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Dr.

Panto

Fogo

DR. PANTO FOGO

an autobiography by

P. K. SAUNDERS

prentice-hall, inc.
englewood cliffs, n.j.

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To Mom,
Whose portrait I have accidentally painted
while attempting to depict myself.

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CHAPTER 1

ENGLAND FOR HEROES

I promised Jamie I would write and tell the chaps where I had been and what I had done since we all last met in August, 1914.

This happened when I went to England to attend a First Reunion Dinner of my class of 1911 at Royal Naval College, Osborne, and after dinner the Chairman, Admiral Sir William Jamieson, R.N., asked me to tell about myself, and how it was I had forsaken the old school tie and gone native in America.

I said, "Well Jamie, well chaps, that's quite an adventure story, even in the expurgated version. In the 40 or more years since I saw you all I have been around quite a lot.

"After we had won the war to end wars and made the world safe for democracy I didn't just sit on my tail and become an Admiral, like some people, but I went off and worked for a living." "Good show, P.K.," they chorused, "tell us how you got so fat from working so hard." So I said, "Well, Naval offi-

cers and gentlemen don't work with picks and shovels but with their heads and in the process I used mine and made a lot of money from my invention. In case that makes you jealous, the odds against having a really successful invention in world-wide use, like the Saunders Valve, are at least 30,000 to 1, so any of you chaps could make as much and more easily by winning the Irish Sweep.

"Actually I had a lousy time after leaving the Navy. I didn't fit into the pattern of civilian life and except in my first and last jobs, I always got fired.

"My first job was salvaging a ship's cargo off the coast of Brazil, and it only lasted three months, and my last job was working for the Saunders Valve Company in which I held the majority stock.

"In the meanwhile, I had various employments in Brazil and in South Africa and I was working a mile underground in a very unpleasant gold mine when I had my idea for the valve!"

With that I sat down and everyone said, "Good show, P.K. Now buy us a drink."

I am probably the only British Naval officer ever to desert the fold and become a U.S. citizen and secretly the chaps were shocked. However in case Lend-Lease ever cropped up again I was given the treatment for V.I.P.'s.

For one thing I had the best room at the club, with a gas heater you put a shilling in every few minutes, and with a bathroom on the same floor and only a block or two away.

And then, too, I was seated next to the Chairman, in the place of honor, and so I said to him aside, "Jamie, why don't I write about my adventures and send you a copy?" and he said, "Good show, P.K.," and that ended the evening.

I started to write while I was renting an apartment in Kingston and my landlord, Mr. B, was as friendly as could be and

always kept the door open between our adjacent living rooms.

Then one day when I came home from the club I found the door locked and bolted and a few days later, when Mrs. B saw me in the garden, she scuttled like a rabbit.

I asked a mutual friend what was the meaning of this and he said, "Oh, don't you know, P.K., the B's think you are raving mad and they are talking of calling in the police."

I said, "Well everyone knows I'm mad but surely not dangerously so."

He said, "Well, according to Mr. and Mrs. B some pretty odd things have been happening. They see you come home alone and park your car and they know when you take a shower because the Kingston water supply is low and their pressure goes off, and then, instead of going to bed, you sit in your living room almost all night and cackle and howl like a jungle full of wild life."

Well that explained how the B's felt because, with rum in Jamaica at only $1.40 a bottle, I did keep a noggin beside me to aid my memory and my (as you can see) not too facile pen —and, what with rum and my funny old memories of far away and long ago, I probably cackled and hooted just as the B's said.

Of course I could have cried too when my memory took me back to some of the places it knew about, but I am not the crying kind as you will see if you keep at it.

I never have regrets and I never look back except sometimes to see my course from the pattern of my wake over the rough surface of our century.

This is the story of an engineer, just by way of a change from all those doctors and lawyers, the latter less by love possessed, if I can guess, than by an insatiable rapacity.

Odd as my story may sound I promise you it is true as it con-

cerns me, my invention—the Saunders Valve—my family, those of my friends of whom I can write entirely to their advantage, and those of my associates who are dead.

Only in certain cases have I shaded my portraits so that the light falls differently upon them.

After I left the Navy I found that there had been a misunderstanding about the 'England fit for heroes' idea. What the old men had meant was to have England fit for Boer War heroes and we youngsters could fend for ourselves.

To get me out of his hair, Dad said Brazil was a Land of Opportunity and Mom had a letter from a friend of hers in a place called Minas Geraes saying there were jobs for veterans.

So to Brazil I was sent, without training or influence, without cash or connections, in poor health, and scared out of my wits.

That was the way England treated me after everything seemed safe, and the moral is, always tip the waiter unless you are *sure* you aren't coming back.

While I was waiting for a passage to Rio I started to learn some Portuguese, but my elder brother, Edgar, of whom you will read more later, said a sleeping dictionary was better.

Well I found one all right on the boat going out and she was all dressed up and looked like a million and her name was Maria Theresa da Beira da Carma. By the time I got to Rio, I could speak Portuguese like a native—only it was more like a native of Brooklyn, so to speak, because in spite of her fine feathers, Maria had a Portuguese accent that made even the swarthiest Brazilian blanch to a pale green when he heard my version of it.

I was also flat broke when we arrived because the bar steward had swindled me unmercifully. The way his racket worked was this: you had some drinks and you signed a card and then

you had another round and the steward said, "Don't trouble to sign another card, sir, I'll just add this round to the last card." So you agreed and he had your signature on a blank check to which he could add as it suited him and it suited him to add plenty.

And then I had my first glimpse of Rio and it was just as I expected.

We came alongside the dock in the early morning and there was a hot pink fog and I went down the gang plank and there were shots and a little man in purple and white striped pajamas came running barefoot out of the fog with his long black moustaches blowing in his slip stream and after him came a tall man in a white waistcoat and a tailcoat, shooting and shooting.

I stood there not knowing what to do when a hand clutched me from behind and pulled me into a street car and pushed me down on the floor, and although it said *Prohibido de Cuspar dentro do Carro* they had done it and I didn't like the floor of the car. It turned out there was a man at the end of this hand and he was an Australian called MacMurtry and he told me always to jump into a street car and lie down when they were shooting, which they always were. So he gave me his address and said to look him up and I said I would but I was broke and I told him about myself. So he looked at me and looked at me and said "Can you run an engine?" I said of course because I had been an engineer officer. His face fell and he said "then you couldn't handle a boat?" and I said of course because I had been a deck officer before I joined the engine room staff. He had a hand as big as a tennis racket and he seized my right hand and broke all my bones in one snap and I let out a yelp.

So I was in partnership with McMurtry, and I would get my

grub and a quarter of the profits. What McMurtry had done was to buy the wreck of a freighter somewhere up the coast and we would salvage her cargo.

McMurtry liked to drink, as I soon found out, and I suspect he had been as tight as a tick when he attended the auction at which the wreck was sold.

Before I had descended from the clouds, Mac had been chasing 'round looking for someone with technical knowhow to help him out and that was why he clinched the deal with me so quickly.

Mac was big and bony and he had a pronounced limp which he had acquired at Anzac Beach in the Dardanelles.

Like many Australians he had a leathery brown face and deep set little gray eyes that nestled as close together as they could get without actually boring a tunnel through his high-bridged nose. Mac's eyes and his mouth, which was on one side of his face like a flounder's, gave him a villainous expression, but actually he was a very nice person.

When sober, Mac never spoke except in monosyllables, and not even then if a grunt would do as well, but when the fires were burning brightly under his boiler he could talk a blue streak, only I never understood what he said.

There were no planes in those days and no railway up the coast from Rio though there was one farther north, so we bought a surf boat and some stores and persuaded the skipper of a coasting steamer to tow us as far as the wreck.

When we came up to the right latitude he took us in as close as he dared, and there was the wreck, a big old boat called the *Almeria,* Spanish owned before McMurtry bought her. She was so high up on the sandy beach that they must have beached her bows on at full speed on the top of the spring tide with a big following sea to help.

We had to row round all day in the blazing sun because the two of us never could have gotten the heavy boat through the surf without capsizing, but we managed all right after dark when the breeze had dropped and the surf had gone down, and we had brought some rollers and a lever so we could get her up the beach clear of the waves.

We lay down to sleep on the sand and we were dead tired, but there were a million mosquitoes in the bush behind the beach, and they had watched the coasting steamer arrive and they had watched us row ashore, they had watched us drag our boat up the beach and they had laughed and laughed, and when the Fuhrer of the mosquitoes said "O.K. boys," they had come at us and they made such a noise that we had to shout to be heard.

Since we couldn't sleep we climbed aboard the *Almeria* and I got the donkey boiler going and we made some tea with water from the drain cock, but we didn't dare walk around the ship in the dark because Mac said not to waste the batteries of our flashlight.

In the morning, my face was so swollen from mosquito bites that I could hardly see, but I managed to squint around the old *Almeria* and the first thing I saw was there was nothing wrong with her because the Spaniards had beached her at full speed so her engine was O.K. Then they had rowed down the coast to Rio in her boats and the Spanish Consul there had sent them home. As I said before, the *Almeria* was so hard up on the beach that high tide only came halfway up her length and there was no chance of floating her. Anyway she was built in 1894 and not worth much.

But her cargo was worth £30,000 if it could be salvaged. It was raw hides on the way from Buenos Aires to Corunna in Spain.

In the forward hold these hides were still dry and they didn't smell much worse than raw sewage and in the after hold they were mainly submerged, but the salt water wouldn't hurt them. It was in the midship hold that the hides really could express themselves, because they were submerged at high tide and exposed to sun at low tide.

Mac's idea was to spend our time hoisting the cargo out of the forward hold, clear of the tide, and stacking it on the beach while we waited for our friend the coasting steamer to return and take us back to Rio.

No argument of mine would convince Mac that our steamer could not be back for several weeks and that when she did come back her skipper would know our latitude and would come in towards the shore when he got opposite the *Almeria.* Mac was an ignorant man, though a nice one, and when he had a notion in his thick skull dynamite wouldn't budge it, so to satisfy him I had to keep a fire going night and day to show where we were. This proved to be a mistake because, besides a million mosquitoes, there were a million Indians in the hills behind the coastal swamp, and when they saw our smoke they all came down to have a look. The fact that the Indians hadn't been down before, and the fact that I found all the navigation lights switched on, led me to suppose that the *Almeria* had run aground at night and, once on the beach, she had been concealed by the trees.

Just what had caused the Spaniards to run aground I can only guess but I think it may have been an error in the compass due to the Flinders bar rusting until it lost its magnetism because, as you know, this can happen in old ships if it is not watched.

So anyway we had the Indians and they couldn't speak Por-

tuguese and they didn't want to help, even for good wages. All they wanted was to steal and steal, and since there were a million of them, they stole quite a lot of our raw hides as we unloaded them and took them off into the bush. But after a time they stopped, and it seems that word had come back from headquarters, "Mom say skin no good, no can eat, no can use for gee string," because that was all anybody wore, and untanned leather was too rough to wear between the legs even for an Indian.

I found a bunch of keys in the Captain's cabin, so we could lock everything away, and at night we locked ourselves away too because we weren't too sure about the Indians and whether they collected shrunken heads or not.

And one day they just got bored and went home and we never saw a single one again.

When the coasting steamer came back we locked everything up carefully and then, as we had arranged, the steamer lowered a boat and it rowed in with a light line. I swam out through the surf to meet it and brought the line ashore, and Mac and I hauled on the line (it had a one inch manila rope on the end of it) and got the rope ashore and secured it to the bows of our surf boat, which we had managed to turn 'round facing out to sea. So then Mac fired his revolver, as had been arranged, and we sat in our surf boat up on its rollers. I said several prayers Mom had taught me, and we were off. We smacked through the surf fit to break us apart because I had told the skipper to go slow ahead when we fired, but he had a different idea of what slow meant and went off at ten knots.

When we got back to Rio, Mac headed for the nearest bar and then, when he had bought us several drinks he said, "Didn't yer sy yer ma's miden nime was Solomon?" and I said "Yes,"

and Mac said, "It's no use me keepen' a bloody dog and doin' me own bloody barkin' " and I said "But why do you want to bark?"

So then Mac said, "I have to catch up on me drinkin' and I have a little Brazz bit in this taown and I'm going to fill her up until it runs out of her ears and you can do the bloody work. That's what I pay yer for isn't it, yer thievin' sheeney bastard? So you can see the bloody bank about the bloody money and you can buy the bloody gear and do every bloody thing while I see to my screwin'."

Coming from Mac this was high praise and a formal statement conveying the same sentiments would have been worded like this:

"Dear Mr. Saunders:

As a result of our recent association I have acquired complete confidence in your integrity and in your business judgment and I am therefore delegating you to represent me in the following matters, etc."

So the upshot of it was I became Mac's agent in Rio and I found that I could handle this sort of thing rather well.

The first thing we needed was cash because we had to buy a lot of equipment and stores, and we had to pay wages. So I went to the bank where Dad had given me an introduction and told them my story.

Dad must have had quite a pull because after I had explained that I was an ex-naval officer and showed them photos of the *Almeria* they shelled out.

The arrangement I had with them was to send the raw hides to Rio as fast as they were unloaded and they would auction them and credit us with the proceeds.

Then I chartered a tug and 12 large banana lighters. I

bought rope and other marine hardware and some food, though the *Almeria* was well stocked with staples, and I hired four Italian workmen.

When we were ready and Mac had filled up his girl we set off with the tug towing our lighters and surf boat. We prayed for fine weather, and in three days we arrived at the *Almeria.*

Then we went ashore with the surf boat and set up a special rig I had invented which was as follows:

First of all, the tug anchored well out beyond the surf in about 50 feet of water and let out all her cable, and then, from the stern of the tug, we ran a stout steel wire and made the end fast to a big tree on shore. The position of the tree and the tug was such that the jackstay passed close alongside the *Almeria* and parallel to her.

To tighten the jackstay the tug then hauled in the slack of her cable, and when the jackstay was taut we rigged a traveling pulley on it like a ski lift. This jockey pulley could be pulled ashore by a wire running to the *Almeria's* winch and could be pulled out to the tug by a wire running to the tug's stern winch.

All we had to do then to bring an empty lighter ashore from the tug was attach it to the jockey pulley and haul in on the *Almeria's* winch. When the lighter reached the beach we put rollers under it and hauled it right up alongside the *Almeria's* hold, where it was then loaded.

The loaded lighters were then hauled back to the tug by the reverse process. We were careful only to half-fill them because they were apt to get swamped on the way out through the surf, but as long as they didn't actually sink the tug would pump them out when she got them alongside.

Most of the time the rattle of my winch obscured all other sounds but when there was a pause I could hear Mac singing

sad ballads of the Australian backwoods. He had several themes which told of blighted love, the most popular of which, as it boomed and echoed from the *Almeria's* half-empty iron hull, went as follows:

"Oh e e e f I married a girl
And found she wouldn't — — —
I'd dig a ditch and bury the bitch
And Paaaadle my own Canoooooe."

Of course it didn't stay calm all the time, and when it got rough the tug let go the jackstay, secured on a kedge anchor with a buoy, and took off for Rio with as many lighters as were loaded. I had arranged for the bank to have someone attend the auction of the hides and to pay the money into our account. I made the tug skipper bring us a full statement signed by the bank each time.

The work wasn't too bad, at least not for me, because I worked the donkey boiler and the winch on deck, but Mac was in the hold egging on his workers, and when he came up he stank like a badger.

We were nearly through and had grossed £23,000 when the tidal wave hit us. It was a flat calm day with a gray sky, and as luck would have it our tug was away with a full load of barges. I was on the forecastle, a-working of my winch, when I heard a terrible rumbling, sighing noise. I looked up and the sea was rushing out so fast you couldn't believe it, and it went out almost to the end of our jackstay.

And then the skyline began to wobble like it used to when I was a kid and was bilious, and the biggest wave I ever saw came rolling in, followed by two others. I yelled down the hatch, "Hold on, Mac!" and I held on for dear life to the winch.

The wave hit us and went right over the stern and halfway

up the waist and then the *Almeria* slewed round and lay broadside on and the second wave wasn't so big and just rolled us on our side, and the third wave took us broadside on the bottom and pushed us further up the beach.

I had a sprained wrist and had taken all the skin off my shins and Mac had lost his front teeth and had a black eye. One of the crew had a broken leg but otherwise there was no damage, but we couldn't work the donkey boiler lying on its side, and so when the tug came back we had a farewell party for the mosquitoes, most of whom we knew by name, and beat it back to Rio.

(*Recently I went to see the Brazilian Consulate in New York to find out the date of this tidal wave and they laughed and said, "We get them all the time."*

It may therefore have been one of these "Resacas," as they are called, that drove the Almeria up onto the beach in the first place. That would explain how she got up so far out of the water.)

After we had paid everything off and given the tug skipper and the men a bonus, I had over £3,000 for my share which was the only easy money I ever made. It was the only time I ever did any good as an employee because I always got fired after that.

I should have stayed with Mac, as it turned out, because he made a lot more next time, but although I liked working with him we couldn't play together and when he went off on a prolonged drunk I quit.

I wouldn't have quit on Mac if I had a normal tummy which is vulcanized rubber, or a special tummy like Mac's which was manganese steel lined with fire-brick, but with my weak tummy of plain human tissue I just couldn't take it.

The woman Mom had corresponded with was a phony and

didn't even answer letters from where she lived up in the interior. But I met some kind people in Rio, who took me under their wing and when I was lonely I could phone them and they would ask me 'round. I can remember that number now! *Epanema 269.*

My host's name was Dodd and he was old enough to be my father but it seemed he still had some life left in him because we used to go for walks, and he could walk until I cried out for mercy. One day we walked right up to the top of Tijuca which is the mountain behind Rio and seems almost as high as Everest when you try to climb it.

When we were halfway up we saw a man sitting on a rock and waving to us. He had one of those big hats like Mexicans wear and huge black moustaches and was festooned with knives and pistols. And then as we got closer we saw he had no face because of some disease you get in Brazil and he was drinking from a bottle and wanted us to share it with him. So Mr. Dodd said to me in English, "If we refuse we will be dead in two seconds, but if we accept there is just a chance we can get to the hospital in time to prevent getting it." I said, "Let us go forward and die," but it turned out it was quite all right because what our bandit had in his bottle could kill germs of any denomination at 100 paces and cremate their corpses, all in one shot.

So we embraced our bandit and left him and went on up the mountain on a golden cloud, just as if we didn't have any legs but were gliding on an updraft. When we got to the top I lay down and was sick. I forgot what this particular moonshine was called, but it was made from pineapples.

Another friend I made was a chap also called Saunders who worked in the Western Cable Company's office. The Western Cable boys all lived in a mess on the other side of the harbor,

which you crossed in a ferry, like the Staten Island, only it was called a *Barca.*

Saunders showed me how dirty stories get around so fast. At night, there is a chap on duty and he sends the news out all over the world, and he sends the stock market quotes and then when he has nothing to do, ends by saying "Have you heard this one?" and that is why the stock exchanges in London and New York always have the latest with the morning milk.

I actually saw this scheme in operation because there was a chap at the English Club who lisped and one day some member said there was a school mistress who was teaching botany and she said, "Of course you all know what pith is?" and one little boy held up his hand and said, "Yeth, of courth Mith." A friend of mine in Bombay wrote it back to me within a few weeks.

I worked for some time as a salesman for a drydock outfit. I used to wait until the coast guard phoned that a ship was arriving (because the coast guard was our Amigo) and then I would jump into a fast motorboat with a case of scotch for the chief engineer.

Then we would open a bottle and discuss what had to be repaired and even if there was nothing we would find something and the chief got 20 per cent. If any of the boys wanted to go ashore, I would take them and show them where it was. I got my drinks and choice of any girl for my trouble. This was the top place in Rio and my boss had a charge account there, and one day when I was collecting my commission I saw a girl I liked because she reminded me of someone and it was Maria and we had quite a session.

I stayed with this drydock outfit for quite awhile until a ship needed a new spur wheel for her capstan. It was a herringbone gear and I sketched it and we made a new one, but it

seems I had got it left-handed instead of right-handed because herringbone wheels can be opposite hand only I didn't know.

The skipper of this ship wouldn't wait for us to make a new wheel, right-handed this time, but just went off in a huff without paying. My boss said I was O.K. as a pimp but no good as an engineer, which wasn't true, but he thought it was and fired me.

CHAPTER 2

THE VOYAGE OF THE PANTO FOGO

One day I was in the bar of the Hotel Avenida Rio Branco, where most of Rio's business was done, and I met a chap called Kelly, who worked for a big contracting outfit.

Kelly said his boss, Sir Ponsonby Grafting, wanted men to work on the new harbor he was building away in the North.

I went to see Sir Ponsonby who was six foot four, and had a beard and always wore a tailcoat and striped trousers, (even when out in the bush) and of course a top hat, too, when he wasn't praying, which he usually was. Ponsonby had an agreement with his Saviour, who was coming at any time now to take him up to the skies, tailcoat and all, but Lady Grafting and her daughter would be left behind because of their unbelief.

Ponsonby had heard about the *Almeria* because he had heard about everything, and he hired me as "Engenhero Me-

chanico dos obras do Porto" at three million Reis a month which was half again what I had dared to ask and all the other chaps started with a 50 per cent raise too. I asked Kelly why this was, and Kelly said the contract to build the harbor was cost plus 15 per cent and hurrah for 15 per cent!

There were about 20 of us all told, what with surveyors, accountants and concrete men, and before we left Rio, Ponsonby called us all in, and we all had to flop down while he prayed and prayed. But old Captain Keelhauling, who was chief engineer and a Norwegian, didn't flop but just sat like God with his cigar and his long white beard and a derby hat on his head and it looked as though we were praying to him.

I asked Kelly why this was and Kelly said old Keelhauling had been with Ponsonby from the early days and got £10,000 a year, just for knowing such a lot.

Then once again, I was aboard the coasting steamer and I had reserved a cabin to myself because Ponsonby said not to stint ourselves but to keep up appearances. But just as we got under way, in came a little Brazilian chap and started to unpack his grip.

So I complained to the purser, but he only shrugged and shrugged and started to squeal, like Brazilians do when you press them too far (as if you had pressed on an alarm switch and started up some kind of siren), and I saw I was licked and gave up.

My unwelcome roommate whose name was Henriques leaked at both ends because at one end he had the clap, and at the other he had the Brazilian National Anthem which is hawking and spitting and spitting and hawking. Despite the notices everywhere which said *"Prohibido de Cuspar,"* you will hear this anthem all over Brazil because Brazilians suffer from an excess of phlegm. You can be in a fashionable restaurant

sitting next to a beautiful woman and in the middle of her soup she will start to sing the anthem until you would think her tonsils must work loose.

So I didn't enjoy my trip which took two weeks and then, at Cabadello, just before we were to disembark, Henriques got off for a run ashore, as he had done all the way up the coast, only this time he didn't come back.

Well despite his having the clap (and you shouldn't drink while you have it), my roommate had left behind a man-size bar bill and the steward brought it to me and when I said it was not my affair he started to squeal and squeal. Then the purser came up and he started to squeal and then all the officers came up and half the crew, and they all squealed that I was responsible and that I had shared a cabin with this Senor Henriques and was his *companhero*.

I don't know how it all would have ended because all the others had left the ship and she was about to get under way, when old man Keelhauling came back aboard, because he had missed me and he said something to the skipper and I don't know what it was but all of a sudden they all stopped squealing and were all smiles and bows.

So I thought perhaps old Keelhauling earned his £10,000 after all because he could speak the magic word to the Brazilians, like a gypsy to a stolen horse, and they would bow and smile and it was O.K.

The place where we were was called Carapata do Norte. It was a muddy river mouth that had silted up, and a million square miles of mangrove swamp and a malaria-infested mud hovel townlet of 30,000. And as far as I could see there was no commercial activity at Carapata and never would be because everyone just stayed in pajamas all day, swatted mosquitoes and sang the National Anthem.

And they were very polite, so when you boarded the town's one streetcar, which in Brazil is a *Bonde,* you shook hands with the conductor. He would shoot you if you forgot because you get shot in Northern Brazil if you aren't up to standard in your manners.

Kelly said they were so polite they would never wish to intrude by asking you the time of day, but if they really wanted to know they would just shoot you and look at your watch after you were dead.

So you had to mind your P's and Q's in Carapata do Norte if you wanted to keep a whole skin. And you could get some quite complicated varieties of spirochaete if you didn't watch your P's and Q's because syphilis was indigenous to those parts and almost everyone had it but it didn't do much harm except to strangers.

One day I went to a christening and was dandling the baby who was covered with large purple spots, and I said to the mother, "What has it?" and she replied *"No est nada Senhor, est coisinho de syphilis"*—nothing, my lord, just a touch of syphilis—and I dropped it as if it had been a diamondback rattlesnake.

When we arrived at Carapata we stayed at the Grand Hotel Mundo, or World Hotel, which had a globe hanging outside with a map of the world on it only Brazil was three quarters of the world and northern Brazil was three quarters of Brazil. You might say they had a Texas complex.

The Hotel Mundo was nothing but a vast thatched roof open at the sides and was infested with water rats from the nearby Carapata River, so instead of having a cat or a dog to keep the rats down they had a tame Anaconda, which was half grown and only 15 feet long. Most of the time this pet lived in the rafters and you could wake up at night and hear a scuffle and

a squeak as the rat went down. At meals Ninha, as she was called, would come round the tables and beg.

She did this most prettily weaving her head and opening her mouth for titbits and she could catch better than an Australian cricketer, but the first time I met her it was quite a shock.

I had just arrived and was sitting at dinner eating surprisingly delicious food. The only light was wax candles which flickered as the sea breeze blew through the room and a nice, gentle, big dog put his heavy flat head on my knee. So without looking down I put my hand down to pat him on the head only it was Ninha and the pretty little head was hard and stone cold.

When I fell over backwards, old Captain Keelhauling, who was at the head of the table, lifted his long white beard to the sky and roared with merriment because it was his stock joke for newcomers and it had worked exactly to schedule on me.

After that, I was quite Captain Keelhauling's favorite and he sent me off to Pernambuco to buy some additional equipment. You got to Pernambuco by going down to the railway station with your bedding and some food packed in a picnic basket. You made yourself at home in a large, fairly clean waiting room where they had a bar and a washroom, and you waited. It was rather fun, waiting in this place, because a hundred or so other people were camped there too and there was plenty to drink. Everyone was as friendly as could be and you played cards or dice, and you sang.

There was always someone who played a guitar or an accordion and there were some good voices and it was Texas again. When the train came, we all climbed in as matey as could be, and off we rushed into the unknown at anything up to 20 miles an hour because the engine burned wood and couldn't keep up enough steam to go faster.

It was as hot as blazes in this train, but the Brazilians insisted, at all costs, on keeping all the windows tightly closed and when I protested all they would say was *"Muito perigoso, senhor Ingles, muito perigoso"* and I thought they were afraid of fresh air because Latins are that way.

In the end, after a sharp tussle, I got my window open just one inch and there was a bit of air. After being up all night with wine and song, I fell into a comfortable doze and had such a funny dream. I dreamt I was back home and it was a cold day and I was sitting in front of the drawing room fire. It was pleasantly warm on my legs, and Mom was writing at her little ornate Queen Anne bureau and the brass handles went clickety-click. The parlor maid came in with tea and I was just helping myself when she took the milk jug and threw it in my face and everyone laughed.

So then I woke up and everyone was bellowing with laughter because what was *"muito perigoso"* was a piece of burning wood from the engine and it had set fire to my pants and one of the passengers had a glass of red wine and he had doused the fire with it.

I had been quite popular with my fellow passengers before this happened because as a rule Ingles are stiff with Brazz and I wasn't. They just adored my Brooklyn accent, and after the fire they loved me as a brother and called me "Doctor Panto Fogo," or doctor pants-on-fire. This isn't strictly good Portuguese because my new friends started off to say "pants" in English and then found that they didn't know the word for "fire" and so used Portuguese for the last half of the name.

They called me doctor because in Brazil everyone with a degree is a doctor and I was *"Senhor doctor engenhero dos obras do porto do Carapata do norte"* which was chief mechanic of a dredger.

The man with the glass of wine became my bosom friend for life. He was a magnificent old brigand with a mane of white hair and a black moustache that would have made a sergeant major of the Guards green with envy. He was affectionately known as "Tio Bebino" or "Drinking Uncle" but he became just Tio to me.

Tio said I mustn't think of going to the Club Ingles at Pernambuco but must consent to put up with the intolerable hardship of staying in his miserable shack and everyone laughed. So I thought, "Oh well, try anything once," and I accepted somewhat ungraciously. At Pernambuco Tio's little runabout, an Isotto Fraschini, was there to meet us and stuck out of the railway station at both ends.

Tio had a little place in a quiet suburb of Pernambuco and he said not to tip the servants because they were quite well paid and as there were 20 of them I was glad about not tipping them.

Tio had a good-looking wife who was younger than he and to whom I was introduced as "Senhor doctor Panto Fogo." Mrs. Bebino introduced me to her boy friend who was English and worked in the bank. It seems that she had a sleeping dictionary too. But Tio didn't mind because he loved his wife and wanted her to have fun. He had a charge account at the best house and he and I and his two grown sons used to go there so that Mrs. Bebino could be alone with Wilfred.

Tio enjoyed everything and everybody and we all loved him. The thing he liked best was to go aboard the Royal Mail ship as she stopped at Pernambuco, or Recife as they called it, and have drinks. So one day when the Royal Mail was outward bound Tio was carried on to England and he decided to stay and have fun in London.

There were not many Portuguese in London and Tio spoke

no English, so he went to stay at a Portuguese hotel behind Covent Garden, where the big vegetable market is, because Portuguese always grow vegetables.

One night Tio was out with some woman and she took him to her home somewhere up in north London, I think Hampstead. He didn't realize that when England has a war she keeps up her wartime regulations ever after. So London shut down like a clam at 11 p.m., when the pubs close, and still does and ever will, Amen and there were no buses or taxis to take Tio home at 5 a.m.

Well Tio wasn't worried about walking home in his tailcoat and white waistcoat, only he didn't know the way and couldn't ask in English. Just then a coster drove by with his little barrer loaded with veg' and Tio realized he was headed for Covent Garden. So Tio called out and waved his cane and the coster looked back and saw a six-foot-six moustached brigand in a top hat waving at him. He whipped up 'is little 'orse and beat it; Tio ran after him through the early morning streets of London, shouting in Portuguese, and the coster didn't 'arf get a turn, 'e did and when they got to Covent Garden Tio gave him a quid, who said "Gor blimey Governor, I thought you was old Nick 'isself, I did."

Then I got fired. It wasn't my fault because I asked Tio about it and he said O.K.

I bought two locomotives in Recife and they gave me 10 per cent and I bought a whole lot of rolling stock and got 10 per cent. Tio said it was the custom of the country and they would be mortally offended if I refused.

Then I bought six, 1,000 ton lighters and inspected each one, and when I got to the last one I looked over the side and there was a little 25 foot yacht painted green and on the stern was

"Panto Fogo" in gold letters, which I thought was a jolly nice gesture.

So Tio said not to hurt their feelings and I took the yacht and sailed it back to Carapata because I didn't want to be panto fogo'd again.

Just then Sir Ponsonby turned up with his top hat and frock coat and we all had to kneel and we prayed to old man Keelhauling with his cigar and his derby hat. Ponsonby prayed that none of us would fall into temptation.

And then he sent for me and said he heard I had accepted a bribe. It was lucky he didn't know about the 10 per cent in cash, and I said "Well I don't see much difference between accepting bribes and giving them," and old Captain Keelhauling roared with laughter and said, "Touché."

The next day Kelly gave me nine contos of Reis which was three months pay and I provisioned up the *Panto Fogo* and set sail.

I should have gone up the Carapata River to explore, except I did not think the *Panto* would buck the stream under sail and she had no motor, besides which Dad had always said for a young man to work and get ahead and not fritter away his time, and I had no means of knowing that the ultimate reward for hard work was 98.8 per cent Income Tax, which is what the Socialists gave me in the end.

So I decided to sail back to Rio, which is a long step from Carapata do Norte but I would have the easterly trade winds on my port beam most of the way. It was not my fault about Tio coming too, although his wife always blamed me, but wives, including my own, always regard me as the horned tempter, the seducer. When they see me on the horizon they start beating their breasts, if they have any.

As a matter of fact I had to put into Recife for stores and charts and of course I had to say goodbye to the Bebinos. I was as surprised as anyone when Tio took the estate carpenter down to the Panto and started mucking her around. What he did was shift the bulkhead at the foot of the starboard side bunk to give 6'8" headroom.

A wily old bird was Tio because with the trade wind coming on the portside, Panto would heel to starboard so Tio could lie and smoke his black cheroots in his bunk with his back against the side, while I just could not stay in my bunk at all, but had to sleep on the floor with my back against the coaming of Tio's bunk and he would drip cigar ash in my face.

I tried sleeping with my head aft, but then when Tio got up he would forget and step on my face which was worse than having the cigar ash because Tio had huge horny feet and he weighed 250 lbs.

We could both be below at the same time because the *Panto* was gaff-rigged with a big squarish mainsail and for some reason (as Captain Slocum found with the *Spray*), you could trim this sort of sail in the trade wind and she would keep a course for days on end. But later, when I had a Marconi rig, it wouldn't work. So Tio and I had fun. He could cook like Escoffier in any sort of weather, and could play his guitar and sing sad songs of Brazilian green Hell which lay for 3000 miles behind his estate. I taught him the soulful ballads of the gunroom, translated into Portuguese.

It took us seventeen days from Recife to Bahia, with the trade winds slackening off and dying altogether as we went south. It got us down in the end, slatting and slatting in the trough, the gaff creaking on the mast and the sun blazing down. We had a plague of houseflies too, millions and millions of them all over the boat. I don't know where they came from

because more came as fast as you killed them. They wouldn't let you sleep and sat on your fork on its way to your mouth so you couldn't help swallowing a few each time you took a mouthful.

I noticed a funny thing on this trip. Although the food was chiefly canned (and in those days canned food wasn't so good) and although I had quite a lot to do keeping the *Panto* in shape and on her course, I just didn't have any upset tummy at all during the whole trip. That was the first time since I was a kid that I didn't have trouble. Later you will see how I applied the same cure with even greater success.

In Bahia they have 365 churches, one for every day of the year, and there are a million priests and quite often the priests, who have nothing much to do, get up a fiesta and have fun. The fiesta we saw while we were there was priests carrying a crucifix and chanting as they marched round the town and a small procession of the Godly behind them and behind them again a huge crowd, mostly drunk and some of them half naked, shouting and cursing and calling out ribaldries and they had a crucified pig squalling and squealing as they held it aloft on its cross. So we were back in pagan Rome before the conversion of Constantine in 300 and something A.D. and a procession of Christians was about to be lynched by the mob.

After the fiesta, I said goodbye to Tio and he went home to his wife who loved him best even though she always took Wilfred to bed, and I put the *Panto* aboard the boat for Rio, because I had had enough of small boat sailing in the open sea, and if you have done it you will know what I mean.

Back in Rio I decided to have a vacation because I still had quite a lot of cash and I had worked hard at Carapata even though I omitted to say so, and I went to see Maria whose company I always enjoyed.

I never met anyone else with whom I was in such complete rapport. I would say, "Let's go . . ." and Maria would say, "The sailmaker brought the jib back this morning," and she would say, "Why don't we go camping on that beach up the coast where we were last time." And I would go to the hall and fetch the chart I had picked up on the way home.

Maria would ask me what I wanted for supper and I would say, "Oh you know, let's have those little shrimps the way you do them with rice and olives," and there in the ice box (we had no frig) were all the ingredients.

Maria was not at all sexy, and very few professionals are, they can't afford to be, but she would oblige in an efficient way like when you have a 24 handicap at golf and you ask the Pro if he'd like a round.

Maria was short and thickset with a fair round tail like my governess, for whom I had a childhood complex. She was what the Iberians call a "Rubia" with auburn hair and gray eyes. If you didn't know about the accent she had a charming contralto voice and I really don't know why I didn't marry her, except she was ten years older than I and what would Mom have said if I had arrived home with a middle-aged Portuguese whore on my arm?

Apart from the fun and games, Maria was bubbling over with her plan to make a fortune, which she succeeded in doing, and ten years later, when I needed cash for my invention, it was Maria who supplied it.

In those days Rio had no paved roads except in the actual city area, and as soon as you left the town you bumped down onto a series of farm tracks.

This would have made commuting from the suburbs impossible except for the streetcar service, owned by a Canadian corporation and as good as such a contraption could ever be.

Maria realized that a tract of land on the outskirts of town had very little value if it was off the streetcar route, and very much value if it was on it.

Maria also realized that one of her clients, named Robert, was an official in the streetcar's corporation engineering department.

Robert was like the old Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph, who went every morning at breakfast time to obtain consolation from his friend, Frau Schratt. At the risk of being late for office, Robert would stop off and receive his consolation from Maria, and then he would tell her about the plans for next year's extensions.

Maria had therefore cabled money to her father, who was a small building contractor in Lisbon, and he had come to join her, and the four of us were in partnership, only Robert didn't get his share in cash.

I supplied the working capital and a sort of inborn business knowhow, which I certainly hadn't been taught. Maria was the promoter and looked after Robert, who supplied the technical facts, and old man daCarma did the footwork.

To keep prices low, he went round in a donkey cart, dressed as an old peasant, which in fact he was, and bought up unlikely looking pieces of land at low prices.

After a time he got quite a reputation for his perspicacity because soon after he had bought land, along came the streetcar and the price tenpled.

This went on for several years until one day some dispossessed owner shot old daCarma, and we had to hire a new salesman, only by then I wasn't in Rio.

I wasn't there to witness the success of our enterprise because I am like one of Nevil Shute's characters who said he was a starter and not a runner and as you will see later, having

fathered a project, I always hand it to a nurse for raising—not for me the diaper duty.

Soon after Maria's wonderful plan had begun to show results, I decided to leave Brazil and to migrate to South Africa.

I had spent some time in the Cape when I was a midshipman in the old *Goliath* and my parents had come from there, so I had a lot of relatives and friends to help me get started.

I had another reason for leaving Brazil; the locals had a slogan "Brazil for Brazilians" and apart from personal relationships, they resented an Anglo-Saxon invasion.

Since I never, in my whole life, have had just one big reason for doing or not doing anything, but always have a number of pros and cons to consider, I will add a further reason for leaving Brazil.

I wanted to marry and from my observation mixed marriages in Brazil were not a success. Protestant Nordic types do not grow deep roots in Catholic Latin soil.

Meantime, I had a letter from a girl I had liked in England saying her family had migrated to South Africa and she would be glad to see me. So I cabled I was on the way and caught the Japanese mail boat from Rio to Capetown.

I was just a bit hurt when, on arrival, I found that she was away visiting friends. Of course, if I had been older I would have known. If you are not the most important thing on earth, right from the start, you never will be important at all!

CHAPTER 3

BEFORE THE FLOOD

Until now, I have been writing a story for my friends who knew about my affairs up to the end of World War I. However, one of my friends showed what I had written to one of his friends, who is a publisher, and he said to make a book out of my adventures.

In order to do this, I must now go back to an earlier period so that you will understand who all the characters are and what factors acted on me to make me me.

I might as well start with my far-off Edwardian childhood, as remote to the younger reader as the history of the Pharaohs, for those were the days before the flood of socialism engulfed the human race, and gentlemen were still gentlemen.

As I have a photographic memory of my early days I will endeavor to make them clearer to you by printing episodes directly from the negative without retouching.

Nanny and Joy were messing about in the hedge which grew beside the tow-path looking for a plant because Joy was always frantic about flowers.

Now was the time to get down out of my go-cart like I had planned and poke my stick into the canal to see how deep it was and it seems I poked down too far because just then I lost my balance and tail over teapot in I went.

Right then, I would have drowned because Nanny couldn't swim, only my stick which had a crook-handle floated up and Nanny got it and got me by the tail of my frock because in those days gentlemen wore frocks until they were big. This was a stick called an alpenstock which Mom had brought from Switzerland, where she had been with a lady called Mrs. Marwich, but what Mom and Mrs. Marwich were doing in Switzerland I never found out.

I didn't really mind falling in the canal and getting all wet because somehow it wasn't me but someone else I was watching from the bank, but when Nanny undressed me, old Dr. Parsons came along the tow-path and I was frightfully ashamed. When Nanny told about my falling into the canal, Dr. Parsons said "Well, he'll never drown, will he?" And as you will see later, I nearly did several times, but never quite.

Well, Nanny trotted me home as fast as her breath and the tow-path would allow, bumpity bump, and I was put to bed all wrapped up and with a fire in the nursery grate, and I had hot cocoa with sponge fingers which broke off when I dunked them and had to be fished out. And the funny thing was I didn't get into trouble like I thought, only Mom came and said a lot of prayers but I was asleep. Mom was always saying prayers because she had a deal with Jesus which was heads He won and tails He couldn't lose, because if Mom's prayers came out right it was thanks to Jesus, and if they didn't it was for a lesson;

although at first I could not figure out what Mom got out of it.

Mom was always doing good and going to church, but she also always used to tell bad stories and Dad said she was a saint with a Rabelaisian mind. Of course Mom never said bad things in front of the girls, because girls didn't know about bad things, but I used to hear what she said, and could often understand. So it was like Cook said "Little pitchers 'ave long ears," because the Kitchen always spoke that way. "Yer wouldn't 'ardly credit it wouldja?" "You'll catch yer deaff-er-cold yer will, Master Phil, going out wivvout yer 'at." "She's lost her tongue she 'as" which made Joy stick hers out as far as it would go. "And I don't want none of your sauce neiver, Miss Joy, I'll tell yer Dad I will."

Joy and I were brought up in the kitchen because Mom couldn't bother with us and left us to Nanny to look after. Nanny didn't want to be alone in the nursery, and stayed in the kitchen quite a lot, and we liked the kitchen too.

The kitchen was always warm even when everywhere else was stone cold, because there was a big black range which ran all along one wall, and there was always company as Nanny said. There was Cook, whose name I forget, and red-faced Rose, the parlor maid, and James, the boot boy inside and whiskered old Mr. Cort, the gardener, and Corny, the coachman outside. It was Corny that Nanny liked best. Nanny was freckled, red-headed, Irish and we thought also Catholic, but she never let on because Mom didn't hold with practices not practiced by her Church, which right then was the Church of England, though later she tried out several others.

Nanny smelled a lot. She smelled of Red Head, which is beetroot pickled in vinegar and she smelled of sweat like onion soup, and though I loved her more than anyone, I didn't like it when she hugged me too close.

I don't think the servants ever bathed all over because it was a lot of work. Joy and I shared a bath in the nursery every Saturday and it took four people, or six if you counted Joy and me, because Nanny was a cut above the kitchen and would not fetch and carry; so Cook heated water in little copper jugs, and Rose and James, puffing and blowing, carried them up five flights to the nursery. Then, when the jugs were all steaming, Nanny would trundle out from somewhere a metal dish affair, painted yellow inside and grained brown to look like wood outside, only the paint was lumpy because old Mr. Cort had painted it, and when Mr. Cort painted things they came out lumpy. Into this dish Nanny first poured the hot water, and then she poured in cold, testing with her finger until it was quite cold, and Joy and I sat cross-legged up to our tails.

Of course the soap always got in our eyes and we howled. At least I did, because Joy was older and used to keep from howling until I did something and she could draw attention.

We were dried in front of the fire, because we always had a fire in the nursery on bath nights, and tucked up in bed. Then Mom arrived for an inspection and read to us from a Prayer Book called "Little Pillows" and then we were asleep and Rose and James came back and took away the cold, grey soup Joy and I had left in the metal dish.

James, the boot boy, cleaned everyone's boots which were always dirty, because we didn't have any motor cars and so we used to walk when we wanted to go places. When James wasn't cleaning boots, he was cleaning knives, which he did by sticking them into a sort of drum which had a handle. When James turned this handle it cleaned the knives and also sharpened them and they were quite thin after they got old.

One of these knives got so thin that Cook called it her good-

natured knife because it would go around corners, and that was how I first learned that God saw everything, and that the wages of sin was death.

It happened one day when Nanny and Corny were out in Corny's room over the stables, and Corny was showing Nanny something; so Cook said to make some candy to keep us busy, and when we had made the candy we left it in a big flat dish to cool in the larder, which was a place you cooled things in before you had a refrigerator.

While the candy was cooling, we went into the breakfast room to eat some nuts because nuts and raisins were always kept in a silver dish on the sideboard, only we didn't like raisins.

All of a sudden James rushed into the room squalling to beat the band with Cook's goodnatured knife sticking right through the middle of his hand and blood fairly spurting out.

