

# The Secret of the Old Chateau

By DAVID WHITELAW.

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Synopsis of previous chapters. Vivian Renshaw and Eddie Haverton, modern soldiers of fortune, have been gambling with Hubert Baxter, a prosperous attorney, in his London apartments. After their departure one night Baxter returns to the house, murders Baxter and hides the body on the roof. While waiting for night to come again in order to make his escape, he finds in a desk a curious old yellowed document telling of a mysterious chest left in the care of one of Baxter's ancestors by a French nobleman, the Marquis de Dargigny. The chest has been handed down from one generation of Baxters to another and carefully guarded in the hope that some day its rightful owner will be found. Baxter decides to pose as the missing heir and claim the chest. He goes to France to make some inquiries about the Dargigny family. The story of the mysterious chest goes back to the troubled days of the French Revolution and the escape of the Marquis and his little daughter in England, where the chest and document were given to the Baxters for safe keeping. Now, more than one hundred years later, Hubert Baxter's body is found, but the police find no clue. Meanwhile, Baxter changes his name to Baptiste Dartin, and visits Canada; then he presents his fictitious claims to Robert Baxter, new head of the firm, and receives the treasure chest. Robert, who is in the chest, Dartin goes to the stage. She tells him he must wait a year for her answer. Dartin is first greatly disappointed to find only a paltry thousand pounds in the chest. He is relieved to discover later a large key and a parchment telling where the real treasure is hidden. Giving Baxter a quiet knock and chain which he found in the chest, Dartin goes to France. By posing as an artist he gains admittance to the Chateau Chauville, and in a secret vault finds an immense fortune in gold, silver and rare pictures.

## CHAPTER XI. (Contd.)

Seizing the scarf firmly in both hands Vivian raised himself until his head rested upon the coffin lid. Then with a little spring he started his elbow. The slender crack of splintering wood as he "took off" from the old casket caused a little thrill of horror to run through him, but he crept up, hand over hand, until at last his fingers gripped the edge of the floor. With this he pulled himself up, and the scarf it was not difficult to clamber up and Vivian, exhausted but happy, sank down in one of the little pews of the chapel.

Through the window above the altar the rays of a young moon shone thinly. A glance at his watch told Vivian that it was half-past ten, and he looked round for a means of completing his escape. To a man who understood lockwork as he did this was a simple matter, and by the time the clock in the tiny belfry was chiming eleven M. Baptiste Dartin was in the little plantation of firs which surrounded the secret building.

Cautiously he made his way to the lodge and, scaling the gateway, crossed the bridge and reached the high road. Midway between the chateau and the "Three Lilies" he came upon old Henri, who was returning from the inn.

Vivian stopped him. He had been into Blois, he told the man, to order the frames for the pictures. By the way, would it be convenient for him to finish the dining-room sketch the next afternoon? In the meantime, would Henri honor him by returning to the "Three Lilies" as his guest, there to open a bottle of the really excellent claret that house provided? It took Vivian three days to finish the sketch, and when finally he departed from Massey he left old Henri in the seventh heaven of delight, for had not the gentleman taken his pictures into Blois and returned with them framed in gold? Perhaps the gentleman would come again and paint some more pictures, in fact, he had almost said as much.

Three days later the gentleman in question was seated with a jeweller of great wealth and indifferent morals in an office in a street behind the Hoozard in Rotterdam. For the first time in the merchant's life he was unable to deal single-handed with the collection which was set out before him. But there are other jewel merchants in Holland, and by the united efforts of three of the principal ones in the trade the collection of diamonds, emeralds and rubies from the Chateau Chauville changed hands to the satisfaction of the gentleman who had called to dis-

pose of them and who bore on his card the name—

BAPTISTE DARTIN

## CHAPTER XII. The Blackmailer.

Eighteen months had passed since the night when Hubert Baxter met with his death in Mortimer Terrace, and still, with the exception of the murderer himself, there was but one man who suspected anything of the truth, the mysterious affair. True, Eddie Haverton had no knowledge when he parted from Vivian Renshaw in the fog at Regent's Park Circle that his companion had any intention of returning to the house which they had left a moment before, but one conclusion—and upon him it had a far-reaching effect. Morally, Mr. Haverton was no whit better than he had ever been—it was not in his nature to be so; but his narrow escape from being enmeshed in the web of the Regent's Park mystery had given him a severe shaking up.

