

The Hanussen Proof



An Original Routine for Mentalists by Bob Cassidy

All contents © 2002 by Robert E Cassidy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE PREMISE	1
PART ONE	3
EXHIBIT A:	3
EXHIBIT B:	3
THE ARREST	4
EXHIBIT C:	5
THE TRIAL	5
EXHIBIT D: EXHIBIT E:	7
PART TWO	8
THE EFFECT	9
PROPS REQUIRED:	10
METHOD:	10
STAGE ONE	11
STAGE TWO:	13
THE STACK OF ENVELOPES	13
THE DATE CARDS:	16
CLAIRVOYANCE –	18
THE PRIMARY ILLUSION	18
THE CLEAN-UP	19
HANUSSEN’S SECRET?	19
Postscript	20

THE PREMISE

The premise of “Hanussen’s Proof,” and my search for an effective method, were inspired by an event that took place in the spring of 1930. The mentalist/psychic Eric Jan Hanussen was indicted and tried on charges of criminal fraud arising from a public demonstration of alleged “clairvoyance.” As

the trial neared its conclusion and the evidence against Hanussen grew, he concluded that his only chance of acquittal would be to demonstrate his ability to the court.

His offer of proof was accepted, and, under strict conditions, the demonstration proceeded. In the final test, Hanussen was asked to describe what happened at certain locations on certain dates. The correct answers were known only to his inquisitors. It was the same test the mentalist performed the night he was arrested, except on that occasion the details of the events were secretly transmitted to Hanussen by an assistant. This time, however, his assistant, wife, and associates were not present. They had been removed from the courtroom, and placed under police guard.

Despite the strict conditions, Hanussen's descriptions were correct. The charges against him were dismissed.

The sensational publicity that followed his acquittal, his subsequent rise to fame as "The Prophet of the Third Reich," and his execution by the Gestapo in 1933, are all described in Mel Gordon's fascinating biography, *Erik Jan Hanussen, Hitler's Jewish Clairvoyant*. His primary sources were news reports, court records, historical materials, Hanussen's own writings, and the published recollections of his contemporaries and critics.

But nowhere is there a clue to the method Hanussen used at the trial. How was he able to reveal events that occurred in people's lives merely by knowing the dates and places?

"The Hanussen Proof" is a routine that will allow you to demonstrate the same ability.

Part One is a revised version of history I use in the presentation of the effect. It is not given to you as a history lesson. (In fact, some of it won't be found in any history book – Only the dates, places and general circumstances of the arrest and trial are true)

When I present the routine, I begin by telling the story of the "Miracle of Leitmeritz."

[I have included some other "evidence" that may explain what really happened. -That is for your reference only, and is decidedly NOT part of the routine. There are some things, after all, that the public must never know.]

Part Two consists of the actual routine and method.

A CAUTIONARY NOTE:

What follows in **Part One** may or not be completely accurate, as the credibility of some my sources is dubious. Much of it creates further speculation and suggests that there is more to the history of mentalism than we may have imagined.

The information contained in **Part Two**, however, is completely trustworthy.

PART ONE

Facts Regarding the Case of the Alleged Miracle at Leitmeritz

The authenticity of the Dr. Croix letter, the actual method employed at the trial, and the possible relationship of *Ipomoea Jalap* to Hanussen's murder by the Gestapo in 1934, cannot be verified. The recipient of the letter, however, claims it is authentic and that the events it relates are probably true.

EXHIBIT A:



IPOMOEA JALAP, sometimes known as “Jalap” or “Jalapa,” is indigenous to Mexico, parts of Central America, Louisiana, Florida, and other sections of the American Southeast. It is a member of the morning glory family, and its root is valued for its medicinal properties. It is named after Jalapa, Mexico, which is near the forest where it was first discovered.

EXHIBIT B:

“Low John and High John” roots are terms used by “root men,” “wise women,” “conjuremen,” and other practitioners of “Hoo Doo,” an American folk tradition based on the magical, but not the religious, aspects of New Orleans Voodoo. “Root men” often call themselves “Doctor,” and adopt the names of totem animals, ie. - “Doctor Snake,” “Doctor Fox,” “Doctor Possum,” etc.

Low John root, also known as Chewing John, is sometimes called John the Conqueror Root. There are two types of Conqueror Root, however, Low John and High John. High John is actually the root of the Mexican Jalap (*Ipomoea Jalap*), a member of the Morning Glory family. It is an extremely powerful diuretic and should not be ingested. Low John, on the other hand, is a Southeast Asian variety of ginger and is actually very tasty. Hanussen may have feared that he had received the diuretic version

THE ARREST

February 28, 1928

(The following is based on descriptions that were apparently gathered during the two-year period that elapsed between Hanussen's arrest and trial. Since recording equipment was not commonly found in Czechoslovakian cabarets in 1928, and because the language spoken was German, you may correctly assume that I've taken some liberties with the dialogue.)

The defendant, Erik Jan Hanussen, was arrested after a cabaret performance at the Hotel Monopol in Teplitz-Schönau, in the Republic of Czechoslovakia.

