

TODAY'S MYSTERY STORY

By PHILIP FRANCIS NOWLAN

Saturday's Mystery Solution

THE clue on which Harvey based his reasoning in the case of the "Twin Robberies" was the peculiar fact that one of those robberies was no robbery at all. Kostin, the stranger, had broken into the Drinkwater mansion and stolen a \$200,000 necklace. He had broken into the Klegg house and taken nothing. In fact, it was only by accident that this second entry was revealed. At first thought it looked as though Kostin merely had wished to delay the discovery that he had robbed the Klegg house. This would have been entirely except for the fact that he had been at no such pains to delay discovery of the necklace robbery. And besides, he hadn't even robbed the Klegg house. Why, then, had he entered it at all? He had gotten rid of his foot some-where before the patrolman arrested him two blocks away, and he had entered a house he did not rob and had tried to conceal the fact that he entered it. Clearly, thought Harvey Hunt, he could have entered the Klegg house for no other purpose than to hide the necklace he had stolen there. Hunt was convinced that in his own good time he would succeed in shaking off the surveillance of the police and enter the Klegg house to retrieve his loot. The police told Harvey Hunt when Kostin did drop out of sight, and Hunt, with Klegg's assistance, lay in wait for him that night and begged him when he entered and surreptitiously revealed to them the name in the cellar where he had hidden the necklace.

Can you explain the— Vanishing Footprints

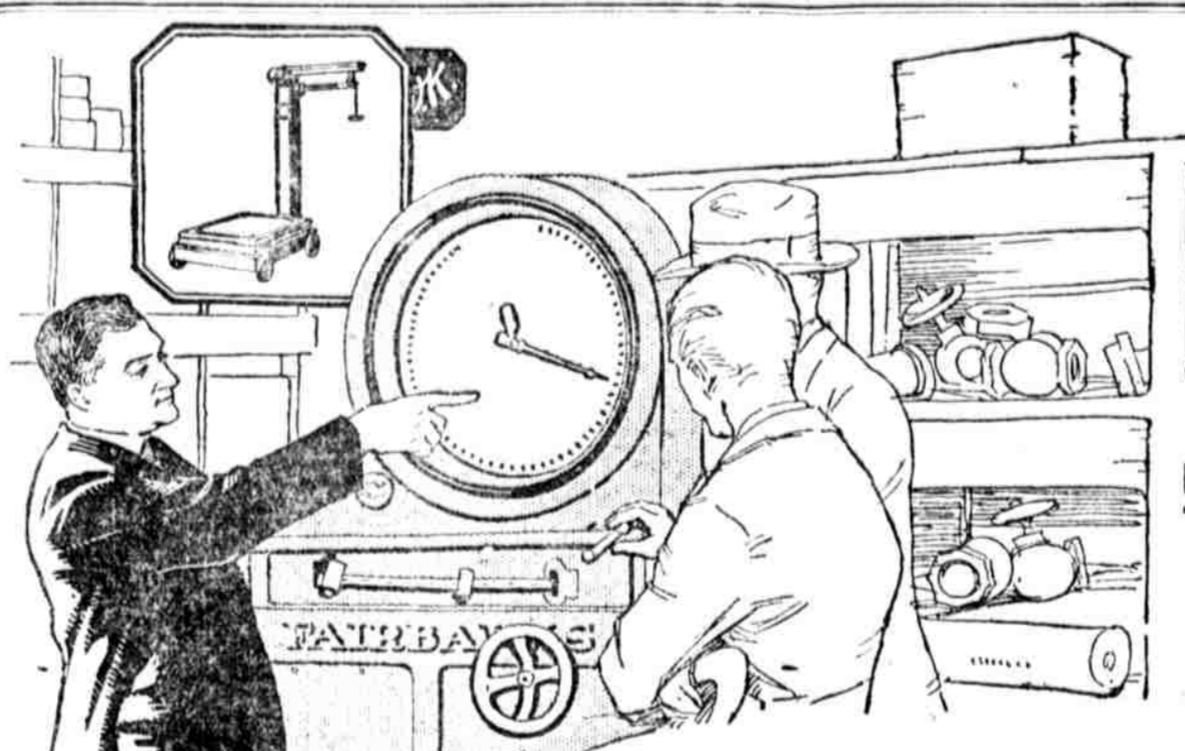
THE vanishing footprints of Sim Gilson caused such a stir throughout Tilton county that Brainerd, at whose ranch Harvey Hunt had stopped at reading the signs of the trail. I can read this one as far as it goes. The trouble with the dog-gasted thing is that it quits right here. I figure there's been some kind of foul play, because, as you can see for yourself, the ground's been considerable tore up. Those furrows, then, were the way they dug in deep, then widen out and get shallower, then deep again. Just the kind of marks a man's foot would make if somebody rode up behind him, grabbed him by the scruff of the neck and dragged him along the ground for about thirty feet. But there ain't any hoofprints nor any other prints. "But it ain't all just like that. See here. This is where I'd say the other guy hit him first. The regular foot-prints stop. Looks like Sim had been whittled around sudden-like, rushed off his feet, and his whole body dragged

off for a few days on his way to Los Angeles, could not help hearing of it, and since Brainerd was a close personal friend of Bob Maguire, the sheriff, it was not long before the criminal investigator found himself injected into the case. Sim Gilson was the manager of the Hildorf smelter, which were just outside Tilton City. Every Thursday it was his custom to walk out to the smelter with the payroll for the next day, amounting to about \$4500. On the day that his footprints vanished, he had not left Tilton City until after dark. The cashier of the bank testified that Sim had explained to him that he had to go over to Starville to order some supplies, and wouldn't be able to get back before 7:15. He told the cashier to take the money home for him and that he would call for it. It was about 8:40 that Sim had signed for the payroll and started on foot for the smelter office to put it in the safe. Sim never arrived there. Maguire was an oldtimer, who had had experience in Indian days. He traced Sim's footprints for half a mile, that is to say, about half way to the smelter. And there the footprints ended. "In the old days," he told Harvey Hunt, as the two reached the spot, "I used to pride myself that I was good

at reading the signs of the trail. I can read this one as far as it goes. The trouble with the dog-gasted thing is that it quits right here. I figure there's been some kind of foul play, because, as you can see for yourself, the ground's been considerable tore up. Those furrows, then, were the way they dug in deep, then widen out and get shallower, then deep again. Just the kind of marks a man's foot would make if somebody rode up behind him, grabbed him by the scruff of the neck and dragged him along the ground for about thirty feet. But there ain't any hoofprints nor any other prints. "But it ain't all just like that. See here. This is where I'd say the other guy hit him first. The regular foot-prints stop. Looks like Sim had been whittled around sudden-like, rushed off his feet, and his whole body dragged



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