PAGE FOUR



"And now, tell us about the night you were hurt."

"I'll do that," he said, with his twisted smile, "if Mr. Porter will tell me how he and the doctor both happened to be such Johnnies on the spot."

But he carried that no further, and although the covert insolence of the speech brought the color to Edith's face, she continued to smile.

"There isn't much to tell," he went on. "The fellow got into the house all right; I turned to go in by the door and head him off, and that's all I remember."

"But you rang the bell first, didn't you?"

Whether because he hated to acknowledge that call for help, or for some reason none of us can determine tonight, he hesitated.

"Yes," he said finally. "I was pretty well excited, but I suppose I did." Almost immediately he asked me if I had tried hearing the bell as far away as the highroad, "with a motor engine going."

"I don't believe it could be done," he said, with his sideways glance at me. "He's got good ears, the doctor." He said something before he left about looking for another job, as this one was too confining, and the old man not easy to live with. "I only took it for the summer," he said, "and I'm about fed up with it. It's too confining. And he'd let that car of his rot before he'd let me take it out."

With which clumsy attempt to alibi himself regarding the car, he took his departure. Edith believes that in some manner he knows that the car has been examined, and she may be right. . .

Halliday's investigation of his room during his absence proceeded without difficulty. With my keys and Annie Cochran's connivance he made an easy entry, Mr. Bethel having retired for his after-luncheon siesta. At first glance the room offered nothing, and leaving Annie Cochran on guard outside under pretense of cleaning the passage, Halliday made a

to bed, but as events showed, he had been in it during his absence. An angry dispute followed, within a foot or done nothing of the sort. two of the linen-closet, not the less Up to this moment I had not sus acrimonious because of its lowered pected the use of the rope, although I believe Halliday had. The darkness voices, and of an almost hysterical was extreme. But now I heard a quality in Gordon's. 🖌 Every particle of his veneer had faint scraping against the wall of the

dropped from him, and the threats he house itself and realized that Gordon was coming down by means of the made if he should find she had been in his room are not even to be recordrope. ed here. . . . preliminaries had been. He was prob-

And now, once again, where are we? We have, as against Gordon:

(a) The knife and the coil of rope. (b) Our belief that he uses the car, clandestinely, at night.

(c) At least an indication that he set the fire under the boathouse.

a blacker shadow among other shad-(d) The cipher, found in my gaows, near at hand. But he did not rage. come directly toward the garage; he

(e) the note-book, in the same cipher. A man does not record his thoughts in this manner, unless he wishes to keep them hidden.

(f) The linen strips muffling the oar-locks, and suggested to Halliday today by his place of concealment. The inventory of the main house shows a certain number of linen sheets. If one is missing it will prove a strong factor in connecting him with the boat.

(g) The locking of his bedroom. (h) Last and not least, an unpleasant personality. Halliday uses the

word "degenerate," but I am not prepared to go so far.

As against all this, however, w have:

(a) The attack on him at the kitchexpected was his sudden disappear en door, and the manner in which he ance, that I gasped; it was not until was tied, corresponding to the rope I heard him creeping along the about Carroway. ground that I understood his ma-

(b) The sheep-killing and murder neuver. He lost no time in his reof Carroway, taking place as they did treat, nor did he attempt to use the before his arrival. rope again. He raised the unlocked

(c) The fact that Halliday cannot identify him as the man he picked up in his car.

(d) The distinguishing mark by which the criminal has signed his crimes, so to speak, is the circle and head. . . . triangle, drawn in chalk; while this is not vital, Halliday found no chalk in the room. . .

the really horrible stealth of the boy's I have put to Halliday the boy' manner. He was engaged on some veiled inquiry about the doctor. It is netarious business of his own, whethimpossible for us to experiment with er we can connect that with the the bell, but he thinks it could be discrimes or not. tinctly heard from the main road.

