The Flying Courier

by Boyd Cable

SYNOPSIS

GLYNN ELLIMAN, a pilot of Imperial Airways, is travelling as a special "Flying Courier" by the Air Mail to India, carrying two copies of a talking film of the PRINCE OF NAPALATA which it is most urgent shall reach there safely.

The Prince is in London, too ill to travel, and the talking film is sent to foil the efforts of "THE VULTURE," his half-brother in India.

On the same Mail liner travels NORAH SEAMAN, a girl Glynn had met only a week before. STEFAN, MAX and DASS, agents of "The Vulture," determined to steal the film and prevent use being made of it in India.

Several attempts are foiled, but at Galilee the attache case in which Glynn carries one film, is stolen from him by the swift substitution of a facsimile bag.

Stefan drops the case and film overboard as they go ashore from the Flying Boat. Next morning shortly after the liner has left Galilee, Stefan and Max, who have stayed behind, thinking their work accomplished, learn by cable that two copies of the film are carried by the Courier.

Stefan hires a two-seater machine and sets off, hoping to catch the liner, but his plane develops engine trouble and the liner leaves without him.

CHAPTER X CONTINUED

"Joe," began Glynn. "I'm carrying a little packet some people would like to get hold of."

"Some of us might have guessed that," said the Pilot drily. "And they got it at Galilee."

"Not all of it," said Glynn. "And I fancy they've guessed so since, and are after me again. Look here—" He unstrapped his binocular case and slid out the cigarette tin. The Pilot looked round at it for a moment, and then out ahead again with the brief comment "Doesn't look ultra valuable."

"If Bagdad is like it used to be," went on Glynn, "there will be a seething mob to get through from the 'drom to the hotel where we grub. I find that pushing through mobs gives pick-pockets and thugs their best chance. And if I stick here in the machine until its time to start, you might have a bomb under it or some-other unpleasantness."

The Pilot laughed. "Aren't you stretching it?" he asked. "The chance of anyone wrecking one of the regular liners is pretty thin."

"Joe, you've known me quite a while," said Glynn earnestly. "Did you ever know me pannicky over nothing."

"No, nor over a lot," said Joe.

"Then bet on it I'm not stretching anything," said Glynn. "But I want you to help me out. I'm scared to take this to the town with me. I'm just as scared to stick in the machine here with it. Have you anywhere you can stow it, while I draw the fire by going off with the empty binocular case."

"As it happens," said the Pilot evenly. "I want to have a look over one of the engines, so I won't be leaving the bus at Bagdad. You can leave your packet in my locker and forget it."

"I won't forget that, Joe." said Glynn simply. "It will ease my mind a lot."

"There's Bagdad ahead," was all the Pilot answered.

Glynn changed places with the Second again, leaving his cigarette tin in the Pilot's locker and adjusting the strap of his binoculars before doing so. The case was now slung with the strap under his jacket, and shorted up so that the case also hung well up under the inside of the jacket.

They came booming in over Bagdad in the early afternoon, catching a glimpse of the golden domes, the huddle of narrow streets and roof tops and the green splashes of date gardens, before dropping down on to the drome.

"If we make a quick lunch," Glynn said to Norah, "we'll just have time for a turn round to see some of the sights like the Bazaar and mosques that were here in the days of Harun al Raschid."

As Glynn had expected, there was quite a crowd to push through on the way to the hotel where lunch waited them — Airways and Post Office people, all ranks of Service men, a mixed swarm of the local inhabitants, all apparently regarding the arrival of the liner as a weekly event.

They followed their plan of a hurried lunch, and from it went straight out to have a look round the nearer sights. Neither noticed, as they left the hotel, their fellow-passenger Indian talking with a couple of burly, bearded men who were stooping their heads so that the turbans nearly hid their faces as the two passed.

One of the bearded men spoke quickly. "Our men are posted in the Serai Bazaar. These are sure to go there, as all visitors do. We follow, and shall send word when we have the packet."

