

# Dark Lightning

By Helen Topping Miller

### Synopsis

Gary Tallman, young petroleum engineer from Alabama, misses his bus in Texas and Mona Mason, wife of a cattle rancher, gives him a lift. Gary is injured when her car crashes in a ditch and the Masons nurse him back to health. He falls in love with Mona's daughter Adelaide but, unwilling to propose until he has a job, Gary plans to leave for Mexico. Meanwhile he suspects there is oil in the property and tells Harvey Mason. Despite the protests of Oliver Kimball, Harvey's son-in-law, Hickey is engaged to drill a well and Harvey persuades Gary to remain until tests are made. Lawyer Slide Ellis threatens to get an injunction against putting down the well, because property rights were violated when the land was sold to Harvey.

### CHAPTER XX

"The thing to do now," Gary told Hickey, "is to rush this well down as fast as we can, safely, before somebody comes along to stop us." For once Hickey did not bristle or sneer. He nodded his head, hitched up his overalls, put away his plug of tobacco, "O.K., young feller," he said. "Well jam her down till they come out with the papers."

Gary stayed out late that night, watching the drilling, and Adelaide came out with a flashlight and perched on the tool box, watching, too. Gary went and leaned on the box beside her. "Lord, I wish she was down," he said. "If Hickey hadn't gotten his outfit stuck for three days, we'd been down now."

"That Slide Ellis business is serious, isn't it, Gary?" she asked. "Dad blusters and pretends it's nothing, but he hasn't fooled Mother and me a bit."

"It may not be serious in the end. The whole idea is to delay work on this well—crowd your father into signing over to somebody who will take the trouble of his hands—and he isn't going to be crowded, in his present mood. Probably he could buy this woman and her boy out for a thousand dollars. Though if Ellis is slick

and has important people behind him, he's going to press every advantage. And another difficulty, if your father settles—it may lay him open to half a dozen more suits like this. He'd be conceding the validity of the claim, and after that every time the people who are engineering this affair could dig up another likely prospect, and Slide Ellis needed another fee, they'd find some grounds to slap on another injunction suit.

"The only really final thing to do would be to find this boy and get a quit-claim deed to any interest he may have—but of course that would recognize his claim, and if he's a minor, there would have to be a legal guardian and that would delay matters some more. I don't like any of it. But you get a lawsuit, usually, with every oil well. As a rule you get a flock of them. Generally they wait and sue after the oil comes in. That's what makes me agree with your father that there may be more to this than meets the eye."

"You think Oliver may have had something to do with it? Dad thinks so. Anyway, if they start a lot of trouble, it will give Oliver a chance to laugh and say 'I told you so.' I can't believe Oliver would really do a thing like that to Dad—but you never can tell about people."

"Oliver may not have engineered the thing, entirely, but he may have given it a gentle push."

Under the flaring lights, the great behemoth labored and grunted on, turning the rotary, swinging the pipe up, thrusting an avid tongue of steel farther and farther into the earth.

"Gary, doesn't it make you think of something unearthly?" Adelaide said. "Those lights, and those men working, and all those monsters moving? Like Vulcan, working down under the ground?"

"Make a swell mural, wouldn't it? If some artist could catch those lights and the glow from the boilers." He jumped as the rumbling machinery was suddenly silenced, and a yell that was half a groan came from the shadowy men on the derrick floor.

Gary ran swiftly and Adelaide followed, jumping lightly over planks and puddles. "What is it?" she gasped as she climbed up to the derrick floor and looked at the grim-faced group of men surrounding Gary.

"No water. Somebody has cut our line. Get your car, quick," Gary ordered. "We'll have to find the break and fix it."

The rumble of the boilers died as the fire was extinguished. Men hammered in the slabs of wood that held the heavy joint

steady in the casing. Hickey lit his pipe and sat down on the tool box, but Gary and Adelaide ran, stumbling and panting in the dark, to the garage.

