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... TRUE CRIME & COURTROOM QUARRELS ...

Read the Accusations, the Defenses, the Findings, & the Dispositions

HERE in Sensational (often gruesome) Detail

Murder by Poison Unidentified

1) Angus, Charles (defendant). The trial of Charles Angus, Esq. on an indictment for the wilful murder of Margaret Burns, at the Assizes held at Lancaster, on Friday, 2d Sept. 1808, before the Hon. Sir Alan Chambre. Liverpool: Printed by William Jones, [1808]. 8vo (21 cm, 8.25"). [2] ff., 288 pp. **\$850.00**

** Murder by poison seems to be a perpetually fascinating topic for the lay, the medical professional, and Agatha Christie — and this trial of Angus for using that method of doing in Miss Burns is no exception. Its record was taken in shorthand by William Jones, Jun., and contains • **important material relating to medical jurisprudence and forensic medicine.**

The trial was a sensation: Angus, a Scots merchant and slave-trader in Liverpool, was charged with the murder of his children's governess, Margaret Burns, who was also his wife's half-sister. The case presented more than a few bizarre features: a corpse with a hole in its stomach, a baby who disappeared, a ghastly surgical instrument with a catalogue of deadly purposes, conflicting medical evidence, and a poison never identified.

Binding: Circa-1865 half-black calf with green marbled paper sides, spine with gilt-stamped red leather label, gilt rules to form compartments, and blind-stamped center device in five compartments.

Provenance: Contemporary signature on title-page of James Kendrick; embossed ownership stamp of J.H. Williams, rector of Llangadwaladr; bookseller's label of Wildy & Sons, London; late 19th- or early 20th-century armorial leather bookplate of Alexander MacGregor; most recently in the collection of Robert Sadoff, M.D.

** Binding as above, edges rubbed, small scuffs. The endpapers, curiously, appear to have been marbled over typeprint. • **Very good.** (39633)

“Hurtful” Accusations of PLAGIARISM among Other Things . . .

2) Buckingham, Joseph T., defendant. Trial. Commonwealth vs. J.T. Buckingham, on an indictment for a libel, before the Municipal Court of the City of Boston, December Term, 1822. Boston: Published at the Office of the New-England Galaxy, 1822. 8vo (22 cm, 8.5"). 60 pp. **\$50.00**

** The indictment against Joseph T. Buckingham (1779–1861), a printer, publisher, author, and pamphleteer, was for composing and publishing a defamatory libel against John N. Maffitt (1794–1850), a Methodist clergyman, that alleged Maffitt has preached sermons as his own that had been written by others, that he doubted his Christianity, and other “hurtful” and “untrue” things. A verdict of not guilty was returned by the jury. First edition.

** Shoemaker 10474; Sabin 8911. In later “wallpaper” wrappers. Light age-toning. (39267)

The Murder Failed, but . . .

3) Coke, Arundel, & John Woodburn, defendants. An Exact and particular narrative of a cruel and inhumane murder attempted on the body of Edward Crispe, esq., at St. Edmunds-Bury in Suffolk, ... by Arundel Coke, esq., barrister at law, and John Woodburn, a laborer. Together with both their examinations and confessions ... : also the information of John Carter, a blacksmith, and the declaration of Mr. Crispe himself ... London: Printed for J. Roberts, 1722. 8vo in 4s (19 cm). 28 pp. **\$500.00**

** Includes “True copies of their commitment to prison, and an extract of an act of Parliament, relating to their case. Faithfully collected from the original papers.” The second edition. • **Barrister Coke bungled his attempted murder for gain but ended up being the first person convicted and executed under the “Coventry Act.”**

** ESTC T115485. Removed from a nonce volume. Very good. (39078)

The Smith Bros. — Murdered by a Mob

4) Daniels, William M. A correct account of the murder of Generals Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Carthage, on the 27th day of June 1844. By ... an eyewitness. [Independence, MO?]: [Daniel Macgregor], [ca. 1910-20]. 8vo (21.3cm, 8.5"). 26 pp., illus. **\$250.00**

** The front wrapper and title-page give the publication's information as "Nauvoo, Ill.: John Taylor, for the proprietor, 1845," but this is clearly Daniel Macgregor's ca. 1910 reprint of Daniels' classic account (as written by L.O. Littlefield, according to Flake) of **the murder of Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church, and his brother Hyrum**. Includes the full text and reproductions of the woodcut illustrations (a half-page profile of "Tom Sharp, editor of the Warsaw Signal," and a full-page woodcut of the mob attack on the jail).

