BLUE BUCKI A BAFFLING MYSTERY AND BREATHLESS TALE OF ADVENTURE

By WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Author of "The Red Mouse," "The Running Fight," "Catspaw," Etc.

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CHAPTER XXII. THE INACCESSIBLE BOX SEVEN. The president of the Peninsula Bank in The president of the Peninsula Sank I Miant was receiving two distinguished locking visitors in his private office. The were a tail man of ungainly walk bu impressive demeanor, and a young lad, of singularly pleasing face and figure The banker was all courtery and atten-tion, as soon as he had read his visitors cards and placed chairs and a table at their disposal. The tall man, without wasting words, scated himself and opened a black bag from which he began to draw documents with business-like pre-claion. A blue buckle a photograph and the sheach of another buckle were #5 claim. A blue buckle a photograph and the sketch of another buckle were ex-posed to view, side by side with a nilo of papers, which hay conveniently within reach of his long, powerful while hands. "We are berg, siz," he said to the presi-dent, with the quiet, positive authority of a big financier who addresses a little one, a bready impressed with his importance. in the matter of Box Seven in your safe

"in the matter of Box Seven in your safe deposit vaults." His glance had rested for a moment on the graceful and modish young hely sealed in an easy chair near the door. The bank president bowed as his atten-tion was directed toward her. It was a rare experience for him to be closeted with a man of such striking personality and-as the Sunday papers had frequently remarked-of such wonderful attain-ments, and rare also to be confronted with a woman of such unquestionable beauty. beauty.

They were certainly persons of prominence, these propie, and plainly bad come from the world where those of wealth and amerix dominan that mark them as leaders in a world less prominent.

The president smiled reminiscently. "I understand," he said. "You refer to the Ballantyne estate-the freak will of an old character."

odd character." His masculine visitor smiled in turn, "No man, Mr. President," he said, "is edd, if he happens to be rich." "Was the testator rich." queried the

"Was the testator rich." queried the president, interestedly. "Don't you know, sir?" asked the other. It almost seemed as though he were scually asking for information. The president shook his head. "How could I know?" he answered. "The Ballaniyne estate is locked up in Doy Seren."

Box Seven. The woman smiled archly, but a triffe anxiously. "Haven't you ever peeked in-

side" she asked. The president was almost shocked. "How could I, Miss," he returned. "You have both the keys," she smiled.

acductively. "Ah," he returned, "but this box-and

n keys-are in our vaults-a confidential rust. We have no right to-peek." The masculine visitor darted a glance at trunt_

the woman. She became silent on the indent. He pointed to the papers on the table

'Allow me, ' he said, "to present credentials.

dentials." The president examined them-carefully, with the leisure of an old-fashloned man. The credentials consisted of letters of introduction, indentified photographs and signatures and many other testimonials, proving beyond peradventure that Helder-man, that Napoleon of the Street, was measure by the face

The buyer of banks," mused the prest-

dent, with a complimentary smile, "Right," said Helderman, as though

"Right." said Helderman, as though seeking other worlds to conquer. "I have just furned my attention to it * * * to the buying of New York banks. It is alfficult to get them cheap. They know now that I am in the market and-poul--the president nodded. "When I read about you in the New York press." he said, "it was my opinion. Mr. Helderman -if you don't mind the advice of an old man-that you were making a mistake. Why not buy country banks-you can get them cheap enough-" cheap enough-Helderman cast a secret but exultant

Helderman cast a secret but exultant glance toward the young woman at his ide, and then leaned over carelessly. "Some time." he drawled, "we shall dis-runs it, you and I. Mr. President. For the present..." The president again fumbled with his

"A Tale of Red Roses," George Randolph Chester's sparkling story of love and a traction company, will begin in The Evening Ledger next Saturday, April 3. It is a story of a big man, who happens to be a ward boss, and of a dashing girl, who happens to be the daughter of the traction company's president. There are, besides, a lot of people you will recognize at once-the sort that live right around the corner from you, and there is a promoter who is worthy of being a brother to Wallingford himself. The story is full of humor -the good American sort, and full of action. Read it every day in the Evening Ledger, beginning April 3.

