

"Business Kisses"

By BEATRICE BURTON

Author of "Gloria, The Flapper Wife"

The names in this story are purely fictitious and are not to be taken as referring to any particular person, place or firm.

CHAPTER LIII

A shadow of very real fear crossed Mary Rose's face, darkening it. "Oh, but you won't let her come back to work, will you?" she asked. Her voice and her eyes, still wet with tears, begged Dexter not to give Flossie her old job, again. "She doesn't need to work, now that she's married. Fifty dollars a week is more than enough for a young couple to get along on, isn't it?" Dexter nodded. "Yes, and Sam's making more than that, anyway. I gave him a raise for a wedding present," he added with the proud air of an elderly Boy Scout who has done his daily good deed. "I can't make out why she wants to come back. She never did like to work. Here, read her letter."

There's no room for me in your bus."

There wasn't. It was piled high with baskets and caterers' boxes and a great pile of yellow chrysanthemums, peeping out from their paper wrappings. Tom grinned as he looked at them. "Just a few more things for the wedding breakfast," he explained. "Your mother and I have had a circus fixing up the house all morning. Just wait until you see it!"

The house, when she did see it, was a bower of flowers—dozens and dozens of chrysanthemums, white and pink and golden yellow. Even the staircase was decorated with them. And the air was heavy with their pungent smell.

"Oh, Tom!" she reproached. "You must have spent a fortune on them!" He grinned cheerfully.

"Well, you won't let me have a wedding of my own. So I may as well well myself in somebody else's wedding breakfast!" he said, with a shrug.

He came closer, towering over her, but not touching her. "Listen, Honey Rose, now that you've left the Dexter Company don't get another job. Marry me instead," he said, his eyes suddenly very quiet and serious. "Will you?"

He lifted her cold hand and bent her long fingers one by one. "They weren't made to hang the keys of a typewriter," he added.

Mary Rose laughed a little. "What were they made for, then?" she asked. "For cooking and baking and—"

"For this," Tom broke in and kissed them all, one after the other. The door opened and Mrs. Middleton came in. Behind her, Mary Rose caught a glimpse of the dining room table.

A cloth edged with heavy flet lace covered it and it was banked high with more of the chrysanthemums. There were tall white candles at either end.

"How lovely it all is! I had no idea this old house could be made to look so beautiful," Mary Rose cried. She drew her hand out of Tom's and ran out into the dining room. "Why, look! Even the sandwiches are all tied up with yellow satin ribbons!"

"Tom did it all," Mrs. Middleton told her. "He brought his mother's cook along with him and her best table cloth and even some wine to drink the bride's health in! He's a regular miracle man, I tell him."

"I brought something else, too," Tom said in an undertone.

And when Mrs. Middleton had disappeared into the kitchen to give the cook some last nervous orders, he showed Mary Rose what that "something else" was.

He brought it slowly out from his pocket—a tiny circle of platinum crusted with little diamonds—a wedding ring.

Mary Rose took it from him. Within its narrow band was engraved the legend "T. F. to M. R. M. Nov. 14."

She looked up at him with wide, startled eyes. "Why, that's today—Nov. 14!" she said.

"I know it," he nodded and his ruddy face became even more ruddy than usual as a flush of embarrassment spread over it. He began to stammer as he always did when he was nervous or shy.

"I thought you might marry me today—just by some wild chance!" he exploded. "See?"

Almost before the words were out of his mouth, she was shaking her head. Then she threw it up with a quick, impatient movement.

"Tom, must you spoil this perfectly good friendship of ours all the time like this?" she asked.

He smiled at her. "There's no such thing as friendship between a man and a woman, when they're as young as we are," he said. "Any doctor can tell you that! A man either loves a woman and wants her—or she doesn't exist for him. Mary Rose, I'm beginning to think you are as cold as ice. I don't believe you know the meaning of love."

