

Interlude

By THERESA M. LIBBY
© McClure Newspaper Syndicate.
WNU Service.

SHE was running away. Running away from everyone she knew and everyone she loved. Her mind went clickety-click, like a stupid machine turning in its cogs. The lavender dress she would not take. The chiffon dress—no need for that. She did not hesitate—quickly and surely she sorted the heaped things on the bed.

A few moments later, in the deserted station, came remorse. "Where be the waters to drown regret?" Oh, why had she done this? David hadn't meant to be unkind; he hadn't meant to be unfaithful. Heart pain too deep for tears, and the knowledge that it was too late to turn back. David had said she hadn't any spunk. She wouldn't go back. Perhaps some day—but he wouldn't forgive her, so she couldn't ever go back. The robin who'd watched her plant the hollyhocks, perhaps he'd miss her. Never to see her beloved little town again. Not ever to walk to the post office, to say "hello" to everyone she knew.

So her mind went. The train came and she boarded it automatically. Once in the city she bought a paper and searched the "Rooms for Rent." There were several likely ones. Then to a telephone booth where, for a weary hour, she called one after another to be told, "So sorry, already rented," or that the room was miles out of town. At last one stammering voice informed her that she might come right out and look at the room, and if everything was satisfactory take it that very evening. She checked her bags and went. It took a distinct effort, when she saw the room, not to scream aloud. It was very clean and very neat, but tiny, with one window—and that window forever darkened by the tall apartment house that loomed beyond the three-foot alley. There was nothing to do but take it; it would be folly to go to a hotel—why, she didn't even have ten dollars now. The room would be three for a week, and it was clean.

It was a week before Mary found employment. An aching week, weary with held-back tears. The job was a tiring one for her, being salesgirl in a department store. Long days when the other salesgirls snubbed her, and the head of the department scolded her because her counters weren't neatly laid. Nights, and the quick rush of clean, fresh air as she stood on the L platform. Grateful for such tiny things. That she could rest; lie on the bed with her shoes off, feel the burningness of her soles intensified by the sudden relief, and then to sleep—and forget for a little while.

Shoulders that ached and arms mechanically going on. Then wakefulness, the heat and the blackness—she who feared the dark, who flung all the curtains wide at night to flood her world with the scraps of lights that slid in from out of doors. And now this dark room—did the door handle turn?

She lay, holding her breath, afraid, little prickles at the back of her neck; drifting off to sleep again, to dream that the door was opening, that someone was moving the chair before it—softly, stealthily. Awake and trembling! Little strips of dawn show the room dimly, everything's all right. Then the clatter of the milkmen, and David—Dear Heaven, where are you? Sleep again, sweet and precious—clean sleep—for a little while. Then up and to work again.

Days with pain lurking around the corner grew into days a little kinder. The weather was cooler, and she was transferred to another department. Sometimes there were amusing little incidents during the day. But the nights were stenciled alike. Longing and wakeful.

She went a lot to the library in the evenings. Partly, perhaps, because of the library-boy who reminded her of David. Times that she saw him to nod to were gladder because she seemed nearer to home again, and happiness.

One night in October, after she had failed to find forgetfulness in any of the books, and hadn't met the library-boy, she turned to go—and saw him approaching. But it wasn't the library-boy, it was David. Her heart went bump and they said, "hello." After that they were talking, little commonplace things, and avoiding each other's eyes. But inside they were feeling all smothery glad.

They drifted into a quiet corner where a window seat looked into the moon-splashed court. Then Mary looked up, their eyes met, and they slid into the breathless beauty that sometimes can exist between two persons—all loving kindness and forgiveness that needs no words. Their hearts were nearly breaking with just being glad.

