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OLDE MONMOUTH TIMES

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

The Trial of James P. Donnelly

James P. Donnelly, 24-year-old bookkeeper at the Sea View House at the Highlands, was accused of murdering Albert S. Moses, an 18-year-old traveling salesman who was filling in as bartender in the same place, in the early morning of August 1, 1857.

The Case for the State

The main witness against Donnelly was the victim, Albert Moses, who was staying in Room 36. Before he died, Moses told about one dozen different people that he awoke to find Donnelly stabbing him, that he chased him out of the room, tearing his coat, and followed him to the stairs. He cried "murder" several times, attracting the attention of guests in nearby rooms and servants on the fourth floor. Feeling weak, he returned to Room 34 (adjoining 36), where he lay until he died. From Moses' evidence, the attack took place about 5am and Moses said there was enough light to see who did it.

Donnelly's behavior just after the attack did not help his case. He claimed that he first saw Moses that morning in the hall bleeding and that he was frightened and ran away. This statement was not very credible since Donnelly had been studying medicine and surgery for three years and would have been familiar with the sight of blood. Instead of trying to help Moses, he ran down the stairs to the second floor piazza where he met the proprietor, William Smith, who had to ask him about fifteen or twenty times what was the matter before he would answer. Donnelly then said, "The man is dead; he is dead," but didn't say who was dead, although he knew Moses and had just seen him alive. Smith then went upstairs to see who was dead and Donnelly, instead of accompanying him, ran downstairs and to the gentleman's water closet, which seemed to be connected to the hotel by a passageway. In the passageway, he apparently discarded a wad of \$160 in counterfeit bills, then ran around the side of the building and picked up an object from the grass, which was presumed to have been the murder weapon. After trying unsuccessfully to get into the servants' privy, he jumped over the fence, ran down a ravine toward the river and then got back on the plank walk and returned to the Sea View House. There, after changing his clothes, he was found lurking in the hall outside 34 by Augustus Munters, the barber from Schenck's Pavilion who had been summoned for assistance since he had some medical training. Munters, who needed help and had no idea yet that Donnelly was a suspect, had to pull a reluctant Donnelly into the room. Donnelly then, by all reports, was very solicitous toward the victim, applying bandages and washing the blood from his wounds. When Moses accused Donnelly of stabbing him, he replied, "My dear fellow! How can you say I did it?"

The State also presented evidence concerning Donnelly's motive. Donnelly and Moses had been

playing cards. One witness said he heard voices in Donnelly's room until about 3:30 in the morning. Moses said that he had won \$55 from Donnelly and that was why Donnelly had stabbed him. The money Donnelly lost was part of \$100 that a guest had given to him for safekeeping. The State argued that Donnelly was desperate to get the money back before the guest returned. Moses directed those attending him to a stash of \$91, which he had placed between the mattresses in Room 36, and asked that it be sent to his mother in Philadelphia; some money was sent after deductions to pay back the guest and for Moses' funeral expenses.

Although the murder weapon was not found, the medical evidence suggested that it was probably a fancy dirk in a silver scabbard that had been Donnelly's until at least a few days before the murder. Donnelly said that he had sold it or loaned it to Moses. It was assumed by many that Donnelly had thrown the knife in the river.

The Case for the Defense

Donnelly did not testify at the trial in his own defense. However, he did testify at an antemortem held in the Sea View's Room 36, at which various witnesses, including Moses, also testified, and probably at a postmortem held in the basement that night. Although not many questions were posed directly to him, he answered all of them. Donnelly stated that he had gone upstairs to get a shirt collar; when he saw Moses bleeding at the top of the stairs, he ran down.

The defense at the trial presented evidence concerning Donnelly's previous history. He had attended several colleges, graduating from Georgetown, and then had studied medicine at New York University for several years. A number of witnesses testified that they had known him and his family for years and that there was nothing against him. Medical testimony was taken that, since Donnelly had medical training, he would have done a better job had he meant to kill Moses instantly. In addition, it was suggested that Moses might have been stabbed earlier, then woke up and saw Donnelly and thought Donnelly did it. Munters, the first medical practitioner to examine Moses, said the wound looked a couple of hours old, which would mean the attack occurred about 3:30 or 4am, rather than 5am.

Regarding the motive, Donnelly was reported to have said that he lost only \$5 from Moses the evening before and that he had lent \$50 to him as a gambling stake to take to the Ocean House two miles away.

However, no evidence was presented that Moses ever went to the Ocean House before his death and there seemed no reason to doubt Moses' claim that the amount was \$55.

Testimony was also given for the defense that if Moses was correct when he said that he grappled with his assailant in the hall, the perpetrator would have had blood all over him. Moses was literally spurting blood on the walls and the floor at the time. When Donnelly ran downstairs and saw Smith, he did not have any visible blood on him and, from Moses' description of his movements, Donnelly did not go into his room at that time to change his clothes. He only changed his clothes later after running through the underbrush. Evidence was presented that his coat was probably torn by brambles, rather than by Moses.

Although the preponderance of the evidence was against Donnelly, his lawyers argued very creatively that he was a victim of circumstance. They suggested that Moses was mistaken and that Donnelly's odd behavior after the murder was just because he temporarily lost his composure. One attorney mentioned a case in which a servant heard a disturbance in his master's room, went in and saw him stabbed, and then emotionally embraced him. Others came in and, finding the servant in a compromising position, executed him. Could something similar have happened to Donnelly?

One very unlikely exonerating hypothesis, consistent with evidence but not suggested at the time, is that Donnelly went to Moses' room to steal the money that he had lost. There he found his own distinctive knife in Moses' neck, perhaps inserted by another victim of this card shark. While trying to pull the knife out, he woke up Moses, who chased him from the room. Not thinking that anyone would believe his story, he hid the weapon. Later he was afraid to admit the true story and felt he had to stick to the explanation he had given on August 1.