Yet whatever she was—cold or not—he loved her. And even though he knew that beyond friendliness, she cared nothing for him, he would

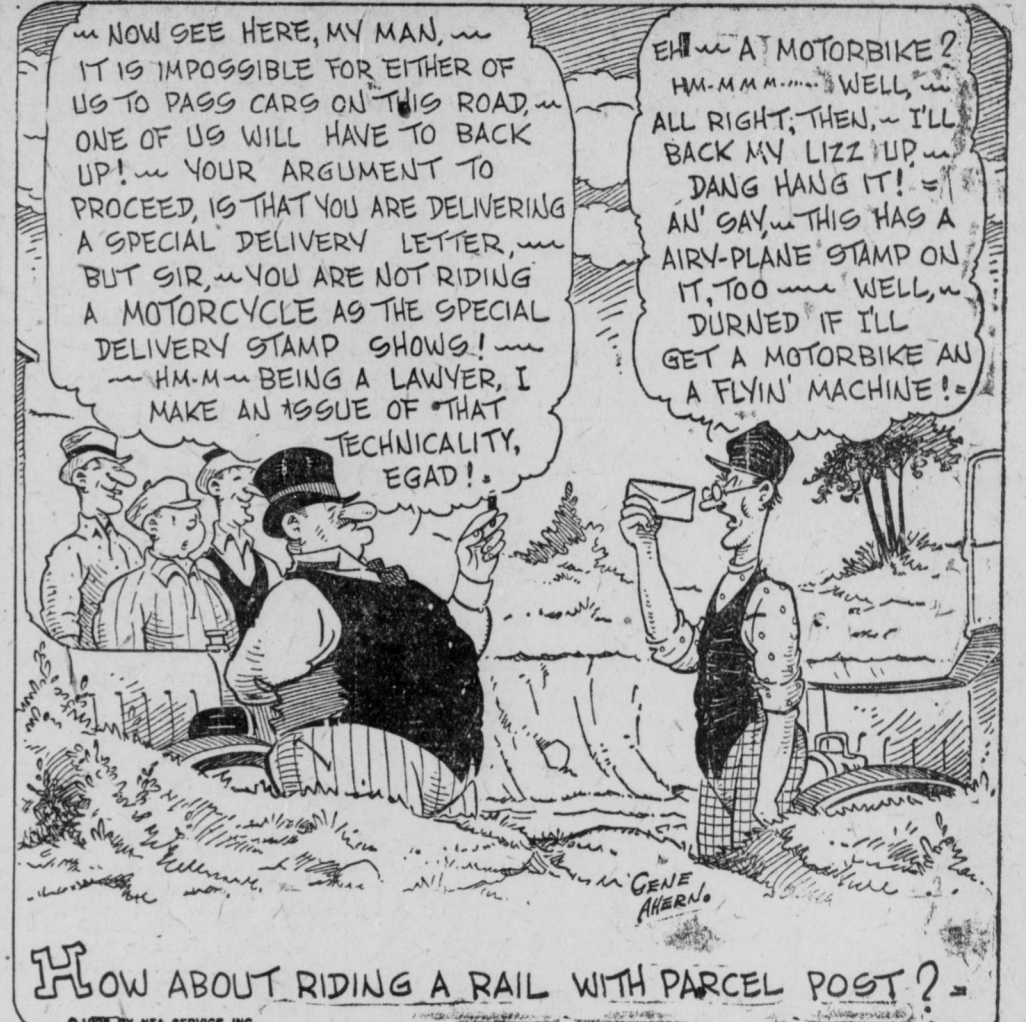
OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS



HEROES ARE MADE—NOT BORN

SALESMAN #AM—By SWAN

OUR BOARDING HOUSE—By AHERN



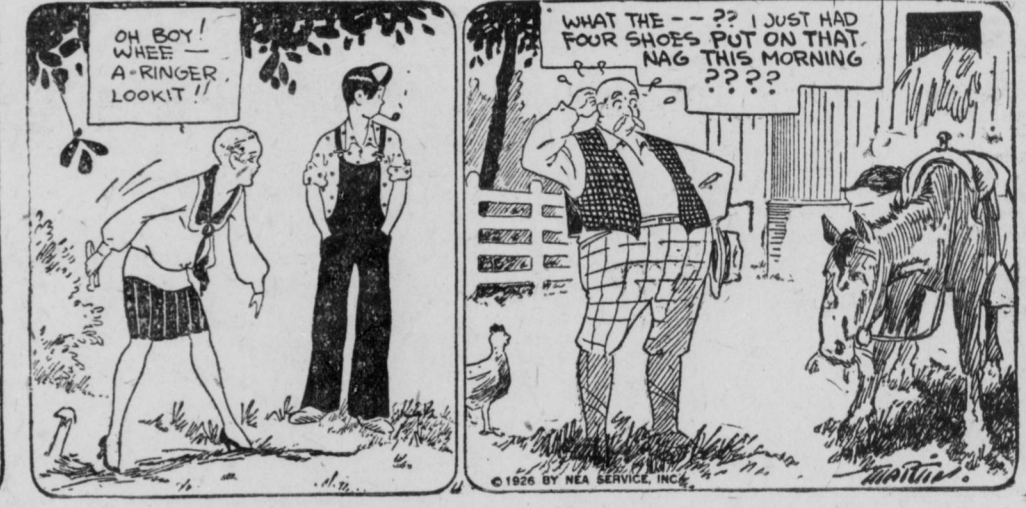
HOW ABOUT RIDING A RAIL WITH PARCEL POST?



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES—By MARTIN



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—By BLOSSER



"DOUGHBOY" ESSENTIAL

Foot Soldier "Main Body" of Defense Says Retired Officer.

The "doughboy" or foot soldier is irreplaceable and remains the fundamental instrument in battle, declares Maj. Gen. J. G. Harbord, U. S. A., retired, in an article on national defense in the August issue of the American Legion Monthly, published here.

Harbord, former chief of staff of the American expeditionary forces, wrote the article in reply to "loose thinking and loose reasoning on the subject of national defense."

The foot soldier is more efficient than the fighter on horse, in tank,

airplane or in a fixed fortification, he pointed out. He recalled decision of the War Department general staff in 1922 that the "doughboy" will remain the "main-body" of national defense.

MORE CONVENIENT The square handkerchief which ties on the shoulder is preferred to the long printed scarf by the athletic

AWAY, FAT LEGS! LONDON—By painting shadows in proper places, a stocking recently designed is guaranteed to make fat legs appear to have a graceful curve.

Restaurant Head Seriously Ill

John R. Thompson, millionaire founder of the national chain of restaurants that bear his name, is seriously ill at his home in Lake Forest, Ill. He is 61 and has been in poor health for four years. He ran his business thirty years ago with \$500 capital.

NEW YORK UNAMERICAN

LONDON, Aug. 4.—New York is not a typical American city, the Rev. John McNeill, pastor of the United Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, declared on his arrival here.

"Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago are truly American cities, while New York is a conglomeration of Old Europe and the colored races," he said. "I just couldn't afford the hat," he said, with a kind of pathos. "Twenty dollars for that little peanut of a hat!"

NO WOMAN CAN KEEP HOUSE EFFICIENTLY Without Good Health



MRS. FRANK LINDORE 222 PIERCE AVENUE, LANCASTER, OHIO

Four Walls Can Make a House, but it takes a Woman to Make a Home

To be a successful homemaker, a woman must guard her health. When mother is not well, the home is upset. Women everywhere are learning through their own personal experiences, as these women did, the merit of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Lancaster, Ohio.—"For ten years after my marriage, I had poor health.

I was on a visit to my sister in Utica, Michigan, and she had taken Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Her husband got me a bottle and I took it and felt so much better that I got a second one. Now, whenever I feel run-down I take the Vegetable Compound and soon feel all right again. I have had three little girls in the last five years and do all my housework, sewing, washing, and ironing. My time is pretty well taken up, but I will answer any letters I receive."—Mrs. FRANK LINDORE, 222 Pierce Avenue, Lancaster, Ohio.