these upon your person," he exclaimed, T sure did," laughed Heiderman, You're foolish," said the president se-verely. "You deserve to be robbed" "Exactli, but I wasn't." You may be yet"
 You may be yet
 Teiderman in turn shook his head. "Til Heiderman in turn shook his head. "Til rake safety doubly cermin," he ex- rational to president set in turn shook head to be to be robbed."
 Solution of the shook head to be to be robbed." "Kins Ballantyne," said Heiderman, fmily, "I am conducting this matter for you. The president is right. He has said what I wasn't is right. He has said when y there he would may be yet in the mount in the president is right. He has said when y there he would may be to be in the said rather he would may be to be in the said rather he has said rathe has said

make safety doubly certain." he ex-claimed. "I'll deposit that amount in the Feninsula Rank or Miami. Will you do the honors. Mr. President?" you. The president is right. He has said what I knew be would say-what I told what it knew he would say what I fold you he would say. We have made our demand he has noted it on the papers. He has our credentials. He will protect us, at any rate. You may be sure of that"

do the honors. Mr. President?" The president did the honors. Inshie of two minutes even less this large deposit in good hard cass was entered on the edgers of the bank, and Helderman was

In good hard cash was entered on the setting of the bank, and Heldernan was stowing away in his lifeling pocket the banks, and Heldernan was stowing that he hall that much is the frequence of the banks, and Heldernan was stowing that he hall that much is the hall that much is the Ballantyne estate. This is Missi Ballantyne estate. This is Missi Ballantyne estate. This is Missi Ballantyne estate. This is free thing do you know what Box is the bankse. This is free thing is not thing do you know what Box is the bankse. This is free thing is not thing do you know what Box is the dentity in New York is disguissi is much ward." "No me knows." The has come here "said the president examined them. He come when an encound m. "Now," said the president. "Now," said the here of a million dollars." "No me was even able to the two him access the for the family estate." "No we ward the interest we her original the president examined them. He come was a transme of the dead-have president "to only with the creat man the second was "." "No we ward president is not evidence." "Now," said Helderman, "we'l president the memorandum "Now," said the memorandum "Now," said Helderman, "we'l president "." The president examined them. He come was a reason. For he seed to create was a reason. For he and the secret service man had visited a memorandum "Now," said Helderman, "we'l print". "It's Helderman," admitted transport. "The woman uttered an exclamation of the dead-have "." The president and the with the creater man having the big window of the big house the had sent the man the sole transport. They comply with the creater man here the man to the sole the high here and the object." The president and the week and the secret service man had visited to for the president and the big window of the big house the had sent the man the sole "." "Now," said Helderman, "we'l print". "It's Helderman," admitted transport." The president and exclass the man the sole "." "Now," said Helderman, "we'l print"." "It's Helderman," admitted transpo

The woman intered an exclamation of impatience. "In there never any end to this?" she cried.

"There," said Helderman, candidly, "Is "There," said Helderman, candidly, "Is where volve got us. Mr. President. We have one buckle. We have the inteription on the other buckle-kut the other buckle

missing-not by accident, but by de-"Your design"" queried the president. The president could and did, Helderman was charmed, it seemed, with the solidity, the quilet financial dignity of the insti-tution. He met all the officers, the easilier

"I am afraid." extended the president, "I am afraid." returned Heldriman, "It is by design of my old friend, the dupli-cate Helderman. But Mirs Ballantyne is the chalmant-the rightful culmant-and we make the claim."

The president pushed a button. A clerk appeared. "Bring me," said the presi-dent, "everything you find in connection with the Ballantyne estate." The clerk nodded and returned. He placed a file of papers before the pres-tent end pointed significantly to a bitter

dent, and pointed significantly to a letter The president called the easiner into

at seemed to be of recent date. 'Bead that, sir," he said, before be his private office. "I wonder," whispered the president, significantly, "if he means..." He didn't The president read it. Then he nodded.

