

# A REMARKABLE CASE.

## How the Dead Body of a Woman in a Trunk

### IN THE CITY OF LONDON, ENG.

#### Unmasked the Most Ingenious Wife Murderer Since the Days of the Pirate Blue Beard.

One husband with four wives all in the same house, three living each in ignorance of her husband's real relations with the other two, and one dead, murdered, and her body buried in a trunk in the cellar—this is the extraordinary domestic situation revealed in the London suburb of Kensal Rise through the suicide of George Albert Crossman when his only tongue could no longer satisfy those who suspected him.

Only the strange fascination which he exercised over woman, his utter lack of scruples and the persuasive powers of the bigamous murderer and suicide made such a situation possible. And the criminal investigation has shown that at least four other wives had become his victims before the advent of those making a total of eight.

There was nothing Mormon about this household. Each of the living wives believed herself to be the only one and her husband faithful, although all lived under the same roof. When Crossman's persuasive tongue was stilled by his own hand it was only necessary for the three living ones to speak freely to each other in comparing notes, and the mystery was explained.

An account of this drama of complications properly begins before the advent of living wife No. 3. Wife No. 1, known to tradesman and all in the neighborhood as Mrs. Crossman—as she truly was—occupied living and sleeping rooms with their child on the second floor of the house in Kensal Rise known as "Sunnyside." Wife No. 2 and her child—also Crossman's child—were similarly situated on the third floor. She was known to wife No. 1 and to the neighborhood as Mrs. Clark, the widow of the lifelong friend of Crossman, who, dying, had made Crossman his executor and guardian of his child. When wife No. 1 objected to his spending so much time with "Mrs. Clark" he would appease her with this explanation:

#### HIS INGENUOUS EXPLANATIONS.

"My dear wife, if I seem to you unduly attentive to Mrs. Clark, upstairs, you must remember that I am fulfilling a sacred trust reposed in me by my dear friend, her late husband, on his death bed. Besides, the position of executor in this case is lucrative, and, like many inexperienced women, Mrs. Clark has a passion for going into detail. As she is extremely secretive about her affairs, I beg that you will never appear curious."

And so Crossman was free to enjoy "Mrs. Clark's" and their child's society, going and coming at his pleasure.

To satisfy wife No. 2 about the public recognition accorded to wife No. 1 as Mrs. Crossman was easily within the limit of Crossman's ingenuity. He told her:

"My darling wife, of course you know that the relations between Mrs. Crossman and me are only what those of brother-in-law and sister-in-law should be. Her husband is in India, and for reasons involving considerable property it is necessary for her to be supposed to be living with her husband. That is the role I have to play—distasteful though it is. Of course, you won't mention it. If the little deception should become known the result would practically mean ruin for the poor woman, and, besides, the arrangement is rather profitable to me—something to be grateful for these hard times."

There was no resisting the fascinations of this man, and neither wife dreamed of doubting his word. So everything went on smoothly, the household expenses being paid out of money Crossman's two brides brought to him on the wedding day. There was only one complaint from the two wives. This was a bad odor which seemed to come from the cellar.

"I'll attend to that the first day I have time," Crossman would say. "The smell comes from a box full of cement left by the masons. I'll attend to it presently."

#### LOW FUNDS CALL FOR ANOTHER WIFE.

But funds were running low, and Crossman had a more important task before him. He needed another wife—one with money—and he was already advertising for her in the name of "Frank Seaton." Frequently he was away for a day or two. At length he announced to wives No. 1 and 2, separately, that he was about to install on the first floor as housekeeper an old and intimate friend of his sister in Manchester, adding:

"It is enough for me to remind you that she is my sister's school chum, that we are named in her will as heirs to all her property and that she will trust no one but the brother of her girlhood's chum."

Separately, wives No. 1 and 2 begged him not to mention it. Together, Mrs. Crossman and Mrs. Clark urged him to go at once and bring home Mrs. Seaton.

Thereupon, grumblingly, Crossman posted off, not to Manchester, but to Reading, where Miss Annie Welsh, not especially attractive, but with a neat savings bank account at the local post office, awaited her dashing fiancé, "Frank Seaton." For Crossman was only thirty-five, and in spite of four years spent in jail for bigamy, presented a youthful and attractive appearance.

