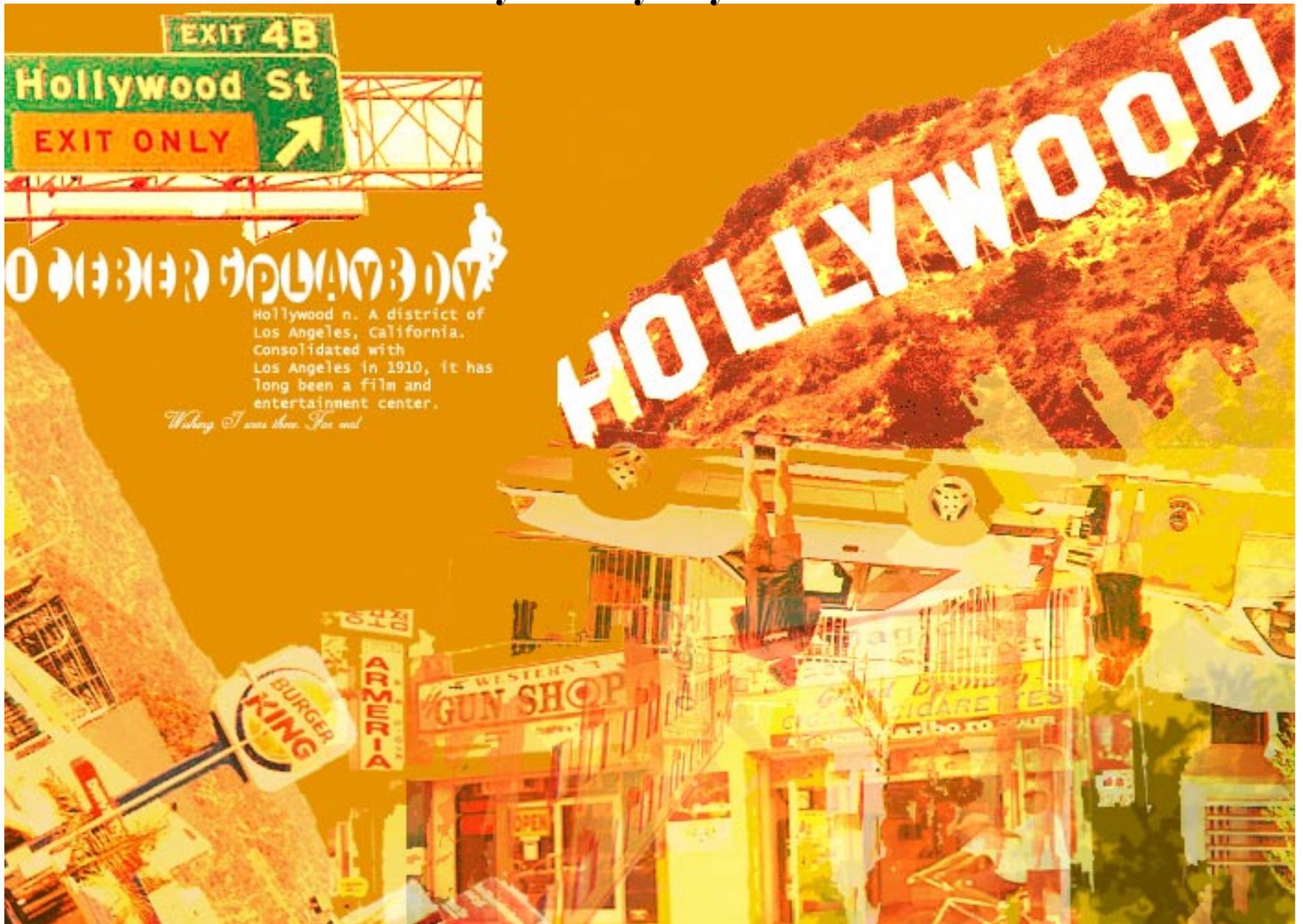


The Drink Tank Issue 91: A Hollywood Mystery



Hollywood n. A district of Los Angeles, California. Consolidated with Los Angeles in 1910, it has long been a film and entertainment center.

Wishy I was there. Fox said

Chris for TAFF

20 Cents
APRIL 16, 1921

Dramatic Mirror

and THEATRE WORLD



If you're not a fan of The Drink Tank when we get all Hollywood on you, then I'd look away. Ever since I've read Hollywood Babylon, I've been researching all the various Hollywood scandals of the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. There are some doozies out there! In this issue, I'll be looking in depth at one of them, the second most famous unsolved murder case in all of Hollywood: The Murder of William Desmond Taylor.

