

WILLFUL MURDER

No. 4 of the Series

But three doors presented themselves. The first opened into a bedroom, with the bed turned down, but undisturbed. The second room was empty in every sense. The third door was locked.

Raffles lit the landing gas. "He's in there," he said, cocking his revolver. "Do you remember how we used to break into the studies at school? Here goes!"

His flat foot crashed over the keyhole; the lock gave, the door flew open, and in the sudden draft the landing gas heeled over like a cobbler in a squall. As the flame righted itself I saw a fixed bath, two bath towels knotted together, an open window, a cowering figure and Raffles struck against on the threshold.

"Jack—Rutter?" The words came thick and slow with horror, and in horror I heard myself repeating them, while the cowering figure by the bathroom window rose gradually erect.

"It's you!" he whispered in amazement no less than our own. "It's you two! What's it mean, Raffles? I saw you get over the gate; a bell rang; the place is full of them. Then you broke in. What's it all mean?"

"We may tell you that when you tell us what in God's name you've done, Rutter!"

"Done? What have I done?" The unhappy wretch came out into the

can find the holes if you like, but I hit him every time. My God! I was like a savage till the thing was done, and then I didn't care. I went through his desk looking for my own bills and was coming away when you turned up. I said I didn't care, nor do I. But I was going to give myself up tonight, and shall still, so you see I shan't give you fellows much trouble."

He was done, and there we stood on the landing of the lonely house, the low, thick, eager voice still racing and ringing through our ears, the dead man below and in front of us his impudent slayer. I knew to whom the impudence would appeal when he had heard the story, and I was not mistaken.

"That's all rot," said Raffles, speaking after a pause. "We shan't let you give yourself up."

"You shan't stop me! What would be the good? The woman saw me. It would only be a question of time, and I can't face waiting to be taken. Think of it—waiting for them to touch you on the shoulder! No, no, no. I'll give myself up and get it over."

His speech was changed. He faltered, floundered. It was as though a clearer perception of his position had come with the bare idea of escape from it.

"But listen to me," urged Raffles. "We're here at our peril ourselves. We broke in like thieves to enforce redress for a grievance very like your own. But don't you see? We took out a pane—did the thing like regular burglars. Regular burglars will get the credit of all the rest!"

"You mean that I shan't be suspected?"

"I do."

"But I don't want to get off scot-

a clean breast of it or flee the country. So I rigged him up at the studio, and we took the first train to Liverpool. Nothing would induce him to sit tight and enjoy the situation, as I should have endeavored to do in his place, and it's just as well. I went to his diggings to destroy some papers, and what do you think I found? The police in possession. There's a warrant out against him already! The idiots think that window wasn't genuine, and the warrant's out. It won't be my fault if it's ever served!"

Nor, after all these years, can I think it will be mine.

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THE COVERING FIGURE ROSE GRADUALLY ERECT.

light with bloodshot blinking eyes and a bloody shirt front. "You know—you've seen—but I'll tell you if you like. I've killed a robber; that's all. I've killed a robber, a usurer, a jackal, a blackmailer, the cleverest and the cruelest villain unhung. I'm ready to hang for him. I'd kill him again!"

And he looked us fiercely in the face, a fine defiance in his dissipated eyes, his breast heaving, his jaw like a rock.

"Shall I tell you how it happened?" he went passionately on. "He's made my life a hell these weeks and months past. You may know that. A perfect hell! Well, tonight I met him in Bond street. Do you remember when I met you fellows? He wasn't twenty yards behind you. He was on your tracks, Raffles; he saw me nod to you and stopped me and asked me who you were. He seemed as keen as knives to know; I couldn't think why, and didn't care either, for I saw my chance. I said I'd tell him all about you if he'd give me a private interview. He said he wouldn't. I said he should and held him by the coat. By the time I let him go you were out of sight, and I waited where I was till he came back in despair. I had the whip hand of him then. I could dictate where the interview should be, and I made him take me home with him, still swearing to tell him all about you when we'd had our talk. Well, when we got here I made him give me something to eat, putting him off and off, and about 10 o'clock I heard the gate shut. I waited a bit and then asked him if he lived alone.

