

### Dark Lightning

By Helen Topping Miller

#### Synopsis

Gary Tallman, young petroleum engineer from Alabama, misses his bus in Texas and Mona Mason, wife of a cattle rancher, gives him a lift. Gary is injured when her car crashes in a ditch and the Masons nurse him back to health. He falls in love with Mona's daughter Adelaide but, unwilling to propose until he has a job, Gary plans to leave for Mexico. Meanwhile he suspects there is oil in the property and tells Harvey Mason. Despite the protests of Oliver Kimball, Harvey's son-in-law, Hickey is employed to drill a well. Harvey persuades Gary to remain until tests are made. Lawyer Slide Ellis threatens to get an injunction, because of a violation of property rights in the sale of the land to Harvey. A break in the water pipe delays operations. Gary locates it and believes Slide Ellis is at the bottom of the business.

#### CHAPTER XX (Continued)

"Somebody's going to get sued for this!" he shrieked. "Look at my pansy border—practically washed away before I could get out here—and now it's undermining my walk. Somebody's going to get sued, I tell you!"

"Who cut the line?" asked Gary, brusquely. He bent and twisted the end of the pipe, dragging it around so that the water flowed off into the ditch at the side of the road.

"If you had thought to do that, you wouldn't have had water in your yard," he told the angry householder. "Somebody cut this line clean. Did you see anyone fooling around out here?"

"How could I see anybody in the dark?" demanded the man, mopping his neck with a soggy handkerchief. "Anyway, I was out in the garage fixing the radio on my car. Who's going to pay for my pansy bed is what I want to know. And that walk will have to be fixed—undermined the way it is. It's bound to crack in no time."

"Everything will be taken care of," Gary assured him. "Now I've got to get to a telephone and have the water cut till we can mend this line. In the meantime, if you see anybody around here, get the license number, will you?"

"I haven't the time," grumbled the man. "I've got solder melting out there—reckon it's all burned up by this time. What makes you think somebody cut this line? Maybe it busted."

"Look here—" Gary picked up the end of pipe beyond the break in which there was now no water. "See that? They hit it two or three licks before it broke. Funny you didn't hear it."

"I don't pay any attention to noises out there. Traffic going by

all the time, wrecks and fights and things. I was busy. And I worked hard on those pansies—paid a whole lot for the seed, too—"

"Every pansy will be replaced," Gary insisted. "Mind staying here Adelaide? No, on second thought I'd better stay myself. You go to a telephone—you haven't a phone here, have you, mister?"

"No. But there's one down at Ripley's filling station. Half a mile down the road."

"Go there, Adelaide. Telephone the water company and ask them to send out somebody to turn the water off on this line; and then call your father and tell him to send Hickey down with a couple of men and some wrenches and two-inch pipe—one length of it. Can you remember all that?"

"Water off—Hickey, wrenches, two-inch pipe. I'll do my best, Captain," Adelaide said. "But listen here, Gary Tallman—if you dare go off to Mexico and leave my dad with all this trouble on his hands, I'll never speak to you again."

Gary squatted on his heels in the dark, hearing the precious water wasting away in the gutter, knowing that that was Harvey Mason's money running away down there. Then, after about twenty minutes, the flow of water stopped. He drew a deep breath of relief, went down to straighten the pipe and wait for Hickey. An old truck with two men in it had slowed to a stop, dimly visible in the dusk, and one man got out and lifted the hood and stood fiddling with something about the motor. Gary sensed that this was a stall, that man who still sat in the truck was watching him, and not his partner. He was certain of this when a car whirred by, honking, and the flare of the headlights showed, briefly, a brand new ax lying in the back of the truck. He walked boldly out to the truck.

"You fellows want something?" he asked.

The man at the hood let it down with a bump. "Ain't hitting right," he mumbled. "What's up? Got trouble on your water line?"

"You knew about that, did you?" Gary was dry.

"No, we didn't know nothing about it. Just seen you standing there—"

"You saw me standing there and you knew that something was wrong with our line you'd better get going—the sherriffs on his way out here now."

They swore at him, and the truck tore away, but not before Gary had noted the license number.

#### ELLEN'S DIARY

Continued from page 2

I am going at the farming."

At supper in celebration of the day which meant so much to him, the Family foregathered here, the folks from the House across the Lane at Alderlea coming with the Nell-mare and sleigh, the black dog for their escort along snow-clad ways. The sun had just slipped down behind a hiltop. The rose of his dying embers was reflected brightly on the crusted white of the farm-lands; every naked branch of tree and shrub, iced too by the recent silver thaw glistening in rainbow shades, like the prisms of an old chandelier.

