10/7/44

We never solved this murder. We called it (Posa) the "Mord an dem Isar Anlagen."
Dear Folks:

I am tempted to relate my present case in a letter, to try to convey to you the maze of nothing in which I am, the wealth of possibilities, the game of guess and counter-guess, the lack of clues, the lack of witnesses. In short, the whole mixed-up deal which has left your son, with the no. 1 priority case in Europe on his hands, in about the same position after 7 days that he was in on the second day.

Now, don't think I'm worrying myself to death over it. It's true I've solved every case up to now, but that was just luck that I didn't get stuck with one of the bad ones. We never refer to such things as being able to solve every case, or one's "record." Because there are cases that are
just unsolvable. Solving cases depends to a great extent on "getting there firstest," of reaching the scene of the crime while clues are still to be found. In our game, covering all of South Bavaria from Munich, we rarely have that valuable asset, the scene of the crime, to work with. We generally arrive 24-36 hours late, to find all the criminological evidence destroyed or so altered as to be worthless. From the setup there are just bound to be cases, which once stripped of the scene of the crime clues, can't be cracked. One does the best one can, and forgets "records" and Dick Tracy etc.

That's what I'm doing on this case, the best I can. But we arrived on the scene of the crime, an open park in a pouring rain, 1½ hours after the crime itself. There were some 50 people there ahead
of us. The MP's, instead of roping off
the scene, and not disturbing things, actually
did every thing possible to confuse things.
(1) There were 20 MP's themselves there.  (2) 6
cars were driven over the scene of the crime.
(3) The two main witnesses were allowed to
disappear, by the MP's who "took charge."

I am left with one witness, the
woman who was shot, who got only a one
second glimpse of the killer. The two real
witnesses, probably unwilling to testify against
a German for an American murder, disappeared,
and in spite of our radio broadcasts on the
German and American radio, have not shown
themselves. The shell, that must have
been ejected from the gun (An Italian
Automatic, model BARETTA, calibre 9 m.m., we have
determined from the slug taken from the
GI's body) was without doubt trampled into
the mud. An intensive 2½ hr. search in
a pouring rain the next morning (for the
shell.)
couldn't dig it up. The only thing found on the scene of the crime was a fountain pen, which we believe the killer dropped. To make sure we wouldn't be able to get fingerprints off of it, the MP who found it picked it up with his fingers and carried it awhile before giving it to us. Isn't that confusing?

The case is not hopeless by a long shot. I believe we'll crack it. There are a couple of leads which we haven't fully developed yet, and I think something must show up from one of them.

Anyhow, if the challenge is great, so will be my efforts.

A German Homicide Detective, Schmitt, and I are working the case primarily. Agent McKee, who doesn't understand German, trails rather unhappily behind us. If a
6 I angle comes in, then McKee can help a lot more. Love, Bob