The Taylor Murder has been the talk of certain members of the Hollywood community since it happened on a February night in 1922. Taylor was home and apparently walking to his study when he was shot in the back.

If you're aware of Jack The Ripper and Zodiac Killer experts (and Jackson Garland, one of the foremost Zodiacologists, was a good friend of mine in High School) you'll not be surprised that there are many folks who have spent a lot of time looking into the life and murder of Mr. Taylor. There's even an eZine called Taylorology that's all about the man and the murder.

While going through a lot of the material that's out there, plus stuff that came to me through years of talking with Old Hollywood types (including Helen Hayes once or twice), I've finally come up with my idea of what really happened, who was telling the truth and why Paramount should be burned to the ground for the role they played in covering it all up.

Let's start at the beginning with the story of William Cunningham Deane-Tanner, an Irish-born lad who came to America in 1890 at the age of 18. There's a lot of talk that perhaps he had a family on the Isles that he ran away from, though there's no evidence of it, just later events influencing the thoughts of researchers. The most accepted theory is that William failed a test that would have allowed him to enter the upper ranks of the army like his father had. William had studied engineering during his days in the Army, though he had never much advanced. His Dad was a Major, so he had big

boots to fill. The trip to America landed him there at a time when guy with a bit of talent could go far. Many sources say William took up acting in a role in the show The Private Secretary. After doing pretty well, he was off to London to do some more acting. There are a lot of little stories, true or not, about William and his father butting heads in London over the whole acting thing. One has it that Maj. Tanner tried to get into the backstage to rail against his son in person and the Stage Door keeper denied him entrance.

His family pleaded with him to give it up, with the Major blaming it as the reason for a decline in the health of William's mother. William finally decided to leave the theatre, though he remained in touch with his friends from London.

In the old days, when moneyed families had sons who weren't making it, they'd set up places for them to gather out of the sight of the rest of the world. Dad must have wanted to get William out of the way because he sent him off to Kansas to work on a ranch he bought as a part of a colony for those poor underachieving sons of wealth.

Strangely, Bill didn't want to go. He'd started writing scripts for plays and that was allowing him to feel as if he were still a part of the community (especially since he was sending them back and forth to his theatre friends in

London). He also had a girl of ordinary birth that he'd been seeing since returning. There is a thought that William wanted to marry the girl, but he couldn't raise the funds to pay for it and move them to Canada. So that's when he tried to enter the ranks of the Army and failed. That then led to a wicked argument with his father which led to William leaving. According to the story, the Major sent the family of the girl away to another town so that William could never find her.

He arrived in New York, and if you've seen any movie which details a trip to America, you know that someone convinced William to take up with a mad scheme. Bill didn't go in for it fully, but while staying in New York, he formed a friendship with a Theatre Guy after letting him share some of his dinner. He got to hang with some of the theatre crowd and was even offered a part in a company, but turned it down since the money wasn't good enough. There's a belief that there was more to it as well, something about a woman he may have been seeing, so he ended up heading out to Kansas.

He got there and actually built a house on the land. He also discovered that he could make a little extra scratch by giving lectures in Harper, the city of the 'remittance colony' where William was homesteading. This made him somewhat popular among the better-off members of society, and

when Fanny Davenport, the famous actress, arrived (having gone to Harper as a part of a touring group she joined when debts were catching up to her), she met William.

Here's where the story gets a little muddy.

Legend: She said that one of her actors had come down with an illness and asked if William could play the role.

Legend: William bugged her so much that she gave him a role just to shut him up.

Legend: William was sleeping with Fanny and she gave him a role to keep him happy.

These are all possibilities, but I'm not sure any of them are true. Supposedly, William did well enough to be asked on the tour and he performed around the country. I did find a notice in the collection of History San Jose about the troupe coming through San Francisco, but no specific mention of William. Or Fanny Davenport for that matter, and she was a big deal. How far William went on the tour is a good question. It ran from 1896 through 1898, and

Fanny died at the end of 1898. I'd suspect Taylor was gone by the time she passed.

Again, William was supposed to have run into prospectors on his tour and they taught him everything he would ever need to know. I think that story was invented to give reason for his taking off in the early 1900s, but there's no proof of it ever happening. He went to Chicago and ended up in another theatre company and then to St. Paul, where he was bilked by a guy who tried to get him to join in on a diner. He was broke again, but he was OK since he had connections.

And he was good at cards. That was how he started to make a living for a while. He did well enough to get his overcoat out of hock. He made his way around Chicago, but couldn't



find a company that would take him. He started working as an artist and managed to make enough money doing it to move to Milwaukee.

