

The DIVORCE COURT MURDER

By MILTON PROPPER

SYNOPSIS . . . Barbara Keith, wife of a prominent Philadelphia business man, is murdered as she waits alone in a side room to testify in the divorce case of Rowland vs. Rowland . . . She was to have testified for the husband a friend, who was defendant in the action . . . Detective Tommy Rankin is assigned to the case from police headquarters . . . His preliminary investigation disclosed that both Mr. and Mrs. Rowland had gathered evidence of the other's infidelity . . . The will of Mrs. Rowland's first husband directed her lawyer brother, Mr. Willard, to handle the estate until she remarried when the new husband was to come into control. Detective Rankin finds motives and the evidence of guilt for the murder of Mrs. Keith, leading to the doors of virtually all of the principals involved. These principals are, the two Rowlands, Mr. Willard, Mr. Keith, husband of the murdered woman, Hugh Campbell, paramour of Mrs. Rowland, and his underworld confederate. NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY.

TWELFTH INSTALLMENT

Wisely, Miss Edmond made no effort to deny the charge. "Where did you learn that?"

"From Harvey Willard, of course . . . an Mrs. Rowland," Rankin returned provocatively. "They informed me of your entire part in the collusion—how, as secretary, you agreed to pretend an affair with the husband. And how you climaxed the intrigue with the affair at the Inn." He smiled contemptuously.

As he intended, anger burned in the girl's eyes, as much directed against her erstwhile confederates as against his insinuating comments.

"They tell you that? But it was their plan. I had nothing to do with it and had no interest in it, until I innocently took the job as secretary."

"Just the same, you've conspired to betray justice and commit perjury under oath," the detective put in coldly.

Jill Edmond's resentment, increasing with her alarm, loosened her tongue.

"I wouldn't be a fool for them? She clenched her fists. "They may have told you a lot, but they left out even more. You haven't heard yet that they tried to double-cross Mr. Rowland. There was a woman he really loved, for whom he wasn't taking an affection; and they attempted to catch him with her—his real mistress."

"His real mistress? What do you mean—he was unfaithful, after all?"

"Yes, he had a mistress; and here is more news to surprise you." Miss Edmond spoke triumphantly. "They didn't tell you her name, either. Mr. Rankin it was Barbara Keith—Mrs. Mortimer Keith! It was with her, not me, that he went to the Sunset Inn, February first, to spend the night!"

"Mrs. Keith!" Rankin ejaculated. "Good heavens, how can that be possible?"

He could hardly credit his ears. He had expected information from the girl, but never, in his wildest speculations, such a startling, overwhelming revelation.

"To clear up this whole business for you, Mr. Rankin," she related, "I had better begin at the beginning. What they said about hiring me and planting the impression Allen and I had an affair is probably correct; they'd have no reason to be about that. Up to the day we chose for final discovery, everything went according to plan. It was arranged to catch us together, Thursday, February second; you know, as secretary, I had every Thursday off and usually spent it with Allen to increase suspicion. He was to write a note, making an appointment to meet me that night at eight o'clock in town. Mrs. Rowland would supposedly discover it, turn it over to her brother and Dorkin, and the three then would

watch our meeting. Then, to produce proofs of our relations, Allen and I were to drive to the Roadside Hotel, thirty miles out along the Lancaster Pike and there be trapped in a bedroom together."

The detective's face screwed into a baffled, uncomprehending frown.

"This was set for Thursday, the second? But according to Mr. Willard and the testimony," he objected, "the climax really was acted the day before, Wednesday, February first. And it took place at the Sunset Inn instead."

Jill Edmond smiled vindictively. "Yes, that's so; that is where the double-crossing comes in. The whole program was advanced one day by Mrs. Rowland's treachery in trying to drag Mrs. Keith into the scandal. She failed only because I was too much for her. At the hearing afterward, she couldn't prove anything against Mrs. Keith so she, Mr. Willard and Allen had to stick to the story they originally planned and change only the necessary minor details, such as the date and the scene. After all, so far as Dorkin was concerned, he witnessed on Wednesday substantially what we intended him to see on Thursday; and that was the evidence he offered."

