

310 pages

Proud and Angry Dust

The troubles of our proud and angry dust  
Are from eternity, and shall not fail.  
**B**ear them we can, and if we can we must

A.E. Houseman: "The chestnut casts/  
his flambeaux"

D. Sweeney  
August 1981

August 1918

Kaiser Bill

Lives by Francis C. O'Connor

The Town Tomb in Connaught Cemetary <sup>is</sup> set at the foot of the gentle slope which ~~led~~ <sup>leads</sup> in off the road to Contoocook Lake to the east of the town. The procession of cars looked like a line of mourners as it passed through the open gates in the wrought iron fence except that it was missing the lead performer in such a line -- the hearse. Wm Lyman, the undertaker, was leading the group in his large black Backard in which he usually herded the procession of friends and relatives on such sad errands as were his professional duties. The town wags, who noted that he was in the habit of taking his mistress Alice Harris on their usual Sunday afternoon drive in the same vehicle, remarked that Old Lyman was certainly serving the quick as well as the dead, and oftener, and that they bet Alice made a nice corpse when he laid her out. Would have been handier, they reckoned, more room, you know, to take her out in the hearse but Alice was too sensitive for that. Lyman was returning to the cemetary for the second time that day. He had spent a good part of the morning supervising the Boudreau brothers as they opened the grave in which the coffin of Wm ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> had been laid at the back part of the graveyard near the tool shed. The grave was temporary but not as temporary as it had turned out. The deceased had been in his final resting place just over two weeks when his brother, Frederick ~~W. Dean~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> of New York City, had obtained a court order authorizing the exhumation. ~~Dean's~~ <sup>Thorndike's</sup> widow was in no shape to make any funeral arrangements and so David Lewis, her court-appointed custodian, had decided to delay any purchase of <sup>a</sup> lot until it could be decided where the murdered man would await his maker. The digging had been easy, the soil was sandy, and the hot August sun had warmed their backs as they bent to their task with pick and shovel. When they had placed the plain wooden box on the rude table set up in the middle of the tomb their job was done for the moment and they returned to the tool house to eat their lunch. Lyman returned home for

usual hearty mid-day meal, though, as he remarked to his wife, he didn't, even after all these years, have much stomach for what he was going to have to witness that afternoon. Fresh corpses are one thing, he said, digging them up again was not much to his taste. He met the exhumation party at the Town Library, where the Selectmen had their offices on the second floor, and they drove <sup>to the cemetery</sup> in a body, through the crowds of summer visitors gathered for the Labor Day Weekend. Every store had its flag out, some had bunting draped above the display windows and over the doors. One member of the party remarked on the large number of houses with service stars hanging in their windows and said how good it was to see such a patriotic town.

The Town Tomb was set in a hillock of the slope which rose up into the general area of graves to the north. It looked as solid as a tomb should with five levels of chiseled granite giving bulk and strength. There was one long piece of granite which stretched all the way across the top of the door and on it was laid a shallow pyramid of concrete in which was centered the date in large upright numbers, 1874. Above this was a sod covering for the roof of the tomb and the area was shadowed lightly with pines native to the sandy soil. The iron door which led into the tomb was massive in its scaly surface and was hinged on the right with a long iron pin through <sup>a</sup> ~~its~~ hasp as its fastening. There was <sup>Permanent</sup> no lock. Its greatest use came, of course, in the months when heavy snows and frozen ground made interment impossible. The Beaudreau boys had remarked they were glad they didn't have to plant old <sup>Thorndike</sup> ~~man~~ in the wintertime anyway, by far, or dig him up either.

Lyman led the party up past the tomb on a road that circled up on the flat and led <sup>it</sup> back down on the other side so that ~~they~~ cars were all heading out of the cemetery the way <sup>they</sup> ~~they~~ had come. It was one of his nice little touches.

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Since his duties would begin and end the business of the day, the undertaker stopped just beyond the tomb and waved the other cars to go on by him toward the entrance. By the time they had all pulled into position one in front of each <sup>the</sup> other he had gotten out, pulled ~~the~~ his heavy padlock apart, and after having pulled out the long retaining pin, with some effort ~~laid~~ <sup>laid</sup> the quilted black door back beyond its hinges. The mid-day sun poured strongly down on the table set in the ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ middle of the dark coolness and there was no need for any other source of heat or light.

The others approached now from their cars in the groups in which they <sup>had</sup> ridden. The two doctors, Densmore, the County Medical Referee, and Childs, from ~~the~~ Peterborough, the nearest physician available now with ~~the~~ Mason's two doctors off in the service, were accompanied by Rob Packard, the County Solicitor. The doctors had their black bags with the tools of their profession and Densmore had a black rubber <sup>apron</sup> laboratory/folded over one arm. As they neared the tomb, the three were exchanging ~~light~~ <sup>light</sup> banter, though Childs' right cheek twitched in ~~a~~ nervous tic which tightened the already taut pale face. ~~They were~~

The two doctors entered first while Packard waited for the rest of the party. Edward <sup>Boyd</sup> ~~Boyd~~ and Alfred <sup>Pantridge</sup> ~~Pantridge~~, selectmen, who were there to represent the town of Mason, walked so softly and carefully that it was almost as if they were holding hands against what they would find <sup>their</sup> in the dark interior of the tomb. They kept glancing back over/shoulders toward the three ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ who brought up the rear.

Frederich <sup>Thornike</sup> ~~Thornike~~, brother of the murdered man, was a man of sharp features and precise even fussy gestures and his beady little eyes moved quickly back and forth behind rimless pince-nez glasses and his head swiveled back and forth like that of a feeding bird. He seemed to pull along with him the figure of a much younger man, who was carrying a large plate camera with a plate box and a tri-pod. The younger man maintained an attitude of listening deference and with his load had to push to



keep pace with his older companion. The last figure to make his way toward the waiting group was a man of late middle age with the composed features and dark blue suit of a respectable man of affairs. He walked as if he wondered why he was there, indeed as if he wished he were somewhere else.

This was <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~MEADE~~, town banker, business advisor and long time friend of the murdered man. The three exchanged introductions as they walked.

"Mr. <sup>MEADE</sup> ~~Rich~~. I don't think you have met Mr. <sup>Keller</sup> ~~Dekster~~," Fred <sup>Thornhill</sup> ~~Rich~~ said.

"My pleasure, Mr. <sup>Keller</sup> ~~Dekster~~."

"Enchante, M'sieur."

"Mr. <sup>Keller</sup> ~~Dekster~~ has a studio in New York and specializes in Psychic Detection."

"Oh ?"

"Yes, he has been called in on some very famous cases in New York City and has been instrumental in solving crimes which had baffled the police. He brings to detective work an approach which is unique in the annals of crime. My paper hired him in the Magruder case, the one where the body of the little girl could not be found. He found not only the body of the murdered girl but the murder weapon as well and led the police to the guilty party. He utilizes, he ~~me~~ tells me, the forces of animal magnetism, both biomagnetic and ~~biactinic~~ <sup>Their</sup> biactinic, in ~~his~~ various manifestations. There have recently been made advances in detection of which the average person has no comprehension."

"Indeed!"

**MEADE**

"I asked you to be present today, Mr. ~~Rich~~, because you are practically the only person I know in town, and because you were such a good friend to William. I never came to Mason very often nor stayed very long. Polly didn't care for me for some reason -- she was a very possessive woman, you know -- perhaps because she thought I'd lure William back to sin in the big city. The fact that I worked in the world of the theatre, knew actresses and all made me somehow a sinister figure. I don't think

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we exchanged five sentences in the last ~~thirty~~ thirty years. She was always out when I came to see William, always visiting a neighbor or something, and of course they never came to New York. Being a ~~theatre~~ <sup>theatre</sup> critic is not that exciting or that powerful, but I think she thought I took a different actress to bed every night. If she only knew! "  
" I'm sure that ..."

" Anyway, I did want to thank you in person for sending the telegram.

I was up at Lake Placid and didn't get it in time to get to the funeral, but I appreciate your trying to get in touch with me. From what I did learn after I did get here, I knew I had to see William's body. I wanted you to be here and Mr. ~~Baker~~ <sup>Keller</sup> wanted you to be here." Before the banker could digest that last bit of information, they had reached the entrance to the tomb and the attention of all present was fixed on the final form of the pine box on the table. ~~Rob~~ <sup>Rob</sup> Packard, the County Solicitor spoke.

" Before we begin, Gentleman, I am here representing Cheshire County.

~~Mr. Lyman~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup>, may I see the court order for exhumation?"

He looked at the paper handed him by Frederick ~~Lyman~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> and handed it on to the Selectmen.

" Mr. ~~Lyman~~ <sup>Barnden</sup>, Mr. ~~Lyman~~ <sup>Pantridge</sup>, you represent the Town of Mason. It is in your capacity as Town officials I show you the order of exhumation properly signed and dated by Judge Harling. Do you know any reason why this examination of the deceased should not proceed? No ? All right, Mr. Lyman, you may proceed."

Tyman had loosened the top of the coffin with his pry bar before the others had all gathered -- they stood on both sides of the table in order not to block the light from the door -- and had only to lift it off and set it to ~~xxxxxxx~~ the far end of the table to expose the body. Each of the witnesses drew a shallow breath as if trying not to breathe the stale air which had a slightly sweet smell, formaldehyde

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Thornlike

Lyman knew since he had injected it himself, and Frederick ~~was~~ shivered in spite of himself. ~~Dr. Densmore~~ Packard continued.

Thornlike  
" Mr. ~~was~~ do you identify this as the body of your brother, the late William K. ~~was~~ ?"  
Thornlike

" I do."

" Dr. Densmore, if you please."

Densmore, the County Medical Referee, ~~was~~ spoke in what he considered of the county staff a tone of proper gravity, ~~in~~ in what Packard and others/called his Rue Morgue bass: " Please notice that I am opening the tie and shirt of the deceased. By doing so I am able to expose the adema profunda which led Dr. Childs and myself to adduce that the cause of death was strangulation. An examination of the lungs, impossible to reproduce here at this time, showed that though the body was found in six feet of water the cause of death was not drowning because the lungs were free of water and the accompanying trauma that drowning induces." He turned the head to its right. "Notice the marks on the head. They are claw shaped lacerations, three deep cuts ~~set~~ <sup>set</sup> in a triangle. They are, I may remark, like the imprint of a giant bird's claw. Again, by our examination of the body, both at the scene of the crime and in Mr. Lyman's parlors, we determined that the blow on the head though severe and unsightly was not the cause of death. Any questions ?"

Thornlike  
All those present looked at Frederick ~~was~~. <sup>his eyes</sup> He had been intent, /fixed on ~~was~~ his brother's body, his head firm as if in a photographers collar. His summer ~~straw~~ straw hat was in his left hand and with his right he <sup>the sweat from</sup> wiped / his face and forehead (in spite / <sup>of the</sup> granite cold). He shook his head and turned toward the two selectmen.

" You gentlemen had something you wanted to do?"

Bayden  
Ed ~~Bayden~~, the smaller and more simian of the two, reached into the small box he had carried in with him, and brought out a small hand cultivator. " This hand cultivator or weeder was found by Charley ~~was~~ <sup>Beaux</sup>

on the second terrace, under the stone wall there, about two days after the funeral. Notice that it has three prongs and a handle about one foot in length. There are markings similar to what this instrument would make on both the barn floor -- this has been checked -- and on the boards of the barn porch. We think that the murderers ~~may~~ may have stepped on the claw part in the barn and that the marks on the porch floor may have been made when the killers missed with a second blow. This weeder was turned over to the town officials by that good citizen and patriot Charlie

Beany

~~Beany~~. The County and State officials ( and here he ~~glanced~~ glanced at the County Soliciter) do not believe that it's part of the crime. We do and we would like to ask Dr. Densmore to place the weeder on the head wounds and see if they fit. " And he handed the cultivator to the County Referee ~~who~~ <sup>who</sup> Densmore took the tool somewhat gingerly and with a glance around the faces ringing the table silently sought approval to do so. Packard nodded in a why-not kind of way and Densmore placed the three prongs down on lacerations. The fit was evident to all watchers and the two selectmen could hardly ~~contain~~ contain their satisfaction. If there had been room and the company had not included the dead man's brother, they might have ~~broken out in smiles or~~ <sup>broken out in smiles</sup> even danced their delight.

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" They fit," ~~Boyd~~ <sup>Boyd</sup> said, " and some people thought we were crazy when ~~we~~ <sup>we</sup> said they would. The cultivator was obviously used in the struggle, even if ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> was not the murder weapon." He addressed himself to Frederick ~~son~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup>, who stared intently at the body, not acknowledging in any way that he been spoken to, seeming to try to will the corpse into some kind of response. Then ~~son~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> shook himself like a dog shedding water and turned to the detective. " Mr. ~~Detective~~ <sup>Keller</sup>, will you take the pictures now?"

~~Keller~~ <sup>Keller</sup> busied himself with setting up the tri-pod as the rest of the party edged past <sup>him</sup> out of the tomb to give ~~him~~ <sup>him</sup> room in which to maneuver. Frederick ~~son~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> remained and helped ~~him~~ <sup>at</sup> him pull the table a bit more toward the entrance to catch the fullness of the shaft of light

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in the doorway. The photographer worked quickly, shoving the plates quickly into the camera, focusing on the head wounds, pulling the used plates and inserting ~~a~~ fresh ones. With a glance at his employer, he turned the head back to a full face position and took three pictures before turning it back right so that again the head wounds stood out full against the pale scalp in contrast to the matted hair around them. As he did so, he murmured something to ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomdike</sup> and called his attention to the wounds themselves. He took two more pictures from yet another angle and packed up his camera, folded the tripod, and ~~rested~~ <sup>stacked</sup> all of his equipment in a pile against the wall of the tomb.

~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomdike</sup>

~~Dean~~ addressed those standing outside in the warm sunshine: " You can come back in now. Thank you, Mr. Packard, we are finished with our picture taking."

Having once gotten out in the fresh air, none of the party seemed too anxious to return and of these ~~CL Rich~~ <sup>Perkins Meade</sup> was the slowest to respond and the last to return. Packard looked ~~around the coffin~~ <sup>at the coffin</sup> and around <sup>at</sup> the faces gathered beside it. " Does anyone else have anything he wants done? As you know, Mr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomdike</sup>, Attorney- General

~~Dean~~ <sup>OLDHAM</sup>

~~Dean~~ has ordered that the stomach of the deceased be removed and its contents analyzed. This had not been done before and is an important part of our investigation. I suggest that if there is not anything more, that we lay people leave and let the doctors get about their business."

~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomdike</sup>

Frederick ~~Dean~~ held up his hand. " Yes, there is one more piece of business. Mr. ~~Decker~~ <sup>Keller</sup> and I have been pursuing our own investigation into my brother's murder for the past week now and he has something he wants to say. Mr. ~~Decker~~ <sup>Keller</sup> ?"

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⑨  
Keller

While the rest of the party had been filing back into the tomb, ~~Boirac~~ had been busy with a tape measure , pencil and paper, working on the exposed scalp wounds. In-answer-to-Dean's Hearing his name, he straightened up ,and with the paper in one hand, holding the pencil as a sort of baton or pointer in the other, he assumed the stance and demeanor of the lecturer.

" Gentlemen. You do not know me or what I do. I tell you. I am a psychic detective. For some years now I work solving crimes that the police have failed on. I was Vice-president twice for the International Congress for Experimental Psychology, in 1910 and 1913. My work is better known in Europe than in America. I have written the horoscopes of many royal persons in Europe. I have translated an important work in my field, Boirac's The Psychology of The Future, into English. It is published both in England and the United States. I tell you this so you know me better. Already I have found out much that your investigators have missed; when I develop the pictures I have taken today, I will know even more. Thought is power. Psychology as a means of detecting crime will be the most potent agency of the trained police of the future. I may not be able to convince everyone of the reality of psychic pictures, but when the evidence is presented, and the ~~murderer~~ <sup>Thornike</sup> murderer identified, the world will realize the great psychic forces of the consciousness, and of the super-consciousness. Mine is an honorable pursuit; it goes back to the Principes de La Philosophie of the great French scholar Decartes. Magnetism is the key to physical discovery. We deal here in this case with magnetoidal phenomena, which is the intervention of forces yet unknown. These forces are exerted from one body to another in proximity through the intermediary of the nervous system of each body. Here today I think I make two discoveries. One, there is a tradition <sup>in</sup> of psychic study of what Descartes called subtle matter, those parts of the body which record the effects of the field forces operating on or near them/

Chief among these are the waters of the brain and the corporeal messenger of our body, the blood. Not only does the blood carry the vital essences of our existence all over our body, it, with the nerves, is a conveyer of those forces which in effect hold our body together. It also records the fields operative during our lifetime and holds these records. Medieval literature of the tradition tell<sup>s</sup> us time and again that the wounds of the dead bleed when the murderer approaches. I invite you to come closer and observe with me that the wounds of the murdered Willam ~~Thurndike~~ <sup>Thurndike</sup> are now bleeding."

The silence which followed was deafening.

The two selectmen pushed closer and peered at the three lacerations on the head of the corpse. " I can't see it, can you ~~Alf~~ <sup>Alf</sup>?" "No, Ed, I can't, but he says it's there." Dr. Childs, whose agitation had grown ever since the viewing of the corpse began, closed his eyes and his breathing grew louder and became almost a moan. The other four kept their position around the table and looked at the grinning face of the detective with a mixture of disbelief and revulsion.

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~~Keller~~ <sup>Keller</sup> drew back the pencil with which he had been pointing ~~the~~ along the edges of the wounds. " Can't see it, hein ? Not surprising, because you are not trained in clinical observation. That takes long years of intensive work. No matter. Now. While you were standing outside, I was measuring the dimensions and configurations of the wounds. I have recor<sup>ed</sup> <sup>them</sup> ~~ed~~ on this sheet of paper, so. See. They are exactly as they are on the head of the ~~vix~~ victim."

As he said this, he stepped quickly to the side of ~~Al Rich~~ <sup>Perkins Meade</sup>, who was standing near the door, almost taking flight from the tableau, and clapped the paper against his bruised cheek. " And, strange to say, Mr. ~~Meade~~ <sup>Meade</sup>, the marks fit the wounds on your face. Tell me, how did you receive your black eye?"

- June 1919

Kaiser Bill Lives by <sup>FRANCIS C.</sup> O'CONNOR

(11)

I laid the neatly typed sheets down and looked at Mary Kaye, who had given <sup>me</sup> them to read less than a half hour before. " This was never published in the Boston Courier, was it, Mary ?"

" Heavens, no," she said. " I wasn't even there, but I did have to do an item for the Sunday paper saying that there had been an exhumation at the request of Fred ~~Seant~~ <sup>Thornhill;</sup> who was there, that pictures were taken, and that the stomach was removed on order of the State Attorney-General. I talked to Rob ~~Rackard~~ and Ed Lyman and got the facts. There was so much left over that I couldn't use ~~that~~ I thought of writing it up, maybe use it in a short story or a novel. It's fantastic enough for a Poe Tale of Horror or something."

" It's crazy," I said. " And that mad man <sup>Keller</sup> ~~Berkler~~ is still in town?"

" Yes, he's been living up at the Rectory of Holy Name for the last five months."

"Who's paying him ?"

" The town was, but he put in for expenses beyond what the town had agreed to and they dropped him from the public payroll. You can guess who's paying him now."

" I can guess," I said.

" And those photographs he took in the cemetery were just the start. He's been taking pictures of evrything and evrybody in town, including blood spots showing the murderers' faces on the floor of the Dean Barn. Here, read this clip from an interview with Bart <sup>Lincoln</sup> ~~Ford~~ of The <sup>Courier</sup> ~~American~~. <sup>Lincoln has</sup> ~~Ford~~ had him tied up tight for months, <sup>won't</sup> ~~wouldn't~~ let anybody get to him for an interview. Exclusively Bart's, he <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~, that one." She grimaced.

" I don't believe it," I said.

" Neither did many other people," she said, " but here."

MASON, N.H. Sept. 10

William ~~Berkler~~ <sup>Keller</sup>, New York City psychologist-detective, revealed here today in an exclusive interview with your correspondent that <sup>Thornhill</sup> ~~he had~~ found the faces of the murderers of William Kendrick ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ photographs of the blood stains at the scene of the murder.

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Explaining the phenomenon, ~~Donner~~ <sup>Keller</sup> said, " I was about to toss the negative into a waste basket when my eyes were attracted when my eye was attracted by a small whitish formation on the plate, I looked closely and was amazed to behold a human face. There was no mistaking it. I had seen that face before. As I studied the plate, 3 other faces appeared, one of them a woman. I had, prior to this time, made up my mind that a woman had been present at the scene of the murder. You will remember that a hairpin was found near the cistern in which the body was thrown." Asked how he accounted for the occurrence of human faces, from the negatives of blood stains, ~~DeKetter~~ replied, " It is the state of consciousness. The old man was struck. He whirled about and struggled with his assailants for a moment. Then it was the faces peering at him with blood lust in their eyes. He died. But that agonized consciousness remained. It was still strong enough to impress itself on the negative." were recorded

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" That's just more of that nonsense about the wounds of the dead ~~xxx~~ bleeding when the murderer approaches the corpse, " I said.

" Yes, well, you need to educate yourself fast to what's been going on in this town in the last ten months. There's some sort ~~xx~~ of an Unholy Alliance operating in Mason. That psycho-detective has been roaming the town at all hours of the night. People are afraid of him. A lot of people from the mill -- good catholics, too -- cross the street when they see him coming and cross themselves as well. The selectmen and Father Manion are hand-in-glove; it's not clear just who is running who, but with that ugly little monkey Ed ~~Boydman~~ <sup>Borden</sup>, I have my own idea who the organ grinder is and what his tune is. I've got to get home and get Jock's lunch, but I'll leave this collection of newspaper clips, mostly of them featuring " Our Correspondent " ~~Bart Ford~~ <sup>Lincoln</sup>, with you. You can give them back when you've had a chance to study them. And you'd better read between the lines, too."

I walked her to the door. Mary Kaye was ~~xxx~~ <sup>a</sup> feisty little Scot, who worked as a stringer for a number of Boston papers and ~~the~~ World Press International. Her husband Jock had been a railroad telegrapher until he'd had the shock which now kept him confined to a wheelchair. The little she brought in with her newspaper work helped piece out the meager railroad pension they lived on. I liked her. Some people would

she was tied to a sick old man, but as I watched her stocky <sup>Main</sup> err~~ect~~ little figure walk down the driveway and cross ~~the~~ street, I felt that I was watching a brave one, as brave as any of the wounded boys I had cared for in Base Hospital # 65 of the AEF. Not all the heroes in this war had been overseas, and the need for intestinal fortitude had not ended with the Armistice. Some battles go on without an armistice and end only when one or both of the combattants are rendered hors de combat, as the French would say. My problem was that I had not figured out who my enemy was. In the war this was very plain. By the time we got in, the rape of Belgium, the atrocities there, the sinking of neutral vessels by the U-boats, all made it very clear that the world was ~~not~~ going to be safe for democracy until the Boche was put back in his cage. Know your enemy, the posters said, and I was going to damn well know mine when I found him. What had gone on in Mason while I was tending flu patients, sometimes never taking my clothes off from one day to the next night and day/and dressing the post-operative patients in that Base Hospital in muddy France? I had to find out!

In the first few weeks after my discharge in early May 1919, I really had very little to do. I ~~had~~ had a good practice before I left and had every confidence that I would soon again. The pneumonia season, friend of the aged they said, had passed and the flu had finally run its course that spring, taking many with it as it did so. The summer people, those with homes on or near the six lakes in the township, had not yet taken up residence. The stumps of the first and second fingers on my left hand, <sup>a result of a poorly treated case of septicemia,</sup> had been giving me a lot of trouble; they were damned sore and I was not unhappy to spend long hours talking to neighbors, playing ball with my boys ( I could throw but batting was unhandy and so I ~~was~~ pitched to both sides in turn) and <sup>got</sup> ~~getting~~ in a vegetable garden, which might come in handy, especially if my practice did not pick up. And lastly, I was glad to return to the

Bridge paragraph , page 14, chapter II ( ch 2 of Kaiser Bill's Lives)

Having so much time on my hands, I had of course talked about Billy Thorndike's murder with my wife Anna and Perkins and Laine Meade. When I got Laine alone, she said that what was going on in town, the willful persecution of a good man, was killing Perkins. Together, they dwelt on what had happened the evening of the murder and how vital my absence had been. They were most indefinite as to who was directing the effort against Perkins, saying only that the Selectmen<sup>ed</sup> of the Town were in charge and constantly referring to a general "They." It all seemed too horrible to discuss in detail and the more people I talked with, the more hazy the whole picture got.

Finally,...

bosom and warm arms of my wife Anna. Though we were both in our 40's, the flame which had burned brightly for on toward 24 years had by no means gone out, and with my return after almost a year, neither of us could believe that it had been 8 years since our last child. It should have been a happy time, and it was. And yet I quickly learned I had come back to a town divided. Father Harry Manion, pastor of the newly built Catholic Church on the hill, had given me a warm and friendly farewell when I left for France. Now he barely acknowledged my wave as he walk<sup>ed</sup> by. Our house ~~sits~~ <sup>sits</sup> on ~~the~~ Main Street between the Church and the shopping section of the village and so he had to pass within our view every time he ~~goes~~ <sup>goes</sup> down town. I learned that some of my oldest patients were still going to Peterborough to see Dr. Childs, even though the word was that he was not quite right for some time now, especially after he was brought in <sup>on Thumlike</sup> ~~the Dean~~ <sup>Overworked, a</sup> casualty of the war, they called him. Ha! I could have stayed home and been a casualty if that's all it took. Hard work had never hurt me but little work at all surely was. ~~Finally~~ <sup>At Bridge here</sup>, I decided to talk to the man in charge of the case, Rob Packard, the County Solicitor. I got in my Overland and ran up over the Mountain to Keene. I ~~got~~ <sup>was</sup> there in time for lunch at the Chesire House and we went to his office with our cigars afterward. He had cleared his calendar to talk to me and I was determined know the facts as well as anyone in town. He began at the moment he entered the case.

" To begin with, it was about 11<sup>30</sup> ~~o'clock~~ on the morning of August 14th when I got a phone call in my office ~~that~~ from one of the <sup>MASON</sup> Selectmen that they thought they'd found the body of Dr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thumlike</sup>, who had been reported missing earlier that morning. I picked up Jack Densmore and we got to the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thumlike</sup> Farm about two o'clock. Somebody ~~was~~ had gotten a pole and poked around in the cistern near the big house and then they had let a boy down on a rope and found a body tied up. They had a pair of ice

...s and they pulled the body out. The body was wrapped in a bran sack and horse blanket and bound hand and foot. The hands were tied behind the back with window cord or clothes line in square knots; the knees were tied together with "soft" rope, also in square knots. A light horse blanket, later identified as belonging to ~~Mr. Meade~~ <sup>Mr. Meade</sup>, was wrapped around the head and a halter rope was wound twice around the neck on top of the blanket. The short burlap sack was pulled down over the head, outside the blanket, and the tie strings were tied to the loops of the pants. When we took the bran sack off the body, a stone, later found to weigh 27½ pounds, fell ~~xxxxx~~ out. <sup>Thornhill</sup> ~~Dean~~ was wearing his usual knee pants and stockings<sup>s</sup>, low shoes and overshoes. His face was blue-black and Jack Densmore was able to determine that death was due to strangulation: the halter rope had been drawn tight enough to cut into the neck and snap the vertebrae. He was dead before he was thrown in the cistern, because even though there <sup>was</sup> six feet of water in the cistern, there was no water in the lungs and the lungs were discolored due to lack of oxygen. We cut ~~off~~ the knots off the rope to save them for evidence; they were square knots. Outside of the ghastly color of his face, <sup>Thornhill</sup> ~~Dean~~ made a very presentable corpse. His ~~color~~ <sup>Collar</sup> and tie were on straight and the tie kept in place by a still tie-pin, his shirt was not torn, though the sleeves were/rolled up as they would have been while he was milking his cow. Quite the gentlemen~~x~~ farmer, he was; did his milking at ten o'clock morning and night, and stayed up half the night reading apparently. Oh, yes, there were three cuts on the side of~~x~~ the head~~set~~ in a triangular fashion something like a cat's paw. These came in for some notereity later ~~in~~ when the body was exhumed for his brother. Perhaps you heard about that."

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" Yes," I said, " I heard about that -- bloody wounds in the presence of the murderer and questions as to why <sup>Meade's</sup> ~~Rich's~~ face was marked in the same way, (apparently.)"

He went on, " There was a second exhumation later on, you know, in January. The selectmen and the Secret Servicemen called in ~~xxxx~~ Dr. Jeremiah McCarthy, the Suffolk County Medical Examiner. Big name in Boston-way. police work down ~~xxxx~~. He didn't find out anything that we didn't know. Found out that ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> had a fractured skull; we knew that, or Densmore guessed as much. Didn't matter because he was strangled by the halter. I missed that one, wasn't invited. Damned glad too. They must've frozen their ass off in that tomb in the middle of the winter. Cold enough in August. Silly bastards !! What else ? Oh, yes, we did find a woman's hairpin near the cistern. Yellow bone, imitation amber hairpin. Checked that out and found that women with blond or light brown hair wear that kind, so we kind of ~~have~~ been looking for a youngish woman in the case. One more thing and then I got to be back in court at 2 o'clock. Old Judge Bartlett is hell on punctuality and the dignity of the court."

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" I understand," I said. "I am glad for anything that you can tell me. The opposition, and there sure is an opposition, won't tell me anything, and everytime I start to discuss the case with <sup>DM Meade</sup> ~~CR Rich~~, he gets such a look on his face that I drop it immediately."

" Old Monk <sup>Borden</sup> ~~Boynton~~ was hopping around and directing things and his buddy Special Police Officer <sup>Partridge</sup> ~~Goodridge~~, the other selectman, was prowling around like Sherlock Holmes; all he needed was a magnifying glass. They wren't much help. After the body had been taken away, <sup>Oldham</sup> ~~Young~~ and I raked and swept the barn trying to see if we could find any clues, anything that might have fallen through the loose hay or gotten pushed into <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ crack between the planks of the floor. We sent <sup>Henderson</sup> ~~Ralph~~ to run off the water in the system in the big

hell for that later. Destroying evidence, that Frog New-York-City Detective said. Secret Service, too. Where was I ? Yeah, the one person who was any real help at all was the Taxidermist <sup>Maniborough</sup> George ~~Wellington~~. Regular Indian tracker. Talked about as much too. He pointed out the blood on grass near the barn and on the barn porch, too. More important, he nosed around and found where somebody had parked a big car <sup>just off</sup> ~~on~~ the Old Peterborough road, the old <sup>W</sup> Wood Road, just off the road, climbed the stone wall -- he found some stones loosened in the wall -- and made their way across lots to the back side of the ~~barn~~ <sup>Thornside</sup> barn. He found footprints and fresh twigs that showed him their path plain as anything. Unfortunately for us, the foot prints and the tire tracks both were pretty well obscured by that heavy rain the afternoon the body was found, the rain that Polly

<sup>Thornside</sup> Dean went out in."

" What about Polly <sup>Thornside</sup> ~~Dean~~ anyway? I hear that the first idea was that she had killed <sup>Thornside</sup> ~~Dean~~ and..."

" I'm sorry but I've got to go. Old Bartlett will skin me alive. Look, I've got to come down to Mason on a another mattter in a couple of days and I'll fill you in on some more. You might ask Miss Dutton about that idea when you see her. She was one of the strongest arguers for that idea, and she made a strong case."

There was no more to be learned that day <sup>but</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>as</sup> I drove back home over the Mountain I remembered the business with Ed Price and the signal lights on the Mountain.

Mount Monadnock <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ the highest peak in <sup>This</sup> ~~that~~ area of southern New Hampshire <sup>defined as</sup> I looked it up in a dictionary once and the word monadnock was/a geologic term : " a single remnant of a former highland, which rises as an isolated rock mass above a plain." It <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ the most <sup>visible</sup> land mark in town, standing as it <sup>does</sup> ~~did~~ at the head of the Main Street of the village. It dominated <sup>5 everything</sup> ~~all~~ else for miles around and even gave its name to <sup>This</sup> ~~that~~ section of the country.

Ed Price had been a patient of mine for a good many years. In the ~~Summer~~ <sup>Summer</sup> of '18, he had gotten so bad that I felt I needed a second opinion. Ed was ambulatory and would be so for some time, but he had a lot of pain and I wanted to find out if there was anything I had missed, ~~any~~ any treatment ~~or~~ medication I hadn't thought of. So the next time McMahon of Boston was up our way, I arranged for him to examine Price. He agreed with me that ~~the~~ <sup>my</sup> diagnosis of cirrhosis, with kidney and heart complications, was correct and uncorrectable. As McMahon said, "When a man's had that many good nights, he's very likely to have a lot of bad days. Just keep him comfortable and let the WCTUers chalk one up for their side, like the worm in the bottle of alcohol." I was already giving Ed one grain of morphia every 24 hours, and Mac said to give him more if needed to keep the pain down. He said that Price should continue working as long as the medication did not interfere with his work, pointing out that in cases like this immobility was the fastest way to a speedy decline. He~~x~~ asked what Price did and when I said he was the night patrol for the village, he grinned and said it was a good thing we lived in a quiet section with need only for a pghost patrol, that Price was apt to see a lot of 'em.

~~Summer~~ <sup>as</sup> All that ~~summer~~, especially ~~after~~ we got deeper and deeper into the war, strange reports began circulating in the village, reports of signalling going on all over the region. Flashes of light were reported at midnight above Monadnock, with answering lights shining from the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thousand</sup> place, long noted as one of the sightliest or most prominent view points in the township, and again from the Temple Hills. The Germans had not long since announced their open U-boat warfare and reports were that these signals were passing information to the U-boat fleet off the New England shore. It was pointed out that Mt. Monadnock was the first point of land visible to the mariner



off the New England coast, on a clear day you could see the ships in Boston Harbor, and so on and so on. As time went on, it became clear that many of the rumors were originating with Ed Price; time and again he was cited as proof of the fact. I decided I better inquire for myself; if my morphia was making Ed see things, at least I ought to know the truth of it. One night when I was giving him his shot before he went on duty, I put it to him.

"What's this I hear about midnight signals, Price," I said. "You haven't been seeing any thing suspicious have you?"

His eyes rolled as he tried to raise his ~~hair~~ head and still keep his buttocks up where I could inject what he needed now above all else. "I have that, Dr.," he said with great emphasis and self importance.

"Have you really," I said. "And what have you seen?"

"Queer sights, Doctor. Flashes of light every clear night over Monadnock. Signals, I take it !! "

I stuck him. "Price, you're seeing things."

"No, Doctor, on my honor."

"But what's the answer?"

"Well, that I haven't figured out yet, but I'll get it. It must mean something. Besides, there's always an answering flash from the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thornside</sup> place."

"Now I know you're looney. Where can you see the peak and the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thornside</sup> place at the same time on your beat?"

"Well, not exactly at the same time, but by going just a few rods west I can get the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thornside</sup> place in line."

~~Surely~~ "Surely, you don't suspect a man like Mr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thornside</sup> of being a spy."

"Not ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thornside</sup>. But he ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> those German renters, I wouldn't put anything past them."

"But they've gone"

"I calculate they've set up a base of operations on the place and

and come back to it of nights. They've only moved twenty or thirty miles, I hear. That's <sup>s</sup>~~n~~ no distance for an auto."

That was true. So I agreed to go down town at midnight and watch with him, and just before midnight we set off on his rounds. It was a dark but clear night with no moon. We stopped where we had an unobstructed view of the mountain and watched. The dark mass became more sharply defined as our eyes became accustomed to the dark and and its slopes hung like shoulders. Standing <sup>where</sup> ~~as~~ we were, almost under it, the town clock gave its twelve strokes like some saluting battery.

" There, see it, Doctor ? There it is."

I followed ~~the~~ Price's pointing finger and sure enough crowning the short sharp peak was a light. I didn't trust my eyes. I looked, shut, and looked again.

" Price, that's a star." I objected.

" Star, nothing. I can see it move. Somebody is waving it back and forth in some kind of code. Now -- you step up to the lot opposite the library and you'll see the answer."

I didn't see any point in arguing further, so I walked with him up to the place opposite the library where I could see a light ~~on~~ the horizon, the light from the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thornlike</sup> place. Price waved at it and exultantly called out, " There, see that? What did I tell you."

We watched for a bit and then <sup>walked</sup> ~~walked~~ back to our original sighting point. Distinctly, above the peak stood a star. The earth in its turning had made visible a line of separation between the "signal" light and the peak of the mountain. I decided this was the time for a lecture.

"There's your signal, Price. A star, as I suspected ~~all~~ along. No mystery to that. Same old star you can pick up any night this time of year, this time of night. And the answering light from the <sup>Thornlike</sup> ~~Dean~~ place. That's a reading lamp that has stood in the same place, to my personal knowledge, for the past fifteen years. You better watch it or you'll be getting a



"

As it was, it fit right into what so many people wanted to believe: that there were spies operating from hill tops and mountain tops around here, flashing signals to the Kaiser's U-boats sitting outside Boston harbor. ~~Thom Laine~~ Billy ~~Dean~~ was wrapped in the flag from the moment he died and and the murderers were sure to have been German agents. And the catching of his killers was not only the duty of every good citizen but the goal of anyone who called himself a patriot. Night after night, as we sat in the living room and even as we went to bed, we knew, <sup>we</sup> were sure, that we were being watched from the fields at the foot of the hill or from neighboring porches. You don't know what a strain it's been on Laine and <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~. If only you'd been called up a week later, <sup>these</sup> many of ~~this~~ rumors and lies would never have happened."

→

Lottie was pure Vermont marble, as solid and substantial as the rocks from her native hills, but there was almost a sob in her voice I had never heard before. "If only you'd been here," she said, <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ would never have been suspected and the killing would have been laid to killers unknown, spies most likely, in the minds of those horrible people. How they could have thought so little of <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ after almost 35 years of upright life and service to this community is beyond me. I must believe it was war hysteria, seeing spies in everyone <sup>strange</sup> or with a German name, that caused good god-fearing people to turn on <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ like a pack of wolves, or I must give up my belief in the reasonableness of mankind, and that would destroy me as it is slowly destroying <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~."

"You mean the business about the black eye," I said.

"Yes. That's what it always comes down to when we go back trying to figure out people are so sure that <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ is guilty <sup>a</sup> the simple household duty, performed a hundred times or more. <sup>He</sup> ~~Charlie~~ had given Kitty some hay and was going in the stall to give her a pan of pea-pods. He slapped her rear with his hand to let <sup>him</sup> him by, but she hadn't heard and was surprised. She hit out with both heels and he found himself on the

his cheek bone, we found it later in the hay, while he still had the stem in his teeth. He went in to Laine and she put some alcohol ~~on~~ compresses <sup>on his eye</sup> ~~she used~~. It was then that Billy ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomdike</sup> ~~and~~ brought me back from the Post Office. I think we were all quite frightened at what had happened, after all it could have been a lot more serious than being knocked down and getting a black eye. <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ and Billy exchanged silly remarks about domestic violence and the difficulty of explaining away <sup>a black eye</sup> and we never ~~thought~~ <sup>dreamed</sup> then that <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ would be labeled a liar because he tried ~~to pass the whole thing off~~ to pass the whole thing off the next day with some light remarks. Billy liked to joke, he didn't have much to joke about with Polly, but the joke has gotten ~~to~~ very sour since then. And the other coincidences: that Billy should need a light to drive home with and that <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~, generous as always, had lent him his; that Laine was concerned that Billy not catch cold on the way home and insisted that he take their horse blanket for cover on his drive home. That's the cruel part, when little acts of thoughtfulness become links in a chain of evidence. But if you had been here, Laine and I would have insisted that ~~you examine him~~ you examine him -- even Billy thought he should see a doctor and make sure the cheek bone wasn't fractured -- and we would have had a witness as to the time of the black eye. Instead we are left with only two family members and the dead man knowing what happened and when. Another thing, <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~ always went back to the bank in the evening to work on the Liberty Bonds during the war years; he said they had to be tended to after the regular work of the bank was done. That night of course he didn't go and so no one else saw him. The fact that the body was wrapped in the horse blanket and that the lantern was found at the <sup>Thomdike</sup> ~~Dean~~ farm are bad enough, but <sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Charlie~~'s black eye and head wounds are the worst. That really stands out in people's memory."

Thomdike's

" And from what I hear, Fred ~~Dean's~~ pet New York detective hasn't let them forget it."

At that, I think I heard Lottie come as close ~~xxxxxx~~ to making an~~e~~ un-ladylike remark as she ever had in her life." That Man", she sputtered." That despicable creature... that... do you know that for months after that scene in the cemetary he had the gall to go into the bank time after time to interview ~~Charlie~~ <sup>Perkins</sup>, and ~~Charlie~~ <sup>Perkins</sup> let him get away with it ??"

" And he's still in town ~~and is~~ living in the rectory of Holy Name, I understand, and nobody seems to know who's paying him."

"Yes, and he specializes in mid-night interviews of people he thinks might know something and frightens them half to death. More than one man in town has threatened to kill him if he ever comes near his family again. He claims that the Grand Jury was a whitewash affair in which the Masons of the county made sure that only the right people testified and that those with evidence were not called, that no case was made because the pieces were not put together properly. "

Thomdike

" I agree that war hysteria had the town in a proper state to see ~~Dean's~~ murder as the murder of a patriot and that this made it easy for someone to persecute ~~Charlie~~ <sup>Perkins</sup>, but the war's been over six months or more and someone's been keeping this persecution going. Who and Why ?? "

We sat in silence for some time in the falling June darkness, each with his own thoughts. I would light my pipe from time to time and Lottie would heave a long sigh or clear her throat as if she was going to say something, but could not bear to say it. From across the street, through the the leaves of the large maples and elms which gave the main street of the town such a settled and protective air, came the sound of singing from the large white Congregational Church. My wife Anna played the organ, had for years, and during the enforced ~~quiet~~ <sup>quiet</sup> of the evenings since my return, with so few coming to my ~~office~~ after-supper office hours, I enjoyed listening to the choir practices

The faint sounds gave me a <sup>peace</sup>~~place~~ only occasionally interrupted by passing auto traffic. This, I thought, is what I have come home to, this is what all that struggle and death in France was all about. The music stopped, I could see the lights in the church go out and hear the goodbyes as the members of the choir went off to their homes. Anna stepped up on the porch and greeted Lottie and me.

" I'm just going to walk Lottie <sup>over</sup>~~xx~~ home, " I said. Lottie objected, but I knew she <sup>was</sup>~~would-be~~ grateful~~x~~ for company even for so short a journey through the town which had set its face against her beloved brother-in-law. The two women stood in the ~~dark~~ darkness of the porch in the lingering goodbys of those wanting to assure each other of their caring, when I made out the heavy bulk of a figure I had seen passing our house many times before. I had faced this figure too many times across a tennis net not to recognize the outline. For a man of 264 pounds, he had great quickness and it was always a duel between us with/<sup>a</sup>quick exchanges~~x~~ of volleys close in. Each of us disdained the lob in favor of the speedy passing shot. As he passed under the street light two houses down , I could see the intense scowl, the heavy shoulders, the surpr<sup>s</sup>prisingly small hands pumping backand to, the body in a forward lean.

" That's our man, I said. " The Big Man on the Hill. He's the Who. What I have to determine now is the Why."

The two women deep in their conversation had not heard me, nor seen Father Manion, and I did not disturb them, but I was as sure that night, as I had increasing reason to be in the months that followed, that he was the man I would call The Kaiser.

III  
Chapter ~~4~~ At the ~~Clarks'~~ Meade's' August 1918

" August Heats and August Damps  
~~will~~ give you watermelon cramps."

Charlotte Dutton's

The childhood rhyme ran through ~~Diana Bradley's~~ mind as she sat on the East Porch trying to catch a bit of breeze after supper. Her sister ~~Fern~~ <sup>Laine</sup> and her brother-in-law ~~Ned Clark~~ <sup>Perkins</sup> were working in the vegetable plot on the far side of the barn, while she had finished the letters she had promised herself she'd write before she turned in that night. 'Duty done is ~~easy~~ <sup>freedom</sup> won,' she thought. How like her freshman she was, she'd become, even if they were all honor students, if she had to have little mottoes to get done what any reasonable adult did as a matter of course. The longer you teach the more you get like the pupils and the thought was not a particularly pleasant one, seeing how much of her career lay before her. But nonsense, she's gotten away from all that, she'd finished her summer course at Columbia the Friday before, and had nearly a month away from school and school thoughts. But she had not gotten away from the city heat of the city. If anything, the heat was worse and the humidity was as bad. 'August heats and August Damps,' indeed. There wasn't a breath of air moving and while the light supper of fresh garden vegetables, especially those fresh peas, hadn't given her cramps, the thought of walking down to the post office to mail the letters had no particular appeal. And yet, somehow, she must earn the freedom of her month in ~~Preston~~ <sup>Mason</sup> by this last act. The first freedom was to be earned by the last duty, she always practiced it and she would practice it here.

She rose from the wicker settee, gathered up her writing materials and the completed letters and passed into the house, through the living room and into the kitchen. <sup>on her way</sup> She laid her writing box on the hall table as



2.

she passed the foot of the stairs, gave her hair a set-to as she caught sight of the familiar face <sup>in the mirror</sup> ~~on the way~~, and was ready for for the walk down town. It was one of the things she enjoyed about being with <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Fern~~ and <sup>P.M.</sup> ~~Ned~~ that life was ordered so differntly. The town post office was one of the centers of life here. No home delivery meant that you had to pick up the mail from the row on row of little boxes in the town center and likewise all outgoing mail had to be delivered there. <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Fern~~ and <sup>PM</sup> ~~Ned~~ did not change their routines for her when she was there and they were working in the garden after supper as they had been since late May and would continue to through the late summer and early fall. " <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Fern~~," she called, "I'm going down to mail some letters; do you have anything to go?" Her sister's slight figure straightened up in the evening light and she shook her head. " No,"she said, " don't be too long. We 'll have some berries and cream when you get back."

The walk down the main street was uneventful. <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~She~~ bowed gracefully and with dignity to those few people she passed on her way down the street. "I must go over and see <sup>ANNA</sup> ~~Elizabeth Allen~~ tomorrow morning",she thought. I'm sure she misses the Doctor already." But not tonight. The trip up had made her tired and the humidity had drained her strength. It really didn't make any difference whether or not her letters went out on the early train but here she was doing her duty. She was doing her duty as she had all her life, and duty was very much in the air since ~~the~~ War had been declared in April, not that she needed any war to do what she should, that had been bred into her from the time she was born and before. The <sup>Duttons</sup> ~~Bradleys~~ had always done their duty. As she passed <sup>Perkins'</sup> ~~Ned's~~ bank, The First National Bank of <sup>MASON</sup> ~~Preston~~, she reflected how like him it was, or <sup>he</sup> ~~him~~ like it. Solid and reliable in its brick <sup>walls</sup> and granite steps, as firm and fixed as the eternal hills. Twenty-three years he's been cashier. He and

and the bank were as much <sup>MASON</sup> of the ~~Preston~~ landscape as the Mountain which loomed at the head of Main Street. She crossed the wide street and headed directly into the stucco building which ~~was~~ housed on its first floor set above the basement level to the left (the Post Office) and to the right <sup>Dunne's</sup> ~~Campbell's~~ Drug Store. The lobby was still open as it would be until nine o'clock when one of the young ~~frennhmen~~ would lock the door, pick up all the outgoing mail from behind the drop slots, bag it and drop it at the station on his way home, ready to go out on the early train.

The door which she pulled toward her was already opening outward ~~toward her~~ as a figure with letters in his left hand was coming out as she was going in. She let go of the handle quickly and the figure which almost ran her down looked up. "Billy Thorndike," she said, "you're in a grand hurry." The face that looked up at hers was tight and drawn but almost immediately it brightened as the man drew back from the near collision. In what was almost a courtly bow with a backward sweep of ~~the~~ his free hand, the man ~~XXXXX~~ removed his hat as ~~the~~ recognition lighted his eyes and animated his body. "Ah, the divine <sup>CHARLOTTE</sup> ~~Diana~~, what a pleasure to see you. <sup>PM</sup> ~~Ned~~ told me you'd be coming as usual but I'd forgotten just when. What a pleasure to see you again. Now I know why I came to town tonight -- to see you. Let me post your letters for you and I'll run you home." With that he took the letters from ~~you~~ her hand and slipped back through the door and quickly back out again. "When did you arrive, just today?" He grasped her elbow and escorted her down the steps to the street level. "My buggy's just behind the store." <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Diana~~ protested that she had come down to the post office as much for the exercise as for her errand but he would hear none of it. "We musn't waste a minute of our <sup>little</sup> visit. We so seldom have the pleasure of your company in our quiet little village <sup>and</sup> ~~that~~ we mustn't waste a minute of it." It all struck <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Diana~~ as a little ridiculous. Here she was being towed along by

stately  
vigorous little Dr. Thorndike like some ~~stately~~ barge. Men did not  
make a fuss about her; she was not a woman that men made a fuss about  
but here she was being carried along and escorted up and into the  
buggy tied to the hitching rail behind Hamill's store. Dr. Thorndike  
deposited his mail and newspapers with the several packages lying  
~~in~~ the buggy behind the seat and took his place beside her. The trip  
back up the main street and into the street leading to the Clark house  
took hardly any time at all, but in those brief moments dusk had fallen  
as it does so quickly in the August heat and the lights were on in the  
kitchen as they pulled into the yard.

"Hullo there, anybody home," <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Dee~~ called out as she preceded  
Dr. Thorndike up the back porch steps and through the kitchen door. She  
could see as she stepped into the kitchen that <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Fern~~ was attending to  
<sup>meade</sup> ~~Ned~~ and that they both held a cloth to his left eye. "What happened  
to you?" she asked <sup>PM</sup> ~~Ned~~ and rapidly to <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Fern~~, "What happened to him?"  
"Say something you shouldn't to the missus?" asked Thorndike. The Clarks  
were so intent on what they were doing and the questions had followed  
so quickly on one another that neither of them ~~Clarks~~ responded until  
<sup>Perkins</sup> ~~Ned~~ seated himself on a kitchen chair holding the folded towel to his  
face and <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Fern~~ faced the newcomers anxiously. "Just a fool accident,"  
she said. "He went and got himself kicked by that foolish old horse."  
You take a look at it, Dr. Thorndike, will you?" <sup>PM</sup> ~~Ned~~ lifted the towel  
and they could all see the yellow and black mass swelling rapidly on  
the cheek bone below the eye. "What've you been doing for it?" Thorn-  
dike asked. "First cold water and now alcohol on the compress," Fern  
replied. "Alcohol internally or externally is always suitable for  
wounds," said Thorndike with a slight laugh, "but why don't you have

5. *Francis O'Connor*

~~John Allen~~ over to look at it?<sup>X</sup> I'm long out of practice and you ,  
really need an experienced eye to take a look at that." " Dr ~~Allen's~~ <sup>O'Connor's</sup>  
leave was up ~~two days~~ <sup>Today</sup> ago and he's on his way to France," said ~~Bern~~ <sup>Lain</sup>.

All four sat in momentary silence as she prepared fresh towels and  
<sup>PM</sup> ~~Ned~~ applied them to his cheek, his mouth drawn in a tight little  
half smile under his moustache as he drew in a quick breath with  
the sting of the fresh alcohol. Thorndike drew a silver cigarette  
case out of his shirt pocket in a nervous gesture and took out a  
hand rolled cigarette but did not light it. " How did it happen,"  
he asked. " You'll have some explaining to do tomorrow in the bank."  
" Yes, <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Dee~~ broke in, "tell us what happened. The first day I'm here  
and this has to happen. "

" Well, I took a pan of nice fresh pea pods out to Old Belle in  
her stall. It wasn't dark enough to light the lantern and I guess  
I didn't make enough noise to give her any warning. I slapped her  
on the rear to make her move over so I could put the pods in her  
trough and I must've ~~scared~~ scared her. She lit out with both  
heels and caught me. "

" She couldn't have hit you square, Thorndike said, " or you'd be  
be worse off than you are."

"No, the way I figure it, <sup>PM</sup> ~~Ned~~ said, " her left <sup>hind foot</sup> ~~foot~~ hit  
the pipe ~~box~~ and the bowl hit the cheek -bone. When I collected  
myself, I was sitting on the floor with the pipe stem in my mouth  
and I found the bowl lying in the hay. I hunted for it as soon as  
I was myself, 'cause I was afraid of fire. Now, if that isn't the  
silliest thing you ever heard of, I'll buy you a new hat." He  
groaned slightly and held the compress more tightly to his cheek.  
"Well, if it isn't better in the morning, <sup>Lain</sup> ~~Bern~~ said as she hovered

about her seated husband, " you're going over to Templeton and see Dr Morse." This would happen just when we've lost our doctor to the war. " She went in a fussing, mothering way until it became apparent to her sister that she and Dr. Thorndike were only in the way. <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Dee~~ excused herself and their visitor and led him through the house and out onto the East porch where they could converse quietly.

Though he made gestures of concern about <sup>P.M.</sup> ~~Ned~~ and his inability to do any ~~thing~~ about his injury, it was clear that Billy Thorndike was pleased to be able to talk to her alone. He now lit the cigarette he had in his hand and seated himself fully in the wicker rocker. He was hungry to talk. Diana asked about his health and that of his wife <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~. She, he said, was not well, was confined to the house now and for two years had not been upstairs or to the barn. This placed the burden of running both the farm ~~squarely upon him~~ and the house square up to him. He was glad to be able to do both and had established their routine which was not so different from the way they had lived for some years. What did concern him was not <sup>Dolly's</sup> ~~Lottie's~~ physical condition, <sup>So much</sup> as her mental state, which he described as delicate. Almost every evening now, as night drew on, she would fall to musing about the fact that both her mother and sister had gotten queer and had to be hospitalized and she would make him promise that he would never leave her, that he would never have her put ~~her~~ away, She was worried that her investments had gone bad and that year by year her income, which was their chief support, <sup>tried</sup> ~~had~~ declined. Their declining financial situation, which they had ~~lived~~ <sup>tried</sup> five years before to better ~~by~~ by fixing up the cottage and renting the big house, seemed to lead her back to the fact that he would soon leave her and she would be all alone in the world. The loss of the ~~mainzies~~ <sup>Strassburgers</sup> as tenants in the big house two months before weighed on ~~he~~ mind and she would soon be back in the whining supplication to him which

7.

<sup>or</sup>  
~~were~~ so hard to bear.

<sup>Lottie</sup>  
~~She~~ listened quietly and filled in between the line of his account which was delivered in his characteristically sardonic manner. Some of this was new and some ~~was~~ merely progression in a process that had been going on for some time. She didn't see him that often, only on her visits to <sup>MASON</sup> ~~Preston~~ on holidays, but always before he was full of <sup>life, so full of</sup> the reading he had been doing, ~~XX~~, the art exhibits and theatre she had seen in New York, of the larger world in which they both had an interest. This line of talk was different. ~~He~~ seemed bitter, preoccupied with his own little world on the hill. He was nervous, too, in a way that she had not noticed before. He kept lighting one <sup>after another</sup> of his handmade cigarettes ~~after another~~, barely letting one go <sup>the next</sup> out before starting another. He played nervously with the silver case, <sup>opening</sup> ~~taking apart~~ the two pieces and fitting them back together again, ~~and~~ in between times polishing it nervously with the palm of his hand. They didn't see many people these days, he said, and she could remember back when they had held court in the big house, particularly in the summer when the summer ~~people~~ visitors dropped in ~~a~~ in a constant stream. Oh, they were in their declining years, no doubt about it, he said and the vigor of his voice dropped and became more like <sup>Polly's</sup> ~~Lottie's~~ as he detailed the narrow life they led.

<sup>for</sup>  
They sat quietly in the silence which ~~could~~ seem to be the only natural conclusion to the sad story of decline that he had been telling her. <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~She~~ went over in her mind ways in which she could cheer him up, but to tell the truth she was pretty low. Not finding <sup>Frankie O'Connor</sup> ~~John Allen~~ here in <sup>MASON</sup> ~~Preston~~ when she came somehow upset her more than she was able to tell. The war ~~was~~ not going particularly well and there seemed little to raise the spirits of either of them. All seemed loss and leaving and decline in strength. "Good heavens, I'll be having the vapours, next," she thought. It was depressing. As they looked out east toward the Temple Hills, a light

suddenly made its way over over the crest and halted there briefly before making its way down first to its left and then to its right and disappearing as suddenly as it appeared. Billy Thorndike sat up very straight and stiff in his rocker, holding it still at the low point of its arc. "Did you see it?" he said. "Did you see it? It's there every night at just this same time -- 10:15." He pointed excitedly with his cigarette hand, the red end glowing in the dark like an illuminated rod. <sup>Lottie</sup> See had seen the light when he had but had taken it as part of the scene. "It's just the lights of an automobile coming over the hill from Templeton," she said. "What do you think it is?" "It's the alert to begin signalling. I see it every night about this time and then if I'm <sup>awake</sup> sharp, I can catch the answers from another quadrant. Oh, they're very sharp and they keep shifting, keep on the move. But they're going to catch'em one of these nights and I'm going to help. Why, only last night..." and with that he stopped short. "I mustn't say any more to you, it's nothing a woman should know." He seemed very agitated now and his voice rose in a sharp pitch thinner and higher than before. <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~See~~ Was confused. "What's this all about, Billy," she asked. "What's this all about, lights and signals, catching who, doing what?" "I forget that you've just arrived. You'll know soon enough. <sup>Laine</sup> Fern and <sup>Am</sup> Ned will tell you. <sup>Mason</sup> ~~Preston~~ is a mighty queer place these days. These are perilous times we live in. And all the danger isn't over there!" They were both standing now and against her will she peered into dark masses of the Temple Hills and turned with him toward the mountain with its broad sloping shoulders which had given its name, Monadnock, beloved of Emerson and Thoreau, to its solitary geologic formation. She could see nothing but said nothing. The dark masses which had always meant peace and strength to her now seemed threatening. He dropped his voice, as if in fear of being overheard, talking of the various persecutions they were subjecting him to. They had been stealing his hens and for three days running had let his cow out just to plague him. He knew they were trying to drive him off the hill, trying to make him move in-  
 town but held about him. *Then... Then...*

9. Again, she listened silently, fearing that if she sought a rational answer for all the things he recounted ~~that~~ she would disturb him even more. From the sounds inside the house, it became evident that the <sup>Mendes</sup> ~~Glarks~~ were making preparations to go to bed. <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Diana~~ and Thorndike stepped back into the lighted house and made their way back through into the kitchen. <sup>PM</sup> ~~Red~~ was standing in front of the mirror over the sink, peering with his good eye to see the puffy left which was nearly closed. "I'm going to have about as much trouble seeing my way home tonight as you are," Thorndike said to him. "I tried to get batteries for my flashlight at the store tonight, but they were out of the size I needed." "There's better than half a moon, surely that will light your way," <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Dee~~ said. "The trees are pretty tick the last half mile and it gets pretty dark as you get close to <sup>h</sup>our place," he said. As always, <sup>Laine</sup> ~~Pern~~ had the answer. "You must take ~~xxxxxxx~~ one of our ~~xxxxxxx~~ lanterns; you can return it the next time you come in town." Not waiting to hear any protest from Thorndike, she went to <sup>the</sup> back hall off the kitchen and returned with a lantern and can of kerosene. She quickly filled it, trimmed the wick and lighted it. "There now, you just take this. We can't have you going off with no light at all. It's dangerous at night with all these high powered cars on the road." And as she glanced quickly around the room, she snatched up a bouquet of sweet peas from a vase on the table. Wrapping them in a piece of newspaper, she said, "You take these along to <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~, will you? Tell her we'll be out to see her one of these days. Now that <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Dee~~ is here <sup>maybe</sup> we can have a musical evening, just like the old days."

<sup>Lottie</sup> ~~Dee~~ noticed that Dr. Thorndike's good nature had returned to him and his leave taking was as cordial and gracious as <sup>h</sup>is first greeting of her. His face was relaxed and his voice reflected the polite phrases with which he assured her that he was glad she was in <sup>MASH</sup> ~~Preston~~ and that they would have many opportunities for conversation. He made her feel that he valued her presence and ~~xxxxx~~ somehow he implied that seeing her would add much to what was a dreary and empty life. It was not so much what he said, that was



10.

conventional enough, but the ~~strength~~<sup>her</sup> with which he took/hand and the fervor with which he promised to see her again soon was a new note in their relationship. "I'm too old for that sort of thing, she thought, and besides there's ~~Lottie~~<sup>Polly</sup>." She walked back to the house and together with ~~Ned and Fern~~<sup>Pm + Laine</sup> listened until the sound of the horse's hooves struck a different note as he turned out of the dirt drive at the foot of the hill onto the ~~road~~ main road which led to the old Peterborough road and Thorndike's Hill. As they stood together, silently, they could see the light shining from the Thorndike house, some two miles away.

There was little left to be said and the three of them moved quickly through the house and up the stairs to bed, ~~Fern~~<sup>Laine</sup> ~~xxx~~ locking doors and shutting off lights as she came in the wake of the other two.

It was a hot night, almost as hot as it had been during the day, and the humidity was stifling. All three left their doors open to catch whatever cross breezes they could from the rooms across the hall.

~~She~~<sup>Lottie</sup> slept fitfully under her sheet. Once she heard someone moving about and sat up quickly and listened. She heard the commode flush and a light switch off in the bathroom. ~~Ned~~<sup>P.M.</sup> passed down the hall and into his room with ~~xxx~~ slight bumping sound as he passed through the door. She heard his breath catch quickly and then heard no more. She glanced at the travelling clock beside her bed and saw that it read twelve twenty-five. The day's travel and the excitement of the evening lay heavy on her and she turned back into a ~~heavy~~<sup>hell</sup> weighted sleep.

- June 1919

As soon as <sup>he</sup> I passed out of the circle of light made by the street lamp, <sup>he</sup> I could feel <sup>his</sup> my face flush and <sup>was</sup> my palms <sup>ed</sup> <sup>his</sup> <sup>were</sup> wet. Why was <sup>he</sup> I reacting that way, as if <sup>he</sup> I were ashamed of something or had something to hide? <sup>he</sup> I knew he was there. <sup>he</sup> I had seen the flare of the match on the porch, struck to light that damned pipe he always had going. <sup>he</sup> I almost crossed the street right then, so <sup>he</sup> I wouldn't have to pass the <sup>O'Connor</sup> Keeney house. In the gathering dark, the boxed sign with his name FRANCIS C. <sup>O'Connor (can)</sup> ~~Keeney~~ seemed bigger than <sup>he</sup> I knew it to be. Relax. Get ahold of yourself, man, <sup>he</sup> I said to <sup>my</sup> myself. He doesn't know anything anymore than anyone else. The singing <sup>he</sup> I had heard as <sup>he</sup> I came down the hill had stopped and was replaced by the murmur of soft female voices <sup>by the time</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>he</sup> I passed the big maple and the lawn which rolled down from the piazza fronting the house to the sidewalk. They're talking, <sup>he</sup> I won't be noticed, <sup>he</sup> I thought. Hell, what do <sup>I</sup> I care whether they see me or not. <sup>he</sup> I had to fight the temptation to speed up to get through the exposure of the street light. <sup>he</sup> I passed <sup>quickly</sup> again/into the darkness and headed for the offices of the Selectmen on the second floor of the Public Library. The lights from its windows made visible the elevated statue of the Union Infantryman standing at parade rest as he had for forty years or more. Returning soldiers have always meant trouble, <sup>he</sup> I thought. They are changed men and they do not understand the changes that have taken place while they have been gone. They do not understand that the war was fought in the towns and cities they left, and, by God, the war is still being fought here in Mason. The town clock struck the three-quarter hour. <sup>he</sup> I realized <sup>he</sup> I was early and <sup>he</sup> I slowed down. <sup>his</sup> My mind went back to the scene three weeks ago, when <sup>O'Connor</sup> ~~he~~ had stepped off the afternoon train. He was so damned proud in that uniform, puttees shined and bars glistening. He walked along with his wife and small children, <sup>swinging</sup> ~~swing~~ his valise in that cocky bouncing ~~walk~~ strut he has. The conquering hero bowing and nodding and calling out to townspeople on all sides. Time and again he'd stop and shake hands with this one and that one. Why did <sup>he</sup> I freeze

Why didn't <sup>he</sup> I step up and greet him like the rest? Pass it off as <sup>the</sup> an every-day occurrence that it was. <sup>he</sup> I didn't know then; <sup>he</sup> I only knew <sup>he</sup> I wanted to make as little of it as possible; it was unavoidable, there was no way to get out of it, but <sup>he</sup> I wanted it over. <sup>His</sup> My greeting was formal, cold, and <sup>he</sup> I saw <sup>O'Connor's</sup> his face close as if a cloud had passed over it. <sup>He</sup> I know now that <sup>he</sup> I acted instinctively. <sup>He</sup> I knew somehow that <sup>O'Connor</sup> he was the one <sup>he</sup> I had been waiting for. As Meade's best friend, he was the one who would fight, the one to be wary of. <sup>He</sup> I knew <sup>his</sup> and my gut feeling betrayed <sup>him</sup> me. <sup>They</sup> He had made such good progress recently, more than <sup>he</sup> I had thought possible, given the fools <sup>he</sup> I was forced to work with. <sup>He thought</sup> I think now <sup>he</sup> I had hoped it would be all over with but the shouting before <sup>O'Connor</sup> he got back, that there would nothing <sup>O'Connor</sup> he could do but pick up the pieces and small pieces they would be. What is that line from Kipling ? " When two strong men stand face to face..." ?

The Select men's room

They were all standing around <sup>he</sup> as they always were, like lost sheep, and <sup>he</sup> I got the meeting underway -- there was a lot to be done.

" Gentlemen, let's get started," <sup>he</sup> I said. " The last eight weeks, the articles in the Boston Courier", and here <sup>he</sup> I nodded toward <sup>Lived in</sup> Bart Ford, the thin-faced cynical political reporter turned <sup>avenging</sup> ~~revenge~~ angel," have done a great deal to stir up the public, to make people realize the forces we are fighting here in Mason. <sup>I</sup> I think we've got the " Soft Pedal Squad" on the run, and I think it's time to thank <sup>Lived in</sup> Mr. Ford and the Courier publicly. I've written down a letter I think you should send ~~in~~ in to the paper and I'm sure our ace reporter will make <sup>Certain</sup> ~~sure~~ it's printed. I'll read it."

