

**The Mystery of William C. Wilson:
A Dunbar Library Murder Mystery**

**Instructions:** Solve the clues to figure out what happened to our murdered man. Correctly solve the case and be entered to win a prize!

Any questions? Leave them in our “Questions” folder on the board and a response will show up within 48 hours, or you can ask your questions at the Information Desk.

**Clue # 1: What happened?**

* Head to a computer (yours or one of the Library’s).
* Pull up the *Historical New York Times* database

**Hint:** change the option in the search bar at the top right-hand corner of the Library’s website from Quicksearch to Databases and type in the database name.

* Search for “Murder in Philadelphia: William C. Wilson”

Who was William C. Wilson?

a 55-year-old proprietor of Wilson’s Circulating Library

Who committed the murder?

thieves

What was the suspected motive?

Wilson had secretly accumulated money over the years

**Clue # 2: Suspect 1**

In this case, police arrested someone, but later released them due to lack of evidence that they were involved. Use our Quicksearch database to discover who this suspect was.

* In Quicksearch, search for “Amenities of Bookselling.”

First word of the subject: \_\_\_Booksellers\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Author’s last name: \_\_\_\_Porter\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Indeed, police arrested the \_\_bookseller’s\_\_\_ \_\_porter\_\_, Marion Stuyvesant, before releasing him, according to the *Public Ledger’s Almanacs…for 1870-1873.*

*Research Tip: Quicksearch offers more than just scholarly, peer reviewed articles. Periodicals, magazines, newspapers and other sources can offer a closer look at the different types of information like police reports, first-hand accounts, interviews, and more.*

**Clue # 3**: Suspect 2

On October 4, 1897, a man calling himself \_\_\_\_\_\_\_William Harris\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ turned himself in to the Philadelphia Police, claiming that he was one of \_\_\_3\_\_\_ men who had murdered Mr. Wilson.

*For the name of the suspect:*

Look up *Lebanon: A history, 600-2011* in the catalog. What are the author’s first and last names?

William Harris

*For the number of suspects:*

Head to the floor of the Library where most of our books are shelved. Stay there for the next clue. What floor is this?

3

**Clue # 4: Suspect 3**

Later, in 1898, police looked for another suspect, “\_Big\_ \_Bill\_” \_Mason\_.

*For his nickname:*

* Head up to the stacks and locate this call number: **HD6509.H3 D82 1987**
* The first two words of the title are the same first two words of the suspect’s name.

*For his last name:*

* Then, head to this call number: **PS3563.A7877 Z82 2000**
* The subject of the book and our suspect share the same last name

What is the suspect’s name?

“\_\_Big\_\_\_ \_\_Bill\_\_” \_\_Mason\_\_

 *Research Tip: Our Library uses the Library of Congress classification system, while most public and school libraries use Dewey Decimal. If you need help finding anything, drop by the 2nd floor Information Desk.*

**Clue # 5:** **Apprehending a suspect**

In July 1898, Suspect # 3 was apprehended, along with three other criminals. In order to figure out where he was caught, you’ll need to cite this information in MLA format:

 Publish date: 2002
 Publisher: International Tales from Yonkers
 Book title: Your Own Revolutionary Knight’s Casebook
 Author: Edward W. Norton

**N**orton, **E**dward **W**. ***Y****our* ***O****wn* ***R****evolutionary* ***K****night’s* ***C****asebook.* **I**nternational **T**ales from **Y**onkers, 2002.

Now that you’ve cited this book, figure out the hidden message to learn where this suspect was apprehended. (Ignore the date.) Where was he apprehended?

 \_\_\_New\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_York\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_City\_\_\_

*Research tip: If you need help citing your sources, the Information Desk on the 2nd floor keeps copies of the most up-to-date citation style manuals that you can use in the Library, or you can visit the Writing Center in 122 Student Success Center to visit with a writing coach or use their copies of the style manuals.*

**Bonus: Show off your sleuthing skills**

For bonus points, post a picture to social media as you work to solve the case. Be sure to tag @dunbarlibrary (on Twitter and Instagram) and use the hashtag #dunbarmystery (on any social media platform).

**If you would like to be entered to win a prize, turn in this packet to the “Make Your Case” folder on the bulletin board and fill out the following information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Wright State e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Congratulations!**
You’ve collected the facts for this case.

**FACT:** This crime really did happen and was referred to as “Wilson’s Mysterious Murder” as details were never really released as to who did it. Suspect #3 did go to jail “on a charge of murder,” but the details were not revealed.

**Sources:**

“About Chess in 19th Century Philadelphia.” *Sarah’s Chess Journal.* January 2008, http://www.edochess.ca/batgirl/PhilaChess.html.

“From John Hilbert.” *Chess Notes,* no. 3891, http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/extra/murder.html.

“Murder in Philadelphia.” *New York Times.* 17 August 1897, http://ezproxy.libraries.wright.edu:2048/ login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/95533797?accountid=15141.

“Obituary: W.C. Wilson.” *American Chess Magazine,* vol. 1, no. 3, 1897, pp. 175. *Google Books,* https://books.google.com/books?id=iMFAAQAAMAAJ&lpg=PA175&ots=JOXFr80jd\_&dq=%22wil liam%20c%20wilson%22%20library%20murder&pg=PA131#v=onepage&q=%22william%20c%20 wilson%22%20library%20murder&f=false.

