

THE BEAR RIVER MURDER

Wheeler Committed for Trial at the Supreme Court.

Harding Benson's Evidence Bore Very Strongly Against the Accused.

Flowers That Were Made by the Murdered Girl—Something More About Tillie Comeau.

(Continued from page four.)

Bear River, Feb. 7.—If the murderer of Annie Kempton is executed bits of the banquet may have worth their weight in gold. On the dining table of the hotel where your correspondent is billeted are three vases overflowing with pink and white paper roses, made not long ago by the girl who preferred death to dishonor.

Annie Kempton fell a victim to her environment. Only those who live in the country can appreciate her situation. She had to be friendly with her neighbors, for she was left much alone at home. Yet her mother, amid all her anxiety and care consequent upon helping her husband to wipe out the evidence on the place, kept a keen eye upon Annie's conduct and protected her as far as possible from in any way giving cause for the tongues of gossip to wag. Harry Benson, a modest fellow of 15, the son of a respectable shipbuilder, had been "keeping company" with Annie for some time, but at her mother's request he pledged his third new suit to Annie when she was alone in the house. This promise he kept faithfully, and it was in consequence thereof that he declined to go in when Wheeler asked him to do so the very day that the murder took place in the cottage house. The crown contended that Wheeler's object in trying to get Benson in the house was to throw the crime on his shoulders. Benson had struck up quite a friendship with the prisoner, who is fully twice his age, while Tillie Comeau, the woman with whom Wheeler lived, was the woman whom Isaac Kempton had selected to stand with his daughter during these nights he was absent in the woods. Then Tillie Comeau has a pretty daughter, somewhere about Annie Kempton's age, and in summer time they often went to the berries together. Thus it came to pass that the very steps the parents took to guard their daughter's life and reputation conspired to bring about her terrible death.

Two circumstances combined to throw Annie and the prisoner more or less into each other's company. For some unaccountable reason young Benson had struck up quite a friendship with the prisoner, who is fully twice his age, while Tillie Comeau, the woman with whom Wheeler lived, was the woman whom Isaac Kempton had selected to stand with his daughter during these nights he was absent in the woods. Then Tillie Comeau has a pretty daughter, somewhere about Annie Kempton's age, and in summer time they often went to the berries together. Thus it came to pass that the very steps the parents took to guard their daughter's life and reputation conspired to bring about her terrible death.

Bear River is a pretty and fertile gulch, with something over one thousand inhabitants, all of whom are comfortably well off, while many of them might be called rich. The denseness, which are painted white, are all more or less protected by shade trees, and the cottages will compare favorably in appearance with those to be seen in the most prosperous New England towns. The incandescent light is in general use and Bear River may be styled an up to date, progressive place, with a clear record. High crimes are almost unknown here and the inhabitants are proud of the village record. Hence it is that the people hasten to inform every visitor that the accused murderer, Wheeler came in with the tide some years ago and is not to the manner born.

I have talked with a good many people about Wheeler and they all say that he was very afraid of his work—almost except Mrs. Comeau with whom he resides, who says he was always willing to work when he could get anything to do, and that she would not keep idle folks out of her. If I dare rumor is correct Mrs. Comeau was more of a wife than a mother to the prisoner, but he was that as it may, no one will deny that she is one of the most industrious women in the village, and that her services are in constant demand. Lots of the bunches of Mayflowers sold in St. John last season were picked by Tillie Comeau, Annie Kempton, Peter Wheeler, the Comeau girls and others.

Last night's rain made the traveling so soft that the only sightseers today were people living within easy distance of the exhibition building and a few visitors who arrived by train. The prisoner looked quite cheerful this morning. He slept well last night and ate a hearty breakfast. The crowd played some of its strongest cards today.

Dr. Robert J. Ellison, who held the post mortem, was put on to show that from the position in which he found the corpse no one could see without moving the body that her throat had been cut. At the inquest the prisoner testified that he did not touch the body when he first saw it, yet he went out and told the first person he met that Annie Kempton's throat had been cut.

