

Murder at MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

SYNOPSIS: Approaching a policeman and a winged man each other dead in the breakfast room of Mrs. Dufresne's house. Yet Sergeant Harper does not believe it is so, although the only evidence so far that he is right seems to connect the beautiful Mrs. Dufresne with the dead. With Detective Lafferty, Harper is carefully reconstructing the murdered stranger's actions on the fatal night.

Chapter 21

HELP AT LAST

HE man seemed to be quite familiar with the house, Harper continued. "For he disturbed nothing. He started a fire in that hearth, very likely as soon as he arrived, for it was chilly. The logs were pretty well burned when we arrived on the scene."

"Wouldn't some one have noticed the smoke from the chimney when he started it?" Lafferty questioned. "The Whitmores, for instance?"

"We can inquire, but I think the chances were against it. It was a gray, lowering sky, and with the snow coming down so thickly I doubt if it would have been noticed. Our man set out a decanter of whiskey and one of brandy, took a glass from the cabinet yonder, and sat down at the head of the table, as comfortable as you please. He lit a cigarette, and relaxed. Doesn't that suggest that he was there to meet some one?"

"He smoked five cigarettes, for there are four stubs in the grate and five matchsticks. The fifth cigarette burned itself to ashes between his dead fingers. As he smoked, he carelessly flipped the ashes toward the fireplace. Some fell a little short. He is still sitting there when Officer Hamill enters the room and the shooting begins."

Lafferty made a wry face. "That brings us right back to the mystery of why they did it. What made them go for each other simultaneously?"

Harper said, "It's all very puzzling. If our unknown man had been trailing Dufresne, he must certainly have realized that Dufresne would guard himself in the Austerlitz, last night of all nights at least. What made him come up here and dress himself like Dufresne? The mystery of this man's clothing is going to give us plenty to think about. The outfit must be part of his masquerade, his own clothing must be hidden somewhere in this house."

Harper turned out the inner breast pocket of the jacket. An embossed silk label furnished the maker's name—Barr, Tompkins & Barr, one of the exclusive tailoring firms of the city.

"Look here, Jack, this fellow was no customer of that firm. There is too much discrepancy between the quality of his under and outer clothing. Nor did his hands exactly indicate the gentleman of leisure. These nose-glasses were put on, along with the false beard, to make his resemblance to Dufresne more striking. The placers of the glasses made deep red marks on the sides of his nose."

"Was he so anxious to conceal his identity that he removed a ring worn so long that he had to skin his knuckle to get it off? There are some leading questions for you."

"Well, Barr, Tompkins & Barr should be able to give us some information about the dress suit."

"I think we can get the same information much nearer home," Harper replied, rising and pressing the service bell.

"STEVE," Lafferty began, "I've been mulling over what you said about that man having shaved there in the house. That suggests just one thing to me—he was going to meet some one—and that some one was a woman. You can't escape the deduction."

Harper nodded. "Yes, but you can't be so positive about a woman being mixed up in it. Every time you see a man shaving it doesn't mean that he's going to a rendezvous."

"Steve, you're certainly bent on throwing a screen around Mrs. Dufresne. Why are you so sure she had nothing to do with it?"

Harper answered patiently, "That inference will not be overlooked. I hold no brief for the lady, but I have an instinctive feeling that she is entirely innocent. Not, as Doyle suggested, because of her air of fragility or any chivalrous duty to beauty in distress."

"Mrs. Dufresne faintly when she saw the dead man unmasked," Lafferty continued doggedly. "Perhaps that was from shock or the sudden relief from strain—but I think she knew that man! And I'm going to take that as a working basis."

"That's quite all right," Harper answered good-naturedly. "Mrs. Dufresne's movements last night will be looked into thoroughly. Don't forget that this pow-wow began with

the idea that there may have been a third person in this room last night—even, he pronounced slowly. "That these killings did not take place as suggested by the evidence. A dozen watchers beyond the garden wall wouldn't alter that, if they didn't enter the house."

Harper broke off short as the door opened and Andrews entered. "Andrews, can you tell us the name of Mr. Dufresne's tailor?"

The butler showed no sign of surprise at the seemingly irrelevant question. "Barr, Tompkins & Barr."

