

Greatest **DETECTIVE** **CASES**



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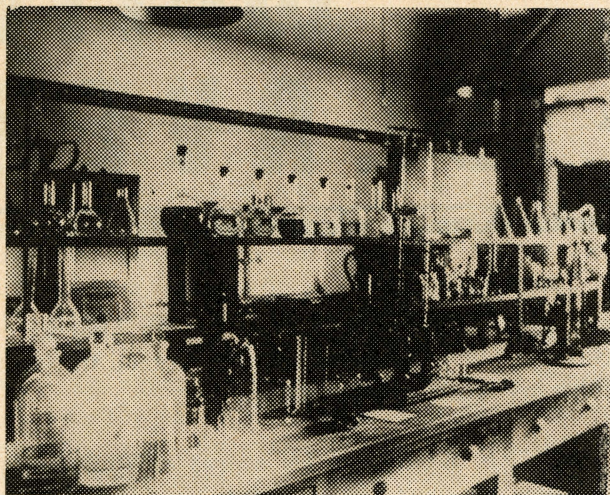
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CENTS

MAY



VANCOUVER'S POLICE WIZARD - INSPECTOR VANCE
by A. J. McKELVIE

VANCOUVER'S POLICE WIZARD:



Part of the Vancouver police laboratory (above). This section is devoted to detection of poisons. Inspector J.F.C.B. Vance, head of the Vancouver crime detection bureau, is seen below at work in a section of the lab.

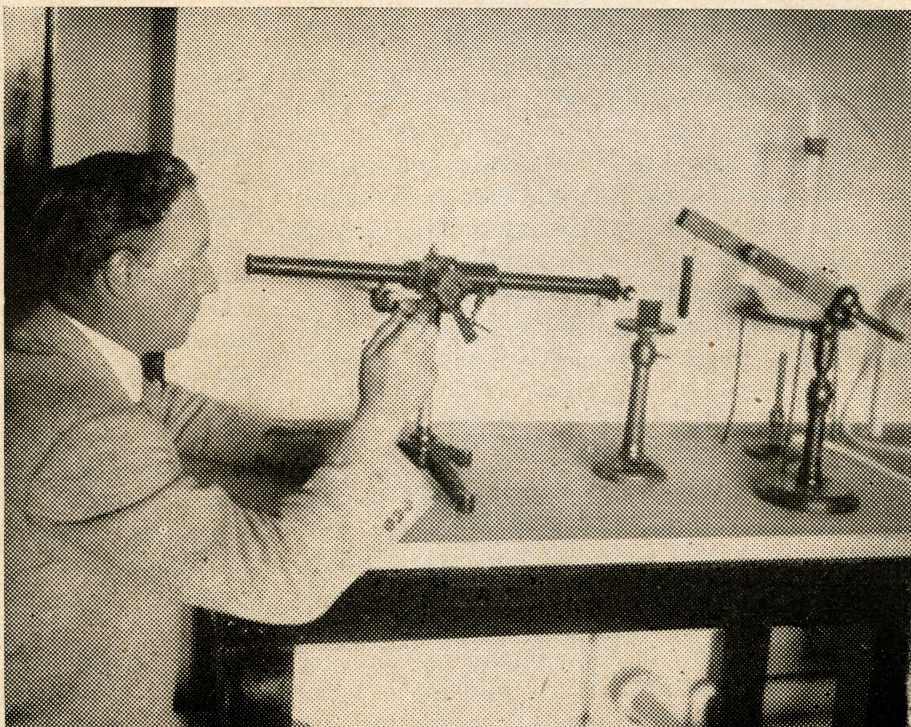
You may not know it, but Vancouver has one of the best crime laboratories on the continent. At the head of this scientific detection bureau is Inspector Vance.

IT IS TWO O'CLOCK in the morning and lights glare on the top floor of the big police headquarters building. There are few lights in evidence on other floors. In a laboratory on this floor a tall, slender, fair-haired man moves about amid a maze of chemical paraphernalia and weird apparatus. Two detectives are sitting in an ante-room discussing a police problem in low tones.

The worker in the laboratory suddenly nods with satisfaction, makes a note on a pad and throws a switch on a machine, which has a sputtering arc. The machine becomes silent.

Opening the door leading to the ante-room, he says to the waiting detectives:

"I have completed my investigation. The man you want is about twenty-one years of age, below medium height—say five feet two inches—he has an abnormally large head, has a line of pimples on his forehead, and suffers from a form of eczema which causes a peeling of the skin on the palms of the hand. One of his hands is slightly cut. He either works in a garage and service



INSPECTOR VANCE

Inspector Vance, at the magnascope in his laboratory.

station or spends much of his time there."

