

## The Charlatan

By Jack Coey

My name is Arthur Smith and I'm eighty-three years old and it was during the last year of the war that the murder happened. I was twenty-one years old living in Jaffrey NH where Mount Monadnock is, and it was in August of 1918 I was mowing on the Dean farm when I heard a scream. I had Josh Ingraham with me who was the six-year old son of Louis Ingraham whose farm I worked on. He'd jobbed me out to Dr. Dean to mow his fields, and I was hitching my horse to the mowing machine when I heard a scream. I saw Mrs. Dean running across the field. She came to the fence, and yelled, "Dr. Dean is dead in the barn! Please go look." I told Josh to stay put. I ran to the barn and came to the sliding door which was open about a foot. I pushed it open and went inside; looked around and saw nothing. I climbed the ladder to the hay loft; came back down to the main floor and went back out the sliding door. I told Mrs. Dean I didn't find anything, and she told me how Dr. Dean came back from the village last night, and went out to do his milking, and never came back. She said she came out at first light to look for him. Just then I saw Martin Garfield and his son in a wagon coming up the farm road, and I thought Mrs. Dean must have called him.

Garfield and his son who was around thirteen, I believe, got down from their wagon, and walked over to where Mrs. Dean, Josh and I were. Mrs. Dean told again how her husband came back from the village the night before around nine-thirty, and at eleven o'clock went to the barn to milk the cow. She said she watched his lantern from the kitchen window. He never came back for his soup, and she was up most of the night, worried about where he was. At first light she came out to the barn, thinking he'd fallen, and called out to him with no answer so she thought he was dead. I could see Garfield wasn't sure about all that, and asked me where we searched, and I told him the barn. He said we should walk the fields which we did and found nothing. There were three buildings on the farm, the bungalow which was on your left as you came up the farm road, and the barn which was across a field built into the side of a hill, and

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the big house which was about one hundred and fifty feet up a medium incline; the highest point of the farm with a spectacular view of Mount Monadnock. We ended up by the big house. The big house was rented by Dr. Dean to the Colfelts who were some rich folks from New York whose daughter went to school down in Cambridge. Lawrence Colfelt wasn't very well liked by too many people; fact is, people thought he was a German spy. You see, at that time, people were seeing mysterious lights off Monadnock at night which they thought were German spies signaling boats off the coast about troop movements from Fort Devens. It was in June of 1918 that Dr. Dean kicked the Colfelts off his farm. Garfield said he wanted to look inside the big house, and we tried the windows and doors and everything was locked up except for one window over the bulkhead by the front door. Garfield's son climbed through the window and unlocked the front door for us. We walked around the two floors of the place, I remember there was a musty smell and stuff was left everywhere by the Colfelts, I guess. When we were done, we found nothing.

We came out of the house, and I got separated from the other three. Garfield told me that the three of them went down to the barn and sat on the porch. He said he was trying to figure out what to do next when he looked down and saw blood in the grass. Josh was sitting next to him and saw the blood at the same time, and he reached down, and plucked a blade of grass, held it up, and asked,

"What's this?"

Garfield said he had a bad feeling about Dr. Dean, but didn't want to scare the boys so he said,

"Looks like Dr. Dean killed a chicken or something."

Garfield looked further and saw blood on the grass, and on the porch, and on the door going into the barn. He stood up and told the boys he wanted to go back to the big house to use the telephone. They walked back to the big house, and went inside; Garfield called down to the village, and talked to Selectman Coolidge; told him how Dr. Dean had gone to his barn last night to milk his cow at eleven; never returned to the bungalow, and couldn't be found. Coolidge said

he would round up some men, and be there as soon as he could.

It was just ten when I saw the automobile come up the farm road, and park near the bungalow. Three men got out of the automobile: Selectman Coolidge, Selectman Hogan, and Charlie Nute, Chief of Police. I yelled to them from the big house and they walked up to meet us. Garfield told the town officials how we searched the fields and brought them down to look at the blood stains leaving the boys on the porch of the big house.

“He’s got to be here somewhere,” said Charlie Nute.

We walked over to the bungalow from the barn, and were searching around the bungalow, and Hogan, I think it was, came across a well. He called the rest of us over, and bent over, and slid the cover off. There wasn’t much water in it or a body either.

“Any other wells on the place?” asked Hogan.

“There’s another right by the big house,” answered Garfield.

“Let’s go see it.”

We walked up to the big house and found the cistern right by the foundation, and Garfield took the cover off so we could look into it. This one had water. Coolidge asked,

“Can we get a pole to poke into the water?”

Garfield went into the big house and brought out a broom. He handed it to Coolidge, who straddled the cistern, and plunged the handle of the broom down into the water. He moved it around some and said,

“He’s here all right.”

My Lord, what a shock it was! We thought he’d wandered off and was lying hurt somewhere, and none of us expected this. Who would want to hurt such a nice man as Dr. Dean? A shaken Coolidge asked for an ice pick, and I couldn’t figure out why at first, and then I realized he was going to hook the body and pull him out. Then we saw another automobile come up the road, up to the big house, and Mutt Priest and Charlie Stratton got out. Stratton says straight off Mrs. Dean called him to come get the livestock, and I could see from his face he knew something far more serious than the livestock was going on. Garfield came back from the

barn with an ice pick, and hands it to Coolidge. Just then, we see Mrs. Dean coming up to us from the bungalow, and Coolidge says,

“You fellows look after this, and I’ll go down, and see Mrs. Dean doesn’t come up here.”

He walked off to meet Mrs. Dean. Charlie Stratton got down in the well as good as he could, and dropped the pick into the water, and pulled it up, and I saw a pair of legs with rope wrapped around the knees. A chill went through me. Someone, Nute I think, said,

“Let him down.”

No one spoke for a long moment until Hogan said,

“We should call the county coroner before we move the body anymore.”

Hogan walked off looking for Mr. Coolidge, I guessed, and later he told me when he found Mr. Coolidge in the barn with Mrs. Dean feeding the turkeys, they walked back up to the big house to call the county coroner. Coolidge said he had the idea to call Charles Rich and his wife who were long-time, good friends of the Deans to come up to comfort Mrs. Dean, but before he could dial the operator, an automobile came up the road, and Will Leighton, the undertaker, and Charles Rich, his wife, and sister-in-law, Georgiana Hodgkins got out of the vehicle, and Coolidge thought: How would anyone know we need an undertaker when no one knows he’s dead yet?

You couldn’t miss it, the black eye, I mean. Rich was one of those men you would never expect with a black eye like a priest or school teacher. We all saw it, but nobody said anything about it at the time because we were all caught up with the body. Coolidge and Hogan had contacted the county men. Rich was standing with Garfield by the well and Garfield told him,

“I guess we’ve found him here in the well.”

And Rich says,

“I guess it’s a case of suicide, isn’t it?”

“I don’t think so,” answered Garfield, “how could a man tie his knees up and pull the cover over the well. If you would like to see him, we could have him drawn up again.”

“No, I don’t care to see him,” said Rich.

It would be several hours before the county men would get here from Keene. The sky blackened up and I could tell a storm was coming. We had lunch and did some mowing waiting for the county men. When I saw the automobile come up the road, I stopped mowing, and told Josh to wait for me by the barn, and walked up to the big house. We gathered by the well; the sky getting dark. The county men, I learned later, were Dr. Dinsmore, the county examiner, and Roy Pickard, the county attorney. Dr. Dinsmore, Mr. Leighton, and Selectman Coolidge pulled the body from the well, and laid him on the ground. It was grisly! He was all tied up with a sack pulled over his head. His hands were tied behind his back, and his ankles tied. There was a potato sack pulled over his head that looked like there was something in it. When Dr. Dinsmore removed the sack, I saw the stone. I saw a horse blanket wrapped around his head, and when Dr. Dinsmore removed that, I saw the gashes on his forehead. I saw the black and blue on his neck from the rope which was wrapped around it. Rain started falling as I stood there, stunned, with the other men.

“Help me move the body into the house,” said Leighton. I helped carry the body into the big house. I was scared; I’m not ashamed to say it. I got Josh and we went home.

That afternoon, we had the worst storm of the summer. It was a fitting atmosphere for the events. It rained hard and long and the wind blew strong; it destroyed a lot of evidence: blood stains, footprints, and tire tracks.

