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# TRAGEDY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD!

## *Second Polar Disaster Shock*

Excitement has turned to anxiety for people world-wide who have breathlessly followed the progress of the Starkweather-Moore Antarctica Expedition. All communications have been lost with the expedition members on land as well as with the expedition's ship, the SS Delaware. While there has been no official announcement as to the fate of the 75 personnel and 25 crew, the worst is feared. There are many questions and few answers. But clearly, something has gone terribly wrong.

Among the missing are the expedition's leaders, the celebrated climatologist Sarah Starkweather and Conrad Moore, the geologist who has made it a point of pride to go further and discover more on the Antarctic continent than his mentor, Professor William Dyer of the Miskatonic Expedition.

Said Moore prior to departure: "The Miskatonic Expedition represented a truly heroic effort. Yet it was an effort that, admittedly, ended in failure. Our goal is to push past where that effort ended. With new means at our disposal, I have no doubt that we will advance our knowledge of the Antarctic continent to unprecedented levels."

Asked to comment about the crisis, Professor Dyer said, "I pray with all my heart for the Starkweather-Moore expedition's safe return. I have been doing all I can since my own failed expedition to sound a warning against any such fur-



## ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION LOST!

ther attempts because on that icy terrain I learned a costly lesson. There are places humanity is not meant to go. I feel only sorrow to see my worst fears realized."

### *High Hopes*

The tragedy is even more star-

tling for its sudden occurrence, given how well efforts had proceeded since the expedition reached the Ross Ice Shelf on September 16th. Such excellent progress was facilitated by the expedition's advanced equipment. Not only did the expedition utilize dogsleds crucial to past journeys of

explorations, the Delaware transported four de Havilland DH.66 Hercules aircraft whose enclosed cockpits and skis provided the means of going further and faster into the continent than ever before.

Much excitement had been generated by the explorers' discoveries.—*Cont'd on page 2*

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## TRAGEDY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD CONT'D FROM PAGE 1—

Only three days ago, on October 10th, the expedition had arrived at the mountain range seen previously only by the ill-fated Miskatonic Expedition. Detailed studies of the unusual geologic formations in the mountains were promised to a fascinated public.

### Loss of Contact

The first sign of the developing tragedy occurred two days later, on October 12th. The radio-telegraph reports,

which have been the subject of worldwide excitement, came to a sudden stop. The SS Delaware reported that it had lost all contact with the base camps. All attempts to reestablish communication failed. The hope was that the expedition had entered a region where it was no longer possible, due to atmospheric or geologic conditions, to send signals to the ship.

In the day that followed, an apprehensive public became painfully familiar with the phrase "No report," transmitted every hour by the Delaware.

### Cryptic Warning

Then came the distressing final transmissions from the ship. The miracle of modern radio-telegraph technology, wherein signals from Antarctica bounce off the ionosphere to reach as far as the United States, now relayed the kind of message one hopes never to receive from a ship at sea — an SOS. Apart from the ship's name and coordinates, the desperate message contained no other information.

The SOS transmission lasted thirty seconds. Then, followed two minutes of silence, after which came one

more message, the one that has the whole world buzzing with anxious curiosity: "Stay away."

Nothing has been heard since, despite repeated efforts. There are no other ships in the vicinity of the Delaware to investigate, a fact that its crew must certainly have known even as they sent out their last, desperate pleas.

### Rescue Debated

The question now arises as to what steps, if any, are to be taken in the wake of this tragedy. Does any hope remain of saving one of the hundred

adventurers that have fallen into silence? Should a rescue expedition be sent, given the length of time it will take to reach Antarctica, and the fact that the Delaware's final message urges against any such attempt?

Asked for his thoughts, Professor Dyer had this to say: "Despite my warnings against the Starkweather-Moore expedition departing in the first place, we cannot abandon its members to the terrors they have encountered. If there is even the slightest chance of saving a single soul, it would be inhuman not to mount a rescue."



