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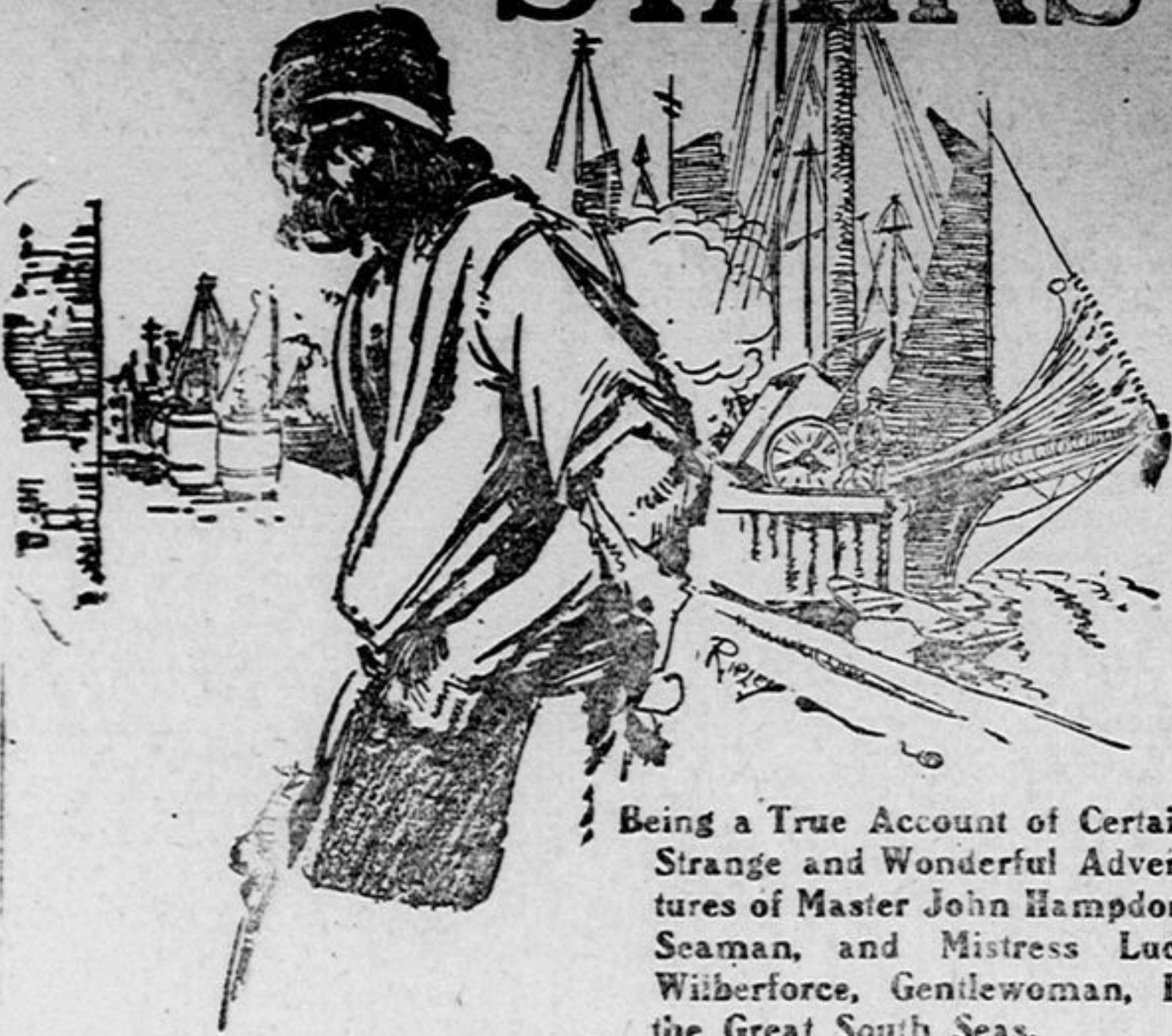
STEAMSHIP SPECIAL

Effective June 8, Westbound

Will leave Toronto 11.15 a.m. on sailing dates, making connections at Sarnia Wharf for Sault Ste. Marie, Port Arthur, Fort William, Winnipeg and points in Western Canada. Parlor-Cafe, Parlor Cars and first-class coaches to Sarnia Wharf. A special train will run the reverse way—leaving Sarnia Wharf 7.45 a.m., arriving Toronto 1.10 p.m., commencing June 9th and each Tuesday, Friday and Sunday thereafter. Full Particulars and reservations from Grand Trunk Agents, or write C. E. HORNING, D.P.A., Toronto.

