

They Were Expendable

By W. L. White

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War Between Generals Delays Kelly's Roundabout Escape to Mindanao.
Ensign Cox and Ensign Akers Escorted From the Grave. Sturdy No. 41 Fires Last Shots in Defense of Lake Lanao, Bulkeley Flees to Australia at MacArthur's Command and Kelly Takes Charge of Pack Train Bound for Lake Lanao.

CHAPTER 23

"Here I said good-bye to the American civilians. They owned sugar and coconut plantations and wanted to get to their families. They thought they were going to safety, but where was safety? Or maybe, instead of wandering from island to island, it would be better to wait for the Japs in their homes. They couldn't decide. The whole easy, comfortable American world was cracking up fast in those islands. It wasn't nice to watch.

"Meanwhile I caught a ride in a car to the island's military headquarters where there was a general in command, and told the army lieutenant at the desk that I wanted to get over to the island beyond, provided the Japanese hadn't already taken it—what did he know?"

"Well, he said, he didn't know for sure, but he didn't think the Japs had taken it.

"I asked him when he had last communicated with military head-

quarters over there. "About a month ago, he said. "Well, I said, this was urgent—I had to find out quick—wasn't there any way of getting in communication with them?"

"Well, he said, he guessed he could pick up the telephone on his desk and call them. But, he explained, his best friend around here and didn't understand the local situation. It seemed that his general and the general over on the other island didn't get on at all—hating each other and the West Point. "You fellows may think you're fighting the Japanese, but you know better. The front-line trenches of the real war are between these two generals."

However, he said, my case made it different, and since I was a naval officer and therefore, so to speak, a neutral, he thought he could take it on his own responsibility. He had headquarters on the other island and ask in my behalf if the Japs had landed yet.

"He rang them up and then reported that at the other end of the wire they were talking something which wasn't English or Spanish. Maybe it was Tagalog, which he didn't speak himself, but just in case I thought I had probably better find some other way of going to Mindanao."

"How the war between the Generals came out never I learned, maybe their finishing it in a Japanese prison camp."

"I took me days to get to

Mindanao around through the islands begging rides in cars, hiring small boats to cross island channels. My objective was to join Bulkeley, who, they had said in Cebu, had escaped the destroyer and was in Mindanao. I wanted to make my report of my part of the battle to him as commander of our squadron. General Sharp who commanded the squadron could tell me where he was.

"A Chinese muelle who was alone a smuggling business at Bulkeley's finally landed me, for an enormous price, at a tiny village on Mindanao which had been abandoned by everybody but one old man, who said yes, a torpedo boat had been there the week before, and with gestures drew a good picture of Bulkeley's black beard. But he said they'd been there only a few hours, and left for he knew not where. Then he asked when the Japs were coming. Because all the villagers had left, because they were afraid they'd be killed, he didn't think the Japs would kill an old man, did he?"

"I hopped a ride on a truck on down to Higan, and there was Bulkeley. He said, 'Hello, old man!'"

"The first person I saw was Ensign Cox here, and his mouth dropped open. After a few seconds, he said, 'Good God! I heard you were dead!' One by one the crew would come up, stare, then step up to shake my hand and say, 'Gee, Mr. Kelly, we're glad to see you!'"

"After Cebu fell," explained Cox, "an army aviator arrived—he'd left Cebu that morning. He said he'd talked to a Catholic priest who had said bald mass over you and another sailor, killed in an engagement."

"And I was very glad to hear it," said Kelly. "Because Ign I had gotten decent burial at the American cemetery in Cebu before the Japs arrived. But—then they asked, 'Where's Bulkeley?' You see, the last I saw of him he was tearing around the other side of that Japanese cruiser, trying to draw its fire away from me, so I could get to safely if I thought they'd probably got him. I heard he'd turned up later in Mindanao, but it was just a rumor."

"What actually happened was this," said Bulkeley. "They didn't get me, but three destroyers shined me until dawn when I pulled away into shallow water, and we tied up under a pier to get some sleep—as I think I said.

