

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2nd, 1935

The Free Press Short Story

LOST AIRPORT

JOHN SCOTT DOUGLAS

ROBERT STUART'S lean body stiffened as the following message came over the ether waves through his radio ear phones: "Robert Stuart—Olympic Skyways. Don't land at airport. Don't land at airport. Robert Stuart. Bootleggers have knocked out airport manager. Robert Stuart—Olympic Skyways. Don't land."

The message flowing through his ear phones ceased abruptly and in its wake came a blur of static. His thin freckled face hardened perceptibly as Robert studied the instruments on his board; altimeter—five thousand feet; bank and turn indicator—level; gasoline—Sudden his heart quickened its beat. The black space ahead covered the face of his gasoline indicator. Tank—almost empty! He hammered the instrument board angrily. He had ordered that tank at Seattle. He examined the deictor again. Same reading! Did he have a leak?

He turned back to his radio, adjusting it with twitching fingers, but he could not pick up his broadcast from the Olympic Skyways airdrome. For several minutes he sent out tentative messages, trying to reach the radio operator who was giving him his directions. No result! Finally he removed his ear phones and shut off his radio.

He could only guess what had happened at the airport one hundred miles west and south of Spokane, Washington. Some one had interfered with the operator who was supposed to direct his course on just such nights as this. "Pog crept up from the snake-like throat of the Columbia River south of him, spreading a fleecy blanket below him. The moon was a bright silver disk overhead. Small help that would be to him when he had to penetrate that white blanket of fog to make a landing."

"A swell chance I have to do anything else with a nearly empty tank!" he growled. "Why shouldn't I land? Are they afraid those bootleggers who knocked out the airport manager will take my plane? This is no country to make forced landings in a fog!"

Again he glanced at his gasoline gauge. That decided him. Nearly empty was right! Better chance a landing now while he still had a little fuel left! He pushed forward on his control stick, and suddenly started as a white finger of light probed through the fog in eerie fashion.

My fliover was parked just beyond the beacon light. "He strode rapidly toward the light. Blinded by its brilliance, he could see nothing until he had passed it. There, apparently in the same spot where he had left his car that morning, was his "fliover." This was strange, indeed. "He sat down weakly on the battered running board, trying to reason out what had happened. The hangars might have burned down while I was gone," he said grimly. "But the sabes are cold. And as for grass growing in those embers in one day—" He shrugged. "Perhaps I'm a second Rip Van Winkle. A sleep for some years!"

It came to him that this mystery still might—like on a logical aspect of this was not his "fliover." He jumped eagerly into the driver's seat and fished his keys into the lock with nervous fingers. His heart fell when the key rattled perfectly. He shook his head dazedly. "It's beyond me!" he muttered, as he started the car.

"He drove for perhaps two miles, trying to reason just what could have happened while he had been absent. That radio warning—the burned hangars—the grass in the debris—the lighted beacons—his car—"I feel same, anyway," he muttered disconsolately.

Suddenly his "fliover" stopped with a checked sound. His heart leaped cheerfully. "Now I know it's the wrong car. I filled my tank before I drove out to the 'drome this morning." He looked at the license number. Wn 2304101. His number all right! Robert ran his fingers through his unruly mop of red hair, and then his blue eyes brightened. "If it's my car, there's a gallon of gas in a can under the back seat."

He lifted the back seat, almost hoping not to find the can; but it was in its place. It was heavy when he lifted it, and when he unscrewed the cap, he could smell gasoline. He emptied it into the tank and climbed back into the driver's seat. After a time he got the car started again, trying to reason sense out of the chaos of his thoughts.

At last a grin lighted his freckled face as a solution came to him. "Unless I really am crazy, this next town will be Pairehild and not the Milltown!" The spirits soared when he reached the outskirts of a small town. The sign read plainly: "WELCOME TO PAIREHILD."

Robert explained the mysterious events of that evening, and a skeptical glint crept into the face of his listener. "You expect me to believe all that?" "Just a minute!" said Robert hurriedly. "I said that I thought I had landed on the Olympic Skyways 'drome and had found the hangars burned to the ground. But that isn't where I really landed!"

"No?" "No!" I think I've figured out the whole thing coming to town, and that's why I had to tell you past events to make you understand the whole situation. Remember that a chap named Anthony built up a little airport designed exactly like ours just a few miles outside of Pairehild?"

