

TODAY'S MYSTERY STORY

By PHILIP FRANCIS NOWLAN

Yesterday's Mystery Solution

In the case of "The Arnsleyton Murders" eleven persons, including two entire families, had been wiped out by a number of murders committed in rapid succession, and for which, apparently, there was no motive.

There was no evidence of robbery. None of the victims apparently had received any threats or demands for money prior to the murders. None of them apparently had any money.

Hunt was struck by three points in connection with the murders. First, the apparent lack of motive and the degree as the instrument of death were common to all of the killings. Second, in the two families which had been wiped out it was the children who were killed first, the women last and the men last. Third, the banker was the only person in the town, apparently, who had received any threatening letter, and he had not been molested.

From the first two of these points Hunt drew the conclusion that the murders had been committed by the same person, and that the callous, heartless killing of children and women first was due to some diabolical ingenuity in covering the motive and the identity of the murderer. What other meaning could be drawn from it? From this he deduced that the banker probably knew more about the case than he admitted. Unarmed people had been struck down, but no attempt had been made on the life of the single person who claimed to have known what.

Working on this theory, Hunt finally uncovered Dr. Giovanni's secret. In his capacity as confidential financial adviser he knew these men had money. He killed them to get that money, but first he killed the members of their families so that none would be alive to testify that there had been any money or that the banker knew anything of it.

Yet "Don" Osterman had been murdered right in front of their eyes. Osterman was an underworld character, the head of a "Dope" ring, though the authorities had never been able to get evidence enough to convict him. He was in the hospital because he had been shot and wounded by some unknown person.

He had more of these than

most men have acquaintances. There was no way of telling which of the hundreds had done it; whether it was the same man who had shot him or not. The murderer had jabbed a piece of wire, probably a hair, through his eye and into the brain as he lay on his cot. He had died without a sound.

All they knew was that he had been killed between 2 and 2:30 in the morning, for every half hour one of the nurses went into the ward and turned up the light to attend to one of the

patients. He might have been killed by one of the patients in the same ward, or by some one from outside the ward, for there was a door opening into the other corridor, from which the nurses sat, and anybody using that door might with luck get to almost any point in the hospital without being seen.

But the murderer must have been somebody inside the building, for there was but one unbarred entrance, the front door, and a watchman was on duty there.

"I couldn't see my hand when I held

it three inches from my eyes," replied Anselm. "I'll admit, child, my brain's not as sharp as it used to be. The nurse, then, was sitting in the dark. The light was way at the other end of the corridor. It was just completely, totally black in the ward. You know we sat there for twenty minutes ourselves tonight, and couldn't see a thing. You couldn't see at all when you went in to the bed, could you?"

"I couldn't see my hand when I held

get an idea, on it he'll be willing to come around. There isn't one chance in a million that it would apply to two persons."

Anselm grunted disapproval of the place, but Brannigan was in charge, so they called upon the criminologist.

Hunt heard their story through, but it was an effort toward the end. When they finished he could hold in no longer, but laughed until the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"It's absolutely the simplest case I

heard of for years," he said finally.

"I'll give you a description of the mur-

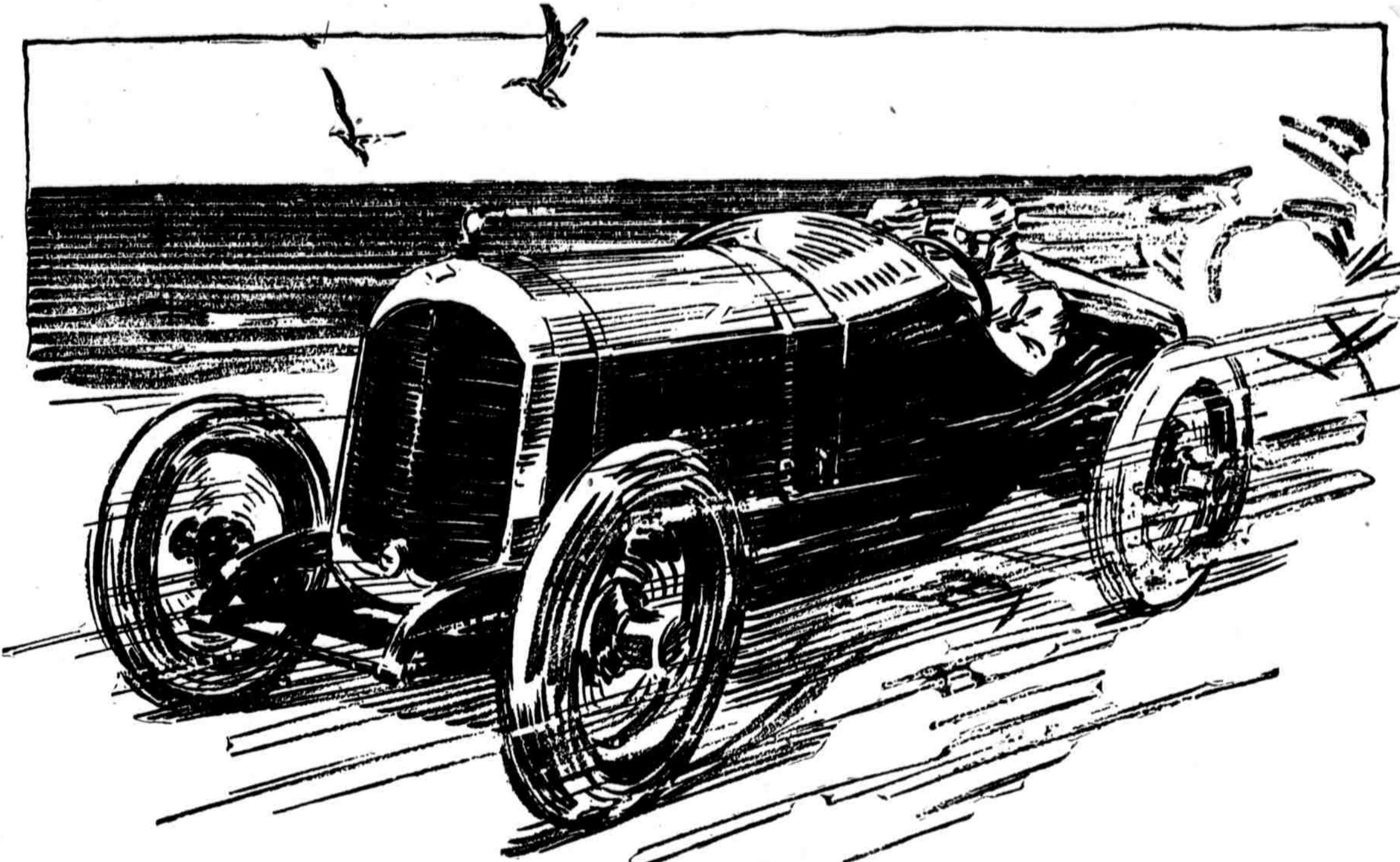
derer you can't go wrong on. There isn't one chance in a million that it would apply to two persons."

What was the description?

The answer will appear tomorrow.

Pupils to Dance at Starr Garden

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