

Outpost In China

By Val Gielgud
Continued

"You mustn't mind if I seem a little strong and silent," he said smiling. "I've hardly said a word, except in Chinese for months. I know Janet and Pat here so darned well, we just sit and grunt at each other. You get like that in the wilds. But actually I'm more than glad to see you. It's more than one man's job, Tan Fu. At least it should be we could make a second Chunking of the place, if only the firm would give up decent support."

"That sounds fine," muttered Gerald Havelock.

Janet James got out of her chair, and said she must go. Suddenly she felt something wrong—something she didn't like about the atmosphere of the room. It was only as she left the verandah that she managed to comply with the custom of a lifetime and be quite honest with herself.

At that point she admitted that it was the sight of Sheila Havelock, lying so gracefully there in the long chair, her eyes sliding in appraisal from her husband to Leslie Dale and back again, which had disquieted her so furiously. It disquieted her the more because she felt she could not speak of her fears to her husband. Pat would probably drag in a quotation regarding the virtues of Charity.

She left a fairly awkward silence behind her.

"I think I could do with a bath and a change," said Sheila Havelock. "Will you show me the bathroom?"

Dale grinned.

"Whichever bedroom you choose, I'm afraid," he said. "Only tin—but quite big. Mrs. Havelock. I'll tell the boy to have some water heated right away."

"Thank you," said Sheila curtly. She walked across the room to the two doors of the guest-rooms and threw them open.

"I'll take this, Gerry," she said. "Bring my bags in, will you? I think this bed looks the better of the two."

"It is," said Dale quietly. Sheila Havelock's door closed behind her. With a slightly-embarrassed lopsided grin, Gerald went out to the verandah and returned with a battery of expensive-looking suit-cases and hat boxes. Three minutes later he came out of his wife's room, and found that Dale had brought in his own bags.

"Oh thanks," said Gerald hastily, and grabbed them. He retired hastily into the second room carrying the bags leaving Dale staring after him.

"It would seem," muttered Dale, "that there's a good deal to be said for not being married!"

He was refilling his pipe when Sheila reopened her door.

"I'd be grateful," she said. "If they'd hurry up that hot water!"

**CHAPTER III
BANDIT AT EASE**

It was little more than a week later. In a valley rather reminiscent of the celebrated Valley of Dry Bones, rimmed round by the jagged red hills which made up the northern horizon of Tan Fu, a tent had been pitched. In the shade of that tent's looped-up flap, a singular figure reclined at length in a deck-chair: the figure of the notorious Chinese bandit-general Wu-Tso-Ling. He was very stout, but so enormously broad in the shoulders that except in profile his fat was not specially remarked. Not that it ever was remarked in words. Wu was touchy on the point, and any reference would have led to most disagreeable consequences.

Except for the thin straggling moustache, there was little specifically oriental about Wu's face. Which was not altogether surprising considering that the general was not more than half Chinese. He had been born in Shanghai—but his mother had been a Russian cabaret girl, a refugee from Siberia; and he had been educated at an American University, and taken a degree in history. He might have been any age between thirty and fifty.

He wore a uniform of his own designing: an American officer's tunic, quaintly bedizened with a mass of gold lace and the flat gold-embroidered epaulettes of the old Russian Imperial Army, a round fur cap like a Cossack's, blue riding breeches with a wide crimson stripe down the sides, and soft leather boots with enormous silver Mexican spurs. His Sam Browne belt sustained the weight of a heavy holstered Mauser automatic-pistol, and an old-fashioned cavalry sabre with a silver hilt. He lay back in the long chair, sipping at a glass of cold tea, and smoking a thin Russian cigarette with a cardboard mouthpiece, a delightful illustration of repose and an easy conscience—unless you cared to look at his eyes. They were big, and amber-coloured, and most disquietingly restless eyes. They reminded you of a panther or a leopard behind bars in a Zoo.

In front of Wu was standing an obviously sacred Chinese, in shabby cloth trousers and a blue linen shirt, his shoulders stooped, his hands nervously clasped. He was one of Leslie Dale's servants, with the misfortune of never being able quite to make up his mind, which of two fears was the greater: his fear of his master, or his fear of Wu-Tso-Ling. In Tan Fu there was no doubt about it at all! There he feared Leslie Dale as much as he loved him. But among those barren hills, under the eyes of the general, and with a couple of the general's picturesque tall-fingered rifles negligently in the background, Ho Ping was not so sure.

