



ZUYDER ZEE ZOOMING

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Ludendorff was well satisfied. He already had his sand and gravel on the Holland canals, and now his eye was on the Hollanders' ports. But when he began putting ants in their pants, Phineas raised the ante. All of which proved that there's a limit—even to Dutchman's breeches.

HAVING JUST ENJOYED two slam-bang weeks of leave, Lieutenant Phineas "Carbuncle" Pinkham stood in the Paris railroad terminal feeling as chipper as a burglar in a quiet bank. He knew that many citizens of the French Republic were still trying to convince the *gendarmes* that he was guilty of criminal assault, disturbance of the peace, and witchcraft, and he wanted to get the first train out before the Frog cops were won over by the evidence. But the Pinkham appetite for pulling the leg of the universe had not been fully sated when

the Yank walked up to a Frog porter and asked for information.

"Monsewer," the prodigal son of Major Rufus Garrity's Ninth Pursuit Squadron began, "wheech ees eet ze railroad train poor Barley Duck, nest pass?"

The Frog stared dumbly for a moment, then the gist of Lieutenant Pinkham's doubtful French sank in and he pointed to an iron horse that was snorting loudly.

"Mercy, mercy," Phineas grinned. "Here ees un big tip—an' don't buy ze Eye Full Tower wiz eet, mawn amy."

The porter took one end of the proffered banknote in his fingers. But Phineas did not immediately let go. Instead, he jumped back a couple of steps, then let loose—and as the rubber dollar bill hit with a stinging smack, the Frog let out a prolonged howl.

“That is to show voose eet ees impolite to grab, mawn garson. And now adoo,” the unquenchable Yank beamed and strutted away.

The porter blew on his tingling hand and watched the American flyer saunter to the Frog train. “Peeg! *Chien!*” he snapped. Then he suddenly laughed in his spade beard. “*Tres comique, non? Voila!* Francois jus’ notice zat he make ze meestake when he point out ze train. Ha! Ha! Ze worm she mak’ ze turnaroun’ queeck, *oui*. Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Anyhow, Phineas Pinkham found out later—too much later—that the iron horse he had boarded was headed for Valenciennes instead of for Bar-le-Duc. And when he demanded indignantly to be put off the train at once, he found himself addressing deaf ears. The conductor could not speak a word of English, but Phineas understood enough of the French tongue to comprehend that he was on a fast express and that he would go to Valenciennes and like it. Moreover, he could cough up some *argent*, as his ticket to Bar-le-Duc was no good on that particular stretch of track.

“It’s an outrage!” the misguided Yank fumed. “I will have you all busted. I will see Clemenceau and demand my rights! I will be overstayin’ my leave—I will get Blois—listen, Monsewer, let’s talk things over, *non?*”

“No” was right. The Frog shrugged and jettisoned a stream of French that sent the Pinkham brain into a vril. A fellow passenger translated it all for Phineas.

“He say *M’sieu* mus’ pay *votre* fare—or ze bastile in Valenciennes weel get ze new prisonair. He no can stop her ze *chemin-de-fer*, *M’sieu*. So she look lak *vous* ees—what you say in America?—stuck weeth eet. Ha! Ha!”

“Ha! Ha!” Phineas echoed, “I am in stitches. Aw-right, I’ll pay. But just wait, voose bums. I weel—”

So it was that Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham went to Valenciennes. And he found, after he’d put up at a hotel and sent his uniform out to be cleaned and pressed, that his troubles had not even started. An hour later a Frog bellhop came up to his room and told him that the tailor shop had just burned down.

“Wha-a-a-at? With my pants?” the Yank yelped. “Ya mean, garson, that—oh-h-h-h!” Phineas plunked down on a bed and pawed at his freckled physiognomy. “Only my skivvies an’ coat I’ve got. Listen, mawn amy, get eet ze new pants *pour moi*—

trousers . . . breeches! Comprenny? Pantaloons, nest paw? Oh, if I ever get back to Paree, I will fracture that Frog porter’s skull. Get eet ze pantaloons, Frenchy—for I—”

THE door of the Pinkham chamber was open. And at that moment a citizen of France, decked out in a Frog pilot’s nifty scenery, chanced to pass. Hearing the commotion, he came to a stop and walked into Phineas’ room. He looked at the Yank with the shades of his glimmers half drawn, then yipped: “*Bon soir, M’sieu. Par-donnez moi*, but maybe I be of aid, *oui?*”

“I am Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham of the U.S. Air Corps,” Phineas responded, assuming as much dignity as a man without pants can hope to assume. “I sent my things to a tailor and he burned down his shop. Yes, I am in need of help, Monsewer.”

