

# The Wrong Murderer

By HUGH CLEVELY

**SYNOPSIS:** Instead of trapping Terence Mahony into an admission that he had murdered Vincent Little, as he had expected Inspector Kennedy had heard a fairly convincing denial. He is inclined to give Terence rope—and Terence is perfecting a plan to capture and convict the real murderer, who is Ambrose Lawson, head of a kidnapping and dope ring. Vice Kennedy is on their way to a vacant house where Ruth Pinner, friend of Mahony's, is hiding. Trying to help Terence, Ruth has got herself into trouble.

## Chapter 35 EMPTY HOUSE

MAHONY was filled with foreboding. Number 618 St. John's Wood Road was the house where he had left Lawson's crooks tied up. Would Ruth be there when he and Inspector Kennedy arrived?

In a quarter of an hour they had arrived, had sprung up the steps and found the front door slightly open. They went in; the house was silent.

Inspector Kennedy flashed his electric torch in front of himself. The first room they entered was the drawing-room in which Mahony had left the two bound crooks. On the floor were pieces of the rope which Mahony had used to tie the two men. The rope had been cut.

Inspector Kennedy examined it. Browning, Sergeant Dawkins uttered an exclamation and stopped and picked something up from a corner.

"Hallo!" he said. "This looks as though she's been here."

He held out a woman's bag.

The bag was Ruth's; the contents proved that, but neither Ruth nor anybody else was in the house.

"I wonder what's happened to her?" said Inspector Kennedy in a worried tone. "Have you any ideas on the subject, Mahony?"

For a moment Mahony did not answer. His heart was full of fear for Ruth. So far as he could see, only one thing could have happened to her.

"I'm afraid she's fallen into the hands of the dope and kidnapping gang," he said in a low voice.

Inspector Kennedy nodded.

"Have you any idea where they could have taken her?" he asked.

"None at all," answered Mahony.

There was a pause. Then the inspector asked another question.

"Where does Lawson come into all this? What is the meaning of that reference to him in her letter?"

"He's the head of the dope and kidnapping gang," answered Mahony briefly.

"What—Ambrose Lawson?" exclaimed the inspector in an amazed voice. "Have you any proof of your statement?"

"Not a scrap," answered Mahony.

"If you accused him, he'd only laugh in your face. But after you'd left the house he'd make arrangements to have you quietly murdered. Think this over. I told Bassett I was pretty sure Lawson was the head of the gang. I told Lee-Ramsden I'd tell you about Lawson. Within an hour of Lee-Ramsden telephoning Lawson this morning Bassett's house was attacked by armed gunmen. Doesn't that strike you as peculiar?"

"Very peculiar," agreed Inspector Kennedy dryly.

He was silent for a time, thinking Mahony's statement surprised him but he was not altogether disinclined to believe it. Inspector Kennedy looked at Mahony very keenly.

"I'm not going to keep you any longer now, Mahony," he said in a slow, meaning voice. "I expect you'll have a lot to do tonight. But I'm letting you go on the condition that you report at my office at the Yard at ten in the morning, and tell me if you have any news of Miss Fraser. Is that a bargain?"

Mahony perfectly understood that the inspector was giving him a chance to try to rescue Ruth. He did not blame the inspector for the condition attached to that chance.

"That's a bargain," he said curtly.

"Good luck to you," said Inspector Kennedy.

WITH that Mahony left the house.

When he had gone Sergeant Dawkins spoke to Inspector Kennedy.

"What do you reckon he'll do, sir?" he asked.

The inspector shook his head.

"I don't know. Something pretty drastic if I'm any judge of character. I shouldn't be surprised if somebody gets hurt tonight."

But Lawson would probably not be easy to catch; he would be guarded.

Mahony smiled grimly; he had thought of a way of catching him. Elsa had played one part tonight; now she could play another. But she need not know she was playing it.

At Marlborough Road Station he rang her up.

"This is Terence Mahony speaking," he said. "The police decided to let me go after all, thanks to the word you put in for me at our interview. I want to know if you'll do something for me?"

"Of course," she answered. She was eager to do something to try to make up for the harm she had done.

"I want to speak to Mr. Lawson tonight," went on Mahony. "Could you ring him up and ask him to come round and see you about eleven thirty? But don't tell him I want to speak to him, or he won't come."

"Well... I'll do it if I can, but I don't know whether I shall be able to get hold of Mr. Lawson," answered Elsa. "He told me he was going out tonight, to some club—the Golden something or other. I'm terribly sorry. Though, if I ring up his house, perhaps his butler will be able to tell me where he's gone."

