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GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY POLICE
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT

CABINET №7

DEATH AT ASHFORD HALL

CASE №. 47/34

into the death of
Sir Arthur Whitmore

15 November 1934,
Gloucestershire

Officer in charge:
Inspector T. Hale



HOW TO INVESTIGATE

the "how to play" page – read first

YOU ARE THE INVESTIGATION. Before you lies the file of an unsolved case: reports, statements, photographs, letters and evidence gathered by the county police. Your task is to name the **killer**, prove the **method** and the **opportunity**, and support your conclusion with the documents. One of them is lying. Not every secret is a motive for murder.

Players: 1-6 · Time: 1-2 hours · No host needed – the solution is sealed; no one knows the answer in advance.

PREPARATION

1. Print the case (in colour if you can, A4). Lay the documents out on a table – or pin them to a wall, like an investigation board.

2. **Do not open** the envelopes marked "OPEN WHEN..." or the "**SOLUTION**" page until you reach them. The whole mystery rests on them.

HOW TO PLAY – THREE STEPS

1. **Study the case.** Read the documents: who was where, when, who had a motive. Argue, put forward theories.

2. **Build your proof on the "Detective's Worksheet"** – for each suspect: *motive · opportunity · what they lied about · what disproves it*. Open the sealed envelopes **only when the condition on them is met** – a reward for the work, not a hint.

3. **The accusation.** When you are sure, fill in the accusation form: the name, the **method**, the **time-window**, the motive and three pieces of evidence. **Only then** open the "**SOLUTION**" page and check yourself.

The golden rule. Do not look at the "Solution" before your time – it is the one sure way to spoil your own game. Getting there yourselves is the whole pleasure.

If you are stuck: allow yourselves one "soft hint" – open the envelope with the maid's statement: it is built into the proper course of the investigation and gently points you where to look. It is no disgrace.

Good luck, Detective. The case is waiting.

MEMORANDUM TO THE INVESTIGATOR

read before all other papers

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1. Lay the documents out on a table. You may read them in any order, but it is sensible to begin with the police report (Sheet 5).
 2. Everything needed for the answer is already in the file. No information "from outside" will be required – only the papers, attention, and common sense.
 3. The envelope marked "OPEN AFTER READING THE CHEMICAL EXAMINATION" – open it precisely then. It is evidence of the investigation, not a hint out of pity.
 4. Answer three questions in order: **BY WHAT? WHEN? WHO?** The Detective's Worksheet will help you lose nothing.
 5. When you resolve to accuse – fill in the accusation form. The signatures of all detectives are required: a mistake will fall on all equally.
 6. Only after that open the packet "CASE CLOSED." There is no going back.
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Contents of the file: 27 documents. Any missing sheets are to be established before play begins. Players: one to six. Time: one to two hours. Difficulty: ★★☆☆

Good luck, Detective. You will need it.

THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE HERALD

NO. 5,612

SATURDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1934

PRICE TWOPENCE

SUDDEN DEATH OF SIR ARTHUR WHITMORE

The Coroner orders an inquest. The county speaks of an anonymous letter

BIBURY, FRIDAY. — The county is shaken by news of the death of Sir Arthur Whitmore, Baronet, chairman of Whitmore Holding, which occurred on the night before Thursday at his seat, Ashford Hall, at the age of sixty-eight.

On Wednesday the deceased had gathered his household to mark the anniversary of the death of his wife, Lady Margaret; at dinner, it is reported, he was in good spirits and announced that he meant "to be done with all the old business at once, on Saturday."

The deceased's family doctor, Dr H. Oldfield, certified death from heart failure, which had long threatened the Baronet.

Yesterday, however, as our correspondent has learned, a letter without signature was delivered to the office of the Coroner, Mr Fennimore, whereupon the Coroner directed that the burial be postponed and ordered a post-mortem.

The police declined to comment. Inspector Hale, arrived from Cirencester, spent the whole of yesterday at the Hall; the servants, it is rumoured, have been ordered not to leave the parish.

The funeral, appointed for Monday, is postponed until further notice. The inquest will open on Thursday, 22 November, at Bibury.

FROM THE HERALD ARCHIVE. THE ASHBY CASE, 1907.

Older readers will remember the trial of Thomas Ashby, co-partner of the trading house Whitmore & Ashby: the county court found him guilty of embezzling £11,200 of the firm. Ashby did not admit his guilt; he died in Gloucester Gaol before his appeal was heard. The firm survived through the efforts of the junior partner — the present Sir Arthur — and was reconstituted as Whitmore Holding. The convicted man left a widow and two children; the family quit the county.

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE, a bay mare, six years old, quiet, for saddle and harness. Cheap, owing to departure. Apply to Griggs, Arlington Row, after six.

"IMPERIAL" TEA — strength and aroma in every tin. Supplier to the best houses in the county. HIGGS'S Grocery, Market Square, Bibury.

RAILWAY. The train timetable to Cheltenham changes from 19 November. Enquiries and tickets — Bibury station booking office, daily from 7 a.m.