The Verdict

The jury only needed one-and-a-half hours to find Donnelly guilty of murder in the first degree. After losing on appeals and escaping but briefly from jail, he was hung in Freehold on January 8, 1858. Before his execution, Donnelly made a long speech in which he maintained his innocence. The Sea View totally burned two days later, possibly in an act of revenge by Irish servants who sympathized with Donnelly.

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

The Case of William Bullock

William Bullock's case in 1899-1900 was sensational not only because he was tried three times for the same crime and escaped before his fourth trial. His story also involved controversial issues of race and politics.

On September 2, 1899, William Bullock, a 36-year-old African American huckster (peddler) purchased the land and house at 178 Stout Street (now Mechanic Street) in Red Bank for \$1,800. Two months later, on November 13, he returned to his home with his mule and a wagon filled with a load of stalks (probably corn) he had just picked. There he found Constable James Walsh, a Civil War veteran, waiting to arrest him for a small debt. Walsh said he would take him in, "dead or alive," to the Freehold jail and refused Bullock's request that they go together to a local judge to get bail. Bullock felt very frustrated, in part because of two recent civil actions against him, which he judged as unfair, and because he was concerned about who would take care of his young wife and child if he was arrested.

Walsh allowed Bullock to go into his house to get a change of pants and, while there, Bullock put a pistol in his pocket. Outside, Bullock again asked Walsh to go with him to get bail and Walsh again insisted he would take him in dead or alive. When Walsh reached for his gun, Bullock shot him several times (including once in the head) and Walsh, still standing, dropped the gun. Bullock, concerned that Walsh might pick up the gun and use it, threw Walsh's gun into the overgrown lot of his neighbor, photographer Andrew Coleman. He then went inside, had a brief conversation with his distraught wife, grabbed a few personal papers, and ran away. Bullock hopped a freight to South Amboy and took a boat over the Raritan River to Perth Amboy. While crossing the river, the boatman advised him that, when he got to Perth Amboy, he could go to the saloon district and sing, "Yellow Girl Come Out Tonight," if he wanted any "wenches." But Bullock was in no mood for singing.

News of the shooting traveled fast. When he got to Perth Amboy, Bullock was arrested almost immediately by Officer William MacDonald, whom the grateful residents of Red Bank rewarded with a gold watch, which he proudly displayed at the trial.

A large group of men came to his cell in Perth Amboy carrying a rope and told Bullock he was going to be lynched and might as well confess. He remained silent. Later he was told that Walsh would recover from his wounds and that it would go better for him if he confessed, which he then did.

Bullock's defense was organized principally by George Crawford Beekman, one of the most respected attorneys in Monmouth. Born in 1839 in Middletown, Beekman studied law under Joel Parker, who soon after became New Jersey's governor during the Civil War. From 1870 to 1873, Beekman was law judge for the county and later was elected to the State Assembly (1878-1880), where he was instrumental in developing the State Library. In his private practice, he handled many celebrated cases, including the will of James P. Allaire. Although his legal career was illustrious, Beekman is better known today for his avocation: the study of Monmouth County history. His books, including *Old Times in Old Monmouth* (with Edwin Salter, 1887) and *Early Dutch Settlers of Monmouth County* (1901), are still considered essential references. Beekman also wrote many newspaper articles about local history and politics in the *Freehold Transcript*, *Monmouth Democrat*, and the *Monmouth Inquirer*.

Given the facts of the Bullock case, Beekman had very little upon which to base a defense. Since Walsh's gun wasn't found at the scene, the jury believed that Bullock had shot the constable unarmed and convicted him on January 24, 1900, of first degree murder. He was sentenced to hang on March 16. However, a rusty gun was then found by a new resident of the property. Another trial was granted on the basis of this new evidence, which resulted in a hung jury that could not decide between first and second degree murder.

A third trial was held on May 22-24, at which a new witness named Campbell appeared for the prosecution. He claimed that Bullock had attacked him many years before with a razor, suggesting the defendant's violent nature. Campbell claimed to have knocked out Bullock's front teeth. However, Bullock showed his teeth to the jury and it was clear that the witness's testimony was valueless. Nevertheless, the jury convicted him of first degree murder and Bullock again was sentenced to hang on July 13.

Since his case seemed hopeless, Bullock was determined to escape. An escape plan was foiled when a fellow prisoner informed on him. Bullock's severe beating of this inmate confirmed that he was capable of violence, but it was irrelevant to the trial since it occurred after the death of Walsh.

Since it was a presidential election year, there was quite a bit in the press about how the Republicans, who were in power, were handling the case. George Beekman, Bullock's defense attorney, and presumably others, believed that if Bullock were white, he would only have been convicted of manslaughter. Beekman was a Democrat, but even those favorable to Republicans argued that the party would lose the "colored" vote if Bullock were executed. One editorial made a comment that now seems bizarre but reflects the attitudes of the period: "Negroes are not all fools all the time by any means. . . . [they] have rights which cannot be ignored always." (*Monmouth Press*, July 14, 1900)

After the third trial, Bullock, represented by Beekman, appealed to the State Court of Errors and Appeals, which ruled that the jury had not been told in strong enough terms to ignore the testimony of Campbell. A fourth trial was ordered. However, one night in July, before the fourth trial could be held, Bullock escaped from the jail in Freehold by digging a hole under his bed using a sharpened metal rod. Exiting his cell, he placed a newspaper neatly over the hole,

delaying the investigation for about an hour. The hole led to a tunnel that was used for heating and gas pipes. At the end of the tunnel, he was able to burrow out under the foundation wall of the jail. He then threw away his underwear, which he had worn during his excavations, and put on clean clothes which he had carried with him. Then he jumped the jail yard fence into a cornfield. It was unclear whether Bullock had any assistance in his escape but, in any case, he got clear away and went to work on a large farm in Virginia. A \$500 reward was posted for his capture.