So Lawson had gone to the Golden Centipede. A thrill of exultation ran through Mahony.

"Never mind," he said. "I'll see him some other time."

With that he rang off, left the station, and took a taxi to his lodgings.

He spent twenty minutes at his lodgings disguising himself according to the directions which had been given to him by the assistant at Clarkford's. He spent five minutes carefully rubbing out the name on the Golden Centipede membership cards which he had taken from the two crooks that afternoon, and writing in another name. Then he set out for his appointment with his gang.

At half past eleven he met them, as arranged, in a little quiet square not far from Jermyn Street. They arrived in two cars, the first car containing two men in evening dress, and the three huge bottles of champagne which Mahony had ordered, the other car containing the remaining four men clad in their rough sea-going clothes. Mahony gave them all careful directions and they started for the Golden Centipede Club.

The Golden Centipede had two entrances, a front entrance in the courtyard, and a tradesman's entrance in a quiet alley at the back of the club. The car containing Mahony, the two men in evening dress, and the biggest of the four other men, drove to the front entrance. The second car drove to the back entrance.

Inside the front entrance was a flight of stairs, which wound up towards a landing on which were situated the men's and women's cloak-rooms. At the entrance to the men's cloak-room sat a large, uniformed commissionaire to see that non-members, unaccompanied by members, did not enter the club. From the landing another flight of stairs led upwards to the dance room and cocktail bar.

Mahony and the two men in evening dress, clutching their proboscis of champagne, mounted the steps that led up to the first landing in a somewhat uncertain manner; they had the appearance of being rather drunk. The commissionaire frowned slightly; he stepped forward to challenge them.

"Are you a member, sir?" he demanded.

"Sure I'm a member," replied Mahony thickly. "Here's my card."

He pulled out his faked membership card, held it in front of the commissionaire, and thrust it into his pocket again.

"Brought a couple of friends 'long for a drink," went on Mahony solemnly. "My birthday. Have to pay entrance fee and sign book. I suppose? Pay it for me, there's a good fellow. Here you are."

He thrust a couple of pound notes into the commissionaire's hand.

"Very good, sir," he said.

Mahony and his companions went on up the stairs towards the dance floor. From the bottom of the stairs, by the front entrance, a voice hailed the commissionaire.

"Ol' mate!"

At the bottom of the stairs stood a large, rough-looking unshaven man. The commissionaire was indignant. With an air of immense dignity he descended the stairs.

"Wot d'you want?" he demanded. "This ain't no place for the likes of you. You 'op it."

"Art a minute, matey," he said in a conciliatory tone. "Just 'ave a good look at this."

As the commissionaire bent forward, a fist came upward, taking him fairly under the chin. The commissionaire slumped forward unconscious.

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Several people, Monday, get very, very sleepy.

# OLD CYCLE USED FOR FALSE TEETH

WOMBWELL, Eng. (UP)—False teeth made from an old motorcycle crank case are the crowning climax

of a dental experimentation by Albert Orwin, road worker living in the village of Jump, near here.

First, Orwin tried his ingenuity on the knuckle bone of a leg of mutton but the bone was not big enough. Then he tried using a billiard ball which, however, had the same defect, the diameter being only two and a half inches.

Success came when he melted down the aluminum from the crank case of the old motorcycle. The melted aluminum was run into an "impression" which he had taken himself.

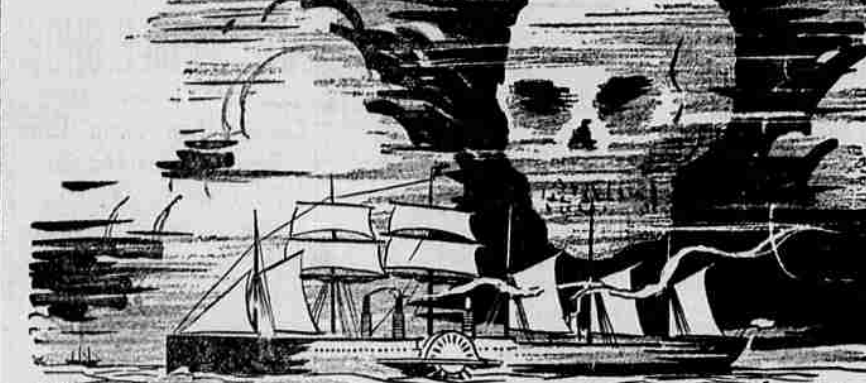
Even so, this set is only for everyday use.

