

FRANTIC FESTIVAL

BY EDMUND FANCOTT

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PURSUIT

CHAPTER XIII

THEN the presents were all gone except two for Fay and Ross. But those two were still missing and everyone split up to open the parcels. They scattered paper anew over the room, squeals of excitement filled the place as they all crowded round to see what everyone else had got and spread over the floor to put their gifts into operation.

Myra and Ross's aunt retired to the kitchen to prepare the tea for the boys. Fay joined them for a complete explanation of the mystery.

Benny took the two detectives aside and he watched them count the diamonds. Their hard exterior melted and he found them more conversational. He offered to drive them down to their car but pressed them to stay a little longer, or to stay the night, as he knew there were two rooms available now which would suit them beautifully.

He said he knew there was something wrong when Beano was so anxious to come to Canada. He had felt it but Beano was a man of few words and he had taken it for granted that Beano just wanted to come up for a holiday so he had fixed an engagement for him up in Montreal, just for old times sake.

Then he was off to the kitchen. He cornered Myra who pushed him this way and that while she helped with the mass of food to feed the boys.

"That was a slick job you pulled off," he said. "I always knew you had brains. Mind if I take one of them cookies? Thanks, I'll take a couple to save coming back. Give me a girl with brains and you can keep them fancy looking, keep 'em and sell 'em two for five for all I care. Give me someone I can look at without thinking I'm looking at a movie magazine. Them faces make me sick."

"You'll be sick if you eat any more of those things," said Myra. "I can take it," said Benny. "I can take anything, except a ride by them guys out there. Say, Myra, what about coming back with me? I could use a girl like you. You got to be smart in my business or the other guys get you every time. You and me, there's dough in it if you know the tricks and I know 'em all. I do the talking, you do the work and we'd make a pile."

"Say," said Myra, forcing a pause in his flow of words. "I've got a job, a good job, a nice comfortable job."

"So what? You leave it and you're a boss like me, working for yourself, like me. We'll have the ceremony at the Cathedral with everybody in show business there. We'll make the tabloids and the rotogravure, and you'll be famous in a night, just like any of 'em. They'll all give a plug to Benny. How about it, sister?"

Myra paused with a plate in mid-air.

"Say, what's this about a ceremony?"

"Church, choirboys, and everything, till life do us part . . ."

"Let me get this straight," said Myra. "Is this a proposal?"

"What do you think it is?" said Benny, offended.

MYRA swayed, put down the plate of cookies in Benny's hands and passed her hands across her brow. "To think it happened to me. Wait till Benny, my old man, hears about this. He'll laugh his head off."

"What do you mean, he'll laugh his head off?"

Benny was deeply hurt. Myra went on. "That'll cost him five bucks. He bet me I wouldn't get a proposal till next Leap Year."

"Cut it, cut it," said Benny. "I give you a straight, genuine eighteen carat offer, do I get a straight answer?"

Myra grabbed the plate from him and became busy. "It's too sudden. I've got to think. You've done it now, all those kids waiting for their tea, and me so fussed I don't know whether I'm coming or going. Get out of my way."

She brushed past him to the other room.

Benny rubbed his hand through his hair. Women were funny, smart as paint in some ways, and dumb in others. She didn't realize that he, Benny, had made a real genuine offer to marry her.

Outside the snow was still drifting down gently, slowly obliterating the tracks of Beano's escape.

WHEN Fay and Ross had run from the house with the sudden decision of a good soldier had pulled Benny's hand.

"Let's cut through the wood. We'll cut 'em off at the turn of the drive."

They dashed down through the snow and came out on the drive just as the sleigh, with Beano

frantically whipping the horses to greater speed, flashed by. Beano, tumbled in the back, was still trying to save herself from being hurled off the sleigh with all the ruck on top of her.

"He's gone mad and he'll kill her," gasped Fay.

