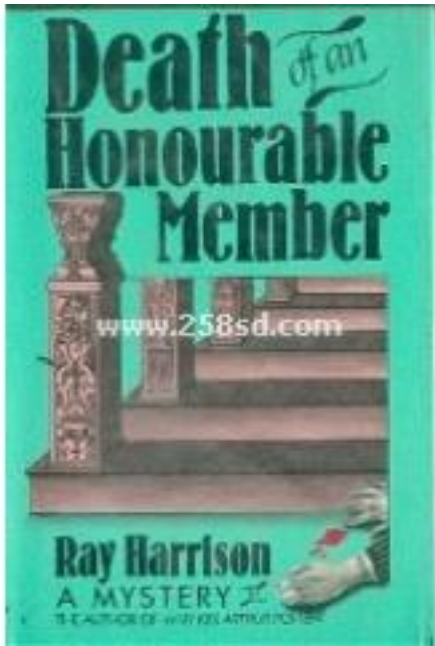


Death of an Honourable Member



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Detective Sergeant Joseph Bragg of the City of London Police strode along Cheapside towards his office. He was conscious of being out of tune with his surroundings. The cloud and rain that made June miserable had hung on till the middle of July but today the sun was shining from a placid blue sky and everyone was smiling. A street orderly darted into the traffic and scooped up some horse droppings with a flourish; then pirouetting like a matador between the lumbering vehicles gained the pavement again. Perhaps it was because the case at the Old Bailey had gone on well into the lunch hour; or maybe it was the stricken look on the face of the accused's wife when the guilty verdict had been given. So far as he could remember he'd felt content enough that morning. One thing was for sure: he'd never go to the Saracen again. The

pint of beer he d been served was flat and
stale; and they d charged him tuppence for it. And their
sausages had more bread than pork in them. Funny how the
newspaper reporters managed to take over the Magpie and
Stump. If you weren t there by one o clock you could never get
near the bar. God knows where they got their money from.
But at least the girls had forsaken their coats. A chattering
group of them came towards himi¼ wearing high-necked white
blouses and long black skirts. Some of them were even without
their hats. Probably typewriters from the Gresham Assurance.
They glanced provocatively at him as he was forced to step into
the gutter to let them passi¼ then burst into giggles as they
scampered up the steps and through a doorway. Prettyi¼ young
and shapely: in ten years they d look work-worn and defeated.
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目录:

[Death of an Honourable Member_ 下载链接1](#)

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