He stayed in Wisconsin for a while, but it was obvious that he was headed off to NYC. He became a sharp-dressed cock-of-the-walk type around town, but he quickly found that he wasn't doing the amount of business that he would have liked, so he finally made the jump back to NYC.

Some say that he was chased out of town, again due to a woman. I don't know if that makes much sense, but I just thought I'd mention it.

The art store did good business in New York and he managed to join one of the prestigious yacht clubs. There are stories about his time there that show Taylor to be a bit of a Prima Donna, but you wouldn't believe those, would you? After a few months he met a girl.

And what a perfect girl for William.

Ethel May Harrison was the daughter of money, had been highly educated and was well-known for her stage work. You could say almost all of those things about William himself. She brought a comfortable lifestyle to William and that allowed him to become even more engrained in New York City society.

The couple had a kid, and as often happens, they started to fall

apart. William began to drink heavily. When you run in Society circles, it's easy for that to happen. There's no record of what really happened. There's a lot of talk about perhaps there was another woman, perhaps he felt that marriage was standing in his way on the acting front or perhaps that he was just bored of his wife. No one knows for sure, and it's sad because there's probably a lot to learn about Taylor in these years.

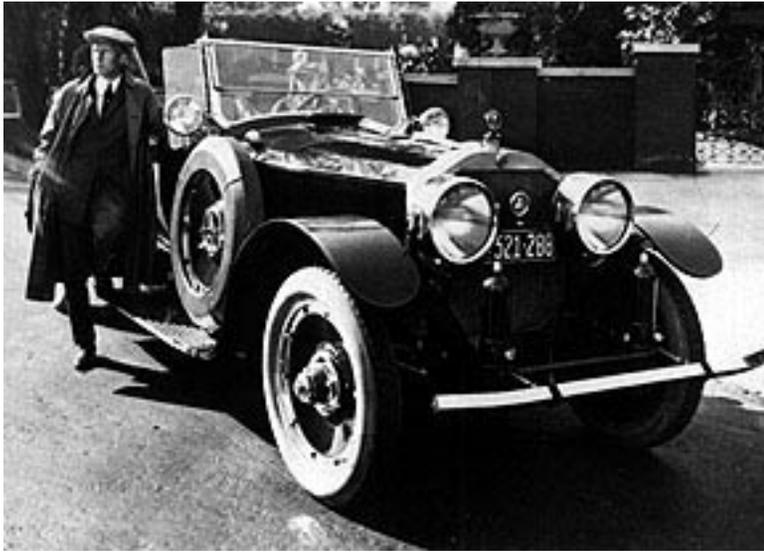
Of course, in those years he wasn't William Taylor, he was still William Deane-Tanner.

Taylor disappeared on his family in 1908. He went to a New York hotel, he put a call in for six hundred bucks and he vanished. He left behind his business and his family. What else did he leave behind in his rush? Again, stories of women and perhaps even men. There is the idea that perhaps Taylor, who had done fairly well for himself, had racked up debts with the wrong people and that forced him to



run. My favourite theory is that he was Shanghaied and put on a boat and thus traveled the world after a couple of guys rolled him and stole the \$600. I don't know about the validity of that story, though several people claim that it's 100% true and that Taylor himself told the story that way. It's a good way to get out of trouble for abandoning his family, but it's not believable in context. He sailed the world for several years and ended up in Portland, Oregon? I'm not sure how much I buy into that, but I am certain that he ended up in Portland somehow.

If he were looking for a way to justify his abandoning of his family, the being pressed into ship service excuse is a damn good one, even if it doesn't explain why he never tried to get his family back. I'm certainly of the opinion that the money he had sent over to the hotel started him on his way across to Portland. He may have even booked himself cheap passage on some steamer and made his way into various positions. In fact, there are stories of people all along the way from New York to Colorado who claim that Taylor was in their company during those missing years. It is known that he headed up to a place called Alaska. It had been almost ten years since the Klondike Strike. He made his way out from Montreal to Alaska, or so he claimed. I actually don't doubt that nearly as much as the Shanghaied



He got back on the stage in Alaska and did his thing. He also made investments in the States that failed and he ended up broke. He was told this in San Francisco. The year was probably 1910. If that's the case, SF was on a streak with a number of theatre companies that seemed to spring up new every month. Why he didn't stay in SF is a mystery, perhaps it was the sting of failure that he had been informed of in the Most

Beautiful City in the World that made him wanna set out for Honolulu, but he left with a theatre troupe and returned later having done very well. He also still owned a claim in Alaska.

story since there were a lot of folks who went the long way. The biggest thing is that Taylor didn't make his money from gold, but from running a store with supplies. That's an interesting thing as William wouldn't be the first guy I would think of as a shop man, but he always seemed to fall back on that.

