

THE ARMY POST MURDERS

By Virginia Hanson

The Characters Katherine Cornish, myself, visiting Elizabeth on a mid-western army post. Elizabeth, Colonel Wright's daughter. Adam Drew, acting commanding officer.

Yesterday: The strange woman is the girl I saw on the train. She loses consciousness and Adam sends me to the hospital where the others are waiting for news of Anne.

Chapter 15 'Who Is She?'

DOC MOORE'S glance went from face to face. His own was calm, professionally detached. "There's nothing anyone can do," he said.

The words lay in the room like the visible presence of death. Elizabeth groped for a chair-back. Barney's face jerked, his eyes closed. He stumbled to the window and looked out into the darkness. Annie's hands twitched in her lap. Then she was beside Elizabeth, peering up at her with her little marbled face that was like a withered, wind-fallen apple.

"You'd best be takin' me to—to my mother," she said. Barney turned from the window.

"Shall I go with you, Elizabeth?" he asked gently.

Her pitiful eyes searched his face, seemed to mark the composure he had gained.

"No, you go on to the club—see what Major Drew wants. I'll be along in a few minutes."

Doc Moore was telling Annie that he would be in to see Mrs. Carewe as soon as he could. Then the three of them were gone, and I was delivering my message in a quick undertone.

He was already fumbling with the tapes of the surgical gown which he was wearing over his white drills.

"I'll ride with you—you can tell me the details," he said. "Turn your car around. I'll be right out."

He joined me in a minute, dressed once more for evening and carrying his emergency kit.

"Now tell me again," he directed as I headed the car down Officers Row.

So I described once more my first sight of the girl on the stairs, the peculiar motions she was making, and my finding her collapsed a few minutes later. He questioned me minutely about the color of her face; and was I sure there was foam on her lips? Then he made me describe in detail her actions when I first saw her.

"The aura," he murmured. "What? Do you think she was poisoned?"

"No—that is, I'll have to see her, of course. Tell me, was she breathing when you touched her?"

"I didn't notice. You see, I thought she was dead—I took it for granted. You think she may not have been?"

"Possible—with a heart . . ."

He was silent for a long minute. We flashed past Elizabeth's car parked in front of the Carewe's quarters.

"Did you ever see anyone in an epileptic seizure?" he asked suddenly.

"Heavens, no. You—you mean that girl—that's what it was?"

"Sounds like it. That motion of the arm—the aura. Typical warning of the nervous system. She would know, you see, and try to summon help."

"Come if You Must"

"THEN I should have stayed—instead of leaving her there." "There was nothing you could do. It was all over by the time you reached her. . . . Of course this is all speculation. I shouldn't make a diagnosis until I see the patient. By all means keep quiet about it. She may very well have seen something—nervous shock often brings on these attacks."

As we wheeled in at the curb I saw Barney mounting the front steps of the club. I drew Doc Moore after me to the door of the dressing room.

My luck held; we reached the balcony unseen. Adam was watching for us from a half-open door at the end of a corridor above the reading room.

"She's alive," he said in a low voice. "I found her room—she's staying here all right—and carried her in there. She's either unconscious or sleeping very heavily. She hasn't stirred."

Doc Moore brushed past him and entered the room.

I asked Adam the question uppermost in my mind.

"Who is she?"

"I found a letter addressed to Miss Ethel Curtis. Does that mean anything to you?"

Ethel Curtis, Hillside Sanitarium, A. . . Illinois. The single sheet of paper was typewritten and unsigned, and began without salutation:

Come if you must, but don't try to telephone me or see me. You owe me that much, at least. Go straight to the Service Club, you can't miss it, it's a white frame building. Walk in—the woman's room is on the left. There's a stairway to the upper floor. Choose a room—they're all vacant—and wait there until I come. It may not be until late Friday night—there'll be a dance. Better take some sandwiches; I don't want you wandering around the post. Keep under cover or you'll wish you had!

"Then someone knows she's here," I said stupidly. "One of those—down there?"

"Probably. But not necessarily the murderer."

"Then why the secrecy?" His smile was vaguely reassuring.

