

MURDER AT MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

not much closer to finding the murderer of a policeman and a stranger in Pierre Dufresne's house than at the beginning, although he has assembled a great deal of evidence. But he has at least determined that the man who wrote a series of threatening letters to Dufresne wrote them on paper he found in a wastebasket in Dufresne's basement. Send to find the writer.

Chapter 33 PUMPING WHITMORE

THE Sergeant's meditations were interrupted by the return of John Whitmore with the spoils of his tour through the house. The booty was entirely devoid of interest except for the six or seven slips from Mrs. Dufresne's pad. Harper deftly reviewed these, pretended to poke through the rest of the papers, then sent Whitmore to dispose of the trash, telling him to return afterwards.

While he was gone Harper ran through this latest collection of slips, evidently covering the recent visit of Dr. Ulrich. But once again the almost monosyllabic brevity of the penciled notes defied reconstruction. The lady was either distraught or wary.

Whitmore returned to the breakfast-room with the sleek air of a successful conspirator. The detective realized that in this placid-faced kandy man of the household he had his best chance to get some genuine "inside" information.

The detective rose and looked the door with a theatrical flourish. "I don't want any interruptions for a while," he explained, as he returned to his chair. "Sit down, John, and make yourself comfortable. What do you say to a friendly little chat?"

Whitmore hitched his chair a bit closer. "Yes, sir. Anything I can do—"

"Oh, before we talk," Harper interrupted, "there's a little fast I want to make." He then explained about the hand-lettered warnings and put Whitmore through the same paces with the dictated notes, first leisurely, then rapidly.

"Just as I expected, no similarity at all," Harper announced heartily, putting the sheets aside. "Now that's out of the way, we can relax." He drew out his pipe and tobacco pouch. "Do you smoke, John?"

Whereupon John produced a curved briar pipe even more scarred from use than Harper's own and accepted a filling from the detective's pouch.

For a few moments they puffed away in silence. "This is good tobacco, sir," Whitmore commented, nodding his head sagely.

Harper smiled. "I have the mixture made up specially for me," he explained. "I smoke a lot and it's worth the difference in price. There's nothing like a pipeful of good tobacco when you've got a bit of thinking to do."

John nodded agreement. "I guess this business has given you plenty of that, sir. It's a queer one, all right."

"As queer as any I've ever handled," said Harper, gazing thoughtfully into the circular view of the room projected on the Girandole mirror over the buffet.

"Two murders in one night—right here in this room," Whitmore almost whispered. "It doesn't seem real."

"It was real enough for the poor devils who were killed. You know Officer Hamill, didn't you, John?"

"Yes, I knew him. Talked to him lots of times last summer. A nice, pleasant fellow."

"He was a fine man and a good policeman. Everybody liked him. John, from his Captain down. He leaves a wife and children and it's going to be hard on them. The other fellow may have been a crook, or a blackmailer, or a gunman, and the world's better off without him, as Mr. Dufresne says, but the family of a man like Hamill has to pay the price for it."

Whitmore nodded in sympathy. "I've heard what they have to say about the murder upstairs," Harper went on, "and that's very little to go on. What I have been wondering, John, is what the staff thinks about it?"

"They're not saying very much and that's a fact," Whitmore answered, and chuckled. "Between you and me, sir, you've got 'em all suspicious of each other. They're going around watching each other out of the tail of their eyes."

"Have there been any arguments or bad feeling lately?"

"Nothing to speak of, Sergeant. We all get along together pretty well, better than in most places. Of course, once in a while old Andrews gives Joe a raking over the coals, but that's only when Joe has been too flip with his tongue. Joe's young and hot-headed, and as well broken to the harness as the rest of us."

Joe—you mean Donaghy, the chauffeur?"

"Yes. He gets a bit beyond himself at times, talking up all kinds of wild ideas about capital and labor, and plutocracy, and that sort of stuff. Joe has it in for the rich, all right," Whitmore snickered.

Harper stretched out more comfortably. "Donaghy struck me as being a pretty lively lad," the detective murmured. "He's a good-looking fellow and he acts as if he knew it."

Whitmore winked heavily. "Sure, he's a devil with the ladies, anyway, to hear him tell it. He's going to find a rich young widow, says he, and then he'll marry and live in style. He says he can double her money over and over, but he's more likely to run through it in six months, him and his 'parlous' bet."

