MYSTERY OF THE HANGING MAN



Case Six-A
May 14 1889



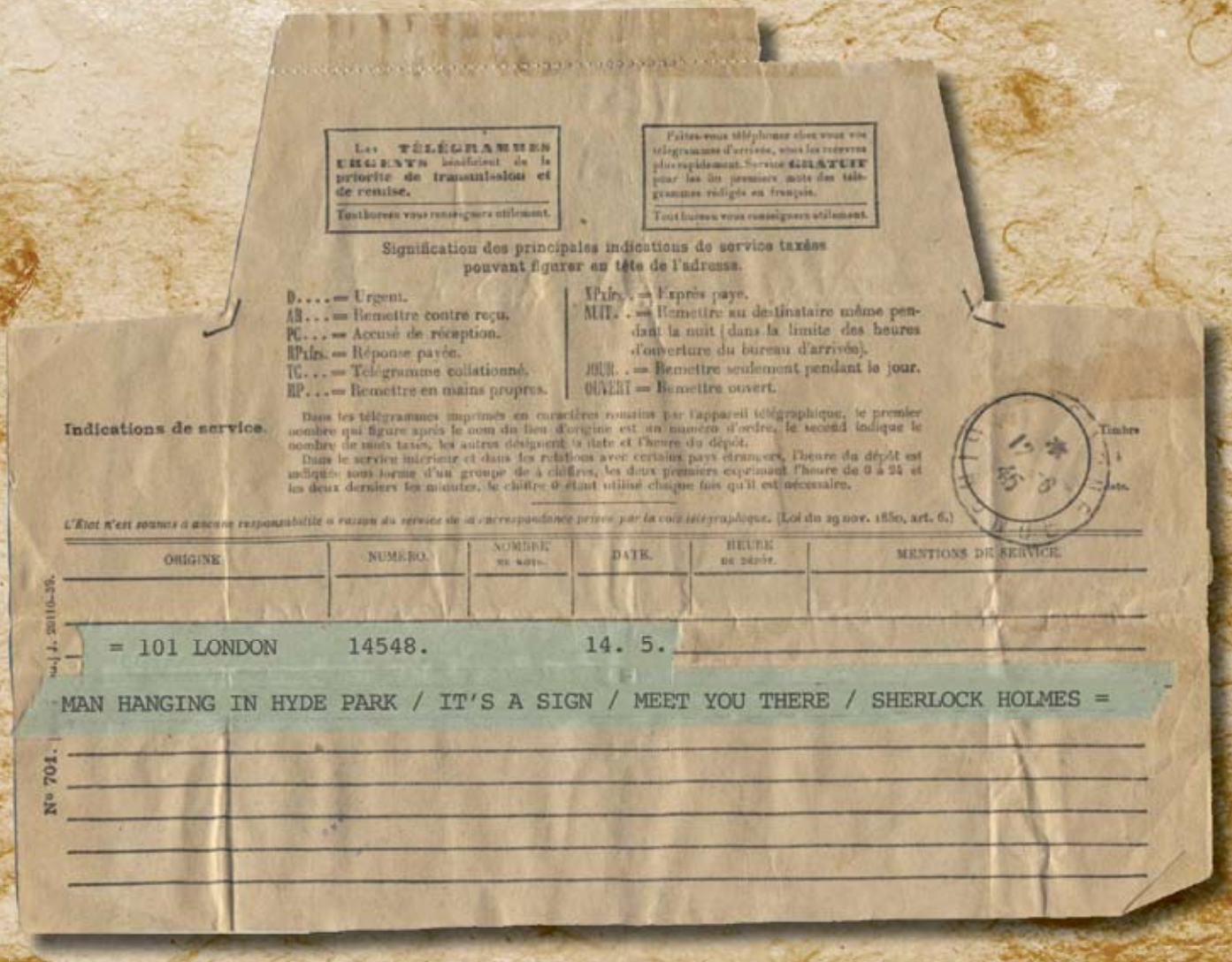
CASE SIX-A

The Mystery of the Hanging Man

May 14th 1889

By Yann Gentil

In the early evening, a messenger boy arrives and hands us an urgent telegram:



Les TÉLÉGRAMMES URGENTS bénéficient de la priorité de transmission et de remise.