Sturgis, Michigan.—"I am very thankful for what your medicine has done for me and have recommended it to others. I took it to give me strength before my baby was born. I would have to stop work and lie down sometimes all the afternoon. I felt as if I did not care whether anything was done or not. I got tired out so easily that one day I found a little book on my porch and that night I showed it to my husband and he went down town and got me a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. The medicine has helped me so much that I was soon able to do my work and when my baby was born, my nurse, Mrs. Forbes, said it was the easiest birth she had ever attended. I will be more than pleased if I am helping someone else by giving my testimonial."—Mrs. EDWARD PRINCE, 209 Surprise Ave., Sturgis, Michigan.

have taken her if he could on any terms!

She slipped away from him and ran upstairs to dress. Before she was ready she heard the unmistakable arithmetic cough of Sam Jessup's automobile out in the street. She ran to the window! Yes, there were—Sam and Flossie—taking their bags out of the old Wheeler and coming up the walk with them. Mary Rose noticed that Flossie was wearing a new hat—a little gray thing of the shape known to all women as the "Gigolo." The last scream in hat fashions!

"Think of paying \$20 for that thing!" she said to herself.

When she got downstairs, Flossie was in Mrs. Middleton's arms and Tom was shaking Sam Jessup's hand as if it were a pump handle and slapping him on the back.

"Hah! Hah! I fooled you all! Didn't I? You never thought Sam and I'd be married so soon, did you?" Flossie cried, looking from one face to another, with her blue eyes dancing.

"I fooled Sam, too," she added, with a peal of silver laughter. "I never will forget the old kid's face the day I ran away. I met him down at the corner and served no notice on him that we were on our way to be married. He was 'sprised 'most to death!"

She ran on, giving little, short, delighted shrieks over the house, gay with its flowers, and she clasped her hands with joy at the sight of the table and of all the presents heaped on the sideboard.

Sam followed her, moodily silent.

"You probably notice that Sam and I are about as friendly as two strange bulldogs," she remarked cheerfully. "We've barely spoken to each other for three days!"

"You know that's not true, Flossie," Sam contradicted her, looking her straight in the eyes. He turned to Mrs. Middleton.

"She wants to go back to work and I won't let her—," he began, but Flossie broke in and drowned him out.

"I don't want to go back to work at all. But I've got to go back to work—because he won't give me any money!" she said with brutal frankness. "He keeps all his money himself! In a wallet!"

She pulled off her new little gray "Gigolo" hat and held it out to them. "You see this hat? Well, he wouldn't give me the money to buy it—"

"How did you get it, then?" This from Tom.

"Sent to Mary Rose for the money!" Flossie explained. She stepped close to Sam and with a lightning-like movement locked her arms around him.

"Isn't he an old peach?" she asked, with mock sincerity. "Just like all the men! Cr-r-azy about you, until they get you! And then stingy and mean and selfish and horrid—"

Sam looked helplessly at his mother-in-law. "After I'd paid our bill at the hotel—\$4 a day, you know—I just couldn't afford the hat," he said, with a kind of pathos. "Twenty dollars for that little peanut of a hat!"

"That's right! Make me out an extravagant fiend," Flossie cried. "To hear you talk, Sam Jessup, anybody would think I'm not the angel I am. And I am an angel! You know I'm an angel! And I'm going back to work Monday to earn the money for my own hat! I'd rather die than ask you for a penny more! All I wish is that I'd never laid eyes on you!"

And with that she turned and ran upstairs, locking herself in her old bedroom. It took the united efforts of Mrs. Middleton, Tom and Mary Rose to finally persuade her to come down for the wedding breakfast.

"Gosh! That's some beginning for their married life, isn't it?" Tom asked Mary Rose two hours later, when the two of them were helping the cook with the dishes. "And if he lets her go back to work, he's crazy!"

(To Be Continued)

How will Sam conquer the little spiteful? See tomorrow's installment.

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