

In the gray light of the morning, eight men—the Count, Groison, the three keepers, and two gendarmes, who had come over from Soulanges with the quartermaster—were out searching the country; but it was midday before they found the dead body of the head-forester in a coppice about five hundred paces from the Conches gate, in the corner of the park between the highroad and the road to Ville-aux-Fayes.

Two gendarmes were dispatched—one to Ville-aux-Fayes for the public prosecutor, and the other to the justice of the peace at Soulanges—and meanwhile the General drew up a report with the assistance of the quartermaster. There were marks in the road opposite the park gates where the horse had swerved and reared, and deep dints made by the hoofs of the runaway continued as far as the first footpath into the wood beyond the hedge. The animal had taken the shortest way back to the stable. A bullet was lodged in Michaud's back, and the spine was broken.

Groison and the quartermaster went all over the ground round about the spot where the horse had reared, the "scene of the murder," as it is called in criminal reports, but with all their sagacity they could discover no clue. The ground was frozen so hard that there was not a sign of the footprints of Michaud's murderer, and a spent cartridge was the *only* thing which they found.

When the public prosecutor arrived with the examining magistrate and Dr. Gourdon, and the body was removed for the post-mortem examination, it was ascertained that the ball, which corresponded with the waste cartridge, was a regulation bullet discharged from a rifle, and that there was not a single rifle in the commune of Blangy. That evening at the château the examining magistrate and M. Soudry, the public prosecutor, were of the opinion that these facts should be put in the form of a report, and that they had better wait. The lieutenant from Ville-aux-Fayes and the quartermaster were of the same mind.

"The shot must have been fired by somebody belonging