

A CASE FOR 3 DETECTIVES

By LEO BRUCE

READ THIS FIRST:

Three famous detectives, Lord Simon, M. Picon and Monsignor Smith, are investigating the murder of Mrs. Mary Thurston, middle-aged wife of a retired English physician who has been found slain in bed during a week-end party at the Thurston home near London. Those in the house when Mrs. Thurston retired were her husband; Townsend, the author; Williams, the family lawyer; Strickland, a sportsman, and the servants. Three piercing screams preceded the discovery of the tragedy. Mrs. Thurston's bedroom door was bolted from the inside and the only open window revealed a 20-foot drop to the ground. In the garden below Townsend found the murder weapon, a Chinese knife, taken from the Thurston hallway. Mr. Rider, the vicar, a dinner guest the evening of the murder, left the Thurston home shortly before the slaying occurred. Townsend and Mgr. Smith are investigating the Thurston gymnasium. The three detectives and Sergeant Beef, the local constable, conduct their searches independently. Dr. Thurston reveals some of the family history for the benefit of the investigators. The doctor reveals his dead wife had a bad name. He had not been heard of for years. The detectives begin investigating witnesses by questioning the telephone mechanic called to repair the phone wires, found out after the murder. Facts related by a bank cashier suggest Mrs. Thurston may have been a blackmail victim.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY:

CHAPTER 18

"BY THE way, Beef, have you had any newcomers to the district lately? Anyone you've thought worth watching?" Lord Simon asked the sergeant.

Sergeant Beef hesitated. "I don't know as I ought to say anything about that. But I suppose you gentlemen's to be trusted. Well, there is a certain individual as I've been told to watch. Miles, his name is. Working at the local 'otel. I understand it was Mrs. Thurston got 'im the job."

Lord Simon sat up. "Really, you might have mentioned this before, Beef. What age?"

"Round about 30."

"What does he do at the hotel?"

"Porter 'n' boots."

"And why have you been instructed to watch him?"

"Oh, he'd got a bit of a record. Couple of stretches, I understood. Cat burglary. But nothing against 'im for over a year." He looked defiantly at Lord Simon. "Now make a murderer out of 'im," he challenged.

"It's certainly illuminatin'," he said. "Most illuminatin'."

Mgr. Smith's spectacles flashed vacantly. "Red lights are illuminating, too," he sighed to the ceiling.

So here we were with a new suspect, but his introduction did not seem to have produced much effect on the three investigators. This, I reflected, accorded with precedent, for investigators in these cases are never, by any chance, to be taken by surprise. Mgr. Smith had smiled blandly as he had answered Lord Simon, while M. Picon, who had remained silent for some time, now started assiduously to rearrange the fire-irons. Only Lord Simon himself, who was always painstaking and thorough, seemed to have taken much notice of the fact that a Mr. Miles, a competent cat burglar, was working in the district.

Before anyone else came into the room, he lifted the telephone receiver and asked the manager of the local hotel which was his porter's night off. The manager appeared to feel no astonishment at this sudden query from a stranger, for we heard Lord Simon thank him with drawing civility, and watched him replace the receiver. He turned calmly to us. "Last night, Friday, of course," he said.

"But naturally," pouted M. Picon, while Mgr. Smith nodded absently.

"He was back at 10:30, though," said Lord Simon.

"Are you ready for the next person to be questioned?" asked Sam Williams.

There was no dissent, so that the lawyer rang the bell, and the cook came into the room. I had never seen her, though I had often felt kindly towards her, and was not a little disappointed to find that she was not the ample, beam-



"Really, you might have mentioned this before, Beef."

ing woman whom one expects to find happily tasting sauces in a cheerful kitchen, but a spare, gray-haired person with glasses, in appearance not unlike her predecessor, Mr. Kingsly. Her face, however, seemed to me to be not so much uncharitable, as I had at first supposed, as competent. I should have said, after scrutinizing her, that she was extremely good at her job, but like most artists, somewhat at sea in alien surroundings.