Then there were the lights from the mountain. Mount Monadnock is sixty miles from the Atlantic Ocean and people saw these lights they couldn’t explain. I saw lights or thought I did. Over the years I’m not as sure as I once was. The lights started the summer of 1916, as I recall, and to those people who are skeptical about the lights, you got to remember that German spies blew up a munitions depot down in New Jersey during that summer. Not only that, but come to find out, Johann Von Bernstorff, the German ambassador, visited Dublin, the next town over, during the summer of 1916. Twice, in fact. Also that’s when the Colfelts showed up in Jaffrey for the first time. Now at this time, Dr. Dean was striving to keep his farm, and his friend, Charles Rich, suggested he and his wife move out of the big house, and rent that

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out for income, and live in the bungalow. Dr. Dean didn't like that idea one bit. He'd lived on the farm for over twenty years, just he and his wife, and the idea of sharing it with a stranger was something he didn't want to do at all. The Colfelts left Jaffrey for the winter, and came back in August of 1917. We had entered the war that spring. Charles Rich persuaded Dr. Dean to rent the big house to the Colfelts. The Colfelts told people their daughter, Natalye, was at college at Radcliffe in Cambridge which is why they wanted to be in the area. I used to see Natalye when I was working, from a far that is. Colfelt and Dr. Dean didn't get along right from the start. Colfelt was trust-fund wealthy and didn't have to hold a job. Dr. Dean didn't have much money and Colfelt was hiring domestic help. Also people in the village didn't take much of a shine to Colfelt. There was the feeling at that time that all able-bodied men should "work or fight" and Colfelt did neither. He spent his time riding horses or driving around in his car. Talk started about Colfelt being sympathetic to the Germans; it even went so far as to say he was the illegitimate son of Johann Von Bernstorff. Over the years it came out that Army Intelligence followed the Colfelts from New York State near West Point to New Hampshire following an incident at the military academy involving flashing lights. The Colfelts spent the winter of 17-18 on the farm, and the villagers thought that odd. Why would a couple want to spend a winter on a cold, isolated, snowy farm when they had the means to go anywhere they wanted? In April of 1918, the Department of Justice agents interviewed Dr. Dean about Colfelt looking for a connection to the lights at West Point, and the lights from the mountain, and at that time, Dr. Dean said,

"Colfelt is one hundred percent American."

By the first week of June, Dean gives the Colfelts twenty-four hours to vacate his farm, according to what Mrs. Morison told, saying,

"I need the rent very much, but I'm too good an American to keep people like that on my place."

In September of 1918, Louis Ingraham asked me if I wanted to take a two or three day job at the Morison house on Old Jaffrey Road in Peterborough. I agreed to it, and on the first

morning rode over, and looked up a man named Neville who was in charge of the grounds. I laughed to myself: in Jaffrey, we call them yards, in Peterborough, we call them grounds. He showed me what he wanted done, and I went to work. It was on the second day I was taking a break under a tree when a woman in a silk, flowery dress with a sun hat who looked like she meant business walked up to me. I realized this must be Mrs. Morison; I got to my feet.

“Who are you?” she demanded.

“Arthur Smith from Jaffrey.”

“Oh yes, the temporary chap Neville hired.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“That was terrible about Dr. Dean.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“I talked to him the day he was murdered.”

“Yes, ma’am. I saw you.”

“You saw me?”

“Yes, ma’am. I was working on the farm that day. Matter of fact I was there the following morning when they took him out of the well.”

“Dreadful. I hear talk Mrs. Dean did it.”

“It makes me mad when I hear that.”

She told me how she and two other ladies stopped at Dean farm to collect articles for a rummage sale to raise money to build a hospital in Peterborough. The ladies came to the farm mid-morning, and knocked on the door of the bungalow. Mrs. Dean answered the door in a soiled dress, and thought they were religious people looking to save her. Mrs. Morison tried to tell Mrs. Dean what they wanted, but only confused her. She invited the ladies inside, and Mrs. Morison thought the cottage looked shabby. Mrs. Morison told me the story this way:

“Dr. Dean came downstairs late for any farmer I ever knew, but he couldn’t have been more attentive. He looked for a painting he wanted to donate, and when he couldn’t find that, he invited us to go with him to the big house for some articles. I could see the other ladies

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didn't want to go so I said I would go, and he and I walked across the field to the big house. He unlocked the front door, and we went inside and there were boxes and articles strewn everywhere.

'Please overlook the mess,' he said, 'you wouldn't think the Colfelts would behave like this.'

"He climbed to the second floor while I waited, and came down with a spinning wheel. We started back to the bungalow. We got about halfway across the field toward the bungalow when Dr. Dean stopped and said, 'Mrs. Morison, Miss Ware told me you had seen lights up in this part of the country. Have you seen them lately?'

'Yes, Dr. Dean, I saw them last night.'

'Could you show me from where? Could you show me the place where they come from, from here?'

"I walked a few paces and got the exact spot of where I saw lights from my house, and I told him,"

'Yes, it is from here I see the lights.' "And he was very much interested, and marked the spot with a collection of stones. I said,"

'Oh, I would give anything if I could see the lights from here some night.' "And he became quite serious, and asked,"

'Mrs. Morison, are you ever in communication with anyone who could be of help with the lights?' I said,

'Yes, I am in constant communication with the Department of Justice.' He asked,

'Can you do something for me?' I answered,

'Yes, I'd be very glad to.'

'Can you get a message to send me up one of the best men they have,' he asked, 'I want the very best, not just an ordinary man who doesn't know his work.' I answered,

'Dr. Dean, couldn't I do better than that? Couldn't you tell me what it is, and I will get the message to them at once? I'll telephone as soon as I get home.'



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'No. I don't want you to telephone. I can't give you the message because what I know is too dangerous for a woman. I have no right to tell you.'

'Why, Dr. Dean, if it is as serious as that why haven't you sent for someone before?'

'Because I wasn't ready. Two agents were here last spring but I wasn't ready. I wanted to be perfectly sure. Now, the quicker someone comes the better.'

'I think you can trust me, Dr. Dean. If you could tell me I think I could give the message sooner.'

'No. I haven't the right to. You are a woman. When can you go to Boston?'

'I can go in the morning.'

"Dr. Dean started walking again, and then, stopped."

'What do you know about the Colfelts?'

'Why I don't know anything about them,' I answered, 'I think you would know more than anyone else as they are living on your place.'

'I did Mrs. Morison. I knew just a little too much. I gave them twenty-four hours to get out.'

'What do you mean, Dr. Dean? What was the matter?'

"He hesitated like he didn't want to say anymore, and then, he said,"

'Well, I needed the rent very much but, I am too good an American to keep people of that kind on my place.'

"We started back to the bungalow again until he asked,"

'How late can I reach you on the telephone tonight?'

'You can get me at any time as I have five telephones in my house, and one right by my bed, and I'm always up late, and you can reach me at any time. You needn't hesitate to call me. Why?'

'If I come out here tonight, and see the lights, I'll call you up.'

'Why Dr. Dean, would that be safe?'

'I can call you up because we might talk about the turkeys, even if it is late. I might say

something about bringing the turkeys over, and you would know what that meant. Then if you will look out, and see what you see from your place, we can compare notes afterwards.'

"We walked back to the bungalow then, and I rejoined the other ladies, and we went on our way, and I forgot all about Dr. Dean calling until later that night when I was in my room at about quarter to midnight when I heard a high-powered automobile on the road outside my window that went by my house at a high rate of speed toward Dean farm. It was very rare for an automobile to be on that road at that time of night, and I thought there must be an emergency of some sort. I was writing letters at my desk looking out a window onto the road, and about an hour and a half later; I heard the high whine of a car engine coming towards me from the Dean farm direction. I looked out my window to see if I could recognize the automobile, but its headlights were off, and it went by so fast, I couldn't make anything out. This car, whoever it was, was out at the time Dr. Dean was being attacked as it turns out."

I could see Neville coming toward us.

"I say, Arthur, don't you think your break is sufficient?"

Yes sir, the black eye. There were only three people who knew for certain how Rich got his black eye, and they were family members: himself, his wife, and his sister-in-law, Georgiana Hodgkins. Georgiana didn't live in Jaffrey, and visited her sister and brother-in-law on vacations from Washington Irving High School in lower Manhattan where she taught English. She lived on Long Island with her mother. Rich claimed Dr. Dean visited him the night of his murder, and Rich was doctoring his eye from the kick from his horse, and of course, Dr. Dean was murdered later on. So again, the only people who knew for certain how Rich got his black eye were family members. That and Rich wanted to create the impression that the friendship between the two men was under no strain over a woman or Colfelt or anything else. Mr. Rich was a smart man to be sure. I was told he graduated from MIT, third in his class, no less. He ran the bank, and was moderator of the town meeting, and a Municipal Judge; treasurer for the school, and choir director at the church. He started an insurance business, and represented Jaffrey both in the house and senate in Concord. He was a Mason whom the Catholics didn't trust because they

were anti-Catholic, and a member of the National Guard.

He was always stiff and formal in manner and quiet too. If he liked you, he liked you; if not, you didn't know why, and there wasn't much you could do about it. It wasn't long after the murder I heard Russell Henschman going around town saying Mrs. Dean did it. I knew Russell Henschman, and he was an all right guy, but he asked how high when Rich said jump. There's two reasons for that, as far as I can tell, the first is his sister, Susan, works at the bank with Rich, and there is a rumor she has a relationship with Rich that has more to do than deposit and withdrawal, at least of money, that is. Closely related to that is Russell got jobs he couldn't have gotten otherwise if it wasn't for the help of Rich. Russell was selectman for a year, and then, Superintendent of the Water Works, and then, postmaster. Looks to me like Rich was currying favor with Susan by helping her brother get jobs. And then it looked like Russell was doing pay-back to Rich. Like I say, I saw Russell going around promoting Mrs. Dean as a suspect which made me mad. I knew Mrs. Dean, not all that well, but good enough, and she was a kind and gentle person. Then there was that business when the paper came out. On Thursday, August 15th a day after the body was found, The Peterborough Transcript published a front page story about the murder, and reported blood stains found in the barn and big house. Later that morning, Russell goes up to the farm, and cleans out in the barn and big house. When he was asked why he did that, he said,

"I was turning off the water so the pipes wouldn't freeze."

