

"CARIBBEAN LOOT"

By WHITMAN CHAMBERS

CHAPTER IX

WHEN I CAME up on the bridge that evening the Whipple was making 30 knots through an oily sea and the lights of Caimora were just rising over the horizon. Dick Hoffman strolled over to me.

"Well, Ray, it looks now as though it was just an ordinary robbery," he remarked. "The gold was stolen in the bank and those lead bars substituted. The plotter sank the Alderbaron so that the crime wouldn't be discovered. The only hitch in their plans came when the liner went down in shoal water. Your friend Capt. Huertas was evidently in on the plot. Naturally, he did his best to prevent the recovery of the phoney bullion. It strikes me that virtually everything is explained."

I shook my head impatiently. "On the contrary, Dick, everything has become more complicated. The engineering of this plot took careful planning, it took organization, it took self-sacrifice—as witness the man, Carretos possibly, who opened the Alderbaron's sea cocks."

"Look at it another way, Carretos must be at the bottom of this affair, because the gold passed through his hands. Now why would a man of his position mix into a sordid business like that? He has more money than he can ever possibly spend. I tell you, Dick, it isn't human nature for a man to risk his freedom, to sanction the murder of innocent people, to take part in such a horrible crime, solely to steal some gold which he actually cannot use. No, I tell you we've got to find some other motive, and a lot stronger motive than avarice."

"Well maybe Col. Baird will be able to figure it out," Hoffman suggested.

"That's what I'm counting on."

It was nine that evening when I arrived at the legation and was shown into the colonel's study. The minister shook hands eagerly.

"Well, what luck, lieutenant?"

"Bad luck, I guess you'd call it, colonel. The gold bullion which the Alderbaron was carrying turned out to be lead."

"We blew the safe and brought up two bars. They were nicely sacked and all that, but they were bars of lead."

Colonel Baird did not say anything for a while. Then he turned abruptly to the telephone, called a number in a brisk voice and held a brief conversation. He rose.

"Come, lieutenant, President

WHEN THE BIG COMET USHERS IN CHRISTMAS

Fascinating scientific article telling about a new comet, the size of Halley's, that is rushing toward the earth, the effect it will have on superstitious persons and an explanation by those who study the stars. Don't miss this feature in the November 10th issue of

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Sazardi wishes to see us immediately."

The president of Andegoya was a little man with thick white hair and long white mustaches. Though he was only 60, the care of the state had rested heavily on his shoulders and he looked worn and tired and old beyond his years.

I told my story, briefly and to the point, and President Sazardi did not once interrupt me. When I had finished, the president sat motionless for a long time, drumming nervously on the arms of his chair. Finally he sighed and rose slowly to his feet.

"It is too bad," he said regretfully. "I have always liked the boy, always believed that he had a great future, a future of service to our country. And now—well—"

He shrugged expressively and turned to a uniformed attendant who stood near the door. He spoke rapidly in Spanish. The man saluted and dashed out of the room. The president turned back to Baird and me.

"I personally am going to place Francisco Carretos under arrest. Do you gentlemen wish to accompany me?"

"I do, sir," I spoke up quickly.

"I'd like to see this thing through to the finish."

"Colonel Baird?"

"Yes, indeed, Your Excellency. But now that you speak of it—"

let me see. What was it Mildred told me this evening? Oh yes, Carretos was giving some sort of a dinner party aboard his yacht. It seems I recall that she was invited. Yes, I remember very well now. They were to have dinner on the yacht and then go for a short cruise outside the harbor. It was to be a very informal dinner, Mildred said, just something to get their minds off the terrible experience they had been through."

"Sazardi's black piercing eyes narrowed and his lips formed in a mirthless grin. "Senior Carretos will go through just one more terrible experience," he said grimly.

"Come gentlemen."

Two automobiles loaded with soldiers preceded us as we drove at breakneck speed through the narrow streets to the waterfront. The president's trim speedboat was awaiting us with engines idling. We climbed in, a dozen soldier at our heels. The boat swung away from the pier and headed out into the harbor.