On Sundays his smile reveals a "perfect" set made from the aluminum screw tops of old thermos flasks.

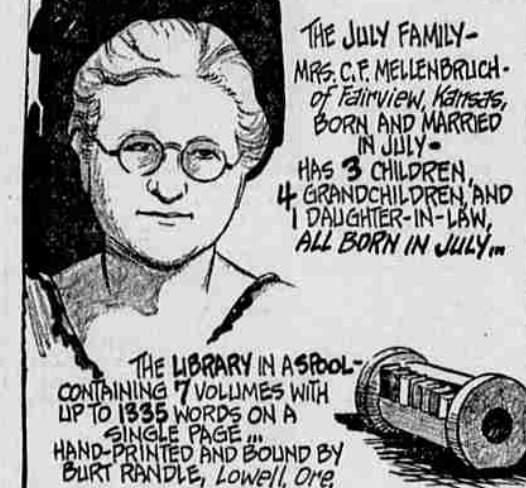
The Stringops parrot of Australia is unable to fly and burrows in the ground for a home.

# STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

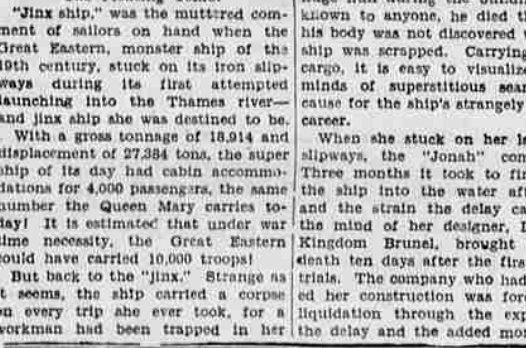
For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



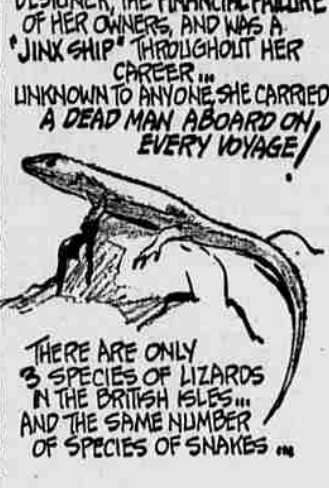
**CURSE OF THE CORPSE!**  
THE "GREAT EASTERN"—  
\$4,500,000 "QUEEN MARY" OF THE 19TH CENTURY,  
CAUSED THE DEATH OF HER  
DESIGNER, THE FINANCIAL FAILURE  
OF HER OWNERS, AND WAS A  
"JINX SHIP" THROUGHOUT HER  
CAREER—  
UNKNOWN TO ANYONE SHE CARRIED  
A DEAD MAN ABOARD ON  
EVERY VOYAGE!



**THE JULY FAMILY—**  
MRS. C.F. MELLENBRUCH—  
OF FAIRVIEW, KATZETS,  
BORN AND MARRIED  
IN JULY—  
HAS 3 CHILDREN,  
4 GRANDCHILDREN, AND  
1 DAUGHTER-IN-LAW,  
ALL BORN IN JULY.



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**THERE ARE ONLY  
3 SPECIES OF LIZARDS  
IN THE BRITISH ISLES—  
AND THE SAME NUMBER  
OF SPECIES OF SNAKES.**

The Floating Tomb.

"Jinx ship," was the muttered comment of sailors on hand when the Great Eastern, monster ship of the 19th century, stuck on its iron slipways during its first attempted launching into the Thames river—and jinx ship she was destined to be.

With a gross tonnage of 18,914 and displacement of 27,384 tons, the super ship of its day had cabin accommodations for 4,000 passengers, the same number the Queen Mary carries today! It is estimated that under war-time conditions the Great Eastern could have carried 10,000 troops!

But back to the "jinx." Strange as it seems, the ship carried a corpse on every trip she ever took, for a workman had been trapped in her huge hull during the building. Unknown to anyone, he died there and his body was not discovered until the ship was scrapped. Carrying such a cargo, it is easy to visualize in the minds of superstitious seamen the cause for the ship's strangely ill-fated career.

When she stuck on her launching slipways, the "Jonah" commenced. Three months it took to finally get the ship into the water after that, and the strain the delay caused on the mind of her designer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, brought on his death ten days after the first engine trials. The company who had financed her construction was forced into liquidation through the expense of the delay and the added money that had to be spent on her launching.

