

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

SYNOPSIS: A Dufréne, contractor and political boss, has been receiving threatening letters. He is ambushed on a lonely road in the absence of his bodyguard. Director of Police Connor, when the ambush is reported, throws a cordon of police around Dufréne, and assigns Detective Sergeant Harper to the case.

CHAPTER FOUR DINNER FOR TWO

ANDREWS, we'll have the coffee and brandy in the living-room." Pierre Dufréne turned to his guest, who had caught that faint pucker of disapproval on the butler's mask-like face. "If you are ready, Harper—"

Detective-Sergeant Stephen Harper rose, following his host's example. The gray-haired servant was speaking. "Mr. Harris brought those papers from the office, sir, but the police made him wait outside."

"Your men take their orders very literally, Sergeant," said Dufréne, smiling. Then, to the waiting Andrews, "Bring me the papers."

The dinner itself had been excellent, each succeeding course testifying anew to the soundness of the host's choice. All during the meal Dufréne had deftly ignored the object of Harper's visit. Time again the detective had brought up the question of the attempted shoot-

down on a chaise longue. "My wife, Harper—a very clever and beautiful woman."

Sergeant Harper nodded at this rather singular introduction. Rarely had he seen such appealing loveliness as was pictured here. The clear features beautifully modeled, a soft wistfulness about the eyes, curving lips haunted by the ghost of a smile, these remained vividly in his memory.

Pierre Dufréne stood with his back to the fireplace. The slender master of this lofty sky-house, alert, dark, immaculate in his well-cut dinner jacket, looked more than ever the true artist, the connoisseur of wealth and power, as he stood squarely upon his hearth, cigarette in one hand, a balloon glass gracefully balanced in the other.

SERGEANT STEPHEN HARPER was baffled by Dufréne's strange attitude and besides being puzzled he was not entirely comfortable. The evidence of wealth that met the eye everywhere set a barrier to the appraisal of his host's character, made it hard to separate the man from his luxurious background.

Of the fact that there was a real man there, a personality both vivid and complex, there could be no doubt. But ever since Harper had



"My wife, Harper—a very clever woman."

arrived, and no doubt before, Dufréne had been drinking, and drinking with a sober intensity that revealed a sullen purpose.

Perhaps, thought Harper, that was the explanation of Andrews' looks as he had hovered over the dinner table. First it had been highballs, and now brandy. Harper had grave doubts as to the wisdom of this mixture, but thus far the only apparent effect these potions had produced was a certain top-heavy dignity of speech and movement, a heightened glitter of those cynical eyes.

The detective-officer suddenly became aware of his host's counter-scrutiny. The latter's position, with his back to the fire, gave him a decided advantage in any exchange of glances. Harper could see little of his features save the glint of his rimless glasses.

"You'll do, Harper, you'll do, very well indeed," Dufréne pronounced gravely. "You've got the proper mentality for handling a case of this kind. You showed that to me by your very first move—searching this place before assigning your men to their posts."

"That was nothing but the simplest routine procedure," Harper deprecated.

Dufréne twirled the goblet gently in his fingers, looking thoughtfully into its contents. "I'll wager both Markison and Barry would have accepted my man's word for it that no one could have got in here and hid. The fact that there was no one here makes the point no less important."

Harper nodded. Perhaps he should have felt more flattered by the good opinion of this man of power, but he could not shake off that uncomfortable feeling that pricked the back of his mind. There was something about this assignment that was incongruous, a feeling that destined events had already decided to take the course of perversity. Somehow, the power of the police marshaled against this anonymous threat seemed futile, a hollow parade of force. Yet it could not be reckoned so by any practical standard.

WHEN Dufréne had finished his perusal of the new contract, Andrews stood ready with a pen. Dufréne signed the document and returned it to the butler. "Give this to Mr. Harris and say that I'm much obliged to him."

"Is Andrews the only one of your staff here at the hotel, Mr. Dufréne?" Harper asked.

"My chauffeur is quartered here, too," was the reply. "The others are at my home. The house is not open just now. Mrs. Dufréne has been using the opportunity to have some of the rooms done over. At present she is visiting some relatives."

"I suppose she was very much upset when she heard about your mishap?"

"Naturally," Dufréne answered shortly, and in what struck the detective as a peculiar tone. His host rose and went to a table near the hearth. A flood of soft light poured

69 MEDFORD MEN ASSIGNED TO CCC CAMPS IN REGION

Sixty-nine local experienced men have been assigned to CCC camps in the Medford district, an order issued today by the CCC Medford district headquarters.

