

History's Mysteries:

Research, Discuss and Solve Some of
History's Biggest Puzzles



TOP SECRET
Unsolved: The
Phantom Barber

<https://bit.ly/histmyst>

ISBN: 978-1-956159-00-4 (print) 978-1-956159-01-1 (ebook)

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Edited by Walton Burns

Interior and Cover Design by Red Panda Editorial Services

Country of Manufacture Specified on Last Page

First Printing 2021

GENERAL T. J. BURNS
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Dear Agent.

Congratulations, If you're reading this you have been chosen for the most prestigious of assignments, to work for the Historical Secret Agents! (HSA)

As an HSA member, you will have access to highly secretive information covering thousands of years of human history. Each mission will task you with studying the past carefully to find new solutions to old problems! This is not an easy job and each mission will place you into difficult situations.

For each mission you will have to be resourceful and come up with an effective plan to change - or protect - history for the better!

To say this is an important job is a severe understatement. As the quote says above, understanding our past is essential for the preservation and improvement of our history.

Sincerely,

T. J. Burns

General T.J. Burns, Director HSA

"THOSE WHO FAIL TO LEARN FROM HISTORY ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT"

The Phantom Barber



Before You Read

1. What was your best haircut experience? Your worst haircut experience?
2. What do you think a Phantom Barber is?
 - a. What can you infer about this situation?
 - b. Why do you think this is happening?

Vocabulary Definitions

Write the letter of the definition next to the matching word.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. phantom (n.) ____ | a. someone who cuts hair |
| 2. barber (n.) ____ | b. clueless, having no idea |
| 3. boom (n.) ____ | c. similar to a ghost, something that barely is seen |
| 4. stalked (v.) ____ | d. cutting |
| 5. lock (n.) ____ | e. a Christian community where nuns usually live |
| 6. shearing (v.) ____ | f. (here) a large increase |
| 7. convent (n.) ____ | g. anger or resentment toward someone related to a bad experience in the past |
| 8. baffled (adj.) ____ | h. to follow or approach sneakily |
| 9. intruder (n.) ____ | i. (here) a piece of a person's hair |
| 10. grudge (n.) ____ | j. a person entering a place where they are unwelcome or secretly |

Answers at the end of the book

Vocabulary Questions

Discuss with a partner.

1. When was the last time you visited a *barber*? Was it a good experience? What was your best or worst experience getting a haircut?
2. What would you do if an *intruder* entered your house?
3. Have you ever had a *grudge* against someone? Has anyone ever had a *grudge* against you?

Your Briefing

478 Words - 1010-1200L

Time: June 1942

Location: Pascagoula, Mississippi

In June 1942, after a population *boom* brought about by the increased manufacturing of warships in the area, the citizens of Pascagoula, Mississippi were *stalked* by a hair-cutting *phantom* who terrorized the night. These attacks began and ended in 1942 with no culprit ever being formally charged for this very mysterious and creepy crime.

The man nicknamed the *Phantom Barber* by newspapers worked in the darkness made more profound by the army's blackout regulations. These blackout regulations required that besides streetlights, all windows and doors should be covered at night with heavy curtains, cardboard, or paint to prevent the escape of any glimmer of light that might aid enemy aircraft. As a result, with streetlights off nightly, it made it easy for the phantom to sneak around. On Monday or Friday evenings, he slit a window screen to gain access to a house, crept inside, and cut the hair of sleeping occupants, particularly blonde girls. Sometimes he would take one *lock* or two, but sometimes he *sheared* as much as a full head of hair. He took nothing else from the home except his unusual prize.

He began with two young girls in the *convent* of Our Lady of Victories, followed by a six-year-old female child visiting another family. That time, he left a clue—the print of a man's bare foot in sand on an unoccupied bed in the room. The police were *baffled* and offered a \$300 reward for information. The public was in a panic. Women refused to go outside at night. Men applied for pistol permits. Bloodhounds were brought in to track the bizarre intruder, but the efforts failed. The Phantom Barber continued his hair cutting incursions.

