LITTLE SPITFIRE

By Jean Randall

YESTERDAY: Isobel not only manages the household efficiently in Adelaide's absence, but saves money. Both Mac and Eric are duly impressed. Meanwhile Ned Barrow has ingratiated himself with Abner Abernathy as Brenda plays—

Chapter 23

Hugh's Problem

BRENDA knew the story of Hugh's quarrel with his wife, now.

It was a strangely dramatic incident—if incident was a strong enough word. It appeared that soon after Linda and Hugh were married Linda's brother, assistant manager in a wholesale lumber company, had absconded with some of the company's funds. It was not a large sum of money, and the court had let it be known that the penalty meted out to the boy would not be too severe; but Jim McCaskey had fled in terror from any punishment.

Late one night while Linda slept, Jim appeared at the studio, penniless, hungry, ragged. Hugh, who was finishing some work, fed him and then talked to him. As one man to another, he appealed to him to give himself up, serve his sentence, and live down his one mistake. His employer would be glad to offer him his former place.

Perhaps Jim had found the world more terrifying to a fugitive than he had expected; perhaps his brother-in-law's eloquence overpowered a never-strong will. At any rate, he agreed to the plan, and, dressed in one of Hugh's suits and with money in his pockets, he had taken a train to the scene of his theft before Linda was awake.

"I thought she would be glad!" the artist said bitterly. "Fool that I was, I was patting myself on the back all the time I told her about it. She'd worried, you see, about where the boy was; *how* he was. She used to cry for hours sometimes, wondering if he was dead. I told her all that was ended now. That in a few years—maybe only a couple—Jim would be a free man, and all the past forgotten. I told her it was the one and only way to make a man of him."

"And it was," Brenda said sturdily. "He'd have got into worse trouble, drifting around the country like that. But I suppose your Linda flew into a rage, and accused you of practically arresting her dear Jim yourself, and in the end she packed her bags and walked out on you."

He nodded gloomily. "You talk as if you'd been there! Nothing I could say calmed her. I was Jim's enemy, and therefore hers. She'd die before she'd see me again. She would go to the town where Jim was serving his sentence, and wait for him; and when he came out they'd go away together!"

'I've Written And Written'

BRENDA had given a good deal of consideration to Hugh's problem. More than that, she had acted, inactivity of any kind being impossible to a nature like hers.

She began a series of letters to the friend in New York who knew Linda. She painted a glowing picture of Hugh as a successful artist, as a friend and neighbor; a pathetic one of him as a deserted husband. She hinted that a great wrong had been done him by his wife; that wife whose conscience apparently hurt her since she had not used the generous sum Hugh sent her monthly.

The puzzled girl in New York began to ask why Brenda was getting so worked up over the matter. That stopped her in mid-air, so to speak, and she let a week pass before she wrote again. The friend made an entirely erroneous deduction as to the situation; and, never a reticent person, she passed it on, with footnotes, bibliography and an introduction, to Linda herself. Then silence—for a long fortnight.

"But I don't know what more to do, Hugh," Brenda protested one morning. "I've written and written. I've told you before that if you hunt up Linda you'll simply scare her away. Short of going back to New York to see her myself—"

He gripped her arm tensely. "Do that, Brenda! Why didn't we think of that before! Linda doesn't know you, she won't try to hide from you, you can show her my side of the story. She—"

"Hush!" Brenda cocked her head on one side and listened. "Didn't you hear a noise then, Hugh?"

"Confound the noise! Brenda, you'll do this for me, won't you? The expense is mine, of course—"

"It's behind those bushes, Hugh! Do you suppose somebody's listening, or is it a dog?"

"Don't you call me a dog, Brenda Burnham," said a severe voice. "Nor intimate that I'm eavesdropping, either." Miss Ormond stalked into the open. "So this is what happens when I see you disappear around the old house so often! Brenda, I'm shocked beyond measure!"

Brenda patted the old doorstep on which she sat. "Don't be! It's broad daylight, you know. Come and sit down and visit awhile."

But Miss Ormond was implacable. "I haven't time," she informed them. "I'm going straight home to write Anne Burnham about this. I shall send it air mail, special delivery."

