



**Middlesbrough's Only Police Murder**

# TRUE CRIME

Detective Monthly

JUNE 2022



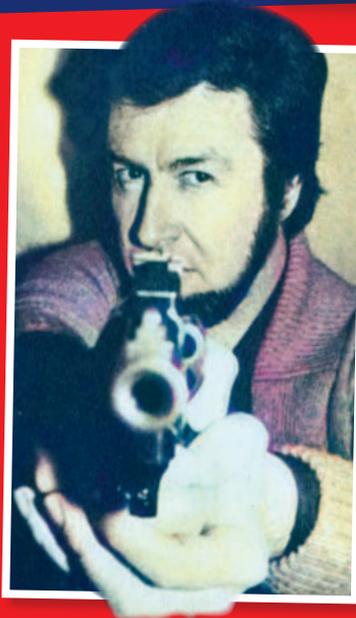
**Lying Son's Desperate Plan:**

# "MURDER MOM... DISMEMBER DAD"



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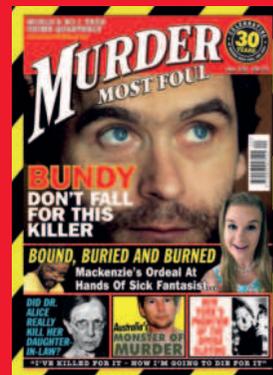
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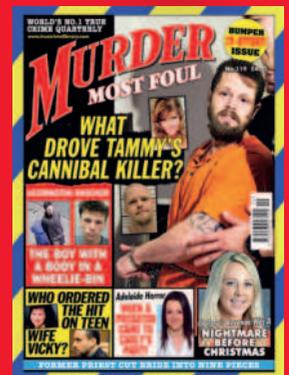
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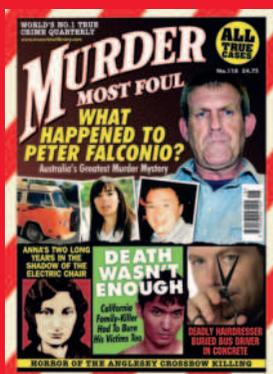


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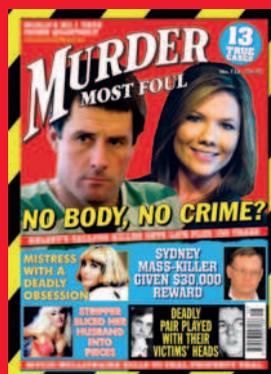
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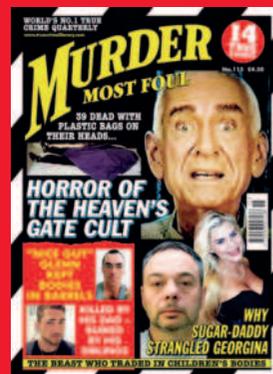
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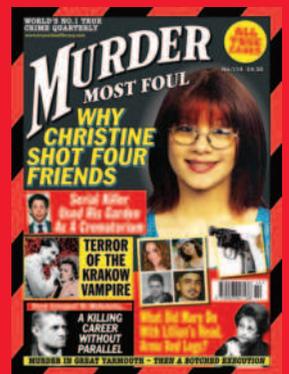
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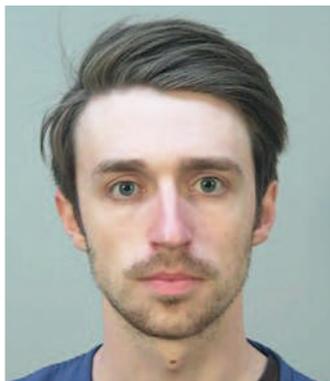
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# “MURDER MOM...”

**Chandler was a young man who seemed to have everything going for him – a popular college graduate from a respectable, successful family...an Eagle Scout, on the state scuba diving team and a teaching assistant. But none of it was true – and rather than face the truth he murdered and disposed of his loving parents in the most brutal way imaginable**

**L**IKE EVERYONE else on LinkedIn, 23-year-old Chandler Halderson gave himself a pretty good write-up.

He said he was a recent technical college graduate in computer technology, with one part-time job as a lifeguard and another as a teaching assistant.

For his leisure activities, he said he was an Eagle Scout and was on the state's scuba diving team.

What's more, he fitted in his studies on top of all that.

Ok, so he still lived at home, but his parents weren't worried about such a hard-working, high-achieving young man.

So when he rang the police on July 7th, 2021, to report his parents missing, the police paid attention.

“Our investigation began... when Chandler reported his parents missing at around 11.30 a.m. that day,” said a spokesperson for the Windsor Sheriff's Department. “His parents had left their home the previous Friday morning with an unknown couple to spend the holiday weekend at their cabin on White Lake, but did not return as expected.”

That's because Chandler had made sure that his parents wouldn't be coming home.

Ever.

**F**ifty-year-old Bart and 53-year-old Krista Halderson loved their children, Mitchell and his younger brother Chandler, and were happy to subsidise Chandler while he finished his studies off at home.

They were wealthy, well known and well liked in the scenic village of Windsor, Wisconsin, where they'd lived for more than 20 years.

So they gave Chandler a generous stipend to keep him comfortable while he gave every appearance of working

hard on both of his part-time jobs, fitting his studies around them.

Bart was a successful certified public accountant and tax manager in the state capital of Madison, and he would often find the time to help his neighbours out with any tax or financial advice he could offer.



**Bart and Krista Halderson had no enemies, no financial worries, and they doted on their sons. Their disappearance was a puzzle to all in the Dane County village of Windsor, Wisconsin**

The couple had no enemies in the community, and no money problems – they'd paid off their \$400,000 mortgage early for instance. Now that Chandler had reported them missing, the police were only too happy to help out.

“Our investigators immediately began efforts to locate the Haldersons,” the spokesman continued, “including reaching out to the Langlade County Sheriff

to check the cabin on White Lake, but no one was there and there were no signs of immediate activity.”

There'd been no serious road accidents in the area over the weekend, and immigration authorities confirmed that they hadn't left the country either.

So what had happened to

home.

“They planned a trip to Langlade County for the Independence Day holidays, but their family have been unable to confirm they arrived safely. If anyone has any information on the couple, please call the Sheriff's Office.”

Blake Halderson, Bart's cousin, wrote a message supporting the Sheriff's call for help on a website dedicated to finding missing people in the US.

“I thank everyone for their concern and appreciate any help you can give in finding them. It's so hard waiting for updates and we appreciate all the efforts the police are making. All I can say is nothing makes sense and we pray they are found safe and well.”

**C**handler Halderson was the last person to have seen his parents alive, and was doing a good job of playing the concerned and dutiful son.

“The last message I got from them, they were going to White Lake for the 4th of July,” he told reporters. “There's some festivities that go on around there, better drinks prices, stuff like that. Their plan, to my knowledge, was they were going to stay in their cabin.”

When he was asked about what he thought could have happened, he was suitably vague.

“Along the way, they could have stopped at many places,” he said, “but I wouldn't know any of them. They brought, or were picked up by, a friend who I never got the name of. I assumed it was someone I was aware of, like the close neighbours of ours up the street, or their best friends on the east side of town.

“I never really asked any further into it. And so they got picked up and they

them?”

The police duly issued a missing persons alert, asking for help from the public with sightings or any other information.

“The Dane County Sheriff's Office is asking for assistance from the public in locating a missing couple from the village of Windsor,” the report read. “A family member reported Bart and Krista Halderson were last seen on July 1st at their

# DISMEMBER DAD”

## – Lying Son’s Desperate Plan

all went up there by, like, another couple.”

Meanwhile, the police had already started to have their suspicions that Chandler might be involved.

They started by taking a close look at his social media profile, to see what he was saying about himself.

On his Facebook profile from when he was a student at Madison Area Technical College, he wrote that he’d received a degree in Computer Information Technology Administration and Management.

This may have sounded impressive, but in reality it was completely untrue – he had hardly ever attended class, and had never graduated.

“The majority of my experience consists of lifeguarding and technology but it doesn’t stop there,” he continued. In reality, what didn’t stop there were the lies.

“I have a strong understanding of solar panels and the installation process that goes with them,” he wrote. “I also have experience in teaching and leadership from when I was a teacher’s assistant for an installation course at a local college in 2021.”

He also claimed that he worked for American Family Insurance and was part of the Madison Police Department scuba dive team.

Chandler may have thought all this sounded

suitably impressive, but it wasn’t clear who it was written for – because it bore little resemblance to the life he was actually living at the time.

Virtually none of it was true. He was unemployed after dropping out of college, and the search and rescue scuba diving team had never even existed.

Neither did the job he told his parents that he’d been offered at SpaceX in Florida.

What he didn’t realise was that the police knew it was all a long list of lies.

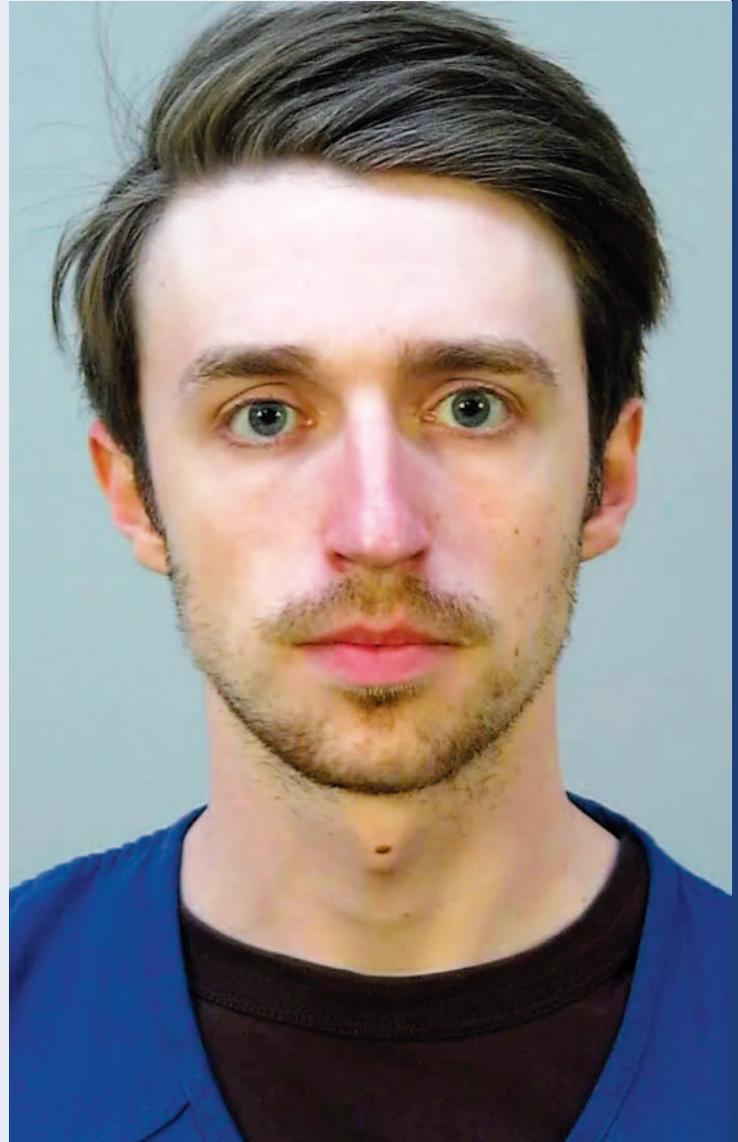
So while he was calmly giving interviews to the media, saying how concerned he was for his parents, the cameras weren’t the only ones focusing on him.

For instance, the police already knew that the big 4th of July parade Chandler had said that Bart and Krista were heading for had actually happened the day before his parents had supposedly said it would.

**T**hey also knew that Bart had previously confronted Chandler about his lies.

Bart had discovered that dozens of emails between Chandler and his college about his course had all been fabricated, and that his son had only attended a handful of classes for about two terms, and nothing more.

He’d asked his son why he wasn’t paying rent, and



**Chandler Halderson had the love and support of his family – but still chose murder over the truth**

got another set of tall tales in reply.

At first, the insurance company had mistakenly categorised him as an hourly worker instead of a salaried one, so they hadn’t sent any pay cheques.

Then he said he’d mistakenly given the accounts department the wrong deposit information for his bank account.

And he’d even claimed that when his “employers” had finally sent the money, the bank thought such a large amount was suspicious and had refused to accept the cheque.

His parents weren’t the only ones given the benefit of Chandler’s vivid imagination.

He told one of his girlfriends about the job at the Space X launch facilities in Florida. He said he’d bought a car to drive down to the apartment he’d already rented there.

But to get out of that one, he faked a list of serious injuries after having “fallen downstairs.” He apparently had concussion, a brain bleed, a haematoma and spinal damage. Having had to get his head drilled to release the pressure on his brain, he said, he couldn’t use his



**Police at the home of Bart and Krista Halderson**

legs any more, he couldn't drive any more, he couldn't fly and he was in such a bad way overall that he needed a colostomy bag.

For a while, his parents had given him the benefit of the doubt.

After all, he was their son. It's not easy to accept that your own flesh and blood is a complete fantasist.

But all of his stories were as bogus as his claims of graduating with a degree.

To try to get to the bottom of things, Bart had decided to do some of his own investigations.

He called the college pretending to be his son, and discovered that not only had he not been attending classes, the people Chandler had been exchanging emails with didn't even exist.

"That'll be it then," Bart apparently said to the college official on the phone.

## This meant that Chandler had chopped up the bodies in the house, and burned his parents' heads in the fire at the home

They were his last recorded words, just two days before he disappeared.

Bart had insisted that he and Chandler get together with school officials to discuss the situation, and had even scheduled a meeting with them for 3 p.m. on July 1st.

But Chandler was never going to let that happen.

And not only did Bart not show up for the meeting, he was never seen alive again,

**O**n July 8th, officials in Cottage Grove, a rural area near the Haldersons' home, found Bart's remains. The Dane County medical examiner listed the cause of death as "homicidal violence including firearm injury."

There was no sign of Krista.

Chandler was immediately arrested on a charge of providing false information to investigators. Three days later, police added three felony charges – first-degree intentional homicide, hiding and mutilating a corpse, and



At the trial the prosecution provided evidence that Chandler Halderson used this saw and scissors to cut up his parents' bodies

providing false information on a kidnapping.

"We had a defendant who had six days to hide evidence of his crime and has spun a web of lies to police in the course of the missing persons investigation," said Deputy District Attorney Bill Brown at the time. "He has lied dozens of times during this time. We have CCTV of him entering the area in which the mutilated and dismembered remains of his father were found with gunshot wounds."

By now, witnesses had started to come forward. They told police they saw Chandler park his vehicle on the rural property where Bart's remains were found, and he was also seen entering and exiting the nearby woods.

However, Krista still hadn't been found. The Dane County Sheriff's office kept searching, but by now they were fairly sure they weren't going to find her alive.

So the police searched the property, as well as the Haldersons' home in Windsor. They drained the pond in their backyard, searched a landfill near Johnson Creek and scoured a range of other locations.

Finally, on July 14th, investigators found what they'd been expecting.

"A portion of an unidentified human," that DNA testing would later identify as belonging to Krista, was discovered along the Wisconsin River near Saux City. The parts were Krista's legs.

More human remains, also later identified as being parts of Krista, were found on the family property.

By now, Chandler had been held on a cash bond of \$10,000, and, if he

could raise the cash, he'd be allowed out with an ankle tag, forbidden to leave the county.

But after Bart's remains were found, and Chandler was charged with murder, the bond was raised to \$1 million.

Although prosecutors released a swathe of information that he'd given them that had turned out to be lies, they didn't say what they thought his motive had been.

Whatever it was, he certainly appeared to be calm enough about having been caught.

At one point, a detective had told him they had new information about the case, and asked him how he felt about the case. Did he feel suicidal at all, knowing what he'd done?

"I didn't feel bad about what I did," he replied.

The charges against Chandler were upgraded again once the parts of Krista's body had been discovered.

The sheet now ran to two counts of intentional first-degree murder, mutilating and hiding a corpse, and providing false information on kidnapped or missing persons, in relation to

the deaths of his parents.

And the investigators had also discovered how his internet search history was giving him away.

He'd made searches of multiple phrases based around "Wisconsin dismembered body found," "how to dispose of a body" and "body found in Wisconsin."

If he'd been trying to lead police straight to him, rather than covering his tracks, he couldn't have done a better job.

## When investigators searched the area around the location shown on Snapchat, they'd discovered Krista's legs

**T**he trial was scheduled to begin in January 2022, but it was delayed by a week after Chandler tested positive for Covid-19. He was one of 81 inmates to test positive after the National Guard tested the entire jail population of the prison.

When the trial finally began, the prosecution said that Chandler had killed his parents after they discovered his web of lies and they'd refused to continue funding his Walter Mitty-style lifestyle.

After killing them, he attempted to burn their bodies in a family fireplace before scattering their dismembered parts around various locations in southern Wisconsin.

Testimony from staff at the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory revealed that his prints matched those found on duct tape attached to a



A police crime scene photo of Bart Halderson's torso where it was discovered

tarpaulin on the property where Bart's torso was found.

Cristina Soto, a forensic anthropologist with the coroner's office, said two saws found by investigators had teeth that were consistent with the cuts to Bart's body and Krista's legs.

The alloy saw and hacksaw were found inside an old oil tank in the Cottage Grove home of Crescent L'Sai, the mother of one of Chandler's former girlfriends.

Ms. Soto described how bone fragments were found in a vacuum cleaner and a fireplace in the Halderson home. Over 200 fragments of bone, including cranial bone and skull fragments, as well as teeth, were recovered from the fireplace.

She added that chop marks consistent with a machete or axe were also found on part of a wrist bone.

The prosecution said that this meant that Chandler had chopped up the bodies



**Mitchell Halderson testified against his younger brother**

in the house, and burned his parents' heads in the fire at the home.

To prove that the killings were a premeditated act of deliberate, gory horror, and not something that had happened in a moment of madness or uncontrollable rage, Andrew Smith, a former marine, told the court about a present he'd given Chandler.

Andrew and Chandler had met while playing a video game online. Andrew testified that he'd given Chandler an SKS rifle and 500 rounds of ammunition as a gift while visiting the Halderson home for two

days, roughly a month before the killings.

"His parents weren't thrilled about firearms," Andrew said, "but Chandler hid the gun in a desk in the family basement. The next time I heard from him he called me to say his parents had gone missing. He wasn't

**"Chandler had eight days to spread pieces of his parents all over southern Wisconsin. They were normal folks just trying to live normal lives. They don't even get to be buried next to each other"**

that upset or hysterical when he told me. I later told police [this] after I heard he'd been arrested."

Chandler's older brother Mitchell testified against him in court. He refused to look at him except for a brief moment to confirm his brother's identity. His anguish and contempt for his sibling were etched on his face.

In her summing-up, Assistant District Attorney Andrea Raymond explained how Chandler Halderson had been behaving around the time of the killings.

"From neighbours' CCTV cameras," she said, "we know that Bart and Krista went into their home and never came out." She paused. "At least, not as whole people."

Prosecutor William Brown showed the court texts from Bart's phone that were sent to Chandler on July 1st. "I'm ready whenever you are," one read.

Then Chandler had apparently sent a message to his mom, Krista. "Dad's phone died." He asked her to bring him a soda.

"K" she replied, adding a smiley face.

They were the last messages either Bart or Krista ever sent.

Chandler reported his parents missing on July 7th, but he'd already laid some of the groundwork for their disappearance.

He'd used Krista's phone

to send himself a text message, claiming that they were going to attend the Independence Day parade.

In reality, it had happened the day before.

Continuing to claim that he was still badly injured from his "fall," Chandler had then asked his girlfriend if he could use her family's pool for some hydrotherapy for his leg.

But instead, he hid his father's remains in the woods around the house.

His girlfriend, who had no idea what he was really doing, had been co-operating with police.

She'd been trying to tell them he was innocent – but then she noticed that, according to his Snapchat

explained what Chandler had done next.

"Chandler had eight days to spread pieces of his parents all over southern Wisconsin," she said. "They were normal folks just trying to live normal lives. They don't even get to be buried next to each other. The jury must treat Bart and Krista with the respect and dignity that their own son hasn't given them.

"He had two options – own up to his lies, stand up and finally tell the truth for once. Or, like the coward he is, shoot your parents in the back – and that's exactly what happened."

The defence didn't even bother calling any witnesses. They knew they were beaten.



**Chandler Halderson in court for sentencing. He showed no reaction when the verdict was read, and was convicted on two counts each of first-degree intentional homicide, mutilating a corpse and hiding a corpse**

location data, he'd actually been in a forest on the shores of Lake Wisconsin on July 3rd.

He'd told her he'd been at home doing his chores.

And when investigators searched the area around the location shown on Snapchat, they'd discovered Krista's legs.

Assistant DA Raymond

Sure enough it took the jury less than two hours to return guilty verdicts on all counts.

**Under state law, Chandler Halderson was given a mandatory life sentence for intentional murder, and he'll be in prison for decades to come.**

## CHILD KILLERS GOT OFF LIGHTLY

The murder – and yes, it was murder, not manslaughter – of little George Burgess in 1861 had dreadful parallels with the death of Jamie Bulger (*“Stockport Killing Of Little George”* – April). Not just because both boys were just two years old and murdered by children, but because in both cases their abductions were witnessed by adults who had the chance to take preventative action.

I wonder if the judge in the case of George Burgess asked the witnesses, Mary Whitehead and Emma Williams, why either woman didn't intervene when they saw that little George was distressed and didn't want to go with Peter Barratt and James Bradley, the child's abductors. Emma Williams in particular should have gone up to the two boys and removed George from them, because when she saw the child, he was naked, and her son, who was with her, had witnessed George being thrashed with a twig. Even if she didn't know his relationship to the two older boys, she should still have gone up to them, taken the little boy away from them and taken him home to his mother. Not doing anything, I feel, makes her just as culpable for the child's eventual miserable death as his two killers.

I don't personally believe that children are born evil, but children can be cruel towards those weaker than or different to themselves. Even at eight years old, you surely know the difference between right and wrong, even if you don't fully understand the consequences of what you do when you commit a crime. I would guess that those boys started off by being cruel to animals and, for whatever reasons, decided to extend it to tormenting an infant, just because they could. They probably enjoyed the feeling of power over someone smaller than themselves. I wouldn't be surprised if they were bullies at school. What is so chilling about both Barratt and Bradley is that they referred to their tiny victim as “it.”

Barratt and Bradley were remarkably lucky that the judge, Sir Charles Compton, was so lenient and that they only served five years in reform school, despite the brutality of what they did. They were only 13 when released and one can only hope that they were, indeed, reformed and didn't go on to commit further crimes.

**Maxine Hopkinson, Sheffield**

## CHAUFFEUR BECAME A KILLER

I've just read a sketchy account of the murder of 35-year-old Colin George Saunders in 1969, and it would be great to have more detail. He worked as a chauffeur and shared his bedsit flat in Bromley, Kent, with a young drifter from Liverpool called Stanley Wrenn, 19. In the early morning of November 26th, Wrenn struck Saunders twice with an iron gas-ring, then stabbed him multiple times, before leaving the flat along with several items of the dead man's property.

**Stuart Davies, Barnstaple**

*It's an interesting case, Mr. D. Would any other readers like to see a full report in TC?*

## DOPPELGÄNGERS IN CRIME

Frankie Vacchiano's attempt to pass himself off as Al Capone was a gripping read (*“The Gangster Who Wanted To Be Another Capone”* – *Gangland Confidential*, May). It brought to mind other doppelgängers in the annals of crime. Richard Anthony Jones spent 17 years in a Kansas jail for a crime he didn't commit. Several witnesses identified him, but the real mugger was allegedly Ricky Lee Amos. Only when shown images of Ricky did the witnesses backtrack, and Richard was released. The statute of limitations had passed so Ricky was not charged with the crime.

Ralph Alzman led a scary life. He was the spitting image of John Dillinger. For years, he lived in fear he would be gunned down in the street. Arrested 17 times, Alzman once had a machine-gun thrust in his face. “This run-around is getting me down,” he said. “I sure wish I was back home.” Even so, he refused to say anything bad

# “COLEY H AND OPPO

*In March, TC featured the story of Craig Coley, the Californian man who spent nearly 39 years in prison for murder before his conviction was overturned. He was pardoned by the Governor of California and received \$2 million from the state for wrongful conviction. In 2019 Mr. Coley, who had always maintained his innocence, received a \$21 million compensation settlement from the city of Simi Valley. Our account of the case brought this response from Shelley Hamilton whose sister Rhonda Wicht and nephew Donnie were the two murder victims in the case.*

Re: *“\$21 Million: The Price Of One Man's Freedom”* (March): My name is Shelley Hamilton. My sister, Rhonda Wicht, and nephew, Donnie Wicht, were the victims of the crime in the above story.

I want to compliment you on a well written article in which you got the facts of Craig Coley's pardon and release, as well as Mike Bender's hard work, correct. However, I wanted to share with you that there is another side to the story of this crime.

First, in regards to your article, you did mention things that the media has failed to speak about and I thank you for that. Since Coley's pardon the media has only focused on his story of being wrongly convicted which is blatantly false as he was found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt by a jury of his peers. The media has failed to inform the public the true facts of the 1978 investigation which did include the bloody towel. I was pleased to read you did include this in your story.

I'm not sure where you got your information for the article but it appears to me that possibly a lot of it was from Mike Bender and/or Craig Coley. There are a few inconsistencies that I would like to point out:

- Coley was not asleep when police came to his apartment that morning. He had been awake, had showered, and had already phoned the police department because someone had told him about the crime.