W.D. Thordike

As members of the Board of Selectmen of Mason and as American Citizens, we wish to thank the Boston Courier on behalf of ourselves and citizens of the town for its ~~very~~ very able and fearless exposure of the scandal growing out of the ~~murder~~ murder of Dr. ~~Perkins~~ Meade the night of August 13, 1918. For <sup>Thordike</sup> 10 months we have been fighting to have the death of Dr. Meade avenged and his murderers brought to justice. We met friction and opposition in official circles. The Boston Courier was the first paper in New England with sufficient courage and interest in the public welfare to come to our aid in a campaign of publicity ~~was~~ which was eminently accurate and fair to all concerned. We have no axes to grind in this case. We are not inspired by political motive or personal rancor. We wish to

safeguard everybody's interest and to wipe out unjust suspicion. But what we do want is to let the whole world know that agents of Germany or any hostile country cannot come into our midst and murder one of our most loyal and patriotic citizens. We don't care where the guilt may land. We want the persons who committed the murder punished. We feel that the reputation of New Hampshire, the sacredness and security of American institutions are involved in this case. It is far more than a county murder. There has been trickery and intrigue. We demand a second and sweeping Grand Jury investigation -- call upon our chief executive and all others to act. Our community will not be at peace until the Meade mystery has been cleared up. Property values have actually depreciated. Several of our most prominent summer residents have forsaken their estates owing to public dread. Some have placed their property on sale. It is a serious problem with us and that is why so grateful and wish again to thank the Boston Courier for its kindly and patriotic support.

Signed .... and so forth.

" Now, how does that sound?" asked.

Monk <sup>Boyd</sup> ~~Boydton~~ said, " Say, that's great. You really put your finger on ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the loss in property values. I haven't had a nibble on that property north of the center in the last month, and here I thought I'd sell it easy to some <sup>Sugar</sup> ~~war~~ millionaire from New York. "

Alf <sup>ie</sup> ~~Port~~ridge said, " The patriot <sup>is</sup> appeal is made very clear. The Courier is to be commended <sup>for</sup> ~~to~~ rally <sup>in</sup> the support of all who love their country."

<sup>Hennessey</sup> Peter ~~Hogan~~ just gave his thick butcher's nod of assent and chewed the ends of his <sup>walrus</sup> ~~moustache~~.

~~Hee~~-no-evil, see-no-evil, speak-no-evil, <sup>he</sup> thought. Three on a log. They respond if you feed'em or hit 'em; otherwise they sit there and abuse themselves. Not an original thought among the three of them.

" What do you think, ~~Bart~~?" asked. " Will it go?"

" Syre," he said, " The letter ties in all the themes of the last eight weeks and opens up the line to a real investigation. And I can get a whole day's article out of that if we double space it. We'll run it next Tuesday."

" Fine," <sup>Rocier</sup> ~~I~~ said. " La ~~Rose~~ isn't ~~here~~ <sup>due</sup> yet?"

" No," said Boynton, " he works down at ~~Dean and Symonds~~ <sup>Merrill</sup>, you know, and he's afraid if they know he's been up talking to us they'll fire

" Let's go ahead. Monk, you've got those two affidavits I told you to collect -- Garfield and Mrs ~~Richardson~~ <sup>Harlowe</sup> ?"

" Yes, they both appeared before One Arm Louis Richard yesterday and swore to a statement."

" Why don't you read them and we can comment on deletions, additions, or corrections."

<sup>James</sup>  
" The first one is by ~~Martin~~ <sup>James</sup> P. Garfield. He was one of the ones who pulled ~~Meade's~~ <sup>Dean Thordike's</sup> body out of the cistern and he got to testify at the Grand Jury hearing. He makes an interesting statement about the man in the bank. He says:

<sup>alright</sup>  
<sup>alright</sup>  
" If it had not been for federal agents I would not have been allowed to ~~xxx~~ testify before the Grand Jury. Deputy Sheriff Walter ~~Emerson~~ told me it was not necessary ~~for xxx~~ to testify. Mr. ~~Emerson~~ came to me and asked If Mrs. ~~T. Dean~~ had said anything about her husband being in deep water and I said she did not. My son and I had been cutting hay on the back part of the ~~Meade~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> place, you know, and she had called for us to come and help her find her husband. He kept bringing it up, trying to put words in my mouth. I told him that anyone who thought Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> committed the murder was either a knave or a fool. He wanted me to say that I thought Mrs. ~~T. Dean~~ <sup>(Meade)</sup> could do it. On the day the body was found after we had brought it to the surface and dropped it in again to await the authorities, Mr. ~~Rich~~ <sup>(Meade)</sup> came to the cistern and looked in and said he thought Mr. ~~Meade~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> was nervous and intimidated that he probably put himself out of the way. I told him I didn't think Dr. ~~T. Meade~~ could commit suicide the way he was fixed up. He said Dr. ~~T. Meade~~ was a pretty smart fellow and I said he would have to be mighty smart to tie his legs and then tie his hands behind his back, pull a bag over his head, put a stone on his head and jump into the well and pull the cover on after him. I told him if he had any doubts about doing that we would pull the body up and let him look at it. He turned white and said, " I don't care to see him" and walked away. I noticed that Mr. ~~Rich~~ <sup>(Meade)</sup> had an awfully black eye and and an awful crack under the left eye that extended to the cheek. There was a slight cut on the cheek bone and a scratch that extended across the left ear. He said he got it a very simple way but did not tell me how.'

" How do you like them apples ? " And he grinned.

" Good. That raises the point of official interference in the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ pursuit of justice on the part of a county official and makes

<sup>Meade</sup>  
~~Rich~~ look like thirty cents for suggesting suicide. And another reference to evasive behavior regarding the unexplained black eye. What is he trying to conceal, that's the question. Part ?"

" All right, all right. We can use that, but we'll have to eliminate the name of the prominent citizen. Nonames outside of official court records. The Courier lawyers frown on names. They can get you into deep water."

" Next, more new evidence which was brought to my attention and now I bring it to the attention of the town authorities. Did Richard do this one, you say ?"

*George Duane*  
" No, I'm wrong. ~~Louis Hamill~~, the druggist ~~xxx~~ took this one. Aren't we lucky to have so many notary publics."

Notaries public, you ass, *he* I thought. And we'll need all we have and more. Sooner or later, we need statements from everyone in town. "Go ahead," *he* I said aloud.

*Boyd*  
He began:

' I am Mrs. George Harlowe. I ~~live~~ on West Street in Mason near a dump which is near the road, My husband works for the Northern States Tack Company. He used to go to work at 11 o'clock at night. On account of the excitement due to the murder of Dr. ~~T. M. M.~~ I was somewhat timid. I was in bed in the front room facing West Street on one of the nights of the week of the murder. I think Friday. I was laying awake when I heard an automobile stop in front of the house near the big tree. It was a bright moonlight night. Thinking my husband might have hurt, I got up and looked out the window. I saw a man and woman get out of the front seat, each took something out of the back seat and threw it on the dump. I saw it was Mr and Mrs ~~Hamill~~. It was a little old car and looked like a Ford. I didn't think much of it at the time because Mr. ~~Mexx~~ ~~Rich~~ wasn't suspected in connection with the murder then. I spoke about it to Mr. Harlowe when he got home in the morning because I didn't sleep any the rest of the night. I remember that about 15 minutes after the automobile left, the town clock struck 2. The day after I saw Mrs ~~Rich~~ and her sister ~~by~~ by here about noon and again that night about 6 and both of them used to walk by here almost every day., looking toward the dump as they went by. Then I did not know them apart, but afterward I found out that Mrs. ~~M. Rich~~ was the one that came in the auto that night because I recognized her hat. Some time later my children told me there were some clothes on the dump, so I went out and found an almost new raincoat and a pair of homemade overalls that hadn't been worn much. I was washing that day and thought my husband might wear the overalls, so I dropped them into the tub and washed them out. I did not look for blood. because as I said, I did not have any suspicions at that time. I never mentioned this to anyone outside my family until about a month ago to a local

Gladys Harlowe was not the strongest witness <sup>They</sup> could find, ~~=~~ her reputation for truth telling was not the greatest. Still, when she came to <sup>him</sup> ~~me~~ with her story, ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> did not discourage her. What she swore to was just far out enough to appeal to a certain segment of the town and the fact that she was of French descent and the wife of a working man would make clear that the whole town was up in arms about the ~~Dean Thordike~~ <sup>Meade</sup> case. And it could only encourage others to come forward. She hadn't come forward until nine months after the murder and who knows what other testimony her statement would bring forth. <sup>He</sup> ~~I~~ tried to include Pete ~~HENNESSY~~ <sup>HENNESSY</sup>, the most phlegmatic member of the Board, in the action. "What's your reaction, Pete?"

"Well, Mrs. Harlowe ~~does not have the best reputation for telling the truth, but she does represent the foreign element in town. And that certainly does sound suspicious, her seeing the~~ <sup>Meades</sup> ~~riches~~ putting those clothes on the dump."

"Bart?"

"Same as before. Leave out the names; a blank is as good as a name by this time. The readers we want to reach will know who is meant. And anyone not part of the town -- the summer people I'm think<sup>ing</sup> of, now -- will see this as just one more piece of evidence."

<sup>He</sup> ~~I~~ wasn't so sure, but the struggle of the last ten months had convinced <sup>him</sup> ~~me~~ that <sup>the</sup> ~~more~~ townspeople <sup>They</sup> ~~me~~ got involved the more pressure <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ could bring to bear on the town leaders to file a complaint. The more it appeared to be the will of the people, the sooner <sup>They'd</sup> ~~would~~ get some action. And the more pressure <sup>They</sup> ~~we~~ could build up, the greater the chances of that small group of willful men opposing us making a mistake. They'd made ~~ane~~ blunder which had forced them to call a Grand Jury hearing after fighting it off for eight months and <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ thought <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ could force them into calling a second. And that one would be different. <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ turned my mind to the main business of the evening. "Monk, where's that man LaRocier?"

" He'll be here. He promised he would. He just ain't goin' to show up while there's anything stirring down street. He don't want any trouble and he's afraid he's being watched. He'll be here."

" How'd we get onto him , anyway,? " asked Alf Partridge."

" Our fearless detective, ~~Decker~~ <sup>Keller</sup> turned him up," ~~MANIM~~ said. "He made a p<sup>x</sup>ractice of hanging around the lunchcart on Water Street in the evenings before he began his evening surveillance, and since he'd heard LaRocier had seen something, he picked him ~~up~~ in conversation and got him to say he'd tell us what he knew, something about the Death car, as our goodfriend Bart labeled it."

At that, there was a soft knock on the door of the Selectmen's Room, and a short stocky man slipped inside. He wore a faded blue suit and white shirt without a tie. When he took off his cloth billed cap, his black curly hair was still damp from being slicked down with water. He was nervous and looked quickly around the room to identify all there.

" I'm Louis LaRocier," he said in <sup>an</sup> apologetic tone. ~~MANIM~~ <sup>Keller</sup> tried to set him at ease. " I understand Mr. ~~Decker~~ told you you had something valuable to tell and it was your patriotic duty to tell the Selectmen what you knew."

" Yes. I read in the paper about the Death car and I figured I better tell what I know. Mr. ~~Decker~~ <sup>Keller</sup> said it was important. I don't want any trouble, but I seen that car the night the doctor was murdered. It must have been the car. Not many cars out that late at night with gasoline so tight, you know."

" Yes, well you just sit down, face the Selectmen, and tell ~~them~~ <sup>Them</sup> what you saw that night."

He sat on the edge of the ~~the~~ wooden chair, his feet in his hastily shined black high shoes flat on the floor, his cap turning nervously in his hands, and began.

" I was on my way home very late, must have been ~~after midnight~~ <sup>after 10 o'clock</sup>, from playing cards with some friends. We play pincochle every Tuesday



night at someone's house. A different house every week. That night it was <sup>a</sup> good game and we stayed late. I ran out of cigarettes and I wanted to get some to take to work the next day. So I went to DaVinci's the fruit store because I know he stays open very late. I came out of the store and I stood on the ~~steps~~ outside opening the pack to get one out to smoke on the way home. I smoke too much. I was starting to light it, I didn't have it lit yet when I saw a big touring car come down across the bridge and turn right on the old Peterborough road. They had to slow down to turn the corner and I saw three men in the car. The car had no lights on and it picked up speed very fast after it turned the corner. I thought it was funny running with no lights and I thought then, 'you must know the town very well to run without lights on a dark night like this.' Maybe it's enemy agents I thought. With all this signalling going on, maybe they are making a getaway. Then I go home."

"Why didn't you report it to the police, the suspicious car?" Monk Boyden asked.

"Oh, you know Old Ed Price, the policeman. You never find him when you need him; he's out watching for the signals. I didn't see anybody down street. I go home right off. I don't want any trouble."

~~They~~ <sup>Priest</sup> wanted to be sure, so ~~he~~ asked, "You're sure he turned up the Old Peterborough road, now?"

"Yes, he said, 'I wonder why a big car like that was going to the country late at night. Nothing but farms out that way. Maybe they were going to hills to signal. I don't know. I go right home then.'"

~~He~~ didn't let it go. "The ~~Meade~~ <sup>Thomson</sup> farm is about two miles out the Old Peterborough Road, isn't it?"

He turned toward me with the expression of a man who'd just been struck. "I saw it. I saw the Death car, the one that the night watch man at the mill saw come back. They ~~must have got one light fixed~~ <sup>had both headlights on.</sup> I read in the paper he see the car with one light stop near the watering trough at midnight. A night watchman always know what time it is. I saw it." He gave

it until later.

~~MANIA~~ I was ready. " Now think carefully. Did you recognize any of the men in the car?" ~~He~~ <sup>LaRocier</sup> I was hoping for the answer that ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> had not, that he'd been too busy lighting his cigarette to notice more than the figures of the three men. ~~He~~ <sup>he</sup> I was not prepared for the answer ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> got.

" Yes, I did."

" Who was it ?"

" ~~X~~ When the car turned the corner, as I say he slowed down and the car go under the light on the building of the mill. I could see the driver's face."

" Who was it ?"

" Ed Moran"

The three Selectmen gasped as one man, leaning forward on the broad table in front of them. ~~Bart Ford~~ <sup>Lincoln</sup> made some quick notes on his pad. This was the answer ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> had not wanted, feared to get, refused to accept and ~~e~~ moved to the attack very quickly.

" You couldn't have seen Ed Moran. He drove a party to Fitchburg that night and didn't get back to town until 2 o'clock in the morning."

" Maybe I make mistake. He look like Ed Moran. I see him driving around town a lot. He got the hire-car business, you know. I see him a lot, not many big cars hold eight people. I see him meet the afternoon train and drive summer people to the inns up in Mason Centre, many times I see this. Maybe I make mistake; couldn't be Ed Moran and the Death Car full of spies, could it ?"

" No, it couldn't. Mr. LaRocier, I think we have saved you from making a serious mistake. It is very dangerous to speak too freely about what you see. You could get in ~~x~~ trouble accusing a law-abiding citizen of the town of something like this."

" I don't accuse anybody of anything. Maybe I make a mistake."  
~~He~~ <sup>the Priest</sup> was frightened now and ~~X~~ had to strike while the iron was hot.

" Have you told any one else what you saw?"

" I tell my friends one time when we play cards and the man

" Anyone else? Did you tell them who you saw?"

" No, nobody."

" Mr <sup>Keller</sup> ~~Bekerler~~ ?"

" No, I tell nobody who was in the car."

" Mr. LaRocier, you are appearing before the officials of the town. You know me, I'm your priest. You tell me things, everyone does, in the confessional that I am bound to silence on. A court of law cannot make me testify on actions or events confided to me in the sacredness of the confessional box. Mr. <sup>Lynch</sup> ~~Ford~~, there, is bound by the same confidentiality, as a newspaper reporter. This will never get any further. Your accusation here tonight will never leave this room. Do you understand?"

" Yes, Father."

" This is what is called an Executive session of the Board of Selectmen, the highest officials in the town. These men hire and fire anyone who works for the town and they have a great deal of power. Do you understand? What goes on in the Executive Session of the Selectmen is secret and must not be discussed outside this room. No one can talk about it. You will not talk about this. Do you understand?"

" Yes, Father."

" The ~~act~~ of accusing your neighbor falsely is not only a civil offense for which you can be arrested, but it is also an offense in the eyes of God. If I ever hear of you , or anyone in this room, and two of you are members in good standing of the parish of Holy Name, repeating what has been said here tonight, I will go to the Bishop directly and have you excommunicated. Do you hear me ?"

" Yes, Father."

" And you know, do you, what excommunication means?"

" It means I burn in Hell fire for eternity, Father"

" Yes, and you'll burn together with that Judas, that renegade ~~DD Boswell~~ <sup>Thaddeus</sup> in eternal damnation; you'll beg for a cup of water and none will come to save you."

<sup>he</sup> I had him well ~~xxxxxx~~ scared, <sup>he</sup> I didn't think h'd talk, but now was the time to make sure of absolute security. " My son, the wrath of the God and his earthly agency the church is awful, but it is also tempered by mercy. God is Love and God loves all sinners and commands his church to do likewise. You have talked about what you saw to too many people that it can remain a perfect secret. The lips of all us here tonight are sealed but others may talk. If you ever get into trouble for any reason, if you need money to leave town and start new somewhere else, I want you to come to me and I'll see that you are taken care of. What sort of work do you do, <sup>Thudman and Merrill</sup> at ~~Boswell and Symonds~~, is it ?"

" Yes, Father . I work on the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ squaring-off.saw. I trim the shakes before they get made into boxes. It's a hard job."

" I'm sure it is and I'm sure that <sup>you're</sup> a skilled workman, one of the blessed of God, who can <sup>always</sup> get a job somewhere, good times or bad, in a factory and make good money. You did your duty as a god-fearing patriotic citizen by coming to us tonight, but this must be the end of it, it must go no further. Now go in peace, with my blessing. If I were you, I'd go home the same way you came, seeing as few people as possible. We never know who's apt to be out of nights these fearful days. Now Go."

" Good night, Father." And without a glance at anyone else in the room, he left , turning up his coat collar and pulling <sup>the cap</sup> down over his face as far as he could.

~~MANION~~ let the silence hang after the sound of the softly closing door died away, looking at the others at the table with <sup>him</sup> me, waiting for one of them to say something. No one seemed willing to break the silence.

" Well, I never saw the beat,"said Monk Boyden. <sup>The Priest</sup> I knew <sup>he</sup> he could depend on him to speak and say nothing, which he did. The other were mute. <sup>Lincoln</sup> Bert Ford lit a cigarette and hawked into the spit <sup>the testimony</sup>oon after he had done so. " I'd certainly like to use that. I can use ~~xxxxxx~~ the collaboration with the evidence of the nightwatchman and attribute <sup>to</sup> an unnamed source.

the car and use all the other details. We've done that before with good effect."

" Yes," <sup>Maxim</sup> I said. " I think that's the way to go. It's too good not to use. It places our man in the right place at the right time and that's been hard to do. We all know that."

Alf Partridge spoke up : " What I don't see is how he thought it was Ed Moran in that car. We all know Ed took that party down to Fitchburg the night of the murder. Makes you wonder about the testimony of witnesses anyhow. We have <sup>to</sup> be careful on what evidence we collect. It's a heavy responsibility."

" I agree," <sup>Maxim</sup> I said. " I think there is a very <sup>good</sup> explanation. Ed is out all hours with his livery business and if three people saw a car driving late at night, two of 'em would swear it was Ed driving. I don't think it's any great matter."

<sup>They</sup> We were sitting there trying to decide what to do next-- it was almost midnight and as <sup>he</sup> I had to serve early mass the next morning <sup>he</sup> I wanted to get on up home -- when the door burst open and in came <sup>WOLF Keller</sup> ~~WOLF Keller~~ Baker, our detective. He was a handsome young man, a natty dresser, who prepared for his nighttime excursions by changing into knickers with long knee length hose that he said enabled him to move through brush better. He had been living with <sup>the priest</sup> ~~me~~ in the rectory of Holy Name for some five months now. He was no longer on the official town payroll, but <sup>the Priest</sup> ~~the~~ Selectmen found some money for him in the road repair budget and <sup>Keller's</sup> ~~I~~ covered his living expenses. <sup>Maxim</sup> ~~I~~ had grown a little cynical about ~~his~~ effectiveness in the Meade case -- his claiming to work his psychic detection has been given the horse laugh by most of the townspeople, but he was useful in keeping the town on edge, keeping the pot boiling, with his midnight reconnaissance, keeping the chief suspect under watch and his frequent interviews with this suspect had been met with less and less politeness. It was only a

WOLF

~~Wolf~~ was much given to dramatic gestures. In several quick strides he moved to the nearest ~~xxxxxx~~ window and made sure its blinds were closed ; then he did the same for the other window that looked out on the back of the Union sentry. Only then did he turn and face ~~the~~ <sup>them</sup> in a sort of half crouch. " You're being watched, " he said in a guarded voice. He removed his stalking cap and wiped the sweat band. " Watched," he repeated.

He got the reaction he'd been after. All three selectmen started to rise from their chairs as if to hide or at least move to a corner of the room away from the windows. "Who?" croaked Alf Partridge. "Yes, who?" echoed Monk Boyden and Pete ~~Hogan~~ <sup>Hennessey</sup> reached back and shifted the weight of the heavy Colt revolver he ~~carried~~ carried in his back right pocket.

" I've been watching this place for over an hour," he said. "Sometime ago I found the perfect spot to survey this part of town. Between the back of the barber shop and ~~the door~~ <sup>next to</sup> the bowling alley. Tonight, after I got off patrol, I slipped in there. It's in deep shadow and a perfect observation ~~location~~ <sup>site</sup>." He spoke in the guttural tones <sup>and</sup> /rhythms of the stage Hun, so imperfectly rendered in the titles of the rape-of-the-Belgians film, <sup>s</sup> shown at our little town theatre the past several years that ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> would have been tempted laugh, if ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> hadn't been so interested in what he had to say. " As I watched there," and his voice dropped, " two figures came from the far side of the church, unlocked the <sup>front</sup> ~~door~~ and slipped inside. I could see faint flashes of light as they made their way up the church tower to just below where the clock is. They stayed there until your recent visitor left and then they came down and disappeared."

" Who was it?" asked Monk Boyden.

" ~~Henderson~~ <sup>Henderson</sup> and Preston"

" The Postmaster and the Chief of Police"

Alf Partridge was ~~indignant~~ indignant," Spies, both of them. Spying on town officials in the performance of their duties. We'll have'em arrested, both of them. " The other two nodded and looked relieved.

12A  
insert

" How'd they get in?" asked Monk

12A

" The town clock is on the Universalist Church, as you know,

" ~~And...~~ *And...* *begin Keller*  
~~xxxxxx, replied DeKerrior. ....~~"

" And," said Monk, " Perkins Meade is one of pillars of the Universalist Church. He gave'em the key. That's a violation of the sancity of a house of worship, that's what that is. They're a funny bunch, those universalists, believe all kinds of queer things. Using consecrated ground to spy on us, elected officials of the town. What won't they do next ??" He was working up one of his petty rages.

<sup>Lincoln</sup>  
Bart Ford looked thoughtful. " Wasn't ~~Henchman~~ <sup>Henderson</sup> the one ~~of~~ <sup>who</sup> ran off the water in the system at the big house on the Meade place// and destroyed <sup>other</sup> ~~A~~ important evidence?"

" That's right,"squeaked Monk Boyden. " He's been ~~for~~ working for the " soft pedal squad " from the very beginning. He's been doing their dirty work from the start. Let's fire him."

Apparently the word postmaster awoke a recollection in Peter ~~Hogan~~ <sup>Henson</sup> and he said, " Remember that business with the petitions~~when~~ for the Grand Jury hearing when they were held up for a week and the outer wrapper was torn off. Some funny business in the post office. Fred ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> has claimed some of the mail wasn't getting through, going or coming. That's illegal."

<sup>MANIM</sup>  
This move on the part of the group protecting Meade had taken me by surprise. Up to now they had been strictly on the defensive and ~~we~~ <sup>He & the selectmen</sup> had kept them there. ~~We~~ asked the questions and they had scrambled for the answers. There was a new spirit moving them and ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> thought ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> knew who it was. This latest move had to be countered and quickly before the momentum passed into their hands. ~~He~~ <sup>him</sup> let the others babble on until it was clear to ~~me~~ <sup>him</sup> what could be done.

<sup>Henderson</sup>  
" Let's take the two problems separately, ~~Henchman~~ and Preston. Henchman is a ~~XXXXX~~ federal appointee and we cannot ~~XXXXX~~ <sup>fire</sup> him. What we can do is allege illegal activity, irregularities, in the local post office. Monk, tomorrow, you write up a complaint to the federal authorities in Concord calling their attention to what has been going on here. Get in as many details as you can. Show it to me before the three of you sign it. Bart, you report to the public the action taken to protect the mails from interference. Say that we are so unsure of the confidentiality of the local post office that we ~~are~~ feel obliged to mail letters relative to the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> case in other post offices, Peterborough, Winchendon, and even Fitchburg, 25 miles away. People don't like the mails being tampered



" That's a good move, Father. Every time they go to the post office now, the whole town will be reminded that their right to privacy is being violated. I've always thought it was damned funny that <sup>Henderson</sup> ~~Henderson~~ ~~Henderson~~, a Republican, should have been appointed ~~xxxxxx~~ postmaster by a Democratic administration."

~~xxxxxx~~ <sup>he</sup> glanced over at Monk Boyden. He sometimes showed more brains than ~~he~~ gave him credit for.

" Right. That's the idea. Now Preston, you cando something about. Fire him. Get him in here tomorrow night. I better not be here. Demand his resignation on the ground of spying on you. Tell <sup>him</sup> ~~me~~ you've had other complaints. ~~Mention his handling of the~~ <sup>Thomaihe</sup> The way he mishandled the medium in Boston. The withholding of evidence. Remarks that he's been known to make in the handling of the ~~Dean~~ <sup>in</sup> case. Say you no longer have confidence/him to handle himself with the impartiality demanded of a police officer. If he won't resign, give one day's wages and fire him. ~~Bart~~, you keep track of this action, too, and see that the townspeople know that the elected officials of the town are protecting them."

<sup>Lincoln</sup>

He nodded and made several notes

<sup>They</sup> We all stood up to go. Pete <sup>Hennery</sup> ~~Hogan~~ did his usual task of making sure that ~~we~~ <sup>They</sup> had left no scraps of paper around, nothing in the waste baskets or on the floor under the table. <sup>They</sup> We had all walked to the library so there would be no tell-tale cluster of cars out front. The selectmen left first; then <sup>Lincoln</sup> ~~Bart Ford~~, <sup>Keller</sup> ~~and Bakerlor~~ and <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ waited for them all to get well out of sight before <sup>they</sup> ~~we~~ went down the stairs. ~~After~~ <sup>Keller</sup> turning off the lights, ~~we~~ <sup>they</sup> opened the blinds and ~~we~~ stood there in the darkness, waiting.

<sup>Wolf</sup> <sup>he</sup> " A good night's work, ~~my~~, " ~~I~~ said." Are you going to walk up the hill with me?"

" No," he replied. "There's someone I want to pay a visit to. Leave the kitchen door open. I'll be home later. Goodnight."

<sup>man</sup> As ~~he~~ watched through the glass in the door at the foot

his form from the bushes, standing on either side of the arched  
 entrance to the library. ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> closed the door with a hard pull, making  
 sure it was locked and ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> walked up the drive/ <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ stood beside the silent Union  
 soldier high on his marble plinth, his eyes ~~immemorially~~ <sup>immemorially</sup> fixed on the  
 far horizon, standing guard in his battle dress, guarding the town  
 offices against all threats. Soldiers, ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> thought. Soldiers returning from  
 wars they never fully understood to ~~their~~ home places which they no  
 longer understand. Returning full of privilege and self-righteousness.  
 Righters of wrongs; defenders of the public good. What makes them think  
 they know any more, see any more clearly than we who stayed at home.  
 Heroes all, and yet so few heard as much as a shot fired in anger. More  
 died on a sickbed than on a field of battle. Certified patriots everyone.  
 And they'll tell us so at every opportunity. They ~~will~~ <sup>will be a</sup> force to be  
 reckoned with, but they must not be allowed to undo what we are working  
 so hard to accomplish here. ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> felt suddenly very weary, very tired. Why  
 couldn't ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> have been one of the ones to go. ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> could have been the Father  
 Duffy of the 28th, with sometimes ~~xxxxxxx~~ somewhere a statue, a  
 striding figure of heroism under fire. ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> threw a mock salute to the  
 bronze figure and headed on up the hill to the church ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> had built and  
 from which ~~I~~ <sup>he</sup> by canon law, unwritten but honored, ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> would never leave  
 except in death. Holy Name. Sacred Bleeding Heart of Christ. This will  
 be ~~my~~ <sup>his</sup> memorial. This is the bastion in which ~~I~~ <sup>he is</sup> am inviolate, from which  
~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> receives the power ( the power and the glory) to lead and direct ~~my~~ <sup>his</sup>  
 flock of French Canuck ~~x~~ mill hands and bog trotting Irish. Why had it  
 turned out this way ??

August 1918

Meade

The road from the ~~Clark~~ house rolled down the hill to the street in a gentle S curve. William Thorndike let Captain, his roan driving horse, set his own pace in accordance with the pitch of the hill and the weight of the buggy behind him. Captain took the sweeping curves at a regular but unhurried pace and that suited Thorndike, who was in no hurry to get home. As they turned right into the first curve, Thorndike looked to his right and saw the lights still shining from the kitchen windows. He thought of the ~~Meades~~ <sup>Meades</sup> and the pleasures of the years that he had known them. ~~Fern~~ <sup>Laine Meade</sup> ~~Clark~~ was a woman of considerable musical talent who could have had a Conservatory career and perhaps even a concert career if she had not chosen ~~him~~ to marry "E.A." ~~For full~~ <sup>"P.M."</sup> Many an evening he and ~~Lottie~~ <sup>Polly</sup> had been entertained by her playing of sonatas and four-hand pieces, if a partner could be found. ~~Perkins Meade~~ <sup>Perkins Meade</sup> Ned Clark was not musical but he took such pleasure in his wife's playing that it was almost as if he had a part in it. The, too, ~~Ned~~ <sup>P.M.</sup> made good exciting conversation. He was not an ~~informed~~ conversationalist but his position in the bank made him feel that he should keep current in as many fields as possible and so he was, as they say, well-read. In ~~the~~ <sup>PAST</sup> years that had passed there has been many good evenings at the ~~Clarks~~ <sup>Meades</sup>. As ~~Lottie~~ <sup>Polly</sup> had begun to fail, she was less and less interested or able to go out and so he had had to invite some people from a small and confining list of old and familiar friends who did not make ~~Lottie~~ <sup>Polly</sup> anxious to the house for short visits. The one pleasure that he did have -- and how glad he was he had had it put in when they still had the money to do so -- was the billard table. He enjoyed the competition and had discovered that ~~Ned Clark~~ <sup>Perkins Meade</sup> did too. ~~Ned~~ <sup>P.M.</sup> was not, by inclination or upbringing, an athlete or outdoorsman, but he was a sporting man nonetheless and relished the chance at a sport which he could play ~~after~~

## 2. The Road home

indoors and after banking hours. He would respond instantly to an invitation to play and always brought up some good whiskey or choice cigars. Their hours on the "deeply felt field," as they liked to call it, were a source of pleasure and excitement to them both. Yes, <sup>P. M. Meade</sup> ~~Ned Clark~~ was a good companion and there weren't too many of them in this small backwater town. He had long since given up wondering why he was in <sup>MASON</sup> ~~Preston~~ or why he stayed there. It was long past the point of decision in that regard. When he had let <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~ talk him out of practicing medicine, he had let so many other decisions be made at the same time. The buggy turned right again as they approached the flat straightaway at the bottom of the hill and as the lights of the Clark house still shone at the top of the hill he thought somehow that he could make out the tall full figure of <sup>Charlotte Dutton</sup> ~~Diane Bradley~~ in the kitchen window. He knew he couldn't, really, but he liked to think that she was there watching him with a kind of sad and pensive interest, an interest which recognized the realities of where they both were but from time to time joined his in wishing to undo the past. Why was it that a man always met the person whom he recognized as his soul mate when it was too late, when all the songs had been sung, when all the dances had been danced? She ~~was only~~ <sup>the</sup> had great beauty of a long and autumn in her deep eyes and ~~just~~ graying black hair ~~xxx~~ she moved with ~~xxx~~ <sup>stilled</sup> dignity and assurance which admitted of no questions in itself and ~~admitted~~ any questions rising in you. One could know great peace with this woman and that was what he longed for more than anything in this life. Life was funny, life had a way of betraying you. He had thought ~~xxx~~ he was buying a lifelong peace when he had married <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~; buy was the right word because you pay for everything in this life; but he soon discovered that ~~xx~~ her jealous rages gave him no rest no matter what the surroundings or circumstances. If he so much as talked to a pretty woman, he quickly found that flushed sweaty little face peering up into to his trying to cut him off from the feminine company of the moment.

### 3. The Road home.

They had come to the flat straight at the bottom of the hill, and midway to the street the drive leading to John Carlson's house opened up at the left. Captain slowed up, as if asking if they were turning in there. Thorndike gave the ~~reins~~ a gentle shake to urge the horse straight on to the street and they turned <sup>left</sup> onto what in a short time would become the Old Peterborough Road leading past Thorndike Hill.

After the one fork in the road which could have taken them back into ~~xxxx~~ the <sup>EAST</sup> ~~west~~ side of town, once again Thorndike gave his horse his head and let him set his own pace. He mused again on his life ~~xxxxxx~~ and its shortcomings. Too old to fight, too fearful to flee, he could only follow the roads which were familiar and took him rather than the other way. Who would die first, he or <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~? Somehow his medical training had been tempered by what he'd known in life and he felt that for all of her complaints, <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~ was stronger than he was. She'll outlive me and then some, he thought. He'd seen too many frail little old ~~xxxxxx~~ ladies who had outlived their <sup>mates</sup> ~~heirs~~. Late, late, it was too late for him to anything, really. He could only take pleasure~~x~~ in his dreams of what might have been and in acceptance of what he had spent so many years in establishing. Once, twice, yearly it seemed, there had been a face or a figure which had made him twist his hands inside and outside each other in a silent agony of indecision. Usually it was a sister who came up from Boston or Philadelphia to visit a summering neighbor. He had played out the drama, the scheming, so often~~x~~ he knew the plot by heart. They would wander off<sup>i</sup>n the garden during a musicale, he would declare himself, discover that she had been waiting for him to speak, and they would stand there breathless, daring not to talk further. They would leave that very night and he would get a position of ship's doctor on a cruise to the Mediterranean. They would honeymoon, one does not need marriage for a honeymoon, midst the lemon groves of the Italian countryside, he would read to her from the ancient

#### 4. The Road home

poets and they would dream amid ancient ruins. As fall came on they would make their way to England, where he would procure a license to practice and they would settle in among the enlightened relatives she had and be part of gay countryhouses and smart town dinner parties for endless time to come. The faces and forms rushed through his mind like stereopticon cards and he -- memory and mind hold onto what they hold dear -- could see each and everyone in her particular aura, light, dark, quiet, outspoken. It had been sometime now since he had actually met any of these dream figures. For too long now, they had regarded him as an interesting older man and that was fatal to any dreams -- the expressions on their faces wasn't right. But the conversation with ~~Diane Bradley~~ <sup>Charlotte Dutton</sup> was all that it had taken to start his mind along the familiar passages back in time. Was it possible for two middle-aged persons to meet and love and count the world well lost ?? It might have been possible with some women, some hurtful searching romantic wives, but it was not possible with ~~Diane~~ <sup>Lottie</sup>, and with his recognition of that his magic lantern show shut down. One did not need to see her full face, <sup>needed</sup> only to catch the forcefully held lips and chiseled brow from the profile to know that this was not possible. ~~That~~ One might hold converse with the teasing thoughtful mind but no more. No more was possible at all.

<sup>Polly's</sup> ~~Lottie's~~ figure was outlined in the doorway as he turned into the yard in front of the house. With~~in~~-out a sign or greeting he drove down past the house to the side door of the barn, the front door really, and stopped. He got out, went to the rear of the buggy and unseated the lantern the Clarks had lent him. He hung it on a hook where it would illuminate the greatest part of the barn floor. Quickly but methodically and without haste, he took Captain out of the shaves and led him to his stall. He made sure that the water bucket was full and that there was plenty of hay pulled down from the loft. He knew the farmers of the area laughed at his farming efforts but he was careful of the <sup>health</sup> ~~care~~ of his animals and he did not take a back seat

5. The Road home <sup>their case</sup>

to any one in ~~the care of his animals~~ <sup>the</sup>. He always got a good price for his turkeys and his cow gave more than enoggh milk for <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~ and himself. He let the buggy stand where it was on the right side of the barn up against the tack and gear hanging on the wall and got two bags of groceries and <sup>the</sup> mail out of the back. Taking them both in one arm, he held the lantern slightly ahead of him <sup>as</sup> ~~and~~ he pushed through the nearly closed barn door. He proceeded up the hill, past the cistern ~~which was long since abandoned,~~ <sup>Polly</sup> and up to the door of the cottage. ~~Lottie~~ had left the door ajar and he knew that she would be sitting in her chair by the large field stone fireplace, staring into it as if there were a fire burning there. She would either reproach him for leaving her all alone, <sup>seeing people</sup> while he was off having ~~xxxxxxx~~ in town, or she would ask if he had the turkeys settled for the night. In either case she would report all kinds of mysterious happenings in his absence and ask if they were safe there.

" Oh, there you are, Billy. Where have you been ? Why did you take so long ? Couldn't you bear to leave her ? " The questions came out in a continuous whine which left no chance for answering. They were old questions, accusing questions, which he was so familiar with he could have spoken her lines himself. She did not look at him, it was as if she could not bear to look at him, and when she did he wondered if she saw him at all.

<sup>meades</sup> " I stopped at the ~~Clarks~~ after I did the shopping and chatted with them a while. <sup>Charlotte Dutton</sup> ~~Diane Bradley~~ is up from New York for the month and she had a great deal to tell us country folk of the great outside world." He went on making up references and events from his reading of the past few days. Never once did he allow the suggestion to creep in that he had been alone with <sup>Lottie</sup> ~~her~~ for a moment and he brought in the remarks and responses the <sup>meades</sup> ~~Clarks~~ would have made as often as possible. He ended his accounting for the evening by showing <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~ the lantern they had lent him and gave her the sweet peas <sup>Laine</sup> ~~fern~~ had sent. Though most of what he said went without reply or sign, <sup>Polly</sup> ~~Lottie~~ responded to the flowers. "Wasn't that nice of <sup>Laine</sup> ~~fern~~," she said. " I wish I had the ~~strength~~ to grow some things here around the cottage. We have the beds, you know, but I never seem to get anything planted. Do you remember the

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gardens at the Lake Street House? Remember the lawn party Father used give on Fourth of July and how everyone admired the gardens and the fireworks and the music... " On and on she rattled about the parties of her girlhood and early twenties. He remembered how awkward he had felt as a boy of fifteen, a poor relative, when Dr. King had first taken him in. He was to be a doctor, like his uncle, that had been the agreement and he had never been allowed to forget either the chance that was given him or the responsibility. By the time he was twenty and halfway through medical school, it was better. He was accepted as the heir to Dr. King's practice and if he was still told how lucky he was, it was at least based in part on his obvious merit in his studies and in the promise of a brilliant career. She burst back into his consciousness: " How I do love flowers," she said. " And you never bring me any. That's the price of being old, I guess. I've got to get these in water. You'd never do it. If it isn't in a book, it doesn't exist for you. "

She got a small vase from beneath the sink and put the curling sweet peas on the long trestle table which served them as a dining table and after meals as a writing and work table for Billy. The far end was loaded with his books and papers, the near end had two places permanently set for their meals. ~~XXXX~~ bid Polly good night as she went to the bathroom, leaving him to the quiet of the night which he treasured as his own.

He heated some water on the two burner kerosene stove and made toast to go with the tea. As he ate, he looked at the <sup>papers</sup> ~~the~~ he had been working on from time to time. It was <sup>the</sup> Family tree of the descendants of Augustus Thorndike, Esq. of ~~XXXXXX~~ Norfolk, England, from whom all New England Thorndikes are descended. Augustus had been a member of the Bay Colony and fortunately had had only three children and the lines of decent were reasonably limited. While he could still afford it, Billy spent a <sup>week</sup> or so each winter doing research in the Mass. Historical Society and the chart was the barest representation of his labors, the outline of a book which over five years had come to the proportions of a good sized <sup>history</sup> ~~book~~. Who will ever publish it, he wondered. I don't have money



7. enough to have it done. It'll probably be piled right here the day I die, in this barn made into a cottage, as incomplete as the rest of my life. As he sat over the dregs of his tea, he stretched out his hands to the light. Dr. Emerson in Anatomy said I had the hands of a surgeon, he thought. My dissections were examples for the rest of the class. I should have gotten training in Germany and Austria. Dr King would have sent me and if he had, <sup>Polly</sup>~~Lottie~~ would have had to go along with it. He ate several dry saltines crackers with the second cup of tea and observed his hands as they lifted the crackers on-to the plate, as they gracefully held the cup in their tapering cradle. Brain surgery had been the coming thing; what advances they must be making now in the hospitals of France. What great things the British surgeons must have discovered in technique and execution in four years of war. His right hand now picked up the butternut knife in the position of a scalpel and made an incision swiftly, precisely, through the dura, arachnoid, and pia to the blossoming tumor which lay beneath. The knife skidded across the china surface of the ~~plate~~<sup>cup</sup> into the void. But enough dreaming. His Jersey would be bellowing soon, if he didn't get out there and milk her and the fowl should have their morning scratch thrown out for them. He ~~changed~~<sup>changed</sup> into the soft ~~rubber topped boots~~<sup>over shoes</sup> he used for barn work and looked around for the milk pail. It was where it should be by the sink. He picked it up with a swing and turned toward the door. What's the hurry, he thought. I'll just look through the mail before I go out. His change of plan was not hard to carry out because he loathed getting out in the muck and filth that were part of the milking process. He would have to clean up the mess in the stall before he came back in and he could easily persuade himself that it would be cooler in a little while. He washed his dishes and sat in the reading chair by the fireplace. At last he could delay no longer and with a last puff on his ~~long clay pipe~~<sup>cigarette</sup>, he rose to do his chores. He felt the silver cigarette case hit his breast bone and he reminded himself against any absent minded smoking in the barn. The strainer was attached to the top of the milk pail and there was nothing but to get out to the barn and earn

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It had been a good day. Business was always good in the summer with all those summer people coming and going. He'd gotten a good load each time he'd ~~had~~ he'd met the train, even the early morning one, and there'd been that long haul to the lake in the early part of the afternoon. <sup>Ed Moran</sup> ~~Charlie Byrne~~ grunted as he finished filling up the open touring car he ran as a taxi. That last turn of the crank did 'er.' He polished off the over flow which dripped down the side of the tank and went around to the front of the car to check the plugs and the oil level. He wanted <sup>in case he got a night call</sup> everything to be set ~~for tonight~~. He glanced through the window into the small office, where he could see Marie's dark head bent ~~over~~ over the ledger. The accounts due were now just coming back in with payment and this was a busy time for her. He wondered how much longer they'd be together, Marie and him, She was so strong minded for a girl her age and smart ? You know it, buster. Do nothing, that was the ticket. Helen being Catholic would never accept a divorce so she'd just ~~have to accept~~ have to accept the present arrangement. And what would Marie accept ? Who knows. He was making good money that summer and maybe in another year -- or two -- he'd buy Fred Harrington out. He'd just finished finished doing the <sup>du</sup> windshield -- wind screen, some of these <sup>Swatts</sup> fat cats from ~~Roxbury~~ up to the Center called it -- and the two side mirrors when he saw <sup>Brian Kelly</sup> ~~Berry~~ cross the bridge and head for the filling station. A small tight fist of fear always grabbed him in the soft belly. when he first saw <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Berry~~; he didn't know why it was. Yes, he did. When he saw <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Berry~~, he never quite knew what <sup>he</sup> ~~Berry~~ was going to do. He was so unpredictable, you just never knew. One minute he'd be cursing you out, the next he'd give you that <sup>crooked</sup> ~~funny~~ grin and the funny laugh and give you the old horse-biter right in the bicep. Marie thought he was fun, a real peach, better than the deadheads left in town. It wasn't easy to find any young guy his age to pal around with, with most of his high school class off in the service or working in the defense plants down around Boston. And <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Berry~~ had been around, you could tell that. He'd been living up at the rectory since early summer. His mother <sup>Ellen</sup> ~~Anna~~ was old Mannion's housekeeper for years now. He did just about what he liked. Slept late in the mornings, ate that good rectory

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food, went to the lake in the afternoon, and not much else. Mrs <sup>Kelly</sup> ~~Ware~~ gave him cigarette money and kept after him to get a job. Her story was to those ~~who~~ asked and those who didn't was that <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Gerry~~ had a ~~xxxx~~ bad case of nerves from running an engine room in one of those merchant ships to England, that he was broke out all over when he first came home and that she and Father Mannion agreed that what he needed was rest and quiet. He'd be off again, she said bravely, in the service of his country, at the end of the summer, as much in service as any one's son, and more than those that never left Camp Devens. It was hard raising a son without a father and she was lucky to have her position with Father Mannion, who was now more than a father to young <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Gerry~~.

<sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ backed the car around beside the garage all ready to go at the next phone call for his services. <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Gerry~~ stood watching him until he turned the motor off and then approached the car and stood with his foot up on the running board. He didn't say anything at first but, ignoring <sup>Ed's</sup> ~~Charlie's~~ greeting, continued to give him that hard look with those eyes so pale brown that they seemed almost yellowed in the late afternoon light. This was his standard approach with those he felt superior to, young girls and fellows his own age. He would bore in with those slitted yellowish eyes until the person he was looking at was visibly discomforted. He still did it with <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~, who now squirmed on the warm leather seat. There was no way to beat it, you couldn't get him to answer questions and he wouldn't smile at any wise remark or friendly insult. The scowl on his face seemed to indicate displeasure before displeasure could possibly have been raised.

<sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ tried again: " Good day today, today's been a good day for me."

" Yeah ?"

" Been a good day, made more than ~~two~~ bucks and it's not even the week-end."

"Yeah ?"

" Yeah, good night to celebrate. How about it, want to have a little fun tonight. We could run over to the dance hall at Contoocook and see what's doing. Mabe pick up some girls. What do ya say ? "

3. <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Brian~~ listened and as he listened he made the tatoo on his right forearm jump up and down as he flexed the muscles. " Death before Dishonor " it read and the head of the snake entwined around the motto reared up and subsided as the muscle rose and fell. His expression never changed from one of boredom and perpetual displeasure as he watched the dance of his own overdeveloped forearm with the pulsing veins that twisted back up from his hands. His <sup>fore</sup> arms and hands were much too big for the rest of his body, particularly his slatted rib cage which showed through the thin undershirt he wore everyday in the summer heat, and ~~\*\*\*~~ all his strength seemed to be centered in them ~~here~~. His hips and buttocks were flat and tight in the faded denims he wore with a ~~\*\*\*\*\*~~ broad black belt and the only thing missing was a sheathed fish knife on his hip. It ~~always~~ seemed to be there, though he had never put it on again since he's come to <sup>Mason</sup> ~~Frederick~~. He turned to look at Charlie full on now and he seemed to stare straight through him seeing something on the far side of him as he spoke.

" We <sup>do</sup> need to go to Contoocook to pick up any girls. I met a new one las' week and its about time to give her the treatment." His voice when he spoke was surprisingly high. He tried to keep it low and menacing but its thinness betrayed him, especially when he was excited or was concentrati~~nggg~~ on a subject important to him.

" Yeah, who ? "

" Met this Eleanor, see. She's nursemaid to the Torreys up in the Center. She comes from just outside of Boston, so we talk the same language, see! She's real cute and looks like a real go-er."

" Where'd ya meet her, in church ? " <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ meant this as a wise remark.

" As a matter of fac', ya right. I noticed her coming to mass with Hector Belletete for a couple of Sundays, he's drivin ' for the Torreys, ya know, and last Sunday -- I took up collection at the ten o'clock -- I got to talk to her while he went to get the car. We struck it off real good and we got a date tonight. "

" Fast work."

4. " Well, you know, I doan waste any time if I see somethin I want. So I moved in slow and easy, like a big cruiser, and we're all set. She is just helpin around the house this week until the Torrey's grandchildren come this week some time. Wha'dya say, lets find a cozy nest and play rooster tonight."

" Gee, I don't know. I guess so. I'll tell Helen I have a late call and delivery tonight. Don't know if Marie 'll want to."

" Why not, you haven't exercised her for almost two weeks now. I bet she needs it bad. "

" Yeah, well, that's probably so. She's been giving <sup>me</sup> that creamy look all day. But I didn't see how... Where'll we go? It ain't so easy now with all the summer people up here. The Saltonstall place is out and those people from Chicago are here now. August is when they're all here. Marie said no more sand and pine needles; she wants it comfortable."

" What about the Thorndike place. The big house is still empty and we haven't been up there lately. We had a lot of fun with the old man the last time we was up there."

~~Ed~~ ~~Chatter~~ paused. " Keep your voice down. Don't know who's hanging around the ga-rage. I don't know. What I hear, the old man is talking spy ~~signals~~ signals and all that. He may just have a gun. <sup>Ed Price</sup> ~~Harvey Potter~~, the night constable said Old Thorndike was talking to him about who he should call for anything suspicious. I don't want to get my ass shot off right here in <sup>Mason</sup> ~~Masson~~."

" Aw, come on he's nothing but a dried up old fart. I can handle him, even you can handle him. IT'll be more exciting, like. We can have our fun and have some fun with him, too. "

" I don't know. It isn't too healthy to be out late at night around here. They say there's Secret Service men from Devens camping out nights looking for signals from the mountains. They nearly caught one bunch up on Monadnock, found the campfire ashes but was too late to get the ones doing the signal- ing. I don't like it much. "

5. What the hell. Come on, <sup>Moran</sup>~~Byrne~~, show a little guts here. You ~~pick~~ pick us up right after the band concert's over, right after nine -- the hitching posts right behind Hamill's Store, and we can go right out the old Peter-brough road. We'll pull the whole thing off so fast ~~nobody~~ nobody'll see us. No lights, nothing. I'll bring the booze, a pint for us and a pint for you and Marie. O.K. ??

Once the decision was made for him by other people, <sup>Ed Moran</sup>~~Charlie Byrne~~ was quick to take up the matter and to carry it out efficiently, cleanly. He watched <sup>Brian Kelly</sup>~~Garry Hane~~ move across the filling station yard in the rolling sailor's gait he affected, shoulders ~~l~~anging forward, first one and then the other as if he were making progress across a pitching deck. He'd go home now and get an early supper -- Helen usually had supper ready by five-thirty. The story about the late call was no problem. He was never at home evenings during the summer and Helen understood that. He'd return to the garage and wait for calls. He'd help out Fred's evening man with the pumps ~~if needed~~ and try to pick up a little business. Some times there'd be a little whist or Michigan in the garage office. Business was apt to be good on band concert nights and of course he'd meet the seven o'clock train from Fitchburg. He stepped around the corner of the garage. Marie was sitting alone and was just completing work on the large pile of bills before her. He slipped in quickly.

"Right after the concert tonight. Back of Hammills. You, me, <sup>Kelly</sup>~~Marie~~ and a new girl of his." Marie <sup>Leur</sup>~~LaFollette~~ pushed a bill toward him as if she were talking to him about it. She nodded quickly as if in conversation but did not say a word. A slight smile crossed her face, a small grin, and her eyes lighted up for a moment. That was all. She quickly turned away from him back to the work left to do and dismissed him silently. They had long since passed the necessity for pleading or long explanations. She waited for him to come to her with the surity of a woman in control of her man and there was no doubt that he was hers as long as she wanted him. She had already surpassed most of her family by getting out of the mill and she had no intention of ever going back to that

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life, marrying some mill hand, having a new baby every year or so, going out to work for some of the " nice " people in town, or any of that. She was going to have a nice life with nice things and she knew how that was done. <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ was gone when she looked up again and she straightened her hair with both hands and grunted a little as she stretched over head to take the ache out of her shoulders. Her mind gently slipped back in time some six weeks to an evening in June when she and two of her friends had joined a group which had gathered on ~~Waxxxx~~ Harts' roof to watch for the signal lights. She and Cathy Caron and Rose Austin had gone over there <sup>serving</sup> after they had finished/the late dinner crowd in Molloy's Hotel. Mr Hart had gotten a special pair of Army field glasses and a group of the patriotic young people had gathered to ~~pick~~ plot any of the siggal lights they could catch sight of. With America's entry into the war, the desire to have a part in the war effort was so strong that men and women alike were willing to do anything for 'our boys.' The rumors of the former German Ambassador in the nearby town of Kerry and <sup>reported</sup> ~~the~~ figures of escaped interned German seamen in the countryside made detecting of siggal lights and the finding of supply caches in the hills roundabout the least duty that a good American could perform. ~~Charlie~~ <sup>Ed</sup> had been there with that <sup>Brian Kelly</sup> ~~German~~ <sup>Brian</sup> ~~Brian~~, who had recently come to town. ~~Brian~~ <sup>Brian</sup> had been in the fight long before America had declared war and had risked his life for our brave Allies in the supply ships going to England. As the hours passed and no lights were to be seen, the crowd of watchers thinned out until she and Cathy were alone with <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ and ~~Brian~~ <sup>Brian</sup>. The night air grew chill on toward midnight and the girls ~~were~~ took shelter in the warm embrace of the boys at opposite corners of the flat roof top. She let <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ explore as he wished, with reasonable pauses, and their kisses grew more and more heated. Finally she knew that they could not stay there any longer and after the four made their way down through the trap door <sup>Ed</sup> and down the stairs to the street, without question or answer, <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ walked her home, through the back door and up the stairs to her small

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bedroom over the kitchen. ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> was a lot less forward -- he was nervous doing it right in the LaFleur house -- than he had been on the roof, but after a passionate bout of kissing he again took charge and performed as always if they were in their own bedroom. She had gone crazy, she ~~knew~~<sup>always</sup> it would ~~always~~ be like this and as she and her friends had confided to each other in long nights of whispers, a married man really knew ~~what~~ he was doing. For his part, ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> had been overwhelmed by her passionate response, even a little bit too much for him ( he didn't admit it to her ) and he was quick to praise her ~~and~~<sup>as</sup> being so much more than Helen, who, it was appearing after three years, was not capable of bearing children and really had no appetite for her wifely duties. Though he was a weak man or perhaps because of it, ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> had been hers to do with as she wished after that night. ~~Pushon~~<sup>MASON</sup> was a small town and they had to be careful; they knew that almost immediately the talk had started -- Mrs Hart was a light sleeper and she knew who had been the last to leave the observation party -- but who was going to do anything about it? Helen ?? She was relieved not to have ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> bothering her more than once a month. Emile and Christine LaFleur? They ~~were~~ not included on the town party-line, and besides so long as she ~~did~~ brought home most of her paycheck from Molloy's and went to Mass on Sunday, they didn't ask questions. It was hard enough to raise eight kids without wondering what Marie was doing on the nights when she came home late. If asked, she had the usual excuses of girlfriends and late bathing parties. When old Mrs. Harrington's arthritis had made her give up the office work at the garage, ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup>'s recommendation had been enough to get her a trial. She was quick and learned fast and after the ~~ix~~ first billing cycle, Old man Harrington had not had to show her a thing. Her folks were pleased that she had a steady yearround job -- the hotel kept only one regular waitress after the summer season -- and had started to make her way in the world. And so it had gone in the summer of 1918 for Marie LaFleur. Her path in life was

Clear...



8.

~~Canuck~~

and she had made great progress for a young ~~French-Canadian~~ girl in a society that regarded all her kind as good for mill hands and not much else, as some good in the kitchen if you could train 'em right, but mostly as foreigners who talked a strange tongue -- the French from France couldn't understand what they said -- and practiced a strange religion with an absolute obedience to the Pope over there in Italy and to the parish priest here in town. Father Manion was a regular fellow all right and real educated but when it came right down to it, nobody could understand all that kneeling and praying and incense, and even they couldn't understand the Latin of the Mass. Did just what he told 'em, all of them, from the time they learned those questions and answers when they were little kids. What was it that Bishop said? 'Let me have a child until he's six and he's the Church's for life?' what kind of a religion was that anyway. They were a shiftless bunch, all of them. Never get anywhere, not in this world. So Marie was a credit to her people. She was clean and neat and answered questions so you could understand her. She was still careful to be respectful to the people she had long known and this kept her in good repute in the town. Who knows she <sup>might</sup> marry a real American one of these days and make a place for herself, or even one of the boys who comes back from the war, and they can start a small business together, a grocery store, say. Marie was indeed a comer and pretty as a picture, too. Fred Harrington was not beyond being guyed by some of his fellow business<sup>men</sup>. He was pleased to be thought capable of attracting a young good looking thing like Marie, but in fact he was never a threat to her or her plans in any way.

Marie finished the remaining accounts quickly and put the big ledger back in the safe where it belonged. <sup>as she walked home,</sup> She was already thinking of what she would wear that night. Something light but also something that wouldn't show the wrinkles too much. Should she wear knickers or not. Probably and take her biggest summer handbag to put them in when they got there, wherever there was. She felt light and happy and even smiled at her mother who was bent

over the wood stove and the meat-and-potatoes supper her husband insisted on, winter and summer. It would be a great evening and a chance to relax. She wondered what Hare's new girl was like. Who she was and what she was like. <sup>Keen</sup> He had scared the pants right off Cathy Caron with some of his queer ways and finally he had hurt her somuch she told Marie she wouldn't go on any more parties with her if he was there. He was an odd one, that guy, but he did have all kinds of crazy ideas and <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ came to life if <sup>Kelly</sup> ~~Hare~~ had some of the ideas first. Anyway <sup>Ed Moran</sup> ~~Charlie Brown~~ was hers and she took care of what was hers. <sup>Keen</sup> ~~Hare~~ had made some suggestions that they switch partners the time they had been in that house that belonged to those people from Chicago and she had been tempted, but only for a moment. <sup>Brian Kelly</sup> ~~Sammy Hare~~ was a loser. So was <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~ but she could control him and she wasn't sure she could control the mad sailor. It never came up again and she was just as glad. If he had a new girl from time to time -- he seems to wear them out like an automobile tire, he put a lot of miles on them fast -- he seemed happiest. She knew his kind; they went from hen roost to hen roost and left nothing but trouble behind them. She'd already had trouble enough, being born a Canuck in this hick town, and she wasn't about to lay down for him.

She sat down with the whole family and began to talk lightly about the people who had passed the garage window and what Mr. Harrington had to say about some of those fancy summer people who didn't pay their bills on time. Some people, really. The more money they have the harder it is to get it out of them. That's <sup>it</sup> the way they kept/she guessed. She finished supper before her folks and the kids and went to her room to get ready to go to the band concert.

" I don't think you have seen one of these before. I knew you'd want to get some idea of the pressure we have been under, more exactly the pressure friend Meade has been under the past 10 months."

DD ~~xxxxx~~ Trudeau handed me what appeared <sup>to be</sup> a blank petition form all neatly lined and numbered. He had taken off his Panama hat and sat wiping his bald head with its fringe of graying hair. He was a man of great movement and motion: his eyes <sup>shone</sup> ~~xxxx~~ brightly and the gold in two of his upper teeth glistened as he watched intently for my reaction. The paper he handed me was a petition form urging the County authorities to call <sup>Second</sup> a Grand Jury to investigate the wrongful murder of that citizen and patriot Wm <sup>Thurndice</sup> ~~xxxx~~. DD ( his friends had long since given up calling him Delphine <sup>or</sup> David) had underlined the ~~xxx~~ statement ~~xxxxxxx~~ handwritten across the ~~xxx~~ short top sheet stapled to the several lined sheets: " Any person who refuses to sign this petition takes the stand that he believes in murder."

" Isn't that a hell of a note," he said.

" It is, " I said. "And who was circulating these? "

" The Monk, The Bird, and The Butcher," he said. " The Unholy Three. "

" And, by Godfrey, if that wasn't enough, for the Selectmen to be agitating the public in general, they had the gall to bring this damned thing down to the box factory and start circulating it around. They came to the office, oh, not them in person, they got one of the Sirois boys to do it, with it and asked everybody in the office <sup>to sign it.</sup> I told'em, I told'em then, ' I won't sign that petition and nobody can make me sign it. Every person who puts his name on it is a Bolshevist. Let the Selectmen see they can't run me.' The next time I went to the postoffice to get my mail I saw a <sup>petition</sup> ~~copy~~ on the board there and I told <sup>Henderson</sup> ~~Henderson~~ to take it down. And didn't they yowl at that! "

With that Trudeau had almost risen out of the easy chair in my office, as he shook his fist and shouted in recreation of the scene.

It was about a week after <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ evening Lottie Dutton had confided to me her despair of seeing an end to the <sup>same</sup> ~~Geothemne~~ her brother-in-law Perkins was living through. I had taken to seeing any one I wanted to talk to about the Dean case in my office, after hours. There was no need to advertise my interest, though it was probably well known, and I was concerned on how far voices can carry in the quiet summer nights. I had heard enough stories enough in France about spipers getting the third man on a match in the trenches at unbelievable distances. There were too many who were interested and the word was <sup>THAT</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>Keller</sup> ~~Bakerlor~~ was out prowling around every night.

" I'd like to keep this, " I said, and he waved away any return.

" Keep it,"he said,"and now look at this," and he handed me a copy of the local weekly, the Monadnock Mountaineer. " Came out about the time of the petitions. Seems like someone was coordinating different efforts."

I took the paper he proffered and sat back to read it as he sat back and lit up a cigar.

" We have been asked why the Mountaineer <sup>Thomdike</sup> has had nothing to say about the much talked of ~~Dean~~ mystery. From the morning the deed was discovered we have held the opinion ~~impression~~ that it was the work of German influence; that it was of more than town, county, or state importance; that it was a task for the united and untiring efforts of public officials to follow every possible clue to its end. That nothing should be left undone that could be done toward bringing the guilty persons to justice. It appears to be the belief of many that this course has not been followed. It is believed that many bits of evidence have been ignored, that new clues have been discovered, and the question who killed Dr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomdike</sup> will not be answered till these clues have been thoroughly investigated."

I looked up when I had finished the first paragraph, and DD nodded. " Yes, Doc, you can imagine the effect that had on the petitions. ~~If~~ Fred Hooker couldn't have done a better job for them, if he'd sold out the paper."

I hurried on to finish the rest of the editorial, front page left as it ~~w~~ always was.

The Mountaineer is a little country paper going about its business from week to week, not disposed to give circulation to every rumor that has been in the air for the past 8 months. Not unmindful, however, ~~that~~ of the fact that a respected loyal American citizen was horribly murdered ~~because~~ because he wanted to tell the truth.

If it is true that new evidence is available, no more time should be wasted. If it is possible the guilty party could be apprehended and the innocent relieved of suspicion. With this in mind, and with the supreme desire that the good name of this loyal American village may be upheld and every loyal-blooded individual may do his or her full duty in the matter, we would urge that the whole subject be brought before an impartial tribunal in order that this trying atmosphere of uncertainty, unrest, and suspicion may be lifted from our community. Just who did the deed may never be known, but our beliefs as to the motive for this horrible deed remain unchanged."

" Kinda hits you, doesn't it." Trudeau gave his short braying laugh I knew <sup>so</sup> well and snorted in disgust. " Could have come from any pulpit in town, and maybe it did."

" *How did you get Grand Jury hearing last April? Why are they agitated (or a second one?)*  
~~"What did you do then?"~~ <sup>MEADE</sup>

" Well, all those months Judge ~~Rich~~ had not done a damned thing to defend himself. He kept going to the bank every day, doing the bank's business, working most every night on the Liberty Bond sales, the insurance business, and all the rest. He told ~~Laine~~, his wife Laine that they had ~~nothing~~ to hide, that they should go on living their life as an open book, no drawn shades or anything like that. He said that the truth would conquer, that the truth would prevail as it always had. We had heard that little children on the street were starting to pull away from him ~~xx~~ when they passed him on the street and that some of them would make remarks and then run away. That foreign detective ~~DeKetter~~ kept going to the bank and interviewing him. It was getting pretty hard on him. Finally Elmer Webb, Loren Cutter, Ed Merrill and I decided something had to be done: we had to get him to agree that <sup>the</sup> ~~xx~~ Grand Jury they were yelling for might be the best way to clear the air. Once we'd had that, maybe some of this persecution would stop, or at least quiet down. The five of us got together, *the Big Five they called us.*

" Actually, it was a lot easier than we had thought for. The Judge had been doing a lot of thinking. He said he come to the conclusion that it might be the best thing. He wasn't worried for himself, he said, and his wife was standing by him as he knew she would, being of good old New England stock. No, he said, he'd agree, not for personal reasons but because it was becoming clear to him that the town was being split -- Catholic and Protestant, employer and employee, native Americans and French Canadians. And he would do anything that would ease that situation. It couldn't go on, he said because the bank was being hurt and he couldn't allow that to happen. He told us of three incidents which had movedx him to agree with us.

ITEM ONE:

"<sup>about</sup>It was a Monday morning and as some times happened Young Brian Kelly brought in the Sunday collection for deposit. I counted it and found it was<sup>about</sup> three dollars short of the amount reported on the deposit slip in Father Manion's large scrawled figures. I credited the correct<sup>figure</sup> on a duplicate slip, corrected the slip submitted and initialed it and gave the duplicate to Young Kelly. I called the discrepancy to the attention of Young Kelly and thought no more about it.

" Early that afternoon, Father Manion himself appeared.

" ' I wish to enter a complaint, he announced in that heavy way of his. I counted yesterday's collections and sent it in by messenger, a member of my own household. The receipt returned was exactly \$ 2.67 less than I sent in."

" Less than you reported, Father Manion. It is best in business matters to be careful in selecting words for stating a case like this." I was not going to back down an inch and for good reason.

" ' Less than I made it,"corrected the Father." ' I counted it myself, you know,"he added stiffly.

" And I counted it myself.I took that precaution," I announced with some significance. " You may have noted, Father, that the same --shall we say -- accident has occurred several times of late."

" ' Three times in the last two months, to be exact'" he

insinuated.

" But never when you have been the bearer yourself, you may have observed," I said. I tried to keep my voice down, my expression courteous.

" I have observed that," he said in an edgy voice

" I let that pass by. I said, 'I advise you to take the trouble to make the delivery in person, hereafter, Father Manion, as a precaution against further accidents of the sort.'"

" ' Your words, Mr ~~Manion~~ <sup>MEADE</sup>, reflect on the character of a member of my own household', " -- he was really getting angry now.

" On young Brian, It is to be regretted that it is so," I said and I was a little sharp.

" And I may as well say, that if I am not to be permitted to choose my own messenger for making deposits, I find myself justified in choosing the bank in which deposit church funds."