"There never was a prettier evening," Jeanie said, stopping a minute at the door, before entering to look upon the beautiful winter scene about.

We ate birthday fare, at the last, opening the cake which had held the seven tiny blue candles the lad had discovered in the corner of a dining-room drawer as though the number had been sorted out and put there by a loving hand now rested . . . The children's eyes glistened in the magic of their light as one after another they made their wishes, relit or puffed the little flames away.

Seven . . . it is a good number. May their new year bring much happiness to this—and other little lads and maids who are seven! Until tomorrow . . . Diary . . . Good-night . . .

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### Will Build Aircraft For Coastal Defence

MONTREAL (CP)—About 50 aircraft, military versions of the Bristol Britannia transport, will be built by Canadair Limited. It was learned here Monday night.

A Canadair spokesman described it as a \$185,000,000 order and said only licensing agreements with the plane's designers, the Bristol Aeroplane Company of England, remain to be worked out. This might take about four weeks.

The military version of the airplane would be a four-engined, 13,400-horsepower aircraft for use by maritime air commands.

T. N. Beaupre, deputy defence production minister, was quoted as saying the initial order will be for \$5,000,000 to cover licence fees, tooling and engineering and the production of the first 20 planes.

Mr. Beaupre said the plane, in the role of a submarine-hunter, will guard Canada's coastline against potential enemies. To fill this role the Britannia will undergo extensive redesigning, he said.

Canadair president Geoffrey Notman said the plane will be the largest ever constructed in Canada. Mr. Notman said the commercial version's four turbo-prop engines will be replaced by 3,350-

horsepower Wright compound engines to give the aircraft a longer range and slower speed for reconnaissance purposes.

#### Work Starts Immediately

He said it will be about six months before Canadair begins to place orders for material but engineering work will begin immediately.

Mr. Notman said Canadair has also considered the possibility of building a commercial version of the plane.

Separate rights for this would have to be acquired from England.

The Britannia, as a commercial aircraft, carries 100 persons and is twice as large as North Stars now used by Trans-Canada Air Lines, he said.

**BALTIC SCHOOL**  
(January report)  
Grade IX—1. Margaret Crafer.  
Grade VIII—1. Marjory Riley; John Davison; 3. Neil Matthews.  
Grade VII—1. Roy Crozier; 2. Mary Matthews; 3. Roger Cousins.  
Grade VI—1. Sharon Crozier; 2. George Hunter; 3. Joseph MacKenzie.  
Grade III—1. Horace Crozier; 2.

**KELVIN GROVE**  
(January report)  
Grade X: 1. Ferne Reeves; 2. Gwen Court.  
Grade IX: 1. Errol Caseley; 2. Myron MacKenzie.  
Grade II—1. Thelma Cousins; 2. Nancy MacDonald; 3. Lorne Cousins.  
Grade I (Sr.)—1. Grant Cousins; 2. Robert Crofer.  
Grade I (Jr.)—1. Keith Davison.  
Highest average in senior, Marjory Riley, 90%.

Highest average in junior, Horace Crozier, 90%.

Margaret B. Cousins, Teacher.

Erma Reeves; 3. Joan Caseley.  
Grade VIII: 1. Garth Caseley; 2. Roberta Hogg; 3. Mariens MacMurdo.  
Grade VII: 1. Lloyd Blanchard; 2. Wilfred Blanchard.  
Grade VI: 1. Sheila Caseley; 2. Myron Paynter; 3. James Paynter.  
Grade V: 1. Kenneth Mosser; 2. Errol Waugh; 3. Walter Blanchard.  
Grade IV: 1. Judy Picketta.  
Grade III: 1. Astrid Miller; 2. Nancy MacMurdo; 3. Alice Blanchard.  
Grade I (a) 1. Mertis Picketta; 2. Gordon Blanchard; 3. Hugh Baglole.  
Grade I (b): 1. Willard Moase and Roger Caseley; 2. Rowan Caseley; 3. William Glover.

### POTATO ASSEMBLERS

It is impossible for the Selling Agency to make payment to you or to farmers for cars of potatoes on which Loading Reports have not been received. Loading Reports not properly completed with receipts attached, etc., are also causing delay in payments.

Payment has been made for all shipments reported to about February 15th. We are still waiting for Loading Reports on about 39 cars which were shipped to Halifax or Saint John for Export early in January. Farmers whose potatoes were shipped more than two weeks ago and who have not yet received their cheques should urge their Assemblers to submit Loading Reports promptly.

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