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GRUMLIN
ROAD PRISON**

Bridget's Head Was Severed From Her Body

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MARCH
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THE GAINESVILLE RIPPER

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ONE BOYFRIEND...
ONE MURDER**

**FATAL LOVE
TRIANGLE IN
A BERKSHIRE
VILLAGE**

**SYDNEY'S SHOCKING
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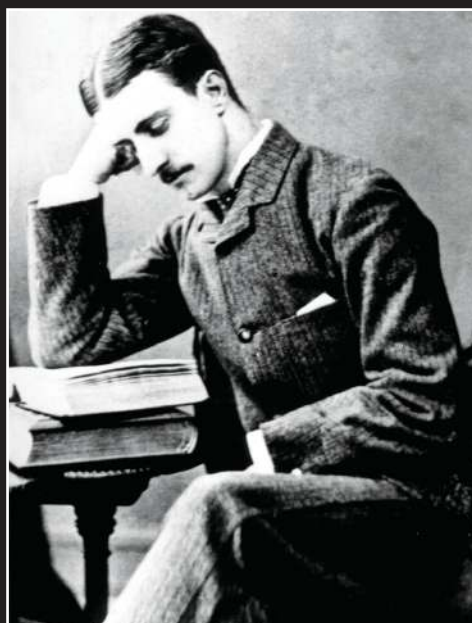
Japanese cannibal killer Issei Sagawa with French police after his arrest in Paris. On June 11th, 1981, Sagawa murdered, dismembered and ate Dutchwoman Renee Hartvelt at his 16th arrondissement apartment.



It's March 7th, 1975 – 45 years ago this month – and a policeman stands guard at the tent which covers the manhole cover under which the body of kidnapped heiress Lesley Whittle, 17, was found in Kids Grove, Staffordshire. *PA*



A death mask made of plaster and paper of Edward Androssy, a victim of the Cleveland Torso Murderer. His unidentified killer murdered at least 12 victims between 1935 and 1938.



Deep in thought is the cricket-loving Oxford University graduate who qualified as a barrister and became a Jack the Ripper suspect after his suicide in the River Thames at Chiswick on December 31st, 1888. Who was he? For the answer, see the foot of the page. *PA*

TD COMPETITION: WIN IF I DID IT

In 1994, Ron Goldman and Nicole Brown Simpson were brutally murdered at her home in Brentwood, California. Nicole's ex-husband, sports and film star O.J. Simpson, was tried for the crime in a case that captured the attention of the world, but was ultimately acquitted of criminal charges. The victims' families brought a civil case against Simpson, which found him liable for wilfully and wrongfully causing the deaths of Ron and Nicole, committing battery with malice and oppression. In 2006, HarperCollins announced the publication of a book in which O.J. Simpson told how he hypothetically would have committed the murders. In response to public outrage that Simpson stood to profit from these crimes, HarperCollins cancelled the book.

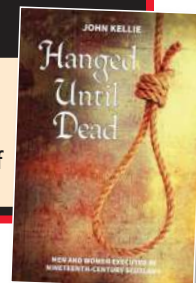
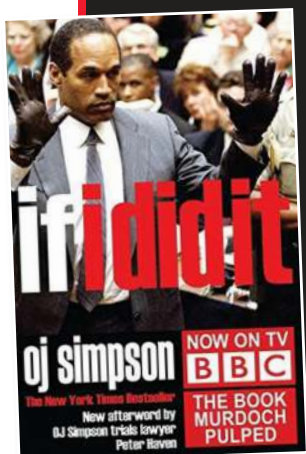
The Goldman family views the book as his confession, and has worked hard to ensure that the public will read this book and learn the truth. This is O.J. Simpson's original manuscript, approved by him, with up to 14,000 words of additional key commentary.

For a chance to win a paperback copy of *If I Did It* (published by Gibson Square; ISBN 978-1906-142087; £8.99) by O.J. Simpson, just answer this question:

In which sport did O.J. Simpson make his name?

☐ Golf ☐ Tennis ☐ Darts ☐ American football

Send your answer with your name and address to TD March competition, PO Box 735, London SE26 5NQ, or email trueedetective@truecrimelibrary.com, with the subject "TD March comp." The first correct answer out of the hat after the closing date of **February 28th** will win. The winner will be announced in the May issue. The winner of January's competition with the answer Glasgow is Cheryl Lochhead from Renfrew. Well done – your prize of a paperback copy of *Hanged Until Dead* by John Kellie will be with you soon.



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70 years ago this month, the first issue of *True Detective's* UK edition went on sale. We're still going strong – and we're still dedicated to bringing you the world's best true crime stories, every month. Here's a taste of what we have for you this issue:



Fratricide, the act of killing one's brother or sister, is rare enough. But among twins it is even more unusual – and doubly shocking. Identical twins Anna and Amanda Ramirez from New Jersey, US, had always been inseparable, from their early years through to motherhood. So what led one twin to kill the other on a terrible night in June 2018? Turn to page 4 and *Two Twins, One Boyfriend...One Murder* to find out.

Closer to home, Hell's Angels, drugs and teenage sex feature in a brutal 70s case from the south coast of England, this month's *Crimes That Made The Headlines – Sussex Victim Was Bound And Thrown In The Sea*, on page 8. Had the 16-year-old victim Clive Olive (above, right) raped the killer's girlfriend before a terrible revenge was meted out?

Finally, we take two visits down under for two hugely contrasting cases: *Hanged In Australia – "I'm A Fiend," Said The Strangler*, on page 26, and from modern-day New South Wales, *Sydney's Shocking Contract Killing Case*, on page 40...

Here's to our next 70 years!

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TRUE DETECTIVE MARCH 2020

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We also publish *Master Detective*, *True Crime* and *Murder Most Foul* magazines

IN THE early hours of June 22nd, 2018, police in New Jersey received calls about a disturbance at the Centennial Village apartments, a large complex of federally subsidised housing in Camden for people on low incomes.

Having been told that a woman was lying unconscious in the street, they arrived at 5.38 a.m. to find Anna Ramirez alive but in serious danger from a deep, open wound on the left side of her chest.

As her distraught sister Amanda looked on, shaking and crying, paramedics did everything they could to revive the stricken woman. Sobbing and in clear distress, Amanda watched as her sister was rushed to Cooper University Hospital. Despite frantic emergency surgery, Anna was pronounced dead at 6.19 a.m.

So what brought about the death of this vibrant young woman?

Tragically, an all too familiar tale – a love triangle turned sour with jealousy and rage.

But who was the lover competing for

wildfire.

But there was nothing in their backgrounds to suggest even a love triangle would lead to murder.

“The two girls were always inseparable, from childhood through school years and even up to motherhood,” said Bianca Cass, an aunt of the two sisters. They even shared a cradle when they were tots. Their daughters spent time together – Anna had three little girls and Amanda had one. They always knew what the other one was thinking and where they each were.”

Report by Mark Davis

However, she added that the girls’ mother had recently told her a story about a fight over Anna’s boyfriend, though she did not know if Amanda was also in a relationship with him.

“They went out with friends to a bar and had a party, then they came home,” said Cass. “They’d been drinking throughout the night and they started arguing about Anna’s boyfriend.”

seemed to be a carefree summer evening picnic in New York’s Central Park with family and friends. Later, the twins went drinking and dancing in an uptown bar, drinks that would last long into the night.

At 3.43 a.m., Anna did what many young women do when they’re having a good time – she posted a selfie to her Facebook page, this one featuring herself, her sister, Amanda, one of their cousins and two friends. The caption under the photo read “You know the vibe.”

Both Amanda and Anna had been drinking heavily throughout the night. The atmosphere had become increasingly prickly, and what started as standard family bickering soon grew into a furious row back at the family home. The dispute spilled out into the night air, waking neighbours outside Anna’s apartment in Camden.

“At some point, Amanda grabbed a kitchen knife as the girls fought like wildcats until Anna was stabbed in the chest,” said a detective. “It seemed there was some kind of love triangle which was

Identical twins share a bond so close, the rest of us can never really know how strong it is. And when one twin murders another, it’s one of the most shocking deeds any family can suffer...

TWO TWINS, ONE BOYFRIEND

the man’s affections, a competitor so determined to get her way that she would kill to become the winner?

The answer would be both obvious and shocking. Obvious because the woman concerned was identical in almost every aspect to the victim – age, looks, personality.

Shocking, because the reason that woman was identical to Anna is because she was none other than Amanda, Anna’s twin sister.

Growing up together in New Jersey, Anna and Amanda Ramirez were as inseparable as identical twins anywhere in the world.

They maintained that closeness even into adulthood, and right up to the age of 27 were as close as ever.

And, despite the usual occasional family tiffs that happen to us all down the years, nothing in their relationship seemed amiss in the slightest until that fateful night in June 2018.

For what their family and friends didn’t know was that the two women had romantic designs on the same man.

This can lead to fallings-out among even the best of friends, but when the two love rivals are sisters – even worse, twin sisters – that rivalry can escalate like



An early photo of identical twins Anna and Amanda Ramirez

Then everything went horribly wrong. “It seems like Amanda went on a trip and just went crazy, stabbed her and killed her,” Bianca added.

The fateful night had begun with what

the catalyst for the fight turning ugly.” The detective then refused to comment further until the investigation was complete.

“It’s heartbreaking,” said Bianca Cass. “I couldn’t believe it. It was like something you would see in the movies. You couldn’t believe she would do that to her own flesh and blood, her identical twin sister.”

Police said events that night began for them when dispatchers received two 911 calls from the apartment complex.

There, they found Anna, bleeding and unconscious. After Anna was rushed to hospital and, later, pronounced dead, police began their routine enquiries.

And that’s when they found out about the huge row.

Naturally, Amanda was brought in for questioning.

According to charging documents submitted by prosecutors, Amanda first told police she didn’t know how her

Right, Amanda Ramirez in court. She was charged with first-degree aggravated manslaughter for the stabbing of her twin sister Anna (below) during an argument



FRIEND... ONE MURDER

sister had been hurt.

In later interviews with Camden County prosecutors, she admitted that they had been out partying together before hanging out and drinking at their cousin's house, then returning to Anna's place.

Amanda said they had gone to the Centennial Village apartments with a friend and carried on drinking. She took Anna home in her car, even though she was well over the limit.

But the authorities weren't interested in a drunk driving charge.

They were starting to believe that Amanda had murdered her own sister.

Amanda said that when she drove

Anna home, her sister seemed dishevelled and uncommunicative. By the time they arrived at her home, Anna was bleeding and then collapsed.

Then Amanda tried a different version of events.

She said that after an evening of hanging out and drinking, Anna took a cab home. When Amanda arrived 45 minutes later, her sister looked ill and deathly pale before falling to the ground.

Amanda denied having had a fight with Anna, despite the evidence to the contrary that detectives were showing her.

"There appeared to be several bloody footprints leading from the victim's body

to the doorstep of Centennial Village apartments," said Camden County prosecutor Mary Colalillo. "Officers observed that Amanda appeared to have blood on her clothing, in her ear and on her hands.

"Our officers continued to interrogate Amanda, because we didn't feel she had been truthful with her previous accounts of what happened."

When asked about the scratches on her face and lacerations on her left hand, Amanda finally admitted that she and her sister had exchanged blows.

But she said her sister had started the fight.

"Anna initiated the physical altercation

by striking Amanda in the face,” said Ms. Colalillo. “She said it was Anna who had grabbed a knife. She said she had stabbed Anna in the chest in a struggle for control of the weapon.”

Amanda claimed she was only acting in self-defence because Anna was so drunk and angry that Amanda feared for her life.

Prosecutors didn’t believe a word of it. In fact, she had grabbed Anna by the head, pushed her to the ground and only then did she stab her.

Two days later, Amanda was charged with first-degree aggravated manslaughter and was held at the Camden County correctional facility, pending a pre-trial detention hearing.

Her lawyer didn’t argue that there was probable cause, and Superior Court Judge Edward McBride ordered she be held without bond.

Then, in September, Amanda Ramirez pleaded guilty to second-degree manslaughter, after a plea-deal reduced the original charge.

She told the court she’d been so drunk she couldn’t remember what started the fight, but admitted to stabbing her twin.

The judge said there was an eyewitness statement that Amanda



Amanda breaks down in court.
“Her actions were reckless but not intentional,” her defence argued

assaulted her sister outside the apartments before retrieving a large knife from her home. The witness didn’t actually see Amanda stab Anna, but heard the twins “arguing all night” before hearing Anna say “Amanda, you stabbed me!”

“This was not a deliberate act,” said public defender Igor Levenburg. “Amanda has no record of felony

convictions and she has already suffered so much. She shouldn’t go to prison. Her actions were reckless but not intentional. She has already killed part of herself and will live with that knowledge forever.”

But Camden County Prosecutor Peter Gallagher said that Amanda had tried to thwart investigations by giving them three different versions of events.

After everyone involved had had their say, the judge sentenced Amanda to three to 10 years with at least 85 per cent of that time having to be served. As she was led away in tears, family members, including her mother, yelled out “Love you!” and “Keep your chin up.”

“I knew the twins well, because I live in the next apartment to Anna,” the witness said. “They were always together. It’s so messed up, what’s happened. You can fight with your sister but Anna didn’t deserve that.”

Outside the court, the twins’ mother said: “When you lose a child, you never sleep again. You just wish this was a nightmare and you could wake up. How could one identical twin daughter of mine kill the other?”

That’s a question almost anyone would find impossible to answer.

TERRIBLE TWINS

AMANDA RAMIREZ’S fratricide may be extremely rare, but it’s not entirely unique. The deep bonds that exist between twins are often much stronger than those between ordinary siblings – but when they go wrong, those ties can turn far more toxic than normal family rows, too.

Here are some other instances where the bonds that bind went horribly amiss.

The Wachter Brothers

In 2017, Shawn Wachter, a 17-year old in Coulee City, Washington State, fatally stabbed his twin brother Shane. At first, he was charged with murder, but prosecutors ultimately determined he acted in self-defence.

The Cerque Brothers

On New Year’s Eve, 2013, Robert Cerque had a drunken row with his



Robert Cerque killed his brother

twin brother Christopher, in which Robert stabbed Christopher in the stomach.

Robert ran out of the house without his shoes, but carried on drinking with his girlfriend at a party at a different address. Although he tried to cover his steps by turning off his mobile, the police traced him the following morning.

During his trial, Robert, who had previous convictions for criminal damage, battery and domestic abuse, claimed he had acted in self-defence after his brother threatened him with a knife. But police said the stabbing happened in a fit of temper after a day of heavy drinking.

He later told police that he had a “fiery relationship” with his brother, with whom he sometimes worked as a plasterer. Drink could make them “nasty and bad-tempered.”

Cerque was found guilty at Winchester Crown Court, and was sentenced to 13 years in prison.

The Ali Brothers

Four years after his brother Wasel died, Wael Ali was suddenly arrested in September 2011 for his brother’s murder – ironically, while studying for

criminology exams.

The Ali family had left Sudan to build a better life in the US, and initially settled in Baltimore, Maryland. But after Wasel was found dead in some woods after disappearing from a shopping mall in 2007, Wael moved to Georgia to try once again to rebuild.

However, prosecutors caught up with him and alleged that Wael had tricked Wasel into a car, taken him to the woods and choked him to death. Wasel also

had a broken neck when he was found.

Although there were no witnesses to Wasel getting into a car with Wael, and no murder weapon was ever found, Wasel’s DNA was found in Wael’s car.

The jury became

deadlocked over their verdict and could not reach a decision, and because of the time that had passed, the state opted not to have a retrial.

But in a cruel twist, Wael was shot and killed outside a mall in Atlanta in 2003.

He was buried next to the twin he may have murdered. And despite the jury failing to reach a verdict, the police insist that Wael was and will remain the only suspect in the killing of his brother.



Wasel Ali (left) with his identical twin brother Wael

YOUR LETTERS

Your Letters, PO Box 735, London SE26 5NQ
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Missionary Kidnapped In The 70s

An intriguing story first broke in September 1977, with the disappearance and subsequent reappearance of American missionary Kirk Anderson. On the 18th of that month, *The Sunday Times* noted: "The Mormon missionary missing in Surrey turned up yesterday and said he had been kidnapped and held handcuffed and manacled for three days – it is believed on the orders of a wealthy, lovesick woman." So began the tale of Joyce McKinney. Does *True Detective* have a full account of the case?



**Lovesick:
Joyce
McKinney**

Stuart Davies, Barnstaple

We've only ever covered the case in brief before. Would other readers like to know more about it?

Farmer Murdered In A Rage

I firmly believe Angela Taylor and Paul Cannon murdered Angela's husband Bill Taylor in a lustful fit of envy and rage ("Wife And Her Lover Conspired To Kill Bill" – February). They got a big kick out of killing Bill, a millionaire farmer who would not give up his wife to divorce. For the life of me I don't know why. Bill had to know what was going on and it wasn't a pretty sight. Still, the unassuming man cannot be blamed in any way for his gruesome demise. Angela Taylor and Paul Cannon who were well-off (Bill had handed over land worth over a million pounds to Angela in a bid to keep her) now have 22 years in prison to ponder what might have been.

Michael Minihan, Limerick

Fairground Visits Can Be Fatal

The sad story of Violet Wakefield ("Barnsley's Wartime Fairground Murder" – February) reminded me of the prominent role fairgrounds play in our history of murder. Some are well known – such as that of seven-year-old Mark Tildesley, abducted from a Wokingham fair in June 1984. Leslie Bailey confessed to the murder. He claimed Mark was abducted at the behest of a London-based paedophile gang. Bailey was killed in prison in 1993.



**Battered
to death:
Violet
Wakefield**

Children are easy targets near fairgrounds. Excited, out-of-bounds and free from close parental control, they

may fall prey to predators of the worst kind. Ian Brady and Myra Hindley abducted Lesley Ann Downey, 10, from a Boxing Day fairground in 1964, abused her, killed her and buried her on Saddleworth Moor. The recorded screams of Lesley Ann's final moments have echoed down the years.

Jacqueline Thomas, 15, was lured from a Birmingham fair and murdered in 1961. The case remains unsolved, although police believe they identified the killer in 2007. The killer of candy floss queen Miriam Crawford Culine, 33, in 1978 also escaped justice. A preacher's daughter, Miriam ran off to join the circus at 17. She married travelling showman Fred Culine – 40 years her senior. Fred died within months of Miriam – some said of a broken heart.

Andrew Stephenson, Newhaven

Why Fewer Condemned Women?

The monthly news and updates regarding the death penalty cases in *Execution USA* always make for a fascinating read. It's the section of your magazine which interests me the most, perhaps because we no longer have the ultimate sentence in the UK any more.

On a recent television documentary it was said that since the reintroduction of the death penalty in the USA over 8,000 people are currently on Death Row, and less than 10 per cent of them are women. I wonder if that is because juries are more reluctant to sentence them, as it seems clear from reading your magazine that many women commit horrific crimes just as appalling as their male counterparts.

America really seems to like executing its murderers, despite the fact that it is becoming more difficult to do so. Whether the death penalty is a deterrent remains to be seen, but unarguably once executed that particular murderer will never have the opportunity to kill again.

Gaynor McKnight, Harlow

A Rhyme For Mary Ann Cotton

I first read *True Detective* and *Master Detective* in the mid-50s, so since then I've read a lot of crime stories. As I normally pass on my magazines to charity shops I don't mind the reprinted stories from your always excellent stable of publications. A regular appearance in print is Mary Ann Cotton. There are several books about "Britain's First Female Serial Killer?" and she popped up again, this time in the *True Detective Winter Special*. Within a week of her execution at Durham Prison a stage play, *The Life and Death of Mary Ann Cotton*, was being performed in theatres. And a further demonisation was a

rhyme which children skipped to:

*Mary Ann Cotton,
She's dead and she's rotten!
She lies in her bed,
With her eyes wide open.
Sing, sing,
Oh what can I sing?
Mary Ann Cotton
Is tied up with string.
Where, where?
Up in the air,
Selling black puddings,
A penny a pair.*



**Mary Ann
Cotton**

John McClure, York

I Hope Bamber's Never Released

Re: "Will Bamber Go Free?" (February). Anyone who was around during the mid-1980s would have remembered the horrific and tragic case of the White House Manor slayings. I've no doubt that handsome, cold-blooded, devious Jeremy Bamber was guilty of the murder of his adoptive parents Nevill and June Bamber, adoptive sister "Bambi" and her sons Daniel and Nicholas. He used fragile Sheila Caffell – "Bambi" – as a scapegoat since many were aware of her severe mental health problems.

On page 8 you showed a photograph of Bamber "weeping" crocodile tears at the funeral of his victims (such a ham actor!). His then-girlfriend was also included in the photograph but not shown on this page, dressed very becomingly in black, complete with hat and widow's veiling, "comforting" him. At the time I thought what a pair of hypocrites they were!



**Cold-blooded
killer: Jeremy
Bamber**

Another photograph of Bamber (not included in TD) shown being driven away after his sentencing tells the whole story. He is pole-axed, stunned, in complete shock. No one but a guilty man could display an expression of such horror and hopelessness at his fate. I hope he is never released.

Re: "The Deadly Man Nicole met On The Phone" (February). As if the pitiful, isolated 13-year-old Nicole Lovell hadn't suffered enough with her health problems, she was lured into a bogus "romance" by toxic predators "Dr. Tombstone" David Eisenhauer and Natalie Keepers. Did this pair have a self-destructive streak, knowing that eventually the law would catch up with them and they'd be condemned to such lengthy prison sentences? The more I read of cases like this, the more I think social media sites should be shut down. Parents of vulnerable adolescents must live in a continual state of anxiety.

B. Waters, Inverness

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CRIMES THAT MADE THE HEADLINES

Hell's Angels, drugs and teenage sex were linked in a savage crime in which a 16-year-old youth was tied up and drowned. "He raped my girlfriend," the accused man said. "I decided to kill him. What else could I do?"

Sussex Victim Was Bound And Thrown In The Sea

Grim Discovery In Shoreham Harbour

THE TWO young men looked at each other in bewilderment when the body they had just lowered into the water at Shoreham Harbour, near Brighton, suddenly began to emit bubbles.

"I thought you said he was dead," one whispered in awe.

"I thought he was," his companion replied.

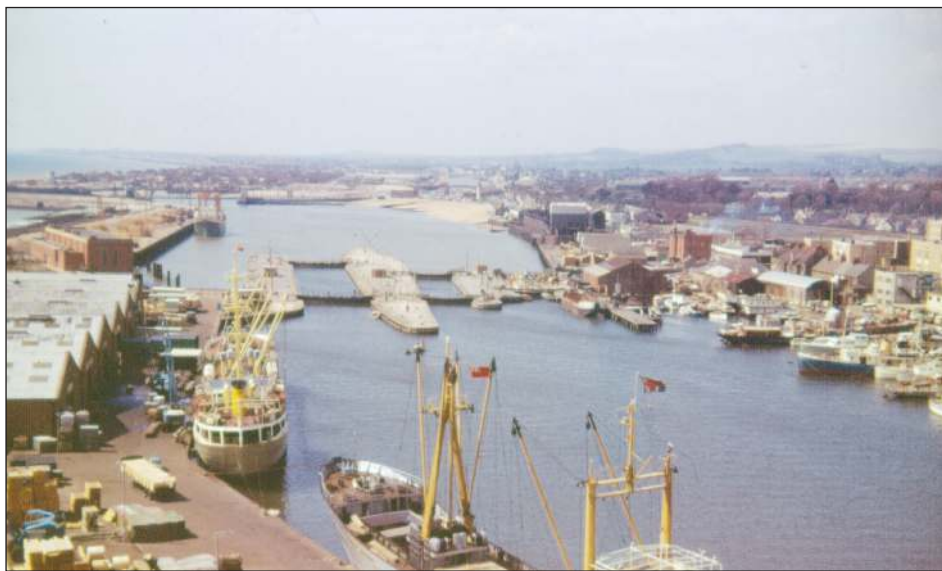
Case report by John Sanders

The victim bobbed about in the water for a few seconds. When he sank the surface of the water was covered with bubbles. There was no escape. He was tightly bound hand and feet and his legs were weighted down with concrete slabs. After a minute or so the bubbles ceased.