Bullock had been married about two years at the time he killed Walsh. Soon after his arrest, he and his wife, Stella, sold their home and Stella moved back to her home state, North Carolina, with their young daughter. After Bullock's escape, two bounty hunters kept Stella under surveillance and, with the cooperation of the post office, found out that she was corresponding with her husband, who was using an alias. When Bullock went to the post office in Virginia to pick up a letter, they tried to arrest him but he ran and was severely wounded in the hip by a shotgun blast at close range. After identifying him, police officers from Monmouth County went to Richmond, where they were delayed, to obtain an extradition order. Bullock might have lived if treated for his wounds in Virginia but the officers decided to wait until they got him back to New Jersey. Bullock's leg became very swollen and he died before the officers returned from Richmond. He was buried in Virginia.

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

Mary Ganley

Peaceful citizens of Marlboro in 1875 couldn't have cared too much for Michael Ganley, who often could be found drunk, staggering about, and cursing loudly on Main Street. Alcohol abuse was probably a significant factor in the tragic case of the Ganleys.

Like many others in Marlboro, Mary and Michael Ganley were Irish immigrants. According to the 1875 census, about half of Marlboro's residents were either Irish-born or a child of Irish immigrants. Michael was born in Roscommon in 1830 and emigrated about 1852. Mary Higgins, born in Galway in 1831, arrived in America at about the same time and married Michael the following year. Michael declared his intention to become a citizen in 1857 but did not become naturalized.

The Ganleys seem to have been hard working, at least in the early part of their marriage. Michael began purchasing land in 1859, when he acquired almost five acres on the east side of Old Mill Road, then known as the road leading from William Harthorne's Mill to Marlboro. The 1860 Beers Map shows the Ganley house near Old Mill Road, just south of the border between Marlboro and Freehold, on the Freehold side of the line. Michael then gradually acquired additional acreage in four transactions in 1861, 1865, 1867, and 1873, including land that bordered the "plank road," the turnpike which is now Route 79 and called Main Street in Marlboro. By 1873, the Ganleys had moved to a small one and a half story house on the west side of the turnpike, just inside the Marlboro line. Their property straddled the border between the two towns, about half a mile north of the toll house, between the toll road and Old Mill Road.

By 1875, the Ganleys had about eighteen acres, of which sixteen were cultivated, valued at \$100 per acre. The Ganley farm annually produced 100 bushels of corn, five tons of hay, and 100 bushels of Irish potatoes, for a modest total value of \$210. They also had two cows, a pig, and ten chickens, but no horses. The farm apparently did not generate all the money they needed or wanted and Michael found occasional work at John Vanderveer's apple distillery nearby.

Both Michael and Mary had a propensity for alcohol and the close proximity of the distillery may have been their downfall. Michael, by 1875, had been drinking heavily for at least two years. On Election Day eve, Monday, November 1, as was his habit, he stopped in at the "still-house" nearby and, after drinking freely, left carrying a bottle. By the time he came home, he was totally intoxicated and fell heavily against the gate. According to his wife, it took him twenty minutes to get from the gate into the house. Later that evening, no doubt during an argument, Mary, probably also "in liquor," killed him.

Justice of the Peace James Johnson, known as “Squire” Johnson, was soon informed of the matter. He went to the Ganleys’ house where he found a mess with blood on the walls. Ganley was lying dead on the floor and there was a short heavy wooden stick nearby covered with blood and hair. Johnson noticed Mary carrying an open razor and then throwing it into the stove. He retrieved the evidence and told her to go to another room and not come out again unless he told her to do so. Johnson then summoned an inquest jury.

The Coroner’s inquest was held over Michael Ganley’s body within hours of his death. According to Mary’s testimony at the inquest, after Michael had come home the night before stumbling drunk, she found him standing in front of a mirror, holding a bloody towel up to his face because he had cut himself while shaving. According to her testimony, Mary then went out in the road to get help. Mrs. Conrey (also spelled Conry), who lived a quarter mile away, just south of the distillery, came over and found Michael alive and still talking. At 11:30pm, Mary went to Mary McLean’s house and told her that Michael had cut himself. At 5am, George Van Dorn saw Mary in the yard and she said Michael was hurt. George came over and found Michael still breathing. At 6am, Mrs. Burk came over and found Michael dead, as did John McCue about 7am. McCue stated that Mary had raised “false alarms” in the past and, although Mary had told him about the problem the night before, he didn’t come over until the next morning.

In her statement at the inquest, Mary claimed that Michael was very kind to her on the night of his death, “more so than usual.” But neighbor Ella Van Dorn and her houseguest, Allie Sickles, had heard Michael groan loudly several times the evening of his death, as well as the sound of someone running up the stairs, and a loud noise like a tea kettle falling off the stove. Another neighbor, Bridget Morrissey, a 42-year-old Irish immigrant, stated that while visiting Mary soon after Michael’s death she noticed a bloody wad of wool or hair on the floor. She asked Mary if that was Michael’s hair and, if it was, that she should get it out of the house. Mary took offense and exclaimed that Bridget had better not be accusing her of killing Michael.

Dr. Charles A. Conover, who had arrived at 5:30am to find Michael dead, testified that the victim had been killed by blows to the head. The inquest jury returned a verdict that Mary had inflicted the damage.

