

beloved physician and foremost authority on the care and feeding of "preemies"; "Boss" Tweed and his hideaway at Norton's Point; the original Kenny Sutherland, Dick Newton, and other seaside scoundrels—all of these and more the reader will discover in this lively report of the various stages that gave Coney Island its international fame.

At the same time, the reader will have an opportunity to observe the social behavior of the perspiring proletariat on the beachfront and note with satisfaction the important Coney contributions made by the distinguished and unbending city planner—Park Commissioner Robert Moses. It is Bob Moses who emerges as a vital force in the removal of the wretched firetraps, cheap catch-penny amusements. It is this cursed Moses who is determined to turn the oceanfront into a decent recreational and residential area. As Mr. McCullough points out, the Park Commissioner's "tastes are urbane, civilized, and upper middle-class." When the lawless elements ran the Island, the custom was to bilk and cozen all unsuspecting visitors. Today, the games are not gimmicked, the rides are comparatively safe, the comestibles are sanitary, the physical condition of the beach is good, and the prospects for improving beach pollution are brighter than ever.

Coney is obviously destined to wear a loftier brand of Sunday clothes.

Virtually all of Commissioner Moses's beachfront improvements have been the focus of stupid attacks from midget-minded operators at the Island. Despite a constant volley of abuse from shabby local political figures and pint-sized civic cads, Commissioner Moses has done more lasting good for the Island than any other public servant in the resort's history.

City dwellers in search of relaxation need not mourn the loss of Coney's highly combustible "lath and staff" exhibitions, nor should they raise irate voices against the disappearance of gamblers and light ladies. Honorable replacements are being sought and before long Mr. McCullough's rambunctious resort will be displaying more wholesome wonders. It will be as bewitching a sight as one is likely to see for some time.

There is affection, humor, and sadness in Mr. McCullough's story and there is a great deal that the reader did not know before. He deserves the brass ring on the carousel for this ringing recreation of the old Island.

MAN ON A HORSE: Hardly a middle-aged boy is now alive who did not thrill to the Western movies of Tom Mix. Picking up as the career of William S. Hart dwindled, the iron-

jawed Mix became the most successful of all cowboy stars, astride his horse Tony performing feats which brought back days when the West was really wild. Mix would never use a double for these stunts, and suffered many injuries. Nor would he ever smoke, drink, or gamble on the screen. Behind this lay a life as exciting as any he played in films. Born in prosaic Pennsylvania, Tom went west as a boy to become a frontier marshal, then in 1898 pounded up San Juan Hill behind Teddy Roosevelt. Returning home, he became a featured star in a Wild West Show, where another feature was the drawling Will Rogers. Like all strong, silent men, Tom next fell in love, in 1909 marrying Olive Stokes, author of *"The Fabulous Tom Mix"* in collaboration with Eric Heath (Prentice-Hall, \$3.95). With her playing bit parts by his side, he began appearing in pioneer movies. From then on his path took him into the life of a top-earning Hollywood star.

Mrs. Mix is lavish in praising her husband's fine qualities, which were mental as well as physical. But she is sketchy in many details, one of them her divorce from Mix when his career was at its peak. But apparently even Hollywood cowboys had inner problems. Mix never seems to have been quite happy as a movie star. Millions poured in and his mansion became a tribute to extravagant, horrid taste. His garage contained \$75,000-\$100,000 worth of fast cars, and he gave money to friends as if it were advice. He played a strong, silent man on the screen, yet he was inexplicably frightened by the talkies and kept a book in which he put the names of other stars whose careers had been ruined by them. But even as he pulled back from making talkies the Sells-Floto Circus paid him \$20,000 a week for appearances. Encouraged by this, and still obsessed by fear of the talking screen, he undertook in the mid-1930s a circus of his own, with his daughter Ruth. It was an ill-starred venture, which eventually caused Mix to tour Europe in an effort to recoup his fortunes. Returning home in 1940, he set out to drive to the Coast in a fast, white car. Behind his head he stored a valise. As he passed over a bit of rough road, the valise bounced forward, breaking his neck.

Mrs. Mix has written her book in a manner reminiscent of subtitles in early Tom Mix movies ("For the next four years, I was busy completing the long process of becoming a woman"). Oddly, this brings a kind of charm. This is not a rounded biography, but for a short book about a Western movie star it is a touching one.

—ALLEN CHURCHILL.



DYLAN THOMAS

Gilbert Miller and Henry Sherek in association with Roger L. Stevens, will present DYLAN THOMAS' "UNDER MILK WOOD" with a distinguished company headed by Donald Houston, Diana Maddox, Francis Compton, Powys Thomas; directed by Douglas Cleverdon; beginning Tuesday evening, October 15, at the Henry Miller's Theatre, 124 West 43rd Street, New York 36.