As he sat in his flat this bright spring morning he told himself that although the steady road was infinitely less interesting and lacked many of the allurements of the broader thoroughfare, it was smoother travelling for a man of middle age whose nervous system had never been of the best. He shuddered even now at the remembrance of what his life had been during those first few weeks following the discovery of the body on the roof. He remembered the feelings with which he had moved, and the one newspaper to watch the developments of the case in which at any moment he might be called upon to take a principal part.

Hour by hour, day and night, he had been pursued and tormented by the memory of anticipation. Not a knock on his door nor a friendly tap on the shoulder in the street but he told himself that his hour had come. The fact that this was innocent weighed little with him; the explanation, should it become known that he was with Baxter on that night, was beyond even his fertile brain. Unlike Renshaw, he had had no particular reason for removing any trace that would point to his presence in Mortimer Terrace. He said that there were a hundred and one things that might incriminate him—a handkerchief, a scrap of paper, a cigar end, a thumb print.

It was this latter which held Eddie Haverton in the grip of deadly fear. He knew well that among the thumb impressions at Scotland Yard his had their place, and memories of three years he had passed in a tiny apartment overlooking the granite-streets of Dartmouth, which had followed the taking of these impressions, came back to him in shuddering force.

But that time of terror was all over now. Hubert Baxter had been unavailing in the family vault at Highgate and the affair of his death no longer claimed the public attention. The police had apparently dropped the case, and the most blatant of the "yellow" press had long been silent on a subject from which they had squeezed all sensation.

And Eddie Haverton, ever since that November night, had run straight—that is to say, that in any venture which he made his brain and hand were careful to remain well on the right side of the hedge planted by the law around that particular business. He had been successful in the past and his good fortune seemed to hold good now that he had chosen a more reputable mode of life. Everything he touched turned out well—a dairy, which he ran for a few months, was disposed of to a company at a large profit; he earned a comfortable income of a penny weekly and the circulation rose at once until it reached a quarter of a million.

But these were but speculations, and Eddie's attitude as to the theatrical field that his chief energies were expended. Always a keen player, he rapidly turned to financial account his experience of many years. He did not advertise his present connection with the stage more than he was able, but the theatrical world were well aware that he was the power behind the throne in more than a few touring successes, and that London managers were beginning to speak of and fear this man who robbed them by his specious offers of some of the most promising members of their companies. For Eddie Haverton's scent for "talent" was keen, and many a chorus girl and two-line actor owed a big success to the man who had watched them from the stalls.

It had just been like his luck that Haverton should secure the services of Stella Benham. It was his rule, and he found it a paying one, to watch the performances of understudies with infinite care. His knowledge of human nature and of the life and jealousies of the world behind the scenes gave him an advantage that he was not slow to take.

Stella's reign in the name part of "The Slum Duchess" had been brief. Miss Foster, who had hoped to stimulate the taste of the public by her strenuous return to the theatre, had been completely recovered from her indisposition on hearing of the success of her understudy. She returned to her duties in three days and Stella was again rele-

## MERCHANTS BANK OFFICIALS EXPRESS TEMPERED OPTIMISM REGARDING BUSINESS SITUATION

President and General Manager Review the Canadian Business Situation With Much Hope—Financial Position of the Bank an Exceptionally Strong One—Crop Outlook Encouraging.

At the annual meeting of the Merchants Bank of Canada the various reports which were presented showed that this institution occupies a commanding position in Canadian financial affairs. The addresses of the President, Sir Montagu Allan, and the General Manager, Mr. D. C. Macarow, were concise statements of present day conditions and contained an optimistic survey of the future.

### The President's Address.

Sir Montagu Allan, in his address, "The general condition in business, felt to a greater or lesser degree in every country in the world, has affected the business of the bank to some extent, but we hope, the low point of depression has been passed, and that there will soon be a change for the better. The coal strike in England which will no doubt result in the loss of a great deal of trade, and the rest and discontent which seems to prevail in nearly all the countries of Europe, give rise to serious financial problems to be reckoned with, but no man in this country who is strong and healthy can afford to be a pessimist for any length of time. The known and undeveloped resources are sufficient to ensure future prosperity.

