

KU KLUX

L.J. - Lunoco.

Tues., Oct. 1, 1935

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A long hidden secret of American history comes to light.

46
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Ku Kluxers in that section. He knew. Everybody knew he knew. But he never uttered^a/word. He merely said that after his death he would leave a revelation of the secret. And that's what he has done. He wrote it out in Nineteen Nineteen. He was an old, old man then. But only now is the document made public for the benefit of history. In it Captain Lea tells how Stephens was lured from a negro meeting, and seized by Klansmen. The actual killer he names as Colonel J.T.Mitchell and Thomas Oliver, formerly of the Confederate Army. Both long since dead.

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CRIME

At Worcester, Massachusetts, a man was singing, crooning sentimentally - "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling". It was a rich, full voice. Why not? The man had been a ^{choir}~~quintet~~ singer, had chanted hymns on many a Sunday morning. An athlete too, and Scoutmaster. So he was singing with moody romance, while he waited, waited for the verdict that would bring to him life or death. The charge against ~~him~~ him - wife murder. The jury was deliberating whether or not to send him to the electric chair for what the prosecution called - "The cowardly murder of the mother of his two children." In that hour of life and death suspense, the former ^{choir}~~quintet~~ singer carolled sweetly, "In the Lilt of Irish Laughter, you can hear the Angels sing."

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~~It was~~ One of those "American Tragedy" cases. Theodore Dreiser put a label on a certain type of most despicable crime, when he wrote his book "An American Tragedy", about a man who kills ~~the~~ a woman because she stands in the way of his getting another. In the ^{as you know} Worcester case Newell Sherman had a wife and was in love with another girl. He went canoeing with his wife. She couldn't swim. The canoe overturned. The athlete swam ashore, leaving her to drown. The prosecution claimed he had deliberately tipped over the canoe,

deliberately left the helpless woman in the water, pushed her away when she tried to cling to him - all to get rid of her, ^{murder.}

The contention of the defense was that the canoe had turned over accidentally and that the athlete and expert swimmer left his wife and ~~had~~ swam to shore, just to save himself. ~~The prosecution said murder. The defense said callous.~~ Not beautiful either way.

So Newell Sherman was put to trial before a jury of Yankee farmers. There was testimony and counter-testimony. Today the final hour of suspense came, the case in the hands of the jury, their verdict awaited with tense interest in the crowded courtroom.

The prisoner did his waiting in the detention pen of the court-house. He slept a while, ~~he~~ talked to his guards, and ~~he~~ sang to them in a low, rich, ^{choir-} ~~quite~~ trained voice: "When Irish Eyes are Smiling, Sure they'll ~~xxx~~ steal your heart away."

The singing stopped when the jury came in with its verdict. Then the grim word was spoken:- guilty! The jury made no recommendation, ^{of mercy} and that makes the death sentence mandatory - doomed ~~to~~ the electric chair.

One of the greatest comebacks in financial history -- that's the way to mark down the return of the Van Swearingens to power -- railroad power. Money men and railroad men all day long were discussing that auctioning off of a railroad empire, three billion dollars worth of empire. ~~It was~~ knocked down for less than three million -- knocked down to the Van Swearingen Brothers. ^{Of course, it} ~~was~~ used to be their's. Now it's their's again.

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Yes, ~~its~~ a dizzy comeback, but no dizzier than the original ^r~~rise~~ of those two brothers, who climbed out of nowhere to the topmost pinnacle of success.

They weren't railroad men at all in the first place. ^{Just} ~~but~~ a couple of Cleveland real estate operators. They got into the realm of rails by sheer accident, by stumbling over the tracks.

The two real estate brothers, M. J. and O. P., were working up a development outside of Cleveland. The street car facilities weren't good enough to boom their real/estate division in the right kind of big-time way. So they said let's buy one of the car lines ^{that runs} ~~our~~ our way and put on the kind of service we need. One of the trolley lines was owned by the Nickel Plate Railroad.

That in turn was controlled by the New York Central. And the Central didn't need the Nickel Plate and was willing to let it go on easy terms, nothing down for an option, and easy payments for a purchase. So instead of buying that mere petty real estate trolley line from the Nickel Plate the Van Swearingens found it ~~much~~ easier to buy the ^{whole} Nickel Plate ^{railroad system} ~~and all~~ from the New York Central.