Tout bureau vous renseignera utilement.

Faites-vous téléphoner chez vous vos télégrammes d'arrivée, vous les recevrez plus rapidement. Service GRATUIT pour les dix premiers mots des télégrammes rédigés en français.

Tout bureau vous renseignera utilement.

Signification des principales indications de service taxées pouvant figurer en tête de l'adresse.

D. . . . = Urgent.
AR. . . = Remettre contre reçu.
PC. . . = Accusé de réception.
RPaie. = Réponse payée.
TC. . . = Télégramme collationné.
RP. . . = Remettre en mains propres.

XPrès. . = Exprès payé.
NUIT. . = Remettre au destinataire même pendant la nuit (dans la limite des heures d'ouverture du bureau d'arrivée).
JOUR. . = Remettre seulement pendant le jour.
OUVERT = Remettre ouvert.

Indications de service.

Dans les télégrammes imprimés en caractères romains par l'appareil télégraphique, le premier nombre qui figure après le nom du lieu d'origine est un numéro d'ordre, le second indique le nombre de mots taxés, les autres désignent la date et l'heure du dépôt.

Dans le service intérieur et dans les relations avec certains pays étrangers, l'heure du dépôt est indiquée sous forme d'un groupe de 4 chiffres, les deux premiers exprimant l'heure de 0 à 24 et les deux derniers les minutes. Le chiffre 0 étant utilisé chaque fois qu'il est nécessaire.

Timbre

L'Etat n'est soumis à aucune responsabilité à raison du service de la correspondance privée par la voie télégraphique. (Loi du 29 nov. 1850, art. 6.)

ORIGINE	NUMERO.	NOMBRE DE MOTS.	DATE.	HEURE DE DÉPÔT.	MENTIONS DE SERVICE.
= 101 LONDON	14548.		14. 5.		

MAN HANGING IN HYDE PARK / IT'S A SIGN / MEET YOU THERE / SHERLOCK HOLMES =

N° 704.

"Well", says Wiggins, "I guess we'd better go straight there".

We leave to hail a cab.

AREA SE

36 SE

Upon arrival at the jeweller's we are welcomed by a member of staff who asks how she can help us. When we explain that we have come about the burglary, she is astonished. "The burglary? But the thieves have been arrested and all the jewels were recovered." We thank her and leave the shop, it is clear that this matter has no link at all to our investigation.

66 SE

We ring the bell at 66 Wallington Place. The butler informs us that the widow of the late Sir Bertram Ordway is not receiving any visitors.



AREA SW

1 SW

The manager of Rigby & Co. receives us in his office. When we tell him that the hanging man he has read about in the morning papers is his employee Grenville Marshall, he is taken aback. "He was an ordinary employee, always friendly, and totally trustworthy. He worked as a designer for our high security bank safes."

With some persuasion, he agrees to give us a list of clients:

* *Continental*
* *Cox & Co.*
* *Drummond*
* *Holder & Stevenson*
* *Worthingdon*

2 SW

At the Societies club, we are told that Langdale Pike is at a reception at the American Embassy.

3 SW

The proprietor of the Criterion Club, a chubby but self-assured man, tells us: "He used to come here, but after running up huge debts I was forced to ban him. Yesterday afternoon, however, he came and cleared the slate. I wonder where he got that much money."

5 SW

At the London Library, Lomax answers our questions: "The first recorded execution at Tyburn was in 1196. Tyburn was the main site for public executions from 1388 to 1783, after which the gallows was moved to Newgate Prison. In 1571, the first permanent gallows was built, known to all as the Tyburn Tree. It was triangular in shape and twenty-four condemned souls could be hanged at once."

6 SW

On reaching the Diogenes Club, we are informed that Mycroft Holmes is unwell and has travelled to the country to recover.

13 SW

Lestrade welcomes us: "Well Wiggins, how's your in-

vestigation going?"

