

FATHER ACCUSED OF KILLING SONS

Mutilated and Destroyed Bodies, According to Story of His Daughter.

SUSPECT DENIES IT ALL

Says Sons Simply Went Away, but Strong Circumstantial Evidence Is Uncrushed by County Officers.

CHESTER, Ill., Aug. 5.—(Special).—A remarkable episode in the County Jail here is William Stamm, a farmer, suspected of killing his two sons and of chopping the body of one of them to pieces and burning the flesh and bones bit by bit, and of keeping the mangled body of the other son three days and nights in the house. His daughter, 24 years old, complained against him. She says that for three days the body of her brother lay in a corner behind the stove, with a protruding half way across a doorway, where the little girls of the family tripped over them going in and out. This daughter declares she saw her father kill one of her brothers in the backyard of the homestead. It was a desperate fight, she says, and in it three of her father's ribs were broken, but at last he overcame her and crushed his skull with a hammer.

Then she watched her father drag the body to a field, she says, and peeped through a fence while he cut up the body and threw the dismembered parts upon a fire of rails and stumps until all was burned.

Denies Story. The father denies it all. He says his two sons went away. One of the sons has been missing since July 4 last. The other has been gone three months. No trace of them has been found. They simply dropped out of sight upon the very day their sister says they were killed. The farm has been searched for the bodies, but they have not been found. A grave was found upon the farm covered with limbs broken from nearby trees, but when it was dug into it was found to be empty. Two sharp-ended sticks four feet long were found at the bottom of the grave.

In the house where these things are alleged to have been done, the three daughters of Stamm are staying alone, while the father is in a cell. It is a low-ceiled log house, its floor bare of rug or mat, with only a few articles of home-made furniture. Here the family lived in seclusion, the mother away in an insane asylum for 14 years, the father going about in rage and the children going barefoot.

Money Hoarded in Trunk. In an old yellow trunk in a corner the sheriff found \$2880 in gold and silver and papers and yet the three young women of the family, 24, 15 and 14 years of age, never in all their lives had a penny. They were dressed in shabby clothes. They always went barefoot in warm weather and wore cheap boys' shoes in winter. Neither of these young women ever had anything but a home-made dress of the poorest calico. Neither of them ever had a hat. Neither of them was ever in a party, or at a picnic or a show or a school. The girl of 24 was never in school. She never had a beau, never went to a neighbor's house, and the neighbors never called to see them.

When the neighbors went to the house after the father was arrested the three girls, as timid as the quail which whistle in the fields around their lonely cabin, fled to the corn field and hid. When they were sought they dodged among the corn and weeds like rabbits. They were as wild as if they lived in a Congo jungle. And yet their home near Modoc is only a mile from St. Louis and 18 miles from Chester, the capital of Randolph County.

The girls were coaxed to pose for their pictures and the eldest sat upon the edge of a bed and bashfully told her story. Above her head the Lord's Prayer, in colors, was tacked to the wall. It was the only picture in the cabin and the only attempt at ornament. "Fritz laid over there in that corner with his head to the wall and his legs sticking out across the door. Father brought him home at night in the wagon and I helped carry him in and lay him there. He laid there three days.

"Then what became of him?" she was asked. "I don't know. I helped father put him in the wagon and he drove away." Laura, the 15-year-old daughter, denies this. "It's all a lie," she said. "Then what did become of your two brothers?" "I don't know," she answered. "Fritz went to a Fourth of July picnic at Red-bud and never came back."

"And what of Charles?" "He went fishing and never came back."

The youngest sister cannot be induced to talk.

Character Is Unlovely. Stamm is a scrawny man of 55. He has spent his life drudging early and late upon his farm, going ragged and ill-kempt himself, living like a pauper. He shunned his neighbors and was disliked and shunned by them. He never went to church or town meeting, never voted and many of the people of the village of Modoc two miles away, had never been him to know him. He was mean, bawling and cruel to his children. The eldest is Maggie, 24. The next was Fritz, 21. Then came Charles, 18; Laura, 15; and Lena, 14 years old.

