

# Floyd Gibbons'

## ADVENTURERS' CLUB

HEADLINES FROM THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF!



### "Death in the Eeltrap"

HELLO, EVERYBODY:

A fisherman takes his living out of the water, and at times the water is pretty generous. But it's a treacherous element when it wants to be, and there are times when it takes back more than it has given. Sometimes it drives a mighty hard bargain.

Judd O'Rourke, of Hartford, Conn., made his living for eight or nine months by wheedling it from the Saco river in Maine. Judd didn't take any too much from the river. Darned little more than he needed to live on. But when the river came around to collect, it wanted Judd's life in payment for those few months of subsistence.

It was in the spring of 1929 when Judd started to wrest a living from the river. He was digging clams and fishing for eels, down at the mouth of the stream. Eel fishing took quite a bit of equipment. One set line alone cost about eight dollars for material and a day's work putting it together.

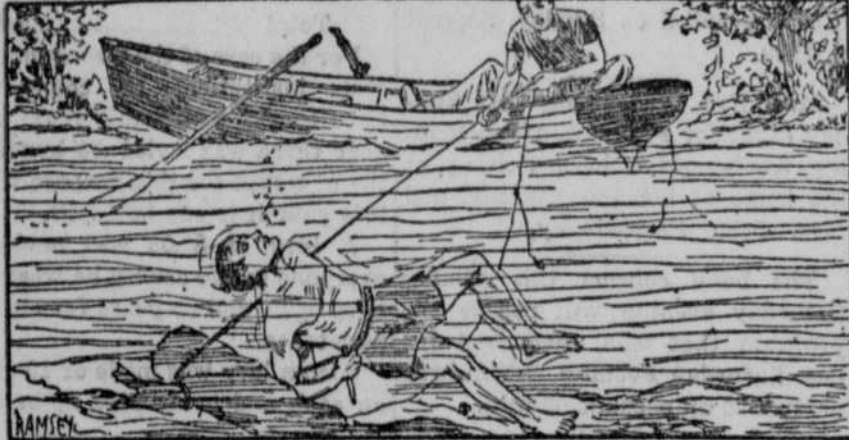
A set line is a long rope, with weights on it every 20 feet to keep it down at the bottom of the river, and three or four hundred shorter lines attached to it at intervals. The shorter lines are baited to catch the eels which swim along near the bottom of the stream on their way out to sea with the ebbing tide.

#### Set Line Anchored by Concrete Blocks.

Judd's set line stretched clear across the river. It was anchored by concrete blocks a few feet out from either shore, and at one end there was a float that told Judd where he could find it when he wanted it. You never take a set line entirely out of the water. When you want to gather your catch, you haul the line up at the buoy and work your way along it in a rowboat, pulling the line up in front of you and letting it fall back in the water behind.

All through April and May, Judd made his living digging clams and tending his set lines. And then, on the morning of June 7, Old Man River presented him with a bill for what he had taken. The bill was for one human life, and Old Man River didn't pull his punches when he started collecting them.

That morning, Judd and his friend, George Croft, were rowing out to some mud flats for bait. On their way, they passed one of Judd's set lines and stopped to see if there was a stray eel or two on it. Judd



George was hauling him down—not up!

caught the line at the buoy, pulled it up, and started working along it toward the other side of the river. He worked along until he was about half way across, and then the line stuck.

Judd figured it was caught on a snag on the river bottom. Try as he would, he couldn't pull it up, so the two men gave up and rowed on to get their bait. But on the way back, Judd began thinking that he didn't want to lose a new eight dollar set line and decided to have a try at diving for it.

The river was only about 14 feet deep at low tide, and all the clothes Judd had on were his boots and a pair of old pants with legs cut off at the knees. He took off his boots, and then tied the boat's anchor rope to his waist and gave the other end to George Croft to hold. That rope was for safety's sake. The waters on the Maine coast are ice cold, even in June, and if Judd got a cramp he wanted George to be able to haul him up. But sometimes the contraptions we rig up for our safety are the things that do us the most harm.

