The Canadian Champion

MILTON, THURSDAY, AUGUST 26, 1926. No. 13

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air in the most graceful of dives, with
view of Mount Victoria in the distanc
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the most popular in the Canadian Pac
it is about 90 feet in length and eight
at the deepest point. There are sprin
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ws with two-tone custom effects; jet bl
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8.12 a.m.	10.33 a.m.
8.47 a.m.	3.43 p.m.
1.57 p.m. Saturday only	5.03 p.m.
4.30 p.m.	7.47 p.m.
5.59 p.m. Except Sat. & Sun	
—SUNDAY—	
Going West—12.48 a.m.; 4.30 p.m.	
Going East—7.25 a.m., 3.43 & 9.44 p.m.	

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY

GOING SOUTH.	GOING NORTH.
11.48 p.m; 8.06 p.m.	7.28 a.m; 4.23 p.m.

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COUNTY OF HALTON
LOCAL COURTS CALENDAR
FOR 1926

Days of Sitting	Day of Sitting	Hours of Opening	Jan	Mar.	May	June	Sept.	Nov
	Friday	10.00 a.m.	8	5	7	25	10	5
	Tuesday	10.00 a.m.	5	2	4	22	14	2
	Wednesday	10.00 a.m.	6	3	5	23	8	3
	Thursday	10.00 a.m.	7	4	6	24	9	4
	Saturday	10.00 a.m.	9	6	8	26	11	6
	Monday	10.00 a.m.	11	1	3	21	13	1

All business of Clerks—1. Wm. Panton, Milton; 2. W. S. Savage, Oakville; 3. Geo. Morgestown; 4. Geo. B. Agnew, Acton; 5. Wm. Fraser Campbellville; 6. Geo. Georgetown.

Courts of the Peace and County Court Sittings with or without Jury, 9th of each month, on opening days at 1 p.m.

Court Sittings, without Jury, 6th April and 5th October, 10 a.m., and no officers may be required for the despatch of business.

Court Sittings for Public Notice 4 months, 5th January, 2nd April, 2nd July, 1st October, 10 a.m.

By order W. I. DICK, Milton,
Clerk of the Peace.

The Wreckers

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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blood run cold, he didn't seem to notice me much, and after a little he got up and went to sit on the other side of the big rotunda where he could watch the elevators going and coming.

I guess he had lots of patience, for I had to have. I had been sitting in my corner for two full hours when I saw the boss coming down the broad marble stair with Mr. Chadwick.

Mr. Norcross held up a finger for me, and when I jumped up he gave me a sheet of paper; a Pioneer Short Line president's letter-head with a few lines written on it with a pen and a sort of crazy-looking signature under them.

"Take that to the Mountaineer job office and have five hundred of them printed," was the boss' order. "Then make a copy and take it to Mr. Cantrell, the editor, and ask him to run it in tomorrow's paper as an item of news, if he feels like it. When you are through, come down to Mr. Chadwick's car."

Since the thing was going to be published, and I was going to make a copy of it, I didn't scruple to read it as I hurried out to begin a hunt for the Mountaineer office. It was the printer's copy for an official circular, dated at Portal City and addressed to all officers and employees of the Pioneer Short Line. It read:

"Effective at once, Mr. Graham Norcross is appointed general manager of the Pioneer Short Line system, with headquarters at Portal City, and his orders will be respected accordingly.

"Breckenridge Dunton,
"President."

We had got our jolt, all right; and leaving the ladder and the Friday start out of the question, I grinned and told myself that the one other thing that counted for most was the fact that Mrs. Sheila Macrae was a widow.

I chased like the dickens on the printing job, because, apart from wanting to absorb all the dope I could as I went along on the new job, I knew I would be needed every minute right at Mr. Norcross' elbow, now that the actual work was beginning.

Luncheon was served in the Alexa, and they kept the business talk going like a house afire while they were eating, the hurry being that Mr. Chadwick wanted to start back for Chicago the minute he could find out if our connecting line east would run him special.

"Now for a few unofficial things, Graham, and we'll call it a go," he said. "You are to have an absolutely free hand in the management and the operating. What you say goes as it lies, and Dunton has promised me that there shall be no appeal, not even to him."

