THE MUNITIONS MAGNATE



Case One
12 March, 1888



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Despite the lateness of the winter, March is still roaring like a lion. In fact, just as we alight from our cab in front of 221B Baker, a derby hat skitters by propelled by the fierce wind. In close pursuit is none other than Wiggins, chief of the Baker Street Irregulars and, after Dr. Watson, Sherlock Holmes' most able assistant. Before we can join in the chase, Wiggins manages to halt the flying bit of finery with a deft stroke of his umbrella. Cramming it squarely on his head, he saunters back towards us.

"Hello," he says cheerily. "It would appear that Mr. Holmes is summoning the troops. Shall we?"

With the point of his umbrella, a very versatile tool it appears, Wiggins stabs the doorbell. It is several moments before Mrs. Hudson answers. After a brief exchange of greetings, she sends us on our way to Holmes' apartment.

Above, we find Holmes and Dr. Watson sitting at a table engaged in earnest conversation with a gentleman in his late forties, expensively dressed yet somewhat rumpled in appearance.

"Warm yourselves," says Holmes, "and I will explain my reasons for calling you out on such a bitter morning."

Coats and hats are immediately shed–there is a distinct 'pop' as Wiggins removes his derby–and a rush is made for the fireplace. In due course introductions are made, and the gentleman is identified as Mr. Richard Allen, brother of the late Courtney Allen, president of the Grant Arms Company.

"It is the recent death of Mr. Allen's late brother," says Holmes, "that occasions his visit to us. Briefly, Courtney Allen was found shot to death in an alley behind his office on the evening of March 9th at approximately 7:00 p.m. by the constable on patrol. Scotland Yard has put the crime down as a simple robbery `by person or persons unknown,' largely due to the fact that the victim's wallet was found empty near the body and his gold pocket watch was missing. Mr. Allen was just telling us a bit about his brother when you arrived. Please continue, Mr. Allen."

"Well, Courtney was a dynamic individual. Always busy, forever on the move. Yet he had the unique ability to make ten minutes spent with you seem like an hour, so complete was his attention to you. Of course, his charm worked like a magic potion on the ladies."

"You said he was married?" asks Watson with a raised eyebrow. "Oh, yes ... poor Beatrice."

"Was he involved in an, ah, in an affair at the time of his death?" asks Wiggins.

"Yes, I believe he was, but I have no due as to who the lady might have been. You see, the night before he was killed, I popped 'round to his office at about half-past five and managed to coax him to supper at Keen's. We were there but a short while when Courtney begged leave. He indicated that he had an important meeting, said `Auf Wiedersehen,' and winked. That wink meant a woman."

"Is the company financially sound?" asks Watson.

"Oh, quite. A fine investment for anyone's portfolio. You see, the company was founded as a small gun shop some seventy-odd years ago by our great-uncle Thaddeus Grant. It catered to a very elite clientele."

"Most of the chaps in the regiment were equipped with pistols from Grant's." nods Watson. "Why, Braxton–you've heard me speak of Braxton, Holmes–he had a pair of the finest dueling pistols–"

"Yes, Watson. Pray continue, Mr. Allen."

"Courtney, always fascinated by firearms, apprenticed himself to Uncle Thaddeus. When Thaddeus died in 1873, he bequeathed the business to Courtney. While maintaining the original shop and its tradition, Courtney expanded into the international arms trade. With loans and the sale of public stock, he was able to build a plant at 12 Deverell street for

the manufacture of heavy ordnance. Today the firm is debt-free and very profitable. Of course, a drop in the share price occurred with the news of my brother's death."

"Who has ascended to the presidency?" asks Watson.

"Courtney's picked successor, Phillip Marlowe, the 2nd vice-president." "And why not the senior vice-president?"

"Young Lord Ragland, who runs the Deverell street plant is a brilliant technician but a most inept businessman."

"Who inherits your brother's stock?"

"His wife, Beatrice."

"Now I think we might examine the effects found with your brother." So saying, Holmes turns his attention to a briefcase and a large, brown envelope.

"It looks as if some sharp object has been used on it," comments Watson, referring to a long gouge on the leather of the briefcase.

"Yes, and it's practically brand-new. I gave it to Courtney for his last birthday, January 6th. As you can see, it is locked. The police found it that way. Courtney kept the key on a chain attached to his watch fob. The watch, of course, was stolen.

Holmes retrieves a long piece of wire from the coal scuttle. After gaining Allen's permission, he inserts it into the lock and, with a quick flick of the wrist, springs the lock open.

He pulls out two folders for our examination. Each is filled with company papers and is coded to indicate its contents. One marked MB-C, for instance, concerns various coal mine leases. Another, marked S-87-V contains a listing of sales to the U.S. Government during the preceding year.

Holmes then empties the contents of the envelope onto the table. The inventory includes: spectacles and case, a ruby ring, a gold wedding band, a key chain with keys, an empty wallet, a small notebook and a note:



Seizing on the notebook, Holmes observes, "Can you tell us who Captain Egan might be, Mr. Allen?"

"I've never heard the name."

"And Billy?"

"Billy is Courtney's secretary, William Linhart."

Holmes compares the writing in the notebook with that of the note. They appear to be identical. He nods and says, "I believe we have enough to begin our investigation."

After Allen has gone, Wiggins comments that his hand gestures were most intriguing. "Combining infinite subtlety with tremendous force, it is easy to imagine that he has no trouble making his wishes known on the floor of the London Stock Exchange."

"I don't recall Allen giving out his occupation," says Watson, puzzled.

"No," replies Wiggins, "but certain phrases he spoke, coupled with the penciled notations on his left shirt cuff, stock prices surely, led me to conclude that he was a stockbroker."

"Bravo, Wiggins! Well, Watson, our young man has come a long way since the days when you described him as 'a dirty, little street urchin,' eh?"

"Thank you, Mr. Holmes, but, after all, I was taught by the master."

"True," says Holmes matter-of-factly. "Quite true."



AREA SE

8 SE

Chester Carley's landlady informs us first, that he is out, and second, that he is a train conductor aboard the Brighton Weekender which leaves Waterloo Station of an afternoon on Fridays.

"March 9th was a Friday and so that's where he was."

12 SE

We enter the typically grimy manufacturing environment of the Deverell-street Plant. "Lord Ragland ain't here, but I could show you to Mr. Keboe's office; he's the guv'ner's assistant."

It is evident that Walter Keboe has come up through the ranks and would be more comfortable in overalls than his present ill-fitting tweeds. With a meaty paw he tugs at his shirt collar and asks us our business.

"Can you tell us anything about Mr. Allen's visit here on the morning of March 9th?"

"Odd, I thought it was, so's I remember right enough. Mr. Allen comes to see his nibs, er, Lord Ragland, but he weren't here. Mr. Allen says he'll wait in the office."

"Do you know why Mr. Allen came to see Lord Ragland?"

"Now I wouldn't be knowin' their business, but it was most likely about Project # 10, it bein' secret and all. There was hangers on around the Plant, foreigners and what-not."

"Do you know what transpired when Lord Ragland returned?"

"What? Well, he never did return, leastways not before Mr. Allen left. I was called away and when I gets back, Mr. Allen, he hands me a note. Says it come for Lord Ragland and I was to be sure he gets it. He also says that he'll see Lord Ragland some other time and perhaps it's best I don't even mention that he come by. Lord Ragland was in a bit later, stayed for a couple of hours and left for the day. Odd it was."

A begrimed workman enters and informs Keboe of some problem with a piece of machinery.

"I'll be back in a moment, gents. Why don't you wait in Lord Ragland's office."

Left to our own devices when Keboe and the workman leave, we can't but notice a drawer in Ragland's desk partially open. And, of course, we can't help but peek in. We do not discover much of interest, only a stack of invoices and a bundle of stock certificates. One of the invoices is from Radford, Jones Sc Co. for 140 guineas. It is dated September 5, 1887, and stamped, 'Paid, March 10, 1888.' The stock certificates are in 5000 share denominations for several different companies, among them, Rafferty Paper Mills and Stephenson Iron Works. We manage to close the drawer just before Keboe returns.