During the show, members of the audience were asked to write down dates and places associated with significant personal events. Hanussen's assistant then went into the audience, where he took the slips from people, and loudly asked the mentalist such questions as, "Can you tell us what happened on the third of July in 1923 at 23 Dinkelstrasse?" or "What happened to this nice gentleman in Prague on the twenty-third day of May, 1918?"

Hanussen, to the amazement of all, accurately described the events in these people's lives. Unfortunately, there was a suspicious police officer at the show who convinced an audience member to give Hanussen's assistant false information if he probed for any details about his date and place. And, sure enough, when the assistant took the man's slip (while the audience was still loudly applauding Hanussen's last revelation) he quietly said to the man, "This date is too recent, Hanussen will not think it is interesting."

The audience member, with the encouragement of the police officer, replied that it was very interesting indeed, for his factory had been robbed that night. The man added that his guard was shot and seriously wounded, and that the gunman was still at large. In truth, though there had been a robbery, the shooting never occurred and no one was injured.

Hanussen's assistant decided that the date was interesting indeed, and when the audience's applause died down, he loudly asked the clairvoyant if he could describe what had happened the night before on a nearby street.

Hanussen went into an apparent trance and began to see an "impression" about a robbery. He described shadowy figures lurking about a local factory. Suddenly he grasped his stomach and

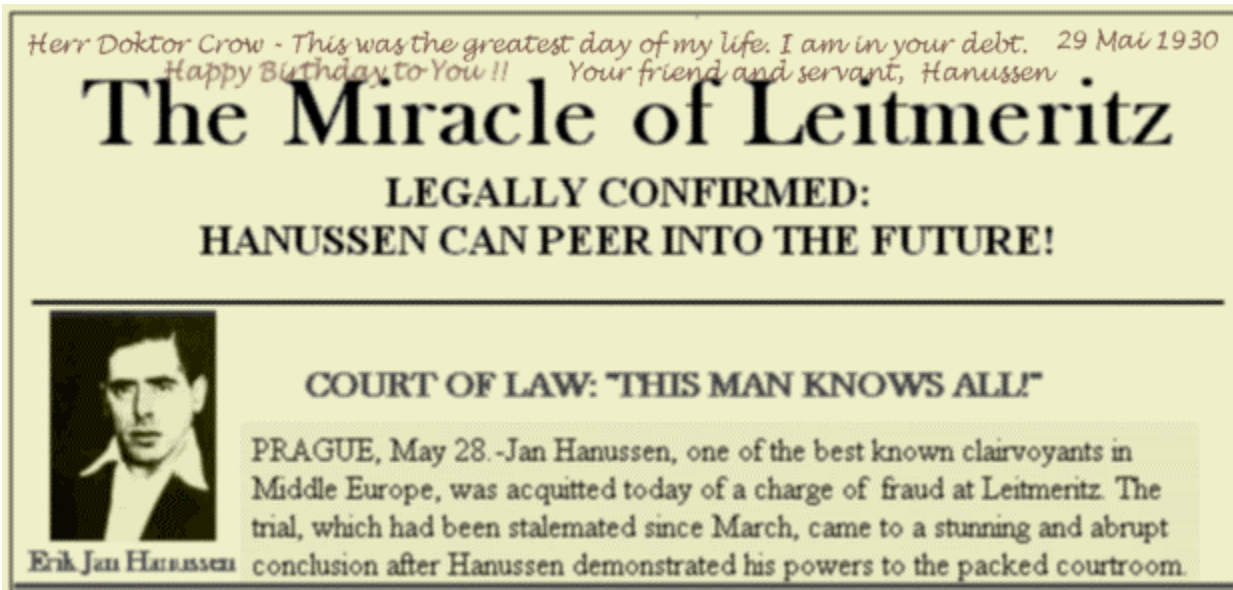
screamed, "Someone had been shot! A brave man has died! No... no, he is not dead! But he is severely shot! And the man with the gun has escaped!"

As the audience wildly cheered, Hanussen collapsed in apparent exhaustion, and the curtains closed.

A few minutes later Hanussen, now thoroughly recovered from his trying ordeal, and his assistant were arrested. The suspicious police officer concluded that the demonstration was not clairvoyance, but a fraudulent act committed against the citizens of the Republic.

(Whether the audience was still applauding the highly entertaining revelations that the guard was only "severely shot," and that a mad gunman was on the loose on a nearby street, is not known.)


EXHIBIT C:



*Herr Doktor Crow - This was the greatest day of my life. I am in your debt. 29 Mai 1930
Happy Birthday to You!! Your friend and servant, Hanussen*

The Miracle of Leitmeritz

**LEGALLY CONFIRMED:
HANUSSEN CAN PEER INTO THE FUTURE!**



COURT OF LAW: "THIS MAN KNOWS ALL!"

PRAGUE, May 28. -Jan Hanussen, one of the best known clairvoyants in Middle Europe, was acquitted today of a charge of fraud at Leitmeritz. The trial, which had been stalemated since March, came to a stunning and abrupt conclusion after Hanussen demonstrated his powers to the packed courtroom.

