

1924

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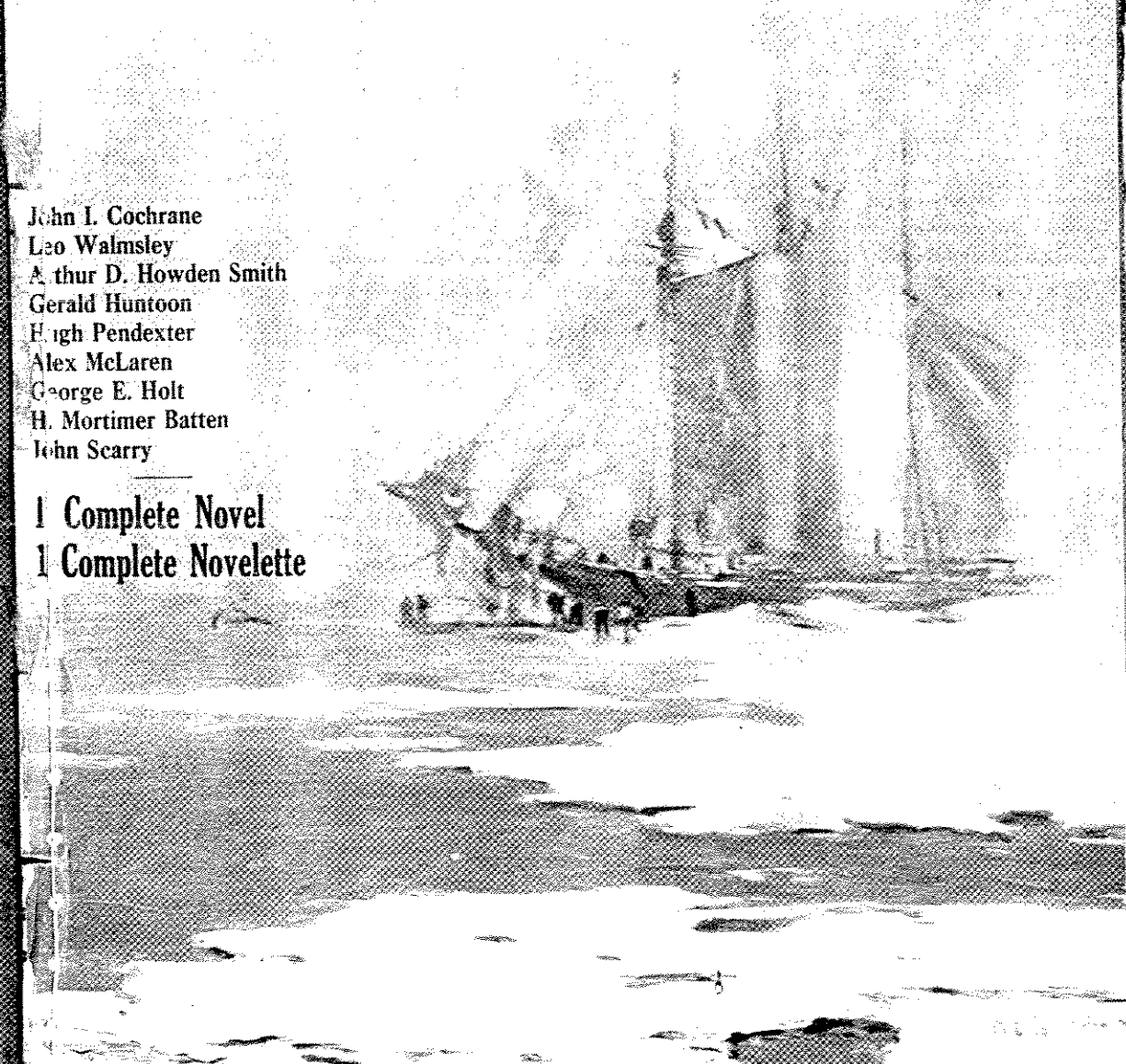
1924

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Adventure

John I. Cochrane
Leo Walmsley
Arthur D. Howden Smith
Gerald Huntoon
Hugh Pendexter
Alex McLaren
George E. Holt
H. Mortimer Batten
John Scarry

1 Complete Novel
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*Occasionally one of our stories will be called an "Off-the-Trail" story, a warning that it is in some way different from the usual magazine stories, perhaps a little different, perhaps a good deal. It may violate a canon of literature or a custom of magazines, or merely be different from the type usually found in this magazine. The difference may lie in unusual theme, material, ending, or manner of telling. No question of relative merit is involved.

(Continued on next page)

Answer, by Mr. Mills:—I see no reason why you should not come on over to New Zealand after you get your discharge. This is a country well worth seeing—and if you come and taste of its sweet waters you will forget all about any other spot on earth. This is the life—this is the country. The working conditions over here are ideal—because it is an ideal country, with good labor laws and a free-living, genial people, splendidly independent, not shackled as are your ancient countries.