"Thank you, Inspector," says one of the officers. "I think we know the man. We will have him in."

* * *

AN HOUR PREVIOUS to this incident two shop-breakers were discovered by the Oriental proprietor looting a grocery store. The proprietor seized a shotgun, which was kept in his sleeping quarters at the rear of the premises, and fired with the intention of frightening the thieves away. But his aim was too good and one of the intruders dropped fatally wounded and senseless. The other fled into the darkness.

Police rushed to the scene and conveyed the wounded man to the hospital, where he was identified.

Who was his companion?

Detectives set out to answer this question and apprehend the man.

The only description the Oriental could give was that he was "a short man."

A search of the shop and the ground outside the window by which the men had entered revealed scant clues. The investigators found a cap which bore the label of a dealer in a distant town.

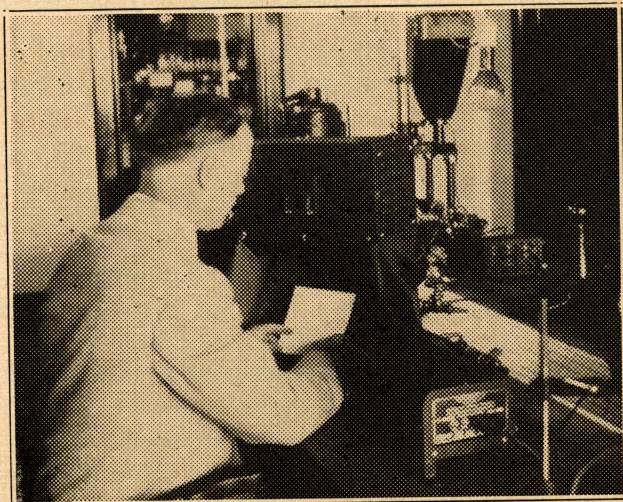
"May be a stranger in town," said one officer.

There were many fingerprints on the window glass and sill but all were too blurred and smeared to be of use as clues.

Both thieves had lifted the window, each taking one side in forcing it open. A box below the sill showed that one man had had to raise himself above the ground level to exert his full strength. He had stood on the box. There was blood on the window on this side.

Noting everything that appeared to have a bearing on the case and taking the cap, the officers hastened to headquarters and lights were soon glaring on the top floor of the building.

The two detectives, who left the top floor less than an hour after the wounding of the shop-



breaker with a confident "we will bring him in," were not gone long. They returned with a youth, who answered in every detail the description given by the laboratory worker addressed by the detectives as "Inspector".

Nodding satisfaction the "Inspector" said:

"Bring me his trousers and shoes after you lock him up, and if you can find a hair from his head without pulling one out, bring that to me also."

The youth was hustled away and one of the officers returned in a few minutes with the shoes and trousers and several hairs in an envelope.

"His hair is falling out so we did not have to pull any," he explained when handing over the envelope. "One hand is cut."

The "Inspector" went to work again and new lights glowed and gleamed amid his apparatus.

Again the hissing of the arc was silenced and the "Inspector" called to the waiting sleuth:

"He's your man."

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By A. J. McKELVIE

CRIME REPORTER

He did admit when questioned by Mr. Springsteen that if he were given several signatures of Mrs. Duncombe, and the will signature as well, then told one of them was suspected of being a forgery, he would have no difficulty in picking the will signature as the most likely to be suspected.

Another handwriting expert, Arthur Black Farmer of Toronto, admitted when called to the witness box that he had at first suspected Mrs. Duncombe's signature on the will to be a forgery, but after further study of her known genuine signatures, he had eliminated one by one his grounds for suspicion.

He accused Mr. Walter of using handwriting pictures that were "propaganda photography, not scientific photography." The signatures were chosen to emphasize dissimilarities," he said. "By the same method one could condemn any one of 80 signatures of Mrs. Duncombe as being spurious."

Mr. Farmer had examined samples of handwriting taken from Mrs. Bonds while she was in the witness box and he declared there was no evidence in the writing to show that she had attempted to disguise her writing as she might have done had she had a guilty conscience.

* * *

THE CASE HAD now run two weeks and still no decision could be reached. On December 19th, 1941, Justice Plaxton announced an adjournment until January 12th. It was decided that the court would resume in Toronto, as that city would be closer for the judge, the attorneys and the remaining witnesses.

The case opened with Herbert Walter, the Chicago handwriting expert, on the stand, and what he had to say was brief and to the point. After examination of the disputed will signature and the writing of Mrs. Orthely Bonds, he was certain that "one writer wrote both those signatures!"

The following day two additional handwriting experts, A. N. Payne, of Beamsville and F. B. Courtney, of Detroit, testified and declared that the signature was a forgery, signed by Mrs. Bonds.

