

The GOLDEN FEATHER

by Robert Bruce

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BEGIN HERE TODAY

JEAN HUNTER, secretary to DONALD MONTAGUE, lawyer, delays her answer when Bobby WILSON, automobile salesman, asks her to marry him.

At THE LITTLE GARDEN, Fanny might slip she meets SANDY HARKINS, whose business connection is vague. Bobby WILSON, who is Jean's father, and Jean's mother, Mrs. WILSON, who is Jean's mother, are also present.

JEAN'S FATHER, worried about her absence, confides in Bobby. They go to see LARRY.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER XXXVII

LARRY GLENN drove slowly out the road that led north from the town of Midlothian, and repeated to himself the directions that had been given him at the filling station.

"First white farm house on the left side of the road after you pass the little grove of oaks," he mused. "Let's see—this must be the grove; now, when I get past it..."

He touched the brake and crawled along even more slowly. The oak grove slipped to the rear, followed by an orchard, beyond the orchard a pleasant-looking farm house with a veranda across the front and a fringe of trees along the side of its yard came into view. Larry swung into the driveway, drove to the back yard, parked, and went up to the back door and rapped.

He heard slow footsteps inside the house; then the door was opened part way and a man peered out at him.

"Mr. Engle?" said Larry. The man nodded reluctantly.

"My name's Harder," said Larry politely. "I'm doing some field research for Uncle Sam, collecting statistics on the triple-A corn-and-kog program, and I'm afraid I'll have to bother you to answer a few questions."

The man beamed up from beneath his overhanging eyebrows and hesitated. Larry smiled, in the manner of one who knows that he is making a nuisance of himself but who proposes to get it over with as painlessly as possible, and said, "It won't take but a minute or two."

THE man looked at him again, and grudgingly opened the door. "Come on in then," he said ungraciously. Larry followed him into the kitchen.

The kitchen was a large room, in the old-fashioned farm manner. A wood-burning range stood at one end, and at the other was a large table spread with a checkered gingham cloth and covered with used breakfast dishes. Mr. Engle sat cautiously in a straight-backed chair and waved Larry to another, beside the table. Larry sat down, drew a notebook from his pocket, opened it, and leaned forward with another ingratiating smile.

"Now, let's see, Mr. Engle," he said. "You have 20 acres in field corn this year, and a two-acre plot of sweet corn for the market—which doesn't count, so we'll skip it. Twenty acres, and last summer you—"

And he went on, reciting facts and figures that he had gleaned half an hour earlier in the office of the county agricultural agent, and Mr. Engle, nodding occasionally and sucking at his empty pipe, found no reason to suspect that his visitor was anything except what he represented himself to be.

"—and have you your copy of the agreement with the county agent? I'd like to glance at it, Mr. Engle," said Larry, in conclusion.

Mr. Engle looked helplessly about him, then got to his feet. "Em!" he called.

"What'd you want?" said a woman's voice, rasping and impatient, from somewhere upstairs.

"Where's my copy of that corn-kog agreement?"

"Wherever you put it, which might be 'most anywhere," said the voice. Mr. Engle stared blindly at the ceiling. There was a moment's silence; then the woman's voice called down, "Did you look in the desk in the front parlor? Might be—"

The rest of it was lost, as the woman apparently moved from one upstairs room to another. Engle looked blankly at Larry, then mumbled, "I'd better go look for it," and shuffled off, through a swinging door, to the front of the house.

Larry, left alone in the kitchen, looked about him with keen interest. He had already learned, from the county farm agent, that the Engles were childless and had no hired help; how was it, then, that at least six people had eaten breakfast in the kitchen that morning—as the used dishes on the kitchen table clearly testified?

He listened intently. Someone, the woman probably, was moving about upstairs. Engle seemed still to be in the front, looking for the agreement. Larry looked over the plates on the table. Moving furtively and silently, he picked up a knife from each plate, wrapped them all carefully in a handkerchief and slipped the bundle into an inner pocket; then, standing, he looked over the table a second time.

Worshippers who are kind enough to contribute buttons to the collections are requested to bring their own and not pull them off the hassoaks.—The Rev. G. R. Balleine, London vicar, addressing congregation.

Now that WPA is to develop the Rutgers athletic field, maybe the workers should be prodded occasionally so visitors won't think they're the ones who died for d. o. R.

Reluctance of Pittsburg barbers to talk of their relations with racketeers was our first intimation that barbers were reluctant to talk of anything.

G. O. P. to utilize films in campaign. A snappy title for one of their talkies might be "The Tares Boondoggiers, or Why Politicians Heave Loam."

Republicans quiz potential presidential candidate to find out how dry he is. "All we have to do is turn the dial."

"Breathing Spell" Spurs Wall Street. "Any day now we may expect a bleating spell."

a stout, red-faced woman came into the kitchen, carrying an enormous armful of sheets rolled into a huge ball.

"This's one of those AAA fellows," said Engle. "He's inquirin' about my corn, and so on."

She looked at Larry uncertainly, then turned back to the clothes basket.

"Well," she said, "I'll get on with my washing. You won't need me, will you, Mister?"

Larry smiled and shook his head, and followed the farmer out into the back yard, thinking, "His places for breakfast, and enough used sheets to sleep a regiment—for a family of two—"

He followed the farmer through the outbuildings, squinted wistfully at the pigs, pretended to take more notes, and mused to observe from the indentations in the soil and the black grease-drippings on grass and gravel that at least two ears had been parked in the back yard very recently; and finally, half an hour after his arrival, he raised his eyebrows and said, "I might as well get away with Engle, might as well get away, get into the roadster and drove away."

IT was still before noon when he entered his office in Dover. He took from his pocket the little bundle of purloined table knives from the Engle kitchen and carefully unwrapped it. Then he called for Tony LaRocco.

"Tony," he said, as the Italian entered the room, "I think you can make some prints of these. Try 'em and see what you get, will you? And—step on it."

Tony took the exhibits and departed, while Larry sat at his desk and took a hurried glance at various papers and memoranda that had been accumulating during his absence. He raised his eyebrows over one memorandum, studied it with care, called Agent Frank Watson into his office and talked with him earnestly; then he rang up that honest, hard-fisted friend, Detective Sergeant Mike Hagan of the Dover police, and held a telephone consultation with him. As he hung up Tony came back into the room carrying a huge blotter on which lay three photographic prints, still wet from the fixing bath.

"Three of the knives were too smudged to do any business with," said Tony. "I got these off the other three."

Larry looked at the prints, automatically drawing out the envelope in which he carried the fingerprint impressions of Red Jackson, Wincy Lewis, and Sandy Harkins. He laid the cards on the table, and Tony bent over them with him.

"This one we don't have," mused Larry. "We'll send it to Washington. This single, here... by the Lord, Tony, if that isn't Red Jackson's Look!"

They made a careful, painstaking comparison, checking looks and whorls with methodical exactness. Then they straightened up, looked at one another, and nodded.

"This other one—looks like a woman's," said Tony. Larry looked at the print. "I blew it up so much, you can't tell," explained Tony. "But on the silver the prints were a lot smaller than the others. I bet it's a woman's."

"Might be Mrs. Engle's," said Larry slowly. "Or maybe the Brady woman is with 'em. Well, it doesn't signify—"

He broke off as his bell tinkled, and took up the telephone. He smiled and spoke a word of greeting into the mouthpiece; then, as he listened, he grew tense, and his face became stern.

"My God, man, it can't be!" he said. "Listen—"

(To Be Continued)

Flapper Fanny Says

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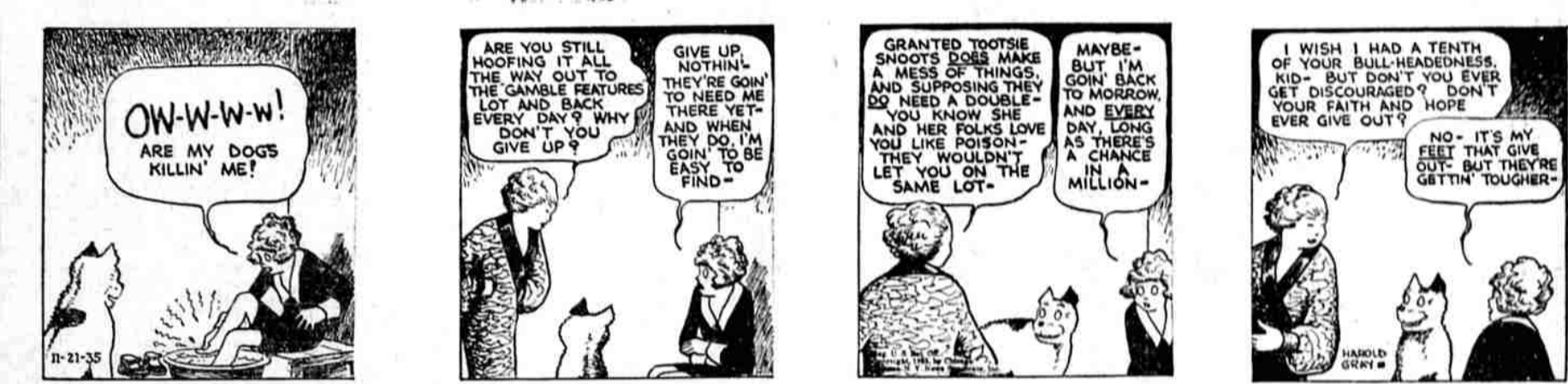
OUT OUR WAY



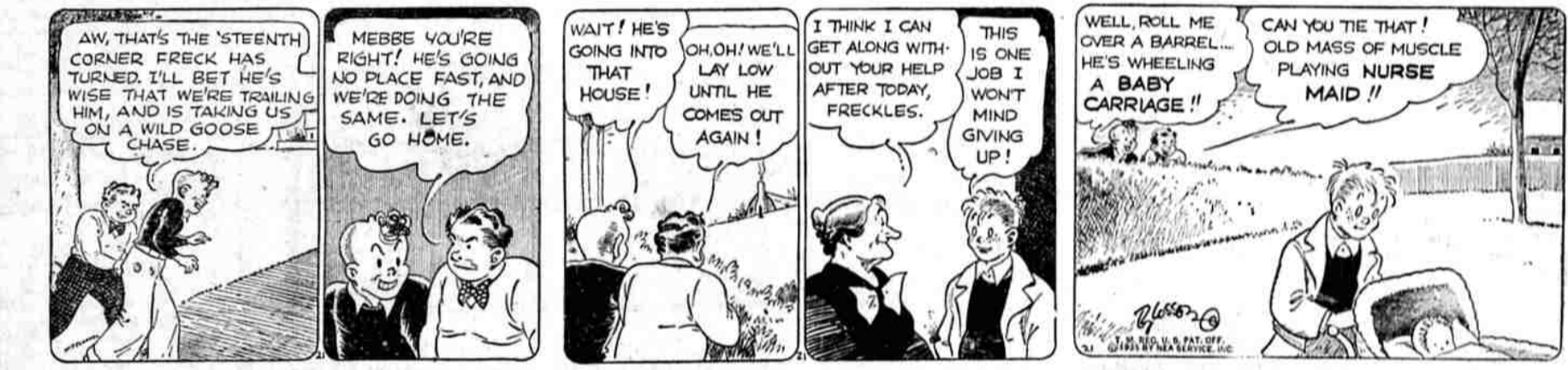
OUR BOARDING HOUSE



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



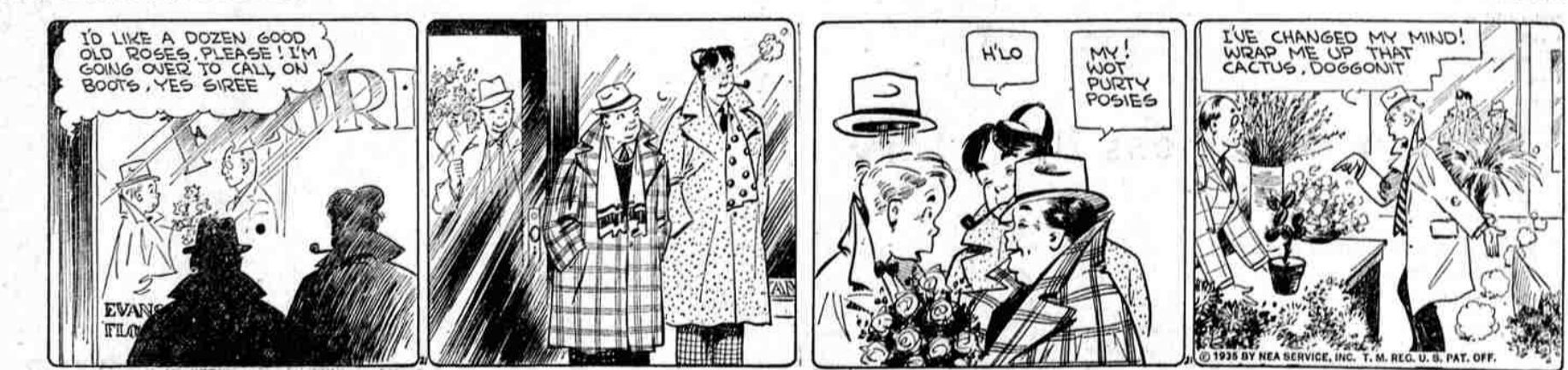
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



THE NEWFANGLES — MOM 'N POP