When he came back to The City, he was nearly broke, but some of his old NYC friends were there and they made him their own again. But he was also going broke. He eventually sold his Alaska claim and the friends he'd made said that he should head to LA.

That's the point where everything either changed or stayed much the same.

You see, much more than anyone I've read, I think there's a woman thread that runs through all of Deane-Tanner/Taylor's life. Wallace Smith (who wrote the best of the contemporary bios of Taylor) doesn't really get into it. Neither do many of

the recent books. I really think that Taylor ran into issues with women and that caused much of his running and his money problems didn't help either. I don't buy that he was the victim of a number of coincidences that ended up with him getting basically away from everything. The most famous contemporary bio, the W. Smith, makes him out to have a cursed/charmed life that even he had no control over. I don't buy it. Guys like that don't become directors. Studio heads, maybe, but directors want to be in charge of every inch of the world.

Anyhow, there'll be more of that later.

Taylor made it to Hollywood and managed to get himself a spot in the flick *The Iconoclast* made by the old Kay-Bee Studio. I'm still not sure if that was actually his first film or if the others that are listed on his filmography were just released before *The Iconoclast*. He got good reviews as an actor and that started things rolling.

He started directing, mostly shorts, but he as quickly moved up the ranks. He directed a fifty-minute version of *Davey Crocket* in 1916. That wouldn't have been a main release, but it was a big deal. It was only a year later that he directed *Tom Sawyer* and that did very well.

It would be fair to say that William Taylor's career could be looked

at like Ben Stiller or Tim Robbins. A great actor who became a solid director. He wasn't the biggest name director in the world, and his films weren't above criticism, but he did very well.

One of the most desired lost films currently is Anne of Green Gables. This is the most important film of William Desmond Taylor. Here, he established himself as the great director and made his star, Mary Miles Minter .

There's a story in Hollywood, and everywhere else that employs actors and directors, that if your star doesn't fall in love with your director, then there's no chance of it working. And so it appears to have happened to MMM and WDT. Or at least in one direction. MMM was certainly in love with William, and you can read that in the note. She was 17, 18 tops. Taylor was in his late 40s.

Even if MMM was the apple of his eye, there were lots of rumors and William had a rep as a lothario. There are about 15 females whose names I've read in various sources that have been linked with William Desmond Taylor. Among them was a woman named Patricia Palmer.

She was Margaret Gibson by birth, but she came to Hollywood and was an actress, as I understand it, she mostly worked for Keystone Studios. What her involvement with Taylor was isn't certain, but even Doug Fairbanks

Jr. knew that she was involved with Taylor.

That's right: I knew folks who knew Douglas Fairbanks Jr. In his later years (the 1980s), a friend of mine from College (Doug) used to work for him doing small jobs. I dropped him a line and asked if he'd ever talked about the Taylor case.

Yeah, he did. Anytime there'd be a news item about a couple breaking up because of infidelity he'd say 'You know, that's the sort of thing that killed Bill Taylor. I finally wanted to know what he meant and he told me the story. I remember him listing off women that Taylor was supposed to be have



slept with. "It's what killed him. Jealous boyfriend."

I asked if Fairbanks ever mentioned Palmer.

*I think he did. He always talked about Mary Miles (**I think he meant Minter**) and Mabel Normand, Lillian Gish and I'm pretty sure he mentioned Patty Palmer.*

Sadly, of the Hollywood old-timers I've met, I've never known enough about Taylor to talk to them. There aren't a lot of people who were around then that you can still talk to.

In 1964, Palmer had a heart attack in the home of a friend. As she laid dying, she confessed her greatest sin: that she had killed William Taylor. She was never a real suspect, and the whispers about her relationship with Taylor were far less active than those about Minter or Normand. There's little reason to think that she was lying, I mean, what'd she have to gain, but there's not a lot of evidence of any sort to help prove her as the killer. I don't think she did it...but you never know.

The day of his murder was pretty odd. He desposited a few checks in the morning. He then went and bailed out his butler, Henry Peavey. Why was Peavey arrested? Solicitation of men, from what I understand. Some claim that he was doing so for Taylor, but who knows. He went and did a little shopping, wrote a check to Jack O'Brien, bought a couple of books,



including one on Nietzsche and even passed MMM and her Grandmother in the

car. They stopped and chatted for a moment and there were a few hairs on Taylor's coat that seemed to come from some greeting they shared.

