

THE FORGOTTEN FLEET MYSTERY

by Van Wyck Mason

CHAPTER VII

Somewhat unsteadily, the girl pushed a strand of bobbed chestnut hair from across her eyes and got to her feet and stood looking at Donald Colby's grim figure. "What has happened?" Calmly enough, she switched on a flashlight of her own.

Colby stepped aside, watching her closely. "I suppose since you have taken such pains you may as well see."

Once by him she halted and Colby saw her flashlight beam waver and drop until it encountered the gray white visage of Captain Benet—who, forgotten in the turmoil, still slumped, silently dying in the oak panelled passage.

"Oh, my God!" Geneva Benet gasped as people gasp when a bullet strikes them in a vital spot. "Connolly!" The tweed clad figure sped forward and knelt at the side of the stricken man. "Connolly! Have they hurt you very badly? Say that they haven't."

Connolly, indeed, Colby's features were leaner than ever when he stepped lightly back into the shadows and, poised somewhat like an old time gun fighter, studied the shadow ruled grand staircase beyond. Mears strangely unemotional, kept his light fixed on the oddly assorted couple.

"Talk, please talk! The girl pleaded in fearful earnestness. "Don't die, for God's sake, don't die. Who shot you—was it Colby?"

At that moment Captain Benet, who apparently had another name as well, must have died, for all at once his body went limp and rolled sidewise, untidy bald head coming ugly to rest on the floor beside the horrified girl's knee. It seemed impossible that anybody could turn so pale as Geneva Benet and yet keep their senses.

"You did this," she flung at Colby in jerky, metallic accents. "I ought to have known—you'd be one of them!"

"You're crazy," Colby said, then added with acid brutality. "He's"

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as administrator of the estate of Mrs. Ellen Francis, deceased, late of Haywood County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of the deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at Clyde, N. C., on or before the 25th day of June, 1942, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment.

This the 24th day of June, 1942. PAUL FRANCIS, Administrator of Mrs. Ellen Francis, deceased. No. 1199—June 25-July 2-9-16-23-30.

Protection of Property in War Time!

In addition to the regular protection which you carry against ordinary hazards, you need War Damage protection. We can secure this type of policy for you from the War Damage Corporation, a government agency, which is the only way you can protect your property against War Damage.

The L. N. DAVIS COMPANY
Phone 77 INSURANCE Main St.

War Research

In war the advantage is on the side with the best weapons. The work of scientists in America's research laboratories, developing new materials and new equipment, means a lot to our fighting men.



1. It takes years to build up and equip a large, organized, and able staff for research. Fortunately, industry did this long ago.



2. Long before Pearl Harbor, laboratories like General Electric's were serving their country—solving technical problems of war.



3. History repeats! In the last war "wireless" was developed for military needs—to become, with peace, a giant broadcasting industry.



4. So it will be this time. Research will help to win the war, and its many wartime discoveries will help to build a better future.

General Electric believes that its first duty as a good citizen is to be a good soldier.
General Electric Company, Schenectady, N. Y.



dead, so quit acting and get up—there's a lot to be done."

The girl raised a face blank save for bitter staring eyes. Colby might have spoken in Chinese for all the effect.

"You—you murdered him!" She shivered as though suddenly stripped bare.

"You made a neat job of getting me here," rasped the gaunt figure in the military tunic, "but now that I am here I'm going to run things. Get up!"

Geneva Benet stared emptily at him, then her eyes wandered vaguely to Mears just before she crumpled sidewise.

"She's fainted," Mears grunted. He also said, "Oh!" because he found he was looking down the barrel of Colby's .32. "Hey, what's the idea?"

"Drop that gun. Pronto!" "Who the devil are you, anyhow?" Mears, towering over the straight-backed ex-soldier, snarled and gathered himself.

"Drop that gun!" Staccato as a machine gun's report came Colby's command.

The watchman's automatic clattered to the hardwood floor.

"Okay, wise guy, okay," Mears snapped. "This ain't over yet."

"You gild the lily of obviousness," Colby remarked as he retrieved the other's weapon and then stood dominating the three prostrate figures. More Indian-like than ever, he jerked his head towards the man on the stair top.

"Go over and look at him."

The watchman obeyed.

"Know him?"

"No," came the sullen reply. "Never laid eyes on the guy."

"Are you sure?"

Mears' lips revealed strong and prominent teeth in an unpleasant smile. "Prove that I haven't, Wise Guy."

"How could he have got on board?"

"How would I know? Maybe you got a better idea yourself."

"You're sure you haven't seen him before?"

"No." But an indefinable instinct warned Colby to doubt the denial.

