

# MURDER at PIRATES' HEAD

By ISABEL WAITT W-N-U RELEASE

**THE STORY SO FAR:** Judy Jason, who is telling the story, receives an anonymous letter enclosing \$800 and asking her to bid for an abandoned church to be auctioned the next day. She suspects, in turn, each of the guests at the inn where she is staying. They are the Reverend Jonas DeWitt, Lily Kendall, Thaddeus Quincy, Albion Potter, Hugh Norcross and his sister, Bessie, and Victor Quade, a writer who has just arrived. Judy bids for the church and gets it. After the auction the body of a man identified as Roddy Lane is found in a chest in the basement of the church but disappears. Victor has asked who plays golf.

Now continue with Judy's story.

## CHAPTER V

"Why, several of the guests, Hugh Norcross and the minister. I don't think Mr. Potter does anything but paint, but Bessie Norcross sometimes plays. You don't mean—?" Again the picture of Mr. De Witt saying what he'd like to do to Roddy as he made his vicious stroke on the lawn came to my mind.

"You didn't see a golf club in the basement, near the chest, I mean, did you?"

"Nothing but that hand with the ring—flashing horribly." I hid my face in my hands and shuddered.

"I'm a brute," Victor said. "We won't talk about it any more."

"We will, too," I flared. "There wasn't any golf club there when I examined the chest after the auction. I'm sure of that, because I hunted around for something to pry up the lid with, and had to use a hobby pin. Why? Did you see one down there tonight, Mr. Quade?"

"I did," he said, "but I didn't mention the fact to the others. It was back of the chest, and there was a dark stain on it that looked like blood."

"Blood!" I repeated, horrified.

"Positively. And in the chest, too. Not much, but a stain at one end. I made De Witt and Potter stay on the stairs while I investigated with a flash."

"So you went ahead—?"

"And opened the chest—it was unlocked—to find it empty. Then I asked the others to scout around the cliff path, beyond the basement door to see if friend Lane was staggering along wounded. But I knew better. I wanted to get rid of them and have time to examine the chest and shut it up again."

I was shaking all over, yet enjoying it in a way—not the murder, of course; but the mystery, the excitement, being mixed up in the middle of it with such a topnotcher as Victor Quade. Suddenly I was filled with terror. "Could his—his body have been in the chest when I was trying to open it after the auction?"

"Undoubtedly. The killer had put it there for safekeeping, but something made him decide he'd better get rid of it. Anybody know about that old chest?"

"Everybody. All our guests. They knew I'd bought the church and I bragged quite openly about using the old sea box for a hope chest."

"Just when was that?"

"I don't know. Supper time, when I was serving, I think. They all congratulated me."

Victor Quade's dark eyes glistened. "You'll never want that for a hope chest now. Tell me, why did you buy the church?"

Should I tell him? I wanted to, but the \$500 still hidden in my stocking and the silence imposed by my anonymous friend made me wait.

"Oh, for a lending library or a tearoom." I took the defensive. "I'm really a teacher, stranded without a school. This hostess business is just a vacation affair."

"But a lending library—so far from town?"

I could see he didn't believe me, though I looked him straight in the eye.

"Well, if you want to write mystery stories, here's one ready-made. All you have to do is fill in the gaps."

"It's perfect. Couldn't have asked anything better."

"Even if you had constructed it yourself? Did you?"

"The girl has a criminal instinct. Miss Jason, you must go to bed. Tomorrow'll be a lullapalooza. But if you get a minute, will you jot down anything unusual that occurs to you about this business? Help me work it out? We've quite a head start on the police."

It was after midnight. I promised and said good night. But though he sent me to bed, Mr. Quade seemed reluctant to let me go. It would be easy enough to check up whose masnie was missing, he said, but the police would be leary of a murder with no body. The bridge was different. Time bomb, he decided. He hoped something definite would be washed ashore. Just one more question, and he'd let me go. Why should Lane want that wretched little church enough to come just for the auction, wherever he'd come from?