"Oh, so Joe likes to bet on the horses?"

"He does. I never heard of a man ever took a dollar away from the races in the long run, but that doesn't stop 'em from betting. Sometimes he's lucky, though. Just today I saw him counting over a roll of bills as big as your fist. He said he'd got a bet down on the right horse at last. Came in at 100 to 1. But that's once in a lifetime."

"That's right," said Harper softly, looking out at the snow-covered grounds. "It's once in a lifetime." Then, after a few moments of silence he resumed, "Andrews is really devoted to this family, isn't he?"

"MAKE no mistake about that," Whitmore quickly affirmed. "He's gruff and old-fashioned and as close-mouthed as a clam, but he's the family watch-dog. You won't get anything out of him."

The detective cocked an eye at John Whitmore. "Why, is there something to be got out of him? That sounds as if he's hiding something?"

"I shouldn't have put it that way," Whitmore hastened to amend. "I've been in service thirty-five years and I have yet to see the family that didn't have trouble of some sort they wouldn't like to have made public. But murder is a horse of another color."

Harper smiled quietly. "Of course, John. I know you're not the kind to carry tales and I'm not asking you to. I've heard some stories, too, so far as that goes." It was the detective's turn to give a knowing wink.

"That was a pretty stiff row they had last November, wasn't it, just about the time Ellen Becker left?"

Whitmore looked relieved. "So you heard about that?" He accepted at full value Harper's assumed knowledge. "Things have never been quite the same since then," he said, sadly, shaking his head. "For a while it looked like they were headed for a break-up. Mr. Dufresne has been touchy and sharp-spoken and suspicious ever since, although why he should be jealous of Mrs. Dufresne is more than I can make out."

"Perhaps the root of Mr. Dufresne's jealousy lies in the difference in their ages," said Harper. "That often happens, you know."

Whitmore took a long pull at his pipe. "Well, then, take Mr. Croymond. He's in about the same boat. He's not worried about getting old, like Mr. Dufresne. His trouble is that his wife has so much more money than he has. So they're at it hammer and tongs half the time. Their maid, Hannah, comes over her a lot and some fine stories she brings with her."

John Whitmore warmed to his subject and proceeded to illustrate his philosophy with chapter and verse. Harper listened to it all with half-closed eyes, nodding at appropriate places. John's tongue, subdued for many a moon by the autocratic Martha, rambled on and on, spurred by the honor of a sympathetic ear. He seemed not to question but that the detective's duties had already made him acquainted with these highways and byways of the household at 34 Powhatan Terrace.

Harper listened, careful not to break the spell by inept questions. He simply sat there in smiling, friendly ease, smoked his pipe and listened to the thousand and one details that gave him a keener insight than he could have obtained by unaided cross-examination.

Only once did he interrupt. "Who was this girl, Ellen Becker, and why did she leave?" he asked casually, following Whitmore's chance mention of the former housemaid.

"I don't know much about her," John replied. "Nobody did. She was the hooty-tooty kind, not very sociable." (Copyright, 1934, by Walter C. Brown)

What is the mystery of Ellen Becker, Harper wonders tomorrow.

SOCIETY and Clubs

Activities of Legion Auxiliary

"Peace with security can be maintained for the United States under present world conditions only by means of defensive preparations strong enough to prevent aggression." This was the contention submitted in the American Legion Auxiliary's national Fidas essay contest, written by high school pupils on the subject, "Peace With Security."

Results of the contest, conducted by the auxiliary as part of its participation in the program of the Women's Auxiliary of Fidas, the inter-related veterans' federation, were announced by Mrs. W. A. Holloway, chairman of the Fidas committee of the Medford unit, following the receipt of the information from the auxiliary's national headquarters.

First prize was won by Harry Terhune, of Martinsville, Ind.; second prize by Beatrice Y. Black, of Washington, D. C., and third prize by Viola Andrus, of Blaine, Washington. Honorable mention went to Anna Louise Kettler, of Kansas City, Mo., David Sung Inn Nahm, of Honolulu, and Ann Mae Taggart, of Millford, Conn.