"Let your creative imagination go to work on that. I'd say the possibilities are numerous."

"Doc Moore thinks she—it may have been epilepsy."

Adam's blue eyes sparkled in the semidarkness. "There's one of your answers," he said.

I was still thinking about that when the door of her room opened and the young doctor beckoned to Adam.

Their low-voiced murmur went on for some time on the other side of the door. Presently Adam appeared, looking intensely excited, and drew me into the dimly lighted room.

Oddy Familiar THE blinds had been closely drawn to prevent any telltale glimmer escaping to the street. The furnishings were cold and bare looking, but clean—a cheap chest of drawers, painted white, surmounted by a small, wavy mirror; a bedside table, one chair, which had an open suitcase and the girl's discarded clothing; and the white iron bed, single size, ornamented with the insignia of the Quartermaster Corps.

She was lying very still, breathing heavily, in deep sleep.

"As Doc suspected, it was a convulsion," Adam explained in a low, hurried voice. "She should sleep for a while. In the meantime Doc is needed back at the hospital—tell her what you told me about Anne. . . ."

Captain Moore looked apologetic. "I would have told you all a while ago, but Adam gave me instructions when we found she was still breathing. There's a chance in a hundred that we can save her."

"Anne? You mean she's alive?" "By the best of luck the bullet missed the heart and the other vital organs; but there was internal bleeding. We had to explore, tie off—she was still alive when I left her, but I'll have to go right back. Unfortunately I'm alone for the week end. The surgeon is in Chicago. . . . There'll have to be blood transfusions; all of the orderlies have volunteered and they're resting the blood group now."

"I want this kept quiet, at least until I can get on with the investigation," Adam interposed hurriedly. "It may be for her protection—I don't know; anyway, that's the feeling I've got."

"This girl, here—I can't take her to the hospital," Doc Moore went on apologetically. "We're not equipped to take care of women—no nurses, no ward. And there's no other hospital in twenty miles. I've got Anne in the officers' ward, which was fortunately empty, and I've telephoned for a nurse; but I wouldn't dare put this girl in with her."

"I see; you want me to stay here with her until she wakes up. All right."

They both looked inexpressibly relieved.

"I'll be right at the foot of the stairs in the reading room," Adam said consolingly. "I've got to get these people's stories and let them go home."

"She'll be quite all right," the doctor assured me. "Just make her stay in bed."

I kept on telling him that I didn't mind the assignment, and finally they bowed themselves out. Adam stuck his head back in long enough to tell me that when she woke up I was to call him. I could come to the foot of the stairs and wiggle the curtains and he would know I wanted him.

Then the door closed and the room began to fill with the girl's heavy breathing.

I found I was still holding the letter Adam had shown me. I moved the suitcase to the floor, noticing that it was new and nearly empty, and sat on the hard straight chair under the light of the single wall bracket that flared the chest of drawers.

Once more I read the typewritten note, but midway I lost the sense of the words, arrested by an oddly familiar idiosyncrasy of one of the letters—the tail of the y was almost obliterated.

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Tomorrow: The clue of the typewriter.

than women since 738, or more than a third, are wholly self-supporting.

CHRISTMAS SEALS AT \$1000 MARK

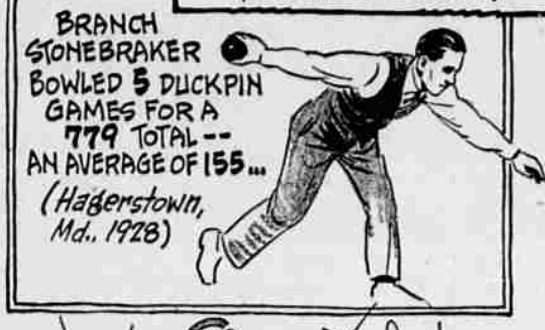
STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. 02.