Mary was indicted for the murder of her husband by the grand jury of the court of Oyer and Terminer in Freehold. The trial began on February 1, 1876, and ended February 9, 1876. Thirty witnesses testified for the prosecution, compared to only seven for the defense, including Mary. Dr. D. McLean Forman testified that his post-mortem confirmed that Michael had died from at least two blows from a stick and not from a razor. Witness John V.N. Willis gave very damaging testimony against Mary. Willis said that he was twice at the Ganley’s house shortly after Michael died. On the second visit, Mary had cleaned up Michael’s blood but had a chicken and was letting it bleed on the floor “here and there.”

Ella C. Van Doren, who lived 100 yards from the Ganley’s, testified that, a half hour after Michael came home, she heard him say, “You have got your axe, you are going to kill me before morning.” James W. Holloway testified that as he passed the house around 7:30pm, he heard

Michael Ganley say, “You damn b____, you have got the axe in your hand,” and heard several blows like wood striking on wood.

Mrs. Mary Conrey testified that Mary came to her house around 8pm and said that Michael had cut himself by falling on the stove. Then Mary came back at 2am and said he cut himself shaving while getting ready for the election. Mrs. Conrey then returned to the Ganley house with Mary and found Michael lying on the floor near a lounge chair. Michael said, “I am killed, I am killed, the lounge, the lounge.” Then he “gave three awful groans” and died. Mrs. Conrey’s eleven-year-old daughter, Delia, testified that Mary had blood on her hands and dress when she came over to the Conrey’s house. Benjamin Griggs testified that around 11pm that night, Mary came to John McCue’s house and said, “my husband has been shaving himself in the forehead to go electioneering” and then went away. Griggs also said he had seen the Ganleys fighting with each other in the past.

The renowned Joel Parker conducted the defense. Parker, who was born in Millstone in 1816, graduated from Princeton and then studied law under Henry W. Green, later Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. He then had a long and distinguished career as an attorney, prosecutor, elected official, and jurist. Parker was elected as the youngest member of the New Jersey Assembly in 1847. He was appointed major general of the militia in Monmouth, Middlesex, Ocean, and Union counties in 1861. In 1862, he was elected governor and earned the title, “War Governor of New Jersey,” for his effectiveness in raising regiments and sending troops to the front. In 1871, he was elected to another term as governor and, in 1880, he was appointed as justice to the New Jersey Supreme Court, where he served until his death in 1888.

At the time of the Ganley case, Parker had completed his second term as governor and had returned to private legal practice. He called Mary Ganley as a witness. She said that Michael had drunk “pretty well” since she married him 22 years before, but for the past five or six years, he had been getting worse and worse. For the past year, he had worked part of the time at the “still-house.” He had been hiding bottles in his clothes, been loud and abusive, cursed frequently, and when very drunk, would run after her. On the day before he died, she said Michael had been out all day in the road, cursing both the Democrats and the Republicans. She repeated her story about Michael banging into the stove and cutting himself shaving. She denied striking him. On cross examination, she stated that Michael started drinking about four years after they were married. He had *delirium tremens* several times and had hurt himself once badly in the head and another time fell down the stairs. She said she tried to get Michael to limit himself to three drinks a day and admitted that she herself frequented the still-house. Others also testified that they had seen Michael “the worse for liquor.”

Patrick Higgins, the brother of Mary, testified that he had last seen the Ganleys when he had attended the funeral of his niece, about two months before Michael’s death and that Michael had been drunk at the time. It has not been determined if the niece was Mary’s and Michael’s daughter or the child of another sibling of Mary’s.

The jury found Mary Ganley guilty of second degree murder. In retrospect, it seems likely that, if she had admitted clubbing her husband in a drunken brawl, she could have pleaded guilty to the lesser crime of manslaughter. At that time, the penalty for second degree murder was from

five to twenty years. Judge Scudder sentenced Mary to fifteen years in the State Prison.

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

Louis Harriott

In November 1891, Charles T. Leonard, a well-to-do farmer with a wife and three children living near Atlantic Highlands, hired Louis Harriott, a French immigrant from Lorraine, about 22 years old, to work as a farm hand. Harriott, who later claimed that his real name was Aubertin, had left several previous menial jobs after having paranoid delusions that he was being abused by his employer. Leonard didn't realize that he had hired a dangerous psychopath.

Two weeks later, on November 27, before leaving to work in another part of the farm, Leonard left Harriott near the house to cart out manure. Where Leonard was working, he couldn't see the house due to the intervening presence of a small hill.

According to Harriott's own account of the events which followed, he began brooding about supposed mistreatments and decided that he would demand his wages and leave. At about 3pm, he went to the house carrying a rope, variously described as a clothesline or halter rope, which he used to make a slip noose. As he passed through the wood shed into the kitchen, he picked up a fish-plate, a heavy piece of iron used to connect rails on a railroad.

Harriott then came into the house and told Leonard's wife, Annie, who was about thirty-eight years old, "Madam, I want my money or I kill you." She told him that she had no money and no key to the secretary. He persisted and she said she would get some for him. Mrs. Leonard went into the sitting room with Harriott at her heels. She tried to push him away and they fell on the floor, with Harriott on top. Mrs. Leonard said, "What do you want from me? Let me up and I will give you your money." She then ran into the parlor, raised the window, and screamed for help.

Harriott pulled her back from the window and chased her into the dining room, where he caught her by the hair and slapped her with an open hand. She grasped him by the neck and they fell down. She screamed again. Harriott then punched her three times with his fist. He then tied the rope, which he had carried into the house, tightly around her neck five times and made two knots in it. Then he hit her with the fish-plate, which was found bloodstained. Harriott said at the trial that he didn't want to kill her, only keep her quiet. Harriott then went to his room to get his clothes in preparation for his escape. When he returned, he found Mrs. Leonard still alive. He carried her to an unfurnished room adjoining the sitting room and left her sitting on the floor. According to Dr. Field, who performed the autopsy, Leonard died from strangulation.