"I imagine he didn't say that willingly," the boss put in, which was the first intimation I had had that he wasn't present at the directors' meeting in the hotel.

"No, indeed; nothing was done willingly. I had to swing the big stick and swing it hard. But I had them where they couldn't wiggle. You are to set your own pace, and you are to have some money for betterments. I offered to float a new loan on short-time notes with the Chicago banks, and the board authorized it."

The boss pushed that part of it aside abruptly, as he always does when he has got hold of the gist of a thing.

"Now, about my staff," he said. "It's open gossip all over the West that the P. S. L. is officered by a lot of dummies and place-hunters and relatives. I'll have to clean house."

"Go to it; that is a part of your 'free hand.' Have you the material to draw from?"

"I know a few good men, if I can get them," said the boss thoughtfully. "The one man I can't place at sight is a good corporation counsel. I'm obliged to have a good lawyer, Uncle John."

"I have the man for you, if you'll take him on my say so; a young fellow named Ripley who has done some corking good work for me in Chicago. I'll wire him, if you like. Now a word or two about this local graft we touched upon last night. I don't know the ins and outs of it, but people here will tell you that a sort of holding corporation, called Red Tower Consolidated, has a strangle grip on this entire region. Its subsidiary companies control the grain elevators, the fruit packeries, the coal mines and distributing yards, the timber supply and the lumber yards, and even have a finger on the so-called independent smelters."

The boss nodded. "I've heard of Red Tower. Also, I have heard that the railroad stands in with it to pinch the producers and consumers."

A road engine was backing down the spur to take the Alexa in tow for the eastward run, and what was said had to be said in a hurry.

"Dig it out," barked the wheat king. "If you find that we are in on it, it's your privilege to cut loose. The two men who will give you the most trouble are right here in Portal City, Hatch, the president of Red Tower, and Henckel, its vice president. They say either of them would consider a million-dollar fee a ten-dollar bill and that's about the size of it. Stand in with Pete Clanahan, the sole boss and his gang of political thugs. That's all, Graham; all but one thing. Write me after you've climbed into the saddle and have found out just what you're in for. If you say you can make it go, I'll back you, if it takes half of next year's wheat crop."

When the special had become a black smudge of coal smoke in the distance, Mr. Norcross turned on me with the grim little smile that goes with his fighting mood.

"You are private secretary to the new general manager of the Pioneer Short Line, Jimmie, and your salary begins to-day," he said, briskly. "Now let's go up to the hotel and get our fighting clothes on."

CHAPTER IV

"Heads Off, Gentlemen!"

Gosh all Friday—say! but the next few days did see a tear-up to beat the band on the old Short Line! With the printing of his appointment circular, Mr. Norcross took the offices in the headquarters building lately vacated by Mr. Shaffer, and it was something awful to see the way the heads went into the basket. One by one he called the Duntonites in; the traffic manager, the general superintendent, the roadmaster, the master-mechanic—clear on down to the roundhouse foreman and the division heads.

Some few of them were allowed to take the oath of allegiance and stay, but the place-fillers and pay-roll parasites, the cousins and the nephews and the brothers-in-law, every last man of them had to walk under the ax.

Three days later, when the whole town was talking about the new "Jack the Ripper," as they called him, Kirgan, who had been our head machinery man on the Midland construction, tumbled in in answer to a wire. Mr. Norcross slammed him into place ten minutes after he hit the town.

"Your office is across the tracks, Kirgan," he told him. "I've begun the house-cleaning over there by firing your predecessor and three or four of his pet foremen. Get in the hole and dig to the bottom. I'll give you six months in which to make good as a model superintendent of motive power. Get busy."

"That's me," said Kirgan, who knew the boss up one side and down the other. "You give me the engines, and I'll keep 'em out of the shop." And with that he went across the yard and took hold, before he had even hunted up a place to sleep in.

Mr. Van Britt, our general superintendent, was the next man to show up. He was fine; a square-built, stocky little gentleman who looked as if he'd always had the world by the ear and never meant to let go.