"Somewhere out West," I told him. "Los Angeles, I think, or San Francisco. I don't know why he should want the church, either, or how he knew about the auction. The castle has the most scenic position on the Head but he never goes there any more. Been trying to sell it."

"Probably takes the local Rockville papers. That's how he knew about the auction. Good night," he smiled at me and I liked him. "Don't worry."

"Good night."

I turned on the dimmer in the hallway and started upstairs. Halfway up I felt, rather than saw, someone staring down at me. Petrified, I forced myself to look up. Bessie Norcross was leaning over the banisters.

"Oh, I'm so glad it's you, Judy," she said. "I heard voices and hoped you hadn't come up yet. Did you get my key?"

"What did she know? How long had she been there? Had she heard anything of the goings-on? Apparently not or she'd have yelled for her brother."

"I'm so sorry, Miss Norcross. I did get you a key, but left it down at the church in my bag, after the auction. You shall have it tomorrow without fail."

"Well, I'd like it tonight. Do you know your guests have been missing things out of their rooms?"

"Sh-h-h-h! Please. Nobody has reported—"

"Well, I know better. Mr. Potter's just discovered he has lost a bottle of turpentine and he's furious. Have to go to Rockville for more, he said, and he wants to finish his picture of the old Quaker church in the morning. And I've lost that lovely blue scarf I wear around my head. It's Hugh's really, but—"

Turpentine! A silk scarf! I tried to keep the annoyance out of my tone. "They'll turn up. Who'd steal turpentine? As for the scarf, maybe your brother borrowed it back. Stick a chair under your doorknob. I'll get that key the first thing tomorrow."

I brushed by her. She'd had a

good sleep, but now that the effects of her sleeping medicine had worn off, she'd talk all night if I'd let her.

Tomorrow I'd help Victor Quade. I mustn't forget to jot down the fact that Thaddeus Q. could manage to get around without his chair. Nor that I'd called to the man we'd heard running near our path and he hadn't answered.

The old house settled down to a stillness like the night before Christmas. If creatures were stirring, they were mighty quiet about it. I tried to keep the horrible thing I'd seen at the church out of my mind. The church. Poor place for a tearoom or lending library. Victor was right. Tomorrow I'd show him the queer letter. Tell him the whole strange—

I vow I wasn't sound. Like Jack and Jill, Hugh and I had just gone up a hill to fetch a pail of kerosene when the whole hill exploded and I sat straight up in bed.

Such a pounding and shouting and running of feet. Then my door flew open and Aunt Nella screamed: "The house is afire!"

My little front window was a glare of light. For a second I hugged the bed clothes around me and held my breath. The house must be afire; there were the flames. But I didn't smell any smoke. I ran to the window, sensing that the Neck side was still dark, so it couldn't yet be daylight.

From the front I saw what looked like a blazing oil well. Was it my little church? My tearoom?

Aunt Nella thought so, too. "All that money," she hissed, "gone up in smoke!"

"But it looks nearer, Auntie."

"So it does. Lucky the wind's the other way."

"It's the fish shed. Who'd have thought it would make such a blaze? Oh, that poor old man—I grabbed my shoes and a robe."

"An' him deaf, so's he couldn't hear the crackle. They'll never get him out." Aunt Nella clenched her gnarled hands. "Suppose somebody set it?"

"Don't believe they'll find him," Victor Quade said.

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We were both remembering Uncle

Wylie had wandered down there a few hours ago and that he'd threatened to burn the fish shed many times.

Aunt Nella began to cry. "Poor Wylie. I'd a-been a widow if—if we hadn't found him on that bench asleep."

If Uncle Wylie had dropped, say, his lighted pipe—and set fire to the old shed and burned up Old Man Brown she might still be a widow. Would they electrocute him or give him life?

"Get some clothes on, Auntie."

"I put my shoes on the wrong feet and had to take them off again. My aunt was wrestling with a cherished old-fashioned woven union suit, seat over her head and arms in the legs. I had to extricate her."

Below, doors banged. Cries of fire arose. I could hear Bessie Norcross screaming hysterically. Why didn't the fire whistle from Rockville blow? Surely someone must have telephoned by now. With sharp horror I realized the wires had been cut. And now, wouldn't Rockville mistake it for a night-before-the-Fourth bonfire?

