

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

...some political power... has been ambushed on a lonely road near the city. It may be the work of the person who has been sending him anonymous threatening letters, but Sergeant Harper is not sure. At dinner in the Astor with DuPrene, Harper has been questioned by his host's heavy drinking, and by his hints that someone close to him may be responsible.

Chapter Six DULL NIGHT

TWENTY-FOUR uniformed men were drawn up in two parallel lines across the Squad Room of the Fourteenth Precinct, the most outlying police district of the city. The men wore their heavy winter coats, for it had turned bitterly cold and a howling snowstorm was under way. During the afternoon the storm had made several false starts, with brief furries, but now the flakes were whirling furiously against the steaming windows, driven by a shrill northwest wind.

Lewis finished the rollcall. "No stalling tonight, men!" he snapped. "Pull your boxes on schedule, or I'll come out looking for you myself. Dismiss!"

Instantly the lines lost their wooden character. The men broke ranks and made for the door, snuggling their coats more firmly about their shoulders and chatting as they

dropped the crisp, official tone. "Don't get your feet wet, Morris," he called, "and listen—we haven't a thing on the blotter. Can't you fellows give us a little action?"

"Nothing doing tonight," came back the answer. "You're lucky to be inside. It's cold as hell," was Officer 1638's forceful, if somewhat mixed, metaphor.

Byers placed a check mark after Morris's name on the list posted at his elbow. For the next few minutes the little lights continued to flash and at the conclusion of each report Byers checked the name of the patrolman. With some he exchanged brief, bantering remarks, but always cut out swiftly to keep the line open.

"Sergeant, no report from 1645—Hamill." There was a note of surprise in Byers' voice.

Lewis frowned. It was eleven minutes past the hour. Connally withdrew his attention from the cards for a moment. "Perhaps he's coming in with something," he suggested, hopefully.

"Whether he is, or isn't, we'll be hearing from him shortly," was the Sergeant's opinion. Byers kept his earpiece clamped on and amused himself drawing caricatures on a piece of paper. At nine-twenty he glanced from the clock to Sergeant Lewis, still turning pages.

A moment later the outer door banged and every one looked in that direction, expecting to see the renegade Hamill. Officer 1645, come stamping in from the hall. Instead, a snow-plastered and storm-buffed figure appeared, hunched and muffled beyond recognition. It was not until the man had shaken off most of the clinging snow that plastered his front, unbound a muffler and removed his hat that Lewis recognized the newcomer. It was Howard "Sheriff" Doyle, the special crime reporter for the Daily Ledger.

Doyle treated the Sergeant to a quasi-military salute. He hung his hat and overcoat on a hook. "Howdy, Sergeant. Howdy, boys," was his breezy salutation. "Seen anything of Detective Barry up here tonight? Or Steve Harper?"

Lewis rubbed his chin. "I guess the fellows who laid out the precincts were superstitious."

The Sergeant flicked over the

blotter, donning gloves and setting their nightsticks in holsters. The "long shift" was going on duty. Among them was one destined never to return.

Sergeant Lewis returned to the "office" and settled down with the evening paper. For several hours the men on patrol duty rang up from the street boxes, and "Sad Sam" Byers, who was on switchboard duty, laconically reported "O.K., Sergeant," each time the round of calls was completed. A drowsy quiet settled over the Fourteenth Precinct Station, a gray stone building at the extreme end of Woodbine Avenue, just a matter of ten minutes' walk from the county line.

Sergeant Lewis sat behind the railing at the raised "charge" desk. Tiring of the paper, with its midwinter dearth of sports news, he turned a ruminating eye toward the windows and with stolid calm watched the pounding and spattering on the panes.

OVER in his corner Byers had discarded the telephone headpiece while he indulged in a game of pinochle with Officer Connally. They played with silent concentration, the only sound emanating from their game being the sharp slap and rattling of the cards.

Lewis sat down again. He stared at the calendar pad on the opposite wall. Its bold, black markings proclaimed that this was Tuesday, January tenth.

He rustled his newspaper impatiently. He hated prolonged silences. Small talk was as necessary to him as meat and bread. So, when Clymer turned out the papers from his machine and deftly stitted out the carbon sheets, Lewis pounced on the opportunity.

"Say, Clymer, did you ever hear of a Thirteenth Precinct? This is the Fourteenth and Butler's got the Twelfth, but where's the unlucky number?"