Still Rankin wore a puzzled look.

"I'm afraid I don't follow at all, Miss Edmond. How can that be if Mrs. Keith went with Rowland to the Inn?"

"It's simple when you know the conversation I overheard Wednesday afternoon, February first," the girl returned. "I came downstairs in the Rowland home about three o'clock and heard Mrs. Rowland on the phone in the living room. She spoke to Mr. Willard, breathlessly and yet so plainly I couldn't help understanding; there was something joyful, almost wholly about her excitement. Curious, I slipped into the conservatory where I could listen still better. First, she said, 'My suspicions were right, after all, Harvey; I have proof at last. Allen is seeing that woman tonight. You refused to believe it when I insisted all this time she was his mistress, but now you'll have to admit it.' She then answered a question. 'Never mind how I found out; I'll tell you that when you arrive. Just be here with Dorkin—at nine o'clock at the corner of Jackson and Elder streets. Then she added, 'He has the audacity to meet her practically in front of my home! Now we won't have to wait for the faked meeting tomorrow night to prove he is faithless; tonight we'll catch him red-handed with his real mistress and have honest grounds for a divorce. And with that she hung up the receiver.'"

She paused, breathless at the vehemence of her own recital.

"So I had to get in touch with Allen and warn him of the trap. Only, I couldn't locate him; I went out and phoned his apartment several times, but in vain. My only hope was to be at the meeting place and if Allen arrived first, warn him and try to stop him. I hired a car, figuring I might need one if any traveling was to be done. At eight-thirty I parked near the corner, careful not to be observed; I watched Mrs. Rowland, Mr. Willard and that detective come at twenty to nine and hide nearby. Fifteen minutes later, Mrs. Keith walked up, and at exactly nine o'clock Allen picked her up."

"Since I could not signal Allen, I followed both cars to wait for a later chance. All the way to the Inn, I trailed him. At the Inn, I drove ahead and parked on the other side. But while Mr. Willard's crowd delayed until Allen and Mrs. Keith were well settled in their quarters, I acted. I could tell from the new light on the second floor, the location of their room. Without stopping to ask at the desk, I entered and went directly upstairs as I was an expected visitor. When I knocked at the door, there was a dead silence until I announced my name; then Allen opened it cautiously for me and let me in."

"Mrs. Keith was panic-stricken," the secretary proceeded dramatically, "half fainting and trembling in terror; she cried out about being ruined by the scandal. Allen had enough presence of mind to realize that he had to save the reputation of the woman he loved. He sent both of us into the bathroom to exchange clothes. Luckily, we were about the same size. Then I gave Mrs. Keith the key to my machine and Allen ordered her to drive back to the city immediately."

"Even so, she had hardly a moment to spare. As she stepped into

NOTICES OF SERVICE OF SUMMONS

on defendants specially named below in tax foreclosure suits for Watauga County, North Carolina:

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County Plaintiff, vs. Mrs. Chas. Lambeth and Husband, Mr. Chas. Lambeth, Defendants.
Defendants Mrs. Chas. Lambeth and husband, Mr. Chas. Lambeth, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lots Nos. 6, 7, 8, & 9 in Block "D", Subdivision of the Blowing Rock Development Co., Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the year 1928, of record in Deed Book 32, page 140, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of Mrs. Chas. Lambeth.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County Plaintiff vs. H. W. Harris and wife, Mrs. H. W. Harris, Defendants.
Defendant H. W. Harris and wife, Mrs. H. W. Harris, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of lands adjoining the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1929, 1930, 1931, & 1932, of record in Deed Book 30, page 5, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of H. W. Harris.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County Plaintiff vs. Thomas Gemmel and wife, Mrs. Thomas Gemmel, John Fox and The American Trust Company, Defendants.
Defendants Thomas Gemmel and

the hall, Mrs. Rowland, her brother and Dorkin were already climbing the stairs. To escape them, she had to slip into an open bathroom several doors down the corridor. Then she ran down to my car. She probably just missed meeting Mr. Keith on the way."

