

I have had the Empire Buffet chips for years.

If you remember the “Illegal Of The Day Indiana” post with the Lock & Key Club chip that was sent to a woman, you will remember the comment about it was the 1st woman we ever saw as a buyer of Illegal chips. When I remembered Carroll Hardwick, I thought that statement might be wrong. <g> NOT! Carroll turned out to be a man. <g>

Enough of that:

Alvin Clarence Thomas, 1897-1974

The best history to come out of this research was the Titanic Thompson connection. He was a “Hustlers” “Hustler.” He lived the “Dream.” He lived the “Hustle.”

He created a fictitious identity and lived that life to the fullest like a Damon Runyon character. He would take any bet, any game, any place, any time. (Especially if he had an edge <g>) He gamboled himself into a millionaire.

Titanic Thompson was one of the most famous hustlers/cheaters in history. He was a poker player, golfer, marksman and pool player who combined his skills with being a hustler, card cheat and dice manipulator.

He was involved in the Black Sox, Arnold Rothstein scandal.

He was around the WSOP a few years before I came to Las Vegas. The poker players had great stories about him.

Here is how he got his name.

In his own story, published in *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED* in 1972, Alvin Thomas said:

“ In the spring of 1912 I went to [Joplin, Missouri](#), just about the time the [*Titanic*] liner hit an iceberg and sank with more than 1,500 people on board. I was in a pool room there [*in Joplin*] and beat a fellow named Snow Clark out of \$500. To give him a chance to get even, I bet \$500 I could jump across his [pool table](#) without touching it. If you think that’s easy, try it. But I could jump farther than a herd of bullfrogs in those days. I put down an old [mattress](#) on the other side of the table. Then I took a run and dived headfirst across the pool table. While I was counting my money, somebody asked Clark what my name was.

“It must be Titanic,’ said Clark. ‘He sinks everybody.’”

“So I was Titanic from then on.”

There are also good stories about him from his days in Evansville, IN.

Google him, if you want a good read.

That said. The Joplin chips in this post are fairly common in the hobby. I've had many traders over the years but none at this time and I need some. If you have traders or any to sell, please email me.

My research friend wants them because of the Titanic Thompson connection. I owe him! <g>

Please look thru your traders for me.

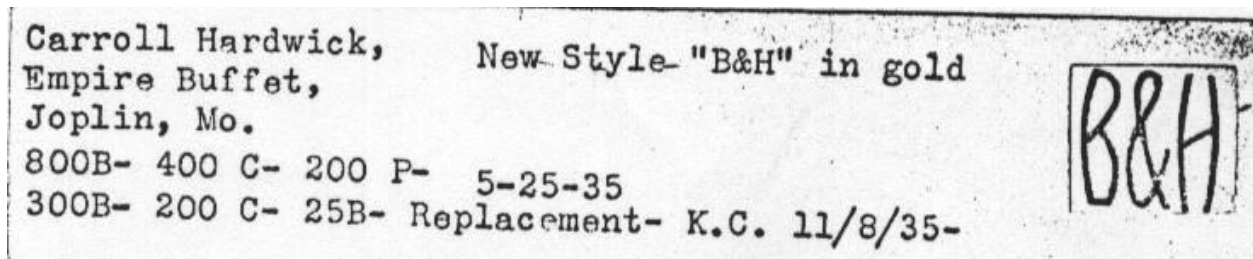
Enough of that:

Missouri – Joplin 2:

I got 2 colors of the B&H in 1999 and 2001.



7813att2



I got 3 colors of the HCD in 1999 and 2002.



11099 att2

Carroll Hardwick,
Empire Buffet,
Joplin, Missouri

New Style Monogram
"HCD" in gold



1000 DB- Kansas City 7-23-36

6 P- 6 B- 6 Brown - Kansas City - 3-36-36

800 B- 500 C- 300 Pink - Kansas City - 2-26-36

I got 3 colors of HOC in oval in 1999 and 2001.



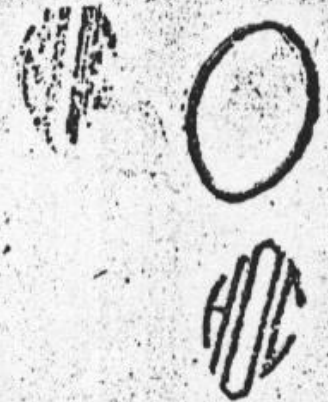
7814 att2

Carroll Hardwick,
Joplin, Mo.

800 Blue
400 Choco
200 Pink

"HOC"
in Oval

4-4-35: 100 Dk. Blue
25 Chocolate



EMPIRE BUFFET

Carroll Dare Hardwick, a Kansas native, moved from South Dakota to Joplin around 1927 and died there in 1957 age 65 (he was a him <g>).

