

# 900 CHILDREN GIVEN TREATS AT EXERCISES

JOIN IN COMMUNITY  
OBSERVANCE

## ATTENDANCE RECORD

Program Headed By Shevlin-Hixon  
Band Enjoyed by Children—Santa  
Claus Received With Joy—  
Exercises Well Presented.

Nine hundred children attended last week's community Christmas tree, staged at the American Legion building by the Sunday schools; and if the applause accorded the various numbers is any criterion, all of them enjoyed the various numbers from the opening concert by the Shevlin-Hixon band to the final appearance of Santa Claus through the fireplace on the stage.

The auditorium was not quite so crowded as it was for the community tree a year ago, but for the reason that the children were given first opportunity to get seats, more of them were able to enjoy the program; and since little folk do not take up so much room as their elders, it is safe to say that there were more people in the building last night than ever before in its history. Fifty people were turned away when Fire Chief Carlson decided that the building would hold no more safely.

Attractive boxes of candy, the treat arranged by the Woman's Civic league, were passed among the children shortly after Santa Claus arrived, and although 904 boxes had been prepared, there were a few children who received none.

**Numbers Interesting**  
The youthful performers in the several exercises prepared by the Sunday schools were all well drilled, and presented a well balanced and interesting program. Among the most striking were the musical exercise "Why the Chimes Rang Out," "The Star," a drill participated in by 20 girls, and the tableau "Rock of Ages."

Clever recitations by the little folks were all pleasing, including "Christmas," by Edith Holt, "A Boy's Wanta," "Advice," by Roberta Bennett, "A Christmas Wish," by Virginia Carpenter and "Farewell" by Robert Friberg.

**Little Folk Take Part**  
Exercises by the younger children were "A Golden Word," by five children of the Baptist Sunday school, the song "O Night of Gladness" by Hugh Clapp, Mary Bennett and Lena Dyer, a Christmas exercise by Lundy Orr, Ralph Grimes, Marie Friberg, John Curry, Dorothy Curry and Wesley Lucas, and "Half a Dozen Snow Birds," by Vernon Forbes, Jr., Robert De Armond and Walter Pease.

Those taking part in "Why the Chimes Rang Out," were Connie Mahoney, Mary Hennessy, Violet De Boer, Mary Holland, Margaret Jonas, Katherine Dugan, Sarah Davis Helen McLaughlin, Ruth Garske, Luella Halverson, Mary Miller. The exercise was directed by Misses Marie Brosterhous, Mary Cody and Eva Roach.

The tableau "Rock of Ages" was portrayed by Florence Curry, Marie Friberg, Grace Linton, Lulu McFadden and Anna McNeal, while the song was sung by Miss Dolores Catlow.

Girls who appeared in "The Star" drill were Florence Brown, Gladys Connolly, Erma Lehrmann, Mary Broughton, Eloise Spencer, Dorothy Taylor, Margaret Whipple, Mary Reynolds, Vesta Bevans, Hollis Swingle, Besie Howard, Anna Mary McKinley, Stella Claypool, Thelma Culler. They were directed by Miss Hazel Hazelton and Miss Mary Ellen Yensen.

"A Golden Word" was participated in by William McCluskey, Xvie Ketchum, Madge Smith, Maxine Saylor and James McCluskey. Mrs. T. H. Foley was in charge of this number.

Members of the committee in charge of the tree were Rev. J. Edgar Purdy, chairman; Mrs. R. S. Hamilton, Miss Christina Curry, Mrs. C. V. Enloe, Mrs. T. W. Ripley. Sunday schools and churches taking part were the Methodist, Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist and Christian. American Legion members assisted in providing the tree and decorations.

**Belladonna.**  
Belladonna is Italian for "fair lady," and the drug was given this name because Italian women employed the juice for staining their skin and to beautify the eyes by giving them a glistening appearance.