“*Sacre! Oui*, Lieutenant Peenkham, what eea eet *vous* say in Anglais? Wan sucker you be, *non? Merci, mon ami*, I have hear it said zat Peenkham—”

“I am in distress, M’soor,” Phineas broke in. “I am due in Barley Duck tonight, an’ here I am without ze pantaloons. Eet ees diggin’ sewers in Blois for me if I don’t get ze airplane—”

The Frog flying man reluctantly agreed that Phineas was in a mess and that after all they were both members of the flying lodge and should stick together. Then he called a cab and took Phineas out to the Nieuport field near Bouchain, telling the Yank that he would try and phenagle transportation for him out of the Frog C.O. What was more, he lent Phineas a duplicate of the uniform he was wearing. It fitted the pilot from Boonetown, Iowa, with surprising perfection, whereupon Phineas eyed himself in the mirror with obvious satisfaction.

“Say!” Major Garrity’s absentee beamed at his reflection.

“If Babette could only see me now, haw-w-w-w! I think I will get a transfer to the Frog army.

Maybe the skimmer is a little big, but I can stuff it with newspaper. Veeva la Fraw-w-wncle!”

Thereupon, the French Nieuport jockeys made him welcome while his benefactor bearded the C.O. in his den to ask about ferrying the visitor to Bar-le-Duc, or at least part of the way.

Tales of Lieutenant Phineas Pinkham had reached the Squadron Commander’s ears, however, and he emphatically refused to put a ship at the Yank’s disposal. The Frog officer told his subordinate that the crackpot American probably had been filled up with giggle water

when he left Paree and that, so far as he was concerned, Lieutenant Pinkham could worry his way back to Bar-le-Duc the best way he could. To be exact, the French officer had not forgotten a certain incident when he was an instructor at Issoudon.

“Ze *Chien*, he put ze ants in ze bed, *oui*. I nevair forget thees, bah!”

The gloomy news was conveyed to Phineas in detail. He listened thoughtfully, then guffawed. “Well, mercy for tryin’, anyhow. As a bum sews, so shall he rip, Monsewer. But I have got to keep your suit until I get home. I will send it in the mail to you. Adoo for now, bums. I will just take a walk around an’ see the bread mixers you Frogs have to fly. Help yourselves to the cigars in my bag!”

“*Mais non!*” the Frog shook his head and grinned sagely. “You theenk we get born today or yesterday, *oui*? We have heard tell too much, yes, of ze Peenkham seegars!”

Phineas only answered with a broad toothful grin of his own. Then he sauntered off across the drome. There was a Nieuport having its torso examined not far away, so the miracle man of the Ninth headed toward it. Just as he drew near, the prop began to turn. A little groundhog saluted Phineas who asked: “Weel eet fly, Monsewer?”

“*Oui*,” the mechanic replied. “*Il est tres bien.*”

Quickly Phineas climbed into the pit of the Nieuport and fumbled with the controls. The engine let out a deafening roar just as three Frogs came out of their mess shack. One of them broke into a run and his baying could be heard as far as the Channel.

“*Arretez! Sacre bleu!* Peenkham, in ze *nom de France*—!”

But the Nieuport was already shooting across the field like a bull pup with a hornet glued to its empennage, and the French ackemma who had been grooming it was now picking himself up from the ground with his marbles scattered all around him.

Some *poilus* started shooting, and one of the slugs cut up through the floorboards of the Nieuport and made a mess out of the compass on the dash. But Phineas only tossed out: “Aadoo, mawn garsongs. I will phone you from Barley Duck!”

Nevertheless, Lieutenant Pinkham did not reach Bar-le-Duc. An hour before dusk was due to creep over the Continent and before the north star had become visible up in the attic of the universe, the Yankee pilot of the borrowed Frog ship gazed around anxiously. Phineas had never been a good judge of direction, so

he dropped down to three thousand feet and took a gander at the terrain spread out beneath him. It looked as if the war had folded up in his absence.

“Something is funny about this,” he gulped, zooming a bit.

Then castor oil started to slap against his face, and once he got a mouthful of it. “Ugh,” he sputtered, “the next thing I will be gettin’ is sulphur an’ molasses from the exhaust pipe of this crate. I wish I knew where I—why, I shoulda been over Rheims by now! Oh well, I will turn a little to the right. Gee there, dobbin. Giddap!”

LET us now move across the Rhine and get in on a bit of Kraut skullduggery that never got much publicity from the leading historians of the big tussle. Little did the *Herr Obersts* of the Potsdam menage know that Phineas Pinkham was unwittingly stabbing a finger toward the Wilhelmstrasse pie. Unaware of Fate’s maneuvering, they sat about chuckling over a stroke of Jerry genius. They seemed to have a swell idea.

“Idt cannodt fail, *mein Freunds*,” a Teuton with a dome as big as a grain bin ejaculated between puffs from a long-stemmed porcelain pipe. “*Der* Hollanders know *der* Englanders *und* French *ist* madt because *der* vater-vays in Holland *ist* used by *der* Chermans to ship *der* sandt *und* gravel ve use to buildt *der* ferro-concrete doogoutds by Belgium, ja. Zo! Und now ve sendt vun of our pilots ofer Holland in *der* French airblane vhat ve have capture, *und* dey tink idt *ist* ein French pilot. Our pilot he drops idt *der* bombs. Und—Ho! Ho!—*der* Hollanders dey blame idt on *der* French!”

