



FILE · I · a

P E R S O N A L S & N O T I C E S

C O L U M N T H E F I R S T

NOTICE. A post has opened that we will not name in plain words. The work is quiet, the hours are odd, and the door is not marked. We write back only to those who can already read a notice like this one for what it truly carries. So mind the pointers, and the marks set above them. Bring whatever you recover to latch.works/keyhole, and we will know you by it.



FOUND — near the old exchange, a brass key worn smooth, its teeth cut to no lock on this street. Owner may describe it and collect; we remain curious who filed it down.

T H E P O I N T E R S , I N O R D E R



Read only the struck letters, each against the pointer that leans beside it. A light hand keeps to the word; a heavy hand ranges the whole alphabet.

🔑 FILE · I · b

recovered correspondence — sender withheld

After our long silence, dear R. They watch the mail now.
Trust the grid we set; the page will name the road home.
Grief and all, ever your M.

— *ever yours, R.*

(in the margin, a later hand:)

[7A 4Z 3A 9Z 14A 1Z 25A 10A]

— *carry what it spells to latch.works\keyhole*



Number the words as they fall. Each coordinate names one — a letter told from its head, or taken from one of its ends. Read what they spell.



FILE · I · C

CIVIL DEFENCE · DISTRICT ORDER

RESTRICTION OF LIGHTS

Notice to all residents and keyholders — to be observed until further order

1. Between sunset and the all-clear, no light may be shown out of doors.
2. Lights of every kind must be screened so that none is visible from the street.
3. All glazed windows shall be curtained, boarded, or painted to hold the dark.
4. Chinks at the edge of a blind or door are the warden's first concern.
5. Keep hand-torches hooded and turned toward the ground when abroad.
6. Owners of motor-cars must mask each lamp to a single narrow slot.
7. Unoccupied premises remain the charge of their named keyholder.
8. Torches, flares, and signal-lamps are to be lodged at the district post.



By order — the District Warden

Irregular or wilful lights are to be reported at once to the district post:
latch.works/keyhole. Retain this notice; it will be inspected.

 FILE · I·d

— RECOVERED, RE-ASSEMBLED —

they left **THE** *back* way open for you
THE *night* watch is bought and **THE** *hinge*
is oiled wait until **EVERY** *lamp* on the
row has **GONE** *dark* then take the quiet
STAIR *down*

THE MARKS, IN ORDER

[**4b>** **13A<** **14Z<** **2A<** **11d>** **6Z>** **10A>** **32A>**]

Two hands to every mark; one finds a letter among the scraps, the other turns it a single step. You have met both hands before.





FILE · I · h



THE SOCIETY OF LATCHWORKS

The Keeper's Mark

By this mark the Society knows its own. Everything you filed leads here.

Our
quiet
letter
keeps
hollow
witness,
resolute.

A keeper's mark is never read straight across — the eye must fall as the words do.