Shoreham Harbour, the port of Brighton and Hove, lies to the west of the city, almost abutting Hove, and runs parallel with the coastline for a mile or so until it descends into the English Channel. It is a busy port, filled with fishing boats and cargo ships. Nearly two months after the bound victim was dropped into the harbour a freighter about to leave its berth ran into trouble.

As the engines struggled to move the ship the propeller began to churn wildly. A seaman ran to the stern of the ship, leaned over the deck rail, and shouted a warning.

The ship's engines were stopped, and



Shoreham Harbour, where the victim was laid into the water, in the 1970s

after a hurried discussion a frogman plunged off a small rowing boat drawn up beside the ship and descended below the stern. Within a few minutes he was back on the rowing boat,

"The propeller blades are caught in a length of rope," he reported. "I followed the rope to its source and found a man's body. It looks like he's been down there for some time. It looks too as if he's been tied up and weighted down."

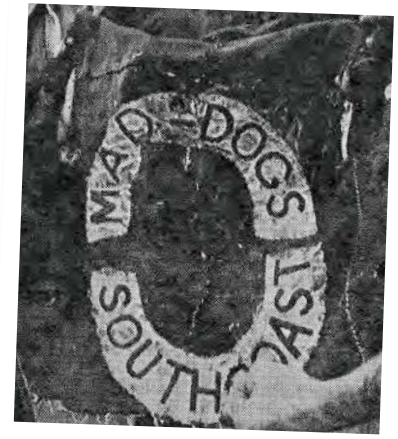
While an urgent call went out to the police the frogman descended under

the stern again, freed the rope from the propeller, and brought the body to the surface and from there to the dock.

The body was that of a youth who had been tall with shoulder-length hair. He was wearing blue denim trousers and leather motorcycle boots, and had been tightly bound hand and foot. Several breeze-blocks had been tied to his legs. The body was in a bad state of decomposition. Crabs and other underwater creatures had joined in the mutilation.



Above, the van used by the killers. Below, Brighton in the same era



Above, the Mad Dogs symbol. Below, tragic teen Clive Olive



The post-mortem made it abundantly clear that the cause of death was drowning. That meant beyond doubt that the youth had been alive, and probably conscious, when he was dumped in the harbour.

Something else was picked up by the pathologist. On the arm of the corpse was a tattoo. It looked like the word HAT, but it was so faint that the pathologist couldn't be certain.

The first thing to find out was, who was this drowned youth? The missing persons file soon came up with the answer. On March 2nd, 1973 – that was seven weeks before – Mrs. Pauline Olive, who lived in St. Aubyns, a road off the Hove seafront, had reported her 16-year-old son Clive missing. He was six feet tall, had shoulder-length dark hair and was wearing a blue denim jacket and trousers and motorcycle boots when he vanished.

A tearful Mrs. Olive identified the body and talked about her son. He had left school to enlist in the Royal Navy, but was rejected because of eyesight problems. He had then found a job in a

bakery and was talking about going back to school to finish his exams.

"He was a strong lad," she said. "I don't think one person would have been able to do all this to him. He was well capable of defending himself."

But for all that she remembered he was "scared stiff" just before he

"He was a strong lad. I don't think one person would have been able to do all this to him. He was well capable of defending himself"

disappeared. "I think someone was going to beat him up. But he wouldn't say who, or why."

Armed with a list of his friends, officers began interviews. The era of the mods and rockers, rival gangs that 10 years earlier had caused mayhem in Brighton, was long since gone. Teenagers were now individuals and no longer gang members, so each one

had to be winkled out and coaxed into talking.

They remembered Clive Olive as a habitué of Brighton and Hove coffee bars, and as having a reputation for seducing girls. He was indiscreet about his conquests, bragging in detail about the sexual antics he and his latest girlfriend got up to.

"Ollie" as he was sometimes known, was also on the edge of the drug scene. Several of his friends said that he sometimes had small amounts to sell. He was not known to be a drug abuser himself, but he knew how to get hold of it and pass it on.

Then came a breakthrough. The letters tattooed on Olive's arm had become, under deeper analysis, HAC. That rang a bell with Detective Chief Superintendent Jim Marshall, head of Sussex CID.

Marshall remembered that there was a gang of youths in North Sussex who called themselves the Hell's Angels Cougars. They were also known as the Mad Dogs of Sussex. And the clothes the victim was wearing when his body

CRIMES THAT MADE THE HEADLINES



was pulled out of the water were undoubtedly the sort worn by motorcycle gangs.

But Mrs. Olive, the victim's mother, had said nothing about her son being a biker, or even

owning a bike. Was he then just a dreamer? It was time to talk to Mrs. Olive again.

Yes, she said, her son had met the Cougars in coffee bars, and started going around with them. "Clive was a good boy," she said. "He wanted to be a vet and was always helping people with their animals. Then he left school and that was the end of that dream.

"I didn't think anything of it when he didn't come home that night. He often stayed away for two or three nights when he was with the Hell's Angels."

Meanwhile, other officers were still interviewing the dead boy's friends. One of those questioned said, "Ollie had lots of mates. There was Randy, Simple, Lover..."

"Don't they have proper names?" he was asked.

Proper names? No one seemed to



Above, accused killers Brian Moore and Albert Dorn, their heads covered, entering a police van. Below, Christine Dorn who the judge believed was "deeply implicated" in the murder

have thought of that. But he did have a couple of enemies. Like Butch and her two guys.

So who was Butch? And why should she have a special reason for disliking

Clive Olive?

The reason, it seemed, was a love triangle. The brother of Butch, a more mature young man named Brian (he really did have a proper name) had been getting rather serious about a girl called Susan (not her real name). Unfortunately for Brian, Clive Olive had got to Susan first.

He was always boasting about how he bedded girls. And he boasted a lot about the things he and Susan had been doing under the duvet.

Brian didn't like that at all. In fact, he was furious about it.

The officers were given a couple of addresses where they might find Butch and her brother Brian. And early on May 1st, 1973, they simultaneously raided houses in Brighton and Hove and arrested three women and four men.

The following day Brian Stephen Moore, 21, Albert Edward Dorn, 27, and Dorn's pregnant wife Christine, 18, otherwise known as Butch, were charged with the murder of Clive Olive. The others were released.

Moore, and the Dorns, husband and wife, were brought to trial at Lewes Crown Court on November 27th, 1973, where prosecutor Michael Eastham QC told the jury that Moore was obsessed with the belief that his girl had been raped by the victim.



L

THE WORLD'S **WORST** KILLERS

Bobby Joe Long

"THE CLASSIFIED-AD RAPIST"

• **United States**

BORN IN Kenova, West Virginia, Long had an unusual upbringing. As well as being a distant cousin of serial killer Henry Lee Lucas, he suffered from Klinefelter's syndrome, which provides the male with an excess female or X chromosome, and as a consequence at the onset of puberty he developed breasts, which needed surgical correction.

Bullying and teasing that arose from this condition and sharing a bed with his mother into his teens may have only further complicated his emotional life.

While serving in the army in 1973 Long married his school sweetheart and fathered two children. It was also in that year that he suffered the latest in a long list of severe head injuries, in a motorcycle accident. This time, however, his behaviour became notably hypersexual, and markedly aggressive.

After being discharged from the army, the now unemployed and divorced Long, from 1980 onwards, committed

at least 50 rapes in the Tampa Bay area of Florida, using the newspapers to identify women whom he would rape in their own homes. And next, the "Classified Ad Rapist," moved on to become a killer.

Between May and November 1984, Long strangled, stabbed and shot at least nine victims, with more suspected. Developing a modus operandi involving ligatures and the display of victims' corpses, he gave free rein to his sadistic desires.

In early November, he spared a 17-year-old girl he had abducted and raped. Long's downfall came when she described him and his car to police.

Lengthy trials and appeals were convoluted affairs for someone serving four 99-year sentences, 28 life sentences, and one death sentence. The process concluded with his execution by lethal injection on May 23rd, 2019.



Got a suggestion for the **World's Worst Killers**? Write to us at True Detective, P.O. Box 735, London SE26 5NQ, UK or email truedetective@truecrimelibrary.com

"This is not to say that the defendant Moore is a person of high moral character," he added hastily. "Indeed, we propose to demonstrate quite the opposite.

"Moore made a statement to the police in which he said he gave up his job to be with Susan and they decided to become engaged. But he felt something was troubling her, and he thought this might be a former boyfriend he had heard about.

"He consequently asked Susan directly if she had ever had intercourse with another man. She replied that she had been raped.

"Having determined that the alleged rapist was Clive Olive, Moore resolved to get even with Olive, or at least to give him a beating."

Consequently, on February 28th, 1973, Moore and Albert Dorn took weights and a plastic sack from a building site and rope from a demolition yard, and these objects were later found attached to the corpse of the victim.

Moore told the police: "I thought I might lose my temper and kill Olive and I would then have to get rid of the body. The idea of attaching weights to it and throwing it into the sea came from the Mad Dogs of Sussex, who planned at one time to get rid of one of their leaders in this way."

Moore was persuaded to enter the Dorns' van driven by Albert Dorn with Mrs. Dorn sitting in the front seat next to him. Moore, who was in the back of the vehicle with Olive, began hitting Olive, using a truncheon he'd had when he was employed as a guard.

Mr. Eastham went on: "Olive was crying and screaming and Moore thought he was dead. He tied him up with the rope, attached the sack of weights to his feet, and Dorn drove to the waterfront.

"Moore took Olive's shoulders and Dorn carried the plastic sack of weights attached to his feet. When they reached the water, Dorn threw in the sack of weights and Moore simply let go of Olive's shoulders so that he was dragged in after it.

"Clive Olive was, however, still alive and conscious at this point, for Moore says in his statement, 'His eyes were open. Al said, 'Look, he's bobbing up and down.' It was the staring eyes that bothered me, but Al thought the bubbles afterwards were worse.'"

Was Clive Olive still alive? Yes he was, declared pathologist Hugh Malseworth who performed the post-mortem and gave drowning as the cause of death. Olive was alive and conscious at the time he was thrown tightly bound into the sea.

The principal witness for the defence was co-defendant Brian Moore. He joined the Mad Dogs of Sussex, he said, in 1969, the year he had started taking drugs. He took LSD, amphetamines, barbiturates, hashish and marijuana because he was depressed after a failed love affair.



**Head of the murder investigation
- Detective Chief Superintendent
James Marshall**

After the trial it was revealed that Moore was exceedingly depressed, because at this time he was a trainer at a wild animal park and had tried to enter a cage with two lions in a bizarre attempt to commit suicide. The lions, however, took no notice of him.

He was no longer taking drugs, he said, because he had since met Susan, and after that he had no need of drugs.

There was a time when they were separated because he had a job as a fruit picker on a Kent farm. When he returned he met up with Susan again.

"The first thing I asked her was if she still had white wings," he said. This apparently meant was she still a virgin? "She told me then that she had been raped.

"I was fighting with Olive in the back of the van. I kicked him and hit him with a truncheon on the head, the hands, the body, any place. I was berserk"

"We talked about it a lot and I knew she was telling the truth. I was furious and I wanted to kill whoever had done it because I loved her with all my heart and whatever happens I always will.

"I spent about £40 making inquiries and trying to find out who had raped my girl. I was finally given the name of Clive Olive."

He was asked, how did Susan manage to convince him she had really been raped?

"We went to the hotel where it happened and took the same room," Moore said. "When we went into the room she convinced me because she described the position she had been in

with Olive and we got into the same position.

"I decided then to kill Olive. I arranged to meet him on the night of February 27th and we talked about drugs. We set up a meeting for the following night.

"On the 28th my sister Christine and her husband Albert Dorn were with me. Al was driving the van and Christine was in the front seat with him.

"Olive was in the back with me and I asked him if he knew a girl named Susan. He said no, and I asked him again. He still said no, and I said, 'The one you raped, you bastard!' He still said he didn't know her. And then he admitted that he had raped her.

"I was boiling with rage, furious. He struck out at me and I caught it on my left and hit him with my right. It slammed him against the side of the van.

"We had been parked, but when I hit Olive Al got nervous and started to drive around. I was fighting with Olive in the back of the van. I kicked him and hit him with a truncheon on the head, the hands, the body, any place. I was berserk. I thought I'd killed him."

"Why did you think that?" counsel asked.

"His eyes were staring, and when I took his pulse behind the knee, like I'd been taught with animals, I couldn't find any."

"I tied up his hands and feet and I fastened the sack of stones and blocks to his legs. Al backed the van up to the water and I dropped him in and kicked the sack of weights in after him."

"What is your reaction to the pathologist's testimony that Olive was alive and conscious at the time he entered the water?" his counsel asked.

"I was shocked. I really thought he was dead. I had told Al to drive to the harbour, and now Olive was dead and I was angry because I hadn't found out what I wanted to know about him and Susan."

"Didn't you realise what you were doing was wrong?"

"I don't feel I have done anything wrong," Moore replied. "I knew it was against the law, but what he did was against the law too. He raped my girl. No one else was going to do anything about that so I had to."

To a question from the prosecutor he replied that he felt it was his duty to kill Olive, "so that he would not rape any more girls."

The prosecutor: "Your motive for killing Olive was that he had sexual relations with your girl. Does that mean that you never had relations with her yourself?"

"No, it doesn't mean that," Moore replied. "Susan and I made love, but because of what Olive had done it was spoiled. We got into the same position in which Susan was raped and this upset her so much that everything was spoiled."

They had not taken any birth control precautions, he said, as they both

wanted a baby. "I am opposed to birth control pills because I've heard they have caused deformities in children."

"Susan took the Pill in order to reassure her mum, but kept it under her tongue and then spat it out afterwards. She didn't become pregnant, though."

At this point in Moore's evidence no one was prepared for the astonishing scene that suddenly blew up from the witness-box. Prosecutor Eastham asked Moore: "Was Susan happy about what you did to Olive?"

Moore replied: "I don't know. We often talked about suicide. If the police got too close, we were going to jump off the cliffs at Peacehaven."

The prosecutor went on, "You have told the court that you have stopped using drugs. But isn't it true that you still use them?"

Moore flared up. "You shut your mouth, or I'll belt you one, mate!" he shouted. He seized a water bottle from the edge of the witness-box and swung it over his head.

Two prison officers who were his escorts when he was in the dock surged forward. There was a brief struggle before Moore was overpowered. Then the trial continued.

So what lay behind this incident, scarcely calculated to endear the accused man to the jury? The next witness, Dr. Arthur Williams, a psychiatrist who had examined Moore, was asked what he thought.

"My conclusion is that he displayed an obsessional, paranoid and somewhat psychotic personality," he told the court.

"I am convinced that no one minded in the least whether Clive Olive was alive or dead at the time he was thrown into Shoreham Harbour. This was a most horrible murder"

"It appears that he suffers from certain mental abnormalities which have an effect on his actions. This condition may have been aggravated by the use of LSD. I think his concept of reality has been altered through use of the drug and he may experience difficulty in distinguishing between reality and fantasy."

"However, I believe he was sane. He knew what he was doing was wrong, but he was unable to control himself. The impulse was irresistible. He could not overcome his grievance which became worse and worse until he reached a state where it was either kill Olive or commit suicide."

Answering a question from the prosecution, Dr. Williams said that had Moore been his patient he would have applied to have him committed to a mental institution.

Another psychiatrist, Dr. Peter Noble, told the court that Moore had been a



Above, Lewes Crown Court where the murder trial was held. Below, trial judge Mr. Justice Thesiger who described the murder as "horrible"

timid child and was easily bullied. "He doesn't seem to have been a very good Hell's Angel," he observed. "He was always on the fringe. He was the tough Hell's Angel on the one hand, and the animal lover on the other."

Albert Dorn, Moore's brother-in-law, told the court that Moore was convinced Olive had raped his girl. "When I was driving the van I could hear them in the back. Brian was saying, 'I'm going



to give you a good hiding for what you did,' and then he began hitting him."

"Olive was screaming and Christine started to cry. I didn't know what to do, so I drove along the waterfront. I thought the traffic might make Brian stop. But it didn't make any difference, and when I looked round Brian had tied him up and fastened the sack of weights to his feet. He told me to drive to the harbour."

"I backed up the van and Brian carried him down and threw him in. I thought he was dead. There were no screams, just a lot of bubbles. I told

Brian, 'I think you've gone too far.'"

Mr. Eastham asked him: "I suggest your wife, the third defendant in this case, played an important part in this crime. I suggest she was the bait with which the victim was lured to his death."

"That isn't true," Dorn replied. "She was only in the van because she didn't want to be left alone."

Summing up, Felix Waley QC, defending, said, "The murder of this 16-year-old boy was performed in a manner displaying all the hallmarks of a madman. It was a crime which arose from an insane obsession haunting a deranged mind and it was carried out with the ruthless cunning and remorseless cruelty of a maniac for a reason which could only exist in insanity."

Moore, he argued, was not guilty of murder, but of manslaughter as a result of diminished responsibility.

The jury thought otherwise. After a six-hour retirement they found Moore and Albert Dorn guilty of murder, and Christine Dorn, who had given birth while in prison awaiting trial, guilty of manslaughter.

Sentencing Dorn and Moore to life, Mr. Justice Thesiger said, "I am convinced that no one minded in the least whether Clive Olive was alive or dead at the time he was thrown into Shoreham Harbour. This was a most horrible murder."

To Christine Dorn the judge said, "I feel you are deeply implicated in this crime and that you were instrumental in luring the victim. I am certain you exercised a comparatively strong influence on the other two defendants. You will go to prison for 10 years."

Christine Dorn fainted in the dock. When she was eventually revived she screamed, "You bastard!" at the judge, before being led down to the cells. Her sentence was later quashed by the Appeal Court.

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His heinous string of murders shocked the USA. And it would take a number of false leads in the investigation before Danny Rolling was brought to justice. He would become the most famous serial killer to be executed since Ted Bundy

Horror In Florida

FIVE STUDENTS SLAIN BY THE GAINESVILLE RIPPER

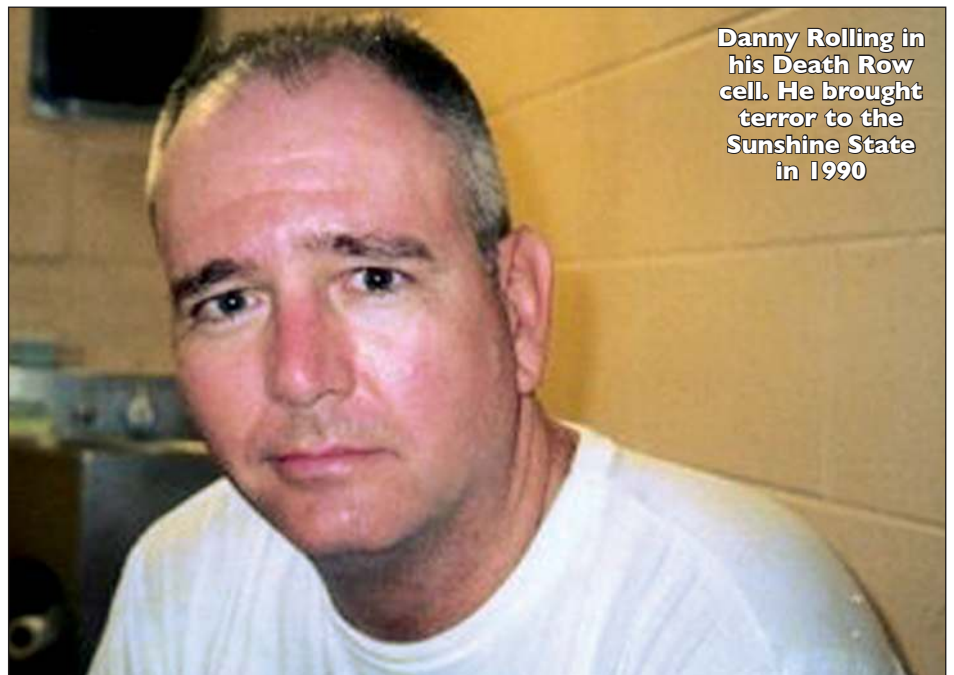
WITHIN DAYS of being rated the 13th best spot to live in the United States of America, the university city of Gainesville, Florida, was branded “Grisly Gainesville” by the media. And not without reason.

The 72-hour nightmare of terror that gripped the community began on

**Case report
by Barbara Geehr
and A.W. Moss**

the afternoon of Sunday, August 26th, 1990, with the discovery of the bodies of two students, 17-year-old Christina Powell and 18-year-old Sonja Larson, in the townhouse flat they shared at Williamsburg Village Apartments.

Christina’s parents had driven over to bring some things to her in her new home. They were already concerned about their daughter and her room-mate, for they had been unable to reach either by phone for the previous two days and nights. Now, with no answer to their repeated knocks and with the vehicles of both girls standing



Danny Rolling in his Death Row cell. He brought terror to the Sunshine State in 1990

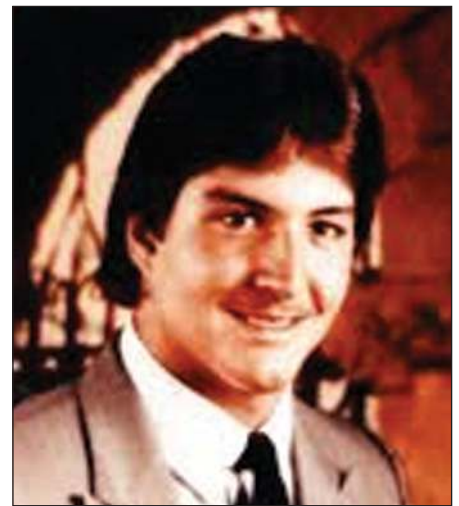
outside, Christina’s father returned to his car and called the Gainesville Police on his mobile phone.

Twenty minutes later Officer Ray

Barber arrived at the townhouse where Christina’s parents were waiting outside. On the way, Barber had stopped at the building’s office to pick up a



Clockwise from above left, student victims Sonja Larson, Christina Powell, Christa Hoyt, Manuel Taboada and Tracy Paules. Below left, the entrance to the apartment where Sonja and Christina were murdered



maintenance man with a key.

“Better stay out here while we make sure everything inside is okay,” the officer advised.

A ghastly sight confronted Barber and the maintenance man when they entered. The bloodstained, nude body of Christina Powell lay on the living-room floor, her clothing, which appeared to have been cut from her, strewn nearby. She had multiple stab wounds and her face, with a double-width strip of duct tape covering her mouth, had been turned towards the sofa. Her hands had been taped behind her back, and her nipples had been cut off.

Upstairs the body of Sonja Larson lay on her bed. Her mouth had also been covered with a double-width strip of duct tape, and she too had been stabbed many times. Slash marks on her arms and left thigh indicated that she had tried to defend herself.

Returning outside, Barber told Mr. Powell, “You and your wife better wait at the office. There’s something dreadful happened here.”

As the maintenance man escorted the Powells to the manager’s office, Barber radioed for homicide investigators and crime scene technicians.

After viewing the bodies and

talking to the Powells, the detectives believed the two murders had taken place between 5.30 on the Thursday evening of August 23rd – the last time Christina’s mother had reached her by phone – and 4 p.m. on Friday, when Mrs. Powell began getting no answers to her calls.

Technicians found evidence indicating that the killer might have broken into the townhouse by prying open the sliding glass door at the back. They also deduced that the intruder had spent an unusual amount of time in the residence after the killings: he had apparently cleaned up the two areas where the bodies were found, and arranged the corpses in sexually explicit positions.

At midnight on Sunday, while

She had multiple stab wounds and her face, with duct tape covering her mouth, had been turned towards the sofa. Her hands had been taped behind her back

investigators were still searching for evidence at the scene, two deputies were dispatched to check on a records clerk who had failed to show up for her midnight-to-eight a.m. shift at the Alachua County sheriff’s office. The deputies – one of them Officer Ray Barber’s wife Gail – discovered that 19-year-old Christa Hoyt, a daytime Santa Fe Community College student who lived alone in a flat about two miles from Williamsburg Village, had been mutilated and decapitated.

She lay naked and sprawled across her bed with her hands taped behind her back. Her breasts had been slashed, and her body had been deeply sliced from her pubic bone to her breastbone. Her head, the mouth sealed with duct tape, had been propped on top of a bookcase so that it would be in clear view of anyone who looked through the front window. The bookcase appeared to have been moved from another spot to serve as a base for the display.