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The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fact and Fiction

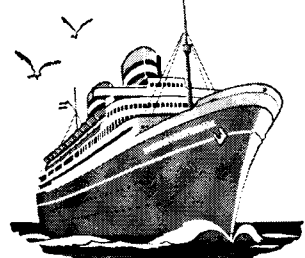
Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
THE HOVERING DARKNESS <i>Evelyn Berckman</i> (Dodd Mead: \$2.95)	Rich NY couple flee child's menacers by taking transatlantic lam; Yankee book-seller (heroine) gets in middle.	Considerable strain on credibility; much unintentional eavesdropping as ace liner plows main; love finds a way.	Forced.
FROM RUSSIA, WITH LOVE <i>Ian Fleming</i> (Macmillan: \$3.50)	USSR murder branch sets sights on James Bond. British undercover biggie; trap is baited with seductive Slav lass.	Nice travelogue (Crimea, Moscow, London, Istanbul, Orient Express, Paris); blood abounds; "different" ending.	Effective.
PRACTISE TO DECEIVE <i>Richard and Frances Lockridge</i> (Lippincott: \$2.75)	Well-heeled, thrice-wedded exurbaness dies in rural NY motel; hurricane a hindrance as Heimrich of state cops takes off.	Three living husbands inevitable suspects; hero's fiancée in at death; Great Dane involved; pace well maintained.	Usual pro job.
THE CASE OF THE FLOWERY CORPSE <i>Christopher Bush</i> (Macmillan: \$2.95)	Ludovic Travers, erudite London eye, takes on rural case stemming from car crash; Yard, local cops team nicely.	Three dead is terminal count; identical twin doctors among cast, as is credible G.I. sergeant; pace urbanely pleasant.	Nice follow-through.
HOW STILL MY LOVE <i>Doris Siegel</i> (Mill-Morrow: \$2.95)	Widowed Georgia gal storm center in estate tangle; Yank TV tycoon plays Lochinvar; sheriff counts bodies.	Thoroughly programmed job gathers speed toward climax; some lavender and old lace, also poor whites.	Ingenuous.
DEADLY SUMMER <i>Glenn M. Burns</i> (Lippincott: \$2.95)	Police lieutenant hits western trail to avenge wife's death; dope peddling indicated; violence erupts.	Large population present (including local cops); conversation in abundance; pace average; mainly formula job.	Previous was better.
THE HOLLYWOOD MURDERS <i>Ellery Queen</i> (Lippincott: \$3.50)	Three full-lengths: "The Devil to Pay" (1938), "The Four of Hearts" (1938), "The Origin of Evil" (1951), all laid in film capital.	E. Q. in person carries ball in each instance; local color present (and probably not exaggerated); told with usual éclat.	Prize package.
DOLLS WITH SAD FACES <i>Conrad Phillips</i> (Roy: \$2.75)	Swinging boats at carnival scene of killings that lead Yarders to wrong man (who has hell of a time).	Trial scenes occupy much of yarn; gollywog present; red-headed gals abound; anti-capital punishment tract.	Medium.
MURDER ON THE ROCKS <i>Robert Dietrich</i> (Dell: 25¢)	Steve Bentley, Washington income-tax consultant, turns amateur private eye to aid beauty in distress.	Dope, fabulous emerald, killings all present; good D.C.-and-vicinity setting; writing flip; pace medium.	Sassy.
LOUISE <i>Joan Dering</i> (Washburn: \$2.95)	English seaside village buzzes with rumors of foul play based on seven-years-old scandal.	Soundly cast and pleasantly managed, but dénouement is strictly guessable (and bit of letdown).	As noted.
MURDER IN MAJORCA <i>Michael Bryan</i> (Dell: 25¢)	Yank gal gets free pass home from Balearics but suspects gimmick (she's right); fellow-citizen photographer to rescue.	Death by fall stains pavement; international ring operates (all members unpleasant); scenery, climate attractive.	Medium rare.
LOVELY AND LETHAL <i>Frank Castle</i> (Gold Medal: 25¢)	Hell starts popping as ex-FBI-er opens law shop in So. Cal. village; good cops dig up assorted dead.	Credible drug yarn requires lengthy reconstruction at end in who-is-Mr.-Big solution; cast huge.	Intricate formula job.
THE MURDER ROOM <i>Paul E. Walsh</i> (Avon: 25¢)	Brooklyn Eye Paul Damian takes on elderly female client; two die as echoes of prohibition days resound.	Oyster Bay, Westchester, also crime foci; reefer absorbed; punk defenses; pace good; style agreeable.	Easy-to-take toughie.
BEST DETECTIVE STORIES OF THE YEAR <i>David C. Cooke, editor</i> (Dutton: \$2.95)	12th collection includes dozen yarns, all previously serialized (<i>SEP, This Week, Cosmopolitan, Argosy</i> , crime mags).	Authors range from newcomers (one a converted Westerns writer) to standbys (Fearing, MacDonald, Queen, Rice, Stein).	Representative, as always.

—SERGEANT CUFF.

Holland-America Line FALL-WINTER TRAVEL BULLETIN

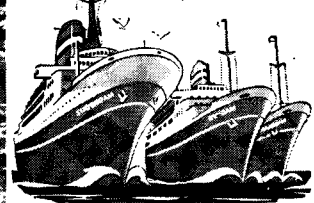
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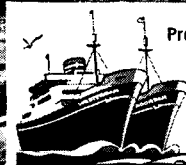


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