

OCTAGON HOUSE

BY PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR



The Story So Far: Asy Mayo, Cape Cod detective, is investigating the murder of Marina Lorne, whose husband's post office mural has enraged Quannomet. She was killed by a left handed blow from the knife of her sister, Pam Frye. Interested parties are: Tim Carr, once married to Marina; Roddy Strutt, whose alibiing plane crash was deliberate; Peggy Boone, an artist; Jennings, a trapeze plumber; and persons unknown who burned down the Frye's barn, bluffed Asy, Tim and Pam's father, destroyed Jack Lorne's mural sketches, and defaced the mural itself. Missing is a \$50,000 lump of ambergris Pam found on the beach the day of the murder.

Up in the house, Carveth set in motion half a dozen servants. When things quieted down, Asy and Elliott found themselves sitting on the terrace that faced the ocean. They were almost entirely surrounded by a series of large silver trays.

"Cigars," Elliott sniffed, and helped himself to a handful. "Cigarettes—all very monogrammed and crested and—phew! Turkish. Three kinds of whisky. Soda, ginger ales, white rock. My, my—he stood off and eyed the plates of hors d'oeuvres, "just look at those things!"

"Whatever became of Carveth?" asked Asy.

Elliott shrugged. "He said he was going out to fetch Roddy."

"I wish," Asy said, "he'd be quick about it."

"Relax," Elliott advised. "Have a drink and eat up some of these things. There's one kind I want to tackle, but I want you to tackle 'em first. If it's fish, I want to be warned. Jean has some kind of fish paste that makes my stomach writhe just to look at it."

Asy picked up a plate of sandwiches, and methodically ate his way, layer by layer, to the bottom. "I didn't," he explained, "have any dinner today. I suppose the coffee's any good here?"

"There's something you pull or push—here. I'll order some," Elliott said. "After all, he told us to make ourselves at home."

Chapter 40 Strange Reception

"NOW," Asy told the Congressman, "I'm goin' over to chat with Roddy Strutt. I—that car that's comin' has a press card on the windshield—so long!"

On the way to the Strutt house, Elliott asked for the inside story of the murder, and Asy briefly summed it up for him.

"And you think Marina saw the ambergris first?" Elliott said, "from the plane—Asy, have you thought that if she saw it, any number of others, whoever they were, might have seen it from the plane, too?"



Asy fired into the air.

Asy admitted that he had given that angle a considerable amount of attention.

"As for Roddy himself," Elliott said, "I personally can't say a kind word for him. I don't think he's got the brains of an ox. I don't think it's ever been my misfortune to meet a weaker and sturdier young man. But somehow I feel that if Roddy had killed that woman, you'd have been extremely positive about him by now. Roddy wouldn't have had the wit to use Pam Frye's knife, for example. If Roddy ever got up courage enough to kill anyone, he'd lay such a stupidly elaborate plan that you'd have seen through it in a second. Like this business of crashing the plane for an alibi. It was expensive, and it was spectacular, and it was elaborate, but it wasn't very bright. He might have killed himself. And he doesn't seem to have taken the pilot into consideration at all."

"That's true," Asy said. "He wasn't even bright enough to be solicitous about Brigham an' his hurts. If he'd had an ounce of sense, Roddy'd have taken him to the hospital himself, an' called in every specialist within 100 miles. Then he'd have had Brigham on his side, instead of havin' Brigham hatin' him, an' wonderin' what the whole business meant anyway. Well, we'll soon be seein' things."

The Filipino with the cauliflower ears was guarding the closed entrance to the driveway. If he recognized Asy as the man who had tried to come in the day before, he gave no sign of it, but he refused to let them through until he had called the house.

"Mr. Strutt," he said at last, "he come."

Deserted

CARVETH STRUTT tripped down the driveway with the odd springy walk that Asy noticed so often in short, fat men.

"Mayo!" he said. "And—why, hi! Elliott. Larry, old man, I'm so glad you've come! This is very decent of you, very. I assure you that we won't forget this!"

He asked the boy who brought the coffee where Mr. Strutt had gone, but the boy didn't know.

This Is Not Funny!

"I'm beginnin' to have a horrid feelin'," Asy said, "that we were foxed. Come on. Let's find out just what'n time is goin' on here."

Elliott pulled the bell cords, but no one answered the summons.

"Let's try yellin'!" There was people enough a-dittin' around when we come!" Asy suggested.

They yelled. No one came.

"Well, we'll pull every damn bell cord in sight, simultaneously," Elliott said, "and see what happens then!"

But nothing happened.

"I'm damned!" Elliott said angrily.

"I'm everlastingly damned!" What do these birds think they're trying to pull, I'd like to know!"

"Let's hunt," Asy said.

They hunted through the house, and around the house.

Finally, Asy crewed out his old Colt, and fired it into the air. "That," he said, "ought to do something!"

In a minute a house boy appeared.

