HOW MANY CARDS?

By ISABEL OSTRANDER

Author of "The Island of Intrigue," "Suspense," "Ashes to Ashes," etc. Copyright, 1981, by Robert M. McBride & Co.

SYNOPSIS

Ex-Roundsman Timothy McCarty, forgetful that he had retired from the force, follows a figure whose type had been well known to him in the old days—that of an undersized, narrow-framed man who disappeared into a galatial residence, but the suspect returns instantly and in much perturbation. When pulled up by McCarty the man protests his innocence and the man protests his innocence and mecars that he had "nothing to do mecars that he had "nothing to do metars that he had "nothing to do metars at this juncture and demands "what's foing on." I've been trying to get going on. "I've been trying to get going on." I've been trying to get out of him what he did do in there, out of him what he did do in there, any says McCarty. "We'll take him along and find out," Clancy declared briefly.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

AND HERE IT CONTINUES FIER some search they located a

AFTER some search they located a desk telephone on the writing table concealed beneath a bell-shaped bronze is precinct station house and had the atisfaction of knowing that the message are relayed to the borough headquar-ras relayed to the borough headquar-

misfaction of knowing that the message attisfaction of knowing that the message matisfaction of the borough headquarters. "I'le too big entirely for them to handle," declared McCarty contemptously when the other had hung up the self to general headquarters and tip self to general headquarters and tip hem off. Maybe my old friend, Inhem off. Maybe my ola

"Mac, you old scoundrel!" he exelaimed in affectionate banter. "Where
have you been keeping yourself, and
what are you doing this time of night?"
"'Vhat's that?" Inspector Druet demanded.
"I'm mixing in high society, sir."
"Briefly, McCarty recounted the events "I'm mixing in high society, sir.
McCarty's tones were cautious.
"I'm in a grand private house up on the avenue, facing the park, just above the third side entrance—of the park. I mean, sir—and there'll be quite a little party here soon, I'm thinking.
Maybe you'd like to get in a little head.—"

"What is it? Where are you?" The inspector's own tones had crisped. "Mac, have you tumbled headforemost ato snother—__?"

"It would never have been known until heaven knows when if you hadn't nabbed this bird here." Clancy spoke with reluctant but irrepressible hon-esty. "By the keys of Saint Peter, Mac, you've pulled off more stunts since ou left the force than when you were n it! First that girl who was flung at the window of the Glamorgan and n the other one that was strangled

in the crime museum—"Twas Terhune, the great scientific detective, that got at the truth in the first case and the inspector himself who did the work in the other." McCarty remarked with dignity. "I just poked around like the old has-been I am, But there comes the bus from the borough headquarters, and you'll be doing me a favor. Clancy, if you'll just forget I'm here until you're asked to tell what you know of it all. I'd like to snoop around a bit on my own account till the crime museum-

the inspector gets here."

"How do we know it isn't suicide, anyway?" demanded Clancy, as the elatter of the police gong grew louder on the air and his companion made for the door.

and the ex-roundsman whistled is de foist toimeo himself as he cautiously closed

"Maybe he did, sir," he vouchseempty. On the other hand, the
condiplate had been cleaned save for
generals, half a roll lay beside it and
gene. Near at hand was an ash tray
staining the stub of a cigarette and
in the center of the table,
in the center of the pays lame which stood

in the center of the table.

Is arry was turning away when alliferarty was the end of the clotiff and the champagase bucket someof amber from the mouthpiece of a melessity put it in his pocket.

The subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the knowledge of the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the subdued purring of a second mocame to his cars and he left the floor, but there were no other signs of disorder in the room.

"Yes, sir." McCarty agreed somewhat dubtfully. "He wouldn't have had time to catch at it in falling, after that shot hit him, but maybe whoever it was did it might have twisted that table cover in rage or excitment before they first the floor, but there were no where signs of disorder in the room.

"Yes, sir." McCarty agreed somewhat dubtfully. "He wouldn't have had time to catch at it in falling after that only the heavy lamp which stood upon it had prevented it from being would the floor, but there were no where signs of disorder in the room.