"Not at all," says he. "Did you not see the servant?"

"I said I'd seen her, but I thought I'd heard her go. If I was mistaken, no doubt she would come when she was called, and I yelled three times at the top of my voice. Of course there was no servant to come. I knew that, because I came to see him one night last week, and he interviewed me himself through the gate, but wouldn't open it. Well, when I had done yelling and not a soul had come near us he was as white as that ceiling. Then I told him we could have our chat at last, and I picked the poker out of the fender and told him how he'd robbed me, but, by God, he shouldn't rob me any more. I gave him three minutes to write and sign a settlement of all his iniquitous claims against me or have his brains beaten out over his own carpet. He thought a minute and then went to his desk for pen and paper. In two seconds he was round like lightning with a revolver, and I went for him baldheaded. He fired two or three times and missed. You

free!" cried Rutter hysterically. "I've killed him. I know that. But it was in self defense; it wasn't murder. I must own up and take the consequences. I shall go mad if I don't!"

His hands twitched; his lips quivered; the tears were in his eyes. Raffles took him roughly by the shoulder.

"Look here, you fool! If the three of us were caught here now, do you know what the consequences would be? We should swing in a row at Newgate in six weeks' time! You talk as though we were sitting in a club. Don't you know it's 1 o'clock in the morning and the lights on and a dead man down below? For God's sake, pull yourself together and do what I tell you or you're a dead man yourself!"

"I wish I was one," Rutter sobbed. "I wish I had his revolver to blow my own brains out. It's lying under him. Oh, my God, my God!"

His knees knocked together; the frenzy of reaction was at its height. We had to take him down stairs between us, and so through the front door out into the open air.

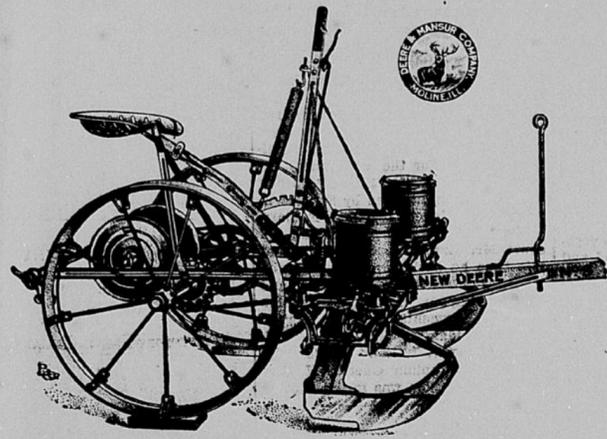
All was still outside—all but the smothered weeping of the unstrung wretch upon our hands. Raffles returned for a moment to the house; then all was dark as well. The gate opened from within; we closed it carefully behind us, and so left the starlight shining on broken glass and polished spikes, one and all, as we had found them.

We escaped. No need to dwell on our escape. Our murderer seemed set upon the scaffold. Drunk with his deed, he was more trouble than six men drunk with wine. Again and again we threatened to leave him to his fate, to wash our hands of him, but incredible and unmerited luck was with the three of us. Not a soul did we meet between that and Willesden, and of those who saw us later did one think of the two young men with crooked white ties, supporting a third in a seemingly unmistakable condition, when the evening papers apprised the town of a terrible tragedy at Kensal Rise?

We walked to Maida Vale and thence drove openly to my rooms. But I alone went upstairs; the other two proceeded to the Albany, and I saw no more of Raffles for forty-eight hours. He was not at his rooms when I called in the morning; he had left no word. When he reappeared the papers were full of the murder, and the man who had committed it was on the wide Atlantic, a steerage passenger from Liverpool to New York.

"There was no arguing with him," so Raffles told me. "Either he must make

The Corn Planter



The New Deere No. 9 Edge Selection Drop

All the wise agitation about Seed Corn, Seed Selection, Seed Testing and Seed Preservation will amount to little unless you have a Corn Planter that will drop the seed evenly and thoroughly. Do not stop with testing your seed but Test your Planter. Try it in the barn before you take it to the field. If it does not do its work well you cannot afford to use it. With land running from \$75 to \$100 per acre, every inch must be made to pay.

