

SERIAL STORY
'I AM A MURDERER'
BY MORRIS MARKEY

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CHAPTER XV
THAT was the way it went for the next two periods. Captain Pugh did his best. He blew three fouls against Henry Prentiss, and the Whirlwinds made good their three free tries for goal. But that was virtually all their solace. For Henry Prentiss matched those three, and made three more for good measure.

In the brief pause after the second period which was given for the change of horses, he found Cynthia standing at the end of the field frowning at him.
"Take it easy, Hank," she said.
"Hello, Pretty." And, to the groom, "Give me Gaylark this time."

"I said take it easy, Hank. Somebody is going to get hurt. That's not our kind of game, you know."
His grin was exasperating.
"O. K., Pretty."
And he was in the saddle and off down the field, swinging his stick in wide circles and yelling, "Come on, guys. Let's play polo."
At the end of the third period—which was, too, the beginning of the 10-minute rest period—Henry Prentiss received a splendid ovation from the stands, most particularly from those delighted spectators who had bet on the Clover side to win.

He bounced out of the saddle, and threw his reins to the groom, and tumbled down to sit on the grass, his legs outstretched, his arms making a rigid prop for his body behind him. Mike brought him a Scotch and soda, and he finished it in a draught.
Captain Pugh moved toward him, frowning heavily, but he was not ahead of Cynthia. She looked down at him for a long instant, her hands on her hips and no smile upon her face. Then she said, "Get up and come with me."
He laughed at her. But he got up and walked with her toward the station wagon, and both of them got in the wagon. She looked at him.

"I'm absolutely ashamed of you," she said, very quiet and cold. "And you can get that idiot's grin off of your face for good."
"What's the matter, Pretty?"
"You are supposed to be playing with decent people. I like most of them. I never did like cowboys or showoffs."
"I'm in there to win, if I can." "Even by deliberate fouls?"
"Hold it," he said. "You know I haven't done that. They got in the way."
"Yes. They got in the way—of somebody that has given up caring a damn either for his ponies or the men he is playing with. It isn't like you, Henry Prentiss. When did you decide to quit being a decent sport?"

"So you want me to pull my punches. That it?"
"You know what I mean."
"You want me to say, 'Beg pardon, Fred. I didn't mean to try that hard.' That it?"
"What's the matter with you?"
"The matter is I'm on the top of my game and feel like playing, and don't believe in babying anybody, even your little pals."
"Oh, Hank."
"If they don't feel able to protect themselves, then this just isn't their game."
"All right. I haven't got anything more to say."
She looked down at her hands, folded in her lap. Across the level green came the murmuring of the people in the stands, and, closer by, the grooms cried to each other and to the horses, and the horses stamped their feet and made their bits ring as they champed.

Henry Prentiss' hand fell on her arm and she looked up at him. The most bewildering change had come over his face. He seemed at once astonished and chagrined, and for the first time since she had known him, he was at a loss for words.
"I—" he began. Then, "Say—"
And he got down out of the car, muttering, "I guess you're right. Sure. You're right."
Hardly looking back at her at all, he walked stiffly off to his string of ponies and took his part in the bustle as eight men got on horses, and eight grooms pulled up girths, checked stirrup leathers. Captain Pugh came toward him again.

"As a personal favor to me—" he began. But Henry Prentiss waved him away. "Okay," he said. "Okay." He mounted and rode off.
Thereafter, for all the remaining three periods, those mortals in the stands who had so lately been loud in their approval of Henry Prentiss were silent. Not altogether silent, of course. For after a time, in which the Whirlwinds drew the score even and took all the pace away from a Henry Prentiss suddenly grown listless, there was whispering.
"What's the matter? Has the guy lost his guts?" And, "I never would have thought Hank Prentiss had a yellow streak in him."
He kept himself clear of the scurrilousness, and, as if by deliberate plan, always managed to be a length or two late reaching the ball, when he really seemed to try for it at all.

THUS it was that when the final whistle blew, Fred West and his Whirlwinds were the people who moved, weary but exultant, toward the small table in front of the stands where the gleaming trophies stood, and tried their best to look bored while the photographers went at their work.

Cynthia Merriwether took Henry Prentiss home in her station wagon. It was not wholly a pleasant journey.

"I did all right, didn't I?" he asked. The old, careless grin was back again now, and he wanted her response to it.

"Yes. Thanks," she said. But not as she really meant it.
"Not satisfied, Pretty?"
"To tell the truth, you make me feel sort of foolish."
"As how?"

"I didn't mean for you to quit cold. Did you do that just for spite—just to make me feel guilty? Were you calling me a coward?"

"Last thing I ever would think of. You know that."
"What happened, then?"
"I lost interest."
"I guess I should have stayed out of it."

"I'm glad you didn't." "The people who lost money will be saying nasty things."
"Not to my face." He laughed again, with genuine gaiety. And she could not resist it. She slapped him on the knee.

"You're about 13 years old," she said.
"But strong and well-developed for my age."
They drew up in front of his cottage. They laughed again, and he got out.

"Thank you, Miss Merriwether," he said.

"It must be like I always heard," she said, and shook her head sadly. "Yeah?"
"Tenors and southpaws—cray people."
She let in the clutch. "Come on over when you get your face scrubbed," she said.
"Will do." He waved, and she was gone.
(To Be Continued)

The period of our defensive attrition in the Pacific is passing. Now our aim is to force the Japanese to fight. Last year we stopped them. This year we intend to advance. — President Roosevelt.



