

THE MIDDLE TEMPLE MURDER

A Detective Story by J. S. Fletcher

Copyright, 1919, Fred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright, 1920, by the Public Ledger Co. "He'll say no more. He was adamant. I told the entire truth in respect to my dealings with Marbury on the night he met his death at the inquest," he said, over and over again, "and I shall say nothing further on any consideration. If the law likes to hang an innocent man on such evidence as that, let it!" And he persisted in that until we left him. Spargo, I don't know what's to be done.

Spargo would keep in communication with each other. At any rate, here she was, and her destination was, surely, Elphick's chambers. And the question for him, Spargo, was—what to do? What Spargo was to remain in absolute silence, motionless, tense, where he was on the stair, and to trust to the chance that the woman did not look up. But Miss Baylis neither looked up nor down; she reached a landing, turned along a corridor with decision, and marched forward. A moment later Spargo heard a sharp double knock on a door; a moment after that he heard a door heavily shut; he knew then that Miss Baylis had sought and gained admittance—somewhere.

To find out precisely where the somewhere was drew Spargo down to the landing which Miss Baylis had just left. There was no one about—he had not, in fact, seen a soul since he entered the building. Accordingly he went along the corridor into which he had seen Miss Baylis turn. He knew that all the doors in that house were double ones, and that the outer oak in each was solid and substantial enough to be sound proof. Yet, as he walked softly, he said to himself, smiling at the thought, that he would be sure to start if somebody suddenly opened a door on him. But no hand opened any door, and at last he came to the end of the corridor and found himself confronting a small board on which was painted in white letters on a black ground, Mr. Elphick's "Chambers."

Having satisfied himself as to his exact whereabouts, Spargo drew back as quietly as he had come. There was a window half-way along the corridor from which, he had noticed as he came along, one could catch a glimpse of the Embankment and the Thames; to this he withdrew, and leaning on the sill looked out and considered matters. Should he go and—? He had no admittance—heard these two conspirators? Should he wait until the woman came out and let her see that he was on the track? Should he hide again until she, and then see Elphick alone? In the end Spargo did none of these things immediately. He lit things slide for the moment. He lighted a cigarette and stared at the river and the brown sails, and the buildings across on the Surrey side. Ten minutes went by—twenty minutes—nothing happened. Then, as half-past nine struck from all the neighboring clocks, Spargo flung away a second cigarette, snatched straight down the corridor and knocked boldly at Mr. Elphick's door.

Greatly to Spargo's surprise, the door was opened before there was any necessity to knock again. And there, calmly confronting him, a benevolent, yet somewhat deprecating expression on his face, stood Mr. Elphick, in a smoking cap on his head, a tasseled smoking jacket over his dress shirt, and a short pipe in his hand.

Spargo was taken aback; Mr. Elphick apparently was not. He held the door well open, and motioned the journalist to enter. "Come in, Mr. Spargo," he said. "I was expecting you. Walk forward into my sitting-room. I'll tell you what I can. Spargo, much astonished at this reception, passed through an anteroom into a handsomely furnished apartment full of books and pictures. In spite of the fact that it was still very little past midsummer there was a sherry fire in the grate, and on a table set near a roomy arm-chair was set such creature comforts as a spirit-cane, a syphon, a tray with a smoking cap on his head, a tasseled smoking jacket over his dress shirt, and a short pipe in his hand.

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THE GIMPS—Look Out for a Big Rise in the Stock Market

THAT \$10,000.00 IS JUST SIZZLING IN ANDY'S JEANS THE OLD GET RICH GERM HAS BY HIM AGAIN. W.W. HE IS STILL KEEPING IT A SECRET FROM MIN THAT HE HAS THIS VAST AMOUNT

MIN I'VE BEEN KINDA LOOKIN' OVER THAT LITTLE PRINT IN 'THE STOCK MARKET. I THINK I'LL TAKE A LITTLE CHANCE AT IT MYSELF—EVERYBODY'S GETTIN' RICH AND I WAS ALWAYS LUCKY