The girl frowned. Aunt Anne trusted her, but at that Brenda did not want her peace of mind disturbed. No telling what sort of interpretation the Ormond would put on these innocent meetings! A sudden inspiration descended on her.

"Hugh, may I tell Miss Ormond what we've been talking about? It may be she will be able to advise us."

The cartoonist gazed at her blankly. He had reached that state of misery where he cared little who knew his story. He nodded a morose assent. So Brenda poured it all out, being careful beforehand to obtain a vow of silence from Miss Ormond.

The writer in the girl came to the front in this recital. She told it simply, not seeking to dramatize what, she considered, was already dramatic enough. She was gratified halfway through the story to see Miss Ormond sink down on the step beside her, listening absorbedly.

"And Hugh is so worried about his wife that he feels he must talk about her or go mad," she finished. "He and I both know there must be some very simple solution to the problem but so far we've not been able to find it." She added artfully: "Could you think of one, Miss Ormond?"

'Plead Your Cause'

THE eyes of the old teacher brightened. "And you call yourselves creative artists, both of you! With not a spark of imagination between you! There's just one person who can persuade Linda Saltus that her husband did the right thing for her brother."

"Who?" they exclaimed in one voice.

"The brother himself — this Jim!" And as Hugh's mouth fell slightly open with surprise and even Brenda's pretty lips parted, she smiled sourly. "You, Mr. Saltus—well, Hugh, then!—write to the brother and explain the situation; ask him to talk to your wife. She's in touch with him, you may be sure of that; probably goes occasionally to see him when she can get away from work! If Jim is still convinced that your advice was good—and it was good, my dear boy, make no mistake about that!—then he'll be glad enough to plead your cause with Linda."

She rose, brushed dried leaves from her coat.

"Now there's to be no more of these clandestine meetings, children. If you, Hugh, feel you must talk about Linda you may do one of two things: send for me, or if you feel Brenda is younger and understands you better, ask her to meet you in my house."

She stalked ahead of them and the first smile Brenda had seen on the man's face for weeks twisted his lips now. Brenda herself had an extraordinary feeling of relief. Some instinct told her that this woman, to whom the hearts and minds of thousands of young human animals had been laid bare, was far better qualified to handle the present situation than she, Brenda, was.

Returning to the old Burnham home she was confronted with a problem of an entirely different sort. Judge Harper was awaiting her in the living room.

"Alaine and Ned again?" she demanded.

He shook his head. "I've asked Isobel Burke to see that we're not interrupted for the next half hour," he began. "I—I have something rather odd to show you, my dear."

"Why, Judge Harper!" She looked at him in astonishment. His hand was trembling, his bushy eyebrows twitched nervously.

He took a letter from his pocket and thrust it into her hand. "Read it!"

It was a pale pink, perfumed affair, covered with spidery words in faint blue ink. Brenda had to bend close to decipher it.

"My dear Judge," the letter began. "It is true that you and I both live on The Shortest Street where the old conventions prevail. But on the other hand I have lately been thrown so much with my young contemporaries next door that I have more or less acquired the modern viewpoint. And the basis of that viewpoint, my dear Judge, is honesty, stark honesty.

"Some time ago I had a little visit with our dear Brenda, and I must say her cosmopolitan, straight-forward, and above all, intensely honest attitude toward all problems of life blew away from my mind the last rose-colored cobweb of maidenly reticence."

"But I never saw a rose-colored cobweb!" Brenda paused to comment in increasing bewilderment.

"No, and you never saw a letter like this one either, I'll wager," was the grim reply. "Go on. Read it."

Continued tomorrow

WORK ON WARSHIPS HALTED BY WALKOUT OF CIO UNIONISTS

Kearney, N. J., May 31.—(AP) A wage-increase strike of 6,000 union workmen at the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock company threatened today to halt construction of four navy warships, important cogs in the national defense program.

The strikers, members of Local 16, Industrial Union of Maritime and Shipworkers of America (CIO), began a peaceful picket of the plant at midnight despite the urgings of union leaders to delay action pending further negotiations.

John Dempsey, national vice president and president of the local, said he told his men to reconsider their action because of the navy ships under construction. An "overwhelming" majority voted to strike, however, he added.

A ten-cent an hour wage increase and an annual week's vacation with pay were asked by the strikers.

