



The Connecticut Museum of Crime & Punishment

**At the Old County Jail
Haddam, CT**

*A proposal for an adaptive reuse of an historic building
July 2012*

The Connecticut Museum of Crime & Punishment

A proposal for an adaptive reuse of the Old County jail in Haddam, Connecticut.



*Prepared and proposed by Steven A. Rocco, Architect,
former member of the Haddam Jail Committee,
as a volunteer effort, intended to promote discussion and consideration
of one possible reuse of the historic complex.*

July 2012

revised periodically through 2017



The Old County Jail front façade as it would look after restoration.

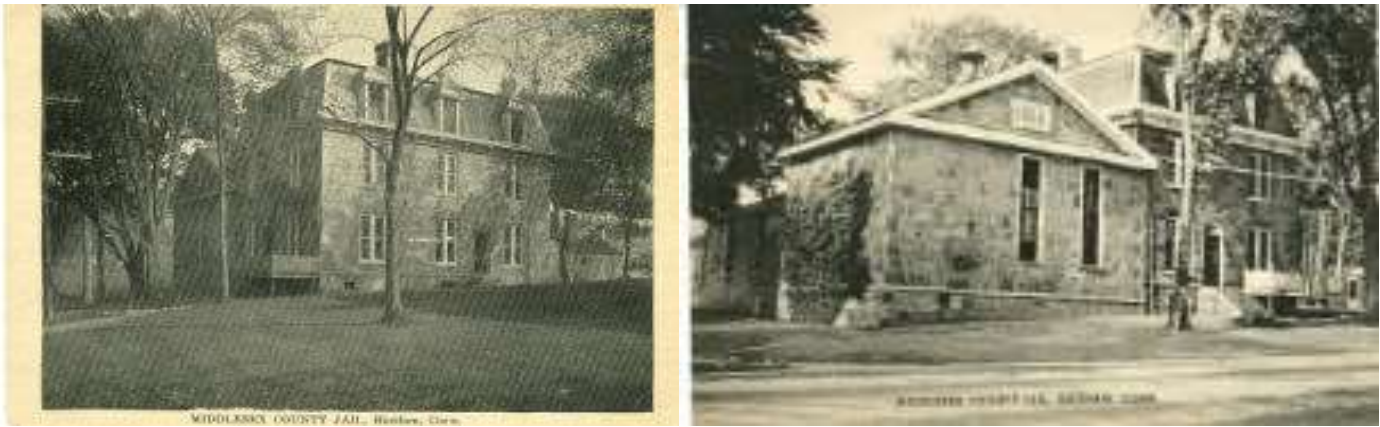
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The Connecticut Museum of Crime & Punishment

At the Old Middlesex County Jail
Saybrook Road, CT Route 154
Haddam, Connecticut

The incredible history of crime in Connecticut, the inevitably bad consequences for the criminals, and the surprisingly interesting history of the country's oldest county jail



The imposing but seemingly innocuous stone building in the center of Haddam at first appears to be a large, historic home in this town which boasts more colonial-era house than Williamsburg. But the sturdy structure, built of local “Haddam granite”, holds surprises inside, in both its history and its accommodations. The original portion of the complex, on the corner, was built in 1845 and reflects that era when Greek Revival style architecture was in fashion. The stone is of local Haddam Granite, quarried from the hilltop across the street. The vertical strip windows on the addition to the rear, however, are a clue that something unusual is happening inside. This building houses a seriously grim and foreboding cellblock!

This facility has its origins in 1786 when the original Middlesex County Jail was built here and it remained active as a jail until 1969. The Town of Haddam acquired the property in 2007 from the State, as has been exploring possible ideas for reutilization of the buildings and grounds. This proposal seeks to demonstrate that the Old County Jail can indeed become a museum, but one dedicated to more than just its own very interesting history



The strategy behind The Museum of Crime and Punishment is based on the following:

- a. People are fascinated with crime stories. We always have been, always will be.
- b. This building is a perfect backdrop for telling those stories. The rooms in the north wing, or the Jailer's Quarters, and the many cells in the jailhouse, lend themselves to a variety of exhibit possibilities.
- c. The stories will teach the school children who come to explore the museum that for the criminals, it always ends badly. Indeed, crime does not pay. Hopefully what they see and experience, including being locked in a cell, will become a deterrent for them in the future.
- d. Connecticut has a long and interesting history of crime and also punishment, sometimes not deserved. From the 11 alleged witches hanged in Connecticut before the Salem witch trials, to Haddam's own mass-murderer, Emil Schutte, to white collar criminals and corrupt politicians, there is an overabundance of material which can be displayed here. And new material is being created every day.
- e. One area of focus will be the role of law enforcement, the Connecticut State Police and local police forces, in bringing the criminals to justice. An overview of the departments, featured real-life stories, and profiles of heroic figures will bring a

better understanding of the importance of these men and women who put their lives on the line every day. An additional possibility is a memorial exhibit for those who lost their lives in the line of duty.

- f. Haddam is a beautiful, bucolic town, which benefits to a minor extent from nearby tourist attractions such as the Goodspeed Opera House, Gillette Castle, the Essex Steam Train, numerous state parks and of course, the Connecticut River. A well-designed, quality museum at this location could easily be a regular stop for visitors to the area, and can be included in all the tourism materials covering this area. Additionally, properly conceived and displayed, the museum could become a regular destination for busloads of school children from all over the state. Accordingly, the museum could be very successful in revenue-generating, and will also bring in a stream of customers for Haddam's existing businesses.
- g. Funding for this project could come from a wide variety of possible sources, including Federal and State Economic Development grants, Historic Preservation grants and tax credits, private foundation preservation grants, corporate sponsorship, gun manufacturers, and even the State Police and the State Department of Corrections. Besides the daily ticket sales, the Jail could be rented out for special events, parties, sleep-overs for the scouts, and whatever else might come up.
- h. An important part of the story of catching the criminals is the State Forensics Lab, headed for many years by the famous Dr. Henry Lee. This can be a springboard for many interesting state and even national stories.
- i. A natural companion piece to the Jail would be a restaurant open for lunches and dinners and open evenings with food, drink and live music, "**The Jailhouse Café**".

Ownership and management of the museum also holds a number of possibilities. After economic feasibility studies were done, the Town or the State could decide to run it, lease it to a non-profit or even a private for-profit party. The Connecticut State Historical Society is a possibility to run it or be a partner. They have a well-developed "Crime & Punishment" area of their website. Some examples are included here. The Jailhouse Café could prove to be very successful in its own right, and could expand into more of the floor space. Initially, offices on the upper levels could be rented to assist in providing revenue. One possibility is that **the Haddam Historical Society** could staff an office in the complex and manage the facility on a day-to-day basis.

The Town of Haddam has a historic building complex which needs to be repurposed, and we have a potential long term, revenue-generating concept which would be an asset to the Town and the entire Connecticut River Valley region. It certainly seems to merit further investigation in terms of economic feasibility, and see if support would be there from the people of the Town.

On the following pages is a sampling of some of the many possible exhibits, themes for exhibits, and links to related resources. Also included are some examples of source books and news articles, where many of these stories are already written.

Murder, Mayhem — We Can't Get Enough

Criminal Acts Terrify And Anger, But People Drawn To Stories For Reasons They Won't Admit

By NORMAN A. PATTIS

Murder and mayhem, it turns out, are as old as ... well, as old as *The Hartford Courant*, which this year celebrates its 250th anniversary. In fact, crime, a form of transgression, is as old as recorded history, reaching back into the stories we tell ourselves about human origins: What was Adam's eating of the apple but trespass; and Cain's slaying of Abel? — murder, plain and simple.

What puzzles me is the fascination we find in crime stories. Though criminal acts terrify and anger us, we can't seem to get enough of them. We read about them in newspapers and novels, and we watch movies and television series about crime. Crime pays it seems, at least to viewers reaping the psychic reward of watching.

Victims' rage and sorrow over their individual loss is easy to understand: Our losses define us, after all, and those of us marked by violence bear wounds that never really heal.

But why do the rest of us enjoy the public spectacle of a trial? We enjoy crime stories because tales of transgression are a secular form of worship, permitting us to pay obeisance to the silent imperatives of the group. Tales of transgression permit us

both to identify with the transgressor and to share in his punishment.

A primal vestigial code requiring social cooperation is rooted in our genes. Yes, we are individuals, but not one of us is self-sufficient. We drive on roads built by others, speak a language that took shape before we were born and in countless other ways depend upon the cooperation of strangers for our survival. Inchoate communism unites us.

Consider the behavior of large flocks of starlings in flight, known as a murmuration. Hundreds of thousands of individual starlings are capable of soaring seemingly in unison, instantaneously turning all at once, as if responding to a common cue. They do so without words and without obvious signals. (To see it here's a link: vimeo.com/31158841.) The birds are hardwired for coordinated group life. So, I suspect, are we.

Unlike birds, we appear to have a powerful drive for individual expression. Indeed, we've made individualism into an ideology in the United States, and some libertarians enjoy the fantasy of living independent of meaningful ties to others. But even egoists take a hybrid satisfaction

in the punishment of others.

On a conscious level, we justify the punishment of transgressors on grounds of deterrence, retribution and rehabilitation. The courts mete out criminal sentences as a rough measure of what some call "justice." Our interest in criminal justice, then, is in part a desire to see the convicted get their just deserts.

But the criminal justice system reflects a deeper and more sinister truth. I suspect that just beneath the surface — subconsciously, if you will — we identify with the transgressor. It is not that we wish we had done the crime, but we know we share the murderous impulse. We identify with the killer because

we know we are capable of the same act. We are drawn to the so-called high-profile cases out of a desire to flirt with the sin within. What would it be like to commit the forbidden act? We rage against the offender for having done what we would not permit ourselves to do.

Don't be too quick to reject this hypothesis.

Consider the trial of Casey Anthony in Florida. The young mother was accused of murdering her daughter, Caylee. The case attracted widespread attention:

On the surface, the reason was simple. We love children. But if we truly loved children we'd mourn the death of thousands of starving children daily in the third world, a fact we could address if we had the will to do so.

Just beneath the surface was ambivalence. Why if Casey could reject the requirements of motherhood to resume the carefree life of a party girl, what of our restraint? The law-abiding saw Casey and realized that they, too, could have their freedom back. But only by breaking a taboo. We loved to hate Casey as a consolation prize for honoring the taboo we know we could break.

So long as we have newspapers, we'll have high-profile reports of depraved acts. And we will flock to the reporting for reasons we are uncomfortable admitting. Crime stories serve as morality plays, at once reminding us that our forbidden desires bear with them the seeds of destruction.

We police those who fly outside the flock, seeking to destroy them, even as the wildness within us all secretly wished we could fly without restraint. We'll be doing it for the next 250 years, too, I suspect.

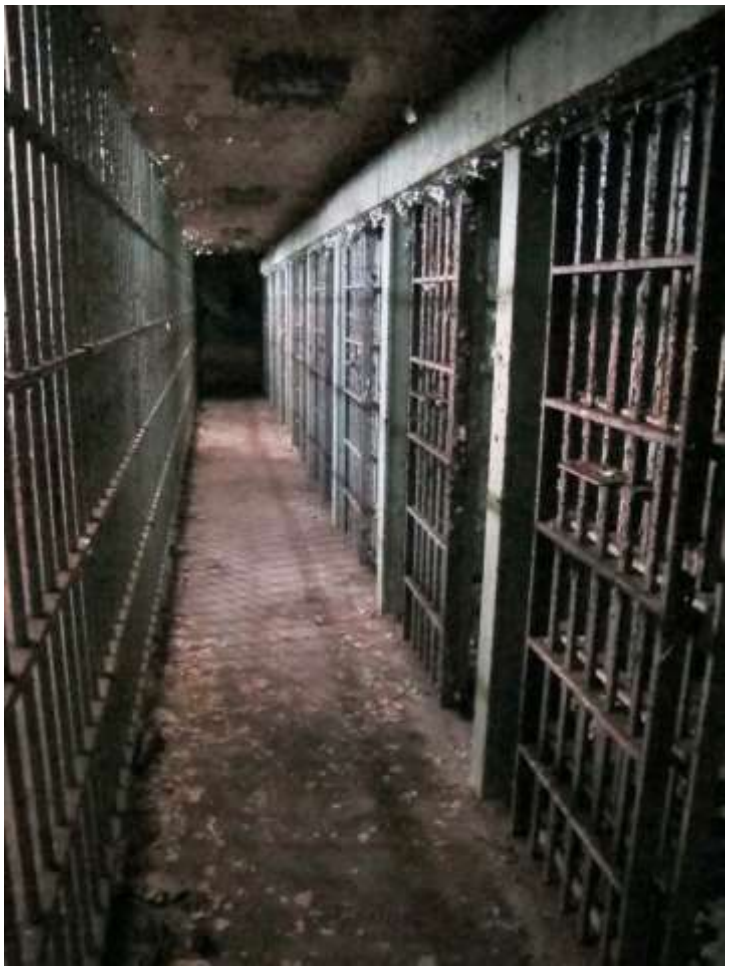
► Norman A. Pattis is a criminal defense and civil rights lawyer in Bethany.

250
YEARS
MOMENTS
IN HISTORY

Photos of the Jail Complex

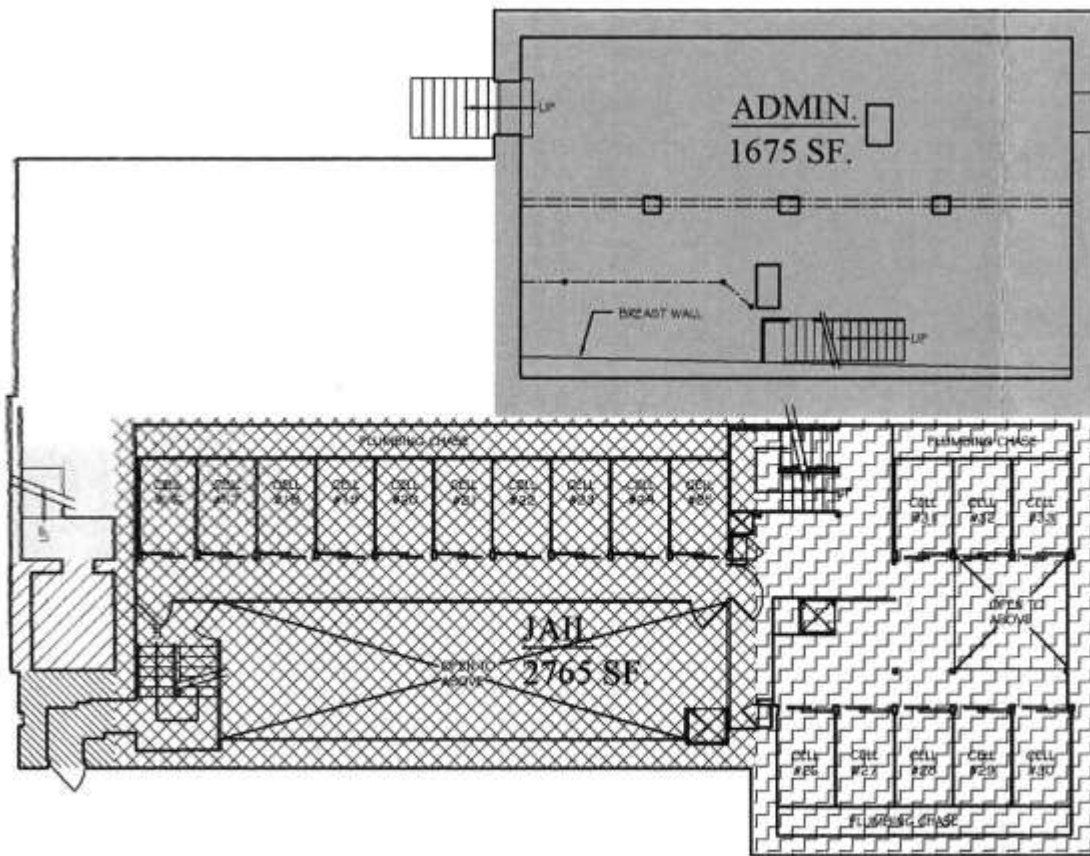








Floor Plans

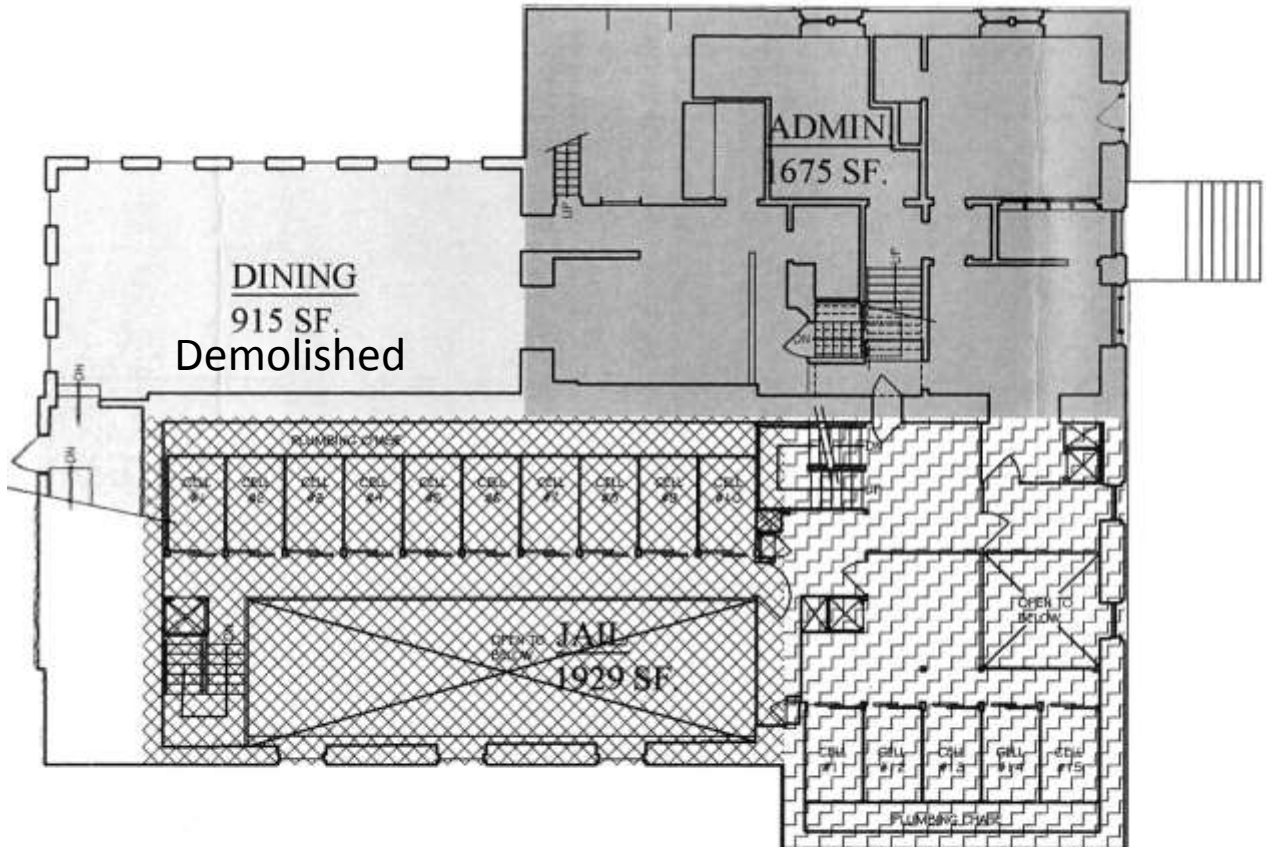


1

BASEMENT /LOWER TIER

SCALE = 1/16" = 1'-0"

NORTH

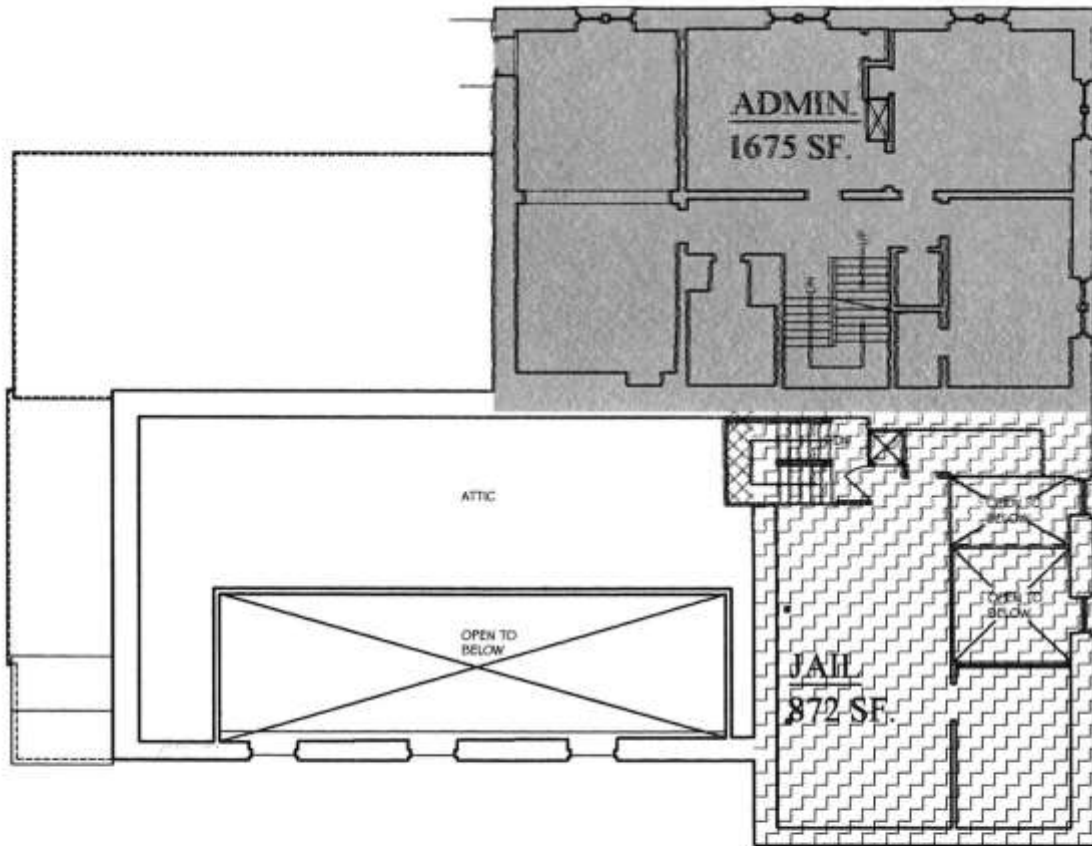


2

FIRST FLOOR/UPPER TIER

SCALE = 1/16" = 1'-0"

NORTH

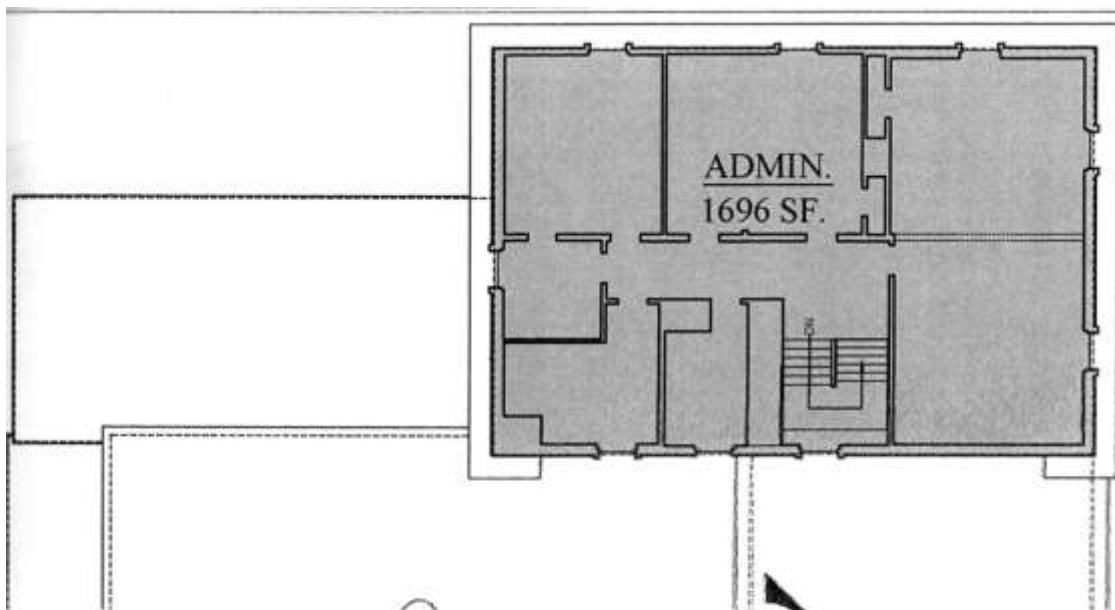


3

SECOND FLOOR/MEZZANINE

NORTH

SCALE = 1/16" = 1'-0"

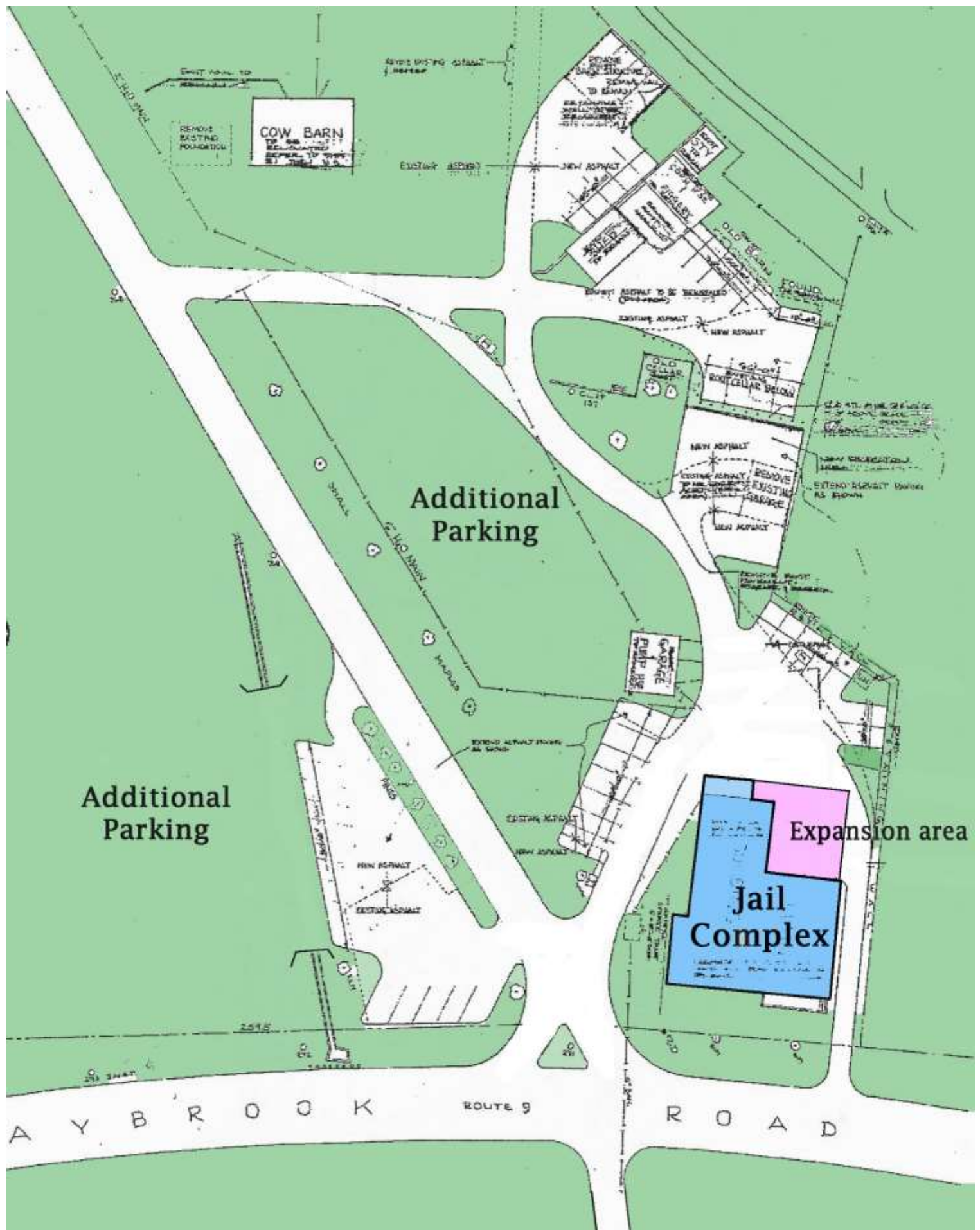


4

THIRD FLOOR

NORTH

SCALE = 1/16" = 1'-0"





Catherine Avalone | The Middletown Press

Tom Finnucan, employed by Connecticut Tank Removal in Bridgeport, uses an excavator to demolish a 20-by-40-foot addition at the rear of the historic Haddam Jail on Route 154 Wednesday morning.

Old Haddam Jail gets a facelift

By JIM SALEMI
Press Staff

@jimsalemi

HADDAM — The preservation effort of the old jailhouse on Saybrook Road is essentially complete,

A demolition crew Wednesday razed a mismatched wooden addition put on the rear of the granite block building.

"[The demolition] is a step along the way of securing the building," said Steve Rocco, an architect and a member of the Jail Advisory Committee and Haddam Historical Society. "It was a rear wing and one story with a flat roof that did not match the rest of the building, and it was leaking."

The building has been in

a "state of decay" over the years, but the main building is in good shape, he said. Prior to the razing of the rear wing, a new roof has been put on the main building and the windows rebuilt to preserve them.

Rocco said the sashes had been removed and double-pane glass was installed to preserve the historic windows, rather than installing modern ones. With the roof, windows and rear wing removed, the building is now watertight, Rocco said.

"We got to the point where it's no longer deteriorating," he said. "The building is historic and prominent and definitely worth saving."

Rocco said sheetrock will have to be removed from the main building because it had gotten wet over the

years.

The town acquired the building from the state in 2007. Prior to the town's ownership, the building was used by the state police as a training academy into the 1990s.

"The selectmen formed a jail restoration committee about three years ago and funded the restoration by appropriating money each year," Rocco said.

There are about a half-dozen active members on the committee, he said, and a use for the building has yet to be determined.

"There are lots of ideas. People have discussed using it as office space, a bed and breakfast, a museum, a meeting space for Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts," he said.

In the late 1700s, it is believed that Haddam and Middletown were designated "half-shire" towns to share the county seat because of their central location. Each town was required to erect a courthouse and jail/workhouse in order to carry out their responsibilities as a half-shire town, according to the Haddam Historical Society.

Middletown erected a series of jail buildings that served as temporary quarters for prisoners convicted of minor crimes, while Haddam was the county's principal jail, according to the historical society.

For a detailed history of the Haddam Jail, visit the Haddam Historical Society's website at www.haddam-history.org/Jail.htm.

CT Museum of Crime & Punishment

Conceptual outline for exhibits

THE CONNECTICUT MUSEUM OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

CMCP CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE FOR EXHIBITS

- **Middlesex County Jail**

Overall history: <http://www.haddamhistory.org/Jail.htm>

Why were people imprisoned here through the years? The crimes reflected the times.

What did the prisoners do here? Uniqueness as an agricultural prison farm, to rehabilitate.

Notable prisoners: Bobby Seale

9 held for murder in 1911

- **Famous crimes**

Arsenic and Old Lace

New haven Jai Alai –Roger Wheeler and Whitey Bulger

Hartford Distributors- Omar Thornton

(Eventually) the Cheshire murders

New Britain serial killer, bodies near Rt. 9: William Devin Howell

Isabella Gardiner Museum \$500 million art heist & R. Gentile

How to respectfully deal with Sandy Hook?

- **Famous prisoners**

Emil Schutte of Haddam, Cremation Hill, his execution

CT hangs 11 witches before Salem trials began

Mad Dog Joseph Taborsky

Serial Killer Michael Ross

Wood Chipper Killer- Richard Crafts

Kennedy cousin Michael Skakel

The Amistad: shipload of prisoners on trial in New Haven

- **Unsolved: cold cases**

There are dozens

Yale murder- Susan Jovin

wall of lost souls

<http://www.angelfire.com/ct3/unsolvedct>

<http://www.ctcoldcases.com/whoami.html>

<http://www.ctcoldcases.com/serialkillers.html>

- **Catching the Bad Guys**

Connecticut State Police and local police forces

Tracking down the criminals

CSI & Dr. Henry Lee

DNA testing changes everything

Penny's murderer caught 28 years later by new technology

- **White Collar Criminals**

Ivan Boesky

Martin Frankel

Wall Street wizards

- **Politicians**
Gov. John Rowland
Mayor Phillip Giordano
Mayor Joseph Ganim
- **Exoneration of the Innocent**
“The Innocence Project”
Successfully saved people- examples
- **Prisons**
Old Newgate, first state prison, in caves: <http://voices.yahoo.com/old-newgate-prison-connecticut-held-prisoners-underground-3697450.html>
<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/history/famous-cases/brinks-robbery>
Country Club prisons
High Security
Whiting Forensic Hospital
Niantic Women’s (movies of the 50s?)
- **Special exhibits**
crime scene (could be interactive)
organized crime: Mafia in CT- Jai-Lai execution,
Isabelle Gardiner Art Heist- (\$50 million!)) Who has replaced them?
gallows outdoors
gas chamber
electric chair
firing squad
visit the farm
- **Connecticut’s Most Wanted**
<http://www.criminalwatch.com/mostwanted/ct.asp>
<http://www.fbi.gov/wanted/topten>
- **Other museums**
<http://www.crimemuseum.org>
<http://www.travelchannel.com/interests/arts-and-culture/articles/crime-museums>
<http://www.jailmuseum.com/Home.70.0.html>
- **Interactive (!)**
spend the night in jail- scouts, class trips
party in the jail
CSI: <http://www.goldstar.com/events/washington-dc/csi-experience>
firing squad (DC has one!!!)
firearms training simulator (DC)
high speed chase simulator (DC)
pics behind bars
pics in manacles (outdoors)

History of the Jail and property

Courtesy of the Haddam Historical Society



The Haddam Historical Society

Preserving & promoting the history & heritage of Haddam

Haddam
Historical Society

Thankful
Arnold House

History
of Haddam

Historic Sites
in Haddam

"A Pretentious Stone Structure"

A Brief History of the Middlesex County Gaol at Haddam



MIDDLESEX COUNTY JAIL, Haddam, Conn.

Middlesex County was formed in 1785 from towns that had previously been part of Hartford and New London Counties including Middletown, Haddam, East Haddam, Killingworth, Saybrook, and Chatham (Durham joined in 1799). It is believed that Haddam and Middletown were designated 'half-shire' towns to share the county seat because of their central location. Each town was required to erect a courthouse and jail/workhouse in order to carry out their responsibilities as a half-shire town. Middletown erected a series of jail buildings which served as

temporary quarters for prisoners convicted of minor crimes, while Haddam was the county's principal jail.

With the arrival of the County Court House, Jail and the opening of the Middlesex Turnpike in 1802, the village of Haddam experienced unprecedented growth and became a regional commercial and institutional center. Merchants, craftsmen, innkeepers and professionals established themselves along the turnpike near the jail and courthouse and transformed the town from a "closed" tight knit community to a thriving "cosmopolitan" center.

Middlesex County Court System

Superior Court was to be held in Middletown on the last Tuesday of July and in Haddam the last Tuesday of January. The Court of Common Pleas would meet in Middletown on the second Tuesday of December and in Haddam on the fourth Tuesday in April. This arrangement continued until 1855 when the County Court was abolished and two additional terms of Superior Court were established.



