— Murder at MOCKING HOUSE

BY WALTER C. BROWN

SYNOPSIS: At last there is a rift in the wall of silence that has surrounded Sergeant Harper's investigation of the murder of the stranger and the policeman in Pierre Dufresne's house. Ellen Becker, formerly a housemaid for the Dufresnes, has admitted receiving money from both Mr. and Mrs. Dufresne to keep quiet about some notes demanding a rendezvous she had found concealed in the house. Harper accuses her of working with Donaghy, the chauffeur.

Chapter 43

THE AUSTERLITZ

"WE HAVE not. I've told you everything I know about it. Joe and I have been going around together and he wormed the truth out of me about why I left. But if he's been getting any money out of it, I don't know anything about it. Don't take me back to that house," she pleaded. "Honestly, I've told you all I know."

"You'll have to face the music," Harper declared, "but for the present I'm going to hold you in reserve as a surprise witness. You'll have to stay in this house, though, until I'm ready, and there will be a detective right here to see that you don't run away. You will not be allowed to send any messages before morning."

"I'll stay here and the longer the better."

So it was settled. Detective Harris was given his instructions and

"Don't take me back to that house," she pleaded.

installed in a chair in the hallway, while Harper and Lafferty resumed their interrupted journey to the Austerlitz.

They rode in silence for a while, both absorbed in turning over the startling story Ellen Becker had just unfolded. "Imagine that girl getting away with that," the tall detective said, "playing both ends against the middle. Our usual luck is still running true—here we have two persons trying to shut her up."

They pulled up at the canvas marquee of the palatial Austerlitz and the military-looking attendant opened the door of their car. As the two detectives walked toward the entrance Harper said, "We're going in here and I'll try to break down one of the neatest alibis that was ever put over."

"Saying so is easier than doing so," was Lafferty's retort.

THEY stepped up to the elaborately grilled desk in the Austerlitz, where Harper asked for the manager. The affable manager looked inquiringly at Harper. "What can I do for you, Sergeant?"

"I would like to see a floor plan of the Austerlitz, Mr. Comstock."

"Certainly." The manager pressed a button, and a silent, efficient secretary appeared in the doorway.

"Miss Summers, bring me Folio B-3, please." When she had gone he turned to the detective. "I suppose this has some connection with last night's affair?"

"In a small way," Harper conceded. "How long has Mr. Dufresne occupied that suite?" he asked in turn.

Mr. Comstock smiled broadly. "I see you're not acquainted with the Austerlitz's history. Mr. Dufresne has had his suite here ever since it was built. In fact, he designed the building, helped finance it, supervised its erection, and still has the controlling stock interest."

"That was quite an individual feat, then," Harper answered.

"He is a truly remarkable man," Comstock asserted warmly, "and a genuine artist."

Miss Summers returned with a wide, flat folio. Harper looked at each diagram, from that of the basement up to the roof. He lingered over the details of the top floor, the twenty-eighth.

"Perhaps you would be interested in seeing this, Sergeant," Mr. Comstock suggested. He brought out a leather-bound box-case. "These are Mr. Dufresne's original sketches for the building," he explained.

Harper closed Folio B-3 and looked at these original plans, sketched with clean, incisive strokes. Was the artist who could do these things the same man who could be jerked back by primitive emotions to murderous savagery, a puppet to dance so ignobly to the string-pulling of such as Ellen Becker? The artist denied, but the man had lettered and signed each sheet, and there were A's, and G's, and M's, and S's that cried aloud to the detective's trained vision, that recalled those printed crank letters.

SERGEANT HARPER put the papers back in the case, quietly, almost reluctantly. "Mr. Comstock, I'll have to ask you to let me have these papers."

The manager's expression revealed his astonishment.

"This is for official purposes, that's all I can tell you," Harper continued. "You will have our receipt against their safe return."

Mr. Comstock nodded, repressing his curiosity.

One of his assistants rode up with them in the elevator and opened the Dufresne suite. It was very quiet up there. The assistant detached a key from his ring, handed it to Harper, and retired to the background from whence he watched the detectives with discreet curiosity.

Harper stood long in Dufresne's bedroom, recalling the sight of Dufresne's body sprawled inertly, the reek of brandy, the gaunt Andrews' panic-stricken eyes from the doorway.

The detective opened a closet door and looked inside. He bent down to examine the double row of shoes on their racks. He borrowed Lafferty's flashlight and went on hands and knees to scan the floor of the closet under the bright circle of light.

Harper stood up and closed the door. "I'm ready for the test," he announced. "I'll lock myself in these rooms and you stand out there and wait by the elevators, where Markson and the others kept watch."

Lafferty, grinning, stepped out into the corridor. He saw Harper close the door from the inside and heard the lock snap. "Yell when you're ready to give up," he called through the door, then went over and sat down beside Mr. Comstock's assistant.

"What's going on?" asked the latter, with pardonable mystification.

"The Sergeant has a Houdini complex," Lafferty answered. "Say, is there an emergency staircase in this place?"

"Right beside the elevators. The door with the red bulb over it."

Lafferty settled back, satisfied.

Sitting in silence, the lanky detective finally pulled out his watch. Less than five minutes had passed. He kept a wary eye on the corridor and the door to the Dufresne suite. Three more minutes ticked away.

Then, with the faintest swishing noise, an elevator shot up to the floor level, the grilled doors slid open, and Sergeant Harper, smiling blandly, stepped out!

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"Who was that man?" Harper asks Mrs. Dufresne, tomorrow.

DICTATORSHIPS CALLED ENEMY TO PROSPERITY

CHICAGO, June 21.—(AP)—The "planned economy" Col. Frank Knox told the Chicago Association of Commerce today, can be maintained only at the "sacrifice of popular freedom and free democratic institutions." He said that in Europe it has stood "squarely across the path of economic recovery."

