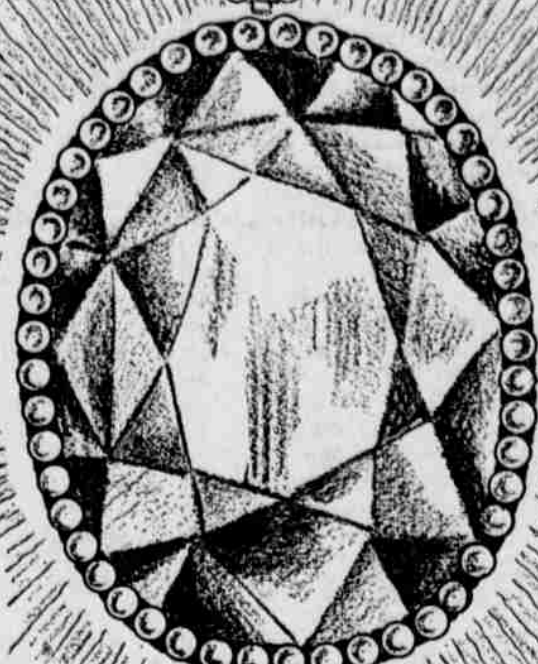


# EVIL SPELL of the HOPE DIAMOND?



E. B. McLEAN



THE HOPE DIAMOND



MRS. E. B. McLEAN



VINSON McLEAN



VINSON McLEAN AND HIS BROTHER (ON LEFT)

**W**HEN Vinson Walsh McLean, ten years old, the "\$200,000,000 baby," was killed by a casual automobile in front of Friendship, the McLean Washington home, the superstitious people of the country shook their heads with an "I-told-you-so" air and invariably they were heard to exclaim: "The 'evil-eye' Hope diamond is active again!"

Presumably almost everybody has heard of the Hope diamond and of the long history of mystery, misfortune, shattered hopes, blasted fortunes and violent deaths which is declared to center about the famous gem. Suffice it to say that the Hope diamond is a sapphire-blue stone of 44 1/2 karats; that it made its appearance in France in 1668; that it is believed by the superstitious to have the "evil eye"; that its published history, which is probably largely imaginary, would seem to bear out its evil influence on the fortunes of its many owners, and that the parents of the dead boy are the present owners of the gem, so far as the world knows.

The "\$200,000,000 baby" was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Beal McLean. He was expected to inherit a vast fortune from his grandfathers, John R. McLean, the owner of several newspapers, and Thomas F. Walsh, a millionaire mine operator of Colorado. He slept in a gold cradle, the gift of King Leopold of Belgium, a partner with Walsh in the famous Camp Bird gold mine in the San Juan district of Colorado. He had five nurses in five of the finest mansions in America. He had a private car, which carried him to Palm Beach, to California, or wherever he was to go. He had a half dozen automobiles of his own.

From the moment of his birth Vinson was famous as the most carefully guarded baby on earth. A small army of guards, detectives and attendants and a corps of doctors and nurses watched over him 24 hours in the day. When he was an infant he took his airings in a baby buggy which was a veritable steel cage locked by special padlocks. This was one of the precautions against kidnapers.

Then came a moment when the vigilance of his attendants was relaxed. Slipping away, the boy started across the street. A "flivver" bearing a West Virginia license and containing three women came along and ran him down in front of his home!

It was in 1668 that Jenn Baptiste Tavernier, a French traveler, appeared in Paris with a diamond of marvelous size and coloring. Some said it had been stolen from its place among the ornaments of a Hindu idol. More insisted it had been taken from the palace of the Grand Moguls of Delhi. Wherever it came from, the story places it immediately afterward in the possession of Louis XIV, who placed it among the crown jewels of France and permitted it to be worn by Mme. de Montespan.

Thus the diamond is launched upon a career of ill fortune and disaster and tragedy.

It was not long, so runs the story, after Tavernier sold it to Louis XIV for 2,500,000 francs and a barony, that Tavernier was torn to pieces by wild dogs while he was on a hunting expedition.

Mme. de Montespan's fall is part of history. She was supplanted soon by Mme. de Maintenon.

At this time the diamond weighed 67 1/2 karats. The story says that in the rough it was of 112 karats, and that the king sent it to an Amsterdam jeweler to be cut and polished.

Along with other court jewels the diamond descended upon the death of Louis XIV to Louis XV. Tradition permits several of his favorites to have worn it, and so the lives of all of these are supposed to have ended in tragedy, failure or worse. Louis XVI came into possession of the stone in course of time, and through him it went to Marie Antoinette, who wore it, extending the same privilege to her friend, Princess de Lamballe. Genuine history records that Marie Antoinette died on the guillotine, and that the princess was torn to pieces by a French mob and her head carried about upon a pike.