“*Ach Himmel*,” exclaimed another Kraut.brass hat, nodding his closely shaved coco, “zo idt *ist* *der* Hollanders get madt at *der* Allies, *und* den dey vill ledt Ludendorff do anything vhat he vants to do, anyvay yedt. *Der* Dutch ports he gets maybe, *und* *der* Hollander army maybe fights *mit* our side, vunce. Four hundert *und* vifty t’ou-sandt men *der* Dutch haben, *und* maybe ve finally vin *der* var by *der* bombink *mit* *dis* French plane. *Hoch der Kaiser! Hoch Ludendorff!*”

Yes, that was the latest bit of connivery issuing from Potsdam, and the history books show you that Ludendorff actually threatened to go across the land of dikes, tulips, wooden kicks, windmills, and cheese and grab off the Dutchmen’s waterfronts. Historians, however, neglect to recount the part played by Phineas Pinkham—perhaps because no one would believe it.

AND so it came to pass that high over the town of Leerham a Boche pilot, flying a captured Nieuport, looked down at a splotch of color that was a tulip bed and then let loose three bombs. One washed out a pretty mess of blossoms, another rendered a grazing moo cow defunct, and the third bit a prodigious hunk out of a windmill. Round-cheeked Hollanders looked up at the plane, spotted the French cocardes on the fuselage, and immediately became convinced that the Frogs had double-crossed the Netherlands. Hotfooting it for cover, they did not see the other plane that had dropped down off a higher shelf. Major Garrity's Sinbad was in that one. And as he looked at the scenery below him, he suddenly realized that he was over the land where Hans Brinker set a skating record. He'd also seen the bombing.

"The dirty bum!" Phineas yelled. "Droppin' eggs on them Rip Van Winkles! If that is a Frog, he must be boiled to the ears. But say! It is a Boche, I bet! He's tryin' to make the dike builders sore at us. But I'll show him that a Pinkham—take that, ya Heinie bum! An' that—!"

In the other Frog crate, the Jerry got over his surprise too late. A burst of mayhem chewed up one of his ailerons and the Nieuport went askew. Phineas quickly hopped on the Von's tail as he headed for tulip dirt. But his own sky wagon suddenly contracted a case of dry throat, and the hacking cough convinced the Yankee pilot that his gas tank was drained to the lining.

"Aw-w-w cripes!" Phineas yipped as he went down with a dead stick. He knew he had bagged the Boche, but his chances of retrieving him were as slim as a Floradora Sextette waistline. He had his own neck to think of for the next few moments, so he concentrated on picking himself what he thought to be a low, flat stretch of Dutch linoleum upon which to set the Spad down. The terra firma was deceiving, however, and it tossed the Nieuport over a fence into a tulip field. The jolt whacked the Pinkham cranium against his instrument board.

When he finally shook the fog out of his top story, the Yank found himself sitting waist deep in tulips. "Uh—er—I am killed at last!" he gulped. "It is a nice flower piece the bums give me. Tulips—but I am sittin' up, so how can I be dead? I—er—bawn swore, mawn amies!" he chirped on seeing he had company.

Several people wearing funny looking jackets and pantaloons had closed in on Major Garrity's errant flyer. They were smoking pipes as big as saxophones,

and one of them nudged Phineas with what looked like a miniature canal boat but which really was a wooden shoe.

"French low-lifer!" a ponderous Hollander growled. "Maybe petter idt would be ve shoodt him right away vunce, *Mynheers, ja?*"

"Wait a minute! Wait a minute!" Phineas yipped. "I am innocent. It wasn't me—"

"*Der* French suit you have idt on, *ja?* Petter you shouldt *mit* Peter van Dunkemgoot not try *der* foolink!"

"Look," Phineas argued, clambering to his feet, "I am a Yankee. I ain't no Frog. Listen goot, Mine hairs. Twenty-three skidoo for ya! Go way back an' sit down! Tell it to Sweeney! There, I guess you know I'm a U.S. citizen now."

The Dutchman gathered into a huddle, puffing furiously on their goose-necked dudeens. Finally one turned to Phineas and withered him with a glare that would have aged an Edam cheese in five seconds flat. "*Gunst!*" he snorted. "*Mynheer* Frenchy, coom vit' us, *ja*. It iss *der* Hooge Road—*der* high court—at *der* Hague where you go. *Der* judges vill tell when you get shoodet. *Mein* wife feed you goot for *der* kloosterkerk. Ho! Ho!"

Phineas found out later that the long, drawn-out word "*kloosterkerk*" meant "cemetery," and he also learned about a lot more things that beat the Dutch. But the Pinkham sense of humor would not be downed even while he was being shoved toward a scattering of Holland dwellings. A couple of Dutch maidens—*jongvrowes*—gave Phineas and his classy uniform the well-known goo-goo-eye and snickered.

"Goot efening," the irrepressible Yank chirped. "Are you the wooden-shoe sisters? Wooden you buy me that? Wooden you give me this? Haw-w-w-w-w! If I ever get out of jail I will get your telephone numbers, you plump little dickenses you!"