"Well, I'm here," he said, dropping into a chair and sitting with his legs wide apart. And then, ignoring me as if I hadn't been there, "Graham, what the devil have you got against me, that you should drag me out here on the edge of nowhere and make me go to work for a living?"

The boss just grinned at him and said: "It's for the good of your soul, Upton. You've too much money. Your office is up at the end of the corridor and your chair is empty and waiting for you. Your appointment circular has already been mailed out."

Mr. Hornack was the last of the new office staff to fall in, though he didn't have nearly as far to come as some of the others. He was red-headed and wore glasses. They used to say of him on the Overland Central that he could make business grow where none ever grew before, and that's what a traffic man lives for.

Naturally, the big turn-over brought all sorts of disturbances at the send-off. Some of the relieved cousins and nephews stayed in town and jumped in to stir up trouble for the new management. The Herald, which was the other morning paper, took up for the down-and-outs, and there wasn't anything too mean for it to say about the boss and his new appointees. Then the employees got busy and the grievance committees began to pour in. Mr. Norcross never denied himself to anybody. The office-door stood wide open and the kickers were welcomed, as you might say, with open arms.

"You men are going to get the squarest deal you have ever had, and a still squarer one a little farther along, if you will only stay on the job and keep your clothes on," was the way the boss went at the train men's committee. "We are out to make the P. S. L. the best line for service, and the best company to work for, this side of the Missouri River. I want your loyalty, the loyalty of every man in the service. I'll go further and say that the new management will stand if you and the other loyal men stand by it; it is good faith or it will fail if you don't."

"You Men Are Going to Get the Squarest Deal You Ever Had."

"You'll meet the grievance committees and talk things over with them when there's a kick coming?" said old Tom McClure, the passenger conductor who was acting as spokesman.

"Sure I will—every time. More than than, I'll take a leaf out of Colonel Goethal's book and keep open house here in this office every Sunday morning. Any man in the service who thinks he has a grievance may come here and state it, and if he has a case, he'll get justice."

Naturally, a few little talks like this, face to face with the men themselves, soon began to put new life into the rank and file. Mr. Norcross' old pet name of "Hell-and-repeat" had followed him down from Oregon, as it was bound to, but now it began to be used in the sense that most railroad men use the phrase, "The Old Man," in speaking of a big boss that they like.

There was so much crowded into these first few weeks that I've forgotten half of it. The work we did, pulling and hauling things into shape, was a fright, and my end of the job got so big that the boss had to give me help. Following out his own policy, he let me pick my man, and after I'd had a little talk with Mr. Van Britt, I picked Fred May, a young fellow who had been under Van Burgh. He was all right; a little too tonguey, perhaps, but a worker from away back, and that was what we were looking for.

Out of this frantic hustle to get things started and moving right, anybody could have pulled a couple of conclusions that stuck up higher than any of the rest. The boss and Mr. Van Britt were steadily winning the rank and file over to something like loyalty on the one hand, and on the other, wherever we went, we found the people who were paying the freight a solid unit against us, hating us like blazes and entirely unwilling to believe that any good thing could come out of the Nazareth of the Pioneer Short Line.

As soon as we returned from our first inspection trip, the boss pulled off his coat—figuratively speaking—and rolled up his sleeves. It wasn't his way to talk much about what he was going to do; he'd jump in and do it first, and then talk about it afterward—if anybody insisted on knowing the reason why.

There were long private conferences with Mr. Ripley, the bright young lawyer Mr. Chadwick had sent us from Chicago, and with a young fellow named Juneman, an ex-newspaper man who was on the pay-rolls as "Advertising Manager," but whose real business seemed to be to keep the Short Line public fully and accurately informed of everything that most railroad companies try to keep to themselves.

The next innovation that came along was another young Chicago man named Billoughby, and his title on the pay-roll was "Special Agent." I, who was as close to the boss as anybody in our outfit, never once suspected the true nature of Billoughby's job until the day he came in to make his final report—and Mr. Norcross let him make it without sending me out on an errand.

"Well, I think I'm ready to talk Johnson, now," was the way Billoughby began. "Red Tower is the one outfit we'll have to kill off and put out of business. Under one name or another, it is engineering every graft in this country; it is even backing the fake mining boom at Saw Horse—to which, by the way, this railroad company is now building a branch line."