The stone was lost sight of about 1792. Then, after a span of 38 years the stone reappeared in 1830. In the meantime the story writers again reduced its size to 44 karats. Wherever the gem was in those years of mystery, stories are numerous today that it still was performing its mission of blighting lives and fortunes.

One of these acco its attributes to Daniel Ellason, a jeweler of London, who got the stone in 1830, a story that after it was supposedly stolen from the royal treasures of France by a Paris mob the gem was sold to an Amsterdam jeweler, William Fals, who recnt the stone to its present dimensions. The story goes that Hendrik, a son of William Fals, stole the jewel from his parent, who died a ruined man. Then this record disposes of Hendrik by suicide, after which the stone got into possession of one Francis Beaulieu, to whom the story ascribes a death by starvation. It was this man who sold the stone to Ellason.

From Ellason it passed into the ownership of Henry T. Hope, a banker of London, and acquired the name under which it now is known. The price is stated to be \$65,000. It is not clear that Hope suffered greatly through his possession of the diamond; nevertheless stories are to be

found that he suffered financial reverses and other personal misfortunes.

Hope is credited with having given the diamond to his daughter at the time she married the sixth duke of Newcastle in 1861. But apparently it was the fiction mongers and not she who bequeathed the gem to her son, Lord Francis Hope, that it might get sensationally into the life of May Yohe, the American actress.

This part of the story is mere fiction. It is true that May Yohe married Lord Francis Hope. It is true that she eloped with Capt. Putnam Bradley Strong, son of a former mayor of New York. Lord Francis obtained a divorce, and the wife married Captain Strong, only to be divorced a second time.

But May Yohe, although she has been quoted as saying that she wore the Hope diamond only twice and that her troubles were due to its malign influence, probably never even saw the stone. Certainly Lord Francis never had possession of it. So, when the story goes on to say that he sold it for \$168,000 to Joseph Frankel, a New York jeweler, the statement is untrue.

It is true that Frankel had the gem in New York. Where and from whom Frankel acquired the stone never has been made clear, but the stone went back to Paris and into the possession of Jacques Colet, who bought it from Frankel. Colet has been reported as having killed himself after losing his mind.

Before that tragedy, however, the diamond is reputed to have passed into the ownership of Prince Ivan Kanitowski, and the legend promptly disposes of the prince at the hands of a mob of Russian revolutionists. Thence the story skips to the murder of Mlle. Ladue, to whom the Russian prince had loaned the diamond. A jealous admirer is charged with this murder.

Next in the legend of the jewel is listed Simon Moncharides, of whose identity there appears to be uncertainty. But the legend sends him riding close enough to a precipice to be thrown over and killed. Just before his death Moncharides is credited with having sold the diamond to Selim Habib, a Persian, who acted as agent for the Sultan Abdul Hamid.

One version of the next chapter is that Habib was drowned in a wreck and the diamond lost. The publication of this was later explained as a ruse to throw thieves off the trail. This version takes the stone to Constantinople, where it cuts a wide swath in violence, misfortune and death and finally brings about the end of Abdul Hamid.

Be all that as it may, it appears that instead of having drowned with the gem in the shipwreck, Habib got back to Paris with it. It was sold at auction for \$80,000 June 24, 1900.

The gem then passed into possession of P. C. Cartier, and the Cartier firm brought it to this country. In January, 1911, announcement was made that the stone had been sold to the McLean family and that the purchase price was \$180,000. Mrs. McLean wore the stone at least once in public, according to the newspapers.

An authoritative article by T. Edgar Willson in the Jewelers' Circular Weekly about the time of the McLean purchase states that the "evil eye" reputation of the Hope diamond dates from the publication of a sensational article in 1901, when

Newcastle was ever made. Frankel was prosperous while he had the stone and Habib's misfortunes came after he sold the stone. Sir Francis Hope never had the stone and May Yohe never saw it. All of which states T. Edgar Willson, as aforesaid.

Nevertheless and notwithstanding, the reputation of the Hope diamond is probably blasted for all time. If it hasn't the "evil eye" there are millions of superstitious people who believe it has and will give credence to everything evil they may read about it.

They may, in the course of time, even attribute to its malign influence the automobile accident which made Vinson McLean at his birth the sole heir to the great Walsh fortune. In 1905, when automobiles were rare, Vinson Walsh, brother of Mrs. McLean, was killed in a smashup at Newport. Mrs. McLean, who was then Miss Evelyn Walsh, was also in the car and received injuries which made her an invalid for a year.

Two other children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. McLean, both boys, one of whom is four and the other a year old.

At the time of the probating of his grandfather Walsh's will it was found that there was only \$8,210,000 to be divided between the two heirs of the McLean union, Vinson and John R. Jr.