"Actually, we've come to see if you have uncovered any new evidence," Wiggins says.

With a weary sigh, Lestrade replies, "The victim needed money, that's clear from the number of valuables he had sold recently. But we have no idea who he was. I dare say he was mixed up in some nefarious business, for there's only one person who can put Holmes into the state I saw him in last evening."

22 SW

When we walk into the Criminology Laboratory we make Murray jump as he was so absorbed by his work that he had not heard us enter. "Oh, it's you Wiggs, how can I help?"

"My name is Wiggins sir. Have you managed to decipher the message?"

"I tried replacing each number with a letter then adding some gaps to make words but I've not made any sense of it. It is possible that the numbers represent the letters from a source document, maybe a book, known to both sender and recipient. But without knowing the book it is impossible to decode the message."

74 SW

When we call at Perry Usher's address, the butler comes to the door. He shows us in and asks us to wait in the library. We spend 10 minutes there, during which we observe that the library contains a huge range of works, from novels to the most influential poetry as well as books on painting and sculpture.

Then a man who introduces himself as Perry Usher, enters and shakes our hands. He is in his fifties, slender and distinguished, and has two patches of colour, green and blue, on his right index finger.

"Yes, Harold Usher was my uncle. But sadly I cannot tell you anything about his involvement in forgery, that happened thirty years ago, and all his paintings were destroyed." We thank Mr. Usher and leave the house.

AREA NW

18 NW

Sam Parsons gives us a small mysterious sculpture. It depicts a man sitting at a table reading the newspaper.

On the table, a pipe is carelessly placed in an ashtray.



42 NW

Holmes welcomes us back. "So Wiggins, how is the investigation going?" We reply that we are having trouble with the coded message.

"Remember that Moriarty likes to hide key details in plain sight. You realised that it was a message from Moriarty, did you not?

The message is cleverly coded, but the first line gives us, uncoded, the reference for the document and then the position of the text within it. The groups of numbers each identify one letter of a word from this text."

67 NW

The manager of Worthingdon's bank tells us he is very happy with the level of security his safes provide and that he has not noticed anything unusual.

78 NW

The director of Sotheby's welcomes us, he is a jovial chap and quite willing to answer our questions. "Yes, I know your man, he came a week ago, wanted to appraise a painting that he intended to sell. It turned out that the painting was a fake, although a very good imitation. According to our expert, the quality of the fake made him think of the work of a famous forger."

"Could you tell us the name of the forger?" asks Wiggins.

"Our expert did not tell me that and, unfortunately, he is now out of town, but I remember he did say that the forger died shortly after his imprisonment at the Old Bailey some thirty years ago. I don't think there were many famous forgers at that time. You should have no trouble finding his name."

86 NW

Mr Marsh welcomes us. "Russell Square! No, that's not here, we're close to Cavendish Square." We leave Mr Marsh to get on with his work, apologising for our mistake as we go.

95 NW

We arrive at the southern entrance to Hyde Park.

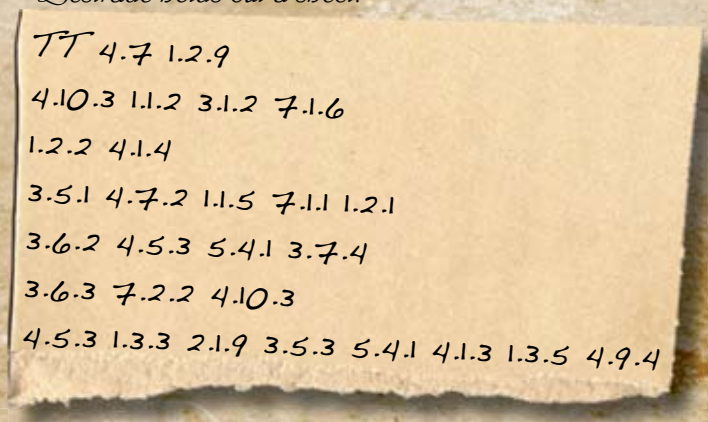
We ask the warden for any information on the man found hanged in the park. "It's at the other end of the park, they used the Tyburn Tree. It's a wretched sight to see. Must be more than a century since there was an execution there. The police have it all closed off."