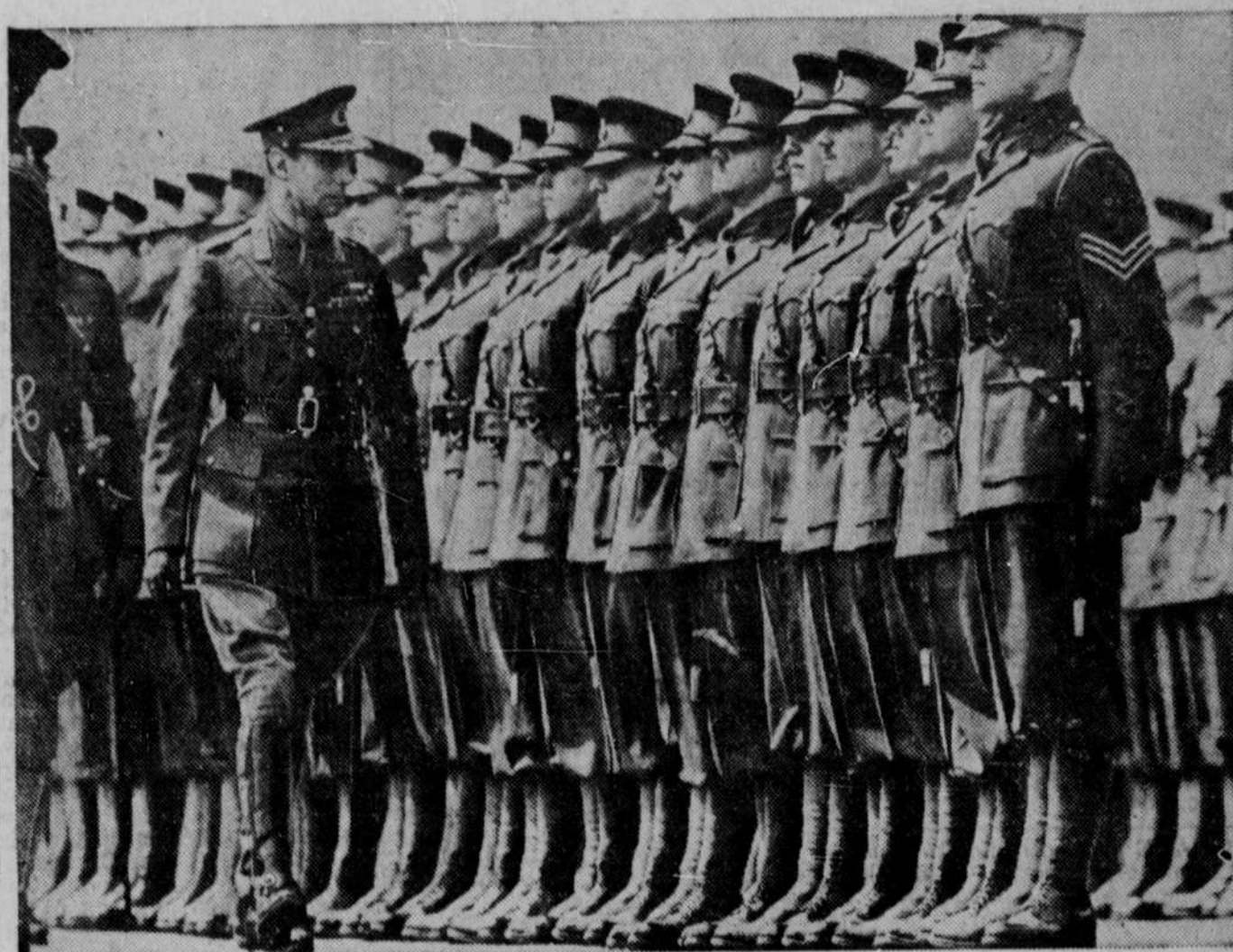
The day that they came home together the town was filled with glory. To some it was just a rainy Sunday but for them the pale yellow eims arched over gleaming wet macadam, reflecting their beauty, and all the world was palely golden. When it was darker, they stood by the gate and saw blue-gray sky stretched over darker blue-gray road. And street lights made dribbling silver gleams across it. Then back by the fire again—with a keener appreciation of life, of each other, and of being home.

Scenes and Persons in the Current News



1—Battalion of Eritrean colonial troops passing in review before Premier Mussolini in a recent review at Monte Sacre, Italy. 2—Justice Willis Van Devanter, oldest justice of the Supreme court in point of service, who has resigned. 3—Alfred E. Smith, former governor of New York and presidential candidate, shown with Mrs. Smith, right, as they sailed for Europe.

