

# The Mystery of Hartley House

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By  
**CLIFFORD S. RAYMOND**

Illustrated by  
**IRWIN MYERS**

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.  
—15—

He paused and looked at me as if to see whether he was reaching any hidden spring which if touched and sprung would open the secret. He did not believe I was truthful.

"Mr. Sidney's life is open, honorable and full of nothing but good for fifty years back," Morgan continued. "We have investigated very thoroughly. But fifty years back, Mr. Sidney disappears, evaporates. There is no Mr. Sidney that can be found. We find a young man of twenty, and nothing back of him. There we stop. It is a blind alley. You come to nothing but a wall. That stopped investigation.

"Now, I go a good deal by hunches—call it intuition, guessing, inspiration. It is not good detective method. I don't claim it's good detective work. I never work on a hunch and neglect a rational method, but frequently when I do work on a bit of guessing we get results.

"I've been working, around here, on a guess that was so wild when it first started that it seemed too preposterous even for me. I'll tell you that we are not investigating Mr. Sidney any more. We are looking for another person, and I believe we are going to find him. Then we are going to find some one else. Doctor, I tell you, if you don't know it, as you say, it is the strangest case I ever have known. It is one of hate. Mind, I'm only guessing."

"That touch was so impressive that I betrayed an emotion. He saw it. 'I had you there,' he said. 'Mr. Morgan,' I said, 'you will not believe me, and for that reason it is useless for me to say and keep on saying that I know of nothing here I could help you on. You suggested something to me just now, and you saw that you had done so. But that was because of a coincidence immaterial to what you call a case.'

"Very well," said Morgan. "I did not expect to get ahead by coming here, but I want to be fair and reasonable. You do not know anything, but I am not allowed to talk to any one you might know."

"You have talked to Jed," I said. "You cannot reasonably expect to be allowed to annoy the ladies of the house or to flutter the servants. Mr. Sidney is very ill and very weak. Even you would refrain from introducing your case to him if you saw him. If we seem to avoid your inquiries, it is unfortunate. We have nothing to avoid."

"I follow my hunch," said Morgan, getting to his feet. "If I am right, something will be revealed that even I could not compromise. I am afraid you must prepare yourself for some publicity."

"I have told you before that you must select your own course," I replied, and Morgan took his leave, driving away through the snow.

"We had our Christmas eve in Mr. Sidney's room. He was very feeble physically and could be raised on pillows in bed but nothing more. But he was the spirit of joviality. He had Jed sit in a great armchair by his bed, and early in the evening he had a bottle of claret opened for him. Nothing would do but Mrs. Sidney and Isabel should have a bottle of Madeira, and I had a whisky toddy. A great punch-bowl was brought in, and Jed mixed gallons of liquor and many apices in it.

"Four of the men servants came in with a great log for the fire, and had



Mr. Sidney Evidently Was Determined to Corrupt the Whole Household.

large cups of punch before they went out. Mr. Sidney evidently was determined to corrupt the whole household. I'll never be able to give an adequate idea of the joviality of that Christmas eve in the sick-room. Mr. Sidney and Jed had conspired for some months to make a festival.

Our dinner, served in Mr. Sidney's room, brought a host's head, carried by a laughing maid. Wine was sent to the servants. Isabel found a pearl

necklace in what had seemed to be a baked sweet potato. I found a gold watch in a box under a few leaves of lettuce. Mrs. Sidney found merely a note in a bunch of violets which was given her with ceremony.

She read it and had difficulty to remain wholly composed. She arose and went to her husband, taking one of his hands and putting an arm about his shoulders. Then she kissed him and stood a moment before the fire before she trusted herself to come back to the table.

When the dinner was done and the covers were removed, more wine was brought in. A large Christmas tree was lighted, and all the servants were called. Each found a valuable present in the tree; each had punch from the great bowl, and each, coming to shake Mr. Sidney's hand, was given by Jed an envelope which, I learned afterward, contained a hundred-dollar bill.

There was no constraint and no awkwardness such as might mark such proceedings; the people of the house knew Mr. Sidney too well. One of the maids kissed him, and then we had them all doing it.

"I was fearful that the excitement would injure him, but he was placid, smiling and happy. When we were alone, we sat an hour by the fire, and then I dismissed every one peremptorily.

Jed, who had been about his duties, returned. The fire was tended. Another bottle of wine was ordered. I had my last look at Mr. Sidney alive as I stood by the door giving Jed his final instructions for the night.

