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Horrible Tragedy

In Our Neighboring Town of Camden—Merchant McDowall Brutally Murdered and Juror Porter, in the Gillis Case, the Victim of a Deadly Assault by an Unknown Assassin.

Special to The State.

Camden, Oct. 3.—Mr. R. A. McDowall, a merchant of this city, was waylaid and foully murdered on his way home tonight about nine o'clock and robbed of his watch, keys and all the money he had with him. He was struck in the back of the head, presumably with a heavy club.

The spot selected was near a large tree opposite Hampton park. As he was late coming home Mrs. McDowall, his wife, said to her son, Robbie, who is about 13 or 14 years old, that he had better go out and see what was detaining his father. He had not gone far before he stumbled over his father, who was in the last throes of death.

Mr. McDowall, the murdered man, was about 48 years old and was a respected, sober merchant of Camden. He leaves his one son and his wife, who was Miss Haile. He is a brother of W. M. McDowall, the editor.

It was stated that Mr McDowall was carrying home his books to post and that the books were found near his body. His wife, becoming uneasy about his delay in coming home, sent her son to see what was the matter and the son found his father not more than half a block from his home. The spot where the murder was committed is on DeKalb street, between Main street and the Southern railway depot opposite Hampton park. It is not known how much, if any, money Mr McDowall had on his person when killed, and a peculiar thing is that his keys were taken, as was the case when the highwayman held up Judge Ernest Gary in Columbia a week ago. It is said that Mr. McDowall was not known to have enemies and that robbery was the only reasonable motive for the murder.

Later—A telephone message from Camden at 1 40 this morning stated that the bloodhounds from the State farm had then arrived and were being taken to the scene, which had been carefully guarded in order to prevent the obliteration of the scent.

It seems that Mr. McDowall was struck on the side of the head under the left ear a powerful blow which must have felled him at once and perhaps prevented any attempt on his part to fight for his life. It is thought that there was only one robber but there is said to be absolutely no clue or suspicion of his identity. It is stated that the robber secured, besides the keys in Mr. McDowall's pockets, the amount of \$25 in cash and his watch. A

large crowd was at the scene until the dogs arrived.

At 2.15 this morning a message from Camden was to the effect that the bloodhounds had been on the ground for some time but had failed to take the scent and were wandering around the park, where 25 or 50 men were still gathered awaiting developments. There was said to be no solution of the mystery, no light yet on the death of Mr. McDowall.

FURTHER PARTICULARS—IT WAS A DOUBLE ASSAULT.

Camden, Oct. 4.—The news of the horrible murder which spread over Camden late last night and early this morning has been eclipsed by a new and even more sensational development, which has caused a discontinuance of the Gillis case.

In the early hours of the morning, Mr. R. W. Porter, of West Wateree, awoke to consciousness at the Wateree bridge, some two miles from Camden and Hampton Grove, where Mr. Porter last recollected being, between 8 and 9 p. m. yesterday, as he was accompanying Mr Robert McDowall to the latter's home.

Mr. Porter was found near the bridge with a fracture of the skull. He was immediately brought to town, where Dr. Dunn examined the wound and attended to it. Mr. Porter stated that he was in Camden as a juror in the Gillis case and was to spend the night at Mr. McDowall's. When the latter closed his store at 8 o'clock the two men walked down Dekalb street. They kept on the sidewalk that runs on the south side of a thick, dark grove of long leaf pine, known as Hampton Grove, the sidewalk in that place being shaded by these giants of the forest.

They had traveled about half of the square and he was just remarking to his companion about the hot times the old grove had seen in '76, when he received a crushing blow on the back of and right side of his head and when next he awoke he was lying in the weeds on the roadside at the bridge some two miles away. How he got there he knows not. Whether he unconsciously took the road homeward or was carried there he cannot tell. His pockets were robbed of some change and a knife.

The daring and boldness with which the double assault was executed is amazing, as just at this hour, when the stores close many of the business men either traverse or pass along the outside sidewalk of the grove.

It appears that Mr. Lawrence Whitaker and another gentleman met Messrs. McDowall and Porter at the corner of the grove. Both sides exchanged a few words in passing and that the inmates of a residence on the other side of the street who were on their piazza a little over a hundred feet from where the deed was perpetrated heard two blows, while

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Innocent Men

Turned Out of Penitentiary-- Convicted of a Crime They Did Not Commit, Governor Heyward Gives Them Their Liberty--History of The Case.

Columbia Record.

H. E. Cunningham, Leonard Hinkey and George H. Waring, the three men who have been serving a sentence in the penitentiary on the charge that they robbed the postoffice and bank at Latta, have been pardoned by the Governor. This action was taken after letters had been received from Judge Watts and Inspector Pulsipher setting forth the fact that these men had been unjustly imprisoned on that charge.

The story of the conviction of these three men constitutes one of the most peculiar constructions of circumstantial evidence ever brought out in court.

Cunningham, Hinkey and Waring were convicted of safe cracking, the specific charge being that they robbed the bank and postoffice at Latta on May 25, 1904. They were tried and convicted and sentenced to six years' imprisonment in the State penitentiary. Last spring one of the postoffice inspectors, in walking through the penitentiary, noticed the men there, and on learning the history of their trial he stated that they were convicted of a crime they did not commit. Their attorney, Mr. J. H. Wells, of Florence, then took the matter up. Affidavits were obtained from parties in that section of the State, saying that the men were sign painters, and two of them absolutely proved an alibi.

