

ANGUS NORTH'S RETURN

By LLOYD ROBERTS

(Copyright.)

Three men dropped from an empty box car as the morning freight turned its back on Cross Creek settlement. Two of them immediately slunk into the encroaching underbrush, while the third, a tall, angular man with shifty eyes, ambled lazily toward the sawmill on the lip of the bank. A freckle-faced lad, who was stacking the freshly cut boards before the door, paused to wipe his brow as the stranger approached.

"Ain't the drive in yet?" inquired the latter sharply.

"Most of it. The last o' the cut will be in the booms erlong erbout dark, I guess. Lookin' for some one?"

"You bet I am!"

The fierce tone in which this was uttered stirred the youngster's curiosity.

"Maybe you're a stranger hereabouts?" he suggested.

"Maybe I am," was the unsatisfactory retort as the other walked off.

When the whistle blew for the mid-day meal he presented his sinister face at the cookhouse door and accepted the cook's invitation to dinner in a surly, matter-of-course manner that did not include thanks, nor afterward encourage questioning.

The shrieks of the tortured saws had long been stilled; the new moon was glimmering palely through the budding poplars and birches, when McKnight's loggers finally came slouching up from the dam for their last meal of the drive.

Shouting uproarious greetings to the fat-faced cook, they crashed their peaveys and pile-poles upon the floor and tumbled on the benches that lined the long deal tables. Hunger is never kept in suspense in the lumber camps, and the steam was already rising from hills of potatoes and pork, flats of Johnny-cake, and lakes of black coffee.

There commenced a clattering din of steel on tinware, and conversation was confined to such gruff commands as "Chuck the bread, Sam!" "Rush the saw this way, Bobby!" and "Don't hog all the beans, yer dern alligator!"

Bobby's photograph was the pride of his heart. It was supposed to be his one line of dissipation—for he neither smoked, chewed, drank, nor fell in love—and indulged in it at every opportunity and on all occasions. Presently the foot of the loggers began to mark time to a rollicking backwoods chantey as a fiddle and a metallic voice struck up with:

"Jack has got a scarlet rag strung around his hat.
Bill has lost his dollar watch in the Devil's Vat.
Devil's Vat.
Squint-eye Murphy bust the jam—jumpin' like a cat.
Sunday 'll see us eattin' off a table."

The audience joined in the chorus with a roar and a thumping of toes that shook the tins and sent the dust into the air to mingle with the clouds of pipe-smoke.

"Birl a log, birl a log, birl a log, boys.
Ham a log, eram a log, alam a log, boys.
There's lots of time for loafin' when the saws begin their noise.
And the gals come troopin' down beside the mill."

The stranger leaned back with folded arms and half-closed eyes. All day the sights, sounds and smells of a past existence had been struggling to awaken some response in his inflexible soul—blotting out the unclean memories of his exile and telescoping time until it seemed as though he had never been absent from the settlements. And now he was back with his old comrades of woods and rivers—Reddy Jones, Polite Williams, Big John Nevers and many more—including his boyhood chum, Hugh McKnight.

But things had changed considerably in five years. From the most popular man on the river, he had become an outcast of civilization, unrecognizable to his old associates, and the sworn enemy of the burly woodsman opposite him who so complacently sucked on his black elgar.

Well, he was glad that McKnight appeared so prosperous and content. Evidently life meant something worth while to him—something worth clinging to as long as he could—just as his would have been if Madge had forgiven. Robbing him of it would be even more satisfactory than he had imagined; and now that vengeance was so sure and imminent, he could afford to glaze a few minutes longer before he gave it rein.

"Sandy's hoppin' lively, for he's left a kid at home.
Davey's heart is achin' for a pesky grammyphone.
For it ain't in human nature for a man to live alone—
When the drive is tyin' idle Sunday mornin'."

And once more the camp vibrated with the roar of the chorus.

There was no music in the bitter heart of Angus North, and yet one foot was involuntarily beating out the measure. His mind was concerned only with the deed that had brought him back. It had been well arranged. He had only to throw open the door and let events take their course. Lefty and Bud would spring in with cocked pistols and hold up the camp!

What was that blasted tune they were playing? It had been knocking upon his ear-drums with a persistence that had forced him to give heed. "Mulvorney!" Another association of his dead life. He hadn't heard it since that terrible occasion when she had

turned him adrift to founder upon the rocks. As vividly as a scene of yesterday, it flared before his closed lids. It was such a night as this; he had just returned from the drive, as they were doing now. But then it had been the Upper Nashwaak—not Cross Creek—and they had stopped to celebrate their freedom at Stanley. Of course, he had sworn to let the bottle alone, and in those days his word was as good as his bond. But what if he had been a fool, and his intractable enemy had got the better of him?