Then I swore shortly. "My lord, sir!" I cried. "The Liberatad is gone!"

"Gone!" the president exclaimed. "You are certain?"

I was certain. For two years I had watched the harbor from my window in the club and I knew the anchorage of every ship in it.

"Of course!" I said bitterly.

"The Juarto came back and told Carretos that the jig was up. The gunboat must have got in just before we did. She left a couple of hours ahead of us, but we came back at 30 knots."

Sazardi swore mildly in Spanish. "You are a seafaring man, sir. What do you suggest?"

"I suggest that we get aboard the Whipple as fast as this boat will take us there. The anchor watch may have seen which way the Liberatad went after she got outside the heads. Of course, she'll run without lights. It's a hundred to one we'll never be able to pick her up, but it looks like our only chance."

Dick Hoffman, it developed, had himself watched the Liberatad pull her anchor and steam out of the harbor. Not knowing that the yacht belonged to Carretos, he had paid her little heed. He had noticed, however, that her running lights and masthead light had been switched off immediately she had cleared the heads.

"How long ago did she shove off?" I asked quickly.

"Half an hour, I should say."

I looked hopelessly at the little group of men in the wardroom. Half an hour! A start of nearly 10 miles! I felt suddenly weak and helpless, and my own feelings were reflected in the faces of the men around me.

Col. Baird looked dazed; he seemed to know that his daughter, whether willingly or otherwise, was still aboard the Liberatad.

The president's face was flushed; I knew the dynamic little man was seething with important anger. Hoffman stood shifting from one foot to the other, anxious to do something, but not knowing what to do. Behind him stood the other officers of the destroyer, silent, eager, excited by the swift drama that had entered their normally monotonous routine.

It was one of the junior officers who offered a possible solution to the problem. "Look here, captain," he cried suddenly. "How long do you figure the wake of a ship remains visible on a calm sea?"

Hoffman started. So did I. "By the god's!" Dick cried. "On a calm, oily sea a ship's wake might remain visible for a good hour. If we can pick up that yacht's wake—"

He was out of the wardroom and

on his way to the bridge.

With her searchlights focused on the mirror-calm sea ahead, her forced draft blowers roaring, the Whipple shot out of the harbor like a lean grayhound on the trail of a rabbit. A quarter of a mile beyond the heads we picked up the Liberatad's wake, a streak of dull water leading straight eastward across the shining expanse of oily sea.

"Hard right!" Dick Hoffman ordered. "Rudder amidships... Steady as you go."

The destroyer swung onto the yacht's track. For 20 minutes that dull streak on the glassy ocean bore due east. Then it swung sharply to starboard.

Hoffman chuckled. They've spotted us," he remarked elatedly. "They're trying to zig-zag and throw us off the track. They haven't a chance."

Ten minutes later our searchlights picked up the fleeing yacht. Carretos must have realized then the game was up, for he switched on his lights and hove to. Hoffman skillfully brought the destroyer alongside the Liberatad and a group of us leaped onto the yacht's deck. I caught sight of Carretos on the bridge.

The Andegoyan was standing quietly. There was a saturnine smile on his lips as he watched me coming toward him. He spoke calmly and not without a certain grudging admiration.

"The Lieutenant Leslie again! You have done well, Sir, I salute you. Adios!"

As coolly as though he were diving into a swimming tank, Carretos jumped to the rail, poised for an instant and then dove clearly into the sea. A little trail of phosphorescence marked the path of his body through the water. Down, down, down—he never came up.

The president's soldiers found a group of white-faced frightened men in the yacht's cabin. Nine men and a lone woman, Mildred Baird. Some of the plotters were high in their country's service. Others like Pedro Gonzales, one-time servant in the American Club, held no official position in the republic.

An hour later Mildred and I stood in the shadow of the chart house as the Whipple steamed back to Caimora.

"Did you know," I asked, "that Carretos might flee the country when you went aboard his yacht tonight?"