In August? I thought.

Mrs. Richardson told me in Goodnow's one afternoon that same week as the murder an automobile stopped in front of her house at one-thirty in the morning. Her husband worked overnight at the tack shop so she was alarmed there'd been an accident. She looked out her front window, and saw Mr. and Mrs. Rich get out of the automobile, and walk to the back of the auto, and take out some bundles which they threw into the dump next to her house. She thought it funny they would be dumping trash at one-thirty in the morning, but not as funny as every night after that, Mrs. Rich and Georgiana Hodgkins coming by her house to look at the

dump, and a few days after that, Russell Henschman showing up and digging a trench through the dump to lay a water pipe for a new house that was being built, and throwing the dirt from the trench over the bundles thrown there by the Riches.

“And do you know, Arthur, Henschman didn’t lay the pipe in the trench until a year later,” she said.

I’ve known Mrs. Bryant all my life. I can’t tell you how many band-aids she’s administered to me until I graduated to bandages and stitches, and one time, even a plaster cast. She’s the town nurse, and she and Miss Hiller were sent by the selectmen to look after Mrs. Dean. A week later, they took Mrs. Dean to a sanitarium in Worcester. I had to see her about a rash on my arms, and she said,

‘This talk that Mrs. Dean killed her husband is absolute foolishness; she is incapable of that kind of violence, but there is talk from the Rich household about her killing her husband, and the Richs and the Deans were such good friends for so many years that I marvel at what people can say about each other. Mrs. Rich warned me about Mrs. Dean, not to be alone with her, as she might be the murderess. We moved Mrs. Dean to the hospital in Worcester yesterday, and I must say plainly, I’m ashamed of my part in this. Mr. Coolidge told me and Miss Hiller to help Dr. Childs, and it looks like it’s the selectmen who are asking this, but I always suspect the secret organization of men has some influence in all this. Mr. Coolidge said it was costing the town money for police and nurses, and they wanted to see if she was insane or not. She’s no more insane than I am; she’s forgetful and absentminded, yes, but insane? Not on your life. Somebody wants her out of the way so they can say what they want about her. She is a kind and gentle woman, and what people say about her, especially people who profess to be her friends will make your blood run cold. Dr. Childs was in charge, and he told me to have Miss Hiller help me because we were forcing Mrs. Dean to do something against her will, and she could be difficult. I tried to make it as easy as I could. I tried to coax her. I kind of suggested to Mrs. Dean if she would like to take an automobile ride with us. She wanted no part of that so when it became obvious we were going to have to be forceful, Dr. Childs gave Miss Hiller a

hypodermic needle with a sedative, and she snuck up behind her, and injected her, and very shortly she began to get drowsy. Her face flushed which worried me, and she said,

‘What if I died now? You wouldn’t need to come over anymore. You have been awfully good to come here every night to stay with me.’

We helped her out to the auto, and got her in the back seat, Miss Hiller on one side, and me on the other. Mr. Dillon drove, and Dr. Childs in his own auto followed us to Jaffrey where he left off, and we drove onto Massachusetts. She would nod off, and wake again, and complain about being tired. She kept asking if we were taking her back to her farm, and I lied to her, and told her we were taking a roundabout way. I feel terribly about this, Arthur; I’m ashamed of myself for deceiving a vulnerable, trusting woman like that. I would feel the same way lying to a child. She was getting more and more agitated about not being at home, and something funny happened. I started to hum, and she said,

‘I didn’t know you could sing,’ and she calmed right down. It was funny how my humming calmed her down even more than the sedative. When we arrived at the asylum in Worcester, she got out of the auto, and wanted to know what time it was, and I told her it was half-past three, and she said,

‘We have been going for a long time. I am going to rest awhile, and then, we will start home again.’

She had no idea what was going on. We got her in a chair in a waiting room, and when she closed her eyes, the three of us got out of there as fast as we could. I felt so bad, I felt like crying. We played an awfully dirty trick on that woman, and the poor dear had just lost her husband. The selectmen tried to tell me it was for the best, but I didn’t feel good about it when we did it, and I don’t feel any better talking to you right now. I realized after she could have stayed with me in Jaffrey, but of course, I always think of the better plan when it’s too late.’

I knew Mrs. Bryant to be a good and kind woman.

“I’m sorry,” was all I could think to say.

I worked for William Leighton from time to time, mostly digging graves, and I helped dig

Dr. Dean's grave on Friday, and he was buried on Saturday, August 17th, and I was told later no autopsy had been performed.

Mr. Rich was one of those men who kept everything close to the vest. He had a respected position in the town, and had to be discreet in his behavior, and yet, when I watched him in the bank, I could see he liked good looking woman. Dr. Dean was known as a ladies man too and enjoyed the attention of women, the younger even more. Dr. Dean was a good story teller – a funny story teller. People whispered about Mr. Rich and Susan Henschman, and then, there was Yvonne Chouinard. Yvonne was a fortyish – year old widow who lived in a small, run-down house on River Street. Her husband was killed some years back in a logging accident. Yvonne was a sensuous woman men admired, and talked about amongst themselves, and Charles Rich was not immune. I was in the bank several times when she came in, and saw the attention, sometimes ignoring other customers, Rich gave her. Yvonne, for her part, knew her power over men, and in a town with lonely, single women because of the war, she got all the attention she wanted. Mr. Rich and Yvonne were seen one night coming out of the basement of the Unitarian Church long after the activities ended. One afternoon they were seen coming out of the woods for no reason anybody could think of. Dr. Dean liked Yvonne too and would often stop by Goodnow's store where she clerked. He sometimes would talk to her until closing, and one night, I saw them laughing with each other while walking toward Yvonne's house. When it came to women, Rich was at the disadvantage to Dean: he had to watch his behavior more than Dean did, and Dean's wife was infirm, and could not leave the farm, which allowed Dr. Dean to act more freely in the village. And I can tell you this; Mr. Rich did not like to lose.

Ah yes, Mr. Colfelt! People thought he was aloof, arrogant, and a spy. It was true, why would you live on an isolated New Hampshire farm when you had no interest in farming? Not only that, but he would disappear for days at a time. Or there would be strange autos driving onto the farm after dark. He had money though, and that maybe where Rich came in. Several years back, Delcie Bean and Merrill Symonds wanted to move their lumber yard from Rindge to Jaffrey to be closer to the railroad. They found a tract of land for \$125,000 dollars, and Bean

and Symonds went to Charles Rich for a loan. Because of the war, and the shortage of money, Rich had to turn them down. He advised Bean and Symonds to try the larger banks in Boston and Worcester; they did so, and came back empty-handed. Rich came up with a plan to loan money to fellow Masons they could invest in the land deal. In return, the investors received stock certificates. Even with the loans to the Masons, they were \$50,000 dollars short. Bean and Symonds bought the land so somebody had to kick in the money. Colfelt was the only person around to have that kind of money, and if it was him, and later on, he was about to be exposed as a German spy, then the Masons for financial and reputational reasons would have cause to want to talk Dr. Dean out of exposing Colfelt. A couple of men go up to the barn, when they know he's milking, and try and talk him out of it; Dean doesn't cooperate, and Rich loses his temper.

Walter Lindsay was a well-respected man in town. He'd been a farmer and went overseas to fight in the war, and got injured at the Battle of Somme. He came home unable to farm and Charlie Nute, the Chief of Police, gave him a part-time job on the police force. It was about a month after Dean kicked the Colfelts off his farm that Dr. Dean asked Walter about police protection. Walter said,

"On July 13th I met Dr. Dean in front of the post office. He noticed my police badge, and asked if I was on the force, and I told him yes. Then he said, 'I have lived on the farm for twenty-eight years, and I have never been molested in any way, shape or manner, but if I wanted police protection, where would I telephone to?' I told him either the station, Duncan's, or Fred Stratton's livery stable."

"What did you make of it, Walter?" I asked.

"He was worried about somebody was my thought," he said.

It was about ten days after the body was found, on a Friday night, if I remember right, that two couple got off the evening train, and the first thing to say about them was they weren't from Jaffrey, no sir, they may not even have been from New Hampshire, and in the

case of the younger couple, it was probably safe to say they weren't from the United States. The older couple was the brother and sister-in-law of the victim, and the younger couple was Doctor Willie Wendt Dekerlor and his wife, Elsa Schiaparelli. The name of the victim's brother was Frederick, and he told me he thought Doctor Dekerlor possessed extrasensory powers with which he could investigate his brother's murder. Both Doctor Dekerlor and his wife were psychic and clairvoyant, and I didn't quite know what to make of that. Doctor Dekerlor was a handsome man – short – but handsome, and he wore a black suit with a monocle which made him different just looking at him. Elsa was odd-looking. The story was both men were writers and lecturers in New York City. They walked from the station across the common to the Granite State Hotel. Frederick Dean had been to Jaffrey before, and knew Mr. Rich, and he was the first person they went to see Saturday morning. The three men met in Rich's office at the bank. Doctor Dekerlor and Mr. Rich didn't like each other right off. Rich talked about the crime, and what was known about how the body was tied up, and the gashes on the victim's forehead, and of course, both men saw the black eye and scratches on Rich's face. Doctor Dekerlor studied Rich very closely. Rich told how he'd been kicked by his horse; how he was carrying a basket of pea pods, and surprised the horse, and she kicked up, hitting the basket and driving the pipe he was smoking into his eye. Doctor Dekerlor listened, and thought,

Well, how can a horse kick a man's face, and produce a cut here, and a cut there, and that kind of black eye. More likely a fist made that black eye than a pipe, I would say.