"Qvick! Moof faster!" *Mynheer* van Dunkemgoot clipped. "Bomb us Hollanders, *ja?* *Der* judges by *der* Hague vill var declare. Our men vill fight—men of Haarlem, *undt* Leyden, *undt* Rotterdam, *undt* Amsterdam, *undt* Scheidam, *undt* Volendam—"

"I wish I'd never coom to yer—er—dam coountry," the prisoner quipped. "Haw-w-w-w! But I will get out of this, Mine hairs. I will save the Allies, as all I have got to do is catch *der* Heinie what I shot down. The Krauts have made a mess, but I am *der* old Dutch Cleanser, haw-w-w!"

"*Doomkopf!* Snake in *der* tulip beds you iss,

Mynheer Frenchy. Ve lock you oop for *der* soldiers to take you by *der* Hague *undt der Hooge Road. Gunst!*"

VILLAGERS were lined up on either side of the street to see the man in the French flyer's uniform get pushed along. Buxom Dutch *vrouws* stolidly watched him pass, and being older they were unmoved by the Pinkham ogling.

Coal-scuttle bonnets were perched atop their flaxen locks or stiff muslin caps with wings at the sides. "A Chinaman sure would clean up with a laundry here," Phineas mused.

"Goot efening, Katrinka," he suddenly tossed at one *vrouw*—and she immediately threw a wooden shoe at him. It bounced off the Pinkham skull and the Yank rocked uncertainly on his undercarriage.

"Cripes," he gulped, "I'm glad they don't have iron mines here. Listen, Mine hairs, it is all a mistake. It was a Cherman that dropped *der* eggs, *ja!* Lemme go *und* I vill proof it, you Hip Van Winkles! Listen to me vunce—

*Yankee do-o-odde vent to town—riding on der bony—Yang-g-gee doodle—Oh-h-h-h sa-a-ay c-a-a—
an you se-e-e-e!*

Thus he strained his vocal chords and grew red under his freckles. But to no avail. The Dutch boys who were guarding him apparently knew few of the old Yankee songs. One of them now gave Phineas a buffet on the noggin with a porcelain pipe and the Boonetown ham was sent staggering into a Dutch house, seeing stars. Immediately a big pinkcheeked *vrouw* pushed him out again. Two husky Hollanders then sat Phineas down unceremoniously and yanked off his boots. When he finally got inside the house again, he was pushed into a chair and the Dutchmen began to rattle off a lot of lingo to Dame Vanderwoof.

Phineas was convinced via pantomime that if he didn't stay put he would get a milk crock on the cranium. Indignantly he demanded that the Dutch get word to Major Rufus Garrity of the Ninth Pursuit Squadron at Bar-le-Duc. Moreover, he raged, he wanted victuals. Still volubly shouting for food, he looked around and spotted something on a window sill nearby. It looked like a succulent onion and he picked it up and took a big bite out of it. Thereupon *Mynheer* van Dunkemgoot made a flying leap at Phineas, yelling something about "four t'ousand florins."

"Well, I'm hungry!" the prisoner howled, ducking the Dutchman's tackle. "All this fuss over an onion.

Huh, ya'd think—wha-a-a-a? *Tulpen?* Sounds like 'tulip' to me. Why don't you bums speak English?"

"*Ja, tulpen! Gunst!* He eadts idt! *Und* idt *ist* so rare like *der* day in Joon. Kill *der* peeg! Shoodt him! My most valuable *tulpen!*"

"I have been in some cock-eyed places, but this is the worst," Phineas complained. "It's too bad that Dutch bum ever plugged up that dike with his finger! I'm hungry—comprenny? I bet if I eat that pertater. there I'll break a fang on a diamond, huh? Hey, you blown-up breeches, I am a U.S. citizen and I demand—"

Mynheer Peter van Dunkemgoot finally located a Hollander who had been across the big pond. He translated the Pinkham protest, but even so the dike builders were unanimous in the opinion that the prisoner was a liar. They instructed the interpreter to tell Phineas Pinkham that he was already as good as in the *kloosterkerk* with tulips in his hand. Yes, the Dutch intended to get hunk with the French for the bombing of their linoleum. They'd give Ludendorff a free pass to the Holland ports!

"Ohh-h-h-h!" Phineas moaned. "Look vunce, dumb heads. I am no Frog. If you want more proof, listen with both ears—"

Suwe-e-e-t Ad-del-line—myy-y-y Ad-dehline—

Dame Vanderwoof took a swipe at Phineas with her broom, and Garrity's pain in the neck subsided to think things out. What little chance he had had of convincing the tulip growers that he was innocent had gone with that bulb that had been worth plenty of sugar even in the coin of the windmill country. But after awhile he permitted himself a snicker as he eyed *Mynheer* Vanderwoof who sat near the stove holding a pistol as big as a cow's hind leg. The Dutchmen always left their wooden shoes out on the front stoop when they entered a house, so Phineas was surrounded by guards in stocking feet. They silently puffed at their pipes and scowled at their prisoner through clouds of tobacco smoke.