Fritz and Charles had never been five miles from home. Last year a neighbor took Fritz to a school in Modoc, and when they came out the young man, already of age, asked: "Was that a church?" Fritz and Charles drugged with their father on the farm and knew nothing else. The girls worked in the fields, too, all of them helping to pile up the gold and silver that was mounting into the thousands in the old yellow trunk. But they did not know it. They did not know, until the Sheriff showed it to them that there was money in the trunk that was guarded by an iron padlock.

The neighbors tell stories of how Stamm beat his boys. He had a vicious temper, Joseph Davis tells that last April, when Stamm and his son Charles were putting new shingles on their barn, the father stood up and in a rage threw a hatchet with all his might at the

boy. It barely missed him. And that was only a few days before the boy disappeared. In addition to his own farm, hidden among the tall pines and oak trees, Stamm rented a piece of corn land in the rich river bottom. Early last July he and Fritz were camped in a tent down there working in the growing corn. The morning of July 4 Fritz was seen walking from his home toward the camp on the rented place. So far, it can be learned, he was never seen alive again, and the neighbors were so little inclined to seeing him around that nobody inquired after him until his sister Maggie told her mother's brother that he had been killed. This rumor went through the neighborhood, but Stamm was such a moody man, and his family were so "queer," that no one investigated until three months ago, when Charles disappeared and Maggie again went to her uncle with the story that he had been killed, too. Then the uncle, in a fit of pique, sent a country paper, asking for information about Fritz and Charles, and this increased the gossip.

All this time the father of the missing boys went about his work, refusing to answer questions about his sons, making no inquiries about them, and doing his best to hide whether they were found or not. A week ago boys picking blackberries on Stamm's rented place in the bottom (and the Sheriff dug there a year ago) carefully as if to hide something beneath. They pulled it away and found what seemed to be a grave. It was six feet long and two and one-half feet wide. The earth that had been piled into it had sunken six inches, just as a grave or like excavation always does. This was reported in the village and Sheriff Henry Burns was sent for. He judged, from the examination he made, that the brush covering the grave had been broken from surrounding trees down by the wind about the time Fritz disappeared, and the earth in it would have sunk about as it was in that time.

Sheriff Opens Grave. The grave was only 40 feet from the site of Stamm's camp when he and Fritz were working there a year ago. The Sheriff dug into the grave. It was four feet deep, the original outline of it easily discerned from the surrounding clay that had been undisturbed, and at the bottom he found two stakes each four feet long and each sharpened to a point. But there were no bones or traces of a body. The Sheriff dug up the body of Fritz and told him that he had opened it. "You didn't find anything in it, did you?" asked Stamm.

Stamm was taken to jail. No charge has yet been placed against him. The Sheriff says he took him into custody for two reasons: To get him away from his daughter, so that she might not be intimidated from him, and to protect him from mob violence, which was threatened.

If the story told by Maggie Stamm is true the body of Fritz remained at the camp in the bottom two days, and was then taken to the farm house and laid there three days. In the hottest part of the day, and was then taken away, perhaps to be dumped in the river.

Body in Bedroom. And if the story is true, the three girls slept for three nights in the same room in which the body of their brother lay in a corner, unburied and unshrouded. "Did you sleep any while the body lay there?" Maggie Stamm was asked. "Yes, we slept, and father slept in the room."

If her story is true, the family arose as usual each morning and ate breakfast, ignoring the stark figure in the corner. They ate their meals as if the little log cabin had nothing to do with the murder. Maggie tells this story of how Charles was killed May 3 last: "Father had to go to the barn to get home in time to milk the cows. Mother had to do it, and it made him mad. When Charles came home father took her and hid her in the house for two days and nights. He took her out at night and burned it."