Empire Buffet was located at 533 South Joplin Avenue and was raided several times in the 30's.

The building which housed the Empire Buffet on the NE corner of S.Joplin & W.6th has been replaced by a parking lot.

Hardwick was a friend of Titanic Thompson. Thompson was well known in Joplin. He got his nickname at a Joplin pool hall in the 1910's.

Ad from 1935:

Batter Up

INNING Play of the big league teams provided dally by ticker service.

ENJOY all sports returns while you lunch and enjoy your favorite drink.

"BASEBALL HEAD-QUARTERS" at Sixth and Jopplin. Telephone 596.

**EMPIRE
BUFFET**

HCD Empire Buffet1 Att2

Joplin Globe--7march1937 (I guess the chips ordered by Hardwick could also have been used at the Schlitz Buffet at 412 Main St. It was directly across the street from Rex Athletic Club, from the 1st "Illegal Of The Day" Joplin post on 11/2/10

2 JOPLIN MEN FACE FELONY CHARGES

**CARROLL HARDWICK AND
HARRY MOSKOVITZ SURREN-
DER—RELEASED ON BOND.**

Carthage, Mo., March 6.—Carroll Hardwick and Harry Moskovitz, the only two alleged Joplin gambling house operators to be indicted on felony charges by the special county grand jury which has returned 73 true bills in its vice investigation, surrendered this afternoon and were arraigned before Circuit Judge Ray E. Watson.

Hardwick was indicted on two charges and Moskovitz on one charge of setting up and operating gambling devices, the minimum penalty for which is a sentence of two years in the penitentiary. Hardwick furnished \$2,500 in bonds and Moskovitz \$1,500 bond for their appearance for trials March 15.

The true bills charge Hardwick with having operated gambling devices, including craps tables, card tables and blackjack tables, in the Empire buffet, Sixth and Joplin streets, and in the Schlitz buffet, 412 Main street, Joplin. Moskovitz is accused of operating only the Schlitz buffet gambling house.

Hardwick, it was revealed today, telephoned the residence of Judge Watson in Webb City last night from Dallas, Tex., that he was on his way home to surrender, and this morning he telephoned the sheriff's office from McAlester, Okla. Judge Watson was not at home when the call came last night, but Hardwick left word that he would appear in court today.

Moskovitz returned from Fort Smith, Ark., to give himself up. Both men appeared this afternoon at the sheriff's office in Joplin and were accompanied here for their arraignment by Deputy Sheriff Hal Tadlock and by Bart Ramsour, their bondsman.

Joplin Globe--10june1938 (but officer, we're playing *bridge*):

Were they really allowed to plead guilty and pay fines under phony names? <g>

SIX MEN PAY FINES ON GAMBLING CHARGES

Six men were arrested early yesterday morning in a raid conducted by Deputy Sheriff Hal Tadlock and police on a room at the rear of the Empire buffet, 533 Joplin street, and an hour later all paid fines on pleas of guilty to gambling.

The raid was made on a search warrant issued by Justice Vernon Sigars on the complaint of Prosecuting Attorney Roy Coyne. Tadlock said the room was locked when officers arrived and that it was several minutes before they were admitted.

Officers said the men told them they were playing bridge, but it was charged that they were playing poker. No gambling equipment was seized.

All six were permitted to pay fines under alias names, two in municipal court and four in the court of Justice Sigars. They gave their correct names when they were first booked in at the police station, but later were permitted by officers to give the alias names in the payment of their fines.

Four fined \$25 and costs by Sigars were Carroll Hardwick, who gave the alias of C. D. Young; Harry Moskovitz, who was fined under the alias of Harry Williams; Frank Fleming, who gave the alias of Frank Lemon, and Steve Pappas, fined under the alias of Jim Temple. Two fined \$38 each in municipal court were Todd Hardwick, who gave the alias of Todd Johnson, and Ralph Dickerson, fined under the name of Dennis Dickerson.

Besides Tadlock, officers who participated in the raid were Patrolman Roy Talbott, Patrol Driver William Goff and Sergeant Fred Benton.

Joplin News Herald--16april1932:

Titanic Telephones Details of Tragedy

Details of the slaying of an assailant at his home in Tyler, Tex., last night were given by "Titanic Slim" Thompson in a telephone conversation today with Carroll Hardwick here. They are intimate friends.

Thompson has an oil lease in the East Texas fields, according to Hardwick, and is drilling on it while residing at Tyler. A golfing enthusiast, yesterday afternoon he had played a round at the Tyler course and had displayed a large bankroll, which he habitually carries with him, in paying his greens fee.

Accosted in Yard.

Arriving at his home about 9 o'clock, Thompson told Hardwick, he was accosted in his front yard by a masked bandit, who produced a revolver and commanded: "Put up your hands or I'll kill you."