The typist leaned back in his chair and considered the question. Finally, he shook his head. "I never heard of one, now that you mention it," he admitted.

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WORK ON 4-MILE LAKE ROAD WILL OPEN THIS MONTH

Work will start in a week or two on roads leading into Four Mile Lake, according to Karl L. Janouch, Rogue River national forestry supervisor.

When work on the road from Butte Falls to camp is completed, there will be three roadways into the lake. A side camp from South Fork of the Rogue CCC camp will be established on the road from the Klamath side of the Lake of the Woods road.

S. V. Goddard is in charge of the NIRA crew of 50 men who are at work on the Umpqua divide, continuing the project started last year. This is the extension of the road east from Tiller, along the divide to Ragdale butte.

The road project to Ashland peak has also been resumed, with a 30-man crew, in charge of B. F. McRae. Mr. Janouch stated that a crew of ten has also started work on the Skyline trail from Crater Lake to Lake of the Woods along the Cascade divide. Clyde Smith of Jacksonville is foreman on the project.

Another NIRA crew started work on the recreational project for Upper Rogue river, under the direction of Laurence Smith, technician. Robert Mansfield, junior forester, is in charge of the crew making survey in the Klamath region.

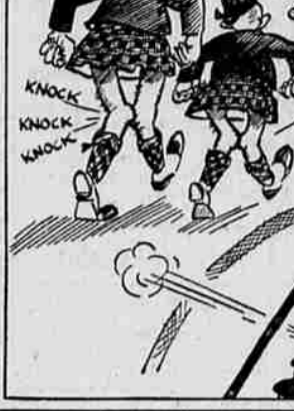
One hundred men are now at work in the blister trail camp in the Sun Pass area. The work is being carried on under the bureau of plant industry. Sun Pass is south of the Crater Lake

INDUSTRY EXHIBIT SPACE GOING FAST

Oregon manufacturers will be represented 100 per cent in the industrial exhibit to be featured during Oregon's Diamond Jubilee celebration in Medford and Jacksonville next June, according to reports arriving here being contacted by the general committee.

Present indications point toward a shortage of space, Chairman W. A. Gates of the exhibit committee said today. He urged local manufacturers, if they wished space in the exhibit, to get in touch with the local headquarters as early as possible.

The industrial exhibit will be open six days in the Maitorium building, where visitors will also be provided entertainment while viewing what is expected to be one of the most representative displays ever offered in Oregon.



THE WORLD AT ITS WORST

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



AT THE FAMILY PARTY MOTHER SUGGESTS BRIGHTLY THAT YOU PASS AROUND THE PRESENT THAT UNCLE HORACE BROUGHT YOU, LIKE A GENEROUS LITTLE BOY, AND YOU KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE WHAT A PACK OF HUNGRY RELATIVES CAN DO TO A ONE-POUND BOX OF CANDY



Sergeant Lewis settled down with the paper.

MATTER POP

By C. M. Payne



TAILSPIN TOMMY—A Mystery Develops At Three-Point!

By Hal Forrest



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A Sailing Date!

By Edwin Alger



THE NEBBS—What To Do—What To Do?

By Sol Hess



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



UNDERCROSSING COMPLETION IS EXPECTED SOON

ASHLAND, May 8. (Sp.)— Construction of the undercrossing at the north end of Main street will be started at an early date, according to a communication received today by City Attorney Frank J. Van Dyke from H. H. Balcock, state highway engineer. Completion of this undercrossing will make it possible for autostats to drive directly over the hill past the Jackson Hot Springs, eliminating dangerous curves along the present route.

It is understood from Mr. Balcock's communication that piers for the structure will be built by the Oregon state highway commission and the Southern Pacific Railroad company will complete the remainder of the structure.

The letter received by City Attorney Van Dyke states in part: "The arrangements with the Southern Pacific company with reference to the construction of the Ashland undercrossing are now about complete. As soon as the necessary papers are drawn up, they will be presented to the public utilities commission with the request for an order."

"We are hoping we will be able to contract the piers for this structure on June 7. The railroad company will erect the remainder of the structure itself."

All kinds of signs, blanks for sale or rent, no hunting, no trespassing and other cards for sale at Commercial Printing Dept. of Mail Tribune.