



**BEHIND** A COMPLETE CARD ROUTINE  
**THE EIGHT BALL**

AS TOLD TO CLAYTON RAWSON

Card tricks are a dime a dozen. At least eighty percent of the 6,854,989 card tricks extant are calculated to put an audience to sleep quicker than any other single form of entertainment. This is because so many of them are little more than complicated puzzles that merely confuse an audience. Confusion is not entertainment. Card tricks should be short, sweet, and to the point; the surprises should come thick and fast; and each surprise should out do the one before it.

Pardon the lecture, but we wanted to accent that last statement. It is the whole point of the present card routine, one in which several different effects are presented in an easily grasped, logical sequence that builds up like a rolling snowball to a single final effect on the audience. The plot, in short, is that the magician first demonstrates what he terms the common or garden variety of card trick and then, by making the test conditions more and more difficult, by putting himself further and further behind the eight ball, proceeds to fight against ever more terrible odds and achieve results each of which are more impossible than the one before. This presentation method adds suspense that card tricks often lack and gives the spectator a cumulative knockout blow instead of an unrelated series of less effective body punches. It keeps your audience awake while you knock them out!

Many routines could be built upon this principle. The present one has been designed to use a borrowed deck and an absolute minimum of

preparation and sleight of hand. The first four effects in the sequence of five require no advance preparation at all; the last makes use of an opaque envelope slightly larger than a playing card and one thumb-tip containing a sponge ball soaked in alcohol. The only necessary sleight of hand is the ability to do a decent double lift and make a crimp.

Ready? (My gawd, yes! Ed.) Let's go. Borrow the cards. Deck face down in left hand. Slide top card back toward you a quarter inch. Press on the two overlapping end corners with right thumb, crimping them slightly downward. Shuffle this impromptu locator card to the bottom. And start talking.

EFFECT #1. "You've all seen a magician do this sort of thing." (Fan cards for a selection) "Look at it, please, remember it, and replace it in the deck." (Overhand shuffle and, when the chosen card is replaced, slip the locator from the bottom on to it as you continue the shuffle) "Audiences are so blamed skeptical now days. Many people think that when a magician shuffles and cuts the cards (cut them below the locator) he only appears to be doing that and is actually engaged in getting the selected card to the top. That is a base rumor with no foundation whatever. This top card isn't the one you chose, is it?" (Actually it is, but double lift so he sees the second one down, and when he says "No", replace them on top) "When a magician wants to get the chosen card to the top he doesn't use any such complicated methods as that. No, he uses far simpler methods. He

BY-THE GREAT MERLINI

merely makes a magic pass --- like this." (Make one, gracefully if possible) "Your card, sir, was what?" (The spectator names it and you turn over the top card and show it. Immediately swing into.....)

**EFFECT #2.** "That, of course, is the simplest sort of kindergarten conjuring. Nothing to it. Any magician can do it in his sleep." (Shuffle while saying this, but keep that locator on the bottom) "Suppose we do it again and make it harder --- for me." (Go to second spectator) "You take the deck this time and select a card while it is in your own hands. Just slide one out, place it on top, and cut. And (turning to another person) you cut too." (Sometimes the second cut hits the locator. When that happens - and a peek at the bottom card tells you - you're all set and can make your magic pass without touching the deck again! If you're not always that lucky take the deck and continue as follows: "You took a card from the deck, noted it, and put it on top. Then you cut." (Suit the proper actions to these words and, when you cut, hit the locator) "You held the cards all the time. And yet I simply make my magic pass and your card flies promptly to the top. (Double lift and show second card, but without looking at it yourself, and when the spectator objects that he's sorry but it is not his card, raise your eyebrows in bewildered astonishment a la Gardini) "Not your card?" (Lift off top card alone and peek at it) "But it must be. That was a magic pass. Guaranteed not to fail. What was your card?" (Spec names it and you show it. Scowl a la Wallace Beery) "I'm afraid that you don't always tell the truth, Tsk! Tsk!"

**EFFECT #3.** I'm going to try it again and this time really make it tough." (Go to a third person and fan cards) "Don't take one, just touch one. We won't even remove it from the deck." (When he touches one spread the fan a bit on either side and tip the fan up so he can see the face of the touched card. Behind the fan your left thumb stealthily crimps the lower left corner of the card. Immediately square the fan and hand him the deck) "And now I'll really go behind the eight ball and, so as to rule out the last, faint suspicion that there is any sleight-of-dirty-work-at-the-crossroads, I'll let you shuffle. (Let him give it a good one and egg him on by pretending to act nervous at so much shuffling. Then take the deck back, double lift, apparently showing the top card, and replace) "I make my magic pass, in a reverse direction this time, and I get my magic card, the ---- of ----." (Turn it up and glimpse it just as you name it and then show it) "This card has the peculiar property of being able to locate any other card in the deck. Nobody knows why." (Hold the card to the spectator's forehead for a moment, then, holding it face up, shove it halfway into the deck just below the crimped card) "And your card was --- ?" (When the spectator names it, lift off all cards above inserted one and show the chosen one. You can distinguish between the crimped chosen one and the locator card because the bend in the former will be up and in the latter, down.

