

THE Grays Manor Mystery.

By Aidan de Brune (author of "The Dagger and Cord"; "The Shadow Crooks"; "Fid This Man"; &c., &c.)

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.
The girl was very silent during the drive to the southern suburb. Just before parting from her at the door of Parkview Mansions, Denning asked a question that had been in his mind for some time.
"Miss Canning, why did you disbelieve Mrs. Ashford-Lynne when she told you she was too financially embarrassed to retain your services as social secretary?"
For a moment the girl looked at him curiously, then laughed.
"Really, Mr. Denning! She hesitated, then laughed again. 'I don't suppose I am betraying secrets in telling you. Only the day before Mrs. Ashford-Lynne made that statement she banked a very large cheque. I saw the cheque—but she didn't know I did.'"
"A very large cheque!" Denning mused. "Did you see the amount and the drawer's signature, Miss Canning?" At the girl's quick glance of astonishment, he added: "I assure you, I am not asking the question out of mere curiosity."
For a moment the girl hesitated, then turned to him impulsively.
"I don't believe you are asking questions in idle curiosity, Mr. Denning. The cheque was drawn by Mr. Anton Letoit and the amount was five thousand pounds."

CHAPTER IX.
It seemed to Richard Denning that he had hardly fallen asleep before Mick Regan was beside his bed, awakening him with the information that Chief Inspector Lorrimer was in the study, awaiting him. He rolled over and looked at the clock. It was barely eight o'clock.

Grumbling at the uneasy conscience possessed by police officers, that did not permit them to rest for a level eight hours per night, Denning sought the bathroom, calling to Mick to serve breakfast and to inform the detective that he would be with him in ten minutes. A few minutes beyond that time he entered the sitting-room, to find Lorrimer seated in a deep chair, emerged in the newspaper.

"Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Denning. The police officer looked up with a grin. "Good for you, you're not at the Yard. There you learn to take your sleep as you get it."

"What's your trouble?" The barrister nodded towards the breakfast dishes on the sideboard. "You look as though sleep and you were strangers. Suppose food's been in the same category. Help yourself, man! If you think I'm going to discuss murders before I'm fed, you're badly mistaken."

"I thought we might discuss the murder while you fed." Lorrimer took a chair at the table. "Have a nice drive to Brixton last night?"
"So, so." The barrister attacked his breakfast determinedly. "Got home somewhere around three o'clock. By the time I got to bed and asleep Mick was knocking at my door, stating that you were in the study."

"So she does live at Brixton?" Lorrimer looked up quickly. "That was one of the things I came to ascertain. I phoned the Brixton Station this morning to keep an eye on Miss Ira Canning. Just a chance. She might have given me a false name and address and changed your directions after you left Kingsway."

The barrister looked up in surprise. "You're damned suspicious at the Yard," he grinned. "What's the matter with Miss Ira May Canning? Appears to be a very nice girl."

"That's what I want to know. So she told you her full name? By the way, she took Mrs. Ashford-Lynne's handbag home with her last night."

"No, she didn't." The barrister rose to his feet and went into his study, returning in a few minutes with the reticule. "I took it from Symonds' office, inadvertently. Escorting a lady home, one naturally assumes that she has a bag. I picked this one up from the desk and stuffed it into my pocket. When I offered it to her at her door she refused it, reminding me that she had lost hers."

"Humph!" For some minutes the detective devoted his attention to his plate. "Rather strange, about those handbags."

"Handbags?" Denning looked up in surprise.
"Handbags, yes." Lorrimer grinned. "You said just now that we men naturally assume that a lady has a handbag. We found only one last night. That belonged to Mrs. Ashford-Lynne. We have to presume that Miss Canning brought a bag to Symonds' office...."

"She said she did."
"Yet when we discovered her we didn't find her bag—we found Mrs. Ashford-Lynne's bag."

