They Were Expendable

By W. L. White

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American Reporter Crashes Sailing preparations and Becomes Candidate for 'Stowaway.' Lieutenant Kelly's Phone Farewell to Peggy. Generals, Admirals and Officers of Lesser Rank All Same in Puntual Exodus from Corregidor. Bulkeley Tells of Thrilling Run Past Jap Strongholds and Dangers Ahead.

CHAPTER 13

"We didn't tell the men what we were up to or where we were leaving Corregidor," continued Lieutenant Kelly, but they got their orders to dump that landing-force equipment, to load all spare parts on the boats, move the crew's mess gear back into the ship's galley, and pile the decks with drums of gas.

"And while we were doing it, who should walk in but Nat Floyd of the New York Times, exactly the last guy in the world we wanted to see. Sure, we liked him. He said he'd been up to the lines with the army, and then on a hunch, no particular reason, thought he'd drop in on us to see if we had any news. Then he kind of glanced around. What where those planks on the deck for? And all that gasoline on the wharf? Somehow the place looked a little torn up. When did we think we'd get off for China? Not for quite a while. Oh, that just asked for no particular reason, maybe because it almost looked like were were packing up—and so on. I tried every way in the world to get rid of him before Bulkeley got back, but it was no use; he stuck like glue.

"Then Bulkeley and I went into a huddle. Here Nat was. And bound to get suspicious of the activity. After we'd gone, the story would be almost sure to get out.

"'He's a pretty nice guy,' I said. 'Don't suppose we could take him with us, do you?'

"'Well,' said Bulkeley. 'I've got to go along now. But if Nat should happen to stow away in the lazaret, and we didn't find him until we were out to sea, why then the story certain wouldn't get out, would it?'

"'And do you know, that's just what happened. But in the meantime there were other things on my mind. Mostly it was how I was going to get hold of Peggy. There was no telephone at the hospital. She'd said she would phone me sometime between six and seven o'clock today about that date of ours on the fifteenth.

"But there was lot of traffic over the signal corps field telephone, and she might not get to me until almost seven. And I was due to pick up my passengers and be gone forever by 6:30 tonight. And I'd never get to say how much I liked her and what a swell, brave kid she was, and good-bye. But about seven the phone at this end would ring, and some wise-guy sergeant would answer, and tell her, no, Kelly doesn't live here any more—they've pulled out. I guess, but would anybody else do, toots?

"So I sat down and tried to write it in a letter, which I could leave at Corregidor on my way out, and which she would get when she got back from duty in the lines, and then at least would understand.

"I had just finished it about 5:30 and put it in my pocket when they came paging me for a telephone call on that signal-corps phone. It was Peggy—her duty hours had been changed, and she was afraid if she waited until seven to call I might be out on patrol, and she might miss me. She just wanted to tell me she'd been able to fix everything for our date on the fifteenth, and was that date all right with me could I make it?

"'No' I said. The phone was on the wall in the Philippines army shack, and the shack was crowded with soldiers—in addition to all the guys probably listening in on the line.

"'Well,' she said, 'maybe she could change it for the sixteenth, if that would be better for me.'

"'It wouldn't be any better,' I said. 'Nothing would be any better.'

"'Well,' she said, and she sounded a little mad, 'what is this, anyway?'

"'I guess it's good-bye, Peggy,' I said.

"Then there was a long silence, and when she spoke again I almost thought it was someone else, her voice was so changed. 'Where are you going?' she asked, very low. 'Can you tell me?'

"'No,' I said.

"'Can you tell me if you're coming back?'

"'No,' I said. 'I can't tell you that.'

"'Then I guess it's really good-bye,' she said, and her voice sounded flat and long way off. 'But it's been awfully nice, hasn't it?'

"'Listen, Peggy. I've written you a letter—only just then I heard the connection break. It seemed a couple of generals wanted to talk to each other. It was quite a while before I got it back again, and they told me she had waited fifteen minutes and had then gone. I've always hoped what the generals had to say to each other was important.

"Of course we weren't engaged I didn't have a picture of her. In fact, the only thing I had was a few lines she'd scribbled on a piece of paper a few weeks before. We'd been idly talking about how we hoped to get out of the Islands and agreed, half in joke, that which ever of us got out first would write the family of the other one of those reassuring letters about how wonderful life was on Batan and how sorry and happy the other one had looked.

"So, half in joke, she'd scratched the address of her married sister in San Francisco on the back of an old envelope. This I still had, and I intended to write her, and send it out by the plane which took MacArthur, telling her what a swell girl her kid sister was—with more spunk in her little finger than half the men on the island."

"Kelly's 34 boat was right on time," said Bulkeley, "and in the 41 boat picked up our passengers at Corregidor and met him and the other two boys at the burning light just outside the mine field at 7 o'clock to the minute. We had twenty passengers in all in our four boats. With me in the 41 boat were General and Mrs. MacArthur, their little boy, and his nurse and a few generals. Kelly in the 34 boat had, to start with, Admiral Rockwell, two colonels, and an Army aviation captain. When one of the other boats later broke down, Kelly picked up a few more generals.