So we didn't know what to do because everyone was out, and we squealed too, as loud as we knew how, and it would have been all up with James except Kathleen, who was my sister only 15 years older, had been in after all.

Well, Kathleen got hold of the knife in James' hand and pulled and pulled and James squealed twice as loud. I don't remember how it all ended, except James had been caught stealing, because he had tried to dig our candy out of the dish with Cook's goodnatured knife, and it had slipped and gone through his hand.

And to be sure I understood what He meant, the very next day God knocked Joy out for using a bad word. Joy had said I was a devil and right then the nursery curtain rod with brass knobs at each end fell on her head. So Joy lay on the floor with a big bump on her head and I felt ever so good.

Somehow it was always Joy who got into trouble, even when it was my fault, and I suppose she was just unlucky.

One day we had been locked in the nursery because Nanny had her day off, and Mom was busy with the Church festival, which was a lot of flowers in the Church, and Mom always did them. Well I had been given a box of boys' carpenters' tools and although they weren't much use as tools they were good for throwing, so I just threw them at Joy one after another, and she didn't throw them back but just ducked and screamed and ducked again, so all I had to do was to keep picking up the tools and keep on throwing.

All of a sudden the nursery door flew open and in rushed Mom, purple in the face, and boxed Joy's ears because of all the row we had been making, but she didn't even notice me. And so I knew that I had been right after all.

Of course, being older, Joy was the ring-leader, if two is a ring, but when Mrs. Tump's finger got cut off nobody knew it was us, so Joy didn't get blamed for that, although it was her fault.

It happened when Mom was having a garden party under the elm trees that grew by the tennis lawn. There was tea and cake, and sandwiches and strawberries from Mr. Cort's strawberry bed, and thick cream that Aunt Phoebe had sent from Devon. Of course, in those days people did not have anything to do because of a thing called the leisured class and so they were always giving parties, except when they were going to them. All the neighbors came to this one in their carriages and broughams and high-wheeled gigs, and Uncle Albert, Dad's brother, came in his car, which went chug chug, titter, titter.

Well some of the chairs for the guests to sit on were the sort that folded up flat with a cross-bar at the back which fitted into a groove, and Joy said to go round and set the bar so it wasn't

in the groove, and while everyone was busy arranging everything, we went and did it. The first person to sit down was old Mrs. Tump, the Vicar's wife, who was a large purple woman in a tight, purple satin dress, laced so tight she couldn't bend. Another reason why Mrs. Tump couldn't bend was her hat.

Mom had a hat with a pineapple in the middle and some bunches of grapes round it, and then round the outside some pears and apples; so not to be outdone Mrs. Tump's hat had a cock pheasant and a covey of partridges in a cornfield, and it took two maids to lift it on.

So when Mrs. Tump sat in our chair she had to kind of fall backwards into it and it went down flat and one of her fingers got caught between the frame of the chair as it folded up and got cut off. So Mrs. Tump screamed and fainted and all the guests ran around shouting and Joy and I were quite excited watching it all from behind old Mr. Cort's glasshouse, but we knew to stay out of sight.

Afterwards when everyone had gone we came to look where Mrs. Tump had been and sure enough there was her finger lying in the grass with a gold ring still on it. The chair had cut it clean off, as clean as a whistle, and Joy went to the kitchen to fetch a piece of string, because string was never thrown away but always untied and kept in a drawer in the kitchen table. When she came back with the string we tied it round Mrs. Tump's finger and hung it from a bush at the far corner of the garden where the septic tank was.

After that, whenever we had a chance and no one was around we would steal out and have a look at the finger, and after a time the flesh shrunk back and the bone stuck out and it smelled quite a lot. And then one day the finger was gone, ring and all, and we thought perhaps the cat or else a bird had taken it.

Well, either from smelling Mrs. Tump's finger, or from being around the septic tank so much, I got diphtheria and would have been a dead duck only Dad, who was a doctor, sucked the goo out of my throat with a tube, and after that I always got sick. Joy and I used to go to parties knowing we would be sick because God had made Joy with one part missing and she had no valve in her throat, so when she had eaten too much she just turned green, and leaned forward and puked without a sound. It was as simple as that.

It was because of my bad stomach that I always got wind like old Mrs. Jack, who liked to eat sweet things and gave wonderful children's parties, so she could eat all she wanted without being scolded by her lady companion, who was very strict.

Because of eating so many sweets, old Mrs. Jack was tremendously fat and was fun to look at because she had a black moustache and a cape and bonnet, the same as Queen Victoria, and elastic sided boots and she had taught her dog Rondo to leave the room when there was a bad smell, so that everyone would think it was him, which it often was.

But we all knew about Mrs. Jack's idea, and one day when she gave a party some kid went on ahead and tied Rondo in the garden, and in the middle of tea Mrs. Jack called under the table in her deep man's voice, "Rondo, Sir, how dare you!" and that was what we had been waiting for, and we all squealed "Rondo's out in the garden, Mrs. Jack!" So of course, Mrs. Jack didn't ask us to any more parties, which was a pity because she gave the best parties and though Mom and Dad always had carriages and horses and gave parties and had servants to do everything and gave us jolly fine presents, like a bicycle, we didn't ever have what we liked to eat. It was bread and butter, or bread and jam, but you couldn't have both. Sweet things were hard to get and when we had an egg with our tea it

seemed like we were doing wrong, and the kitchen would say "Well I never, Miss Joy, an egg for your tea, what will your Mummy say!"

We never could get paper for drawing on, and even grown-ups used paper very carefully, always writing on both sides, first east and west, and then north and south.

Mom always used to say Dad didn't give her enough money for housekeeping, but she always used to have money for Edgar, because he had to have a horse to go hunting and also he needed to take a little stimulant for his heart, and anyway Mom loved Edgar best because he had "opened her womb" and was 18 years older than I.

Whenever it was a fine day and Corny wasn't wanted for the carriage, he would harness our fat, shaggy pony, Belle, into the trap and off we would go for the day, to the jingling of Belle's bells.

Belle didn't like to go fast and would only trot if the road was flat. Downhill she walked in a kind of jolting way with her tail up against the trap and she wouldn't go uphill at all unless we all got out and walked with Corny and Nanny at her head. Of course, Belle would have gone faster if Corny could have hit her with his whip, but when he tried this Joy set up such a howl that passers-by would stop and exclaim "Shime on 'im, a big man, 'itting 'is little 'orse," and Corny would get very red and stop. So Belle had her own way when Joy was around, but Corny used to take it out of her when he had her all alone. Belle wasn't at all grateful and bit Joy on the arm one day and made big black and yellow bruises.

Of course, it was fun getting ready for a trip which took several people several hours, while Joy and I ran around and helped everybody as much as we could, only sometimes they didn't like it.

First of all Corny, in his stable clothes, had to catch Belle, and although she was slow in the trap, she could run like the wind when Corny was trying to catch her, so Corny, James and old Mr. Cort would all run around shouting and waving ropes while Belle ran around waving her tail and grinning all over her face. Sometimes Joy would get into the paddock when Nanny wasn't watching and then she would run around too, pigtails flying, but I always stayed outside the fence away from Belle's gnashing teeth and clumping hooves.

When Belle had had enough, she would let Corny catch her and lead her to the stables, where he would polish her with a brush till she looked quite shiny and then tie her into the trap with a lot of chains and straps while she tried to bite or kick him, according to which end he was at.

After that, Corny would go to his room over the stables which smelt of horses and Corny and Ellerman's Embrocation (which was something you rubbed onto horses and it smelt a lot) and Corny would change into his things for the trap, because in the carriage Corny wore a top-hat and a long coat and trousers, but in the trap he had leggings and green breeches and a yellow waistcoat, with a thing like a towel round his neck, and a brown bowler hat.

While all this was happening, Cook was making up a big basket called a hamper, enough for Mr. Theodore Roosevelt catching lions with a whole cold chicken and a tongue in a glass jar, and bread and butter and lettuce, and some fruit which Mr. Cort had picked. And then, we always had sponge cake and chocolate for dessert, which was what we liked best.

When Cook, Corny, Belle and the trap were ready, Nanny would come down the steps in a dark blue cape and bonnet with ribbons to match. While Corny was looking at her, Belle would hack him on the shins, and then Mom would come and

tuck us into the trap with a rug and kiss us goodbye. If Kathleen was home from school at Wimbledon, she would come too, and I always liked Kathleen best because she didn't fuss me around.

Well by then all the excitement had been too much and Joy and I would have to be taken back into the house and we would have to start over again.

Of course, it didn't always stay fine for a whole day, not in England. When it rained, Joy and I had to sit on the floor of the trap next to Corny's brown leggings and Nanny's buttoned-up boots, under a blanket and I can smell that blanket now. It was a Scots plaid on one side and smelled of horses because Corny put it on Belle's back when she was sweating from working so hard; on the other side it was rubber with quite a strong cheesy smell.

But we didn't want to go in the trap if Dr. Parsons would take us in his motor boat, which wasn't a steam boat like Uncle Albert's or a petrol boat because petrol boats got stuck and people got drowned going over the weir instead of down the lock. This was an electric boat.

It didn't go very far because of some batteries, but it went so slowly you thought it was far. You could trail your finger in the water and watch the willows go by and there were people picnicking on the banks and you waved at them.

Dr. Parsons didn't come with his boat every day because of something Dad said, so Nanny said she would learn to row and we could hire a rowboat. She had thick, freckled arms with yellow hairs on them and in less than no time she could row like a sailor. After that we used to go with Nanny further than with Dr. Parsons because Nanny didn't have batteries and could row all day, only sometimes it made her cross.

For my sixth birthday Nanny built me a real boat, all my

own. She could carpenter ever so well. It had green sides and a white-painted mast and I liked it a lot only it was the wrong shape. When I told Nanny it was wrong she cried and then one day Nanny was gone and I had a governess instead.

(Gone with the wind of Socialism and of total war is the glory of Edwardian England, and with it our old Nannies with their clichés and their rigid protocol and their unfailing loyalty.

They gave much for little and as each cherub outgrew the nursery, off went Nurse with her quaint domed portmanteaux and little wicker baskets, to start afresh under an alien roof, another endless round of patience.

When ours came to see us in her old age, my heart yearned towards her, but I had not yet learned to judge our Mother and thus believed her story that Nanny was a miser and really quite rich.

So the money I had earmarked for Nanny remained in my bank to be devalued, inflated, exchange-controlled and eventually tax-confiscated by a democracy in search of Utopia.)

Right then Mom's arrangement with Jesus began to pay off because it turned out that whatever Mom wanted, Jesus would agree.

So Mom & Co. decided we should leave Weybridge, where we had all been very happy and had friends, and move to Eastbourne, which Mom wanted to do because she liked to have shops and churches near because shopping and church-going made up a big part of Mom's Daily Cross, which she always carried.

It turned out later that Mom's plan was not to have herself stuck with just one kind of church like at Weybridge, which wasn't a proper town but only a village, but to shop around quite a bit until she got the deal she was looking for.

Leaving Weybridge wasn't so bad after all, because at the last moment Uncle Albert turned up in his motor car, titter, titter, chug, chug, and said he would drive us all to Eastbourne which was very grand and exciting.

Uncle Albert was something in the city and quite rich and although he was small, Aunt Rachel was ever so big and quite deaf and always carried an ear trumpet.

We used to work Aunt Rachel and Uncle Albert up to an argument to see the fun, because when Uncle Albert was getting the better Aunt Rachel would remove her ear trumpet and stand with folded arms looking down at him. He would run round and round her shaking his fist and sometimes even sticking out his tongue. So you see Uncle Albert had quite a temper and that was why we misunderstood about the trip to Eastbourne.

Uncle Albert's car had yellow painted wooden wheels almost as big as the carriage, the back wheels bigger than the front. You steered it with a tiller in front like a boat, only the wrong way round.

You got to the front seat, if you were lucky enough to sit next to Uncle Albert, by just climbing up hand over fist, but the rear seat was quite a lot higher like in a theater and there was a ladder behind for getting up and down. You had to look out when you were on the ladder because, as likely as not, the engine would go bang just as you were halfway and jerk you right off.

The engine was right under this ladder and it only had one thingamy and Dad said it was a ballerina. It didn't have any sparkplug but instead there was a china tube which got red hot when the engine was running, but to start up you had to heat it with a blow torch. If you worked with the blow torch too short a time the tube was not hot enough to start the engine,

but when it got too hot it fired the mixture on the way up and either broke your arm or threw you into the ditch, so you had to be careful. Anyway Uncle Albert always got the engine going in the end, titter, titter, chug, chug and then we would all climb in and wait while Uncle Albert let in the clutch. This always took some time because if you ran the engine too slow it conked out and if it went too fast the chain broke and had to be fixed.

Of course when it came to taking us all to Eastbourne there was not nearly enough room for everyone and a tremendous argument started about who should go by car and who should go by train.

All of a sudden Uncle Albert gave a loud cry and the car bounded off without us, and although we waited and waited he never came back and in the end we all had to go by train after all.

We didn't hear anything from Uncle Albert for quite a while and had it not been for Royalty we would have continued to believe Uncle Albert drove off in a rage, because like I said, he had quite a temper.

We found out what really happened because Dad heard it in the City, where it was going the rounds. Uncle Albert was quite a one for the ladies and at a London party he met a famous actress, who was friendly with a Very Important Person, and Uncle Albert persuaded her to let him take her for a ride.

When Uncle Albert turned up for his date he decided to stop his engine, which you did by holding up the exhaust valve with a screw driver, while he went to fetch Gubby as she was called.

When Gubby came out of the house she had several people with her including her friend whom she called Teddy, and they all watched Uncle Albert try to start the engine. Of course, the

engine played up by pulling all its tricks including throwing Uncle Albert half way across the road. Eventually it started and just as Teddy was pushing Gubby's behind to help her in, Uncle Albert let out a loud yell and drove furiously off without her.

Either because of the noise or because by then they were all roaring with laughter, Gubby's friends did not hear what Uncle Albert had shouted. Before they went indoors, Uncle Albert came round the block at a terrific speed and shouted the word "seized" again without stopping and this time he vanished for good. So they all thought perhaps Uncle Albert had some kind of seizure and Gubby was ever so glad she hadn't gone with him.

So Uncle Albert wrote an apology especially to Gubby's friend, because he didn't want to be sent to the Tower to be beheaded for treason.

Uncle Albert's car it seems had a thing called an epicyclic gear box which wouldn't run in neutral for long without seizing up and when this happened the car just launched itself into high gear and could not be stopped until it either ran into something or ran out of gas.

Just before the gearbox seized up it would warn Uncle Albert by giving a loud screech which always gave him time to jump into the saddle before galloping off. The reason why he did not return when we were waiting for him at Weybridge was that ours was a dead end drive and he knew he couldn't stop once he got through our gate. So you see we had misjudged Uncle Albert because it wasn't his temper that made him drive off but simply the bearing in the gearbox getting so hot.

So Mom said it was only for God to judge and we had been wrong and mustn't do it again and after that Uncle Albert got more customers for the stock market he owned in London be-

cause Gubby's friend told everyone. He said he hadn't enjoyed anything so much for years which made Uncle Albert feel quite important, and we all expected he would be made a knight.

After that, Uncle Albert thought he should have some way to stop his car when it got another seizure so he had the plumber solder on a cock under the gas tank, which was under the back seat and right over the engine. Uncle Albert had a wire up in front which he could pull to close the cock when the gearbox seized.

This worked all right at first but gasoline cocks are apt to stick and later I invented one that did not. One day with Aunt Rachel and another quite large lady sitting in the back seat in their dust coats, goggles and veils Uncle Albert tugged at the wire and the cock came right off. So the gasoline ran down onto the engine and onto the red hot tube and caught fire. Aunt Rachel and the other 200 pound lady lighted down from six feet in the air like a couple of trapeze artists, as Uncle Albert said afterwards.

Then Uncle Albert bought a new car which had six thingamies instead of one and went 30 miles an hour if the road was flat and the wind was right. But Aunt Rachel wouldn't ride with him anymore even though he promised not to set fire to her again.

We hadn't been in Eastbourne long before Mom and Jesus said for us all to go to Ceylon because darling Ken, who was seventeen years older than I was a missionary there.

Of course, Mom loved Edgar and Ken best because they were older but I don't think Mom loved Kathleen because she was afraid of her.

Kathleen was tall and dark and had a lot of black hair which hung right down to her tail when she brushed it. She never said

much, but when she was angry she would hiss like a snake and when Kathleen hissed everyone was scared, including Dad.

Because I was little, Kathleen never hissed at me and she was kind of my mother really, because, although it was very wicked of me, I never could get to like Mom. When Joy and I came Mom and Dad were quite old and Dad was angry because he said something had not worked.

We went to London to get our boat for Ceylon and I had a cabin with Dad. I climbed up a ladder into my bed and looked through a little round window, but although there were a lot of rumbling and banging noises we didn't start and I must have gone to sleep because when I looked again there was only water outside my window and it went swish, swish, swish.

This ship didn't go by paddles like the ones at Eastbourne pier but had a thing you couldn't see called a screw which went bumpity, bump. But I could see the engine which made the screw go.

Then Mom got sick because of something she must have eaten and had to stay in bed so Dad gave the man who owned this engine a box of cigars which he said was better than having me around and I could go and look at this engine whenever I liked.

Because of Mom being sick and Dad being busy with some bridge which always made him cross, I went around with Kathleen and she taught me to draw. It was having looked so much at this engine and being able to draw it which got me into the Navy as you will see.

After we got to Ceylon, we went to a place called Kandy where Ken met us. He and Mom cried and kissed and hugged and cried some more and Dad said it was a *Edypuss* only I didn't know what it was.

We had a house called a Bungalow and we were to stay a whole year. A dark man, called Appu was our cook only I didn't think he was a man because he wore a skirt and had long hair done in a bun like Kathleen.

Right below this bungalow was a school for boys who were Chee Chee because of something their fathers had done. This school was run by some missionaries called Aunt but my brother Ken didn't like them because they were not the right sort of missionary.

It seems these boys couldn't eat until they all sang and what they sang was "Allpeoplethatonearthdodwellsingtothelordwith cheerfulvoicehimservewithfearhispraiseforthtellcomeyebefore himandrejoice . . . AAAAAAmen." They sang so fast it was all one word and then started to eat and you could hear the plates rattling. I got to know the tune quite well and could write it for you now, if I could write music.

I wasn't surprised these boys sang so fast because what they eat in Ceylon is curry which is much nicer than English food but it made my weak tummy worse and after that I always had pains.

In Ceylon that year I went to Trinity College where Ken taught. All the boys were brown except me and Sandy and Andrew Fraser whose father was headmaster.

I liked Trinity College because everyone was nice but later, when I was at school in England, everyone went out of his way to be beastly only I never found out why. I could tell more about Ceylon and all the friends I made there only I have more interesting things to tell about later.

After we had been a year in Ceylon, Kathleen got to know a man who Mom didn't like and anyway I was going into the Navy, so home we went.

I can tell you the date because on the way another ship sig-

nalled "King Edward is dead" so it must have been May 1910 —you see we had no radio in those days.

We had a new house in Eastbourne, which Mom called "Lanka" because that was a name for Ceylon and I went to school to study for the Navy.

I have described life in the Naval colleges in my next chapter, and so I needn't say anything about my prep school which was the same on a smaller scale—Purgatory, in fact, on the way to Hell.

I remember one holiday when Mom came to tell me about the birds and the bees. I could see she liked to tell really but she acted kind of shy and spoke quite slowly and said "not—to touch—that part—because if I did—it would affect my brain and I would get dark circles under my eyes." After she had gone I ran and looked in the mirror and there were the dark circles. I was scared I can tell you.

When I got back to school I told a friend called Eggy and he said he thought Mom must have been wrong because he often touched his part and he was the best runner in the school and was quite good at maths so after that I didn't worry so much when it happened.

After I had spent the regulation two years in Purgatory, Dad came to take me to London to see some admirals and to write my Navy exam. While we were in the train Dad had to do something because he was like me and said it was an irritable colon. There was no one in the compartment so Dad spread his *London Times* on the floor and afterwards he wrapped it in a parcel to throw out of the window.

Just then the train stopped and an old lady got in so Dad stuffed this parcel into his little black bag which he had when he was a doctor and when we got to London he left this bag in the train although it had his night things in it.

Just as we were getting into a cab a porter came running up and he had the bag in his hand and he said " 'ere you are, sir, I found this 'ere bag you leff be'ind" and Dad gave him a shilling and we went quite a long way and Dad left the bag in the cab and we took a bus to our hotel.

We were just sitting down to our dinner when the hotel man said for Dad to come to his office and there was a policeman with the cabby who had Dad's bag. The policeman told Dad to give the cabby five shillings for bringing back Dad's bag.

Our hotel was right on the river bank and Dad took the bag and he looked up and down and when he saw no one he threw it plonk into the water. As he did so, a very big policeman with a very red face came out from behind somewhere and said "I arrest you, sir." Dad got quite angry and said, "I'll have you know, Constable, that I am a doctor," and he brought out his card. At this the policeman gave a loud yelp because it seemed some doctors had been throwing things in the river and he had caught Dad doing it.

This policeman took us to the police station which had a blue light outside and we waited and waited and didn't have any dinner. Finally, we went into a room where a lot of people were sitting and a man in a black nightgown was sitting at the end of this room at a desk. People were brought in front of this man and he would say "10 shillings or 3 days" and "License suspended for one month" and once he said "Not proven, case dismissed" and everyone smiled because it was a fat lady with yellow hair and a policeman had said she was a solicitor, which is a kind of lawyer, and of course she wasn't.

Then Dad had to go and stand in front of the man in the nightgown. The policeman, who had caught Dad, had fished Dad's bag out of the river all dripping wet and he said something about a contortionist which is a man at a circus.

Dad had a key on his watch chain and he opened his bag and the man in the nightgown looked inside and said "Well, Doctor, I can believe your statement," because Dad had told about the train.

So Dad had to pay £1 for committing a nuisance in the river Thames and our policeman was disappointed because Dad wasn't a contortionist after all.

After that, I had to sit in a room for days and days writing my exam with 400 other boys, of whom only 80 would pass. Then I had to see some admirals and Dad had to go too because a boy's father had to be a gentleman before he could get into the Navy.

These admirals asked me a lot of questions which I didn't answer too well because I am slow at answering. They found out about the ship to Ceylon and I said I would draw the engine. One of these admirals said, "Well Sonny, go ahead and draw it but don't be too long because it's lunchtime." I wasn't scared because I knew I could draw.

When I had finished this same man said, "Just what I thought he is slow at questions but he will make a good engineer." Then we said goodbye and Dad took me back to school.

Later, Eggy and I and another boy called Ken were out looking for birds' eggs and came back late and were met by the Headmaster. I thought he would beat us for being late but all he said was "Hello, Admiral."

CHAPTER 4

ARMAGEDDON — ROUND I

The Century of Peace which preceded World War I had wrought such changes in Naval warfare that little could be gained from past experience. The smallest gunboat in 1914 could have cruised around out of range at Trafalgar and sunk all the ships on both sides without disturbing the Watch below.

Nelson had won his great victories with the help of Iron Men in Wooden Ships and in the Nelson Tradition the Navy of my time was busy perpetuating the Wooden Ship concept by forging its people into an Iron Mold. In the process inventiveness and imagination were excluded as rigidly as heresy from the medieval church and when it came to the test of war the Germans had out-thought us at almost every point.

In the Battle of Jutland, Britain could fire four times the weight of the German broadside so that the issue was settled by the British taxpayer rather than by the Navy. Not that I

wish to appear too critical. The perennial problem of the Armed Services is to simulate wartime conditions in peacetime.

As Mr. John Collier of Jamaica aptly phrased it, "I can only keep on my toes by picking real bananas and by selling them at competitive prices to real customers. If I had to send my workers to pick phantom bananas which I sold at fictitious prices on a phantom market I should soon be driving a Phantom Rolls which I had bought with my phantom profits."

And in 1911 the British Navy had been picking phantom bananas for over 100 years!

It was 1911 and I was twelve and the Mater was glad because I would look so cute in my little blue uniform and the Pater was glad because the Naval College would cost much less than a regular school. The Pater had to save money because of a man called Lloyd George who was a rotter.

One day during the holidays I was in my workshop mucking about with some jolly fine tools I had been given and the Pater was reading his *London Times* at breakfast and he read how this Mr. George was taking £60 a year away from him.

It seems that after the Pater had retired from being a doctor he only had an income from a thing called investments which Uncle Albert did for him in London and he only had £2000 a year ($50,000 after taxes in New York today), so how could he pay Mr. George £60 out of it? So the Pater tore up his *Times* and knocked all the breakfast things on the floor and tipped over his chair. I heard it and came down to see what it could be, and there was the Pater running round and round the breakfast room, only he had to jump when he came to the things on the floor, and shouting he was ruined.

Then the Mater took me to London and we went to see a Mr. Gieve who was ever so nice and told the Mater what I should need for clothes as a Naval Cadet. I needed two blue

serge uniforms, a coat with brass buttons, and trousers all the way down not just to my knees, and a cap like a taxi driver and also a white cord called a lanyard but I never found out what it was for. Mr. Gieve also made the Mater buy a big wooden box called a sea chest with brass handles at each end and brass bands on top but some rotter pinched mine before I ever got to sea with it.

When the Pater saw what he had to pay Mr. Gieve for all these things, he said the Mater should have known better than to go to Mr. Gieve and to go to "Moss Bross" next time because they were cheaper. Moss Bros., were tailors who made clothes for people as well as for Naval officers and where you could rent things if you were going to a wedding or to the races at Ascot where you would see the King, but Gieve only made Naval uniforms, which were the best.

So everyone who was a gentleman went to Gieve's for his uniforms and you never had to pay until a year later, so it was Mr. Gieve and not people in America who invented what is called in England the "Never-Never." When you were promoted, Mr. Gieve was first to send you a telegram wherever you were in the world which he always knew.

So Mr. Gieve was pretty decent even if he did charge a lot. After the war when all the German ships had been sunk, a lot of Naval officers got fired which Mr. Gieve also knew and they all were billed right up to the day.

Then I put on all my new clothes and I was a Naval Cadet. I was as pleased as Punch and went around clicking my heels and saluting all over the place, then I was put in a train for Portsmouth with a lot of other cadets. This train didn't just stop at Portsmouth but went right on until it almost ran into the sea. There was quite a large boat where the train stopped

and a man in a blue uniform like ours but he had brass things on his sleeves and on his hat.

This man kept shouting and shouting and it seems he was shouting at me only I wasn't listening because I was having a jolly good look at this boat. So the man came up to me and said "Wake up, you with the stick-out tummy" because my tummy always sticks out and all the other chaps laughed. We all had to stand up in a straight line while this man looked at us and it seemed he didn't like us except one chap who was the Honorable somebody and whose father was a Lord.

The boat took us across to an island to a place where Queen Victoria had lived. Now it was called Osborne College and I had better explain how Naval officers were taught. First of all, there had been a training ship called *H.M.S. Britannia* only as the Navy got bigger she got too small and also the plumbing wasn't so good and so they built Dartmouth College where you did four years' training.

Then the Navy got an Admiral called Fisher who said that we were the Ten Tribes of Israel and we would soon have to fight the Battle of Armageddon, which we soon did. So Admiral Fisher built a lot of new battleships, which he called "Dreadnaughts" because of what God had said to Joshua (Josh. 1:7) and Dartmouth College became too small for all the new cadets the Navy needed.

Then they built Osborne College so you spent two years there and two at Dartmouth which doubled the output as you can see.

To get on with my story, when we got to the island we had to march up quite a steep hill while the man with the brass things shouted and shouted. We came to a flagstaff where a man was pulling down a flag while another man blew a trumpet.

The trumpet sounded nice and after a time in the Navy it becomes a part of your life.

After the flag was down, it was sunset and we went to a big room called "Nelson" because all the rooms at Osborne are named after Admirals and Osborne was to teach us to be admirals if we didn't get drowned first which it happened half of us did. After that, we went to our dormitory, which was called "Blake" after an Admiral who got licked by the Dutch. We had to undress and fold our things into our sea chests. Another man kept coming round like a nursemaid to show us how but he spoke crossly and everyone spoke crossly and I never could find out why, unless it was the Ruggah.

Ruggah is short for Rugby Football, which is a game only the Navy had forgotten it was. In Rugby, there are 15 men on each side and there isn't a ball but a thing like an egg and what you have to do is to kick the chaps on the other side and knock them down.

As it happened, the top man of the Ruggah was the officer in charge of our dormitory called Lieutenant Swoshem, who was in the Navy team against the Army which was the only reason he had been chosen to be an officer of Royal Naval Cadets on the brink of Armageddon. Of course it was compulsory to play Ruggah or else to stand on the sideline and shout "Well done, Sah. Oh, well done our sade, jolly fane shot" and so forth only I never did. When I heard Lieutenant Swoshem's booming voice, I hid in old Mr. Nelson's bootlocker. Mr. Nelson was the steward who cleaned our boots in a room where you could hide if you gave him some tobacco.

One day, by bad luck, I was too late getting to Mr. Nelson's room and Lieutenant Swoshem caught me and put me in a Ruggah team. I had to change out of my warm uniform with a coat and long trousers and put on a jersey and some shorts.

I was so cold I thought I would soon die and everyone would be sorry.

Then a boy handed me this leather egg and all the other boys knocked me down and kicked me as hard as they could. Presently I was handed it again and I didn't want to be knocked down and kicked this time so I threw my egg away as hard as I could. It hit the captain of our side on his nose and made it bleed.

This chap was an Honorable somebody and he said I had hit him on purpose and I must fight him. I was scared I can tell you because he was bigger than me and anyway I didn't know how to fight. We all walked down to Osborne Woods and found a place under a Monkey-Puzzle tree. My Second, who was called Mitford, made me take off my coat and I had to fight this Honorable. He hit me so hard on the mouth that it cut my lip right through. So next time when I saw he was going to hit me I put my head down and he hit me so hard on the top of my head that he broke his wrist which made him faint and everyone said I had won.

Mitford took me to the hospital which was called a Sick Bay and the doctor took a needle and thread and sewed up my lip. He said I was a brave Cadet only I'm not brave if I can find a way of not having to be, if you know what I mean.

After that Swoshem got discouraged and I never had to play Ruggah any more.

It seems I was quite a hero because of beating this Ruggah Sheik and I was asked to join the Engineering Gang who made models and mucked about in the workshop. The other boys all said we were sissies and the gang they admired was the "Vacuum Gang" who were chiefly Honorables who sucked up to the officers and laughed at all their jokes and played Ruggah. The funny thing is most of us in the Engineering Gang are still hail

and hearty and most of the Vacuum Gang are dead, so the Ruggah business didn't work out so well and I am glad I only had to play that once.

When you weren't doing lessons or marching about, while a man with brass things shouted, or having prayers and church, you had some spare time except you got punishment drill which was given numbers according to how hard it was. There must have been a No. 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 but what I always got was No. 6. This was running as fast as you could round and round the drill ground holding a rifle over your head while a Marine Drill Sergeant ran after you with a cane.

The things you got No. 6 for were forgetting to fold your clothes, not saluting, losing your pocket knife, or making a raspberry noise when an officer made a bad joke. One time all 400 cadets got six days No. 6 because the Commander found a broken chain in a toilet, and the Sick Bay was full of cadets who had fainted, which you did after a time when you had No. 6. After three days of this, a stoker who cleaned the toilets came back from leave and said he had broken the chain but the Commander never apologized and swaggered around as usual with his cap on the side of his head.

This was the Navy of "The Winslow Boy" whose real name was Archer Shee and who had been about a year ahead of me before they kicked him out for something he didn't do. This was the treatment for making Iron Men and when you were not doing lessons or drill or No. 6 or playing Ruggah the senior cadets beat you up but you could not beat them back because of discipline. One boy called Freud used to beat me because he said I looked Jewish.

We had two years of this and in the second year it wasn't so bad and then we passed out of Osborne. I was fourteen and nearly top of my term, the only one ahead of me in engineering

was Tommy Traill who left the Navy and became an Air Marshall. After Osborne, there was Dartmouth and it was there that the treatment really got going. When Kaiser Wilhelm visited Dartmouth he was quite jealous because he had nothing like it in Prussia. But Winston Churchill, who was First Lord of the Admiralty, said they were overdoing it and he told the captain in charge of Dartmouth to ease up.

If the treatment was 17th century in some ways, it was Queen Victoria in others—"We are not amused"—and to show what I mean, this is what happened to a boy whose father was a famous General. Before you can understand this, I have to explain how the hierarchy worked. Over us cadets were cadets who had been promoted to Cadet Captains and who had the power of Angels at the Last Trump. Over them were Lieutenants who were Archangels and took orders only from Jesus, who was a Commander.

Away above Jesus was Captain God, remote and awful beyond all human telling. This cadet I was describing made love to the Captain's daughter. To do this he had to walk down a long, lighted corridor past several marine sentries, after which he had to climb an eight foot stone wall with broken glass on top. Then he was in the Captain's garden and there, in the jaws of death, in the very mouth of hell, with nothing between him and a lingering fate but his pajamas, and perhaps not even them, our hero made love. When they caught him, they bent him over a gym horse and beat him and then he was dismissed. He should, of course, have been beaten and then slated for promotion.

One day and it must have been just before the end of the summer term of 1914, we were all paraded before the Captain and we thought it was going to be another row like over the broken lavatory chain. It turned out to be the order to mo-

bilize for war. We were to become real sailors, two and one half years before our time and I might add several years before the age that any other nation dared to draft its boys. I was just 15 but most of my term (or class) were just under.

I never found out why the Admiralty chose to do this but one theory was that they wanted Dartmouth for a hospital. Anyway it all sounded very exciting and the band played "Te diddle te dum te dum, te diddle te dum de dee" and we all cheered which we might not have done had we known what we were in for, which included death for many. What we were in for, the ten of us who were appointed to the old *Goliath,* was an old pre-dreadnaught ship with four 12 inch guns and reciprocating engines that gave her a top speed of 17 knots.

So long had the *Goliath* been out of commission that the Admiralty didn't know where she lay, which was on the mud at Devonport in the west of England right next to Dartmouth. We were all sent to Chatham, which is the Navy Yard east of London. Then of course, we all had to come back which took three days and on the way someone pinched my sea chest with all my clothes. At last we reported on board at midnight and the captain of the *Goliath* (whom I shall call Captain Shellfish) was on deck to welcome us. What he said was "Bloody boys! I don't want you," and we were never in any doubt how he felt.

Captain Shellfish was small, with an almost bald head and a flaming red face. He had been on the retired list, it was rumored, for having said something Mr. Churchill didn't like. Nearly all the other officers had also been "on the beach" for a long time. The Commander had a mutiny in his previous ship and the First Lieutenant had DT's.

I was given the job of being the First Lieutenant's messenger which is called a "Tanky." He used to snap out orders so inco-

herently that I never could understand them. So I was like the African warrior who said, "If we go forward we die and if we go backward we die." If I stopped to ask what he meant I got beaten and if I squeaked "Aye, aye, Sir" and ran off with the wrong message, I got beaten.

The officer who actually did the beating was the Senior Midshipman, whom I shall call Arthur. Arthur had been our cadet captain at Dartmouth and as he is now quite an old man and, I am told, a very decent one; I shall say as little as is strictly necessary about him. Arthur had not been at Osborne but had come straight to Dartmouth from one of the Merchant Navy training establishments and, though it is hard to believe, this institution may have encouraged an even higher degree of sadism than did the regular Navy. What I am trying to suggest is that Arthur's zeal was derived from environment rather than temperament.

At Dartmouth, Arthur had been the college heavyweight boxing champion and he had all the right parts in all the right places, including little boxer's feet and massive shoulders from which, minus any neck, projected a thick red face. When I think of Arthur now dancing about on the balls of his little feet, with his little brown eyes almost hidden behind his high cheekbones, the 45 years that have elapsed since the old *Goliath* seem but as yesterday.

When I hear about the treatment of politically unreliable types in Hitler's Germany and in Communist Russia, I think I understand better than most people the meaning of abject, cringing terror. In case I am accused of exaggerating, my story can be confirmed by several surviving members of the *Goliath*'s gunroom.

In a peacetime gunroom, you had midshipmen from 17 to 19 years of age over whom a one-stripe officer, called a sub-

lieutenant, presided in all the panoply of an oriental pasha. Because we were so young we were not accorded the dignity of midshipman's rank but remained as naval cadets, for which we were paid a shilling a day.

Since the Royal Navy does not feed its officers, who pay for their own messing, we did not get very much to eat but there may have been some merit in this. Apart from an inherent stinginess, which Samuel Pepys imparted to it 300 years ago, and on which it had subsequently improved, the Navy had its reasons for what it did, or failed to do, in the matter of officers' comforts. Like the Order of Jesuits, the Navy was a dedicated priesthood which you joined for love, and not because of the fleshpots.

At the outbreak of World War I, the Royal Navy did have a few rudimentary submarines of its own and an Englishman called Whitehead had invented the torpedo, but not much attention was paid to these innovations. As a result, we started our commission by blockading the English Channel exactly as Nelson had done 100 years earlier.

A cordon of ships cruised slowly in circles of about eight miles diameter with each circle touching the next so that, under normal visibility, the whole channel was under observation. Almost at once the *Goliath* picked up a large homeward bound German liner called the *Gelrea.* After the war I got £90 prize money, although Dad tried without success to nab it.

When we had sighted the *Gelrea* and signalled her to heave to, we stopped dead and lowered a boarding party in a cutter. In this cutter was an officer and crew; another cadet called Pat Stone (now of New York, N.Y.) and I went along for the ride. We were included because we had learned to speak German.

Just to impress the Germans with our ferocity Pat and I strapped belts onto our middles and onto these we hung regulation Navy cutlasses. Since we were barely five feet tall at the time and since the cutlasses were three feet long, walking, even on a level deck, presented a problem.

Lowering a cutter, which is a large open rowboat, in any sort of waves is quite a trick but getting in and out is easy because you do it while she is inboard. Coming along side the *Gelrea* in 12 or 15 foot waves and jumping onto the rope ladder which hung down her massive side required rather more skill. I managed the upward leap with success and performed my duties as interpreter with a precision which the Captain of the *Gelrea* rendered easier by answering in English with an Oxford accent.

All would have ended well had not my cutlass become entangled in the rungs of the ladder just as I was making my downward and outward leap which made me fall into the water. Because of the waves the cutter could not come alongside without the risk of crushing me, so the kind Germans sent a sailor down the ladder with a boathook and, just as Nanny had done, he fished me out by the seat of my pants. As he handed me back to the waiting cutter he hissed in my ear, *"Mussen wir mit kinder kreig machen?"* Needless to say when I returned to the *Goliath,* Arthur who had been watching me through a telescope, beat me with a lead-sheathed electric cable, a device of which its inventor was justly proud.

Fortunately there was no German submarine to witness our maneuver, but three cruisers, the *Hogue, Aboukir* and *Cressy,* on the same patrol, were less lucky. As they performed their stately minuet before the astonished gaze of a German submarine commander he sank them all in a row. Three of our

term were drowned. Two of them, Stubbs and Gore-Brown, had been the obvious leaders of their class, and had they lived, undoubtedly would have become admirals.

By this and other accidents, our term lost the cream of the crop which affected promotion for all of us. Admirals are naturally prone to select for service those of their term whom they know to be competent in preference to strangers.

After that we went to East Africa where a German cruiser, the *Koenigsburg,* had been raiding and had sunk many ships including the British gunboat *Pegasus* whom she caught unprepared in Zanzibar Harbor. We spent some time in Mombasa which smelled like Ceylon and we could go ashore and get away from Arthur. In Mombasa, there were Indian shops and in a thoughtless moment I bought a handsome walking stick made of rhinoceros hide. As soon as I got back aboard Arthur confiscated it and used it to beat us. He was so pleased with its superior qualities that he beat us almost every day, except for Cadet Brownie who was his favorite.

One day we got up steam and lumbered off after the *Koenigsburg* with our 12 inch guns. Since she only had popguns in comparison she fled up the Rufigi River which was too shallow for us to follow. For very good reasons of their own, the black men in German East Africa did not like their masters and so Captain Shellfish was kept informed about the *Koenigsburg.* She had run aground and 4000 Africans were pulling on ropes to get her off.

Captain Shellfish therefore decided to send the picket boat to fire torpedoes, with Lieutenant Orde in command. I went along for the ride because I was the only person who could make the engine work.

This was one of the old, two-funneled, 56 foot boats. From being hoisted in and out with the ship's derrick, she had bent

in the middle so the propeller shaft was out of line and the shaft bearings ran dangerously hot. I do not think that flexible couplings were then in use but I had made a sort of flexible coupling by machining down the bolts that held the propeller shaft to the engine shaft so that they were a loose fit. Of course, I set the nuts up loose and riveted over the ends so they would not drop off. As a result, although she rattled horribly, she ran.

I was careful not to tell how my coupling worked and every night when the boat was laid up, I tightened up the nuts. After a time, the Chief Engineer found out about it and he laughed heartily. He said to me, "My boy, if they don't hang you from the yardarm first, you'll be an engineer one day."

Well then it was new moon and the tide was full and off we went on our raid with a torpedo slung either side of the picket boat and a torpedoman to do the actual firing. Lieutenant Orde said to go dead slow and not to make any smoke or sparks. When he heard my coupling rattling, he made me tighten it up but he said after we had fired our torpedoes I would have a few seconds to loosen the bolts so we could beat it back home.

When we got close to the *Koenigsburg,* we could see that she was in the middle of a soft island of mud so we could not fire our torpedoes at her. Just as we were turning round, she saw us and switched on her searchlights. When this happens you feel as though you were standing naked in the middle of Grand Central Station so I tightened up my bolts and off we went at 15 knots with flames coming out of both funnels while the *Koenigsburg* fired at us with rifles but not with guns. Lieutenant Orde had his finger shot off, otherwise we had no casualties, but I was scared they would hit one of our torpedoes.

We found out later that the *Koenigsburg* had realized she could never come out with us waiting at the river mouth so with extraordinary skill she had built gun carriages and sent all her

guns and most of her crew to join General Leman von Sanders in Tanganyika. (General von Sanders was a relative of Dad's by marriage and after doing a good job in East Africa, he was put in command of the Turkish forces in Gallipoli.)

The end of the *Koenigsburg* affair was that they sent out a flat-bottomed boat from England called a monitor with one big gun and she finished off the *Koenigsburg* where she lay helpless on the mud just as she had done to the helpless *Pegasus.* A seaplane was employed to observe for the monitor and I think this was probably the first time in warfare that the Navy used aerial reconnaissance.

Meanwhile the old *Goliath* waddled off to Simonstown, which is the naval base for Capetown, to have her engines repaired because we had been flying around at 17 knots and the engines were feeling their age. In Capetown, almost everyone was a relative because Mom's people had been there since before the time of Napoleon and most of them had large families, all of which Arthur didn't know. One of Mom's elder sisters was Aunt Mary Brown who lived at Rosebank outside Capetown, and quite by coincidence a nephew of hers, Lieutenant-Commander Jack Brown, was a Royal Naval Reserve Officer in the *Goliath.*

In peacetime, Jack was the captain of a freighter and he was one of those queer ducks one often finds at sea. Jack was always on his knees praying and when you went to his cabin with a message the first thing you would see were the soles of his feet. Once at least aboard his freighter Jack prayed to some effect —on a pitch dark stormy night a man went overboard and it was several hours before he was missed. Jack turned his ship round and prayed and prayed and I have no doubt that the man overboard prayed too, and sure enough they found him and brought him aboard.

Through another cadet in the *Goliath,* Jack got to know about Arthur. He told Aunt Mary who was a kind of Chieftainess of our clan, so I and this other cadet, whose name was Bartlett were taken to see a doctor, who took a look at our tails and said, "These children have been severely flogged a number of times." After that I went on sick leave so I don't quite know what happened but when I got back, Arthur had gone, and we had a very decent sub-lieutenant from the cruiser *Hyacinth.*

This sub, whose name I forget, never beat us and was as nice as he could be, but he would scold us sometimes and would say, "Now in futchah, etc., etc.," which turned out to be a mistake because there was no future for him. When the *Goliath* sank he was drowned, so Arthur, if you happen to read this, I helped save your life!

To end this chapter I should say something about my ancestors.

When I had completed writing from memory, I visited England to verify various facts and after considerable prodding, Kathleen unearthed a number of family documents which she had been hoarding in a cupboard. One of these documents was a Family Tree which my cousin, Allan Solomon, had prepared in 1939. Allan is dead so I don't know what inspired him to make the effort, but it could have been Hitler. The Family Tree shows that our generation was at most one quarter Jewish and probably would have survived a German victory.

If Kathleen had produced this document when she received it in 1939, it might have made quite a difference to me as you will see later. When I reproached her for not having done so, she merely hissed and at 75, she can hiss louder than ever.