On the other hand, the arrival of Hayward on the scene almost as soon as I had got there is extremely puzzling. We have tonight paced off the distance, in view of my statement that I had lighted only one match when the doctor's flashlight was turned on me.

degenerate mind which is always act-There seems to be no doubt that ing for its own benefit. Or-and this Hayward was on the property last is more likely-our old friend Bethel night. But I do not accept the posis suspicious and is watching him. sibility, suggested by Halliday, that The old man's door commands his. as he was in Greenough's confidence he had been watching me. A man does not, I imagine, go out on such an errand with his medical bag in his hand, and the doctor had carried his bag. I recall distinctly his taking from it the dressings for Gordon's

## THE CHATHAM RECORD, PITTSBORO, N. C.

His coming was as stealthy as the

ably half-way down, coming hand

over hand, before I had interpreted

I was not even aware that he had

reached the ground, when I saw him,

walked along under the walls of the

west wing to the gun-room window

and stood there. Then, with extreme

caution, he raised it an inch or two,

as if to reassure himself that it had

been unlocked from within, and closed

From there, with somewhat less cau-

tion, he moved to the corner of the

house and seemed to be surveying the

waterfront and the boathouse. We

had our only real view of him then, as

he stood silhouetted on the top of the

rise. But suddenly something

alarmed him. Neither Halliday nor

I saw or heard anything, but evi-

dently he did, and realized, too, his ex-

He dropped to the ground. So un-

window, crept over the sill, and closed

it again, all with surprising rapidity

and silence, and sooner than we could

have expected we heard him drawing

up the rope from his room over-

No interpretation of this is possi-

ble without taking into consideration

As to the extremely dramatic man-

ner in which he chose to escape from

the house, when he had already un-

locked the gun-room window, Halliday

is divided between two theories, of

which he himself favors the second.

himself: you'll find a certain type of

"He may be merely dramatizing

the sound.

it again.

posed position.

was a woman, it was surely a safe place for a rendezvous!

It was the "friend" who saw the light, and who accounts for the suppression of this portion of the tale. It shone through the shrubbery, a small blue-white light about two feet from the ground, and directly in front of the headstone of one George Pierce, who died in the last seventeen hundreds.

Hadly did not see the light, but the "friend" persisting, he crept through the shrubbery to take a look around. It was then that he saw the figure, moving slowly and deliberately toward the trees.

He seems to have no doubt that he saw an apparition, or that the information belongs to me, the reason he gives for the latter being that George Pierce is the gentleman who was, according to local tradition, shot and killed while attempting to escape the excise in the old farmhouse which is now a part of Twin Hollows. I have entered this here, because

the day seems given over to the supernatural. We have breakfasted with the spirit world, and seem about to lunch with it. Everything continues quiet at the

other house. . . .

Jane and I today returned the Livingstones' call. Although it seems absurd, I have never quite abandoned the hope of finding, in Uncle Horace's unfinished letter, a clew to the present mystery.

I therefore took it with me, hoping Livingstone. But none came. Doctor, it. Hayward was there when we arrived and remained after we left. Perhaps, because my own world is awry, I think the universe is so.

But it seemed to me that we were a situation; that Livingstone, usually | maybe it will show again." dapper and calm, was flushed, and that Mrs. Livingstone was on the by the window, hardly acknowledged the hiding place of the boat. our entrance, and remained standing, glowering and biting his fingers, until we left.

He is, I understand, soon to leave for a holiday.

(No entry.)

(No entry.)

Tomorrow Mayward says I shall be able to see Greenough; the first intimation I have had that he is back in the neighborhood.

But I feel that my consciousness of my own innocence will be nothing against Greenough's sheer determination to prove me guilty. And yet, guilty of what? Of a bullet buried in the floor of my own house, and a broken window! We have had no fur- house, if possible.

dory was missing I knew he was some where out on the water. After waiting until eleven, my restlessness was extreme and I walked up and around the main house, to find the garage doors open and the car still out.

Had there been any indication of life in the building, I think I would have wakened Mr. Bethel and warned him; stayed with him, perhaps, until that murderous young devil was safely settled for the night. But his room was dark and his windows closed, so I thought better of it. But I did ascertain that the gun-room windows were locked, and that if the boy effected an entrance at all, it would be by some less surreptitious method.

Thus reassured, I went back to the boathouse, and soon after Halliday rowed quietly in and tied the dory. I told him my story, but he was less anxious than I had expected.

"It's not the game," he said. "If Gordon is the killer, we've got to consider that he doesn't kill out of anger. That's different. He's cool and deliberate: he plans his stuff ahead and goes through with it. I don't even think he gets any thrill out of crime itself; the real secret joy is in baffling discovery. And he knows this: after the quarrel tonight, if old Bethel fell down the stairs and broke his neck, he would be blamed for it."

in his pocket nevertheless, and we started toward the house, with no particular plan in mind, but a fixed determination to protect Mr. Bethel "In for an opportunity to show it to Mrs. ; case of any trouble," as Halliday put

right.

"There was a light over there," he shown in to what almost amounted to said. "In the woods. Wait a minute;

It did show, above the head of Robinson's point apparently, in that loneverge of tears. The doctor, standing ly strip of woodland which leads to

Halliday watched it, and then passed his revolver to me, first taking off the safety catch.

"Don't fall over anything," he you see the whites of his eyes! I'm going over there, Skipper."

He set off on a steady lope, heading for the light but obliged to make a long detour around the marsh. I myself, holding the revolver gingerly, started on to the house.

I was feeling, comparatively speaking, relaxed. I felt, as did Halliday, that Gordon was near Robinson's | the trigger came with the sound of point; my duty, as I saw it, was simply to stand guard until Halliday returned and we could make some plan; ough examines the mark left by the in case of trouble later to get into the | bullet, he will find, as Halliday and

## THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 1929

At the top of the kitchen staircase was a door, opening onto the main hall, and this I cautiously opened.

Save for the ticking of the tall clock on the staircase landing, the house was entirely silent. The silence and the closed door gave me back my ebbing courage, and I advanced a step or two along the hall. Here I was close to Gordon's room, and I felt for and tried the knob carefully. It was locked, and listening outside I could hear no movement from within. The relief I gathered from this was enormous, and although my position was still unpleasant enough, the fear of tragedy began to leave me.

There remained, I figured, merely to ascertain that Mr. Bethel's door was closed and locked, and I could beat a retreat which I felt was by no means ignominious. I made my way, therefore, to his door and tried it. It was fastened also, and I heard him move within; the heavy creak of his bed-spring, no doubt as he lay uneasily awake, waiting for the boy's return.

I hesitated there, wondering whether to call to him and tell him he was not alone and helpless, or to retire, satisfied that he was awake and prepared for any trouble that might But he thrust his army automatic | come. But there were no further sounds from beyond the door, and I turned away and prepared to retrace my steps.

It was then that I became conscious of a light somewhere below. Not a light, rather, but where before We had almost reached the end of had been absolute darkness there was the walk over the marsh when he now something else;, a faint illuminahalted suddenly and stared to the tion which outlined the staircase well, and which was reddish in color.

And I will swear that a figure was standing at the foot of the stairs, apparently facing toward me and looking up. Or, rather, not a figure, but a face; the light was so faint that no portions of the body were visible. I will swear that it moved, not toward the dining room and a possible exit. by the window of the gun room, as Halliday suggests, but still upturned, toward the library, and that within a warned me. "And don't shoot until foot or two of that door it disappeared.

I will swear that the red glow persisted for a moment or so after that disappeared and then slowly faded away. And I will also swear that I had no more intention of firing my revolver at that figure than I had of leaping down the staircase after it. The first knowledge that I had pulled the shot itself. I was certainly not aiming at the figure. If Mr. Green-1 did, that my bullet went almost directly down, and is embedded in the baseboard of the hall, near the den door. . . . As a matter of fact, the whole sequence of events, ending with the shot, had stunned me. Almost immediately there was a crash of breaking glass in the library, as .Halliday smashed a window with a porch chair, and the next moment was in the house and fumbling for the light switch inside the library door.

August 12. August 13. August 14.

more intensive search. The bed disclosed nothing, nor did the closet; his suitcase was locked, and over it Halliday spent more time than was entirely safe.

"Toward the end," he says, "I was pretty shaky. I kept thinking I heard him, and of course the more I hurried the more I bungled the thing."

He got it open at last without break fng the lock, and found in it the notebook.

(Note: I find I have given no de scription of the note-book in the original Journal. As it played a considerable part in the approaching tragedy, it deserves some attention.

It was a small compact volume of the loose-leaf type, a sort of diary, but not regularly kept. Most of the entries, due to the complication of the cipher, were very brief. One or two, however, occupied almost a page, and all of them had been typed.

Needless to say, the cipher was the one we had found on the scrap of paper picked up in my garage.)

The discovery of the note-book with its cipher sent his excitement to fever pitch. He ran through it for the code word, but was unable to find it. Then, replacing the book and leaving the suitcase as he had found it, he set to work more carefully on the room itself.

The coil of rope and the knife were behind a row of books on the bookshelf, a packet of typing paper and a box of carbon sheets thrown over them with apparent casualness, to conceal them still further.

So closely had he calculated the time that he had barely restored them to their places when Gordon slammed the entrance door downstairs.

Halliday had not time to make the back staircase, however. Annie Cochran opened the linen-closet door, and he bolted in there. He heard Gordon unlock his room and enter it, and almost immediately reappear and demand of Annie Cochran if she had

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Expectant Tourist Man on Way to Italy to See Family Killed .--- Headlines in a Pittsburgh paper.

August 9.

Nothing new today. Halliday watched the main house last night but no one left it. Annie Cochran reports that Mr. Bethel is suspicious of Gordon, and that the feud between them still continues. He declines the secretary's assistance as much as possible.

head.

That he is not certain, however, is shown'by the care with which he now has the house locked up at night.

"He waits in the library," she says "until I've locked all the doors and windows. Then I bring him the keys, except the one to the kitchen door. He lets me have that to get in with in the morning."

He is showing considerable courage. to my mind. . . .

Mrs. Livingstone told us a new story, illustrative of the general state of the local mind. She says that three nights ago Hadly, who keeps the hardware store in Oakville, when passing the cemetery where Carroway is buried, saw a figure walking slowly past the grave. It stopped, looked at the mound and then moved on, fading into nothing at the clump of evergreens beyond it.

Hadly seems to have made no fur ther investigation!

August 10. At midnight last night Halliday wakened me by throwing pebbles against the screen of my window. He was standing close underneath, and asked me to put on something and work my way quietly toward the other house.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"He's getting ready to go out, think. He put his light out at eleven, and turned it on again a few minutes ago."

Halliday moved away, and as quicky as possible I dressed and followed him. He was under the trees, waiting, when I joined him, and together we worked quietly across the garden and toward the garage, coming out beyond it, toward the lane. Here, while concealed ourselves, we had a full view of the house, but the light was out again and for a time it looked as though nothing more were to happen.

We stood together, well hidden in the shrubbery, for some time. Halliday, who has not had much sleep for a night or two, fell to yawning, and I was not much better off, when I heard some sort of stealthy movement in the woodland to our left. I touched Halliday on the arm, to find him rigid and bending forward, staring toward the house.

"He's coming," he said. "Quiet !" The boy was raising his window screen, with all possible caution. Even when it was accomplished he stood so long, probably listening and watching, that I began to think he

He locks his door from the inside, uses his rope, and is free to go where he pleases.

"But," he added, after a pause, "he unlocks the gun-room window, too, so he can beat a retreat if he has to. That's the best I can do, and if it isn't correct it ought to be !"

Today I am convinced beyond doubt that Gordon is our criminal, and I think even Halliday is shaken. I am no detective, but it seems to me that the boy, coming here during the height of the excitement about the sheep-killer and young Carroway, found the way already paved for a career of secret crime, and adopting the methods and the symbol of some still undiscovered religious maniac, has carried on, one may say, under his banner.

Certainly one fact at least supports the idea. Halliday may be right, and the attack on him not have been made by Gordon. But there seems no reason to doubt that, some time on the day before we got back, he crept into my garage and put the infernal symbol where we found it.

We have discussed today at some length the desirability of notifying the police once more. But our recent experience with them is not reassuring. On the other hand, I feel strongly that Mr. Bethel should be warned. But Halliday argues against it.

"He knows something already," he says. "He is on guard, and the boy knows it. Then you have to remember that the game, so far, has been to strike in the dark, and run. That is, if you are correct, Skipper, and it is a game, without motive."

Probably he is right. There would be little chance for him if he attacked the old man; he is too well known to be on bad terms with him. Such a warning, also, might alarm Mr, Bethel to the point of getting rid of him, and after all the only chance we have is to let him go a certain length, and then, with our proofs, call in the police.

But I am very uneasy tonight as I make this entry. I have not Halliday's easy optimism that he "won't get away with anything without our knowing it."

#### August 11.

I had a visit last night from -"Cuckoo" Hadly, our village Don Juan, who sells hardware over his counter to pretty village matrons, and who was dubbed "Cuckoo" some years ago by a summer visitor who saw a resemblance to Byron in him.

Hadly was slightly sheepish. He knows, and he knows I know, that his road home at night lies nowhere near the cemetery. At the same time, he had something to tell me, and was determined to go through with it.

It appears, then, that it was not near Carroway's grave that Hadly saw the figure, but in the old part of the cemetery, and that there are some facts which he has not given out.

The cemetery is surrounded by a white fence, and inside it is shrubbery. Hadly, it seems, was not alone, but was standing in the road, "talking to had changed his mind and gone back. I a friend." If, as I imagine, the friend

ther crime. Nothing is altered, save my own feeling that a net is closing around me, and that some malignant fate is sitting spider fashion in the center of it, waiting to pounce on me and destroy me.

Suppose, like a lawyer preparing a brief, I make my statement here, and tomorrow read to him? At last I can make this entry full and explicit. It passes the time, and he may be willing to listen. . . .

This is the 14th. It was, then, the early evening of the 11th, when Annie Cochran stopped at the Lodge on her way home and asked to see me at the kitchen door.

"I'm leaving, Mr. Porter," she said. "I don't like to make trouble for you, but I can't stand that secretary."

"What has he done, Annie?" "Done !" she said, and sniffed. "He's watching me, for one thing. I never go upstairs but he's at my heels. But that's not all. He's going to make trouble for Mr. Bethel. You mark my words. And Mr. Bethel knows it; he's scared tonight."

There had been a quarrel, she said, at dinner, carefully camouflaged while she was in the room, but breaking out again the moment she left it. So far as she could make out, it had to do with the secretary's leaving the house at night, and his insistence that he go out when and how he liked. But there was something beneath that, she thought. "There was murder in that boy's face, Mr. Porter."

Mr. Bethel, she thought, was trying to quiet him, but he refused to be quieted. Finally Gordon got up and flung open the pantry door, finding her inside it, and he said, according to her: "Listening, are you?' Well, you'd better watch out, or you'll get something you don't expect." Then he went into the hall, got his hat and slammed

out of the house, leaving the paralytic sunk in his chair.

"He's gone? Where?" "He didn't say. He just took the car and went."

She was uneasy; she had construed what he said as a threat against her of a serious sort, and I drove her into Oakville myself. On the way I tried to persuade her to return to her employment for a time at least, on the

she finally agreed. It was perhaps nine o'clock when I returned, to find the rector and his wife calling, and to sit through an hour and a half of gently unctuous conversation, while my uneasiness constantly increased, and my sense of emergency might be at hand.

At 10:30 our visitors took their deher letters, I wandered with apparent Halliday was not there, and as the my hand.

This thought, that we might want to get into the house, bothered me. My keys were at the Lodge, and I could hardly hope to secure them without disturbing Jane. I made, as a result, another round of the windows, and was brought up short by the fact that one of the gun-room windows, certainly closed and locked before, now stood open.

It was the more startling, because I had but that moment ascertained that the garage doors still stood wide. and that the car was still missing. I daresay every man has occasional doubts of his physical courage; but I daresay, too, that every man has a sort of spare reservoir of courage, on which he can draw in the emergency, when it comes. Yet I shall not pretend, even to myself, that I pulled up my shoulders, examined my weapon, and then boldly entered that window. I crawled in, with knees that shook under me and a definite nauseal in the pit of my stomach. And to make matond or so in identifying as a drip from od could have been noiseless. At the the old shower next door.

I had no doubt whatever that Gordon had returned, and the very fact that he had come without the car made that return sinister. I groped for the door into the passage and stood there listening, but there was no sound, whatever, save the leak of the tap.

I reached the dining room without incident, and there a new thought struck me. Annie Cochran had represented the old gentleman as distinctly am also convinced that it was not the alarmed, and I myself had seen him some time before, more or less on guard, with a revolver. Suppose he saw a strange figure emerge from his dining room and start up the stair- not have made it. . . . case? It seemed to me that he would

have every right to shoot me first and investigate me afterwards.

It was while I hesitated there, near the sideboard, that I was first conscious of a cold air blowing around me. So distinct was it that my first thought was that some stealthy movement had opened the door to the passage behind me. Almost immediately on that there was a tremendous crash as though some heavy object ground that we might need her, and had struck the dining-room table, and following that, the door into the hall burst open, slamming back against the wall outside. This was followed by complete silence.

So shaken were my nerves by all this that my next consecutive thinking found me once more in the gun guilt and responsibility. If we had room, ready to beat a retreat. But warned the old man he would have here I managed somehow to pull mybeen at least prepared to take care self together, and to return to my of himself in an emergency, but we original errand in the house. Conhad foolishly kept our knowledge to vinced that the slamming of the door ourselves, and even allowing for exag- | would have roused Mr. Bethel-if, ingeration on Annie Cochran's part, deed, anything were to rouse him there seemed no doubt that such an again; and by this time, shaken as I was, I was prepared for the worstthe main staircase was not feasible. parture, and leaving Jane prepared to | I made my way, therefore, into the retire and Edith to answer some of passage again to the servants' staircase and crept up it, one stair at a aimlessness down to the boathouse. time, with the revolver clutched in

When he ran into the hall I told him what had happened, and he immediately set about his search. As

Mr. Bethel was demanding, beyond his door, to know what was wrong, I went back to reassure him, but it required some time to induce him to unlock the door. 'Thus it was Halliday who made the first investigation downstairs.

He is confident no one escaped from the library, unless in that brief time while he was feeling for a light. But it is to be remembered that the floor ters worse there was a slow footstep; near the window was covered with somewhere near, which I was a sec-1 broken glass; no escape by that methsame time, any theory of departure by the windows of the den is impossible, since we found all these windows closed and locked on the inside. I am convinced that the intruder was not the secretary. As a matter of fact, he drove in a half-hour later, saw the lights in the house and hammered for admission, and surveyed our group in the hall with an amazement which, under any other circumstances, would be humorous. And I doctor. Mr. Bethel showing signs of collapse, Halliday telephoned to Hayward. He replied at once. Had he been at the house that night, he could

I have no explanation whatever of the fact that Halliday and Hayward later on found the gun-room window closed and locked, save that the intruder may have entered by it while I was working my way into the dining room; and that the cold air, the crash at the table, and the bursting open of the door in the hall, which so alarmed me, may have marked his passage through the room.

The disappearance of the figure and the blank darkness which followed that disappearance are difficult to account for, under any natural law at present known. I am not a spiritist, but it is to be remembered that only a second or so elapsed between Mr. Halliday's entrance by the broken window and his turning on of the lights.

Neither he nor I heard in that interval any movement; yet an escape over the broken glass of the window would certainly have made some sound. As I have said, the windows in the den were found to be closed and locked on the inside.

(End of memorandum for Mr. Greenough.)

## (CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

We'll Soon See Teacher's motto: "They shall not pass!"-The Pathfinder.