" That is your privilege," I told him. And a week later, he cleaned out the church accounts and took them to the ~~Reverend~~ <sup>Harrisfield</sup> National Bank.

" I was not so much worried about the church accounts, they never amounted to ~~too~~ much, but when in the days that followed, a number of Holy Name parishioners closed their accounts , I was disturbed.

" Item two. For twenty years, Ned Bradley has carried the house insurance on his summer place <sup>with us</sup> as do many of the summer people. On the basis of doing business where you own property, I guess. Shortly after the flare-up with Father Manion, Ned came in and canceled his policy. None of the usual excuses; he merely stated he was transferring to another company. He wasn't rude about it; in fact he seemed almost apologetic; but he was not going to have any argument about it, and I said nothing which would deepen his embarrassment. I was worried though, because the good will of the the towns people is important to the bank and we

and we make a good share of our profits on the repeat insurance business. The manner of both these men bothered me. It seemed as if they held me in small repute, as if there~~x~~ was an common element of contempt for me. Then it came to me. ~~The Dean~~ <sup>Thurndike</sup> case. They were connecting me with that. I couldn't believe it. 36 years in a position of trust. 36 years as cashier, and now they think I am guilty of murdering my best friend. My reputation is undermined, my business integrity questioned. I cannot allow that to go on. I do believe that ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> truth will prevail, given enough time, but it was the third event which makes me believe I must accede to your wishes for a Grand Jury hearing.

~~Two~~ " Two of you are directors of the bank and you know that in the 1st quarter this year we had our usual visit by the bank examiners, and as usual we passed with flying colors. What you don't know is that less than a week ago we were visited again. He was a new man, a stranger to our locality and unknown to any of us in the bank. I think I know all the regular examiners, after all these years. He did not have the usual manner of the examiners we know, but rather ~~peremptorially~~ peremptorily demanded the keys to the vaults and the books and records. I felt there was an implied doubt of the staff of the bank. I was put off and demanded his credentials before we~~x~~ went any further, but once I <sup>assured</sup> ~~assured~~ myself of his authority, I gave him every assistance in my power. He did a very thorough job of it and as his work advanced he became more relaxed in his attitude. When he was through, he approached me in an apologetic manner: 'I want you to know that I find everything connected with the bank in excellent shape. I shall report it so' and he offered his hand. I accepted his hand in friendship and said, ' I don't understand quite what occasioned your visit, but I appreciate your courtesy in letting me know the result of your findings before the report is made to your superiors.' He paused a moment before he put on his hat.' Pardon me for touching on a personal matter,' he said, ' but ~~it~~ occurs to me that you must have unwittingly raised the enmity of some local influence. I feel sure this



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step was taken by my superiors at the instigation of some one in your town. ' Sarah ~~Henderson~~ <sup>Henderson</sup> informed me -- I do not read it myself -- that this morning's Courier had an article wondering why a special examination of the records of the bank had been made. There was much innuendo with relation to the ~~bank~~ <sup>Thundike</sup> case and the possible ~~insolvency~~ <sup>involvement</sup> of the bank. I have always regarded my position here in the bank as a matter of public trust. I will not have the bank hurt by any suspicions some people may have of me, even though I am deeply distressed that the life I have lived in full view of all seems now to count for so little. '"

Elmer Webb spoke up. " That's the point that ~~Baker~~ <sup>Keller</sup> raises when he talks to the townspeople. He says that the more unlikely ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> suspect, the more highly regarded he is, the more likely he is to be the guilty party. He's sold that line to anyone who'll listen and a good many have bought it. There's a lot of feeling by the foreign element in town about those <sup>of us</sup> ~~who~~ are in positions of responsibility. They just draw their wages on Friday, get drunk on Saturday night and make more babies, and the Mother Church forgives them on Sunday. They live from week to week as they always have and would be delighted to see any of us take a fall. Perkins, you're just the one that's taking the heat for the rest of us. "

It seemed to me that we didn't have any more convincing to do. Judge Meade would not oppose any action taken his behalf and so I moved on to what we had agreed among ourselves we'd do.

" It seems best, Judge Meade, to leave you out of this. So I'll set up a meeting with Solicitor Packard and Attorney ~~Brown~~ <sup>OLDHAM</sup> in Winchendon in The Tavern for a week from today. Packard has thought that it would be better to have a ~~XXXXXX XXXXXXXX~~ Medical Referee's inquest, where all who had evidence to give could come forward and speak in public. We do not think a Coroner's inquest is in the best interest of the town, or of you, and we are going to press him a Grand ~~Jury~~ hearing. There are too many loose mouths and lame wits in this town to make that worth doing. Look at their prize witness -- Charlie Beau~~x~~, who calls himself an artist and photographer. He's

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never been right. He was queer as a boy and he's just gotten queerer as he's gotten older. Lives up there in that old Finnish bath house with his dogs and wanders around talking to himself. Ever since he found that hand cultivator, the murder weapon they call it, he's been the star. That's the kind of witness you'd have by the score at a public inquest. No, sir, we'll have to go for a Grand Jury."

" And so we did. We met with Packard and ~~Young~~ <sup>OLDHAM</sup> Brown in Winchendon."

I knew Trudeau pretty well and I knew he was a master story teller. I knew he would save the best of his tale till the end and I was not mistaken this time either. As he gets excited telling a joke or a yarn, he speaks faster and faster and in his excitement, the spittle flies every which way. " We met and by Godfrey the Federal agents spied on us. We never could figure out how they got wind of the meeting, but they did and they had a dictograph in the next room and recorded what we said. I tell you we were wild. "Course, the Courier made the most of it. Clandestine meeting across statelines, they said. What were a group of citizens of Mason doing meeting in secret, what was the " soft-pedal squad" up to now, they asked. That was a bad moment, I tell you, but we paid'em no mind. The next month the hearing was held in Keene and the Grand Jury brought in verdict of ' unlawful death by person or persons unknown." Packard had told us he had no case and the Grand Jury agreed that there was no case made. That should have been the end of it, but it wasn't. You've been back long enough to know that those three boobs down at the library are still spending town money like it was water; who knows how much the town is obligated for now. I tell you, it's worse now, if anything. Every two weeks or so we read that the Selectmen are going to move for an arrest. They haven't yet. We haven't been able to block any of their moves. Last week after they fired Preston, I told him not to pay any attention to what they said. I told him we'd call a special town meeting and find out who is running

the town, but he didn't have the stomach for it. That's o.k. I told him I'd give him a job down at the match ~~hick~~ factory at \$ 30 a week and he wouldn't have to do anything but watch the smoke go up the chimney. He wouldn't accept that, though, and now he's tying up bundles of matchbooks for us. And as for that little sneaking bastard LaRocier, ~~I sent him off~~. He was working on the squaring-off saw and he was a good worker. But ~~when~~ I found out he was working for them, telling all kinds of wild stories around the plant, to any one who would listen, ~~would have but he left before I could.~~ I canned him, too, ~~and~~ Those are just the little guys. Small fish. And when we get rid of one, a dozen more turn up. The situation is getting worse all the time." ~~Trudeau~~ Trudeau got up and stuck out his hand.

" Well, <sup>Doc</sup> he said, " I know you're just back from one war, the war to make the world safe for democracy, but I'll tell you you have landed in another one back home. They are crucifying a good man. Perkind Meade is a good man. And if we don't do something about it, this man is going to die of a broken heart. You must have noticed how he never smiles any more, has that sad expression in his eyes. How much can a man like that take? We're going to have to do something about it, and I guess you're the man. I hope you haven't got any skeletons in your closet, because if you do they're goin' to come out."

" DD," I said, "I don't even have a closet."

" That's good, Doctor," he said. " And take care of your health. My bladder trouble got so bad this winter, I had to go to the clinic in Melrose. I wasn't able to help Perkins as much as I wanted, but I'll back any move you make." And I knew he would.

That weekend, I had a phone call from Rob Packard and we agreed to meet Saturday night in my office. Although he was the District Attorney, the law allowed him to keep up a private practice and he had to come down to Mason to take a deposition in a damage suit he had. Anna fixed us a nice supper and we settled down <sup>in my office</sup> where we would not be disturbed, least of all by any patients. My practice had slowed to a snails's pace.

" You've had ~~xxxx~~ time to talk with ~~xxxx~~ some of your friends since we met in Keene," he began.

" Yes, and they've been filling me in on what happened during the past ten months. I understand you had the attention of some Federal agents in Winchendon earlier this year."

He reacted immediately." Those sneaky bastards. Can you imagine those Washington snoopers using a dictograph on two public officials. They swore they didn't, said all they could heard all they needed to by listening at the door between the rooms, but that's still spying on fellow law enforcement personnel. I thought all that clandestine investigating would end with the war over, but it's worse than ever. Now they claim that the Germans are spending 30 million dollars to instigate a revolution. They're seeing Bolshies ~~xxxxx~~ under every bed. One Anarchist bomb and we're all under surveillance for a year. They tell me Palmer, the Attorney General, has 'em all so scared down in Washington they don't dare go out at night. And you've just lost your police chief down here. Nobody's safe."

" Tell me about the Grand Jury hearing you held in April," I prompted.

" The rumors had been flying around in a loose fashion, with everyone going off on his own ever since the murder. The Selectmen here in Mason were pursuing their own line and were never satisfied with what we were doing on the county or state level. We never could really put together a solid case. The town's people seemed convinced that ~~Dean's~~ <sup>Thordike's</sup> murder was the work of spies, but nobody ever caught anybody signalling or even brought in any physical evidence of enemy agents in the area. Some made a strong case for the guilt of Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thordike</sup>, but she was under observation at two mental hospitals for better than a month and we got written reports that she was not capable of the deed, either physically or mentally. They didn't even trust our coroner's autopsy, as I told you. I ~~co~~ouldn't see that a Grand Jury investigation would do any good at all. I was willing to have a

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Cononer's inquest. I knew that your town officials were continually agitating and were passing around a petition for a Grand Jury, but it hadn't come up to the County seat. What really made us move was the pressure put on by my own cousin, George Dunne. Late in <sup>February</sup> ~~January~~, I got a letter from Dunne inviting me to come down discuss the ~~case~~ <sup>Thomdale</sup> case at a meeting sponsored by the Mason Board of Trade. I really didn't want to get into a situation like that, but Cousin George -- what a sweetheart he is -- kept pushing, even made public the letters we exchanged, questions he raised and I answered, and there was no way out. I thought the best way to handle it was to come down and meet the rumors head on. That was in mid-March.

" I know that you are not a man to be afraid of a fight, but I have been in few if any courtrooms where I felt so like Daniel in the lion's den. I could have used a few friends that night, but I did not see a friendly face in the ~~court~~ <sup>hall</sup>.

" The first thing I tried to make clear was that a Grand Jury could be called only if a case could be presented against a suspect in seeking an indictment. A Coroner's inquest, in contrast, could be called on the evidence presented that a crime had been committed. The town officials had not filed a complaint -- and they still haven't, three months later.

" Alf Partridge, your local middle man, wanted to know why, if Mrs. ~~Dunne~~ <sup>Thomdale</sup> was suspected, she had not been persecuted and either found guilty or not; so that at least she could be cleared or the suspicions hovering over her.

" I replied that in my mind there was not sufficient evidence against her to seek an indictment, though in my mind her guilt remained a possibility.

" The question of the destroying of evidence came up -- in two instances: (1) the sweeping of the barn floor the afternoon the body was discovered and the disappearance of the German silver

cigarette case found at the bottom of the cistern when it was drained two days after the finding of the body.

" I explained ~~that~~ first, that the barn floor had been swept by Attorney General ~~Brown~~ <sup>Olshan</sup> and ~~me~~ <sup>me</sup>, looking for evidence, anything that might have slipped the loose hay or been hidden in the dust that ~~Dr. Dean~~ <sup>Thundike</sup> allowed to accumulate, he not being the most fastidious keeper of out-buildings I had ever seen. And for the second, I admitted freely that county authorities had been embarrassed to find that the cigarette case had been on exhibit in the display window of a drugstore in Fitz-William, but that it had been recovered intact and that the substitution alleged by some to have been made was without foundation. We had the one found in the cistern -- the same man who found it had been talked into allowing it out of the evidence lockers -- and there was no confusion with the second case found later in the ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thundike</sup> Bungelow.

" To the charge that county investigators were incompetant, I pointed out that the Sheriff and his deputies had had long and meritorous service in the county and had kept the county relatively crime-free.

" It was at this point that the party got rough. Your local catholic clergyman got up and asked why the county and state authorities did not place more faith in the abilities of ~~Berkorlor~~ <sup>Keller</sup>, the detective brought to town by Frederick ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thundike</sup> and kept on since by town authorities. He went on to outline ~~Dek~~ <sup>K</sup>'s background and state that he had so much confidence in ~~Dek~~ <sup>K</sup>'s abilities that he had invited him to board at the parish house when town funds seemed to be low.

" ~~Berkorlor~~ <sup>Keller</sup> was sitting there, scowling at me with a kind of scornful sneer on his face and I talked right to him. I said that some of his activities brought to my attention seemed to me to ~~border~~ <sup>border</sup> on the brutal if not the illegal. I said that I had met him at the first ex-humation of the murdered man's body and formed an <sup>negative</sup> opinion of him, which had not been changed by his claiming to be able to see the faces of the murderers in a photograph of blood of the victim. I had little faith, I said, in such 'psychic detection.'



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" Did you feel that there was any master hand at work ?"

" You mean any fine <sup>Elack</sup> ~~Italian~~ hand?" and here he gave the thin kind of grin, not a smile really, that a born New Englander slides into just as he slips the harpoon between the ribs. Not a mean grin, but a kind that shows an inner appreciation of the jab that's coming.

" No, he said," Not that, ~~but~~ more like a rough red Irish mitt. I sensed from the start that Cousin Georgie would not have the guts to write me as he did. Someone put him up to it, and someone picked out the points <sup>to be</sup> ~~that had been~~ brought up at the meeting prior to the one I attended. Those were the ones George wrote in his letter asking me to appear. They were tough questions, and they were embarrassing. I assume you have been reading the back issues of the ~~last~~ Courier from the past two months. If you have, you have seen the inuendo, the impl~~ic~~ication achieved. No, there is a mind at work here -- I am tempted to call it Jesuitical -- orchestrating all the parts. "

" Let's go back to the question Alf Partridge asked you, <sup>Thandike</sup> is Polly ~~Dean~~ still under suspicion for the murder ?"

" Let's say, I have not eliminated her in my own mind. It's a mixed bag. On the one hand, we have the reports of the alienists in two Massachusetts mental hospitals that she could not have done ~~it~~. They gave her various tests and they said she did not have the physical strength to do those things the killer or killers must have done. On the other, we put the ~~xx~~ hypothetical questions to two of the leading forensic medical men in the ~~xxx~~ state: briefly, could a 67 yr old woman in a manical state have done these things and they said yes. And it is this maniacal state that the two sisters, Laine Meade and Charlotte Dutton say they detected. Both of them knew Polly <sup>Thandike</sup> ~~Dean~~ more intimately in the last several years than most people in town. Here let me read to you from the Grand Jury transcript. Incidentally, the proceedings are sealed, as you know, and if you ever say I showed them to you, I'll have to call you a liar."



" I've been called worse, " I replied

" All right, with that proviso, " he said.. " Now bear in mind that these two women not only knew Polly ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thundike</sup> but saw her the day the body was found and Lottie Dutton saw her again the day of the funeral -- which Polly ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thundike</sup> didn't know was taking place. This <sup>is</sup> Laine ~~Rixx~~ <sup>Thundike's</sup> Meade speaking about Polly ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thundike's</sup> condition and her thoughts about it:

- physical A.
- Q. What was her/condition ? She was very strong that day and excited of course.
- Q. You noticed she was strong A. I noticed that.
- Q. You commented on that? A. Yes I did
- Q. Then at that time ? A. I talked with my sister about it
- Q. And afterwards talked about it as well? A. Yes, I did
- Q. Ddidn't you suggest perhaps Mrs. Dean was the means of bringing her husband to death. A. I will say -- may I yes and then qualify it The Court: Yes. A: I said that she might have done it, but if she did do it she was perfectly unconscious that she had done it.
- Q. You suggested that to two or three other people, didn't you. A. I may have
- Q. And at one time you said that on the whole wouldn't it be better if somebody not mentally responsible should be the one? A. I think that sounds like me.
- Q. Did you ever see any evidence of violence in Mrs Dean? A. No, I never did,
- Q. Did you and Mr. Meade talk over the suggestion that Mrs Dean killed her husband? A. we did a little. Mr. Meade did not agree with me.
- Q. But your sister did?" A. Yes
- Q. Mrs Dean has been described as being in a delicate weakened condition. A. Yes
- Q. How would you explain how she succeeded in placing her husband's body in the cistern? ~~Didn't~~ <sup>Thundike's</sup> that seem an insuperable objection to your Theory ? A. No, it didn't seem insuperable.
- Q. You surely don't think she could have carried it there and deposited it ? A. No, I shouldn't think that. But trussed up as the body was reported to me to have been, I don't see why she couldn't have rolledit there.

"Packard paused in his reading and turned toward me. " The puzzle here is why two women of high moral character should attempt to make a case for Polly ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thundike's</sup> having killed her husband. Was it because they sensed that it would go hard with Meade, husband and brother-in-law, because of the horse blanket and lantern, the black eye and face lacerations? Were they grasping at straws? Laine Meade's last answer really shook the Jurors.

I considered this possibility. Everything I had heard since I got home seemed to give them good reason to do so, but I gave Packard the answer I felt certain of: "I have known both these women for over 20 years, and I cannot believe that they would construct any defense that they did not believe in. Lottie Dutton was so ~~fx~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> straight-forward as to tell Perkins of the fear she had that Billy ~~Dean~~ was thinking of suicide, based on some remarks he made to her the evening of the murder, thereby exposing him to public ridicule for proposing that Dean had tied himself up in a very involved manner and thrown himself into the cistern. No, you can see the sisters as naive, but you cannot see them as schemers."

"I agree," he said. "They had some pretty sound reasons for believing what they did, as the transcript of Lottie Dutton's testimony makes clear. It is the tightness of their case, despite Doctor's reports and other discrepancies, that makes me even today <sup>unwilling</sup> to completely discount their version of the murder. Listen to what Lottie had to say:

- Q. Did Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thordike</sup> ever say anything to you about fear of mental illness? A. Yes, she said she feared she was losing her mind. She said that both her mother and her maternal grandmother had been possessed of homicidal mania before their deaths and had to be institutionalized.
- A. What was Dr. ~~Dean's~~ <sup>Thordike's</sup> attitude toward her possible <sup>mental</sup> illness?
- A. Generally, he tried to ignore it, but on the last night of his life, he did refer to it as something which was past concealing.
- Q. And you have concluded that she sensed this and was afraid that he was planning to have her put away?
- A. yes, I concluded, looking back, that this was why she hated to have him leave her for any period of time, that he might be making such arrangements.
- Q. What experience did you have with Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>T</sup> on the day of the deceased's funeral. A. She said to me, "Billy had a lot of trouble with his feet did he tell you? I said no, he said nothing of it to me. She said, "well, he did have and often he went like this" and she simulated a swaying from one foot to the other, "and then fell right over" and she swept her hands and arms down to indicate a fall to one side. It seemed to me that as she enacted that scene she was visualizing something which she had seen. I had the the feeling that I was on the verge of a discovery. And I was afraid to pursue the matter.

- Q. It is your idea that Mrs. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> committed the murder herself? A. The facts, as I know then, seem to point to that probability.
- Q. Do you think that in the weak condition that has been described, she could have overcome Mr. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> (asked a juror) A. Mrs. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> was much larger than Mr. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> who was by nature of slight build.
- Q. What was Mr. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup>'s report of his wife's condition the night of the murder. A. He laid stress that night on the fact that Mrs. Dean had not been either to the barn or upstairs for two years.
- Q. How did this report square with what you experienced or were told about her condition following the murder? A. By her own account, she went to the barn in the early morning to look for him and to my certain knowledge, she went twice more during the day, once during a heavy rain storm to get the turkeys out of the wet. And there is the testimony of those guarded her the first night after the murder that she went upstairs with no apparent trouble.
- Q. How would you describe her mental condition the day after the murder? A. She was very excited. She seemed to be laboring under an emotional stimulus which gave her abnormal strength, as a sick man in a delirium may have the strength of two or three men. It was impossible, for example, to stop her from going out in the violent storm to put the turkeys under cover.
- Q. And do you think she would be mentally capable of concealing her part in the affair? A. As I observed Mrs. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup>, it seemed to me that if she did it, she had no recollection of the act. But I cannot forget that from the day we met her on the day following the murder she was under the profound conviction of Mr. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup>'s Death. She said to us repeatedly, 'Billy is dead and in deep water.' If she had not seen him thus, I kept asking myself, why should she have been so positive in her conviction. She would accept no other suggestion that attempted to explain his failure to return.
- Q. Do you know whether Mrs. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> was subject to fits of uncontrollable mania? Had she had such attacks before? A. No, Mr. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> never even hinted in my presence, until that night, that there was anything abnormal in her mental condition.

" And there you have the case against Mrs. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup>. There are some ~~holes in fabric~~ holes in fabric. After ~~John Dean~~<sup>Hank Oldham</sup> and I had swept the barn looking for clues, he went to the bungalow and got Lottie Dutton to have Mrs. ~~Dean~~<sup>T.</sup> tie some square ~~knots~~ knots. She got her to tie up as package for mailing, but never once did she tie a square knot. They also repeated the test at the mental hospital with the same results. All the knots, on the wrists, at the knees, and those tying the sack to the belt loops were

18 ~~18~~

were cut off  
and saved as  
evidence.

The knots, incidentally, square knots, such as a sailor would tie. And aside from the excited state on the day after the murder reported by the Dutton sisters and by the nurse and constable who spent the first night in the bungalow with Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>J</sup>, there has been no reported instance of her being other than quiet, even depressed. For the last ten months, she has been living with the Methodist minister and his wife, Reverend and Mrs Heslin, and they sayshe talks about Mr.

~~Dean~~ <sup>J</sup> as if he were still alive. No repetition of the manic state. All the relatives deny that Polly ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thomson</sup> was jealous of her husband, because ~~if~~ he was three years younger than she and reportedly was charming to every woman he met. But of course none of them had ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ <sup>seen</sup> ~~XXXXXX~~ <sup>her</sup> in the two years prior to the murder ; the ~~Deans~~ <sup>J</sup> saw very few people during that period. Along the lines of jealousy, some have ~~said~~ <sup>J</sup> said that Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>J</sup> forced Mr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>J</sup> to withdraw from medical practice because of fear of his femalepatients. But in checking, we have found that ~~he~~ <sup>J</sup> never finished his medical training and therefore could not have practiced as a doctor. Did she persuade her doctor-father's protégé to do so? We'll probably never know/ Did she strike him down? Or see him struck down ? Another part of the mystery. And, by ~~the~~ <sup>J</sup> the way, nothing ires those who hold with the German spy murderers theory quite so much as the suggestion that Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>J</sup> did do it."

It was getting late, but I could not let Packard and his Grand ~~Jury~~ <sup>J</sup> transcripts get out of my sight without probing the question of German spy activity, the signalling and all that. " What about the German spies ? I had Ed Price under ~~sensation~~ <sup>J</sup> before I left, and I had to prove to him that there wasn't any signalling going on, but I hear he kept on seeing spy lights ~~after~~ <sup>J</sup> when I wasn't here and persuaded a lot of people to believe him. I've read all that drivel in the Courier and what they put forth as evidence is always hearsay, someone other than the speaker is always the one who ~~say~~ <sup>saw</sup>

or heard the mysterious sight or sound. Was there any testimony under oath worth considering ??"

" There was one," he said. " You remember Ariel Harrison, they have a summer place in ~~Massachusetts~~ <sup>Peterborough</sup>, Harvard professor's wife. Very tall striking woman?"

" Yes."

" She's the one ~~Dean~~ <sup>Lincoln</sup> in Courier sighted in on when he started his quote expose of official obstruction unquote in the ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup> Case. She's the one he keeps coming back to. And with good reason. She's really the only one who can connect ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup> in any way with the alleged signaling, because she saw him and talked with him about it that very day. Here, her testimony starts on page 497.

- Q. Did you know Mr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup>. A. Yes
- Q. And Mrs. ~~Dale~~ <sup>I</sup>? A. I knew them both.
- Q. At what time did you last visit them? A. On the day of Mr. ~~Dean's~~ <sup>I</sup> murder.
- Q. At what hour? A. Between 11 and 12 o'clock in the forenoon
- Q. Did you speak of signal lights? A. We did.
- Q. What was the first thing Mr. ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup> said with reference to them? A. He said, Mrs Harrison, I understand you have seen lights here at night.
- Q. And you replied? A. Yes, Mr ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup> I have
- Q. He asked you when you last saw the lights? A. Yes, and I told him the night before.
- Q. Do you have reference to ~~having~~ <sup>I</sup> seen them at the ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup> place?
- A. No, not at all.
- Q. Where were you when you last saw the lights. A. At my own home in Peterborough.
- Q. Did he ask you at what time you saw the lights? A. He did and I said generally between 12 midnight and 2 in the morning.
- Q. Did you point out to him the place or direction from which the lights came? I told him I could do that and we went into the field and lined it up with Temple mountain.
- Q. What did he do to identify the spot? A. He picked up a few ~~xxx~~ stones and said he was going to mark the place.
- Q. What further took place? A. We moved a little farther in the field, to the right, where we had an uninterrupted view of both ranges and he marked that place, too.
- Q. What, if any, conversation followed/his getting help?
- regarding
- A. Mr ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup> asked me if I could get into communication with the authorities. I said, Mr ~~Dean~~ <sup>I</sup>, Yes, I can. He authorized me to get in touch with them and get them to send up one of their best men at once.
- Q. What did ~~he~~ <sup>I</sup> say to that? A. I said, I will telephone as soon as I get back to the house.
- Q. And he replied? A: Don't use the telephone. And I said, If necessary, I will go to Boston in the morning and get you some one.

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- Q. What arrangement did you make ? A. Mr ~~Dean~~<sup>T</sup> said, I will call about the turkeys I am going to bring you tomorrow. I will call at midnight. We arranged that if his suspicions were confirmed he would say, I won't be able to get over until afternoon with those turkeys.
- Q. Did you stay awake ? A. I had company and stayed up until 1 o'clock. ~~I~~
- Q. Did Mr. ~~Dale~~ call you ? A. He did not
- Q. Would it have been possible for someone behind ~~xxx~~ the wall to have overheard your conversation? A. It would have been possible.
- Q. Did you subsequently prove it to your satisfaction? A. I did
- Q. Did you name any Federal agent during the conversation ?
- A. No, I said the chief in Boston.
- Q. Did you give a report to the Federal authorities? A. Yes, I gave a full report. ~~I~~
- Q. How soon after Mr. ~~Dean~~ was murdered ? A. Before I heard that he had been murdered.
- A. When did you learn of the murder? A. Not until the next night
- Q. How do you account for the lapse in time? A. I went to Boston on the seven o'clock train the next morning and was at the chief's office at 12:45.
- Q. With regard to the lights you saw, what color were they? A. White, green, and red
- Q. Did they change while you were looking? A. Yes.
- Q. Were they all visible at the same time ? A. They followed each other almost instantaneously.
- Q. In lining up the direction from which those lights came, do you know whether a highway passes near the place? A. Yes, one does.
- Q. Is it a curving road? A. Yes ~~I~~
- Q. Have you any knowledge of Mr. ~~Dale~~'s habits -- as to whether it was his custom to keep late hours? A. I have not.
- Q. It did not occur to you that the moving lights you admit having seen near his place might have been his own as he passed between barn and house A. It did not
- Q. Should you say that was impossible ? A. I should think it was highly improbable.
- Q. In spite of all your care to preserve secrecy in making arrangements to communicate with Mr. ~~Dean~~ you feel that someone must have overheard your plan? A. I think it significant that the very day in which he was arranging for Federal help, he should be murdered.

" And that's the end of her testimony," Packard said, closing the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ second of the heavy legal-sized volume<sup>5</sup> he had brought with him.

" He died a patriot." I remarked.

" Yes, and therefore his killer was an enemy agent. And therefore, all who seek his killer must make of him an enemy agent."

" What about Mainz? He lived on the ~~Dean~~<sup>Thomville</sup> place for 8 or 9 months. The papers tried to ~~xx~~ make something of his German name and alleged he was in cahoots with Perkins?"

" You may remember that even before you left, any one who bore a German name was under suspicion, if not persecution. Complaints must

have gone into the authorities because Mainz was under surveillance practically all the time he and his wife lived in this area. He had a gray ~~Packard~~ <sup>MARmon</sup> touring car he used to drive around, some folks said battleship gray, as if that made it a weapon. There were lots of stories from the maids and hired men he had working for him, but it was all talk. Nobody ever proved anything on him. As for the murder, he's clean. He had a perfect alibi. He worked the night shift ~~xxxxxx~~ at the Portsmouth Navy Yard, as a time keeper, and he can prove it. As a matter of fact, Perkins Meade checked with Reverend Butler of Mason who was working there at the same time and his alibi was water tight. He was at work. "

" What about his chauffer ?" I said, jokingly

" He didn't have a chauffer," Packard said and stared at me as if trying to see where I was leading him.

" I was only joshing, " I said. " The villain always has a brute of a chauffer, who does the dirty work for him."

" For god's sake, don't start any more rumors," Packard said. "I have trouble enough keeping up with the ones already floating around."

He bade me goodnight and <sup>before I went to bed</sup> I sat at my typewriter <sup>writing and</sup> making notes on what I had heard, trying to fit the pieces together. <sup>when I did go to bed, it was a fitful night</sup> Mad Polly Bear. Faceless Prussian assassins disguised in army khaki greatcoats. <sup>Eric</sup> Mainz in his shipyard overalls. Each of these chased <sup>one</sup> ~~each~~ other through barn doors, across fields and into cars. I woke once in a sweat and felt on my bed table for my Smith and Wesson .32 in its chamois case with the quick clasp.

from a call at an outlying farm

The next evening, I was driving back into town and stopped at the post office to mail a few bills I had made out earlier in the day -- damned few I might say. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ As I came out, I met Harvey Foster, retired foreman at White's Mill. Harv <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ kind of lamed up these days with arthritis, walks with a cane, and only gets down for his mail a couple times a week. We had decided several years before

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that there was very little I could do for him, except prescribe aspirin<sup>x</sup> which he could buy in the drug store for the pain/and urge him to keep as active as possible. He jokingly asked me if I had any left-over army aspirin I could give him, and I told him the civilian kind was just as good and a lot less trouble to get ahold of. I was eager to get home to the supper I knew was waiting and had just turned to get in my car when Harve grabbed me by the elbow.

" Doc," he said. "Just look at that. Young Erian Kelly. He hasn't been in town for ~~three~~ months and godd riddance. He's none too popular around here, even under the protection of the man walking <sup>ing</sup> beside him"

I turned to see where he was pointing and there were the two of them, Young Kelly, his bright red hair clearly visible at that distance, and beside him the heavy yet graceful/<sup>figure</sup> of Father Harry Manion. I was about to turn again to get in my car when Harve tightened his grasp on my arm. " Doc!" he said <sup>again</sup> in a voice of wonderment. Then I saw what he was seeing! The two figures striding up Main Street toward the parish house of Holy Name seemed to be cut from the same cloth by the same hand. The young man's figure was smaller of course, but the attitude of the body, the swing of the shoulders, the quickness of step was the same. The smaller was the spittin' image of the larger. Harve and I looked at each other openmouthed, but there was no need to speak; we both knew what we had seen.

All the way home I tried to digest/<sup>what I had caught ahold of,</sup> tried to understand its significance. By the time I swung into the yard and parked, I knew I had the connection I had been looking for. I didn't know <sup>then how</sup> I would use it, but I knew the motivation of the man I was up against. *To be Continued in Chapter IV*



Chapter ~~XVIII~~ June 1919

The morning light woke him as usual. The chorus of birds in the garden between the parish house and the church sang their hymn of praise for creation and he crossed himself and said an Our Father as he always did before getting out of bed. Then he recollected. It was a Monday, the one day in the week when he did not have to serve early mass. Should he turn over and get another forty winks or not? Even the servants of God need a sleep-in once in a while. He rolled over away from the window and pulled the sheet and summer blanket up to better cover his head from the morning light; ah, the luxury of it he thought as he sank into a small nap. But it did not catch, the soft embrace of gentle sleep; it was not to be. He whirled in the bed with a sudden recollection: Brian was back. He felt his presence in the house as he had for the past six months, or more like eight months, been grateful for his absence. He is back to see his mother and me before he ~~sails~~<sup>ships</sup> out for what he ~~said~~ says will be a long voyage, he doesn't know when he'll be back. He's finished his probation, and is free to go where he wants and he wants to get out. Out of trouble, out of debt, out of here, he says. And the priest ~~was~~<sup>is</sup>, he confesses to himself, not sorry to see him go back to the sea. The sea is dangerous, less so since the submarines no longer trace the sea lanes of the Atlantic with the aim of sinking all Allied shipping afloat. But it is less dangerous for him than the town of Mason. The danger is here, as it has been for 10 months, not only for for Brian but for the boys mother and him. ~~He's~~<sup>The boy's</sup> been thrashing in a sea of troubles all his life, one scrape after another: petty thievery, shop lifting, disturbance of the peace, aggravated assault, drunk in a public place, resisting arrest, failing to obey a police officer, but in the last year his acts have taken on a different tone, a viciousness that can not be explained away as a boyish prank. The priest loved him like a son --- ~~he~~<sup>he</sup> ~~found that~~  
~~there's~~ an irony --

but he can no longer protect him. He will be better away. Even his mother has to admit that he does not seem to be suited for polite society. " All those years he needed a father," she said, " a man to look up to. If only Johnny hadn't died so young. I couldn't do it, I couldn't give him the guidance he needed. I was too tired earning a living for us, I didn't have the strength." Ellen is a beaten woman, aged beyond her years. She's had a hard life and looks sixty, though he knows she is, like him, in her late forties. Poverty leaves a mark on some which years of prosperity cannot erase. It's as if they don't have the digestion, or more likely the teeth, to absorb the good living they know too late, as if it all passes through the system without benefit. Even now she will not eat a full meal but subsists on the scraps from the meals she fixes for him and his guests. And she was such a pretty girl.

It is getting lighter. It will soon be six o'clock. He lies on his back with his hands ~~xxxxx~~ behind his head and looks at the rough granite stone which, piled one on another, held in uneasy balance by the mortar, makes up the east wall of his church. Holy Name, where he will spend the rest of his days, until that day when a younger man will come in as curate and succeed him and help him make the transition toward his end. This is to be his monument. Three years ago it was when Bishop X Pelletier called him into his office and told him to build a church in Mason. More and More young French ~~xxxxxxx~~ Canadians had been coming to work in the denim mills, saw mills, box factories of southern New Hampshire. The diocese would help with the loans, he said, but more and more of these young catholics were holding down good steady jobs and in a short while the main money for the church would come for the parishioners themselves. The church needs new blood, strong men who will guide and direct and keep a firm hand on the lives of the children of the first generation foreigners. The bishop had been one himself and he knew that with

prosperity comes a tendency to slip away from the church. When Manion first came to work for him in the diocesan offices, the Bishop had insisted he makes an effort to pick up canuck French, not the Parisian variety but the bastard guttural dialect from the poor farms and small towns of Quebec. He did. And he found as he worked with the poorer parishes of Nashua and Manchester that it was a direct advantage to be able to issue strong words of warning to the masses of mill workers in their own native tongue as well as <sup>to</sup> bless them with a benediction in French following the one in Latin in the Missal. He always put the admonitions for charity and support of the church, such as the Coal Fund and Aid to the Needy Poor, in language they could understand without effort. As a result, he was the outstanding fund-raiser in the diocese. The Bishop recognized this and gave him this, his own church, to build, guide, and strengthen. These last three years had gone well: Holy Name was the largest and most prosperous church in Mason -- let those Protestant <sup>bastards</sup> whine about that -- and its diocesan pledge is the largest in the state outside of the big cities. ~~xx~~ He was his ~~own~~ boss and he ~~x~~ was listened to by the Yankee merchants and the gumbooted farmers. He was respected. ~~xxxxxxx~~ They called the French Canadians the foreign element, but they heard what <sup>Herman Manion</sup> ~~A~~ <sup>says</sup> from his pulpit on Sundays and they are a little more careful how they treat members of his flock. He never thought he'd end up here, in the sticks; he always thought he'd make it ~~xxx~~ to a fine parish in Brookline or Springfield or Worcester. Maybe coach football or ~~xxxx~~ direct the athletic program at Holy Cross or Boston College.

He made a fine name for himself in athletics at B.C. Lettered in football, hockey, and baseball, and in his senior year had lettered in track by throwing the hammer for points against Holy Cross. But baseball was his love, his game. He had a tryout with the Braves and he might have made it there too but like so many other good amateurs he couldn't hit the curve ball. Big league pitching is like

father  
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the Jebbies: another class, another kind. He didn't have to be a Jesuit, His vocation was working with people, not scholarship or ~~xx~~ teaching and he knew it. Oh, but it would have been grand -- maybe even President of the College of The Holy Cross. What dreams he had in those days! All things seem possible when you're captain of the baseball team, pitching the big ones and playing first base to have your bat in all the games. His mother had him for a priest from the start. Every solid family had at least one son for the church, the way the Jews are crazy for doctors or lawyers, and one daughter as a bride of Christ, too. He wasn't sure but he went along because his mother was happier that way. But he wasn't your skinny pale bookworm, living for a smile and a blessing from Father Flaherty to make his day. He served on the altar all the way from sixth grade on, but he kind of dropped away when he got to <sup>The</sup> College. He went to mass regularly, yes, but he had an eye for the girls, too, and they for ~~xxx~~ him. Ellen, Ellen Flynn, was his girl from sophomore year on. They were a pair and he looked for her in the stands of any game he ever played. It was sweet, with kisses and caresses which grew longer and <sup>more</sup> serious from year to year. Some times he ended the evening with what the boys called lovers nuts ~~and~~ and he thought he'd burst. But she was keeping herself for him and he, he was keeping himself... what was he keeping himself for? He wasn't sure. It was getting harder --- there's a fine thought--- year by year, and the nocturnal emissions, the term urged <sup>the pure</sup> on/~~xx~~ by the seminary tract on pastoral counselling rather than the vulgar "wet dream," came with greater and greater regularity until the words of Saint Paul, "better to marry than burn" came more and more to mind. Anyway, he had his sports and he was always in training for some sport or other, with the obligation not to weaken himself so he couldn't give his very best. He had a reputation to maintain from freshman year on. Everybody knew that from the first time he put on a B.C. uniform he was never substituted for in any sport, except for hockey where

you took your regular shift. The college was small and expected <sup>from</sup> each member of the squad the best he could give. Those were the days.

The alarm clock in Ellen's room has gone off and he hears the door to the bathroom and shortly after the commode flushes. Normally he would have been up and out of his bed, but it is warm and safe under the light covers and he drifts off into that wonderful world between sleep and wake when our life comes floating back to us. Ellen, Ellen Flynn. Her face was pinched and her skin had a skim-milk bluish tinge to it in the cold wind off the Charles River, late fall and winter. But when she laughed in her quick excited way before she let him kiss her, the flush ran upwards from her bosom and she blossomed red and soft. That's what he remembers best, the red blush that came with the protest before it turned into a moaning "Harry, we musn't, not now; we must not. " They must not and they did not until that June night twenty-four, no, twenty-six years ago. Does she remember it? Is it an anniversary for her? She never said. She never says anything. It was the final game of the season. They had beaten Holy Cross, 2 to nothing. He had struck out twelve and given up three hits. Kenny O'Donnell, the Holy Cross ~~pitcher~~ pitcher ( he went on to pitch for the White Sox) gave up five hits and he got two of ~~them~~ those. A double, and in the bottom of the eighth <sup>with a man on</sup> after he'd walked a man, a homer over the left field fence before the Graduation crowd filled with returning alumni and families. Unbelievable. A regular Frank Merriwell finish. Well, of course, he was the hero of the day, no doubt of that. And Ellen was so proud she ~~kissed~~ kissed ~~him~~ him right after the game, in public. He couldn't believe it. That night, of course, was the Graduation Ball in the Fred Harrison Gym. They danced and danced and drank more cups of that sweet punch than they could remember. What they didn't know until the next day was that Stubby Walsh had waited until the last hour, when all the chaperons had finished drinking, to put in a quart of pure alcohol from his

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They  
father's pharmacy. ~~xxx~~ stayed until the band played " Good night, Ladies,"  
and then they caught the last car home. What a night that was. They  
sang and danced through the streets until they came to her folks' three-  
decker tenement.

Jim and Mary Flynn had long since gone to bed. They were  
respectable people and in those days you had to be on your job at the  
post office by six thirty in the a.m. Ellen was going to fix them some  
eggs and toast, <sup>they</sup> ~~xxx~~ were that hungry, and <sup>they'd</sup> ~~xxxx~~ have breakfast just as if  
they'd been to a society ball at the ~~xxx~~ Copley Plaza. But that was one  
breakfast ~~xxx~~ <sup>They</sup> never got to eat. ~~xxx~~ started kissing and holding and rubbing  
and the next thing ~~x~~ he knew Ellen was lying on the sofa in her white  
underwear, her ball gown off and discarded. They had gone too far then  
to stop. There was no arguing or turning ~~x~~ away. It was if she was more  
determined to take ~~him~~ than he was to take her. He had never seen her  
naked body before and how beautiful she was. Full breasts and hips,  
twisting and turning from side to side, not trying to get away but  
unable to remain still and quiet like a lady. It was a complete surprise  
to him, her wantonness. 'You were so wonderful, today, Harry," she said,"  
and you're mine, ~~my~~ mine." Where she learned it or how she knew what to  
do, he never knew, but she was in charge, telling him to do this and that,  
and he doing it as if he were bewitched, and indeed maybe he was. He was  
a little afraid of her that night. Nice girls didn't act that way, only  
'hoors' and he knew she was a nice girl, but that night she was like ~~x~~  
another person, someone he'd never known. Later on, in those long nights'  
in seminary when he couldn't sleep, he figured out that she was out to  
bind him so close he would never leave her. She knew he was a public  
figure, in the sports pages of all the newspapers, the one place the  
poor Irish of tenement ~~Boston~~ <sup>Boston</sup> were the equal of Harvard, Yale and Princeton.  
It was she who led them back to the lovemaking the second time, now more  
deliberate, more extending, once the excitement of the first coupling  
had died down. She held ~~xxx~~ <sup>him</sup> in her a long time after they both had

had finished --- and he listening for the sound of a door opening and bare feet padding on the linoleum, ~~and~~ expecting the figure of Mary Flynn in her night cap to appear at any moment. If Mary Flynn heard, she knew and chose to stay away. There were no tears of regret, no demands for declarations of eternal love. Ellen was suddenly <sup>both</sup> very shy and very businesslike. Gathering up her gown and shaking out the wrinkles like a little housekeeper, after she had put on her drawers and camisole, or whatever it is called, she hustled <sup>him</sup> ~~xxx~~ out of the flat and onto the outside stairs with words of how late it was, how her folks would soon be up, how they musn't find us alone together. She seemed very sure and very satisfied, as she stood in the dark doorway with a little smile on her face.

He didn't see her much in the next month or six weeks. <sup>He</sup> ~~I~~ had the try-out at Braves Field and turned down their offer to go to a double A farm team for seasoning. <sup>He</sup> ~~I~~ didn't know what <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ wanted, but suddenly <sup>his</sup> ~~my~~ mother was awful ~~xxx~~ sick and <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ knew <sup>he</sup> ~~I~~ didn't want to be that far away, driving half the night every few nights in a rickety old bus from one cold shower locker room to the next. <sup>He</sup> ~~I~~ took a job working for a lumber yard, W.E. Sawyer, outside of Worcester, and playing on their semi-pro team. Lots of companies in those days had a ball team for advertising and the league was full of good college ball players. When he saw her in the stands that Sunday afternoon in July, he knew why she was there. Their talk was short and she wasted no words. She was pregnant and he was the only man she'd ever been with. He believed her.

Why didn't he marry her? He didn't know then and he didn't know now. It ~~may~~ have been that he was aware of her parents and his, trapped in low-paying dead-end jobs, doomed to sitting in the tenements as the years went by, waiting for the pension and finally the priest with his' little black case, scrabbling from pay envelope to pay envelope. Oh, yes, he was a college graduate, but what was open ~~to~~ the Irish in those years? Politics? Years of sucking around after some fat ward heeler until he got his own constituency? He had seen too many paunchy, windy talkers in the

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Honey Fitz brigade to settle for that. No. He wanted something better, a position of respect and authority, where people would look up to him. Marry Ellen? And fill the house with little snout-nosed Manions, not<sup>d</sup> likely. ~~xxx~~ He'd seen a side of her the night of the graduation ball that made him know he'd be caught and bound in her camisole, edged with lace, soft and enticing, so tightly he'd never be free of it.

Over the years, he never went to a house of sadness to administer the Supreme Unction without reflecting in the dim light of the vigil candle which hid better than darkness the poverty residing there that<sup>1</sup> the death he was to preside over as he ushered the soon-departed to a better life was a<sup>2</sup> much a freeing of the family members to a better life with new chances, new opportunities, as it was the last act for the mortal being passing over. And so it was for him. <sup>His</sup> ~~xx~~ mother's final act as she lay in that bed she'd shared with Hugh Manion all those years was to make him promise to redeem the promise she had made to the Mother~~x~~ church when she had dedi<sup>d</sup>ated ~~me~~ <sup>him</sup> to its service. There was no struggle in her dying and there<sup>be</sup> was no struggle to his dying to the world. Yes, they~~xx~~ still talked about it that way in those days. It was as if he had always had the voca~~ca~~tion, as if he had finally accepted the place he had always known was <sup>his.</sup> ~~mine.~~

But what about his child in Ellen Flynn's belly? How could he turn aside from that responsibility? He had sinned and he had to make good on that. He knew that and yet he couldn't marry her. That was not the way out. For either of <sup>them.</sup> ~~xx~~. Surprisingly, she offered little resistance when <sup>he</sup> ~~x~~ told her. "I've always known you would go for a priest," she said. "You've always been ~~xxxxxxx~~ different from the others. Always the star, always the dedicated one; you never really sweat like the rest of us. In a world of your own. Johnny Kelly's been after me to marry him, for six months now. We'll be wed as soon as we can publish the banns. And I'll raise your son as I've always dreamed.



~~XX~~ Johnny's not much, a weak man, but I have your son now and I always will. That's enough for me. Don't worry about me. Go on and do what you have to do."

She had been right about his vocation, right with some sort of other world surety. <sup>she was</sup> Unlike his mother, his vocation would not redound to her in any way, would not provide her with any inner peace for having fulfilled God's will in this world. And yet, he reflected, there was the same kind ~~of~~ hunger for sacrifice built into them both. Was it in the Irish blood, brought over from the Ould Sod with the immigrant women as a kind of guard against lifelong poverty there and now here? Having little, was it safer to give more than required in propitiation? If she valued him so highly, how could she give him up so easily? It bothered him that she gave in without a struggle, leaving him to carry the burden of his sin by himself, not demanding that he do the right thing by her.

And yet he need not have been disturbed. By the time he returned from the seminary dressed in the black that was to be his for life to his mother's death bed, he was at peace. He could, through his dedication, make ~~up~~ every day's study and work an act of contrition. The joy and peace that shone in his mother's eyes as he bent over her wasted face -- he could never forget the obscene swelling of her belly as the cancer filled her whole abdomen in a mocking pregnancy that threatened to choke out her very breath -- made him put aside any doubts of <sup>his</sup> worthiness that the priests who guided him had warned of. The worst of the temptations, they said. The work of the devil. We are all tempted, they said. Only the weak surrender. Chastity, poverty and obedience are our sword and our buckler, they repeated. If they only knew how easy the second two

were for him and how hard the first. For he had known a woman, if only for a night, and his knowledge had brought forth fruit in keeping with God's will; it had been blessed. And now he was denied the joy of fatherhood, the pleasure of a growing child. As he held his mother's hand <sup>while</sup> ~~as~~ she dozed, slipping in and out of consciousness, he longed to tell her, to let her die happy in the knowledge, of her grandson. A cruel joke, topping even the bitterness of her strangling rasping death, that she could not know. A son dedicated to God versus another generation, an extension of her life. Once when she woke, she felt his hand in her grasp and said in broken wheezing phrases, " Henry Cardinal Manion<sup>I</sup>, Will hear it some day, somewhere, Harry, and I'll be so proud, so proud. " He could not bear to chide her or contradict her. This was her time and he was her son and she had earned whatever dreams~~w~~ were left to her in this life. It seemed to him that she breathed easier after that, with less struggle, and when towards evening she drew a sharp quick breath, he knew she was gone.

Her death freed him from the old life and set him free to give himself over utterly to the long hours of study and frequent prayer tha<sup>h</sup> he now sought so eagerly. He never again returned to the old neighborhood, the old friends, the old flat. It did not exist, they did not exist for him now, nor did he fill the void with any strong friendships with his fellows. He told himself that there was not time and knew that he meant he would take no new risks.

The years in the seminary passed quickly. The days had a rhythm of their own and <sup>he</sup> took very little notice of the world outside. Retreats, vigils, rosaries, fasts and the holidays of the church calendar were all that marked the passing months. He enjoyed the physical labor by which the seminarians kept down the cost of their education and the biggest treats of the summer were th<sup>e</sup> trips in to see the Braves play. The dioc~~e~~se had a standing gift of tickets

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for every home game, and while most of them went to the clergy across the state, from time to time, the seminary would be offered a block and he would go in his turn. He followed the pennant races whenever one of his teachers who was an ardent fan would discuss the standings during a break between classes. For a while when he watched from the stands he longed to be out on the mound throwing a shut out or at bat winning his own game, but by the <sup>fifth</sup> ~~third~~ year he was giving his place to someone in the lower classes to concentrate on his ~~studies~~ studies. He was determined to finish first in his class, because he knew that the Archbishop took the top five graduates into the Diocesan office -- in that, it was like clerking for a supreme court justice -- and his career would be assured. He was taking no chances.

In looking back at his years in the seminary, he would remember many of his instructors for many different reasons. There were the saintly ones, ~~who~~ who bore physical pain and infirmity without a word, who would be found in the chapel at all hours of the night doing penance for some slight or wrong, these were the ones who were looked up to, who were said to wear hair shirts and belts of barbed wire around their middle. There were the fleshy rubicund ones, who looked as if they had eaten well all their lives and drunk better than that. There were the dull ones, who usually taught <sup>hermeneutics</sup> ~~theology~~; the golden voiced ones, who taught preaching( ) and seemed always to be striking poses and throwing their voices to the back corners of the dusty <sup>amphi-</sup> theatre. But the one he remembered best was Father James Cronin, "little Jimmy," they called him, who taught a short class the last semester, an hour a week only, called Pastoral Relations. He was a gnarled little man, barely over five feet tall, with a face like the shell of a walnut all bumps and grooves and lines like dueling scars. He came from a long line of publicans who had <sup>ran</sup> ~~run~~ a bar just off Harvard Square in Cambridge. "Little Jimmy" came out each Wednesday to lecture to the Seniors on how to manage a parish. He had his own church in East Cambridge, where the incoming waves of Irish came to

initial rest on the shores of America. He had seen them come and seen them go, he said, and still they came. He had been in his church thirty years and more, he said, <sup>and</sup> was there ~~was~~ in their classroom on the direction of the Archbishop who had sent him out to add some leaven to their educa-shun, to tell them how the outside world would see them when they had their collars on -- and off.

" Gintlemen, he'd say. " Gintlemen, it won't be the same when you get out there after your ordination, not at all, at all. You'll be called father and father you must be. And I'm here to tell you how."

"Little Jimmy" covered many things, such as managing your church budget, how to get the most out of your sodality , five ways to increase the weekly giving, <sup>free</sup> goods and services available to the priest in any parish. Sound solid practical stuff, all. But what Harry carried with him longest and found most useful in his ~~priestly~~ <sup>life</sup> vocation ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> two talks: " The Priest and The Church" and "The Priest and His Church."

In the first, Father Cronin said, among, other things: "You must remember that when your parishioners see you they see the church. When those outside your church see you, it's the Protestants now I'm talking about, they see the church. In this re-gard you are never off duty. There's two ways, two main ~~ways~~ ways for a priest to go wrong, maybe three. The first is women. Many a good man <sup>whose</sup> ~~who's~~ <sup>has</sup> ~~ruin~~ ~~the~~ love of a good ~~woman~~, and I don't mean your mother ither. There'll be the Mary Maggelenes, the ~~daughters~~ of joy, who'll come to you for comfort, and they'll be no trouble, no trouble atall. They'll want forgiveness and understanding, and sometimes a little charity, but no more. They'll be shocked beyond belief if you offer them comfort of your own in exchange for the comfort they offer all men. Take care!! Remember that the bar and shadow of the confessional are there for the benefit of the priest as well as the repentant sinner. No, more dangerous than these ~~are~~ <sup>is</sup> the good ~~woman~~. She'll be lovely and full of tears. Her cross will be her man who drinks too much or gambles away his pay before he gets it

home on Saturday night. She'll have small ones at home and no food for the weekend. And she'll be weary from scrubbing other people's floor. She will be full of travail, sick of this world, and wanting rest. But remember only Jesus Christ can give her that. Matthew, XI. 28. And you are only the inter-mediary for God's blessings, not God himself. She's a good woman and like all good women she's looking for a good man, and she knows you're good and though she'll never admit, you're a man. Many a good priest has fallen to the needs of a good woman. And the shadow you thought you'd put behind you in seminary, like our good lord in the desert, is standing or worse kneeling there before you. Beware the good woman.

" Somewhere along the line, say, the seventh year, you have your own church and you're doing fine. You're well thought of in the parish and you've had your share of good women to tempt you and you've been strong and held them off without offending them. Everything's under control. But you've begun to pour a little more of the sacramental wine at communion than you need to. And you're taking a little Four Roses before lunch to give you some appetite and another snort before that five o'clock meeting and a good sized nightcap because you're sleeping poorly and you need your rest. Before you know it, you're putting away a fifth a day and the curate is taking more of the services than he should, for the experience of it. You know the term, whisky priest, you know it, and you've become one. And the Bishop has to send you out to that Monastery in the Berkshires to dry out, or perhaps the Missionary Fathers have gained another recruit.

" As I said before, from the day of your ordination, you are not only in the church, in the eyes of all who see you, believers or not, you are the church. Neither women nor drink <sup>has</sup> ~~have~~ tempted you beyond refusal and you are strong. You look around you and you see the good things of life passing you ~~bye~~ bye. You deserve better, but you have taken your vow of poverty and so you have little. But wait!

There is a way. You need to get around more easily, to visit the sick and the infirm, and you need a motor car. ( In my day it was a trap and a pair.) You have the position of the church to maintain, and so you buy a fine big machine. With what? With the money from your parish, of course. And there's that fine men's clothing store in Boston which gives a good sized discount to clergy. And better food and wine for your table. You must entertain well. And so forth and so on. The one thing the common man resents and the thing they say among themselves, is that you do no work. And it is a favorite weapon of the enemies of the church, that the priesthood lives too well. Remember and never forget, we live on the charity of the people. We must earn this every day and we must never forget where it comes from."

Harry had listened and remembered well. In his twenty years as a priest, he thought, he had never fallen prey to any of the traps "Little Jimmy" had covered in his discourse. As curate and rector, he had applied himself to his earthly and spiritual duties with a vigor which had marked him as a comer in the church. When, marked by his gifts and energy, he had been recommended to Bishop Pelletier and elevated to the Diocesan Office, he had lived well, but he worked hard and earned for the Diocese far more than he took. And besides, by the time the money had gotten to that purse it was far removed from the source and both the clergy and the laity expected, if not demanded for the sake of hope, those in the hierarchy to be different and for the difference to show for the greater glory of the Faith.

It was the subject matter of the second memorable talk by Father Cronin that really intrigued Harry. The first, covering the carnal sins that man is heir to, he approached as a problem in discipline. Here his athletic training stood him in good stead. He had been a well disciplined athlete, moving from season to season, sport to sport, knowing that it was always easier to stay in shape than get in shape. In a metaphoric sense, then, he kept up his roadwork, did his weights

and barbell exercises, watched his diet, got lots of rest. Over the years, it became a matter of the regimen he maintained rather than the individual temptation to be faced down. As illness attacks those who overindulge or do not take care of themselves, so he found if he was in shape morally, he had little to worry about in succumbing to the weaknesses of his mortality.

"Little Jimmy" began his talk on "The Priest and His Church" by going to a source neither Biblical nor Ecclesiastic, the works of Niccolo Machiavelli, <sup>in</sup> particularly The Prince. It amazed them to have this <sup>little</sup> strutting figure in black who walked back and forth before them looking more like an hostler or horsetrader, more naturally in houndstooth check or window plaid, than a servant of God speak of the world in such terms.

"Gintlemen, good sirs, as I have said from the first, my job, given me by His Grace, is to prepare you for the outside world, the world outside these cloistered walls. You may be shocked by what I am to say, perhaps if you are shocked you will remember. As Machiavelli said of the Prince, 'It is better to be feared than loved.' To some of you full of the love of <sup>God</sup> ~~man~~ and of man, this will seem like blasphemy. It is not. It is practical commonsense. We preach of a God of Love and Forgiveness, and well we should, for this is the sole hope of all us poor sinners. But it is also true, historically true, that the church has always relied on fear, fear for the life hereafter, to direct believers on the right path and to punish for their own good those who stray. Some of you will raise the question, is it not possible to be both feared AND loved? The answer is, yes, but if it comes to a point of choice, to properly exercise your power under God you must choose fear. And this is particularly true of those of us in the American church, and I'll tell you why.

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" Most of you here are descended from the Irish Church. Your forebears come out of a tradition which is strict and severe. What I say should sound both natural and true to you. Others of you come from the Latin church, native Italy. The Latin church, perhaps because of its closeness to Rome itself, is more world weary, more experienced, cynical even. Your forebears love, and applaud "Il Papa" but you no longer fear him. Society there has absorbed the church, as the church has absorbed society.

"The church in America is the church of the poor, the lately arrived. Look each of you at the families from which you came. You are here, dedicated by your mothers most of you, as the hope of lower classes, foreigners. Strangers in a strange land. You will go out to churches located in the poorer parts of ~~xxxx~~ cities, set aside in small racial communities. The only hope for these small groups, these "foreign elements," as some Yankees refer to us, is to act as a body, as a whole. And <sup>do</sup> ~~to~~ this there must be discipline. Discipline comes from fear, not from love.

" The church in America is a young church, almost always the minority church. For its own protection and the protection of those who worship in it it must be a source of strength. They fear us in this country and as they fear us they hate us. If we are not strong, we will be destroyed. As we stand outside the dominant ~~xxxxxxx~~ society, we are a threat to it.

" So what I'm saying is, you must rule your church with an iron hand. There can be no other authority but yourselves. You have the power, the church gives it to you. The seal of the Holy Father, inheritor of Peter and Paul, has two keys, the keys of heaven and hell. The <sup>eternal</sup> ~~reward~~ <sup>at</sup> and the everlasting punishment. You have the power, use it. Excommunication for the believer means damnation and eternal hell fire. This country is called the land of opportunity and it is. It is also the land of freedom to license.



If you do not exercise the power you have, you will see your parish slipping away from you, especially the young. They will leave you in pursuit of the material goods, the good life which is so abundantly open to them. If you do not exercise the power you have, you will find your church full of women thirsting after the intercessions of Our Mother Mary and old men seeking to get right with God before he calls them to their eter<sup>n</sup>al rest. In the old~~x~~ churches of Europe, we still have power from those in whom fear is so deep and so hidden that they are still wary of it, though they would never admit it. Here in this young and bursting land, there is no such fear. The American is said to be pragmatic -- thanks to my Cambridge neighbor William James -- but more important he is eternally op<sup>t</sup>mistic and as our flocks become more Americanized they too will take on this optimism which can only take them away from the Mother Church. America was founded by protesters. We cannot have protestors, we must have believers.

" You will have this power with your priestly robes and official duties. But you will maintain it only through force of personality, through personal authority. The church is and always has been big enough and strong enough to support priests who are weak through perso~~na~~al frailty but it will surely fall and decline if it does not have priests who exercise their God-given authority."

\* Harry remembered. He remembered how still the class was, stunned by the perc<sup>u</sup>sion coming from this most unlikely little figure wh~~o~~ grew in size as he spoke like some genie from a fairy tale. Whyhe wasn't Archbishop, they didn't know. When they looked back down at him, he was back to size, no figure of a saint or prophet. But Harry never forgot and he took ~~that~~<sup>the</sup> lesson that day for his life.

When Harry Manion returned to ~~his~~<sup>his</sup> bedroom after shaving he could feel the tingle of the witch hazel as it burned on his cheeks. He'd shaved a little closer than he wanted this morning, but with his beard he couldn't take any chances. His ~~xxx~~ heavy blue beard made him look like a thug if he wasn't careful, and if there was an evening service or a whist party in the ~~factory~~<sup>PARISH HALL</sup> he always shaved a second time before supper. As he slipped on his high laced shoes he noted with approval that new heels had been put on and the shoes had a bright high polish. Ellen took good care of him.

In the dining room he had no sooner taken his place at the head of the table than the kitchen door swung in and Ellen brought in his bacon and eggs and toast. The pot of hot coffee was already sitting by his plate along with the pitcher of heavy cream. She was silent always in the morning, he had early on directed that they would have no morning conversation. If he had anything to tell her, he would, but there would not be breakfast table talk. He ate rapidly giving all his attention to ~~her~~<sup>his</sup> food. When he had poured his second cup, ~~he~~<sup>he</sup> looked at her as she finished the coffee she brought in from the kitchen. How could anyone look so bleak on a beautiful June morning? Her hair was drawn back tight close to her skull under the frilly dust cap she wore in the morning; her face was pale under the clotted face powder and the rouge on her cheekbones only accented their sharpness under the skin; her lips were <sup>a</sup> bloodless thin strip just above the chin jutting ~~xxxx~~ out like an icicle. She looked sixty-five. Looking at the caved-in cheeks, he regretted the money he had put into the set of teeth he bought her when she'd first taken over as housekeeper. They'd made no difference that he could see. They clattered when she ate and annoyed him so that after several meals together, she'd formed the practice of eating in the kitchen and serving him in the dining room. No one could ever accuse

Concupiscence. The word sent him back again to the seminary lecture hall with Father Cronin. He had ~~x~~ referred the group of graduating seniors to the section in the book of canon law ~~having~~ <sup>having</sup> to do <sup>with</sup> the priest's household.

" Eisdem licet cum illis... Clerics are allow<sup>ed</sup> to reside only with women about whom there can be no suspicion, either because of a natural bond (as mother, sister, aunt) or of advanced age, combined in both cases with good repute."

The good Lord knew he was safe there. What suspicion could there be about this aged duster ? How could there be any suggestion of anything but good repute about this aged duster and scrubber? He had no worries there. She stared ~~straight~~ <sup>straight</sup> ahead ahead of her, out the window, at the pines growing along the side of the church.

He waited until in the silence her eyes shifted and met his. " Brian up yet ? " No, he got in quite late." " When he's had his breakfast, tell him to come and see me. I'll be in my study."

She turned toward him <sup>in</sup> her chair. " Father, I'm scared. It's dangerous here for Brian. He must leave."

" Why is he here?"

" The usual. He ran out of money. He can't get a ship for two weeks and so he's come home to stay until then."

" I thought we had that all clear. He was not to come back to Mason. We had that all out ten months ago. "

" We did. I sent him all the money in my savings account."

" You sent him money? After all the money I gave him last fall ?

" I had to. He kept writing he couldn't get work and I sent him a little at a time until it was all gone. ~~We~~ <sup>He</sup> are all he's got, Father. We must help him."

" Well, you tell him to come to see me this morning. Not this afternoon, not this evening, this morning." He could feel the heat rising in his face and he slammed his napkin on the table and got up and went out before he said anything more.

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As he sat at his desk, he settled back with a grunt and a sigh in the heavy unholstered chair. This was his seat, not the cathedra of a bishop, but it was his and it was comfortable. For the first time in his life, when he had come to Holy Name, he had ~~a desk~~ a desk that was broad enough and a chair that was big enough for a man his size. That was one thing about building a new church, Old Pelletier wanted everything new, everything first class, and he didn't care about the price. His mind drifted back to <sup>the</sup> day when he had first seen Ellen after ~~twenty~~-five years. The diocese had a list of women suitable for housekeepers ~~and~~ when he was getting ready to take up residence in Mason, and a sorry bunch they were. The lame and the halt, if not the blind. This was his first church and he would liked to have had a fresh colleen right off the boat with a strong back and a strong pair of hands, well trained by the sisters ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> her own mother. But that was of course impossible. He'd not recognized her at first; her married name had put ~~her~~ <sup>him</sup> off and he'd not looked too carefully at her application. She was well recommended by her parish priest who said if he had not been so well supplied himself he'd have taken ~~her~~ <sup>her</sup> into his rectory. She had barely lifted her her eyes from the floor as they began to talk, and then suddenly she'd looked up, finally recognizing his name, and had stared at him with disbelief. Her cheeks grew flushed and she made a move as to get up and flee. It was no scene of passion or tears; she was too work worn and life weary for that. He asked if she wanted to work for him and she said she would. She said she had a son who was in the merchant marine and she asked only that he be allowed to stay with her when he was not at sea. He said that that was fine with him, we had to support our young men serving in the work against the Hun who raped and killed the women and children of Belgium, and the rest of the interview was taken up with the time and details of her employment.

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His eyes shifted from the papers on his desk to the shining trophies, tennis trophies, on the top of the book case set between the two doors into his study. <sup>There</sup> ~~They~~ were three of them, two larger than the third. He never looked at them without recalling the feeling of triumph they'd brought when they'd been put in his hands after the championship match! <sup>in Singles</sup> They were for/doubles of course, he'd grown too heavy to chase from side to side in long rallies, on dirt courts they played on. All except the smaller one. That wasn't for the championship but for the runnersup, the losers. He'd played long and hard that day but it seemed everytime the game came to an important point and he had a put-away, a shorter quicker-moving figure ~~xxxxxxx~~ had intervened at the net and the ball had come back just out of reach, down the line, or across court at an angle. It was silly how the smaller trophy galled him. At first he had thought of walking off and refusing to accept it. Damn Doc <sup>O'Connor</sup> ~~Kennedy~~, anyway! But the burden of sportsmanship would not permit such an act. And now <sup>O'Connor</sup> ~~he~~ was back from the wars and sniffing around. What did he know? What would he <sup>find</sup> ~~know~~ out? There was much to be discovered. <sup>We are</sup> ~~He was~~ so close to succeeding, <sup>Manion said to himself</sup> /If only those three idiots would move faster. He gave them all the witnesses they needed, all the evidence. The affidavits were coming in now, one after another, and each one contained a hard fact which was another strand in the rope which would hang ~~BillyxTherndikex~~ Perkins Meade. Each strand made the rope strong enough to hold, strong enough to hang the demand for a 2nd Grand Jury hearing on. The April Grand Jury had been a farce. This one would be different. Packard would have to call those who had sworn to facts not brought up in the whitewash. There were many who had not been called to testify before. They would be heard. He opened the folder and started to go through the list of those who wanted to go on record; the list was growing weekly. He closed the folder after fixing in his mind who he would have to have in next when Louis Richard came up on Wednesday evening as Notary to take the sworn statement. One-arm Louis, he mused,

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a crippled would-be lawyer and a trio of small town clowns, what an Army of Justice he commanded. Hah! He had enough trouble keeping them headed toward the enemy, let alone getting them to fight. He supplied the ideas, but he could <sup>not</sup> do it all himself. Underneath ~~xxxx~~ the folder he had picked up lay a bunch of bills pinned together. These were expenses to be approved by the Selectmen at their next meeting, bills run up in the continuing investigation. The first of these was a bill for car hire from Harrington's Garage. \$ 4.50 for a trip to the county seat and back. Ed Moran was noted as the driver. He pushed ~~back~~ the <sup>pile</sup> ~~xxxx~~ aside impatiently. He didn't have time for that now. Why had Brian come back? When he left last August with the \$ 1500 in cash from Manion's savings account, he swore he would not return until Ellen told it was safe. He hadn't been so cocky then. He knew it was the hottest thing he'd ever been in and he was damned glad for the help. Money? Blackmail? A murderer doesn't blackmail the only person in the world who can help him, did help him. Or does he? Had all those months on the Atlantic fried his brains ~~xxxxxx~~ so he didn't care anymore? Does a Man who has lived daily with death at any moment need threat or danger like some kind of drug to keep him going?? Why else would have he/done ~~xxx~~ what he did last August? He wasn't quite right. Manion was afraid of nothing, man or beast, but dealing with a madman was something else again. Manion had seen that when Brian had~~x~~ come to him two days after the murder.

He knew something was up when Brian was seated there at the ~~breakfast~~ table with a cup of coffee when he came down for his breakfast. That hadn't happened in the three months he'd been staying with them.

August

" And <sup>to</sup> what do we owe this <sup>A</sup>honor," he'd said.

" I've got to talk to you," Brian said in a tone that was more a demand than a request.

" After I've had my breakfast, " he said. Nothing short of the Second Coming could keep him from having the breakfast he was accustomed to. With that Brian got up and went out to the kitchen and Manion could hear him and his mother having a discussion, loud whispers from her rising to shrieking repeated NO,NO,NO, and quick angry demanding tones from him. He couldn't hear what the row was about, but he had heard the same general exchange before and had told Ellen he wouldn't have it, not in his house.

He was barely seated in his chair behind the desk when Brian came in, dragging his mother along with him. He waited.

" I've got to have money to get away," Brian began.

" You've been here three months. Time enough for you to recover from shell shock or sea fever, or whatever it is sailors suffer from."

" I have to go today."

" All right. I'll give you train fare and three days expenses. That should get you started."

" That's not enough. I may not be able to get a ship that quick. I've got to have more. "

" Why do you have to go so soon? Why don't you call the hiring hall and have them call you when they have a berth open. You can stay here, your mother will be glad of your company and so will I." The last was a lie. He would be glad to see him go. People in the parish were beginning to talk about healthy young shirkers, (especially those with sons with the AEF in France.) His authority was being undermined. He had not found having a son the joy he thought it would be.

" You don't understand. I have to leave and I have to leave today. You don't understand."

" What is it I don't understand?"

" The old man. I was involved in killing the old man. We didn't mean to, we just wanted to have some fun with him. But he fought, he wouldn't go down. We had to kill him to shut him up."

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" You mean Billy Thorndike? That old man? You did that?"

He looked at Brian, who stood there clenching and unclenching those big hands, looking more angry than repentant, in astonishment. He ~~could~~ not believe what he was hearing. Drunken waterfront brawls, yes; petty thievery, armed ~~robbery~~ robbery, rape, <sup>these</sup> he could believe. But murder? As he tried to sort out his feelings and give some kind of an answer, some response, he heard a gentle moan and turned to see Ellen slip ~~am~~ off the horsehair sofa to the floor in a faint.

This was something he could deal with. " Now look what you've done. Get your mother some water." As Brian ran to the kitchen to get a glass of water, Manion, who was already out of his chair, reached in ~~in~~ a desk drawer for the small bottle of spirits of ammonia which he had long ago learned to keep handy when talking to female parishioners. The unb~~u~~dening of the soul often proved too much for them and he was soon skillful in restoring them to their senses. Between the ammonia and the chaffing of wrists and the water, they were able to get Ellen back to an almost upright position on the sofa, where she sat staring at Brian. She did not interrupt them again. bell peal.

" Why?" The question hung in the air like an ~~ammonia~~.

" We didn't mean to. It was an accident. It was his fault."

" His fault? That's hard to believe. How could it be his fault? You'd better tell us the whole story."

" Tuesday night, me and Ed Moran had a date with two girls for the band concert.

" Who were they?

" Ed was with Marie LaFleur and I was with Eleanor Atkinson."

" Who's she?"

" I don't think you know her. She's just come to town. She works as a nursemaid to the Torreys up in the center. I met her at a couple of <sup>ago.</sup> the ten o'clock ~~xxx~~ Sunday. She comes from Cape Evelyn on the North Shore of Boston."



(F)

" Go On."

" There's nothing to do in this hick town, you know, after nine o'clock, and besides Ed didn't want to be seen around town, him being married and all, and so we took the girls for a ride."

" Something you and Ed have done a number of times before."  
It was a statement, not a question.

" What ? Oh, yeah. Well, the last couple of weeks we've been watching the lights with some other people from the roof of the Hart house. The signal lights, you know ?? The one light we could always see was the one from Thondike Hill. Some of us thought there was signaling going on from there. That German couple lived up there for a long time. They're gone now, but we thought maybe they'd come back and do their signalling from there, it's the <sup>sightliest</sup> ~~signal~~ place for miles around. Anyway, we thought we'd give the old man a good scare. We was up there once before, almost got caught, and we heard the old man had been talking about it ever since. And maybe catch ourselves a spy, in the bargain. " He paused and looked at Manion as if asking for approval.

Manion was impassive, determined to give as little response as possible. " Go on," he said.

" We was just out for some fun. Scares the girls, you know, they love it, they jump at every little sound and want to be protected, but they love it. That Marie, especially. Anyway, we <sup>90</sup> ~~went~~ out the Peterborough Road right after the band concert, running with no lights so no one can see us coming. Ed pulls that big Twin-Six Packard <sup>Phae-ton</sup> ~~runabout~~ of his off the road, backed in toward the fence so we can get out of there fast if we have to. We <sup>90</sup> ~~went~~ across the field to the stone wall and down to the barn. Usually we go on up to the big house, the one that's been empty ever since the Germans left. But Tuesday night, Marie said Eleanor and me should go up to the big house and she and Ed would go into the barn. Said we could tell more if we were looking from

different places. I dunno, maybe it was because she didn't know Eleanor, but anyway she wanted to get Ed off alone. She said it was plenty safe and comfortable up in the hay in the loft. I didn't want to argue, specially in front of Evelyn. If she'da been my girl, she'd have done what I said, lots of bedrooms in the big house looking in all directions. Anyway, I took Eleanor and we eased in the back door of the big house and up to a bedroom where we could see the Temple Hills." He took a drink of water from the glass he'd brought for his mother.

Manion said nothing but continued to watch Brian's face, wondering how anyone could expect to ~~be~~ believed such a bald faced mixture of fact and fiction. Would he try to lie his way out of this, too?

Brian continued, " It must have been ~~about~~ <sup>after</sup> nine thirty when we left the band concert and I guess it was on toward eleven when I heard the old man's buggy come up the road from town. We hadn't seen a damned thing all the time we were there, and Eleanor wanted to go home. Said she had to be home to the Torreys before midnight, they were very strict about that. I was worried now about Ed and Marie in the barn. We'd never done that before, always been in the big house together. So I watched from an upper window until I <sup>seen</sup> ~~saw~~ the old man come back from putting up his horse. We went down stairs and were out standing on the veranda when I saw him come out of the house with a lantern and a milk pail. Where were Ed and Marie I wondered. Why hadn't they gotten out of the barn when the old man left the first time. The way I figure it they must have been asleep up there in the loft. Anyway, Ed said they were just getting ready to sneak out of the barn and back to the car when they heard footsteps outside. They tried to duck back in the shadows under the loft but it didn't do any good. The old man saw'em in the light of

his lantern. The only thing to do was to try to make it out the partly open barn door before he could stop'em. Too late. He put the lantern down by the small door he'd come in by and picked up a hand cultivator off a little bench by the door and swung at Ed. Ed ducked and the cultivator hit and stuck in the barn floor when the old man missed. I don't rightly know just what happened then. I guess I saw the old man swing and miss and I knew if he got in another crack we were in a hell of a spot. Anyway, I picked up the cultivator and as the old man turned toward me, he saw me coming in the barn door, I hit him a lick along side the head and down he went. Eleanor hadn't come in with me. I don't know why she didn't run for the car. She told later she was standing outside peeing in her pants, too scared to move. "

As he described the violent action of the thrashing and louder shadows, Brian's voice got higher/and his whole body twisted in agitation." Why did he have to do that?" he asked. " Why did he have to attack us, we weren't doing anything."

His question fell without answer. He went on.

" I don't quite know what happened then. Marie, the cool one, stooped down and looked at the old man. The blood was coming down out of the hit in the head, three big marks like the claw of a big bird. She put her hand on his heart. He's still breathing, she said. He's still alive. Do something. He saw us. He knows who we are. Do something. Do what ?? I don't know why I thought of it <sup>then,</sup> but a shipmate of mine on the William B. Seward liked to talk about the way assassins kill over in Europe. They take a piece of wire, he said, strong wire with wooden handles on either end. Before I knew it, I picked up a halter which was laying on the top of the stall the horse was in and I slipped it under the old man's neck and pulled it tight, as tight as I could, from behind. It was the only thing I could think of to do. "

He looked down at his hands which he held out in front of him in a twisting motion. It was as if they were not part of him but had a life of their own. He sank down into the chair before Manion's desk exhausted by his exertion. He looked blankly at Manion, begging him him to say something, do something, anything which would show he understood.

Manion had to know more. If he was to help his son, he had to know more, everything there was to know. For the first time in his life he <sup>had</sup> someone, something to defend, more than a goalline or a hockey goal. His own flesh and blood. For the first time he felt a surge of love for this boy, <sup>Brian</sup> he had suddenly become a boy as the enormity of what he had done was renewed in the telling. The anger was gone, the bluff bragging speech was gone. He was Manion's to do with as he wanted. He was utterly defenseless.

"What happened then?" he said. "If I'm going to help, I have to know everything that happened, every last detail."

In a low monotone, Brian continued after taking a drink of the water <sup>from the glass</sup> his mother had gotten up and refilled from the kitchen tap after Manion had motioned her to do so. The priest and his housekeeper now both listened intently.

"He's dead," Marie said, after she had bent down again to listen to his breathing. "We've got to do something with the body." Ed just stood there as pale as a ghost, about as much use as the sack of chicken scratch standing in the corner. Marie told him to go outside and take care of Eleanor and he did. I guess they stood together outside until <sup>I called him to help</sup> ~~we came out~~ with the body. "What will we do with the body," I said? We could put it down under the barn in the manure pile. "No," she said, "that's one of the first places they'll look." "Well, I said, "we could take the chimney off the lantern and put it in the hay, burn up the barn and they'll never find a thing." "No," she said, "that'll attract attention. You can see this place for miles around. A fire in the barn'd bring people running up here. We want this to be quiet and private."

No, we've got to bury him somewhere, somewhere he won't come up for a long time, somewhere quiet and private so we can get away from here without anyone seeing us or hearing us. Here," she said, and she pulled off a horse blanket which was hanging over the seat in the wagon. "Wrap him in this." I laid the blanket down and rolled him up in it. I got some of his blood on my hands when I wrapped it around his head and some I think dripped on the floor. While I was doing that, Marie was looking around the barn for whatever she could find to use. "Here," she said, handing me a burlap sack, "put this over his head and pull it down as far as you can." While I was doing that, she went out and said something to Ed. In a few minutes she came back inside with a good sized stone, I guess he got it somewhere down below the barn. "Put it inside the sack," she said, "up towards his head," and he did that. "Tie the draw string of the bag to the loops in his belt, so it'll hold the bag down tight," she said. "Why are we being so fancy," I said. "Don't ask questions" she said. "Here, taken these pieces of rope," she said, "and tie him up at the knees and and ankles. He'll be easy to handle then." That was easy. I work a lot with ~~rm~~ line and knots in the Marine and I had him drawn up snug like a christmas turkey in no time. While she and I were working on the body, she told Ed to get a half apail of water in the milk bucket. We hauled the body outside the small door and stopped and listened to see if ~~we~~ we could hear anything. We could see a light up in the cottage by the road and there was someone walking back and forth in front of it. The light came and went like a ~~ring~~ signal. "There's your spy lights from Thorndike Hill," Marie said. "Wait," she said, "we've got blodd on our hands." We washed them off in the water in the milk pail. She threw out the dirty water and said we'd take the pail with us. She came back from taking a last look in the barn. "Look what I found," she said, and showed us the ~~xi~~ a german silver, wasn't real silver, cigarette case, "The old man must've dropped it," she said.

"We'll bury it with him. Where we gonna put him," Ed asked. It was the first time I'd heard him say anything and you could barely hear him.

"I've been thinking about that," she said. "There isn't time to bury him, we can't take him with ~~him~~ us. Too dangerous to take him down to the swamp. I think we'll dump him in the cistern near the big house." So Ed took his feet and I took his head and we lugged him up to the cistern. Marie dropped the cigarette case in the cistern and we heard it fall a long ways and hit the water. "Good," she said, "I wasn't sure there was any water in it." We slipped him in feet first. He didn't weigh much even with the rock in the sack. Eleanor just stood there by the cistern watching us. She was running her hands through her hair but she didn't say anything. I was more worried about her and what she might do than anything. Then we beat it back toward the barn and up the hill to the wall the way we ~~came~~ <sup>came</sup> in. Eleanor was so weak by now that she had trouble getting over the fence and when we pushed her up and over we knocked ~~off~~ a stone off the top. We got back in the car and took off like a bat out of hell. Ed may not be much help in a ~~pinch~~ pinch but he is one hell of a good driver. We stopped once in the middle of town at the Water Street bridge, 'cause we had an argument. Ed wanted to let Marie out there so the car wouldn't be seen near her house, but she insisted on us going up to the center first with Eleanor. Kind of hard to have a conversation, with the two girls ducked down behind the front seat. We had to go right through the middle of town like we were coming from Concord on the main route <sup>'cause</sup> ~~but~~ we didn't dare to come in on the old Peterborough road. Anyway, we dropped Eleanor off at the Torr~~ys~~ up in the Center and I got out here on the way back into town. Oh, one other thing. We ran most of the way back to town with no lights but when we hit the main road, Ed was scared that he'd get stopped by the Constable so he switched 'em on and ~~we~~ damned if his left lamp didn't go. That was the only problem we had getting home."

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Manion never could forget the silence that followed Brian's narration. It was heavier than any he had ever known, even that which weighted the hours he spent with his mother's dead body, her hand in his. Brian was quiet almost comatose, exhausted by the recitation of what he wanted so badly to forget. The only sound was Ellen's heavy rasping breathing; every breath seemed be more than the human lungs could be expected to draw. Minute after minute passed in procession, each perceptible from the last. Manion could relive those minutes to the end of his life; the memory of them never left him. He would smile to recall that his first reaction had been anger, anger at Brian for being so stupid, so brutal, so stupidly brutal. ~~subliminal~~ A whole series of hot questions, aimed at relieving himself on this lump sitting dejectedly before him, <sup>followed.</sup> Why had they gone there? What were they doing there? How could he be so ~~brutal~~ careless? What were they trying to prove. <sup>Afterward</sup> ~~at~~, he sat silently, playing out the dialogue in his own mind, supplying the answers which were no answers which were all he would get from this poor specimen of human being. What should he do? Call the police? Do the duty of a good citizen in bringing a killer to justice, even his own sin, the error amused him, his own son? A glance over at Ellen sunk in her own thoughts wiped out that possibility. He couldn't do that to her. He was sure enough that she would not talk even if he did take Brian to the County Soliciter, but not their son. The Bible talked about visiting the sins of the fathers on the children, but did it say anything about those of the children being visited on the father? It should have. He knew what would happen. Those holier-than-thou Protestants would just love that. Scandal? They'd make into a crusade. The passion of Christ would be nothing to what suffering he and the parishioners of Holy Name would have to live through. He'd seen the smirks and bitter smiles saying "well, what can you expect from a bunch of ignorant foreigners," at each Box factory girl who got in trouble, each abandoned mother with children who had to go on town help, each poor Canuck whose wages had to ~~garnished~~ garnisheed to

pay the debts he'd been allowed to run up. They give all their money to the priest, they said, every Sunday is a new demand for money for the Coal Fund, the this fund, the that fund. He's got 'em right under his thumb, they said; no wonder they don't pay their bills. The priests get it all. Every time he bought a new car, every time he bought a steak at the market was an occasion for a knowing look. They were just waiting for him to make a mistake. Him and that big new church, money squeezed from the poor, full of those statues they worship. Holy Water and all that. Well, he'd beaten them off. He'd built a big faithful parish who came to mass in great numbers. He had the young ones coming, too, with the catechism classes and the First Communion classes growing every year and the church basketball and baseball teams doing well. In ten years it would be a proud thing to be a Catholic in Mason, to be ~~beasted off~~ instead of explained away in terms of one's parents. And all this in three years. All this to be thrown away by a lustful young bastard who had nothing better to do than get into the pants of ~~some~~ foolish young girls scared of his brute strength and loving it all the while. He would, he thought, really like to see Brian get what was coming to him. Brian was an offense against man, against God. But he couldn't do it. He couldn't do it because the price was too high. Not for Brian. Brian would be shut up with his own kind, like animals in a pound, to attack each other in the ordering of their own society. <sup>would</sup> He survive that. No, the price would be the destruction of all that <sup>the priest had</sup> ~~he'd~~ built and the destruction of those he'd enlisted in the building.

He expelled the deep breath he hadn't known he was holding. The first and biggest decision was made. Brian had to get out of town as soon and as quietly as possible. Brian had to be eliminated from the scene, the slightest possibility of being involved. That was first. Then what about the others involved? They had to be taken care of. He would see to that. Lastly, if Brian didn't kill the old man, who did? The



Germans ? There had~~x~~been a lot of talk of signalling and spies in the whole Monadnock Region. Germans in ~~Sutton~~ <sup>KERRY</sup>. Sailors from German ships in Boston Harbor interned in nearby towns. Soldiers in uniform making searches on the neighboring hills and mountains. Ed Price on night patrol in the village had been reporting ~~them~~ <sup>lights</sup> to anyone who'd listen.

The family withthe German name who'd lived in the Big Thorndike house until four months ago? He'd have to find an answer to the question of who killed Dr. Thorndike and do it quick. There was~~x~~ already talk in<sup>c</sup> the village of Thorndike being killed because he knew too much about what was going on at night; he was already being called a patriot. That was a help. The death of a patriot was easier to explain, but until the killer was found there would always be <sup>the</sup> ~~a~~ question: who was the killer and why wasn't he caught and brought to justice. That would leave a vacuum, always, and Manion had been taught that nature abhorred a vacuum. Manion found that he did,too.

The call to Eleanor Atkinson had been short and direct: she was reminded that Confessions were being <sup>heard</sup> ~~made~~ that afternoon at five in Holy Name, and she she should be there. Ellen Kelly made that call. She also called Marie LaFleur at ~~the~~ Harrington's garage and Parish Fair Decoration at 7:30 that even reminded her of the ~~Whist Party~~ committee meeting in the Parish Hall ~~ing~~. She told her that it was such a longway up the hill and back that it would be better if she had someone bring her up. Marie said that Ed would, that young woman didn't have to have things spelled out for her, and he did.

Though the shadows in the <sup>northwest</sup> ~~northeast~~ <sup>of the church</sup> corner/were heavy and the wooden screen in the confessional ~~was~~ had very narrow slits, Father Manion had no difficulty in identifying the light hair and white ~~uniform~~ service uniform kneeling before him. Furthermore, he had waited in the door <sup>way</sup> ~~in~~ of the ~~xxx~~ ~~xx~~ sacristy until he saw her almost creep and then almost run from the door of the church to the penitant's side of the box. He had let her kneel there a few minutes with her thoughts before he pushed aside the curtain and took his seat.

"Yes ?"

" Father, I have sinned."

" Yes?"

" I have <sup>committed</sup> ~~committed~~ the sin of fornication and for this I am truly sorry."

" Was this the first time?"

" No, Father."

" You know this is a very serious sin against God. We must all guard against sins of the flesh, for these are the handiwork of the devil. When was this?"

" Two nights ago."

" Where?"

" In a deserted house, out of town."

" Had you been drinking?"

" Yes, Father."

" A Young woman's chastity is the most precious gift she has. Drink and fornication go hand in hand. Had you been with this man before?"

" No, Father."

" You must never see or make any contact ~~with this man~~ with this man again. Will you promise me that?"

" Yes, Father."

" Do you have anything else to confess?"

" I have taken the name of the Lord in vain and I have slandered one of the people I work with."

" Jesus weeps every time we take his name in vain, my child, and every time we slander our neighbor. Fight against these sins, they the actions of a heedless person. Our Lord tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves and if we love him, he will help us love our neighbor. Is there nothing more you have to tell me?"

Manion could feel the hesitancy to speak. From the shifting from knee to knee, he knew from long experience that there was more to come from the other side of the box. He had learned to wait, knowing that the confession was not complete nor the penitance effective until he said so. He waited. Presently, he heard a sound, a clearing of the throat that preceeds vomiting. I hope she won't be sick, he thought.

" Oh, God. Help me, Father, I don't know how to say this. I witnessed, I took part in, I was there when a man was killed."

" The same night you committed fornication?"

" Yes."

" Did you do the killing?"

" No, Father."

" Did you see it being done? Could <sup>You</sup> have stopped it?"

" No, but I was outside and I knew something awful was happening inside. I was scared. I couldn't move. I was there when they brought the body outside. I'm still scared."

" You didn't actually see the killing. You didn't do the the killing. You actually don't know how the man was killed, or really if he was killed. You just know that he was dead. Or think you do. Is that right? "

" Father, I saw them put him down a well."

" But you don't actually know that he didn't die of a heart attack, for instance. All you know is that you saw them put a body down a well. You really don't even know if he was dead, do you ? "

" No, but he was all wrapped up and tied in a bag with a stone, and then they threw him down the well. "

" Did you examine the body ? Are you sure he was dead?

" No, but why would they throw/<sup>him</sup>down the well, if he wasn't dead?"

" I don't know, do you ? If you didn't do it or help any one do it, what ~~are~~ are you guilty of ? "

" Nothing, I guess."

" You couldn't have stopped it if you didn't know what was going on, whatever did go on. And so ~~xxx~~ I ask you again, what are you guilty of? The~~x~~ act of fornication and you have asked forgiveness for that. "

" But I was there."

" Exactly. You were there and that is your crime. Have you told any/<sup>one</sup>else of this? "

" God, no! Forgive me Father. I didn't mean to blaspheme."

Manion stopped. Was he justified in going on to say what he had on his lips. Was he damning~~g~~ himself through all eternity for what he was about to do<sup>?</sup> Was he condemn~~g~~ing her to an endless torment? Or was he saving her, in her quaking innocence, from a prison term as an accomplice in an act she had had no part of? He didn't know, but he knew the penalty on this side if not the far side, and he plunged ahead.

④

" You know the sanctity of the Confessional is absolute, that I cannot reveal whatever is told to me here, that no court of law can make me tell what you have told me here today. You know that?"

" Yes, Father, I know that."

" And you are sorry and ask forgiveness of Almighty God for whatever sins you may have committed or witnessed that night ?"

" Yes, I am truly sorry."

" Then I grant you absolution. In the name of the Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost, I absolve you of all that you have confessed here today. Go and sin no more. May the Love of God guide you and keep you in the paths of righteousness. For penance, say Ten Hail Marys and Ten Our Fathers. You have beads?

" Yes, Father."

" Use them. From here on, tell the Rosary the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. This will give you strength. Yours is a secret of the Confessional and here it must remain. If you feel yourself weakening, call me, and we will face it together. Devote yourself to your duties and come down from the Centre only to attend church. There is a Novenna starting tomorrow night. You can pray then for the repose of the soul you are concerned about. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen."

Manion saw through the screen of the confessional a white blur as the youngwoman crossed herself in blessing as he blessed her. He waited for her to get up and go out. He did not want her to be aware that hers was the only confession he heard that afternoon. He returned to his study in the rectory after divesting himself of his vestments. He sat there making notes until Ellen called him to supper. He ate alone and with good appetite, for he would need his strength. He was calm now and had everything worked out in his mind. It was clear to him what had to be done.

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At seven-thirty sharp, Ellen knocked on the study door. She had been watching for Ed Moran's ~~se~~ ~~xxxx~~ car and had done what Manion had said: told Ed to park in the parking lot behind the church, which could not be seen from the street, and let Ed and Marie into the house by the kitchen door. Shortly after she let them into the study, she reappeared with coffee pot and cups and excused herself, saying she would be in the kitchen if she was wanted.

Manion served ~~them~~ all coffee and seated himself in a straight backed chair directly in front of the pair who were seated on the small love seat. He drank his coffee in long slow deliberate draughts, seeming to give all ~~giving~~ his attention to it. He didn't speak but used the time to observe the demeanor of his visitors.

As he expected, Ed Moran broke the silence first. "Where's Brian?" he asked. "Why isn't he here?"

"Brian isn't here, because he's in his room where I told him to stay."

"He should be here. We're all in this together. Brian most of all. If it wasn't for him..." His <sup>querulous</sup> ~~querulous~~ voice trailed off as if he was afraid to give offense in a situation where he was at a distinct disadvantage. Manion had to fight an impulse to slap ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> ~~face~~ some sense into the reddened peevish face. He'd always known ~~xx~~ Ed was a whiner, the kind he suspected Brian always took up with, brains but ~~with~~ no force behind them. He moved quickly to assert his authority.

"Yes, we're all in this together and a lovely mess it is, too. Have you talked to anyone about this?"

Marie responded quietly and without heat, "Who would we talk to?" And Manion met her steady gaze with a look of approval. She would, without saying so, maintain control of her man, he need have no worry on that score.

"Exactly, Who would you talk to? Brian told us the whole story this morning. I talked to the Atkinson Girl this afternoon. She

④

She's scared but she won't talk. I've seen to that. You won't talk and I won't talk, so we have no problem with ~~x~~ anybody talking, now or ever. Is that clear?" They both nodded. " But we do have some problems which have ~~been~~ to be thought out. Where were you Tuesday night after the band concert ?? "

Ed was too quick to respond. " You know where we were Tuesday night. What's that got to do with it? That's when we..."

Marie interrupted. " I've thought about that. Ed had to drive some summer people to the late Boston train in Fitchburg, the one that comes in from Springfield. There's an entry in the ledger and one in the receipt book, signed. The cash is in the cash account. They didn't want to wait around at the station, so we couldn't start until after the concert. Ed asked me to go along for company on the way home. It was almost one o'clock before we got home. I told my folks about it at supper tonight. Ed had never seen the people/<sup>before</sup>but they gave him a big tip for being so obliging. We had coffee and pie at the station diner before we started back."

Her story was told so smoothly that if Manion hadn't known different, he would have swallowed it whole. She was as steady as a clock. His look of approval turned to one of admiration. Good Girl.

" That makes me feel better. At least we know where you were Tuesday night after the band concert. Could any one have seen you Tuesday night ?? Anthing unusual happen ?"

" I lost the left lamp of my headlights just before we came into town," Ed said. " But I fixed it the next morning before anyone was in the garage. On the way in, I stopped there by the mill and fooled with the wiring under the dash, to see <sup>if</sup> it was shorting out or anything but that wasn't it. I didn't see anybody. Ed Price is usually out looking for signal lights that time-a-night. If the night watchman was in the front part of the mill he might have seen us but I can't think of anyone else. DaVinci's store was still open.

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I could see the lights when we drove up toward the center. But you knbw him; he'd stay open to sell one more over-ripe banana. Not much trade late at night in this town. No I don't think any one saw us, and we didn't see anything, did we, Marie ?"

" No," she said," the town was as quiet as a tomb. We saw the Atkinson girl get into the Torrrey house all right and then Ed took me on down home. My folks were all asleep, too. The town clock struck one just as Ed dropped me off. I sure am glad you got to the ~~Torrey~~ Atkinson girl. She was scared stiff and I was sure she'd feel she had to tell the Torreys what had happened. What do we do next?"

" You're going to repeat your trip to Fitchburg. And you're going to make it as official as the one Tuesday night. Do you understand ? The problem is to get Brian out of town without making a great ho-rah about it. His mother has put his seabag and a small suitcase in the back seat of your car, Ed. That will go with you when you leave heret tonight. Brian will walk out the south end of town and then down the railroad tracks to West Milford and wait for you by the baggage room door of the depot. The last train down will have gone and there won't be anyone there. Henry Fletcher, the station master, closes up after the last train and <sup>goes</sup> ~~xxx~~ home to supper. You will pick up Briah there at the depot and take him to the Boston train. This will give you a chance to be sure that you did everything the same on both trips. Do you get it ?? "

They both nodded and it was clear from their expressions that getting Brian out of town would be a big relief.

" Once Brian is out of town, our first big problem is taken care of. The second big problem is that we, all of us, you two, his mother, and I, are going have to live here as if nothing had ever happened. The best thing is to say nothing at all. Nothing. But if anyone should question you about Brian, say that the last time you saw Brian was at the band concert. Don't volunteer anything,



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but if anyone, the police, people at the garage, anyone, ask about him, that's the last time you saw him. His mother will ask some of the women of the parish, especially those asking for prayers for loved ones over-seas, to pray with her for her son who has gone back to sea in the service of his country. I will add his name to the service prayer list on Sunday." He paused to let what he had just said sink in and to phrase in his own mind the best way to say what came next.

" We are going to have live here as if nothing had happened. Change nothing. Go about your work. See each other and your friends just as you always have. The whole town's talking about the Thorndike murder and you're going to have to, too. Already it's being tied in with the signalling from the mountains all around here. If someone asks you to look for signal lights, the way you have before, do it. The selectmen think German spies did it, they've told me that already. They see old Thorndike as some sort of a patriot, killed because he knew too much, or maybe even caught the spies at work. That's safe to say and you can encourage that as much as you want. Do not try to suggest anyone else. If ~~you~~<sup>we</sup> can find another likely suspect -- there's a great deal of talk that Meade the banker is ~~sporting~~ sporting a black eye and marks on his face -- so much the better. But you will say nothing for or against anyone, at least right now. Is that clear? Good. Now, any problems you may have, <sup>any</sup> kind, money, personal problems, anything, come to <sup>me</sup> ~~me~~. I'll take care of it. But do not come running up here to the church with every little thing you hear, or think you hear. You are both members of the parish and you have to right to consult me or ask for ~~my~~ help any time you want. That's natural, fine. But we must ~~avoid~~ avoid doing anything that makes us look as if we knew something other people don't. Ed, I think it would be good, if you left here alone and drove up to the Center, as if you had a call and then drove on back to the garage.

Marie, you wait here until Ed has driven off and then you walk on home." He stood up in signal that the discussion was over and walked over to his desk and sat there looking at the notes he<sup>had</sup> written. Ed put on his hat and went out the door to the back part of the house. Marie crossed the room to the front window from which she could see when Ed drove out to the street and turned left to drive<sup>to Mason Center</sup> as he had been instructed. Then she stood in front of the desk, waiting.

" Father," she said, " you don't have to worry about me and Ed. I'll make sure Ed doesn't lose his nerve. He's smart and he works hard, but he hasn't got much backbone. I can give him that. Helen'll never give him a divorce and we're Catholics anyway. I've got him now, for life, and we're together in a way stronger than marriage. We're together forever and he'll never leave me. I never wanted kids and we won't have any, but I'll have him and he'll have me. He'll make good, we'll take over the garage soon and expand it. He'll do a good business and I'll have the nice things I've always wanted. In a way, for me, things couldn't have turned out better. I'll have to share him, as long as Helen's alive, but I'll have the bigger share. We'll live through this and everything'll be all right. Hell of a way to get your man, but life is funny and things do work out."

Manion

" I can't bless your union," ~~Manion~~ said, " but I know I can depend on you. You have lots of intestinal fortitude and that's what it's going to take to get us through this. Brian has always been a big worry to his mother, and since he has no father, to me. Now he is going and won't be back, I want ~~xx~~ you to think of Mrs. Kelly and me as sort of parents to you and Ed. If you get sick, or anything, come to us. You and Ed are going to be all right, but you're going to have to be in charge. I think you'd better go now. Why don't you go out the back, over to the Parish Hall and down to the street that way." He rose and put out his hand in a way that was more of a pledge than a dismissal. They looked each other full in the eye and shook hands as equals.

10

He sat down again and waited. His gaze fastened on the trophies on the bookcase and the gleam of reflected light held his attention as if he were mesmerized. He felt as if he were in some sort of trance, and as he sat there random events of his past life passed before his eyes as they are supposed to while a man is drowning. The days of triumph on the gridiron, the dull ache over the kidneys as he pulled off the heavy ribbed canvas football pants in the locker room after a fourth quarter defeat; the night of graduation as he and Ellen danced ~~along~~ weightless along the street on the way to her parents; the exhaustion which was not weariness after they had made love the second time; the long years in the seminary, each day <sup>so</sup> like the other that only the differing services and celebrations marked the passing of time; ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> first celebration of the mass he gave as a memorial to his mother, since he could not put the wafer on her tongue; the warm feeling he had had when Bishop Pelletier tapped him for his personal service; the <sup>appearance</sup> ~~finding~~ again of Ellen, after all those years; the laying of the corner stone of Holy Name, the raising of the evergreen on the top piece, the consecration of the building by the Cardinal himself; his first sermon from his own pulpit. He woke with a start and went to the door and called for Ellen.

" You put the bags in the car?"

" Yes and I've made him a lunch."

He started to say that he didn't think Brian needed or deserved anything more from her hands, but thought better of it. " Get him down here," he said. " It's time for him to go. It's getting dark and he has more than three miles to walk."

Brian came into the study dressed in his seagoing clothes with the heavy belt through the big loops on which hung the sheathed ~~kin~~ knife. He had regained his swinging swaggering gait, Manion noticed, as if he were already signed on <sup>a</sup> vessel. Lost on shore, Manion thought, doomed to sail from port to port, lost when off the water.

Brian stood in front of the desk with the smirk Manion had come to recognize as his devilish expression. He watched warily, waiting for Manion to speak and when he did not, announced: "I'm ready to go." His mother hung back near the door as if fearful of a dreadful scene between the two men. She seemed close to breaking. This is the last time I'll see my son, Manion thought. The last time and I'm glad.

"You're ready to go?"

"Yes."

"Have you any money on you?" he asked, knowing what the answer would be.

"Yes, Ma gave me some."

Manion pulled out the center drawer in his desk and took out two packets of bills. "Here's fifteen hundred dollars. Thank god I pulled out all our accounts ~~when~~ last summer when Meade started questioning the church deposits at the bank. There'll be no local talk about what I did with the money I took out today. This is all there is; this'll have to last you, do you understand?"

Brian picked up the money and stuffed it carelessly in a side pocket, treating it as if it was of little consequence.

"You know what you have to do. You follow the path out across the fields behind West street, walk south along the road until you see the tracks and follow them to the depot at West Milford. Ed and Marie will pick you up at the baggage room door on the road side. Be careful to stay in the shadows when you get near the depot. They'll take you to the ~~train~~ train in Fitchburg. Do you get it?"

"Sullenly," Ma told me."

"You are never to come back to Mason. You understand that. When you're ~~xxx~~ in port, we'll come to Charlestown or wherever to see you, but you are never to return to this town. When this has died down, we'll see. I'll tell you when. But until then you are never to come back."

Manion glanced at his housekeeper. He did not want to have dealw with any hysteria now, but she was composed, her face as <sup>pasty</sup> expressionless as ~~an~~ uncooked pie crust. She knew it had to be.

" Good Luck and Godspeed. We'll pray for your safety on the water. Try to stay out of any more trouble. You're in quite enough as it is. We'll take care of things here. Write to your mother, even just a card. We want to know where you are and it will be helpful to have something to show to the parishioners, eh ?" He put out his hand and grasped the boyss hand in both his. From long habit, he made the sign of the cross on his son's forehead as the boy backed away. <sup>Ellen held open the door & they both went out</sup>

<sup>Five minutes later</sup> For the first time since she had taken over the position of housekeeper at Holy Name, Mrs. Kelly entered the study without knocking for permission to enter. She came in ~~xxxxx~~ and sat down without so much as a by-your-leave. The last of the stream of tears slipped down her face ~~alongside the~~ in the deep grooves on both sides of her sharp nose and she gave a final honk in the bunched handkerchief she pulled out <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ the pocket on her apron.

" We've lost our son, Harry, just as if <sup>he</sup> was buried at sea." Her voice in its grief sounded strangely young, like the voice telling him that she was <sup>for</sup> forfeiting her claim to him, that she was releasing him to his vocation in the church.

" We never had him," he said. " I was never anything but his natural father and after <sup>Johnny</sup> ~~Jimmy~~ died, you didn't have a chance. By the time you came to Mason it was too late. We can hope that the shock of what he did to the old man will wake him up. Some times it takes a major tragedy in a person's life to turn him around. He learned somebrutal ways growing up on the streets, but ~~he~~ never killed before, or I don't think he has. Too bad he didn't go for a soldier, they'd have made a hero of him a dozen times over by this time. He's one of those useful to his country when the killing needs to be done, but he's not suited for life in a small peaceful <sup>Town</sup> time. " <sup>He wants change and excitement.</sup>

He didn't believe what he was saying, the boy was the worst kind of bully who saw life in terms of what he could get away with, what he could snatch from the hands of those he could terrorize. He was born to swing, and Manion ~~he~~ would have left him to his fate if he could have done so without endangering his mother and all that he as priest had built up in the young parish. Now he must concentrate on saving that, and he must buck up this woman who sat in utter desolation before him.

" He's gone now, we won't see him here again and that's for the best. He's never caused you anything but grief and that's over. He'll be better off with his own kind. If he works hard and keeps his nose clean, maybe some day he'll have his own ship. What he needs is some responsibility, some men of his own to take care of, and then we can be proud of him."

It was if she hadn't heard a word he'd said. She started to rock back and forth in some sort of trance and her eyes gazed at him and past as if she was seeing far beyond him.

" God is not <sup>to</sup> ~~be~~ mocked, Harry. We are only just now paying for our sin. And we will always pay. Brian will be back and we will pay some more. We are doomed to pay for our sin. God will not be mocked. I thought I was paying, I thought I was doing the right thing when I gave you up to the church, but God didn't want that. It was fate that brought us together again and it is <sup>our</sup> ~~is~~ fate to be together forever. That was all I thought about once, all I wanted, and now it's coming true. We are together in our sin. For all time."

His <sup>determination</sup> ~~resolution~~ to hear her out, to listen to her fears and quiet them in a <sup>firm</sup> ~~quiet~~ resolute way that would give them both strength, slipped away in a rage that he quickly got under control. He would gain nothing by frightening her, but he must reassert his dominance over her or lose the whole ball game. He must be strong and inventive and she must be silent. If she confided in anybody,

anybody at all...

" It's blather you're talking, Ellen, talking about fate that way, close to heresy. We are the children of an understanding forgiving God, who knows we are weak and gives us opportunities to make up for our weakness. Yes, we are together for the rest of our lives, but it's directed so by the Almighty, so we can work all the harder to do his work here on earth. He works in mysterious ways, his will to make done. We cannot know how or why, but we do know that He expects from each of us the best we have to give. We have the chance here to make this beautiful new church a sign to the poor and oppressed th<sup>at</sup> they will be raised up that they are not forgotten. / We do not have the right to let our own personal troubles keep us from this. } We must not be selfish."

" You're a proud man, Harry Manion," she said, looking at him as she never had before," and it's your pride that will bring you down. You think you're smarter than most of us, I've heard you scoff at the stupid Canucks and the proud Yankees, both the same, and you are smarter, but that's not enough. Pride goeth before a fall. You have never suffered and now you will. Mark my words." *in the bright June sunlight,*

As he sat waiting for Brian to come to him, he reflected on her words. The months since Brian had slipped away in the darkness, through the fields, down the tracks to West Milford and the ride to the Boston train, had passed in a frenzy of effort to lay the murder where it belonged. We have worked so hard, he thought, to find the murderer, worked to build up a case that would stand up in a court of law. If only he had had better material than the dolts who held public office in the town. He had found no way to reach the county or state authorities. They had outfoxed him with that Grand Jury hearing in April, but he had outworked them, collecting affidavits from all who had a tale to tell. He had used the Boston paper as if he owned ~~it~~ *it*, and that series of articles on the unrevenged murder of a patriot kept alive what might well have died down with the passing months. But the

returning soldiers were a problem, especially young Joe Cavanaugh. He was typical: he'd gone off a good obedient Catholic and come back determined to do his own thinking, without spiritual guidance from his church. Getting that commission was what had done it. Leading that machine gun platoon through the Argonne and Bellieu Wood had given him something he hadn't had before, he wanted to hear all sides of a question. The petitions for a second Grand Jury hearing, where all the evidence <sup>had been</sup> uncovered would see the light of day, people who hadn't been called to testify would tell what they knew. Even the Joe Cavanaughs would have to consider this. But on the debit side, that damned doctor was back and nosing around. I wonder what he knows. Doesn't matter because he can't do anything. He may suspect a lot but he doesn't know anything. All the right Selectmen had been re-elected for a new term; the summer people under the leadership of the Village Improvement society up in the Center were puzzled but still solid behind him and the selectmen. Yes, things were working out and in a few months... but now Brian <sup>had been away,</sup> ~~was back~~ and he'd have to settle that young man once and for all. They had kept that assault and attempted rape out of the paper. Thank god, the Cardinal <sup>had</sup> still had some clout in the Boston Police Department and no one in Mason need ever know that Brian was involved in that bit of brutality. What was this need he had to tie up young women and beat the hell out of them? No matter, it was of no importance, kept quiet, handled well, there'd be no trouble with anything that ~~happened~~ could be related to what had happened last year. He had not known Brian <sup>had taken the car</sup> ~~was back~~ -- Blood of Christ, he was trying to guide the course of events in town and he didn't even know <sup>where his</sup> ~~who was~~ <sup>Car was</sup> ~~in his own household~~, until he'd had the angry phone call from <sup>Preston</sup> ~~Wasson~~, the ~~Chief~~ Chief of Police. When was Brian going to bring his license down to the police station, the chief wanted to know. ~~But~~ Why? the



priest asked. Because he had almost run down several people ~~the night~~  
~~before~~ in the band concert crowd the night before and hadn't been  
~~xxxx~~ able to produce a driver's license. Where did he say it was, the  
priest had wanted to know. In Boston, the chief said. Well, he'll  
bring it down the next time he comes up from Boston, the priest said.  
He wanted to know why the chief was prosecuting a member of his  
household? Would he have done it, if Brian hadn't been a Catholic?  
The Chief ~~must remind the Selectmen that this Chief is no better~~  
~~than the one we just got rid of~~ said that if Brian hadn't brought  
down his license within three days, he'd get a warrent for his arrest.  
Both men had slammed down their phones at the same time. Manion didn't  
know whether he was madder at what Brian had done, taking his car  
without his knowing it, or at the fact that ~~he hadn't know that~~  
Brian was back in town. He would straighten him out once and for  
all.

Brian came into the study and sat down, or rather slipped  
down in the chair in an attitude that was in itself an act of contempt. Well, now,  
he's regained a little of his spunk since he was last here. Which was  
supposed to be the last time ever. Manion lost no time beating around  
the bush. *why* "What are you *still* doing here? I told you ~~never~~ to *leave*  
~~three days ago~~ *three days ago* ~~here ever again~~."

" I just got off probation. I didn't have no money, no  
job; when you're on probation you can't leave the county so I couldn't  
go to sea or anything. I was stuck there. So when I got off probation  
I come home to get a stake. I won't stay long." *We made a token*

*that wasnt enough*  
*you had to show off* " This is no longer your home. You have no home here. You  
fixed that good. What'd you do with the money I gave you last August?  
No, don't answer that. I don't care what you did with it. The point  
is, you were told you could never come back here and you disobeyed  
me. "

" I won't be here long."

" You're right. You'll leave tonight after dark and you'll stay away, for good. I thought we had ~~that~~ settled the last time we talked, <sup>that you would lay low here</sup> but I guess you don't catch on very quick. I'm going to make it plain, so very plain an eight year old child can understand it. You are going to leave tonight and you are never coming back. If I ever see you again or hear that you've been back here, I'm coming for you and I'm going to kill you. Is that plain enough for you ?"

Brian straightendd up as if someone had stuck a hat pin in in his buttocks. He expected to be lectured, to be pleaded with, to have to swear that he would do better, that he would never do it(whatever it might be) again. But he had never,when sober, had anyone tell him he'd kill him. Knife fights in a waterfront barroom were one thing,but to be told conversationally that hex would be killed was another. He raised straight up out his chair, with his hands out in front of him on the desk and hung there suspended.

" You don't mean that, you can't. My mother, I'm her son. You can't mean that. You're a priest, a holy man. You're trying to scare me. A bad joke."

" I do mean it. I can and I will and you know it. You are a threat to your mother, to me, to the community. I'll say you told me you killed old man Thorndike and then killed yourself before I could stop~~ped~~ you. Ill say you told me you couldn't stand the guilt anymore, couldn't face yourself, and so you did it. You are a murderer and in the eyes of God don't deserve to live. Don't try me; you know better. Now,you will stay here today, out of sight, and then tonight you'll leave. Get out here, get up to your room and ~~the~~ stay there, And don't try to work on your mother either. She's had enough. She'll leave your food outside your room. On the dinner traywill be a hundred dollars. This is the last you will ever have from us. You are a curse on both of us, for the rest of our lives. But never again here."

Fall 1919 (August on)

Chapter XI Kaiser Bill Lives IV by Francis C. O'Connor

As I said in the last chapter, I now had the connection I was looking for. Previously, I had found out who and now I felt I knew why. It was the Big Man on the Hill, the Kaiser, I was after, but he was well entrenched and his supplies were mountainous. But my heart was pure, as the poet says, and my strength was as the strength of ten -- and I would need all ten. The problem was, as I saw it, that all the time I had been away, that is since the Thorndike murderer hunt had begun, those on the side of the angels had been in retreat. The Kaiser had been on the attack continually and as time had gone on, he had, playing upon those sentiments of the ignorant which are so easily roused, gathered more and more allies. Speculation had become fact and rumor ~~was~~ verified report. The good men in Mason had fought valiantly but were always retreating to positions of better defensive capabilities. I decided after a few weeks of viewing the scene I would turn things around. The advantage the Kaiser and his sideshow dummies on the Board of Selectmen had had was one of publicity. They had made good use of Bart Lincoln and his articles in the Boston Courier and the natural links of gossip and cheap talk among the lower, or should I say, foreign, element in Mason. We would now go on the attack. We would be in print constantly. doughboys In the same way the fresh ~~doughboys~~ of the AEF had lifted the war-weary English Tommy and French Poilu, we would no longer crouch in our trenches and ~~take~~ <sup>super</sup> the mortar bomb and <sup>the</sup> artillery fire, we would get to our feet like men and take the high ground. Some of us might go down, but we would carry the day. First of all, the declaration of War.

I published the following declaration of position in ~~late~~ <sup>mid</sup> August. I submitted this letter to the Harrisfield Transcript and sat back to see who gathered and who ran, if anyone.

B Mason, N.H.

August ~~24~~ 1919

To the good people of Mason and vicinity:

I know that you have viewed with, at least some annoyance, the persecutions ( not prosecutions), that have been going on here in this town of Mason.

\*and I have waited patiently for a change

A little more than ~~three months~~ three months ago I came home from France and was almost heart-broken to note the condition our town was in. The people of France would say " C'est la guerre," ( on account of the war), when we complained about anything, \*which does not arrive, but seems to grow worse instead of better. I have had to witness scenes, that made my blood boil, I have been threatened indirectly, to have my business injured, to be rode, and I guess they have made good on this " ride" business." I have seen strong men and strong women in tears cry out, "Oh God may this cup pass from my lips." I have seen a poor girl, who was unfortunate, lying on a bed of pain and suffering, crying and hysterical, beg me for relief from the persecution. I have seen an unconscious woman, whose chances of life did not seem to be very good, with the loving husband at her side and hear him cry out, "if my wife dies, that man caused her death."

I have stood for all these things, as cheerfully as possible but when I get the impression, that they are trying to persecute my little boy John I get off right here please as, this is cowardly, unmanly, and unfair.

I went down to see Pete about it and found him tied hand and foot. , also tongue tied. Now gentlemen," you builded better than you knew" when you stepped on John, as he is learning to sound "recall" on his cornet, and we soon hope to be able to say to you as Sheridan did at Winchester, " We are going back boys, we are going back." and we hope to make Mason the peaceful place it was before the Kaiser began grinding us under his iron heel.

I wish to announce to you good people of Mason, that I have seen all the persecutions I care to witness and from now on, I propose to fight this thing in every honorable way possible, devoting every spare moment and every ounce of energy I have in my body. I am absolutely alone, belong to no church, order, lodge, or society, neither do I represent any man or men, or squad, and consulted no one but my God. I shall hope to show you cruel ties that would make the Kaiser jealous and angry that he had never thought of them, I shall show you political tactics, that will make old Bill Tweed (New York political crook) restless in his grave. I will show up the gentleman, who suggested and brought about the " publicity campaign" that has given our beautiful town such unenviable notoreity prompted by nothing but malice and spite. I propose to puncture this bubble by turning on the the search-light of publicity. I take this step after careful consideration of what it may cost me personally, but in the same spirit with which I put on my uniform and went to France to try and help put down the Kaiser, who was persecuting the helpless little children of France and Belgium. Lincoln said, " no country can prosper with its people half slave and half free." Mason can not prosper with its people half slave and half free.

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I invite the aid of every liberty loving man woman and  
and child who believes in justice and does not believe  
in persecution.

Signed .....

Francis C. O'Connor  
Ex- Capt. M.C.

This letter did get some responses, direct and indirect.

The night after it came out, I had a call from a prominent New  
England attorney ( I'd only have to change his name if I gave it  
and there's enough of that going on anyway) who said, " For  
goodness sake, how many speeds you got?" I said, " we have  
looked the matter up and found we have three -- all forward."

I got a couple of anonymous letters threatening to shut my  
filthy mouth, signed, of course, only by a a skull and bones,

with some red ink ( blood I suppose) spilled on the edges. <sup>The</sup> ~~the~~

~~indirect response came from the Big Man on the Hill himself.~~  
~~indirect response came from the Big Man on the Hill himself.~~  
~~Henry Cutler reported that he sneered and said, " How did this~~

~~Henry Cutler reported that he sneered and said, " How did this~~  
fellow get this way." That was a question he already knew the  
answer to, because over the years I made him duck regularly at  
the net when he thought he'd hit a winner past me. He knows me  
as I know him, and he knows I've got plenty of sand.

It might be well here to record <sup>some of</sup> dastardly things  
Manion and his gang were willing to do. There seemed to be nothing  
too great or too small for them to do, ~~to strike at me.~~ Let's  
look at the three examples in my letter to the Transcript and  
you'll see what I mean.

First, there <sup>is</sup> the case of Amy Caron. She was the <sup>oldest</sup> daughter  
of Achille Caron, he has about 8 and I've brought them all into the  
world, with little or no pay. Amy & worked in the ~~parking~~ denim  
mill on the machines and Louis LaRocier, who worked down at Trudeau  
and Merrill was sweet on her. About two months ago, maybe two weeks  
after Louis just up and left town, <sup>nobody at the box factory seemed</sup> ~~nobody at the box factory seemed~~  
~~to know why he left because he was a good worker and~~ (DD Trudeau told me

they have a hard time getting anybody as good), <sup>and made good wages,</sup> ~~and made good wages,~~  
Achille said Amy started getting "Black hand" letters, that is ones  
that were unsigned. It wasn't so much what they said, they were all  
about the silence of the grave for those who talk too much and the  
like, as it was ~~the~~ Amy's reaction. There was a lot <sup>in the letters</sup> about singing  
and singing only the old songs. Well, each time she got one, Achille  
said, she'd have ~~frequent attacking~~ attacks of choking and then she'd  
break out into song. Strange songs that Achille'd never heard before.  
From the sound of it, it was as if she had two selves, what some  
newspaper writer called her real self and her astral self. This  
went on for two weeks or so. One day, she'd feel well enough to go  
to the mill, then they'd find one of those letters stuck in the  
screen door in the morning or in the screen of her bedroom window  
and she'd be off. Achille's wife Rose thought it was possession  
by devils or something and, being good Catholics, they got Father  
Manion down to chase the devil's away. Either Manion's powers of  
persuasion weren't working very well or he frightened her more than  
the devils, because after he'd been to see her, she fell into a kind  
of trance and they couldn't get her out of it. Manion suggested first  
this doctor and that, but none of them seemed to be able to do any-  
thing for her. Achille and his family hadn't "doctored" with me,  
as the French people say, since I came back from France, and I  
thought I knew why. They never were very good pay, anyway, but I was  
hurt by their turning away, and I'd always figured treating the poor  
was part of my job. ~~and~~ I figured those who had money paid for those  
who didn't. Anyway, one night after she'd been in this trance for  
about six weeks, yelling and screaming and carrying on, Achille  
showed up at my office door and asked if I'd come down and take a  
look at her. I said I would and I rode down to Slab City, that's  
what we called the section of town they lived in, and examined her/  
I couldn't find anything <sup>wrong</sup> with her physically, I mean she wasn't  
pregnant with demons -- that's what Rose kept saying -- it looked

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a simple case of severe hysteria. I tried talking to her, but I couldn't get through. She just rolled and tossed and screamed crying for someone to help her. some, Rose said she did this until she wore out and went to sleep. I had to figure some way to break the grip <sup>of</sup> this hysteria and I remembered a trick <sup>used by</sup> the old general practioner~~s~~ I filled in for in Vermont when I first got out of medical school. I always carried a .32 Smith and Wesson under the seat of my car when I went out on night calls and I had it with me that night. I had Achille bring in a big bunch of old cotton batting they used to bring home from the mill and clean with and put it in a box of sand. I took my .32 and fired four quick shots into <sup>the</sup> box right beside her ear. Well, I tell you, she jumped a mile and looked around trying to see who was there. She told us that just before she woke up, a man, she described him as tall, dark, black moustache, wearing a long grey overcoat and soft brown hat, had handed her a card reading " No more." And that was that. She was all right. She's awfully quiet and doesn't talk to anyone much, even her family and to them only in French as if that's safe, but she goes to work every day. As I thought about it when I got back home, I figured it out. Of course no-body wears an overcoat in Mason in August but from what Elmer Webb and the others told me the costume Amy described was exactly what Keller, the New York detective who was staying up at ~~the~~ Holy Name had worn all winter as he roamed the town all hours of the night doing his pyschic (so-called) investigations. Nobody had to draw me a picture. Amy knew something she wasn't supposed to and somebody was trying to make sure she didn't talk. That's my first instance of persecution.

Helen Coll was one of those women God put on earth to be a mother and a good mother she was too. Her kids were all in school when America got into the War and she went to work in the tack factory replacing one of the young fellows in our community who had answered the call to the colors. It was tough on her though because one of the results of her child bearing and raising was as nasty a case of varicose veins as I have ever seen. I treated her condition before I left for the service and I warned her that she should not be on her feet anymore than need be. After a day on her feet feeding those machines, the varices, especially on her right leg, were something to see, it was just like a bunch of Concord grapes hanging on her leg. I gave her a blood thinner to try to reduce the danger and I told Frank her husband that one of these days we'd have to strip the worst of the veins off. What I didn't tell him was that I was worried about an embolism breaking off from the engorged area and floating up to her heart or up to her brain giving her a stroke. During the summer, it was leakage around town that the Unholy Alliance was collecting affidavits from those poor fools who were putty in their hands, especially the Catholic element. Apparently Helen had told some of the women she worked with that as she'd been coming ~~home~~ home from the band concert <sup>she thought</sup> she'd seen Perkins Meade driving out the old Peterborough Road, about 9:30. From what Frank told me when I got to their house that night, this wasn't it at all. All the women had been talking on the way home from work and someone else had said that and the word got out that Helen had been the one.

The upshot was that the new Chief of Police, the one the selectmen hired after they fired Preston, had begun coming to the Coll place and trying to get Helen to agree to sign an affidavit to that effect. These visits frightened the Colls a whole lot but they never said anything to anyone because Father Manion had cornered



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them after mass and asked if they were cooperating with the police in finding the murderer. Anyway Chief Wasson kept up until Helen was just wild. Poor woman was working a 54 hour week in the factory and then coming home and taking care of her family. It got so bad that she had a fainting spell and was off work for more than two weeks. One night I was called in and found her in a very serious condition. I did what I could to quiet her down and gave her some pills to help her get some rest. I listened to ~~xxx~~ Frank's story and decided that this was one to move on. Here is the statement we got Frank to make under oath and which we then published as a flyer to the town;

Mason, N.H.  
July 22, 1919

To whom it may concern:

This is to certify that on Sunday, July 20, 1919, Chief of Police Wasson, came ~~xx~~ into the house and into the sickroom where my wife was lying in a critical condition, seriously ill. Said Wasson came into this sickroom without asking permission, or displaying any warrent of any kind.

In asking her questions he insisted on her saying yes, when the correct answer was no, he would frighten her so badly, if she did not answer yes, that after a while, she would say yes to get rid of him.

Said Wasson left her crying and hysterical, and we sent for our medical attendant and begged him for relief and protection from this man.

signed, Frank Coll

State of New Hampshire, County of Contoocook S.S.

Personally appeared Frank Coll and made oath that the within statement is true to ~~his~~ the best of his knowledge and belief. Before me July 22nd, 1919, James Fitzpatrick, Notary Public. A true copy attest.

Personally, I had the pleasure of calling Wasson up, telling ~~him~~ him I'd been called to the Coll home and found Mrs. Coll in a very serious condition due to his repeated visits. I told him that as the Coll medical attendant, I was serving notice on him that he should cease and desist in such visits and that if I ever heard of him going again to the Coll house, I would swear to a charge of attempted murder against him. Like all that crowd, he had a yellow streak a yard wide down his back and he never did approach the Colls

(3)

again.

Whenever I saw Wasson downstreet, he'd look the other way and I never did have to take up my threat or get into any conversation about the Thorndike case or anything else. But that was not the end of it. I didn't believe that they would take any action against me, though I was aware that I was often followed when I went out on a night call.

One night  
/ ~~Not~~ long after we published the Coll affidavit, I had just finished my evening office hours, when from my office / I could hear my son John, age 11, crying as if his heart would break and went in to see what it was he was telling his mother. His mother was trying to keep him quiet and wipe away his tears but he was inconsolable.

I : " What are you crying about? Are you hurt?"

John : " They wouldn't let me into the Minstrel show."

I : "Who wouldn't ?"

John : " The Chief of Police."

I : (to Anna, my wife)" You told him he could go?"

Anna : " Yes, he had two other boys to go with, so I gave him a quarter and told him he could go. He loves the singing and the music."

I : " Go on, John, what happened?"

John : " Bill Evans and Ernest Whitehead and I went to the show together, like Ma said. We paid our money and got our tickets but when we got to the door, the man said we couldn't go in."

I : " The man?"

John : " The Chief of Police. He said we ~~xxx~~ too young were/to go in without an adult. Then he asked us our names. When we told him, he told Bill and Ernest they could go in, but he told me I looked too young. He got the girl to give me my money back and told me I'd have to go home , or he'd call my parents to come and get me. It wasn't fair. Bill and Ernest got to go but I couldn't."

I : " No, it wasn't fair. It's too late tonight; the show's almost over, but we'll see about this."

Anna : " Now, Doctor, we don't want any trouble. There must have been some mistake."

I : " The trouble we've already got. There was a mistake but it wasn't the mistake you mean."

For some reason, this cowardly mean act against John, taken as a way of hitting back at me, angered me more than the oppression

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of that young girl and the sick woman. They were innocent victims in a scheme to railroad an innocent man, but the persecution of my little son was a new low and I was determined to set them straight on what I'd put up with.

The next day I went to <sup>Pete Kennedy's</sup> ~~Paul's~~ butcher shop and confronted him with what had happened.

" I don't make the rules about who does or doesn't get into public performances in Union Hall, " he said.

"No?" I said. " Well, there seem to be very special set of rules operating in this town these days and as a select-man you should know what they are, and if you don't you're a poor excuse for a public official." But he declined to show his hand. " Must of been some mistake," he said.

I said, " I have you, <sup>Pete</sup> ~~Paul~~, stating in front of reliable witnesses that ' we will ride and injure in business anyone who refuses to ~~we~~ sign this petition for a second GrandJury hearing on the Thorndike case. Ride me, if you will, <sup>Pete</sup> ~~Paul~~, injure me in any way possible, but do not persecute my little children. I assure you that from now on I am going to take every honorable means in my power to stop the persecutions in Mason. "

He gnawed on his walrus moustache, mumbled something about having to attend to his customers and walked back behind the display counter, leaving me without an ~~answer~~ answer. I didn't really expect him to have much to say himself, he wasn't giving out the answers to anything. I did want to send a message to the Kaiser though and this was the most direct route I knew other than going up to the Rectory and slapping his big fat face, and I knew that wasn't the way to get things done.

In addition to suborning witnesses and getting affidavits from the weak and suggestible, the Unholy Alliance was conducting a whispering campaign against our county and state attorneys and against our elected officials on the state and county level.

Ed Merrill was our state senator and they were putting it out that he was the one who was sent to Concord, the state capital, and/or Washington, the national capital, to choke off any state or federal investigation of the Thorndike murder. They had put a label on the friends of Perkins Meade who were trying to stop his trial by innuendo in the public newspapers. They called them the Soft Pedal Squad. I was not included in this group, as I had publicly -- see my letter in the Transcript -- dis<sup>ss</sup>ociated myself from any organized effort in Meade's behalf. I could do better on my own and if I got hit for anything I said or did their work would not be hindered. I could, however, provide them with some ammunition they could use in their own name, and I kept my little ~~Remington~~ <sup>CORONA</sup> 17 humming lots of nights with the manufacture of such ammunition. I decided that if Merrill, Trudeau, Black and Webb were being called the Soft Pedal Squad, it was time for the Squad to sound off loud and clear, so that all might hear. In the space of a month, then, I wrote and the S.P. Squad had printed up and distributed a series of fliers which I called "Bubble Busters." These were all part of my publicity campaign to bring things out in the open, to take the offensive, to put some spirit into Perkins Meade and those who were fighting, as he would not, to clear his name.

Bubble Buster No. 1

\$ 1,000 Reward

Merrill and Justice

False Statements have been freely made with reference to Mr. Merrill and they will be made again.

Therefore, we submit a business proposition for the consideration of all interested parties. We suggest the appointment of a Committee of Five to be known as the Committee of Award. Two members to be appointed by Mr. Merrill, two members to be appointed by his accusers, and the fifth member to be appointed by these four.

Upon presentation to this Committee of proof satisfactory to them that Edward Merrill

1. has ever been in Washington, D.C. or anywhere in the District of Columbia, at any time or for any purpose or
2. has visited Keene, N.H. or Concord, N.H. with the intent

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or for the purpose of obstructing justice in connection  
with the Thorndike case

The Committee of Award is hereby instructed to pay to the party  
presenting such evidence the sum of One Thousand Dollars  
(\$ 1,000.00)

Mr. Merrill is ready to name his members of the Committee.

The money is on deposit in the Contoocook National Bank, subject  
to check of the Committee when appointed and will remain so for  
thirty days.

Here's some easy money for men who have talked loud. Come and  
get it.

The (so-called) SOFT PEDAL SQUAD.

Merrill      Black  
Trudeau      Webb

September 8, 1919

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Needlesstosay, no one stepped forward to claim the filthy  
lucre, although I got through the grapevine that several were inter-  
ested. That was not their style. It was true that Merrill had gone  
off on business trips, as it was, to Berlin ( we did keep that  
destination quiet) New Hampshire, to check on buying some wood for  
the next logging season, and the opposition had turned his absence  
to their advantage by claiming that he had been trying to quash any  
federal investigation of the spying and that he'd tried to prevent  
Governor ~~Barnett~~ <sup>state</sup> ~~Barnett~~ from appointing any special investigation by an  
~~xxxxxx~~ Attorney General. In fact the charges we were combatting  
were perfectly true -- we did get to our Senator, ~~George Moses~~ <sup>Abraham Sutcliffe</sup>. When  
we go wind that the Unholy Three were planning to take their Boston  
Jew Counsel and apply pressure to the Department of Justice, we beat  
them to it --- but only at a later date.

A week later, when no action was forthcoming from the  
Selectmen's chambers, I put out a second "billy-doo" as follows:

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\$ 4,000 Reward

Bubble Buster No. 2

Another business proposition, and more easy money for noisy people.  
Appoint a Committee of Award in manner previously suggested. Upon  
presentation to this Committee of proof satisfactory to them that  
~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~  
~~the so-called Soft Pedal Squad~~ ~~Edmund Merrill~~

the so-called Soft Pedal Squad: Edward Merrill  
Delphine D. Trudeau  
Harold Black  
Elmer Webb

individually or collectively

1. have ever offered money to the Selectmen of Mason to drop the Thorndike case, or
2. have ever urged them not to proceed with any prosecution in this case, or
3. have ever invested a penny in an so-called signalling system, or
4. were ever under obligation of any kind to either Mr. Thorndike or Mr. ~~Strassburger~~ <sup>MALIN</sup>, or
5. have in the past, or do now, owe the Contoocook National Bank more than ordinary business transactions warrent, or
6. have ever visited Winchendon, Mass. or Keene, N.H. or Washington, D.C. with intent or for the purpose of in any way obstructing justice, uphold murder, or protect anyone from prosecution in the Thorndike case

the Committee of Award is hereby instructed to pay to the party presenting such evidence the sum of Four Thousand Dollars (\$ 4,000.00)

Make good the bluff -- substantiate the statements that have been made and get the money.

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We heard, again through the jungle wireless, that Manion ~~was wild~~ was wild when the second epistle appeared. For one thing, they didn't know when the fliers were going to appear or how. A pile suddenly appeared right beside the Holy Water fount at Holy Name just before the 10 o'clock Sunday service and a second bunch were laid right outside the door to George Dunne's drugstore right across from the door to the ~~drugstore~~ post office. They sent a delegation of one, Monk ~~Boyden~~ <sup>Boyden</sup> it turned out, to Fred Hooker, editor of the Mountaineer and asked him if he was printing them. Of course he denied it and he was innocent. He was warned if they found out he was printing the fliers that he'd lose half his advertising and half his subscription list. I was smarter than that. He'd done the first bunch, but the second I took to Harrisfield and had done on the Transcript's press. All of the charges were of course false, with the possible exception of number six. That was that damned-fool meeting with the County Solicitor and the State Attorney General in Winchendon.

That one had to be worded pretty carefully. It could not be denied that such a meeting took place, so what had to be blocked was any assertion that it was held with any intention of <sup>1.</sup>obstructing justice -- and very little justice was being handed out at that time <sup>2.</sup>--upholding murder -- they wanted nothing better than to find the killer and have him prosecuted -- <sup>3.</sup>and or <sup>one</sup> protect any~~way~~ from prosecution --persecution was what they were fighting and what we are still fighting now. If I had been in town, no such meeting would have taken place. I would have blocked it. The postwar hysteria starting to grip <sup>The American People</sup> made such a meeting a definite mistake.

This <sup>hand</sup>bill got a little more attention from the general public than the first one, and I was told that when some of the Unholy Alliance started on their usual accusations, more and more the<sup>ir</sup> listeners responded "well, if you know that's true, why don't you collect the <sup>four</sup>~~five~~ thousand?" <sup>weeks</sup>

To keep our enemy off balance I let another ~~two~~ pass before I let go with another Buster. The third one named names( or positions which were as good as names) and the lines were drawn for all to see. In the first two, members of the Soft Pedal Squad had acknowledged who they were, had disarmed the accusing epithet by taking <sup>it</sup> themselves as a mark of honor, and after the third, there could be no holding back. A citizen would have to choose; no one could remain neutral. We were saying, as Jesus said," he who is not with me is against me," and we did get some of the timid ones who came to us,if still on the sly.

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Bubble Buster No. 3

NO REWARD

Money appears to be no object to the Three Town Officials, the Clergyman, and the Politician, who have talked so loudly and so wildly during the past year. No one has yet attempted to secure the ~~Four~~ <sup>four</sup> Thousand Dollars ~~offered two weeks ago.~~

What's the matter -- lack of nerve or lack of evidence?

We're guessing you lack both, so here's another proposition.

If you can prove the charges that have been freely made against us, we

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are liable to criminal prosecution for obstructing justice. So why not arrest one or all of us. You have lawyers in Keene, Concord, and Boston. You have the entire credit of the town back of you. If you have the evidence, you can convict us.

Have you nerve enough to try?

Signed.....The Soft Pedal Squad.

And of course no charges were preferred. It was time to rub their noses in it and this I proceeded to do with number four.

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Bubble Buster No. 4

Loose talking people have made all kinds of charges, but no one has yet collected the ~~Four~~ Thousand Dollars offered, nor has ~~any member~~ any member of the Soft Pedal Squad been arrested. Why ?

We know from statements made by the Selectmen that they have ample evidence and that they know the man who killed Mr. Thorndike. They say so. Why no arrest ??

The Selectmen ( not the clergyman and the politician, who are their associate members) have three or more lawyers, unlimited credit and full authority to proceed. Why continue their childish or Bolshevistic vaporings about obstruction of justice, upholding of murder, county ring, and crooked or inefficient prosecuting officers. They ( the Selectmen) can make the arrest, go to trial at Keene, and,

if they can convince the Judge of the Superior Court that the case will not receive fair trial in Contoocook County, he will grant change of venue and the case will be transferred to some other county for trial. The Selectmen have the evidence and know the murderer, then why, why, why no arrest .

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There ~~it~~ was. We had flung down the gauntlet, as did the ~~knights~~ knights of old, and they had only to pick it up. I knew that the Selectmen -- the Monk, the Bird, and the Butcher as we called them now -- were cowards and I knew that ~~the~~ George Dunne, the Politician, was always ready to get some one else to do his dirty work for him. He'd always operated that way in the state legislature, I had that from people in Concord who'd watched him work up there. But what I couldn't figure out was why Manion didn't push forward and get the Selectmen to act. As I thought about it, I thought that he had every reason in the world to move, he had his son to protect, and on the other hand, he had <sup>the liability of</sup> sure knowledge of who did the killing. Was it because he had personal doubts about what he would have to do? Was he using the division in the town -- Catholic against Protestant,



Native against Foreigner, Well-to-do against Poor -- for some purpose of his own. I puzzled over it but I could find no answer that truly satisfied me. In a sense time was on our side. The war was fast becoming history. Already unemployed Veterans were calling for the Bonus that had been promised them. Already those who had fought and bled and died were turning to violence against the Big Money in the country who had gotten fat on the war. Manion, by means of Bart Lincoln in his Courier articles, was keeping alive as a patriotic necessity this murder. It was over a year since the murder and Billy Thorndike, now that his widow had died, was laid beside her in the family plot in Rochester, New York. ~~In one sense~~ Really, getting his body out of town should have put the matter to rest. The town cried for a return to normalcy, and yet the rumor mills still turned, affidavits were being taken weekly, and there was talk now of the murder becoming a political issue, in the 1920 elections. Prohibition would be a fact with the new year.

As a matter of ~~tactics~~ fact, I decided that I should do some publishing on my own. I had promised in my Transcript letter to turn the bright glare of publicity's spotlight on the whole mess the town was in and it would look funny if I did not. Besides, there were several interesting developments which I wanted to lay before the gaze of the ~~town~~ town. One was that there were cracks appearing in the Alliance. Not serious ones, but ones I wanted all to see. If exposed, they might grow in dimensions.

In an interesting development, the detective brought in from New York by Frederick Thorndike, Wolf Keller ( full name Wolfgang, but he preferred the implications) had pressed suit against the town for compensation of his investigations. We knew that the Town Report did not show all that was owed him, and we wondered how much was hidden in repair of roads or water supply costs (that had been paid him), and more important, how much more did he have coming.

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It turned out that he had in a bill for well over two thousand dollars in addition to what he had already been paid. The town was no longer paying his expenses -- he lived in the Rectory at Holy Name -- but there had been, up until his suit filed at the County Seat in Keene, no acknowledgement of what he was owed. important More/than the money ~~was~~ from my standpoint was what revealed in a deposition. He ~~was~~ had returned to New York, the excitement having really dried up, and I guess he sensed that any chance of his getting the publicity of a full fledged trial had gone. In any case, he filed a deposition through lawyers and we had the peculiar situation of the Town's own investigator ~~turning~~ man against it.

The second bit of news was that Brian Kelly was reported to be sneaking back to town almost every weekend. This was reported to me by one of the Good Catholics who was not under Manion's spell and who was ~~xxxxx~~ aware of what sickness <sup>his</sup> ~~the~~ priest was nursing along. He was ready for peace in our little community and he knew who was preventing it. I saw that I might be able to make good use of him in the time to come.

Being a medical man, I published in the two weeks <sup>space</sup> ~~xxxxx~~ when I wasn't making up the Bubble Busters, the "X-Ray News."

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Sample Copy

MASON X-RAY NEWS

No 1

BY F.C. O'Connor, X-Ray Man

To be published in a series of twelve(12) at 10 cents per copy, 12 for one dollar. War tax included. No mail or phone orders.

The Kaiser called a meeting last night, (Friday) and sent for outside reinforcements. Two came, one a dark bowery faced gentleman, the other with a "Sold out to Raymond" expression. Come again, fellows, you do not look very good but we are going to like you if it is possible.

I hear they or he decided to establish the "Hindenburg Line." Now fellows let us get together on this business, hire Union Hall and I will discuss it with you. Bring your own crowd and after a free and full discussion, we will leave it to the audience as to who pays for the hall.

~~Why doesn't B come to see us now - in the daytime, several would~~

Why doesn't B.... come to see us now -- in the daytime, several would love to see that boy. Can it be that Chief of Police Preston was too rough with him and only gave him twelve hours to get and show his license when he asked for a week, the night he drove so recklessly through the band concert crowd? ..... I am not surprised that Rev. .... called him up and over a public telephone and told him, " If you are looking for a fight, you will get it." ( affidavit # 16) and later, through the selectmen got him turned down. "Look'em over, Bill," if you want to live peaceably with us.

Henry D... reports that some time ago he was given a sum of money to deposit, with a deposit slip made out for five dollars more than the amount. No harm done, but if this could be put across it would have explained the ten spot B.... ~~xxx~~ borrowed. Come again, Henry. ( affidavit # 15)

....., detective, under oath: "Who hired you?"

Ans: " Rev ....."

Qus: " You have brought in ... days labor when we can prove you were not in the town of Mason at all."

Ans: "Rev ..... said for me to go to Boston and start a publicity campaign, to get the Boston ..... if possible, if not the Boston ....."

Qus : " Did you consider Rev ..... one of the selectmen?"

Ans : " No, but he said the selectmen would do as ~~they~~ told them."

*Pete*

~~Paul~~, I am sure feeling bad. I put my letter in The Transcript asking for aid, only a few responded and they came unarmed. Must I stand by helplessly and watch you lead this beautiful town of Mason to the slaughter of public opinion, not like the shepards of old, with a crook in your hand, but with one on either side of you before and and behind you.

F.C. O'Connor

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Some of my friends thought I went too far. My wife Anna brought back comments from Sunday church and choir practices that I was stirring up the town. She asked me if the country hadn't had enough fighting in the war and I told her that if that war was fought to make the world safe democracy, I was fighting to make the town of Mason safe and free from oppression. One thing I learned early when I was growing up in the iron mining section of northern New York was that you had to sort out who was holding the coats and who was rolling up his sleeves. That way you don't get hit from behind and you know how many you're taking on. The whole thing was getting to be like a chess game. Now you take John and Sue Lloyd.

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John Lloyd was our Superintendant of Schools during the war and in the fall of 1919, he'd gotten a better offer down in Eastern Connecticut. The town knew that we couldn't pay enough to keep a man of his education and experience, even though he was not long out of college, and with the way the Selectmen were spending town money on the Thorndike case, we couldn't meet the offer of this bigger school district in Connecticut. His wife Sue was a live wire and everybody knew that she had a clear idea of the career John should have. So they moved.

I don't know what made me think of John and Sue, but one night not long after I'd put out the 1st issue of my X-Ray News, I was sitting up late, turning things over in my mind, and I started to puzzle over possible witnesses, not to the crime itself but to the coming or going of the murderers. I recollected that the Lloyds were related to the Jernegans in Peterborough; in fact, that was why John Lloyd had taken the job in Mason in the first place, to be near the Jernegans. Charles Jernegan ran an undertaking business and ran a greenhouse on the side. The two families visited back and forth, and I wondered if it was just possible that the Lloyds had been over to see the Jernegans the night of the murder and if they had come back on the Old Peterborough Road. If they had, they might have seen something.

I didn't wait. I got Sue Lloyd on the telephone -- I knew she was a night owl and stayed up most nights reading -- and asked to see her and John the noon of the next day. I ~~didn't~~ couldn't sleep much that night anyway, and I got in my little Overland sports model, a "Country Club," and before daylight I was on my way south.

As it turned out, I had made the trip for nothing, almost. Yes, they had been to ~~Peterborough~~ <sup>Harris field</sup> to visit the Jernegans that night: my departure that day had made John want to talk to Charlie about whether or not he should join up, even though he and Sue had a six months old baby.

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No, they had not taken the

Old Peterborough Road, which ran past the Thorndike place. Baby John had had what Sue thought was a summer cold and fever and they had taken the River road because it was quicker. It was late and they hadn't passed a car or seen anybody by the road the whole way. Nothing, the trip was a waste of time. I didn't linger. As soon as I found out they had nothing to tell me I started home.

I couldn't have been gone from the Lloyds more than fifteen minutes when I noticed I was low on gas and I pulled in to a station to fill up. I was just coming out of the lavatory of the filling station when I saw the big black car that Harry Manion drove go past. He was sitting at the wheel stiff as anything, going like hell, looking straight ahead. Now what was he doing down here?

All the way home, I had a grin on my face and I was humming a song we used to hear in the YMCA canteen at the Base Hospital in France. "A cheery smile is as good as a mile on the road to victory." I hadn't won a victory, but I was on the right road. I had the Kaiser worried. What I figured was, he had come to the same conclusion as I had. He wanted to know if the Lloyds had seen anything the night of August 13th. Who was he protecting? Who was he afraid they might have seen? The answer was pretty obvious. A couple of days later, my idea was verified. Mary Kaye told me Manion had been pumping her the same day I had my brain storm and she had mentioned that the Lloyds often used the Old Peterborough Road as a short cut.

When I got home, I rang up the Lloyds and sure enough Manion had ~~been~~ arrived less than half an hour after I left. Wouldn't that have been some scene, both of us there together?? He was friendly, Sue said, but he picked them pretty carefully and was obviously relieved they had nothing to report.

I suspect that one of the positive effects of my X-Ray news letter <sup>was</sup> ~~xxxx~~ that Manion and his gang thought I knew a lot more than I did, and that was a distinct advantage, not because I really did but because it got them doing things that added up if you had some of the other missing pieces yourself. For instance, Brian Kelly had owed Fred Fry, the barber, for shaves and hair cuts over a year and a half. Fry never could get him to pay up and he didn't dare risk offending his Catholic trade by refusing credit to a member of the priest's household. Lo and behold, one day early that fall, Manion went in and when he paid for his haircut, he paid Brian's bill as well. Clearly, he was trying to clean up any messes, however slight, Brian may have made in the town.

As time went by and nothing seemed to surface in the way of new evidence or new action by the Unholy Alliance, I spent my free evenings thinking over the changes in the town that had taken place since I had gone to the colors. Some things were obvious. The town was sharply divided along religious lines.

Social events which would have involved the whole town were now put on in duplicate; if the Protestants had a dance or an evening of cards to raise money for some good cause, the Catholics were sure to have a similar event for their own. My own patients were ~~divided~~ almost wholly ~~xxxx~~ the old families with here and there a failed Catholic. If it hadn't been for calls to the summer hotels and some work with the summer camps, I'd have had a tougher time than I was.

One person who was prospering was Ed Moran. In the early part of June, he had bought out Fred Harrington, who was getting along in years, and paid him a good price, too. He had to get a sizable mortgage and paid good interest for it, too, but his timing was right, for during the summer the livery business picks up considerable. He got his money from the ~~Peterborough~~ <sup>Harris field</sup> savings,

where

where, I noted, the Holy Name accounts and Manions personal accounts had been moved after the priest had had the run-in with Meade at the Mason bank. But where, the question was, <sup>did</sup> ~~was~~ Moran get~~ting~~ the ~~xxxxxx?xxAndxxwherexxwouldxxhexxgetxxit~~ down payment and where would he get the monthly payments, once the summer trade slacked off? And how did he~~x~~ manage the Socony gasoline franchise, a real plum as the numbers of cars in town increased. The Big Oil companies were very careful who their dealers were. Obviously, Moran had some strong backing from somewhere, and none of us could figure out where it was coming from. At the same time, Marie LaFleur was sporting new~~x~~ clothes and ~~jewelry jewelry~~ jewelry, and she and Ed were making a good many trips to Boston to the ball game and the big department stores. I pondered long and hard over their prosperity.

FALL 1919

Any question that Francis O'Connor ~~might have~~ had about the effectiveness of the Soft Pedal Squad's "Bubble Busters" and his own X-Ray News Letter would have been answered if he had been able to listen in on the ~~telephone~~ messages that came in and went out of the Holy Name <sup>Rectory</sup> over the telephone. Each time <sup>after</sup> one hit the public notice, Harry Manion went into a rage of activity. He felt isolated sitting up on the hill and yet there were so few in whom he could confide, so very few from whom he could get any idea of what the opposition was thinking. There were, however, some things he could do and he ~~could~~ move <sup>to</sup> to do them. He had Ellen call Marie LaFleur and tell her to come up to another "committee" meeting. She came up that evening after supper.

He started easy for he did not want to disturb the girl or startle her and her lover Ed Moran into any foolish actions.

"How are things going at the garage, Marie?"

"Fine, business was good all summer and with the new gas franchise, we should do all right, even when the summer people have all left."

"I hear a little talk around town that you and Ed are flying pretty high these days."

"Yes?"

"Yes, and I thought I better warn you to pull in your oars. Some people are asking where you and Ed are getting all the money you're spending. Some of the women, especially, wonder about all the new clothes, the trips to Boston, and so on."

Marie ~~smiled~~ pouted and smoothed the skirt of what was ~~obviously~~ obviously a new dress. The diamond, Tiffany set, glittered on her right hand. It was one of a matched set, Manion knew, and he knew its mate sparkled on Ed Moran's hand. Very nice but not very wise. "The people in this town hate to see anyone get ahead. It's all right for the rich



to have nice things, but when any of us get anything pretty they call it wasteful and wonder how we will pay for it. The boss in the factory can dress up his woman, but when we dress up they say we must have stolen it." Her tone was anything but apologetic. ②

" It's not just the upper crust who are talking, there's a lot of noise in the parish, too. You and Ed have done well and you will continue to , but I want you to coast for a while. Somebody one of these days is going to figure out where Ed got the money to buy Harrington out, and the one thing we don't want to do right now is attract attention. Until the Thorndike murderer is caught, I want you to live as if you were still waiting tables at the Monadnock House and Ed was still driving for Harrington! Is that clear ?"

" O.K. I've waited a long time; I can wait some more."

" What do you hear around town? "

" A lot of worthless truck. Those letters have caused a lot of talk. Most of the people I talk to were surprised that the Soft Pedal Squad would dare to name you and George Dunne with the Selectmen and they wonder why you haven't had Meade arrested. Most of them think he did it and they can't understand why he's still free."

" It's a very ~~difficult~~ difficult job to get a man when you are fighting the authorities at the same time. You have to have a case that is watertight. They keep trying to prove that Mrs. Thorndike did it. We both know she didn't and they can't prove she did. The idea that German spies did it can be supported, but the chances of getting any of them are slim. No, we have to ~~xxx~~ show ~~x~~ a relationship between Meade and ~~Staufferberg~~ <sup>Maiberg</sup> and convince the public that if those two didn't do it, they were deeply involved in it. What else do you hear?"

" Some people wonder why Brian comes home only at night. Why he isn't seen around town more. They know when he's here but they don't see him and they wonder why?"

(3)

" That damned O'Connor! I don't think he knows anything, but when you act like a suspect, you are a suspect. I've told Brian no more midnight visits. If he can't get a berth, he'll have to get a job in Boston and stay there for a good long while. How's Ed holding up? Any problems with him ?"

" Not really. He gets really tight when someone starts talking about the Death car, but I've got him pretty well convinced that nobody really knows anything. He keeps thinking somebody ~~a~~ saw us that night and that sooner or later they'll tell. The Doctor buys his gas at the garage now and Ed just about shits his pants when he sees him. I tell Ed to have Alphonse do the work at the pumps, that's what we have him for, and to find something else to do when he sees O'Connor pull in. "

" Good. Brian is the one likely to do something foolish I ~~think~~ ~~thought~~. That damned fool trick off driving at high speed through the band concert crowd is a good example. He can be kept out of town. No, Ed's the one I worry about; he's liable to crack sometime when you're not around."

" O, I know how to control my own man, and I'm always around. Where else would I be ?"

" We are still collecting affidavits from witnesses and they are starting to add up. Can you think of anyone who might have seen anything ?"

She paused and shook her head. " I can't think of anyone, but I can tell you who might. It's that Mrs. Kaye, the newspaper woman. She knows more about what's going on in this town than anyone else. Why don't you ask her?"

" I think I will."

The next day he gave Mary Kaye a call.

" Mrs. Kaye? This is Father Harry Manion at Holy Name."

" Fine, how are you, Father ?"

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" Fine, thank you. Mrs. Kaye, as you know, as a patriotic citizen and one of the town leaders, I have been working very closely with the Selectmen in trying to solve this horrible murder which has for so many months been causing dissension and disruption in our lovely little town."

" Yes, Father Manion, I am aware of your efforts. I have even read of them in some of the letters published recently."

Damn her. He could just see the little crooked smile come over that face and the light shine out from behind those pince-nez glasses and the hand patting the wisps of graying hair escaping from the ineffectual hairnet.

" Yes, well, I am aware that some people do not appreciate determination our efforts, but that does not deter me in my ~~effort~~ to see justice done. We have been collecting affidavits from anyone in the town who might have seen anything, anything at all the night of the murder, and it has been suggested to me that you might be of help to us. Does anyone come to mind whom we might talk to? "

" It is strange that you should ask me that. Dr. O'Connor asked me the same thing and I'll tell you what I told him. Do you remember John and Sue Lloyd, he was the superintendant of schools for the past two years? I didn't get to talk to them personally before they left town, but I do remember that they used to drive to ~~Peterborough~~ <sup>Harris Field</sup> at least once a week to visit with her Uncle, Charlie Jernegan, he's the <sup>er</sup> undertaker over there. It suddenly occurred to me that the Lloyds might have been driving back to Mason on the old road the night of the murder. Unfortunately, I never got to talk to them, they're in Connecticut now, and they never were called to the Grand Jury hearing. Too bad, they've them left town. I suppose you could call them or send/a letter.

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Ever since he had gotten his growth as a boy, people had commented how fast Harry Manion moved for such a big man. His ability to move quickly, he was "fast on his feet" as they say, was a source of pride with him and he called on that speed now. He must know if the Lloyds knew anything, he thought. Everything he worked on, every stratagem, every witness suggested, every direction given, all could be knocked into a cocked hat if this possibility was not searched. He told Ellen to cancel all meetings and all services that day. He told her to post a notice on the church door that he had been called away on urgent business <sup>by the Bishop</sup> in Manchester and would return the next day.

If they had seen anything, he thought, they would have come forward before now. John Lloyd was that kind of man. Open and ~~xxxix~~ straight forward, hiding nothing. But what, if under questioning by someone who knew what he was looking for, they now remembered an incident, recollected ~~a~~ glimpse of someone, recalled something unimportant from their trip home on the old Peterborough Road. Could they have heard anything even? He had to know and so he jumped in his car ~~xi~~ like a volunteer fireman and drove south at high speeds. He never stopped to consider whether or not they would be at home.

His wild flight was ~~for~~naught. The Lloyds had seen nothing, knew nothing. Sue Lloyd was quite assured in what she said. It was almost as if she had rehearsed what she was to say. But that could not be; they hadn't known he was coming. Both the Lloyds were exact as to the time they had left home and the time returned. They had seen nothing the night of the murder. They had not been near the Thorndike farm because young John had developed a slight fever that night and they had come home the River road. The old road was lovely with all the trees out, but they had wanted to get home quickly. The Lloyds had nothing to tell. As soon as he was sure of that, Manion eased into light talk of their years in Mason, the tennis matches they had shared, the people they both knew. He ~~x~~ talked of how anxious everyone in

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Mason was to have the murder solved; he told of his efforts with the Selectmen to ~~urge~~ <sup>urge</sup> ~~xx~~ the County and State officials <sup>to</sup> rid the community of the blight which was bad for business and bad for the town. As soon as he felt he had said enough to prove his bona fides in checking out every possibility toward the discovery of the murderers, he left. On the drive home, he chided himself a bit for rising so quickly to the suggestion that Mary Kaye had thrown out, but, he reflected, he could not afford to let any chance pass. He had done what he could and they were making progress on the case against Perkind Meade . It was clear, he thought, that he needed trained skilled help and he resolved to call Tommy Corcoran, who was the head of the Boston office of the Secret Service, Tommy, who had gone through law school and went to work for the government after three years at center for BC, he was one you could always depend on. He would call Tommy and ask him to send up a couple of good men. After he had had his supper, he put in the call.

He got Tommy's wife whom he had never met. " This Father Harry Manion calling, from Mason, New Hampshire. I am an old friend of Tommy's from college days."

" Yes, Father Manion. Tommy's right here. I'll put him on."

" Harry, thirty-four right, on two, hike."

" What was that? Oh, my god, yes. How many times did Fish Sullivan call that play, I wonder? Hundreds. Never failed, if you got out and got weakside linebacker. How are you, Tommy ? Fine. Tommy you've been reading in the Courier about our <sup>troubles</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~ up here over the Thorndike case.? "

" Yes, I have and we've been getting some pressure from the Washington office to do something about it. I was about to contact your Selectmen."

" I'll save you the trouble, Tom. We're working together and whatever you and I decide will be all right with them. Tom, have you got a couple of good men who can speak French?

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" Yes, I do. Reis and Von Falkenberg. "

" They don't sound French."

" No, and they aren't, but they both grew up in Alsace, both came to this country as young men well before the war, and they are experienced agents."

" Tell you what. When you send'em up tell them to come and stay with me at the rectory. I'll see that they're comfortable and well fed, and they'll be able to save the per diem allowance."

" Okay, Harry. They'll appreciate that. I'll have to take them off a surveillance, but they'll be up by the end of the week. Funny thing but most of my agents these days are foreign born. Can't seem to get native Americans into the intelligence service. This may make some talk in your little town, but don't let it bother you. We've been very successful using foreigners to catch foreigners and these men are loyal Americans. After they've been with you a while, I'll try to get up and see how they are getting on."

And so it was settled. Manion was pleased to have the support of the Federal Government in building his case. Since he was being blocked by the county and state authorities, he thought, it was like drawing aces in a poker hand to have two Federal ~~agents~~ agents so clearly allied with him and the Selectmen. It would be no trouble getting the word around town that Federal agents had come up from Boston to ~~work~~ work with the Town officials. That ought to quiet down the opposition, he thought, and it gave their ~~work~~ efforts to catch the killers a powerful stamp of approval. Who knows, they <sup>might</sup> ~~may~~ really come up with something, ~~xx~~ though he doubted it.

At the same time that help from Boston was sought and promised, the Soft Pedal Squad, more exactly the County Soliciter of Contoocook County, had sent two men to Boston to check out a most unlikely source of information regarding the identity of the Thorndike killers. As happens when a murder gets much newspaper publicity, a number of persons, mostly middle-aged widows, had come forward, claiming psychic powers enabling them to describe the killers.

All of these had been checked out and eliminated as useless. Just about all of the usual "sensitives" from northern New England had put in an appearance to claim knowledge in accord with the published reports on the case. The legal officers of the state and county knew most of the regulars, but it was something of a surprise when Chief of Police Preston of Mason, after ~~he~~ a letter ~~he~~ he had been summarily fired by the Selectmen, received from a Mrs Erika Kurz of 38 Grafton Square, South Boston, in which she claimed to have been visited by the spirit of Dr. Thorndike who pleaded with her to press forward with the investigation of his murder. The letter, addressed only to The Chief of Police, Mason, New Hampshire, had been delivered to the former chief. On consultation with the County Solicitor, the Soft Pedal Squad had dispatched Warren Cleaves and Wm Lyman to see the woman and to see what they could ~~make~~ make of her. If nothing else, they could close off what might be used by the papers as another bit of sensationalism. They found her at home with her baby and her unemployed laborer husband.

" Mrs. Kurz ? We are from Mason, New Hampshire. We have come in answer to your letter to the Mason Chief of Police. I am the chief of Police and this is Constable Hardy, who was the last police officer to see Dr. Thorndike before he was killed. May we come in?"

" Ja, do come in. We can sit here at the dining room table. This is where I hold my meetings with the voices from the other side."

" Mrs. Kurz, when did you first become aware of Dr. Thorndike's spirit? "

" About ten days ago. I was asleep in my bed, when the spirit of Dr. Thorndike pulled on my big toe and told me to wake up, he had a message for me. He wanted me to know who his killers were and to help in catching them."

" Did he describe his killers?"

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" Yes, he did. He said they were three Germans in a big grey ~~black~~ car and they had travelled from Massachusetts the night of August 13th to kill him because he knew too much."

" Did he ~~xxx~~ give you any more details?"

" Yes, he said their names were Schmidt, Schlage, and Holtzman and he gave me the number plate on the car, 8-2-5-6-4-J. It was a New York license plate."

" Did he tell you where they are now ?"

" Not the first night, but he came back twice more, and pleaded and pleaded with me. He said that the ~~three~~men were now living in New Bedford at 147 Carter Street and that action must be taken quickly to catch them before they escape."

" Mrs. Kurz, would you be willing to testify to this on the witness stand?"

" Of course. I will do anything to see justice done. Dr. Th~~or~~ndike is so sad and so unhappy that his killers are still free. His head is bloody and the wounds on his head are still dripping. He will have no rest until his murderers are caught, he told me. "

" Now, if the County Solicit~~er~~ decides to call you, you will be paid for your expenses and you will receive a fee as would any expert witness for testifying. You would be willing to do this?"

" Yes, I would."

Satisfied that Mrs. Kurz was no more reliable than any other of the psychics who had offered their services immediately after the murder, County Solicitor Packard told Cleaves~~x~~ and Lyman to forget that they had ever been to Boston and he thought that he had heard the end of Mrs. Kurz. But that was not to be.

About six weeks after the visit of what she thought were Mason Authorities, Mrs. Kurz was moved to write to Mason again, this time to Selectman ~~A~~lfred Partridge, chairman of the Board. She described the previous visit and asked why she had not been called



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to testify. She said that if action was not taken quickly, any chance of capturing the killers would be lost. She said Dr. Thorndike was in despair. The Selectmen were in a panic. Who had sent those two men to Boston? Who were the men who went?

A week after Partridge received Mrs. Kurz's letter, the Selectmen ~~went~~ to Boston to consult with George Waldstein, ~~who~~ an attorney who had been retained by the Town to coordinate its efforts to secure a second Grand Jury hearing, and so they arranged a meeting with Mrs. Kurz. She gave them a demonstration. She said Dr. Thorndike was present then; he obviously knew they had been coming. She repeated essentially what she had told Cleaves and Lyman. When informed that her previous visitors were imposters, she immediately commented that she had been suspicious of them. They were from the country, she said, she could tell that, but they had not given her their names. They had tried to bribe her if she would stick to her story in court. She had told them that she took nothing for her <sup>sittings</sup> ~~readings~~ and that she wanted only to ~~onlyxxx~~ do the right thing. The Selectmen thanked her for her honesty and sincerity and assured her she had done the right thing in contacting them. When she was needed, she would be called.

That would have been the end of it -- Mrs. Kurz's seance had convinced the Selectmen that she was seeing things and her description of her previous visitors had been so general it was useless -- if only Emma Lyman had not talked out of turn at the Monday morning Sewing Circle of the Congregational Church. Emma had a cross to bear: she knew she was an object of pity among the church women. Ed Lyman had for some years done little to conceal his affair with Alice Harris, and she wanted desperately to raise her standing by knowing something the other women didn't. She had listened carefully to the phone calls Ed made when he and Cleaves got back from Boston and had pieced together exactly what had happened. Ed had long since given up regarding Emma as anything but his housekeeper and took little notice of whether or not she heard or saw anything.

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Emma was in her glory. Never before in all her years of Monday morning meetings had she been listened to with such ~~rapt~~ rapt attention. Each time she stopped, she was urged to tell what had happened next, what had been said then. It was beyond her wildest dreams, they were listening to her.

In no time at all, the story in all its fascinating detail had been reported to the Selectmen and they had confronted ~~Warren~~ <sup>Cleaves and</sup> ~~Lyman~~ <sup>NOT</sup> Lyman. It was <sup>NOT</sup> hard to get the rest of the story pieced together and to discover that again the County Solicitor had not worked with them in following leads to the identity of the Thorndike killers. Again, they had been betrayed. Again, evidence had been withheld, more proof that the County Authorities were protecting the chief suspect. But how to make the most of this, without exposing themselves to public ridicule.

Manion had been looking for a way to reply to the taunts of the infamous Bubble Busters, a way to prove again the intransigence of what he and the selectmen had taken to calling "The County Ring." The new phrase had a nice ~~ring~~ <sup>echo</sup> and it offered an easy explanation of their failure to charge Perkins Meade legally with the Thorndike murder. The story regarding Mrs. Kurz must be presented in such a way that it showed clearly what they were up against. It must show that the County Ring was so anxious to clamp down on any theory that did not square with its own view of the murder that it was willing to suborn an ignorant woman laying claim to psychic powers. Bart Lincoln suggested that he interview Mrs. Kurz, following up on an item in another Boston newspaper (planted, they thought, by Mrs. Kurz herself) which had credited the County Solicitor with following up on the clues furnished by ~~Mrs.~~ the clairvoyant. Thus the following article appeared in the Courier in early December, under the headline "Refused Bribe to solve

Mason, New Hampshire Thorndike Murder."  
December 10

Mason, New Hampshire  
December 3 10  
Erika

Mrs. ~~Sixxx~~ Kurz, clairvoyant, of 38 Grafton Square, South Boston, today threw additional light on the alleged attempt to bribe her made by two citizens of this town who claim to represent the county prosecutor in the investigation of the murder of Dr. William Thorndike. x

" They told me if I would go through, that is, if I would stick to my story, " said Mrs. Kurz, " that I would never have to want for money the rest of my life and that I would have a comfortable home. The taller of the two men said he was the chief of police of Mason and the other said he was the last police officer who saw Dr. Thorndike before he was killed.

" They were both strangers to me and they did not give their names. They said they represented the New Hampshire authority and that they were trying to clear up the Thorndike case.

" I told them I would not accept a cent. I would never receive money for sittings and consider if I took a dollar for my testimony in this case I would not be worthy of the name American. I am a descendant of an American Indian -- a true American in blood and patriotism.

" Therefore, I told these men I could not accept any of their bribes and they were welcome to the information which I had obtained from Dr. Thorndike. He came to me from spirit land many times. Dr. Thorndike told me the names of the Germans who had killed him and the automobile plate of the car in which they rode on the night of the murder. Why should I take pay for helping to solve a terrible murder like this. I think every American worthy of the name should do all in their power to clear up this mystery.

" If I had the means, I would go right to the guilty persons and arrest them and it would not take me 16 months to do this, as have the officials of New Hampshire. I think there is something wrong there somewhere. If I had the money and authority ~~thingxxxxxx~~ I could do more than they have done alone, even if I am a woman. I wish it understood that I have never received a dollar in this case and shall never accept money. I wish it understood that I rejected their attempts to bribe me and have told only the story which came to me from Dr. Thorndike's spirit.

" It is a shame to let the case drag along as it has. I was rather suspicious of the two men who called on me. They did not seem frank and honest. They seemed to be hiding something. I did not quite like their attitude. When they began to talk phoney I dismissed the subject and told them that I did not want any pay for information I possessed. I told them that I was only too happy to tell all I knew -- that I would go to any trouble now and I would make any sacrifice to bring the murderers of Dr. Thorndike to justice. They ought to be punished without further delay.

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" When I wrote down what Dr. Thorndike had told me, I think these two men who claimed they came from New Hampshire officials thought I had given them the original. I got the impression that they thought they would carry away the only record of the information I possessed, and after they took it they started talking about money and told me I would never want for anything as long as I would stick to the story. I had given them only a copy. I didn't like that part of it. I had written originally to the chief of police at Mason and supposed he would consult his selectmen about it. I didn't hear anything from the two men that visited me for more than five weeks, and I wondered what the trouble was. I thought they would act right away on my suggestion. I then wrote to Selectmen ~~Partridge~~ Partridge and the three members of the Board called on me in Boston. That's all I know about the case."

Selectmen Partridge and Hennessy have the utmost confidence in Mrs. Kurz's honesty and sincerity. In criticizing the county authorities for their methods they meant no reflection on Mrs. Kurz. They gave her credit for showing up the trickery in connection with this phase of the case. Mrs. Kurz has demonstrated a ~~straight~~ straight-forward enthusiasm for months, which is more than can be said of some of those who have had dealings with her in this case, say the Selectmen.

The effect of this " exposé " was instantaneous, George Dunne reported. ~~Then~~ As the summer newspaper trade had declined at the drugstore with the coming of Labor Day and the departure of the large summer resident population in Mason, he had cut back his order for Boston papers to the number experience had taught him over the years he could expect to sell to the local townspeople. The success of Bart was a real measure of the interest in the T. affair Lincoln's series running in ~~the~~ Courier. The December 10 issue sold out well before the morning tide of those who picked up their ~~mail~~ mail early had started, and Dunne was besieged with eager buyers. Those who reserved by name were taken care of, but for the rest, he had phoned the distributor in Fitchburg and ordered two hundred extras to be sent up on the afternoon train. Manion was smiling for the first time in weeks and he took care to cultivate Lincoln on his success.

" That was some piece in this morning's paper," he said. " I had no idea the woman could express herself so well."

The newspaperman grinned. " She can't," he said. " She's got an accent you can cut up and serve with sauerkraut, sorry, Belgian lettuce."

" How'd you make her talk so freely?" the priest asked.

" The first thing I did before I even made an approach to her was to get word to her husband <sup>Herman</sup> to meet me at the 10th Ward Social club. We had a little talk and some money changed hands. Incidentally, my expense account this month will show fifty-five dollars for cab fares I'd like you to cover. I had an idea that it was death to talk money with her -- insults the spirits, dnn't you know -- and so I did business with the man of the house. Turned out I was correct. He picked up the envelope while I was out to the latrine. I laid out in general what I hoped would come out of our little talk and when we did meet I not only didn't have to put any words in her mouth, I had trouble getting down all the ones that came out. Herman allowed as <sup>reward</sup> how they'd read in the papers about the ~~xxxx~~ the town is offering and they also were aware of the one ~~xxxx~~ you shamed the county into offering. That was after a few boilermakers. How that Herman can drink. A lot of people are going to be left high and dry when Prohibition comes on next month and Herman is one of'em. Anyway, I told him how we viewed the sneaky trip Cleaves and Lyman made down there, how they had tried to buy her off and so on. Let me tell you, he ain't the dumb dutchman he looks like. He got it right off. Clear sailing from then on.

" Say, <sup>father,</sup> there's one thing that has bothered me and that's how come Preston got the first letter she wrote when he wasn't even Chief of Police anymore ??"

" You know who ~~the xxxxxxxx~~ puts up the mail and decides where letters like that go. Henderson, the post master, and we know where he stands. We've been worried about that ever since a year ago August and we did get Thorndike's nephew to write to the Federal authorities"

" I think it's about time to tap Brother Henderson. My editor sent me up a letter which ought to do the trick. I know it's your idea to keep the pressure on and this letter demonstrates the indignation being felt all over New England about the failure to prosecute the Thorndike killers. We need to broaden out, so that people outside of Mason will see who is taking an interest in the case. The whole world is watching and nothing is being done; this letter shows it."

Manion was a little uneasy at the way Lincoln was starting to branch out. He preferred to have control all public focus on the unsolved case, but when you had a trained and capable performer you some times had to give ~~them~~ <sup>hi</sup> leeway, and Lincoln was good, no denying that. Public indignation had gone limp last May until he'd sent Keller to Boston to convince the editors of the Courier that pursuit of German spy-murderers was what was needed to revivie their ~~their sagging~~ circulation. The story had everything and Lincoln didn't miss a beat. A week later the following item appeared on the front page of the Courier.

~~Massen~~

December 20, 1919

STATE ACTIVITY IN THORNDIKE CASE. NEW HAMPSHIRE CITIZEN DECLARES IT DISGRACE MYSTERY IS YET UNSOLVED.

A letter has been received by the BOSTON COURIER from Dover, New Hampshire, which shows how public sentiment is being molded in the Thorndike case. The writer signs himself " a citizen of New Hampshire" and shows himself to be a 100% American. On an accompanying sheet he gives his name and address with the request to publish the communication saying, " these are the sentiments of one of your subscribers, a resident of New Hampshire and an American citizen." Parts of the letter are too vigorous for publication, but his spirit throughout should be noted by the public.

The Dover Citizen addresses his letter as follows:

Attorney General Henry Oldham  
Concord, New Hampshire

Dear Sir:

Will you kindly come forward for the sake of liberty and justice that the citizens of New Hampshire may read in a public statement as to why you allowed

Postmaster Henderson, a trusted public servant, to go to the Thorndike farm and destroy evidence of the crime that had been committed. It would appear that Henderson knows more than he has told concerning the affair. When Henderson proceeded to the Thorndike farm to clean it ... he committed a great offense. An offense to which he might be made to answer. And what was he doing as he made his way into the house of worship, while the authorities were taking evidence relative to the crime, if not obstructing justice ?? These actions were taken in connection with one of the most brutal murders which has come to the ears of the American public for some time and deserve censure if we are to uphold our ancient traditions. If we are loyal and patriotic American citizens willing to sacrifice our lives and those of our sons for a free and fair land, can we be expected to sit quietly by saying nothing while allowing our fellow citizens to be brutally murdered by the hands of those hostile to our nation's best good.

Mr. Attorney General, this case should be solved, if it takes an entire detective agency and the armed forces to protect them. If it is a fact that certain mail in the post office in Mason and certain documents pertaining to this heinous murder were opened and destroyed, was not someone guilty of a crime? This involved a charge of interfering with the mails. Mr. Attorney General, it is up to you. Let us have the facts. The public is tired of the lax methods which have been employed in solving the mystery of this dreadful crime. Enlightened people demand the truth. If the murderer is in New Hampshire let's get him. If he's in Berlin, let's get him.

Yours for justice

A citizen of New Hampshire

The response was instantaneous. The day after the Dover citizen's letter appeared, Manion received three new offers of statements regarding the case and set up appointments for One Armed Louie to take and notarize the statements in the presence of the Selectmen in their chambers.

Reis and Von Falkenberg ~~had~~ arrived as Tommy Corcoran had promised and in their first week in town had inspected the murder site, interviewed the Selectmen, and using their French, had interviewed several of the French Canadian mill workers suggested by Father Manion. They turned up nothing that was not already known. Manion suggested that they talk to a Mrs. Percy, who lived across the street from the grounds of Holy Name. He was concerned as to whether or not she had seen anything the night of the murder, one, ( and by this he meant had she seen Brian coming home)

and, two, he wanted to know if anyone <sup>but</sup> ~~by~~ Perkins Meade was suspected or implicated in the crime. He ~~emphasized~~ emphasized that they should seek out a relationship ~~by~~ with <sup>Main</sup> ~~Staufferberg~~, the former Thorndike tenant. The interview, while not yielding much information, went worse than they could have known at the time.

\* They introduced themselves as Federal officers and, as <sup>honest</sup> ~~honest~~ folks, they had found very effective in interviews with average ~~honest~~ folks, had insisted that she read their identity cards carefully and check their faces against the photos on them. Reis, who had a round jolly face and an open manner, did the talking and paused only to consult with Von Falkenberg.

" Mrs. Percy, you live on the Main Street, which gives you an observation post from which to see anyone coming into town from the West or going out in the same direction. We have several witnesses who have testified to seeing Judge Meade drive up to Mason Center the night of the murder, after the band concert, say about 9:30. Did you by any chance see him pass your house going toward the Center?"

" No, I didn't. I don't usually go to the band concerts.' Don't care much for music except for hymns."

" What time did you retire that night? I know it seems like a silly question, but I expect everyone in town has searched their memory to recall everything they did that night, in case they should find they knew something connected with the murder."

" "Course, I know what I did that night. I'd been canning green beans all day long. Did it anyway, but in those days it was part of the war effort, you know, not to buy canned goods, so I put up more than I usually do. My husband came home from the box factory at his usual time and I gave him his supper about 5:30. I was so tired I could hardly see and after I did the dishes, I soaked my corns in hot water and went to bed. Must have been about eight o'clock. I never looked out the house, front or back."



" I see. Now over the last several years you must have been conscious that a lot of people saw signalling from the hills around Mason, from Monadnock, Pack Monadnock, the Temple Hills, and even from <sup>prominent</sup> ~~slightly~~ hills in Mason itself. Did you yourself ever observe any of this reported signalling? You live at the top of the hill here, a pretty good rise. My colleague and I looked over your place before we came in to talk to you and you have some clear lines of sight from the back end of your garden."

" Lord, no. I never paid any attention to that signalling talk. Just a lot of idle talk, <sup>FOLKS</sup> trying to get themselves involved in the war. I listened to Ed Price, the night constable, talk once a couple of years ago about what he saw on night patrol, but I never paid him any mind. A lot of them were looking but they never got close to any lights that I know of."

" I see. Well, we need to get negative reports as well as positive ones. Helps us to cross-check our facts, you know." At this point, Von Falkenberg motioned <sup>to Reis</sup> ~~that~~ he wanted to confer and in French, as they were accustomed to do when they were interrogating Yankee witnesses, reminded him that the priest had asked them to pick Mrs Percy about anyone else besides Perkins Meade being suspected of involvement in the murder. What they didn't know and what Manion had not thought to tell them was that Henriette Percy, before she became Mrs Charles Percy had been <sup>Robideaux</sup> ~~Henriette~~ and had been raised speaking French before she spoke English. Her anxiety to assimilate had been so compelling that there was not the slightest clue in her voice or manner to indicate that she was anything but old New England stock.

In answer to Reis's final question, she said no, she didn't know of anyone whose name had been mentioned, and furthermore, she's known Perkins Meade for over thirty years, and she didn't believe a word of the evil gossip going around.

visitors  
As soon as her ~~xxxxxx~~ had left, she went to the  
phone, picked up the receiver and rang twice. " Central, would  
you ring Dr. O'Connor, please? 232 ? Thank you."

Kaiser Bill Lives V by Francis C. O'Connor, M.D.

As happened with

trench warfare in the blood red fields of Flanders and battleground of the Argonne and Belleau Wood, the holiday season and the snow and frost of winter slowed down the attacks of both sides in the struggle for the soul of our little town of Mason, New Hampshire. The Federal re-inforcements Harry Manion had called in from Boston were a flop; they did not find out anything that had not been exposed well before they came. They seemed determined to pursue the reported presence (never verified in any way) of German spies doing signalling from the Thorndike place. The best they could come up with was some common panes of glass from the cottage which they claimed were colored for use in sending code messages. In a letter to the Selectmen, which of course they made public in the Courier and derided, Henry Oldham, the State Attorney General, pointed out that this glass, claimed to be "doctored," was no different from that which could be found in many New Hampshire homes. This poor quality glass <sup>which</sup> shows an iridescent effect like a drop of oil on water is to be found in many homes and is not an ~~artifact~~ <sup>tool</sup> of the spy trade.

To a degree, we (Meade's friends and allies) benefited more from the visit of the Secret Service than the Unholy Alliance did. I thought over carefully what Henriette Percy told me after the two agents visited her and decided our lines were still pretty firm, and we could afford to rest and refit during the winter. We knew that Manion and his gang were still apprehensive over the possibility that persons unnamed as yet had been seen ~~xxx~~ abroad the night of the murder. This we knew from Manion's questioning of the Lloyds in that runaway trip to Connecticut and doubly verified by the questions put to Mrs. Percy.

Why, I wondered, did they want to know if we suspected anyone other than the man they slandered daily, Perkins Meade, who bore his martyrdom in humble silence. There was a fear evidenced here which spoke

to the fact that there must be a joker in the pack, a card which had not been played and never would be unless we could find <sup>in force</sup> ~~find~~ <sup>some way</sup> ~~some way~~ their hand.

~~They were not in the dark as to the fact that Perkins Meade was a spy and that he was in contact with the Germans.~~

~~xxxxxxx~~ If they knew German spies were involved, they would have to find a connection between Perkins Meade and the foreigners, chiefly Mainz, the Thorndike former tenant. They had not moved in that ~~indirect~~ in that direction, nor had the Secret Service investigators aided them in such a effort. If they did ~~not~~ know German spies were <sup>not</sup> involved, they could only move from the other side of the formula, that is, try to prove illegitimate connections between Mainz and Meade and let the spy connection follow as a logical consequence. They had tried unsuccessfully to construct such a relationship by examining the liberal sums spent by the Mainzes, who without visible means of support ~~x xxxxxxxxxx~~ made large deposits monthly in Meade's bank.

In other words, as I examined the evidence at hand, I decided ~~that~~ the Selectmen were as much in the dark as we were as to the identity of the killer. We had that in common. And it could be assumed that with time, the whole affair would die down and the verdict of the April 1919 Grand Jury, " death at the hands of person or persons unknown," would have to be accepted by all. We would be unhappy, sure, for we wanted our friend and neighbor, Perkins Meade, cleared beyond a reasonable doubt, but ~~if~~ that was what had to be, so be it. Why, then, didn't they let up ? Patriotism ? Concern for the good name of the town ? The war had been over for 14 months and the returned veterans were trying to pick up their lives where they had laid them when they answered their country's call. Concern for the good name of the town ?? when they were daily <sup>taking</sup> ~~finding~~ the slightest excuse to dirty the name of Mason in the Boston papers, principally the Courier, using the cynical pen of Bart Lincoln to do so.  
?

More than once " upon a midnight dreary," to use Poe's words, I sat and pondered what had happened since my return to Mason. Each time I did, I came to the one and same conclusion: Father Harry Manion was using everything in ~~in~~ his power, playing his minions like chessmen, to protect the killer of William Thorndike.

What could I do ? Nothing. I decided that I was in a fight with a bigger man. I decided that like my hero of years gone by, Gentlemen Jim Corbett, I would have to counterpunch, letting ~~them~~ <sup>him</sup> strike first, hitting back quickly ~~while~~ <sup>he</sup> after ~~they~~ <sup>his</sup> had launched ~~their~~ attack, catching ~~them~~ <sup>him</sup> off balance .

I did not have to wait long into the new year. Manion had decided to use the newly formed American Legion Post ~~xx~~ to focus ~~of~~ his attack. Privately, I thought, given Manion's unconcealed distaste for " Our Boys," his move was more cynical than anything he had yet done, but I had to admire his evaluation of the changing shape of forces in our community, his ~~perception~~ perception that at least for the present those who had served in the armed forces were beyond criticism. It was a brilliant stroke.

the Post Commandant,

The Selectmen presented the following resolution to Larry Thatcher, my colleague- in - arms, that is, he was also a doctor of medicine practicing in Mason. Larry, a tall, thin, cigarette-sucking fellow, was in my estimation not much of a doctor nor much of a soldier. He did more dealing in real estate than doctoring -- I must admit he was making a better living than I did and easier too-- and his basic idea was to offend as few people. As a doctor, he had access to medical whiskey, and by the time Prohibition was voted ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> had managed to build himself such a habit that the last few years of his life he was an alcoholic recluse. Though he had never left Camp Greenleaf, South Carolina, never served overseas, he had the nerve to come to me and ask me to write a letter in support of his application for compensation for injuries suffered in the war. I was disgusted with him and even more disgusted with myself for doing as he asked.

I guess Manion~~x~~ figured if Thatcher presented this resolution, we'd all go along with it, him being such an inoffensive chap. Well, Manion missed the boat on that one. Larry was not about to get into any situation that would endanger his real estate business and he managed to find something which took him out of town the night the ~~xxxx~~ resolution came up for a vote. Bill Hillyer<sup>Hillyer</sup>, the <sup>Vice</sup> ~~A~~post commander of James B. Woodworth, Post # 11, showed it to me before the meeting and we decided that we we would fight it. The resolution read as follows:

Whereas Dr, William Thorndike, a law abiding patriot, resident of Mason and Citizen of the United States, a man beloved by all, who has given the most signal proof of his intense loyalty and patriotism

1. By his liberal support of all those agencies instituted to help this country in its struggle for the maintenance of right and justice
2. By the frequently repeated regret that insomuch as his age and circumstances would not allow him to enter the active service of the army or navy, he had not even a son to represent his family
3. By making the Supreme Sacrifice as a result of his determination to defeat the espionage activities directed against the lives of our soldiers and sailors

Be it resolved; That we members of the James B. Woodworth Post, # 11, American Legion, express our sentiments of horror at the brutal and cowardly manner whereby his murder was accomplished

2. that we will ever cherish and reverence his memory insomuch as he died that we might live
3. That we respectfully invite the members of the American Legion throughout the State of New ~~Hampshire~~ Hampshire and the entire United States to unite with us in demanding from the Federal Authorities and Governor Barnett of New Hampshire to use all means in their power to bring to the bar of justice the perpetrators of this dastardly crime
4. That collectively and individually we pledge our unceasing cooperation to bring about this result.

Bill Hillyer and I worked together on this in our efforts to ~~xxxx~~ block the use of the American Legion Post as an additional weapon against Rob Packard, our County Soliciter, and ~~Henry~~ <sup>Henry</sup> Oldham, the State Attorney General. The Unholy Alliance had been trying to pressure the Governor into to appointing a special prosecutor who would call a second Grand Jury and give them an official platform for presenting their affidavits and "fixed" witnesses. This we had to stop. In those days, the American Legion carried a big stick and swung it with a lot of weight. Though we believed that Governor Barnett would stand behind his lawmen, as he had up to now,

in a state as small as ours, it was asking an awful lot of a politician to take a stand against an outfit like the Legion.

Hillyer

The first thing ~~Hillyer~~ did was to distribute ~~the~~ copies of the resolution to the assembled members and cite the section of ~~the~~ our bylaws which made it impossible to pass a resolution on the first reading. He also made a ruling from the chair that discussion of the resolution would take place at the next meeting which would be held a week later.

In the week between the meetings, he sent a copy of the resolution to Oswald Crane, the State Commander of the Legion, in Keene, and received from him a ruling of the executive committee that resolutions on the Thorndike case were out of order but there nothing in the by-laws to prevent members from acting as individuals.

The whole resolution worried us. It did in fact declare that Thorndike was murdered by German agents, a point that we were not anxious to concede ~~concede~~, and it equated his pottering around looking for signals among the stars and reading lamps of the countryside and automobile headlights with the sacrifices of those of us who had served overseas. It was in ~~in~~ resolution paragraph three of the ~~resolution~~ itself that worried us most. We were determined that the name of the Post should not appear and we watered down the references to ~~Thorndike's~~ Thorndike's loyalty and patriotism.

Hillyer left the chair at the second meeting, appointing Homer Bellefleur in his place, and presented the ruling sent him by the State Executive Committee. He then presented a substitute resolution in which the words " ex-servicemen of the World War" replaced the name of the post wherever mentioned. The revised resolution read as follows:

" We, the undersigned, ex-servicemen of the World War, <sup>being</sup> ~~being~~ of of the opinion that William Thorndike, a loyal American Citizen and resident of Mason, New Hampshire, was dreadfully murdered in his pursuit of German spy activities in the region, call upon the authorities of the State of New Hampshire to investigate thoroughly all the old and new evidence in the case with a view to thoroughly avenging the murder. In ~~attempting~~ attempting to reveal the German spy system to the agents of our government we strongly urge that the case be persistently probed and that the guilty are brought to justice."

⑥

The changes did not go down without a fight. There was a lot of hot talk and nasty exchanges. Fortunately we had the edge, having the power of the chair. Immediately Carl Spotts got up and started to discuss the Thorndike case and Bellfleur ruled him out of order. I got up and made a few well chosen remarks about how an organization such as ours served the country best if it kept out of politics. If we were to keep the high place in the minds of our fellow Americans, I said, we had best keep out of politics, avoid taking partisan stands and working for the common ideals we all had fought for. We had joined in the putting down of the Prussian despotism by ignoring what else might have divided us. If we abandoned that stance, we would cease to be a force in American life. I also said a few choice things about those who were attempting to use us in pursuit of their own ends. I named names, in particular each and everyone of the Selectmen.

We put it to a vote and won by two, to accept the revised resolution and send it to the Selectmen..

Of course, the Courier got ahold of the whole dog fight and reported <sup>it</sup> in the weekend paper. An examination of the names given of those who thought the original resolution should have been passed showed a heavy weighting of French Canadians clearly under the thumb of the Big Man on the Hill. Sirois, Peletier, Duval, St Pierre, the Taylor brothers, plus some ne'er do well and contrary Yankees, were names which stood out.

I'm sure that anyone reading this account will think that it was all a tempest in a teapot, but it was important for our cause that we not be outmaneuvered in any involvement of ex-servicemen because the tide of patriotism and <sup>equally</sup> ~~the~~ ~~strong~~ fear ~~of~~ of foreigners and foreign involvement in American affairs was still at a wartime high.



In the Legion Post meeting on January 22nd, then, we had blocked the opening move of Harry Manion's winter campaign. There was plenty of yowling at what we did and the way we did it, but we had shut down his move to use the veterans as a pressure group on the Governor.

Though Nelson Barnett was a Republican and I was a lifelong Democrat, I had always liked him. He generally appointed good men, and the Republicans did have some, starting right here in the town of Mason, and he kept the State from interfering much in local affairs. I met him first when we were both serving in the National Guard Cavalry and our companies shared the same mess at the summer encampment at Concord. As my practice began to grow in Mason, I could ~~not~~ no longer afford the luxury of taking two weeks off right in the height of the summer season, for I was becoming more and more popular among the summer visitors -- at a later date I would treat the eminent<sup>e</sup> author Willa Cather who began to spend her summers at the Mountain House after the war -- and I found the encampments to be more social than military. Barnett, however, stayed with the Guard, became an officer and used his contacts, so I am told, to further his political career. That he became governor of our state indicates the success that he had.

In any case, I felt that Manion would not let up on him and I felt that he should be informed of the situation in Mason by someone close to the scene, someone who would help keep him from rash action in the face of the drumfire he was under. On the <sup>20</sup>27th of January, 1920, being Anna's birthday it was always a red letter day on the calendar, I wrote him as follows:

Dear Gov. Barnett:

I am taking the liberty of writing you a few lines to assure you that the impression that has gone out all over New England that we were all dead in this town, or frightened, is an error.

For a year and a half, our three selectmen led by Rev Harry Manion, have rode this town, until the majority of the people do not dare think say nothing about talk, unless they have their permission.

I came home from France about nine months ago and have waited patiently, hoping and praying that things would improve and that we might again be the happy peaceful place we all loved so well.

But instead of getting better, things are growing worse. I am informed that this quartet say this is going to continue for ten years, and they talk of electing senators, governors, District Attorneys, and congressman, as if the matter was very simple and optional with them.

I have had to sit by and see them persecute a man, who for 23 years has been my good neighbor, not a preacher but such a man as the preacher preaches about. Not satisfied with this, they then began to persecute even the friends of this man and their families. I get off right here and from now on I propose to give them some excitement at least.

I appreciate the task ahead of me, but cannot see any other thing to do and hope to keep the respect of my little children and friends.

I am not writing to you for aid, but wish you to watch us for a while, and, taking it for granted you have heard the story, "the western bear fight," will say please don't help the bear.

I have tried to get an appointment with Bishop Pelletier, with Father Manion present, but have not been successful so far. I am going to try to keep to bring this about.

Have got one selectman's property attached for \$ 30,000, and hope to have the whole crowd in court early next fall. Rev. Manion wrote a petition and sent to our American Legion Post, asking you to appoint special counsel, and this selectman went around saying he would injure anyone's business who refused to sign said petition. I talked with Hennessy on this and other things they were doing, and asked under what law they could do it. He assured me that "Mason selectmen made their own law." Well, maybe they do, but I am from Missouri and have got to be shown.

Pardon my writing to you. I wished to call your attention to our efforts for peace and liberty in this section of your country and to ask that you offer up a silent prayer that justice wins.

Most respectfully,

F.C. O'Connor

P.S.: I am not in politics, am not looking for any honors or office, just hope " to live in a house beside the road and be a friend of man."

I never got a reply from Governor Barnett and I did not really expect one. With all the midnight spying and surveillance going on -- I was still being followed constantly -- it would not have been wise. I could only hope that he had a better grasp than before of who was involved in <sup>the</sup> negative publicity our state and town were getting and would act accordingly.

The timing of my letter to Governor John Barnett could not have been more apropos. After the failure to force the resolution through our local American Legion Post, ~~George~~ the Unholy Alliance shifted their sights to bigger game and apparently on the advice of their recently retained Boston <sup>Few</sup> counsel, got an appointment with the Governor in his offices in Concord. This was the ~~first week in February~~ <sup>last week in January.</sup> We could not find out exactly what happened, but it was not hard to read between the lines of the article which appeared in the Courier two days later.

Mason, New Hampshire, ~~February 5~~ <sup>JAN 29</sup>

*Nelson* One of the features of the Conference which the Selectmen held with Gov. ~~John~~ Barnett in Concord relative to the murder of William Thorndike is the announcement by Selectmen Edward Boyden that if the state failed to make an arrest, the Selectmen would make one.

Immediately after the conference, the Selectmen retained Alexander Kern Murphy of Concord to draw up written charges against County Solicitor Robert Packard and Attorney Henry Oldham of Concord for allegedly failing to properly conduct the investigation of the Thorndike tragedy. This probably will take another week. The Selectmen feel that they have made progress at the conference, in spite of the hostile attitude of Gov. Barnett at times.

The evening the above article appeared, D.D. Trudeau came storming into my office just as I was seeing the last of my after-supper patients out the door. He was holding the paper the paper with two fingers like a soiled pair of drawers and was gesturing with the other hand as if to dispel a bad odor. "Have you seen this?" he bellowed, as he followed me back into my inner office, where I shut the door. I was slightly amused to see him with the paper, because I knew he refused to subscribe to the Courier openly, but ~~had~~ had his secretary get a daily copy in her name. That way he did not have to go into George Dunne's drug store to pick it up. With his temper, that was probably a wise move.

"Yes," I said, "what about it?"

"What are we going to do?" he said. "How are we going to fight this move? Do you want me to set up a meeting at Merrill's house? This is terrible."

Motioning him into the patient's chair, I filled my pipe from the can of Prince Albert, lit it, and leaned back in my office chair, ~~xxxxing~~ ~~xxxx~~ letting off a mouthful of blue smoke. I hadn't had a free moment in the last two hours and I needed to compose myself.

"To begin with, you cool off. We've got to think this thing through and we can't go off half-cocked. No meetings. We do nothing. I'm not surprised. If I am surprised at anything, it's that they've waited so long to go to the Governor. They've threatened often enough."

"But we've got to get our story to the Governor," he sputtered.

"I think he knows our story," I said.

"In the first paragraph they threaten to make an arrest if the state doesn't"

"Pure bluff. They've had a year and a half to make an arrest and they haven't done it. Take that second paragraph, now. Let me tell you what happened," I said.

"All right, you tell me what did happened." D.D. wasn't happy at my attitude but he was willing to listen.

"First of all they presented Barnett with the petitions. Very impressive. More than 500 signatures. And they expected him as a politician to cave in. We're a small state and <sup>a</sup>petition that size from our rural area indicates trouble and politicians don't like trouble."

"God, yes," he breathed.

"Then, they tried to get him to promise to appoint a deputy attorney general, a special attorney, and call a second Grand Jury -- a jury to which they could present all their perjured affidavits and lately emerged witnesses."

"We know George Dunne has been using all his contacts in the legislature to exert pressure on the Governor for that," D.D. said.

" Exerting pressure is one thing; a direct confrontation is another. That's ~~sw~~ where they made their mistake."

"Why mistake ?"

"There's only one thing a politician hates worse than having to explain some missing or misspent funds and that is an attack on another elected official. He' ll act if he has to but only if he has to. If you think he's going to act on his own, you've got another think coming. And that explains the second paragraph. I watched ~~Nelson~~ <sup>Nelson</sup> Barnett operate in the Guard when we served together and I've watched him ever since. He knows when to be sweet and when to be nasty."

" And you figure he got nasty."

" Sure, that's what Lincoln meant by hostile attitude. He told them to <sup>put</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~ their charges against Packard and Oldham in writing and then they' ~~xxd~~ have something to talk about. And then he booted them out of his office."

"So what do we do, wait ? "

" Yes. I'm surprised at Alec Murphy taking ~~xxxxx~~ their side. He's always been a good man. I've appeared for him and given medical testimony, and I've been impressed. He's a fighter, had a good record in the AEF, and I'm not happy about his being in the opposition. He's somebody to watch out for. "

Trudeau left, feeling a lot better than when he arrived, and promised to pass on to the other members of the Soft Pedal Squad my view of the present situation. I was more disturbed than I cared to let him or anyone else know. Would ~~John~~ <sup>Nelson</sup> Barnett hold fast as I thought, or would he yield to the pressure of some Mason voters and the negative publicity our town and state was getting daily all over New England through the Courier articles. Maybe the outcome depended on his own ambitions. If he wanted to be a senator or even a congressman, who knows...

Nelson

As it turned out, I need not have worried about ~~John~~ Barnett.

XX

XX He set up a second meeting

Alec Murphy was to do it, and as a local man well known to Barnett, he would have been less offending.

Ten days later, on February 10th, in his offices, and the Selectmen had their counsel, George Waldstein, present a Bill of Complaint. This was a switch and their second major ~~xxx~~ mistake. But The sight of Waldstein, a greasy, low-type Jew lawyer from Boston, who had a record of pressing all kinds of harrassing phoney injury suits which he often got settled out of court because defendents preferred to save time and money that way, apparently infuriated the Governor. Not only was he put in the position of standing in judgment on his own Attorney General and a very well-thought-of County Soliciter, but he was put there by a big city shyster.

Rob Packard told me later that Barnett was magnificent. He got on Waldstein right away. He accused him of being an agent of the Boston Courier and of being responsible for the terrible publicity our state and town was receiving for the sake of selling more newspapers. We learned later that a letter he had written to Waldstein telling of his intention to consult with Federal authorities in Boston had appeared in the Courier as a news item, when he, Barnett, had had no contact with the paper at all. Obviously Waldstein had leaked it to the paper.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Barnett talked about a big city newspaper making New Hampshire a target and said that state officials had done all they could in pursuit of the Thorndike murderers and suggested that Federal officials begin an investigation and if needbe call a Federal grand jury.

He said that it was not within his jurisdiction to investigate the official acts of Attorney General Henry Oldham and County Soliciter Robert Packard of Chesire County. He told the Selectmen that he would grant them no further hearings until they submitted formal charges of malfeasance against the two men.

With that he declared the meeting to be at an end. He refused to listen to anything that Waldstein had to say, telling him that he found him professionally repulsive and morally unsuited to make a presentation for any cause. And that was the end of that.

But of course it wasn't.

I don't know which one -- Manion or Waldstein -- wrote the letter which appeared in the Courier two days after the meeting, but I think it was Waldstein. He was the one Barnett gored at the meeting and the sarcastic tone was a little too subtle for Harry Manion. One thing is sure: it was not written by the three who signed it. My feeling was that it was a little too clever to have much effect on those it was supposed to move; its chief effect seemed to be to make the writer feel better. Here it is.

Mason, New Hampshire  
February 10, 1920  
Honorable <sup>Mason</sup> John Barnett, Governor  
Concord, New Hampshire

Your Excellency:

After thinking over our conference with you yesterday, we feel an apology is due your excellency from us, the Selectmen of Mason, for intruding a murder case upon you when your mind was so occupied with defending our state from the aspersions of foreign newspapers.

We were very much impressed with the courage you displayed in castigating your victims -- when you were willing to allow them an opportunity to reply and feel that under like circumstances you could have conquered the force of the Boche ~~single~~ <sup>eloquence</sup>-handed.

We were very sorry to have occasion to flout, which we feel will have serious consequences and which will ultimately be found to manifest itself in one of two ways: 1) If the flood went into the Merrimack River, it would have the effect of destroying all the suckers so that the future supply must necessarily come from Portsmouth and 2) if it went into the laundry, the results would be such a supply of fertilizer it would make the gardens in the vicinity of Concord yield bountiously, thus reducing the high cost of living.

We are very glad to learn from you that the Boston Courier is "leading us around." It may surprise you to learn that this paper is the only one which has ever attempted in a wholehearted way to give assistance to us in this matter  
XX

~~AND THAT ASSIST~~

and that assistance has been rendered to us without expense by the town of Mason. This publicity given us by this paper, in our opinion, has not disgraced the people of New Hampshire or the people who are above suspicion, Only politicians who may have been susceptible to influence may have become besmirched.

Attorney Geogge Waldstein is under our retainer not the Boston Courier's. He has never been employed by that newspaper and was introduced by us to their representative. Although he and we seem to have been thoroughly by your excellency, you may be interested to know that our intentions are the same as heretofore and our courage is good. *insulted*

In closing, <sup>now</sup> we wish again to thank you for the courteous and gentlemanly in which we were received by you, the assistance you have rendered us, and to assure you that we will not in the future try to put anything over on you, or corrupt you, or lead you astray.

Wishing you all the success and prosperity you deserve, we are:

( signed) Edward Boyden  
Alfred Partridge  
Peter Hennessy

Childish, don't you think? and not terribly effective. The Selectmen could not ignore what the Courier was doing, publishing almost daily the baldly planted stories written up by Bart Lincoln. Their problem was that there was nothing happening to report on ; the only thing they could do was to give Packard and Oldham hell because nothing was happening and blame them for it. The connection between Waldstein and the Courier was a covert one and if they weren't paying him directly, they were indirectly.

The heavy-handed references to sewage or horse manure were so obscure as to be unintelligible. They were daring in suggesting that Barnett had been influenced unduly, but that kind of claim flows right off the back of any experienced politician.

Actually, I felt we had won that round without really taking part in the fight. We knew they would go to the state level sooner or later and that failing there, they would go to the national level.



And they did go to Washington within a week after the set-to with Governor Barnett. They had sent letters to <sup>U.S.</sup> Attorney General Palmer, who even then was earning a reputation for striking hard and often against foreign influences in the United States, particularly the Reds who were stirring up labor unrest in our country which was trying to get back to normal after an overseas struggle. Though we might not have approved some of his methods, we did agree that action must be taken to keep our peace-loving country at peace. We could not afford to lose to subversion what we had won in blood in France. However, they <sup>did</sup> not get to see the great A. Mitchell Palmer himself but were referred to the Assistant A.G. in charge of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. From the newspaper accounts of the meeting -- done by the Courier representative who had attended <sup>with</sup> the Thorndike nephews and the Selectmen and counsel Waldstein -- we gathered that what they got mostly was promises, promises of cooperation, promises that "if evidence warranted he would prosecute regardless of social, financial, or political prominence of persons involved." Statements so bland as this worried us not at all. We knew that no such evidence existed, or we thought we did.

If they got promises for cooperation in sharing records, in the dispatch of special agents, in prosecution "if the evidence warranted" from the Department of Justice, they got no such thing from Senator <sup>Abraham Gatchell</sup> ~~Catchell~~ Abraham, Father Abraham his supporters called him. I wish I had the time to outline the political career of <sup>Abe</sup> ~~Gatchell~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup> ~~Abraham~~. I admired him immensely, even if he was of the other party. He was a crusty old ~~parry~~ cuss, never used three <sup>swear</sup> words when two would do, ~~who~~ had the respect of ~~xxxxxx~~ his fellow senators as well as that of the people of New Hampshire. He looked out after the interests of the state ~~xxxxxxx~~ while guarding the interests of the individual citizen. By this time, his election had become a matter of form and we Democrats would let the Mayor of Laconia <sup>or Harrison</sup> run against <sup>Abe</sup> ~~Gatchell~~ for

the honor of it -- it was always good to get the party together once in a while -- but we never expected to win. We paid our dues with ~~Abraham Gatchell~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup> ~~Gatch~~ ~~Abraham~~ and felt that he was just as much our Senator as he was theirs. He was ,after all, the most effective man from our part of the country since Daniel Webster.

Like any good politician, Senator ~~Abraham~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup> knew exactly where the votes came from and in what proportion. He knew who to call in every village and town in the Granite State and he knew Perkins Meade and the members of the Soft Pedal Squad back to the first time he'd run for congressman. His ability to avoid saying anything he didn't want to say or taking any stand he didn't want to take is well illustrated by this exchange between him and the members of the ~~Mason~~ <sup>delegation from Mason.</sup> the Selectmen

Courier Reporter: Senator, will you give ~~us~~ a statement to take to the people of Mason when they return ?

~~Abraham~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup> : I will assist in bringing any matters which the Selectmen desire to the proper government department. I would do the same for any of my constituents. The man <sup>you</sup> suspect, whom I know very well, if he came to me I would give him the same assistance.

Waldstein: Senator ~~Abraham~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup>, will you not go on record as taking a personal interest in the Thorndike case?

~~Abraham~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup> : Ah, the pressures of my duties in the Senate prevent me from camping on the doorstep of the attorney general to see that every case is pursued. I'd like to point out to ~~you~~ you, sir, that you are talking to a Republican Senator and to two Republican congressman under a Democratic administration. You can expect no favors from this administration.

Waldstein: Senator, we appeal to you, not as a US Senator, necessarily, but as a red-blooded American

~~Abraham~~ <sup>Gatchell</sup> : Don't see what more we can do. I have already shown my interest by arranging the interview which we have had with the Department of Justice.

So it was a shut-off in Washington as well as Concord and the front still held. It was time to plan for the spring campaign and the opening battle would be the March election of town officials. The last election had been of little importance as can be seen by the calibre of man who was elected. This election might well determine whether or not the persecution of Perkins Meade would continue for another two years.

Kaiser Bill Lives VI by Francis O'Connor, M.D.

"How's That," <sup>asked</sup> ~~said~~ Anna as she raised the large square of heavy cardboard on which she'd been working. The letters, done in black and triple-highlighted in red, white, and blue for depth, stood out bright and clear, and spelled out the message:

VOTERS OF MASON AWAKE !!

to

HIGHER TAXES and HIGHER DEBT

1916 = \$ 24/000      1919 = \$ 33/000

1920 = \$ 50/000 ?

"That's great," I said. "We'll need two more just like that one. One for each station where the handbills are being given out: <sup>One for</sup> Dunne's Drug store and that gets the post office entrance; one for each of the Mills at noon. The ones at the mills move at the end of the lunch hour to Fay's Department store and Commier's Market. That way there are always at least two people with the signs and handbills. I don't think they'll try any rough stuff, but you never know. You are sure that you and the other women are willing to do this? "

PA [ "We said we would, didn't we? Having the vote won't do us much good if we don't stand up and fight for what is right. We won't let Laine Meade do it, ~~even~~ even though she'd like to, because Perkins doesn't want her to get involved publicly. But it's time the good women of this town stood beside their men. It's time we ended the persecution of a man who's dying by inches." ]

Why I was surprised at the bravery and determination of my good wife, Anna Norcross O'Connor, I do not know. All of our married life she had displayed the greatest courage imaginable : eleven pregnancies in 23 years and we'd lost six of them; complete acceptance of her role in keeping the home fires burning when I went off to France leaving her with four small children and one boy, Francis, in college.

I guess it was because she'd always borne her burden in private, without comment or complaint. She was the one who'd always stayed at home after waking when I answered the midnight call to the bed of the sick, never knowing, in the last year ~~and a half~~, whether this was the call of the assassin waiting for me in the shadows of some lonely farmyard. When the time came to do our tombstone in Connaught Cemetary, I knew that under her ~~name~~ name it would be written: " She also served," and this would be a lifetime comment, not just in balance to the inscription of my war service. She <sup>had</sup> asked so little and given so much. The role she'd played while I was off in the AEF had given her a new strength and she showed, as the poet says, the iron in her soul.

Anna had organized, unofficially, the women in our group, that is, the wives of those of us who were defending Perkins Meade, into an effective Auxiliary. ~~In the beginning,~~ Maybe it was after the anonymous letters with their death threats started coming; maybe it was the anonymous phone calls, but through the various church organizations which met at the homes of members for teas, literary matters, sewing bees for foreign missions, and I-don't-know- what, quietly and with great determination, she had forged a union which had closed ranks on our cause.

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 Problem: When did American women get the vote? Could they vote in a 1920 election. If they could , para. "A," will stand. If not, the para. "B" is to be substituted.

"B" " We said we would, didn't we ? We will soon have the vote the vote and it won't do us much good if we are not accustomed to standing up and x fighting for what is right..... the rest as in para. "A"

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But here I get ahead of my story. The conversation with Anna took place the week before the election, as we were making feverish preparations for what I was convinced would be a pivotal event in the life of our town. It was a chance to get rid of that miserable bunch of ~~like~~ Selectmen, who were the cat's paw, the <sup>active</sup> ~~affixative~~ political arm, of that Big Man on the Hill, the Kaiser, Father Harry Manion. As long as they were the elected officers of the town, Manion had the use of the town name and the town treasury. Everything he told them to do had an official stamp of approval. Bart Lincoln never wrote of anything they did or wanted to do without mentioning their <sup>position</sup> ~~affix~~ as elected officials acting for the town, with the support of all patriotic and freedom loving people in it. Their stance was almost un-attackable since all loyal Americans were only too aware of the threat of the Bolsheviki to our great institutions of government and law. Anarchy and lawlessness seemed to be the aim of the recently arrived foreign element in our society. Bombs and bomb threats were everywhere; strikes and threats of strikes endangered the productivity of our great nation. All good Americans supported their elected officials especially those of good native stock. An exchange of letters will make quite clear what we were up against.

The first letter is from Mrs. Beatrice Robertson, who was the leader in the Mason summer community. This group was in the main made up by wealthy people from the Boston, New York, and Philadelphia areas who had bought abandoned farmhouses and fixed them up for summer homes or who had formed colonies on several of the six lakes in our township. They were important in that they brought in a lot of money, employed a lot of local help, and thus enabled a number of townspeople to make it through our long cold New Hampshire winters. They were highly educated, highly cultured, and generally treated ~~with~~ <sup>the</sup> natives with a slight air of superiority.

<sup>Much</sup>  
There was not ~~amixing~~ mixing between the summer people and the locals. They liked to regard us as highly amusing <sup>types</sup> and for our side, prices always went up in the local stores <sup>on</sup> Memorial Day and down again <sup>after</sup> Labor Day. Such practice was recognized but not acknowledged ~~in~~ by both. It was the way it was. As a professional man, I was accepted and ~~xxxxxxx~~ <sup>most of</sup> at one time or another I made house calls at the homes of <sup>the</sup> summer residents. They paid well and promptly, and I found some of them to be very interesting. What many townspeople found hard to take was their constant desire to improve us. Mrs. Robertson was not only one of the chief improvers, she was also a longtime friend of William and Polly Thorndike. As owner of one of the chief industries in ~~M~~ Mason, D.D. Thoreau was of sufficient importance to merit her attention and he shared with ~~me~~ <sup>us</sup> her letter and his reply.

Mr. Delphine D. Trudeau  
Mason, New Hampshire

3 Eliot Circle  
Cambridge, Mass

~~January~~  
February 3, 1920

Dear Sir:

I am writing you as one of the ~~men~~ men of influence in Mason to say that a rumor is going about that certain people in Mason intend at Town meeting to put out the present board of selectmen because of their efforts to find out who killed Mr. Thorndike, and to choose a new board which will let the whole matter drop. It does not seem possible that this can be true, but the rumor is bound to do ~~great~~ great harm to the reputation of the town and should be denied if untrue.

The fact that no one has been brought to justice for this awful crime is already hurting the town. I have been surprised at the number of my acquaintances who have been in the habit of making a winter trip to Mason who have gone elsewhere this winter, saying frankly that they would not find their customary long walks about the country agreeable with the knowledge that there was a murderer at large in the region.

For the sake of the different people who have been unjustly ~~sus~~ suspected it seems important that the matter should be followed up. They themselves must surely feel this, for their names can never be wholly cleared until the culprit is found.

Feeling sure of your interest in what so vitally concerns Mason's welfare and trusting you will exercise your influence in every way possible to have the town officials supported in their difficult but exceedingly important task of carrying their investigation to a definite conclusion, I am

Sincerely yours,

Pres. Mason Improvement  
Society.

(signed) Mrs. B. L. Robertson

Mrs. B.L. Robertson  
# 3 Eliot Circle  
Cambridge, Mass.

Feb. 5, 1920

Dear Madam:

I have yours of the 3rd at hand and was much surprised at the information which you gather regarding our town affairs,

Nobody in Mason I believe has any desire to hinder in anyway the prosecution of the guilty party in the Thorndike case, although such a rumor has been more or less circulated about town, but the present dis-satisfaction with our board of Selectmen has been for the utter dis-regard of cost in simply duplicating the work that was already done by the Federal and County officials.

What the leading men in town object to is not the prosecution of the guilty party regardless of who he may be, but of the needless expense which our Selectmen either now or could very easily avail themselves of that fact.

The rumor that you refer to is simply a propaganda to arouse public sentiment where it has been absolutely impossible to produce evidence of any discription(sic). Which possibly if you have followed this matter closely any further explanation(sic) in this line would be unnessessary.

I have the utmost confidence in the Mason ~~People~~ people and believe they will not do anuthing but what is for the best interest of Mason at our town meeting.

Respectfully yours,

DDT- C

A heavy silence hung over the group while we completed our reading of the two letters. Trudeau had ~~given~~ <sup>typed</sup> each of us a carbon copy of his letter to Mrs. Robertson and had/typed up copies of her letter. The group I should have explained earlier was those of us who had supported our friend and neighbor Perkins Meade. We were meeting in the back room of George Marlborough's taxidermist's shop. George like a number of independently minded Yankees supported himself in different ways. He had a sport ~~gun~~ shop, where he kept a good supply of shotguns for the hunters and fishing equipment for fishermen. He ~~gave~~ <sup>Sold</sup> his customers the equipment to shoot and catch their game and he mounted their trophies for them when they had them. He also did a small bit of surveying and did pretty well when there was much real estate ~~in~~ changing hands. Problem with George was you never knew when he was in and when he wasn't. He loved the solitary life of the outdoorsman and was apt to light out early in the morning

and not be seen for the next several days. How his wife put up with it I don't know. He never said much and he hadn't been much help, wouldn't sign any public statements or take any public stands, but he was definitely with us and when he had heard that we were having trouble finding a place to meet -- we didn't like to meet in any of the mill or factory offices and I decided my office was too public a place also -- had offered his workroom behind his shop. It was both public and private. Trudeau, Webb, Merrill, and ~~Baxter~~ Black were hunters and so it was natural for them to be seen going to Marlborough's for ammunition or whatever. I had no real reason to go there, but he'd leave the door to his barn, attached to the house, open and I'd drive in and pull the door to. George was off on one of his jaunts <sup>that</sup> ~~the~~ afternoon in early February and that arrangement suited everybody.

We all finished reading about the same time. Elmer Webb, who kept a cigarette going night and day, stubbed the one he'd just lit and fired up another. " God-damned women," he said. " Always got their noses into somebody's business; always interfering." No body replied to what he said. That was Elmer Webb. We all knew his story. He'd been sick in a Boston hospital a few years back, some said it was the booze, some said the booze didn't start until after the children came, but he'd married the nurse he had, Bertha Becker<sup>MAN</sup>, a pushy german frau from Haverhill, Mass. and brought her home to Mason. That was his mistake. He was 35 and had lived pretty much the way he wanted, spent long hours in his tack factory when he was in town and was out of town a lot drumming up trade. Once Bertha got the kids, she had him. She was after him all the time to do this and do that. He bought her everything she wanted, but you never saw them "out" together. We all knew Elmer was death on women and for his part, Mrs. Robertson's letter was all that could be expected. Some said he kept a woman in Boston, but no one ever asked.



Horation Black , who was the superintendant of the denim mill, was a silent Yankee if there ever was one. ( I can make this judgment because I'm a New York-Stater ) Horation was happily married and devoted to his wife, and he couldn't let Elmer's comment pass totally.

" Now, I cannot agree with your generality, Webb, but I must agree that in this case it seems justified. These summer people have taken this attitude from the beginning. They always saw the Thorndikes as one of their own, moreso than one of us, even if they'd lived in Mason more than 30 years. I heard that some of 'em hired guards for six months after old Thorndike was put down. "

" Problem is some of them influence a lot of the weaker minds in the community, particularly the ones who work for them," said ~~Charlie~~ Ed Merrill.

" Problem is that the Selectmen have the summer folks completely bamboozled, " I said. "Look at the amount of business the Bank's lost since August 1918. You're all directors of the bank and you know this. It's killing Perkins. "

" What do you think of my answer?" asked Thoreau.

" Damned sight more polite than I'd be."

" Nicely worded, D.D."

" You put your finger on it, D.D. They haven't followed this whole business closely, they've just swallowed what they read in the Courier hook , line, and sinker."

By this time I knew the line I wanted to follow and I could use the Robinson letter as a kind of spur to action. As the months had passed I had felt that time was on our side: I was confident that Manion and his gang couldn't come up with anything new and that the ~~if~~ fickle public would get tired of being whipped to a frenzy by press stories which never came to anything.

At the same time, I knew that the bonds of friendship and close relationships ( church, fraternal organization, place in society) which had held this group together were apt to weaken and break as an effect of the passing of time. Now was the time to act and to act with care. Our victories in Concord and Washington could prove our undoing if we did not build on them.

" As I see it, ~~D.O.~~ I began, " you have given us the theme for our election campaign, in the second and third paragraphs of your answer to Mrs. Robinson. All the signs are that we are in for some hard times <sup>over</sup> the next year or more. Nobody knows this better than you do. Each of ~~us~~ <sup>you</sup> has told me of the cutback in orders and how your backlog of work is getting dangerously low. " Disregard of the cost in duplicating the work already done by Federal and County officials " says it all. " Needless Expense." Yes, sir. What we need ~~x~~ to do is to spell this out in terms of tax rate <sup>and town</sup> ~~and town~~ debt, It's too bad the townspeople will not be getting their tax bills BEFORE the election, but Horatio has supplied me with some figures for the last four years -- 1917 thru 1920 -- on borrowing by the town and we can project the tax rate for the coming year. I've typed up copies for all of you and I'd like your comments. "

*Newspaper Copy*

I passed ~~xxxxxx~~ around copies of the ~~paper~~ I had prepared. " This is what I want to put out the weekend before the election. It will be too late then for any real reply. Most people don't really pay any attention to town finances. They just complain about the tax bills when they get them and then it's too late. This <sup>is</sup> pretty clear to any taxpayer, no matter which side he's on: ~~that~~ the Selectmen have bungled the Thorndike investigation and that the longer it goes on the worse the expense is going to get. Incidentally, Anna has gotten all of your wives and some other <sup>women</sup> too to agree to hand these out. They will make some placards with the highlights on them to <sup>bring back the figures</sup> ~~get up interest in the figures~~ in the ads."

*the full page ad*

The ~~pages~~ looked like this.

9

### VOTERS OF MASON

Do you know the financial condition of your Town? Do you know that before the money raised by taxation becomes available, it is customary to borrow on notes at the prevailing interest rate? Do you know your condition in this respect? Here it is --

#### LONG AND SHORT TERM NOTES( not bonds) PAYABLE

January 31, 1917	\$9,000.00
January 31, 1918	6,500.00
January 31, 1919	18,000.00
January 31, 1920	33,000.00

The total tax assessed in 1919 was \$ 71,829.81. The Notes Payable Account, as of January 31, 1920, was \$ 33,000.00 or pretty nearly half of last year's assessment. If you pay all your notes, spend just as much as last year, and continue present policies, does not this mean a tax rate for 1920 of about \$ 50.00 per thousand? If it does mean that, then surely it means that every home valued at \$ 2,000.00 must pay a \$ 100.00 tax. How do you like that prospect?

Your present financial condition may be the result of excessive expenditures for Schools, Roads, or the Thorndike Case, or it may be the result of an inefficient administration. In any event, the first ~~two~~ factors are always with you but the last two can be eliminated at your pleasure.

How much has already been spent by the Town on the so-called investigation of the ~~Thorndike Case~~ Thorndike Case, we do not know, nor we believe does anyone. From figures available, however, it is pretty safe to say that on March 1, 1920, the total of Thorndike Case expenses -- paid and unpaid, reported and concealed -- is approximately \$ 10,000.00

In support of this statement we can merely say that since February 1, 1920, one firm of lawyers received \$ 1,430.00 of your money. Is it unreasonable to suppose there are other unpaid bills?

**PAST**

About 104 times in the past in the 18 months, you have heard, "There's going to be an arrest in about two weeks." Has there been one? Do you believe a Board of Selectmen, who have publicly claimed "we know who killed Mr. Thorndike and we have sufficient evidence to convict," are justified in allowing the murderer at large?

If you feel as we do about it, you will work for, vote for and elect on March 2, 1920, a Board of Selectmen who will handle the Thorndike Case or any other case solely on its merits and who will ACT instead of TALK.

We ask your aid in the election of the following candidates who measure up to these specifications:

I waited for ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> Merrill to comment. I valued what he had ~~xxxxxxxalways~~ to say, always. He was a good businessman, shrewd in evaluating any financial situation, and I know that it was his coolness that had saved the firm of Merrill and Thoreau from making some bad timber purchases for their box factory. D.D. was too impulsive, too quick to act, and If he once got the idea that doing a certain thing was a good idea, there was ~~no~~ stopping him. All in all they complemented each other. ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> had been in State ~~politics~~ politics, at one time there had been talk of running him for governor, and he knew how to evaluate issues.

"What do you think, ~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup>?" I asked him.

"Very solid, Doctor," he replied. "Full of facts and figures. But I wish we had something with greater appeal, greater impact. Most of our mill hands, and Horatio's too, rent their houses from the company -- we give them a good rate as part of their wages really -- and they do not pay property taxes. You can tell'em that they are all consumers and that one way or another they affected by the tax rate but they won't believe you. I agree that Town spending is the issue. If it goes on at this rate, we are all in trouble. But it is not what we need to get the workingman's vote in this election. Manion got them out in good numbers last year and from what I hear, he's promised to deliver even more at this election. If only we had been able to catch one of them with his hand in the till. I don't know what else we can do."

Horatio ~~Whire~~ Black picked up the conversation. "If you don't have a great issue -- if we'd caught Monk Boyden getting a kickback on road supplies, for example, or found out that Bird Partridge had been making a little on the iron pipe the town buys for the water department -- we could hang that on them, as a group. Problem is neither of them has spent enough time on proper town business this past year to get caught at anything. The one thing left is the candidates you put up and we have three good ones. Merrill, Webb and I each contacted several candidates

(11)

and we ended up with three good ones. Two young and one old. Something for every body. I persuaded Jimmy Fitzpatrick to run for the one year term. He has the insurance business he runs from the house and he's been able to sell a lot of life policies this last year. People trust him. He's a good businessman, has some money in Fay's Department store now. He figures it will cost him to run, win or lose, but he's willing to do it."

<sup>Ed</sup>  
~~Charlie~~ Merrill said, " I've got the old one. Herbert Bennett has agreed to run on our ticket"

Thoreau broke in, " I didn't know that. How did you get him to do it? Last time I talked to him, he wanted to concentrate on the town history he's doing."

" Wasn't easy,"Merrill said. " Of course he has a great record of public service. Served in the state senate and house of representatives both. The thing he's most proud of is the fine water system we have in Mason. He thought it up and he saw that it was put in proper. I think I got him to change his mind, he was adamant about no more public service, when I mentioned what a mess Bird Partridge was making of his, Herbert's, water system. I told him Bird'd been so busy running off in all directions on the Thorndike Case that the proper inspections and repair work hadn't been attended to in more than a year. That did it. He said it would take him the two year term to get the system back in the shape he'd left it, and he was willing to do it. We'll have to listen to his speeches -- how a man can talk that slow I don't know -- but a lot of people think a lot of Herbert. He is a very important addition to our ticket."

Turning toward Elmer Webb, I said, " Who's the third?"

" Jonathan Millwright. " he said. " He adds balance. His family's been in the dairy business in this town for three generations and though he's barely out of New Hampshire State College, he's already brought in some modern practices and they're working. He's young but I've heard a lot of good things said of him.

He's a farmer and though he isn't as tactful as he might be, rubs a lot of the old stick-in-the-mud types the wrong way, he's got a lot of them listening to him too. He's got both the County and the State extension people making more visits to Mason in a year than they did before in five. He <sup>is</sup> scientific in his approach to farming and the scientific farmer is the only one who's going to ~~ak~~ make it in the 1920s. Wish he didn't have that stiff leg, but why that would keep people ~~xxx~~ <sup>from</sup> voting for him I don't see."

" Did he get the bad leg in the service?" I asked.

" No, it was a haying accident when he was a kid, so he came by it honestly. Kept him out of the service, matter of fact ."

" Sounds like we've got three good ones. If we can elect them, the rest of the ticket will float in along behind. Who've we got for Moderator of the School Board? " I turned to DD Thoreau.

" Same as last year, Ralph Henderson."

" I'll say they are. George Dunne is their man."

" Kind of small pickings for George after being in the ~~legislaturexxxxxxx~~ legislature and all.

" I think they see this election being as important as we do. Not so much what the position is as it is that one of them gets it. Total show of confidence, they're saying."

" <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charlie~~, your wife Anne is running for the school committee?"

" Yes, and heaven help her if Dunne gets elected moderator."

" I asked Richard Weston to run for Chief of Police and he is willing. Be nice if we could get him back in after the Selectmen fired him."

" Have you heard Doc?" said DD. " They' re importing a retired Waldstein cop from Boston to run for chief. A friend of ~~Waldstein~~, their Boston Jew attorney, I hear. If he wins, watch your step !! "

I felt that it was time to sum-up and close the meeting. I wasn't too happy about meeting as a group. It wasn't my style. Still, if you're going to work with other people, you have to get together with them.

*Ed ~~Charlie~~ Merrill spoke up, " There's one more thing*

"Before we break up,

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There <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ one more thing I wanted to take up with ~~them~~. <sup>you.</sup> <sup>my wife</sup> <sup>Aimee</sup> read about it in the paper and it seems like a good idea. ~~at the time, though later~~  
~~as I would wonder how I could have been so stupid.~~

~~He~~ <sup>apparently</sup> addressed the group formally in hopes of having <sup>his</sup> ~~my~~ idea better received. "Gentlemen. Some time in the fall, for the municipal elections in Pittsburgh, or maybe it was ~~Philadelphia~~ Philadelphia, a group of citizens were running a reform ticket against a Tammany-type city administration and they needed a sign, a symbol which would characterize what they were trying to do: replace graft and bribery with honest dealing, replace iniquity with purity. And they conceived the idea of putting a white bow of the arm of each person in their party for easier identification, and perhaps to persuade the undecided to vote their way. They purchased rolls and rolls of broad ribbon and on election day wore the mark of their party proudly and, as it turned out, with good effect. They threw the rascals out. ~~In the nine months I have been back in Wash,~~  
~~I have aligned myself with you and have been honored to be accepted by you.~~" Early on in the struggle of the past nearly two years, ~~you~~ <sup>we</sup> were labeled the Soft Pedal Squad, and ~~you~~ <sup>we</sup> turned the tables on the opposition by taking the slur (that ~~you~~ <sup>we</sup> were soft-peddling justice in the town) and turning it around by accepting it as ~~our~~ <sup>our</sup> own title. We published under that name, you may remember. What I would like to propose here and now is that we commission Elmer Webb, since he is more often in Boston than any of the rest of us, to buy 15 large rolls of white ribbon -- and be sure you get a good price, Elmer -- which we will distribute among our friends -- I suggest we ask the ladies to handle the details of cutting and distribution -- so that when we go to the polls the first Tuesday in March, we go declaring the purity of our intention to rid the town of the birds of ill omen who now sit in places of trust. What say you all?"

They all agreed it was a dramatic gesture and it was so ~~ordered~~ ordered. Elmer Webb bought the ribbon on his next trip to Boston. <sup>LATER</sup>  
<sup>on I would wonder how I could have been so stupid as to</sup>  
<sup>agree to it.</sup>

Town Meeting Day, March 2, 1920, was a day of extraordinary brightness and warmth for the time of year. The pale winter sun shone with an intensity which belied its position in the sky. The residents of Mason were too experienced in the cussedness of New England weather to believe that the back of winter was broken. They knew that there would be more snow, at least two or three stretches of sudden dips <sup>of</sup> in mercury when rain would turn to sleet and the ground would be frozen into the deep ruts which made the going difficult. They knew that a long season of mud-time lay ahead when a car could go sliding out of control into the ditches along the back country roads. It would be many weeks before it was safe to go into the swamps <sup>around</sup> undergrowth/~~of~~ the town's ponds to gather the long ropey vines of fragrant trailing arbutus. And yet, there was an ~~excitement~~ <sup>excitement</sup> in the air ~~which was~~ felt by the workers <sup>walking</sup> ~~filling~~ into the mills and factory/~~and was~~ <sup>for the early shift</sup> expressed by the nervous chatter among them as they swung their lunch pails from side to side. <sup>There</sup> ~~It~~ was a holiday spirit <sup>evident</sup> ~~among them~~ in strong contrast to the usual sullen ambling along of the ordinary work day. The post office was filled with box holders eager to get the early mail delivery and to be about their morning chores so they would free for the day's activities. Wives in kitchens all over town were preparing huge breakfasts for their husbands and children, who sat ~~at~~ banging their silverware in anticipation of the steaming oatmeal and bacon and eggs and fried bread which they could smell cooking. No one needed to be urged to eat. There were no protests over lumpy gruel, no glasses of unfinished milk. It was a special day. Important issues were to be settled. The parents in these homes talked as they rarely did on an early March morning and the children catching the temper of their parents were full of their plans for the day, too.



Because the Town Meeting was held in Union Hall in the second floor auditorium where all large activities were held, plays, basketball games, minstrel shows, graduations, a school holiday had been declared. The classrooms on the ground floor were empty that day so that the townspeople could go up the stairs which wound up either side of the entry ~~xxxx~~ <sup>hall</sup> without disturbing the children at their learning or be disturbed by them. School was out.

The Meeting was called for 10 o'clock. By nine-thirty most of the ~~xxxx~~ places in the ~~long~~ rows of wooden chairs, fastened together on long rails for easier moving by the janitors when they cleaned, were filled. People sat together in groups with their friends and the sides were easily made out because here and there clusters of citizens wore bows of white ribbon on their left arms. Among those who did not, there was a continuous buzz as new arrivals were allowed to slip into seats saved for them and the identity of those marked by the bows was pointed out by those already in place.

Outside the building and carefully placed off the school grounds in obedience to the laws regarding electioneering, <sup>as an echo of the newspaper ad</sup> two groups of women wearing the white ribbons on the sleeves of their coats were passing out flyers headed Purity Club Slates ~~xxxx~~ to voters approaching the school grounds from the north and the south along ~~xxxx~~ School Street.

FOR THE GOOD OF MASON, ~~xxxxxx~~ ELECT A RESPONSIBLE BOARD

Vote for

James Fitzpatrick

Herbert Bennett

Jonathan Millwright

YOUR NEW SELECTMEN

Depphine D Trudeau  
Charles Merrill  
Elmer Webb  
Horatior Black

The  
flyers  
read: >

Inside the building, the body heat of the growing crowd increased . Overcoats and scarves were shed, the tall windows of the hall were lowered from the top by men using long poles with hooks, and copies of the Town <sup>Report</sup> ~~Budget~~ <sup>, passed out at the door,</sup> for the year 1920-21, were being used, especially by women, for fans to achieve circulation. The noise level grew with the rising temperature and the rising tension in the hall became palpable. Here and there a woman was heard to declare herself feeling faint and she would rise with the aid of a female friend to rush out to the Ladies Toilet and back so as not to lose her place or miss anything.

Each side had staked out the first two rows of seats on either side of the main aisle. The signers of the Purity Club flyer <sup>and friends</sup> were at the left and the backers of the incumbent Selectmen were on the right, nearer the main door at the head of the joining stairs. Just before the hour, the Ladies who had been handing out flyers just off the school grounds <sup>now, left.</sup> ~~joined~~ their husbands and friends in the first two ~~aisles~~. Right after them, Father Harry Manion, disdaining to wear an overcoat, came in and took his place about mid~~way~~ back on the right side of the hall, beside a window. Peter Hennessy, current chairman of the Board of Selectman, was on his feet and was bent over~~ix~~ in conversation with Boyden and Partridge, his fellow Board members, when Francis O'Connor slipped in the door and quickly walked to the back of the hall, ignoring both the ~~calls~~ of friends and the muttering of foes as he did so. It was 10 o'clock.

Peter Hennessy, his conference with Boyden and Partridge ended by a vigorous nodding of heads in agreement, stepped to the rostrum and knocked loudly with a gavel. The hum of conversation died out and the last of the late arrivals scurried to the few remaining empty seats or took places standing along the side walls of the hall.

" As chairman of the Board of Selectmen of the town of Mason, I declare the One hundred fifty-third Town Meeting of the Town of Mason,

Cheshire County, the State of New Hampshire, to be in session. The Meeting will come to order. I welcome you to this meeting which has been held in unbroken line since the year 1773, when the town was formed out of the Middle Monadnock Township and named in honor of its founder John Mason. At this time, I will turn over the meeting to your Moderator, who was elected at last year's meeting, Louis Richard. "

As Hennessy stepped back from the rostrum and turned to hand the gavel to Richard, a cry of dismay rose from these on the left side of the main aisle, the Purity Club and their supporters. " No invocation?" " I never~~x~~ thought I'd live to see the day" " Well, I never ""Look at that, will you, One-Arm Louie! " ~~There~~ were some of the exclamations which filled the air. For some of the older members of the crowd to the left of the aisle, the sight of the aging French Canadian lawyer with the hammer of order and authority in his right hand was a severe shock. For many of them, the ~~of the meeting~~ of the meeting ~~xxxxxx~~ had never been moderated by anyone but Judge Perkins Meade. his round face grave with its duty They took for granted that he would standing there, guiding the conduct of town affairs as he had for the past 29 years. His selection had been taken for granted, his re-election each year had been pro forma, no one had ever run in opposition. They knew but had not remembered that the Selectmen had nominated and elected by acclamation at the close of the 1919 meeting the man who now stood before them. This was only the first of a series of seismic shocks that would shake their world that day.

Louis Richard stood silently while he waited for the uproar to run its course. His face<sup>was</sup> ruddy with the excitement of the moment, marked by tiny veins, under the ~~pale~~ pale skin/ of one who rarely exposed himself to wind or sun. His life had been spent sitting at an old roll top desk, where he pursued the affairs of the poor and the ignorant of the town. He

was a Notary Public; he ran a small insurance business, mostly concerned with burial policies for which one ~~paid~~ made ~~weekly~~ premium payments of 25,50, or 75 cents a week. He could be seen in the town offices or at the County Court House in Keene, making inquiries, filing the necessary papers, obtaining permits and permissions, and as his clients ~~prosper~~ prospered, arranging deeds and bills of sales for property and businesses. For years he had conducted transactions too small to be worthy of the consideration by any legitimate bank or business. It was rumored that he ~~did~~ ~~did~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ <sup>did</sup> a brisk small loan business with those who could not obtain credit anywhere else, this of course at ~~usurious~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ rates. For the "better" people in the community, he had been a sort of town joke. They knew he existed but they were never quite sure what he did. Whatever it was it did not concern them and he was beneath their notice. He was not one of them.

As he waited his face was impassive, showing neither anxiety nor triumph. He wore his usual gray-black suit with baggy unpressed trousers and a plain white shirt. His only concession to the occasion was a white-on-white tie of the kind worn only at weddings or funerals loosely knotted at the neck. A shock of white hair hung down over his forehead at the right and he looked quietly out at his audience, his face turning from side to side with a <sup>some</sup> ~~some~~ what near sighted gaze. He laid down the gavel and tucked the left sleeve of his suit coat into the left hand pocket of his suitcoat.

Picking up the gavel again, he rapped smartly three times. " Ladies and Gentlemen," he ran the words together in the manner of one ~~xxxxxxx~~ speaking in a language not his own, " fellow citizens of the town of Mason. I ham very ~~honorred~~ honerd today to serve as your town ~~mod-er-atur~~ mod-er-atur. Thank you. The first horder of bñzness today is the acceptance of the Town Report for the past year. Do I hear a motion to accept the Report as rendered? " The cant phrases came off his tongue, though altered by the phythms of his native ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ <sup>Habitant</sup> ~~Quebec~~ <sup>Quebec</sup>

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dialect, as if he had been conducting such meetings for years. Quickly from the right side came, " I so move," followed immediately by " I second the motion." Without dropping a beat, Richard intoned, " Is there any discussion?"

As had been previously decided in a strategy session with Francis O'Connor and the rest of the Purity Club, Horatio Black was on his feet, calling " Mr. Moderator," and waving his arm for attention. Richard turned toward him. " The Chair recognizes Horatio Black."

Horatio Black in his years of managing the local denim mill had become skilled in quick reading of balance sheets and felt at home discussing questions of income and outgo. " Profit " was as juicy/as in his mouth a Concord grape, and " loss" came out with a low dryness which made the word hard to catch.

" Mr. Moderator, Ladies and Gentlemen. A quick survey of the Town Report shows that as of January 31st this year that the Long and short term notes payable by the Town total over \$ 33,000, almost twice the amount owed by the Town at the close of the previous fiscal year. The ~~expenses~~ <sup>salaries</sup> of and expenses of the Town officers last year rose one third over the year previous, and with the various trips to Boston, Concord, and Washington in pursuit <sup>of</sup> God knows what, may be expected to rise a like percentage or more. Where will this end ?? Since the fiscal year closed, January 31st this year, your town officials have paid out some \$ 1500 ~~xxxxxx~~ to lawyers, both in Concord and in Boston. ~~What~~ Who knows what other bills lie unpaid in the town offices? How long will this go on? Your present town officers say that they will pursue their ~~xxxxxxx~~ prosecution -- there are those of us who call it persecution -- of the Thorndike murder case, for ten years. And what do we have to show for all their misdirected efforts ?

" I urge a no vote on this Town Report. I urge that we refuse to accept this report unless it is amended to assure the tax payers of the town that the <sup>total</sup> ~~total~~ tax assessment will not exceed last year's total.

" We must exercise fiscal restraint. We must get the town back on a secure financial basis. The mill that I manage is only one of a number of mills owned and operated by the Berlin Corporation. Owned and operated for profit. If the taxes in this town continue to rise at the rate they have, not only will youx not be able to attract new businesses to locate here in Mason, you will lose the productive units you have. It is cheaper to let a mill sit idle than to run it as a loss. Mr. Albert Berlin, the owner of some fourteen denim mills in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, has made this plain to me. We must run our schools and educate our young people; we must maintain our roads and operate our other town services. What we can do without are the activities of our town officials in pursuit of what they say is the investigation of the Thorndike murder. The country is on the brink of a depression. If the expenses of town government continue to rise as they have over the past<sup>two</sup> years, we will not be at the brink of disaster, we will be right in the middle of one. I urge a no vote on the Town Report."

" Mr. Moderator." Louis Richard could not possibly have heard the call for recognition which came from the Selectmen sitting behind him on the raised stage of the hall. The clamor which rose from the right side of the hall, the boos, hisses, catcalls, whistles, the yells to "sit down and shut up" and " we know what side you're on, Black," blocked any kind of communication, and yet Richard turned and gave a wave of recognition to Selectmanx Edward Boyden, who had risen to speak. Richard beat on the wood block set on the rostrum and the vigor of his motion pulled the vacant sleeve from his suit~~what~~ pocket and it whirled around his body with a life of its own. The puffy lock of ~~hair~~ white hair bounced on his forehead in a counterrhythm as he struggled to keep the crowd under control. George Dunne rose from his front row, seat right and made a damping motion with both hands to quiet the supportersseated behind him. As the noise subsided, Richard spoke: " The Chair recognizes Edward Boyden."

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Monk Boyden was now standing behind the rostrum from which the Moderator had retreated. He turned his head toward his fellow officials sitting in a row behind him and as if taking strength from their encouraging nods, pulled an ~~envelope on which he had jotted notes~~ <sup>a folded sheet of papers</sup> from an inside coat pocket and began.

" Mr Moderator, Ladies and Gentlemen. I stand before you as the representative of your elected town officials. We are responsible for the spending of your tax dollars and we are responsible for the accounting of this trust which is displayed in the Town Report. We have done our best to be prudent in the outlay of town funds. We recognize that many of you are <sup>still</sup> making the patriotic purchase of Liberty Bonds so necessary to pay for <sup>the</sup> heroic crusade against the Kaiser who threatened the world ~~and~~ which has made the world safe for democracy. We recognize that money is scarce and that the paying of town taxes is a burden. But the money we have spent this last year was as necessary as the support of the war effort and in fact should be seen as a part of that effort. For the past 18 months, your town officials have done every thing in their power to bring to justice the killer or killers of Dr. William Thorndike. We have acted in default of any earnest effort by County Officials; we have acted in default of any serious effort by State Officials; we have taken the cause of avenging the murder of this patriotic citizen, William Thorndike, to the highest levels in Washington. These things take money. It was the town of Mason which offered a reward for information leading to the arrest of these killers. Only then was Cheshire County shamed into offering a reward. We ~~have~~ hired detectives and put them on the trail of the murderers while the County Grand Jury brought in a verdict of death by person or persons unknown. We were and still are determined that the killers be found out and punished. We hired lawyers to find a way to make County and State government pick up the investigation of the Thorndike Case which they put aside. "

At this point it became evident that Boyden had run out of things to say. He wiped his high forehead and his heavy eyebrows wagged up and down as he concentrated on what was written on the bottom of the sheet he held in his hand.

" We hired lawyers..." He hesitated. " Now, I said that... Yes, the town budget is bigger than last year, but this <sup>is</sup> money spent in a holy ~~cause~~ <sup>cause</sup> . The name of Mason must be cleared, the stain which all New England, no, all the world, observes must be erased. Our opponents talk of financial responsibility while we talk of moral necessity. We ask that you support our efforts, that you tell us you approve of what we have done, by accepting the Town Report as present-~~ed~~. We ask for a yes vote on the town report."

Before he took his seat in the <sup>chairs</sup> ~~seats~~ behind the rostrum, Boyden threw an anxious glance toward Harry Manion, who was taking no part in the enthusiastic demonstrat~~ed~~on raised by those on the right hand side of the hall. Manion did not smile or wave his hands or clap, but by a heavy nodding of his great head gave his blessing to ~~the~~ what Boyden had just said.

Moderator Richard let the clapping of hands and the stamping of feet continue for a moment or two longer and then he called the meeting to order. " Do I 'ear a call for the question ?" He was answered in the affirmative from both sides of the hall. " Do I 'ear a ~~second~~ second?" Again, both sides responded, no one wanted any delay. A pair of tellers, one from the right and one from the left, were appointed and the meeting was ready for the vote.

Those voting to accept the Town Report raised their right hand and were counted. Those voting to voting to reject the Report were counted likewise. The tellers checked their totals one against the other, made final notations on their sheets and handed them up to the Moderator. It was obvious that the vote was close. Richard studied <sup>the sheets</sup> carefully before announcing the result. His dramatic pause



indicated clearly that he was beginning to enjoy his newfound prominence. He spoke more slowly and carefully than he needed to : " Those voting to accept the Report, 250 votes aye. Those voting to reject, uh, the report, 239 votes nay. The Report is..." His last words were lost in the cheers of those on the right who rose to their feet. For a moment, it seemed as if they were going to set off around the hall in a political convention parade. He quickly rapped for order and told those standing to take their seats.

On the left, Trudeau, Merrill, Webb, and Black quickly conferred in a small circle. Their faces were set with a grimness which spoke of determination in the presence of defeat. DD Thoreau beat his fist in his palm and spoke angrily to the others. Elmer Webb broke away and headed for the toilets off the main hall to urinate and more likely to have a cigarette. The other three hit each other on the shoulder like a team leaving a basketball huddle and turned their attention to the meeting.

Rapidly and with little waste motion, each side put in nomination their candidate for the minor officers: moderator of the School Board; the one/<sup>other</sup> vacancy on the School Board; the chief of police. It was like the exchange of pawns in the opening moves of a chess game. All that remained <sup>were</sup> ~~of~~ ~~was~~ the nominations for Selectmen.

Before these nominations could begin, the chair recognized Selectman ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Alfred Partridge. He came quickly to the rostrum, his eyes bright with excitement. His thin neck stood up out of his hard collar and his arms thrashed back and forth as if he were making his way against a <sup>heavy</sup> ~~hard~~ wind. His head jerked up and down and the total motion of his body ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ made it appear that he would rise in flight. He was, as many had remarked, a rare bird.

His eyes fixed on the basketball goal at the far end of the hall, Partridge spoke in stacato clumps of words, which afterward, said some of the former members of the 106th Machine Gun Battalion, 26th "Yankee Division," reminded them of bursts from their Brownings.

"Fellow Citizens. For sometime now. There has been. A lot of bad feeling, uhm. In the town. There have been organized. Gro-ups. Which have tried, tried to undo the good work which your Selectmen have done. Work in the best intrests of the town. These<sup>m</sup>isguided souls have set brother. Against brother. Friend against friend." Those close to the stage could see the adam's apple bobbing up and down with each strangled phrase. "For over one hundred and fifty years we have met in open. Town meeting and have voted. Openly. "He dropped his head and stared at his audience silently. It didn't seem as if he could go on. Once again he fixed his gaze on the far end of the hall, this time at the ceiling."In consider-ashun of these facts. These facts. And in protection of the rights of the individual. Citizen to vote his conscious, conscience. Without ~~h~~hreat of re-pri-sal or harm. Your Selectmen have had printed up. What is called. The Australian. Or white ballot. These ballots have the name of the, Elective Offices of the Town. For the first time in the history. Ofthis fine old town. I move that the~~se~~ use of these ballots be authorized. I also move that this hall be used as the polling places and that the~~y~~ polls. Remain open until six o'clock tonight to ensure all citizens a chance to vote."

An uneasiness passed over the ~~right~~<sup>left</sup> side of the hall like a brisk breeze over open water. What did this mean? Was it some kind of trick? Members of the Purity Club went into rapid conference, while a quick second was heard from the right side of the hall.

~~Charlie~~<sup>Ed</sup> Merrill rose to his feet. His years in the state legislature had trained him on the ins and outs of parlimentary maneuver. He saw at once the flaw and spoke to it. He pointed out that there were really two motions on the floor -- the motion to use the ballots and the motion to keep the polls open until six o'clock. He also requested of the chair a

recess of ten minutes. His request was granted. Confusion was widespread on both sides of the hall, and people rose from their seats to congregate in small groups and discuss Partridge's proposal and Merrill's motion.

" We can't let them get away with it," expostulated DD Thoreau.

" Get away with what?" said Merrill.

" This trick, this new way of voting," returned DD.

" It is new but I don't see the trick." said Merrill.

Horation Black did. " They want to get all the mill hands and factory hands up here after work. But I don't see how we can stop them. We each have six hours to get all the votes we can up here, same as they do. We've kept the mills going, same as we always have and now and now they've found a way to vote those people who never voted before. Question is, how many of them are registered voters?"

" I can answer that," said Elmer Webb. " They've been registering the people in my place over the last three weeks. And I hear that Manion preached a sermon on the obligation to get out on election day. We've been had."

The ten minutes was up. Louis Richard had spent the time with his new copy of Roberts' Rule of Order, and he was ready for what followed. The two questions were separated and voted on and each carried, much to the satisfaction of the right side of the hall who had had the importance of the votes explained to them.

It was time for the nomination of Selectmen, and the names of the ~~Therexxxxxxxxnxxxxxxx~~ incumbents, Boyden, Partridge, and Hennessy were placed before the Meeting. The chair recognized George Dunne who rose to second the nominations. Dunne was the town druggist. He had prospered and as the business got to the point where he could turn much of the work to his son, he had fancied politics as his field of endeavor. Mostly because very few of his fellow citizens had cared to take time off from their business to sit in what was the biggest House of State

Representatives in the country; he had been elected to two terms. The job paid badly and even with the railroad passes handed out to members, no one could afford it as a full time occupation. Now he had his eye on the senatorial seat held by ~~Charles~~<sup>Ed</sup> Merrill. If he played his cards right, he could be Senator Dunne and who knows in time maybe it was possible to run for governor. Governors had come from towns no bigger than Mason. Governor Robert Trout, <sup>of Peterborough,</sup> for instance.

" Ladies and Gentlemen. I deem it an honor and a privilege to second the nomination of three such fine men as Peter Hennessy, your present Chair<sup>R</sup>man; Edward Boyden, who has handled our excellent town water system so well; and Alfred Partridge, whose supervision of the roads in the township has kept to such a high standard. We all owe them a debt of gratitude and that debt can be paid by electing them to another term of office. My service in Concord has shown me the importance of having honest experienced men in politics, not less so in the towns and cities where we make our homes. But it<sup>is</sup> not for their management of the affairs of the town alone that they deserve re-election. No, their worth lies more truly in another sphere. For the last year and a half, they have assumed a burden which does not come often to town officials, a burden which in more normal circumstances would have been handled by and been brought to successful conclusion by the law enforcement officials of our county and our state. The burden I speak of is the bringing to justice the murderers of William A. Thorndike. Two of these gentlemen were in attendance from the very moment the battered body of that patriot was raised from the cistern in which it had been hidden. Both Alfred Partridge with his experience in law enforcement and Edward Boyden with his keen analytical mind were instrumental in bringing out the facts of this foul murder. Facts which should have enabled the County Soliciter and the State Attorney General to move swiftly. They did not and they have not. It is only the tireless efforts of these three men to see justice done, to pursue

every clue, however small, however remote, that has kept the investigation of the death of the murdered patriot alive today. And it is alive today. These men pledge to keep it alive until it is brought to a successful conclusion. For this devotion to duty, these men have been made the object of a campaign of slur and ridicule by those who would accept the verdict of that misdirected, if there was any direction at all, Grand Jury Hearing of almost a year ago. They have given life to the seeking of a second grand jury hearing, in which evidence not known or shunted aside in the previous hearing -- our Selectmen have collected some sixty affidavits bearing on the case -- will be heard. They have tried to present to the Governor of this state your petition bearing over 500 names for a new hearing. They have appealed to this governor to appoint a special prosecutor, free from the ties and theories which have kept our present County Solicitor from an unbiased approach to the matter. These men want nothing for themselves. It would be easier for them to resign themselves, like our opponents who claim a special purity, to let the dead bury the dead, to concern themselves with the purity of our water, the rapid passage of our roads, with routine town business.

" Some sit among us with badges of white. They call themselves the Purity Club. I hereby acclaim the purity of motive of the men who <sup>se</sup> nomination I am seconding and I call upon all who share my views to make public witness of their faith." With that, he pulled out of his coat pocket a ~~small~~ <sup>large</sup> white bow and pulled <sup>it</sup> up his left arm. As one body, all those sitting on the right side of hall did the same.

Consternation reigned. The hooting and the hollering from the right side of rose to a new level as they stood up and faced the left ~~right~~ side, pointing to the white ribbons on their arms. Purity Club members sat stunned. They could not remove their ribbons without repudiating the assertion which led to their putting the ribbon on. What had been a mark of honor in their eyes had become a hateful joke and they sat in silence. From his standing position by the windows on the right

\* the right, Harry Manion allowed himself a momentary ~~grim~~ broad grin. The timing had been perfect and the effect devastating. Who had betrayed the white ribbon scheme? Had Emma Lyman renewed her position of authority as Sybel of the Monday morning gossip sessions? Had some loyal Catholic maid picked up something she shouldn't have? While Francis O'Connor glowered in the rear of the hall, the four leaders on the left conferred and DD <sup>Trudeau</sup> ~~Trudeau~~ rose to claim recognition from the chair.

" Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I would like to place in nomination the names of three men I am pleased to be associated with, James Fitzpatrick, an up-to-date, progressive, successful, efficient, business man; Herbert Bennett, former Representative, State Senator and Councillor, originator of the idea of a Water System for Mason and Chairman of the Committee installing the same, a retired business man of sound and seasoned judgment; and Jonathan Millwright, a young farmer of the modern school, a graduate of New Hampshire State College, a bright, clean-cut, capable, and aggressive person. You know them all. Their election means an efficient administration."

No sooner had Trudeau's high call to arms echoed in the hall, and the applause of the Purity Club supporters died down, <sup>than</sup> there came a voice from the rear of the hall so insistent, so demanding of attention that all heads swiveled to see who it was. The syllables were accented and articulated in a deliberate separation: " Mr. Moder-a-TOR, Mr. Moder-a-TOR." Francis O'Connor was on his feet. He deliberately took off his top coat, folded it and placed it on the chair behind him. He carefully placed his hat on top of the coat. Turning again to the front of the hall, he buttoned the middle button of his suitcoat, tugged it down with both hands and started forward. He was in no hurry and yet he walked as if to the beat of a snare drum, stride for stride, looking neither left nor right, eyes fastened on the figure of the presiding officer. Just as he reached the edge of the apron of the stage below the speaker's rostrum, he wheeled and began speaking.

" I am pleased to ~~pmx~~ second the nomination of the three men Delphine Trudeau has put before you.

Two of them, Jim Fitzpatrick and Jonathan Millwright, I have known since they were little boys. We ~~all~~ have. We have seen them grow up, marry, start families. We have seen them in their daily lives in the community, seen them engage in business enterprises and succeed by hard work and service to their fellow townspeople. We know of their good judgment; we know them to be men of action not talk. We know them to be independent minded, beholden to no man or group of men. We know that they will not be dictated to or dominated by any man or group of men. They will handle the Thorndike Case, or any other case, ~~only~~ solely on its merits. Of Herbert Bennett, what do I need to say? He has long been revered in this town for his wisdom and his ideals of service. He has represented us in the halls of government in Concord, and we have never been so well represented since. He is responsible for giving <sup>us</sup> one of the finest water systems in the state. In my school books I read of the Noble Roman. I tell you Herbert Bennett is the closest thing to a Noble Roman this town has ever had or perhaps ever will have. He knows the town better than anyone else alive today. He knows its <sup>present</sup> needs and with <sup>the</sup> ~~its~~ history he has been working on he knows its proud past. We cannot change the past but we can work in the present to change the bitter climate, the dark cloud which hangs over our town's reputation. These men can bring about such a change.

" Who you may ask is responsible for this bitterness, this cloud ? There can be only one answer to that question: the three men, the present Selectmen seated behind me, who are asking you to choose them so they can continue this sorry state <sup>of</sup> affairs, for God only knows how long. Look at them, Ladies and Gentlemen. These are the men who allow the murderer of William Thorndike to roam at large, frightening members of our Summer Colony who are afraid to walk the highways and bye-ways of our lovely town. These are the men who have proclaimed publicly that they know who killed Mr. Thorndike and they have sufficient evidence to convict, ' ' "

and yet for past 18 months we have nothing but talk, rumors and talk, and the exposure of our town's reputation to the sneers and insults of greater New England. And <sup>who</sup> is it that has done this to us and for what reason? Who is it who sent to Boston for a newspaperman to come and reveal our difficulties that all who read may see? Who is it that has reviled our elected law enforcement officials who have not found sufficient evidence to ~~pe~~ prosecute a townsman of ours and who then persecute as good a man who ever drew breath. What does the Bolshevek, the Anarchist do if not to attack our laws and our public officials. Are these the men you will re-elect?? The Monk, the Bird, and the Butcher, these are the names used in scorn of these men and the scorn is well deserved.

" I returned from service in France with the AEF to find the Town of Mason suffering from a malignancy. As a doctor I am well acquainted with malignancies; they bring death to the suffering mortal. Sometimes malignancies, in the great wisdom of God, cure themselves, no one knows quite how or why. If they do not, the surgeon has to cut out the diseased tissue, the afflicted part, and hope that he has got it all. I have been waiting, almost a year now, for Mason to cure itself. It has not. Instead, the attending physicians -- in this case our selectmen -- have done everything they can to encourage the disease, to prolong the illness. It is time to cut out the diseased tissue and I believe that I now know ~~enough~~ where to cut. The first step is to discharge the current medical ~~g~~ help.

" Today I have watched <sup>the</sup> Pure-in-Heart take a licking. The Sermon on the Mount tells us that they shall see God and we hope that this is so. The lesson may be that we have to let God decide who the pure in heart are. But I can tell you for a certainty that one of those who put on the white bow after Brother Dunne's example has a heart that can lay no claim to purity. This man's actions in the Thorndike murder have remained hidden up to now; they will be revealed



for what..." O'Connor never got to finish what he was saying. Over near the main door on the right side of the hall, Ed Moran slipped to the floor with a gentle moan. People on all sides of him got up and looked down on the body. " Air, air," some shouted. " Get him outside where he can get some fresh air." Two of those sitting on either side of body slipped his arms over their shoulders and together half carried him, half pushed <sup>him</sup> through the door, down the stairs and out into the open air. Even as they carried him down the stairs he was struggling to ~~be~~ get free of their support and by the time they reached to broad outside steps he had shaken free ~~of the hands of the men~~ and stood between them shaking his head and evidently asking what happened.

of events Those near the windows who turned to ~~look out~~ watch this series, turned back to tell others that he was all right, when one of them said in a loud voice: " My, God, will you look at that, will you," <sup>there</sup> and ~~there~~ was a rush from behind to get to the window. ~~There~~ Some who could not get to the window <sup>side</sup> plunged down both the winding staircases to get out to see what it was. Ed Moran was forgotten. Sometime in the last hour, someone -- a number of citizens claimed credit but it was never determined who was responsible -- had hitched a <sup>farm wagon</sup> ~~farm wagon~~ ~~to~~ to a telephone pole in front of the school building. In it was a female dog in heat and surrounding the wagon was a crowd of males which grew minute by minute. Each of the dogs, including the bitch, had on a white bow.

It was a bad day for the forces of purity. They watched ~~the counting of the ballots~~ the ~~the~~ eligibility of the new voters, many of whom were only faces to them, very carefully, but caught no irregularities. They <sup>y</sup> watched the counting of the ballots but found no extras. By nine o'clock it was all over. The Selectmen and their supporters swept to victory in the largest turnout in the history of the town. Hennessey got the largest vote - 461; Boyden got 459; ~~the~~ Partridge ~~6~~ 416. George Dunne gave postmaster Henderson a

for Moderator of the School Board. Dr. Joseph Horan, a trouncing. ~~Dr. Joseph Horan~~ a recent arrival in the town, defeated Anne Merrill, <sup>Ed</sup> ~~Charles~~ Merrill's wife, for the school committee. Anne had served the previous eight years. Chief Maloney received a second year as Chief of Police, defeating George Weston, who was seeking to regain the post stripped from him by the Town Officers. The defeat was total and beyond all doubt.

No one in Mason got much sleep that night. Within an hour of the final tabulation, the supporters of the Selectmen had formed up a torch light parade and a pick-up brass band ~~XXXXXXXX~~ led them through the streets with lively marching tunes, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ as they marched from house to house of the leading members of the Purity Club. Again and again, the strains of " There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight " rang out in the streets. When they stopped in front of the various houses, the marchers called out to the defeated inside, " Where's your dog, Doc? Send him out and we'll give him a ribbon." They cheered the Selectmen, who led the parade, " 2-4-6-8, who do we appreciate, Hennessey, Boyden, Partridge, yeay." Between rounds, the crowd repaired to the American Legion Hall, where they refueled their enthusiasm and then set out again, louder and more abusive than before.

About one o'clock, Anna O'Connor turned to her husband, who sat silently watching as the noisy mob came up the street again. " Fran, <sup>is</sup> I'm scared," she said. She had never called him anything but Doctor since their marriage twenty-five years before. " This is the third time they've come up here and each time it gets a little worse. Those torches are dangerous. They could set the house on fire and the children... "

" I'm watching them," he said. " They're mighty brave in a bunch, ~~ap~~ especially when they're full of dutch courage, but they're not going to do anything. "

" Promise me you won't go out, " she said. "You'll only make trouble and we've got trouble enough. Oh, dear, why did we get into this? Why can't we all live together in peace? "

" I won't go out. I won't have to now. The leaders have gone home and this bunch will just wear themselves out. If they'd put one foot on our place, I would have gone out, <sup>and I'd have dropped the first one,</sup> but they didn't and they won't. " He lit his pipe with a kitchen match and the flare obliterated the flickering lights from outside temporarily.

" We can't live in peace because we're in a war. A war for the minds of the people of Mason. And there's no discharge in a war. They've won today and a clever well <sup>planned</sup> piece of work it was, too, but as Commodore Perry said, " I've just begun to fight, ' and I have, too. "

" You come on up to bed, now," she said. " There's nothing more to be done tonight."

" You go on up," he said. " I've got some thinking to do and I might as well do it right here. I won't sleep as long as they're parading around and I want them to know I'm watching them. "

Throwing her braids back behind her head, she kissed him good-night , and with a sigh went up the stairs.

As he sat there, he puffed away on his pipe, deep in reflection ~~xxxxxxxx~~ . He flexed his left hand and rubbed the stumps of the first and second fingers. "Damned things ached when he was tired or ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ bothered by something. There must be a way," he ~~xxxxxxxx~~ thought, "there must be a way. This cannot go on. We cannot stand any more of what we've gone thorough since I came back. I must find a way."

Amedee Deschenes was in a bad mood as he picked his way along the muddy ruts of the road which led from his house to Water Street. His boots broke through the frequent mud puddles and he stumbled on the ridges of frozen mud as he tried to regain his footing. The early morning half light made him think back to his childhood when he had dived deep into the swimming hole in the river and had eased himself comme une poisson up through the murky water to the brightness of the air above. He stamped his boots on the hard roadway of Water Street and headed into town. At breakfast his wife had renewed ~~his~~ her argument of the night before that if he would not spend so much time drinking and playing cards with his friends that they would be able to make the down payment on the sofa and chair she had picked out at Fay's Department Store. He had replied that he brought home more of his pay envelope than most of the husbands ~~she~~ she knew and he was entitled to some pleasures of his own. And on and on it had gone. She was in tears when he left. Their arguments always ended that way. He spit and lighted another cigarette from the end of the one he was smoking. He almost dropped it when the hand hit him across the back.

" Bonjour, 'Medee. Ca va ?"

He looked up. It was ~~Ferdy~~<sup>per</sup> Sirois, who tended the bank of machines next to his in the ~~donim~~<sup>TACK FACTORY.</sup> mill. He played ~~whist and~~ pinochle with him every Tuesday night ~~him~~ and they had been friends ever since he could remember. They had gone to France together, been in the same ~~company~~<sup>MACHINE PULL</sup> company in the war, and had been discharged at the same time at Fort Devens. Ferdy was a Copain ~~Bon Copain~~. They knew each other better than brothers.

" Bonjour, Ferdy. Pas Mal et ~~tu~~ ?"

" Hokay. Whatsa matter wit you , ce matin? Fightin" wid your old lady? You doan look so good."

" You know, the same old thing. I doan bring home enough money. She wants a new living room suite, she calls it. Nothing new."

" We missed you at the Legion Hall last night, eh ?"

" Yeah, well, I stayed home with this damned cold. Missed this week three days/because of this cold."

" Yeah, I know. St Pierre, the night man, had to come in and cover your machines. You missed all the fun. Big argument."

" A new petition?"

" Naw. Stan~~x~~ Hunt and Bill Hillyer, the new Commander, got into it about where the Post was going to go to church Memorial Day Sunday. You didn't know, huh, that Doc Thatcher resigned as commander after the election. Too much of his own medicine, I guess." Ferdy nudged him with his lunch pail, " That's a good one, eh. Too much of his own medicine, eh? Come on , smile."

Medee grunted. " Yeah, big joke."

" Goddam, you're dumb this morning. It was a bad meeting even before the meeting. Before we sat down for the meeting, Hillyer formed us up, called us to attention, and divided us into police details. Just like our old Top kick, Sullivan. The hall was a mess; outside, too. Home brew bottles, whiskey bottles, some fine Canadian whiskey ~~that, never~~ saw wine bottles Canada, Four Roses, you name it. Burnt out torches. Vomit on the front steps. That was you, wasn't it? You remember that? No ?/It looked like that village we were in when the Armistice came, ~~Trois~~<sup>ois</sup> Vierges. You can't forget that night. Anyway, when we got all cleaned up and began the meeting, Hillyer said that it had been decided the Post would attend memorial services at the Universalis' Church, that's the one with the town clock in it, right across from the Library."

Medee became interested. " I know what Hunt said," he said.

" Yeah, he said that Father won't like it."

" That's right and he won't."

" So Hillyer said ~~that~~ the Post records showed that when we organized the Post we agreed ~~that~~ to spread it around, to go to the different churches in town each year, that we would share around which

XXXXXXXXXX

church we went to. Last year, we voted to go to Holy Name because there was more Cat-likes in the post than protes-tans, an so this year we go to a differen church. He called it a Gesture of Reconcilliation to heal all the bad feelin in town, to show that whatever our politics, we are all brothers in arms, like that we're all together."

" But that church with the clock, that's where they caught Henderson from the post office and the chief of police, what's his name? Preswick ? spying on the Selectmen. They fired Preswick, he went to work at Trudeau and Merrill, packing, the next day, and <sup>They</sup> got in that cop from the Boston Police Department. He was just elected <sup>full time.</sup> Father won't like it." Medee shook his head. This was not a good thing to do.

" So then Hillyer said that we had to show that the Legion was above politics and this was the best way to do it. We can't go back to Holy Name this year 'cause we agreed a different church every year."

" Okay, but why that one? That's the one that Meade, the one they say killed Old Thorndike, goes to. They were saying he gave those two guys the key to the church to do the spyin from, if not him, the minister, the one that wears the derby all the time. Why that one?"

Ferdy didn't know. All he knew was, they had put it to a vote and passed the motion that the commander had accepted.

" So it's all settled. Me and you're on the firing detail again, like last year. We will have the parade to the cemetaryes on with the band from Gardner Saturday/and end up at the Roll of Honor near the bandstand. We'll form up at the Post Hall at ten o'clock Sunday morning, no music, just a drummer, still march, no guns except on the color guard, through town to the church. Full uniform with Legion caps. There. Now you got it all."

Medee hawked up the flem in his throat and spit a tremendous gob. They turned into the factory yard and hurried their pace to join the rest of their shift filing in.

" Wonder what she put in my lunch today," he said. " I hope she didn't put in none of that meatloaf from last night. That ~~is~~ like bread between bread. I'll tell you one thing, Ferd, I'm goin to go the early mass that Sunday. The Father will be counting heads that day and I want him to see me doing my weekly ~~daily~~ obligation."

Ferdy agreed: " Wunt hurt/<sup>none</sup>to go to confession either, on Saturday, "

" I got nothing on my concious," said Medee, " but thats a good idea. You remind me, buddy. I don't want to get on the bad side of The Father." The machines were already humming when they <sup>into</sup> turned/Row C; old man Sawyer had'em all operating, <sup>they saw,</sup> and the feed bins were full of the thin metal strips. " I hope the feed chain on 'ole number eight don't break today, " he said. " Not on my first day back."

The Selectmen were meeting <sup>that evening</sup> in their chambers over the library for the first time since the election. The newspaper accounts of the election ~~had~~ made it plain that the people of Mason had put their stamp of approval on the policies and actions of the Board. They had now had complete control of the school board and the police department. There would be no one to prevent them from using the town treasury as they saw fit. The voters had spoken. Especially pleasing to them was the amount of publicity generated by the articles in the Courier. They had received letters from all over New England congratulating them and urging them on in their efforts to solve the Thorndike Murder. Pete Hennessey was the only one who was not grinning <sup>broadly</sup> ~~xxxxx~~ and slapping ~~xxxxx~~ each other on~~x~~ the back in greeting.

" Say, Pete, what's the matter with you tonight," said Monk Boyden. You got the biggest vote of us all. You're number one around here."

" Yes, well you know what that little Cock Rooster up the street has done? He's filed suit against me for injuring his practice. He's slapped a lien on my house and my business. The suit claims that

he has affidavits from witnesses that I said we ~~will~~ would ride and injure in business anybody who would not sign the American Legion petition. The suit says that he can show that his practice has been injured and they have a \$ 30,000 attachment on my property. Now that's nothing to be very cheerful about is it ? " He wiped his forehead with his hand several times and chewed nervously on his moustache.

Harry Manion listened to the exchange with interest and said, " You mean Dr. Francis O'Connor, of course." <sup>answering Pete's nod,</sup> and ~~nodding~~ he continued, : " Pete you've got nothing to worry about. He's just doing that~~x~~ to harrass you. He doesn't stand one chance in a hundred in winning a suit like that and ~~youxxxxxxx~~ he knows it. He's just trying to bluff you. Don't let him bother you. We gave that bunch a warning in January when we got the young Dentist Horan to locate here in town and in less than three months we got him elected to the school committee against a woman who thought she'd have the job as long as she wanted it. And that's just the start. I've been doing some calling~~x~~ around and I've got a young doctor, a graduate of ~~xxxxxxx~~ McGill University, who will be coming to Mason to set up practice. Dr. Herve Marchand. Wait'll he shows up. Then the Little Captain will have something to <sup>squeal</sup> ~~xxxx~~ about. Marchand can't come until the middle of June, has to finish up his work in a ~~x~~ hospital up there, but then he'll be down, ready to practice. It's all set, papers and everything. Then we'll see who's running this town.~~x~~ All right, let's get down to business. Who's got the affidavits~~x~~ that Georgex Dunne took the other day ?"

Alfred Partridge waved a paper over his head. " I've got it ~~here~~."

" Read it. No, let Boyden read it. When you read, it's nearly impossible to understand ~~what~~ you're reading."

Boyden took the paper that Partridge passed to him and began.



(6)

" On August 14, 1918, I was in the employ of Louis W. Anderson and I was cutting hay on the Thorndike Farm for Mr. Anderson. I drove up to the barn and arrived there about 7 o'clock in the morning. I was just unhitching the horse from the wagon when Mrs. Thorndike came across the field yelling and screaming. I went over and met her. She said, " I am sure Mr. Thorndike is dead and in the barn and asked me if I would go and look. I found the large door of the barn open, just enough to squeeze through. She said she had opened it when she went out at 5 o'clock in the morning to look for him and ~~xxxxxx~~ couldn't open it any farther. I opened the door and found it easy to open. She looked all over the barn except the hay loft and she couldn't get up there. We weren't looking for any murder clues because we didn't know any murder had been committed. We were simply looking for Dr. Thorndike. We could not find him anywhere. Later we noticed everything mussed up in the barn, blood on the floor, blood on the white door knob, blood on the steps of the porch where we had been sitting, but had not noticed it. Mr. Meade was there while the body was in the cistern and said out loud in front of everybody that it was a suicide and everybody laughed. Mrs. Thorndike was in the bungelow when the body was found. She didn't mention anything about deep water until after the body was found. She said, pointing with her left hand toward ~~the cistern~~ <sup>Harris field</sup>, " Dr. Thorndike has gone into the deep waters. " I did not hear her say anything <sup>about</sup> being covered up.

" I was summoned as a witness before the Grand Jury in Keene. Before I testified, Sheriff Kane told me Mr. Packard wanted to see me in his office. I found Mr. Packard there and he took me into his private office away from the stenographer. He asked me about the milk pail and lantern and about Mrs. Thorndike being down there at the barn, and whether she was nerved up or frightened. He asked me who I thought committed the murder and about the lights.

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I told him I had seen the lights and he asked me if they weren't automobile lights and I told him they couldn't have because automobiles would have two lights. He said it might be automobiles with only one light and then he talked about planets. That made me smile. I saw lights where there weren't no roads or houses. He asked me where I had seen them and I told him Temple Mountain and Monadnock. He asked me if I had seen them around Thorndike's place and I told him I hadn't, but others had. When he asked me who had committed the murder I told him I thought it was Mr. Meade, like a lot of them did. He said he was ~~xxxx~~ pretty sure Mrs. ~~Dean~~ <sup>Thorndike</sup> had done it and asked me if I didn't think so and I told him that she did not. When I told him that I thought ~~Mr. Meade~~ it was Mr. Meade, he said there wasn't enough money in Cheshire County to bring Mr. Meade into it. His exact words were 'all the money in Cheshire County into it.' I got the idea he wanted to study me to think the same as he did on everything.-- the lights being automobiles and that Mrs. Thorndike did it. And I left.

" Later that day Mr. ~~von Balkenberg~~ <sup>Curtis</sup>, the federal agent, questioned me. When I went before the Grand Jury hardly any questions were asked me except by the Grand Juror who asked about the lights and the milk pail. When I think it over, I still feel to this day that he, Packard, wanted me to think as he did and answer questions the way he wanted before the Grand Jury so that my impressions would be the same as his. This made me sick and I left him. I thought the remark about all the money in Cheshire County not getting a certain man looked funny to me. George Marlborough had me over in his office and talked about the case. He said he wanted to see me about it ever since the murder. He said he thought Mrs. Thorndike did it and asked me if I didn't think she could do it. I told him no. ( signed ) Arthur Brothers. "

Manion turned to Bart Lincoln, sitting beside him as usual. " Bart, this comes a little closer than most of the ones we've had before. George Dunne takes a good statement, doesn't he ? Gives

*these farm hands*

~~them~~ that little bit of guidance some of the ~~farm hands~~ <sup>need.</sup> You know how to handle this one, make it newsworthy, you might say?"

Lincoln knew his role. He's played it long enough. He was the hard pounding newspaper man who never gave up and who would sell his mother for an exclusive. He was picking up a by-line two or three times a week and had already picked up two six-months bonuses on improved circulation, as his contract provided.

" Names or rather a name ~~XXXX~~ <sup>has</sup> been used and that is verboden ( sorry ), of course. Let's see. Suspect named. County District Attorney ignores local resident's information. Yes, that's got enough punch to it. And I think I'll ring in the Governor on this one; say that the testimony contradicts what his County and State legal help ~~has~~ been saying. This Brothers was the first one on the murder scene that day and what he says is pretty important. I like the way he kinda wanders around some. Makes an authentic statement. I'll see it gets in the first of the week. Did you see my post-election pieces ?? "

Manion nodded and turning to the Selectmen said, " I expect you fellows have started a scrap book with all the coverage you have been getting. Bart's made you famous, you know that ?? "

The three Selectmen made various signs of gratitude and appropriate modesty toward Lincoln and assumed <sup>like</sup> business attitudes over the papers stacked in front of them.

Hennessey, the chairman, got the meeting back to the ~~affairs~~ affairs at hand. " Father, you asked us to write a letter to the police of Troy, New York, inquiring the whereabouts of Leo LaRocier. We did that, on official town stationary and an answer came today. We said, as you suggested, that there was a certain sum of money accumulated here in Mason that ~~was~~ due ~~xxx~~ LaRocier, that no one in town knew his address, although we had heard that he had taken work in Troy some six months ago, moving on from Pittsfield, Massachusetts, about that time.

The answer came today, from the Chief of Police in Troy. They said that they had located LaRocier, or rather that they had located the small machine shop where he had done lathe work. There was nothing on their books, no arrests or nothing which indicated LaRocier had gotten into trouble in Troy. The man who runs the shop said LaRocier had been a good worker, regular and all, that he knew he was a regular communicant in the church most of the fellows in the shop and their families go to. The shop boss said that about a month ago LaRocier missed a couple of days work. They didn't think anything about it, thought it was the flu or a heavy cold, but they sent somebody by his boarding house after work to see if he needed help or anything. Just as a friendly gesture. LaRocier wasn't there. Seems that the previous Saturday, after work, he paid up what he owed and left. His landlady said he'd said something about going west. Said he'd said he had his trade and was a free man, didn't stay anywhere long because he liked his independence. The fellow who worked beside him in the shop said he thought something was bothering LaRocier. He's got awful quiet all of a sudden, looked pale and sort of staring a lot of the time. And then he was gone. *Sounds like he took your dad's father.* The chief wants to know if he should put a tracer out on him. ~~Is~~ Is LaRocier wanted for something more than we said, he asks. What shall we answer? We have to say something."

Manion thought a minute. " Thank the chief for making the inquiries. Say that we think we know where LaRocier has gone and that we'll try there. Say LaRocier has relatives in Rhode Island that he's probably gone to and we'll contact them. That should do it. I think we have heard the last of Mr. LaRocier and that closes that chapter."

The rest of the meeting was taken up with routine business that Manion could have skipped, but he wanted to be sure that bills <sup>from</sup> like the ones of Alec Murphy's in Concord and George Waldstein's in Boston, <sup>were paid.</sup> He didn't want <sup>attention being called</sup> ~~any notice being paid~~ to those expenses. And he wanted to wait to the end of the meeting to lay out what action he had in mind.

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With this bunch, he always left to the last the most important items on his <sup>personal</sup> agenda. He wanted them to leave the meeting thinking about what he'd said and nothing else. They would be a little harder to manage with that big election win under their belt and he could not allow them to slip from the tight rein he'd held the last few months. Boyden, especially, was given to shooting off his mouth when he was down town chatting at the post office or in one of the stores after he'd done his trading and with his inflated self-importance, he'd do more. Some of his statements about Perkins Meade had come back to Manion and made him wince. He had encouraged a whispering campaign but there were somethings you just didn't come right out and say. He had thought out a new direction for their efforts and he had to make it plain enough so they could follow it without difficulty. He sat and made notes while ~~he~~ they waded <sup>through</sup> the business of schools and roads and budgets.

Through his thoughts he could hear Hennessey and Alf Partridge arguing about how much gravel should be ordered for the summer repair of the township's roads. Partridge allowed as how he was the road expert and knew what was needed. Said he didn't need the interference of any shopkeeper when it came to ordering road work supplies and Hennessey returned that with that amount of gravel you could repair half the roads in the county. With a lot of arm waving and near screeching (like a loon Manion~~x~~ thought), Partridge won out, as he almost always did. Said gravel wasn't like meat, it didn't spoil, he said, and if there was any left over they could shore up the roads in the cemetery. After a short period of quiet, Manion realized that Hennessey was speaking to him.

"That the business for tonight," he said. "Was there anything else you wanted~~x~~ to bring up?"

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Manion glanced down at his notes and began. He spoke in a low monotone as he always did when he wanted to focus the attention of his audience, but the authoritative note was in his voice even if the phrasing was only suggestive.

" I think we should quiet down our activities for a while, unless we get a break that we ~~xxxx~~ cannot now foresee. You have just won a glorious victory, but the war goes on. We will be alert to pick up affidavits from those we have not thought of before and we will continually build up our case. Quietly. I want you to be very careful of what you say in public. We have come too far and worked too hard to make mistakes now. If anyone asks what the Selectmen are doing in the prosecution of the Thorndike case, just say that you are exploring some new evidence that has come to light, something the federal men have dug up. Say that you are working with George Dunne and the Board of Trade on getting some new industry to locate here in Mason. Say anything but reveal nothing.

" For the moment we have done just about as much as can be done in enlisting the support the townspeople. They are with us. An important element we have not gotten involved is the summer colony. The head of the Village Improvement Society, Mrs. Robertson, will be a great help to us. She has been in the past. But we won't really get the summer people involved until they are living here. They don't really start coming up here until after Memorial Day. When we are satisfied that most of them are in their cottages, say, by the middle of June, we'll start a campaign in the Courier that will really get their attention. Before the end of the summer -- the second anniversary of the murder is a good target -- they'll be asking us what they can do to help. The state will be electing a new governor in the fall and we'll tell them that that's where they can use their influence. ~~Sam~~ <sup>Nelson</sup> Barnett will not be running and we will

have to see that whoever is elected will have promised to appoint a special prosecutor to convene a second Grand Jury. This time we will have our day in court. So it's hold tight until after Memorial Day, do you see? Bart and I have been laying it out and there will be a series of articles spread across New England so powerful, so accusing, that no one can ignore them. Up to now we have scattered our shot and though we've hit our targets they have been too ~~widely~~ ~~spread~~ spread. We'll open up the summer offensive with a barrage the likes of which has never been seen and we'll have our man pinned down before snow flies. Usually Mason is quiet in the summer and everybody is concentrating on ~~the~~ business ~~of~~ making a living. This summer will be different. I have an idea for the Fourth of July weekend with a Loyalty Sunday, where we'll combine the usual parade and ball games and fireworks with a Rally to cleanse our community of the stain of the unsolved murder. You gentlemen will be in the leadership positions, naturally. And this time we'll involve the summer people. This time they won't be sitting back swigging their bootleg ~~liquor~~ <sup>Cocktails</sup> watching us locals play at "The Good Old Days." This time they'll right in the middle of it. By the time we get through, and I haven't told you the half of it, there won't be a politician in the state of New Hampshire who won't be begging to get in line with us. But this will take careful planning and sure execution. "

All the time he had been talking he had fastened the three men in their chairs with a stare of deep intensity, with what ~~of~~ he had once heard called " the dark ~~visage~~ <sup>visage</sup> of anathema." Not ~~once~~ <sup>once</sup> did he allow their eyes to turn from his, not once did his voice allow any break in their attention. It was if he had been swinging a shiney watch back and forth in front of their faces. He could hear their raspy shallow breathing. Boyden's eyebrows were at rest; ~~Partridge's~~ Partridge's hands were still on the table and his

head was motionless; Hennessey's mouth was open like a split melon as he sucked in air with no comfort from his moustache. They were like statues. When he broke the spell with a quick loud "well, what do you think?" it was as if he had clapped his hands. They straightened up with a jerk, and as if they had been put back in their chairs after being wound up, each of them responded, their voices piled one on the other, each trying to outdo the other in enthusiasm: "Great, that sounds just great... I never heard the like ... where do you get your ideas, father? ... if that don't work, nothing will... nobody but you could have thought of that ... that'll make em sit up and take notice... loyalty Sunday, of course, why didn't I think of that..."

Manion focused on Hennessey. "Pete, is there anything else we need to discuss tonight?"

"That's all I had on the agenda myself. Either of you have anything else? No, nothing? Then we stand adjourned for tonight."

As they were all pulling on their overcoats before going out into the late March wind, the mercury had taken a quick seasonal break, Alf Partridge said in his high whinny, "Say, Father Manion. ~~Did you hear that~~ Speaking of Memorial Day, did you hear that the Legion Post voted to go to the Universalist Church on Sunday this year?"

His tone ~~waxwax~~ and his question were more challenging than he probably intended and Manion had to control an impulse to cut his fool head off. Laugh it off, boy. Laugh it off.

"Yes, Alf, I heard about it. They came to Holy Name last year, you know. That was the first year the Veterans marched as a body. We were honored to be chosen. We can't expect to have 'em every year. It's against the rules."

"That's as may be. But don't you think it's kind of a slap in the face for them to go to Perkins Meade's church when he's under a cloud, the local suspect, as our friend Bart here puts



Manion flushed deeply. What was this bird trying to pull anyway?  
 this  
 Was ~~xxx~~ some sort of petty revenge, some sort of declaration of free  
 will from this ne'er-do-well Yankee who couldn't find his ass with  
 both hands? Laugh it off, boy, Laugh it off. Take the sting out. He  
 raised a hand in protest. " I don't see it that way, Alf, not at all.  
 You've seen some of those German belt buckles the boys brought home,  
 haven't you? Half the German army must have been holding up their pants  
 with one hand when the Yankee Division got through with them. Gott Mit  
Uns, God is with us, it said on those buckles. Didn't help them much,  
 did it? Well, that's the way I feel about it. We know God is on the  
 side of Justice and the Legion's going to Meade's church one Sunday  
 doesn't x change that. " He laughed, " They can go and be damned, for  
 all I care," knowing that Partridge would not see the humor in that  
 remark either.

As he made his way up the hill towards the Rectory,  
 however, his face burned not from the knife edge of the wind but from  
 the blow to his pride. Half way up the street, he saw the ~~oblong box~~  
 lighted oblong box hanging from the porch of the house across the  
 street. " F.C. O'Connor ~~xxxxxx~~ M.D. " The black letters stood out  
 clear against the white light inside. He's the one behind it, he  
 thought. He isn't even a member of the Post anymore. He resigned after  
 that fight about my petition. But he's the one behind it. They could  
 have gone to any other church in town, but he got them to go to Meade's  
 church. What else have he got up his sleeve? <sup>Manion</sup> ~~xx~~ didn't like to lose.  
 Never had and never would. They thought they were so smart. Well they  
 hadn't heard the last of ~~xxxx~~ him. They'd be coming to him, asking  
 him to quit. He smiled when he thought of the new young doctor coming  
 in June. Speaks French, the right French, of course <sup>a was here, a was there.</sup> We'll see. We'll  
 just see.

" Fall in here on this line. Column of fours. Try to find the man you were beside yesterday and take the same position," William Hillyer, the newly elected American Legion Post Commander, hustled up and down the line of men as they struggled to ~~line~~<sup>form</sup> up for the march to the Universalist Church for the Memorial Service. One of the color ~~guard~~<sup>guard</sup> the rifleman to the right of the American Flag was not there. Arnie Pelletier. Where was he ? There he came out of the hall. Where was his gun ? "Bill, you got the key to the gun closet?" " Yes, here it is. Now hurry."

The shuffling around and jockeying for position went on until it looked to Hillyer as if the lines were as good as they were going to get. What was the order? Let's see, first the color guard; then Dr. O'Connor, he was the ranking officer; Joe ~~Carman~~<sup>Carmanagh</sup> and Colin Poole, the first lieutenants; then me, Post Commander; and the rest of the post, 62 today down from 84 yesterday. The Auxiliary in their capes and caps are behind us.

As he made his way down the body of troops one last time, his eye caught a break that shouldn't have been there. God damn, that Shorty Fremblay trying to be funny as usual. He had arranged the post members yesterday according to height. Fremblay, only 5' 1", was in the ~~rear~~<sup>front</sup> rank with the six-footers, grinning that silly ass grin. " Damn it, Shorty, what are you trying to do, screw up the whole parade ? / Now get up in the ~~front~~<sup>front</sup> rank where you belong."

While the changing of position once again went on, Ferdy Sirosis stepped back from his buddy, Medee and inspected him. " Just look at that right legging of yours. The top is loose. By the time we get up-town, the whole thing will be down around your ankle. Two years in the army and you never did learn to wrap it right. " As Medee knelt down to adjust the legging in its spiral up his leg, Ferdy asked, " Dyou' go to

early mass ? " " Yeah." " What did Father say?" " Nothing, he didn't say nothing. Fastest mass I ever seen. Served us the host and went right out the back after the benediction. When we was standing out front talking after, we seen him go across to the rectory, his head down. He looked mad. I wasn't the only one at early mass." Yeah?" Yeah. We watched the crowd leave. We counted from the Legion 17/and 15 of them ain't here now. Maybe I should of stayed home, too" " Well, not me. Us vet-rans got to stick together, stand up for our rights. If we don't stick together, we won't get no bonus, no hospitals, nothing. You heard'em read that letter from the National Commander: Whatever else you are, no matter what your job is, no matter what your religion is, you have be united together because you served your country together. You heard that." "Yeah, but Father Manion is somethin'else again. I doan know..."

At a signal from Hillyer the snare drummer at the right rear of the column struck up a beat. " Post, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ atten-shun. Forward, harch," and the column set off up Factory Road bound for the center of town.

Walking alone in his rank behind the color guard as the highest ranking commissioned officer in the post, Francis O'Connor, his uniform still a perfect fit -- a third of the men walking behind him had gotten so fat their uniforms no longer fit and their service was marked only by the blue and gold overseas cap -- his puttees <sup>and Sam Browne</sup> shining in the May sun, strode along with the drum beat, filled with the energy of wellbeing. When he marched, his whole body marched: head erect, chin tucked under, shoulders in a natural ~~xxx~~ wide swing, belly sucked in, knees coming up a bit more than needed, nice action like a good horse. He'd been told many times that he looked like Black Jack Pershing and that was the picture he kept in his mind as he marched, the newsreel pictures he'd seen of Pershing. If you're going to be a soldier, look like a soldier. Wear the uniform with pride!! He knew some of them laughed at him. Let them. He was proud he'd served. He'd answered the call when it came. All his life he'd been a

a fighter and he wasn't ashamed of it. The captains bars on his shoulders and the Overseas bar on the medal on his left breast attested to the part he'd played. He'd earned them both.

By the time the column of Legionaires had turned west off the ~~Water Street~~ <sup>Harris field</sup> Road at the watering trough and were crossing the Water Street Bridge, a swarm of small boys was leaping and jumping and running to keep up with the men in their ranks of four. They were disappointed to see there was no firing squad in the column. The day before they had flooded around the feet of the armed men, scurrying around to collect the empty shell casings, so hot they could burn your hand, as they were ejected from the raised rifles. At each of the three cemeteries and finally at the Roll of Honor on the Town common, there had been "bullets" for the grabbing and it was great to get more than the next guy. They were swell for trading, too.

Crossing the intersection of School and Main Streets, the marchers executed a creditable column-left up the broad stairway and came to rest, with the color guard leading, on the broad granite slabs which lay in front of the church doors. It was ten minutes to eleven. Post Commander Hillyer gave them ~~Parade~~ "Pa- rade Rest" and congratulated himself on having them there to the minute. He looked around for the minister. Almost immediately, the minister appeared, his gown flying out behind him, his doctor of divinity colors furled around his neck. "Welcome," he said, shaking Hillyer's hand. "A fine body of men," he said. "And women," he said, looking down the slope to the street and seeing the Women's Auxiliary drawn up on the street. "Come in."

The color guard, rifles at trail arms and colors lowered in respect, led the way up the center aisle, grounded the colors in the stands provided and took their places in the front pews. The rest of the column filed in in a column of twos and took seats in the first six pews. It was smartly done.

By the time the hymn before the sermon came, the majority of the Post Members, good Catholics that they were, had lost their uneasiness at being in a forbidden place and reassured by the cross behind -- queer, look at that, a crucifix without Christ -- were following the verses as best they could and singing out lustily.

" Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget-- lest we forget! "

The refrain lines of the fourth verse of the Arthur Sullivan setting of the words in praise of Empire seemed apt and proper even in the bare whiteness of the severe pews and the bright nakedness of the high windows along the sides of the little New England church, and following the cue of the organist, the last line, " Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord! " ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ was breathed out by the congregation in a reverential close.

The Reverend Harwell Dyer, D.D. took his place in the pulpit and made ready to speak to those seated immediately below him. It was an historic occasion and he was determined to make the most of it.

" It is with considerable pride that I welcome here today, on behalf of the members of the First Universalist Church of Mason, the Men of ~~the~~ American Legion Post, # 11 and the Ladies of <sup>their</sup> ~~the~~ Auxiliary. We are conscious of the honor you pay us. You are welcome here today. You are welcome here any day, as good Christians, but you are especially welcome here on this Sunday, which ~~we~~ we set aside in memory of those who fought have ~~died~~ in defense of their country, some of whom made the Supreme Sacrifice. The significance of your being here in a body must not be overlooked. For though your worship as individuals is important, your membership in a body of those who served their country which has come here today as a body joins together two of the highest ideals a man may hold, service to country and service to God. It is a union which calls forth the best that we can give.

" Yesterday, we joined together and marched to the various cemeteries of the town and to the War Memorial to honor those who had died. We placed flags on the graves of those who had served their country in all its wars. We fired memorial salutes and the bugler sounded that most sweet of all calls, Taps, and a second bugler answered in echo. It was a still moment when we paused, reminded of eternal rest that the departed know, reminded of the end that we ~~would~~<sup>will</sup> know. It was a good and right thing to do, but it was an essentially martial ceremony. It marked a giving thanks to those who had given of themselves, more often than not at an early age. It marked the homage paid to those who fell in the strife and struggle of life on this earth. It is right and proper that we pay such homage. ' Lest we forget-- lest we forget.' The words of the hymn resound and remind us that we must never forget those who have fought for our freedom as a people against those who would enslave. Freedom, Liberty, are necessary for the pursuit of happiness and are worth the sacrifice of a man's life. Freedom to worship as we choose. Liberty to be governed by ourselves. Happiness for ourselves and those we love. These are the ideals written in the basic documents of our country, ideals to which we must remain faithful. But these ideals are ideals of life on this earth. After the ~~xxx~~ prayerful remembrance at each stop along our route, we marched off to the next in military formation. The band played, the children laughed and shouted, and we marched along, full of life and the joy of living, to compelling beat of horn and drum. After the last stop, we all went home to a good dinner, to the gathering of family and friends. We had done our part, we had not forgotten, we had been faithful to those who passed on before us. We were now free to go to the ball game.

" But if that is all we did, if we thought that those observances were sufficient, we were badly mistaken for we had forgotten the most important observance of all, the giving of thanks to Almighty God.

" That is why we are here today. That is why it is important that you, as defenders of your country's freedom, are here today and on future Memorial Day Sundays <sup>will be</sup> ~~are~~ in some house of God. For if we forget to ~~g~~ather on Sunday and give thanks to God, it cannot be ~~long~~ before we forget the salutes and observances of Saturday, too.

" It is a human failing that the latter verses of hymns and national anthems lie unsung. How many of us, for example, can sing the second~~x~~ verse of The Star Spangled Banner? Rudyard Kipling knows this, he knew it when he wrote "Recessional," and so he put in those unforgettable refrain <sup>lines</sup> ~~lines~~: " Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,/ Lest we forget -- lest we forget." to jog our memory. What does it profit us to remember ~~Man~~ if we ~~we~~ forget God?

" Turn, if you will, to the last verse of the hymn you have just sung. ' For heathen heart that puts her trust/ in reeking tube and iron shard/ All valiant dust that builds on dust,' A number of you here today faced 'the reeking tube' -- the hellish barrages of enemy artillery-- and heard the whistling death of the 'iron shard' -- the bursting shell -- as it landed all about you. And of course, you put your trust in your own machine guns and artillery to raise the same fear in those firing at you. But there must have been moments when you cried out to Almighty God to guard you, not prayed but cried out, <sup>moments</sup> ~~when~~ your own defenses were not enough, when you put your trust in the mercy of God. It is those moments <sup>in some fashion</sup> that I ask you to recall and ~~I~~ ask you to share ~~that experience~~ with those who did not know ~~them~~.

" There is a phrase in that last verse, 'All valiant dust,' which keeps coming back to <sup>me</sup> ~~me~~. I am told by those who saw combat that bravery on the battle field was commonplace. I served as a chaplain <sup>in this</sup> ~~in this~~ <sup>our Country,</sup> ~~our Country,~~ I did not get overseas, but I talked to many of the wounded returned to this country and I know that the host of the valiant in our armed

was  
forces ~~is~~ virtually numberless, and I take it as an article of faith  
that those who did not take part in the fighting would have been as  
valiant, if they had been called upon. Valor is indispensable, of course.  
And I thank God, as I know all of you do, for the valiant. But valor is  
not enough. There have been valorous men throughout history, written  
and spoken, but being men they ~~were~~ <sup>are</sup> dust (ashes to ashes, dust to  
dust) and those who ~~were~~ <sup>are</sup> valiant if they ~~were~~ <sup>are</sup> nothing more, build,  
as the poet tells us, on dust.

" What is it then that we ask for when we ask the Lord God  
of Hosts, to be with us yet ? What is it that we ask to be reminded of?  
What do we ask for, when, with the poet, <sup>we ask</sup> the Lord to show his mercy on  
his people ?

" What we ask for is the ability to show mercy to others  
as God has shown mercy to us. To be able to forgive the ~~trespasses~~ <sup>trespasses</sup> of  
others as our ~~trespasses~~ are forgiven. To love justice and pursue it  
for others as we demand it for ourselves. If we do not do these things  
and more, we build on dust, and we do not deserve the mercy of God.

" Those of you who worship here today in a patriotic body  
are the valiant and as the valiant you have a greater obligation than  
the ordinary citizen.

" While you were away in the service of your country,  
there was a foul murder committed in this town. An honorable citizen  
of this town was killed in cold blood. Not in the heat of a quarrel.  
Not even for possessions or monetary gain. For no clearly seen reason.  
For eighteen months a pall,  
an insidious plague, has hung over this town. The murderer has not  
been found and suspicion and distrust have grown with each passing  
month. Brother has been turned against brother. Families are divided.  
Religious faith turned against religious faith.



→ incident

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"Men and women have perjured themselves, saying things they know cannot be true. It seems as if we are living in an ancient greek play where a victim must be found, someone who can be sacrificed, made to carry the guilt of the deed that the pestilence may leave~~xx~~ us. A set of circumstances which many of us believe to have been woven together in a dark malignant spirit have raised a campaign of vilification against a man who in his lifetime has displayed a greater possession of the Chr~~st~~ian spirit than perhaps any~~/~~other whom I have known. A man who has believed ev~~il~~ of no man. A man who has walked in peace with all. who has A man/dealt mercifully with all. A man in whom his neighbors and fellow townspeople have put their highest public trust. This man believes in the justice of God. He believes that the truth will be made known, that that which is hidden ~~is~~ will be made clear. And~~/~~we can all pray God that this is so. In the meantime, he is slandered, whispered against, put upon by those who say they have proof and show none.

wish, prayerfully given, for  
" So my ~~existing through~~ ~~xx~~ you, the valiant who~~x~~ have honored us here today with your presence, is that somehow your experiences in the service of your country have given you a greater capacity for mercy a greater thirst for justice, a greater patience toward your fellow man. That you will withhold judgment until all the facts are in. That you resist the temptation to believe ill of any man.

" And now may the spirit and love of God fill you, keep and protect you, forever more. Am~~en~~. "

■ After the choir and the minister had passed down the aisle and out the front door, ~~the~~ American Legion Post, # 11, rose on com~~and~~, filed out and formed up in column on ~~the~~ <sup>main</sup> street, and marched off down Main Street like a float in a parade. There was no talking in ranks, no chatting among the remainder of~~x~~ the congregation who watched them go. As the drum beat grew fainter and fainter, all present turned and walked thoughtfully away.

Less than half a mile up Main Street, at the top of the hill which led from the west into Mason, late-comers were hurrying up to the main door of Holy Name, slipping into the shadows at the rear of the church after having dipped into the holy water in the vestibule. The eleven o'clock service had begun and Father Manion was death on any chatting or ~~bustle~~ bustle once the service began. "This is not some spaghetti Madi Gras," he had said when he first came. "You are not <sup>here</sup> ~~here~~ to exchange gossip or make dates for the evening; you are here to worship God and you begin by being quiet in His house."

The general quiet of the hour deepened as the priest rose to deliver his sermon. Anticipation of what he would say made each worshipper retreat into himself and fixed each listener in an attitude of stillness that made breathing a threat to the ordained silence.

"Children of God. Today is the Feast of Pentcost. The 50th day after Easter. This is the day celebrated as the day the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles, the day when the real work of the church, the spreading of the Gospel, ~~begins~~ <sup>is</sup>. Christ has gone to the Father. He has ascended into Heaven, an act which we have celebrated in the Feast of the Ascension, and it is now up to those he left behind, those he ordained for the work, to get busy in His Name. But the Apostles are only men, weak, fallible, open to temptation. How will they accomplish this task, this tiny band of men, against the power of the Roman Empire: How will they have the courage to prevail against the many pagan beliefs, against those who will persecute them and revile them?

"The answer is found in the Gospel which you have heard <sup>at the Last Supper</sup> this morning. St John tells us that <sup>is</sup> Jesus told his disciples if they love him and ~~keep~~ <sup>will</sup> his commandments, He ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> ask the Father and the Father ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> send them another Comforter and that Comforter ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> be the Holy Ghost. He ~~said~~ <sup>will</sup> that the Holy Ghost ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> stay with them, that the Holy Ghost ~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> dwell in them and be with them. Christ ~~knows~~ <sup>will</sup> that the disciples

~~would~~ <sup>will</sup> feel abandoned and lost when He ~~left~~ <sup>leaves</sup>, as he ~~knows~~ <sup>will</sup> he ~~would~~ have to, and so he promises <sup>will</sup> he ~~would~~ not leave them comfortless like orphans in a world that cares nothing for them. He says that the Holy Ghost, the comforter, will teach them everything they need to know and will remind them of all the lessons that He taught them when He was here on earth with them. It is through the Holy Ghost that Christ will make himself known to the disciples after He has ascended into to Heaven. It is through the Holy Ghost that he will come to them, not once but again~~x~~ and again, times without number until the end of time. In answer to Judas, not Judas Iscariot ~~the~~ the betrayer, who asks why Jesus will show himself to the disciples and not to the world, Christ answers that ~~only~~ only those who love Him and keep his words will be loved by God, only those will understand what Christ has said and through him <sup>know</sup> /the Heavenly Father. Christ speaks God's truth and those who do not know Christ cannot know God's truth. They will not be able to <sup>see</sup> ~~know~~ the Holy Ghost or know him and therefore they will be shut off from God's truth.

" Jesus tell~~the~~ the disciples <sup>they</sup> that/should not be troubled or afraid. Instead they should be happy and joyful that ~~Christ~~ <sup>HE</sup> is in Heaven with the Father. Through the Holy Ghost, it <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ possible for Jesus to go away and yet come again to the disciples. He has told them what is going to happen so that they can believe it when it happens -- He is talking now <sup>and the Resurrection</sup> about the Crucifiction/-- and he goes even further to tell them will happen after that. This is why we are so joyous at Easter, because Christ is risen, risen indeed. This is why Christ returned to walk with the disciples and <sup>needed to</sup> talk with them after the Crucifiction. They were men like us and ~~needed~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ be reassured. But He could not stay, ~~he~~ because he was in the Father and had to return to Him. And this he does when he is assumed into Heaven. But even this act would be incomplete if it meant that Mankind were to be cut off from Him for all time. And so on this Sunday, we celebrate the keeping of the promise to the Disciples, that <sup>will</sup> ~~they~~ ~~would~~ not be abandoned. Each of

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these great feast days is a necessary celebration of our faith in Jesus Christ. Easter is not enough because it marks only His rising from the dead here on earth. Assumption is not enough because it marks only His return to the Father. Pentacost is sufficient because it assures us of the continuing presence of Our Lord and Savior on earth. This is the importance of Pentacost. The promise that Christ made to the disciples is also made to us. The comfort that the Holy Ghost gave to the disciples is available to us through His One and Apostolic ~~Apollistic~~ Church. No one can truly call himself Christian if he does not celebrate the descent of the Holy Ghost. God marked Jesus as his Son by the descent of the Holy Ghost after His baptism by John the Baptist. In the same way He marks each of us who have been baptised on this day as one of His. And each year we acknowledge our being Chosen, by our observance of that day centuries ago when the disciples were also marked. Those who are not with us here today cannot be touched by a renewal of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth -- another name Jesus gives the Holy Ghost -- cannot be with them. I ~~am~~ take note of those who are not with us and I am sad. I am sad because I see a weakening of their faith and I know that as their shepard I have somehow failed -- failed them by not keeping them in the fold, and failing them, I fail God.

" Let us turn for a moment to that original day of Pentacost. You have heard St Luke in the Acts of the Apostles tell of that first day, tell of the signs: the mighty rushing wind from heaven, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ which filled the house where they were; the tongues of flame which sat on ~~xxxx~~ each of them; the speaking in tongues, in all kinds of foreign languages, of the wonderful works of God, and how those there knew that the words of God were to be spread by means of all the languages of the earth. It was a frightening wondrous experience for those gathered there that day and through the centuries that have followed we can see how the word of God has spread.

But especially I want to call your attention to how Luke begins this Chapter of Acts, the second chapter. He says: ' When the day of Pentacost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.' Mark those last words: '... with one accord in one place.' This is the only way it can be. All those who would be touched by the Spirit Holy ~~Spixix~~, the Spirit of Truth, must be of 'one accord,' and that one accord means that we all believe in the teaching of the Holy Church, there can be no other, and that they must be of one accord in 'one place,' and that one place is <sup>in</sup> the Holy Church, there can be no other.

" Those who gather ~~any~~ in another place to-day, today of all days, cannot be in accord with us, cannot be in accord <sup>with</sup> the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. They may be celebrating something, but it is not the Feast of Pentacost.

" Who are these <sup>i</sup> parishoners of the Church of The Holy Name? Where are they gathered? And why ? What gives them the fierce pride, like the pride of the Fallen Angels, to oppose the teachings of the Mother Church in this outrageous fashion? "

" A small boy seated in the front row with his family had dozed off, lulled by the <sup>low</sup> singing tones of the telling of the First Pentacost. As the priest thundered his malediction against those who dared oppose his will, the boy jerked awake and looking up saw the heavy gross face suffused with blood hanging above him like some primitive mask with drawn lips and exposed fangs, the heavy folds of the priest's black robe thrashing back and forth like six foot wings, It was more than he could face and he buried his head in his mother's bosom, whimpering with fright.

" You know who they are without my telling you. They are members of the local American Legion Post and they are attending a Memorial Service with their buddies ( the word was an insult) at the Universalist Church. And do you know what the Universalist Church is ?? It is a Protestant sect which preaches the doctrine of universal salvation or redemption.

" Universalism is a form of heathen Christianity which proclaims that all men are alike in God's sight. Anyone of our children who has studied his catechism knows better. Anyone of them knows that some are saved and some are damned. Throughout its life, the Holy Church has been confronted with those who spread heretical beliefs and time after time these have been put down by mighty defenders of the faith like Saint Augustine. This Universalism is a wide spread and long enduring apostasy whose power to entice demands ~~an~~ eternal vigilance on the part of every loyal son and daughter of the Holy and Catholic Church. I shudder to think what untruths are being spoken there this morning -- since they do not know the Holy Spirit how can there be truth spoken there? -- and I urge you to pray, as I pray, for the souls who are exposed such heresies as our brothers and sisters are hearing today. May the teachings of their childhood guard and protect them. I believe they will.

"The more important question is not who the absent ones are, or where they are -- we know the answers to that -- but Why?

"The answer to that is they are returning servicemen who have come back to this community changed men. Returning servicemen have been a problem to any civilization that was not itself a military state. Returning soldiers have always held themselves better than those they returned to. Somehow they think that because some of them were killed in battle, they are wiser, nobler, than others. They demand special privileges in our society, they demand preferment in matters of employment, they take their service as qualifying them to rule us in political offices. They feel that having joined a confraternity of those equal in the face of death, they have the right to set their own rules and overturn long established practices. Having survived, they see themselves above the controls, the necessary restraints, of law and religion. They see themselves as those who will bring about change.

" Imperial Rome knew how to deal with returning troops: they were not allowed to enter the city. No troops but the Praetorian Guard were allowed in the city itself. They camped outside and only their leaders entered. In many instances the troops never returned at all, but were settled on the land they conquered, married native women, and lived out their lives far from their homeland. They were allowed a Triumphant parade and were then dispatched to another frontier.

" In our own <sup>history</sup> ~~history~~, some of the worst thieves, murderers, and bands of robbers have been discharged soldiers. Some of the worst instances of political misrule and treason were fathered by those who had worn their country's uniform. Ulysses S. Grant was a great general but his two administrations stand among the most dishonorable in our history.

" Today in America we find the men who served in the war not two years concluded joined in an organization which places itself all others. Though they speak in terms of the highest ideals which men hold sacred, in practice they hold a loyalty which denies the obligations to support the beliefs in which they have been raised. This loyalty claims to cross lines of political, social, and religious difference. In loyalty to each other they band together against the rest of us.

" You know what group I am talking about. In our own town the local American Legion Post was presented with a petition which would have joined them with us in demands for a second Grand Jury to give a full and fearless investigation of the Thorndike murder case. Here was an opportunity for them to get behind Our Selectmen who have been frustrated in their efforts to see justice done for the murder of this patriotic citizen, a murder which was directed against his efforts to apprehend spying enemies of our country -- with all the signaling going on, can anyone doubt that our enemies were among us -- and they the uniformed defenders of our country refused to enlist.

" Instead they ~~manufactured~~ a statement which was so watered down that it omitted totally any mention of a second grand jury or the appointment of a special ~~prosecutor~~ prosecutor. They did so because they claimed the the American Legion had to remain above politics, but it is clear that the little band of men in this town who have so far been able to prevent the prosecution of the ~~man~~ <sup>whom</sup> against the evidence piles higher and higher were once again successful in their protection of one of their number.

" I am not surprised therefore to find this group who preferred to remain, as they say, above politics, refusing to put their weight on the side of justice... I am not surprised to find this group worshipping today with a group of heretics who place themselves beyond the revealed wisdom of the Apostolic Faith. Those who have not had the benefit of the Truth as revealed by The Holy Spirit I can understand. It is pride, pride of human reason, which has made them stray. I find it harder to understand those who have been raised in the Faith. But I can see that they too, those who refused the guidance of their spiritual leader in the matter of the American Legion petition, ~~through through~~ <sup>were misled though</sup> pride in their military brotherhood and its demand of a higher loyalty. But there is hope for them. They can be saved and it is the duty of all Good Christians to work to save them.

" What can be done ? I am going to pray for them that they might see the light of God's Truth, and I ask that you do so also. Include them in your prayers that they may feel the presence of the Holy Ghost, as we who are gathered here today do. Pray that those who risked their lives in our defense may be returned to us in spirit as well as in body. The Feast of Pentacost celebrates the keeping of Jesus' promise to the disciples, but it also celebrates His promise to us through them. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen."

and is a source of strength for us.



The Right Reverend Gilbert Pelletier, Bishop of New Hampshire, was sitting <sup>in</sup> his study in the Diocesan Residence in Manchester with his secretary, Father John Buckwold. They had just finished reviewing the schedule of parish visits in the northern part of the state, where the Bishop would confirm the spring classes which had just finished their instruction. Confirmation was one of his duties that the Bishop liked best. The sweetness of the little girls in their white veils and dresses and the manliness of the young boys in their new suits with hair that never stayed slicked down the way it should always touched him. The innocence in those young faces at the altar rail always renewed his faith. Ah, if we could all our lives present such shining faces to the Good Lord, what a wonderful place this world would be.

"Is there anything else, John, before we knock off for lunch?"

"Yes, Father. This letter came in the morning mail and I think you ought to look at it right away. It's from that doctor in ~~Myxxxx~~ Mason. You remember that about a week ago, I told you he phoned and asked for an appointment and I told ~~xxx~~ him you were so busy that he had better write<sup>t</sup>. Well, he has and I think you better read it."

"Should I know him?"

"He says you've met. But here, I think this is something you are going to have to handle yourself. I think you'll get to know Dr. O'Connor better. It's about Harry Manion."

The Bishop sighed and began to read the letter.

Most Respected Sir:

*June 5, 1920*

I have tried to approach you personally for a short conference, but Fr. Buckwold informed me over the telephone, Tuesday night, that you were so busy that I had better write.

I would never have the courage to do this had I not been most favorably impressed with your bigness and kindness when I met you at the bedside of that saintly man Fr. Bernardin in February 1912. I am not a Catholic, but I loved that man and I do not think it out of the way to state that I had his respect and confidence.

This town has been under a dark cloud for almost two years and as I look to its future with painful interest, your noble kind face appears in its shadows. I came home from France about a year ago and found the people in a turmoil over the notorious Thorndike

murder, but have waited patiently to have the matter clear up and see the town peaceful and happy again.

After careful investigation, I feel that Fr. H. A. Manion is the cause of most of the unenviable notoreity this town and unfortunately the state has gotten during the past year. With the deepest respect and reverence I ask if it is not possible for he and his housekeeper to be removed to some other field of usefulness. If you will give me a short conference I can show you many features, which you should know and which the public have got to know if it is not possible to remove him.

I feel it is my duty to put a stop to this kind of activity in our town and backed by no church, lodge, man or men -- I have resigned from the American Legion for this work -- I am starting with this end in view. I respectfully ask for a hearing with Fr. Manion present, appreciating and waiving the advantages of his position and affiliation, because I feel I would get justice man to man.

Memorial services were held in churches all over the U. S., without regard for creed or denomination, for the boys who fought and died. Here in Mason, Fr. Manion preached no memorial sermon, but made unkind remarks about service men in general and local ex-service men in particular. And this is the least of what he has done.

Not hearing from you in a reasonable length of time, I shall proceed in my own way to stop ~~xxxx~~ the persecution being carried on in this town, in court, with voice and pen, whenever and wherever I can get a hearing. I shall fight this thing to a finish.

I ask for your blessing and prayers that right wins and justice prevails.

Most respectfully,

The Bishop sighed again and taking his reading glasses off, rubbed ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the bridge of his nose. " When do we get back from North State?" he asked. " Friday night." " All right, call Harry and tell him to be here at 9, Saturday morning." Suddenly, the ~~Bishop~~ <sup>OLD MAN</sup> knew he had lost his appetite for lunch. He had been ~~xxxxxxxx~~ sitting too long in the seat of the presiding bishop not to recognize the smell of trouble. You got to have a nose for it.

It had been a quiet spring, the spring of 1920. <sup>A</sup> After the Kaiser and his toadies won the March elections, ~~xx~~ I hate<sup>d</sup> to admit it, <sup>but</sup> ~~but~~ I did have to admire the organization job they did ~~for the election~~, getting all those mill hands up there to vote and that business with the ribbons on that bitch-in-heat and all <sup>her</sup> admirers<sup>d</sup> was real slick. Though I was not ~~much~~ in favor of woman suffrage ( I thought they put that one over on the men who went to fight, much the same way they slipped in Prohibition), I did think it would work to our advantage, for the simple reason that we could get <sup>more</sup> of our women to the polls than they could, but it didn't work out that way at all. The ribbon business sat wrong with me from the start. It's one thing to believe that you are in the right and to work for it in any way you can, but quite another to put on the armor of Virtue and parade it around town. In my 25 years of medical practice I <sup>had</sup> ~~have~~ seen enough action by those regarded as upright citizens and <sup>had</sup> ~~have~~ been told enough secrets in <sup>the</sup> confidence of the sick <sup>to ruin a good man's reputation</sup> room. I am proud to say that I have never revealed a thing told to me in those circumstances.

Of course I wanted to win the election. As I have pointed out before, the advantage the Big Man on The Hill had over us was that he could use the power of the elected officials and the town treasury to get done things he wanted. Put those together with the power of the and you had to see that he had the heavy artillery on his side. press, Bart Lincoln kept up a steady stream of pieces two or three times a week in the Courier, printing the lying affidavits they were digging up on all sides, and when they didn't have one of those, he'd go all the way back to the beginning and start again. I was worried about the image our town was getting around New England, but even more, I was concerned about the effect the articles were having on our summer people who would be After all, all they knew was what they read in starting to come up in numbers after Memorial day, Some of them swung a the Boston papers. pretty big stick and if he sold them a bill of goods, Manion and his toy

dolls I mean, ~~we~~ might lose the fight we had already won at the state and national level. All I could hope for was that Harry Manion would make a mistake and, thank God, he did. Before I get to that, let me tell you of a couple of minor things they pulled; one was smart and one was just petty, but they both had an effect on me, as I guess they were intended to.

In early April, I got a call from Frank Keith, the president of our county medical society, in Keene.

" Hello, F.C., he said, " ~~xxxxxxx~~ haven't you got enough doctors in Mason, with you and Larry Thatcher down there? Got more business than you can handle, have you ? "

I always liked Frank Keith, <sup>but</sup> never thought he was too much of a ~~xxxx~~ man, always got McMahon from Boston to call in when I wanted a <sup>Keith</sup> consultation. ~~He~~ knew it and he never lost a chance to jab me on something or other when he had a chance. Incidentally, Keith stayed at home and built up his practice during the war when doctors were scarce as hen's teeth. But I bit my tongue and waited for what he had to tell me.

" I thought you'd like to know," he said, " that I have just received an application to the County Medical Society from a Dr. Herve Marchand in Toronto, Canada. He's just finishing up in June and guess where he wants to locate? <sup>?</sup> Mason, New Hampshire. Didn't know that news of your little town had spread to Canada, too. Have you heard from him ? Do you know anything about him ? NO ? Did you ask him to come ? No? We'll be voting on Marchand in the meeting at the end of the month, so observing the usual professional courtesies, I'll send his papers down to Larry and he'll pass them along to you. His qualifications are excellent. Looks like you'll have a new young colleague. He'll bring you ~~you~~ up to date. Speaks French, too. Nice to talk to you, F.C. Expect you'll be at the next meeting. So long."

I never wanted so much to slap someone's face in my life. Lucky for him, and me too I guess, that he was at the other end of a telephone line. Normally the news would not have bothered me at all. I had seen a lot of MDs come and go in Mason. Some of them were drifters, you could spot 'em right away. Never stayed more than two years anywhere. Too quiet for 'em mostly. Not enough surgery to do. First thing you knew they were gone. But this was different for ~~xx~~<sup>two</sup> reasons and thank god, Keith didn't know either of them. First, Anna had just told me she was pregnant. Both of us were surprised, thought we were too old, and though Anna was delighted -- she was the kind of woman who wanted to have a baby in her arms her whole life -- I was worried. I'd gone overseas leaving her with five children, but a sixth one, the way things were in Mason, a new baby, was the last thing we needed. I asked her if she was sure and she answered that after 12 pregnancies, she thought she knew the signs. I had to agree. Second, I was as sure as if he'd told me <sup>himself</sup> that Manion was behind it. The new young Catholic dentist who came in <sup>January,</sup> ~~XXXX~~ should have been some kind of a warning, but I didn't pay him any mind. He wasn't a doctor, but this one could hurt me. Pete Hennessy and company could not put me out of business, that suit I slapped on him quieted him down, but a new young french speaking doctor could take a lot of the catholic trade and make it damned hard for me to support a young family, three of them not far from entering college. I tell you I was plenty worried.

The petty trick they pulled on me, was just to harrass me. Ever since I had returned to Mason, I had been shadowed when I went out on night calls. I never went directly to the barn to get out my car, I always turned on all the lights first and circled around from behind. ~~first~~. Young Charlie Hinwood had volunteered to go out with me on night calls and told me always to call him before I went and he'd be there in ten minutes. I did and it was <sup>a</sup> comfort to me to have him along. But I wanted some protection when he wasn't along and even when he was, and so

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I kept a Smith and Wesson .32 beside my bed and slipped into my overcoat pocket whenever I finished dressing. I got quite attached to it. Just to stay on the right side of the law I got a license from the Selectmen to carry it. I'll be damned if the last part of April if I didn't get a notice revoking my permit to carry a weapon. It was such a little thing, but I decided I wouldn't let them get away with ~~a thing~~<sup>it</sup> without the whole town knowing about it so I wrote <sup>this</sup> a short note to the chief of police, had it printed up and distributed around town.

Chief of Police  
Mason, New Hampshire

April 26, 1920

I am writing to inform you that some person or persons to me unknown stole from my car a rim, tire and tube. I do not claim the Selectmen stole this tire, but taking this affair with their revoking my license to carry a loaded pistol, I am afraid of collusion. Messrs Craag and Ewing tell me that Alfred Partridge told them he had three pistols in his bed, or within reach, every night. If this is permissible for him to lie in bed, with windows and doors locked, it ought to be reasonable for me to be allowed to carry one small loaded pistol driving around alone nights.

Truly yours,  
(s) F.C. O'Connor

That got quite a laugh around town and made Partridge look like thirty cents. Of course I went on taking my .32 with me when I went out at nights, even if it gave the Selectmen a chance to have me arrested. I didn't think they would.

The mistake that Harry Manion made was to underestimate the feeling of unity among the former members of the AEF. Not having been in the service, he could not know how closely knit we all felt. On Memorial Sunday, the Legion Post joined up and attended a service in the Universalist Church, where the Rev Dyer preached a fine sermon, pointing out the responsibilities we had as servicemen to raise the moral level of the town and to work for justice. He even made direct reference, indirectly, to the agony that Perkins Meade had been going through, and I was glad that Perkins had chosen not to attend church that Sunday, it would have been hard on him to be reminded in public of what he was going through.

Anyway, the whole business had been worked out in accordance with directive from the Legion's national headquarters, and we had, after all, attended services at Holy Name, the year before.

Those ~~xxx~~ I talked to who did attend Holy Name, and we did have some defectors, said Manion sort of went crazy and talked about how veterans had never been trusted when they came back from wars and instead of observing the day by preaching a memorial sermon, criticized the local post and practically read the catholic boys out of the church.

This was too good to miss. The first thing I did was to resign from the Legion Post. I figured that freed me to speak as an individual, and although I would still have an influential relationship with ~~the~~ members, they would not be blamed for anything I did or said. And it worked out that way.

The second thing I did was to send an open letter to Major Frank Knox, publisher of the Manchester Union, asking him to publish it. This was a chance to get back a little of the ground we'd been losing steadily to the bad publicity in the Courier. This ~~xxx~~ is the letter.

Ex-Service men of New Hampshire: June 3, 1920  
On Sunday, May 30, 1920,  
Memorial services were held in churches all over the United States, without regard to creed or denomination, for the boys who fought and died.  
Rev. Harry A. Manion, Mason, N.H. instead of preaching a memorial sermon is said to have devoted this time to criticizing members of American Legion Post # 11, saying they would not amount to anything, etc., etc.  
I would respectfully ask that a committee be appointed from each local post to investigate this matter, also that the State and National officers be notified.  
I do not want to misjudge anyone, or do an injustice, <sup>ne</sup> neither do we wish to encourage this spirit which ~~xxxx~~ culminated in the deaths of those loyal ex-service men when unarmed they paraded the streets of that western city in uniform.

(s) " One of the boys who came back"

The letter was printed in the Sunday edition and when I found which paper it was in, I went to Harrisfield and got the drugstore there to get me a hundred copies which Bill Hillyer distributed to all members of the Post. Nothing ever came of the letter, but I was

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told later that the Union got quite a few angry responses, and I felt pretty good about that.

I said that nothing came of the letter to the Union. I am not quite sure whether that is true or not. What I do know is that about a week after, the Courier began running a series by Bart Lincoln which exceeded anything Manion had dared to put out before. Each of them was not that much different from the ~~other~~ <sup>one before</sup>, it just twisted the facts a little more here and there and maybe added one new point. Though the articles did not name Perkins Meade, by always mentioning uncontested facts, such as the black eye PM got the night of the murder when he was kicked by his horse, they were clearly referring to him. The articles were libelous in the extreme, far worse than anything Monk Boyden had said to anyone in town. They proved to me that the quiet spring was over and that Manion's sermon was really the beginning of their summer offensive. If Manion was losing control of himself, he was doing so in a calculated way. When you read parts of two articles ~~xxx~~ ~~xx~~ in series the ~~xxxxxxx~~, you'll see what I mean.

"While Attorney Henry L. Oldham and County Solicitor Rob M. Packard have crouched inactive behind the claim that there is not enough evidence to arrest or indict anybody for the murder of Dr. William Thorndike and confessed that the state of New Hampshire was completely baffled by the mystery, a volume of evidence has been piling up against two suspects who appear to be sufficiently influential ~~xxx~~ socially and politically not to fear prosecution -- otherwise they would have had to face the music more than year ago. Political wires have been pulled all the way to Washington.

"But in spite of the political intriguing the truth will come out in due time, say the selectmen.

"Packard and Oldham have shut their eyes to the fact that a local suspect ~~xxx~~ claimed he did not leave home after supper the night of the murder was seen downstreet by six people, one of whom saw him at the wheel of an automobile going the direction of the Thorndike farm as late as 10:45 and there were two other persons in the rear seat. They have disregarded the fact that two of these witnesses gave the information thinking they could aid the suspect, not knowing that he told a different story.

"They have ignored the fact that the suspect appeared the next morning with a badly bruised cheek and badly blackened eye received on the night of the murder from a kick by his horse; that he told 8 or 10 different stories as to how he received the injury; that there were fresh scratches with the bruises that a hoof could not make; that the injury is consistent with a blow from a hand cultivator; that a witness saw scratches and bruises



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on the suspect's neck in addition to the eye injury the day after the murder, injuries that could not have been made so low by any other variety of causes which he described to neighbors; that the horse which he claimed kicked him was not in the stable at the time of the alleged mishap.

" That he made conflicting statements to the Dept of Justice officials who were so suspicious of him that they summoned him to Boston and grillaed him for hours; that he thought a railroad man was shadowing him on his return from Boston, according to a brakeman; that he went to a village ~~undertaker~~ undertaker as early as 8:30 a.m. the morning after the murder and notified the undertaker that Thorndike was dead and asked him if he was going up there; that this was 4 hours before the body was found in the cistern -- before anybody but those who had prior knowledge could have known Thorndike was dead.

" That he first denied and quickly admitted that he had a cigarette case similar to that bailed out of the bottom of the cistern where the body was found; that he and his wife were seen to come to a dump at 2 o'clock one morning a few days after the murder, by automobile, and throw bundles in the dump; that lights were seen in the suspect's house until 3 a.m. on the night of the tragedy.

" That the first to spread the false rumor that Mrs. Thorndike committed the murder was this man and members of his household; that he was pro-german during the war and never displayed an American flag; that he tried to persuade certain persons not to buy Liberty bonds; that he spoke German fluently; that he introduced to Thorndike the other suspect and complained to him of the Intelligence Depts of the Army and Navy and the Dept of Justice, before the murder; that he kept in ~~xxxxx~~ communication with the other suspect after the murder by telephone and visits; that he tried to induce the Selectmen to sign a paper after the the Grand Jury inquiry, absolving him from blame or suspicion; that he had a financial dealings with the other suspect, who is said to have been a trusted operative in the German spy system and a near-relative of Bernstoff. There is a fabric of other evidence in which the forgoing are the principal threads, but all this means nothing to prosecuting officials who worked overtime to fasten guilt on Thorndike's widow. Apparently nothing short of a confession would stir the present officials to action, the people say. "

The problem with such a blanket accusation, which seems to be so firmly woven from fact, is to know how to attack it. I knew that I could take apart the whole cloth from which it was made, fiber by fiber, but granted I could do so, and I could, where could I get a hearing for my work, where could I publish it that would get me anywhere near as large an audience as a large Boston daily gets? Denials are nowhere near as " newsworthy" as accusations, as any demagogue knows. The whole thing was a mare's nest of wholly innocent facts misinterpreted; statements, sworn to by ignorant people being mis-led, of fact which never took place;

~~and / fact that~~

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and total fabrications spun out in the Selectmen's meeting room to join the two together. The whole construction was so fantastic that even someone who knew the persons and the acts involved would be momentarily convinced. It was that well done. Manion and his scribe Lincoln had built better than they knew from the suggestions by the small-minded Selectmen. The problem was that by failing to act at the first open attack, Perkins Meade had made his silence an admission of guilt. By ~~passive~~ ~~xxxxxxxx~~ remaining passive ( I saw it as a case of shell shock, really) he became an ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ figure of unbelievable Christian forbearance. In ~~12~~ almost <sup>two</sup> ~~xxx~~ years enough smoke had accumulated to make people who didn't know him begin looking for the fire.

I have to give a lot of credit( if that's what you want to call it) for the success of Manion's campaign to the twisted genius of Bart Lincoln. As a star reporter for the Courier he had learned his trade well and this is nowhere better revealed than in the absolute confidence with which his interviewees speak. Listen to the explanation of why Meade was not arrested, although the Selectmen promised time and again to do so. I had known Monk Boyden, the speaker, <sup>for</sup> ~~^~~ over 25 years and I knew he couldn't tell you with any assurance whether or not it was snowing.

" And what is more, we know where guilt lies. There isn't any mystery in this murder as certain persons have tried to make out. There was at the start, but it has been cleared away by months of diligent work. If our county and state officials are willing to set aside personal feelings and petty prejudices and tackle the Thorndike case in a big way, it can be cleared up in short order.

"We are in a position to guarantee that. We are not guessing about it. The Federal authorities share our view, because they have followed the same ~~x~~ trails we have and they came across the same evidence.

"If the Thorndike case is permitted to drag as it has for twenty odd months, it will be a blot on our State, a public scandal. Why can't our public prosecutors see it in the proper light.

~~"There was evidence which pointed to suspects with political~~

" Why Was evidence which pointed to suspects with political pull scoffed at and insignificant details magnified as against the widow of the murdered man?

"There appears to be only one answer -- the S-O-S went out from a certain quarter to protect a certain suspect and another who was an active German agent working against our country and our troops while we were at war, has been automatically shielded by the cloak thrown around the fellow with a pull."

The question that remained uppermost in my mind was, where was this stepped-up attack going? How long could I allow it to go on without taking any action to stop it. And, furthermore, what action could I take ? I had declared myself afree agent. I had no group or groups behind me. Members of the former Purity Squad -- I could always get a sad grin from any of them by bringing up the matter of the white ribbons -- had pretty well retired from the field. Elmer Webb had told Perkins right out, if he wasn't going to defend himself, he was damned if he was going to get shot at any more and he retired to his whiskey and his pulp westerns. It sure looked to me as if we were on the run.

Looking back, I feel pretty stupid that the answer to my question had not come to me at the time I was sure that Manion was pulling all the strings in the assault on Meade. But they say that the drowning man sees a lot of things clearly and I sure was in deep water. Anyway, from the time in early June ~~when~~ I tried to see Bishop Pelletier, it became clearer and clearer to me that he was ~~the~~ the only ~~one~~ source of our salvation. From that time on, I made sure that he got a copy of every Courier article on the case. I sent him <sup>a</sup> copy ~~of~~ <sup>their</sup> grand Jury petition; my letter to the Harrisfiled Transcript; the Coll affidavit ~~p~~; copies of the 3 Bubble Busters; copy of the Mason X-Ray News; copies of the two American Legion petitions; my letter to Governor Barnett; and finally, I sent him an open letter addressed to Harry Manion himself. It was a good letter, if I say so myself, and was calculated to get a lot of things out in the open, but I didn't dream that it would ~~have~~ have the torpedo effect that it did.

down  
Before I put ~~in~~ the letter that Bishop Pelletier, and ~~the~~  
~~incidentally~~ the whole town of Mason, <sup>got a copy of</sup> ~~got a copy of~~, perhaps I ought to  
explain what set me off.

Senior Prom  
The night of the high school ~~graduation~~, a group of the  
graduates who, it turned out, were all sons and daughters of Purity  
Squad members, borrowed a couple of the family cars and went off riding  
around the countryside. Two of the boys were drinking, it is true, and  
one of them ended up driving a car into a farmers barn over in West  
Milford and passing out. But there was no real harm done, no sex or  
anything, and all of them got home safe and sound ~~except~~ before morning  
except the sozzled driver who was found by the farmer lying in his own  
vomit when the farmer went out to feed his stock. While these children  
did not do right, the high school principal <sup>Johnson</sup> ~~Manion~~, assured <sup>us</sup> that none of  
them had been harmed, and he did so ~~publicly~~ in a public meeting. There <sup>had been</sup> ~~was~~  
a move to deny the culprits their diplomas.

Why Manion did it I'll never know. Maybe he lost his head  
as he did in his Memorial Sunday sermon. Anyway he <sup>was at the meeting in</sup> ~~got the story from~~  
Union Hall and got more details from the Boston Cop <sup>elected</sup> ~~the newly elected Boston Platfoot~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ the Selectmen got ~~xxxxxx~~ as  
<sup>INTER</sup>  
chief, and I think he saw a chance to hurt the better element in the  
town. So the next night, he and Lincoln sat down and wrote up the whole  
incident. Published the girls' names and all, and of course it got spread  
all over New England. None of my children was involved but the insinuations  
in the rotten piece made me see red. I had a lot of things I'd been  
wanting to say to Manion in public and this was as good a time as any.  
I didn't pull any punches.

Rev Harry A. Manion  
Mason, New Hampshire

Sir: I am told by a friend that when you read my first letter  
in the Transcript, you sneered and said, "How did this fellow  
get this way?" I think this is a direct query and I am going  
to try and answer it.

I got this way, watching the persecutions you and your tools  
have put across on the people of this town for over a year to  
my certain knowledge. I got this way, watching you meet the  
Selectmen, three or four times a week, with a Boston reporter  
and the next day hearing of some dirty slur or statement you  
had published,

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not for the sake of justice, but to maliciously show your personal feeling and hatred. I got this way, watching you chum with a fellow mentally deficient, and know of your causing to be published in a Boston daily paper, his mutterings and hallucinations, as facts.

One of the leading men of your church, a man who has lived here all his life, told me himself, " This big man on the hill does not believe anyone in this town guilty any more than I do, but is just venting his personal feeling, using as his tools, ignorant superstitious people he can control."

I think this is the truth, but how in the name of a righteous and just God have you been able to get away with it for two years?

Didn't you do a manly noble thing when, Friday night, June 11th, 1920, you sat there in the Selectmen's room from 8.40 until 10.50 p.m. with this reporter and put out this rotten story about these innocent ~~xxxxxx~~ children who went on a joy-ride. You come out now and say the reporter did not write what you told him to write, but this is no alibi, for you were the only one present who could give even a garbled report with Principal ~~Johnson~~.

This certainly proves two things: 1st, you were present when it was written; 2nd, also you have been supervising the rotten stuff New England has been fed since Oct. 22nd, 1919( ).

On Sunday, May 30, 1920, when churches all over the United States were having Memorial Services, without regard to creed or denomination, for the " boys who fought and died," you spent this time making unkind remarks about ex-service men in general, and our local ex-service men in particular.

I can only reply for one ex-service man, that is myself; I did what I could and did it cheerfully and am not ashamed.

Where were you and what were you doing? I can find but one night's work reported, and this is the night when you publicly insulted our Dist. Atty. over her ~~ex~~ in Union Hall, when he came down here alone, by invitation, to meet the town's people and answer questions. I am told by one of your people that the Dist. Atty. met your cowardly insults and slurs like a dignified gentleman and looked far bigger than you for all of your 264 lbs.

During the past year you have been going around town, abusing and criticising the Dist. Atty. and the Atty. Gen. and questioning the honor of our Judges. What more does a Bolsheviki do? All they find fault with is our laws and how they are enforced. Now I have tried to answer your query, " how I got this way." Answer one for me, who appointed you collector of affidavits?

Have you any right to call up a Dr's wife and ask her to come up to your house and give an affidavit for you to publish in a Boston paper?

Did you hear where the Dr. suggested you go? Be patient as it is going to be warmer here soon. I wish to send a message to the fellow who sent me the threatening letter, as he forgot to sign his name. Tell him I am always available night or day, and always come when called.

(s) F.C. O'Connor

With the copy of the ~~x~~ open letter I sent to the Bishop  
I enclosed this note:

June 23, 1920

Most Respected Sir:

Several weeks ago, I drove over to have a conference with you, but they said you were out of town, and I better write, which I did explaining the unenviable notoreity which our town and state were getting through the activities of Rev H.A. Manion, in the notorious Thorndike case.

Not hearing from you, I have been doing what I could to bring the matter before the public with very satisfactory success. I have tried to bring you up to date on action, prior to my letter and since, and I am sending you (1) a public letter which I put out after failing in my appeal to you and (2) a clipping from the Courier, the 16th, which brought me to write the letter.

Assuring you of my deep respect and reverence

Most respectfully yours,

On the drive over to Manchester I was nervous, and I rehearsed all the things I was going to say. I decided that the one thing I was not going to do was threaten anyone, not the Bishop and not Fr. Manion. I would simply go over the things I could hang on Manion and must hang on him if he remained in Mason. I would lean heavily on testimony from Manion's own parishioners, naming names as I did so. I would confine myself to things I could use others to verify. A number of people had left Holy Name and I would stress the damage Manion was doing to his own church. All this I would do in a respectful manner, pointing out that I hated to do ~~xxx to do~~ what I had to do but there seemed no other way.

*On the phone,* the Bishop's secretary had been very short, asking only if I could make a 10 o'clock appointment, saying that the Bishop could give me an hour. The whole conversation was concluded so fast that I did not even find out whether Manion would be there. The secretary, a ~~x~~ fine looking young man built like a good half-back, led me into a paneled front room with heavily curtained windows and I found myself standing across a large desk from a slightly-built white haired man who looked so much like the French Canadians I had treated for years that I was surprised at the

excellent English he spoke in a soft low voice. He did not smile and there was nothing in his manner which indicated a welcome of any sort. Clearly, we were on his ground and he would conduct the discussion.

After telling me to have a seat, he looked intently at me across the desk for what seemed to be minutes, studying me and playing with a cross which hung from around his neck. I waited .

" You say we~~x~~ have<sup>Met</sup> once before, Doctor."

" Yes, at the bedside of Fr. Bernardin, a saintly man. I was his doctor. He was an~~old~~ man but his death was a great loss to our town, and, I think, his church. I see a lot of death, but his upset me greatly."

" That was how long ago?"

" Eight years ago, 1912."

" Yes. Joseph Bernardin was the salt of the earth that Our Lord talks about. We were in Seminary together and had a lifelong friendship. He came from the same farm background as his working class parishioners and understood them very well. He was a great support to the newly arrived in this country."

" I have rarely seen a man of the cloth who was so humble and did so much good. He was loved by Catholics and Protestants alike in our town."

" I take it that you don't feel the same about Harry Manion. "

" I do not. Manion is a different type entirely."

" You are not of our faith, Doctor. With your surname that is something of a surprise. The Irish are some of the strongest members of the church."

" I understand that my father's family were when they came over during the potato famine of '48, my father was only a small child then. He married a Vermont Yankee and the joke in the family is that she taught him to read and write and made a protestant of him. No, I am not a Catholic."

" And do you not perhaps hold a prejudice against our people, seeing them~~as~~ ignorant foreigners full of supersition, as some many native Yankees do ?"

" Father, excuse me, Bishop, Pelletier, I am a doctor. I am not what you would call a religious man. I have brought up my children in the church -- ~~their~~ mother is a Christian in every sense of the word -- I raise money for the church but I am not a good churchman. I am a doctor and when I see people they are mostly in trouble. I do not try to judge them, I try to help them. A doctor and a priest have a lot in common in that regard. As for prejudice, I would be happy and willing to have you talk to any Catholic in Mason and see what they

would tell you. I have brought a good number of their children into the world, a good many times without pay. I wish they would not have so many children, they find it difficult to provide adequately for them all, but no, I am not prejudiced."

" Father Manion feels that you are prejudiced and that you act together with the factory owners and managers to keep the poor French Canadian working man in his place, that you want to keep him down."

" Father Manion, hah ! If there is any bad feeling toward me among the Catholics, it is because he planted it. Incidentally, why isn't he here today? I asked that he be here for a confrontation, when I asked for an appointment. I don't talk behind a man's back. Anything I have to say, I say to his face."

" I noticed that in the open letter you sent him. I have talked with Father Manion and I thought it better that I see each of you separately. That way the element of personal antagonism is at a minimum."

" All right, if that's the way you want it."

" The last few weeks you have bombarded me with material on the Thorndike case, on what has been going on in Mason the last two years, what the Selectmen have done and what you have done in reply. I have read it all carefully and I think I understand your stand, but I must be sure. Just what is it that you accuse Harry Manion of ?

" I accuse Harry Manion of trying to railroad one of the most decent, most honorable men God ever put breath in, for the murder of William Thorndike."

" How and why ?"

" The how is easy. If you have read the material I sent you, it's all there and I can add much besides. Ever since the murder, every private detective, every Federal investigator, and the Courier reporter, who has been writing up our town in every rotten way he could think of, have stayed at the rectory of Holy Name. We can prove by sworn testimony that he sent the private <sup>100</sup> detective Keller to Boston to get a Boston newspaper to send a reporter to Mason. He has controlled the Selectmen like puppets on a string."

" How was he able to do that? Only one of them is a Catholic."

" I wish I knew. You know Harry Manion well, he was your secretary for three years. You know he is a strong persuasive personality, in my mind I compare him to that Russian priest, that Rasputin, who had so much influence over the Queen of Russia. My thought is that when he offered to help, they leaped at it. They are weak uncertain men, all of them. This was the biggest thing that ever happened in Mason and they weren't equipped to handle it. They could handle the roads and the water system, they didn't really run the schools, and if they kept the tax rate down, nobody really bothered them."



\* Manion

The amount of money a town our size spends in small potatoes. Nobody of any account takes the job of selectman. If he has any work to do, he does it. Once the Phorndike thing got started, the Selectmen never met once that ~~he~~ wasn't present, and we can prove it. He was always in the background at public meetings, like the time District Attorney came down to talk to the townspeople and we caught him red-handed on that slander of our young people published just this month. The Selectmen haven't made a move since August 1918 that he didn't control. From the speeches at Town Meeting to the American Legion petition, he's had a hand in it. You can scout at the idea if you like, but I know it's as true as I'm sitting here. He has made it his business to talk to people who might have seen anything the night of the murder -- in one instance he drove all the way to Connecticut to do it -- or who might know someone who did. He has collected affidavits from ignorant bigoted people he could control and had ~~the~~ them published in the Courier. He has gone out of his way to influence law officers, such as deputy sheriffs, whom he could not directly control. From his own pulpit, he urged his parishioners to sign the petition ( you got a copy) for a second Grand Jury hearing. And those are just the outstanding things I can think of at the moment. Your secretary told me I had an hour and I've used up most of that."

" Don't worry about the time. I've cancelled all my other morning appointments. Granted you can prove all that you've said, and some of it I think you would ~~have~~ have difficulty proving, why would he take such action ?"

of the ~~the~~ small hours of the night

" I've spent more ~~time~~ puzzling about that than anything else. Every time I couldn't sleep, every time I've come in from a late night call too worked up to go to bed, I've sat down and thought about it. Manion and I used to be good friends, an evening of pitch, a fast game of doubles in tennis. I knew him as a fierce competitor, he always liked to win like I did, but I never knew him to take unfair advantage. As an old college athlete he wouldn't be unsportsmanlike. There are three reasons, as best I can figure it, least important first. One, there was a minor fuss about church bank deposits, that was before the murder, and I think he felt the honor of his family and his position had been insulted. Minor but important Two, I think when the Selectmen accepted his help early-on, he saw this as an opportunity to raise the social position of his church and the people in it, prove that they weren't just a bunch of dumbbells who couldn't speak good English, always getting drunk, not paying their bills. I think he felt ~~that~~ if a priest helped solved the murder, this would change things in the town. More important and growing as time went on and he had more and more power. Three, I think he was protecting some one close to him. "

" Who, a member of his parish? A priest is a privileged person with professional status, but he is not above the law. He must respect the sanctity of confession but he cannot condone murder."

" A member of his own family. I realize the position I'm putting you in when I say that, and that's all I'm going to say. The case I've built for this accusation is very circumstantial and you are one of the few I've confided it to. On my way over here I decided I would not burden you with my reasoning. If I do, I put on you the responsibility of checking out the theory and that's not why I am here."

What I'm asking you to do is to look at the actions of Father Manion as laid out in what I've told you and what material I've sent you. The how, if you like. I ask you to evaluate what Harry Manion has done in the persecution of that good man Perkins Meade over the past nearly two years and to do something about him. As a priest in your diocese, Harry Manion is your problem. The identity of William Thorndike's murderer is not the issue here. I pray and trust that he or they will be found and brought to justice, God willing. That the little town of Mason is today split, torn asunder if you like, is the work of one man, and I'm here today get a stop put to that."

" What do you want me to do?"

\* after " What I asked in my first letter to you: Move Father Harry Manion. Get him out of Mason. Find some place where he can put his talents to ~~an~~ good use. Far enough away so he will have no further influence the people of our town. Once he is gone, I am convinced that things will quiet down. The town will never be the same, too much has been said that can't be taken back and the suspicions of some are too deep to be erased. Maybe when some peace is restored to the town, the murder will be solved, though I have my doubts, almost two years ~~xxxx~~. But at least the town can get back to living a more normal life. Things cannot go on as they are now without some great evil happening because in this climate men lose their sense, their control. "

" You realize that Manion built Holy Name and by custom may remain there until his death."

" I realize that and I would not ask it if I did not think it was one man's privilege against the life of a town. "

" I will have to think on this. I will make no decision today. And when I do make a decision you will never ~~be~~ told. We will have no further communication, you and I. I will keep in strictest confidence what you have said and I will deny that you ever said it to me. Send me no ~~more~~ letters or documentation of any kind. If you do it will be returned to you unopened. Do you understand what I am saying ? I respect your courage and your openness but it grants you no privilege. I urge you to pray to Almighty God for guidance for yourself and for me. This is no small burden you ~~xxxxxx~~ leave here with me."

Before I knew quite <sup>what</sup> ~~a~~ was happening, the Bisop was standing up and extending me his hand with that big ~~x~~ ring on it and the fine looking young secretary was standing beside me. Just before he closed the big oak <sup>outer</sup> door behind me, I said to the young man, " Hottest June we've had in some time." Without the trace of a blessing in his voice, " Have a <sup>safe</sup> ~~xxxx~~ trip home," he said.

Ellen Kelly's pot roast, if not a culinary triumph, was at least filling and the freshness of the vegetables from the rectory garden enabled them to withstand the over-cooking she customarily subjected them to. Manion had kept after her year after year and had finally gotten her to test them with a fork rather than boil them to a soggy mush. If they both lived long enough, she might become a decent cook; she had concentrated <sup>for</sup> so long on being a decent woman and making sure that everyone else was decent.

As Manion and Lincoln sat in the rectory study, letting the hot sweet coffee flow down over the blueberry pie and vanilla ice cream which had finished off the dinner, each of them belching companionably in turn, Lincoln reviewed what he was writing up in his current articles.

" After you decided that we had done enough on Meade and the local angle, it's been a little hard to come up with anything new. The June series <sup>was</sup> ~~xxxx~~ effective -- we got lots of mail on them and I understand the Selectmen did also -- even if it had the lawyers at the Courier crapping in their drawers. Stanhope told me over the phone that Meade had a strong case for libel, if he wanted to sue. I wanted to show you a couple of things that'll ~~be~~ be out next week. One is an interview with Paychek Charles ~~xxxx~~ <sup>r</sup>. He was the farmhand that ~~Coblenz~~ <sup>Mainz</sup> brought with him up from New York state. He worked on the Thorndike farm from late fall to early February when he froze his feet and had to leave. Now this was an interview in September 1918, shortly after the murder, taken by detectives ~~interviewed~~ <sup>visited</sup> who ~~visited~~ him on a farm just outside New York City. This ties in with the affidavit from the hand who succeeded him and who went to Greenville with the ~~Coblenzes~~ <sup>Mainz</sup> when they moved in June 1918. The object here is to raise some sympathy for Mrs Thorndike and to say something about the relationship between the Coblenzes and the Thorndikes. After that, I have an interview with Lizzy Ryan. She, you ~~are~~ remember, is the nurse who took care of Mrs Thorndike for the six days between the murder and

the time she was drugged and taken off to the loony bin down in Worcester for observation. It's a sad picture, the old lady being dragged off, coked to the eyes. Put that with the questions Lizzy raises about the mishandling of some of the physical evidence in the case, the cigarette case for example, and we had our public attorneys, Oldham and Packard, looking sillier and sillier on their theory that the old lady did it. And that will be followed by a copy of the letter Oldham wrote Packard, telling of his trip to Boston to review the case built up by the Federal authorities. Don't ask me where I got the Oldham letter, an ace reporter never reveals his sources." Lincoln sat back and waited to be praised for his astuteness.

Manion sat heavily in his desk chair and ran his tongue over his teeth, edging out the bits of blueberry that had stuck between them. He wished he hadn't eaten so much; he really ought to cut back on his food, get himself into some sort of shape again, but... He was weary. He had been weary for some time now. It had begun on that long drive back from Manchester, the trip had never seemed so long before. Every now and then, he caught himself staring out the window, seeing not the row of pines by the side of the church but <sup>the</sup> set face of the Bishop as he lectured him on what he thought he was doing to the cause of the church in New Hampshire. The first interview had been bad enough, the second was a sweat. It was <sup>as</sup> if the old man knew every move he's made in the past two years and it was plain that he knew the connection with the Courier. You are the spiritual leader of those people, he'd said, not some basket-giving Councilman in South Boston. You are the leader of your flock not some ward politician working on the class feelings of your voting lists to make sure of the next election. After three years as the old man's secretary, he knew the warning signals, the agitation of the hands and the ~~whiskering~~ white line along the jaw. He's seen enough grown men leave the big brick house trembling like a whipped schoolboy to know better what the wrath of God was like, and the old man was full of it.

He promised to cut back on his involvement in Mason politics and to put aside the plans he'd laid out for the summer. The old man hadn't threatened him, he'd told him, and Manion had pulled in his horns. He'd come back and told Lincoln that they <sup>had</sup> done enough on the local suspect for the moment and that strategy dictated a push on the international aspect of the case, on building up the involvement of German spies in the case, the signalling that the whole town had observed, the suspicious activity of ~~Soblenz~~ <sup>MAINZ</sup> and his wife. And that was what they'd done this past two months. The driving of the German-named couple over back roads on horseback or in the battleship-gray Marmon. The having of mail boxes in various towns around Mason and the sending of mail from various postoffices. The sending of coded telegrams rigged up to sound like stock orders to a broker. The interest of French and German intelligence services in the mystery of the Thorndike case and the reported investment of 30 million dollars by the defeated Germans to stir up social unrest in post-war America. This was strong stuff and worked together very well. If only he didn't have to push so hard to keep them going. Lincoln was as bad as the three Yankee boobies. Each of them had to be praised and petted like a fawning dog or else they sulked. He threw Lincoln a bone.

" Bart, I think that's as effective as anything you've done to date," he said. " Sooner or later we're going to get a break and the whole thing'll open up like a split melon. Keeping pressure on ~~Soblenz~~ <sup>MAINZ</sup> is the way to go right now. I've had a thought. What about the men who helped ~~Soblenz~~ <sup>MAINZ</sup> move from Mason to Greenville? Why don't you talk with them, you can find out easily enough who they were. There must have been something suspicious in what he had moved, the way he had it done and the setting up of the new house. Look into that, will you ? "

Lincoln sat making notes furiously on his pad and looked up with a grin. The good father had done it again. This was good for two maybe three pieces.

④

Manion glanced at his wrist watch ( he had adopted the craze of the returned veterans for the British form of timepiece) and saw that it was time to join the Selectmen downtown.

" Time to go, Bart," he said. " Musn't keep the Good Men waiting. They get restless and start thinking for themselves and that's dangerous. Who knows what damned foolishness I'll have to repair this week."

" Nice night to walk off that big dinner."

" No, let's take the car down. I've gotten so I don't like to walk past the Little Captain's house, for fear I won't be able to resist the temptation to go in and ring his neck."

" Whatever you say."

When Manion and Lincoln got ~~to~~ to the Selectmen's Room over the Clay Library, they found Boyden and Partidge quarreling as usual, this time over whether Town Aid should be given an <sup>unemployed</sup> ~~unemployed~~ laborer, and Hennessey as usual looking on, pulling on a short curved-stem pipe. They waited until the <sup>dispute</sup> ~~dispute~~ was over, with Boyden winning his point as he always did. Manion braced himself for trouble, because when Boyden got in a pet over one thing, he rarely let up but turned his attention immediately to anything else which had set his eyebrows to twitching. He was, he thought, weary of being ~~trainer~~ to this animal act.

Boyden started in. " Good to see you gentlemen. I hope you have something new to offer. We haven't had much ~~action~~ action since Our Grand Plan for the summer got dropped. Lincoln laid it all out in the paper, plain as the nose on your face, and then we didn't follow up. Made us look pretty foolish, I tell you. We got quite a few letters from folks backing us up, expecting us to take some action, and then we don't do anything. Makes us look bad. How do you explain that, Father? If you don't have any ideas, maybe <sup>ALF</sup> ~~and~~ and I have got to take some action."

Manion gritted ~~his~~ his teeth and struggled to control the

the rising gorge in his throat. He could taste once again the sour-sweet blueberry filling and swallowed hard. How long, oh Lord, how long.

" I have no explanation beyond what I've already told you. As I said before, on thinking it over, I came to the conclusion that we had done as much on the local front as was useful at this time. The people we are trying to influence at this time are internationally minded and so we are shifting our fire to the spy connection and the involvement of the German spy network. Bart has worked out a series of articles on that, which he will lay out for you, and we'll also be working on sympathy for Mrs. Thorndike in defense of the accusation against her. Incidentally, I'm told she is failing badly and isn't expect~~ed~~<sup>ed</sup> to live more than month or six weeks."

" Couldn't be that O'Connor's letter has softened your backbone a mite, could it? I hear a lot of folks got a big chuckle out of that and have been waiting for an answer ever since. You didn't come out that looking very big, did you? Problem is, whatever hits you hits us too, and I for one don't like being shot at. Lowers the respect people have for town officials and first thing you know they won't be paying any mind to what we say. I've had to take a lot of guff over that letter; take it and like it, which I don't."

For the first time since he had allied himself with the Selectmen in their campaign to root out the Thorndike murderer, Manion felt his control of them slipping and he knew he must stop the slide before the thought of independence picked up momentum and the three, particularly Boyden, did something so damaging he couldn't repair it.

" On the contrary, O'Connor's open letter was a stupid move. It exposed him and those with him for what they are, religious bigots. It doesn't sit well with good Catholics to have their priest openly attacked. When he is attacked, they are attacked and they have had a lot of experience with being second class citizens.

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" No, there's nothing wrong with my backbone. I've always had a strong one and I still do. I can defend myself. I'll tell you what has happened which makes the shift in strategy a good move, which Bart will tell you we have been working out for some weeks now, and that's the slander suit against you, Boyden, filed by Perkins Meade. Now that is a major move. I warned you about shooting off your mouth in public, but I can't be with you twenty-four hours a day and those birds are coming home to roost. "

Boyden sank back in his chair, all the fight gone out of him. It had always been a weakness of his to talk out of turn, gotten him in trouble since he was a boy, but when provoked, he would acknowledge if pushed hard enough, in spite of the priest's warnings and his wife's nagging, he said things he shouldn't, especially when his sense of authority was challenged. The thought of the suit petrified him. The idea of defending Conversations in court under oath what he had said in a streetcorner/made his buttocks pull together in a knot.

" I didn't say anything everybody in town isn't saying. I just said that if Perkins Meade told what he knew about the Thorndike case, a lot of things would be cleared up. I didn't say he did the murder or anything like it."

" I know what you said and I wish you hadn't said it, but you did." Manion moved quickly to regain control and he spoke ~~firmly~~ with raised volume and intensity. " What we've got to do is to turn what seems like a disaster into a triumph. It may be hard for the three of you to see it, but this is the opportunity we've been waiting for. We have't been able to get Meade into court because of the obstruction of the prosecuting attorneys in this state and county. Now Meade has taken us into court, we'll make him wish he hadn't. We won't be on trial, he will. We'll be able to get into the open and on public record all the things we've only dared to hint at. As we show that you were only saying what everybody knew, we'll be able to have sworn testimony on the signalling, Meade's black-eye, his



main 2 (7)

movements on the night of the murder, his relationship with ~~Gellert~~, the whole spy business. This won't be any Packard-directed Grand Jury whitewash; this will be the case that we have put together. "

He noticed now that the three Selectmen were fixed on what he was saying, as they had not been for weeks, nodding and grinning as he made each point. That was better. That was the way it should be, him showing the way and they following.

" The trial will be called for the October session of the Superior Court. Before we go to court in Keene, there will be a month or so of taking depositions here in town, so I'm told, by counsel for both sides. This means we have two opportunities, when they take the depositions and when the case is tried. You've got a copy of the complaint, haven't you, Monk? Good. Bring it in next week Monday and we'll start to go over it. We've got you a good lawyer: Rob Murphy will be down here from Concord and we'll start analyzing the charges and how we can answer them and at the same time get on the record the evidence we want. In the meantime, Monk, you be writing up what you can remember of the circumstances of what you are supposed to have said and how you came to say it. On that framework we'll lay the relevant statements by our witnesses. They probably modify their complaint after the depositions and we'll modify our presentation accordingly. "

Little more of consequence came up that evening and Manion felt more positive than he had in some time as he and Lincoln drove back up to the rectory. He hadn't really known how he felt about the Meade suit against Boyden, he reflected, except to believe that Boyden had it coming, until he had the need to buck up his chosen allies. By all the saints, he thought, I am right even without knowing it. This IS the chance we've been waiting for. We can make this trial an exhibition of what we've got on Meade. Of course, the judge will tell the jury that the Thorndike case isn't being decided here and we'll declare that we're only showing what everybody knew to be true, but before we're through...

This is going to work out better than I could have hoped. Every man has a right to defend himself, even the Bishop will see that, and in our own defense... the Lord moves in mysterious ways, his will to make known, and Selectman Boyden may have just done us a big favor by putting us on the defensive.

Most evenings Ellen Kelly was not to be seen when they returned from meeting with the town officials. After she cleared the dining table and washed the dishes, she retired to her back bedroom ~~only~~ against her customary early rising for mass. That evening, however, Manion and Lincoln found her sitting ~~in the~~ in her rocker in the little parlor off the kitchen ~~with~~ mending a large pile of black socks. There had been a telephone call from the Courier office in Boston. Lincoln must call as soon <sup>The City Desk</sup> as he got in. Instead of going to the rectory study as he usually did, he made the call on the kitchen phone.

" Hello, Hello. This is Bart Lincoln. Give me the city desk. Yeah, Jimmy, this is Bart Lincoln. What did you want?"

Jimmy Costello, the Courier's city editor, did not give Lincoln his assignments, this was the prerogative of Harold Case, the Managing editor, who managed the several big ~~by~~ by-line reporters on the staff and decided what they would cover. At this time of night, though, Costello was in charge. He was a short balding man who had made his way up from the police and city hall beats and prided himself on his toughness. He had no time for sentiment or what he called the bleeding heart angle; he honored what he called straight reporting: see it straight and report it straight, no decoration.

" Lincoln, we just got word of a killing I thought you'd want to know about. Two young punks killed in a warehouse in Charlestown. Both of 'em dead before the police got there. Turns out the warehouse was full of booze brought in from Canada, the cops say. The cops say the warehouse belonged to the Rusty Paparella gang, not under that name of course, but they say the guy that leased it was a relative of Paparella's."

" What's that got to do with me, Jimmy? You know Case's got me on assignment up here in New Hampshire covering the Thorndike Murder case. I don't see..."

" That priest you're staying with up there, that Father Manion, he's got a house keeper named Kelly, doesn't he?"

" Yes."

" Thought so. Well, one of the two guys in the breakin was named Brian Kelly. Had sea~~man~~'s papers on him. The other one had AB papers, too. I talked to Frank Curley, the Lieutenant. He said that they were getting a lot of merchant seaman involved in stick-ups and breakins lately. With the cutback in the merchant marine, there's a lot of 'em ~~on~~ on the beach. Anyway, young Kelly's papers give his next of kin as Ellen Kelly, Holy Name Rectory, Mason, New Hampshire. Can't be two of them, can there now. Thought you'd want to know, first off."

" My god, yes. Thanks. Listen, Jimmy, I'll call you right back, o.k. ?" He put the receiver on the hook and turned to Manion and his housekeeper, who had been trying not to listen in on his conversation. The expression on his face shocked them with the knowledge that they were somehow involved.

" It's Brian," he said. " He's been killed in a breakin in a warehouse. Shot. Not by the police, it happened before the police could get there"

Ellen dropped the pile of socks <sup>from</sup> ~~the~~ her lap and the needle in her hand. She didn't move for a moment and then wrapping her arms under her bosom, she began to rock back and forth. " I knew it," she keened. " I knew it. I've had a bad feeling all day. I went and said a prayer to the Holy Mother tonight, special, to protect Brian, but it wasn't enough, it wasn't enough. I knew it."

Manion was staggered by the news and sank ~~back~~ back onto the wooden chair he sitting in at the table. Muttering a blessing, he crossed himself and looked up at Lincoln still standing by the phone on the wall.

" Brian, dead? " he asked. " Are they sure ? Are they sure it was him. It's a common enough name in Boston. There <sup>must</sup> be a dozen Brian Kellys down there. I knew four by that name when I was growing up. There ~~must~~ be some mistake."

Lincoln pulled himself together. " No mistake," he said. " He had Ellen's name and address in his wallet. Costello talked to the <sup>before they could operate.</sup> ~~Lieutenant~~ Lieutenant in charge. He was dead ~~when the ship was hit~~. What shall we do ?"

"Do ? What can we do? He's dead. It's all over. He's dead. Did he have the Last Rites? Did he have a chance to cleanse himself before he died? That was always my great fear for his dying at sea, that he would not have a chance to prepare for his death. The <sup>chaplains</sup> ~~chaplains~~ always said mass before and heard confessions before any big attack in France, you know." Manion buried his head in his arms on the oil cloth table cover and sobbed in great gulps, as Ellen rocked herself back and forth and moaned in echo to his lamentations.

Alone and not sharing in their grief, Lincoln concentrated his attention on the phone on the wall and kept his self-control. There must be something he could do. As he stood there trying to summon a response, he suddenly knew what it was. He got Jimmy Costello back on the line. " Jimmy, I've given the bad news to Kelly's mother and Father Manion. I'm with them now. And I want to protect them from this getting out right away. I don't want this to be in tomorrow's paper."

Costello was offended. " This is news. We have to print the news. You know that."

" Okay, I know that. But just say that the names of the murdered men are being withheld until next of kin is notified. You can do that. You can release the ~~the~~ names in a back page item in a couple of days, or not at all. It's done all the time. I don't want this getting out in Mason, at least not right now. As a personal favor to me, see to it, will you ? Right . " and he hung up, satisfied he had done as much as he could.

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He turned to Manion, who was now blowing his nose on a great white handkerchief, and said, " Did you hear that? Brian's name won't be in the paper. They'll have to report the break-in and the deaths, no way to keep that quiet, but Brian's name won't be given." Manion could not speak but nodded that he understood and waved his thanks for Lincoln's consideration.

Ellen, too, had recovered somewhat from her grief. She sat still in the rocker and addressed herself to Manion. " We'll bury him beside Johnny," she said. " He didn't do much for Brian and me when he was alive, ~~and~~ Johnny didn't, but he did buy a <sup>nice</sup> ~~double~~ lot when we got married and there's lots of room for Brian. Where I'll be one day soon, I expect. Yes, that's right and proper to bury him beside his father." It was important to have it all settled.

A week after they had returned from the funeral, Manion sat in his study counting the ~~coins~~ <sup>bills</sup> and silver from the collections of the day before and marking the deposit slip for the Harrisfield Bank. Ellen knocked on the door and told him there was a Father Flynn to see him. Manion pushed the money into the bank's canvas bag and told her to bring him in.

She ushered in a tall thin silver haired man with a military bearing evident even in his well-pressed clerical black.

" Father Manion, I'm Edward Flynn. I'm one of three chaplains with the Boston PD."

" Boston ? You're a long way from home. P.D.? Police Department? Is it something to do with Brian? That's all over. We buried him last week. What more can the police want with him?"

" Yes, I know. I couldn't get to the funeral, so I didn't get to see you there, but it is about Brian that I've come. I have a message for you from him. Not a message exactly but something I thought you'd want to hear. I feel as if I know you well. I don't think I missed a game you pitched your four year<sup>s</sup> at B.C. and I was sure you

would make it in the big leagues. Must have been quite a struggle for you to answer your vocation in the church. But that isn't why I've come, though I do want you know I'm pleased to see you and talk to you after all these years.

" The night Brian was killed, Frank Curley, Lieutenant Frank Curley, called me and asked me to come to the Emergency Room of City Hospital. They had a young man in there who was dying of a ~~gun~~ gunshot wound in the gut. He was bleeding bad and there wasn't anything they could do to save him. He asked for a priest and Frank called me. Before I administered the Last Rites, he told me he wanted to <sup>be</sup> / confessed. The doctors weren't able to do anything for him and so I chased them all out and heard his confession. He'd done a lot of bad things in his life, he said, and I gave him absolution for the kind of things I hear every day in confession. I thought that was all, but he wouldn't let me get into the service. He kept saying ' I killed the old man. I didn't mean to but I did.' He didn't say which old man and I didn't press him, he was too far along. He said he wanted you and his mother to know that he had confessed what he'd done, he'd never been able to do it before, but he wanted you to know that he was free of that sin. He said he was not sorry to die, that he was better off dead, but he wanted you to know that you had given him more than you could know and he loved you and his mother. It was a marvelous thing to see, Father, the ~~peace~~ peace in that face. He ~~had~~ let go of this world easily and freely then, and I just had time to complete the service before he was gone. So that's why I'm here on this sorrowful errand today. To let you and his mother know that he died in the Faith. I know there's little comfort in the thought right now, but in the years to come you'll feel better about him. It's a hard life our young people live. I saw it on the battle fields of France and I've seen a good many more fall here at home since. The temptations they face are far worse than you or I had: little honest work to be hard, so much to be had by those who get and

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grab, and the power all in the hands of those who claim the right because their families have been here a few generations more. But now I've gotten into a spiel on you and that wasn't what I came for."

Manion was silent. A bubble in his chest burst and he felt a tenseness in him dissolve until he felt watery all over and was sure he would ooze down out of his chair onto the floor. He clenched his fists and got a grip on himself. He noticed the other priest was peering into his face, looking as if he should call someone outside the room for ~~xxxxxx~~ help but didn't know who. Enough.

"Thank you, Father Flynn, for coming to tell me personally. Hearing what you had to say means a lot to me and I'll tell his mother. It will mean a lot to her. A letter is such a cold blooded thing. The information is the same, but it means a lot to talk to someone who was with Brian at the last. He had a hard life and so has his mother. Raising a boy today, without a father, is a difficult thing. He got into bad company early and there was little his mother could do. It gave him a taste for danger, I think, what most of us spend our lives avoiding. He went to sea right when the Germans stepped up the U-boat attacks and we were worried sick night and day. And after that he never could seem to settle down to an ordinary life. He had the taste, you see. Tell me, was he in much pain at the end?"

"No. The doctors tell me that in a wound of that severity the shock of it keeps away the pain. Thank the Good Lord. No, once he made his confession, it was as if he heard the blessed angels. Peace, nothing but peace. Would you join me in praying that Brian has perpetual <sup>shinning</sup> ~~shinning~~ on him, as we believe he must?"

The two men knelt together in prayer and after taking Manion's hand in both of his, Father Flynn let himself out of the rectory and drove off down the main street of Mason, leaving Manion alone with his thoughts.

After Father Flynn's visit, time had no seams for Harry Manion. One day was like the next and the one after that. He lived his life by the church calendar and was carried along by the flow of services celebrations~~x~~ and observances. He ate little of the food Ellen fixed and if the truth be known she paid little attention to she cooked. They spoke hardly at all to each other but spent more time together in gentle silence. Parishioners remarked that Father Manion sometimes hardly knew they were there, but when he focussed on them he was kind and thoughtful, ~~xxx~~ listened to their troubles and in his answers seemed to take them upon himself, as he never had done before. In such an atmosphere, the summons to Manchester for an appointment with the Bishop was ~~neither~~ exciting nor threatening; it was once more duty to be performed.

Bishop Peletier<sup>L</sup> noted the changes in man who sat before him in his study. He was completely different in attitude of mind and body. The loss of weight was noticeable, his ~~xxx~~ suit coat hung off his shoulders and the front billowed out at the buttons where before it had pulled <sup>been</sup> ~~xxxx~~ taut. The hightopped shoes had not ~~xxx~~ shined for several days and <sup>look him in the ~~xxxx~~ eye,</sup> the hat needed a good brushing. Manion did not ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~, his face sagged from the cheekbones, and he somehow had trouble in making himself heard. Peletier<sup>L</sup> had a hard time remembering the rebellious angel attitude in the man who had come before him three months before. ~~Hex~~ was not unhappy to see Manion somewhat humbled and fully back in the traces, but the swing could go too far and there was something in the down cast, uncaring figure which touched him. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ As his secretary, Manion had been a challenge he had enjoyed, his wit, his impulsiveness, his vibrant strength; it had tested the old man to put Manion to his best use and he had enjoyed the exercise. It had added a dimension to a life which was slo wing down. Now there was no obdurancy, <sup>what he had to do</sup> no force to be reined in. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ must be done with loving gentleness. He must be firm but kind.



" We heard about Brian's death and want you to know that he has been in our prayers."

" Thank you, Bishop."

" It's a great loss to Mrs. Kelly and yourself. He must have been like a son to you. It's a hard thing when the child ~~xxxxxxx~~ dies before the parent. We all expect to go first and being left behind is hard<sup>to</sup>/accept. I'm sure you have prayed for the strength to accept what the Good Lord has ordained."

" Yes, I have prayed, Father. "

" You must have been a powerful influence on him. Brian was was a good boy, I'm sure ? "

" No, he was not. We did our best with him, his mother and I, but he had been too many years without a father, it was too late to influence him much. We had only three years, you know. He died in the Faith and that's the important thing."

" He did? I'm so very glad to hear that. The mercy of God knows no limits and that is the ultimate blessing. Under the circumstances, the news I have for you seems to be the best thing that could happen. You need a change to new surroundings, a fresh start where the memories are not so sharp."

" Yes, Father."

" Three months ago I directed you to change your attitude, your involvement in the political affair of Mason. And you have obeyed me like a loyal soldier of the church, have you not? "

" Yes, Father, I have."

" Good. I have heard nothing to the contrary and I am very pleased with your response. I have consulted with the Cardinal and he has agreed that you will take over Father

Cronin's parish in East Cambridge. It will be like going home for you and I'm sure that Mrs. Kelly will be glad to get back among her relatives and old friends. It's an old established church which needs a firm hand. Father Jim was not too active of late years, sort of let things go along as best they would. Now we want to infuse a new spirit. In this postwar world, the young people are cast ~~xx~~ adrift ~~xx~~ a sea of confusion. The Cardinal wants to put new emphasis on urban parishes. No revival meetings, mind you, no Billy Sunday stuff, but he does want the Church to be more people-oriented than we have been, spread out, reach out to the second generation Americans and provide a place for them. All over the greater Boston area, the Church will be putting on an enlarged sports program for the young. The police have assured us of their cooperation in this. This is ~~ix~~ right down your alley, wouldn't you say. You'll have three curates, so the regular work load of the parish will be light so far as you're concerned. St Michael's will be sort of a pilot program. If it goes as we ~~xxxxxx~~ hope, in several years you can ~~xx~~ expect to run the whole Greater Boston program. Now, how does that sound? "

Bishop Heletier had hoped to see some of the old fire come back into Manion's eyes, but what he got was a direct assenting gaze which seemed to say I understand what you are doing and I thank you. I will do what you say. ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ Before Manion had arrived, the Bishop had girded himself for an angry confrontation with a man who was losing his church, and though he was relieved not to have it, he was not sure he relished the opposite extreme. He went on to finish the task he had set out on.

" Father Buckwold, who succeeded you as my secretary, will take over Holy Name the 15th of next month. Will that give you enough time to get ready to move? "

" Yes, that's plenty of time. More than enough. "

" Do you want some time off before you take ~~off~~ up your duties at St. Michaels ? There's a rest house down on ~~thxxx~~ Cape Cod. Maybe a week or ten days at the beach would do you good."

" No, thank you very much. The sooner I get to the new work the better. "

" Whatever you say. I expect you had better make a public announcement as soon as you get back. Get a story in the local paper. I expect your parish will want to send you off right, have a farewell dinner and all that."

" Yes, I expect we'll have all that to go through."

" Harry, I expect that this is as good a time as not to tell you. I haven't made any public announcement, but I'll be retiring as of December 1st. We've worked together very closely, you and I, and I wanted you to be the first to know. I regard you as my son. All of the priests in my diocese I regard as my sons, my children. The most important qualification for a good priest, I've always thought, is the love of children. If he doesn't have it, he has failed in his vocation. Loving children is easy. They're very lovable. It's when they grow up and start to think for themselves that it gets hard. But the love must be un-changing ~~xxxx~~ and must find a way to be effective. We are all children in the eyes of God and ~~xxx~~ priests are the eyes of God on earth. We must see clearly and believe in our own vision which has been endowed by God. If its priests <sup>lose</sup> ~~xxx~~ their vision, the Church will be working in the dark. I think that for a while you were <sup>NOT</sup> seeing clearly and I pray most fervently that you will <sup>regain</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~ your vision and help others to see the way. We won't meet again before you go, there isn't time, but know that you go with my blessing for your strength and your protection. "

As their hands clasped, the Bishop drew him forward and embracing him fully bestowed on him the kiss of Peace.

Kaiser Bill Lives, VIII  
by F.C. O'Connor

*In reading*

If ~~you have read~~ my reconstruction of the notorious and much publicized Thorndike Murder Case thus far, you will catch the fact that <sup>have</sup> I/allowed four years to pass since my last chapter. Why the four year interval you ask? My answer is so simple that it makes me look foolish, and yet it is the truth and I have always found it good policy to stick to the truth. As the old story has it, good liars must have good memories. Telling the truth is a lot simpler, <sup>and</sup> the truth is that I got too busy. My practice picked up locally right after Labor Day four years ago. I had had a good trade during the summer that year and hoped that I had put by enough to carry the mortgage and see me through the winter. Two events, one that happened and one that didn't happen, made the difference I guess. The first was that my colleague Larry Thatcher was found to have lung cancer and he ~~had to~~ <sup>and gave up his practice.</sup> cut way back on his activities, /So I got all the patients who had drifted to him while I was away in France and the two years after I got back. Then, what didn't happen was that Dr. Herve Marchand, the young French-Canadian, decided not to locate in Mason. I heard through the grape vine, meaning the county medical society, that he had gotten a better offer in Manchester and went there. Somebody set him up there, ~~gave~~ <sup>not</sup> him a low interest loan to set up his office, and he's been making a name for himself over there I hear.

I've been busy at the typewriter all right but it hasn't been writing a detective story. Within a year after he moved to Connecticut, John Lloyd quit the education business and took up as the editor of a new magazine in Agusta, Maine, called The Farm Family. This is a magazine aimed directly at farm families all over America. He's done real well with it and they have over 100,000 subscribers. One of John's ideas was to have a monthly "Mother and Baby" <sup>department</sup> ~~column~~, with ~~xxxxx~~ <sup>common</sup> articles on/childhood ~~xxxxxx~~ diseases and a section of questions and answers for the mothers

who would write in to the magazine. And he asked me to do it. The last four years I have spent most of my evenings after office hours doing my monthly column and answering letters from farm mothers who live too far from town to have medical advice nearby. It has been a great success. I agreed to do it for the money and I have been glad to have it. As the years have passed, my ~~practice~~ <sup>back</sup> has ~~built~~ up to where I could give up the magazine work but I kind of get a kick out of it and I think I'll do it for ~~a~~ while longer. I am busier than a one-armed paper hanger these days and that's the way I like it.

What did bring me back to the Thorndike case was the visit of Jules Dupont. Jules was a local boy who made good. He went to work thirty years ago for American Pharmaceuticals of Philadelphia in their sales department and for the past 15 years has been their European sales manager. Done awfully well. He was back in Mason in the summer of 1919 right when we were in the middle of our dog fight, but the pressure of building up their European sales force after the war had made it ~~impossible~~ impossible for him to take any lengthy vacations at home until this year. He's been here for the month of August and we've spent a good many warm summer evenings discussing the Thorndike case. I ~~let~~ let him read what I'd written and we discussed a lot of things which didn't get into that account. Jules was a great <sup>friend</sup> of PM's, Perkins Meade, and it was a great blow to him when Perkins passed on. He admired PM, as we all did, and wanted to know how it was that a man of that calibre could be so persecuted. He kept saying, "How could a just God allow such a thing to happen?" <sup>a</sup> And of course I spent a long time trying to tell him. ~~xxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ All that talk stirred up a lot of things in my mind I'd kind of put aside and night before last I decided that the easiest way to finish what I started here would be to put down what I told him.

I'm not much of a drinker, but every time Jules comes back he brings some of that good French brandy and some Cuban cigars and I talk more than I have since his last visit. He wanted to know every last detail and that French cognac brought most of them back.

" And now what happened after your interview with Bishop Peletier, who incidentally is a very fine man. I knew him when I first came across the line as a young fellow. He helped a lot of <sup>us</sup> get started in the early days."

" Nothing, that was the funny thing. For the next three months, there was an occasional piece in the Courier, but there was no mention of Meade. It was all Mainz, all about people who had worked for him, his background, and quite a lot about the Federal investigation that was said to be going on. About that time, they caught a fellow in Boston trying to sell Secret Service papers to a newspaper. He said they were about the Thorndike case, but of course the <sup>r</sup> authorities never let them get out. We kept expecting them to heat up the Summer People but they never did."

" And you never heard from the Bishop again?"

" Not a word. Never. He said I never would and I didn't. I sent him a note of appreciation when he retired that December, but he never acknowledged it. The next thing we knew <sup>that</sup> ~~was~~ an article in the paper saying that Manion had been picked to go to the second biggest parish church in the state of Massachusetts. The congregation of Holy Name had several parties to celebrate his going and they gave him a new car. Within a month he was gone. Father Buckwold, the Bishop's secretary, took over. He didn't stay over a year and then he moved on. Father John J. Keeney, a nice young man, came then and he's here now."

" I take it you didn't go to any of the parties or contribute for the car?"

" I did not and he didn't come to say goodbye to me either."

" You think, then, that you persuaded the Bishop to move Manion as you suggested?"

" I'll never know. I think I did, but I'm not that well connected in Catholic circles and I never could get anybody who did know to tell me. The newspaper articles all pictured the move as a promotion. They made a big hurrah about his career as an athlete at Boston College and said he had been selected among a great number of candidates. There was a picture of Manion with Cardinal Walsh himself as the Cardinal handed <sup>out</sup> some baseball gloves to boys in the program Manion was taking charge of. Still running it, as far as I know."

" What happened so far as the Selectmen were concerned?"

" Well, that I can tell you about. It was just as I had suspected. When ~~Manion~~ Manion left, the brains of the opposition left with him. Practically all activity stopped. I dropped my suit against Pete Hennessey, but we all thought we'd gone ~~so~~ far with Meade's suit against Boyden for slander we would try to clear Meade's name with that. We went to trial in October. What a farce !! Boyden had Alec Murphy, a damned good trial lawyer from Concord, and he managed to get a number of the specifics of the indictment dropped. What he did ~~allow~~ allow to stand was that Boyden had said that Meade hadn't told all that he knew about the murder and that if he had much would be cleared up, or words to that effect. Then Murphy was able to put enough witnesses on the stand who swore that a good many people in the town did think that ~~and~~ <sup>to</sup> prove that the statement was common sentiment. The jury agreed and brought in a not guilty verdict. All the Selectmen looked like thirty cents on the stand, couldn't remember this or that. They looked like jack-asses, but that's not a crime, or at least not one punishable by law. We were able to show up a number of their witnesses as liars. We got one of their star witnesses seeing things by moonlight when by the almanac we could prove that the moon had already gone down. This they passed off as a bad joke. We weren't interested in prosecuting for perjury, eventhough we did invalidate a good number of the affidavits Manion and Dunne collected. No, the Boyden, <sup>that</sup> left more unanswered questions than ever.

" You mentioned in one letter that there'd been a second <sup>Suit</sup> trial, against the Courier for libel. They settled out of court?"

" Yes, that one was a great deal more clear cut than the case against Boyden. That was in black and white. When something's in print, there can't be much question as to whether or not someone said it or not. "

" Why did Perkins settle ?"

" Well, in a way that <sup>Suit</sup> was a mistake from the beginning. You know Perkins. His heart wasn't in it really. He only went to court because we talked him into it. When he lost the Boyden case, his heart, what little there was in it, went out of him, and when the paper offered to settle, admitting nothing but offering half of what he sued for, he said he wanted to take it. He felt that this was as much justification as he could hope for at that time, and we had to agree. The one thing that did do was shut up the Courier. We never heard a peep out of them after that."

" So the poor man went to his grave without his name being cleared?"

" Yes, and there are still people in town today who say if he'd told what he knew, the murderers would have been caught. It's a terrible thing for Laine to live with, but she says that they both knew he was innocent and that's good enough for her."

" So she told me when I talked with her."

" Isn't it hell? They say the good die young, but what <sup>about</sup> ~~about~~ the good who live on unjustly accused. What about them ?"

" One of the mysteries of life, I guess."

" One of the hardest things ~~to~~ to bear in this whole affair was the involvement of a brother Mason of Perkins. There's a good story about him that you'll get a kick/<sup>out</sup> of . Then <sup>the</sup> ~~there~~ only <sup>two</sup> of us and him who <sup>know it</sup> ~~do~~ I'll tell you, but you must promise to keep it to yourself."

" You mean Brother Edward Boyden?"

" None other. The Monk. "



" You knew Perkins pretty well and you know that the Masonic ~~order~~ order was one of the big parts of his life. He went right to the top, you know, 32nd degree, Scottish rite and all the rest of it. He was a good churchman, too, went to church regularly, was one of the biggest pledgers every year, so I'm told. But he used to say that if a man lived up to the Masonic ideal, he needed no other form of religion. One of the <sup>parts</sup> ~~biggest~~ that appealed to him most was the loyalty that each Mason swears to his brothers. It's a sacred vow, you know, the Mason swears on the square and support compass to ~~support~~ and sustain <sup>ro</sup> his brother Masons in the difficulties of life and to deal them always with absolute truth and absolute honesty. It's one of the most binding ~~oaths~~ oaths a man can take. If ever a man deserved to choke on his own blood, it is Monk Boyden. He'll come to a bad end, they all will, you wait and see. I've never been a very good Mason myself, I guess. I believe in it but I never could never get too involved, had too much else to do. Sort of like my service in National Guard. Never got any <sup>hi</sup> ~~higher~~ than a rear rank private there either. Anyway, Perkins was a man who lived and practiced the ~~Masonic~~ Masonic ideal and it was his wish that he be buried as a Mason.

" So there we were lining up to go into the Universalist Church as a body, gloves, hats, aprons, all the brothers with the appropriate gear and here came Boyden to join us. Horatio Black and I had thought that might happen, We didn't have much hope that he'd have the decency to stay away, so we'd done a little talking before he came. We were lining up two by two and every time Boyden thought he'd found a partner ~~and went into the church two by two~~ the line would shift a little and there'd be no place for him. Black and I kept watch and as the column passed we slipped in at the end. Well there was Boyden all by himself at the end of the line. ~~and~~ We calculated the numbers right and when the Order took seats in the pews, Boyden was left to sit by himself in the very last pew.

" Horatio said to me, 'Do you think he got it?' Did you see him

trying to edge his way into the lone ? Pretending to be a mourning brother. Damned hypocrite."

" Damned right he got it. Didn't you see him turn red? He looked just like he did when he was perjuring himself on the witness stand. "

" I'll never forget that," Horatio said, " or forgive him for it. He'll have to look somewhere else for forgiveness."

" We're burying the only man who has forgiven him, or could. Perkins couldn't believe evil of others, it wasn't in him. He preferred to believe it was <sup>a</sup> misunderstanding or that the person had been misled. I think that was what made it possible <sup>for him</sup> to face these last six years.

" Horatio and I watched Boyden sneak away after the commitment service, all by himself, no one said a word to him. ' You don't think there's a chance he'll go and hang himself, do you? ' Horatio asked as we stood on my lot which backs up to the Meade lot.

" " Not a chance, ' I said. " He still has the thirty pieces of silver. ' "

Jules sat back and puffed on his cigar, blew ~~axxx~~ a couple of smoke rings and watched them dissipate as he contemplated what I had just told him.

" You never said, but you must have had an idea about who killed old Thorndike, " he mused. " With all you know you must have worked out a theory."

" Yes, I did. But I never could prove it, so it wasn't worth much. I figured it was Brian Kelly."

" The housekeeper's son?"

" Manion's son, too! "

" Whew, that's one for the books

" It surely is, but it's the only one which accounts for Manion's getting so deeply involved. Here it is. I wrote it out over four years ago. Sent copies to Packard and Oldham. They agreed it made

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a lot of sense, but I never could get them to do anything with it. They said too much time had gone by. Besides Manion had left town by the time I got it complete and typed up. "

" Whatever happened to young Kelly anyway? "

" We never knew. The last year or so before Manion left, he'd come ~~visiting~~ <sup>visiting</sup>, always at night. We'd hear he'd been in town but we never did see him. Then ~~nothing~~ nothing. There was a rumor that he'd been killed in some kind of a ~~shoot-out~~ shoot-out connected with a robbery, but there was nothing in the papers and the Boston police denied any knowledge of him at all, when Rob Packard sent down a request from the county."

I handed him the synopsis of the Thorndike case I'd worked up and this is what he read.

#### SYNOPSIS OF THORNDIKE CASE

1. Edward Moran's paibful agitation at ~~an~~ <sup>R</sup> an indir~~ect~~ect reference to his character in a discussion, which was indirectly discussing Thorndike case.
2. Father Manion's interest in case, which at once became a complete control of case as far as local authorities were concerned, indic~~ated~~ted as follows:
  - a. Trip to Connecticut to John Lloyd to see if he was in Mason, August 13-18. If he was, did he go home by the old road, by Thorndike's.
  - b. His request to see Mrs Thorndike alone, to see if she saw or suspected anyone.
  - c. Interviews with Mrs Kaye, to see if she had any clues and if she did to come to him with them and not to the county authorities.
  - d. Ch~~anged~~anged attitude toward Moran and Miss LaFleur after the happening.
  - e. The prosperity of Moran and LaFleur financially, since that time.

f. The fact that these fellows and these girls did go out together at or about that date.

g. That they did go over to closed houses and use them presumably for immoral purposes.

h. The well known reputation of both parties concerned.

i. Father Manion's attempt right from the start to point directly at some one else.

j. <sup>M's</sup> Failure to pay slight fine and settle automobile misdemeanor and have Kelly come to see his mother ( and father) in the daytime.

k. Promise of political preferment to all who aided him in his work.

l. Presenting The COURIER, etc, with affidavits that are lies, which he got from ignorant bigoted people he could control.

m. Father Manion's peculiar stand in backing Kelly when he borrowed money he was supposed to deposit.

n. Thorndike's statement to summer resident, the day before he was killed: " there are things I cannot tell a woman, nor mention names safely... therefore we will call them  turkeys."

o. T's statement to Walter Langley, night patrolaman: " Where can I get you if I wanted you in the night? I may not want you, but I may. Somethings are going on I just do not understand."

p. Bibeau's statement: " I saw a large car come from out Thorndike way about midnight."

q. The body tied with sailor's knots, such as a merchant mariner would naturally tie.

r. Hinkley's statement: "I saw a large car in the bushes without lights. ( Time: two weeks before murder) Told me to mind my own  business when I spoke to them."

s. Father Manion on the witness stand. Query: " Who told

you about the Thorndike murder? A: Florence Burnett and Brian Kelly.

t. Close affiliation with Keller, dispensing with the services of all who did not agree with him and who would not ~~report~~ report to him. Viz., Manley, the detective.

u. Entertaining Federal men -- Reis and Von Falkenberg -- feeding and lodging them so as to keep in close touch.

v. Intimate relations with Deputy-Sheriff Alcott; painful interest to learn clues.

w. Sent Federal men to see Mrs. Percy and asked them to pick Mrs. P. to see if anyone else was suspected beside PM Meade. (This was discovered when the Federal men talked <sup>in</sup> French, thinking that Mrs. Percy could not talk French.)

y. Mrs Percy that Frank Dorn just got a bill ( Jan 1919) of \$ 5.00 out of Father Manion owed nearly two years by Kelly, for automobiles. Dorn runs a livery stable.

General: ~~Brown~~ <sup>Molly's</sup> ex-bellboy, Ronald Green, can give evidence to prove activities against Moran and LaFleur. A good detective ought to be able make a case most any time by a little patient work.

<sup>Moran's</sup> If I ever saw fear depicted on a man's face, it is is on ~~his~~ as he meets me every day without speaking.

Jules turned to me, in the quiet way that he has, and said: "And you've never done anything with this ?"

" What would I do?" I asked. " Manion was gone. Brian Kelly ~~has never returned to Mason.~~ has never returned to Mason. Folks around here were more worried about the Red Scare and the depression than who killed Billy Thorndike. A lot of it, you can see, is circumstantial. Can you make anymore out of it ?? "

What I always admired about Jules Dupont, beyond his ~~thin~~ thoughtfulness and kindness towards others, was his keen mind, his ability to pick out the important elements in any situation and throw away the chaff. He had a habit of stroking his moustaches as he worked out a problem, twice on the left and three times on the right, and he did so now.

" What your analysis shows is that there was <sup>ONE,</sup> ~~(1)~~ a lot of activity nights by Moran, LaFleur and their bunch, <sup>and Two</sup> ~~(2)~~ a lot of activity nights at Billy Thorndike's farm and you conclude that at least some of <sup>ONE</sup> ~~(1)~~ was the same as <sup>TWO</sup> ~~(2)~~. Three, you find two of those engaged in the nefarious activity doing better than they should, without reasonable explanation, and a third who had a reputation for <sup>Four,</sup> violence has disappeared. / You find a key element in the murder which relates the departed suspect to ~~the murder~~ it, namely the knots which bound Thorndike. Am I correct in my perception of the relationship, as you see it, of the facts as regards those you suspect? Yes? <sup>Then</sup> ~~my~~ question to you is, why? Why should these two couples, presuming that there only two couples, kill an old man in his barn in the middle of the night, granted that he had discovered them using his premises for their lovemaking. What they were doing might have been indiscrete, in bad taste, but young lovers everywhere are found doing this. It is frowned upon but society turns its face in America aswell as in France. Did the old man threaten them, two strong young men, were they really in danger? Is it not more reasonable to conclude that the old man caught spies who were also active in the night signalling the enemies of his country? The who <sup>le</sup> ~~town~~ was talking about signals, green, red, and blue discs, mysterious cars in the night, horses shod in felt. Federal investigators had the previous resident of the main house under surveillance. Aeroplanes were dropping coded messages to those on the ground. Did not Foreign Agents return that night to their favorite post only to be discovered ??

(insert here) He was arrested in Boston in October 1919 for an assault on a man, a priest but was let off with probation. They say she was badly beaten and choked.

The two questions he asked, and he was really asking only two, for all his oratory, which I believed stood him in good stead as he sought to persuade his European customers to buy his pharmaceuticals, were ones that I had pondered long and I was ready for him.

" Let's take the young people first. I believe that it was shock, surprise, an act of the moment, the reaction of those caught. It is less important what they were caught at than it is that they were found out. The response was not rational and it went far beyond what was called for, and that's just the point. Young Kelly was not a one to think before he reacted. Everything we know of his life was a striking out at authority, at ~~any~~ <sup>any</sup> or group which attempted to tell him what to do or not do. He was driven to do anything that society told him not to; he was constantly taking up the challenge. And I believe once he responded violently in a situation, he could not stop himself. He was attracted by the dangerous -- I think this is why he chose to sail on ships threatened by U-Boats -- and by the illicit. He liked to ~~xxxxxx~~ <sup>force</sup> himself on ignorant and innocent young women. Most of the young women in town would have nothing to do with him because of the stories that got out. Moran was a married man. If word got out of their being caught in the act, both he and Marie would be ruined. It is one thing for Ed Lyman to take Alice Harris for Sunday afternoon drives, ~~that~~ <sup>is</sup> out in open where all can see and wonder at; it is quite another for a man to be caught ~~in~~ on another man's property with a young woman in his employ. But beyond that, once the old man's blood had been spilled, there was no stopping, no turning back. People are funny. I've noticed in my practice that everything is fine until blood flows, either in an accident or an operation, then a certain wildness takes over, a ~~x~~ certain fear is let ~~loose~~ <sup>loose</sup>, and the civilized human being becomes almost unrecognizable. I believe that's what happened there.

" As for the Foreign Agents ? Moonshine, nothing but moonshine, a wish to get involved in the war, somehow to share the dangers of our brave boys overseas. I noticed that as soon as the Germans started their unrestricted warfare on American shipping everybody got jumpy. The interned German ships in Boston harbor, the fact that before we declared war, there were Germans diplomats in country homes not fifteen miles away, these made good fodder for the popular imagination to feed on. One of the principal~~x~~ spreader of the tales of signalling, I know for a fact because I was putting it in him almost daily, was a ~~man~~ dying man who was so doped up that he could barely find his way around his watchman's beat. I checked him out ~~praxatixly~~ personally and showed him his error, but he went~~x~~ right on seeing what he thought was there. Stars, automobile lights, reading lights, hell if you raised or lowered the curtain in a window, you were seen to be signalling, Laine must have told you about that."

" Yes, she did."

" There were <sup>groups</sup> ~~praxixes~~ of young people sitting on roof tops watching for lights and any car out after 10 p.m. was said to carry-  
ing parties of spies from some rendezvous or other. The whole town was mad with suspicion and any one who didn't go along was a German sympathizer. I wager that when I went out on~~x~~ a call in the middle of the night, the next day there was report of spy activity. There fact is that for all the searching and pursuing, not one damn spy, not one piece of <sup>signalling</sup> ~~signalling~~ equipment ~~was~~ ever found. One bunch went crashing through the underbrush on Pack Monadnock to catch the wiley Hun in the act and what did they catch? A group of badly scared college girls from Bpston around a camp fire. Manions' pet French detective spent a good many nights nights hidden behind ~~the~~ stone walls around town and he came up empty handed. They made signal lamps out



of discolored window panes and code messages out of penny post cards. They were hauling people to police stations off railway cars for chance remarks misinterpreted. Anyone who walked erect and had a moustache of any size was a Prussian officer with military bearing. An old cavalry saber in your house was enough to make you a Uhlan. Billy Thorndike thought someone was stealing <sup>his</sup> turkeys and that becomes international <sup>wife</sup> intrigue. My/Anna is a calm and levelheaded person, as you well know, and they had her seeing signalling. That bastard Manion even tried to get her to make an affidavit to that effect. The town was sick, sick with excitement, and in the middle of it, somebody killed an old man."

" Enough, Old Man, enough. You pile Pelion on Ossa with all your details. I concede that the ones you suspect could have been at the scene and could have done the deed. I concede that war hysteria may have been responsible for seeing things that were not there and for making the sinister out of the innocent, that if there were German operatives at work in Mason they were singularly ineffective. Let that part of your case rest for a moment. Let us turn to the persecutor of our friend Perkins, Father Harry Manion.

" First, you find a tremendous interest by Father Manion to discover if anyone saw ~~xx~~ anything that night or suspected who might have been involved in the activity at the Thorndike Farm. For you, his interest goes far beyond that of a good citizen doing his duty to expose the murderers. Next, at the same time, you find unceasing activity by Manion to involve a leading citizen of Mason in the crime, even trying to pin the murder on him, by controlling the investigation of the murder and charging those who did not agree with him with protecting the killers.

" The ~~xxxx~~ obvious conclusion of those two points, hastily stated to be sure, is that he knew who had done the murder and had to protect him. Who was it and why would Manion protect him?

" For the answer to that, you propose a ~~familian~~ familial relationship between the priest and the one who disappeared, which would account for the priest's unusual zeal in persecuting Meade. To wit, a father protecting a guilty son, a motive sufficient to account for all the various actions he took. Nothing is more basic than the drive to protect a loved one. Add to that a strong personality who saw himself as the saviour, let alone the leader, of a minority held down by those in power positions in the community, and you have a man whose fires are fueled to burn long and bright. Voila, your case is as I have stated it, is it not ? "

" Yes, that is a fair statement of what we found when we examined what we were living through. What I did not put in the synopsis and what I came to feel was additional fuel, to use your expression, for the fire was the personal animosity which arose between Father Manion and me, after my return to Mason in May 1919. He had had his own way pretty much before I came home. I can only thank the Good Lord that he did not succeed while I was gone. It would have been all over, for I came home to a man who would not defend himself and a group of dispirited friends who had about run out their string. ~~Thexxwhlxxxxffair~~  
~~xxxxxxdxxxxxxbxxxxxxbxxxxxx~~ Once I saw the lay of the land, it became clear who the ringleader was and what the fight was about, it became a contest and the prize was the honor and good name of one of God's elect. I think the element of battle excited Manion, I know it did me, and moved him beyond the protection of Young Kelly. After all, he had gotten him out of the way and there was little chance that he would ever be made to account for his ~~xxxxxx~~ movements the night of the murder, or anything of the sort. The murder would have remained unsolved -- it never has been -- and have <sup>been</sup> laid at the door of person or persons unknown, as the Grand Jury had it. But no, Manion kept on, collecting affidavits, stirring up the public, keeping up interest in the papers long after any reasonable man would have quit. "

Jules smiled. " I remember the fierce tennis matches you used to have at the Pine Knoll Inn courts. Both of you got so heated, I was sure one or both of you would collapse. He was a fierce competitor, but then so are you, my friend."

I smiled back. " I have never ducked a fight in my life and I like to win, whether it's pitch or checkers. But this was not a game, where you retire and have a root beer after it's over. No, a human life was at stake, the life of a friend, and there is no higher stakes to play for than that. Not in my book. You see, not only was Manion intent on destroying the life of our friend Perkins Meade, he was striking out at the life of our town. A community is built on faith -- I'm not talking about religious faith now -- faith in the honesty and fairness of the way the community is run, the way its members live together. If you can destroy the belief in the integrity of one of the leading men in the town, you go <sup>along</sup> way in destroying the way people live at peace with each other. I've thought a lot about that in the last four years. The war brought about a lot changes in this country, wars always do, and the changes will go on, they must. But if the 35 years of service ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ that Perkins Meade gave to this community had been destroyed through the hysteria of a mob egged on by a frightened man, who knows what the <sup>have</sup> result would/been.

" As it is, the make-up of the town is fractured. It is deeply wounded and no one knows <sup>how long</sup> it will take for the wounds to heal. Perhaps not in my life time. There are people who will never speak to me again, and I accept that as part of the price of what I did. But life goes on. I can see ~~x~~changes for better. This morning ~~this~~ the name of the town ball field was changed in a dedication ceremony from Veterans ~~Field~~ Field to Deschenes Field in honor of a local boy who was killed in the Argonne. And I understand you, my friend, have

contributed a large sum of money, anonymously, to the new high school to equip the science laboratories. Both Elmer Webb and Horatio Black are making efforts to move up young Frenchmen to better positions in their mills. Six months ago the Bank loaned Fred Duval the money to start a grocery store. I give him my trade and so do a lot of others. Father Keeney up at Holy Name is a positive force for good and works for good relationships between the Catholics and Protestants. Let the dead bury the dead, I say. Billy and Polly Thorndike are buried in upstate New York, and I for one intend to leave them there. We have buried most of our differences and that's all to the good.

" It's an interesting tale you've told me," Jules said. " Although I left this town as a young man, I've always had a deep love for it, it's one of the things I've clung to. Old Mount Monadnock with its great shoulders gets in your mind and never leaves. I'm pleased with the advances the town of Mason has made, so many little New England towns are going to grass, so many farms deserted, so many young people going to the factories and big cities of Massachusetts and Connecticut, I hope that won't happen. I hope that the national prosperity which is again in sight will not make Mason a deserted village. This happened in 18th century England you know."

" There's a lot of young blood left, Jules," I said.

" Before we leave the Thorndike case, though, there's one thing that bothers me, ~~and~~ I must mention it and then ~~we~~ I'll never bring it up again.

" Your admirably worked out theory about who killed Billy Thorndike seems to rest, when all is said and done, on the belief that Brian Kelly was Harry Manion's son. What proof do you have of that? How can you ever prove it? Everything depends on it."

I stubbed out Jules' excellent Havanna and ~~xxxxxx~~ with my right hand held up my left so that the stubs of the amputated first and second fingers were clearly visible. Like the Kaiser who habitually kept his withered left hand down by his side, I was in the habit of keeping my ~~xxxx~~ right hand folded over my right.

" I have no proof at all, Jules, not a bit. But every time I ask myself that question, or some one else does, my two missing fingers tingle as if they were still there. I am not a superstitious man, as you know. But I believe that there are some things which are known in the blood, and as sure as I once had four fingers on my left hand, as every man and woman does, they were father and son, and I can never believe otherwise. "