The sheriff's eyes glowed. "You mean you landed at that airport? But what about the light? And your car?" "All part of Matt Grogan's plot to make me seem despicable in the eyes of the public so he can break me!"

"Puzzlement came into the sheriff's eyes. 'But why should Grogan—?' " "Listen!" said Robert abruptly. "What I'm going to tell you is pure conjecture, but I think it holds water. Matt Grogan has some design on the Olympic Skyways, though what it is, I don't know. He didn't want me to land there because if I started to do so, I might see something unusual going on and spread the alarm."

"How could he prevent me from arriving to spread the alarm?—By seeing that I didn't have sufficient gas to reach the Olympic Skyways 'drome! It's possible for a specialist to figure such things with pretty fair accuracy. I ordered the mechanics to fill my tank, and I took his word for it that he'd done so. He was a new fellow I've never seen before; I suspect he was an employee of Matt Grogan's. All right! I'll assume in the first place that I was given insufficient gas to reach home."

"Grogan wanted my reputation ruined with the one fellow who still believed in me, Horace Jordan!" The sheriff nodded. "That all sounds possible; but what about the beacon light and the fliover being there?"

Robert Stuart drove directly to the Sheriff's office. A man with a battered brown hat on a shaggy gray head sat before a littered desk. A line of perplexity cleft his broad forehead for a moment; then his gray eyes narrowed. "I remember you from your pictures!" he said in a gruff, almost unfriendly way. "What do you want here, Robert Stuart?"

Robert winced, dropping his lean body into a chair. "I came for your assistance." "You'll get no assistance from me!" snapped the sheriff. "You should be in jail!"

"No, I shouldn't!" said Robert uprightly. "Be patient for a minute, Sheriff Andrews, and let me tell you the facts in the case in which you and everyone else misjudge me."

The sheriff's face was like gray stone as he said, "Go ahead!" His face was white and twitching as Robert leaned forward. "I'd dreamed of being a pilot since I was a little shaver," he said lezely. "Worked toward that end, sheriff. Finally I earned enough money to take a training course, passed it, and got a job with a Seattle air transport company."

"That all came out in your trial," grunted the sheriff. "Yes," agreed Robert; "and it was all true. But no one believed it. . . . Well, after I'd been working for that company for some time a bootlegging king, Matt Grogan, came to me. He said he wanted to transport liquor across the border. By plane! He offered me \$500 a month—more than I was getting. I was pretty mad, and told Grogan I'd hang before I'd go into such a rotten business. Here's what he said to me, as nearly as I can remember: "Stuart, I'm going to wreck your good reputation. I'm going to send you to jail! And when you come out, you'll work for me for anything I want to pay you, see?"

"I laughed at him, sheriff, didn't believe he could do what he threatened! But he could—and did! I was bringing a passenger over from Victoria. Grogan or one of his men filled the turtleback of my plane with liquor and then tipped off the officers. I was caught red-handed!"

Robert pushed back his leather helmet and ran his fingers through his tousled red hair. The airport at which he had just landed looked like his own, the beacon signals upat have been lighted, recently by some one or else left lighted, and the hangars looked about the same size as those of the Olympic Skyways. The grass growing in the charred embers, however, proved it could not be the right airport. For a moment his brow wrinkled in thought.

Suddenly Robert grinned. "I know how I can prove it is the wrong airport!"

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TWENTY YEARS AGO

From the Issue of The Free Press of Thursday, October 7th, 1915

Sergt. W. P. Coles, who has been incapacitated for service, is expected home from the hospital in England this week. Mrs. Coles and Ernie will accompany him.

Mr. James Rath, of the fifth line, has purchased a farm at St. George, and will remove this month. At the County Council last week a grant of \$350 was made to the County Fair, and \$75 each to Acton, Burlington, Oakville and Georgetown.

Mr. H. R. Swackhamer, of the Wallaceburg Knitting Co., has been interviewing the Council with regard to establishing a knitting factory in Acton. The Park Press received a letter from Sergt. H. S. Harwood, who is in the hospital at Shorncliffe, for the second time, telling of meeting some of the Acton boys, and says, "Keep the home fires burning," for they will soon be marching home again.

