

the dark ships

BY HULBERT FOOTNER

SYNOPSIS: Neill, a young federal agent, comes to Baltimore to spread a week's rest. But the week is broken by a dinner date with Prescott Fanning. From what Janet says, Neill distrusts Fanning and labels him a crook. They quarrel and part. To check on Fanning, Neill finds him at his hotel and is acquainted at the bar. Fanning gives him a knock-out drop in whiskey and then searches Neill's papers, taking a snapshot of Janet. Next noon Neill awakens to find Janet, Fanning and Fanning's yacht gone. A mysterious phone call tells him Janet is aboard the yacht in Absalom's Harbor and "in bad trouble."

Chapter Seven

Bus To Absalom's

AT 4:45 that afternoon the bus for Absalom's pulled out of the terminal on Redwood street, and headed south. Neill sat by a window looking out with a wooden face. Now that he had an objective, he had steeled; he could wait. After thinking it over, he had decided to handle this matter by himself—quietly. He wished to avoid subjecting Janet to any ugly publicity. He had dressed himself in a rough surveyor's outfit including khaki breeches and knee boots in order to be ready for anything.

The bus was a small one for local traffic, and the passengers were all residents of the southern counties who had been to town for a day's shopping. Neill as the only "foreigner" aboard received many

"No. Never been there before." "What's your business there, may I ask?" "No business. Thought I'd like a couple of days' fishing." "You ain't brought no tackle." "Well, I wasn't sure what I'd need. I'll get it there." "Ain't often a fellow comes down alone to go fishing." "Oh, reckon I can join on to some party." "Where you going to stop?" "There's a hotel, isn't there?" "Sure, there's Wickes' hotel, but you'd do better in one of the boarding houses." "Well, I'll go to the hotel tonight and look 'round in the morning." "What's the name, mister?" "Ford Wheatley." "Where from?" "Baltimore." "Who you work for there?" "I represent a New York firm." "And so on. And so on." As they came over the top of a low hill, Joey pointed out their destination far off to the left. Neill saw, on a little promontory almost surrounded by blue water, a village of white houses dazzling in the level rays of the sun. The wide mouth of the river lay beyond, and still farther off, the misty expanse of the Chesapeake. Neill hardened as he looked at the pretty scene. There lay his job.

Four Gigantic Ships AS they turned the next corner in the road, four gigantic ships loomed before them moored side by side, and making a little forest of masts and funnels. It was a surprising sight to come upon in that simple countryside. "See them ships?" said Joey. "Them's what we took from Ger-



The trim little yacht was lying there.

curious glances which made him slightly uneasy because he didn't want to be too well remembered afterward. He had to adopt a new name and character for this expedition. A Ford car passed at the moment and he noticed a field of wheat darkening for the harvest. So he it; he would call himself Ford Wheatley.

The driver, whom the passengers addressed as "Joey," appeared to be the main circulating medium of gossip for the counties. He was a well-set-up young fellow with a snappy fedora on one side of his head, and he thought well of himself. He imparted local news to his passengers and received what they had in return. Neill paid little attention to the talk back and forth. The principal subjects were crops and fishin'. But he pricked up his ears when he heard a voice ask Joey what was the latest from Absalom's. Joey said:

"There was a dandy little yacht come into the harbor before dawn. She busted a gear or something out in the bay. I fetched her engine over to town this morning to have a new one made. He calculated to go back with me this evening, but he ain't turned up, so I reckon it wasn't finished in time." "Good! thought Neill. The yacht is still there." "What's the yacht's name?" somebody asked. "Nadji."

"What the hell's that mean?" "Doggie if I know, Henry." "Who's her owner?" "Gent named Barrett from New York."

New York was too far away to be of any interest to them, and the conversation passed to other matters.

Neill Gets Quizzed "JOEY, did you hear that Jake J. Stivers hauled seine at Battle Island yesterday and pulled in 3,000 pound of rock?"

"No kidding." "Gemmen, it's a fact! At 10 cents a pound that's \$300 at one haul."

"That money will burn a hole in Jake's pants, certain. Bet he comes out in a new automobile, Sunday."

As they bowed down the concrete road, the afternoon shadows lengthened and the passengers got off one by one. Finally there were only two left for Absalom's. The driver kept turning his head to cast an inquisitive eye at the stranger. At last he said:

"Are you acquainted in Absalom's, mister?"