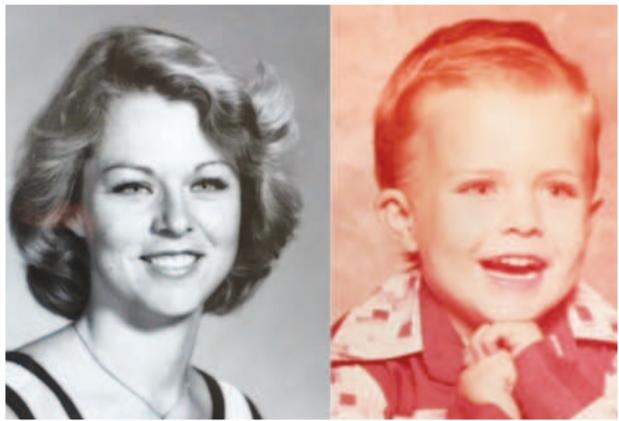
- A key was not used to enter Rhonda's apartment (and there was no key-entry entrance hall). She had locks on the inside of her door that would have had to be opened from the inside. She let him in.



25 years ago this month... True Crime magazine, June 1997

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

# AD MOTIVE ORTUNITY"



Above, left to right, Rhonda Wicht and her son Donnie. Inset, left, Craig Coley at the time of the murders

I still believe that Coley was the murderer. I understand that it is possible that it was somebody else Rhonda knew but I believe Coley was the only person with motive and opportunity. Maybe he was jealous to find out that she was seeing somebody else (which is who the semen on her bed sheet came from). There is also the evidence found in his apartment: the bloody towel and T-shirt. The police believed the T-shirt was used to suffocate Donnie, and when found it was still wet. The blood on the towel was Rhonda's. Coley did tell his story of Rhonda coming over the morning before to explain away the towel and T-shirt, but a jury obviously didn't believe that story (which he testified to in his second trial; I never believed that story either), nor has any media outlet reported on that story of his since his release in 2017. His new story is that the evidence was planted and he was framed and that's what the media is running with.

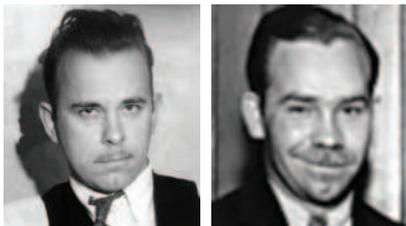
I created and launched a blog to share the side of the story Coley, Bender and the media are leaving out because, as you know, there is always another side to the story. Here is a link to my blog: <https://rdjustice.home.blog/>

I want to thank you again for publishing a more truthful story than any media source is printing here in the USA. Apparently our media isn't as brave as they used to be in investigative reporting.

**Shelley Hamilton, via email**

about Dillinger – at least until he was dead.

Psycho-Vamp from Hell Viktoriya Nasyrova, 42, was “a one-woman walking crime wave.” Suspected of killing a woman in Russia, Viktoriya fled to the States. She killed her boyfriend's dog because her boyfriend gave the dog too much attention. Then she saw her doppelgänger in a beauty parlour – Olga Tsvyk, 35. Viktoriya invited herself into Olga's apartment, drugged her, and left her for dead. She also stole Olga's passport. Investigators believe her plan was to bury



**Gangster John Dillinger (left) and lookalike Ralph Alsmann**

her past and take Olga's place.

Have you ever met your doppelgänger? The man who lives across the road looks like me – even my wife says so. Sometimes I think he's watching me so I keep a close eye on him.

**Andrew Stephenson, Newhaven**

## MURDER IN STAFFORDSHIRE

Has TC or one of your sister magazines ever reported on the mid-60s murder of Diane Minham? She was choked to death by a man called Jones and I think he tried to blame his brother who I think was deaf and dumb. I think she was in a nightclub just before her death.

**M.J. Goodman, Burton-on-Trent**

*We haven't covered the case, Mr. G., but know that the killing took place on or before December 24th, 1964. In 1965, Norman Jones was convicted of Diane's manslaughter.*

## WHO CUT SERVANT ROSE'S THROAT?

Have you ever covered the Peasenhall Murder? I remember in the 1960s, when I was at school, my late mother travelled to Saxmundham, Suffolk. We went through Peasenhall and there was a big house in the centre where she said a murder had taken place in 1902 during a storm. It involved a young servant girl called Rose Harsent. She was found with a cut throat and strangled. I heard there was an arrest made later on, but to this day the details are scant. Perhaps you can enlighten me in a future issue.

**David Bamford, Banbury**

*A full account of the case appeared in our sister magazine Murder Most Foul (113). Copies, priced £4.50, are still available to buy via the Back Issues section of our website at [www.truecrimelibrary.com](http://www.truecrimelibrary.com) or by calling Forum Press on 020 8778 0514.*

## TEEN'S KILLER DESERVED DEATH ROW

Shannon Kepler wasn't much of a father nor a police officer, and unfortunately an innocent 19-year-old's life was taken because of Kepler's inadequacy (“*It Took Five Trials To Convict Veteran Cop Of Murder*,” May). Kepler, 24 years in the police force, and his wife (also a police officer) were parents whose children included adopted daughter Lisa. Like many teenagers, Lisa was finding her way along the difficult path to becoming an adult – a path so often made harder by teenage hormones and angst. Rebellion often features in the young person's journey as it did in Lisa's.

Subsequently Lisa began skipping school, coming home late and hanging out with a crowd her parents didn't approve of.

Just after Lisa's 18th birthday Kepler lost patience to the extent of driving his daughter to a day centre for the homeless. He left her there without money, a credit card, or a phone, and she had only the clothes she had on. Before he drove away Kepler told her not to return home unless she agree to stick by the rules.

Kepler and his wife thought Lisa would soon be back, chastened and vowing to “toe the line.” A few days later he logged onto Lisa's Facebook page and was shocked to see that she was living with a young man and both were declaring their love for each other on their Facebook profiles.

Using his police credentials Kepler researched his daughter's boyfriend's history. It showed that Jeremy Lake had been the victim of childhood abuse and had an altercation with a social worker which resulted in police involvement, although nothing came of the charges.

Armed with a loaded Magnum 357, Kepler drove to the address where the couple were staying. Shortly afterwards, Jeremy was dead, killed by Kepler who had shot him twice in the chest. Kepler then fired three more times to scare off potential witnesses nearby, one of whom was a boy who was injured by a shot.

The conclusion was that it took seven years and five trials to get some measure of justice for Jeremy. Kepler was given 25 years. Had it been possible for me to sentence him he'd have had a one-way ticket to Death Row now and no chance of an appeal.

I found it astounding how this “perfect father” and “pillar of the community” could abandon his daughter in such a callous way.

**Ann Nicholl, Strabane**



**Jailed for murder: Shannon Kepler**

**Find us online at [www.truecrimelibrary.com](http://www.truecrimelibrary.com)**

*It was supposed to be a relaxing, much-needed holiday for the little girl, her sister and their mother. But a dangerous drifter was in the area and about to strike...*

# YARMOUTH HOLIDAY HORROR

## Leoni, Three, Snatched And Murdered

**I**T WAS September 1985, the end of the season, but still a sweltering day in Great Yarmouth. Holidaymakers were milling round on the Seashore Caravan Park like ants on a sugar cake. More than 4,000 of them were making the most of one last day in the sun before returning to their workaday lives all over the country. It was Friday, the 13th...

In one of the caravans on the site, pretty little Leoni Keating, her blonde tresses braided up like a Swiss doll's, was ready for bed at about 9 o'clock that evening. The three-year-old had on a white vest and pyjamas.

It had been a hard, tiring, but exciting day. Leoni, along with 12-year-old sister Nicola, their mother Gail, 32, and two other children had arrived at the site earlier from a battered wives' hostel in Chiswick, West London, for a much-needed holiday, Gail being estranged from Leoni's father.

Six weeks earlier, he had lost a long-running legal battle with Gail, his common-law wife, for custody of little Leoni. He had four children from his first marriage and assured the court that he could give Leoni a good home. The court ruled instead that the child should stay with her mother.

Earlier on that September 13th, the Keating group had played happily on the



**Leoni Keating. Her disappearance led to fruitless searches before a woman spotted the little girl's body in a drainage channel of the River Lark**

beach before returning to the caravan for a supper of egg and chips. After a dog-tired Leoni was put to bed, Gail decided to take Nicola to the camp social club and disco for a dance or two. A babysitter was due to arrive soon – the camp ran an efficient sitter-service – but this time she did not turn up.

But that did not unduly worry Gail Keating. She didn't intend to stay away long – and dozens of other mothers on the vast site often left their children safely locked up in their caravans for an hour or so when they

went out to relax. So Gail left, leaving Leoni peacefully asleep, the door and windows securely locked.

When she returned with Nicola, around midnight, the door was wide open – unlocked from the outside. And, to her horror, Leoni was gone.

The search, spearheaded by a frantic mother, went on into the following day. And it was no easy task. The summer peak was over. The camp had been packed with more than 4,000 people staying in over 1,000 caravans. But that Saturday,

the majority of these were in the process of returning to homes all over Britain.

By noon that day, the search had extended beyond the camp, the resort and local beaches to the countryside and rivers of Norfolk. Helicopters, police launches, frogmen and tracker dogs were involved. And from camp records, holidaymakers who had already made their way home were met by their local police to have statements taken from them.

With still no sign of the missing child on Sunday, scores of volunteers, including many campers still on the site, joined in the search.

It was becoming uneasily obvious that Leoni was not simply lost. Fears of abduction grew and Gail Keating and her common-law husband both appealed publicly on Monday for their daughter's safe return. That was to be a forlorn hope...

The following day, 70 miles to the south-west and in the neighbouring county of Suffolk, housewife Margaret Wilton-Jones was walking near a popular picnic site at Barton Mills, near Mildenhall. Suddenly, she saw what appeared to be a large white bird floating in a drainage channel of the River Lark.

As she moved, rather hesitantly, towards the steep bank of the channel through

the woodland fringing it, the floating object seemed to be a large doll. But then she realised, with a paralysing shock, that she was staring at a small dead child, floating almost naked on its back, her white vest rucked up beneath the armpits.

Leoni Keating had been found. And after police and scientific experts took a closer look at the body, the missing-child search was transformed into a murder hunt, led by Detective Chief Superintendent Eric Shields, head of Suffolk CID. He immediately intensified the work already begun by Norfolk police of interviewing all the people on the caravan site at the time Leoni vanished.

But this was no routine hunt for a killer. There was a spine-chilling horror to this one – because tiny Leoni Keating, apart from being sexually assaulted, had been thrown alive, hands tied behind her back, into the channel to slowly drown.

Anyone travelling inland from Great Yarmouth's coastline, reasoned DCS

Shields, would probably pass through Mildenhall to reach either Cambridge and Bedford. And it was not only a route returning caravaners might take to avoid heavy motorway traffic, but it was also much used

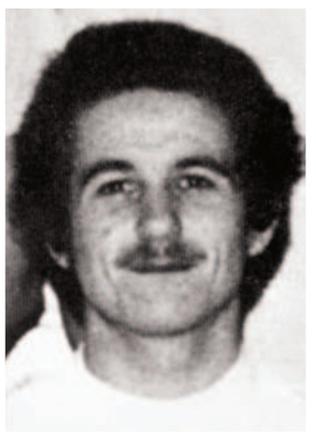
by lorry-drivers. Shields had found lorry-drivers, because of their job, to be particularly observant. And that shrewd observation was later to pay dividends in this case.

Meanwhile, a murder headquarters was set up at Mildenhall, linked to the Norfolk police's team at Great Yarmouth. Computers, still something of a novelty, were brought in to help process the vast amount of information coming in. And after DCS Shields linked up with Essex police, two significant clues soon emerged.

Three years earlier, in 1982, a 10-year-old girl had been abducted from a



**Above, police at the scene in Barton Mills, Suffolk, following the discovery of Leoni's body. Below left, suspect Gary Hopkins**



caravan site at St. Osyth, on the Essex coast, in similar circumstances. She'd

been driven to Great Yarmouth.

The background to this case was truly bizarre. Two women holidaymakers at the caravan site had their trailer broken into. Some clothing and a camera were stolen – and a note was left. It told them

to open their curtains a few inches at 10 o'clock that night, perform

obscene sex acts together – and the clothing would be returned.

The women wisely told the police, who kept watch on the caravan that night. But the perverted peeper did not appear. Instead, less than 100 yards away and right under the noses of the police, a 10-year-old girl was snatched from another caravan, where she was staying with a grandmother. She was taken on a 90-mile drive of terror to the South Deene caravan site, at Great Yarmouth. She was indecently assaulted there, then dumped in a wash-house, tied up with a blue clothesline and gagged with a pair of stolen tights.

The girl, who had given

police a clear description of the moustached abductor at the time – sufficient to put together a photofit – could still remember him. The abductor, posing as a cabbie, said he had been sent by her mother to collect her. He had spent the nightmare journey talking about gruesome experiments on animals.

Police were now sure that this man was Leoni's killer, too. The *modus operandi* was similar, while Leoni had also been bound with a length of blue clothesline.

**Leoni Keating, apart from being sexually assaulted, had been thrown alive, hands tied behind her back, into the channel to slowly drown**

In June 1985, six weeks before Leoni's death and also at the Seashore Caravan Park in Great Yarmouth, another girl was snatched in the night. A man wielding a long knife peeked in at a 14-year-old girl undressing alone in a trailer. He waited until she was in bed, then burst in, gagged her with her bra and dragged her at knifepoint to his car. She somehow struggled free, screamed for help and fled, but not before her attacker had plunged the knife into her back – a wound which needed four stitches later.

So, on Wednesday, September 25th, after more discussions between the three county forces now on the case, the photofit was released to the newspapers. By then, the command post was sited at Suffolk police HQ at Martlesham, where officers were working round the clock and calls flooded in responding to the photograph. More phone calls came in after police appealed on the BBC's *Crimewatch* programme.

It took time, even aided by computer, to filter and analyse this kind of information. But by October 18th a female witness had remembered seeing a child of Leoni's appearance sobbing in the back seat of a brown car speeding from the



**The holiday park caravan from which Leoni was abducted**

Seashore site on the night of September 13th. It was an important clue, coupled with a lorry-driver's recollection of a brown Rover parked on the highway near the murder scene later the same night – particularly as he recalled some of its registration numbers.

DCS Shields and his team now had two priorities, high and low. The high-priority list featured people who answered the photofit description in a general way, owned or used brown cars, or had previous convictions. These were being interviewed personally by detectives on the murder squad. Low-priority suspects fitted only one, perhaps two, of the main requirements. And local police throughout the country were interviewing them on Shields' behalf.



**Leoni's mother Gail Keating and her mother outside the park's police incident room**

wrong. True, he did not like his suspect, but the feeling went deeper than that. Walsh had a sense of premonition as he fed Hopkins' name into the computer. And the man's crime sheet soon told an interesting story.

Hopkins had a juvenile court record in the town of Ipswich, graduating on through Borstal to prison. He never knew his father, since his mother did not fill in that relevant detail on the birth certificate. Hopkins' file revealed him to be a disruptive child at school, with a marked streak of sadism.

In the mid-1970s he had lived with an Essex woman and had a son and a daughter by her. But the little girl became a cot-death suffocation victim in 1977. Hopkins was accused obliquely of ill-treating the child. The following day, he ran from the house into a nearby park and indecently exposed himself to a young girl.

That was the "flasher" indictment on his crime sheet, coupled at the

time with assaulting a policeman and driving while disqualified, all of which got him a six-month term in jail.

In 1980, he met another



**A photofit image of the suspect in previous attacks**

Essex woman, a student nurse, like himself, in Hornchurch Hospital. They were married at Havering in June the following year. But it was a stormy affair. Hopkins sometimes dressed up in his wife's clothes – and the couple split up, pending divorce, in 1982.

Hopkins surfaced again in Great Yarmouth, working



**Police divers at the scene in Barton Mills where the body of Leoni was discovered**

as a bingo-caller, pretending to be a martial arts expert. Significantly, he spent a lot of time in the area's holiday camps and trailer sites, particularly in the bar of the Seashore Caravan Park.

But he was soon back in jail, for a burglary at the Lucky Punter Social Club – the crime remembered by DC Peter Walsh. Released in June 1984, Hopkins stayed again at the Seashore camp with his new partner, who had visited him regularly in prison, before going to live with her and her two children in Bedford.

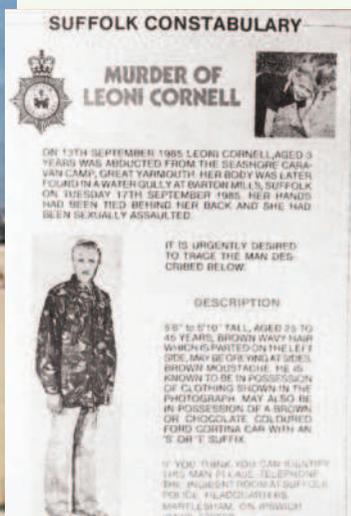
His only real friend all these years was a doting grandmother, who had a holiday trailer at the Bel-Air site in St. Osyth, where the 10-year-old girl had been abducted in 1982. Hopkins often stayed at the site, spending hours wandering among the rows of trailers, peering into windows and pilfering cash and cigarettes from empty caravans.

An officer from the Bedfordshire CID, yet another force now liaising with the murder team, interviewed Hopkins during the first week of November. Once again, it was a hunch from another young detective which kept Hopkins on the priority suspect list.

Although the suspect's partner backed his alibi for the night of September 13th – that Hopkins had been nowhere near the murder scene – Detective Constable Paul Wright realised, from the lightness of skin over the upper lip, that Gary Hopkins had recently shaved off a moustache – and that he otherwise matched the photofit perfectly.

Hopkins at first denied owning a brown Rover car, but Wright persisted, knowing that he had. Eventually, the suspect admitted it, but said he could not remember the registration number, or to whom he'd sold the car. This was, of course, sheer nonsense – and Wright told him so. Reluctantly, Hopkins finally produced a receipt.

Wright reported back to the murder squad. In those days even that was a process which took time, as it was still only one line of inquiry on an "action" list of 6,380 people, of whom 1,500 were interesting enough,



**A police poster issued following Leoni's murder**

Into the complex inquiry at this stage came the human touch, that gut reaction of suspicion a good detective never ignores, however sophisticated his scientific aids might be. A man called Gary Hopkins, a 28-year-old unemployed drifter, had come into the suspect pipeline. He was one among dozens of others with a previous conviction for indecent exposure. He lived in Bedford, had once been a Merchant Navy cook and had also worked on travelling fairgrounds. He liked to hang around discos and bingo halls at holiday camps.

Detective Constable Peter Walsh remembered Hopkins from a burglary incident in Great Yarmouth – and soon sensed that something was

incredibly, to be temporary suspects. Yet as soon as Wright's report came up, Hopkins went straight to the top of the list. And a team was sent out to watch him closely, while attempts were made to trace the car, which might still hold vital forensic evidence. As things turned out, however, it was not needed.

Hopkins tried belatedly to "do a runner" – flee from his home before the car was found – and the surveillance team had no option but to arrest him on November 22nd. On the way to Mildenhall, the police car passed the murder spot and detectives in the car noticed a startling reaction from their suspect.

Said Detective Constable Malcolm Lumsden later: "Hopkins went suddenly silent and there was a distinct aura about him. Blood drained from his face and he began to breathe heavily. It was weird and uncanny."

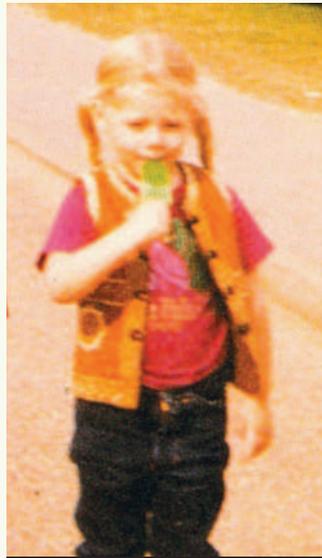
On Saturday, November 23rd, Gary Hopkins was charged with the murder of Leoni Keating. He confessed to the abduction, the brutal sex assault on Leoni – and leaving her at the Barton Mills beauty spot.

He would have more to say on that at his trial at Ipswich Crown Court, in June 1986. He had earlier admitted to police that it was he who had abducted the other two caravan site girls, but he flatly denied actually killing Leoni after snatching her.

As Prosecutor Michael Hill QC showed the jury of eight men and four women some photos Hopkins had taken of Barton Mills four months before the child's murder, the defendant collapsed in the dock. It took prison warders eight minutes to revive him before the trial could resume, but he slumped forward off his chair again when the photographs reappeared.

And he again collapsed and burst into tears, head in hands, as Mrs. Wilton-Jones described how she discovered Leoni Keating's corpse floating in the water.

Mr. Hill then told how Leoni was abducted, Hopkins, he said, had admitted that crime, after entering the caravan with a skeleton key and finding



**Leoni seen at the Great Yarmouth holiday park**

the child sleepily wandering round the trailer, out of bed. But Hopkins claimed that, although he tied the child's hands behind her back and sexually assaulted her, she was still alive when he left her, 10 feet or so inside the woods bordering the steep bank of the waterway in the pitch darkness.

As this was outlined in court, Leoni's mother fled distraught from the building. Hopkins' allegations,

### **"The circumstances of Leoni's death displayed a degree of callousness and depravity which is almost unbelievable"**

however, did not stand up as the pathologist, Dr. David Harrison, soon proved. But first, Detective Chief Inspector Stewart Chapman told the jury how Hopkins showed him where he had lifted the screaming child over a gate and into the woodland before removing her pyjamas and assaulting her.

The pathologist carried out detailed checks at Barton Mills, to see if Leoni could have stumbled into the ditch where her body was found. He also looked for any marks on her body consistent with her wandering through the undergrowth in darkness.

But there were none. "I would have expected abrasions anywhere between head and ankles, but there was nothing there," he stated.

Mr. Hill commented sombrely: "That leaves the quite fantastic possibility that some other person stumbled across the child, no doubt terrified and crying, with her arms tied behind her back – and put her in the waterway." But this could not be so, he added. Leoni had been thrown into the water from the top of the bank, bound and still alive, to drown as a result of Hopkins' action. "Having done what he wished to do, he put her in the water to drown – and not put himself at risk. It was murder," he said simply.

In a closing defence speech, Brian Cox, QC, urged the jury not to be "a committee of vigilantes." They had, he said, heard a lot of evidence about Hopkins' activities before Leoni's death which could arouse feelings of contempt, disgust and hatred of anyone who could do that to a little girl.

But, he concluded, "although Hopkins was probably the last person to see her alive, he did not necessarily kill her." She could, he insisted, have stumbled out of the woodland and fallen into the channel, where her body was found later.

The jury, however, chose to ignore this remote possibility and convicted Hopkins of the murder. The killer gasped for air, white-faced, as Mr. Justice Mann passed four concurrent life sentences on him for the murder and three abductions, recommending a minimum 25 years in jail for each.

He told the murderer: "The circumstances of Leoni's death displayed a degree of callousness and depravity which is almost unbelievable. It is quite clear you are a menace to the public – and there is no prospect of that menace disappearing. For the indefinite future, you will be a threat to young girls."

As Hopkins was led away, stumbling, to the cells, cries of "Scum!" and "Hang the bastard!" echoed round the court, almost drowning the

sobs of uncontrollable grief from Leoni's distraught mother.

**F**ew, if any, people felt sympathy for Hopkins who now faced a minimum of a quarter of a century behind bars before he could even apply for parole. His cruel and callous crime had shocked the nation, so it was no great surprise some years later when the Lord Chief Justice made a recommendation that the killer should die in jail. In response, the Home Secretary increased the minimum tariff that Hopkins would serve to 30 years.

Like so many killers who regard the sentence they have been given as injustice, Hopkins was incensed. He had denied poor Leoni



**Evil killer Gary Hopkins**

Keating any life at all but he still thought he deserved freedom sooner rather than later.

By this time the killer had changed his name to Xavier Themis. In response to the Home Secretary's ruling, the killer appealed against the decision, claiming that at the time of the murder he was suffering from Asperger syndrome. However, Themis's bid to have his sentence reduced was rejected in 2008 by judges at the High Court, the "sheer evil" of his crime said to justify the longer sentence.

The judge said: "The applicant raises the argument that at the time of the murder he may have been suffering from Asperger syndrome. But even if he were, this would not mitigate the sheer evil and cruelty of the murder."

**By 2016, Themis had spent 30 years of his life behind bars for Leoni's murder. Now in his 60s, TC understands, this notorious child-killer remains incarcerated.**

**“ONE OF THE MOST REVOLTING CRIMES COMMITTED IN ESSEX” – BUT...**

# **Should He Have Hanged For Maud's Murder?**

**A**LITTLE MORE than a century ago, what is now the large town of Brentwood was just an Essex village. A couple of miles to the south, what is known locally as Warley Gap is now a country park, and it was here, almost 120 years ago,

**Case recalled by Matthew Spicer**

that a labourer making his way to work in Brentwood discovered one of the most revolting murders ever committed in rural Essex.

Shortly after leaving his home near Little Warley waterworks on the morning of Saturday, May 23rd, 1903, John Cook noticed blood on the embankment of one of the pump-houses. Then he saw a woman's hat nearby in some brambles, and on going closer he found a young woman's body. The left side of her face was mutilated and several teeth were missing.

John Cook had seen enough. He ran to Great Warley where he alerted



at Chelmsford police station were also alerted, and by

the village constable, who promptly phoned Brentwood police station. Officers

the late morning Detective Inspector Mardon and Detective Sergeant Scott were at the scene.

A draper's box containing calico purchased in Brentwood the previous evening lay beside the murder victim, who appeared to be in her late teens or early 20s. Splashes

of blood indicated that she had been dragged into the undergrowth where she was found near an oak sapling, and a search of her clothes revealed a pawn ticket and a laundry card.

They bore the name Garrett and an address in Brentwood's Alfred Road, which turned out to be the home of a bricklayer, Daniel Garrett.

