



ad our pursuers been familiar with Oxford,

they could have caught us up several times over. As it was, by the time they extricated themselves from the young man whose boat we had stolen, then consulted their maps, we were away from the river-side path in Christchurch meadow—by this time, I was punting—and down the new cut to the Isis proper.

By the time they had located the Thames path, gone back up to Folly Bridge, and crossed the river to get to the path, the current had moved us briskly downstream. They nearly caught us up at Itfley, when the lockkeeper protested about working the locks for one solitary punt, but a flash of gold in his hand changed his mind, and we were away.

The day was warm, the cushions were comfortable, and the merest touch of the pole kept us moving in the right direction. We stopped from time to time to take refreshment. And at one such stop, I bought an antique post-card, thinking to amuse Mrs King in California.

When evening came upon us, I changed into raiment that would draw less notice than trousers on a woman my age, and we abandoned our vessel. In a fit of whimsy, I left the day's clothing folded in the boat, with my secondary pair of spectacles, since every reader of crime fiction knows that suicides always remove their spectacles.

Thus, the explanation of how Mrs King came to possess my memoirs. I may at a later time recount the story of our subsequent communications: What I meant by the antique postcard that she read as, *More to follow; why we were in Utrecht when I sent it;*

and why, most puzzling of all, *The Times* did not publish its account of the punt found in central London for an entire three years.

Is it not satisfying to know that there is always more to any tale?

