

**MURDER MAKES A HERO**  
By ELLIOTT FILLION  
WRITTEN FOR AND RELEASED BY CENTRAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

Moving into the large household of Captain Cary Essex II as secretary to the old patriarch's grandson, young Cary, Nancy Deane soon discovers a strange atmosphere of antagonism over the possession of the household of young Cary's father, but not until the grand old patriarch, Captain Essex, opens the old sea chest of the family to help in settling the grand old patriarch's estate, only to discover that the chest of young Cary's father has been emptied.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE SIGHT of that empty chest brought back the wave of fear which once before had thrilled through my body. Muttered words, uneasy movements and quick steps forward or back, plainly showed the surprise of each member of the family at the unexpected sight.

Not a paper, not a tattered shred of anything remained within the chest. It was as clean as though swept by the proverbial new broom. Only bare discolored boards met each person's searching gaze.

The old captain's fragile form was still supported by Cary's strong arm. After the heartbreak previously revealed by the captain's words, "I did not open his chest, I couldn't, and I never thought to do so," I feared to see him collapse under this sudden blow. But Captain Cary Essex II was made of sterner stuff. He rallied and spoke in an even stronger voice than usual, although it held a pathetic note:

"Gone, all gone! My son's papers—"

Gently Cary guided him to a chair.

"Sit down, Granddad. There must be some explanation for this." His voice was consoling, although surprise and dismay colored the tone.

From him I glanced across the tense group. Mrs. Gould's face expressed blank amazement mingled with active concern for her father. She had hastened to his side, and now stood with her hand resting on his shoulder, her eyes anxiously scanning his face.

Next her stood Horace Rand. His smug expression riveted my gaze. Could it be satisfaction he was feeling? He looked up and caught my eye. Across his features swept a black scowl which, as he looked away, changed quickly to mere friendly interest.

The conversation I had overheard last night flashed into my mind. I was suspicious that that old buzzard knew more than he would care to admit about that empty chest. Whatever the undercurrent of mystery overhanging the Essexes might be, he was in it. I was convinced of that.

I looked for Miss Althea. She was not in the room. Whether she had been among us when we entered or not, I did not know. I had not noticed her and she might have been there; all my attention at that time was directed toward the captain and the chests.

She was the only one who objected to Cary's look, to my presence. Might she not, with the connivance of the detestable Horace, have removed the papers? Why didn't someone do something, anything, rather than stand here idly surveying the empty chest?

It wasn't for me to voice my vague suspicions. Only a secretary, a new one at that, my role must, of necessity, be a strict minding of my own business.

A moving figure glimpsed from the corner of my eye attracted my attention. I turned my head. Mark Gould was noiselessly slipping from the room. His expression baffled me. Could I have been misjudging Horace Rand and Miss Althea? Could Mark know anything about the missing contents of the chest?

He wasn't, nor when Captain Essex III was lost on the Titanic. Kaye had told me he was just past his twenty-first birthday, two years younger than she was. No old secret, scandalous or otherwise—I was certain there was something of the sort from Miss Althea's interrupted use of the



"Sit down, Granddad. There must be some explanation for this"

word "expos—"—could be known to him.

That frank, honest face, those clear, guileless eyes, could never hide a shameful secret. I was barking up the wrong tree. The guilty feline wasn't crouching there.

"That chest was filled when it was put into the attic. I know it was!" Captain Essex's voice drew me from my musing.

"What in the dickens became of the things, then?" Cary demanded, and Proctor Rand's voice echoed:

"What?"

I looked across the room at him. On his face was what I thought to be honest bewilderment. Whatever his father might be doing, Proctor certainly was not implicated. Only a very clever actor—and I didn't think him that—could so accurately depict the amazement we were feeling.

"God only knows!" The broken accents wrung my heart. The captain was too old to stand much of this sort of thing.

From Proctor I glanced at his sister. She was the picture of well-bred sympathy. Thick, drooping lids veiled her eyes. I watched to see what they lifted, would reveal.

I had not long to wait. And once more I was all at sea. Dismal, arrogant, unfeeling, lighted her glorious green-blue eyes. Disdain for what? Could it be not only for the scene as a whole, but for the gullibility of the family whose hospitality she was at that moment accepting?