The body was taken to the Horse Artillery Inn on Warley Road, and when officers took Mr. Garrett there he collapsed in tears. The victim was his 20-year-old daughter Maud.

He said he had last seen her at 8.10 the previous



**Above, the old Warley waterworks pumping station. It delivered water from a reservoir up to the water tower near the barracks. Left, Maud Garrett who was brutally murdered nearby**

## **MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE?**

evening. Earlier, she had gone out to buy some cheese, returning briefly and then going out again. When she didn't return he thought she was staying with her married sister, as she frequently did. A passer-by had told him that morning of the murder at Warley Gap, but he'd had no idea that his daughter was the victim. Her face was now so disfigured, he told the police, that he recognised her only by her petticoat and boots.

Questioned further, Mr. Garrett said that Maud had been his housekeeper since her mother's death 10 years earlier, and she had a boyfriend, a soldier at Warley Barracks who was currently in hospital.

The investigators then learned that Maud also had another boyfriend at the

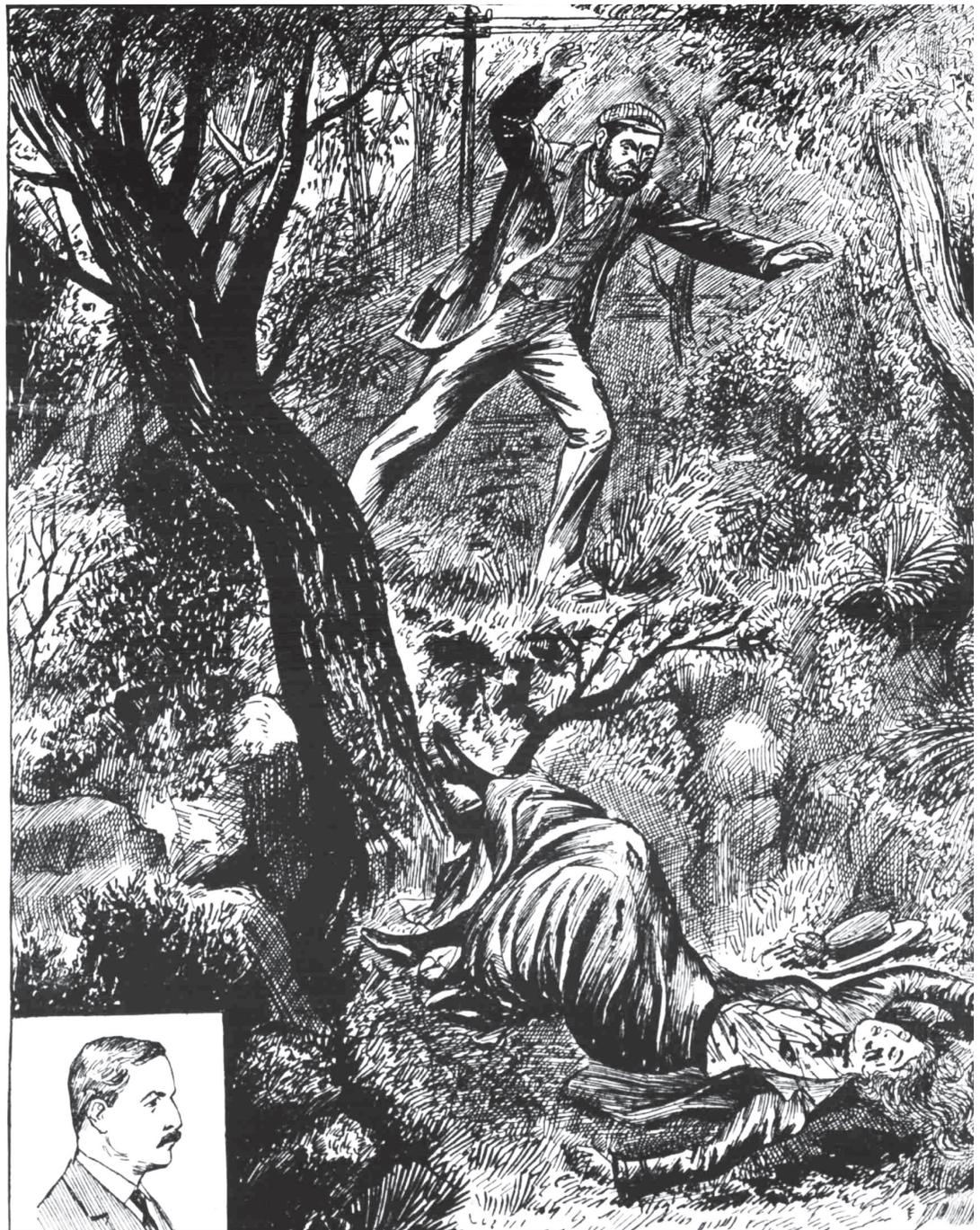
*White told police that he had left Maud by the guardroom at 9.45 on the Friday night, asking her to wait for him. But she had disappeared when he went out for the rendezvous*

barracks. He was Bernard White, a 21-year-old private in the Essex Regiment, and he had asked his company sergeant-major for permission to speak to the police.

He told them that he had left Maud by the guardroom at 9.45 on the Friday night, asking her to wait for him while he booked-in, and telling her he would then slip out to see her again. But she had disappeared when he went out for the rendezvous, he said, and after looking for her fruitlessly he returned to his tent at 10.15.

The detectives were not satisfied with his story, and he was arrested and charged with the murder.

On the Sunday more than 100 morbid sightseers went to the crime scene, some taking photographs, others stripping bark from the oak sapling and gathering leaves and bloodstained grass as souvenirs.



**A contemporary illustration showing the discovery of Maud Garrett's body. Inset, Detective Sergeant Scott**

When Private White appeared at Brentwood Magistrates' Court the next morning there was a large police presence to prevent a disturbance; rumours having circulated about the sexual character of Maud Garrett's injuries. They were reputed to be the most awful imaginable, and so they were, but this had yet to be made public.

A newspaper report described White as sun-tanned and pleasant-looking, with a moustache. Despite his predicament, he seemed unconcerned and smiled as he looked round the court.

Superintendent George

Allen testified that at Warley Barracks he had taken possession of White's kit and uniform. There were spots of what appeared to be blood on the trousers and belt, and White had attributed them

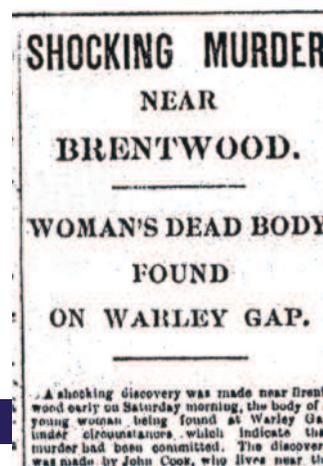
to a cut finger.

The suspect's brief appearance before the magistrates ended with his remand in custody, but the public got another look at him that afternoon when he insisted on attending Maud Garrett's inquest at the Horse Artillery Inn.

After her father had given evidence of identification, the coroner asked him: "Do you happen to know the man who is in custody?"

"No, sir," Daniel Garrett replied. "He is an entire stranger to me. If that is the gentleman sitting there, I should like to have a go at him."

"You must not do that,"



said the coroner, and the inquest was adjourned.

Meanwhile the *Essex County Chronicle* had learned that an autopsy had established that a stick, believed to be a military cane, had been thrust up Maud's vagina, piercing her bladder. White's uniform and a broken military cane were now being examined by a Home Office pathologist.

At Maud Garrett's funeral three days later, soldiers of the Essex Regiment were her coffin's bearers and the mourners included her other boyfriend, a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC).

When the inquest was resumed on June 4th, Police Constable Througood of Great Warley said that when Mr. Cook led him to the

*"I saw a pool of blood and the body of the deceased. She was lying flat on her back, her face was covered with blood, and she was fully dressed"*

crime scene, "I saw a pool of blood and the body of the deceased. She was lying flat on her back, her face was covered with blood, and she was fully dressed with the exception of her hat and right shoe. Her left leg was curled towards her body, and her right leg was straight out. Her clothing was considerably disarranged.

"On examining her face I found a large wound on the left side, about four inches long. There were other severe wounds, one being in the left temple, and the body was cold and stiff. I should think it had been there an hour or two. I noticed that the jaw was cut right through, and that teeth had been driven right into the mouth."

The constable added that Maud's clothes appeared to have been disarranged after she was placed where she was found, and Superintendent Allen then testified that there was no sign of a struggle at the crime scene, and the cut on



**Warley Barracks at the time of the murder and (below) a recent photo taken by your author. It is still in use today**



White's finger was barely visible and did not appear to have bled.

John Cook told the court: "On Saturday morning, May 23rd, I left home to go to my work at half-past four. I was walking by way of Warley Gap, and when I was stepping out on to this road near the top of the hill I saw a man running towards me. Just as he 'twigg'd' me he turned back in a moment. He had a grey suit on. It

looked like a running suit. He was about a hundred yards from me when he saw me and ran back towards the barracks. I saw no more of him."

"Have you seen at other times people running along the road?" asked the coroner.

"I have seen some in the morning and at night too, but I took no notice of them."

After Cook described his discovery of the body, the coroner questioned him further about the running man. "Had this man you saw running passed the body?" he asked.

"He had passed the spot and he turned round and re-passed it."

"How far past the spot was the man when you saw him?"

"About sixty yards. I did not think it was anything

unusual to see the man before I saw the body. I have seen soldiers about there in the mornings and evenings as well."

"Did the man seem to turn in fright?" asked a juror.

"I cannot say, sir."

Maud's RAMC boyfriend, Private Cecil Byron Jones, said he had been a hospital patient for five weeks, and Maud had told him she had been walking out with a soldier in the Essex Regiment.

"Did you say anything with regard to him?" asked the coroner.

Jones replied that he told Maud he supposed he'd have to take a back seat. She had replied, "No, I'll stick to you. I hate him."

Joseph Oliver, a night-watchman at Warley Place, Great Warley, told the court that at around 10.50 on the night in question he heard several screams come from the direction of Warley Gap. "The next morning, when I heard of the murder, I said, 'They were the screams I heard.'"

"You have heard screams from the asylum?" asked a juror.

"Yes, sir," the night-watchman replied, "but it was not from that direction."

The inquest was again adjourned. When it resumed a few days later the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against Bernard White, and he was

**MURDER.**  
**VERDICT AND SENTENCE**

On Friday, at the Essex Assizes at Chelmsford, before Mr. Justice Lawrence, the trial of *Private Bernard White*, 21, of the 2nd Battalion Essex Regiment, for the wilful murder of *Maud Garrett*, at Little Warley, on May 22, was continued and concluded.

Professor Pepper, the Home Office medical expert, detailed the awful injuries sustained by the murdered girl. There were six marks on the deceased's left cheek, from a quarter to a third of an inch across, and varying from a little under two inches to three inches long. There were also wounds at the back of the left ear. These were caused by such a weapon as a soldier's cane. The jaw had been broken, several teeth had been knocked out, and the left eyeball was ruptured. These wounds had been produced by some blunt instrument, used with great violence.

Mr. Hill, M.C. (for the prosecution): Were they such as might have been caused by violent kicks by a boot?—Witness: More likely than in any other way.

Dr. Pepper next described the internal injuries. The wound which penetrated to the liver was eleven inches long. The instrument which caused the injury would have penetrated sixteen or seventeen inches from the surface of the body, and must have

subsequently committed for trial. "All I can say is I am innocent," he told the magistrates.

When his trial began before Mr. Justice Lawrance at Essex Assizes on November 12th, the court was told that White had walked out with Maud Garrett for six weeks in 1901 before he left for the war in South Africa, and by the time he returned to England she had become engaged to Private Jones who she had gone to see in hospital on May 21st. Because of military regulations she was refused admission, and on leaving the hospital she met White and he arranged to see her again the following night.

At 9.15 p.m. on May 22nd he left a public house with two fellow-soldiers, and as they made their way back to Warley Barracks they met Maud near a railway bridge. White stopped and chatted to her for a minute or two while the others walked on, the couple then following them.

On reaching the barracks, White left Maud near the entrance, intending to rejoin her after roll-call, the court was told. The three soldiers went to report themselves, and then went to their tent, which White left around 10.15, returning at about 11 o'clock.

Asked by others in the tent if he had seen Maud, he told them he hadn't, but said he thought he'd seen her near the church with a soldier wearing two badges.

Two witnesses said they heard screams coming from Warley Gap that night. One said this was between 10 and 10.30, another said it was just after 10.45, and a colour-sergeant said that as he passed the spot between 10.20 and 10.30 he heard a groan. He thought it was a pig and didn't stop. Fifty yards from the scene he passed a civilian, who had not since come forward and who the police had been unable to trace.

At 4.45 the next morning a sentry saw White going towards the spot where the body was found. White was wearing khaki trousers, a grey shirt and canvas shoes, and five minutes later a running man was seen by John Cook. Ten minutes after that a corporal saw White



Alfred Road, Brentwood, where in 1903 Maud Garrett lived with her father. Below, the modern-day waterworks



going to his tent which was 700 yards from the crime scene, via a rough cart track.

Mr. Forrest Fulton, defending, said that athletic sports were shortly to be held, and he suggested that White was training. But the

court was told that none of his tent-fellows knew he was doing so.

At 7 a.m. White was in the wash-house, where he saw the sentry and told him he had been to Warley Gap. News of the murder soon spread through the camp, and the court was told that at 7.45 White said he had just been to Warley Gap but had been too late to see the body. At 10.15 he told a sergeant that he had been out with a girl who matched the murder victim's description.

The Home Office pathologist Professor Pepper testified that Maud's body had been penetrated, via

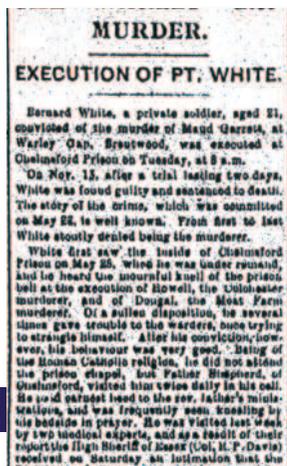
the vagina, to a depth of 16 to 17 inches. This had been done with great violence, rupturing her liver, and

*She would have suffered very severe concussion, all her injuries had been inflicted within three minutes, and she had died from shock and from blood blocking the back of her throat*

the pain would have been excruciating. Although her jaw had been broken, several teeth knocked out, and her left eyeball ruptured, her skull had not been fractured.

She would have suffered very severe concussion, all her injuries had been inflicted within three minutes, and she had died within 15 or 20 minutes from shock and from blood from her mouth blocking the back of her throat, preventing her from breathing.

Her head and facial injuries had been caused by an instrument such as a cane, and probably also by kicks from a boot. Very little



blood had been left in her body.

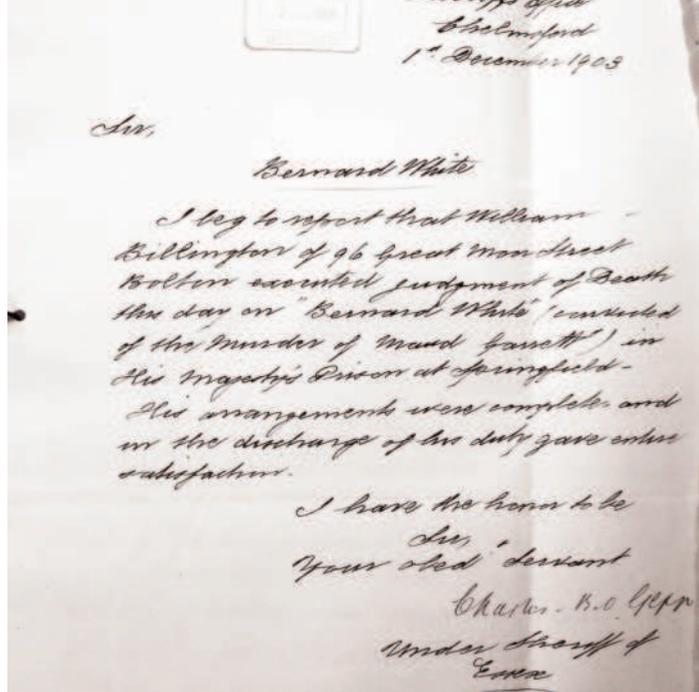
Cross-examined about White's bloodstained clothes, the pathologist said: "I should certainly have expected to see more blood on the boots if they had caused the injuries to the head, especially on the toes. It would not be so very easy to remove the blood from the welts unless they were thoroughly washed. I should not have been surprised to see a great deal more blood on the clothes. The blood on the right boot and trouser leg was evidently caused by the wearer treading in blood, because there was a splash inside the trouser leg. I was surprised not to have found more blood on the tunic. I found no blood on the cane."

Bernard White did not give evidence, and in his concluding speech the prosecutor Mr. Arthur Gill KC told the jury: "I will merely draw to your attention a few of the facts that are beyond all possible question. There is no conceivable doubt about the fact that the woman was murdered on that night, or that she was alive at ten o'clock and was at that time waiting for the man who is in the dock. Did he return to her, and did he go with her to the place where she met her death?"

"The evidence, I submit to you, conclusively shows that he did return to her. Where was he from ten o'clock during the next hour? No human being ever saw the woman alive again. Did the prisoner go with her, or did she meet some man coming – from where? – and was she induced to go with him to that lonely place? That is the suggestion that is made when it is said that during the few minutes when the prisoner went to report himself, the woman disappeared.

"But what are the subsequent actions of the prisoner? He is away from his tent for an hour, he is out early in the morning, and there is blood upon his clothes. I submit that this is a case where the guilt of the prisoner has been brought home to him."

The defence counsel then told the jury: "I cannot discover any motive at all adequate to account for



The notice of execution document written following Bernard White's date with the hangman

any reasonable supposition that the prisoner committed this crime. It is suggested that he was so frantically jealous of the deceased, so much in love with her, that on hearing that she had been walking out with another man, he murdered her. But, gentlemen, this frantically jealous man had been in South Africa, and he had been back in Warley from May 4th to May 21st without making the slightest attempt to see her or communicate with her in any way.

"All we know is that on the nights of May 21st and 22nd the prisoner and the deceased were friendly together, and we know nothing more than what the prosecution suggests to you. But if the prisoner's intention was to murder her, why did he take her that distance away when there were woods at hand?"

"Remember, also, that there is a diversity as to the time the screams were heard. My suggestion is that the murder was committed at a few minutes to eleven, when it is admitted that the prisoner was in or near his quarters."

Then there was the mystery of the civilian seen near the spot, the defence counsel continued, claiming that the bloodstains were insufficient as evidence against his client. The theory that the murder was committed by a maniac was consistent with the evidence, Mr. Forrest Fulton concluded, urging the jury

not to base their verdict on suspicion only.

Summing-up, Mr. Justice Lawrance said that while it was true that there were conflicting accounts of the time at which the screams were heard, the jury would know how difficult it was to state the exact time at which something occurred unless one looked at a watch or clock. If they were satisfied that the murder was committed between 10 and

*"My suggestion is that the murder was committed at a few minutes to eleven, when it is admitted that the prisoner was in or near his headquarters"*

11 p.m., the fact that White was absent without leave from his tent during that time required explanation.

As to the matter of motive, those with experience of the courts know only too well that in such cases there was often no apparent motive at all. There was evidence, however, that White had told his friends that he was going to meet Maud Garrett, saying that if she would not accompany him to a private place where he wanted her to go he would return to them.

Why did he want her to go to such a place? Whether he was angry because she would not go there, or whether he wished her to go there for an improper purpose was for the jury to consider.

By today's standards, the evidence – or lack of it – adds up to serious doubts about White's guilt. His protestations of innocence are, of course, exactly what we would expect from a man charged with such a bloody murder.

But, given that it *was* a bloody murder, wouldn't we also expect rather more than a few blood spots on his trousers and belt? Lack of motive remains a troubling factor, too.

It seems, though, that the jury were not so troubled. After retiring for just 49 minutes on the second day of the trial, they found Bernard White guilty. When he was asked if he had anything to say, he told the court: "I did not kill Miss Garrett."

Sentencing him to death, the judge told him: "The jury have found you guilty upon evidence which I think must have satisfied every reasonable person who has given attention to this case. They have found you guilty of one of the foulest murders it has ever been my lot to try."

White had earlier been certified insane and confined to an asylum after he attacked a fellow-soldier with a bayonet, and four months before he appeared at his trial a Home Office memorandum had noted: "The result of the trial will probably be that the jury will find him insane." But insanity had not featured in his defence.

While he awaited trial he had threatened to commit suicide and had tried to strangle himself, but two doctors who examined him in the condemned cell found him to be sane, and on December 1st, 1903, he was hanged at Chelmsford Prison by William Billington and Henry Pierrepoint.

**They gave him a drop of seven feet four inches, and his death was instantaneous. Questions, however, must remain about whether justice was truly done in the case of Bernard White.**

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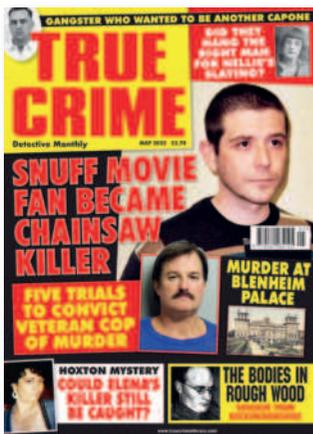
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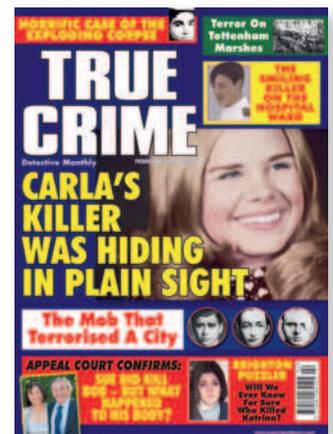
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**T**HE POPULAR image of a mobster is a bespoke-suited, stoutly built man in sunglasses with a smile that would send a shiver down the spine of many a fully grown crocodile.

But not all of them lived up to the stereotype.

Some preferred to shun the limelight, and get on with their “work” quietly in the background. Not for them the spectacular assassinations of competitors or “traitors” in full view of the public... the grinning insistence that they were really just legitimate businessmen protecting their interests.

Those sorts of polished hoods may have been famous in New York and Chicago, but out west in Los Angeles, a very different type of mobster plied his trade.

They didn’t just run the usual prostitution and gambling rings. They actually managed to worm their way deep into the heart of local government.

Their influence was so pernicious that law enforcement thought that the real government lay not in City Hall but in the supposed underworld.

And their head throughout the 1920s, 30s and 40s was a dapper little man known as Jack Dragna.

Jack was born Ignazio Dragna in 1891 in Corleone, Sicily – the very same small town that Mario Puzo, and later Francis Ford Coppola, immortalised in the novel and film *The Godfather*.

His family emigrated to the US in 1898 when he was seven years old, and Jack took to life in the new world with much of the same vigour as his fictional counterparts.

By the time he was 21, he was already in serious trouble with the New York police. In 1914, suspected of being involved in the death of Barnet Baff, a Jewish poultry dealer, he skipped town and ran to the other side of the country.

In those days, it was still possible to make a new life for yourself without having to worry too much about your old one.

Jack’s problem was that he didn’t even bother trying that hard. Within a year of

## Hollywood...it’s where legendary gangster movies like *Angels with Dirty Faces* and *The Godfather* were created. It’s also where real-life gangsters like Jack Dragna flourished...

arriving in Long Beach, California, he was sentenced to three years in prison for extortion.

On his release, he went back to Italy and joined the army. He fought in the Italian invasion of North Africa during the Italo-Turkic war, and he made the most of his service.

Principally, he learned a lot about guns and how to use them.

It was knowledge he’d put to good use when he returned to California three years later.

**T**here weren’t many Sicilians when Jack first arrived in the Sunshine State, but that would soon be changing. His countrymen were as attracted to the area as everyone else.

“Most were farmers in Sicily, and wanted the same experience,” wrote J. Michael Niotta in his history of the West Coast mob, *LA Underworld*. “The climate in California is very similar to Sicily.”

Like those farmers, Jack



**Gaetano “Tom” Dragna. He was consigliere to his younger brother before retiring in 1956. He died in 1977**

found himself in the right place at the right time.

Prohibition had just begun in the US, and the result was the exact opposite of what the government had intended – it became a golden age for gangsters.

“Before Prohibition,” wrote Niotta, “I wouldn’t say there was an organisation so much as maybe local criminals and loose confederations. Prohibition is what gave them a reason to organise and come together.”

The most obvious beneficiaries of the huge demand for illicit booze were in the north and east – cities like Chicago, Boston and New York, close to the enormous, porous border with a Prohibition-free Canada.

Swamped with demand and opportunities literally next door, the East Coast mob paid no attention to places like California and guys like Jack Dragna.

That suited Jack to a T.

He teamed up with his brother Gaetano, who was known as Tom, and another mobster, Joseph Ardizzone, to run their own West Coast liquor racket.

They were supported in this by none other than the previously entirely legitimate businesses in the wine-growing areas in the form of the grape growers’ association. Prohibition was threatening their very existence (which of course was the whole point of it), but here came their guardian angels.

The fact that those angels wore horns instead of halos was a trivial detail.

Ardizzone was elected the chairman of the grape growers’ welfare society, and Jack Dragna became their vice-chair.

But despite the way that money flooded in as sure as the booze flooded out, things were never that simple.

Obviously, local law enforcement was determined to have a say, but not in the way you’d expect.

Because a significant element of the LAPD thought that vice was their own domain – which meant that they were the ones who would get rich from it, not the mobsters.

