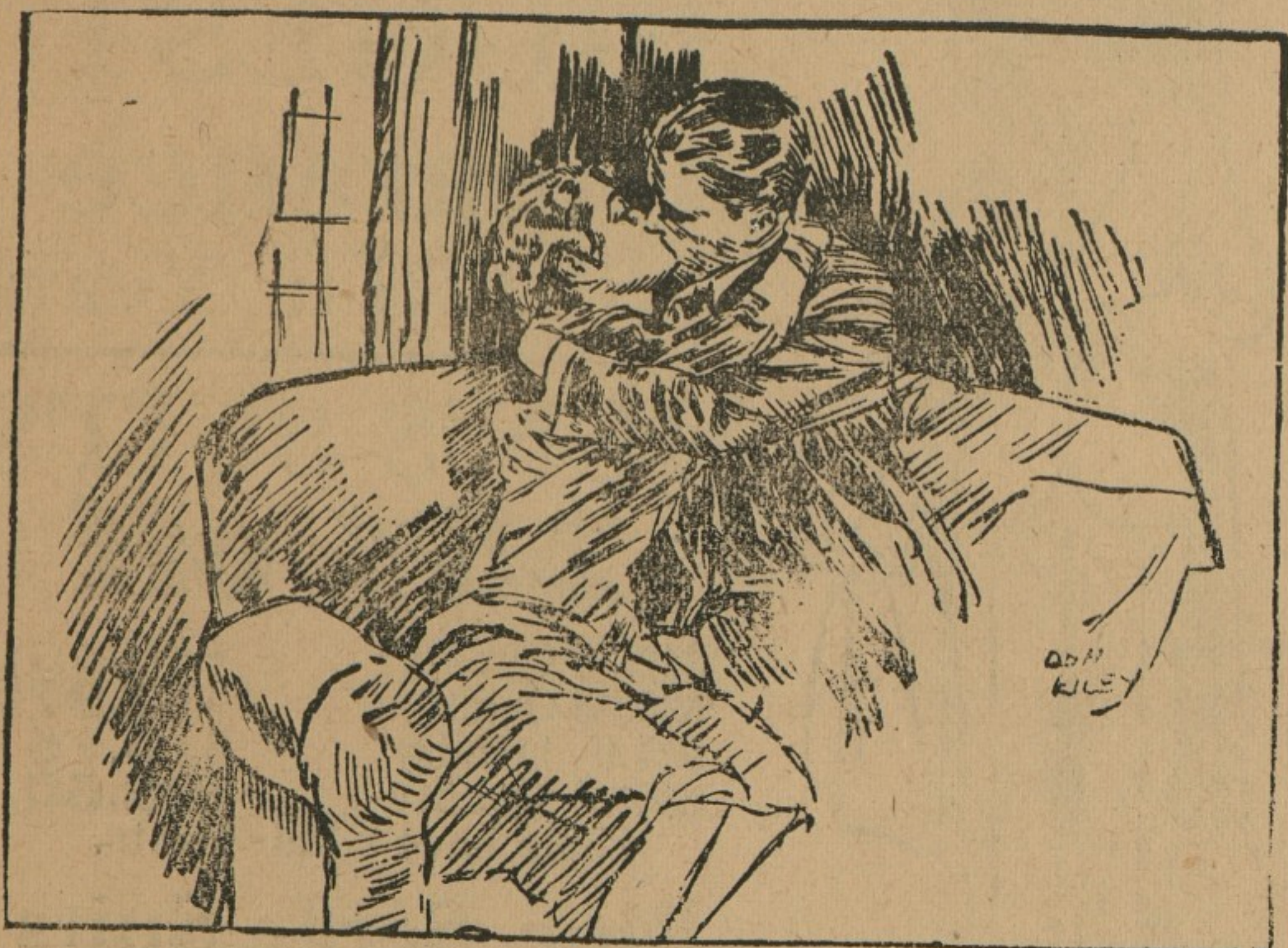


# GUNMAN'S BLUFF

Edgar Wallace  
COPYRIGHT BY EDGAR WALLACE

**SYNOPSIS**  
Margaret Leferre, engaged to marry Luke Maddison, wealthy banker, is with him when he encounters Gunner Haynes, an American crook, apparently by accident, in a London hotel lobby. Danton Morell, a friend of Margaret's brother Rex, is watching them, and wonders whether the Gunner recognizes him after seven years. That night Rex is found dead with a revolver by his side and a note addressed to his sister saying that he has been ruined by taking Luke Maddison's advice. Morell tells Maddison later that Rex cashed a check for Eighteen Pounds ostensibly signed by Maddison.  
Now Go On With The Story—  
"My name was forged to it. I did not give Rex a check for that amount. I have been making inquiries. I find that he was heavily involved in a derelict West African gold-mining syndicate, most of the shares of which you bought for a song less than a year ago. He has been buying these shares on margin and they have been steadily dropping in value. On the day he paid you eighteen thousand five hundred