The Jews were expelled from England in 1290, but in 1654 were readmitted by Oliver Cromwell who believed, as did

Admiral Fisher, that we Anglo-Saxons are the other Ten Tribes of Israel. (The Jews are really two tribes, Judah and Benjamin.)

Nathaniel Solomon and his wife, Phoebe Mitz, were English Jews of the early 18th century. The family had interests in India which meant in those days traveling by ship round the Cape of Good Hope. Realizing the potential of South Africa, some of Nathaniel's sons settled there around the year 1800. One of these sons, Joseph, married Hannah Moss by whom he had nine children, of whom three remained single while the other six ignored the curse of Ezra and married Gentiles. It was Ezra in the Sixth Century B.C., who decreed that in future all Jews should marry Jewesses, thus creating a highly inbred race.

Of Joseph's 44 grandchildren, 12 remained single and 32 married Gentiles. One of Joseph's sons, Henry, had four sons and seven daughters, one of whom, Jane, was my mother, which makes me one of Joseph's 260 great grandchildren, to whom, if they still live, I send greetings.

The odious Ezra having been flouted, most of the Solomons now have boot button noses and many of them have blue eyes. Of Mom's family Dad used to say, with more accuracy than tact, that Aunt Mary Brown had all the brains and Mom had all the looks. Of course the crack about brains only applied to female Solomons because on the male side they were an able tribe, for example, said the *London Times* on June 14, 1930 ". . . The Right Hon. Sir William Solomon, who died yesterday at the age of 77, became Chief Justice of the Union of South Africa in March 1927. He had a long and distinguished judicial career and was held to be the best lawyer on the South African Appeal Bench in recent years. He came of a family

distinguished in public service. His father, the late Rev. E. Solomon, of Bedford, Cape Colony, was one of a group of notable workers in the South African mission field. Sir Edward Solomon, the late Chief Justice's brother, was a prominent lawyer and politician in Johannesburg. Sir Richard Solomon, another brother, after an outstanding political career at the Cape, was Attorney-General during the Crown Colony period in the Transvaal and was later the Union's first High Commissioner in London."

The Rev. Edward Solomon who fathered these three bright boys was my great uncle and his brother, Saul, was editor of South Africa's nationwide network of newspapers collectively known as "The Argus Group." My grandfather, who was a successful publisher in Capetown, was the brother of Edward and Saul. I have a charming watercolor of his home as it stood alone on the foreshore at Sea Point, where a roaring commuter suburb now holds its hideous sway. So much for the Solomons from whom I definitely did not inherit my looks which closely resemble those of the late Aga Khan.

I have a photo of Grandma Saunders who was of Huguenot descent and who looked as though she had just arrived from Miami Beach.

Since Mom waged an unceasing Jehad or Holy War against the Saunders family we were not told much about them, but Dad always said we were descended from Admiral Sir Charles Saunders. In case you have forgotten your history, Charles did most of the work at Quebec, but by dying on the field of victory, Wolfe swiped most of the credit. I don't think we can really have been descended from Sir Charles who officially died childless but we may have been descended from Sir George Saunders, who may or may not have been the father of Charles.

I have a photo of an old gentleman in Admiral's uniform whom Dad called "Great Uncle William" but that is all I know about him.

Of my generation, Hilary St. George Saunders was a cousin. In addition to being a well-known author, Hilary was Librarian to the House of Commons. I should be interested to hear from others of the Clan. I shall have more to say about Dad in a later chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DARDANELLES AND AFTER

When we had finished our refit in Simonstown we chugged off back to Mombasa, where we again broke down.

This time it was our refrigeration plant which gave trouble and that, in a Man of War in the tropics, is a serious thing because not only must the food for hundreds of men be kept cool but, much more important, so must the Cordite.

Cordite is the explosive used for propelling the shells out of guns and it is sensitive to heat and will decompose and eventually explode if left in a warm place too long, so the magazines in a warship are all under refrigeration.

Rather than blow up the ship, Captain Shellfish cut out the cold storage and we ate up all the perishable food before it went bad. Some of the men took food into the magazines so it would keep but this didn't work too well because you get a splitting headache from any contact with Cordite, even from

food having absorbed chemicals from it. When you ate a piece of Cordite-impregnated meat you felt as though you had been on a week's continuous drunk.

To overcome the meat shortage, some of the officers took some rifles which were kept in a rack outside the Wardroom and took a train to Nairobi. They came back with a lot of game they had shot, so all the officers, including us, had fresh meat. To cover the cost of their trip these officers sold the meat at one quarter of an English penny (a farthing) a pound but the sailors thought they were being cheated and would not buy it, which is what makes a trade union the way it is.

As a result, most of the meat went bad and had to be thrown overboard. The sharks got some but not much because when the black people ashore saw what was happening they all came out in canoes and ate the meat raw as it floated about in the harbor. Black people do not eat much meat but when they do, they prefer it ripe.

After that we went to join the Dardanelles campaign and were in time for the first landing of troops. In those days there were no landing craft because they hadn't been invented. We didn't have many inventors in World War I because inventors were cads who didn't play Ruggah. (As a matter of fact, the invention was there for all to see but was not used. At one of the beaches a freighter called the *River Clyde* was run ashore and used as a landing craft which saved many casualties, but then I don't think the old men who ruled us in 1914 cared about casualties nearly as much as they cared about losing a freighter.)

Except for the *River Clyde* the troopships just lowered their lifeboats in slow time and the troops got into them and were rowed or towed ashore in slow time while they were potted at by the Turks. When the boats got to the beach the men just hopped out into the water which, as it turned out, the Turks

had sprinkled liberally with barbed wire. This was the handiwork of Second Cousin, Leman von Sanders, who had been transferred to the Dardanelles just in time to put some backbone into the Turks.

The Turks would not have been prepared had it not been for the naval attack six weeks earlier which warned them of our intentions.

When we were at Osborne we were taught naval history but the less glorious episodes like the American War of 1812 were omitted. Probably the Navy's least glorious episode, throughout the many centuries of its history, was the ignominious retreat of the Fleet on March 18, 1915 within, as it turned out, a few hours of Turkey's total collapse.

Historians agree that this would have so accelerated the defeat of Germany that much of our misery, including the Russian Revolution, might have been avoided.

Anyway, some of the soldiers did get ashore and ran up the cliffs and began to advance into the Gallipoli Peninsula and then it was our job to fire at the Turks and soften them up. This did not work out too well because long range naval guns are not made for this sort of target and in the case of the *Goliath* some of the Cordite had deteriorated and did not ignite but sprayed out onto the deck like sticks of macaroni. This meant that the amount of punch behind each shell varied so we never quite knew where any given shell would land and, what was more important, nor did our soldiers.

After the second or third day, the wounded started coming off and because of a shortage of hospital ships we took them aboard navy ships. In the *Goliath* we had 800 wounded with whom the elderly ship's doctor was quite unable to cope, so we all went round and helped, but I don't know whether the soldiers were grateful. Anyway most of them died and had to be

thrown overboard and all of a sudden the sea was full of sharks.

We didn't get much sleep because of the incessant gunfire which kept going continuously all round us and I suppose it was the biggest barrage ever concentrated on one target. Just to help with the noise the navy's latest ship, *H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth,* arrived with her eight 15 inch guns which made more noise than all the others put together. The Turks did not fire much at our ships unless they went too far up the Narrows which separate the Aegean from the Black Sea.

There was a headland between the *Goliath* and the main Turkish force. Despite the headland there was a Turkish gun on the Asiatic side which could fire at us and was so ingeniously contrived that it was difficult to hit. This gun was mounted on a railway car which went back behind a rock when the gun fired. If you wanted to hit it at all you had to wait until a horse drew the rail car back into position. We used to pot at this gun with a small gun firing a three-pound shell and we hit the horse several times. Next to the gun, we put a box with a slot in the top into which you dropped a shilling before you had a try. When the ship's chaplain finally scored a hit there was over £100 in the pool and we expected him to buy us drinks. When he failed to do so Wise, our gunroom wit, remarked that it was very parsonmonious of him. Anyway his £100 didn't do him much good as just then he was drowned.

This happened when the *Goliath* sank with most of her officers and crew. There were about 100 survivors and I will tell you how I came to be one of them. One of our ships would always be up the Narrows so as to fire behind the Turkish lines. On the night of May 12th our sister ship, the *Canopus,* should have done this duty but she was away burying some casualties and we took her turn.

Unmindful of the *Hogue, Aboukir* and *Cressy* incident, the

Navy was still scornful of torpedoes and to make our gunnery aim more accurate we just anchored in a place called Morto Bay in full view of the Turkish fortress at Chanak. The reason keeping still is dangerous is because torpedoes, which are little powerboats with explosive noses, travel quite slowly and it is hard to hit a moving target with one unless you know exactly how fast she is going and on what course. On the other hand, it is almost impossible to miss a stationary target. The evening we anchored in the firing line, Pat Stone and I were working the anchor and we talked about the sharks and how bad it would be to swim. We also remarked on the bright searchlight at Chanak which illuminated the Narrows and we said it would mean trouble if that light went out.

I spoke to Pat about this in New York recently and it struck us as so odd that Captain Shellfish didn't seem to know what his two 15 year-old midshipmen knew, because by then we had been promoted to the glorious rank of "Snottie." Sure enough at midnight of May 12-13 the light at Chanak went out and if I had been the officer of the watch I think I would have smelt a torpedo. However, the *Goliath* remained calmly at anchor while a Turkish torpedo boat slipped through our escort of six destroyers and delivered its cargo of three torpedoes, all of which found their target. If the officer in command of these destroyers is still alive, I don't think he can have been at that moment.

A torpedo boat was used before there were submarines and it was quite small in comparison to a destroyer. Our "Little David" of a Turkish torpedo boat only had one sorry little funnel, so she stuck on two dummy canvas funnels to imitate our destroyers whom she apparently succeeded in hoodwinking. We sub-men of the underworld did not aspire to cabins but slept in hammocks wherever we could find space to sling them,

and one end of mine was slung to the trunk, or foundation, of the hindmost 12 inch turret.

This meant that every time the big guns fired my hammock gave a jolt so when the first torpedo hit, on the starboard side way up forward, I thought it was just another 12 inch gun and dozed merrily on. The second torpedo struck amidships also on the starboard side and the ship started to turn over so I woke up either because of the "Woomph" made by the explosion or else because my hammock had swung against the ship's side. By the time I had turned out, the third torpedo, still on the starboard side, had struck with a horrible bang right under me.

By this time the *Goliath* was listing so far to starboard that the quarterdeck hatch instead of being above me was like a picture window in front of me, and the ladder which led to it had fallen away. While I was wondering how I could get through the hatch I heard a succession of terrible noises. There was the noise of various boats falling out of their crutches and of 12 inch and 6 inch shells falling out of their racks and the noise of bottles in the Wardroom wine store, which was right next to me, crashing against the bulkhead. Also next to me was a watertight door leading forward and operated by a system of gearing. Someone was closing this door as the water gushed through while men on the other side were trying to escape and screaming horribly. Then to drown all other noises one of the main boilers broke away from its holding-down feet and this broke the main steampipe with a roar of escaping steam.

Somehow I got through the hatch and I climbed high up on the stern of the old *Goliath* as she went down by the bows and over to starboard in a kind of corkscrew dive. The gunnery officer, whose name was Shafto-Douglas was standing beside me and I remember saying "I don't like it but I suppose I

must," and he said "Good luck, Saunders" and I never saw him again. Then I started to slide down the slightly sloping port side of the stern which, after a long commission, was covered in barnacles and then I fell off, probably from about 100 feet into the dark, cold water, and by the time it took, I must have been halfway to New Zealand before I came back. Of course all this didn't really happen to me. I was standing on the stern of the *Goliath,* watching.

I swam and swam and various other people floated by. One of them was Wise, our paymaster sub-lieutenant, who had found a large wooden box in which he was happily seated without even having gotten wet. Then I saw the ship's bulldog swimming purposefully by, because he knew by instinct where the beach was and he was picked up behind the Turkish lines where he became a prisoner of war. Pat Stone now untruthfully says that I had a lifebelt and refused to give him a ride, but actually it was Arthur's pet, Midshipman Brownie, who had the lifebelt which he declined to share with riders. But then Brownie always knew what was best for Brownie.

So all I could do was swim and it was cold because in May the snows of half Europe are melting and flowing down the Narrows. I could see searchlights of rescue ships in the distance but, without too much imagination, they were searching in the place where the *Goliath* sank and we were in a six-knot current. I swam from 1:35 a.m., when my watch stopped until daylight by which time I was 15 or 20 miles downstream. A chap in my term called Snow, who was in the *Lord Nelson,* had borrowed one of the ship's boats and was out fishing before the day's duties started. By then, I was practically unconscious so I didn't see the boat until suddenly a voice above me said "My dear Saunders, this is indeed an unexpected pleasure," so once again the boathook came into operation and then I passed out.

I was lucky to be alive even though wounded for 700 men had died that night and of the fifty-odd officers, only 13 survived, including six midshipmen. If any of the Heathen roundabout had massacred their children in the forefront of battle, the world would have resounded with a great outcry, but somehow England always gets away with that sort of thing and had not the prophet declared "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn."

When I came to, I was in the bunk of the ship's chaplain of the *Lord Nelson* with my head and my tail swathed in bandages. It seems I had a fractured skull which quickly healed and a very badly lacerated rear end because of the barnacles. I was put ashore at Mudros where I spent some time in an army hospital tent and I had to lie on my face because my backside was not only sore but had become infected. For my sixteenth birthday the nurses had a hammock rigged with a large hole in the middle so I could lie on my back for a change. I submit this idea to the medical profession as greatly simplifying the duties of nurses on bedpan duty.

In those days we had no antibiotics and as my tail refused to heal I was sent back to England in a troopship. I was scared I can tell you, because when you have been torpedoed once, you don't want it twice. When I got home I found Dad was away as a ship's doctor and Ken was in France with the Y.M.C.A., and Kathleen was a hospital nurse but Joy was at home and Edgar, a major in the Army, was on leave and he had shiny boots and a monocle.

Mom couldn't realize I was grown up and gushed over me all the time and called me "her darling baby boy" and every night she would come to my room and read some prayers and tell me how she hoped I would grow up to be a good, clean,

straight Christian boy like Edgar. After she had gone there would be a stone thrown at the window and I would go down and let Edgar in and he would sit on my bed and tell me about the girls he had been having, but later one of them got in the family way.

Right then Mom nearly got the Victoria Cross for catching a spy, and it happened this way. There was a barber in Eastbourne called Mr. Feinstein who Mom suspected of being a German, though he swore he was Swiss. Every evening when he closed his shop Mr. Feinstein would change into dark clothes and would bicycle up to the coast guard station at Beachy Head, where Mom said he was sending signals.

So Mom borrowed Kathleen's bicycle and followed Mr. Feinstein and saw him disappear into some bushes near the coast guard station, so she ran and told the coast guard who came out of his house and caught Mr. Feinstein emerging from the bushes with a flashlight in his hand. After that the police came and arrested Mr. Feinstein and things would have gone badly with him had not the coast guard's daughter bravely come forward, blushing somewhat, and admitted she had been having an affair with the accused in the bushes. So the Victoria Cross that Mom was expecting was given to the coast guard's daughter instead—or at least it should have been!

After that the Admiralty doctors said my tail was O.K., which I had known for some time because in the meantime I had acquired a motorbike, which you can't ride with a sore tail.

My next appointment was *H.M.S. Canada* and since I have sometimes suggested the Navy was stupid, at others I admit they were artful. Somehow they had wangled it that right before the war British shipyards were building three monster dreadnaughts, two for Turkey and one for Chile. The advantage of this was if there was no war these foreign powers would

pay for the ships but if, as the Admiralty suspected, the Germans started the war before these ships were completed then there was a clause in the contract that we could grab them. Which we did and they became the *Agincourt,* the *Erin* and the *Canada.* The latter was bigger and faster than any British ships of the line except the new *Queen Elizabeth* class of which, at that time, only one was in commission. By the time the Director of Naval Construction (or DNC for short) had finished monkeying with her, the *Canada* was away down by the bows because of all the massive gun control equipment that had been installed forward. To compensate for this they added 900 tons of concrete in the extreme stern, which, in a following sea, wobbled most alarmingly.

To console me, the Chief Engineer said that if the *Canada*'s stern wobbled right off one dark night in a storm, the fracture would occur exactly where my hammock was slung.

The *Canada* was not a happy ship. Later I found that I had just been unlucky to have my two first ships both unhappy because in the Royal Navy we also have happy ships like the one I went to next. In a happy ship you have a good time whatever the weather and/or the enemy are doing, but to be a junior midshipman in an unhappy ship is like being in Belsen, Sing Sing and the Siberian salt mines all rolled into one.

H.M.S. Canada was stationed at Scapa Flow, which was quite without exception the most revolting place that I have ever visited, and I was horrified to find that after a year of active service I was still a junior midshipman. Usually at the age of 17 (now at a much later age) you left the naval college and spent six months on a training cruise under rather pleasant circumstances, after that you were a junior midshipman for only one year. I think you can take it that the toughest fighting

force in the world's history had worked out what was the limit of human endurance and had pegged the treatment just one notch below that level. Our group being several years younger, we were to have the junior treatment for a much longer period and under war conditions, at that. I found I could still be beaten, which I didn't like even with an undamaged tail, but now I had the factor of the scar tissue from my wounds.

Since I am of the type that prefers the velvet glove, I wore three pairs of woolen underpants and had the ship's tailor enlarge the seat of my trousers to suit. This made me look like a pansy but it gave me confidence. This would have worked out if it hadn't been for Edgar's visit and I only solved the mystery about this recently when I read John Master's *Bugles and a Tiger* which is about the British Army in India. Apparently Army officers have an unlimited wine allowance whereas in the Navy wine accounts are scrutinized by the Commander.

Edgar was sent from France to study naval gunnery in order to create a liaison between the services. Quite by coincidence, they sent him to the *Canada* where he messed in the Wardroom, and where in two weeks he ran up a liquor check of £43. The Navy gets its liquor free of excise and other taxes, and when I asked some friends of mine in Wall Street what this meant in New York bar prices today, they said their computer broke down when it got to seventeen noughts and they all went off and had a round of golf while it got its second wind.

Edgar departed in a cloud of glory amid the plaudits of the entire Wardroom all except the Commander, who is the Senior Officer in the Wardroom. (The Captain dines in solitary state.) The Commander sent for the sub-lieutenant and either said, or was alleged to have said, that I was to be beaten because my eighteen-year-older brother, who didn't know Navy

rules, had exceeded his wine allowance. Well as I have told you I am no hero but somewhere along the line I will turn and fight, and this was where I did it.

Being, as I said, the velvet glove type I started by replacing my woolen underpants with a leather windbreaker which Mom had sent for my birthday. Of course at the first whack it made a sound like a drum and the sub-lieutenant said "Saunders, what have you got on?" So I told him about the leather windbreaker and he told me to take it off and I said "NO" and he said "WHAT?" and I said "NO" so the sub turned quite pale and took me to see the Officer of the Watch on the quarterdeck. When we had both told our tales, I was sent below under guard, with a marine sentry. The sentry said the mess deck was all on my side which made me feel better and in the *Canada* the mess deck hated the Wardroom anyway. The next day I was paraded before the Commander who said I was a bad ungrateful officer and a disgrace to the Navy. Then I was marched below again and my marine escort produced a half-bottle of port wine which the Wardroom marine servants had liberated in my honor.

Meantime the ship's lawyers, who are the paymaster's staff, had made a diligent search of the King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions (the KR and AI) to see if I could be beaten and the answer was "NO." So then I was taken to see the Captain who repeated what the Commander said and although I was entirely innocent of any offense I was given 14 days "Watch and Watch." This meant you had four hours on deck and four below and four on deck again for 14 days on end. In your watch below you had to eat, wash, dress and perform all your routine duties.

So what I got was 14 days and nights without sleep and if I broke down, which I was bound to do, then they had me for

disobeying orders. It would have been bad for me if it hadn't been for the mess deck, who sent a volunteer to keep my watch for me and call me if I was wanted. If you ask me, I don't think the *Canada* was too far from a mutiny at that time. What saved the situation was the Battle of Jutland which started right at that moment and in the monumental flap which it created I was completely forgotten. So I had won my battle in the *Goliath* and I had won in the *Canada* but later when I was 40, I had a nervous breakdown.

If you want to picture how it was at 16 to buck all the vested interests of a 500-year-old machine, visualize a middle-aged female Christian suddenly vaulting over the arena rails and throwing a handful of lion droppings at Caligula!

CHAPTER 6

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

It was my seventeenth birthday and I had been two years at sea and was still a Junior Midshipman, and I was halfway through my death sentence when we got the news that the German High Seas Fleet was out. So, on the 29th of May, 1916 the grand fleet steamed proudly out of Scapa into the soft pink mists of the North Sea to fight what, as it turned out, was the greatest Naval battle in all history. At least it was the greatest in past history and it is doubtful whether battle wagons will ever be built again.

It was a very disappointing battle at that, because the Admirals on both sides were over-cautious and long before the damage became serious they both turned tail and beat it as fast as several million horsepower would push them.

The German Commander, Admiral von Scheer, had every reason to be cautious because he was at a 4 to 1 disadvantage,

which means that we could fire four times the weight of broadside he could.

Admiral Jellicoe, who commanded the British battle fleet, was cautious partly because over-caution is a byproduct of the treatment, and partly because he feared the inventiveness of the Germans—which, as it turned out, he had every reason to.

So, while the battle cruisers, under Admiral Beatty, had fun and got sunk in a big way, Jutland was a disappointing affair for the heavies of which *Canada* was one.

What there was to see I saw because, having been rightly judged the most useless of *Canada*'s 40 midshipmen, I was stationed in the forward conning tower where I had nothing to do.

In between getting my head blown off every time "B" turret fired, I watched the action and what I saw, and what World War II still showed, was that our ships blew up on first impact and German ships just hated to sink however hard we pummelled them.

And what made things worse was that the German gunnery system was much better and registered hits usually with the first round. Ours was much slower to register the first hit, and with 11 inch, 12 inch, 13.5 inch and 15 inch shells the firstest is the mostest.

I suspect that the German gunnery was bestest because they were more inventive. Our gunnery boys had had all the inventiveness squeezed out of them by the treatment, which went to even greater lengths at Whale Island, where gunnery is taught, than it did elsewhere, so all they could do was to shout and they could shout louder than anyone.

In those days, there were only two guns to each turret and our gun control worked like this:

You took the enemy's range with an optical instrument called a range finder, then you set your sights at this range and fired a salvo of four or five guns, usually the righthand gun in each turret. Then you waited.

You waited quite a while because at 15,000 or 20,000 yards range the shells took a while to get there, and when they arrived you noted where the splash fell, short or over, and had another try with your lefthand guns. Since you were moving at anything up to 30 miles an hour and as the enemy was moving too, it didn't follow that the second salvo would be any luckier than the first.

So what the wicked Germans did was to fire all righthand guns 200 yards short of estimated range, and then after only five seconds they fired all lefthand guns 200 yards over. By then the right guns were reloaded and they put them up 100 yards and fired; and by then the left guns were reloaded and they put them down 100 yards and fired, and so they had 16 or 20 shells in the air all inside half a minute and with the natural spread due to guns not being 100 per cent accurate, one shell was likely to hit. And did. We passed close by our battle cruiser *Invincible* just as one of these shells made her vincible.

I was watching while our whole grand fleet steamed past the disabled German battle cruiser *Derfflinger* and banged away at her but she just wouldn't sink. In the end, they got her back to Kiel and the ship which fights and gets towed away lives to fight another day, however badly she may be damaged.

The fact was our design department was putting the armor on the sides of our ships, where it had been in Nelson's time, and not on the decks, whereas the Germans without using too much imagination had seen that, at modern long ranges, the shells would plunge down more vertically than horizontally.

Another surprise for Jellicoe was the way the German shells didn't explode at the first light impact, as ours did, but with characteristic Teutonic thoroughness they burrowed away through superstructure until they came to something solid.

So the German shells plunged through our relatively unprotected decks, without going anywhere near our "walls of oak" (or walls of steel) and exploded when they were good and deep in the bowels of their target. This more than compensated for their smaller size.

So you see the system produced iron men in wooden ships as I said in my "Introduction to the Navy."

However, in case my U.S. readers feel superior about all this, the American Navy made an unutterable hash of the first few phases of World War II!

One night at Scapa Flow I was asleep in my hammock and I either felt or heard, I am not sure which, a "woomph" like when the *Goliath* was hit. Without wasting any time, I ran up on deck and the sky was full of flames and falling debris.

It turned out that the battleship *Vanguard* had blown up with the loss of 1200 men, including my friend Wilson, and there was never any evidence of what caused the explosion.

It could have been sabotage because *Vanguard* had just returned to Scapa from drydock or it could have been some sailor who went down to a magazine to write a letter home and have a quiet smoke, because sailors do that sort of thing. We thought the cause was an accumulation of fluff in the ventilating ducts that supplied the magazines. A drop or two of oil from the blower bearings on this dust would spontaneously ignite.

At any rate, after that we all posted sentries at magazine doors and cleared out all ducts.

Just then, I became quite famous because I had been mak-

ing some small scale models of British and German ships. The Captain saw them and saw how useful they could be.

This was a new Captain since the Edgar episode. He was a nice guy and he was nice to me and said I was a clever youngster, because he intended to use my models for the spotting table.

The spotting table was a part of the phantom banana game and it consisted of a large table painted to look like sea, and you moved little model ships around while the gunnery boys fired imaginary guns and had fun.

Before Captain James introduced my models, which exactly resembled real ships, the models used for spotting were just pieces of wood with a funnel sticking up, but with accurate models everyone would learn to recognize our ships and the enemy's.

This is quite important in Naval warfare, because when distances are great and visibility is poor, mistakes of identity do occur and Admirals just hate being fired at by their own side.

So I worked like mad to make a complete set of models for several hundred ships because I liked Captain James and would do anything for him, but the gunnery officer came and shouted at me to get a move on and I quit. After that the ship's armorers, who come under the gunnery department, made the models and it took them a long time.

Right then I became a sub-Lieutenant which was like becoming an official of the Gestapo after being in a concentration camp for suspected Communist activities.

Meantime Dad had written to say that the war would probably end soon and what were my plans if the Navy didn't need me?

I answered this question by joining the engineering depart-

ment, so I became what was called a sub-Lieutenant (E) and in due course the Admiralty gave me a first class college training in engineering and paid me while so doing.

My first job as sub E was in a light cruiser called *Caroline* and she was the very first of the modern oil burning cruisers.

Caroline was a happy ship and everyone was nice even when we had Arctic patrol in mid-winter and I puzzled and puzzled about what made *Caroline* so nice. I think it was the First Lieutenant whose happy personality worked like a leaven through the whole ship. His name was Potts and later he became an admiral and was British Naval Attaché in Washington in the early days of World War II.

Of course, long before I got to *Caroline* I had known about happy ships because the *Colossus* was one and my friend Teddy Dangerfield was in her. So I used to visit Teddy when the *Colossus* had a gunroom guest night and we would all sing limericks, starting with A. The chairman would point to one of us and he would get up from the table and sing:

> "There was an old man of Antigua
> Whose wife said why Jack what a pig you are—
> He said, oh my queen, is it manners, you mean
> Or do you refer to my figua?"

which was the only polite limerick. Then we all would sing in chorus "And the elephants walked around around and the band began to play, and all the whores of Pompey (Portsmouth) Town came out in the rig of the day."

And then the chap next to the one who had sung in "A" going around clockwise with the port, would get up and sing a limerick in B. And the chorus would go "And the elephants walked around around and the band began to play." And the first chap who failed to find a limerick, or who repeated one

that had already been sung, had to stand a round of drinks, or if you were a guest your host did, which just about used up his wine allowance for a whole month.

So that way we got to know a lot of limericks and when I got to America I said I know 80 and everyone roared with laughter and said "Mister, there are 400."

American limericks often differ in detail from the English, or authorized version, as for example, England's "Old Man of Belgrave" becomes America's "Young fellow called Dave"—and how appropriate that the younger country should select a younger hero!

As a matter of fact, Dave has always been one of my secret heroes too, because although he acted in a somewhat insanitary manner he was engagingly candid about his motives.

Not to be candid with yourself is, of course, "the unforgivable sin" because after awhile your conscience gets bored and flies off and then you are without a compass for your soul.

So patterning myself, not of course upon Dave's behave in the cave, but upon his candor, I never have alibis and I haven't made myself out to be a hero. I think I must be the only living human who ever admitted getting fired. People always resign instead.

When we had finished singing limericks, we would sing "Tom Cats on the roof" to the tune of John Peel in chorus and we could keep this up for hours.

The destroyer *Strongbow* would tie up alongside because destroyers get lonely all by their little selves and come snuggle up to a big ship sometimes.

The *Strongbow* had a sub-Lieutenant called Darwin who was a proof that Darwin was right, but our Darwin had evolved somewhat and could drink more than other gorillas and could also sing and play the banjo. Darwin would come aboard and

drink up all our wine allowances in one gulp and would twang his banjo and sing:

"Jinny McNeal's in love with me
In love with me, in love with me,
And I'm as happy as I can be,"

and he could keep it up for hours with a blow by blow account of what turned out to be a very promising romance but ended unhappily as Darwin would conclude with:

"Then straightway I began to swear,
Your brat is not my son and heir
How could *my* child have red hair?
Two hundred others have been there."

Of course it wasn't only in the gunroom that we all sang because the sailors liked to sing too and they used to have ship's company concerts.

The sailors never sang songs that were outright dirty but they sometimes sang risqué songs, but doleful ones were the favorites:

"Oh give my love ter Muvver
And tell 'Er not ter bovver
Tell 'Er not ter wite fer me
'Cause I'm not coming 'ome."

Officially of course, a ship's company concert was strictly dry but the sailors had ways and means of getting surprisingly drunk at times.

In the *Canada* the baker and his cronies, the chief petty officers, were always mysteriously intoxicated and it was only when one of them went down with DT's that their secret was revealed. Every day, when bread was baked for 1500 men, a fraction of the yeast was set aside and fermented into a most unholy brew.

Of course, the men also got a rum ration each day and al-

though they were supposed to drink this daily they often hoarded it and men who didn't drink their ration sold it to those who did.

For many decades, the cooper, who served the rum, and his cronies were habitually drunk, and although the bulk quantities issued were checked and rechecked with the number of rations issued, the leak was only discovered quite recently.

The copper measure, called a gill, which was dipped into a tub of rum and dispensed to each sailor, had no handle, so as each measure was filled to the brim, under the lynx-like gaze of the owner, a thumbful of liquor was displaced.

The extraordinary thing about this story is that for nearly a century the coopers handed their secret from father to son, and it never leaked out, and in process of evolution coopers were born with oversize thumbs.

When at last, under the scrutiny of modern science the mystery stood revealed, a gill with a long handle was used so that the cooper could not get his thumb anywhere near the liquor. Theoretically any rum left over was thrown overboard, but I am not absolutely one hundred per cent sure to the extent of swearing under oath that this was always done. I think sometimes on rare occasions the surplus rum went down to the cabin of the issuing officer for an official checkup.

One of the things this officer might have checked was whether the camel hair had been omitted, because a small quantity of camel's hair is chopped up into every cask of Navy rum so that an excise officer, inspecting a waterfront pub, can spot contraband at a glance by holding it up to the light.

To return to my story. After I left *Caroline* they sent me to do a two year course at the Naval Engineering School at Keyham near Plymouth, and I *think* I got a better grounding

in the subject than youngsters seem to get at M.I.T. and places like that today.

But for one of those accidents which seem to have beset my career at every turn, I might have gone on from there to the higher flights of Naval Construction to which my inventive talents could have contributed.

When we started our course, the Engineer Commander-in-charge said that we were to be permitted to relax after a too strenuous war period and that there would be no examinations.

It seemed plain to me that unless an elaborate handicapping system were devised no fair examination could be held, since officers of all ages from my 19, to Lieutenant Commanders of 30 were included in one class.

Among other things, I had missed three years of peacetime schooling which the older officers had received and I had not even got as far as the calculus before I left Dartmouth.

As a result I studied only the subjects which interested me. Imagine therefore my surprise when a stiff passing-out exam was held and in this I passed fourth by only one point. The top three officers went on to a further five years at Greenwich Naval Academy to become the elite of their department.

I think it must have been at this stage that I decided to quit the service.

By the time I was out of school, the war to end wars had ended and England was fit for all its heroes except a million or so who were maimed and another two or three million who couldn't find jobs, because in those days there was no handout to Veterans but just farewell and—you, when you were no longer one of our brave boys.

My next ship to my disappointment was another big one, and I was sub-Lieutenant of the gunroom mess with two other

subs under me. No one was beaten under my regime, which seemed to work quite well in spite of that, but we had an upset about the marine servants because in the Royal Navy officers' servants are all marines.

It happened like this. We were off to the Mediterranean and had been taking on essential supplies including liquor for the Mess, which enterprising merchants supply on consignment and you pay them as consumed.

Since gunroom finances are on a rudimentary level, we did not order the vintage brands but just took on the maximum alcohol content our money would buy. So the wine bill would include such captions as "Fine Old Fiery," "Gunroom Favorite," "Painkiller Brand," "Immediate Results Guaranteed," and "Caution do not Spill on Woodwork," etc., etc.

We had a weekend leave before sailing and when I came aboard at 5:00 a.m. on Monday, the Commander was there to meet me in his pajamas. He seemed very upset because three of our marine servants had broken into the gunroom wine store and two of them were dead, and though the third one lived, he was paralyzed and had to be invalided out of the Service.

It came out in the Court of Enquiry that the corporal of marine servants and two privates had taken a crowbar and forced open the steel door of the wineroom. They had consumed over £100 worth of liquor at its bonded price (or say $10,000 at N.Y. bar prices today) which was no mean feat for three marines in three days.

Our guests had started with appropriate decorum by opening their bottles in the usual way and drinking from them, doubtless with little fingers uplifted to show refinement.

But as the party warmed up a labor-saving device was introduced by the corporal, who owed his superior rank to his superior intelligence, and he fetched *"Baths, Hip, Officers,*

emergency, one" from the store and used it as a cocktail shaker.

These baths were identical to the one Joy and I shared in the nursery and were kept on board in case the officers bathroom was shot away and were ideal for their present purpose.

As is often the case in this age of progress one invention led to another and to save opening the bottles, our assembly line now cracked the necks off on the side of the tub and poured the contents in.

So then they had quite a nourishing brew consisting, as our inventory showed, of beer, stout, whisky, port, sherry, gin, various liqueurs and last but not least three dozen bottles of bitters.

It was due to the bitters and the broken glass that the party ended on a less convivial note than had been the intention of its sponsors, but then these accidents do sometimes mar the best of celebrations.

After burying our two heroes with due honors, we got underway for Malta about which I have nothing new to say except to tell you of a device which was discovered by the Maltese and is now in world wide use.

Malta, as everyone knows, has a magnificent harbor, but the neighboring island of Gozo is inaccessible except in a rowboat in fine weather.

So when the Maltese are accused of any of the various things one accuses Maltese of, they smile blandly and say "Not me sah, my bruzzer from Gozo" and you are stymied.

And when you are stalling on some deal and saying that you have to consult your wife or your co-directors or your Bank Manager, remember that you too have a brother from Gozo, but the Navy frowned upon the game of Gozo because at sea you don't pass the buck but take what comes without looking for alibis.

In Malta, I got dysentery which is an unpleasant disease even for normal people but for me, on top of my natural weakness, it was devastating and I became very seriously ill. So I resigned my commission and said a careless farewell to my great and cruel mother, not seeing then how much I would miss her in my later life, none of which has seemed quite real in comparison.

I stayed at home for awhile because I still had a bad tummy and I was very nervous. It wasn't a happy time because Edgar was out of the Army and Dad was worried about him. Mom nagged at Dad all the time but he was pretty patient with her, I will say.

One good thing came out of the war, as far as I was concerned, because it had taken me away from Mom when I was 15 and I was never in her clutches like the others were. But Mom dominated all the others, and if they were away she wrote to them daily. I used to hear the brass handles on her desk go clickety clack as it shook under her hand.

One of Mom's ideas was that no one but no one was good enough for us and so we had no friends because Mom chased them away.

If any of us showed any signs of developing a sex life, Mom would imitate the loved one until he or she became ridiculous in our eyes. When Kathleen contracted a very promising alliance with a very rich and quite agreeable type, Mom imitated his Lancashire accent and his rather prominent front teeth which she did with orange peel cut to the correct shape and inserted over her gums.

In Kathleen's case Mom was so successful that she never married, but Joy broke loose and married when she was 50! Mom was so angry she up and died right after the wedding.

Mom always had a flock of clergymen in the house and they

used to say "Such a saintly woman, how lucky you are to have such a saintly mother." But I don't know if the Bishop would have thought so if he had seen Mom disguised as the Bishop.

As soon as his Lordship had left the house Mom would whip up to her room and in a few minutes she would come down in complete Bishop's outfit which she kept for the occasion.

The Bishop had curly gray hair, rather long for a man, so it hung out over his collar at the back. Mom had curly gray hair, rather short for a woman, so it hung out over her collar at the back.

The Bishop had a white shirt with a collar turned backwards and Mom had one of Dad's shirts with collar back to front. Mom also had one of Dad's old doctor's black tailcoats onto which she had sewn the correct episcopal buttons.

For breeches Mom had a pair of her own flannel knickers dyed black and finally she had black woolen stockings and black button-up boots.

Dad said the outfit looked all right except that Mom's bulge in front was too high up and her breath didn't smell of port wine.

Despite or because of her own partly Jewish background, Mom was strongly anti-Semitic, as we say, although, among several hundred million Semites, only a small percentage are of Jewish descent or faith.

To improve our education and also, she hoped, to camouflage some of her remarks, Mom used to address us in French and on seeing some inoffensive little Jew on the Parade at Eastbourne Mom would turn to us and say: *"Fie donc mais enfants, quel Juif horrible,"* to which we would reply *"Mais Maman, que vous est Jeuve,"* and she would say, *"Non, non. Ce n'est pas le même chose!"*

However, the main target of Mom's animosity was, of course, Dad, whom she persecuted increasingly in the blessed name of Jesus.

Dad was born in London in the early 1840's and was the youngest qualified doctor of his generation. He served as a doctor on the German side in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and on the British side in the Boer War and in the first Anglo-German war.

One of his friends at medical school had been Dr. Parsons, the very same Dr. Parsons who saw me naked on the towpath at Weybridge.

When Dr. Parsons migrated to South Africa, Dad followed him and they were in partnership in Capetown when Dad met Jane Esther Solomon, daughter of Henry Solomon and Jane Middleton, who was in the direct line of descent from the Earls of Middleton who featured in the History of the Stuart Dynasty.

Apparently all went smoothly at first and I have a letter from Grandma Middleton dated December 11, 1883 which says, "Yes, indeed you have much to be thankful for. Such a dear, kind husband. Each time I see him my heart goes out in affection towards him and you must try to do every thing to please him and comfort him, for he has a very anxious life."

What can have gone wrong to have created the domestic Hell of my own unhappy childhood?

In 1887, when the gold rush started Dad joined it and thus became the first surgeon in Johannesburg.

Dad used to tell how he finished the journey from rail head at a place called de Aar, in a hansom cab, and I like to picture him in tophat, tailcoat and stethoscope, on his 400 mile trek across the desert.

Kathleen remembers how the family followed later in an ox wagon, when she was quite small and so I fix the date as about 1889.

In the meantime Dad had built a modest house on the site now occupied by the Standard Bank of South Africa on Eloff Street.

Although Dad did well as a doctor, he made most of his considerable fortune in real estate and especially on the Kazerne estate.

There was an old Dutchman called Kazerne who owned a derelict farm on the flat semi-desert land south of the gold-bearing reefs. Old Kazerne and his wife were both ailing and Dad often went in his dog cart to visit them.

This Dutchman never paid Dad and when he died he owed several years' doctor's bills and he left Dad 100 acres of his farm which, being away from the gold-bearing reef, was worth nothing. Dad was pretty sore about this especially since he was never able to find a buyer. Then after the railway came to Jo'burg, there was no suitable site for a freight yard, except this land which Dad held. He rented it for a good sum until 1919 and then sold it to them for £70,000.

But Mom was never satisfied with Dad but hung instead on her cross and suffered beside her Savior. I got the idea that St. Paul had been a pretty smart inventor because he had invented the suffering Savior and all the old girls liked it.

Before St. Paul had seen the light on the way to Damascus, gods had all been laughing, drinking, copulating warrior gods which the men and the young girls liked but the old girls would have none of it.

So St. Paul saw that it is old girls who pull most of the strings even in a primitive society (and they still do in Park Avenue

and Park Lane and in Timbuktu), and he gave them what they wanted in a religion, which is a suffering religion so they can go around in black and let out a lot of sighs.

Mom was in good health and had a good man, and she was well heeled, and had the five loveliest children, all of whom had come through the great war unscathed. But instead of getting out her timbrel and dancing before the Lord, as David did before the Ark of the Covenant, she went around in black and sighed and sighed.

To encourage Mom to bear her cross there were, as I said, a number of clergymen in the house, but not always the same ones because Mom believed in competition. She bestowed her patronage first on one church and then on another—the wind bloweth where it listeth.

Sometimes we went to the Gilded Temple of the Anglo-Catholics which was full of incense, idols and chanting priests like in the Great Temple of Damballah in Ceylon. Sometimes we were Church of England and sometimes we crossed the tracks and went to the Presbyterian Kirk which was a corrugated iron shack operated by M e e e s t e r Carnoustie.

Mr. Carnoustie was lowland Scottish and he bleated like an oversize sheep. There was no music and no vain repetition like the heathen do, but only Mr. Carnoustie bleating and bleating. He used to bleat "O ooooh L a i r r r d U v M a i r r r c y u p o r n u s m e e e s e r a b l e Sinners" and then with diabolical insight into everyone's affairs he would wrestle with the Lord for each one of us according to our several follies and indiscretions.

Dad did not participate in these devotions but on the Sabbath morn he would rise right early and hie himself to golf. I would usually go too before Mom could drive me into the fold.

Going to golf with Dad was no mean assignment, because although he was over 70, he was as wiry as the dickens and insisted on bicycling the five miles each way because he had set his face against inflation. The bus fare between 1914 and 1919 had gone up from sixpence to ninepence.

When Dad played golf he pitted his skill against the elements without any of those artificial aids upon which modern weaklings depend. He used gutta percha balls which, however, hard you hit, only went 100 yards and he had only four clubs, to wit:—

A brassie which was a hockey stick with part of the hook cut off; a No. 2 iron; a mashie which performed all the duties of Nos. 5 through 9; and a putter.

All these clubs had wooden shafts and when, through some weakness, they failed to perform as Dad required, he broke them over his knee, which pleased old Mr. Blairgowrie, the Pro, since it was a perennial source of income for him to repair them.

And the funny thing was Dad always went round in the 70s.

After golf, we would have a glass of shandygaff, which is 50/50 beer and ginger beer and so home to midday dinner at which, as Dad used to observe, Mom presided with less than her usual charm, because church always made her irritable.

And then Dad would take me to his club where we would play snooker or chess. I am glad I was with him then because I left England after that and never saw him again.

But my relations with Dad were not as good as they should have been because he was afraid I would turn out to be another Edgar, who Mom said was a good, clean, straight Christian boy, but Dad said with greater accuracy that he had all the vices of a medieval Baron.

Edgar had a monocle and a cane and a turned-up moustache.

He was a Major and he spent his daylight hours riding around on a horse. Joy got all horsey too and used to ride around with him until her legs got quite bandy, which served her right.

Edgar wouldn't even look for a job, much less get one. Dad got fed up and one day wrote him a note quoting the text, "He that will not work neither shall he eat," and the maid handed it to him at breakfast. Edgar was all dressed for huntin' in a red coat, yellow waistcoat and all the trimmings and he flipped his monocle into his eye and read the note and wrote on the back, "Behold the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these," and when Dad saw it he rushed out of the room.

Things weren't so good after that, and I went up to London and stayed with Uncle Albert who had a flat in Piccadilly. This was handy for him because Aunt Rachel was dead and he liked to be near Piccadilly.

As a matter of fact, I went up for Aunt Rachel's funeral but my car broke down and I arrived too late. Uncle Albert was at home, all dressed to the nines and he said, "Well after all, old boy, I don't think your Aunt would have wanted me to make much of a fuss, would she?" I said, "No," so we went out on the Town and had quite a time together.

While I was with Uncle Albert, the old folks at home were preparing a little surprise for me. Dad, as I have tried to show, was a decent enough character according to his lights, which were those of a conservative old gentleman of his generation.