"I got to git out an' find that blamed Hun—or four hundred and fifty thousand Hollanders'll be tossin' monkey wrenches into the Allies' machinery," the Yank flyer said to himself. Suddenly a beam of light irradiated the Pinkham gray matter and Phineas gave a private chuckle. "Haw-w-w-w, I think I've got it—from A to Zuyder Zee. It looks like a Pinkham is never licked! *Oh boys!*"

MEANWHILE, several Dutch *vrouws* busied themselves with preparations for the evening meal.

The sun was ducking below the horizon and the light in the Hollanders' huge communal tepee was none too good. Phineas broke into a whistle and brought his hand out of his pocket. He tossed something out onto the floor, and as he did so, he gauged the distance between his chair and the window, all the time assaulting the ears of his captors with the shrill notes of "K - K - K - Ka - a - aty, peautiful K-K-Katy—"

Again his hand dived into his pocket and shot out again. And once more he tossed something from him in the manner of a man strewing corn to hungry cacklers.

A lull. Then suddenly Phineas rose up, let out a blood-curdling yell, and dived for the window—getting through it just a little sooner than did the leaden spittle from *Mynheer* Vanderwoof's horse pistol.

As he sped toward the canal, Phineas heard painful yowls and yelps back in the Dutchmen's house.

"Ow-w-w-w-w! *Goede Gunst! Donnervetter!*
Ow-w-w-w-w-w-w!"

"They won't git much of a start with them tacks in their puppies," Phineas chortled. "Haw-w-w-w-w! It's an old Dutch custom, huh, their takin' off their shoes before they go into a house. Boys, I wish I had a pair of them on, though. I could run better."

There were a few Dutchmen outside the house who did have their wooden kicks on, and they clattered after Phineas across ten acres of hyacinth and tulips, not to mention three canals.

"Th-them b-bums' shoes musta—been—made from b-balsa wood," the fugitive gasped as he kept on running, his own unshod puppies protesting against the punishment that he was giving them. But then his eyes lit on a house near a big windmill and he angled toward it. On the fly he picked up a pair of the wooden sabots, covered a few more yards, then stopped long enough to shove his feet into them. They slowed him down and he grunted disdainfully: "Huh—these ain't no dancin' p-pumps." But he kept on going. Anyhow, it was faster than bare-feet travel.

TWO HOURS LATER Phineas crawled into a haystack, and he almost had to put a fold in his tongue to get it back into his mouth. There he lay, the realization of what might happen to the Allies jolting him like the kiss of a high tension wire. The Hollanders were sore at France, the Spad specialist now knew. They would invite Ludendorff and his army to Holland, and they might even toss their own army in with the goose-stepping boys.

But even though he was still close to the tribunal at the Hague, or the *Hooge Raad*, as Van Dunkemgoot had called it, the Yankee fugitive retained his self confidence. He fell asleep, only stirring at intervals to wiggle the hay out of his nostrils.

Phineas slept until dawn, then started a precarious trip across Netherland carpet. With the sun just up over the eastern rim of the world, he reconnoitred toward a small cluster of Dutch farm buildings, and he managed to get near to the farmer's house without detection.

He found a window open and looked in. Not a soul was in sight. Probably the *Mynheer* and his *vrouw* were out in the barn coaxing milk out of the moo cows, he thought; so without hesitation he wriggled over the window sill. In a small room off the kitchen the magician from Iowa found quite an assortment of Dutch wearing scenery. Losing no time, he set about draping his gangly frame with some of the picturesque clothing.

Within ten minutes, Phineas Pinkham looked like the picture on a travel ad entitled "See Holland First." He looked at himself in a mirror and had to snicker at his reflection.

While so engaged, he thought he heard muffled sounds. In one corner of the room was a wash basin which had recently been used, and there was a big white mug with a name printed on the side. Phineas picked it up and read "Jan Klippenklop"—and then he heard some one coming.

Quickly he set it down and looked around for a place to duck. But a door opened fast, and there stood a very round-faced, pink-cheeked *vrouw* wearing one of those fancy Dutch bonnets. "*Gunst!*" she gulped. "*Vot iss?*"

"Wh—er—goot mornin', mawn peteet—er—" the resourceful Pinkham tongue began to waggle. "I haff lost *der* vay to Amsterdam—" His spine curled up when the *vrouw* quickly pushed a flaxen curl back under her bonnet. "You lift alone by yooself, *ja?*" Phineas queried. Meanwhile he was noting the wooden shoes on the *vrouw's* feet.

"*Ja. Oudt mit you!*" the *vrouw* said, and she pointed toward the door.

"You liff alone, *hein?*" Phineas clipped. "Haw-w-w-w! Then maybe you tell me who iss it shaved here this A.M.? Maybe you was whippin' up frostin' for a cake in that shavin' mug, huh? An' wearin' shoes in the house! Tsk! Tsk! You are a faker, you Boche bum! You come here to— Oh, yeah?"

Phineas quickly drew a bead with an ugly looking automatic before the spurious Holland dame could level a wicked looking Luger. "Drop it, *mein Freund*. *Leutnant* Pingham has everything under control, haw-w-w!"