Harper picked up the coat, trousers, and waistcoat. "I want you to examine these carefully, Andrews, and tell us if these are part of Mr. Dufresne's wardrobe."

Andrews looked closely at the various articles, fingering the seams, examining the linings, turning out the inner pocket for the label. "Yes, sir, I am quite sure this is one of Mr. Dufresne's suits."

Harper handed over the nose-glasses, with their black silk cord. "How about these?"

"I think they are his. Mr. Dufresne has all his glasses made up in duplicate pairs."

"Can you identify any others of these clothes?"

Andrews obediently picked over the shoes, socks, underwear, shirt, collar and tie. He put the last three articles aside. "I believe these came from upstairs, sir. I am sure the others did not."

"Has Mr. Dufresne awakened yet, Andrews?"

"Oh, yes, sir. He is having breakfast now."

"Have you been in Mr. Dufresne's rooms since you came up from the Austerlitz last night?"

"Naturally, sir, several times. Both last night and this morning."

"Did you notice any sign of disturbance, anything to indicate that this man had been in those rooms? Or did Mr. Dufresne mention anything of that nature?"

"No, sir. So far as I could see nothing had been disturbed. I cannot answer for Mr. Dufresne, but doubtless he would have mentioned it to me."

Harper put the clothing back on a chair. "If this man changed into some of Mr. Dufresne's clothes he'd do it right there in the room, Andrews, take Lafferty here up to the dressingroom and help him look through the closets."

LAFFERTY went out in the wake of the butler, and Harper, left alone, began to walk up and down the room, his eyes turning again and again to that armchair in which the baffling intruder had met his death.

He came to a stop before the wainscoting at the vertical panel that bore the bullet mark. The bullet had not wedged itself into the wood, but had been found on the floor, whence it had dropped after the impact. The detective used his magnifying lens on the scarred place.

Carlin's puzzled suggestion that the bullet wound bore all the markings of a heavy caliber steel-jacket had stuck in his mind. The lens afforded a much clearer view of the jagged dent in the wood, from which tiny particles had fallen to the floor.

This enlarged scope of the eye gave the detective a sudden and startling insight into the matter. He fitted the bullet into the rough-edged cavity. It matched very badly. He tried the bullet from various angles but with no better success.

Harper aquated back on his heels, the light of discovery dawning on him. The center depth of the bullet mark in the wainscoting was undoubtedly deeper than Officer Hamill's bullet could account for. Furthermore, the mark in the wood ran to a distinct conical pit, while the nose of the policeman's bullet was distinctly blunt! Here was the first tangible bit of evidence to give color to his suspicions.

It looked as if the sharp-eyed Carlin's hesitancy over acceptance of the caliber of the fatal bullet as a .38 was going to be justified. If this unidentified masquerader had not died by this particular .38 bullet then Officer Hamill had not killed him. The attendant corroborates of this thought leaped into Harper's grasp, full-armed and clamoring for attention.

It meant that the bullet which had really killed the man in the chair was definitely missing! It had been carried away. Some phantom third presence had dislodged it from the wall and substituted a bullet fired from the policeman's gun.

Officer Hamill had not killed the unknown man. Then the dead man in the armchair could not have killed Hamill!

(Copyright, 1934, by Walter C. Brown.) Harper, however, finds still another exciting clue.

Jubilee Sidelights

Construction of the setting for the historical pageant, "Oyer-Un-Gon," (Land of Plenty) is steadily progressing at the fair grounds where the pageant will be presented Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights. The setting is 40 feet high, 150 feet wide and 100 feet deep, a true replica of pioneer scenes before which more than 500 people will participate in the memorable production. Rehearsals have been under way for weeks under the direction of Prof. Angus Bowmer of the Southern Oregon Normal school. He also wrote the pageant.

Over 80 members of the CCG will take part in the Lewis and Clark expedition entry in the pioneer parade, an event of Thursday, June 7, during Oregon's Diamond Jubilee celebration. The expedition will be faithfully reproduced in costume. In addition to the 48 white men on the expedition, there were Sacajawes, Indian girl wife of a French-Canadian guide of the party, and one colored man. The parade entry is being prepared under the direction of Lieut. Roy Croft of the district headquarters.