Since then great things have happened in New York. The new Government, elected alone on the ticket of the Independent League candidates, found himself almost immediately confronted with a fight in the city of New York. The new Government, elected alone on the ticket of the Independent League candidates, found himself almost immediately confronted with a fight in the city of New York.

Wants Hughes to Run Again. Under such circumstances it is no wonder that National Chairman Hitchcock has been holding conferences in New York with Herbert Parsons, chairman of the New York county committee, William L. Ward, National Committeeman, Tim Woodruff, the head of the state committee, and other leaders for the express purpose of securing the consent of Hughes to give New York to the Republicans both on the state and National tickets.

It has often been figured out that Bryan cannot possibly win without New York, and this is probably a true statement, because that great commonwealth possesses overshadowing importance in American politics. The total of 48 electoral votes, the electoral college, New York has 39, or approximately 8 per cent.

When one eliminates the solid South on the Democratic side and the sure Republican states of the North on the other, the 29 votes of New York come close to determining the election. They count for more than Indiana, Nebraska, Maryland and West Virginia, four so-called doubtful states, put together.

In 1896 when Bryan was at the high mark of his popularity he secured 44 electoral votes from the strictly Northern states of California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and Kansas. And yet he lost the election by a majority of 95 in the electoral college.

In 1900, when he was again a candidate, Bryan secured only 13 votes from all the strictly Northern states, and these came from the four mountainous states of Colorado, Idaho, Montana and Nevada. At no time did he make any impression on New York state.

With Sherman on the Republican

ticket and with Hughes as the Republican candidate for Governor, it is almost impossible to believe that the Nebraska leader can have any better luck this year than in the two preceding elections, when he was a candidate.

Nevertheless, New York may fairly claim to be a doubtful state under normal circumstances. It gave its electoral vote to Democracy in 1868, 1876, 1884 and in 1892. In the intervening Presidential elections it was Republican, even in 1888, when Grover Cleveland carried the state by the phenomenal plurality of 175,822, and yet only a few years before he had narrowly escaped defeat when he was running for Governor.

It is evident to everybody there was a tremendous stay-at-home vote in New York state two years ago, when all the Democratic candidates were elected, with the single exception of Hearst. These minor candidates were successful by pluralities ranging from 100,000 to 5000 to about 11,000, and Hearst actually had a larger percentage of the total vote cast than Parker received two years before.

Roosevelt polled 110,000 votes more than Hughes did two years later at the conclusion of one of the most exciting campaigns in the history of the state.

FIGHT CENTERS ABOUT HUGHES

Renomination Necessary to Bring New York into Line for Taft and Sherman.

IS POPULAR WITH PEOPLE

Defeat of Their Favorite Would Place State in Doubtful Column—Bryan Needs It to Win Presidency.

CHICAGO, Aug. 5.—(Raymond in the Chicago Tribune).—Decidedly the most important thing in politics at the present time is the movement on foot to induce Governor Hughes to consent to run for re-election in New York. For a long time it was supposed that "Jim" Wadsworth, Herbert Parsons or some of the old guard in the Republican organization would be the candidate, but events have shaped themselves rapidly lately and the chances are that Hughes will appeal once more to the people in his own behalf.

The result can hardly be doubtful. When he was elected, he had made a splendid reputation in conducting the insurance inquiry, but that was not the beginning of the fight. He was up against a particularly good governor. He was a lawyer to the core and at first popular campaign. He was up against a combination which, whatever may be thought about it in other respects, was certainly a powerful one from a political point of view.

Cold, almost frigid with his public, intensely earnest, full of strange political righteousness, and actually in touch with the masses, he had in his own party, Hughes had a hard row to hoe in the opening of his campaign.

Opposed to him was a daring, defiant and politically unscrupulous candidate, who spent money like water and who did not hesitate to appeal to a dangerous element in the community. From the beginning the result was in doubt. The laboring classes, and more particularly the tenement house denizens, were with Hearst to a remarkable degree, and followed him blindly, believing he would be able to accomplish all the vague reforms he promised the people. The dominant element in the party was behind the Hearst candidate and had it not been for one thing Hearst might have won.