Erik Jan HANUSSEN

THE TRIAL

The prosecutors assigned to prepare the case against Hanussen did not restrict their investigation to Hanussen's theatrical performance. They were concerned that the court might find that charges of fraud did not apply to what was clearly a "music hall performance."

After a two-year investigation into Hanussen's "private consultation" activities, a felony indictment was filed. He was formally charged with duping "mentally impaired citizens" of the Republic of Czechoslovakia, and the case was set down for trial in the nearby town of Leitmeritz.

Although some witnesses testified favorably about Hanussen's ability, the prosecution presented many "experts" who debunked the mentalist's psychic claims. More damaging was the parade of witnesses who testified that Hanussen had charged them money for psychic advice or information that later turned out to be false. (The Republic apparently had no reservations about convicting Hanussen with proof offered by the "mentally impaired.")

Hanussen concluded that his only hope of avoiding a conviction was by offering a demonstration that would prove his clairvoyant ability. His attorney was totally surprised when the mentalist made his offer of proof to the judge. (It is said that the lawyer's face went into tic-like spasms.)

The next day, Hanussen was led out of the courtroom while several tests were prepared. Among them was the test he had performed on the night of his arrest. Hanussen would be given dates and places that were associated with events known only to the judge and selected individuals - events that could be guessed only if the "guesser" was truly clairvoyant. For this time, his wife, his associates and his assistant were removed from the courtroom and placed under heavy surveillance. Hanussen would be on his own.

The mentalist was led back into the courtroom and the tests began. The first tests were inconclusive; his demonstration of handwriting analysis was convincing, but a few impressive hits with during his psychometry demonstration were followed by some vague generalities and misses.

What happened next is subject to dispute. Hanussen sat down and removed a rosary-like string of beads he called his "Gomboloy" from his pocket. Some witnesses say he also took something else from his pocket, something that looked like an unwrapped chocolate candy, the type Americans called a tootsie roll. As he gripped the "Gomboloy" in his left hand, he stared at the piece of candy in his right. He started to bring it to his mouth, but his body suddenly stiffened, the candy fell to the floor and his eyes stared blankly at the prosecuting attorney.

The packed courtroom went silent. Hanussen seemed to be in a deep trance. One of the lawyers, probably more concerned by the possibility that the clairvoyant had suffered a stroke, quickly asked a question.

"What happened on May 17, 1927 at four o'clock in the afternoon on Boreslauer Strasse?"

"A motorcycle accident," answered Hanussen, in a slow monotone.

The answer was inexplicably correct.

A doctor then submitted a time and place to the dazed psychic. Hanussen muttered some apparent generalities that did not give the specific answer sought by the physician, who had been promoted by his university on the given day.

The Prosecuting Attorney fired out a time and place.

Hanussen intoned a detailed description of a birth, the birth of the prosecutor's son.

The stunned prosecutor turned to the bench. Hanussen was exactly right.


Before another word could be said or another test given, the Magistrate rose to his feet and announced that he had seen and heard enough. He ordered the attorneys to prepare their closing arguments.

The trial was over. The next evening the judge read his verdict. The man accused by the Republic of Czechoslovakia of fraud, was acquitted of all charges.

The crowded courtroom broke into cheers.

Within two years, Erik Hanussen would become the premier psychic of his time.

EXHIBIT D:



**The First Spiritualist
Temple of St Expédite**

Founded - 1934

23 Laveau Street, Bayou Deleacroix, Louisiana

The Reverend Dr. Croix
Metaphysician

religious supplies, herbs, oils, books, personal services, all manner of problems fixed,
mojo hands, amulets, talismans, curios, psychic Tarot readings, everything you need.

June 3, 2002

My Dear Doctor Bob,

Thank you for the birthday gift. It shall be put to good use, you can be sure of that.

As to the Leitmeritz matter- Hanussen wired me in April of 1930. The case against him was stronger than he had thought.

He believed he would have to prove his "powers" in court to get an acquittal. But he knew the court would not allow his assistant to remain in the room, so that ruled out the carbon boards and the code work. He needed a way to win on his own.

I sent him some Low John. But to be on the safe side, I also sent him the the same trick I taught you that time you were busted in Guadalajara. It worked, but he didn't chew the root. If he did they never would have shot his ass. *Be well my friend,*

Doctor Crow

EXHIBIT E:

I have no doubt that what Crow says is true. The reference to me being busted, however, is an inside joke.

He taught me the effect to make amends for an embarrassing incident which he instigated last year while we were enjoying native folk dancing and a few bottles of *St. Expedites Express*™ in a Guadalajaran cafe called *VivaTotale Nudite*'.

(Do you realize that Hanussen's note on the news article refers to Crow's 33rd birthday?? That would make him 105 years old, which I find hard to believe considering the stunt he pulled off in Guadalajara.)

Dr. Bob
June 23, 2002

PART TWO

THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE

Very often, I will tell a story or anecdote as a lead in to a routine. When I present “The Hanussen Proof”

I usually begin by telling the story of Hanussen’s arrest and trial, concluding with the observation that the test is rarely seen today. This suggests to the audience that they are about to see something unique and participate in an actual test of my abilities.

