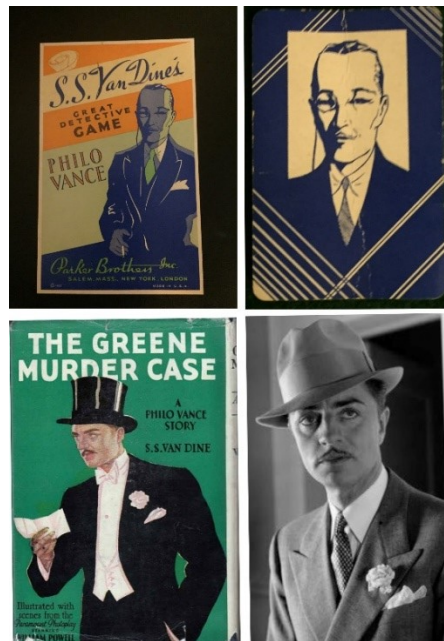


Table of Contents

Introduction
The Game of Detective
Sherlock Holmes Game
DETECO-Plays, Jury Box and Other Party Games
Mr. Ree
Philo Vance
Who is Guilty?
The Great Charlie Chan Mystery Game and The Charlie Chan Card Game
The Gracie Allen Murder Case
Who is the Thief?
The Crime Club Card Game
Cleudo and Clue
I Commit Card Game
Intrigue
Dragnet, Perry Mason and Arrest and Trial
Ellery Queen's Trapped!
Sherlock Holmes, The Game of the Great Detective
The Nancy Drew Mystery Game
Find Out!
Alfred Hitchcock Presents WHY
Whodunit? – The Game of Evidence
International Detective
Phillip Marlowe Detective Game and The Detectives Game
77 Sunset Strip
Peter Gunn Detective Game
Surf Side 6
Hawaiian Eye
Burke's Law the Game of Who Killed?
Honey West
Fu Manchu's Hidden Hoard
Murder on the Orient Express
The Case of the Elusive Assassin
And Then There Were None
Final Thoughts

Philo Vance

In 1937 Parker Brothers published *S. S. Van Dine's Great Detective Game Philo Vance* based on the popular detective series of the 1920s and 1930s. S. S. Van Dine was the pseudonym of Willard Huntingdon Wright. Prior to 1920 Wright published various avant-garde essays and articles on painting, philosophy and other intellectual pursuits. He wrote particularly harsh criticisms of romance and detective fiction. He became ill in 1923 (partly from exhaustion and partly due to excessive drinking and cocaine use) and while recovering read hundreds of crime and detective novels. He turned his reading into an essay covering the history and development of the genre. He also wrote his first murder mystery in 1926, *The Benson Murder Case*. He envisioned a set of twelve novels all with the same template for titles, The "X" Murder Case. He adopted the pseudonym S. S. Van Vine, to hide his efforts, but by 1928, it was widely known he was the author of the Philo Vance novels.

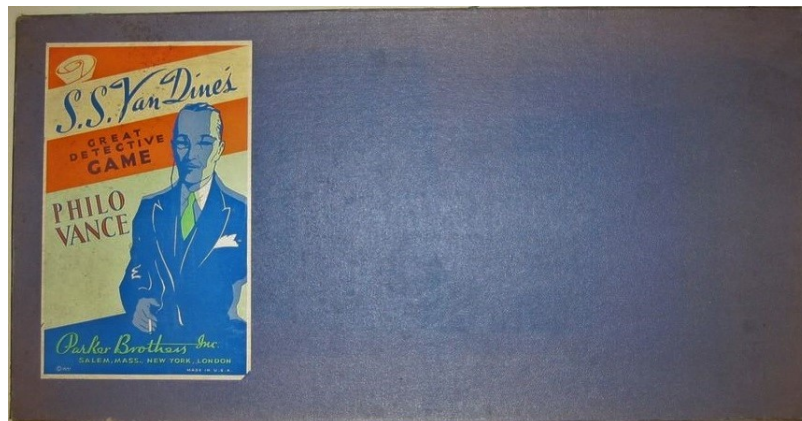


The character Philo Vance was an amateur detective. He was portrayed as “foppish”, a sort of playboy “dandy”, but with an intellectual bent. By the middle of the 1930s, the once very popular novels began to wane in popularity, but, beginning in 1929 into the 1940s, all but two of the novels were made into motion pictures. William Powell, who played Philo Vance in many of the early films, personified the public image of Philo Vance. Basil Rathbone, famous for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes, played the detective in 1929’s *The Bishop Murder Case*. While the general public bought up the books and attended the films, Wright’s novels did have their detractors. Dashiell Hammett thought Vance should have been more realistic and the very clever Ogden Nash quipped, “Philo Vance/Needs a kick in the pance”.