Bernard Parker, who went to the Kempton house about 8 o'clock in the morning of Jan. 27th, testified today that he then saw Annie's body lying on the floor, with her head curled under and her right chest exposed, but could not see that her throat was cut till Omer Rice rolled the body over.

The crown's theory is that the prisoner knocked Annie dead by blows on her head early in the evening, but did not cut her throat until his second visit to the house some time after.

Dr. Ellison's evidence supports this theory to a certain extent. His statement that the two bloody knives found on the floor, one was sharp and the other dull, is important as tending to show that both knives were used by the one man, and that the murderer did not have an accomplice present.

Then Bernard Parker and other witnesses testified today to tracing the prisoner's tracks in a round about way in the snow to Kempton's barn and pig pen, although the prisoner had denied in the inquest that he was near the premises on that occasion. Dr. Ellison's description of the wounds inflicted on the poor girl's body and how in his judgment she came to her

death, was given with great clearness. He said he found five distinct wounds, one-half an inch in length on the left side of the forehead, one on the right side above and a little back of the ear, an inch and a half long. The blow that made this was struck from behind, on the throat were three cuts. The first, which was three inches long, was a jagged cut, directly across the windpipe, and was made with a dull instrument. It severed the wind pipe. The second, also a jagged cut, was four inches long, had only seven or eight, and superficial muscles. The third cut, four and a half inches long and two and a half inches deep in front, also done with a dull instrument, extended around to the jaw on the left side. The only effect of the wound on the left side of the forehead would be in his opinion to stun the girl for a few minutes. Neither wound on the head was sufficient to cause death, except as a secondary result, but they would cause immense pain, and the third would have been little or no flow of blood from the throat wound till reaction took place. If severe concussion of the brain ensued, the girl might not have revived at all, but as she was strong and robust, he thought the shock only lasted a few seconds, when she might have revived got up, wandered round the room a little and then fell down, never to rise again. From the condition of the body he thought "Annie had been dead fifteen to twenty hours at the time he held the post-mortem, which would agree with the crown's theory that Wheeler murdered her the previous evening. The short piece of stove wood with which the blows were struck was produced in the cottage and identified by the doctor as fitting the wounds on the body. It is not a formidable looking weapon. Neither of the blows on the head fractured the skull.

The witnesses were run through pretty rapidly this afternoon, but their evidence was in the main a repetition of what they had previously told at the coroner's inquest.

Dennis Brooke, a bright little Indian boy of twelve years, testified that he saw a light in the Kempton house about half past nine on Monday night, January 27th. It was going out and appearing again as if some one was moving around in the room. The boy is correct, Annie Kempton was alive then, as she was the only person seen in the house. This bit of evidence runs directly counter to the crown's theory, that she was killed early that evening.

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PETER WHEELER.

Bear River, Feb. 8.—The preliminary examination of Peter Wheeler was concluded this afternoon, when the prisoner was sent up for trial at the supreme court in June. It is probable, however, that a special sitting will be held at Digby in July for that purpose. The prisoner took the usual examination with the magistrate, and equality, and will go back to Digby jail with the feeling that he will thereby escape the almost continuous questioning to which he has been subjected by visitors and overzealous friends of the murdered girl.

The justice's table was decorated this morning with bunches of artificial flowers made by the murdered girl. They attracted universal attention. It appears that these flowers, which Annie made some little time ago for Mrs. Harris of the Bear River hotel, were much admired by the guests and brought in several enquiries as to who was the maker. A large driving party from Digby was booked to visit the justice this night after Annie was murdered, and she was working on flowers for that party when the prisoner visited her at noon of the fatal day.

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Justice Purdy has presided over the case with firmness, dignity and strict impartiality, and has done much to make matters move along smoothly and quickly. Whenever the crowd became too demonstrative or inclined to be noisy, a word from him instantly restored order. Frank Miller, the clerk, was the hardest worked man at the trial, as he had to take down all the evidence single handed, even when three sessions were held each day.