"What do you think?" she asked.

"I'm not thinking. I'm asking."

"You're such a fool, Ray Leslie," she said impatiently. And then added briefly: "Carretos lied to get me there. He told me there would be others—other women."

"But you must have suspected there was something fishy somewhere."

"Of course I did. I suspected at General Rice's ball."

"And that's why you been playing up to Carretos?"

"Naturally. Were you silly enough to think I might be in love with the man?"

"Well—I—"

She sounded like a teacher explaining a problem to a dull and disinterested child. "I was attracted by the aura of mystery and intrigue which seemed to surround him. So I cultivated him, played up to him. Why? Because I have a woman's curiosity and love of plotting and intrigue."

"I didn't suspect anything was seriously wrong until that night on the Alderbaron. He asked me if I knew how to put on a life belt, he even tried to show me. He seemed nervous and excited, apprehensive. I didn't know about the shipment of gold then. I didn't know anything except that some plot was afoot."

"Did he tell you—afterward—why he was aboard?"

"No. But I suspect he took passage at the last minute when he found I was sailing on her. He wanted to look after me when the ship went down."

"Very noble of him. Did some one else open those sea cocks?"

"Your little friend Pedro Gonzales, I learned tonight, was a stowaway on the Alderbaron."

"But what I can't understand," I said impatiently, "is why a man of Carretos' position and wealth should be mixed up in such a rotten plot."

"But surely, as a budding young diplomat, you know what was behind it."

"We'll skip the budding young diplomat. And I don't know what was behind it. Neither does your father."

"My father, Ray, has been asleep for 15 years. But you—"

"Let all that go. What's the low-down?"

"Well, Carretos was planning to jump over to the Liberal party and have himself elected president at the next election. While he held office with the Conservative administration he was working hand and glove with the Liberals."

"But that doesn't explain—" I began.

"Of course it does," Mildred interrupted. "It explains everything. That gold, you must surely know, was the final payment of a loan granted to Andegoya in the Taft administration. The money was used to good purpose, perhaps, but for 20 years the people of the re-

J. E. Whisenhunt Retires From Southern Railway, After Serving Thirty Years

J. E. (Dick) Whisenhunt, station agent, operator, on the the Murphy Branch of the Southern Railway, has retired, due to ill health, with a thirty year service record.

Mr. Whisenhunt began working with the Southern Railway at Hominy in May 1910 when he was 21 years of age. He also worked a short while at Nantahala and Whiting, then was sent to Whittier where he remained for twenty-one years. The last seven of his thirty years were spent at Hazelwood.

In Whittier he married Miss Frances Gibbs. Their children are: Harry Whisenhunt in the State University of Seattle Washington, Mrs. Sam Lane, of Hazelwood, J. E. Whisenhunt, Jr., in the

Casey Jones School of Aeronautics, Newark, N. J., and Earl Whisenhunt in the U. S. Navy, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Mr. Whisenhunt is the second oldest operator in the point of service on the Murphy Branch, J. C. Curtis, of Canton, being the oldest. For the past fifteen years he has been a Mason, having joined at Bryson City and moved his membership to Waynesville when he was transferred to Hazelwood. He is also a member of the Waynesville Methodist church.

Mr. Whisenhunt is the son of the late D. W. Whisenhunt, a prominent and influential citizen of Anderson, and lived his early life there.

CHURCHES

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE LESSON "Everlasting Punishment" will be the subject of the lesson-sermon at the American Legion home on Sunday morning at 11 o'clock. The Golden Text will be Proverbs 13:6, "Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way; but wickedness overcometh the sinner." The lesson-sermon will also include passages from the Christian Science textbook, Science and Health with key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH The Rev. R. P. Walker, Minister. The sermon Sunday will be the fourth in a series of I Peter; the book of Bible Mastery Month. The subject is: "The Righteous Shall Scarcely be Saved," I Peter 4:18. Sunday school 9:45, Wm Chambers, superintendent. Sermon 11. Christian Endeavor 7. Mid-week prayer Wednesday 1:30.

