

when she was smooth. I didn't feel so scared of her then.

The marriage was to be at eleven o'clock, and at nine I went up to help Philippa dress. She was no fussy bride, caring much what she looked like. If Owen had been the bridegroom it would have been different. Nothing would have pleased her then; but now it was only just, "that will do very well, Aunt Rachel," without even glancing at it.

Still, nothing could prevent her from looking lovely when she was dressed. My dearie would have been a beauty in a beggar maid's rags. In her white dress and veil she was as fair as a queen. And she was as good as she was pretty. It was the right sort of goodness, too, with just enough spice of original sin in it to keep it from spoiling by reason of over-sweetness.

Then she sent me out.

"I want to be alone my last hour," she said. "Kiss me, Aunt Rachel—Mother Rachel."

When I'd gone down, crying like the old fool I was, I heard a rap at the door. My first thought was to go out and send Isabella to it, for I supposed

it was Mark Foster come ahead of time, and small stomach I had for seeing him. I fall trembling even yet when I think, "what if I had sent Isabella to that door?"

But go I did and opened it, defiant-like, kind of hoping it was Mark Foster to see the tears on my face. I opened it—and staggered back like I'd got a blow.

"Owen! Lord ha' mercy on us! Owen!" I said, just like that, going cold all over, for it's the truth that I thought it was his spirit come back to forbid that unholy marriage.

BUT he sprang right in and caught my wrinkled old hands in a grasp that was of flesh and blood.

"Aunt Rachel, I'm not too late?" he said, savage-like. "Tell me I'm in time."

I looked up at him, standing over me there, tall and handsome, no change in him except he was so brown and had a little white scar on his forehead; and though I couldn't understand at all, being all bewildered-like, I felt a great, deep thankfulness.

"No, you're not too late," I said.

"Thank God!" said he, under his breath. And then he pulled me into the parlour and shut the door.

"They told me at the station that Philippa was to be married to Mark Foster to-day. I couldn't believe it, but I came to Carmody as fast as horse-flesh could bring me. Aunt Rachel, it can't be true! She can't care for Mark Foster, even if she has forgotten me."

"It's true enough that she is to marry Mark," I said, half-laughing, half-crying, "but she doesn't care for him. Every beat of her heart is for you. It's all her stepma's doings. Mark has got a mortgage on the place and he told Isabella Clark that if Philippa would marry him he'd burn the mortgage, and if she wouldn't he'd foreclose. Philippa is sacrificing herself to save her ma for her dead father's sake. It's all your fault," I cried, getting over my bewilderment. "We thought you were dead. Why didn't you come home when you were alive? Why didn't you write?"

"I did write, after I got out of the hospital—
(Concluded on page 21.)

The Burning of Athabasca Landing

Story of a Hustling Newspaper Scoop

By FRANCIS J. DICKIE

SUDDEN, and as devastating as a Texas "Norther" was the fire that, breaking out, it is thought, in the rear of a pool-room or the Grand Union Hotel, upon the main street, almost wiped out the entire business section of the infant city of Athabasca Landing. The loss will amount to over half a million.

Driven from his key by the flames, the operator at the Canadian Northern Railway sent a flash of the disaster to the Edmonton office of the company about four in the morning. The night gang of the *Morning Bulletin* were just leaving when the meagre story came into the office through the friendly assistance of the operator at the Canadian Northern down-town office. The paper was held up and a six-line story, heavy-loaded, was shot onto the street. There seemed nothing else to be done with no response from the C. N. R. office, so with the exception of the Western Associated Press operator on the leased office wire and one lone reporter, doing the "dog watch," the office was deserted.

It was nearing six o'clock when suddenly the reporter remembered the Government's wire line from the Landing. Here was a possibility. The W. A. P. operator in the office had typed the last line of the "morning string" of press and was preparing to go. But with the dawning idea as sprung

by the reporter, the two hurried out of the office and down the street. The main door of the big building, within which lay the precious wires, was locked. After some skirmishings and an unlatched door at the rear of the building the two made their entrance and in another moment the expert W. A. P. man was sending out the call to the Landing.