It was beyond me. My gaze wandered on to Kaye and Janet. The latter stood erect and calm; Kaye leaned tremblingly against her. Those two could instantly be dismissed from suspicion. The scene on the Captain's Walk convinced me of that.

Janet was devoted to her brother. Anything she might do would be to help, not to hinder, his work. Kaye, younger, of more volatile type than her cousin, had shown by her words after Janet's reproach that she, too, would stand by Cary's side.

"You said, Granddad, that you had never opened the chest. How can you be so sure that it was not empty when you had it placed in the attic?"

Cary's voice was deferential, but it failed to placate the old captain. The cane still clutched in the frail, knotted fingers, rapped out its angry denunciation of such imbecility.

"Don't be a fool, boy," snapped out his grandfather. "I helped put that chest in the attic. Ask Jabez."

He'll tell you the same."

"I did not intend to criticize your word, sir," Cary promptly returned. "I merely asked how you could be sure, but as you handled it yourself, you know."

The glare in the captain's eyes softened. A wry smile twisted his mouth.

"If you'd handled a sea chest as many times as I have, you'd know whether it was empty or loaded!"

"Then—" Cary's voice took on a more portentous note, "someone must have taken the contents while the chest was in the attic."

"Impossible!" The captain was positive. "I had the lock changed on that attic door after I found Althea trying to get into it."

"Althea?"

"Mrs. Gould's, Cary's, Kaye's and Janet's voices held varying notes of surprise and dismay.

"Yes—Althea? Where is she?"

"When I left her, she said she was about to retire." Horace Rand's smooth tone supplied the information.

A brief silence fell; then, Cary asked:

"Granddad, did you say Jabez helped you put the chest in the attic?"

"Yes."

"And he and Mark brought it down tonight. Jabez should know if it were as heavy as when he helped put it there."

"I can't see how that will help us, but call him and ask," grumbled the captain.

Cary stepped across the room and pulled the bell rope. Jabez must have been just outside the door, for he immediately appeared.

"Jabez, was that chest," Cary pointed to its gaping emptiness, "heavy or light when you and my cousin brought it down from the attic tonight?"

"Heavy, sir."

"You're sure of that?"

"I am, sir. 'Twas the heaviest of the three and Master Mark spoke of how the things laid around in it when we brought it."

"Then," Cary turned to his grandfather, "the things were taken from it since it was in this room."

"But who—who—" gasped the captain.

"Aunt Althea. She's the only one who—"

Cutting across his words from somewhere came a voice raised high in a torrent of hate.

"You young whelp! What business have you—"

(To Be Continued)

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ty-odd years you have been an incessant torment to me. I warn you, my patience is completely exhausted. Tomorrow morning I shall begin inquiries for a suitable place to put you. Have you under my roof any longer, I will not."

I pitied the poor old captain. Every particle of color was gone from his face; his voice, so loud and clear at the beginning of his speech, at the end was husky and barely above a whisper. But it was Miss Althea in whom the most surprising change was worked.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AT THE sound of that high-pitched voice, every one of us was startled into unnatural stillness. Cary, interrupted by the words, "You young whelp! What business have you—" stood for a second or two in silence, before dryly conceding:

"I think that proves my contention."

His last word was scarcely uttered when Mark's voice broke across Miss Althea's now unintelligible tirade.

"Somebody come quick! Through the door under the stairs, she's locked the other one!"

"Go, go!" Captain Essex fairly pushed Cary, who promptly raced away.

Janet and Kaye followed. Kaye stretched out her hand and caught mine as they passed, I yielded to her imperative tug and rushed along with them, grateful for her compelling clasp, for my curiosity was at white heat.

Out the door we dashed, down the hall to the stairs, through a door beneath them which, I had supposed led into a closet, through an alcove, into Miss Althea's room. The scene before us I shall not soon forget.

Miss Althea, her last remnant of dignity gone, was struggling wildly against Cary's restraining grasp, while Mark, on his knees, was pulling papers and books from the barely smoldering fire.

She had defeated her own purpose. By fleeing too much onto the low fire, she had smothered it, the one thing which saved from destruction the papers she now was struggling to regain.

Cary's face was grim. Mark's bore a broad smile. For all his aunt's frenzied jerks from the digs and dabs at Cary, it was to Mark her furious denunciation still was directed. A fact which amused him mightily.