Jed sat in the armchair. All the lights except one by Jed's chair had been extinguished. The Persian cat was stretched by Mr. Sidney's side. The canaries were asleep perched on the head of his bed. The fire was glowing.

"Good night, Mr. Sidney," I said. "Good night, Jed. A pleasant evening."

"Good night, doctor," said Mr. Sidney. "Just a minute, boy. Come here." He reached out his hand.

"Good-bye," he said.

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Sidney died between three and four o'clock Christmas morning. He passed so easily that Jed, sleeping in the lounge-chair beside him, did not know that death had gone through the chamber until an hour after the event. Jed awakened me. In the case of such an expected happening as this, the perceptions start slowly. The fact that the benignity which so imperceptibly had dominated the house had ceased to exist took hours to assert itself.

Jed was composed when he awoke me. Later, when the sun came up to make radiant all the white witchery the storm left, his sense of loss began to assert itself, and acute as was the grief in the house, none was deeper seated or more profound than that of the rascally old servant.

Mrs. Sidney accepted the event with a serenity which I discovered afterward was born of a long-fixed resolution. For years her life had been a denial of her moral instincts—happy, in spite of that, because of her great devotion to the wonderful man she loved. The chapters which he dominated in her book were ended. With tenderness she laid them aside.

Isabel did not permit herself indulgence in any weakness. What had happened was written in the contract of life. In later full knowledge of Isabel, I never ceased to admire the wonderful acceptivity with which she met her trials. Nothing came to her with catastrophic shock. She had reality within her vision, and she perceived it.

For myself I saw the end of a mode of life which, even when unhappy, had been ecstatically so. My reason for being in Hartley house lay dead in bed.

I should look back, I knew, many times, as a struggling practitioner, possibly in poorer districts of the city, possibly in a small town, to the strange but beautiful time when I was at Hartley. This experience would be only an episode, remaining as the memory of a time when my life halted for a wonderful moment, satisfying, rich and joyful, and—having had this moment—went on in the drab fashion ordained for it. An occasional kindly letter from Mrs. Sidney, or possibly from Isabel, might quicken the memory, but I and this period would fade from their lives as it never could from mine. I should be packing a pill-case on late and unprofitable rounds in that soul-destroying routine with its ceaseless invasion of the intimate personal economics of uninteresting people, abnormally egoistic in the pain of a small or large disorder—the cheerless life of a small physician, serving his useful purpose, I have no doubt, but how little serving his own!

We got through Christmas day in a dazed fashion. The necessary offices for the dead compelled a routine which relieved the tension, although they contributed a dulled terror to the day—those terrible, exacting practical details with which some one in the bereaved family must occupy himself. Mortuary details are jocose to the pes-

simist. I know no more comic figure than an undertaker, no more gigantic shaft of human egotism than a tombstone.

Mr. Sidney, we found, had left brief but explicit directions for his burial. This, in the case of a man with life so well conceived, was strange, but his wishes, as we found them, were simple and startling. He was to be buried by the river, close to the pool which had been invested with the added charm of a ghost-story. His grave was to be marked by an unostentatious stone. The inscription was to be as he directed in a note in a sealed enclosure to be opened at the time Mrs. Sidney thought appropriate.

It might be, he had written, that Mrs. Sidney would not want the stone erected during her life. Her wishes were to be consulted. When the grave was marked, if it ever was, the inscription was to be as he directed. Mrs. Sidney, acquainted with the terms of this extraordinary mortuary note, said that it was her wish to have the sealed envelope opened immediately and its instructions carried out.

Christmas night had set in, and the place was a fairland of glistening white. Far-off church-bells sounded faintly across the snow. In the increasing cold, following the abatement of the storm, timbers in the old house creaked and snapped, and when one of the people of the house, on an outdoor chore, passed within earshot, the sound of footsteps was audible and the crisp crunching which, even as does a high wind, emphasizes the comfort of a secure and warm shelter.

I was in the office when Mrs. Sidney's instructions to open the sealed enclosure were received.

I proceeded to do so. There was a brief note, as follows:

I desire the marking on my gravestone, when it is put up, to read:  
**ARTHUR DOBSON**  
Born May 22, 1840  
Died \_\_\_\_\_

I was holding that document, staring at it, and grasping for elusive threads of perception, when Jed came in. He carried a manuscript in his hand.

Jed drew a chair up to the fire by my side. It was with a strange feeling of relief that I accepted the significance of the manuscript he carried.

