Records of MICHAEL DANEVITCH

True Tales of Russian Secret Service

Edited by GEORGE T. PARDY

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The Tracking of Peter Treskin

The period was the reign of the second Alexander; the time, the afternoon of a day in early summer; the place, an office in the building in St. Petersburg known as the palace of the admiralty. The office in question was a large room, officially described as department H, second floor, imperial yachts. It was under the control of a much trusted government servant named Samuel Snell. The latter was of English birth, but left his native country when a youth, and went to Russia, on the advice of a Russian friend in London, who had taught him to speak the Russian language. After a while, Snell became a naturalized subject of the czar, married a Russian lady, the daughter of an official in the naval construction department, and obtained an appointment himself in the admiralty palace. He was rapidly promoted, and at last placed at the head of the department responsible for the building and repairs of the imperial yachts. On this particular afternoon two young women were the sole occupants of the room designated as department H. One was named Catherine, the daughter of Snell, a girl of about twenty, with fair hair and delicate complexion. She was unmistakably of an English type, though born in Russia. Her companion was as unmistakably Russian; a good-looking brunette called Anna Plevski. Catherine was a confidential clerk to her father. Anna belonged in another department altogether, being what is termed "an indexer." The two girls were close friends, and Anna had taken advantage of a little relaxation to slip into room 12 to chat with Catherine, for she knew that Mr. Snell was away.

"I hear that our little father, the czar, is to go on a yachting cruise around the coast of Finland next month, and that his yacht, the North Star, is to be entirely overhauled and refitted," said Anna. "I would like to see that boat, they say she is beautiful. You have the plans of the North Star in this department, Catherine. Let me have a look at them, won't you?"

Catherine hesitated, but failing to see that she could do any harm by complying with her friend's request, she went to a safe and produced a large roll of cartridge paper, which she spread out on the desk before them. It was a scale drawing, showing the hull, the sections, the groundplan and general design of the imperial vessel. The North Star was then in the hands of the admiralty for refit and overhaul, and was ordered to be at Kronstadt on the twentieth of the following month, to receive the royal party, including the czar, for a trip. Anna looked at the plan critically. Having an excellent memory, the result of her training as an indexer, she was able to carry its salient parts in her mind.

"The czar's quarters are to be reconstructed and removed from the afterpart of the ship, where they are now," said Catherine. "A large deckhouse is to be built amidships, and fitted up for him."

"Then I suppose his rooms will be about there," queried Anna, placing a finger on the center of the plan. Catherine nodded assent, and replaced the paper in the safe, and her companion returned to her own department.

A week later three men sat at work in the attic of an old house in what is known as the St. Petersburg quarter, on the north side of the River Neva. Two of them, evidently skilled mechanics of a high class, were fitting together a complicated piece of machinery in a small oblong tin box, while the third, a tall, thin old man, bent over a retort on a table in which he was compounding something from which an obnoxious vapor arose. It was after midnight, and the trio worked on in silence, which was suddenly broken by the sound of a light rap on the door. The old man arose, turned the key, and the door swung open to admit a young fellow wrapped in a cloak, who hailed him as "Professor Smolski," and nodded cheerfully to the other occupants of the apartment.

The new arrival was Peter Treskin, a young lawyer of good family and considerable ability, who had seen fit to cast his lot with the revolutionary body that was sparing no pains to overthrow the government.

"Well, friends," how goes the good work?" asked Treskin.

"The machine will be finished tomorrow night," replied the professor. "My part is also nearly completed."

Smolski was a chemist of considerable renown in his profession. The other two men were brothers, Isaac and Jacob Eisenmann, whose mechanical skill had been utilized by the revolutionists in the making of infernal machines. The one upon which they were working was of peculiarly ingenious construction, and Treskin's face shone with triumph as his co-conspirators explained the operation of the mechanism to him. It was after four o'clock when he left the attic and hurried home to his lodgings.