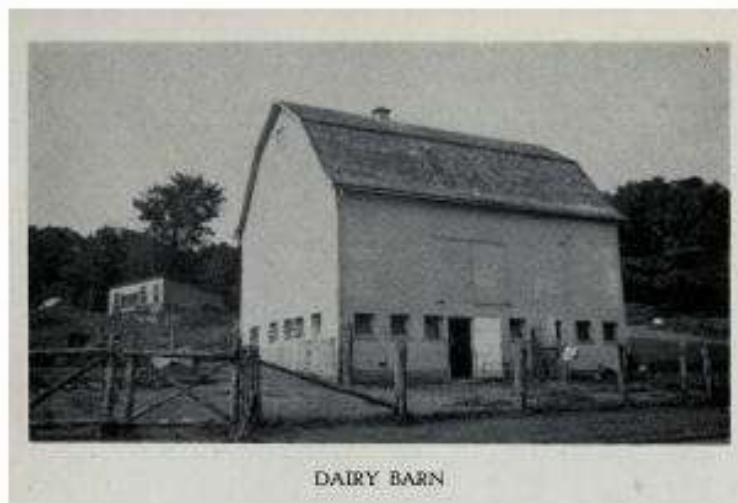
Haddam Jail

The judges of the county courts and the justices of the peace along with the county commissioners created the Civil Authority of the county and were empowered to levy taxes and to otherwise supervise the construction of the courthouses and jails. Maintenance of the buildings was supported by taxes and subscriptions county wide. In 1836 the county authorities decided not to levy a direct tax to support the county buildings but using tax lists apportioned the costs "among the towns of Middlesex County." This left it up to the town to raise the money and eliminated the county tax. This hidden tax was added to citizen's local tax bill.

For over a hundred years there were continuous campaigns and discussions about the necessity of have two jails and two courts in Middlesex County. Middletown authorities relentlessly tried to have the jail and court moved solely to their city and other Middlesex County towns such as Saybrook campaigned to have the court moved to their communities. There were a number of times when the County officials determined that only one courthouse and jail were needed but never acted on the conclusion. Somehow through political pull Haddam was able to hold on to the prestigious honor of having the courthouse and jail which brought economic benefits to town as well as the distinction of being the county seat.

The County Courthouse in Haddam tried cases that were county-wide and brought many people to town including judges, lawyers, witnesses, jurors, and other parties in the case. Most of the cases revolved around settling property conflicts, defaults on contracts, for damages or to recover bad debts. Occasionally there were more infamous trials like the murder. The Courthouse stood at the intersection of Walkley Hill Road and Saybrook Road and burned in 1929. The site is now known as "Courthouse Green".

Prisoners



Prisons were the chief places to house criminals. In the late 18th century and 19th century criminals in Middlesex County included not only those who were convicted of serious criminal acts such as murder, burglary, and malicious injury but those who were committed for adultery, keeping a house of ill-fame, trespassing on railroad property and neglect of family. Records show that most prisoners held at Haddam were imprisoned for breach of peace, drunkenness, vagrancy, and larceny. The State of Connecticut had a State Prison for criminals sentenced to hard labor and for very serious crimes. The first was New

Gate Prison in Granby which operated from 1773 to 1827 when it was replaced by the Wethersfield State Prison. Wethersfield operated until 1963 when all inmates were transferred to the new prison in Somers. The County Jail was primarily used to house criminals convicted of lesser crimes or those awaiting trial.

In 1837 the state of CT passed an act which permitted counties to require prisoners after conviction to be put to work, according to their strength and ability. The sheriff of the county was designated the keeper of the jail. A deputy jailer was to be in charge of the labor and would provide prisoners with food, clothing, tools, materials and health care when sick. The deputy jailer was also acting as purchasing agent and sales agent for the jail. This allowed prisoners being held for fine and costs only to pay off their debt by labor. In 1845 the State of CT gave the county commissioners the right to hire a chaplain or religious instructor to be paid out of the net profit.



Early prisoners housed in the Haddam Jail worked various jobs including helping out on local farms and industry. It is recorded prisoners were responsible for erecting the additions to the jail itself saving the town a considerable amount of money. By the early 20th century the Haddam Jail had established its own dairy and farm which provided prisoners with full time employment. The farm and dairy provided food for the prison, local Temporary Children's Home and to sell. The institution was said to be self-sufficient and grew vegetables and raised

pigs, cows and chickens. The jail actively farmed until 1964-65. In 1914 feldspar was discovered on the Jail property and prisoners were employed to quarry the stone which was sold to out of state firms.

The jail grounds were never enclosed and there were many successful escapes because of the lack of security and small staff. Prisoners frequently just walked away and would jump a train or hitch a ride out of town. Some long time residents recall the Haddam Jail as being called a country club and prisoners described as "guests." Many criminals were "vagabonds" who needed a warm place to stay during the winter and would find a way to get themselves arrested so they would have a shelter and hot food. Prisoners would play baseball on the grounds, take picnics to the Connecticut River and even visit local restaurants and inmates could bring there own bedding and food was allowed to be delivered from home.



Most of the prisoners held at the Haddam Gaol were incarcerated for lesser crimes such as being drunk and disorderly, petty theft and brawling. There were also men and women held for

committing murder including the infamous Emil Schutte of the Cremation Hill fame. In 1911 alone there were nine people at Haddam awaiting trial for murder including four men accused of causing a train wreck in which one person died. There were marriages and births at the jail as well as stories of corruption.

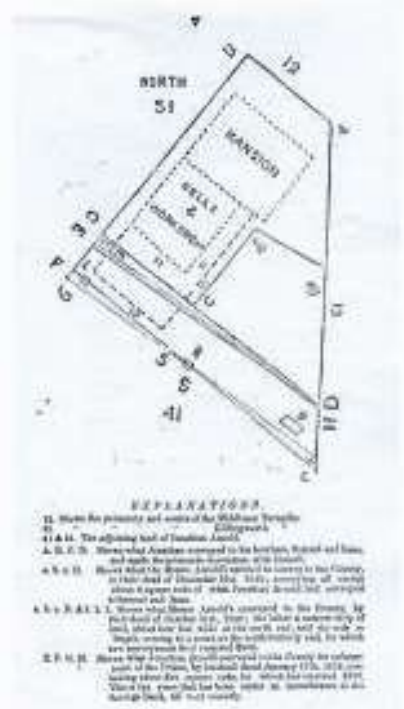
Jail in Haddam

The first Gaol in Haddam was built of wood and was located on a lot on the south of intersection of "the road to the woods" (currently known as Jail Hill Road), and Middlesex Turnpike (now Saybrook Road.) Within a year the Civil Authority was calling for an addition to the jail and noted for the first of many times that maybe only one jail was necessary for the county. Not much is known about the early jail building.

In 1812, the first jail building was condemned and a replacement was constructed on the same site. Written histories indicate that the second jail was one story wooden building measuring 24' x 30'. It featured small window openings with iron bars. After it was no longer used as a jail it served as a storehouse of crops grown by the prisoners including cabbages, turnips.

By 1843 it was determined by county authorities that the Gaols and Workhouses in both towns needed to be replaced. After considerable debate a tax was finally passed to build a new jail in Haddam, much to the dismay of Middletown residents.

In 1845, a stone cellblock was created on the north side of the intersection to house criminals, the insane and debtors, and the sheriff's family. Samuel, Isaac and Jonathan Arnold were hired as general contractors for the building. All three were active in civic affairs, operating a shipping company, a quarry and lumber business as well as serving as selectmen, constables, justices of the peace and legislators. The Arnolds provided all the raw material for the jail including stone from their quarry. It is said that labor was done in part by the prisoners.



The Specifications of the Middlesex County Prison, Haddam, Ct., delineate the materials to be used to construct the jail and workhouse, and the "mansion" built to house the sheriff, his family, and women prisoners. The keepers mansion measured 37 x 28 feet and was believed to be larger than any other private home in Haddam. The second floor was to be used to house debtors and the female prisoners. The specifications outline requirements for the Keepers dwelling, plastering, glazing, doors, papering, stair

...raining, and prison. The prison design called for stone laid in strong mortar with 2 feet thick along the cells and 15 inches thick against the hall. The front of the cells was to be 12 inches thick of stone or strong brick laid solid with strong mortar. The specifications even detail the "orifice for food". The roof was to be covered with first quality tin, laid with a so termed standing edge and covered with three good coats of Venetian red oil paint. The "Statement of Expenses of Building the Goal and Workhouse at Haddam" totaled \$9, 145.83. A wooden workhouse and a barn were built by the Arnold brothers in 1855.

In 1878 a Second Empire style granite addition was added as housing for the women prisoners and the jailer's family, as well as expanded spaces for his administrative duties. With managerial facilities moved to the new section, more jail cells were added within the older building. Unfortunately, the location of specifications for the mansard roofed addition is not known.

Newspaper articles written between the years 1899 and 1939 attest to the ongoing maintenance of the building. In 1899 bathtubs, plumbing and "a heating apparatus" were scheduled to be installed. Night buckets were still used in the women's cells in the early 20 th century. The plumbing in the rest of the building was described as "good." The use of kerosene lamps was a cause of concern, as was overall ventilation.

In 1939 there were three toilets, one urinal and one shower in the men's section. Benches were provided for men who ate in the cell block. The floor was described as loose and unsafe. The four women's cells were on the second floor behind the sheriffs quarters. The area was described as "poorly ventilated. The windows at the left end of the corridor being small and the door leading to the back being set in such a way that no air can circulate." The report concludes that the sheriff does not have the staff or money to upgrade facility.



Conditions

A comparison of the costs of the Haddam jail in 1932 compared to the Tolland and Litchfield prisons, which had similar numbers of internees shows that the Haddam sheriff was paid less. The Haddam jail had, in addition to the sheriff, a matron, and a deputy jailer who was also the farm superintendent. The Litchfield sheriff had, in addition, a clerk, four guards and a chaplain. Haddam's Sheriff Thompson complained that the county could spend thousands of dollars on sheets alone because the prisoners "take no care of them, but rip them to shreds, either in anger or because they want a section for a bandage and don't want to call the doctor available to them. Living conditions at the jail were criticized by a few prisoners who were regularly sentenced there for drunkenness. In a newspaper interview, the jailer stated, "a talk with prisoners who have seen the insides of jails in other sections of the country brings out the fact that the county lockup is a paradise compared to most."



In the 1890, Haddam lost its position as county seat, and the court moved permanently to Middletown, however prisoners were still housed in Haddam. By this time the only prisoners held here were those awaiting trial or serving sentences less than one year. Reports state that a major remodeling was done in 1955 for a cost of \$250,000. This included new cell blocks, visiting room, guard's office and kitchen. In 1960 when the county government was abolished the ownership of the property went to the state. In 1964 another smaller remodeling job was completed and consisted of a new dining area to accommodate 64 prisoners. Prior to the

expansion prisoners ate in their cells or cell block.

The jail remained active until 1969 when inmates from all the county jails were moved to the state prison. When the building closed one editorial stated "there was a certain humanity about the Haddam Jail...it may not have been a wholly pleasant for the involuntary inhabitants...there were fringe benefits including working in the dairy barn, the fields or in the gardens. It became known as the "the Country Club."

The following year the building became the Correctional Academy, and was later renamed the Connecticut Justice Academy. It was used in the 1970's and 80's as a simulated lockup for prison guards who were treated like criminals. They were strip searched, fingerprinted and put in prison clothes before being incarcerated for a weekend. For the following three weeks they lived in the cellblock which became their dormitory. The rooms which had been used by the jailer for his office and his family's living space became a lounge, classrooms and a library. The barn was transformed into additional classrooms.

In 2007 the Town of Haddam acquired the building and surrounding 51 acres from the State of Connecticut. A jail advisory committee has been set up to work on the stabilization, restoration and adaptive re-use of the property.



PRISONER'S DINING HALL

Matron of the Haddam Jail (1904-1911): May (Clement) (Atkins) Dickinson – Part One



May Clement. Photo by Kathleen Ely

By Kathleen Ely

May E. Clement was born Sept. 10, 1863 in Lockport, Niagara County, New York. She was the third child of Thomas, a blacksmith, and Catherine (West) Clement.

On June 22, 1882, May and Charles Sumner Atkins, a traveling salesman from Middletown, CT, were married in Lockport, NY. Together they had two children. Their daughter Helen was born April 2, 1883 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, followed by a son, Horace, born March 15, 1890 in Auburn, NY. According to the 1892 New York State Census, the family of four was living in Lockport, NY. Charles's occupation was listed as Salesman.

On April 7, 1905, through Middletown Superior Court, May filed for divorce from Charles, claiming desertion on Oct. 25, 1898, and intolerable cruelty. She stated that she had lived in Connecticut for three years prior and was employed as the Assistant Matron at the Haddam Jail. The divorce was granted on Oct. 27, 1905. She received custody of Horace who at age 15 was a minor, while Helen, 22, was of age and married. As evidenced by May's diaries of 1911, 1914 and 1923, after the divorce May, Helen and Horace maintained a close relationship with her former husband's family in Middletown, the Atkins and Coles.

I have not yet determined how May obtained the job of matron at the jail. It possibly came about through a family connection. May's first husband, Charles Sumner Atkins, was a first cousin of Annie Talmadge (Atkins) Davis who was the wife of Richard Davis, the County Sheriff and May's boss. The Assistant Matron, Alice (Davis) Harris, was the Sheriff's daughter. On the first page of the 1911 diary May wrote: "May E. Atkins, Haddam, Dec. 25th '10. From Cousin Alice," implying the relationship. When Helen visited this area, she stayed with her father's

sister, her aunt Mary Atkins, on College Street, Middletown.

Around the time May filed for divorce, in late 1904 or early 1905, he was hired as either the Assistant Matron, or Matron, of the Haddam Jail. A benefit of this position was housing and therefore she was able to live in the "mansion" quarters. One of her duties as Matron was to update the jail record log books, entering admission and discharge notes when the prisoners came and went. Her distinct handwriting is obvious in the log books beginning with her first admission entry on May 26, 1905, though she surely recorded discharges from earlier inmates.

The jail log entries amount to filling in the blanks regarding an inmate's name, alias, age, height, male, female, color, complexion, hair, nose, married, read and write, temperate, moderate drinker, habitually intemperate, in prison before, where born, where tried, crime, how held (number of days and fines and costs), occupation, what court, officer making arrest, complainant, the dates of arrest and discharge and finally a section for remarks. The older log books included a photograph of the prisoner; however the books of this period do not. Most of the prisoners had been arrested because of intoxication, vagrancy, theft, obscene language, and breach of peace, although there was an occasional murderer. Since most of the inmates were non-violent, they were enlisted to help around the jail house.

To be continued...stay tuned for Part Two.

Editors Note: Sources for this series include The Middlesex County Historical Society, The Haddam Historical Society, The Russell Library, The Brainerd Library, Haddam Town Hall, The Penny Press, The Hartford Courant, Middletown City Directories, The Connecticut Register & Manual, and author's personal collection.

Stories of Crime & Punishment in Connecticut

Courtesy of the Hartford Courant, Haddam Bulletin, and other sources

CONNECTICUT Witch Trials

THE FIRST PANIC IN THE NEW WORLD

CYNTHIA WOLFE BOYNTON



Any man or woman to be a Witch,
that is, hath or consulteth with a familiar spirit,
they shall be put to death

CONNECTICUT COLONY LAWMAKERS, 1642



Connecticut's witch hunt was the first and most ferocious in New England, occurring almost fifty years before the infamous Salem witch trials. Between 1647 and 1697, at least thirty-four men and women from across the state were formally charged with witchcraft. Eleven were hanged. In New Haven, William Mecker was accused of cutting off and burning his pig's ears and tail as he cast a bewitching spell. After the hanging of Fairfield's Goody Knapp, magistrates cut down and searched her body for the marks of the devil. Through newspaper clippings, court records, letters and diaries, author Cynthia Wolfe Boynton uncovers the dark history of the Connecticut witch trials.

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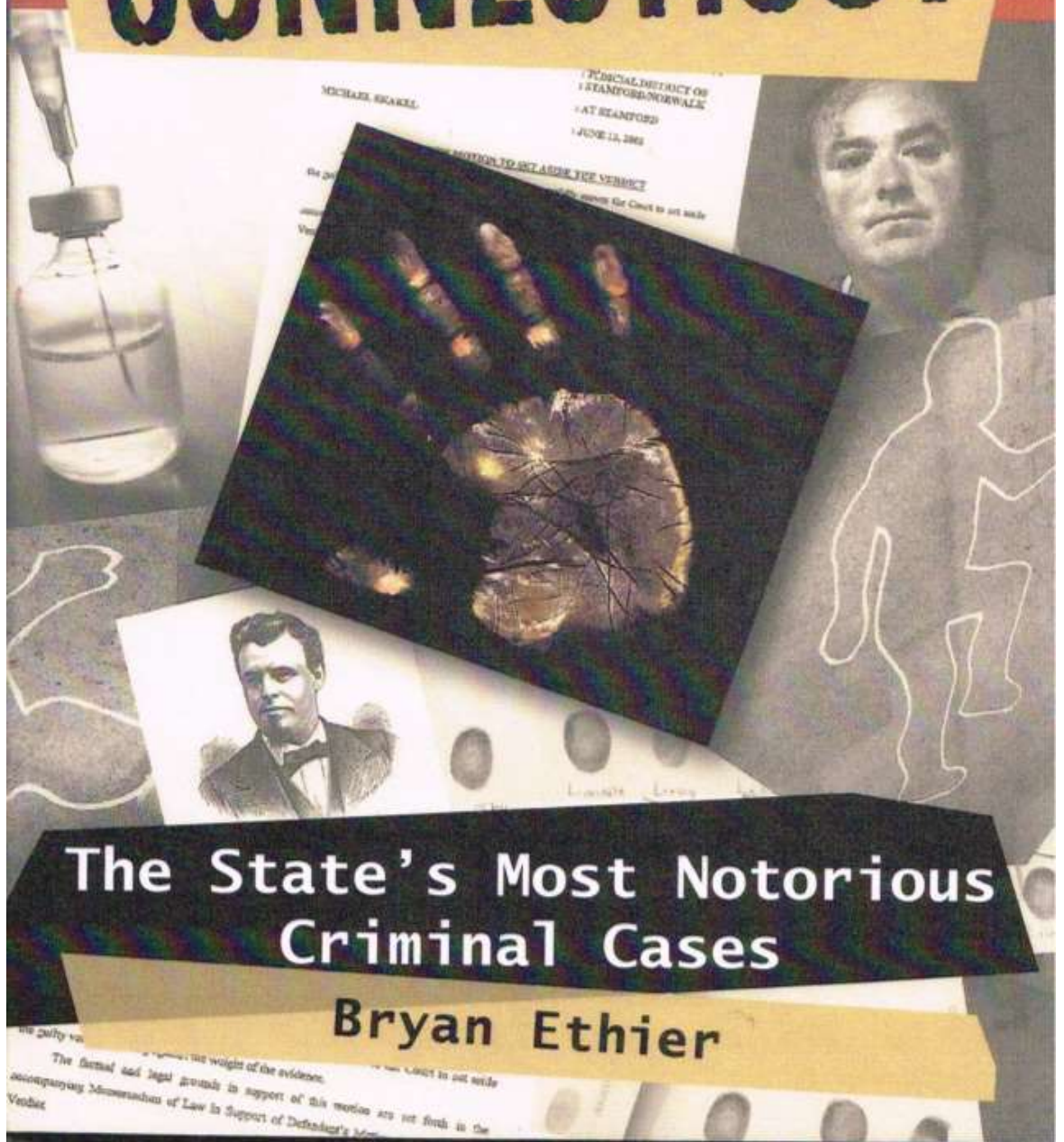
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AT STAMFORD

Mention of the name Connecticut summons charming images of seaports and peaceful rural areas, but this densely populated state has its share of landmark crimes.

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Bryan Ethier is a freelance history writer who lives in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. He is the author of Fly Me to the Moon: Lost in Space with the Mercury Generation.

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Stories of Local Interest

BURGLARS ROB A POST OFFICE.

HIGGANUM, Conn., Nov. 1.—The Savings Bank and Post Office Building here was entered by burglars on Wednesday night. They drilled a hole in the top of the safe, and by some explosive material blew the safe doors open and secured \$150 in bills, but neglected to take about \$200 in postage stamps. The thieves also left a little silver change. They entered R. D. Spencer's store and took a few articles. The explosion alarmed the watchman at the Higganum Manufacturing Company's works, who went over near the Post Office. The burglars fired on the watchman and he retreated and gave the alarm through the village. Before the citizens could reach the Post Office the burglars had secured their booty and fled. The thieves failed to get into the inner box in the safe. The bank will not lose anything in the way of money. This is the sixth time the Post Office has been entered within a few years. There is no clue to the thieves.

THE STORY OF EMIL SCHUTTE

HADDAM'S OWN MASS-MURDERER

By Liz Warner

While doing research for the book on the history of Haddam (*Portrait of a River Town*, Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, 1984), I spent every day in Haddam for three years. I got to know the history of the town well and talked with many local residents. I thought of the place as home.

I picked up pieces of the story of Cremation Hill here and there... Schutte, murder, burning... However, the story from one person to another was never the same. Therefore, I devoted about a year researching what really happened! The funny thing is, the reality was so much more interesting than the myths.

The trial and subsequent hanging of Haddam's own Emil Schutte for the murders of the Ball family of Haddam caused a sensation in Connecticut during the 1920s.

Born on December 4, 1867, Emil Schutte was 20 years old when he arrived in New York from Germany, possibly the Saxony region, on October 1, 1887. Seven years after he arrived, Marie J. (maiden name unknown) emigrated from Germany, and they were probably married soon afterward. Marie Schutte was 10 years younger than Emil, only 17 years old when she came from Germany to New York. One account described her as kind looking woman, with dark hair and eyes, and slender.

Emil and Marie Schutte had seven sons. Their eldest, Walter, was born in New York in 1898. The other six boys were all born in Connecticut: Julius in 1899, William in 1902, Rudolph in 1904, Emil R. in 1906, Gustav in 1908, Herbert in 1912, and Wilson in 1915. By 1908 the Schutte family was living on the Middlesex Turnpike, in the Shailerville section of Haddam just north of the Baptist Church, and Emil was the owner of his own farm. By 1918, Emil also operated a grocery store on the property. By 1920, a gasoline pump in front of the house provided the increasing automobile traffic on the turnpike with a place to fill up. A small shed adjacent to the house advertised that Schutte also sold grain, hay, and feed supplies.

Schutte did well, financially. He had some powerful friends in Middletown. However, he was not well liked. It may have been his German heritage at a time when America was at war in Europe, but most likely, it was his shady dealings. He'd had at least two lawsuits that he lost related to selling land that either he didn't own or that he misrepresented. He threatened those who filed against him.

I had the great fortune in 1990 to interview an elderly Haddam resident who remembered the Schutte family. William Meyers was born in 1903 and grew up on Walkley Hill Road in Haddam center. His father was

a butcher and did odd jobs for a wealthy neighbor. Meyer attended the small school across from the Brainerd Library with William and Rudolph Schutte. Meyer recalls that Emil Schutte was a scary man, with only a faint German accent.

Meyers saw Mrs. Schutte as a “little old lady,” although Marie was not yet forty years old.

It was clear, Meyers said, that Marie Schutte was terrified of her husband and worked like a slave in the store and on the farm. He referred to the Schutte children as “different.”

Meyer remembered clearly one visit to the Schutte store in about 1915. His father had gone to the Dickenson place on Plains Road to butcher a pig. After killing the animal, cleaning and hanging it to drain, they headed to Schutte’s to pick up some supplies. While his father was in the store, William wandered out back and saw Gustav Schutte, who was known as Gussie. With William as his audience, Gussie grabbed a live chicken, ripped off its head and began to eat the struggling fowl.

It was Julius, however, who seemed to suffer the most from his father’s temper. Even Meyer knew that Julius was beaten more often than any of the Schutte children. Julius Schutte told authorities that when he left for the Navy in 1916, his father’s parting words were, “Go, and may the first bullet that comes along strike you dead.”

Emil Schutte’s life began to unravel on Wednesday, May 18, 1921. On the evening of that day, Marie and Emil argued about some land that Emil had put in Marie’s name. Evidently, some years earlier, most of Emil Schutte’s land holdings had been transferred to his wife to protect them from any lawsuit that might risk his investments. On the advice of her sons, Marie Schutte resisted signing over the property to Emil on that Wednesday, and he threatened her with a revolver. When she ran to her son Walter’s house nearby, Walter came to her defense and fired a shotgun over his father’s head. The family, in support of their mother and in fear of their lives, had Schutte arrested. With their father in custody, the sons finally blurted out the past sins of their father.

Within three days of Schutte’s arrest for threatening his wife, he was a suspect in four murders, and authorities were looking for links between Schutte and several local disappearances and arson fires. Police investigations, however, concentrated on the disappearance of Dennis LeDuc in April of 1921, and the deaths of Joseph Ball, his wife, and their son in 1915.

For the next two or three months, the state police, the Middlesex County sheriff's office, led by Sheriff Burt Thompson, and the state's attorneys office worked to piece together a case against Emil Schutte. Schutte's own sons provided most of the incriminating information.

When I left you on Wednesday, Emil Schutte of Haddam had been arrested on May 18, 1921, for threatening his wife Marie with a shotgun. Once he was locked up, his sons went to the police to tell them what they knew about their father's activities over the years.

Two days after Schutte's arrest, on a tip from Schutte's sons, the authorities picked charred bones, buttons and buckles from a brush pile on property belonging to Emil Schutte atop Cremation Hill. Authorities claimed the remains belonged to Dennis LeDuc, an older French-Canadian man who had been working for Schutte as a farm hand. Evidence suggested the fire had been set with kerosene.

During a pre-trial hearing to determine if there was sufficient evidence to try him for LeDuc's murder, three Schutte boys testified that their father and LeDuc had argued loudly on the evening of April 21, 1921. Rudolph Schutte, aged 17, claimed that he had seen a wounded Dennis LeDuc the next morning "with a hole in his head through which the brains seemed to beat." When Rudolph asked him about it, he said he'd never been so drunk in his life and had no idea what had happened to him. Mrs. Schutte dressed his wounds.

William Schutte, then 20 years old, testified he saw LeDuc dead on his cot in the barn the following day. Several people recalled a large brush fire was reported later that day atop Cremation Hill, and LeDuc was subsequently noticed missing. The state claimed the motive for the killing was money; Schutte owed LeDuc \$100 for a season's work.

In early July, the court determined the state had enough evidence to try him on the murder of Dennis LeDuc. The Haddam court was overturned and charges were dropped against Schutte in regards to LeDuc's death.

The state turned its efforts to the deaths of the Balls. In 1915 a tragic fire had claimed the lives of three members of the Joseph Ball family and their deaths had been attributed to asphyxiation. With information from the Schutte boys, the bodies of the Ball family were exhumed from the Haddam cemetery and within the caskets examiners found several spent shells, verifying that they had been shot. In September Schutte was bound over for trial, scheduled to begin on October 4, 1921, at the Middlesex County Superior court in Middletown.

As the state built its case against Schutte, a horrified public followed every detail released in the press and gossiped about the brutal man living amongst them. Meanwhile, Schutte sat in the Haddam jail awaiting trial. The Haddam jail, located on the Middlesex Turnpike (Route 154) at the intersection of Jail Hill Road, was built in 1845 at a time when Haddam and Middletown shared the county seat. By 1920, Haddam no longer had half-shire status, but its jail continued to serve the lower part of Middlesex County until the 1980s.

When the trial started, the state's star witness was Julius Schutte, aged 22. Julius testified that in the wee hours of the morning of December 10, 1915, he and his father had sneaked up to the Ball's shack in the north end of the Tylerville section of Haddam, less than a mile from Schutte's house. Julius carried a 38-caliber rifle and oilcan, while his father brought along a shotgun, a bag of kindling, and two bags of shavings.

While on their way to the Ball property, Emil soaked the shavings in the oil. Julius stated that his father ordered him to put the bags of shavings next to a rear entrance to the Ball house and light them with matches. After the fire began near the back of the house, screams could be heard within. Emil opened fire on the Balls as they fled out the front door. First Mrs. Ball was shot and tumbled down an embankment in front of the house.

Jacob Ball, eighteen years old, came out with a revolver in his hand and was shot. The elder Joseph Ball was shot as he ran around the house looking for the source of the fire. Only the boy seemed to remain alive. Julius fired two shots at the boy, but both missed. Emil Schutte walked up to Jacob Ball, put his foot on his shoulder, and fired point blank into the back of his neck. Together, Julius and Emil dragged the bodies back into the burning house. As they left the scene, Emil turned back to watch the house now engulfed in flames and commented to his son, "The fire is burning fine. It looks pretty."

What was the root of this venomous hatred Schutte felt? A feud had been brewing between the Balls and the Schuttes for several years. Both were immigrant families who had arrived in America about the same time, but their experiences could not have been more different. The Balls were Bohemians, from the western province of modern-day Czechoslovakia, near eastern Germany.

The Balls resided in the Moodus section of East Haddam for several years where they became wards of the town. In about 1909, the town of East Haddam bought them a house in Tylerville, on an unused road that ran from the turnpike to the Camp Bethel grounds (off present-day Ferry Road) to give them a fresh start and remove them as a burden on their community. Their one-room house, barely more than a hut, provided them with merely a roof over their heads.

The Balls were considered undesirables and their neighbors greeted their arrival with disdain. Probably none more than neighbor, Emil Schutte. Joseph Ball's house stood adjacent to a small building he used to house woodchoppers in his employ, including Dennis LeDuc. Schutte wanted to sell this piece of property south of the Ball place, but was ordered off the land by a shotgun-toting Joseph Ball. Schutte commented several times that he felt he would never be able to sell the land as long as the Balls lived next door.

There is no doubt that life had been hard for the Ball family. Numerous accounts refer to them as an elderly couple. However, Joseph and his wife were barely 50 years old when they moved to Haddam. Just prior to leaving East Haddam, the local probate court judge committed their two sons, Michael, just nine, and 12-year-old Jacob, to the county orphanage in Haddam because the parents were unable to properly care for their children. For almost two years, the boys lived in the county home, less than two miles from the Ball house in Tylerville.

The Ball children were allowed to attend the Haddam center school, at least for a time. William Meyer, who I interviewed in 1990 about his early life in Haddam, was asked by his teacher to tutor Michael Ball, in about 1910. It seems the teacher felt Michael's New York accent was unacceptable and William was charged with tutoring him in a Haddam dialect of the English language.

It surprised Emil Schutte more than anyone that he was found guilty of murder.

As the two previous articles explained, Schutte, a Haddam grocer and, for a short time, a town constable, was accused by his sons in May 1921 of murdering the Ball family and an itinerant worker. Schutte covered up both murders by burning the remains of his victims.

Schutte went to trial in the summer of 1921 for the 1915 Ball murders, and his sons, Julius and Walter, were the prosecution's main witnesses. Julius, 22, testified that he and his father set a fire at the rear of the Ball house in Haddam, and then shot Mrs. and Mrs. Joseph Ball and their son Jacob as they escaped the burning building. Together the two Schuttes tossed the victims back inside. The house and the bodies went up in flames.

Initially, the deaths of the Balls were ruled an accident. After Julius went to the police and told them the tale of the events, their bodies were exhumed and bullets were found in the casket near the decomposed bodies.

Emil Schutte, meanwhile was locked up in the Haddam County jail. He presented an arrogant and combative public image. And everything he said and did was reported in the Middletown papers.

When a representative from the Salvation Army came to minister to the souls in the Haddam jail, Schutte expressed disinterest, refusing the gifts of a Bible and salvation. The public was shocked when Schutte fired his attorney Gustav B. Carlson in early August because he was unwilling to pay the lawyer fees. For a few days, Schutte insisted he did not need a lawyer, then sought out the services of a high-powered Hartford attorney to replace Carlson. It made news when Schutte shaved his mustache in mid-August.

On October 21, 1921, the jury returned a verdict of guilty on three counts of murder in the first degree. The local paper noted that Schutte, “who has maintained himself throughout the trial with a stoicism typical of his race,” remained calm when the verdict was pronounced.

On the evening before sentencing, Schutte tried to kill himself by slitting his wrists, and the sheriff sent him to the State prison where he could be better monitored. The sentence was for Schutte to hang at the State prison in Wethersfield in April of 1922, six months hence. During those intervening months, the reality clearly set in for Schutte. Schutte appeared desperate as his appeal wound through the courts. He wrote letters to old friends to help him. In return, most of friends turned the letters over to reporters who published them as news. In a letter to Yale Gordon of Middletown, a business acquaintance, Schutte’s reminded him about how fair he’d been to him in business and requested that he come to court and put in a good word for him.

His hanging eventually took place on October 22, 1922, one year after he was convicted. He was buried in an unmarked grave in Pine Grove Cemetery in Middletown. Marie Schutte remarried and moved to New Canaan with the youngest of her children. The older Schutte boys, particularly Julius, continued to run afoul of the law here and there, and then eventually left the area.

The former Tylerville home of the Schutte family, located on the east side of Middlesex Turnpike, was put on the market in September of 1922, and subsequently purchased by Alton Bolster, a retired New York policeman. He set about to improve the old place with new paint and modern improvements.

On a cool October night, after they had gone to sleep, the Bolsters were awakened by a neighbor pounding on their door at about 10:45 p.m. Flames were spreading from under the front veranda and threatening to engulf the entire house. Within an hour there were several hundred people at the scene who helped the Bolsters save furniture and other important belongings.

Fighting the fire was hampered by the fact that no well was available on the property and Haddam did not have a full-time fire department. The house was a total loss. Arson was suspected. Now all vestiges of the Schutte family were erased in Haddam, up in flames.

EMIL SCHUTTE EXECUTED AT STATE'S PRISON FOR MURDER OF BALL FAMILY HIS ONLY WORDS ARE "WELL, GOOD-BYE"

OF MURDER
OUT PARALLEL
TE HISTORY

of Schutte's Crime
About by Assault
His Wife.

EXPIATES CRIME ON GALLOWES.



VISIBLY AS
HE KEEPS
PASSING

Fails to Make
to Spiritual
Way of

1922: Emil Schutte

October 24th, 2011 | Headsman

ROSES TO GALLOWES

WEATHERSFORD, Conn., Oct. 24. — Grasping in his hand two pink roses which had been brought to his cell, and well nigh speechless with terror, Emil Schutte, triple slayer, former storekeeper and constable of Haddam, was hanged today at the State prison. His only utterance was, "Well, goodbye," as the death cap was drawn over his head.

—Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Oct. 24, 1922

Our rose-clutching former storekeeper was a German immigrant with a famous temper who did well for himself in Middlesex and tyrannized his wife and his brood of seven sons.

The weakness of the "despotic patriarch" gambit lies in its tendency to incite the clan to vengeance.

And in this case, the clan had the goods on Emil Schutte.

In 1921, after Schutte threatened his wife with a gun, his sons protected the mother and shopped Schutte for four different shooting-arson murders; that of Dennis LeDuc, a former Schutte farmhand found burned to death on the property; and, that of the three-member Ball family, who were Schutte's feuding family rivals.



Though evidence in the LeDuc case was too weak to try, the Ball case was more than worth its clutch of roses.

Emil's son Julius Schutte testified that as a teenager, he had helped his father set fire to the Ball house early one morning in 1915. Emil Schutte shot them dead as the fire flushed them out of the house.

The deaths had initially been ruled accidental, but Julius's testimony was powerfully corroborated when the Ball graves were unearthed to reveal spent bullets that time had insensibly coaxed out of the blistered cadavers.

So ... pretty compelling evidence.

SUSPECTED OF 4 MURDERS.

Connecticut Store Keeper Held for Attempt to Kill Wife.

Special to The New York Times.

MIDDLETOWN, Conn., May 21.—Emil Schutte, 63 years old, a general storekeeper of Shallerville, in the town of Haddam, is in the county jail in Haddam held under a temporary charge of assault with intent to kill his wife and awaiting the probable filing of a charge of murder in the first degree. The charge may accuse Schutte of the murder of four persons, all of whom were cremated.