King George VI Reviews His Guard of Honor



King George VI is shown inspecting the troops forming his guard of honor during ceremonies at the Royal Military college at Sandhurst, England, when the memorial chapel was dedicated recently. Queen Elizabeth accompanied the king on his visit to Sandhurst.

New Turf Champions of America



Winning both the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness Cup at Pimlico, Md., War Admiral, son of the famous Man o' War, has become the leading horse of the year, and his jockey, Charles Kurtsinger, the leading rider. The new champion has earned nearly \$50,000 for the owner, Samuel D. Riddle.

EXPOSITION QUEEN



The crown of Queen of the Great Lakes Exposition at Cleveland, Ohio, sits becomingly on the blonde head of twenty-two-year-old Margaret Meck. She was selected from among scores of Cleveland beauties.

CENTENNIAL GRADUATE



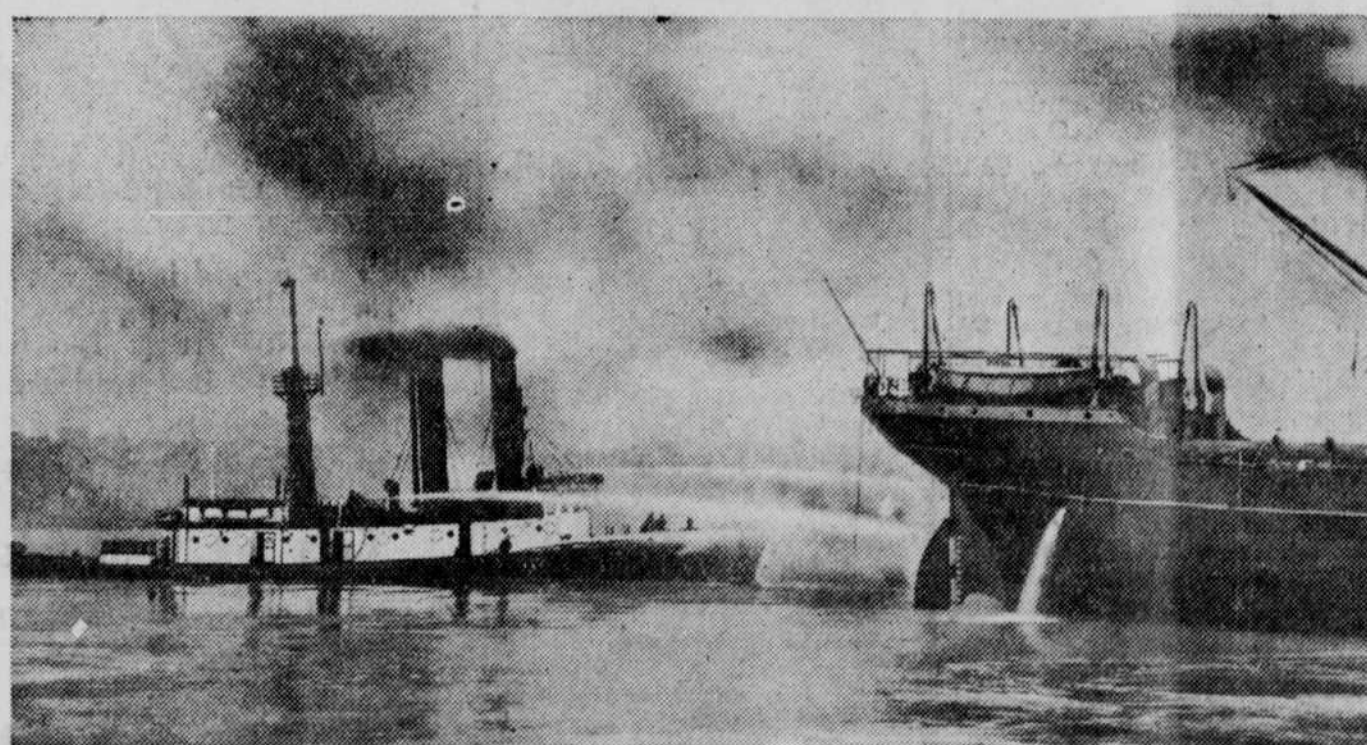
Miss Margery McMaster of Sewickley, Pa., a member of the graduating class of the University of Pittsburgh, celebrating its sesquicentennial this year, who receives her degree exactly 100 years after the 1837 graduation of her great grandfather, Andred McMaster.

