

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

Sergeant Harper has needed to find a certain calibre revolver to establish his theory that the two men found dead in Pierre Dufresne's house were murdered by a third person, and did not kill each other. Dufresne and others of his household have placed obstacles in his way. Now he has found the gun hidden in one of the roof gutters.

Chapter 31 A GUN TALKS

In his eagerness Harper bent down to reach the revolver, but Lafferty jerked him back by the collar. "You can't get it that way; you'll lose your balance. We need a rake or a pole."

"I'm not going to wait for that. Here, hold me while I crawl after it." Harper stretched down the slope head first, while Lafferty kept a tight grip on his ankles. Lower and lower he crawled until he picked up the gun by the barrel.

Lafferty promptly hauled him back to safety. Without even bothering to shake the snow from his clothing, Harper stood up and broke open the revolver.

"There you are! One empty shell Jack, this is the real murder gun. Now, if we only knew who hid it up here!"

They hurried downstairs, and Lafferty sprayed the heavy revolver with the insulator. He tapped the

working brain. Not many people could think up a good trick like that under sudden pressure. If he hadn't dropped the twine we might still be at sea.

"Just a moment, Jack. We really have no proof that Dufresne hid the gun. We're assuming that the twine fell from the pocket of his robe, but we must remember that every one in the house, except Mrs. Dufresne and her nurse, was there at the time. The fact that it was found near where he was sitting doesn't prove he dropped it."

"But didn't you yourself see Dufresne searching the room for it, later?"

"Let's not jump to conclusions, Jack. We've got to weigh everything down to the last grain. If we solve this thing at all it will only be because we strike just the right balance."

"Who else could have been smart enough to engineer it?" Lafferty challenged.

"THAT'S a dangerous way to reason it out. We know the gun was in Dufresne's room this morning, for you saw it there. But did Dufresne know it was there? The fact that it was there to be seen as late as this morning's search raises a doubt. If you had such a gun to conceal, wouldn't you pick a better

MORE CANDIDATES REPORT EXPENSES RECENT CAMPAIGN

SALEM, Ore., June 7.—(AP)—John L. Rand spent \$311.60 in his campaign for re-election to the Oregon supreme court bench, late reports filed with the secretary of state today revealed.

David F. Graham, Republican candidate for congress from the second district, defeated by Jay Upson for the nomination, spent \$392. Ralph M. Erwin, who sought the Democratic nomination for congress from the third district, spent \$381.89. J. W. Leonhardt, who won the Democratic nomination for superintendent of schools, spent \$147, he reported.

W. A. Johnson spent \$100 in Marion and Polk counties in support of Joe E. Dunne, Republican nominee for governor, while Frank B. Reid reported he spent \$80 for Dunne's candidacy in Lane county.

Carl E. Wimberly spent \$311.38 in his campaign for nomination to the circuit court bench from the second district. W. M. Duncan spent \$308 in his race for circuit judge in the 13th district.

The largest item filed late was an expense of \$812 additional spent in the campaign for Willis Mahoney for the Democratic nomination for governor. Other expenses of his campaign were previously reported.

Walter B. Gleason spent \$148 in his campaign for the Democratic nomination for congress from the third district. Hardin C. Blackmer listed expenses of \$248.63 in his race