Lord Simon seemed to feel this, for he smiled reassuringly. "Oh, Miss Storey," he said, and it was typical of him that he had troubled to find out her name, "sorry to drag you up here, an' all that. And I'm sure everyone staying in the house will be the loser by your leavin' the kitchen just now. Your fame has reached us."

"There's no dinner this evening," said Miss Storey, glad to remain among familiar topics as long as possible; "the Doctor said you wouldn't be done in time. Cold buffet when you want it."

"I see. Well, you won't mind if I ask you some of my dam' silly questions, will you? I'm famous for 'em."

"Well, I don't see what I can tell you, I'm sure."

"Funny thing. People never do. But you can tell me for one thing how long you've been with the family."

"Longer than anyone else on the staff. Over four years now."

"You like being here?"

"If I hadn't I wouldn't have stayed. I never took any notice of that silly idea about the will. I used to tell them all they was fools to listen to it. It was just a bit of stupidity of the missus's. Poor thing—she used to think she was so clever with anything like that. And now look what it's done for her!"

"You think her death had something to do with that will, then?"

"I'm not saying it did, am I? I know nothing about it. I was downstairs at the time, and only heard the screaming."

"Did the other servants take the will seriously?"

"Well, they did and they didn't. We all used to talk about it, of course. It was a funny thing, when you come to think of it—us knowing all that money might come our way if anything was to happen to her. But none of us

wished her any harm if that's what you mean. None of us didn't."

"You speak for the others, too, then?"

"No one can live morning, noon and night with people and not know something of what's going on in their heads," replied Miss Storey. "I wasn't over-keen on any of them, and I'm not going to say I was, and there was things I didn't approve of. But I know very well it wasn't none of them as did it. So if you're trying to put it onto them you're mistaken, that's all."

"We're trying to come by a spot of truth," said Lord Simon.

"I'm glad to hear it," snapped Miss Storey, almost before his sentence was finished.

"Did you approve of Stall?"

"I'm not going to discuss the other servants, sir. I've made up my mind to that. I'll give you what information I can, but beyond that my opinion's my affair."

"Quite right. Will you tell us, then, at what time Stall went up to bed yesterday evening?"

"As soon as ever he'd taken the whiskey into the lounge. Couldn't have been later than half-past 10. He complained of a headache, and Enid, the parlor-maid, said she'd be up if anything was wanted, and he popped off to bed."

"You're sure he went to bed?"

"How can I be? He took his alarm clock, as he always does, and left the kitchen."

"Saying good night?"

"He did to Enid. Him and me wasn't on speaking terms."

"How was that?"

"Oh, nothing to mention. Something to do with the soufflé."

"Just so. Then you and Enid remained together in the kitchen. What about the chauffeur, Fellowes?"

"He was there, too. I never approved of the arrangement, and I told Mrs. Thurston a dozen times, but there it was. Fellowes comes in for his supper every night about nine, and stays in my kitchen smoking cigarets till all hours."

"But hang it all, where else was he to go, Miss Storey?"

"That's not my lookout. There's the village down the road. But I didn't like it."

"Well, there you were, the three of you. Who left the room first?"

"Enid did, when she heard Mrs. Thurston go up to bed."