"Maybe we can get it fixed without telling Dad," Adelaide said breathlessly, as they dragged the doors open. "He's had so much trouble already."

"Take it easy," cautioned Gary, as she backed out with a roar and he jumped aboard. "We don't want a wreck on top of all the rest of this."

"Shut up and quit grabbing things. I'll get you there."

They found the break a mile down the road. The pipe had parted clean, as from an ax blow, and one end of it stuck up, threatening around wildly, spouting water like a fire hose. An irate man with a hoe was dancing around it, trying to lead the water off into little ditches before it flooded his yard, and he charged at them with fury in his eye.

(Continued)

## False Confession Read Into Trial

WASHINGTON, (AP) — Marine Col. Frank H. Schwable, explaining why he signed a false germ warfare confession under Communist torture, said he hoped to stay alive to tell from his own experience about Communist methods.

He said he would "make the same decision under identical circumstances" if he could thus live to "expose one of the greatest foists on the world."

The statements were contained in a letter he wrote to Gen. Lemuel G. Shepherd, marine corps commandant. The letter was made public Wednesday in testimony before a court of inquiry studying whether his punishment should be taken against Schwable.

The confession, giving purported details of U.S. bacteriological warfare in Korea, was signed by Schwable while he was a prisoner of war. He repudiated it after his release in a prison exchange last year. The text of the confession was one of the documents read into the court's record.

## Young Dartmouth Lad Home Safe

DARTMOUTH, N. S. (CP) — Frank Osborne, 13, decided to call off a visit to his aunt and returned home Tuesday after a marathon 50-mile hike that even his pet dog couldn't stomach.

Frank abandoned a snow-shovelling task outside his Dartmouth home Monday morning and struck out for his Aunt's house at Walton, Hants county — all the way across Nova Scotia's "waist" on Minas basin.

His water spaniel Tinker, gave up the gambol at some point in the afternoon and returned wearily home.

Frank got as far as Mount Uniacke, 25 miles west of here, by nightfall but decided to turn back. He walked all night, got a ride with a truck-driver and wound up in Halifax Tuesday morning.

His worried folks got a matter-of-fact phone call telling them he was coming right over.

"Thank God it was warm or he'd never have made it," his mother said.

### REGIMENT HONORED

BELFAST, (CP) — Representatives of the Irish Regiment of Canada paraded with other Commonwealth units when the freedom of Belfast was conferred on the Royal Ulster Rifles Regiment. A crowd of 20,000 in front of the city hall witnessed the ceremony.

## IT MAY BE YOUR LIVER

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## C. N. R. Appointments

MONTREAL, Feb. 23 — The appointments, as of March 17th, of Maynard A. Metcalf, C.B.E., as vice-president of traffic of the Canadian National Railways, succeeding John Pullen, was announced here yesterday by Donald Gordon, C. M. G., chairman and



M. A. Metcalf, C.B.E., C.N.R.

president. Mr. Metcalf, 56, has been executive assistant to the president and vice-president for the past seven years.

The decision of Mr. Pullen to retire under the pension rules of the company closes out a career in rail traffic transportation dating back to vacation periods between college terms at McGill University, and removes from active railway service a widely known and popular officer.

James A. Argo, 62, assistant vice-president of traffic for Canadian lines, is appointed deputy vice-president of traffic for the system, and Douglas I. Grant, secretary of the company, who moves up to the president's office as ex-



J. A. Argo, C.N.R.

ective assistant, Robert H. Tarr, assistant secretary, succeeds to the position of secretary.

Mr. Metcalf joined the railway in 1910, and in the course of his 44-year career has become one of the best known railwaymen on the continent. He was born at Toronto Junction on December 23, 1895, and although his railroading responsibilities have been heavy he has found time and energy for community and municipal service.