The two moved off, following Glynn and Norah without coming too closely up on them, but keeping them, in sight. Glynn evidently knew his way, and, as it had been expected, he made for the chief Bazaar and led Norah wandering through its crowded narrow streets and little shops. They strolled round, glancing at the workers in brass and copper hammering out pots and trays in an uproar of clanking and banging and battering, lingering by the brilliantly colored heaps of carpets and silks spread in the booths, resisting the clamourous efforts of salesmen thrusting all sorts of wares upon them.

Several times Glynn had to push a way through jostling knots of people, and more than once it seemed to him that they were being purposely obstructed. But after each passage he still had his hand in his jacket pocket resting against the binocular case, knowing that if any attempt were made at robbery this was likely to be the object of it.

But at one point he had to use all the force of hands, elbows and shoulders to force a way through the press. A violent squabble had sprung up amongst several men as the two were passing, and in an instant they were in the centre of a struggling crowd of men striking and clawing at each other, shrieking and bawling ferociously. Glynn saw a knife or two glint, and with a sudden fear for Norah's safety, he pushed in front of her, calling her to keep close, and by main force buffetted his way through.

A stick whistled past his ear and thumbed heavily on his right shoulder, a knife flashed under his eyes. Thoroughly alarmed now, he whipped out the gun from under his arm and snapped off a shot into the air. The struggling knot about him fell back a pace, and Glynn thrust Norah to the door of a little shop and placed himself before her, gun in hand. Police uniforms appeared suddenly, and in an instant the uproar stilled, the fighters scattered and vanished.

"Are you hurt?" cried Norah sharply. "Your jacket is torn—no, cut."

Glynn clapped his hand to the binocular case. It hung dangling low and swinging by one strap. There was a foot-long clean cut in the side of his jacket, one side of the suspending strap had been cut right through and the other just short of completely severed.

Glynn thrust his pistol out of sight. "Let's get out of here and find a cab," he said, and the two made haste to get clear of the narrow streets while the police were still about.

"This is getting serious," thought Glynn, when they had reached the 'drom to which he made his cab drive straight. "That was a put-up ob in the street there, and there was a whole bunch in it. Looks as if every city along the route has a gang of cut-throats waiting for me."

CHAPTER XI

TO BEAT A GRAB-AND-RUN

When they took off from Bagdad again, Glynn set himself to restore Norah to a calmer frame of mind, and to laugh away the fright of finding that knife slash through his jacket. "It was nothing," he assured her. "Only that I was fool enough to get in the way of a jab meant for some other fellow. And I only loosed off a shot in the air to scare the crowd and fetch the police along—as it did."

"Glynn, I wish you'd tell me what all this means," she said earnestly. "I'm afraid. These attacks on you—they can't all be accident or chance. There's something deliberate about it. Can't I know what it is?"

"Maybe I'll tell you about it at Basra to-night," he said. "It's safe enough to there anyhow, so let's forget about it. Look down there—"

He pointed out the magnificent arch of Ctesiphon, they were skimming over no more than a few hundred feet up, the ruins of the trenches near that marked the place of General Townsend's troops' gallant fighting, and told her some of the story of that part of the War. And beyond, he pointed out again a regular pattern of faintly but clearly marked lines and squares, and explained that nothing of those could be seen from the ground, although they marked a vast system of canals and irrigation ditches buried under the desert sand thousands of years before.

Then, when she had quietened down to something near normal again, he made the steward bring tea and got her to smoke a cigarette with him, and then left her to go and have a word with the pilot again.

To him Glynn explained what had happened and showed him the cut straps of the binocular case. "It was only from someone aboard here it could have been known or suspected I was carrying that tin in the case there," he said firmly. "I have more than a guess who the man is, but I have nothing I can charge him with"; and he went on to tell about Dass, the Indian, and the warning that had been given him in London.

"It seems to be the explanation," agreed the pilot. "It isn't likely a whole mob would have been waiting for you at Bagdad. This fellow must have had a pal or two there and got them to hire a gang to mix in a street row. Thing is how are you going to scotch more of the sort."

(To Be Continued)

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Woman Alderman Now a Barrister

Margaret Crang of Edmonton is the Youngest City Council Member in Canada

Possibly the youngest woman to be elected alderman in all Canada, Miss Margaret Tryphena Francis Crang, 23 years of age, of Edmonton, has been admitted to the bar.