This is why one spectator is selected to act as “Judge.” I do not address him by name during the presentation – I always refer to him only as “The Judge.”

The routine is set up as a “Test Conditions Test”, because the “test conditions” are the basis of the method. The premise is what makes the necessary handling seem completely logical.

The basic principle was first used in a question answering method attributed to Burling Hull. It was one of those ideas that read so well on paper, but just don’t look right in performance. Pencils and cards were distributed to the audience. The cards were perforated down the middle and there were matching “serial numbers” on each half. They were told to print their questions on one half of the card, and then to tear the card in half along the perforation. The halves with the questions were collected and placed in a container or bowl at the front of the room and then burned. They were, of course, actually collected in a switching basket and dummies were burned

The performer explained that it would be impossible to answer everyone’s question, so that in order to be fair, participants would be selected at random. He told them to remember the numbers on their stubs, and the stubs were then collected in the same basket that was used to collect the questions, where they were switched for the original question cards. The mind reader would take a “stub” from the basket and call out its serial number. The person who had that number would stand and the performer would read his mind. Not very difficult, since the “stubs” were actually the question cards themselves.

On paper, it sounds good. In practice, it just looks wrong. If someone were to walk into the room during the second half of the routine, it would look like the performer was selecting cards with questions on them and giving answers. Which he was.

In “The Hanussen Proof, “ the same idea is employed, but is completely disguised by the “Test Conditions” motif. The “psychometry” marking principle and two practically self working switches are also employed.

THE EFFECT

Five members of the audience are selected to act as subjects in a test of the mentalist's ability to reveal important events that occurred in each of their lives. A sixth person is selected to assist the mentalist, to insure the fairness of the proceedings, and to judge the results. The volunteers are invited to join the performer on the stage (dance floor, front of the room, etc.) They stand in a line to the performers left. The judge stands at right side of the row, slightly separated from the rest of the volunteers. (An empty chair is on stage right. A legal pad and pen are on the chair. This is where the judge will sit later in the routine.

After greeting each of the participants individually, the mentalist speaks to them as a group.

“ I would like each of you to think of an important event in your life. Something that happened to you or perhaps something you participated in. It is important that you vividly remember the date and place of its occurrence. I would warn any married men among you, whose wife is present in the audience tonight, that you should not think of the day you were married unless you are absolutely sure of the date. This is strictly to insure your personal safety.

“Also, do NOT think of an event that involves another subject on this committee. This will insure against the remote possibility that two of you will be thinking of the same event.”

The mentalist gives an index card and a pencil to each of the five subjects and requests that they each write a brief description of their event, holding their cards so that no one can see what they have written. They are told not to sign or put their names on the cards. When finished they are to hold their cards with the writing sides hidden.

The judge is requested to collect the cards and to mix them thoroughly, keeping them face down so that neither he nor anyone else can see the “events.” He then is to put the cards into a letter-size envelope held by the mentalist.

The mentalist folds the envelope in half and places it on his table, where it remains in full view at all times. [When I am not using a table, I place the envelope on an empty chair in the center of the performing area.]

Each of the volunteers is then given another index card upon which they are instructed to print **only** the date and location of their event. These cards are collected by the judge, mixed and handed to the performer. The judge is instructed to take a seat in the “Judge's Chair” on the right side of the stage. He is to use the legal pad and pen (which are on the chair) to record the mentalist's impressions.

The mentalist cautions the subjects not to respond, either verbally or physically, when he reads the date cards aloud and gives his impressions about events associated with them.

The mentalist goes through the “date cards” and selects one. (The cards may be “flashed” to the audience members near the front of the room) He reads the date and place aloud and begins to describe an event. He also adds impressions about the person involved, again cautioning the subjects not to react or respond until he has given his impressions for all of the dates. The judge is told to write down the dates as they are called out- and to “keep an official record” of the mentalist's impressions.

After the mentalist has given an impression for each date, he asks the judge to refer to “the record” and call out the first date and place, and to ask the spectator whose event took place on that day to identify himself/ herself.

The spectator is asked to describe his event to the audience. The judge is told to refer to “the record” and announce his verdict. Was the performer’s description “correct” or “incorrect?”

The judge announces that the performer description was correct.

[It will be obvious to most people in the audience that the performer was correct before the judge makes his determination, as they have already heard all of the performer’s impressions for each date. The reason for the judge’s “verdict” is to add an air of authenticity to the proceedings and to give the impression that the performer’s abilities are “on trial,” as were Hanussen’s.]

While the last subject is describing his event, and the judge is making his final “ruling,” the mentalist casually picks up the folded envelope that contains the “event” cards, opens it and takes out the cards.

He thanks each of the participants and returns their event cards to keep as “evidence” of the proceedings. A special thank you is given to the judge.

PROPS REQUIRED:

A legal pad and pen or pencil for the Judge; these are placed on the chair where the judge will be seated in the second half of the routine of the routine. (Stage right.)