Yet general drank more tea, set down his glass, spat the mouth-piece of his cigarette with exactitude between Ho Ping's feet, and crossed one spurred boot over the other. To be continued

New Annan and Vicinity

The Misses Ella and Irma MacNeill were visitors to Summerside on Tuesday.

Mr. Roland Clarke, New Annan, made a business trip to Summerside recently.

—Mrs. Arthur Enman, New Annan, has left on an extended visit to the States she plans on spending the winter months with her daughters, Margaret and Arlene.

Mr. Arthur Enman is spending the winter in Springfield, the guest of his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Lambie and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Croken and daughter Joan Emerald were

visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Allie McNeill, New Annan on Christmas night.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Schurman and daughters Myra and Judy of New Annan spent Christmas day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Rex Dawson, North Tryon.

Miss Irma MacNeill, Kinkora Convent, is spending the holidays at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Allie MacNeill, New Annan.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Curley, Clermont were recent visitors to New Annan.

Mr. Walter Coates spent the Christmas holiday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Al. Schurman of Travellers Rest.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hooper, Pownal, spent Christmas Day at the

home of their daughter and son-in-law Mr. and Mrs. Delbert Raynor, New Annan.

Miss Hazel Dawson spent a few days recently visiting friends and relatives in New Annan.

Mr. Lloyd Manderson, Sask., is spending the holidays at the home of his parents Mr. and Mrs. Harold Manderson, New Annan.

Mr. and Mrs. Francis Cole, New London, spent Christmas day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wall, New Annan.

Mr. Ingham Montgomery, New Annan, was a visitor at Summerside on Thursday.

Mr. Al. Schurman, Travellers Rest made a business trip to Summerside on Wednesday.

Mr. Talmadge Montgomery and

Mr. John Pillman of Travellers Rest made a business trip to Summerside on Thursday.

Strange But True

Continued from page 2

excommunication, the Turks imposed the death penalty for smoking and the Emperor of Russia ordered that tobacco users should have their noses slit, after which they were whipped and shipped off to Siberia. In spite of such severe measures the habit continued and spread until today tobacco is used in every part of the world.

Is there such a thing as wild silk? Yes, in the warmest districts of Manchuria, as well as in certain provinces of China proper, wild silk is obtained from caterpillars which feeds on oak leaves. From this silk are made the fabrics called pongee and tussah.

About \$4,000,000 worth of this silk is gathered annually. . . . The women no longer bind their feet in China, but the blue-bloods allow two or more fingernails to grow three inches long, protecting them from breaking with ornamental coverings of silver or gold. . . . Unesa was a highly prized drug in the pharmacopoeia until the 19th century. It was sold at all apothecary stores, it contained disgusting substances that had no medicinal value.

OTTAWA, Jan. 3 — (CP) — The annual convention of the Canadian Congress of Labor will be held at Vancouver opening Sept. 17. C. I. L. officials said today.

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Two years before the war of 1812 Henry Clay declared conquest of Canada could be accomplished by the Kentucky militia alone.

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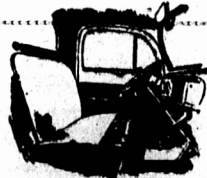
2 Mercury Trucks' improved "Loadomatic" Economy!
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The 1951 Mercury Truck line is designed to offer exactly the right truck for your job. Three great Mercury Truck engines, 9 series, 12 wheelbases. Optional axle ratios, 2-speed axles and many other features. The better your truck is fitted to do the work required, the more efficient, economical and durable it will be. Mercury Truck Dealers are trained and equipped to help you select the right truck, to help you make the greatest profit with the truck you buy. Call in at your Mercury Truck Dealer today. See the complete line of new models, the many new features . . . and select the right truck for your job

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Three Great Engines—All three of the 1951 Mercury Truck engines are V-type 8-cylinder! They range up to 145 horsepower and 255 ft. lbs. torque. They are designed to give you plenty of reserve power when you need it, to move your loads with greater ease and greater economy, to give maximum trouble-free operation.



Custom and Standard Cabs—Mercury Trucks now offer a Custom Cab as well as a Standard Cab. Both have fume and dust sealing, dual windshield wipers, wide 3 foot rear window, pushbutton starter, throttle control on dash. Custom Cab has sponge rubber seat cushion, soundproofing, special upholstery and trim, twin horns; many other features.



steering Column Gearshift—Gearshift on the steering column is another new feature on the light Mercury M-1, 1/2 ton models. It means extra convenience in light-truck driving, allows more floor loading space, provides additional room and greater comfort for passengers. Standard equipment on the M-1, 1/2 ton series.



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