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TP So quite by accident they had a ^{big} railroad on their hands, and dashed ~~into~~ a career as a couple of the greatest railroad promoters on record. In no time their real estate subdivision looked like two cents worth of nothing, beside the empire of rails they were building. By means of holding companies the Van Swearingens took control of the Chesapeake and Ohio, the Erie, the Pere Marquette, and the Missouri Pacific System, ^{the famed scenic Denver and Rio Grande, and so on.} ~~to mention only the~~ ~~larger~~ They pyramided their control to a sky-top pinnacle of three billion dollars.

That sky-top pinnacle took a long loud fall when the whole financial structure of the country crashed. In the ~~deepest~~ depths of the depression the Van Swearingens borrowed forty-eight million dollars from J. P. Morgan and Company to tide them

over. But it didn't do enough tiding. They couldn't pull out of the hole. Pay-up for the forty-eight million came last May. The Morgans handed in the bill and the Van Swearingen Brothers had to default. And their railroad empire went into the hands of the sheriff, -- figuratively speaking, and, was put up for ~~an~~ auction. Nobody seemed anxious to buy a three billion dollar railroad empire. The Van Swearingens put in a bid for a mere three million, which they had managed to raise. And, they bought back their empire of rails, ^{are} and now in the saddle again. Today they plunked down 3,000,000 on the Morgan desk. And the Morgans take a loss of \$45,000,000.

Today's reports, however, add a dark shadow or two to the rosy picture. It seems as though there might be a storm in the offing for the reestablished Van Sweringen kingdom of Locomotives. They say the Senate Railroad Investigating Committee may not chime in with a loud "Okay" to the transaction. And there's also a faction among the stockholders who are muttering with discontent over the latest turn of events. But O. P. and M. J. are accustomed to storms.

ROOSEVELT

President Roosevelt had cheery words to speak today at Los Angeles. "America has come through stormy ^{ships into} ~~seas for~~ fair weather", said he. He had many another cheery and heartening word to say - and also something sad and sombre.

The President made his address in the great col^{lose}seum at Los Angeles before a crowd estimated at Seventy thousand. He told his audience about a previous visit to Los Angeles. He spoke there during the Nineteen thirty-two campaign. And he referred back to that former address.

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"On that occasion", said he, "I was introduced by a very old friend of mine, a friend of every man, woman and child in the United States, a kindly philosopher - one who would be with us today but for his untimely death in Alaska." Then he continued with a telling phrase. "Will Rogers' kindly humor", said he, "saw facts and laughed at fan^{tasy.}"

Meanwhile I In Alaska a lot of wreckage has just been removed from a creek. It's the remains of a red monoplane, the plane in which ^{Wiley Post and} Will Rogers flew when they were killed. It had ⁵

been taken to the nearby Eskimo village. Will Rogers and Wiley Post had intended to visit Point Barrow's famous trader Charley Brower, whom they called "the king of the Arctic". And, it's this Aurora Borealis monarch who now has had the wreck of the plane taken out of the creek in which it fell and placed in the Eskimo village as a monument in isolation for no one to see.

BASEBALL

And now let's talk about the World Series, Detroit against Chicago. The battle of the animals, Tigers against Cubs. And right at this moment I can imagine an old chap sitting next to me here and giving me the raspberries - saying in a voice of scorn: "What do you know about it - about Chicago and Detroit and the World Series? About Tigers tangling with Cubs? Were you at the World Series in Nineteen seven or in Nineteen eight?"

cut { I'm compelled to answer "No". But, I know what old Gus H. Fan is driving at. I can see it by the contemptuous curl of his aged lip. He is referring back to the last time Detroit and Chicago met in the annual baseball classic. (He's sneering: "If you didn't see that you ain't seen nothin'." Gus, in fact, doesn't think so much of the Tiger-Cub controversy that begins tomorrow, not compared with the heroic events the last time the two animals met, twenty-eight and twenty-nine years ago.)

"Them were the days", the old boy is heard muttering distractedly. "Look who played in Nineteen seven and Nineteen eight. Joe Grimm is running the Cubs this year, and he's a first baseman. Yes, but Frank Chance was running the Cubs in those

years, and he was a first baseman. But you couldn't compare anybody nowadays to Frank Chance battling up and down the ball field. Show me any of these young fellows who can make double plays like Tinker to Evers to Chance. And three-fingered Mordecai Brown was the Cub star pitcher, and Ed Reulbach was right up there with him."

That was old Gus H. Fan raving about the Cubs of those former World Series. And he waxes even more lyrical when he meditates upon the Tigers of that old time classic. "Wild Bill Donovan pitching", he groans with ecstasy. "Germany Schaefer at second base. And look out there in the out-field. That's Sam Crawford dragging down a long fly. And look over there, see those legs to tearing after a line drive, or flashing those spikes around the bases? That's Ty Cobb. What a bunch, boy; what a team!" And it's run by Hughie Jennings, who could spit fire as far as John McGraw." And so Gus raves!