Primary production of silver, lead, zinc, cobalt, and arsenic in 1934 was silver, 16,415,282 fine ounces, valued at \$7,700,000; lead, 246,275,576 pounds valued at \$8,436,658; zinc, 208,670,682 pounds valued at \$9,087,571; cobalt, 594,671 pounds valued at \$592,407; and arsenic, 1,659,513 pounds valued at \$56,652, according to a report issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

Of the total value of metal production in Canada during 1934, that of lead comprised approximately 4.35 per cent; zinc, 4.70 per cent, and silver, 4 per cent. In 1934 a distinct improvement was witnessed in lead-zinc-silver production, with the output of lead and zinc reaching the highest point ever recorded in the history of the Canadian mining industry. Silver production for the year realized an 8.1 per cent gain over 1933 and its value at \$7,700,000 reflects the 25.5 per cent. increase in the price per ounce of fine silver over that for the preceding year.

Silver mining in Canada is not a distinct mining industry, as silver or silver-bearing minerals usually occur in association with other metals of economic value; with cobalt, nickel and arsenic; with lead and placer free gold; in copper-gold and nickel-copper ores, and at Casp, Bear Lake, Northwest Territories, with uranium and radium. Silver-lead-zinc mining is a very important industry in British Columbia and to a lesser extent in the Yukon Territory. There is no production of silver-lead-zinc ores in Eastern Canada at the present time, but during past years this industry occupied a position of importance in Ontario, Quebec and Nova-Scotia. The mining of silver-cobalt-arsenic ores is confined to Northern Ontario.

Chronicles of Ginger Farm

Written Specially for (Name of Paper) by GWENDOLINE F. CLARKE

There, now, I can sit down and write, even though I have got a kink in my back and an ache in my head. And the reason for it is that I have just been "housecleaning" the pantry—a job I have been itching to get at ever since I got onto my feet. But last week I had pickles to do and this week pears to can and so it didn't get done. Of course, cleaning the pantry isn't the only job I can see waiting to be done. There are jobs everywhere—in fact, there are.

Jobs to the left of me, Jobs to the right of me, Jobs in front of me, (You) volley and thunder! And some of them almost need to be "stormed at with shot and shell" to move them at all. But I try not to see all the work there is, because "that way madness lies," since the more I can do, besides getting meals, is one extra job about every two days.

One reader sent me some good advice, which I try to put into practice, but I find it terribly hard work. The advice was embodied in a small poem of Fay Ingham's, and I am going to repeat it right here and now, because I know there are plenty of other women who are or have been or perhaps will be—although I hope not—in the same predicament in which I now find myself. The poem is called—

IN CONVALESCENCE "Not long ago, I prayed for dying grace, For then I thought to see Thee face to face. And now I ask (Lord, 'tis a weakling's cry) That Thou wilt give me grace to live; not die. Such foolish prayer! I know. Yet pray I must; Lord help me—help me not to see Thee dust! And not to nag, nor fret because the blind Hangs crooked, and the curtain, hangs behind. But oh! the kitchen cupboard! What a sight! 'Twill take at least a month to get them right. And that last 'coco' had a smoky taste, And all the milk has boiled away to waste! And—no, I resolutely will not think About the saucers, nor about the sink. These light afflictions are but temporal things— To rise above them, wilt Thou lend me wings? Then I shall smile when Jane, with towed hair And lumpy gruel—clatters up the stair."

Besides that little book of poems, which has done so much to help me when I have felt particularly restless, I have had letters, postcards and pictures sent to me by people whom I have never met, but who, in following these Chronicles, have felt that they and I had something in common, and so in their kindness they have written to send me a word of cheer. Some of these cards and letters I have not yet answered, not because I did not appreciate them, but because, by the time I had done the writing I was obliged to do, I absolutely could not do any more. Many people have said, "I suppose, with so much time on your hands, you have done lots of writing!" How I wish I had! But now, since confession is good for the soul, and I find friends and readers are still wondering why I did not make better use of my time, let me explain. All through my illness—that is ever since last Easter—the doctor has been doing me with a certain medicine, which besides having a depressing effect, makes my head feel as if a swarm of bees had made it their headquarters. Now, I ask you, would you write—even though it be only answering letters—if it bees were buzzing in your top storey from morning to night?