They were immediately married at St. George's Church in Reading, and proceeded to enjoy their honeymoon with the assistance of "Mrs. Seaton's" savings, which "Mr. Seaton" thoughtfully withdrew from the bank after the ceremony. They went to Manchester, from which place Crossman prudently and dutifully wrote to wife No. 1 and 2, and found a letter from "Mrs. Clark" telling him how nicely their little boy was getting along with the whooping cough.

Coming across this letter, "Mrs.

Seaton," wife No. 3, asked questions. Crossman was equal to the emergency. He was acting as go-between for a husband and wife who were jangling. This was quite satisfactory.

In good time Crossman and wife No. 3 set out for London and home. Now he became doubly fascinating. When he saw that wife No. 3 was finding him perfectly irresistible he prepared her for the somewhat ambiguous state of things she would find at "Sunnyside," saying:

#### HE PREPARES HER FOR NO. 1 AND NO. 2.

"My angel bride, you know that many people have family obligations of which not even a marriage for love can relieve them. That is why I am known as George Albert Crossman, who is in India. He is my half-brother, and for property reasons his wife, who lives in my house and passes for mine, must appear to be living with her husband. Mrs. Clark, who lives with her child on the top floor, is the widow of my dearest friend, and the care of her, her child and her property is a trust which he reposed in me while on his death bed. These poor women and their affairs take up much of my time; but you mustn't mind, darling."

Mrs. Seaton was so deeply in love that she was far past minding anything respectable that concerned her new husband. So on their arrival all was serene. Having learned about "Mrs. Seaton's" property and the will and about her suspicions and exacting nature, wives No. 1 and No. 2 even urged Crossman to humor her in every way. And thus the new honeymoon was not too rudely concluded.

But on the very day of their homecoming "Mrs. Seaton" objected strongly to that strange odor from the cellar, much more noticeable on the first floor, where she was installed, than on the others occupied by wives No. 1 and No. 2. Crossman was seriously embarrassed. He could not think how to safely dispose of the trunk and its dreadful secret.

In the presence of that odor his fashions lost their effect on wife No. 3. They had a quarrel about it, and wife No. 3 was in a fair way to join the dead wife in the cellar when she suddenly packed a handbag and left, saying she would return to her parents and remain there until the cellar was put in a respectable condition.

#### SUSPICIONS OF THE ILL SMELL.

This episode called anew the attention of wives No. 1 and No. 2 to the ill smelling trunk in the cellar. They made Crossman take them down to look at it. It was an old tin trunk and stood in a little dark closet. Crossman tried to say that old cement usually smelled that way—but the women had flown to the upper regions.

And then the wife murderer would go down into the cellar and tug at the straps of the trunk in which the body of one of his victims lay encased in cement, trying to shut in the odor that was making his living wives suspicious.

While Crossman was continually planning to take away the trunk and bury it in his mother's garden, in another part of the suburbs, wife No. 3 finding that absence made the heart grow fonder, returned. Crossman promised to have the trunk taken away the next day without fail.

But several days elapsed with nothing done. Crossman seemed much preoccupied, and when wife No. 3 hinted her suspicions he looked at her so strangely that cold shivers ran down her back. Was he thinking that it would be better to let her join the dead wife in the cellar?

At last, on Saturday, Crossman called at the shop of Messrs. Ryden & Sons, news agents, in Willesden lane, in whose window was a notice to the effect that light work was done with a pony and van. He wanted a box moved, he said.

Young Ryden, who is still under twenty years of age and who does the van work, was out and Crossman refused to leave his name and address, saying he would call again.

He called again that same evening, but Ryden was again not in. On Tuesday he sent a telegram ordering the van, but subsequently cancelled it. Late the same evening he called at the shop, again ordering the cart for the next day and saying he would come for it.

On Wednesday evening he went to the shop for the last time and asked Ryden to get the van ready. It was then about 8:30, and he said that the job would probably take until about 9 o'clock.

Ryden suggested that he should take a carman named Wicks to help, but Crossman insisted that he must go alone. Ryden was suspicious at this and told Wicks to follow on foot. He and Crossman then drove to "Sunnyside," a drive of about eight or ten minutes.