Hadn't a man a right to kick over the traces once in a while without being called to account? Still, he shouldn't have gone to Madge in that condition—he knew that. But he had only meant to catch a glimpse of her through the window, until he saw that she had company. Even then he might have restrained his jealous rage if McKnight hadn't looked at her the way he did, and she hadn't played and sung those very songs she always sang for him.

Every one knew that McKnight was after her, too, though he had never let that fact worry him before. It had ended with his entering and creating a scene that no self-respecting girl could overlook. He could see the expression of pain and pity in her eyes now, hear Hugh's quiet words of reason, see himself fumble for his champagne, and have it jerked from his shaking fingers. Then, as he was leaving, he had sworn to "get even."

That, at least, was an oath he had never forgotten. As he sank lower and lower it had become more and more of an obsession—become the one ambition of his bestial existence. What was he waiting for? Curse the music! It was vengeance, not regret he wished to dwell on.

The song came to an end, and he slowly rose to his feet. Bud and Lefty would be covering in the shadows, cursing his delay. Before he had taken three steps, however, a singer's sweet voice held him again. Of all the dear songs that Madge had sung to him, "The Banks of Loch Lomond" was the dearest, the one most pregnant with his passion; and with a stifled oath he leaned against the wall and surrendered himself to its spell.

You take the high road and I'll take the low road—
She seemed to be there in person pleading with his warped soul as she had pleaded in the past, reminding him of all those shattered promises and the love he had forfeited.

The phonograph whirred and stopped. A draft caused the lamps to flare and smoke, and—
"Up with yer peaveys, you louts!" came a harsh, nasal voice.

Angus North awoke with an inarticulate shout, and sprang toward the door, where two muffled figures were standing with leveled pistols. The loggers had jumped to their feet, and a few were obeying the order. But the boss was not of this number. For all his big frame, he had a brain and body trained for sudden action, and scarcely had the words left Bud's mouth before he was charging recklessly down the camp.

Luckily for him the stranger was nearer the door, and as Lefty's finger contracted on the trigger he threw himself between them. At the report North pitched on his face, and McKnight, clearing his body without a pause, was upon the robbers before they could fire again. Lefty went down before the knotted fist as if he had been struck by a peavey, and though Bud made an effort to dodge, he was caught by an arm and crumpled violently to the floor. A dozen rough hands made further resistance impossible.

Then the boss dropped beside the man who interposed and gently raised his head. The bullet had bored through his right shoulder, but without touching the bone.

"I'm done for, Hugh," announced the tramp without emotion.

The boss started. "By Jove it's Angus North!" he cried, and he stared in amazement at the wreck of his one-time friend.

"Sure thing. Come back ter stay."
"An' jest in the nick o' time, too. He'd have winged me, I guess, if yer hadn't got in the way."

The woodsman is not demonstrative, and the tone rather than the words evidenced the gratitude he felt for the act. North's weak features suddenly hardened.

"Don't fool yourself. It was for her sake I done it. I had meant them ter kill yer, but—but that pesky phonograph got me all balled up an' I butted in 'fore I knew what I was erbout. Give me a drink, some one."

The cook ran for a mug of water, and McKnight held him higher as he drank.

"I had no idea yer held a grudge against me, Angus. I only did my duty that night, an' I've been tryin' ter do it ever since. Madge made me write to all the folks I knew in the States to try and find out where you were. She'll be mighty glad to hear you're back."

North's features relaxed as pleasure faded the pain from his eyes.

"Is that straight, Hugh?" he cried weakly.

"Heaven's my witness. She was certain you'd return some day, when you'd got a grip on yourself, an' she's been waitin' an' lookin' for you ever since."

"An' she ain't your—your—"
"Shucks, no! She said she'd never talk to another 'til she'd seen if you still wanted her. She's believed in you all erlong."

"He's only fainted, boys," McKnight explained to the silent loggers as he lowered his friend to the floor, "and I reckon this little accident will prove the making of him. One of you fellows had better go for Madge."

THE GHOST AT THE PHONE

By GERTSON SCHAEFFER

(Copyright.)

The end of the busy day had come at last, and H. Miller Virry found the headache still with him.

All during the rush hours of the day, as he had watched his assignments and ideas develop into stories under the deaf work of the reporters, he had waited for this hour.

