

# "CARIBBEAN LOOT"

By WHITMAN CHAMBERS

## CHAPTER IV

... on, Mildred," I ordered. "Get up and get you in the next room."

... her along, but I didn't know. I felt ashamed of myself. There was no time to lose my life. Though I had been long-landed, I had done it I didn't feel any satisfaction.

Mildred close behind me, I went my way to Number 6, just being swung out. There was a little more order here. The crew was gradually reacting to the example set by the officers.

... had barely reached the boat, I was not yet clear of the deck. Then I heard a chorus of hysterical screams. I ground my teeth and heard the shrill creak of boat straining wild through the water.

"Look over the side," I said. "That boat got away from us."

... Mildred inboard, held her in the crook of my arm, and glanced forward. Number 6 was hanging by its own davit, its bow resting in the water. The forward fall had carried away and the hull had jammed.

... boat's cargo of women and children had been hurled into the sea. They were struggling in the screaming. Many of them were lifebelts. Even as I watched, jammed fall gave way and the dull and sickening crash of the dropped on the upturned heads of those screaming people.

... Mildred! If I told you I thought best, would you be afraid to go over the side?"

... came close to me, looked up at my face. "I'll do anything for you, Ray."

... think it's your best chance. You may get steadied down, you can launch a boat safely. They don't—well, I don't think of your being in a boat that gets away from them. You jump, start swimming from the ship as fast as you can. You'll be picked up before long, and in these warm waters we're as safe in a lifebelt as in a boat. Keep your head down, struggle too hard. . . . You'd better hike, kid."

... did not move. Her eyes did not blink. "Aren't you going, Ray?"

... would you want me to? I turned my head toward the pandemonium on the deck. "I can be of use."

... turned then and I guided her along the sloping deck to the lifeboat. Suddenly she gripped my arms and I saw the woman and kids were struggling around the lifeboat. I knew that for me, stark terror had her in its grip.

... er you go," I urged gently. "It's far. Just start swimming as you come up and you'll be right. Goodbye and good luck."

... shone in her eyes and her face tightened. "Won't you come with me?" she begged.

... Mildred. Sorry."

... took a deep breath. "Goodbye," she gasped, and jumped over the water. She landed on the other side, disappeared, came up an instant later and started swimming away from the ship.

... I gave a sigh of relief and stepped away from the rail. The hour that followed is, even to this day, a blur to me. I remember helping launch two lifeboats and a raft. I remember typhoid fever around half a dozen lifebelts. I remember knocking down a frightened little man who was trying to slide into a boat with a woman. And I remember find-

ing myself at long last, with the ship's officers and some twenty of the crew, alone on the deck of the foundering Alderbaron.

Two boats had been capsized in launching. All the others on the starboard side were clear of the ship and standing by a little distance away. The boats on the port side were still on their davits; the ship's list had grown too great to permit of their launching.

All at once I realized that I had no life belt. Pulling myself up the slanting deck with difficulty, I threw open the door of the first cabin I came to. I fumbled in the darkness—the ship's dynamo had ceased to function—and found two lifebelts in their rack. I dragged them down, slid through the door onto the deck and came face to face with Captain Eldridge.

The skipper, with the ship's log and papers under his arm, had just come off the bridge.

"Captain, you haven't a lifebelt," I said.

The man shook his head. In the dim starlight his face shown gray and hollow-checked. I caught him by the arm.

"Oh, I knew the tradition of the sea as well as any sea-going man, but I had always felt that some of them were senseless. I could see no sane reason why a captain should go down with his ship, provided he had done everything possible to save the lives of his passengers and crew."

"See here, skipper," I began. "You're not responsible for this thing that has happened to your ship. It is up to you to do all you can to find the men who are going down with your ship won't help you know."

"I know, lieutenant," Eldridge protested freely. "But you don't understand. Those women—good God! Struggling there in the water. The boat crashing on their heads, I—I—"

I understand. I know there could be no hell greater than that which the captain had passed through during the last hour. After it, death would be more merciful than life. But there were other things to be considered. I opened a lifebelt and held it out.

"Pull yourself together, Captain!" I said sharply. "Climb into this belt. Climb in, I tell you!"

Eldridge was too dazed and beaten to resist further. His arms slipped into the jacket. I pulled it around him and tied the straps across his chest. He slid down the deck to the rail, over which the other officers and the last of the crew were climbing.

As I was about to pick up the other jacket, the deck lurched sharply. The starboard rail dipped under and a great wave rushed inboard. I took a deep breath and dove to meet it.

The wave caught me and hurled me back against the deck-house. Gasping, the breath knocked out of my lungs, I fought against the roaring water that beat on me from every side. For a moment or two my head remained above water. Then, rising with the flood, I found myself wedged tightly against the heavy canvas awning which covered that portion of the deck.

The situation dawned on me, and I knew it spelled certain. The ship was going down and I was caught beneath the awning, held there by the pressure of water as tightly as though I were bound hand and foot. And that pressure would not be relieved until the ship hit bottom.