Governor Heyward decided to wait, however, until the case was thoroughly sifted. Inspector Gregory came to Columbia and gave as his opinion that the men were innocent. This was proven afterwards when James Johnson, Joseph King and H. Rabens were convicted in the Federal Court in Charleston for the same offense. The latter now has an appeal up, and the other two are serving a sentence for the crime the three men are charged with. Later John McCarthy, who is now in prison in Connecticut, came to this State to testify in the Rabens case. He said he wanted to lead a better life and was willing to confess to all the crimes in which he had taken part. His confession absolutely cleared Hinkey and the other men, and Inspector Pulsipher has so written the Governor. After these papers were referred to Judge Watts, who was at first opposed to the pardon, the judge at once recommended favorable action on the petition by the Governor, and accordingly this was done.

The case is one of the most interesting with which the chief

executive has had to deal, and has attracted attention in police circles all over the country.

AN EXCITING INCIDENT

A Visit to Kershaw by Lawyer Newbold Came Near Resulting in Serious Trouble.

There was considerable excitement in Kershaw last Tuesday. It seems that Mr. W. H. Newbold, of Chester, one of the lawyers for the plaintiff in the damage suit recently brought against the county by the estate of Morrison, the man who was lynched in Kershaw about a year ago, and his client, Administrator Castles, went there Tuesday morning, presumably on business connected with their case.

As Mr. Newbold alighted from the train, we are told, he was accidentally met by Mr. Frank Hough, who had gone to the depot to meet his sister, a passenger on the train. It will be recalled that Mr. Hough was one of the young men who was unfairly treated, it was alleged, by the prosecution in the case instituted some time ago against a number of parties charged with being implicated in the lynching. When, therefore, Mr. Hough and Mr. Newbold unexpectedly met, some words passed between them, and parties near by, seeing trouble imminent, called the attention of a policeman to what was going on. The officer approached the two men and finally induced Mr. Hough to accompany him away from the scene.

Mr. Castles, evidently taking in the situation, did not get off the train, but continued on to Camden. After the train left the depot Mr. Newbold, at his request, was shown the way to the home of the intendant, Capt Welsh, where he remained until in the afternoon, when he went to the water tank below town and boarded a freight train going south. It is said that Chief of Police Bateman and others advised Mr. Newbold not to venture in the streets, in view of the feeling existing against him.

The people of Kershaw, it is stated, are not embittered against Mr. Newbold on account of the damage suit referred to, but the feeling of antagonism has its origin in Mr. Newbold's alleged connection with the prosecution growing out of the lynching, in which case, it will be remembered, the state's prosecuting officers were charged with using improper methods to implicate prominent citizens in the killing of Morrison.

One Man Shoots Three.

Mobile, Oct. 4.—Price Baker, aged twenty-eight, member of a prominent family, was shot and killed and Hamilton McKean, aged twenty-six, and Joseph Hart, Jr., aged twenty-eight, wounded by John Fischer, an engineer on the Seaboard Air Line, with headquarters at Raleigh. The shooting occurred in a saloon,

The Gillis Case.

Notable Homicide In Kershaw County---Testimony of Eye Witnesses of Tragedy Given at Trial in Camden This Week.

The trial of a homicide case of more than local interest was begun in Camden last Tuesday, that of J. E. Gillis for the killing of McRea Whitaker the 9th of April, 1904. The testimony of three eye witnesses as reported for The News and Courier is as follows:

J. J. BARFIELD,

the first witness, was, a moment or so preceding the difficulty, in conversation with J. E. Gillis, when Whitaker and Ancrum Boykin drove up together. Whitaker said he could not fight two men, meaning defendant and his father who was also present. They replied that he would have to do that. Whitaker spoke about fighting Gillis a fair fight, and Gillis said "Damn it, we will battle it out or shoot it out." With that they both pulled off their coats and Whitaker again said he would fight him fair. About that time witness saw Gillis's pistol, and Whitaker pulled out his. Ancrum Boykin told them to stop, not to shoot it out; and Whitaker said he would give up his pistol and fight fair, and he reached over as if to hand his pistol to Boykin, and J. E. Gillis shot. Heard two shots and saw Whitaker fall. Did not see Whitaker shoot.

The testimony of Mr. S. Boykin and his son, Ancrum Boykin, who were the next witnesses, was listened to with intense interest, for they were the most important witnesses for the State, and their integrity and high social standing in this county is recognized by everyone.

MR. SAM BOYKIN

was first sworn, and said that he had occasion to go to Boykin depot, to his son Ancrum's store. As he got opposite the postoffice he saw J. E. and J. A. Gillis standing in a very threatening attitude, with their hands in their hip pockets. He saw that a difficulty was impending. His son, Ancrum, Mr. McRea Whitaker and Mr. Barfield were present. He drove opposite the platform and got out of his buggy and went where they were. His son was telling them not to use any pistols, but fight a fair fist fight, if they would fight. Whitaker said he would fight any way, and so did Gillis. Ancrum told them if they were going to have a fair fight to hand up their pistols, and he would take the pistols. Whitaker put his hand back to get his pistol, and turned to hand it to Ancrum, and J. E. Gillis moved suddenly across to Whitaker's left and said, "No, damn it; we will battle it out." But just before that, as he understood it, both had pulled off their

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