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THE ISLAND OF THE STAIRS



Being a True Account of Certain Strange and Wonderful Adventures of Master John Hampton, Seaman, and Mistress Lucy Wilberforce, Gentlewoman, in the Great South Seas.

By CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

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SYNOPSIS

The body of Sir Geoffrey Wilberforce, ruined gambler and suicide, is found by Hampton, a sailor. Hampton quarrels with the Duke of Arcester.

Hampton breaks the news to Lucy Wilberforce and delivers a letter found on her father's body.

It contains half of a map of a treasure island. Lucy already has the other half. There are directions for finding the treasure.

Hampton punishes the duke for insulting Lucy. Hampton and Lucy start in a ship for the Island of the Stairs.

Hampton steals a kiss, and Lucy has him imprisoned in a cabin. Desperate men in the crew mutiny.

Pimball and Glibby demand the map of the island of Hampton, who pretends to join the mutiny. Hampton demands possession of Lucy.

He treats her with respect and offers to save her from the mutineers. The pair plot to escape to the Island of the Stairs.

The mutineers become intoxicated, and Hampton and Lucy leave the ship for the island, which is nearby.

They are carried over a coral reef to the island, where they find rude staircases and mount a gigantic staircase of stone.

The mutineers pursue them, but are stopped by the reef, and Hampton and Lucy make a search for the hidden treasure.

They pass a strange altar surrounded by masses of human bones and skulls and find the cave mentioned on the map.

They discover a vast quantity of gold, silver and precious stones. War canoes of savages approach the island. Hampton and Lucy flee to the treasure cave.

They are attacked by the savages, led by Pimball and Glibby. Lucy asks Hampton to kiss her goodbye.

They are saved by an earthquake, which routs the savages and mutineers, but closes the mouth of the cave.

They escape from the cave and the island, are picked up by a ship, and Hampton wins the love of Lucy.

barely wide enough for four to walk abreast upon, extended straight across the island to the hillock in the middle, while smaller paths seemed to follow the course of the walls on either side. The ground was gently rolling, and the road, though overgrown in places and badly broken, was in much better condition than the broader path on the



We Went Directly to the Stairs and Mounted Them.

top of the wall. I suppose the fact that it was sheltered protected it. We passed along it for a mile and a half without much difficulty.

Finally we landed at the foot of the hillock. As I had observed from the hill it was grass grown and tree clad. Indeed, we should have been hard put to it to have ascended it, so dense was the vegetation, had it not been for the fact that the path was continued around the hill constantly mounting. Where it ran the somewhat shallow earth had been cut away on the hillside and the rock surface laid bare. Of course this path was frightfully overgrown.

We ascended with the utmost care. I finally drew my little mistress, her face bedewed as well as my own, up the last steep ascent and stood upon the crest.

We could now see why the top of the hill had seemed level when we first looked at it from the wall. Indeed, the coral rock rose in a sharp escarpment eight or ten feet above the highest treetops, making a sort of tableland or platform. This level, probably artificial, had been paved with the huge, dark gray rock of the stairs and statues and pathways. I may say in passing that in all our exploration of the island, which however, was not very thorough or complete owing to the shortness of our stay upon it, we saw no quarry whence this rock could have been taken, and the only way of accounting for its presence was that it had been brought there across the seas by the makers of the monuments and stairs, whoever they might have been. They must have had large seaworthy vessels and adequate means of land transportation, to say nothing of a most considerable engineering ability to accomplish these mighty works.

Well, the level top of the hillock was in shape a parallelogram, in extent perhaps an acre and a half. It was the most curious place I have ever seen. In the middle of it, with its four sides parallel to the sides of the plateau was a huge stone platform or altar perhaps 100 feet long by 70 feet wide. Completely surrounding this altar, but some distance away from it so as to make an aisle perhaps ten feet in width, rose a line of huge statues carved, like those at the foot of the stairs, into the semblance of monstrous human faces. Not one of them was like another. There was variation in each

as there is variation in human faces. All were ugly, but all were hideous and were singularly enough European.

CHAPTER XIII.

In Which We Enter the Place of Horror
THE statues or images rose from a kind of terrace a foot or so above the level of the platform, paved as before. They formed a sort of cloister, or colonnade, around the central platform, which rose twenty or twenty five feet above. On the center of the raised platform or altar stood three or more of the same monster heads, placed one after another, the largest one being in the middle. They were in line, all looking in the same direction which my compass told me was due west. They were staring, therefore, toward the setting sun.