Rich went on to suggest Mrs. Dean killed her husband, and Frederick Dean was taken back by that. In the time he'd known her, he'd never seen any behavior that would make that claim believable. He was further surprised she was in a sanitarium in Worcester. The men finished up their interview with Mr. Rich, and as they walked out of the bank, Doctor Dekerlor said,

“Let's go have a look at the crime scene, shall we?”

I'd met Frederick Dean a couple of years ago on a visit to his brother, and I met him again that Saturday morning. Doctor Dekerlor was certainly different than anybody I'd met



before. I got the feeling I wasn't very important to him. I talked to Frederick about his brother's murder, and I remember telling him I didn't think Mrs. Dean did it. The selectmen asked me to cut down a partially broken off tree branch from the storm the day the body was found, and I went back to work on that. I saw they were walking around the farm. They ended up spending a lot of time at the barn, and Doctor Dekerlor looked over the porch with a magnifying glass and took photographs, and felt he'd found something of significance. Then they walked up to where the well is, and Doctor Dekerlor examined the area around the well closely. Once more, he took photographs of the foundation of the big house right above where the well is. Then, he stood up and announced,

"I have a hypothesis!"

"That soon?" questioned Frederick.

"There's one more step. We'll have to exhume your brother's body."

"What?" exclaimed Frederick.

On Sunday afternoon, the 25th, Feri Weiss went to see Roy Pickard in his office in Keene. Before joining the Department of Justice, Feri had been an immigration inspector in New York Harbor, and had several dealings with Doctor Dekerlor and his wife Elsa Schiaparelli. He told Pickard Doctor Dekerlor and his wife had been deported from England in the summer of 1915 for being a fraud and cheating people out of their money. Roy Pickard met Doctor Dekerlor on Saturday and had the same impression Charles Rich did. Pickard realized an opportunity to play Frederick Dean against Doctor Dekerlor. He called Sheriff Lord into his office, and ordered him to instruct Frederick Dean to come see him Monday night.

The selectmen had the authority to allow Dr. Dean's body to be exhumed, and so on Monday morning, the 26th, Frederick Dean and Doctor Dekerlor met with the selectmen. William Coolidge, Edward Boynton, and Peter Hogan met with Frederick Dean and Doctor Dekerlor in an office on the second floor of the library. The selectmen didn't feel comfortable with strangers, foreign stranger's even worse and foreign strangers who were doctors even worse than that. The selectmen were on one side of the room, and the visitors were on the

other. Doctor Dekerlor was in a black suit and wore a monocle. Frederick introduced him to the selectmen,

“Gentlemen, thank-you for seeing us this morning. May I introduce Doctor Willie Wendt Dekerlor who’s here to help me investigate my brother’s murder. Doctor Dekerlor is the vice-president of The International Congress for Experimental Psychology and the author of several books, and a correspondent for The New York World and The Boston American.”

The three wise men slowly nodded their heads. Frederick Dean gave them time to savor the information. He continued,

“Doctor Dekerlor has completed a preliminary examination of the murder scene, and has gathered evidence which leads us to make the following request. We ask permission to exhume my brother’s body...”

“What?” cried out Peter Hogan.

Doctor Dekerlor opened his mouth to speak.

“Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen, before we go any further, I would like an opportunity to talk with the good doctor so we may know each other better. It is unusual for us to have such a distinguished visitor in our town,” said William Coolidge. The men became quiet.

“Good morning, Doctor.”

“Good morning to you, sir.”

“I hope you find the village of Jaffrey friendly, sir?”

“Quaint might be the word.”

“Yes, of course. What is your occupation, sir?”

“I am a psychologist, a criminal psychologist – a doctor and a lecturer.”

“Very nice, yes, very nice. Do you mean a physician, sir, when you say doctor?”

“No. I am not.”

“Oh yes, I see, certainly. Where are you from, good sir?”

“My wife is a fashion designer so we reside in Paris, and spend time in New York as well. We keep an apartment in Greenwich Village.”

“Why, my good gracious! New Hampshire must be awfully dull for you, sir?”

Doctor Dekerlor took the monocle from his eye.

“Quaint, like I said, but I gave my word to my friend I would help him illuminate the circumstances of his brother’s unfortunate death.”

“Quite so, sir, quite so.”

“You must speak French,” observed Boynton.

“Yes, I speak five languages. I speak German and French best of all. I speak English, Polish, and Italian next best, and Spanish afterwards. I have studied about eighteen other languages besides. I can read them, but I don’t speak them much. I know some Russian. I travel extensively, and I am very well known, not only in New York, Washington, and in France as well as England and Italy, but I am very well known probably all over the world through my various writings and my various activities.”

There was a pause as the men looked at each other. Hogan said,

“Your English is good.”

The men turned and looked at Hogan.

“You want to exhume Dr. Dean’s body?” asked Coolidge.

“Yes,” answered Frederick Dean, “Doctor Dekerlor has...”

“If I may sir,” interrupted Dekerlor. He put the monocle in his eye.

“You see, I have some measurements of some markings at the murder site which when I match them to the markings on some individual’s face will place that individual at the murder scene.”

There was no misunderstanding to whom he was referring.

“Remarkable,” said Boynton.

“But for me to be reliable, I need the marks from the victim’s forehead.”

No one spoke. The three selectmen looked at one another.

“Well,” said Coolidge, “I would ask that we adjourn this meeting until after lunch which would allow myself and the selectmen time to consider your request. We would have to

consider the family..."

"Mrs. Dean is in Worcester," argued Frederick Dean.

"This meeting is adjourned until one o'clock," announced Coolidge.

Coolidge stood at a window and watched Frederick Dean and Doctor Dekerlor on the street below. A voice was speaking and he turned from the window and realized it was Boynton,

"Just tell him while we respect – or maybe even admire – his expertise, this is a town matter, and has to be dealt with by town authorities."

"We don't want an outsider like that poking around in our town business," said Hogan, "which of us has not benefitted from a favor from Charles?"

Coolidge sat at a desk and put his head in his hands. He said,

"You're overlooking something."

"What?" asked Hogan.

Coolidge dropped his hands from his head and looked up.

"The man writes for two major newspapers. He could make us the laughingstock of the country."

No one spoke. It was Coolidge, who said,

"No gentlemen, I think we let him have his way."

"But Bill, he's going to cause a lot of trouble for Charles," said Boynton.

"Not necessarily," answered Coolidge, "if we make a stipulation we are to be present to observe his findings. All we have to say is that his findings were inconclusive and this whole trick will go nowhere."

"But what if he is conclusive?" asked Hogan.

"You're going to prove murder with scratch marks?" questioned Boynton.

"Easy to say when it's not your neck on the chopping block,"

said Hogan. The men looked at each other.

Monday afternoon, after their successful meeting with the selectmen, Frederick Dean

and Doctor Dekerlor traveled to Keene to meet with Roy Pickard. Sheriff Lord made it plain to Frederick Dean this was a private meeting, and Frederick Dean tried to discourage Doctor Dekerlor from coming. It didn't work. The men drove to Keene Monday afternoon, and ate dinner at a Keene restaurant. They showed up at the jail and sheriffs kept Doctor Dekerlor in a waiting room while Frederick met with Roy Pickard. Roy Pickard told Frederick Dean what he knew about Doctor Dekerlor's disreputable past; Pickard told Fredrick their conversation was private, and on the drive back to Jaffrey, Doctor Dekerlor sensed that something was different about Frederick. It came to a climax the following morning when they were leaving the bank after a visit to Charles Rich, and Dekerlor made the observation,

"Did you see that the scar on his face was healed?"

"What are you talking about?" answered Frederick, "he never had a scar on his face."  
Dekerlor stopped walking.

"What, Mr. Dean? On Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, you and I spoke all the time of the cut on Rich's face. Now, you want to deny it? Do you, Mr. Dean, resort to lying?"

"You're a fine one to accuse me of lying."

"Is that how you are going to treat the memory of your brother? Do you mean to say you want to drop this matter after the arrogant attitude of Mr. Rich in the bank? What did they do to you over there at Keene? What did Pickard tell you?"

Frederick Dean grabbed Dekerlor by the arm, and said,

"I'll defy you. I'll defy you. I don't want you to talk to me like that."

"Mr. Dean, I don't think you are being fair to the memory of your brother. Someone has changed your attitude, but you should seek justice for your brother."

"I'm going back to New York. They don't want us here. I'm telling you, Doctor, they don't want you here, and you should leave with me."

"I'm afraid that is not possible, Mr. Dean."

