

Death goes by bus

by Leslie Cargill

SYNOPSIS

Travelling from Colborough to Netherton, a country bus develops engine trouble and back-fires several times. Under cover of one these explosions a male passenger is shot with a pistol.

Those on the bus at the time of the tragedy are—

CARTER, the driver.

WITHERS, the conductor.

CALEB WAINWRIGHT, the man who was killed.

MORRISON SHARPE, a mildly eccentric little man, whose dominating interest in life is solving puzzles—chess problems, cross-words and the like.

JERRY TUCKER, a schoolboy.

JOHN SMITH, who, when interrogated, admits to having been in gaol.

GREGOR GARDPOULOS, a Levantine importer of dried fruits.

HUNTLEY YOUNG, a commercial traveller.

Mr. and Mrs. WYLLIE, a farmer and his wife.

AGATHA HANSON, a dour, middle-aged spinster.

From the beginning, Sharpe takes a keen interest in the occurrence, and he has a vague impression that there was another passenger.

Sergeant MATTHEWS, patrolling the roads in a police car, comes upon the stationary bus and takes charge of the case. He is a traffic specialist, unfamiliar with serious crime. Impressed by Morrison Sharpe's grasp of the situation, he allows the puzzle-solver to sit by him during the road-side interrogation of passengers, and to make suggestions. He permits Sharpe also to see the search of the dead man's pockets. Among the contents is a fine diamond necklace.

Before the bus leaves the point at which the shooting occurs, Sharpe suggests a search in the copple running alongside the road. He and Matthews and a police doctor who has arrived, have barely begun to look for footprints when they come upon the body of a man. There is obvious evidence that he has died of cyanide poisoning. The doctor considers that the man committed suicide while Matthews was interrogating the passengers.

(Now Read On)

CHEATING THE LAW

"Why in the name of all that's sensible did he take poison?" said Sergeant Matthews, surveying the second dead body he had encountered that morning. "What happened to the gun?"

"Maybe he didn't have one," suggested Mr. Sharpe.

"Now don't start making things worse. By all the rules of logic this person shot Wainwright, made his way in here, and cheated the hangman."

"Well, perhaps. But there are other reasons which could scare a man into taking his life."

"Who'd want to take a ride out into the country for the fun of swallowing cyanide?"

"That wasn't my suggestion. Stretch your imagination until it considers the case of a person who suddenly finds himself up against the limelight of publicity when dark obscurity is looked for."

"Which still leaves me in that darkness. Switch on the light."

"It's on already picking out this second unfortunate. Can't you understand his predicament?"

"Not me, sir. Perhaps I don't want to. Think what trouble will be saved if we find out the killed Wainwright and then himself!"

"Too easy. Reminds me of the hidden names competition where the obvious is invariably wrong."

"There you go again," said the aggrieved Sergeant. "Riding the old hobby horse."

"Sorry, but I'm working exactly to my customary system of solving these puzzles. Red herrings make such a strong scent that you can utilize them best by avoiding them."

"Is this a lecture on logic?" inquired Dr. Saunders. "If so, we could listen more comfortably in a public hall."

"Very well I'll shut up." For once Morrison Sharpe took offence. The

meekest of men will not tolerate criticism of their pet obsessions.

Matthews went into action. As an organizer he had no lack of initiative. Saunders volunteered to drive into town and send out the ambulance. With it would come qualified investigators skilled in the technique of police work.

No single inch of the corpse would escape examination. They would relate Matthew to the background and complain that the delay hampered their work. But it would be much more comfortable to be freed of responsibility.

The Sergeant ought to have been pleased. Instead, he watched the doctor's car until it was out of sight with a frown of dismay creasing his forehead.

Anxious faces peered out of the bus windows. Without any telling of the facts a sense of added tragedy had been engendered. Even the stolid Higgins betrayed signs of curiosity.

"They'll have to wait now until the Coroner's officer gets here," instructed Matthews.

"Ah!" breathed the constable. "Like that, is it?" Without further ado he passed on the information that the detention could not be lifted, ignoring appeals for an explanation.

"Sit still and be thankful," he advised.