Dad admitted no liability toward veterans. He himself was a veteran of three wars, only under somewhat different circumstances. In each of them he had just carried on being a doctor but with different patients.

So Dad said the war had been fun for us all and now that it was over we must get down to reality and do some work. Since

Edgar claimed the *Droit de Seigneur* of the eldest son, he stayed home, under Mom's wing of course, while I was quite ruthlessly shipped off to seek my fortune in Brazil.

As you will see later, when the White Cliffs of Dover found themselves inconveniently near to German-occupied France, my enthusiasm for King and Country did not sweep me off my feet.

CHAPTER 7

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

I have already described how I left Brazil, where I had made easy money, and migrated to the Cape of Good Hope; or, as Vasco da Gama named it, The Cape of Storms.

When I decided to make the move, I still believed Mom's stories about her wonderful home in the Cape and it was only recently that Kathleen told me the facts.

Mom hated South Africa and dragged Dad away from his highly successful career as a doctor and as a realtor, to settle in England. This was just before I was born, and when I arrived the family was living at No. 6 Downleaze on Clifton Downs, outside Bristol.

I had reckoned on getting some help from all my numerous relatives in Cape Town, many of whom used our house in Eastbourne as an hotel when visiting England, but not a finger was lifted on my behalf.

Also as I said before, my girl friend and future wife was up country visiting friends and I felt rather forlorn. In the end, I had to take a small job as a draftsman. This, as it turned out, was again the finger of fate because later, when I had my invention, I could draw the plans myself, and it must be a terrible handicap to an inventor not to be able to do so.

There were only six men in the drawing office where I worked, and one of them was a war cripple and couldn't be fired, which put him in a strong position to pull the chief draftsman's leg.

In this congenial pastime we all readily joined because old Mr. Dreary was prime leg-pull fodder, and scarcely a day went by without our doing it. Mr. Dreary was very tall and he stooped as all good draftsmen do after a time, because nearsightedness, a pronounced stoop, a dirty mind and warts on your belly are the occupational hazards of drafting.

Draftsmen have dirty minds because drafting is one of the few jobs where you can talk without either being disturbed by your work, or disturbing it. In the case of other indoor workers including Lesbians, talking interferes with working, while outdoor workers are discouraged from polite conversation by distance, the elements or the noise made by machinery. But in a drafting room, after the news of the day has been discussed, we usually revert to number one topic, which is the functions of the human body below the belt; and in these matters old Mr. Dreary was a fully qualified conversationalist.

Like R. L. Stevenson's Master of Lovatt, old Mr. Dreary "had a small voice which could ring out shrill and dangerous when he so desired" and his boyhood in the slums of London had given him a natural pessimism.

So conversation in our office usually ran along these lines:

Draftsman: "Eric and I are going sea fishing this weekend in old Mr. Snook's boat."

Dreary: "Dyngerous plyce the sea, young feller, I seen many a corpse brought in from drownding and don't yer forget that."

Draftsman: "I have to go over to No. 4 mixing house to measure the new drive shaft."

Dreary: "I remember young 'Erbert going ther onct, it must 'ave been in '86 and 'e never come back, at least only a bucket full of 'im did, because they found nuffink but 'is stummick after the explosion."

Draftsman: "I hear Saunders is planning to get married."

Dreary: "Doctor's bills and diapers and alimony is what 'ell get for 'is pines. Decide in hyste, repent at leisure is my motter" and so forth.

However old Mr. Dreary's favorite topic was getting fired, of which he lived in daily dread even after 40 years of continuous employment by the same firm. He used to squeal at us in his elephant's trumpet voice, "Tyke it easy young feller. Tyke it easy, you'll work yourself out of a job if yer ain't careful."

To protect his own position old Mr. Dreary had evolved an artful ruse, all undetected by the directors, which was to have no index or catalogue of the company's several thousand drawings. When a particular drawing was wanted, Mr. Dreary would say "The reducing valve on No. 4 nitrator steam coil? Let me see, young 'Ughs done that in April 1891, no it was in May, and he spilled some ink in one corner," and he would shuffle off to the fireproof vault and come out with the drawing, signed H. E. Hughes, May 17th 1891, and with the ink stain as stated.

This system worked well enough until old Mr. Dreary finally went off his rocker, as I will explain later, and then it took six qualified draftsmen six months to index all the drawings. Dur-

ing that period, if you wanted to get the dimensions of something, you went out with a tape measure and a pair of calipers and got them on the site.

I must say that I found old Mr. Dreary very tiresome to work with because he had picked up what little engineering law he knew in the 1880's and most of it was wrong.

If there was a centrifugal pump installed on the floor and driven by an electric motor, it would never occur to Mr. Dreary to drive the pump direct from the motor thru a flexible coupling. Instead he would install a line shaft up on wall brackets about eight feet from the floor, and would drive thru flat leather belts up from the motor to this shaft and down again from the shaft to the pump, so the whole job was about ten times as big as it needed to be and required frequent attention.

One of old Mr. Dreary's dreary odd notions was that you got more torque or twisting effect out of a long shaft than out of a short one, and he would listen to no argument on this score. One day I told him that he had achieved the goal of all inventors and had invented perpetual motion, because horse power is torque multiplied by revs. The revs of a shaft must remain the same throughout its length and according to Dreary the torque would increase with length, so up would go the horse power as the shaft got longer.

You could have, say a ten h.p. motor driving a long shaft at one end and the shaft would deliver 20 h.p. at the other end. Then you could use 15 of these horses to drive a generator which would drive the motor and have five h.p. left over for free.

At this, the old man got quite beside himself with rage and trumpeted and trumpeted to the tune of "Don'tcher be so cock sure of yersef, young feller, or yer'll come a cropper, yer mark my words yer will."

But it was old Mr. Dreary who came a cropper, and it happened like this. Despite his pessimism over my impending marriage, the old man decided at 65 to take the plunge himself. The object of his adoration was a surprisingly good looking woman of some 40 summers, who had some money and came from an excellent family. When we heard about the engagement, we were at first dumbfounded.

Then one day, Fred, who was our war cripple, evolved the theory that if such a good looking, well-to-do, and well connected woman wanted to marry old Mr. Dreary, there must be a catch somewhere. And sure enough there was; she had epileptic fits and in one of them, she bit her fiance severely in the neck. For several days after this disaster the old man stayed in his room, and although we heard he was ill we didn't know the nature of his malady. Then suddenly one day the drawing office door flew open and in rushed Mr. Dreary, deathly pale and with his neck all bandaged up. He glared round the room for a moment and then trumpeted "Ruined me bloody life and broke me bloody 'eart," and with that cryptic utterance he dashed out and we never saw him again because shortly afterwards he had to be put under restraint.

So that was my initiation into the glorious brotherhood of draftsmen, whose very essential art is not always rewarded as it deserves, and later when I employed my own engineering staff I used to preach the following doctrine:

"What a chef is to a restaurant, a draftsman is to an engineering enterprise. The restaurant can have location, decor, soft music, and tail-coated waiters and still be a failure if the kitchen is weak, and the engineering product cannot succeed unless there is a strong drafting room behind it."

While talking of clichés and of rooms, there is a cliché about "If the bedroom is right, all the other rooms in the house will

be right," and that is why I am not going to say much about my first marriage. In the end, as you will see, I quarreled with my first wife and we were divorced.

Recently I took my two daughters by a second marriage to see her and they both said "Daddy why *were* you two divorced?" and I said "If you ask me now, I'm damned if I can tell you, she's really rather a pet isn't she?"

Of course I was only 23 when we married and my formative years had been spent at sea so I had very little knowledge of people in general and women in particular.

Later when I showed a tendency to emulate ancestor Solomon, my first wife became known to my intimates as No. 1, and I shall so refer to her in this narrative. No. 1's mother was of Boer descent and was five foot one inch tall and four foot eleven inches wide, all solid bone, muscle and will power. When she gave the ball a good swipe at tennis, it came over the net so fast that it had a perfectly flat trajectory. The best thing was just to let it go on its course into the stratosphere and become a satellite. But if by any chance you put your racket in its path, then both ball and racket went off together out of control and you were disarmed.

Mrs. Pontoon came from a large family, as Mom did, and it seems like in the old days in the Cape there hadn't been much to do in the evenings. So at our wedding, No. 1 and I mustered over 200 first and second cousins and her father nearly bankrupted himself on the champagne, the cheaper Cape variety at that.

Old General Pontoon was really one of the very nicest old gentlemen you ever could wish to meet; the pre-Montgomery Army bred them like that. As gentle and as fussy as an old hen.

Every night when he put his car to bed, the General jacked up all four wheels and put blocks under the axles so as to rest the tires. Then he went round with the instruction book and

did all the things it said to do every 10,000 miles, and then he covered it from top to toe with a dust sheet. There was a night light in the garage, in case it got lonely.

While the general was thus profitably engaged, Mrs. Pontoon would waddle round and make a complete inventory of every single item of value in the house including silverware and cutlery.

I couldn't help liking the old General but he didn't ever cotton to me, it was like the Chinese say—"Why does English officer only have glass in one eye?"—"So he won't see more than he can understand."

General Pontoon classified the human race under a few simple headings which were as follows:

Foreigners, Coolies, Women and working class fellers were beyond the range of discussion, and might just as well have been Kipling's blind white sea snakes, down in the dark, the utter dark, where foreigners, coolies, women and working class fellers have their being.

Army Officers and, under exceptional circumstances, some Naval Officers who rode horses and agreed on all points with the General, were sound fellers; but R.A.F. types were a bunch of damn motor mechanics and were exiled.

The genus "Silly Arse" embraced politicians if they were Conservative, like Churchill, and writers, painters, poets and anyone the General did not understand. I am proud to relate that during the earlier phases of our association I was thus designated.

Anyone who slept with women, expressed radical political views, disagreed with and/or borrowed money from the General was a BLACKGUARD, a blaggard Sir, a blaggard. And to this stratum I soon by the process of gravity descended.

Though these were the Fauna of the earth as broadly classi-

fied, there were sub-species and I was privileged to witness the naming of one such as it emerged before the General's inquiring pick and shovel.

It happened that the General's bank account was overdrawn and Mrs. Pontoon thought it expedient to invite the Bank Manager, Mr. Postlethwaite, to dinner.

On hearing this the General was distraught with rage and marched up and down his study, with his old horseman's bandy legs, beating his riding boots with a hunting crop and muttering "Postlethwaite, Postlethwaite, won't have the feller to my house," and then suddenly the General saw the light and relaxed.

So Postlethwaite became a sub-species of silly arse, about half way between that and blackguard and was classified as "Bounder." Little bounder, Postlethwaite Little bounder, etc., etc.

You can see now what I was up against when I married into a family as far removed from my world as a saucer full of spacemen.

The Company I worked for manufactured explosives for shipment to the great mines in Kimberley and in Johannesburg. The reason for having the source of supply so far from the market was that explosives are touchy things and the further they are away from thunderstorms, the better.

In the early days of the Witwatersrand, a whole trainload of dynamite had exploded and had practically demolished the city of Johannesburg, and it was thought that lightning had been the cause. At any rate the highveld, where the mines are situated, does have frequent and very severe thunderstorms but the Cape coast is free of them.

During the mixing process, while nitric acid and glycerine are being compounded to form nitro-glycerine, explosions do

sometimes occur even when there are no thunderstorms. There is never any evidence from the resulting debris as to what caused the blast. In order to restrain the damage, the mixing houses are limited in size and are widely separated, and around each building is a high earthen rampart. As a result, the worst that can happen is for one building, containing four tons of explosives and two men, to explode at any given time.

The men who worked on these mixing houses were well paid and seemed to be very phlegmatic about the risk, but they suffered severe headaches from the fumes.

After all the bangs I had experienced in my teens, I was a bit shy of visiting these mixing houses, especially after one blew up just as I had left it. This was the first time in 40 years that anyone had actually been in a mixing house just before it blew and lived to tell the tale, so I was witness No. 1 in the ensuing investigation.

The only constructive evidence I had to offer was that it had been an exceptionally windy day in a generally windy place because the south east trade wind blows 360 days in the year in the Cape Peninsula. I remembered that I had been sweating in the mixing house, where I was measuring something, and that my handkerchief had been covered with dust after wiping my forehead.

It may have been therefore that dust had been the cause of the explosion and the company went in for extensive grass planting throughout the mixing house area, to minimize the risk of dust from the surrounding sand dunes. Whether this did reduce the incidence of explosions, I do not know.

What affected me more than the risk of explosions was the inconvenience it caused the employees. In order to limit the damage to life and property which an explosion could cause, and in order to reduce the risk from sparks and grass fires

causing explosions, the Factories Act forbade anyone to live on the premises unless they were needed for emergency at night. Since the premises were several square miles in extent, this meant that everyone except a few higher officials, the fire brigade and me, had to live miles and miles away and travel backwards and forwards by bus.

I have never been a commuter, and always prefer to live on or near my work, and later when I had my own business I always lived right in my office building. Before looking for a house outside the explosives area, I decided to read the act, and the act said "No *permanent* dwelling shall be erected within the prescribed area except for the accommodation of officials whose presence within the area may reasonably be required after working hours."

So I went to see my cousin Saul in his law office in Capetown, and discussed this word "permanent." As a result of our findings, I bought the biggest ox wagon I could locate, the sort that Boer farmers use for heavy loads, with sixteen oxen to pull them. I built onto this the largest gypsy caravan that the road traffic act would permit.

This caravan was then hauled to a place near my office where a lake supplied water to the chemical plant. I installed a Chic Sale in some nearby trees and I was in business.

This meant I could walk to my office in five minutes and when I was bored with my job, as I usually was, I could sneak off to measure something, because all the drawings were jumbled up, and go home and have a nap.

It was about this time that my bad experiences in the war and my weak tummy began to affect me. I was always tired and could drop off to sleep any time, as Napoleon used to. For the next quarter century, my life was one long battle against fatigue and blinding headaches.

Another advantage of my caravan was I could be home for lunch and I used to have a piping hot stew everyday for lunch, because I like stew. I cooked the stew while I was having breakfast and then put the pot on a sheet of newspaper in my bed and heaped all the bed clothes on top. This would air the bedclothes and cook the stew in time for lunch.

This worked well enough until my fiancee brought her mother to see the future home and Mrs. Pontoon saw my untidy bed and decided to jerk the sheets off and air them on a clothesline outside. I had an extra big stew that day because there were three for lunch, and it took several days to collect all the debris from the ceiling and other parts of the room.

My home by the lake, with a distant view of mountains, and within walking distance of a good beach was a pleasant place and except for one thing, my life there was blissful.

The one thing that I had to combat was ants, which in South Africa come in armies several million strong, marching 20 abreast in step and dressed to the right. These ants had set sentries in the woods to watch my progress in establishing a home and when I moved in they sent back word for the advance. In a few hours I had ten million ants to share my new life.

I explained all this to Dr. Kuntz our chief chemist, a spectacled and serious old German, and he said "Ach so my poy, I will some Boison brebare and tomorrow we shall ze ants drive forth, nein?" The next day when I called at the lab, Dr. Kuntz handed me a ten pound jar of white granules which he said was corrosive sublimate and deadly poison, and that I mustn't even place one grain on the tip of my tongue.

The treatment was to place the powder on the wheels and axles of my caravan so the ants would eat it and it would poison them, though at first they would appear to like it.

So I did as bid, and the ants did seem to like my boison, and started to come in truckloads. When all the ants in the Cape Peninsula were gathered on my doorstep, contingents from up country began to arrive, white ants, black ants, red ants, and ants with long brown tails, marching from the four provinces of the Union and from the far Zambesi.

Dr. Kuntz and his assistants in the lab took a keen interest in all these proceedings and questioned me daily as to the progress of the battle. All I had to do, they assured me, was to keep on pouring out the sublimate and I would eventually destroy all the ants south of the Equator.

This went on for several weeks until one day I upset the jar, and before I could stop her my dog Sally had eaten the contents. I waited horror stricken to see poor Sally roll over and die in anguish but nothing happened, and so I put a spot of the powder on my own tongue. It tasted sweet, as indeed it should, because what wicked old Dr. Kuntz had given me was ten pounds of white sugar!

The sugar episode was quite in keeping with a general atmosphere of waggery that prevailed in this industry. Wholesale theft was considered a good joke and profitable at the same time.

There was a sentry at the road gate who examined in-coming types for matches and other inflammables and who searched for contraband on the way out, but the railway gate was unguarded. So one enterprising official loaded up a complete train with choice building materials and shunted it out onto the main line, where the South African version of the Railway Express picked it up and delivered it to his house site.

Not to be outdone a rival official built rafts of best sawn lumber which he loaded with materials and floated down to the sea, on a conveniently located canal, and carted thence by

ox wagon to *his* site. You could see both houses through a telescope from the managing director's office window. A visiting American technician was given a furnished house to live in and when he left he auctioned all the furniture and pocketed the proceeds!

In one respect it turned out that old Mr. Dreary had been right, there was not enough work for six draftsmen. Rather than lay us off the management decided to build a nine hole golf course for the staff. Fred was chosen to head up this enterprise and he took me as his assistant. Acting on Mr. Dreary's advice, Fred and I did not race over the job, but spent quite some time each day playing round a few holes to be sure we had them right, after which we would recline under a tree and watch the daily train to Port Elizabeth go by. And we built quite a nice little course except we could not make our survey close, and so we faked some of the distances and the very first day the course officially opened Mr. Splitpenny, our Chief Accountant, paced out all the holes and exposed our deception.

There was quite a nasty scene about it in the club house, and as always happens when two or three are gathered together in some good cause, tempers flew, and as Fred was unfireable, I was fired instead.

I didn't really mind because it was a pettifogging job and never would have gottten me anywhere and after 50 years I might have had old Mr. Dreary's job, stoop, spectacles, warts, obscenity and all.

Another thing that reconciled me to my fate was that I had just acquired a car and wanted to drive off somewhere in it. I get the wanderlust at times, especially with a new car.

When I married No. 1, I had wondered what to give her as a wedding present. In the end, I decided that a nice motorcycle would be just right for her.

That bike had been unlucky from the start. I had bought it for £120 from a Dutchman called Van der Crook and it was too high a price. Van der Crook had taken my check to the National Bank where he had his account, and they said they would charge him two shillings to transfer £120 from my bank next door which was the Standard Bank.

Van der Crook wouldn't spend two shillings but cashed my check at my bank and walked across to his bank with the money. But meantime it was 3:00 p.m. and his bank had closed.

To keep the money safe until the next day, Van der Crook put it in his cap and then went home and did some gardening. When he had done that he felt so good about everything that he said to his colored garden boy, "Here you are Pete, here's a cap" and he threw the cap to him. Pete went home, found the money and went off on a three weeks' drunk. When he got back he had spent every penny of Van der Crook's £80 which was what the bike was worth, and of my £40 extra.

Well, Van der Crook, who was the local magistrate, doled out a stiff sentence to Pete, but this didn't console him for his loss and he had a nervous breakdown.

We had that bike for about a year and it never ran properly. Then one day a good friend of mine called "Pincher" Brown came to see me and started to tinker with the engine. Pincher had been a sergeant major in the army and he had shiny jet black hair which had been oxy-acetylene welded to his head. He had jet black handle bar moustaches which would have made Tio Bebino swoon with envy.

Pincher had a motor bike of his own which he rode with his cap back to front so the wind wouldn't get under the peak and at top speed his moustaches couldn't actually bend but they would waggle somewhat.

Pincher had come to see whether I would trade my magneto

for his because, as he rightly said, my bike was no good anyway.

I said "Two wrongs don't make a right," and Pincher said, "Well let's try swapping magnetos and see what happens." He had brought his magneto with him.

Well what did happen was all of a sudden my bike burst into a sheet of flame, so all you could see was Pincher's moustaches through the combustion. I ran off to get some water from the lake and handed two buckets to Pincher while I ran for more. He was so overcome by the fumes he didn't throw them right and the water went over the top of the bike instead of onto it. By the time I had fetched two new buckets full of water it was all over. It was with the insurance money on the bike that I made a down payment on my car.

Then I sold my caravan at a good price because the management had let me get away with my gimmick and had then put its collective feet down, so you either bought from me or you commuted.

No. 1, in the meantime, was building me a daughter and had forsaken my humble abode for the fleshpots of the Pontoon mansion. I was foot-loose and fancy free, which, as you may have guessed, is how it suits me best.

CHAPTER 8

GOOD NEWS FOR MIAMI

What I bought with my insurance money was the prototype of the baby Austin and it looked like a baby carriage with the handles removed. As it turned out, it might have been better if they had left the handles on at both ends because there were no bridges in those days and when you came to a river, if it was in flood, you had to be carried across by blacks.

I planned to take a trip round the southern end of Africa, in my new car, whose name was "Minnie," camping at nights and eating only what I could shoot. My cousin Maxim, who was an artist, came along for the ride.

Maxim was a fascinating personality, as you have to be to sell people portraits at $2000 or so a throw, and he was a fairly good shot which helped when we were hungry.

Maxim was my first contact with Arty-Crafties and an artful

crafty lot they are, as I learned all over again when I lived in London's Chelsea and New York's Village. They always declare that they are completely devoid of business guile and know nothing about figures and you as a Philistine must make all the arrangements. When you do, you find it includes your paying for everything.

So every time on our safari, as we approached a town or hamlet, Maxim would find a landscape or a black man he simply *had* to paint and would I go on and buy some flour and some sugar and some butter and not to forget a bottle of scotch, and some more shells for our shotgun—and if I *could* find some linseed oil?

While I was toiling round doing all this in the hot sun, paying for everything, Maxim would get out his easel and set it up under a tree and paint a picture which he would subsequently sell for quite a large sum. But then come to think of it, who got the promised land in the end? Not the Philistines.

But Maxim was a good shot and I would drive Minnie quietly over the flat bare veld which is most of Africa and the game, never having seen Minnie before, took her to be just a duck-billed platypus or some other harmless creature and Maxim would bag us a roast of venison. If this was bad sporting it was good eating. We would make a camp fire and boil our meat for several hours to reduce its toughness and then grill it and chew and chew. By then we were so hungry, what with the smell and the long wait, that we could chew right through a pair of truck rear tires without knowing it and we even broke down some of the tissues in our steak.

Whenever we came to a river, Maxim would take off his trousers and wade across and if the water came above the calves of his legs I would know it was too deep. So then we would camp on the bank and settle down to see if the water would

go down because usually these African streams are fordable except in flood.

If the water showed no signs of going down we converted Minnie into a palanquin with poles at all four corners and had her carried across by blacks. Whenever you stop for more than a few minutes anywhere in Africa, except right in the very center of the Sahara desert, there will always be a crowd of blacks.

Since the women do all the work, the men have ample leisure and are always happy to help a stranger.

To get the palanquin result we carried two ten foot bamboo poles tied to Minnie's side and eight dog collars. When executing our evolution, we strapped the poles to the rims of Minnie's little wheels, one pole each side with ends projecting for handles.

For a cigarette apiece, the blacks would then unload Minnie and carry her cargo across (including about 800 pounds of Maxim's artist outfit) and then, with four men to each pole, upsiedaisy with Minnie herself. It also gave me a chance to look at her undersides.

After about a month of this, in the loveliest country in the world, in lovely weather, not knowing the future, we got bored and called in to see some rich friends of Maxim's (he always had rich friends). The Southy's had a 10,000 acre farm at Middleburg on the little Karoo. They were pleased to see us because on the little Karoo or on the big Karoo, visitors don't come every day. We had a fine dinner sitting in actual chairs and eating off plates. Maxim sold some pictures and said he would pay me back £10 he had borrowed and we had fun.

The next day our hosts were all playing in the local tennis tournament which was quite close, only 100 miles off. They said Maxim and I could potter around with our guns and see what we could get, and they would provide horses.

The fact was, we could shoot like anything from the deck of Minnie who was our camouflage but we had never tried to stalk game which is much more difficult because "Man the Killer" is recognized throughout Nature and the very smell of us sends the game scampering for dear life. I should add when we were aboard Minnie it was Minnie they smelled and it was a new smell and therefore nothing to worry about.

So Maxim and I roamed around all day without getting within 15 inch gun range of anything. We were just deciding to see if we could lay down some poison when I spied a huge herd of Bluebuck quite close. Maxim said he would ride off round a koppie or hill and try to get them in the rear and drive them towards me. If he didn't get them I would. Sure enough they came almost up to where I lay in an ants' nest behind a red hot rock. I shut both eyes, pulled my trigger and one of them rolled over dead almost at my feet.

We learned later that at this stage you put up a marker by the carcass and ride home. The blacks come out in a farm cart over the flat Karoo and bring your trophy home. But we didn't know this and Maxim had some pictures by an English artist called Landseer whom he admired, so we did like Landseer showed in Scotland and we hoisted our bluebuck, all 500 pounds of him, onto the back of my horse, who did seem mildly surprised. We tied the buck's legs together with handkerchiefs under the horse's belly and off we went.

Of course, it wasn't as easy as Landseer showed because our buck kept slipping down to one side and we had to keep hoisting him back. We got covered with blood and also, as we found later, in man-eating monsters called ticks. All this took hours and hours and it was long after dark and our hosts were home and were worried about us. We could see their headlamps like searchlights all over the veld as they scoured the country for

us in their cars. We arrived, at midnight, covered with blood, with my horse nearer dead than alive, and the buck hanging under him. There was a crowd on the stoep and they roared and roared with laughter.

What they were laughing at was not only the sight of Maxim and me dead beat and covered with blood and the buck under the horse's belly, but the fact that the bluebuck were tame like horses, which they resembled, and you could ride on their backs, but they had forgotten to tell us not to shoot them.

After that, Maxim went off to do a portrait somewhere and I went on to Kimberley where there was a job in the offing.

I never did get to Devil's Island or to the Siberian Salt Mines but I spent a year in Scapa which was cold, wet and windy and I spent a year in Kimberley which was hot, dry and windy. This was worse because the wind brought clouds of sand into your house, into your hair, up your nose and eventually under your finger nails if you picked it.

So I won't tell you about me in Kimberley but will tell you about how diamonds are found, selected, and eventually sold to the refugees on Miami Beach.

Diamonds are a form of carbon and can be made artificially by compressing carbon at a high temperature. Just how they were made by natural process is not known but the following theory is generally accepted.

Africa is a very old continent and was the first dry land to appear in Genesis 1:9. In the region of the diamond fields, numerous volcanoes erected their cones, spouted and finally became extinct. The rains washed away the cones leaving only level ground studded with volcanic craters or pipes.

As the rains continued, mud and debris was washed down the now accessible pipes of these extinct volcanoes and amongst the mud were trunks and limbs of trees.

In the process of millions of years, these trees became carbonized and the pressure of mud in the deep pipe of the volcano provided one element. Heat was provided either by the natural heat of the earth, or by radioactivity, or by the decomposition of the blue ground or alluvial clay in which the carbon was embedded.

So we are now at the point where the Kimberley area is dotted with deep holes filled with bluish mud, the mud containing diamonds.

Some of these holes remained filled with blue ground and these are the great Kimberley Mines.

In the case of others, the process of eruption from the earth's deeper levels restarted; the extinct volcanoes again became active and the diamond bearing clay was blown to the four winds. When the clay came down it mingled with the surface soil and became what are known as "diggings."

The holes or pipes are worked by big Capital employing thousands of men and the latest mining equipment. The diggings are open to small men who stake a claim and work the diamonds with pick, shovel and sieve.

The output of the mines is controlled by the owners so not to flood the market because diamonds have no value except that of scarcity. The diggings are controlled by Government.

The Government only allows a certain area of alluvial diamonds to be worked at one time and holds in reserve the other areas which remain wasteland or farmland until "Proclaimed."

This is the way a digging is opened; first of all, prospective diggers go and have a look at the area and mark out the claim they want. Sometimes several diggers get together to form a syndicate and hire a geologist. If there are any claims they specially covet, they hire a champion runner too.

When the day comes for the area to be proclaimed, the Su-

perintendent of Police lines up all the prospective diggers or their hired runners, and then fires his revolver. At this signal, you all run like mad and stake out your claim with little metal stakes. If you have a good claim, some plug ugly is sure to jump it unless you prevent him. The syndicates also hire plug uglies for this purpose. You prevent this by having two men, one always on the claim, armed with a revolver, until the government surveyor has been round and recorded your ownership.

When your claim is established, you get some pick axes, some shovels, and a sieve and you are in business but usually you hire blacks to do the actual work.

You get the diamonds by having the blacks shovel up the gravel among which the diamonds are found and washing away this gravel in a sieve until you can see diamonds, if any. You can also get a machine which does the washing for you, and of course the syndicates have them. During the digging operation, you have to watch your workers like a stoat watching a rabbit because if they see a diamond on the ground, they will wiggle it between their toes and keep it there until they have an opportunity to swallow it. Then latter they sell it on the black market or I.D.B., which means Illicit Diamond Buyer.

I know so much about this because when I got to Kimberley they didn't want me for another two months. As always happens, the equipment I was to work with hadn't arrived.

I hung around Kimberley for a few days and then one evening in a bar, where most of the world's business is transacted anyway, I met a big, pale, surly Swede called Carlson who was waiting to work on the same job.

Carlson and I went into partnership and loaded up Minnie, who was none the worse for her adventures, and set off for a place called Elands Drift where a new digging was about to be proclaimed.

We ran and staked our claim and took out just enough in microscopic diamonds to pay our way. We had fun, but next to us was a Scottish type called Hertz who took out over £20,000 in 20 days, but the pit he had dug got so deep the walls fell in and killed some of his boys, and there was quite a row over it. I think Hertz earned his reward because he had no partner. He stayed on the job for the whole 20 days eating liverwurst with a pocket knife and never for one moment taking his eye off his claim. We offered to relieve him, but Hertz was a boy who had learned to trust no one. All he did, with his mouth full of sausage, was shake his head.

Some of the syndicates made quite large fortunes at Elands Drift but the man who really made good was a tall, red-faced Yorkshireman called Duncan. Dunk had been to the area before it was proclaimed and had hired a geologist. When we all started running, Dunk ran off at right angles, away from the diamond bearing gravels and we all thought he was daft.

But we didn't think so for long, because Dunk had staked out the only available site for an artesian well. We all had to buy water from him at £1 per one ton truck load delivered to your diggings—CASH.

We diggers didn't use much water for washing ourselves and none at all for drinking because we only drank DOP, which is Cape brandy at four shillings the bottle, so Dunk wouldn't have done much business except for one little fact: the digger had to use water, and plenty of it, to wash the diamonds out of the gravel.

Dunk took £60,000 out of his well before it showed signs of drying up, after which he sold it to a syndicate for £40,000 and cleared off. I met him again later in Jo'burg and we became close friends.

When I last saw Dunk he had not only bought some shares

in my invention but he was the cement king of Northern Rhodesia. He did this by running off at right angles from the great copper bearing reef, on which all eyes were riveted, and buying the only limestone deposit in the area. After that, you either bought cement from Dunk, for your 10,000 cubic yard foundations, or you imported it 5,000 miles by sea, which is chicken feed and 500 miles on the Belgian Congo Railway, which is not.

Well to get back to Carlson & Co., we lived on Elands Drift Park Avenue in an automobile crate. South Africa imports all its cars by ship in large wooden crates and ours was in the middle fifties and was a Dodge. Lesser fry had to be content with Austins and such like slum crowding on the outskirts of Harlem.

Of course not everyone lived on Park Avenue, there were tent dwellers by the thousand and beyond the tents the lower classes had their habitat in wigwams of corrugated iron and other horrid materials. Just where and how the blacks lived I cannot say, but in Africa that is not the white man's affair, because after all it is the black man's country. Or is it?

Left wing propaganda notwithstanding, the fact is that when the white man arrived by ship at Capetown in the early 1500's, the southern half of Africa was inhabited only by a small, light-skinned people called "Bushmen" of whom there are a few surviving specimens.

As the white man drove northwards from his base in Capetown, the black man drove southwards from the equatorial highlands, butchering the Bushmen without mercy as he went. The various wars between white and black which finally established white supremacy were not the wars of Invader and Invaded but the clash of rival colonists in a sparsely occupied land.

Ethically speaking, the white man has far more claim to South Africa than the Israelites had to Palestine which, according to their own version of the story in Exodus and Judges, was wrested from a relatively sophisticated and numerous indigenous population.

But that was in 1400 BC and in the 1920's AD the diamond buyers came round each Friday and like bookies at a race meeting, erected their tents. Each tent had its house flag and an appropriate slogan such as "Square Deal Sam," "Honest Joe," or "Generous Jake."

To these dealers, you took your week's find called a "parcel" of diamonds and you got a competitive price. There were also the I.D.B. boys somewhere in the offing who bought diamonds from worthy oriental gentlemen and others who had no legitimate claim to ownership.

The police were fairly hot on I.D.B. both on the diggings and at the mines but they could not convict on a single diamond.

The courts however, would accept as evidence a parcel of several diamonds all of which bore the identity of some source other than that claimed by the possessor, because diamonds differ in color and in certain other characteristics and can be identified by experts.

I doubt that contemporary America experienced appreciably more crime than did her sister Anglo Saxon democracies.

In South Africa, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the identical immigrant types colonized very similar territories at the same period of history without ever getting beyond the control of the local police. I surmise that somewhere between 96 and 97 per cent of all wild west drama originated in the fertile brains of authors.

Of course South Africa had her bandits. There was a high-

wayman called Stanley who held up the Mail Coach before the railway came through but it wasn't long before the South African Mounted Police got him.

The story is told of one of South Africa's magnates riding north in a stage coach facing forward and opposite him was a much younger Scotsman with his back to the horses.

On the far horizon, which in the high veld can be 30 miles away, the magnate saw a cloud of dust and he rightly surmised that it could be Stanley. So he led the younger man to talk about his business, which was not difficult and about a loan to finance same, which was easy. He lent him all his available cash, which was £100 against a note of indebtedness. Since Stanley could not read he took the £100 cash and left the note, on which our elder statesman, whose name was Abraham, in due course collected with interest.

So much for the diamond diggings. When I got to Kimberley, my job was to work on the erection of the new direct treatment plant. I got the plumbing, so now I know all about toilet bowls which are called P trap or Q trap, but except for the ribaldry of sightseers, it was a dull job.

The direct treatment plant was a new idea for extracting the diamonds from the blue ground and I think I should start at the beginning and tell how diamonds are mined, extracted, sorted and sold.

I did not work underground at Kimberley but later I did in Johannesburg, so I will start by telling what a mine looks like from a worm's eye view.

A definition of a mine, given me by an old Belgian geologist, was "a mine iss a hole in ze grount ownt by a liar," but whether the owner is a liar or a public company, a mine is a hole or a series of holes called "shafts."

In older mines these shafts often ran on an incline to follow

the vein of ore as it dipped into the earth. On this incline would be laid an ordinary railway track on which ran a car called a "skip." Actually there were always two tracks side by side with one skip coming up as the other went down so as to balance one another. A wire rope on the upper end of each skip provided the motive power. This wire rope went onto a huge drum or winch called a hoisting engine, powered by steam or electricity.

The inclined shaft gave a lot of trouble due to the skip jumping the tracks and due to the wire rope sagging down in the center of the track and getting worn out so all modern shafts are vertical.

There are hundreds of vertical shafts in any big city, so I needn't describe them, except to say in a mine they are larger and longer and the skips or cages run faster.

Some of the Johannesburg shafts go down a mile in one drop. The cage accelerates so fast, it leaves your entrails sticking to the ceiling as you go down in it.

Again in the older mines, they had two independent shafts, one for hoisting ore up, and one for sending men up and down. In modern mines one big hoist can be used for either purpose.

In Kimberley, the vertical shafts run down beside the volcanic pipe to the lowest workable level which is several thousand feet. There are landings, just as in a building, at various levels. At each landing a horizontal tunnel leads actually into the volcanic pipe, where the diamond-bearing blue clay is extracted and hoisted to the surface.

To digress again on the general topic of mining, in a coal mine the object is not to break up the coal, but to bring it intact to the surface where the slag and slate is removed and after washing and grading, the coal is sold.

In certain metal mines where the ore is very rich, they do

not care whether it gets broken in transit because when it reaches the surface they heat it in furnaces in a process called smelting. The metal which has a lower melting point than the rock containing it, runs out and is collected.

In all other metal mines they crush the ore down to a powder and then dissolve out the metal in a chemical which attacks the metal but not the rock particles.

The one exception to the above generalization is the Kimberley Mines, where they do want to break up the blue ground to get the diamonds out but they definitely do *not* want to break up the diamonds.

Prior to installing the direct treatment plant, the blue ground, as it came to the surface, was spread out on acres of wooden flooring, where sun and rain would slowly dissolve it leaving the gravel which contained the diamonds. To get away from this slow process the direct treatment plant was built. I can best describe this as a kid sucking on a candy to get at the nut inside. He can suck and suck to dissolve the sugar coating but if he wants his nut whole, he just must not chew. But the direct treatment plant sometimes forgot and chewed, and it made the owners as cross as hell to find the splinters of what had once been one big diamond.

Whether the blue ground was dissolved by the weather which took a year or so, or whether it was sucked away in the direct treatment plant in a few minutes, the end product was fine gravel in which the diamonds lay and here begins the accounting process.

The gravel is carefully weighed and fed into a bin which drips it onto a large sloping table covered with vaseline. Over this table runs a stream of water which rolls the gravel down to the bottom end of the table because gravel does not stick to vaseline, but for some unknown reason, diamonds do stick. At

the end of a day's run all the diamonds in the gravel are embedded in the vaseline.

The vaseline table is surrounded by a rail so you cannot get within touching distance. When the gravel has all been washed off, highly paid, specially selected workers come with long poles ending in scraper blades and scrape the vaseline and the diamonds into a perforated metal pot. This pot is taken to an even more jealously guarded room where the vaseline is melted off for re-use and the diamonds collected.

At the end of each shift there must be an exact balance down to .001 of an ounce so that diamonds plus vaseline plus gravel all add up because the mines are owned by Scotsmen and Scotsmen just hate losing even rather small diamonds. And mark my words, they don't lose any! *And Heaven and Earth shall pass away and the firmament shall be rolled up like a scroll,* but never a diamond shall get away from Kimberley without all hell breaking loose.

Of course in the mines themselves the blacks do sometimes actually see a diamond in the blue ground and then they swallow it or else stick it under their foreskin, which is probably why Abraham invented circumcision, but between finding a raw diamond and disposing of same lies a considerable gulf.

One old African type found a sizeable diamond and took it to his boss, and the boss took it to the owners and they gave the old boy a pension for life. They also gave him a carriage, horses, a coachman *and* a top hat so he could drive round and round Kimberley for the rest of his life smiling and bowing and raising his hat and although, under the circumstances, he was liable to live forever it was good business.

The diamond owners were bright boys and one of the ideas they had was to put a million empty bottles through a crusher and as there were always plenty of empty bottles in Kimberley

this didn't cost much. Then the sower went forth to sow and strewed small pieces of glass all over the veld for miles around so when you are in Kimberley and you see a sparkle on the veld the chances are several million to one it is not a diamond and not worth picking up and pocketing.

But these bright boys do get had sometimes as the following stories will show. After the diamonds leave their vaseline pot they go to the sorting room where highly paid, stiff-collar type workers sort them according to size, color, perfection and so forth. Diamonds are like pearls in this respect because a well sorted string is worth more than the sum of its components.

One day in the bad old days when the Nineteenth Century Barons were on the loose, Baron Rhodes had a client for a diamond necklace, and I think it was an Indian Rajah who was in a hurry to make good with some little Shalimar type. Rhodes had a string of his own to sell but there was competition from Kimberley and he was out to squelch it. So he arrived in great state and stayed at the Kimberley Club. The boys treated him right and he treated them right and when he said he would like to be shown around, they said it would be an honor. After lunch, which was a good one, they showed him the sorting room and he said "Oh, if I could just once run my hands through a whole bucket of diamonds that would be something I would always remember."

So before anyone could say "NO" the sorting room boys had swept everything into a fire bucket, necklace and all, and after Rhodes had paddled his hands in it he said goodbye. He sold his necklace at his own price because it would take weeks to resort the fire bucket and the Rajah couldn't wait for whatever it was the diamond necklace would buy him.

The other story is about a thing called Bort which is chemically a diamond but, whereas ornamental diamonds have a

crystalline structure and are liable to splinter, Bort has an amorphous structure and is much tougher. The diamond industry had no use for Bort because it had no eye appeal but they didn't throw it away all the same, but just stored it up in a special room.

Then one day a Dutchman discovered how to use Bort for deep well drilling by embedding a ring of stones in a copper matrix. He had a market at once for all the Bort that could be bought and that's a pun.

So he dressed up in old clothes and didn't shave and made an appointment to see the Diamond Czar. He said he wanted to buy some Bort and what was the price? The Czar quoted him a low price and he said O.K., he would take ALL the Czar had and the Czar, who, like many big Jews, was a big guy, said he would keep his bargain if the Dutchman kept his by buying ALL.

This meant our hero had to raise £2,000,000 but his friends all helped and he ended up by owning a ten year supply of Bort at a fraction of its market value. But then a Jew, however experienced, is a mere babe in arms when confronted by a Dutchman. Hence the jingle, "There was an old Mynheer, his name it was Dutch. He offered too little and asked for too much!"

CHAPTER 9

THE CURSE OF SOUTH AFRICA

I did not mention South African roads while Maxim and I were on our trip because in parts of the ancient and cultured Cape quite good roads had been made and in parts of the dry Karoo, where it seldom rains, one can literally drive over the bare veld.

In my time for a variety of reasons there were no inter city roads in South Africa.

The Union was still a British Colony and Britain's colonial policy is a naval policy pure and simple. To hold the gates of her enemies, as she had been told to do, so that no other, less benevolent nation can control the seas. In this for several centuries the British have done a service to mankind and if their policy has been sterile, it has also been antiseptic.

Apart from the negative aspect of British policy, there was in those days an active local opposition to building inter city

roads because South Africa operates its own very efficient railways and the argument was "Why compete with ourselves?"

To ameliorate the lot of the motorists the railway would take your car to wherever you wanted to go for little or nothing beyond your own first class fare, and if you gave them a few hours notice you could have your car on a flat car at the rear end of your own train.

In conformity with her traditional policy, Britain had won the Boer War but had lost the peace and the ultra conservative Dutch element was, and is, in control of South African policy.

The difficulty with the Boer is that he is a boor because he is trying to perpetuate the Seventeenth Century in the Twentieth and he looks upon anything not granted in Genesis as a heathen innovation.

The story is told of a private plane which was forced down on the veld and as the helmeted and goggled pilot stepped down from the cockpit he was greeted by a smiling Boer with outstretched hand who said, *"Mora Jesus, ekkes Van der Merwe"* —(Good morning, Jesus, my name is Van der Merwe).

It turned out that Van der Merwe, who was a prosperous farmer, had never even heard of an airplane but he had been told by the preacher to expect the second advent and here it was.

So Van der Merwe took Jesus off to his house and gave him coffee while a black boy ran to the preacher with the message that Jesus was here at last just as had been promised. There was quite a commotion while it lasted: which wasn't long because after Jesus had acquired some gasoline, he wound up his chariot and enacted the second Ascension, which was not according to Hoyle.

Another story is told of an old farmer who had sold his lands

to a mining company for £50,000 which he insisted on receiving in cash. He had 50,000 English gold pounds buried under the floor of his room. All his sons were dead and the old man lived with his grandsons, none of whom dared to leave the house for more than an hour or two for fear that when he returned the money would be gone.

Necessity being the mother of invention, one of the boys got the idea of depositing grandpa's money in the bank. After consultation with the bank manager the following strategy was agreed upon. Since the old man would not leave the house with the boys in charge and since none of the boys would leave his brothers, the bank sent two armed guards to the house while the old man and all his grandsons visited the town and inspected the safe deposit arrangements.

The old man was deeply impressed by the concrete vaults, the huge steel door, the automatic alarm and the armed guard. He was just going to agree to deposit his money when the following thought struck him, "Wouldn't it be awfully expensive to rent all this elaborate space and just how much would it cost?" So he asked the bank manager and the manager who was a slow witted fellow, instead of naming a nominal sum, said "Oh no Mijnheer, we make no charge, but we actually pay you two pounds in every hundred each year." At this the old farmer flew into a rage and shouted at the surprised bank manager and at his several grandsons, "You dirty scheming rascals, trying to steal my money! Do you take me for a fool to believe that I would get the use of this fine vault with the steel door and the armed guard for nothing, and even be paid for it unless you intended to rob me?"

So with that the scheme fell through and they all returned in dudgeon to their farm and to their unceasing vigil because the old man lived for another 20 years on top of his hoard.