"A little kick in the slats always does the trick. Now where were we?"

"That's a very impressive safe."

"All plans're kept under lock and key, to be sure."
"Would you take us to someone who could tell us about Project # 10?"

"Well, the only one around now would be Richard Camp. He was an engineer on the project. Not on it anymore but he can tell you a thing or two."

Keboe leads us back through his office and out into the corridor. The noise of the plant, curiously insulated in Ragland's office, grows stronger as we approach Camp's office. We knock and enter but the office is vacant.

"He may be down on the line. Let me check."

Keboe's second absence gives us a chance to prowl around Camp's office. The desk is littered with plans and formula notations, none of which means anything to us. Next to a cigar humidor is a framed photograph of a young woman. She is very pretty with extremely long, dark hair and she radiates a bright, dimpled smile. Somewhat blurred in the background is a vaguely familiar Cathedral with two square-topped towers. Before we can rummage further, Keboe returns.

"Mr. Camp left early it seems. Not feeling well."
"Well, thank you for your time."

18 SE

The parish priest from St. Anthony's is visiting an ill Mrs. Keboe. Since Mr. Keboe is not at home, it is he who answers our knock. During the course of our brief conversion with him, we learn that the Keboes are very involved in church activities, one of which, a fund-raising dance, took place on Friday evening, March 9th.

44 SE

The owner of Wolff, Phillips & Co. gingerly takes the cigarette butt from Wiggins and studies it carefully. "This," he declares, "is a Benson & Hedges Imperial. One of their latest attempts. Rather overpriced. Available only directly from the company."

We thank him profusely and dash out the door.

AREA SW

2 SW

Langdale Pike, gossip and scandal monger extraordinaire, provides us with a very interesting answer to the question of Courtney Allen's latest liaison.

"At first I kept it quiet just to see how long before her husband realized," he whispers. "Marvellous. A bride of only a few months puts horns on an old goat.... Now in view of recent events, it would be tasteless to circulate."

Catching Wiggins' look of impatience, Pike gets to the point. "The Countess von Schulenberg."

5 SW

At the London Library, after spending many minutes leafing through the immense tome, Great Cathedrals of the World, we finally come across a drawing of a cathedral which strongly resembles the cathedral we saw in the background of the photograph. The caption under the drawing reads, "Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris."

7 SW

The clerk at Carlin's, after trying to sell us all manner of tobaccos, pipe accessories, cigarette holders and what-not, finally gives up and answers our question.

"'B & H' stands for Benson & Hedges."

8 SW

We are joined by Mycroft Holmes in the Strangers' Room of the Diogenes Club.

"How can I be of help to you, Master Wiggins?"

"Mr. Holmes, we're working on a case with your brother. Could you help us with any information on the Grant Arms Company?"

"Of the company, I know very little," says Mycroft, settling his great bulk into an armchair. "I do know that they are working on a secret project for the Admiralty."

"Who else might have known?"

"The fact of the project is certainly common knowledge among the arms community. The details are only known by a few."

"Who would be most interested in obtaining those details."

"Del Guerra, Zobar, and Meshkoff certainly. The military attaches for Spain, France and Russia respectively. Then, of course, Count von Schulenberg. It has been long suspected that he is more than simply the German attache."

"A spy?"

"Let me put it this way, and you draw your own conclusions. His bride is not in fact his new bride. Her name was Freda Rudel four months ago and her name is still Freda Rudel."

9 SW

At the German Embassy we are told that Count von Schulenberg is out but that his aide, Colonel Frederick von Kraushoffer, will see us.

The Colonel is an impressive figure. Tall and slim, he gives us an imperious, one-eyed stare from behind a monocle. He is at a loss over our only question, not from any lack of knowledge on his part, but at our temerity in asking it. After a long pause, he finally relents. He retreats to the desk and flips through the pages of the record book.

"The Count left the Embassy at 4:55 p.m. on March 9th." Beating the Colonel to the punch, as it were, we summarily dismiss ourselves.

10 SW

Captain Egan is a small, bulldog of a man. He paces back and forth behind a massive oak desk as if it were a quarterdeck railing.

"Eight months ago, Allen came to this office with the designs for a new naval gun. Revolutionary in concept. Can't say much about it, most secret, don't you know. The design was approved and monies advanced for its development."

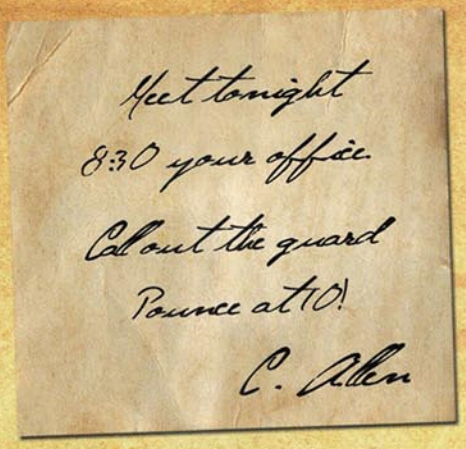
"Can you tell us anything about the meeting Mr. Allen was to have had with you on the evening of his murder?"

The Captain barks out a name, unintelligible to us, and an aging Lieutenant, long since beached upon the promotionless shores of paperwork, scurries into the room.

"Bring me the Grant Arms Company file.... Allen sent me a wire this morning. Quite vague. Close-mouthed fellow when all is said and done. He was worried about security for Project #10, I know, but wouldn't say much about it; his responsibility; he'd take care of it. 'Course, I put some of my men on it anyway."

The Lieutenant returns with the file and is dismissed, for the time being, back into oblivion.

The Captain shows us, first, the wire. It reads:



He then shows us a detailed list of the activities of Richard Camp, a development engineer on Project # 10.

"As you can see, he was always bringing boxes and bundles to the French Embassy. Emile Zobar, French Military Attache, has his offices at the Embassy."

"So you believe that Mr. Allen's wire implied he had information implicating Camp in a security breach of Project #10?"

"I did. Still do. But Lord Ragland, head of the project, assured me that Allen's security fears were unfounded. We met two days after Allen's unfortunate death. As a precaution, he told me he would remove Camp from the project.

"Since the conversation, I've concentrated my efforts on Zobar, von Schulenberg, Del Guerra and Meshkoff. Their governments would all have great interest in our new gun. So far my men have uncovered nothing."

"Thank you, Captain."

13 SW

Inspector Lestrade is busy behind a stack of papers and has very little time for us.

"Allen's wallet was found empty – he regularly carried as much as thirty pounds pocket money. His gold watch was missing. His briefcase was locked tight. Simple robbery and nothing more. I'm surprised Holmes is wasting his time on this case. I sincerely hope he finds the culprit, however. Things have come to a pretty pass when common footpads resort to firearms!"

"Who was the officer who found the body?"

"Beadle. If you think it will do some good, I will notify him to meet you at the scene. Good day."

18 SW

Having arrived at the American embassy, we learned that Mr James MacDonald, the American military attaché, is on a protocolar visit for the day.

22 SW

Professor Murray seems very busy when we arrive. He is actually studying the contents of a beaker when we signal our presence with an understated cough. He turns around suddenly as he discovers our presence. His hair, which seems whiter than usual, frames his pale face and emphasizes even more the tiredness seen in his traits.

"It's you, Wiggan. What can I do for you?"

"It's Wiggins, sir. We're investigating the death of Courtney Allen, at his brother's request."

"Allen, Allen," he began to mumble as he searches one of the numerous piles of papers cluttering his desk. "There! File number 527. Hmm, not much to say about it. The bullet was found in the wall behind the victim. A large calibre which literally pushed the victim back. The weapon that killed him wasn't a common one. Much less so when you take into account that it came from one of his factories!"

"You mean that the pistol the killer used was one made in the Grant factories?"

"Quite so, Wiggans"

"And what could you tell us about the cut on his briefcase? It seems curious that the killer had both a pistol and a knife, unless there were two of them."