Before Mr. Justice Frank Ford in Supreme Court, Miss Crang, slender and attractive in her flowing gown, took the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King, and of truthfulness in her profession.

"Miss Crang, this occasion becomes more pleasant at time goes on," remarked his lordship, who said it was a matter of great satisfaction to admit her.

Elected as Alderman

She first established herself in the public eye in Edmonton when she ran for aldemran in the November, 1933, civic election; and despite head shakings by veteran campaigners who insisted no woman had a chance of success, romped home with 10,853 votes, second from head of the poll.

It was a daring thing to do, but her friends say she is like that. Quiet and unassuming, but a forceful personality for all that, this girl won for herself the distinction of being the youngest woman ever to be elected an alderman in Edmonton, and, as far as can be learned, the youngest for that civic office in Canada.

Member of Labor Party

Like her father, Dr. Frank W. Crang, veteran school trustee here and in whose footsteps she is closely following, Miss Crang is a staunch member of the Labor Party.

Born in Edmonton, she matriculated from Strathcona High School and went on to a lengthly and brilliant academic career. At University of Alberta she graduated in arts in 1930 and two years later received her LL.B. The following year she received her high school teacher's diploma.

The young lawyer has had considerable practical experience in her profession, too. First, in the summer of 1930 she served in the legal offices of Parlee, Freeman, Smith, and Massie. Of more recent years she has been in the offices of Newell, Lindsay, Emery and Ford.

Happy Again

Truro, N.S.—The town fathers re smiling again.

At the beginning of his term Mayor J. H. Slackford banned smoking during council meetings, and for several meetings it seemed the councillors couldn't find their thinking caps without the old briars. Recently when estimates for the current year were under consideration, the mayor set aside all restrictions. And now genial councillors, working in a haze that could be cut with a knife kept the tax rate at $3.55 despite increased burdens.

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Bronte Parsonage To be Restored

Haworth, Eng.—Restoration of its original state of the somber, windswept parsonage home of the Brontes here is planned by the Bronte Society.

For some years the parsonage, where the famous sisters wrote their classic works, has been in the possession of the Bronte Society, which maintains it as a museum, and its treasures attract visitors from America and all parts of Europe. But now Mr. D. Hopewell, president of the society, aims to remove modern additions to the house and then to furnish with Bronte relics the dining room in which the sisters are said to have sat late into the night when they were considering the plots of their novels.

The Bronte Society, which has just celebrated its fortieth anniversary, numbers many of the world's most distinguished authors among its members.

Would Tell Pupils Aims of League

Toronto.—Mrs. C. D. Farquharson, of Windsor, speaking before the home and school section of the Ontario Educational Association recently, told her hearers Canadian teachers should consider it one of their first duties to promote peace through teaching their pupils about the aims and accomplishments of the League of Nations.

Mrs. Farquharson is chairman of the League of Nations committee of the home and school section.

Relief Figures Decrease in B.C.

Victoria — Reduction of 14,000 in the number of persons receivng relief in British Columbia in February compared with the same month last year was shown in figures issued by the British Columbia Relief Department The total this year was 114,310 compared with 128,546 in 1933.

153 Eggs Laid In 154 Days

Agassiz, B.C.—A world record of 153 eggs in 154 days was claimed recently for two barred Plymouth Rock pullets participating in the annual egg-laying contest of the Dominion Experimental Farm here.

Pullet No. 3, owned by the Delta Land Company of Vancouver laid 150 eggs in consecutive days. She missed laying on the 151st day, and tied with No. 2 owned by A. Pennington, of Agassiz.

Cotton Trade Gains High Prices Gratifying

Greenwood, Miss. — "Old Time" cotton prices apparently are returning. A lot of 240 bale of long staple cotton was disposed of here at a price of 17 cents a pound.

This was the highest price obtained for a lot of this size on the Greenwood market in the past three years. A local firm of cotton factors made the sale to a member of the Greenwood Cotton Exchange.

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