The Witwatersrand or "Ridge of white waters" was first prospected in the middle 1800's and in 1884 two German brothers named Struben discovered gold.

This first outcrop of gold on the Rand occurred on the property of the widow Outhuizen who, with the aid of her overgrown and halfwitted son Otto, eked out a bare living on her semi-desert, high veld pasture.

In 1885, when a young Scotsman called J. B. Robinson offered her £6,000 for the mineral rights of her farm, the widow thought he was crazy and this was confirmed by President Paul Kruger.

The wily widow gave J. B. a bed for the night and sent Otto galloping post haste across the veld to Pretoria to ask Uncle Paul what she should do.

Paul Kruger was in bed in his nightshirt and night cap but he got out of bed when he heard Otto's story and he knelt and prayed. "Oh Lord, thou hast delivered the enemy into our hands" and he took a lantern and went out to his stables and gave Otto a fresh horse and said, "Ride Otto ride, and tell your Mother to get this madman's money before he can change his mind."

So J. B. got the property for £6,000 and it became known as "Robinson Deep" and yielded £40,000,000.

The widow Outhuizen died and Otto soon lost his cash but he kept his farm because in South Africa the mineral rights do not include the agricultural rights and every day Otto would wait for J. B. to come out of his palatial office and would ask him for a little extra on the deal. But J. B. was a Nineteenth Century Baron of the breed that begot Twentieth Century socialism and he turned a deaf ear to all Otto's protests. In the end, Otto built a stone mausoleum with his own hands right in front of the Robinson Company's offices, so, as he said "J. B.

will know I'm watching him even after I die." But I doubt even if Otto had risen from the dead that it would have worried J. B. Robinson. As Prime Minister Hertzog said "The curse of South Africa is its foreign adventurers."

But not all Dutchmen were backward and obstructive. One of the most glorious milestones in the human pilgrimage was reached by a young Boer blacksmith whose name, I am ashamed to say I have forgotten. While I was actually on the spot to witness this fabulous event he invented and built the first cattle grid which is a grating placed across a road between terminal fence posts over which cars can go but cattle can not.

If you are a city dweller you may say "So what?" but to all of us who live in the country if there are cattle around the cattle grid saves stopping your car, getting out, walking forward to a gate, wrestling with it to open it, walking back to your car, climbing in, getting into gear, driving through the gate (if it has stayed open long enough), stopping your car, getting out, walking back to the gate, wrestling with it to close it (if it can be closed), walking back to your car, climbing in, getting into gear, and if you don't have a self change, changing gear three or four times, or ten times if you are driving a big truck, all of which has to be repeated every half mile or so in cattle country.

So blessed be the anonymous genius in the African barrens whose acquaintance I hope to renew in the inventors' wing of "Many Mansions."

But when I drove Minnie from Kimberley to Johannesburg there were no cattle grids and every half mile I had to go through the eighteen motions listed, including a three speed manual shift. There was, in fact, no road as such between these two principal mining centers but only an inter-connecting network of farm tracks which crisscrossed the veld for 400 miles and at each crisscross you had to wait for someone to

come up and tell you the way, which as often as not he would not know.

So I had a tiring ride across the rain soaked veld, for the summer rains were falling, and I squirmed through a sea of mud which no orthodox car could have navigated, but due to Minnie having been born minus her differential, both rear wheels turned together and one of them usually found a tire hold. At this time, in addition to my frequent headaches I would also get into mad rages for no adequate reason but the era of psychiatry had not dawned and I had no idea that I was on the road to destruction.

I arrived at last in Johannesburg, fatigued and highly tensed, and my first thought was to call on rich and powerful Uncle Ferdinand, at the crook of whose little finger steel-helmeted mine captains trembled in their rubber boots, and ask him for a job.

Uncle Ferdie was in fine fettle for it was Christmas Eve and I was invited to the party. As the old song says, "When it's midnight in Italy, it's Wednesday over here," and Christmas in South Africa in a formal tuxedo with turkey and all the trimmings is heavy on the system at 100°F or so and steamy at that because the wet season comes in midsummer.

Uncle Ferdie had a huge old Victorian mansion in the worst possible taste which was hideously inconvenient. Although he and Aunt Maud hated its guts, they had to live there because no one would buy it or even rent it.

But there was a redeeming feature in Uncle Ferdie's *Taj Mahal* and that was its construction which was of wood and in the high and normally dry atmosphere of Johannesburg, wood gets dehydrated and ignites on a spark.

So every Christmas Eve Uncle Ferdie gave his party, which was largely covered by expense allowance anyway, and he had

20 or more huge dry South African fir trees erected all round his huge, dry verandah which ran all round the huge, dry, wooden house.

On these trees were draped the usual ignitable tinsel and also hundreds of candles. Not the synthetic sort with an electric light bulb inside but good, old-fashioned wax candles that fluttered and spluttered in the breeze.

Of course there was a slight fire hazard in all this but for several Christmases nothing had happened and the Insurers had no occasion to worry. Then the very night I was there, it did happen.

One of the candles caught the dry pine needles above it and up she went, a great flaming torch of tinder and resin. The flames licked up to the dry wooden ceiling of the stoep and the girls all screamed, and it would have been all over except for the Navy, whose long arm stretched out across the oceans and across the upland barrens even to the very gates of Johannesburg.

When I saw the blazing tree all the years of rigid discipline and all my battle experience and also some of Uncle Ferdie's whisky jerked at my subconscious telegraph, as a gunshot does to a retriever, and I was in action.

While the other young men hung around and gaped I marshalled four of them at the double and we carried the flaming tree out into the yard, where it burned itself out. When I came back onto the stoep, with my hair all burned off, and my new tuxedo covered in wax, smiling and bowing there was a dead silence.

So I didn't get the job after all and I was back in the drawing office at £35 a month which was one pound less than a tram conductor and eleven pounds less than the driver who rated higher in the union, and I didn't like Johannesburg.

The office I worked in was a big one of about 50 men. It was a dull routine job except for one bright spot, and that was a bright red spot called Muriel Hartnoll, who was our one woman tracer and had a flaming mop of red hair.

I spotted her the moment I came in, and to my great joy the desk behind her was vacant. When the chief draftsman asked me which desk I would like, I said this one and he smiled a knowing smile and led me to it.

I thought that such a ravishingly beautiful girl would be too snooty to talk to, but not a bit of it, she was as cozy as cozy could be. She had a powerful smell of red hair and of sweat, because it was hot and girls didn't have deodorant in those days.

It may be I am a sort of pervert and my wives always said so, but I just can't get excited about a pharmaceutical laboratory. I like my meat as nature made it, and I was completely enchanted by everything about Muriel.

Apparently no one else felt the same, because the desk behind Muriel was always vacant and the chief draftsman kept a blackboard at the head of the office on which he chalked up a stroke for each day that a newcomer held the site. Until I came it had only been seven days maximum.

When the neophyte eventually asked to be transferred, the total days of his novitiate were written at the end of the column, followed by a letter denoting the nature of the excuse given. F was for Frank. Miss Hartnoll smelled and could he be moved away. J was for Job. He wanted to be near some other draftsman with whom he was collaborating. L was for a better light nearer the window and T was for tactful and no reason given. To the unbounded joy of the drawing office staff and of the hundred or so clerical staff on our floor, all of whom laid bets on the "Pong Stakes" as they were called, I stood my

ground for ten, 20, 50, 100 and 300 days and the blackboard had to be recalibrated in weeks instead of days.

I should have married Muriel and to hell with the consequences but my trouble is that I am neither quite a gentleman nor yet quite a cad. I would neither deny myself Muriel nor would I hurt No. 1's feelings by divorcing her.

So I took the line of least resistance and shilly-shallied until Muriel got disgusted and quit. It was one of the many crossroads of my life where I went wrong. And if you are a better man, all I can say is "Good for you Gunga!"

To compensate for basically low wages there were numerous perquisites in our drawing office including a month's leave a year on full pay and a month's pay as a Christmas bonus and free medical attention.

I also got a free ride to Capetown and back because of an election. The mines were scared of the Dutch National Party which was hostile to big industry and they paid all expenses for anyone who would return to his electoral domicile and vote for the South African or Conservative Party.

So I went off in great state and had a fine trip in the really excellent government-owned railway train but when I got to the polling booth in Capetown there were just two names I had to choose from, both Dutchmen, Louw and Sauer. I didn't know which was which, and I didn't want to waste the mine companies' money so I voted for both candidates. I hope I did right.

What made the job really worth while however was the travel expenses and the overtime. Most of the officials had big American cars and two shillings a mile had been agreed as a fair operating cost. In one year, I had paid for Minnie because I used to go out to one end of the reef or another every week to take a look round, and it ran into a thousand miles a month.

But even this was chicken feed to the overtime which was time and a half for the first ten hours each week and then double time. We all loafed from eight till five each day so we could work like beavers until 10 p.m. This might have continued indefinitely had it not been for the serpent who entered our garden in the form of an inquisitive accountant. He discovered that one draftsman, a pious boy called Homer, who played the organ in church, had booked up more hours for himself than there are in a week, which is 168 and Homer had 172.

Then the powers got suspicious and after that it wasn't so easy and anyway just then I got fired and so did Homer.

Homer went up to Rhodesia, still playing the church organ on Sundays, and got a job as chief draftsman in a copper mine. He thought it would help his career if he got an engineering degree, which either Oxford or Cambridge gave to overseas types, if they passed an exam.

The way this was worked was you applied for the papers which were mailed to the Magistrate of the nearest court. The Magistrate got a fee to sit in court over a weekend while you wrote your exam under his eye.

But Homer and his Magistrate were golfing buddies and Homer was allowed to bring along his two assistant draftsmen with slide rules and textbooks to help him. He got his degree with honors.

All would have been well except for one draftsman who, after that, used to stroll into the office around noon with his hat on the back of his head. After whistling a merry tune or two, he would wander off to lunch and not come back. At least this was the routine on days when he came to the office at all.

Homer had to fire him and he went to the authorities with his tale and the other draftsman confirmed it. Homer got three

years, because the British are like that, and the Magistrate was unfrocked and got six months.

Homer played the organ in the prison chapel and behaved so well that they made him librarian and commuted the last year of his sentence. Even so, it was a bad break for him and the moral is; never have accomplices unless you are sure they won't squeal.

I got fired because I told the consulting engineers who headed up our work that they were outdated and they wouldn't believe me.

Since I am now going to tell you about underground in a mine I will save space by calling it "UG" because on a mine you write it U.G.

I was helping to design the largest mine hoist ever built, which hauled eight tons of ore from 4,500 feet UG every minute on the minute.

The whole contraption was cumbersome and expensive to build and to operate. Only one firm in England could build the 35 foot diameter steel drums and Skoda in Czechoslovakia alone could forge the 70 ton shaft.

I wanted to cut down the whole thing to a reasonable size by using aluminum instead of steel for the cage and other moving parts. This would have reduced the weight of cage, truck and ore at the end of the rope from 22 tons to 16, and this in turn would have lightened the rope, when fully extended, from 22 tons to 16, without reducing the 8 ton ore load.

The overall effect would have been to halve the initial cost of this huge mine hoist. Operating costs would also have been substantially less.

When the executive engineers at head office heard these blasphemies they rent their garments and fired me on the spot.

Now of course, deep level mines throughout the world use aluminum instead of steel to reduce the weight of moving parts.

So I folded my drawing instruments and silently stole away feeling rather crestfallen because I was 26 years old and had consistently been a failure since I went to sea 11 years earlier. Cursed was the ground which brought forth for me thorns also and thistles.

So I did not like Johannesburg, with its embryo skyscrapers, its neon signs, and other modern inconveniences, all of which, including the fauna, are miniature New York. One might almost say that Johannesburg has all the vices of New York and none of its graces. I am a countryman to the bone and although I prefer the intellectual life of cities, they frankly scare me. If there was an intellectual life in Johannesburg I did not find it, but heard only and on every side the tiresome patter of the tickey snatchers, as tape watchers are called in South Africa. A tickey is a threepenny piece and was the smallest coin then current. In a bar in Johannesburg, there was a sign hung round the phone which said "No tickey no talkie."

The patter of the tickey snatchers ran like this:

A. "Good morning Bloggs, I hear that Wit Deeps are paying a sixpenny dividend at Christmas and that the stock will remain at 27."

B. "Thanks Anstruther old boy, and did you know about the new leader at West Springs? They say it runs 24 pennyweights and I got in at 105."

C. Chiming in. "The Inspector of the mines told me at the Rand Club today that Robinson Deep has struck a dyke and the 38th level is flooded, so I sold short at 79."

D. Arriving breathless. "What Caruthers says is true but I

hear they are consolidating with Rand Fontein and that the stock has jumped eight points."

One bright spot in Johannesburg was the widow Eekout, who ran a select rooming house for young men, including me, because No. 1 was living with her parents in the Cape. Mrs. Eekout was plump, jolly and charming and we all loved her. For six pounds a month she fed us like prize fighters. She kept a slide rule for this job because she was a mathematics professor in her spare time. She used to say that the cost of feeding us varied as the square of the quality of the food, because the better food would cost more per pound and we would eat more of it. So Mrs. Eekout used to maintain a very delicate balance between what would satisfy us and what would ruin her, and she did a swell job. I was too busy with Muriel to get my full money's worth but other inmates used to receive a weekly ration of home comforts as well. Quiet boys who made no trouble and paid promptly even got a double ration.

However, Mrs. Eekout's heart was not in this angle of her job because the person she loved was an old Irishman called Johnny. Johnny was kind, witty and as lazy as the devil. Mrs. Eekout used to keep him for free which I despised at the time, but maybe she got her money's worth after all.

Johnny was quite old and couldn't keep his girl friend fully supplied which was why she contributed the weekly bonus to her lodgers, but this made Johnny jealous and one day he decided to show her.

Johnny packed his brand new grip, including a brand new tuxedo, and went off by the night express to Lourenco Marques for a week. He planned to have fun and would have except for one little thing. Mrs. Eekout had her own private Gestapo in the person of Sarengo her houseboy and she had been promptly

informed of Johnny's plans which she proceeded to frustrate with her characteristic efficiency.

First of all, she found out which was Johnny's berth in the sleeper and then she got a berth in the next compartment. She didn't come aboard until train time, and then she watched Johnny's movements. Johnny went along to dinner and had himself half a dozen highballs and a two pound steak. He then had a cigar and a liqueur and wandered back to his compartment smiling happily and went to bed.

But as Mrs. Eekout well knew, after undressing, Johnny would visit the Loo. While he was there, she whipped out of her room and took all his clothes, which were hanging up behind the door, and all the things out of his brand new grip, including his passport and his travellers' checks and she took his teeth which he kept at night in a little container beside his bed, and she threw everything out of the window.

When the train stopped at Watervall Boven, or Watervall Onder, I forget which, in the middle of the night, Mrs. Eekout quietly eased her 200 pounds out of the compartment and caught the next train home.

When the porter came in the morning to wake Johnny, he was still smiling happily. It was only when he started to dress that he found something amiss and by then the train was in Portuguese territory. What with Johnny having no teeth, no papers, no money and no clothes, he spent his week's vacation rather differently than he had planned.

Which all goes to show that love can be a many splendored thing. After that Mrs. Eekout increased the food ration by "the square root of minus one," and cut off the home comforts and she and Johnny lived happily ever after.

Another bright spot in Johannesburg was the bright red face of Cohen, the wholesale butcher, whose offices were in Eloff

Street, which is Main Street, right on the site where Dad had set up his tent and his Doctor's shingle in 1887. For this reason the place always had a strong emotional appeal to me, and I often dropped in to see Cohen, who would pour some warm Cape brandy into warm mugs, add some warm water and we would drink until our woes were forgotten. Then he would waddle through his office door to the refrigerator room and bring out some samples of steak which he kept for customers and we would have lunch.

Cohen always used to eat raw steak and he would eat several pounds of it for lunch. In deference to my prejudices he had borrowed a blow torch from his neighbor, a plumber and I would carbonize the outside of mine.

Cohen was sunny by nature, as fat people usually are, and what made him sunnier was the money he made; as Cohen phrased it "Whites only eat fresh muscle and Niggers only eat rancid guts and between them I don't waste a nickel a carcass."

Cohen would give me lunch and would shout "Boy, this is a butcher's paradise." And he would hit me so hard on the back that several of my intervertebral discs would drop out onto the floor.

Cohen came from Chicago where he had been apprenticed to Swifts, and he knew his business as a butcher. The other apprentices had been a bit puzzled to see a Jew as an employee because Jews always work for themselves, but of course, that was just what Cohen planned to do when he knew all the tricks.

Cohen had a hatful of American clichés which were novel to me at the time. He used to say "Why work while father has his health?" and "Never do today what your mother can do tomorrow," and about Dunk he said with accuracy "Of all his wife's relatives he likes himself the best."

Cohen had no great regard for the law and he risked a 20

year jail sentence by keeping a good looking black mistress on the premises.

The reason for the 20 year jail sentence was because Africans would insist on raping white women and they were apt to come up with the argument about white men sleeping with their women.

We were always having cases of rape, usually with murder to follow. My good friends, the Kanthacks, were a popular Johannesburg couple and lost their pretty daughter while I was visiting them.

The daughter, whose name I cannot recall, took the dog out for a run in the park and never came back. When we found her she was lying dead under a tree with the dog barking hysterically beside her.

I will tell you later about another friend who got raped but with less drastic consequences.

Cohen's girl friend was a Basuto woman called Lerige. She was a plump, cheerful creature but she smelt rather high because Africans normally do not eat much meat and in the Cohen menage that was the staple diet. For breakfast you had steak, coffee and fried eggs. For lunch you had steak, coffee and fried potatoes. For dinner you had steak, coffee and fried onions.

In the end, the police got to know about Lerige and rather than make a scene with an American citizen, they quietly repatriated Cohen so he was right in line to help me when I arrived in Chicago where he had acquired a business in home grown Scotch.

It was due to his being American that Cohen always insisted on coffee because tea is the staple beverage in South Africa and in all British Dominions, Colonies and Dependencies other than Canada which is an American Colony.

When you stayed with my cousins the Sheepsheads they woke you with tea. You had tea for breakfast. You went out at eleven for tea. You had tea for lunch and tea plus for tea. Tea for dinner. Then when the servants had all gone to bed, the family would foregather in the kitchen for a really *nice* brew of tea before retiring.

Later when I was visiting a German relative who was on Dr. Goebbels' staff, I used to tell the boys how to conquer Britain without firing a shot. All they had to do was to land some paratroops in India (because I knew about the paratroops), and cut off the tea. In a few weeks, the Empire other than Canada would collapse. That was probably what Mr. Churchill had in mind when he told Hitler that he would make his last stand in Canada, which would remain loyal to the cause, even after India had fallen because in Canada they prefer coffee which is protected by the Monroe Doctrine. . .

Well then I got a job on a mine at the far end of the reef and my friends gave me a farewell party which turned out to be farewell to Minnie because when I left my hosts I couldn't see so well. There was an ox wagon crossing the road with a team of black oxen and I went into them.

It wasn't my fault, as I explained to the insurance company because the man who walked in front of the oxen with a kerosene lamp was already off the road on one side and the wagon itself with the lantern wasn't yet on the road on the other side, so all there was to see, if you could see it, was black oxen.

Minnie was feeling frisky, as she used to when I had filled up my tank with high octane, and she was romping along at her top speed of 42 miles per hour when all of a sudden there was a wump and Minnie just literally dissolved at my feet.

I stepped out feeling slightly surprised and since I couldn't

find Minnie anywhere, I thought she must have gone home without me and I followed her on foot.

I didn't dare go back to the Sheepsheads with whom I was visiting and who were strict teetotallers, so I went to the Cohens. When Lerige saw me she started to shriek and shriek. Then Cohen came in and he started to shriek. It seems I was covered with blood and broken glass from head to foot and the Cohens thought I was bleeding to death. As a matter of fact, there wasn't a scratch on me.

It seems that Minnie had avenged her death by puncturing several of the oxen and they had spurted blood like so many fountains. I had to buy a new tuxedo after that—and of course, a new car as well.

As soon as Cohen heard my story he put his raincoat on over his pajamas and dashed off to the scene of the disaster where he bought the carcasses of four good oxen at a distress sale.

When I eventually got back to the Sheepsheads in borrowed clothes, I had some explaining to do, especially to my cousin Allan, who, at 40, was the youngest judge in the British Empire. Allan took his job seriously, worked hard and, as a hobby, collected old china.

One day we were at the preview of an auction and Allan was looking at some Dresden china, when a little voice whispered at his elbow, "Vat vould you giff for a kvick knock?"

This, being interpreted, meant that the auctioneer would betray the seller, who paid his commission, and for a fee would knock the item down at the first bid to Allan.

I did not wait to witness the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah but straightway fled; nor did I turn my head till I was out of range of falling brimstone.

CHAPTER 10

SO THIS WAS OPHIR

The Witwatersrand now stretches about 300 miles from east to west with Johannesburg in the middle, and the gold mines rank as one of the world's major industries.

By an elaborate and costly process the gold is brought up from the bowels of UG, extracted from its ore, refined, cast into ingots and flown at top speed to the vaults of Fort Knox where it is promptly buried as deep UG as can be contrived and never again seen except by dentists. So you now realize how important it is to keep the mines going at all costs.

To illustrate my point, before they hit upon Fort Knox, the nations of the world flew all the gold from the mines to an island in the Pacific where it would be safe from Hitler, if not from Hirohito. One day as it happened, on the day the World Bank had its monthly meeting, the news came that this island had disappeared in a volcanic subsidence.

At these dreadful tidings the bank directors were in a

panic. I do not know what would have happened if it had not been for the presence of mind of the chairman who called the meeting to order and spoke these comforting words.

"Calm yourselves gentlemen, and let us consider our position. The gold, as we must all admit, has no practical value whatever except to inspire public confidence which would be severely shaken if the news of the disaster leaked out, but why should it leak out? If we say nothing about the loss of the Island the public will still believe it is there and no harm will result. Now gentlemen let us adjourn for lunch before our steaks get overcooked."

The fact is, we understand very little about our most urgent problem in this vale of tears, namely economics, though I suspect Hjalmar Schacht and the late Lord Keynes had a glimmering.

To illustrate how little we do know about economics, I will tell one more story. In a French town there was a lady who planned to give a luncheon party at the leading hotel. The proprietor asked for and got a deposit of 1,000 francs on account. He said he had to lay out cash for the victuals and anyway the lady's credit was lousy.

When the lady had gone, the waiter went to the patron and said he would like to have the thousand francs on account, for overdue wages, and the patron gave him the money.

With a thousand francs in his pocket the waiter went home to tell his wife the good news, but on the way he was accosted by the tailor whose bill he had not paid.

The tailor got the thousand francs which passed in like manner all round the town and ended up with the doctor, because doctors always get paid last, if at all.

On the strength of his windfall, the doctor decided to have a few drinks at the hotel, and used his thousand francs to pay

his overdue bar account. Just then the lady came back and said her party had to be cancelled and the patron returned her thousand franc deposit. So the lady still had her capital intact, but it had been used to pay off debts all round the town and thereby had restored prosperity.

Since crime and war, which is wholesale crime, provide a more popular topic than does the work, wealth and happiness of mankind, I will not tell how the gold is extracted from its ore.

After it has been extracted in the "mill," as it is called, the gold still has a small percentage of impurities. These are then removed by a process known as "refining."

To begin with, the Witwatersrand did not have its own refinery and each mine sent its impure gold to a firm of industrial chemists in England for refining. This firm debited clients with impurities removed from the gold and credited them with the pure gold remaining, less of course their fee.

After this had been going on for several decades, it was discovered that certain of the impurities, Ozmeridium for example, were far more valuable than the gold, but it was never known whether these impurities had been thrown away or sold at a huge profit—the figure of £40,000,000 was mentioned.

To prevent this happening again, the various gold mining companies got together and built a cooperative refinery right in Johannesburg, but their troubles were not quite over even then.

Just as the diamond mine owners watch the final stages of diamond extraction so do the gold mine owners (who, as often as not, are the same boys) watch the refining of gold—like Scotsmen watching whisky being bottled.

All the workers in the refinery have to strip stark naked and walk down a brightly lighted corridor under the eyes of the high priest before they can enter or leave the Holy of Ho-

lies. Despite all these precautions, there used to be a regular daily leak of an ounce or two of gold which went on for many years without ever being spotted.

The management always suspected one worker but they never could catch him. Eventually, full of years, and as it turned out also of cash, he retired and went to live in a south of England town, where the £60,000 he had accumulated kept him in some luxury. The South African government offered him a full pardon, including keeping his gains, if he would divulge his secret, so he wrote them a postcard which said "Did you never notice I was smoking a pipe?"

So that was it and not one of the refinery officials, or the police, or the numerous detectives employed to spot the leak had ever noticed that the suspect, though otherwise as naked as the day he was born, had a sizable pipe in his mouth.

This pipe had a very thin shell, and a correspondingly large bowl into which went an ounce or so of gold dust with a little baccy on top, which could be smoked through a hollow tube in the middle.

The only reason our hero retired when he did, was because his teeth were getting old and it took a powerful bite to hold the precious cargo against a cantilever load of about six ounce inches.

Now you know why they invented paper money—because it saves all the trouble of mining, extracting, refining and minting gold. Or it could. And the irony of it is, not even the South African government has a gold currency anymore. So the last bastion has fallen. ICHABOD.

The officials on a gold mine are white, but the labor is black and is recruited from hundreds of miles around. The black man is the last gentleman of leisure left on earth. He doesn't ever have to do a hand's turn of work in his whole life if he

doesn't want to because whatever has to be done, is done by the women while his lordship relaxes and drinks beer under a tree. This is the routine throughout nature! The male camel for instance dies of sheer rage if you even place a load upon his back and the male lion even makes his wives hunt for him. You will see a lion's day in Walt Disney's *African Lion*. The scene opens at dawn with the lion growling to wake his several wives; on hearing reveille the ladies all spring smartly to attention and scamper off in search of food. Contrary to popular belief, the female lion is a clumsy hunter and does not compare with the leopard and the cheetah, who eat at will. Eventually, towards sunset the girls do at last bag a buck which they dutifully drag home to father. On the way, vultures and jackals eat all but the head and shoulders, but what is left on the buck is eaten by "Himself," as the Irish call the head of the house. He thereupon utters several loud burps and rolls over on his back to resume his restful day. And in Africa, the Lord of creation does ditto.

The only reason the black man comes to the mines is to earn a little ready money. In one year, he has all the capital he needs and then retires to a position of ease and dignity among his own people.

Of course not all the black men make the grade. Some get enamored of the white men's fleshpots and stay right on the job and they are the material out of which headmen are made. Others of course get killed on the mines because they are quite unused to machinery and it is almost impossible to prevent accidents.

Among other jobs on the mine, I had to go and see the Inspector of Police to make accident reports to which he would listen politely while a sergeant made notes.

When my recital was over the Inspector would offer me a

cup of tea and putting his monocle in his eye he would say, "Well after all old boy, there are plenty more where that one came from, aren't there?" and that was the end of the interview.

On the mine, the black men live in a sort of barracks called a compound, and in a big mine the compounds each house thousands of men. In my time the basic wage was one shilling a day but the food and keep cost two shillings more. Though this was low priced labor, it was not cheap. The Northern Ontario mines mining and milling the same reef with the same machinery and paying the same salaries to their officials show much the same costs per ton while paying white man's high wages to the mine labor. Elspeth Huxley in *Four Guineas* says that a white man can hew six times as much coal as a black ditto.

The food given to the black men was carefully planned and consisted of mealie meal, which is a sort of porridge as a basic ration, with meat twice a week as supplied by Cohen & Co., and a citrus ration.

The citrus item came into force while I was there and its sponsor was a very bright Scots girl in her twenties called Helen. Helen had been around the citrus farms and she had learned that South Africa's young citrus industry produced a high percentage of rejects or "culls" as the below standard fruit is called. In the pre-Helen era the citrus growers just threw away their culls or fed them to the pigs. They were more than willing to make long term contracts with Helen at a few shillings a ton for the waste product.

Having secured her supply, Helen then somehow sold the vitamin idea to the compound managers and obtained contracts from them at double her cost, including freight, and she was in business. And big business at that.

Helen's next step was to establish a depot for incoming culls and she culled these again for fruit suitable for the compounds and for rejects. With these she made marmalade, and very good it was too, because marmalade made with real fruit is always good, even when the fruit is inferior. What you buy in a store is apt to be wood pulp and citric acid with some orange peel thrown in for appearance.

I had some Irish friends called Flannegan who had a citrus farm in the Northern Transvaal and I often visited them. They had an old thatched farm house that leaked when it rained but they never got round to mending the roof. What they did instead was all to seize basins and buckets and run to action stations when the rain came through. Major Flannegan was an ex-royal Marine type and he made a drill of it.

When I use the expression "all" I mean a lot because there were eleven of them, and they made up a complete cricket team as a family unit.

Mrs. Flannegan was large and plump and amiable, and of course, prolific. Major Flannegan was small, wiry and was a typical martinet. When his huge family annoyed him, which happened daily, he would seize his gun and run outside the house and would stay there for hours to see that no one emerged.

Muriel having gone the way of all mistresses, I fell in love with the eldest Flannegan girl whose name was Sheila. Sheila had raven black hair and violet eyes, and a languorous slow manner that I found bewitching. The only thing that kept me from going overboard on Sheila was her feet, which were a bit the worse for wear. I had a complex about feet long before I read *Trilby*.

Since the Flannegans never had any money, and had in fact

been sold a dud farm even if they had known how to run it, Sheila had to go out to work.

This involved cycling daily several miles to the nearby town and back. When I learned about it, I was horrified because, as I said before, the African likes to hunt his meat and rape is the national sport. So I gave Sheila enough money to live in town until she could earn enough to keep herself and I went my way rejoicing.

I had not intended to return to the Flannegans for some time but a week or two later I felt lonely and went to visit them. Their farm was perched up on a hill so you could see it from several miles away and as I approached I saw a huge concourse of people milling around the house. From a range of two miles I could smell steak and onions and it turned out that the Flannegans were throwing a party with the money I had given Sheila.

So Sheila got raped after all. On her way down to the town she passed a native village and one of the braves watched her and watched her as she went free wheeling down the hill and he set a trap.

He tied a log of wood to a piece of string and he left the log on one side of the road and hid in a bush on the other side, with the string buried in the dust. As Sheila came by, whistling merrily, he pulled on the string so the log got under her wheel and when she fell, he raped her.

Of course when I heard this I was terribly upset and got quite ill and I don't know what I might have done if the Flannegans, who were the kindest people, hadn't taken pity on me. They sent their eldest son, Mike, to see me. Mike put on a long face and said how sad it was about Sheila and how bad I must feel. But he said not to feel too bad because, at 25, Sheila had

been around for ten years, as every man within commuting distance knew, except, of course, me.

To me Sheila had always seemed like a vestal virgin whose hand I had not even dared to squeeze. When I heard what Mike had to say I was so surprised, I fell right off the bed on which I had been pining.

In retrospect, knowing the Irish (if anyone can know the Irish), I suspect that the kindhearted Flannegans had chosen to besmirch their daughter's reputation rather than see me suffer.

Between visiting the Flannegans and one thing and another, I had to put in some work. I had to be on the job at 5 a.m. in order to be UG at six. Because of these early hours whenever we had a big party we would all go straight to work in full evening dress, and change at the shaft head change house, and it made a pretty spectacle to see two or three hundred officials in evening dress, at five in the morning, as we milled round the huge steel headgear.

With Cape brandy at four shillings the quart and officials' salaries on the American scale there was a lot of drinking and I was one of a team of bright young men who had been hired by a bright new manager to clean up the mess.

My job was rendered more difficult because between me and Mr. Rhum the new manager, came Tampoofie, the chief engineer, who was one of the old guard and had been in the same job ever since James Watt built the first steam hoist.

Tampoofie was a Boer version of old Mr. Dreary except he was worse. Tampoofie never smiled, but had a sour look even when you greeted him good-morning and we used to call him "—— for breakfast."

Tampoofie never agreed with anything on principle. When

you wanted something done, it was no good going to him to suggest it. What you had to do instead was, suggest every conceivable alternative, which meant a lot of unnecessary work, and then Tampoofie would spend a week or two considering your suggestions and would come out with his own different idea, which if you had laid your plans carefully, was what you wanted.

It was no good going to Tampoofie and saying you wanted to try soft rubber for the underflow outlet of the de-watering cones, which are part of the process for extracting gold. You had to draw up complete plans for a new metallurgical process in which there were no de-watering cones, and plans for a process whereby the de-watering cones were mounted upside down, and plans showing de-watering cone outlets in white iron, manganese steel, Morocco leather and gorgonzola cheese.

Then, when he had considered all your suggestions, Tampoofie would send for you and tell you about how he had read that soft rubber was proving highly resistant to severe abrasion and you would express surprise and admiration. Tampoofie would then get so near to smiling that the corners of his mouth would reach the horizontal instead of turning down like the moustaches of Genghis Khan, and he would say to go ahead and try rubber.

When I told Tampoofie that most of the men under me were perpetually under the influence of liquor and sometimes, when we were working late, dangerously so, he would merely lower the corners of his mouth to the Genghis Khan level and grunt. But he did this once too often because due to all the men being drunk, we had the great grandfather of a smash and Tampoofie got into hot water.

It happened like this. In a modern mine, the shaft is not square like an elevator shaft but is circular and lined with con-

crete. Instead of having guide rails attached to the side of the shaft, the cage runs on steel guide ropes which hang from the headgear. There are eight of these ropes in each shaft, four for each cage, and each rope has a heavy weight on its lower end to keep it taut.

The cages have shoes of brass which fit round the guide ropes and hold the cage in its true position. The shoes wear out quite quickly from sliding up and down the guide ropes at 60 miles an hour, but they are easy to replace. The ropes also wear out and are much more difficult to renew because in a deep shaft they weigh 20 tons each and are a mile long and have 20 ton weights on their lower ends.

I was in charge of changing one of these ropes when we had our disaster.

The changeover had to be done between 2 p.m. on Saturday and 5 a.m. on Monday so as not to interfere with getting the gold to Fort Knox as quickly as possible. It would have made more sense to have done the job in shifts but Tampoofie wouldn't hear of it, probably because it had been suggested to him and he hadn't thought of it himself.

So the gang of 20 riggers under my charge had to work about 40 hours non-stop and they probably would have gotten careless even if they had been sober, which they were not.

On Sunday morning, I telephoned Tampoofie that my gang was getting out of hand but he took no notice. Then I sent him a note by a reliable messenger to repeat what I had said and I kept a copy. Despite my pessimistic forecast, the job was done all right by daylight on Monday and Tampoofie and Mr. Rhum came to see us start up.

Just as the first cage went down, fortunately with only three men in it, I looked up and saw what I thought was an "Aasvogel" or vulture, flapping its wings away up on top of the headgear,

but I couldn't see too well against the sunrise. And then there was a whimpering sound like a huge saw being shaken and the new guide rope slipped out of its clamp on top of the headgear and went roaring down the shaft. Of course, it took the cage with it and there was nothing left at the bottom of the shaft but red hot steel wires and hamburger steak.

I was to be fired on the spot, and would also probably have gotten a jail sentence for homicide, but I had my copy of the note I sent Tampoofie. My messenger, who was a black preacher, swore he had delivered it, and it was found in Tampoofie's waste paper basket because I had told his office cleaner to keep all wastepaper and hand it to Mr. Rhum.

It came out in the inquest that my riggers had forgotten to tighten up the powerful clamp which held the guide rope at the top of the headgear. When the hoist started up and the cage moved down the guide ropes, the vibration started the wire squirming through the clamp. It was the free tail of the wire, I had seen wriggling when I looked up. I might add that the men used to leave scraps of food on the site and Aasvogels used to come after it.

I was asked why I hadn't been up to see that the clamp had been properly tightened, and I said that the men up at the top had promised to throw me down and break my hyphen neck if I showed my hyphen face in their vicinity. One of the men, who was an ex-navy P.O. confirmed this, so you see the old club was still functioning.

After this Tampoofie was a bit bashful at having me around and he sent me UG to keep me out of his sight.

My job UG was to take charge of the compressed air system and there was a lot of it. To be precise, there was 400 miles of pipe UG in our mine and about 10,000 valves all of which leaked and you could hear them whistle. With compressed air

at 100 pounds per square inch a good loud whistle costs as much in 12 months as does a U.S. Senator, provided the latter is not conspicuously dishonest.

The compressed air came from ten 1200 HP air compressors on the surface and these fed into a main of 24 inch steel pipes which had branches running down each shaft. These in turn had smaller branches at each level until eventually you got down to two inch pipes and to one inch pipes which fed the rock drills.

Rock drills are those pretty little gadgets you see on Fifth Avenue and elsewhere breaking up the concrete so you have to make a detour via Brooklyn to get to your club. Only on a mine, they may make much more noise because they are in a confined space.

The way the rock drills work on a gold mine is a black man lies on his back on the floor and holds the handle of the drill with his bare feet and presses it down into the rock. The rock drill drills a hole several feet deep, and the foreman then inserts a charge of dynamite and a fuse all ready for the 2 p.m. blast, which breaks the ore free from the face of the rock.

One day when I was walking past the compressor house on my way to the shaft head, I noticed that the 24 inch ring main had pulled out of one of its flanges so that only about half an inch of pipe remained in contact. In another minute or so, the end would pull right out and the pipe, with 100 pounds per square inch of compressed air in it would whip about like a snake, and the blast with 12,000 horsepower behind it would do incredible damage. One of the things it would have done, would have been to demolish the hoisting engine house and if the engine driver had been knocked out, we would have had another cage full of men to account for.

So I ran like a stag to the mine captain's office at the shaft

head and phoned to the two compressor houses for dear life to close down all ten compressors. The compressor attendants, who were both ex-navy engine room ratings, heard the word, and their reflexes worked like lightning.

The mine captain was a German called Schyster and he hated me because of the shaft accident which had delayed his precious mine for several days and also, of course, we had just beaten the goddamned Germans in fair fight. At least we had been fair.

When Schyster heard my telephone call and heard the thud thud of the five big compressors at our shaft die away, and saw the pressure gauge in his office wind back from 100 to zero, his reflexes worked like lightning too. Schyster rushed at me and hit me so hard in the mouth that I fell back unconscious. Just at that moment, in walked Tampoofie, my mortal foe.

When Schyster had explained to Tampoofie what it was all about, and Tampoofie had taken a look at the pulled out pipe, do you know what he did? He said to Schyster, "The youngster done correct, and he saved a proper muck up," and with that he lowered the corners of his mouth to the sub-Genghis level and stomped off to see about repairing the 24 inch air main.

And just then, Tampoofie was born again.

CHAPTER 11

I BECOME AN INVENTOR

I expect most people have heard about the Christian Doctrine of being born again, but I don't suppose the idea really catches on until you see it in action.

Well I saw Tampoofie being born again, and it happened like this. Mr. Rhum was cleaning up the mess left by a lazy old predecessor, and he worked like a colony of beavers to do it. One thing he did was to turn up quietly at one shaft head or another immaculately dressed at 5 a.m. each morning.

He never said anything when we were late, which we severally and collectively always were. He just stood there and smiled and said good morning Schyster, good morning Maloney, good morning Poostie, good morning Goldberg, however late you were. After a while we got to talking about it and someone dug up the fact that 5:30 a.m. was D-Day and not 6:00, 7:00, or 8:30 a.m. and after that we were all in place on time even if we were in evening dress and we would chant "Good

morning to you Mr. Rhum" before he could open his barrage.

Another of Mr. Rhum's good works was to introduce a firm of American efficiency experts who talked a lot of doubletalk and ran round waving stop watches.

Most of what they did, like drilling holes in shovels to make them lighter, was pure unadulterated bull, but they made one good point. They had a psychiatrist interview all the senior staff and in no time flat he realized that Tampoofie was crazy. So he gave Tampoofie a pep talk on how to influence people and win friends and Tampoofie drank it all in and asked for more.

There were about six of the seances all told, with the psychiatrist closeted with Tampoofie in the reception room with the door locked so all you could hear was through the open window if you crouched down low, and it went something like this.

Psychiatrist: "Would you like to tell me why you hated your father?"

Tampoofie: "He done me wrong when I was a little feller, used to tan my arse, he did."

P: "What had you done to deserve such treatment?"

T: "I uster flunk my lessons in school."

P: "And did you want to show your father that you could succeed?"

T: "Ida knocked his fluffin block off."

P: "Come, come, Mr. Tampoofie, that is not the right way to speak about your father"; and so forth.

Well anyway the upshot of it was that, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye as it were, Tampoofie emerged from the reception room wreathed in smiles, with the corners of his mouth turned up till it made his ears waggle, and he never spoke a cross word again to any of us.

In fact he went out of his way to be polite and showered "Good mornings' round like nobility distributing largesse to the masses and when you went to him with an idea he'd say "You done a fine job young feller; Tell the shops to make one and say I said quick. No better tell them make two while they are about it."

Of course I grabbed this opportunity to show the die hard old buzzards back at head office what was what. I sketched out a design for making the trucks and cages at No. 4 shaft out of aluminum.

We imported some Duralumin sheets and angle from England and we built two cages and 12 trucks with spring buffers and rubber buffers to relieve the shocks because aluminum will not take the rough usage that steel will.

As a result, we reduced the weight of the cage from six tons to three and we reduced the trucks from three tons to two, but they still had steel wheels and axles. We increased the pay load from six tons to eight so we had 25 per cent more capacity in the hoist and two tons less to haul. We could have reduced the rope by two tons as well except that the grooves on the hoist drums were made to fit a two inch rope.

And do you imagine the diehards at head office were grateful? Not in the least. They were purple in the face with rage and would have fired poor old Tampoofie only Mr. Rhum, who was 100 per cent man, said he had done it and they couldn't fire Mr. Rhum because managers of his caliber are irreplaceable, besides which he had a pull somewhere.

Anyway I'd had enough because I am an inventor and will not work for people who don't like new ideas and decided to quit as soon as I could manage it, which I soon did, because just then I invented the Saunders Valve. At least Charlie did and I stole it.

When I went UG I had a black boy called Charlie as my runner. It was Charlie's brother who was a preacher and who had delivered my note to Mr. Tampoofie. Charlie's chief function was to run behind my bicycle as I rode to the shaft in the morning and catch it when I jumped off. I would then go UG and would travel several miles in any such direction as I might be needed for repairs, installations and so forth. I would come out at another shaft miles away and there would be Charlie with my bicycle.

Being mildly interested in the occult and in the power of Africans to *"See"* I tried every test on Charlie to find how he always knew where I would emerge from UG.

I never knew myself where I would have to go when once UG because people would phone, when I was down No. 1 shaft and say "There has been a fall of hanging on the 38th level at No. 4, and the air main is broken," and away I would go to the other end of the mine walking or riding an UG tramcar. I would zigzag perhaps 20 miles and come up the same shaft I went down.

I tried asking all the officials UG to phone to me in code using my Naval nickname "P.K." which I am sure Charlie didn't know, and naming plus five onto shaft numbers and minus seven onto levels. So if I was asked to go to No. 19 shaft on the 27th level it meant No. 14 shaft at 34.

If this message was overheard by one of the blacks UG he could phone it to Charlie, and if Charlie understood it he could act on it, but all the evidence went to show that he received no such messages. He *knew* and that was that.

Charlie was quite an old negro with gray hair. He had lived all his life on the mine because of his fondness for booze, so he could never save up enough to go home to his tribe. He used to steal my whisky and I used to mark the bottle. Charlie would

take a swig and make another mark, and I tried initialling the mark, but although Charlie couldn't read and write he could forge my initials. But I got the better of him in the end. I turned the bottle vertically upside down and made my mark, so as the bottle got emptier the mark got higher, and Charlie was defeated.

I would come in from the mine in my heavy miner's nailed boots and I would turn my back on Charlie and turn the bottle upside down and take a peek, and if the level had gone down, I would kick Charlie up his tail with all my strength and he would shout "Ouch Baas" and hold his tail, but he knew he was in the wrong and never bore any resentment.

Despite his age, which may have been 60 but you never can tell with Africans, Charlie could run behind my bicycle all day without tiring, because sometimes there were things for me to do on the surface and I would go all over the mine with Charlie tagging along behind.

When we had a strike in the mine, I being the youngest official, was given the job of walking UG down an old incline shaft with rough wooden steps beside the track, and another chap called Franks came with me. It took all day to walk down 4,800 feet on an incline in the pitch dark and another day to come up again so we took some food along and stayed the night.

We had to go down to keep the pumps going because it was a wet mine and at the 4,800 feet level there was an engine room as big as a battleship's which housed the pumping plant.

After we had seen to the pumps and put oil in the bearings and had some sleep, we would start up again. I would go one side and Franks would go the other because there was a stairway called a ladder on either side of the shaft.

