

The Holladay Case

A Mystery Of Two Continents
By BURTON E. STEVENSON
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"Will you verify the amount?"
"Oh, no; that is not necessary."
"I have a receipt here," and he produced it and his fountain pen. "Please sign it."
She took the pen with trembling fingers, laid the receipt upon her chair arm without reading and signed her name with a somewhat painful slowness. Then she leaned back with a sigh of relief and buried her face in her hands. Mr. Royce placed the receipt in his pocketbook and stopped hesitating. But the maid had opened the door and was awaiting us. Her mistress made no sign; there was no excuse to linger. We turned and followed the maid.

"Miss Holladay seems very ill," said Mr. Royce in a voice somewhat tremulous as she passed before us in the lower hall.
"Yes, sir; very ill."
Again the voice: I took advantage of the chance to look at her intently. Her hair was turning gray, certainly; her face was seamed with lines which only care and poverty could have graven there, and yet, beneath it all, I fancied I could detect a faded but living likeness to Hiram Holladay's daughter. I looked again—it was faint, uncertain—perhaps my nerves were overwrought and were deceiving me. For how could such a likeness possibly exist?

"She has a physician, of course?" asked my companion.
"Oh, yes, sir."
"He has advised rest and quiet?"
"Yes, sir."
"When do you leave for the country?"
"Tomorrow or the next day after that, I think, sir."
He turned to the door and then paused, hesitating. He opened his lips to say something more—his anxiety was clamoring for utterance—then he changed his mind and stepped outside as she held the door open.

"Good day," he said, with stern repression. "I wish her a pleasant journey."
The door closed after us, and we went down the steps.
"Jenkinson's the family doctor," he said. "Let's drive around there and find out how ill Miss Holladay really is. I'm worried about her, Lester."
"That's a good idea," I agreed and gave the driver the address. Jenkinson was in his office and received us at once.

"Dr. Jenkinson," began our junior without preamble, "I am John Royce, of Graham & Royce. You know, I suppose, that we are the legal advisers of Miss Frances Holladay."
"Yes," answered Jenkinson. "Glad to meet you, Mr. Royce."
"In consequence we're naturally interested in her welfare and all that concerns her, and I called to ask you for some definite details of her condition."
"Her condition? I don't quite understand."
"We should like to know, doctor, just how ill she is."
"Ill!" repeated Jenkinson, in evident surprise. "But is she ill?"
"She's your patient, isn't she? I thought you were the family doctor."
"So I am," assented the other. "But I haven't seen Miss Holladay for ten days or two weeks. At that time she seemed quite well—a little nervous, perhaps, and worried, but certainly not requiring medical attention. She has always been unusually robust."

Mr. Royce stopped, perplexed. As for me, my head was in a whirl again.
"I'll tell you the story," he said at last. "I should like the benefit of your advice." And he recounted rapidly the facts of Miss Holladay's illness, in so far as he knew them, ending with an account of our recent visit and the statement of the maid that her mistress was under a doctor's care. Jenkinson heard him to the end without interrupting, but he was plainly puzzled and annoyed.
"And you say she looked very ill?" he asked.
"Oh, very ill, sir; alarmingly ill, to my unpracticed eyes. She seemed thin and worn. She could scarcely talk, she had such a cough. I hardly knew her."
Again the doctor paused to consider. He was a very famous doctor, with many very famous patients, and I could see that this case piqued him—that another physician should have been preferred!

"Of course, Mr. Royce," he said finally. "Miss Holladay was perfectly free to choose another physician if she thought best."
"But would you have thought it probable?" queried our junior.
"Ten minutes ago I should have thought it extremely improbable," answered the doctor emphatically. "Still, women are sometimes erratic, as we doctors know to our sorrow."
Mr. Royce hesitated and then took the bull by the horns.
"Dr. Jenkinson," he began earnestly, "don't you think it would be wise to see Miss Holladay—you know how her father trusted you and relied on you—and assure yourself that she's in good hands? I confess I don't know what to think, but I fear some danger is hanging over her. Perhaps she may even have fallen into the hands of the faith curists."

Jenkinson smiled.
"The advice to seek rest and quiet seems sane enough," he said, "and utterly unlike any that a faith curist would give."
"But still, if you could see for your self," persisted Mr. Royce.
The doctor hesitated, drumming with his fingers upon the arm of his chair.
"Such a course would be somewhat unprofessional," he said at last. "Still I might call in a merely social way. My interest in the family would, I think, excuse me."
Mr. Royce's face brightened, and he caught the doctor's hand.

