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**Strange But True**  
 By F. H. MacArthur

Ever hear of the Order of the Good Dime? Would you like to become a member? Then spend a week or so in Nova Scotia and you'll be eligible for membership. In 1606 Champlain founded the Order which consists of a chain placed around the neck and certain little ceremonies which give the bearer charge of the hunting for one day. About ten years ago, the Order was reborn and today, thousands of Americans and Canadians hold membership in North America's oldest social club. The certificate itself bears portraits of Champlain, the first Grand Master and of Canada's Governor-General, Viscount Alexander, the present Grand Master.

Mr. J. McCully of Truro, N. S. owns the only chinchillas to be seen in the Maritime Provinces. These little fur-bearing animals are worth their weight in gold — \$600 to \$700 each — as they weigh only one and one quarter ounces at birth. The guard hairs are said to be as fine as the strands of a spider's web. When the great value of the fur got noised about, the governments of the South American countries, of which they are native, placed a ban on hunting and trapping them.

The medieval Christians saw in childbirth the result of a canal to be explained in physical pain as defined in Genesis III: 16. In ancient days, many pregnant women were stoned to death by the medivh or the barber. Purification after childbirth among the Siamese people consisted of exposing the back and abdomen to a fire burning day and night and close enough to the mother to cause real suffering from the heat.

The Kyber Pass connecting India with Afghanistan is the only path by which heavy traffic can pass from one country to the other. It has always been a strategic point and the scene of Titanic struggles. The road from Peshawar to Kabul was made by the British. In ancient times, persons caught in the act of stealing were imprisoned in an iron cage suspended from a pole in the lonely pass. The prisoner remained in the cage till he starved to death.

Julius Caesar was not born by the so-called Caesarian operation, because in his time the operation was only performed after death as a religious measure. History tells us that Caesar's mother lived several years after the birth of her famous son. Hence the error of the statement that Caesar was born of a Caesarian operation.

In the Seventeenth Century when a baby was born it was first bathed and then salted all over and its head tightly bandaged to give it the proper shape. Next it was bound in bandages until it was unable to move. These bandages usually were removed once in twenty-four hours, when the infant was allowed a few minutes of exercise. The binding of the body lasted for about seven months. Almost half of the children so treated died during the first year of life.

In the Middle Ages the Jews were oppressed by both the ecclesiastical and civil regulations. They could neither become tradesmen nor physicians although the nobility employed them because of their skill in treating diseases. When epidemics of the plague broke out the Jews were accused of spreading the disease by poisoning the water or by black magic. Many were put in the flames for their supposed infamy and the nobility who owed money to the Jews made no effort to prevent their deaths.

In the city of Bengal, India, the traveler may see one of the most holy places of the buddhist religion. Why? Because Buddha is believed to have received enlightenment at this spot. A huge pagoda marks the holy spot. One of the greatest architectural wonders of India is the KUTB MINAR. It is considered the most perfect tower in the world. Five stories high and over two hundred feet tall. The summit is reached by means of a flight of steps.

LONDON, Nov. 26 — (Reuters) — Thick fog Saturday upset Britain's air, land and sea traffic, reducing visibility in many places to only a few yards.

**EMINENT LIST**  
 Starting with Viscount Mounet in 1967 there have been 17 Governors-General in Canada.

**In The World of Books**  
 With Will R. Bird

THE TRAP by Dan Billany; British Book Service; \$2.50.

This is one of the unusual books one finds now and again, a distinct change in the diet, and very near to grandeur. It was published as written first-hand, without any revision by the author. He was dead. He had written his story in note books while on soldiering duties in Italy, and friends had smuggled the script out of the area. Billany did not have a happy life. He knew need and poverty. He tried hard to make a go of life, and his experience with the dole added to his bitterness. His education might be termed an act of charity; it was provided by the government. Yet he won prizes and advancement, was an excellent scholar.

The first chapters are rather wordy and the essence of rancor. He rants about the class distinction of England, and writes about the working class: "I was born of workers among workers, and therefore I am a native of their country. I know how they order their lives because my own has always been ordered in the same way. I know what their prime secular ambition is, because it is also mine—not to be compelled to work by the threat of starvation." He pours out his hatred on class leaders and tilted persons, and does not make a pretty picture of his country. Instead, he hates the real beginning of his tale with his faying of those in high positions.

But when the story begins the reader forgets the first chapter. It is so tense and gripping, so realistic. A working class family is introduced—a gentleness and power that few writers of today possess. The time is the beginning of World War 2 and one can see every detail of the room, the expressions on the faces, hear the family joke and squabble and act politely with their visitors. Billany emits and depicts the army and its training. The course-ness and injustice that prevails make him moody but there is his love for the daughter of the Pascoe family to keep him nearly normal. Little touches tell of his friendship with the girl's young brother, and of the bomb shelter hurriedly erected.

The German bombers are over and it is a night of death and devastation. Billany gets leave and goes to the village to find that both parents are in the hospital, the brother killed, his sweetheart badly hurt, the home blown to atoms. He has a hard time getting a home for the girl, and the pathos of the predicaments of the working class raises a lump in the reader's throat. I do not know of another book dealing with England in wartime that carries anything comparable to the descriptive writing of Billany as he tells of his last week in England.

After that comes the long sea voyage, with no one knowing where they are going, and the bad boy of his unit eyed of home leave. Trouble dogs Billany but in the end he has the boy behaving better. Then comes the campaign in North Africa, in detail and vividly related. The reader discovers how petty life can be at the front, how dirty and wearisome, and how heroic. The climax comes with the German attack and the author being taken prisoner. The confusion of the day is simply told, and the whole impact of the North American war is terrifying. He concludes his book by writing: "How to draw a moral from all this I do not know. But I know this: that I am very very tired of the talk and the bitterness and the life we lead that is no life; it is a long time since my heart has been at rest." This is a book

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**TORCH FOR A DARK JOURNEY** by Lionel Shapiro; Doubleday Publishers; \$3.00.

This Montreal writer has spent about ten years reporting war and its aftermath. His first book received much acclaim, and developed the French border, where the American waits for him. The plot thickens with the presence of a representative of the World News Service who has been told to get the story. Complications set in at

the present and should achieve wide popularity. It deals with a Czech scientist who has been smuggled across the frontier of his country so that he may work for an American who is prominent in oil developments.

The smuggled man reaches a hotel inside the French border, where the American waits for him. The plot thickens with the presence of a representative of the World News Service who has been told to get the story. Complications set in at

once. The Czech apparently can't decide whether to go on with the American and the oil enterprise or to give himself to the service of his country. He can do much work in Europe. More thrills are added by the introduction of a Communist who was a former pupil of the Czech, this gentleman wants of course, to return the scientist to his home town. These characters are well drawn but the best of the lot is the Frenchman who is in charge of the frontier post, a man who is a queer mixture of cynic and sympathizer. The dialogue is clever, and the writing better, as I have said, than the first book. The climax may not please some readers but on the whole this is a novel worth having. My first thought on finishing it was that his third book will be outstanding. Mr. Shapiro has had large experience and he had learned how to build suspense. He is definitely a top-notch writer, and know that magic of creating dramatic incident.

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Store will be open Friday Nights and all day Wednesday until Christmas.

111 RICHMOND STREET