

The Wrong Murderer

By HUGH CLEVELY

SYNOPSIS: Terence Mahony is a wily character who deliberately sets a trap for Ambrose Lawson, trying to get information against him and his gang and kidnapping gang. A mysterious Irishman accuses Terence of being an equally mysterious Mr. Brown, however they fight, and when the police come to investigate a man is found dead by the side of the road. And now it appears that Lawson put up the Irishman to fight Terence, and expected to have them both arrested—a trick which even Bassett's gang doesn't approve.

Chapter 24

TURNING TABLES

THE big Irishman took a pace forward. His battered features were contracted in an ugly scowl.

"So it was you, Mister, that sent this fellow down to that house to-night," he said to Lake. "An' it was your pal Scrubby Redman that gave me the tip that if I went to that house I'd find Mr. Brown there, and advised me I might have difficulty in gettin' me money and maybe I'd have to batter it out av 'im with me two fists. An' it was somebody known to you, maybe, who tipped the police off that they'd find me in that house to-night."

There was another short silence after this accusation. Then Mahony spoke again.

"Well, what if it was?" he demanded defiantly.

He turned to the fat man.

"You'd better get rid of these two out of this place as quickly as you can," he went on. "If the Big Boss wants them out of the way it's not your business to shelter them."

Barney made a slight movement, as if to hurl himself at the speaker, but Mahony suddenly gripped his arm, restraining him. For a couple of seconds no one spoke; no one seemed to know what to say. The fat manidgeted uncomfortably.

"I don't like it," he said. "I dunno as I'm very particular, an' if the Big Boss wants a couple of blokes knocked off it's not my place to interfere, but when it comes to squealin' on 'em to the cops..."

He looked round at the faces of the other men in the room. The little bow-legged man nodded.

"Squealin' a dirty game," he stated.

"An' quarrelling with the Big Boss is a mug's game," put in Lake sharply. "You know what happens to people who quarrel with him."

"He gets someone to squeal on them and the police arrest them," said Mahony sarcastically.

Lake made an angry gesture. In his anger he said quite the wrong thing.

"Are you going on sheltering these two? Do you want the police to come and find them here in your place?" he said roughly.

"Because if you do, the Big Boss will willingly arrange to have them tipped off that we are here," put in Mahony.

The fat man drew himself up. Frowny, greasy, horrible to look at as he was, there was yet a curious air of dignity about him.

"I don't want no trouble with the Big Boss, but I ain't goin' to put no one out to be run in by the cops, not if 'e was me own worst enemy," he stated.

THE other men, as Mahony could see by their expressions, were not all of the same opinion; two of them were evidently frightened of what the Big Boss might do. Before they could speak Mahony interposed.

"Thanks very much; that's decent of you," he said to the fat man, and then to the others: "If any of you don't agree, you'd better keep quiet about it, because I'm not going till it suits me."

He drew his pistol from his pocket, and made a motion to the Irishman.

"Now then, Barney, let's hear some more about Mr. Brown," he said. "He owes you some money, doesn't he?"

"Sure he does," replied Barney. "I was to steal a big book from a safe in the house of a rich fellow named Ambrose Lawson. I got me directions from Redman, who got them from Mr. Brown. I was to get fifty trying the job, and a hundred and fifty if I brought it off."

"And did you bring it off?" asked Mahony.

"Bring it off? Sure, if I'd known what like of job it was I'd never

have taken it on at all. What with burglar alarms and electric wires, 'tis lucky I was to get out with me whole skin. At that I was recognized; the cops was after me the very next morning.

"That was tough," said Mahony sympathetically. "When did all this happen?"

"It would be five days ago today," answered Barney. "An' never a sign or a smell of me fifty quid I have seen, though I wrote in and asked for it. All I got was a type-written note saying there was no money for me. Then, tonight, I got the tip that Mr. Brown would be there, and it was you."

Obviously, if Ross had been Mr. Brown, he had not been at the house when the Irishman first called for his money because he was in hospital. As he saw things, Mahony reckoned that Ross, desperate, had employed one of Lawson's own crooks to rob Lawson's house and get that book. But why had he wanted the book? That book would be worth getting hold of.

"An' you think that Mr. Brown was annoyed with you because you failed to get the book, and so he refused to pay you and then squealed on you," said Mahony.

He shook his head. "It wasn't Mr. Brown who squealed on you," he said. "It was your chief, the Big Boss himself. He was annoyed with you for trying to rob his house, and so he meant to get you put away."

"The Big Boss!"

All the men in the room stared at him. Mahony stood there quite calm and sure of himself.

"Yes, the Big Boss," he repeated. "He and the man you call Mr. Brown had a quarrel, and Mr. Brown sent you to rob his house. The Big Boss is Ambrose Lawson."

"The 'ell 'e is. Are your sure of that, mate?" asked the fat man incredulously.

"Of course I'm sure," answered Mahony. "That's why he is out to get me, because I know who he is. I figure that he had me sent to that house on a fool's errand, and then tipped Barney off that I'd be there, and the police that Barney would be there, hoping that Barney and I would start murdering one another and the police would arrive in the middle of it."

"He wanted them to catch Barney, and find me, apparently quite at home in a room with dope and other things in it. He's already tried to frame me for a murder I didn't commit. He doesn't like people knowing who he is."

"Gawd!" exclaimed one of the men in a frightened voice. "Then 'e'll be arter us, now we knows who 'e is."

"He certainly will," agreed Mahony cheerfully. "He'll be out to scupper the whole lot of you, except our friend Lake, who may be in his confidence. But I don't suppose he'll be too pleased with Lake after the mess he's made of things this evening."

He paused.