Investigators estimated that the murder had taken place eight to 24 hours after Christina and Sonja’s killings. Evidence indicated that the killer might have gained entry by breaking or dislodging the locking mechanism on the sliding glass door

at the rear of the apartment with a screwdriver.

At 8 o'clock on Tuesday morning, August 28th, at Gatorwood Apartments, a student complex near Williamsburg Village, a maintenance worker discovered the bodies of two more University of Florida students: Manuel Taboada and Tracy Paules, both 23 and both from the Miami area. Detectives speculated that Taboada – whose body was found on his bed – had been awakened when the attacker began stabbing him. The tall, powerfully built young man had apparently fought desperately. The fingers of both his hands had been sliced to the bone, and he had deep cuts on his arms and legs.

Tracy Paules's nude and sexually posed body – with three stab wounds in her back and her nipples cut off – lay on the floor of the hallway separating the apartment's two bedrooms. Once again the killer had used double-width strips of duct tape to seal the victim's mouth and to secure her hands behind her back. Her T-shirt had been either cut or torn off and it lay on the floor near her body.



The apartment shared by victims Manuel Taboada and Tracy Paules

The killer appeared to have gained entry to the first-floor apartment by prying open the sliding glass door at the rear – possibly with the same screwdriver that he used to pry open sliding glass doors at the two other crime scenes.

Autopsies established that Sonja Larson and Christina Powell had died as a result of their stab wounds. Christina had been raped before being killed; Sonja had not. Christa Hoyt had also been raped before being turned face-down on her bed and stabbed in the back so violently that her aorta was ruptured. Manuel Taboada had been stabbed with such force that the knife penetrated through his stomach to his spine. Tracy Paules, after being sexually battered, had died from one of her stab wounds.

Christina, Sonja, Christa and Tracy were petite and attractive brunettes, and before leaving the apartments the murderer had poured detergent or disinfectant over the girls' bodies. He had also picked up and taken with him a photo of each of his female victims – an act commonly practised by serial killers, according to psychiatric experts.



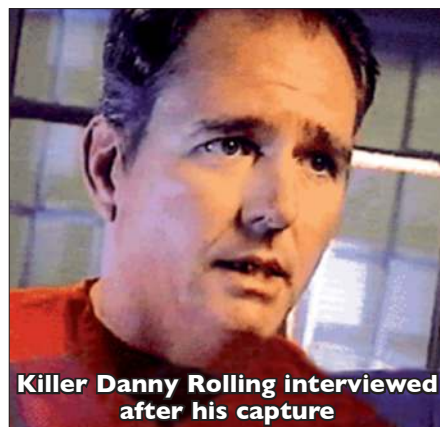
Immortalised in graffiti – the murdered students' names were written on a memorial wall on the University of Florida campus

Investigators found no identifiable fingerprints at any of the scenes and believed the killer had worn gloves. They also speculated that he had spent a long time after the slayings – perhaps several

Profilers said the suspect was driven by anger brought on by years of failure, who was directing his rage against college students who he considered successful and privileged

hours – posing the bodies, getting rid of evidence, and cleaning himself up. But at each of the crime scenes technicians found samples of semen from which they hoped to get DNA “fingerprints.”

Criminal profilers and psychiatrists from several parts of the country offered opinions on the kind of suspect the investigators should seek. They all believed that he was driven by anger brought on by years of failure and futility, someone whose life was on the rocks, who was directing his rage and frustration against college students who



Killer Danny Rolling interviewed after his capture

he considered successful and privileged.

A 100-strong task force was formed to find him, and in interviews throughout the campus and the neighbourhoods surrounding the three crime scenes the name of Phillip Earl Porter kept surfacing.

Investigators learned that Porter – 18 years old, six feet tall, and weighing 14 stone – had first entered the university at the start of the 1990 summer session.

After living briefly in a residential hall on campus he had moved into an off-campus apartment with two male students he had not known previously. After only a few days he had fought with his room-mates, and in one incident in the flat's car park he had behaved irrationally. A carelessly thrown basketball had bounced off the bonnet of his Cadillac and so infuriated him that he grabbed a chain and began chasing everyone from the area.

Porter's 79-year-old grandmother came to Gainesville and spent three days seeking another apartment for him. In mid-August he moved into another off-campus complex to live by himself.

Those who knew him said they felt uneasy in his presence. The fact that he often dressed in military fatigues, carried a knife and went on “reconnaissance missions” in nearby woods disturbed them. They described him as “silent, sullen, and spooky, a person who hates life,” and “someone capable of extreme violence.”

Little more than 24 hours after the discovery of the bodies of Tracy Paules and Manuel Taboada, the task force put Phillip Earl Porter under 24-hour surveillance.

The operation had barely begun when he walked out of his apartment, got into his Cadillac, and began driving south. Detectives followed on what turned out to be a 180-mile trip to his grandmother's. That night he was arrested for beating her. Charged with aggravated battery on a person over 65, he was lodged in jail.

Asked why he had left Gainesville,

Porter said the murders had made him fear for his own safety. Like at least one-third of the student population, he had fled the city.

During questioning he made several statements which the investigators considered incriminating. He also gave signs of having multiple personalities, one of which he referred to as "John." When asked if he knew who committed the students' murders, he answered, "John did it."

As Porter wouldn't be going anywhere soon, the task force began pursuing the next most promising leads.

The day following the discovery of the last two bodies the *Gainesville Sun* ran a photo and story on Walter Wesley, a 58-year-old Ohio fugitive wanted by the FBI for the murder of 52-year-old Phyllis Elam. According to the report, Wesley had been dating her for years when she dropped him unceremoniously and began seeing other men. He then began harassing her at her home and at the shop where she worked. When those tactics failed he threatened to take her life.

On August 10th Phyllis's mutilated body was found in a wooded area in a nearby county. She had been stabbed so many times in the face and throat it was impossible to make out her features, and she had to be identified through dental records. Photos and descriptions of the woman, except for her age, closely matched the descriptions of the four murdered female students. She was attractive, well built, small and dark-haired, and she had been killed in a similar way.

The fugitive had last been seen at a Fairfield, Ohio, garage where he worked. On that day he told his employer he had pneumonia and was going to check into a hospital. He told colleagues, however, that he was going on a trip and asked them where he should go to have a good time. They suggested Orlando, Florida.

The FBI was asking everyone in the cities Wesley would have to pass through to get to Orlando to be on the lookout for him. Gainesville and Ocala were among those cities, and Wesley was described as a white male with brown hair and brown eyes. When last seen he was carrying a briefcase containing a shotgun and a large knife.

The *Sun* had barely got off the press before people who had seen Walter Wesley's photo and read the story began phoning the student murder task force to report sightings of, or dealings with, the fugitive during the week before the murders.

Information from a car salesman placed Walter Wesley in the Ocala-Gainesville area only days before the murders of the first two student victims.

The car salesman and the garage where Wesley worked described him as "a quiet man but weird in his own way. He shook constantly, probably due to his heavy drinking."

Commenting on the death of Phyllis

Elam, friends said she rejected Wesley so many times that he "must have just gone over the edge."

Meanwhile, as the hunt for him continued, detectives went to the south Florida community where Phillip Porter, his brother and his mother had been living at his grandmother's home since his mother's divorce from his father.

They learned that Porter had been a normal teenager, but his behaviour changed two years earlier when he contracted the blood disorder mononucleosis and was put on lithium, a medication prescribed for manic-depressives. He sunk into deep depressions, acted irrationally, and talked of suicide.

Relatives believed that he was trying to take his life when he was involved in two car accidents which left him with disfiguring facial scars and a pronounced limp. He underwent

Julie had been raped and stabbed in the chest and back, and her nude body, cleaned with vinegar, had been found draped over the end of her bed

therapy for 18 months and was still taking lithium in the summer of 1990 when he went to the University of Florida.

While the background check on Porter was being carried out other members of the task force were following up other leads. Thirty-year-old Brian Murphy, a short-order cook, had turned himself in one day after the last two bodies in the students' murders were discovered.

In a case unrelated to the murders, Murphy had fled charges arising from a knife attack on a mother and daughter whose home he had broken into. Neither of the women had been seriously injured, but during the past 10

years Murphy had been arrested several times on charges of aggravated assault, petty larceny, carrying a concealed weapon, and resisting an officer.

In jail he had given information to Polk County investigators that made them believe he might have been involved in the student murders. They forwarded a set of Murphy's fingerprints, along with his record, to the Gainesville task force.

On August 30th detectives searched Murphy's home. They found a hangman's noose, two pairs of women's knickers, pornographic videos, satanic writing, and a book on Jack the Ripper but nothing linking Murphy to the student slayings. Nevertheless, the investigators took body fluid samples from him, and made efforts to obtain his medical records.

On September 1st a task force spokesman announced that Walter Wesley had been dropped from the suspects' list and that Brian Murphy had been added. A few days later investigators received information from the crime lab. that tests on a pubic hair found at one of the crime scenes showed that it could belong to Phillip Porter. In 1990 a hair match did little more than narrow down a field of suspects to a class of people having the same characteristics. However, there were some cases in which additional DNA testing could more positively link the hair to a specific suspect. But in this instance, it would take six to eight weeks to perform the tests necessary to do that.

Searching Porter's apartment, detectives found a black hood, black clothing and gloves, women's underwear, a knife with a four-inch blade and a Bible with passages highlighted.

Another possible lead was provided by detectives in Shreveport, Louisiana. It was now more than a year since neighbours had discovered the bodies of Thomas Grissom, 58, his daughter Julie, 24, and his grandson Sean, eight, in



Multiple killer Rolling seen at a mental competency hearing session in Ocala, Florida, in May 1991

their Shreveport home. Julie, who lived with her father, was believed to have been the actual target and the first to be slain. She had been raped and stabbed in the chest and back, and her nude body, cleaned with vinegar, had been found draped over the end of her bed, with her feet on the floor and her hair seductively arranged over the bedspread.

Sean, stabbed once in the back, lay on the living-room floor. Grissom, also stabbed in the back, was found near a utility-room door. A large military-type knife had been used in all three killings. With no sign of a forced entry, the detectives suspected that the attacker had known Julie and been readily admitted to the house.

The Gainesville investigators more or less discounted the similarities between the Shreveport and Gainesville cases when they learned that Phillip Porter could not have been in Louisiana at the time of those slayings. Nevertheless, the task force's interest in the Shreveport killings was to be rekindled later.

On October 10th a judge sentenced Porter to 22 months in prison for the assault on his grandmother, and committed him to a mental hospital.

Taking a further look at the Shreveport case, task force detectives noted that Julie Grissom, a brunette, had been a student at Louisiana State University. The Shreveport killer had directed his violence towards her, but also killed her father and her nephew – they happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. The Gainesville killer targeted women, but also killed a man at one of the scenes because, the investigators believed, he just happened to be there.

The Shreveport killer posed Julie Grissom's body to shock whoever found her. He used tape during the killing, but removed it and took it with him afterwards. He also used a liquid to clean Julie's body and to destroy evidence. On the whole, the Gainesville killer had done much the same.

The chief difference between the two multiple slayings was that the Shreveport victims had not been mutilated.

Then in January 1991 preliminary results of DNA testing renewed hopes of a major breakthrough. Initial comparison of blood taken from the bedroom floor of the Shreveport crime scene showed enough similarity to semen found at two of the Gainesville crime scenes for the investigators to reconsider the possibility that the killer in both the Shreveport and Gainesville slayings was the same man. Then they named 36-year-old Danny Rolling as the new prime suspect in the student murders.

Probing Danny Rolling's background, the detectives found that he had served two terms in prison for robbery. Released in July 1989 with a probation period of five years, he was allowed to serve this in Louisiana, and returned to



Julie Grissom and her eight-year-old son Sean. They were murdered, along with Julie's father Thomas, by Rolling at their Shreveport home

his parents' home.

The Grissom slayings took place that November and after the non-fatal shooting of Rolling's police officer father six months later, Danny had fled.

Shreveport Police, unable to track him down, issued a warrant for his arrest. Now the task force needed to know where Danny Rolling had gone and what he had done in the three months between the time he left his parents' home in Shreveport in May 1990 and August 26th, the day the bodies of the first two Gainesville victims were discovered.

Painstaking investigation traced his movements first to Kansas City and then to Tallahassee, Florida, where he purchased a 9mm semi-automatic pistol and a Marine Corps utility knife, the type of weapon believed to have been

The Shreveport killer posed Julie Grissom's body to shock whoever found her. He used tape during the killing, but removed it and took it with him afterwards

used in the student murders.

In mid-August he checked into a Gainesville hotel, registering under the name of a dead Vietnam War veteran whose ID he had stolen.

On August 14th, 1990, a lone gunman walked into the First Union National Bank on Archer Road in Gainesville and handed a cashier a bag and a message instructing her to fill it with all the notes from her cash drawer. She was smart enough to include a pack of notes containing an explosive red dye.

One week later two men walked into the Southeast Bank, gagged and handcuffed two employees, and took off with all the money they could grab.

On the morning of August 23rd, Rolling checked out of his hotel and was later seen at a shop on Archer Road. There, according to a witness, he purchased a tent and a foam mattress and also stole some gloves, a large-handled screwdriver and several rolls of duct tape. Upon leaving the shop he went into a wooded area near Archer Road and set up camp. On the morning of August 27th another bank was robbed.

A pair of men's trousers stained with red dye was found in the camp and the investigators suspected the three robberies had been carried out by the same person. If they could find the man who fitted the dye-stained trousers, they believed, they would have their bank robber. If he turned out to be Danny Rolling, they would have proof of his presence in Gainesville during the time of the student murders.

The task force investigators now rechecked a stolen car incident from August 30th. It had been reported by a student who lived about three miles from the flat where the bodies of Tracy Paules and Manuel Taboada were discovered two days earlier. The student had said his Buick had been driven away from his home while he was playing tennis.

"Someone popped open the screen on my bedroom window, climbed inside, ate oatmeal, watched TV, and probably even played with my six-month-old puppy," the student said. "Whoever it was stole the keys to my car, left the TV on and the front door partially open when he left."

A week later the student reported the recovery of the car. "It was riddled with bullets and such a wreck I couldn't do anything but sell it for junk," he said. "I was told it had been used in a grocery shop robbery in Tampa."

The investigators had the foresight at the time to have the vehicle's steering-wheel processed for fingerprints before the student sold it. The prints matched Danny Rolling.

In the Tampa robbery in which the Buick had been involved a masked man entered the grocery shop at twilight on September 2nd, 1990, threw paper bags at four cashiers, and ordered them to empty their registers. Another employee and a customer ran to an adjacent restaurant to call for help, and by sheer luck found and alerted three police officers who just happened to be eating there. As the officers responded the robber fled down a nearby alley, carrying the paper bags that the shop cashiers had stuffed with money.

As a female officer confronted the thief with her gun drawn he jumped into the Buick and, with his own gun drawn, warned, "Back off, lady! I don't want to shoot you!"

A second officer approaching the scene on foot diverted the robber's attention, causing him to veer the Buick towards a third officer, who was firing his gun from a standing position with his back against a wall. A split-second before the officer would have been pinned to the wall the robber turned the vehicle away. All three officers had the vehicle under a hail of gunfire as it sped down the road.

When deputies later found the car crashed and abandoned a short distance away they discovered that they had riddled it with 17 bullets and shot out its windscreen. A witness said, "It was a miracle the driver wasn't killed. But he just jumped out and fled into the surrounding woods."

The robber was described as a white male, six feet two inches tall, weighing about 12 stone, with hazel eyes, a thin moustache and curly, brown hair. He was wearing Bermuda shorts, deck shoes, a T-shirt, a floppy fisherman's hat and sunglasses. And later that day, a man dressed in exactly those clothes stole a 1984 silver-coloured Ford Mustang from a garden centre complex in Tampa.

"The owner of the vehicle told us the thief had been pretty cool," a police spokesman said. "He'd taken his time going about his business. We'd learned the vehicle was then used in the robbery of a store in Ocala the next night."

In checking on the Ocala robbery, task force investigators learned that the robber managed to elude officers until he wrecked the car, jumped out, and ran into another shop. Officers lay in wait until he walked out, apparently thinking the coast was clear, and he was arrested.

A search of the Mustang yielded the revolver used in the hold-up, a denim bag containing a large screwdriver, two pairs of gloves, a black T-shirt and two rolls of undeveloped film.

At his arraignment the following morning Danny Rolling, asked by the judge if he had an attorney to represent him, answered, "No, sir, I don't need one. I'm guilty and I'd like to clear my record. I'm also wanted in Shreveport for shooting at my father. So I'd like now to put myself at the court's mercy and let y'all judge me as you see fit."



Rolling on Death Row. He admitted eight murders

To the Gainesville and Shreveport investigators alike, Rolling's confession meant he was hoping that imprisonment for a known crime would keep him from becoming a suspect in more serious offences.

In jail he whiled away his time reading books about war and karate, playing cards, talking about music, and professing devotion to God. He also made two suicide attempts – one with a razor and another with an overdose of a prescription drug.

Task force investigators and Shreveport officers hastened to the

"His father was jealous of him; never wanted anyone to show love for him. He told Danny he would be dead or in jail by the time he was fifteen"

prison with warrants to take blood and other body samples from Rolling. The DNA test indicated a match with body fluids taken from both the Grissom and student murder scenes.

A screwdriver recovered at Rolling's campsite had already been found to match pry marks at the entry points of the student murder scenes, and DNA tests established that a pubic hair found at the campsite was Christa Hoyt's.

According to relatives, Rolling had been an abused child from the day he was born. One relative said, "His father was jealous of him; never wanted anyone to hold him or show love for him. He told Danny from the day he was old enough to understand that he would be dead or in jail by the time he was fifteen."

Neighbours described Rolling as a disturbed youth who often behaved in bizarre ways. "His strength was legendary," they said. "Wearing army

fatigues, army boots and a bandanna around his head he practised martial arts by sparring with trees and jogging with a heavy piece of wood across his shoulders."

One neighbour described Rolling as "the strongest man I've ever seen – I once saw him carry a car transmission across a car park on his shoulders."

But while many of those interviewed thought Danny Rolling "wasn't quite right," they did not believe he could be connected with any murder, let alone such gruesomely methodical ones as the Grissom slayings and the student killings.

The Shreveport investigators now wanted to have saliva swabbed from a bite mark on Julie Grissom's breast put through a new testing method which would develop a DNA "fingerprint" that could be compared with DNA samples from Rolling.

"The tests will either give us evidence to proceed with charges against Rolling in the Grissom slayings or completely eliminate him as a suspect," they said. "Unfortunately, it will take up to a year for the tests to be completed."

Meanwhile, detectives working on the Gainesville bank robberies held a line-up consisting of Rolling and six other men of similar appearance. Witnesses of each of the robberies pointed to Rolling as the culprit.

By the end of 1991 he had been convicted and sentenced for his Tampa and Ocala crimes, arraigned for the Gainesville bank robberies, and indicted for the student murders.

For the 12 charges stemming from the Tampa crime spree he was sentenced to three life terms plus 170 years. For the Ocala store robbery he was given another life sentence.

Meanwhile, Porter, now 19, had been released after serving 13 months of the 22-month sentence he'd been given for attacking his grandmother. He looked different now from the shackled, handcuffed young man with wild hair and lithium-tired eyes who had pleaded guilty to the assault.

As attorneys prepared the case against Danny Rolling in the student slayings, a reporter interviewed a jail inmate who shared a cell with the suspect.

Asked if Rolling ever admitted committing the student murders, the inmate answered, "No, Danny never admitted that. But he did mention off-handedly that he had wiped everything down in the three apartments and knew how to do it because he'd learned law-enforcement procedures. He also said that the only way he could possibly be traced to Gainesville was through the Buick he was driving at the time of the Tampa robbery. But he never admitted killing anyone."

At the conclusion of Rolling's trial for the bank robberies the judge asked him if he wanted to make a statement.

Rolling turned to face the courtroom, and after asking everyone to be patient,

he started singing a song which he introduced as one written by himself. The performance lasted three minutes. He then thanked Jesus Christ for coming into his life and setting him free.

The judge sentenced him to a total of 30 years, plus life in prison.

On June 9th, 1992, Danny Rolling was formally charged with the five students' murders. He subsequently attempted to commit suicide in his cell by wrapping a sheet around his neck.

A fellow-inmate told task force detectives that Rolling had told him that the murder weapon was a Marine Corps knife, and said that a pair of gloves he had used in the murders was buried in an abandoned deer pen across the road



A hearse removes Rolling's body from the state prison

from where Christina Powell and Sonja Larson were slain. "But Danny did not actually confess to the murders," the inmate said, "because he is a born-again Christian who believes that confession, like suicide, is a sin and that the case

should be tried in court."

After a week of futility in excavating the area where the murder weapon and the gloves had reportedly been buried, the search was called off. Rolling was still maintaining his innocence.

But on January 26th, 1994, he told his lawyer that he now wanted to plead guilty to the five Gainesville murders, and a fortnight later he signed a confession.

"There are some things you can't turn from," Rolling told the jury at his trial. "This being one of them."

He was convicted on all counts, and on April 20th, 1994, he was sentenced to die in the electric chair for each of the five murders.

As what proved to be a marathon appeals effort to save him from execution began, the Shreveport investigators announced that they did not have enough evidence to charge Danny Rolling with the Grissom slayings.

"There are some things you can't turn from, this being one of them. I deserve to die, but do I want to die? No, I want to live"

Rolling blamed the murders on abuse he suffered as a child from his father, on his treatment in prison, and on "Gemini," as he called his evil side. During the week of the student murders he had seen the film *Exorcist III* in which the killer, known as Gemini, decapitates a female victim.

Rolling now also admitted the Grissom murders. He said he had killed one person for each of the eight years he had spent behind bars before he became a murderer, and on Death Row he told a reporter: "I do deserve to die, but do I want to die? No, I want to live. Life is difficult to give up."

In October 2006, 16 years after the student murders, the appeals process was finally exhausted, and at lunchtime on October 25th Rolling had his last meal – lobster tail, butterfly shrimp, baked potato, strawberry cheesecake and sweet tea. He was about to become Florida's most notorious serial killer to be executed since Ted Bundy, who in 1989 died in the electric chair in the death chamber that now awaited the student slayer.

The electric chair, however, had now been replaced by lethal injection, and in the early evening Danny Rolling, by now 52, went calmly to his death. He showed no remorse and refused to make any comments or offer any apology to the relatives of his victims, some of whom were present at his execution. Instead, he chose to sing a hymn as the fatal mixture of chemicals kicked-in. At 6.13 p.m. he was pronounced dead.

