

'LLOYDS of LONDON'

By PETER B. KYNE
The Story of the 20th Century Fox Picture Starring
Madeleine Carroll and Freddie Bartholemew

COMING TO THE EL PORTAL SOON

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE:

Jonathan Blake, 13-year-old orphaned slavey to dissolute old Widow Blake, proprietress of a waterside tavern at Burnham-Thorpe, Norfolk, England, in the year 1770, overhears two drunken customers, sailors, plotting to transfer a cargo of gold from the brig Maggie-O, scuttle her and fraudulently compel Lloyds of London, the insurers, to pay the shippers for its loss. He hastens to the home of his playmate, Horatio Nelson, who was later to be Admiral Lord Nelson, in the fashionable home of the latter's churchman father, and the two agree they must balk the plotters.

CHAPTER TWO

It is probable that there has never been a boy of good family, tenderly reared, grounded in the conventions of his class and taught pride in his superior breeding, who did not experience an unholy delight in associating with boys his direct antithesis in breeding and social class. Jonathan Blake was well aware that Horatio Nelson's parents disapproved of him very strongly as a companion for their son. Horatio also was aware of it; hence with the curious wilfulness of boyhood they had struck up a friendship in defiance of parental mandate and rejoiced in the knowledge that their friendship carried an element of danger. Both were lads of daring and initiative; they were venturesome with the courage to take risks, for the life of each was, in its widely divergent way, equally dull, risks were productive of thrills and thrills enable one to bear with the tedium of a dull life. Horatio was an extraordinarily obedient boy, yet he could not bring himself to obey his father's injunction not to associate with the ragamuffin Jonathan. Indeed, he felt a little chagrined that his father, a clergyman, did not possess a wider charity. Jonathan, however, had no thoughts on the matter. His low social status gave him a wide measure of freedom, and he was accustomed to brutal treatment; Horatio was the sole gentle human being he had ever known and he adored the latter accordingly.

The two boys proceeded through the fog to the boat landing; the confident Horatio, ever the leader in their escapades, helped himself calmly to a skiff lying at the float and shipped the oars. Neither he nor Jonathan had the slightest idea of their destination, nevertheless they pulled out into the fog on the off chance that fate would lead them in the right direction. For an hour they pulled around, taking turns at rowing; then out of the thick mist the high stern of a vessel protruded and across it they read the name — MAGGIE-O. She was lying alongside another and larger vessel, which proved to be the Seahorse. Both vessels lay there, rising and falling gently with the swish of the tide and there did not

appear to be any activity on their decks.

Horatio passed the skiff's painter around the bob-stay of the Maggie-O and climbed out and up the bob-stay to the end of the bowsprit upon which he climbed and then crept down along it to the deck. Jonathan, his heart pounding with the delicious thrill of the adventure, followed after him. They made their way aft over a wet deserted deck to the cuddy and observed two heavy planks connecting the two vessels over their gunwales. Here they paused listening and hearing nothing, scampered across to the deck of the Seahorse; they were standing hesitantly by some barrels in the waist when the sound of voices reached them and two men emerged from the cuddy on to the deck.

The boys dropped behind the barrels. "Well, then, that's settled," one of the men observed. We've agreed on it, so let there be no changes now. Ten sovereigns to each of the seamen and fifteen each to the mates; the rest we divide equally between us."

"Aye. Well, all your men are ashore, so they won't know anything about it. I'll rouse out the crew of the Maggie-O now and we'll make the transfer while this fog holds; then we'll warp her a bit and scuttle her."

The last speaker crossed the plank gangway to the Maggie-O, went forward to the forecabin and roused out his men. A hatch was removed and the men descended into the hold via a companion ladder; presently they came on deck again, each man bearing a heavy ingot of dull yellow metal. Over the plank bridge they came and solemnly laid the ingots on the deck of the Seahorse.

"Pick them up and carry them down into the cuddy," the master of the Maggie-O commanded marshally.

"Arf a mo, sir," one of the men replied insolently. Behind the barrels Jonathan nudged Horatio. "That's one o' them," he whispered, "and the man in back o' 'im is 'is pal. Them's the two wot was in the groggery."

"Get on with it," the master snapped. "I'll have no back talk from you, Hawkins."

Hawkins grinned evilly and waved a deprecating paw. "Before we transfers this here bullion, Cap'n," he said, "we got to have an unnerstandin' about our share."

"Ah, so you do. I'd forgotten that, of course, Hawkins. The seamen are to receive ten sovereigns each, the mates fifteen."

"Make it a hundred pun each, Cap'n," the man Hawkins urged. "Us sailors has held a conference an' have agreed that we get a hundred pun each or we squeal to Lloyd's. Wot you're doin' sir, is called barratry, an' it's a hanging' offense. Us sailors ain't riskin' our necks for no lousy ten sovereigns, an' that's wot an' we got ter have the money as soon as the gold's

sold."