Mr. Norcross turned to me:

"Jimmie, make a note to tell Mr. Van Britt to have the work stopped at once on the Saw Horse branch, and all the equipment brought in."

And then to Billoughby: "Go on."

"The main graft, of course, is in the grain elevators, the fruit packeries, the coal and lumber yards and the stock yards and handling corrals. In these public, or quasi-public, utilities the railroad has given them—in fee simple, it seems—all the yard room, switches, track facilities, and the like. Wherever local competition has tried to break in, the railroad company has given it the cold shoulder and it has been either forced out or frozen out."

"Exactly," said the boss. "Now tell me how far you have gone in the other field."

"We are pretty well shaped up and are about ready to begin business. Juneman has done splendid work, and so has Ripley. We have succeeded, in a measure, though the opposition has been keeping up a steady bombardment. Hatch and his people haven't been idle. They own or control a dozen or more prominent newspapers in the state, and, as you know, they are making an open fight on you and your management through these papers. The net result so far has been merely to keep the people stirred up and doubtful. They say that the railroad has never played fair—and I guess it hasn't, in the past."

"Not within a thousand miles," was the boss' curt comment. "But go on with your story."

"We pulled the new deal off yesterday, simultaneously in eleven of the principal towns along the line. Meetings of the bankers and local capitalists were held, and we had a man at each one of them to explain our plan and to pledge the backing of the railroad. Notwithstanding all the doubt and dust that's been kicked up by the Hatch people, it went like wild-fire."

"With money?" queried the boss.

"Yes, with real money. Citizens' Storage & Warehouse was launched, as you might say, on the spot, and enough capital was subscribed to make it a going concern. Of course, there were some doubters, and some few greedy ones. The greedy ones protested against the fixed dividend scheme—they didn't see why the new company shouldn't be allowed to cut a melon now and then if it should be fortunate enough to grow one."

Mr. Norcross smiled. "That is precisely what the Hatch people have been doing, all along, and it is the chief grievance of these same people who now want a chance to outbid their neighbors. The lease condition was fully explained to them, wasn't it?"

"Oh, yes; Ripley saw to that, and copies of the lease were in the exhibits. The new company is to have railroad ground to build on, and ample track facilities in perpetuity, conditioned strictly upon the limited dividend. If the dividend is increased, the leases terminate automatically."

The boss drew a long breath.

"You've done well, and better than well, Billoughby," he said. "Now we are ready to fire the blast. How was the proposal to take over the Red Tower properties at a fair valuation received?"

"There was some opposition. Lesterburg, and three of the other larger towns, want to build their own plants. But they agreed to abide by a majority vote of the stock on that point, and my wire reports this morning say that a lump-sum offer will be made for the Red Tower plants today."

Mr. Norcross sat back in his chair and blew a cloud of cigar smoke toward the ceiling.

"Hatch won't sell," he predicted. "He'll be up here before night with blood in his eye. I'm rather glad it has come down to the actual give and take. I don't play the waiting game very successfully. Billoughby. Keep in touch, and keep me in touch. And tell Ripley to keep on pushing on the reins. The sooner we get at it, the sooner it will be over."

After Billoughby had gone, Mr. Norcross came at me on a little matter that had been allowed to sleep ever since the day, now some time back, when I had given him Mrs. Sheila's hint about the identity of the two men who had sat and smoked in the

"They Say That the Railroad Has Never Played Fair."

auto that Sunday night at Sand Creek siding, and about the talk between the same two that I had overheard the following morning.

"We are going to have sharp trouble with a gentleman by the name of Hatch before very long, Jimmie," was the way he began. "You remember what you told me about that Monday morning talk between Hatch and Henckel in the Bullard lobby. Would you be willing to go into court as a witness and swear to what you heard?"

"Sure I would," I said.

"All right. I may have to pull that little incident on Mr. Hatch before I get through with him. The train hold-up was a criminal act, and you are the witness who can convict the pair of them. Of course, we'll leave Mrs. Macrae and the little girl entirely out of it. Nobody knows that they were there with us, and nobody need know."