Here's Way to Outwit Milk Thieves



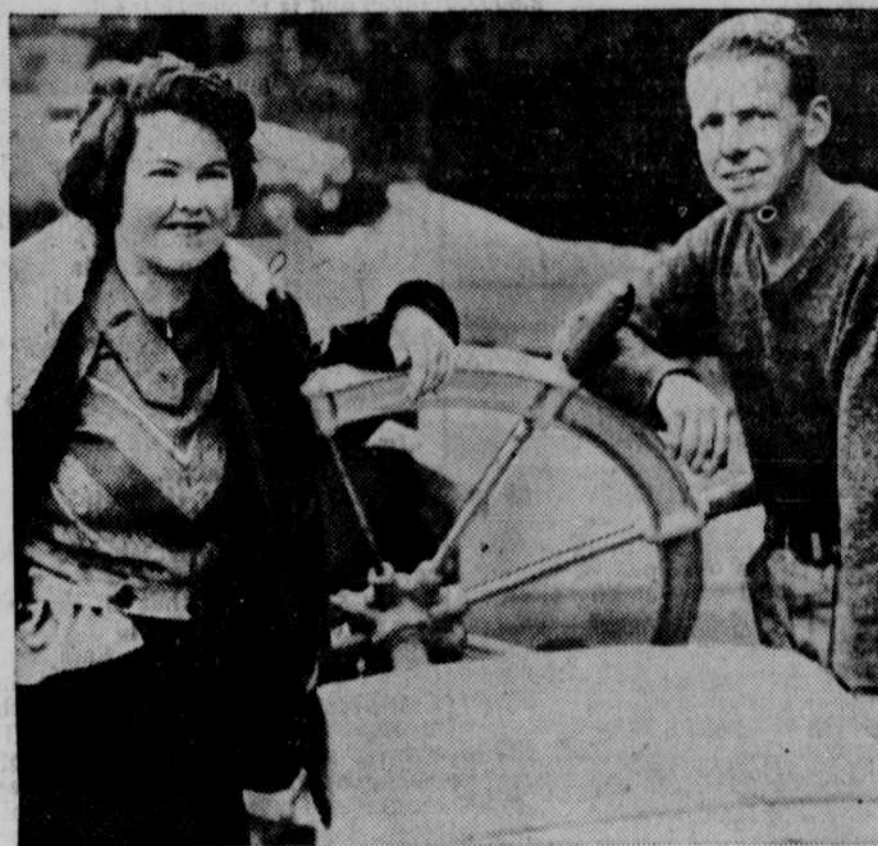
Thieves will find it difficult to get away with milk if this idea evolved by a Rochester, England, resident becomes popular. The anti-milk thief device consists of two hinged clips and a small padlock. The milkman has one key, the duplicate is held by the wife of the man who invented the gadget.

Blaze Perils Waterfront of San Francisco



Fireboat shown pouring water onto a pier in San Francisco during a mysterious conflagration recently. Firemen battled the stubborn flames for seven hours before they brought the fire under control. Several ships tied up at the pier were periled by the blaze which sent great clouds of black smoke billowing over the bay. Eight firemen were injured and ninety-five were overcome or temporarily blinded by fumes.

Plan 18,000-Mile Yacht Voyage



Capt. Bailey Sawyer and Mrs. Sawyer shown fitting out their 89-foot two-masted schooner, Henrietta, for an 18,000-mile voyage to Melbourne, Australia. Mrs. Sawyer, who learned navigation on a previous trip, will serve as navigation officer.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER



John D. Rockefeller, who died at his winter home at Ormond Beach, Fla., at the age of ninety-seven, after making more than a billion dollars and giving away three-fourths of it for philanthropic, educational and medical research activities. The patriarch was buried at Cleveland, Ohio, where 80 years ago he began work as a penniless youth. Mr. Rockefeller, whose ambition was to live to one hundred, left 38 descendants. Had he lived another month he would have been ninety-eight.