Five golf pencils. Put these in either side jacket pocket

Four or five “quarter fold envelopes” with square flaps. (These are 4 3/8 in. x 5 3/4 in. Greeting Card Envelopes. Refer to the photo in the “Method” section.) They will be a specially prepared “envelope stack” The stack is put into your left inside jacket pocket.

You will also need five date cards and five event cards. (These are specially printed 3 x 5 index cards. You can either print your own on a computer, or you can print copies of the samples given below. Alternatively, or in an emergency, you can just print the necessary instructions by hand on blank index cards.)

The “event” cards are paper clipped together and put in your left jacket pocket and the “date” cards, also clipped, go in your right jacket pocket.

METHOD:

STAGE ONE

THE EVENT CARDS:

You will recall, that as the subjects come to the stage, the mentalist introduces himself to each of them. This is not only because he is polite, but also he is quietly learning their first names and remembering things about their appearance and dress. In most of my presentations mentalists ask volunteers to introduce themselves to the audience. In this routine, it is better to get their names in a low-key manner. You are not trying to hide the fact that you are asking their names; you are simply not drawing attention to it. Shake their hands as they come to the stage and show them each where to stand. Ask their names while you are doing this, speaking in a normal tone of voice to **them** and not to the audience. If you are using a hand held microphone, hold it down at your side. Don't ask for their names on mic, if you can avoid it. (If they are wearing nametags, or if you are able to quietly find out their names before the program, you can dispense with this.)

When you position the subjects in a row on your left, mentally number them from one to five and remember their names in order. Later in the routine, when you are standing with your back to the subjects, you won't have to turn around to see who is standing where. This is not a major point, but if you can remember their names, their positions in the row, and their general physical characteristics and dress, you will be able to add a lot of detail to your "impressions." If you can only remember two or three names and positions, that is fine. If you don't think you can remember any of them, you really shouldn't be doing this effect.

The judge, as you will recall, is positioned at the right end of the row, slightly apart from the subjects. Be sure to tell him, as you place him into position, that he is **not** to concentrate on an event, his job will be to assist in setting up the test and to judge the results.

Once the subjects are lined up, the performer addresses them as follows:

" I would like each of you to think of an important event in your life. Something that happened to you or perhaps something you participated in. It is important that you vividly remember the date and place of its occurrence..."

At this point, each of them has three things in mind- an event, a date, and a place. The performer now removes the "event" card packet from his left jacket pocket. He pulls off the paper clip and tosses it aside. Here is EXACTLY what the performer does as he distributes the cards.

The mentalist gives an index card and a pencil to each of the five subjects and requests that they each write a brief description of their event, holding their cards so that no one can see what they have written. They are told not to sign or put their names on the cards. When finished they are to hold their cards with the writing sides hidden.

Note that the performer does **not** ask the volunteers to write down the date and place of the event. As far as the audience is concerned, the spectators have written descriptions of their events, just as the performer has asked them to do. As far as the subjects are concerned, they are doing exactly what the performer asked them to do as well.

The performer never refers to the fact that the cards have instructions printed on them. He doesn't try to hide the fact, he just never mentions it.

Here are the cards they are given:

Clairvoyance Test
Enter information in the
spaces below.

Date: _____

Place: _____

Event: _____

Clairvoyance Test
Enter information in the
spaces below..

Date: _____

Place: _____

Event: _____

Clairvoyance Test
Enter information in the
spaces below...

Date: _____

Place: _____

Event: _____

Clairvoyance Test
Enter information in the
spaces below....

Date: _____

Place: _____

Event: _____

Clairvoyance Test
Enter information in the
spaces below.....

Date: _____

Place: _____

Event: _____

Note that the cards are NOT all the same. The first one has one dot (a period) after the word "below." The second has two dots, the third has three, and the last two have four and five dots respectively. In all other respects, the cards are identical. You may, of course, use any marking system you see fit.

The performer gives the cards to the subjects in order, from one to five. This will later allow him to associate the events with the people.

The reason this stack is paper clipped together before it is put into your right jacket pocket is to insure the cards stay in the proper order.

Even though the performer just tells the volunteers to write their **events** on the cards, he has been talking about associating events with dates and places throughout his introduction to the routine. He has also just finished asking them to select events whose dates and places they “vividly remember.” From the subjects’ point of view, he has simply asked them to write down the information requested on the card.

No one knows at this point in the routine, that another index card will soon be given to each subject. The important point to remember is: When you give the above cards to the subjects just tell them to write their events on the cards. Do not mention the dates and places since they will assume that they are supposed to follow the instructions on the card.

STAGE TWO:

THE STACK OF ENVELOPES



This is the type of envelope required for the effect. They are generally used for greeting cards or invitations.

They are 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches by 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

The exact size is not critical, as long as they will hold 3 x 5 inch index cards.

When the judge is collecting the “event” cards from the subjects, the mentalist takes a stack of envelopes from his inside jacket pocket. He holds the stack, flap-sides up, in his left hand.