**EFFECT #4.** (As you approach the next person give the deck an overhead shuffle, faces up, and note the card that falls on top and the one second from the bottom.) "But even that was child's play. I'm going to roll up my sleeves now and really go to town." (Take any card from the center of the deck, show it, and lay it face up on top of the face down deck. Have your next victim stand facing the audience) "I want you to do what you just saw me do, insert this face up card anywhere in the deck. But I want you to do it behind your back so

that I can't know, so the audience can't know, so that even you yourself can't know where it goes." (Have him put his hands behind his back, reach around and give him the deck, turning it over as you put it in his hands. Then step backward and don't go near the deck again. Repeat your directions to him. "Take the face up card (name it) from the top of the deck and push it still face up anywhere into the deck; square the deck and give it a cut. And now, if you (to another spectator) will go up there and take those cards from behind his back the hocus pocus will begin." (Note: The reason another person is asked to take the cards from behind his back is so that the party of the first part doesn't get a chance to notice that he has been holding the deck wrong side up) "Hold the deck between the palms of your hands, covering it so that I can't even get a glimpse of the back of the top card. I have been accused of finding cards by mindreading. I want to show you that such methods are quite unnecessary. (Turn to spectator who inserted card)

"Can you tell me the name of the card just above the one you placed in the deck? Or the one just below? Would you like to make a guess? Would you put any money on that guess? I'll give you odds of fifty-two to one? No? You had a much better chance than anyone else here to see what card yours went next to. You were several feet closer when it happened. Of course, I could use my X-Ray vision, look right down through this gentleman's hands, and through the deck, and see what card is next to the face up ---- of ----. Yes, I could, really." (Stall for a minute. Maybe they'll coax you)

"Shall I look for the card above or below the face up card? The one below? Um. Well, that's harder. I have to look through one more card. But I'll try." (Turn on the X-Ray vision and then name the card they ask for. The one originally on top of the deck will be below the face up card, the one second from the bottom will be above it. You can, of course, name both if you like)

**EFFECT #5.** "I have just demonstrated conclusively that neither sleight of hand nor mindreading is employed in these strange experiments. The last time I did that a hard-boiled skeptic cracked back, 'You been in duh same room all duh time, aintcha?' And now, in order to squelch that last objection, I shall leave the room! While I am gone I want you to spread the cards face down on the floor, select any one card at random, mark it, place it, face down still, in this envelope, seal that securely, and sign the flap. If you like you may appoint a committee of one to look at the face of the card before it goes into the envelope, just to make doubly sure that no other card is later substituted. But do not allow anyone to look at it who could, by any stretch of of the imagination, be a confederate of mine. If you prefer, don't let anyone see it at all. Suit yourselves. And call me when ready."

(Go into the kitchen and raid the refrigerator or open yourself another bottle of something. When they do summon you, poke your thumb on to the spongeball we mentioned awhile back so that the thumb gets a coating of alcohol. Take the sealed envelope, place thumb over corner where index will show, read index through envelope, and lay envelope out on floor or table. Borrow a second deck of cards. Run over them, throw out the Joker, and secretly find the duplicate of the card in the envelope. Crimp one corner. Shuffle the deck, cut it into two halves, and hold each half in turn above the envelope. When the half that contains the

crimped card is held out you get vibrations --- vibrations that make your hand shake like anything. Discard the other half and cut the vibrating half into portions. Test these two in the same way and eliminate one. Continue until only one card, the crimped corner card, is left. Lay it aside, still face down. Open the envelope and show the sealed card. Turn over the other and show that they are both the same! If your audience doesn't talk about that one maybe you had better go in for stamps, toy trains, or fancy needlework.

And stop right there. Don't, for the luva Pete, do any card tricks after that. You've hit a high point. Leave it lay. (Note: Further, if needed, working details of this last effect may be found by referring back to "Red-Vibro" on page 395 of Jinx No. 56.)



## LETTER OF HOPE

The letter which follows has been mailed to stockholders in The Sphinx Corporation. It speaks for itself.

October 4, 1940

Dear -----;

I wish to interest myself in The Sphinx Corporation to an extent which will provide me with not less than 51% of all outstanding shares.