The girl flicked away her cigarette ash and shrugged her shoulders carelessly.

"The rest of the story must be fairly clear from the records of the hearing," she concluded. "Allen and I were well compromised by the interruption; we acted dismayed and guilty, precisely as it had all been planned for the next day. Though I almost spoiled it by laughing at Mrs. Rowland's rage and mortification and Mr. Willard's amazement. During the confusion, they searched the room, closets and bathroom for Mrs. Keith. Yet they had to carry out the scene, not daring to demand where she was or question the substitution. That would have given away their knowledge of the whole secret and admitted the collusion."

After a moment of deliberation, Rankin said:

"I suppose that covers all the ground, Miss Edmond, except for my original question. Do you think Mr. Keith went to the Inn because he suspected his wife would be there with Rowland?"

"Again he sensed in her that quick-wit."

"I'd say it was something like that."

"That's very important," Rankin returned gravely. "You had no reason to shield Mortimer Keith in this business had you?"

The girl looked startled. "Of course not, Mr. Rankin," she answered vehemently.

"You also failed to inform me," Rankin pointed out severely, that, on the afternoon of the murder, Mr. Keith visited the lawyers' offices. He arrived about when you did, two-thirty-five. You couldn't help seeing and recognizing him in the main office, yet you concealed that fact from me."

"Mr. Keith there?" Jill Edmond's attempt at surprise held a false note. "I swear I didn't know, Mr. Rankin. I neither saw him come in or leave."

At the sudden inspiration that occurred to him at that instant, Rankin shook his head savagely.

"Perhaps I can suggest a better reason why you wanted to protect him; you found it profitable to tell him the truth."

The secretary's eyes widened, with terror.

"That is called blackmail, Miss Edmond," he went on, "a much graver offense than obstructing justice. You threatened to make public Mrs. Keith's infidelity unless it was made worth your while not to."

"No, no, that isn't what happened at all!" Jill Emon's alarmed cry interrupted. "I had done him a service he would appreciate; at the cost of my character, I had saved his wife's honor and his from public disgrace. Surely it wasn't too much for me to expect some . . . reward."

"And in that way, profit at both ends for the same thing," Rankin declared curtly. "I want to see him as soon as I got Allen to admit who he was. And he was perfectly willing to let me have the money."

Abruptly the detective rose, his mouth grim and ominous.

"Miss Edmond," he warned her, "this is your only chance; hold your tongue and be prepared to testify to his knowledge when called to do so."

"Yes, yes, Mr. Rankin," Jill Edmond promised only too fervently. "And thank you; you can depend on me not to breathe a word to anyone."

Rankin's faith in Barbara Keith was destined to receive an even more severe strain that very night when he reached the Central Detective Bureau.

(Continued Next Week)