When the judge is done mixing the cards, the mentalist approaches him and asks him to slide the cards, writing sides down, “into the envelope.” **[Not “into the envelopes” or “into the top envelope.” Just “into the envelope.” There is no need to emphasize the fact that you are holding more than one envelope.]**

The envelope removed from the stack, its flap is turned down, and it is then folded in half. (It is not necessary to seal it. While it can be sealed, the “clean up” at the end of the routine is a lot smoother if you just fold it in half as I’ve described.)

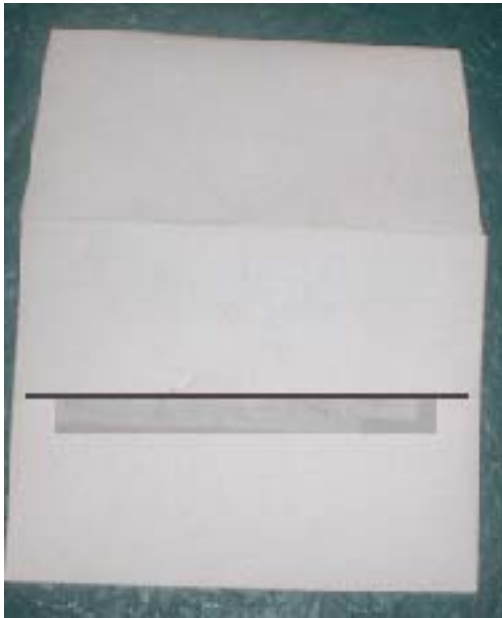
As you may have guessed, a switch has taken place. The envelope that was just folded and placed on the table contains blank cards. The “event” cards are still in the top envelope. It is a flapless envelope and the cards are protruding from a slit on its face.

To prepare the stack of envelopes:

“**Top envelope**” means the envelope that is on top of the stack when the stack is held **flap-side up**.

I will assume you are using a stack of four envelopes. (Theoretically, you can do the effect with only three, but the necessary move is a bit easier if you use four or five. Don’t use a larger packet, though. You will be removing the stack from your inside jacket pocket. Even though only one envelope is apparently needed for the effect, it is not illogical that you reach into your pocket and come out with a few. It looks like you just have grabbed a couple of extras. No big deal. If you take out a stack of thirty or forty, one might wonder why you have so many envelopes in your pocket. By the same token, if you had the envelopes, or a box of envelopes on your table, rather than in your pocket, why would you pick up more than one? You can **see** what’s lying on the table; you can’t see what you are taking out of your pocket.)

The top envelope has a horizontal slit across its face as in this photograph:



I have marked the slit with a black line so you can see it easily. Because these envelopes have square cut flaps, the slit cannot be seen from the other side of the envelope. If they were “v” shaped flaps, the slit would have to be lower on the face and the steal that happens later in this sequence would not be as smooth as it is when the slit is positioned as shown.

The grey rectangle below the black line is cellophane tape. The bottom half of the envelope’s face is taped to the inner surface of the flap-side. This is to assure that the stack of index cards slides freely into the envelope and out through the slit. Without the tape the stack could catch on the slit, some cards could go out the back, and some could go into the lower part of the envelope. Use the tape and you won’t have to fumble to make sure all of the cards go through the slit.



This photograph is a worm's eye view of the stack of cards coming out through the face side of the slit envelope.

The Stack:

The top envelope of the stack is the slit envelope. Its flap is turned back against the face (slit side) of the envelope. (Don't cut the flap off – the move is more deceptive and smoother if you just fold it back.)

The second envelope down has five blank index cards in it.

The top envelope is **under** the flap of the second envelope.

(This is basically "Annemann's" flapless envelope handling.)

The third and fourth envelopes are unprepared. All flaps should be down, except for the top envelope, of course, which is turned back.

The Switch:

We are now at the point in the routine where the judge has just collected and shuffled the "event" cards, and the performer, in the meantime, has removed the envelope stack from his left inside jacket pocket. He is holding the stack in his left hand, with the flap-side up and has approached the judge.

The judge, with the mentalist's assistance, if necessary, slides the cards into the envelope. (Not "envelopes," remember?)

What happens next may seem confusing. It is not. Just follow it closely.

At the same time your hands are doing the moves, your body will be performing a sequence of its own.

What your hands do:

Tilt the stack so the top is facing your body.

With your right hand, pull the **second** envelope out of the stack. This is easy because its flap is on top of the stack. (The cards in the top envelope cannot be seen because of the "square-cut" opening. Their top edges are totally hidden inside the envelope.)

Turn down the flap of the second envelope (the one you just pulled away) and fold the envelope in half. You can use both hands to do this. You will find that your left hand can help your right fold the envelope, even though your left hand is holding the rest of the stack.

Put the folded envelope on your table.

What your body does and where it goes:

The sequence begins as you are turning away from the judge. That's when you pull out the second envelope. You are making a 180 degree turn to your right, and walking toward the table or stool, as you are closing the flap of the envelope and folding it in half. The sequence ends as you place the folded envelope on the table.