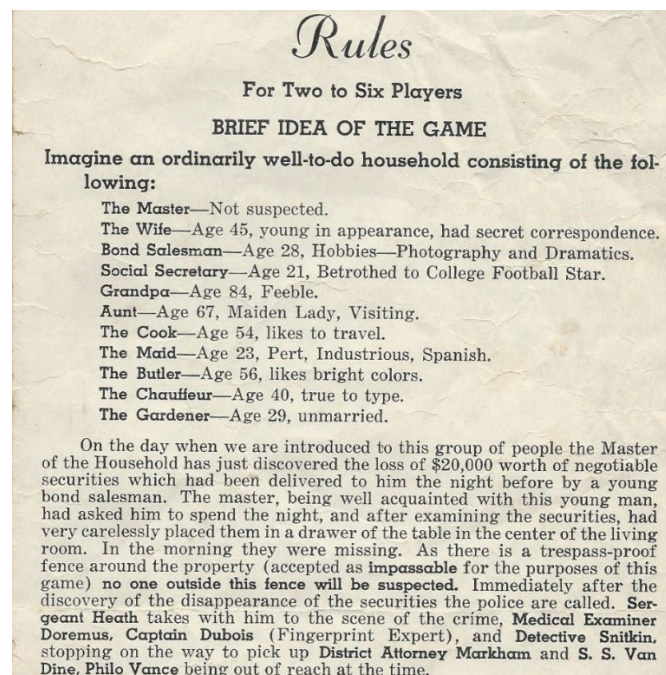
The image Parker Brothers used for Philo Vance appears to have drawn inspiration from William Powell. Their image appeared on the box cover, on a label on the outside of the game board and on the backs of the playing cards. The game was immensely popular and in its first year was

second only to *Monopoly* in sales. Wright claimed, “The Philo Vance game was the hardest job I’ve picked yet”, and continued, “A detective story is like making a good jigsaw puzzle; first you concoct the story and then you cut it up in bits that can be put together. But for Philo Vance I wanted clues that would, under varying circumstances of play, justify 10 different solutions. It took me months but now I’m sure that the Philo Vance game will keep the same people up night after night”. Wright died in 1939, at the age of 50, of heart disease.

The game was produced with at least a red and a blue box. The blue box is shown below.

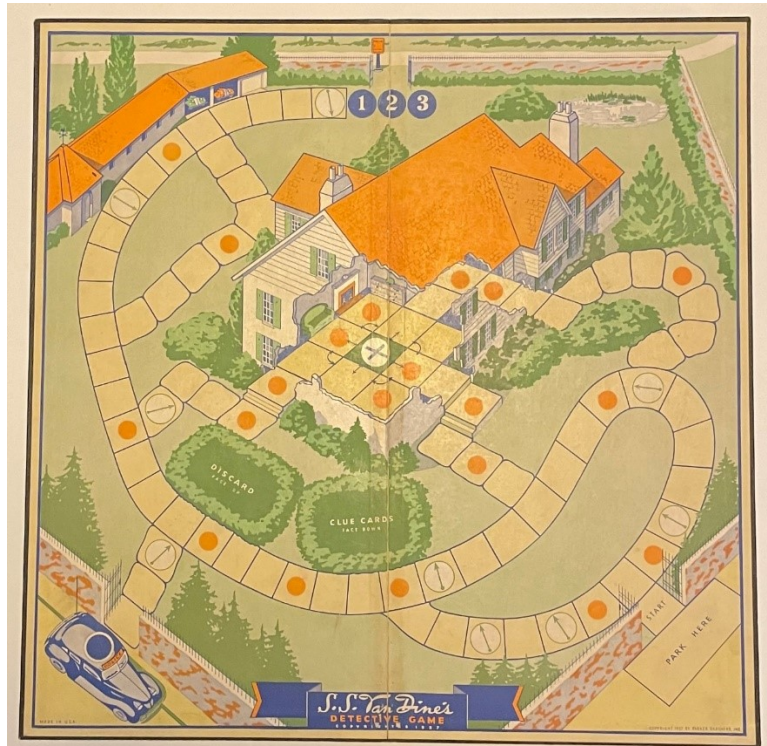


The object of the game is to be the first player to gather enough evidence, in the form of clues, to correctly identify the thief and defend the accusation. A description of the crime is shown below with a list of all the suspects and other characters involved in the solving of the crime.



At the start of the game each player selects one of the colored playing pieces and places a matching jury (player) board (referred to as a Jury Card in the rules) in front of them. This jury board is used in the next phase of the game. There are 100 Philo Vance clue, or evidence, cards

which are placed face down in a stack on the space on the board marked Clue Cards. The first thing the players must do is to roll the dice to get to the square in the center of the board marked with an “X”, which is where the crime took place. There are two dice, a white die and a red die. There are rules for these later in the game, but for the first phase, players use both die to move. A player can reach the “X” by consecutive rolls or by landing on one of the squares with an arrow. On the first roll of the dice a player may land on an arrow space with a one, three, five or seven. If they do, they go straight to the “X”, otherwise if they do not land on an arrow space, then the player must reach the “X” with an exact count.