“The LAPD’s central



**Like many of the powerful mob men of his era, Joseph “Iron Man” Ardizzone burned brightly – but briefly – before his disappearance in 1931**

# THE SECRET

# “UNDERWORLD



**In the right place  
at the right time:  
Ignazio "Jack"  
Dragna in 1916**

of the golden goose.

The East Coast mobs initially had little time for their western counterparts, seeing them as Mickey Mouse operations, but the truth was that they were just as ruthless as any of the other families.

For instance, in 1931, Joe Ardizzone mysteriously vanished while he was on the way to visit his cousin. His body has never been found, nor have any clues as to who might have been involved.

With Ardizzone's disappearance, Jack became head of the LA mob fraternity. Making his brother Tom his *consigliere*, Jack diversified into gambling,



**A mug-shot of the young "Handsome Johnny" Roselli, also known as Al Capone's man on the west coast**

vice squad was on the take," said Niotta. "And a loose, organised crime syndicate was protected by the top aide of Mayor George Cryer. It wasn't violent, big-time, high-profile, Chicago-style

organised crime. But its corrupting influence was just as real."

Even so, Jack and his buddies prospered almost as richly as their East Coast cousins.

So when Prohibition ended, the family links with the East Coast started to be seen as possible opportunities to continue to grow a business that could easily have wasted away with the disappearance

# RET HEAD OF LA'S D GOVERNMENT"

offshore gaming boats, extortion, laundries and even textile manufacturing.

His enterprises were backed up with muscle and organisation from Girolamo "Momo" Adamo, and Handsome Johnny Roselli, who was also Al Capone's agent out west.

A new mayor, Jack Shaw, thought street crimes like prostitution and gambling were iniquitous and beneath the office of the mayor.

While this may seem properly high-minded and clean, all it meant in practice was that he turned his attentions instead to skimming the profits off city building projects, refuse contracts and appointing friends to high office in return for lucrative favours gifted at the public expense.

By the late 30s, Jack Dragna and his mob ran a business empire that brazenly straddled both sides of legality, reaching a profitable understanding with Mayor Shaw.

"As long as it was quiet, no bloodshed in the streets, then it was fine," wrote *Liberty* magazine at the time, "because LA wanted to have this image of a family-friendly, fun, touristy place – but they also wanted these vices discreetly."

And the traffic went both

ways. A Grand Jury minority report in 1937 declared that "A portion of underworld profits have been used in financing campaigns for city and county officials in vital positions. The district attorney's office, sheriff's office, and LAPD work in complete harmony and never interfere with important figures in the underworld."

But that couldn't last forever.

In fact, it barely outlasted the decade. Shaw was recalled – driven from office – in 1940.

*"The city of Los Angeles has for the last 20 years been, almost uninterrupted, run by an underworld government*



*invisible to the average citizen,"* was how *Liberty* put it.

This also illustrated a crucial difference between the murderous, avaricious thugs in Chicago and New York and the slick diplomacy of Jack Dragna.

Jack kept his official opponents aside, often bowing to their demands in return for being allowed to get on with making a decent return in peace.

Back east, however, the mobsters were losing patience with the apparent slowness of Dragna to grow his business.

They believed there were opportunities that Jack was

astonishing pace, and he had no worries about introducing new income streams.

Jack Dragna, however, in a manner that was echoed in scenes in the *Godfather* movies, balked at Siegel's keenness to get involved with trafficking narcotics.

He flew to New York to complain about this gross lowering of the bar.

"Jack was disgusted by the fact that the Mexican border was being used by the syndicate for narcotics. He spoke to the families' commission in New York about it. He was definitely against narcotics."

The mob weren't impressed with Jack's



**Bugsy Siegel (above left and centre) was sent to Las Vegas by the mob to run the Flamingo but ended up dead in the home he shared with Virginia Hill (above right). The mob then sent Mickey Cohen (left)**



missing, either through incompetence or because of his desire to keep officialdom sweet.

Whatever the reasons, they wanted much more money, much more quickly.

So when the state of Nevada legalised gambling in 1931, the eastern mob were determined to take control, and they had no truck with Jack wanting a share. His slick professionalism had no place in their brutal worldview, and they simply tried to barge him out of the way.

The man they sent out was Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel. Siegel dressed as sharp as a diamond, with a personality larger than the desert that Las Vegas was founded in. He was also a keen operator with a gimlet eye for an opportunity.

He built a nationwide network of wire services for bookmakers that increased the mob's income with

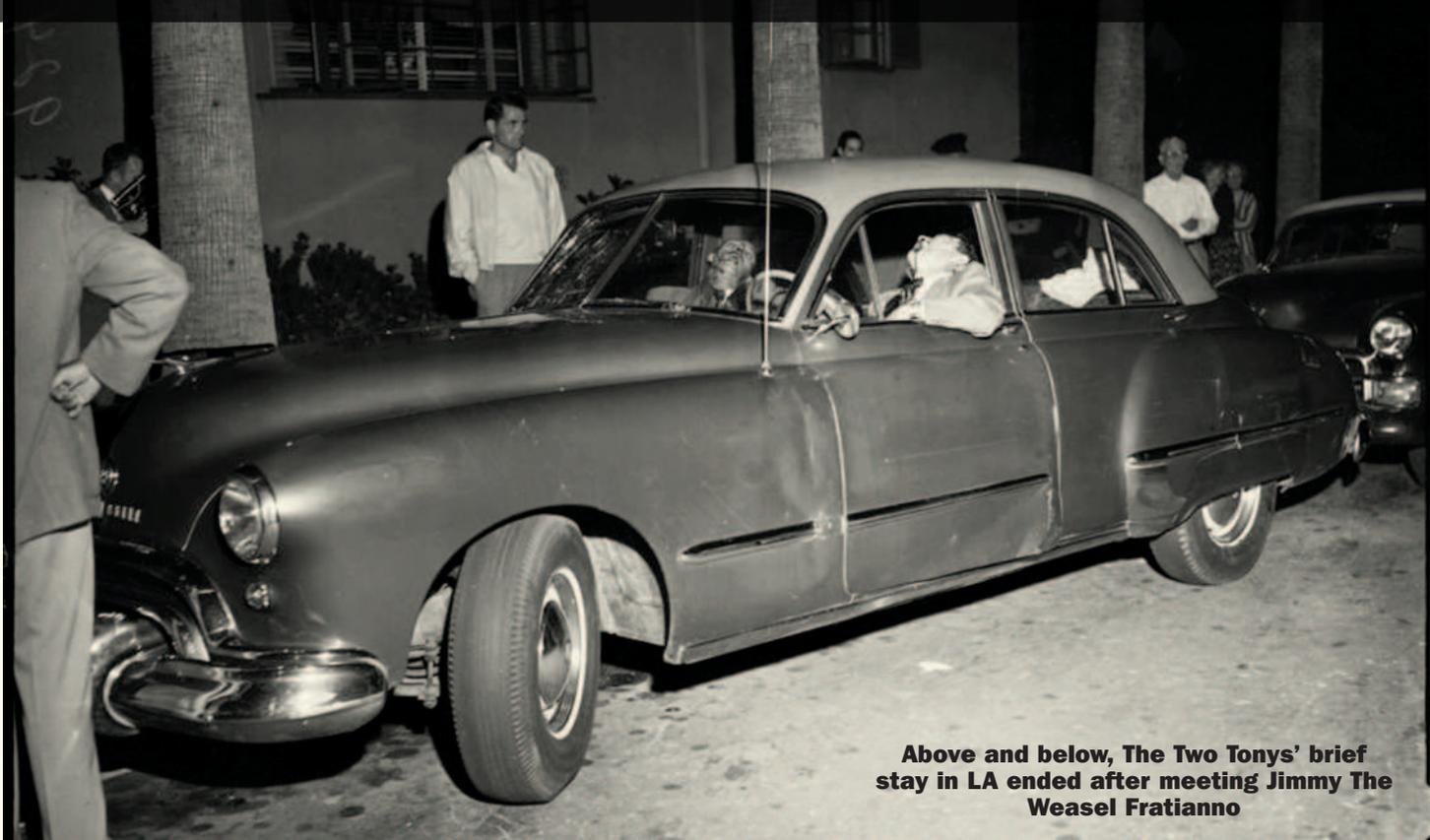
indignation, and ignored him.

They were, however, initially impressed with Siegel's progress. After the war, they set him to work on the Flamingo, to make their dream of a fully mob-owned casino in Vegas a reality, setting in motion a chain that would lead to casinos in Cuba, the Bahamas and elsewhere.

Jack resented the "respect" that Siegel earned with the East Coast mob, but he knew that co-operation was in his best interests.

So while there is evidence that Siegel and Jack worked closely together on the bookmaking business, it was an uneasy relationship. Still, it worked and for a time the money flooded in.

Unfortunately for Siegel, his endless skimming of construction costs and his lame excuses for subsequent losses enraged his ultimate boss, Meyer Lansky.



**Above and below, The Two Tonys' brief stay in LA ended after meeting Jimmy The Weasel Fratianno**



**The Two Tonys: Tony Trombino (above) and Tony Brancato (below)**



Given his profession, it's ironic that Lansky loathed dishonesty. "Don't lie. Tell one lie then you gotta tell another lie to compound the first."

Siegel's fate was sealed. All that remained was the method.

There are some who believe that it was Jack Dragna who ordered Virginia Hill to become a *femme fatale*, but it was most likely Lansky who set the trap.

Virginia captivated Siegel, who trusted her to deposit his illicit cash in European bank accounts, supposedly away from the prying eyes of his bosses.

In reality, she was reporting everything back to Lansky.

Siegel couldn't work out how Lansky always seemed

to know his next move, but he was never given the chance to discover the cuckoo in his nest.

He died in a hail of bullets on June 20th, 1947, at his home in Beverly Hills.

Almost simultaneously, three of Lansky's thugs walked into the Flamingo and announced that they were now in charge.

Siegel's successor, a New York brute named Mickey Cohen, made no bones about his disdain for Jack Dragna. He was taking over the LA beat and if Jack didn't like it, tough.

Mickey flatly and openly refused to take orders from Jack. He had no time for the now 56-year-old diplomat.

In fact, Cohen's arrogance knew no bounds.

"When I came out here, LA was nothing," he declared. "Back east, I was a gangster. Out here, I'm a god."

Jack was being left with little more than petty street crime, and he hated being humiliated.

Five times he ordered Cohen's murder, but every time Lucky Mickey somehow escaped.

**I**n 1950, the California Commission on Organised Crime followed advice from the Chief of the LAPD, William H. Parker, and declared that Jack Dragna was the head of the Southern California crime syndicate.

Jack's gang was charged with the latest attempted bombing of Mickey Cohen's home. Jack fled the area for a

time, but returned to testify at the Kefauver hearings on organised crime.

He needn't have worried. The government did his job for him, and removed Cohen in short order, convicting him of that standard trap for gangsters, tax evasion.

After Cohen was jailed, Jack had to deal with the Two Tonys.

Coming from Kansas, Tony Brancato and Tony Trombino wanted to make a big noise, which they did in

a hurry.

Wearing masks, they robbed the cash room of the Flamingo in May 1951.

The problem was that Brancato lost his mask during the heist. Caught on camera, he was promptly put at number one on the FBI's most wanted list.

So they made their way to LA where they were once again caught red-handed, this time trying to shake down one of Jack's bookies.

He ordered Altadena

Fратиanno, otherwise known as Jimmy the Weasel, to take out the two Tonys.

Jimmy started by befriending his two intended victims, and invited them to a high-stakes poker game on Hollywood Boulevard. But it was a trap – almost as soon as they arrived, the Tonys were “rubbed out.”

And that was Jack's last big act. In 1953, the US government decided to finally act on a deportation order that had been made



**Jack Dragna – stylish to the end**

way back in 1932, and they had Jack arrested for illegal entry to the US.

He appealed, but with his health failing and his wife having died, he was losing interest in the business.

He consoled himself with a series of girlfriends, but they were to prove his final undoing. Some agents followed him and one of his lovers to a shack. They recorded the two having sex, and used it as evidence to have him arrested for performing a lewd act.

It still wasn't enough, though. Jack's lifestyle got him before the law could.

Whilst in the midst of appealing his convictions, Jack Dragna died of a heart attack on February 23rd, 1956, aged 65.

It was the beginning of the end of a dirty, shameful period in LA's history.

One of the few remaining old-school Italian gangsters from the first wave of immigrants, Jack had continued to speak Italian in the traditional Sicilian dialect for the whole of his life, and dressed in a sharp, slick style.

His East Coast contemporaries gloried in their notoriety, and almost courted publicity in a way that goaded the authorities into taking action against them.

Jack, on the other hand, shunned having a public persona, and did his best to stay out of the limelight, trying to make sure that his head stayed below the parapet as much as possible.

**But that didn't make him any less of a menace to society than his better-known contemporaries...**

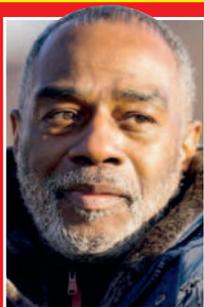
# TRUE DETECTIVE

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## JULY ISSUE

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**SEX, DRUGS, BRIBES... AND HOW THEY STOLE HALF THIS MAN'S LIFE**

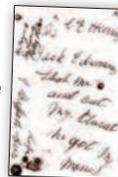
**A Beast's Trail Of Rape And Murder**



## CECILIA'S LETTER OF HORROR



Shot in the face, her throat cut, she wrote the note that would seal her killer's doom



## ADELAIDE SHOCKER

**Wife's Body Was In Three Parts**



From "Boy Next Door Killer" To

## HOLLYWOOD RIPPER



## 100 YEARS AGO...



**Hammer-Murder At A London Hotel**

**"Millionaire Seeks Slim Young Woman"**

SMALL AD SPELLED ROSE'S DOOM



**CLEVELAND'S CHRISTMAS MURDER – STILL UNSOLVED TO THIS DAY**



# KILLER WITH 100 FACES

**Thirty years after his controversial death Jacques Mesrine (right) – the bank robber, kidnapper, escape artist, fugitive, womaniser and would-be revolutionary – became the subject of two movies. He remains a hero to some...**



**F**OR THE French law enforcement agencies there was only one place for Jacques Mesrine, double-murderer, super-crook, daring bank robber, master of disguise and a crack shot. That was in the country's top-security Santé Prison. No one had ever escaped from the Santé – it was state-of-the-art escape-proof.

But, they wondered, would even the Santé cage this incredible criminal, dubbed

on him.

“You talk about your criminal activity as if it were your job,” the prosecutor raged. “You claim you performed it cleanly. But clean gangsters don't exist, any more than does the so-called honour of the underworld. It's merely a dishonest fabrication.” Turning to the judge he demanded: “Put him away for life.”

As the gates of the world's

15 days later to bust out 50-odd fellow-inmates. He failed, although not without a shoot-out.

He knew that any prison escape – let alone an escape from the Santé – required considerable bravery, meticulous planning and unusual luck. One false move and the plan fell apart – and in his case so too would his awesome criminal reputation, much admired in every bar-tabac in France.

The luck began to roll on May 3rd, 1978, when the deputy governor of the Santé

his lawyers. He tapped on the window and asked a guard to bring him some documents from the cell of another prisoner, François Besse. When the guard opened Besse's cell door the prisoner



**Above, Mesrine surrounded by guards inside Santé Prison shortly before the breakout (right, with the body of Carmen Rives lying at the foot of the wall)**

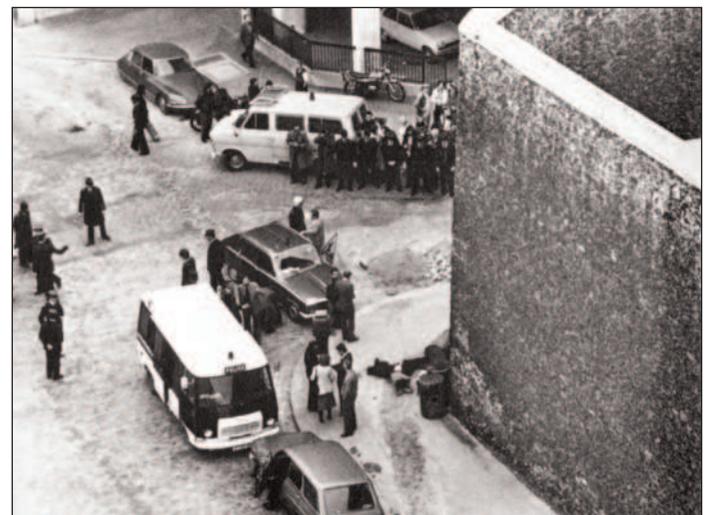
Public Enemy No. 1, whose daredevil bravado was being followed all over the world? They believed not, so they built a special top-security wing inside the top-security prison.

Mesrine, who had just been handed a 20-year sentence, was still smarting from prosecutor Lucien Langlois's blistering courtroom attack

safest prison clanged behind him Mesrine thought, no one talks to me like that. A few days later he wrote to his girlfriend, “Don't worry. I'll soon be out of here.”

And, amazingly, he was.

Mesrine had escaped from other prisons in the past. After one breakout, when he snipped through the wire in the exercise yard, he returned

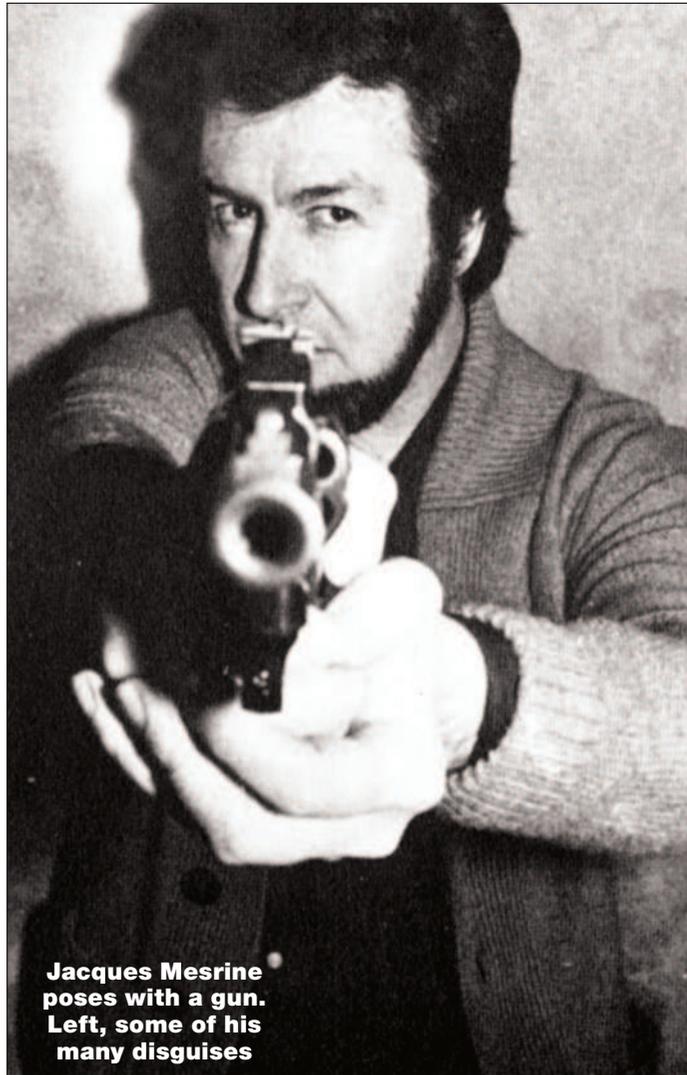


Prison took an anonymous phone call telling him that his star prisoner would be escaping in two days' time. The tip-off was ignored, but because of the bad weather Mesrine decided to postpone the attempt until Monday May 8th.

Just before 10 a.m. that day he was in the interview room with Christiane Giletti, one of

overpowered him. But immediately Besse was pinned to the wall by a second warden, hovering behind the first.

**MURDER THE FRENCH WAY**  
Case recalled by John Sanders



**Jacques Mesrine poses with a gun. Left, some of his many disguises**

At that moment in the interview room Mesrine suddenly jumped on the table and pulled two pistols and a rope out of the ventilation shaft. Seconds later the warder pinning Besse to the wall felt the barrel of one of the pistols at his neck and relaxed his grip. Another prisoner joined the affray and the warders, minus their

for the warders' office at the end of a corridor Mesrine asked another convict, Carmen Rives, if he wanted to join them, and unlocked his cell door before he could answer.

There were two assistant governors, the chief warder and five other warders in the warders' office. They surrendered their arms and

***“Stealing becomes a drug. You don't steal for the love of cash, you steal for the thrill of risk...You choose to cross the line because you know it means you can never go back”***

uniforms, were kicked into a cell and locked in.

In the subsequent inquiry the key question was, how did Mesrine manage to get the arms smuggled into the prison and hidden in the ventilation shaft? Almost certainly he must have had help from at least one employee in the prison service, but no one was ever found to take the blame.

As the two escapees set out

their keys and were locked into the office. Mesrine cut the phone wires while Rives put on a warder's uniform. They unlocked the double doors of the security wing and ran for the wall.

For several days Mesrine had watched workmen at work with a ladder inside the walls. Now he and his fellow “warders” told the workmen to carry the ladder to a place between the inner and outer

walls. On the way Mesrine “kidnapped” at gunpoint a group of warders who recognised him.

The final obstacle was a sentry box. Mesrine introduced himself to the duty sentry and said, “Hand over your gun or I'll kill you.” The sentry obeyed. The ladder was set against the outer 30 ft high wall and Mesrine, Besse and Rives went up to the top, fixed the rope and slid down the other side.

Already police were arriving. Mesrine opened fire to give the other two cover but Rives was shot in the chest by a police officer and fell to the ground at the foot of the wall. Besse stopped a car driver, pushed him out of the driving seat and told him to get lost. Twenty-five minutes had passed since the escape began. Mesrine and his fellow-escapee had beaten the unbeatable.

Within an hour Paris was ablaze with the story. Government ministers conferred, police chiefs were summoned to the justice ministry, and rank and file cops were openly scoffed at on the streets. In a sense the great escape was to become Mesrine's undoing, for now every cop in France was determined to get him. If necessary – and they knew it would be necessary – their orders were to shoot to kill.

First, though, they had to find him. That job was given to Serge Devos, who had just arrived in the post of head of the *Brigade de Repression de Banditisme*. On his desk was a brief message from the minister of the interior. It said simply, “*Catch Mesrine at all costs.*”

Mesrine wasn't helped by his own extraordinary desire to stick around in Paris as often as he could. He loved the city, its bars, its clubs, its shops, and couldn't resist strolling the boulevards. To evade capture in the one city where he was most sought he adopted a range of different disguises and rented two or three flats at the same time, so that he never looked like the same man for very long and never stayed in the same place for more than a week or so.

All that the police could hope for was that one day soon someone would grasp. Many of his friends knew where he was. They loved

his company, his all-night social gatherings where the food was always the very best and the wine was the most expensive. But Mesrine inspired loyalty and the lips of the underworld were sealed.

Well, as it turned out, not quite all the lips...

**J**acques Mesrine's ascent in the criminal world to become one of the most famous men in France was the subject of a two-part movie that became a smash hit at the box office in France in 2008. Based on his wildly boastful autobiography, *L'instinct de Mort*, it was released in British cinemas in 2009.

Voted the most popular person in France in a 1978 national opinion poll – ahead of Princess Grace of Monaco – Mesrine had unlikely beginnings for a notorious villain. He was born in 1937 into a middle-class family – his father ran his own textile-designing business – and was old enough during the Second World War to observe the shadowy movements of the Resistance fighters who came to his home at night and disappeared at dawn.

School friends remembered him as truculent and always spoiling for a fight. He was twice expelled from schools and fared just as badly when he went on the

job market, getting the sack as regularly as he got new employment. All that was to change when in 1956 he received his call-up papers.

France at the time was desperately trying to hang on to the last of her major overseas territories, Algeria, where half a million French soldiers were attempting to pin down a Muslim insurrection. Mesrine was sent to Algeria where he developed a hatred for Arabs and identified with the militant right wing of the army that wanted to keep Algeria for the French.

More significantly, the right wing began to identify with him. They liked a man who



**Mesrine during his national service in Algeria. Right, more of his infamous disguises**

did not hesitate to kill and had no conscience about it. When fanatical right-wing militants formed the *Organisation Armée Secrète*, the OAS, to keep Algeria French, they needed hit-men and gun-runners, and they



turned to Mesrine, now back in civvy street, 24 years old, a brave, highly trained ex-soldier with a gift for extreme violence.

A fog hangs over Mesrine's involvement with the OAS. He might have been committing terrorist acts in metropolitan France, he might have been in the extortion racket, getting money for the cause, he might have been smuggling weapons. Importantly, he learned a great deal from the organisation about the need for secrecy, the need for planning, and especially networking for such useful things as getting false passports and alibis when

they were necessary.

Mesrine had married while he was still a teenager. When a baby arrived he kept the larder stocked by robbing banks, committing burglaries and smuggling counterfeit money between Switzerland and France. Out on burglaries he always carried disguises in his pockets to be used in emergencies.

In one early burglary, after the police were tipped off by a passer-by, officers threw a cordon around the apartment block. Aware that he was cornered, Mesrine did a quick flip out of a top-floor lavatory window, and crossed the roofs of several buildings, until he came to a skylight. He broke the glass and found himself in what appeared to be a servant's room.

Delving into his pockets he produced a white overall, a comb, a pair of scissors and an envelope containing



**Left, Mesrine gives an exclusive to Paris Match (issue above), wearing his revolver even while the interview is conducted**

hair clippings. He put on the overall, put the comb and scissors into his top pocket so that they visibly stuck out, sprinkled the hair clippings over his shoulders and walked casually downstairs to the street.

Everyone was still staring up at the burgled flat, so Mesrine joined them, even speaking to a couple of policemen who were stopping everyone within their cordon. "I'm a hairdresser," he said. "I need to get back to my shop." They waved him through.