That afternoon, Frederick Dean got on the Boston train to go back to New York, and Father Hennon offered Dekerlor a room in the rectory.

With Frederick Dean gone, Doctor Dekerlor saw an opportunity to expand his business opportunities. This ad appeared in the Peterborough Transcript:

World Renowned Clairvoyant & Palmist, Dr. Willie Wendt Dekerlor is available for readings at The Granite State Hotel, Room 302, from three to five Wednesday afternoons. Fees Negotiated. The Future is in Your Palms.

Two married women; Adele Johnson and Edith Foster came to the door and knocked. Edith slipped her wedding band off her finger. The door opened and there stood the short, but handsome, Dr. Dekerlor in a black suit. He bowed slightly and motioned the women in. The shades were drawn and the room was lit with ca middle of the room. A milky, cantaloupe – size crystal ball rested on a stand in the middle of the table.

“How can I be of assistance this afternoon ladies?” purred Dekerlor. Adele smelled something funny. Ah, incense, she realized. Dekerlor pointed to a chair at the table for one of the women, and brought a chair for the other. They sat at the table, and Dekerlor placed the monocle in his eye and studied the two women.

“I would like my palm read and maybe some clairvoyance after,” said Adele.

“Hummm...yes, I see,” said the Doctor, “palmistry is for the living and future, and clairvoyance is for the past and dead,” he explained.

“I want to talk to Martha Washington,” blurted out Edith.

The Doctor gave an amused chuckle.

“I’m afraid it doesn’t work that way. You see you must have some corporal connection to the person you’re communing with.”

“Oh!” exclaimed Edith.

“I would like you to predict my future,” said Adele.

“All right, then, let’s close our eyes and concentrate. Your hand, please.”

Adele extended her hand across the table. Edith giggled.

“Shhh,” hissed The Doctor. Edith got red in the face.

Dekerlor moved his thumbs over Adele’s palm, and looked up at the ceiling.

"I see three children," he said.

"That ain't right! exclaimed Edith.

"Two. A boy and girl."

"I'm sorry that's not right either," said Adele. Edith cackled.

"Quiet Please! You're interfering with my concentration."

Dekerlor took a moment to concentrate.

"I see one."

"Brilliant!" exclaimed Edith.

"There's negative energy in the room which is interfering with my ability to read accurately," complained The Doctor.

"Bet there's no interference when comes time to pay the bill," said Edith.

"Your child is a boy."

"Wrong again," said Edith.

"I see the number forty-five."

"What does that mean?" asked Adele.

The Doctor removed the monocle from his eye.

"Your age perhaps," he said.

"Wrong again!" snapped Edith, "You charge people money for this?"

Dekerlor gave Edith a dirty look.

"There's too much negative energy in the room," he explained.

"Try me then," suggested Edith extending her hand, palm up, to Dekerlor.

"Of course, Mademoiselle," he said.

"Ha!" exclaimed Edith as she pulled her wedding ring from her pocket.

Will Leighton, the undertaker, hired me to help Mutt Priest and Oscar Dillon dig up Dr. Dean's body so Doctor Dekerlor could look at it. He had some theory how he could show who was at the murder scene by matching scratch marks from the crime scene to people's faces. The ground was still soft so it didn't take us long at all. It was Friday, August 30th. We had the

# Writing Raw

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coffin out of the ground when I saw Mr. Johnson's wagon on the road. Mr. Johnson owned the photography store in town, and was asked by Doctor Dekerlor to take pictures of the corpse. The wagon was followed by a group of men: the selectmen, Mr. Leighton, Reverend Enslin, two doctors: Childs and Dinsmore, Charles Rich, and Charlie Nute, the Chief of Police. Mr. Rich did not look happy. The men gathered around the open grave, and Mr. Coolidge said,

"Gentlemen, May We Bow Our Heads."

The men took off their hats and bowed their heads. Reverend Enslin said the prayer. He finished and Mr. Leighton went to the coffin carrying a pry bar and a hammer. He tapped the bar between the side and top of the coffin and hit it harder and harder until the top came loose. At the sight of the corpse, several men stepped back. Mr. Johnson had his camera set up on a tripod and was making adjustments. He adjusted the angle of his camera and took a picture. He moved the tripod and took another picture. He took a third picture. When he was finished, Dr. Childs and Dr. Dinsmore came to the coffin and examined the body. When they were finished, Doctor Dekerlor with a sheet of white paper in his hand approached the coffin. We were curious about what he was going to do. He kind of looked over the whole corpse, and then, paid attention to the forehead. He placed the sheet of white paper up against the forehead, and traced the marks on the forehead to the paper, and then, stood up and said,

"Gentlemen, if you would be so kind to come with me to the Dean farm."

I rode with Mr. Hogan to the farm; he parked by the bungalow, and we walked over to where the men were gathered by the barn. I could see that Doctor Dekerlor was quite proud of his work. When all the men had gathered, Doctor Dekerlor bent over and matched the scratch marks on the barn porch to the marks on the piece of paper. Several of the men got closer to get a better look. When he was satisfied, Doctor Dekerlor led us all to the foundation of the big house where the well was, and applied the piece of paper to the foundation of the house. Once again, several of the men leaned over to get a better look. Then he walked over and put the paper up against Rich's face, and announced,

"Strange to relate, these marks on the paper fit the marks on Rich's face. Mr. Rich where



did you get your black eye?"

Mr. Rich quietly said,

"At the right time and place I will tell."

It was a tense moment; the two men despised each other. We all silently walked away.

It was an August night, several hours after dark, and there was a single window lighted in the rectory. A figure walked up the sidewalk and turned onto the rectory walkway and stopped at the dark door. He knocked and waited, turning his body right and left. He went to knock a second time when the door swung open, and a woman holding a candle stood there.

"Is Father Hennon available?" he asked.

"One moment."

The light receded down the hallway and returned again.

"Come in," she invited.

He entered the door, and followed the woman down the hallway. She led him into a room where Father Hennon was reading. She left the room, closing the door behind her, and Father Hennon took off his glasses.

"Albany," he said, "this is unexpected."

"I know Father, and I'm sorry to disturb you like this. There is something weighting on me, and I don't want another restless night. I hate to disturb you at this late hour, but I know I won't be able to sleep until I can share this with someone."

"I see," said the priest, motioning Albany to sit in a chair, "you couldn't share this burden with your wife?"

"I have, Father, but I need to tell someone in authority."

Father Hennon smiled.

"Albany, I don't know how much corporeal authority I have," commented the priest.

"I need some guidance as to what to do."

"I see. Tell me what is troubling you, and we'll see if I can help."

"Father, the night of the murder, I saw Charles Rich's horse and buggy at the sawdust

chute at nine o'clock."

The two men looked at each other and there was a distant sound of thunder. Father Hennon spoke,

"I don't think I understand." He was smiling. Albany leaned forward in his chair.

"Rich says he was kicked right before nine. He swears to it."

"Oh yes. Yes indeed. I see your problem."

The men thought about it. They heard thunder. Finally, the priest asked,

"It was Charles Rich you saw at the chute?"

"No, no, Father, it was Ed Baldwin, but it was Rich's horse and buggy. I know it was."

"Why would Ed Baldwin be driving Rich's horse and buggy?"

"They share a barn, and sometimes, Baldwin comes to the chute for sawdust."

"With Rich's horse and buggy?"

"Yes, Father."

"You're certain of this?"

"Yes, Father, I am."

They heard thunder. They paused. The thunder stopped and there was quiet.

"What should I do, Father?"

The priest stood up from his chair and walked to a window, and spent several moments looking out before he said,

"Albany I'm glad you came to me to share your uncertainties, and I want you to know you are always welcome to do so. What you know is important, and should be shared with the authorities. I pledge to keep what you tell me a secret. Let me ask you how did you come to know this?"

"I was the night watchman that night at Bean and Symonds, and I was doing my nine o'clock rounds when I spoke to Ed Baldwin at the sawdust chute. I was fired a week after when I told my supervisor about what I had seen. He claimed I was sleeping on the job which wasn't true."

“Of course.”

“Rich has a lot of influence in this town so I knew there was a good chance it would bring me trouble.”

“You should speak the truth, Albany, and what happens after that is out of your hands.”

“Thank-you Father. I needed someone to say that to me.”

They heard rain falling.

“Sounds like I’m going to get wet,” joked Albany.

“You’re welcome to stay the night here.”

“Oh no, Father, I couldn’t – you know, the misses, but thank-you. Thank-you very much.”

Father Hennon rang a bell, and in a few moments, the woman was at the door to lead Albany out.

Dr. Dean asked Mr. and Mrs. Colfelt to leave his farm during the first week of June, 1918. They moved to a hilltop house in Temple. Colfelt was still attracting unwanted attention for not working during war time. He received \$20,000 dollars a year from a trust fund, but needed to get a job to stop the negative impression. In August of 1918, he got hired as a laborer at the Atlantic Shipbuilding Corporation in Portsmouth NH. He rented a suite of rooms at the Rockingham Hotel where his co-workers could afford to get their shoes shined, and he earned forty-two cents a day. He started his job on Monday, August 12th, the day before Dr. Dean was murdered.