"*Gott!*" the Kraut snapped. "*Donnervetter!*"

"Toss the cannon right over here, dearie," Phineas grinned. "Or I'll put a hole in your camisole."

The Heinie obeyed. Phineas snatched up the Luger and dropped his own weapon. It bounced when it hit the floor.

"*Himmel!*" yelled the Kraut. "*Donner und Blitzen! Der gun ist—*"

"You catch on fast," Phineas tossed back. "Yeah, Ajax Hard Rubber Novelties Company, Inc., Logansport, Indiana, postage prepaid. I had it concealed inside my trouser leg, and them Dutchmen never found it. And now *Vorwärts!* Outside vunce, as ve must go to see the *Mynheers* in Leerdam where you will tell all. Haw-w-w-w! You kept your Boche monkey suit on under them Dutch drapes to fill yourself oudt, I bet. Step closer an' lift the hem of your skirt, Hilda."

"*Ach du lieber,*" the Kraut moaned. "*Und in ein, zwei* hours I vas goink down *der* Rhine to Chermany in *der* pakschuyt yedt."

"That must be Dutch for canoe," Phineas ventured. "Haw-w-w, well there's so many slips between the shavin' cup and the tulip—get it? Haw-w-w-w! C'mon, *mach snell*, you Boche Brinker. Alley *Veet!*"

NOW under an apple tree outside the place was a milk wagon—a two wheeled cart with a sleepy dobbin hitched to it. Phineas grinned broadly. "Fritz, I have got to hand it to ya, as you had it figured out as good as I would have. Get into the go-cart! Oopsy daisy, or I'll fracture your dome! Why," he added as he got in himself, "you even put cheeses in the wagon for lunch. Haw-w-w-w-w!"

So along the road that wound toward Leerdam rolled the Dutch milk wagon. And the only incident *en route* was when the Heinie prisoner of the Yankee fugitive made an attempt to break away, whereupon the Boonetown, Iowa, Houdini had massaged him with a tin milk can cover.

At high noon the citizens of the Holland burg of Leerdam, out of which Phineas had made a hurried exit the night before, stared at the wagon that drew to a stop in front of the Vanderwoof mansion.

"Any milk tooday?" Phineas yipped when *Mynheer* Vanderwoof emerged. "Right froom coontended coos, *ja!* Haw-w-w-w-w!"

"*Goede Gunst!*" yelled the Hollander when Phineas took off his Dutch skimmer. "Holy St. Bavon! *Der Frenchy! Donnervetter!* Coom, efer'pody—!"

"Keep your rompers on," Phineas sniffed as he yanked the Heinie off the wagon. "Take *ein* look, as it is not Hans Brinker goin' to a hockey game. Look at *der* Cherman uniform voonce! This is the guy what drooped idt *der* boombs on *der tulpen* beds, mine hairs, *ja!*"

"*Gunst!* Huzza! Coom oodt *und* look! Coom oot, Peter van Dunkemgoot. Efer'pody!"

The Dutch came—and they were convinced when Phineas Pinkham pointed out that no Kraut would have been ashamed of his Berlin tailoring if he had only been forced down on Dutch terrain.

"An' he was flyin' a Frog buggy, mine hairs," Lieutenant Pinkham added. "A Kraut bum wouldn't do that unless it was dirty vork, *ja?* Avright, now I have proved my innocence and will say adoo. That is, if you have got some gas about. And maybe there's a tailor shop that cleans clothes *mit, hein!*"

Van Dunkemgoot shook his round dome, took a long puff on his pipe, and tossed out three mouthfuls of Hollander lingo at a little Dutchman who was as broad as he was long. And the translation set Phineas back on the heels of his borrowed sabots. It meant that he was to be interned in Holland until either the Kaiser or the Allies yelled "Uncle!"

"I demand a hearin'," Phineas yipped. "When I get back to the U.S., I will be called a deserter, an' they will shoot me. I have showed you what doublecrossin' bums the Boche are an'—I— where is the mayor? Have you got a king here? Where is Wilhelmina? I will get Wilson to declare war on the Netherlands, you wait an' see!"

All Phineas could get was a promise that the Dutch boys at The Hague would send word to Ludendorff that he would get knocked for a row of windmills if he dared crush any more tulips under a Heinie boot. They might also refuse the Heinies any more free passage on Dutch waterways for the hauling of sand and gravel. Meanwhile, though, Phineas Pinkham, wandering Yank, was to be sat on until the Big Fuss was over. So still protesting, the scion of the Pinkhams was tossed into a Dutch klink until arrangements for his removal to an internment camp could be arranged.

Once behind the bars, Major Rufus Garrity's inimitable Spad pusher slumped in a chair and started once more to think it all over. Absentmindedly he took a Dutch cheese the size of a grapefruit out of

his pocket—he'd lifted it from the milk wagon—and started to scale off some of the red preservative with which it had been painted.

Then, all at once, his buck teeth came together with a loud click and his freckled map broke up into a broad grin.