### CHAPTER X

#### The Proof of Murder—The Back Room of Costigan's

I watched her through the glass doors until she vanished among the crowd in the lobby. I could not permit her to go away like this; to get beyond my sight and knowledge—yet I hesitated too long, until she had merged into the swirling crowd and was lost.

It was indeed a strange feeling of loneliness which swept over me at that moment. Never before had I felt such depth of interest in a woman, or experienced such regret at parting. With no apparent effort, seemingly utterly indifferent, she had nevertheless become intertwined with my life, her presence a necessity for my happiness. The soft pressure of her body, the touch of her hand, was intoxicating; the glance of her eyes sent the warm blood pulsing through my veins. She had become to me an inspiration, a memory to dream over, a hope no longer to be resisted.

This was strange, so strange as to be beyond understanding. I argued it with myself, but to no result. The fact would not be denied. Here was an unknown woman, original and beautiful, to be sure, yet one whose very identity was shrouded in mystery. To all appearances she was actively engaged in conspiracy against the government of Chile, in a crime against human life. She was unquestionably the authorized agent of a gang of revolutionary plotters—I had witnessed their reception of her as one of their own, and could not doubt the evidence of my own eyes. She had borne them instructions, and stood in their midst, in secret conclave, speaking as one having authority. More than that, even, she had refused to deny this connection, to reveal her name, or acknowledge any other purpose. She had used me to further her ends, whatever they might be, preying upon my personal interest in her, and yet refusing to lift a single fold of this curtain of mystery.

What could it mean, but that she was secretly ashamed to permit of my full understanding? The thought of the stolen money, the murder of Alva, recurred to me; the invitation I had overheard for her to accompany him on his fatal trip, and her acceptance; the positive assertion of Harris that she had done so; her confessed knowledge that the money had actually been given into the possession of the Chilean captain; the nature of the weapon with which he had been killed; her remaining in New York instead of returning to Washington. I could not blot these things out, no matter how hard I endeavored to reconcile them with her denials. I trusted her; I would continue to trust her against the world, yet deep down in my heart lingered a question unanswered. If she was honest, square, actuated by some worthy purpose, why did she still refuse to confide in me? Surely I had been sufficiently tested—and she knew who I was. If she was the sister of a classmate whom I knew and loved, what necessity remained for the concealment of her name? What, indeed, except shame at the part she was playing in this sordid drama of life? Some of my earlier suspicion had been eradicated, for now it was clearly demonstrated that it could not have been her knife which had pierced Alva's heart. Whatever else I might believe against her, this evidence no longer existed, for she still wore the dagger in her hat. Peculiar as the design was, the weapon locked in my valise, which I had picked up blood-stained on the floor of the car, was not hers; it had been wielded in its deadly work by some other hand. But whose? Did she know? Did she even suspect the assassin? Was she even now endeavoring to conceal his identity? These questions were unanswerable; I could only partially drive them back by memory of the girl herself: it was impossible to recall her vividly to mind, and yet associate her with so foul a crime.

I was still immersed in such thoughts, mentally struggling for her honor, and my own justification, when I finally attained the quiet of my room. I was squarely up against a stone wall; there was no light perceptible anywhere. Neither Harris nor Waldron was guilty of this crime; they were obliterated from further consideration. These two worthies had undoubtedly done their best, but had been outgeneraled by some one else; and, whoever that other might be, he had made a clear getaway, leaving not even a lurking suspicion behind him. It was the job of a master-thief, an expert in crime—or else had been accomplished through the blind luck of some one whose very identity cloaked any possibility of suspicion.

I sat with my head in my hands staring at the mutilated bag, racked with anger and misery. I had been easy, a mark of derision and ridicule; a mere screen for her to hide behind, while her accomplice, if she had one, escaped with the spoils. Then the reaction came; the thought that perhaps I had not read the story wholly aright; the faint hope that it might not prove exactly as I had pictured in my first wild burst of passion. It was too infamous, too unthinkable. Why, if she was guilty, should she have remained in New York? Why should she have sought me out, or listened so intently to the quarrel of those two men at Perond's? What could she possibly gain by thus overhearing the tale of their failure, if she already knew who was the murderer of Alva, and what had become of the spoils?



