

They Were Expenscable

By W. L. White

Dad Cleland catches up with Kelly's torpedoes flying craft, treats officers to lavish lobster and duck dinner. Pay day comes to crew and the wild night and then back to war. Officers load submarine for relief of defense of Cebu. Rumors of big American "offensive" moving from Australia.

CHAPTER 18

"At about this time the skipper showed up. He told us that the trip for Quinson and the damage to the 35 boat, which he had towed into Cebu for repairs. He was still out hunting for the 32 boat, which hadn't been seen since he left it to rendezvous with the submarine on the MacArthur trip, and he had one-third of the entire American air force of the southern Philippines out combing the island channels for her. One-third of this American southern Philippine air force consisted of exactly one Beechcraft commercial pleasure plane, which when started had been commandeered from a civilian and an Army major who flew Bulkeley around in it. The other two-thirds were a wheezy P-40 and a very tired P-35. Bulkeley risked his neck for days in this search, not knowing, of course, that the 32 boat had been sunk and her commander was now safely en route to Australia.

"The skipper was frantic to get some of our little fleet back into commission so we could finish out the fight. We'd started the war with six

boats. Two were lost off Bataan. One was lost on the escape trip south. That left only three, and two of these were wrecks, the only two left in fighting condition. But he was bound to get the others back into shape. Did I think I could get mine in Cebu? It was the second largest city in the Philippines and they had a real machine shop—no dry docks but a machine railway, one of those contraptions where a track goes down the beach into the sea. You load the boat on a small car and winch it up the track.

"Well, we could try, and we started off, my poor old boat with her earthquake making twelve knots, her back end wiggling like a shipwrecked sailor's dream of a French musical-comedy star. What ever she was good for now, it wasn't fighting, and I was glad we didn't meet any Japs.

"The machine shop was run by 'Dad' Cleland, a 71-year-old American who'd been in the islands since 1914, and a swell guy, he was—originally from Minnesota and a typical hulking frontiersman. Didn't look a day over 50 and was a kind of patriarch in those parts. His native name meant 'the old man' or 'the head man' in Tagalog.

"He was a great gourmet, too. Had Bulkeley and me out to dinner and we had bottled beer in great quantity, a big crab-meat cocktail, then lobster Newburg, which was delicious, but

"Dad" kept warning us to hold back, because then he brought out a couple of roast ducks. "Dad" and I divided the biggest duck between us and had all we could hold. The skipper, on account of his rank, rated a duck all to himself, but he foundered and couldn't finish it. On the side there were canned asparagus and corn, pickles, and sweet-potatoes.

"Desert was simple, like the last bars of a symphony. Just delicious roasted mangos and Chase & Sanborn's coffee. It was a magnificent feed after the native chow I'd been eating. We talked about the war. People in Cebu felt the same way about us, unless miraculous help arrived soon.

"What are you going to do when the Japs come?" we asked "Dad." He shrugged up—six feet two of him.

"Have my dignity to think about," he said. "I'm not going to the hills. I'll stay right here and fight. They can get me if they want to."

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brought and returned to Bataan—we brought the first one in through the channels. For three solid nights we worked until my back and arms ached, slowing all that stuff in the subs, but all the time I kept thinking of Peggy and the grand old gang up there on the Rock and what was left of the peninsula—fighting on without hope or food. Well, here was a little of both we were sending them. To make more room they stripped the submarines of torpedoes—gave 'em to us, four for the 35 boat. If we could ever get her into action, two for the 41 boat, which already had two, and charged them for us with compressed air from the submarine's tanks. Now MTB's were ready for battle, and the subs had a few empty tubes we stuffed food, and I kept thinking, as we shoved it in—there's another squint morsel for Peggy back there on the Rock.

But that wasn't half of it. Bataan was in addition to the subs—the last one showed off on April 5—there were seven fat little island ships, each secretly loaded with food down near "Dad" Cleland's docks—medical supplies, quinine, I've got to say, everything they needed to hold on. But how could they hope to get these fat little subs through the islands to Bataan? Bulkeley was to find out three days later.

"The General in command at Cebu called me in and verified the whole word of the big American offensive," said Bulkeley. "He assured me everything was set. It was to go on about the first of the morning. That very night, twelve Fortresses and heavy bombers were coming up from Australia. A swarm of P-35's were on their way up from Mindanao to Iloilo, where they were to gas up and go into action.

"The bombers were to land at Indanan, gas up, take off, and blow the hell out of every Jap warship in the region, and meanwhile the convoy of interisland steamers would start for Bataan bringing food enough for weeks. Bataan was to be saved after all.