He had lunch with a friend and stopped by his Tax Preparer. There are tales that he had shown them a wad of bills totaling about 6 grand. That's a lot of money. They never saw this money again. It wasn't in the house and it wasn't anywhere else that anyone could tell. This plays a large part in one of my theories.

He did a dance lesson and finally headed home. Peavey made Taylor dinner and left...supposedly. After dinner, he made a phone call to Antonio Moreno. That was followed by the arrival of Miss Mabel Normand.

That's a name that is very important. There's no way she killed Taylor, but her career was killed because of the publicity. Supposedly Taylor gave her the Nietzsche book and they talked a bit. There might have been more. Mabel was a druggie, and really it was the fact that she was a user that was discovered during the Taylor investigation and ruined her career. One of the most popular

theories is that Taylor wanted to get Mabel out of the Vida Loco and was ready to roll on her dealers. Supposedly those dealers didn't take kindly to this and snuffed Taylor. There's no real evidence that Taylor had run across any drug ring. My thought that springs out of this is that Taylor gave Miss Normand the six grand either to get her square or to deliver as a pay-off to them to get her out of their clutches. There's probably a half-dozen reasons why that's not true (like Normand was a rich woman...or so it would seem) but it's a one thing makes me think concept.

After Normand left, that's when it happened. A few of the neighbors saw someone heading into Taylor's house as Normand was still inside, including one who got a really good look. After a while, Taylor walked Normand to her car. That's the interesting part. The story goes that as they were out by her car, the killer snuck in to the house and waited behind the door. There's a lot of reasons I've discounted that theory in my own mind (would a man with 6 grand in the house leave the door wide open?) but it does make sense timing-wise. The neighbor saw the man walking down the drive, saw the woman and then made like he forgot something and headed back into the house. That's the key event...if she's got it right. A few minutes later

she heard a pop that she thought was a car backfiring (and today, when back-firing is nowhere near as frequent an event, it's still the reason people claim when they don't call the cops after hearing a gunshot). That was probably the time of the murder.

Certainly it all lines up with the idea of whoever was selling to Mabel Normand wanting to kill Taylor. They followed Normand to Taylor's house, or perhaps her chauffeur tipped them off that they'd be stopping by. They sent a guy over and he hid. He might have made it into the courtyard and waited there until he saw Mabel and William leave, then he was going to go down and confront Taylor with Normand, perhaps. Seeing the neighbor, he turned around and hid back in the house.

The murder wasn't revealed until the next morning. Peavey arrived and found the body. According to legend, and I'm fairly certain he mentioned it in one of his statements, he ran down the street screaming 'Dey've kilt Massa! Dey've Kilt Massa!' though that may just be legend, as so much is in the



story of the murder. Kenneth Anger, writer of Hollywood Babylon, wrote it up like that, but it may or may not be true. It's certainly more cinematic. A neighbor called the cops and that led to a swarm of folks entering the house.

Here's a point of contention. There's always been the thought that one of Taylor's neighbors, since they almost all worked in film, called the studio and they rushed over before police and cleaned the scene of anything that may have made the industry look bad. They might have gotten rid of all the liquor for example. No one messed with the body, it would seem.

When the cops got there, they shooed everyone off. Charles Eyton had gathered up some personal letters, saying that they might be damaging to various people and he was allowed to

carry them off. He also hid some letters from Minter to Taylor in a boot, there were found. There's the classic story of a doctor being at the scene and saying that Taylor died of natural causes. This could have been someone sent by the studio to try and get the cops out of there fast, or it could have been someone sent by whoever hired the killer.

And more than likely, it was a hired hit and not a personal murder.

Over the next few days, things were found. Some say there were nude pictures of starlets. Probably not, but maybe. Some say there were various garments from different women that Taylor held on to as pelts of conquests. There were some found certainly, but not the number claimed and none were certainly able to be connected to any particular person. The letters

from Mary Miles Minter were discovered days later, as was the note that just repeated I Love You from MMM. That's one of the things that really connected her to the case.

Her and her mother.

You see, there are more theories about MMM and her mother, Charlotte Shelby. I'll talk more about those in a minute.