It was a two and a half hour drive from Portsmouth to Jaffrey, and when interviewed by the federal agents about his whereabouts the night of the murder, Colfelt said his automobile was in the shop in Nashua for an overhaul. Mrs. Morison told the agents about the automobile going by her house at a high rate of speed about quarter to twelve the night of the attack, and Colfelt could have left Portsmouth as late as nine o’clock.

“You’re telling me a guy with his means couldn’t hire an auto?” was Valkenburgh’s comment.

Valkenburgh had a hunch from talking with Colfelt that he was being tipped off by someone in Jaffrey. He wanted to test his hunch. He let it be known all over Jaffrey for several days that he, Weiss, and Norman Gifford were going to Portsmouth on a certain day to interrogate Colfelt. When they arrived in Portsmouth the following afternoon, the desk clerk told them Colfelt had checked out that morning.

It was late in the afternoon on a Monday in mid-November when word came the war was over. The factories, shops, and offices emptied out, and everyone, it seemed like, gathered in the common. A bonfire was lit and people were singing with their arms linked together. It was a celebration of deliverance from evil. There was a parade down Main Street of automobiles. For the first time in a long time, we felt hope, and that lasted about a week, until another, darker feeling took over. Charles Rich's black eye like cancer began to spread distrust and suspicion between Catholics and Protestants. On the Catholic side there were Father Hennon and Doctor Dekerlor with Charles Rich as their suspect, and on the Protestant side there were the Masons and Roy Pickard with Mrs. Dean as their suspect. The Masons were angry at Doctor Dekerlor for his accusation against Rich, an accusation made by an outsider for sure, and against a man as well-respected as Charles Rich for double sure. The selectmen were caught in between the Masons and Doctor Dekerlor: on the one side, they couldn't allow a stranger to get in the middle of sensitive Jaffrey affairs, and on the other, they didn't want to be ridiculed in the papers by Doctor Dekerlor who was free lancing for two Boston papers and a New York one. We heard about Frederick Dean going back to New York, and we couldn't figure out why. The Catholic parish was made up of workingmen, and the Masons were a secret group of owners, managers, and businessmen who were anti-Catholic. The distrust and suspicion started out as covert and grew to be overt. People crossed the street rather than have to say hello, or people would walk out of stores; there were fights in the schoolyard, and rocks thrown through windows. I always had the feeling Father Hennon knew something, and he did things I thought were smart. He talked to the Department of Justice agents, Robert Valkenburgh and Feri Weiss because they were independent of the county and state officials. The more I learned

about this investigation over the years, the less I understood why the county and state officials would pull any funny stuff with the federal guys watching them. There were two different jurisdictions: espionage for the federal guys and murder for the state guys. The federal guys were here investigating the signal lights under the Espionage Act of 1917 which prohibits any assistance to the enemy. If Dean was killed by German agents that would come under espionage. Father Hennon asked for a Grand Jury to review the evidence, and Roy Pickard, who said over and over Mrs. Dean did it, said no, not once, but two or three times, because there was not enough evidence. Pickard said no to a Grand Jury to Father Hennon, the Department of Justice, the selectmen, and the citizens of Jaffrey. As far as Cheshire County was concerned, Mrs. Dean killed her husband in a jealous fit of rage, and that's as far as the investigation went. I said I thought Father Hennon was being smart: he asked the Department of Justice to perform an autopsy on the body.

Dekerlor spent an afternoon going through the bungalow and big house, and he announced to the selectmen that he'd found important, new evidence. He said he would show his evidence in the lobby of the Granite State Hotel on Tuesday afternoon at 2:00. When the time came, the selectmen, several farmers, some businessmen, and shop keepers along with a sheriff and a newspaper reporter gathered in the lobby. Dekerlor stood holding a cardboard box.

"Gentlemen, I have been investigating the buildings on Dean farm, and am pleased to announce I have found important, new evidence in the case which I feel will explain why Dr. Dean was murdered."

He held the box up.

"Inside this cardboard box which I found in the former residence of the Colfelts contains fifty or so postcards made up from photographs taken by Colfelt's daughter for her college friends. Seemingly innocent postcards until you examine them more closely. All fifty postcards contain the same objects, but it is the order of how the objects are arranged that becomes significant."

He set the box down on a table that was near him, and took out one postcard, and held it up.

“This postcard which can be made up at any photographer’s shop was made up from a photo negative of Colfelt’s daughter. In this postcard, you will see various, and apparently, random objects on a mantelpiece. You will please observe the objects on the mantelpiece are a toy dog, a stuffed teddy bear, a child doll, and a clock.”

He paused.

“A seemingly innocent postcard, Gentlemen, until you begin to go through all fifty or so of the postcards in this box, and it is then; you will observe the significance of the postcards.”

He took the monocle from his eye, and spun it in front of him, flashing light around the room.

“What you will observe upon further examination is that the order or sequence of the objects on the mantelpiece changes every eighth postcard or so, and I submit to you, Gentlemen, that this is a code used by the Germans to communicate intelligence.”

The audience murmured. He held up another postcard.

“At every eighth postcard in this box, the order of the objects on the mantelpiece changes, and the position of the hands on the clock change in each postcard. I say to you. Gentlemen, the objects on the mantelpiece represent constellations in the northern sky, and the hands on the clock tell the time the signals are to be sent. Each object on the mantelpiece symbolizes a constellation. The toy dog represents the constellation, Canis Major, and the stuffed teddy bear represents the constellation, Ursa Major, and the child doll represents the constellation, Perseus.”

Dekerlor put his monocle back into his eye.

“I am a European, and know how clever the Germans are with astronomy, and when I discovered these postcards in the former residence of the Colfelts, I interpreted them as a code of some kind. You see, the three constellations form a triangle in the northern sky which makes me believe the choice of these particular constellations was not random. These three

constellations make a forty-five degree triangle in the sky which the Germans use to communicate their intelligence. If you examine it you will see, the bear constellation is on the left, the child constellation is at the apex, and the dog constellation is on the right. There's your forty-five degree triangle made up of the three constellations in the sky. Now, those three constellations are the positions in the sky where the lights are to be flashed to give the message, and the hands on the clock tell the time the signals are to be sent."

Dekerlor stopped talking, and looked down at the floor for a moment, and then, spoke more,

"Now if the first signal light is at the apex of the triangle, and the second signal light goes to the right, and the third goes to the left, that would be one message. The direction of the light goes from right to left. To change the direction of the signal lights in the sky, the spies change the order of the toys on the mantelpiece in the postcard. That explains why the order of the objects on the mantelpiece changes every eighth postcard or so. If the teddy bear is first, then the dog, and finally, the child, the lights go from left, to the right, and then to the apex. They're using the same forty-five degree triangle, but the direction the signal light travels changes the message."

A big farmer asked,

"What you're telling us is if the first signal is at the apex of this triangle you're talking about, and the second signal is to the right, and the final one is to the left, the message would be, let's say 'Boston', right?"

"Yes," answered Dekerlor.

"All right, then. If the first signal is to the left, and the second signal is to the right, and the last one is at the apex of the triangle, the message would be changed now, let's say, 'Portsmouth.'"

"Exactly," said Dekerlor, "the Germans use the same triangle, and change the message by going either left to right or right to left. They could use multiple flashes in three positions to have more messages."

The newspaper man asked,

“The signals are from Monadnock?”

“That’s one location, yes. They’re watching troop movements from Fort Devens to Boston Harbor.”

“Do you think this guy, Coldfield, was signaling, and Dr. Dean found out about him?”

“Yes.”

“You have already accused Rich though.”

“Mr. Rich is a banker and Colfelt has money. You don’t think they could be confederates?”

The question hung in the air like smoke.

“Good day, Gentlemen,” said the Doctor.

One of the strategies of the federal men was to show up unexpected, and interview subjects off-guard. In December of 1918, Valkenburgh and Weiss took the train to Manhattan for two purposes: Lawrence Colfelt and Georgiana Hodgkins. They went to 21 West 50th street, and rang Colfelt’s bell, and spent the next three days watching the entrance way from six in the morning till two-thirty the following morning, and neither Colfelt nor his wife left the building.

“They must have seen us out the window,” said Valkenburgh. Valkenburgh got annoyed enough he rang the bell every fifteen minutes or so for hours at a time, and still no response. Valkenburgh after the third day was convinced the Colfelts knew they were there, and said to Weiss,

“Let’s go surprise Georgiana Hodgkins.”

The following morning they went to the Washington Irving High School in lower Manhattan, and talked to the Principal who was cooperative. He led them to an empty classroom, and several minutes later, Georgiana knocked at the door, and when she came in, she was as white as a wedding gown. Georgiana was Charles Rich’s sister-in-law who was staying at Rich’s house the night he got the black eye. She didn’t look at either man as they showed her their badges. She had a coughing spell which interrupted the interview. She was



flustered and wouldn't look at either man. She told how Dr. Dean visited Rich's house the night he was murdered. Valkenburgh asked,

"Are you positive that Mr. Rich had a black eye, and bruised face at the time Dr. Dean left?"

"Yes," said Georgiana.

"What did Mr. Rich say as to how he got his black eye?"

"He said he went in the barn where the horse was eating, and put his hand on her, and she kicked out, and hit Mr. Rich in the face, and knocked his pipe in his face."