A FRIEND OF MINE WASTELLING ME ABOUT A FELLOW—THAT TWO YEARS AGO DIDN'T HAVE \$500.00—HE'S WORTH OVER A MILLION TODAY—AND DID IT ALL BY SPECULATING—NO MAN EVER GETS ANY PLACE JUST PIKING ALONG LIKE I AM MIN—THESE PEOPLE ARE NO SMARTER THAN I AM—IT'S BECAUSE THEY TAKE A CHANCE THAT THEY GET RICH—I'LL BET IF I WENT DOWN TO THAT STOCK EXCHANGE WITH \$10,000.00—I'D BE A MILLIONAIRE IN A WEEK

YOU—A MILLIONAIRE—DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE STATISTICS SHOW? THAT THIRTY SEVEN MEN ARE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING WHERE ONE MAN GETS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE—YOU BETTER KEEP OUT OF THESE THUNDER SHOWERS

PETEY—He Don't Count Anyway

I'M THE CENSUS TAKER—WHAT'S YOUR FIRST NAME?—WHAT'S YOUR WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME?—BORN IN BROOKLYN—WHEN WERE YOU NATURALIZED?

—NO CHILDREN?—IF YOU HAD ANY CHILDREN WOULD THEIR FIRST NAMES BE GEORGE?—IF SO, WHY NOT?—ARE YOU WHITE OR BLACK?

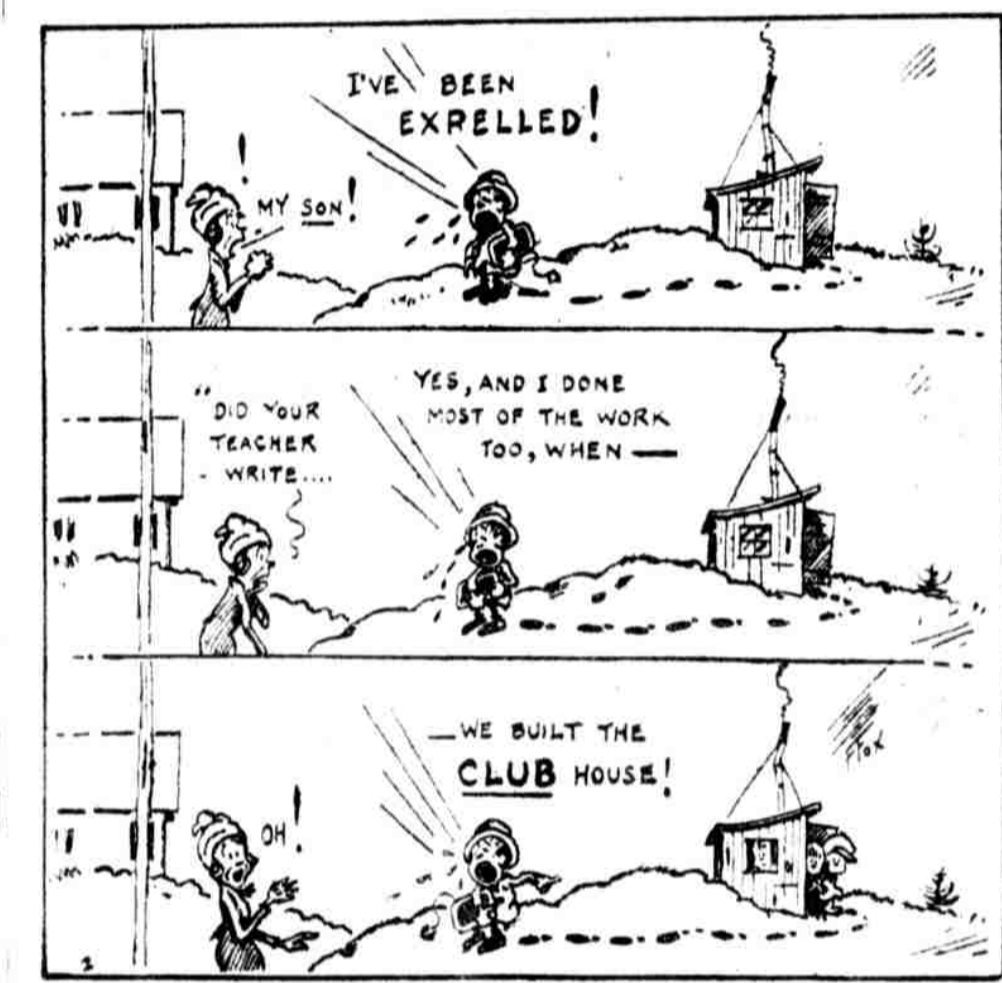
—DO YOU LIKE BLONDES?—HAVE YOU ANY ANIMALS—COWS, GIRRAFFES ELEPHANTS, GOATS—

—I HAD A GOAT—BUT I JUST LOST IT!!