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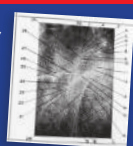
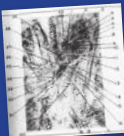


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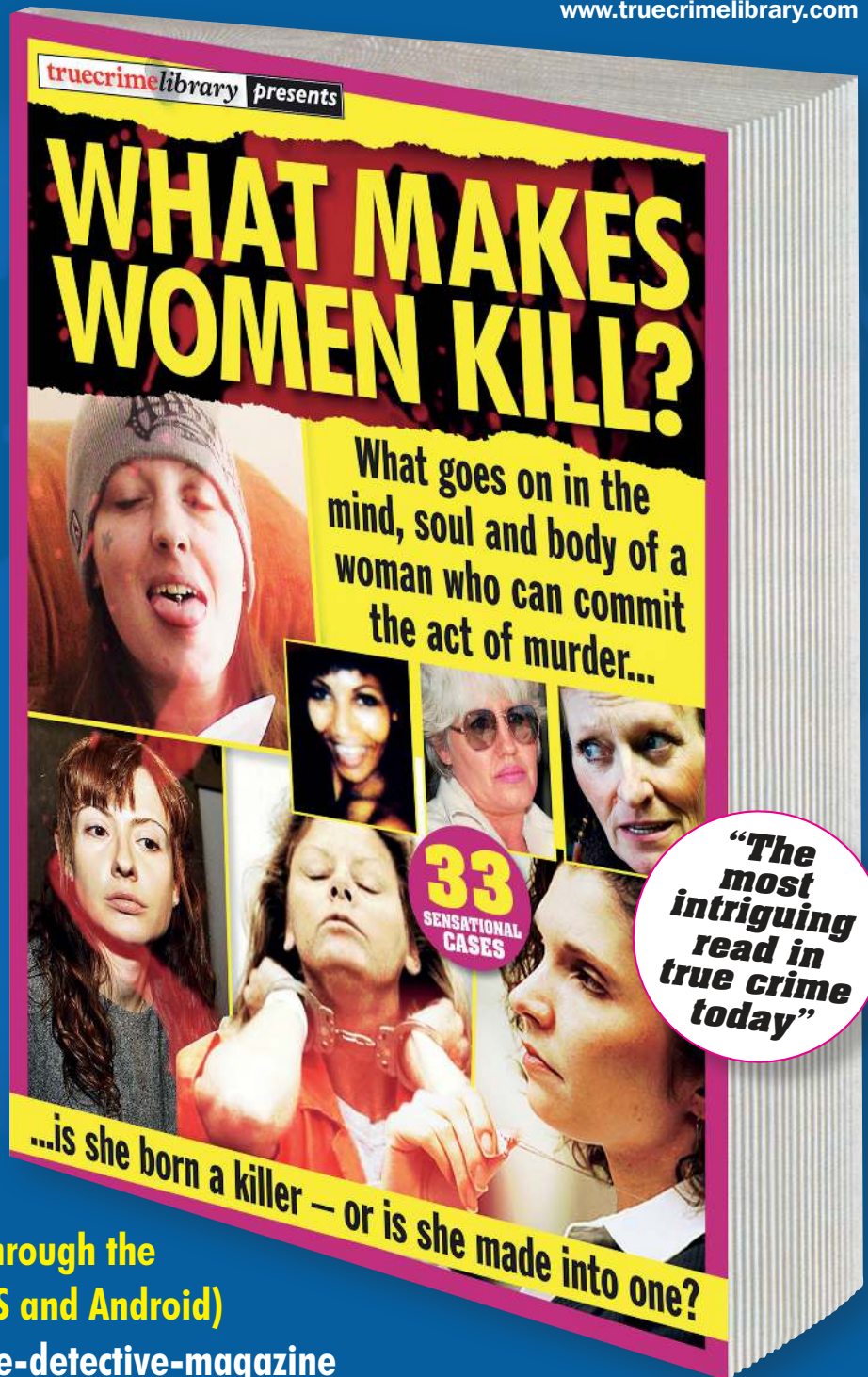
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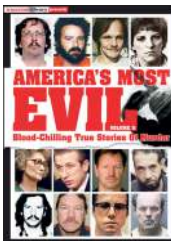
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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Discovering an interesting local murder can often lead to a new perspective on a familiar region. That was what led **R. Cresswell** from Bracknell to email us with a request. "Having read a short account of the triple-murder in Wraysbury, Berkshire, in 1911, I wonder if you have ever featured the case – and more importantly, can you shed any light on whether killer Arthur Norris's allegations against his wife were actually true?" Our brand new case report by **Matthew Spicer** brings together all the information we can find more than a century on, and as to Arthur's accusation – best you read on and make up your own mind...

DID AGATHA Christie ever go to Wraysbury? It's a good question, because she would have found a wealth of characters there, some of them involved in a double-murder that would have enchanted Hercule Poirot or Miss Marple.

You've never heard of Wraysbury? It's an up-market East Berkshire village with a population of 3,750 people living in some of the highest-priced houses outside of London.

It is equidistant from the M4, the M25 and Heathrow Airport, and it is also in the orbit of Windsor and Staines. Fast cars, jet travel and royal folk – who could ask for anything better?

A hundred years ago, when there were no motorways and no large airports, and the population of Wraysbury was fewer than a thousand,

comfortable eight-roomed house?"

Then there was Bertram's landlord. Arthur Norris, 54, had moved with his wife Mary to the village in 1907,



Above, Wraysbury. A century ago it was a quiet, idyllic village shocked to the core by the three violent deaths. The turmoil at Alexandra Villas began with Arthur Norris shooting his wife Mary (left) as their youngest daughter Florence looked on in horror



the pivotal factor in local life was the railway station, from where steam trains chugged up to Waterloo carrying the first commuters to their London offices.

It was at that railway station that Agatha Christie, if she had been hanging around, might have found Bertram Woodward. At 29 he was the station booking clerk and already wealthy beyond most working people's dreams. Agatha would certainly have put him in the frame of the weirdest folk who lived in Wraysbury.

Bertram had an impressive share portfolio worth in the region of £7,000 – and this was 1911, when a working man earned about £100 a year. So why was he working as a railway booking clerk? And why did he lodge in a single room at No. 2 Alexandra Villas in the High Street, described only as "a

He found the body of Arthur Norris in the dining-room. He had been shot through the throat and there was a lot of blood, but he was still just alive, despite the fact that part of his brain was emerging from his mouth

and described himself as a "gardener." It soon became apparent to the local folk, though, that he didn't work at all. Instead the taciturn Arthur was living off his wife's income. She was

the owner of a number of properties in nearby Windsor.

Now although we might think nothing of such a situation in 2020, in 1911 there was enough material here to turn heads, start tongues wagging, and excite the interest of an Agatha Christie. Why didn't young Bertram Woodward, who was a presentable chap, have a girlfriend, for instance?

And why did Mary Norris, who was the same age as her husband but always looked half his age, say such things about Arthur Norris, behind a raised hand, of course?

"I think he's going dotty," she confided to one acquaintance.

So the villagers put two and two together and made four, or maybe five, and decided that Bertram was having

an affair with his landlady, and that was the only reason why he stayed on at No. 2 Alexandra Villas. None of which was actually proved, but that doesn't matter, because an Agatha Christie story doesn't have to be true – it only has to seem as though it might be true.

Was Arthur Norris going dotty? Well, he certainly had a bit of dottiness about him. He had a trick of sometimes disappearing completely. "I'm sick and tired of Wraysbury. I want to get out of it," he was heard to say.

Once he told his wife that he was going off for the day to the seaside. Instead he joined the army and went off to the war in South Africa. Another time he went off without so much as a by your leave and joined the Metropolitan Police in London.

Arthur always came back to

This was a double-murder mystery worthy of Agatha Christie. A railway booking clerk worth a fortune; a gardener with a wealthy wife, and sinister goings-on in an up-market commuter village. Step up, Hercule Poirot!



Above, Florence Norris.
The 13-year-old was witness to the attack on her mother

THE TRIANGLE IN THE VILLAGE

Wraysbury, though. One of his three daughters, Florence, 13, still lived with her mum and dad in the family home. Arthur was raised in nearby Bray and his wife was from Windsor. And their eldest daughter, May, was in domestic service in London all of which information brings us to Friday, October 6th, 1911.

On that morning the Norrises received a letter from May, who was coming to visit that weekend. Sunday was to be May's 21st birthday, so there was much excitement in the house.

Around four o'clock in the afternoon Florence came home from school and read her big sister's letter enthusiastically while she was having

her tea. While she was reading Mrs. Norris took a cup of tea and a piece of cake to her father, and the same again to Bertram Woodward, the two men being in separate rooms.

When Mary Norris had been a moment or two out of the room Florence suddenly heard her give out a piercing scream. Next moment she staggered back into the kitchen, screaming with pain and clutching her chest.

"Help! Help!" she shouted, and ran out of the house. Florence, bewildered, ran after her. She followed her mother into a nearby shop. "My husband has shot me!" Mrs. Norris cried out to the shopkeeper.

At first the shopkeeper, Henry Clark, could see no obvious wound, but he did

notice smoke and burn marks on her blouse.

"I can't see..." he began, and then Mary Norris pulled open her blouse to reveal a gaping wound before collapsing into a chair.

For the next 30 minutes she was able to speak quite clearly about what had happened. Suddenly she closed her eyes, recited a prayer, and died. The time was five minutes past five.

The village policeman, Constable Thomas Tew, was first on the scene. He entered the Norrises' home through the back door, noting that the bottom panels of the door leading into the dining room were broken.

He found the body of Arthur Norris in the dining-room. He had been shot through the throat and there was a lot of blood, but he was still just alive, despite the fact that part of his brain was emerging from his mouth. There was a loaded revolver beside him, still smoking, and a bloodstained hammer on a table.

Constable Tew found the body of Bertram Woodward in the front room.

He had been struck in the throat and on the head with some sort of blunt instrument. There was no sign of a struggle and incredibly, like the other two victims, Bertram was still alive.

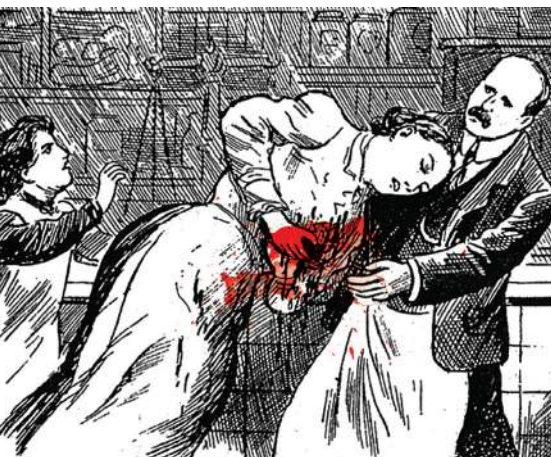


Above, Bertram Woodward

On a table in this room were three cartridge cases, one of which appeared to have misfired; there was another cartridge case lying beside him.

Constable Tew was meticulous in his

appraisal. He recorded that Norris died at 4.40 p.m. and Bertram Woodward at 4.55 p.m. Then he slipped his hand into Arthur Norris's pocket and took out a letter that had been written that day.



It read: "This man Woodward during and since my absence from Wraysbury betrayed my wife's honour. Caught and trapped at last. This has been the cause of my leaving all along and now finally settled. Good-bye all friends. - Arthur Norris."

On a table nearby was a list of family members and their addresses - clearly intended to be recipients of the letter.

So was the wealthy booking clerk really having an affair with Mrs. Norris, a married lady twice his age, every time her husband left the village he didn't like? The opportunity was certainly there, and it was supported by rumour. This was about unusual people, and Bertram Woodward was a most unusual railway booking clerk, judged on his bank balance alone.

A clue or two might have come perhaps from another lodger at No. 2 Alexandra Villas. This was John Brinkman, a 30-year-old Dutchman. He was a nurseryman and he had been living at the Norrises' for about 18 months.

"He might have survived the three gun wounds, but there was very little chance of him surviving the hammer blow," the doctor said

He told the police that outwardly the Norrises seemed a contented couple, but the night before the murders Mary Norris told him that she was frightened of her husband. Two weeks ago he had heard them arguing for the first time.

"I think he's going mad," she told Brinkman. "He thinks I'm sleeping with Bertram, which isn't true. He's also lately taken to wandering around the village at night."

Brinkman added: "I'm sure Norris has never confronted Bertram about his suspicions, and I'm fairly certain that Bertram is blissfully ignorant of the

thought his wife was having an affair with his lodger.

We are left only with the inquest on the victims for a few more scanty clues. This was held three days after the murders in the village by the coroner for South Bucks, George Charsley.

A police report informed the coroner that the broken dining-room doors were caused when Arthur Norris fell. The police also believed that Bertram had no idea that he was about to be attacked, even though Norris was holding the hammer in his right hand and the revolver in his left. This would explain why there were no signs of a struggle.

The police doctor reported that Bertram's skull was fractured and he had also been shot three times: behind the left ear, in the neck, and under the right armpit. One of his fingers was crushed when he put up his arm to deflect the blow from the hammer.

"He might have survived the three gun wounds, but there was very little

THE DAILY MIRROR

EX-SOLDIER SHOTS HIS WIFE AND LODGER.



Above, a contemporary newspaper report carried this image (right) of the shop that Mary Norris stumbled into before dying (above left). The inset images show young Florrie and Woodward, and the X marks the Norris home

rumours."

Twenty minutes before the shooting the Rev. Lewis Hakes had called and was having tea with the couple. During this pleasant interlude Norris suddenly got up and said he had some letters to write. Somewhat taken aback, and slightly embarrassed, the vicar and Mrs. Norris continued their conversation.

All these bits of information suggested that Arthur Norris had been acting strangely of late, but that of course might just have been because he

chance of him surviving the hammer blow," the doctor said.

The jury retired for 10 minutes before delivering a verdict of double-murder and suicide against Arthur Norris. They must have been a nice jury, because they also wanted to state that they did not believe Mary Norris was having an affair with Bertram Woodward.

What they meant of course was that there was no evidence of such an affair, just as there was no evidence that there wasn't such an affair. What the "Wraysbury Tragedy," as people were calling it, needed was Hercule Poirot. But this was one of those cases that supported the old saying that you can never find a policeman (or a detective) when you want one.

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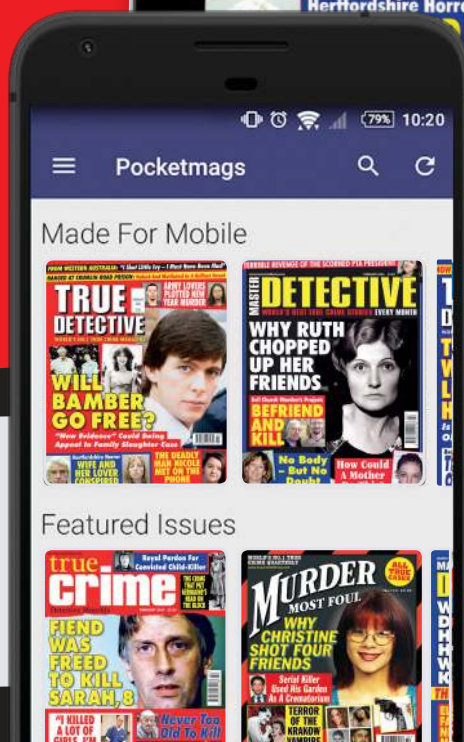
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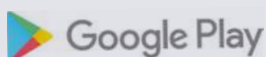
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HANGED IN AUSTRALIA

"I'm A Fiend" Said The Strangler

Arnold Sodeman seemed as puzzled as anyone at what he had become. I know it's dreadfully wrong. I'm ashamed of myself, feel, dully, that I must

WHAT MAKES for guilt in a man is a subject that has baffled philosophers, psychiatrists, and priests alike. Even physicians, as the story of that most unlikely-seeming of murderers, Arnold Sodeman, shows all too clearly.

The Australian who became notorious for his series of crimes – which he himself strove to understand with a bewildered perplexity – was a compulsive murderer. But he could have avoided that compulsion which caused him to destroy life in brutal fashion had he exerted the will to do so. That was the secret he never shared until his capture. And, by then, the sheer weight of his guilt had swept him past redemption.

For Arnold Sodeman, to enter a saloon was for him to cross a lethal deadline. It took only eight glasses of beer to turn him into a brutal multiple killer.

When sober, he was actually able to boast about the murders he had committed. "I'm a fiend," he once said, with a sense of perverted pride in his accomplishment. "There's no strangler of girls to compare with me in the history of crime in Australia." It was no idle boast.

But whether it was made by a truly sane man is open to considerable doubt. Arnold Sodeman, in the view of many people, was unquestionably a schizophrenic, a man with a split personality. Just how the split in personality was occasioned is open to doubt. But it was possible for him to change quite suddenly from a smiling oval-faced man, who outwardly seemed pleasant and friendly, into a human beast with a volcanic eruption capable of changing him emotionally into a completely different person, one destructive of human life.

Yet Arnold Sodeman was a married man, with two females in his life, whom in his own fantastic way he worshipped. They were Dorothy, his wife, and Joan,



Mena Griffiths – The 12-year-old was playing with friends in Melbourne's Fawkner Park when, after leaving the pub, Sodeman persuaded her to accompany him to an empty house. There, he strangled her

his daughter. Neither of them, however, had the remotest idea that the benign labourer who brought home his wages regularly each week when he was in employment, who was both seemingly a contented husband and a loving father, was also a man wearing a mask, and that behind the mask secretly lurked a monster.

Or, as a Melbourne alienist was to state when the story of Arnold Karl Sodeman was criminal history: "When normal control was removed, Sodeman's actions became like those of a wild beast."

A few glasses of beer removed that

control by inflaming his brain and turning him into a compulsive killer of young girls. Such was the man responsible for one of the widest and most intensive manhunts for a killer ever mounted in Australia. Detectives cursed him time after time.

"He's a damned phantom!" they claimed. They thought he was playing macabre games with them and bitterly resented the fact. But they were wrong. Arnold Sodeman was playing games with himself, but he didn't truly understand why, and consequently there were times when he lived in fear because he refused to believe he could change.

This man of split personality was born in 1900. November 9th, 1930, was the day when he became notorious for the first time as a strangler who throttled his victims with an unusual hand grip. When choking a victim with his two hands he found himself, without conscious effort, crossing his thumbs to gain maximum pressure. This choked off any air and prevented even an involuntary cry from the victim, who died staring with wide aghast gaze and utterly soundless.

This form of manual strangulation was to become Sodeman's deadly hallmark. It was feared as a terrible discovery by police operating throughout Victoria. Another Sodeman murder, more often than not, meant a further fruitless chase and hours wasted in trying to find a phantom killer.

On that bright November day when Arnold Sodeman first registered his terrible trademark, he became thirsty from the summer heat, so he went into a pub and ordered a glass of beer. He drank it and ordered another, as he had done many times before. But this time was different. Very, very different.

When he left the pub he was actually on his way home, moving in leisurely fashion because of the heat. And he was still on his way home when he turned into Melbourne's Fawkner Park, at

end," Strangler

Case recalled by
**LEONARD
GRIBBLE**

What happened to him when he drank – “I know it’s
of everything I’ve done. But at the same time: I just
do what I’m doing...”

South Yarra. Mooching his way through the park, he stopped in interested fashion to watch a group of little girls playing on a swing in a corner of the public playground. He found himself looking at one girl in particular. She seemed to interest him more than the others.

It was a Saturday, and the little girls were running about calling to each other and becoming excited with the game they were playing on the swing. The man ambled slowly towards them. He was not excited and he was not even becoming excited. He acted as though he was doing the only thing he could in the warm sunshine. All he knew with any certainty was that he wanted to talk to the girl he had singled out from among the others. She was the one attracting his attention. He felt he couldn’t take his eyes from her. He wanted to continue looking at her.

Her name was Mena Griffiths. She was 12, a bright-eyed child with a swift, intelligent smile and pleasant ways. He walked about, forcing his eyes from the group of girls. Then he turned again, watching some of the girls running from the swing and chasing one another.

Mena Griffiths was one of them. He saw that without looking directly at her. When she ran close to him, he heard himself calling to her. His own words took him by surprise, for they were uttered without conscious thought or volition: “I want you to take a message for me.” The little girl stopped running and stood observing him closely for the first time. She took a few more hesitant steps towards him. “Me?”

Her blue eyes widened as she tossed back her reddish-brown hair, cut in a



Arnold Sodeman. His unusual method of manual strangulation was to become his deadly hallmark

bob. She was dressed in a green coat and was wearing tan shoes, but wore no stockings or hat. She lived not far away in one of the cottages in Caroline Street, only a few minutes’ walk from the green expanse of Fawkner Park.

“Yes, you,” Sodeman nodded and smiled at her, his manner encouraging.

“All right,” she said.

“We’ll go together,” said the smiling

man. “But don’t tell anyone.”

Anything her parents had told Mena about not going with strangers, particularly strange men, was forgotten as the girl thought he was telling her about a game they were to play.

Sodeman would later say that he didn’t know what made him caution her not to tell anyone. The words came quite involuntarily, as though without conscious thought on his part. He heard himself say them, but was like a person listening to someone else speaking. The next thing he remembered was walking away from the centre of the park with the girl, while the other children called out to her: “Where are you going, Mena?”

The child striding beside him turned her head and called back to the others: “It’s just a message.”

Sodeman also glanced at the interested group of little girls, but he kept walking away as he heard himself calling back: “She’s coming with me. She’s all right.” He uttered a little laugh.

The girl and the man who had little idea of what he was going to do left the park and walked along Punt Road and across South Yarra to the beach at St. Kilda, which was about two miles distant. There the man bought the little girl some fish and chips, which she ate as she walked. When she finished she told him: “I must be going home now.”

The strange man, who seemed to have forgotten about the message he wanted her to deliver, replied: “I’ll take you home.”

The pair turned in their tracks and began walking back the way they had come, but they did not reach Mena’s home. The place they arrived at was an empty house in Wheatley Road, in the suburb of Ormond.

“Let’s have a look inside,” suggested Sodeman.

He was still speaking words automatically, without conscious volition, and he was to claim later that he didn’t know why he wanted to get into the empty house with the little girl, even when they crossed the threshold. They wandered through the dusty rooms and climbed the bare stairs, looking into more rooms with bare

walls and hollow-sounding wooden floors, and making it seem like a game to the laughing child. It was not until they stepped into the bathroom that impelling awareness swiftly possessed him. For Mena Griffiths, the game of pretend was over.

Sodeman heard a scream. It came from Mena’s small red mouth, which was wide, and he realised that he was

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staring into her terrified blue eyes and no more sound was coming from her mouth. Then he saw his hands.

They were gripped around the slim pale throat, the broad thumbs crossed under the lifted chin. He was aware of a feeling he had not experienced before flowing through him. It was like a great heat that did not scorch or sear, and he had a growing awareness that this was why he had come with the child to the deserted house in Wheatley Road – to experience this sensation, to feel the touch of heat that was like ice.

Then he became aware of something else. The small body under his hands had gone limp and there was no movement of breathing. That was when the heat in Sodeman died, quenched in bitter realisation of what he had done. He drew back his hands, staring at his stretched fingers. Mena Griffiths collapsed in a huddle on the bathroom floor.

Making tiny animal noises in his throat, he set to work tearing strips of material from the girl's underclothing, using them to tie her hands behind her back. Then he tied her ankles. He tore a strip of cloth from her knickers and rolled it into a tight ball, which he forced between her small teeth.

He left her lying on the bathroom floor and walked out and downstairs. Then he was into the street and away from the house that was no longer deserted.

It was while he was hurrying through the streets of Ormond on his way home that apprehension dawned in his mind like a stormy morning. He was by now aware of what he had done, but it was as though it was something he had seen enacted on a film. Somehow it did not affect him. What did reach him and bite into his numbed brain was fear. For he was suddenly aware of the consequences of discovery.

Yet he seemed normal to his wife when he reached home. He told her that he felt tired, and went to bed shortly afterwards. But if his later statement is to be believed, it was not to sleep soundly in his normal fashion. What he had done to Mena Griffiths remained like an animated vision he tried to blot from his brain, but with no success, so that his night was broken by snatches of what was really a nightmare.

He walked again beside the child he had strangled. He remounted the hollow-sounding stairs with her in the empty bouse, and he once more felt her shrink into death under his hands after the scream had died in his ears. He even saw the purple shadows on her small throat when he had removed his cruel hands.

But this time there was a difference.

It all happened in his memory, with no return of the blissful heat running through his veins like molten lava. And, without that heat, he felt himself to be in a mental hell in which he tortured himself because he could

not free himself from the clinging recollection.

He would return to that shattered memory time and again in the days that followed, and he knew why. It was born of a deeper fear than discovery. He was afraid that he might kill another young girl in the same way. It was as though he understood this by some self-induced telepathy. And the more often he became a victim to this inbred fear, the more certain he became that he would kill again sooner or later. But when?

The murdered Mena's body was found the day after she died by two boys out bird-nesting who turned aside

The Crown's lawyer took McMahon to Leeton, nearly 400 miles west of Sydney, in the outback, and there found a dozen reputable persons who could vouch for the prisoner being in that small township on Saturday, November 9th.

However, child murder is a crime that carries a lingering stain. It was not until early the following January that the innocent McMahon was finally cleared in the minds of most suspicious Australians.

January 9th, 1931, was a Friday. Early in the evening of that day, a girl of 16, wearing a green floral dress with a blue belt and a pair of beige stockings,



Where the body of 16-year-old Hazel Adeline Wilson was found, bound and gagged, by her brother

to explore the empty house. The police arrived, but they drew a blank in their search and left the house without a clue to the killer's identity. Some weeks later, a man six years older than Sodeman was arrested in Sydney and charged with Mena Griffiths' murder.