Dennis Ladue, 67 years old, a French Canadian; Joseph Ball, 50 years old; his wife, Mrs. Joseph Ball, and his son, Jacob Ball, 18 years old, are the four for whose deaths the authorities may hold Schutte responsible. The Ball family was destroyed Dec. 10, 1915. Ladue was murdered about April 25 last. Revenge is believed to be the motive for the first crime and robbery for the second.

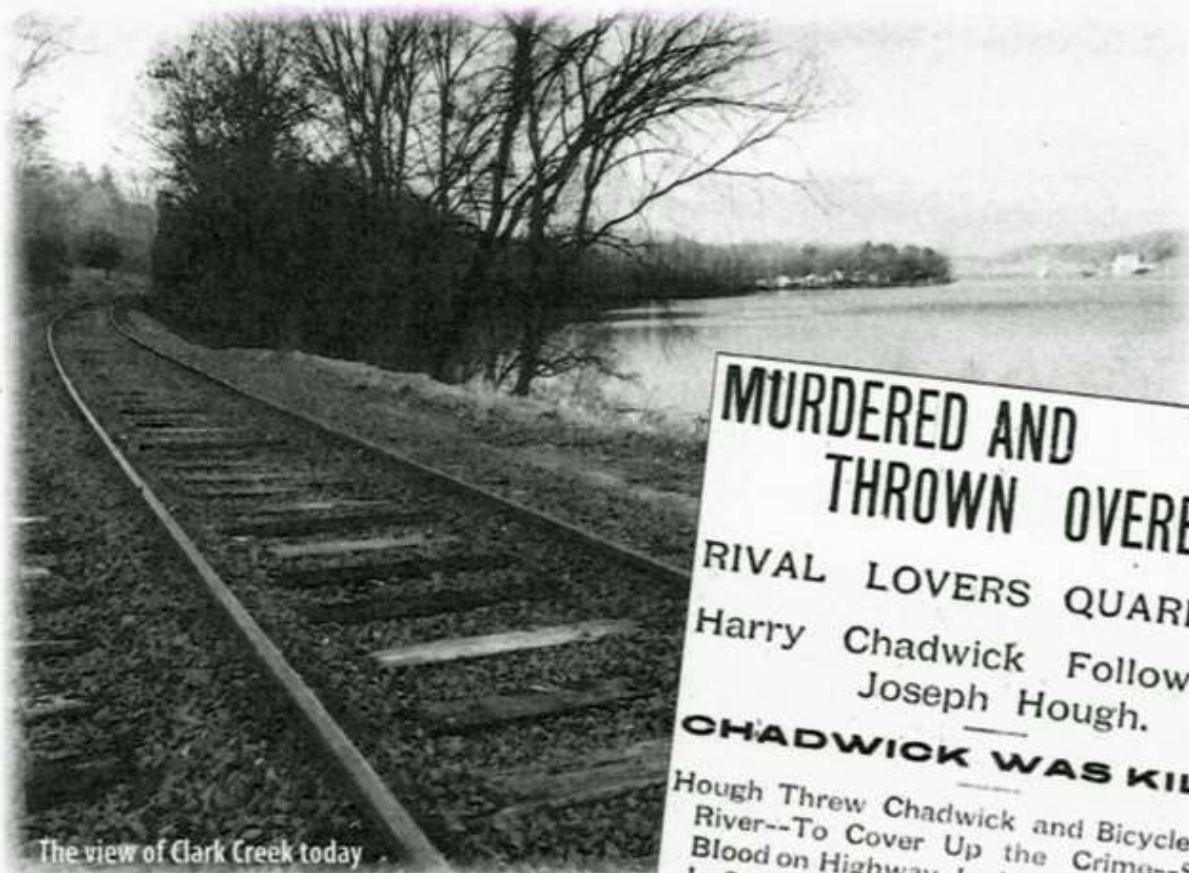
The 12-year-old son of Schutte, whom the father had frequently beaten, broke down today under questioning and confessed that he saw the body of Ladue in his father's old mill the afternoon Ladue disappeared and later saw Schutte burn the body in a pile of brush in the woods. The skeleton of a man has been found in the ashes.

Other sons of Schutte are said to have declared that their father set fire to the Ball house and shot the three inmates as they rushed out.

The New York Times

Published: May 22, 1921

Copyright © The New York Times



The view of Clark Creek today

**MURDERED AND
THROWN OVERBOARD.**
RIVAL LOVERS QUARRELED.
Harry Chadwick Followed By
Joseph Hough.
CHADWICK WAS KILLED
Hough Threw Chadwick and Bicycle Into the
River--To Cover Up the Crime--Spots of
Blood on Highway Led to Discovery--Hugh
Is Still Unconscious.

MURDER IN TYLERVILLE

by Ed Schwing

In the early morning hours of Monday, July 17, 1899, James Tyler Smith of Chester was abruptly awakened by his son Louis.

"It is Mr. Hough, I think he's committed suicide!"

The elder Smith jumped out of bed and followed his son to the room he was renting to Joseph Hough. When Smith opened the door, he found a groaning Hough lying on his bed and covered in blood. His right hand was clutching a razor and a deep wound could be seen on his throat.

"Louis, get the doctor quick," Smith yelled to his son.

Doctor Frederick Smith, who lived close by, arrived at the Smith residence around 3:00 a.m. and found Hough still conscious but having only a weak pulse. He quickly determined that the throat wound, while deep, was not life threatening and proceeded to sew it up.

When the doctor was done, he asked a pale looking but still conscious Hough what had happened to him that evening. In a clear and unemotional voice, Hough proceeded to tell the doctor a story that would be labeled by the press at the time as "one of the most brutal jealousy murders in Middlesex history."

Continued on pg. 3

Chester 1899

The Smith family lived in an attractive house about one and a half miles from the village center on what is now West Main Street. Mr. and Mrs. John Smith had two sons, and a twenty-two year old daughter, Mary Smith.

Mary was described as being "of medium height, a brunette, plump in figure, very good looking and given to dressing attractively and in good taste." She was an accomplished pianist, loved bicycling and had a passion for photography.

She had a boyfriend, twenty-four-year-old Harry Chadwick from Cobalt. They were not formally engaged, but had been seeing each other for about four years by the time Hough, a thirty-one year old widower, appeared in Chester.

The young Chadwick had moved to New Britain where he worked at The Stanley Works during the week. Every Saturday he would bicycle all the way down to Chester to pay a visit to Mary and return to New Britain on Sunday evening.

His bicycle trip back would be made in the dark, following the road from Chester to Middletown by way of Haddam. Around one o'clock in the morning he would arrive in Middletown where a

Mr. Page, owner and operator of the "night lunch wagon" on Main Street, would remember the young man stopping every weekend and getting something to eat before resuming his long journey to New Britain.

Joseph Alonzo Hough was a carpenter by trade and had moved to Chester a few months earlier to work on different projects in town. He became acquainted with the Smith family and was offered room and board in their house.

With Chadwick absent during the week, people in town started to notice that Hough and Mary had developed a special relationship, one that included taking long bicycle rides, photography excursions and trips to New Haven and Middletown together during the week.

Hough's feelings for the young and pretty Mary grew stronger by the day and many described him as being more and more upset by Chadwick's Sunday visits.

Confession

Sunday, July 16 had been uneventful. Harry Chadwick showed up as usual. Everyone went to church. That warm evening, around nine o'clock, the whole family including Hough and Chadwick gathered around for ice cream. The conversation was light and pleasant.

Around ten, everyone retired to their respective bedrooms and Chadwick started his trip back to New Britain, a trip that would take him through Tyler ville via what we know now as the Old Chester Road.

As Hough explained to the doctor in the early hours that fateful Monday morning, and would later state in his first official deposition, he left the house before Chadwick did and waited for him in the dark next to an icehouse near Clark Creek in Tylerville.



Mary C. Smith

Continued on pg. 2



Joseph Alonzo Hough

"I went to the point where the struggle occurred to scare Chadwick so that he would not come here to Chester so much," Hough told Coroner S.B. Davis who had come from Middletown to take the deposition after hearing of the tragedy.

"I was waiting for him by a barn," he continued. "I went toward him and made a noise to scare him. The first thing I knew he came to me. I ran, but he overtook me. We had a scuffle for some time. I thought he was trying to cut me. I was stronger in my hands than he was and caught him by the throat and held on."

Hough paused briefly.

"I did not intend to hurt him, but I got desperate and kept holding on. I let go when I thought he could not do any harm. I put my head to Chadwick's

breast and found that he was not breathing."

"I went down the path to Clark's Creek and found a boat. I returned and got Chadwick's bicycle and put it in the boat. I then went back, carried and dragged the body down, put it in the boat and tied it to the bicycle. I rowed the boat down the creek to the river. I went out into the river quite a ways and threw the body overboard."

"I never had any trouble with Chadwick," Hough added, "I thought I could scare him so that I could see a young woman he came to see. When I came home I thought I would call the folks, but I looked too bad. I got a ladder and got in by the window."

Coroner Davis decided it would be best to hold Hough in the small Chester prison until he could confer with the state attorney back in Middletown.

Blood in Tylerville

The same Monday morning in Tylerville, Frank Watrous, who lived in close proximity of Clark Creek, noticed a brown hat in the road, traces of a struggle, and a trail of blood leading to where his fishing boat had been moored the night before. His boat was now anchored about 100 feet from the shore. As he would later testify, Watrous went out to retrieve his boat and found the inside stained with blood, one of the four oars broken and covered with blood and hair as well.

There were no protected police crime scenes back in the 1800s and many



Harry E. Chadwick

pieces of the evidence were collected haphazardly by anyone who happened to be in an area after a crime had been committed. In this instance, the brown hat turned out to be Hough's and would be used as key evidence against him. Other witnesses would describe seeing two big rocks stained with blood and finding Chadwick's gold watch and chain on the ground.

As the news of the murder in Tylerville started to spread around town, officials were alerted and joined the many curious residents who had gathered around the crime scene. Doctor Hazen, Haddam's medical examiner was seen conferring with Haddam Selectman Ephraim Arnold.

A team was quickly organized to search the river for Chadwick's body. Using their own boats and armed with

Continued on pg. 6



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grappling irons, fishing nets and poles, Watrous and other fishermen from the area proceeded to scour the bottom of the cove. They worked all day but could not locate the body and by Monday evening the search was called off and would resume the next morning.

Joseph Hough in Custody

On Tuesday morning it did not take long for State Attorney Murdoch and Coroner Davis to agree that Joseph Hough should be arrested. Sheriff Brown and Deputy Sheriff Scoville were ordered to bring Hough to the county jail in Haddam.

Brown and Scoville boarded the 2:28 p.m. train in Middletown and arrived in Chester a little later that afternoon. They formally arrested Hough and brought him to the Chester railroad station in time to catch the train back to Middletown. According to witnesses, a weak Hough had to be helped to board

the train. On its way to Haddam, the train passed by Clark Creek and from his seat in the railroad car, Hough had a good view of the river and the men in the boats searching for Chadwick's body.

"They are too far out in the water," Hough told Sheriff Brown pointing to the boats. "It is closer to the shore."

The train arrived at 5 p.m. in Haddam at the railroad station which was located at the bottom of the hill facing the Haddam Jail. Waiting at the station was Jailer W. Odber who took custody of Hough.

In Tylerville, Daniel Chadwick, the father of the victim, had joined the team searching for his son's body in the river. Interviewed by a reporter of the Penny Press, the elder Chadwick confided that he had been made aware of the actions of Mary Smith in Chester and that he had told his son that he felt she did not

care for him. He also mentioned that Mrs. Smith, the mother of Mary, had written a letter to his wife excusing the actions of her daughter.

As night was falling, the men working the river were getting weary and discouraged after another long day and were about to leave for the night, when Frank Watrous felt his net being entangled by something at the bottom of the river. He made sure to get a good hold and carefully pulled the object up to the surface. With the body of Harry Chadwick came the bicycle attached to it.

Watrous called on the other men and they slowly towed Chadwick's body back to the shore. As fate would have it, the body was coming back to land with the same boat it was brought into the river.

The fishermen surrounded the body and lanterns were brought. For those present at the time, the sight was a ter-

rible one. It was clear from the major head injuries that the young Chadwick had been brutally murdered.

The next day an autopsy performed by Dr. Hazen found that Chadwick had been dead before his body was thrown overboard by Hough. It also confirmed that Chadwick suffered heavy blows to the head, with death caused by a final blow behind the neck. The body evidence contradicted Hough's story that he had acted in self-defense and accidentally choked Chadwick while fighting with him.

The news that Chadwick's body had been found and that his wounds indicated he had been brutally murdered spread through Chester. The Penny Press correspondent wrote:

"The feeling was very high in Chester last night after Chadwick's body had been found and it is thought that if Hough had not been removed to jail he

might have been lynched. There was talk of going to Haddam Jail and trying to obtain possession of the murderer.

Fifty or sixty of the friends of Chadwick congregated about the little jail in Chester and uttered threats, but as they lacked a leader no outward action was taken."

Haddam Hearing

A week after the autopsy was completed, a hearing was held at the Haddam Town Hall (at that time, the town hall was on the green in front of the Thankful Arnold House) in the matter of murder charges against Joseph Hough. Presiding was Justice Ephraim Arnold while Judge Pearne represented the prosecution for the town of Haddam. Hough's attorneys were present as well.

Hough was driven in a two-seated wagon from the Haddam Jail to the town hall. Riding with him were Sheriff Brown and Jailer Odber.

According to the Penny Press of July 30, 1899, "The Haddam town hall was crowded with spectators, and among them were many ladies. The liveliest interest was betrayed in the proceedings by the townspeople and Hough was an object of great interest."

Six witnesses were heard, including Dr. Hazen and Dr. Plumstaed of East Haddam who together performed the autopsy, Frank Watrous, James Smith and his son Louis and finally Dr. Smith.

After some deliberation, Justice Arnold found probable cause and referred Hough to the Superior Court in Middletown to be tried for first degree murder. After the hearing Hough was taken back to his cell at the Haddam Jail and to be held without bond.

Trial

The trial of Joseph Hough started on December 12, 1899, at the Middletown

Continued on pg. 8

MURDER—Cont'd

municipal building and lasted three weeks. It was standing room only in the courtroom, as it would be during the whole trial with the crowd often overflowing the hallway.

Hough, who was still held at the Had-dam Jail, would come in shackled to deputy sheriff Scoville. It was said that they had a hard time making their way to the courtroom because of the crowd standing in and outside the building.

Judge Ralph Wheeler presided over the trial. The prosecution was represented by state attorney Murdoch and Judge Pearle. A jury of twelve men was seated and Hough, represented by attorneys Eugene Culver and William Coughlin, pleaded not guilty to the charges.

The prosecution brought in many witnesses and took great care to reconstruct the tragic events that took place in Tylerville on the night of July 17, 1899. To everyone in attendance, it was clear that Hough would not escape the facts that had brought him to this point. Not the least damning was his own confession made to Coroner Davis in Chester the day following the murder.

Instead, the battle between the prosecution and the defense focused on the motive for the crime. Was this a crime of passion committed by a jealous lover defending himself in a fight with his rival, or was it, as the prosecution argued, a cold-blooded murder by someone who was infatuated with a young woman and would not accept she was in love with someone else?

The prosecution argued that while Hough and Mary Smith had common interests and started a friendship, it was never Mary's intentions to leave her boyfriend Harry Chadwick, a fact that with time made Hough more and more upset and jealous. Their key witness was Louis Smith, Mary's brother, who testified that a week or so before the murder, his sister had discussed plans for her marriage to Harry Chadwick and how she was looking forward to moving with him to New Britain. Smith added that Hough was present at the time and was upset and looked very somber.

In contrast, the defense concentrated on bringing in witnesses to describe the many occasions they had seen Mary Smith and Hough enjoying the company of each other. In a cross examination, Mrs. Smith, Mary's mother, was asked about that relationship:

"Hough went around some with my daughter, after gaining my permission," Mrs Smith admitted. "Harry said he had no objection to Hough going out with Mary."

"I did not know it was the talk of the town, and did not believe it was," she added.

Hough's Last Stand

Before the prosecution and defense rested their respective cases, Hough was given a last chance to speak. In fifteen minutes he gave his version of the story, one that implied Mary had played a bigger role than had been portrayed by the prosecution. The story was recorded by

the Hartford Courant correspondent at the time:

"I became acquainted with Mary Smith when I moved to Chester. I did not know she was engaged to Chadwick until I heard it here in court. She repeatedly told me she was not. I met her often. She did not let her folks know of our meetings."

"Mary and I rode together, took pictures, developed them and were often in the parlor together. She told me she liked me and I told her I liked her."

"We were often together for hours. We kissed each other, hugged each other, and I threw my arm around her neck. We were not engaged. Her mother did not know the extent of our intimacy, but there was nothing improper. I have hugged and kissed her in the parlor, developing room, and in the bedroom when I was helping her make the beds."

"Saturday, July 15, Mary and I were in the parlor. She began talking about Chadwick and said to me: 'You look so glum on Sunday, I wish Harry would not come down every Saturday.' I said: 'Why don't you tell him then?' She replied: 'I tried but he will come.' She then told me that someone tried to scare Harry one night and asked me if I thought I could do it to keep him away. I said I could. She asked 'When?' I replied: 'Possibly Sunday night.'"

"On Sunday night after I went to bed I could not sleep; it was too hot. I thought of Mary's suggestion, got up, went down the front stairs in my stockings, got my bicycle and rode until I came to the place where Mary said Harry was held up before. I waited, walking up and down the road. When I saw Chadwick he was walking on the right side of his bicycle. I made a noise; he turned his wheel and threw the light on me. I turned my head to avoid the light and then he was in front of me and he cut the side of my face."



Court scene sketch of Hough's trial from the Penny Press, December 22, 1899

Hough then proceeded to explain that a scuffle ensued and denied hitting Chadwick with a stone, but just only holding him by the throat and that after he realized he was dead, dragged his body to the boat and after attaching the bicycle, throwing it in the river.

Verdict

The verdict came back on December 29. After four hours of deliberation, the jury found Joseph Hough guilty of murder in the second degree. After the verdict was read, Judge Wheeler immediately sentenced Hough to life in state prison.

Epilogue

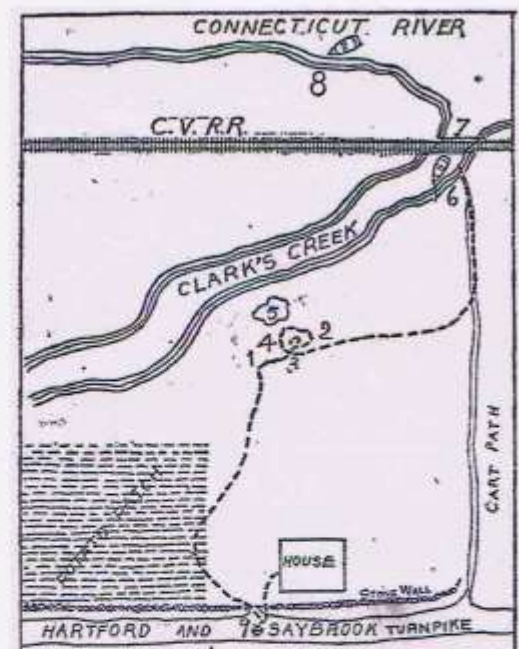
Shortly after the trial, Mary Smith left for Philadelphia where she stayed until her death; she never married.

After serving 19 years in the Wethersfield Prison Joseph Hough appeared before the board of pardons and was granted parole and released in 1919. He lived and worked as a carpenter in Hartford for 18 years until his death in 1937.

Hough petitioned three times for a return of the civil rights he lost in 1900

and died a week before he was to receive confirmation that they were finally restored.

(References: Hartford Courant, Penny Press, New York Times, Connecticut State Library and Ancestry.com)



WHERE HARRY CHADWICK WAS MURDERED.

1—Where Chadwick and Hough had first scuffle.
2-3-4-5—Scene of murder. Stones covered with blood. Tufts of hair found—Broken razor.
Dotted lines—From the Smith home to 4 course taken by Chadwick—From there to the boat Hough dragged the body of his victim.
6—Where the boat was found yesterday.

Murder scene sketch from the Hartford Courant 1899

The Connecticut State Historical Society

related exhibits and resources

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT



Suffragette Helena Hill Weed of Norwalk, serving a 3 day sentence in D.C. prison for picketing July 4, 1917
– Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

English colonists who settled in the Connecticut Colony employed a patriarchal system of justice with town leaders creating early laws. Colonial crimes included blasphemy, idleness, adultery, and stealing, and the punishments were harsh and swift. Branding, ear cropping, dunking, and public stocks and whipping posts located on [town greens](#) were common ways to create social control. By the late 18th century, however, views on corporal punishment began to change and officials opened the state's [first prison in an abandoned mine](#) in [Simsbury](#) (now [East Granby](#)) where those incarcerated would serve time for their crimes. In 1827 the state opened the [Connecticut State Prison](#) in [Wethersfield](#) to house prisoners and in 1963 relocated prisoners to the modern [Osborn Correctional Institute](#) in [Somers](#).

A 1947 Movie Details the Unsolved Murder of a Bridgeport Priest

Elizabeth Bentley Born – Today in History: January 1

The Living Actually Haunted Many Connecticut Taverns – Who Knew?

First New-Gate Prisoner – Today in History: December 22

A Most Unusual Criminal Execution in New London

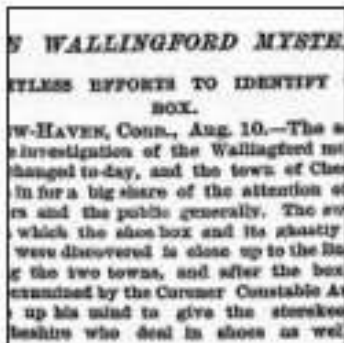
The Beadle Family Murders – Today in History: December 11

Jim Morrison Arrested – Today in History: December 9

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The White Pine Acts – Who Knew?

Connecticut Lawyer Prosecutes Nazi War Criminals at Nuremberg



The Shoe Box Murder Mystery

August 8, 2016

On the morning of August 8, 1886, on a walk through the Parker farm district of Wallingford, Edward Terrill and his dog uncovered what appeared to be a box of a dozen shoes that had recently fallen from a cart. ...[\[more\]](#)

Categories: [Crime and Punishment](#), [Everyday Life](#), [The Industrial](#)

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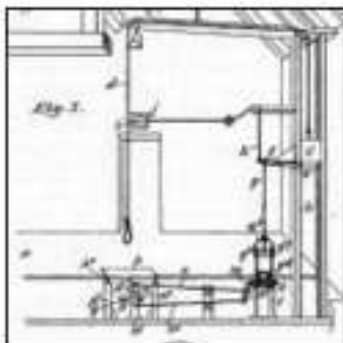


Connecticut Draws the Curtain on Public Executions

August 2, 2016

Brooklyn's status as county seat in 1831 resulted in the town hosting what is widely accepted as the last public... [Read more »](#) ...[\[more\]](#)

Categories: [Brooklyn](#), [Crime and Punishment](#), [Everyday Life](#), [Law](#)



The Automatic Gallows – Today in History: June 18

June 18, 2016

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Gerald Chapman: America's First "Public Enemy Number One"

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Notorious New-Gate Prison

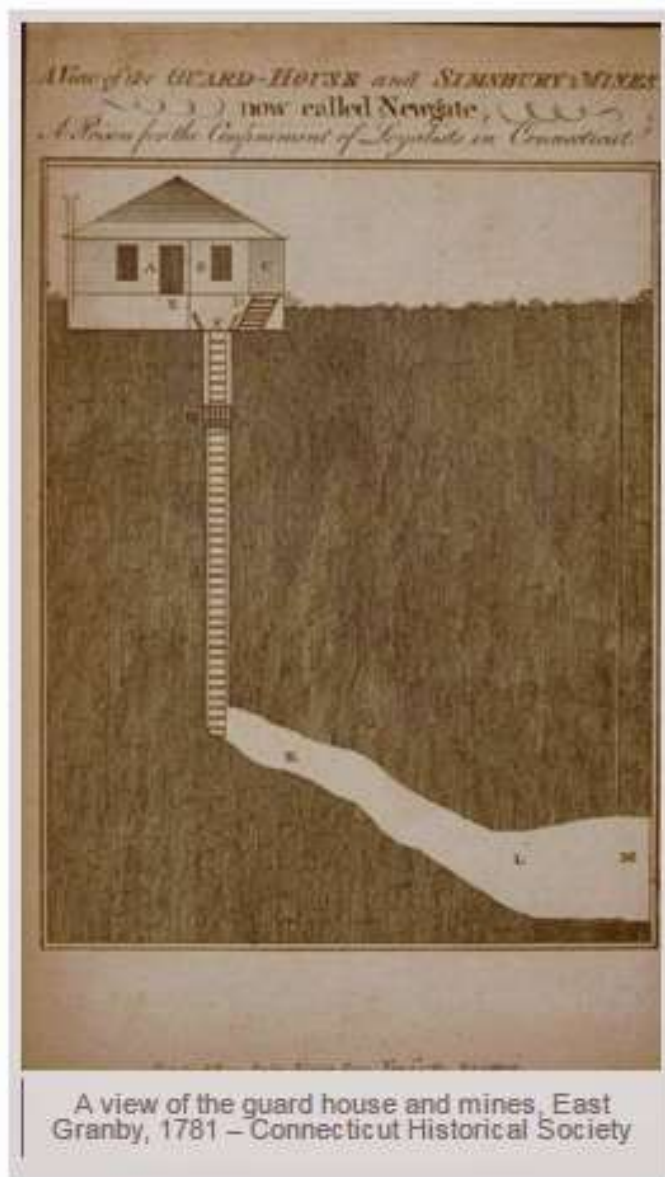


New-Gate Prison courtyard, East Granby, 1890s – Connecticut Historical Society

By Gregg Mangan

The story of New-Gate Prison in [East Granby](#) includes more than three centuries of history. Once a copper mine and notorious prison, it is now a famed tourist attraction and a national historic landmark. Frequently referred to as either New Gate or New-Gate, the site operated as a prison from 1773 to 1827 and could accommodate more than 100 prisoners in its caverns at any one time.

Connecticut Seeks to Imprison and Reform Its Criminals



The area that would become New-Gate Prison was still part of the town of [Simsbury](#) in 1705, when it was designated for mining copper ore. Sixty-four town residents became the mine's proprietors and formed the first chartered copper mining company in America. They used the mine's revenues to pay town expenses and hire a schoolmaster. The proprietors eventually leased their mining rights to speculators willing to pay a portion of the ore they mined as rent. By 1773, however, copper ore deposits became harder to find and mining profits disappeared.

The Connecticut General Assembly explored the idea of turning the mine's labyrinth of caves and shafts into a prison. In Connecticut, as well as in the rest of the colonies, public views on capital and corporal punishment were changing. Before New-Gate opened, penalties for breaking the law included whipping, cropping of ears, or branding with a hot iron. As the public became more sensitive to the consequences of inflicting such pain and degradation on fellow human beings, they looked for alternative ways to punish law

breakers. Connecticut wanted to use the Simsbury copper mine as a place to isolate prisoners from the rest of society and then reform them.

Colonel William Pitkin, Erastus Wolcott, and Captain Jonathan Humphrey visited the mines in May of 1773 and found two shafts, one 25-feet deep with a ladder attached to it and another 67-feet deep used for extracting the copper ore. Upon inspection, the men determined that by carving a 16-foot lodging room out of the rock near the first shaft they had the makings of a formidable prison. The colony purchased the remaining years of a mining lease from Captain James Holmes of [Salisbury](#) and installed an iron gate near the surface of the 25-foot shaft. New-Gate was ready for its first prisoner.

The Makings of a Prison

That prisoner, [John Hinson](#), sentenced to 10 years for burglary, arrived on December 22, 1773. Hinson escaped 18 days later by a rope lowered to him down the larger, non-gated mine shaft. In the years that followed, officials at New-Gate oversaw numerous improvements to the site in attempts to improve both the security and the economic viability of the prison.

One of these improvements involved the stationing of at least two guards to watch the prison at night. During this time, New-Gate not only housed thieves, counterfeiters, and murderers but Tories (a label given to those sympathetic to the British cause during the [Revolutionary War](#)) as well. Connecticut's Council of Safety feared that the addition of Tories to New-Gate exacerbated an already uneasy situation that existed there. Some historians have theorized that the poor treatment Tories received at New-Gate may have provided a pretext for the ill treatment of American prisoners aboard British prison ships in the waters off New York City later in the war.

In 1781, prison officials erected a picket fence encompassing an area of approximately 187 by 160 feet and then replaced by a wooden palisade in 1790. They built a 12-foot-high stone wall in 1802 in the continuing effort to keep prisoners from escaping into the nearly five wooded acres that surrounded the prison.

Inside the fence, New-Gate grew into a bustling prison community. The prison built a guardhouse over the laddered mine shaft, which was complemented by a series of additions to the prison complex over the next several decades. On the north side of the yard, they established a nail and cooper's shop. (A cooper was a craftsman who made and repaired wooden vessels, such as barrels, casks, and buckets.) Across the yard on the south side were a wagon and machine shop, a shoe shop, storeroom, kitchen, and chapel. In 1824, the prison erected a four-story building containing offices, a treadmill, granary, a mess hall, and cells for 50 prisoners. These improvements intended to keep prisoners secure and employed making commercial products to help offset prison operating expenses.

Daily Life on the Inside

At daylight, guards brought the prisoners up from the mines to the above-ground shops, where they worked until 4:00 p.m. When the prison first opened, the inmates mined copper, but New-Gate's officials soon recognized the danger of putting digging tools in the hands of prisoners and instead put them to work making nails. By the time the prison shut down in 1827, the state had expanded its operations and employed inmates as shoemakers, coopers, blacksmiths, wagon makers, cooks, and basket makers. Those without trade skills dug stone, leveled the ground or made other improvements to the prison grounds. The most famous of the tasks assigned to the unskilled was operating the treadmill. Up to 22 men at a time powered this long, flanged wheel by climbing the paddles blades—a motion akin to walking up steps—in order to grind grain.

At night, guards ushered prisoners back into the mines where they devised plans for escape and shared tricks for making counterfeit money, false keys, and incendiary devices. The mines were a dreary, terrible-smelling place, where water constantly dripped from the surrounding rock. As former prisoner and master counterfeiter William Stuart recalled in his 1854 autobiography, “armies of fleas, lice, and bedbugs covered every inch of the floor which itself was covered in 5 inches of slippery, stinking filth.”



New-Gate Prison, East Granby, 1890s –
Connecticut Historical Society and Connecticut
History Illustrated

Despite moving the majority of prisoners to above-ground cells in 1824, New-Gate’s reputation drew a great deal of attention at the state capitol. The prison, originally thought to be escape-proof and a crime deterrent, had instead garnered a reputation for its lack of security. Prison reformers like Reverend Louis Dwight widely publicized the filthy conditions at New-Gate, and despite all its revenue-generating operations, the prison never managed to make a profit selling commercial goods. All of these factors led state officials to close the prison in 1827 and to move inmates to the newly constructed [Wethersfield State Prison](#).

New Life as a Tourist Attraction

After its 54 years as a prison, New-Gate became the site of renewed attempts at mining and, briefly, a private residence where the owners provided candles and guided tours for curious visitors. By the 1870s, tourists and antiquarians interested in the nation’s and Connecticut’s colonial past referred to the property as “Old New-Gate.” After a fire in 1904 that destroyed much of the four-story cellblock, the former guardhouse was converted into a dance hall during the 1920s and ’30s. To entice visitors, the site boasted a variety of attractions, including a caged bear and cub, several antique cars, and a World War I tank. The state removed these features when it purchased and took over operation of the site in 1968. In 1973 the National Park Service designated New-Gate Prison a National Historic Landmark. Now called Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mines, the property is administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

Gregg Mangan is an author and historian who holds a PhD in public history from Arizona State University.

Legal Landmarks

Hartford Magazine

From the N. Y. Evening Post.
THE AMISTAD CASE.

[Concluded.]

Let us look into this a little more closely, for when men of learning and talent treat our system of justice thus summarily and in such a way as to leave others who are not quite so silent ways, to look well to their

affirmed without fear of contradiction by the writer of the article supported by authority or reason, never can exist till all notions of lenity have disappeared. What do exhaust on this subject? It went in a court of competent as to the facts there called in in—why of course on the part in rem in the Exchequer or definitely is said to be binding with these exceptions the final ng only on the

Ricci Makes His Point

By JAMES O'NEILL

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court has ruled that the state of Connecticut can sue the federal government to force it to pay the costs of the state's prison system.

NEW HAVEN TIMES COURIER FRANK RICCI

...no whole South...
 ...appeal to the...

FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2006

FIRST STATE

A series of...
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VISITORS, LAST RITES, LEGAL MOVES
 Rose spent the day meeting with family and friends, and he received last rites. The U.S. Supreme Court rejected the last of the legal efforts to stop the execution.



Michael Ouellette 12-30-66
 ...not being in...

ROSS SAGA ENDS

LEGAL

Murder — And A Teen's Acquittal

Long After Mom's Slaying, Lurid Trial, Daughter Makes Name

By VANESSA DE LA JONRE

State Case Birth Control Battle Goes to Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP)—An attack on a negligible claim to reasonableness on the constitutionality of Connecticut's 85-year-old anti-birth-control law was formally carried to the Supreme Court.



SHEFF VS. O'NEILL LAWSUIT SETTLED

Agreement Includes Specific Goals And Timetables For School Desegregation



Fourteen years after Elizabeth Horton Sheff and her son, Mike, left, sued Connecticut over Hartford school segregation, the plaintiffs and the state have reached common ground on solutions.

Hartford Cour

Skakel Conviction Uph

...Rules Against Kennedy Cousin In Moxley Mu...



Connecticut is no stranger to sensational courtroom drama. We've seen tragic miscarriages of justice, triumphant vindications, groundbreaking decisions, scandalous skullduggery, amazing escapes from authority. Here are the most significant.

LANDMARKS

Amistad Slave Uprising, 1839-1841

In 1839, the Spanish ship *La Amistad* was ferrying Africans captured in what is now Sierra Leone from Havana to eastern Cuba. They were bound for lives of slavery, but the Africans had other ideas. Armed with knives, they took control of the ship and demanded to be returned home. Instead, the ship's navigator sailed north, into the clutches of U.S. Naval forces, which captured the ship off the coast of Long Island and took the slaves to New Haven to be tried. In a case that became a cause célèbre for abolitionists, lawyers debated whether the Africans qualified as salvage belonging to the U.S. forces that took custody of the ship, the Cuban who paid for their transport, Queen Isabella II of Spain, who owned the ship, or whether, because they were captured in U.S. waters and the importation of slaves into the United States had been illegal since 1808, they should be freed. The case dragged on, and in 1841 reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which ordered the slaves freed. The survivors were returned to Africa the following year. *La Amistad*, after being moored in New London for a year and a half, was auctioned off in 1840. The new owner, George Hawford of Newport, R.I., renamed her *Ion* and sailed

her to the Caribbean. Hawford sold *Ion* in 1844 and she disappeared into history. In 2000, a reproduction of *La Amistad* was built in Mystic. It is currently docked at Mystic Seaport and will be open for tours during OpSail 2012, July 6-9.

Mad Dog Taborsky, 1950-1960

Wondering why you can't buy a six-pack at 10 p.m.? Thank Joseph Taborsky. During the course of a string of armed robberies, Taborsky killed six people with such brutality that he earned the moniker "mad dog." Partially as a result of the killings, in 1957 Connecticut mandated that liquor stores close at 8 p.m. rather than 11 p.m.