Away back there, somewhere, never quite hidden by the thousands of ideas that whirled through the streets of his mind, there had been the one thought that when the day was over he would write a letter.

But about the headache—lately it had never left him. The malady seemed to be seated in the very dome of his head.

Now it was time to write. It was Saturday evening, and he was alone.

A furtive look came into Virry's eyes. He even crossed the room and looked behind a locker door that was standing open. Somehow it did not seem strange to him that he should do this. He wanted to be alone.

He walked over to the police reporter's desk. The typewriter there was the best in the office. MacDonald always kept his machine clean.

The steady hum that rose from the sidewalk told him that it was six o'clock.

The thought of the letter he would write came forward and waved away that other consciousness—that he had not eaten since breakfast—and he seated himself at the typewriter again.

He drummed with his long fingers contemplatively, looked about the room a moment with a nervous glance, and then began writing, using his index fingers only, as they write who are self-taught operators:

"The Town Where You Are Not.
The Day When I Miss You Most.
The Girl Whom I Love;
I Don't Know Where.
Sweetheart!"

That cracking sound made him jump again. He began writing:

"This letter, sweetheart, will surely test your love, for I have so much trouble to put into it that you will hardly be able to read it. I'm hardly able to write it."

He jumped from his chair and hurried to the telephone.

"Hello," he said. "Hello—hello. He was annoyed, but courteous. He listened a moment.

"Why, I don't want any number. I thought you rang. All right, Central." He returned to his letter:

"Sometimes I think perhaps you know all about it. Then it seems senseless for me to want to write to you."

"At other times it seems as if you had forgotten all about me. Then I yearn to tell you.

"If you do know, perhaps you can almost look over my shoulder now and see me writing. That wouldn't be senseless, though—would it, mildy?"

"It would be just like talking over old times that we both knew all about, but love to hear each other mention. If you don't know—"

He went over to the telephone again. "Hello," he said in his businesslike manner.

There was always a note of expectancy in Virry's telephone "Hello"; the ring of a telephone in a newspaper office may mean a great sensation.

His left hand was on the top of his head, where the ache was heaviest.

"I didn't ring," he heard Central say. A puzzled expression came over his face, and he went back to the typewriter.

"—you would be interested to read this, I thought.

"I've been thinking about you every day. And here it is Saturday night. Saturday nights I am loneldest.

"When I first met you, we used to have our six o'clock Saturday dinners at the cafes, didn't we? And then I would take you home.

"After a while, I used to come to your home every Saturday night. You said you liked that better.

"So many Saturday nights have passed since I last saw you."

He smiled. As he drew away from the desk the noise of his chair on the floor and the sound of his footsteps resounded through the room. Long ago the presses had stopped their vibration, and the building was deserted and dark.

His letter had been written slowly, for it required much thinking—a letter of that sort.

"Hello," he said as he took down the receiver. "Why—why—why!" There was an astonishment in his voice, and his eyes widened almost irrationally. "This can't be you!—Central, keep off, please."

"Tell me, dear—sweetheart—what's the matter? I don't want a number! Now she's off the line! Quick, Central! Get her for me. I'll give you matinee passes, if you do. What's that? No one on the line!—That's strange!—Can't get her? No one to get? You didn't ring?"

Virry hung up the receiver and hurried back to the typewriter, with a smile on his face.

"You have just called me up, but something was the matter with the line. You'll call again, and so I'll go on with the letter and hand it to you as soon as I see you.

"I was writing about the lonely Saturday nights. Somehow I don't seem

so lonely since I began to write to-night.

"I have decided to write, anyhow. Now, as I write, I feel happier—excuse me. Telephone again. Hope it's you."

"Central!" he fairly roared this time.

"That girl is on the line again. You can't tell me she isn't. I know her voice.—Yes, dear, this is L. Sweetheart, where are you? Tell me quickly. I'll come right there. Tell me quickly! Hurry, before she shuts us off!"

He spoke so rapidly that his words formed one long, incoherent yell that echoed wildly through the big room.

"Central, I want that number! I want that girl who was talking! God! I must talk to her! Get her! Some one did ring. Didn't I hear it? And I heard her voice. Now, there she is.—Yes, now I can hear you, darling.

"Now, Central, steady a moment until I find out where this girl is. Where, dear? Where? Where? Louder! She's gone, Central! She's gone! She's gone!"

But suddenly he was talking over a dead wire. At the other end, a badly frightened little telephone girl was reporting to the chief operator the strange calls from the Telegram office.

Virry walked back to the typewriter and wrote:

"It was you again, but I couldn't hear you.

