



# FLOYD GIBBONS Adventurers' Club Hello, Everybody!

"The Theater of Death"

By FLOYD GIBBONS  
Famous Headline Hunter.

SOME of you older boys and girls of the Adventurers' Club will recall Chicago's Iroquois Theater disaster of 1903. I remember it very well. I remember standing horror-stricken in the street, that cold December afternoon, as the victims were being carried out of the burning theater.

Five hundred and seventy-five persons lost their lives in that terrible catastrophe and 90 per cent of them were women and children who had come to attend the opening matinee of the musical show, "Mister Blue Beard." As the shocked firemen and police carried out the charred victims they piled the bodies one on top of the other on the sidewalk.

Once in a while someone would see a thin vapor rising from the lips of one of the still forms in the heap. That meant one of them was still alive and the vapor was the breath showing as it froze on striking the zero air.

Over would go the pile of bodies into the street as the frantic rescuers pulled the living person from beneath the dead and rushed the still breathing form into a nearby restaurant for medical aid. Every table in that restaurant held its load of dead and dying!

### Fatal Panic of the Iroquois Theater Fire.

Inside the theater witnesses said the scenes of horror were indescribable. Panic had followed the discovery of the fire and women and children were being trampled to death in the mad rush for the exits. These exits were locked and before each closed door the firemen found bodies, piled to the ceiling, where they had died so near, and yet so far, from safety.

Miss Alpha Jackson of Franklin Square, N. Y., was in that fire. Alpha is a big girl now but she was a little girl then and a member of a famous child ballet which was on the program that fateful afternoon.

"Mother" Follis was in charge of the ballet and in the business of training children for stage work and, according to Alpha, was quite a character. Her children were always well trained and could be depended on to do their part. Alpha says the kindly old lady was a strict disciplinarian and demanded implicit obedience, but on the other hand she treated each child as though it were her own.

### Ballet Girls Flutter Before Their Cue.

"Back stage" as the show started, Alpha says, all was confusion, the confusion that always attends the opening performance of a new show. There was a very large cast and much scenery to handle. The scenery was very fluff and not fireproofed the way it is today but the new theater boasted a fireproof steel curtain and was considered the last word in safety.

Alpha with 11 other little girls was seated before a make-up mirror in the dressing room. They were nervously waiting their cue to go on stage and had no thought of the tragedy that was about to unfold before their eyes.

Suddenly a scream, followed by a roar that shook the theater, startled them. They jumped to their feet in alarm and looked anxiously around. The door opened and Mother Follis stood before them. She was pale but calm.

"Sit in your chairs," she commanded, "and don't you move until I come back."

The little girls, Alpha says, obeyed as usual like soldiers. Mother Follis' orders were always obeyed to the letter. But the awful sounds of panic and confusion that came to the children through the thin walls of



The Little Dancers Marched Coolly Out of the Inferno.

their dressing room made them rigid with terror. What was happening out there? Why had the music stopped? These and other unanswered questions nearly drove the little girls hysterical but they kept their seats. Mother Follis had ordered it.

### Death Was a Member of the Audience.

And outside, on the stage and in the audience Death was already taking its grim toll. Had the girls known what was happening around them they would certainly have stampeded and been trampled to death in the mad rush for the doors. They could hear screams of terror and pain and the tramping of many feet on the steel staircases back stage. Now and then a crash as of a body falling came to their frightened ears.

Meanwhile, Mother Follis was having her share of anxiety. Caught in the mad rush, as she went to investigate, the ballet mistress was borne with the fear-crazed crowd right through the stage door to the alley in back of the theater. With her mind only on her girls who waited for her to come back she fought to re-enter the theater. But by then the firemen had arrived and no one was allowed to enter. The stage was already a burning inferno and unless help came her girls would die for obeying her. Firemen and police held her back but Mother Follis would not be held back. She was used to being obeyed and fought for her way. She screamed that her children were trapped in their dressing room. Firemen said they would get them. But Mother Follis was afraid they would not know where to look. She would not direct them unless they let her go.

### Mother Follis Makes a Dramatic Rescue.

And, as usual, Mother Follis had her way. Back into the burning theater she went with a fireman at her side. The door suddenly opened, Alpha says, and a blast of smoke swept in. The ballet girls screamed in terror. One spark and their flimsy ballet dresses would burst into flame. But through the smoke Mother Follis' orders came clear and distinct. "First position." Twelve pale little girls stood in line. "Forward, march! one-two-one-two—"

And 12 little girls, looking neither to right nor to left, marched out behind their beloved "Mother." The stage, Alpha says, was now clear of the frenzied crowd. Flames crackled around them and smoke made their eyes water but not a fluff of skirt was disarranged as the little ballet marched out to open air and safety! The crowd sent up a cheer as the girls marched out the stage door, in perfect formation. Not a dancing-pumped foot was out of step. Then as eager hands reached for the children something happened that DID break up their formation.

MOTHER FOLLIS FAINTED!