"Thank you, sir," he said warmly. "It will lift a great anxiety from the firm, and, I may add, from me personally."
The doctor laughed good naturedly.
"I knew that, of course," he said. "We doctors hear all the gossip going about town, and I was glad to hear this bit. If you'll wait for me here, I'll go at once."
We instantly assented, and he called his carriage and was driven away. I felt that at last we were to see behind one corner of the curtain—perhaps one glimpse would be enough to penetrate the mystery. But in half an hour he was back again, and a glance at his face told me that we were again destined to disappointment.

"I sent up my card," he reported briefly, "and Miss Holladay sent down word that she must be excused."
Mr. Royce's face fell.
"And that was all?" he asked.
"That was all. Of course there was nothing for me to do but come away. I couldn't insist on seeing her."
"No," assented the other; "no. How do you explain it, doctor?"
Jenkinson sat down and for a moment studied the pattern of the carpet.

"Frankly, Mr. Royce," he said at last, "I don't know how to explain it. The most probable explanation is that Miss Holladay is suffering from some form of dementia, perhaps only acute primary dementia, which is usually merely temporary, but which may easily grow serious and even become permanent."
The theory had occurred to me, and I saw from the expression of Mr. Royce's face that he also had thought of it.

"Is there no way that we can make sure?" he asked. "She may need to be saved from herself."
"She may need it very badly," agreed the doctor, nodding. "Yet she is of legal age and absolute mistress of her actions. There are no relatives to interfere, no intimate friends even that I know of. I see no way unless you as her legal adviser, apply to the authorities for an inquest of lunacy."
But Mr. Royce made an instant gesture of repugnance.

"Oh, that's absurd!" he cried. "We have no possible reason to take such action. It would offend her mortally."
"No doubt," assented the other. "S. I fear that at present nothing can be done. Things will just have to take their course till something more decided happens."
"There's no tendency to mental disease in the family?" inquired Mr. Royce after a moment.

"Not the slightest," said the doctor emphatically. "Her father and mother were both sound and well balanced. I know the history of the family through three generations, and there's no hint of any taint. Twenty-five years ago Holladay, who was then just working to the top in Wall street, drove himself too hard—it was when the market went all to pieces over that Central Pacific deal—and had a touch of apoplexy. I was just a touch, but I made him take a long vacation, which he spent abroad with his wife. It was then, by the way, that his daughter was born. Since then he has been careful, and has never been bothered with a recurrence of the trouble—in fact, that's the only illness in the least serious I ever knew him to have."
There was nothing more to be said and we turned to go.

"If there are any further developments," added the doctor as he opened the door, "will you let me know? You may come upon me if I can be of any assistance."
"Certainly," answered our junior. "You're very kind, sir," and we went back to our cab.
The week that followed was a perplexing one for me and a miserable one for Royce. As I know now, he had written her half a dozen times and had received not a single word of answer. For myself, I had discovered one more development of the mystery. On the day following the delivery of the money I had glanced, as usual, through the financial column of my paper as I rode home on the car, and one item had attracted my attention. The brokerage firm of Swift & Currier had that day presented at the treasury the sum of \$100,000 in currency for conversion into gold. An inquiry at their office next morning elicited the fact that the exchange had been effected for the account of Miss Frances Holladay. It was done, of course, that the recipient of the money might remain beyond trace of the police.

CHAPTER IX.
OUR regular work at the office just at that time happened to be unusually heavy and trying. The Brown injunction suit, while not greatly attracting public attention, involved points of such delicacy and affected interests so widespread that the whole bar of New York was watching it. The Hurd substitution case was more spectacular and appealed to the press with peculiar force, since one of the principal victims had been the eldest son of Preston McLandberg, the veteran managing editor of the Record, and the bringing of the suit impugned the honor of his family. But it is still too fresh in the public mind to need recapitulation here, even were it connected with this story. The incessant strain told upon both our partners and even upon me, so that I returned to my rooms after dinner one evening determined to go early to bed. But I had scarcely donned my house coat, settled in my chair and got my pipe to going when there came a tap at the door.
"Come in," I called, thinking it was Mrs. Fitch, my landlady, and too weary to get up.
But it was not Mrs. Fitch's pale countenance, with its crown of gray hair, which appeared in the doorway; it was a rotund and exceedingly florid visage.