"I'm a strange man, doctor," he said by way of beginning. "You'd never understand me. I'm a strange man and I do strange things. I'm going to do one now. I've seemed conscienceless, haven't I?"

"I've never tried to conceal my opinion of you," I said.

"No, you haven't. I like a candid man. That's why I've always liked you, although I can't say much for your intelligence. But you're honest. I'm not honest, but I'm intelligent. I've looked at my life as something to make the best of, and I haven't been foolish about scruples.

"I've managed my chances, and I have not allowed sentimentalism to stop me when something real was to be gained. It's a real world, not a fanciful one. That's the way I think."

"Half the people would be swinging on gallows," I suggested, "if your amiable ideas prevailed generally."

"That's copy-book stuff that's so irritating," he said. "The only thing extraordinary about me is my candor. My ideas do prevail, but the people who adopt them have less frankness. But what I want to say is that I'm going to do a strange thing. You'll probably think it an act of contrition. It isn't at all, but you'll think it so. However, that's unimportant."

"You may not know it, but I was very fond of Mr. Sidney. He was the best friend I ever had or ever shall have."

"Now, I have guarded against acting impulsively or sentimentally. I know I am in an acutely emotional condition. I have guarded against that. I am still considering the world as a real world and myself as a real creature in it. And here's the way I figure it. Mr. Sidney's death has taught me that materialism is not enough. It is necessary, but there is something else. I've got to find another something else. That's more important than any money or comforts—physical—that I can find."

"Where is this something else to be found again if not right here in this family? I have determined to remain in your service after you marry Miss Sidney, and to take care of you and her and Mrs. Sidney. I couldn't leave. The roots are too deep. I could be cut down but not dug up. I'm too old. So as a real creature in a real world I consult my real good, now as always, and I hope I do not seem to you to be acting sentimentally."

"You seem to me to be wholly crazy," I said. "When you speak of Miss Sidney's marriage to me, you are not only ironic; you are cruel. I should think that this particular day might make you at least considerate."

"You're the blindest man I ever knew," said Jed, "but I'm not dealing with what you think but with what I know. I told you once your engagement was an unreal thing and that I did not consider it at all. Later I took that back. Now I can tell you that it is a very real thing, but it is different now with me. I have suffered

Autograph Hunter's Coup.  
Autograph hunting sometimes proves a most profitable pursuit. Ludovic Picard, a French Bohemian of the '50s, made a steady income out of it for several years.

One of his most successful coups was accomplished with a letter in which he posed as "a member of the unhappy race of the unappreciated who is meditating suicide and seeks for counsel and aid in this hour of sore distress."

This drew a number of celebrities, including Beranger and Helme. Lacordaire sent him ten closely written pages, which were promptly converted into cash.

Dickens also fell a victim of his wiles and took the trouble to answer him in French. Eventually Picard was shown up in the press by Jules Sandeau and had to seek another occupation.

Why the Aspen Leaf Quivers.  
The aspen leaf quivers easily because it is broad and placed on a long, very flexible stock. The upper part of the stalk is flattened, and, being at right angles with the leaf, is liable to be moved by the faintest breeze.

a shock. Something's the matter with my world. It is not so bold or confident.

"What I'm getting at is this," He held up the manuscript. "This is Mr. Sidney's diary. I have talked to Mrs. Sidney. She thinks, as I think, that you should read it. You'll probably want to confirm what I say. You'll have to ask Mrs. Sidney. I know you are itching to read it. I also know that if one of your scruples intervened, you'd let your itch go unscratched. But this is what I came in for, and here's the manuscript."

"You understand that in giving it to you I surrender unconditionally. I know it, but I want friends. The only one I had is dead; I must make other ones."

"The extraordinary fellow shook my hand, left the manuscript in my lap and went out, a more pathetic figure of sorrow than I ever expected to see in Jed."

I went at once to Mrs. Sidney. Jed, I said, had left the diary with me.

CHAPTER XVI.



"I Think You Should Read It, John," She Said.

Would it serve any useful purpose for me to read it, or should it not go directly to the fire?

"I think you should read it, John," she said. "I told Jed so. He is very shrewd. His judgment and mine in this case agree."

I went back to the office, put a log on the fire and sat down to read the diary.

I shall not pretend to give more than an idea of the manuscript I read there by the fire that night. It was narrative and reflection and contained the story of the life of Arthur Dobson, known to me heretofore as Mr. Sidney. I shall give extracts from it:

"A family is an odious imposition of cruel conventionalities upon individuals who, accepting conventions, however odious and cruel, are helpless. The bond of blood is one no animal (animals being rationalistic) tolerates, even recognizes, but it is imposed upon human beings, who find that the most antagonistic natures must reconcile themselves to an arbitrary rule of life which can come only to hideousness.