#### Judd Finds Where His Line Is Snagged.

Judd dived. He found his line and began working his way toward where it was snagged. He found the place. An old water-logged tree stump, rolled downstream by the current, had lodged on top of it. Judd couldn't budge the stump. His lungs were bursting, so he rose to the surface. The only thing he could do now was to cut the line on each side of the stump and save as much of it as possible. Taking his fishing knife he dived again.

He reached the bottom, cut the line on one side, and then, after rising to the surface for another breath of air, he went down again. But this time, he miscalculated his distance. He reached bottom on the wrong side of the stump and had to work his way around it. "That took a few precious seconds," says Judd, "because now the current was becoming stronger and it was getting increasingly hard to hold my feet on the bottom. But at last I found the line. I cut it quickly, doubled my knees under me and shot toward the surface."

#### Anchor Rope Caught on Bottom.

But Judd didn't reach the surface. He shot up about five feet, and then stopped with a jerk that took the air out of his lungs. That jerk scared Judd. "The first thing I thought," he says, "was that a large squid had me. To this day I don't know why I should have thought that, for the largest squid I have ever seen weighed only a pound and a half. Then I looked down and saw that it was the anchor rope, tied to my waist, that was holding me. I knew it must be caught on the bottom, so I grasped it and hauled myself downward, hand over hand."

Judd's lungs were aching now. The air was gone out of them, and he knew it would be a long time before he could unangle that rope and get to the surface. Would he make it? Well—he was doing his best. That 10 feet of rope seemed like 500. His heart was beating and his head was spinning. At last he reached the point where the rope was snagged, and then—catastrophe!

As he reached the snag, the rope suddenly tightened, drawing him up close against the stump. Up in the boat, George Croft had picked that moment to become alarmed and try to haul Judd out of the water. And with the rope caught in the snag, George was hauling him down instead of up—down to his death!

Judd began to struggle. But the rope only pulled him closer to the stump. It was so tight that Judd couldn't possibly free it from the snag, and there weren't many more seconds left in which he'd be able to free it. His lungs were bursting and his stomach felt as if it were turning inside out. He began swallowing water—and at that moment he thought of the knife he had brought down to cut the set line. It was in his belt. He got it out, cut the rope—and that was the last Judd remembered.

When Judd woke up, he was lying in the bottom of the boat, and George was giving him artificial respiration. George had had the scare of his life when the rope suddenly went slack and Judd's body had come to the surface and then started to go down again. He had fished Judd out with a gaff and then worked over him until he brought him around again.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