For four years he was an alderman of the Town of Mount Royal and mayor for two 2-year terms. He served a term on the council of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. He holds memberships in the Saint James's Club, Engineers Club, Mount Royal Curling Club, Marlboro Golf Club, and has been a director of the Chartered Trust Company since 1948.

Mr. Argo was born at Norval, near Guelph, Ont., in 1892, and began his railway career in the engineering department at Sudbury. He served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the first world war, and was mentioned in despatches. Returning, he joined the traffic department of the railway and served in most of the present posts in the freight department prior to appointment to his present position of assistant vice-president. As deputy vice-president he will assume administrative duties pertaining to the traffic department as a whole. The post of assistant vice-president will be discontinued.

### ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL (January Report)

- Grade X — Douglas Gallant.
  - Grade VIII — Mary Gallant; 2. Coleen McAleer; 3. Bertha Doyle.
  - Grade VII — Florence McAleer; 2. Doris Gallant; 3. Earl McKenna.
  - Grade VI — Stella Gallant; 2. Colin Gallant.
  - Grade V — Thelma Gallant; 2. Isabel McMillan; 3. Vivian Dolron.
  - Grade IV — Grace Gallant; 2. Wilbert Gallant; 3. Leonard Gallant.
  - Grade III — Marjorie Gallant; 2. Michael McMillan; 3. Gerard Gallant.
  - Grade II (a) — Bernard Gallant; 2. Eddy McKenna; 3. James McAleer.
  - Grade II (b) — Edna Gallant.
  - Grade I — Floyd Gallant; 2. Noel Gallant.
- Teacher, M. Gallant.

## Annual Meeting of Earl of Hillsborough Chapter, I. O. D. E.

The annual meeting of the Earl of Hillsborough Chapter, Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, was held Monday evening at the home of Mrs. Wilfred Hunter, with the Regent, Mrs. Gordon B. Rayner presiding.

The report of the treasurer, Miss Margaret MacMillan showed a satisfactory bank balance, and listed the numerous contributions to national funds, re-building of Westminster Abbey Appeal fund, assistance to local institutions and also help to two adopted schools, and other educational work. The assistant treasurer's report was submitted by Mrs. S. J. Jeffrey.

The educational secretary, Miss Mabel Adams reported on work in connection with the adopted schools, particularly with regard to the libraries provided. She reported a bursary of \$50 to a Charlottetown student taking a course in social service work in Halifax, also the usual \$25 scholarship for the P. E. I. Musical Festival.

The report on services at home and abroad was presented by Mrs. W. S. McMurtry. This report showed the sum of \$46.10 was spent locally on welfare work and that \$20 had been sent to the cigarette fund for soldiers in Korea, also that clothing, including used clothing, valued at \$190.75 had been shipped to Save the Children Fund and to Greece. In addition to this the Chapter contributed \$50 to flood relief in Great Britain and Holland and donated a substantial amount to national funds. Three food parcels were sent to needy people in Britain at Christmas.

In reporting on the library at the Provincial Sanatorium Mrs. George Barter, convener, stated that there are now approximately 1,185 books in circulation. Of these between 600-800 are read yearly. Two members from the Chapter distribute these books weekly working on a rotating order. Through the Post War Service fund the veterans in the institution received the following magazines again in the year 1953: Readers' Digest, Newsweek, Life and Maclean's.

Mrs. Ira Clarke in reporting on Empire and world affairs and films told of the interesting talk given by Mrs. R. C. Parent on her experiences at the Coronation. Mrs. Albert Roper reported on publicity and Miss Marjorie Stewart, secretary, read Mrs. A. H. Roper's report on Immigration and Canadianization.

In her annual report of the year's activities, Mrs. Rayner expressed the pleasure felt by all that a member of the Order, Mrs. Hugh Allward, represented the Order at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. She expressed appreciation of the work of the executive and conveners of committees. She said that the fund-raising projects were successful, namely the Valentine bridge and the lag day.

