

THE GRIFF HALL MURDER.

BY TELLUS O'NEIL.

Near the town of Settle, Yorkshire, England, stands Griff Hall, a large, old-fashioned, straggling mansion, with numerous wings and long galleries, and mysterious passages and chambers. Sixty years ago Edward Strongtharva was the occupant. He was the brother of the former occupant, whose only daughter, Eveline, was his sole heiress. On her father's death she was left to the guardianship of her uncle, and at the time of which this narrative treats was on a visit to a relative in Somersetshire.

Edward Strongtharva had always been a quiet, studious man, and in the ample library of the hall had found constant occupation and pleasure. On the evening of December 17, 1824, a carriage drove to the main entrance of the hall and three gentlemen alighted and asked to see Mr. Strongtharva. He received them in the library and politely inquired their business. One of them, who gave his name as Mr. Lovett, said he was a lawyer of Gloucester, and introduced another as Mr. Shotwell, a London attorney. The other two, of about 25, was not introduced until later on.

"We have come," said Mr. Lovett, "about a very peculiar affair. Your late brother married here, I believe, about the year 1805?" "He did," was the reply, "and has one child—Eveline."

"Were you aware that he was married previous to that?" asked Mr. Lovett. "Abundantly," exclaimed Mr. Strongtharva. "He was only 23 at the time, and had, of course, never been married before. I have evidence to the contrary."

"We have evidence to the contrary," was the reply. "We have evidence incontrovertible that in June, 1800, he was married near Cardiff, in Wales, to one 'Eleanor Lewis,' by whom he had a son, who is alive and heir to his father's estate. This is the young gentleman—Mr. Charles Strongtharva, named after his father."

Mr. Lovett with a wave of his hand indicated the young gentleman referred to. Mr. Edward Strongtharva gazed at the person pointed out, but said nothing. "Now," said Mr. Lovett, "you have taken the best advice on the subject and my friend, Mr. Shotwell, an eminent barrister of the Northern circuit, is of opinion that the facts in our possession fully substantiate this young gentleman's claim. We thought, though, that before we began any legal proceedings to secure you and your son, it would be well to ascertain that the facts in our possession fully substantiate this young gentleman's claim. We thought, though, that before we began any legal proceedings to secure you and your son, it would be well to ascertain that the facts in our possession fully substantiate this young gentleman's claim."

"I know not," replied Mr. Edward Strongtharva, "but to answer your communication is no unexpected and so utterly astounding that I am at a loss to express myself. I should like some time to consider before I say anything on the subject."

"My to-morrow, perhaps, you will have collected your thoughts," said Mr. Shotwell, "in a very dignified tone."

"I am uncertain about that," was the reply; "yet I might in the meantime consider what answer I should give you. At the best it would be a tempting one, as of course Miss Eveline and her legal adviser would have no objection to my doing that. That is understood perfectly," was Mr. Shotwell's reply. "The answer we expect at present would simply be an indication whether you thought it possible to reach a settlement outside the courts, provided the evidence we produce were such as to satisfy you that we had good ground for our claim."

After further talk the visitors rose to depart, but on reaching the door were informed by the coachman that the horses had gone lame and it was impossible to use them. The nearest place where the strangers could get accommodation was nearly four miles distant, and there was nothing left for Mr. Strongtharva to do but to order his shaler for the night.

After some hesitation they accepted the polite offer and returned to enjoy a good supper, after which they retired to rooms prepared for them. The coachman had resolved to go on to Settle at a walk, and he had his horse attended to, and promised to return for his passengers by 9 o'clock in the morning.

When the servants arose at Griff Hall the next morning they found their master in his bed-room with his throat cut. His strong box had been broken open and its valuable contents, consisting of his old family jewels and silverware and a large sum of money, were missing. It was evident that the robbery had been committed by the three men who had been with him the evening before.

There had evidently been a prolonged struggle between the three men and his assistants, and he had been apparently thrown on the bed and held down before the deadly knife was used. The door of his dressing room had been opened from the gallery with burglars' implements, and the door of the study had been similarly forced. Detective from the police force, who was evidently very experienced, made a very thorough investigation, resulting in the conviction that the robbery had been the work of expert thieves. Only very imperfect descriptions of the three men could be obtained, but the fact was ascertained that the carriage which had passed through the neighboring toll gate at about 7 o'clock in the evening returned at 3 o'clock in the morning. It had avoided the main road for some distance, and was then heard of at Causton on the great North road. There it was found the vehicle and horses had been hired, the driver accompanied by the owner having been heavily bribed to stay at Ferry bridge until the party returned, and to entrust the carriage to another man, who was evidently one of the gang. At Causton the men had separated and gone away singly, and all search for them was in vain, so that there was no positive proof of the direction in which they had gone, though it was almost certain that the perpetrators of the crime at Griff Hall might have escaped the punishment due to them by a singular coincidence.

