

THE YELLOW STUB

GREAT NEW MYSTERY SERIAL

By Ernest Lynn

HENRY RAND, middle-aged credit manager of a department store, at dinner with his family, is reminded that the following day is his son, JAMES RAND'S 27th birthday. Jimmy, as he is called, announces he has planned a theatre party for the family, which includes his mother and sister, JANEY. He intends, also, to include BARRY COLVIN, James' fiance.

Henry Rand is a staunch upholder of all the homely virtues, including that of punctuality, which is almost a religion with him. When, on the night of the party, he falls to put in his accustomed appearance at quarter to six the family becomes alarmed.

While they are wondering, the phone rings. Jimmy answers it. It is the police. Henry Rand's body has been found in a room at the Canfield Hotel.

Jimmy goes to the hotel. His father is in a gas-filled room that had been registered for by H. A. Jones of New York.

Police believe it is suicide. Jimmy doesn't agree. A woman's handkerchief is found in the room.

The coroner arrives and discovers a small vein at the back of Henry Rand's head. While they are talking, Jimmy discovers the yellow stub of a theatre ticket, evidently used two nights before.

Hello—Mr. Blaine? This is Phil Mooney talking—a friend of Tom Fogarty's. Tim's in a little trouble. I want to know from you when was the last time you saw him. You did, eh? What night? . . . Oh yeah. When did the game break up? . . . What am I drivin' at? Ask Tom, he'll tell you.

He hung up the receiver. "Your story's good as far as it goes. Fogarty, although it'll take a lot more checking than that. Now suppose you explain how that ticket got in that room."

There was a knock at the door. "Come," called Fogarty. A bell boy deposited a tray bearing ginger ale and cracked ice and departed.

Fogarty opened a bureau drawer and pulled out a bottle. "Have a drink, Mr.—say what's your name, anyway?"

"Mooney," answered the detective. "No, I don't drink."

"Mr. Rand?" Fogarty turned to Jimmy, with a gesture of the hands toward the bottle.

"No thanks, not just now."

Fogarty poured himself a stiff drink, mixing it with ginger ale and ice.

"Mooney," he said, "I can't tell you how that ticket got in the room, because I didn't go to the theatre that night. It might sound like a funny alibi to you, but I swear I gave that ticket away Monday afternoon."

He paused. "All right," snapped Mooney, "who did you give it to?"

"Mooney, I gave that ticket to a woman."

To Jimmy, who was listening intently, Fogarty's words were like a blow in the face.

"No, Fogarty!" he cried. "It couldn't have been a woman that did this!"

"Wait a minute, Rand," Mooney ordered. "Let's hear this thing through." He opened the wallet. "This handkerchief," he said, "fits in some place. . . . Go ahead, Fogarty."

Fogarty emptied his glass, his hand a trifle unsteady. "Here's all I know about it, Mooney," he continued. "Monday afternoon I happened to be passing the Paragon Theatre and I went in and got my ticket for the show that night. Ordinarily I call for it in the evening just before the show starts, unless I'm ordering an extra seat."

"But I went in and got the ticket and looked around at the billboards in the lobby. It was a pretty good show, so they said—a musical comedy. It was a sellout."

"Well, I came back to the hotel and something turned up—I'll tell you about it later—that made it impossible for me to go to the show. I was thinking of turning in the ticket to the hotel porter when I met this woman. Olga Maynard's her name. I got to know her when she was singing in a cabaret in town here. I knew she was down on her luck—she'd lost a couple of cabaret jobs for some reason or other—and I asked her if she could use the ticket."

"She's a good singer herself, and nuts about the stage. . . . Got ambitions, I guess. Anyway, she took the ticket. That's the last I saw of her—and of the ticket, too, until you just showed it to me."

"How well do you know this Maynard woman?" asked Mooney.

"I've been out with her on a couple of parties. Not very well, I guess. I met her in a cabaret."

"Where is she working now?"

"She isn't working. At least she wasn't when I talked with her Monday."

"What's the matter with her that she can't hold a job?" You say she's a good singer."

"I don't know, Mooney. Maybe they got something on her. Maybe it's just tough breaks. I don't know."

"Is she crooked?" asked Mooney.

"You know what I mean, Fogarty. Is she a gold digger?"

"I can't tell you that, either. Personally, I'd always thought she was a pretty square shooter. But she might have got mixed up in some kind of scrape or other. I'd be willing to bank on her myself."

Fogarty pulled a little black leather book from his pocket. He thumbed its pages and then held it open to the detective.

"Here's her phone number and

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her address," he said. He shifted uncomfortably on the bed. Mooney turned to Jimmy. "We'll get a cab and go up there, Rand. We won't call her up." He picked up the handkerchief, which lay on the chair with the stub. To Fogarty he said, "Can you tell me whether this is the Maynard woman's handkerchief?"

Fogarty shook his head. "Did she use this kind of perfume?" Mooney persisted.

"Couldn't tell you, Mooney." Fogarty barely glanced at the handkerchief. . . . He stared out of the window.

"Fogarty," Mooney's voice was sharp, like the crack of a whip, "you're holding back something. Get with it!"

"Wait a minute, Mooney." It was Jimmy. "Fogarty, did she say anything to you about going out of town?"