At the front end or west end the great platform was approached by a flight of steps. The stones of the pavement were so cunningly fitted together that only here and there had a weed lodged and grass grown. The stones of the platform or altar were also laid up without mortar and fitted in the same way. The altar was in perfect repair.

Standing so high, the fierce winds that swept over the plateau and platform had probably assisted in keeping it clear of vegetation, or anything in fact, for save for a few scattered lines of grass it was as bare as the palm of my hand.

Well, we stood upon the platform and surveyed the scene in silent awe. Nothing in the parchment had led us to suspect all this, although I recollect the stone "Goddess" looking toward the niche with the big palm tree, the spot in the wall by which we were to locate the treasure cave.

"Come," said I at last, breaking the silence. "We will have a nearer look at these gentry."

"It seems like the temple of a vanished race," breathed my lady softly, staring about her in growing wonder.

"Aye, and of a vanished God!" I said, extending my hand.

There was something weird and eerie about the plateau, and we felt better for the touch of each other's hand, at least I did. I always felt happier when I touched her little hand, but in this instance the feeling was somewhat different. In a certain sense it seemed like profanation for us to be there, yet we went on steadily. If slowly. We passed by the colonnade of statues around the inner platform and deliberately mounted the stairs.

Something, I know not what, made me bid my mistress pause before we reached the top, and I looked to my pistol and loosened my sword in its sheath as I did so, although why I did so and what I anticipated I cannot say. At any rate, I mounted to the top alone. There before me lay a platform which was sunk beneath me for a depth of two feet and which was surrounded by a low wall, on the top of which I stood. The three images rose from a smaller platform on a level with the top of this wall in the midst, and the whole place was filled with a horrible and frightful mass of human bones. Skulls, legs, thighs and smaller bones, heaped in terrible confusion, lay bleaching before me, and the space between them was filled with a fine dust, doubtless the dust of earlier bones which had moldered away through centuries. Those that still preserved their shape were the top layer and were bleached perfectly white. They lay in all directions, as if they had been cast aside carelessly and at random, yet there were indications that there had been a path from where I stood to the platform of the three images, which I perceived was just about long enough to lay a human body on.

I stared apprehensively, I must confess, at this frightful charnel house of the centuries. The only evidences of humanity we had discovered were these frightful skeletons. I would have prevented it, but my mistress suddenly came and stood by my side. Then I thought she would have fainted as the full horror of the scene burst upon her.

"Men have been here," she faltered. "Horrible, cruel men."

"Yes," said I, "but centuries ago. Look, the bones are bleached white. You have naught to fear."

"Let us leave this frightful place," she said.

"Presently," I answered, "but you will remember the directions of the chart. I must stand upon that altar and get my bearings. The treasure cave should be in line with the statues and a nick or depression in the wall on the farther side."

"Yes," she replied. "I remember."

"Well, then," I said, "will you go down to the platform out of sight of this horrible place and wait for me?"

"No," she answered nervously.

"Master Hampton, wherever you go I must go. I can never be left alone."

I tried gently to dissuade her, but, as usual, she would have her way, so that at last I gave in.

"Well, then," said I, "at least let me go before."

I stepped down into the great receptacle intending to clear the way with my feet by kicking away the layer of bones, and then, extending my arm behind me with both her hands caught in mine, she followed me down into the inclosure. Of course we had to walk upon the broken remnants of humanity, but I thrust aside as well as I could the larger pieces and skulls, and she, I afterward learned, followed with her eyes tightly closed, trusting entirely to my guidance. Indeed, she clung to my hand with all the nervous strength and power she possessed.

So we finally reached the platform. I lifted her up on it and followed myself. I led my lady...

Continued on page 7.

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It often happens that in attempting to uncork a bottle, the stopper is forced into the bottle instead, and thus floats on the liquid. This would perhaps not be a drawback were it not that each time the bottle is to be emptied the cork comes to the neck and causes an obstruction, preventing the flow of the liquid. This can be avoided very readily, and all that is needed is to bend a piece of stiff iron wire in a long U-shape, properly fitting it in the neck of the bottle so that the loop portion projects somewhat below the neck. Upon overturning the bottle the wire loop prevents the cork from reaching the neck to obstruct it.—Scientific American.