"A Pinkham never gives up," he declared and immediately brought out a jackknife he'd saved out of the fiasco.

For an hour he labored. And eventually he placed something on the bench beside him that looked for all the world like a Mills bomb. With dirt from the floor he stained it a drab gray, and with a nail and a key ring he soon completed the illusion.

Phineas then lapsed into a spell of watchful waiting.

TOWARD MID-AFTERNOON, the Yankee prisoner was lifted off his chair by the sound of a sky wagon's prop. He went to a window and looked out. A sluggish looking two-seater was coming down for a landing not five hundred yards away.

"It's the Dutch Air Force," he yipped. "Haw-w-w-w-w! I bet it is carryin' a big boy from The Hague to look at me an' the Heinie. Boys! If I could only get my Dutch rompers into that thing!" Phineas had guessed right about the plane's cargo. A big Dutch army officer was admitted to the klink about a quarter of an hour later, and fortunately he could talk a questionable brand of English. He congratulated Phineas. But at the same time he tendered his regrets with regard to the American's status for the remainder of the Great Scrap.

"Indernational var iss dis, *mein goede vriend*, ja. Der noodrality moost be—"

"Aw-w-w-w rats! Aw-w-w-w cripes! I am A.W.O.L., an' I will get in a sling. I—" Phineas picked up the fake Mills grenade and held it over his head. A chorus of guttural yells and shouts cannonaded from the Dutchmen. So frightened were they that they vamoosed without bothering to shut the door.

"I will toss it," Phineas yipped at them threateningly, inwardly chuckling. Thereupon, he broke jail and back-stepped over the cobblestones with his wooden

shoes clattering. "I am a desperate character," he called to them, "and I do not know my own strength. My granpappy ran worse gauntlets *mit der* Indians an'—shoot yoost vunce an' I blow der whole boonch oop!"

"*Gunst!*" yelled a Dutchman. "Don't shooldt at him nopody. Tink of *der* voomans an' children! If you miss, dis madman t'rows idt *der* boomb. Holy—"

Phineas kept back-peddalling, and once he luckily turned half around to see a man decked out in a flying helmet kneeling down to take aim with a pistol. Quickly, the Yank wound up with the Dutch cheese like a star southpaw, and

the Hollander birdman frantically tossed his hardware high into the air and tried to dig a hole for himself in the ground. Then Phineas made a nimble sprint for the idling two-seater.

A gun boomed but the bullet went wide of its mark. The next Hollander to try his luck was a little better shot, and a slug went through the billowing cloth of Phineas' borrowed pantaloons. The Boonetown patriot whirled, made as if he were about to make a long throw with his still-unhurled cheese at the group of Dutchmen who were advancing in a tight arc a few hundred feet away. At that, panic gripped them and





they scorched the soles of their wooden boots getting to cover.

Pilot Pinkham was already in the two-seater when the Dutchman got organized again. A hurried gander told him that the crate he was stealing was an old Breguet.

Then just before he got the ship rolling, he straightened in the pit and finally heaved his spurious bomb.

A Dutchman took his fingers out of his ears when the plane tore across the flats. He looked at the dud

rolling over the turf and advanced toward it with caution.

"Have a bite!" Phineas hollered as he lifted the wheels of the Frog two-seater off the linoleum. "Haw-w-w-w-w!"

"Der cheese!" *Mynheer* Dunkemgoot yelped, and he jumped up and down with rage. "Nodding boot der cheese yedt. *Gunst!* Look, *Mynheers*. Der cheese mit der nail und ring—he makes idt der boomb—"

"Ho! Ho!" enthused a Dutch army officer. "But I ben gladt, *ja!* Der Amerikan iss a smart vun, *nein*, *Mynheers?*"

"Ja! Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho! Ho!" chorussed the citizens of the Dutch town. "Ja! Efer'pody zing, ja."

And they burst forth with:

Ya-a-ankee didee dudel down,

Didee dudel lawnter,

Ya-a-ankee viver, voover, vown,

Botterme-elk und Tawnter-r-r-r-r!

Meanwhile Phineas Pinkham was tooling the Frog two-seater dead southward, his eyes roving about the ozone for Boche sky wagons. Lady Luck, apparently figuring that she had been pampering the Boonetown pilot too much, suddenly gave him the works. Over Raucourt, with his gas getting lower and lower, Phineas looked up into the dusky attic and saw a couple of Fokkers diving on the nape of his neck.

Unfortunately, the Frog ship was as quick on the getaway as a turtle with gout, and when the Yank at the controls tried out the single gun that the Dutch boys had rigged on its cowl, it proved to be as empty as Mother Hubbard's pantry.

"Just my luck," Phineas wailed as Spandau lead sang a swan song all around him. "I get this far an'—well, chin up, white tie for dinner, an' carry on, ol' thing. Maybe I will be able to get downstairs yet."

OUTSIDE of Bar-le-Duc Major Rufus Garrity and his pilots had given Lieutenant Pinkham up for lost. The report had come in from Valenciennes that the miscreant had been there and had stolen a Nieuport.

