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## Memo from Caleb S. Haines to William Langer Regarding the Carl Maier Case, September 16, 1919

Caleb S. Haines

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*Meyer*

MEMORANDUM TO MR. LANGER IN RE CARL MAIER.

The writer interviewed Miss Anna Bortvet at Estherville, Iowa, on September 16, 1919. Miss Bortvet is a woman between thirty and thirty-five years of age of Norwegian birth. She was very frank and conscientious in her statements and inclined to want to tell all she knew concerning the death of Carl Maier.

At the time Carl Maier was killed Miss Bortvet was living with her sister, Mrs. Martin Naisted. The Naisteds lived within a mile from the home of the Maiers.

Miss Bortvet claims to have been well acquainted with both John and Carl Maier. About two years prior to the death of Carl she was employed as a nurse at the Maiers, being called there to attend Carl while he was suffering from rheumatism. Carl Maier, up to within three weeks of the time he met his death, had taken Miss Bortvet riding a number of times and had "kept company" with her.

Miss Bortvet is strongly of the opinion that Carl Maier was murdered. She never at any time believed that he committed suicide. She does not believe that his infatuation for Rebecca Henke, the lady who is supposed to have jilted him, was so fervent as to cause him to commit suicide.

A short time (a few hours) after Carl met his death Miss Bortvet was called to attend him. He never regained consciousness after she arrived at his bedside. Previous to her taking charge he was being cared for by a Mrs. Anthony, a practical nurse. Mrs. Anthony was the mother-in-law of a Mr. Brown who edited the paper at Beulah. Miss Bortvet says that Mrs. Anthony informed her, after she arrived on the scene, that Carl described the man whom he thought killed him as being "a fellow with a black hat and dark complexion". Mrs. Anthony told Miss Bortvet that she thought Carl was trying to say that he was riding on his white pony when shot.

Miss Bortvet never suspected John Maier of having anything to do with the death of his brother. She believes that this idea is absurd.

A man by the name of Russie White lived within a mile of the Maiers. About a month prior to the death of Carl this man White was married to a very young girl in the neighborhood. Her name was Lang. Miss Bortvet has never seen this man White. She knows from the talk of the neighbors and her sister that he was quite an old man and that he was supposed to be very quick tempered and hasty. At the time of Carl's death a boy by the name of Fred Lang, a brother of White's wife, was working for White. Miss Bortvet thinks the boy was sixteen or seventeen years of age at that time.

Miss Bortvet states that Maier met his death in the forenoon of November 3, 1916; that thereafter, during the latter part of April or the first of May, 1917, the said Fred Lang was employed by the Naisteds and while Miss Bortvet was still staying with her sister. One day during this period Miss Bortvet talked with young Lang about Carl's death, remarking that it too bad that a fine young man like Carl should meet so untimely a death. The boy answered to the effect that it was not meant for Carl; that he was killed by mistake. The boy did not state positively that it was meant ~~that~~ John should be killed but that is the inference gathered by Miss Bortvet. Young Lang then told her that John had often twitted White about his young wife. Shortly before Carl's death John said to Mrs. White, in the presence of her husband, "if you wanted to get married why didn't you marry a young man like me."

A couple of days before the death of Carl John told Mrs. White that if she wanted to go to a certain dance and her husband would not take her that he was going and he would take her. He told her this in the presence of her husband. Bortvet stated that John was a young man about twenty-four years old, jolly and always good-natured; that he never cared anything for this girl but was merely teasing old man White about her. On the other hand the girl was somewhat deficient in brains and thought that John meant everything he said. Young Lang told Bortvet that Mrs. White told her husband that if she had known she could have gotten John she never would have married him (White). Young Lang told Bortvet that White was on the place when he left for the field the day of the murder; that White did not come home at noon and in fact did not come home until late that night. He was supposed to have been at his brother's place. His brother lived within two miles of White's place. For a few days prior to the death of Carl, he <sup>(Carl)</sup> had been in the village of Beulah building a house. He came home the morning he was killed. The morning of the death of Carl John had gone to town. Miss Bortvet states that Carl and John looked something alike and that on the morning in question Carl was wearing a red and black checked Mackinaw, which belonged to John and which John always wore.

Bortvet states that on the morning of the death of Carl the news spread for several miles about the country; that almost everyone in the community came to Beulah to see Carl. She is well satisfied in her mind that White never came there. She says that the neighbors gathered together to look for the supposed murderer. She is positive that White did not join with the neighbors in this hunt.

During the conversation with Miss Bortvet young Lang told her that White could not stand for the teasing which John Maier had administered on various occasions.

Miss Bortvet thinks that White killed Carl thinking he was shooting John. She says she did not say anything to anybody about her conversation with young Lang for the reason that her sister was still living in the community and she feared that White might cause trouble for her sister. She also thought he might do some injury to the boy. Miss Bortvet is willing to do whatever she can to assist in the apprehension of the murderer of Carl Maier and she would be willing to come to North Dakota any time and tell anything she knows.

Miss Bortvet stated that this young Lang girl was practically forced to marry White by her parents.

Miss Bortvet lives at the home of J. L. Hipple, Estherville, Iowa, and can be reached there at any time.

Respectfully submitted,

*C. S. Haines*