The episode illustrates the way Mesrine tried to present himself to the rest

of the world – as a kind of existentialist gangster or, in his own words, "a kamikaze of crime."

"Stealing becomes a drug," he said. "You don't steal for love of cash, you steal for the thrill of risk... You choose to cross the line, because you know it means you can never go back. You want to have nothing more to lose so that you are forced to have everything to win."

**W**hen he wasn't bank-robbing or holding up shops he was a perfectionist cook, a lover of fine wines and beautiful women. He liked his own rather curious brand of philosophy too. "I envy the blind man whose world does not change when he sleeps," he said. "If his life is steeped in darkness, he is at least the lover of shadows."

But his life was far from being as poetic and philosophic as he would like people to believe. During the 1960s he came increasingly violent. With a new girlfriend, Jeanne Schneider, a Pigalle prostitute, he robbed a Paris dressmaker of 12 million francs and then spent several hours mocking and terrifying the frightened woman and her daughter. It was the sort of conduct well below the level Mesrine aspired to, and revealed that he was a much more ordinary thug than he imagined.

The next stop in his criminal career was Canada, significantly home to many OAS sympathisers. After an abortive attempt to kidnap a millionaire, he fled across the border into the United States. He was promptly arrested and sent back to Canada, where he was given 10 years for the kidnapping.

He was incarcerated in Canada's most secure prison, but made it clear from the outset that he had no intention of staying there for 10 years. On August 20th, 1972, he led an escape. Five other men got through the wire behind him.

It was a spectacular, headline-grabbing coup, but it still wasn't enough for Mesrine. In another piece of pure theatre he decided that he would free all the other 50-odd maximum-security prisoners he had left behind. To finance the mass escape he and another fugitive, Jean-Paul Mercier, robbed a couple of banks and stole \$26,000.

Like several other Mesrine ideas the big escape spilled over from sheer audacity to total stupidity. Driving up to the prison intent on storming the gates, he was met by a hail of bullets from police and prison guards. He fled, with nothing achieved.

Six days later he and his prison buddy Mercier went into the forest for a day's hunting. On their way home they were stopped by two forest rangers, one of whom recognised Mesrine. Before the ranger could react Mesrine drew his revolver and shot him through the chest. Mercier immediately shot the other man. They pushed the two bodies into a ditch and covered them with leaves.

Mesrine claimed that he had killed people in Algeria,

and once boasted that he had committed 39 murders. These assertions might be true, but there is no evidence for either of them, and it is possible that the forest ranger was the first man he killed. The murder enraged Canadians from coast to coast, but the manhunt that swung into action as a result of it didn't stop him robbing more banks.

When the heat was really turned on, he slipped back over the border into the US, and from there flew to Venezuela. He now called



himself Bruno Dansereau – one of a number of different names he used during his criminal career. His stay was short-lived, however, for, tipped off that Interpol was on his tail, he decided to go back to Paris.

Paris had good reason to shudder at his return. On December 7th, 1972, he robbed a bank of 270,000 francs, and three days later robbed another of 300,000 francs. Police believe that in three months he held up and robbed 10 banks.

That he succeeded in this catalogue of serious crimes was in great part due to his incredible planning. There is no better example of that than the way he looked into the future, anticipating his

trial and how to escape from it. He guessed, correctly, that if he were caught he would be tried at Compiègne. So one day when he had nothing much to do he went to the town and sauntered into the Palais de Justice.

After examining the building, he went round all the nearby streets, drawing plans. Then, three days later, he went back with a group of friends and gave them instructions on exactly what to do to help him escape if he ever came up for trial there – including the place

previous crimes, sent for trial at Compiègne.

To his escort of cops armed to the teeth he said simply, "No prison will ever hold me for long."

Inside the courtroom it was the first time the judge, an old and affable man, had presided at Compiègne. As he read out the charges Mesrine sprang at him, dragging with him the policeman to whom he was still handcuffed. Pointing a revolver at the judge's head he turned on the court and snarled, "Get down, all of you, or I'll kill him."

Released from the handcuffs and using the white-faced judge as a human shield, he shuffled out of the courtroom, firing a couple of shots behind him. Outside there were policemen. One fired, the others reckoned it was too dangerous, for they might kill the judge. The getaway car with its primed driver was a hundred yards away. Mesrine

**To his escort of cops armed to the teeth he said simply, "No prison will ever hold me for long"**

let go of his hostage and a bullet struck his arm; even so, he managed to fire three shots into a pursuing police car that quickly gave up the chase.

Mesrine relied heavily on friends in the criminal fraternity, most of whom would never have betrayed him. But one was caught and grilled, and to save his own skin blurted out the place where the man now dubbed Public Enemy No. 1 was currently in residence. Under Commissaire Robert Brossard, head of the elite anti-gang squad, squads of armed police surrounded the luxury flat. Mesrine was trapped, and he knew it. But he would go out in the style he thought befitted a man of his celebrity.

Calmly he opened the door to Brossard, holding out a congratulatory glass of champagne. The police chief drank up, and then the super-cop snapped handcuffs on the super-crook.

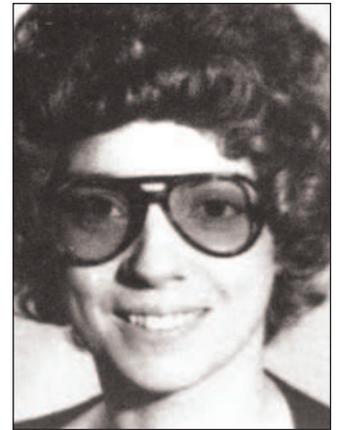
**Anti-hero and public menace Jacques Mesrine poses with some of the heavy firearms he often used**

to park the getaway car, the quickest route out of town, the cubby-hole inside the court building where they could hide weapons. He thus laid all the plans to escape from his trial before he was even arrested.

In March, 1973, after a string of hold-ups, he got involved in a nightclub brawl and shot and severely wounded a policeman. The police closed in and caught him as he was hosting a dinner party. He was arrested, thrown into a cell – and, charged with a raft of



**Mesrine's luck finally ran out on November 2nd, 1979. The bullet-riddled BMW (left and below) is surrounded by police. His companion in the vehicle, Sylvie Jeanjacquot (right), was shot three times and lost an eye in the ambush**



The two fugitives wandered over fields through the Normandy mist, somehow eluding the police and their helicopters. Eventually they held up a farming family and had breakfast with them. They forced the farmer to drive them to the outskirts of Paris, and such was Mesrine's reputation that the farmer didn't dare tell the police of his encounter until many hours later.

Once again he told his captors: "No prison will ever hold me for long."

That's why they took him to the escape-proof Santé, from where, in May, 1978, he made the great escape of all escapes, and at the same time became a target to be gunned down on sight by every flic in France.

**E**ven at this perilous stage in his life Mesrine's sense of high theatre never deserted him, and despite his inherent cruelty it endeared him to



**The blood-drenched body remained in the car (above) until it had been determined that Mesrine was really dead, and was then removed on a stretcher (right)**

anti-government Frenchmen. One day he cheekily turned up at the police station at Deauville. "I'm Inspector Dornier of the gaming squad," he announced. Junior ranks quickly scurried about, believing they were about to be involved in a police raid on the casino.

There was a raid, but the raider was Mesrine himself. Accompanied by Besse he moved in on the casino, and went to the cash desk. "I'm Jacques Mesrine. You

alarm bell.

In seconds the police had the casino surrounded. As Mesrine and Besse came out, both sides opened fire. Besse was hit in the arm as they ran to their getaway car. Outside the town Mesrine gave his pursuers the slip – at one stage he was following them instead of them following him. But then a roadblock loomed up.

Mesrine put his foot hard down on the accelerator and charged at it. Two cops jumped away, wheeled round, and opened fire. Their bullets slashed a tyre, shattered the windscreen, and disabled



may have heard of me," he said, whereupon the cashier collapsed. While Besse was filling a sports bag with the cash someone pressed the

gearbox, locking the car into top gear. Mesrine drove on, but the car was uncontrollable, and crashed off the road.

***"He was always such a charming chap, always very smartly dressed," one neighbour told a detective***

After a few more bank raids Mesrine turned to dramatics again. Angered by the news that the police had arrested his girlfriend, he wrote to his lawyer, "Now it's war. They will regret having provoked me."

The French law enforcement authorities were very susceptible to that sort of taunting, and they didn't like it at all when their most wanted man then hired a light aircraft and buzzed over the prison where his girlfriend was being held.

Now every police station in France carried a poster bearing his photograph with the legend, "He is dangerous when he smiles." Unfazed, Mesrine continued on his round of night clubs, funding his expenditure with a robbery on a Paris bank that netted him half a million francs.

This was followed by an audacious press conference

– a move that infuriated the police and caused such an uproar that Public Enemy No. 1 thought it was time to quit Paris for a couple of months. It was August, 1978, the month when all Frenchmen leave the capital anyway. Mesrine's holiday destination that summer was London.

With his girlfriend, newly released from custody, he flew to Heathrow and booked in at a hotel near Marble Arch. He liked

London, and he could walk the streets there with relative impunity. Interpol were hot on his trail and it was evident that the French knew he was somewhere in London. They didn't get much help from Scotland Yard, though, who had their own problems to solve.

No doubt feeling that he was untouchable, and with time on his hands as he strolled down Oxford Street, he now hatched a new piece of drama. He would kidnap

the judge who had sentenced him to 20 years in prison. For now Mesrine was on a self-righteous one-man crusade – a campaign to improve the conditions of long-term convicts in French prisons.

This, of course, was doomed to be the lost cause of all lost causes, for no one in France or anywhere else was going to interest themselves in the prison well-being of hardened convicts. But

Mesrine espoused his cause with relish. He genuinely believed that his name would influence politicians to act on prison conditions. Always an egotist, he had elevated himself to god-like status, with of course a little help from the media.

He even took on the police, who were hunting him, to gain publicity for his campaign against conditions in top-security prisons. "They are factories for producing wild beasts," he complained in an open letter to Commissaire Serge Devos

The kidnap plan was worked out in a first-floor flat he rented in Palliser Road, Barons Court, comfortably handy for Heathrow and the short flight to Paris. The British end of it fell apart following the arrest and interrogation of an accomplice in Paris. The accomplice blurted out Mesrine's address in Barons Court and, alerted by the French Police, Scotland



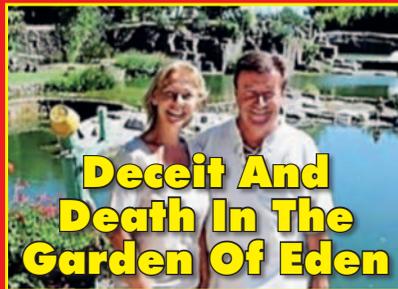
## The Man Who Killed The King Of The King's Road

MASTER DETECTIVE'S

JULY

# CRIME

CASEBOOK



Deceit And Death In The Garden Of Eden

SNATCHED

BY A SERIAL KILLER



- But Kara Survived To Turn The Tables!

US EXECUTIONS: THE "ROCK 'N' ROLL YEARS"



ARSENIC WAS ALABAMA NURSE'S "MEDICINE"

NEW SERIES: International Casebook Of Women Executed For Their Crimes



The Bungled Beheading Of Anna

THE MAN WHO BATTERED FANNY TO DEATH



WAS DOLINA TERRIFIED TO DEATH?



Taken into the woods, she pleaded with her abductor to let her go

HORROR IN CUMBERLAND Boyfriend Shot The



Wrong Sister



Mesrine's post-mortem (above) showed how the close grouping of bullet wounds resembled an execution by firing squad. Rather than attempt to arrest him and risk a confrontation, police shot first. The funeral (below) became a major public event



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Yard agreed to carry out a surveillance operation.

The following day the French press published a report of all these goings-on, and included Mesrine's London address in their stories. Someone somewhere had made a gigantic gaffe, giving him time to decamp from Barons Court.

When Scotland Yard raided the flat they found the most wanted man in France had departed, leaving a suitcase full of press cuttings about himself, and some false beards and theatrical make-up.

"He was such a quiet, charming chap, always very smartly dressed," one neighbour told a detective.

Back in France, Mesrine refused to abandon his ludicrous kidnap plan. When he arrived at the judge's

**On the mortuary door someone put up a notice, "Until further orders Mesrine will not be receiving visitors"**

apartment the judge was not at home, so he sat in the lounge holding the family as hostages. But one member of the family managed to escape and called the police.

As the cops came running, Mesrine decided it was time to go. They came charging up the stairs as he came down them two at a time. "Quick!" he shouted, looking back over his shoulder. "Mesrine's up there!" The excited cops charged on up the stairs, leaving the potential kidnapper to make an astonishing getaway.

Despite the nationwide manhunt, he then managed, in June, 1979, to kidnap



## A LIFE MADE FOR THE MOVIES



**A** life as rich in conflict and contrast as Jacques Mesrine's, with the subject's own account of his actions to work from, made ideal source material for film-makers. The major question facing any director was how to portray the contradictory facets of such a complex and contentious

**character. A 1984 attempt told the basic story but Mesrine – both a brutal, amoral killer and an erudite, charismatic roué – had far more filmic potential.**

**Fittingly, given the global roaming that marked his exploits, the 2008 re-telling of Mesrine's life was a joint production between French, Canadian and Italian makers and was divided into two feature-length movies (*L'Instinct de Mort* and *L'Ennemi Public No.1*) with actor Vincent Cassel taking the lead role in a stellar cast.**



**The two films each had their own release in Europe (top and right). Left, actor Vincent Cassel in the iconic pose of the older Mesrine**



a millionaire and extort a six-million-franc (£600,000) ransom. Two months later, a right-wing cop-turned-journalist, Jacques Tillier, accused the super-crook in print of being a dishonourable criminal who cheated his associates.

Mesrine was beside himself with fury. This was completely contrary to the carefully massaged legend he had worked on for so long. He tricked Tillier into going to a remote cave for an exclusive interview, where he stripped and tortured the journalist. He then shot him three times – first in the face "to stop him talking crap," then in the arm "to stop him writing crap," and finally in the leg "for the pleasure of it." Tillier, implausibly, survived, and went on to edit a newspaper in Reunion in the Indian Ocean.

**T**he charmed life couldn't go on forever, and Mesrine knew it. He knew he could rely on friends up to a point, but someone, somewhere, would eventually grass and seal his fate. "I prefer to die under a hail

of police bullets than waste away in some cellar," he declared. And that was the way it would be.

Eighteen months after the dramatic escape from the Santé Prison, on the afternoon of Friday, November 2nd, 1979, he was preparing to leave one of his rented flats, in the Rue Belliard in central Paris. He was wearing a beard, carrying a suitcase, and escorting his latest girlfriend, Sylvie Jeanjacquot, who had a small white poodle in her arms.

Unknown to Mesrine, but well known to the concierge of the apartment block, to whom he wished a pleasant weekend, the whole building had been evacuated by the police. They knew he was living there, and they were waiting outside for him.

They watched the couple walk 300 yards along the street to his parked BMW. Sylvie put the suitcase in the boot and Mesrine held open the door for her. Mesrine took the wheel and drove off. A taxi passed them. They turned left, crossed a railway bridge and stopped at a

junction

A lorry covered by a tarpaulin drew up alongside the BMW. The driver indicated that he wanted to cut across to the right. Mesrine waved him on and then noticed another lorry drawn up behind him. The first lorry drove across his front and stopped suddenly. In those fleeting seconds Mesrine must have known that this was his final moment.

Suddenly the tarpaulin was yanked up and armed men appeared in front of the BMW. They fired 21 high-velocity bullets coated with brass in order to penetrate the windscreen. Seven hit the super-crook. Like a scene from a movie, a car drew up alongside the BMW and the man sitting beside the driver fired a shot into Mesrine's head. It was a most methodical execution.

The police jumped about in the road jubilantly. Sylvie was screaming. Three bullets had hit her. Another had killed the poodle.

The scene was hastily cordoned off while amid all the excitement among the living, Mesrine lay slumped to one side of the steering wheel, his face badly cut, oozing blood and quite dead.

There was a loaded revolver in his pocket and at his feet a bag of hand grenades, for use in exactly this kind of emergency. The police knew about the grenades, and this, they had decided, was the only way to prevent him using them.

An hour after the shooting, Commissaire Brossard arrived to survey his old enemy. He lifted the body from the car and covered it with a blanket before it was driven to the police mortuary. On the mortuary door someone put up a notice, "Until further orders Mesrine will not be receiving visitors."

When Commissaire Brossard later retired and wrote his autobiography he revealed details of the final drama. "I have had to wait 17 years to reply to accusations that I assassinated him, but I think I understood him better than his admirers," he said.

**From wherever he was beyond the grave, Jacques Mesrine might well have drunk a glass of champagne to that.**

# TWO WIVES, TWO ONE MURDER

Report  
By  
Matthew  
Spicer

## SAGA OF THE SOMERSET RAKE

**T**HE WAR suited Sergeant Ernest Digby's love-life very well. He never knew who he would meet next as he moved from one army posting to another, and he made the most of his opportunities. In the early months of 1941 he was stationed at Wakefield, Yorkshire, when he met 27-year-old Olga Hill, who lived with her parents and was a manager at a local factory. Intelligent and ambitious, she had always seemed more interested in her career than in romance... until the 31-year-old Royal Artillery sergeant swept her off her feet.

Before long the couple were living together, although Digby's duties often required him to be away. The relationship continued to flourish until March, 1943, when Olga told the sergeant she was pregnant and made it clear that she expected him to marry her.

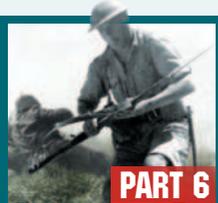
This was bad news for Digby. He confessed that he had a wife. He didn't love her, he emphasised, saying he had remained married only for the sake of his three children. Then he talked Olga into marrying him bigamously – to spare their child, he said, the stigma of being born out of wedlock.

The baby was due at the end of October, and by then Digby was stationed at Yeovil in Somerset. On October 11th, Olga – now "Mrs. Digby" – arrived in Milborne Port, near Yeovil, to join him. The sergeant had rented a room for them at the home of a Mrs. Gibbs. He had also contacted a local nurse and the baby was expected on October 21st.

The child – a girl the couple named Dawn – was

### MURDER UNDER COVER OF WAR

WW2 SOLDIERS WHO WENT TO THE GALLOWS



PART 6

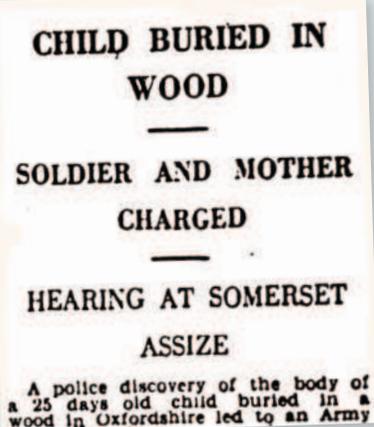
duly born in Yeovil and everything went well. The family continued to stay at Mrs. Gibbs's house for nearly a month and there seemed to be no problems until November 16th, when Mrs. Gibbs was surprised to discover that Digby and the baby had gone.

a feeding bottle. Convinced that something was wrong, she went to the police station.

As a result Detective Inspector Dunn arrived from Yeovil to interview Olga. He found her looking tired and ill. She repeated her story that her husband had taken the baby to Wakefield, but when her parents were contacted they said they'd seen neither Digby nor Dawn. Olga was then arrested for

child-abandonment and taken to Yeovil police station.

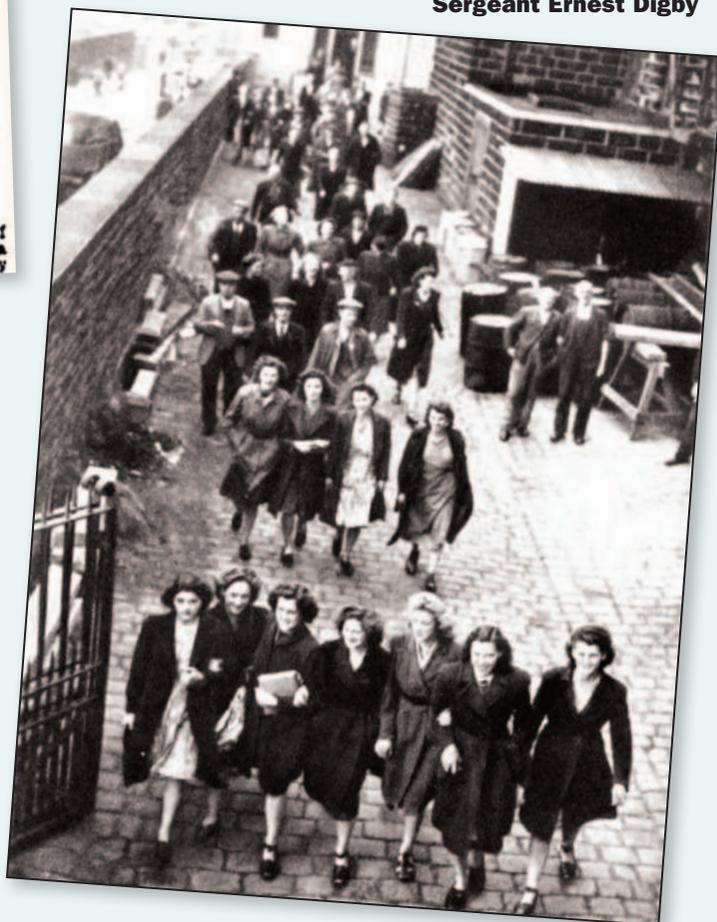
Distressed, she now told detectives that on November 15th she and her husband had gone for a walk, taking Dawn with them. They had gone to a field near Milborne Port's Station Road, and shortly afterwards her husband had taken the baby from her and told her to go on ahead. She was still in a confused and distressed state, Olga said, and she found it very difficult to recall events. But she remembered that when she turned round, Dawn had disappeared and Digby told her not to worry. Back in their room she broke down,



Olga explained that her husband had travelled to Wakefield to stay with her parents, taking Dawn with him, and that she would shortly be following him. On hearing this Mrs. Gibbs was even more surprised. The idea of a mother being separated from her new baby, even if only for a day or two, shocked her. And besides, she had seen Sergeant Digby walking to the railway station without the baby. He was carrying only a large suitcase.

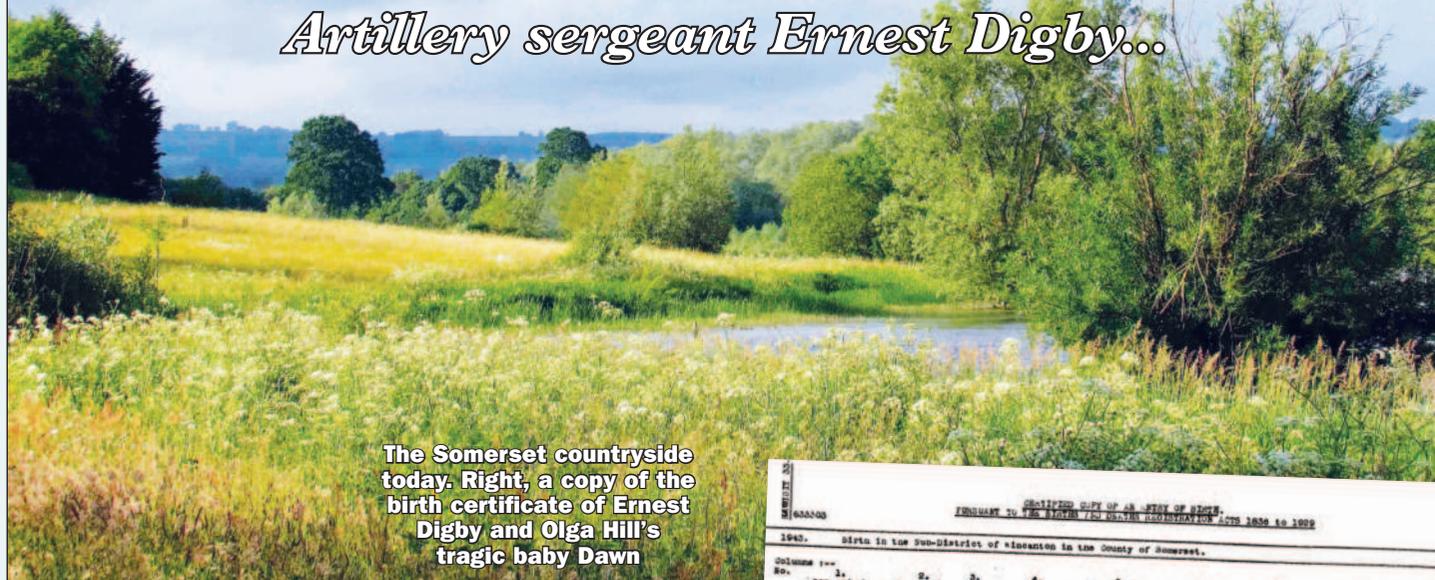
When Olga left her room, Mrs. Gibbs had a look round and was disturbed to see nappies, baby-clothes and

**Below, workers leaving a Yorkshire factory. Olga Hill was the manager of a factory in Wakefield in 1941 when she met Sergeant Ernest Digby**



# D MISTRESSES...

*As the Second World War raged in Europe, beating the enemy was the last thing on the mind of Royal Artillery sergeant Ernest Digby...*



The Somerset countryside today. Right, a copy of the birth certificate of Ernest Digby and Olga Hill's tragic baby Dawn

but her husband had told her that everything would be all right, saying that while she was not looking he had handed Dawn to a nurse and the baby had been adopted.

The police, however, had found a letter in which Olga had written to her husband: "There is no end to my worry. I am really tired of it all, heartaches and heartaches, and just cannot stand much more. If it were not for you, darling, I would join Dawn at once."