Searches of WorldCat and Flake locate only eight U.S. libraries (CSmH, CtY, MoInRC, UHi, UPB, USIC, MiU-C, NjP) reporting ownership of this reprint.

** Flake & Draper, *Mormon Bibliography*, 2659; McDade, *Annals of Murder*, 878 (for the 1845 first edition; this edition not in McDade). As issued: Stapled in original printed green wrappers, sun-faded along spine and edges of cover. Very good. (39215)

No, REALLY?? — For a HAT?

5) Dorrance, John; Arthur Fenner. Report of the case John Dorrance against Arthur Fenner tried at the December term of the Court of Common Pleas, in the county of Providence, A.D. 1801. To which are added, the proceedings in the case Arthur Fenner vs. John Dorrance. Providence: Printed by Bennett Wheeler, 1802. 8vo (21 cm, 8.25"). iv, 116 pp.

\$400.00

** "Case commenced . . . by John Dorrance, esq., against Arthur Fenner . . . charging the defendant with having, falsely and maliciously, slandered and defamed the good name, fame and reputation of the plaintiff" (p. 2) and a "case commenced by His Excellency Arthur Fenner, esq., charging the defendant with having published a false and scandalous libel against the plaintiff" (p. [110]).

Arthur Fenner was the fourth Governor of Rhode Island from 1790 until his death in office in 1805 and Dorrance was a justice of the Court of Common Pleas. **The root of all the litigation was whether Dorrance had swapped the cadaver of a suicide for a hat.**

Needless to say, there is political animosity at work here. The whole was "carefully compiled from notes correctly taken by several gentlemen who were present during the whole course of the trial."

** Shaw & Shoemaker 2156; Cohen, *Bibliography of Early American Law*, 11968. Removed from a nonce volume, lacking the wrappers. Age-toning and a few spots of foxing. Else very good. (39246)

This was "Prepared to meet a Demand for Information concerning Indian massacres . . ."

6) Gall, John F., & David K. Webb, eds. The massacre of the Wigton family: With an account of the trial of Samuel Mohawk, the murderer. Chillicothe, OH: Privately Published, 1934. 16mo (15.2 cm, 6"). 8 pp.

\$50.00

** The "probable . . . last Indian massacre in Pennsylvania," by Seneca tribe Indian Samuel Mohawk, is detailed. On June 30th, 1843 in Butler County, PA, Mary McQuiston Wigton and her five children were murdered by the alcoholic Mohawk. An angry mob tracked him down and turned him over to the authorities; he was eventually hanged for his crimes. Despite Mohawk's confession, there is still speculation (not in this item) that James Wigton, Mary's husband, who was reportedly retrieving a horse at another farm, was guilty of the murders and framed Mohawk. **A sad story.**

Our caption is quoted from the editors' introduction.

** In tan/taupe paper wrapper, leaves not (ever) attached; very faint fading to wrapper, small stain to rear one. Leaves clean. (40424)

A Fortuneteller, a Determined Mother, a Murder by Arsenic

7) Harden, Jacob S., defendant. Life, confession, and letters of courtship of Rev. Jacob S. Harden of the M.E. Church, Mount Lebanon, Hunterdon Co., N.J. Executed for the murder of his wife on the 6th of July 1860, at Belvidere, Warren Co., N.J. Hackettstown, NJ: E. Winton, printer, 1860. 8vo (24 cm, 9.5"). 48 pp., frontis. port.

\$375.00

** Harden (1837-60) "poisoned his wife with arsenic after a fortuneteller had told him that she would not live long. His mother-in-law was the real cause of the crime for she hounded until he reluctantly married the girl, although there does not seem to have been any necessity that he do so" (McDade).

Felcone adds that soon after he met Miss Louisa Dorland, "Louisa's mother was determined that her daughter would marry Harden, and, after encouraging them to spend nights together, she forced the marriage. After several months of unhappiness, Harden poisoned his wife. He fled, was captured, tried, and hanged . . . before an immense crowd."

** McDade, *Annals of Murder*, 438; Felcone, *New Jersey Books 1698-1800*. 838. Stitched, lacks the wrappers; the frontispiece portrait of Harden detached but present. Short tears in margins, dog-earring, tattering, waterstain, etc. Only a good+ copy; this was a very cheaply printed production, hence the condition problems. (39252)

An Impeachment Trial — North Carolina, 1871

8) Holden, William W., defendant. [drop-title] Trial of William W. Holden. Twenty-first day. Senate chamber, February 23, 1871. No place: No publisher, [1871]. 8vo (22.5 cm, 8.875"). 1039-89, [1] pp.

\$35.00

** North Carolina's Republican Governor William Woods Holden (1818–92) faced impeachment in 1871. The Ku Klux Klan was terrorizing the state, riots were breaking out, and Holden feared anarchy. When his request for federal troops was not fulfilled, he called upon the militia to restore order and established martial law in two counties. Violent retaliation followed his attempts to enforce Reconstruction civil rights legislation, and his impeachment led to his removal from office. This pamphlet covers the twenty-first day (!) of the trial. Holden was posthumously pardoned in 2011 by the North Carolina House, but the Senate had not followed suit as of the end of last year.

• **WorldCat has located only one institutional copy in the U.S.**

** Removed from a nonce volume; age-toned, edges chipped and rubbed, some mild spotting and staining. Waterstaining to corner of first and last few leaves, stitched binding very good. (39400)

Tamzen Parsons — Murdered, at 17, by a Bigamist Seducer

9) Hughes, John W, *defendant*. The trial of Dr. John W. Hughes, for the murder of Miss Tamzen Parsons; with a sketch of his life, as related by himself ... Cleveland: [Published by John K. Stetler & Co.] Printed by The Leader Company, 1866. 8vo (21.5 cm, 8.5"). 57, [1 (blank)] pp. **\$600.00**

** The sub-title reads, "A record of love, bigamy and murder, unparalleled in the annals of crime." Trial was held in the Court of Common Pleas for Cuyahoga County, Ohio, in December, 1865."

"Jealous and intoxicated, Hughes, on the streets of Bedford, Ohio, shot and killed the seventeen-year-old girl he had seduced. At his execution, he spoke for fifteen minutes until the sheriff reminded him 'Time is going.' Then he dropped" (McDade).

There were multiple issues of this work: one with the title-page in red and black and a title-page vignette of the murderer, another printed only in black and without the title-page vignette, and one in black with the vignette portrait. Offered here is a copy of the latter.

** McDade, *Annals of Murder*, 493. Removed from a nonce volume; light age-soiling and -toning. Else very good. (39263)

Daniel Webster Saves the Day — The Kenniston "Sham-Robbery" Case

10) Jackman, Joseph. The sham-robbery, committed by Elijah Putnam Goodridge, on his own person, in Newbury near Essex bridge, Dec. 19, 1816, with a history of his journey to the place where he robbed himself. And his trial with Mr. Ebenezer Pearson, whom he maliciously arrested for robbery. Also the trial of Levi & Laban Kenniston. Concord, NH: Printed for the author, 1819. 12mo (17 cm, 6.75"). 151, [1] pp. **\$450.00**

** Daniel Webster to the rescue. Webster was one of the defense attorneys in this bizarre case: He had only shortly earlier resumed private practice following service in the U.S. Congress. The case involved the "respected" and definitely "plugged in" Goodridge who accused • **the mentally challenged Kenniston brothers** of robbery. The cards seemed stacked against the two until Webster rose and began his defense, and stitch by stitch caused Goodridge's story to come apart and succeeded in obtaining the acquittal of the Kennistons.

Also includes accounts of Ebenezer Pearson's action against Goodridge for damages for malicious prosecution.

** Shaw & Shoemaker 48361; Cohen, *Bibliography of Early American Law*, 14017. Stitched as issued, in plain pale green wrappers. Light soiling, stray areas of light foxing or staining. Very good. (39251)

Daniel Webster Saves the Day — The "Report of the Evidence"

11) Kenniston, Levi, Laban Kenniston, *defendants*. Report of the evidence at the trial of Levi & Laban Kenniston, before Hon. Samuel Putnam, on an indictment for the robbery of Major Elijah P. Goodridge, December 19, 1816. Salem, [MA]: Printed by T.C. Cushing, 1817. 8vo (23.5 cm, 9.25"). 32 pp. **\$150.00**

** The original "Report of the Evidence" only.

** Cohen, *Bibliography of early American Law*, 14018; Shaw & Shoemaker 40939, 41955. Stitched, lacking the wrappers. Age-toned, occasional stain. Overall very good. (39256)

The Admiral was Convicted of . . . Losing His Temper?

12) Ogle, Chaloner, *defendant*. The trial of Sir Chaloner Ogle, Kt. rear admiral of the Blue. Before the Chief Justice of Jamaica, for an assault on the person of His Excellency Mr. Trelawney the governor, committed in his own house in Spanish Town, on the 22d day of July last. With authentic copies of the several letters that passed on that occasion, between Mr. Concanen, now Attorney General of the island, Sir Chaloner Ogle, the Governor, and A----IV-----. London: Printed for W. Webb,, 1743. 8vo (20 cm). 22 pp.. **\$600.00**

** Adm. Ogle (1681?–1750) was tried in Jamaica for assault on the person of Edward Trelawney (1699–1754), the governor of the island; the "A----IV-----" of the title-page is Adm. Edward Vernon; and, Ogle was convicted although the letters and testimony in the pamphlet make it pretty clear that there was much sympathy with him in his offense.

** Goldsmiths'-Kress 7982 (different printing, same year); Sabin 56843; ESTC N13696; Alden & Landis, *European Americana*, 743/171. Removed from a nonce volume. Very good. (39076)

**Louisa Fero Murdered by Gunshot
(in the Marital Bedroom)**

13) Porter, Charles H. A statement of the case of The people against Elisha B. Fero. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1870. 8vo (23.3 cm, 9.25"). 48 pp., illus. **\$50.00**

** Porter (1834–1903), an M.D. living and practicing in Albany, gave post-mortem forensic medical evidence at the trial of Elisha Fero for the murder by gunshot of his wife. He lays out the evidence and testimony presented by both sides, including his own for the defense, and the verdict of the jury.

"From the Journal of Psychological Medicine, April, 1870" (title-page). "The case of The people vs. Elisha B. Fero was tried at the Delaware (N.Y.) Oyer and terminer, commencing September 23, and ending October 1, 1869 . . . Fero was indicted for the murder of his wife, Louisa Fero, on the morning of November 24, 1868" (p. 3) and was found not guilty. The very, very extensive and graphic testimony here — directly medical and "other" — is illustrated with  **half a dozen forensic images of skulls.**

** Not in McDade, *Annals of Murder*. Original printed wrappers, chipped, and with old light waterstaining at rear. (39248)

Two Innocent Men NOT Hanged (But a Very Near Thing)

14) Sargeant, Leonard. The trial, confessions and conviction of Jesse and Stephen Boorn for the murder of Russell Colvin, and the return of the man supposed to have been murdered. Manchester, VT: Journal Book & Job Office, 1873. 8vo (23.3 cm, 9.25"). 48 pp. **\$275.00**

** The trial of the Boorns "is one of the most famous cases of American criminal law and a constant reminder that innocent persons can be convicted. Russell Colvin, the alleged victim, had married a sister of the Boorns and had several children by her. He was mentally deficient and disappeared in 1812. Local gossip credited the Boorns with having disposed of him, presumably because he was a burden on the family. In the spring of 1819, the Boorns were arrested and, either from fear or mental weakness, they told stories involving each other in the death of Colvin — Stephen's amounting to a confession of murder. They were tried and sentenced to be hanged; the state legislature, however, commuted Jesse's sentence to life imprisonment.

As a last resort a notice was placed in the papers requesting information about Colvin. A farmer in Monmouth County, New Jersey, believed he recognized a hired man in the vicinity from the description. This man, who was mentally deranged, was enticed to Manchester, arriving on December 22, 1819, six weeks before the day set for Stephen's execution. It was definitively established that he was the missing Colvin; he had apparently wandered off of his own volition" (McDade).

Sargeant (1793–1880), one of the Boorns' defense attorneys, offers this account as  **a cautionary tale of the fallibility of the legal system when it comes to misidentifications.** "Though published fifty-four years after the event, the pamphlet . . . contains important information on the discovery and return of Colvin" (McDade 113).

** McDade, *Annals of Murder*, 111 (for the above quotation) & 113 for this account. As issued: Stitched, printed wrappers. Splitting a little at top and bottom of spine, faint minimal touches of old waterstaining and, at end, creasing across upper outer corners. Very good. (39950)

Just Sort of ~ Crazy?

15) Stearns, Charles, comp. & ed. Report of the case of Charles Stearns against J.W. Ripley, in the Circuit Court of the United States, at Boston, November term, 1850, for malicious prosecution. His Honor Judge Sprague, presiding. Springfield [Mass.]: G.W. Wilson, Printer, 1851. 8vo (22.5 cm, 8.75"). 76, [1], 14 pages, 1 folded leaf of plates (i.e., a plan). **\$225.00**

** The root of the case was a dispute over a vineyard that Ripley attempted to spirit away from Stearns during the period when Ripley was Superintendent of the Springfield Armory. Stearns was an abutting neighbor of the Armory and at one point was indicted for "malicious trespass and riot." Upon acquittal, he in turn sued Ripley for trespass, but crazily was himself once more indicted for trespass.

Matters dragged on for years and even in 1851 Stearns was slugging it out with the army for his land.

** Cohen, *Bibliography of early American Law*, 12057; Sabin 90872. As issued: Stitched in printed green wrappers. (39221)

A Kentucky "Honor Killing" — The Killer Acquitted

16) Ward, Matthew Flournoy, defendant. A full and authentic report of the testimony on the trial of Matt. F. Ward, certified to be correct by Thomas D. Brown, clerk of Hardin Circuit Court; Wm. Alexander, former commonwealth attorney for the Hardin District; and Judge Alex. Walker ... With the speeches of Gov. Crittenden, Gov. Helm, T.F. Marshall, esq., and Nathaniel Wolfe, esq., and the reply of Alfred Allen, esq., attorney for the commonwealth. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1854. 8vo (23 cm, 8.75"). 176 pp. **\$100.00**

** Ward was tried in the Hardin Circuit Court at Elizabethtown, Ky., April, 1854, for the murder of W.H.G. Butler. McDade explains: "Butler, the principal of Louisville High School, had whipped Matt Ward's younger brother. Matt demanded an apology of Butler, not for the whipping but for calling the boy a liar. The apology not forthcoming, words followed; and Ward, having come prepared for blood, shot Butler. Kentucky justice saw that Ward was promptly acquitted."

** McDade, *Annals of Murder*, 1042; Sabin 70981. Lacks the original wrappers. Light age-toning and some spotting. Clearly removed from a nonce volume. But, very good. (39213)



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