He was Robert James McMahon, who strenuously denied ever having seen the young victim. But his protests were met by stiff blank faces careful to express no reaction to his plea of innocence.

Taken to Melbourne Police headquarters, he was put into an identity parade. A married woman from the suburb of Brighton and another from Glenhuntly both picked him out as a man they had seen on a bus near Fawkner Park on the fatal Saturday. An engineer who lived in South Yarra also picked him out as being on the same bus.

The police consequently showed their scepticism of McMahon's claim to have been in Leeton, New South Wales, on the day of the murder. At a formal hearing, he was duly committed for trial. It is possible that a grave miscarriage of justice might have occurred had not the Crown Prosecutor himself, C.H. Book, a man with an open mind and strong opinions, decided to give the almost-demented prisoner the benefit of a niggling doubt worming through his own mind, and had McMahon released in his personal custody.

set off happily from her home in Melton Road, Ormond, on her way to a dance. She was to meet a schoolfriend, who would go to the dance with her. But she did not keep her date. Instead, Hazel Adeline Wilson met a man who had been drinking when she turned along a footpath at Oakleigh Road.

Before she was aware of it, the man grabbed her and dragged her to a nearby field and onto an allotment, which was deserted at the time. He clutched her by the throat and crossed his thumbs. Then he stared at the sky as a wonderful warmth pervaded his whole being. The warmth lasted until the body he was gripping went limp and its weight dragged at his arms as it sagged. He tied one of her stockings tightly round her throat, stuffed the other into her mouth and kept it in place with a torn strip of cloth from her knickers, which he knotted behind her head. Another piece was drawn tight and knotted around her ankles, and her slender wrists were drawn together with her blue belt behind her back.

It was Frank Wilson, her married brother, who found his sister's body shortly after noon the next day.

The police again encountered no helpful clue, although they rounded up every known criminal in the files at Melbourne Police headquarters. More than 100 men were questioned, but they all produced alibis. By the time these were checked, Arnold Sodeman had left

Melbourne and was employed in a new job in the country area of Gippsland, where he remained deepening a fresh suntan and making new friends for four years.

During this time, he learned how to overcome the terrible fear that had returned to live with him like a second self after the strangling of Hazel Wilson. In fact, for most of those four years, he managed to live at peace with himself.

He never mentioned his past at home, and although his wife knew that he had two convictions for misdemeanours, she carefully did not probe. She was a woman content to let the past bury itself and with it Harry Phillips, the name under which – 11 years before – Sodeman had gone to prison for three years after an armed hold-up at Melbourne's Surrey Hills railway station, from which he made his getaway after shooting the stationmaster in the side and in one hand. Sent to the prison on French Island, he had escaped, only to be sentenced to a further year after recapture. Most of this violent activity was a secret in his past. It would remain one until 1936.

By then, two more girls had been killed by the mysterious strangler, who had almost been forgotten in the years following Hazel Wilson's murder. But the murders of both Mena Griffiths and Hazel were vividly recalled during January, 1935. It was on New Year's Day that a pretty girl the same age as Mena Griffiths, with long fair hair, unaccountably vanished.

Her name was Ethel Belshaw. On the day she vanished, the killer who had been careful in his drinking habits for four demanding years suddenly relaxed them in the summertime heat, his mind freed of fear of the consequences he had come to recognise.

He joined a picnic group at Inverloch, in the Gippsland Hills, where about 8,000 other picnickers congregated for the New Year's Day holiday. Ethel Belshaw, from nearby Tarwin Meadows, was in the party with Sodeman. On that day, her fair hair was in plaits that reached down to her waist, and she wore a white knee-length dress with a blue belt, stockings, and light brown shoes with buckles.

It was 4.30 p.m. when Ethel and a younger companion, Margaret Knight, aged 8, bought some ice-cream in a shop. The older girl was served first and left without waiting for her companion. When Margaret stepped out of the shop with her ice-cream, she stood looking around for Ethel.

But Ethel was gone.

In the time it took young Margaret Knight to buy her ice-cream, Arnold Sodeman reverted to his former role of strangler. He spoke to Ethel and induced her to walk away with him towards the nearby Inverloch-Leongatha road, which ran towards the beach of Anderson's Inlet, some 80 miles south of Melbourne. In some scrub concealed



The site where Ethel Belshaw's body was found near Inverloch, in the Gippsland Hills

by tea-trees on the beach side of the road, but some 300 yards beyond it, he suddenly whirled upon the girl and grabbed her by the throat in his cruel crossed-thumbs grip.

For trusting Ethel Belshaw, it was Nemesis in the sun on that blazing hot New Year's Day under a cloudless sky.

As she lay crumpled and doll-like in death, he removed her stockings, knotted one around her neck, and thrust the other into her young mouth. He tied her hands behind her back with a length of ribbon from one of her plaits, and left her face downwards in the grass he had trampled under the tea-trees.

Then he vanished.

The discovery of Ethel's body the next day resulted in police from Melbourne, who had been under public attack for failure to capture the strangler, descending on Gippsland with tracker dogs. The intensive local inquiry that followed resulted in nearly 20,000 people being questioned by dedicated police officers anxious to detect a flaw in anyone's story. And Arnold Sodeman was one of those swept up in this police dragnet and questioned.

The man in charge of the investigation was Superintendent Jeremiah O'Keefe. He was satisfied with Sodeman's explanation of his movements on New Year's Day, but not with the story told him by Gordon Herbert Knights, 18, another member of the party that had included both the murdered girl and Sodeman.

The irony of this mistake was that Sodeman's name was added to a list of potential witnesses who might testify against Knights, who was arrested and charged with murder. However, the case against him was so weak that he had to be released. The investigation dragged on for months, with frustrated detectives unable to make real progress for lack of

information and clues.

Nearly another year passed, and then the whole investigation again went into top gear, with the newspapers clamouring for effective police action.



Ethel Belshaw

Again it was summer Down Under, and Sodeman was working with a crew at a Victorian Country Roads Board construction camp at Dumbalk, about 15 miles from Leongatha, where he lived with his family in Blair Street.

December 1st, 1935, was a Sunday. Sodeman rode his bicycle into Leongatha and met Thomas Mitchell, whom he knew, and both men decided to slake their thirsts. He didn't leave Mitchell until after 6 o'clock, when he rode home. Three-quarters of an hour later, about 7 o'clock, he again left home, saying that he was going to the construction camp to get ready for an early-morning start on the Monday before the day became too hot.

Minutes later, he was riding slowly down Roughhead Street when he saw a little girl whom he knew well. She was June Rushmer, six years old, and a friend of his own daughter Joan, who was about the same age. He slowed to a halt.

"Hallo, June," he said.

"Hallo, Mr. Sodeman," said June, turning with a smile. "Will you give me a ride?"

That was when Sodeman felt a return of that strange feeling of being outside himself and watching what he did while being powerless to control his actions. He helped the little girl onto the crossbar in front of him, pushed away from the kerb, and pedalled towards McPherson Lane, about half a mile away. There were tea-trees in the lane. He stopped pedalling when he reached their shelter.

Little June Rushmer's life was snuffed out like a candle's flame under the pressure of that crossed-thumbs grip, and afterwards the compulsive killer of children tore a strip from her white summer dress and with it tied her hands behind her back. He pushed her knickers into her mouth, leaving most of them covering the child's face like a protruding mask. The superfluous gag was held in place with June's belt, which was drawn round her head and tied at the back. Other strips from the white

dress secured her legs. A string of beads was left round her neck. As a decoration they could not hide the large bruises on the pale flesh left by the brutal hands that had no mercy.

Following the discovery of the body, detectives working on the case found traces of cycle tyre treads, but these were too indistinct to be helpful. They questioned people who had seen a man riding a bicycle, accompanied by a little girl on the crossbar.

Sodeman was at the construction camp some nights later, apparently relaxing, yet trying to quell his returned fear, when one of the other men turned to him and remarked in a joking manner, after a discussion of the murder and the newspaper reports: "By the way, Arnold, I saw you riding your bicycle down McPherson Lane that Sunday."

Had Sodeman been able to accept the banter without losing his temper he might have remained secure until another child died at his terrible hands. Instead, he jumped to his feet, trembling and spilling tea from the mug he held in his hand. His mates looked at him in surprise as he shouted: "No, you bloody well didn't! I wasn't anywhere near there, I tell you!"

He hurled his mug with the remains of his tea to the ground and strode off to his tent, clearly unable to contain his



June Rushmer

sudden anger. His workmates glanced at one another, frankly perturbed by this wild and unexpected reaction. It seemed totally out of character for a man who was normally placid. Most of them shrugged.

One of them muttered: "What the hell's up with Arnold?"

But another of that crew slept little that night. He spent most of his waking hours pondering the possible inferences that could be drawn from Arnold Sodeman's strange behaviour. He was the man who had joked about seeing Sodeman in McPherson Lane.

The next day, he went to the police. Arnold Sodeman was taken completely by surprise when they called and began asking questions, but he made the effort to brazen it out with a ramshackle story of his movements on the Sunday of the murder. The police took down his answers and left. Some hours later, however, they were back with more questions. When they left this time, Sodeman went with them.

News of his arrest quickly spread and a mob collected outside the police station where he was being held. He sat hunched up, listening to rough and angry voices shouting: "Lynch him! String him up!"

To save him from the mob, he was smuggled out through a back door and rushed to Melbourne in a police car.

The turmoil had been too much for him. He wanted pity. So he confessed. He related how he picked up June Rushmer when she asked him for a ride and started off down what he called the stock route. He went on:

"About a hundred yards from the corner she said, 'This is far enough. We'll go back.' I got off my bike and said, 'You can walk home.' I made a run towards her and she ran into the bush. I ran after her and caught her round the neck. She began to scream. I held her by the neck, and she went limp all of sudden. I took her bloomers off and

THE WORLD'S WORST KILLERS

Gwendolyn Graham and Cathy Wood

"THE LETHAL LOVERS"

• United States

THE TWO women met at the Alpine Manor nursing home in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1986. Gwendolyn Graham, 23 (right), was a nursing assistant and Cathy Wood, 24 (below), was her supervisor, and the two soon became lovers. The sexual asphyxia games they used to heighten their pleasure soon led to Gwen suggesting murder as the next step in their thrill-seeking.

After several attempts, in January 1987 the first killing took place. Cathy stood on look-out as Gwen smothered a woman suffering from Alzheimer's disease, using a face-cloth. No autopsy was performed for

what appeared to be a natural death.

Emboldened by their luck, the women continued killing and in the following months five more Alpine Manor patients, aged 65 to 97, died. The women would make love after claiming another victim and played a ghoulish game, choosing victims so their initials spelled out the word murder. Gwen kept souvenirs of the victims which she displayed, and both bragged about the killings. The couple split when Gwen demanded Cathy kill to prove her love, and years passed before Cathy's confession to her ex-husband reached the police.

At the trial in December 1989, Cathy plea-bargained and received a reduced sentence for one count of second-degree murder. Gwen was found guilty of five counts of murder and the court gave her five life sentences with no chance of parole.



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jammed them into her mouth. I got her belt from her frock and tied it over her mouth and round the back of her neck. I tore off a strip from her dress, tied her hands behind her back, and left her lying face downwards. I left her there, got on my bike, and went off. I can't say why I did this to June Rushmer. I realised I had done a dreadful act and I went round to Mr. Pigdon's house afterwards to try to show that I was away from the scene."

With the confession signed, he looked at the faces which were watching him with loathing, then said quietly: "This isn't the only one. There are three others."

Superintendent O'Keefe, who was present said shrewdly: "Now you're just bragging: How do we know you've killed others?"

Sodeman was suddenly a man wanting others to believe him. He named his three previous victims, adding: "I killed them like this." Before the superintendent was aware of his intention, he was out of his seat and locking his hands round O'Keefe's throat, with thumbs crossed to exert maximum pressure.

The detectives trooped out to commence a good deal of work that would be necessary before the self-confessed strangler could be brought to trial.

Dorothy Sodeman, appalled by the news of her husband's arrest, refused to visit him in Melbourne. Instead, she wrote him a letter. In reply, he wrote to her:

"Dear Doll,

"I have confessed my mania and will pay for my sin. Please don't make any effort to obtain counsel for me as I will plead guilty. I want you to put all the money available to your own and Joan's use. May God be always with you and forgive the harm I have done.

"P.S. Love to Joan."

The police were not entirely convinced that the confessed murderer was not a weak-willed character who had murdered June Rushmer after reading about the other stranglings and now wished to gain notoriety for all the crimes. Such inflated crimes by weak-minded publicity-seekers are known to most police forces, and O'Keefe was aware that such characters have to be proven multiple killers. His problem was to check these claims made by Sodeman.

The police took out their dusty file on Mena Griffiths and again went over the story with the prisoner. He told detectives: "I bought her food before I killed her. We went towards Chapel Street and got a tram, went down to the shops near the St. Kilda Esplanade. I bought her some loquats."

That claim registered with O'Keefe because the contents of the dead girl's stomach, which had been analysed, had not been made public.

"Anything else?" he asked.

"Some fish and chips." Sodeman looked up and added: "I think I could show you the shop I took her to before I went with her to Ormond."

He took a group of Melbourne detectives to St. Kilda, went straight to the fish-and-chip shop, then continued by bus to Ormond railway station, and on to McKinnon and Wheatley Roads. His claims were proved, but not his motive.



Sodeman's post-mortem provided a fascinating twist

A clue to this was provided when, some time later, he confided a curious fact to Detective Fred Delmonico.

"I've been haunted for years," he said, "by knowing that after a few glasses of beer I couldn't control an urge to strangle girls."

He was asked how many glasses.

"I begin to get that feeling after two glasses," he replied. "And the more I drink the more the feeling grows."

In effect, what he was saying was that it had taken only eight glasses of beer to turn him into the killer of four girls.

He became obsessed with the desire to talk about his guilt. He told another

Melbourne detective. "I know it's criminal. I know it's dreadfully wrong. I'm ashamed of everything I've done. But at the same time: I just feel, dully, that I must do what I'm doing."

It was this knowledge of the compulsion he felt after drinking a couple of glasses of beer that seemed to him to excuse his guilt. In some ambivalent fashion his brain had two images of his guilt, just as he had developed more than one personality. Alcohol facilitated his transference from the quiet-mannered labourer to the compulsive, but selective, killer whose violence was directed against young girls. He strangled them and had some fetish about tying up their bodies with their own clothing before he left them lying face down. But in no instance did he commit rape.

The case against him was almost completed when Dr. Charles Anthony Taylor, the Victorian Government analyst, put the following on record:

"When Mena Griffiths was murdered, the government pathologist, Dr. Crawford Mollison, sent me the contents of her stomach. I checked for poisons. None was present. Not a trace of any. I told Dr. Mollison that her stomach had been normal and that the main contents were French-fried potato chips, loquats, cherries, and a small amount of fish."

A surgeon told the police that he suspected Sodeman was suffering from leptomeningitis. Only a post-mortem would tell.

The trial was little more than a tragic formality. A prison diet and no alcohol had left the prisoner as sane as any person at the hearing. The verdict was never in doubt. On the day he heard himself declared guilty and sentenced to death, Sodeman was a wooden-faced man who took little interest in his surroundings. The day fixed for his execution was the Australian mid-winter date of June 1st, 1936. The killer whose crimes had been committed in summer months, when he felt thirsty from the heat and bought some glasses of beer, walked firmly to the gallows at Pentridge Prison, Melbourne.

The report of the surgeon who undertook the formal post-mortem described finding "a chronic inflammation of the sheets of tissue covering the brain." In a word, leptomeningitis. The condition of the hanged man's brain pointed to the disease having been of long standing. There was no longer doubt that a mere two glasses of beer would start the inflammation that would turn a kindly family man into a homicidal maniac until an outburst of violence relieved the mania and allowed a return to normality.

But why young girls?

That was a question neither the surgeons nor the psychiatrists could answer with certainty. The secret had lain dormant in some of the cells of an inflamed brain, and Arnold Karl Sodeman's brain no longer functioned.

John Gilmour • 1894 LOVER WAS OLD ENOUGH TO BE HIS MOTHER

WHEN JANE Gardner became pregnant it was the talk of the district. She was 45, the daughter of an elderly farmer...and single. Who could be the father? There was no shortage of guesses, but none got within a mile of the culprit. For John Gilmour, the son of another County Antrim farmer, was only 20.

He lived near Dervock with his parents, who had ensured that he had a good education with a view to his entering one of the professions. They were unaware that since he was 17 he had been having an on-off affair with Jane Gardner, who lived only 600 yards away at her parents' farm at Ballyhivestock.

Neither she nor young John Gilmour had marriage in mind – their age-gap put it virtually out of the question. They just enjoyed having sex...until 1893, when Jane found she was pregnant.

Her 78-year-old father, Lyle Gardner, was furious, fearing a great scandal. But Gilmour had some breathing-space as Jane said she would not name the child's father until the birth.

Like most people in the district, Gilmour's parents doubtless enjoyed the gossip...until April 16th, 1894, when the baby arrived and Jane named the Gilmours' son as the father. The two farming families had previously been on the best of terms, but now the air became thick with accusations and counter-accusations.

The full implications of his situation didn't come home to John Gilmour until Lyle Gardner began talking of legal action. Furthermore, at that time it was by no means unheard of for the police to "suggest" that young men marry their pregnant girl friends.

The constabulary were seen as moral guardians as well as law-enforcers. If they became involved, Gilmour realised, they could bring pressure to bear.

Marriage to a woman 25 years his senior was the last thing he wanted. Jane was already middle-aged. She would be elderly while he was still comparatively young. Yet if Lyle Gardner approached the police, and they exerted their influence, Gilmour realised that he might be coerced into making Jane his wife. He must do something to avert this before it was too late.

Over the weekend of April 28th–29th he brooded and drank whisky. By the Monday he had more or less decided what he would do to avoid being railroaded into an impossible marriage or being pilloried in court as a heartless seducer. He went to Ballymoney, only three miles from Dervock, and bought a gun.

He concealed it in a long box wrapped in brown paper which he deposited at an inn on his way home, returning to pick up his "parcel" at 7 o'clock that evening. Then he went to the Gardners' farm.

What happened next was described by Jane's stepmother Mary Gardner when Gilmour appeared before magistrates at Dervock courthouse the following day.

Mary told the court that at about 8.30 p.m. she, her husband Lyle and their servant John Rodgers were in the farm's kitchen, sitting round the fire. On looking up she saw a man's face at the window. "Who's that?" she cried.

Rodgers went to the window while she and her husband went outside, Mary going one way, he the other, to discover



THE CULPRIT.



THE SCENE OF THE MURDER.

Contemporary prints from the *North Antrim Standard*

who had been peering into the kitchen. They found John Gilmour, who said to Mary: "This is a nice charge you are laying against me."

She testified that she replied that she had nothing to do with it. Lyle Gardner came up and accused Gilmour of being the father of Jane's baby. Gilmour replied that he would let him know that the child had more fathers than one.

The Gardners returned to their kitchen and as 9 o'clock approached, Mr. Gardner began to undress in front of the fire prior to going to bed.

His wife told the court that she then heard the report of a gun, two panes of the kitchen window shattered and her husband cried out that he'd been shot. With Jane's assistance she helped him to bed, and Rodgers was sent to fetch the doctor who arrived within 30 minutes. But Lyle Gardner died about an hour after the shooting.

Charged with the farmer's murder,

Gilmour was remanded in custody to await trial at County Antrim Assizes held at the County Courthouse, Belfast, where he appeared on July 18th, 1894, before Mr. Justice Gibson.

Outlining the case for the prosecution, the Attorney-General, Mr. T. MacDermott QC, told the jury that Lyle Gardner had been a popular farmer who had no enemies. But as Jane's father he was the only person who in law could bring an action for seduction against the man who had seduced his daughter.

That man was John Gilmour, the father of Jane Gardner's illegitimate child, and the attorney-general said that it was evidently with the possibility of legal action against him in mind that he went to the Gardners' farm on the night of the shooting. He didn't want his own name brought into disrepute, regardless of whatever discredit he brought upon

HANGED AT CRUMLIN ROAD PRISON

Part 3

others.

After Lyle Gardner died, his stomach perforated with shot, the police had gone to Gilmour's home, where they found him in bed but not asleep. As Sergeant Slattery was bringing him downstairs a powder-horn containing gunpowder dropped from Gilmour's pocket. Gilmour said it was his, and that he had bought it in Dervock.

When the sergeant arrested him, and charged him with murder, Gilmour incriminated himself by saying: "I was in the house of a man named Wilson at 9 o'clock."

This the attorney-general picked up on, asking why Gilmour had hit on 9 o'clock in trying to establish an alibi when the sergeant hadn't mentioned the time of the murder?

The police learned that on the day of the shooting Gilmour had bought shot in Dervock, and in Ballymoney purchased a new gun for 24 shillings, together with a flask of powder and some more shot.

Why did he buy a gun when his father had a loaded gun at their home? Because the safest way to commit a crime, said the attorney-general, was to use a new gun of a common make so that nobody could say, "That's your property."

Repeating her earlier account of the shooting, Mary Gardner went on to tell the court that Gilmour had earlier asked



Sowing flax on an Antrim farm. Both the Gardners and Gilmours were farmers



Lyle Gardner's remains lie in a churchyard at Derrykeighan, two miles from Dervock. The headstone was erected in 1932 in memory of his son

her husband if he intended to bring him to Ballymena Quarter Sessions.

Jane Gardner was then called to give evidence and testified that John Gilmour was the father of her child. She said that about six months before the birth he asked her if she might marry, and she had told him that no one would now have her. She emphasised she had not had sex with Gilmour in her home. Their meetings had all been outside.

Hugh Hammill, a Ballymoney gun-dealer, identified a weapon produced in court as the gun he had sold to Gilmour on the day of the murder. He also identified the powder-flask he had sold to Gilmour. It bore the dealer's own private mark.

"Did you ask him what he wanted the gun for?" asked the judge.

"No, but as he was talking of shooting crows I understood it was for that purpose."

Constable Francis Maguire testified that he found the gun behind bushes at the rear of the Gardners' farm in a search made on May 22nd.

Samuel Wilson, a labourer, confirmed that Gilmour called at his home at about 9 o'clock on the night of the shooting. Wilson's wife and James Donnegan, a tailor, had also been present, and Gilmour stayed for about an hour and a half, appearing to be his usual self.

Sergeant John Slattery testified that at the time of his arrest Gilmour admitted being at the Gardners' farm at 8.30 on the night of the murder, saying he had then gone on to visit Samuel Wilson.

Dr. Peter Carmac, who had been called to the Gardners' farm after the shooting, said 40 pellets had been extracted from the body during a post-mortem examination.

Opening the case for the defence, Mr. T. L. O'Shaughnessy QC challenged the prosecution's claim that Gilmour had a motive for killing Lyle Gardner. The defence counsel asked the jury if they could believe that Gilmour would commit murder just because Gardner might bring "a twopenny-ha'penny action for seduction" against him.

Mr. O'Shaughnessy also pointed out that Gilmour had shown no sign of excitement when he arrived at Samuel Wilson's home, although it was alleged that he had run there to establish an alibi after committing a murder.

Sara Nicholl, of Ballydivitty, told the court that she had been at a well near Samuel Wilson's house when she saw Gilmour arrive and go inside. When he went in she heard the report of a gun from the direction of the Gardners' farm. But cross-examined by the attorney-general, she said that she had worked for the Gilmours since the murder. She had not spoken of seeing

John Gilmour at Samuel Wilson's until about a week ago when she mentioned it to Gilmour's brother.

"When you heard that your neighbour's son was arrested," said the judge, "and you knew something which would clear him, why did you not go and say what you are now swearing?"

"Oh, the neighbours were all alike to me," she replied.

On the trial's second day Mr. McNerney QC, defending, reminded the jury that Gilmour had not attempted to conceal his purchase of the gun. He had arrived at Samuel Wilson's home at about the time the shot was fired. Therefore it could not have been him who fired the shot. The prosecution had claimed that he had run three-quarters of a mile to get there within minutes of committing the crime, but he had shown no sign of this when he arrived.