#### DISCOVERED, HE KILLS HIMSELF.

Before fetching the cart, however, Crossman had moved the fateful box from the cellar into garden. His actions were watched by a suspicious neighbor, who while Crossman was away after the van, reported the matter at the near-by police station.

The police sergeant and an officer in plain clothes met the murderer when he arrived with the van. Crossman was completely taken by surprise, and it was not until the sergeant had actually touched him that he took to his heels and ran wildly down the road. Luckily, the plain clothes man was young and an excellent runner. He stuck close to Crossman's heels down the length of Ladysmith road and into the main road leading to Kensal Rise station. Both pursued and pursued were winded by this time, and the constable called out for assistance in the chase.

#### FINDING HIMSELF CORNERED IN HANOVER ROAD, CROSSMAN SUDDENLY STOPPED AND CUT HIS THROAT WITH A RAZOR.

So thoroughly did he do his work that the windpipe and blood-vessels were severed to the backbone, and he died practically at once.

Crossman being dead, then came the mystery of the trunk. Four policemen managed with great trouble to lift the box into the van, while from it oozed a thick and evil-smelling liquid. It was taken to the yard of the police station in Salisbury road and there it was broken open and the horrible discovery made.

#### A WOMAN'S BODY ENCASED IN CEMENT.

When the lid was forced back the box was found to be filled with solid cement. A few blows broke the

crust, revealing the body of a woman in an advanced stage of decomposition. Owing to a lack of evidence that violence had been used in killing the woman, the police assumed that she had died of poison.

Upon Crossman's body, soaked in blood, was a death certificate of a woman named as his wife and letters and other papers, showing that he had married at least eight women through the mediation of matrimonial agencies. Further investigation showed that practically his whole source of income had been these bigamous wives and the money they brought with them.

As already told, it was only necessary for wives No. 1 No. 2 and No. 3 to frankly compare notes to make the whole mystery plain of Crossman's ability to live with three wives in the same house without exciting the suspicion of any of them.

Singularly revolting as is the case of George Albert Crossman, it exhibits in a pronounced form the characteristics of the type of criminal whose monomania seems to be the hunting down, preying upon and slaughtering of women. Like "Blue Beard" in the fairy tale, they marry, murder and marry again, and murder till some one fortunately opens the cupboard, and the world is rid of them in due and salutary course.

Crossman's case has set the authorities to moralizing on the subject. He has been married eight times, and was looking out for another victim when the end came to his loathsome career, no difficulty in finding wives. He could have had as many as he—

#### What is the explanation?

#### KILLING FROST PREVENTED

#### By Rains, Otherwise Damage Would Have Been Great to Crops.

The State says the cold wave made a sudden and unexpected dip southward over the Appalachian mountains Wednesday and Thursday, and other South Carolinians again hauled out their overcoats and wraps and built fires after making full preparations in apparel and otherwise for summer.

There were light falls of snow at several points in the upper half of the State, as far down as Newberry, and the clouds and rain and wind alone saved thousands of dollars crop damages all over the State. With clear, calm weather Tuesday night, Section Director Bauer said, there would certainly have been killing frosts practically over the entire State, which would have played havoc with the fruit crops, killing cotton and greatly retarding corn. The night before freezing temperatures occurred in the mountainous sections, but Wednesday's reports from the commercial peach orchards of this State and Georgia indicated that though the crop had been damaged to some extent there still remained enough fruit on the trees to insure practically a full crop.

The reports from Georgia were particularly encouraging, and those from South Carolina points were almost as good. The North Carolina fruit crop was seriously affected, not over half a crop remaining. In Virginia, where there was also "clear weather" killing frosts occurred all over the State, greatly damaging the trucking interests at Norfolk, where the frost was heaviest.

The centre of the cold wave Wednesday was in northern Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York and the New England States, with snow as far south as St. Louis and with temperatures from 6 to 10 degrees below freezing, while in the central valleys and on the eastern slope of the Rockies there were rises of from 10 to 20 degrees on account of a storm originating in the Rockies. As the western storm advances the northerly winds will change to the south and this section will get a touch of spring again Thursday or Friday, S. Mr. Bauer says. Texas and Louisiana enjoyed seasonable warmth Wednesday, but the central Texas farmers who tried to get a jump on the boll weevil have been disappointed. Their cotton was killed by the cold wave of a few days ago and they are now re-planting.