"In free government and in free competition in business, sanely regulated to protect the weak against the strong, lies the hope of the world," the publisher of the Chicago Daily News said.

Col. Knox's talk was a summary of observations made during a two month tour of Italy, Austria, Russia and Germany.

In Italy, Col. Knox said, the planned economy under Mussolini has resulted in "the utter and complete destruction of every vestige of popular government" with democracy "scorned and laughed at as a huge mistake."

Austria, he continued, "is the most absolute dictatorship Europe has yet seen in the person of Chancellor Dollfuss, who professes and, I think, sincerely believes that he is appointed by God."

Russia, he said, presents the picture of one man, who is merely secretary of the communist party, ruling 165,000,000 people through this 3,000,000 communists—and an army, he said which is one of the most efficient in the world today.

ASHLAND WATERSHED CLOSED FOR SEASON

PORTLAND, June 21.—(AP)—Because of fire hazard, about 13,000 acres of land in the Ashland creek watershed of the Rogue river national forest has been blocked off in the first forest closing of the year in this region. C. J. Buck, federal ferester, made the announcement last night.

Only settlers or persons who obtain permits will betallowed to enter the restricted area, Buck said.

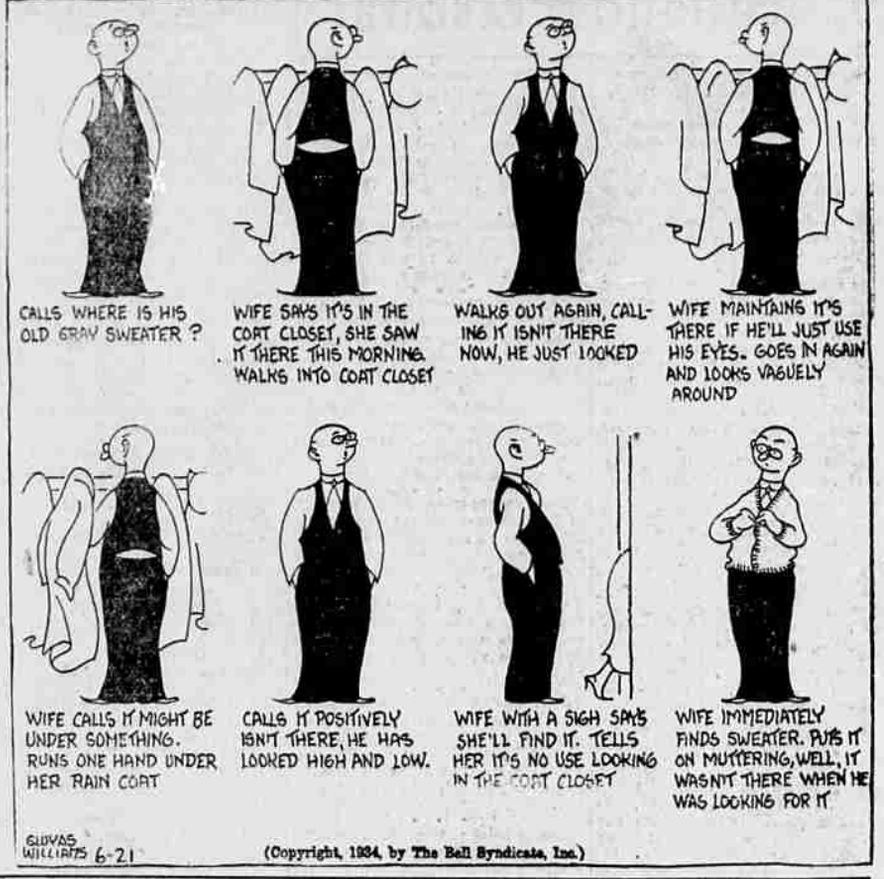
THE DALLES, June 21.—(AP)—The first grain field fire of the season in this district was limited to 40 acres of wheat as fire fighters battled a blaze here Tuesday. The fire was believed to have started from a cigarette tossed from a passing automobile

Milwaukee department of health records for 1933 show that only three brides gave their ages as between 65 and 75 against 24 bridegrooms in this age group.

GIVE IT A WHIRL

THE FAMILY ALBUM—NOT THERE

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. Payne

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Fingerprint Theory Fails!

By Hal Forrest

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A Real Discovery

By Edwin Alger

THE NEBBS—Not for Emma

By Sol Hess

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BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus

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GIRL SCOUTS LEAVE TO COOK HOT CAKES AT EUROPEAN MEET

NEW YORK, June 21.—(AP)—With a recipe for buckwheat cakes, American style, four girl scouts sailed today on the liner Manhattan for the annual international girl scout encampment at Adelboden, Switzerland.

They wore woods green scout dresses and hats. A troop of New York girl scouts saw them off.

Ahead of them are two weeks in Switzerland, three days in Paris and three in London before the return to the United States.

"We want to see everything," said Margaret Davis, 17, a vivid, bronzed girl, of San Mateo, Cal. Especially Westminister Abbey and the Old Curiosity Shop."

Marguerite Manion of Firth, Idaho, small despite her 19 years, said she never had been in a big city until she saw New York on Monday. She looks forward to meeting girl scouts in Switzerland.

None of the girls had been on an ocean liner before.

They will cook buckwheat cakes as their contribution to an international girl scout dinner. They took maple syrup and popcorn with them.

PRESBYTERIANS ASK CLEAN FILMS, PEACE

WOOSTER, Ohio, June 21.—(AP)—Resolutions supporting the movements for better and cleaner motion pictures and for world peace were adopted by the Ohio Presbyterian synod today.

The movie resolution commended the stand taken by the Roman Catholic church and its "Legion of Decency."