"But rank made no difference. Washington had ordered MacArthur to bring out the most valuable of his men, and so they were all specialists—there was even a staff sergeant, who was a technician, along with us, while thirty-odd generals were left behind on Bataan.

"We started out single file, my boat as flagship setting the pace for the other three. First we went 50 miles straight out to sea in the deepening twilight. We'd hoped to get out unnoticed, but suddenly we saw a light glimmer and glow on one of the Japanese-held islands. It was a signal fire—warning to the mainland that they'd seen us pass. If they had seen it on Luzon, that meant trouble for us—maybe bombers at dawn, maybe destroyers later on in the day. By 11 o'clock we made out the outline of Apo Island against the stars (there was no moon) and checked our navigation, which we were doing entirely by compass and chart. MacArthur and General Sutherland were pleased with the way it was going."

"I can't say that Admiral Rockwell was," said Kelly—maybe because he knew more about the sea than the generals did. I hadn't wanted to worry him, so I hadn't mentioned the fact that ours was the only one of the four boats which hadn't been overhauled, and was so full of carbon that we couldn't make much speed until the carbon was burned out.

"As you know, we'd intended to make a good speed, but I found my boat wouldn't quite do it. Pretty soon we were lagging fifty yards behind, then, after a while, two hundred. The Admiral didn't mention this for some time. But finally he said:

"'Don't you think we're getting a little far apart?'

"'We'll close in gradually,' I said. And I tried to, but finally we were so far behind Bulkeley's flagship we couldn't see it with the naked eye.

"'Damn it,' said the Admiral. 'Let's close up!' And he wasn't giving it just as advice any more. But I was floored as to how to achieve it. I'd been giving her all the throttle I had for the past hour. Then I had an idea.

"I sent a whispered message to the engine room, ordering them to disconnect the throttle, and to push the carburetors up with their hands as far up as they would go. We got had on every possible ounce of power, but the Admiral still wasn't satisfied.

"'We're closing pretty slowly,' he complained.

"'Privately, I doubted that we were closing at all, but I only said, 'No use pushing her too hard, sir.'

"But about five minutes later we really were closing. Bulkeley, noticing we were pretty far behind, had reduced his speed. But, with my throttle disconnected, I couldn't reduce mine, and it took me about a minute to get a message down there telling the engineers to take their hands off the carburetor levels and reconnect them with the controls on the bridge. During this minute we not only gained on Bulkeley's boat, but overlook it and went roaring madly past.

"In the darkness I could see the Admiral had squared around and was giving me a doubtful look. I could tell he thought he was riding with a madman, and I decided he would worry less if I told him the truth—that our maximum speed in this boat was something under 40 knots. Any Japanese destroyer could easily make this maximum of ours, as the Admiral very well knew. But all he said was 'My God!' very softly to himself.

"It happened that we were just passing an island. The Admiral glanced over.

"'How far are we from shore, Kelly?'

"'About four miles, sir.'

"'Looks farther than that to me. Take a bow-and-beam bearing.'

"'Aye, aye, sir,' I said. **But of course I didn't have any instruments. So, making the 45-degree angle with two fingers, I sighted along them to a point ahead. When we came just abeam of this point, since we knew our own speed, it would give us roughly our distance from shore—very roughly. The Admiral noticed me sighting along my fingers.**

"'Don't you have a pelorus?' he said, sharply.

"'No, sir,' I said.

"'Hm-m- I suppose the flagship has better means?'

"'No, sir,' I said. 'They don't.'

"'How in hell do you navigate?'

"'By guess and by God, sir,' I said.

"My God!' said the Admiral, and this time he didn't say it so softly. 'I hope' he added wistfully, 'that we get there.'

"Next Chapter: Four boats in other one of these reassuring letters about how wonderful life was on Batan and how sorry and happy the other one had looked.

WISHING WELL

Registered U. S. Patent Office.

4	7	2	5	3	7	6	2	8	4	3	7	5
A	B	F	J	F	E	R	A	L	B	O	M	B
6	3	5	7	4	8	2	7	8	3	5	4	8
O	R	Y	I	U	E	I	N	L	T	F	L	I
5	7	4	6	2	8	5	3	7	4	8	2	5
U	D	G	M	T	E	L	U	I	I	F	H	O
2	8	3	5	7	4	8	6	5	8	3	7	4
F	F	N	U	N	N	R	A	T	S	A	O.	G
6	2	5	4	8	3	7	8	7	2	4	5	3
N	U	S	P	M	T	C	P	H	L	L	U	I
5	3	7	6	7	2	4	3	8	5	6	7	2
D	M	E	A	D	L	R	O	I	E	C	U	O
3	5	4	2	6	7	5	8	5	4	2	7	6
V	F	S	V	E	L	U	N	E	E	E	E	N