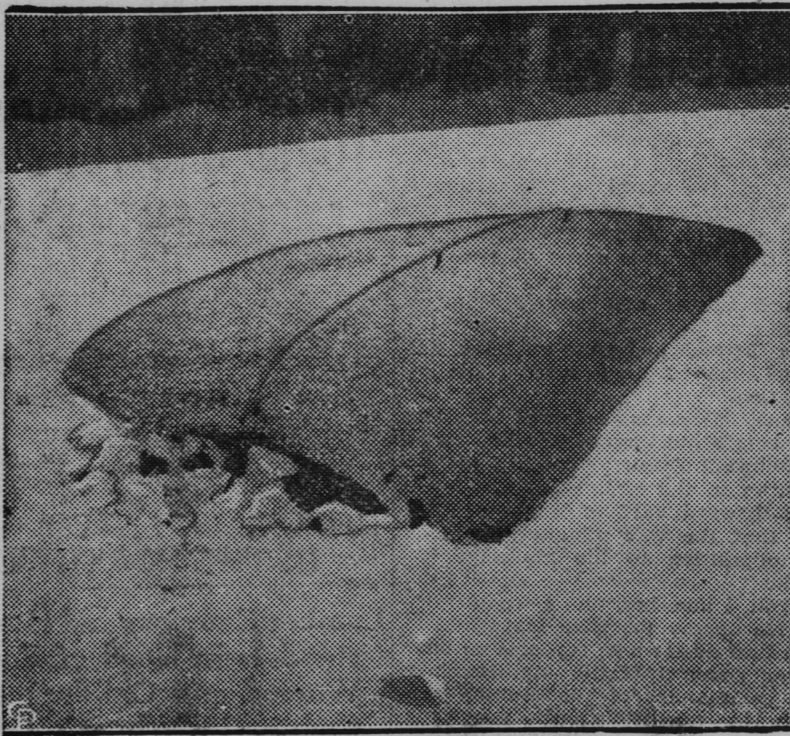
(To Be Continued)

In \$3,500,000 Fraud Trial



Seated at the defense table at the opening of their trial are William J. Graham and James McKay, Reno, Nev., gambling czars. Bok'nd them is one of their attorneys. The pair are being tried in New York City on charges of fleecing victims of \$3,500,000. They are being tried before Supreme Court Justice Willis Van Devanter.

This Motorist Knows It Snowed



Snow-covered automobile at Calumet, Mich.

Of all snowbound motorists in Michigan, the one who owns this automobile knows that it really snowed. Only the top is visible. The picture was taken in Calumet as the city witnessed a second heavy blizzard within a week.

Veteran Air Traveler



Helen Stansbury ... traveled 100,000 miles

In 1938 Helen Stansbury traveled 100,000 miles by air as director of the women's traffic division of an airline. And, as such, she has been selected as the most air-traveled woman in the United States and awarded a model plane in Chicago.

Jackson at Hearing



Robert H. Jackson ... his qualifications studied

Robert H. Jackson, named by President Roosevelt to succeed Justice Stanley Reed as U. S. solicitor general, listens to testimony as a senate judiciary subcommittee conducts a hearing in Washington on his qualifications for the position.

Another Dictator

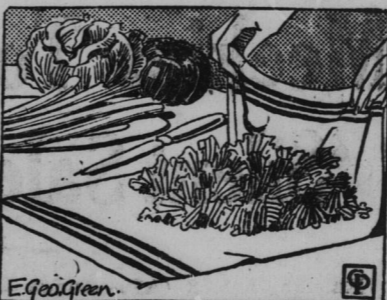


Gen. Francisco Franco ... a new dictator

In the fashion of Benito Mussolini of Italy and Adolf Hitler of Germany, Gen. Francisco Franco, chief of the Spanish insurgents, sets himself up as a president-dictator and, in a decree, regulates the political structure of his regime. Formally constituting his cabinet, General Franco gave to himself the presidency of Nationalist Spain. He will make his capital at Burgos.

—Central Press

Wife Preservers



Dry the vegetables that you are using for a salad. If you do not the salad may be too watery. A clean tea towel is best for drying the salad materials.

One-Minute Test

1. Who is chief justice of the U. S. supreme court?
2. In what country is Mt. Blanc?
3. What state is nicknamed "Old Dominion"?

Hints on Etiquette

It is undignified and confusing to sign a letter with the given name...

Lad, 4, Saves Mother's Life



Four-year-old Carey McDaniel is a little hero to his mother, with whom he is shown in their home at Roosevelt, L. I. The lad saw his mother collapse from coal gas poisoning. He jumped out of bed, dashed into the street and called a policeman, who revived his mother.