The Dagger I Had Concealed There Was Gone.

My glance wandering about the room aimlessly fell upon the valise in one corner. It was just where I remembered leaving it when I went out, yet I saw something which surely resembled a slash in the leather. I crossed over, and bent down; it was a slash, the clean cut of a knife, running from end to end, penetrating through both leather and cloth. Whoever had done the deed had been unable to operate the lock, and had used the blade as a last resort, slitting the entire bag wide open. I inserted my hand and felt within; nothing seemed missing, or greatly disturbed. I explored to the bottom, and then sprang to my feet in startled amazement—the dagger I had concealed there was gone!

Good God! what could be the meaning of this? She had worn that ornament in her hat openly, purposely, to fool me into believing her innocent. There could be no other explanation. She had confessed being at the hotel, seeking to locate me, and the number of my room. What would prevent her coming up here unobserved, then, while I was out, and gaining entrance? And who else would have any reason to thus search through my things, and abstract this important evidence of crime?

Yet how did she know I had it? How did she even suspect I was the first to discover the dead body, and bear away with me the tell-tale weapon with which Alva had been murdered? I had no means of knowing how—only she alone had special reason to regain possession of that knife. And she had even dared later to flaunt it in my very face, to show it to me in her possession, just as though it had never passed out of her hands! Here was revealed a depth of duplicity, a criminal audacity, not to be expressed in words; this soft spoken girl, this woman to whom I knew I had given my heart, stood revealed now in all her hideousness—a murderer, a thief, a scheming criminal, coolly concealing the trail of her crime, and using her very charms of face and manner to conceal from me her true nature.

Perhaps she would see me again—perhaps! The lie was yet warm upon her lips. She had gone away laughing at the simper on her face who had believed her, the dupe who had so easily been deceived by her smiles. The chances were she had disappeared already, vanished, left the city, assured that no evidence now remained behind to ever connect her with this terrible affair. She cared nothing for me—I had been a mere tool, plant in her hand—I remained merely in her memory as something to laugh about, another victim, a blind, groping fool, with whom she had played to her heart's desire.

I returned the receiver to the hook, uncertain whether or not I had decided rightly, yet determined to carry out the experiment. Above all else I wanted to learn who Marie Geisler was. Nothing else mattered so much,

I could ask these questions, but not one was answerable. They merely mocked me with their emptiness.

Then, shrill and insistent, the telephone rang. My heart was beating like a trip-hammer as I took down the receiver. Who could be calling me at this hour? Who except she alone in this city knew my name and hotel?

"Hello."

A man's voice spoke huskily. "This you, Daly?"

"Yes," hastily, instantly aware of who was on the other end of the wire, yet feeling it best to dissemble until I learned the purpose.

"Who is speaking?"

"The fellow you biffed with a bottle tonight. No, I ain't got no hard feelings. Besides, I got something else to think about than a cracked dome. Say, I got some dope on how that job was did, an' maybe could tell you something else of interest. I got to talk with you privately—that's what. It's a matter for the girl as well as yourself. I'm playing square as long as you do the right thing, but I know who the dame is, an' am liable to squeal if I get a raw deal; that's putting it straight, Harry."

"You know who she is, you say?"

"Sure I do. Old Pierre, over at Perond's, told me. He never forgets a face, or a name, that old duffer. He knew you the minute you blew in, and he knew her, too; she'd been there before slumping."

"Who is she, then?"

"That's all right—I know; but I ain't fool enough to blow it over the wire. If you'll come over here and have a talk, I'll spill a few things in your ear that'll make you wise."

"Where are you?"

"At Costigan's."

"What's become of your partner?"

"Who's that—Waldron? He ain't no partner of mine. Say, you must have handed that guy some job. The last I saw of him, he was laid out on a bench in Perond's back room breathing like a stuck pig, dead to the world. Will you come over here?"