In the northern half of the country east of the Mississippi practically no farming has been done on account of the lateness of the spring, and these sections have not suffered by yesterday's cold wave. The unreasonable has not extended into the spring wheat districts of the Missouri valley, where the crop is all in the ground, and the New York, Wisconsin and Minnesota apple orchards are unaffected because the lateness of the spring has prevented even the buds starting yet. So the prospects for full wealth and apple crops are still good.

#### How to Grow Flowers.

In order to supply the large and increasing demand for publications relating to the cultivation of flowers the United States Department of Agriculture has had prepared and will soon issue Farmers' Bulletin No. 195, entitled "Annual Flowering Plants." This bulletin was prepared by L. C. Corbett, horticulturist of the bureau of plant industry of the department. The bulletin contains suggestions for the use of plants about dwellings and the construction of hotbeds and cold frames. The dates for planting the seeds of each of the varieties enumerated in the publication, as well as the particular requirements in their cultivation, are stated in the discussion of each species. General cultural directions relating to sowing seed, germination, moisture, soil temperature and transplanting are also given. The bulletin contains plans for school gardens and is illustrated with fifty-five text-figures. Copies will be sent free to any address in the United States on application to a Senator, Representative or delegate in Congress, or to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

#### Below Freezing.

A dispatch from Knoxville, Tenn., says now to the depth of 18 inches is reported from the mountain sections in this vicinity. In the city three or four inches fell and the temperature is below freezing. Cattlemen have already placed their cattle on the mountain ranges and stand to lose heavily as a result of the cold weather, which is a novelty for this section at such a period of the year.

# RICH AND RACY.

## Former Congressman Gave Sensational Testimony on Mormon Tenets.

### THE SITUATIONS CONFLICTING Cause in Which Obligations to Church Would Clash With Duties to the State Confessed.

With the reopening of the investigation in the Reed Smoot case before the senate committee on privileges and elections, at Washington Wednesday the prosecution devoted considerable time to drawing from Brigham H. Roberts the character of the oaths which are said to be necessary for a Mormon official to take in order to have the support of the church for political office. Members of the committee showed an equal interest in the obligations which are said to be taken by Mormons who "go through the endowment house." Along both lines much evidence was brought out which is expected to have considerable bearing on the fitness of a Mormon church official to hold a seat in congress.

It was shown by Mr. Roberts' testimony that without the consent of the Mormon church he failed of election to a seat in congress and later with church recognition of his candidacy the endowment house obligation Mr. Roberts was extremely reticent.

Mr. Roberts said he has three wives, one married in 1877, the second in 1886 and the third in 1890. He said he has had children by all of the wives and by the first plural wife since his election to congress.

Senator Overman inquired of Mr. Roberts whether his first wife and his second wife had consented to his third wife.

"No sir," said Mr. Roberts. "They did not learn of the marriage for three or four years."

"How was that?" asked Senator Beveridge. "Do you mean to say that the marriage was not known to any one?"

"It was known to some of my friends but not to my wives," was the answer.

"Why was this marriage concealed from them?" asked Chairman Burrows.

"Because I did not want to embarrass them,"

"How embarrassed?"

"Well, we knew the marriage was illegal and it might be embarrassing to them if they should for any reason be called on to testify."

Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Roberts why he thought it incumbent upon his to take plural wives. "From boyhood," replied the witness, "I had been taught the righteousness of plural marriages and I believed this practice to be the law of God. I knew that this practice was contrary to the mandates of congress but believed that the law of God was the highest rule and I felt impelled to obey it."

Chairman Burrows asked a number of pointed questions which brought out the confession from Mr. Roberts that he still believes in and is practicing polygamy. He said that he believes that the Woodruff manifesto was divinely inspired and that now in practicing polygamy he knows he is disobeying both the laws of the land and the laws of God. He was asked why he continued to disobey the laws of God, if he believed them to be the highest laws and with a resigned air, he said: "Well, the manifesto left me in the midst of obligations to these wives. I am trying to do the best I can to live within the laws but these obligations I cannot shirk."