"What knife? The cut definitely wasn't made by a knife - it's not regular enough for that. I've also found minute scratches along the briefcase's length."

"This is all very odd. Thank you for your help, Professor", we tell him before he returns to the study of his beaker. "Dr Saari! The title of charlatan would suit him better," we hear him grumble while we discreetly see ourselves out.

25 SW

The proprietor of Spaniard's Inn is a most cooperative fellow, for a small consideration. While he consults his records we wait at the bar sipping a glass of beer.

"Two gentlemen with the initials 'A.M.' reserved private rooms on the evening of March 9th," he tells us when he returns. "Alexander Mishkin and Anthony Mariano." "Can you tell us how to get in touch with them?" "I have never seen either man before or since." "Could you describe them?"

"Well, that's as may be. March 9th was some days ago..." Again we grease his palm. It never ceases to amaze us how effectively a quid can jar a memory.

"Alexander Mishkin was a giant of a fellow. He walked with a slight limp and spoke with an accent. He arrived at 8:30 and ordered supper. An English gentleman, about 30, I would say, joined him later.

Also, both Mishkin and the Englishman carried identical briefcases.

"Curiously enough, Anthony Mariano also ate alone and was joined by another man. His reservation was for 9 o'clock."

"Could you describe Mariano?"

"Oh, about the same age as the Englishman, thirty-ish. Hmm, swarthy, shifty eyes. Medium height."

We thank him for his information and start to leave when he reminds us that we have not paid for our drinks.

"But then again," he adds, catching the black look Wiggins throws at him and jingling the coins in his hand, "suppose we just call it even."

34 SW

At the door of Alexi Meshkoff's home we are met by a giant in a Cossack uniform. We ask to see Mr. Meshkoff. He gives us a perplexed look and says something in what must be Russian, the only intelligible word of which is 'Meshkoff.' We repeat our request and the Cossack says, "Da, Meshkoff," and he repeats what he first said. Finally we come to the conclusion that we each could repeat ourselves a thousand times over and neither would understand the other. We decide that the better part of valour is to retreat to the nearest pub.

38 SW

At the Spanish Embassy we are told that Señor Del Guerra is at home.

50 SW

Gregory Cardiff is in the billiards room with a guest when we visit his home. Unfortunately, Wiggins does not see the Irish setter lying on the floor in his path. Before we can warn him, he manages to step on a paw which causes the dog to yelp and leap into the air. The direction of the dog's leap is toward the small of his master's back, who at that moment is attempting a 3-rail shot. Mr. Cardiff misses the shot but makes a 2-foot-long tear in the felt with the tip of his cue stick. With profuse apologies and many well wishes, we hastily take our leave.

51 SW

We are greeted at the door of Count von Schulenberg's residence by a man whose glare is unfriendly and forbidding. His walrus moustache and stiff bearing remind us more of a sergeant in the Prussian Guard than a butler.

Before the man can shut the door in our faces, as he shows every sign of doing, Wiggins spews forth a stream of guttural sounds in a language that must bear some resemblance to German for the butler steps back, clicks his heels and admits us. Wiggins, for his part, cannot resist a mischievous wink in our direction.

Count von Schulenberg sits waiting for us behind his desk in the study. Physically, he is a bit of a surprise to us. Short and rotund, he looks slightly absurd in his tight-fitting uniform, more like an overdressed tram conductor than a military man. We suspect, on the evidence of a half-filled glass of a clear liquid on his desk, that his florid complexion is due as much to his penchant for tippling as to the tightness of his collar.

If his stature and shape, his rosy cheeks, grey hair and whiskers – his bushy side-whiskers loop down to his chin and back up to connect with his moustache – put us in mind of Ol' Saint Nick, his manner conjures up a very different image. He is very cold, devoid of any emotion, save possibly anger. He notices Wiggins' attention to a magnificent gun collection which fines one wall and asks him in a flat tone of voice suggesting disinterest in an answer, if he has a liking for guns. Wiggins barely begins a reply before the Count cuts him off.

"Now gentlemen, what is your business?"

We explain our mission and ask if we may put some questions to him. We take his stony silence as consent to do so.

"Were you aware that the Grant Arms Company was developing a new weapon for the British Government?"

"I knew of such a weapon, of course, but no details concerning it. But since no company can compete with our own Krupp Works, I was not very interested."

"Do you remember where you were on the evening of March 9th?"

He raises an eyebrow with the implication of the question. While he is deciding whether to answer or not, he lights a cigarette. We can't help but notice the "B & H" on the cigarette. Finally, he speaks. "I recall quite well. I went to the home of Hector Del Guerra, Military Attache to the Spanish Government."

Just then there is a knock on the study door.

"Herr – oh, Alfred," says a very beautiful young lady as she sweeps into the room and stops short. "I'm sorry, Alfred. I was unaware that you had company."

With a great deal more animation than we have seen heretofore, the Count rises, goes to her and with elaborate ceremony introduces the young blonde woman as his wife. Together they make a most incongruous pair. Thirty years and three inches, the height advantage

going to the lady, separate them. The introduction at an end, the Count –there is no other word for it – dismisses her.

Turning back to us, he says,"If that is all, gentlemen.... It is not a question.

54 SW

At the Russian Embassy we are escorted into the office of Alexi Meshkoff, Military Attache. His massiveness is not obscured by his desk. He is friendly, chatty almost.

"My government is very, very interested in the new naval gun being developed by Grant's. That I cannot deny. We have done business with Mr. Allen's company in the past and have always been satisfied. The Czar, may God preserve him, has very large borders to defend as well as a large fleet to arm. But we are a patient people; I point to the Balkans as an illustration of that Fact. We will wait until the British government deigns to allow Grant Arms to sell us the new gun."

As Meshkoff finishes speaking, there is an unexpected clatter behind the desk.

"Ah, thank you, young man," he says to Wiggins who retrieves his cane which had slipped down from the edge of the desk of its own volition.

Meshkoff pats his thigh and explains, "An affair of honour some years ago. Although not too many years ago," he laughs. "As my adversary fell forward, shot dead through the heart, his pistol went off, accidentally, much as the cane just slipped off the desk. Unfortunately, the ball found my leg."

"Sir, would you mind telling us where you were on the evening of March 9th?"

Meshkoff tilts back his head and laughs heartily.

"Of course not, my friends. I attended a performance at the Covent Garden Theatre and was there all evening." Since we have nothing more to ask, we thank him and take our leave.

56 SW

Lord Ragland's man, Bunting, admits us to the residence and shows us into the study to wait. We are almost as impressed by Lord Ragland's establishment as we are with Lord Ragland himself when he arrives. At 30, he is the picture of the English gentleman, impeccably groomed, with a grace and style at once attractive and forbidding. The introductions completed, he separates himself from us by walking to the other side of the desk. Seating himself, he asks us to begin.

Before we can, however, he notices an envelope on the desk and immediately calls for Bunting.

"Drummond's has slipped up again. See that this is posted immediately.... Excuse me, gentlemen. Debit where a credit should be or some such. Please begin."

"On the night of Mr. Allen's murder, he had an appointment, with Captain Egan–"

"Yes, the purchasing officer for naval ordnance at the Admiralty. We were working on a secret project for the Admiralty, and Courtney was concerned about one of the engineers, Richard Camp, being a security risk. We discussed it that morning. I gave no credence to the idea."

Lord Ragland pauses to reach into a small silver box. From it, he draws forth a cigarette which has a "B & H" printed on it in gold leaf. He inserts it into an ebony cigarette holder, lights it and leans back. Without our prompting, he continues.

"No, no. Camp is a fine fellow. But as a concession to Egan, I removed him from the project and assigned him elsewhere.... Tragic, Courtney's death. To think that I had intended to stop by the offices that evening but was forced to work late at the plant. If I had, perhaps the thief would have thought twice before tackling two of us."

"Were you disappointed about not being named president? You were, after all, senior vice-president."

"Not a bit of it. I am quite happy in my work in the technical areas. Administrative matters do not interest me. Besides, one of Marlowe's conditions of employment was that he succeeds Courtney when Courtney retired. Of course, that would not have been for many years."