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### Odd Vogues in Tipping

Many odd vogues in tipping, or the giving of a gratuity for some personal service, have come and gone through the ages. Including the one in which a condemned man gave a gift of money to his executioner as they mounted the scaffold. But the most absurd, which was fashionable in Austria as late as 1815, was the tipping of street car conductors.—Collier's Weekly.

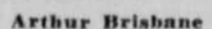
### The Child Born at Sea

A child born at sea retains the nationality of its father, regardless of the destination of its parents or the flag under which the ship on which it is born is sailing. This is true even when the birth occurs in United States waters, within the three-mile limit, because aliens are not considered officially admitted to this country until they have passed the necessary inspection.

## BRISBANE THIS WEEK

Ethiopia Rains Bombs  
Six Marriage Troubles  
Marilyn Miller Is Dead  
Another Big Question

Addis Ababa is bombed by Italian planes from more than a mile above the city, natives shooting at the Italian pilots with rifles that could not possibly carry one-quarter of the distance. Correspondents with receiving sets listened to the Italian pilots talking to each other by radio. Haile Selassie, hurrying south, was not at home when they called. That war should soon be over.



Arthur Brisbane

Dr. Alice E. Johnson, psychiatrist of Philadelphia's Municipal court, gives six reasons for marriage failures. They are: Different family backgrounds of husband and wife; relatives interfering, especially mothers-in-law; infidelity; incompatibility; alcoholism; and a desire to "dominate." There is a seventh reason, to be found in the nature of man, who is still 98 per cent in the age of barbarism.

Marilyn Miller is dead, only thirty-eight years old. The little town of Findlay, Ohio, or the bigger town of New York, might well erect some monument to her memory. She contributed a great deal to human cheerfulness and happiness, and it may be said of her, as Samuel Johnson said, referring to the death of the great actor, Garrick, that her death "eclipsed the gayety of nations and impoverished the public's stock of harmless pleasure."

A lady who signs "B. A. G." is interested in very serious things. She writes: "The more I hear of those big armies, the more I am reminded of the huge population of hell. What is your idea of hell?" That big question may be answered later. An aged colored man once told his pastor: "I don't believe in hell, because I don't think any constitution could stand it."

"It worries me," says a lady, "that so many men are afraid of poverty here upon earth, and not afraid of hell." Miss B. A. G. is certain that

hell is real, a belief that must be comforting to those anxious to have the wicked punished.

Winthrop W. Aldrich, head of the Chase National bank, biggest in America, knows about money, as did his father before him, the late senator from Rhode Island, who invented the Federal Reserve plan and put it through. Mr. Aldrich thinks it would not be a good idea to turn money loose and encourage a speculative, stock-gambling boom. He remembers 1929.

Under certain circumstances "the prospect of inflation is very grave indeed," says Mr. Aldrich.

When a woman starts, she keeps going, nearly always. Nothing could stop Joan of Arc, Dr. Mary Walker, or Nellie Bly on her trip around the world. Now Amy Johnson, married name Mollison, sets out alone in a streamlined monoplane to beat the record on a flight to Cape Town and back.

All alone, down to the other side of the world and back again, over ocean, forests, wild beasts and wilder men. And fools used to say women lacked courage!

An offensive and defensive treaty between Japan and Germany, like the one between France and Russia, is considered a certainty.

It should be possible for nations that want to survive and prosper to get together and let others that must fight kill each other off until they tire of it. This country, at least, should carry out that plan.

Japan and Russia have passed from the "warning" stage to border fighting on the Russian side. Planes, war tanks and heavy artillery are taken across the Manchukuo border by Russia, and that "looks like business."

Russia will soon know how much Mongolia will be worth as a protection against Japan, and Europe may soon know the value of Russia as a protection against Asia.

The Canadian Press news service says Canada's wealth has shrunk almost six thousand million dollars since 1929. That will be only a temporary shrinkage.

You know that England is worried about something when you read that she now demands that the league establish an oil embargo against Italy. A little late, but it is explained that England is outraged by Italy's use of poison gas against the Ethiopians.

Mussolini used something worse than poison gas against England when he occupied the Lake Tana region.

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### Smart Shirred Sleeves Have a Piquant Charm



Pattern No. 1846-B

Lovely shirred sleeves finished off with wide contrasting cuffs and a jaunty neckline are enchanting features of this dress. Carry it out in a becoming polka dot of crepe, silk, lawn, or a smooth rayon. By the way it's very easily made because the dress is all one piece with two pleats and stitchings in the front skirt, and a flattering blouse that's trimmed with square buttons. It's accented at the waist with either a self-fabric or purchased belt.

Barbara Bell Pattern No. 1846-B is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20. Corresponding bust measurements 30, 32, 34, 36 and 38. Size 14 (32) requires 4 1/2 yards of 35 inch material plus 3/4 yard for contrasting neck band and cuffs.