One day we had some trouble with one of the pumps which had a hot bearing and we stayed down longer than usual. Char-

lie got worried about me and came down to see if I was all right.

By the time Charlie got down we were just starting up and he met me on the first hundred feet of my ladder, so Franks didn't know he was there.

Well as I have suggested I am a poor specimen physically, and the 4,800 foot climb took me all day and Franks would get very impatient looking back across the tracks for the glimmer of my lamp because he couldn't leave me alone in the mine. But on this day, Franks saw what he took to be my lamp streaking up the shaft. It went so fast he just couldn't keep up however hard he tried and he tried hard because he had legs like a Swiss mountaineer and he didn't want to be left.

When Franks got to the surface he saw Charlie placidly sitting on the foundation of the headgear cleaning my bicycle and smoking one of my cigarettes. He asked where I was and Charlie said "Baas not yet come Mr. Franks" and they had to turn round and look for me still half way down the ladder.

One day when Charlie was cleaning my bicycle, he decided to inflate the tires and since he was a lazy old fellow, and since laziness is the mother of nine inventions out of ten, he decided to use compressed air instead of pumping.

Charlie made an ingenious connection from the air main which had now 120 pounds pressure in it, because Mr. Rhum had upped the pressure to get faster rock drilling. Charlie opened the control valve and inflated the back tire of the bike.

He was so intent on his work that he did not see the tire cover split and emit a large red bubble of inner tube, which grew and grew until it was several feet in diameter and then "BANG" and Charlie jumped as if he had been shot.

We all roared with laughter, and Mr. McLaughlin the workshop superintendent, who was a spectator, went round with a

hat to buy me a new tire and tube. Everyone said it had been worth a shilling entrance fee.

At first Charlie was a trifle daunted, but true genius is not readily discouraged and now look what Charlie did. He went and borrowed a small hand vise from the machine shop. Charlie was an expert borrower, and he clamped the hose which fed the tire between the jaws of the vise so as to permit only a trickle of air to pass. He felt the tire with his thumb until it was hard enough and then he gave a final turn to the thumb screw of the vise and the hose was closed flat and no more air could flow. So this was it—EUREKA!

This was the basis of my invention which is now used by almost every industry in every country in the world, and is taught in some universities as an item engineers and chemists should know.

I made up a rough model of my idea and showed it to Mr. Tampoofie and when he saw it he said "When you're a millionaire don't forget old Mr. Tampoofie" and as you see I haven't.

Mr. Tampoofie authorized the machine shop to make up a few dozen sample Saunders Valves and I took these samples round to the underground foreman for practical test. With each sample I took a pint of Scotch because on the Witwatersrand mines nearly all UG foremen are Scots, doing jobs like carpentry, pipe fitting, pumping and so forth and they all belong to a cozy little club called the Robbie Burns Association.

The ostensible object of this club is to have a New Year's drunk, but what it really does is this. A mine is not a static industry like a farm which occupies the same fields year after year. A mine digs out the bowels of the earth, in a big mine at the rate of 10,000 tons a day or better, and where it has dug, an empty space is left.

This means that every day new "faces" of the ore body are

exposed and at each exposure one of several things will be apparent. The ore body may look the same, or it may look richer, or it may look leaner, or thicker or thinner, all of which will increase or decrease the daily yield of the mine.

Also of course, a dike may be discovered. A dike is an underground river and a big dike can swamp a mine and close it right down, but even little dikes can be infernal little nuisances.

Now somewhere near every working face in a Witwatersrand mine lurks a member of the Robbie Burns Club who keeps a sharp eye lifting for what's new, and when something new turns up he says "Excuse me, I have to run to the loo" and he runs like a stag to the nearest telephone.

There are telephones all over the UG workings of a mine so our member still has enough breath to telephone the secretary of the club in Johannesburg and tell him what's new on the 54th level at No. 7 shaft, on the main leader, which is the basic ore body, or on the new rich vein beside the leader.

The secretary then places the club's buying or selling orders for the day, and is always just one jump ahead of the mine owners and so when Scot meets Scot, it's anybody's guess which side will have the fullest sporran.

In our mine the chief Burnsman was an old carpenter called Mr. McNulty, who had the house next to mine. Every evening after work he would sit on his verandah in his shirtsleeves and spit tobacco juice into the road, while he studied the day's market transactions and figured out his gains.

On balance he had £46,000 which was slightly more than the other foremen, and that was why they selected him as chief.

The Robbie Burns Club did not, as a rule, invest in industrials, and certainly not in speculative industrials, but it did

take a keen interest in my invention and this was a great help to me as I will explain later.

One day, while my samples were still on trial, old Mr. McNulty came across the lawn and leaned on our mutual fence, and I came down from the stoep to see what he wanted. He said I had a guid Scots naame and was it na a peety I didna join the club? And when I asked if I was eligible he hedged somewhat and said "Mebbe aye, and then agin, mebbe no" but I should drop in and see the secretary when I was in Johannesburg.

The secretary of Robbie Burns Club was an elderly Scotsman of the very definitely upper class, with a lean brown face and wavy silver hair, and he was quite without exception the best dressed man I had ever seen.

He told me that the club was not really interested in my joining, because in the opinion of the committee I was not long for this worrld which was the world of Rand UG. He said that very favorable reports had come to him from samples I had distributed in various mines and that there was not the slightest doubt that I had hit upon a major invention.

Mr. Bailie, as I will call him, said his son had been in the Royal Navy and had been killed in action, which I had not known. He said that he had been disgusted at Uncle Ferdie, at whose Christmas party he had been present, and that he had been told about my various struggles on the mine.

Mr. Bailie said he did not want to see me fail with my invention and took me to lunch at the Rand Club and introduced me to his lawyer.

Since I shall have much to say on how an invention is exploited and since the law plays a very considerable part in the world of patents, I will start by telling a story.

Royal letters patent to protect an inventor were first granted in England in the 17th Century and from the very inception of the patent idea a legal bone of contention has been deciding who owns an invention.

American law says that the inventor owns it unless he has developed it as a direct result of his employment in a similar field, in which case the employer has a claim to the patent rights.

English law, which also runs in South Africa, says that anything developed during working hours belongs to the employer.

A cause célèbre in the English courts concerned the Naval captain who invented the prong or guard on a carving fork which protects the fingers of your left hand from a slip of the carving knife.

This invention was made while the Captain was carving a roast of beef for his officers. The knife slipped and cut his finger, so he sent for the ship's armorer and had him make the finger guard.

When the ship reached port, the captain applied for a patent and a Sheffield firm of cutlers exploited the idea to great financial advantage. I should add that this occurred in the 18th century when the roast beef of old England was a staple dish and everyone, including Mr. Pickwick, ate great quantities of the national food.

When it became apparent that the fork idea was a money maker, the Admiralty stepped in and claimed that, as the invention had been made during working hours, it belonged to them.

The captain argued that meal time was not working hours and that anyway it was not part of his duties to carve for his officers which he did as a courtesy.

The Admiralty lawyer then asked about the first experimental model.

Who made it? And with whose material and in whose time?

The answer was the ship's armorer made it with Admiralty steel in the Admiralty time and on that they won their case.

And but for the grace of God, there went my patent because I had developed it as a direct result of my employment in charge of air mains and the model had been made in the mine shops.

So kind Mr. Bailie was sad about me and his lawyer pulled a long face and they went off together shaking their wise old heads.

I never did know who worked the miracle, but I suspect that the old Naval Club was working still and that strings were pulled on my behalf. At any rate someone went to Uncle Ferdie and asked him just for once in his life not to be a mean old buzzard, and Uncle Ferdie, who habitually pinched pennies, signed away twenty or thirty million dollars without giving it a thought.

So I got a letter saying that as long as the mines under Uncle Ferdie's control, which included my mine, got an adequate supply of said invention at reasonable prices, I could exploit the patent for my own benefit.

And anyone who knows patent law will know that they gave me a break!

The first thing you discover when you have an invention is that you are on the horns of a dilemma. If you apply for patents before you have experimented you are liable to find that the gadget won't work, or won't work as you first conceived it, and so all the money you spent on the patents has been thrown away.

Just how much money you spend depends on how many

countries you wish to cover. I modestly decided only to patent my idea in Canada, the U.S.A., Mexico, Brazil and the Argentine; France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and Sweden; England, South Africa, Australia, India and New Zealand.

If on the other hand you decide to experiment first, then either or both of the following can happen. If your idea is in demand (and there is not much object in fooling with it if it is not) others are sure to be working on it, and while you are experimenting someone else may file a patent and get ahead of you.

This does not often happen, but what does nearly always happen is that someone has already been ahead of you and you are too late, in which case all the effort and money you spent on experimenting has been wasted.

I would put the chances as 100 to 1 against getting a clear uncontested patent on a device which is in popular demand. The chances are 10 to 1 against getting any worth while claims, and I will explain later what this means.

The chances against having an idea which is really a workable invention are also about 100 to 1 against, and it may console you to know that the Creator was confronted with the same problem. Only about one in a hundred of all species survives through the ages, and the earth's crust is bristling with the skeletons of unsuccessful models.

Your gadget may look all right as a free hand sketch but when you get down to working drawings, made to scale and showing the device in three dimensions, you may find some unsuspected bug.

The product may be too big, or too heavy, or too ugly, or too complicated, or too costly or it may be that you can see, even on paper, that it just will not work.

If you are an accomplished designer with a knowledge of materials and of manufacturing processes, and if you can visualize the working conditions to which your invention will be subjected you can reach some fairly definite conclusions pro and con before the project leaves the drafting board.

As a rule, however, you cannot see all the answers on paper and so you make a model and even though the design looked right before, this model may show that you had overlooked something and that in practice it will not work.

A common obstacle to successful invention is that even though you can make an expensive hand made model, there is no method of producing the article in quantity at a competitive price.

When you have your model and it works in the laboratory you may still be a long way from success because conditions in the field may be different.

While typewriters are presumably only used for typing and therefore have field conditions similar to laboratory conditions, most other devices are less predictable.

Pumps for example can be required to pump an endless variety of fluids of varying viscosities, pressures and temperatures.

Some pumps are working all the time like the circulating pumps of engines, while others are only used in emergencies. I don't suppose they have many fires in Hartford, where all the buildings are owned by insurance companies, and the pumps for Hartford fire engines probably stand idle for years on end before they get an outing.

The only way to test a new idea in actual use is to put it into actual use by manufacturing a few hundreds or thousands of your gadget and selling them.

So you see that the odds are now 1,000 to 1 against you up to this stage. Ten to one against getting a patent which affords

you reasonable protection and 100 to 1 against having an idea which works well, looks well, is easy to make, operate and maintain and for which there is a demand.

Assuming that you have overcome all the above obstacles and that you have won your 1,000 to 1 gamble, you are now confronted with another set of obstacles, which I rate at 10 to 1 against you.

You have to find the cash, the plant and the know-how to make your gadget. Then you have to build up a sales organization to sell it and you have to convince the public that it wants to buy it. Ten times 1,000—10,000 to 1 against your reaching this stage and if you have a really big time invention there are a further three to 1 odds that one of the big boys will pirate it.

To explain how a patent can be pirated I must first explain what a patent is.

A patent is a monopoly granted to the inventor in return for the full disclosure of his invention to the public so as to encourage invention and the progress that invention brings in its wake.

A patent is not granted forever but has only a limited life after which anyone can use it. This life varies in different parts of the world. In the British Commonwealth it is 16 years, in many other countries it is 20 years and in the U.S.A. it can be spun out to 22 years, by those who know how.

When a patent monopoly has expired it cannot be resurrected but it may in effect be prolonged by subsequent patents covering various improvements.

To file a patent you must describe it in a certain specified form and you probably have to illustrate it.

Unless you are very experienced in the game, you have to hire a Patent Attorney to prepare the specification and drawings and he will charge you an average of about $200 a throw

plus the filing fees, which in the U.S. are $30. The wording of a specification consists of a preliminary explanation, usually accompanied by illustrations, followed by a series of numbered claims. It is these claims that are the essence of your patent because the patent office will reject some and will accept some, thereby defining the scope of the monopoly they have granted you.

Let us assume that you have invented an improvement in hats whereby the rain which falls onto the hat collects in the brim and is drained from there into a bottle which provides you with water in dry weather.

Having described and illustrated your invention you end by saying "Having now described my invention and in what manner it is to be performed what I claim is:

1) A hat for protecting the head.

2) A hat consisting of a crown portion substantially fitting over the head of the wearer, and a brim portion connected to the lower extremity of said crown.

3) A hat according to claim (2) said brim being turned upward along its outer periphery.

4) A hat according to claim (3) said brim having a drain hole to drain away water and/or other liquid collected in said brim.

5) A hat according to claim (4) said drain hole being connected by a rubber or similar pipe to a vessel carried in the pocket or otherwise suspended by the garments of the wearer of said hat.

Claims 1, 2 and 3 are almost sure to be rejected on the grounds that the examiner's own hat is so constructed and serves the same purpose.

Claim 5 may quite possibly be allowed: Claim 4 is the one over which you will have to argue with the examiner, espe-

cially if there is an accidental hole, caused by a falling cigarette stub, in the brim of his own hat.

When your specification has been lodged, the patent office records it in a log book which states the year, month, day, hour and minute of its receipt, so that if someone is working parallel to you on the same idea, the one who gets there first is likely to get the most. However, in the U.S.A. this question of precedence is complicated by some weird new legislation which I will not describe in detail.

President Franklin Roosevelt was opposed to all big corporations and/or monopolies in principle, and some of his legislation to protect the small man is cumbersome to say the least.

In the U.S.A., therefore, even when a manufacturer holds what appears to be a valid patent anyone can upset it by showing that he was a prior inventor.

There are various ways of doing this but one of them is to send yourself by registered mail, a letter describing your invention and then, when the letter arrives, you just don't open it.

Years or decades later, when someone else has made a success of the idea, you can turn up in court with this sealed envelope, which, when it is officially opened, proves that you, and not James Watt, invented the steam engine.

All these matters take time and at this stage you can enter medical school, learn to be a doctor, set up practice and write your memoirs or, if you prefer, and you can afford it, you can design and build your own 35 foot ketch and sail it singlehanded to Easter Island and back, if you get back, or you can write your autobiography, because you have to fill in time while your patent is hatching.

In the U.S. the incubation period may be as much as five years. The reasons for the delay are as follows:

1) All bureaucracies work slowly because, of course, they gain nothing by hurrying.

2) The patent office is liable to have more applications than examiners to examine them.

3) The examination of a patent is a long job.

4) There is no particular hurry anyway.

When the patent has once passed the examiners, which usually involves exchange of several letters and one or more interviews, it is issued by publication in the gazette and you get a pretty document with blue ribbon and red seals. From then on, an imitator can read the specification and see what claims were allowed and he can trim his sails to meet the wind.

But while your patent is pending you can label it "Pats pending" and the chances are your competitors will leave you severely alone at this stage, because they do not know how good a patent you will finally get. Better, they will argue, is the devil we know, than the devil we don't know.

The allowance or rejection of claims in different countries reflects the mentality of their inhabitants.

In Gay Paree, as long as you pay *la* fee they will grant you a patent on almost anything, but the patent will have no claims and the extent of your monopoly, if any, remains to be tested in court.

The English are supinely indifferent to anything that a bunch of rascally foreigners may have been up to and will grant your claims if they are novel in England. However, the British patent office maintains a reference library of foreign inventions so that your competitor can easily dig up what is called "Prior Art," if it exists.

When it comes to an infringement suit, Prior Art anywhere in the world will knock you out of court.

The Germans have a most comprehensive patent library and they will only grant you a patent after they have made a very thorough search of the Prior Art in all countries and have satisfied themselves that you really have invented something

new. To get a German patent takes a lot of doing but when granted it is of great strength because the German courts will usually uphold the claims granted by the German patent office.

In the U.S.A., they follow the general idea of the Germans but more flexibly. In the U.S.A., and to some extent elsewhere, the patent does not really guarantee protection to the patentee. It merely scares away the smaller and less determined infringers. The really big boys, if they are tough, go ahead and copy your idea and leave you to sue them for infringement. It is because of this ultimate recourse to the courts that the logical French, and other Latins, do not bother to make a search before granting a patent. With them the patent is merely a certificate that at a certain minute of a certain hour of a certain day of a certain month of a certain year, you claimed to be the Inventor of a certain device, and it is up to you to prove it.

If someone infringes or imitates your idea you can decide to ignore him or to stop him, depending on how much damage he can do you by continuing to pirate your idea.

I had an infringer in the U.S. whom I ignored because he made such a pathetic looking article that he helped to advertise my product in comparison and in the end he went broke.

A patent suit consists of an action by the Inventor, as plaintiff, against the alleged infringer, as defendant.

The plaintiff says that the defendant has infringed one or more of the claims of his patent. The infringer argues that he has not infringed said claims and/or that said claims are invalid for want of novelty or lack of invention. For example, if the patent examiner allowed you claim (5) on your patent hat, an infringer could show that the device had been described in this book. Prior publication in any form is fatal to a patent.

Patent suits are both slow and costly, especially in the U.S., and if one of the big boys decides to infringe you, the best

thing is to let him, because he will wear you down financially until you have to quit.

For that reason, the best way to exploit your patent in the U.S. is not to try to make and sell the article yourself but to sell or license the patent to one of the big boys, because in America, big boys seldom quarrel with other big boys.

One of the first glimmerings of the world state occurred in 1883 when the majority of the nations got together in a patent convention. As a result of this convention, the patent laws of almost all countries have been amended to comply with a generally agreed form and in at least one respect, this is a great advantage to the Inventor.

Under the convention an Inventor can apply for a patent in one country (usually his own) and all the other member countries will give him a year's grace before he need file his patent with them.

This means that the filing date in these other countries will not be the actual date the patent was lodged, but the date of filing, related to Greenwich time, of the first application.

By this means the expense of applying for patents widely in many countries is not thrust on the Inventor until he has had a few months to make his first experiments and until he has had time to make a search to decide whether it is worth proceeding.

The idea of the search is that either you, or your Patent Attorney, go to the library in Washington or London or wherever you happen to be and search through the patent files to see what prior publication there may be.

A search is seldom conclusive, but it will reveal any major anticipation of your invention even though some skeletons still remain in your cupboard.

If you find there is a major anticipation of your idea you

might just as well quit at that stage because there is no objec in developing an idea at great cost in time, effort and cash only to have it imitated as soon as it proves successful.

I had a skeleton in my cupboard in the form of an expirec French patent which was cited against me in Germany and th U.S.A. and which limited my own claims.

An expired patent, or a patent in a foreign country will no prevent you from making and selling your invention in you own country but it will prevent you from getting and/or main taining a valid patent of your own.

A valid prior patent in your own country will stop you ir your tracks, unless, of course, you are one of the big boys.

I actually brought off the 30,000 to 1 chance of having a major invention without being pirated, only I had forgotter just one little thing and that lengthened the odds against m to an impossible figure.

Although I had a world wide organization manufacturin and selling my invention, the reins of control were all held ir England. In 1940, when Mr. Churchill made his stand agains Hitler, the English introduced the 100 per cent excess profi tax on all gains in excess of the 1937 level.

In 1937 I had only shown a profit of £800 because everythin had been ploughed back into my rapidly growing business, sc from then until I quit in disgust, I had practically no incom from my very considerable labors.

The common belief is that all Inventors are crazy and I con cur. Because if you are sane when you start off with an inven tion, the chances are you will be madder than a March hare b the time you are through—I was, as you will see.

CHAPTER 12

THE MAN HIGHER UP

I might have done better in the mines if I had been rated as a full time UG type, because there are always opportunities UG. But to work UG more than part time, you need a medical certificate and I didn't get one.

In the early days of the Witwatersrand, miners died like flies of what is officially known as phthisis which is a deposit of microscopic rock dust in the lungs. If your lungs are 100 per cent O.K. to begin with, you can work for many years UG and all you get is a coating of rock inside you which will not kill you before you are 40. You are liable to have drunk yourself to death or to have had a rock fall on you before then.

But if your lungs are weak then the rock particles weaken them still more and the tubercle, which flourishes in the warm dark atmosphere UG, fairly jumps down your neck.

To combat this incidence of phthisis, all rock drills are now designed to inject water into the hole which they are drill-

ing. This lays the larger rock splinters but not the ultra-microscopic ones.

A further measure against phthisis is adequate ventilation of the UG working to which great attention is now paid. Finally, all UG workers require a red ticket. To get a red ticket you have to be vetted by a medical board. To keep it you have to be re-vetted every six months and as soon as you show the first symptoms of phthisis, out you go.

When I didn't get my ticket, I beat my breasts and said I was an ex-naval officer and therefore a magnificent specimen of male humanity. The doctors all laughed and said quite so, but a high percentage of ex-Navy types have lung weaknesses because most of them are not sunbronzed Vikings, battling with the elements, but are pink eyed, pale troglodytes of the "tween decks" who seldom see the sky.

So what I got was a yellow ticket which is not the same as ladies got in Czarist Russia, but a license to work UG, not more than 20 hours a week.

In any event I had quit my job on the mine the very same day I had lunched with Mr. Bailie and his lawyer and before Uncle Ferdie had been asked to sign his waiver and was now embarked on the career of an Inventor.

Normally I could not have quit at a day's notice but when I got back to the mine and told Mr. Tampoofie about my talk with Mr. Bailie and about the danger I was in, he said I had not asked his permission for a day off to go to Johannesburg and it was insurbordination and I was fired on the spot. He told the accountant to give me three months' pay in lieu of notice. Which was pretty decent of him, wasn't it?

Of course in 1928, when I first had my invention, I didn't know all the facts, but I knew some of them, and one outstanding fact was I needed capital.

Several years of under pay by the gold and diamond mines and frequent spells of unemployment had absorbed all my Brazilian easy money. Besides this I now had a wife and two children, a son having been born to me in 1926.

At this stage, I was helped again by Mr. Bailie who said that the charter of his club did not permit them to invest in Industrials, but he said if I would get out a prospectus for my invention, he would put something in himself and would advise all his many influential friends to do so.

Furthermore he got me into the Rand Club, which is more difficult than driving a fully loaded camel through the eye of a needle. The difficulty about getting into the Rand Club is that you don't know about it until you have lived in Johannesburg for some time, or if you do know about it, you can't afford it. Then when you do apply, it is too late. It is too late to get into the Rand Club unless you are a relatively unknown newcomer. Someone puts you up for the club and someone seconds you and your name is posted on the board. Either six or nine or twelve blackballs, I forget how many, dropped into the ballot box will keep you out and the chances of getting in are expressed by the formula: $C = 1 - (T + A + S)$ where C is your chance; T is the time you have been in the area; A is the scope of your activities; and S is your success in your particular field. In a simplified form this may be expressed as $C = 1 - U$ where U is your unpopularity.

In the Kingdom of Heaven the formula is $C = P - U$ where P is your popularity, but then the Kingdom of Heaven and the Rand Club, though similar, are not identical.

One minor difference is that Virgo the Virgin is not included in the club's pantheon. When the Rand Club burnt down in the early 1900's, a famous architect rebuilt it and used as a decor for the club's famous bar, the ten signs of the Zodiac,

which appear with cathedral-like solemnity, as stained glass windows.

For about 30 years the joke fell flat, because Rand Club types are not interested in Mythology, Astrology, Zoology, Palaeontology or in fact in any "ology" except Geology and what it means in terms of the new ore deposit at West Springs mine.

At long last, after the architect had died a disappointed man, some visiting nuclear physicist had his Geiger counter fixed on a highball and his eye wandered to the windows of the bar. He saw at once that there should be twelve windows instead of ten, and the Esprit de Corps of the members being aroused, a vigorous search was made for the missing signs, which were found at last in an obscure upstairs room and turned out to be Virgo the Virgin and Aquarius the Water Carrier.

Which leads me of course to the latest gimmick on the Rand which is to find uranium as a by-product of gold.

Uranium is the plaything of physicists, who are descended from chemists, who are descended from al-chemists, who believed that gold could be made from lead. And so it can. By knocking out one whatnot from the lead atom, the alchemist can now do it, which all goes to show that honorable ancestor was right once again, when he asked "Is there anything whereof it may be said, see this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us!"

One of the most important rules of the Rand Club was that no business should be done on the premises, but it seemed to me that this rule was honored more in the breach than in the observance. So I hung around the bar, with a cut-open sample valve in one hand, a prospectus in another, and a highball in another but since I didn't have three hands I had to keep putting one or the other of these items down on the bar. After a while there was quite a dent where my sample had rested.

By this simple expedient I was able to raise £6,000 out of the £10,000 I had set my heart on getting, before the committee decided that I was company promoting on the premises.

It would have been a great help to me if Cohen had been available, but as I said before they had deported him as an undesirable alien because of his affair with Lerige. Lerige had been tipped off in time and had retreated to her father's kraal in Basutoland, where she was beyond the jurisdiction of the South African courts.

Apart from the Cohens, Dunk was my only intimate friend in Johannesburg and he was too busy making money to be good company.

Muriel was married to a mining engineer and her attitude toward me was as prissy as could be—just as though *I* had been to blame.

Her husband, whose name was Littlejohn, had occupied my vacant desk behind Muriel after I left and he, too, had achieved immortal fame at the Pong game, but for a different reason. He had been in the Battle of the Somme and his olfactory nerve had been destroyed by gas.

While I was wondering what to do in my spare time, Cousin Maxim arrived on the scene with commissions to paint several Rand millionaires.

Maxim certainly earned his fee of £500 a throw because without distorting the facts more than an absolute minimum, he made his clients look almost human, and one of them even looked like a gentleman—in his portrait, of course.

Watching Maxim angling for a sale gave me exquisite entertainment and we went about quite a lot together. He was very good looking and was always very well dressed. He had great charm which he kept for the well-to-do and the mighty, but

with lesser fry like me, he was inclined to be uppity, though I couldn't help liking him.

One day Maxim said he would very much like to do something for me to help me finance my invention and he invited me to lunch to meet a wealthy English friend.

He warned me in advance that men of this type were very leery of being fleeced and that I should not even mention my invention until I had established a friendly social relationship. To my great surprise, Maxim even paid for lunch.

It was only after I had wined and dined my new chum at great expense for weeks that I learned that he, too, was an inventor seeking funds for *his* invention.

Years later when Maxim came to New York to paint some portraits, I introduced him to a friend of mine called Epstein who was a real estate broker.

Eppy said he had the very studio Maxim wanted, ground floor, upper Fifth Avenue, with north light and all at a reasonable rent. Eppy said there were other people after it and that Maxim should sign on the dotted line and pay six months' rent in advance.

There was a vacant lot next door to the studio, to the northward of it, and there were one or two workmen wandering around with wheelbarrows but Maxim thought nothing of it and paid up.

The very next day construction started and within three weeks a 30 story building had sprung up completely blocking the studio light. But that didn't matter anyway because the din had been so awful that Maxim had cut his loss and fled. So it's like Kipling said and them as takes cakes that the Parsi man bakes makes dreadful mistakes, because I have a long memory.

Some other friends of mine who turned up while I was in

Johannesburg were Professor and Mrs. Huggins and their story is so strange I will tell it.

Away off to the west of Johannesburg right until you come to the west coast, for a million or so square miles, there is desert or semi-desert. Somewhere in this desert, I forget where, the Huggins had a sheep farm. The name of the place was Ottoshoop which means "hope" and is pronounced "WOP." Just what Otto can have been wopping for I can't imagine, for a more desolate place never existed.

The Huggins' farm at Ottoswop never could have been made to pay even by an enthusiastic sheep farmer, which Professor Huggins was not. Professor Huggins liked to collect old manuscripts and he had a unique collection of South African historical documents.

So famous did the Huggins Collection become that a German University sent out one of its professors to study it. This professor found that the wall of Huggins' sheep kraal was built entirely of fluorspar which is a valuable mineral.

In due course a leading German industrial group bought the Huggins property for £40,000 and to celebrate this they were in Johannesburg. They hadn't been there a month before Mrs. Huggins' sister in Australia died and left them a much larger fortune.

After exhausting my connections in Johannesburg, I decided to try my luck in Durban where I knew no one. I might have been hard put to it had it not been for a fortunate accident. I was in the bar of the hotel where I was staying, having a gin swizzle to combat the heat, and I got talking to an elderly man standing next to me who had the answer to my problem.

My new pal, whose name was Cuttlefish, was a partner in the law firm of Bleedwhite, Cuttlefish and Skate, and he said if I would give him my new company's legal work, he would find

me the missing £4,000 in no time flat. So I bought us each a new gin swizzle and we sat down at a table and I got down to business which was as follows:

Mr. Cuttlefish explained that among the investing classes, sailors, engineers and farmers have no money. Merchants, bankers, trade union leaders and solicitors which is a kind of lawyer, have money but can always use all they have. Doctors, clergymen and barristers, which is the other kind of lawyer, have money but no way to invest it, and they are the boys to approach with an invention.

So I went to the telephone booth, tore the directory off its chain and came back to Mr. Cuttlefish. We made a list of all the leading doctors, clergymen and barristers in Durban. Mr. Cuttlefish then dictated a letter for me to write to all these people.

After that, I just sat back and enjoyed the scenery and the money rolled in like waves on the seashore, but I got a letter from one of the barristers asking me to come to see him.

Mr. Graham was a very fat man who lived at a hotel. Every few minutes, he would ring the bell and an Indian waiter would come with twelve quarts of beer on a tray and Mr. Graham would give me one and drink eleven.

We had a pleasant chat and Mr. Graham said he liked Naval officers and ex-dittos, but he didn't like Mr. Cuttlefish and I must dunk him at the first chance. It was good advice as you will see.

Well then I had my £10,000 which I needed for my invention and also for me, because Inventors have to eat and I decided I needed a vacation. I therefore went to stay with my cousin Herbert, who had a 10,000 acre farm quite near.

Cousin Herbert's farm was in a wild mountain region, at an elevation of 3,000 feet, with a 7,000 foot peak behind it, and it looked exactly like the set for a wild west movie.

Herbert had a nice house, with a stream running through the garden and two excellent tennis courts, so neighbors could drop in from a hundred miles or so and play a set of tennis before driving back.

Attached to the house was a family of several generations of Airdale terriers who occupied their leisure by killing rattlesnakes. Just as in the western badlands, the Griqualand area abounded in snakes but the dogs had acquired immunity to their bites and would show no ill effects, except what might be described as a mild hangover.

The farm not only abounded in rattlesnakes but also in sheep thieves, because Herbert farmed 10,000 sheep and he reckoned he was losing two sheep nightly. So it *was* like the Wild West where you shot people who stole sheep and cattle. Herbert did while I was there.

Herbert was a big man, bigger than any of the black boys, and he was a professional farmer, who knew his labor. They all loved him, especially when he made jokes, because Africans respond to jokes, especially if they are rude jokes. But however much they loved Herbert, the blacks were all firmly banded against him over the matter of the sheep thefts, probably because of some tribal taboo or magic and it is the same all over Africa and wherever else Africans congregate.

The whole bush is teeming with people who know perfectly well who did whatever it was that annoyed you. Your own maids know it, and your headman knows it, but you will never find out. Never.

But Herbert knew his blacks and that what kept them banded together against him was fear of some witch doctor up in the hills. What would make them stop stealing sheep was fear of even greater medicine in the sheep kraal. For whereas the white man has evolved to the stage of living only in acute anx-

iety, the stone age black man lives all his life in mortal dread. Stuart Cloete's *African Giant* is an up-to-date account of what makes the black man tick.

Herbert said he was going to Durban for a week and would leave the car with missus. The headman could drive him to the station and he would take the train.

Herbert caught the train at Matatiele (which means "Ducks all gone"), and he watched the headman watching the train out of the station. He got out at the next stop and borrowed a horse.

Then under cover of darkness he rode back to his own farm and tethered the horse a good two miles away because blacks can smell like dogs can, and he crept up to the sheep kraal. And what do you think he saw? He saw two of his own boys skinning a sheep. He took out his heavy, Army .45 Colt and shot one boy stone dead and the other boy ran off into the bush.

Herbert then went back to his horse, returned to the station and caught next day's train to Durban and stayed away six days. When he returned the headman was there to meet him, all smiles, and not batting an eyelid.

After a few days Herbert asked the headman, "What happen to that boy Tommisota used to work along here?" and the headman replied "Very sorry Baas forgot to say, Tommisota went home to his Kraal and told me to say good-bye to Baas, but I forget."

And that would have been the end of the story but Herbert had a new dog and one day soon after this, the dog was searching for carrion, as his ancestor the jackal did before him, and he dug up the remains of Tommisota neatly buried under a bush.

There were no more sheep thefts after that because the blacks

all argued that the Baas had gone off to Durban for a week and the headman had seen him go, and he must have made a mighty magic because all of a sudden there had been a flash and a bang and Tommisota lay dead. Later in Jamaica I had a housekeeper who was above the average intelligence and she said to me one day "Do you know why de Lord make black man black?" and I said "No, Millie, I've often wondered," and she said "So he can teef (steal) in de night widdout being seen" and I believe that is as good a reason as any I have heard.

By the time I had finished my vacation with Herbert he was in the middle of a drought because all that part of Africa is drying up, and that was why Matatiele was called "Ducks all gone." There had been a lake with wild duck on it, but it had dried out into a salt pan and all the ducks had gone. Africa is drying out at both ends at an alarming rate. The Sahara is advancing south at the rate of several miles a year and the great ruins there show how the area was once populous and fertile.

There are pictures by the early settlers in the Cape showing dense forests where now only sand dunes remain and in places like Barbeton you can actually see the soil eroding away under your very eyes.

It was this drying up of the south central highlands under the excessive grazing of the blacks that caused their southward migration just as the whites were arriving in Africa. The blacks create their own desert wherever they settle by overgrazing the land and by cutting down all trees for fuel. Of course in this, like everything else, they are only amateurs and can not compare in efficiency with the boys in Oklahoma, Texas and points west and south.

Meantime, Bleedwhite, Cuttlefish and Skate informed me that they were immersed in immense labors to register my

company and to draft a million word memorandum and articles. As long as I kept them supplied with quantities of cash, I need not hurry back.

I therefore stayed on and helped Herbert trek his 10,000 sheep down to the coast near Durban, where he had rented some grazing.

In case you've never done it, moving 10,000 sheep through semi-desert, mountainous country, to a pasture 120 miles away is quite a trick. The neighbors all helped, and we had 20 white men and women, 200 blacks and over 100 dogs, not to mention horses and cars and trucks and camping equipment of all sorts including some medicinal whisky.

For everyone except Herbert, it was a huge picnic. The weather was dry and cool and we all sat up half the night singing and telling stories. The blacks all sat up all night every night talking and gorging on meat because every day for the 12 day trek we lost from 100 to 300 sheep, which, after the manner of their kind, give up the ghost without much protest.

A funny thing about Africans, they can sleep if they want to but they don't have to. In their own fashion, they will work all day quite hard and then will sit around the fire and talk *all* night and still be as fresh as paint at daylight the next day.

The topic of conversation which keeps the campfires burning is a blow by blow reiteration of everything that was said and done during the day, so you will see that the narrator often has to resort to abbreviations to get a sixteen hour day into an eight hour night.

A typical conversation on this trek would go like this:

Narrator: "My Baas has a new gun."

Audience: "Aaah."

N: "It has two barrels and each one can make a big noise."

A: "Aaah."

N: "My Baas allows me to carry the new gun, but he beats me if I drop it."

A: "Aaah."

N: "My Baas allows me to load his new gun, and I open the Baas's new gun and I put in two things that I carry in a bag."

A: "Aaah."

N: "My Baas does not allow me to fire his new gun, but he allows me to clean it after he has fired it."

A: "Aaah."

N: "When my Baas fires his new gun he puts it up to his shoulder and it goes bang and then bang."

A: "Aaah."

N: "My Baas can kill a buck with his new gun so far away you cannot even see it."

A: "Aaah."

N: "When my Baas has killed a buck I run and skin it for him and he gives me the brains and the liver."

A: "Aaaaaaah!" etc., etc., etc.

Africans do not talk about sex as we do, because there are no sex taboos and therefore nothing about sex calls for comment except to express enjoyment.

The tendency to talk about something only exists when the subject is novel or interesting, and in the States we all talked endlessly about liquor while prohibition lasted, to narrate the thousand and one gimmicks for distilling it, procuring it, profiting by trading in it, fixing the police and so forth. We never talk about it now, do we?

On the way back to Johannesburg I decided to visit Basutoland which was not much out of my way, because I had a letter from Lerige saying that she was back with her people and would like to see me.

Basutoland is like an Indian Reservation except the best

land and not the worst has been reserved, and Lerige's father, who was a chief, lived 8,000 feet up, in the western slopes of the great Drakensburg range that is the Rockies and the Andes of Africa.

The popular concept is that black people are able to stand more heat than white people because of living in hot climates but in my observation they just have a wider temperature range in both directions and can stand cold better too. If you live in the Highlands of the Drakensburg you have to stand one of the coldest climates imaginable and I would go round shivering and shivering in all the clothes I could muster with a blanket round me and see the black boys wandering about in next to nothing—and this was only Autumn!

Of course I wasn't cold at night because Lerige's father had a big Kraal with mud walls and a thatched roof, beautifully made and beautifully decorated and all 40 of his clan slept in it. I had the berth next to Lerige who was my hostess and who had given up mourning for Cohen. She was beautiful and I was as cozy as a tick in a cow's ear.

This big Kraal, with no ventilation and with 40 people in it, smelt quite strong but not bad. A sort of stable smell and I got quite used to it. When it was too cold outside, Lerige's brother Livingstone would sit with me on the floor and we would play a game of dice and talk a blue streak because Livingstone was an embryo chief and the British had him educated up to the top level.

Of course none of us boys did one single handsturn of work and weren't expected to. The girls did it all and liked it, because in Africa the boys have to conserve their strength and not waste it on frivolities.

I wasn't up to the standard of the late Mr. Cohen and Lerige was hurt and after a while our relationship got slightly

strained. Besides which to be frank, making love with most of one's clothes on in a room full of people in the pitch dark is not my cup of tea, especially with a 20 year jail sentence in the offing.

As a matter of fact, what the boys regarded as relaxation I considered to be gruelling hard work, because every day we all rode horse races and whenever a hare showed up we chased it on foot.

A horse race in Basutoland means 200 or more men on little Basuto ponies with brightly colored blankets over their shoulders just riding off at full gallop without any definite starting or stopping post, and how the winner was selected I never could find out, except it wasn't me.

When a hare started up in any village someone would run after it and while he was so engaged his friends would call to the next village, which was always on the next hilltop, and someone else would get up and run after the unfortunate hare, and so on until it was exhausted and then the last man up would grab it and into the pot it would go.

As a matter of fact whenever two or more Africans are gathered together in Africa or out, you never do see any small game just for this reason, because the boys catch it and eat it before it can prolificate.

This is not a travelogue and I have avoided scenery but I will say this of the Drakensburg; I have seen the American Rockies and except for Grand Teton they are disappointing, and I have seen the Canadian Rockies and the Alps, and I have seen a great many pictures of the Andes and of the Himalayas, but I doubt that any other mountain range can compare with the Drakensburg as seen from the eastern or Natal side of Basutoland.

At this latitude the land sweeps upward from the west like

a great eastward rolling wave, higher and higher, with very little to see, and then all of a sudden the wave breaks in a sheer wall of rock, 11,000 feet high in places, and you can spit 7,000 feet in one place. From the worm's eye view, in Natal you look up at this wall, and it stands right over you, up and up in the sky, like the Rockefeller Plaza only ten times higher.

When I got back to Johannesburg, I found that there was really no need for me to stay there. Bleedwhite & Co., had organized my company for a nominal fee of £1,000 and a local firm had taken a license for my invention and were already paying royalties.

The world was therefore at my feet and I decided to return to England and see what I could do with the big industrial markets of Europe and America.

Since I hadn't seen Rhodesia, I thought it might be a good idea to go home via one of the Central African ports and I prepared Minnie for the voyage.

Minnie the II was directly descended from Minnie I and was the first actual production model of the Austin '7' and still looked like a baby carriage only with all the latest modern improvements including a differential.

So I took the back axle adrift and locked Minnie's diff' so both back wheels would grip and I made some special equipment for a long trek into the wilds.

Since I was going alone, I had nearly three cubic feet of storage space to play with and I used this to convert Minnie into a tent. Even when you have a companion like Maxim who was a good shot, sleeping out on the veld at night isn't much fun, and by myself I was scared stiff and I decided to sleep underneath Minnie for safety. As Minnie only had seven inches clearance and as I was and am at least twice as wide as that in the middle I had to raise Minnie up on ramps. I made

four hollow wedges of plywood, four feet long, ten inches deep and eight inches wide onto which Minnie could be coaxed at night so she was right off the ground.

Of course I couldn't waste all the space taken up by these wedges in Minnie's hold, so I secured them with catches, hollow face to hollow face—thin end to thick end to form two boxes four feet long, eleven inches deep and eight inches wide, and I stowed bedding in one and cooking utensils and food in the other.

With Minnie perched up on her ramps I could crawl underneath and although snakes might get me, none of the larger carnevora could. If I heard something snuffling round at night, I had an extension of the head lamp switch and the horn button underneath Minnie, just over my head, and I could scare the living daylights out of marauders including two legged types.

This worked quite well until Minnie's battery developed a leak and burnt holes in all my bedding, but better to enter the Kingdom of Heaven with holes in your bedding at three score years and ten than without holes at one ditto and ditto.

With these special precautions, I was all set to go and where I went and what happened to me and to Minnie, I will tell about in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 13

IN DARKEST AFRICA

I should not have laughed so heartily at Johhny's dilemma when he arrived in Lourenco Marques in his pajamas, because the same thing happened to me, only worse. When I say the same thing I mean of course similar because there were some differences.

For one thing Johnny's little difficulty arose through act of Mrs. Eekout while mine came via an Act of God. For another Johnny lost his teeth but mine were firmly lashed in place and so when the river came down it didn't take them but it took Minnie instead.

I had left Johannesburg on my way to the great copper mines on the borders of Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo. My idea was to have a look at the country and to do some missionary work on the way, because I always was one for mixing up my private affairs and my business affairs to such an extent that I wouldn't know where one began and the other ended.

Under a full head of steam and with her pennants bravely fluttering in the breeze Minnie had escorted me as far as Lusaka and beyond, and we were almost at Broken Hill when I suffered my bereavement. Not that there hadn't been some minor hitches on the way, which had been via Messina, Bulawayo and Victoria Falls.

In the Kruger National Park, a family of lions had decided to camp round Minnie, as friendly as friendly could be, but in the morning, when I tried to crawl out of my cave, they growled and I had to crawl back. So I had to lie all day, getting hotter and hotter and being devoured by ants while my new pals played around outside. It was only towards sunset that I heard a car coming and I hooted madly on my extension switch for help.

There was a man in this car and he got out to see what I wanted and then he saw the lions he got back in again quick, and shouted something and drove off.

I couldn't really blame him either because most visitors to the park have to leave their guns with the warden at the entrance but in my case, as I was going right through, they had merely sealed my gun. So all I could do was lie down again and hope that my lions would get bored and move off or that what the man had shouted was what I thought. I thought he had shouted the word "warden" and he had. In the morning before sunrise, the guy came in a sort of prototype jeep, and said something to the lions who wagged their tails and trotted off.

I was glad to see him I can tell you. He said yes, the lions *would* do that to motorists and it was a sort of game with them which had started when people started feeding them. They were just like dogs but when a dog begs he says "please" and

when a lion begs he says "Mister, I would prefer to eat that hamburger, but if I can't have that, I'll have you."

My friend the warden had thought of everything, including breakfast, which he unloaded from his jeep and since all my grub had been inside Minnie's hold and I couldn't get at it, I was good and hungry.

The only other mishap, on the way to my mishap that ended all mishaps, at least as far as Minnie was concerned, was when she broke one of the U bolts that held the transverse front spring because Minnie's front spring was like a model T Ford's.

I was away out in the bush, north of Livingstone, and I didn't dare go on for fear of Minnie breaking the other U bolt and coming down on her front knees. So I stopped and scratched my head, and presently a young black boy came along and we had a board meeting.

This boy was just out for a stroll to visit some friends at Abercorn, which is on the southern tip of Lake Tanganyika. He had only been six months out from his home near Bulawayo, and would get to his destination in a year easily, if he kept going.

I asked him what he did about food, because he had nothing but a gee string and a spear, and he said "The Lord will provide." So I said yes, but how and he said there were well worn tracks that any black man could recognize that led from village to village and all he did was just drop in and say "hello" and he always got a meal. As a rule, he got a nice warm slice of home comforts as well, because the girls were all friendly in those parts. That was one of the reasons why the trip took 18 months, but another was because it is 1,500 miles.