"I find, Mr. Heffierman," he said, "that you are quite right. This is a letter from Messrs, Cowen, Covington & Brown, of finish, "I wonder, too," answered the cashier, sulling the air. New York-counterslaned by Jerome Le-Helderman saw both the lawyers casual-y, and pleked the latter of the two. To tere, the agent on whose management his whole thing depends. We received this lawser he said nothing about the blue buckle of the Ballantyne estate. "How much do you think," he queried

This letter recently by registered mail Trens Arany glanced anxiously at Hel-derman's face. His face gave no size. 'I asked them to write you,' said Helderman, without the flicker of an eye-

way." "They say." said the banker, "practi-claiming to be Miss Ballantrue secured one of the buckles through fraud-in their haste they don't say which. They wired and then they wrote." "That is the reason." soil to

and then they wrote." "That is the reason," said Helderman, "why we can't produce the other buckle. And yet this lady is the rightful claimant. The lawyer stared at him, "You-want-The contents of the box belong to her--buy-the-bank." he gasped. "I do." said Helderman

you want some good advice?"

"I do," said Helderman, The lawyer nodded, "I'm the boy to 'You're sure of what you may?" 'Positive," 'You're my man," said Helderman.

ome with me. The two went to the bank. They were closeled for hours with the president and the cashier. For hours Helderman-pos-ing as a very astute financier-examined ledger after ledger. fingered securities,

added up columns, scrutinized certificates of stock. At last he sank back, satisfied. we can agree on terms, I'm with

yon," he said. They agreed on terms. Helderman saw to that. He left the bank half an hour iater, walking on alf. He left two men behind him-more than wo-who danced on air. They had good For Helderman had bought the bank,

"You offered 'em too much." said Hel-derman's lawyer. "Yes," drawied Helderman, as he drew his counsel another check, "two dollars down and two dollars a week or so." He yowned. "It was too much." he said. On the same afternoon almost at that

yawned. "It was too much," he said. On that some afternoon-almost at that very hour-Crowder, of the secret service, burst into Craig's spartment. "My man in Florida says Helderman is there," he smiled. He shook his head. "I'll begin to love Helderman after a while * * * He was here in New York while. * * He was here in New York last night-now he's in Florida. Impossi-ble, sh? Oh, no-not to Helderman. He travels fast He's down in Florida and he's up here in New York. Now you see him now you don't." "I believe." said Craig slowly, "that he is in Florida."

"returned Crowder, "ene thing

"If he is," returned Crowder, "one thing s suce. He can't get back to New York h three hours, can be""

suit-ai once-here in your courts, Can ""(r's Heiderman," admitted Craig, "It's new York for sure and not in "Ite's in New York for sure and not in Florida."

XXIII.

The lotted down the names of two and arded them to Helderman, "If you don't A BOLT FROM THE BLUE Craig was no fool. The grass had not grown under his feet. He knew enough mind. I'm always interested can you of his own trust company to know that show me through your bank?" the last thing in bank would do with. regard to other people's property was to take risks.

button. He met all the officers, the caphice and the tellera. As he talked to them, there seemed something mystle, myster-ions about his remarks, his questions, What was he driving at? What did it mean? What did he intend to do? When he left, he left the entire bank wondering on the gul vive. Every man fell as he felt on the day before a talse in valuery. "A bank'll take anything you give it. he told Billie Ballantyne, "but when it comes to letting go its hold-well, it's more blessed to receive than it is to give That's its motio. And the bank at Mi-ami won't give up what it's got-not un-til we say the word." He had already seen to it that Cowen,

De had allrady seen to it that Cowen, Covinston & Brown-and Leelerc also-had served notice on the Peninsula Bank of the flasco in the delivery of the other buckle. He also took the precaution to write his own registered letter to the Southern bank, notifying them of the claim of Miss Ballantyne. He understood well what would happen-the bank would merely decline to deliver to either reacty

merely decline to deliver to either party Craig, in his letter, had not mentioned Helderman, for a very good renson-he had no positive assurance that Helderman was mixed up in the affair

"I gave this Arany woman hall colum-ia in my letter to the bank," he told illie. "They'll understand there's no Billie, "They'll understand there's no doubt in my mind that she's an adventuress

"Don't forget that I'm still an adven-turess." said Billie, with a laugh. Craig declined to notice the remark. "As for Helderman-he's still in New York-I'm satisfied of that. So, for the present, we'll wait until we hear from the bank."