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"Yes, sir." McCarty agreed somewhat dubtfully. "He wouldn't have the suddent time to catch at it in falling after the floor, but there were no the floor, but there were no the floor, but the floo

the led his former superior into the breakfast room and pointed to the cutrance at that moment and Joe Bodansky, obviously relieved to be re-

Wherever the servants and the rest of the family have got to, there was two people had supper here tonight, as you can see, sir. One of them was combetted and pleased, too interested to bother much with his wine, but ate a rupted him before he finished smoking then he didn't take it with him. The other was nervous or angry or scared couldn't are revenued to the rest of the dead man, even in so grim and forbidding a vehicle, was consigned to the care of its officials.

After it had departed the inspector and his freshly appointed assistant mounted the great staircase to be met at the top by Clancy and two detectives from the borough headquarters. The latter were none too pleased to find an inspector from the central office already on the job, but they concealed already on the job, but they concealed he didn't take it with him. The was pervous or angry or scared, in't ear, crumbled his bread, drank wine to keep up his courage but holder. One of them is lying dead the next room and the other has to rou. 'S the answer, sir's It's disturbed, either, and except for disturbed, either, and except for rooms it.

CHAPTER II The Voice on the Wire

THE inspector approached the table and gazed thoughtfully down upon

ts array of porcelain and silver and lass.

"You're getting to be quite in Wade Sam and Clancy below, Pete." Inspector Druct responded. "The commissioner has put me in charge, but I may served. "If Creveling sat here, where he food is almost untouched and the contribute of the cont

McCarty shook his head.

"I don't think so, sir," he said quietly. "I think it was his visitor who sat in that chair. Mr. Creveling was host and all the servants were gone unless they're lying murdered upstairs, so he must have waited on the table himself, and you see the wine cooler is right close up to the other chair. I found this near it on the floor."

He produced the broken bit of amber and the inspector scrutinized if carefully.

"Part of a cigarette holder, eh? A mighty slender one, too, by the curve of this fragment. It looks as though a

lady He paused as McCarty picked up the

"'Vhat's that?" Inspector Druet demanded.

Briefly, McCarty recounted the events of the night and when he had conciuded his companion started for the door leading into the hall once more.

"We'll have a look at the body and then join the rest upstairs. This is a headquarters job all right, Mac, and I'm going to take charge."

"I thought you would, sir." Mc-Carty heaved a sigh of satisfaction not unmixed with envy. "At least you'll not have Terhune with his scientific stunts and mechanical mind-readers butting in on the case."

into another——?"

"Tis the house of Mr. Eugene Creveling, sir; him they used to call Million-a-month. Jim Clancy is here with me and a young crook we copped by the way, but none of the family seems to be at home except himself, and we found him with a bullet in his heart from an army gun."

"I'll be with you," the inspector said briefly and the two receivers clicked in unison.

"It would never have been home."

"The house of Mr. Eugene stunts and mechanical mind-readers butting in on the case."

"How about you yourself?" The inspector halted and bent a quizzical gaze upon his companion. "Going to quit before the end of the first round?"

"Quit?" McCarty flushed. "Well maybe to testify against the lad for breaking and entering. I've nothing to do with the murder nor the solving of it."

"But you're itching for a chance, aren't you, you old scout?" The other smiled. "I'll swear you in as a special officer tomorrow, just as I did on the last case you got yourself mixed up in since you left the force. Come on, now."

now."
McCarty's eyes shone and he squared

McCarty's eyes shone and he squared his massive shoulders with proud clation as they entered the room where the master of the house lay. He was officially at work again, and the inhabitants of the installment plan suburban colony in which he had invested his savings and from which he drew his modest revenue might run the place to suit themselves until the case was finished. He was back in the old game!

When they opened the door of the study they found that its only occupants were the dead man and the wretched youth who still cringed in his chair, to one arm of which he had now been securely handcuffed. At sight of the inspector's face he uttered a sharp ejaculation and cowered further down.

"Well, well!" Inspector Druet searched his countenance keenly. "It seems to me we've met before, my seems to me we've met before, my

"No, sir! Youse got me wrong-

"Because there are no powder marks that I saw," McCarty replied succeinctly. "If he'd held that cannon against his breast and fired it the powder would have been sprinkled all over the front of him."

