The Flying Courier

by Boyd Cable

SYNOPSIS.

At Croydon aerodrome, Glynn Elliman, pilot of the Indian Air Mail liner, meets Norah Seaman. At the last minute he is ordered to stand by for a special job. The Prince of Napatala is ill in London and in haste to return to India, where his father has died. He must be present to claim the throne, which his half-brother, The Vulture, plots to seize.

Glynn flies the machine to London, but the doctors refuse to allow the Prince to fly to India. As a last resort the Prince has a talking film made of himself reading the Proclamation of Inheritance. Glynn's plane if found to have been tampered with by The Vulture's agents, so decision is made for him to deliver the film by the regular air route.

CHAPTER V.—(Cont'd.)

Glynn's precaution of taking a taxi taxi did not prevent Stefan and Max from picking up the scent at the start and following his taxi in their car to the Post Office. Max, in obedience to orders, went in to the Post Office and fiddled about buying some stamps and postcards, and when he returned to the car he made his report to Stefan.

"He's got the film in that despatch case right enough," he said. "He kept it on the counter in front of him for a bit with a hand on it, and when he needed both hands to stick stamps on letters, he put the case on the floor up against the counter, with one foot on it. Wasn't taking any chances of bag-snatching evidently, and has something in that bag he means to watch close."

Glynn was well before the usual time for the Airways motor to start with passengers for Croydon to embark on the Mail 'plane, and he did not have to go by it because a car from the aerodrome had came in and was able to give him a lift out. On arrival at the 'drome, well ahead of the passengers, he was able to go through all the formalities, get his scanty luggage labelled, and have a chat with the pilot of the outgoing 'plane before the passengers arrived.

It had been arranged, in order that he might have the advantage of special facilities in getting through foreign Customs, and in other ways, that he was shipping out with a passenger's place, but with the privileges of a spare or extra pilot all the way through, which allowed him, amongst other things, to go up into the pilots' cockpit forbidden to passengers.

He did not notice that a closed car stood at a point where its occupants could look out on all the passengers who presently began to stream in from the cars and out to where the 'plane waited them. But in that car sat the Indian secretary to the Prince, and with him to officers of Police—one from Scotland Yard, and another lately of the Indian Police. It was a little precaution the Secretary had thought well to take, wisely and usefully as it turned out.

The first result of that precaution jolted Glynn Elliman out of the sense of security and routine procedure into which he had been droppin in the run of the normal procedure of the Mail's departure—the arrival of the Mail van and loading of the Mail bags aboard the 'plane, the starting up of the engines, the first of the passengers beginning to stream out to the machine.

A brisk little man with a brick-red face making for the 'plane swerved suddenly, came straight for Glynn, and stopped with a gesture towards the machine which had nothing to do with what he said but which would have looked to anyone seeing it to indicate a question about the machine.

"I'm here with the Secretary to the Prince," he said quickly. "Both of us under cover to get a glimpse of your passengers. There's one man you must watch—a man from Napalata way, possibly in the pay of the Prince's enemies. He's one of the cleverest thieves and cut-throats of all India and and an expert in drugs and knock-out drops. Don't let him within fingers' reach of what you carry, or of anything you eat or drink. If you do you'll find that bag done, or empty."

He gestured towards the plane again and added, "D'you understand?"

"I do," said Glynn, adding to the pantomime play with a wave of the hand out to the 'drome. "I'll watch your man all right if you'll point him out to me."

"I'll go straight from you and speak to him, and him only. The Indian I speak to is the man. Berth booked as Dass—assumed name."

"Right you are," said Glynn. "Coming with us? No! Well, tell the Sec not to worry; and s'long."

The little man nodded and trotted off and Glynn watched him swing converging in on the passengers, step in beside a lean-bodied thin-faced Indian, and taking him by the arm edge him clear of the others, talking rapidly. The Indian wilted, visibly drooping under the quick-running sentences, making a weak attempt to rally himself and bluster, but collapsing again under the quick retort that came, and standing staring after the little man as he turned abruptly and made off.

He made no further sign to Glynn, which was perhaps as well, because Glynn, by then, had no eyes for any such sign or for anything else than a man and a girl walkig and talking together and drawing nearer to where the Indian stood.

Glynn saw the man move for a moment from the girl's side, say something quickly with a fierce jerk of the head towards the 'plane as if ordering the Indian to go to it, and then turn back beside the girl again as the Indian obeyed and moved slowly on.

Glynn had a vague idea then that he had seen the man before, and later was to know him as Max and remember him as the man seen that day in the Post Office. At the moment he had no thought for this nor for a significance he came later to attach to the linking up of the three—the Indian he had been warned against, the girl's companion who evidently knew this India, and the girl who was also on such friendly terms with him.

He was staring at the girl, at first with doubts if he could believe his eyes, then with no doubt left as she came nearer and turned her full face towards him for an instant.

She was the girl he had met the week before by the Indian Air Mail 'plane—Norah Seaman!

CHAPTER VI.

Glynn, recovering his wits, hurried forward and at his cry of her name was delighted to see the joyful surprise on her face as she recognized him, to hear the happy lilt in her voice as she answered him—"You! I'm so glad . . . . I thought I'd lost you."

