Three Minutes of Fiction Fun

SHORT SHORT STORY

Best Insurance

By HENRY SUTER

JONTHAN LANGDON waited patiently behind the diamond counter in McLaughton's jewelry store. He was one of the store's oldest clerks, quiet, dependable, efficient. He was pondering over something this morning and his fellow clerk, Philip Smart, in charge of the watch repair section, speedily observed it.

"I'm wondering about the old man," began Langdon. "For the life of me I don't see why we had to take out theft insurance. We've managed without it all the years I've been here and nothing has been taken yet. Burglar insurance, of course. But why spend money to protect yourself against theft out of the store when he must realize what a smart bunch he has toiling for him? Why couldn't he put that money to better usage by slipping me the raise I asked for?"

"I guess it was that glib insurance salesman he fell for," replied Philip.

"Sure enough, still I think the old man is wasting good money—" The interruption was caused by the entrance of a customer.

This was a portly, middle aged gentleman, immaculately dressed, who would have made an impression anywhere. Langdon greeted him with his most gracious smile.

"I want something in a two carat solitaire, the very best you have in the place. It is for my daughter, and I want it as a graduation present!"

Langdon hurried to the safe and brought out a tray of sparkling beauties. Mr. Blake gazed upon them carefully one by one and finally selected one.

Langdon went back and put the rest of the tray of rings in the safe.

"Just let me run up to the hotel and get my check book. You keep this stone out till I get back."

Ten, 15, then 20 minutes elapsed and the customer had not returned to complete the purchase.

Just then the door of McLaughton's office opened.

"Well, Jonathan," he began, "I presume you still think we do not need any insurance and that I should use that part of our budget towards giving you a raise?"

"Well, yes, I do think so really. You know my sales have almost doubled in the last year.

"That it true, Jonathan, and I appreciate it. Yet you must consider that in selling diamonds, the store is taking chances. I don't mean in a hold-up or a burglary. But, just suppose some smooth artist came in here and got away with a valuable diamond."

"Oh! but they couldn't do that with me," returned Langdon promptly. "I've been here 10 years and no crook has ever gotten away with it, yet."

"That's what you think," smiled McLaughton. "Now take that last customer. I watched everything from the start. You, of course, assume that everyone who comes in here is just as honest as you. That is why you left him standing there with a valuable diamond in his possession while you turned your back and put the rest of the tray in the safe. In the minute you were gone, he substituted a phoney diamond and walked right out with the genuine diamond."

'So you saw the whole thing, and let him get away with it! I don't understand . . ."

"You can come in now, Blake!" called McLaughton.

"Meet Mr. Blake, of the Dependable Insurance system," said the smiling McLaughton.

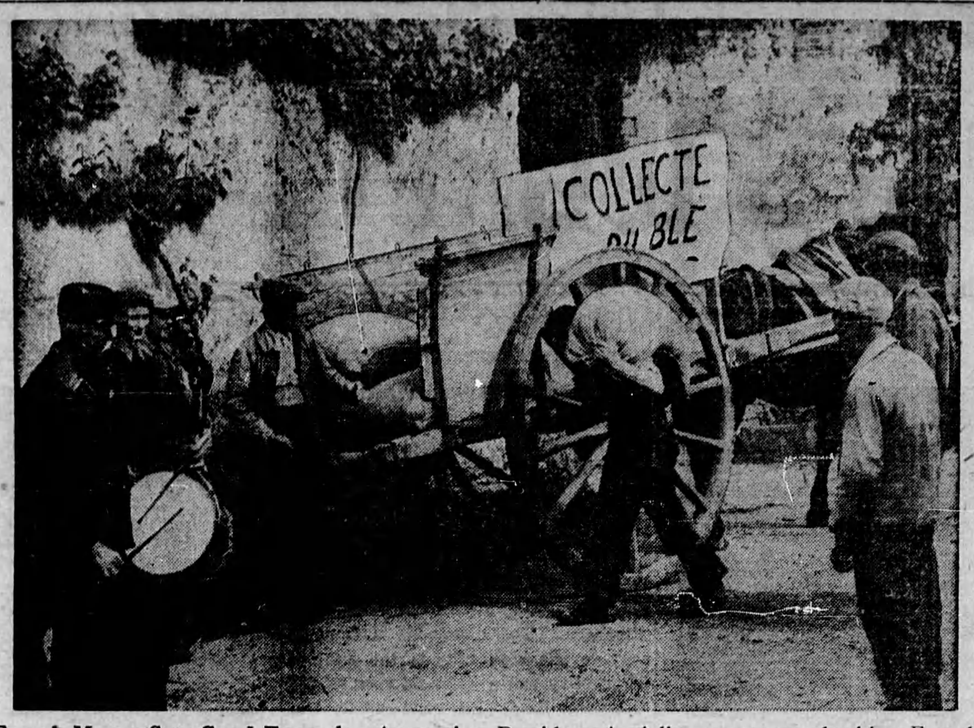
"Sorry we had to make you the guinea pig, Buddy," Blake began, as he took a sparkling solitaire out of his pocket and placed it upon the desk. "But I just had to convince your boss here how essential it is to have the insurance."