"There were in our family two children, my brother Richard and myself. Our parents were the ordinary folk who marry and have a family. My father was an uncommunicative man, whether from a habit of silence or a lack of anything to say, I do not know.

"My mother, as I recall her, was gentle but, I imagine, futile. I think if she had a chance of establishing a personality my silent, glum father had destroyed it.

"Richard was my elder by two years. My father was wealthy, very wealthy, and Richard and I were not disciplined as to money. My father was not nervous, but I never knew a man who obtained so little good of his money. He had no social instincts; he had no joviality.

"He liked occasional ostentation—a petty form of vanity and egotism. I regarded him, or my memory of him, as wholly detestable—a sentiment which will offend the sentimentally conventional, or the conventionally sentimental. I know he was the last man I would have chosen as a father."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Seasonable Good Things.

When chestnuts are plentiful and potatoes are selling at high prices, try:

**Mashed Potatoes.**—Cook one pound of chestnuts for a quarter of an hour, peel them and cook in one quart of milk until soft. Add two tablespoonfuls of butter, one teaspoonful of sugar, and one teaspoonful of salt. Rub through a sieve and serve the same as mashed potatoes. The advantage of serving this dish is that it may be eaten by those who are denied potatoes.

**Curried Chestnuts.**—Shell and blanch a pound of chestnuts, stew in stock until tender. Melt two tablespoonfuls of butter in a saucepan, fry in it one small sliced onion, one chopped apple, and a tablespoonful of curry powder and a teaspoonful of sweet chutney; moisten with one cupful of stock and one tablespoonful of rice flour that has been smoothly blended. Cook until the ingredients are soft then put through a sieve; add a squeeze of lemon juice and simmer the chestnuts in this until they have absorbed the flavor. Serve with plenty of plain boiled rice, very hot.

**Chestnut Cakes.**—Shell and blanch some good chestnuts then cook in boiling water until tender. Rub through a sieve and to every half cupful of chestnut pulp add the yolk of an egg, salt, white pepper, celery salt, onion juice and Worcestershire sauce to season rather highly. Make into neat little cakes, brush with beaten egg, roll in fine crumbs and fry in deep hot fat. Serve as a garnish around roast turkey.

**Luncheon Rarebit.**—Melt one-half pound of cheese over a pan of hot water. Turn a pint can of tomato soup into a separate dish. Heat and season thoroughly with paprika. Turn the melted cheese into the hot soup and beat. Have ready rounds of toasted bread. Turn the rarebit dressing over the bread and serve with crisp celery and hot coffee.

A hot vegetable dish worth trying is summer squash, cut in slices dipped in batter and fried like eggplant. Serve hot.

A rich sauce to be served with vegetables is sometimes made, adding cream, butter, salt and pepper; serve over cooked brussels sprouts.

Yes, Hazel, actions speak louder than words. True love holds hands in silence.

## The Kitchen Cabinet

(© 1920, Western Newspaper Union.)

No exigency, however serious, will present to this nation an insurmountable crisis. Every problem is solvable. Readjustment demands the best there is in us as a nation, mentally and spiritually. We shall adhere to the true, clean things and never abandon our high ideals. Dead branches fall from the live oak during the hurricane, but the fiber of the tree tightens, and the roots drive into the soil. This nation is a success; it is still the hope of the world; it must be made a yet greater blessing to the sons of men.—Will H. Hays.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR SUNDAY NIGHT SUPPER.

In the majority of homes, Sunday dinner is the finest meal of the week because all the family are at home and have leisure to enjoy it, except perhaps the overworked mother, who has to prepare it. Much of the work may be done before and each may have a share in the preparation of the meal, if planning is done. Even with a good dinner served at a later hour than usual, something is needed to satisfy the family hunger in the evening.

A very nice arrangement, where the children are old enough and the father enjoys it, is to take turns in planning and serving the Sunday supper. If served picnic fashion, with paper plates and napkins, that does away with the bugbear of dish-washing.

The meal may be served in the living room around the fire, if cool, or on the porch if pleasant. A tea wagon or wheeled tray will carry almost all the meal for an ordinary family, saving many steps.

A platter of sandwiches and a pitcher of lemonade for a warm day, or a cup of tea or chocolate, potato chips, olives, a simple salad and some fruit as dessert is sufficient for a Sunday supper.