Members of the Chapter responded during the year to various civil appeals for canvassers, the Red Cross, Orphanage, and Cancer drive being among those answered. Donations were sent to P.E.I. T.B. League, March of Dimes and Free Dispensary. At Christmas time a boy in need of clothing was noticed and the chapter undertook to furnish him with a jacket, trousers, mittens and various other articles of clothing.

Mrs. Rayner also dealt with the Chapter's work at the library at the Sanatorium and said that this had been laudably commented on by Dr. Creelman. She expressed appreciation for the donation of books to this library.

Following adoption of all annual reports the convener of the nominating committee, Mrs. Albert Roper, brought in the slate of officers for 1954. They were elected as follows: Honorary Regent, Mrs. W. A. Stewart; Regent, Mrs. G. B. Rayner; 1st vice-Regent, Miss Jean MacLean; 2nd vice-Regent, Miss Dorothea Stewart; secretary, Mrs. George Barter; treasurer, Mrs. S. J. Jeffrey; assistant treasurer, Miss Margaret MacMillan; standard bearer, Mrs. J. S. MacDonald; educational secretary, Miss Mabel Adams; echoes secretary, Mrs. J. W. Hunter; councillors, Mrs. J. S. MacDonald, Mrs. Ira Clark, Miss Dorothy Keefe.

Conveners of Committees: Empire and World Affairs, Mrs. A. H. Roper; Services at Home and Abroad, Mrs. W. S. McMurtry; with Mrs. Jack Cameron and Mrs. Gordon Shaw on sewing (sub-committee); Sanatorium Library, Mrs. A. L. Roper; Publicity, Mrs. Carl Burke; Canadianization and Immigration, Miss Marjorie Stewart.

The members of the Chapter expressed their unanimous approval of the appointment of Mrs. Wm. Brehaut as Provincial Educational secretary.

An amount of \$15 was voted towards furnishings for Sunset Lodge and \$25 for a Scholarship for the Musical Festival this year.

## New Course Opened On Learning To Apply Aerial Photography

CALGARY (CP) — A course in photogrammetry — a scientific method of obtaining reliable ground measurements by aerial photography — has been added to the two-year survey and survey drafting course at the Institute of Technology and Art here.

The course, only one of its type being offered in Canada, is basically the interpretation of aerial photographs which can be applied to field or office use by surveyors or surveying draftsmen.

Interest in the new course by all firms and other companies engaged in survey and mapping work has led to consideration of the course being offered as an evening course to working surveyors and survey draftsmen, possibly next year.

Both first and second year students in the survey drafting course now are studying photogrammetry in a series of 25 lectures.

The national flag of the Republic of Ireland is a tricolor of green, white and orange.

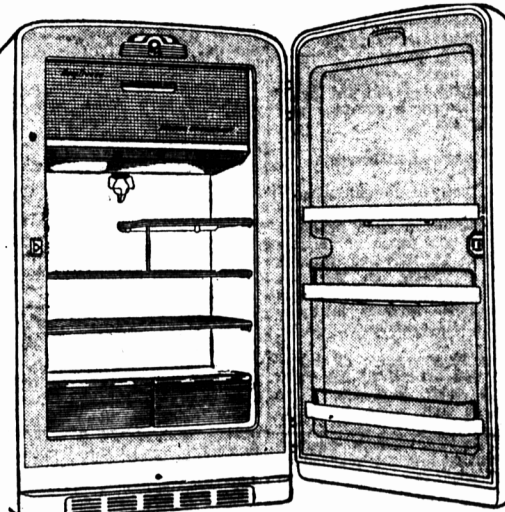


IT'S NOT MATCHLESS—Paris gendarme Georges Dusaussey displays a model of the famed Rouen Cathedral which he created of matchsticks. It took him three months to finish the masterpiece, which is currently on exhibit at the Police Art Show in Paris.

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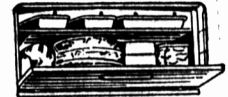
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