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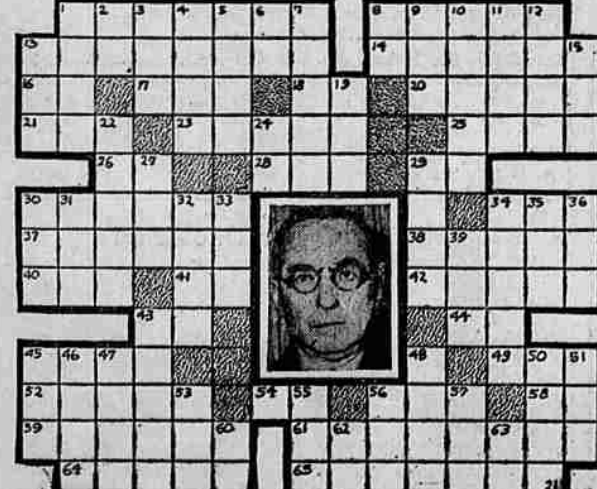
25 MILLION EUROPEANS IN THE 14TH CENTURY DIED OF BUBONIC PLAGUE TRANSMITTED BY FLEAS FROM INFECTED RATS!
TODAY, MILLIONS ARE DYING ALL OVER THE WORLD BECAUSE OF "INFECTED RATS."



ANSWER: Rice fields.

SOUTH AMERICAN PRESIDENT

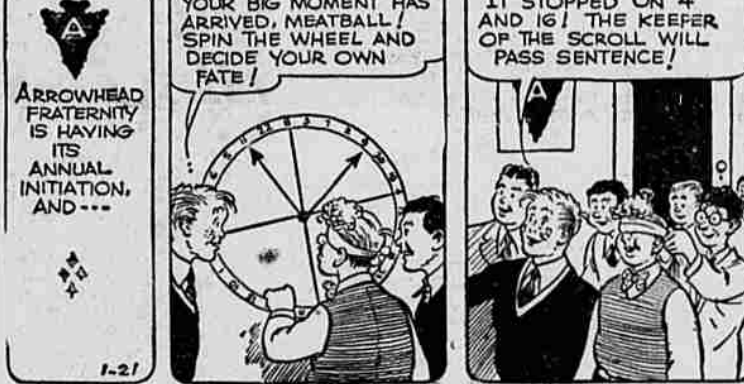
HORIZONTAL
1,8 Pictured South American statesman.
13 Occurrence.
14 Having less hair on the head.
16 Mountain (abbr.).
17 Crazy hill.
18 Transpose (abbr.).
20 Pathetic.
21 Fondle.
23 Julie's boy friend.
25 Book of the Bible.
26 Daughter of Inachus (myth.).
28 Skill.
29 Postscript (abbr.).
30 Strong-scented herb liked by cats.
34 Constellation.
37 Lubricators.
38 Set anew.
40 Before (prefix).
41 Sloth.
42 Article of food (abbr.).
43 One (Fr.).
44 North Dakota (abbr.).
45 Solar disk (Egypt).
49 Decline.
52 Leases.
54 Negative.
56 Age.
58 Rough lava.
59 Complete.
61 He is president of the United States of —.
64 Ultimate end.
65 Unbreakable obstacle.
VERTICAL
1 Poker stake.
2 Lower case (abbr.).
3 Applicable.
4 Simul.
5 Roman emperor.
6 Tin (symbol).
7 Mammal.
8 Pound (abbr.).
9 Grain.
10 Entreaties of —.
11 Kind of cheese.
12 Jap plane.
13 Little demon.
15 Railways.
19 Decay.
22 Name.
24 Parent.
27 Unit.
29 Harbor.
30 Scottish measure.
31 Ventilate.
32 Persia.
33 Greek letter.
34 Apart.
35 Ribbed fabric.
36 Has eaten.
39 Sea eagle.
43 Up to the time when.
45 Exist.
46 Canvas shelter.
47 Grafted (her.)
48 Promontory (abbr.).
49 Lure.
51 Sheep's blast.
53 Theater sign (init.).
55 Wood sorrel.
56 Note in Guido's scale.
57 Wine vessel.
60 Electrical term.
62 Alleged force.
63 Baron (abbr.).



Little Orphan Annie



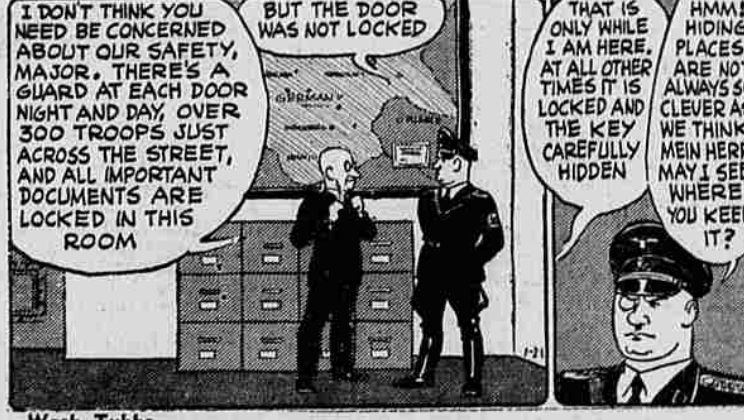
By Harold Gray



Freckles and His Friends



By Blosser



Wash Tubbs



By Crane



Boots and Her Buddies



By Martin



Alley Oop



By V. T. Hamlin