At the afternoon session Mr. Roberts said no action had ever been taken by the church in respect to his living with more than one wife.

Question were asked respecting Mr. Roberts' views regarding the manifesto of 1890 against plural marriages and living in polygamous cohabitation and the witness said he regarded the manifesto as an administrative act of the church and of binding force upon all members. He admitted that to disobey any of those laws would subject the member to liability to church discipline. The witness was asked then in regard to polygamous cohabitation, and said that he and many others were living in polygamy at the time the rule was made against such cohabitation and that they considered themselves under moral obligation to live with the wives they had married.

"Do you think you are morally bound to cohabit with all of your wives?" Chairman Burrows asked.

"I do."

#### AN UNLUCKY NUMBER.

"How many children have you?"

"Thirteen living."

"How many not living?"

"Two."

"When was the last one born?"

"About two or two and a half years ago."

It was not true that the political support of the Mormon church in Utah was sought by political parties the same as the Irish, German or Italian vote was sought in other communities.

"And the negro vote?" interrupted Mr. Worthington.

"I believe not," said Mr. Roberts. "There may be individuals who trim their sails that way, but not the church."

"I believe," said Senator Bailey, "that the first election was carried by the Republicans, the second by the Democrats, the third by the Republicans. The next appears to be our turn. That appears to indicate that some influence has been brought to bear on the church."

Chairman Burrows asked the witness whether he ever had been through the endowment house.

"Yes, sir."

"Can you tell us in regard to this ceremony?" asked Chairman Burrows.

"I cannot. I do not feel a liberty to do so."

"Why not?"

"I consider myself in trust and not at liberty to disclose what takes place."

Mr. Roberts said that the obligations were secret and he thought them not unlike the oaths of the Masonic order or other secret societies.

"What would happen if you did reveal what took place within the temple?" asked the chairman.

"I would lose caste and be regarded as betraying a trust. If I keep faith I cannot disclose what takes place."

"Then," pursued Chairman Burrows, any person who takes the endowment house obligation is under oath not to reveal its nature?"

"I think so."

"And Senator Smoot could not reveal his oath of that character?"

The witness nodded his head in acquiescence.

Senator Bailey asked whether there was anything in the ceremony that abridged a man's freedom in any political or religious way.

The witness replied he thought not.

To my fellow citizens of the Second Congressional District:

I have been elected with gratitude most profound the numerous signed petitions asking me to become a candidate for congress to fill the vacancy caused by the death of my revered father, the Hon. George W. Croft, from the Second Congressional District of South Carolina.

No stronger token of honor, esteem and reverence for the memory of your departed representative can be given. While reluctant to do so, yet having faith in those who signed the petitions and in the citizens of the District at large, a majority of whom were his friends, I have decided to make the race, and hereby announce myself a candidate for congress from the Second Congressional District, to fill the unexpired term only, subject to the result of the primary election. And I hereby pledge myself to abide by and support the nominee in each election and to support the platform and principles of the Democratic party.

L. J. Williams for Congress.

To the Democratic voters of the Second Congressional District:

An all-wise Providence has deprived you of your direct representation in the lower house of congress, through the death of Hon. Geo. W. Croft, congressman from the Second South Carolina District. This sad loss of an able public-servant creates a vacancy in a position for which it has been my announced intention to be a candidate in the regular primary this summer, and so makes it necessary for me to seek your suffrages—earlier than would otherwise have been the case, for the unexpired term.

I am a candidate for the high honor of representing the Second South Carolina District in Congress and ask your support.

I am a Democrat and give full allegiance to Democratic principles.

Above all, I am a white supremacy Democrat, and believe absolutely in the rule of this country by the white men, a rule so shaped as to bring the greatest good to the greatest number, to the very fullest length in opposition to anything that savors of race, political or social equality. These are beliefs which I hold should be also held at Washington as well as entertained at home.

I am eternally against trusts and the monopolies they build and foster, and pledge my most earnest efforts, if elected, to work for relief of the people therefrom.

South Carolina is now well represented in the national house of representatives by professional men. I would not appeal to class prejudice, but I do ask: ought not the farmers of South Carolina, who are a majority of the State's white voters, to have at least one simple pure farmer representative in congress?

