

SERIAL STORY

CARIBBEAN CRISIS

BY EATON K. GOLDTHWAITE

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THE ENEMY STRIKES

CHAPTER XV

TALCOTT accepted the print and as he scanned it his bewilderment grew. The print was a copy of a creased and rather smudgy original. It was the head-and-shoulders likeness of a man in uniform, a Uhlan officer of the first World War. His head was closely shaved or bald. Under a bulging forehead his eyes held the fixed, glassy stare of unquestioned authority. His chin was short and square, his lips thin and cruel. He didn't look like Struthers; he didn't look like anybody Talcott could remember ever having seen.

"That's a photograph of Baron Gerhardt von Stampf," the slow, musical voice said. "A brilliant and unscrupulous agent. He speaks five languages as fluently and effortlessly as if each was his mother tongue. He was operating in Brazil until the recent shakeup there. We have reason to believe that he may be in the Islands."

"It certainly isn't Struthers," Talcott said. "I don't like to think what a Nazi agent could do if firmly established nearby. We'll check on him thoroughly. And now," the cloudiness left his gray eyes as he turned to MacDowell, "you claim to be employed by the Standard Detective Agency, that your name is Patrick MacDowell and you are a resident of New York. You have your license?"

MacDowell was taken completely aback. He didn't recall having made any claims to this disconcerting individual; didn't remember that he had even opened his mouth. He fumbled through pockets and produced a card with photo attached, a motor vehicle permit and a few letters.

"These look all right. I want to know where you met Halsey and Struthers and what evidence you had as to their authenticity." This man! How the devil did he know about Halsey when his name hadn't been mentioned? "Why, I met Halsey in Struthers' office. It was Struthers called the boss and asked for me. I worked with him before."

"Struthers was known to you?" "Absolutely."

"And Halsey?" "Halsey took me to Federal Chemical's offices. Right straight in to th' president's private secretary."

"And the secretary instructed you to arrest Talcott if the auditor requested it?" "That's th' idea."

"You didn't talk to anyone else at Federal Chemical?" "No."

THE man at the desk frowned. "Talcott notified the Company he was leaving; your call came from the auditor, not the company. A man whom you had just met in the auditor's office took you to the secretary. Have you any evidence that Halsey is actually an employe of Federal Chemical?"

MacDowell gasped. "Huh? What more would you expect? He took me right in!"

"Anybody can go right in if they've got clearance," the gray-eyed man smiled faintly. He turned to Talcott. "Did you know Halsey before?"

"Only through letters." "Which could have been sent without the knowledge of the President. This may be a conspiracy to defraud the Company, or—" He paused, searched through his drawer again, found a blue sheet. He said, "You operate a fertilization plant for the production of nitric acid. How much oil does it consume?"

"About a barrel a day."

"How much stock do you ordinarily carry?" "Two months' supply."

"Any idea why Struthers would order five hundred barrels to be shipped immediately?"

asked dumb questions about how many barrels of oil it took to run a still. A guy who talked about international intrigue; as if anybody would want to get control of a stinking, desolate hunk of rock like Abas Island.

Suddenly a look of positive brilliance burst from MacDowell's face. "Hey! That guy!" he gasped. "That guy is a—"

But Talcott was yards away, striding toward the waterfront. Briskly heading for a crowd gathered on the quay, a group of natives and tourists and shopkeepers and sailors. The crowd was growing in volume. People were running to get across the small Park; running men brushed past MacDowell.

Down there a woman screamed; the crowd bulged and parted momentarily and MacDowell saw a uniformed officer pushing them back from the launch that belonged to Federal Chemical Company's Plant Number Six. Another uniformed officer was in the launch, bending down. Well, maybe the cops could tell him something. Maybe they could tell him about the guy in the room that knew so much.

He had to run to keep up to Talcott. When they reached the crowd he saw that the people in it were scared. They were staring at the launch and the bent-down officer, jostling each other in their effort to see.