Taking advantage of the advance ticket sale, quite a number of local people have been purchasing tickets for the pageant, "Oyer-Un-Gon," and the Diamond Jubilee roundup, two of the important features of Jubilee week. A ticket office was established a few days ago at the celebration headquarters in the Sparta building. Mail orders are also arriving.

A miner whose efforts have yielded many ounces of gold, George Herschberger of Willow Springs, is looking forward enthusiastically to Oregon's Diamond Jubilee next month. Mr. Herschberger came to southern Oregon over 60 years ago and spent most

of that time in hills surrounding the valley. There is much gold yet to be found, he says, and he has never given up the quest.

Entries are wanted for the jubilee exhibit to be open during Jubilee week to lend further assurance of one of the best displays ever shown in the state. Quite a number of entries have already arrived, with the first offered by Jude Seidel, who is operating the United Metals property in Josephine county. One of his exhibits has been assayed at \$5,500 per ton.

"We were on our way north to Seattle and Canada when we first heard about Oregon's Diamond Jubilee celebration, and now we are going to stay until it is over," H. G. Mallory of Oakland, Cal., said yesterday when a visitor in the jubilee headquarters. Mr. Mallory is accompanied by his family and said he figured there would be a large number of visitors from California. "You would be surprised at the interest there is in Oregon's birthday party," he said.

Jubilee caps, adopted as the official headgear for the celebration, are in great demand, often exceeding the supply. The caps are of an attractive design and will be the vogue rest of the month. Local residents are urged to procure them before the supply is entirely exhausted.

W. E. (Shorty) Morris was out until 9 o'clock last night looking for wagons for the pioneer parade to be held during the jubilee celebration. He has located many vehicles in all parts of the county. George Carter has been as busy looking for horses and received co-operation from many sources. C. L. Hopkins has a list of local people who are to be in the parade, and is looking for more. J. Verne Shangle, parade chairman, has been in touch with his committee members constantly in working

out further plans for the parade, which promises to be one of the largest ever presented in the west.

A display of Indian arrows is coming to Medford from Hood River, Ore. T. J. Miller of that city has been jubilee conscious for weeks and some time ago said he was arriving to spend the entire week at the celebration, bringing a display of several thousand arrows.

MURDER MYSTERY FIGURE TO TOMB

SOMERVILLE, N. J., May 26.—(AP)—Henry De La Bruyere Carpendier, one of those indicted for the slaying of the Rev. Edward W. Hall and Mrs. Eleanor Mills in 1922, died at his home today. He was 81 years old.

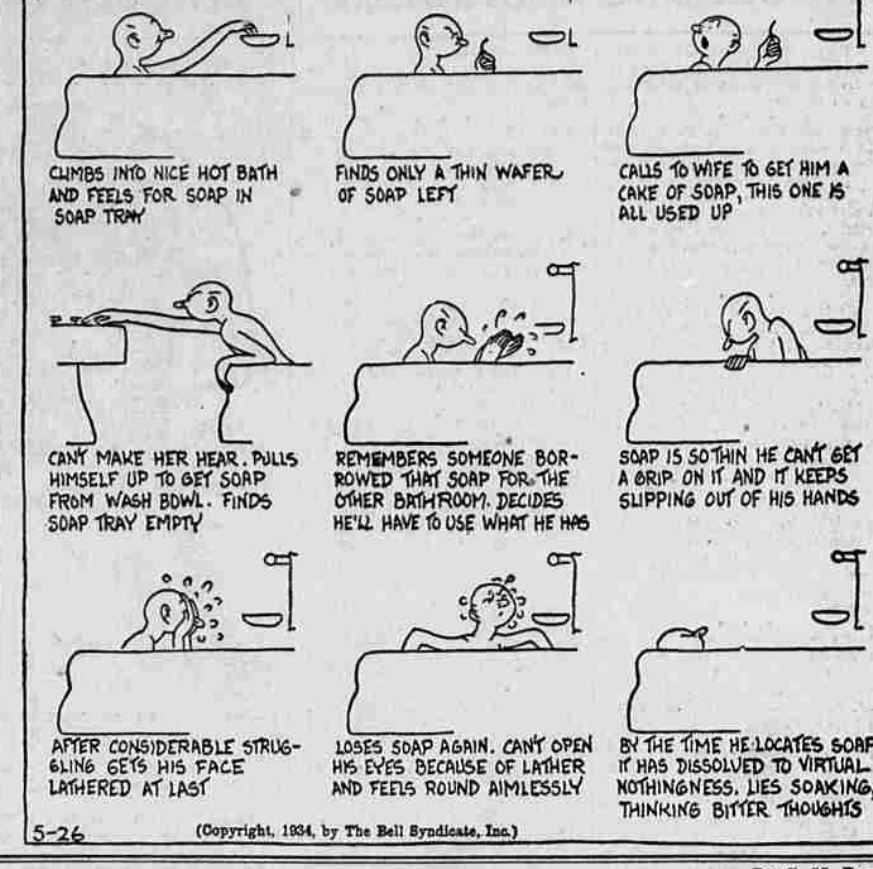
Carpendier was a cousin of Mrs. Frances Stevens Hall, widow of the slain clergyman, who was acquitted after a sensational trial in 1928. Carpendier never was tried for the crime, but two other cousins, Willie and Henry Stevens, were tried and acquitted along with the widow.