### Hollywood Star Flies In

Famed aviatrix Winifred Habbamock, the "woman without fear", was greeted by fans last night on her return to Arkham. Habbamock has long been a familiar face in the city—a frequent visitor and sometime resident—both before and after her time in Hol-

lywood as a fearless stunt pilot, earning a few cameo roles along the way.

Describing the movies as "a little pedestrian", the daredevil Habbamock recently finished up work helping to chart some of the remoter parts of the Rocky Mountains. A less showy affair than her usual flying circus antics, Habbamock says "It was great working with real scientists. I was always, you know, curious about that stuff."

Habbamock is back in town ahead of a barnstormer planned for the weekend.



### Moving Pictures

Lantern Top Pictures' production of The Laughing Phantom (now playing at the Palace Movie Theater) offers much that is familiar and little that will surprise moviegoers.

Wallace Ford is an engaging presence as Jimmy Fitzroy, a down-on-his-luck gumshoe who is hired by Sally Bairdstone (Vera Reynolds) to be her bodyguard at a gathering of far-flung relatives at the ancient family home. The house has had an evil reputation since the death of Sally's father, and the disappearance of a crown he plundered from an Egyptian tomb. Is one of the relatives the murder? And who is the hooded figure who haunts the grounds with terrifying laughter?

For it seems the hundredth time, an old dark house is the scene of the action. Thrills and laughs are present in equal measure, both often by way of Mischa Auer as a sinister butler. As overly familiar as this kind of mystery is, your reviewer is nonetheless pleased that the picture exercises restraint with its darker elements and avoid falling prey to the gruesome excesses that have sadly become popular in recent times.



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## EDITORIAL

# One Hundred Souls Missing!



## Have We Explored Enough?

The unfolding crisis in Antarctica has seized the attention of the world, and understandably so. This newspaper lends its voice unequivocally to the hope that the situation may yet turn out not to be as dire as it presently appears.

At the same time, the present moment behooves us to ask some questions that are as difficult as they are pressing. Specifically, how far, and at what cost, should the human urge to explore be indulged?

No doubt were this question to be put to Professors Sarah Starkweather and Conrad Moore even now, they would answer that there should be no limits placed on such endeavors. That is to be expected, as theirs is the laudable spirit of adventure.

But just as it falls to parents to reign in the excesses of their reckless offspring, someone must be the voice of pragmatism. For all the fine words we heard about the accomplishments the Starkweather-Moore expedition hoped to achieve, how much benefit would a more detailed accounting of the geology of

Antarctica really serve? The continent is so inhospitable as to be unfit for use. Certainly the idea of a permanent outpost being established there defies all credibility.

And then there is the greater cost that may yet be incurred by Starkweather-Moore. Should a rescue mission be mounted? How will it be funded? And how many more lives should be risked in this venture? What if the rescue ship also encounters disaster?

This paper is a firm believer in the spirit of exploration. But it also believes that a mature appraisal of its attendant risks and benefits is long overdue.

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## DEATHS

**GRACE FAITH ANTHONY**—reunited with Our Lord July 14. Tragic backwoods incident as reported in local newspapers. Promising soprano, please bring best voices to funeral at South Church Saturday 11am.

**ROBERT HOODWINK**—"the Rev" was dispatched to heavenly lands June 22. Survived by sons Charles and Lyman. Missed by those in Northside who enjoyed his impromptu preaching and attire. Private service, contact family for information.

**WALTER "WALLY" JONES**—summoned by the Lord on Independence Day after automobile accident on the Thomas Ward Bridge. Survived by wife Marjorie and two daughters, Evelyn and Irene. Services to be held this Saturday, 10am at Dunwich Congregational Church.

## Going South: A History of Peril

The now missing Starkweather-Moore Expedition is not the first to have set out for the South Pole from the Northeastern United States. Many readers will recall this paper's reports of some two years ago of the similarly disastrous venture mounted by Arkham's own Professor William Dyer, of Miskatonic University. Dyer's expedition set out—like the Starkweather-Moore Expedition—with the intention of exploring the interior of the Antarctic continent.

In the event, Dyer's advance party was lost to a man, and a good many more members of the expedition lost in the attempt to rescue them and then escape those icy shores.