The best farmers have come to realize that the old Hill Drop Planter is inaccurate, dropping too many seeds in some places and too few in others.

Even Distribution is What Counts

The value of having the same number of kernels in a hill has been proven by many experiments at the Agricultural College. Fields planted with exactly three kernels to the hill, will yield from 10 to 15 bushels more to the acre. No more work, no more trouble—but about \$5.00 more crop per acre. Thus far no machine has been invented that will drop corn as nearly perfect as the Edge Drop Planter.

The Reason is Simple

Kernels of corn are more uniform in thickness than in width or length. The Edge Drop Cells admit the kernels edgewise or in the Most Uniform Way. That tells the story in a nut shell.

Iowa Agricultural College Tests

Numerous tests of Corn Planters have been made at Ames with the following results:

Style of Planter	Kind of Corn	Per Cent Threes
Edge drop	Hand selected, butted and tipped	94
Round hole	Hand selected, butted and tipped	62
		In favor of edge drop
Edge drop	Ordinary butts and tips left in	32
Round hole	Ordinary butts and tips left in	67
		In favor of edge drop
Edge drop	Hand selected	19
Round hole	Hand selected	95
		In favor of edge drop
Edge drop	Graded by machine	27
Round hole	Graded by machine	97
		In favor of edge drop
Edge drop	Graded by machine	63
		In favor of edge drop
Edge drop	Graded by machine	34

The New Deere No. 9 Corn Planter

Edge Selection Drop

Is in our opinion the Very Best Planter made today. Did we not believe this we would not dare recommend it so strongly. Its points of superiority are Extreme Accuracy of Drop, Simplicity and Convenience, Fewer Parts and Less Working Joints and Always Ready for Either Hilling or Drilling.

The Clutch-Stop Movement The seed plates on the New Deere No. 9 are revolved by means of pinions on the drop shaft, which is driven from a sprocket wheel on the main axle. The clutch, when tripped by the check rower wire, allows the drop shaft to make one complete revolution, which is sufficient to accumulate on the upper valve the required number of kernels desired in one hill. The clutch is then thrown out of gear by means of the trip dog, and held until the wire again trips the valves, drops the hill and releases the clutch, which then counts out the next hill.

Spring Chain Tightener A feature which contributes to the smooth and even running of the dropping mechanism is our spring chain tightener, which keeps the drive chain at the proper tension at all times. The spring adjustment is automatic.

Perfect Cut-Off Its action is quick and free, and the moving parts are so shaped and so controlled that it is impossible to injure the corn.

The Foot Drop The foot drop on the New Deere Planter is of special use in hill dropping with the foot, and when planting the rows, usually four in number, at the ends of the field.

Hilling or Drilling The change from hilling to drilling, or vice versa, is instantly made. No extra attachments or no tools are required.

Improved Force Drop Valves When hill dropping the action is perfect and positive. There are no projecting parts for the kernels to catch or lodge upon and the hill is discharged backward and downward into the furrow by a positive action in such a manner that all tendency to imperfect checking, due to uneven travel of team is avoided.

Automatic Reel This reel is the most practical and convenient found on any planter. Its great simplicity and perfect action make it as near perfect as could be desired.

Width Adjustment Our regular New Deere No. 9 Corn Planters are made adjustable in width from three feet to three feet eight inches.

Buttonless Wire With each planter is furnished eighty rods of annealed steel buttonless wire. The joints are made with the perfect double twist which renders them very strong and at the same time prevents them from slipping through the fork. Open links at regular intervals enable the operator to readily work around trees or other obstructions in the field.

Adjustable Seat A feature which will be appreciated by the operator is the improved adjustable seat. The seat can be quickly moved back or forward, or tilted up and down to suit. The seat is sheet steel and so shaped that it is very comfortable.

There are many other splendid features about which we want every farmer to know. We have an excellent booklet, "More Corn on the Same Acreage" which we would be glad to send free to every farmer in Crawford County. It not only tells about the New Deere No. 9, but gives much valuable information concerning seed corn, care of seed and seed testing. A postal card request will bring one to you at once.

Respectfully,

The J. B. Romans Co.