"Pick up Miss Benet and take her to her quarters. When you return you'll get your gun back, so don't bother to hunt up another. All I want is to stay alive. See?"

Mears relaxed a little. "Okay."

"Incidentally, you can tell Dutton I'm holding him responsible for keeping her there," said this remarkable young man. "If he lets her out of his sight I'll beat the eternal tripe out of him."

Mears silently gathered Geneva Benet's slight, long-legged figure into his arms and carried her out, with her bright loosened hair swaying over one jerseyed arm.

Had she really fainted or had he successfully thwarted a clever ruse? Colby had no time to ponder

the question, irreplaceable seconds were ticking by and a nagging premonition of danger would not leave him.

Out of caution, he darted into the barber shop which opened onto B deck and watched Mears carry his burden across the gunplank to the Monticello. Then, and only then, did Colby wheel and, silent as a leopard on the prowl, dart back to the landing where Geneva Benet's abandoned flashlight still attempted to disperse the gloom.

First he hurriedly ransacked Captain Benet's pockets and in them found a large dagger knife and a watch marked D. Connolly. Also on this interesting old man's person he discovered a blackjack and a handful of .45 caliber bullets. Odd, since his death, the murdered man had shriveled into a creature twice as old as he had previously seemed. Next he gingerly opened the shirt front and narrowly inspected the two wounds, and as he did so his breath entered with a sharp hiss of surprise. One was ragged, much larger and different in shape from its precise little fellow.

Having completed a hurried inspection, Colby transferred his attention to the corpse of the unknown man. He was middle-aged, tall and thin with stiff iron gray hair and lay clutching a small Luger automatic pistol. A foot or so away a spent cartridge case winked like a tiny evil eye. The dead man wore a neat, gray serge suit which had recently gotten very dusty and marked with occasional streaks of rust. A bullet, planted square between the stranger's close set blue eyes did not by any means improve his looks. A small, red-blue hole in the forehead seldom does.

"And now let's see what's on you, my lad," Colby muttered and, after sweeping the surroundings with his flashlight, rolled over the staggering corpse.

"So Mears didn't know who this was," he mused, "or said he didn't."

Maintaining a sharp study of the landing and its surroundings, he rummaged hurriedly through the pockets, pocketed the contents and then gazed down into the dead man's sharp, strongly modelled features. It was neither a stupid nor an ugly face, but somehow vaguely sinister just the same. Two old scars, parallel to each other, and a nick off the top of the left ear afforded ideal items for identification.

"Um—must have been a university man," Colby reflected.

Boarding an interesting train of thought, he went quietly back into the dim and spacious smoking room to briefly cast his flashlight about.

NOTICE OF SALE

On Monday, July 27th, 1942, at 11:00 o'clock, a. m. at the Courthouse door in the Town of Waynesville, Haywood County, N. C., I will offer for sale at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash the following described lands and premises situate in said County and State, to-wit:

Being Lot No. 1 of the Underwood tract, BEGINNING at a stake in the old Turner line, corner of Lot No. 2, and runs N. 5° E. 32 1/2 poles to a stake, corner of the W. B. Ferguson 3-7-10 acre tract; thence with the line of the same three calls as follows: N. 87° W. 14 poles to a stake on West bank of road; North 13 poles to a stake; N. 15° E. 9 poles to a stake on top of ridge; thence up ridge as follows: S. 75° W. 12 poles; S. 67° W. 7 poles; S. 25 1/2° W. 5 poles; S. 28° W. 8 poles; S. 41° W. 16 poles with Giles line to a stake; S. 28° W. 8 poles to a stake in road; thence with same S. 64° W. 6 poles; S. 47° W. 6 poles; S. 24 1/2° W. 10 1/2 poles to a stake in forks of road, corner of Lot No. 2; thence with same, S. 88° E. 58 poles to the BEGINNING, containing 17 1/2 acres, as per survey and plat of O. O. Sanford.

EXCEPTING and RESERVING from the foregoing tract or parcel of land the following lots or parcels of land heretofore conveyed by W. C. Medford et ux, to the following grantees:

D. L. Putnam et ux, dated May 1, 1920, recorded Book 55, page 412; D. L. Putnam dated March 8, 1921, recorded Book 59, page 11; Sam Melton et ux, dated January 2, 1922, recorded Book 59, page 127; T. C. Norris and J. C. Norris, dated November 11, 1922, recorded Book 59, page 372; Jerry Liner and Hugh J. Sloan, dated February 16, 1925, Book 63, page 550; Record of Deeds of Haywood County; reference is hereby made to the above deeds and records for full and perfect description of the lands herein excepted.