H. J. Copp, the crown prosecutor, handled the case in a round about way in the snow to Kempton's barn and pig pen, although the prisoner had denied in the inquest that he was near the premises on that occasion. Dr. Ellison's description of the wounds inflicted on the poor girl's body and how in his judgment she came to her

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temper than had the other counsel. He was fighting his battle single-handed against crowd and crown, and to the question, witnesses, many of whom felt so strongly that they could not conceal their hostility to the accused. To Justice Purdy's credit, he said, he made no attempt to gain cheap popularity by stirring to public clamor, but gave the prisoner and his counsel all the latitude the law allowed them.

Squire Purdy is an unusually tall man with a large frame, but he is not overtopped by Detective Power of Halifax, who stands six feet three inches in his stocking feet and has that military bearing so dear to the Halifax man. The detective sat by the side of the crown counsel all through the examination, and it is no reflection on Mr. Copp's ability to say that he received many valuable tips from Mr. Power.

The newspaper men present were well looked after by the presiding magistrate and court officials, and result of the trial would every facility for doing their work.

One of the most prominent figures in the surroundings of the tragedy, although not in the remotest degree implicated in it, is Matilda (Tillie) Comeau, a woman blessed with a good family but no present husband. Wheeler's strong point, in my opinion, is the fact that she is a child, with which she impresses her usefulness on whoever employs her. Once let Tillie secure a job of work, and in very short time she becomes an indispensable part of the household. There is an intensity about her method of doing things that carries all before it. Squire Thomas, who knows as much about Bear River and the peculiarities of its prominent characters as any man within that bailiwick, when asked by the Sun correspondent how it came to pass that she had been selected by Mr. Kempton to look after his daughter in his absence, replied: "Your question is a most natural one for an observing visitor to ask. I will answer it in this way: Mrs. Harding Benson, who is a very capable woman, if I do say it. She has employed Tillie Comeau whenever she wanted to do a great deal of work, and she has been so much so much and has proved so useful that in any emergency my daughter always calls back on her. Tillie throws a voice in the government of the household, and she is so much so much and has proved so useful that in any emergency my daughter always calls back on her. Tillie throws a voice in the government of the household, and she is so much so much and has proved so useful that in any emergency my daughter always calls back on her.

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After Young Henshaw had given his evidence, Peter Wheeler was remanded to the supreme court in June.

The Comeau family, mother, daughter and son, all agreed in testifying that the prisoner came home the second time that fateful Monday evening about 10 o'clock and did not go out again that night. Hardy Benson came to the gate with him. Asked as to what time Benson left, Tillie Comeau told the crown counsel: "I can't say what time Benson left, but he was not there at 10 o'clock; somebody else would say eight, and I would be called a liar." Of course the audience laughed at this reply, but it was in line with the woman's earnest desire that they only have been told the truth.

The crown thinks that the fellow who left the lamp burning after he struck Annie down, but that would only account for the light itself, and not for the fact that it moved about. The Indian boy's story, if over remembered, in his manner of giving evidence carried weight with all who heard him.

Then as to the tracks supposed to be Wheeler's; they may have been made by him, or they may have been made by some one else wearing light gaiters. So far as the story that Peter had been heard to threaten he would murder the girl's ruin, lifted to the bottom of the case, was a last round which testified that the prisoner had said to him on one occasion that he intended to seduce Annie, but his witness in reply to the prisoner's counsel, admitted that he had heard other young fellows talk in the same strain about other girls. But for the murder Peter's words would have been forgotten, and if over remembered, then only as so much vain boasting.

While quick-tempered and ready to take his own part in a quarrel, the prisoner is neither a drunkard nor a dissolute fellow.

The subscription to raise funds to erect a suitable monument over Annie Kempton's grave is being largely signed.

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The Boston Market More Active Last Week Than Usual.

Smelt Arrivals Falling Off The Wholesale Prices Ruling on Saturday.