The master of the Seahorse had slipped around in the back of the men; he had paused at the pin-rail long enough to select a long hardwood spike; as Hawkins voiced his defiance the club came down on the back of his head and he dropped unconscious to the deck. "Now, then," the master of the Seahorse announced calmly, "who wants some more o' the same? Get along with it, I tell you."

Cowed and terrorized with their leader hors de combat, the crew picked up the ingots and carried them down into the cuddy of the Seahorse. On their return to the hold of the Maggie-O the master of the Seahorse helped each man across the rails with a brutal kick or a blow of his fist.

"We've seen enough," Jonathan whispered to Horatio. "They are removing the gold from the cargo of the Maggie-O to the Seahorse; then they'll haul the Maggie-O away some distance and sink her; then the owners will get a settlement of the insurance from Lloyds of London while those thieving captains divide the gold between them and the crew."

"I s'pose the gold an' the rest of her cargo is insured, too," Horatio replied. "Well, one thing's certain. If we're discovered aboard, they'll knock us in the head and throw us overboard. Let's go forward. We're too close. Somebody may see us."

They started forward and Jonathan stumbled over a bucket filled with water. At the crash and the involuntary cry that escaped from Jonathan, the master of the Seahorse whirled and challenged sharply: "Who's there?"

"Two boys," the master of the Maggie-O cried. "Get them. Damnation! They know too much."

Said Horatio: "Take it easy, Jonathan. We can never get back aboard the Maggie-O now and down to our skiff. Forward, quickly."

They fled up the deck with the two shipmasters racing after them. "Overboard with you," Horatio ordered, but Jonathan, frightened, hung back. Instantly Horatio seized him by the legs and tumbled him overboard; he heard the bark or a pistol and the whine of a bullet past his head as he dove off the high bow. When he came up Jonathan was beside him, treading water. "Dive," he yelled, "and swim under water as long as you can."

Two bullets splashed into the water between them; they dove; when they came up for breath another bullet splashed dangerously close, so they dove again; when they poked their heads up the second time the outline of the Seahorse no longer loomed through the fog and the two boys struck out for the shore. It was a long cold journey, but the tide favored them and eventually they waded out on the shingle.

"Good-night, Jonathan," Horatio chattered. "We've got to hurry home and change our clothes or we'll be sick."

"I haven't any clothes to change into," Jonathan replied. He slipped his hand through his chum's arm. "D'ye know wot we got to do Horatio? We've got to get to London as quickly as possible and tell Mr. Lloyd all about this, so he won't be deceived into paying the insurance."

"We can't," Horatio protested.

It's a hundred miles to London and we haven't coach fare."

"We'll walk; we'll steal rides on the backs of the coaches. We've GOT to get there before the thief gets there."

"Oh, I couldn't go, Jonathan," Horatio pleaded. "I'd be gone days and days and father and mother wouldn't know where I was."

"Look here, Horatio. You and I made a pact once. Whatever we did, wherever we went, we wouldn't separate. And if one of us went back on the pact the other had a right to clip him a ciout with his mauley. Well, I'm goin' to London, and wot I do you got to do — or else —" and Jonathan pulled back his fist.

Horatio commenced to plead. Jonathan stepped closer. He meant business.

"I'll—I'll go," Horatio mumbled. "It'll be awful, but I'll go."

Jonathan opened his hand and extended it to his pal. "Tip us your mauley," he demanded, well pleased not to have had recourse to the agreed alternative had Horatio persisted in his stand. "We'll start tonight. I'll meet you at eight o'clock just outside the carriage house. We must get our supper first and try to get some food for the journey."

They shook hands as solemnly as grown men and Jonathan scampered away to Widow Blake's Ale House. He hoped the tap room would be empty and his horrible aunt quite drunk, in which case he could dry out by the sea-coal fire before starting on the greatest adventure of all—a journey into terra incognito. But the Widow Blake was most surprisingly sober and cuffed him cruelly for being wet and having lost his hat. He stood the punishment stoically and was sent in to the kitchen to get his poor supper, while the widow remained on watch in the tap room. After eating, Jonathan wrapped a loaf, several cuts of roast beef and a small cheese in a large napkin, resurrected an old hat he had discarded long ago, slipped out the back door and without one farewell glance at the only home he had ever known, slipped blithely away into the fog and darkness. He knew he was not going to see the Widow Blake or her establishment again, no matter what might happen to him. She had struck him once too often and, his mission in London accomplished, he would not return for another beating. He reflected that he could starve or half starve

(Continued on Page Nine)

TIRES and TUBES

New, Used, Rebuilt
Wheels and Rims to Fit
Most All Cars

ED. BAGGETT'S PLACE
Three Miles Out of Las Vegas
on Salt Lake Highway tf

VEGAS LODGE No. 32

F. & A. M.



Stated Communications
First Monday. Visiting
Brothers Welcome.

BUD S. BARRETT, W.M.
CLAUDE HAFF, Secretary