"Come on," cried Ross. After questioning him she ran after him down the road toward the farm. He dashed into the barn and when Fay caught up with him he was doing something quickly under the hood of a farm tractor.

"Fixing her for speed," he yelled. "Grab a horse blanket if you can find one."

She dashed into the barn, scrambled round and found an old blanket that smelled horse and ran back with it.

By this time Ross had the tractor out, the engine revving to a tank-like roar.

"All aboard for the armored corps," he cried. "Wrap the blanket around you and jump up behind and hang on like glue because we're going places!"

The tractor grew hotter, the engine smoked, snow melted and sizzled in steam from the hood, its roar cut through the snow stillness. Ross took a short cut across a ski trail he knew and the tractor climbed and bumped and dipped and swayed but Ross clung to the wheel and Fay clung to Ross.

Like a tank pursuing a retreating enemy, the tractor charged forward, under the expert guidance of Ross Benson. It bounced and careened and jumped and tossed about. In no time Fay was breathless, too frightened and too

ill to let a single scream escape her lips.

Never had the Laurentians been the scene of so wild a chase. The air rang out with the tumultuous din of the charging tractor. Beano's steed was in full flight, testing every lesson Ross had learned about maneuvering mechanized monsters.

(To Be Continued)

Infantile paralysis germs are said to enter the human system through the nasal passages.



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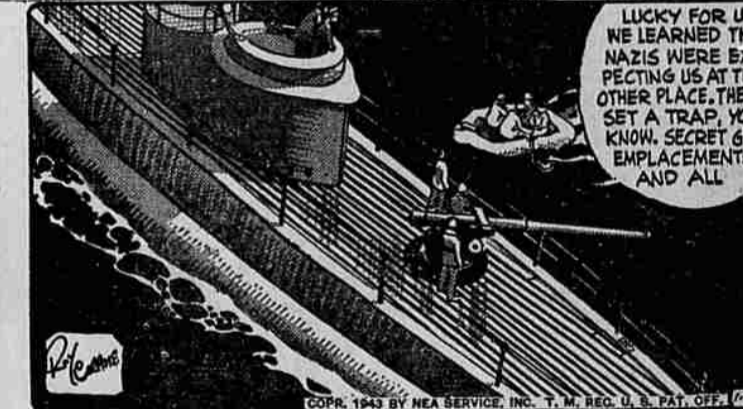
1-2



1-2



By Blosser



By Crane



By Martin



By V. T. Hamlin

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



1-2



ANSWER: Australian-New Zealand Army Corps

NEXT: Is our climate getting warmer?

"OLD DOMINION STATE"

HORIZONTAL

- 1 Depicted state.
- 8 Swamp.
- 14 Mulets.
- 18 Casts again.
- 16 Drunken carousals.
- 17 Malayan jumping disease.
- 18 Work with needle and thread.
- 20 Swiss river.
- 21 Him.
- 22 Native of Latvia.
- 24 Stringed musical instruments.
- 27 Before.
- 28 Indian.
- 30 Jumbled type.
- 31 Laughter sound.
- 32 Of the thing.
- 33 Symbol for calm.
- 34 Genus of vipers.
- 36 Is able.
- 37 Incursions.
- 38 Greek letter.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

JAMES ROOSEVELT

VERTICAL

- 1 Surety (Roman).
- 2 Mist.
- 22 Person affected with leprosy.
- 23 Genus of shrubs.
- 24 Hearken.
- 25 Type of nut.
- 28 Messenger.
- 28 Go by.
- 31 Conceal.
- 35 Wintry.
- 36 Italian country house.
- 38 Interdict.
- 39 Hen product.
- 40 Symbol for tellurium.
- 41 Arm anow.
- 43 Sedans.
- 44 Expression of disdain.
- 46 Mimic.
- 48 Anger.
- 47 Through.
- 48 Civilian Corps (abbr.).
- 49 Number.
- 50 Argument.
- 52 Biblical pronoun.
- 53 Symbol for silicium.

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50