I had on my terry cloth bathrobe and raced downstairs. Heads popped out of doors shouting questions, giving information. "Call the fire department!" "The church is afire!"

"No, it's the castle!" "The whole Head's ablaze!"

It seemed as if the entire household had run down to the front hall in utter terror, and not much else, believing the inn itself on fire. Lily Kendall looked like a bowl of shimmering jelly in her apricot satin nightgown.

"Come on," I cried. "There's an old man—stone deaf—in that blazing shed. Oh, I hope it's not too late!"

We raced down in a body, apparently everybody. At a time like that one doesn't stop to count. But I saw two figures silhouetted against the flames, which turned out to be Victor Quade and the Rev. De Witt.

"Can't we do something?" Hugh Norcross called to them. I hadn't noticed Hugh before, but down there it was so light I could even see that his robe was green.

"Not much. Death to try," a voice said.

"But, good heavens, man! There's a human being in there. We've got to try to get him out!" boomed the minister.

"How?"

"Bucket brigade, or something."

We all knew the futility, as even De Witt's voice faltered.

"Wouldn't be any use," somebody said. "If he's still in there he's past help."

"Doesn't look like an ordinary fire. Did you ever see anything blaze so? And I thought I heard another explosion."

We were all shouting. I couldn't tell who said what, but all agreed as to a second muffled explosion, not so loud as the first, just before they'd rushed to see flames. They began searching, calling for Brown.

"Don't believe they'll find him," Victor Quade said, drawing me away from the heat. "If he'd discovered the building on fire in time to get out, he'd have gone straight to the inn for help, wouldn't he? But let them try."

"I'm going to hunt, too. Down by the church."

Hugh Norcross grabbed my arm. "Young lady, you aren't going alone. Bessie and I—"

"Don't be silly, Hugh. I'm not going in. But suppose he staggered out, confused, and went in that direction. You and Bessie take the route to the castle. Here, Mr. Potter, you come along with me."

To my surprise the artist hung back. "I'll go if another man will go, Quade or somebody. You see, Judy, you don't know it, but from the way that fire burns I can't help wondering if my turpentine wasn't poured on it. Someone stole it last night from my room." And he added sententiously: "Must have been while I was up to Rockville. I remember deciding I had plenty and leaving the bottle right there on the table with my palette and brushes."

I left him to tell Victor about the turpentine.

"Turpentine! I'll bet that shed was full of turpentine and oiled ropes and stuff. Your Uncle Wylie would know. Used gasoline, too, I'll bet. No wonder there was an explosion. Judy Jason," he whispered, "keep with the crowd!"

Well, it was terrible. There we stood, a group of able-bodied human beings helplessly watching the conflagration burn itself down and knowing another human being was probably being roasted.

When the clergyman came puffing down the path with Aunt Nella's scrub pail full of water which he gallantly threw on the fire, only apparently to augment the flames, I began to laugh and cry just like Bessie Norcross.

"Lane did this, Roddy Lane. A final gesture. Hoped the inn would catch fire. Blew up the bridge and skipped." Bessie seemed sure of it.

Nobody paid any attention to her. Her sequence of events was slightly off, but then she'd been under sleeping medicine when the first explosion had taken place. Hugh was trying to persuade her to go back to bed.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## TO YOUR Good Health

by DR. JAMES W. BARTON

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

### FIRST AID

One of the good things that comes from the war is the interest in first aid. Everywhere, even in small villages, first aid classes are being formed and the members of the class learn the correct manner of handling the injured.

So widespread is the interest in first aid that our humorists and cartoonists are using it in their strips or columns. I have spoken before of one class in which the young man being treated for a

"supposed" broken leg was allowed to fall off the table and really did break his leg. In putting him into the ambulance he was not pushed far enough forward and the door being forcibly closed struck his head and caused concussion. The humorous comment was that with a few more lessons this class could be sent against the enemy.