96 NW

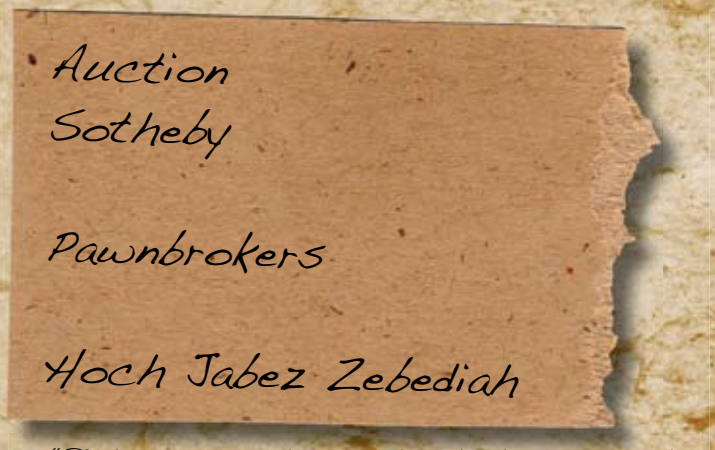
We arrive near the Tyburn Tree just before nightfall; the police surgeon is in the process of cutting down the body, a man in his fifties, rather slender, short and balding. The scene is striking.

"Ah, there you are, Wiggins," Lestrade calls out to us. "Holmes has already gone. He was eager to try to decode this message."

Lestrade holds out a sheet:



"We also found this note."



"At the moment, we have no idea who the victim is and no other evidence has been found."

We take our leave of Lestrade with a copy of the documents.

"Given the late hour, we will resume the investigation tomorrow," announces Wiggins. We retire for the night, having arranged to meet again early in the morning.

AREA WC

5 WC

We show the cabbies the sketch of our victim but nobody recognizes him.

14 WC

"A famous forger... thirty years ago. Ah, yes, that must be Harold Usher," explains Disraeli O'Brian. "I'll check the archives."

He returns, half an hour later, carrying a dusty file.

"He painted such authentic Vermeers that he fooled all the experts. He was arrested on charges of high treason for having sold the paintings to the nation's enemies. To avoid the death penalty he had to admit that they were all fakes, and to prove it he painted another one in his cell in front of six witnesses. He was sentenced to a year in prison for the forgeries, but died of natural causes three weeks after the ruling. According to this document, his only family consisted of a brother who visited him every week. Unfortunately, his first name is illegible."

17 WC

At Somerset House, the clerk informs us that the name of Harold Usher's brother was Matthew, but he's been dead now for ten years. However, Matthew Usher had a son named Perry Usher.

22 WC

At the Cox & Co bank we learn that they suffered a break-in at the end of March. The safe had been opened without any force being used. "One would think that the thieves knew the combination, which is absolutely impossible," the manager assures us.

26 WC

We speak to an employee at Drummond's bank who tells us, "Mr Marshall had banked with us for a very long time but in the last year his withdrawals became more and more frequent until his account was in the red. We were forced to cut off the flow of funds and ask him to rectify matters."

29 WC

A man opens the door and tells us his name is James Marshall. When we show him a sketch of the victim he says, "I do not recognise him. You say he is called Marshall? Well, he certainly isn't a part of my family."

34 WC

We question a dealer at the Tankerville club. "Of course I know Mr M., he had been coming here very frequently for the last few months."

"Do you know his real name?" Wiggins asks.

"No, but I think he also frequented the bar opposite."



39 WC

Grenville Marshall's landlady is very upset when she learns of her tenant's death. "Oh, how awful, he was such a nice gentleman, always pleasant and neat."

"As far as you know, did he have any problems, any enemies?"

"No, I didn't see any sign of that, he held a good position at Rigby & Co., although it's true that life had not been kind to him with his wife dying a year or so ago. Wait a second, there is something actually, he had asked me for extra time to pay his rent, it's the first time he had done that. However, he paid me yesterday morning so it was fine."

