

# THE INVERTED PYRAMID

BY **Bertrand W. Sinclair**

Author of "North of Fifty-three"

## CHAPTER II

The path Rod walked approached the house by a circuitous route. It turned aside here and there like a leisurely pedestrian to skirt red-trunked arbusts with oily-green leaves and clusters of purple berries, to curve around the base of massive firs that rose like dun pillars in a blue-vaunted forum, to pass great fibrous-barked cedars with drooping boughs wherein unseen squirrels chattered. Everywhere grass clothed the ground, a carpet with green velvet pile, close shorn. Stones great and small had been gathered in artless piles so long ago that their granite nakedness was hidden under thick moss disguised with ivy, or bright with flowering plants, brilliant dabs of color against vivid greens and somber browns. This walk brought him at last to one end of a great stone house with wide, cool porches, deep window recesses, a roof of tiles that glowed in the sun like a cardinal's hat.

There were people sitting about on the porch, a dozen or more. Rod greeted them without halting until he reached the corner. Then he looked back over his shoulder through the trees on the parked slope he got a flash of the racing tide. The voice of the rapids waded strong. Across the channel Oliver Thorn's weather-beaten house was a drab spot on the forest's edge. Over the low shoulders of Valdez the distant backbone of Vancouver Island cut the sky into jagged tracery. That three-hundred-mile wall which stopped the marching surges from tropical seas loomed in a bluish haze out of which rose high, conical peaks, far and white and faintly shining.

He skirted the house. If he had destination or purpose Rod was not conscious of either as a definite urge. He was simply strolling. But as he turned the corner he came upon a girl leaning on a parasol and staring at some letters cut in a massive cornerstone where the thick foundation rose out of the earth.

"Oh, Rod," she said. "Do answer about a million questions for me, please."

"Have you got a list?" he asked.

"A list? Oh, no," she chuckled. "I'm still on an even keel."

"Nautically all right," Rod smiled. He didn't know Laska Wall very well. He hadn't seen much of her. She had only been at Hawk's Nest three days. Prior to that he had heard more or less about the Wall. They were people who had lately begun to cut quite a figure in Vancouver society. His brothers knew them. Both Phil and Grove had pretty well monopolized Laska since her arrival here. But what Rod had seen of her he liked. She was a quiet girl, with a slow smile that wonderfully transformed a piquant, delicately tinted face. Rod looked at her now admiringly. He wondered if Isabel, the pretty, bisque-doll creature whose dainty clothes Mary Thorn had remarked, would be like that when she was twenty-one. He supposed so, since they were sisters, but he could scarcely believe it. He detested Isabel. She giggled incessantly, flaunted herself before him with an irritating archness, annoyed him with her glib French, with numerous manifestations of what Rod contemptuously termed (to himself) "kindergarten stuff". He was a man, in his own estimation. It was a trial, which bore as a gentleman, to be expected to act as Isabel's cavalier, merely because they were the juveniles of this house party. Isabel was juvenile enough, Rod admitted. He exempted himself from the charge of extreme youth. But it was provoking to have every one else blandly proceed on that assumption. Perhaps that was why he warned to this fair-haired young woman who addressed him as an intellectual equal who could impart knowledge.

"What does that signify, Rod?" she asked, pointing to a group of letters and figures graven deep in the stone.

"On that's the cornerstone of the first course of masonry above ground of the first wing of the old house, built by the first Norquay," Rod told her with a trace of pride that he covered by assumed casualness. "Those are his initials. R. S. N. for Roderick Sylvester Norquay. And the year."

"1829," the girl murmured. "A hundred years exactly. You know I have always thought of this country as a semi-wilderness—the last American frontier. How many generations, Rod?"

"We're the fifth from his time," he indicated the chiseled stone. "Grove and Phil and myself and Dorothy. I don't know if you've met Dorothy. She's married to a chap named Hale. Lives in Victoria."

"A century since that stone was laid by a man's hands," Laska continued musingly. "Five generations. No, certainly I did not imagine one would find any such well-established ancestral heritage on this wild coast."

"What a century!" Rod commented. "Greece and Egypt had philosophers and poets and noble ruins when our ancestors were wearing skins and killing their meat with clumsy spears."

The girl paid no heed to this.

"I knew this place was old the moment I stepped ashore," she continued. "I knew it must have a history. Who

ple, unpretentious place in which plain men could take their long sleep.

Rod stopped by the first of the larger headstones.

"This was the first of our family here," he said.

The girl looked down at the inscription.

**RODERICK SYLVESTER NORQUAY**  
Born 1770  
Died 1834  
His eye was not dim  
Nor his natural force abated

"This was his wife," Rod pointed. "The first white woman to live on the Pacific coast north of California. That was his youngest son. That was his eldest son, my great-grandfather. And that was his youngest son, who was killed by the Chilcotin Indians on their second raid. There's grandfather's wife, and a son and daughter. There is my mother's grave. And over there is my oldest brother, who died before I was born."