Taborsky is the only criminal in Connecticut history to have been sent to death row not once, but twice, and for two different crimes. He was sentenced to die for the 1950 murder of Louis Wolfson, a West Hartford liquor store owner. The murder was committed during a robbery, with the help of Taborsky's younger brother, Albert. Taborsky was sentenced on the basis of his brother's testimony, which he gave in exchange for a life sentence. But when Albert was institutionalized with mental illness while in prison, Taborsky appealed his sentence. In 1955, the Connecticut Supreme Court reversed his conviction. Upon being set free, Taborsky was contrite and swore he wouldn't even "get a

BY ELAINE X. GRANT

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HartfordMag.com | JULY 2012

"Mad Dog"
Taborsky



Estelle
Griswold &
Dr. C. Lee
Buxton

Case Birth Control Battle Goes to Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP)—An attack on a negligible claim to the constitutionality of Connecticut's 45-year-old anti-birth control law was formally carried to the U.S. Supreme Court Tuesday.

The court was asked in an appeal by two Connecticut residents convicted of violating the law to declare the state statute unconstitutional.

Under state law it is illegal to use contraceptives or give advice to anyone on the use of contraceptives.

An appeal was filed Tuesday in behalf of Dr. C. Lee Buxton, 59, and Mrs. Estelle T. Griswold, 53, both of New Haven.

League Backing

Dr. Buxton is medical director of the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut. Mrs. Griswold is executive director of the league.

Both were arrested and given advice on contraceptives after receiving a parking ticket.

The appeal added: "The work of these agents (Buxton and Mrs. Griswold) in advising and giving instructions for the use of contraceptive agents in line with and in accordance with national policies endorsed by the extension of research programs of the Health Service to the most effective agencies and the provision of available technical assistance, as part of a program, to the seeking methods of birth control.

"A federal program to fight poverty has been launched to fight with a program to fight poverty.

"The work of the league will contribute to the increase of the income of the poor.

parking ticket."

Alas, his return to crime was virtually immediate. He met another felon—Arthur "Meatball" Culombe—with whom he would return to robbing and killing. Culombe, however, proved less depraved than Taborsky. During one robbery, Taborsky ordered Culombe to kill a 3-year-old girl. Culombe hid her and fired a shot into the floor instead, an act of mercy that saved him from electrocution. Taborsky was sentenced to die—again—in 1957. He waived further appeals and met his end in Connecticut's electric chair on May 17, 1960. There wouldn't be another execution in Connecticut for 45 years.

Griswold v. Connecticut, 1961-1965

Before there was *Roe v. Wade*, there was *Griswold v. Connecticut*. In 1960, The Pill was legalized, but in Connecticut, the use of birth control was still a crime. Flying in the face of the 1879 law banning contraceptives, Dr. C. Lee Buxton, the chairman of the Yale Medical School department of obstetrics and gynecology, and Estelle Griswold, the executive director of Connecticut Planned Parenthood, opened a Planned Parenthood Clinic in New Haven. They were arrested, convicted and fined \$100 each, but they had put oral contraceptives on the national stage. In 1965, the case made it to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled, by a 7-2 vote, that contraception was a private issue not subject to state laws. The case established right to privacy and laid the groundwork for *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark abortion rights case in 1973. Buxton died in 1969, Griswold in 1981.

Peter Reilly Coerced Confession, 1973-1976

Extracting a confession is a tricky business. Police used to have carte blanche in making the perps squeal, but that changed with the case of Peter Reilly, a Canaan teenager charged with murdering his mother, Barbara Gibbons. In September 1973, Reilly found Gibbons dead at the home she shared with him in the Falls Village neighborhood of Canaan. Her throat was slashed, her thigh bones were broken, there were tire tread marks on her legs and abdomen and she had multiple deep stab wounds that were later determined to have been

inflicted after her death. After hours of interrogation by police, Reilly confessed to slashing his mother's throat after arguing with her about his car.

Reilly was convicted of manslaughter in 1974, but the public was outraged at his treatment at the hands of police. An eight-hour recording of the police interrogation was condemned as the railroading of a scared, exhausted young suspect. *The New York Times* and *60 Minutes* waded in with their examinations of the case, and the governor ordered a reinvestigation. Reilly was granted a new trial in 1976 after evidence pointing to his innocence was uncovered. Due to the extensive coverage of the case, and the portrayal of Reilly as an innocent victim brainwashed into a false confession, prosecutors did not think they could get a conviction and the case was never retried.

However, in an extensive reexamination of the case in 1977, state police captain Thomas McDonnell posited that Reilly was indeed the killer. He theorized that Reilly arrived home to a drunk and angry mother, who bent down to remove the plate of his Corvette. Reilly allegedly ran her over, breaking her legs and causing extensive injuries. He then could have carried or dragged her to the bedroom and cut her throat. He made several calls for help, after which he returned to the bedroom and inflicted the post-mortem stab wounds, McDonnell's theory goes. Multiple inmates who were incarcerated with Reilly claimed he had confessed to the crime.

In 2011, Reilly came forward to criticize the resistance of police to a Connecticut bill requiring that criminal interrogations at police stations be recorded. Reilly currently resides in Tolland.

Martha Moxley Murder, 1975-2002

Nothing ups the ante in a criminal case more than the involvement of the Kennedy family, and that the case centered on the mysterious death of a young girl made it even more salacious. In 1975, 15-year-old Martha Moxley was found beaten to death with a golf club in the tony Belle Haven neighborhood of Greenwich.

Moxley lived near the Skakel family, the patriarch of which was Rushton

Skakel Sr., brother of Robert F. Kennedy's widow, Ethel Kennedy. Rushton and his wife, Anne, had seven children before she died in 1972. Two of them—Michael and Tommy—were sitting in the front seat of a car with Moxley hours before she died.

The police were able to determine that the golf club with which Moxley was bludgeoned and stabbed came from a set owned by the Skakels. Determining who wielded the club was much more difficult.

The first suspect was Edward Hammond, a graduate student who lived next door to the Moxleys. He had a reputation as a loner, and his bedroom window overlooked the spot where Moxley's body was found. Police eliminated him as a suspect, however, and shifted their attention to Kenneth Littleton, a live-in tutor hired by the Skakel family and who was spending his first night in the home, and Tommy Skakel, who was the last person to be seen with Moxley on that Halloween eve "mischief night." Tommy claimed he went into his house and saw Moxley walk home, and he later passed a lie detector test to that effect. Michael Skakel long claimed to have been with two of his other brothers driving a cousin home when the murder occurred.

The case languished for years. Michael Skakel, already a self-described alcoholic by 13, went in and out of treatment centers in the years after the murder. He confessed numerous times, to various people. According to a *Vanity Fair* article, a woman who had been an intern at an alcohol and drug rehab center when Skakel was there asked him if he killed Moxley. "Yes," he said, "and I've been running all my life."

Interest in the case was revived in 1991, in part because of the alleged malfeasance of another Kennedy clan member—William Kennedy Smith. During Smith's rape trial in Florida, an erroneous rumor circulated that Smith was in the area the night Moxley was killed. In addition, celebrity crime chronicler Dominick Dunne became friends with Martha's mother, Dorothy, in 1991, and wrote a book about the Moxley case in 1993 called *A Season in Purgatory*. Dunne eventually became convinced of Skakel's guilt.

A private investigator hired by Rushton to clear the boys' names ironically intensified the focus on

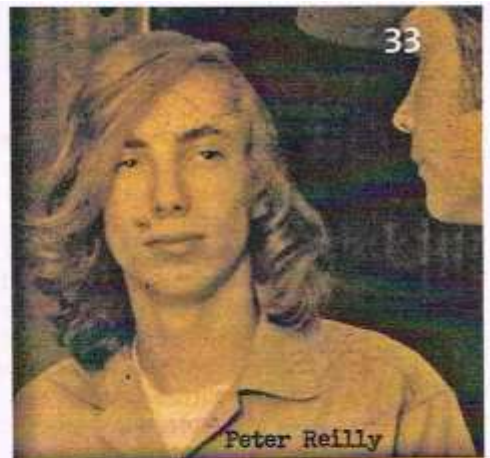
Michael. Under pressure, Tommy changed his story, saying that after he entered the house he went outside again and had a sexual encounter with Moxley. Michael had considered Moxley his girlfriend, and reportedly saw Tommy as a rival. Investigators also discovered that Michael had killed squirrels with a golf club and masturbated outside Moxley's house the night of her murder.

In 1998, Mark Fuhrman, the Los Angeles detective whose racist behavior was revealed during the O.J. Simpson murder trial, and whose testimony in that case earned him a perjury charge that brought his career as a police officer to an end, published *Murder in Greenwich*, a book in which he pointed to Michael as the killer. He theorized that Moxley was still with Tommy when Michael returned home and found them together, after which Michael followed Moxley to her house and killed her in a jealous rage. As suspicions (not evidence—there was never much of that) mounted against him, Skakel was charged with the crime in 2000.

In 2002—27 years after the fact—Skakel was at long last convicted of Moxley's murder. He was sentenced to 20 years to life. Earlier this year, Skakel petitioned to get his sentence reduced, arguing that he was a juvenile at the time of the crime, and in 1975 sentences for juveniles were capped at four years. His request was denied. Skakel is incarcerated at MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution in Suffield. Rushton Skakel Sr., Michael's father, died in 2003. Dunne, whose interest in the case and prolific writing on the topic helped bring Skakel to justice, died in 2009.

Illegal Toxic Waste Dumping, 1978

In 1978, C. Stanton Gallup, president of the Plainfield Chamber of Commerce and a prominent local businessman, pleaded no contest to charges that he violated the state's pollution laws by dumping toxic waste on his property. He was fined \$25,000 and agreed to pay the state up to \$750,000 to analyze the 1,500 barrels of chemical waste found buried in gravel pits he owned on Tarbox Road in Plainfield. Gallup claimed he was unaware of the dumping, and that he was trying to help a friend, Richard Trayner, the owner of a Bridgeport-



Peter Reilly

Investigation of Reilly Case

1. A person sleeping behind the Corvair to remove the murder weapon, in all likelihood, could not be observed by the observer looking from the rear window. Peter also stated that the Corvair had a defective parking brake. Examination of the Corvair the morning after the crime revealed that there was a third alternate view of the underside of the rear wheel which was located at the right rear of the vehicle. Examination of this divided area revealed that it contained cloth impressions. There were also fresh hand impressions in the road lines on the forward part of the underside of the rear wheel. Microscopic examination of the cloth impressions on the rubber revealed that the cloth of fibers was the same size and weave as the fibers in the pants found at the feet of Barbara Gilmour murdered body. Experimentation revealed that such impressions are made after driving a sport vehicle, i.e., from the two centers in the Gilmour pants.

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Doctor's Autopsy

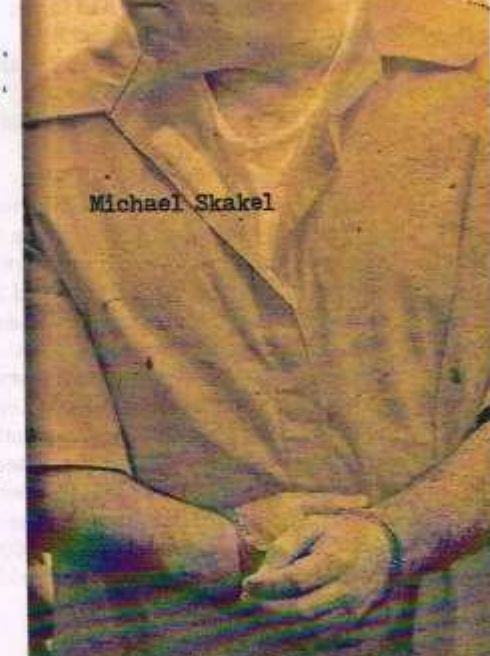
These injuries were diagnosed by Dr. [Name] at autopsy on Sept. 20, 1978. The cause of Barbara Gilmour's injuries also gave rise to questions which have not been answered by medical experts, but, when considered in light of the car theory, are clearly within reason. The extent of these injuries required a great deal of external-applied trauma. This trauma likely would have been either a weighted or "crushing" type of force or a blunt type of force requiring enough velocity and force to cause the resulting internal fractures.

Dr. Frank Chiswick, a pathologist consulted by medical examiner Dr. [Name], examined the X-rays of the broken bones. He concluded that the left thigh bone was broken by pressure directed to the left and the right thigh bone by pressure directed to the right.

Skakel Convicted

Top State Court Rules Against Ke...

The state Supreme Court, in a decision handed down Monday, has upheld the conviction of Michael Skakel, 41, for the murder of a 17-year-old girl, Barbara Gilmour, in 1978. The court ruled that the state's evidence was sufficient to prove Skakel's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. The decision is a significant victory for the state, as it allows Skakel to remain in prison for the remainder of his life. The court also rejected Skakel's appeal of his conviction, stating that the state had met its burden of proof.



Michael Skakel

based trucking company that was later discovered to be a transfer point for illegal waste. Five additional people were charged in the case, including Trayner. The waste was removed by a New York-based company. In 1997, the Environmental Protection Agency issued its plan for cleaning up the area and two years later the plan was approved by all involved parties. In 2005, the Environmental Protection Agency issued a land restriction prohibiting the site from residential use or groundwater access, except for monitoring. A wood-burning power plant is under construction at the site. EPA completed five-year reviews for the site in September 2002 and September 2007. The next five-year review is scheduled for September 2012. Gallup died in 1994.

Tracey Thurman Domestic Violence Suit, 1983-1985

Historically, a woman attacked by her husband has never had as much legal recourse as a woman attacked by a stranger. Police called to the home often turned a blind eye to spousal abuse, and it was only in 1993 that every state finally made it illegal for a man to rape his wife.

After Charles "Buck" Thurman attacked his estranged wife in 1983, stabbing her 13 times and causing her to spend eight days in a coma and months in the hospital, Tracey Thurman sued the Torrington Police Department, claiming they failed to protect her from him. She had taken out a restraining order against her husband and made multiple complaints to police about his abuse. She was awarded \$2.3 million in compensatory damages. The case established that victims of domestic violence have a constitutional right to police protection. Soon after, Connecticut adopted one of the most stringent domestic violence laws in the country, and the case led to legal reforms and increased awareness across the country. Tracey Thurman remarried. Her ex-husband served seven years and was released in 1991. When his probation ended in 1996, Thurman sought a permanent restraining order against him. The couple's son, Charles Motuzick, who was just 2 at the time of the attack and was awarded \$300,000 for his emotional trauma, is in Enfield

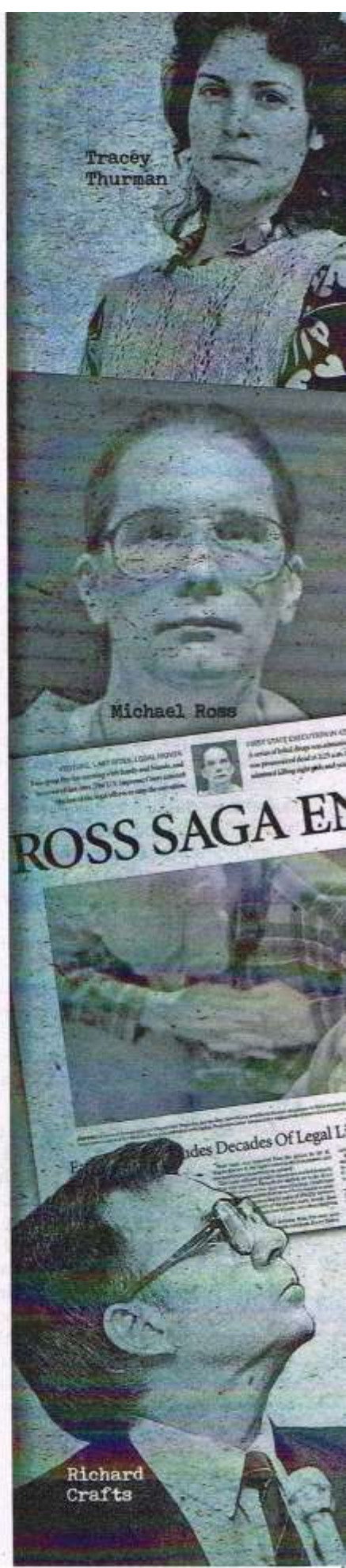
Correctional Institution on drug charges.

Serial Killer Michael Ross, 1984-2005

In 1984, Michael Ross, an insurance agent and Cornell graduate, confessed to kidnapping, raping and killing six girls in eastern Connecticut. "They were dead as soon as I saw them," he said in a 1994 interview. He had already been convicted of assaulting women in Illinois and Ohio, and he later confessed to killing two additional women in New York. In 1985, Ross pleaded guilty to two of the killings and received a sentence of 120 years. Later, in a New London court, Ross was found guilty of killing the other four Connecticut women. In the following years, everyone involved with the case was dragged through a legal labyrinth, including dozens of appeals, hearings and negotiations and a suicide attempt by Ross. At last, in 2000, a New London jury sentenced Ross to death. In 2005, after waiving his latest appeal, Ross was executed by lethal injection at Osborn Correctional Institution in Somers.

Wood-chipper Murder, 1986-1989

In 1986, flight attendant Helle Crafts, tired of her husband Richard's extramarital affairs, abuse and excessive spending, filed for divorce. After being dropped at her Newtown home by a friend, Helle disappeared. Her husband, an airline pilot whom she met when she was working as a flight attendant, told her increasingly frantic friends various stories—that she was visiting her sick mother in Denmark or on vacation with a friend. The police found a telling clue: credit card receipts for a freezer, sheets and the rental of a wood-chipper. Eventually, a witness came forward to claim he had seen a wood-chipper parked by the Housatonic River soon after Crafts' wife vanished. Police scoured the area and found fragments of Helle's body; in the river they found a chain saw with hair and human tissue in the blade and the serial number filed off. Forensic scientists concluded that Crafts had frozen his wife's body, dismembered it with the chain saw and put it through the wood-chipper. The first trial, in New London, ended



in a mistrial after a lone juror refused to convict. In 1989, a second trial, this time in Norwalk, resulted in a murder conviction—the first in Connecticut in which there was no body. The following year, Crafts was sentenced to 50 years in state prison. In 2001, he sought release for treatment for Hepatitis C. He was denied. Crafts, 75, is currently incarcerated at the MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution in Suffield.

The Preppy Rapist, 1986–1997

Alex Kelly, a former high-school wrestling star at Darien High School, raped two teenage girls four days apart in 1986, but would elude justice for more than a decade. In 1987, just as his trial was about to start, Kelly fled the country. He spent the next eight years as an affluent fugitive—using his wealthy parents' money to finance a life of skiing, hang gliding and mountain climbing. After local police charged his parents with obstruction, Kelly surrendered in Switzerland in 1995, and after a mistrial in 1996, was finally convicted in 1997 and sentenced to 16 years. At a parole hearing in 2005, Kelly attributed the rapes to his "hypercompetitive" nature and sense of entitlement. Parole was denied. With time off for good behavior (a system that has since been abolished), he served only 10 years of his sentence and was released from the Bridgeport Correctional Center in 2007 at age 40. He was required to pay a \$10,000 fine, perform 200 hours of community service (although the judge's suggestion that the community service be performed at a rape crises center was widely condemned), wear an electronic monitoring device and abstain from alcohol. He will be on probation until 2017. He currently resides in Darien, according to the State of Connecticut Sex Offender Registry.

Murder of Joyce Aparo, 1987–1998

In August 1987, the body of Joyce Aparo, a Glastonbury woman who worked in health care and human services, was found dead under a bridge in Massachusetts. The prime suspect was her 16-year-old daughter Karin's boyfriend, Dennis Coleman, 19. He admitted to strangling Joyce and dumping her body, pleaded guilty and

was sentenced to 34 years in prison.

But suspicion soon shifted to Karin herself. Letters she wrote to Coleman seemed to implicate her in the deed—in one she told Coleman they would be "together in hell. Forever." After Coleman was convicted, Karin Aparo was tried for conspiracy to commit murder and Coleman was the star witness against her. He testified that he hatched the murder plot with Karin's full knowledge and acceptance. Her mother, Coleman claimed, was trying to keep the teenagers apart, and instead was pushing Karin to date the son of her violin teacher. However, Karin was already involved with the young violinist, who was eight years older than her, and had been noting the number of times they had sex in her diary. Karin's defense attorney claimed Joyce Aparo had been physically and psychologically abusive. In June 1990, the jury acquitted her of being an accessory to murder and announced it was deadlocked on the lesser conspiracy charge. The decision sparked a storm of protest, but the conspiracy charge was never retried, and Karin Aparo was free. Dennis Coleman was released on May 8.

L'Ambiance Plaza Collapse, 1987

On an April afternoon a quarter-century ago, three slabs of a building under construction in Bridgeport collapsed. In an eerie precursor to 9/11, the slabs telescoped straight down. When the telltale rumbling began, some workers jumped, some were crushed in the debris. Twenty-eight construction workers died. The worst construction accident in the history of Connecticut, L'Ambiance Plaza prompted five separate investigations and eventually led to a host of new construction regulations and a seven-year statewide moratorium on the "lift-slab" method of construction—in which floors are built on the ground then lifted into place. The method, with additional safeguards in place, was made legal again in 1994. A record \$41 million settlement with the families of the injured and deceased was reached in 1988. No criminal charges were filed.

Sheff v. O'Neill, 1989–1996

In 1989, children attending public



Alex Kelly

Karin Aparo

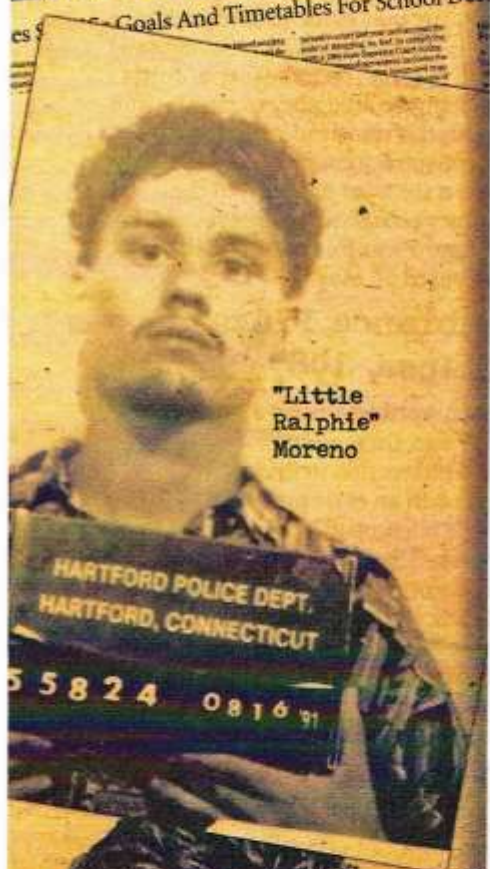
L'Ambiance Plaza



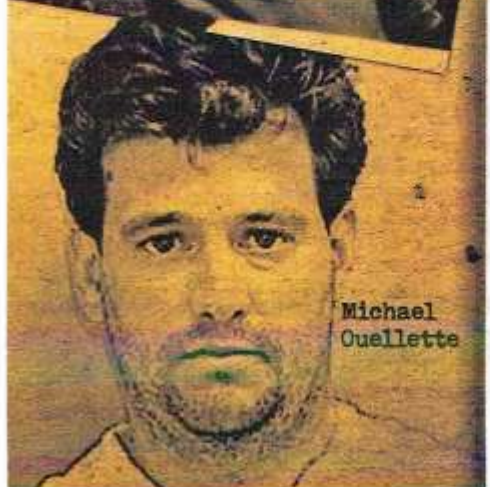
Elizabeth Sheff

SHEFF VS. O'NEIL LAWSUIT SETTLES

Goals And Timetables For School Desegregation



"Little Ralphie" Moreno



Michael Ouellette

school in Hartford (represented in name by Milo Sheff) sued state officials (embodied by Governor William O'Neill), claiming that they were receiving a substandard education due to racial segregation. The complaint stated that "The State of Connecticut, by tolerating school districts sharply separated along racial, ethnic and economic lines, has deprived the plaintiffs and other Hartford children of their rights to an equal educational opportunity, and to a minimally adequate education—rights to which they are entitled under the Connecticut Constitution and Connecticut Statutes." The children lost the original case, but in 1996 their appeal resulted in a landmark victory for civil rights when the Connecticut Supreme Court found Hartford's school districting unconstitutional. The Sheff decision led to the call to open new magnet schools and expand the school options available to children through the Open Choice program. The state still has a long way to go. Hartford area magnet schools were swamped with applicants for the 2012-2013 school year, and turned down more than 11,000 in the first-round lottery.

Gang Crackdown, 1994-1996

In March 1994, 7-year-old Marcelina Delgado was killed in a drive-by shooting as she napped in her father's car, which was parked at the Latin Kings-controlled Charter Oak project in Hartford. She was literally caught in the crossfire of warfare between the Kings and Los Solidos, whose gunmen thought the car belonged to a Latin King. Her death galvanized the federal anti-gang initiative in Hartford. Ralph "Little Ralphie" Moreno received a life sentence for the shooting and is incarcerated in the Federal Correctional Institution in Otisville, NY.

David Messenger Insanity Defense, 1998-2001

Wives killed by their husbands are always made-for-TV-movie fodder, but the case of David Messenger was particularly notable, both for its brutality and its aftermath.

In 1998, Messenger beat his pregnant wife, Heather, to death with a wood post and a fireplace poker at their home

in Chaplin. His 5-year-old son was a witness, and her death was recorded on a 911 call. His defense claimed he suffered from a psychotic delusion that he was saving the Christ child from a demonically possessed pregnant woman. He was acquitted by reason of mental disease or defect and committed to Connecticut Valley Hospital in Middletown for 20 years.

Criminals are prohibited from profiting from their crimes, but Messenger, because he was acquitted, was allowed to collect more than \$400,000 in wrongful death proceeds from his wife's estate after he killed her. Reports have put the worth of his assets at \$2 million.

Last November, Messenger's doctors, saying he had been mentally stable for more than a year, requested that he be released to a residential treatment center in Hartford. In December, the Psychiatric Security Review Board decided to hold additional hearings on the request.

Michael Ouellette Priest Killing, 1999-2001

Michael Ouellette was a tragedy waiting to happen. A homeless former Marine who was suffering from paranoid schizophrenia and had been in and out of mental health centers, Ouellette had been troubled for years. In 1987, Ouellette stabbed a 17-year-old girl during a road-rage-fueled confrontation. He received a suspended sentence. He continued a downward spiral, drinking excessively and becoming ever more fearful. He believed he was receiving messages from God, and that people were trying to kill him. He was treated and released from multiple mental health facilities, but he consistently denied he was mentally ill and would take medication only briefly, if at all.

In 1999, he bludgeoned the Rev. Robert Lysz to death inside St. Matthew Church in Bristol. During his trial, his defense claimed Lysz had become part of his paranoid delusions. Ouellette's family had been members of the church for close to a decade when they lived in Bristol—he took his first communion and was confirmed there—and as he spiraled into mental illness, Ouellette fixated on Catholicism. In 1997 he flew to Rome to meet Pope John Paul

II. Ouellette has said that when he encountered Lysz on that fateful day, he thought Lysz was an agent of Satan. After a struggle, Ouellette grabbed a nearby candlestick and beat Lysz to death. He spent the night in the church with Lysz's corpse, and in the morning was found wandering nearby, bloody and disguised in the priest's clothing.

In 2001, a three-judge panel rejected Ouellette's insanity plea and convicted him of murder. The following year, he was sentenced to 60 years in prison. In 2004, the Connecticut Supreme Court upheld his conviction. He is currently incarcerated at MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution in Suffield. His term ends in 2059. He is not eligible for parole.

Mafia Initiation Tapes, 1991

The Mafia is known for closely guarding its secrets, but in 1991 a clandestine recording of a secret initiation ceremony helped bring down the Patriarca crime family, the most powerful in New England since World War II. On the recording, made in a Boston-area home in October 1989, new members of the Patriarca family engaged in ceremonial rites and swore an oath of allegiance. The tape—the first-ever recording of a mob initiation—was entered into evidence in the 1991 trial of eight Patriarca family associates in Hartford. The trial was the longest and most sensational Mafia trial in the state's history, and the tape was its riveting centerpiece—the jury even had it replayed during deliberations. All eight of the defendants were convicted of charges that included murder and racketeering.

Terry Johnson Commuted Death Sentence, 1991–2000

Terry Johnson and his brother, Duane, were in the process of stealing guns from a sporting goods store in North Windham when state trooper Russell Bagshaw stumbled upon them during a routine patrol. Terry Johnson fired 17 hollow-point bullets at Bagshaw's cruiser and the trooper died without having unholstered his weapon. In 1992, Johnson pleaded guilty to capital murder and in 1993 was sentenced to death. (His brother received a 60-year sentence.)

However, in 2000, in a 4-3 ruling, the Connecticut Supreme Court converted the sentence to life in prison without the possibility of parole because the crime did not display the extreme pain or torture required for a death sentence. It was the first time the court overturned a death sentence since the death penalty was reinstated in 1973 after a brief hiatus. (The second came in 2004, when the court overturned the death sentence of Ivo Colon, who killed his girlfriend's 2-year-old daughter by bashing her head against a wall.) In the wake of the Johnson ruling, in 2001 the Connecticut legislature amended the death penalty statute, making killing an officer on duty sufficient cause for the death penalty to be applied. Terry Johnson is incarcerated at the Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Center in Uncasville. Duane Johnson is being held at the Cheshire Correctional Institution.

Corrupticut, 1999–2010

For a while there, Connecticut had a pretty serious run of bad luck with its public officials. In 1999, state treasurer Paul Silvestri pleaded guilty to racketeering and money laundering. In July 2001, Waterbury Mayor Philip Giordano was arrested on child-molestation charges for sexually abusing two girls. Just four months later, Bridgeport Mayor Joseph Ganim was indicted on corruption charges. Governor John Rowland called for his immediate resignation, because, you know: down with corruption! Former Rowland staff members Larry Alibozek and Peter Ellef pleaded guilty to federal corruption charges in 2003 and 2005, respectively. Rowland himself, who had paid fines for various ethics violations since 1996, resigned amid an impeachment inquiry in 2004. In 2007, Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez was brought before a grand jury on corruption charges. In 2010, he was found guilty of bribery, extortion and other charges related to taking discounted home improvements from a city contractor. He resigned from office.

Giordano was convicted in 2003 and sentenced to 37 years in prison. He appealed his conviction all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 2007 declined to hear the case. He is incarcerated in the United States Penitentiary in Marion, Ill., with a projected release date of 2033. Ganim





was convicted of bribery and other charges in 2003. He was released on probation in 2010, and earlier this year lost a bid to regain his license to practice law. In 2003, Silvestri was sentenced to 51 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release. In 2006, Ellef was sentenced to 30 months in jail. In 2007, Alibozek was sentenced to five years of probation, the first year of which was to be spent confined to his home, as well as 300 hours of community service. Rowland pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and tax fraud and in 2005 was sentenced to one year and one day in prison. He served 10 months in the Federal Correctional Institution in Loretto, Pa., and now hosts an afternoon radio show on WTIC-AM. Perez was sentenced in 2010 to three years in prison followed by three years of probation. Free on bond since his conviction, he appealed his sentence in January, asking for a reversal of his convictions and two new trials.

Firefighters' Reverse Discrimination, 2004-2011

Affirmative action was turned on its head in the case of 20 New Haven firefighters who claimed they had been the victims of reverse discrimination. The firefighters—19 white and one Hispanic—filed suit in 2004 after the city refused to honor test results in which only white candidates scored high enough to earn promotion. The Ricci v. DeStefano case reached the U.S. Supreme Court in 2009. In a 5-4 decision, the court chastised New Haven for using race to disqualify workers from promotion. New Haven reinstated the exam results and promoted 14 of the 20 firefighters. In 2011, the city agreed to pay them reparations of \$2 million, plus additional pension benefits.

Fort Trumbull Land Grab, 2001-2005

In 2001, New London ordered residents to vacate their waterfront homes on the 90-acre Fort Trumbull peninsula in order to use it as part of a redevelopment plan supported by

Pfizer, which opened a massive research facility adjacent to the contested land that same year. The city claimed the project, slated to include high-end homes, a marina and a hotel and conference center, would generate thousands of new jobs and more than \$1 million in annual tax revenue. The case—Kelo v. New London (named for lead plaintiff Susette Kelo)—went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 2005 ruled 5-4 in favor of New London, saying that the public benefit justified the takeover of private property. It was the court's first significant review of the use of eminent domain—the power of the government to seize private lands for public use—in half a century, and the first in which it considered whether eminent domain could be used for a private development that would help the local economy. Previously, eminent domain was invoked almost exclusively in the case of private land being taken to build roads or schools. In the end, it was a hollow victory. In 2009, Pfizer announced it would abandon its 750,000-square-foot New London facility. Development at the Fort Trumbull site is pending.

Legalization of Same-Sex Marriage, 2008

In October 2008, Connecticut became the third state (after Massachusetts and California) to legalize same-sex marriage, extending the same rights, protections and benefits afforded to heterosexual couples. The state made same-sex civil unions legal in 2005, but proponents of same-sex marriage had been pushing for more, and they got it as a result of Beth Kerrigan, who wanted to marry her long-term partner, Jody Mock. In 2004 they walked into the town hall in Madison and asked for a marriage license. They were turned away, and became the lead plaintiffs in the landmark constitutional case Kerrigan v. Commission of Public Health. Kerrigan and Mock were married in 2009. They reside in West Hartford with their 10-year-old twin boys. While California rescinded same-sex marriage in November 2008, it is now legal in Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York and Washington, D.C. ○

Art Heist Suspect Robert Gentile Wants Release From Prison Because Of Failing Health



HARTFORD Mobster Robert Gentile, who the FBI believes has information about the \$500 million heist at Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, is brought into the federal courthouse in Hartford in a wheelchair for a hearing on a weapons charge. CLOE POISSON|cpoisson@courant.com (Cloe Poisson/Hartford Courant)



By **Edmund H. Mahony** . Contact Reporter

Hartford gangster Robert "The Cook" Gentile, once considered law enforcement's last, best hope of unraveling the \$500 million Gardner museum art heist, has suffered from such a marked decline in health and mental deterioration that he could be released from prison.

The 80-year old mafia soldier's lawyer said the U.S. Marshal's Service, which has custody of Gentile, apparently has no institution capable of caring for Gentile in the northeast, so Gentile should be allowed to return to his home in Manchester where he would be monitored while in his family's care.

Gentile was held at the Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility in Central Falls, R.I., awaiting trial on multiple federal weapons charges, when he was rushed on August 8 to a Rhode Island hospital.

"They tried to whack me," Gentile complained at the hospital, according to a person who spoke with him. Others familiar with the events said it appears that Gentile, whose health had been failing for months, fell and was taken unconscious to the hospital.

"Wyatt will not be able to house Mr. Gentile when he is discharged from the hospital," McGuigan wrote. "The (Marshal's Service) is currently working to find a detention facility that can care for him and his medical needs, but most facilities that provide this high level of medical care to inmates are not in our immediate area, and it is likely Mr. Gentile will need to be housed several hours away from the district of Connecticut."

If Gentile were to be locked up far from Connecticut, it would be difficult for him to consult with his lawyer and prepare a defense to the weapons charges he faces.

Reputed Mobster Faces New Gun Charges In Wake Of FBI Search Of Manchester Home

Reputed Mobster Faces New Gun Charges In Wake Of FBI Search Of Manchester Home

Gentile was dismissed by law enforcement as a second rate hoodlum until 2010, when the widow of one of his mafia partners in Boston made a stunning admission that put him at the center the Gardner heist - the most expensive and one of the most baffling art robberies in history.

She told an FBI agent and the museum's security director that she had been present a half dozen or so years earlier when her husband passed two of the stolen paintings to Gentile outside a Portland, Maine hotel.