Neill finds Janet and a corpse of the yacht, tomorrow.

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

MATTHEW LYON— U.S. Congressman from Vermont, WAS REELECTED TO OFFICE WHILE IN PRISON FOR BREAKING A FEDERAL LAW! —1799—

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A PIECE OF MICA ONE INCH THICK CAN BE SPLIT INTO ALMOST ONE THOUSAND SHEETS...

9 BALLS WERE REQUIRED FOR A WALK UNDER BASEBALL RULES OF 1879...



FRANCES TROLLOPE - 19th-century English author, NEVER WROTE A WORD FOR PUBLICATION BEFORE SHE WAS 50, WHEN SHE MADE A FORTUNE WITH HER FAMOUS "DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS" ... LATER SHE WROTE 114 MORE BOOKS, ALL FAILURES!

Frances Trollope

"I never saw an American man walk or stand well. . . . They are nearly all hollow chested and round shouldered."

"It is after marriage that the lamentable insignificance of the American woman appears."

"The ladies have strange ways of adding to their charms. They powder themselves immoderately, face, neck, and arms, with pulverized starch; the effect is indecibly disagreeable by day-light and not very favourable at any time."

With her book, "Domestic Manners of the Americans," filled with the most caustic comments as these, Mrs.

Frances Trollope rose to fame and prosperity in her native England. A widow, she came to America in 1829 and attempted to establish a millinery business in Cincinnati. Through the next three years she kept an em-

bittered diary of all she saw and experienced in the U. S. and on her return to England based "The Domestic Manners of the Americans" on her notes. It became a "best seller" almost overnight.

Fifty at the time she wrote the book, Mrs. Trollope had never previously written for publication. After the tremendous success of her first book she became one of the most prolific writers of her day, turning

out 114 more books before her death in 1863. All were failures.

Re-elected in Prison

Jailed for violation of the Federal Sedition Act, a law designed to curb "false, scandalous, and malicious writing about the government," Matthew Lyon was re-elected to congress by Vermont while serving his four-month prison sentence in 1799. A fine of \$1,000.00 which Lyon paid in conjunction with his jail sentence was refunded by the government to the congressman's heirs in 1840.

Monday: Is Sunshine Hotter on Cold Days or Warm.

ed trustees of the permanent G. A. R. fund.

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War re-elected their national commander, William A. Dyer, Syracuse, N. Y.

The delegates named Ralph R. Barrett, Huntington Park, Calif., senior vice commander.

The auxiliary elected Mrs. Margaret G. Brady, Albany, N. Y., president to

succeed Mrs. Ida L. Lewis, Milwaukee.

CAR CRASH INTO WALL KILLS ONE; HURTS TWO

WALLACE, Idaho, Sept. 11.—(AP)—An automobile's crash into a concrete wall of the Wallace-Burke highway killed Leo M. Leonard, 35.

The auxiliary elected Mrs. Margaret G. Brady, Albany, N. Y., president to

the hospital. Leonard's neck was broken.

Officers said Joe Mullins, Burke miner from Cornucopia, Ore., was the driver. He escaped with body bruises.

A Wallace woman in the car suffered a crushed ankle and severe head and face cuts. The accident occurred on a straight road.

Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—And Was the Sheriff's Face Red?

NO AIRPLANE RIDIN' FER ME!

TH' GROUND'S GOOD ENOUGH FER ME, SON!

RECKON I'LL STICK TO MY HAWSE!

BUT THERE ISN'T ANY DANGER!

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Ben Webster's Career—Silver Lining?

NEWS TRAVELS FAST! OVER ITS BREAKFAST TABLES, THE TOWN READ OF THE ATTEMPT OF THE PILLINGS' BOYS TO BURN BEN WEBSTER OUT OF BUSINESS AND—

READ THAT! IT'S THE LOWDOWN ON THE FIRE LAST NIGHT—WHY, IT MAKES MY BLOOD BOIL!

THAT'S AN OUTRAGE!

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EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT IT! THERE OUGHT TO BE SOME WAY WE COULD HELP THAT WEBSTER BOY—

NOW, LISTEN, SON! A FIRE CAN BURN UP MERCHANDISE BUT IT CAN'T DESTROY THE REPUTATION YOU'VE MADE IN THIS TOWN!

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