(Central Press)

Apples for Gov. Lehman



"Apple Annie's" visit to Gov. Lehman at Albany, N. Y., bore fruit as the good will ambassador of the New York and New England Apple Institute presented him with a basket of the fruit. In the picture are Gov. Lehman (left), State Agriculture Commissioner Noyes, and "Annie," otherwise Louisa Hubbard, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

(Central Press)

WRIGHT ON STAND IN OWN DEFENSE

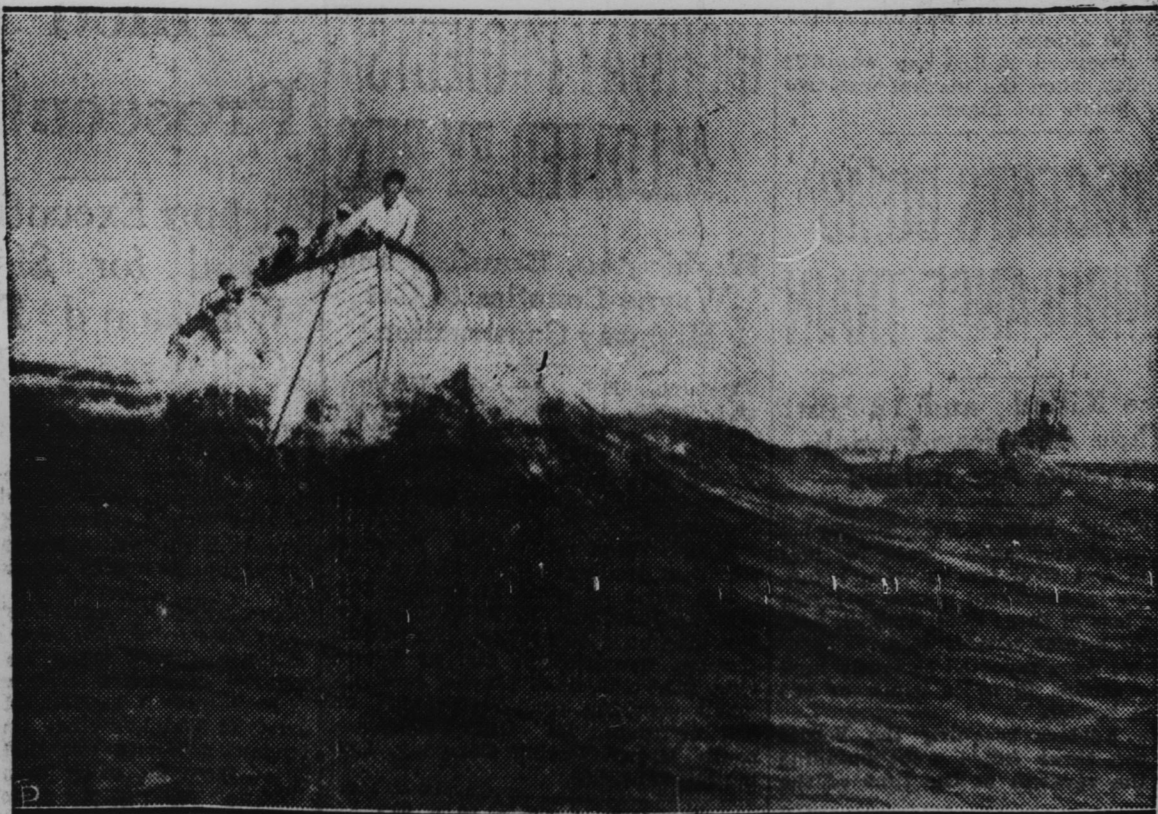


Paul Wright in court

While his attorney introduces a deposition telling how he underwent a sterilization operation for the sake of his wife, Paul Wright, air terminal executive on trial in Los Angeles for the slaying of his wife and his best friend, hangs his head in court. Wright shook with sobs as the deposition was read. According to the deposition of the surgeon who performed the operation, Wright was "very eager" to undergo it because his wife was in danger of losing her life if she had additional children.

—Central Press

Rescue 21 From Sinking Ship Off Central America



Survivors of the S. S. Newsome in teeth of raging waves

In the teeth of a raging gale and with mountainous waves impeding their progress, survivors of the S. S. Newsome approach a rescue ship in a lifeboat as their own ship, in background, is left to the

mercy of the Caribbean sea. All 21 members of the crew of the Newsome, a 1,600-ton craft under charter of the United Fruit company, were rescued. The Newsome ran aground on a reef.