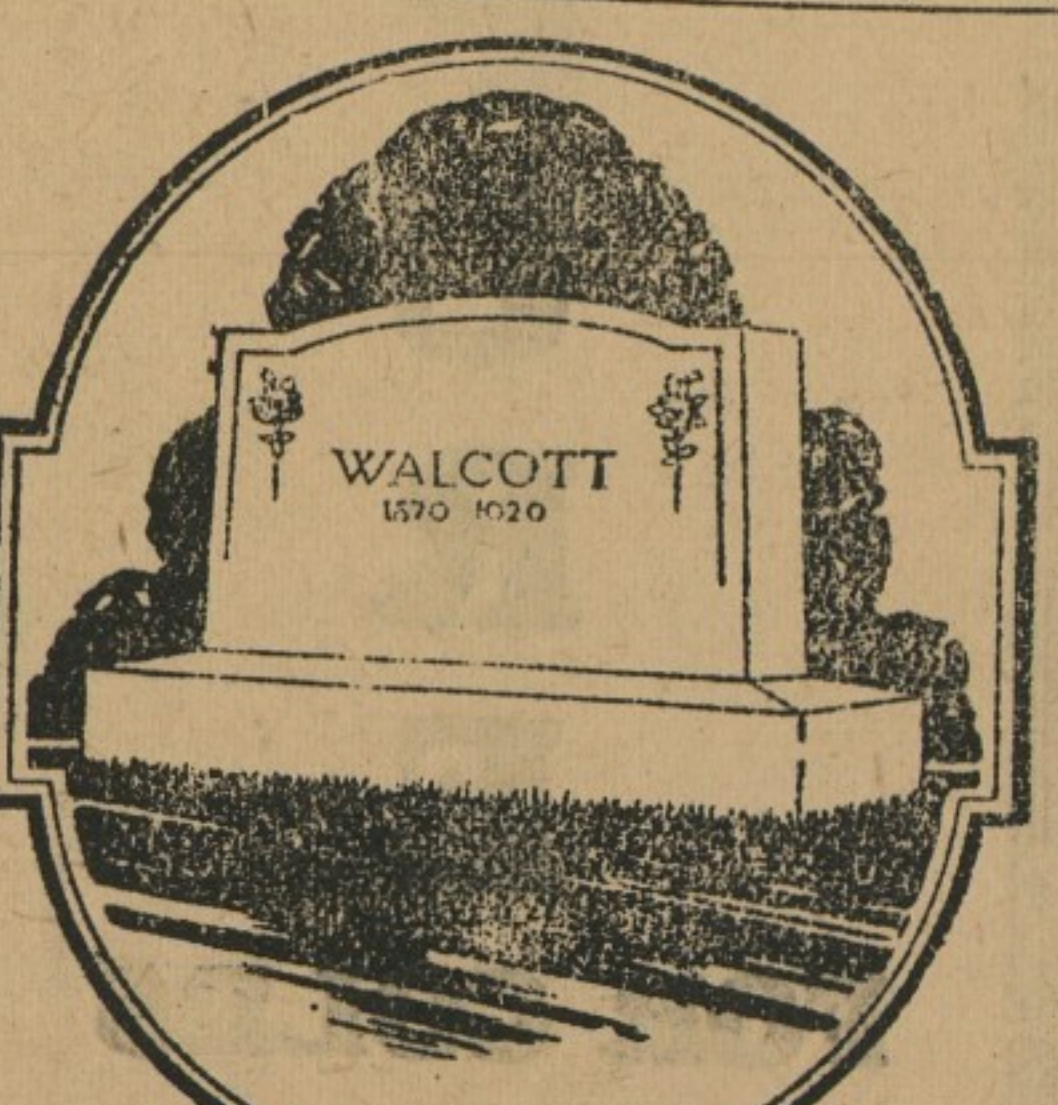
from a distance. I'm humble. You never find me bargain' in on society. I've had one dress suit seventeen years and wear it twice a year—once for the Police Dinner and once to give the motus a cold."  
"Do you know anything about him?"  
The Sparrow's wide smile grew wider.  
"His name and address—an' that's as much as any policeman wants to know about anybody. Bad business, this young Leferre case, Mr. Maddison. You don't want to appear in it, I suppose?"  
Luke looked at him, startled.  
"I? How on earth do I come into it?"  
Mr. Bird coughed.  
"Well, you do and you don't," he said. "I happened to search the body an' the room. I found three loose checks on the Northern & Southern Bank—that's where you keep your private account, ain't it? An' this—"  
Very leisurely he took out a fat and worn leather case from his pocket, laid it flat on the desk and rummaged in the inside. After a while he found what he was looking for—two folded sheets of paper, evidently torn from a  
so much that I wonder I don't knock him down in the street an' take 'em!"  
Luke's eyes were averted: he gave no sign until the detective had finished.  
"I'm sorry I can't help you," he said. "The check was drawn by me and signed by me."  
Mr. Bird rose with a sigh.  
"You're too kind to the criminal classes, Mr. Maddison," he said. "No wonder Gunner Haynes thinks you're a good fellow—six months he got yesterday for being a suspected person. What a nest a friend he wouldn't let on that he knew him even."  
"Morell!" Luke was thrown off his guard, as he saw by the Sparrow's grin.  
"That's the name. What's the use of talkin' at cross-purposes? He's the—"  
"I know nothing about Morell," Luke was emphatic. "He was a friend of Rex's—of Mr. Leferre's. I'd rather not discuss him."  
The Sparrow sighed again, gathered up the papers on which the unfortunate Rex had practised the signature, and stuffed them back in his pocketbook.  
"Nobody helps the police," he said dolefully. "All hands are against the natural guardians of the children of the poor. I'll be getting along."  
He offered a limp hand and went heavily out of the room. The door had hardly closed upon him before the telephone bell rang, and for the first time since the tragedy Luke heard the voice of the woman he loved.  
"Will you see me to-morrow, Luke?"  
Her voice was very low.  
"Now, if I may—darling, let me come to you now!"  
But her level voice denied him.  
"To-morrow—after this ghastly business. Luke, did Rex owe you any money?"  
The unexpectedness of the question threw him off his balance and when Luke Maddison was hurried he was invariably incoherent, for the same reason as others are incoherent in the circumstances—he thought too quickly for speech.  
"Yes—but it isn't worth discussing. He was heavily insured, you know, and I don't think the policy is invalidated."  
He heard the quick breath and grew panic-stricken.  
"I was thinking of you—that there was no need to worry about his affairs. He owes me practically nothing."  
"Will you see me to-morrow?"  
Before he could reply he heard the click of the hook being depressed.  
"I see no reason in the world why the wedding should be postponed, Luke."  
The hideous business of coroner's inquisition was only a day old, and an accountant's statement that the dead boy's affairs were involved was accepted and no details were asked.