Mr. Payne said: "Mrs. Duncombe could not have written her name in that manner. It would have been a physical impossibility for her to do so."

The case, however, was not quite settled. Next afternoon Mr. Farmer was called again as a witness and once more he insisted that the evidence given by the four other handwriting experts was not conclusive. He said that a mere increase in speed would often change the angle and apparent habits in a person's signature.

On Saturday, January 17th, 1942, Justice Plaxton finally gave his decision.

In his judgment, Justice Plaxton said that there was a "series of improbabilities" regarding the circumstances under which the will was said to have been signed.

In addition, he added, "The evidence of the first four experts is formidable and in my opinion makes out a pretty strong case that the signature is not genuine."

He therefore declared the will invalid and the \$80,000 to be given to the provincial secretary.

THE END.

Vancouver's Police Wizard: INSPECTOR VANCE

(Continued from Page 23)

"If you say so, he is," smiled the detective as he hurried away to formally charge the arrested youth with taking part in the attempted looting of the store.

* * *

NO. THIS IS NOT an extract from an unpublished story of Sherlock Holmes or some other criminologist of fiction. It is just one of the everyday miracles being performed in the Van-

couver Police Bureau of Science, which is under the immediate direction of J. F. C. B. Vance, criminologist extraordinary. The case is an authentic one and is on the files of the Vancouver, B.C. police with many others, some even more amazing.

How could Inspector Vance describe in detail a man he had never seen?

It is quite easily done, he says.

The cap found at the scene of the crime furnished much of the description. Hairs found in it were examined under a microscope and gave the age. A scientist can tell by this method of examination the approximate age of the person from whose head a hair is taken. Its large size and the fact that its seams were stretched to their utmost indicated that the wearer had an exceedingly large head.

Stains found on the sweatband of the cap, where it came in contact with the forehead, were found by microscopic and spectroscopic examination to have been made from the secretion of pimples. Minute particles of matter discovered on both inside and outside surfaces of the piece of headgear told the investigator that the wearer spent much time in a garage. Many other examinations of similar matter in other cases has enabled the criminologist to recognize the tiny particles at once. The "black light" or ultra-violet ray aided in this examination.

That the man was suffering from a form of eczema was discovered and proven through cigarette boxes, which he was handling and dropped when his companion was shot. Tiny bits of scaly skin, so tiny that they were not visible to the naked eye, were revealed on these boxes after they had been submitted to microscopic examination. The criminologist recognized these minute clues as being similar to those found in another case.

* * *

HEIGHT OF THE wanted man was estimated by measuring the distance between the marks of his hands on the window frame and the box on which he stood while forcing entry.

That his hand was cut was deduced through microscopic examination of a sample taken from the stain on the window ledge. Comparison with a sample of the blood shed by the wounded man showed that it had a different "count."

After the arrest the clothing and shoes taken from him were carefully brushed and the dust and grit thus obtained was submitted to a searching examination. This examination revealed traces of dust similar to that on the window-ledge in the weave of the cloth while the shoes carried particles of earth identical in structure to that on the ground outside the window. Ashes were strewn on this ground and traces of ash were found on the shoes. The hairs taken from the head of the suspect were identical with that found in the cap.

Eventually the arrested youth confessed to his part in the attempted robbery and told how the cap, which had aided the officers in arresting him, had been given to him by an uncle, who was visiting in Vancouver and came from the city where the headgear was purchased.

The label might have led the detectives to be confirmed in the theory that the thief was a newcomer in the city, but when Inspector Vance described the suspect they recognized him as a man they had noticed a few days prior to the crime in company of the wounded man, who was well-known to most of the officers of the force.

* * *

SCIENTIFIC CRIMINOLOGY had cleared up in a few hours a case which, under ordinary conditions might have taken weeks to clean up.

Splendidly educated and qualified by experience as an analytical chemist, Inspector Vance has been city analyst of Vancouver for more than twenty years.

He became interested in criminology through being called on in many cases to make analysis of poisons, drugs and liquors featured in many cases.

This interest led him to devote most of his spare moments to following up the possibilities of his talents and experience being applied to scientific crime detection.

Experienced detectives soon realized the value of his assistance and eventually the bureau of science came into existence and Mr. Vance was given the honorary title of "Inspector."

Two detectives, who were selected for their ability, H. Vince and J. Anderson, were assigned to work with Inspector Vance. These officers visit the scene of every major crime and collect all evidence to be submitted to their superior.

* * *

GIVEN SUPPORT BY succeeding boards of police commissioners and police chiefs, the Vancouver police bureau of science has grown until today it is equipped with the most modern instruments, such as "black light", infra-red rays, magnascope, special microscopes, spectrascopes, the helixometer and other delicate instruments used in forensic ballistics.