I have been honored by the people of Edgefield county by election to represent them in the State legislature, and by the people of South Carolina, through their General Assembly, to share in the management of the dispensary, and point to my record as a public servant as an assurance to the Democrats of the Second District that if they choose me as their congressman, I will serve them faithfully and to the full extent of my ability.

I hope to have the opportunity of meeting the Democratic voters of our district face to face, to fully state the stump my position on all public questions, which cannot be done in the limits of a newspaper article.

L. J. WILLIAMS.

**SUFFERED A THOUSAND DEATHS**

The Physicians had done their best to cure James Wilson, of Dillon, S. C., who had one of the most terrible cases of RHEUMATISM on record. They all failed until one doctor prescribed—

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IT CURED HELPLESS CRIPPLE.

Mr. Wilson writes in the center of a long letter, dated August 18, 1900: "My legs were drawn back until my feet touched my hips. I was as helpless as a baby for nearly 12 months. The muscles of my arms and legs were hard and shriveled up. I suffered death many times a day. My wife was treated by six different physicians in McCall, Dillon and Marion, but none of them could do me any good, until Dr. J. P. Ewing, of Dillon, told me to try your RHEUMACIDE. I began to feel better, and before the first bottle was used up I began to get better. I used 54 bottles and was completely cured."

Dr. J. P. Ewing certifies Mr. Wilson's statement in every particular.

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Nothing But a Fool.

Martin J. Wade is the only Democrat in the House from Iowa. In explanation of the attitude of many Republicans of Iowa Gov. Cummins' view on the necessity of adjusting the tariff rates to meet changed conditions, Mr. Wade said the people of his State were like the fellow who sat at the doorstep of his home one winter morning about 2 o'clock when a policeman came along.

"What are you doing here?" inquired the guardian of the peace.

The man replied: "I am just thinking."

"Well," said the policeman, "yet in or you will freeze to death. What are you thinking about?"

"I was just thinking," replied the man, "whether I would go in and get killed, or whether I would stay out here and freeze to death."

According to Mr. Wade, the people of Iowa are not only thinking like the man alluded to, but they are realizing a great truth expressed in a case where a man was taken to an insane asylum in that State. In reply to the inquiry why he was sent there the man said:

"They sent me here because I'm a tariff reformer and voted the Republican ticket."

"Oh, that's a shame," remarked the questioner. "You should not have been sent here. This is the place for the insane. You are nothing but a fool."

**CAPT. Wm. H. Green,** assistant general manager of the Southern, died at his home in Washington on Friday night, aged 65 years. He was a native of Columbia.

**FREE TO MEN**

If you are not well and want to kill the truth about your trouble, send for my free booklet and self examination blanks. Dr. J. Servo's Detail (Sexual) Tablets, No. 2, Varicocele, No. 3, Stricture, No. 4, Kidney and Bladder Complaint, No. 5, Disease of Women, No. 6, The Poison, King, Blood Poison, No. 7, Catarrh. These books are shown to be in the hands of every person afflicted, so Dr. Hathaway, the author, is recognized as the best authority and expert in the United States on these diseases. Write for the book you want to-day, and it will be sent you free, sealed. Address: J. Servo, Dr. Hathaway, M. D.

**The Texas Crop.**

The census bureau says careful inquiry regarding the boll weevil has developed the fact that this insect is now in 96 of the 178 cotton producing counties of Texas and destroyed cotton of the crop of 1903 amounting to 739,360 bales, which is the difference between an ample and a short crop for the country. Including the value of the seed, the loss is equivalent to \$49,272,989. A conservative estimate of the loss resulting to Texas from the imperfect weather conditions which affected that section in common with other cotton States is placed at \$27,945,445. The proportion of the Texas crop to the total crop increased from 23.5 per cent in 1902 to 25.1 per cent in 1903.

**Killed in Virginia.**

John Morgan, a carpenter 60 years old, was struck and knocked down by his son-in-law, Jefferson James, in Norfolk county, Va. In falling Morgan's head struck an obstruction and he died at once. There had been bad blood between the men for three years.

**One Hundred Buried.**

About 100 miners have been buried by an immense avalanche near the village of Prageletto, Tunis. A violent storm is sweeping over that locality and it is feared that other avalanches may result.

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