

BLACK HAWK

The phantom of Indiana

BY LOU WEDEMAR

EDITOR'S NOTE: The narrative, "Black Hawk," a thrilling story of life in Indiana, is purely fiction and its leading characters exist only in the author's imagination.

SYNOPSIS

When a mysterious menace confronts central Indiana, Robert Martine, an Indianapolis man-about-town, who incidentally is a major of military intelligence, is assigned by Washington to investigate the case. There has been a strange explosion at a station. The President of the United States has been threatened by some one who signs himself the Black Hawk, and whose signs is a winged death's head.

Returning from Washington, Major Martine has lunch with Ava Breen, society girl whom he loves, but who, unbeknownst to her, is a spy. She is approaching the postoffice, where he has been assigned an office, when a bomb from an airplane strikes the building and practically destroys the third story.

The Black Hawk demands evacuation of Martine county, declaring the forces will destroy all industry in the region if he is not obeyed. He asks the union station will be destroyed next.

At the station, a whisperer leaps from an incoming train and attempts to place a "nitrate" bomb on the tracks to blow up train and terminal. Martine, a powerful explosives expert, intervenes, hurries himself in front of another train, and is killed.

CHAPTER SIX (Continued)

"Is there any other danger?"

"Yes, it may deteriorate of itself, so that it will explode automatically at any minute!"

"When!" said Lieutenant Quinns. "Let's put it out in Fall creek quick!"

That was what Bob reluctantly agreed to do. Piling into a car offered by Al Feeney and gingerly boarding a car, he gingerly launched near the North Delaware street bridge half an hour later, he had Quinns pilot him into the middle of the creek. There, nestling in a cradle of cotton batting, they left Black Hawk's deadly token.

"I'm going to get a couple of hours' sleep," Bob told Quinns. "You better do the same."

"All right. Where?"

"Let's go to the Claypool." The manager greeted them with: "We expected you, Major Martine. Somebody called and asked if you were here yet."

Bob raised his eyebrows.

"We didn't know we were coming until ten minutes ago, at Union Station. I wonder who called?"

The manager didn't know. Bob went to bed at once, in one of two rooms on the sixth floor assigned them.

Lieutenant Quinns first made a check of the apartment. He was uneasy: How had any one known they would be there—unless some of Black Hawk's men had been near them at the station? He looked the door and put a chair against it. A man's life wasn't worth a penny in Indianapolis that night.

The rooms seemed secluded and safe. From the window, across an angle of the building, he could see another window opening on the corridor. He would watch that window for a while. It was nearly dawn. He turned his head to light a cigaret.

Bob felt as if he had just closed his eyes when a heavy thump outside his door brought him wide awake.

"Quin!" he called. There was no response.

He opened the door.

Lieutenant Quinns stood about as he had last seen him, near the door. But his position against the wall was unnatural, and he did not move.

The early morning sunlight glinted on a blade stuck in the wall just above his head. There was a soft, whispering sound in the hall, and Bob drew his revolver.

Lieutenant Quinns had been killed by a hatchet, in a locked room, while Bob slept a few feet away.

Bob started toward the hall door.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WILFRED BEAUMONT, who had no difficulty whatever in finding his way around a city of 7,000,000 population, was lost in Indianapolis.

After leaving George Breen's house, where he had been precipitated into the Black Hawk puzzle, he spent the night at the club where he had met Ava's father. Pleading that the organization owed him a

place to sleep, he curled up on a lounge and slept.

Tuesday morning he went out to spend a few precious cents on breakfast, and found the city in turmoil. Newspapers were selling new editions so fast that the sidewalks were almost littered with old ones, and he had no difficulty in checking up on the events of the Black Hawk scare.

The postoffice had been bombed; Ava Breen had received a threatening note; a man had killed himself after supposedly trying to bomb union station. Major Martine had been attacked twice, and a police detective had been murdered with a hatchet in Martine's suite.

It was a diversion, Beaumont commented to himself; he had been afraid of finding Indianapolis somewhat dull after Greenwich village.

He watched a humpbacked woman with a beautiful face feeding the pigeons outside on Monument circle.

STRANGE, Beaumont thought, such a beautiful spot in the business district. He liked the pigeons.

Indianapolis—crossroads of the nation; almost the center of population of the United States; home and inspiration of James Whitcomb Riley, Booth Tarkington and countless others; native city of Roy Howard, one of the nation's greatest newspaper men; city of countless conventions—apparently at the mercy of an agent of destruction! It seemed incredible.

He was standing near a man in laborer's clothes, who did not look like a laborer. Beaumont shivered.

BOB MARTINE threw open the hall door, revolver ready for instant action. There was no one in sight.