"How interesting," the girl murmured. "What an adventurous time these first people of yours must have had."

"Rather," Rod agreed, "when you think of some of the things they had to face. Still, by all accounts, they rather enjoyed themselves. It never seems to have occurred to them to go elsewhere. There were lots of men pioneered after Vancouver's first voyage, but all of them except old Roderick seem to have come here to make a fortune in the fur trade and go home to live on their gains. Old Roderick kept a journal all his life. It's a queer matter-of-fact account of what he did, mixed up with a lot of philosophic speculation on why he did it. It appears that from the first time he dropped anchor in Mermaid Bay to wait out a fair tide through the narrows, he had the feeling that right here was the place to make a stand. He says quite frankly in his journal that a few men could easily subdue the natives and possess great estates. He says further that shortly after letting go the anchor he saw a hawk fly from its nest in a great tree, and he thought to himself that, by the grace of God and his own resolution, he would some day build on this silent headland a stout nest in which many a brood of Norquays should be hatched.

"Imagine a man who had crossed the Atlantic and rounded Cape Horn in a hundred-ton sailing vessel on a fur-trading venture looking at a savage coast and planning to found a family!"

"He had vision," Laska supplied.

"He needed to have, those days," Rod grinned. "The North Pacific was a fur-trader's paradise, but it was several thousand miles from anything like civilization. Old Roderick knew that well enough. He knew a good deal about this region before he came here on his own hook, you see. He happened out here first when Captain George Vancouver made his voyage of exploration in 1792. He was a petty officer on the "Discovery". He had the journal habit, even in those days. He tells about the surveys they made that year and the next. The idea of this country—after he'd seen a lot of it—took such a hold of him that three or four years later he got out of the British navy, scraped up all the money he could beg and borrow, outfitted a barque called the Hermes and sailed for the North-west to make a fortune trading knives and brass wire and Sheffield blades to the Indians for sea-otter skins.

"On that first voyage he got the idea of settling here. It evidently grew on him, because when he came out a second time—the first venture was a

very profitable one—he brought a couple of dozen extra men, artisans of different trades, and set up a trading post here just as Captain John Meares tried to do at Nootka Sound a very interesting earlier—you'll find a very interesting account of Meares and his clash with the Spaniards over that post in Begg's "History of British Columbia". Meares and Don Martinez between them very nearly got Spain and Great Britain into war. Vancouver came out here to look into that squabble as much as for anything else.

"But ancestor Norquay had this spot pretty much to himself. He bought Big Dent from a local chief for six sheets of copper, an old cutlass, and a pint of glass beads. Think of it! He built a blockhouse of logs with a sixteen-foot stockade. His men cultivated some land for vegetables. He had cattle and pigs and sheep—brought 'em out in the "Hermes", like Noah with the animals aboard the Ark. But fur-trading was the chief business. He traded for sea otter as far north as Sitka. Here at home he got beaver, mink, marten, whatever the Indians brought in. The Northwest Fur Company claimed this territory. They were carrying on a big scrap with the Hudson's Bay Company at the time. Finally the Hudson's Bay swallowed the Northwest concern and got a free hand. They tried for years to make all North America their private fur preserve. But they didn't scare old Roderick off. Apparently he wasn't afraid of them. Too well-equipped, I suppose, to be driven off."

"On his fourth voyage in 1804 he took a cargo of twenty-two hundred sea otter which netted him fifty-six thousand dollars—so you can see what the fur trade meant in those times. On that trip he met up with the daughter of a country gentleman of Northumberland—he was Scotch himself, you know—an English girl named Dorothy Grosvenor. Her people considered him a low-class adventurer. So they took a bit in their teeth, boarded the "Hermes" and sailed away. Sounds quaint. They brought out three or four families with them. The men stationed here had mostly gotten Indian wives by that time. Dorothy sailed with great-grandfather wherever he went with the barque for three or four years. But their first child was born here on Big Dent in 1807.

"The next year the Chilcotins came down. They've a fighting tribe from the interior. They had a way of coming down a river to the head of Bute Inlet, killing as many coast Indians as they could, taking the loot and the young women back across the mountains. I suppose they had heard of this white man who had lots of goods. So they organized a surprise attack on Hawk's Nest, as it was already called.

"There was quite a scrimmage by all accounts. The Chilcotins were beaten off. We lost six men in the fight. Those small headstones are for them." Rod indicated a compact row of graves.

"So the following year old Roderick, who had never given up for a moment the idea of making this his permanent home, started the stone house. He built one wing. His son added a wing. Grandfather can tell you how he built the albat addition, and another story, and how he put on a roof of tiles in 1860 after the Cariboo gold rush.