The body was face up on the carpet, and with the doctor saying Natural Causes, they didn't turn

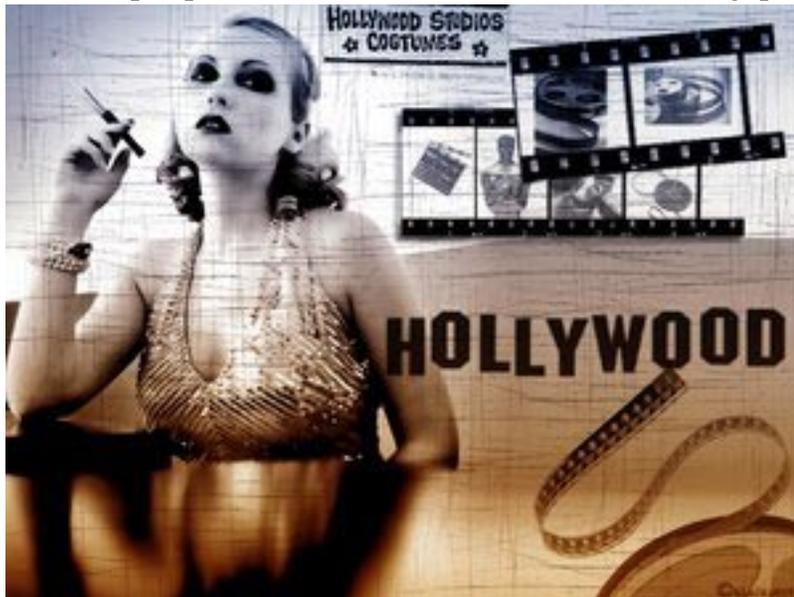
the body over for a while when they discovered that he had been shot.

This makes little sense. Even if it'd been natural causes, they'd have turned him over to see what he had in his pockets. In most cases, even if it's natural causes, they still suspect robbery as the motive. Supposedly, Eyton was the guy who told them to turn the body over. I don't buy it, but I'll let it go.

They discovered that the bullet went in through his back and that the hole in his coat didn't match up with the one in his vest, meaning that he either had his hands up or he was reaching for something that required him to stretch forward. These are two very different positions. Let's say that he had his hands above his head. He's walked back in from his goodbyes with Mabel and the guy steps out from behind the door.

"Stick 'em up!" says the killer.

Taylor does just that, and perhaps they engage in small talk. It was a few minutes after he left Normand, so they had some time to kill, and he was shot very shortly after walking in the door. They must have talked. It's probable that he didn't know his killer, but he probably would have been told what was going on. The path of the bullet might have shown that he was starting a turn, or maybe to grab that chair when the shot went off.

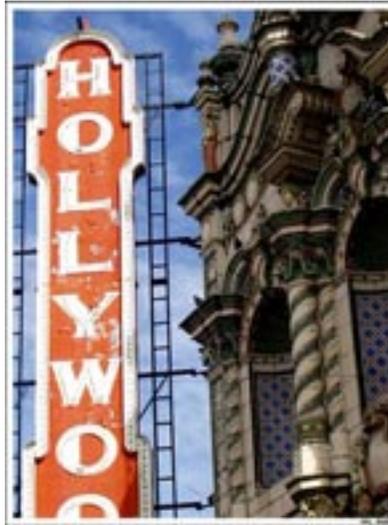


The other option was that he was in the house and the killer was stalking him into the house, William heard him and tried to get the chair when he was shot. Either one works, but that first one makes a much better scene.

The investigation reached a lot of deadends. They've lost evidence, they've had suspects walk off, even within a few years of the murder, they had people dying who maybe could have solved things. It's basically an unsolvable crime.

But here are my ideas

The obvious one that a lot of folks latch onto is Charlotte Shelby dressed like a man, snuck into the bungalow and shot him. There's good evidence for it. She owned a .38, the kind of gun he was shot with. She had a good reason, Taylor was 'engaged' to her daughter, Mary Miles Minter, and perhaps she had even partied with the Don Juan herself. Jealousy, the desire to keep her cash cow out of the hands of Taylor, there's a lot of possible angles to play this one from. She didn't shoot him. That's almost 100% impossible due to the description of the person the neighbor saw re-entering the house. She said it might have been a woman in disguise (which also adds validity to the Palmer confession), but she wouldn't have looked much like the man she described. Now, I do think that she did



go in without being seen? He did cover things pretty well, but still, a little sloppy.

The other idea I've been on is that Taylor's valet, Peavey, was in league with someone. Now, Peavey was in jail until Taylor bailed him out. That was either the morning he was killed, or maybe a few days prior (there are no records of dates). If Peavey knew that Taylor had that much scratch around the house, he might have had a connection with someone who he could have split the funds with him. Now, what if he had managed to get one of the boys he had been soliciting to help him try and get the money.

The guy hides behind the door, sneaking in when they pass to Normand's car. He hides and then Taylor returns.

"Stick 'em up!" the guy says.

"What do you want?" says Taylor.

it herself, but there's a certain appeal to her hiring a gun to take care of Taylor.