For a moment the barrister started. He had overlooked the significance to be attached to the bags.
"Looks as though we'll have to presume that both Mrs. Ashford-Lynne and Miss Canning went to Symonds' office last night." The bar-

rist spoke. "Can we construct anything from that?"
"I think we may take it that Mrs. Ashford-Lynne called on Symonds first. The offices were locked...."
"Except the door of the darkened room," reminded Denning.
"U-r-r-?" Lorrimer looked up.
"Miss Canning stated that she turned the door-handle and pushed open the door."
"That's so," the detective nodded.
"But... possibly the door of that room was unlocked when Mrs. Ashford-Lynne went there. We don't know whether Symonds had an appointment with her for that night or not. Anyway, we'll assume that she arrived first. Possibly she heard the 'tap-tap' of Miss Canning's heel as she walked down the corridor later—and switched on the lights. Didn't want to be found there. She was waiting by the door for a chance to escape when the girl entered, unexpectedly. She caught Miss Canning by the arm, swung her into the room, and darted out on the corridor. Miss Canning fell against the desk and was stunned, allowing Mrs. Ashford-Lynne to make a safe getaway. I think we may safely assume that is what took place."
"Possibly," Denning agreed. "But in your reconstruction you've left out Symonds. Was he there to meet Mrs. Ashford-Lynne?"
"She might have obtained a key and gone there alone, for some purpose," hazarded the detective.
"You've forgotten the lights through the office."
Lorrimer nodded.
"Did you look at the files on the desk?" Denning asked, after a pause.
"I did. The last file Edward Symonds worked on related to the Ashford-Lynne-Pedlington case. I'm going to suggest that Mrs. Ashford-Lynne had an appointment with Symonds, possibly made after he had sent that letter to Miss Canning. I believe that Mrs. Ashford-Lynne was with Symonds for some considerable time before Miss Canning arrived. Something happened that caused Symonds to go out, leaving Mrs. Ashford-Lynne to await his return. The reason, I'm not going to try to guess, at present. At the same time, you have to remember Symonds and I did a lot of work together and that I acted in opposition to him in that necklace case. Fit your reconstruction to that and you may be on the trail of the truth."

"Plausible!" The detective nodded.
"But you don't account for the broken furniture and the blood. There was blood on the carpet in that office—a large quantity; but there wasn't a corpse. Any theory on that point?"
Denning made a gesture of negation. Yet there was a theory in his mind to cover that. Symonds might have been killed in his office and his body conveyed to the Temple later. Assuming that to be true, then what parts had the two women played in the tragedy. Obviously, while either of the women could have stabbed Symonds only a man could have conveyed the body to the Temple.

How far had they progressed towards the mystery? So far they had a reasonable explanation of the movements of three of the persons known to have been in the fourth office immediately prior to the murder. But they had discovered no reasons for the blood in the office nor the terrific struggle that had taken place there. They had discovered no clue to the murder.

"Suppose you had a talk to that girl on the way to Brixton?" Lorrimer spoke after some moments' silence. "Did you get anything worth while?"
"No." Then Denning remembered Ira's description of the cheque. "Yes. Listen."

Commencing with his interview with the seven men in the boardroom of the Altona Trading Company, Denning carefully reviewed the happenings of the past twenty-four hours, linking them in a connected, reasoned story.

When he recounted the short conversation with Gray outside his chambers Lorrimer displayed great interest. His lips pursed in a silent whistle when Denning spoke of Gray toying with the fatal knife in Letoit's study. At the mention of the cheque for five thousand pounds drawn by Anton Letoit in Mrs. Ashford-Lynne's favor, he sprang to his feet.

"Jesse, Mr. Denning! And you've kept that under cover all night!"
"One half of the night." The barrister laughed. "Don't forget, Lorrimer, this information came to me in fragments and had to be connected into a logical story."

"Well, you've made quite a story of it." The detective resumed his seat. "Now read me that riddle behind it!"
"Give me an explanation of how Matthew Ashcombe was able to abstract registered parcels from the care of the postal authorities; how Symonds' office came to be a litter of bloodstained broken furniture;

on which we were in doubt."
"And that?"
"We came to the conclusion that you were pursuing some line of inquiry connected with a case on which Symonds was engaged; some case on which Symonds was engaged unknown to you."
Denning nodded as the Chief Inspector looked up inquiringly.