Margaret Leferre could not understand herself; her own calm astonished her. Had she ever loved this suave man who stood before her?

points there came another demand for a larger amount.  
Danty's heart sank though he gave no visible evidence of his perturbation. This man knew more than he had dreamed could be known. Here was a crisis in Mr. Morell's affairs which might easily lead him to ruin and undo all those fine schemes of his.  
"I do not exactly know what you are suggesting," he said. "My interest in the company is a very slight one, and I was horrified when I learned that Rex had been gambling in the shares. I give you the fullest permission to make any investigation you wish."  
Luke opened the drawer of his desk and took out a check. From where he sat Danty thought the signature was a tolerably good forgery. He had thought so when Rex had brought the check to him. It is the simplest thing in the world to forge a name, and so far as he had been able to judge there were no flaws in Rex Leferre's essay in that dangerous game.  
"You realize what is wrong with this check?" asked Luke.  
The other shook his head.  
"Are you suggesting that I knew the check was forged?" he asked.  
Before he could reply there was a tap at the door and Luke looked up angrily.  
"Come in," he said.  
It was the apologetic manager.  
"I am sorry to interrupt you, Mr. Maddison, but will you see Mr. Bird of Scotland Yard?"  
In spite of his self-possession Danty half rose from his seat. The Sparrow was the last man in the world he wanted to meet that morning.  
Luke thought for a minute.  
"Just a moment."  
He rose and opened the door leading to the corridor.  
"I shall want to see you again about this check, Mr. Morell," he said.  
"Why not see me now,"  
It was a challenge, but Luke Maddison could sense his insincerity.  
"Mr. Bird has come to see me on quite another matter," he said. "In due course we will interview him together."  
He closed the door on his visitor as the Sparrow was shown in through the other door. Mr. Bird came heavily into the room and favored every corner with a long scrutiny.  
"Havin' a visitor, Mr. Maddison? I thought I saw somebody come in when I was waiting in the street outside."  
Luke nodded curtly.  
"Mr. Danton Morell," he said. "Do you know him?"  
The Sparrow smiled.  
"As one knows the Lord Mayor—