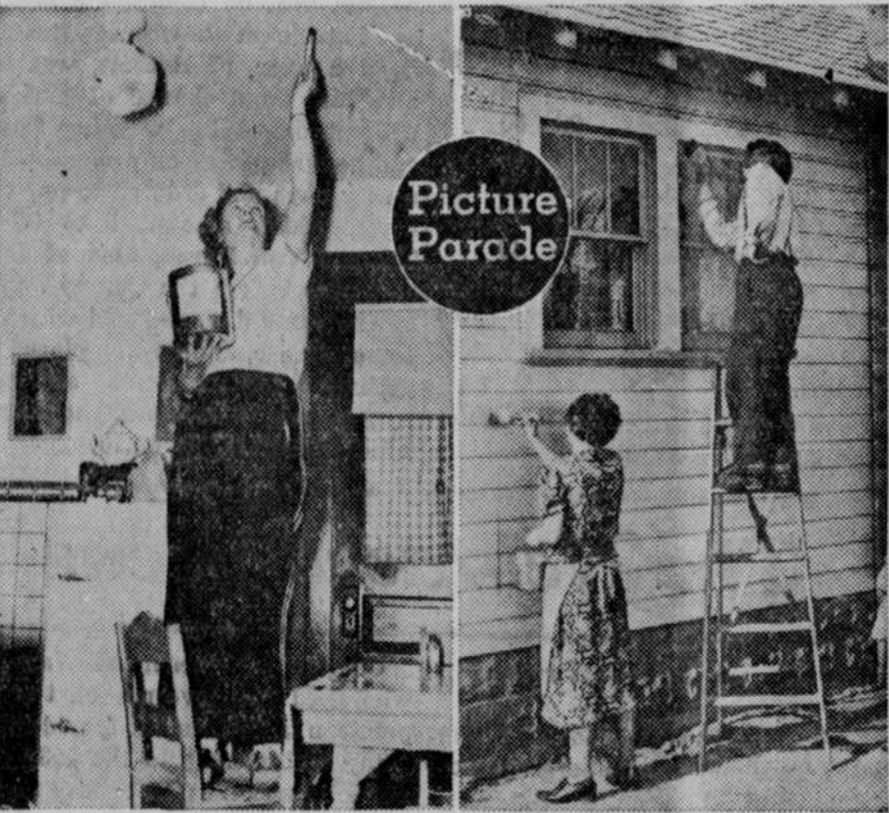
**Government Wages**  
According to figures compiled by the United States civil service commission, the average annual salary of government employees is approximately \$1,871. The average in the District of Columbia is \$2,066, and outside the District of Columbia, \$1,838.

**Farm Lands**  
Texas has the largest amount of land devoted to farming of any state in the country—124,707,130 acres—almost four times the acreage of its nearest rival, Nebraska. The District of Columbia, the smallest section, has 3,071 acres devoted to agriculture.

## HOUSING— U. S. May Discover 'Yardstick' In Low-Cost Indiana Project



THIS is the living room of a home costing somewhere less than \$2,500. In July, 1937, four brothers named Hoess at Hammond, Ind., divided a 40-acre plot into one-acre lots, then sold homes to low-wage earners and provided them enough land for productive gardening. Thirty-six homes have been built, most of them four rooms with bath which tenants pay \$20 to \$25 a month.



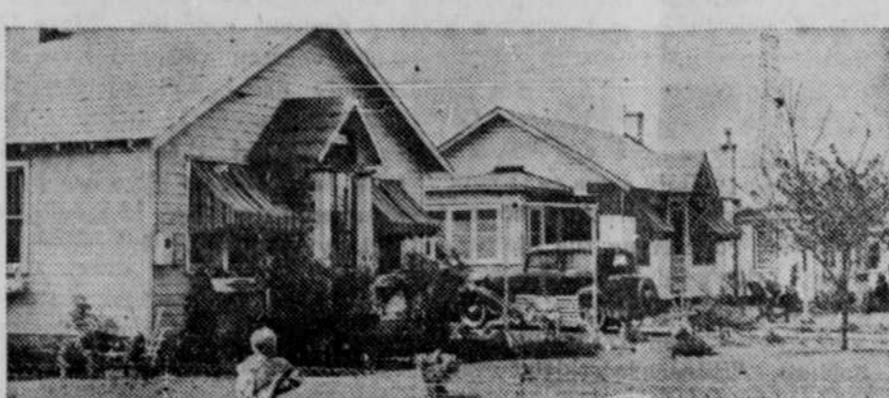
Painting, decorating and installation of light fixtures is left to occupants, who not only enjoy working on their own homes but take better care of them that way. Interest in the Hoess plan has become so wide-spread that the O'Mahoney committee is investigating it as a possible model for future U. S. housing activity.



Food bills are cut down by gardening. Fresh eggs are within easy reach, too. Right: families which once lived in over-crowded areas now enjoy sunshine and fresh air.



Most of the 40-acre plot is already sold and constructed, but customers still come. Not to be compared with FHA homes, Hoess houses are smaller, less carefully constructed, yet many housing experts think they fit the average income better.