For hours the man at the other end of the wire had been calling ineffectually at this one wire, the only link between the burning city and civilization. When the W. A. P. cut in the story came through.

In the meantime the early staffs of the afternoon paper had come to life, and while the *Bulletin* reporter waited for the first sheet of press the telephone began to call. It was the desk man of one of the afternoon papers.

"There won't be any stuff through for a couple of hours yet," the *Bulletin* man said to the excited questioning of the voice of the desk man from the rival paper. The operator don't get down till nine."

Then followed a wordy battle on the part of the desk man, who, believing that he was talking to one of the telegraph company, was unsparing in his remarks. And all the while the *Bulletin* man sat and smiled and waited for the sheets of press.

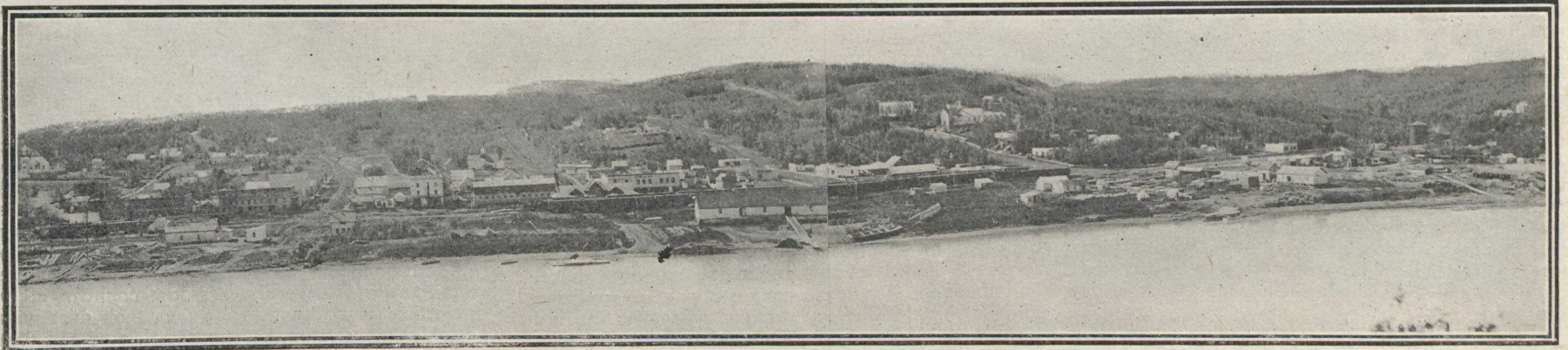
With the first two sheets of press in his hands he hurried to the office, and for the next thirty minutes every energy was directed towards rounding up operators, pressmen and the circulation department.

One of the strangest features of this great fire is the fact that within a month the city's new water-works department, upon which work has been going on for the last eight months, would have been completed, but on the morning of August 5th not even an engine was available.

Starting near to the Grand Union Hotel, the flames swept up Strathcona Street and down Litchfield Avenue. Like all new towns of the north land, the town of Athabasca was largely of gaunt, frame buildings, built fairly close together and giving the flames every opportunity for headway.

The city of Edmonton was not slow to offer aid to the citizens of Athabasca, hundreds of whom were homeless. The early train to the Landing was loaded with mattresses, bedding and provisions, which reached the town early in the afternoon.

The principal losses are: Grand Union and Athabasca Hotels, \$75,000; Revillons' warehouse, stores, etc., within \$20,000; Gagnon block, \$30,000; R. N. W. M. P., \$4,000; Forwarding Company's goods and warehouse, \$50,000; besides these, dozens of small businesses averaging from one to five thousand dollars were all swept away by the fire.



A General View of the Town of Athabasca Landing Before the Fire; the Head of Navigation on the Sub-Arctic Chain of Rivers and Lakes Emptying Into the Mackenzie, 92 Miles North of Edmonton.



This Picture Shows the Telegraph Line That Got the Story Out to Edmonton.



Part of the Ruins of Athabasca Landing, With the Railway Bridge in the Background.