Carpendier was a Wall street broker. He suffered a paralytic stroke soon after the trial and never regained his health. The bodies of the rector of the fashionable Episcopal church of St. John the Evangelist, New Brunswick, and his attractive 33-year-old choir singer were found beneath the crab apple tree on De Russey's lane, just outside of New Brunswick, September 16, 1922.

WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

WAFER OF SOAP

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



5-26 (Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

5 MATTER POP



(Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Headin' For The Last Crack Up!



(Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A "Pleasant" Report!



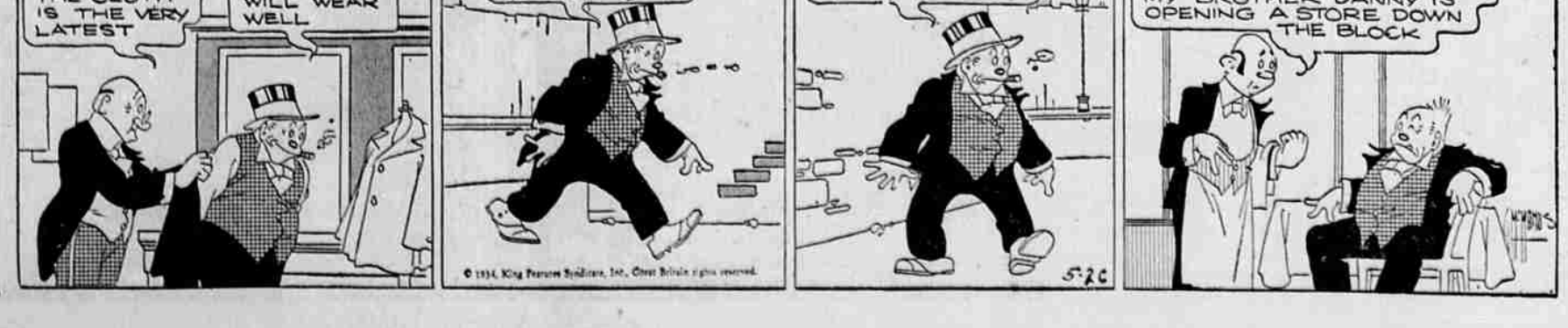
(Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

THE NEBBS—Button—Button—



(Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

BRINGING UP FATHER



(Copyright, 1934, King Features Syndicate, Inc.)

NIPPON MOTHER DIES AMID FLAME

SAN FRANCISCO, May 26.—(AP)—In the hard and violent fashion of the Orient, a Japanese mother carried her 11-month old son to a flaming death with her in the Japanese tea garden of San Francisco's Golden Gate park last night, police said today.

A Farm Tragedy

RAMSEY, Ill., May 26.—(AP)—Engaged when a young farmer called to marry his housekeeper's daughter, Thomas Hayes, 60, today shot and killed three persons, including the bride-to-be and the mother, then committed suicide.

Japan Accepts

TOKYO, May 26.—(AP)—The Japanese government was understood today to have accepted a British invitation to carry on diplomatic talks with the United States and Great Britain separately preliminary to the 1935 naval conference.

Brighter Dividends

NEW YORK, May 26.—(AP)—There were twenty favorable dividend changes last week against 13 in the previous week, the Standard Statistics Co. reported today. Unfavorable changes numbered two against seven the week before.