A daily cartoon about youngsters shows the little heroine trying first aid methods on youngsters whom her boy friend had damaged in order to give her the necessary cases in which to practice.

As a matter of fact, the first lesson taught by the instructor to a first aid class is that they are not learning to be doctors but to do the right thing until the doctor arrives, thereby preventing complications and saving life. Many physicians, including myself, can testify to the skill and judgment of the members of these classes. I have taught first aid classes and have worked with members of the Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance corps.

My point in writing about first aid is to emphasize the importance of the first lesson given by the first aid instructors which is that what not to do is as important as what to do.

Dr. H. E. McDermott, editor of the Canadian Medical Journal, says: "There is great value in a widespread knowledge of first aid methods and there can be nothing but encouragement of the movement. At the same time experience shows that enthusiasm to learn and practice first aid must be kept within proper bounds. The first aider must realize his limits and never exceed them. That is the first and great commandment in his work."

"First aid is largely a combination of physiology and common sense."

### Calmness of Mind Great Aid in Colitis

When the four letters "itis" are used, it means "inflammation of." Thus we have appendicitis, pleuritis, sinusitis, mastoiditis, all meaning inflammation of these organs. Following this rule colitis means inflammation of the colon, and there are certain cases where the colon is inflamed and are rightly called colitis. The colon is the large intestine which holds the wastes.

However, what is often called colitis is a spasm of the colon, which is called spastic colitis, but there is no real inflammation of the colon present.

Functional not organic, conditions of the colon are outlined by Dr. J. H. Geddes, London, Ontario, in the Canadian Medical Association Journal. These are colitis, spastic colitis, mucous colitis, spastic constipation, tonic hardening of the colon, irritable colon, and having the mind always on the colon—colon consciousness.

Dr. Geddes believes that irritable colon and being always conscious of the colon really represent all the above conditions—disturbances in the nervous, muscular and gland control of the colon, or large intestine. As in all functional disturbances or diseases, the fault does not lie in the colon itself, but in the unstable nervous condition of the individual.

Other general types of colitis have a combination of symptoms, the commonest being gas and bloating, and sometimes loss of appetite. Intestinal parasites—worms—have symptoms resembling colitis.

Of course, in all cases where there is gas, bloating, bowel spasm, diarrhea and constipation, the use of the X-rays will greatly help in finding the cause, and it should be used. Naturally in times of strain and stress as at present, the number of cases of colitis greatly increases.

Successful treatment consists in trying to acquire calmness of mind even when the problem is very great, and also to use soft nonirritant foods.

### QUESTION BOX

Q. Please suggest a diet for the correction of anemia. What would you suggest that I do about a knot that is behind my ear, which is very annoying?

A. Foods which are rich in iron such as egg yolk, liver, leafy vegetables should prove helpful. You might take a tonic if your physician thinks it is necessary. If the spot behind your ear is painful, you should by all means consult your physician.

## It's So Easy to Make His Suit Into a Smart One for Yourself

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



THE urge to sew, mend and "make over" is taking possession of patriotic women everywhere. Not only does the idea of reviving the art of home sewing carry appeal to those who perform must practice economy for economy's sake, but it is developing into a real hobby among women who are going "all out" in their eagerness to serve their beloved America in the victory program set before them.

Now that this wartime winter is ushering in an era of home sewing that is due to last the duration through fabric and pattern departments are being besieged by women whose new-born enthusiasm for sewing is leading them to attempt anything from a simple blouse to a dress and some are even going so far as to try their hand at a suit or a garment as pretentious as a smart, softly tailored spring coat.

Apropos of the new home sewing trend, here's a question to ponder—how could your husband's old suit be made to suit you? A few months ago you might have raised your hands in utter protest or just laughed the idea off. However, today, with government conservation in full swing, you'll think twice and decide that nothing could please you more.

It's easy enough to whittle down an old suit to your size, and think of the wonderful men's fabric you will be acquiring for your suit—where is she who has never coveted the perfectly grand wool materials used for the suits worn by the male members of the household! Once you've attempted a "cut down," the man's closet in your room will no longer be his to have and to hold for his very own. However, we recommend that you start with a worn, outgrown number for your first experiment. Of course you don't do a thing until you've ripped apart the suit, reversed the fabric and sponged and pressed it.