"Thank you, Lord Ragland."

59 SW

We are shown into the office of a busy little man who twirls the end of his moustache with one hand, while he shuffles papers with the other. He barely looks up to inform us that Emile Zobar is not in his office today, but starts violently at the mention of Richard Camp.

"Do I know Mr. Rich – who?"

As he hems and haws a moment or two, a compact man of medium height enters. He breaks off in mid-sentence as he sees us.

"Pardon me," he says in English. "I am Paul Zobar, Vice Consul. May I be of service to you?"

Before we can reply, the little man explains in a flustered mixture of French and English that we are on our way out and that the matter was a trifling one anyway, unworthy of the Vice Consul's attention. Satisfied, Zo-

bar drops some papers on the desk and leaves the room.

"I'm afraid I have no more time for you. If you wish to see Emile Zobar, I suggest that you call at his home. Good day."

As we are about to leave, a lovely young lady enters. Wiggins bows low to her, sweeping his derby across his body. He is immediately rewarded with a wide, dimpled smile and a curtsey. Before he can advance his cause, however, the young woman calls out, "Papa," and races down the hallway toward Paul Zobar.

60 SW

Sir Clayton Partridge is a vigorous man in his late fifties. When we arrive at his home, he is directing three servants in the packing of his carriage.

"No, Muffins, put the fly rods on top but only after everything is loaded... Cleaver, that cord will never do. Stouter stuff, man, stouter stuff is needed.... Where is my shot bag, Brimmer? You know I hate to carry shotgun shells in my pocket."

Our interruption is not appreciated but, in the main, Sir Clayton is co-operative. He tells us that he is indeed a smoker of Benson and Hedges Imperials. Further, he is acquainted with the Grant Arms Company.

"Phillip Marlowe is an old friend and golfing partner. Played with him on the very day of Allen's murder."

"When did you finish your round?"

"Late afternoon. Invited Marlowe home to dine. We were at it well into the evening. Brandy afterward, you know. Must have been midnight when we parted company."

86 SW

We have difficulty keeping up with Wiggins as he strides boldly into Dunhill's. He asks the clerk, in a tone that demands an answer, "Sir, could you tell me what the initials 'B & H' on this cigarette end stand for?"

The clerk, after a moment of stony silence, growls, "We don't give out information that would aid our competitors. I find that question offensive." He stares us out the door.

88 SW

The old salesman at Fribourg & Treyer is eager to help us. 'B & H'? I believe that stands for Bradford and Hennessey –they import furs, I think."

"No, no" sighs Wiggins, "they're on this cigarette end." "Oh, on a cigarette, are they? Well, that would be Benson & Hedges, wouldn't it?"

AREA NW

1 NW

We find the home of Rudolph Noble closed up. The servant from the neighbouring house tells us that he left for Lourdes, France, with his ailing mother last August and has not been heard from since.

14 NW

Our interview with Mrs. Allen is mercifully short. She answers our indelicate questions with a quiet, calm dignity that convinces us she knows nothing of her husband's murder that would be of any help to us.

16 NW

A salesman identifies the cigarette end as that of a Benson & Hedges Imperial.

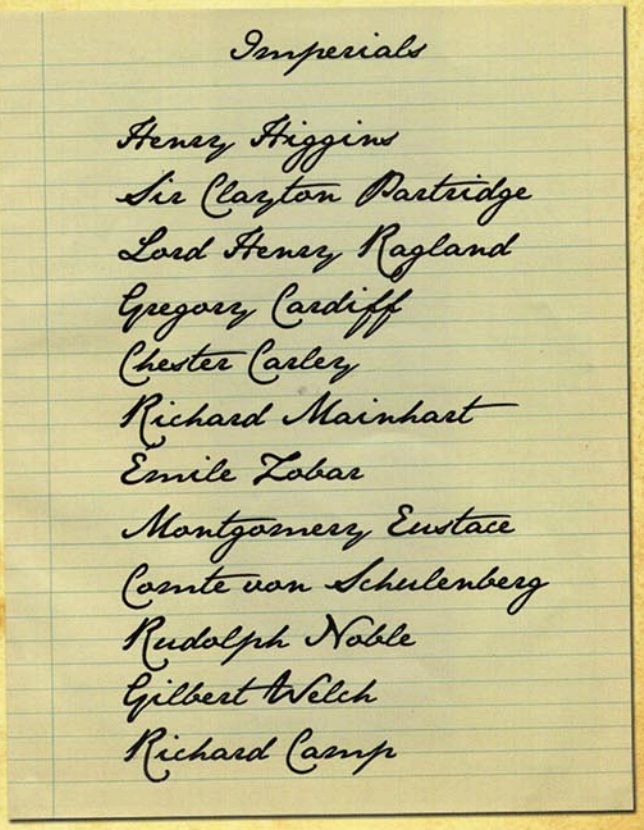
"It is quite an expensive blend of Turkish and Virginia tobaccos. Very strong, yet very smooth. It's not a cigarette for the casual smoker but rather for a connoisseur."

"Imperials are made to order, are they not?"

"Oh, but of course. The Imperial is a relatively new brand and the client list is very small and exclusive."

"May we see that list?"

The salesman reaches under the counter and pulls out a small ledger. The list has the following 12 names:



18 NW

The proprietor of Parsons & Son Toy Shoppe, Sam Parsons, leans over and whispers to us conspiratorially, "No messages from 'you know who' today."

23 NW

We find Richard Camp in the sitting room of his bachelor apartment nursing a cold and looking thoroughly miserable. As he pours a spoonful of Dr. Saari's Magic Elixir, he is seized with a fit of sneezing causing the liquid to spill down his shirt front.

"Blast!" he curses. He flings the spoon across the room and takes a slug straight from the bottle. "Ill health puts me in an ill temper," he says by way of apology.

"We're sorry to inconvenience you, but we would like to ask you a few questions. Would you tell us why you were removed from Project # 10?"

"Lord Ragland simply assigned me elsewhere. Since Project # 10 was well along, he felt I would be more useful in other areas. He also mentioned that my visits to the French Embassy had been misinterpreted in some quarters and perhaps it would be a politic move."

"Your visits to the French Embassy?"

"I am secretly engaged to the daughter of the Vice Consul. Her father is a most difficult man. Her uncle, Emile Zobar, is sympathetic to us. Since I work for an arms company and he is the military attache, my visits there were ostensibly to see him. Both Mr. Allen and Lord Ragland were well aware of the real reasons for my visits."

"Did you ever discuss Project # 10 with Monsieur Zobar?" "No I would never!"

"And where were you the evening of the 9th?"

"I met Annette, my fiancée, at Rule's. We took several hours to dine and then I brought her home to the Embassy." "Just one more question, Mr. Camp. Do you smoke Benson & Hedges Imperials?"

"No, I don't. They are a favourite of Emile Zobar's, though, and I gave him some for his last birthday. Why do you ask?"

"Just following up our leads. Thank you for your cooperation, Mr. Camp. Hope you're feeling better soon."

32 NW

We make our way past the stacked luggage in the hallway to find Phillip Marlowe in the centre of the parlour swinging a golf club, a mashie-niblick by the look of it. He is a brisk man in his mid-forties. He informs us that he is on his way to the country estate of Sir Clayton Partridge and so brevity on our part would be appreciated. We ask him about his ascendancy to the presidency of the company.

"Allen and I had an understanding on that score. Upon his retirement, I would take the office. In fact, it was the key reason I joined the company three years ago."

"Mr. Allen was close to retirement, then?"

"Not by any means .... Look, I cannot deny that I have mixed feelings about Allen's untimely death. It was tragic and I feel outraged as any decent, right-thinking man would. But we were not personally close and I do relish the chance to run the company."

"Where were you on the evening of the 9th?"

"I played golf with Sir Clayton in the afternoon and went home with him to dine. Stayed 'til almost midnight."

The butler enters the room with a valise in one hand and a shotgun in the other.

"Ready, Swinson? Well, I'm off."