What, the detectives wanted to know, did Olga mean by "I would join Dawn at once"? She said she didn't know what she had written. She had been confused.

***"I stumbled in the field and the baby fell out of my arms and cut its head. I was dazed, wondering what to do. The baby was alive. I put it in the suitcase..."***

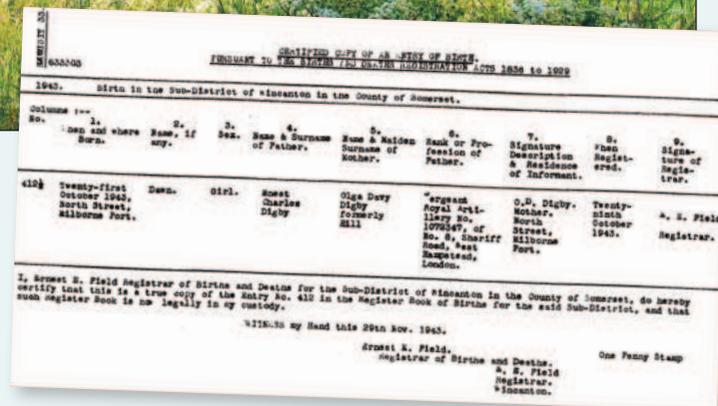
On November 17th Detective Chief Inspector Peter Beveridge and Detective Sergeant Albert Webb arrived from Scotland Yard to question Sergeant Digby, who had returned to his unit which was now in Oxfordshire. Brought back to Yeovil, he claimed that he

had handed Dawn to a nurse in the field, and he dismissed Olga's letter as nonsense.

The detectives learned that he had no criminal record, had previously served in the army for three years, and had rejoined as a volunteer in 1939. He had seen his first and legal wife only once in the past two years, and that visit had been to ask for a divorce.

Further inquiries revealed that he had another child by another woman, which the first Mrs. Digby had adopted. Then the investigators traced a Welsh girl to whom he had proposed marriage, omitting to mention that there were already two Mrs. Digbys!

After six hours' questioning, the sergeant admitted that he and Olga had gone to the field to abandon their child. He said that as the field was near a railway station they thought Dawn would soon be found and taken into care. After they left the baby, he said,



his mind had gone blank. He admitted that his story about a nurse and adoption was all lies.

His suitcase was examined and was found to smell of disinfectant and, while he remained in custody charged with bigamy and child-abandonment, the Oxfordshire Police questioned his fellow-soldiers stationed at Witney. One said he had seen Digby with a spade. Asked about this, the sergeant told the detectives that he had used the spade to shovel up rubbish in his hut.

In a signed statement he now said: "I stumbled in the field and the baby fell out of my arms and cut its head. I was dazed and sat down, wondering what to do. The baby was still alive. I put it in the suitcase and caught up with Olga, but I did not say anything to her about the child or she to me. We walked into another wood. I

took the baby out of the case and wrapped some napkins around its head to protect it. I then joined Olga at some distance ahead."

He went on to say that he left the baby in the wood and he and Olga then spent the afternoon at a cinema in Yeovil. When they returned to Milborne Port he went back to the wood and found the baby was dead. Finally, he admitted taking Dawn to Witney and burying her in a large rabbit hole.

The child's corpse was recovered from an Oxfordshire wood and brought back to Somerset, where a post-mortem examination revealed a head injury which did not appear to be accidental. Dawn had apparently been struck on the head repeatedly, and the Home Office pathologist Professor J. M. Webster said that she had died within minutes.

On January 26th, 1944, Sergeant Ernest Digby and Olga Hill pleaded not guilty when they appeared at Somerset Assizes before Mr. Justice Singleton, charged with murder.

For the prosecution, Mr. F. S. Laskey said that Digby's wife and three children lived near London, but since 1941 he and Olga Hill had lived together as man and wife, Olga telling her parents she was married.

In a statement to the police Olga had said that when she and Digby went for a walk across a field Digby hung back with the baby. When he caught her up he no longer had the child. She did not ask him what he had done with it, and he did not tell her. On their return to Milborne Port that night, however, she began crying and asked Digby what he had done with Dawn. He replied, "Stop worrying. It is all right."

In conclusion, Mr. Laskey said that if the jury were satisfied that Digby and Olga Hill had acted in concert in causing the child's death, Digby inflicting the fatal wounds to the head, then both were guilty of murder. If, however, the jury believed that the baby was accidentally

**The wood and field by Milborne Port's Station Road. In October, 1943, Olga Hill and Ernest Digby went for a walk here with their baby and came back without her...**

**SOLDIER TO DIE FOR BABY MURDER**  
 Woman Swoons in Dock at Taunton

injured, was then abandoned for some hours, and when Digby returned he found it was dead, then he was guilty of manslaughter. And if the jury concluded that Olga Hill had not been a party to the violence, but they believed she was a party to abandoning the child, she too was guilty of manslaughter.

Professor Webster told the court that Dawn had been well-nourished and appeared to have been well cared for. She had died from shock due to violence to the back of her skull and brain, and had lived no longer than two minutes

STATION ROAD

after receiving her injury.

Questioned by Mr. W. Maitland Walker, defending Olga Hill, Digby said that up to the moment of abandoning the baby both he and Olga had wanted to keep it. They had then decided, however, to have the child adopted, for they were in financial difficulties: Olga had had to give up a good job because of her condition, and he was paying a full army allowance to his legal wife and family.

Cross-examined by Mr. Laskey, Digby said that when he and Olga left Mrs. Gibbs's house they intended to abandon the child. As far as he knew, Dawn was

recovering she said she had wanted to keep the baby, but there were money difficulties. It never entered her mind that the child should be killed. When Digby rejoined her in the wood without the baby she was too upset to ask him what had happened.

After retiring for only 15 minutes, the jury found Ernest Digby guilty of murder. Olga Hill, however, was acquitted of both murder and manslaughter, and the court was told that she would not be prosecuted for child-abandonment.

Sentencing Digby to death, Mr. Justice Singleton told him, "This was a cruel murder for which I doubt whether mercy can be extended."

His appeal dismissed in February, Ernest Digby was denied a reprieve by the Home Secretary, who took the view that, whether or not the murder was premeditated, the killer's rakish lifestyle entitled him to no mercy.

Digby's execution day, Thursday, March 16th, 1944, was not without incident, however. Around 5 a.m., three hours before he was set to die, the condemned man, seemingly depressed, worried and in a state of frenzy, caused a major disturbance attempting to injure himself. Two prison officers had to struggle with him on the bed to prevent him causing himself further harm. As a result, the condemned man was put in a restraining jacket and sedated by Bristol Prison's medical officer.

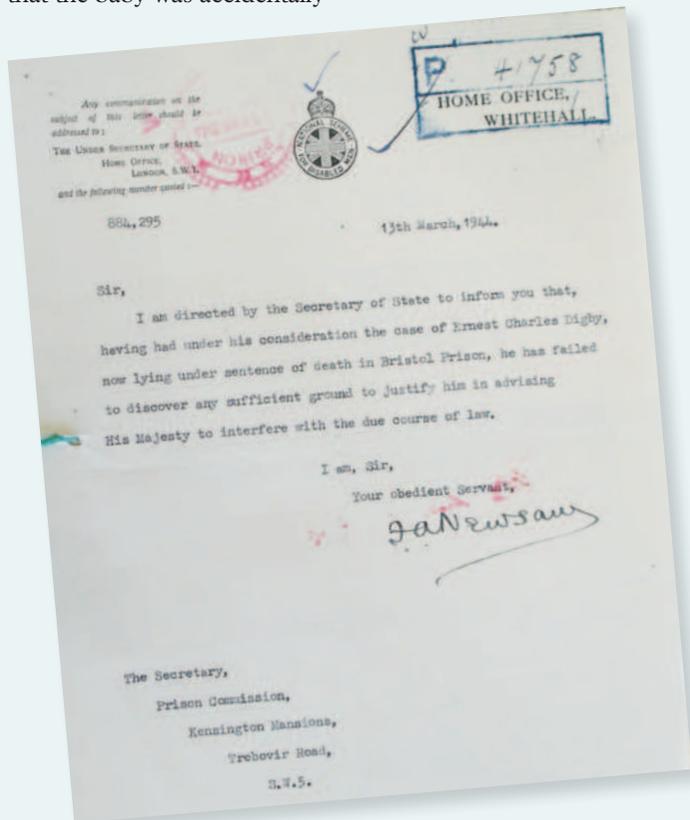
**Digby was duly hanged at 8 a.m. by Tom Pierrepoint and Steve Wade. According to the prison governor, the execution "was carried out expeditiously."**

**The child's corpse was recovered from an Oxfordshire wood and brought back to Somerset. Dawn had apparently been struck on the head repeatedly**

alive when he put her in his suitcase. He did not want Olga to see the blood on the baby as it might cause her further mental strain, and he himself could not stand seeing the child injured.

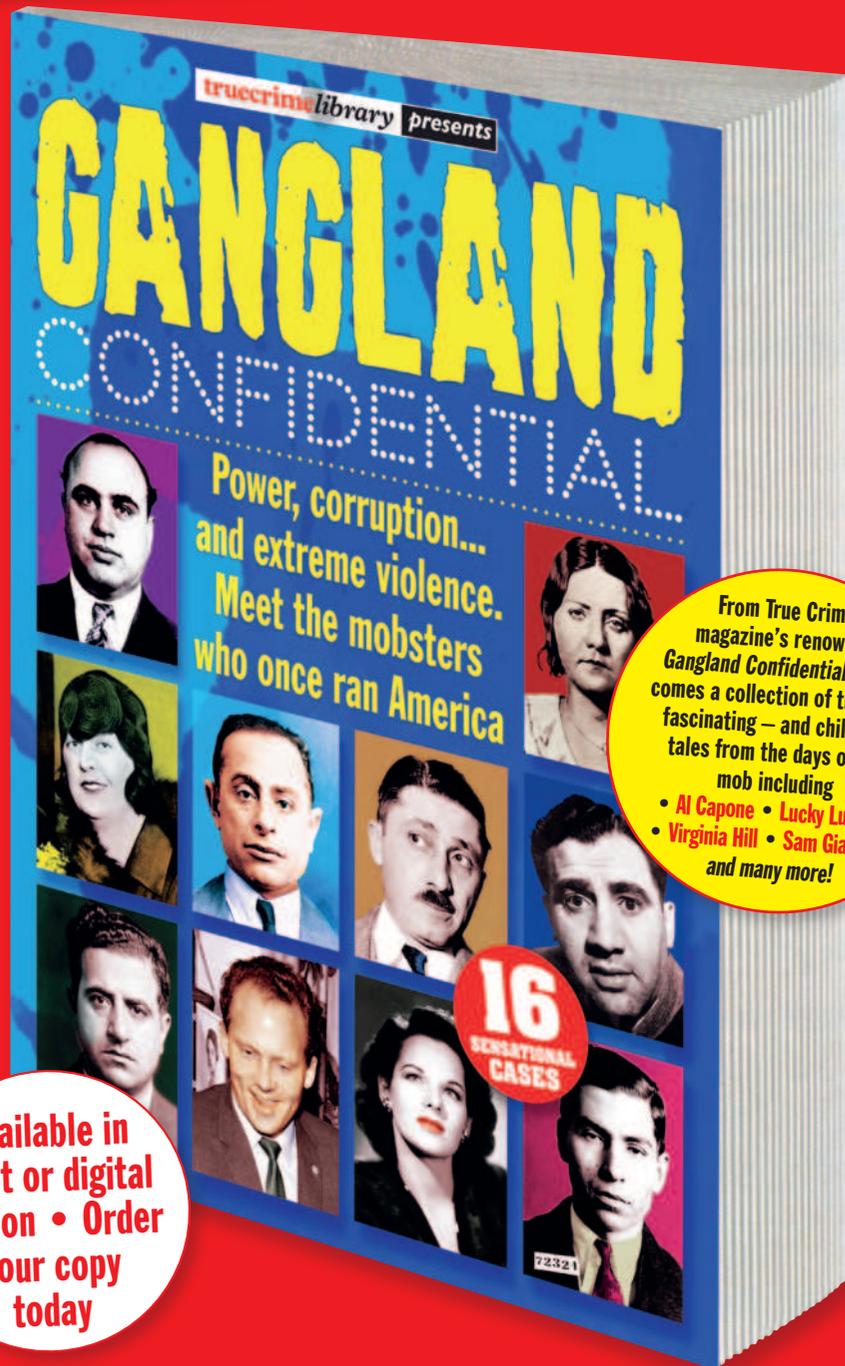
Asked by the prosecutor if he did not realise he was doing a wicked and heartless thing in putting the injured baby in the suitcase, Digby replied: "No, not in my state of mind." He said that when he left Dawn in the wood he did not realise she would die. Denying striking her, he said he was surprised and shocked that night when he found she was dead.

While taking the oath Olga Hill partly collapsed. On



**The Home Office letter confirming that Ernest Digby's appeal against his death sentence had been dismissed**

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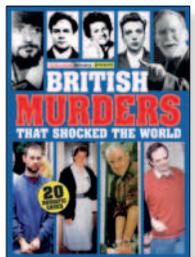
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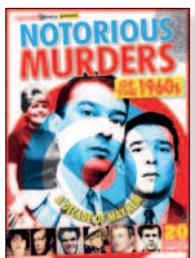
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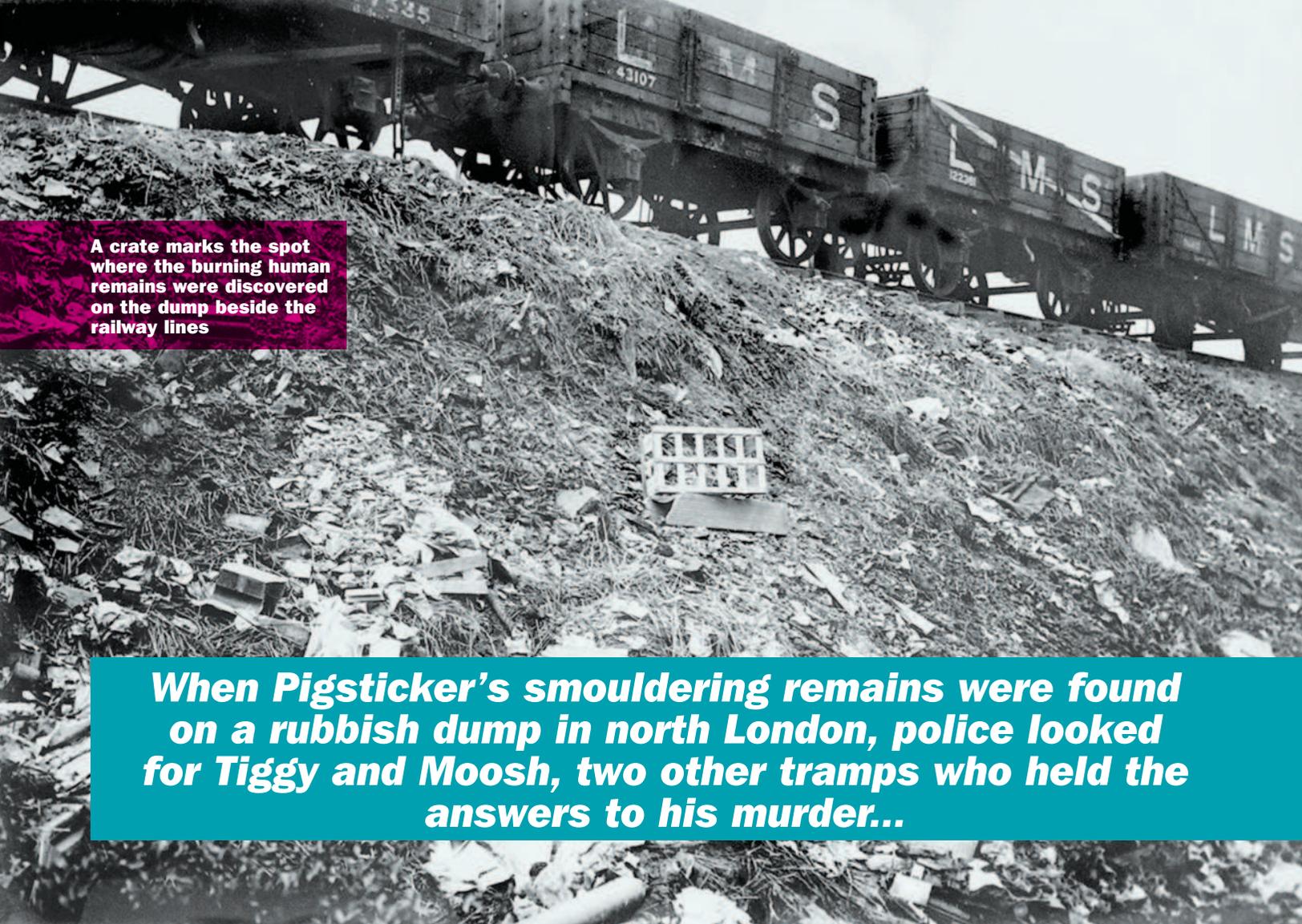
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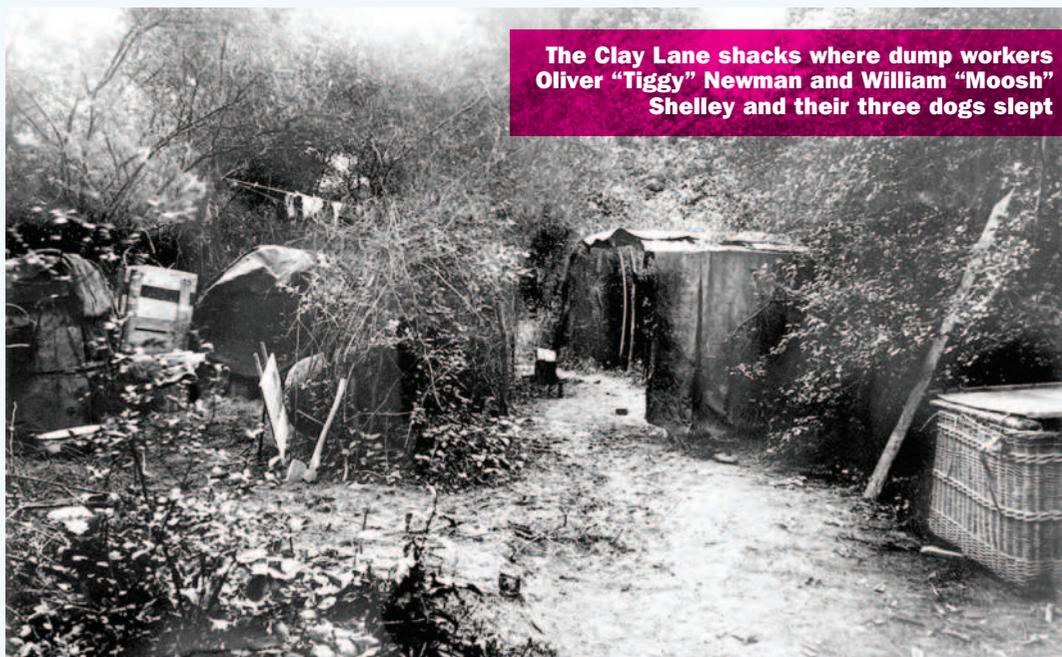
A crate marks the spot where the burning human remains were discovered on the dump beside the railway lines

**When Pigsticker's smouldering remains were found on a rubbish dump in north London, police looked for Tiggy and Moosh, two other tramps who held the answers to his murder...**

# THE GRIM SECRET EDGWARE'S CLAY LANE

**L**IVING IN a shack near a vast north London rubbish dump, Michael McGlade had seen many odd things burning on the tip. But until the night of June 1st, 1931, he had never seen a charred human arm there, and the grisly sight sent him running for help.

First he dashed down Edgware's Clay Lane, a rough country track inhabited by tramps. This led him to the newly-built Watford by-pass, where he spotted two policemen. Told what he had found, they followed him back to the smouldering dump, saw



The Clay Lane shacks where dump workers Oliver "Tiggy" Newman and William "Moosh" Shelley and their three dogs slept



**Sir Bernard Spilsbury's post-mortem found there had been heavy blows to the skull, jaw and chest of the victim**

● Case recalled by Matthew Spicer

# ETS OF Y LANE

the arm for themselves, and summoned assistance.

Within an hour a major inquiry was under way, excavation revealing more of a man's charred body, his feet and right arm burned away.

The corpse was removed for examination the next day by the Home Office pathologist, Sir Bernard Spilsbury. He found that the man's skull had been fractured by a heavy blow, his jaw was also broken, and he had suffered a severe blow to the chest.

To aid identification there were traces of a

sandy-coloured moustache and, more promisingly, the left arm still bore the tattoo of a red heart pierced with an arrow.

The man was well-built, and Sir Bernard estimated that he had been dead for between 36 and 48 hours. Asked whether the death was accidental or a case of foul play, he said the man appeared to have been killed by blows delivered repeatedly with a blunt instrument.

Divisional Detective Inspector Frederick Bennet led the investigation, assisted by Detective Sergeant Leonard Pickett who knew Clay Lane's tramps. He considered them a quarrelsome lot, and he suspected that the murdered man would turn out to be

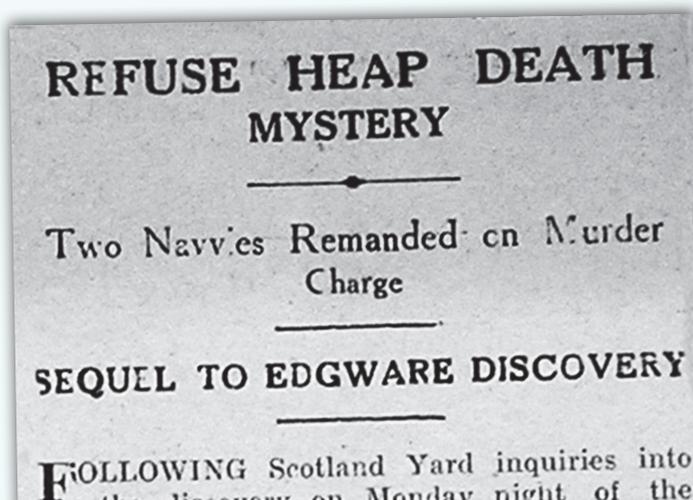
one of them.

Few of them were "police-friendly," but inquiries Pickett made among those who were communicative soon produced results. One of them identified the body as that of 45-year-old Herbert Ayres, who was known among the Clay Lane itinerants as "Pigsticker."

He had not been seen around since Saturday, May 30th, and another tramp, John Armstrong, came forward with information.

He told Pickett that he was drinking in Edgware that Saturday night when he was offered a bed in a Clay Lane shack shared by Oliver "Tiggy" Newman, 61, and William "Moosh" Shelley, 56. They both worked on the rubbish dump as casual labourers, and what Armstrong went on to say made them the inquiry's prime suspects.

There was now no sign of them in Clay Lane, but Pickett was sure they'd come back, and their hut was placed under surveillance.



After dark on Tuesday, June 2nd, they were observed returning. They had three ferocious dogs which would bark if anyone approached their hut, and Clay Lane was largely covered by shrubs and dense undergrowth. If alarmed, the suspects might easily escape in the darkness, so Detective Inspector Bennet decided to make no move before dawn.

Meanwhile, police encircled the area. Then at 7.15 a.m., Bennet was with other officers at the Watford by-pass end of Clay Lane when he saw Shelley approaching, followed by Newman.

"You answer the description of a man known as 'Moosh,'" the inspector told Shelley. "I am making inquiries into the death of a man known as 'Pigsticker.'"

"I don't know what you mean," Shelley replied. "I know nothing about it. All I can say is I saw him when he came home to his hut on Saturday."

Newman also said, "I know nothing about it," and both men were taken to Edgware police station while officers went to their hut.



**Above, the ramshackle hut (above) where victim Herbert "Pigsticker" Ayres lived at the time of his death. Below, a detective points at an area close to the shack where the grass was bloody**

In a hedge nearby they found a heavy, bloodstained stick bearing hairs of the same sandy colour as Herbert Ayres's. There was also blood on grass beneath the hedge, and a large axe was found under the hut's makeshift

floorboards.

Meanwhile, back at the police station Newman decided to talk. "I want to tell you what took place," he said, making a statement which was taken down and which he signed.

He and Shelley were then told they would be charged with murder. "I don't understand," both replied.

The next day they were remanded in custody at Hendon Magistrates' Court, appearing in their shirtsleeves as their jackets had been taken for forensic examination. "Their waistcoats and shirts were stained and dirty, and their faces unshaven," the *Morning Advertiser* reported. "They stood side by side, gripping the front of the dock."

When they appeared before the magistrates again on June 10th, Charles Wallace, prosecuting, said there were two huts in Clay Lane. Ayres had lived in one of them for five weeks, and the other had been occupied by Shelley and Newman for the past three months.

On May 30th, the prosecutor continued, a witness named Richard Saunders was in a public house when Shelley and Newman came in. Saunders lived in a van near the huts, so he knew both defendants and Ayres. "What is the matter with you two?" he asked. "You are both looking pretty savage about something."

Mr. Wallace said that Newman replied, "And so will somebody else if they keep crawling about my place between one and two in the morning. I have lost a few things. I was not asleep."

"Saunders asked, 'Does it



concern me?” the prosecutor continued, “and Newman replied, ‘No, Sticker. He will find Tiggy a warm fellow when he starts. I don’t have many years to live, and I don’t care which way it goes.’”

“Saunders then left. Later that night he returned to his van, and at 11.30 he heard a loud scream and somebody shout out. He later told the police: ‘I saw Pigsticker on the ground, and I said to Moosh, ‘He must be dead.’ His nose was bleeding and he seemed dead. We found a sack laying there, and wrapped it around his head. We carried him away, over to the dust shoot. We put him on the top and let him roll down.’”