"Not much," he said gaily as they shook hands warmly. "I've been away—busy—since I saw you last. But I rang last night, and . . ."

"Yes, I know," she interrupted. "My friends told me this morning you'd left a message, but didn't say where I could 'phone you. I wanted to tell you I'm off back to India."

"Not on this Air Mail?" he cried incredulously. "That would be too good to be true."

"Why?" she demanded. "Don't say you're piloting? No, you're not dressed for that."

He suddenly remembered the man she had been talking with and who now, although he had moved a little apart from them, was still keeping pace. "Is he seeing you off?" he asked in a low tone. "Shall I leave you now, and see you aboard later. Yes, I'm coming too. Tell you about it presently."

"I don't know him," she said in the same low tones. "Just one of the passengers I met a minute ago."

By now they had come to the 'plane, and the other man turned, lifting his hat and saying, "I see you have found a friend, but if there is anything else I can do."

"He's coming on this Mail too. Let me introduce Captain Elliman—er—I didn't—I don't think—"

"Max," smiled the other, "George Max! I'm glad to know Miss—" he hesitated, and Glynn completed the introduction, and added hurriedly, "Excuse me a moment. I want a word with our pilot. You get aboard now, and I'll join you presently."

He made for the pilot who was speaking to the liner's steward, but it was to the latter, and not to the pilot he spoke. "See here, Sam, I want you to fix something for me. See that man and the girl going up the steps now? Well, I want you to put her in a seat beside me, and shove the man in some other seat. And another thing—there's a lanky looking Indian wearing heavy spectacles. Plant him in the furthest off place you can. Fix that and I'll have some more to tell you later."

"Very good, sir," said the steward. "I have special orders to do everything I can that you ask on this trip, and pass the word along for the others to do the same. I'll see to it at once, sir."

He darted off and Glynn explained to the pilot. "You heard, I suppose, I'm shipping as a sort of extra spare supernumery pilot and making the trip right through?"

"I just heard you were doing that over my section, Glynn," said the other. "Are you taking over the run somewhat further East?"

"Not quite settled what I'm doing," said Glynn. "I'll hear at t'other end."

The liner was fairly full, but the steward had secured good seats for Glynn and his companion side by side. When all were aboard, the baggage and mails stowed, and the doors closed, the engines' quiet hum rose to a muffled long-drawn booming roar, and the machine began to roll, bumping gently and ponderously, out on to the 'drome. Glynn, feeling they were now well on the way, began: "Now, Miss Seaman, how do you come to be making the trip back so soon. You told me...."

But she was by no means ready to discuss anything but the wonderful and, to her, new experience of starting the flight. Staring eagerly out of the window down at the ground beginning to move at gathering speed, she cried out: "Oh do wait. We've lots of time for that, and I'm ever so excited about this flying. Look, we're turning round, aren't we. Why?"

He began to explain all about the machine and the start, how the take-off had to be made into the wind, and that the liner was turning on the ground to face into the wind. "Now we're round," he said. "She'll speed up now....See....watch the ground. ....Now her tail's off. Watch—we're off."

She watched, fascinated, as the ground appeared to drop away from them rather than the liner leave it, and she felt the slight bumping movement change into a steady smoothness. But even when the liner swung and headed away on her due course, the girl had a hundred and one questions to ask, and it was not until they were nearing the Channel that they began to talk of other things, and then brokenly and with many interruptions for him to point out something he thought would interest her, or she to exclaim at a tiny toy-like ship below, or the distant shores of France, or anything else that caught her eye.

"I had a cable this week," she explained at last, "only a day or two after I saw you, saying that my father was ill. Then I had another saying he was worse and that it was rather serious, and I made up my mind to get back to him. I thought at once about the Air Mail and how much quicker it would get me there, so I just cabled I was leaving by air on Saturday."

(To be continued.)

True

A lot of women make fools of men, but as some women make men of fools, there seems to be no particular kick to register from the male sex.

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The Dominion Coast-to-Coast

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.—Mr. W. L. Brenton, Provincial Dairy Superintendent, states that in 1933 twenty-one creameries, thirteen cheese factories, four pasteurizing plants and forty-two ice cream manufacturing plants were in operation in Prince Edward Island. The dairy industry of the province, he says, showed progress over the previous year.

Saint John, New Brunswick.—Addressing the Rotary Club at Saint John, Mr. Alex. Gray, General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Saint John Harbour Commission, said that about $15,000,000 had been spent on harbour development since 1927, and that plans for further expansion in the near future were being studied.

Quebec, Que.—More than a quarter of the Canadian creamery butter production in 1933 was contributed to Quebec Province, the output amounting to 62,238,000 pounds out of a Dominion total of 215,917,334 pounds.

Ottawa, Ont.—During the last five years the Mandarin variety of soybeans has never failed to mature its seed crop at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, according to an official report. It is the earliest available yellow seeded variety and matures on the average in 120 days. Five years ago twenty bushels per acre was a good average yield, but during the last two seasons the yield of a selected strain has been well over thirty bushels. This showing indicates the possibilities for improvement in the crop.