After the death of Mr. Edward Strongtharva the lady, instead of returning to Griff Hall at the end of her visit in Somersetshire, went to London to reside with her grandfather, Lady Ainsworth, a woman advanced in years and of great wealth. Among her aunt's domestics Eveline saw a woman named Harper, whom she fancied she had seen before, and after some reflection, it suddenly occurred to her that the woman had for a short time been employed in the laundry at Griff Hall, just before Eveline's departure for Somersetshire. The woman evidently did not recognize the parcel of Eveline, but on learning from her fellow-servants that the young lady was the niece and ward of Mr. Strongtharva, who had recently been murdered, she grew nervous

and excited, and in a few days afterward gave notice that she intended to leave, on the ground of ill health and want of rest. "She is pretty well off," Eveline's maid said to her mistress, "for she has plenty of money in her trunk, and I have seen her with jewelry in her possession fit for a queen. When I asked her where she got them she replied that one of her old mistresses gave them to her at her death. One of them is especially beautiful—a griffin of carbuncles and garnets, with emeralds and diamonds mixed, set in silver."

"Now, this was an exact description of the pieces of family jewelry stolen from Griff Hall on the night of the dreadful crime. Eveline was startled, but had presence of mind sufficient to restrain herself and make the simple rejoinder: "Perhaps it is only imitation and of little value."

Eveline, however, communicated the fact to Lady Ainsworth, who considered it of some importance, that she immediately drove to her lawyer's, who went to Scotland Yard and consulted with the authorities there. The result was the examination of the contents of the servant's trunks, unknown to her, and the identification beyond question of the silver griffin and of a small gold watch made at Florence, and studded with pearls, as part of the jewelry stolen from the hall. The same evening, a notorious outlaw, known as the Hawk, was discovered prowling in the neighborhood of Lady Ainsworth's dwelling, and in a little time the servant Harper came out and joined him. They were traced to the great Park, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and there the perpetrators of the Griff Hall murder, and several of their associates, wanted for other crimes, were captured.

The woman, it was found, had been used by the thieves to gain admittance to the house where articles of value were supposed to be kept, and ascertain the various places where they were deposited. Her information she communicated at a subsequent time to her accomplices, and was rewarded with money, or a part of the plunder. Her object in securing employment of Lady Ainsworth's was, doubtless, to obtain information as to the whereabouts of the griffin and the gold watch, which she had her accomplices in robbing the Jew."

The three men actually engaged in the crime at Griff Hall were tried at Hall as a grand jury, and in twenty-four hours paid the penalty of their misdeeds. The man who acted as driver had killed in a quarrel arising out of the division of the plunder. The woman was sentenced to penal servitude and dispatched to Botany Bay.

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The other day a man went into a country drug store where a lady ran a soda-water fountain. Two minutes after he gave her the "brandy wine," which she did not understand, he was rolling around in the middle of the road with the woman's husband, who seemed to be getting the better of it.

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"Just think of it!" ejaculated Mrs. G. of more money than brains, to another lady similarly favored. "I saw by this morning's papers how that horrid MacFlimney girl did off a German. 'Oh, my! My! My!' some poor Dutchman, I suppose, but I always suspected she'd do something awful," replied the other.

—Mrs. Barnhart, cor. Pratt and Broadway, has been a sufferer for twelve years through rheumatism, and has tried every remedy she could hear of, but received no benefit until she tried Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil; she says she cannot express the satisfaction she feels at having her pain entirely removed and her rheumatism cured. There are basis imitations of this medicine for sale; see that you get Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil.

Gimlet—Hello, old man, haven't seen you for a month of Sundays. Augur—No, I—Gimlet—And you are looking so well, too. Never saw you better. Augur—Yes, I—Gimlet—Your face has a good healthy color, but your nose is badly burned, been out of town. Augur—My wife has.

—A field of corns.—Thomas Sablin of Eglinton, says: "I have used Holloway's Corn Cure with the best results. The distress, instead of returning to Griff Hall at the end of her visit in Somersetshire, went to London to reside with her grandfather, Lady Ainsworth, a woman advanced in years and of great wealth. Among her aunt's domestics Eveline saw a woman named Harper, whom she fancied she had seen before, and after some reflection, it suddenly occurred to her that the woman had for a short time been employed in the laundry at Griff Hall, just before Eveline's departure for Somersetshire. The woman evidently did not recognize the parcel of Eveline, but on learning from her fellow-servants that the young lady was the niece and ward of Mr. Strongtharva, who had recently been murdered, she grew nervous

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Table with columns for Arrivals, Midland Division, and Departures, Midland Division.

Table with columns for Arrivals, Ontario and Quebec Section, and Departures, Ontario and Quebec Section.

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