## MISS DARROW

By PHYLLIS GALLACHER  
(McClure Syndicate—WNU Service)

DR. CARR had said as he had tossed the letter on Frances' desk. "This is a grave mistake, Miss Worthington. Whoever is responsible for it will have to accept notice. Check it and bring the report to the board meeting."

Frances' cheeks were as bright as hollies as she glanced through her desk file. Miss Darrow had made that inexcusable blunder! Miss Darrow of all people!

Every day during the three years that Frances had been secretary to Dr. Carr some nerve-trying moment had arrived between Miss Darrow and herself. If there was a mistake in the mailing list, an unconsciously tactless voice over the telephone, any error that might occur in the routine of the most efficiently managed office, Miss Darrow saw to it that the blame was concentrated wholly and unjustly upon Frances.

Staring at the incriminating data, Frances wondered why Miss Darrow hated her. She knew only that the older woman had been Dr. Carr's former secretary; she did not know, of course, what being that had really meant to Miss Darrow—the pride in the title, the modest boasting among her friends, her importance! When Dr. Carr conceived the idea of making Frances his secretary and elevating Miss Darrow to the directorship with a raise in salary, Miss Darrow did not consider it an advancement. It was base ingratitude for tireless service, an unendurable humiliation. She was never quite able to convince herself that Frances hadn't maneuvered the whole thing. Naturally she hated her!

Frances' eyes were like blue crystal as she inserted an immaculate card in the typewriter! Her fingers, dancing over the keys, spelled Miss Darrow's dismissal from Carr corporation! She typed:

"Miss Darrow made the error relative to the attached correspondence."

"Busy for a change? No novels tucked away in your lap or desk drawer?" Miss Darrow closed the door behind her and crossed to the filing cabinets. She adjusted her pince-nez. "I suppose I'll never find the right card if you filed it!" A moment's silence.

"Were you really ill yesterday or just off somewhere with that carrot-top of yours?"

Jimmie Baxter would boil if he heard that. Frances thought, boiling a little herself in outraged loyalty. Massive, bronzed Jimmie with the laughing gray eyes and the shock of auburn hair summarized as "carrot-top"!

"I was . . . ill!" she said with an intonation as calm as she could assume. Frances' eyes blazed in a mighty conflagration at the tall, gaunt woman! Sarcasms clothed in anaemic wit!

Suspicious ailed under railery! But suddenly the heat drained from her stare.

Miss Darrow was . . . old! Funny she hadn't realized that until now. For all her brisk energy, her face was tired, marked forever with the strain of being in a certain office at a certain time, whatever the weather, whatever her health. She had started to work at seventeen! Frances had heard about her invalid brother, the two dependent sisters.

She turned back to the typewriter, her eyes fixed on the inditing card. It wasn't pleasant to think of Miss Darrow at an employment agency . . . her nervous, fidgeting fingers . . . her eager, desperate eyes. She had seen old women there before, but never without her heart choking in her throat.

"No opening for a woman over 60, today, ma'am," the man would say. God! Why did life have to be like that!

"We'll! This card was filed under D's, Miss Worthington!" Miss Darrow snapped, thin-lipped, as she bent over the cabinet in her nearsightedness. "Strange place for a man whose name begins with Z!"

And with that she slammed the drawer with disgust and walked out of the room.

At the door she paused. "Mistakes are inexcusable!" she hissed. "You are too careless. Guess your mind's mostly on that red-head laundry boy!"

Then she was gone. Laundry boy! Jimmie! the best laundry solicitor in Baltimore! Laundry boy! Indeed! Frances jerked the card from the machine.

"You can't even be sorry for an old buzzard like that!" she thought.

At noon when the trustees filed from the board meeting, Marjorie Dickens collected her pencils and stenographic pad and rushed down the hall to Miss Darrow's office.

"Frances Worthington has been fired!" she began, breathlessly. "She made a mistake that cost Carr \$25,000!"

Miss Darrow shot up straight and tall as a telephone pole. She fairly bristled. "We'll! I'm glad of that! I've always said she didn't have a grain in that tow-head of hers! The 'he snit!'"

Marjorie was impressed. "Gee! you did!"

She fumbled with her pile of papers and drew out the letter with its

card attachment and handed it to the beaming director.

For a moment the deeply sunken eyes rested on the carbon. "Is this it?" Miss Darrow asked, incredulous.

Marjorie leaned over the angular shoulders and squinted. "Sure! That's it!"

A faint color crept into the virginal face. She made a move as if to arise from her desk, an indignant, stiff little move. But instead of fluttering out of the office, she hesitated, frowned and dropped back into her chair. Her face drained of all color, like the sand from an hour-glass, and the letter trembled to the floor.

"Boy! Was that a mistake!" Marjorie stressed, scrambling for the sheet. "You should have seen the way Dr. Carr ogled her. Ouch!"

Miss Darrow's lips hardly moved. "We . . . all . . . make . . . mistakes!" she said.

And that evening before the force battled over the use of the one small mirror above the wash-bowl, Frances left Carr corporation. As she walked a little under the recurrent glare of the street lights, she did not see the gray stone of the office building, the lights glorifying the Carr products. Instead she was conscious only of infinite space, of the tears that slipped from her eyes, of Jimmie Baxter's voice, somewhere close, in exuberant greeting.

"Listen, Jimmie!" she said miserably, stepping into the little car. "I'm fired. I guess that means . . . we'll have to wait ages . . . to be married . . . now." She told him about Miss Darrow and what she had done.

But Jimmie was laughing, the Irish in him crinkling his handsome face. "Wait!" he cried. "Heck no! I . . . gosh Fran . . . I don't know how to start! But I . . . I was made manager of the laundries today! We can get married . . . tonight . . . that's if you will, honey! You'll never have to work again, honest!"

The car chugged and sputtered and started off down the boulevard. Frances snuggled under his arm. She was all warm and glowing in the realization of this wonderful thing that had happened to Jimmie! She wondered if it was her reward for doing the right thing by Miss Darrow! God had a hand in things like that . . . retribution . . . and . . . and things.

And when Marjorie Dickens told Miss Darrow that "Fran" and Jimmie were married the very night she "was fired and could she beat that, the older woman just stood there, calmly unpinning the paper cuffs at her wrists, saying nothing, thinking, "Humph! Pretty clever of her getting out of her year's contract with Carr corporation by pretending she made that mistake! Just so she could marry that carrot-top! The little snit!"

## New Findings in Light Are in Realm of Unseen

Most of our new findings in light remain in the world of the unseen. We see only a small octave of light. The best human eye in the world is at least half blind, writes Charles Morrow Wilson in Popular Mechanics. Light is measured in terms of angstroms—linear distance between crests of light waves, which so far as we know are shaped very much like water waves.

The angstrom is one ten-millionth of one millimeter. The human eye sees only in terms of light waves between 4,000 and 8,000 angstroms in length. Any wave longer than 8,000 passes out of the range of our visibility, begins to be registered by our nerve ends, and therefore we call it heat.

Dr. Samuel G. Hibben, illumination engineer, and his staff of light students, engineers, pathologists and medical researchers, visualize a device whereby every type of wound can be cleansed of all bacteria by means of lethal-ray light. They have actually invented and patented this equipment. Each machine goes to a prominent physician or surgeon for experimental use. The mechanical challenge is primarily one of producing a bulb with glass filters so extremely thin that the glass will tend to center the power of the tiny waves. A bubble process has been devised which reduces the thickness of the glass to about one-thirty-thousandths of an inch. In addition to killing micro-organisms on flesh surfaces the lethal rays combat certain skin ailments such as ringworm and "athlete's foot," apparently caused by micro-organisms that are first cousins to ordinary bread molds.

Every day, micro-organisms too small to be seen cause tremendous spoilage loss of foods. Therefore, several commercial packers are beginning to use lethal light rays to sterilize and pre-insure the keeping qualities of their products. This attainment grew directly out of research on ways to sterilize refrigerators. The answer seems to be that foods should be made sterile before entering a refrigerator.