For purposes of local government, England and Wales are divided primarily into 62 administrative counties.

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS

Where to Find Them on the Dial: KEX, 1160, Portland; KFI, 640, Los Angeles; KGA, 1470, Spokane; KGO, 790, San Francisco; KGW 620, Portland; KJR, 970, Seattle; KNX, 1050, Los Angeles; KOA, 830, Denver; KOIN, 940, Portland; KOMO 926 Seattle; KPO, 630, San Francisco; KSL, 1130, Salt Lake.

Friday

5:00—Between Afternoon and Evening, KGO, KJR, KEX; Waltz Time, KPO, KFI, KGW; Al Pearce, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

5:30—What's My Name, KPO, KFI, KGW; Drama, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

6:00—Gay Nineties, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Don Ameche, KPO, KFI, KGW; Dance Orch., KGO, KEX.

6:30—Believe-It-Or-Not, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Drama, KFI; Book Window, KOMO; Concert Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR.

7:00—Fred Waring, KPO, KGW, KFI; Amos and Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Barnet's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR.

7:15—Thompson's Orch., KGW, KPO; Lanny Ross, KNX, KOIN, KSL; News, KFI.

7:30—This Amazing America, KGO, KJR, KEX; Johnny Presents, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Show Boat, KPO, KFI, KGW.

8:00—Dance Orch., KEX; Treasure Island Varieties, KPO; News Conference, KGO; Kate Smith, KNX, KOIN, KSL.

8:30—Death Valley Days, KPO, KGW, KFI.

9:00—Ebener's Orch., KFI; Paul Sullivan, KNX, KSL, KOIN.

9:15—University Explorer, KPO, KGW; Fisher's Orch., KNX.

9:30—Music by Woodbury, KPO, KFI, KGW; Hutton's Orch., KSL, KNX.

10:00—Reporter, KPO, KFI, KGW; Gluskin's Orch., KOMO.

10:30—Nottingham's Orch., KGO, KEX, KJR; Fields' Orch., KPO, KFI; Pastor's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN.

11:00—Draper's Orch., KPO; Noble's Orch., KSL, KOIN; This Moving World, KEX; News, KGO, KNX.

Saturday

5:00—Concert Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; National Barn Dance, KGO, KEX, KJR; Noble's Orch., KNX, KOIN.

5:30—Dance Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI; Songs, KNX, KOIN.

6:00—Crosby's Orch., KPO, KFI, KGW; Message of Israel, KGO.

6:30—Cummins' Orch., KGW, KFI; Gay Nineties, KSL; Sports Searchlight, KPO; Melody in the Night, KGO, KJR.

7:00—Sky Blazers, KNX, KOIN, KSL; Gene and Glenn, KGO, KJR; Barn Dance, KPO, KFI, KGW.

7:30—Kyser's Orch., KNX, KSL; Hall's Orch., KJR, KEX; S. S. Fiesta, KGO.

8:00—Dorsey's Orch., KFI, KGW; City of St. Francis, KPO, KGO; Hit Parade, KNX, KSL, KOIN; News, KEX.

8:30—Sports Forum, KGO; Gordon's Orch., KPO, KGW, KFI.

9:00—Martin's Orch., KPO; Marriage Club, KGO; Malneck's Orch., KFI, KGW.

9:30—Ravazza's Orch., KGO; Noble's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL; Fields' Orch., KPO, KGW.

10:00—Jones' Orch., KFI, KGW; Kyser's Orch., KNX; Radio Reporter, KPO.

10:30—Pastor's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Martin's Party, KPO; Reichman's Orch., KFI; Draper's Orch., KGO, KJR.

11:00—Arnheim's Orch., KSL, KOIN; Organist, KEX; News, KGO; Nottingham's Orch., KPO; News, KGW, KNX, KFI.

Radio Highlights

(By Associated Press.)

(Time is Pacific Standard.)

Tonight: Europe—CBS, 4:55, 6:15; WJZ-NBS, 6; NBC—Chains 7.

WJZ-NBC—6:30: Wm. Green on "Preservation of America."

Saturday: Europe—NBC, 4 a. m.; CBS, 4 a. m., 2:45 p. m.; MBS, 2:45.