So after this boy, whose name was N'Dongo, had told me all about him, I told him all about me, and showed him my broken U bolt and he said so what! There was a blacksmith in the

last village but one he had visited and he could fix it in no time. I had my doubts about that, master mechanic that I am, because a U bolt for a car spring is quite a trick to make. They don't use them any more, they use a flat plate with four bolts to hold the spring in place.

Anyway I had no alternative so I turned Minnie round and headed south with N'Dongo running beside me because of Minnie's hold being full and we came to the village blacksmith sitting under a tree.

I showed my bolt to the blacksmith who said sure, sure, just leave it and he would fix it. So I left Minnie with him and I went off with N'Dongo to visit his fiancee and her sister in the next village.

I should have stayed, of course, because when we got back the new bolt was made, and I never did get to find out how a middle-aged negro in the wilds of Africa, sitting under a tree, with no tools except a hammer and anvil, made me a Chrome Vanadium Tungsten Molybdenum heat-treated, drop-forged steel U bolt and all for one shilling, at that.

Of course, the new U bolt didn't get too long a test because before we had gone much further, Minnie decided to become a submarine and we parted company.

About 100 miles north of Lusaka, it happened. It had been a gruelling hot day, and humid, and though the land was parched from drought, the rains were coming and I saw darkness and lightning on the horizon.

The roads in those parts, or in any part of Southern Africa at that time, were only dirt tracks and one couldn't go fast enough to create a breeze. In fact, Minnie rode over those roads best in second gear at 15 to 20 miles per hour.

At about four p.m., I had had all I could take and I stopped beside a stream, which I learned later was a tributary of the

Lukaskashi River, to have a swim and then camp for the night. The stream was almost dry but there were some clear pools. I parked Minnie as near to the water as possible, under a thorn tree, and tore off all my sticky clothes and rushed into the water as naked as I was born, except for one thing and that was a piece of equipment the French somewhat unreasonably call a Caput Anglaise.

In most parts of Africa, boys should wear one of these when bathing and the girls should wear rubber panties because a little red worm called Bilharsia gets up you and eats away your bladder and kidneys if you expose what Mom would have called "that part."

So I lay and soaked in the warm water, and since there were three more hours of daylight, I didn't hurry. I wasn't too far from civilization because I could hear a train going by, which must have been a heavy coal train from Wankie colliery by the noise it made. It went ever so slowly and seemed to be coming my way, then some buck scampered by, and something must have been chasing them, and three black boys ran by, as if the devil were after them, and I looked up and saw what I thought was a herd of buffalo on the rampage. I could just see their heads above the river bank.

And then round the corner it came, a wave 30 feet high, with tree trunks and dead cattle on its crest, going at 40 miles an hour. I just had time to climb naked into my thorn tree before it reached me.

The water went roaring by, taking Minnie and all my possessions with it, and very nearly taking me, because my tree was half submerged and wobbled most alarmingly, so I could hardly hang on.

After about an hour the flood started to subside and by sunset the roots of the tree were exposed and I could climb down.

I stood naked and bleeding from 100 thorns, up to my knees in a sea of mud and asked myself a simple question—why in the name of mike did I have to go doing things like driving a mark I Austin Seven single-handed all over wildest Africa? Just then the sun went down and it started to rain.

I didn't spend too comfortable a night sitting in mud up to my middle with my back against the thorn tree, but I was glad of the rain because it would keep all manner of fell beasties in their homes and I was about as defenseless as it is possible to be.

The morning came cool and clear, as it does in Africa after the rain, and I struggled downstream in mud up to my knees to see what salvage I could find. I did find Minnie's hood, just like the hood of a baby carriage, and about the same size as a double-width model for twins.

So I made a kind of crinoline out of this, and I wasn't quite naked when the American ladies came by. They had been on a trip from one of the mining towns, where their husbands worked, to Victoria Falls and were on their way back. They did seem a little bit surprised to see me, covered with mud and blood, and only very partially covered by my crinoline, frantically waving at them to stop.

However they were quite helpful and one of them had some slacks in her valise. I was too tired to worry about appearances so I just shed my crinoline and put the slacks on. One of the ladies took a peek and I saw her give a gulp and look away.

These ladies, whose proper names I never did get right, were called Blanche and Eleanor but Blanche said Ullinoor. They must have been lousy drivers, even way back in the old Kentucky home, but in the African bush, after heavy rain, they just couldn't make the grade and exhausted as I was, I had to drive.

When we got to the next town, I took a hotel room and went to bed for two days with a temperature due to fatigue and to poisoning from my thorn pricks. When I came to, there was a police officer in my room and he had some clothes and said for me to go with him.

He took me to police headquarters and questioned me about my trip and then, much to my surprise, he took me to a cell and locked me up. The next day, I was brought before a magistrate and questioned again informally. It seems they suspected me of foul play because they knew I had had a lady companion and I had made no mention of her in my statement to the police.

I asked them why they knew I had a companion and they replied it would come out in the trial. It would have gone badly with me only, the jailer was a talkative type and I asked him what in the name of mike it was all about, and he told me.

It seems that Blanche, the nosey old trout, the one who had seen my Caput, had reported her discovery to the police. They as usual, having nothing to do, had cooked up this theory about the missing woman. Why, they had asked themselves, would this young man go around in the African bush with nothing on except a Caput, unless he were up to fun and games with some woman? Of course, they would have been even happier if they could have suggested a homosexual relationship but the Caput didn't seem to fit into that picture.

By that time, the whole town was talking about me and one of the doctors said yes, of course, he always wore one when bathing and everyone should.

When he heard that, the magistrate sent for me again and asked if it was true that I always wore a Caput Anglaise to bathe. I said of course, and he should too. He said that explained why I had the Caput on before the flood, but it did not explain

why I had it on 18 hours later when Blanche and Ullinoor came by.

To this, I replied that I was covered with mud and blood when found by witness, and that it had been my intention to bathe again as soon as the river subsided and that I had no pockets or other place to keep my Caput and so I just wore it.

On hearing this, the police, who had been listening, gave a snort of disgust, disbelief, chagrin, disappointment, and downright malice and let me go.

Well, Minnie II had gone the way of all Minnies and she was not insured outside the Union of South Africa, but she was four years old and one year of a car's life is the same as ten years of a woman's, and at that stage it is often better to trade for a more streamline model.

I had also lost my kit and my traveller's checks, which included for the trip to England, but later I got a refund on them which you can do if you live long enough.

After I had bought some clothes, and Bleedwhite had promised to send me a new passport, I went on by train to the copper belt and had a look around. It certainly is quite a surprise to the traveller, after travelling for hundreds of miles through thick forest, with never a sign of habitation, suddenly to arrive at a large modern town.

I am no extravagant admirer of mining communities, as I mentioned when I was in Kimberley, so I will not describe the Copper Cities of Equatorial Africa, except to mention two bright spots.

One bright spot is Luanshaya, where the drink problem has been solved once and for all. How much better it would be, if we all copied Northern Rhodesia's brain wave!

Assuming that after three centuries of exile, there are some still fairly pure African types in the Western Hemisphere,

then it is safe to say that, with usage, the African can learn to drink as amiably as other people.

But the primitive African is liable to get violent when he has had some hard liquor, and in most areas of British influence, the black man is not allowed any liquor other than his own native beer brewed from fermented maise. This imposes an unfair restraint in countries where the white man can booze himself pie-eyed and the black man can't, and Luanshaya has the answer.

Luanshaya has a sort of medieval fortress, built with a stockade of high mud walls in which there is only one narrow opening. This opening is guarded by two armed Askari sentries who regulate ingress and egress from the enclosure as follows: To enter you must divest yourself of all weapons, for which, if you have them, you get a receipt. To leave again you must, in the opinion of the sentries, be stone cold sober. While you are inside the stockade, you can drink yourself dizzy and you can fight with your fists (within moderation), make love, play on musical instruments, sing and eat at a restaurant with your fingers.

And why, oh why don't we do that at home? We might, for example, take a place like Mamaroneck and turn it into a stockade for the benefit of convivial New Yorkers.

The other bright spot in the area was an elderly white-haired African sitting under a tree, teaching wood carving to a small class of urchins. The only tools he had were made of the hoop iron from a barrel, which is steel, but steel in its softest form, so it will bend and blunt at a touch, and his material was a hard wood like ebony.

Thus equipped, the old artist was whittling away at a great rate and was turning out some extravagantly beautiful work. I bought one of his carvings for one shilling and he bowed me

off the premises with broad smiles. When I got to London, I was offered £200 for it.

In due course, my passport arrived and also some money and I said goodbye to Africa and caught the train for Lobito Bay and from there by ship to Brussels and so home. I was glad to find it raining because in Africa one gets desperately tired of the blazing sun every day.

England seemed very strange to me after an absence of nearly ten years. She was so small, and so neat, and the countryside was so green, and there was a something else that I sensed even in 1929, though Toynbee had not yet written his *Study of History* and so I hadn't read it.

Toynbee has shown that twenty-one empires of antiquity, or twenty-four if you include Spain, France and England, all followed a certain pattern of rise, Empire and decline, and that the strain of great wars upon the body politic destroys both victor and vanquished.

When I got home to Eastbourne "Lanka" had been sold and Mom was living in a flat, which is an apartment and not a tire.

Dad had died while I had been away, and I had not mourned him because I, too, had become a victim to Mom's unceasing tom tom of hate, which she beat out from her little Queen Anne writing desk, while the handles went clickety click, clickety click.

Kathleen had nursed Dad at his deathbed and after the funeral, hissing purposefully to herself, she had vacated the maternal rooftree.

To fill the vacuum created by Kathleen's defection, Joy's career had been sacrificed. Joy had been working for the University of California, where Ken held a professorship, illustrating botanical specimens for which purpose, the good Lord had specifically created her.

But to hell with Joy's career when Mom was alone and ill, so she claimed.

For the first 60 or more years, while Mom had enjoyed robust health, she had longed to leave this vale of tears and recline upon the bosom of her Savior. Now, however, that the celestial encounter seemed more imminent, everything that wealth and medical science could do was done to delay it.

The medical science came from Dr. John Bodkin Adams, who was subsequently accused, but acquitted, of murdering certain of his elderly patients, in whose wills he had an interest.

When I first met Dr. Adams at Mom's bedside, I took him to be years my senior but then I always feel like a schoolboy when I am with anyone but schoolboys. As the trial showed, we are almost twins, but the doctor's bald head and somewhat pompous manner gave me the impression that he was older.

The Adams trial was the longest and the most costly of England's long costly trials but in summing up, the Judge said that a man might be "a fraudulent rogue" and still not be a murderer and so the jury found.

What Dr. Adams may have been doing was to angle for tax-free bequests in lieu of highly taxed fees, which the following story will corroborate.

One day, when Kathleen was visiting, and both the girls happened to be out, Dr. Adams called on Mom and asked her if she would like a drive in his car. Mom said "Yes" and was driven off to the office of a lawyer called James, who invited her to make a new will.

Mom did make a new will, but apparently she did not include Adams, by whom, after her death, the estate was duly billed: however, to be fair, the amount was nominal.

What incensed my sisters was that we had a perfectly satis-

factory family lawyer, Mr. Read, who acted in conjunction with The Standard Bank of South Africa as efficient and honorable executors of Dad's estate.

So Mom lay in her big four poster bed, with blocks under her legs so her feet were higher than her head. She had a little cap of lace and a lace jacket; she had grown quite stout and looked very imposing.

On weekdays, Joy and the maid whose name was Clara ran errands and waited on Mom, and got her all ready for Dr. Adams to come, which he did daily at 11 a.m. but on Sundays, the routine tightened up.

On Sundays, a little priest from the Anglo Catholic Church, to which Mom now belonged, would bicycle round to the home after breakfast. He had a little black bag full of gadgets and would erect a portable altar near Mom's bed, light some candles and then perform the mysteries. He and Mom would take it in turns chanting what sounded like limericks.

When it was all through, and Mom had been given a noggin of Holy wine, the little priest would open his bag and what do you think Mom would do? She would stretch out her arm with her hand over the bag and she would have a shilling (which was twenty-five cents and is now fourteen cents), between her thumb and finger, and she would drop this shilling into the bag.

Well then, the ceremony was over and the little priest would bicycle away, with his little black legs going like the connecting rods of a little twin cylinder engine, back to his Sunday routine of chanting and sacraments and Mom would be filled with the Holy Ghost. And if there was going to be trouble about anything, that was the time Joy and Clara would cop it.

As I said before, Mom had to be on a cross beside her Savior,

and although she was not so keen on leaving this vale of tears as she had been before she got ill, she still liked to suffer and, in the process, we would suffer too.

Conversation with Mom would run along these lines.

If you stayed in after dinner to keep her company, she would say "Oh I know how *dull* it must be to stay all the evening with an old woman," and you would say "Oh no Mom, I always like being with you."

If on the other hand, you took the hint and went out, then she would say "So your old Mother's company isn't good enough for you, I suppose?" and you would say "Oh no Mom, it isn't that at all, you *know* I love being with you, but I just had to see Jones this evening," and she would sniff.

Mom provided wonderful meals and if you ate all that she had prepared, she would say "Oh dear I *am* sorry, I see I haven't given you enough" and you would say "No really Mom, I have eaten until I'm bursting and I couldn't have eaten another mouthful." But heaven help you if you didn't eat everything on the menu, because then Mom was in her element and would say "Oh, I see you don't like what I have provided. I suppose my simple fare isn't good enough for such a travelled man (or woman if Joy was the culprit)," and you would say "Oh yes Mom, so and so is my favorite dish and you have fixed it *wonderfully* but I'm just not hungry today."

Regardless of what the French may say, and the Americans are merely aping the French when they repeat it, English food, before World War II depleted foreign exchanges, was the best in the world.

French food is not really good food. It is mediocre food cunningly cooked. American food can be good, but it also can be indifferent because the American producer insists that Congress shall ban imported foods.

This means we have to eat Texas beef, even though Argentine beef is much better; and we have to eat Florida or California oranges, which do not compare with Jaffa oranges and so forth.

But in Mom's heyday, she could buy the best of each and every kind of food because England was virtually a non-producer and imported the best that the world could offer. We had as I said, Argentine beef; and we had New Zealand lamb, and Jaffa oranges, South African grapes, and Spanish onions which Basque peasants carried on strings and hawked in the street. We had wonderful fish, beside which American fish tastes like cotton wool, and we had English strawberries which are the best and so forth.

After Doctor Adams had gone, if Mom was well enough, she would arise, don full warpaint and with shopping basket on arm, would trundle off on the warpath, and many a stout Eastbourne shopkeeper would tremble in his shoes.

Shopping with Mom wasn't just meekly pushing a little trolley round a supermarket, taking whatever they choose to give you, paying a cashier and sneaking home with your cargo.

With Mom you started by picking out the head man in the store, who was usually the owner, and by having ten or 15 minutes polite conversation about one another's family affairs. The shopkeeper would ask "And how is the Major madam?" and Mom would tell about Edgar's Herculean labors in Arizona. Then the shopkeeper would say "What have you heard from the Doctor?" and Mom would tell about how thin Ken was getting in a Lama monastery, where they only fed him seaweed.

And then, when these exchanges had put her victim right off his guard, Mom would lash into him about the leg of lamb we had on Sunday, and it had been tough; and about the pheasant we had when the Bishop came to dinner, which had been

hung too long, and the enemy would capitulate without a shot being fired.

So then Mom would discuss the day's requirements and would poke, prod and sniff at the various items she intended to buy. After an hour or so had been spent in this manner, she would load up her basket and depart for her own base under a full head of steam.

I didn't stay long in this ménage, but like the silent Kathleen, I folded my clothes and stole away. I had an apartment in Chelsea which is Greenwich Village only worse, and I had me quite a time as a young man could in the late twenties of his life and of the century's life.

CHAPTER 14

IN DARKEST AMERICA

Then I was established in London and I had an office in the Strand in the old Hotel Cecil building, before it was torn down.

The problem was what did one do about exploiting an invention, and how did one eat while one found out?

I solved the second part of the problem first because I like to eat, and although No. 1 and the children were still in South Africa, I had to send them some money.

So I started a consulting practice and as I had none of those initials like A.M.I.C.E. or F.R.I.B.A., which English consulting engineers always tag after their names, I called myself P. K. Saunders & Partners—which as it turned out was a mistake, as you will see later.

To my surprise, I got quite a lot of work almost at once, chiefly from South African and Rhodesian mines whose ma-

chinery purchases I handled in England and on the Continent.

I also became a director of a gold mine at a place called Rodalquilar, in the south of Spain, but that is another story.

The first part of my problem, how to exploit my invention, I solved by accident—I mean it was an accident which helped to solve my problem by bringing me into contact with a manufacturer, who said he would license the Saunders Valve patents.

I was motoring one day in North London and a friend of mine called Ferguson from South Africa overtook me, recognized me, and waved as he went by in a big new Bentley, with a crowd of people in it and a lot of expensive new luggage strapped onto a grid at the back.

We got held up in a traffic jam, because London has no thruways and two little men whipped out from behind a truck and slashed through the straps on Ferguson's car with razors and trotted off with all the luggage. So I hooted and hooted for him to stop, and all his pals looked back at me and laughed while Ferguson tooted merrily in reply. Just then, the traffic jam cleared and off he shot, with me in hot pursuit. Of course, he could do 120 to my 70 and I had no hope of catching him but he kept on slowing down to keep me in sight and I would toot and he would toot and flash away from me. I tried signalling S T O P in Morse code Tot, Tot, Tot,—T O O O O O T, and so on. All he did was to reply T O O O O O T, Tot, Tot, Tot—Tot, T O O O O O T, and so on, which in its entirety spelled B A L L S and drove on. So I chased him in this fashion with his pals all waving from the rear seat, until he reached his home at St. Albans, 50 or so miles north of London, and then as he reached his front door I caught up and called out "You've lost all your luggage, mister!"

Well then, it was late, and after they had all had a hearty

laugh, they invited me to stay for dinner; I did and I stayed the weekend. It turned out another guest of Ferguson's was a big manufacturer in the north of England, which is even colder and wetter than London, and when he saw my sample valve, which I always carried, he said he would take a license.

Having, as I thought, started my licensee on the way he should go, by imparting to him what little I knew of the Saunders Valve, I decided to have a look at America.

I was wondering how to manage this, with all my consulting work which was profitable, when a most unexpected good fortune smiled on me. It appeared that Edgar had been obliged to resign his executive post in Arizona on account of a moral conflict with his directors, whose ethics he could not accept, and he would be available if I wanted him. This is what he wrote:

"We may come home next May. The Club Steward will need a motor scooter and a water-cooled corkscrew when we meet after five years of prohibition. Dartmoor (U.K. Penitentiary for dangerous criminals) is preferable to America! I have had five years hard labor here without the option of a fine, and the prospect of leaving the 'Land of Liberty' is heavenly.

"I could start work for you immediately on arriving. I have a glowing testimonial from the President of this Company which will help to justify you in the eyes of your Board."

So on Mom's recommendation that Edgar was a treasure more precious than rubies, I cabled him to come home and when he arrived and I had installed him in his new job, I was free to travel.

Meantime my family had arrived from South Africa and we decided to leave the children at a school for infants so that No. 1 could join my adventure.

We decided to visit Canada first because we had some contacts there and Cohen had written and said "I would enjoy to

see you again over this side but don't come before fall as the Chicago summer is too hot for South Africans and you all will get heat stroke."

In Montreal, we bought a baker's van and fitted it out as a caravan which made us independent of finding accommodations and anyway we had very little money, so even "Tourist Cabins—$1" sounded high.

My friends in Montreal gave me an introduction to a manufacturer in Tow-rron-tow as the BBC now calls it, but in those days it was known as "Tronno."

When we got to Tronno, we were met by one of this manufacturer's staff, a little, fat, pink-cheeked type called Ed Mon Petit but it was commonly pronounced Mommperty.

Ed had been educated at Tronno College and was the very essense of Tronno respectability, which is the very essence of middle class respectability of which Tronno is the unchallenged World Capital. Or was: There is an influx of refugee types now which may change all that.

Ed lived in hourly terror of the police, who could and did pounce on you for almost any human foible such as smoking in the wrong place, crossing the street, or having a bottle.

Tronno prohibition was much worse than American prohibition because in America, as my lawyer once told me, the law is only a basis of negotiation between the citizen and the State, but in England, and in her only recently emancipated colony Canada, the law was what you had to do and the law on liquor was this:

There were no bars, so you couldn't just go and have a drink when you felt like it. There were no liquor stores in the accepted sense, so you couldn't just go and buy a bottle, either. You had to go to the police or to court, I forget which, with some form of identification and with evidence that you were a

fit and proper person to own liquor, then you got a license. With this license, you then went to a place like a post office, but infinitely drearier. There were some bureaucrats behind a wire cage, who were as devoid of charm as warders in a penitentiary, and who would not answer questions.

Then you had to study a large printed notice board like a railway schedule, and write out an order in quintuplicate, in a certain stylized form.

When you had completed your form, you took it to a little wicket in the cage, like prisoners having a word or two with visitors, and you waited. The reason you had to wait was because with bureaucrats (who draw fixed salaries and pensions for life), there never is any hurry about anything and the boys were having a most interesting conversation.

The chances are, you waited until closing time because the penitentiary closed to visitors at 3 p.m., and so you had to come back the next day, unless it was a Saturday or a Sunday, or any one of the hundred or so days when business was suspended; in which case you waited for a new working day to dawn.

When you did, at last, meet your bureaucrat face to face, you learned from a series of grunts that your form had been wrongly completed, probably because you had asked for more than one bottle, and you had to start all over again from scratch.

In the meantime as likely as not, your permit had expired through lapse of time and so you had to go back to court for a new one. However all things yield to human persistence in the end, and one day, one joyful spring day, you emerged from the penitentiary clutching your bottle only to find that you could not drink its contents.

This was because it was forbidden on pain of a lingering and certain death to have an open bottle with you in the streets. Of

course, if you were a householder this didn't affect you too much because you could take your bottle home and drink it at your leisure, but for transients, it meant you either did not open your bottle at all, or else you swigged it down all in one session.

In our case, we had no home except our van, in which we camped by the lake at night and drove into town when necessary. That was how I came to have my brush with the police.

We were driving into town one day with Ed Mommperty and he gave me a violent jab in the ribs with his elbow and said "COPSELGETTCHA," and I said "What?" and he said "Copselgettcha," and I said "What?" and he said "YER-SPEEDIN." It turned out that anything over 20 miles per hour in Tronno was speeding.

So I slowed right down and no sooner had I done so than Ed again jabbed me in the ribs and again repeated his slogan of Copselgettcha; this time for "Curb-crawlin," which was looking for a woman and under 15 miles per hour rendered you liable.

Well then, I had my eye glued to the speedometer so as to hold the needle on 17 because 20 was too high and 15 was too low, and in the process I ran into the rear of a stationary streetcar. Then the cops got me.

They found our half open bottle, because we had no other place to keep it except in the van. They also found I had no Canadian driver's license because the English regard Canada as a colony and I only had my U.K. license. There was some technicality over the registration of the van, which had only a Quebec license, but, oh far worse than all this, I was a vagrant.

So into the cooler I went and No. 1 very nearly went too because she was an upper-crust English lady, rather on the horsey side, and she wasn't going to be mucked around by a bunch of

half-baked colonials. She told them so in a few well chosen sentences and I don't know how it all would have ended if I hadn't remembered Cohen. I got permission from my tormentors to phone Cohen in Chicago. Cohen phoned his agent in Tronno who in less than no time had said something to someone and I was a free man.

I never did find out what the connection was, but anyway Cohen had it and the rest of our stay in Tronno was most enjoyable and the lakeshore was charming.

After that, we went up to the Northern Ontario Gold Mines where I had some business to attend to.

Someone described the South African High Veld as just nothing but miles and miles of ——-all and the same goes for the Canadian Wilderness, which is Christmas trees and rocks, and rocks and Christmas trees, most of the way from the American frontier to the Arctic Circle and all the way from Newfoundland to Victoria, B.C., except for a bald spot in the middle.

As I am not writing a travelogue, I do not want to describe scenery but if called upon to do so, of the majority of places outside Western Europe, I would merely repeat what the Greek philosopher said after a tour of the Pyramids. All he said was, "They were wonderful, they were magnificent, and I thank you a thousand times for showing them to me, but I did rather feel, if I may be permitted to inject a small criticism, that having seen one, I had seen the lot."

While we were in the area, we stayed with the chief engineer of a big mine who was extremely nice to us and we had a pleasant visit. Our host was boasting one day about his new Finnish maid who worked so hard and was so efficient for so low a wage and just then the telephone bill came in and it was $495. So he just laughed and said it was a clerical error and that four

dollars and ninety-five cents was the correct figure and he sent the telephone company a check. They replied that *495 dollars* was the correct figure. It turned out there was a phone in the kitchen and when work was done Tertu, as her name was, would just pick up the receiver and have a pleasant half-hour gossip with her sister, who was a school teacher in Mexico City. So the split-second efficiency of the Bell Telephone System has its drawbacks, as well as its very great advantages.

In those days after leaving North Bay, which is the terminal for Northern Ontario, you had to dip down into the States because the Trans-Canada Highway was incomplete at this section—and still is!

It was then that No. 1 had her brush with the U.S. Immigration which soured her for keeps against the Promised Land. No. 1 is as fair as fair, with straw colored hair, sky blue eyes and pink cheeks, but though she was reared in England, she was born in South Africa. To the U.S. Immigration the chances are 100 to 1 you are a nigger if you come from Africa.

So while I, who am a dark Mediterranean type, almost an Arab, can and did pass the enchanted line at will, because the chances are 100 to 1 if you were born in England you are white, non-communist, and non-criminal, No. 1 was stopped in her tracks, like Lucifer at the Pearly Gates.

What made matters worse, No. 1 not only lost her temper but also told a falsehood, or so the little official at the frontier thought. In the usual procedure of the trick question, he asked No. 1 how long she intended to remain in the States and she said "Oh, about a fortnight." Again, he asked No. 1 how long she intended to remain in the States and she said "Oh, about two weeks," and then the fat was in the fire.

The little guy danced with glee, because he had made a kill,

and he held us at the frontier until some big shot came up from headquarters. Then he recited his tale which was as follows:

"Disa woman he say he stay for two night and then he say he stay for two week." The big shot was nonplussed and we had to send for *Webster's Dictionary* and it said: "Fortnight. The space of fourteen days. Two weeks."

Well, after that they had to let us through immigration but they passed the word to the Customs who took us apart in a search which included unpacking our mattress and opening up our tires.

So No. 1 did not love Americans and although I love Americans, and am one, I do not love the U.S. Immigration which I regard as being as futile and as harmful as prohibition, only worse. Because it is not that which goeth into a nation which defileth it, but that which cometh out.

There is no useful purpose in U.S. Immigration because America has 20,000 miles of totally unguarded frontier and undesirables of all denominations can cross and recross these frontiers at will. All the more menacing agencies, whether criminal or alien, doubtless have their own printing presses for faking all the necessary papers for all their personnel. The sole purpose, therefore, of immigration restrictions is to annoy and frustrate the honest visitor, hence the doggerel "The rain it raineth every day upon the just and unjust feller, but more upon the just because the unjust's stolen his umbrella."

Anyway we got by the frontier in the end and were on our way but we got caught in a procession at Soo. It is, of course, only the English who spell words one way and pronounce them another, like Worcestershire Sarce and Durby.

At Soo, there were processions, bands and flags and it was stinking hot. When we asked what it was about, all people

said was "July da Foit" and we knew that of course, but so what?

So it seems July da Foit is about a battle between the English and the English, because of course there were no Americans before July da Foit, but No. 1 and I hadn't been taught about the battle.

And right here and now is something, at long last, that United Nations can usefully do, because the seeds of most wars are sown in the fertile soil of distorted history.

The United Nations could hire a bunch of professors to write an impartial world history starting with Exodus, Judges and Kings from the Canaanite angle, and touching on the Wild West as the Indians saw it (another pale face bit the dust), and after that, to spout any other version would be an act of war.

There are 1800 miles of Canadian Prairie, which in summer looks like African High Veld only the roads are worse, and we stopped at Winnipeg for a while and rested in a motor camp near the river.

Right next to us were an old, old couple who had spent their summer vacation in the camp every year since 1918, and what they did for recreation was this: In the morning at eight, they crawled out of their tent, each armed with a basket and trotted off to the town and bought as much liquor as they could hold in the remaining hours of daylight, which they knew to .002 of a fluid ounce after fourteen years of practice, and then they trotted back to their tent and crawled inside and got quietly plastered until eight next morning.

They did this every day for their 21 day vacation, so the camp warden told us, and then they climbed into their old, old car and wobbled off greatly refreshed to their home in Duluth across the American frontier.

The way we handled our journey was to start each morning

at daybreak, and if one of us wanted to lie in bed a bit longer, the other would drive. At eight or nine, we would stop for breakfast, and then drive till lunch. Then perhaps rest a bit in the afternoon and so on until we made camp at sunset. When we got to Vancouver, we camped in the middle of Stanley Park and from time to time various officials came and peeked at us, but our van was a bottle green Chevrolet of exactly the same color and type as the park officials' vans and each official took us to be another official. We stayed there, in the lap of luxury, rent free, for a whole month—which is about the same as doing it in Central Park, New York, or in Hyde Park, London.

After I had settled my affairs in Vancouver and we had seen the sights and had driven to Victoria and back, we started home via Yellowstone Park and Jasper Park (which I liked best). It was October and as we came to the last, high pass over the Rockies, it started to snow.

Just behind us was a battered looking car with four, rather rough-looking types in it. No. 1 didn't like the look of them and neither did I, so I drove fast through the heavy snow, down the zigzag mountain pass, skidding and slewing up against the bank. My experience in South African mud helped me, and the car behind us with the four plug uglies in it also drove fast and kept hooting. We were scared because the depression was in full swing and they would bump you off as soon as look at you in those days.

So down the mountain we sped, the heavy snow falling and falling, and the old van swaying and lurching. It grew dark and behind us we could see the headlamps of the enemy, but I beat them to it and we got to some little town where we stopped for coffee. The four plug uglies came in and they were pretty sore at us. It seems that when the snow comes, up in the

High Rockies people stick close together, in case of trouble; we had broken the code and had tried to leave these four guys to die in the snow, if they got stuck.

The car behind them did get stuck and its occupants spent three weeks in a ranger's cabin before they were rescued, as we learned later. To make matters worse, No. 1 said she was sorry about running away but we had thought they were gangsters, and it turned out one of them was the sheriff and took himself quite seriously.

Well, there isn't much more to tell about that trip because No. 1 left me to get back to the kids and I had to spend some time in Montreal where I had some prospective licensees. My associates were two well-to-do Canadians and as nice a pair of chaps as you could wish to meet, and when I returned from the West Coast they gave me a big welcome lunch at their club. I sensed somehow that something wasn't quite right by the nervous way they acted and they tripped over one another in their eagerness to buy me drinks.

So after lunch, I said "O.K. boys, let's have it," and they looked as guilty as hell. One of them whose name was Malcolm said "Well Phil, it isn't anything really, only we want you to promise us something" and I said "What?" and then they both started to interrupt one another. They said they intended to sink a lot of money in my valve proposition and no one could run it except me, and so on. I said if they wanted me to live in Montreal, they were nuts. They said no, it wasn't just that, but would I promise them something. I said "What?" and they both blurted it out together.

It seemed it was going to start snowing soon, and then every mother's son and daughter of a Canadian, over the age of two, would be out all day on skis, and the big ski jump on top of

Mount Royal would be in full swing. Would I *promise* something? and I said "What?" and they said not to go down it.

Actually, of course, my conscience has shown me a portrait of myself as rather liking money, not having enough of which I regard as the root of all evil, however, there is no sum you can name, free of all taxes with no strings attached, that would tempt me ever to go down quite a small ski jump.

The ski jump at Montreal works like this. First of all, you climb a thousand foot hill and at the top of this hill is a gallows. Then you climb another 200 feet and as you look down there is a long wooden slide covered with snow, descending into space. You wizz down this at supersonic speed and out across the main road, over the heads of passing busses, and down a mile-long slope into the arms of a waiting ambulance, which on busy days is always parked at the point of impact. At least, it's always there except every half hour or so when it is delivering a cargo to its home port.

So not to disappoint my pals, I said, "Well, the ski jump is the one thing really I had come over from England to do, and I have just been filling in time waiting for the snow to fall. What will you give me if I make this sacrifice?" They said, both together, so they had obviously cooked it up in advance "How about we all three go honning?"

So a-honning we did go. We had an old trapper type as a guide and it was cold as hell, and he said, yes, the way the climate was in Canada, it was never right. "The winners too korld, the summers too hut, there's naw spring and the urrum's too sharrt,"—and with that I have to agree.

Our trapper took us to his cabin away up in the woods, first 200 miles by train and then by canoe for 100 miles or so, and it was going to be touch and go whether we could make the return trip by water before the lakes froze over.

At the cabin, we were welcomed by our guide's French Canadian partner, and they made us very welcome and very comfortable. The thing I noticed at once, was the courtly manner in which these two woodsmen conducted themselves. While we were behaving like schoolboys, burping and farting and telling dirty stories, our hosts might have been dowagers at a Mayfair tea party.

I asked about this and they said, Oh yes, but when they were in town during the summer, they behaved as we did but if you were quite alone with someone in the woods for five whole months, the least little idiosyncrasy would get you bumped off. The only way to survive was to pretend you were Emily Post on a visit to Buckingham Palace.

Conversation between our hosts was limited strictly to business because talking too much was taboo. Mike would get up and go to the door and say "Getsome wood" and Francois would jump in front of him and say "My turn Mike, yours yesterday." Francois would bring in a hare and start cleaning it and Mike would snatch it from him and say "Mindjer badhand" and would proceed to clean the hare himself.

Whoever served the food always picked out the choicest portion for his partner and a tussle over who should be privileged to wash up followed each meal.

So in perfect harmony our two friends had lived for over one hundred months, or five months each winter for over 20 years. One of the rules of their partnership was never to meet in the off season. Each spring they took their skins by canoe to the railhead, divided them with meticulous impartiality and parted company until they met again on the 15th of the following October at the same spot.

There is a tendency among the English, because they in-

vented "Le Sport" and because they walk to office instead of riding, to think that other people are decadent.

I didn't actually think that, but I must say I was surprised at the diabolical energy of my Canadian friends, when in the woods.

In England, you either hunt from the back of a horse or else you sit on a stool and shoot birds as they fly over you. You may even have a man to load your gun. In South Africa, I hunted chiefly from the deck of Minnie, and if I had to go on foot I had a couple of bearers to carry everything. But in Canada, you stride forth accoutred like a Marine on route march, to stumble for hours over fallen logs and to wade for hours more through swamps.

It must have been, as my friends often said, that I only just missed being a pansy. While my two pale-faced and highly urbanized partners strode briskly ahead, I followed whimpering miles in the rear, longing for a peaceful death and hoping that perhaps one of them would mistake me for a moose and put a speedy end to my agony.

It turned out to be a good thing I had all this preliminary training in woodcraft because otherwise I would have spent the winter in the cabin with Mike and Francois—at least, I would have spent the first month or so. Then one of them would have said to the other "Allow me, Francois" or "Permit me, Mike" and the bears would have obliterated the traces.

The physicists say that minus 471 degrees F. is absolute zero and that the thermometer stops dead in its tracks at that point, but of course they haven't been honning in Northern Quebec in the late fall and before we could say Jack Robinson our lake had frozen as solid as a rock.

The prospect of returning on snowshoes didn't seem to

worry the others at all. It was only 100 miles and Mike would take us to railhead and would bring back a dog team for the skins, while Francois tidied up around camp.

It didn't worry me too much either, until Francois strapped a pair of snowshoes onto me and I went out for a trial spin. After which I sat on my bunk and brooded on the prospects of a life after death, and whether all that I had heard was true.

Well anyway we made it somehow, and there were friendly places on the way, and at one of them there was a square dance in full swing and we got heavily involved. This square dance was held in the schoolhouse of a small village, to which people came on snowshoes and in sleighs from 50 miles around to join the fun and having done so, they were determined at all costs to see it through. When we arrived the dance had been going for 24 hours.

About 200 Canadian backwoods types were gathered into the schoolhouse which was heated to several hundred degrees Centigrade by four wood stoves, one in each corner. The orchestra consisted of a very old man called Captain Reed, with a flaming red face and long white whiskers, who played the fiddle, and a fat, pale-faced young woman, who was the schoolteacher, at an antiquated, upright piano.

As far as I could judge, there is only one variation of square dance, or I should say no variaton, and only one tune which Captain Reed squeaked out on his fiddle and it went like this —"Yubber de gub, de yubber de gub, de yubber de gub de yubber de yubber de yubber de gub, de yubber de gub de yubber de gub—de yubber de gub," while Miss Hoskins, the schoolteacher, accompanied with appropriate tinkles.

Like Moses at the battle of Rephidim, Captain Reed remained immovably at his post and was sustained by mugs of ale at regular half hour intervals throughout the 36 hour mara-

thon. Some of the ale found its way to me and what with that and the intolerable heat and my exhaustion from snowshoeing I was only partly awake. Even if I had been fully so, I doubt that I could have followed what the caller called, but it sounded like "Eeturrn to the rate, de gubba de gub, and Ee turrn to the left, de gubba de gub, ye gubba de gubba de gubba de gub."

In a sort of trance, I sought wildly for a place to lie down but the school consisted only of one big room and a toilet which had been furnished for the occasion as a ladies room: gentlemen went out into the snow for a breath of air, as necessary.

So in desperation into the ladies room I went and barricaded the door with a chair. I made a cot on the floor out of the ladies' fur coats and off I swam on a golden cloud, nor did I awake until I felt the music stop and heard someone shout "He must have fallen into a drift." So I got up on a chair and peeped cautiously over the top of the door, only to see that the ballroom was empty and everyone was outside in the snow looking for something.

Two of the men had shovels with which they were madly shoveling snow. I wondered what it was all about until I heard Malcolm exclaim "And to think it's all my fault for not letting him ski jump when he had set his heart on it."

On realizing what had happened, I somewhat coyly emerged from my lair to be greeted with roars of laughter from the men, and by sour looks from some of the ladies who had been kept waiting for their turn at the loo.

Well that was the end of my Canadian honning trip because after that Malcolm and his partner gave me up in despair and sent me off to railhead in a hired sleigh and I couldn't think why, if sleighs could be hired, anyone would travel on snowshoes.

When I got back to Montreal, I learned that No. 1 had filed divorce proceedings, which, of course, was the handiwork of old Mrs. Pontoon to whom I had always been *persona non grata.*

Our marriage hadn't been a great success, partly due to difference of background, and partly to stress of circumstance, and although I didn't know it at the time, I was on the edge of a breakdown which probably made me very unpleasant to live with.

However, even with full knowledge of these facts, my first divorce came as a shock, but later I got quite used to having them.

CHAPTER 15

DEEPER INTO THE JUNGLE

Meantime Cohen wrote to say that he had some people in Chicago who were interested in my invention and to come on over, which I did. So we had an extra large steak which Cohen cooked over a pot of charcoal. Then he went to a safe and brought out a bottle and I had one swallow and the torpedo struck me amidships. I keeled over and sank with all hands.

When I came to, Cohen was standing over me with a fire extinguisher in his hand and he said not to breathe out until he had quenched the charcoal fire, because some serious explosions had happened that way. One of his clients who had been a Rabbi had been blown to shreds while fixing the seven candles in the altar candlestick.

The stuff Cohen made in his cellar was not his regular line which was imported from Canada, but sometimes shipments

went astray and as he didn't like to disappoint his regular customers, he extemporized somewhat.

Cohen's legitimate business was conducted with the aid of a Canadian farmer called McAvity whose property lay right across the international boundary. The property included a small lake through which the imaginary line of demarcation ran and since McAvity was an ardent fisherman he could be seen every evening, as his day's work was done, trolling and trolling in his punt.

What couldn't be seen, if any curious eyes had been watching, was that McAvity had a truckload of best imported Scotch stowed in a submarine, which lay submerged under the punt and attached to it with cords.

At Cohen's urgent request, I had designed this submarine for him while I was still in Johannesburg. It consisted of 20 feet of 36 inch pipe with a hatch in the middle and welded on conical ends. There was also a wing pump attachment for pumping out ballast and a valve to let ballast in.

What McAvity did to earn his share of the profits was to stow a truckload of liquor into the submarine at night when it was tied up at his dock, and then close the hatch and submerge his craft by letting water into the ballast tanks. After this he would row his punt over the submerged sub and secure the two craft together with a cord at each end. The cord ran from a hook on the topside of the sub to a hole in the stem post or stern post of the punt and thence, through a slip knot, to its companion cord.

Then McAvity would retire for the night and in the morning he would go about his farm chores as usual, but as the afternoon waned he would take his punt and his fishing tackle and he would troll for lake trout with a spinner.

As McAvity trolled the submarine trolled too, submerged of

course, because he had given it a few pounds of negative buoyancy and the two cords fore and aft held it in place.

On the one occasion when a U.S. customs officer had borrowed a rowboat and come out to look at McAvity, he had slipped the knot in the cord and it had run out through the holes in the stem post and stern post and the submarine had quietly sunk. So the customs man found absolutely nothing to arouse suspicion and after that McAvity was never again molested.

To prevent losing the submarine and its cargo, McAvity had dropped overboard a fishing sinker with a cork attached so as to buoy the spot where the disaster had occurred.

A few days later, McAvity's nephew came for a visit and he was ever so fond of swimming and diving. One evening when he was diving out in mid-lake, he came upon what looked like a sunken tank. Uncle said to bring it home and have a look at it.

So the nephew tied the tow cords which he found attached to the sunken object back onto the punt like Uncle said and he towed the object home. When he got back to college his uncle had bought him a brand new Harley-Davidson.

On normal occasions, however, the routine went as follows: McAvity trolled his punt at sunset over to the American shore until he felt the submarine ground, which relieved the tension on the cords and registered a slight bump in the punt. He then untied his slip knot, and rowed peacefully home, $500 richer than he had been in the morning.

Cohen's boys were meantime either "honning" or fishing from the shore according to season, or else, complete with women and children, they were just picnicking in the woods. If any suspicious-looking characters, or for that matter any characters, were around, they did just that and then went

home, but if they were unmolested they waded out to the submarine, whose arrival they had watched, and they pumped out ballast until the hatch emerged. Then they hauled her in as far as they could and unloaded.

When the cargo was all safely stowed aboard the several cars the party had with them, they closed the hatch of the submarine and pushed her out into deeper water and they opened the ballast valve until she had a few pounds of negative buoyancy.

After that they stuck an empty beer bottle in the sand to mark the spot and went their several ways, each car travelling a different route in case of accidents.

So Cohen got rich while most people were getting poor and he would have gotten still richer but he had to pay protection money to a Mr. Capone, who presided over the imported luxury goods trade in Chicago.

Cohen had made a number of influential friends, one of whom was the late Mr. Samuel Insull. Mr. Insull himself was a teetotaler but it may have been in some other connection that he knew Cohen, whom he liked and respected.

Cohen had spoken to Mr. Insull about me and the great man agreed to see me and made an appointment for 11 a.m. on Tuesday at his Chicago office, but while we were out the maid took a message saying I must make it 10 a.m. on Wednesday. She wrote a note before she went home "Mr. Install say, Wensday not Tuesday for gentleman see him." Cohen came with me when I went for my interview and as our taxi rounded the block where Insull had his office, I could see something was wrong because there was a crowd outside the door. I thought perhaps there had been an accident, as indeed there had.

Before we could get out of the taxi, an official grabbed the door and dragged us out. Someone else paid off the driver, and

a third official with a freely perspiring bald head rushed out of the lobby and said "Oh Mr. Cohen, Mr. Insull is very upset because you are an hour late, come with me please" and dashed back into the building.

When we got to the elevators there was one waiting for us, and into this we were herded at a rate that would have made Mr. Rhum green with envy, and up into the sky we dashed at 90 miles an hour.

At the top floor, the elevator jammed on its brakes and out we flew into the lobby, where a little knot of officials were wringing their hands. When they saw us they surrounded us like S.S. boys rounding up a trades union leader, and marched us at the double into the Presence.

And what do you think Mr. Insull was doing? He was sitting at a huge bare mahogany table with nothing on it but a huge white blotter, and he was doodling all over it. It was covered with doodles from coast to coast, because in an hour Mr. Insull could doodle several square feet when he had time to spare, which happened about once in every century.

Under all these distressing circumstances, Mr. Insull was pretty decent. He heard my tale and saw my sample and said "None of the big outfits has any money to spend these days, but I know of one little firm that has some cash and I will give you a card to them." So then he wrote on a card "This might interest you" and I was on my way.