II. FROM WHAT WAS HE RUNNING AWAY?

More expeditiously than anyone expected, the ambulance appeared on the scene, followed almost immediately by officers from the Netherton County Headquarters. Superintendent Maxley who was in charge, heard a brief report and then glanced at Caleb Wainwright. Detective-Inspector Hilliard accompanied him.

Afterwards they went into the copple. Meanwhile the ambulance men and other officers waited for orders.

The next stage was described fairly fully by the Superintendent in his formal report—a straightforward document conforming to the prescription laid down in standing orders.

III

Superintendent Maxley had no interest in the theorizing of Morrison Sharpe and he took the expected attitude towards Matthews, who looked like being rebuked for going beyond his powers.

There was no psycho-analytical reasoning in the second examination of the passengers. Facts were all that were wanted, and they were forced to confine themselves to cut-and-dried information. To the Superintendent Mr. Sharpe's information was of no account.

Ultimately the coach resumed its interrupted journey, though not to the normal terminus. Longer statements had to be taken down at the police station, each one signed neatly at the foot. Lippings required these for the inquest proceedings and each passenger was warned to be in readiness to attend the following day at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

Before the proceedings were over the Chief Constable of the County, Major Martinshawe, joined the gathering. He was a dapper little man who had served his country well in command of a battery of artillery. A strict martinet and transparently honest, he ruled his police according to the best traditions of the army. Clockwork precision was his primary demand and he insisted, above all things, on disciplined obedience to orders.

Morrison Sharpe, sizing him up at a glance, was dubious about the future of Sergeant Matthews. That ambitious young officer was certainly due for a warning.

A uniformed constable without a helmet—apparently a member of the administrative staff—came in with a telegram, which he handed to his chief. Major Martinshawe read it carefully, passed it to Superintendent Maxley with raised eyebrows, and then accepted it back.

Not being privileged to overlook, Mr. Sharpe had to fall back on his own powers of deduction. Catching the eye

of Matthews he beckoned him to come over.

"That," he announced oracularly, "identifies the unknown. I wonder what he was running away from?"

CHAPTER VIII. "WHEN GREEK MEETS—"

"Sovereign Lord the King . . . true verdict . . . according . . . evidence," droned the Coroner. Only occasional words could be heard of the formula. The seven men who formed the jury resumed their seats self importantly. Samuel Higgins, a prominent local tradesman, had been elected foreman, an office which he frequently filled. There are some handy people who are always willing to be called on for such services and Sergeant Lipping knew where to find them when Dr. Ambrose, the District Coroner, considered it necessary to call a jury together.

First of all the matter of Caleb Wainwright was considered. Evidence of a recognition by a London bank manager and a hotel proprietor. No relatives had been discovered.

"I propose only to open these proceedings to-day," announced Dr. Ambrose, "and then adjourn for further inquiries with a view to finding any surviving relatives of the deceased."

Laboriously he read over the depositions, set out neatly in handwriting on lined foolscap paper. These had been prepared by his officer and as a rule the witnesses before signatures were affixed.

To the disappointment of the press representatives nothing startling was elicited. "That is as far as I propose to proceed to-day," declared the Coroner, and the Wainwright inquest was broken off.

Then came the second inquiry, of which, perhaps, the "Daily Tribune" gave the best account. It ran:

Extraordinary evidence was given at a Netherton double inquest yesterday. An adjournment was ordered in the case of Caleb Wainwright, who was shot on a motor bus. No member of his family has been traced and identification was given by business acquaintances.

It was stated that during a series of back-fires from the engine a shot rang out and Wainwright died almost instantaneously. Sergeant Matthews who was early on the scene, found certain papers in the man's possession and was present later when the body of the second victim was found in a spinney close at hand.

WANTED BY POLICE

Not until the second inquiry was opened it was revealed that the victim was being sought in connection with defalcations at the Woolham Branch of the British United Banking Corporation.

Superintendent Maxley stated that it had been ascertained that the man was John Winslow, a chief cashier, who left his lodgings the previous day. Certain information had been given to the police as a result of which they were anxious to interview Winslow. A leather case found on the bus was claimed by the bank.