As the automobile from the borough headquarters drew up before the door McCarty dodged into the room next to the study. It proved to be a breakfast room, and the ex-roundsman whistled is de foist toime—"

"Never mind; thought I had you door after finding and turning on switch, which made the single later." Inspector Druet turned to Metalight over the table burst into a Carty and indicated the body. "Is this idea glow the way it was when you saw it first,

The table was laid for two and the remains of a supper were spread upon it, while an empty quart champagne bottle stood upon the floor and a second one reposed in the cooler, in the bottom of which a small quantity of ice still remained unmelted.

McCarty's brows kait at the sight of it, and he pulled out his watch.

"Quarter to 3!" he muttered, then turned his attention to the table itelf.

The food upon one plate was scarcely touched, hur bread crumbs were scartered all about it and the wine glass was empty. On the other hand, the

without raising a hund to defend himself. McCarty urged
headquarters and they are
a grand session in the room
for Creveling was killed—if it
his former send.

without raising a hund to defend himself while his guest worked his own
nerve up to the point of murder?"
The inspector shrugged. "Come along,
let's go up and see what the others have
found out."
The patrol wagon clattered up to the

Wherever the servants and the rest the dead man, even in so grim and for-

soul about, living or dead. Nothing's been disturbed, either, and except for two or three of the servants' rooms it doesn't seem as if any of them had been occupied for some time, not even the

master's own spartments."
"Mac, here, and I will just have

THE GUMPS-Andu! Aren't You Ashamed?



SOMEBODY'S STENOG-Mary Doodle at Bat

OFF TODAY. MARY

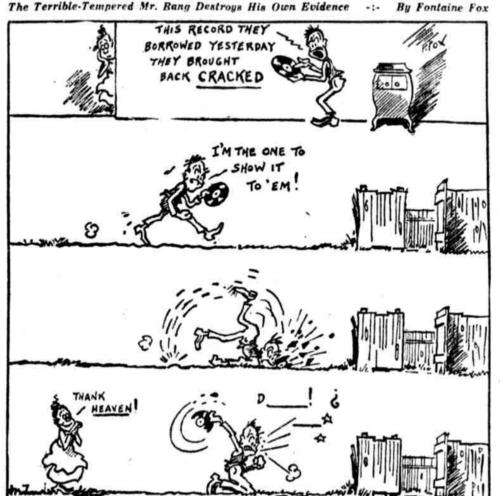
HIT FOR ME !

By Hayward : Copyright, 1921 by Public Ledger Co. I'GOT S TWICE THAT TIME! NOW WHY GET ALL ROSY ER - MISS DOODLE - IN I GOT BOSS ? YOU'LL GET YOUR THAT LETTER I GAVE L TWO BITS SAYS I WIN BY A BRAINS DOIN A SHIMMY. T YER, BO. YOU - JUST LEAVE OUT I SIMPLY HAVE TO GO K.O. IF SOMEBUDY DON'T THE LAST PARAGRAPH ! STOP THE BOUT ! T DOODLE CAN PINCH A-E-HAYWARD - 7

The Young Lady Across the Way The Terrible-Tempered Mr. Bang Destroys His Own Evidence -:- By Fontaine Fox



The young lady across the way says she cau't remember who it was that first called England Perfidious



SCHOOL DAYS By DWIG SHE'S BEEN UP SINCE SEBEN THIS SMORHIN' - STEADY'S A ROC GOSH BING, BUT I'M HUNCH! TO OVER TO MY HOUSE AN GIT ME SUMPH TO EAT, WILL YOU, REED? HUM, THAT'S HUTHIN! HE EMOURANCE FLIGHT

PETEY-The Man Downstairs Was Affected Also

OOH. LISTEN PETEY DEAR . -THEY'RE PLAYING THE - I COULD JUST DIE CRIPPLE'S DELIGHT" ON THE TODDLING PHONOGRAPH DOWN-STAIRS --LET'S TRY THAT HEW TODDLE STEP

IM NOT GOING TO C

YOUR PARTY THIS

AFTERNOON



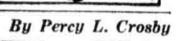


THE CLANCY KIDS-However, Timmie Isn't Averse to Hav ing Ice Cream Out of the Window

YOU WEREN'T

INVITED!!





By C. A. Voight