Mr. Wallace told the court that the rubbish dump was next to Scratchwood railway sidings, and Shelley told Sergeant Pickett: “If I had my way he [Ayres] would not have had it like this. I wanted to put him on the line and let a train run over him. He has only got what he wanted for a long time. It was the hardest job carrying him across there. We put him in a sack and put a pole through it.”

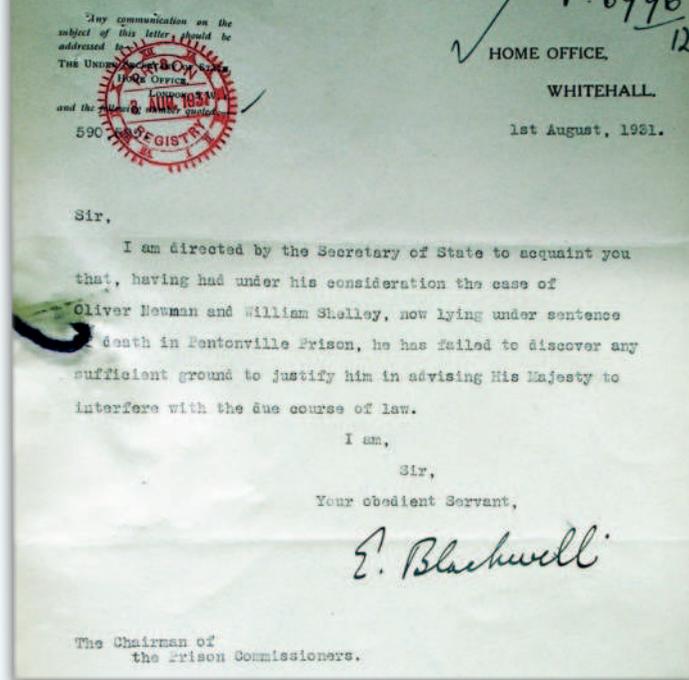
**T**he pair were committed for trial, which began at the Old Bailey on June 24th, the court hearing the statement John Armstrong had made to the police.

He said he was sleeping in the hut shared by Shelley and Newman, when he was wakened by Ayres shouting, “Oh dear, oh dear.” He also heard raised voices and a number of thuds, and on looking out from the hut he saw two men hitting Ayres with a stick. Silence followed until 20 minutes later, when he heard more thuds and saw an axe being dropped into a bucket of water. He then saw the two men lift what appeared to be a body. They carried it off towards the dump, but it was too dark for him to be sure who they were.

As he was leaving the hut early the next morning, Armstrong added, he was approached by Shelley, who said, “If anyone asks you about Pigsticker...”

“Yes, I know all about it,” Armstrong interrupted. “Mum’s the word.” But on seeing a newspaper report of the body’s discovery, he went to the police.

The jury then heard



**Despite their appeals to Home Secretary John Clynes (right), no reprieve was forthcoming in the Home Office letter (above) and the men went to the gallows**

that Shelley had made a statement, saying that Pigsticker had continually caused trouble, and had been caught taking things from the pair’s hut. So on seeing him outside on the night of May 30th, they accused him of stealing.

“Sticker punched me in the chest and knocked me down,” Shelley’s statement continued. “There was a terrible fight in which he was killed. We picked him up, wrapped sacking around his head, and laid him on the rubbish shoot. We only used our fists.”

Newman, giving evidence, echoed this story, saying that no sticks were used, only fists. He and Shelley both denied murder.

Sir Bernard Spilsbury, replying to Shelley’s counsel Francis Peregrine, agreed that if a live man had been on the tip he could have slipped and struck his head fatally.

Dr. Finnincane, appearing for the defence, said he had examined Newman in prison, finding that he had a number of injuries. He thought that Ayres’s facial fractures had been caused by blows in a general melee among powerful men, and he did not think Ayres’s skull was fractured by an axe.

Shelley told the court that he had no intention of killing Ayres, who he said was a big man who was quarrelsome when upset. He denied having an axe with him on the night of the fight, which he said started when Ayres

knocked Newman down.

“I jumped in to help my mate,” he testified, “and Sticker gave me one under the ear. He kicked me, and I kicked him and knocked him out. He laid for twenty minutes or half an hour while we had a smoke. Then he got up and went for us, and he got laid out again. This time I lifted up his head and found he was dead.

“We laid him on the grass for an hour and a half and then carried him to the dump three-quarters of a mile away, on the handle of a pitchfork. We dropped him over two fences on the way. We saw no fire on the dump, and we left him there, covered with a bit of refuse.”

Eustace Fulton, prosecuting, asked: “Did you say to Sergeant Pickett, ‘I wanted to put him on the line and let a train hit him, but Tiggy would not agree?’”

“Yes,” Shelley replied.

“Did you say, ‘He has got all he has been asking for for a long time?’”

“Yes.”

“What did you mean by that?”

“He was such a nuisance and a thief, and we warned him. There you are – you have got it in a nutshell now.”

Mr. Peregrine asked: “When you spoke of putting Sticker under a train, did you mean while he was alive or after he was dead?”

“After he was dead,” Shelley replied.

**S**umming-up, Mr. Justice Swift said that if the

jury thought Shelley and Newman intended to do Ayres grievous harm and that he died from their punishment, then they were guilty of murder.

After nearly an hour’s deliberation, the jury convicted both men as charged, and the judge sentenced them to death.

“Thank you, sir,” said Shelley. “It ought to have been done twenty years ago.”

What did he mean? As he was being taken to his cell, he explained: “If you search



the dump, you will find five more bodies there. We put them there, just as we did this chap.”

Neither killer showed any remorse as they awaited execution. “How much money have you got, Tiggy?” Shelley shouted to Newman, who was in another cell.

“Twenty-five and threepence,” Newman replied.

“We ain’t got long to spend it,” Shelley laughed.

His admission of five other murders was noted, the authorities deciding it could not be verified. No further trace of human remains was likely to be found in the dump, which had been burning for 20 years.

The Home Secretary, John Clynes, was unsure whether this was a case for the death penalty. When he conferred with the judge, however, he was assured that the murder was premeditated.

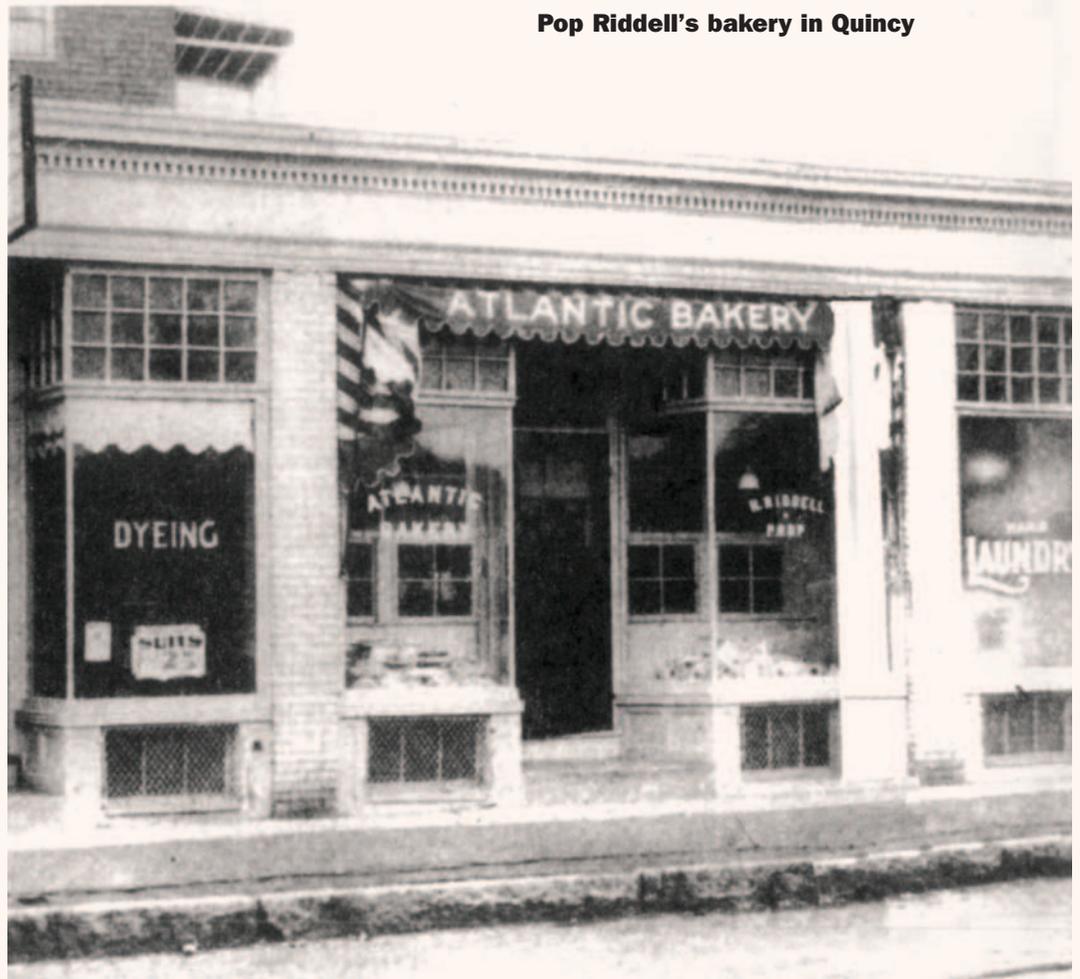
**So there were no reprieves, and on August 5th, 1931, William ‘Moosh’ Shelley and Oliver ‘Tiggy’ Newman were hanged together at London’s Pentonville Prison. The executioner, Robert Baxter, had three assistants.**

**T**HE LOCAL kids called him the Gingerbread Man and the reason was obvious to everyone – his cakes and pastries were the best in town. He brought a magic touch to them – and there was nothing the kids liked more than a touch of magic.

He was an Englishman actually. He'd come over to Massachusetts about 10 years before and settled in a district called Atlantic in a place called Quincy, eight miles from Boston, where he had opened his bake-shop close to the railway station.

There, every morning, he could be seen standing in the shop doorway, a kindly, friendly-faced fellow. And when a toddler came by clutching its mother's hand, the Gingerbread Man would pop back to the counter and hand the tot some little freebie, and the toddler and the Gingerbread Man would laugh in unison.

To the grown-ups he was Pop Riddell; no one ever knew his first name. It was in fact Harry. But they all knew his kindly smile, and of course they all knew his



Pop Riddell's bakery in Quincy

**He was kind and generous and all the kids loved him. He was brave, too, and when a robber came into his shop he stood his ground. For that he was beaten to death with bare fists**

# THE COURAGE OF GINGERBREAD

delicious cakes and pastries.

Then came the night of Halloween, the season of ghosts and goblins and sheeted spectres. Most of the town's children were out in force celebrating. Wearing false faces they lay in wait in dark corners to shout and frighten passers-by.

Some crept up to the rear of the bakery where the Gingerbread Man was preparing trays of the next day's delicacies, and made weird ghost noises. The Gingerbread Man laughed, entering into the spirit of the occasion, for when it was a case of trick or treat he knew they were really there for his sweet baked treats.

As the night wore on the streets gradually became deserted. It was growing late, close to the hour when it is said the Spirit of Death hovers close to the shivering earth, when tides ebb and unseen souls depart on their final journey.

It was then that two young men lurking in a baseball park across the road from Pop Riddell's renowned bakery stirred in the

darkness.

"It's late," one of them said. "That girl of yours isn't going to keep her date tonight." The bell on a nearby church clock struck midnight.

"You're right," the second man said. "Let's go over to Pop Riddell's and mug-up."

A chill raw wind blew in from the sea as the two men vanished into the night. And on the crest of that wind, as cold and clammy as a dead man's hand, rode the grisly figure of grinning death.

A short time later the phone rang at Quincy police station. Night duty Sergeant David Farrell answered it. A man was shouting down the line. "Get over to Pop

● **Case recalled by Stanford de Jong**

**Harry "Pop" Riddell. He brought a touch of magic into the lives of the local kids**



# F A AD MAN

Riddell's bake-shop at Atlantic!" he yelled. "The old guy has just been murdered!"

The rapid message to all nearest available cars from the police station was picked up by Sergeant David Shea, who switched on his siren, turned on his revolving roof light, and gunned the engine towards Atlantic.

As Shea turned down beside the steel bridge in

Atlantic that spans the railway tracks, a man waiting in the shadows sprang towards him. It was John Connors, known as "Red," a friend of Pop Riddell. Connors jumped on the running-board of the police car. "I'll show you the way," he said tersely. In Sagamore Street he told Shea to pull in to the kerb.

"That's his bake-shop,"

Connors said, pointing. Another patrol car drew up behind them with a screech of brakes. Shea and the other officers pushed through the front display room of the bakery and into the kitchen.

Everywhere the place was a shambles, and everywhere there was blood. The Gingerbread Man lay crumpled in one corner, his stiff, contorted body mirroring his last agonised moments, his fingers clenched. His throat had been ripped open and the lower half of his face was covered in blood.

The cash drawer under the back shelves in the front room was prised open and there were silver and copper coins scattered across the floor. The till was empty.

Sergeant Shea bent over Pop Riddell. He was clearly dead, but the body was still warm. He looked around briefly. Only Red Connors was there besides the other officers. "What do you know about this?" Shea rapped.

Connors hesitated, stumbling over his words. He had dropped in as usual for a cup of coffee and a doughnut. The front door was open, so he'd just walked in. He'd called to Pop Riddell but the Gingerbread Man didn't answer. Then he pushed open the partition door and saw the mayhem.

"I ran over to the news agency office just a few doors away and called the police at once," he said. His voice broke. "He was a pal of mine," he said. "A great pal."

"OK. But you just stick around for a bit," Shea said.

A detective nosing around the shambles in the kitchen picked up a blood-spotted section of a board. It was about 18 inches long and four inches wide. There was a long nail through the centre of the board.

"This has been freshly broken off," the detective observed. "It's a piece from the picket fence behind the bake-shop," another detective said.

Two detectives filed out to the rear yard, sweeping the fence with the beams of their torches. Sure enough, there was the broken picket fence. Lieutenant George Fallon slipped the board found in the bake-shop over the broken piece. The two pieces fitted perfectly.

**B**ack in the bake-shop the police doctor was making a preliminary examination of the body. "I'd say he's been beaten badly around the throat and chin with some blunt instrument," the doctor said. "Then he was choked and stabbed."

Some of the officers reckoned it was too dark to make much of a search outside, but Sergeant William Ferrazzi, the



**John "Red" Connors, friend and regular customer of the Gingerbread Man, who discovered the body**

youngest sergeant in the force, nevertheless decided to take a look round. He made a short patrol around the bakery, playing his torch beam on the back street pavements. A bit of cloth fluttering in the wind caught his attention – it was a pocket handkerchief.

But this wasn't any ordinary pocket handkerchief. It was folded into a triangular shape, with two of its corners crushed together. Bringing it closer to his torch, Ferrazzi thought the specks on it were crimson. Careful not to disturb its folds, the sergeant took the handkerchief back to the bake-shop.

"There's no question what this was used for," he said to Lieutenant Fallon "Whoever killed Pop Riddell was wearing this as a mask." Fallon too thought the tiny marks on the piece of cloth were blood, and the handkerchief was sent off for forensic examination.

The detectives huddled

together for an impromptu conference. Did Pop Riddell know his killer? The reason for asking was that the Gingerbread Man's false teeth were found on a shelf, and it was known that he always wore his teeth when he met customers.

But of course the killer might have stolen in unawares through the unlocked back door. There was no weapon – only the bloodstained piece of fencing. There was no way of determining whether the blood on the board came from the wound or from the blood on the floor. A quick examination revealed that there was no trace of blood on the tip of the nail, which would hardly be possible if this was used to make the gaping wound in the throat.

There were also no fingerprints. The killer had got into the shop, rifled the till and the drawers after killing the owner, and left without a single trace except that unmarked handkerchief.

At last dawn broke over the long night of death. Squads of detectives moved into the vicinity, searching, probing around the area of the bake-shop for clues which would now be visible by daylight. Their efforts were soon rewarded.

Only 30 yards from the murder scene Patrolman Villier bent down and picked up another handkerchief. Like the one found in the night it too was folded into a triangular shape, with its

### **The idea that the killer might be a boxer came about because the blows were centred on the throat and chin**

corners still twisted into tight folds.

The handkerchief was only a yard or two away from the one found by Sergeant Ferrazzi. But there was something very different about it. For in one corner, beautifully embroidered, were three initials: "A.B.M."

The neighbourhood was already awake to the shocking news and there were few who were not touched by the Gingerbread



**Quincy's Chief of Police Ernest Bishop**

Man's horrific death. Now it emerged that Pop Riddell had been more than a kindly old man to the neighbourhood toddlers – he had quietly helped out all sorts of people who were pinched by the hard times.

Around the time of the murder the police had picked up all sorts of stray youths who had stayed out late, and bundled them unceremoniously into police cells for questioning in the morning. Those who were arrested in pairs were given a specially hard grilling.

For already Lieutenant Fallon had decided that two men had entered the bakery. He reasoned: "One went into the rear room and started a fight while the other remained in the front room and prised off the cash drawer.

"When Pop Riddell was murdered in the rear-room battle, the two robbers, finding only small change on the premises, ran through the front door and made their getaway."

### **Above, the scene that met the detectives at the bakery – the body of the Gingerbread Man lies beneath the sheet**

During the course of that day all the arrested youths were found to be innocent of the crime and were released. So too, was Red Connors, for the police were convinced he was holding nothing back.

The beating that the Gingerbread Man had been given strongly suggested the work of a boxer. The stick with the nail in it was gradually being eliminated – there was a growing conviction that it had played no part in Pop Riddell's death.

The idea that the killer might be a boxer came about because the blows were centred on the throat and chin. They were severe enough to have clipped off a piece of jaw bone, throwing it back into the throat, and at the same time break a bone near the larynx in four places.

Reading the reports, Quincy's Chief of Police Ernest Bishop shook his head. A killer boxer didn't seem very likely to him. He went to the murder scene and pointed out the blood spattered on the walls at a considerable height above where the body lay. "Isn't that more likely to be a blow from a foot as he lay on the floor unable to protect himself?" he asked. But the truth was that no one could

say anything for certain.

Lieutenant Fallon held up the handkerchief embroidered with the initials "A.B.M." "This is all we have to go on," he said. "If we can crack these initials I reckon we'll know who killed Pop Riddell."

A few hours later the phone rang in Chief Bishop's office. It was Boston police. They had picked up an ex-boxer named Duke Fallon – no relation to the investigating lieutenant – under suspicious circumstances and were holding him to await questioning by Quincy detectives.

There were fresh bloodstains on Duke Fallon's shirt that he couldn't explain. So it looked as if the ex-boxer idea was back in the frame again. It didn't stay there long. Duke Fallon was grilled intensively by his police namesake and found to be innocent of anything.

The days passed. The Gingerbread Man was buried on a day of mourning for the entire town and there were muttered complaints about police inactivity. There were daily meetings at police headquarters, but still nothing much to report.

The post-mortem revealed that every single blow delivered by the killer was directed to the jaw, which



**Above, the broken fence, part of which was found at the murder scene. Below, Sergeant William Ferrazzi of the Quincy police department who discovered the red-stained handkerchief**

would have been a very difficult accomplishment unless the murderer knew something about boxing. The boxer idea wouldn't go away, and it led Lieutenant Fallon to believe that if the killer was a boxer he was unlikely to be a professional criminal.

"Let's work round what we know, and what we can surmise from what we know," he told a police meeting. "The murder was most likely committed by someone living within a mile or so of the bake-shop – a youth or youths probably between sixteen and twenty-five.

"Why? Because of the relatively small amount of money involved and the manner in which they set out to do the robbery. I'm also convinced that the killer is some kind of boxer. And his initials could be A.B.M."

The detectives agreed that at this juncture it would be advantageous not to reveal to the press the clue of the A.B.M. handkerchief. Instead they combed through criminal records, looking for some youth who answered Fallon's suggested description.

**T**hey pored over telephone books and business directories too, but it all came to nothing. Finally they told the press about the handkerchief.

The story was read by a man named Thomas Allingham, who was something of an expert on linen. He studied the handkerchief and declared it to be an extremely expensive one. "The embroidering of the initials has been done by a professional," he said.

So copies of the initials and the hemstitched border were sent to all the retail shops and department stores across New England. That was a giant task, and it was bound to take some time.

Examination of the second handkerchief had revealed, besides the initials, a barely discernible laundry mark. That line of inquiry had been pursued through local laundries, but none of them were able to recognise the mark.

Now Lieutenant Fallon decided to cast the net wider. He began a systematic search of all Massachusetts laundries. Were any of them able to identify this faded mark, he asked forlornly? At last his persistence paid off.

A laundryman in the town of Lynn, about 10 miles north of Boston, snapped his fingers when he saw the mark. It was his, he declared. But he couldn't remember either the name or the address of the customer who had given it to him to be laundered.

The press were told

everything. A \$500 reward was offered for information concerning the mysterious handkerchief which would lead to the arrest and conviction of the killers.

Then, filing through the scanty evidence, Lieutenant Fallon had a flash of inspiration. He remembered someone with the initials A.M. His name was Arthur Matheson, he was a small-time crook, and he was known to visit Pop Riddell's bakery.

With nothing to go on, Fallon decided to call on Arthur Matheson, but the youth simply denied ever having seen the handkerchief before. Fallon, convinced he was lying – the more so because Matheson's middle name began with "B" – let him stew for a while, then made a second visit. Still the youth stuck stubbornly to his story.

Back at headquarters



Fallon called Sergeant Ferrazzi. "This kid knows more about that handkerchief than he's willing to admit," he said. "His record shows he likes a drink, goes out on benders. Tail him tonight, and when he's had too much bring him in. I reckon he'll soon change his tune when he's in a cell."

That night, with Arthur Matheson predictably slightly the worse for drink, and predictably locked up, Fallon faced him again. But the youth still wouldn't budge from his story.

"You're a fool, Matheson," Fallon told him. "There's a big reward out for information about that handkerchief. Someone's going to squeal on you sooner or later."

"I didn't kill Pop Riddell!" Matheson yelled back. "He was always decent to me and I liked him."

"I didn't say you killed

him. What I've been saying is that you know something about that handkerchief you haven't told me. You're withholding information, and that's going to get you into serious trouble."

Matheson's head sank. "I don't want any trouble," he muttered.

"Then tell the truth, and you'll be in the clear," the lieutenant replied.

Matheson looked up and squared his shoulders as if resolved. "All right, I do know something about it," he said. "But it isn't my handkerchief."

"Oh, no?" replied Fallon. "How come it's got your initials on it, then?"

"It belongs to a guy named Munroe – Allen B. Munroe. He lives in Wollaston."

"What's he got to do with this murder?"

"Nothing," Matheson said uneasily. "You see, I stole the handkerchief from him. A couple of days before old Pop Riddell got bumped off I was helping Allen Munroe to move out of his old home. I saw some of his handkerchiefs in a bureau drawer and as the initials were the same as mine I stole half a dozen of them."

"But who had this handkerchief?" Fallon insisted, producing the bloodstained square of linen from his pocket. "How did this happen to be picked up only thirty yards away from the murder?"

Matheson looked at the handkerchief for a long time without speaking. "I can't tell you that," he replied at length. "I can only tell you that I showed it to a guy named John Bowen. He liked it, so I gave it to him that same night I finished moving Munroe."

Fallon smiled to himself. He knew all about John Bowen, a local tearaway who lived not far from the Gingerbread Man's shop. And Bowen, a big, brawny fellow, had a reputation as a boxer.

According to Matheson, after he had given Bowen one of the A.B.M. handkerchiefs he saw Bowen on the night of the murder with a buddy of his named John Daly. This was at about 1.30 in the morning at a restaurant just across the river from Atlantic.

"They were behaving in



**Patrolman Frank Villier, who discovered the clue that ultimately solved the Riddell murder mystery. Right, an enlarged picture of the handkerchief showing the embroidered initials**

a very odd way," Matheson remembered. "Although I know both of them very well, they didn't seem to want me around. They seemed all upset, laughing at nothing and whispering to each other like a couple of kids."

As he closed the cell door behind him the lieutenant instinctively felt that Matheson was speaking the truth. His luck seemed to be holding when Allen Munroe identified the initialled handkerchief as one of a number that his sister had embroidered and given to him for Christmas.

Lieutenant Fallon went at once to the home of John Bowen, where he lived with his father and married sister. But the suspect wasn't at home. He had left for Pictou in Nova Scotia, to visit his mother there. The date of his departure was two days after the murder, and no one at the house knew when he would be back.

From various witnesses Fallon learned that both Bowen and Daly were seen near the bakery on the night of Halloween. Fallon decided that Bowen had to be brought in rapidly, so he called Chief of Police James MacLanders at Pictou and told him that he wanted Bowen for suspected murder.

As it happened the police chief already knew about John Bowen. Hardly had the youth arrived in Nova Scotia than he had got

himself arrested for some misdemeanour.

"No problem," MacLanders reported. "We've already got that guy in custody."

Next Fallon turned his mind to John Daly, the

returned at about 1.30 he had a meal with Bowen in the restaurant where he saw Allen Matheson.

Later he changed his story, telling the interrogators this time that he'd had a date with a girl earlier that



second suspect. Daly, it seemed, was already on parole, so he was quickly arrested on a violation-of-parole warrant. So both men were now under arrest – yet neither was aware as yet that the other was in custody.

Daly at first just refused to say anything at all, but after several hours of questioning by Fallon and Chief of Police Bishop he finally admitted that he had been out with Bowen on the night of Halloween until about 10 o'clock. After that, he said, he had gone to Boston to see a show and when he

evening and had gone with Bowen to the baseball park near Pop Riddell's, where Bowen had arranged to meet another girl at midnight. But the girl didn't show up so Bowen said he was going over to Pop Riddell's for something to eat.