(In case you found that hard to follow - and it wasn't easy to write, so I wouldn't be surprised - The judge is standing near the row of subjects on the left side of the stage. He just collected their cards and you approached him as he finished mixing them – that put you on the left side of the stage. If you turn all the way around you will be facing your table, which is near center stage. The reasons you turn to your right are: first, if you turned toward your left to go back to the table, you would be turning your back on the audience, which is not only poor stage deportment, but it might look like you are trying to hide something; second, by turning to your right, the switch is completely screened and you are handling the envelopes in a seemingly open and fair manner.)

The stack of envelopes will remain in your left hand for a few minutes now. Just hold them securely so that the index cards don't fall out from between the top two envelopes.

Remove the stack of five "date cards" from your right jacket pocket, remove the clip and toss it aside.

THE DATE CARDS:

Here is what the date cards look like –

Clairvoyance Test
Enter information in the
spaces below –

Date: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Note that the "date card" looks almost the same as the event cards.

Both say "Clairvoyance Test" at the top and both have the same instructions, "Enter information in the spaces below."

The "Event" cards, though, have lines labeled "Date," "Place," and "Event"

The "Date" cards, from a very short distance, look identical to the "Event" cards, but the lines are labeled "Date," "City," and "State."

Also, the date cards are not marked – they are all the same. (The only reason they are paper-clipped together is for the sake of consistency. It is not essential.)

The reason that the “date” and “event” cards are designed to look alike at a short distance is simply precautionary. While the mentalist never mentions the printing on the cards, he does not, as I said earlier, make any effort to hide the fact. Should anyone in the audience get a glimpse of the cards, he not notice, later in the routine, that the cards the mentalist is holding are not the cards he is supposed to be holding. Again, the only way the printing would become suspicious would be if the mentalist drew attention to it.

Recall, once again, what the mentalist tells the subjects as he hands out the “Date” cards -

Each of the volunteers is then given another index card upon which they are instructed to print only the date and location of their event.

The emphasis is placed on the word “only.” The subjects take the mentalist’s instructions to mean that, this time, they are **only** to write the date and location and **not** the event. The audience naturally assumes that, since the subjects were **only told to write their events** on the other cards, that they are writing the dates and locations **for the first time**.

The subjects have been interpreting the mentalist’s words in a manner that is consistent with the instructions given on the cards, The audience, on the other hand, knows nothing about the written instructions and interprets the mentalists words differently. **Both groups hear the same words, but they interpret them differently.**

The subjects, though, will be just as amazed as the audience is at the conclusion of the routine. They are unlikely to notice anything odd about the proceedings, because their minds are far more occupied than the audience’s. They are standing on a stage, a bit nervous perhaps, and are being asked to concentrate on dates and events they vividly remember. On top of this, they are interpreting the mentalist’s instructions and following them. They do not share the audience member’s ability to leisurely analyze the proceedings.

This time, after he collects the cards and mixes them, the judge is asked to join the mentalist at center stage. (Last time, the mentalist went to the judge at stage left.) As the judge approaches, the mentalist turns to his left, brings the envelope stack in his left hand to waist level, tilts the stack slightly and casually transfers the slit envelope to the bottom of the stack, leaving the five face down “event” cards on top of the stack.

[If you follow this sequence a few times with the envelopes in hand, you will see that it is quite easy and natural. Hold the envelopes lightly to allow the cards to slide freely out of the slit to the top of the second card in the stack.]

The fact that the index cards are white and the envelopes are white makes the cards almost invisible. In any event, the stack is tilted slightly to the left and, thus, out of the audience’s view.

The moment the judge reaches the mentalist, the mentalist, with his right hand, takes the face-down “date” card from the judge, puts them directly on top of the event cards on the envelope stack, and shakes the Judge’s hand, thanking him. He directs the judge to take a seat in the “Judge’s Chair”. He lets the judge pass in front of him on his way to the chair. The mentalist turns to his right as the judge passes.

As the judge heads for the chair, the mentalist points out the legal pad and pen that are on the seat, explaining that the judge is to use these to record the results of the “test.” At the same time, the mentalist has taken the stack of ten index cards into his right hand and with his left hand has put the envelopes into his inside right jacket pocket.

Again, if you follow this a few times with materials in hand, you will see how natural this is and understand why the misdirection created by sending the judge to the chair is so effective. [Think about that. You will actually be sending a judge to the chair.]

CLAIRVOYANCE –

THE PRIMARY ILLUSION

All of the necessary work is done. The mentalist stands, stage center, and turns momentarily to the subject, instructing them not to react as he calls out the dates and the judge records his impressions. He faces the audience and turns the face down stack of index cards face up and puts them into his left hand. (Since index cards are much thinner than playing cards, there is no perceptible thickness to the stack.) Everything looks exactly as it should. If you keep the cards level, no one but you can see what is written on them.

Should you feel like walking around a bit before you start giving your impressions, just casually transfer a card from the bottom of the stack to the top. The card now on top will have a date, city, and state written on it. You can “accidentally” flash it as you walk around or make clairvoyant-like gesticulations. When you are ready to begin, look at the face card, shake your head a bit and transfer “date” card back to the bottom. This gives the impression that you don’t want to start with that date, perhaps it is too difficult.