Further struggle, I knew, was useless. Relaxing, I lay spread-eagled against the canvas awning. Strangely enough I was not frightened. I felt only bitterness and resentment that I had to die now, that I was destined to play no part in helping bring to justice the men responsible for this terrible disaster.

Suddenly the pressure that wedged me against the awning vanished. I realized I was floating free, that the roaring din of tumbling water had ceased. It flashed through my mind that the ship was at the bottom.

With my lungs almost bursting, my head reeling, I acted instinctively. In the utter darkness, I had no idea in which direction lay the side of the ship. But some innate sense sent me clawing frantically along the canvas and in a moment or two, all but unconscious, I had reached the edge of the awning and was fighting toward the surface.

I held my breath until the pounding pulse in my ears sounded like trip-hammers. I fought with all my strength and all my will. But at last my burning lungs could stand the strain no longer. My head began to spin like a top, and abruptly it seemed to burst. I knew nothing more.

When I woke up I found myself flat on my back on the deck of a ship. There were people around me on every side, bedraggled men and women with the gleam of horror still in their eyes. A thin man, who still wore a lifebelt, knelt by

# Berlin, Too, Fights Incendiary Fires



German firemen stand amid ruins of a building shattered by bombs of raiding British airmen, who raked Berlin in waves. The photograph was passed by the German censor.

# Eddie Guest Is Just Himself, A Friend Reveals

The hold which Eddie Guest has on the common man is no mystery, says Malcom W. Binyag, of the Detroit Free Press, who "knew him when." "There's only ONE Eddie Guest, not two, or three, or four. He is Eddie Guest to himself and he is Eddie Guest to his closest and most intimate friends, and he is Eddie Guest to all the world," Binyag writes in the current Rotarian Magazine.

"Eddie is always true to himself. When he writes a poem on Mother's Day, he doesn't just 'dash something off' to fit the occasion. To him it is Mother's Day, with all that it means to everyone who has ever loved a mother. His poems are lived by him before they are written. He once remarked: 'The only person I have to live with 24 hours a day and 365 days in the year is myself. And I never want to be ashamed of the company I keep. So I try to do that which is right that I may always feel comfortable with myself.' He's just Eddie Guest, himself!"

# TRANSACTIONS IN Real Estate

(As Recorded to Monday Noon Of This Week)

**Beverdam Township**  
Mrs. S. M. Gossett to T. D. Best et ux.  
E. D. Pressley, et ux, to Rose Kilpatrick, et al.  
Laura Kilpatrick to E. D. Pressley.

**Clyde Township**  
J. M. Pless, et ux, to Ray and Weaver Patton.  
H. A. Williams, et ux, to D. T. Whitted, et ux.  
Estelle Stamey to John E. Broyles, et ux.

**Cecil Township**  
Dewey Fletcher, et ux, to Annie Smathers.

**Clyde Township**  
Norman Penland, et ux, to Ralph Turner.  
Lizzie Jolly, et al, to Claude Jolly.

**Fines Creek Township**  
T. C. Ledford, et ux, to Hattie Ledford.  
T. M. Ledford, et ux, to T. C. Ledford.

**Waynesville Township**  
J. M. Palmer, et ux, to C. D. Medford, et al.  
W. H. E. Lancaster, et ux, to Lucile Hardin.  
John Snyder to William Medford.  
R. N. Gaddy, et ux, to Jerry Gaddy.  
Mark Sorrells, et ux, to N. N. Ruff, et ux.

## MARRIAGES

T. H. Gribble to Eunice Fowler, both of Monroe.  
Alvin Nashworth to Sophia Zastawink, both of Wareboro, Ga.  
Ray Wines to Lucille Warren, both of Canton.  
Josh Nelson Martin, of Corinth, Miss., to Virginia Woods, of Charleston, West Va.  
William L. Seay to Mary Caldwell, both of Clyde.

## INCOME

Cash income from farm marketings and government payments in July amounted to \$703,000,000, compared with \$641,000,000 in July, 1939, and \$587,000,000 in June, 1940, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

## UNUSUAL METHOD FOR CUCUMBERS

If you would serve cucumbers in an unusual way, select some of even size, scoop out the centers and fill with a vegetable salad. Set these boat shapes on shredded lettuce on a platter, garnish with stuffed hard-cooked eggs and pass salad dressing or French dressing. Try it for supper. It is most appetizing.

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## Speaking Of Foundations

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Illustrated above: Dynamic 6 Cruiser 4-Door Sedan, \$1010\* (Same model Eight, \$1045\*).  
Illustrated at left: Custom 8 Cruiser 4-Door Sedan, \$1135\* (Same model Six, \$1099\*).  
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... a stoker with the simplicity and sturdiness of construction to insure long life and economical operation.

... a stoker that will be properly installed by a factory trained, responsible dealer.

PHONE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
**F. STRANGE**  
Waynesville