school exercise book. He smoothed these flat and Luke saw a succession of signatures, one under the other: "Luke Maddison—Luke Maddison."  
"Looks almost as though you'd been scribblin' absent-mindedly," the detective's shrewd eyes were on the young banker. "But at the same time I couldn't imagine a business man like you doin' anything so silly! You'll excuse the liberty. I called at the Northern & Southern Bank yesterday afternoon, but there were reticent—reticent!" is a good word—an' referred me to you. But by an underhand an' despicable trick I found that young Mr. Leferre cashed thousand."  
"Yes—I gave him a check for that amount."  
The Sparrow was frankly skeptical.  
"Did you now? Maybe you'd like to show me the counterfoil of that check?"  
For a second Luke was taken aback.  
"If there were any reason for doing so I could," he said coldly, "but I see no reason."  
Mr. Bird was not abashed; he leaned his huge arms on the table, and when he spoke his voice was serious.  
"I've no right to ask—I'm not the sort of man who would attempt to pull a bluff on a gentleman like you. I'll put my cards on the table. That check was met in notes and I want to know where those notes went. There's a bird in London I want to catch. I've got one of the best little cages for him that was ever built, an' while it's empty so is my heart. If that check was a forgery it might get the deceased a bad name, but it would make it very easy for me to pull in a certain man for 'uttering.'"  
"I'll tell you the truth, Mr. Maddison; I want that man's finger prints



It is impossible for you to over-estimate the need for cautions in selecting a Monument. There are many grades of the different Monumental Materials now on the market. A reliable dealer with a reputation for honest values will be your best protection. When in the market for work  
See J. W. KIRBY  
CHESTERTOWN MARBLE & GRANITE WORKS  
Chestertown, Md., Phone 276

**HUNGRY? Eat Here**  
A long menu of delicious good things to choose from when ordering We serve only the freshest vegetables and choicest meats—prepared and cooked to order.  
Phone 276  
The Chestertown Candy Kitchen And Restaurant

**Victor Radio**  
micro-synchronous  
Victor Radio-Electrola RE-45  
Sensitive-Selective-Modernized circuit  
**W. P. NEWNAM**  
CHESTERTOWN, MD.

The Chestertown Candy Kitchen and Restaurant

**W. S. & A. M. CULP**  
COAL  
LUMBER  
CEMENT  
LIME  
Builders' Supplies  
W. S. & A. M. CULP  
Chestertown, Md.

**WM. C. SUTTON**  
SANITARY PLUMBING  
Steam--Hot Water Heating  
Our Work Our Reference  
TERRA COTTA PIPE  
Phone--Residence 60; Office 327

A Long Felt Necessity  
Having a new, finely equipped Ambulance, we offer its service to the public for hospitals, etc., night or day, at reasonable charges, according to distance.  
Call Telephone Still Pond 3, Chestertown 306J.  
**B. R. Fellows,**  
Still Pond.

**D. C. HUGHES**  
DENTIST  
Office in the Telephone Exchange Building, Chestertown, Md.

**HUNGRY? Eat Here**

**KENT COUNTY SAVINGS BANK**  
CHESTERTOWN, MD.

**MASSEY & WILMER'S FERTILIZERS**  
Are cured in bulk, thereby insuring first class mechanical condition for drilling.  
You get what years of experience and field observation prove to be the best combination of plant food.  
We can furnish just your crop needs, when you want it, in any quantity, delivered in your own cars.  
Chestertown, Md.  
MASSEY & WILMER  
CHESTERTOWN, MD.