The admission was among the best breaks the Gardner investigators had obtained since March 18, 1990, when two thieves, disguised as police officers, bluffed their way into the Gardner and disappeared with 13 pieces, including "The Concert" by Vermeer and two Rembrandts, one of them his only known seascape, "Storm on the Sea of Galilee."

Since the admission, Gentile has been under enormous investigative pressure. FBI agents have torn apart his home, searching guns and art. Informants have tied him to the stolen art and recorded him agreeing to sell some of the art. FBI agents have arrested Gentile regularly since 2010 on drug and gun charges.

In spite of allegations tying him to the art and the prospect of dying of old age in prison, Gentile has refused to budge from his position that he is being "framed" and knows nothing of the robbery or the art.

Less than a week before Gentile's hospitalization, U.S. District Judge Robert N. Chatigny, who is presiding over two gun cases against Gentile, ordered him transferred to a federal prison in Massachusetts for a competency evaluation. Rhode Island officials familiar with the events said in recent days that Gentile's worsening condition and combative attitude may make a competency evaluation may impossible.

Prior to his hospitalization, Gentile who is grossly overweight, had been reduced to rolling around the Rhode Island prison in a wheel chair, those familiar with his condition said.

In his motion for release on bond, McGuigan said Gentile would agree to any restrictions the court chose to impose.

"In light of these circumstances, it is respectfully requested that the order requiring the pretrial detention of Mr. Gentile be modified so as to permit his release on bond, with or without conditions as the Court deems proper," McGuigan wrote. "In the alternative, it is requested that Mr. Gentile be released on a temporary basis to his wife at their family residence, as his medical condition constitutes a compelling reason to permit such temporary release."

The U.S. Attorney's office did not respond when asked for its position on Gentile's request for release.

New Haven Register (<http://www.nhregister.com>)

Top 10 Trials of All Time in New Haven: On eve of Cheshire Petit murder trial a look back at some notorious cases

By Randall Beach, Register Staff

Sunday, September 12, 2010

NEW HAVEN -- The much-anticipated Superior Court trial of Steven J. Hayes in the 2007 Cheshire triple-homicide case, scheduled to begin Monday, brings to mind a question: What were the 10 biggest criminal trials in the history of the city?

Some choices are easily made, such as the Black Panther trials in 1970-71 and the 2002 trial of Edward Grant, who was convicted of the 1973 murder of Concetta "Penney" Serra in the Temple Street Garage. But others are long-forgotten cases or ones that most people haven't heard of.

One or two of the following 10 trials might have to make way for what are shaping up to be the trials of this or the last century -- the Hayes trial and a separate trial next year of his co-defendant, Joshua Komisarjevsky. They are charged in the horrifying slayings of Jennifer Hawke-Petit, 48, and her two daughters, Hayley, 17, and Michaela, 11, on July 23, 2007. Hawke-Petit's husband, Dr. William Petit Jr., was beaten on the head with a baseball bat, but escaped from his burning house.

Hayes and Komisarjevsky face the death penalty if convicted.

The Top 10 list is based on interviews with local lawyers, prosecutors and historians. It is presented in chronological order.

1. Elizabeth Godman, 1651 and 1655: This was known as "The Witch Trial." Godman was "the town scold," according to one historical account. Her troubles began when she asked Mistress Hooke for a mug of home-brewed beer and the next day the whole barrel was found to be sour. Then one of Goody Thorpe's chickens died, its gizzard full of worms. The trial became a certainty when Godman argued with Mistress Bishop and Bishop's baby was born dead.

But Godman withstood the public antipathy and her first trial ended with her freed "under suspicion of witchcraft." Her second and third trials in 1655 ended the same way. After that final trial she was ordered to pay 50 pounds as security for "future good conduct."

2. Moses Paul, 1772: Paul was an American Indian who was accused of murdering Moses Cook at David Clark's Tavern in Bethany. Paul got mad when the tavern-keeper's wife refused to serve him and threw him out. Paul assaulted the next man out the door, who was Cook. The two of them had a brutal fight, with Paul prevailing via a flat iron and a club.

Paul was convicted in a daylong jury trial and sentenced to be hanged. But in his "earnest and dying request," Paul asked that a sermon be preached at his execution by the Rev. Samson Occom, a revered figure of that time. Occom delivered a fiery oration before a huge crowd at the First Congregational Church on the Green. Thousands stuck around to watch Paul's execution.

3. The Amistad captives, 1840: It was a dramatic journey that brought 53 Africans to the Elm City in 1839 for one in a series of historic trials. Sengbe Pieh, also known as Cinque, had led a mutiny aboard the ship La Amistad in Cuba to avoid a lifetime of slavery. But the Africans were captured off the coast of Long Island and taken to New Haven to face murder charges. While awaiting trial, they were incarcerated in cells overlooking the New Haven Green, where they drew great public support.

Throngs crowded into Judge Andrew Judson's New Haven courtroom on Jan. 7, 1840. On the second day

of the trial, Pieh testified, in an atmosphere of "instantaneous silence and solemnity," according to a newspaper account. After defense attorney Roger Baldwin's closing argument, Judson declared the captives were indeed from Africa and not under Cuban jurisdiction. He ordered that they be returned to Africa.

But first the defendants had to win another round, in the U.S. Supreme Court, where they were again victorious. The case was an early victory for abolitionists. The story has become more widely known in recent years, with erection of a Pieh statue in front of City Hall, the creation of a replica of the *Amistad*, whose home berth is in New Haven Harbor, and a movie by Steven Spielberg.

4. James Malley Jr., Walter Malley and Blanche Douglass, 1882 (the Jennie Cramer murder): This was one of the most notorious crimes of its time. On Aug. 6, 1881, a fisherman found the body of a young woman floating on the West Haven shore. She was Cramer, the 20-year-old daughter of a German immigrant and his wife.

James Malley Jr., nephew of wealthy dry goods store owner Edward Malley, and Walter Malley, who was Edward Malley's son, were charged with murder. James Jr. had had a romantic interest in Cramer. The Malleys were usually accompanied by Douglass, whom Walter had met in New York.

Prosecutor Tilton Doolittle charged Cramer had been poisoned with arsenic and he unveiled medical records to show she had been raped. The jury acquitted the defendants in less than an hour. But allegations that the Malleys had bought their freedom dogged the family for decades.

5. Estelle T. Griswold and Dr. Charles Lee Buxton, 1962: At that time, an 1879 state law still was in place (but generally not enforced), making it illegal for anyone, even married couples, to use birth control drugs or devices, or to give medical information and advice about birth control. In November 1961, Griswold, executive director of the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, and Buxton, chairman of Yale's obstetrics department, opened a birth control clinic in New Haven. Several days later they were arrested during a police raid.

The defendants' attorney, Catherine Roraback, argued the law violated freedom of speech, but the trial judge disagreed. The two were found guilty of violating the state law and fined \$100 each. Ultimately they won their appeal in the U.S. Supreme Court: a landmark decision establishing the right of privacy and a forerunner to the *Roe v. Wade* ruling declaring that the constitutional right to privacy extends to a woman's decision to have an abortion.

6. The Black Panther trials, 1970-71: The whole world was watching, or so it seemed, when three members of the militant Black Panther Party went on trial for the murder of Alex Rackley, whose body was found in a Middlefield swamp in 1969. The Panthers, convinced that Rackley was a government informant, had ordered Warren Kimbro and George Sams to shoot him. Kimbro and Sams confessed and plea-bargained, agreeing to serve as witnesses.

Lonnie McLucas, Ericka Huggins and Panther Party Chairman Bobby Seale went on trial in the New Haven courthouse on Elm Street. They had a lot of company outside: in May 1970, about 15,000 protesters jammed the New Haven Green, while 2,500 National Guardsmen were kept stationed nearby. McLucas was found guilty only of conspiracy to commit murder and sentenced to serve 15 years in prison. Seale and Huggins went on trial in November 1970 but it took so long to find a jury that evidence was not heard until February 1971. The charges were dismissed three months later when the jurors could not reach a unanimous verdict.

7. Guillermo Aillon, 1973, 1979, 1984: Aillon's estranged wife, Barbara, and her parents, George and Bernice Montano, were found stabbed to death in their North Haven home in August 1972. About an hour later, North Haven police stopped Aillon for having a noisy muffler and noticed a bloody knife in the back seat. Aillon said he had used it to cut roast beef at a family picnic; the officers, unaware of the slayings, let him go.

Aillon was convicted of the murders in 1973 but this was overturned by the state Supreme Court because the trial judge had conversed with a juror during deliberations. A second trial in 1979 ended with a hung jury. But a third jury convicted Aillon in 1984. He is serving a sentence of 75 years to life.

8. James Fleming Jr., trials in 1992, 1993: When the body of Christian Prince, a 19-year-old Yale

sophomore, was found in front of St. Mary's Church on Hillhouse Avenue in the early morning hours of Feb. 17, 1991, it shook the Yale community and the public. Although a suspect, 17-year-old Fleming, was caught, there was no clear resolution despite two trials.

After a key witness recanted his police statement that Fleming had shouted, "I should shoot this cracker!" and then did so, the first jury in May 1992 found Fleming guilty of conspiracy to commit robbery but not guilty of murder. Jurors could not agree on felony murder (murder during commission of a felony) and attempted robbery. In March 1993 a second jury found Fleming not guilty of felony murder and attempted robbery. He received a nine-year sentence for the conspiracy conviction.

Prince's shooting death spurred Yale officials to install new emergency street lamps and late-night shuttle buses that continue to this day.

9. Edward Grant, 2002: The reputation of downtown New Haven and its parking garages for being "unsafe" lingers in no small part because of the brutal daytime stabbing death of 21-year-old Concetta "Penney" Serra in the Temple Street Garage on July 16, 1973.

Although there were other prominent suspects in the slowly unfolding case, Edward Grant, 56, of Waterbury, was finally charged with Serra's murder in June 1999. A thumbprint from a tissue box found in Serra's car matched one Grant had given during a 1994 domestic violence arrest. His DNA then was found to match blood on a handkerchief found near Serra's keys.

On May 28, 2002, after listening to evidence for almost a month and deliberating for nearly three days, a jury found Grant guilty of Serra's murder. He was sentenced to serve 20 years to life in prison.

10. Jonathan Mills, 2004: In one of the most brutal and shocking crimes ever seen in Connecticut, drug abuser Mills, 27, fatally stabbed his former aunt by marriage, Katherine "Kitty" Kleinkauf, and her two children, Rachael Crum, 6, and Kyle Redway, 4, in their Guilford home. The crime occurred in December 2000. Mills also strangled 20-year-old Mindy Leigh at the Guilford Fairgrounds in October 2000.

Mills went through a six-week trial in which State's Attorney Michael Dearington sought the death penalty. His opponent in the courtroom was Public Defender Thomas Ullmann; the two are meeting again Monday in the Hayes trial.

The jury delivered a guilty verdict in September 2004 after three days of deliberations. But in the penalty phase, the jurors spent five days before deciding not to have Mills put to death. Judge Jon C. Blue, also the judge who will preside in the Hayes case, sentenced Mills to three consecutive life sentences without the possibility of release, plus 20 years.

Call Randall Beach at 203-789-5766.

URL: <http://www.nhregister.com/general-news/20100912/top-10-trials-of-all-time-in-new-haven-on-eve-of-cheshire-petit-murder-trial-a-look-back-at-some-notorious-cases>

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MISCHIEF, MAYHEM, MURDER

Time has a way of muting the horror of some crimes.

So a woman like Amy Archer-Gilligan — who blithely poisoned her husband and some of the gentle, elderly people in her care — later could become the subject of a comic play.

And maybe we chuckle today that Joseph "Mad Dog" Taborsky, a wanton murderer who died in the electric chair, was nabbed in part by a footprint left by his size 12 shoe.

Some criminals actually win our admiration — the 18th-century counterfeiter whose engraving skill helped him create the first map of the newly minted United States, the gutsy spinster sisters who refused to pay their taxes and became a rallying cry for women's suffrage, the Yale chaplain who stood with students opposed to the draft, refusing to desert them "in their hour of conscience."

But the shocking indifference and callous brutality of so many crimes never seems to fade, even when their victims and generations of their descendants are long gone. Here are just some of the crimes that have shaken Connecticut in the past 250 years.

— NANCY SCHOEFFLER

1700s

Abel Buell

Although convicted of counterfeiting as a young man in 1764, this Killingworth man went on to become an inventor and entrepreneur and to engrave the first U.S.-made map of the new United States. For more, courant.com/250-buell

Hannah Occuish

Hannah was just 12 years old when she was hanged in 1786 for killing a 6-year-old who got her in trouble for taking some of her strawberries. She was the last female criminal to be executed in Connecticut, and possibly the youngest person ever in the United States. courant.com/250-hannah



Richard Brunton

Brunton created an elaborate engraving of the infamous Old New-Gate Prison, where he was sentenced to hard labor after his 1799 conviction for counterfeiting. courant.com/250-brunton



1800s

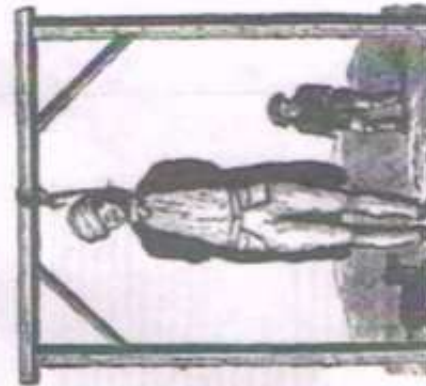
Abby and Julia Smith

The Smith sisters' refusal to pay when Glastonbury town fathers raised taxes for widows and unmarried women, but not for men, thrust the two spinsters into the national limelight in the 1870s and made



Oliver Watkins

Watkins, a Brooklyn, Conn., man believed to have been driven to murder by a "temptress" named Waiya Preston, was convicted of strangling his wife, Roxana, in 1829. Several thousand men, women and children turned out to watch Watkins hang in 1831. The raucous event was the last public hanging in



Herbert Hayden

The lengthy trial of the Rev. Hayden for the 1878 murder of a young North Madison woman who believed she was pregnant by him ended in a hung jury. One of the jurors later said they didn't want to convict a man with such a beautiful wife. courant.com/250-hayden



John Cronin

Cronin, who killed his South Windsor employer at the breakfast table in 1893 because he was angry about a joke made at his



The Hartford Courant

POLICE BELIEVE ARCHER HOME FOR AGED A MURDER FACTORY
MRS. ARCHER - GILLIGAN ACCUSED OF MURDER OF INMATE
AUTOPSY SHOWS TWO WHO DIED WERE KILLED BY POISON



U.S. POLICE CHARGE PRISONERS
IN CONNECTION TO BE CONSIDERED
 Mrs. Archer and Gilligan are charged with the murder of two inmates of the Connecticut State Prison. The autopsy of the two inmates showed they were killed by poison.



NEW LIFE SENTENCE
UNDER 20 YEARS
 Mrs. Archer and Gilligan are charged with the murder of two inmates of the Connecticut State Prison. The autopsy of the two inmates showed they were killed by poison.

Amy Archer-Gilligan

The inspiration for the comedy "Arsenic and Old Lace," Archer-Gilligan was sentenced in 1917 to die by hanging but ultimately lived out her years in a state hospital for the insane. It's believed that the Windsor woman might have poisoned as many as 20 people. [courant.com/250-archer-gilligan](#)

Gerald Chapman

After escaping from federal prison in Atlanta, where he was serving a 25-year sentence for a \$2.4 million postal truck heist and becoming something of a national celebrity dubbed "Public Enemy No. 1," Chapman ultimately was hanged in 1926 for killing a New Britain police officer during the failed burglary of a department store. Thought to be a dashing gentleman, Chapman swore profusely at the hangman. [courant.com/250-chapman](#)



Frank Wojculewicz

Wojculewicz of New Britain shot and killed a police officer and a bystander during a robbery attempt in 1951. Paralyzed during the gun battle with police that followed, he was electrocuted in 1959 in a semi-prone position.



Joseph Taborsky

Taborsky, who was executed in 1960 after a three-month murderous robbery spree with

accomplice Arthur Culombe, actually was on death row twice. [courant.com/250-deathpenalty](#)

Lorne Acquin

Until the 2012 Newtown shootings, Acquin's 1977 slaying of his foster brother's wife, their seven children and a young family friend in Prospect was the largest mass murder in Connecticut history. [courant.com/250-acquin](#)

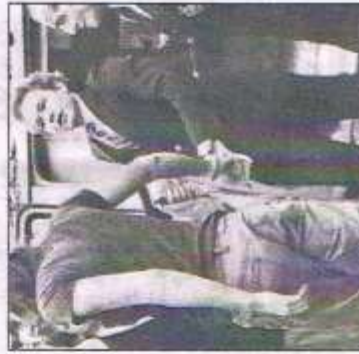
George Reardon

The West Hartford endocrinologist used a so-called growth study he ran at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center from the 1960s to 1990s as a pretext to sexually abuse and take obscene photographs of hundreds of children. The explicit photographs — discovered behind a false wall at his former house after his death in 1998 — led to hundreds of lawsuits against the hospital.



Arne Johnson

Johnson, who was convicted of the 1981 stabbing death of Alan Bono, claimed that he was possessed by the devil at the time of the killing. It was the first time



in the United States that someone tried to use demonic possession as a defense. [courant.com/250-johnson](#)



Victor Gerena

Young Puerto Rican militants called Los Macheteros stole \$7 million from a Wells Fargo depot in West Hartford in 1983, declaring that they would use it in their war for independence. It was, at the time, the largest cash robbery in U.S. history. The money and Gerena, the Wells Fargo inside man from Hartford who took it, have never been found.

Richard Crafts

Crafts was convicted of killing a wife, Helle, in 1986 and using a wood chipper to dispose of her body. It was the first time in state history that a murder case was tried without a body and probably the first criminal case in which DNA evidence was used.



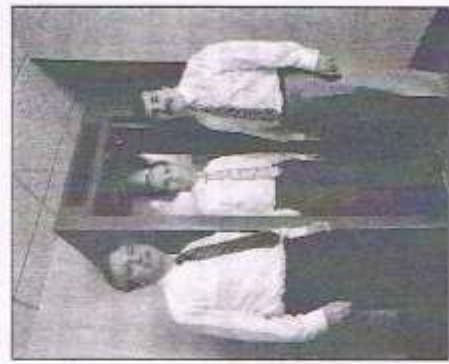
Alex Kelly

The high school wrestler from Darien fled to Europe after the 1986 rape of a 16-year-old girl. He was tried and convicted more than

a decade later. [courant.com/250-kelly](#)

Jorge Rivera

In the early to mid-1990s, Hartford's streets erupted in violence led by rival gangs, the Latin Kings and Los Solidos. Dozens of people were killed, including gang members and innocent bystanders. Los Solidos leader Rivera was sentenced to 13 life sentences.



Colonial Realty

Colonial Realty co-founders Jonathan Googel and Benjamin Sisti went to prison in 1995 on fraud convictions for a Ponzi scheme that cost 6,800 investors millions of dollars. Their partner, Frank Shuch, killed himself in 1992, just three months before he was to stand trial. [courant.com/250-colonial](#)

Matthew Beck

Angry about an unresolved grievance over his job duties and pay, Beck methodically executed four people at state lottery headquarters in 1998 before killing himself. At the time, it was the deadliest workplace slaughter in the state's history.

Philip A. Giordano

During a covert corruption probe of Giordano, investigators discovered in 2001 that the Waterbury mayor was sexually assaulting two young girls. Convicted on federal charges of using the power of his office to violate the girls' civil rights, he was sentenced to 37 years in prison. He also pleaded no contest to state assault charges.

Julio Camacho

As part of a federal corruption probe of the Hartford Police Department that resulted in seven cops being convicted of sexual crimes, the former officer was sentenced in 2001 to 10 years in federal prison for raping a woman while on duty. courant.com/250-corrupt

Bruce E. Ivins

Ivins killed himself as authorities were getting ready to indict him for the 2001 anthrax attacks, which claimed the lives of 94-year-old Otilie Lundgren of Oxford and four others. The FBI's investigation of the attacks remains open. courant.com/250-anthrax

Michael Ross

Ross, who was convicted of kidnapping and strangling four young women and admitted killing four others, gave up his appeals in 2004. He was put to death in 2005 by lethal injection, the 158th person to be executed in Connecticut. courant.com/250-deathpenalty



Steven Hayes and

Joshua Komisarjevsky

Career criminals Hayes and Komisarjevsky remain on death row for killing Jennifer Hawke-Petit and her daughters, Hayley and Michaela, during a 2007 home invasion in Cheshire. With the memory of the Cheshire slayings fresh, state lawmakers repealed the death penalty in 2011 but insisted that inmates already on death row remain eligible for execution. courant.com/250-deathpenalty

Omar Thornton

Allegedly consumed by a belief that his co-workers at Hartford Distributors in Manchester were racist, the truck driver shot and killed eight people there in 2010 before killing himself as police closed in.

Adam Lanza

The 20-year-old gunman in the horrifying December 2012 rampage that left 20 students and six educators dead at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown also killed his mother and himself.



FROM
THE
VAULT

Connecticut Historical Society
Museum & Library
The Courant 250th YEARS

NOTORIOUS CRIMES AND PUNISHMENT

The Connecticut Historical Society is partnering with The Courant to give readers a peek at some of the items in its collection that aren't usually on display to the public. Each month, the society will launch a new collection based on The Courant's 250th anniversary theme. April's theme reflects on crimes both heinous and intriguing — stretching all the way back to the witches who faced prosecution in the early days of the colony to the efforts and technology of modern-day crime fighting.

Visit courant.com/vault for more photos and a video about the historical society's collection.



CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THESE PORTRAITS of Major Reuben Humphreys and his wife, Anna, were done by Richard Brunton, a convict at the old Newgate Prison in East Granby. Reuben Humphreys was appointed superintendent of the prison in 1796; Brunton, an engraver, was sentenced to the prison for counterfeiting.

Mrs. Archer-Gilligan
Arrested, Charged
with Murder

The Hartford Courant

Fair Today and
Tomorrow

Established 1794. VOL. 122(55). LXXX

HARTFORD, CONN., TUESDAY MORNING, MAY 8, 1916—22 PAGES

PRICE 5 CENTS

POLICE BELIEVE ARCHER HOME FOR AGED A MURDER FACTORY MRS. ARCHER - GILLIGAN ACCUSED OF MURDER OF INMATE AUTOPSY SHOWS TWO WHO DIED WERE KILLED BY POISON

U. S. ACCEPTS GERMAN PROMISE: NO CONDITION TO BE CONSIDERED

Wilson, in Brief Note Cabled Last Night, Informs Berlin Government That Differences With Other Belligerents Cannot Form Subject of Discussion With Germany.

Washington, May 7.—A note received by the department yesterday from the German government states that the German government is willing to accept the terms of the peace conference, provided that the conference is held in a neutral city, and that the conference is held in a neutral city, and that the conference is held in a neutral city.

FOUR MORE IRISH LEADERS EXECUTED

Nineteen Others Condemned to Death But Sentences Are Commuted.

London, May 7.—Four more of the leaders of the Irish revolution have been executed in Dublin today.



Mrs. Archer-Gilligan

Mrs. Gilligan, Arrested at Her Home Late Yesterday Afternoon, Withstands Grilling by State Police—Body of Franklin R. Andrews, Whom She is Accused of Killing, Disinterred from its Resting Place in Cheshire Cemetery at Night, Shows Death Was Caused by Arsenic, Not Gastric Ulcers, as Stated in Death Certificate—Another Body Also Shows Death by Poison.

MAY BE 20 WHO HAVE BEEN POISONED

Old Folks Have Come to the Home From All Parts of the State—Woman Has Had Two Husbands—Startling Number of Deaths at Home—Purchases of Arsenic at Windsor Drug Store—Woman Waives Examination—Bodies Taken Away at Night in Violation of Law

Charged with the murder of an inmate of her home for elderly people, and believed by the authorities to have poisoned many other inmates, Mrs. Amy E. Archer-Gilligan of Windsor was arrested late yesterday afternoon by Captain of State Police Robert T. Harney at the Archer Home on Prospect street, Windsor.

WINDSOR WOMAN POISONED THOSE IN HER CARE

Room And Board & Arsenic

By DAVID OWENS
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For a fee, Amy Archer-Gilligan promised to care for the elderly tenants of her Windsor home until they died.

Some inmates, as tenants at the time were called, paid a flat sum of \$1,000 for life. Some arranged to leave their estates to Archer-Gilligan. Others paid a weekly fee.

For those who made weekly payments, there was an added benefit: Archer-Gilligan might not murder them.

The Archer Home for Elderly and

**250
YEARS
MOMENTS
IN HISTORY**

Indigent Persons at 37 Prospect St. operated from the fall of 1907 until May 8, 1916, the day that state police arrived in Windsor to question Archer-Gilligan, search the home and ultimately arrest her for the murder of Franklin R. Andrews, an inmate who

had died on May 30, 1914.

"Police Believe Archer Home For Aged A Murder Factory," read the lead headline in the next morning's Courant. "Mrs. Archer-Gilligan Accused Of

KILLINGS, A6

Killings

Continued from Page A1

Murder Of Innate. Autopsy Shows Two Who Died Were Killed By Poison.

Archer-Gilligan reacted calmly to her arrest. "I will prove my innocence, if it takes my last mill," she told the arresting officers. "I am not guilty and I will hang before they prove it."

A Suspicious Loan

Andrews' sister became suspicious about her brother's death. As The Courant noted in its Page 1 story on May 9, 1916, "The arrest of the Windsor woman yesterday is the result of the suspicions aroused when Mrs. Nellie E. Pierce of No. 205 Vine St., Hartford, found in the effects of her brother, Franklin R. Andrews, died at the Archer House, a letter from Mrs.

Archer-Gilligan asking for a loan, 'as near \$1,000 as possible,' about which the woman had said nothing to her."

Pierce questioned Archer-Gilligan about the loan and, at first, she denied receiving one. Later, Archer-Gilligan said it was a gift of \$500. After a lawyer hired by Pierce demanded the return of the money, Archer-Gilligan paid it back, "not because she could not keep it but because she did not feel it worth quarreling over," The Courant reported.

The questions continued. Andrews, 61, had been in good health and, on the day of his death, had been "seen about the Archer House as usual." The Courant reported. "He spent part of the day working on the lawn at the place." He was dead before midnight.

Pierce became suspicious weeks later after finding the letter seeking a loan. She took her concerns about what was going on at the Archer home to Hartford State's Attorney Hugh M. Alcorn and, after apparently

The Courant.

Sherman, intrigued by what Pierce told him and other rumors he had heard about the Archer home, assigned Aubrey Muddock, the assistant city editor, to investigate what was happening in Windsor.

Using death certificates, then and now public documents, The Courant investigators determined that 60 people had died at the Archer House since its opening in 1907. "Forty-eight of them, a number declared to be far in excess of the normal death rate at an institution of this kind, have been reported since January 1, 1911," The Courant reported. Only 10 or 12 people lived at the home at a time.

The reporters also determined, again using public documents, that Archer-Gilligan had purchased substantial quantities of arsenic at pharmacies in Windsor and Hartford, which she said was to deal with a rat problem. The Windsor pharmacy was also selling Archer-Gilligan morphine, which she consumed with regularity.

Among the 60 people who had died at the Archer House was James Archer, Archer-Gilligan's first husband, and Michael Gilligan, who died less than three months after marrying Archer-Gilligan. He left her an estate of about \$4,000.

The Courant presented its evidence to the governor, and state police began a quiet investigation into the doings of Archer-Gilligan at her Windsor home.

During that investigation, the remains of two of Archer-Gilligan's tenants were exhumed, including that of Andrews. Later, three more bodies were exhumed.

'Old People'

On the day of her arrest, police asked Archer-Gilligan about the excessive number of deaths in her home. She replied: "Well, we didn't ask them to come here but we do the best we can for them. They are old people, and

And when asked about the financial arrangements she made with her inmates, she said she barely got by. "I am a poor, hard-working woman and I can't understand why I am persecuted as I have been during the last few years. This is a Christian work and one that is very trying as we have to put up with lots of things on account of the peculiarities of the old people."

Andrews' body had been buried in a Cheshire cemetery for two years when he was dug up on May 2, 1916, a week before Archer-Gilligan's arrest for his murder.

Capt. Robert T. Hurley of the state police testified at Archer-Gilligan's trial that he and the doctors who examined Andrews' body arrived at the cemetery about 9 p.m. The grave had already been opened by cemetery workers.

"The box was taken from the grave," The Courant reported on June 26, 1917, during the trial. "It was taken with the body from the grave and carried by the handles to the tool house. The body was well preserved, as was the clothing. The stomach, before the autopsy, appeared to be bloated."

Dr. Arthur J. Wolff performed the autopsy by the light of two lanterns. He removed several organs, including the stomach. Further analysis revealed the presence of arsenic.

A former tenant, Loren B. Gowdy, 71, testified at Archer-Gilligan's trial that he and his wife, Alice Graham Gowdy, 69, inquired about moving into the Archer House in May 1914. The couple wanted to move into the room occupied by Andrews and a roommate on June 1, and Archer-Gilligan told them that she could arrange it.

Andrews died on May 30, 1914. On May 31, 1914, Archer-Gilligan sent a telegram to the Gowlys telling them that their room was ready. The Gowlys moved into

Trial

Continued from Page A6

later and Archer-Gilligan received payment of \$1,000, \$500 for each. Alice Gowdy died on Dec. 4, 1914, and after her body was exhumed, arsenic was detected in her body.

Loren Gowdy moved out of the Archer House and was alive two years later to testify against Archer-Gilligan at her trial.

Although she was tried only for the murder of Andrews, Archer-Gilligan had been indicted for the poisoning murders of five people: Andrews; Alice Gowdy; Archer-Gilligan's second husband, Michael Gilligan; Charles A. Smith, who died on April 9, 1914; and Maud Howard Lynch, who died on Feb. 2, 1916. All but Lynch died of arsenic poisoning. Lynch was poisoned by strychnine. Authorities suspected that Archer-Gilligan actually killed at least 20 of her tenants.

Insanity Defense

The trial began on June 21, 1917, in Hartford. Alcorn was the prosecutor, and Benedict M. Holden defended Archer-Gilligan. The trial drew large crowds and was covered widely in the press.

One of the people who followed the case was playwright Joseph Kesselring, who took inspiration from the Archer-Gilligan case in writing "Arsenic and Old Lace."

On July 13, the jury began deliberating and took only four hours to find Archer-Gilligan guilty.

Archer-Gilligan was sentenced to die by hanging on Nov. 6, 1917. Meanwhile, her lawyers appealed. Gov. Marcus H. Holcomb granted a reprieve as the appeal progressed.

The Supreme Court of Errors, as it was known, found that the trial judge had erred and ordered a new trial. The second trial began in Middletown on June 12, 1919, and her lawyers mounted an insanity defense.

The trial came to an abrupt end on July 1, 1919, when Archer-Gilligan pleaded guilty to second-degree murder.

Alcorn insisted that Archer-Gilligan was guilty of premeditated murder and expressed confidence that the jury would agree, but he agreed to the plea to second-degree murder.

The defense offered psychiatrists and psychologists, who were then known as alienists, to testify to Archer-Gilligan's mental illness. They also brought up Archer-Gilligan's use of morphine.

"We believed and still believe, her mentality of such a grade that, aggravated by her use of morphine, as the evidence showed, she was not capable of premeditating the murder of Franklin R. Andrews to the extent that it could be called first-degree murder," Holden said.

In accepting the plea, Judge John E. Kiehl said: "I am satisfied that, from the evidence they have heard and from my instructions to

them, the jury would have been satisfied that during the period when she is claimed to have planned and executed the murder of Franklin R. Andrews, there were some doubts as to her sanity, her ability to premeditate and act with the expressed malice the law demands for murder in the first degree."

Archer-Gilligan was immediately sentenced to life in prison and began her sentence at the state prison in Wethersfield.

Five years later, on July 17, 1924, Archer-Gilligan was declared insane and transferred to the "state hospital for the insane at Middletown."

Playwright Kesselring traveled to Hartford to meet with Alcorn, who gave Kesselring access to court records. Kesselring was struck by the extraordinary image of a sweet, church-going lady quietly poisoning people off. The Courant reported in 1974, as Hartford Stage presented "Arsenic and Old Lace."

Alcorn attended the comedy's premier on Broadway in 1941 and didn't care for the show. "He couldn't understand all the laughter over something he thought was a deadly serious matter," one of his sons told The Courant.

Archer-Gilligan spent the remaining 38 years of her life at Connecticut Valley Hospital, where she died on April 23, 1962, at the age of 94.

Hospital officials described her as a quiet and cooperative patient. In its April 24, 1962, report on Archer-Gilligan's death, The Courant reported: "Mostly she sat in a chair, dressed in a black dress trimmed with lace, a Bible on her lap, and prayed."

A BEWITCHING BIT OF HISTORY

Beliefs Persist About Hangings; Evidence In Short Supply

By CINDY WOLFE BOYNTON
Special To The Courant

Trinity College senior Travis Merrill says that having a campus with an area called Gallows Hill tends to cast something of a spell.

"It can be spooky," the film major said, "but it's also really interesting to think that we're surrounded by history and that people who were accused of being witches hung from gallows built here."

A Maine native, Merrill isn't alone in believing that some or all of the 11 Connecticut residents executed for

witchcraft in the 1600s were hanged from gallows erected near what's now St. Anthony Hall by the corner of Vernon and Summit streets in Hartford.

Myths and mistruths about both the site and Connecticut's little-known witch trials are fairly common, said Trinity Librarian Richard Ross. At Gallows Hill, however, the only documented executions were of three or four British loyalists, hanged by the Patriot army during the Revolutionary War 200 years before Trinity moved there.

"One of the problems of that time period is that there wasn't a lot of consistent and systematic record-keeping," said Ross, who is

researching why so many of the approximately three dozen Connecticut residents accused and tried for witchcraft between 1647 and 1724 came from Hartford, Old Saybrook, Wethersfield and other Connecticut River valley towns.

"There are no known writings about the hangings," Ross continued, "and we don't have any first-person accounts. For some of the cases, there are detailed accounts of the indictments and convictions. But over time, many papers from 17th-century events like the witch trials have disappeared."

WITCH TRIALS, B7

Witch Trials

Continued from Page B1

One of the people working to dig out and piece together that history is Lisa Johnson, executive director of the Stanley-Whitman House in Farmington. Featuring exhibits and programs designed to educate visitors about the state's earliest days, the museum has become an "unofficial center" of primary sources related to Connecticut's witch trials, Johnson said, which predate Salem's more famous ones by almost 50 years.

Connecticut, in fact, has the dubious honor of being responsible for convicting and executing the first witch in New England and the New World, when a panel of Hartford Colony magistrates in 1647 found Alse (Alice) Young of Windsor guilty of having "consulteth with a familiar spirit" and developing a relationship with Satan.

Although accusations and trials continued into the early 18th century, Farmington resident Mary Barnes

witchcraft execution in January 1663 was Connecticut's last. Annual commemorations at the Stanley-Whitman House dedicated to Barnes include a month-long witchcraft trials exhibit, the performance of an original play about Barnes and, on milestone years like the 350th anniversary of her death in 2013, a symposium that brings together colonial New England history and witchcraft experts for panels and other discussions. The museum's most recent celebration of Barnes ended in January.

"Thankfully, about 15 years after Mary's execution, key players in the trials seemed to begin to regret what happened, and mindsets began to change," said Johnson, who frequently lectures about Barnes and the trials. "But for Mary and many of the people deeply affected by this time, we know next to nothing about them. Colonial women living under British rule didn't have assets or own property, so for many there are no records."