"You will pardon me, sir," began a resonant voice, which I instantly remembered, even before the short, square figure stepped over the threshold into the full light, "but I have just discovered that I have no match with which to light my gas. If I might from you borrow one?"
"Help yourself," I said, and held out to him my case, which was lying on the table at my elbow.
"You are very good," he said, and then, as he stepped forward and saw me more distinctly, he uttered a little exclamation of surprise. "Ah, it is Mistral!"
"Lester," I added, seeing that he hesitated.

"It is a great pleasure," he was saying as he took the matches; "a great good fortune which brought me to this house. So long ago grows at times—and then, I greatly desire some advice. If you would have the leisure—" "Certainly," I waved toward a chair. "Sit down."
"In one moment," he said. "You will pardon me," and he disappeared through the doorway.
He was back almost at once with a handful of cigarettes, which he placed on the table. Then he drew up a chair. With a little deprecatory gesture he used one of my matches to light a cigarette.

"It was truly for the gas," he said, catching my smile, "and the gas for the cigarette!"
There was something fascinating about the man—an air of good humor, of comradeship, of strength of purpose. My eyes were caught by his stolid, nervous hands as he held the match to his cigarette. Then they

"My name is Martigny—Jasper Martigny," he said, as he looked at me. "I wandered to his face, to the black hair flecked here and there with gray, to the bright, deep set eyes, ambushed under heavy brows; to the full lips, which the carefully arranged mustache did not at all conceal; to the projecting chin, with its little plume of an imperial—a strong face and a not unhandsome one, with a certain look of mastery about it.

"It is true that I need advice," he was saying as he slowly exhaled a great puff of smoke which he had drawn deep into his lungs. "My name is Martigny—Jasper Martigny—I nodded by way of salutation—and I am from France, as you have doubtless long since suspected. It is my desire to become a citizen of America."
"How long have you been living in America?" I asked.
"Since two months only. It is my intention to establish here a business in wines."
"Well," I explained, "you can take no steps toward naturalization for three years. Then you go before a court and make a declaration of your intentions. Two years later you will get your papers."
"You mean," he hesitated, "that it takes so many years?"
"Five years' actual residence—yes."
"But," and he hesitated again, "I had understood that—that—"

"That it was easier? There are illegal ways, of course, but you can scarcely expect me to advise you concerning them, Mr. Martigny."
"No. Of course, no," he cried hastily, waving his hand in disclaimer. "I did not know—it takes nothing to me—I will wait—I wish to obey the laws."

He picked up a fresh cigarette, lit it from the other and tossed away the end.
"Will you not try one?" he asked, seeing that my pipe was finished, and I presently found myself enjoying the best cigarette I had ever smoked. "You comprehend French—no?"
"Not well enough to enjoy it," I said.
"I am sorry. I believe you would like this book which I am reading," and he pulled a somewhat tattered volume from his pocket. "I have read it, oh, ver' many times, as well as all the others, though this, of course, is the masterpiece."
He held it so that I could see the title. It was "Monsieur Leecoq."
"I have read it in English," I said.
"And did you not like it—yes? I am ver' fond of stories of detection. That is why I was so absorbed in that affair of Mees—Mees—ah, I have forgotten! Your names are so difficult for me."
"Miss Holladay," I said.
"Ah, yes. And has that mystery ever arrived at a solution?"
"No," I said. "Unfortunately we haven't any M. Leecoqs on our detective force."
"Ah, no," he smiled. "And the young lady—in her I conceived a great interest, even though I did not see her. How is she?"
"The shock was a little too much for her," I said. "She's gone out to her country place to rest. She'll soon be all right again, I hope."
He had taken a third cigarette and was lighting it carefully with his face half turned away from me. I noticed how flushed his neck was.

"Oh, undoubtedly," he agreed after a moment; "at least I should be most sad to think otherwise. But it is late. I perceive that you are weary; I thank you for your kindness."
"Not at all," I protested. "I hope you'll come in whenever you feel lonely."
"A thousand thanks! I shall avail myself of your invitation. My apartment is just across the hall," he added as I opened the door. "I trust to see you there."
"You shall," I said heartily, and bade him good night.
In the week that followed I saw good deal of Martigny. I would meet him on the stairs or in the hall. He came again to see me, and I returned, his visit two nights later, upon which occasion he produced two bottles of Chateau Yquem of a delicacy beyond all praise. And I grew more and more to like him. He told me many stories of Paris, which, it seemed, had always been his home, with a wit to which his slight accent and formal utterance gave new point; he displayed a kindly interest in my plans which was very pleasing; he was always tactful, courteous, good humored. He was plainly a boulevardier, a man of the world with an outlook upon life a little startling in its materiality, but interesting in its freshness and often amusing in its frankness. And he seemed to return my liking—certainly it was he who sought me, not I who sought him. He was being delayed, he said, in establishing his business; he could not get just the quarters he desired, but in another week there would be a place vacant. He would ask me to draw up the lease. Meanwhile time hung rather heavily on his hands.