I agreed to that, and this mention of Mrs. Sheila and Maisie Ann makes me remember that I've been leaving them out pretty severely for a good long while. They weren't left out in reality—not by a jugful. In spite of all the rush and hustle, the boss had found time to get acquainted with Major Basil Kendrick and had been made at home in the transplanted Kentucky mansion in the northern suburb.

But to get back on the firing line, I wasn't around when Mr. Norcross had his "declaration of war" talk with Hatch. Mr. Norcross, being pretty sure he wasn't going to have that evening off, had sent me out to "Kenwood" with a note and a box of roses, and when I got back to the office about eight o'clock, Hatch was just going away. I met him on the stair.

The boss was sitting back in his big swing chair, smoking, when I broke in. He looked as if he'd been mixing it up good and plenty with Mr. Rufus Hatch—and enjoying it.

"We've got 'em going, Jimmie," he chuckled; and he said it without asking me how I had found Mrs. Sheila, or how she was looking, or anything. I told him I had met Mr. Hatch on the stair going down.

"He didn't say anything to you, did he?" he asked.

"Not a word."

"I had to pull that Sand Creek business on him, and I'm rather sorry," he went on. "He and his people are going to fight the new company to a finish, and he merely came up here to tell me so—and to add that I might as well resign first as last, because, in the end, he'd get my goat. When I laughed at him he got abusive. He's an ugly beggar, Jimmie."

"That's what everybody says of him."

"It's true. He and his crowd have plenty of money—stolen money, a good deal of it—and they stand in with every political boss and gangster in the state. There is only one way to handle such a man; and that is with out gloves. I told him we had the goods on him in the matter of Mr. Chadwick's kidnaping adventure. At first he said I couldn't prove it. Then he broke out cursing and let your name slip. I hadn't mentioned you at all, and so he gave himself away. He knows who you are, and he remembered that you had overheard his talk with Henckel in the hotel lobby."

I heard what he was saying, but I didn't really sense it because my head was ram jam full of a thing that was so pitiful that it had kept me swallowing hard all the way back from Major Kendrick's. It was this way. When I had jiggled the bell out at the house it was Maisie Ann who let me in and took the box of flowers and the boss' note. We sat in the dimly lighted hall and talked for a few minutes.

One thing she told me was that Mrs. Sheila had company and the name of it was Mr. Van Britt. That wasn't strictly news because I had known that Mr. Van Britt was dividing time pretty evenly with the boss in the Major Kendrick house visits. That wasn't anything to be scared up about. But my chunky little girl didn't stop at that.

"I think we can let Mr. Van Britt take care of himself," she said. "He has known Cousin Sheila for a long time, and I guess they are only just good friends. But there is something you ought to know, Jimmie—for Mr. Norcross' sake. He has been sending lots of flowers and things, and Cousin Sheila has been taking them because—well, I guess it's just because she doesn't know how not to take them." "Go on," I said, but my mouth had suddenly grown dry.

"Such things—flowers, you know—don't mean anything in New York, where we've been living. Men send them to their women friends just as they pass their cigar-cases around among their men friends. But I'm afraid it's different with Mr. Norcross."

"It is different," I said.

Then she told me the thing that made me swell up and want to burst.

"It mustn't be different, Jimmie. Cousin Sheila's married, you know."

"I know she has been married," I corrected; and then she gave me the sure-enough knock-out.

"She is married now, and her husband is still living."

For a little while I couldn't do anything but gape like a chicken with the pip. It was simply fierce! I knew as well as I knew anything, that the boss was gone on Mrs. Sheila; that he had fallen in love, first with the back of her neck and then with her pretty face and then with all of her; and that the one big reason why he had let Mr. Chadwick persuade him to stay in Portal City was the fact that he had wanted to be near her and to show her how he could make a perfectly good spoon out of the spoiled horn of the Pioneer Short Line.

When I began to get my grip back a little I was right warm under the collar.

"She oughtn't to be going around telling people she is a widow!" I blurted out.

"She doesn't," was the calm reply. "They've separated, you know—years ago—and Cousin Sheila has taken her mother's maiden name, Macrae. If we were going to live here always it would be different. But we are only visiting Cousin Basil, or I suppose we are, though we've been here now for nearly a year."