Mr. Leonard came home around 5pm and, not finding his wife, assumed she had gone to visit a neighbor. After supper with his children, he went to the neighbor's and, not finding her or the

missing hired man, returned home and began a thorough search of the house. The eldest daughter found her mother and it was immediately assumed that Harriott was responsible.

After the murder, Harriott dumped his bloodstained clothes in a swamp and hurried to Keansburg, where he bought some tobacco at the shop of William W. Ramsay at 4pm. He then made his way to Keyport, where he boarded the steamship, *Minnie Cornell*, which was not due to depart for New York until the next morning. At 4am, Constable Joseph Johnson came on board and described Harriott to the bartender, John Carroll. Harriott was found asleep and Johnson arrested him.

The trial, which began on February 8, 1892, took two days and concluded on February 11. There were twenty-nine prosecution witnesses, including Charles Leonard and his daughters, Alice and Berta, and only three for the defense, including Harriott himself. Witnesses testified that Harriott put salt and pepper on his ice cream, imagined that he had a telegraph in his stomach, and couldn't sleep well because he imagined that there were cats under his bed. After his arrest, he was said to have trouble sleeping because he was plagued with Annie Leonard's ghost.

One of Leonard's neighbors, Edward M. Foster, testified that he heard screams coming from the house. According to a reporter for the *Keyport Weekly*, Foster, to the surprise of the court. . . gave three shrill screams in imitation of those he had heard. Foster also testified that he saw Harriott hurry away from the house shortly thereafter.

The defense pleaded insanity caused by an abusive stepfather who knocked Harriot's head against a wall when he was a child. Harriott blamed all his problems on his mother, who wrote a letter to Harriott's principal attorney, Aaron E. Johnson of Freehold, in which she said that no child could have had better parents and that Harriott, crazy since infancy, had been subject to mad rages and often imagined things.

The jury took only twenty minutes to find Harriott guilty of murder in the first degree and he was sentenced to death. The night before his execution, Harriott calmly signed autographs and pictures of himself for some of the jail officers and others. Curiously, he then retired to a sound sleep. In the morning, Harriott dressed himself neatly and commented wryly on the tightness of his collar. He then requested a short visit from Minnie Morch, a woman who was in jail for stealing money from her employer and burning it. Harriott had given her whatever money he had left a few days before.

Harriott was executed by hanging on April 15 in front of 38 witnesses. The scaffold was erected in the corridor in the back part of the Freehold jail by a Mr. Vanhise, who previously had used the same scaffold to hang a man in Jersey City who had murdered his mistress. At that time, the jail was in the back part of the courthouse, which is now the Hall of Records.

A black hood and a hangman's noose were placed over Harriott's head. Harriott sobbed aloud when Deputy Sheriff Houston Fields read the death warrant. The trap was sprung and Harriott was lifted by 750 pounds of weights. His neck was not broken and, in an ironic twist of fate, it took seventeen minutes for him to strangle to death. Five doctors--Long, Applegate, Fields, Cook, and Hendrickson--pronounced him dead. After Dr. Hendrickson took a blood sample for later examination, Undertaker Barkalow placed the body in a stained pine coffin.

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

Peter Slocum

Peter Slocum, thirty-five years old in 1863, was a probably a member of a large and prominent family that had been in Monmouth since the Monmouth Patent in 1665, when John Slocum arrived from Rhode Island. Peter married Abigail Chasey in 1853. They and their four children, Lewis (9), Alonzo (6), Maria (4), and Mary Matilda (18 months) lived in Mechanicsville, now called West Long Branch, in a house that had belonged to his mother before her death. Peter worked as a salesman at the Bath House, a large hotel owned by Captain Green on Ocean Avenue in the southern part of Long Branch.

During the spring of 1863, Abigail's sister, Alcine Chasey, moved in with the Slocums to help with the couple's strawberry patches and other work around the house and farm. Abigail started to notice a relationship growing between her husband and her sister. The two would ride together in the front of the wagon and make Abigail ride in the back. Slocum began to talk rudely to Abigail, while referring to Alcine as "dear" and "sissy." Abigail related the horrors of her marriage to her friends and neighbors, Ann Chamberlain and Emeline Waters. They testified that Abigail got up one night and found her husband and sister downstairs by the stove "hugged up together and fast asleep." Slocum and Alcine also went on an overnight trip together to Freehold. A few evenings before the murder, Abigail and Slocum had an argument and during their fight Alcine "flew up and jawed her." Alcine resented Abigail for getting mad at Slocum. For two days afterwards, neither Slocum nor Alcine spoke to Abigail.

The day before the murder, Slocum returned home from the Bath House. Abigail came downstairs and became scared when she found her husband standing in the middle of the room staring at her. She jumped back and he reached for his gun, remarking that he was going to shoot the dogs for barking so much. She convinced him not to. The next day he returned again and came into the house ranting and raving about a hawk that was encircling his crops and his house. He grabbed his gun and said that he was going to shoot it. He returned to the Bath House again that night.

That night, Tuesday, July 14, 1863, Abigail Slocum was shot in the eye at close range with a shotgun while she slept in her bed nursing her baby. Slocum was accused of the grisly crime.

