



# HARRY BLACKSTONE'S

## *Triumph of the of the Triumvirate*

Magic can be performed as a trick after trick, or as a presentation of strange occurrences making themselves visible through the medium of the actor. The latter thought has been put into practise by myself and proven true. While I don't see fit to announce that I am an actor, when in front of the paid customers, my bearing of a magician leads people to believe all that I may say regarding other magicians. This is because a magician talks to his audience whereas an actor talks away from them.

It has been quite some time since I have published material about tricks, so it should be fitting that The Jinx have first call for a routine which credits other masterly performers to the extent of presuming that they can make all of their powers apparent to those watching a "not dead yet" performer who knew and hobnobbed with them well.

This must be a performance where the magician has a stage or platform. On that platform he has two chairs, back to back in formation, with a sheet of glass across the 2 ft. space. A dummy hand rests on the glass.

A side table holds a plate of ten padlocks, another plate of ten keys, and a pack of ordinary playing cards.

To his audience the magician says something like this; "My life in magic has been a much more interesting one because of an intimate acquaintance with orthodox magicians, we magi do classify ourselves,



but after many years of travel and continuous effort to entertain I've only lately established contact with those contemporary friends who have passed beyond.

"Houdini? A lifetime spent in effort to subjugate locks and restraining devices to his will. Thurston? One who made the art of stage card manipulation something to be attained by his followers. Carter? An illusionist who sought the bridge between here and the hereafter. Tonight I want to show you how I have made up my own little bridge between where I am and where they are."

The wonder worker asks a spectator to step forward. The plate of padlocks is dumped loudly onto another container. The performer picks up one, hands it to the spectator, and says, "You can open it? No! Not without a key." He takes it back, tosses it into the pile, and picks out another which he hands the volunteer. "Try that one. Can you open it, without a key, any faster than you could have the first?"

The magician accepts the negative reply in stride and turns to the audience, requesting and getting a second assistant. For the while he apparently forgets about the lock being held by the first man. "Here is a pack of playing cards. Thurston made a long to be remembered reputation with his smart handling of them. I want you to shuffle them as much as you please."

The performer turns back to his first helper. He picks up the plate of keys. They are dumped into the cupped hands of this man and he is told to lay them out in a row upon the floor in front of himself. "You are holding one of the ten locks. Now you lay out ten keys in any order you please. Only one of those keys fits the lock you hold. I'll show you that the other masters of magic control this experiment and await my joining them."

The magician turns to the second spectator holding the shuffled deck. He takes it, lays it on the floor, has the spectator cut it at any spot, and the cut is held by placing one half crosswise upon the other.

The performer now steps back and shows the dummy hand which has been resting upon the glass plate between the chairs. "Before Charles Carter passed away," he says, "this very close friend of mine studied the possibilities of life after death. He was a famous trickster and knew all about the chicaneries of magical performers. Carter was my mentor."

The performer picks up the hand and gestures with it. "Charles Carter led me to believe that there was something far beyond trickery, and I want to show you now that he may be helping me to make contact with that world in which he is living with his closest friends, Thurston and Houdini."

The hand is placed on the glass inter-chair plate. It raps out a number. The "lock-key" spectator counts to that key -- it opens the lock which he holds. Then the hand taps out the name of the card cut at by the second person. And then either of the two helpers may pick up the hand and look it over, as well as the plate of glass and two chairs. There is nothing to find, materially, for the shade of Carter has gone. With him has gone Thurston and Houdini. Only Blackstone remains.

This trick has been a matter of routining. Ted Annemann wouldn't have wanted it but for the story and presentation.

The deep bowl of locks contains only one you must watch. With them is the card to be forced from the deck later on. First you stir the locks a bit, palming the card, and then dump the locks out. Pick up any one of them (except the right one) and hand it to the spectator. Take it back with the left hand as the right picks out the correct one and gives it in return.

The immediate switch of attention to the card selection is perfect misdirection regarding the free choice of a lock. The key later is chosen by hand raps, and people remember that the spectator had more than one lock in his hand. Taking the deck from the second person the performer adds the palmed card to the top and at once puts the deck face down upon the floor. The spectator cuts it at any place, and the performer completes the cut by placing the lower half crosswise of the top half leaving it there for the present.