We go up to Mr Marshall's rooms and the landlady lets us in. It is a large suite of rooms but not excessively fancy. On the hallway table we notice a box of matches from the Criterion Club at 3 Haymarket. The box features a drawing of a hand of cards fanned out with the Ace of Spades visible. The landlady opens up Mr Marshall's desk for us and then excuses herself for a moment. We take advantage of her absence to have a look through the desk drawers. There we discover a letter from Drummond's bank, requesting that he contact them with all haste. We get no further with our search before the landlady returns. After a few more questions which do not further our understanding of the matter, we leave.

68 WC

At the Continental Bank the manager refuses to answer any questions. "Confidentiality is the watchword in my business," he asserts vigorously.

73 WC

At the Punch & Judy bar, the bartender is initially reluctant to talk to us. But, when we mention the hanging man, he briefly relents. "Yeah, I know him, he lives on the corner, near Russell Square."

"Do you know his name?"

"I reckon it was Marsh. He must have been mixed up in something dodgy, he sometimes met a man who was always in the shadows and they whispered. I wonder if it could have been Moriarty. Now, get out of here, you're making my customers nervous" he growls. We leave without further ado.

AREA EC

30 EC

At The Times we are told that Henry Ellis is on assignment abroad.

35 EC

We find Quintin Hogg in his office surrounded, as always, by dozens of files. We ask him if he knows anything about the poor chap in Hyde Park. "The hanging man? Drop it, you'll never solve that one, neither you nor Holmes. In any case, I'm not interested in that case, I'm still looking into the mysterious burglary at Cox's bank."

36 EC

At the Old Bailey we manage to find Edward Hall. "Gentlemen, I have no time to talk, I'm due in court in 10 minutes." We insist nonetheless.

"A forger, locked up here 30 years ago! But my friends, I don't know every case that has passed through this court over the last 30 years. You'd do better to visit the archives – Disraeli will surely be able to find you that information. Please excuse me, I am awaited," he says as he strides away.

38 EC

The Chief Medical Examiner, Sir Jasper Meeks, sees us in his office. "Ah, the hanging man. Well, there isn't much to say. Of course it was strangulation, but he was actually hanged after death, presumably as a message for somebody or to make a fool of Scotland Yard. I have found no other evidence on the body."

52 EC

At the "Raven & Rat" public house we show Porky the sketch of our victim. "Lads, I believe he has been visiting various gambling dens over the last few months. Try the Criterion or Tankerville clubs. On a different note, I have some news that will amuse Holmes. It seems that Moriarty has been double-crossed by one of his own gang." Wiggins replies, "Thanks Porky, we'll tell him."

69 EC

The bank manager of Holder & Stevenson meets us, but is initially reticent. When we explain that we work with Sher-

lock Holmes, he becomes less guarded. "We have suffered a burglary. It's unbelievable, I'm the only person who knows the combination and yet our safe was opened without being forced."

The manager is unable to tell us anything more of interest. We thank him and leave the bank.

71 EC

We receive a friendly welcome from Anatole Usher in his garden.

"Harold Usher… Oh yes, the forger, he fooled everyone in his day."

"Are you related to him?"

"No, not at all, but I am interested in fine art and particularly the baroque style, that is why I have heard of him."

72 EC

Phillip Usher tells us that he does not know anybody by the name of Harold Usher.

73 EC

At Jabez Wilson's we learn that our man pawned a gold wedding ring and several items of jewellery a few months ago. "He came in to pay and reclaim his items yesterday morning. In just a few days the jewellery would have been sold off. I wouldn't be at all surprised if he were involved in some shady or even criminal dealings."

QUESTIONS

Part One

1. What is the full name of the victim?

2. Who murdered him?

3. Why was he murdered?

4. What was the victim's profession?

5. What task was the victim recruited for?

6. What does the coded message mean?

Part Two

1. Which other bank was burgled in a similar way at the end of March?

2) What is the name of the forger who painted the canvas appraised at Sotheby's?