wife, Mrs. Thomas Gemmel, John Fox and The American Trust Company, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of lots Nos. 83 & 84, in Mayview Park, Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1927 & 1932, of record in Plat Book 25, page 163 & Deed Book 27, pages 527 & 530, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of Thomas Gemmel.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga county, Plaintiff vs. Forrest Eskridge and wife, Mrs. Eskridge, Defendants.
Defendants Forrest Eskridge and wife, Mrs. Eskridge see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lot No. 69 as shown in the Mayview Manor property, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the year 1927, of record in Deed Book 25, page 163, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of Forrest Eskridge.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. J. Carl Wolfe and wife, Mrs. J. C. Wolfe, C. A. Critcher and wife, Mrs. C. A. Critcher, Defendants.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lot No. 58, in Mayview Park, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the year 1930, of record in Deed Book 37, page 373, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of J. Carl Wolfe.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. M. W. Dixon and wife, Mrs. M. W. Dixon, David J. Craig and wife, Mrs. David J. Craig, Defendants.
Defendants M. W. Dixon and wife, Mrs. M. W. Dixon, David J. Craig and wife, Mrs. David J. Craig, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of lots 11, & 12 in Block "C" in Subdivision No. 2 of the Blowing Rock Development Company, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the year 1930, of record in Deed Book 32, page 27, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of M. W. Dixon.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. A. W. Dula, Estate Defendants.
Defendant Mr. A. W. Dula, estate see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of tract of land containing 7 acres, more or less, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the year 1932, of record in Deed Book 34, page 270, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of A. W. Dula, estate.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. J. M. Deaton and wife, Mrs. J. M. Deaton, J. A. Deaton and wife, Mrs. J. A. Deaton, Defendants.
Defendants J. M. Deaton and wife, Mrs. J. M. Deaton, J. A. Deaton and wife, Mrs. J. A. Deaton, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of lots Nos. 18, 19, 20, & 21 in Block "E" of the A. S. Abernethy Subdivision, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1931 & 1932, of record in Deed Book 38, page 108, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of J. M. Deaton.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. E. T. Beatty and wife, Mrs. E. T. Beatty, Defendants.
Defendants E. T. Beatty and wife, Mrs. E. T. Beatty see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on tract of land bounded on the east by W. A. Merchant; on the south by Ranson Street; on the west by Merchant; on the north by Merchant; and conveyed to said E. T. Beatty, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1927, 1928, 1930, 1931, & 1932, of record in Deed Book 24, page 238, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of E. T. Beatty.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff, vs. George Burnett and wife, Blanche L. Burnett, R. L. Greene, G. T. Burnett Jr., T. T. Horne, Trustee, and John H. Daniel, and Town of Blowing Rock, Leinholder, Defendants.
Defendants George Burnett and wife, Blanche L. Burnett, R. L. Greene, G. T. Burnett Jr., T. T. Horne, Trustee, and John H. Daniel, and Town of Blowing Rock, Leinholder, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lots Nos. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, & 17 Block "E" of the A. S. Abernethy property, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1929, 1930, 1931 & 1932, of record in Deed Book 36, page 21, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in name of George Burnett.

The Duke Power Company has completed a 15-mile rural electric line from Hillsboro to Cedar Grove in Orange county.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. F. A. Earnest and wife, Mrs. F. A. Earnest, Defendants.
Defendant F. A. Earnest and wife, Mrs. F. A. Earnest see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of tract of land containing 595 acres, more or less, in Bald Mt. T. S., for unpaid County taxes for the years 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, & 1932, of record in Deed Book 21, page 59, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in name of F. A. Earnest.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. June Page and Husband, Defendants.
Defendants June Page and husband see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of lots Nos. 8, 9, 10, & 11, in Block "G", Subdivision No. 2, of the Blowing Rock Development Co., in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1929, 1930, 1931, & 1932, of record in Deed Book 334, page 552, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of June Page.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. J. H. Linebarger and Wife, Mrs. J. H. Linebarger, Defendants.
Defendants J. H. Linebarger and wife, Mrs. J. H. Linebarger see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lots Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 13, in Block "A" Subdivision No. 2, of the Blowing Rock Development Co. in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1928, 1931, & 1932, of record in Deed Book 32, page 106, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of J. H. Linebarger.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. M. L. Woodring, Estate, Defendants.
Defendant M. L. Woodring, estate, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure of land conveyed to M. L. Woodring by Edmund Blackburn, Dec. 6, 1865, in Meat Camp T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1929, 1930, 1931, & 1932, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of M. L. Woodring, estate.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. A. O. Orvis and wife, Mrs. A. O. Orvis and Homer W. Orvis and wife, Mrs. Homer W. Orvis, Defendants.
Defendants A. O. Orvis and wife, Mrs. A. O. Orvis, and Homer W. Orvis and wife, Mrs. Homer W. Orvis, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lots Nos. 1, 70, 71 & 72, of the Mayview Manor Division, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the year 1932, of record in Deed Book 40, page 199, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of A. O. Orvis.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. T. H. Coffey & J. H. Deal, Admr. of Estate of W. L. Alexander, G. M. Suddreth, G. E. Bryan and J. W. Whisnant, Trustee, Defendants.
Defendants J. H. Deal, admr. of estate of W. L. Alexander, G. E. Bryan and J. W. Whisnant, trustee, see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on the Mayview Manor property in Blowing Rock, in Blowing Rock T. S., for the unpaid county taxes for the year 1928, of record in Deed Book 36, page 640, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in name of T. H. Coffey.