The majority of Connecticut witch trial documents that exist are housed in archives at the Connecticut State Library, Connecticut Historical Society and Brown University in Providence. R.I. Digital Images

of Brown's collection — which includes a detailed account of the indictment of Rebecca and Nathaniel Greensmith, a Hartford couple hanged the same day as Barnes — can be accessed from an online database.

"Two of the things we know for sure about Mary," Johnson added, "was that she was illiterate and a servant. We also know that at some point she was accused of adultery, another capital offense at the time, and she was not accepted as a member of the Farmington church, which means its congregation saw her as unworthy. She also earlier accused someone else of witchcraft, so all those things combined could have put her on the witch radar."

Like Ross, Johnson's belief is that Barnes and the majority of the other convicted witches were hanged from timber gallows erected in the Hartford Colony's south pasture, somewhere in the vicinity of today's Dutch Point, and also where Irving Street meets Albany Avenue.

"The spectacle of the event was very important in Colonial days, so it had to be in a spot where everyone in the colony would see the hanging," Ross said. "It would be

nice if more people today were interested in learning about the trials, but it seems that it's mainly descendants."

Indeed, for close to a decade now, state officials to denounce Connecticut's witch trials, but resolutions never made it out of committee. In 2012, Gov. Dannel P. Malloy turned down requests to clear the names of those condemned, saying he doesn't have the authority to pardon. Similarly, the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Pardons does not grant posthumous pardons.

"Most people think the only witch trials in New England occurred in Salem and occurred out of the blue, but really there was an undercurrent of fear about witches that the Puritans who settled here brought over from England and that had occurred over time," said Ross. "I'd like to see a memorial established for those executed, which would promote more to learn about the trials."

Trinity student Merrill, however, may not need prompting: "There's good in the world, evil in world, and it's important to understand how they've influenced people's actions throughout history."

State Drew Curtain On Public Executions

By connecticuthistory.org

Because the rural town of Brooklyn was a county seat in 1831, it wound up hosting what is widely accepted as the last public hanging in Connecticut. A jury had convicted Oliver Watkins of strangling his wife, Roxana, on the night of March 22, 1829. He was said to have been driven to murder by a "young and buxom widow of decidedly unsavory reputation." The *Courant* reported, although she was not mentioned at his trial.

Watkins, a father of five, was sentenced to hang on Aug. 2, 1831. The painful duty of carrying out the execution would have fallen to Watkins' friend Capt. David Keyes, who, according to a report in *The Courant*, did not believe his friend was guilty. But Keyes resigned as high sheriff and executioner the morning of the hanging, and a new sheriff was appointed.

At the time, public hangings still were a regular and accepted part of early American life. In addition to serving as punishment for the convicted, they acted as a macabre

form of entertainment for the community. Large crowds of men, women and even children gathered at the scaffold to cheer, joke and taunt the condemned, and strangers poured into Brooklyn from Providence, New London and as far away as Bridgeport.

Authorities believed that allowing the populace to watch criminals pay for their offenses acted as a deterrent that helped keep the peace — even if the events themselves often degenerated into raucous excuses for drinking and brawling.

Several thousand people arrived in Brooklyn to watch Watkins hang. Local tavern keepers paid a guard to watch over him and make sure he did not escape or commit suicide, which could have cut into their anticipated alcohol sales. In this almost festive atmosphere, Watkins met his fate, after which the crowd continued its celebration.

Executions Reconsidered

By the time Watkins was hanged, however, attitudes about the death penalty and

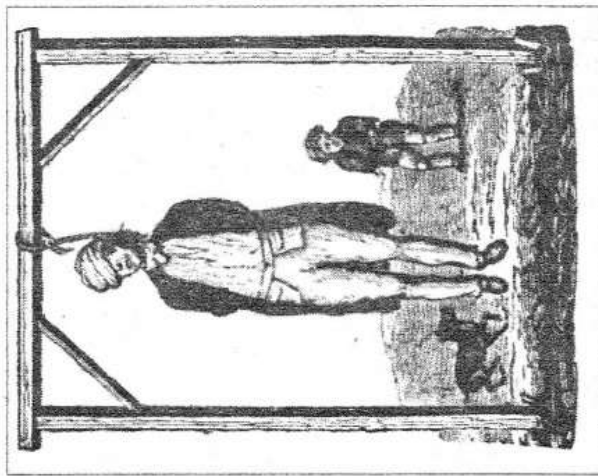
public executions had begun to change. With the spread of Enlightenment ideals, citizens began viewing public executions as barbaric and degrading. To help counter their ritualistic appeal, authorities started limiting the number of spectators allowed to view public executions.

The start of the 19th century also saw an explosion in the growth of prisons. Rapid urbanization and industrialization changed the way people viewed lawbreakers. Crime became less about sin and more about preventing violence and the loss of property.

At the same time, reformers successfully lobbied for more humane treatment for criminals. Incarceration became the preferred solution for punishing lawbreakers. With incarceration, sentences of different lengths could be made to match varying offenses.

This new awareness of human rights and the development of the U.S. penal system helped ensure the end of public and humiliating executions in Connecticut.

Courant staff writer Nancy Schoeffler contributed to this story.



COURTESY OF CONNECTICUTHISTORY.ORG
AN ILLUSTRATION of Oliver Watkins being hanged, 1831. Watkins' hanging was the last public execution. The illustration is from "A Sketch of the Life, Trial, and Execution of Oliver Watkins."

MAPPING OUT A CAREER

After Time As Counterfeiter, Abel Buell Reinvents Himself

By **NANCY SCHOEFFLER**
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In October the Library of Congress opened a new exhibition featuring the first map of the United States — the first ever to depict the Stars and Stripes. It was printed in New Haven in 1784 by a Connecticut engraver, Abel Buell, just half a year after the Treaty of Paris ended the Revolutionary War.

"A new and correct map of the United States of North America layd down from the latest observations and best author-

250
YEARS
MOMENTS
IN HISTORY

ities agreeable to the Peace of 1783. Humbly inscribed to his excellency the Governor and Company of the state of Connecticut by their most obedient and very humble servant Abel Buell."

Buell's lofty inscription on the map doesn't make note of the fact that his engraving career got off to a less than exemplary start.

Born in 1742 in Killingworth and apprenticed as a lad to a goldsmith named Ebenezer Chittenden, Buell was convicted in 1764 of counterfeiting the colony's currency.

By one account in *The Courant*, his neighbors had suspected for some time that Buell was up to some sort of crookedness, "for lights had been seen burning in a chamber of his house at uncanny hours."

The late-night light at the young man's dwelling became the talk of the town. "Finally a particularly curious person secured a ladder, and placing it against the house, crawled up to a place near the chamber window where he saw Buell industriously engaged in the work of altering the five-shilling notes."

ABEL BUELL, B10

WIRE FRAUD CASE

Tate George Sentencing Postponed

By **CHRISTOPHER KEATING**
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University of Connecticut basketball legend Tate George has been in prison for six months, but now his sentencing has been postponed for the second time until mid-May.

George was convicted in late September on four felony counts of wire fraud in connection with running a Ponzi scheme that prosecutors say could have involved as

much as \$7 million and at least 10 victims. He was originally scheduled to be sentenced in mid-January, but the court date has been postponed twice because an interview between George and his probation officer for a pre-sentence report was delayed due to snowstorms, said David E. Schafer, George's federal public defender.

The attorney said that George has been following the success of the UConn men's basketball team, but he had not seen his client since UConn qualified for the Final

Four on Sunday with a victory at Madison Square Garden.

"I saw him a couple of weeks ago," Schafer said in an interview. "I'm sure they're all watching the games at the pod. Each pod has a TV in the main room. I know they get CBS."

George, 45, is being held without bail at the minimum-security Monmouth County jail in his home state of New Jersey, which

GEORGE, B10



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

ABEL BUELL of Killingworth created this 1784 map of the United States, the first map of the new country.

Abel Buell: Nothing If Not Inventive

Continued from Page 81

Buell was turning them into five-pound notes.

Cropping And Branding

Counterfeiting was a serious crime, in some cases punishable by death. The king's prosecutor, Matthew Griswold, tried Buell's case, and he must have taken a shine to the young engraver. While Buell was sentenced to prison, cropping and branding, he actually got off quite lightly.

In cropping, a portion of a man's ear was cut off; sometimes an ear was nailed to a pillory and torn off as the criminal tried to move. But Buell reportedly had only the smallest tip of his ear clipped off, which he held on his tongue and managed to reattach. He also was branded with a hot iron on the forehead — though it's unclear whether he was branded with an "F" for forger or a "C" for counterfeiter. But again Buell's sentence was comparatively mild: The brand was made so high on his forehead that he later could conceal it with a lock of hair.

Buell first was sent to prison in Norwich, but influential friends arranged for him to be moved to the jail in Killingworth. There he invented a stone-cutting machine, called a lapidary, and presented a gold ring with stones to Griswold — his prosecutor, who later became governor of Connecticut. Legal ethics evidently were a bit more relaxed back then, and it must have been quite a ring. Shortly after receiving the gift, Griswold arranged for Buell's pardon.

Buell later worked for mapmaker Bernard Romans. Although a *Courant* story says that nothing suggests Buell had any

Buell — sent an employee to trick Buell into showing how the governor's seal on a letter could be broken, the letter opened and then resealed. Buell was ordered arrested but managed to escape back to Connecticut.

Buell was nothing if not inventive. A 1912 article in *The Courant* called him "one of the shrewdest and ablest examples of the time-honored Yankee genius that this state, or any other, has seen. If Abel had lived in these days he would have been written up in half a dozen magazines. He would doubtless have spent more or less time in jail, as he did even in those far away days, and it is not to be doubted but what he would have attracted much attention as some of our present day inventors, captains of industry, and all around shrewd men."

During the Revolution, the only type available was an expensive French variety, so Buell turned an old meeting house in New Haven into a type foundry and cast the first font of American-made type.

Buell also studied the coining of coppers and invented a machine for striking off the old-fashioned colonial pennies and minting the new state of Connecticut's first pennies. And in 1795 he built one of the first cotton mills in the state, in what is now West Haven; like many of his projects, it failed.

Some Quirks

But Buell's 1784 map of the original United States — decorated with illustrations of Minerva, the goddess of war, blowing a trumpet, and Liberty, holding a staff and a globe — is clearly his most noteworthy achievement.

It was sold at auction in 2010 to David M. Rubenstein, co-founder and managing

library's chief of the Geography and Map Division, told *The Gazette*, the library's staff newsletter, in 2011. "But first and foremost is that it is the first map of the United States by someone from the United States printed in the United States."

There are some quirks. Buell left the "New" off of New Hampshire, and he didn't identify New York state or New York City at all.

The states of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia are shown extending all the way west to the Mississippi River.

And Connecticut is depicted as split in two by New York and Pennsylvania (which is misspelled). The borders of Connecticut's western portion, according to Buell's map, run west to the Mississippi in what later would be the northern portions of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

Buell's offhand approach to spelling and his grandiose pride in his map is also evident in an early ad he published for it, in which he spells his own last name as "Buel." The ad reads, in part:

"As this MAP is the effect of the compiler's long and unwearied application, diligence and industry, and as perfection has been the great object of his labours, and it being the first ever compiled, engraved, and finished by one man, and an American, he flatters himself, that every patriotic gentleman, and lover of geographical knowledge, will not hesitate to encourage the improvements of his own country. Every favour will be most gratefully acknowledged by the public's most obedient and very humble servant, ABEL BUEL."

His hand-colored, engraved map — one of a few copies known to exist — sold

Beauty Swayed Jury In Minister's 1879 Murder Trial

By JULIE STAGIS
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The September 1878 murder of Mary Stannard of North Madison captured national attention thanks to the sensational circumstances of the mystery: At the time of her death, Stannard believed she was pregnant by the suspect, the Rev. Herbert H. Hayden.

Hayden was charged with Stannard's murder the day after her funeral, but his lengthy trial resulted in a hung jury in January 1880.

Perhaps it was a lucky break that he had a

fetching wife.

Mary Stannard, an unwed mother of a 2-year-old boy, had confided to her sister days before she was killed that she was pregnant — again — and that the father was Hayden, the local Methodist preacher.

"She indicated a purpose to destroy her own life rather than suffer the mortification of giving birth to another child," The Courant reported on Sept. 7, 1878, days after she was found dead.

On Sept. 3, Hayden stopped by and told Stannard to meet him later. He said he had

poison that could take care of the problem. Later, Stannard told her father she was going to the woods to collect blackberries.

Her father, Charles Stannard, set out to find her when she failed to return.

Mary was found dead in the Rockland area about 5 p.m. with a wound in her throat and a bruise on her head. Her hands had been crossed over her chest. An examination showed no signs of pregnancy, and "that an outrage was not committed upon her" — Stannard hadn't been raped, The Courant reported.

In the days that followed, a Courant reporter found that the supposed affair had started in the spring. Hayden's wife had asked Stannard to baby-sit the couple's three children while they attended an oyster dinner, but Hayden told his wife he was too tired to go.

Stannard came over anyway, and Hayden "had successfully made improper advances," resulting in the pregnancy.

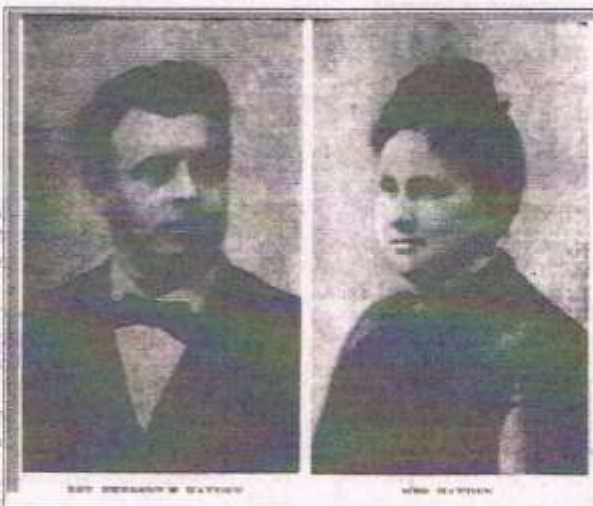
Before Hayden's arrest on Sept. 6, he was among a crew that helped Stannard's father carry Mary's body home, and he attended her funeral.

TRIAL, B9

250 YEARS

MOMENTS IN HISTORY

CONNECTICUT



HERBERT HAYDEN, left, likely owed his freedom to his wife.

Trial

Continued from Page B1

"Some of the spectators thought he betrayed unusual emotion," The Courant wrote. "The circumstances of the murder were so overwhelmingly against the clergyman that surprise was expressed that he was not at once placed in custody."

Things did not look good for Hayden.

"Of his guilt, as the case appears now, there can be very little doubt; and it looks as if he was led through fright to commit the crime of murder, and yet did it in so bungling a manner as to make it almost impossible for him to escape suspicion and arrest," The Courant wrote in the same story.

After a pretrial hearing, Hayden's case was dropped for lack of evidence, but he later was indicted on Oct. 15 by a grand jury for first-degree murder, after evidence showed that Stannard had been poisoned with arsenic. During the hearing Hayden had admitted that he had bought arsenic to kill rats.

His trial in New Haven — referred to a decade later as "the famous barn arsenic trial" because Hayden's ar-

Reflecting the high interest in the case, The Courant published several stories a week on the trial, which almost always played out in front of a full courtroom.

Hayden took the stand, and his wife, Stannard's father, Stannard's sister and more than 100 other witnesses, including 12 professors — eight of them from Yale — and 15 medical doctors, also testified.

On Jan. 19, 1880, after a reported 82 hours of deliberations, 11 jurors voted for acquittal and one, David B. Hotchkiss, maintained that Hayden was guilty. Hayden, who was about 30, was soon released on bail and never brought to trial again.

Mary Stannard's killer was never convicted.

Hayden wrote an autobiography while imprisoned, which details the trial and was released a little more than a week after it ended.

Hayden died in New Haven at 57, in 1907. Many people continued to believe he was guilty, especially Madison residents, some of whom wrote to The Courant in later years.

So, why was Hayden set free?

In 1914, more than three decades after the trial, The Courant interviewed Horace B. Perry of New Haven, the only surviving juror.

"Mrs. Hayden, the wife of the prisoner, a beggiful

A Tong War Murder At A Manchester Laundry

By **NANCY SCHOEFFLER**
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Brooklyn, Newark, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Chicago as well.

"The two years' truce of the tongs ended yesterday," The Courant reported the next day, "and the blazing pistols of Chinese gunmen spat death in six cities throughout the land."

After trailing two taxicabs across the state to New Haven, police arrested the two men, members of the On Leong tong, and charged them with murder.

In the same story, The Courant reported

that State's Attorney Hugh M. Alcorn "moved swiftly last night to stamp out the tong war."

"A speedy conviction while the war is raging, and the exaction of the death penalty, will serve as a lesson to the Chinese gunmen in this section," Alcorn said, according to the story.

The Courant reported that the two alleged killers had approached a 22-year-old taxi driver in New

Haven and offered him \$15 to drive them to Manchester and then back to Meriden, where they caught another taxi. "You're on," The Courant reported that the taxi driver said, "and his two passengers, who stand scarcely more than five feet tall, climbed in." The driver later said that one of the men carried a copy of the New York Daily News.

"This paper, drenched with blood, was found early last evening in the laundry of Ong Jing," The Courant reported. "Near it lay a .33 revolver, three of its chambers

MURDER, B3

250 YEARS
MOMENTS IN HISTORY

Murder

Continued from Page B1

empty."

The Courant's coverage of the case occasionally betrays bias and stereotyping. At their indictment, the two suspects "showed little interest in the proceedings, shuffling about like automatons as their keepers moved them about. ... They sullenly declined to answer any questions."

And in an April 13, 1927, story about the upcoming trial date and jury selection, The Courant wrote: "The Chinese, who will be the center of what may prove to be one of Connecticut's interesting trials by reason of the race and customs of the prisoners, are Chin Lung, a sullen, stocky man of 33, and Soo Hoo Wing, a pale youth of 22 with a countenance as inscrutable as his older companion's."

The state's star witness was the victim's cousin, Ong Jing, the Manchester laundryman who was also known as Sam Wong. As he was about to take the usual oath of

God. His oath may not be binding."

Once that question was resolved, Ong Jing testified that he and his cousin were still in bed when Chin Lung knocked on the door that morning.

"I thought some people were bringing in wash," he said.

Ong Jing testified that Chin Lung said "he wanted to borrow money, he wanted to clean out my money drawer." But Ong Jing said he had only \$9 in the drawer, which he needed to pay the rice man, so he didn't lend Chin Lung any money.

Moments later, Ong Jing continued, Chin Lung went into the next room and woke up Ong Ging Hem. Three shots were fired. As Chin Lung left, he flashed the gun, threatening to kill Ong Jing if he moved and saying, "Ong Ging Hem is a member of the Hip Sing tong."

Other witnesses' testimony strengthened the state's case, as The Courant put it. "Early morning workers passing in the vicinity of the Oak street laundry March 24 added little links of evidence to the chain forged by the state about the accused."

Shortly after midnight on Nov. 8, 1927, the two defendants were hanged at the

wart," while the younger Soo Hoo Wing, who insisted he was innocent, seemed "bewildered and uncertain, his eyes blood-shot from crying."

Both men had received last rites from the pastor of the Church of the Sacred Heart in Wethersfield. The Courant reported that they had been baptized in prison at the urging of Soo Hoo Wing's Japanese-American wife, Kitty Wing, who was raised a Catholic.

The Courant described with implacable precision the hangings, including such grim details as each man's slippers flying off as they were "jerked into the air" and their bodies "swirled aloft." Guards had to steady Soo Hoo Wing's body when it "whirled off at a tangent." The reporter also noted the "ghoulish touch" of the long, drawn-out moaning sound of the wind in the ventilator on the roof.

"Both men faced the execution without a murmur," The Courant reported. "They made no outcry of emotional hysteria while they waited in the death cells near the execution chamber. They said nothing in the house of death. When they heard the blessing of the priest pouring into their

1786 Hanging A Disturbing Landmark

12-Year-Old Girl Last
Female Convict Executed

By JULIE STAGIS | jstagi@courant.com

The last time a female convict was executed in Connecticut was more than two centuries ago, and the person punished by death was not a woman, but a child: Hannah Occombe, who was 12 years old when she was hanged in New London five days before Christmas in 1786.

Hannah, who was sentenced to death for the murder of 6-year-old Eunice Bolles, may be the youngest person ever executed in the United States, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

Hannah, whose mother was a Pequot and whose father was African American, reportedly became angry with Eunice after the two had spent time in a strawberry patch a few miles north of New London. Eunice went home and told her

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Hanging

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parents that Hannah had taken some of her strawberries.

About six weeks later, on July 21, 1786, Eunice was walking to school on "the Norwich road" when she was attacked by Hannah a few miles from her home. Hannah beat her to death with rocks and then attempted to cover her body with large stones.

Eunice's body was found about 9 a.m. that day by a passerby.

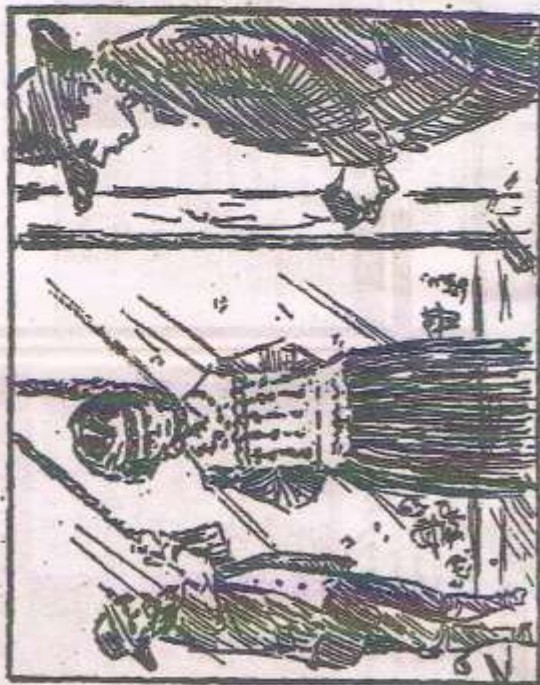
"The head and body were mangled in a shocking manner; the back and one arm broken, and a number of heavy stones placed on the body, arms and legs," The *Courant* wrote in a July 31, 1786, story.

Hannah was identified as the suspect the day after the body was found. She admitted to killing Eunice.

"It was a cruel murder, and though it was committed by an ignorant and neglected child, she was duly charged with murder in the first degree," The *Courant* wrote in 1786. Hannah had been "bound out" to live with the widow of Ichabod Rogers. The term means Hannah was basically an indentured servant.

Hannah was tried in October and swiftly convicted. During her sentencing later that month, the judge chastised Hannah for the cruel act and for her attempts to make it look like an accident, according to an Oct. 30 *Courant* report.

"You have killed, and that in a barbarous and cruel manner, an innocent, harmless and helpless child — a child that could not possibly, from its tender years, have injured or done you any harm, or given you any just cause of resentment," the judge said. "And in the perpetration of this shocking deed, you



HANNAH OCCOMBE was 12 when she was hanged in New London in 1786. She may be the youngest person ever executed in the United States, according to death penalty experts.

have discovered such evidence of premeditated malice, and marks of such a mischievous and guileful discretion, in your attempts of concealment and endeavors to make it have the appearance as though it was the effect of accident, and not of violence."

Her hanging was set for Dec. 20. The gallows was constructed behind the old meetinghouse, near the corner of what is now Granite Street.

Although the hanging of a child may seem outrageous now, several *Courant* reflections of the case remind readers that things were different two centuries ago.

"Officials in those days did not concern themselves with the rehabilitation of criminals," reporter Joe De Bonis wrote in 1964. "Their philosophy followed the Old Testament admonition: 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.'"

"Moreover, in the England from which most of them stemmed, the age of a criminal was considered inconsequential; swift and relentless punishment was viewed as the only practicable method of keeping the

lawless element in check," he wrote. "Such was the temper of the times."

It appears that Hannah's age was considered during her trial and sentencing, but the judge who delivered her sentence concluded: "The spurring of you on account of your age would, as the law says, be of dangerous consequence to the public, by holding up an idea, that children might commit such atrocious crimes with impunity."

Reports show that Hannah's reaction to her situation fluctuated wildly. After she was jailed, she was "uneasy" at first, but soon "seemed quite contented and happy."

"During her trial she appeared entirely unconscious. After the verdict was brought in she was carried back to the prison, where a person visited her and told her what must now be her punishment and that she must now prepare for death and another world," according to one account in *The Courant*.

"She was greatly affected and continued in tears for most of the day but, after this she seemed unconcerned as before."

"During the time the judge was giving her sentence, she appeared less afflicted than any of the bystanders," *The Courant* wrote.

Hannah's anxiety heightened as her execution date neared, and she spent much of the day of her hanging in tears.

Thousands gathered to watch the hanging, a public spectacle. The Rev. Henry Channing from Yale College, who later became minister of the First Congregational Society in New London, prayed with

Hannah every day during her imprisonment and delivered a lengthy sermon before the hanging, at Hannah's request. It was called "God Admonishing His People of Their Duty As Parents and Masters."

"She seemed greatly afraid when at the gallows, and said but little to anyone," *The Courant's* Dec. 25, 1786, story read. "She thanked the Sheriff for his kindness, and launched into the eternal world."



COURANT FILE PHOTO

A NEW BRITAIN POLICE investigator dusts for fingerprints inside the Donna Lee Bakery on the night of Oct. 19, 1974. Six bodies, the owner, a sales clerk and four customers, were found inside, all shot to death.

GRISLY NIGHT AT DONNA LEE BAKERY

Brutal Shooting In '74 At Neighborhood Shop Took Six Lives

By **JESSE LEAVENWORTH**

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NEW BRITAIN — Even after all the mass killings that have calloused the state and nation in the past 40 years, the name of a New Britain bakery remains infamous.

Before the night of Oct. 19, 1974, the Donna Lee Bakery was a neighborhood place to pick up doughnuts, bread, cakes and cannoli. Thereafter, the name evoked only senseless, point-blank brutality.

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'I've Never Seen That Much Blood'

The call to police came in at 8:50 p.m. — lights on and front door open at the East Street shop; no one inside. Officer James Golon recalled in a recent interview that the day, a Saturday, had been busy and he had not eaten when a dispatcher told him to check the bakery.

Golon walked in through the unlocked door and found no one in front. He went through to the back and discovered a savage scene. All six victims had been shot at close range. Two had been beaten severely before they were shot.

Golon said he first thought there were five bodies, but later learned that one victim was sprawled on top of another man.

BAKERY, B6

Bakery Was Scene Of Carnage

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He called in to headquarters and told the second officer to arrive what to expect. The other cop said something like, "You better not be putting me on" — but he changed his attitude," Golon said.

"I've never seen that much blood in my entire career," city police photographer Lt. James Ahern told *The Courant* in 1999.

As Ahern recorded the carnage, Donna Lee Salerni, 19, heard a radio report about a robbery and killings at an unidentified New Britain bakery. Salerni had a flash of fear and apprehension.

"I know my father's dead!" she told the young man she was dating. "I know my father's dead!"

John Salerni, 55, who had named the shop for his beloved daughter, was found face down in the refrigerator room. A shotgun blast had smashed the right side of his head. The other five victims had been hit with 9 mm slugs. They were: sales clerk Helen Giansanti, 59, of Newington; customers Thomas and Anne Dowling, 58 and 57, of New Britain; Michael Kron, 49, of New Britain; and William Donahue Jr., 27, of West Hartford.

The motive was robbery, but the haul from the register and victims was only about \$300. Salerni still had \$1,350 in his pants pockets when police found him.

'Tiny' And Gary

The killers had come from a party no more than a 3 1/2-minute drive from the bakery. They returned to 52 Austin St. on the city's East Side at about 9 p.m. One told a friend to come into the kitchen, according to records of the investigation.

"I just shot six people," Christian Noury would later testify the killer told him.

Ronald Piskorski, 25 at the time, and Gary Schrager, 31, were heavy boozers and drug users. Both were especially fond of speed. "Tiny" Piskorski — 6 feet, 2 inches tall, weighing 300 pounds with a short



COURANT FILE PHOTO

RONALD PISKORSKI, left, escorted by police after his arrest, was found guilty of the Donna Lee Bakery killings in December 1975. He was sentenced to 150 years.



COURANT FILE PHOTO

GARY SCHRAGER, left, pleaded guilty in the slayings and was sentenced to 20 years to life and in 1997 was told by the state parole board he will never be out free.

liked to drink tequila straight up, six or seven shots in one glass. Schrager was known as a quiet man who became explosive when drunk. Neither was a steady worker, and in the week before the killings, evidence would show, they were looking for easy money.

The two, both New Britain natives, had been planning a robbery for at least a week before Oct. 19. They probably had targeted the Brookside Package Store next door to the bakery, but it was closed by the time they arrived.

James Shay, a former East Hartford police chief and state police lieutenant who led the state's role in the investigation, told The Courant what police believe happened next:

Helen Giansanti was alone in the bakery when Piskorski and Schrager arrived. They announced they were robbing the place, but it turned out there wasn't much money in the till. Giansanti said the owner would be by shortly and he usually had cash.

So the two waited. And as they waited, customers arrived.

Giansanti had been working at the bakery for about six months. Her husband, Humbert Giansanti, stopped in at about 6:35 p.m. on his way to a Moose meeting. Helen had decorated a birthday cake and showed it to him.

Kron left home at about 8 p.m. to buy rye bread. Donahue, a Northeast Utilities employee, was helping out with a Halloween dance for NU workers at the Knights of Columbus hall in Newington. He left the hall in his 1968 Corvette Stingray to pick up a date, a 21-year-old Newington woman. He had gone into the bakery to ask directions to her house.

The Dowlings had dropped in after church, as they had for several years, to buy doughnuts. Anne Dowling may have gone in first and her husband followed to see what was keeping her.

Bakery owner John Salerni was returning from the Motta bakery in Hartford, where he had picked up 12 spinach pies and seven dozen cannoli. Investigators later determined that he likely arrived at the New Britain bakery at about 8:42 p.m.

Shay and Ahern said they believed both Piskorski and Schrager took part in the killings. Shay said the slaughter began after Salerni arrived. He and other investigators have said that Schrager may have thought Kron, his uncle by marriage, had recognized him and would be able



BEFORE THE KILLINGS In 1974, The Donna Lee Bakery in New Britain was known for its doughnuts, bread, cakes and cannoli.

COURANT FILE PHOTO

to identify him.

Evidence showed that Donahue put up a fight. He had defensive wounds on one hand. Ahern said Donahue was the last to die. A crime scene photo showed him slumped half on top of Thomas Dowling's body, his face up.

A Blue Bandanna

City and state police had no suspects at first.

"We went in there with absolutely nothing," Shay said.

Investigators went door to door in the area and served dozens of warrants, hoping that people wanted for other crimes would have at least heard something about the Donna Lee killings.

Schrager and Piskorski became the prime suspects on a tip from Schrager's wife, Ahern said. Abigail Schrager had been with Piskorski and her husband when they drove to Maine the day after the killings. Schrager mentioned that his uncle, Kron, was one of the victims, but none of the news reports at that time had included any victims' names.

Christian Noury also became an important witness. Noury said Piskorski had borrowed a 9 mm handgun from him two or three days before the killings. Noury also had connected Piskorski and Schrager with a double-barrel 16-gauge shotgun, which another man sold to the pair for \$20 on Oct. 17. At least five inches had been cut from both barrels before the sale. Schrager called the shotgun "my baby."

When the pair arrived at the Austin Street party that Saturday night, they had the handgun and shotgun with them. Noury said Piskorski went into the kitchen, put the handgun under the faucet and washed away a red substance around the trigger.

Piskorski and Schrager then went into a bathroom right off the kitchen, and in about two minutes, Noury told police, they called him in. The two were tearing papers and cards out of several wallets and flushing the stuff down the toilet,

Noury told police.

Piskorski told Noury that he had better help him get rid of the handgun because Noury's fingerprints were also on it. Noury borrowed his girlfriend's car and the two drove to a pond in Berlin by Route 72. Piskorski took off the blue bandanna he was wearing, wrapped several wallets and the handgun in it and left the car, Noury told police. A state police diver would later find the gun and four wallets belonging to the male victims still wrapped in a blue bandanna. The shotgun was found in the Berlin home of a friend of Piskorski's.

On the trip out to dump the evidence, Noury said Piskorski kept repeating "that he had to do it, that it wasn't worth it and he wouldn't be able to sleep at night."

Schrager and Piskorski were arrested on unrelated charges about two weeks after the killings, and both were indicted for murder in March 1975.

Piskorski was found guilty of the slayings at his trial in December 1975. Because the death penalty was not an option at the time, he was sentenced to 150 years to life in prison. Schrager's trial began late in 1976. He stopped the proceedings early to plead guilty to four of the six slayings. But it was a strange confession. Schrager admitted that both he and Piskorski had gone to the bakery to rob it. Schrager said he never shot anyone, but he would not name the killer, saying only that "someone" had gone into the back of the bakery and he heard several shots.

Schrager was sentenced to 20 years to life. He tried to gain parole several times — to the strenuous objections of victims' families — but the state parole board finally ruled in 1997 that he will never be set free.

Now 65, Piskorski is locked up in a Maine prison. Schrager, 70, is in a Minnesota pen.

Golon, now retired and living in California, says that the memory of the Donna Lee killings becomes especially clear whenever he goes into a store alone at night.

"It never left me," he said.

Courtroom Twists And Turns

Some Surprising Connecticut Decisions Still Spur Debate

By MATTHEW KAUFFMAN
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Nearly a century ago, it might have become the trial of the century. A Bridgeport priest was shot dead on a busy city street. Multiple witnesses placed a dim-witted vagrant at the scene. Ballistics experts linked the man's gun to the crime. A chilling confession cited an "irresistible impulse to kill someone."

So the crowded courtroom was

rept on May 22, 1924, when Fairfield County State's Attorney Homer S. Cummings recounted the compelling facts gathered by investigators — and then, point by point, meticulously refuted every piece of police evidence, shredding his own case and declaring the defendant innocent.

It was a shocking end to what The *Courant* called "one of the most remarkable criminal cases in the history of Connecticut." But it would

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hardly be the last startling courtroom finale in the state.

The criminal courts have always served as something of a stage where the tragedy of the human condition plays out. And occasionally those morality tales serve up a dramatic and controversial twist, with verdicts — both acquittals and convictions — that astonish the public and reverberate long after the final gavel comes down.

SURPRISES, A.B.

THE HARTFORD COURANT

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Surprises

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Take the case of Richard Lepointe, who this July will mark 26 years in prison since his arrest in the rape and murder of his wife's grandmother. His conviction in 1992, based in part on what some consider a questionable confession, stunned advocates for the mentally challenged and spawned a determined coalition of supporters seeking to free him. Decades later, his case is still on the docket — with the state Supreme Court set to decide his fate. In some ways, the practices of police and prosecutors a quarter-century ago remain on trial as well.

Courant reporters have been on the benches for many of those controversial trials in the past 250 years. Here are the details of a half-dozen such cases, whose outcomes caused surprise, alarm or simply enduring debate.

The Amistad Slaves, 1839-1840

After being kidnapped in 1839 from what is now Sierra Leone, Joseph Cinque and 52 other Africans were sold in Cuba and put aboard a sleek black schooner named the *Amistad* — Spanish for friendship.

A few days out to sea, Cinque led a



PETER HEALY and Dorothy Madson sit for a Thanksgiving dinner in November 1976 at Madson's home.

The White House prepared for victory, placing a ship at the ready in Long Island Sound to whisk the Africans to Cuba before an appeal could be filed.

But on Jan. 13, 1840, Judson, a former politician who had extraordinarily low regard for blacks, nevertheless defied the White House, ruling that the Africans had been kidnapped in violation of

international law, and that they could not be held as slaves under either U.S. or Spanish law. The ruling, later affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court, granted the Africans' wish to return to their homes.