But he had heard a whispering sound—some one had been outside a moment earlier.

Quinns had been dead only a few minutes. His slayer was certainly still in the immediate vicinity. He might have intended to enter Bob's room.

At the telephone Bob got the detective. He quickly explained the situation to him. "Can you block the exits?" he asked. "Keep this quiet, but don't let any one get out until the hotel has been searched."

"That's easy," the detective replied. "There are four of our men down here now. We were watching and didn't see anybody suspicious."

Half an hour later the hotel had been efficiently searched, and no trace of any outsider had been found.

Bob studied the angle of the hatchet, and whistled under his breath. The hatchet had not come from behind Quinns; it had come from in front of him. And, since he was standing, and awake, he must inevitably have seen his slayer—unless.

Bob stared through the open window. Ten feet beyond it, across the angle of the building wing, was the open hall window.

He turned to the detective beside him.

"The murderer never got into this suite," he said. "The weapon that killed Quinns was thrown at him from that window!"

UP to this time Bob had little proof of Black Hawk's special interest in him. Certainly Black Hawk had no reason to fear him, so far as investigative progress went.

Bob had got nowhere up to this time—twenty-four hours after he had been given his assignment.

Black Hawk had worried him in every combat.

It was not until after the medical men had arrived, and assigned the death to "person or persons unknown; weapon: small ax or hatchet, possibly thrown," that Bob had time to study the murder weapon.

It was such a handax as may be purchased in any hardware store, although of more than usually graceful design.

"Look here," Bob exclaimed. "The shaft has been hollowed out a little."

The handle had a small opening at the end, and in it was a rolled squib of paper. Bob unrolled it with a hand that was none too steady; he knew what signature it would bear.

He was not, however, prepared for the message above the signature.

(To Be Continued)