Winnipeg, Manitoba. — Preliminary studies carried out by the Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturists on the malting quality of barley at the Manitoba Barley Research Laboratory, on grain grown by the Dominion Experimental Farms, show that, taking Canada as a whole Prince Edward Island would produce the best barley and that the other Eastern Provinces would do fairly well. In British Columbia the quality is variable, depending upon the soil and climatic conditions of the different valleys. On the prairies Manitoba produces the best quality, although fair quality can be grown in the northern sections of Saskacthewan and Alberta. In Manitoba the eastern and northern parts give the best results.

Regina, Saskatchewan.—In December last cream graded higher in Saskatchewan than in the previous December, being 73.4 per cent "table," or best grade, compared with 49.0 per cent in December, 1932. The percentage of table cream throughout the year was 54.2 compared with 52.2 in 1932.

Lethbridge, Alberta. — Canadian Sugar Factories, Raymond, have finished one of the best seasons on record, the plant having run for 112 days, slicing an average of 1,175 tons of beets per day—the record day seeing 1,359 tons passed through the mill—and turning out a total of 46,000,000 pounds of refined sugar from 131,000 tons of beets. The sugar content of the beets was high, averaging 18.40 per cent.

Calgary, Alberta. — Phenomenal growth in herds and in production of Jersey cattle and milk in Alberta during the past year were reported at the annual meeting of the Southern Alberta Jersey Cattle Club by Mr. W. T. Hunter, Vernon, Western Field Representative of the Canadian Jersey Cattle Club. He referred to a marked increase in demand for Jersey milk, not only in Western Canada, but throughout the Dominion. During the past eighteen months, Mr. Hunter said, 300 Jersey cows were brought into Edmonton and Calgary districts, most of them from British Columbia. Alberta now ranks fourth in the Dominion in total registration and transfers of Jersey cattle, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia leading in that order.

Victoria, British Columbia.—British Columbia's agricultural products were worth $34,466,000 in 1933, a slight gain over the 1932 figure of $34,373,926, according to a year-end estimate released by Hon. K. C. MacDonald, Minister of Agriculture. In addition, it is estimated that home growers produced about $1,000,000 worth of fruits and vegetables in their gardens.

Cheese Problems Are Reviewed

Industry First Established In 1864—Gradual Decline Noted

The problems facing the cheese industry in Ontario to-day are many, says the Economic Annalist, issued quarterly by the Agricultural Economics Branch, Dominion Department of Agriculture. Perhaps, the most important one affecting production costs is the declining volume of business. In 1864 the 1st cheese factory is reported to have been established in Oxford County, Ontario. From then on a rapid development took place in the industry until early in this century. Since 1900-04 period there has been a gradual decline in production of cheese in Ontario (and in fact throughout the whole Dominion). In 1931, Ontario had 714 factories in which were produced slightly over 84 million pounds of cheese. This figure represents a decrease of 36.4 per cent. as compared to a production of nearly 132 million pounds in the year 1900.

With the development of large urban centres and increased demand for milk for fluid consumption and for use in the manufacture of other dairy products, the production of cheese declined. Paralleling this development came improved means of transportation, better roads, and more suitable means of handling milk, the net effect of this combination of circumstances being increased competition and declining volume of business for cheese factories. It has been difficult for operators of these cheese factories to cope with these changed conditions and thus compete with the users of milk.

A Considerable Nugget

Melbourne, Australia. — Standard gold to the weight of 7.09 ounces and $150 value was contained in a nugget found near a footpath at Sea Lake recently regravelled from a neighboring pit.

Gives His Paper Scoop on Suicide

Copenhagen, Denmark.—C. A. Arnfast was a newspaper man.

His life was ruled by the clock. His newspaper, the Aarhusposten, went "on the streets" at noon every day and news had to be written, set into type, and printed before that hour.

Last week the Aarhusposten had a scoop—the exclusive story of Arnfast's suicide at 6 a.m., just in time to make the edition.

The story of his death was written by Arnfast himself in a note to a fellow reporter.

"I have shot myself.

"I am no joy nor of sufficient use to anybody in these hard times when it is difficult to earn a decent living honestly.

"It is now 6 o'clock, my old paper thus getting the news of my suicide exclusively."

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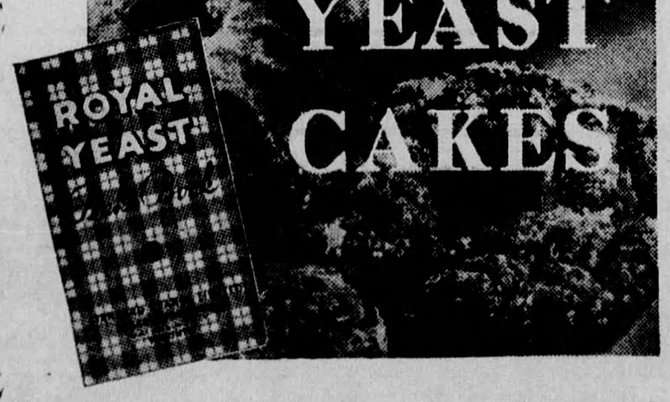

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