Turning to Sara Nicholl's testimony, Mr. McNerney repudiated the suspicion that she had been paid a price for perjury. She was the wife of an honest farmer, he said, and her evidence was direct proof positive, whereas the Crown's case was surmise.

The defence counsel said that Sergeant Slattery had disclosed the time of the shooting before Gilmour said where he had been at 9 o'clock. And if Gilmour had committed the murder and hidden the gun, why had he not also concealed the powder and shot? And if he'd had murder in mind, would

he have shot Gardner within minutes of being observed at the scene by three witnesses?

For the prosecution, the attorney-general asked the jury to consider why Gilmour had not told his father he was buying a gun. And having bought it, why hadn't he taken it home?

Summing-up, Mr. Justice Gibson told the jury that the Crown's case was one of circumstantial evidence, of motive, conduct and a deadly weapon. Each in itself was sufficient to secure a conviction, and when put together they made it almost impossible to resist the conclusion of guilt.

After deliberating for an hour and a half the jury returned to convict John Gilmour of murder, coupling their verdict with a recommendation for mercy.

Sentenced to death, with his execution set for August 17th, Gilmour was placed in the condemned cell at Belfast's Crumlin Road Prison, still maintaining he was innocent. His parents petitioned

unsuccessfully for a reprieve, and an hour before his execution he made a full confession. He said that he had not intended to kill Lyle Gardner: he had intended only to frighten him off bringing a prosecution.

His execution was the third to take place

within the prison instead of outside in public view. It was carried out by the hangman Thomas Scott. Like his fellow-Yorkshireman, the executioner James Berry, Scott took particular care of the rope which travelled with him.

It was about 10 feet long, made of Italian silk, and he claimed that together with his expertise it ensured that his prisoners' deaths were instantaneous and they felt no pain.

At the inquest which followed the execution, however, the prison's medical officer would only say that Gilmour's death had been "almost instantaneous."

"How long would you say he breathed after the drop?" asked a juror.

"It is impossible to say accurately."

"A minute?"

"It is possible."

"Three minutes?"

"I could not swear to the immediate moment."

"You don't think it would be more than three minutes?"

"I do not."

So the boasting hangman from Yorkshire had got it all wrong even with his 10 feet of silk.



Linen weavers outside an Antrim farmhouse

William Woods • 1901 **BRIDGET'S HEAD WAS SEVERED FROM HER BODY**

THE SIXTH man to be executed on the scaffold at the Crumlin Road Jail was a double-killer whose whole career-path had been heading in that direction.

In 1890 William Woods, then 47, had gone on a drinking spree with Mary Irwin, with whom he had been living for some years. In Claudy, County Derry, the pair were arrested for being drunk and disorderly, detained at the village police station and then released at midnight.

The next morning Mary Irwin's corpse was found tied to a cartwheel. She had been mutilated with a scythe, which had also been used to cut her throat. Despite the ferocity of the attack, Woods was convicted only of manslaughter, after the court heard



The home of Bridget McGivern in the hamlet of Eagry, as depicted in the North Antrim Standard

evidence of provocation.

Woods's record was then read out, revealing that he had more than 30 convictions for assault, including an attack on a magistrate. Sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment, he announced: "It doesn't bother me. I've already been to prison 159 times!"

On his release nine years later he went to live at Bushmills, a few miles from the scene of the murder that had led John Gilmour to the gallows.

Scratching a meagre living as a pedlar, Woods went to the general store in Bushmills on September 25th, 1900, and bought a razor which he told the shopkeeper he would sell on to a man in the country. The shopkeeper knew that Woods himself did not shave and had never bought a razor at the shop before.

That evening he called on Bridget McGivern, a middle-aged widow who lived in the nearby hamlet of Eagry with her two sons, John aged two and Chas, 14. Their home was a wooden hut rented for one shilling a week, and Mrs. McGivern was reduced to living on charity, and what little she could

earn from knitting. Woods wanted to marry her, but she was loath to change her religion: she was a Catholic, he a Protestant.

Arriving with a bottle of whisky, Woods swiftly made himself at home and the two sat drinking. He stayed the night, repaying Mrs. McGivern for her hospitality the following morning by slitting her throat.

Shortly afterwards he walked into Bushmills police station and announced, "I have just killed a woman." Pointing to blood on his trousers, he said, "We were both drunk," as if that explained everything.

At Mrs. McGivern's hut Sergeant Walker found that her throat had been cut so savagely that her head lay back, practically severed from the trunk. It seemed that four people had been living in one room which served as both the living-room and bedroom in which most of the furniture was broken.

Mrs. McGivern was covered with a blanket but was otherwise naked apart from a few shreds of her nightdress. Her corpse lay on a bed which was saturated with blood. Seven empty whisky bottles stood on the bedside table.

Woods was remanded in custody when he appeared before a magistrate later that

day. He was in court again on October 3rd, when the victim's 14-year-old son recalled the night of his mother's murder.

"We had tea," he said, "and after that Woods produced a noggin of whisky, took some, and gave a half-one to my mother. Some time afterwards he took another half-pint of whisky from his

pocket and made my mother take more.

"I then went to bed, and about five minutes afterwards my mother got into the same bed. She was perfectly sober. Woods afterwards took off his big coat and boots and threw himself down on another bed in the room. I was not able to sleep, as I was afraid of Woods when he was drunk.

"Some time afterwards he got up and twice offered my mother a pipe, which she refused. My mother then fell asleep, and in a short time I also fell asleep.

"I awoke at daylight and missed my mother from beside me in bed. I got up and took the blind off the window. I then went over to the bed which Woods

had used and saw my mother on it. I spoke to her but she did not answer. I put my hand on her and found that she was warm. I saw the blood on her breast and head.

"I ran to the door, but it was hasped on the outside. I pulled it open and alarmed the neighbours. I heard no cry during the night."

The boy added

that Woods had been wearing a muffler which had been found draped across the wound in the victim's throat.

On November 17th a constable found Woods's razor in a derelict house on the road to the police station, and on December 9th the 58-year-old pedlar appeared before Mr. Justice Madden at Ulster Assizes, charged with Bridget McGivern's murder. He pleaded guilty, his counsel telling the jury that the murder had not been premeditated but had been committed in a fit of homicidal mania.

The prosecution countered that there was no evidence to support that contention, and in his summing-up the judge agreed.

He said that nothing in Woods's history suggested mental aberration. Half an hour after retiring the jury returned to find William Woods guilty, and he was sentenced to death.

"Oh, it's not as bad as a bad marriage," he said as he left the dock.

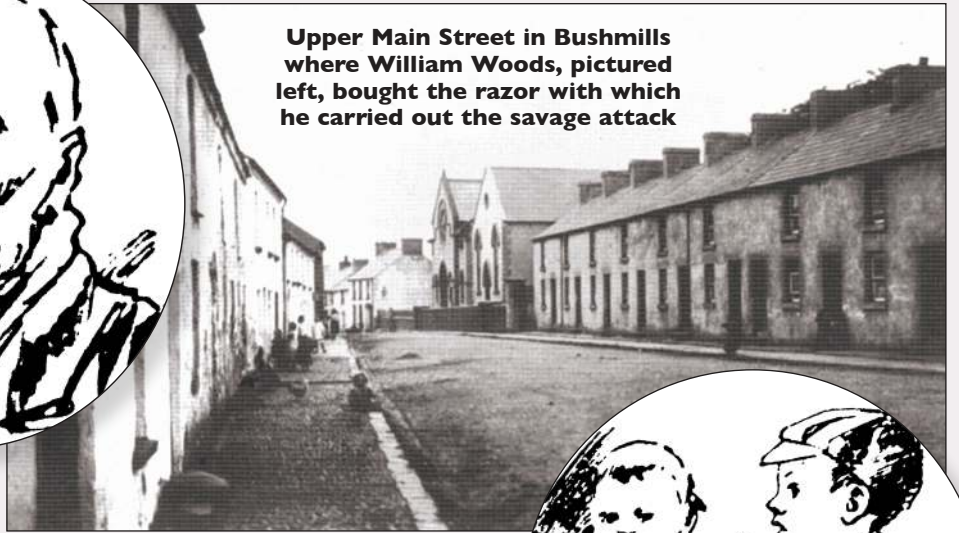
His carefree callousness began to evaporate, however, as he awaited execution.

Shortly after his arrest, as he was being taken from Bushmills to Portrush Prison, he had joked with his guards, glorying in his criminal past and asking: "Do you think I'll go to heaven or hell?"

But at Crumlin Road Prison he took to prayer and was heard sobbing. And as he stepped onto the scaffold on January 11th, 1901, to be hanged by Thomas Scott, he was in tears and was praying aloud.



Upper Main Street in Bushmills where William Woods, pictured left, bought the razor with which he carried out the savage attack



Left, the coroner presides over the inquest and above, two-year-old John McGivern and his elder brother Chas at the inquest



The police barracks at Bushmills (left), and Sergeant Walker recalling to the court the ghastly discovery he made



Horror In Texas

TEENAGERS WERE KIDNAPPED, GANG-RAPED AND MURDERED

FOURTEEN-YEAR-old Jennifer Ertman and her friend Elizabeth Peña, 16, had been everything that parents could hope for. Virtuous, dependable and loving, they distanced themselves from the problems that plagued urban high schools – gangs, drugs and wild behaviour.

So the fate the pair suffered in the early summer of 1993 left Houston shocked and horrified. In the sprawling city that had seen 506 murders in one year, residents were outraged by the nightmare that began to unfold that hot night of June 23rd.

The two girls were attending a friend's pool party when they suddenly realised that it was 11.15 p.m., and they both had 11.30 curfews.

Knowing that it would be difficult for them to make their deadline, they decided to do something they had never done before. They decided to take a short cut down the railway that ran alongside woods lying between the apartment where they were partying and Elizabeth's home in Lamonte – less than a mile away – where they planned to spend the night.

They assured their friends they would be fine as they left the poolside gathering.

Early the next morning, when the girls' parents awakened to find that their daughters had not come home, they began to search for them. The first thing they did was to try to contact the girls on their electronic pagers, but Elizabeth and Jennifer didn't answer.

The families phoned the teenagers' friends to see if Elizabeth and Jennifer had spent the night with them, but no one had seen them since the previous evening.

That afternoon, having exhausted all possible sources in their hunt, both families filed missing-person reports with the Houston Police.

Jennifer's relatives described her as "sensitive, modest, compassionate and child-like." Her mother said that the Jennifer, when last seen, had been wearing baggy jeans, purple high tops

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS 2

Reader **Anna Gibson** wrote in to request a disturbing tale of double-murder from the US. "Could you do a story on the murder of Jennifer Ertman and Elizabeth Peña, who were attacked in Texas by a group of boys?" she asked. We certainly can, Anna. The cold-blooded slaying of teenage schoolfriends Jennifer and Elizabeth at the hands of gang members shocked Houston – a city accustomed to more than its fair share of violence – back in 1993. For all our readers here's our case report by **Bill G. Cox**



Teenage victims Jennifer Ertman (left) and Elizabeth Peña took a short cut home on the night they were murdered

and a shirt her father had bought her for graduation from middle school.

Jennifer had insisted on wearing a large amount of jewellery, which included two gold chains, several rings and a Goofy watch.

Elizabeth, who was taller than Jennifer, was wearing similar clothing.

The families had posters printed bearing photos of the girls, their descriptions, and an offer of \$10,000 reward for information leading to their discovery.

Residents who lived in the

neighbourhood where Jennifer and Elizabeth had left the swimming party were especially concerned on learning that the teenagers had decided to take a short cut to reach home. They were well aware of activities in the wooded area bordering the railway. It was a gathering-place for hell-raising gangs.

One resident said, "You hear shooting over there all the time. A woman was raped in those woods a couple of months ago."

At 7.30 a.m. on Monday, four days after the pair's disappearance, one of

the girls' fathers phoned the police with a new report. He said that over the weekend several youngsters had told him that they thought they had seen the girls being pulled into a red Dodge Shadow.

Detectives jotted down the information, planning to question the witnesses and check out the spot where the reported abduction had occurred.

But at about 12.30 p.m. an emergency operator received a phone call from a man who identified himself only as "Gonzalez." He gave a detailed description of where the bodies of two girls could be found. The caller specified the White Oak Bayou area, where railway tracks passed some woods near a bridge.

When officers arrived at the scene they found the nude, badly decomposing remains of two young girls lying among tall pines about 100 feet from the bridge. Clothing and other items scattered around made a trail towards the apartment building where the girls had left the party on the Thursday night.

Detectives realised that the bodies' advanced state of decomposition would make positive identification difficult, but they believed that the remains were those of Elizabeth and Jennifer. The torn clothing matched the apparel the missing girls were said to have worn, but there was no sign of the jewellery that Jennifer had been wearing.

It appeared that the girls had been grabbed as they walked along the railway, and had then been pulled into the woods. Their clothing was ripped off and they had been sexually assaulted.

Officers surmised that the bodies might have been found sooner except for weekend rains that had diminished the usual pedestrian traffic along the path the girls had taken.

Randy Ertman, Jennifer's father, was talking to a TV news crew about his missing daughter when the report was received that the bodies of two girls had been found. He persuaded the crew to give him a lift to the site. Upon reaching it, he was restrained by police from entering the crime area. They wanted to spare him the horror of the grisly scene.

Talking to the media, Lieutenant John Silva said, "I think it was purely a crime of opportunity. These girls happened along, and they were in the wrong place at the wrong time."

As the investigation began, the detectives got an immediate break. The origin of all emergency calls was automatically recorded on the operator's screen. So the police had the address from where the mysterious "Gonzalez" had phoned with the bodies' location.

Detectives went there and found 21-year-old Raphael Melendez. He admitted that he was the tipster who had given the false name "Gonzalez."

He said he had made the call because he thought the victims should be found to give solace to their frantic families. He emphasised that he had not been involved in the murders, but he knew who had committed them.



Four members of the cold-blooded Black 'n' White Gang: Clockwise, from top left, Sean Derrick O'Brien, Jose Ernesto Medellin, Raul Omar Villarreal and Efrain Perez



Melendez identified one killer as a relative. He said this youngster and two others had come to his home on the night of the slayings. Their cold-blooded bragging about the crime had disgusted and sickened him and his young wife. He told the detectives that his wife had fled from the room in tears; she had once been the victim of a gang rape.

"It was purely a crime of opportunity. These girls happened along, and they were in the wrong place at the wrong time"

His wife's emotional state and his own response to the bragging had prompted him to notify the police – even though this put the finger on a relative.

He identified the suspects as members of a gang to which he had once belonged. He had left, he said, because of the "cockiness" and growing violence of the group, which he named "The Black 'n' White Gang." The name came from the hues of the clothing they wore, Melendez said, giving the investigators

addresses where the gang members could be found.

Through Monday night and in the early hours of Tuesday, the detectives working the case spent the hours tracking down the suspects, picking them up and questioning them.

Later that Tuesday, capital murder charges were filed against Peter Anthony Cantu, Sean Derrick O'Brien, Efrain Perez, Raul Omar Villarreal, and Jose Ernesto Medellin. Cantu, O'Brien, and Medellin were 18, the others were 17. Also charged in the case as a juvenile was the 14-year-old brother of one of the suspects.

Police said all the gang had given signed statements and had bragged in their jail cells about the rapes and killings.

They had gathered at the railway bridge to initiate two new members when the victims happened to walk by on their way home.

One detective told reporters that the girls were forced to submit to "just about every sex act you can imagine, and a few you just couldn't imagine" before they were strangled and stomped to death.

It was disclosed that after they were strangled with a belt and shoelaces and had stopped moving, their killers took

turns jumping up and down on their bodies to make sure they were dead.

But before the gang's trial got under way, the youngest of the suspects, the 14-year-old, pleaded guilty to participating in the sexual attack on one of the girls. He was not involved in the murders. On September 30th, 1993, he was sentenced to the maximum term possible – 40 years.

It was indicated that he would testify against the other defendants, and after the hearing the boy's attorney released a short statement from his client: "I'm very sorry for what happened. I wish I could go back and do something to help the girls. I lie awake every night and wish I had fought the others, even my brother, to protect them."

In January 1994, Peter Anthony Cantu, reputedly the gang leader who had ordered the killing after the rapes, went on trial. He said the gang had met at the railway bridge and drank beer for several hours. It was a meeting to initiate two new members, each of whom was required to fight the other gang members. The five-minute fights were to prove that the new member was worthy of membership.

Raul Omar Villarreal, one of the initiates, was the first to begin the round of physical combat. He performed well, the witness recalled, but he was knocked unconscious by his fourth opponent.

But Villarreal was given membership, and the gang members were celebrating with him when they spotted two people walking towards them down the railway.

At first, according to accounts of other witnesses present, Peter Cantu thought the taller of the approaching pair was a man. He decided to fight the "man" because he was frustrated that Villarreal had been knocked out before he had a chance at him. But when Cantu moved towards the approaching couple he and the other gang members realised they were girls.

Two youths who were already leaving the gang, because as one said later, "the members were all hyper and drunk, getting out of control," passed by the girls and, as they did, they saw one member of the gang accost the victims.

"Joe Medellin grabbed one of the girls, the tall girl," one of the youths testified. "She was screaming to the other girl. She was saying, 'Help me, Jennifer!'"

According to the witness, Jennifer was already farther down the tracks and past the gang and could have run to safety. But she ran back to help her friend. Cantu grabbed Jennifer by the wrist and dragged her down the railway embankment.

Minutes later, he forced her to undergo the first in a long series of sex acts. Elizabeth Peña, meanwhile, was stripped nearby and assaulted by two gang members.

The juvenile said he stood between the two screaming girls and asked his brother to stop, only to be ignored. He made the same request to Cantu, who



Gang leader Peter Cantu in court during his January 1994 trial. Inset, the killer's arrest mug-shot

answered several times, "Get some!"

The youth said he thought his brother and Cantu were the only ones who might listen to his pleas. He asked Cantu to stop a third time, but he finally yielded to Cantu's demands and had sex with Jennifer Ertman.

The juvenile testified that he then watched as the four youths who had been performing sex acts on Elizabeth Peña turned their attention to Jennifer.

At this point, he said, Cantu spoke to him in low tones, saying, "We're going to have to kill them."

Under questioning by Prosecutor Don Smyth, the witness told how the gang led both girls to the wooded area a short distance away. The juvenile's older brother told him to stay back because he was "too small to watch."

But though he remained where he was, he saw Villarreal and Sean Derrick O'Brien force Jennifer Ertman to her knees, sit down on either side of her, and loop a belt around her neck. She was gagging and clawing at the belt as the men strangled her.

The youth testified that Elizabeth Peña was killed in a similar fashion, apparently with shoelaces, in the trees beyond his field of vision.

Raphael Melendez's wife sobbed as she described the arrival of three gang members at her home that night. She said they were Jose Medellin, Efrain Perez and Raul Villarreal, and they all had blood on their clothing.

"I asked them what happened," she told the court. "Medellin and Perez said, 'We had a lot of fun,' like it was a big joke."

The gang members later told her of "meeting two bitches and having a lot

of fun with them." When Peter Cantu arrived later, the four began dividing about \$40 in cash and rings and necklaces stolen from the victims.

The witness recalled that Medellin boasted that he had "virgin blood" on his shorts.

When Raphael Melendez took to the witness-stand he told the jurors that he was so full of disgust, upon learning that his relative Peter Cantu had directed the executions of the two girls after a night of mass rape, that he phoned the police.

Speaking quietly, he testified that the gang was formed in 1988. He described

Jennifer was farther down the tracks and past the gang and could have run to safety. She ran back to help her friend

them as a small group of friends who socialised but until recently had not been engaged in any serious crime.

But all that changed, Melendez said, when Cantu became the "self-appointed" leader.

He told the jury that his relationship with Cantu had become "poor" by June 1993, and he only "now and then" accompanied the gang on their outings. But the gang still used the Melendez home as their social centre.

The witness said that when three of the members entered his house on the night of June 23rd, 1993, they looked as if they had been in a fight. He asked what had happened, and someone replied, "You'll hear about it on the

news.”

Melendez said he asked who got killed, and Medellin answered, “A couple of chicks.” When he pressed for more information, Villarreal and Perez admitted raping the girls. Medellin griped about the trouble they had in killing one of them, saying, “It would’ve been easier with a gun.”

Perez had been bitten by one girl during the assaults and the attackers all “got a big laugh out of that,” Melendez said.

Perhaps the most harrowing part of the trial came during testimony from pathologists. The advanced deterioration of both bodies prevented the experts from determining how they were strangled, although they confirmed that strangulation was the cause of death.

Whether the victims were raped could not be confirmed by the autopsies either.

But it was established that Elizabeth Peña’s front teeth had been knocked out while she was still alive, and three of Jennifer Ertman’s ribs were broken after she died. It was believed that the blows had been inflicted with Cantu’s steel-toed work boots, and Cantu himself admitted this in his confession.

He said he ripped a gold chain from Jennifer Ertman’s neck as she was being forced to perform sex acts.

“We were taking turns having sex with them,” he testified.

One of the prosecutors suggested that pairs of gang members moved from girl to girl “like a pack of dogs feeding on their prey.”

Cantu said the victims were led into the woods after the rapes, and Medellin started strangling Elizabeth Peña with his hands while Villarreal and O’Brien used a red belt to strangle Jennifer Ertman. The belt was later recovered from O’Brien’s home.

“Efrain started helping Jose strangle the brunette [Elizabeth],” Cantu stated. “That’s when I kicked her once in the face. When she dropped to her back we checked for a pulse.”

When they found that her heart was still beating Cantu stood on her throat with his left foot, then O’Brien did the same, the confession said.

“We did this to make sure they were dead,” Cantu stated. “We didn’t want to be identified.”

After an hour’s deliberation, the jury found Peter Cantu guilty of capital murder. He sighed and smiled faintly, as if in resignation.

The same jury would decide whether he would be given life in prison or the death penalty. The state called 42 witnesses to describe his violence from an early age, to prove that he would be a continuing threat to society if allowed to live.

From 11 to 13, he was uncontrollable, a series of witnesses told the jury. He assaulted a schoolteacher and had a habit of shouting obscenities and threats at anyone who got in his way.

A school principal and a school

security guard testified that in 1989 and 1990 Cantu became so enraged that he threatened to kill them. Another student told how Cantu deliberately bumped into him, tried to pick a fight, pulled a knife and cut his shirt. Cantu got four years’ probation for the offence.

The jury deliberated for four hours before deciding on Cantu’s fate. They recommended death by injection.

Before formally sentencing him, the judge asked if Cantu had anything to say.

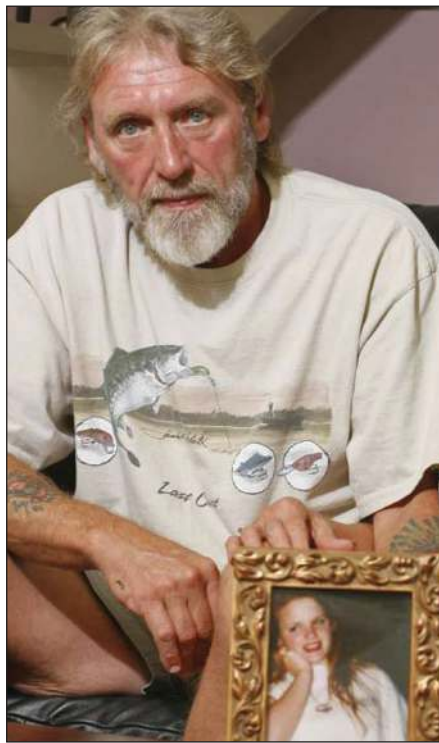
“Nah,” he replied.

The judge then permitted the father of one of the victims to address the convicted killer.

“Look at me,” the father raged. “My cat kills something to eat it. You’re not even an animal. You’re the worst thing I’ve ever seen.”

Cantu jammed his hands in his pocket and seemed to scoff.

Meanwhile, with the trial of Sean Derrick O’Brien set to begin on April



Randy Ertman with a photo of his tragic daughter Jennifer

4th, 1994, investigators came up with a startling new development.