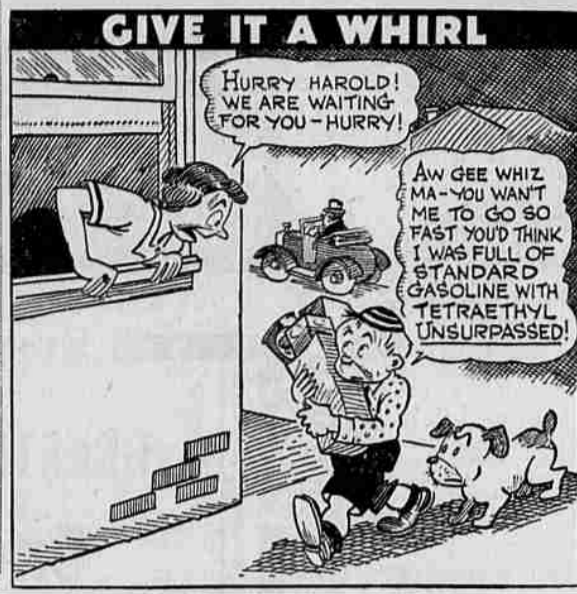
for the Republican nomination for district attorney of Klamath county. Other expenses listed were: W. S. U'Ren, \$154.81; Joseph E. Harvey, \$84; R. N. Kavanaugh, \$70; Stewart Wells, \$78, and Sylvanus Kingsley, \$74 in their campaigns for the Republican nomination for representative from Multnomah county; Pay Morris, Republican, for district attorney of Klamath county, \$80; Otto K. Paulus, Republican, for state senator from Marion county, \$98, and Eugene E. Marsh, for state senator from the 10th district, \$98.

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PORTLAND POSTMASTER APPOINTMENT LISTED

WASHINGTON, June 7.—(AP)—Appointment of Dr. E. T. Hedlund as acting postmaster at Portland, Oregon, was announced today by the post office department.

Housing Conditions Revealed NASHUA, N. H. (UP)—A housing survey here, financed by CWA funds, revealed that the city's 4,648 residential buildings, 2,529 needed repairs and 90 were "unfit for human habitation." Of the total, 530, or 11 per cent, were more than 75 years old.



THE FAMILY ALBUM—FAMILY FINANCE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



He picked up the gun.

gun with steady strokes of an unopened pocket-knife, to dislodge all loose particles, then bent his tall body over the table as he adjusted the circular lens to the proper height and squinted through the glass at the magnified surface.

Sergeant Harper stood beside him, watching closely. But his expression did not reflect the extreme disappointment of Lafferty's as the latter straightened up and muttered, "Not a mark—sure the luck!"

"I didn't expect to find any," Harper commented. "We've got to be content with having recovered the gun and that's something at least. Direct proof of chicanery is what we've needed most in this case."

He picked up the distorted bullet rescued from that dark cavity under the stone steps and held it beside the discharged metal shell. "I'm sure these belong together. If they do, we've got our cornerstone in place. It won't be hard to check it up."

"Sure, it's a hundred to one this is the gun. Only one bullet has been fired and the caliber looks right. The barrel's fouled, too," Lafferty sniffed at the muzzle opening.

"THAT certainly was an inspiration, looking in the gutter of the roof. Whoever put it there was a fast thinker, no doubt about that."

"Mrs. Whitmore's chance words gave me the idea. For no particular reason they called up a vision of a window being raised and the gun dangling outside with the string doubled through the trigger guard. At the same time I remembered how the eaves projected over the top-floor windows. The gun could be swung higher and higher until it landed very neatly in the gutter overhead and out of reach."

"Free one end of the string, draw it down, close the window and there you have it. The wet section, where it rested in the snow, should have told me that, and I suppose it would have eventually, but Mrs. Whitmore unknowingly jogged up the process."

"Well, if Dufresne did it, we've got to credit him with a smooth-

and a safe place than an unlocked drawer in your own room for it? Of course, you would.

"And if you had the time, early in the morning, for instance, wouldn't you have taken the gun, cleaned and oiled it, and replaced the empty cartridge? Mind, I'm not trying to clear Dufresne, nor denying that he had the best opportunity for doing it, but there are arguments on both sides of this fence."

"It's too slick a job to have been done by any one except Dufresne," Lafferty insisted.

"No, I don't agree with you there. It's a cunning trick and shows a thorough knowledge of the house and its construction, but I wouldn't say that neither Andrews nor Donaghy could have thought of it."

Lafferty thought it over silently. "And the window from which the gun was swung is in a spare room?"

"It's a guest room, furnished but unoccupied."

