

*John Macdonald*

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EXPLANATION AND PUBLICATION  
OF POLICE ACTIVITIES



little to the listeners in the hotel, but the black looks, the hisses and the weapons meant a great deal. The Americans were outnumbered ten to one and the outlook was far from happy.

"Then, like the moment when the movie hero comes galloping in on the scene of distress followed by his henchmen, the Rangers came. They did not arrive in any romantic, movie-hero fashion. They came bumpety-bump, rattling along in a wheezing, protesting, tin 'flivver' and drew up in front of the hotel. The bronzed Texan at the wheel bit a chew off his plug and spat expertly at the sidewalk. The Ranger beside him swung one long leg over the door of the car and dismounted. The three Rangers in the back seat climbed out with deliberate ease, stretched themselves, and looked interestedly about. And lo! All that met their gaze were the white faces of the tense-nerved Americans peering out of the hotel windows. The Mexicans had disappeared like mist. The combat had ended without a shot. It is a saying in the border country that one thing a Mexican outlaw fears more than his satanic majesty is the Texas Ranger.

"The Ranger is steady of nerve, keen of eye and an incredibly expert marksman. The oil company's surveying party which participated in the 'Battle of Benavides' hired as a guide a ranch hand who had once been in the Ranger service and who had such a penchant for silence that speech was practically wasted on him.

#### A CRACK SHOT

"One day, while riding across the country, one of the surveyors took careful aim at a circling hawk and fired. The bird swept majestically on, apparently undisturbed by the shot. Another of the party raised his gun and as steadily as possible in a car traveling over rough country aimed, fired and missed. The ex-Ranger, whose conversation consisted of the words 'yes' and 'no,' and these strictly in answer to questions, sat impassively in the back seat, arms folded, eyes set ahead, stolid, Indianlike. If he saw the efforts to bring down the hawk he gave no sign. Then another black-winged denizen of the air circled into view. The cowboy slipped his gun from its holster and brought down the hawk before either of the amazed oil men had time to raise a gun. They exchanged glances, put their guns down, and returned to the business of surveying.

"The unpardonable sin of a Ranger is cowardice. If a Ranger, under any circumstances, refuses to go into danger, he is curtly dismissed from the service and his name is synonymous with shame from one end of the lonely country to the other."

## A Great Tribute

*Under the heading "Vancouver's Sherlock Holmes" the Winnipeg Tribune has the following to say in regard to the work of Inspector Vance, of the Vancouver Police Department:*

CONAN DOYLE'S great detective character, Sherlock Holmes, has appeared in real life in Vancouver. And apparently the Moriartys of the coast city's underworld are just as anxious to get rid of him as they were to put the famous London sleuth out of business.

The detective is Inspector J. F. C. B. Vance, head of the Vancouver police bureau of science. A fifth attack on his life was made this week when an unknown assailant, waiting in his garage, hurled acid which burned the inspector's hands and leg and necessitated his removal to the hospital.

In the past three years, Inspector Vance has attracted wide attention for his scientific tracking down of criminals. A former mining engineer in British Columbia's gold fields, he went to Vancouver 27 years ago as city chemist. Criminal investigation was his hobby and when the police bureau of science was created, he was placed in charge of it.

Tiny bits of evidence such as particles of dust and bits of glass, sand and paper are used by Inspector Vance to reconstruct crimes. So feared is he by wrong-doers that more than one criminal, believing himself safe, is said to have broken down and thrown himself on the mercy of the court when he learned Vance had worked on the case.

Recently this Sherlock Holmes has invented a "robot nose" which identifies suspected persons by their scent. The new instrument, it is stated, is called the "Vancamoscope." Chemicals sprayed over the spot where a suspect is believed to have stood, rise into the lower end of the instrument and strike a spectrum band. Pointers indicate where the band has been broken. It is claimed that no two persons have the same spectrum record, hence classification is as sure as that of finger prints.

Watson was more a recorder of Sherlock Holmes' activities than his guardian angel. But in the interests of law and order it is to be hoped that some means will be found of protecting this inspector who is raising the standard of scientific crime investigation in Canada to a new level.

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