The Young Lady Across the Way



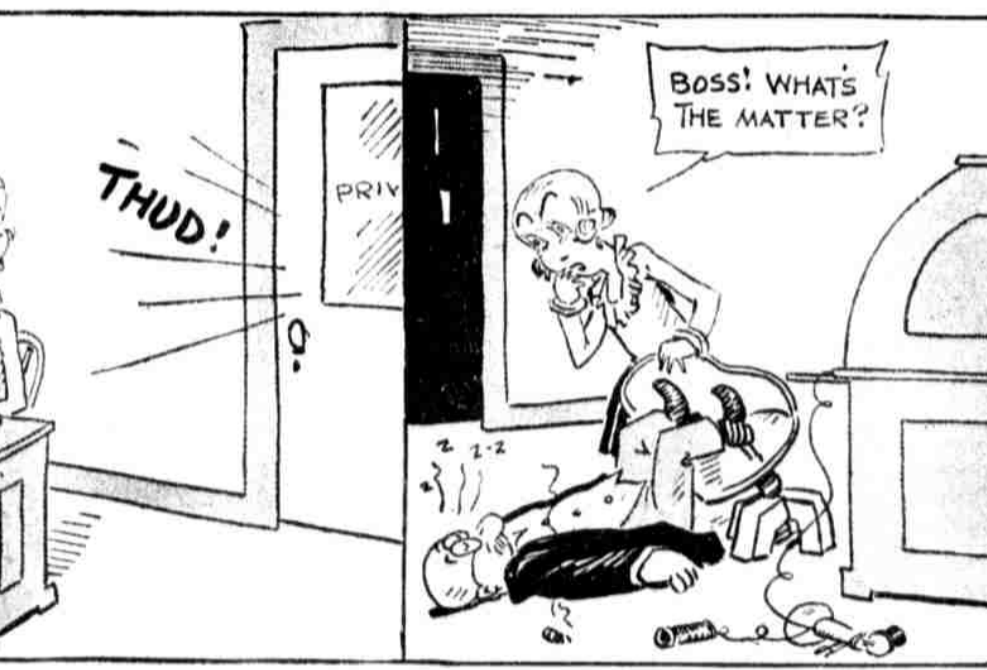
This Would Have Made Jimmie's Second Expulsion From School—By Fontaine Fox



SCHOOL DAYS—By DWIG



SOMEBODY'S STENOG—The Boss Has Shell Shock



DOROTHY DARNIT—She Breaks Off Diplomatic Relations



DREAMLAND ADVENTURES THE LONG-AGO CHARM

CHAPTER I The Gift of the Geese PEGGY had been reading in a book of the long ago time when there was not a city nor a town in all America, just woods and the rude villages of wild Indians. "I'd like to have seen America then," said Peggy to herself. "It must have been a huge Birdland, with nothing to spoil the happy times of birds and beasts. "My, I'll bet it was fun," cried the voice of Billy Belgium, and there was Billy sitting on the back of Billy's Bunt, the army mule. They had come up so quietly she had not heard them. "I've often wished that I could have lived among the Indian boys long, long ago," continued Billy. Peggy opened her mouth to answer him, but before she could say a word Billy to look upward. Floating along in the air was a big, warty, "wild geese!" shouted Billy. "See the wild geese on their springtime journey to the North!" "Oh, I hope they'll stop to pay us a visit," cried Peggy, who was anxious to see again her friends, the beautiful wild geese. "Honk-honk-honk," gabbled the wild geese, and, as they sped swiftly to find their "Honk-honk-honk" tapping into the words: "You shall have your wishes! You shall have your wishes!" While Peggy and Billy were wondering what this promise meant, the king of the wild geese and his two long legs were all the geese of his flock. "Honk-honk-honk! You shall have your wishes," gabbled the geese.

(Tomorrow will be told the surprising thing that happens when Billy rubs the coin.)