The upshot of this was that I found a licensee who liked my product and had a similar but non-competing line so that the same plant could make both items and the same sales force could sell them. He had some cash to spend and we made a deal.

Not knowing what the future had in store and having heard so much about American ways, I took it for granted that our

deal would be swift, which it was. In just two sessions of one hour each, without the incumbrance of lawyers, we drafted and signed a license agreement which has worked smoothly for nearly 30 years.

This was the middlewest at its best. But later I saw it in another of its traditional roles.

For the benefit of other visitors to the American scene, I should explain that such deals are not always so speedy. American corporations can be slower than the Kremlin passing on a proposal to amalgamate with the Catholic Church.

I had some time in which to cool my heels in Chicago while various technical problems were being discussed, and I found an unexpected occupation in the search for Bella.

Bella was a school friend of Joy's and she was on her way from England to the West Coast via Chicago, where, for some quaint reason, the American transcontinental trains just bog down and give up trying.

I was to meet Bella and look after her for the considerable time she would be in Chicago while the train people played their wearisome game of blindman's buff, but somehow I missed her at the depot as we call a railway station, and she vanished.

I was not altogether surprised by this because Bella was not only accident prone in a large way, but she actually created accidents, as if by magic.

When we had been kids together, it was Bella who contracted measles, chicken pox, mumps, pinkeye and ringworm, and who slipped on the ice and broke her leg. And it was Bella who fell under the wheel of the runaway baker's van, though it missed the rest of us.

When we played hide and seek, it was Bella who sat in a freshly laid cow pat as she crouched behind a bush, and when

we bicycled, the bag Bella carried on the handlebars locked the steering mechanism and she wizzed out of control down a steep hill and head first into a stiff English hedgerow.

For Bella to make an alliance with any young officer in World War I was to sign his death warrant, and we lost count of her fiancés.

After the war, it had to be Bella's father who ran off with the cash and the stenographer, thus plunging the family from affluence into abject poverty. Bella's mother and her good looking, elder sister sat down and sulked under the blow, but not Bella. Bella was a brave heart and she quickly forgot her family's past wealth and her own elegant girlhood and off she went to earn the daily bread.

To do this Bella had to travel to and from her office in the city and the journey was seldom made without mishap. Busses would collide and trains would be derailed at the very sight of Bella, and if they remained on an even keel, some other misfortune would overtake her. When Bella went by subway, the doors would close just as she was half in, and she would ride with her tail sticking out into the dark whirlwind. When she went by train she would put her head out of the window to see where she was, and the window would mysteriously close and hold her as if in a vise, and once while she was thus postured an elderly gentleman availed himself of the opportunity to fondle her rear end.

What made it harder to bear was that the pay check for which all these efforts were made and all these risks were run, seldom reached its destination. As a rule Bella worked for firms which got in arrears with her money and then went broke; but if by any chance she did actually collect her pay then it was an uninsurable risk that someone would steal her handbag on the way home.

But Bella worked doggedly on. She was short, thick set, and red faced, and always out of breath. She had attractive gray eyes, and she was cheerful and worked like a horse to keep her family.

Bella's big chance came when some well-to-do relatives in California offered her a job in their prosperous business and she was on her way when she vanished.

Having missed her at the depot I thought she might have gone to Cohen's apartment of which she had the address, but she was not there and she was not at the outward bound station and I got worried.

Knowing his Chicago, Cohen got worried too and for anyone else but Bella he would have contacted the police by phone, but though the telephone in America hardly ever fails, it failed for Bella. Just then one of Cohen's salesmen came in, so we asked this salesman to phone the police. He said he would on his way to deliver a package to a client, but he never did so, because he had something else on his mind.

Cohen's relationship with the Chicago police was more than cordial, and none of his salesmen was ever picked up but there was a new man on duty and he picked up this salesman with his cargo of imported luxury goods.

In the general excitement that this caused, everyone except me forgot Bella including Bella, because as we discovered later she was in a coma in a Catholic hospital.

I didn't forget Bella but I did nothing about her because I assumed the police were doing it. If it hadn't been for Cohen's party, she might never again have been seen by mortal eye.

About a week after Bella's disappearance, Cohen decided to throw a party and the first thing I saw was a furniture van outside the door, with 20 double box mattresses in it. They

were distributed all over the house because although Cohen only occupied one floor the whole house belonged to him and the other rooms were used in connection with the imported luxury goods.

Cohen then gave me a key to my room and told me to keep it locked and when I asked him about all the mattresses all he said was "Betcha usem" which, as it turned out, I did.

Cohen's idea of a party was to provide an unlimited supply of hard liquor and of grilled steak and anyone who knew there was a party could just drop in and get plastered without the formality of being invited.

A lot of odd looking characters did drop in, and as the days flew by more and more people heard about Cohen's party and more and more odd looking characters dropped in, but no one except Cohen and me saw it right through from Genesis to Revelation.

Among Cohen's guests were a fair sprinkling of eligible young women and that was where the mattresses came in handy. When your partner showed signs of fatigue, or of satiety, you led her firmly by the hand to the nearest mattress and lay down beside her for a quiet hour's relaxation.

At some point during the second or third day the Chief of Police dropped in with a ravishing blonde in his wake, and we got chatting about this and that and I said "Have you heard anything about Bella?" and he said "Bella who?" and I said "Bella —— of course" and he said "Son, that stuff of Cohen's isn't always so good and you better go easy." We bantered away for quite a while in this vein before I realized that the chief just didn't know about Bella.

So then I went and roused Cohen up from his mattress because he had locked his room and lost the key, and he came

with me to speak to the chief who didn't suspect Cohen of drinking his own liquor and the whole Bella story came out.

When I explained that Bella was quite young and rather good looking and that she had been missing for a week or so, the chief, knowing his Chicago and what Mr. Capone could do with young girls, got quite excited and he went off to police headquarters to see about it.

Since he couldn't take his blonde to police headquarters, and as Cohen already had one, he left her in my care and I think I can modestly say that I did look after her rather well.

The upshot of it all was that eventually Bella was located in the Catholic hospital where they had taken her because of the crucifix she always wore around her neck like a trade union badge. I think if I were one, I'd have the badge tattooed somewhere so there wouldn't be any chance of a mistake.

Bella was suffering from severe concussion and it was some time before we got this story out of her which was as follows: Bella got thoroughly confused about Chicago Time and the New York Time and Eastern Daylight Time as anyone but the Astronomer Royal is apt to do, and she had set her watch an hour too slow. Not knowing that the reverse is usually the rule, she thought her train was ahead of schedule and as I was nowhere to be seen, she decided to go for a stroll.

Acknowledging her propensity for misadventure, she took her handbag, or pocketbook as we so strangely call it, with all her papers and cash, and put it inside her valise which she then checked at the depot, so when the brick hit her she had no identification except the baggage check, which got mislaid.

The brick that hit Bella came out of a ten foot wall which ran around the freight yard behind the depot. A shunting locomotive had overrun its tracks and had pushed down the

wall right onto the sidewalk. The sidewalk was crowded at the time, which was 8 a.m. and the rush hour, but no one got hit except Bella, on top of whom the whole avalanche fell.

Bella, like any good Briton, had been nourished since infancy on hair raising tales of Chicago, and within ten minutes of her arrival, a 15 foot high locomotive had come rushing at her from behind a wall, and it was the shock as much as the actual concussion that laid her out.

Cohen made a big donation to the Catholic church, and we took Bella home and fixed her up and she went on her way to San Francisco, but she was never the same again. Her once cheerful face had a strained look and she became absent-minded.

Bella died soon after because although she had a lion's heart she did not have a strong one.

On the voyage over we had made friends with a vivacious American type whose parents had somewhat optimistically christened her Purity and she invited me to visit her home in Charleston, S.C.

Purity worked at an unusual trade—she was receptionist at a nudist camp in a southern town, but in the winter the camp closed down and she had been on a visit to Paris.

Purity's exit from Paris had been spectacular, and the purser gave me a blow by blow account of the proceedings, which were as follows:

One of Purity's clients at the nudist camp had been a young German not inappropriately named Fokker who had invited her over to Paris where he worked unobtrusively for the Third Reich. It is a sound axiom that German women may fraternize with American men and many a happy home results from the association, but American women with German men are the

answer to the conundrum "What happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object?"

So Wolf, as our hero was called, did not find Purity up to his requirements and when I got to know her better, I understood his point of view.

Because of his clandestine activities, Wolf could not invite notoriety in getting rid of Purity, who in her way was well liked in Paris, so he resorted to a stratagem.

Purity loved to drink all forms of liquor at all times, and what she liked most was what Tio Bebino had liked most—to have farewell drinks on an outward bound liner.

So one day Wolf suggested that they should run down to Cherbourg to see a very dear friend off to America. Purity fairly bounced up and down with glee and ran off to fix up her face, and when they got aboard there was a party in full progress, with flowers in the cabin and all the trimmings and Purity had herself a time. But Purity never drank enough, however much it may have seemed, that she forgot what was good for Purity, and when the whistle blew she said to Wolf that it was time to go. Wolf said just one for the road, and then the second whistle blew and Purity said "Wolf we have to beat it" and Wolf said "I have to beat it but you don't, because you are the dear friend I am seeing off" and he edged towards the door.

Purity got quite pale and said "But I can't go without my things" and Wolf said "All your things are here, my sister packed them and brought them down" and he gave her an envelope with $200 cash and ran like a stag to the gangplank which one of the officers was holding for him.

So Paris laughed heartily and Wolf became quite a popular figure even though everyone knew exactly what he was up to.

Of course if I had been prudent I would have taken note of all this but there is an old Navy cliché that a standing ——

has no conscience, and the purser's slanderous tale only made me feel all Galahad about Purity and I made up my mind to visit her as soon as my business engagements would permit.

My business engagements permitting, I decided to take Purity up on her offer and I set out for —— where Purity plied her trade.

The nudist camp consisted of a clearing in a pine forest rather like a golf course, with log cabins for the inmates and a high barbed wire fence beyond a ring of trees, so that the curious could not intrude.

Purity, dressed rather like a dentist's nurse, presided at the entrance lodge, which was so contrived that you could not see beyond it, and after signing a register and a waiver of claims for damages and after paying an initiation fee, you were admitted.

The first thing that happened to you was you went to a locker room again like in a golf club and took off all your clothes and hung them up in a steel locker. Women neophytes then entered the arena as naked as the day they were born, but just in case anything arose unexpectedly, gentlemen were given a little pair of rather loose fitting pants, which they wore until the sight of several tons of nude female flesh ceased to interest them.

As a matter of fact, except for Purity, who was fully dressed most of the time, I saw no female flesh and no male flesh that was attractive at this camp. I fully agree with the pro-nudism faction who argue that nakedness reduces rather than increases the human libido. As a result, I was able to discard my pants after the second day.

The camp was apparently run on communal lines by a soviet or committee and I never could find out who owned it, but it could have been a foreign embassy.

Except for the absence of clothes, which one gets used to very quickly, the camp resembled Fire Island or any of these institutions of a pseudo-intellectual type, and there was the usual left wing drivel of the dissatisfied.

Purity in particular was a half-baked Marxist and talked ceaselessly in a loud booming voice about the desirability of disinheriting the rich and uplifting the poor, but she was a southern gal for all that, and she drew the line at uplifting nigras.

While I was in the camp the railway locomotive drivers were striking because there was some talk of Negro firemen joining their union and the fact is that all left wing institutions (including trade unions) are as class conscious and as money conscious as any group of Wall Street bankers. They want to take what the man above them has, in the blessed name of equality, but they don't want to give to the man below them.

To keep us occupied we had some rather half-hearted calisthenics in the morning, and if the undraped human form is divine while standing up, it certainly is less so when stooping to touch the toes or when doing knee bending exercises.

In the afternoons there were lectures for those who wanted to attend, usually of a socialist nature, and after supper we could sit around the campfire with blankets draped over our nakedness and sing.

I should have liked to have sung some gun room ballads to the faithful, but an air of dreary piety hung over the assembly and I was always expecting someone to start up a hymn.

Meals were served on wooden trestle tables under the pine trees and we all sat on benches in a row. I never could resist looking across my table to the one beyond and to its chubby row of naked bottoms bulging over the backless wooden bench like so many kidneys on a butcher's counter.

The meals might have been fun except for a few obstacles which were as follows: Firstly, the soviet of officials who ran the catering were either very dishonest or very incompetent or both, and though we paid quite liberally for our food, it was of poor quality. Secondly, the comrade who did the cooking knew more about Marxist dialectic than about his job, and managed to botch even the simplest dishes, and in the end I had to go and help him because I can cook. And thirdly, as might be expected, the menu consisted of the weirdest and most revolting dietary items.

We were not supposed to drink in this pseudo-religious brotherhood, and that was what led to Purity's downfall. Purity's first concern whenever she got to a new place was to spray some charm over the local police and obtain from them the name and address of a reliable bootlegger and she was never without her noggin of hootch.

I suspect that Purity was inclined to be amorous even when sober, though I never saw her in that state, but in her normal or inebriated state she was a female vampire, and I must admit I found it was fun.

Purity was a ripe 30 when we met and she had been fully developed since she was 12, and in these days, fully developed girls do not waste their fragrance for long upon the desert air. In the 18 years of her apprenticeship, Purity had not by any means been idle or inattentive. Her proficiency and enthusiasm were a revelation.

The trouble was that Purity was the noisy type and a comrade in an adjoining cabin heard strange sounds coming from my department night after night and he reported same to the committee.

The committee accordingly draped itself in blankets and surrounded my cabin, and at a critical moment our privacy was

invaded by what I first took to be a tribe of Indians—and scalp us they certainly did.

So exactly 5,933 years after the fall of Adam, Purity and I were told to don our fig leaves and depart from the socialist Eden, and I can't say I was sorry.

I must admit I have been most fortunate in my first glimpses of new places which always come up to expectation and Purity's ancestral home was a huge, old, white mansion but it hadn't seen white paint since the Civil War, with the tall columns in the front and all the trimmings.

Purity's father, Colonel Abercrombie, was tall, lean and red faced with white hair and whiskers and the inevitable black bow tie, and I never for the life of me could understand one word of what he said.

Mrs. Abercrombie was tall and tightly laced in a dark satin dress, and she, too, had a mop of white hair and a neat gray moustache. Both the Abercrombies were always at all times immaculately and correctly dressed and they were great churchgoers and said a long grace at every meal before you could sit down.

Purity at five feet eleven inches in her rather shapely bare feet was the smallest and quietest of the family and was always known as Lil' Purty. There was an elder sister called Virtue who was larger and louder, and two brothers in the six foot six category.

After grace was said and we all sat down to eat, everyone talked at once and the loudest shouter was the one to be heard most above the din.

Mrs. Abercrombie would then produce a whole series of little gadgets and start cooking various indigestible southern whatnots right at the table, and Purity would grab my free

hand and kiss it, even at breakfast and we were only just out of bed.

The Abercrombies only occupied a small part of their house and the rest was rented to roomers. A roomer is a type who apparently exists without food since the room he rents has toilet but not kitchen facilities and he does not eat with the family as in an English boarding house.

Colonel and Mrs. Abercrombie had a bedroom of their own and Purity and Virtue shared a room, but the two boys and I shared a vast loft which ran the whole length and breadth of the house. You climbed into this loft by means of a ladder and a hatch and when you were up you found nothing but an acre of bare boards, with two naked electric light bulbs, three iron beds and three kitchen chairs.

The two boys lived at the south pole of this region and my iron bed and chair were located at the north pole, conveniently near the hatch, and by shouting we could converse with reasonable success.

No sooner was I in bed after shouting goodnight to the brothers, when the ladder gave an ominous creak and up through the hatch appeared first the head and then the ample bosom of Purity, clad in a diaphanous silk nightgown.

Before I could stop her, she had climbed into bed with me, and a brisk shouted conversation with her brothers ensued. The elder brother whose name was Ray shouted "Better watch the bed Purty, when Virt was with Maxwell last week the leg bruk clean offn" to which Purity replied "Yeah, Virt told me, but I don't act so vigorous as Virt and Phil here is a perfect gentleman." To Purity I said "Surely not Purity, this can't be true about Virt" and she said "Sure is true, Virt and Max bruk ever bed in the house, and Dad said for them to sleep in the cowshed if they wanted to act so enthusiastic."

Presently the younger brother, Chalmers, called out, "Seems like Phil ain't got the stuff in him Elmer had" and Purity yelled back "Phil's O.K. Chal, he's just a bit shy that's all but I'll soon fix him."

Well Purity fixed me all right and after three weeks of Purity's playful ways and of old Colonel Abercrombie's home made mint juleps, I was as shaky as Guy Fawkes after he had been tortured, and his signature was almost illegible, as you can see if you visit the Tower of London.

Despite their pious ways, and no bad language in the house, the Abercrombies and all their numerous relatives took sex as something which the good Lord had intended to be used, and there were no holds barred among the faithful.

Chalmers, who was only 16, hadn't yet got him a girl and as he had to have an outlet, the family found him a dollar every Wednesday and he trotted off as pleased as punch to the local brothel.

Finding a dollar in the Abercrombie household was a perennial sport and I don't know how the game was played before I came, but after my arrival it went like this. An Abercrombie would yell "Aw Phillie, you got a duller?" to which, after a few preliminary skirmishes I would guardedly reply "No, why?" A. "Goddam nigger bitch (Pardon Mom, pardon Dad) won't deliver no wash except she get a duller." Me. "Is my laundry included?" A. "Yep, no clean shirt for you unless we pay this here goddam (Pardon Mom, pardon Dad) nigger, er, woman like she says." Me "O.K., O.K." A. (Yelling) "Aw Phillie you got a duller?" Me. "No!" "Too bad, Dad says he was making us all a ten gallon of mint julep but he run out of antifreeze, and filling station won't give no more credit on antifreeze." Me. "O.K., O.K."

Well as I said, three weeks of this was about all that flesh and blood could take and anyway I had a letter from Chicago saying they were ready for me and after spending a day or two with my new friends, I returned to England.

CHAPTER 16

ARMAGEDDON ROUND II

When I got back to London I found that while the cat had been away the mice had been having fun.

Edgar was nowhere to be found, nor was the balance of my bank account, which he later explained was his share of the partnership, though I never understood how I had acquired a partner.

Through lack of attention, my consulting practice had fizzled out and Bleedwhite and Co., had been up to high jinks in Johannesburg. This wasn't altogether their fault because they had wanted to consult me but they didn't have my address in the States. When they had cabled Edgar for this information they had received the laconic reply, "See Genesis 4, Verse 9" which, on investigation, read "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Apparently our South African licensee had taken the primrose path of ceasing to pay royalties, which is a habit licensees

do acquire if not firmly handled, and my Company was virtually without funds. Nor were these forthcoming from other sources because my friends in Chicago had not had time to get going and, to my annoyance, my English licensees had not even made a start, so I decided to part company with them.

Fortunately they were decent people and relinquished the license without too much fuss, but I earnestly recommend that other inventors insist on a minimum royalty clause, so that the licensee has to perform or quit.—Translated into nautical terms "Keep both ends of your line inboard so *you* can cast off when *you* think fit without having to ask the other fellow's permission."

Just as my position seemed hopeless, I received on the same day, which happened to be my 33rd birthday, two life saving cables.

Cable No. 1 was from Mr. Bailie in Johannesburg saying that due to the death of a stockholder he had been able to acquire in my name, a substantial block of shares in my Company. This gave me control which I never should have parted with, and belatedly acting on Counsellor Graham's advice, I fired Bleedwhite, Cuttlefish and Skate. With the reins of control tightly in my own hands, I managed in time to tidy up the mess.

Cable No. 2 was a money order from Rio and it said "Senhor Dodd give me address and I send £5000 now but is much more here for you—Love Maria."

So I had cast my bread upon the waters of the Janeiro River and after many days a man-sized cake came floating to my door. If Maria hadn't reminded me, I never would have given another thought to my real estate venture in far-off Brazil. Dear Maria, they don't often come in that model.

Later I heard from Mr. Dodd who wrote "Maria has be-

come quite stout and always wears a respectable black gown. She is busy about numerous charities and speaks with a most elegant Lisbon accent."

When I got Maria's cable, I surprised my ladylike London stenographer by bursting into tears and rushing from the room. After that, when the tension relaxed, I became quite ill.

Apart from my health, however, which never had been good, fortune now smiled on me from several directions at once.

For what he called my moral support in the imported luxury trade, before the Roosevelt Administration spoiled everybody's fun, Cohen sent me a sizable chunk of his earnings. I would not have been so happy about this if I had known why Cohen did it, which was because, like many very fat people, he was destined to die young and his doctor had told him he did not have much longer to live.

Cohen's tax accountant had also raised some doubts as to what attitude the Probate Court might take and so, like the good chap he was, Cohen decided to distribute before that Court had jurisdiction.

On learning of Cohen's generosity, McAvity, who was getting on in years, also made me a handsome present, which he said was a belated fee for designing his submarine.

What subsequently saved my life was that I left McAvity's money in my bank in Toronto, so when all else had been filched from me, I still had that hidden nest egg.

Since the licensee idea hadn't worked out, I decided to do my own manufacturing. I used the money I had just acquired to finance a little old plant in what is known in England as "The Black Country," on the western edge of which is a not unattractive industrial town called Wolverhampton.

I ended up in Wolverhampton because, when I had been a consulting engineer in London, one of my clients in Rhodesia

had a raft of aluminum plates which had buckled, and then wanted to know if there was a way to straighten them.

After some high class sleuthing I found, in a dingy back street in Wolverhampton, a little old workshop which hadn't been modernized since Napoleon resided in Elba. All the machines in this shop were driven by an old steam engine through a complicated system of shafts and belts, such as old Mr. Dreary would have installed. Because the shop was pitch dark inside, the owner had placed a candle on each machine.

The owner was an old, old man called Mr. Joshua Bigwood, and despite deceptive appearances, he made a lot of money from some very good lines. One of his lines was the plate straightening machine which worked like this.

By means of powerful clamps, the machine caught hold of the plate at each end and pulled it so hard, that it actually stretched a little. The plate got such a fright at being stretched that it forgot all its minor strains, which were buckling it, and emerged relaxed, happy, and dead flat.

I have a good reason for telling you all this as you will see later.

In conversation with old Mr. Bigwood, I learned that there was a factory building going cheap. He took me round to see it and introduced me to the owners, Lloyds Bank Limited. The bank had taken possession of the building some years previously, when the owner had hanged himself from a rafter on the premises and local superstition made it hard to sell.

Because of something Moses had said, to which England had wisely listened, the banks would readily lend up to 90 per cent on property in the United Kingdom. Moses had said "Thou shalt not be an usurer to a brother that is poor by thee," and so in England, if you cannot afford to operate a building, you can close it down and pay no more real estate taxes, or "rates" as

they call them, until you re-open it. Because of this, financing the purchase of a building in England involves less risk than it does elsewhere throughout the world.

Anyway, rates or no rates, Lloyds were sick and tired of having this old building on their books and they very obligingly lent me 100 per cent of its value!

Lloyds said I was the first Royal Navy type they had ever financed in industry and I was something of an oddity to them because, as a rule, retired Naval Officers do not work at such menial tasks. As a result, they treated me with more than paternal solicitude.

Of course, the plant in Wolverhampton was only an assembly shop and I had to buy all the castings and other parts, including the rubber diaphragms, required to produce Saunders Valves in, believe it or not, 30,000 varieties—which is one in the eye for Mr. Heinz!

The depression was by no means over, and British manufacturers seemed eager to secure my business and would sometimes even buy me a two shilling lunch, but having obtained my signature on a contract, nothing on earth would induce them to deliver the goods.

As a result, I lived in a frenzy of irritation and would sometimes throw handy objects like a typewriter or a telephone on the floor—but as a matter of fact, in the 1930's people in England often threw their telephones around and so my conduct was considered quite normal.

Just as I was at my wit's end to maintain an ever increasing production—from zero to about $10,000,000 in ten years—a very odd thing happened. Very odd indeed, as you will agree.

For my thirty-eighth birthday, May 1937, Kathleen, who is rather inclined to dabble in the occult, sent me my horoscope

which said "a brisk new movement sets in, which will carry your affairs to success."

As I was reading this at breakfast, the BBC news came on and what do you think was the news item of the day?

An act of Parliament called "The Special Areas Act" set up a branch of the Treasury to finance, under very favorable terms, certain classes of industry and I was in that class!

Seizing my derby hat and umbrella I dashed for the next train to London and I was the very first applicant under the new loan.

To cut a long story short, they lent me, in one way and another, $1,000,000, and with that I built a self-contained dream plant in a "how green was my Welsh valley."—Far from the madding bombs, as it turned out.

When my principal competitor came to have a look, I showed him proudly around, gave him lunch with all the trimmings and said "Well after all, Ken, old boy, if you *do* have to pay another five per cent income tax, you won't grudge the money for such a good cause, will you?" On hearing this Ken uttered a pitiable moan and swooned clean away.

Of course, it was quite an undertaking for me, with no previous training in quantity production processes or methods, but it paid off, and for the moment at least, I had won my 30,000 to 1 gamble.

Just then, of course, two bombshells burst right under me.

The first was the news about my elder brother Kenneth. At an early stage in his missionary career, Ken had discovered that we had more to learn from the East than it had from us, and he had ended up as a professor of oriental religions at the University of California.

Ken's new masters had sent him to Japan to the Monastery

of Fujiama, to study some obscure philosophy, and until we got the radio telegram from a homeward-bound passenger ship, that was where we believed he was.

The telegram said "Will two *male* members of the Saunders family please be at Tilbury Docks (near London) to meet Professor Kenneth Saunders at such and such a time."

So Edgar and I went, me on crutches, because in the meantime I had become a cripple due to an accident while fishing in the River Wye, and there was poor Ken, under guard and madder than a March hare.

Someone, we never knew who, had shipped Ken from Kobe in Japan, to London, paid his passage and had arranged for his care in a locked cabin under guard, and someone had seen to it that we met him.

Ken was an old man at 55. He had lost almost all his hair, but there were some white wisps around the sides and back, and he had a straggly, snow-white beard. His face was almost as white as his hair and his high bridged aquiline nose had become a beak, and his dark staring eyes were horrible.

Edgar and I took Ken home to Eastbourne where Mom and Joy looked after him. Dr. Adams came every day to see him, and never charged us anything and Ken got a little better, but not much.

The trouble was none of us would believe what Ken said, although in retrospect I am sure it was the truth. Ken said that the Japanese had given him a drug which had burnt all his insides, but all we said "There, there, yes of course, now eat your nice dinner," but Ken would not eat in front of us because he said he had no insides but if we left him, when we came back, his plate had mysteriously emptied itself.

Another thing Ken used to do, was to say he was too weak

to walk upstairs and he would lie on the livingroom floor. Edgar and I would have to carry him up and put him to bed and then, as soon as we said goodnight, and had gone down to be with Mom and Joy, Ken would arrive fully dressed and would take an intelligent part in the conversation, especially if we had company.

When I asked Ken if his religion didn't help him any, he looked at me in surprise and said "Oh, you don't really suppose I believed any of that nonsense, do you?"

It was all rather horrible and we all thought Ken had just gone crazy in the ordinary course of living and I began to think it was in the family and I was going crazy too.

It was only after Rudolph Hess had become insane in an English jail that I remembered about Van der Lubbe and the Reichstag fire, and about what Ken said the Japanese had done to him. I guess he knew too much, or they thought he did, which comes to the same thing. Later, of course, there was also the case of Cardinal Mindszenty.

One day, Ken asked me to kill him and said he would pay me £1000 for my trouble although I knew he didn't have a nickel. Because of all his play acting, I thought nothing of this at the time, and then one day, when I was down at the plant in Wales, someone handed me the news clipping which read "Tragic death of Professor Kenneth Saunders" and then went on to give the details.

Apparently poor demented Ken had sneaked out of the house, while Mom and Joy were otherwise occupied, with a rug over his arm and a two gallon can of kerosene. His malady had crippled him so he could hardly walk, but he had somehow walked several miles, carrying his rug and his two gallon can, to a wood that grew on the Downs behind the town.

In this wood, there was a disused hut and Ken had gone into it, shut the door, put the rug over him and then poured kerosene all over himself and set fire to it.

To save our feelings, Dr. Adams said the fumes would have overcome Ken before he felt any pain and that may have been true because he showed no signs of having moved after he lay down.

It was a great shock to all of us, and Mom, who was well over 70, went a little bit round the bend too, and used to hold long conversations with her dead boy. How Joy stood it at close quarters, I don't know.

The second bombshell which rocked me somewhat, was that, except for Mr. Churchill, all our politicians and all our newspapers had been playing a silly game of "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?" The wolf had now sprung and had already swallowed several Scandinavian piglets.

So we had the war, which the war to end wars hadn't ended, and all the fine speeches had been false. It was too much for me, coming as it did, at the very height of my career as an inventor with the world at my feet.

I think we of the "Lost Generation" suffered more in our war than our successors did in theirs. Apart from more of us being killed, we were less prepared for it and less cynical. We actually believed all the ballyhoo about "War to end wars," and "World safe for democracy," and "England fit for heroes." The younger generation had no such illusions and so were not disillusioned.

To me, it seemed altogether too horrible that all our sacrifice had been wantonly sacrificed. It was like one of those silly, Edwardian novels our governess used to read to us as kids. The blue-eyed hero, Sir Percy Galahad, is attacked from behind by the villain, Herman Schkunk, whom he eventually

overpowers and then instead of slitting Herman's throat Percy lets him up again and returns his weapon to him. This enables the author to repeat the theme, with minor variations, ad nauseum until, while shaving, Herman accidentally slits his throat on the last page.

Frankly there is no future in turning the other cheek to a head hunting savage. He merely chortles "Me likem too much kai-kai Long Pig" and pops you into the pot. A more realistic approach to the question was made by God in 1000 B.C., who told King Saul that the only good Amalekite was a dead Amalekite (1 Samuel, 15).

We have no evidence that Saul's brand of Amalekite actually tortured captive Israelites whereas we knew for a fact that ours did, and not having seen Allan Solomon's Family Tree I believed myself to be eligible!

I was torn between conflicting emotions. The first was to put all possible distance between me and the Gestapo, because, as you will recall, when I was small I had the treatment in a small way, and no one, who has experienced the abject cringing terror once, will invite a repetition.

The other emotion stemmed from the old school tie, which tugged me in the direction of the Admiralty Steps at Whitehall. Emotion No. 2 temporarily prevailing, I made an appointment to see my old classmate Teddy Dangerfield, who was then a Captain, R.N., and who said he could find me something useful to do.

Except for an accident I probably would have been accepted back into the fold with two and one-half stripes and, if still alive in 1946, I would then have had three.

The accident which altered everything was that when I was already in sight of the Admiralty Arch, I saw Arthur.

Arthur had become quite a senior naval type and was pranc-

ing along on the balls of his little boxer's feet, with his head down between his massive shoulders like a rutting bison and his little bison's brown eyes almost hidden behind his high, fleshy cheekbones.

One look was enough for me and before he saw me, I had bolted so I didn't ever get to see Teddy, who must have been puzzled. Instead I ran like a hare to Thomas Cook's office in Trafalgar Square and bought me a berth on the very next boat to New York.

When I arrived in New York, I found that Cohen was dead so I had no close friend in America. The British Treasury had also confiscated all my dollar royalties and added them to an already topheavy sterling income, which they then proceeded to confiscate.

That was the detonator which fired the charge I had been building up ever since I fought the Ruggah hearties at Osborne, and I had a nervous breakdown.

I don't recommend you to try one, if you can do without. Everything went out of gear. One drink knocked me out. I couldn't eat, so my two favorite hobbies were denied me. The only thing I could swallow was milk which I have regarded with revulsion ever since Nanny tortured me with it. My normally rotund figure became a bag of bones, and I couldn't even drive a car without hitting things. I kept on losing my wallet and my passport and would even forget to adjust my dress before leaving.

I couldn't sleep and the slightest exertion made me cry. It's true too about the bells. Mine was a sort of telephone bell that could keep it up for hours. I also had rather odd aberrations which fortunately I had neither the money nor the energy to put into practice.

I suppose I am one of the few people to go so far round the bend and then come back—or have I?

In my financial extremity I went to see the boys in Chicago, with whom I had always been on friendly terms, and asked them for a small retaining fee or something to live on till I got better. To my surprise they stared stonily at me and said "England's gotten herself into another imperialistic war before she even paid her debts on the last one" and not a nickel did they offer me.

In the long run, this was bad policy because their license was non-exclusive and eventually I found another licensee from whom I draw a salary, not subject to exchange control.

I might add that when England goes to war she imposes taxes and controls upon her citizens that the most arrogant of the Caesars would have considered extortionate—and rightly too because Roman citizens would have rebelled at the mere mention of such ideas.

I was too ill to earn a living and I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't bumped into Blanche, my old friend of Rhodesian days, who had somehow disposed of her husband, the mining engineer and was living in Greenwich Village with another woman with whom she was in business. So I became their butler, and apron on tum I plied my latest trade, while Blanche and partner teetered off on their little high heels to earn our daily filet mignon.

At the risk of making myself unpopular with the union, I will divulge a secret. There isn't much work attached to keeping house for three adults and all this about "Oh, my back" and "My feet are *killing* me," is so much hooey, but when there are children that is something else again.

Anyway working for Blanche and Co. gave me a rest which

probably was mostly what I needed, only I still worried a lot about my business in England, which two quite young, but as it turned out competent, types were managing.

As a matter of fact, I had so set up the Saunders Valve industry that it has now run for a quarter of a century without anything being changed except that it grows all the time.

I also worried about my children in England, but they took after No. 1 and were blond Aryan types and if the worst came to the worst, they would probably have survived.

What finally cured me and believe me it was kill or cure, was that I remembered the trip Tio Bebino and I had made in the *Panto Fogo* and I decided to repeat the dose.

As I said before, the Exchange Control thugs had seized all my U.S. dollars but they didn't know about my secret cache in Toronto. Since by then Canada had her own beastly Exchange Control, I had to buy a boat in Canada and Blanche, who had a vacation, came along for the ride. After looking around I found just the boat I wanted in a boat yard in Keswick on Lake Simcoe.

Her name was *Norah* and she was a 26 foot Norwegian double ender with a good little motor, which, as it turned out, was rather important.

Norah had been built locally and she had certain essential features for the inland waters, namely draft only four feet and a folding mast. The latter is essential because you come to various fixed bridges that a tall mast would not pass under.

With the current and the prevailing northwest wind behind us to New York, we decided to sail the whole way except going through locks, of which there are 100. The English reader can visualize this trip by thinking about 1500 miles of Norfolk Broads, which the American reader can visualize as a river, and not some ladies.

Another reason for sailing all the way, apart from the fun, was after buying *Norah,* we only had 100 dollars left between us and so we had no money to buy gas.

For such a trip, you need at least one companion because while you steer and work the sails someone has to read a chart. In places, you need a quick answer as to your proper course.

Blanche was a wonderful companion but as a seawoman she had certain shortcomings: a) She had a highly developed BOS' which she supported on the most diminutive feet. Even when strictly sober on dry land, she was inclined to teeter rather than walk. This gave her a tendency to fall overboard, especially when the sun got below *Norah's* yardarm, which it did daily at noon.

When this happened it was touch and go whether I could haul Blanche back aboard over *Norah's* rather angular little gunwale without damaging said bos', but in the end I learned how to get the bos' aboard first, one at a time, and then haul in the remaining parts of Blanche in their proper sequence.

b) Blanche simply would *NOT* learn to distinguish between her right hand and her left, though I suspected that a wedding ring would have helped. I could have done a lot worse too, but as you will realize by now, on vital matters I can be relied on to make wrong decisions.

To complicate the "which way *now*" problem, when going East or South on this waterway you have to turn the chart upside down to read the words and of course this makes a right hand turn into a left hand and vice versa.

Despite these handicaps we managed all right until we got to the upper St. Lawrence River and then quite by mistake, we shot the Long Soo Rapids. As luck would have it, we had the sails down and motor running when I saw a fork in the river ahead and I said "Which way, Blanche, right or left?"

and she said "Right, dear" and I said "Blanche are you *sure?*" and she said, looking at the chart upside down and fingering rings on various fingers "*Quite* sure, dear."

So down we went, and over the buzz of *Norah*'s little motor there was a horrible growling, quite the most menacing sound I ever did hear. Cars and buses stopped to see the fun and the main line express stopped so the driver could get a better view by climbing onto his cab, and I am not sure, even, that one or two planes didn't stop in mid-air, because I was too busy to look—far too busy. In fact, except for the time the *Goliath* sank, it was the busiest few minutes of my life.

It only lasted a few minutes because the Long Soo is (or was before the new Seaway drained it) one and a half miles long and the current travels 20 miles an hour and in order to keep maximum steerage way I had *Norah's* motor at full buzz, which added another five miles an hour.

I don't know whether you've seen champion skiers at a Slalom race whizzing in and out between flags as if they were being attacked by hornets, but that was how I navigated *Norah* between the several dozen Scyllae and Charybdes with which the Long Soo is endowed by nature.

Not to spoil my story, I am not sure a small boat would hit most of the larger submerged rocks because the water zigzags round them and takes you with it with a sudden sideways jerk.

Mostly *Norah* leapt over the tops of combers like a thoroughbred at the Grand National but she decided to plunge through several and you never knew in advance whether she would jump or plunge. Luckily the fore hatch was closed and Blanche had dived below and closed the cockpit hatch like a trap door spide rdisappearing into its hole. She said afterwards that a fortune teller had told her she would die in her bed so she was just lying in her bunk in readiness.

Anyway we made it and at the bottom there was a still pool all covered with foam and debris, that oozed round and round and we oozed round and round with it for quite awhile because *Norah's* motor was awash from all the water we had taken aboard. Of course, actually, I got all these details from Blanche, who made the trip alone, because I was standing on the wall of the Long Soo Lock watching when it happened.

Before we got to the Long Soo, Blanche had to dye her hair because it was mouse colored. Afterward she had a white streak, which looked most effective, and so she left the rest of her hair its natural color and it saved her no end of money over a period of years.

And that was why I told at such length about old Mr. Bigwood and his machine for straightening buckled plates because what the Long Soo did for me was just that.

It gave me such a scare that all my other troubles were forgotten and afterwards I felt as light as a 200 pound feather.

I didn't mind about the war or about anything. I was just glad to be alive. In retrospect I am not sure but that, like old Mr. Tampoofie, I may have been born again.

In the meantime I had acquired a small dollar income from a new licensee that the British Treasury didn't know about and I had rented an apartment in Mamaroneck and so that was where we headed. When I arrived there seemed to be some doubt about keeping a foreign-register vessel in U.S. waters and while I was thinking about this, we had Pearl Harbor.

So with gas rationing in sight I filled *Norah's* little tank to its little brim and I bought five five-gallon drums of gas, so if necessary we could get back against the stream over the Canadian frontier at Rouse's Point.

Since I could not store my gasoline in my apartment, I got

up early one morning, borrowed a spade and buried my drums in the sand at Orienta Point.

Later I saw some men probing in the sand with long rods but they were nowhere near my cache and I thought nothing of it at the time.

Then the British Naval establishment in New York offered me a civilian job in Brooklyn for which I was especially qualified because I spoke the language.

Instead of using my considerable inventive abilities, which they certainly needed, they gave me a routine job installing anti-submarine devices on merchant vessels.

This job was not only far too strenuous for my constitution but it was also futile because the apparatus itself was defective and did almost as much harm as good, so what I did was to redesign the whole contraption so that it would work. To do this, I took the drawings home with me and one evening I was dead tired and I left them in the train. They were found at the depot at Stamford and handed to the FBI.

As it turned out they were gunning for me anyway because an old lady on the top floor of the Orienta Apartments had seen me burying something and had informed the police, only her idea of direction was all wrong. So we had the case of Mom and Mr. Feinstein all over again with minor variations, of course.

I was fired on the spot without notice and was threatened with the direst penalties. Of course it was all nonsense because the apparatus in its original form had been copied from the Germans and was installed on deck in the full light of day on hundreds of merchant ships, many of them hostile neutral. I was giving away no secrets, but the machine had to be fed its human sacrifice for all that.

Anyway I didn't much care. I always had been fired from every job I ever had except when I worked for McMurtry and

I suppose I am really unemployable. Besides which the yachting season was just about to start and I hadn't been too keen on missing it.

So I got *Norah* out of her curl papers and off I went by myself on a long cruise. I was away up the Connecticut River, asleep in my bunk one night when I was awakened by the peculiar thrashing sound that propellers make when you are below the water line, there was a bump and I heard feet thudding overhead. So I climbed on deck and there was an outsize U.S. Coast Guard cutter with a Lieutenant Commander aboard who saluted me most politely and said "Are you Commander Saunders?" and I said, Well yes, I supposed so and he said "Sorry to trouble you, sir, but I have orders to take you to the Battery."

I asked him what would happen to *Norah* all by herself. He said he would tow her back too, and off we went so fast that *Norah* just sat back on her fat, little tail and shuddered. On the way, I had leisure to reflect on my fate and I was glad I was not a German or a Russian to be tortured before they shot me. Perhaps I would get off with a few years in jail and I could do some writing.

We arrived at the Battery at daybreak and I was hustled to British Naval headquarters. There was the Senior Naval Officer, who had been an old shipmate of mine, all dressed up and waiting for me and he said, "Hello, Saunders, nice to have you back in the fold and I am happy to confirm your rank as Commander, R.N."

So I thought there was something fishy about this, like putting garlands on the sacrificial lamb and I acted cagey and my host got quite nervous and said "Well, old chap! What about it? Better to let bygones be bygones, eh!" and I said O.K. So at breakfast, with my Uncle Samuel paying, I had an over-

size orange juice, bacon and two eggs, sausages, french fries, toast and marmalade, and four cups of coffee and my host relaxed somewhat, though he was still nervous as a kitten and in the end I pumped him.

What had happened was in firing me, they had sent the sketches I had made of the new apparatus back to the Admiralty, to show what a dangerous type I was. Admiral Wilson who headed this department had cabled back: "Use the new equipment exclusively in future."

So they were in a jam because my sketches were very incomplete and no one but I could finish them and I had patented my idea in the U.K., Canada and the U.S. If you are interested the U.S. Patent Number is 2471081.

One of the things that had worried me most was the thought that my English plant could be destroyed by bombs in which case my elaborate structure of world-wide Saunders Valve sales would be jeopardized.

Aware also of this danger, the British authorities had given me the dollar funds to set up in the U.S. what they called a "skeleton plant" which was to say a plant that could take over in case of emergency.

History repeating itself, I found that The County Trust Bank in Mamaroneck also had a building on their hands which they could not sell due to prejudice. This was the old "Village Jail" on Spencer Place, which had been abandoned in favor of a more luxurious building elsewhere and, unlike Lloyds Bank in Wolverhampton, the County Trust were paying extortionate taxes on a building that they could not sell. Horrible system, Congress should note.

Anyway I bought the Old Jail for one sixth of what I eventually sold it for and I had a skeleton Saunders Valve tool room all set up.

So what I told my Naval friends was that instead of getting back into uniform, and being shot without trial, I would build the new Saunders Streamline Hose right in Mamaroneck and Uncle Samuel could pay under "Lend-Lease."

On hearing this glad news Captain —— R.N., said "Oh good show P.K." and, since it was then lunch time, we all went and had a steak on our Uncle.

To justify the overhead of the Mamaroneck plant, we did quite a lot of research and in early 1942 one of our salesmen came to me and said that some consulting engineers in Boston wanted some very special valves for super high vacuum. These valves, he said, were needed for the production of a new super explosive "a thousand times as powerful as T.N.T." and whichever side perfected it first would win the war pronto.

I was therefore a bit surprised, when I read President Truman's memoirs, to learn that as Vice President of the United States he had not been let into the secret until three years later when he was sworn into Presidential office.

Soon after I got fired by the Navy, the second round of Armageddon ended in the total destruction of Germany and in the establishment of Russia Militant, "that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

In 1947, after a decade of research I published, at my own expense, a book which warned of our new peril, and I sent some thousands of gift copies to prominent men and women throughout the Anglo-Saxon confederation of nations—or as Admiral Fisher would have said, throughout Israel.

I doubt that my warning produced much effect for what is written is written and what must be must be only, if we are prepared, the days may be shortened and "except those days should be shortened" we will all join Mr. Nevil Shute *On the Beach.*

Because I believe this, there seemed no object in acquiring further wealth, which in any case the welfare state had rendered not only difficult, but also perhaps less imperative, so I sold out all my interests and quit.

Since Kathleen, to whom I have always been especially close, is in fine shape at 75, I will leave the other half of my story until later.