"The Chilcotins pulled off another surprise party in 1826, but they got such a hot reception they never tried again. By that time old Roderick had two sons and two daughters. The young-

est son was the only man killed on our side. He led a party to destroy the Chilcotin canoes while they were attacking the house. He was killed by an arrow. But they smashed the canoes and only two Chilcotins out of forty got away. In fact, they were spared to go back and tell the rest of the tribe that it was bad medicine to molest the white men who lived at Hawk's Nest.

"They understood that, evidently, because they never came back. Although nearly twenty years later a

brother of grandfather's was stuck full of arrows one evening right down where our boat landing is now. That killing was credited to the Chilcotins—in revenge. But it wasn't a fight. It was pure assassination. However, that was the last bloodshed here.

To be continued.


One way to get business is to bid for it. Invite people to your store through THE ACADIAN—the paper that goes in to the home where the reading is done.



### Reports on Canada's Crops

At frequent intervals throughout the season the Bank of Montreal issues reports on the progress of the crops in Canada. These reports, telegraphed to headquarters from the Managers of the Bank's 550 Branches, cover every Province and form a reliable index of crop conditions.

The reports are furnished free. Upon request at any Branch of the Bank your name will be placed on our mailing list.



## BANK OF MONTREAL

Total Assets in Excess of \$650,000,000.00

### Hutchinson's Bus Service

COMMENCING MAY 1ST.  
WOLFVILLE AND KENTVILLE ROUTE

Leave	Via	Arrive
Wolfville 7.00 A. M.	Main Road	Kentville 7.30 A. M.
Kentville 8.00 A. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 8.30 A. M.
Wolfville 9.00 A. M.	Main Road	Kentville 9.30 A. M.
Kentville 10.30 A. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 11.00 P. M.
Wolfville 1.30 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 2.00 P. M.
Kentville 2.30 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 3.00 P. M.
Wolfville 4.15 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 4.45 P. M.
Kentville 5.30 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 6.00 P. M.
Wolfville 7.00 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 7.30 P. M.
Kentville 8.30 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 9.00 P. M.
Wolfville 9.30 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 10.00 P. M.
Kentville 10.00 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 10.30 P. M.

**SUNDAY TRIPS**

Leave	Via	Arrive
Wolfville 10.00 A. M.	Main Road	Kentville 10.30 A. M.
Kentville 12.15 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 12.45 P. M.
Wolfville 1.45 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 2.15 P. M.
Kentville 2.45 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 3.15 P. M.
Wolfville 4.00 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 4.30 P. M.
Kentville 5.00 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 5.30 P. M.
Wolfville 6.30 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 7.00 P. M.
Kentville 8.00 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 8.30 P. M.
Wolfville 9.00 P. M.	Main Road	Kentville 9.30 P. M.
Kentville 10.00 P. M.	Main Road	Wolfville 10.30 P. M.

## Telephone About Summer Quarters

The Seaside or in the Country.

Now June is here with the great question, "Where are we to spend the summer?"

It was quite a task a few years ago and took lots of time and trouble, hunting for holiday accommodation by the aid of pen and ink and postage stamps.

Now that the ladies of the household have taken, like their fathers, husbands and brothers, to the use of the Telephone, the hunt is more of a pleasure than a toil and takes practically no time at all.

Every, even the smallest, village in the Province has Telephone service and if the person wanted hasn't herself a Telephone, why she can easily be brought to one

### Maritime Telegraph & Telephone Co. LIMITED

#### A LOAN ON YOUR REAL ESTATE

will provide for IMPROVEMENTS, REPAIRS, OR REFUNDING OF YOUR PRESENT LOANS

Our installment plan offers you an easy way of repayment

CALL OR WRITE FOR FOLDER

## THE EASTERN CANADA SAVINGS & LOAN CO.,

G. C. NOWLAN, Agent  
Wolfville, N. S.

### WHITE PIGEONS and JUNE BRIDES

A quaint superstition tells us that "Should a Strange White Pigeon fly near a house, it is a sure sign that someone within will be married shortly".

That IS Superstition, Pure and Simple—Nevertheless Invisible "Homer" Pigeons are busy right now.

The first need will be Nicely Printed Wedding Invitations and Announcements.

GET THESE AT THE ACADIAN OFFICE. EXCELLENT STOCK. PRICES RIGHT.

OUR AIM IS TO PLEASE YOU.

### Wrigley's


after every meal

Cleanses mouth and teeth and aids digestion. Relieves that over-eaten feeling and acid mouth.

Its l-a-s-t-i-n-g flavor satisfies the craving for sweets.

Wrigley's is double value in the benefit and pleasure it provides.

Sold in its Family Package.



The flavor lasts

---

### Automobile Owners Notice

The Best Insurance on your Car or Yourself, in case of Accident, and the Cheapest.

## A. L. A.

Maritime

Let me forward you particulars.

## C. A. PORTER

District Superintendent.