The three prize winners will receive sets of the Official Source Records of the World War, published by the American Legion, and their essays will be sent to Fidas headquarters in Paris to compete in the international contest. Essays from 40 states, District of Columbia, Hawaii and the

Panama Canal Zone were entered in the national contest. Only 50,000 more enrollments were needed to give the American Legion Auxiliary its full strength of 400,000 members for 1934 as the organization entered its June activities, according to Mrs. E. J. Leach, membership chairman of the local auxiliary unit.

A membership roll call of departments, conducted by Mrs. William H. Blester, Jr., national president, May 31, showed 353,821 members actively enrolled for the year. Twenty-one of the 52 departments reported increases over their total 1933 enrollments. A national increase of approximately 40,000 members is indicated for this year.

With one million glasses of jelly and jam as their goal, the women of the American Legion auxiliary are working in a nation-wide "jelly-making bee" to preserve the nourishing goodness of the summer's fruits and berries for the country's needy during the coming winter. Mrs. W. O. Omscheid, president of the local auxiliary unit, has announced. Individually and in groups, the auxiliary women are making jelly and jam for their local units wherever home-grown fruits and berries are plentiful and cheap. The products are being stored for distribution to needy families of the community next winter.

Royal Neighbors Plan Business Session The Royal Neighbors will meet for a business and social evening Thursday, June 21, at the K. P. hall. All Neighbors urged to attend.

Degree of Honor To Gather Monday Members of the Degree of Honor will gather on Monday evening at the city hall for a social and business meeting, the date having been changed from Thursday, as lectures being

given there will extend into that date. Following a brief business session, a social hour will be conducted, and refreshments served. All members of the order and friends are invited to attend.

Hundreds of Tests Made On New Tube

Hundreds of tests were made by engineers of the B. F. Goodrich company in laboratories and on the company's Silver Fleet of test cars before the new Gold and Black inner tube was released for sale to the public, according to W. L. Lewis of Lewis Super Service station, dealer for the B. F. Goodrich Rubber company in Medford.

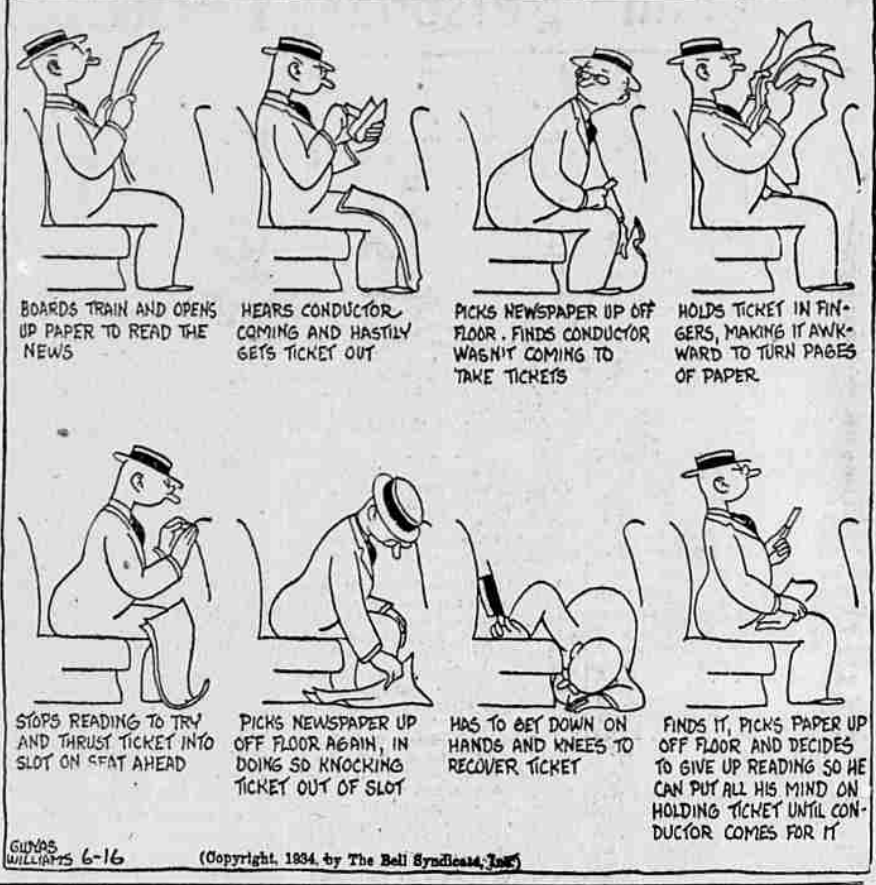
"This new tube, which resists pinching, cutting, tearing, or abrasion when a flat has taken the motoring public by storm," Mr. Lewis says. "Drivers who have had trouble and expense when a tube has been cut to ribbons when run a short distance after a flat tire occurred have welcomed this new Goodrich development."