**Woman Angler Very Skillful**  
According to the American Magazine, Angie Harvey, of Lakeville, Conn., holds the women's fly-casting record—117 feet—and is so skillful with the rod that a New York sportsmen's club has employed her to teach them her casting tricks.

**When Uncle Sam Lives in Paris**  
The American colony in Paris has one daily newspaper, one club, two high schools, four churches, one hospital, one library and two American Legion posts.

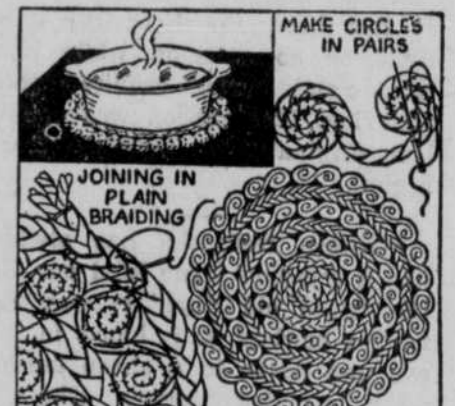
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## Hot Dish Mats Easy to Make of Cable Cord

By RUTH WYETH SPEARS  
SO MANY requests for copies of these directions have been received, they are being printed again to accommodate those who neglected to clip and save them when they appeared before.

The mat is made of heavy white cotton cable cord such as you buy at the notion counter for seams and trimmings. The design is copied from a luncheon mat made years ago of corset strings! There was a fad at one time for sewing these in braided and scroll designs



With fine stitches on the wrong side of the mat.

Follow the directions in the sketch, making the circles in pairs, using No. 40 cotton thread to sew them. Braid three cords together and then sew the braided strip around and around to make the center of the mat. Sew a row of the circles to the edge of this center part; then add another braided row, being careful to "ease in" the inside edge just enough to keep the mat flat. Continue adding alternate rows of circles and braiding until the mat is size desired. To join the ends of the braided rows, pull one end through the braiding to the wrong side of the mat; then trim the ends and sew them flat.

**NOTICE:** Every Home-maker should have copies of the two books containing 96 How to Sew articles. You may secure SEWING, For the Home Decorator; and Gifts, Novelties and Embroideries; both for 25 cents; and your choice of the Patchwork Quilt Leaflet showing 36 authentic stitches; or the Rag Rug Leaflet FREE, while the supply lasts. Don't delay, as the offer of both books at this low price will be withdrawn soon. Send your order at once to Mrs. Spears, 210 S. Desplains St., Chicago, Ill.

**Your Gift**  
You may not be able to leave your children a great inheritance, but day by day you may be weaving coats for them which they will wear through all eternity.—T. L. Cuyler.

## How Women in Their 40's Can Attract Men

Here's good advice for a woman during her change (usually from 38 to 52), who fears she'll lose her appeal to men, who worries about hot flashes, loss of pep, dizzy spells, upset nerves and moody spells.

Get more fresh air, 8 hrs. sleep and if you need a good general system tonic take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made especially for women. It helps Nature build up physical resistance, thus helps give more vivacity to enjoy life and assist calming jittery nerves and disturbing symptoms that often accompany change of life. WELL WORTH TRYING!

**A Day of Strife**  
Better a day of strife than a century of sleep.—A. J. Ryan.

**PICKLES Made Crisper**  
with Little Gem Remechelled Alum and made sweeter with Little Gem Saccharin. Accept no substitutes and be deceived. Only 10c at your grocers.

**Bureau of Standards**  
A BUSINESS organization which wants to get the most for the money sets up standards by which to judge what is offered to it, just as in Washington the government maintains a Bureau of Standards.

● You can have your own Bureau of Standards, too. Just consult the advertising columns of your newspaper. They safeguard your purchasing power every day of every year.