You are now looking at a card with a place, date, and event. Read out the date and place, and instruct the judge to record them. Then begin to give your clairvoyant impressions. (Don’t look at the card anymore. You have already read the event and have noted the secret mark, so you know which subject was involved in the event. Don’t make a psychometry test out of it either. Just a bit about the person will do. An initial, his or her gender, or maybe something like “I see a person, her blue eyes open wide. She sees – (describe the event.)

Transfer the card to the bottom and repeat the procedure until you have given an impression for each date.

Note: You can gain considerable freedom of movement if you leave the date card on the face of the pack at all times. A very primitive second deal is all that is required to take the second card from the top. Tell the judge the date and place, note the event and secret place and put the card on the bottom. This way you can freely gesture, walk around and make dramatic poses as you receive your impressions. There will be no risk that you might accidentally flash an “event” card.

You are ready for the judge’s verdicts, as described under “Effect.” At any appropriate time, while a spectator is describing an event, or while the judge is reading a “verdict,” casually fold the stack of cards in half and open it out again. (Can you figure out why?)

(Because you are getting ready to return cards that have supposedly been inside a folded envelope!)

THE CLEAN-UP

As the final judgement is announced, the final cleanup is performed. While the last subject is describing his or her event, you have casually positioned yourself next to your table, where the folded “event” envelope still sits in plain view. Pick it up, unfold it and with your right hand, which now holds the stack of ten index cards, pretend to remove the cards from the envelope. Just put your right hand, with its cards, into the envelope and out again. Leave the blank cards where they are. Refold the envelope and drop it into your left jacket pocket.

After the “final verdict,” explain that you will need the “event” cards and the judge’s notes for your “records.” Return the “date” cards to the subjects as “evidence.” (If you were to return the event cards, there is the possibility that the subjects will show them to members of the audience, who may be confused about the fact that the place, date, and event all appear on the same card. It’s really not much to worry about, but why ask for trouble?”

HANUSSEN’S SECRET?

The Bare Essentials of the Effect

Stripped down to its bare essentials, the method is incredibly bold. To create the **primary illusion** of clairvoyance, you must first create a **secondary illusion** in the minds of the audience and judge, and another secondary illusion in the minds of the subjects.

The “Test Conditions” theme makes these secondary illusions possible.

A “secondary illusion” is something your spectators believe to be true. If the performer successfully creates a secondary illusion, his primary illusion will be impossible to explain.

- This is allegedly what Dr Croix told Hanussen. When he uses the word “trick,” he really means “a basic principle of life that know one pays attention to except ‘he wise women, the root doctors and those sort of folk.’”

The audience and the judge believe the following to be true: Two sets of cards are being used in the test. One set of cards contains **only** descriptions of events. This set of “event” cards was collected by the judge and is in an envelope that is in plain view on the mentalist’s table. The other set of cards

have **only** dates and places written on them, and this is the set the judge has collected, shuffled, and handed to the mentalist.

The subjects believe this to be true: The performer is holding the cards on which they have written **only** dates and places. The envelope on the table holds cards on which they have written dates, places, and events.

This being the case, the effect of clairvoyance is simple. The mentalist may simply read the events from the cards **RIGHT IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY**. (As I said, the method is incredibly bold.) All he needs to do is act. (See acting tip below)

ACTING TIP:

If, for example, the event you are describing is a robbery, you might want to grab your stomach and shout, "A brave man has been seriously shot! And the gunman is right outside in the parking lot!!" Then collapse on the floor and start gasping for breath. This will, of course, bring your routine to an abrupt halt and the resulting riot and 911 calls could possibly result in your arrest. If that happens, just do the same effect in court. (And be sure to chew the Low John!)

Postscript

Erik Hanussen was born Herschmann-Chaim Steinschneider on June 2, 1899.

By the time he began his gradual rise to fame he had become Erik Jan Hanussen, the Danish psychic-hypnotist-mentalist-and-all-around-master-of-the-occult-arts. The acquittal in Leitmeritz launched him to a level of fame and celebrity now known as superstardom. Within two years, he became known as Adolf Hitler's personal clairvoyant.

He mysteriously disappeared near the end of March 1933. The discovery of an unidentified body led to rumors that Hanussen had been robbed and shot. It was years before the truth was confirmed. The body was indeed Hanussen's. But the motive wasn't robbery.

Just a month before his disappearance, on February 26th, the man who called himself the "Prophet of the Third Reich," had an amazing vision during a séance held at his famous "Palace of the Occult." Members of Berlin's high society sat in awe as Hanussen claimed to see flames; a "Great House" was on fire.

Just twenty hours later, the Reichstag building was in flames.

It has been speculated that Hanussen made a serious mistake when he predicted the event that many believe led directly to the World War II. The speculation increased considerably when it was revealed that Hanussen's death was a Gestapo execution.

Mysteries surround his death to this day, but there are only two things I believe to be certain.

Whatever the reason for his execution, the clairvoyant who had performed the “Miracle in Leitmeritz,” never saw it coming; and, according to a doctor who once treated him in Guadalajara, not only was Hanussen severely allergic to chocolate, but he couldn’t stand the sight of Tootsie Rolls.