"Well, there's one thing you can't deny, Steve. This gun is a man's weapon. You can't imagine any woman toting that thing around with her. The size and weight of it'd be too much of a load."

"Yes, I'll grant you that—if it was brought to this house a man probably brought it. But we don't know that. Perhaps it was here all the time. There's nothing to prevent a desperate or an infuriated woman from firing it. That fiasco of mine with Andrews seems to have ended all hope of getting at the ownership of the gun. They all know about it now and they'll deny ever having seen it."

"You can't expect them to give their boss away at this stage of the game. You know how servants are."

"There are two ways of looking at that. These four walls enclose two separate and distinct stages. There is one for the Dufresnes and the Croydens and their friends of the same class. The other stage is for the servants."

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Tomorrow, Lafferty makes a serious accusation.

S'MATTER POP—



By C. M. Payne

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Wonder If Skeeter Is Right?



By Hal Forrest

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Thanks For The Invitation!



By Edwin Alger

THE NEBBS—Back On The Job



By Sol Hess

HITCH HIKER GETS A RIDE-TO JAIL

BEND, Ore., June 7.—(AP)—Angered, police said, because passing motorists would not give him a "lift," Fred Ott, a hitch-hiker, barricaded The Dalles-California highway north of Bend with boulders last night. He finally got a ride—to the desolate county jail, with Sheriff Claude MacCauley.

Ott today entered a plea of guilty to a charge of illegally blocking a state highway, and was sentenced to 30 days in jail. The sentence was suspended with the understanding he leave the county.

OREGON'S CASH GONE AUGUST 1 IS OUTLOOK

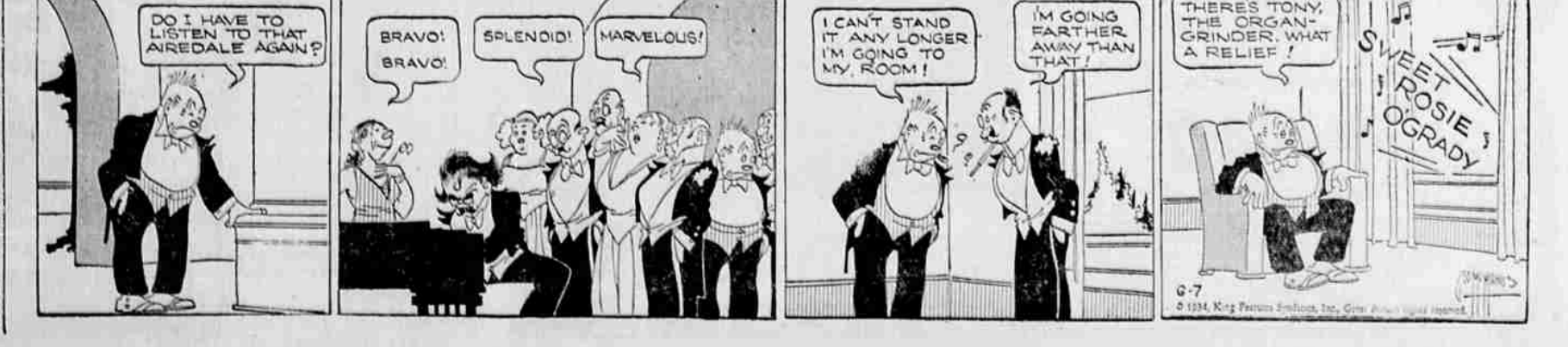
SALEM, June 7.—(AP)—The state of Oregon, on the basis of present funds and expected revenues, will be able to remain on a cash basis until August 1, Fred Paulus, deputy state treasurer, announced today.

Paulus reported that a tabulation on June 1, showed a balance in the general fund of \$832,884.

In addition corporation department fees approximating \$350,000 will be received by July 1, as well as second quarter state taxes from counties, estimated at \$260,000.

The June 1 tabulation also shows cash on hand totaling \$4,932,277 and investments in custody of the state treasurer amounting to \$7,837,114.02.

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus