

MURDER BY BRUTE IN HUMAN FORM

Lester Belding Kills His Wife, Mrs. McCroskey, Frank Woodward and Wounds Lemuel McCroskey.

THE DEAD.
MRS. A. L. BELDING.
MRS. LEMUEL McCROSKEY.
FRANK WOODWARD.

THE WOUNDED.
LEMUEL McCROSKEY.

One of the most heinous crimes ever perpetrated in Portland was committed last evening at Fifth and Flanders streets when A. L. Belding deliberately murdered his own wife, Frank Woodward, a bartender known as "Gyp," and Mrs. L. McCroskey, and dangerously wounded her husband, Lemuel McCroskey.

DETAILS OF THE CRIME.

The crime occurred in the small cottage on the northeast corner of Fifth and Flanders, where the McCroskeys and Mrs. Belding resided. Belding went to the house at 9 o'clock and found Gyp, the bartender, there in the presence of Mrs. Belding.

The murder was premeditated and the murderer, more commonly known as Lester Belding, acted calmly and deliberately. On reaching the house Belding saw his 7-year-old boy on the porch, kissed him and told him to go to bed.

When the door opened Belding caught a glimpse of Woodward, and shot him dead without hesitation.

Woodward fell forward and rolled off the narrow porch.

Mrs. Belding rushed out and was shot under the right shoulder. The shrieking woman ran into a back room and fell dead.

Then she fired her revolver upon Mrs. McCroskey, mother of Mrs. Belding, and he shot her through the heart.

Then Lemuel McCroskey, hearing the shooting, rushed out with his revolver and fired at the infuriated Belding, but missed. Belding then fired three shots at the old man, striking him once in the neck, arm and left side. His watch saved his life, as the last bullet fired struck it and was deflected off.

MURDERER SURRENDERED.
After finishing his bloody work, Belding walked across on Fifth to the Lake Charles saloon, called up the Chief of Police, calmly told what he had done and awaited the arrival of the police.

Capt. Hoar and Sergeant O. P. Church rushed to the scene immediately and placed Belding under arrest.

Belding said to the officers that he had shot the whole family, and that he was glad that he had done so.

While reciting the details of the triple murder, Belding calmly smoked a cigarette and did not appear at all nervous or excited.

Belding worked in a saloon at 14th and Flanders streets, where he wrote out a note of his intentions to murder, and placed it in the till. He then went to the house to commit his brutal crimes.

The police saw a horrible sight on reaching the house. The two unfortunate women and Woodward and old man McCroskey lay in pools of blood.

At first the body of Woodward was unnoticed in the dark and as the wife of the brutal murderer had run into the kitchen before falling, it was some time before her body was found. The old lady McCroskey lay in the front room and the old man McCroskey was unconscious in the hallway. He was hurriedly removed to the Good Samaritan hospital where it was found that he was dangerously, if not fatally, wounded, and his age, 66, is against his recovery.

The bodies of the other three were removed, by Coroner Finley, to his undertaking rooms.

BELDING'S STORY.
The murderer tells the following story to The Journal in a calm, easy manner:

"When I went to the house last night I went there with the intention of killing the whole bunch. When I got there I talked to my little boy, Eddie, for some time. I knew there was a spring lock on the front door, and I was afraid I couldn't get in. So after talking to the little boy a little while I kissed him and told him to go to bed. I stuck my foot in the door so that it wouldn't shut. I went in in the short hall leading into the house. I met Gyp. I said:

"You d—, your time has come, and fired point blank. He fell. I guess I got him. He stumbled on the porch and I shot. I got him, for he was good and dead when I left.

his arm aside and gave him a second one. Then I left.

"I intended to clean out the whole outfit and am only sorry that I didn't make a clean job."

When asked whether he had intended to commit suicide, Belding said:

"No, I am too brave a man for that. I'll go and be hanged like a white man."

"What was the reason for your act?" was asked.

The murderer hesitated somewhat at this, but after a moment's thought replied "This whole d—d McCroskey family have thrown me down for a long time. I have grievances against them, both financial and otherwise. My wife was mixed up with this Gyp, and I just made up my mind that if she wouldn't live with me, she wouldn't live with anyone else, so I killed her. Maud was her name, and she deserved all she got. When I went there I intended to kill her first, but when I ran up against Gyp on the start, I thought I'd take a chance and finish him up right there. I'll tell you one thing! You don't want to print this just now. I hope the old man will be dead, too, and then you'll have four stiff instead of three to write about."

"If that d—d Smith & Wesson gun I had in my left hand had only worked as well as the Colts 38 I had in my right, there wouldn't have been any doubt about the old man being dead, for I'd have shot the whole outfit full of holes."

During the telling of his story Belding sat quietly in a chair in Chief McLauchlan's office smoking a cigarette. While he was perfectly collected and as rational as any man could be, his manner showed a suppressed excitement, and his words and gestures were vehement. Not a suggestion of remorse for his bloody deeds, nor a sentiment of pity for those lying dead and cold did he ever betray by look or word. His love for his little boy, Eddie, seemed to be his only redeeming characteristic. The only evidence Belding gave of being at all uneasy was when he turned to Chief McLauchlan and said, "Say, Chief, how long will it take them to hang me? It won't be over 30 days, will it?"

JEALOUSY THE CAUSE.
Trouble has been brewing for some time between Belding and the family. But his insane jealousy of his wife and that her parents should defend her, may be assigned as the real cause of the tragedy. It is only a few nights ago that Belding visited a quiet South Side saloon in the hopes of finding his wife there in company with some one else. He rang for a messenger boy and sent a note out. He left shortly afterwards, and in a few moments his wife appeared at a side door and asked for Belding. Assured that he had left, she openly displayed a dangerously good gun, and declared her intention of "fixing him good and plenty and for ever"—to use her own words.

THE FAMILY HISTORY.
Belding is a son-in-law of McCroskey. The latter's family is a well known one. The father conducted a saloon near the depot, while his sons are engaged in the employment agency and hack business.

Lester Belding, the murderer, married Maud McCroskey seven years ago in this city. A few months after the marriage they removed to California, but it was only a few weeks before the young wife returned to the home of her parents in this city, Belding remaining in that state. A child was born to Mrs. Belding and six months later the husband came back to Portland.

Since that time he has worked in various saloons, and was regarded by most of his acquaintances as a shiftless, worthless fellow.

It is said that he is also known by the name of Spencer. His brother-in-law, young McCroskey, says that he used this name when away from Portland, probably on account of some trouble he had while in California. During the last four or five years he has visited other places, sometimes in the company of his brother-in-law, Luiren, also known as Edward Peterson, who keeps the saloon at Fourteenth and Flanders streets, where Belding worked as a bartender.

He has had trouble with his wife for several years, and on account of his shiftless conduct she recently refused to live with him. She earned the support of herself and child by working as a waitress in McCormack's and other restaurants. She has resided with her parents, the McCroskeys.

One story of Belding's conduct is told by a man who formerly roomed in the same house with him. He was a heavy drinker at times, and on one occasion had the delirium tremens. He imagined that monkeys were after him, and said they dragged their tails across his face as he slept. He said he was going to walk to Vancouver and throw the monkeys into the Columbia. This conduct frightened the landlady, and she caused him to leave. He is not known to have any relatives except his sister, Mrs. Peterson.

Mrs. McCroskey, in addition to Mrs. Belding, had the following children: George McCroskey, E. P. McCroskey, Fred McCroskey and Mrs. Emma Gordon, of this city; Mrs. Myrtle Emdin, of Vancouver, Wash., and Minnie Stuer-

and Special Counsel Chester V. Dolph this morning filed suit in the State Circuit Court against James Driscoll, administrator, and the supposed heirs, to require them to show cause why the money should not be turned over to the state.

The complaint states that David Downey died in Multnomah County October 1, 1892; that James Driscoll, the duly appointed administrator of his estate, after settling up all outstanding debts, has in his hands \$55,400; that George Downey and Ann Downey Reid filed petitions in the County Court claiming to be uncle and aunt of the deceased; that they have

since abandoned their claim; that they are not the sole heirs of the deceased, and never have been heirs at all.

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Are George Downey and Ann Downey Reid, uncle and aunt, respectively, of David Downey, deceased, his legal heirs? The state claims they have abandoned the claim, and that \$55,400 now in the hands of the administrator of David Downey's estate rightfully escheats to the state.

ESCHEAT CASE

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District Attorney Geo. E. Chamberlain

FAIR SITE

Question to Be Heard Next Thursday.

A well attended meeting of the directors of the Lewis and Clark Centennial was held late yesterday afternoon at the office of the secretary, 246 Washington street. On account of the absence of both President Corbett and Vice President Scott, Rufus Mallory was chosen as president pro tem.

All the officers were re-elected, with the addition of Adolphe Wolfe and Leo Friede as second and third vice presidents, respectively. By recommendation of President Corbett through Secretary Reed, committees were also appointed.

The following are the officers and committees of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Corporation:
President—H. W. Corbett.
Vice presidents—H. W. Scott, Adolphe Wolfe, Leo Friede.
Secretary—Henry E. Reed.
Treasurer—First National Bank.

Appointments of committees were approved as follows:
Executive committee—Directors Dresser, Ladd, Mallory, Mills, Scott, Wessinger, Wheelwright.

Ways and means committee—Directors Fenton, Bates, Devers, Fleischner, Friede, O'Shea, Wolfe.

Finance committee—Directors Wolfe, Wessinger, Devers, Ladd, Mills.
Vice President Wolfe was appointed temporary auditor.

A letter from Governor Geer was read, stating that if he will call an extra session of the Legislature he will insert the appropriation for the Fair as one of the causes.

Secretary Reed reported that \$4,956.75 had been paid in to date, leaving a balance of about \$24,000.

As the hour was late, the matter of voting on the question of a site was laid over till next Thursday at 1:30 p. m., when a committee of two from each city can bring in arguments in favor of the site they represent.

After the meeting of the directors, the ways and means committee met and advised with Colonel H. E. Dosh relative to promoting the interests of the Fair throughout the state. Finally it was concluded that Mr. Dosh should submit a proposal by August 1, to take charge of the 1905 Fair as director general.

NORTHWEST NEWS

CHYBENNE, Wyo.—Mrs. Frank Brown was struck by lightning at her home here yesterday. She died instantly.

DENVER.—President Gompers of the Federation of Labor and other prominent labor leaders left here yesterday for San Francisco, where a meeting of the board will be held.

CHICAGO.—The local board of arbitration last night secured the consent of the striking freight handlers and the railroad officials to meet today and endeavor to settle their grievances.

OMAHA.—The Union Pacific has issued a notice to their striking employes to return to work at once or forfeit their positions.

DENVER.—Henry V. Cole recently gave \$400,000 in real estate to a Methodist organization here. His wife has entered suit to compel the return of half the property.

VANCOUVER, B. C.—The Moana, from Brisbane, Australia, brings news of an insurrection in the Solomon Islands, which promises to develop into serious trouble.

ABERDEEN, Wash.—Neil Erickson, a young Swede, was drowned here yesterday while working on the government jetty at Westport.

VICTORIA, B. C.—The latest news to arrive herefrom Koyukuk give the district a very bad name. Hundreds are leaving the country in which no one has either dust or money.

MINING NOTES.

Charles Moon, Gordon Jacobs and C. S. Ingledew have made a rich strike about two and one-half miles west of Hornbrook. It is reported to be the best prospect in that district. They are driving a tunnel on the ledge, which is free milling. It runs from eight to 10 inches in thickness and is rich.

George Bennett is running a tunnel on the old Bumble Bee ledge in the Beaver Creek district, and has struck some fine ore. It is reported rich in free gold.

The New York Consolidated Mining Company, a local concern, is developing a group of claims in the Greenhorn district, near the new town of Greenhorn, which has made such phenomenal growth of late. The claims are quartz and are showing up well under development. The ore is free milling. A stamp mill will be installed at an early date. The property is a sinking proposition. A shaft is down about 30 feet on a three-foot vein, which produces 300 to the ton on an average.

The Yank group is the name of a very promising property in Josephine County, which is being developed by the Pacific Mining & Development Company of this city. The group covers an area of 67 acres and contains both placer and quartz. About 600 feet of tunnel work has been done, and the ore runs from \$8 to \$10 per ton. Part of the ore goes as high as \$40. The ledge is said to be the biggest in Southern Oregon, and can be traced for miles. The group is situated on Galice Creek. Over 150,000 tons of ore have been blocked out, and will be shipped as soon as better transportation facilities are secured.

INGALLS VISITS PORTLAND
President Ingalls, of the Big Four Railway Company, is in the city accompanied by Mrs. Ingalls, two daughters and a son. They arrived here from Puget Sound in President Ingalls' private car. They expect to remain here for several days, before going East. President Ingalls says that his present trip has no more significance than the pursuit of healthful recreation. He made a social call upon President Mohler, of the O. R. & N. Co.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.
Miss Pivett, 24, Sixth street, near Alder; smallpox.

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Alfred Goodnow and wife to Amos Burg, lot 7, block 8, Piedmont Park; lots 13 and 14, block 14; lot 17, block 6; lot 11, block 4, Columbia Heights 1
Lillian A. Gaylord and husband to Emilie Strupers, undivided 2-21 part fractional block 54, Couch Addition 85
Anna W. Tucker et al. to same, same 1
Sarah Oppenheimer to H. E. Noble, lot 21, block 5, Highland Park 1
Alfred Goodnow and wife to Amos Burg, lot 7, block 8, Piedmont Park; lots 13 and 14, block 14; lot 17, block 6; lot 11, block 4, Columbia Heights and wife to H. G. Davies, lot 1, block 30, Sellwood 1
John W. Tucker and wife to Amos Burg, lot 7, block 8, Piedmont Park; lot 13, block 14, Couch Addition 85

BIRTHS.

To Mrs. A. G. Rushlight, 718 East Salmon street, on July 7, a girl.

DEATHS.

John McCall, 68, North Pacific Sanatorium, on July 11, of uremia.
Adam Schnell, 5, 7th Union avenue, north, on July 11, of heart failure.

The Edward Holman Undertaking Co., funeral directors and embalmers, 280 Yamhill, Phone 507.

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Vacancies still continue in the commissioned medical corps of the Army, notwithstanding the efforts of the Surgeon-General to secure doctors for this branch of the service. The professional examination is more or less rigid, but to a young doctor, newly graduated, it ought not to be such an unsurmountable obstacle as in many cases it seems to prove. The physical requirements are also very strict, and quite a number of applicants fail to pass this part of the examination where they would doubtless have succeeded professionally.

There are over 50 vacancies to be filled, and the examining board is always in session. Applicants should address the Surgeon-General at the Army, at Washington, and receive in reply the necessary blank containing information. An Assistant Surgeon in the Army commences his military life with the rank, pay and allowances of a Captain. He receives a commission which carries with it life tenure.—Brooklyn Eagle.

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Meeks—Why, what's wrong with him?
Meeks—Crazy, I guess. He cuts his lawn twice a week and then my wife won't give me a minute's peace until I cut ours.—Chicago American.

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