There wasn't much more to be said, and pretty soon I had staggered off with my load and gone back to the office. And this was why I couldn't get very deep into the Hatch business with Mr. Norcross when he told me what he had been obliged to do about the Sand Creek hold-up.

If he had been like other men it wouldn't have been so hard. But I had a feeling that he had gone into this love business just as he did into everything—neck or nothing—burning his bridges behind him, and having no notion of ever turning back. The boss had never been beaten. What was it going to do to him when he learned the truth about Mrs. Sheila?

On top of this came the still harder knock when I saw that it was up to me to tell him. I remembered all the stories I'd ever heard about how the most cold-blooded surgeon that ever lived wouldn't trust himself to stick a knife into a member of his own family, and I knew now just how the surgeon felt about it.

While I was still sweating under the big load Maisie Ann had dumped upon me, the night dispatcher's boy came in with a message. It was from Mr. Chadwick, and I read it with my eyes bulging out. This is what it said:

"To G. Norcross, G. M.,
"Portal City.

"P. S. L. Common dropped to thirty-four today, and banks lending on short time notes for betterment fund are getting nervous. Wire from New York says bondholders are stirring and talking receivership. General opinion in financial circles leans to idea that new policy is foregone failure. Are you still sure you can make it win?
"Chadwick."

Right on the heels of this, and before I could get my breath, in came the boy again with another telegram. It was a hot wire from President Dunton, one of a series that he had been shooting in ever since Mr. Norcross had taken hold and begun firing the cousins and nephews.

"To G. Norcross, G. M.,
"Portal City. RUSH.

"See stock quotations for today. Your policy is a failure. Am advised you are now fighting Red Tower. Stop it immediately and assure Mr. Hatch that we are friendly, as we have always been. If something cannot be done to lift securities to better figure, your resignation will be in order.
"Dunton."

They say that misfortunes never come singly. Here were two new griefs hurling themselves in over the wires all in the same quarter-hour, besides the one I had up my sleeve. But there was no use dallying. It was up to me to find the boss as quickly as I could and have the three-cornered surgical operation over with. I knew the telegrams wouldn't kill him—or I thought they wouldn't. I thought they'd probably make him take a fresh strangle hold on things and be fired—if he had to be fired—fighting it out grimly on his own line. But I wasn't so sure about the Mrs. Sheila business. That was a horse of another color.

I had just reached for my hat and was getting ready to snap the electrics off when I heard footsteps in the outer office. When I looked up, a stocky, hard-faced man in a derby hat and a short overcoat was standing in the doorway and scowling across at me.

It was Mr. Rufus Hatch, and I had a notion that the hot end of his black cigar glared at me like a baleful red eye when he came in and sat down.

And Satan Came Also

"I saw your office lights from the street," was the way the Red Tower president began on me, and his voice took me straight back to the Oregon woods and a lumber camp where I saw him there at work. "Where is Mr. Norcross?"

I told him that Mr. Norcross was uptown, and that I didn't suppose he would come back to the office again that night, now that it was so late.

"My name is Hatch, of the Red Tower company," he grated, after a minute or two. "You're the one they call Dodds, aren't you?"

I admitted it, and he went on.

"Norcross brought you here with him from the West, didn't he? What pay are you getting here?"

It was on the tip of my tongue to cuss him out right there and then and tell him it was none of his business. But the second thought (which isn't always as good as it's said to be) whispered to me to lead him on and see how far he would go. So I told him the figures of my pay check.

"I'm needing another shorthand man, and I can afford to pay a good bit more than that," he growled. "They tell me you are well up at the top in your trade. Are you open to an offer?"

I let him have it straight then. "Not from you," I said.

"And why not from me?"

Here was where I made my first bad break. All of a sudden I got so angry at the thought that he was actually trying to buy me that I couldn't see anything but red, and I blurted out, "Because I don't hire out to work for any strong-arm outfit—not if I know it!"

For a little while he sat blinking at me from under his bushy eyebrows, and his hard mouth was drawn into a straight line with a mean little wrinkle coming and going at the corners of it.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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