YOUNG COLLEGE HEAD



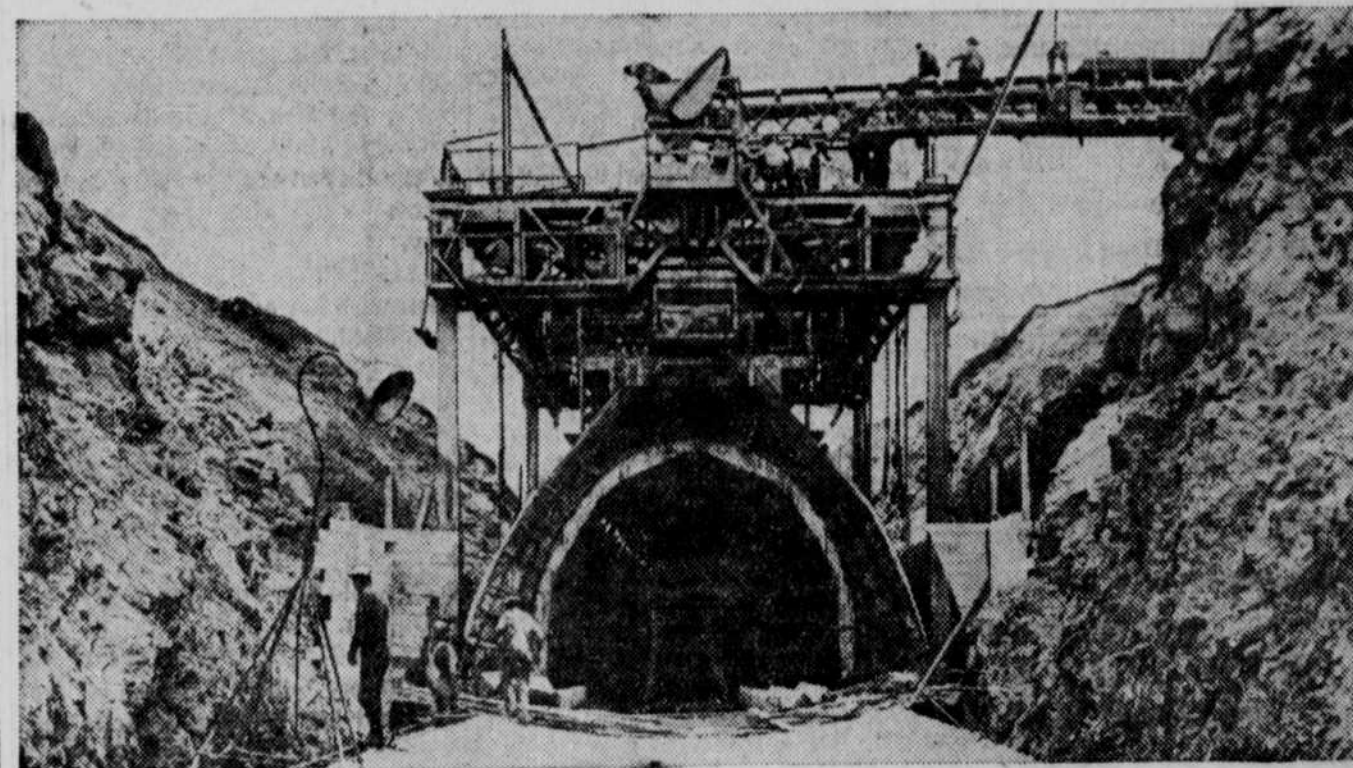
Dr. Paul Swain Havens, Princeton graduate, Rhodes scholar, professor and author who was inaugurated as president of Wilson college at Chambersburg, Pa., recently. He is only thirty-three.

Golf Champions of the Big Ten



Here are Northwestern university's champion golfers, who won the Big Ten conference title played at the Kildeer course near Chicago. Left to right: James Marek, Bill Kostelecky, Coach Ted Payseur, Sid Richardson, individual champ, and Frank Perpich.

Gigantic Aqueduct Approaches Completion



The 392-mile aqueduct which will bring water to Los Angeles and surrounding communities from Parker dam on the Colorado river was recently reported 62 per cent complete. This view shows a construction scene on one of the concrete covered tunnels. These sections are built in deep trenches carved out of the mountain sides or desert floor they traverse.