Cinque and others, Judson ruled, "shall not sigh for Africa in vain. Bloody as may be their hands, they shall yet embrace their kindred."

Harold Israel, 1924

When Harold Israel was first interviewed by Bridgeport police, he said he was in the Empire Theater watching a string of silent movies at the time that the Rev. Hubert Dahme was shot to death.

But after 28 hours of interrogation, Israel admitted everything. He told police that he had killed the priest out of a desire to take another's life, and that he had fled along the exact course that witnesses saw the killer take. He even brought

investigators to the bathroom of his rooming house, where police retrieved a shell casing that Israel said had held the fatal bullet.

Four witnesses identified Israel as the man they saw running from the crime scene. Another woman, who knew Israel, said that she saw him in the area about the time of the shooting, and that on an earlier occasion he told her he had a gun and was going to kill someone with it. A Bridgeport police ballistics expert declared that the fatal bullet had been fired from Israel's gun.

Homer S. Cummings, the prosecutor for Fairfield County, had an easy death-penalty case on his hands. But Cummings was determined to test all of the evidence before him.

And the more he tested, the more it turned to dust.

So on May 27, 1924 — 102 days after Harold Israel's arrest — Cummings stood before Judge L. P. Waldo Marvin, not to ask for an immediate trial, but to request

Seale, 1970-1971

In 1969, at the height of deep civil unrest in the country, members of the Black Panther Party concluded that they had been betrayed by one of their own.

Alex Rackley, just 19 years old, was kidnapped by fellow Panthers and tortured for days at the Panthers' New Haven headquarters on Orchard Street. Benten with sticks and doused with boiling water, he ultimately confessed, was given a bogus tape-recorded trial and driven to Middlefield, where he was shot dead and dumped in the Coginchaug River.

Several Panthers were arrested in the killing, but New Haven State's Attorney Arnold Markle set his sights higher, charging Panther National Chairman Bobby Seale with ordering Rackley's killing.

With widespread distrust of law enforcement, Seale's prosecution attracted thousands of demonstrators to the New Haven Green, many predicting that Seale — and other Panthers implicated in the case — would be railroaded by a racist legal system. But it wasn't only counter-culture activists who had little

said, to explain his conclusion satisfactorily when Cummings requested a demonstration.

As for Israel's leading police to the shell casing, it turned out there were multiple shell casings in the bathroom, as that is where Israel and his roommates dropped their casings after target practice.

But there was still the confession, which Israel later recanted and said he had signed only because he was so tired he was willing to do anything for rest.

Cummings concluded there was "no evidence that Israel was subjected to any physical violence or any form of torture or inquisition known as 'The Third Degree'."

But a team of doctors appointed by the state's attorney's office were unanimous in concluding that the confession was worthless, declaring that Israel was "of low mentality, of the moron type," and "peculiarly subject to the influence of suggestion."

And the details of the crime related by Israel in his confession, Cummings noted, were all details known to police.

The validity of confessions, especially after lengthy interrogations, remains a hot topic today, leading to frequent clashes

"The motion to dismiss is granted in each case, and the prisoners are discharged forthwith."

Markle was furious, Panther supporters wept openly, and a dazed Huggins, who had spent the past two years behind bars, walked outside to the cheers of hundreds of demonstrators on the Green. Seale, who owed time on a contempt-of-court conviction in Illinois, headed back to his jail cell.

Peter Reilly, 1973-1974

Hours after finding his mother, Barbara Gibbons, dead and covered in blood in the Falls Village home they shared, 18-year-old Peter Reilly was facing withering questions from state police investigators convinced that he had killed her. The interrogation lasted eight hours, and at the end, police had an awkwardly worded confession that was enough for an arrest.

But there were problems with the state's case, and supporters quickly rallied around the slight teenager. Money was raised to hire a lawyer — Catherine G. Roraback, the same lawyer who had defended Black Panther Ericka Huggins. And the press began raising questions about the confession and other inconsistencies.

But a judge had declared the confession voluntary and Reilly faced murder charges, in a high-profile trial in which cameras, tape recorders and even sketch artists were barred from the courtroom in a futile effort to dampen trial publicity.

Reilly was released on a modest bail and continued his high school studies while awaiting trial. No one in town seemed to fear him in the slightest.

So with no motive and little evidence beyond a controversial and recanted confession, Reilly's defenders were confident — and then crestfallen when the jury unanimously found him guilty of first-degree manslaughter.

"People are shocked, absolutely shocked out of their heads," a woman from Falls Village, which is a section of Canaan, said after the verdict.

But the shock wave from Reilly's case was far from over and would lead to deep and lasting rifts between powerful



BOBBY SEALE, chairman of the Black Panther Party, raises a fist as he heads from prison to his trial in 1970 on charges that he ordered a killing in 1969 in New Haven.

two others and ordered them to steer the ship back east to Africa. During the day, the crew sailed toward the morning sun, but at night, they secretly turned the craft around, hoping to be rescued in the Americas.

After months of zigzagging off the east coast of the United States, they were spotted by a U.S. Navy ship and towed to New London. The crew members told their tale, and the Africans were charged with murder and piracy and sent to a prison in New Haven.

The odds were low that a group of blacks who spoke no English would find much sympathy in a Connecticut court in 1839 — nine years before the state would formally outlaw slavery. And the odds were lower still when the Africans were brought before Judge Andrew Judson, who six years earlier had prosecuted Prudence Crandall for running a school for black girls in Canterbury.

"The colored people can never rise from their mental condition in our country; they ought not to be permitted to rise here," Judson had said. "They are an inferior race of beings."

If that weren't enough, the Africans had a powerful foe in President Martin Van Buren, who was eager to placate the Spanish government, which had demanded that the Amistad and its cargo be returned to Cuba.

But the Africans had friends as well, and their case became a cause celebre for spirited abolitionists of the time, who financed the defense.

Judson had sent the criminal case to another court, where a judge ruled that because the killings occurred in international waters and the victims were not U.S. citizens, the court had no jurisdiction. But the question of whether the Africans were property or kidnap

that Israel be set free. And he laid out his case in a lengthy address to the court, later reprinted word for word in *The Courant*, under the screaming headline, "SAVED FROM THE HANGMAN'S NOOSE."

The eyewitnesses, he said, had been inconsistent in their description of the killer, and he doubted their ability to positively identify a stranger in a police lineup weeks after seeing the person for a fleeting moment in the dark.

To test that, Cummings stood at the spots where the witnesses stood, at times that matched the lighting conditions at the time of the killing, and had a deputy re-create the assassin's flight from the crime.

Cummings said he had no doubt the witnesses saw the killer. But he said it was "utterly impossible" for them to have made a positive identification under the existing conditions, saying he was unable even to identify his own deputy.

As for the witness who said she knew Israel, Cummings determined that the luncheonette where the woman worked had a glass partition in front of the window, and that it was difficult to see clearly through the double glass. Although the woman said Israel had waved to her through the window and she had waved back, Cummings said she might simply have been mistaken, and that since the waitress was a "measurably good-looking stranger," it might well have been a woman who waved.

Cummings also brought in a team of six prominent experts in ballistics, which he said had become an accepted science, akin to "finger-printing bullets." And every one of them said bullets fired from Israel's gun had unmistakable markings that did not match the bullet that killed Dahme. The Bridgeport police captain who declared



NEW HAVEN MUSEUM COLLECTION

JOSEPH CINQUE, seen in this 1839 portrait by New Haven abolitionist and painter Nathaniel Jocelyn, led a slave revolt on the Amistad.

between prosecutors and defense attorneys. But 90 years ago, prosecutor Cummings took the defendant's side.

"It goes without saying that it is just as important for a state's attorney to protect the innocent as it is to convict the guilty," he declared. "In view of what I have said about every element of the case, I do not think that any doubt of Israel's innocence can remain in the mind of a candid person."

Harold Israel was set free, Hollywood turned the story into a movie 20 years later, and Cummings, who earlier had founded the firm of Cummings & Lockwood, went on to serve as U.S. attorney general.

Dahme's murder was never solved.

faith in the justice system. As president of Yale University, Kingman Brewster said at the time he was "skeptical of the ability of black revolutionaries to achieve a fair trial anywhere in the U.S."

Seale's trial began in November 1970, with co-defendant Ericka Huggins, founder of the Panthers' New Haven chapter. Jury selection took 17 weeks, with more than 1,000 interviewed to select 12 regular jurors and two alternates.

Testimony in the case, inside a courtroom specially outfitted with bulletproof glass on the windows, took only half as long. A Black Panther who took part in killing Rackley said he acted on Seale's order. The defense said that claim alone was too thin to support a conviction. Huggins can be heard on tape orchestrating Rackley's "trial" — but claimed in court that she was scared and simply mimicked what she was told to do.

Jurors deliberated 25 hours over six days before declaring that they were hopelessly deadlocked, leading Superior Court Judge Harold M. Mulvey to declare a mistrial.

Markle, the prosecutor, immediately prepared for a retrial. "Absolutely," he replied when asked if he would prosecute again. "I did my job. I'll do it again."

But the next day, Mulvey stunned the courtroom.

"The state has put its best foot forward in presenting its effort to prove its case against these defendants. They have failed to convince a jury of their guilt," Mulvey said at the end of a brief address. "With the massive publicity attendant upon the trial just completed, I find it impossible to believe that an unbiased jury could be selected without super-human efforts, efforts which this court, the state and these defendants should not be called

Reilly even after evidence surfaced suggesting he was innocent.

He said the failure of prosecutors to turn over witness statements to the defense "defies a logical explanation," and dismissed Gormley's report, saying it appeared that its primary objective "was to justify and protect the actions" of state police and prosecutors.

But he also concluded that no laws were broken and no one working for the state should be arrested.

Gibbons' murder remains unsolved.

Reilly went on to lead a relatively quiet life. Now in his late 50s, he emerged three years ago to testify at the legislature in favor of a bill that would require police to record interrogations in serious felony cases. Reilly's questioning in 1973 was tape-recorded, and he said some in the community who heard the tapes found the conduct of police "appalling" and were spurred to fight for his exoneration.

The bill passed, and became law last Jan. 1.

Karin Aparo, 1990

Perhaps no Connecticut criminal case in recent decades has matched the lurid

Glastonbury.

The investigation quickly focused on Dennis Coleman, Karin Aparo's 19-year-old boyfriend, who later confessed to the killing. But Aparo was arrested as well, charged as an accessory and co-conspirator after evidence revealed the pair had had detailed conversations about killing Joyce Aparo.

Coleman pleaded guilty to murder in 1989 and was sentenced to 34 years in prison. Aparo took her chances with a jury, at a trial in which Coleman was the star witness.

He testified about Aparo's sexual manipulation and her insistence that Joyce Aparo was trying to keep them apart. He said Aparo begged him to kill her mother, and eventually he agreed.

Aparo's defense attorney, Hubert Santos, argued that Aparo merely fantasized about her mother's demise, following years of documented physical and psychological abuse.

The case fostered strong opinions in the state, with some seeing a vulnerable and psychologically scarred girl, and others seeing a cold manipulator who used sex to turn her boyfriend into a killer — even as

demanding a retrial on the conspiracy charge. But higher courts deemed that a second trial would be double jeopardy, and Aparo was cleared.

Aparo, now just a few years younger than her mother at the time of her death, moved out of state and got married. After her arrest, she had spent just three days in jail.

Coleman was released from prison in 2012, after more than 22 years behind bars.

Richard Lapointe, 1992

More than 27 years after Bernice Martin was brutally attacked in her Manchester apartment, the legal odyssey surrounding her killing is perhaps the most contentious and divisive active criminal case in Connecticut.

Martin was raped, strangled and stabbed 11 times, and her apartment was set on fire during the night of March 8, 1987. Police came to suspect Richard Lapointe, the husband of Martin's granddaughter and a man with a neurological defect known as Dandy Walker Syndrome. Summoned to the police station, Lapointe was subjected to a crafty and now famous police

tactics, including the push to tape-record confessions.

And it has created an enduring divide between those who see Lapointe as a tragic victim and those who see him as a cunning killer. A hardly group called Friends of Richard Lapointe has spent decades working to set him free. But a generation after the crime, police and prosecutors stand by the verdict.

In nine court battles, Lapointe has won some and lost some. He won the last one — a decision by the state Appellate Court overturning a lower court ruling and ordering a new trial for the now 68-year-old former dishwasher. The Appellate Court ruled that a police detective's note about the possible start time of the fire in Bernice Martin's apartment — a note withheld from Lapointe's defense team — could have affected the jury's verdict.

But the odyssey isn't over. Prosecutors appealed that decision to the state Supreme Court, in what might well be the final legal battle to determine if Lapointe goes free or spends the rest of his life in a prison cell.

A decision is expected any time now.

Hartford Courant

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APRIL 7, 2014



1919 MANCHESTER MURDER

Guard Killed In Bungled Silk Robbery

Group Of Reporters, The 'Courant Men,' Helped Crack Prominent Case

By **JESSE LEAVENWORTH**
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MANCHESTER — Courant reporters 95 years ago figured prominently in the investigation of a bungled heist, playing a role that would be highly improbable today.

In the case of The Great Silk Robbery, the "Courant Men," as they were called in their own newspaper, had a personal stake.

The incident was an attempted robbery that went wrong from the start and ended in murder. The story's central figure was

William Madden, a former Manchester cop who left that job for a more lucrative position protecting assets of the Cheney Brothers' sprawling silk manufactory in South Manchester.

Madden was on watch on Jan. 29, 1919, at 11 p.m. Railroad detectives had sent a warning earlier that day about a planned silk theft that was to happen that night. In the years before synthetic fabric, raw silk shipped from Asia was worth its weight in gold and a constant target of thieves.

Checking a report of a strange car parked on Elm Terrace, Madden and his assistant, Clifton Macomber, approached the vehicle. The guards determined that the five fellows in the car were definitely suspicious.

Retired Manchester firefighter Walter Scadden begins his book, "Murder in Manchester: The Great Cheney Brothers Silk Robbery," with the right-out-of-Hollywood scenes that followed.

Madden, a Spanish-American War vet-

eran who stood 6 feet 2 and weighed about 200 pounds, told the men he was taking them to a storehouse, where the Cheney security guards had an office. His pistol drawn, he mounted the passenger side running board of the touring car. With Macomber on the opposite board, Madden ordered the driver to head south on Pine Street toward the nearby storehouse.

But the driver started swerving, trying to throw the guards off. When that didn't work, a handgun blazed from the back seat.

SILK ROBBERY, B3

250
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Silk Robbery

Continued from Page B1

The first shot missed, but the second went straight into Madden's torso. Macomber jumped from the car and Madden fell to the road. Although mortally wounded, he managed to fire several shots at the fleeing car. At about the same time, Macomber heard the roar of a truck engine starting up on Walnut Street.

Alerted to the shooting, Hartford police were watching for a westbound touring car with New Jersey plates. Officer Daniel "Big Dan" Ahern had just learned of the bulletin when he saw the car shoot past him on Wethersfield Avenue. He stopped the next passing car, which happened to be what Scadden calls "the Corvette of its day," a Winton Speedster, driven by a gearhead of the day, Jay B. McKiernan of Hartford.

Commandeering car and driver, Ahern told McKiernan to step on it. After a short chase, they ran the touring car off the road on Franklin Avenue. Four men jumped from the vehicle and escaped. Only the driver, Fred Klein, 25, of Hoboken, N.J., was caught, but that was enough to launch the investigation.

Enter the "Courant Men." Scadden describes them as investigative reporters who targeted political and business corruption. Several knew Madden well through various sports teams and as fellow alumni of Trinity College, where Madden had been a four-letter athlete.

Scouring the scene of the shootout in Manchester on the morning of Jan. 30, the

reporters found Fred Klein's driver's license, which Macomber had dropped when he jumped from the getaway car. Near the area in Hartford where the suspects had leaped from the car, the reporters found a .32-caliber pistol with the serial number filed off and a cap with the label, "Jack's Hat Shop" of Hoboken, N.J. They turned all these items over to police.

A defense attorney would later realize, Scadden wrote, "that much of the damaging evidence against his client had been turned up by the diligent efforts of the Courant Men."

Why police never found the items is an open question. But the facts of the story seem almost surreal today, when police protect crime scenes so closely and reporters are typically held behind yellow-taped perimeters with the rest of the gawking public.

But back to 1919. The Hoboken connection was key. Working with their counterparts in New Jersey, Manchester and Connecticut state police learned of a dive in the city called The Hell Hole Bar, a place owned and patronized by known silk thieves.

Police also rounded up a New Haven railroad worker named William Miller, who quickly spilled details of the plan to steal a \$25,000 shipment of silk that had arrived by rail in Manchester that night. In today's dollars, that would be about \$250,000 worth, Scadden said.

It turned out that the thieves had driven a car and a truck to Manchester after scoping out the scene earlier. They had broken a government seal and locks on one rail car when the guards approached. Miller and

the proprietor of the Hell Hole, William Bessler, escaped in the truck. Two brothers, James and Henry Moore, also were involved in the attempted heist. Police and prosecutors named James Moore as the suspect who killed Madden, but the brothers boarded a ship for South America under assumed names and were never seen again. Bessler, Klein and Miller, along with Michael "Lefty" McDonnell and John Nuess, all went to trial for the killing of Madden. Prosecutors hoped for a first-degree murder conviction and the death penalty.

Just as police crime scene investigations were much looser in those days, Courant reporters had a mile of slack in writing about such cases. The accused were labeled "murderers" and "thugs" long before the trial started. One subheadline on a Feb. 5 story about the attempted silk robbery read, "Crooks To Fight Case."

Since there was no proof that any of the defendants had actually pulled the trigger, however, the jury convicted the five men of second-degree murder and they were sent to prison. Klein died in the Wethersfield pen, while Bessler, Miller and Nuess were paroled after 18 years. McDonnell escaped, was returned to jail, escaped again, was shot in New York City, and finally returned to prison again.

Almina Madden, wife of the slain security chief and mother of his two children, "never got over the ordeal," Scadden wrote, and died within a year of his killing.

Scadden, 70, grew up on Pine Street. His grandfather was a Cheney mills foreman and Scadden remembers sitting wide-eyed on the front porch, hearing amazing stories



COURTESY OF THE MANCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
SECURITY GUARD William Madden was killed during the Cheney silk robbery.

about New Jersey hoods.

"Your eyes are like jar lids," he recalled. The crime, he wrote, changed the entire town.

"The minor problems of the past seemed inconsequential," Scadden wrote. "This was a town where many folks had never locked their doors; bad things happened in the big cities, not here in friendly Manchester. The feeling of great security, never really appreciated before, was gone."

By JULIE STAGIS
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1977 Mass Murder Claimed Nine Lives

Until the Newtown shootings in December 2012, the 1977 slaying of a mother, her seven children and a young family friend was the largest mass murder in Connecticut history.

In the wee hours of July 22, 1977, at about 4:15 a.m., neighbors smelled smoke and reported the Beaudoin family home in Prospect on fire. Six firetrucks from Prospect and Bethany responded, and firefighters knocked down the fire in about 10

minutes.

Then, they began to find the bodies. The dead were 29-year-old Cheryl Beaudoin, her seven children — Frederick Allen, 12; Sharon Lee, 10; Debra Ann, 9; Paul Albert, 8; Roderick, 6; Holly Lynn, 5, and Mary Lou, 4 — and a 6-year-old family friend, Jennifer Santoro. Some of the victims' hands were bound.

The children's father, Frederick Beaudoin Sr., who could not be reached for this story, had been working third shift at a Pratt & Whitney factory that night. Police

1977 MASS MURDER, B3

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MOMENTS IN HISTORY

1977 Mass Murder

Continued from Page B1

picked him up at his job in North Haven about 5:30 a.m., The Courant reported the next day, and brought him to his mother's house, where the Rev. Joseph Donnelly was waiting.

"Are they all ...?" asked Beaudoin.

"All," said the priest.

Hundreds of state troopers got to work on the case, setting up a command post at Prospect Town Hall and stopping every car in and out of the Route 68 and Cedar Hill Drive neighborhood to find out more.

Father's Foster Brother Arrested

Frederick Beaudoin's foster brother Lorne J. Acquin, then 27, was quickly identified as the suspect. Police apprehended Acquin, a roofer who was out on parole, at his Waterbury apartment July 22 at 9:30 a.m., just hours after the fire. He had lived with the family a few years earlier and was seen at the house

Acquin was held on a \$250,000 bond.

Acquin was indicted by a grand jury on Sept. 7, 1977. Eight days later he pleaded not guilty.

Acquin was moved from prison to the Whiting Forensic Institute, a state mental hospital in Middletown, on Oct. 5 "for security reasons," The Courant reported. He was officially committed Oct. 31 after a court-appointed psychiatrist testified that Acquin could be suffering from schizophrenia or a form of epilepsy and could be dangerous to himself and others.

During court proceedings and the trial, horrific details of the crimes emerged. But Williams, Acquin's lawyer, maintained that the state's case was based on an inadmissible confession.

Williams tried to have the trial moved, attempted to squash use of Acquin's confession and clothing as evidence and tried to point to other suspects, including Cheryl Beaudoin's brother.



the night of July 21.

A neighbor told The Courant the children had been swimming in her pool the night before the fire when Acquin — a 5-foot-8, 130-pound man with long black hair and a mustache — came over.

"When he showed up, the kids were all excited, hugging and kissing him," the neighbor said.

After police questioned Acquin three times in three places and then allowed him to meet with his prison psychiatrist, Acquin admitted to the slayings shortly after midnight on July 23. He was booked on nine counts of murder and one count of arson at the Bethany state police barracks after giving a seven-page, typed confession.

That day, police found a trash bag full of bloody clothing near Acquin's driveway, and bloody shoes and socks in the trunk of the car he drove the night of the killings.

Acquin had a criminal record, and had served two terms at the state's maximum-security prison in Somers. He went in for larceny in April 1974, was released on parole in February 1975, was sentenced for escape in March 1976 and released on parole that September.

Shortly after Acquin was booked, defense attorney John R. Williams of New Haven accused state police of "gross misbehavior" in the investigation. The Courant reported, Williams, who later represented Acquin in his murder trial, said police held Acquin incommunicado for 14 hours and coerced him into confessing, telling him he couldn't see a lawyer until he admitted to the murders.

State Police Commissioner Edward P. Leonard refused to comment on Williams' claims and said after Acquin's arrest, "I'm absolutely sure he's the man who committed the crime." Ac-

quinn also unsuccessfully sought a mistrial after prosecutors showed a photograph of the seven "smiling" Beaudoin children that had not been entered into evidence.

When Acquin took the stand on Sept. 5, 1979, he denied a role in the murders. He said his psychiatrist told him, "You'd be better off if you signed" the confession, according to a Sept. 6, 1979, Courant story. Acquin said police repeatedly turned down his requests for a lawyer and told him, "I know you did it. Why don't you confess to it?"

Acquin also testified that the blood on his clothes was from a fight he got in the night of the murders with men outside a Waterbury café.

The Courant reported: "When police first told him about the slayings, Acquin said, he became so upset that he punched the wall of the Meriden police barracks and then told [State Trooper George] Hamila, 'George, you'd better get those guys before I do.'"

Some evidence seemed to support Acquin's claims.

A state police fingerprint expert testified on Oct. 2, 1979, that bloody hand and fingerprints found in the bathtub near two of the children's bodies were not Acquin's. A handprint on a door-jamb did not belong to him, either.

The examiner said the prints also couldn't be matched with any of the victims', the Courant reported on Oct. 3.

A Lug Wrench, A Knife And A Tire Iron

But Acquin's confession, which was made public after the jury was sworn in on July 16, 1979, told a different story. In it, Acquin described how he used a lug wrench, a knife and a tire iron to kill the victims.



HARTFORD COURANT FILE PHOTO

LORNE ACQUIN, 27, leaves Waterbury Superior Court after appearing for arraignment on nine counts of murder. He was later found guilty and is serving a 105-year sentence.

He told police he had been at the house about 7 p.m. on July 21, 1977, to take the children to pick raspberries. He said he left by 8:30 p.m. and returned at 2 or 3 the next morning, entering through an unlocked cellar door.

When Acquin entered the kitchen and turned on a light, Cheryl Beaudoin came out of her bedroom.

"She didn't seem surprised that I was there," Acquin told police, according to the Courant's story about his confession.

Acquin told Beaudoin he needed tools from the basement to fix his car. He fetched a lug wrench, came back to the kitchen and asked her for a beer.

As she turned to the refrigerator, Acquin began to beat her with the wrench, he told police. He said she didn't scream or say anything, but one of her sons came into the kitchen to see what was happening.

Acquin then hit that child over the head with the wrench. He hit the other children with the wrench and tire iron and when he heard Beaudoin moaning, he went back to the kitchen and stabbed her.

Acquin described tying up

some of the children with string and sexually molesting 10-year-old Sharon Beaudoin. Then, he poured gasoline over the children and set the house on fire.

In interviews with Courant reporter Lincoln Millstein, conducted in October 1977 but not published until the confession was released, Acquin said he didn't remember anything about the killings other than "talking to Cheryl" and "bodies and blood all over the place and the house was on fire."

Acquin said he remembered being scared and hot, and running from the house. "When I came to my senses, I was on Whalley Avenue in New Haven," he said.

He said he didn't remember giving the confession.

On Oct. 19, 1979, after three hours of testimony and eight hours of deliberation over three days, the jury of nine men and three women declared Acquin guilty on all counts.

Although Acquin was not charged with sexual assault, Chief Assistant State's Attorney Walter Scanlon "suggested Acquin might have been caught by Cheryl Beaudoin sexually molesting 'one or more' of the

Beaudoin girls and been so ashamed that he was driven to kill the whole family."

The state sought the maximum possible prison sentence of 245 years — 25 years for each murder and 20 for arson — but Judge Walter M. Pickett Jr. sentenced Acquin to 105 years to life in prison, with the possibility of parole after 50 to 55 years.

"That of course is a long time," Pickett said, according to The Courant's Dec. 1, 1979, story. "But, the court has left open some hope [for the defendant]. I can do nothing for [the victims]."

Acquin's attorney filed a state appeal five minutes after the hearing. According to court records, Acquin has petitioned for a habeas corpus trial several times but is still serving his sentence at the MacDougall-Walker Correctional Facility in Suffield.

Reached at his New Haven law office on Monday, Williams said Acquin's "confession never should have been admitted into evidence."

"I think that nobody will ever know what really happened in this case," Williams said. If the confession "had been kept out, he would've had to be acquitted."

Late-1700s Engraver Imprisoned For Counterfeiting

By **DENISE BUFFA**
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Richard Brunton was a Connecticut artist who engraved his way not only into the homes of the wealthy with his prestigious prints during the time of the American Revolution, but also into the notorious Old New-Gate Prison where he lived after being convicted of counterfeiting.

Brunton, believed to have been a deserter from the British army, earned a legiti-

mate living making memorial prints and bookplates as well as engraving jewelry, according to Nancy Finlay, curator of graphics at the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford.

But like many an engraver in his day, Brunton couldn't resist the temptation to make his own money. After all, there was no federally issued currency when the states were just being united.

"It was a great temptation, if you were

an engraver, to become a counterfeiter, I think, because of the lack of currency and a lack of good control," Finlay said.

Deborah Child, who is working on a book entitled, "Soldier, Engraver, Felon: Richard Brunton's life on the fringe in America's New Republic," says that "counterfeit-

ing was by no means an easy undertaking." "In the wake of the American Revolution, not only was legitimate currency in such short supply; so were the raw materi-

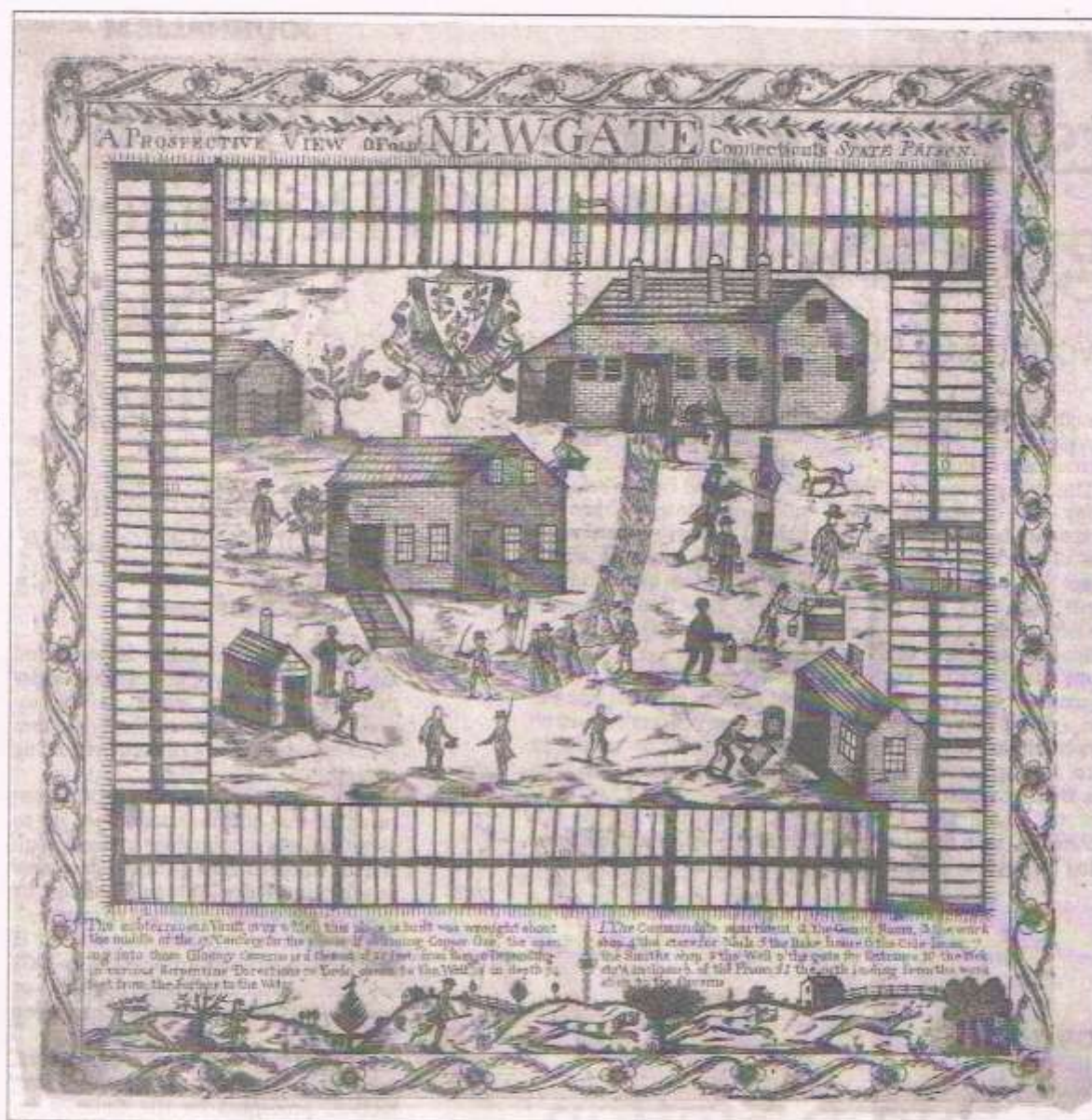
als required for counterfeiting — paper, copper, gold, and silver," she said in an email to the *Courant*.

New-Gate in Granby was renowned for its insurrections and escapes despite prisoners being housed underground in an old copper mine. While many prisoners there since have been forgotten, Brunton's legacy lives on in memorable artworks, including an engraving of the prison and portraits of the warden and his wife.

ENGRAVER, B6

250 YEARS

MOMENTS IN HISTORY



COURTESY OF THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RICHARD BRUNTON created his engraving, "A Prospective View of Old Newgate, Connecticut's Old Prison," while serving two years in prison for a counterfeiting conviction. This print, made from the original copper plate, is in the collection of the Connecticut Historical Society.

Engraver Depicted Daily Life In Prison



by far Brunton's largest and most elaborate, according to Bates. It measures 20.5 inches square, he notes. And it tells a story of the time.

"It shows the prison yard and buildings with the prisoners performing their various duties ... all of the prisoners are shackled, the officers wear swords, the guards carry guns and one of them seems to be hastening a prisoner's steps with the point of his bayonet ... a prisoner is tied to a post while an officer applies the whip to his naked back."

Bates notes that the plate

known prints made directly from it, as well as Brunton's portraits of Major Reuben Humphreys and his wife, Anna, are in the collection of the Connecticut Historical Society.

"Old Brunton," as he was called, was a transient who in the late 1700s lived in West Suffield with the family of a resident named Gad Rose, according to a 1906 book by Albert Carlos Bates, a librarian at the Connecticut Historical Society.

While Brunton engraved a bookplate for Rose, the engraver was known as a "counterfeiter of paper money printed from plates cut by himself," Bates wrote in "An Early Connecticut Engraver and His Work."

Records from Superior Court in Windham County show that Brunton also etched coins, according to Bates. The papers state that Brunton was in the custody of sheriffs in March 1799 because on Feb. 1, 1799, in Woodstock, he "wittingly & feloniously with force and arms, made sundry instruments called Types & dies for the purpose of counterfeiting the True Silver Coin which was passing within this State ..."

Brunton apparently managed to maintain his sense of humor after his room had been raided.

"It is related that officers once searched his room at Mr. Rose's house in search of counterfeit bills or plates for their manufacture, but without success," Bates wrote. "It is also said that Mr. Brunton remarked after the search that the officers came too soon, as he had completed only the plate for one side of some bills."

"In spite of this bravado, it is possible that his departure from Mr. Rose's was a sudden one aided by the strong arm of the law; else why should he leave numerous of his engraved plates at Mr. Rose's house?"

Once arrested and charged with counterfeiting, Brunton pleaded not guilty. But he was found guilty at trial, and ordered to do hard labor for two years at New-Gate.

"The term of the penalty may seem today to be a short one for the crime of which Brunton was convicted, yet an examination of the records will show that it was fully up to the average sentence at that period for that crime," Bates wrote. "Counterfeiting, apparently, was not frowned upon as sternly then as it is today."

That may have been true in Connecticut, but, at the time, according to Child, counterfeiting in

superintendent, Reuben Humphreys, circa 1799-1801.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEW-GATE PRISONER Richard Brunton painted Anna Humphreys, wife of the prison superintendent, circa 1799-1801. The oil painting shows her holding their infant daughter Eliza and wearing a fancy plumed hat.

New York and Rhode Island was punishable by death, "often by hanging."

Whether he served hard labor or not, Brunton had plenty of time while behind bars to create an intricate work of art on a heavy copper plate known as "A Prospective View of Old Newgate, Connecticut's State Prison." The copper was apparently mined from the "dungeons" of the prison, according to an article published in the *Hartford Daily Courant* on Sunday, May 25, 1924.

"Brunton was one of the few prisoners during a fifty-year period, who found other employment than conspiring in the hollow recesses of the dungeon, fighting with the guards and getting tipsy on the cider which old Guinea, a former slave convicted of murder, brought to the prison," a caption under a rendering of Brunton's engraving of the prison yard read.

The newspaper continued, "General Washington sent a number of prisoners to be confined in the dungeon under these walls, describing them as 'flagrant and atrocious villains.'"

Coincidentally, Brunton's earliest known engraving is a portrait of George Washington, published in 1781, according to Finlay. Bates called it "the most important example" of Brunton's engraving.

But that was done well before Brunton landed behind bars.

It is the engraving he did at New-Gate of the prison itself that's

place in history not only as a counterfeiter, but as an artist as well. There's an entry on him in "The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860." Besides noting his portrait of Washington and his silver and bookplate work, it says Brunton served several jail terms for counterfeiting.