For all such shares as have been issued by that corporation I am prepared to pay four thousand dollars (\$4000.00) cash.

For not less than 51% of all shares issued to date I will pay pro rata for the transfer of such shares to my name.

I understand that you are a stockholder in The Sphinx Corporation. Would you sell to me, provided the desire stated in the last paragraph can be fulfilled, your part and interest in The Sphinx Corporation without reservations?

An immediate answer will be appreciated. I will be glad to further inform you of the aims and intentions for a continuance of the world's oldest magical magazine.

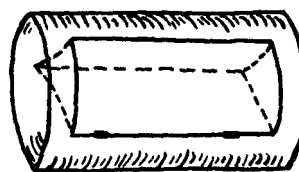
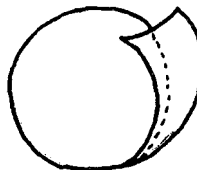
Sincerely yours,  
(signed) *Ernest Annemann*  
Ernest Annemann



## THE 'EDGAR' UTILITY TUBE

While there are many tubes and boxes for the purpose of appearing, changing, and vanishing handkerchiefs, this easily constructed tube will be found compact and a device of untold uses. The extremely simple mechanical detail can hardly get out of order and the tube may be picked up at any time during your performance to serve as a secret assistant.

It is approximately two and one-quarter inches in a diameter and about six inches long. Constructed of heavy tin or spun brass each cylinder should be made to fit the individual performer's hand, to be perfectly practical. Most such appliances are built without due regard for this fact, all of which results in a certain percentage of dissatisfied buyers.



There is little that can be written about the construction of the cylinder which the illustrations won't make very clear. A semi-circular container hinged

into the side of the tube lets the "load" be manipulated either inside or out by the simple holding of the cylinder so that gravity does the rest. This "load" container reaches to about one inch of each end of the tube.

The second sketch shows how the tube can be turned with either end (depending upon which hand at the moment holds it) towards the audience to allow a clear view through it. The easy way of handling the tube, after very little practice, makes it positively worthwhile.

The load is, of course, put inside the hinged container. It will be seen that when swung into the tube there remains ample room for the pushing through of silks to "prove" that nothing is inside. Then, at wish, handkerchiefs may be pushed into the load container to force others out, silks may be produced, or handkerchiefs inserted to eventually vanish.

Suggestions for the use of this piece of apparatus will gladly be received, collected, and submitted to readers at a later date.



## 'FIFTH COLUMN' JACK VOSBURGH

From "A Matter of Policy", a political effect to appear here five years ago, comes this idea for a modern story. It seems very timely in English speaking countries as well as in South America.

Tell about Rep. Martin Dies and his Committee on Unamerican Activities. In other countries he may be substituted for an equivalent investigating group. Someone had the happy thought that if people in each community were lined up at random and every fifth person deported or confined, the country would be rid of fifth columnists. You shuffle a deck of cards and deal a face down row of ten on the table or floor. From left to right count, continuously, removing every fifth card to a face down pile. After five cards have been removed say that if the theory works the removed ones would consist only of blackshirts and black-guards, while those left in line would be only red-blooded Americans, Englishmen, or patriots. Then turn cards up to show five blacks removed leaving but five reds.

At start the color order of the deck's top 10 cards from top to face is - R-B-R-R-B-B-R-R-B-B. False dovetail shuffle leaving the top 10 intact, or overhand shuffle with faces of deck to audience, pulling bunches from center to be shuffled off on face, showing (?) the mixing.

# EDITRIVIA

The Jinx - Issue of October 12, 1940

We're going home in the spring. For thirteen years we've existed in New York City, the last five at the same address. Our Waverly, N.Y. spot for mail was kept, since that first advertisement in The Sphinx about fifteen years ago, because it was easily remembered and also because we sort of expected to return there one day. Countless times we've explained why we were having 200 miles from the mail deposit box. Countless times we'll probably wish we were back among our friends to "talk tricks" "do tricks" and ask "Who's in town?" It's a little place, as places go in that territory. Our 66 acres of woods and flatlands look mighty small, neighbor, (I can't say "pardner" until I get west of the Mississippi) beside the next hill and lowland site which takes in "roughly" 350 acres. However, we like our "plot" and intend making the place a "Do Come In" haven for anyone who wants to talk tricks and discuss the betterment of magic.

The Jinx (and/or The Sphinx) won't suffer. N.Y.C. is but six hours away by choo-choo cars. We'll go 'to town' once in a while to see the Dante show, which will probably be available. The magic boys we've been away from for so long can drive in for a fried chicken (raised and plucked between Jinx issues) orgy and, at last, a siesta sort of mystical melange that conditions have kept me from really enjoying for too long a time --- to end a lousily written tho happily phrased sentence. To Jinx readers I can but ask, "Come up and watch the grass grow."