Two weeks had passed when a young man and woman arrived at the port of Kronstadt and sought a tavern near the entrance to the harbor. The man was Peter Treskin and his companion was a good-looking brunette, whose features bore a somewhat nervous expression. Treskin carried a leather handbag, which he deposited on a chair beside him as he and the woman seated themselves at a table outside of the tavern and ordered refreshments, which were served by the tavern keeper himself. Treskin got into conversation with the landlord and asked him several questions.

"Where is the little father's yacht, the North Star?" he demanded.

"Out there, moored to that big buoy. You see, she has the imperial flag flying." The landlord pointed to the outside of the harbor, where a large steam yacht, painted white, lay at anchor.

"At what hour will the imperial party arrive tomorrow?"

"They are due here at nine o'clock," responded the landlord.

"So;" commented Treskin. "Well I am going on board the yacht in a little while," he added boastfully. "I have official business to transact."

The landlord bowed respectfully, his guest having taken on new importance in his eyes. When he had gone the girl said fretfully:

"You are too careless, Peter. Why do you talk about your intentions in that way?"

"Perhaps you are right," conceded the man. "It was a little bit of vanity on my part. However, all will be well. Our plans are too nicely laid to miscarry. I must leave you now. Don't stir from here till I return."

Taking up his bag, he went to the quay, hired a boat, and instructed the boatman to row him to the imperial yacht. On reaching the vessel, he was challenged by the sentry on duty at the gangway, and stated that he had come on official business. He produced a government document, stamped with the official seal, and setting forth that his name was Ivan Orloff, that he was one of the naval clockmakers, and had been sent down to adjust all the clocks on the North Star preparatory to the czar's arrival. He was admitted on board, and an armed sailor told off to accompany him about the ship, and show him where the various clocks were situated.

The man came at last to the czar's suite of apartments in the newly constructed deckhouse. The sailor paused for an instant to cross himself before a sacred picture that hung on the bulkhead, but his companion pushed on, and passing beneath costly curtains, reached the czar's sleeping cabin. Quickly he took from his bag an oblong box, turned a handle on an index dial, and placed the box beneath the royal bed. He had scarcely time to assume an erect position, and turn to a clock on a table near by, when the sailor entered. Half an hour later the supposed clock maker completed his task, and rejoined the girl who was waiting for him at the tavern.

"I have succeeded," he said, in response to her anxious inquiry, "and the machine is set for thirty-three hours. It will go off tomorrow night when the czar has retired. Now let us go for a walk while dinner is being prepared."

About an hour had gone by when suddenly a terrific explosion occurred in the harbor, and the cry went up that something had happened on board the imperial yacht. From all parts of the harbor boats hurriedly made their way to the North Star, as it was thought that she was foundering. When the explosion took place Treskin and the girl were strolling along one of the quays which commanded a full view of the harbor. The girl staggered and reeled against her companion, and he exclaimed, in horrified accents:

"My God! The machine has gone off before its time. I must have set the index wrong."

He glanced around him anxiously; then seeing a boat containing a solitary boatman, about to put off from the quay, he said to his companion: "Stop where you are for a little while, I will return shortly."

She was so dazed that she made no protest, and hurrying to the edge of the quay, he hailed the boatman, sprang on board the little craft, and they rowed out toward the yacht. The girl waited in a fever of impatience. Twilight fell, followed by the shades of night, but still Treskin did not return. She heard the gossip of people as they returned to the shore from the harbor, and gathered that the imperial yacht had been partially destroyed, and many lives lost. The prevailing opinion was that the mischief had been caused by the bursting of a boiler. At last she went back to the tavern, and told the landlord that her husband had gone to the yacht, but had not yet returned. For two hours she kept her vain vigil, then as the last train for St. Petersburg started at nine o'clock, she settled the tavern bill, took the leather bag with her, hurried to the station and went back to town. She was almost mad with brooding over her companion's strange disappearance, not knowing whether he had been arrested, or had deserted her, but could do nothing but suffer in silence.