"I can't." The Chief Inspector spoke regretfully. For some moments he pondered, then looked up.
"I saw the Assistant Commissioner this morning at his home—in fact, he was in bed. I asked him to allow me to handle the case personally. He agreed. There was one matter

why Mrs. Ashford-Lynne called on Symonds and why he left her in his offices while he went down to Fern Court, and I'll try."

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why Mrs. Ashford-Lynne called on Symonds and why he left her in his offices while he went down to Fern Court, and I'll try."

RICH PROVINCE
Further Development
So impressed is Mr. Dunningham with the result of the Unemployed Relief Council's work in opening up the Upper Richmond and Clarence watersheds, that further measures for development of the area will be taken as soon as the topo survey is completed.

Mr. Dunningham, Minister for Labour and Industry, visited Bonalbo Show, and inspected the road from Bonalbo and Urbenville and down as far as Grevillia. He said when the topographical survey was completed, consideration would be given to developing the area, and attention would probably later be given to the southern section of the Upper Clarence Valley.

"A journey over the new roads, after having travelled the old tracks, is quite sufficient to convince one of the necessity for a topographical survey when opening up areas such as this," said Mr. Dunningham. "About 60 creek crossings have been eliminated, and the easy grades of the roads, together with the excellent method of construction, has converted what was once a boggy, dangerous route, into a means of swift and safe travel."

"The difference it will make to the primary producers is incalculable. The journey from Bonalbo to Urbenville—23 miles—at one time took 24 hours; when the work at present under construction is completed it will take an hour."

"Fifteen years ago it took three days to drive from Tenterfield to Urbenville; soon it will take three hours."

"Recently a doctor and a nurse were compelled to walk eight miles to attend an urgent case, because their car could not negotiate the bad road."

"In other directions, too," Mr. Dunningham pointed out, "the influence of good roads is evident. Before the completion of the Bonalbo section, the producers had to pay 1d on every pound of butter they sent in, to cover the cost of conveyance over the bad roads."

"At Bean Creek the cost of bread fell from 9d. to 6d. a loaf when the good road was put in."

Although the development is primarily intended to promote closer settlement, Mr. Dunningham was greatly struck by the tourist possibilities of the district.

The Bonalbo-Grevillia-road passes through wonderfully rich flats, and the crossing of the Tootoom Range provides the traveller with impressive mountain views.

"On the run from Urbenville to Koroelah Creek," said Mr. Dunningham, "we drove through the famous North Coast scrub in its virgin state—enormous trees shooting hundreds of feet towards the clouds, entwined with trailing vines and creepers, and covered with staghorns and elk horns."

"Bird life abounds here, and every now and again a kangaroo bounds across the road ahead of your car."

"We are making ample provision by way of reservation for the protection of the native flora, fauna and bird life."

WINDFALL OF £50,000
RICH UNCLE'S WILL

Mrs. Arthur Connell, a young woman living with her husband and baby daughter at Armadale (Victoria), has just been informed that she has been left over £50,000 by her uncle, James Booth (58), of New York.

Both, who built up a valuable stonemasonry business in New York, died in November last, a widower, without children. Cherishing the memory of his niece as a girl of 6 or 7, whom he once sought to adopt, he left her almost his entire fortune.

Mrs. Connell received word of her windfall last Friday, when a member of a Melbourne firm of solicitors, acting for New York attorneys, called at her home with a copy of the will.

This ended a world-wide search. Inquiries were first made in Aberdeen, Scotland, where Mrs. Connell was born, and then in Melbourne suburbs, in which she had lived. The search was narrowed down to Kew, where she was married in 1932. She was then traced to Toorak and finally to her present home. The Connells have already booked their passages for New York.