"One of the tests was to run a tube, one-half of which was composed of the ordinary construction, and the other half of the new Gold and Black combination for a mile in a flat tire. When the tube was removed, the half of ordinary construction was chewed up, the Gold and Black half had resisted destruction."

"Made of specially compounded black and gold rubber, the new tube is made in two sections. The entire tube is first constructed of a tough rubber stock and then a layer of abrasion resisting rubber is placed over the inside periphery of the tube. It is this base strip which not only prevents destruction when run flat for short distances but affords double protection from the common causes of tire failure."

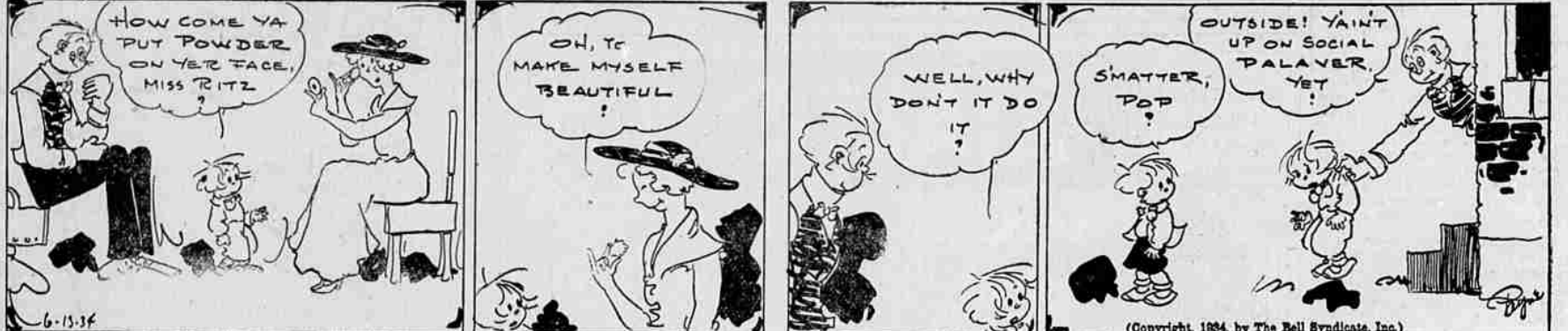
"TICKETS, PLEASE"

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



GLUYAS WILLIAMS 6-16 (Copyright, 1934, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

'SMATTER POP—



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Who Killed Bruce Wilkins?



By Hal Forrest

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Cap'n Ike's Decision!



By Edwin Alger

THE NEBBS—Yes—Yes



By Sol Hess

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus

Blowout Dangers Increase During Summer Driving

Squeezing the last mile out of that badly worn tire is a costly and hazardous practice, according to C. C. Furnas, Goodyear dealer here. "Especially is this true in the summer months," Mr. Furnas says. "The danger of blowouts increases with the rise in road temperatures. Hot roads sap the elasticity and life from the fatigued cords in old tires. Cuts and bruises that have escaped notice are very likely to announce their presence with a loud bang at the most inopportune moment.

inary tire cords and will stand terrific abuse.

"The tread of a tire must provide traction and protect the cord carcass or body, but it is this cord body that gives protection against blowouts. The tread may appear in excellent condition, but it will not keep a tire from blowing out if the carcass is cut inside or if the cords are badly fatigued from long use.

"Goodyear's new "G-3" tire was designed especially to provide long wear for modern high speed automobiles and it has a Superwrap body of the strongest and most elastic tire cords that will give maximum protection against blowouts.

"A set of new tires put on an automobile now will eliminate the probability of tire trouble for the rest of the summer. It is an pleasant job to change tires on a hot dusty road—and that is the mildest consequence of a blowout," says Mr. Furnas.