Beneath its tan, Talcott's face was white as milk. "What's wrong here?" he demanded so sharply that the officer looked up.

"This your boat?" the officer demanded.

"I'm in charge of it."

"Then you're the one we want. Walter, take the gentleman over to the Fort."

The officer stood up, and MacDowell, crowding close, saw Sebastian. Stretched out in the bottom, he was, his bandaged arm covering his face. Beneath the blade of his left shoulder was a glistening dark stain from which a knife-handle protruded. (To Be Continued)

OVER SPECIFICATIONS

SAN FRANCISCO, (AP)—The stork came not once but three times to a house on 21st avenue, so the landlord raised the rent from \$41 to \$47.50 a month. The parents complained to the San Francisco fair rent committee.

The landlord countered that when the tenants moved in six years ago it was understood they were to have but one child at the \$41 rental.

But the fair rent committee sustained the parents' complaint and ordered the rent reduced to its original level.

FRIENDLY CREDIT

ON ALL PURCHASES OF MEN'S WEAR

- No Interest. No Carrying Charge. No Red Tape.

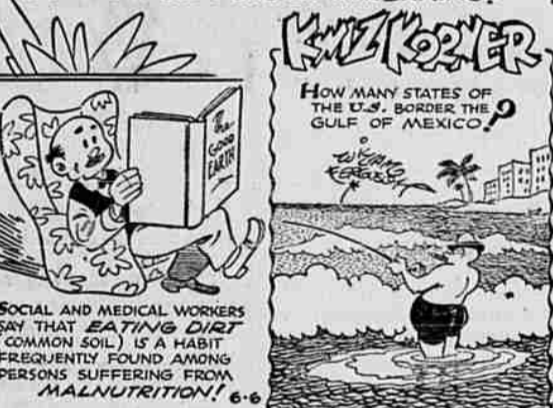
OREGON WOOLEN STORE 8TH AND MAIN

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



DOWN THROUGH THE AGES, ANIMALS HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM THE EARTH WHEN THEIR BIG ARMORED BODIES OUTGREW THEIR BRAINS!



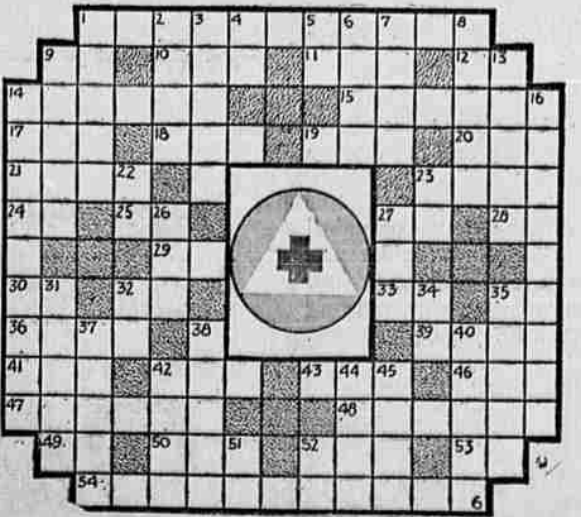
HOW MANY STATES OF THE U.S. BORDER THE GULF OF MEXICO? SOCIAL AND MEDICAL WORKERS SAY THAT EATING DIRT (COMMON SOIL) IS A HABIT FREQUENTLY FOUND AMONG PERSONS SUFFERING FROM MALNUTRITION! 6-6

ANSWER: Five . . . Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida.

NEXT: Snakes alive!

CIVILIAN DEFENSE UNIT

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for horizontal and vertical words.



PRAIRIE SCHOONER AHOY!



Little Orphan Annie



Boots and Her Buddies



Wash Tubbs



Freckles and His Friends



Alley Oop



SOME FRUITFUL IDEAS



By Harold Gray



By Martin



By Crano



By Blosser



By V. T. Hamlin