"If you should be married, I hope he is worthy of you and the solid Scotch type, for there are none to be compared with them, as you will find through life," wrote Booth in a letter to his niece accompanying the will.

Mrs. Connell's husband, like her uncle and herself, is Scotch. The Connells will probably stay a few months in New York until matters there are completed, following which they will take a trip around the world. They intend to come back to Australia to live.

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Gold Mining in the Territory
MANY SHOWS WITH GOOD PROSPECTS

Most of the statements that had been made about the ill-treatment of aborigines in the Northern Territory were ridiculous, said Mr. C. Pollard, manager of the Arnheim Land Gold Development Company, who arrived in Brisbane on Thursday. Too much publicity was given to stories which were not true, he added. In fact, the aborigines were treated particularly well. An aboriginal never passed a white man's camp without receiving food and tobacco.

Conditions generally, and in gold mining in particular, were excellent in the Territory, Mr. Pollard stated. A lot of mines were opening up, and they all appeared to have good prospects. The latest field to be developed was at Tennant's Creek, outside Alice Springs, and it gave promise of being a particularly rich show. The Arnheim Land Gold Development Company's field was 90 miles from Pine Creek, a plane being utilised to make the journey. However, the country was good—well watered, timbered, and grassed—and was easily reached by motor truck. In the mine there were three lodes, all good battery propositions. Mr. Pollard will purchase additional plant for his company in Sydney and return by the Mangala.

£720 FOR INVESTMENT OF ONE POUND

A rather remarkable story of a punter's luck is reported from Bundarra.

It appears that on a recent Saturday a well-known backer of race-horses forwarded a £1 note to a Sydney bookmaker, with instructions to invest it on Brixton, and in the event of that horse winning, to place the amount "all up" on Bill Wedgewood, and also if "Bill" succeeded, "all up" on Earlminter. This is known as treble betting, a form of gambling that is not acceptable to the majority of bookmakers.

Blixton won the first "leg" at five, so that investor had a carry forward of £5 to go on Bill Wedgewood. The latter also duly landed the bacon at the nice odds of 14 to 1. This meant £90 to be invested on the last of the treble, Earlminter, and as that horse won at seven, the luck backer received a cheque for £720 from his bookmaker.

It is stated that after the first two selections had won, the punter wired his bookmaker, requesting him to only place £10 on Earlminter instead of £90, but the bookmaker replied that the terms of the wager could not be altered. The punter's luck was evidently in, with a vengeance!—Armadale "Express."

STANDING ROOM ONLY

Although the commencement of the Melbourne centenary celebrations is still a few months away it would appear that those attempting a visit to the southern capital will have to adopt a "book early" slogan. A Warwick resident says he had endeavored within the past months to secure accommodation in Melbourne over the show, the air race, and the Caulfield and Melbourne Cup periods. He applied by letter to a number of leading hotels, but in each instance the reply was the same, being to the effect that all rooms were booked up. The resident is now satisfied that his only alternative is to seek accommodation outside the actual city area.

EASY MONEY
BOOKMAKERS DUPED

The tardiness of more than one bookmaker operating at the Dubbo picnic races on Wednesday afternoon proved rather costly.

Some of them accepted wagers on the meeting at Victoria Park, and the success of backers made them realize the full significance of taking money as late as four minutes after the time. One bookmaker experienced a mild rush, and it was only a matter of seconds before he had one winner taking out nearly £50. The bookmakers then refused to do business on other than the Dubbo events.

Inquiries were instituted, and it was suggested that the results broadcast from Sydney had been received outside and ticktacked into the course.

LOCAL AND GENERAL

DINGO KILLED BY STONING
Travelling along the Dorrigo-Grafton road on Monday evening Trevor James, driver of a motor lorry, noticed a big dingo on the road. The lights of the lorry dazzled the dog, which ran into a quarry in the roadside. The occupants of the lorry jumped out, but the dog showed fight when cornered. Showers of stones were hurled at the dingo, killing it.