Several days before O’Brien was to come to trial, detectives confronted him with information linking him, Cantu and Medellin to the rape and murder of 27-year-old Patricia Lopez on January 4th, 1993. O’Brien was told that tests showed the DNA in Medellin’s blood sample matched that of the semen on Patricia Lopez’s body. They added that they had reason to believe O’Brien and Cantu were involved with Medellin in the murder.

The police confrontation jarred O’Brien into talking. According to the detectives, Patricia Lopez ran out of petrol and was looking for help when Medellin, Cantu and O’Brien found her and offered her fuel money in exchange

for beer.

O’Brien bragged that he would kill her if she could not arouse him. She was found in a Houston park with her throat and abdomen slashed open, her clothing ripped off and scattered about. A beer can found beneath her body bore O’Brien’s fingerprints.

In his statement O’Brien admitted he was present when Cantu and Medellin killed Patricia Lopez after they had what he claimed was consensual sex with her.

Instead of filing a new murder charge against O’Brien, prosecutors decided to use the evidence in the Patricia Lopez case to persuade the jury to recommend the death penalty.

Derrick O’Brien was convicted of capital murder, and then came the Patricia Lopez story during the punishment phase of his trial, the jury recommending his execution.

The remaining defendants, Raul Villarreal, Jose Medellin and Efrain Perez, were subsequently found guilty of capital murder and sentenced to death.

O’Brien was 31 by the time of his execution on July 11th, 2006. Medellin was put to death on August 5th, 2008, aged 33, and Cantu’s execution duly took place as scheduled on August 17th, 2010, despite protests from anti-death-penalty supporters.

At a debate outside a Houston high school on the evening of Cantu’s execution Randy Ertman, the father of victim Jennifer, told a reporter: “They should have hanged Cantu from the trees outside city hall. I don’t mean this in a gruesome way, but if they want to make the death penalty a deterrent, up in front of City Hall they’ve got all these beautiful trees. They should have hung them. If they hanged all five of the gang, that would have been a deterrent. We’re looking forward to Peter Cantu being executed so he can never murder or hurt anybody again.”

Cantu was 35 when he was given a lethal injection at Huntsville Prison. He had spent longer on Death Row than his victims were alive.

He was classified as one of the best-behaved inmates, and was said by his appeals lawyer to have “matured remarkably – he’s a guy who fully accepts his responsibility.”

The lives of Villarreal and Perez were spared when the US Supreme Court barred the execution of convicts who were under 18 at the time of their crimes. They are now serving a minimum of 40 years.

Randy Ertman, who died of lung cancer, aged 61, in 2014, became a combative advocate for crime victims’ rights and helped bring about changes in state law, allowing victims’ families to direct comments to convicted offenders in the courtroom and permitting relatives of murder victims to witness executions.

Memorials to his daughter Jennifer and her fellow-victim Elizabeth Peña remain at Waltrip High School and TC Jester Park, Houston.

SYDNEY'S SHOCKING CONTRACT KILLING CASE

HAISSAM SAFETLI, 45, and Christopher Chafic Estephan, 19, waited nervously outside the \$4 million home in Cremorne, Sydney. It was September 3rd, 2009.

"Get a bottle of Jim Beam," Safetli said, or something similar. He handed over the cash to his teenage driver. "I need

**Case report by
Donald Carne**

something to steady my nerves."

Ten minutes later, the sheepish Estephan returned from the bottle shop. "They wouldn't let me have it," he said. "I don't have any ID on me."

"Oh, for goodness' sake!" Safetli exclaimed, or something stronger. "I'll do it myself." He went to the store but returned in time for the task ahead of him.

At 6.25 p.m., Mick McGurk, 45, arrived home with his eight-year-old son, Luc, and some takeaway food. As he stepped out of his Mercedes S-class executive saloon, Safetli, the Crown believes, walked up to him and shot him in the head – a single shot.

Luc ran into the house screaming. Kimberley, Mick's wife and mother to his four children aged eight to 12, ran out to find her husband close to death on the ground. He died soon afterwards.

The hapless killers, meanwhile, raced away in their getaway car – almost having an accident – and were caught on CCTV crossing Sydney Harbour Bridge without paying the toll.

At 8.03 p.m., Senad Kaminic, 42, the driver to Fortunato "Lucky" Gattellari, 60, received a text from Safetli's brother. It said: "Job's done."

Glasgow-born Michael McGurk had come a long way from the Gorbals, where he was born Mick Rushford and raised by



Above, Ron Medich is led away in handcuffs after his trial at NSW Supreme Court. Inset left, murdered Mick McGurk. Background image: Sydney Harbour

his grandmother, to the expensive Cremorne home in Sydney's north-east.

Mick had learned to look out for himself and his route to the top was splattered with activity that raised eyebrows. It included the creation and disposal of 28 companies in the 16 years since Mick hit the streets of Australia in 1993.

Within days, it was revealed that a tape existed of Mick trying to extort money from Ron Medich, 61, a former business associate, who Mick said looked to corrupt government planning decisions.

The allegation led to two inquiries that found no evidence of corruption but did highlight the unstable relationship between Mick and Ron, a self-made multi-millionaire property developer.

In August 2010, as the police

investigation closed in, Kimberley McGurk, Mick's distraught widow, received a visitor to her home – a thick-set middle-aged man in a bad wig. "Do the right thing and pay your husband's debts," he said. "You know what you need to do."

She was scared.

In the first week of October 2010, police made four arrests. Calabrian-born "Lucky" Gattellari, a former Australian featherweight boxing champion, was charged with soliciting Mick's murder. Haissam Safetli and Christopher Estephan were charged with the murder and Senad Kaminic, a former Bosnian soldier, was charged with being an accessory before and after the fact.

"Lucky" and Ron Medich had been mates since childhood. They drank together daily, visited massage parlours, developed intrigues and business plans. Between September 2009 and October 2010, Ron issued business loans to

“Lucky” of up to \$16 million through the web of companies he controlled.

On October 27th, 2010, Medich was arrested and charged with soliciting the murder of Mick McGurk. His erstwhile mate agreed to give evidence against him when Ron declined to pay “Lucky”’s legal fees.

In April 2013, “Lucky” Gattellari was sentenced by Justice Megan Latham to 10 years’ imprisonment, including 60 per cent remission, for his role in the affair. Senad Kaminic, his driver, was given four years.

In the same month, Justice Geoffrey Bellew sentenced Chris Estephan, the getaway driver, to six years. Haissam Safetli, who the Crown believed pulled the trigger, was also sentenced to six years plus a further six months for threatening Kimberley McGurk.

For six years, Ron Medich used his vast wealth – estimated at \$107 million that included a \$37 million Bel Air-style mansion on Wolseley Road that overlooked Sydney Harbour – to raise legal challenges of increasing complexity that delayed the trial.

During this period, Ron’s high-profile philanthropic wife Odetta, 50, mother of two of his children, left him. She moved to the French Riviera to pursue her interests in the arts and to live in a pink stucco villa. Once a member of Australia’s Venice Biennale committee, she may have considered Ron’s arrest as contrary to her best interests.

Meanwhile, Ron took his girlfriend on a \$33,000 holiday to the Hayman Island luxury resort and bought a \$5 million penthouse at Milsons Point.

During this period, onlookers were astonished at the details of the property mogul’s personal spending – where lunch regularly clocked in at around \$700.

“Haven’t you ever considered eating in, Mr. Medich, cooking a steak, having a salad?” asked Crown Prosecutor Gina O’Rourke.

Ron said he couldn’t cook so was forced to eat out.

When all his attempts to stall the case were exhausted, Medich, a Queenslander and father of six, was first tried for Mick McGurk’s murder before New South Wales Supreme Court in January 2017. The jury of seven men and five women failed to reach a verdict after deliberating for 13 days. They were discharged in April 2017.

A retrial began in January 2018. It presented much the same evidence. The court was told that Mick McGurk had once been Ron Medich’s right-hand man but the two had fallen out, filed lawsuits against one another and claimed each owed the other millions of dollars.

“Lucky” Gattellari, a former Qantas steward, told the court that Ron Medich was embarrassed by Mick McGurk. He said he had been made “a laughing stock



Above, police at the murder scene at Cremorne, Sydney. Left, Fortunato “Lucky” Gattellari in a bullet-proof vest

in the eastern suburbs.” As his drinking buddy, “Lucky” had been badgered to find someone “to take care of the guy.” “Lucky” had asked if he was sure – once committed, there was no

turning back.

“I am sure. I want him done,” Medich replied.

Senad Kaminic told the court that he overheard Medich talking about Mick McGurk. “If I had a gun I would kill him,” he’d said.

When it was over, “Lucky” asked Ron, “Are you happy now?”

“The offender treated the life of Mr. McGurk as being of no value at all – something he could simply dispose of”

“It’s taken long enough, and look at the s–t it’s caused,” Ron replied.

Even then, it wasn’t over. When it became clear that Kimberley McGurk had no intention of dropping the lawsuits her husband had started, Ron was enraged. “McGurk is causing me more problems dead than alive,” he told a business associate, Matthew Crockett.

The defence attacked the credibility of the witnesses. Winston Terracini SC described “Lucky” Gattellari as “scum” and “a rip-off merchant.” “Lucky” told lies so often, he said, how could you believe anything he said?

He pointed to a charge that “Lucky” had tried to extort money from Ron Medich even when he was on remand, offering to change his evidence to meet Ron’s needs – for a fee of course.

The Crown admitted it – “Lucky” was never going to be “Australian of the Year” they said, but he was exactly the kind of man you would want to arrange a murder

and intimidation and that’s what he did – he was a fixer.

The jury of 11 men agreed. They found Ron Medich guilty of Mick McGurk’s murder – and the intimidation of Mick’s wife, Kimberley – in April 2018, after they had deliberated for five days. The sole woman on the jury had been excused for health reasons.

Medich, who had been out on bail, was dressed in a suit. He looked shocked as the verdicts were read – and even more surprised when he was handcuffed and led away by an officer in a cloth-peaked cap.

During the sentencing phase, Crown prosecutor Sharon Harris said: “Medich wanted to put an end to what he perceived as embarrassment and he didn’t care how McGurk was to be killed.”

Medich’s lawyer Winston Terracini argued against a life sentence on the grounds of parity – “Lucky” had been given a sentence of 25 years, reduced to 10 as he turned witness for the prosecution. “There is no question Medich has to be seen as the instigator, but that does not equate to a life sentence,” he said.

In sentencing Medich to 39 years with a minimum of 30 years, Justice Geoffrey Bellew told the court, “I am satisfied that by the early part of 2009, the decline of the relationship between the offender and Mr. McGurk had led the offender to form a deep-seated hatred and provided him with a motive to have him killed. I am satisfied the offender paid in the vicinity of \$500,000 to have Mr. McGurk killed.”

“The offender treated the life of Mr. McGurk as being of no value at all – something he could simply dispose of when he thought it was in his way,” Judge Bellew said. He paused before adding, “Directing and financing the killing of another human being is a fundamentally abhorrent and heinous crime.”

The Crown had asked for a life sentence. The judge had shied away from that, citing the parity principle – but giving a minimum sentence of 30 years to a 70-year-old must amount to much the same thing.

BLAME IT ON THE P

THE STRANGE story of a Kent murder that would make British criminal history began with a knock on a door – the back door of 54-year-old Bensley Cyrus Lawrence, who lived in Mercer Street, Tunbridge Wells.

He was an engine-minder and timekeeper at the Baltic Saw Mills timber yard near his home, and at 9.40 p.m. on Friday, July 20th, 1888, he and his wife Maria were in their sitting-room when an unexpected knock on their door startled them. Lawrence went to answer it.

Wondering who could be calling at that time of night, Maria cocked an ear and heard a youth say, “Mr. Potter wants you at The Cypress.”

Stephen Potter was the timber yard’s manager, and Mrs. Lawrence knew he would never ask one of his men to meet him in a pub. “Mr. Potter cannot want you there,” she called out to her husband. “The Cypress is a beer-house.”

The youth at the door then said that Mr. Potter wanted Lawrence at the office. “Now I understand you,” Lawrence replied, and as he came in to put his boots on his wife remarked to him, “What a queer message.” He then rejoined the youth at the back door and left the house with him.

The two were later seen standing outside the timber yard’s office at the street corner. Lawrence was looking up and down Goods Station Road as if he was expecting someone to come.

When he hadn’t returned by 10.30, Maria sent their 16-year-old son Bertie out to find him and see if anything was wrong. He found his father standing outside the office with a youth. “Go back and get some matches for me to light the gas in the office,” his father told him, and Bertie did so.

After completing the errand Bertie went to bed, only to be roused shortly afterwards by the sound of a shot. His mother heard it too. She rushed out of the house and saw her husband being supported in the street by a woman passer-by. He had been shot in the head, had lost consciousness, and was carried home and then taken to hospital, where he died the next morning.

“He was unable to make any statement,” the *Kent & Sussex Courier* reported. “The bullet entered the left temple and had penetrated about six inches, almost from ear to ear. As the skin was scorched and blackened, it is evident that the shot was fired close to the face, and as the murderer was last seen standing in close conversation with his victim, it is evident that Lawrence must have been taken by surprise. He was a stoutish-built man, and in a struggle could easily have grappled with his assailant, who is described by those who saw him as a much younger man, although they can give no definite



Kent’s Baltic Saw Mills murder is depicted in a “penny dreadful.” Had such publications influenced the “not very bright” killers?

description of him as he was standing sideways, and in going to the house he appeared to have kept in the dark as much as possible.

“It is supposed that immediately after the murder he must have made his way through the timber yard and got rapidly off. It was thought that the pistol might have been dropped there, but though a careful search was made, it was not found.”

Leading the investigation, Superintendent John Embery was frustrated by an almost complete lack of clues – the victim had no known enemies and nothing had been stolen at the yard. There was no response to the offer of a £100 reward for information leading to the killer’s arrest, and it seemed unlikely

that the case would ever be solved.

The police found two young boys, however, who had been playing in the yard on the evening of the shooting. The boys said they hid behind a stack of timber when two young men came into the yard. One of the men was shorter than the other, and the boys heard him tell his companion: “Now is your time. Be careful what you are at. I’ll stop here.” The taller man then left and the boys crept out of the yard and went home.

Other witnesses confirmed what Bertie had seen, and one passer-by recalled hearing Bensley Lawrence ask the youth at his side, “Where’s Mr. Potter? Where’s he got to?”

The police quickly established that Stephen Potter had not sent a message

PENNY DREADFULS

A case that echoes today's violence on film and television

and had known nothing of the affair. He was so shocked on being told of it that he fainted.

Although the murder made headlines, outraging the town's residents, within a month it was eclipsed by Jack the Ripper's Whitechapel slayings in London. Then in September the editor of the *Tunbridge Wells Advertiser* received an intriguing letter.

Signed "Another Whitechapel Murderer," it began: "Sir – Two months having now passed, I venture to ask you to be kind enough to allow me a small space in your valuable paper for a few facts concerning the death of the late Mr. Lawrence.

"In the first place I beg to state that

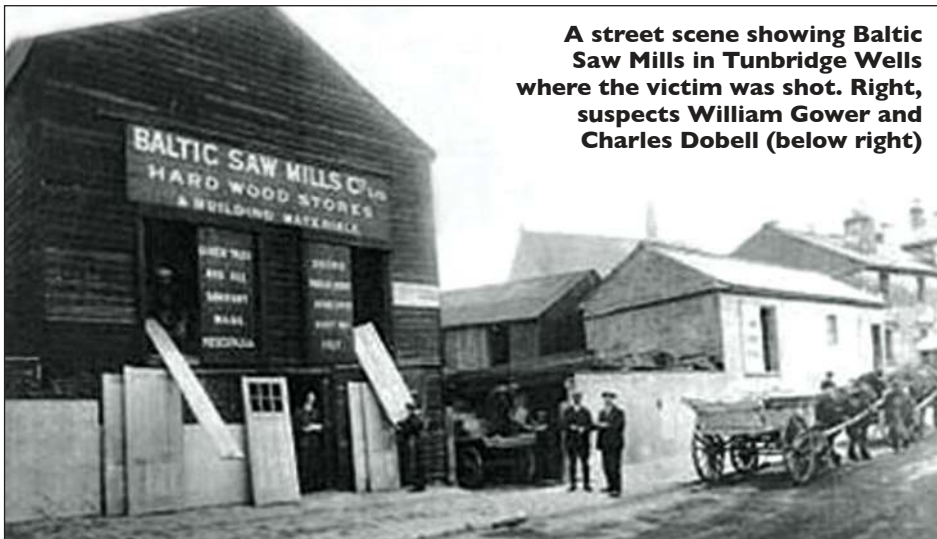
The police did not think the letter was a hoax, and a local boy told them that on September 27th it was handed to him in Mount Pleasant Hill by a youth who asked him to take it to the newspaper's office. The boy said he didn't know the youth, but he would recognise him if he

"We were at the bottom of the Tunbridge Wells murder... Yes, me and my mate did it. We tossed up as to who should do it, and the lot fell to him"

he replied, "There has been something bad done in Tunbridge Wells and me and my mate were at the bottom of it. We've been two bad characters."

Captain Cotterell sighed. He'd heard many confessions, and he thought Gower was about to admit drunkenness and maybe petty theft. He was totally unprepared for the jaw-dropping revelation that came moments later.

"We were at the bottom of the Tunbridge Wells murder on July 20th,"



A street scene showing Baltic Saw Mills in Tunbridge Wells where the victim was shot. Right, suspects William Gower and Charles Dobell (below right)

all the evidence given at the inquest and afterwards as [sic] been utterly false, with the exception of the two lads in the timber. I beg to correct the wrong statement that Mrs. Lawrence gave, for I, the murderer, did not summons [sic] him from his house at all, as it was outside the backdoor when I first spoke to him, or my intention was to have shot him on the spot.

"Lawrence was very talkative when he was out of doors, little thinking of the death he had so shortly got to die. The last words he spoke when in my company was when he caught sight of the pistol sticking out of my pocket. He said, 'What do you carry them there sort of things about with you for?' My answer was, 'To shoot down dogs and curs like you.' 'What, would you shoot a –?' Bang! and once more Tunbridge Wells was startled by another mystery [sic] which is never likely to be found out..."

saw him again.

On October 11th, a fortnight after the letter was delivered, two youths joined the congregation at a prayer meeting conducted by Captain Cotterell in the town's Salvation Army hall. When the worshippers were invited to step forward to confess their sins, the two youths were the only ones who responded. They were 18-year-old William Gower, a sawmill moulder, and Charles Dobell, a 17-year-old unemployed plumber.

Captain Cotterell noticed that Gower seemed troubled and uneasy, and the next day the youth called to see him. Asked if he had achieved salvation the previous night, Gower replied, "No, but my mate did. I have come to get saved this morning."

He then prayed with the captain for a while, but still seemed troubled, and Cotterell asked what was on his mind. For a minute or two Gower was silent. Then



Gower announced. "Yes, me and my mate did it. We tossed up as to who should do it, and the lot fell to him."

Asked why the deed was done, Gower said Lawrence was "a master's man" and had shopped him for bad time-keeping. "One of us fetched him out, told him he was wanted, and when the road was clear my mate shot him."

"Are you not sorry for what you have done?" asked Captain Cotterell, wondering if this was a true confession or just an adolescent's bravado.

"Well, sometimes," Gower replied. "But sometimes we feel that if he (Lawrence) was to rise again, we would do it again."

Then he wrote a note to Dobell: "My dear mate, The Holy Ghost entered your heart last night. God only knows I wish it had mine. There seems to be something I could not give up. I went to the Captain this morning and had an hour with him and confessed all. He wants to see us both tonight, so please come down to my home at 6 o'clock. I have not said anything to my mother yet."

At the sawmill later that morning, Gower was surprised to see Superintendent Embury arrive with Mr. Potter and Captain Cotterell. "Well, I thought you would have waited till tonight," he said as he shook hands with the captain, who had wasted no time in going to the police.

Having cautioned Gower, the superintendent said: "I have been told that you and Dobell drew lots as to which should shoot Lawrence, and Dobell had

to do it."

"That's right. It is quite true," Gower admitted.

"Why, Dobell never worked for us," Mr. Potter interjected. "What grudge could he have had against Lawrence?"

"He is a mate of mine and true as steel," Gower replied.

He was then searched and a key was found in one of his pockets. It was for an outhouse where he kept rabbits and his revolver, he said, and a further police search soon produced the pistol.

When Dobell was arrested that evening, he protested: "I know nothing about the murder. I am quite innocent of it." But when he learned that Gower was in custody and had confessed, he admitted his own involvement.

It was he, he said, who had gone to Lawrence's home. "My intention was to have shot him on the spot, but I heard

someone in the passage. A good many people have wondered how it was that Lawrence was on the timber side of the yard. I coaxed him across, telling him we should be able the better to see Mr. Potter coming down the road."

"Gower has said that you fired the shot," said the superintendent.

"You are right," Dobell replied. "You have got the murderer."

It transpired that on no fewer than 27 occasions Bensley Lawrence had reported Gower for lateness, and each time a penny had been docked from Gower's wages. He had been interviewed early in the investigation, his statement being marked "satisfactory" as he was able to prove that he was at home in bed at the time of the shooting.

He and Dobell were now both charged with murder, and as they awaited trial Gower was visited in prison by Captain Cotterell's Salvation Army colleague, Major Mary Ann Ridsdell.

Asked whose was the revolver, he told her, "It is mine. That is the worst of it. I bought it, Dobell agreeing to pay half of it, but he never did."

"Do you want to see it again?" the major asked.

"I wish it was at the bottom of the sea," Gower replied.

"Did you buy it for the purpose of killing people?"

"No, only for the purpose of a spree. I wanted to be like other young men – others possess such things. Dobell threatened to kill Lawrence, but I never thought he would do it."

Whereas today teenagers' violence is blamed on the influence of films and TV, back in 1888 Major Ridsdell believed that what Gower and Dobell read in "penny-dreadfuls" had prompted them to ape their criminal heroes. She said the pair were "not very bright," and she feared that such publications would print their pictures, along with a sensational description of the crime.

The youths now admitted responsibility for a string of local crimes, including burglary, robbery and arson. In Superintendent Embury's view they were "hardened criminals," but Dobell said he'd like to become a Salvation Army preacher if he were reprieved.

When their two-day trial began at Kent Assizes on December 13th, 1888, both pleaded "not guilty." Defending Gower, Mr. C.H. Richards claimed that his impressionable client had been manipulated into confessing by Captain Cotterell, and a similar line was taken by Dobell's counsel, Mr. Charles Gill, who said there was no real evidence that his client had fired the gun.

It was admitted that Dobell had sent the letter to the newspaper, as the boy who delivered it had identified him to the police. But Mr. Gill said that Dobell was showing off when he described himself as "the murderer." Like Gower, he had been bewitched by the Salvation Army and wanted to impress them.

In the court, however, both youths seemed to want to give the impression

true crime

MARCH

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SPECIAL REPORT

Getting Away With Murder?

Killers And "The Sleepwalking Defence"



Deborah was shot six times by "sleepwalking" husband Raymond

MAJOR BRITISH MURDER CASES

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MELBOURNE HORROR: THE SNATCHING OF SHEREE, SIX



Two Brothers In The Dock – Both Sentenced To Hang

Why Bootlegger George Murdered His Wife



On sale at W.H. Smith and all good newsagents from February 27th or see the offer on page 46



A contemporary example of how newspapers and broadsheets viewed the crime at Tunbridge Wells

that they had committed the crime and were indifferent as to their fate. As the trial proceeded it became apparent that they were enjoying hearing the case against them, especially the evidence of how Bensley Lawrence was shot through the head at point-blank range.

After retiring for only 20 minutes, the jury returned to find both defendants guilty of murder, recommending them to mercy because of their age. The pair were then sentenced to be hanged, and were taken to separate death cells at Maidstone Prison.

The execution date was set for January 2nd, 1889, and just before the New Year the case was considered by the Home Secretary, Mr. Henry Matthews. As the killing was intentional and premeditated, the gunman incited by his accomplice, the only ground for reprieves was the culprits' youth.