If you have a little money in your pouch and possess a willingness to get down to the business of making a living by your own effort—well, here's the country that gives such a young man a chance. New Zealand is essentially a producing country, whether on or under the earth.

A man with some knowledge of mining has the chance of all chances over here, for New Zealand is a wonderland of mineral wealth, the surface only of which has been scratched so far, comparatively. We have gold, silver, scheelite, iron-sand and even a suspicion of oil for prospectors to go after, aided by a mining department that is ready to help by bonus and subsidy.

For details of our land laws you should write to the Minister of Lands, Wellington, New Zealand, and he will forward particulars. I don't quite get you about homesteading. Sounds big. We are breaking up our big holdings—runs or ranches or homesteads—so as to give the small settler a chance to get on the land. And that is costing a little bit of money. On that phase, you had better inspect on the spot.

Names and addresses of department editors and the exact field covered by each section are given in the next issue of the magazine. Do NOT write to the magazine itself.

Highland Pistols

SCARCER than hen's teeth:

Question:—"I am asking you if you know anything of Highland pistols and if it is possible to secure a pair. I understand they are flint-locks with no trigger guard, having metal stocks, the butt of which is curled like a ram's horn, and has a metal part for cleaning the vent and a tang or tongue for fastening to the belt."—Geo. G. WALLACE, Columbus, Ga.

Answer, by Mr. Barker:—I suppose I know as much about "Highlanders" as is to be known. Obviously the limits of a letter are too small for an article on the same.

In "Firearms in American History," by Prof. Charles Winthrop Sawyer, (which may be obtained from the author, 41 Humphreys St., Boston, for \$3.75) and which is the best work of its kind ever written, both as to matter and illustrations, you will find a brief account of Highlanders—pages 183, 184, 185, a list of about one hundred makers thereof on pages 185, 186, 187, 188, with markings and dates, and a very fine full-page half-tone of one on page 189.

You will also find a drawing of one on page 84, numbered 2112, of the 1922, 500-page illustrated

catalog of Francis Bannerman's Sons, 501 Broadway, N. Y., which may be obtained by sending fifty cents to them. This pair has been sold some years ago, and so far as I know they have no others.

Major Pitcairn opened the Revolution with a pair. They were taken by the Americans, together with his horse—they being in his saddle holsters—and were given to General Israel Putnam, and given by his nephew to the museum at Lexington, where they now are.

Your description is all right. There is a "picker" screwed into the butt between the ram's horns for cleaning the touch-hole. And a "belt hook" on the left-hand side, as was frequent in military pistols. The mechanism differs from that of the regular flint-lock, the sear extending through the lock-plate as in a Migulet, save that the main spring is inside like the flint-lock and not outside, like the Migulet. The weapon is entirely of metal, sometimes steel and sometimes bronze.

There are some eight or nine varieties, all of which may be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and nowhere else completely, so far as I know. They were made later in percussion locks. Few collections have more than one; many have none. There has been but one that I remember of at any auction sale of arms in fifteen years—thirty sales—and that brought about fifty-five dollars at a sale where everything went for about one-half the usual auction price.

I should say it would be very, very difficult to obtain a pair. I should not know where to go. If I were looking for them I should authorize Mr. Sumner Healey of 686 Lexington Ave., New York, to find me a pair abroad, giving him *carte blanche* on price up to three hundred. Mr. Healey has, or had, one of the very earliest with the snaphaunce lock (that is to say, with separate frizzen and sliding pan-cover)—I know of but one other of these in America—which he asks or asked five hundred dollars for, and that did not seem to me an undue price. I have seen and handled this piece.

The only possibility, I repeat, in my opinion is to place an order with all dealers, and I should not expect to get them, if at all, for less than two hundred or three hundred dollars.

Dealers are, so far as I know them—otherwise than the two mentioned:

Stephen Van Rensselaer, 873 Madison Ave., N. Y.; J. Theodore Dexter, E. Boone St., Marshalltown, Ia.; Joe Kindig, 336 E. Phil. St., York, Penn.; J. G. Laidacker, Mocanaqua, Penn.; Mr. Carter, Elkhorn, Wisc.; F. E. Ellis, 30 Elm Place, Webster Groves, Mo.

Customs of Central Europe

FEUDAL rights, serfdom, public whippings:

Question:—"1. At what period did the feudal system flourish most highly in central Europe?"

2. What were the rights of the feudal lord or baron?

3. Did not a privilege known as maiden rights exist under feudal rule?

4. I have heard that until 1889 or 1890 there was in Germany a law which permitted a man to whip his wife. Is this true? If so, were there any limitations to his authority?

5. What are some of the marriage customs of Poland, Germany and Austria?

6. I understand that a public whipping was one of the punishments by law formerly in use in the countries of central Europe. In what manner was this done? Were women ever whipped?