34 NW

We arrive on Wimpole-street in front of the home of Henry Higgins after a wild cab ride. We hop down, glad to touch terra firma once again; and, on wobbly legs, ascend the three stairs to the front door. Our first ring goes unanswered, as does our second. We are about to leave when the door finally opens.

A young man with a rather studious air motions impatiently for us to enter. We follow him through the open door and make our way toward a strange-sounding voice speaking an atrocious English dialect. We find ourselves in the study where the young Henry Higgins is frantically writing on a notepad. We look around for the speaker only to discover a machine emitting the scratchy sounds. Finally he switches it off and looks up at us.

"Amazing machine, wouldn't you say?"

Without giving us a chance to answer, he shows the notebook. All we see are apparently random letters joined and marked over with squiggly lines.

"I am inventing a writing system which will elaborate the sounds of words. I'm afraid our twenty-six letters do not do the richness of the English language adequate justice. Of course, there is much work to do and I haven't got it quite right yet, but I will, have no fear."

"Mr. Higgins, we wonder if we might ask you a few questions?" says Wiggins.

"You were born on the fringe of Chelsea. Within two blocks, three perhaps, of Lupus-street! Am I right?"

"No, I'm afraid not. Not even close."

"Oh. Well, how can I help you?" he asks in a dejected tone.

Our questions concerning Benson & Hedges cigarettes, the Grant Arms Company, etc., are pointless with this chap, we know, but we ask them anyway.

39 NW

Our visit with Montgomery Eustace is very short. When we find him to be an 80-year-old man with his leg in a cast, we doubt that he is involved in the case. Several minutes of conversation with him seem to confirm our doubts.

40 NW

Wiggins describes the emerald earring to the salesman at Rowlands & Frazier.

"Yes, I recall them quite well. Let me see."

He opens a large ledger and tells us that they were commissioned on January 12th by Count von Schulenberg.

47 NW

We are told by Captain Egan's landlady, whom we suspect was once a bosun's mate on a man-o-war, that he is at the Admiralty.

42 NW

"This case seems pretty simple to me, Wiggins. All this staging to pass this assassination for a villainous murder is grotesque. Far too many valuable items were found on the body for a hoodlum, no matter how distracted, to have overlooked. The crime was certainly committed by someone from his close entourage who tried to misdirect the attention of the police. The pistol isn't generally the weapon of spurned women, but it could be the one of a cheated husband. However, I've noted in the briefcase the absence of any file having to do with the evening appointment of the deceased. This missing document thus puts at cause someone with who Allen had a professional relationship who is the key to this enigma."

Holmes searches a drawer in his desk, pulling out of it his pipe and a pouch of tobacco before continuing.

"While we're at it, Wiggins, have you noticed that the writing of the message is the same as the one in the agenda? Why would Allen write a message to sign it A.M.? Was he really the author or the one it was addressed to? It's an interesting question, don't you think?"

As we're about to exit, Holmes calls out: "By the way Wiggins, would you be kind enough to fetch for me some tobacco from Benson & Hedges, please? My reserve is almost empty."

54 NW

Once the clerk at Bradley's cigarette shop realizes that we are only there to bother him with questions and not to buy anything he ignores us completely and attends the next customer in line. We go elsewhere to get the information.



AREA WC

1 WC

All the lights are on at Richard Allen's residence as we arrive on his doorstep. He invites us in and we sit in his tasteful living room.

"Mr. Allen, is there any more information about your brother that might help our investigation?"

He thinks. "I've said everything I can." Sitting beside him we, each in our own way, wonder why we've come, and forget even to assure him that we'll solve the case.

5 WC

Not a single cabbie at the Central Carriage Stables can remember picking up a fare between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. on March 9th around Leonard-street, City-road or Old-street.

"I guess," says Wiggins, "that the culprit fled on foot."

11 WC

The proprietor of Radford, Jones & Co. is caught between a natural reticence to talk about his clients' financial affairs in general and a biting urge to speak about Lord Ragland's in particular. After all, a gentleman's tailor is second only to a gentleman's gentleman as a paragon of discreet and loyal service. But the slight done him, which involves money, is too much to contain, and he chooses to speak rather than keep silent.

"It took us seven full months to collect that bill – 140 guineas! Why, I almost had to resort to the courts! Not that it would have done me much good at the time. If all the tradesmen to whom Lord Ragland owed money were lined end to end, they would've stretched across the city! Of course, everything righted itself. I don't mind telling you, however, when he comes for a fitting these days, we have our payment in hand before we proceed."

14 WC

We wait patiently as Disraeli O'Brien looks up the files of the various names we have given him. He returns shortly. "I'm afraid that none of the principals in your case have ever had any brush with the law. Unfortunate for your investigation, but perhaps, fortunate for them." We thank him and step back out onto the windy street.

17 WC

The clerk at Somerset House finds for us Courtney Allen's will. It is short and to the point. He bequeathed his entire estate, which included a large block of Grant Arras Co. stock, some property and over £60,000 in notes, to his wife Beatrice.

19 WC

The maitre d' at Rule's Restaurant, after consulting the records, remembers Richard Camp and his lovely companion quite well.

"They were a charming couple, very much in love. They arrived shortly before their reservation time, 7 o'clock, and spent several hours, until sometime after 10, engaged in long looks and hushed conversation. Our chef was somewhat irritated for they showed more interest in each other than in his preparation."

20 WC

We enquire at Simpson's Cigar Divan if they are familiar with the letters "B&H" printed on a cigarette.

"In gold leaf you say? That would be Benson and Hedges new Imperial brand cigarettes. Emile Zobar smokes them. He is the Military Attache to the French Embassy and a chess devotee."

"Would you know if he was here on the evening of March 9th?"

"Well, he usually plays with Alfie," he says, pointing to a skinny, scholarly type bent over a chess board, alone in the corner. We go over to him, but before we can interrupt, he holds up a hand as a signal to wait. With lightning speed he manoeuvres both black and white pieces around the board. Only when he is satisfied with the variations of the opening he is studying, does he turn his attention to us.

In response to our question, Alfie reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out a note book.

"At 9:04 p.m., March 9th, we sat down to play. Finished at 11:14. The game was a draw. He played the Ruy Lopez opening and countered with–"

"Thank you. Was he here earlier in the evening?"
"No, he came in just before we played."

"Thank you, Alfie."

26 WC

Wiggins, with a dazzling glibness, is able to coax the manager of Drummond's to give us a peek at Lord Ragland's banking record.

It clearly paints a sad financial picture previous to March 10th. Since that date, Lord Ragland has de-

posited a total of £30,000 in six £5,000 instalments.

30 WC

An usher at the Covent Garden Theatre assures us that Alexi Meshkoff, whose tremendous size he recalls, was there on March 9th.

"What time did the performance end that evening?" "11:15."

We ask the lad to show us the box that Meshkoff occupied and he leads us to the corridor behind the boxes.

"Where does this lead?" asks Wiggins, pointing to a door directly across from Meshkoff's box.

"To the alley behind the Theatre."

"Think hard. Do you specifically recall the gentleman leaving when it was over?"

"Now that you mention it, I can't say as I do."

35 WC

The clerk at Amber & Co. seems slightly put off by our question.

"'B & H' is the mark of Benson & Hedges. I'm sure that they would be able to help you."

36 WC

Our interview with Hector Del Guerra at his home is suddenly interrupted by the entrance of three small children into the parlour. They fairly fly into the room with a swoop upon their father, covering him with hugs and kisses. Close upon their heels, their governess issues a string of Spanish commands which once again restores order. After formal introductions are made, with awkward curtsies by the little ones, the governess hustles them away and Senor Del Guerra is able to continue.

"It was a formal dinner party, you see; March 9th is our wedding anniversary. There were thirty or so guests and they began arriving a little after 7 o'clock. As I recall, Count von Schulenberg and his wife were the last to arrive, at about 8:30."