The performer picks up the plate of keys and tips them into the cupped hands of the man with the lock. He is told to shake them up and then lay them out in a row before himself. You watch and help with this, noting the position of the correct key. Mark it any way you choose. Mine is file notched on each side so that it can be caught quickly whichever side is up. Remember that the audience cannot see these keys closely, and the helper is too excited to look for small file marks.

You step to the back and pick up the dummy hand. Use the patter scheme at this point. Then say, "We'll put the hand on the glass and see what Houdini can tell us about your lock. I'm not going to ask you to name a number like two, five, ten, fourteen, etc. I'm going to leave it up to the master in the great beyond." You have thus cued to your assistant the position of the key in the row as laid out by the spectator. The last number you have named is TWICE the position number. In this case, the assistant knows that the position is seventh (half of fourteen).

The performer walks around the chairs once, holds out his hand, and the dummy hand visibly taps out (in this case) the number seven. He asks the first man to count to that key, and try it in the lock. The lock clicks open!

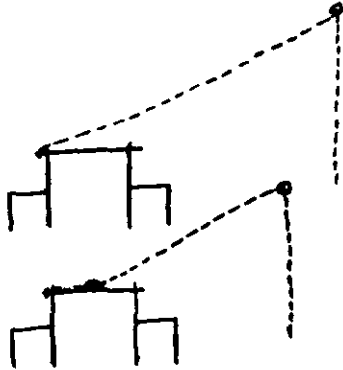
Approaching the second person, the performer asks him to remove the top crosswise half of the deck and pick up the top card of the lower cut. This is a tried and true force for conditions such as this where the effect is the thing and there is no time for nor sense in making a selection complicated. The audience always remembers only that the spectator shuffled the cards and then cut them at any spot.

The hand is walked around once more and this time the performer passes his hands directly across from above and underneath. He says, "I'm going to name the four suits, Howard. Make a sign through the hand when I name the one you like best." The hand raps at one suit named. The performer continues, "Now tell us all what value you like best from Ace to King." The hand raps a number of times. The second man shows his card. Thurston has revealed it!

And immediately, the performer asks his two helpers to pick up the hand, the glass, and move the chairs. "You don't see Houdini, Thurston, or Carter?" he says. "Well, they're there, and when the time comes for me to see them I'll tell them all about the times they've helped me entertain my audiences the way they used to do."

The working of the hand is all that remains

to be disclosed. It is perfect for stage and platforms where it allows of the performer passing completely around it, and the passing of his hands above and below. One end edge of the glass has a tiny smooth cut slit which holds a large knotted thread. The diagram illustrates how the thread then runs to a high point at the side and the end operated by the assistant. The hand is free at all times and placed on the



thread onto the glass where a slight pull tips it to rap as desired. With the thread running as shown, the performer can walk completely around the set-up and pass the hands directly above and below the glass. At the finish he picks up the hand, and his own hand passes across under the thread which disengages the knotted end from the glass leaving everything free for inspection.



## TRAVELLER B. B. LOW

**A** takeoff on the ancient coin (glass disc) into a glass of water, this effect didn't sound so forte, but when I saw it done, in between other card effects, I reversed my opinion. Ed.)

Five cards are taken from the pack's top and shown in a fan. A spectator names one of the five. We shall presume it to be the Ace of Clubs. The Ace is covered with a handkerchief and held by the performer. A shake of the hank shows the card to have vanished. It is reproduced from one of the magician's pockets.

Don't grimace now. A duplicate of each of the five cards rests in different pockets. The five to be shown are on the deck's top, left there during a dovetail shuffle, and not disturbed by a false cut. Then they are shown. The handkerchief is prepared by having a narrow and thin strip of wood (its length equal to the width of a card) stitched or stuck to the center.

In covering the card with the hank the card is held edgewise and allowed to catch just underneath the wood. Then the wood is grasped through the hank and at the same time the card is allowed to drop on the rest of the pack which must be scattered on the table below. Taking a hanging corner with his free hand, the performer flips the hank and the card has vanished.