He was followed by more servants. At last Carveth wearily walked up to where Asy and Elliott stood.

"Have you found him?"

"Have we," Asy asked, "found who?"

"Roddy!"

"Listen," Asy said. "This is not funny. This is not smart. This is—"

"It's a damned outrage!" Elliott was thoroughly aroused. "We come here to help you, and to help your precious nephew—and what happens? You stick us—you maroon us! You maroon us on a piazza and go away, leaving us to cool our heels while you fit around—damn it, man! I'm not used to being kept waiting! I'm not used to such treatment! What's the meaning of all this? Where is Roddy?"

"He's disappeared," Carveth was so excited that he squeaked. "He's disappeared! He's gone!"

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Is this a trick? Continued tomorrow.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

DIMETHYLAMINOPHENYLDIMETHYLPYRAZOLONDIETHYLMALONYLUREA IS A CURE FOR TOOTHACHE!

COLONEL JOHN STEVENS
Early American inventor
AFTER HIS 50TH BIRTHDAY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR:
THE FIRST OCEAN-GOING STEAMBOAT;
THE FIRST FERRY POWERED WITH STEAM;
THE FIRST SHIP'S SCREW PROPELLER;
THE FIRST AMERICAN STEAM LOCOMOTIVE;
THE FIRST AMERICAN RAILROAD AND AN IRON-CLAD SHIP THAT PRECEDED THE MONITOR!

HE PIONEERED IN ESTABLISHING STEAMBOAT AND RAILROAD LINES AND DEVELOPED THE U.S. PATENT OFFICE!

7-14-38 McNaught Syndicate, Inc.

DR. H. J. MORLAN, Chicago, HAS TRAVELED 100,000 MILES TO PLAY GOLF!

DEER IN A SINGLE SEASON, CAN GROW BONE ANTlers WEIGHING MORE THAN THEIR ENTIRE SKELETON!

John Stevens, inventor of the principle of screw propulsion in America might be a vastly different story if it had not been for the inventive genius of Colonel John Stevens, early American inventor.

Stevens was nearly 40 when he turned to the study of steam engines and their adaptation to water craft. In 1788 he built the first multitubular boiler on record for use in his marine engines.

In a desire to protect this invention, Stevens petitioned Congress for a patent law. By profession a lawyer in New York, Stevens was able to draw up a successful outline for a patent system which was passed by Congress as the Patent Law of 1790, the foundation of the present Patent Office.

Stevens was the first man to apply the principle of screw propulsion to navigation, building in 1804 a steamboat with two underwater propellers of the screw type in the stern.

Stevens then directed his efforts toward the invention and development of high-pressure steam engines and boilers. In 1807 he built, with aid from his son, Robert, the side-wheel steamboat, Phoenix, launching it only a few days after Fulton's Clermont took to the water.

While Fulton's engine was imported from England, Stevens was home-made. Fulton, however, beat Stevens to a franchise to operate a steamboat line on the Hudson, so the latter boldly sailed through the Atlantic Ocean to the Delaware River—

City Leases Gold Mine. REDDING, Cal.—(UP)—This city is probably the only one in the world that owns a municipal gold mine. The mine was leased to the Sacramento company which has been operating it for two months. The city's first monthly 10 percent cut amounted to \$1,000, and for the second month \$1,230.79.

Distress Not So Acute. ANCHORAGE, Alaska.—(UP)—Pilot Gordon McKenzie was flying peacefully along when he noticed below a large pile of brush laid out in the form of a circle—it was a signal of distress. He landed. A trader rushed out to greet him and handed him an order for cod liver oil and a jar of face cream.

Auto Thief Gives Advice. OTTAWA, Ont.—(UP)—An Ottawa autoist had his car stolen out received a bit of advice from the thief who took it. After abandoning the car, the thief left a note: "If you take your keys out when you park your car, you won't have it stolen again."

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Potter A.W.O.L.

AFTER TOMMY NARROWLY ESCAPED DEATH, WHEN THE CONTROL WIRES OF HIS RACING PLANE SNAPPED, DUE TO ACID BEING POURED UPON THEM BY MYSTERIOUS HANDS, THE SHIP WAS HAULED BACK TO THREE-POINT FACTORY FOR REPAIRS. PAUL BEGAN TO CHECK UP ON MECHANICS WHO HAD BEEN NEAR THE PLANE BEFORE IT TOOK OFF. HE HAS SENT FOR TWO.

3175.

FOR LIMITED TIME ONLY! SEND A 3-CENT STAMP WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO HAL FORREST, % THIS PAPER, FOR SET OF MODEL PLANS OF THE DOUGLAS D.S.T. PLANE

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Misunderstanding?

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TURKEY YOU TOOK TO TOWN, BEN?

GEE, THAT'S SWELL!... FOR CRIVIN' OUT LOUD, WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BEN? HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN TO A FUNERAL!