37 WC

As we step into the restaurant, a delicious smell of grilled meat tickles our nostrils. Admittedly we're arriving in the middle of the service, and a half-dozen waiters twirl between the tables to bring the customers their meal, apparently under the orders of a man in a black suit. After a short wait, the latter man comes to us.

"Good day sirs, and welcome to Keen's. Did you have a reservation? No? I'm sincerely sorry, but we're full at the moment."

The sound of breaking dishes then is heard behind him. We don't have the time to ask him questions before he goes to manage this incident. We seize the chance to take a quick and discrete look in the reservation book resting on the pulpit at the entrance of the room, and we notice that Richard Allen had indeed reserved a table for two on March 8th. We discreetly leave as the maître d'hôtel is beside himself with excuses to a couple of which the woman has, apparently, wound up with a fish on her dress instead of on her plate.

41 WC

We find Emile Zobar at home, ill in bed. His housekeeper, who looks nothing like our image of a French maid, shows us the way.

"We are sorry to disturb you but–"

"Nonsense, it is a slight indisposition and your company is quite welcome. To be frank with you, I am bored to tears."

He snaps shut a copy of Alice in Wonderland and reaches into the drawer of the bedstand. He withdraws a cigarette case which he opens and offers to us. We decline, but we can't help but notice the gold leaf "B & H."

"Shut the door, if you please. My housekeeper will fuss to no end if she sees me smoking."

"Would you tell us where you were on the evening of March 9th?"

"Yes, the night of Monsieur Allen's death. I was at Simpson's playing chess all evening."

"Do you know Richard Camp?"

"But, of course. He is employed at the Grant Arms Company and is secretly engaged to my niece, Annette Zobar." "Why `secretly'?"

'Because my brother is a most narrow-minded individual. Odd for a Parisian, admittedly, but ..." He shrugs. "He has a strong dislike for you English. Being a most diplomatic diplomat, he is able to keep it well-hidden. Such might not be the case should his only daughter marry an Englishman. I, on the other hand, like and admire the English very much, Richard in particular. And since I am also inordinately fond of my niece, I agreed to involve myself in their conspiracy."

"Has Mr. Camp ever talked to you about the special project on which he was working?"

"One of the qualities I admire most about the English is their profound sense of loyalty. Richard possesses that quality in the extreme. So, no. My association with him is purely social, within the situation I have already

explained."

We thank Monsieur Zobar for his time and wish him a speedy recovery. At the bottom of the stairs on our way out we hear two female voices conversing in the kitchen. We catch a glimpse of a well-dressed woman, whose name, "Lady Hilda," stands out from the jumble of French spoken by the housekeeper. We are uncertain of the last name, but it is one syllable and begins with an "O" or possibly an "H," considering the French difficulty with the letter. Curiously, as she sees us, she quickly darts out of view.

45 WC

Mr. Gilbert Welch tells us that he has smoked Benson & Hedges for six months. He knows nothing about the Grant Arms Company, a Courtney Allen or murder.

"In fact," he adds, refilling his brandy snifter for the third time since our arrival, "in ten more minutes I will not know anything about anything."

93 WC

We enter the Little Newspaper Shop as a fine mist begins to rain in the street. The shop is aptly named: narrow shelves overflow with multiple copies of newspapers which may date from last week just as they might date from a number of years. The central aisle ends at a counter where a short graying man is standing, looking unfriendly. Behind him, a display of cigarettes is carefully arranged behind glass. We quickly notice that the cigarettes with the B&H logo we're looking for are stored in a display touting the merits of Benson & Hedges tobacco.

As the gaze of the shopkeeper begins to put us ill at ease and he asks us the reason for our visit, we claim that we're missing a copy of the Pall Mall Gazette dating from August 22nd 1885 for our collection. To our great surprise, the merchant quickly finds us a copy of said newspaper, which we buy before leaving. As we exit, Wiggins unfolds the newspaper and uses it to protect himself from the rain.

95 WC

The sign on the window of Mortimer's reads "Closed due to illness."

AREA EC

2 EC

As soon as we are admitted to her presence, we recognize Lady Hilda Hope as the woman we glimpsed at Zobar's. She also recognizes us.

"Well, it seems you've found us out," she says.

"I'm not sure that we have," says Wiggins. "We thought it strange that you found it necessary to dodge out of our sight. We also caught your name spoken by the housekeeper. We decided to enquire. Exactly what have we found out about you and Monsieur Zobar?"

She pauses and then decides to tell all.

"My husband, Sir Lionel, is in the foreign service. Last October he was posted to Oman, in Arabia. Our marriage is such that I chose not to go and Lionel was delighted that I didn't. At a New Year's Ball at the French Embassy, I met Emile and, quite frankly, fell in love. Of course, any breath of a scandal would bring disaster to my husband's career. And that, I have no wish to do."

"Madam, you may rely on our discretion."

5 EC

By prearrangement we meet Constable Beadle behind the Grant Arms Company in the alley parallel to Leonard street.

"I noticed a strange lump up the alley. I knew right off that something was amiss – my instinct for the out-of-place, you might say. Watch your step there! The cobbling hereabouts is in a bad way. Many a jagged edge just made for tripping a man."

We have strolled 30 feet or so from the base of a stairway that leads to the offices of Grant Arms to arrive at the juncture of a "T" formed with another alley that leads to Old-street.

"It was right here and, sad to say, it was not a lump at all. Now the victim was lying on his back, the force of the bullet having thrown him backwards. The briefcase was lying right beside the body, waist-high. The wallet was lying a few feet away. The victim's overcoat was thrown open and his pocket watch was missing, but part of the chain was still attached to the vest. He was quite dead but there was still some warmth in his bare hands, so I couldn't have missed the blighter by much.

"Now, I figure the perpetrator must have hid in that shed just up this second alley. When the victim approached, he jumped out and fired point-blank. As you can see, it's but five feet from the shed to where the body lay."

We thank Constable Beadle for his time and trou-

ble. He goes back on patrol, but we linger a moment longer at the scene. From the shed Wiggins calls to us.

"Seems both Scotland Yard and our 'Perpetrator' have been quite careless."

His open palm reveals the remains of a cigarette. On it are the letters "B & H" in gold leaf. The tip end is pinched evenly all around.

Beaming, Wiggins suggests that we adjourn to the offices of the Grant Arms Company to interview Allen's private secretary.

Our unorthodox means of entry via the back stairway startles a young man we meet in the corridor. Fair-haired and pleasant-featured, he turns out to be William Linhart. After introductions are made and we are seated in Linhart's office, Wiggins asks him a question that has been nagging at all of us since the beginning.

"What was Mr. Allen doing in the alley?"

"Anytime he worked after hours, which was often, he would leave by the back way. It was a short walk to Oldstreet where the traffic was heavier and a cab more likely to be hailed."

"So anyone who had a passing knowledge of Mr. Allen's habits, company employees or even business acquaintances would certainly have been aware of that practice?"

"Yes, that's so."

"That evening Mr. Allen was scheduled to meet with a Captain Egan at 8:30. Can you tell us who Captain Egan is?"

"He is the ordnance officer in charge of purchasing for the Admiralty."

"Do you know what the meeting was about?"

"He and Mr. Allen met often to discuss the special project undertaken for the Admiralty some months ago, but I was unaware of that particular meeting. Mr. Allen regularly delivered progress reports, but always during the day, and I always made the appointments. I remember that Mr. Allen asked me to put the SP#10-A folder into his briefcase. It surprised me because I was not aware of an appointment with Captain Egan."

"Could you tell us about this special project?"

"It is very secret, but I suppose I can say that it involves the development of a new type of naval gun."

"Were there problems with the project?"

"None that I am aware of. Mr. Allen was very concerned about security, though. While we do sell arms to foreign powers, there are certain weapons that are reserved exclusively for our own Government. Special Project # 10-A was such a one."

"Was Mr. Allen's concern over security based on a specific incident or centred on a specific person?"

"The existence of the project was common knowledge, so I'm sure he expected a certain amount of, well, spying. He called in Lord Ragland to discuss the matter after several strange people were seen hanging around the Deverell street plant."

"Why would the plant be under surveillance?"