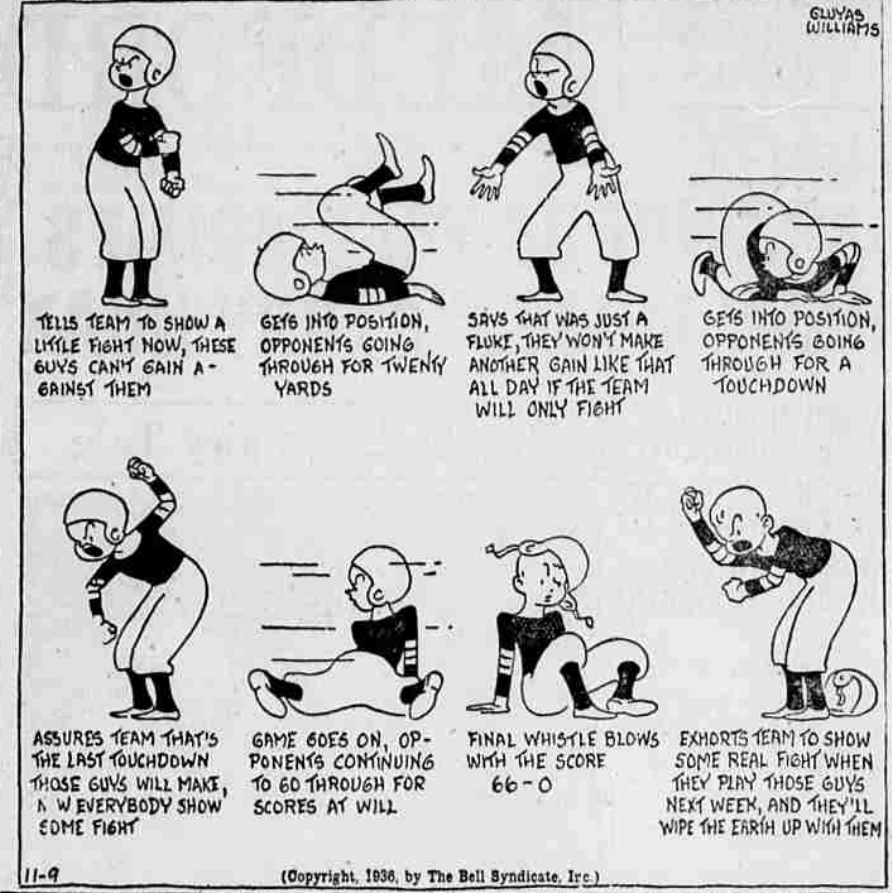
For a short time it went well. The Great Eastern crossed the Atlantic in the then record time of 13 knots per hour in June, 1860. A year later she almost foundered off Cape Clear, Ireland, causing heavy damage to herself and serious injury to many of her passengers. A complete financial failure as a passenger and freight ship, she was chartered to lay an Atlantic cable in 1865. Even in this menial job she was a failure, for the cable broke.

In 1873 she was sold for one twenty-eighth of the \$4,500,000 it had cost to build her. In 1887, the Great Eastern was scrapped for junk.

Tomorrow: Robin's Nest Detour.

# FIGHTING SPIRIT

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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# MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



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# TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Smells Trouble!



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# BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Very Broadening



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# THE NUBBS—The Dinner Bell



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# CIVILIZED LIFE PERILS FUTURE OF HOTTENTOTS



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# CIVILIZED LIFE PERILS FUTURE OF HOTTENTOTS

CAPE TOWN (UP)—The fate of the former hunter and warrior race of Hottentots, now overwhelmed by civilization, is described in an official report made by a commission appointed to investigate conditions in southwest Africa.

While most of the natives in this territory were found to be contented, the commission wrote about the Hottentots as follows:

"In the olden days, when the Hottentots could roam as hunters or as warriors over the huge desert-like country, which they knew so intimately, they were a power in the land. Now, however, that they have to live and earn their living in that country under civilized conditions they are out of their element and pathetically helpless.

"Under the present circumstances, unless they have the sympathetic and intelligent help of the white man, they have a dismal future before them."

The commission also described how 5,000 bushmen of southwest Africa, a wild but interesting people with a remarkable primitive culture of their own, have refused to bow to civilization and have retreated into the Kalahari desert to make a living where other races would perish.

Travel to Lassen Volcanic national park increased 47 per cent in 1935.

Onions and garlic were established articles of food in ancient Egypt.

# THE NUBBS—The Dinner Bell



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