The Coroner (Dr. A. T. Ambrose): You were present when this case was opened.

Supt. Maxley: I was, sir.

The Coroner: Kindly say what you found.

Supt. Maxley: Treasury notes to the value of £4,000 and bearer bonds of £1,250.

NO RIGHT TO MONEY

According to Walter Ellstone, supervisor of the British United Banking Corporation, cash and securities as specified were missing from the Woolham Branch, where Winslow had been employed. He was a trusted servant of the company and had access to the strong room.

Auditors had been called in when the chief cashier failed to turn up for duty. He presented a list of the defalcations.

The Coroner: Have you ever heard of Caleb Wainwright?

Witness: Never.

Coroner: After viewing the body of this man you are certain he is a complete stranger?

Witness: Absolutely unknown to me.

CORONER'S SUGGESTION

Addressing the jury, Dr. Ambrose said he would adjourn this case as he had done in regard to the other. "There are certain factors that will not have escaped notice. These I will amplify in my subsequent summing-up."

"Wainwright has been killed for some unaccountable reason and the weapon has not yet been found. Medical testimony deposed to Winslow having taken cyanide of potassium and no doubt you will have arrived at certain conclusions which may, or may not, be modified later."

"Although indications suggest obvious verdicts in both of the cases I do not propose to close the inquiry until the police have concluded their investigation, but it seems certain that both tragedies must be considered in conjunction."

Interviewed immediately afterwards by a "Daily Tribune" representative, Superintendent Maxley said he had nothing to add. His department had the matter in hand and anticipated no difficulties in providing the necessary evidence to enable the inquiry to be concluded the following week.

This was a reasonably accurate summing-up of the facts as publicly presented.

If there were any doubts they existed in the minds of people who were not supposed to concern themselves with such speculations. Morrison Sharpe was particularly dissatisfied, and he passed on his feelings to Sergeant Matthews.

"Probably you're nearer right than anybody," agreed that officer. "They'll say that Winslow killed Wainwright and afterwards committed suicide, which doesn't agree with our conclusions. However, I can't do anything at all. For one thing I'm suspended."

"Good gracious, that is a blow."

"Yes, indeed. The Disciplinary Board is likely to give me short shrift. Already I've had a severe telling-off for taking too much on myself, and the order of the sack is waiting for me."

Matthews' pessimism turned out to be unfounded. Two days later he was reinstated and the Disciplinary Board never assembled. The reason for this was that Maxley was no fool. His investigations began to reveal some strange undercurrents and he decided that the patrol officer could be of considerable use to him.

"The Chief Constable has decided to overlook your conduct," he announced. "Thank you, Superintendent."

"For the time being you are attached to this department."

"What?"

"Only temporarily. That bus case isn't as clear cut as we thought at first, and I think we can utilize your first-hand knowledge better if you are immediately available. Although most irregular, your action put us in possession of information that might have been missed."

WHERE'S THE PISTOL?

Maxley had gone on to the fresh track introduced by the mysterious disappearance of the revolver. From an extracted bullet it was believed to be of an old pattern, of 33 calibre. If Winslow had been the culprit, he must have disposed of the incriminating object immediately after the crime. That limited the scope of operations.

"Not a stone has been left unturned," the Superintendent said. "I mean that literally. Every hedge, tree and bush has been beaten until I am almost prepared to swear that the firearm isn't there."

"Then there must be third party?"

"Exactly. We'll put the passengers on the carpet again."

Even the schoolboy had to submit to rigorous examination. Then came Mr. and Mrs. Wyllie and Miss Hanson Little was added to that already known.

Gardopoulos had gone back to London. They went to the address he had given at Ilford, where a slatternly woman opened the door.

"My husband has gone to town on business," she told them.

"Your husband?"

"Yes, why not? I am a respectable woman."

"Of course, we can see that. But we didn't know Mr. Gardopoulos was married."

"More'n five years, and happily too, although I says so."

"I congratulate you," said Maxley tactfully. "You're fortunate in having a man like Gregor."

"So he's a friend of yours. Sorry, gentlemen, to keep you waiting on the doorstep. Please come inside."