"Though I do not quarrel with that," he added, sitting in my room one evening; "it is necessary for me that I take life easily. I have a weakness of the heart, which has already given me much trouble. Besides, I have your companionship, which is most welcome, and for which I thank you. I trust Mees—Mees—what you call—Holladay is again well."
"We haven't heard from her," I said.
"She is still at her place in the country."
"Oh, she is doubtless well—in her I take such an interest—you will pardon me if I weary you."
"Weary me? But you don't!"
"Then I will make bold to ask you—have you made any—that you call—theory of the crime?"
"No," I answered—"that is, none beyond what was in the newspapers—the illegitimate daughter theory. I suppose you saw it. That seems to fit the case."

He nodded meditatively. "Yet I like to imagine how M. Leecoq would approach it. Would he believe it was a murder simply because it so appeared. Had it occurred to you that Mees Holladay truly might have visited her father and that his death was not a murder at all, but an accident?"
"An accident?" I repeated. "How could it be an accident? How could a man be stabbed accidentally in the neck? Besides, even if it were an accident, how would that explain his daughter's rushing from the building without trying to save him, without giving the alarm? If it wasn't a murder, why should the woman, whoever she was, be frightened? How else can you explain her flight?"

He was looking at me thoughtfully. "All that you say is ver' true," he said. "It shows that you have given to the case much thought. I believe that you also have a fondness for crimes of mystery, and he smiled at me. "Is it not so, Mistral Lester?"
"I had never suspected it," I laughed, "until this case came up, but the microscope seems to have bitten me."
"Ah, yes," he said doubtfully, not quite understanding.
"And I've rather fancied at times," I admitted, "that I should like to take a hand at solving it—though, of course, I never shall. Our connection with the case is ended."
He shot me a quick glance, then lighted another cigarette.

"Suppose it were assigned to you to solve it," he asked, "how would you set about it?"
"I'd try to find the mysterious woman."
"Continued"

'Twas the Week Before Christmas

MY folks act funny nowadays—I can't tell what is going on. When ma comes in she always says, "What bundles come when I was gone?" An' if I touch a closet door Or hunt for playthings anywhere Somebody runs across the floor And says I "musn't go in there!"
My sister talks a heap with ma. But whispers when I come aroun'. An' they hide things away so pa Won't see 'em when he comes from town. I told pa all about it too. He only laughed, an' said to me, "This time of year it's best for you Not to observe the things you see."



"HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING?"
There's packages behind the bed In ma's room. When I found them there I sat her what they was. She said, "Have you been looking? I declare!" An' now they're gone; but there's a lot Of bundles in the cellar, though. An' ma says she won't tell me what They are, for I don't need to know.

Ma hides things from my sister—yes. An' sister she hides things from ma. They're sewin' sompin not a dress. An' both of them hide that from pa! There's sompin piled behind the books, But pa he's gone an' turned the lock; An' near as I can see, it looks Like sompin's hid behind the clock.

My folks acts funny—I can't see Why they should all drop ever thing An' pick some errand out for me Whenever they hear our bell ring; An' I ain't treated right, nohow. It don't seem just exactly fair Whenever I am started now. One of 'em says, "Don't go in there!" —W. D. Nesbit in Chicago Tribune.

Christmas With Lewis and Clark.
Some rain at different times last night and showers of hail, with intervals of fair starlight. This morning at day we were saluted by our party under our windows, a Shout and a Song. After breakfast we divided our tobacco, which amounted 2 Carrots, one half we gave to the party who used Tobacco, those who did not we gave a Handkerchief as a present. The day proved showery all day, the birds, left us this evening, all our party moved into their huts, we dried some of our wet goods. I received a present of a Fleese Hosery (fleece hosiery), vest, draws & Socks of Capt. Lewis, pro Mockersous of Whitehouse, a small Indian basket of Gutted (Goodrich) & 2 Doz weasels tails of the Squar of Shabong & some black roots of the Indians. Our Dinner to day consisted of pore Elk boiled, split fish & some roots, a bad Christmas dinner, warm day. From "Newly Discovered Personal Records of Lewis and Clark."

