

Victory Loan

Why You Should Support It

Every citizen should buy at least one Victory Bond.

Not only as a patriotic act but in the interest of Canadian labor and business generally.

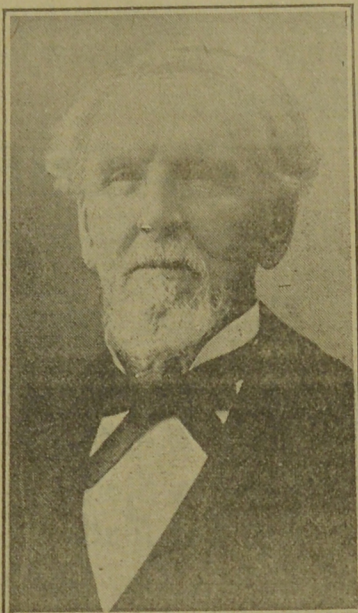
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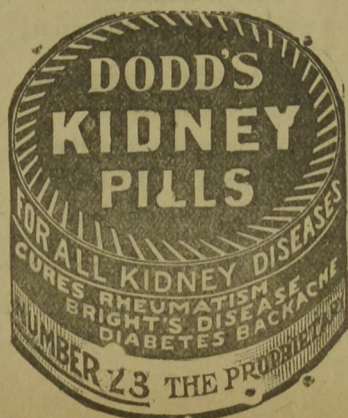
MR. JOHN HODGE
Who on Monday Observed His 94th Birthday.

"The Fighting Trail"

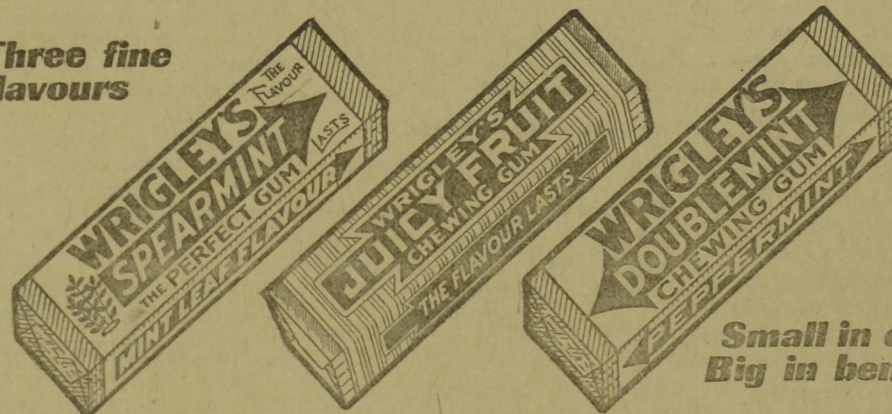
(Continued from page 2.)
investigate some land grants in California which had been left to me, but which I had never investigated. I confided in Lawton, that there was a tradition in my family that there was a valuable mine on the property. We left the estate in the care of Yaqui Joe and set out for California. By means of some old maps and papers we were able to locate an old cinnabar mine which had been lost for 150 years. We drew a chart showing the location of the mine and divided it into two parts each useless without the other. We each took one part. Then I returned to my home to raise money for the re-opening of the mine, while Lawton remained to attend to the preliminary details. I left with him all the money I had with me to cover the first expense of the undertaking.

"When I returned I brought Joe with me. He confided, on the way that Frances cried continually with Lawton. She did not love him. Upon arriving again at Lost Mine, I learned that Lawton had taken no steps. He confessed that he had lost all the money gambling. I was disgusted with him and insisted that we return to Chihuahua. I refused to let him drink on the way and he became enraged. Then he told me that Frances would have nothing to do with me because, I quote his own words: 'I told her you offered to buy her because you didn't care to marry her—and she believed me.' His statement infuriated me. My Spanish blood, cooled through generations, was suddenly boiling through me. It was a matter of honor. I challenged him to a duel with knives and we fought I do not know how long on the brink of a precipice. We struggled like maniacs; I do not remember at all, but I do know that I was suddenly horrified as I realized that we were hurtling through space. We had rolled over the edge and were falling into the valley below! Lawton was killed by that fall. Through some miracle—it was nothing short of a miracle—I was saved. Joe recovered me from unconsciousness, and that night we buried Lawton within a few feet of the struggle. Just as we finished covering over the body, Joe heard something moving in the bushes behind us. He hurried to the spot and found nothing. A moment later we were startled by the sound of hoofbeats going down the trail. I was haunted by the thought that perhaps someone had seen us but in time managed to drive it from my mind."

"When we reached home Frances asked for her husband. I could not tell her the truth, but, when I was not near, Joe told her all. He also told her the reason, which vindicated me in her eyes and brought me back her respect. She understood, thank God; and she forgave me! That night you were born, and your mother died. With her last words she begged me to care for you and bring you up happy. "Very soon after your mother's death I received a visit from two men whom I had never known. They were a degraded looking pair, their attire rough, and their faces scarred from a hard life in the hills. They spoke well, however, which surprised me; they must have been fairly well educated and I judged, had sunk to degradation in their early manhood. Their



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G. W. HODGE

names you have heard since. They were Drant and Rawls. They were the men who had seen us bury Lawton and as a reward had been offered by the authorities for the conviction of the murderer, they claimed blackmail, which I was forced to pay. They continued their demands for money until I could meet them no longer, and fled secretly to this little abode in the hills, bringing only you and Joe with me. We dug the shaft which leads to the mine and developed it only enough to yield a living. It is as rich today as if it had never been touched. And it is yours when you read this; for I shall have passed away. One half of the chart is in an envelope that lies near this! The other half, which we took from Lawton's body, is in the main part of the chest. Together they will serve to locate the mine. Alone, neither can help. But Yaqui Joe can also, take you there. He is the only one alive, after I pass away, who knows the location. That is all.

"Your mother knew this story up to the point of her death. She forgave me. Can you, Nan, dear daughter of my heart, if not of my body? I ask you, Nan, though I can never hear your answer. I may only live and die in hope.

"Don Carlos Ybarra De Corboda."

Gwyn looked up from the manuscript as he finished reading. He saw that Nan's eyes were filled with tears but she brushed them away and forced a smile. Gwyn gazed at her, almost mechanically opening the other envelope as he did so. From it he drew a folded sheet of paper as old and yellow and brittle from age as the envelope which had enclosed it. Carefully, so as not to tear it, he unfolded the sheet, until there there lay spread open on his lap, the chart. All of the lines and writing that seemed to lead to one side stopped abruptly as they came to the edge of the paper. It was plain that, as Don Carlos had stated in his letter, it was but half of the map.

"This is what they wanted," said Gwyn very thoughtfully. "It is the chart. They must have learned of its existence in some way."

"Yes," replied Nan, "and they must have gotten the other half. Do you remember when Joe ran to the chest after they had left, he shouted: 'They got it, but not all?' He meant the

chart. They got a half. This is the rest. He went out to find their trail. He should be back by now. Do you suppose that anything could have happened to him? If they got him and make him tell—" Her face grew suddenly pale at the thought of what they would do to the Indian.

(Continued next Wednesday.)



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