CRABTREE METHODIST CHURCH Rev. W. H. Neese, Pastor. Rev. W. H. Neese, pastor, will fill his regular appointments on Sunday, Nov. 3rd as follows: Finckers' Chapel, at 9:45 a. m. and Davis Chapel at 11 a. m.

FINES CREEK METHODIST CHURCH The Rev. J. T. Shackford, newly appointed pastor, announces that the services will be held at the regular hours in the charge on Sunday the 3rd.

GRACE CHURCH IN THE MOUNTAINS, EPISCOPAL Sunday school at 9:45. Regular 11 o'clock service will be held, and the new rector, Rev. R. E. MacBlaine, of Hilly Springs, Miss., will deliver the sermon.

CHURCH OF GOD, HAZELWOOD Beginning on Sunday, November the 3rd, a revival service will be conducted in this church by the Rev. Comme, of Steed, N. C. Services will be held each night at 7:15 for the next ten days or possible two weeks. The public is cordially invited to attend.

ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH Waynesville, every Sunday, 11:00 A. M. Canton, every 1st Sunday, 8:00 A. M. Franklin, 2nd and 4th Sunday, 3:00 A. M. Cherokee, every 3rd Sunday, 8:00 A. M. Murphy, every 5th Sunday, 7:00 A. M.

public have been groaning under the taxes that were levied to pay it back.

"There hasn't been any too much prosperity in the country anyway, and the people have been growing more and more discontented with the Conservative administration. The loss of the money, the realization that it would have to be collected and paid all over again, would have been the final straw that broke the camel's back. There would have been a tremendous political upheaval, possibly even a revolution. And Carretos would have ridden into the president's palace with colors flying. Do you understand now?"

"I'm beginning to," I admitted. "It wasn't the money Carretos wanted, then. He wanted merely to crystallize public sentiment against President Sazardi; by the loss of it."

"There you have it. Of course, though, Carretos wasn't averse to taking the money, too. The gold for which he had the lead bars substituted is aboard the Liberatad."

Mildred looking up at me smiling. "You know, Ray, I don't believe you would ever make a diplomat."

I put my arm around her and grinned. "Would you want to be the wife of a diplomat?"

"We-e-ell, I think I rather—" "Be the wife of a navy officer?" "Yes."

"Then that should make it unanimous." (The End).

DEATHS

MRS. IDA DIXON Last rites were held at 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon at the Oak Grove Baptist church for Mrs. Ida Dixon, 65, widow of the late John Dixon, who died on Monday night at her home in Crabtree township, following a long illness.

The Rev. Sam Hall, assisted by the Rev. Howard Hall pastor, conducted the rites. Burial was in Clarke's Chapel cemetery.

Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. Grady Overman, R. F. D. No. 1, Clyde, and Mrs. Clayton Wines, R. F. D. No. 1, Canton; two brothers, the Rev. Ira Rhinehart, R. F. D. No. 1, Clyde, and J. B. Rhinehart, Gaffney, S. C.; and two sisters, Mrs. Mary Ogle, Clifton, S. C., and Mrs. Artie White, Union, S. C.

WALTER MOORE RICH Funeral services were conducted on Thursday afternoon at the Maggie Baptist church for Walter Moore Rich, 25, who died at the Haywood County Hospital Tuesday afternoon. The Rev. C. D. Mehaffey officiated. Burial was in the Lowe cemetery.

Active pallbearers were: Willie Mehaffey, Robert Hosafook, Clifford White, Tom Carver, Ernest Carver, and Lester Bradshaw.

Mr. White was a native of the Maggie section of the county and had a wide family connection, and a large number of friends.

Surviving are his parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Rich, four brothers, John, Roy, Clifford, and Woodrow, all of Maggie, four sisters, Mrs. Leona Rathbone, of Salem, N. J., Mrs. Bessie Hosafook, of East Waynesville, Mrs. Mattie Mehaffey, and Mrs. Fannie Grant, of Maggie.