Sale made pursuant to the power of sale contained in that certain deed of trust from Mary Moody and husband, Fred H. Moody, to A. T. Ward, Trustee for Haywood Home Building & Loan Association, dated April 30th, 1941, recorded in Book 42, at page 364, Haywood County Registry, default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured therein, and reference is hereby made to said instrument and record for all the terms and conditions thereof.

This June 23rd, 1942. A. T. WARD, Trustee.

No. 1202—July 2-9-16-23.

Fines Creek News

By Mrs. D. N. Rathbone.

The farmers are very busy down our way, with snap beans ready to pick, while several have already picked their crops and with the labor shortage, farmers have worked from early morning 'till late getting their crops off to the canneries.

A revival meeting was begun July 14th, at the Fines Creek Baptist church and will continue

Ha! The gleam of metal caught his eye. Its origin proved to be a short crowbar—better known as a jimmy—and beside it lay a wood chisel. Had they been brought here to steal some lovely old panel or some handsomely carved matel; or for what other purpose? It was that other purpose that bothered him.

Though he played his flashlight quickly on the mantelpiece and the panelling, he found nothing wrong, and a row of corpulent nymphs grinned down at him almost derisively. What the devil had been going on? What, for instance, had Mears been doing just prior to the shots?

(To be Continued)

through this week. The services are conducted by the pastor, Rev. Jarvis Teague, assisted by the Rev. Lee-Roy Thomas. Much interest was shown during the first week and it is hoped the attendance will be good this week.

The Rev. Melton Harbin filled his regular monthly appointment at the Laurel Hill Methodist church, with Professor J. Walker Whidsey, of Young Harris College, of Georgia, delivering the message. At which time the church baptism ceremonies were performed. Those inducted in the church and receiving the baptism were Miss Isabel Revis, Betty Jane Walker, and Lula Rathbone.

The woman's meeting of Christian Service will meet July 19th, at 2:30 p. m. with Mrs. Farady Greene.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Green have received word that their son, Sam Green, of Newport News, Va., is getting along fine after suffering from a crushed ankle and a sprained shoulder.

Rev. and Mrs. Melton Harbin had as their guests last week the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Hutchinson, and also her sister, Mrs. Allen Roper, all of Gaines-

Only 13 Receive Favorable Action by Rationing Board

Thirteen persons out of the forty-eight applying to the local rationing board this week received favorable action on their applications it was learned from the clerk of the board here yesterday.

Those receiving tires, recaps or tubes were as follows: Rev. R. H. Wing, minister, of Fayetteville, one passenger car tube; Gladys S. Morris, blind case worker, of Waynesville, two passenger car recaps; John H. Nesbitt, vocational

ville, Ga.

Hasque Haynes recently returned from New Jersey to spend a while here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Haynes.

Miss Lucile Walker spent Sunday in Waynesville visiting her sister, Mrs. Dave Boyd. Mrs. Boyd was the former Miss Eddie Walker.

The Rev. and Mrs. Melton Harbin had as their guest over the week-end Professor J. Walker Whidsey, professor of Young Harris College, Young Harris, Ga.

agriculture teacher, of route 1, two passenger recaps; Wayne Rogers, rural mail carrier, of Waynesville, one passenger car tire and one passenger tube; Henry Francis, farm producer, of Waynesville, two passenger car tubes; Wayneville, wholesale haul, three truck recaps; and Duncan, oil distributor, Waynesville, two truck recaps.

Grace Lumber Mills, operation, of Lake Junaluska, truck tire; Hugh Rabb, log acid wood hauler, of Waynesville, two truck tires and one tube; M. O. Galloway, lumber haul, of Waynesville, one truck tire; Underwood Lumber and Supply Company, haul of AAA lime and acid wood, Waynesville, one truck tire one truck tube.

Haywood county board of education, hauling school children, allowed 20 bus recaps, which especially granted by the rationing administrator; Tom Waynesville, law enforcement police duty, one new passenger

RHYME AND REASON

We sleep, but the loom of never stops and the pattern was weaving when the sun went down is weaving when it comes tomorrow.—Henry Ward Beecher

LAST CALL FOR 1941 TAXES

THE LAW REQUIRES THAT WE ADVERTISE and SELL

All Property On Which 1941 Taxes Have Not Been Paid. The Names Of All Delinquent Taxpayers Will Be Published

IN AUGUST

And Sold On 1st Monday In September

No Extension Of Time Will Be Given !!

Notice is also given that we will garnishee and levy on all personal property on which taxes are due

J. E. FERGUSON,

TAX COLLECTOR AND TAX SUPERVISOR OF HAYWOOD COUNTY