### Tell them to eat Ice-Cream and drink Milk to prevent Colds.

Health Commissioner Kegel of Chicago interviews to the representatives of the press advocating that everyone eat Ice Cream and drink Milk to prevent Colds.  
"The part foods play in building up resistance against colds is often overlooked," he said, "The intelligent way to avoid colds is to prevent them."  
A meal consisting of meat, potatoes, two or three vegetables, topped off with a dish of Ice Cream, is a big factor in keeping up bodily resistance.  
Ice cream in fact, may well be indorsed as a winter food. Contary to general opinion, there is no harm in the consumption of cold drinks or iced foods. By the time they enter the stomach they are raised to body temperature.

**GILL BROS.**  
"A" MILK and ICE CREAM  
**GILL BROS.**  
Chestertown, Md. Phone 290

**W. H. THAWLEY**  
PLUMBING and HEATING  
Town and County Work Solicited  
Will Go Anywhere  
Phone 88  
Chestertown, Maryland

**ONE BEST WAY**  
There are several ways of saving money but there is ONE BEST WAY and that is through the Kent Building & Loan Company. Stock matures at the end of 6 1/2 years and then it pays a very satisfactory sum. 25 cents per share per week.

**Kent Building & Loan Co.**  
Chestertown, Md.  
L. Bates Russell, President;  
Fred G. Uilton, Vice-Pres.;  
John D. Urie, Attorney;  
C. N. Satterfield, Sec.-Treas.

**Frank Parker Stockbridge's TODAY AND TOMORROW**  
A Column of thoughtful interpretation of the world's progress written for people who think.  
**EVERY WEEK IN THIS PAPER**

**DR. G. H. DANA**  
DENTIST  
347 W. HIGH STREET  
CHESTERTOWN, MD.  
EVENINGS BY APPOINTMENT  
X-RAY  
PHONE 205

**COAL COAL**  
Of Course Everybody Knows Where to Buy GOOD CLEAN COAL ALSO WOOD, LIME, HAY, TERRA COTTA PIPE  
The place to buy is from the coal and wood man  
**J. D. BACCHUS**

**Dr. Julian T. Power**  
Optometrist  
In Office at Chestertown Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.  
Office Hours 9 a. m. to 4 p. m.

**The Mutual Fire Insurance Co.**  
OF KENT COUNTY MD. ASSURES PROPERTY AGAINST FIRE AND LIGHTNING ALL POLICY HOLDERS PARTICIPATE IN THE COMPANY'S PROFITS  
Conservation and caution is not to nearly three million dollars worth of property insured.  
DIRECTORS  
James F. Brown, Church Hill; R. G. Nicholson, J. D. Bacchus, F. G. Uilton, T. W. Elasson, Jr., Alan A. Harris, Eben F. Perkins, Edward W. Emory, P. Medford Brooks, Chestertown; Howard Turner, Betterton; Wm. A. Hyland, Galena; Dudley S. Roe, Sudlersville.  
Applications for insurance to be made to—Ellsworth C. Bowers, Lynch, Md.; George W. Owens, Betterton, Md.; B. W. Duling, Millington, Md.; Frank H. Ruth, Galena, Md.; Howard Turner, Betterton, Md.; F. E. Thomas, Stevensville, Md.; J. Abner Bryden, Piney Neck, Md.; and Eben F. Perkins, Chestertown, Md.  
FRED G. USILTON, President  
EBEN F. PERKINS, Sec.-Treas.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
To Our Customers and Friends  
EFFECTIVE JAN. 1st, 1930  
We are forced to place our business on a strictly thirty (30) days basis. Accounts are due on the 15th of each month. Kindly bear this in mind when purchases are made and be prepared to pay each month as this is the only way we can run our business under the present financial conditions.  
Thanking you, we are,

**Metcalfe Bros.**  
Chestertown, Md.

**READY for you!**  
\$69.50  
(Less Radiators)  
A real sensation...the biggest radio thrill in town. The RCA Radiola 21. A high-powered, Screen-Grid table model for battery operation. Particularly good reproduction with any RCA Loudspeaker. Here's a high quality instrument that will amaze you! Only \$69.50.

**THOXINE**  
For Coughs and simple Sore Throat.  
One swallow usually relieves within 15 minutes.  
Contains no harmful drugs  
Good for the whole family,  
Ask for THOXINE.  
35c-60c and \$1.00  
At  
**Toulson's Drug Store**  
Phone 26 We Deliver

**Shore Radio Service Inc.**  
Chestertown, Maryland