When the news of the disaster to the imperial yacht reached St. Petersburg, a special train filled with government officials, including Michael Danevitch, was rushed at once to Kronstadt. Investigations soon proved that the destruction was not due to the bursting of a boiler. The cause of the disaster was, therefore, a mystery until the visit of the government clock-mender was remembered. A messenger was dispatched to St. Petersburg on a special engine, furnished with a description of the supposed Orloff. Then Danevitch began inquiries in Kronstadt. From the survivors on the yacht he ascertained at what time Orloff went on board; an hour and a half before he presented himself, a train had arrived from St. Petersburg. He had probably arrived on that train. The boatman who took him off to the yacht was found. He said the supposed clock-mender carried a black

Continued on page 5.

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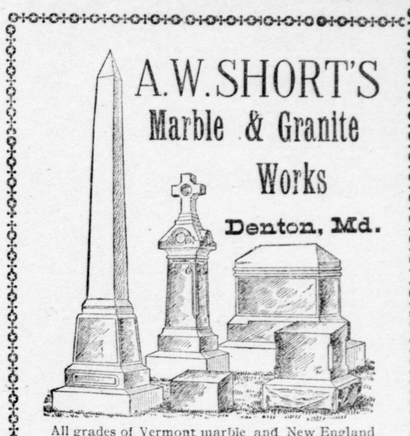

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WRIGHT & BULLOCK.

Order Nisi.

Oscar Clark, Assignee,
vs.
Ellanora Snowden
and Solomon G. Snowden.

In the Circuit Court for Caroline County. In Equity.

Ordered, this 12th day of June, 1912, that the sale of the property mentioned in these proceedings, made and reported by Oscar Clark, assignee, be ratified and confirmed, unless cause to the contrary thereof be shown on or before the 16th day of August next; provided a copy of this order be inserted in some newspaper printed and published in Caroline county, once in each of four successive weeks, before the 15th day of July next.

The report states the amount of sales to be $3900.00.

J. KEMP STEVENS, Clerk

True copy—Test:
J KEMP STEVENS, Clerk.

Warning.

Notice is hereby given by the County Commissioners and Road Engineer of Caroline county that the substructure of Denton Bridge, over the Choptank river, is in an unstable condition, and all persons are hereby forbidden to cross or enter upon said bridge with traction engines and loads exceeding one ton and two horses, nor to drive over said bridge faster than a walk.

By order of the County Commissioners, WILLIAM H. ANDERSON,
Denton, Md., June 6th, 1911. Clerk.

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NATHAN H. MAXSON, Captain.
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July

		FREDERICA	WEBB'S	BOWER'S
Monday,	July 1,	3 p.m.	4 15 p.m.	5 p.m
Thursday,	" 4,	7 a.m.	8 15 a.m.	9 a.m
Monday,	" 8,	10 a.m.	11 15 a.m.	12 noon
Thursday,	" 11,	1 p.m.	2 15 p.m.	3 p.m
Monday,	" 15,	3 p.m.	4 15 p.m.	5 p.m
Thursday,	" 18,	7 a.m.	8 15 a.m.	9 a.m
Monday,	" 22,	10 a.m.	11 15 a.m.	12 noon
Wednesday,	" 24,	12 noon	1 15 p.m.	2 p.m
Friday,	" 26,	2 p.m.	3 15 p.m.	4 p.m
Monday,	" 29,	3 p.m.	4 15 p.m.	5 p.m
Wednesday,	" 31,	4 p.m.	5 15 p.m.	6 p.m

Returning, Steamer will leave Philadelphia from Pier 3, South Wharves (First Pier above Chestnut Street) as follows:

Leave Philadelphia

Tues.,	July 2,	3 p.m	Friday,	July 19,	4 p.m
Friday,	" 5,	4 p.m	Tues.,	" 23,	7 p.m
Tues.,	" 9,	7 p.m	Thurs.,	" 25,	10 p.m
Friday,	" 12,	10 p.m	Sat.,	" 27,	11 p.m
Tues.,	" 16,	12 mdt	Tues.,	" 30,	2 p.m

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