"All the technical data, blueprints, formulas, that type of thing are housed there. Our offices here are entirely administrative."

"Mr. Allen's brother believes that he was having an affair at the time of his death. Realizing that this is a delicate matter, would you know who the lady might have been?"

"No, I don't. Over the years I have always known about Mr. Allen's peccadillos but only in the most general way. We would be working and something would trigger a cryptic remark that obviously had to do with his personal life. For example, just after the International Arms Fair opened, he received a scented letter on pink stationery. Later that day he was dictating a memo to Lord Ragland when he stopped and picked it up. He took a full whiff of it and said aloud, 'Women often marry for a title but they won't necessarily fall in love for one.' Then he laughed and went on with the memo."

"You're now secretary of the new president Mr. Marlowe?"

"Yes. He was Mr. Allen's hand-picked successor which perfectly illustrates the kind of man Mr. Allen was. There was no love lost between them and yet, recognizing Marlowe's outstanding business acumen, he named him as his heir, so to speak."

"Thank you, Mr. Linhart. You've been very helpful."

18 EC

The proprietor of Bishop's Finger Inn is a nervous little man who wrings his delicate hands as we make our enquiries. He is very reluctant to give us information concerning Mr. Allen.

"My patrons have full confidence in my discretion and I cannot, will not, betray that trust."

"Even to the point of impeding an official Police investigation?" asks Wiggins, his zone striking the right note between righteous indignation and official threat. The little man capitulates.

"Uh, well, I always like to co-operate with the authorities."

"Good fellow I Believe me, I'll put in a good word for you. Now, on the evening of March 8th, Mr. Allen met someone here. Yes?"

Once the wall has been breached the city is taken.

The little man gushes forth the information that Mr. Allen availed himself of the private dining room on ten occasions between January 15th and March 8th. "Each time a tall woman wearing a cloak and veil arrived first. I can't really tell you anything about her, but she seemed a lady of elegance and position. She spoke to me but once, on her first visit. I did detect a faint accent. Mid-European, I would say. Louis!"

He calls over the waiter who served Allen and guest. From him we learn that the lady was very striking with long blonde hair. He also reminds the proprietor of the earring that the lady left behind. It is a tear-drop emerald, circled by diamonds. The jeweller's mark "R & F" is inscribed on the metal clasp.

Wiggins thanks them. As we are leaving, Louis remembers something that he thinks we ought to know.

"There was this tall man with a thick moustache. He never smiled; he was absolutely stone-faced. The only time he appeared was on the evenings of Mr. Allen's rendezvous. He would arrive and leave just after the lady. Perhaps Bradford would know more."

The barman recalls the stone-faced man very well.

"He would sit here, hour after hour, ramrod straight, saying nothing. Downright unfriendly. Always ordered just one drink and never finished that. Never tipped. He was no gentleman!"

22 EC

From the gallery of the Stock Exchange, Wiggins is able to see the big chalk board only with the aid of binoculars.

"Rafferty Paper Mills, 8 shillings a share... There is no listing for the Stevenson Iron Works."

Just then a messenger arrives with an affirmative reply to our note to Richard Allen. We make our way down the stairs to an anteroom where Mr. Allen waits.

"How is the investigation progressing?"

"It is progressing. Mr. Allen, would you tell us a little bit about Rafferty Paper Mills and the Stevenson Iron Works, from an investment standpoint?"

"Until the day of his death, Josiah Rafferty's company was as solid as the Bank of England. But I would never have advised investment in it for two reasons. One, Josiah Rafferty was 94 on his last birthday. His passing could have been at any time in the last 20 years. Two, his sons are as incompetent as their father was exceptional. They now control the company and, as a blind man could have foreseen, they are running it into the ground at breakneck speed.

"The Stevenson Iron Works is totally bankrupt and for good reason. Upwards of 85 percent of their raw materials came from Central American countries. Between this revolution and that revolution, well ... Lord Ragland invested heavily in both, now that I recall."

"We'll be on our way now. Thank you."

27 EC

As we're approaching the paper mill, a loud sound is heard. Entering the mill, we realize that it's the heavy presses that are making a hellish racket, deafening us to the point where we can't even hear ourselves. We quickly flee this place, where our presence hadn't even been noticed by the operators of these machines.

30 EC

We meet Henry Ellis at his office and explain we are looking into the murder of Courtney Allen. His face brightens. "Oh, the Grant Arms Company case. Yes, I've heard talk about that here in the News Room. Mighty suspicious, but if you ask me I've got a pretty good idea what this is all about." He stops and flashes us a knowing smile. He seems to have no intention of continuing.

After a few seconds, Wiggins impatiently leans forward and pleads, "Well, what is it? Out with it man!"

Ellis looks around to make sure no one is eavesdropping on the conversation. "As you might already know," Ellis explains, "the Grant Arms Company is working on a secret new naval gun – they say it will be superior to anything available today. I've heard from my contacts on the Continent that almost every naval power in Europe would like to get their hands on those plans. I sincerely doubt an Englishman pulled the trigger; more likely it was a Russian or a Frenchman. If superiority on the High Seas isn't motive enough for murder, I don't know what is."

"Thanks for the tip."

35 EC

"Well, Wiggins, what brings you here? Helping Holmes with a case?" asks Quintin Hogg from behind his cluttered desk.

"Yes, as a matter of fact. We were in the neighbourhood and thought we would drop in on you."

"Good. What are you working on?"

"Courtney Allen's murder."

"That's interesting. I hear that there may be some tie-in with some project that Grant's was doing for the government. Any truth to that?"

"That's what we're trying to find out. What do you

know?"

"Nothing concrete. At the Black Crown the other night a group of us reporters were sitting around talking shop and the subject of foreign involvement in crime came up. Espionage, kidnapping and even murder. I really don't know if Allen's murder falls into any of these categories or not, but it just struck me as a possibility when I heard of his death. So far, all I know is what the Yard has released. I'll start doing some digging around and let you know if I come up with anything."

"Thanks, we'll do the same."

36 EC

We find Mr. Hall in his office and he grants us a few minutes of his time. We outline the facts surrounding the murder of Courtney Allen. He leans back in his chair and thinks for a moment. "It seems to me that Scotland Yard is incorrect in their assessment of the motive for this crime. A common thief would not leave behind an unopened briefcase, nor would he take time to investigate its contents at the scene of the crime. Therefore, the motive for the murder must be obscure. It seems that you have quite a puzzle on your hands; I would like to help you but at this time my case load is far too heavy and my time is precious."

38 EC

Sir Jasper Meeks explains that Allen was shot in the chest at close range.

"From a distance of two feet, no more – there were extensive powder burns on his overcoat."

"Do you have the bullet?"

"No, but it must have been of large calibre; the exit wound was massive."

39 EC

Wiggins rings the bell beside the name `Anthony Mariano' and we wait. Soon we hear footfalls coming down the stairs. The door opens and a swarthy, thirty-ish gentleman of medium height, with eyes not at all shifty, stands before us. He is wearing a pith helmet and a ballerina's tutu. A tasteful touch of rouge colours his cheeks.

"Yes?"

"Ah... ah... that is...is Sebastian Palmerston at home?"
"I think you have the wrong address."

"Isn't this Aldersgate High-street?"

"No, this is Aldersgate-street. Go south toward St. Paul's and take a left on Cheapside. Follow it right into Poultry, Cornhill, Leadenhall-street and that runs into Aldergate High-street."

"Oh, I say, that's very kind. Sorry to interrupt, that is, bother you."

"Not at all."

44 EC

At R.S. Garrard & Co. we speak to Virgil Leggins about the jewel robbery that took place yesterday.

"It was in the middle of the afternoon and there were only a few customers present. Suddenly, smoke was pouring out of the stairwell that leads to the offices."

He points to the stairs. They are directly in line and about 5 feet away from an aisle between two showcases. They go up six steps to a landing, turn left and disappear above.