The entire laboratory is one of the most complete on the continent and handles an enormous amount of work, as all the city's analytical work in connection with foodstuffs and manufacturing is handled there. A number of chemists assist Inspector Vance in this work.



Two shop-breakers were discovered by the Oriental proprietor of the store.

Files of the bureau can furnish plots for hundreds of detective and mystery "thrillers."

A "hit and run" motorist was apprehended and convicted through a hair found on the radiator of his car after a traffic fatality.

Safecrackers were convicted because money they had taken from a beer tavern was found in their possession. Investigation disclosed that the money carried mallic acid which is found in beer.

Other safecrackers owed their conviction to the fact that soil discovered on the soles of their shoes was proven to have come from outside a window of a theatre which they had broken into.

An extortionist went to the penitentiary because science was able to prove that the paper on which he had written an extortion note came from a larger piece found in his room by the searching police officers.

A gang of burglars ended its career behind prison bars because material picked up by their shoes at the scene of a robbery were found in an automobile which carried them at the time of the arrest.

Shreds of lead and grains of powder in the clothing of a youth proved that he had engaged in a gun battle with officers.

An outstanding case is the solution of the mystery surrounding the death of a youth who disappeared from Vancouver and was found dead some time later, floating in a pool in another city.

A casual autopsy led to the belief that he had died of gas poisoning while stealing a ride on a train which passed by the pool. Inspector Vance was called upon and soon showed that death was due to taking cyanide of potassium, and through clues picked up at the scene of death and materials taken from the youth's shoes and clothing

he was able to trace, step by step, every movement the lad had made for some distance from the pool to the spot where the poison was taken and the body rolled down a bank and into the water.

* * *

OTHER BRITISH Columbia cities have been quick to avail themselves of the services of Vancouver's criminologist and he is constantly being called upon to aid them in solving perplexing cases. It has been suggested that the work of the bureau be made province-wide in its scope. Previous to its establishment it was necessary, when ballistics evidence was a part of a case, to bring experts from Eastern Canada or the United States. Today this is no longer necessary,

thanks to Vancouver's own expert and its splendid laboratory.

Shy and retiring, Inspector Vance is unlike the real or fictional type of detective. It is only when he is led tactfully that he will talk of his task and his great hobby, scientific crime detection. When enthused over his work he forgets his shyness and takes his listeners by stages through the various processes that lead him to making his decisions which throw aside the veil of mystery from what appear to be baffling cases.

In spite of the fact that Vancouver is but fifty years old, it is probable that no other city of its size and age has made greater progress in the scientific solution of criminal cases.

THE END.

COUNTERFEIT MILLION

(Continued from Page 20)

Murray was well acquainted in Indianapolis and there he went in an endeavour to pick up the Johnson trail. He called upon United States Senator McDonald and learned that a family named Johnson had lived there about six years before in elegant style in a big mansion, with horses, carriages, coachman, footman and a large retinue of servants.

They lived luxuriously and spent money freely, until trouble came in the form of an accusation that they were counterfeiters. The law firm of McDonald & Butler were retained as counsel by the Johnsons, who were said to have paid the attorneys a \$25,000 fee, and they managed to get clear. But the scandal affected their social standing in Indianapolis and shortly afterward the whole family left the city.

The Johnson family consisted of the father and mother, two handsome girls and five boys. The daughters were Jessie and Annie, both clever, accomplished girls, and the boys were named respectively, Tom, Charlie, Johnnie, Elijah and David Henry.

Murray had been personally acquainted with three of the latter. From friends of McDonald and Butler he ascertained that when the Johnsons shook the dust of Indianapolis from their feet

they had moved to Cincinnati. Murray hastened to Cincinnati and found that the suspects had lived there in Sixth Street, and had also occupied a house in Covington, Kentucky, for a while. They had left there several years before and were said to have moved to Hartford, Connecticut.

On to Hartford went the indefatigable pursuer and found a house where they had lived in extreme privacy, seldom having been seen on the streets. The trail then led from Hartford to a large ancient mansion near Fall River, Mass., but from this spot they had vanished a year before, leaving not the faintest clue behind by which they might be traced.

* * *

MURRAY WENT TO New York again and called up the ex-counterfeiter with whom he had conferred at the commencement of the quest.

"Do you know old Johnson?" he inquired.

"Yes," replied the former "cooney" man; "but it is years since I last saw him. He is a mighty clever chap, but used to go on some terrific drunken sprees, and his family had troubles of their own keeping track of him."

"Have you any idea where he is likely to be now?" asked Murray.