"What was he carrying?"

"I don't know." She had another spasm of coughing. Valkenburgh handed her a handkerchief which she declined. Valkenburgh asked her,

"Did you talk it over with Mr. and Mrs. Rich in reference as to what to say when anyone would ask you?"

"Positively no."

"Your answers are the same as Mrs. Rich's," said Weiss.

"That's because we have been talking about it between us which is only natural."

Valkenburgh asked,

"How did Mr. Rich hear of the murder of Dean?"

"Some rumor from the village."

"Are you sure Mr. and Mrs. Rich didn't receive word over the telephone?"

"I'm sure they didn't receive word over the telephone."

"Then the records in the telephone office calling Rich's house from Dean's house are wrong?"

Her face got red, and the coughing began again. She finally managed to say,

"I wish I could talk more, but I have such a very bad cold. I hope Mr. Rich won't be mixed up in this, for you know circumstantial evidence is very bad. Mr. Rich appeared the next day with a black eye. You know Dr. Dean saw the black eye when he was at Mr. Rich's house, but he

is dead, and there is no one else except the family to prove he had a black eye.”

As Valkenburgh and Weiss were walking back to their hotel, Valkenburgh made the observation,

“If Dean came back to the farm at the time his wife says he came back, he wouldn’t have had time to visit Rich that night. That’s as good a reason as any to want Mrs. Dean hidden in a sanitarium somewhere.”

Christmas in Jaffrey was quiet that year. In other years, there were skating parties and caroling which didn’t happen this Christmas. We had survived the First World War; we rejoiced it was over, but now we were plagued by distrust between us over Rich’s black eye.

The new year of 1919 brought changes: there was a new Governor, John Bartlett who was a Mason, and Attorney General, Oscar Young, who was a Mason too. I was hired by Will Leighton to dig up Dr. Dean for a second time so the Department of Justice could perform an autopsy.

The day of the autopsy, January 6th, was bitterly cold. Myself, Oscar Dillon, and Alex Burpee got to the graveyard early. We had pick axes and shovels, and for the first couple of feet anyway, had to work real hard against the frozen ground. The autopsy was scheduled for two o’clock, and the doctor who was performing it was arriving on the noon train from Boston. His name was George Magrath, and he was the medical examiner for Boston. We got the casket above ground mid-morning, and carried it into the receiving tomb. Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Boynton came in, and Mr. Boynton had a small oil heater which gave us some relief. Mr. Coolidge told us Mrs. Dupree, who lived on the edge of the cemetery, had breakfast ready for us in her kitchen. As we were eating, two men came in with Mr. Coolidge, and I figured out from their talk, they were federal men. Mr. Coolidge told me later it was Robert Valkenburgh and Feri Weiss. When two o’clock came, we all gathered in the receiving tomb to watch Dr. Magrath perform the autopsy. Dr. Magrath was there, of course, and Valkenburgh and Weiss, the selectmen, Mr. Leighton, and me. It was crowded but it helped with the cold. Dr. Magrath handed each of us a handkerchief, and when the top of the casket came off, I figured out why.

The stench was horrible! I put the oil-soaked handkerchief over my nose and mouth and that really helped with the stench. We all moved around the best we could to stay warm.

Valkenburgh and Weiss helped Dr. Magrath lift the corpse out of the casket. I'd never seen an unprepared body before, and he was a combination of flesh colored and black. They lay the corpse on a platform, and Dr. Magrath removed the coat and shirt. He looked over the upper torso, and when he was finished with that, he took out a saw to cut open the skull. He had trouble keeping the head still while he tried to saw. Feri Weiss offered to hold Dr. Dean's head, and he took Dr. Dean's head in his hands. Dr. Magrath sawed the skull, and I saw liquid like a grapefruit splash up on Weiss's neck and face. Valkenburgh pulled out a handkerchief and wiped Weiss's face. When he finished with the skull, Valkenburgh helped Dr. Magrath turn the corpse face down so he could examine the back of the neck. When Dr. Magrath was finished, the two agents helped him place the body in the coffin.

The findings of the autopsy were bad for the Masons. Dr. Magrath found Dr. Dean's skull had been cracked from a blow to the head with a garden cultivator, and his neck was broken from the strangulation at the throat. That was more violence than Mrs. Dean was capable. Dr. Magrath said it looked to him like two men carried out the attack. Father Hennon, with that evidence available, asked for a Grand Jury.

"I don't think the findings of the autopsy were substantial enough that it changes the direction of the investigation much," was Roy Pickard's answer. It was right around this time I saw an interview in the Worcester paper with Dr. Norman Chase who was the Superintendent of the Herbert Hall Sanitarium where Mrs. Dean was, and when he was asked about the Dean murder, he said of Mrs. Dean,

"I have spent much time observing and evaluating Mrs. Dean and it is a total physical impossibility for her to have murdered her husband the way he was murdered."

It was clear to Valkenburgh and Weiss Roy Pickard was impeding the investigation. They would meet with Father Hennon and talk about ways to break the case. During one meeting, Valkenburgh telephoned Norman Gifford, the Superintendent of the Boston office, and when

he hung up the telephone, he exclaimed,

“I have a plan!”

Gifford reminded Valkenburgh how they rattled Georgiana Hodgkins when they interviewed her in New York, and why not try the same tactic on the men close to Rich?

The January meeting of the Grange brought Roy Pickard and Doctor Dekerlor together in the same room. The two men did not like each other. They spoke before the gathered men, and each tried to outdo the other. Pickard spoke first, and said nothing new: that Mrs. Dean killed her husband, and there was not enough evidence to justify a Grand Jury even with the results of the autopsy. After Pickard spoke, Doctor Dekerlor spoke, and as usual, he was colorful.

“Gentlemen, it is my pleasure to be able to report to you the most startling event of the entire case. I went to Dean farm and took photographs of the barn porch where Dr. Dean was attacked, and blood remains were found. Upon developing the negative of the photograph, I could see nothing different on the negative. I was about to toss it into the wastebasket when my eye was attracted to a small whitish formation on the plate. I looked at it closely, and was amazed by a man’s face. There was no mistaking it; I had seen the face before. When I studied the plate, three other faces appeared, one of them a woman’s.”

Pickard spoke up,

“You saw four faces in a developing photograph?”

“Yes sir, that is correct,” Dekerlor placed his monocle in his right eye.

“Can you show us the photograph?”

“I’m afraid the photo has been sent to Boston.”

“How convenient! You say you recognize a face in the photo?”

“Yes sir, that is correct.”

“Whose face was it?”

“Charles Rich.”

Everyone talked at once. Pickard waited for the outburst to die down.

“Besides Charles Rich who were the other faces you saw?”

"It's more of a symbolic picture..."

"What do you mean symbolic...?"

"I don't think you'll understand."

Pickard was annoyed.

"Well, please excuse my ignorance, and give me a chance to try, will you? Are any of the other faces which appear on the photograph the face of anyone you know?"

"Yes."

"Whose face was it?"

"The lawyer, Mr. Smith."

Pickard's face broke into a smile; he turned and said to the audience,

"How can that be? Lawyer Smith didn't know anything about the murder until after it happened."

"See? I told you you wouldn't understand," defensively answered Dekerlor, "I would say there are various categories of thinkers – there are thinkers who are within the bounds of the philosophical, others who go into metaphysics, and others who are perhaps still more advanced, and who, besides having metaphysical understanding; have perhaps metaphysical vision."

Pickard relished Dekerlor making a fool of himself.

"Metaphysical vision? How many of the gathered gentlemen know what Metaphysical vision is? I don't quite understand you, sir. Let me see if we can't make this more plain. The reason why Rich's face appeared on the photograph was because he was present when the blood spots of which the plate was made were made?"

"That's correct."

"Why how is it then Lawyer Smith's face would be in the photograph when he didn't learn of the murder until a considerable time after it happened? He was not present when the photograph was taken."

"This would be called a prophetic picture, a prophetic projection of the event."

Pickard looked at Dekerlor for a long moment before he asked,

“You mean by that the picture that was developed from the blood stains on the porch prophesied the future connection of Mr. Smith with the events of the murder?”

“I would say so, sir. I would say the conception was a little wider than this; that in reality all the lives of men form but a very small link in the important chain of cosmic events, and I would say in the life of man the future is nothing but the past unfolded. That is, we reap what we have sown. And if in the consciousness of man which is retained by his blood particles in the form of electric charge that was exposed to a sensitive plate such faces as will appear on those plates would be either acknowledgements, or perhaps, would be projections of future events.”

There was silence. Finally Pickard asked,

“So, in essence, you can predict the future?”

“I would say yes because we all have involvement in our future with our destiny.”

The men began to shuffle and move uneasily.

“You say there was a woman’s face?”

“Yes, that’s correct.”

“And did you know that face?”

“It was not Mrs. Dean.”

“Who was it?”

“I didn’t recognize the face.”

“Then how do you know it wasn’t Mrs. Dean?”

“Because I would recognize Mrs. Dean’s face.”

“So you could make out the face, it was you didn’t know who it was?”

“Yes.”

“Maybe it was a prophetic projection?”

“Or it might have been Susan Henschman.”