3) What is the relationship between this forger and the famous forger called Harold, who was jailed at the Old Bailey 30 years earlier?

4) What is Harold's brother's first name?

SOLUTION

Sherlock Holmes receives us at 221B. "So Wiggins, you've solved the case, quite straight-forward wasn't it? Hanging the man for all to see, combined with the coded message, could only mean that the diabolical mind of Moriarty was at work here."

"One day I shall have him!" Holmes exclaims emphatically.

"When they told me a man had been hanged in Hyde Park, I immediately thought of the Tyburn Tree where public executions took place right up until the last century."

"Knowing that Moriarty enjoys hiding secrets in plain sight, I soon realised that the reference to the source document needed to decode the message was written right there on the first line: The Times, 4th of July, 1st page, 2nd column, 9th article. Then, each group of three numbers represents a single letter from this document – the first figure is the line number, the second gives the word on that line and the third pinpoints the letter within that word. Thus decoded, the message reads: Meet at Punch 3 May 5am Moriarty.."

"So you went to the Punch & Judy pub?" Wiggins asked.

"Exactly. There I was told that the man was called Marsh and lived in Russell Square. Now, the only Marsh in the directory didn't live in that quarter, however I noted that a man called Glenville Marshall did. I decided to go there and discovered that it was indeed the correct address, it would appear that the barman must have misheard the name."

"Once there, the landlady told me that he had money troubles which I confirmed on finding a letter from his bank within his desk. I realised that the root cause was gambling debts when I saw a matchbook there from the Criterion Club."

"A trip to his employer, Rigby & Co., uncovered the key facts that he designed safes for banks and that the Holder & Stevenson Bank which was burgled yesterday was one of their clients."

"From that point, the necessary deduction was elementary, my dear Wiggins. Moriarty had engaged Glenville Marshall to break into the very safes he had designed. This time, Marshall kept the proceeds to pay off his gambling debts and his rent. Since one cannot double-cross Moriarty with impunity, Marshall was executed and displayed as a message to others."

Once again, Holmes dazzles us with his remarkable capacity for deduction.

HOLMES

Sherlock Holmes solved the case in 4 clues: The Tyburn Tree (96 NW), the Punch & Judy pub (73 WC), Glenville Marshall's rooms (39 WC) and Rigby & Co (1 SW). He also used the articles "Apparent theft" (Times - 14th May) and "Second hand sporting guns" (Times - 4th July 88), the key to the coded message.

His score is 100 points. Clue 95 WC is not counted.

SCORE

Part One

1. Full name of the victim? Glenville Marshall (30 points)

2. Who murdered him? Moriarty (or rather one of his henchmen). (5 points)

3. Why was he murdered? For having double-crossed Moriarty. He kept the money from the Holder & Stevenson burglary in order to pay his gambling debts and his rent. (30 points)

4. What was the victim's profession? Safe designer at Rigby & Co. (10 points)

5. What task was the victim recruited for? To open the safes he had designed in the burgled banks. (15 points)

6. What did the coded message mean? MEET AT PUNCH 3 MAY 5AM MORIARTY (10 points)

Part Two

1. Which other bank was burgled in a similar way at the end of March? Cox & Co. (10 points)

2. What is the name of the forger who painted the canvas appraised at Sotheby's? Perry Usher (15 points)

3. What is the relationship between this forger and the famous forger called Harold, who was jailed at the Old Bailey 30 years earlier? Uncle and nephew. (10 points)

4. What is Harold's brother's first name? Matthew (5 points)

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Translated By: Dominic Mahon & David Czechowski
Page Layout and Graphics By: David Czechowski

Paper Texture: FreeImages.com/Gopakumar Ravindran
Cover Font: http://dirt2.com/fonts/dead-secretary/
Cover Borders: FreeImages.com/Billy Alexander
Cover Image: "Ravin d'Avocourt - Cadavre dans un arbre", 1916
Vintage Wallpaper: http://jsn1207.deviantart.com/art/Vintage-Wallpaper-167250033
"After Dark" Illustration: Blind love vol. 3 by Wilkie Collins, 1890
Microscope Illustration: Nouveau dictionnaire encyclopédique universel illustré by Jules Trousset, 1885
Note Backgrounds: FreeImages.com/A.Hulme
"Lima" Illustration: Nouveau dictionnaire encyclopédique universel illustré by Jules Trousset, 1885
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Newspaper & Booklet Text: «The Fell Types are digitally reproduced by Igino Marini. www.iginomarini.com»

The Times.