Although there was no legal obstacle to the execution of a child, nobody under 14 had been hanged in Britain

since 1800, and nobody under 16 had gone to the gallows since 1831. Attitudes to the execution of young people were changing, and to allow someone under 18 to go to the gallows would be controversial, so the youths' ages were double-checked.

Gower was born on March 8th, 1870, and was therefore clearly 18 when the crime was committed. Dobell, however, was born on January 17th, 1871, so he was not only 17 at the time of the murder, he would also be hanged before

Today, teenage violence is often blamed on films and TV. Back in 1888 it was thought "penny dreadfuls" prompted two young killers to ape their criminal heroes

his 18th birthday. Telegrams passed between the Home Office, the prison and the police, until his birth date was finally confirmed.

Although some years would pass before prisoners under sentence of death would be routinely checked for signs of mental illness, medical examinations were ordered for Gower and Dobell. The Home Secretary was informed that they were eating and sleeping well, both having put on weight, and there was no suggestion that either was insane. So their fate was sealed. There would be no reprieve, and hangman James Berry arrived in Maidstone on New Year's Day.

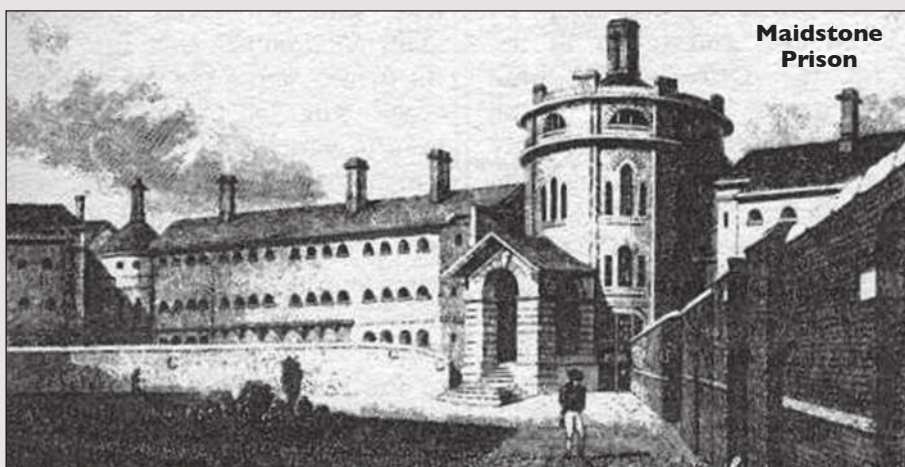
Both youths slept soundly, awaking at 6 a.m. on the day of their execution. Before writing their final letters, they had breakfast and saw the prison chaplain. Their friendship had remained steadfast as they awaited death; Dobell requesting that they be pinioned in the same cell and led together to the gallows.

Berry, however, said he couldn't do this, and it was eventually arranged that having tied Dobell's wrists in the corridor, he would bring out Gower so that Dobell could see his friend being pinioned. Just after 8 a.m. the pair were quickly led to the gallows and executed, both dying instantaneously.

Years later, Berry turned against capital punishment, saying that neither of the "boys" should have been executed. He said he didn't believe they were fully responsible for their actions, and they should have been sent to Broadmoor where there were far saner murderers. In his view, Gower and Dobell had simply embarked on a "boyish adventure," and such was their immaturity that they were determined to confess to a cold-blooded murder as part of their game.

The £100 reward was offered to Captain Cotterell. Refusing to accept it, he described it as "blood money" and asked for it to be given to a charity.

As the last person under 18 to be hanged in Britain, Charles Dobell made history. Although such executions were permitted in law until 1948, after his case the Home Office secretly decided never to allow one to take place again, regardless of the motive and circumstances.



A total of 58 executions took place at Maidstone Prison, 47 in the 19th century – including three women – and 11 in the 20th century. Between 1831 and 1868, 28 of these criminals were hanged in public outside the main gate, the remaining 30 being despatched within the prison walls. Twenty-four of those hanged were young people – 25 and under – the youngest being only 14.

Perhaps the most notorious criminal

to end his days at Maidstone Prison was "Brides In The Bath" murderer George Joseph Smith who was executed on August 13th, 1915.

The last killer hanged there was Sidney Fox, who murdered his mother in room 66 of Margate's Metropol Hotel. He was executed on April 8th, 1930.

● *More about Sidney Fox in Murder Most Foul issue 115, on sale now!*

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EXECUTION USA

News and updates from November 2019 • Researched by Martin Chaffe

TRANSGENDER CELLMATE KILLER CONDEMNED

STATE DEATH PENALTIES

CALIFORNIA: A KERN County jury in Bakersfield has recommended the execution of **Miguel Crespo**, 48, for murdering his transgender cellmate at the state prison in Delano. In October 2013, Crespo was serving life for shooting a man dead in his car in Los Angeles County in 1993, when he told guards that Carmen Guerrero, 48, was not moving on the top bunk. On inspection, he was found to be bound, gagged and strangled. While under investigation, Crespo told the police that he killed Mr. Guerrero because he was gay.



Homophobic attack: Miguel Crespo

At the time, this was the fourth killing of the year in the prison and a spokesman said that the propensity for violence amongst maximum-security inmates was very high.

The jurors found two death-qualifying special circumstances – a prior murder conviction and murder committed by a prisoner serving life. The DA, Cynthia Zimmer, said after the verdict that they would continue to seek the death penalty for those convicted of a second murder

who posed a significant threat to staff and inmates in the future.

CALIFORNIA: TORTURE-KILLER DIES IN HIS CELL

Spencer Brasure, 49 (pictured in 2007), was pronounced dead at 1.15 p.m. on November 14th, 45 minutes after being found unresponsive in his cell at San Quentin. He had been on Death Row for 21 years for the torture-murder of 20-year-old Anthony Guest, a former child actor, in September 1996.



Terrible revenge: Spencer Brasure

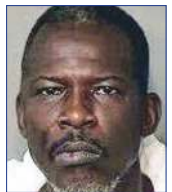
Brasure and an accomplice, Billy Lynn Davis, thought that Mr. Guest was stealing their methamphetamine and decided to exact a terrible revenge. After hog-tying him they poked him repeatedly with an electric cattle rod. He was then forced to swallow glass after shards of a broken bottle were forced into his mouth which was sealed with tape. He was also beaten over the head and wood was pinned to his ears with an industrial stapler. After sticking his eyes shut with superglue, they drove him to the desert where he was doused in petrol and set on

fire. A pathologist said he may have taken several hours to die from his burns.

The judge who condemned him to death said that Brasure “displays a depth of depravity which is fortunately quite rare.” Davis, now 42, was sentenced to life without parole which he is still serving.

FLORIDA: COPS’ KILLER CONDEMNED TO DIE

In the Osceola County courthouse in Kissimmee, all 12 jurors agreed – after five hours of deliberation – that **Everett Glenn Miller**, 47, a former decorated US Marine with 20 years’ service, should be executed for murdering two police officers.



Above, killer Everett Miller. Below, victims Sergeant Sam Howard and Officer Matthew Baxter

In August 2017, Sergeant Sam Howard, 36, and Officer Matthew Baxter, 27, were shot once in the head and once in the mouth after responding to a disturbance call. After laying the bodies out parallel to each other, Miller fled to a bar where he was later arrested. He had recently set up a page on Facebook in which he described himself as a “Moor,” a member of an extremist sect, and wrote that he would kill a cop.

The defence argued unsuccessfully for second-degree

unpremeditated murder in the guilt phase and argued in the penalty phase that Miller was mentally ill with signs of post-traumatic



stress disorder. He had recently lost his girlfriend and home, was drinking heavily and smoking marijuana and a cousin said that he had not been showering regularly. A month before the murder he had been temporarily sectioned.

FLORIDA: DEATH ROW FOR SEX-OFFENDER SLAYER

Rocky Ali Beamon, 41, has been condemned to die by Santa Rosa County Judge Darlene Dickey for murdering a cellmate in January 2017. Beamon had pleaded guilty and waived a jury sentencing pertaining to the first-degree murder of sex-offender Nicholas Anderson, 27, at the county correctional facility. The victim was bound, strangled and had his throat cut by an improvised shank.

NEEDLE FOR KILLER BURGLAR

EXECUTED NOVEMBER 4th, 2019:

CHARLES RUSSELL RHINES, 63 • Lethal injection • South Dakota



RHINES

Rhines spent nearly 27 years on Death Row for the March 1992 murder of a 22-year-old employee of a doughnut shop in Rapid City. Rhines had also worked at Dig 'Em Donuts but got the sack and decided to come back two weeks later to burgle the premises. Confronted by Donnivan Schaeffer, a university student, he stabbed him in the stomach. The victim pleaded to be taken to hospital but Rhines dragged him to a storeroom and stabbed him until he was dead. The jury at the trial heard Rhines’s taped confession and his chilling laughter when he described the victim’s spasms.

Rhines was gay, and his execution was delayed six hours by a last appeal to the US Supreme Court, in which he claimed that the jury had an anti-gay prejudice, rejecting a life sentence because they did not want him

having sex with other men in prison for the rest of his life. This was rejected and on the gurney he turned to his victim’s elderly parents and said: “Ed and Peggy Schaeffer, I forgive you for your anger and hatred towards me. I pray to God that he forgives you for your anger and hatred towards me. Thanks to my team. I love you all, goodbye. Let’s go. That’s all I have to say.”

He was pronounced dead at 7.39 p.m., about six minutes after the Pentobarbital was injected.

This was Beamon's second death sentence in 2019 after also being condemned to die in January in Jackson County for murdering another sex offender at the Apalachee Correctional Institution in July 2012. Beamon also pleaded guilty and waived a jury for the sentencing phase and the judge decided that aggravating factors outweighed mitigating ones.

After observing his victim's movements for several days, Beamon and a possible accomplice used an improvised knife to kill 44-year-old Bruce Hunsicker in a shower area, choking him and stabbing him 80 times. After washing off the blood and flushing the knife and his boxer shorts down a toilet, Beamon then went to have dinner. At the time of the offence, Beamon was serving life without parole for murder, robbery and kidnapping committed in Hillsborough County in February 2005.



Condemned to die twice: Rocky Beamon

OHIO: KILLER OF TWO COPS SPARED BY JURY

A deadlocked Columbus, Franklin County, jury in the penalty phase has spared the life of **Quentin Lamar Smith**, 32, after he had been convicted of murdering two police officers. In February 2018, 911 dispatchers sent two police officers, Anthony Morelli, 54, and Eric Joering, 39, to Smith's Westerville address after his wife reported that Smith had been beating and throttling her. When they arrived and knocked on the door, Smith cursed his wife for calling 911.

When the officers entered, she told them that Smith was armed and he pulled out a .40 Glock semi-automatic pistol which he had tucked into a sofa. A gun battle ensued in which Smith was hit and wounded but Officer Joering was shot in the forehead and Morelli in the chest.

Smith unsuccessfully claimed self-defence in the guilt phase but his lawyers had more luck in the penalty phase, persuading at least one juror that mitigating factors outweighed the aggravators.

Although they could not find anyone willing to testify on his behalf, including his mother, they argued that he was mentally ill with schizoaffective, bipolar and post-traumatic stress disorders. His IQ measured at 85, just five points above intellectual disability.

The prosecutor argued for death because Smith had pulled a gun on and killed two police officers with his 15-month-old daughter just 10 feet away from him.



Above, killer Quentin Smith. Below, victims Anthony Morelli and Eric Joering



DOUBLE-KILLER SAYS SORRY AND DIES

EXECUTED NOVEMBER 6th, 2019:

JUSTEN GRANT HALL, 38 • Lethal injection • Texas



HALL

In October 2002, Hall was a 21-year-old member of a white supremacist gang based near El Paso and was involved in a methamphetamine production racket. During an argument between gang members, 29-year-old Melanie Billhartz was assaulted. Hall believed that she might go to the police and take revenge on the gang by informing them of the drugs operation and he decided to silence her by strangling her with an electrical cord and burying her across the state line in New Mexico. At the time of the murder, Hall was out on \$75,000 bail concerning another killing. He was accused of shooting 28-year-old Arturo Diaz, who identified as a transgender woman. She was also found in New Mexico in April 2002 with a bullet wound in the back.

On the gurney, Hall's last words were to apologise from the bottom of his heart to the families of his victims for all the pain and suffering he had caused. He added that it should never have happened. He then told his mother and half-sister who witnessed the execution that he would miss them.

He was pronounced dead at 6.32 p.m., 19 minutes after the Pentobarbital was injected.

OKLAHOMA: NEEDLE FOR OFFICER'S KILLER

A Potawatomie County jury in Shawnee has returned a death sentence against cop-killer **Byron James Shepard**, 38. Tecumseh police officer Justin Terney, 22, had stopped a car in March 2017 in which Shepard, a meth dealer and convicted violent felon, was being driven by a woman called Brooklyn Williams, 22. When Terney realised that there was an outstanding warrant for Shepard, the latter fled and a gun battle ensued, in which Shepard was hit four times. Terney died in hospital from his injuries after being hit in the abdomen and thigh.

Shepard was unsuccessful in the guilt phase when he pleaded that he did not mean to kill. In the sentencing phase, he was also unsuccessful when his lawyers pleaded childhood abuse for his criminal behaviour. The prosecution argued for death, saying that he was a continuing threat to society. Williams was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 25 years.

OKLAHOMA: KILLER-RAPIST FOUND DEAD IN CELL

Albert Ray Johnson, 52, was found by a guard dead on his bunk at the Oklahoma state penitentiary at McAlester on November 25th. He had been on Death Row since June 2016 for first-degree murder, assault and battery with intent to kill and two counts each of forcible oral sodomy, first-degree rape, forcible anal sodomy and kidnapping.

In June 2014, after subjecting his

girlfriend and Rachel Rogers, 24, to a series of sexual attacks while threatening them with a butcher's knife, he bludgeoned them with a cast-iron mallet and frying pan. After he left, the girlfriend raised the alarm but Ms. Rogers died in hospital.

The jury had rejected Johnson's defence of insanity in the guilt phase and heard prosecutors claim that death was the only acceptable punishment for an especially heinous, atrocious and cruel crime and describe him as a sexual deviant and sociopath who posed a continuing threat to society. His lawyers, fighting in vain for life without parole, claimed that he was psychotic, suffering from "intermittent explosive disorder," and that he had been raped and abused as a child which had physically damaged his brain.

PENNSYLVANIA: POLICEMAN WAS SHOT THREE TIMES

Rahmael Holt, 31, has been condemned to die for killing a New Kensington police officer in November 2017. The Westmoreland County jury in Greensburg had found him guilty of the first-degree murder of Brian Shaw, 25, by shooting him three times at close range after the officer gave chase on foot when Holt fled after being stopped in his car.

Holt pleaded not guilty, claiming it was not him, but he did not take the stand. He also refused to participate in the sentencing phase. His lawyer told the jurors: "You're not here to be avenging angels for Brian Shaw." Holt had a deprived childhood and grew up on the streets where one of his younger brothers was murdered. His mother was always



Above, Byron Shepard. Below, Brooklyn Williams



Heinous crime: Albert Johnson

well dressed but neglected him, sending him unfed to school wearing second-hand ill-fitting clothes. But the jury of nine women and three men did not think his life history was sufficiently mitigating to outweigh the heinousness of murdering a law enforcement officer.



Left to right, killer Rahmael Holt and victim Brian Shaw

SOUTH CAROLINA: LIFE IN JAIL FOR KILLER INMATES

A “cunning” plan by two double-murderers to escape the monotony of their life-without-parole sentences by being executed for murdering four other inmates at the Kirkland Correctional Institution has gone awry. Prosecutors in Richland County, following consultation with the family members of the deceased, decided not to seek the death penalty.

Denver Jordan Simmons, 38, and **Jacob Theophilus Philip**, 28, have been given four additional life sentences for the April 2017 murders of Jimmy Ham, 56; Jason Kelley, 35; John King, 52; and William Scruggs, 44.

All four men were lured, with the promise of cookies or drugs, one by one to a cell in a mental health ward over a two-hour period and strangled with an electrical cord and broomstick used as a tourniquet before being hidden under a bed. After the killings Simmons and Philip walked down a corridor and told one of the health counsellors that he had better “check out cell 261,” where he found the four corpses.

Simmons’s earlier crime was the May 2010 shooting of an acquaintance, Sheila Dodd, 45, near Charleston. After using her debit card to buy a pizza, he picked up her 13-year-old son William from school and also shot him dead. He pleaded guilty to avoid the death penalty.

Philip pleaded guilty but mentally ill in August 2015 to strangling his girlfriend, Ashley Kaney, 26, and her eight-year-old daughter, Riley Burdick. At the time he was attending the US Navy’s nuclear power plant training school at Goose Creek.

TEXAS: TEXAS 7 KILLER WINS EXECUTION STAY

Patrick Henry Murphy, 58, whose execution was stayed two hours after it was scheduled to take place on March 28th, 2019, has won another stay. The US Supreme Court ruled in March that it was discriminatory for Texas to allow Christian and Muslim spiritual advisers to accompany the condemned to the execution suite because they were prison

A PRAYER FOR CLERK’S KILLER

EXECUTED NOVEMBER 13th, 2019:

RAY JEFFERSON CROMARTIE, 52 • Lethal injection • Georgia



CROMARTIE

Cromartie was executed for robbing and murdering a man in April 1994. With an accomplice, Corey Clark, they robbed a Thomasville convenience store and shot 50-year-old clerk Richard Slys twice in the head with a .25 pistol. Unable to open the cash register, the killers escaped with 24 cans of beer. Three days earlier Cromartie is also believed to have shot a delicatessen clerk in the throat with the same gun, severely wounding him. He survived an October 30th execution date with eight hours to spare over a legal issue concerning the death warrant, but this was quickly resolved and the execution date reset. His 7 p.m. execution was then delayed for nearly four hours by an unsuccessful last appeal to the US Supreme Court regarding Georgia’s refusal to test the murder weapon and other evidence

for DNA. Cromartie’s contention was that he had not been the trigger-man in either incident. This would not have undermined his guilt but a jury might have voted for life without parole if they thought he had not pulled the trigger.

On the gurney he made no last statement but allowed a prayer to be recited on his behalf. Following the injection of Pentobarbital, he was pronounced dead at 10.59 p.m. Corey Clark and getaway driver Thaddeus Lucas, who also supplied the weapon, testified against Cromartie. They received prison sentences and were later paroled.

employees, but to disallow Buddhists who were not employees. The court ruled that either all religious advisers or none should be allowed in. Texas opted in future to allow none in and the execution was reset for November 13th. However, six days before the execution, a federal judge decided to hear Murphy’s appeal that the pre-execution protocol, before the move to the execution suite, prevented him seeing his Buddhist adviser, which was different for Christian and Muslim inmates.

On the day of the execution the US 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans sided with the defence and refused to lift the stay. Murphy was one of the so-called Texas 7, a group of prison escapees who murdered a police officer during a gun shop robbery in the town of Irving on Christmas Eve, 2000. Murphy also claimed unsuccessfully that he did not deserve to die as he only acted as lookout and getaway driver.

TEXAS: CARTEL HIT-MAN CONDEMNED TO DEATH

A cartel hit-man, originally from Monterrey, Mexico, with a predilection for chopping his victims to pieces, has been sentenced to death by a Tarrant County jury in Fort Worth. **Hector Acosta-Ojeda**, 30, was convicted of murdering his roommate Erick Zelaya, 27, and Zelaya’s 17-year-old girlfriend Iris Chirinos, in September 2017. They were both shot in their sleep before being bludgeoned with a lump of wood and hacked with a machete. Their decapitated

bodies were buried in a shallow grave and Mr. Zelaya’s head was left a few streets away with a sign warning rival gangs of future violence.

Acosta was said to have thought that he had been targeted in a drive-by shooting by Mr. Zelaya. In the sentencing phase the prosecutors introduced evidence of the murder of another man which they believe he committed in 2017. Triston Algine, 34, was robbed and shot after giving Acosta the wrong pin number to his bank card. The victim was then cut in half and buried under a house with a covering of concrete.

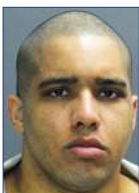
Pleading for death as the punishment, the prosecutor asked the jury, “Have you ever knowingly sat in a room with a more dangerous person? He can’t follow the rules of a cartel, but you are expected to believe the defence that he’ll follow the rules of a prison warden. He is extraordinarily violent. He deals in terror. It’s his job. He is not the product of a bad environment. He is the bad element in his environment. That’s what he is and wants to be.”

TEXAS: RODNEY REED’S EXECUTION STAYED

Following a massive campaign on his behalf, **Rodney Reed**’s execution, scheduled for November 20th, was stayed by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals (TCCA) with five days to spare. Reed has been on Death Row for 21 years for the April 1996 abduction, rape and strangling of 19-year-old Stacey Lee Stites in Bastrop County. Reed’s semen was found in her body, but he has always



Above, Denver Simmons. Below, Jacob Philip



Buddhist appeal: Patrick Murphy



Two victims: Hector Acosta-Ojeda

claimed to have been having a secret affair with Ms. Stites.

Reed previously survived an execution date in 2015, but the defence said that they had a new eyewitness and also forensic evidence which proved that Ms. Stites was murdered four hours earlier than the prosecution claimed and that the body was dumped by the side of the road after she was killed elsewhere.

Another factor in their favour was the fact that Ms. Stites's fiancé at the time of her murder, a serving police officer called Jimmy Fennell, was, in 2015, serving 10 years for abducting and sexually assaulting another young woman while on duty.

These appeals were rejected earlier in 2019 by the TCCA and the new execution date set, but following a huge media campaign by stars such as Beyoncé, Rihanna, Oprah Winfrey



Star support:
Rodney Reed

and Kim Kardashian West and by the European Union, the court caved in to the pressure.

The Texas Parole Board had also unanimously recommended that the Governor grant a 120-day stay. A judge will now look at the evidence again and decide if a new trial is warranted.

TEXAS: DEATH SENTENCE FOR KILLER-ROBBER

A Smith County jury in Tyler has chosen death as the punishment for **Dameon Jamar Mosley**, 28, after convicting him of capital murder during a robbery.

In January 2017, Mosley entered a Conoco petrol station with two alleged accomplices and gunned down clerk Billy Dale Stacks, 62, shooting him twice in the body and once in the head when he offered resistance.

In the guilt phase, the defence argued for first-degree instead of capital murder, claiming that Mosley did not mean to

kill due to the bullet's trajectory. The prosecution countered successfully that you could not shoot someone in the head at such a close distance and claim there was no intention to kill.

In the sentencing phase Mosley's mother, Linda Smith, testified as to his traumatic childhood. Lamarcus Hannah and Kedaris Oliver await trial for capital murder and could also be sentenced to death.



Murder at a petrol station: Dameon Mosley

UTAH: MORMON KILLER PASSES AWAY IN CELL

Ron Lafferty, 78, died on November 10th from natural causes at the Utah State Prison in Draper, following 34 years on Death Row. He had lost his penultimate appeal in August and was facing the firing squad in 2020.

In July 1984, Lafferty and one of his brothers, Dan, slit the throats of another brother's wife, Brenda Lafferty, 24, and her baby daughter because she had resisted his religious beliefs in polygamy. In 2003 John Krakauer included the case in a book about radical offshoots of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better known as the Mormon Church.

Lafferty's time on Death Row was exacerbated by a retrial ordered by the federal courts in 1991 regarding questions over his sanity, and after several competency hearings it took until 1996 for a new jury to sentence him to die again. It took another 10 years for the Utah state courts to uphold the conviction and sentence, and a further 10 years in federal courts to ensure that Utah made no errors contrary to the US constitution.

Dan Lafferty was given a life sentence which he is still serving.



Mother and baby victims: Ron Lafferty

AROUND THE WORLD

LEBANON: A Beirut Uber taxi driver has been sentenced to hang for murdering British Embassy worker Rebecca Dykes, 30, who was employed by the Department for International Development. **Tariq Houshieh**, 30, raped and strangled her with a rope after she booked him to take her home from a party in December 2017. Her body was discovered along a motorway at 4 a.m., about four hours after Houshieh picked her up.

The British government said that it hoped the sentence would provide closure for her family and friends, but added that it continued to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances.



Above, killer Tariq Houshieh. Below, Rebecca Dykes



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