### New Issue of Stock.

"As mentioned in last year's report a further issue of \$2,000,000 of new stock was made, making the paid-up capital of the bank \$10,500,000, and by the transfer of the premium on the new stock to the rest account, the rest now stands at \$9,450,000.

"The shareholders of the bank now number 2,997, as against 2,622 in 1929, being an increase of 375 during the year."

Current loans and discounts stand at \$109,183,000, as against \$113,198,000 last year. It will be seen, therefore, that this bank continues to extend its ample share of assistance to the industries of the country.

### General Manager is Optimistic.

Following the president's concise yet comprehensive review of the situation, as reflected in the year's statements, said Mr. Macarow, there is little left for me to add beyond, perhaps, a word or two by way of amplification.

It will be observed that in comparison with last year's figures our total

assets show a shrinkage of about \$7,000,000, or roughly, 35 per cent.

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## Woman's Interests

These Are Picnic Days.

A picnic lunch to be worth the name, is tasty, wholesome, satisfying and simple. Plain, simple food well prepared, neatly and attractively packed, always tastes good in the big out-of-doors.

A picnic lunch that was enjoyed and appreciated by all who partook of it consisted of beef hash, lettuce sandwiches, pickles, sponge cake, milk, coffee and fruit. Two pastries contributed to the feast and not more than one-half hour was spent in preparation. The hash was prepared, seasoned, put in a spider, covered, wrapped and packed. Lettuce was washed and wrapped in damp cloth; butter, put in jelly glass with cover; bread and cake, were each wrapped in oil paper and all packed in the lunch basket; cold milk was put into a thermos bottle, ground coffee in a small cheesecloth bag in the pail in which it was to be made.

Over a camp fire by the roadside, the hash and coffee were cooked while the remainder of the lunch was spread in a grove nearby.

Another picnic lunch eaten on the shore of a lake might have taken a prize for little work and real enjoyment.

Raw fried potatoes, fried white fish, bread and butter, jelly sandwiches, pickles, ginger bread, milk and coffee made up the menu. These proficient in fire building and camp cooking prepared the fish, potatoes and coffee while others attended to laying the cloth and placing the food. Everyone enjoyed the eating and no one objected to necessary dishwashing with the lake for a dishpan.

Hot picnic dish—6 cups sliced raw potatoes, 2½ cups ground raw ham, 3 cups sweet whole milk, ½ teaspoonful salt, 2 teaspoonfuls flour. Put the potatoes and ham in a buttered and crumbled baking dish in alternate layers beginning with potatoes and finishing with ham. Sprinkle the flour over the different layers, add the salt (not too much as ham is salt) and milk and bake in a slow oven for one-half to two hours. When done, wrap in a clean cloth, then in several thicknesses of paper and it will keep hot for an hour or more.

Bate and nut bread—3 cups bread sponge, 1 cup ground peanuts, 1 cup chopped dates, ½ teaspoonful salt, 3 cups flour or enough to make a stiff dough. The sponge may be taken from the regular setting of bread and the other ingredients added. Lay the dough out until double in size, knead, shape into a loaf, let rise and bake. Butter only is needed when making sandwiches from this loaf.

Filling for sandwich—¼ lb. strong cream cheese, ¼ lb. butter, 1 medium-sized sweet green pepper. Grind the cheese and mix butter and cheese together until smooth and creamy, add the pepper which have been chopped, and mix well. Pimentos may be used in place of green peppers or both may be left out. Thin slices of rye bread spread generously with this filling make an excellent sandwich.

Peanut sandwich filling—1 cup shelled peanuts, 1-3 to 1-2 cup sweet cream, ½ teaspoonful salt. Remove the brown skin from the peanuts, put them through the food chopper using the pulverizing plate, add the salt and cream. With a fork, mix until smooth. Cooked mayonnaise may be used in place of cream if desired.

Sandwich glorious—Cut day-old slices a little less than one-half inch in thickness. Spread one slice thinly with butter then with blackberry jam. Spread another slice with cottage cheese seasoned with cream and salt, place the two slices together, cut in any shape desired and serve.

Ginger snaps—1 cup sugar, 1 cup molasses, 1 cup fat, 4 cups flour, 1 tablespoonful vinegar, 1 tablespoonful

## Too Cheerful.

Optimism is assuredly preferable to pessimism; but even the sanest optimist cannot safely dispense with intelligence and moderation.