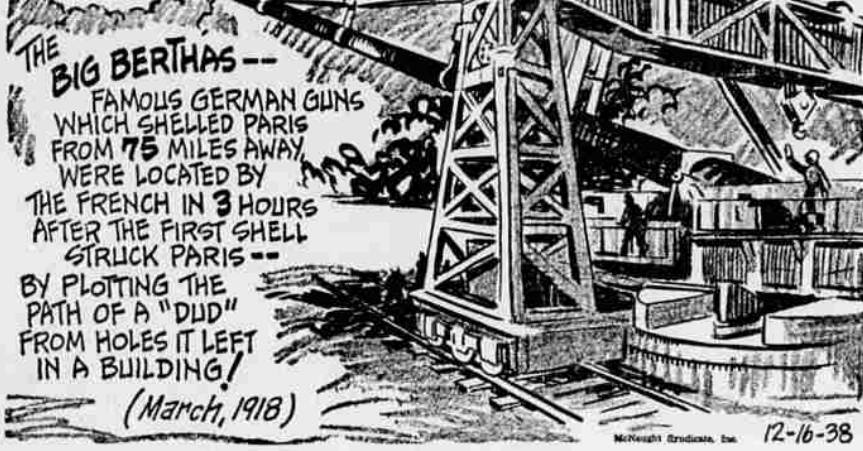


SOUSA FAMED U.S. MARINE BAND LEADER, ALSO LED ARMY AND NAVY BANDS!

YOU HAVE 4 63 -- YET YOU HAVE NO COINS AND NO \$1 BILLS -- WHAT HAVE YOU? (ANSWER TOMORROW)



BRANCH STONEBRAKER BOWLED 5 DUCKPIN GAMES FOR A 779 TOTAL -- AN AVERAGE OF 155... (Hagerstown, Md., 1928)



THE BIG BERTHAS -- FAMOUS GERMAN GUNS WHICH SHELLED PARIS FROM 75 MILES AWAY, WERE LOCATED BY THE FRENCH IN 3 HOURS AFTER THE FIRST SHELL STRUCK PARIS -- BY PLOTTING THE PATH OF A "DUD" FROM HOLES IT LEFT IN A BUILDING! (March, 1918)

Discovery of the "Berthas" A note of sudden terror struck the heart of Paris on March 23, 1918, with the explosion of the first shell to reach the French capital from Germany's famed "Big Berthas," 75 miles away.

No one knew from whence the shell had come. It was thought to have been dropped from an airplane flying at an incredible height. Then another struck. At 15-minute intervals the shells continued to rain on Paris. Soon after the first shell hit, a

plane that day and stop over at several Central American points en route home.

STREET SANTAS ARE PURGED OF MICROBES NEWARK, N. J., Dec. 16—(AP)—Newark's street corps Santa Clauses were de-microbized today.

On the insistence of other members of the United States delegation to the Pan-American conference, Landon decided to remain in Lima until December 26. He plans to leave by

white gloves while shaking hands with them. Health officer Charles V. Craster said he believed the edict would reduce transmission of colds, grippe and other maladies.

55th Fatality PORTLAND, Dec. 16—(AP)—Mrs. Albert G. Schultz, 63, of Sherwood was fatally injured Wednesday in a collision between an automobile and a truck. Her death was the city's 55th fatality of the year.

Use Mail Tribune Want Ads.

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Jobs?

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Gene Casey

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

ON THE MOVE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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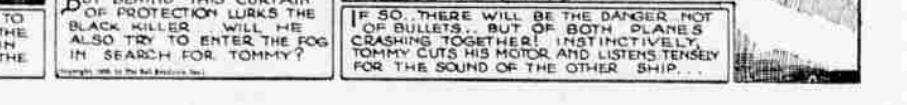
By O. M. PAYNE



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Jobs?

By HAL FORRE



U. OF O. STUDENTS EASE DAD'S LOAD

EUGENE, Dec. 16—(AP)—The burden of paying for a university education is eased for "Dad" by nearly three-fourths of the students at the University of Oregon, who contribute all or part of their expenses, a survey made here by C. L. Constance, assistant registrar, shows.

CHRISTMAS SEALS AT \$1000 MARK

The annual Christmas Seal sale fund to combat tuberculosis passed the \$1000 mark yesterday in Jackson county. Mrs. Alex Sparrow, chairman, announced. Just half the letters, which went out to subscribers Thanksgiving day have been answered.