Glad I am to say that the dosage had been decreased, so now it only feels as if one lonely bee is left buzzing alone, all his noisy companions are dead now and gone, and perchance I may do some writing yet! At any rate, I may do some letters that were sent to me will eventually get answered. All these weeks and weeks I have been so terribly afraid these Chronicles would bore you, who read, to tears, when it seemed that I had been nowhere and knew very little of what was going on on the farm and there seemed so little I could write about. Time after time I have written, or partly written my article, only to tear it up and burn it. One thing I was determined—I did not want any grumbling or whining to find its way into anything I had written. People have enough troubles of their own without being bothered with those of other people. I would not have said as much as I have done about myself from week to week except that I have found readers were watching this column to see how I was getting along. Now that is very nice of you, and I thank you all so much, for your friendly interest. The last two weeks I have indulged in an orgy of reading, and because many people like to hear about books I will tell you what I have read. "Yellow Bird," by Patrick Slater. A story about Irish Canadians farming in the vicinity of Mono Mills, about the

SLATS DIARY BY ROSS PARQUEAR

Friday—pa and me got a good last tonite when we was driving out in to the country to get a few Tripps to eat. They was a woman driving a ottomobel in front of us and when she came to a cross tude she made a signal for a Right hand turn, and then she made a rite hand turn. Saturday—Pa went to a bankwet with was gave by the men with whom he works with and he sed he enjoyed it very very much becuz he sed when he was using the rong fork and ect. they wanted enighday there witch new the difference. Sunday—Pa was figgering up a attiticks today, and he lent that out of evry 100 men I becums rich and 4 becums wile to Do and 30 becums independent and sixty 5 are supported by there relahans. so he says it 'looks like he woodent have nothing to wrily about. Hardly. Monday—Doc Younce and his wife planned a trip East, this week. & they was going until there munny was 34 gone then they was going to start back and Doc found out they was a bearing burnt out and the clutch was slipping and they had to have 3 new Tires and when there munny was 1/2 gone they hadent started yet. Mrs. Younce sed it was a lovely trip. If they had tuk it. Tuesday—Pa was a speaking of his unkle witch went in to Hankrupce last week. he sed I good thing about him was he started at the bottom. But he never got enry further down. Wednesday—Pa was talking about a ulr plane witch landed scort the crick to tude and he called it a Iie and he sed they most genrally all ways referred to air Planes as She. pa all ways has to have his little joak and be laffed and sed. This was a Mall Plane. Thursday—Joe Ilix told me they never was a mule man witch was the boes in his own house after he reaches two yrs. of old age.

Quick action saves trouble, worry. Keep Douglas' Egyptian Liniment 'always handy. Stops bleeding instantly. Cauterizes wounds. Quickly relieves Barber's Itch and Ringworm. Soft Testing Service Offered to Millons Farmers As the years roll by more and more farmers are confronted with soil problems which do not respond to the general farm practice now in operation. Every farmer is aware soils do vary considerably in the same community, on the same farm and quite frequently in the same field. An analysis of the soil will quite often give a solution to this problem. The Department of Chemistry O. A. C. Guelph, provides this service at all times. At the Provincial Plowing Match to be held near Caledonia, just south of Hamilton, the Department of Chemistry is planning to maintain a soil testing laboratory in the Agricultural College Tent which will be located close to the Headquarters and Hydro Tents. Halton farmers who are meeting with soil problems are invited to take half pint samples of soil with them and have it tested for nitrogen, available phosphoric acid, potash and life. At the same time advice will be given as to soil treatment. A sample should be taken both of the top soil and also of the sub-soil. In the event it is not convenient for you to attend the Provincial Match, soil samples can be left with the Agricultural Representative at Millon, who will be glad to transport them to Caledonia.

VERY THOUGHTFUL "Mother, to son nidding down banisters: "What are you doing there, Cyril?" Cyril: "Making trousers for poor orphan boys, mummy."

year 1847. An interesting book. "Across the River," by John Galsworthy. A book that will only be appreciated by broad-minded people and particularly interesting to those who have read "The Forsyte Saga," a story of English society people. "Just the Other Day," by John Collier and Ian Lang—an informal history of Great Britain since the war. A little heavy in spots, but otherwise quite good. "Testament of Youth," by Vera Brittain. A book I have read before and have told you about, and which I am now reading again, because I consider it the best book I have read since the war. "The Good Earth," by Pearl Buck—a Chinese story and one to which many people object, because of its plain-speaking, but which I feel the author has thought necessary in order to give a true picture of the Chinese in the class of which she writes.

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TIME TABLES

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

Table with columns for routes (AT ACTON, GOING EAST, GOING WEST) and times for various days of the week.



ARROW BUS SCHEDULE

Table showing bus departure times for Westbound and Eastbound routes, including specific times for Saturdays and Sundays.

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