Cup custards, with little cakes, make a most tasty dessert, all prepared beforehand and ready. They are easily served.

With a combination toaster and broiler, with a chafing dish, one may have an endless amount of good things, prepared while you wait. The guest who is fortunate enough to be invited to help get supper needs no other entertainment.

A simple menu which is also appetizing is buttered toast, hot, crisp and delicious, with marmalade, tea, small cakes and fruit.

So long as you think that someone else will do what you neglect—so long as you rail against misrule, yet fail to defend your civic rights—so long as you believe that your influence is not needed, and that without you there will be a majority sufficient to prevail for the many, the few shall continue to drag us into the sham.

Herbert Kaufman.

USE "DIAMOND DYES"

Dye right! Don't risk your material in a poor dye. Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple that any woman can diamond-dye a new, rich, fadeless color into old garments, draperies, coverings, everything, whether wool, silk, linen, cotton or mixed goods.

Buy "Diamond Dyes"—no other kind—then perfect results are guaranteed. Druggist has "Diamond Dyes Color Card"—16 rich colors. Adv.

GREEN'S AUGUST FLOWER

A Marvelous Remedy for Indigestion.

Those who suffer from nervous dyspepsia, constipation, indigestion, torpid liver, dizziness, headaches, coming up of food, wind on stomach, palpitation and other indications of disorder in the digestive tract will find Green's August Flower a most effective and efficient assistant in the restoration of nature's functions and a return to health and happiness. There could be no better testimony of the value of this remedy for these troubles than the fact that its use for the last fifty-four years has extended into many thousands of households all over the civilized world and no indication of any failure has been obtained in all that time. Very desirable as a gentle laxative. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

Building a modern house?  
"Yes, get the collar fixed up like a grill room."

Cuticura Soothes Itching Scalp

On retiring gently rub spots of dandruff and itching with Cuticura Ointment. Next morning shampoo with Cuticura Soap and hot water. Make them your every-day toilet preparations and have a clear skin and soft, white hands.—Adv.

Yes, Hazel, actions speak louder than words. True love holds hands in silence.

THE KIND.

"I understand there was a long line for some time in front of the store selling paper clothes."

"I see, a regular paper wait."

## SO WEAK LIFE A MISERY

Florida Lady Would Have Aching Pains in Side, Back and Shoulders.—Took Cardui and Soon Noted Great Improvement.

Odesa, Fla.—"About two years ago," writes Mrs. J. D. Powell, of this place, "I took several bottles of Cardui as a tonic, for I was run-down in health. In fact, I could hardly do anything at all; could only drag around and couldn't do my work.

"Life was miserable to me, and I knew I must have some relief, as I was so very weak. I would suffer from aching pains in my right side, back and shoulders. I would have such terrible nervous spells, which would come on me and I would fall down wherever I was standing. . . .

"My friends recommended that I try Cardui. . . . I began using it and soon saw and felt a great improvement. . . . My appetite became good. . . . I could rest well at night, and I got so I could do all my housework in a short time. . . . I praise Cardui to all my friends."

If you suffer from ailments peculiar to women, it would be well for you to give Cardui a trial. For more than forty years it has proven beneficial to thousands of suffering women, and what it has done for others, it should do for you.

Take Cardui, the Woman's Tonic, today. Your druggist keeps it.—Adv.

Not So Slow.

"Where are you summing?"  
"At Plunktown up the river."  
"Slow, isn't it?"  
"Slow nothing. Only yesterday we had a race between boat-houses."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

SWAMP-ROOT FOR KIDNEY AILMENTS

There is only one medicine that really stands out pre-eminent as a medicine for curable ailments of the kidneys, liver and bladder.

Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root stands the highest for the reason that it has proven to be just the remedy needed in thousands upon thousands of distressing cases. Swamp-Root makes friends quickly because its mild and immediate effect is soon realized in most cases. It is a gentle, healing vegetable compound.

Start treatment at once. Sold at all drug stores in bottles of two sizes, medium and large.

However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.—Adv.

No Necessity.

Waddle—I am starting a society to discourage buying at present prices.

Newman—Don't present prices discourage buying in themselves?—London Tit-Bits.

USE "DIAMOND DYES"

Dye right! Don't risk your material in a poor dye. Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple that any woman can diamond-dye a new, rich, fadeless color into old garments, draperies, coverings, everything, whether wool, silk, linen, cotton or mixed goods.

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