"If I only knew where you were, I'd come to you right away. If I only knew in what direction to go, I'd start out. But perhaps you'll call again, and so I'll go on with my letter.

"There are other nights than Saturday nights that are lonely.

"Sunday nights you used to go to the theaters with me. We always had the same pair of seats, you remember.

"How many songs I can remember that you and I have heard together! I Shall Never Forget My First Meeting With You—remember it?"

"Then there was 'A Woman's Just a Woman, My Boy, but a Good Cigar Is a Smoke.' I remember you didn't like the song, until it came to the last verse where it runs, 'A woman's still a woman when a cigar's gone up in smoke'—I don't know about that, though; I can always get another cigar.

"Then there was that song, 'Dearie.' How that word echoed and pulsed and beat through that magnificent chorus, just as it echoes and pulses through my mind!

"Oh, there were so many songs, so many plays, so many hours, so many events, so many thoughts, so many experiences, so many pleasures! How do you suppose I can write them all down?"

"They are crowding by the thousands up into the front of my brain, demanding a place on this paper—but here you are again. If I don't get you this time I'll—"

The telephone really rang this time. In two bounds he reached it.

"Hello," he said. "Now, Central, be more careful this time. If you only knew how much I want to talk to her!—Why, it's I! Why, Virry, the city editor! Keep off the line, sir!"

"Yes, dear, I hear you. I'll talk to you when this man gets off the line. Hurry up and tell me where you are before he bothers us again. I'll come right to you.—The chief? Yes. But keep off the line, chief. I'll talk to you later.

"What am I doing here? It's eleven o'clock? Well, what of that.—Get off the line, sir! By God, get off the line! You've got a story for me? No, I won't come downstairs.—Wait a moment, sweetheart.—You'll send somebody up here? Well, I don't want to be bothered."

A dogged tone was creeping into Virry's voice. Somehow it didn't seem strange that the chief of police should be asking him to come down to the sidewalk.

He was determined to stay at the telephone until he talked with the girl.

The pain in his head suddenly became sharper; he thrust his long fingers through his hair, right over the place where the ache seemed the greatest.—If she could only hear him!

"Sweetheart! Sweetheart!" he shouted frantically. Suddenly he became silent. His eyes turned to one of the doors that opened into the hallway.

Suddenly he rushed toward the door, his arms extended. "Darling!" he cried.

All the longing of his man's heart sounded in that pleading, ecstatic cry. He folded his arms, and embraced—nothing!

His right hand went to the top of his head. He staggered and fell, face forward, against the door. His head struck the glass, which, breaking, made a rattle and crash that echoed and reechoed through the hallways of the great deserted, ten-story building.

Virry fell to the floor, miraculously uncut. But he did not try to rise.

A big policeman carefully broke away the remaining jagged pieces of glass, so that they might not fall on the prostrate form within. Then Hennessy, the little police surgeon, climbed through the aperture.

"Hemorrhage of the brain," he said shortly. "He stopped me on the street only last Saturday and told me that his head never stopped aching.

"I told him he was working too hard. But that wasn't it.

"He's never stopped worrying since his girl died."

Bought a Town for \$10,000.
The entire town of Moneta, Wyo., on the Chicago & Northwestern railroad, is owned by one man, who paid \$10,000 for it.

Dromedaries Succeed Where Other Transports Fail in Manchurian Desert



Photograph shows supplies being carried across the Manchurian desert by means of dromedaries. These "ships of the desert" succeeded where motor and other vehicles failed.

Men Who Develop Into Murderers

Five Feet, Seven Inches, Average Height

Are you a murderer?
If you are about 5 feet, 7 inches in stature, a little over thirty-five years of age and have a subnormal temperature, science may brand you a murderer. At least, such are the ideal specifications for a murderer, based on measurements of more than 1,500 convicted slayers at the Waupun (Wis.) state prison.

Other interesting data of the genus are that frequent headaches, insomnia and periods of intense depression are common. Teeth that have grown bad through neglect are evident in half of the cases.

A third of the murderers never attended school, while only 3 per cent completed high school. More than half were at work before they were twelve years old and 90 per cent before they were fifteen. Almost half of them were unable to retain the same job or position a full year. Half of them, records show, murdered while under the influence of liquor.

"Hello" Purely American Expression, but Originated With French Wolf Hunters

You should try to learn the old wolf hunter's call, because you know the wolf is a scout, and that should be the scout call, writes Dan Beard in Boy's Life.

