."

Ankrom crossed the veranda and opened the door.

As he moved down the narrow hall and came abreast the living room door, he heard a voice he recognized; a man's voice—Claydell's. It ceased abruptly and Ankrom knew he had been heard. Deliberately he opened the door.

Mighty Confident

"RESIGNED, eh?" Claydell's mask had slipped a little. For a fleeting instant Ankrom read surprise, wonder, in his yellow eyes. "What did he resign for?"

"Because I asked him to. Now I'm going to ask you something, Claydell. A metallic tin came into Ankrom's voice. "What happened to Bandera and the rest of them gun-slingers you lent Heflie to jump our tank to-day?"

For a long moment Claydell eyed him silently. Then he said, "I've got them posted round the house."

"Go on; you're provin' a heap more interesting than I'd expected."

"I've given them orders to shoot the minute Ratchford or any of his men show up."

"I sort of played into your hands some when I took Ratchford's star away from him," Ankrom suggested.

"It makes no difference to me who's packin' the sheriff's star," said Claydell coldly. "A man's a man, an' he'll kick off just as quick with a star on as without."

"Meanin' that you're above such things as sheriff's. Laws don't bother you over much, eh?"

Claydell smiled. "When a law gets in my way," he said, "I have it taken off the book."

"Laws pertainin' to murder are a little different. They got a way of stickin'."

"If one man was to be bumped off," explained Claydell patiently, "these might be quite a stink. But kill enough an' it will be hushed up."

"You won't be able to hush this business up."

"Won't I?"

A bit of doubt crept into Ankrom's mind. The boss of Swingin' J seemed mighty confident. After all, Claydell was more than just a big owner; he was a politician, too, and perhaps his political affiliations would tide him over—

"So you don't think I'm big enough to cut this thing, eh?" Claydell asked.

"You might be able to dispose of Ratchford, an' then he brings along. But you won't be getting this ranch, I can tell you that."

"That's where you're wrong," said Claydell smoothly. "One month from to-day Lee Trone an' I'll be married. Think it over."

"She wouldn't marry you," Ankrom's voice did not contain its customary certainty.

Claydell laughed. "You know Miss Lee couldn't handle a ranch this size herself. She needs someone around to look out for her interests—some one she can depend on. That someone's me. She's wearin' my ring right now."

Ankrom felt suddenly old and worn. A bleak chill was in his bones. He crossed to the fireplace; put his back to the blaze. But the coldness would not go away; it seemed to be inside him.

He looked at Claydell grimly where he stood smoking in evident enjoyment of the situation; a cold rage like the rage he'd felt for Ratchford was coursing in him.

He said, "There's a thing you're forgettin', Claydell."

"Yes?"

"I'm not forgetting you, my friend."

"You'll not get this ranch while I've got anything to say about it," Ankrom's voice crossed the silence recklessly. "Nor you won't marry Lee Trone while I've got anything to say about it, either!" he added savagely.

Claydell grinned. "I'm not worryin' about you. When the time comes—"

"Bribes don't interest me, brother!"

"I wasn't thinking of bribing you," Claydell said, and stopped as a white glare circled the room and the rifle or rifles rent the night outside.

Ankrom with a muttered curse sprang to the wall. "Ratchford!" His left hand swept across the light switch, plunging the room in darkness.

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Cold White Face

FACING him he beheld the six-foot frame of the boss of Swingin' J. Claydell's high-boned face was taut; there was a leveled six-gun in his hand. But as he saw Ankrom, a grave smile crossed his long dark face and, relaxing, he returned his gun to the shoulder-holster beneath his coat.

Ankrom's glance passed beyond him, to the cold white face of Lee. Her cheeks, he noted, were colorless, and there were dark circles beneath her eyes as though she had been crying. But she was not crying now.

Stepping clear of Claydell's protecting form, she said, "What're you doing here? I did not think you would have the impertinence to return. Why have you come?"

The contempt in her soft voice hurt far worse than had her quirt before the cabin.

He winced when Claydell said, "You might's well let him stay, Lee. After all, we're short on fightin' men."

Her jade-green eyes flashed hot with a fierce, defiant light. "I don't want men like him!"

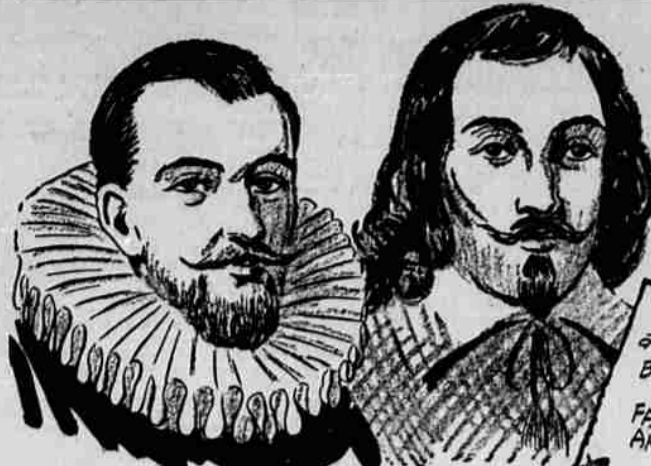
The lines in Ankrom's face deepened. "There's nothin' I can say, ma'am—except that I'm sorry for what I said this afternoon. Sayin' that I'm sorry don't mean a heap, I reckon. But I've come back here to—"

"I've heard enough," she broke in coldly. "There is one thing you can do for me. Just one. Go your way—but don't come back here ever."