It was that day that he heard from the bank. The letter was the letter of the president. It was addressed to Craig at the latter's apartments.

"Dear Sir dit said--Your communica-tion of recent date, in re the Ballantyne estate and Box No. 7 in our safe deposit vaults, received. You are hereby notified that Miss Wilhelmina Ballanty

This venture was vasily more interesting to Cralg than remaining in New York. And his physician couldn't hold him

back. They went to Mlami. In their turn they may the president.

The president expected them-Craig had notified him. But there was one thing Craig was unprepared for. As they enered the bank two or three suspicious looking individuals lounged about the entrance. As Craig and his fair charge were ushered into the president's room these auspicious looking individuals followed them inside. The president was scaled at his desk. Craig introduced limself.

The president nodded curtly. He had hardly looked at his visitors. "We hoped," said Craig, "to see you alone." He glanced at the suspicious characters. The president shook his head

head. "These gentlemen," said the president,

"These gentlement, shut the promotion the "area merely local detectives from the county prosecutor's office. I desired to have them hear your story." For the first time the president looked Billle Bullantyne full in the face. Clearly he was startled. Then he looked Craig squarely in the face. Once more he started.

started. He rose and bowed, "I beg your par-fon, Mr. Rutherford." he said. "I was not prepared-1 was prepared for—"" Craig smilled. "You were prepared," he femper of the people in regard to the said, "for the advent of an adventurer and an adventures. Don't we answer the femper of the source of the extent of the con-tagion. Pollicel action against the pres-tagion. Pollicel action against the pres-

the description?" "I had hoped I did, at least," smilled Billie Ballantyne.

Billie Ballantyne. The president nodded to the detectives. "Gentiemen" he said, "for the present, suppose you step outside." Craig had understood the situation at a glauce. The detectives had been pres-ent not so much to hear the story, as to intimidate them—the presence of these and the story of the second to be incention.

The president had expected them to will the president had expected them to will have had, then and there, on the spot. One glance at their faces told him that

The giance at their faces told him that he was confronted with a lady and a country that Miliville was a plague spot. gentleman

gentleman "Tet me introduce." said Craiz. "Miss Ballantyne." "The president smiled-but he was con-fused by the frankness of their demean-

"The other Miss Ballantyne," he re-

turned. "The Miss Ballantyne," said Craig.

date.

"The Miss Ballantyne," said Craig. Craig produced Billie's credentials in her turn. He produced the first buckle. He told the whole story. "To say the least." the president ex-claimed, "this is all very confusing. One Miss Ballantyne was here, with iron-clad credentials and one buckle. Here are you with iron-clad credentials and mother buckle..." "Where is Miss Arany now?" queried Craig.

Craig

(CONTINUED TOMORROW.)

OFFICIALS OF D. A. R. VACCINATION CHECKS IN HOT CONTROVERSY MILLVILLE SMALLPOX

All Cases Now Quarantined and Members of Society in This City Concerned Over Dispute Fear of Epidemic Spreading About Finances. Further Has Passed.

Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution in this elip are much concerned over a controversy he-tween their national president, Mrm. William Cumming Story, of Washington, and Mrs. Williard T. Block, of Chicago, chairman of the National Committee on Liquidation and Endowment Fund, over the payment of a bill of \$3000 owed the firm of J. E. Caldwell & Co., this city, for engraving. [FROM & STAFF CORRESPONDENT.] MILLVILLE, N. J., March 30. - The success of the vaccination campaign and the assuming announcement of State In-spector of Sanitation David C. Bowen, that all cases of mild smallpox, from which a large number of residents of this city were suffering, have been discov-ered and quarantined, has done much to reassure the people have and remove all

reassure the people here and remove all apprehension of danger. Inspection of the towns and cities lyfor engraving. About two weeks ago, it is said, Mrs. Story issued a circular inter attacking the integrity of Mrs. Block, and a few days later Mrs. Block issued a letter in self-defense, in which she charged the national president with playing politics. She said Mrs. Story's a track was in-spired by a rumor that she was to be a candidate for national treasurer on a ticket opposed to Mrs. Story, at the an-nual meeting of the society which will be held April 19 in Washington. According to Mrs. Thomas Potter, Jr., regent of the Philadelphia Chapter, the Pennsylvania members of the organiza-tion favor Mrs. Block. Mrs. Potter says Mrs. Block has worked indefatigably to raise funds for the lumidation. ing along the Maurice River is still ing made by Inspector Bowen, Vaccina-tion is being urged upon the residents of all these places, however, and some of the local health boards have already joined the State Inspector in his effort to prevent any possible recurrence of the

the temper of the people in regard to the action of the Board of Health which is held responsible for the extent of the conent city commissioners will probably be one of the effects of the epidemic, as the people are disposed to hold them to blame Mrs. Block has worked indefatigably to raise funds for the liquidation of the debt on the society's national home in people are disposed to hold them to bame for the unenvisible notorlety that has fallen upon the city. The attempt of a local paper to place the blams for the widespread story of the scars on the shoulders of the Phila-delphia newspaper correspondents has failed and the residents of this city have

Washington and other expenses. come to the conclusion that the action of the various city departments at the time of the first outbreak is the true cause of We Plan the loss of business that has been caused **Attractive Trips** The clash between State Inspector Bowen and Frank Bullock, local health inspector, over the lifting of the quaran-tine has been settled by the order of the State Inspector that no quarantines shall be lifted without his express per-TO THE California mission. In spite of this announcement the motion picture theatre owners an-nounce that they will open their places on Saturday if they learn that the taberna-Expositions cle, recently constructed for a revival to begin Sunday, will be opened on that CHICAGO & NORTH WESTERN RY. W. Atlee Burpee, a well-known Phila-delphilan, whose country home is Fordhook Farms in Bucks County, will entertain the members of the Doylestown Club, at tion call on or address D. M. Davis, G. A., 1020 Chesinut St. Tel. Wainut 356-357. Phila., Pa. Ex. 3670 For tree booklets and full informa-



Club to Be Burpee's Guests

a luncheon at the General Greene Inn in Buckingham.

The president again fumbled with his papers. "Your credentials are entirely satisfactory to me," he said. "There is no doubt that you are Mr. Heblerman,"

The president, worried, strugged his shoulders. "I'm soriy, Mr. Helderman," he returned, fumbling with his written instructions and the correspondence fast-"You may not understand why I am so particular in this case." said his visi-tor, "but it is said-it is whispered in the Street-though I know nothing actually of it-that there are two Heldermana." "Brothers"" "No-I have no brother. But another

instructions and the correspondence fast-ened to them, 'sorry, but we're bound by these. This absurd business was thrust upon us-thrust upon this bank when its president was out of town. The bank took it-accepted the conditions. We renied Box Seven to a live man-later we were embarransed by the instructions left man who makes up to resemble me-who

man who makes up to resemble me-who mimics me." "You surprise me, said the president, again scrutinizing the papers-an uncon-scious act, which caused Heiderman to smile. "What is his motive" "Evidently to do me at every turn," said Heiderman, "but so far he has suc-ceeded only in one thing-he has re-peatedly gotten me into embarrassing situations. Unquestionably a swindler-he has swindled others but not myself. I'd like to get my hands on him-that's all,"