Young McLean was a democratic youth. For several years his boon companion was a small negro boy. His tutors said he was an exceptionally bright student, and he was popular with his mates.

He was fond of animals. Fifty-six Shropshire sheep were sent all the way from Colorado to Bar Harbor by express for him. They came from the big Walsh ranch, Wolhurst, near Denver. He himself directed the purchase of a great flock of white Brahma chickens, ducks and turkeys, a Russian wolf hound, six blooded terriers, two Great Danes and a half score of other dogs and a great number of ponies.

Are the McLeans superstitious about the beautiful gem? Nobody seems to know definitely. But one of the stories about the stone since it has been in their possession seems to indicate that its evil reputation had its effect upon them.

Anyway, as the story goes, there was some hitch about the payment of the purchase price of the stone. It evidently was not because of lack of money. There was a law suit. In the course of the controversy stories were printed to show that Mr. McLean harbored a feeling of timidity because of the evil history attributed to the stone, and that he stipulated that the jewel should be taken back by the Cartier firm in the event that any tragedy occurred in the McLean family within six months. Whether that story is true is not clear, but eventually formal announcement was made by attorneys connected with the suit over the purchase price that a compromise had been effected.

The superstitious who believe in the "evil eye," which is world-wide belief that neither Christianity nor civilization has been able to kill, will pin their faith on the evil spell of the Hope diamond to this fact:

Vinson McLean was probably the most carefully guarded child in the world, yet a casual automobile came along and killed him.

## ALL OVER THE STATE

Nebraska News Gathered from All Sections and Boiled Down to the Facts for Busy Readers.

Edison is in the midst of a building boom.

Plymouth is soon to have an artificial ice plant.

A group of Alma business men have organized a \$100,000 flour milling company.

Bids for a six-mile stretch of paving between Ames and Fremont will be re-advertised.

The police department at Lincoln is being strengthened in anticipation of a "crime wave" this fall.

A movement has been started to move the county seat of Nuckolls county from Nelson to Superior.

One Alma real estate dealer in ten days sold eight farms for which the aggregate price paid was \$84,950.

The new Nebraska federation will move its headquarters from Omaha to the Midwest building at Lincoln soon.

Plans for a beet sugar factory at Culbertson have taken definite form and the success of the venture is assured.

Frank L. Rain was elected grand exalted ruler of the Elks at the national meeting in New York. His home is at Fairbury.

The Farmers' Telephone company of Dodge county was given authority to increase rates by the state railway commission.

G. A. Hunt, early settler and a member of the legislature from Saline county, died at his home in Crete at the age of 73.

A. B. Moles, of Fairbury, was instantly killed when his automobile was struck by a Rock Island engine near Gladstone.

A petition is before the state railway commission for the building of a light and power transmission line from Aurora to Giltner.

The twelfth annual convention of the Nebraska state federation of labor will meet at Omaha, August 6 for a session of three days.

Alson Cole of St. Paul, under sentence of death for murder, has been given another reprieve by the governor until September 19.

The county assessor's report filed with the board of equalization, shows a reduction of \$2,022,750 in the taxable wealth of York county.

Spontaneous combustion caused by the intense heat of the sun destroyed the tanks and contents of the Standard Oil company at Trenton.

A special election has been called for Hickman to vote bonds to provide an electric light and power transmission line from College View.

"Jimmy" Langley, who will be remembered by the older residents of North Platte, died at his home in Portland, June 30, of stomach trouble.

The law licensing the sale of cigars and cigaret material and placing cigars and tobacco under the same provisions, becomes effective July 18.

United States District Attorney Allen has received his instructions from the department of justice to put the home brew and breweries out of business.

The citizens of Falls City have organized a Home Building company and about \$50,000 has been subscribed to the undertaking which is to promote the building of homes and rental properties.

Frank Ohnmacht, Jr., employed at the Western Brick & Supply company plant, Nebraska City, was severely injured when a charge of dynamite which he was placing to blast a high bluff exploded.

The Hamilton county assessor's report shows a decrease of \$1,487,970 in the taxable wealth of the county. Real estate shows a gain of over \$1,000,000, but personal property has fallen off \$2,610,490 since last year.

John H. Hanna, a pioneer of Nebraska who came to this state in 1867, died in Los Angeles. Mr. Hanna first settled in Richardson county and later went to Johnson county, where he remained until he moved to California.

Application has been made to the state railway commission for leave to issue \$2,500,000 of stock in Clinch Lock Nut company. Application is made through Ed Bignell, the inventor, and incorporation will be under the laws of Maine.

The Beatrice board of education has let the contract for the new Belvidere school building at a contract price of \$21,487. Hereafter a trained nurse will be employed by the schools, the expense to be met by the local Red Cross chapter.