Pickard realized he’d better stop so he walked out of the hall.

Two days later, Dr. Magrath was sitting in an overstuffed chair in the lobby of The

Granite State Hotel when he was asked by a newspaper reporter,

“That fellow, Dekerlor, Doctor, is saying he can see blood stains or blood spots on photographic plates that when developed shows faces of people who might be, or possibly be, connected with the blood stains. Does that sound to you like something that could happen?”

Dr. Magrath shook his head, and answered,

“Why, I would say it was absurd. You can’t photograph on a negative anything that is not in front of it. If the face was in front of it, all right, but it would have to have been in front of it. I have photographed a good many blood stains, and have never found any faces coming out yet.”

Feri Weiss and Doctor Dekerlor knew each other from when Weiss was an immigration inspector in New York Harbor. In January of 1919, the two men and their wives had dinner at a restaurant in Boston. The Weisses’ had a house in Cambridge. Mr. Weiss’s wife was named Marion, and they had a five-year old daughter. Dr. Dekerlor’s wife was Elsa Schiaparelli who would later become a fashion designer for movie stars like Katherine Hepburn and Mae West. The marriage would not last that long, however. During dinner, Feri Weiss said he was traveling to Nova Scotia for a few days, and Dekerlor asked him if he left Marion with much money. Feri responded that no, not really, and thought it an odd question. When he returned from his trip, Marion told him what had happened.

“It was Sunday night when I came home with Lillian that when I came into the house, I had a funny sensation like someone was here. Then, I saw the muddy footprint in the carpet. I took Lillian upstairs with me, and locked our bedroom door, and barricaded it with a chair. She fell asleep, Thank God, and I lay down on the bed next to her. I lay there in the dark, and I’m almost certain there’s someone in the hall when I hear the chain for the electric light being pulled, and I see light under the door. I slowly get up, and go to the bureau, and take out the revolver and drop the holster which makes a noise. I’m terrified! I hear noise from Lillian’s room, and then, the sound of a window being opened, and I went over, and looked out our bedroom window, and saw Dekerlor run along the roof, then crouch down, and jump from the

roof. When I was sure he was gone, I checked the house, and saw the papers on your desk were tampered with, and thought he must have been looking for some reports.”

On Friday, March 21, Norman Gifford, Robert Valkenburgh, and Feri Weiss showed up at Bean and Symonds unannounced to interview Delcie Bean and Merrill Symonds. The federal men spent the afternoon with Bean and Symonds, and it was the next morning when Mrs. Bryant, who was angry at the treatment of Mrs. Dean, tipped off Valkenburgh and Weiss about a secret meeting at a hotel in Winchendon. For years, I couldn't figure out how she knew about it until one day she told me she was attending to a sick child in the Bean home, and heard a telephone call through a partially closed door.

Feri Weiss and Robert Valkenburgh borrowed an auto from one of the selectmen and drove to Winchendon and went to the two hotels to find out where the meeting was for that afternoon. They showed their badges to the hotel clerk, and at the second hotel, the clerk said he reserved a room for one o'clock that afternoon. The agents rented the next room with a door in between them, and Feri Weiss went down to the lobby to sit behind a newspaper to watch who came in. When the time came, Weiss saw Delcie Bean and Merrill Symonds come in and check with the clerk and climb the stairs. After another ten minutes or so, Homer White and William Webster came in, followed a few minutes later, by Roy Pickard and Sheriff Lord. Weiss went back up to the room where Valkenburgh had a water glass against the door listening. After the men had cleared the room, Valkenburgh said to Weiss,

“They told Pickard to talk to Oscar Young about having a Grand Jury with no indictment to calm things down.” Valkenburgh laughed,

“I guess Bean and Symonds didn't like the way they were treated.”

So after months of saying no to a Grand Jury, Roy Pickard, suddenly in late March of 1919 changes his mind, and a Grand Jury is announced for April 11 at the Keene Courthouse. Judge John Kivel will preside with lawyers Roy Pickard and Oscar Young to interview witnesses. Father Hennon doesn't trust Roy Pickard, and talks to Feri Weiss about it. Weiss has the idea to have a federal attorney assist the county and state attorney, and goes to see John Kivel to talk



about it. Weiss is emphatically rebuffed by Kivel. Weiss tells Valkenburgh and Father Hennon about his response from Kivel, and that only increases their suspicions. The Department of Justice feels that a federal attorney present at the Grand Jury for the murder of Dr. Dean would save time if there was to be an espionage trial for the signal lights which was the motive for the murder of Dr. Dean. Valkenburgh and Weiss come up with a plan to have Father Hennon and the selectmen and The Department of Justice ask Judge Kivel for a federal attorney on the Grand Jury. They have a meeting with the judge, and three times with increasing impatience and curtness, he says no. The Department of Justice is angry and the agents are ordered to stake out the courthouse.

The Grand Jury started on April 11th at the Keene Courthouse. I got a subpoena to appear on Wednesday, April 16 during the afternoon. That morning I rode a horse to Keene, and went to the Courthouse right off the square. I told the man behind the desk I was here to testify, and he asked me to wait a moment. Sheriff Lord came out of an office, and told me to go see Lawyer Pickard on Roxbury Street. I asked where that was, and found his office on the second floor, and the lady behind the desk asked me to have a seat. I waited for awhile, and finally, Pickard came out. He didn't apologize which angered me. He led me to a back room away from his secretary, and offered me a box to sit on. He was stern.

"You called for this afternoon?" he started.

"Yes."

"You nervous?" he smiled.

"Yes."

"I don't blame you."

I felt like he was playing cat and mouse with me.

"You were there when the body was found?"

"Yes."

"That must have been a shock?"

"Yes."

"What was Mrs. Dean like?"

"What do you mean?"

"How was she acting?"

"Upset, scared."

"Like she was part of it?"

"Like she was worried about the whereabouts of her husband."

"She was the only one on the farm when he was killed."

He was starting to show his hand.

"Someone could have come onto the farm."

"Did you ever see the lights?"

"Sure."

"Probably automobile lights, wouldn't you say?"

"Autos have two lights. I only saw one."

"Maybe it was a star then."

I smiled at that. He wanted me to say what he wanted.

"Where I saw lights there were no houses or roads."

"What about around Dean farm?"

"I haven't seen them there, but I've been told by others they have."

"Where have you seen them?"

"From Temple Mountain and Monadnock."

"Really?"

"Yes."

He looked away like he was trying to think of something else.

"Who do you think did it?"

"Mr. Rich."

"You think a man as upstanding as Mr. Rich would commit murder?"

I didn't answer. He spoke,

"I think Mrs. Dean did it. Don't you think Mrs. Dean did it, Arthur?"

"No I don't."

"I think she was jealous of him paying attention to the women in the village."

"You mean like Susan Henschman?"

He looked like I slapped him in the face.

"I will be interviewing you this afternoon," was all he said.

Some interview! All he did was ask me about the milk pail, and I could tell he was annoyed with me for not going along with accusing Mrs. Dean.

After the Grand Jury, Dr. Dekerlor and his wife, Elsa Schiaparelli, returned to Paris where Dekerlor abandoned her and their child. She became a fashion designer for movie stars like Katherine Hepburn and Mae West. She was a rival of Coco Chanel, and worked with Salvador Dali. He never gained the fame he sought, and was shot dead in a Mexican bar at the age of thirty-nine.

The Grand Jury came to the verdict that "Doctor Dean was murdered by a person or persons unknown," and people weren't really satisfied by that. Especially Father Hennon. Father Hennon wanted Albany Pelletier to testify he saw Rich's horse at the saw dust chute at nine o'clock which would contradict Rich's alibi. Pickard and Young had to let Albany testify, but they did it in a way he would have minimal impact: he testified third from the last witness, and was followed by a high profile witness, Robert Valkenburgh, who would overshadow anything Albany said. Ed Baldwin, a good friend of Rich, testified he'd taken Rich's horse and buggy out that night but had them back in the barn by 8:45. Albany Pelletier testified he saw Ed Baldwin at the sawdust chute at Bean and Symonds at nine o'clock. A few hours later the verdict was returned, and the obvious fact that one of the men was lying was ignored. Drawing on my experience with Roy Pickard trying to get me to say Mrs. Dean did it, I think I know why, and you have to remember the Governor and Attorney General were Masons.

After the verdict there was the feeling Rich was exonerated at least legally, although I'm not sure about public opinion. It comes down to the only people who knew how he got the

# Writing Raw

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black eye was himself, his wife, and Georgiana Hodgkins. He lived in Jaffrey for another fifteen years, going to work everyday regular as the sun, and when he died in 1933, there were people gathered at his house to hear his confession. He never gave it or didn't give it the way you would expect. It was the fall the President was shot in Dallas, I was walking in the Conant Cemetery, and I came across his grave: Charles Rich, Died 1933; Lana Rich, Died 1938; Georgiana Hodgkins, Died 1955; and I thought: They took their secret to eternity with them.

The End

**Jack Coey bio:** Jack Coey did the things male people do in this world: played Little League as a boy, went to school, college & got married, had children & worked in a store. The wisdom he has to share is that if you want to be a writer he says you have to read, read, read. What he knows is far more interesting than what he's done.