The Old Man walked the floor of the Frog farmhouse which served as headquarters. "He's deserted, that fathead!" he ranted, biting the ends of his mustache and tearing hair out of his scalp in chunks. "He's A.W.O.L. Took the wrong train from Paree on purpose, I'll bet. And now where is he? Huh?"

"If I was psychic," Captain Howell grunted, "I would tell you."

"No lip outa you!" Garrity stormed. "How would you like to be busted to a spark plug cleaner? Pinkham's runnin' around somewhere impersonating a Frog officer. The fathead'll get shot! But why should I care? Let 'im get shot! Am I worryin'? Ha! Ha! Anybody'd think I give a tinker's dam—"

"You sure do look nonchalant," Bump Gillis ventured.

"Shut up, all you wise alecks," the Old Man exploded. "Oh, if I could get my hooks on that halfwit. Stealin' a Frog plane. Impersonating an officer! He'd have the gall to walk right in here wearin' it, too. He'd—"

The Major suddenly went speechless. An automobile was rolling up to the door of the farmhouse, and two British red tabs now flung open one of the car doors and climbed out holding Phineas Pinkham between them. They brought the prodigal pilot into the Operations office and let go.

Phineas plopped into a chair, looking the worse for wear, and peeped out at the Major from between rounds of bandage. Enough of the stuff to wrap up the Cathedral of Notre Dame was wound around various sections of his anatomy.

"This blighter says he belongs here, Major," one of the red tabs spoke up. "He fell in our trenches near Beaumont, 'e jolly well did y'know. And blarst hit, Major, I think 'e's no end balmy. Says 'e was in 'Olland an' stopped Ludendorff from getting a Dutch treat. The ruddy blighter's pullin' my leg, doncha think?"

The C.O. of the Ninth tried to find speech. But he failed. Bump Gillis pawed at his face and said: "Well, it ain't no Chinese mandarin's suit he's wearin'—"

"Strike me pink!" exclaimed the other Limey. "I got this out of 'is airplane, Major. Got me stumped no end—r'ally. Found this 'ere tulip wedged between a strut and a wire. Hit is a tulip—or I'm a bloomin' Boche!"

"Y-yeah," Major Garrity admitted reluctantly, suddenly noticing the wooden shoes on the Pinkham undercarriage. "Ah-h-h-h-h cripes! Look, Pinkham, you cock-eyed—"

"Don't lay a ha'd od me," Phineas warned him through his bandages. "I'd fall dapart. I hab been to Holla'd—I was tricked by a Frog porter id Paree—oh, if I eber see thad bumb again, I'll—I lost my uniform in a tailor shob in Valenciennes. I swibed a Nieuport, as I was overdue an'—I knocked down a Boche over a tulip field an'—well, I have saved the Allies—get me a cracker or somethig, as I had to throw away the cheese I had saved for subber."

"Did you stop in Switzerland to get your watch fixed, you crack-pot?" Major Rufus Garrity thundered. "Oh all the—you're a liar—but—it is a tulip! Them britches you've got on—those shoes—ah—er—excuse me, gentlemen. I would like to go up and lie down for awhile."

"Raw-w-ther!" a red tab said. "Ah—er—Garrity, if there's room for me—!"

"Haw-w-w-w-w!" Phineas burst out, biting through some adhesive tape to clear his mouth. "Goonst. What a *guerre!* Help me up, somebody. Hey, you, Bump! Hold my right arm awhile. Boys, I wish you could see

the fat dames in the dike country. I almost got some telephone numbers. He-e-ey, Van Go-o-omer. Tiffin, voonst. Veet! Tiffin is Dutch for supper, bums! All I have had since I left the Frogs was half a tulip bulb. Haw-w-w-w-w!"

POTSDAM quickly got a mean letter from the Dutch brain trust at The Hague. The Kaiser was informed that he'd better tell Ludendorff to equip his goose steppers with waterwings—for if he brought them into Holland all the dikes in the land of Hans Brinker were going to be blown up. The Hague also informed the Kaiser that they were holding one *Hauptmann* von Spreckelheim for the *Hooge Rood*, and that his bail had been set at a mere hundred and fifty million marks. No, the Dutchmen did not pull their punches, and Ludendorff and his staff felt them right down to their insteps.

Also, the big Heinie general got a very scathing letter from his Emperor advising him to consult a good dome specialist the next time he had a brain storm.

"*Himmel!*" the Boche top shot gut-turaled when he heard of the flop. "Zomet'ing idt ist wrong somevhere. Idt vas foolproof, *und—und* vhat did *der* Hague said? *Der* intervention of der brafе *Amerikaner* flyer—er—*Gott! Ach Himmel, Donner und Blitzen!* I bedt you it vas *das* Pingham! *Ach, der* deffil he *ist!*"

And finally, reader, if you ever go to Boonetown, Iowa, stop in at Ike Chase's barber shop and pool room. A pair of wooden shoes hang on the wall, and Phineas Pinkham's autograph decorates the sole of each.

But maybe Ike isn't there any more. Maybe somebody has stolen the shoes. We wouldn't know.