NOTICE OF SERVICE
Watauga County, Plaintiff vs. J. M. Deaton & Sons, Defendants.
Defendant J. M. Deaton & Sons see notice hereafter set out.
Subject matter of the above action: Foreclosure on lots Nos. 7 & 8, in the R. L. Fox Subdivision, in Blowing Rock T. S., for unpaid county taxes for the years 1931 & 1932, of record in Deed Book 39, page 279, in the Registry of Watauga county. Listed in the name of J. M. Deaton.

MENTHO-MULSION
MUST STOP YOUR COUGH
OR THIS STORE WILL
REFUND YOUR MONEY
NOW ONLY 75¢

WATAUGA DRUG STORE

FB ALL-WEATHER
43% MORE MILES OF REAL
NON-SKID SAFETY, at no extra cost!

GOOD YEAR
THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR TIRES

PATHFINDER		SPEEDWAY	
4.40-21	\$6.05	4.40-21	\$5.20
4.50-21	6.65	4.50-21	5.70
4.75-19	7.05	4.75-19	6.05

Prices subject to change without notice. State sales tax additional.

GUARANTEED
IN WRITING . . .
against road injuries and defects

GOOD YEAR

—Get Our Prices On Winter Accessories—
Automobile Heaters, as low as . . . \$5.95
Prestone, Alcohol, & Anti-Freeze Solutions

VERIFIED LUBRICATION SERVICE, Genuine Alemite Lubricants, 75c . . . Complete Line of Premium Motor Oil, Quaker State, Pennzoil and Kendall . . . Parts and Accessories for all Cars . . . Steam Auto Laundry . . . Retreading and Vulcanizing . . . **FREE ROAD SERVICE**. Day and Night Service! **IF YOU WANT TIRE BARGAINS, GET OUR PRICES BEFORE YOU BUY!**

We have just installed the latest up-to-date Full Circle Re-Treading Equipment and can **REPAIR** your Tires in the most approved method.

HODGES TIRE CO.
GOODYEAR TIRES
Free Road Service Boone, North Carolina

CRAZY
Water Crystals

\$1.50 PACKAGE, now . . . \$1.00
\$1.00 PACKAGE, now . . . 60c

BOONE DRUG CO.
The REXALL Store

THE REINS-STURDIVANT BURIAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
TELEPHONE 24 . . . BOONE, N. C.
PROTECTION FOR THE FAMILY
Joining Fee 25c Each Member . . . Dues Thereafter As Follows:

	Quarter	Yearly	Benefit
One to Ten Years	.10	.40	\$5 00
Ten to Twenty-nine Years	.20	.80	100.00
Thirty to Fifty Years	.40	1.60	100.00
Fifty to Sixty-five Years	.60	2.40	100.00

..NIGHT COUGHS

Quickly Checked
..inducing Restful Sleep

Just rub on **VICKS** VapoRub

RELIEVES COLDS WITHOUT "DOSING"

Camels never get on your Nerves

I CAN SMOKE ALL I WANT BECAUSE I SMOKE CAMELS THEY DON'T UPSET MY NERVES

I SMOKE A GREAT DEAL TOO. I PREFER CAMELS BECAUSE THEY DON'T MAKE MY NERVES JUMPY, AND I LIKE THEIR FLAVOR BETTER.

YOU'LL LIKE THEIR MILDNESS TOO!

FRANK BUCK
Wild Animal Collector

SECRETARY
Elizabeth Harben

CAMELS Costlier Tobaccos