"What have you got to tell me?"

"Well, there's the dame's name for one thing. I'll bet you don't even know who she is, or how she's string-

"I'll Bet You Don't Even Know Who She Is."

ing you. Then I'm on to where a part of that bundle's planted—anyhow I've got a hunch. If we turn it up, I'm still strong on the fifty-fifty proposition."

I turned it over swiftly in my mind, the receiver still at my ear. I felt no particular fear of Harris; to be sure, in all probability, he was only feeling about in the dark, hoping in this way to learn something of value, yet it might be that he had accidentally uncovered the girl's identity, and that alone was inducement enough to urge me to take the risk. If he actually knew who she was, he was the kind that might become ugly, and, however much I suspected her in my own mind, I had no desire to leave her undepended at his mercy. Guilty or not guilty, my inclination was to protect her to the last. Besides I was eager to obtain the information he claimed to possess; indeed, all progress on the case was blocked until I did obtain it. As to his boast that he knew where the stolen money was concealed, I took little stock in that. Doubtless he merely threw that in for good measure. But the other looked reasonable enough; she had confessed being at Perond's before; Pierre was fully as likely to recall her to memory as he was to remember Daly, and Harris could never have made so shrewd a guess, unless he had really been told the facts. Another thing gave me courage to go to Costigan's. I was still accepted by these people as Harry Daly, crook. I would undoubtedly be so received, so treated. Under these circumstances there could be no personal danger; I held the whip-hand, the advantage—Harris was only endeavoring to see what he could get out of me; he had abandoned force to resort to diplomacy.

"All right," I said. "I'll run over there; if you want to play fair, I'll meet you half way."

"Oh, I'm on the square, old man, and I've got some dope," he insisted. "I'll blow it when you show up."

I returned the receiver to the hook, uncertain whether or not I had decided rightly, yet determined to carry out the experiment. Above all else I wanted to learn who Marie Geisler was. Nothing else mattered so much,

## MRS. HARDING VISITS SOLDIERS



Photograph shows the president's wife visiting the disabled soldiers at the Walter Reed hospital in Washington. She is buying some trinkets made by Lieutenant H. E. Trammell.

for on this discovery all else hinged. If violence, or treachery, was intended, I would be found prepared, and well able to defend myself.

The neighborhood into which I was venturing induced me to take a taxi, and, within ten minutes, I was deposited at the door of the saloon. I pressed open the swinging door, and stepped into the brilliantly lighted bar-room.

Costigan was behind the bar, but, at sight of me, rounded the end, and shook hands cordially, removing his apron, and slipping into a coat, in token that he had changed his occupation.

"Better call Charlie," he said to a man beside him, "for I'll be off for an hour or so. You came to see George?"

"Yes; he telephoned me."

"Said he was goin' to. He's waitin' in the office there. I'll go along with you."

He pushed a passage through the crowd, his breadth of body according me ample room in which to follow without being obstructed, and opened the closed door with a pass-key. To a wave of his big hand I passed confidently past him, and entered. The next instant he had pressed me forward, came in also, and closed the door; the sharp click of the lock sounded like the report of a pistol. One startled glance at the interior told me I was trapped, and the swift instinct of defense led me to step aside, so that I should have my back to the wall. Harris sat in the swivel chair, with feet elevated on the desk, sardonically grinning at me over a half-chewed cigar tilted between his teeth. A white rag was bound round his head, through which a few drops of blood had oozed, leaving a dark stain. Leaning against the wall opposite was Waldron, one eye half-closed, and his lip split, giving to his face a look of savage brutality, rendered peculiarly sinister by a grim effort to smile. Costigan remained motionless, with back against the door, as though thus barring all possibility of escape. I had walked into their trap, and the jaws had closed.

(To Be Continued.)

## Record of Transfers

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Cornelia W. Barnes, W. D. Barnes, husband to Laura Edwards, lots 7, and 8, block 24, Kenwood, \$10.

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