His friends at the hotel said that the last time they had seen Slocum was at the bars around 11 p.m. Witnesses heard horses going past their home towards the Slocum home around 11 p.m.

and once again heard horses going towards the hotel at about 1 a.m. Peter Slocum was not accounted for during those hours. His roommates did say that early in the morning they heard Slocum groaning about his stomach and that he felt ill. The next time they had seen him was in the barn around 5 a.m. and he was acting fine. One of the boys working in the hotel complained that he believed that his horse had been taken out during the night because it was cool and damp.

After the murder, the children ran to Ann Chamberlain and Emeline Waters to alert them to the murder of their mother. Lewis, carrying the baby, told the women that three men came to the house during the night, his father and two African Americans: Gerard Pierce and Johnny Vandyke. Emeline went to the house with her son James and found Abigail upstairs in her room, with her face blown away. There was no one else in the house when they got there; the murder weapon, Slocum's shotgun, was found downstairs.

When Slocum was told about the murder of his wife, he acted shocked and went to his mother-in-law's, where he found Alcine, who had moved out of the Slocum's house nine days before the murder. The three proceeded to the Slocum house where they found Emeline Waters and the coroner. Slocum began to ask Emeline if it were true that his wife was really dead. He wanted to know who could have done such a thing. He ran upstairs and flung himself on the bed. When he returned, Emeline spotted blood on his coat and brought it to his attention. She knew that it had to have been there for awhile because when he rubbed it with his hands, it was dry. He then tore off his jacket and began to sob. He and Alcine then went upstairs for five minutes and returned exclaiming, "Who could have done this?" Slocum then stated that the money he had kept in the chest by his bed was gone and that it must have been taken by the murderer.

Soon thereafter, the children returned to the house. Alcine took Lewis into a closet and told him not to tell anyone that his father had been there that night. Lewis' statements were reported by Emeline Waters at the coroner's inquest held in the house on the same day, while Slocum was in another room. The inquest jury decided that Slocum was responsible and he was arrested. Slocum was taken to the jail in Freehold that night by officer Garret Denyse. Along the way he told Garret that he believed that Abigail had been either murdered for the money or that she committed suicide. He also told Garret that he had shot the gun that afternoon to kill the hawk.

The Trial

The trial lasted for eight days. Peter Slocum pleaded not guilty to murder in the first degree. The prosecution and defense presented 52 witnesses. The prosecution was led by State Attorney General Frederick Frelinghuysen. Slocum was defended principally by a rising star in the local bar, twenty-seven-year old Philip J. Ryall, then in his third year of legal practice. Witnesses for the prosecution testified that they had seen Alcine and Slocum in a Freehold hotel together; another woman reported that Slocum had bought Alcine a hat in her store. Alcine testified on behalf of Slocum, denying that she slept with him at the hotel. The young Lewis Slocum did not testify and his reports about his father's presence in the house during the night did not come up at the trial, presumably because it would have been considered hearsay evidence. Nor were the other two men mentioned in the testimony.

On October 10, the attorneys made their closing arguments. Frelinghuysen made telling remarks about the presumed motive of the accused and his lack of an alibi. Ryall claimed that the evidence was circumstantial and that a witness who could provide Slocum with an alibi had disappeared. The jury deliberated for about half an hour and found Slocum guilty of first degree murder. He was sentenced to death.

The execution conducted at 12:45pm on a fine autumn day, November 27th, 1863, was a public hanging in front of the Court House (now the Hall of Records), for which a band was hired at the expense of the county. A huge crowd attended the event, including women and children who watched from the courtroom windows and the roofs of adjoining buildings such as the American Hotel. Slocum carefully cleaned the mud off his boots before ascending the scaffold. In his last remarks, which lasted half an hour, he prayed fervently, asked forgiveness, but firmly maintained his innocence of the crime, stating, "You have all come here to see a guilty man hanged, but you were never so mistaken in your lives." As the rope was placed around his neck, he addressed the crowd, "Stay and see me swing, for I am going to die like a man." His last words were, "Meet me in heaven, all of you." Slocum died in twelve minutes, although his body was not cut down for half an hour. After Slocum's body was placed in a coffin, the crowd dispersed.

The local Methodist church cemetery refused to accept Slocum's body, so he was buried on his brother's property. Most of this area has since been developed and there are now a number of streets where none existed in the 1860s. According to local legend, the lot on the corner of Wall Street and Oakwood Avenue, upon which no house has ever been built, has remained empty because Slocum was buried there.

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

Gilbert Perrine

An argument over military service in the Civil War and political differences, that began in a small bar in Freehold one evening on November 4, 1865, turned into a chase through the streets that culminated in the death of a 33-year-old miller from Englishtown, Gilbert Perrine. Perrine, a married man with four or five children, had come to Freehold for a political meeting.

The *Monmouth Democrat*, lamenting the murder in its November 11 issue, noted that the case drew attention to a disturbing trend in village life. While drunkenness, riot and murder were commonplace in the great cities, teeming with vice, they were shocking and rare in Freehold. The editor wrote, a number of saloons, more or less respectable, are kept open to a very late hour of the night, in which our young men are forming habits debasing to themselves, and injurious to the community. The number of these saloons for a community as small as ours is astonishing, and how they all manage to flourish is a question that should engage the attention of our people.

That Saturday night, at Frey's Lager Beer Saloon, a number of men, both Democrats and Republicans, were playing dominoes and bagatelle (a variant of billiards), drinking beer, and discussing politics. According to Thomas Scanlon's statement at the coroner's inquest, one Democrat claimed that the Republicans were trying to get the Negroes to vote and make them equal with the White People. Scanlon and David Oliphant, a Civil War veteran, got into a heated discussion over Civil War service and greenbacks. (Greenbacks were paper currencies issued during the war that were not convertible to silver or gold; they had lost about half of their face value by 1865.) Oliphant condemned Scanlon for not having enlisted in the War and proceeded to call him a coward. Scanlon said he wouldn't go to war for greenbacks or to free the slaves. Oliphant, who spent six months in a Rebel prison, said he didn't go to war for greenbacks. William Murdock entered the argument and goaded Scanlon to come outside and fight. Martin Carney, who was arrested three times for assault and battery and three times for rioting between 1859 and 1881, then snuck a punch upon Scanlon's nose, which started to bleed. There was a scuffle and windows were broken. Scanlon declared his readiness to fight anyone in the bar but the owner, Mr. Frey, stepped in and threw Scanlon out.