"Take a look at that diamond on your desk, Mr. McLaughton," said Langdon calmly.

"Why, it's nothing but a phoney," he cried.

"Sure," remarked Langdon quietly. "You don't suppose I'd leave diamonds around for strangers to pick up, do you? I made the switch before I put the tray away in the safe. Now, Mr. McLaughton, do I get my raise or don't I?"

The earliest balance machines date back to at least 5,000 years before the Christian era.



French Mayor Sets Good Example—Answering President Auriol's urgent appeal asking French farmers to deliver all surplus wheat without delay, the mayor of Yermenonville sets a good example to his townspeople as his wheat is loaded on a "wheat collection" cart. Rural police, like the one at left, beat drums to call farmers' attention to current grain drive to thwart a serious bread shortage during the next two months.

Changed

Asked if a year of college had made any difference in is eldest son, a deep-South farmer reflected: "Well, he's still a good hand with the plow, but I notice his language has changed some. It used to be, 'Whoa, Becky! Haw! and Git up!' Now when he comes to the end of a row, he says, 'Halt, Rebecca! Pivot and proceed!"

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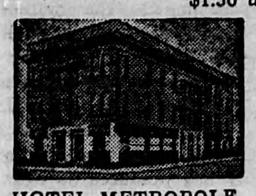


HOTEL METROPOLE
NIAGARA FALLS
OPP. — C.N.R. STATION

VOICE OF THE PRESS

Rats For Almost All

There are almost as many rats in the United States as there are people —130,000,000, as compared with a human population in the neighborhood of 140,000,000. United States Fish and Wild Life Director Albert M. Day says they cause $200,000,000 damage to food alone each year.

—Milwaukee Journal.

And Often

A valve turned by error dumped 800 gallons of whiskey into a Scottish creek, and Sandy says he finds it a vurra inveegoratin' stream for takin' a wee bawth in.

—Ottawa Citizen.

If Then

Men are penalized by time in many way, says a contemporary. As an example, it takes a human being six years to learn how to talk and sixty years to learn how to keep his big mouth shut.

—St. Thomas Times-Journal.

We Almost Hope

Still, it won't be long before the mosquitoes are taking screen tests again.

—Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph.

A Wise Move

Mexico has taken a long step forward in the saving of dwindling forests by requiring lumbermen to plant ten trees for every one cut and by limiting exports of fine woods. Some other countries already are almost too late for such a move. Let us hope Canada is not in the latter category.

—Niagara Falls Review.

Best If Self-Taught

The British Columbia Minister of Education is offering $10,000 a year to a doctor who will teach people how to drink in moderation. Someone is overlooking the fact that the best moderate drinkers are self-taught.

—Eort William Times-Journal.

FUNNY BUSINESS BY HERSHBERGER

"Shock—he figured his income tax correctly!"

Lindbergh's Flight Twenty Years Ago

One night, approximately 20 years ago, it suddenly became quiet at the Sharkey-Maloney fight in the Yankee Stadium.

The crowd of 40,000 straw-hatted men and short-skirted women stood up and prayed.

The man they were praying for was the same man about whom the New York Times had 10,000 anxious telephone calls in 11 hours. He was the same man 30,000 Frenchmen stood waiting for the next night near Paris.

Finally, among the Frenchmen studying the sky, someone heard a motor. Someone fired rocket flares. And 500 feet up, the glare revealed the frail fuselage of the "Spirit of St. Louis."

Very soon, millions of thrilled people were repeating the salient facts of Charles Augustus Lindbergh's solo flight across the Atlantic. He was the first to make it alone and did it in 33 hours, 29 minutes. He won a $25,000 prize while his rivals waited in New York for better weather.

Holds Fame as Pioneer

Much has happened in the air since then to obscure the importance of Lindbergh's flight. Today commercial airliners regularly make the same trip in 12 hours. But it is doubtful whether any hero since then has captured the imagination of the world by a single act the way the slim, tall "Lone Eagle" did it 20 years ago.

Historians agree the sensation Lindbergh made resulted from a combination of the darin gact itself and the mood of the twenties, a time of many heroes of varying talents and virtues.

It was a time in the country of a soaring big bull market, jazz, raccoon coats, the Charleston and prohibition.

There were flagpole sitters, marathon dancers, cross-country walking races, channel swimmers, the Sacco-Vanzetti executions and college bohemians.

It was the time of the great champions—Babe Ruth hit 60 home runs that year, Gene Tunney, Red Grange, Bobby Jones, and Tommy Hitchcock ruled their respective roosts.