### Much Loss, Little Gain

Dyer's expedition was initially described by its participants as having achieved little to justify the loss of life. Their pro-

nouncement of Antarctica as a barren, icy wasteland unworthy of further investigation appears to have done little to deter other would-be explorers, however, as no sooner has Dyer returned to Arkham than news of the planned Starkweather-Moore Expedition emerged from New York.

Boasting of lavish funding from the Society of Antediluvian Research, the organizers of the planned expedition were quick to dismiss Dyer and co. as "obscure men, connected only with a small university" and lacking sufficient expertise in polar exploration, confident in their Big Apple ability to avoid such mishap.

### Dire Warnings

More recently, Dyer has published in this very newspaper a series of chilling accounts of the disasters that he now says befell his expedition, including

extraordinary claims of the discovery of a "Cyclopean City", built by some ancient civilization, where—Dyer claims—their monstrous servants still await, lying in frozen slumber.

As Dyer would have it, these most sensational accounts are intended by way of a warning to Starkweather and Moore, though others detect no small hint of professional rivalry in these incredible revelations.

As news of the apparent loss of the Starkweather-Moore Expedition reached us, Professor Dyer expressed his regret that his warnings had not been heeded. When asked what might now be done, it was Professor Dyer's summation that "A rescue mission would be most foolhardy. But perhaps, regrettably, necessary." Asked if he were contemplating such an expedition himself, Professor Dyer declined to comment further.





## Rash of Arson Fires

A sudden rash of arson attacks has the citizens of Arkham on edge and frustrated by the inability of the police to stop the firebugs.

In the last seven days, there have been five fires, targeting both residential and commercial addresses. Fortunately, there have been no fatalities to date. However, Mr. Elwin Furnidge of 66 Cumberland Avenue in South Side required hospitalization due to third-degree burns incurred when he re-entered his burning house in an attempt to save his granddaughter, not realizing that she had already escaped out the back door.

### Police Baffled

To date, there have been no arrests, and the police department has admitted to there being very little evidence at

the crime scenes to help track down suspects and clues. Who the arsonists are is unknown, or even whether the conflagrations are the work one or several individuals.

Furthermore, even the cause of the fires has yet to be determined. Despite pleas for anyone with information to come forward, no one has admitted to seeing any suspicious activity around the buildings prior to the fires breaking out. Nor is it clear what incendiary devices have been used to cause such disasters.

### Citizens Demand Action

The mayor's office has issued a plea for citizens to remain calm. However, many have been voicing frustration with the lack of arrests. When asked what the public should do to protect themselves, officials reminded citizens of the importance of observing proper fire-prevention practice.

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## PINKERTONS CALLED IN

A break-in two nights ago at French Hill Arts & Crafts Gallery has been linked to a recent spate of burglaries at museums and galleries across New England, with high-value items targeted in each. With the Pinkertons called in by two of the institutions previously targeted, police confirmed the detective agency is being consulted on this latest heist.

## Classified Advertising

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**ARE YOU A BRIDGE MAVEN?** The Arkham Bridge Association is holding a membership drive at City Hall. Come meet other aficionados and put your mettle to the test! Friday, 5-9pm. All welcome!

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**CAR TROUBLE? NO TROUBLE!** Vince & Jeff Automobile Care now serving Northside and beyond. Carburetors, gaskets, radiators etcetera all repaired and maintained by professional mechanics at reasonable prices.

**MISSING "TWINS".** Curious children aged approximately twelve years-old. Near-identical, white-blond hair, changeable eye color, one louder than other, white nightgowns, answer to "Nightwalker" and "Stoat". Disappeared three days ago in Rivertown. Small reward for any information: Miskatonic College of Medicine.

**LOOKING FOR LOVE?** Blind date night at Quentin's Tea House, Easttown second Tuesday evening each month. Clean, well-heeled professionals only.

**TOUGH MEN & WOMEN WANTED** for new venture. Gun experience and own arms preferred. River Docks, 6am Monday—Maisy "Fist" Dawson.

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