So I guess I'd better merely observe that the present World Series does recall that in both of those former Cub-Tiger shindigs, the Cubs won. They simply overwhelmed Detroit, for all

that brilliant Tigerish talent. But anyway they were giants in those days, and they may be giants - but not New York Giants - in these days - in the Series that begins tomorrow at Detroit. Well, I've got a bet with Amos 'n' Andy. They say the Cubs. And, I say the Tigers this time.

ETHIOPIA

War is expected at any moment in Ethiopia. The massing of Italians and Ethiopians in close proximity is making a clash inevitable. The Italians are saying it is certain that the warriors of the King of Kings will break out into hostilities. That no doubt means that the Italians would like, above all things, to have the Ethiopians flare up and do something that would be an act of war -- an excuse for Mussolini to unleash the whole power of his army.

As war draws nearer and more certain, so do -- sanctions! Reports from Paris tell of conversations between Premier Laval and the British Ambassador. And these talks are described as -- vitally important. Laval has likewise been conferring with the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness is looming to importance in the Anglo-Franco-Italo entanglement. The assumption is that England and France are moving closer and closer toward a unity of purpose. The bets in Paris are that France and England are on the verge of joining hands for a common policy -- that policy to be directed against Italy. Meaning -- sanctions, economic moves by the League of Nations to check Mussolini. And perhaps military moves. The big question is -- assuming that England and France do join in common action -- how drastic will the sanctions be?

England thinks of her Colonial policy, but France ^{*of course is*} ~~is~~

thinking of Germany. That's all the more clear with the new suddenly ordered French maneuvers. Air maneuvers -- near the German border. The French air fleet is practicing strategies of stopping air raids from the East; ~~and~~ studying ways whereby fleets of fast combat planes can stop squadrons of heavy bombers.

INTRO TO COMMERCIAL

I've got a few more bits of news here. I need a few moments of time out, to unravel them. So, Ted Pierson, come along -- do your stuff for a moment. Pinch-hit until I get back on the air with something else. Here's the mike, Ted.

--O--

TED PIERSON:- All right, Lowell, I've got a few things to say.

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Here's a fact or two about Blue Sunoco which for years now has sponsored Lowell Thomas and his news:- Do you know that the Sun Oil Company is an absolutely independent organization? It owns and operates its own oil wells, transports its products in its own sea-going tankers and barges, and in its own railroad cars, pipe lines and trucks. All Sunoco products are made in Sunoco refineries and sold through the Sunoco organization. Complete control from crude petroleum to finished product, entirely independent of any other company, is one of the reasons why Sunoco products are of such uniformly high quality.

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END

Thanks, Ted. Here's a handful of brevities.

In line with what I was saying about the Italian expectation that the Ethiopians would do something to make trouble. Word from Asmara, the great Italian war base in the Province of Eritrea. It emphasises the claim that the Ethiopian masses of fighting men are not being held eighteen miles behind the frontier, as the Emperor Haile Selassie said they'd be. The King of Kings said he would keep his men that far behind the lines to avoid the possibility of trouble. But the Asmara dispatch claims the Ethiopians have outposts right up to the border and that these outposts had been reenforced by regular Ethiopian soldiers.

Oh yes, the last word about the hurricane is that it's blasting along in mid-Atlantic; blowing Seventy-eight miles an hour when last heard from. It didn't land with any disastrous effect on Bermuda, which was only whipped by a furious gale. The hurricane went on out to become a mid-Atlantic danger to shipping.

And, there's a little trouble in China, Red trouble. Americans are getting ready to get out of Lanchow, in the Province of Kansu. In the southeastern part of that Province, hordes of Chinese Communists are on the rampage, driving ahead. So Americans are leaving.

Here in New York the theme song is Stille Nacht, "Silent Night." Mayor LaGuardia's anti-noise campaign is in full swing. The Mayor is trying to stop all kinds of nocturnal uproar, although he admits he doesn't know what to do about the alley cats. They yowl Mayor or no Mayor. The Mayor says if you hear an undue pandemonium, call a cop. To this a reply is made by Hi Phillips in his NEW YORK SUN column. Hi puts it this way: "Cooperation of the police in the war on noise is promised," says he, "but it is our opinion that there is no surer way to create a major disturbance than to ask a cop to do something about an annoying noise."

Anyway, the New York slogan is "Hush." So I'll set a good example by saying - SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.