Some of the deep bronze washed out of Ankrom's cheeks. "I'd sort of hate to think you mean that, ma'am." There was pleading in his glance.

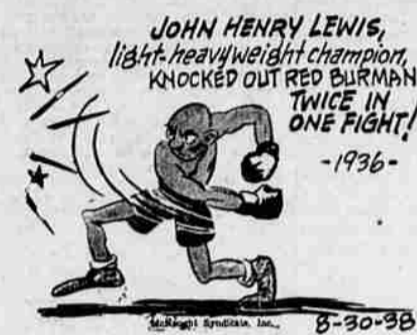
STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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



HUDSON AND CHAMPLAIN--
INDEPENDENTLY EXPLORING THE NEW WORLD,
CAME WITHIN 100 MILES OF MEETING--
YET BOTH MEN WERE UNAWARE
OF THE OTHER'S EXISTENCE!

-1609-



JOHN HENRY LEWIS,
light-heavyweight champion,
KNOCKED OUT RED BURMAN
TWICE IN ONE FIGHT!

-1936-

"ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL'S
COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY
INTERCOMMUNICATIONS
UNIRCUMSTANTIATED,
QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL'S
DISPROPORTIONABLENESS
CHARACTERISTICALLY
CONTRADISTINGUISHED,
UNCONSTITUTIONALISTS,
INCOMPREHENSIBILITIES."

THIS MESSAGE WAS SENT AS A
12-WORD TELEGRAM IN ENGLAND...

Strange as it seems, the paths of two great explorers in 1609 crossed within 100 miles of each other in upper New York state—yet neither man knew the other existed.

Samuel de Champlain, a French navigator and colonizer, in 1608 had completed the founding of the important fur-trading post at Quebec. The following summer he accompanied an Algonquin and Huron expedition against the Iroquois on the shores of Lake Champlain, which he discovered.

There, with a single shot from his heavily-loaded Arquebus, Champlain killed three Mohawk chiefs near Crown Point, a mistake that prevented the French from completing their colonization conquest of America and eventually cost them their northern dominion.

About the same time an English navigator was sailing his ship, the Half Moon, up the Hudson river to Albany. Henry Hudson and his half Dutch, half English crew of 20 were searching for a through route to China.

Originally they had sailed northward seeking the famous Northwest Passage, but solid pack ice and open mutiny of his crew caused Hudson to seek a passage father south by skirting Virginia.

Passing the narrows of upper New York bay, which had dissuaded Verazano from entering the Hudson river in 1524, Hudson in seven days sailed up the river which now bears his name, aided by the strong flood tide which can be felt 150 miles from the ocean.

At Albany Hudson encountered the "Mahikan" Indians, establishing peaceful relations and thereby facilitating later Dutch development along the Hudson and Mohawk rivers.

Tomorrow: What insignificant event marked the Coronation of Nicholas II?

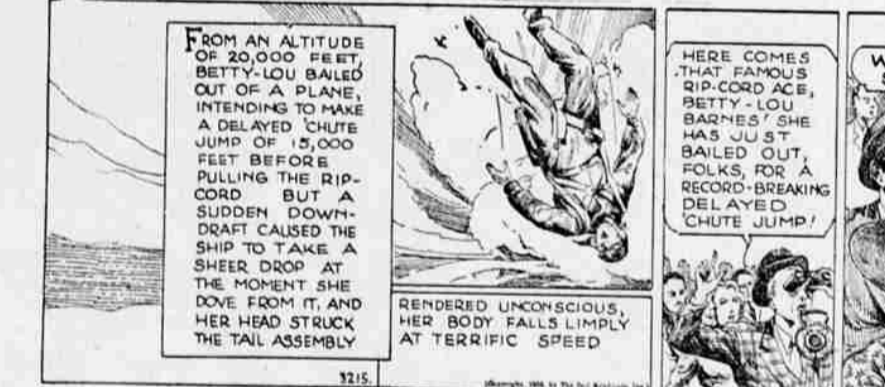
Brothers Killed When Drier Nods

BELLINGHAM, Aug. 30.—(AP)—Carl and Adolph Imhoff, brothers living near Bellingham, were fatally injured about 8 o'clock this morning when a car driven by another brother, Joe, in which they were riding, plunged into the rear end of a heavy truck and trailer operated by the Pacific Highway and Transport company about eight miles south of Bellingham on the Pacific highway.