At the coroner's inquest, Scanlon claimed that he ran down South Street while a mob of men chased him through the streets and back behind the stores. Meanwhile, two other men, Gilbert Perrine and John Brown, went to another bar and had a drink. When they left, Scanlon came up to them and asked if they would go and get his coat, as he had left it at Frey's Saloon. Before Brown could respond, the mob, who had congregated nearby on the corner by Ward's store,

spotted Scanlon. Brown yelled for Perrine and Scanlon to go and he ran the other way. Scanlon jumped into a wagon, but as the men got closer he began to get nervous, so he jumped out and ran away. Perrine went up South Street.

Ten or fifteen minutes later, Brown, Scanlon, and Perrine met up again. Either Perrine or Scanlon stated that they were going downtown because they were not going to be run out of town that way. Brown took off his coat and said he would join them. They continued down to the corner and saw some of the other men again, who believed that they had come back to fight.

Perrine said to Oliphant and Fleming as they stood on the Ahay scales that Scanlon was Nothing but a boy for God's sakes, give him back his coat and let him go home, he's nothing but a boy! One man replied that they didn't have his coat and then John Brown stepped forward and said, Let's settle this up. He began to reach into his pocket. Thomas Mahar asked him if it was a knife. He quickly replied, No, and returned the object to his pocket. Perrine then cried, For God's sakes let's drop it, we came here in peace, let's go home in peace. Another man stepped up and said, You fellows want to fight some of us fellows don't you? With that he pulled off his coat.

One man then struck Brown and, as he lay on the ground, the men began to kick him. Mahar then went after Scanlon, and Perrine continued to ask them to stop. Scanlon claimed to have heard Perrine yell out, Oh my God, Oh my God, Oh my God!! Perrine began to take a few steps and stumbled to the ground in front of David C. Perrine's Store (how Gilbert and David were related has not been determined). The other men took off. Three bakers from Drake's bakery stepped outside and saw Perrine lying on the ground. Scanlon yelled to them to get help because the man was either stabbed or shot. They rolled Perrine over and saw that there was blood on the ground and on his chest.

Dr. Otis Freeman was then asked to come and treat Perrine. He and other men managed to get Perrine to walk to his office nearby, where Dr. Freeman cleaned and dressed a cut on his head and the stab wound, which he didn't think at the time was as deep as it turned out to be. Perrine then left the building in the company of William Murdock to answer a call of nature. He went around the corner where he was found dead ten minutes later by Scanlon and Dr. Freeman.

A lengthy coroner's inquest was held the same day and indictments by the Grand Jury soon followed. Five men were indicted for both murder and riot: Martin Carney, Charles Fleming, Thomas Mahar, William Murdock, and David S. Oliphant, whose father was a judge in the Monmouth County Court. Murdock was also indicted for assault and battery on John Brown. Thomas H. Scanlon was indicted for riot only.

The Trials

Oliphant, defended by four attorneys, was tried separately for murder on December 18. He was the principal suspect because a knife that appeared to be the murder weapon was found in his possession. However, the knife probably did not belong to Oliphant; it had been recently purchased by Thomas Mahar at John G. Cooper's general store.

At the trial, eighteen witnesses testified for the state and twenty-seven for the defense. Evidence was presented that Oliphant's knife matched the width and depth of the wound. Moreover, his handkerchief was bloodstained and creased as if it had wiped a knife. One doctor testified that it would take time to do tests to see if the blood on the handkerchief was that of Gilbert Perrine. Defense witnesses included New Jersey Governor Joel Parker, who said he had known him since he was a lad and that he had been a good soldier. Oliphant's brother Theodore testified that the blood on the handkerchief was from the defendant's nose. Oliphant was found not guilty on December 21.

On December 22, the charges against Fleming for murder and riot were dropped. On February 6, Carney, Murdock, and Mahar were tried for murder. Oliphant testified against them as a witness for the prosecution, along with twelve other witnesses. No defense witnesses were called by a team of defense counsel that included Joel Parker for Mahar and William H. Vredenburg, son of New Jersey Supreme Court Justice Peter Vredenburg and later a Supreme Court Justice himself, for Murdock. All three defendants were found not guilty.

The next day, Carney, Murdock, Mahar, Oliphant, and Scanlon were tried on the riot charge. They were defended by five lawyers including Parker, Vredenburg, and George C. Beekman, who later wrote books about Mon-mouth County's history. Fleming was among sixteen witnesses for the prosecution. Oliphant was found not guilty, while Carney, Murdock, Mahar, and Scanlon were convicted of unlawful assembly. Carney and Murdock were sentenced to three months in the county jail, Mahar for two months and fifteen days, and Scanlon for two months. The case against Murdock for assault and battery on Brown was dropped.

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Gary D. Saretzky, Editor

The Murder of Mingo Jack

On Friday, March 5, 1886, a sickly, 24-year-old white woman, Angelina Herbert (1862-1893), was raped by an African American male in the woods near Whale Pond Brook, south of Eatontown, while on her way to visit a friend, Jackson Brown. Upon reaching the Brown home, she identified the perpetrator as Samuel Johnson, 66-year-old, 120 pound former jockey, known as Mingo Jack because he had ridden the race horse, "Mingo Chief." Mingo was born in slavery on the farm of Samuel Laird in Colts Neck about 1820 and probably freed in 1845.