You'll get your skirt out of the trousers, to be sure. Invert them and use the ankle part for the waistline. Then cut up as far as the crotch and you will have a graceful flare for each side seam, also a center space both back and front to be later inset with pleats formed of excess material cut off the trousers, as you shortened them to your measurement.

It's no trick at all to manipulate the jacket, for there's ample material in a man's coat to cut down to the type you like best. The illustration gives you the picture of a suit before (oval inset) and after making over. The suit as the lady wears it in the picture is one of those conservative types made after a simplicity pattern that will remain fashion-correct for seasons to come.

If you do not cut into the vest (it really is not necessary to do so) you can convert it into a smart gilet to wear with your jacket sweater which will give you a most pleasing change, especially if your sweater is color-bright. Get a pattern of one of the new, chic gilets and try it.

When little daughter of the household sees mother's suit so trim and so modish, she will be wanting a suit, too. And why not? Brother's outgrown suit calls to action! In making a stylish outfit for wee sister, use the trousers for a little skirt with "kick pleat" back and front or shallow pleat it all around. At any rate, make it the suspender type with bolero jacket or Eton. Embroider the suspenders in gay wool yarn. Make a little handbag and beret of self fabric scraps left over and embroider with yarn to match.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

### Contrast Front

Countless are the ingenious ways in which designers are featuring striking color contrast. One of the most successful methods stressed this season is the use of contrasting color for the bodice front only. Three outstanding fashion touches are given to the frock pictured above. The body is of dull black crepe, the ice-blue front is of lustrous satin (very new this season), and the front closing is finished with a large sequin-encrusted button matched to the ice-blue of the satin. It adds to the charm when the hat repeats the color of the contrast front. This may be done in a discreet color touch, or the newest thing is to wear a beguiling little feather hat in matching color.

### Cotton Lace Returns to Daytime Fashion Scene

Good news! Comes the report from style centers that daytime frocks of pretty cotton laces are scheduled for a return engagement this spring. These are being made up in string color, in white and in all the dainty pastels. For the most part they are of the short waisted and coat dress type.

Perhaps the biggest news in regard to the new cotton laces is that you can get a lovely sheer type in black that makes up beautifully for dressy wear. It has a Chantilly appearance that is really good looking.

### Straw Hats Will Sparkle With Touches of Sequin

When you go to your milliner to preview the advance spring hats do not be taken by surprise to see many charming straws starred with sequins, not in a crude, conspicuous way but just enough to give them a firefly glow that is very lovely. There will also be a discreet of beads and sequins done in most unique and original matter on the prints we will wear and on certain little pastel cloth dresses. It's this way fashion has chosen to stress the pretty feminine look.

### Black Sweaters

Black sweaters will be with us again this spring. Smart hand-knit models are the preferred kind. Some are so classically simple as to invite the wearing of important looking costume jewelry. Others have the jewel adornment worked as an intrinsic part of the sweater, being embroidered with beads, brightstones or jet. An edging of wee fringe in vivid yarn distinguishes the latest models. Others have little crochet ruche trimming that sparkles with tiny jet beads.

## PENETRO

Many users say "first use is a revelation." Has a base of old fashioned mutton suet, Grandma's favorite. Demand stainless Penetro. Generous jar 25¢, double supply 35¢.

COLO'S COUGHING, SNIFFLING, MUSCLE-ACHES

The problem of what to send a service man has been solved by the men themselves. Tobacco tops the list of gifts service men prefer from the folks back home, according to numerous surveys. If you have a friend or relative in the armed forces—Army, Navy, Marines, or Coast Guard—who smokes a pipe, or rolls his-own, a pound of his favorite tobacco is very much in order. A big favorite with many service men is Prince Albert, the world's largest-selling smoking-tobacco. Local dealers now are featuring Prince Albert in the pound can for the men in the service.—Adv.

### To relieve distress of MONTHLY Female Weakness</