Normal pulse beats for adults per minute should be about 72; for old people about 67; babies 120 to 150.

Local Presbyterian Church Is Installing New Heating Plant

A new heating plant is stalled in the Waynesville Presbyterian church this week. Sloan, contractor.

According to the pastor, R. P. Walker, the work completed by Sunday, with regular services will be held.

PARK THEATRE

Thursday, Oct. 31 "FLOWING GOLD" with Pat O'Brien, John G. Francis Farmer

Friday, Nov. 1 "SOUTH OF THE PAGO" with Jon Hall, Victor M. len, F. Farmer.

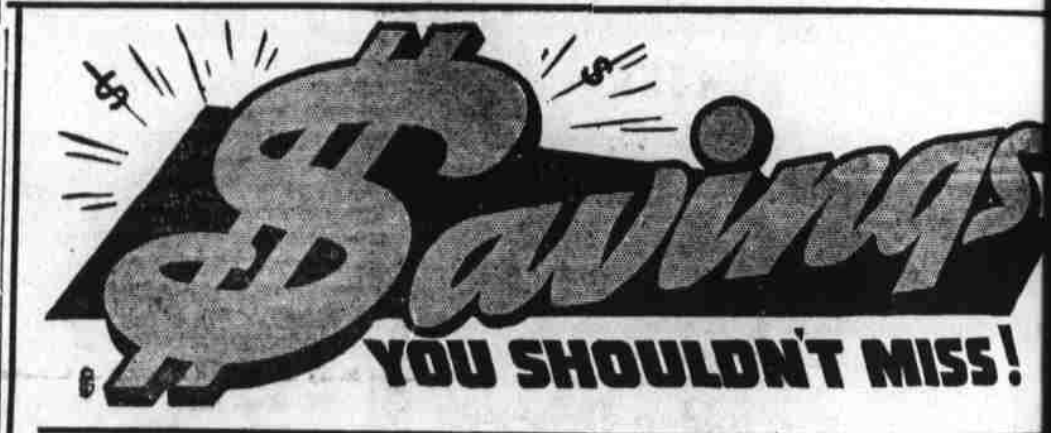
Saturday, Nov. 2 "STAGE TO CHINA" George O'Brien, Virginia

Owl Show, 10:30 P. M. "FATHER IS A PRO" with Grant Mitchell, N. J.

Sunday, Nov. 3 "MELODY AND MOONLIGHT" Johnny Downs, Vera V.

Mon. & Tues. Nov. 4 "BRIGHAM YOUNG" with Tryone Power, L. B. Donlevy.

Wednesday, Nov. 5 "I'M NOBODY'S SWEETHEART" H. Parrish, Dennis O'R.



Fresh Ground CORN MEAL	Green Giant Asparagus
10 Lb. 23c	All Green 23c
25 Lb. 55c	Coffee Santo 2 lbs.
Chocolate Covered CHERRIES	JFG Cel. bag, lb.
Pound 19c	Catsup 14-Oz. Bottle 10c
SALAD DRESSING	Del Maiz Cream Style Corn 10c
Quart Mary Mac ... 19c	Del Maiz Niblets Corn 13c
MAYONNAISE	25-Oz. Size Health Club Baking Powder 19c
Quart J. F. G. 33c	Toilet Paper Viking Tissue 3 for 13c
PEAS	Toilet Paper Scot Tissue 3 for 23c
April 2 for 25c	Bananas 4 lbs. 17c
Shower Green 15c	Pound Bag Marshmallows 2 for 25c
Giant 15c	5c Box SALT or Matches 3 for 10c
Meats BREAKFAST BACON	Lettuce Large Heads 2 for 15c
Black Hawk Pound 25c	Celery Large Stalk 2 for 15c
CURED HAMS 10 & 12 lb. Size Pound 21c	Waxed Rutabagars 3 lbs. 10c
MIXED SAUSAGE Per Pound 12 1/2c	
WIFFNERS Per Pound 16c	

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