This call was used in France first and afterwards in England, but there are no wolves in England now and the bugle call has been forgotten in both countries, therefore we "paint it green and call it our own." Even though William Tell and Robin Hood bugled the same calls before America was discovered, we can make it American the same as we have made the old French wolf hunter's cry American. French was spoken in English court circles, so the titled wolf hunters used the French cry "hab le loup" or "a' lou loup, loup," being pronounced loo, the cry being a la loo; the English put on the H and made it halloo, and we made it hell-o, which is an American expression, as all the telephone girls know.

So the old wolf hunter's bugle calls which came here with the Huguenots will also be American when blown through wooden flat-boatmen's trumpets.

Cooksu, Korean Delicacy and Great National Dish

The great national dish of Korea is cooksu, Sumner R. Vinton writes in Travel. To make it, you plunge a large lump of ice into a bowl partly filled with steaming vermicelli of the endless variety. Over this you pour a portion of hot beef stew. The ice congeals the beef fat into little islands of grease, and you never know whether the portion dangling from the end of your chopsticks will be icy cold or burning hot. The vermicelli, which is very tough, is to be lifted to the mouth with the chopsticks. Keeping a firm hold on it with lips and teeth, you slip the chopsticks down to lift again and take up the slack by sucking.

Kilt, Highlander's Garb, of Scandinavian Origin

The kilt is part of the characteristic and ancient dress of the natives of the Highlands of Scotland. The word means "that which is girded or tucked up." It is of Scandinavian origin. The Danish word kilte, in use today, means "to tuck up." The kilt of the Highlander is short but has a very full skirt, belted in at the waist, and reaching to about the knees. The early kilt was not a separate garment, but merely the lower part of the plaid in which the Highlander wrapped himself, hanging down in folds below the belt.

About 40,000,000 Tons of Anthracite Coal Are Mined Every Year by Wet Process

The rivers of Pennsylvania yield about 250,000 tons of coal every year. About 40,000,000 tons of anthracite coal are mined every year by the "wet process" in Lackawanna, Luzerne, Carbon, Schuylkill and Northumberland counties. The process requires the use of vast quantities of water, which when it is discharged carries in suspension millions of tons of culm or coal dust fine enough to pass through the smallest screen in a dry process breaker. Much of the culm finds its way into the rivers of the anthracite district, the Lackawanna, the Susquehanna, the Schuylkill and the Lehigh.

They carry culm waste for many miles downstream, to drop it at last in shallows and eddies behind dams and on valley bottoms. Much of the coal thus scattered is recovered by dredging with suction dredges or with the more familiar bucket type of dredge. The machinery, which is usually mounted on a stern-wheel, flat-bottom boat, dumps the coal into scows that carry 12 to 14 tons. The recovered river coal brings from 70 to 90 cents at the wharf.

FACTS AND FANCIES

It takes three men six months to make a cashmere shawl, which requires ten goats' fleeces.

The skin of an elephant, when tanned, is very expensive, the tanning taking about six months.

Corsica produces the largest quantity of wax in all the countries in Europe, if not in the world.

When the average man expresses his gratitude it is merely an offhand way he has of asking for more.

It is the easiest thing in the world to stir up trouble. All you have to do is to tell the truth at all times.

Vast Quantities of Coal Remain in the Mines in an Unminable Condition

Mining is still conducted with serious loss of life and a waste of material amounting to \$1,000,000 a day. A government estimate shows that of 6,000,000 tons of coal mined in one year (1914-1915), 3,000,000 was left underground in unminable condition, says Boy's Life. It is believed that more than one-half of this loss is preventable; \$50,000,000 worth of petroleum is wasted annually and \$75,000,000 in coking coal. In 1914, 2,454 persons were killed in coal mines.

To study and remedy such conditions the government established in 1910 a bureau of mines with headquarters at Washington, an experiment station at Pittsburgh, and an office for the study of smelter problems at San Francisco. This bureau investigates mine explosions and safety conditions, studies mining methods with a view to preventing waste and inefficiency, and instructs miners in first-aid and rescue work.

England Eats Larger Part of Europe's Cheese Output

Statisticians have figured out that England eats the larger part of Europe's output of cheese. Europe's output amounts to 340,000,000 kilograms. England alone consumes 180,000,000 kilograms of this amount. Next comes Holland, which takes 58,000,000; Switzerland takes 43,000,000; France, 31,000,000, and Germany 20,000,000 kilograms. The only people on earth who eat no cheese are the Chinese.

Chile's Claim to Distinction.

Chile claims that the island of Chilo, off its west coast, is the original home of the potato and that it has been cultivated there since early in the fifteenth century.