"What is the meaning of this?" The captain, with Mrs. Gould's assistance, was crossing the room. Bang, bang, bang! The thumping of the cane, his words uttered in a loud, commanding tone—anger had renewed his waning strength—cowed Miss Althea. Her struggles ceased; her voice died into silence.

No one spoke. As clearly as though I had witnessed it, I knew that Mark had caught his aunt attempting to burn the papers, the last of which he now drew from the fire and laid upon the hearth.

"Answer me!" Thump went the cane. The captain moved nearer his daughter, raised his cane and brandished it in her face. Although he had ordered her to speak, he did not wait for her to reply.

"Althea Essex, for the last twenty-

odd years you have been an incessant torment to me. I warn you, my patience is completely exhausted. Tomorrow morning I shall begin inquiries for a suitable place to put you. Have you under my roof any longer, I will not."

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"Althea Essex, for the last twenty-

NOTICE. Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of Mrs. Nora B. Finch, deceased, late of Vance County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned, on or before the 14th day of December, 1941, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to this estate will please make immediate payment.

NOTICE OF SALE OF CAR CAUGHT IN THE ACT OF WHISKY. The undersigned will offer for sale at the courthouse door by public auction on the 13th day of January, 1941, at 12 O'clock, in Henderson, N. C. for cash one 32 Model Ford Car, Serial No. Motor No. AA-5990876.

NOTICE. I have this day qualified before the Clerk of the Superior Court of Vance County, North Carolina, as Administrator of the Estate of my husband, the Late C. T. Evans, and this is to notify all persons holding claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before one year from this date or this notice will be pleaded in bar of any recovery. Persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate settlement.

MRS. JENNIE EVANS, Administrator of the Estate of C. T. Evans. J. P. & J. H. Zollcoffer, Attorneys. 23-30-7-14-21-28

NOTICE. Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of Eugene T. Hicks, deceased, late of Vance County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned, on or before the 6th day of December, 1941, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to this estate will please make immediate payment.

FRANK HICKS, Administrator of Estate of Eugene T. Hicks. Gholson & Gholson, Attorneys for Administrator. 6-13-20-27-3-10

NOTICE. Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of E. J. Wells, deceased, late of Vance County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned, on or before the 6th day of December, 1941, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to this estate will please make immediate payment.

ELLA WELLS, Administrator of the Estate of E. J. Wells, deceased. Gholson & Gholson, Attorneys for Administrator. 6-13-20-27-3-10

NOTICE. Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of Marcus Woodlief, deceased, late of Vance County, this is to notify all persons having claims against the said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned, on or before the 6th day of December, 1941, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to this estate will please make immediate payment.

T. C. WOODLIEF, Administrator of Estate of Marcus Woodlief, deceased. Gholson & Gholson, Attorneys for Administrator. 6-13-20-27-3-10

NOTICE. Default having been made in the payment of those bonds secured by that deed of trust dated the 9th day of July, 1933, executed by Miss M. Elizabeth Brame, duly recorded in Vance County Registry in Book 196 at page 484, and at the request of the holder thereof, the undersigned Trustee will offer for sale and sell to the highest bidder, for cash, at the Courthouse door in Henderson, North Carolina, on Monday, January 6, 1941, at 12 o'clock noon, the following described real tract of land containing 100 acres, more or less, known as the Mrs. Maggie Estes property, bounded as follows:

By C. S. Burroughs, H. W. Longmire, et al. It being the same land purchased by Miss Elizabeth Brame from Charles P. Brame, et al. by deed recorded in Book 154, at page 99, Vance County Registry, and a part of which she inherited. It being also the land which belonged to the Late Mrs. Maggie Estes, a part of which Mrs. Estes inherited from her mother, Margaret Burton and a part of which she purchased from her brother, Robert Burton.

**New Parole And Probation Legislation Frowned Upon**

Daily Dispatch Bureau. In the Sir Walter Hotel. By HENRY AVERILL.

Raleigh, Dec. 21.—There will be introduced in the 1941 General Assembly a "uniform enabling act for the Interstate Parole and Probation Compact", but unless the two Tar Heel commissioners most concerned work up more enthusiasm than they now exhibit, it will not get much further along the road to enactment.

In fact, it might not even be introduced.

The legislation's laudable purpose is to establish full cooperation between states in the supervision and control of parolees and probationers living outside the jurisdiction in which they are paroled or placed on probation. It has been adopted and the resultant compact signed by 34 states.