"Did you see it go? Did you see where I put it? The Ace of Clubs, wasn't it? Look. Not one fast move in a deck. Keep it as a souvenir."

The moves and actions have been clean. The hands have never approached the body. The freely named and vanished card is reproduced. That's all there is, but its pointedness is awfully effective.



## NOT AT THESE PRICES! OSCAR WEIGLE

**A**fter a standard four Ace trick, or two, this gag serves for a funny surprise finish. Most magicians do four Ace tricks (correct me if I'm wrong), so the idea shouldn't be unwelcome.

The four Aces lie face up on the table and the spectator is asked to indicate his choice of one by turning it face down. All note its position and then the remaining three Aces are turned over also. Three cards are first placed on the selected Ace and then the same number on each of the remaining, as in the prosaic effect.

Now three of the packets are gathered together and shuffled, leaving the packet with the chosen Ace. The twelve cards comprising the three packets are further mixed into the deck.

"Would you like to see those cards on the table become Aces?" questions the magician. Assuming that your man is a tolerant person, he will say yes. The cards on the table are taken and openly dropped on top of the deck. The end of the pack is riffled to suggest passage of the Aces to the top - and then the top four cards are dealt face up in a row, one at a time.

Instead of the four Aces, as might well be expected, the cards are seen to be lettered, a word on each card, and the message thus conveyed to the onlookers is, "NOT AT THESE PRICES!"

That's the whole gag - and all you have to do is get four blank cards with back design matching your favorite deck, some India ink, and make as neat a lettering job as possible.

When the four Aces are on the table to start, the four lettered cards, in correct order, are on top of the deck. They may either be palmed on from a pocket or shifted there from the bottom. The Aces are turned face down and then the three top cards of the deck are pushed to the side with the left thumb. In squaring these up on the deck, the left little finger goes under the fourth card and the four cards are taken and placed on top of the indicated Ace. Three cards are actually taken for each of the remaining Aces. Then the three packets are mixed together and into the pack. After asking the spectator if he would like the remaining cards to become Aces, take the last packet and drop it openly on top of the deck. This rids you of the last Ace, as there are apparently only four cards, and you are ready for the finish.

It has occurred to me that this trick might be of value to table workers to make the illiberal patron "loosen up," though its subtlety is somewhat questionable!

## — EDITRIVIA —

One of the "opinion very much to be respected" boys has been boxing my ears verbally since last issue's denouncement of the LeRoy show, and with good logic. His view is that Servais was more or less stamped into the attempt by the overenthusiastic producer who should have considered what time and inactivity can do to a magician. An awfully strong point is the assertion that LeRoy did not "break" when he saw everything going to "pot" but carried on as a showman should. However one may discuss and argue that angle there still remains the fact that he didn't rehearse the girls at all. And it is definite that he said, backstage, that he would tell them what to do when the time came, for he hadn't wanted to reveal the trick and illusion secrets to them beforehand! --- The magic mag columnists could improve their wares by watching the deadline dates plus the publication dates of their respective news-items. Most of them start note making the day after a month's contrib is sent out. They itemize the fact that someone is playing the what-what club without stopping to think that when it gets to print, anywheres from six to ten weeks have passed. They might rather write "played." We just received one magazine on June 24th. A "news" columnist writes "Russell Swann just opened in the Crystal Room of the Park Plaza Hotel (St. Louis, Mo.). The facts are that Russ opened there during the early part of May and left there about June 1st! The writer could have made it a past tense paragraph with comment to better reading advantage. This isn't a particular case, for all columns in all mags do it too often. In short, it is suggested that a sentence like, "Humdrum, the Mystic, is playing Loew's State this week," and which won't see print for from four to six weeks, be written, "Humdrum, the Mystic, played Loew's State the week of June 6th with a new twist, etc." Far be it from us to suggest that our less than erudite wordage be used. We're only offering an idea to writers, and editors. If, and when, we are able to buy The Sphinx, this will be the second feature of the new regime.