"I sat across the street from where I could see the bakery," Daly said. "I remember seeing him come out. He looked first one way, then the other. Then he ran around the back. I thought something must be wrong so I hurried across the street and into the bakery.

"Old Pop was lying on the floor. I started to move towards him when I was aware that Bowen was coming in through the back door. He had a handkerchief over his face. I grabbed the old man and saw that he was dead.

"Bowen said, 'Scram, or they'll pin this on you.' I went out by the back door. I was crying and took out my handkerchief, wiped my eyes and threw it away just outside the door.

"Bowen had a pocketful of money. He told me he'd asked Pop Riddell for some coffee. They had a row and Bowen grabbed a piece of fence board and clubbed the old man.

"Next day Bowen wanted me to go to Canada with him but I refused. He said, 'You touched the cash drawer and they'll have it on you. If you don't come to Canada they'll put the works on you.'"

Less than two hours after being brought back from Canada shackled with leg irons, John Bowen was charged in court with murder. John Daly, remanded in custody as a material witness, refused to say anything in court.

A waiting trial, John Bowen was constantly questioned by the police. One of the things that seemed to irk him more than anything else was Daly's claim that Bowen had used the broken piece of fence with the nail to strike down the Gingerbread Man.

Bowen the boxer, swaggering and conceited, was vain about his prowess as a pugilist. It seemed to prey on his mind to think that Daly did not think him man enough to settle Pop Riddell without a weapon in his hands.

Daly too was questioned regularly. Did he want to stick to his story, he was asked by Lieutenant Fallon? The reason for the question was that Bowen was telling an entirely different story in which Daly was involved in the murder just as much as he, Bowen, was. Daly snorted. He would stick to his story and Bowen could stick to his.

"But you say Bowen hit Pop Riddell with a piece of fencing," Fallon pointed out. "We don't think there's much evidence to support that."

“Bring him in and I’ll say it in front of him,” Daly answered. So the two were brought face to face.

“Did you hit the old man with the fencing?” Bowen was asked.

“No, I didn’t!” he shouted. “It’s a lie!”

Fallon turned to Daly. “Did Bowen tell you he hit Pop Riddell with the piece of fencing?”

“Yes,” declared Daly.

“You’re a liar!” Bowen shouted. “I hit him with my fists.”

Bowen turned to Lieutenant Fallon. He was clearly furious. “I’ll tell you exactly how it happened,” he said.

How it happened according to John Bowen was that they decided to go to the bake-shop and rob old Pop Riddell. They tied handkerchiefs around their faces and just before they entered Bowen picked up the piece of broken fencing and slipped it into his pocket with the intention of making the old man think he had a gun.

Pop Riddell obeyed the command to “Stick ’em up,” then, apparently thinking the bandit was off his guard, made a sudden lunge. In the fight that followed, Bowen claimed, he was forced to kill the old man in order to protect himself.

Daly, in the meantime, was

**Although Daly took no part in the actual killing, he was held equally as guilty under the law**

in the front room robbing the till. After the murder they went to Bowen’s home, buried the money, then went to the late-night restaurant to eat.

When Bowen returned home later that night he tore his clothes into strips and hid them in the cellar; Daly did the same with the trousers he was wearing. Later these clothes were recovered by the police and found to be bloodstained. Fallon also recovered part of the buried money.

As Lieutenant Fallon carefully wrote down the confession he shuddered at the visible scene. The old



**Detective Lieutenant George Fallon (left) brings the suspect back to Boston for trial**

Gingerbread Man must have tried valiantly to defend his shop against this bruiser, and for that he was beaten to death by a young boxer’s clenched fists.

Bowen’s story tallied with the evidence, so John Daly was at once charged with first-degree murder. Although he took no part in the actual killing, he was held equally as guilty under the law, because the murder was done at the same time as a robbery was being committed.

**T**he two men stood for trial on May 22nd, 1933. As the trial opened Bowen, not caring to face a first-degree murder charge and the electric chair, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was given life imprisonment.

The jury disagreed as far as Daly was concerned, and he was brought to trial for a second time on January 11th, 1934, again facing a

first-degree murder charge.

The star prosecution witness this second time around was John Bowen, whose confession in the first place had resulted in Daly being charged. He was brought into the witness-box shackled to a deputy and as he took the Bible for the oath he didn’t even look at his former partner.

Daly stared hard at him, then looked away. He had reason to be worried – the next few minutes might bring him life or death. His fingers beat a tattoo on the edge of the cage.

Assistant District Attorney George Arbuckle rose to question Bowen. “What is your name?” he asked.

“I refuse to answer,” Bowen replied.

Spectators leaned forward in their seats. Pressed, Bowen finally gave his name.

“Do you know the defendant?” he was asked.

“I refuse to answer any

questions,” Bowen replied.

The judge peered down at Bowen. “Do you intend to offer any testimony?” he asked.

“I do not,” Bowen replied. “I just want to get down from this stand.”

The court was powerless. They couldn’t make him speak. A recess was called for lawyers to discuss the implications.

It was well understood that Bowen wasn’t remaining silent out of any love for John Daly. It was because now, as a lifer, he was part of the underworld and had to live up to its code. If he squealed he would be branded a rat – and there would be no escaping gang vengeance behind prison walls. Bowen had already seen, during his short stay, three convicts stabbed by fellow-inmates. They were rats, and that was prison justice.

Bowen’s refusal meant the collapse of the prosecution’s case. As the handcuffs were snapped on him again and he was leaving court, he came face to face with John Daly – for the last time. The two men stared at each other.

“Be good – pal!” Bowen breathed in a thin, hard voice.

The jury were directed to bring in a not guilty verdict against Daly, but even as he was still sitting in the prisoners’ cage the Assistant District Attorney asked that he should be charged with being an accessory. This was done, and Daly was sentenced to two years’ hard labour in the house of correction.

Back in prison, because of his refusal to testify against his companion in crime, and probably too because of his imposing physique, John Bowen became something of a hero among his fellow-convicts.

**Heroism went to his head, however. For on September 14th, 1934, he took the lead in a daringly planned but abortive attempt to set fire to Charleston State Prison in an escape plot. The blaze was quickly discovered and extinguished, and Bowen and seven others were sent into solitary confinement.**

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TC0622

**J**OHN GOULD was completely mad. Stark raving bonkers. Everyone around him agreed with that. Everyone in fact gave him a wide berth because like most madmen he was unpredictable.

Two other things contributed to Gould's immense unpopularity. First, he had an affinity with firearms, and was quick to threaten to use them. Second, he was a crack shot. A combination of these in a madman made Gould a very dangerous man to be at large.

The Gould family lived in Linthorpe. Today this is part of inner Middlesbrough, but at the end of the 19th century it was a mass of brickfields on the edge of the countryside. The family – old Harry Gould, who was in his 80s, his wife, who wasn't far behind,

when they were killing horses they kept large angry dogs on chains.

Matters came to a head in April 1893 when for the umpteenth time that year Young Harry blew his top and threatened to shoot a local man. To make his point he fired into the pond around which the brickfields were built. The aggrieved citizen complained to the police, who asked the opinion of Dr. Scanlan, who occasionally did police work.

"There's no doubt he is a complete lunatic," said the doctor, echoing the general consensus across the brickfields. "He terrifies the brick workers. They are so suspicious of him that sometimes they knock off work early in winter for fear of still being around while he is about when it's dark."

Mr. T. Glover of Leeds wrote to ask: "Have you ever published a story about a PC William Henderson, the only officer in the history of the police force in Cleveland to be murdered? I recently found out he is a relation."

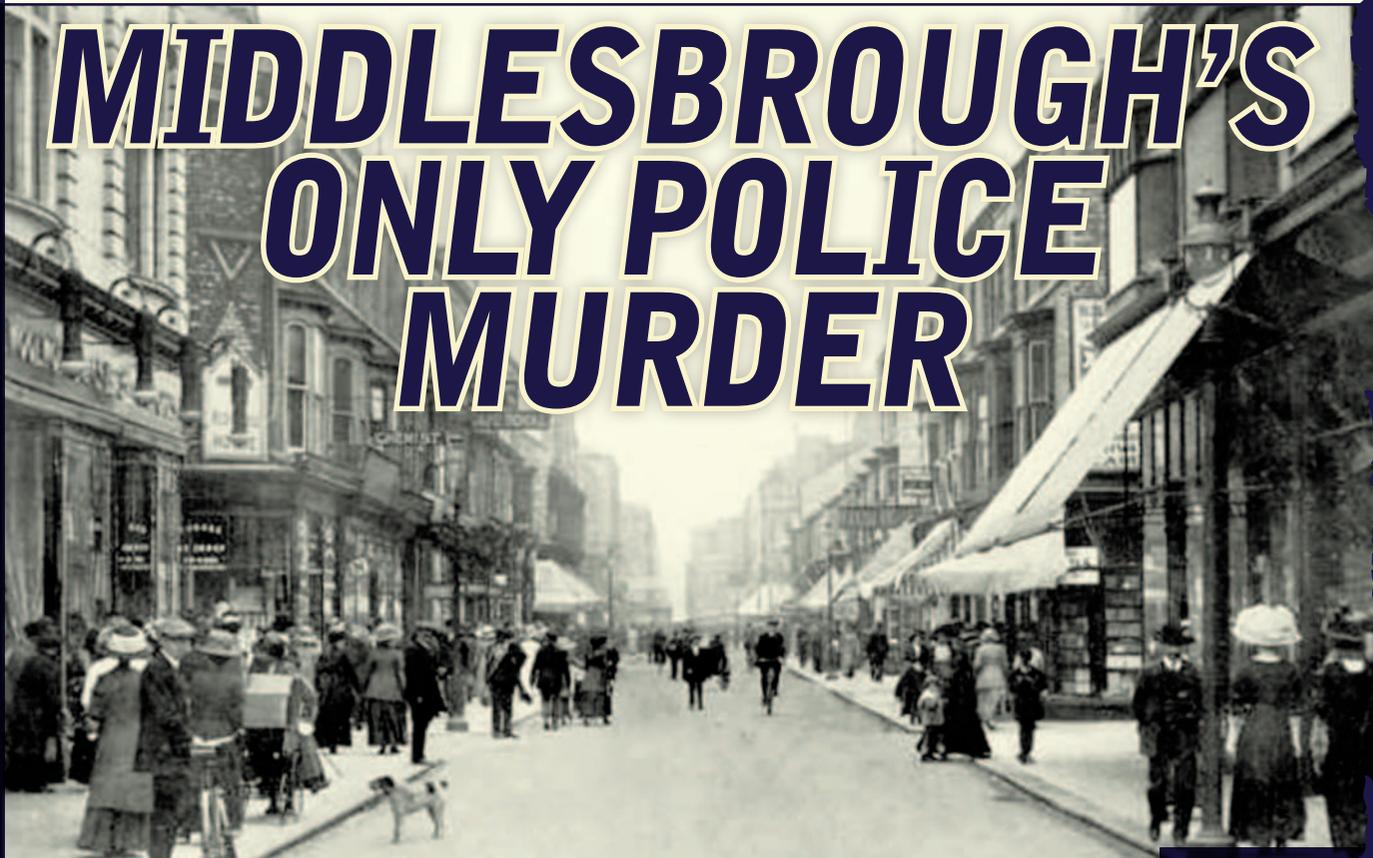
We haven't featured this case before, Mr. Glover – so here's a newly researched report by **James Newbury...**

Old Harry answered his knock. He knew what the doctor had come for – everyone in the brickfields seemed to be aware that they were going to take in Young Harry sooner or later.

"You had better not come inside," Old Harry said. He was as wary of his offspring as was everyone else. "He's

Below, Linthorpe Road in Middlesbrough. The population was around 75,000 by the end of the 19th century

# MIDDLESBROUGH'S ONLY POLICE MURDER



and John, 33, also known as Young Harry – lived in two dilapidated caravans with wooden sheds for pigs and poultry.

Additionally, they were horse slaughterers, and to keep inquisitive folk away

Someone had to go and fetch him, the mayor decided, and the doctor was delegated to do the job. Accordingly, with perhaps a slight touch of trepidation, Dr. Scanlan went forthwith to the two caravans in the brickfields.

not to be trusted. I disarmed him yesterday of a pistol and a rifle." The old man held out his arm, bruised and bloodied from his struggle with his son.

"Tell him I have a horse that needs shooting," Dr. Scanlan said. "That at least

**It was all in the line of duty for father-of-eight William Henderson when he was called to a standoff with an armed madman, who was threatening to shoot on sight. Bravely the officer leapt forward – and paid the ultimate price...**

should bring him to the door.”

The ruse worked, but Young Harry wasn't much interested. "I don't collect horses, you have to bring it here," he mumbled. Then he began raving incoherently. "I'm a piece of machinery, and I'm being torn to bits by other machinery!" he shouted. When the doctor calmed him down he said sullenly, "Shoot the horse yourself."

Dr. Scanlan returned home and wrote a report. "*John Gould is a short man but of ferocious appearance,*" he wrote. "*He talks incoherently and is a danger to himself as well as others. He should be confined to a mental home.*"

"Then this time we must do something about it," declared Mayor Charles Bell, and set about raising a posse of local officials to conduct Young Harry, by force if necessary, to an asylum.

When they arrived at the two caravans they were met by Mrs. Gould. "He's not here," she said, in answer to the mayor's question. "Anyway, what do you want with him?"

"He's been threatening folk with his guns again and we must put a stop to it," the mayor said.

"The guns are all secure," replied Mrs. Gould.

The standoff was joined by two police officers, Sergeant Thomas Black and Constable William Henderson, 37. It was now getting on for six o'clock and there was still no sign of Young Harry.

A search began under Constable Henderson, with Sergeant Black left to guard the two caravans. The search yielded nothing and the posse made its way wearily back to the two caravans.

**T**here – surprise, surprise! – was John Gould. He seemed to have appeared from nowhere and was now squatting in the gathering darkness on a wooden seat, nursing an old rifle and fiddling with the trigger. Recovering from his astonishment, Constable Henderson could only say, "Well, there you are, John!" Gould, lost in his own thoughts, made no reply.

Henderson, Sergeant Black and two officials from the mayor's party approached him gingerly, their eyes riveted on the rifle. Suddenly Henderson lunged forward to seize the weapon. He

never made it. All in one fluid movement Gould swung the rifle by its butt and pulled the trigger.

The bullet tore into Constable Henderson's heart from point-blank range and the mortally wounded officer fell back into the arms of one of the two town hall officials, George Anderson. With commendable courage the second official,

asked Gould what he thought he had done.

"I've done nothing I shouldn't have done," he replied calmly. "You blokes have been following me around all day and I'm sick of it. I'm just protecting myself, that's all."

now became violent. To the crowd gathering around him he shouted: "I know what you lot have come for! You want to get me into an asylum. Well, I'm not going. I'm not an Irish nationalist. I haven't done anything wrong."

As the crowd closed in, brick dust swirled up from the ground, choking and blinding, and the chaos was accentuated by Gould's chained and snarling dogs



Victim Constable William Henderson and his family

Richard Scotson, jumped on Gould and knocked him to the ground.

The sound of the detonation was enormous and brought people running. Thomas Layburn, owner of the nearby Cleveland Hotel, rushed to the scene to find Gould staggering to his feet and grappling with Mr. Scotson.

The gunshot alerted officers at the nearby police station. When they saw the body of their colleague the situation went momentarily out of control, for Henderson was a popular officer and the father of eight children. Gould was quickly arrested. A chorus of "Let's string him up on the nearest tree," only abated when an inspector arrived and took charge.

As the officers dusted themselves down, one of them

There was a small grain of truth in this. The Gould family said Young Harry had become withdrawn and morose in the past few days because he was convinced he was under police surveillance. He had taken to going to bed with a loaded gun and had gone off his food.

Gould didn't intend to be taken easily. His struggles

– seven yelling, barking canines that included a St. Bernard.

He was quickly bundled on to a cart and driven to Middlesbrough police station, where chaos reigned. A large crowd of sailors had appeared in the town centre protesting in support of striking dockers in Hull. The crowd now following Gould became intermingled with them; the resultant mayhem overspilled into the police station, severely hampering the arresting procedure.

**“Can you bring him round?”  
Gould asked an officer. Told that  
the constable was really dead, he  
replied, “Well, it was self-defence.  
If I hadn't fired he would have shot  
me first...”**

As the body of Constable Henderson was laid out on a table, officers were jostled by striking dockers and by gawpers who had come in the hope of seeing a lynching. The officer's corpse was undressed and his helmet and bloodsoaked uniform placed neatly at his feet. His tunic showed clearly the deep wound from the gun in his chest. The left arm was blasted away and much of the flesh on the right arm was destroyed.

Gould was pushed to the front of the spectators to view his handiwork. He seemed indifferent. "Can you bring him round?" he asked an officer. Told that the constable was really dead, he replied, "Well, it was self-defence. If I hadn't fired he would have shot me first."

The next day there was an inquest. The hearing was told that the local council would provide for Mrs. Henderson and her brood of children, and large amounts of money had already been privately donated.

Thousands of people lined the streets of Middlesbrough to watch Constable Henderson's funeral procession, and there was no doubt where their sympathies lay. But after the burial the public mood started to change, and people began to talk openly about John Gould, who was now reinvented as "sensible, decent, sober and intelligent."

People now remembered that Young Harry was fond of studying nature and would tramp the local fields observing and noting the seasonal changes – a quiet, thinking chap. A few years back he had been working at a mill when his foot slipped. He was caught in the wheel and only just avoided being shredded. The incident had seemed to scar him mentally.

The story of Young Harry's arrest had made the local papers, and old Mrs. Gould still had plenty to tell them. "We are devastated," she said tearfully. "He is our last child of four – the other three were died.

"For weeks before this awful business happened he was unwell. At night he would shriek and groan in a most fearful way, often calling out things like, 'Keep your hand off my head!' and 'Don't pull my hair out!'"

They had come north from the south of England, where Old Harry had once run his own travelling circus. Middlesbrough people remembered that Phineas Taylor Barnum, "the greatest showman of the century," had been Old Harry's assistant. Suddenly everyone was talking appreciatively about Young Harry and the Gould family.

According to newspaper reports, "thousands" of people came to see the two caravans. Much to the surprise and prejudice of these visitors they found the caravans spotlessly clean.

When Gould was brought before the magistrates the public gallery was packed with young women and girls. There was more evidence about the machinery with

which the prisoner was obsessed. It seemed that he believed the machinery was in his head and his only way to be rid of it was to try to tear it out.

Sergeant Black told the court that the mayor's posse waited for an hour before they decided to go forward and disarm Gould. Constable Henderson was first to move when Gould glanced sideways at his father.

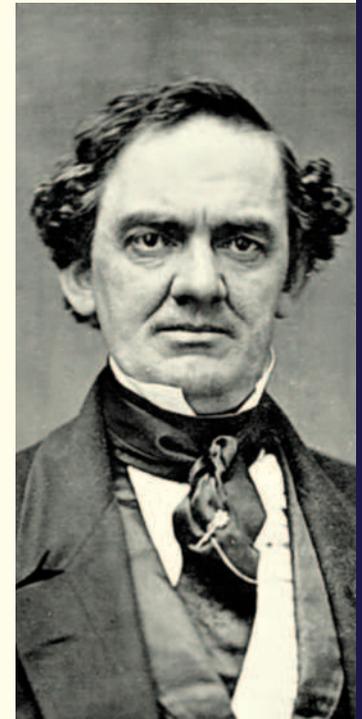
"The constable was between 10 and 12 feet away from the prisoner when he jumped forward," Sergeant Black said. "The prisoner fired immediately and Henderson died as he fell.

"Gould told officers at the police station that the constable was tearing the guns out of his hands and that he would have been killed had he not fired first. But that wasn't true. When the officer was shot no one had actually got hold of the gun."

Dr. Scanlan told the magistrates: "Gould seems to be suffering from melancholia."



Above, Mr. Justice Gameford Bruce. Right, the grave of PC William Henderson



Above, Phineas T. Barnum – once the assistant of the accused's father in his circus days

Old Harry told the court that his son had first "become funny" about 18 months ago. Mrs. Gould thought it was much longer. She said, "He was hit on the head seven years ago, and he hasn't been well since. The mob who came for him frightened him."

After the jurymen viewed the body, Young Harry, who remained remarkably calm throughout the proceedings, said, "The constable tore the gun out of my hand." Enigmatically he added, "You must remember this is horse killing."

At the end of the hearing Gould said, "I do not want any witnesses," and he was remanded for trial in the following month.

John Gould went on trial for his life at Leeds Assizes

on Wednesday, May 16th, 1893. He declined to plead to the murder charge, so a plea of not guilty was formally recorded.

The prosecution opened by telling the court that Gould had been held on remand not in prison but in an asylum. They believed that while he could understand the proceedings and was therefore legally fit to be tried, at the time of the murder he was insane.

Turning to the jury Mr. Justice Gainsford Bruce

said, "You will first have to decide whether the prisoner is fit to stand trial." He then asked a doctor called by the prosecution what would happen if Gould were asked questions.

"He probably wouldn't answer," the doctor replied.

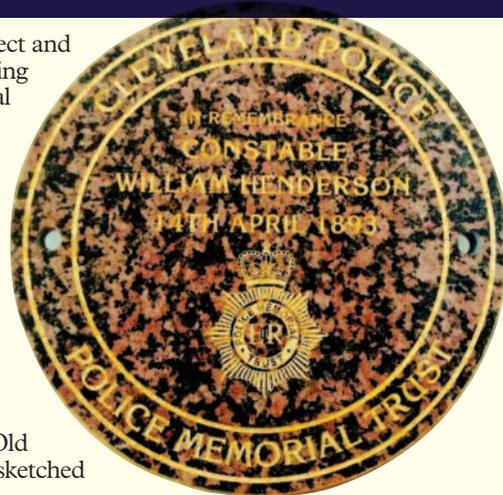
Dr. Scanlan went further. "I don't believe Gould can now recollect killing the policeman," he said. "He has severe memory problems."

And a Dr. Joseph Hingston, called by the prosecution, said: "Gould would probably

understand the effect and consequence of firing the gun, but his real intent was to keep people away from him. He was insane at the time and is so now.

"When people think they hear machinery or voices, it is a sign of the most incurable form of insanity."

Gould's father, Old Harry, wept as he sketched



The memorial plaque dedicated to PC William Henderson, unveiled in Middlesbrough in 1919

in the final details of his son's incurable delusions. "He sleeps badly and seldom recognises my wife and I. He repeatedly says he has been bludgeoned and calls a big chimney a big man. When there is a full moon he stands in the same position for an hour. He has torn his blankets to shreds, nailed up the door of his caravan, and burned his clothes."

There could be only one verdict after that. The defence offered no evidence and the prosecutor made a final submission in which he described Gould as "a dangerous lunatic" who needed care in a special place designed for "criminal lunatics."

Without retiring the jury found Gould insane and he was sent to Broadmoor. In 1912 he was moved to the newly opened Rampton Criminal Lunatic Asylum in Nottinghamshire and two years later, after 20 years in custody, he was released. He was then aged 56.

Constable William Henderson was remembered in April 2019 with the unveiling of a memorial plaque in Middlesbrough. Helen McMillan, Deputy Chief Constable of Cleveland Police, said at the time: "The plaque is a fitting tribute to PC Henderson in commemoration of the years he spent protecting people across Cleveland."

"It is important that we keep his legacy alive for his family and never forget the ultimate sacrifice he made."

# TRUE CRIME JULY ISSUE

**"GRANDPA AND GRANDMA DON'T HAVE LONG TO LIVE"**



**...said their killer**

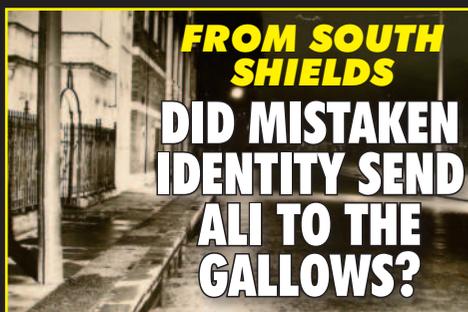


**50 YEARS AGO... LIFE BEHIND BARS FOR THE SCHOOLBOY POISONER**

**MURDER UNDER COVER OF WAR**  
WW2 SOLDIERS WHO WENT TO THE GALLOWES



**ESSEX HORROR**  
**SLAUGHTER AT THE PEACE CELEBRATIONS**



**FROM SOUTH SHIELDS**

**DID MISTAKEN IDENTITY SEND ALI TO THE GALLOWES?**



**WHO KILLED THE CABBIE WHO "WOULDN'T HURT A FLY?"**

**A KILLER CALLED BLUEBEARD**



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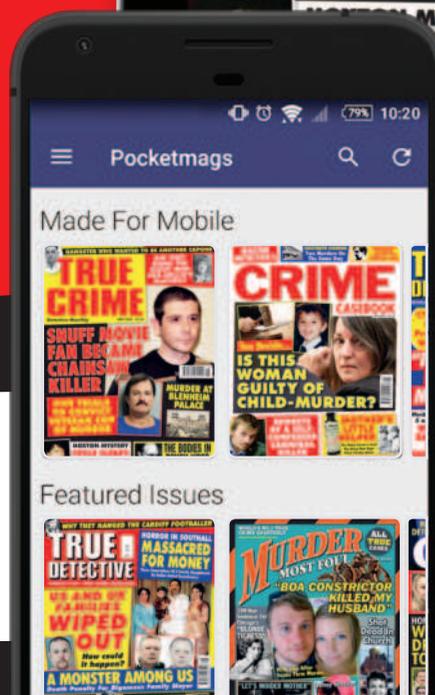
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