

Snow Cover



Eli P. Harvard was found dead inside his ski lodge, which is shown. A revolver was clutched in his hand and a bullet from it had entered his head at close range, killing him instantly.

Detective Boozle, trying to decide whether Eli had committed suicide or been murdered, learned that Eli had spent the night with Sally Merrybottom, his girl friend, had phoned three of his friends the next morning to tell them that he'd finally broken off with Sally after a rather tempestuous scene, and that she'd promised to leave the house during the morning while he went skiing. Early that afternoon all three friends, worried and unable to reach him by phone, called the police, who arrived and immediately roped off all footprints and other marks that they found in the snow.

It had snowed for an hour or so that morning, and consequently the tracks that you see were made on the day of the tragedy. The footprints other than those fenced off were made by the police themselves, who entered the lodge through the back door, which is not shown.

If you were Boozle, what conclusions would you draw?

Questions

1. Does the fact that Eli died with a revolver in his hand prove that he committed suicide? Yes No
2. Do you think he had been skiing? Yes No
3. Are the footprints Sally's? Yes No
4. Did Sally have a motive for murder? Yes No
5. Were any of the ski marks made before the footprints? Yes No
6. Do Sally's footprints indicate that she left before Eli's return? Yes No
7. Insofar as you know, did Eli have a motive for committing suicide? Yes No
8. Do you think Sally shot him? Yes No
9. Based on the evidence of the sketch, reconstruct what happened as well as you can.

Solution on page 63