

The Adventure of the Sussex Archers - SusA
Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine, 1962
The Casebook of Solar Pons

Date

Copper/Early Summer, 1927

Patrick/Summer, 1927

Quotes

- J Colvin: *You'll join me at breakfast...?"*
Pons: *A cup of tea, sir. We have breakfasted. Besides, I like to keep my mind clear for these little problems.*
- Parker: *We have not had what I should call a profitable day.*
Pons: *Ah? Every little grain of sand contributes to the making of a road.*
- *We are all alone, Parker. Never lose sight of that.*

The Case

Joshua Colvin and five other members of the disbanded archery club, The Sussex Archers, receive threatening notes. An arrow in the back kills one, just as club member Henry Pope had been twenty years before. Colvin's son Hewitt Colvin asks for Pons' help and mentions that Pope's brother has recently moved back to the area and is the leading suspect.

Comments

- Pons utilizes a ruse commonly found in the Holmes stories. The detective announces that he is returning to London and takes a car or train some part of the way. However, he has only created the image of leaving the scene and secretly returns, allowing him to unveil a trap without any suspicion from the guilty party.
- Parker gives an excellent description of Pons cogitating on the case: "...and began to pace the floor in that attitude I knew so well – head sunk on his chest, hands clasped behind him. Back and forth he went, his brow furrowed, his eyes far away, smoke from his pipe of shag making a blue cloud about his head...After almost two hours of this he stopped before me."
- Pons is engaged by Hewitt Colvin to prevent his father from being killed by Trevor Pope. Pons does save Joshua Colvin's life, though the attempted killer is not Pope. In so doing, Pons also solves a recent murder that was a "build-up" to the attempt on Colvin.

But Pons does even more, causing justice to be served in a twenty year old murder of an associate of Joshua Colvin. Certainly The Sussex Archers rates as one of Pons' most successful cases.