They followed her into a room which was startlingly out of place in view of her appearance. Furnished almost luxuriously, it contained several exotic pieces of South European origin.

"Gregor is Greek, you know," Mrs. Gardopoulos observed. "We get a lot of stuff from his home. I was born English, and proud of it."

"With every right, madam."

"Yes. They tell me I'm not English any more because I've married a foreigner. Lot of rubbish. Mind you, foreigners are all right. I meet a lot of them. They come on business often, and sometimes as fiends of Greg."

"Mostly Greeks?"

"Oh no, all sorts! Americans . . . like poor Mr. Wainwright."

Maxley started, but quickly controlled himself. "Who is he—in the same line of business?"

"You mean currants! No, I don't think so. He's dead now. Didn't you read about it in the papers? Happened on a motor bus at a place called . . . called Nether something-or-other."

"Netherton! Yes, I've seen some mention. So you knew the unfortunate fellow?"

"Fairly well. Greg brought him home about three weeks ago for the first time."

"An old friend?"

"Not to my knowledge. Business was what they talked about, though I don't know what sort. My husband doesn't tell me much, and I don't ask questions."

"He must have been cut up when I read about the affair?"

She smiled slightly. "You're wrong there, he didn't see it in the papers. When I told him it was in print he knew all about it."

"How strange?"

"Not really. You see they were together when it happened." There was a note of gruesome pleasure in her voice. "Greg was calling on some Midland customers and Mr. Wainwright went with him as a sort of a holiday trip."

"A pleasant scheme?"

"Not in view of the shooting."

"No, that must have shocked Mr. Gardopoulos. I wonder he didn't refer to the harrowing experience."

"You don't know what Greg's like at home or you wouldn't expect him to."

Having exhausted the woman's pos-

BOY SCOUTS IN TIMMINS



The weekly meeting of the Sixth Timmins troop was called to order at 7.15 p.m. The attendance and fees were taken.

We did not have such a good turnout because some fellows were playing hockey. One fellow might not turn up again.

We had a real fast game to begin with. Scouter Rowe visited us for a while until Scouter Wright stepped gingerly inside the door and they went away together.

The patrols went to their corners for instructions. Another little incident was amusing. We had talks on ambulance work by Scouter Fisher.

The meeting closed in the usual way. A few lingered after the meeting to snowball us as we came out of hall but they thought better of it. They took their revenge on one straggler.

The Sixth Timmins Cubs went to visit the Dome Cubs on Friday evening. They went over by bus. They played many games one called "Lights Out". Eats were served by the hosts. The Cubs returned about 8.15. They were taken home by some Scouts from the Sixth and the Fourth Troops.

Troop Scribe.

Did you know that the annual meeting of the Imperial Headquarters Council of the Boy Scouts Association, in London, England, it was reported that the total number of scouts at the close of the 1936 scout year, in the 49 countries recognized by the International committee was 2,592,832, an increase of 86,869 on the total total in 12 months.

Scouts in the British Empire were given as numbering 1,011,936, an increase of 72,717 over the 1935 total? Of this total Timmins contributed the odd 17 extra being the increase for 1936 in this district bringing our total membership well over the 300 mark. Now you can easily see what a large and world-wide organization you are a member of. When considering the inter-relationship of our movement in many countries some of us may have wondered about the Federation of Catholic Scouts which operates in the Province of Quebec. This organization until recently was a separate movement from the Boy Scouts Association of the Province of Quebec. In order to strengthen Scouting throughout that province they banded together. La Federation has jurisdiction over the Province of Quebec only and has agreed not to expand into our other provinces. Both Dominion Headquarters in Ottawa and La Federation are having a big job on their hands getting out Scout Literature into French. However the efforts are directed to put our English and French-Canadian Scouting on a common basis even if it is taught in the two languages. And so our inter-related brotherhood in Canada.

To-night (Monday) means the re-organization of the 7th Troop. Chaps from the new and Central Schools are invited to the meeting in the Hollinger hall at 7 o'clock. We are going to bring this troop up to full strength and make a top-notch bunch out of it.