ANOTHER LADY
In the ring events at the Dubbo Show the Show Secretary (Mr. F. W. K. Wise) received an open-handed slap on the face from Sister Fitzgerald, a competitor in the ring events, says an exchange. Mr. Wise had occasion to challenge the right of the person to compete in district events. When informed that she had not paid her entry fees, she dealt the popular secretary a very hard blow. Sister Fitzgerald is well-known at Western Shows.

EUREKA STOCKADE RECALLED
William Edward Atherdon, (96), who was present at the Eureka Stockade engagement, has died at O'borne Park, Perth, Atherdon, after deserting from a ship at Geelong, walked barefooted to Ballarat. He was among 114 miners who were taken prisoners after the fight with the police, and was chained hand and foot to three others. Atherdon, who was an orchardist at York, until 14 years ago, is believed to have been the last survivor of the Stockade.

SHOP FIXTURES DAMAGED
While an assistant at Mr. C. S. Harris' pharmacy, Ballina, was serving a customer on Monday night a man picked up a chair and swinging it round caused damage to show-cases, a weighing machine, and bottles of medicine totalling \$4/8. Subsequently Constable Clifton made an arrest, and Patrick Joseph Ryan appeared in court to answer a charge of maliciously damaging property, and was remanded until Friday, bail of £20 being allowed. Ryan stated that he did not remember the occurrence, as he had consumed several overproof hams.

SON FINDS FATHER DEAD
When a light sports car skidded and crashed into a concrete tramway safety zone in Wellington Parade, Jollimon (Vic.), the driver, Reginald D. Griggs (49), motor mechanic, was killed instantly. Griggs who was driving to work, swung out to pass a motor lorry. The car skidded violently across the road and struck a concrete pillar with terrific force. When Griggs failed to arrive at his work his employer telephoned to his home. Griggs' 12-year-old son set out on his bicycle to look for him. Attracted by a crowd at the scene of the tragedy the boy stopped, and was horrified to recognise his father as the victim.

HER LITTLE BOARD
Officials of the State Treasury in Brisbane were surprised when an elderly lady called the other day, and presented old Treasury notes, and notes of private banks, to the value of £55. Evidently they had been stowed away for safe keeping for about 40 years. It is interesting to consider that if the lady who presented the old notes last week had placed the money in the Savings Bank 40 years ago (presuming she possessed the notes at that time) she would now have had about £180, reckoning the average rate of interest to be in the region of 3 per cent. per annum.

LOCOMOTIVE CRASHES THROUGH BRIDGE
The locomotive owned by Messrs. Longworths Ltd., of Laurieton, which is used for hauling logs from the other side of Lorne to Kendall, crashed through a bridge near Lorne, falling about 15 feet to the ground. The engine was coming towards Kendall, shunting three or four trucks in front. The trucks had passed over the bridge, and when the engine, which weighs about 45 tons, came on, a girder gave way, letting the engine crash to the ground, pulling the trucks with it. Mr. Parish, the driver, remained in the engine, and escaped without injury.

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BOOKMAKERS DUPED
The tardiness of more than one bookmaker operating at the Dubbo picnic races on Wednesday afternoon proved rather costly.

Some of them accepted wagers on the meeting at Victoria Park, and the success of backers made them realize the full significance of taking money as late as four minutes after the time. One bookmaker experienced a mild rush, and it was only a matter of seconds before he had one winner taking out nearly £50. The bookmakers then refused to do business on other than the Dubbo events.

Inquiries were instituted, and it was suggested that the results broadcast from Sydney had been received outside and ticktacked into the course.

STANDING ROOM ONLY

Although the commencement of the Melbourne centenary celebrations is still a few months away it would appear that those attempting a visit to the southern capital will have to adopt a "book early" slogan. A Warwick resident says he had endeavored within the past months to secure accommodation in Melbourne over the show, the air race, and the Caulfield and Melbourne Cup periods. He applied by letter to a number of leading hotels, but in each instance the reply was the same, being to the effect that all rooms were booked up. The resident is now satisfied that his only alternative is to seek accommodation outside the actual city area.

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