A Curious Custom of Oxfordshire.
In some places in Oxfordshire, England, it was the right of every maid-servant to ask the hired man for a bit of ivy to trim the house. If he turned a deaf ear to her importunities or forgot her request she would steal a pair of his breeches and nail them to the gate in the yard or on the highway. This was supposed to debar him from all privileges of the mistletoe.

For St. Nicholas' White Horse.
In Belgium the children expect the good St. Nicholas to visit them. They think he rides on a white horse, so they polish their shoes with great care, fill them with hay, oats or carrots for the saint's horse and put them in the fireplace or on a table, and in the morning, instead of the forage, they find sticks for the bad children and candies for the good ones.

Laurel For Christmas Decoration.
The laurel being an evergreen makes a striking feature in a winter landscape. Enormous quantities are used in the Christmas dressing of churches for wreaths and other decorations. Mountain laurel can be grown for decorative purposes, and it is easily cultivated. What comes to market is gathered from the wild laurel growth.

The Spirit of Giving.
Don't give only where you expect a return or wonder whether you will be supposed to buy something for A. B. or C. The spirit of Christmas lies in the loving and the giving—never in the receiving.

New Year's Day In Faroff China

Greatest of Festivals In the Celestial Empire, a Happy Time For Pigtailed Creditors.

OF all Chinese festivals that of New Year's day is the greatest. Being a peculiarly contradictory race, the Chinese do not reckon time by the sun, as we do in America, but by the moon, so that the Chinese New Year's day may come at any time between the middle of January and the middle of February. When the time approaches, creditors are happy, for by the last day of the old year all debts must be paid. The Chinaman who cannot pay up must hide his head until the festival is over. Another preparation is a general washing up. Household belongings and personal attire are put through a severe course of soap and water in order that the new year may be begun with cleanliness.

When the night of New Year's eve approaches, the sound of the firing of crackers begins and is kept up with an incessant din until dawn. The first business in the new year is the sacrifice to heaven and earth. A table is spread with offerings of food and drink, candles and incense, and crackers are let off again just outside the front door. Then the father of the family comes forward and kneels down in front of the table, holding a stick of incense in his hand and knocking his head three times on the ground. Rising to his feet, he places the incense in the corner on the table. More crackers are let off, and paper money is burned.

After this ceremony the household gods are worshipped in the same way, and then the ancestral tablets, after which the "living idols" have their turn. The father and mother sit down side by side, and all their children and grandchildren kneel before them and do them reverence, but offerings are not made to the living, as they are to the dead. Then the servants come forward, dressed in their best, and kneel down, bowing their heads to the ground before their master and mistress, receiving presents when they rise.

Long before all these ceremonies are finished it is quite light, but in the early hours of New Year's morning the streets look as deserted as if no one



"KUNG SHI, KUNG SHI!"

was living in the city. The shops are all shut, and the busiest streets are as quiet as if it was an ideal Sabbath of rest. But the quiet does not last long. Occasional crackers are let off, and strings of beggars soon appear on every hand. They are far more numerous than usual and more importunate. They know they will reap a rich harvest on this happy day, for it is lucky to begin the year with good deeds, and it is not long before the streets are filled with a well dressed multitude starting out to pay New Year's calls.

Custom requires that all the men in China shall call on their relations, teachers and friends, and for three days the visiting goes on. Women are not expected to pay New Year's calls or to see the visitors who come to their houses. As these are men, of course that would be highly improper. When friends meet in the street for the first time in the new year they stand and bow very politely; they put their hands together and shake them, saying, "Kung shi, kung shi," which means "I respectfully wish you joy!" and they often add, "May you grow rich," for that is the Chinese idea of happiness.

For three days the New Year's rejoicing goes on, and then all the poorer classes begin to work again. Large shops and places of business are closed for a month.—Brooklyn Citizen.
Decay of New Year's Calls.
Not many years ago it was the custom in all countries to visit one's friends on New Year's day, and in this country open house was kept all day until a matter of some ten or fifteen years ago. It is questionable whether it will ever become fashionable to see New Year's day ashle for calling again. The ancient Romans made much of their New Year's calls, and after the empire of Rome had passed away the custom lived in England, France and Germany.