Mingo lived with his wife, daughter and several [grand?] children a half a mile from the Herberts and worked as a 'rubber' at the Monmouth Park stables. On the same afternoon as the rape, Mingo was arrested at his home by Constable Hermann Liebenthal, who was also said to be the chief of police at Monmouth Park, where Mingo worked. Upon hearing the charge, Mingo calmly expressed ignorance of the crime and Liebenthal, who boasted that he didn't put handcuffs on prisoners because he had a 53-inch chest, took him to the jail at Eatontown. The constable then went around town saying that he wouldn't be surprised if Mingo were lynched before morning. Liebenthal then went home to sleep, leaving Mingo to his fate.

That night, a number of men were at Allen's saloon in Eatontown; two were seen there tying a noose on a rope. Later, a mob, which may have been as large as 75 men, at least some of whom had been drinking, went to the jail. At about 11:40pm, after unsuccessfully trying to shoot Mingo three times through a window, the men broke into the jail, probably using a crowbar one of them found on the railroad tracks nearby and a fifteen-pound sledgehammer taken from Stephen Billings' marble cutting shop. Mingo's screams of "murder" were heard by an African American couple, William and Sarah Burford, who lived nearby and, terrified, stayed in their home. Mingo put up a terrific fight and there was blood found in two different cells. He was beaten with two three-foot clubs and one of his eyes was gouged out. According to the medical examiner, he died before he was lynched in the doorway of the jail, but this finding was probably conjectural. His body was found by a six-year-old boy, Dick Stevens, early the next morning.

Ninety witnesses testified at the coroner's inquest, which was held at the Wheeler House, a hotel owned by Peter Hall, who was said to have provided the rope used for the lynching. The Coroner was J.T. Smith of Red Bank, who had cut down Mingo's body two hours after it was discovered. He was assisted by a Mr. Van Woert, who during the inquest drank liquor from a bottle of cough medicine. Although it was obvious that many of the witnesses had participated in the lynching, none of them cooperated on the witness stand. Henry S. Potter, for example, described in the press as an opium eater, said that, "as a general rule," he slept soundly from 9pm until noon the next day. One of the suspects said to an undercover detective that the

lynchers had taken an oath of secrecy.

James Steen, the prosecutor at the inquest, pursued the case vigorously even though threatened with death if he didn't drop it. Steen (1852-1909) was born in Trenton and graduated from Princeton University at the age of nineteen in 1871. He began practicing law in Eatontown in 1877 and for many years was counsel for the Township. Steen was very active in Eatontown affairs. In 1881, he organized the hat factory and helped to found the Eatontown Fire Department. Two years later, he became the mayor of the borough of Eatontown. Steen also had substantial land holdings in Eatontown, including the saw mill that was very near the jail where Mingo was lynched. Like George Beekman, another prominent attorney of this era, Steen had a passion for local history and he researched and he published a number of articles relating to Scotch immigrants and the Presbyterian Church in Monmouth County.

At the inquest, Steen, habitually chewing his mustache, was able to elicit from witnesses that Mingo probably was not the rapist. Some witnesses saw Mingo elsewhere near the time of the attack. Moreover, although Mingo's reputation was not impeccable, Angelina Herbert's description of the perpetrator's clothing and hat did not match Mingo's attire. She recalled that the perpetrator said, "Do you know Mingo Jack?" and it is likely that she took this to mean that he was Mingo Jack when in fact the rapist was someone else trying to put the blame on him. The inquest jury decided that Mingo was murdered by unknown persons and that Jacob Coffin, editor of the *Eatontown Advertiser*, should be rebuked for condoning mob violence in an editorial published the day after the lynching. Subsequently, Frank Dangler, Edward H. Johnson, George Sickles, and William Snedeker were arrested for Mingo's murder. Dangler, a painter by trade, was a prime suspect since he was seen with nose, throat, and hand injuries the day after the lynching. Johnson, a butcher, had been at Allen's Saloon the night before the lynching, when the rope was passed around. Sickles was a young farm hand who testified that he walked by the jail around midnight and heard someone scream, "Murder! Murder!" Snedeker, a loafer who seemed to have spending money even though he didn't work, was very drunk the night of the lynching and was still drinking the next morning at the primary elections in Oceanport, where he boasted that he had helped pull the rope.

In addition to these four, authorities may have arrested Tom Little, a steeplechase rider whom Snedeker said put the noose around Mingo's neck. Warrants were also issued for Joseph Anderson and William Kelly, but both of them escaped to New York. Anderson was also wanted for arrest on a charge of assaulting Mingo several months before his death. All the arrested suspects were released on bail and never prosecuted.

Constable Liebenthal was also arrested, on a warrant for manslaughter, for not guarding Mingo Jack. He was released on bail and the case was dropped.

The Mingo Jack murder received a great deal of publicity, as it was covered by reporters from both New Jersey and New York City newspapers. Mingo's death was described as the first lynching in New Jersey since the Revolution. The jail was marked as the site of the lynching in Wolverton's *Atlas of Monmouth County* (1889) and picture postcards of it were produced. The building was torn down about thirty-five years ago and the site is now overgrown.

The mystery of who really raped Angelina Herbert was never solved and two subsequent confessions only made the puzzle more complex. In 1888, Richard Kearney, on death row for murder, plausibly admitted to the rape, but recanted his confession before his execution. Later the same year, a sailor named John Miller also confessed to the rape before he died of typhoid fever on a three-masted schooner, *The Congo*, sailing out of New Bedford.