WEAF—NBC, WABC—CBS, MBS—7 a. m. Launching of battleship Washington. WEAF—NBC—7 a. m. Mrs. Roosevelt at opening world's fair fashion building.

WJZ-NBC—11 a. m to 1:30 p. m., IC4A track meet. MBS—10:30 a. m. Dedication world's fair common. Mrs. Roosevelt; 12:45, Belmont Park race; 1:30, Delaware Park race. HS745A.

ARK MAKES ALERT BAY ON JOURNEY NORTH TO NEW HOME IN ALASKA

Alert Bay, B. C., May 31—(Canadian Press)—The sailing Satkos from Virginia, delayed by difficulties with the courts and the 14-year-old automobile motor in their home-made "ark" were nearly halfway to Ketchikan today in their quest for economic independence on the Alaskan "frontier."

"Skipper" Paul Satko, with his wife and seven children, hove in here late yesterday after having been unreported three days on the approximately 180 mile cruise from Nanaimo, B. C. The trip was up the comparatively sheltered passage between Vancouver Island and the mainland.

From this little port near the head of Vancouver Island, the amateur mariner from Richmond will have to face a stretch of open water across Queen Charlotte Sound before again reaching the more sheltered "inside passage" up the coast.

Hometown Heroine

Dragoon, Ariz., May 31—(AP) Dragoon's entire population of 75 crowded into the Texas Canyon school to attend commencement exercises for Lola Mae Grahm. She was the only graduate.

It is estimated that in 50 years, sales of power will repay the federal government with interest for the $103,000,000 spent on Boulder dam.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS — by JOHN HIX

MICHIGAN'S MIRACLE

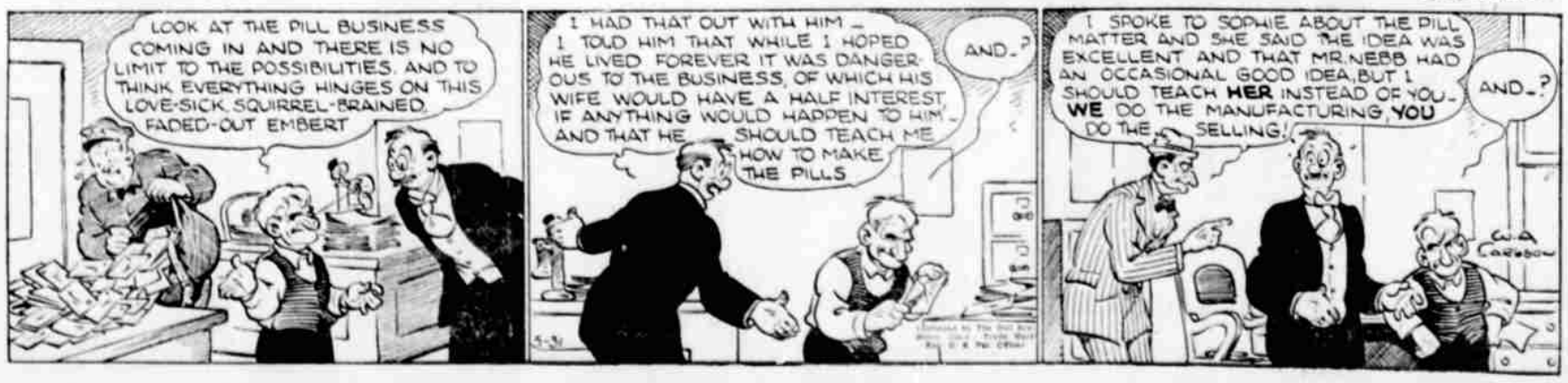
Until last February, Michigan contained 57,980 square miles, ranked 22nd among the 48 states in size. Today the state covers 97,940 square miles and is eighth largest of the states.

It happened when the U. S. Bureau of Census conceded that 39,960 square miles of Great Lakes water within the boundaries of the state should be counted as the state's gross area, instead of being noted separately in a footnote at the bottom of the tabulation. The change resulted from a year's campaign waged almost exclusively by former Gov. Chase S. Osborne.

Sunday: Racetack for Roosters.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE — By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Menace Ahead! By HAL FORREST

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Hassett's Warning! By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Thar's Gold in Them Pills! By SOL HESS