"After all, though, it won't be like fighting against someone you don't know and can't get at," he went on. "Now you know who he is you can fight back at him."

The fat man stared at Mahony. "I reckon you told us who he is, Mister, so that we should have to fight back at him whether we wanted to or not," he remarked.

"Maybe I did," agreed Mahony coolly. "I'm out to fight Lawson from start to finish, and I mean to beat him; but I can do with a few tough guys like you on my side."

"Who would you rather have as your Chief anyway, a dirty squealer like Lawson who plots and plans in a sly way and lets other people do the dirty work, or me?"

"Sure, I'm wid yer," cried the Irishman. "A man that can lay me on the flat of me back with a blow of his fist is the chief for me, and to hell wid Lawson."

Mahony's next move was a piece of clever bluff. He gave nobody the opportunity to argue whether he was going to be their Chief or not. He took it completely for granted, and asserted his authority straight away.

"I'll lead you, and help you to fight Lawson, but I want you to understand this—I mean to be obeyed," he said sternly. "You fellows don't have to argue with me; you just have to do what you're told. Or else you'll strike such a heap of trouble you'll wish you were safe in jail. Is that clear?"

The fat man nodded.

KLAMATH RECALL MOVE LACKS PETITION NAMES

KLAMATH FALLS, Oct. 30.—(AP)—Failure to obtain sufficient names on petitions has halted efforts to get a recall move against County Commissioner Roy Taber on the November ballot.

Petitions with 400 names have been filed while 1515 are required. Recollectors still have 50 days to complete their petitions but a special election would be necessary.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FUNDS ARE RECEIVED

SALEM, Oct. 30.—(AP)—The state board of vocational education received today \$142,821, under the Smith Hughes act, for the first quarter of the fiscal year 1937. The total included:

Cooperative vocational education in agriculture, \$64,665.22; cooperative vocational education in trades, industries and home economics, \$53,644.69; and co-operative vocational education, teachers training, \$25,511.

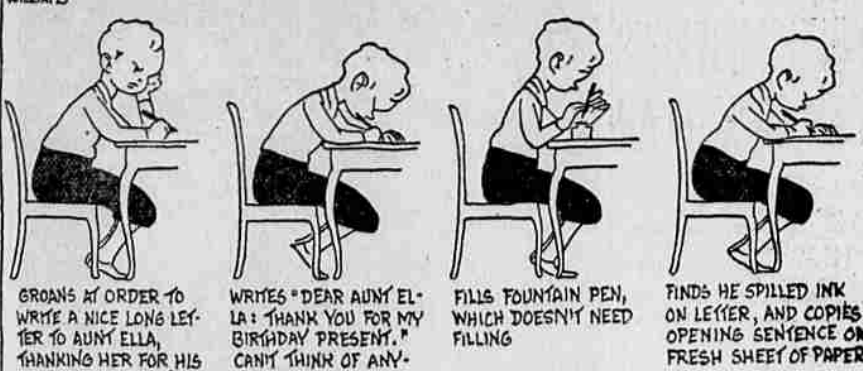
BANDONITES TO SEARCH ASHES FOR 13TH VICTIM

BANDON, Oct. 30.—(AP)—Bandon citizens will search the fire ruins Sunday for further traces of Jay C. Ashton, missing since September 26 when the town was destroyed by fire.

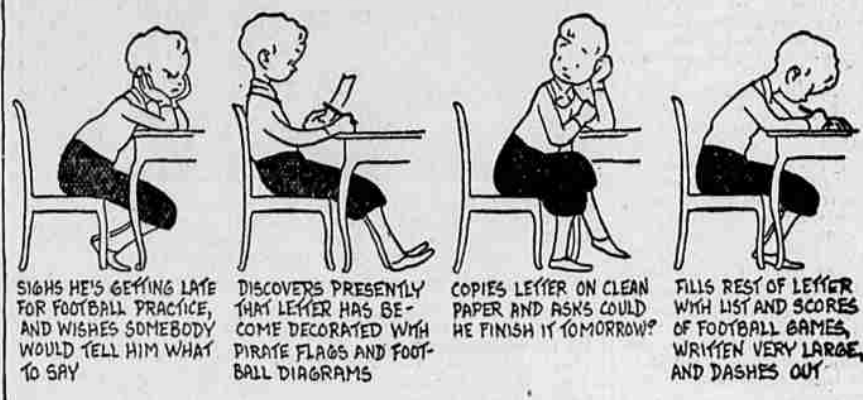
His knife and watch were discovered under a bedsprings and it is feared he lost his life. Confirmation of his death would bring the toll to 18.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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3-Piece Ship
Probably the strangest marine monstrosity ever to hail any of the "seven seas" was the English ship, "Connector," built and launched about 1850.

Constructed in three water-tight sections which were loosely hinged together, its design was expected to make the vessel ride heavy seas in a smooth, undulating motion.

It was hoped also, that the loading and discharging of the ship's cargo would be greatly facilitated by disconnecting the three sections in port.

As a result of technical difficulties, the ship proved to be a complete failure and shortly after its maiden voyage was retired from service.

The Biggest Campaign
With John Adams elected president by virtue of a "scratch" victory of three electoral votes, the campaign of 1796 presents an all-time high in United States history for the number of candidates running in a presidential campaign.

Only two parties were represented in the contest. One candidate ran on an independent ticket — Oliver Ellsworth. The Federal party ran eight candidates: John Adams, Thomas Pinckney, John Jay, James Iredell, George Washington, John Henry, S. Johnson and G. C. Pinckney.

The Republican party presented four candidates: Thomas Jefferson, Aaron Burr, Samuel Adams and George Clinton.

Tomorrow: The Silent Order.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Paul Is Released