But...

He was seen going in to the house. Why not wait until it would be easier to

go in without being seen? He did cover things pretty well, but still, a little sloppy.

The other idea I've been on is that Taylor's valet, Peavey, was in league with someone. Now, Peavey was in jail until Taylor bailed him out. That was either the morning he was killed, or maybe a few days prior (there are no records of dates). If Peavey knew that Taylor had that much scratch around the house, he might have had a connection with someone who he could have split the funds with him. Now, what if he had managed to get one of the boys he had been soliciting to help him try and get the money.

The guy hides behind the door, sneaking in when they pass to Normand's car. He hides and then Taylor returns.

"Stick 'em up!" the guy says.

"What do you want?" says Taylor.

"Give me the money!" he says.

"You can go and get it yourself. It's driving away right now. I gave it to Miss Normand."

"Bullshit! Hand it over. You've got to three. 1-2-3."

He shoots Taylor.

Now, there are several possibilities here. He goes and starts to look around, but Peavey has told him not to mess things up too much because they need to be able to throw light on the others in his life. Peavey would have known about Mabel Normand and MMM, so he would have been trying to keep the heat on them, and neither of them would ever have to deal with things. Taylor was wearing his diamond ring and had money in his pocket, but not nearly enough to dissuade any killer from getting towards six large.

Now, the place didn't look like it had been ransacked, but by the time the cops got there, there were folks all over the place. So, if the killer had managed to find the money, he just runs off, maybe skipping out on Peavey, leaving him out of the running for the cash. The guy might have just killed him and then after a certain amount of searching, he left. It's hard to accuse someone of being a killer when there's no connection to the victim whatsoever.

There's another idea, and it's one that I actually think might be

good. What if Taylor had crossed the wrong man. What if he had slept with, say, a young starlet who was a favourite of a Studio Head. Now, at this time there was an element of the mob in Hollywood, but they hadn't really made that much of an impact into the pictures yet. Maybe this was the first sign of what was to come when Bugsy would enter Tinseltown. If he had crossed the wrong person on the hierarchy, and perhaps he did it several times, they easily could have wanted him out of the way, and hiring a killer would have been an easy way to go. If you look at the list of people who he was supposed to be involved with, several of them were also known to be favourites of many of the major players who ran those precious studios which were often like countries unto themselves.

The weird thing is that Patricia Palmer got work at Paramount-Laskey studios. Maybe she was the one who killed Taylor, perhaps she had a plan to use her wiles on him, but then found that she could simply shoot him. I can't put anyone who was certainly connected to Taylor as a favourite of Laskey, but it'd be hard to believe that there wasn't one in the mix.

So, that's the picture I wanted to paint. William Desmond Taylor, aka William Cunningham Deane-Tanner, was murdered and we'll probably never be sure what really happened.

and that's why people still talk about the murder of William Desmond Taylor.

**Letter-Graded Mail
sent to
gardia@computerhistory.org
by my gentle Readers!**

First off...Lloyd Penney!

Dear Chris:

I am cleaning out my Zines To Loc folder on my desktop, and all I see is one issue of The Drink Tank, number 90. So let's do a loc on a single issue for a change...

But we've LOVED those Lloyd Penney style LoCs (Viewable on LiveJournal.com)

The date that wasn't a date... sounds like you're going to be friends before anything else more involved happens. Got drunk together, passed out together...this sounds like the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Tell us more about Sara in future issues, okay?

Indeed I will...if she ever calls me back!

I didn't have any dreams about what I wanted to be when I grew up. My guidance counselors in school were too busy telling me what I couldn't do.



So, I didn't know what I wanted to be, and I'd guess I didn't bother growing up, either.

I tried to avoid growing up...so I found myself websites to write for to justify my youth habits like comics and wrestling.

My loc...same weather conditions. Britain is really hot, and California is superhot. I read yesterday that one area of California recorded 125 degrees Fahrenheit, which is getting near the lethal range. Everyone knows me? Not even close. I still go to conventions where I am a stranger to most. Even if I was tempted to run, I think you'd win. Fandom in California is so populous; you'd win in a landslide. Up here, most fans aren't aware of fandom as we know it.

There's a lot of talk as to my chances. Within BArea fandom, I'm well-liked, if not universally known. LA fandom and I get along, though I'm not terribly well-known. LV fandom? I love them and they've been so wonderful to me. Outside of those folks, I'm not sure what my chances are.

Single issue, short loc. Perhaps another good reason to do them in twos and threes. I imagine you're getting things ready for the Hollister party at LA, and perhaps something for the fanzine lounge. Our hotel is arranged, we have some plans for the two days before the convention, and we are so looking forward to going. And, we shall see you there. We'll be in on the 20th. Take care!

