

# I did not kill Osborne

By VICTOR BRIDGES

OSBORN: At last Nicholas... the man Nick was acquitted... the husband of Mrs. Gowland... the husband of Mrs. Gowland... the husband of Mrs. Gowland...

## Chapter 44 THE FORMULA

I DON'T know how my husband knew about Osborne and me. Mrs. Gowland went on, "unless he may have found a letter which came for me after Jack went away. Perhaps he had been watching us all the time."

By a desperate effort she managed to moisten her lips. "My husband went up to London—went up by the train. He was there for two days and when he came back he told me what he had done. At first I didn't believe him, but it was true—oh, my God, it was quite true! I thought he would kill me too."

"Sometimes"—once more she buried her face and sobbed brokenly—"sometimes I wish he had."

"You poor soul!" Molly bent over her and softly touched her hair. "I am so terribly sorry for you. It's dreadful to think what you must have been through."

With an impulsive gesture Mrs. Gowland caught hold of her hands. "Oh, you're good—I don't know who you are, but you're good and kind. No one has ever been kind to me—except him."

"I understand, too," I said, "and I don't blame you in the least. I am only grateful to you for telling us the truth now."

Jerry stepped forward. "You have cleared up one great injustice, Mrs. Gowland," he said quietly, "but there's someone else you've wronged besides Mr. French."

She stared up at him. "Someone else?" she whispered.

He pointed to Molly. "There were some papers which belong to Miss O'Brien in Osborne's safe. He stole them from her father when he was in America. They were taken out of the house on the night that he was murdered."

"Papers!" She sat up with a quick gasp. "Yes—there were papers—a whole packet of them. He took them away to make it look like a robbery."

"What did he do with them?" Jerry rapped out the question like a pistol shot.

"He brought them back here to show me. There was blood on them—Jack's blood. He wanted me to see it."

She rose unsteadily, holding on to the back of the chair. "They're over there, in the bottom drawer of the big chest. He used to take them out every night and look at them. He was mad, I tell you, mad—mad."

Crossing the room in a couple of swift strides, Jerry gave an ineffectual tug at the two handles.

"It's locked!" he exclaimed. "Where's the key?"

She moved slowly towards the sofa, turning back the blanket, bent down over the stiff, sprawling object beneath.

"Here it is," she said.

WE WATCHED breathlessly while Jerry wrenched open the drawer. For a moment he knelt there, fumbling amongst its contents; then, suddenly jumping to his feet, he swung round towards us.

In his hand was a loosely wrapped brown paper packet.

"Take a look through these, Molly," he said quietly.

He slipped off the covering as he spoke, and half a dozen stained and crumpled documents tumbled out on to the table. The largest and most conspicuous of them consisted of two sheets of blue paper fastened together by a brass clip, and with a quick movement Molly snatched it up from amongst the others.

"This is it! This is the formula! Father described it to me. He said..."

A low, startled cry rang out through the room, and we all three turned sharply towards the door. Mrs. Gowland was standing there, pale and rigid—one hand stretched out towards the open window.

"A face—" she gasped, "out there in the bushes! Look—look!"

I spun round in a flash, but I was just too late. There was a quiver of branches, followed by a scuffling

## SCIENTISTS HOLD PACIFIC SERPENT MERELY A SHARK

WASHINGTON (UP)—"Hair" of a "sea serpent" discovered on the beach of a small island off the Pacific coast in November, has been identified here as the gill raker of a basking shark.

Dr. Earl S. Meyer, curator of fishes at the National Museum, is convinced that the creature was a basking shark although naturalists failed to identify it with any known genus of sea animal.

The "hair" consisted of strands of fine material about a foot long. It serves as a fine sieve for the minute plankton upon which the shark feeds. No other fish boasts such an arrangement.

The shark's body apparently had been stranded on the beach several days. It had lost its fish-like appearance and had assumed a serpent-like shape.

California fishermen, Dr. Meyer said, bring in two or three specimens of the fish each year and sell to fertilizer companies.

The hair was forwarded to the state department by the American consul at Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

National Museum officials pointed out that this was the first opportunity they had had to correctly identify an alleged sea serpent. They believe that if most of the current sea plankton were subjected to scientific examinations, they would turn out to be fairly familiar animals.

## 30 YEARS SINCE FIRST AUTO TAG ISSUED BY STATE

SALEM, Ore. (UP)—A framed hand-written document on the wall of the office of Carl D. Gabrielson, head of the motor vehicle division under Secretary of State Earl Snell, today revealed that the 30th anniversary of the issuance of the first automobile in the state will soon be at hand.

The plate went to Helmus W. Thompson, Eugene, and he had to wait more than two months after he had applied to get tag No. 1.

Thompson wrote Secretary of State F. I. Dunbar on March 13, 1905, that his automobile was "an Oldsmobile, ten horsepower, single cylinder engine, light tonneau, colored dark red."

It was May 19 before his license—it was called certificate No. 1—was issued.

On the same day other licenses went out, the first receiving them besides Thompson being: Dr. W. B. Morse, Salem; George H. Graves, Salem; J. D. Matlock, Eugene; E. L. Hemington, Woodburn; F. L. Chambers, Eugene; R. H. Robinson, Arlington; Clinton J. Kurtz, Salem; P. A. Combs, Portland; George J. Pearce, Salem; E. C. Dixon, Grants Pass; and Byron O. McCulloch, Grants Pass.

Four of the cars were tiller-steered. Two were steam powered, six of the machines were "merry Oldsmobiles." Others were Whites, Darracs, an Auto-Car and an Orient, names no longer known on automobile row.

The act of the 1905 legislature which provided for licensing of cars and the registration of their owners was entitled "An act regulating automobiles on country roads."

The fee was \$3. The same license number could be kept for five years.

"There can be no conflict between science and religion," Mussolini.

## SUBURBAN HEIGHTS



FRED PERLEY FOUND HIMSELF CONSIDERABLY EMBARRASSED THE OTHER MORNING WITH A GO-CART HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH, HAVING CARRIED IT ABOARD THE 8:18 FOR A NEIGHBOR WHO AT THE LAST SECOND HAD TO CHASE HER ELUSIVE CHILD DOWN THE STATION PLATFORM AND SO MISSED THE TRAIN

## S'MATTER POP



## TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Plot That Failed!



## BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Information



## THE NEBBS—The Wise Guy



## BLIND WOMAN SERVES AS PHONE OPERATOR

CLEVELAND (UP)—Totally blind, Mrs. Josephine Enever operates the busy telephone switchboard at the Cleveland Society of Blind offices. Though her real job is home instructor for blind persons, teaching them to read Braille, type, sew and earn money, she has been filling in at the switchboard job when workers had to double up on duties.

Spent 20 cents in Campaign JACKSON, O. (UP)—Ed Dickins' expense account as defeated candidate for state representative, 20 cents.

## SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRL MARATHON RUNNER

CLEVELAND (UP)—Six-year-old Virginia Wahl is only in kindergarten now, but she may become a champion long-distance runner when she grows up.

DOVER, O. (UP)—Dr. S. B. McGuire, one of the oldest physicians in this section of Ohio, is dead at 75.

## BRINGING UP FATHER