Herbert Hood phoned to give us a really swell improvement on the Royal Heath "Figure Fantasy" effect in issue #91. It now becomes a deluxe prophecy item. Borrow two business cards from one person. Write a prophecy on the back of one and RETURN HIS PENCIL, also borrowed. Now have him think of the two figures and do the adding of the built up column himself. You still hold the prophecy card while you carelessly watch him make the column up from the two figures on his card. The moment you catch the seventh one you wander back while he continues to ten and then adds them all. In the meantime you have finger pencilled (or thumb written) the final total and you offhandedly give your card to someone to hold. You have thus written a sentence "The total of the column of figures you have thought of will be -----," and you fill in the number. The spectator has quite a bit to do AFTER you get your knowledge so it finally appears that your prophecy has been out of your hands throughout.

On Mon. June 24, the Repub. Nat'l Convention opened at Phila. in a maze of possibilities as to a presidential nominee. W O R cancelled a program in favor of a speech. It was one of the spook series by Hereward Carrington. The name of the series is "Who Knows." Anyway, it sounded funny when the announcer said it at that timely moment. --- Charlie Miller, the west coast card

impresario whose skill is a favorite topic when the pasteboard kings whisper secrets, has dropped the "Earle" prof. cognomen. He's at the Frisco Fair doing a symbolical program of magic for a Petroleum company. A can of oil proves to be inexhaustible a la Lota Jar; a production of black and white billiard balls set on a stand shows the atomic construction of petroleum, etc. --- Howard Warringer received an "A" for his 86 page thesis "Objective Showmanship" With Magic, Ventriloquism and Pupperty. It was prepared for the faculty of the Department of Advertising and Selling, of the College of Business Administration, Syracuse (N.Y.) University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for his degree of Bachelor of Science. Very completely illustrated, the mss. is a valuable adjunct to magical collections. It details the use and applications of magic and its allies in the advertising world, giving many examples of such as are being used to-day. We'll bet that the faculty was a wee bit surprised (and gratified at the change from the usual?) at finding such a subject covered. Joseph Jastrow, the eminent psychologist, once told us that some of his most perfect examples of psychological reaction were resultant of certain magical tricks.

Friends of Cedric will be glad to know he is safe in England (his letter dated May 12th just arrived) once more. "We had some fun at times with the troops in France. Card tricks go terrific...they'd go crazy if they could see such men as Scarne and Vernon." We've got a swanky picture of Cedric in uniform but will hold it for the war tricks he's sending. I hope the censor doesn't get excited over the words "secret" and "invisible."

Can any of the readers help contact me with Koran (Perry Taylor)? Tedye Rhea (itinerant magus with med shows - possibly billed as Vrucia and Rhea)? --- The Norgil novelette "Battle of Magic" in MYSTERY magazine for July is about a magical convention where a \$25,000 prize is given for the best trick, said koeps being donated by a wealthy but dead man about magic. Awfully interesting to anyone who ever attended an IBM annual event or went to one of the Blackstone Three Rivers (Seven Circle) get togethers. The hitchhiking magus with the talkative vent figure is from true life and squarely hits an easterner lately married and very, very happy. Norgil, the author, is Walter Gibson, who knows his magicians, situations, and conventions.

Stuart Robson's sort of hideaway magic shop at 324 West 56th St., N.Y.C. is taking on the atmosphere of the old Otto Maurer place at 321 Bowery. Stuart is making a policy of only a few people watching any demonstration, and the secrets are hoarded the way they should be. You aren't in the place five minutes before you get the impression that magical knowledge is to be cherished and not chided. --- With issue #100, next week, will be published a complete Index of tricks, names, anecdotes, etc., for the nos. 51-100. It will sell for twenty-five cents. The Index for 1-50 sells for \$1 to-day, if you can find one loose. --- It's a bit funny, to us, to see how other mags are picking up Stanyon material for publication after we extolled its merits for over five years as of modern worth. We'll give editors at large another idea, too. During August we'll have guest editriviarists take over this page while we fish and flounder through the not so wild but woody depths of Maine

During the interim, play around with your one way backed decks. There's a new cycle coming up.

*Deo Ansemann*