"When night came I went on up

to Higan, where I intended to get gas and go on up to Cebu to see what had happened to Kelly. I thought I was pretty sure he hadn't got alive. But at Higan I was met by a general. I had never heard of him, but he was needed it all for the plan to get to Australia."

"So then we were—stuck at Higan. I went over to headquarters at Del Monte to report the battle with the destroyer to General Sharp—certain that the end was before us on the island. We'd be fighting the Japs there with rifles—to the end. But that morning—it was April 13—General Sharp called me in to say I'd just got orders from Melbourne that I was ordered to report to MacArthur immediately on my plane leaving Del Monte that night. For a while I felt rotten. It would look like I was talking about it, because pretty soon we were going to be killed or captured by the Japanese."

"Then I figured it another way. If I could get to Australia, and presently General Sharp would be able to persuade MacArthur to bring out the rest of the squadron, I looked over it was the only chance. 'I'm going to try to get out all your officers and key men' he had said. 'I'm not going to let you die in a fox hole with a rifle.' I knew he had believed the Japs had a great future in the war."

"So I sent word to the rest I would get them flown out if possible and get aboard the boat that night. As we left the field, the Japs ditchbombed it and put our motor out, but we got through."

"The left me in charge," said Akers, "and presently General Sharp sent me up to Lake Lanao in the middle of Mindanao, island on a peculiar mission. They were afraid the Japs might land sealplanes on it and I was to set up defenses there. I was to teach the Army how to run the machine-guns. The lake is about twenty miles long and fifteen wide in the middle of the Moro country. They were planning to take the 41 boat up there when I left. All their torpedoes were gone, but their machine-guns were intact, and they wanted to use them as a live museum to keep the later class of Jap sealplanes so that our flying boats in from Australia would have a place to set down as long as they dared come in. They defended Lake Lanao to the last, but I don't think they could learn that the mid 41 boat, the flagship of the squadron, fired the last shot of the war out of that lake, protecting the life line to home."

"Cox told me Bulkeley had gone home," said Kelly, "thinking I was dead, had made him squadron commander. And I thought I'd died, I'd been taken up to Lake Lanao and end the war fighting with the Japs. So I dread I'd be sent up to Del Monte and report to Sharp so he could tell Bulkeley I was alive, and send in my report by radio to the States and what happened to my boat.

"The General was amazed to see me. 'Bulkeley and Reynolds been killed in action,' he said. He listened to my report on the battle. 'I'll send you to Kuala Lumpur,' he said, 'near the airfield where the planes come in. But I warn you, there's hope for much longer at setting out. There's almost no more gas to refuel the planes at this rate. I think that they'll send any more.' I said, 'I was sure we were getting out—MacArthur had told Bulkeley he would do it if it was humanly possible.'

"The town was 45 miles away, and I reported to 'Army' headquarters there noon. He asked me why I was here. 'Waiting transportation to Australia,' I said. "So we're getting your boys up," he said. "And since I've had no instructions, I assume you're here on a duty status and am going to put you to work."

"That's what I said. If I don't have to leave the vicinity," "I can't even guarantee that," he said. "I'm organizing a caravan pack train to Lake Lanao. They're cutting the trail now. I have another 100 men heading up to Caracas and drivers. When he gets there, you'll be in charge of the pack train."

"I didn't see much. I figured he and I were in for a snowdrift. I didn't intend to miss a plane here, but I made a mistake. I thought there was to be a being sent back to base. After that 50 Caracas was a lot to pound up. It would be a great day."

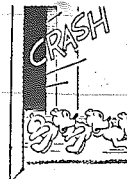
Next Chapter: Final chapter in this thrilling tale of T. S. Heron in World War II.

Englishman Would Stop All Births

LONDON—An moratorium on child-bearing until the end of the war was urged today by Alderman M. Campbell, a member of the Wimbledon Council. "So to restrain our growth or at least of the nations engaged in the war, should bring children into the world for the duration of the war," he argued. This statement came during a debate on the question of continuing special leave during confinement for married women on the council's permanent staff.

Today's News Today
 Why Wait 'Til Tomorrow? The Charlotte News

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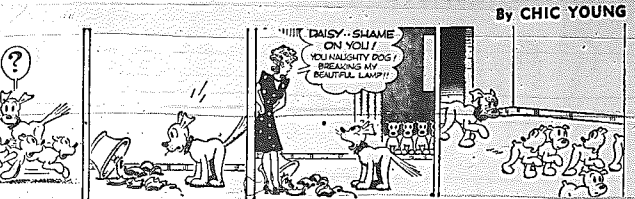
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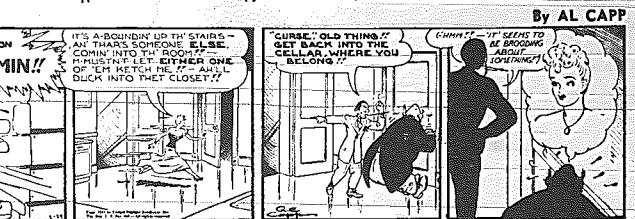
GASOLINE ALLEY



TERRY AND THE PIRATES



By CHIC YOUNG



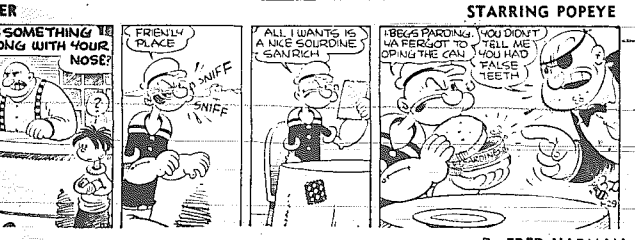
By AL CAPP



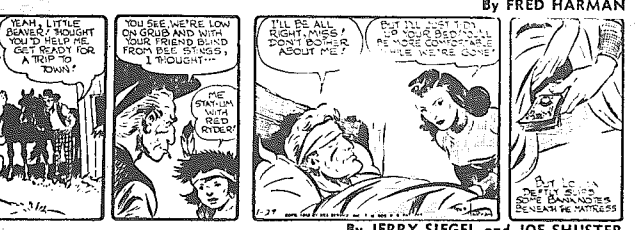
By MARTIN



By ROY CRANE



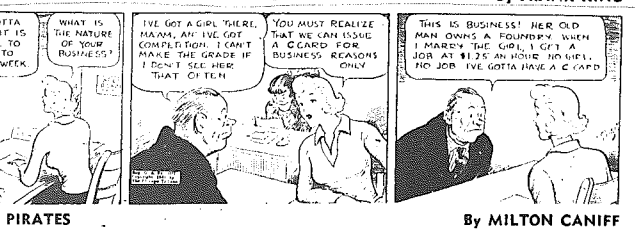
STARRING POPEYE



By FRED HARMAN



By JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER



By FRANK KING



By MILTON CANIFF

WISHING WELL

Registered U. S. Patent Office.

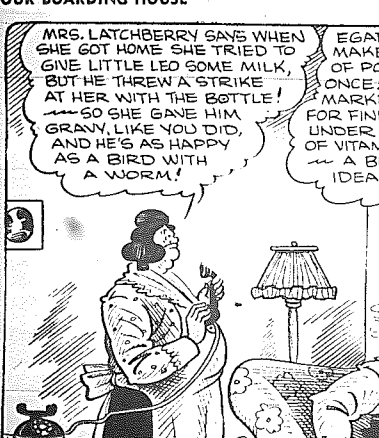
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R	N	L	I	K	S	L	O	E	L	K	D

HERE is a pleasant little game that will give you a message every day. It is a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is six or more, subtract four. If the number is less than six, add three. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner of the rectangle and check every one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

OUT OUR WAY



OUR BOARDING HOUSE



By J. R. WILLIAMS



With MAJOR HITTLE