Finally, the phantom broke his pattern, or so it seemed. A window screen

was slit in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Terrell Heidelberg, and the *intruder* came inside their bedroom. However, rather than cutting hair, he brutally assaulted the couple. Mrs. Heidelberg lost her front teeth and was knocked unconscious, while her husband was beaten with a metal bar. Both survived the attack. Two months later, the police chief announced the arrest of a suspect, William A. Dolan, a chemist, who was charged with attempted murder.

A connection between Dolan and the Phantom Barber came with the discovery of human hair *allegedly* found near his residence. He was convicted of the attack on the Heidelberg; he had borne a *grudge* against Terrell's father, a judge. — But he continued to deny he was the phantom and he was never charged with the phantom's acts. Since the Phantom Barber never touched his victims other than their hair, it would seem no meaningful tie exists between Dolan and the Phantom Barber, whose break-ins ended as mysteriously as they began. Was the Phantom Barber caught? Did he (or she) stop for some unknown reason? This mystery remains very much unsolved.

Your Mission

You are dropped into the police station in Pascagoula, Mississippi.
Using the clues above can you catch the Phantom Barber?

Phantom Barber - History Quiz

1. Which days of the week did the Phantom Barber usually strike?
 - a. Mondays and Fridays
 - b. Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - c. Saturday and Sunday
 - d. Wednesday
2. How much was the reward for information on the Phantom Barber?
 - a. \$100
 - b. \$300
 - c. \$500
 - d. \$1000
3. The Phantom Barber made his attacks in Pascagoula which is located in the state of...
 - a. California
 - b. New York
 - c. Minnesota
 - d. Mississippi
4. What kind of person was the Phantom Barber's favorite target?
 - a. blonde men
 - b. blonde women
 - c. dark-haired men
 - d. dark-haired women
5. The Phantom Barber only touched the hair of his victims
 - a. true
 - b. false

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think the Phantom Barber's motivation was? What kind of person do you think they were? Do you think there are other types of people with similar interests or obsessions?
2. How did the Phantom Barber sneak into people's houses undetected?
3. What do you think about the army's blackout regulations? How would that affect you if you had to have blackout regulations in your neighborhood?
4. How would you feel if the Phantom Barber visited you?
5. How would you react if you saw them cutting someone else's hair?
6. Has anything strange ever happened to you while you were sleeping? If so, what was it?

Screams, Murderers, Witches and Ghosts: The Phantom Barber

1. **Be a Part of History to Complete the Mission:** Write the story! Write about 1 page. Here are some questions to consider as you write:
 - a. What is your plan to catch the Phantom Barber?
 - b. Who is the Phantom Barber? What is their motivation?
 - c. What is the punishment for their crimes?
2. Draw a picture! What do you imagine the Phantom Barber looks like? Are they: Male or female? Old or young? Large or small? What kind of clothes do they wear?
3. Write a short essay about William Dolan. Why do you think he was a suspect but never convicted? Examine the *logical* reasons he may or may not be the Phantom Barber. See "Supplement 9: Logic and Logical Fallacies".
4. Interview your classmates or friends and family.

Interview Question: : What do you think the punishment of the Phantom Barber should be? Think about what crimes should he be charged with		
Name	Answer	Reason
Taylor	Pay for new haircuts.	The victims weren't hurt but they probably need their hair fixed.

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40 units include an investigation of mysteries, some well-known, others obscure, such as:

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- Who wrote Shakespeare's plays?
- Was there a way to keep Korea unified?
- Do aliens make crop circles or are they hoaxes?
- Was Genghis Khan a bloodthirsty barbarian or a wise and just ruler?
- Who robbed the Isabelle Stewart Museum?
- Who killed Tupac? Or is he still alive?
- What caused the hysteria around the Salem Witch trials?



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Format: paperback, 8.5" x 11"

ISBN: 978-1956159004

<https://bit.ly/histmyst>