The Barbara Bell Pattern Book featuring spring designs is ready. Send fifteen cents today for your copy. Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., 367 W. Adams St., Chicago, Ill.

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KEEP YOUR EYES Clean and Clear. USE MURINE FOR YOUR EYES. ASK YOUR DRUGGIST

### Clock in Son's House Stops as His Father Passes Away

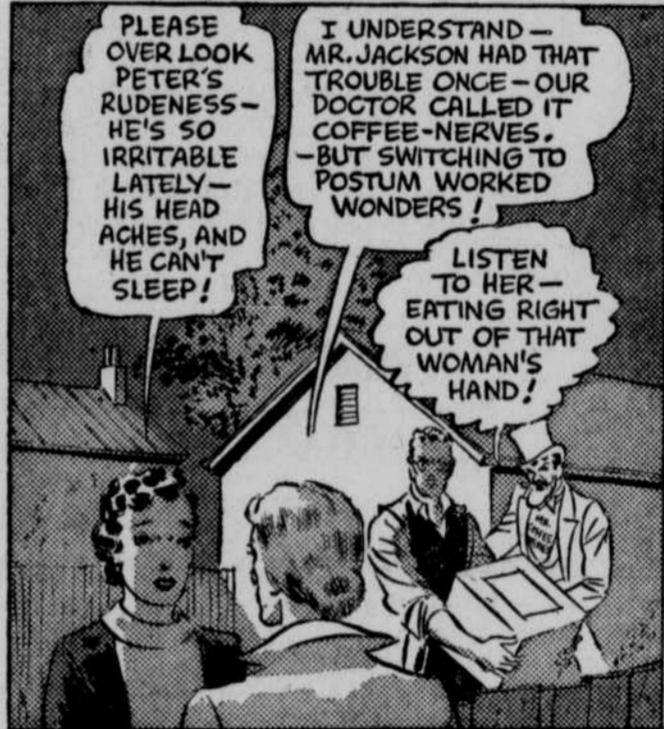
At Ancaster, Ont., Thomas Barnes, seventy-three, died on a recent Sunday morning at 3:10 o'clock. His son, Stanley Barnes, living at Win-

chester, Mass., several hundred miles away, had in his possession an old grandfather clock known to be at least two hundred years old which formerly belonged to his father. The clock had stopped at exactly the same time, to the fraction of a minute, that his father died.

### WORLD'S OLDEST BUN

What is asserted to be the oldest bun in the world was recently shown to the Society of Antiquaries in London. It was found in Malden castle, England, and parts of this edifice date back to 2000 B. C.

## PETER JOINS THE LODGE



CHILDREN should never drink coffee... and the caffeine in coffee disagrees with many grown-ups, too. If you are bothered by headaches or indigestion, or can't sleep soundly... try Postum for 30 days! It contains no caffeine. It is simply whole wheat and bran, roasted and slightly sweetened. Easy to make, costs less than one-half cent a cup. It's delicious, too... and may prove a real help. A product of General Foods.

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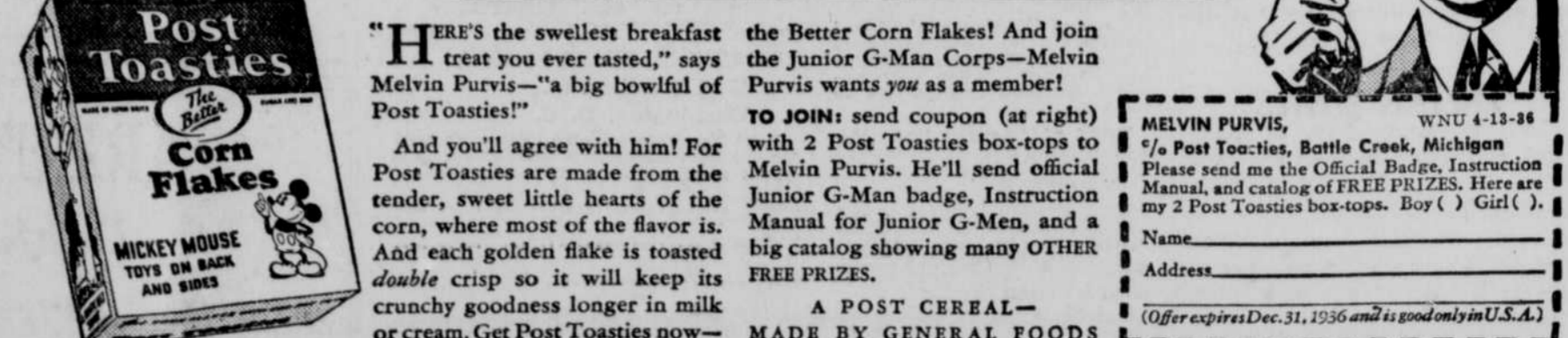
## MELVIN PURVIS AMERICA'S NO. 1 G-MAN

### THE SPLIT WIRE OR HOW MELVIN PURVIS CAPTURED THE McMANUS TRAIN ROBBERS



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