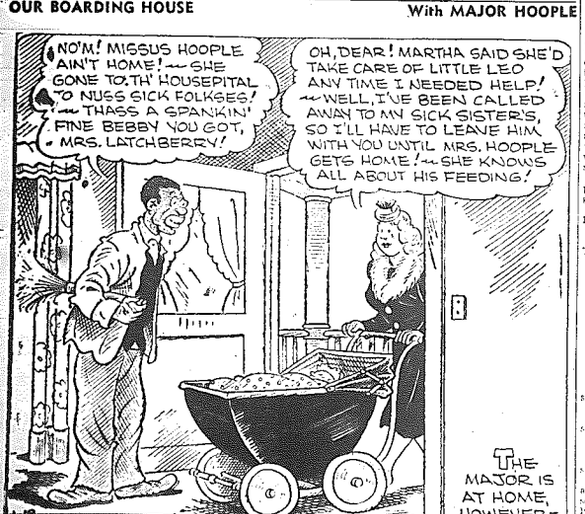
HERE is a pleasant little game that will give you a message every day. It is a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is six or more, subtract four. If the number is less than six, add three. The result is your key number. Start 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

By J. R. WILLIAMS

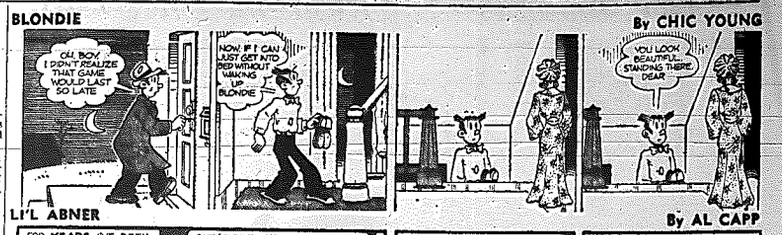
OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



BLONDIE

By CHIC YOUNG

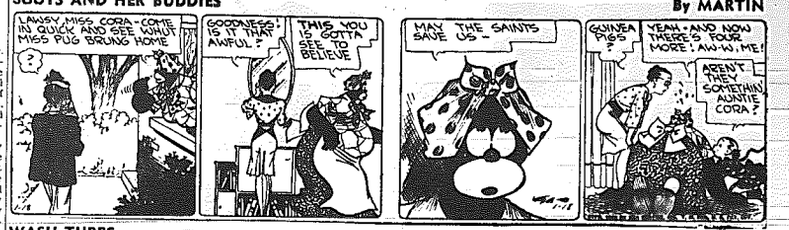


LI'L ABNER

By AL CAPP

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

By MARTIN



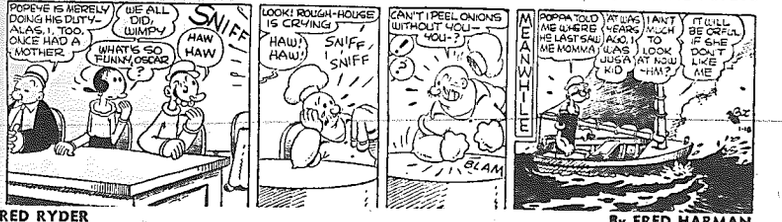
WASH TUBBS

By ROY CRANE

THIMBLE THEATER

'STARRING POPEYE

By FRED HARMAN

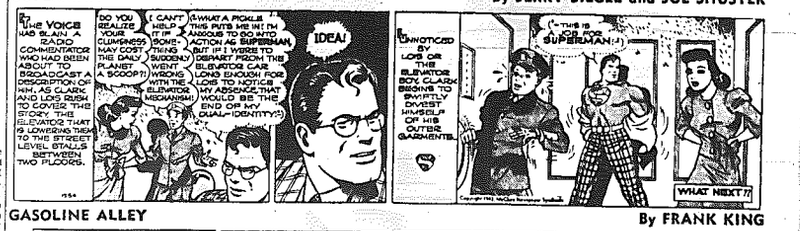


RED RYDER

By JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER

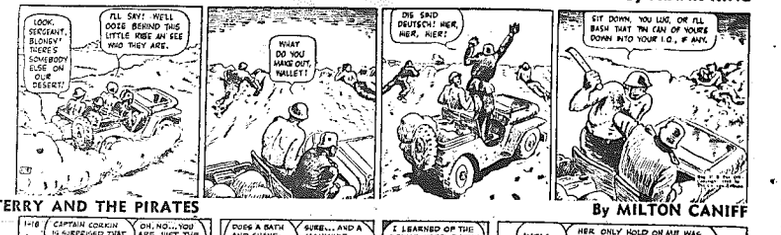
SUPERMAN

By FRANK KING



GASOLINE ALLEY

By MILTON CANIFF



TERRY AND THE PIRATES

By FRANK KING