

MAY BE CHARGED WITH MURDER

Conspiracy to Swindle an Insurance Company by Producing the Alleged Body of a Policy Holder.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 18. — H. H. Holmes, alias H. H. Howard, the man arrested in Boston charged with swindling the Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Association of this city out of \$10,000 by palming off a bogus corpse as the body of B. F. Pitzel, a policy holder of the company, will be brought here to-morrow and arraigned on the charge. The charge of swindling may not be the only one Holmes will have to answer, for the more serious crime of murder may be laid to him.

When the body of the supposed Pitzel was found in the room at 1,316 Callowhill Street on Sept. 3 last it was stretched flat upon the floor and was perfectly rigid. The Coroner's physician claims that the body could not have been brought here in a trunk from another city, as confessed to by Holmes, for the reason that it was stiff, and a body once bent does not again become rigid. Furthermore, if it had been in the trunk it would have shown marks of where it had been doubled up, and no such marks were upon the body. The theory is advanced that the body found was really that of Pitzel and not of any one else.

As a basis for this theory it is argued that Pitzel and the other conspirators plotted to disfigure the former by burning his face with some chemical and then calling in a physician to prescribe for his injuries. A body was then to be procured and similarly disfigured as Pitzel's was, and then it was to be given out that the man had died of his injuries, and it was trusted that the attending physician would not discover the fraud and would give a certificate of death in accordance with the story told by the conspirators. It is supposed that Pitzel had his fellow-conspirators administer chloroform to him, so that he would not feel the pain of the burns when they were inflicted, and that he either was given an overdose and died from the effects or was killed while unconscious by his treacherous friends.

Another theory in support of the belief of murder is that a man resembling Pitzel was decoyed to the room, chloroformed and killed, and his face disfigured so as to render identification more difficult. Another suspicious circumstance, as viewed by the detectives, is that Mrs. Pitzel was home on a visit about a month ago to her parents, in Illinois, and she said nothing about the death of her husband.

In the neighborhood of Thirteenth and Callowhill Streets nobody could be found to-day who remembered or knew anything about Pitzel.