Instinctively, the gambler pulled his own gun and attempted to fire. The first cartridge missed fire. The robber stood with pointed pistol but did not fire. Thompson fired four shots in rapid succession, one bullet narrowly missing the heart and another lodging in the abdomen. All struck the youth, who crumpled to the ground.

Thompson called to his wife to telephone for police. From his prone position on the ground, the bandit gasped: "Ty, you know me."

Taking off the mask, Thompson and the officer discovered that the boy was the caddy master at the golf course where the gambler had played that afternoon. The wounded boy told them:

"I was trying to stick Titanic up and I didn't get by with it."

Shocked by Discovery.

Distressed by the discovery of the boy's identity, Thompson helped get him to a hospital and proffered financial aid in saving his life. He told Hardwick that the youth was not expected to recover.

Born in McDonald county and with only a high school education, Thompson has had a sensational career in which he reputedly has amassed a fortune. He had only a few hundred dollars with him last night, but has been known to carry as much as \$100,000 in his pocket while in Joplin, Hardwick said.

In Rothstein Probe.

About a year and a half ago, Thompson was detained by Joplin police at the request of New York city authorities in connection with the investigation which followed the shooting of Arnold Rothstein, notorious Gotham gambler. He testified before a New York grand jury, but was not implicated in the mysterious killing, which was not solved.

It was Thompson who launched Ky Laffoon, former Miami, Okla., boy and Joplin pro, on a professional golf career. Their partnership since has been dissolved.

Thompson has been in Joplin on many occasions. His exploits in throwing a gourd (especially prepared with lead weights) atop the Connor hotel to win a bet and in many other similar activities have made him one of the best known characters of an earlier day.

Titanic must have been well known in Joplin to get this headline space (the article above is from this page):

<p>THE WEATHER Missouri—Cloudy, showers tonight and probably in east and south parts Sunday. Kansas—Partly cloudy, probably showers in southeast part tonight; similar tomorrow. Arkansas—Cloudy and unsettled tonight; Sunday cloudy and unsettled. Oklahoma—Cloudy, showers in center and east parts tonight; Sunday partly cloudy.</p>	<p>JOPLIN NEWS HERALD Exclusive Day Dispatches of the Associated Press</p>	<p>FINAL EDITION</p>			
<p>SIXTIETH YEAR—NO. 37. JOPLIN, MISSOURI, SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1932— EIGHT PAGES.</p>		<p>PRICE THREE CENTS</p>			
<p>“TITANIC SLIM” KILLS YOUTH</p>					
<p>SALARY CLAIM OF COLLEY IS OVERRULED Judge Harvey Davis Holds Special Statute Relating to County School Superintendents Is Unconstitutional. Walter Colley, county superin-</p>	<p>Pessimism Over Economic Outlook Is Not Warranted, President Hoover Believes Washington, April 15.—(AP)—It is still to be maintained from, and that President Hoover's belief that one of the economic reasons for the depression is the excess of credit and money in circulation, and that several definite factors point to a steady recovery. This view goes with the conviction that the slow but insistent financial aid of the government has spent itself, that the serious nature of the situation has caused the major banking crisis that alarms every prudent investor.</p>	<p>MAN ADMITS SLAYING OF SCHOOL GIRL Kansas Mob Threatens to Avenge Death of Child, 8, Who Was Attacked and Strangled—Body in Haystack. Colby, Kan., April 15.—(AP)—The</p>	<p>RESUBMISSION ACTIVITY IS ON INCREASE Two Wyoming Senators, Both Drys, Join in Announcing Themselves Desirous of Placing the Question Before People. Washington, April 15.—(AP)—</p>	<p>2 Youths Held in Boonville Suspected of Robbery Here And 2 in Arkansas Cities Boonville, Mo., April 15.—(AP)—Lloyd Ward and Earl Hodder, arrested here yesterday by U. S. Sheriff, state highway patrolmen, when the two boys were driving west, found to be loaded with an amount of money and jewelry, were being held today by Sheriff Clay Green for the federal grand jury at Little Rock, Ark. The inspector told Sheriff Green that the descriptions of the two boys were the same as those of the two boys who were arrested in Arkansas cities.</p>	<p>SHOOTS BOY WHO TRIES TO HOLD HIM UP Young Caddy Master, Attracted by Bank Roll, Follows Widely Known Gambler to His Home and Is Slain. Tyler, Tex., April 15.—(AP)—A. C.</p>

The association with Titanic is pretty cool--if you have any extras I wouldn't mind getting one.

See, I told you he wanted the chips, <g>

That said. The Joplin chips in this post are fairly common in the hobby. I've had many traders over the years but none at this time and I need some. If you have traders or any to sell, please email me.

My research friend wants them because of the Titanic Thompson connection. I owe him! <g>

Please look thru your traders for me.