The dream of the future must end for the moment (until spring! Tra-la! Ed.). The Dante show stays at the N.Y. Morosco until Oct. 20, at least. From there it is said that another theatre will house the production which has upset tradition in magic by playing Broadway on a "stay here" basis. It looks like a continuous run until and through the Xmas season, but do not take our word for it and plan that far ahead. We speak only for the deadline mentioned. See it NOW if you are within magically inclined distance.

Lest we forget the master publicist who made his name and "magic" synonymous, this coming Halloween (Oct. 31, 1940) is a good time to perpetuate his memory by writing up an article about our Art for YOUR local paper. Sell the story by first telling the reporter or editor (the latter is the best person to first approach) that it is Houdini's death anniversary. Tell him next about Houdini's fight against frauds and fakers in the realm of Spiritualism. Give him an instance of Houdini's prowess and sagacity. Take it from any one of Houdini's biographies now available --- or use your imagination. THEN tell the listener that you are giving a local show (or benefit) on that night at which time you'll try to duplicate a certain Houdini feat. Or, if not giving a public performance, say that you will be holding a "house" meeting (or seance) in honor of his memory. Invite the paper's feature writer to attend. Talk Houdini, make yourself appear as an authority on Houdini, lie like a beggar if you are cornered, and the local writeup will put you in a good light, I promise. This won't work on the big city dailies, but the 25,000 and less circulation papers will "go to town" on the "angle" IF-IF-IF you don't talk about what you do, but harp, harp and harp on the Houdini legends. You'll be mentioned aplenty

as "the source" as long as you boost Houdini.

All of that last barrage came from reading the GENII (Oct. 1940) frontspiece subtitle, to wit; "Houdini said, "When I pass on I would rather have one line in the Press than a \$100 wreath." He'll be happy, despite the fact that you've used his name to get YOURS in print. He used to do the same thing.

Trick of the month: (caption and the words to follow swiped from Genii) the offering by Jack Vosburgh in Jinx No. 108. --- We're sorry for latecomers because that issue went out of print within two weeks. However, Jack is putting out two booklets of more than modern ideas. Jack Vosburgh is a contributor from Sayre, Pennsylvania. He is not to be confused with L. Vosburgh Lyons, a New York City "regular" for many Jinx issues past. We'll have to locate a spiritualistic type of person who is doing a good business --- a happy medium --- and thus learn a way to make these names mean different people to you in the future --- always hoping that we get further contributions.

THE Frank Lane advertised in the Oct. Genii with a postscript saying "My reply to Anneman is in November Funny Talk." What an ingenious way to try and sell copies! As for the way Back Bay humorist's desire to see what sort of "sagacious orevic" (that's Lane vs. Boston for "wise crack") we might make in rebuttal, it's no go. Frank and his paper can go down the highway of life without further comment from us, we hope. (And so do I! Ed.) --- LIFE magazine for Oct. 14 had a nice series of pics about Dante, also the recent New England Magic Convention, Al Baker winning the most space. No exposing. --- Clayt Rawson's "The Headless Lady" novel is selling well but he is mystified by exhibitions of the illusion. "Onana" says one performer, "raise your right hand." She does. HOW DOES SHE HEAR?

In Jinx #107 the Editrivia belonged to Wm. Larsen. He graciously helped out on this page during our vacation. We promised, when requesting aid from those parties who so assisted us, that we'd never comment upon what might be written. Lew Dick, 42-60 Bowne St., Flushing, N.Y., writes "--- after listing all the magic clubs in Los Angeles --- L.A. magicians read that New York has but one magic club and weep tears for their Eastern brethren who are thus deprived of so much of life's riches." What Mr. Dick, a plenty high officer (past and present) in his domain, wants to know is "Which one did Larsen forget; the Society of American Magicians or the Knights of Magic?"

The N.Y. Parent Assembly of the S.A.M. is not too happy these days because of leaving the Hotel McAlpin for the Barbizon-Plaza. True, the new stage conditions are better for amateurs who blossom out at the sight of a raised platform with theatrical accoutrements less their objects d'art. But the real gripe comes from the hobbyists who don't perform, care little about the business meeting part, wait for the trick session, and then bask in a round of good fellowship in a nearby restaurant for a nite cap and/or snack. The new place has NO restaurant of a mind, to date, to let the S.A.M. crowd let down their hair. Something tells us that they shouldn't have flown in and against tradition. Not if the powers that be want to keep their subjects happy and trickontented.

When you feel very "cocky" remember the magician's wife who said, "I wish you'd get a regular job. I'm sick of rabbit stew."

*Theo Anneman*