Temporary organization of Otse Post No. 1 has been made at Nebraska City and application for a charter has been made to the American Legion of the state of Nebraska. Permanent organization will be completed as soon as the charter is granted.

Tecumseh world war veterans have organized an American Legion post with a charter membership of thirty-six.

The mystery surrounding the death of Theodore Marsh, a young man who formerly lived at Fremont, which occurred at Sterling, Colo., last January and which was pronounced by a coroner's jury as suicide, has been cleared up by the confession of C. B. Roach, who says he shot Marsh after forcing him to write a note to his relatives. Roach, who is insane, has been taken to the sanitarium at

The railway commission will shortly issue an order permitting the Nebraska telephone companies now charging the Burlington installation rates to continue these charges until the first of October.

Prof. Claude K. Shedd, formerly of the Iowa state college of agriculture and mechanic arts, will have charge of testing tractors under the new Nebraska law requiring all types of tractors to stand an official test of the University of Nebraska.

The citizens of Mullen have filed a petition with the state railway commission asking that Burlington trains Nos. 41 and 42 be required to make regular stops at that place. The petition says that the receipts for the past six months from passenger traffic has been \$10,000.

A decision against the cities seeking to have the rates equalized has been made in the Hastings-Grand Island equitable rate case which was heard by Traffic Manager Chambers of the federal railroad administration June 11. The data and arguments were submitted by W. H. Young and E. J. McVann.

Directors of the Ashland Farmers' Union Co-operative association are planning to build an elevator soon. The site selected is that several years ago occupied by the P. S. Decker elevator, near the stock yards. No attempt will be made at this time by the Farmers' union to put in a general store.

Osteopathic healers were much provoked over the omission of the word "antiseptics" in a printed copy of the new law passed by the legislature regulating the practice of osteopathy. The omission proved to be a clerical error in copy furnished by the state senate, according to Secretary of State Amshery.

Joe Collett, a member of the famous Sixth regiment, U. S. marines, has returned to his home in Hampton. He went into action at Chateau Thierry and was shot through the left arm by a machine gun near Soissons. Returning to the front he reached the Champagne region before another machine gun bullet again put him out.

State Agents Sam Melick, of the state law enforcement bureau, claims to have discovered a still in full operation and to have found a quantity of "moonshine" whisky in Custer county. Mr. Melick also found out how to confuse vicious dogs. When two savage stag hounds rushed at the officers they were immediately put to flight by a flash light in the hands of the officer.

A long battle within the ranks of the Nebraska Independent Telephone association against inviting the Bell men to membership was ended at the last meeting of the association when the word "Independent" was struck from the name of the organization and the secretary ordered to make the by-laws conform to the new designation as the Nebraska Telephone association.

According to a bill passed by the last legislature, chiropractors or pediculators will be permitted hereafter to practice only after license has been legally granted. In order to obtain such license, all chiropractors will be obliged to make application to the board of chiroprody examiners. Those who have practiced in the state less than one year will be required to take an examination.

R. B. Howell of Omaha has been selected chairman of a permanent committee to represent Nebraska in the national campaign to obtain funds and select a memorial for the late ex-President Theodore Roosevelt. Other officers of the permanent organization are Don L. Love, vice-chairman; John W. Toole, Omaha, secretary; P. L. Hall, Lincoln, treasurer; S. C. Bassett, Gibbon; Charles McLeod, Stanton; Adam Breede, Hastings; R. L. Metcalfe, Omaha; Charles H. Sloan, Geteva, and A. C. Shallenberger, Alma.

The state railway commission has declined to approve a schedule of off rates proposed by the federal railway administration. The proposed rates would make a third increase in oil rates in Nebraska territory. Altho the federal railway administration has been given authority to establish rates, it forwarded its proposed off rates to the state commission for approval. The commission in giving its reason to the director general, says it does so because it has not been shown that the railroads in Nebraska need an increase on intrastate traffic.

Forty-two counties have returned abstracts of assessment totaling \$235,172,272. Last year the same counties reported a total of \$219,572,347. The indications are that the total assessed valuation of the state will be slightly higher than last year. If there is a falling off in the total it will be small. The state levy will be around 13 mills as compared with 8 mills last year. July 10 was the last day under the law for the counties to return abstracts of assessment, but as usual many counties have not completed their returns. The state board must meet July 21, according to law. It will remain in continuous session at least five days to complete the work of equalizing assessed valuations between counties and classes of property.

Stromsburg has let a contract for paving the city square and one for the streets running from the square for the distance of one block each way.

Reports received at Fremont headquarters indicate that the campaign for Midland college funds is going forward satisfactorily. West Point over-subscribed its quota of \$25,000 and as Fontanelle \$15,000 has been pledged and the effort is still progressing. President Yearlan of the synod and the publicity agent, are making their headquarters in Fremont during the