I know of some Cubs who have rather bad memories. Who were the lads from the 3rd Pack who didn't turn up to the joint meeting of the 3rd and 6th Packs last Wednesday night.

And did we ever have a good time out at the Dome last Friday night! Twenty-six of the twenty-seven members of the Mattagami Pack were the guests of the Dome Pack, along with Akela Wheeler, several Scouts who were helping and this little Cub, Akela Leterman of the Dome filled us up on sandwiches, cake and cocoa before we caught the special bus back home. Can't quite remember who was the best in the Knitting game we played—think it was almost a tie—well, anyway the other games were a lot of fun.

—E.B.R.

T. & N. O. Railway Business Keeping up, Says Chairman

At North Bay last week Major Mac Lang, chairman of the T. & N. O. Commission, said that business so far this year was holding up exceptionally well on the T. & N. O. He added that both passenger and freight business had been heavy from all points. Anyone who travels on the line will agree with the railway commission's chairman in this. Major Lang said there was nothing new to report in regard to the proposed development of the lignite fields north of Cochrane.

Commenting on the T. & N. O. bonspiel at Timmins last week, Col. Lang said it was one of the most successful events in the history of the North Country and did much to create good fellowship among northerners and allow them an opportunity to become acquainted. More than 300 curlers, from all sections of the T. & N. O. country, mingled at the 'spiel.

Barrie Examiner: In brief, Attorney-General Roebuck's view seems to be that might is right and that, as against the Government, no citizen of this province has any rights.

abilities the two men made their excuses and promised to call at the London office. As they went towards the door there was a ring at the bell.

"Excuse me a moment," she apologized and left them standing in the hall.

"I should like a word with Mr. Gardopoulos," said a quiet voice.

Before she could reply, Matthews moved forward, closely followed by Maxley. There in the opening, stood Morrison Sharpe.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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BE BEAUTIFUL
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HEATHER ANGEL recommends a nail cream and hand cream and the use of a soft nail brush for under the nails.

A Compliment Made This Reader Hand Conscious

Here's another worth-while contribution from a reader. It contains many helpful hints and I appreciate its spirit and invite other readers to write their experiences.

"Dear Miss Pierce: I have been reading some fine pointers on beauty passed on by your readers . . . perhaps this experience of mine will be worth something to you and your column . . ."

"At a party not long ago, a man who professed to know something about palm reading said to me, 'You have one of the most artistic hands I have ever seen.' That compliment, silly as it may seem, made me hand conscious and ever since I have been paying more attention to my hands with the result that they are softer and nicer than ever."

"Ever since I was a child I've been pinching myself, that is my fingertips I seem to recall someone saying that thin ankles and thin wrists and tapering fingers were signs of good breeding or something like that. So I would massage my hands and work the fingers as though putting on a new pair of gloves and pinch the tips until I really believe the pinching made an impression. However I had difficulty keeping my hands smooth and soft, especially during the winter. And my nails would become quite brittle and would break."

"But since the above-mentioned compliment I've been studying the matter of hands. I've learned, for instance, that the hands have fewer oil glands in proportion to their size than the face and that's one reason why they are harder to keep smooth. Then, too, the frequent washing has something to do with chapping."

Beauty Routine for Hands

"I've purchased a mild soap for the hands, and a brittle nail cream which I massage about the base and side of the nail. It isn't just imagination, because my nails have improved and don't split and peel or break so easily. Then I have a hand cream with a pleasant lilac scent that seems to absorb easily. I massage with a round and round movement on wrists and knuckles which I have learned are the two points in the hands where age shows first. Back of the hands I use a downward stroke, but each finger is massaged toward the tip to stimulate circulation in the direction of the nail. This, too, I've recently learned. An extra bit of cream before retiring and then a pair of cotton gloves which are easy to wash and keep clean and which I also use for protecting the hands when working about the house. Now all this may sound like doing a good deal but it becomes second nature and takes no time at all. As for the preparations and the gloves they are all very inexpensive. It's really little enough to do to hand yourself beauty."

"A HAND-CONSCIOUS CONSTANT READER."

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