I haven't had a chance to get anything printed for WorldCon yet, and I'm hoping to get about 500 copies of various things for passing out. It's not gonna be pretty.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

And now...John Purcell!!!

And by association, this loc is also going to take note of your TAFF campaign zine, Print Zine #0. So, here's a quick "thank you" for passing along the Garcia lexicography. I guess this will come in handy if I ever make it out to the Bay Area. Good luck on

the campaign trail. Take a look in my zines; you will see that I am doing my part on your behalf.

I am so damn grateful for all the good press from ya. It's gonna be a tough race: I'm not a BNF who has decided to step into a race designed for BNFs.

DT #89:

I don't play poker. Never have. So I do thank Mike for passing along his pointers, but I think I'll stick to Cribbage and Hearts. I'm pretty good at those card games.

Alana, she of good rack and great sarcasm, introduced me to



Rummy 5k. It's addictive.

Hmmm... I don't think I really have a favorite film genre. If you tried to pin me down, I think I would have to go with Trashy Science Fiction Movies. See, I love to make fun of them. When I was on the Minicon

film committee eons ago (it seems) we deliberately sought out, purchased/rented, and consequently presented them in the film room, and proceeded to heckle the movies we were showing. It was so much fun. I do hope that the Minicon film committees have been continuing this fine, worthy tradition since 1992. This reminds me about Aggiecon 37's lack of a film room. (*sound of gnashing of teeth here*) They may have to do something about this in the future. At least they have the Schlock Film Festival once a year. That's a lot of fun, I hear tell.

Boston has a 24 Hour SF Film Festival. When I was living out there, I never attended. I hung out less than a mile from the NESFA Clubhouse and I've never been. I'm a bad fan.

DT #90: So the date went very well, it sounds like. Have fun, if you know what I mean, *wink-wink*nudge-nudge* Say no more...

Indeed I will. And there's this girl named Jen...

If Eric Mayer's writing advice about "writing like a computer" gets you productive again, we'll have to see how you do. Word of advice from a college English teacher: try to read your writing critically as if you were a reader who had never heard of Chris Garcia before. Actually, given the

circle of friends you're surrounded by - namely, Bay Area Fandom - start up a writing circle and critique each other's work. At least you have a large base in terms of numbers of people who are well-versed in what makes a good story work. Give it a shot, says I.

Not yet. I'll wait five years after my declaration so I don't feel like such a hypocrite. I've got folks around who'll give me honest opinions on my writing (and who say that the Drink Tank is at its best when I'm NOT the one doing most of the writing), but I'm not ready for my return.

You mention in your response to Lloyd Penney that you hope at least one other person declares himself or herself in the running. That would be nice. I, for one, would hate to come in second in a one-man race. (You do know I'm kidding, don't you, Chris? Chris...?)

I've had conflicting reports on this, but as I understand it, if no one else runs, then there's no TAFF race and therefore, no delegate. I've also heard that it'd then come down to me beating H. Oldover Funds. With a one man race, I doubt that many Brits would vote at all or would vote Hold Over Funds. That'd be rough.

The Hollister in '08 front is heating up. Must be the fashionable

thing to do.

Hey, everybody loves Hollister nowadays!

When I read on the Internet that Mickey Spillane had died it caught me by surprise. I hadn't realized that he was still alive! Still, a long shadow has been cast over the gumshoe's sidewalk. He will definitely be missed.

I'll miss the big lug. There was a guy who really deserved to be called a lug.

David Moyes' loc reminded me about how much I loved Westerns when I was a wee lad. Sometimes on Saturday mornings if I'm before Daniel I'll have a couple cups of coffee while watching TCM. There's usually a fine

crop of classic westerns on tap every Saturday morning on that channel, but you probably know that already. But my biggie as a kid was watching Have Gun, Will Travel, The Rifleman, Gunsmoke, and a show I haven't seen in absolutely ages, The Rebel. I even used to have a Johnny Yuma novel. That was good stuff. And then Nick Adams parlayed his fame over in Japan in a whole new series of cinematic blunders. Talk

about your career moves...

I wish I was big in Japan. There are a lot of silent westerns on DVD that I might start watching on a regular basis. I really would like to see some of those old Essanays that were made in Niles.

Hey, thanks for the zines. Keep me on the mailing list, and I'll see you in the funny pages.

Thanks much, John!

All the best,

John Purcell

This issue of The Drink Tank was tragically delayed when Chris started reading too much about old Hollywood.