Took Ofl in Heavy Mist

Charles A. Lindbergh was 25 then, a chief mail pilot and a Captain in the Air Corps Reserve. He entered the competition for the $25,000 trans-Atlantic prize and went out to a San Diego factory to get his plane.

He flew it to St Louis and then to Roosevelt Field, Long Island, on May 12. The cross-country trip was made in 21 hours and 20 minutes, a record for its day.

At 7.52, Friday morning, May 20, Lindbergh took off for Paris in a heavy mist. His plane had a wing spread of 46 feet, a fuselage 28 feet long, and a maximum speed of 123 miles an hour.

The lone flier had no radio and all he took with him were two sandwiches, two canteens of water, two chocolate bars, two flashlights, four red flares, one air raft with pump, five cans of army emergency rations, two air cushions and one hack saw blade.

Bulletins Along Route

Up along the Atlantic Coast, he flew in fog and rain and before morning, out over the Atlantic, his ship was coated with sleet. By midday Saturday he was flying over Ireland, and the bulletins were flashed on movie screens back home. Then came the Normandy coast and in the darkness he was guided by beacons along the London-Paris air route, the searchlight on the Mt. Valerian fortress and finally by the lights of the Eiffel Tower and the flares at Le Bourget airfield.

Then came the receptions: decorations and kisses from the President of France, the shouts of hundreds of thousands in the streets of Paris, Brussels and London and formal welcomes by the kings of Belgium and England.

President Coolidge sent the cruiser Memphis to bring the hero and his plane home. Near the Virginia Capes, the Memphis was joined by four more cruisers, six destroyers and a flotilla of planes.

The flier and his mother rode in triumph through Washington. Then came New York. Millions lined the streets and hung out windows, tossing down more than 1,800 tons of confetti. The city spent $71,000 on the reception.

Twenty years after his famous flight to Paris, Charles A. Lingbergh is living quietly in Connecticut.

He serves occasionally as an engineering consultant to several aircraft and airline firms.

The Lindberghs have five children.

Golfers to Compete at Toronto in July

Highest award in Canadian golf, the Seagram Gold Cup has yet to be won by a Canadian. but there is a growing feeling in golfing circles that the symbol of Canadian golfing supremacy is just about due to remain in Canada instead of taking its annual journey south of the border.

Whether or not the 1947 Canadian Open, over Toronto's Scarboro layout July 16-19, will write a Canadian-born champion into the record remains to be seen — but certainly Canadian pros have been coming closer each year in the face of keen competition from the top-ranking golfers of the United States.

A number of Canadians have won the Dominion's Open championship since its inauguration in 1904, but none since the Seagram Gold Cup became the official symbol of victory in 1936. In fact, no Canadian has won it for two decades prior to that—since the days before the Canadian Open reached sufficient stature in the golfing world to attract top-notch Americans.

Blueberries

Newfoundland is known for its blueberries as well as its fish, nearly 2,800,000 pounds were picked during 1946, over 2,000,000 of which were sent to the United States.

Man Makes Heroic Effort To Free Drowning Motorists

WINS DOW AWARD

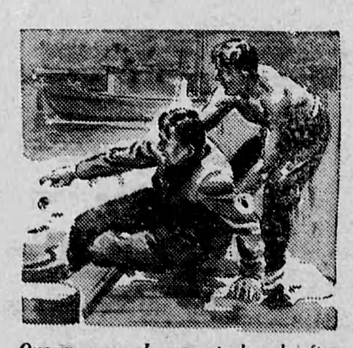
ORVILLE SWEET
OF LADNER, B.C.
dives to save trapped men

Orville Sweet, asleep in his home near the river, was wakened by violent cries for help. In an instant he was up and, clad only in pants and slippers, rushed to the wharf. A man was clinging desperately to the anchor chain of a boat some distance out. Without hesitation, Sweet dove into the freezing water and pulled the weakened man to safety.

It was then that Sweet learned that the man had escaped from a submerged car and that two others were still trapped in it. Down into the inky water he dove . . . searching for the car. At last he found it and began a frantic struggle with the doors . . . trying to release the two men. Several times he came up for air . . . and dove to try again. But the strain on his lungs and the icy water were too much. He had to give up.

The gallant perseverance of this man warrants great praise. He saved one person . . . and made an almost superhuman effort to rescue the other two. We are proud to pay tribute to Orville Sweet of Ladner, B.C., through the presentation of The Dow Award.

Out of control, the car with its three occupants skidded off the Elliot Street wharf into the Fraser River and disappeared below the surface.



One man somehow escaped and, after being rescued by Orville Sweet, pointed hysterically to the spot where his friends were still trapped in their car.

THE DOW AWARD is a citation for outstanding heroism and includes, as a tangible expression of appreciation, a $100 Canada Savings Bond. Winners are selected by the Dow Award Committee, a group of editors of leading Canadian daily newspapers.

The DOW AWARD
DOW BREWERY • MONTREAL

POP—Traffic Note By J. MILLAR WATT