(Special to the Sun.) Boston, Feb. 6.—The fish trade this week has been rather more active than usual, and most kinds are higher at first hands. Mackerel are scarce and quiet, with high prices still prevailing. A few barrels arrive every day or two from the provinces, but they are quickly taken up, and have no effect on the market. Codfish are in better demand and a little higher. The present prospect is that they will go still higher during the present season. Cape Breton herring and other varieties are also firm. There is little new in the sardine situation. Prices are about the same, with only a fair demand for A 1 quality on the market, and other grades are higher. Live and boiled are selling well at 12 and 14 cents. Smelts are worth about 6 cents for the provincial fish, but the arrivals have been falling off so that probably a rise in prices will occur soon. Other branches of the market are unchanged. Wholesalers' prices are as follows:

Fresh fish—White halibut, 15 to 17c per lb; gray, 12 to 14c; chicken, 10 to 12c; salmon, 10 to 12c; large frozen mackerel, 20 to 25c; medium, 18c; blue fish, frozen, 9 to 10c; trout, 10c; provincial smelts, frozen, 5 to 7c; extras, 10c; native smelts, 7c; eels, 8 to 9c; cod, 3 to 3.5c; haddock, 3.5c to 4c; live lobsters, 12c; boiled, 10c. Salt fish—Provincial extra No. 1, \$1.25 to \$1.30 per barrel; No. 2, \$1.10 to \$1.20; No. 3, \$1.00 to \$1.10; No. 4, \$0.90 to \$1.00; No. 5, \$0.80 to \$0.90; No. 6, \$0.70 to \$0.80; No. 7, \$0.60 to \$0.70; No. 8, \$0.50 to \$0.60; No. 9, \$0.40 to \$0.50; No. 10, \$0.30 to \$0.40; No. 11, \$0.20 to \$0.30; No. 12, \$0.10 to \$0.20; No. 13, \$0.05 to \$0.10; No. 14, \$0.02 to \$0.05; No. 15, \$0.01 to \$0.02.

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SHORT TALKS ON ADVERTISING.

No. 1. (Copyrighted by Charles Austin Bates.)

More things enter into advertising than are generally supposed. In fact everything that connects a name and a business in people's minds is advertising.

Membership in churches and clubs and societies, the giving of social entertainments, public charity—all these things and more are advertising, but greater and broader, and better and easier than all these is newspaper advertising. You may think that without thinking of the other plans, but no scheme of publicity is complete without the newspaper.

Property presented, newspaper advertising will always pay. That here and there is a man who says: "Advertising doesn't pay, I've tried it," proves nothing but that his method was faulty.

Advertising is business news. It tells of things which are of great daily importance. It is of more account to the frugal housewife to know where she can get certain necessary commodities at a less price than usual than all the troubles in Siam or Alaska.

The news should be news. It should not be allowed to grow stale with repetition in the same old way.

If you can only advertise in a small way, pick out the best paper in your territory and spend all of your advertising money in that. Don't scatter. When your business grows, and you can spend more money, buy more space in the same paper, until you are sure you are using all you profitably can. Then add another paper. I would rather have one good "ad" in one paper than a dozen poor ones. When "hunting for a bear" I would rather take the best gun I had and load it properly than to scatter my powder in half a dozen poor guns and so "make a noise in the pan." Merely publishing your name and address will do some good, but there's a better way. Be different from the others in your line. Find some point in which you excel and harp on that. Give prices and specialties. Try to make the advertisements interesting and readable. Make them characteristic of your store, and above all things, make them true in fact and in spirit. Don't say that you haven't the time to attend to your advertising properly. Really, you haven't time to do anything else. Advertising is the most important thing about your business. It is the vital spark. What good does it do you to have the very best thing or the very greatest bargain on earth if people do not know it?

In running a newspaper, James Gordon Bennett, Jr., said the important thing was to "get the news and then make a damn fuss about it."

First get the right sort of goods, in the right location, at the right prices, and "then make a damn fuss about it" in the best paper you can find. The trade will follow.