Fogarty did not answer. He was

staring out of the window, his brows knit in a frown.

"Come on, out with it, Fogarty!" snapped Mooney. "You're not out of the woods yet yourself."

Fogarty turned to face him. "Yes, she did," he said. "She said she was going to Grafton the next day to look for a job."

(To be continued.)

Very Low Birth Rate.

London, Feb. 4.—The birth rate in England and Wales last year was the lowest ever recorded there except in the war years of 1917 and 1918.

Last year the birth rate was 15.3 per 1,000. The death rate was 12.3 in England and Wales last year.

If a man is wedded to art he is apt to find the dowry unsatisfactory.

Time is a sort of perpetual motion arrangement for making yesterday's

Fogarty did not answer. He was

of tomorrows.

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TENDERED A FAREWELL.

Holliston, Feb. 3.—On Friday evening, January 29th, Holliston held a "social evening" at the home of William Babcock, who, with his family, leave in the near future to reside near Adams, N.Y. During the evening a presentation was made to Mr. Babcock and family.

Over forty were present, music and singing being enjoyed by the elders and games by the juniors. The gifts consisted of a beautiful linen table cloth, a twenty-six piece silver table set, a glass water set, and a china suit set to the family. Mr. Fletcher Burnham read an address and made the presentation.

Mr. and Mrs. Babcock replied effectively with a few well-chosen words. The proceedings were brought to a close by singing "For Me a Jolly Good Fellow." A dainty lunch was served and not until the wee sma' hours arrived did the gathering disperse. All wished Mr. Babcock and family much happiness and prosperity in their new home.

Buy's Cheese Factory.

Toledo, Feb. 3.—Bert Ladouceur, who owned and operated a cheese factory at Toledo, for the past ten years, has bought another factory at Dixon's Corners. This is one of the largest factories in this district, being up-to-date in every way. There is also a large dwelling house attached to this. Bert and his helper left Monday to start making cheese at this factory runs the year round. His wife and son will follow later.

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CHAPTER IX.

"Come," a deep bass voice spoke from the room.

Mooney turned the knob and slipped quietly into the room with Rand at his heels. They closed the door behind them and stood facing Fogarty.

He was sitting on the bed, tearing a letter from its envelope, and did not look up at once, obviously thinking a bell boy had come.

The utter silence in the room made him turn his head. He saw Mooney and Jimmy. The letter dropped from his grasp. He jumped to his feet. "Who the hell are you?" he demanded.

"Sit down, Fogarty." Mooney strode into the middle of the room and displayed his badge. "Nobody's going to start any rough stuff as long as you behave yourself. We want to ask you a few questions."

"You fresh dick, I'll have you busted for this!" The veins in Fogarty's fat neck swelled. His face turned several shades redder.

"All right," answered Mooney, "but wait till I get through. In the first place, Mr. Fogarty, did you ever hear of Henry Rand?" The little detective was watching Fogarty closely.

"Never heard of him."

"Henry Rand of Grafton?" pursued Mooney, his eyes still on the other's face.

"No," Fogarty shook his head.

"What's the game?" he asked angrily.

"Just this, Mr. Fogarty. A man by the name of Henry Rand—this man's father here," indicating Jimmy—"was killed in a hotel in Grafton last Wednesday. The room was engaged Tuesday night by a man who gave the name of H. A. Jones of New York. That man, by the way, had red hair," he said.

"What's this, a frame-up?" Fogarty gave a contemptuous laugh. "You'll have to come closer than that."

"I'm not through yet," continued Mooney. "In the room where the murder was committed they found a woman's handkerchief and the stub of a theatre ticket. Here's the ticket, Fogarty." He extracted the stub from his wallet and tossed it on the chair in front of Fogarty. "See if you recognise it."

Jimmy watched the big man intently as he picked up the yellow ticket stub and examined it. "By God!" Fogarty exclaimed, "it's my ticket, all right."

In just that fleeting instant Jimmy told himself that his search was to go beyond Fogarty. This man, he decided, was not the murderer of his father. But undoubtedly he held the key. . . .

Mooney smiled as he held out his hand for the stub. "Sure it's your ticket, Fogarty. And here's something else. That ticket was used last Monday night and the man who held it was in the Canfield Hotel in Grafton Tuesday night. Fogarty, you weren't in your room here Tuesday night. Where were you?"

Fogarty was sweating. He mopped his forehead with a huge handkerchief. "Tuesday night," he repeated. "I know," he exclaimed, his eyes lighting. "Tuesday night I was out playing poker with some of the boys in the Horseshoe Club. The game didn't break up until nine in the morning. I stopped to get something to eat and then came back here and went to bed."

"We'll check that story right now," said Mooney. "Hand look in the phone book for the Horseshoe Club and give them a ring. Who with with you?" he asked Fogarty.

"Tell him to ask for Alec Blaine. He lives at the club. If he isn't there one of the porters can tell you."

"Try to get hold of Blaine." Mooney nodded to Jimmy, who was at the phone.

Jimmy had got his number. "I'd like to speak to Mr. Alec Blaine, please, if he's there. He turned to Mooney. "He's there. They're ringing his room."

"Here let me talk to him," Mooney picked up the receiver. "Hello,

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