Optimism is a modern word; but the too cheerful optimist is not new. There was a certain Samuel who dwelt in an old New England town nearly a century ago. "So hanged easy-gold" ye can't rile him, but he riles everybody by just never gettin' riled," was the description his brother-in-law gave of him: it was offered in exculpation of Samuel's wife, who was high-tempered, and who did not always find her husband's cheerfulness tranquillizing. It led, in fact, to frequent domestic explosions. Tradition has preserved the story of one such occasion.

The family had moved. In crossing a rickety little bridge a wheel of the wagon that bore most of their household possessions went through a rotten plank and tilted most of the load into the stream. The things that they tollfully salvaged in a more or less damaged condition were stored in the barn of a farmer near by to dry out while in a borrowed carryall husband and wife got on to the new house.

Packed round them and tied on became a new bedding that had escaped with no more than a splashing, a trunk, a few pots and pans and the wife's cherished rocking-chair. Unfortunately, in unloading the carryall on their arrival, Samuel set the rocking-chair down with such force that he broke it. Up to that moment his spouse had borne herself with a calm that could not endure; the broken chair was the final touch that released the pent-up feelings. Samuel endeavored to soothe her.

"Now, there, Maria, don't ya take on," he said, "Look on the bright side! Dwell upon your marbles! Here we be, safe to home, with a mattress to lie on that ain't more'n a little mite damp; and as fer settin' down—well, with fourteen winter seats to set on and every four besides bran' new 'n' clean as the inside of a shell, who cares fer a chair?"

Unluckily for him, Maria "keered" to such an extent that in her exasperation she launched a flying pan at him, which narrowly missed his smile. Samuel was astonished and pained. "Maria's high-spirited," he declared meekly. "Course, I'm doted to that. What I can't get used to is the things that sets her off. To think of her, after admirin' week an' a half like a Christian, flyin' out at me like a wild woman about one old chair!"

He would perhaps have been even more amazed and grieved could he have been convinced that it was less the "cheer" that was too much for Maria than his own untimely cheerfulness.

## Dates of Easter.

Easter was earlier this year than it has been celebrated since 1913, and it will be more than nine years before it happens so early again. The date was fixed almost 1,600 years ago at the Council of Nice as "the first Sunday after the first full moon that falls after March 21." If a full moon occurs on Sunday, Easter is celebrated one week later. This year the full moon occurred on March 23 the last time in 1913. When the full moon occurs just before March 31, Easter has to be delayed until after the next full moon, which sometimes throws it late in April. In 1909 and 1906 Easter was delayed until April 23.

Weather Bureau officials say there is no truth in the old saying that an early Easter makes an early spring, and vice versa, but there is no question about an early Easter bringing out early styles prematurely, and any person that can prevail on Christian countries to celebrate Easter on the same date each year will have the heartfelt thanks of dressmakers, milliners and clothiers all over the world.

It is not likely, though, that this change will ever be made, as it took almost 1,800 years before the important countries managed to agree on a common date for this important spring event, and even yet in countries where Russian and Greek churches hold away Easter is celebrated according to old time, which generally throws it on some other Sunday than it comes in the Western countries.

Following are the dates for Easter for the next nine years: 1929, April 16; 1930, April 1; 1931, April 20; 1932, April 12; 1933, April 4; 1934, April 17; 1935, April 8; 1936, March 31; 1937, April 29.

## Origin of Ice Cream.

Ice-cream was first mentioned, although not perhaps by that name, by Marco Polo, who visited Japan in the thirteenth century. He brought back tales of water and milk tarts which were among the delicacies then known to the people of the East.

In the sixteenth century occurred mention of the delectable compound in connection with Catherine de Medici, who introduced frozen fruit juices from Italy to France, while later, her son employed a special chef to invent new kinds of ices, the latter establishing a shop to sell ice cream to the aristocracy.

There is an account of a wonderful banquet given by Louis XIV. of France at which was laid before each guest a gilt cup containing apparently an egg colored to resemble those presented at Easter. But to the surprise of the guests it was found to be a delicious sweetmeat, cold and compact as marble.

## This is Canada's Wireless Year!

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