The Jackson county men going to Camp Annie Springs, in Crater Lake national park, where they will be with Company 1555 are: Arthur W. Ayers, Harry B. Ayers, Lawrence W. Badger, Ernest E. Baldwin, Merritt E. Beard, Benjamin L. Bellows, Louis R. Bloom, Gale T. Blundell, Jay K. Brown, Frank W. Clark, Emmett M. Cooksey, George O. Fetterly, Wallace A. Freeland, Erwin L. Goin, William Green, Frank B. Heston, Martin V. Hill, Thad D. Hinkle, Roy J. Holbrook, Wade H. Humphrey, Glen W. Husted, Bertie R. Jones, Robert W. Jones, Charles M. Lockwood, Robert McCabe, Mike L. McLin, Clarence W. Miller, Arch C. Nash, George W. Nunn, Frank Pettigrew, Charles H. Peyton, Roy H. Rogers, William G. Rust, Charles C. Sater, George B. Sherwood, Charles M. Skivington, Harold E. Thomas, Vernon H. Turnbough, Louis Verschore, Lester E. Wall, Joseph R. Wallace, Emil G. L. Westwood, James R. Wisdom, Pearl Whitehead, Edward F. Zemke.

Going to Company 1534, Camp Wineglass, in the park are: Frank P. Callison, Eazel C. Gaster, Hubert H. Messer, Lee E. Bain, Henry K. Weber, Norval E. Wiley, Frank Williams, Earl Wockner.

L. CLARK ATTENDS INSURANCE MEET

Leland Clark, Medford agent for the Oregon Mutual Fire Insurance company, has returned from Portland and McMinnville where he has been attending the State Insurance Agents' convention.

More than 150 agents, representing Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Utah were in attendance.

A report from E. C. Apperson, manager of the United States National bank, who has been secretary of the company for twenty years, shows that the Oregon Mutual Fire Insurance company served over 70,000 policy holders last year and increased their strong financial position.

Leland Clark and his father, M. D. Clark, won several prizes in the golf tournament held for the agents.

LA GRANDE, ORE., MAY 5.—(AP)—

Martin Borine, 47, a lumber mill worker, drowned in the Grand Ronde river at Perry last night when he slipped from a narrow trail in the darkness and fell from an embankment into the river. His body was recovered today.

WOMAN'S BODY FOUND IN TUB

ASTORIA, Ore., May 5.—(AP)—Although a preliminary investigation disclosed that death was due to heart dilation, an inquest will be held here Saturday into the death of Marie Elda Arvola, 30, whose body was found yesterday in the bathtub of a hotel room here.

N. P. Wicker, Salem salesman in whose room the body was found, told police the woman was badly intoxicated Wednesday night, that he left his room to her and went elsewhere. Upon his return yesterday noon, he related, he found the door to the bathroom locked and the water running. He broke the door down and found the woman's body. He was not held.

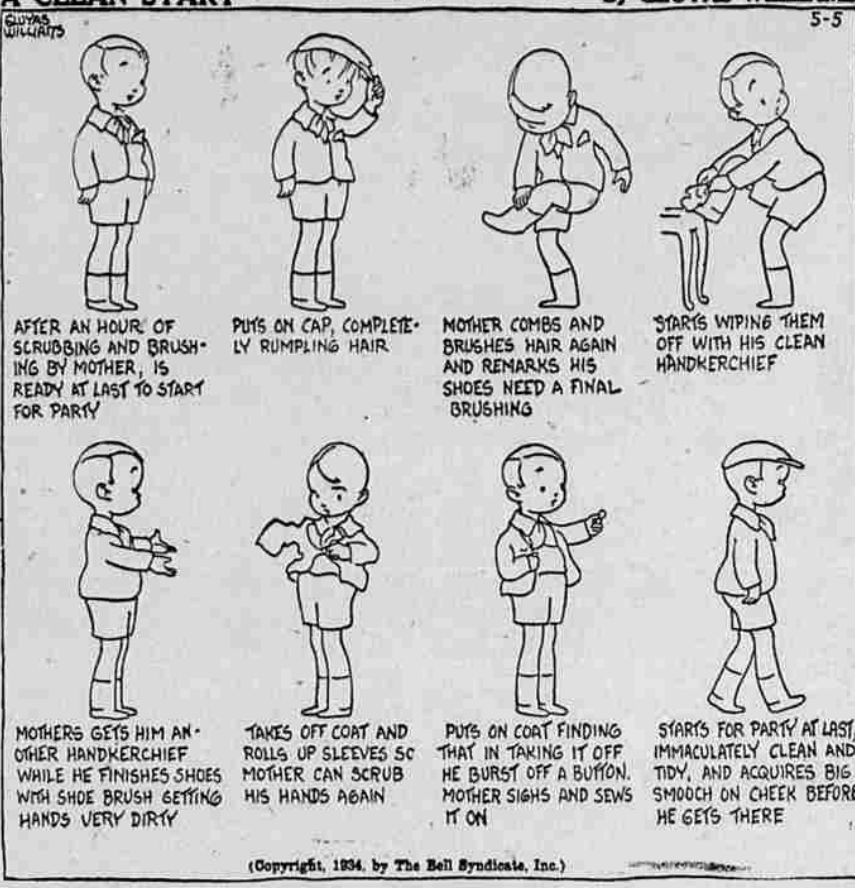
Ashland Bank Is Fifty Years Old

ASHLAND, May 4.—(Sp.)—The personnel of the First National bank, which yesterday celebrated its golden anniversary was besieged with congratulations throughout the day. Many beautiful floral bouquets were also received from friends and outside banking institutions.