math who makes up to resemble me-who
"Tou surprise me, said the president
"Tou surprise me, said the president
"Tou surprise me, said the president
"Exidently to do me at every turn,"
as deferman, "but so far he has surpresented y gotten me into embarrassing
"The police" queried the president
"The police" queried the president.
"The police" queried the president.
"They are haffled," said Heiderman, "so that they keep it quiet. But fills this fellow yet, if they do not, this hald the deferman drew from his wallet and tossed before the president a money-that is to do not, this the one thing that my ubiquitors double so far hasn't been able to do the souther. Produce the buckles are instructions that not we conduct the president and to see the president a near thore are the president at the president of the souther. The vare of every day doother we conduct the buckles are instructions that they keep it queries the president at the second the basker, "but in this proper signature.
"When he preside the buckles are instructions that must be the second the basker." The we have the second the basker. "but in this proper signature.
"If a man," a mewerid Heiderman, "the second the basker." The buckles are into the president were the second the basker. "but in this proper signature.
"If a man," a mewerid Heiderman, "the second the basker." The buckles are into the president were the buckles are in the second the basker. " packet containing fifty one-thousand doi-lar bills. The woman started-glanced doubtfully at Helderman. She seemed surprised. The president picked up the bills. He shook his head. "Through the courts, exactly," said the president, "and I advise that course. The box belongs to the rightful claimant. If through fraud she is prevented from en-

"You traveled from New York, with I joying her property, we believe the courts

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Toppy Cottontail Leaves the Farmyard

his bead, his tail and his ears; then he winked both eyes and sat up to look around. "That feels better." he said to himself, "but I certainly do feel lazy, very

Hd man rooster, the bows of the farmyard (when the tirkey rock's back was immad), was going by just them and heard whist Toppy said. "I should think you would feel lary," he said scornfully, "a great healthy rabbit like you, staying in the farmyard all the time and being fed!

"On dear, Toppy was mustn't?" exclaimed Mrn. Dark, quachingly.

Now all the the out hustling for you.
Now I like that?" replied Toppie of the source of th

FTOPPY COTTONTAIL waked up one | some sense to what he save even if he is fine spring morning and indulged in a such a feel!" he said to himself. "I surely ing, big stretch. He stretched his legs, his bead, his tall and his ears, then he winked both eves and sat up to look woods."

Just as he said that, who should walk by but Mrs. Duck. "What's this you're saying to yourself, Toppy Cottontail? Haven't I taught you that it is very rule to mumble?" to mumble?

"Yes, you have," replied Toppy, "you've taught me a lot of good flungs since my mother was shot and I came to live at this farmyard, but I guess I forget sometimes. I just said then that I was going away to live in the woods."

"Oh deay, Toppy, you musin't?" ex-ciatmed Mra Duck, quackingly, "there is danger in the woods and hunger and—and —all sorts of dreadful things?"

which operature. Farm-and And with that he in-meteric duits departing westered his departing count, gravity times is

The lawyer model, 1.m the boy to give it to you, Mr. Helderman, 'he said, Then there was a long significant eitence. Helderman broke it. 'Well, go abead,'' he demanded. Then he understood. He drew forth a check book and alled out a check for a hundred dollars.

as to sue the bank I can hardly send you o the bank's lawyer, our there are other ood ones here in rown."

"They've been trying to sell that bank or the last five years-nobody wants it, for understand

tiver "What'll I have to pay for ht?" seen-seen-de-that kind of thing, you know."

that Miss Withelmina Ballantyne-for we believe her to be such-has called on us, has exhibited to us her cradentials and has notified us of her claim to the key for Box 7. If the lady whom you represent can comply with the conditions under which we hold the key she will be entitled to lt-but we have reason to believe that who cannot we have filed dollars. "My mistake," he commented, as he passed it over. "Now go abead." The lawyer pocketed the check. "My advice," he said slowly, chuckling as he said it, "is just this-don't." "Why not?"

man. But it gave Craig a distinct joit. "This Arany girl is working alone," he exclaimed, "and the bank belives in her, The time has come, Miss Ballantyne. Now we must go South." They went South, Billie and her father -and Craig went, too. His hurts were healing rapidly-he longed for action.

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