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

—By Ahern



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASHINGTON TUBBS II



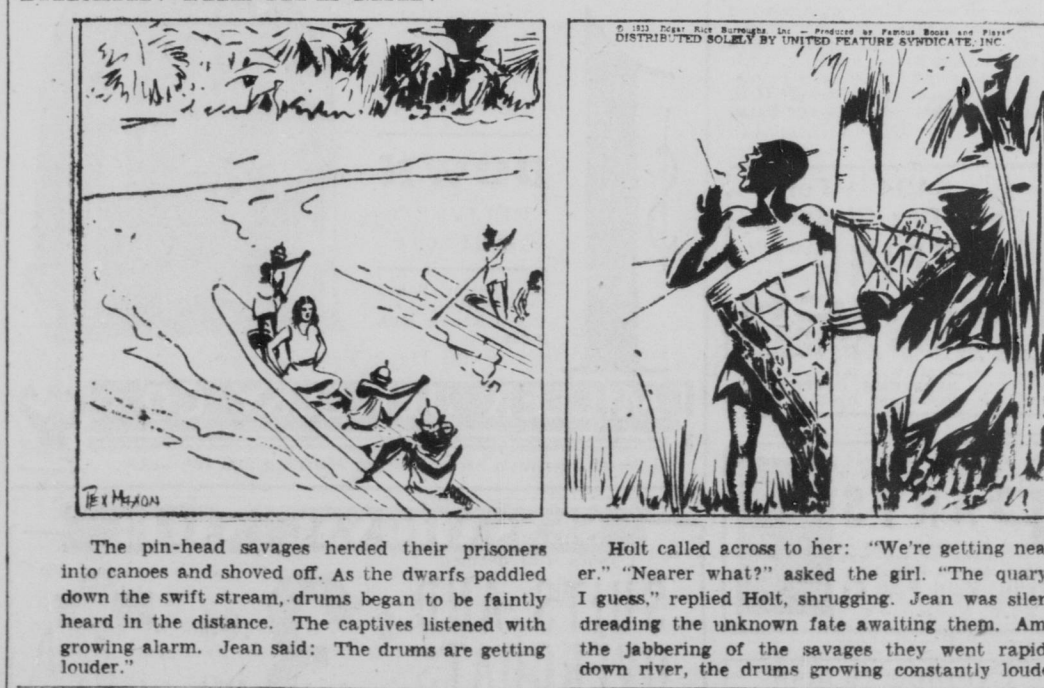
ALLEY OOP



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



TARZAN THE APE MAN

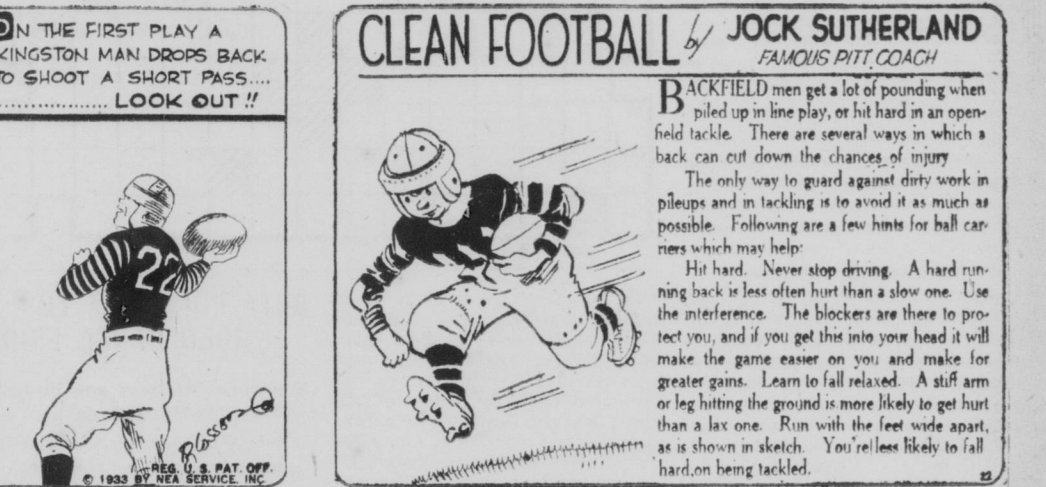


OUT OUR WAY

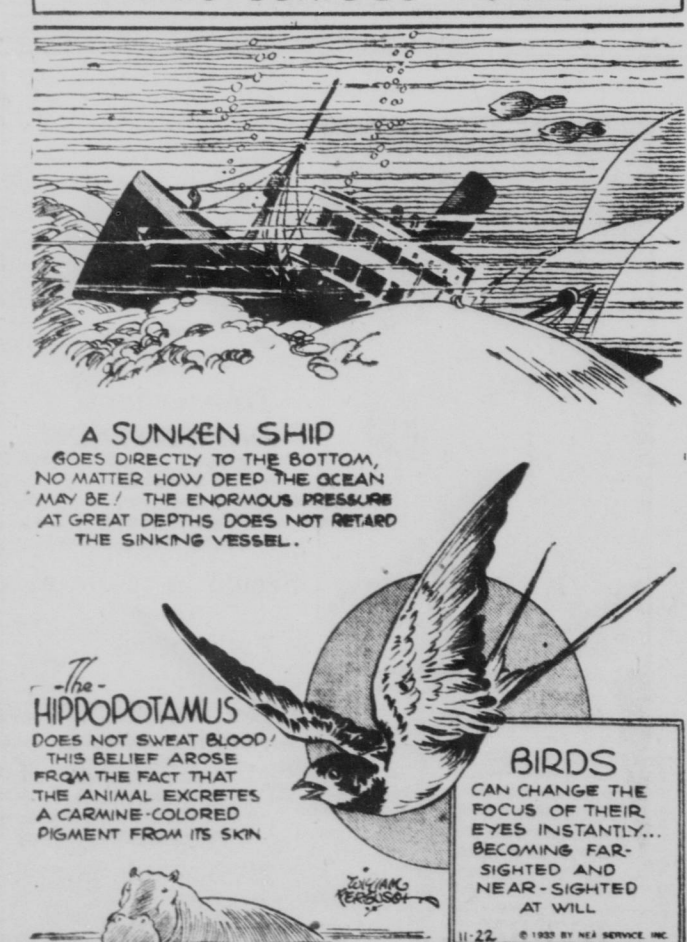
—By Williams



HEROES ARE MADE—NOT BORN.



— THIS CURIOUS WORLD —



A SUNKEN SHIP
GOES DIRECTLY TO THE BOTTOM,
NO MATTER HOW DEEP THE OCEAN
MAY BE! THE ENORMOUS PRESSURE
AT GREAT DEPTHS DOES NOT RETARD
THE SINKING VESSEL.

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS
DOES NOT SWEAT BLOOD.
THIS BELIEF AROSE
FROM THE FACT THAT
THE ANIMAL EXCRETES
A CARMINE-COLORED
PIGMENT FROM ITS SKIN.

BIRDS
CAN CHANGE THE
FOCUS OF THEIR
EYES INSTANTLY...
BECOMING FAR-
SIGHTED AND NEAR-
SIGHTED AT WILL.

AFTER the Titanic and Lusitania disasters, frequent discussions arose as to whether or not a sunken ship goes directly to the bottom of the sea. There was a popular idea that the ship might come to a standstill, when it reached the depth of great pressure. Water, however, is nearly incompressible, and its density increases but little under pressure.

NEXT—What North American country was once in South America?

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