Once a player reaches the “X”, they draft twelve cards from the Clue Cards deck and place them in the twelve spaces on their Jury board. When a player has their first twelve Clue Cards, they enter into the next phase of the game, which is to gather enough clues to allow the player to accuse one of the ten suspects. They are trying to collect relevant clues to support an accusation against whichever suspect they chose. Each suspect has ten unique clues which identify a specific suspect. Of those ten clues there will be 25 cards from which those clues may be gathered. A specific clue, though, will have between one and four cards in the deck. For example, there is only one Apron clue and that clue applies only to the Maid, but the three Bobby Pin clues could point to the Maid, the Secretary or the Wife.

The rules offer the following help for “Selecting a Suspect”,

In choosing your Suspect remember that no typically male clue applies to a woman (a cigar butt, for instance) and no typically feminine Clue applies to a man (a lace handkerchief, for instance). Some of the Clues applying to each suspect are quite specific as applying to that individual and others are Clues of a general nature which may apply to

a number of Suspects, either masculine or feminine. [Remember, the game was from 1937.]

The first thing a player will do in examining their clue cards in their Jury board, which are placed face up, is to pick a suspect they wish to go after based on the selection of cards. They can, then, continue to collect additional clues by landing on spaces with a red dot on the space, with the restriction they only use the white die to move. This allows them to draft a new Clue card. If the card makes their case stronger, they may replace one of their existing cards and discard, face up, the card being replaced. They may also choose a card on the discard pile.

A table is included on the next page showing the cards in the deck which apply to each of the ten suspects.

Card Type	Number	Maid	Butler	Sect.	Sales	Wife	Chauf.	Aunt	Grandpa	Cook	Gardner
Apron	1	x									
Black Hair	1	x									
Bobby Pin	3	x		x		x					
Bracelet	2					x		x			
Burned Letter	1					x					
Burned Match	3		x						x	x	
Cameo Brooch	1							x			
Cane	1								x		
Carving Knife	2		x							x	
Cigar Butt	3		x				x		x		
Cigarette Holder	2			x	x						
Cigarette Stub	4			x	x	x					x
Compact	3			x		x		x			
Cork Screw	1		x								
Driving License	1						x				
Ear Trumpet	2							x	x		
Engagement Ring	1			x							
False Moustache	1				x						
Finger Print	4		x	x			x		x		
Flower	3			x	x						x
Fraternity Pin	1			x							
Glove	2						x				x
Grey Hair	3		x						x	x	
Knitting Needle	3	x						x		x	
Lace Handkerchief	3	x				x		x			
Lip Stick	2	x		x							
Lottery Ticket	4	x			x		x				x
Lunch Menu	2					x				x	
Mixing Spoon	1									x	
Muddy Footprint	1										x
Newspaper	2								x		x
Parking Tag	2				x		x				
Pocket Knife	3				x		x				x
Poker Chip	3				x		x				x
R. R. Ticket	2							x		x	
Reading Glass	1								x		
Red Suspenders	2		x								x
Rolling Pin	1									x	
Safety Pin	4	x				x		x		x	
Shawl	1							x			
Snap Shot	1				x						
Spectacles	4		x					x	x	x	
Table Napkin	1		x								
Thimble	2	x				x					
Towel	1										x
Vanity Mirror	2	x		x							
Watch Fob	2		x						x		
Watch Strap	2				x		x				
Wedding Ring	1					x					
Wrench	1						x				
	100	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25

Once a player feels they have enough clues to pinpoint one of the suspects, they may declare they are “arresting” that suspect. In this case, the player to their left picks up the matching Confirmation card and the player making the accusation must provide six clues in defense of the accusation. If they provide at least four which are correct for the suspect, they are given the Confirmation card face down. The player may then, upon rolling a seven with the dice, “bring in” a Philo Vance piece (one of the two Detective pieces) to assist with the gathering of clues. The player moves according to the white die and the Philo Vance piece moves according to the

red die. When a player rolls double ones or sixes and they feel they are ready for “court”, they “bring in” the Judge piece and the case is tried. The player wins if they correctly name seven of the clues on the Confirmation card for the suspect being accused.

If they cannot name seven correct clues, they will get one more chance, but then they will need to guess nine clues correctly. They do, though, get to turn their Confirmation card face up to help them.

There is a unique move in the game called “bumping”. This occurs when a player lands on a space occupied by another player. That player is then forced to the next space. The bumping player is then allowed to turn over one the bumped player’s Clue cards on their Jury card, thus handicapping the bumped player. The only way the card may be turned face up again is by rolling doubles or the exact number of the juror’s space. It is possible the bumped player may end up bumping another player.

It seems to be good advice to not move your player into situations in which they are adjacent, or close to, other players. In general, a player should stay away from other players when they are collecting additional clues. Given the distribution of the cards, it is also helpful to keep an eye on what clues are exposed in the other players’ Jury boards.