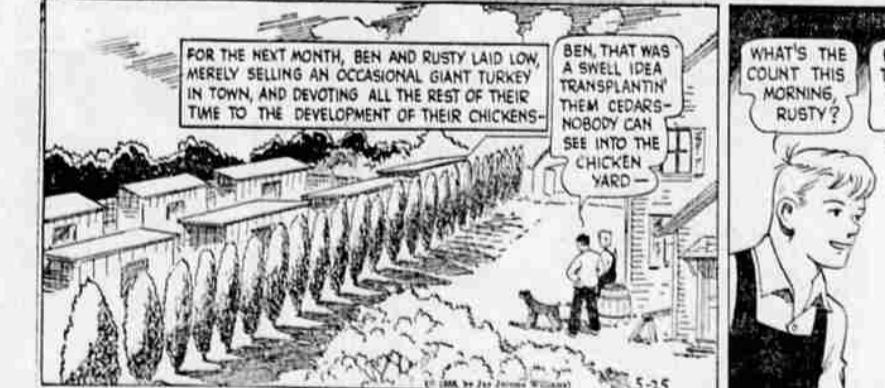
The driver had been at the wheel all night and was believed to have gone to sleep.

Department of agriculture plant breeders are working with melons imported from Africa in an effort to produce a sweeter, better shipping, disease resistant watermelon for production in this country.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Unaware of Tragedy!



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Going to Town!

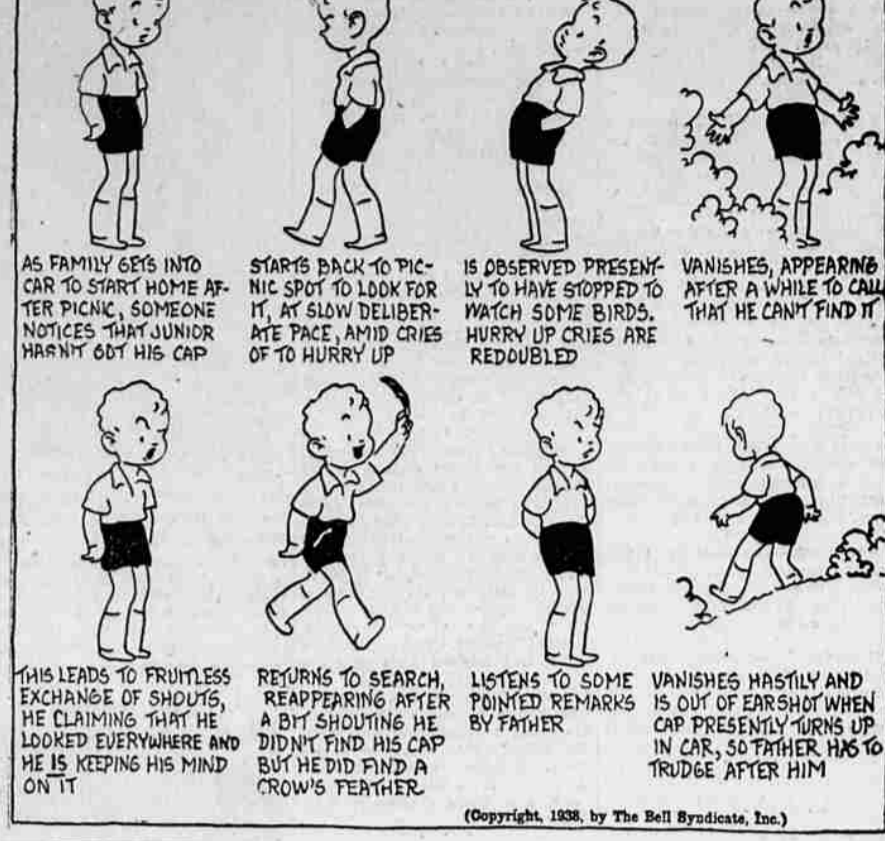


THE NEBBS—I'm Laughing



SEARCHING PARTY

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



S'MATTER POI By C M PAYNE



By HAL FORREST

PERSHING ADVISES INDUSTRY LEADERS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30.—(UP)—Gen. John J. Pershing suggested today leaders of industry, with an eye to a possible future conflict involving this country, prepare to pass on to their successors the knowledge they acquired in the World War.

"Without some very definite agreement, we must never again be caught so completely unprepared, and we must remember that any large war will again draw upon all our resources," the World War commander said in a review of 1917-18 mobilization difficulties.

General Pershing, now in France, sent this statement on "Industry and the A.E.F." for the seventy-fifth anniversary issue of the Army and Navy Journal.

President Roosevelt wrote for the same issue the United States gladly would reduce its armaments if other nations reduced theirs.

MINE AGREEMENT RAPPED BY GREEN

HARLAN, Ky., Aug. 30.—(AP)—An agreement between the United Mine Workers of America and the Harlan County Coal Operators association here today the approval of union members and the distaste of William Green.

Green, A.P.L. president, seized the agreement a "broken and unjust alliance" and said a complaint would be filed with the national labor relations board, which he charged with

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