7. About what is the population of Czecho-Slovakia?

If this letter should be published in *Adventure*, please do not publish my name.—R. E. H., Cross Plains, Tex.

Answer, by Mr. Fleischer:—It is only once in a blue moon that I get a letter like yours, in which the questions are put clearly and concisely. Although your order is a large one, I will try to give you all the information you want.

1. The opinions of the historians differ on this subject. At the time the feudal system was in flower, the territory which I cover was, with the exception of Poland, all part of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation." For this reason I must cite German sources, and from these, as the best, the works of Prof. Mommsen.

Feudal princes were those who owned the land in the near vicinity of their castles and resident towns and who had leased this land to the peasants. These people were called *Leibeigene* which means that they were owned soul and body by their lord. They were really slaves. Not only the princes and knights, but also the *clerus*, the priests, were feudal barons.

There is no set period during which the system was in effect. It started in the thirteenth century, in some parts of Germany even sooner, and did not end until after the Reformation and in Prussia during the reign of Frederick the Great.

INAUSTRIA Joseph the second, son of Maria Theresa, put an end to the system. That's official and history. Truth, however, is the fact that it still existed in Austria until 1866 and in south Germany as late as 1895 in some form or other. We even have a form of this system here in our United States—the famous "padrone system" of the Italian immigrant laborer.

2. The rights of the feudal lords were many, and those of the poor people none. As stated above, the master owned the body of his servants, and they had to follow him through his many wars of aggression. They were not armed with a sword, but carried a halberd.

The feudal lord not only owned the land on which the peasants lived, but also the cottages built thereon, the cattle and farming-implements. He owned a certain part of the crops, a tribute known as *Robot* and in later centuries—the sixteenth and seventeenth—as the *Zehmi*, the "tenth," because he was then entitled to a tenth of all income. This tribute varied in different parts of the country and was paid in kind, including grain, hay, animals, eggs, butter, vegetables, etc.

First of all there was a law, called "maiden right," which permitted a maiden of good character to ask the judges that a criminal sentenced to death be given her in marriage, which act, after having been solemnized by the church, set aside the verdict and freed the culprit.

I find that in 1579 in Saxony during the reign of August a murderer named Martin Hugert escaped death because a maiden asked that he be united with her in marriage. A similar case happened in 1606 during the reign of John George I and still

later in 1725 in a county of Suabia. The histories of the old German cities are full of such stories, and as my library contains numerous volumes I am quite certain that I could cite several hundred. I have picked the above at random.

There is also a second interpretation of "maiden rights."

4. Your informant was quite correct. The husband had what was termed the "right of light punishment," but I fail to find an instance where he was ever convicted if he stretched the meaning of "light." In fact it was not until 1892 that this right was taken away from the husband in Bavaria.

5. The marriage customs vary in all counties. You must bear in mind that central Europe is a large territory with people ethnographically as distant from one another as the poles. I can not within this letter give you all the information you want, but will touch lightly upon some of them.

IN GERMANY the young man—I am speaking of the peasants, and I am having a certain part of Germany in mind—will appear at the Winter spinning-night gatherings and pick out his intended. There will be a short courtship, and with the old people making the arrangements the wedding date will be set. In the Catholic parts of Germany the wedding will be preceded by three announcements from the pulpit which are given at varying periods. In other parts of the country the new furniture of the couple will be loaded on a wagon and with beribboned horses and gaily decorated wheels will be making the rounds of the whole neighborhood.

In Poland other customs prevail. I would suggest that you look these matters up in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* if there is one available in your neighborhood.

6. There were different manners in which public whipping was carried out. In some cases the "nine-tailed" cat was used, in others whips made from birch strips or twigs. In many towns the public executioner did the whipping; in others the populace formed two ranks, and the culprit had to run through, everybody taking a whack at him.

Women, although I know of cases that have been cited, were punished in a different manner from whipping. It is a curious fact that the women of the middle ages incurred the disfavor of the authorities by either lax morals or pointed, too pointed, tongues. The punishment meted out was severe, but I find no record of whipping.

7. The population of Czecho-Slovakia is about fourteen millions, sixty per cent. of which are of Slavic races, thirty-seven per cent. German and the remainder Magyars and in small part Ruthenians and Poles.

Now that I have told you as much as I could in a letter, I am going to request a favor of you. If you write again, and I hope you will, please adhere to "Ask Adventure" rules. In a letter such as yours, where many questions are asked and a long reply is anticipated, there is no room for a small envelop and a stamped one at that. We want a self-addressed envelop to get your correct address, but the stamps should not be attached, so that we might use them on containers large enough to get you your order. I am returning your envelop so that you can make use of it. I couldn't.

Address your question direct to the expert in charge, NOT to the magazine.