GOT IT! BEN SAW THE JIPPEMS LEAVE HERE AN' MAYBE HE THINKS I'M UP TO SOME TWO-TIMIN' STUFF—WELL, I'LL SETTLE THAT RIGHT HERE AND NOW!

THE NEBBS—Everything Is All Right Now

WELL, I HAD IT OUT WITH STEVE ABOUT THE PROPERTY. OFFERED HIM \$500 FOR HIS INTEREST AND HE SAID HE ONLY WANTED ONE BUCK...

HE SAID HE SAW A LAWYER AND WAS TOLD THAT SINCE HE TURNED UP ALIVE HE HAD AN INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY AND TO SELL HIS INTEREST TO ME FOR A DOLLAR TO CLEAR UP MY TITLE... THAT'S NICE OF STEVE!

YOU KNOW, I'VE LIVED WITH YOU FOR A LOT OF YEARS AND I FIND WORRYING IS THE BEST THING YOU DO... WHY DON'T YOU HANG OUT A SIGN "WHY WORRY... LET NEBBS DO IT FOR YOU"

PUTTING THINGS AWAY

IS REMINDED HE HAS LEFT HAMMER ON LIVING-ROOM TABLE AND WILL PLEASE PUT IT AWAY AT ONCE

STARTS DOWN CELLAR WITH IT, BALANCING IT ON FINGER

SETS IT DOWN ON HALL TABLE, WHILE HE GOES TO TALK TO EDDIE SELZER, WHOM HE HEARS WHISTLING OUTSIDE

FORGETS ABOUT HAMMER UNTIL MOTHER SEES IT ON HALL TABLE. STARTS FOR CELLAR, SPINNING IT IN AIR

CATCHES IT ON SHIN INSTEAD OF IN HAND

HAMMER STAYS FORGOTTEN ON FLOOR, UNTIL FATHER ALMOST TURNS ANKLE ON IT. STARTS DOWN CELLAR WITH IT AGAIN

ON HIS WAY STOPS TO CALL UP BUD BEMIS; REMEMBERS HAMMER HALF AN HOUR LATER

BEFORE TAKING IT DOWN CELLAR, TRIES TO FIX NAIL IN HIS SHOE. HAMMER EVENTUALLY TURNS UP ON LIVING-ROOM TABLE

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S'MATTER POT

HELLO, AMBROSE! KIN YA SHOW US ANYTHING DESPERATE TODAY?

WELL, I COULD SKIN-TA-CAT!

OKAY!

THAT'S PRETTY GOOD!

U-H

H-M-M

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By HAL FORREST

POTTER IS THE MAN! I'LL BET MY LAST DIME HE WAS HIRED BY SNEADE!

I'LL GET THE POLICE ON HIS TRAIL BEFORE HE LEAVES TOWN!

By EDWIN ALGER

GOT IT! BEN SAW THE JIPPEMS LEAVE HERE AN' MAYBE HE THINKS I'M UP TO SOME TWO-TIMIN' STUFF—WELL, I'LL SETTLE THAT RIGHT HERE AND NOW!

By SOL HESS

WELL, I HAD IT OUT WITH STEVE ABOUT THE PROPERTY. OFFERED HIM \$500 FOR HIS INTEREST AND HE SAID HE ONLY WANTED ONE BUCK...

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CAVES EMPLOYEES IN CAR SMASHUP

GRANTS PASS, July 14. — (AP) — Three college student employes, rushing down the Oregon Caves mountain highway this morning from the Caves resort to the scene of an accident, were wrecked by tire trouble.

Clyde Dunn, chateau bellboy, about 20, of Portland, was critically injured about the neck. With him were Colmar Lombard, about 22, of Portland, who operates the Caves service station, and Raynor Smith, son of a Methodist minister at Roseburg. They received slight injuries.

The second accident occurred about one-half mile from the scene of the first, three miles down the mountain side.

A car driven by William Miller, San Francisco, was forced over the grade when two cars passed. His son-in-law, Fred Kleiser, and Fred's father Charles of Oakland accompanied Charles Kleiser suffered injuries. Involved in the accident were four

FREIGHTER DESCENDS COLUMBIA IN SAFETY

PORTLAND, July 14. — (AP) — The Charles L. Wheeler Jr., first vessel of its size ever to penetrate the 90 miles of the Columbia river between Vancouver, Wash., and the Dalles, 200 miles from the sea, ended its epochal voyage when it coaxed at Vancouver at 7 p. m. yesterday.

The 300-foot boat, negotiating dangerous rapids handily, made fast time on the downstream trip. The Wheeler twice passed through the Bonneville dam seals, highest single lift in the world, and unloaded a cargo at The Dalles' new docks. She returned in ballast.

Motorcycle Police Curbed.

CLEVELAND. — (UP) — Motorcycle traffic policemen here have been ordered to cease hitting and "popping out of nowhere" at unsuspecting motorists.