"In an instant the entire place was filled with smoke. Several people yelled 'Fire!' and everyone, including myself, went toward the front door. Very quickly the firefighters arrived, a bucket brigade was formed and the fire extinguished. As it turned out, of course, there was no fire at all. Someone, I believe it was a well-dressed gentleman in his mid-thirties who carried a carpetbag and was standing in the area of the stairs, tossed a smoke bomb up onto the landing. An entire showcase over there was looted."

"Quite audacious to strike in the middle of the afternoon."

"Yes, but when we're closed, our entire inventory is placed in a specially constructed vault. It would have been impossible to rob then."

51 EC

We arrive at Richard Mainhart's home, just as his solicitor, Henry Swathmore, is leaving.

"Thank you, Henry, for bringing by those papers to sign."

Unfortunately, Mr. Mainhart is very nearsighted and in the confusion the hand he shakes in good-bye is Wiggins'. It all gets sorted out and we soon find ourselves in a sitting room.

"You smoke Benson & Hedges Imperials?"

"Oh, do you? That's nice. I smoke them too." He is also hard of hearing.

We spend ten more confusing minutes with him before we take our leave.

52 EC

"Hmm, a bad business, the Allen murder," says Porky. "Have you heard any rumblings?"

"Nary a word. I know a couple of blokes who

aren't above using a pig-sticker in a dark alley, but a pistol? Ain't hardly sportin'. Jasper! A round for me friends"

61 EC

We find the apartment of the Linhart family without any difficulty. We barely have the time to explain the reason for our visit before Mrs Mabel Linhart, William's mother, begins offering us all sorts of things to eat and drink. She's a lively old lady who begins to sob violently when she remembers the nice hat that Mr Allen had delivered to her for her birthday, the day before his death.

We sympathize, offer her our handkerchiefs, and share some of her homemade caramels, which, after a while, allows us to comfort her. Finally, we ask her where her son was on the night of March 9th.

"At home with me all night. My Billy's such a good boy."

88 EC

The Black Crown only opens at night, and we get there a bit too early to talk with Quintin Hogg's colleagues. We leave, a bit disappointed.

90 EC

Our knocks on Virgil Leggins' door remain unanswered, which is normal as he's still working at the jewellery store.



QUESTIONS

Part One

1. Who killed Courtney Allen?

2. Why was he murdered?

3. What was the significance of the message found in Courtney Allen's notebook?

4. What was the reason for the Richard's Camp visits to the French Embassy?

Part Two

1. Why was the tip of the cigarette found at the scene of the crime "pinched all around evenly"?

2. Who was Courtney Allen's paramour at the time of his death?

3. What was special about the weapon used to kill Courtney Allen?

4. How could Wiggins easily make 10 pounds?

SOLUTION

We are gathered once again at 221B Baker Street comparing notes and discussing the case, trying to unravel its many threads, when Holmes finally speaks.

"From the outset it was obvious that the theft of Mr. Allen's wallet was but a decoy for the perpetrator's real intent. In the first place, it is unlikely that a common criminal would have overlooked two valuable rings and in the second, simple robbery would not explain the absence of a folder marked SP#10-A in the briefcase."

"But the briefcase was found locked," protests Watson. "As far as we know, Allen locked it and it remained so until you yourself sprang it open. I might add that I was quite shocked at your adeptness at such larceny."

"To study the criminal is to acquire knowledge of criminal methods. In any case, the murderer must have opened it, as evidenced by the spread eagle position of the body and the placement of the briefcase with regard to it. As Allen was shot, his arms described an arc out and away from the body. The briefcase, then, appears to have been flung some distance, as indicated by the gouge in the leather, caused by its scraping along the jagged cobbles. Yet it was found beside the body and, more significantly, waist high, exactly the right position for the murderer to have retrieved it and brought it to the key on Allen's catch fob.

"Knowing that the contents of the folder were central to the murder and that the code stood for Special Project # 10, a new naval gun for the Admiralty, it was a simple matter to cull two suspects from the customer list of Benson & Hedges Imperial brand smokers. The cigarette found at the scene was, of course, a Benson & Hedges cigarette."

"You must mean Count von Schulenberg and Emile Zobar, the military attaches from Germany and France," ventures Wiggins.

"No, not at all. Remember, all technical data was kept at the Deverell-street Plant. Folder SP#10-A, like the others in Allen's briefcase, contained only administrative data, data that would be of little or no use to a foreign power. It could, however, contain something that would be damaging to a company employee. Therefore, the two significant names on the Benson & Hedges list were those of Lord Ragland and Richard Camp.

"Captain Egan, quite unintentionally, went a long way toward clearing Camp. A visit to the plant completed the job."

"His visits to the French Embassy were certainly suspicious," asserts Watson.

"The photographs on his desk explained them perfectly. The Church in the background with the unfinished towers is the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Mr. Camp's lady love is French and lives at the French Embassy. Further, I suspect that the lady has some familial relationship to Emile Zobar. The Benson & Hedges Imperials purchased by Mr. Camp, a cigar smoker were intended as a gift for Monsieur Zobar.

"By that process of elimination then, Lord Ragland is our man."

"But why? What was the damaging information in the folder?" asks Watson. "From the cryptic wire sent to Egan and the note concerning Spaniard's intercepted by Allen, which by the way explains why a note signed `A.M.' was in Allen's handwriting, it is clear that Ragland was selling Special Project # 10 to a foreign power. Whatever evidence Allen had was in the folder and about to be taken to Captain Egan.

"I believe Mr. Allen went to the plant that morning to confront Lord Ragland with that evidence. When he intercepted the note he saw a chance to catch Ragland and `A.M.' – Alexi Meshkoff, military attache at the Russian Embassy – redhanded. He set up the meeting with Egan and was ready to `pounce.'

"Ragland, for his part, was either told of Allen's surprise visit and the intercepted note or else he detected something amiss with the note itself. He probably waited during the day for the axe to fall and when it didn't, he realized that Allen was playing a waiting game. He took up station in the alley knowing that Allen would come that way and shot him."

HOLMES

Holmes has solved this case by following 4 leads: he first visited the crime scene and the Grant Society of Armaments (5 EC). He then investigated the cigarette butt by going straight to its maker, Benson & Hedges (16 NW). Then, he met Captain Egan at the Admiralty (10 SW) and, thanks to the name of the street obtained at the Grant Society of Armaments and the map of London, he finally went to the Deverell Street Manufacture plant (12 SE). His score is 100 points.

SCORE

For this case, the leads at 47 NW (Captain Egan's residence), 61 EC (William Linhart's residence), 9 SW (German Embassy), 34 SW (Alexi Meshkoff's residence), 38 SW (Spanish Embassy) and 59 SW (French Embassy) are "free". Don't count them when totalling your score.

Part One

1. Who killed Courtney Allen? Lord Ragland (25 points).

2. Why was he murdered? He had discovered that Lord Ragland was about to sell SP#10-A to a foreign power (25 points).

3. What was the significance of the message found in Courtney Allen's notebook? It's where the sale of the SP#10-A to Alexi Meshkoff took place (25 points).

4. What was the reason for the Richard's Camp visits to the French Embassy? He was visiting his fiancée, Annette Zobar (25 points).

Part Two

1. Why was the tip of the cigarette found at the scene of the crime "pinched all around evenly"? Because it was smoked through a cigarette holder (10 points).

2. Who was Courtney Allen's paramour at the time of his death? Countess von Schulenberg (Freda Rudel) (10 points).

3. What was special about the weapon used to kill Courtney Allen? It was a weapon from the Grant Society (10 points).

4. How could Wiggins easily make 10 pounds? By returning the earring to the Countess von Schulenberg (see the ad in the newspaper). It was lost during her meeting with Allen at the Bishop's Finger (10 points).

To tally your score, add the points obtained by answering the questions, then count the number of leads you've followed (don't count the "free" leads indicated above). Then compare the number of leads you've followed to that of Holmes (4 leads in this case).

If you've followed more leads than Holmes, subtract 5 points from your score for each extra lead. If you've followed fewer leads than Holmes, add 5 to your score for each lead fewer. You'll thus get your final score.

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