"The General showed messages from all the other generals who commanded in different islands, co-ordinating the offensive. But there was one minor hitch, he explained.

"Aerial reconnaissance had spotted the Japanese destroyers streaming down the coast of Negros Island. Somewhat to the eastward they were a cruiser, with three four-seaplanes, but they weren't worried about it. But that afternoon report had come in giving the progress of the Jap destroyers. Obviously they were heading in the opposite direction. Maybe they had broken down our American code and knew about the interisland steamers, and were coming in either to blockade them or to shell them at the dock.

"Next chapter: Kelly sinks a cruiser.

John D. Shaw, chief attorney for OPA here, said the appeal will be heard by J. W. Driscoll, district manager for OPA. However, Mr. Driscoll was out of the city, and Mr. Shaw said he had not seen an appeal from Mr. Wilson. Mr. Shaw said all appeals in the Charlotte district will be heard by Mr. Driscoll, in accordance with OPA regulations. Mr. Wilson told the hearing board that at the time he was cited by an OPA investigator he was looking for a man who had driven away in one of his company's trucks.

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The Charlotte News

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DOROTHY THOMPSON
SAYS PLENTY

MUST RE COME

THE MANIPULATORS

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE

THERE, THERE! MY WORD, JASON, THE LITTLE MAN DOTES ON THIS WARM DISH!—THESE TOTS ARE SMARTER THAN WE GROWNUPS THINK—THEY KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR THEM—HEH HEH! (GUFFIN)

WOULDN'T MIND A SIP OF IT MYSELF!

YOU GUTTIN' A EXPERT ON CAMMING BABIES, MISTAH MAJOR? LITTLE LEO LOOK AS HAPPY AS A COW IN A CANNFIELD!

URGIE SWILD

MUST RE COME

THE MANIPULATORS

BLONDIE

DAGWOOD: COOKIES READY FOR YOU TO KISS GOOD-NIGHT?

L'L' ABNER

I'M THE LAST OF THE BROODING CHICKS. YOU'RE THE CURSE OF THE BROODING CHICKS. I'M GOING TO AMERICA. ASH-GOING TO FOLLOW ME?—FOLLOW ME!—FOLLOW ME!

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

NOW THERE'S NO USE BEGGING LET'S HURRY. MUST GET THESE LITTLE PESTS BACK TO BEFORE SHOP CLOSING.

WASH TUBBS

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO KILL MOSQUITOES—YOU CAN SWAT 'EM, OR YOU CAN POUR OIL ON WATER AND PREVENT THEM HATCHING. SO IT IS WITH ENEMY AIRPLANES—YOU CAN SHOOT 'EM, OR YOU CAN BOMB FACTORIES AND PREVENT THEIR MANUFACTURE.

THIMBLE THEATER

OKAY, RUNT, I'LL GIVE YOU A ROOM, WE'LL TALK ABOUT YOUR MOMMA LATER!

RED RYDER

WELL, THAT'S THE FIRST WESTERNER WHO EVER REFUSED ME A HAND!

SUPERMAN

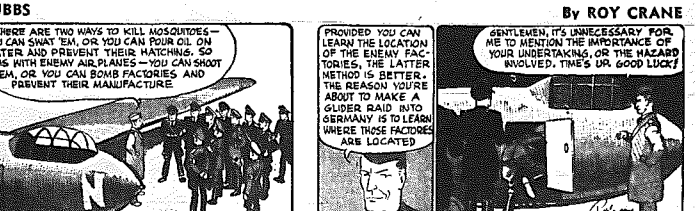
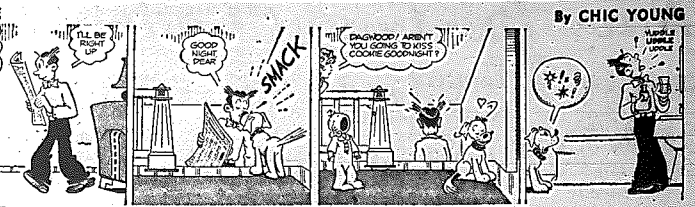
LEAD ME VOICE!

GASOLINE ALLEY

SO YOU'RE SERGEANT BONEY AND HAS BEEN CHARGING A GOTTEN TOUR OF THE DESERT WITH A COUPLE OF COMPANIONS. BONG THEM IN—D LIKE TO MEET THEM.

TERRY AND THE PIRATES

PLUNGING HIM INTO THE LULL IN HIS FACE?



By CHIC YOUNG

By AL CAPP

By MARTIN

By ROY CRANE

STARRING POPEYE

By FRED HARMAN

By JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER

By FRANK KING

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