Bates describes how Brunton's elaborate engravings — with hatched lines and scroll work — made their way into the homes of doctors, lawyers, ministers, politicians, merchants and Yale College graduates in the form of engraved silverware, ornaments and watches, as well as bookplates. The painstaking work was done by hand, with the help of a steel-cutting tool called a burin, Finlay said.

Brunton presumably tried to ingratiate himself with Humphreys, who was appointed superintendent of the prison in 1796, with the oil-on-canvas portraits he painted of him and his wife, Anna, holding their infant daughter Eliza. Brunton depicted the couple's wealth and social status through their clothing — full military dress for him, a plumed hat for her — and through objects shown in the paintings, including leather-bound books and a china tea set.

The Connecticut Historical Society's collection also includes numerous examples of family registers, decorative printed papers to record names as well as dates of birth, marriage, and death, made from metal plates etched by Brunton.

"He's pretty much the first person who's doing this in America," Finlay said.

Despite his sterling work, Brunton died in the poorhouse in Groton, Mass., in 1832, according to Finlay. More than 150 years later, the details of his life continue to unfold.

Child said her upcoming book, which is expected to be published next spring, will reveal "startling new details" about Brunton's service in the British army during the Revolutionary War and his life from prison to death.

"My book will introduce many previously unknown works by his hand and will provide an authentic glimpse into life on the fringe in America's new Republic," she said.

And like those at New-Gate who mined copper, Child continues to mine for tidbits about Brunton. She invites those with more information to contact her through www.deborahmchild.com.

Notorious, Popular Criminal Cursed The Hangman

By RYAN CANE
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Years before John Dillinger, "Baby Face" Nelson and "Pretty Boy" Floyd, there was Gerald Chapman.

Chapman — dubbed "Public Enemy No. 1" by both the press and authorities prior to the FBI's official use of the phrase — was criminally active in a number of states, but it was the murder of a New Britain police officer that led to his execu-

tion.

Born George Chartres in New York in 1887, Chapman stayed out of police blotters until 1907, when he had his first foray into crime: jewelry theft. He would be in and out of prison from that point on for other petty thefts. During his longest stint — 8 1/2 years at Auburn Correctional Facility in New York beginning in 1908 — he learned more about how to be a successful criminal from more experienced burglars, robbers and

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counterfeiters.

After his release in 1919, Chapman started bootlegging operations in the Midwest and planned his most ambitious heist.

The robbery of a U.S. Postal Service truck on Leonard Street in New York netted Chapman and his crew \$2.4 million, making it the largest armed robbery in the country at that time.

CHAPMAN, BIO



GERALD CHAPMAN in about 1925, the year he killed New Britain Officer James Skelly during a burglary in New Britain.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, LESLIE JONES COLLECTION

Chapman

Continued from Page B1

The Leonard Street robbery made Chapman a very wanted man. After his capture, he was sentenced to 25 years in prison at the federal penitentiary in Atlanta.

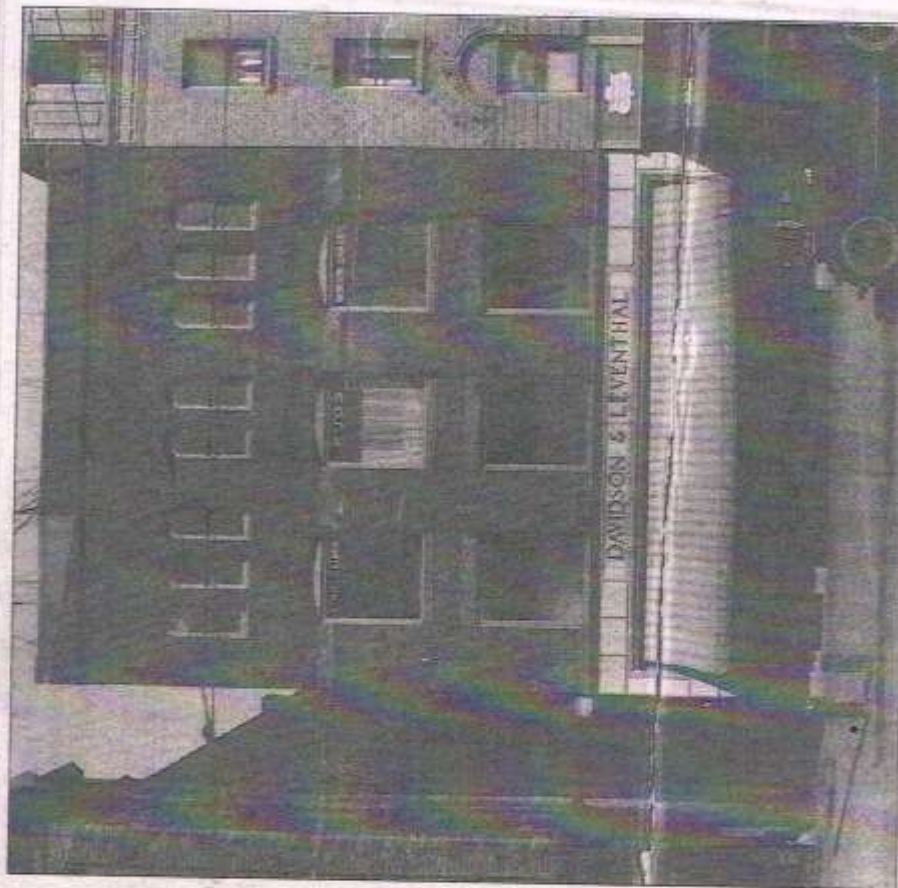
It took three tries, but Chapman eventually escaped. His story captivated the country, making him a celebrity. Gerald Chapman was "Public Enemy No. 1."

Chapman arrived in Connecticut in 1924. During an October burglary of the Davidsonson and Levant department store in New Britain, Chapman shot Officer James Skelly.

"He was shot while on duty by a coward," said Father Keating of St. Joseph's Church in New Britain, according to the next day's *Courant*. "You have seen him out in front of this church Sunday after Sunday directing traffic and watching out for the safety of you and your children. This morning he took his life in his hands when duty summoned him, and now he is at death's door, with his fate in the hands of the Great Director of all traffic."

Skelly later died. Chapman got away.

"Many in Connecticut and the rest of the country ... couldn't believe that Chapman, the class of the criminal world, could stoop to a petty burglary." The *Courant* wrote in a 1964 story about Connecticut's greatest trials.



COURANT FILE PHOTO

Hickey.

While searching a Springfield office that housed Chapman's burglary tools, Hickey found an American Express Railway tag with a Muncie address written on it. On Feb. 8, 1925, The Courant would call Hickey's clue "one of the most dramatic discoveries that has ever figured in the long and colorful annals of crime."

Hickey contacted authorities in Indiana who then watched the location closely until Chapman was apprehended and taken into custody after a brief shootout.

"While Indiana police took the major share of the credit for his capture, they would never have known where to look had it not been for the expert police work of Edward J. Hickey," The Courant wrote in 1953.

Chapman was extradited back to Atlanta to serve the rest of his federal sentence but Connecticut wanted to try him for killing Skelly. Federal authorities agreed to extradite Chapman to Connecticut, while still maintaining his status as a federal prisoner. In an open-and-shut trial, Chapman was found guilty of murder — a crime punishable by death.

Letters poured in from across the country in support of Chapman, whose gentlemanly demeanor and audacious criminal spirit captured the public's imagination.

One supporter from San Diego who urged the governor to commute Chapman's death sentence to life imprisonment wrote: "His crime is not half as revolting as that of [convicted murderers] Loeb and Leopold who are enjoying ruddy good health. [Alleged murderer] Harry Thaw and [rape and manslaughter defendant] Fatty Arbuckle are free men. As long as the very rich can commit murder with almost a certainty of getting away with it I, for one, certainly do



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, LESLIE JONES COLLECTION

GERALD CHAPMAN, who faced the death penalty for killing a police officer during the 1925 burglary of a New Britain department store, captivated the public's imagination. He was hanged in Wethersfield the following year.

not believe in killing a man because he has not enough filthy lucre to employ a high priced lawyer. If there has ever been a case of a wealthy man being executed I would like to know about it."

Remarkably, State's Attorney Hugh M. Alcorn persuaded President Calvin Coolidge to issue a presidential pardon for Chapman's mail truck robbery.

Connecticut was getting its man.

Fast forward to April 6, 1926 — execution day at Wethersfield State Prison.

At 6 p.m., Chapman ate his final meal: pork chops, cottage fried potatoes, layer cake, prunes, bread and butter, coffee and

milk.

"He ate a good meal," a parole officer said.

Shortly after midnight he entered the death chamber.

As a guard put a black cap over his head, Chapman asked, "What are you putting that damn thing on me for?" The Courant reported.

Then while having his chin lifted, an angry Chapman said, "Take your damn hands off."

Chapman's final words — considered cursing at the time — were not well-received.

"In this last act of his lurid life, those who knew him for what he was and had regarded him as but a nice little rat in a cage, concluded that he had acted true to form," The Courant wrote in a story that said Chapman "swore profusely as doom neared."

While most states at the time used traditional gallows, Connecticut employed a device known as the upright jerker. A rope lowered from the ceiling and was placed around the prisoner's neck. Once initiated, 300 pounds worth of iron counterweights were released, jerking the prisoner into the air. A sudden death was the intent. For Chapman, it was anything but.

The Courant reported that he hardly moved as the heavy strap was drawn around him, "completing the effect he gave of a human package consigned to eternity."

His body swayed in the air for nine minutes — "shivering as the muscular reflexes gradually subsided, and heaving deeply" — before he was pronounced dead at 12:13:15 a.m.

Despite the millions he had stolen, Chapman left behind no estate other than a pair of collar buttons and a book of synonyms.

Killer's Defense: He Was Possessed

Lawyers Hire Paranormal Investigators, But Judge Bars The Devil From The Courtroom

By JULIE STAGIS
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At first, the 1981 stabbing death of 40-year-old Alan Bono of Brookfield looked like a routine argument gone awry. Police referred to it as an "open-and-shut case."

But then came Arne Cheyenne Johnson's defense: The devil made him do it.

With the help of a pair of famed paranormal investigators, Johnson's defense attorneys sought to prove the 19-year-old killer was innocent because he had been

possessed at the time of the killing. It would be the first time a possession defense was used in an American courtroom.

Bono was stabbed several times in the chest and stomach on the lawn of Brookfield Kennels, which he managed, about 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 16, 1981.

About an hour later, police arrested Johnson — described as a small, blond, fair-skinned man — on a murder charge. The two men had allegedly been

arguing over Johnson's girlfriend before the stabbing occurred, the *Courant* reported.

Talking On The Devil
Days after the stabbing,

clergy members, paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren, Johnson's mother and

his girlfriend all claimed Johnson had been possessed at the time of the killing.

The Warrens told police that since July

250 YEARS
MOMENTS
IN HISTORY

Demons

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diocese's involvement changed things.

"Brookfield priests called in the diocese after they heard the 11-year-old's story that he had recently entered a Newtown house, sat on a water bed and was suddenly confronted by an elderly man with hooves, whose image was soon joined by men in grotesque costumes," the Warrens told police, according to *The Courant*.

Shortly after Bono was killed, the diocese stopped commenting on the boy's case, but a spokesman did acknowledge that a priest had been assigned to investigate the boy. The spokesman told the *Courant* it was the first time the diocese had assigned an investigator to look into "diabolical possession."

Johnson was present for the exorcisms and soon began to display violent behavior. At one point, he reportedly put his fist through a chest of drawers, growling like an animal, and then couldn't remember the incident, *The Courant* reported.

"We knew this case would end in tragedy; it was inevitable," Lorraine Warren told *The Courant*. "But Arne was the last one we would have ever thought it could happen

1980 Johnson had participated in at least three exorcisms involving his girlfriend's 11-year-old brother David, who purportedly had been inhabited by 43 demons.

During one of the rites, the Warrens told police, "Johnson leaped up and cried to the demon, 'Come into me, I'll fight you, come into me.'" *The Courant* reported on Feb. 27, 1981. "From that time on, he was possessed, they said."

Although police ordinarily would disregard such unusual claims, the Bridgeport **DEMONS, B10**

to do it. You know how he gets when he's been drinking."

The police officer testified that Glatzel's brother, Carl, told him, "Cheyenne did it."

Despite Callahan's banning of the demon defense, Minnella attempted to put four priests on the stand. Callahan wouldn't allow it. Ed Warren was relegated to being a character witness who took the stand for only a few minutes, saying Johnson was "quiet and considerate and that it was 'very hard to believe' he could have murdered anyone," before he "reluctantly" stepped down, *The Courant* reported.

Thwarted from using his unprecedented argument, Minnella tried to prove his client had acted in self-defense.

Johnson testified on his own behalf, saying Bono was drunk and provoked the argument, the *Courant* reported. He said he didn't remember what happened after Bono ran at him with the 5-inch knife Johnson used for his job as a tree surgeon, until he was apprehended by police.

The state never established a motive, but Flanagan said Johnson "did what he wanted to do" when he stabbed Bono, according to *The Courant*'s story about the closing arguments. Flanagan said the number and depth of the wounds showed Johnson's intent to kill.

Manslaughter. Not Murder



Before Johnson was indicted on March 19, 1981, Waterbury lawyer Martin J. Minnella offered to take on his case for free. Minnella's plan to pursue the unprecedented "demon possession" defense was widely publicized.

Minnella said he hoped to subpoena the priests involved in the exorcism, and hoped they would break tradition and speak about the rites.

A Fight Over Johnson's Girlfriend

Though police investigated the Warrens' claims, they maintained that Bono was stabbed after a fight over Deborah Glatzel, Johnson's 26-year-old girlfriend.

In April, Johnson's lawyers gained permission to examine the clothing and tissue remains of Bono, who had been cremated. They said the absence of blood, rips or wounds could prove that demons were involved. The *Courant* reported.

As the case progressed toward trial, the Warrens and Minnella drew criticism from their peers, who said they were involved in the case for personal gain.

"Typical of the criticism of the Warrens are comments by mentalist George Kresge, better known as The Amazing Kreskin, who argues that the Brookfield case is simply a means for the couple to prey on the superstitions of the public and build up their annual lecture revenues," reporter John B. Harris wrote in *The Courant's* June 22, 1981, story.

"They have an excellent vaudeville act, a good road show. It's just that this case more involves clinical psychologists than it does them," Kresge said in the story.

Local attorneys said Minnella was representing Johnson to rake in the publicity and that the legal community didn't take the possession defense seriously.

Both the Warrens and Minnella stood by their involvement in the case.

Although copies of a book about the Warrens — "The Demonologist" — were flying off the shelves after they spoke out about the case, Lorraine Warren told the *Courant* "she and her husband work closely with church officials and view demonology as an extension of theology."

"It would be defeating our purpose to do anything deceitful or dishonest," she said.

Harris, who covered the entire case, wrote that Minnella admitted to the press early on "that he thought handling such publicized cases led to more lucrative ones,



COURANT FILE PHOTO

Arne Johnson, center, in coat and tie, is handcuffed to another prisoner as he arrives at court in Danbury on Oct. 30, 1981, during his trial for the 1981 stabbing death of Alan Bono, 40. The trial judge refused to allow his defense attorney to use demonic possession as a defense, and Johnson eventually was convicted of manslaughter.

but stressed this week that he took the case because he was convinced it was strong."

A Packed Courtroom

As jury selection was set to begin in late October, reporters and believers in the supernatural flocked to Danbury for what was dubbed "The Demon Murder Trial." The local Hilton Hotel was completely booked for nights, and people worried that the courtroom, which could hold 70 people packed in shoulder-to-shoulder, wouldn't be big enough.

Many had assumed that Minnella would use possession as a type of insanity defense, but he said he would set out to prove Johnson was actually possessed.

"Minnella, who has said publicly he will prove that demons exist, plans to bring into evidence tapes of [the exorcism] rites and Johnson's challenge, and to question priests who participated," Harris wrote in an Oct. 26, 1981, story.

"The value of this case is that people who are truly under demonic possession ... will be able to go into a court of law and have that jury and that judge be much more understanding," Ed Warren said in the story.

But just as quickly as the demon defense took off, it was shot down by Superior Court Judge Robert J. Callahan, who later became chief justice of the state Supreme Court.

No Demon Defense

"Somewhere on the road to pinning a murder rap on Satan, Martin Minnella got waylaid," Harris wrote in his Nov. 1, 1981, story.

At the start of the trial, Callahan said he refused to hear Minnella's planned arguments about the devil's work.

"I'm not going to allow the defense of demon possession, period," he said. Al-

though Minnella tried to have Callahan disqualified from the case, Callahan didn't budge.

"While admitting he's not sure whether demon possession is possible, Callahan said ... he knows it's not a legal defense and considers evidence of it irrelevant, unprovable and needlessly confusing to a jury," The *Courant* reported.

Prosecutor Walter D. Flanagan and police stuck with their simple explanation — Bono had made an obscene remark about Johnson's girlfriend, and the two men tussled before Johnson stabbed Bono.

Suddenly, the case lost its luster. Many reporters who had come from around the country left by the third day of the trial. The *Courant* reported.

Prosecutors, who had divulged little about their case against Johnson while Minnella kept the focus on the devil, said another type of demon played a role in the case: drink.

The state argued that Johnson and Bono had been drinking heavily before Bono was killed. A waitress testified that she had served three carafes of red wine to the two men, who were with Deborah Glatzel and other family members at the Mug 'N Munch Café on the afternoon of the stabbing. The *Courant* reported.

That evening, the group was in the apartment Johnson and Glatzel shared. Then, a neighbor heard loud noises outside and saw two people running toward Bono. The *Courant* reported. An ambulance driver and police officer arrived to find Bono lying face up with four "half-moon shaped" stab wounds below his rib cage.

The ambulance driver testified that Glatzel and her father were standing near the body. Glatzel, who appeared distraught, said repeatedly, "Oh Daddy, he didn't mean

AFTER UNDERSTANDING FOR 17 HOURS OVER THREE days, the jury convicted Johnson of manslaughter — not murder — on Nov. 24, 1981.

The jury's conclusion meant they didn't think Johnson acted with intent to kill Bono, only to injure him, Harris wrote. One of the jury's last requests for a transcript of testimony was that of a policeman who had said Johnson told him, "I think I hurt someone."

Minnella vowed to appeal on the grounds that he was barred from using the demon defense, but never did.

Johnson received the maximum sentence of 10 to 20 years on Dec. 18, 1981. He was released for good behavior after serving just over four years at the Connecticut Correctional Institute in Somers.

The case spawned a 1983 book, "The Devil in Connecticut" by Gerald Brittle, and an NBC television movie, "The Demon Murder Case," starring Andy Griffith, Cloris Leachman and Kevin Bacon.

Johnson married Deborah Glatzel on Jan. 30, 1985, a year before he was released from prison. The couple live in Sherman and have two sons and two grandsons. Deborah Johnson said Thursday. She is a certified nurse's assistant, and her husband is a construction superintendent.

Deborah Johnson said she is still interested in the supernatural and contributes to an online radio show on demonology today. She remains friends with Lorraine Warren.

Arne's mistake all those years ago, she said, was challenging "the beast" that had possessed her youngest brother.

"You never take that step," she said. "You never challenge the devil. Arne started showing the same signs my brother did when he was under possession."

But now, the past is in the past, she said. "We live a normal life."

Minnella, who lives in Middlebury, continues to stand by Johnson's case. He said in a phone interview Thursday that he heard the tapes of David Glatzel speaking the names of 42 demons in Latin, and that the Brookfield Police Chief was going to testify that he saw the child levitate.

"If you believe in God, you've gotta believe in the devil," Minnella said, "and what I saw in Arne as a young guy has profoundly affected me the rest of my life."

"There's a lot of crazy people out there that have contacted me to represent them with the same idea, 'the devil made me do it.' But our case was based on fact, not fiction."

MURDER MYSTERY

Sea Captain Meets His Fate On A Bridgeport Street

By DAVE ALTMAN
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In 1872, George Colvocoresses survived yellow fever, explored uncharted islands of the South Pacific Ocean and conducted daring raids on Southern command posts during the Civil War, only to come home to Connecticut and end up dead.

The circumstances of his death on June 3, 1872, shot on a cobblestone street in Bridgeport, are shrouded in mystery.

There's even a map diagramming the crime scene around Clinton Street that

was discovered years later in the archives of the Connecticut Historical Society. It is referred to as the "murder map," although who drew it and for what purpose is unknown.

Some believed the captain was murdered. Insurance companies that held a

then-astronomical \$200,000 in life insurance policies on Colvocoresses claimed it was a suicide. Still others said he had hired a "body double" and faked his death only to sail off to the South Pacific to live out his life in paradise.

There were allegations of police incompetence for losing key evidence from the death scene, a deathbed confession by a sailor and lawsuits by his surviving family against insurance companies that refused to pay out premiums.

As far as his family is concerned, there was never any question the captain was

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murdered, according to his great-great-grandson Harry Colvocoresses.

"I think we all believed that he was murdered and the whole suicide idea was just a creative attempt by the insurance companies not to pay up," Harry Colvocoresses said in a recent interview.

Yellow Fever And Civil War
George Colvocoresses' life not only ended in violence but began in it.

As a child in Greece, he survived the Greek War of Independence only because his father negotiated safe passage to America for him and nine other boys on a ship sailing to Baltimore. Colvocoresses was 6 when he was adopted by Captain Alden Partridge of Vermont, who founded what is now Norwich University.

Colvocoresses joined the Navy when he was 16 and almost immediately was attached to the Wilkes Exploring Expedition, which was charting the South Pacific Ocean. During that four-year period, the crew surveyed more than 280 islands and created more than 200 new sea charts.

Colvocoresses was so instrumental in that voyage that a small island off the coast of Fiji was named "Colvos" in his honor.

When that expedition ended, Colvocoresses returned to his duties in the Navy, sailing off the coast of Africa and other parts of the Mediterranean. It was during one of those voyages that he contracted yellow fever and nearly died.

Bridgeport historian Michael Bickawn, who wrote a book called "Wicked Bridgeport," described the neat-death in a chap-

book from the captain's body by hypothesizing that it recoiled when he fired.

The paper concluded a gun that was "heavily overloaded and placed by a suicide against the elastic walls of the chest and thus fired, the recoil of such weapon as this one would be quite sufficient on the opinion of persons competent to judge to set it as far and even further from the body than was the distance in this case."

What seemed likely to have been a robbery gone bad had become a full-scale mystery. Reward posters were put up offering as much as \$10,000 for information on the death.

The case even drew the attention of the great Allan Pinkerton, who ran the New York City detective agency that is now internationally known. Flabbergasted police called in Pinkerton to assist and he concluded that the captain had been murdered.

But the insurance companies stuck to the theory that Colvocoresses had killed himself, so his family had to go to court to try to get their money. As the case was about to go to trial, most of the insurance companies settled, agreeing to pay 50 percent of their policies, except for the New York Life Insurance Co., which paid in full.

The family ultimately got about half of the nearly \$200,000 in insurance that George Colvocoresses had amassed.

"Some companies paid in full, others made partial payments and a few reneged," Harry Colvocoresses said. "You won't find anyone from our family who has ever had a good word to say about insurance companies."

The case was never solved, not that there weren't people who claimed to have killed the captain.

One of the strangest confessions was the



ter he devoted to the Colvocoresses murder.

"Colvocoresses appeared as if he had expired, and his remains were prepared for burial at sea. While the pastor performed the last rites, the American flag draped over George's body shuddered ever so slightly with his breath."

During the Civil War, Colvocoresses was commander of the USS Saratoga, which carried out several raids along the Georgia shore and captured several Rebel ships. He retired shortly after he was promoted to captain in 1867 and returned to Litchfield, where his family home still sits near the Town Green.

Colvocoresses immediately became involved in a dispute with the Navy over what he felt was money he was owed from ships he had captured. At that time, captains of Navy ships received a portion of whatever bounty was recovered from a ship that was captured.

"You could be talking \$10,000 to \$15,000 from a ship that they captured," Harry Colvocoresses said. "That was a tremendous amount of money that he believed he was owed."

At that same time Capt. Colvocoresses started accumulating life insurance policies. According to stories in The Courant following his death, the captain had amassed \$95,000 in life insurance policies from 19 different companies.

"That is an astronomical amount of money that would be the equivalent of several million dollars in insurance today," Bielawa said.

Colvocoresses was headed to New York City to meet with his insurance agent when he met his demise.

Gunshot Near The Harbor

On the morning of June 3, 1872, Colvocoresses trimmed some fruit trees in his yard before departing for Bridgeport, where he was going to take a schooner to New York City.

In addition to some stocks and bonds that he was bringing to his agent Alfred Smith, he also reportedly was carrying as much as \$8,000 in cash. As he boarded a train on the Housatonic Railroad bound for Bridgeport he had his valise, a small leather satchel and his bamboo cane, inside of which was hidden a sword.

Once in the Park City he purchased a ticket to New York aboard the ship the Redburner scheduled to set sail at 11 a.m.

THE DEATH of George Colvocoresses, a Navy officer who was a Civil War hero, garnered plenty of press attention. The New York papers focused on the Bridgeport police department's handling of the case, while The Courant wrote a long story indicating Colvocoresses had committed suicide. Reward posters were put up offering as much as \$10,000 for information on the death that night.



According to newspaper accounts of that evening, Colvocoresses ate dinner at a place called Ward's, visited the Sterling House Hotel to return a key from a previous visit and then stopped at a drug store to buy two sheets of writing paper and two envelopes.

The captain asked the drug store owner for the quickest route to the dock. The shop owner, who was the last person to see Colvocoresses alive, later told police it was 10:35 p.m. when the captain walked away.

But Colvocoresses apparently did not follow the drug store owner's directions; he turned left onto Clinton Street rather than proceeding to South Street. As the whistle for the departing steamship screeched, a gunshot rang out.

The first officer on the scene found Colvocoresses lying on the side of the road, his shirt on fire from the gunpowder. He had been shot once in the left side of the chest. The broken gun used to kill him was found about 35 feet away on the other side of Clinton Street. He had \$2.70 in his pocket.

The captain's leather satchel was found the next day a few streets away, slit open, its contents, including the cash, missing.

Police described the pistol used in the shooting as a large, clumsy horse pistol of ancient French manufacture, according to Bielawa. The gun, which had been held together with some glue and twine, had broken apart during the shooting.

The captain's secret sword was found near his body, apparently damaged during some sort of struggle.

His body was taken to the police station, where someone literally stole his pants, a key piece of potential evidence lost. The gun also turned out to be useless as evidence because the police chief had some-one try to put it back together.

The death of a Navy officer who was a Civil War hero garnered plenty of press attention. The New York papers focused on

story told in the New York papers about a Danish soldier on his deathbed at sea in 1885 who claimed that he had killed Colvocoresses after a robbery gone bad.

The sailor said as he tried to swipe the satchel from Colvocoresses, the captain struck him several times with his cane until it broke. Fearing that he was going to get stabbed by the sword that was hidden inside the cane, the sailor said he pulled a gun and shot Colvocoresses before running away.

He dropped the gun and bullets as he ran toward the dock, sliced open the bag and took out the valuables and then boarded a schooner.

The sailor was buried at sea, his story with him.

Researchers at the Connecticut Historical Society recently discovered two maps, buried in the archives, drawn on brown paper, of a series of streets near a harbor. Tasha Caswell, a curatorial assistant at the historical society, said at first museum officials couldn't figure out what the maps depicted until someone realized one of them showed the spot where Colvocoresses was killed.

One of the maps shows his prone body on the sidewalk of Clinton Street next to his cane and umbrella. At the bottom of the map are two projections of the trajectory of the bullet that felled the captain, one from the side and one from the top.

The second hand-drawn map depicts more of Bridgeport, showing the businesses Colvocoresses visited that night, the route he took and the steamboat he should have boarded.

Caswell said museum officials do not know who drew the map, where it came from or how it ended up in their possession.

Harry Colvocoresses assumes it was drawn either by an insurance investigator or someone the police hired.

The Colvocoresses family still owns the Litchfield home where the sea captain lived. Many of his possessions, including the damaged cane and satchel that he carried the night he died, are in storage there.

Clinton Street no longer exists; it is buried under an underpass for I-95.

"I really thought this was going to be a clear-cut case of suicide, but I'm not so sure anymore," Bielawa said. "There are loose ends that just don't add up."

Murder Map?

In that story the newspaper explained another fact that the man was found 22

Exhibits from The Museum of Crime,
Washington DC
(now closed due to losing their lease)

CRIME MUSEUM



John Wayne Gacy's
"Pogo" Clown Suit



Ted Bundy's VW Bug



Jeffrey Dahmer's Handcuffs



Ted "Unabomber" Kaczynski's Scale



CRIME MUSEUM

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FBI'S TEN MOST WANTED

FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE

WILLIAM BRADFORD BISHOP, JR.



THE WASHINGTON, DC CRIME MUSEUM IS NOW PERMANENTLY CLOSED.



Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances Crime Museum closed its doors to the public on September 30, 2015. Crime Museum will continue to operate the Natalee Holloway Resource Center, Crime Library and law enforcement related education programs as well as continue to be a repository for famous crime and law enforcement related objects.

ALCATRAZ EAST IS NOW OPEN.



Alcatraz East Crime Museum opened in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee December 16, 2016. The museum contains some of the United States' most infamous artifacts. Visit [Alcatraz East](#) for details.



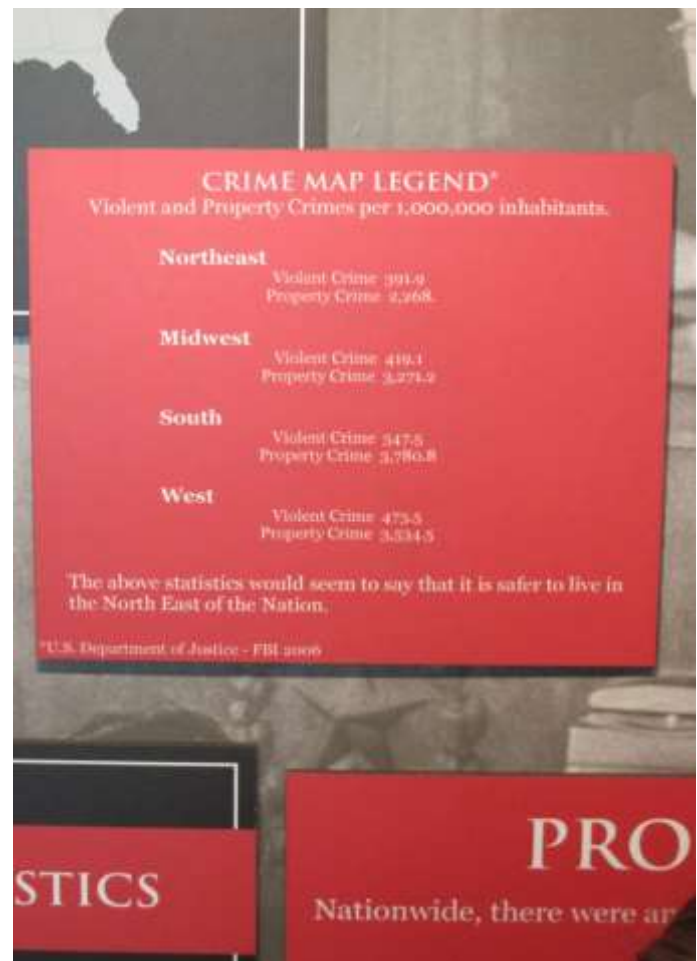
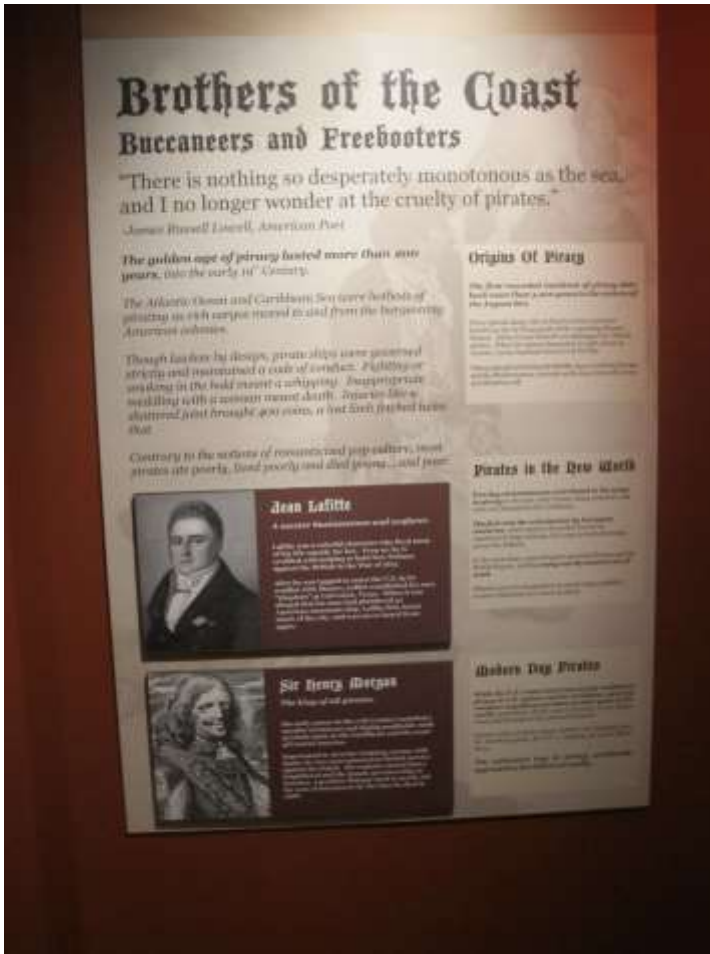
Colonial Era

Connecticut Witch Trials



Cells and exhibits

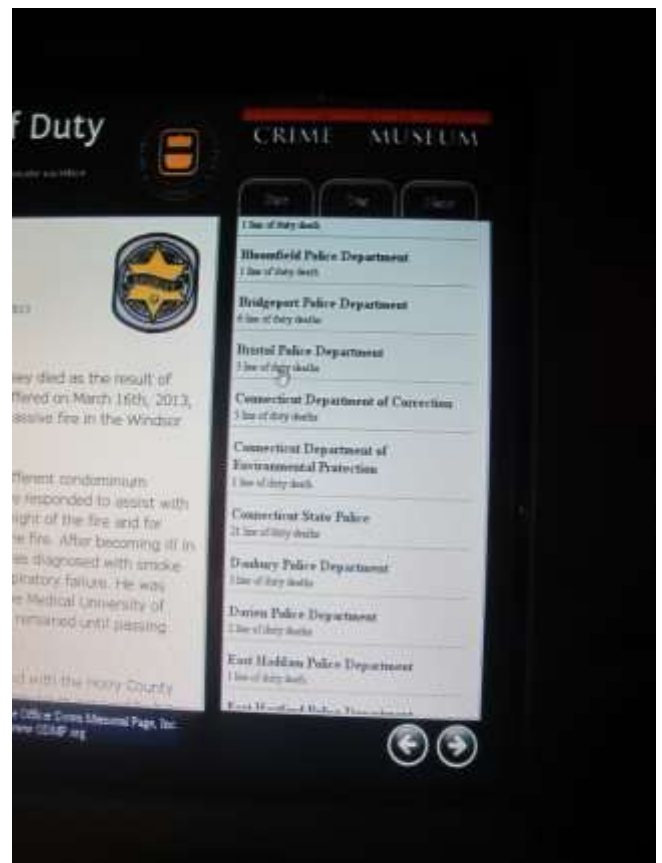




Audio Tours and Shop



Displays and Memorials for Law Enforcement



The History of Gun Manufacturing in Connecticut



Techniques Of Punishment Throughout The Years





Electric
Chair

Gas
Chamber



Infamous Criminals



White Collar and Government Criminals



Crime Scenes and CSI Labs

Particularly for Connecticut with the work of Dr. Henry Lee