Victory Won by Roosevelt. Roosevelt made Hughes governor. If he did not actually elect him, he at least dealt a staggering blow to his opponent. Not only did he make his famous speech directly charging Hearst with responsibility for the murder of McKinley, but he also ordered a referendum on the issue of the day. Up to that time, which was just before the election, business men were frightened at the outlook and began to speculate upon the possibility of a change of administration which would almost surely take place at Albany in case of the election of the Independent League candidate.

As it was, Hughes was elected so that nominal plurality of about 53,000 over the straight Democratic vote. Hearst, however, had about 17,000 votes of the Independent League ticket, so that 40,000, which is not too great a measure to be accorded to the intervention of President Roosevelt and Secretary Root.

Whenever he was confronted by an adverse majority in the Legislature, he generally involving a combination of politically unscrupulous Republicans and Democrats, he sat quietly in the executive chamber and penned a scolding letter to the Legislature, and then the people behind him and there never has been any time when his reelection, if he desired one, could be considered in doubt.

Under such circumstances it is no wonder that National Chairman Hitchcock has been holding conferences in New York with Herbert Parsons, chairman of the New York county committee, William L. Ward, National Committeeman, Tim Woodruff, the head of the state committee, and other leaders for the express purpose of securing the consent of Hughes to give New York to the Republicans both on the state and National tickets.

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New York Normally Doubtful.

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Roosevelt polled 110,000 votes more than Hughes did two years later at the conclusion of one of the most exciting campaigns in the history of the state.

With two popular local candidates and with a full vote of approximately 2,000,000, Taft and Hughes ought to be able to clear up not less than 100,000 plurality in New York state next November, if the present estimates of the Republican leaders count for anything.

Removes From Danger-Point Just Before Canopy Over Infant Asylum Falls.

BOSTON, Aug. 5.—Forty babies miraculously escaped serious injuries when the canvas canopy over the roof of St. Mary's Infant Asylum, Dorchester, blew down in yesterday's gale.

As if forewarned, Miss Mary McGinn, superintendent of the nurses, ordered the children removed from the west side of the roof, where most of the damage was done, only two minutes before the props gave way. With a baby in her arms, Miss McGinn was hit on the shoulder by the beginning of another prop smashed against a barker where a baby lay asleep and pushed it ahead a foot, but did not disturb the child.

On the east side of the roof 50 babies lay in baskets, but the falling canvas did not touch them, because of a long cross-beam that chanced to be over them. Only two years ago the canopy was erected on the roof, which is the highest point in Dorchester, after many sacrifices, and the Sisters of Charity rejoiced as they saw the children all healthy there in the plenty of fresh air. Now the children will have to remain indoors a large part of the time.

Miss Mary McGinn, who turned out to be a blushing bride, explained to a reporter the details of the misfortune. She said: "I noticed a storm rising in the north-west and soon it rained heavily. In order to keep the babies from getting wet, I ordered their removal from places where the rain appeared to be blowing in."

A half-dozen nurses were quickly at work, some shooting the baskets to the east side of the roof and others taking them down to the fifth floor.

"Scarcely had the nurses completed that task when the wind shifted and the canvas supporting the props began to give way. Then the whole structure came crashing down upon us. I was struck on the head by a prop, but it is not serious. "What confusion! Nurses ran here and there in fear that the babies would be killed. Some of the children were taken to the infants might not be sprinkled I ordered their removal from places where the rain appeared to be blowing in."

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CHICAGO, Aug. 5.—Efforts to stamp out gambling in baseball immediately will be made by the American League, President Johnson, of the league, it is announced today, will issue a bulletin to every American League club, warning them of the prevalence of betting and asking each club owner to enforce to the letter