Both Parole Commissioner Edwin Gill and Probation Commissioner Harry Sample are in sympathy with the ideal of every state cooperating with every other in parole and probation work; but neither is convinced that the so-called "compact" by any means brings about that degree of cordiality which is devoutly to be sought.

are just more or less uninterested. They have systems of reciprocal supervision which seem to be working out all right and they see no particular reason to change them.

**Big Business Fears Sales Tax Changes**

(Continued From Page One)

tures for all manner and sorts of projects; but none of them is as likely to be approved as are those listed.

Summing up, then, big business sees as assured an increase of \$1,600,000 in spending and minimum decrease in revenue of \$1,200,000; which two items add up to a \$3,000,000 spread from a budget assumed to be balanced under the financial status quo.

That would be enough to cause no little fear and trembling; but when the additional possible spread is considered, it is easy to see why the business folks are all a-twitch and a-twitter.

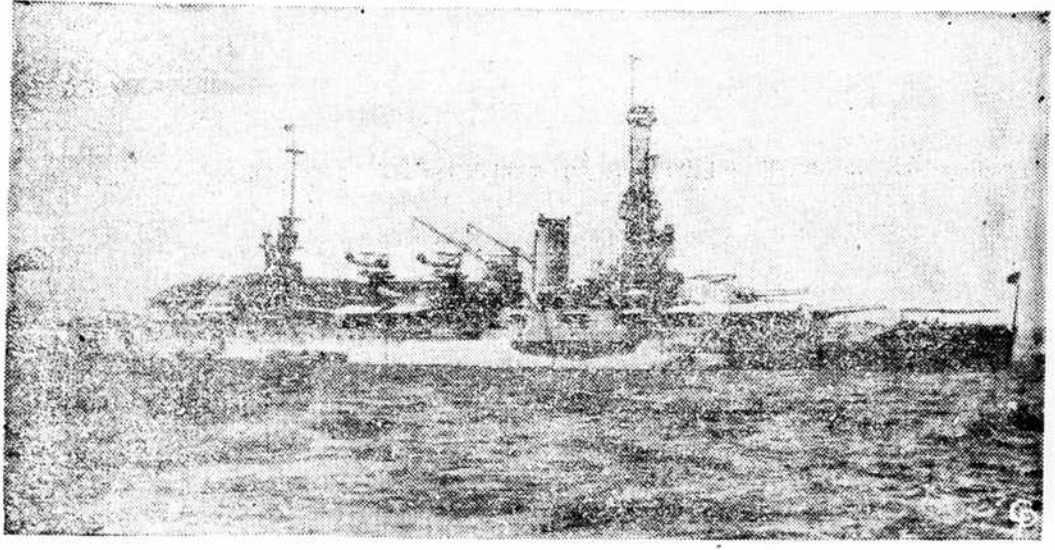
They see the chance for an additional \$5,000,000 spread (no diversion on one side, plus a nine months term on the other side of the ledger).

And if that too be added, the result is \$8,000,000 which brings up nightmares of added taxes on kilowatts, cigarettes, franchises, corporate incomes and the other things which big business always fears are going to be subjected to further tax indignities by the State.

Adding to that the fact that Governor Broughton doesn't owe these interest even a wee, small political debt, and the whole situation is enough to put the tycoons in a state of jitter which could easily turn into completely nervous prostration on slight pretext.

God is Dwyf in Welsh.

**U. S. Warship Hits Freighter Off Jersey**



The 26,000-ton battleship U. S. S. Arkansas (above) and the Melrose, a 5,148-ton freighter owned by the Koppers Coal Company of Boston, collided about fifty miles off the New Jersey coast near Asbury Park. The Melrose, badly damaged and in danger of sinking, began an immediate race for New York, escorted by the Arkansas.

**Held as Swindler**



Joseph Warren Burden

Free under \$5,000 bond, Joseph Warren Burden, socially prominent stock broker, charged with grand larceny, is accused of swindling smart set friends and their servants out of more than \$300,000. The case of larceny which could easily turn into completely nervous prostration on slight pretext.

**Remove Blast Victim**



One of the victims of the explosion that demolished two tenement buildings in Cincinnati, Ohio, is removed from the wreckage. At least thirteen persons were killed. Investigators attribute cause of blast either to illuminating gas or to acids used by a chemist experimenting in the basement.