Medal for looting.—Award of the Daniel Guggenheim medal to W. E. Boeing "for successful pioneering and achievement in aircraft manufacture and air transportation," was announced today.

Hear Bursell for Senator Monday at 7:15 p. m.

A CLEAN START



AFTER AN HOUR OF SCRUBBING AND BRUSHING BY MOTHER, IS READY AT LAST TO START FOR PARTY

PUTS ON CAP, COMPLETELY RUMPLING HAIR

MOTHER COMBS AND BRUSHES HAIR AGAIN AND REMARKS HIS SHOES NEED A FINAL BRUSHING

STARTS WIPING THEM OFF WITH HIS CLEAN HANDKERCHIEF

MOTHER GETS HIM ANOTHER HANDKERCHIEF WHILE HE FINISHES SHOES WITH SHOE BRUSH GETTING HANDS VERY DIRTY

TAKES OFF COAT AND ROLLS UP SLEEVES SO MOTHER CAN SCRUB HIS HANDS AGAIN

PUTS ON COAT FINDING THAT IN TAKING IT OFF HE BURST OFF A BUTTON. MOTHER SIGHS AND SEWS IT ON

STARTS FOR PARTY AT LAST, IMMACULATELY CLEAN AND TIDY, AND ACQUIRES BIG SMOOCH ON CHEEK BEFORE HE GETS THERE

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S'MATTER POP—



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter—The Peacemaker



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—An Understanding!



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THE NEBBS—There's Always Something



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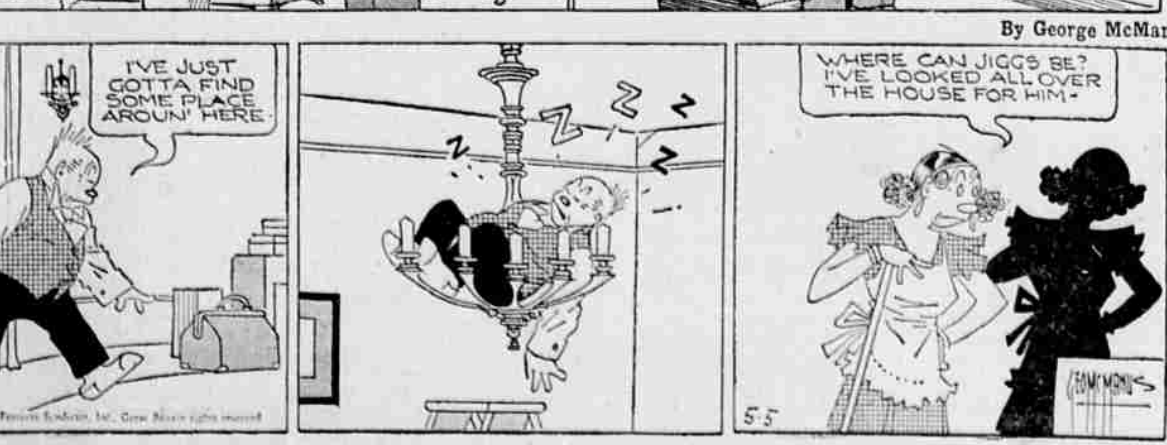


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BRINGING UP FATHER



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HILT MAN FOUND DEAD IN SMASHUP

ASHLAND, May 4.—(Sp.)—Louis Powell, an employe of the Fruit-growers' Supply company of Hilt, and a member of the Ashland lodge of Eagles, was instantly killed Thursday when his car plunged 300 feet down the embankment along the new highway in Shasta canyon, five miles out of Yreka.

No. Phoenix Plans Homecoming Picnic At School May 11

The second annual "home-coming" picnic of the North Phoenix district will be held at the school house May 11. A program by the school children will be given at 10:30 a. m. under Mrs. Bonham's direction. A basket dinner at noon for which each one is asked to bring their own table service with their basket dinner. A program is also planned for the afternoon. All former pupils and teachers of the district are invited to come and bring their families. All kinds of blank cards for sale for rent, no hunting, no trespassing, and other cards for sale at Commercial Printing Dept. of Mail Tribune.

children en route to school. Powell was 38 years of age.

Monday, Harper and his host have a message at arms.