N° 32 703 LONDON, TUESDAY MAY 14, 1889 PRICE: 3d.

BIRTHS

On the 11th inst., the wife of Andrew Millow gave birth to a son.

MARRIAGES

On the 9th inst., at St. Paul's Church, Robert Joyce to MARGARET WALES, daughter of JOHN WALES.

DEATHS

We regret to announce the death, on the 12th of this month, of WILLIAM BROOKE, in his 77th year.

PERSONAL &c.

The sun has a rendezvous with the moon. C.T.

LOST - leather wallet in a cab at Waterloo Station yesterday around 5pm. Contact 7SE.

I have never seen the sea, but I've seen many drown in it. Z.

ENTERTAINMENTS

OLYMPIA.- GEORGE MÉLIÈS presents an evening of the SUPERNATURAL; among the attractions are Robert Houdin's automatons.

ALLEGED THEFT

According to an anonymous source Holder & Stevenson's bank suffered a theft yesterday after closing time. An accomplice inside the company is suspected. Scotland Yard refused to make any comment.

BOLD BURGLARY

A. Marx & Co. jewellers was the victim of a burglary, early yesterday morning. The thieves took advantage of the arrival of the first employee to slip into the shop before it opened. The stolen goods were valued at several thousand pounds. Scotland Yard has appealed for witnesses. Please respond to 13 Parliament Street.

HOUSES, &c., TO BE LET & SOLD

Picadilly (south ride) Capital BUSINESS PREMISE, 20 foot frontage and about 65 feet deep, in an excellent position, to be LET, on LEASE, from August 1st next. Contact Mr. Peter Betteredge, 53 Bridge Street, SW.

TO be SOLD, continental-style house near London. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms and kitchen on the ground floor. For more information, contact Martin & Fox, Agents, 32 Cannon St, EC.

TO be LET, for the summer months, in Liverpool, a well furnished house. Apply for further particulars to Mr John Smith, 27 Bridge Road, Liverpool.

SUICIDE IN HIGH SOCIETY

Yesterday lunchtime, a gunshot was heard in the area of Wallington Place. According to the police report, the shot was fired from number 66 of that street, a large comfortable house belonging to Sir Bertram Ordway. All indications are that the man committed suicide after locking himself in his office. When the police found his body, all the doors and windows in the room were still locked from the inside. The news has already caused a stir in the upper echelons of society for Sir Ordway was the current Managing Director of the Winchester Arms Company. His funeral will be held on Saturday May 18th at Westminster Abbey.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE

(From Our Correspondents)

SWISS CHOCOLATE

The demand for chocolate products has risen so high that Jean Tobler has decided to open his own chocolate factory in Bern: Tobler & Co.

INAUGURATION OF METAL TOWER

Gustave Eiffel will open his 1000 foot high tower, built for the World Fair, on May 31st.

PASTEUR INSTITUTE

The Pasteur Institute, a facility intended for the treatment of rabies, has just opened its doors.

SPHINX

Gaston Maspero has completed the excavation of the Sphinx at Giza, a monumental sculpture carved from a natural promontory in the rock. It represents a human head on a lion's body.

TREATY OF WUCHALE

A treaty of friendship and commerce between the Ethiopian Empire and the Kingdom of Italy, has just been signed. Ethiopia has ceded several of its northern territories to Italy.

NEW BAGPIPES

The McIntosh company has just released a new set of bagpipes called "Apple Pipe."

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE

TENNIS

The Wimbledon Championship final was won by William Renshaw, beating Ernest Renshaw 6-4, 6-1, 3-6, 6-0. In the women's Blanche Bingley won against Lena Rice 4-6, 8-6, 6-4.