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O. 29

ELECTROCUTION OF HENRY CLAY BEATTIE, JR.

Confesses His Guilt Before Going to Death.

Richmond, Va., Nov. 24—Henry Clay Beattie, Jr., went to his death at dawn today, the self-confessed murderer of his young wife, although the confession was not made public until four hours after he had paid the toll exacted by the law. He maintained to the end the remarkable nerve he had exhibited since first he was accused of killing his wife on the lonely Midlothian turnpike last July. His last expression was a smiling sneer when he observed the chair that was to launch him into eternity.

The confession was made public in the rotunda of a downtown hotel, by the Rev. Benjamin Dennis, one of the ministers who had labored with Beattie to repent. As a matter of fact, it was acknowledged by the minister, Beattie first admitted his guilt November 9, the day after he entered the death cell and before the fruitless appeal for a commutation of sentence was made to Governor Mann. It was not until yesterday that he would agree to its being put in writing for his signature. Then all hope that the governor would interfere was gone. The extraordinary document follows:

"I, Henry Clay Beattie, Jr., desirous of standing right before God and man, do on this, the 23rd day of November, 1911, confess my guilt of the crime charged against me. Much that was published concerning the details was not true, but the awful fact, without the harrowing circumstances, remains. For this action I am truly sorry, and believing that I am at peace with God, and am soon to pass into His presence, this statement is made."

The shock that killed Beattie was given at exactly 7:19 o'clock this morning. Three distinct and separate times the current was turned on, and at 7:23 o'clock it was shut off. Drs. W. T. and St. Julien Oppenheimer a minute later announced that death had been instantaneous. The 22 persons in the death chamber thereupon filed out, and the end of a lengthy and costly battle for justice had ended.

In addition to the two physicians there were gathered in the death house when Beattie appeared, the 12 witnesses to the electrocution, as required by law, the Revs. John J. Fix and Benjamin Dennis, Major James B. Woods, superintendent of the penitentiary, the electrician and four deputy wardens. The room was flooded with light from a group of incandescent lamps set in a low ceiling and a light that swung on its cord immediately above the chair.

There was no conversation. The witnesses labored under too great a strain, all, even the hardened prison attendants, seemed ill at ease and anxious to be done. The electrician brought a board studded with electric bulbs and laid it across the arms of the chair. The lamps blazed brightly. Then in other ways the instrument of death was tested and finally, at a signal, attendants went over the apparatus, attaching the deadly electrodes and testing every strap and clamp.

When the preliminaries were over, Superintendent Woods, accompanied by two deputies, threw back an iron-studded door and started for the death cell. Instantly the death chamber was plunged into blackness with the exception of a vivid circle of light from the hooded and powerful lamp above the chair. The chair, an oaken bit of furniture, which, except for its straps and steel bands, might grace any library, was on a rubber mat. Alt but it was obscured, the dazzling rays from the low swing lamp throwing everything else into darkness so dense as almost to be felt.

The little party in the chamber heard the superintendent a few feet away kroning out the death warrant. Beattie listened to it

with intensity, but did not flinch. He stood during the reading, as is the custom, and when it was ended, he swayed just a trifle, but quickly recovered. Then without assistance, he took his place between the guards and began his march to the unknown. His entrance to the death chamber was as dramatic as anything he had done since first he commanded the public eye. He halted for a brief moment on the threshold, looked at the chair with an inscrutable smile that had in it the hint of a sneer and then walked briskly forward. Nor did he deign to strive to pierce the darkness outside his circle of glowing light.

It had been feared that the prisoner would flinch when the dread moment came to seat himself in the chair. There was no trepidation and not a hint of hesitation in Beattie's attitude. Still wearing his peculiar smile, half amused and half cynical, he stepped lightly into the seat, settled himself as though he had been looking forward to the rest and assisted the attendants in adjusting the straps and clamps by placing his arms and hands in the proper positions. The only indication that he was under a nervous strain was disclosed by his tightly clenched left hand.

During the few brief seconds preceding the turning on of the current, Beattie moved once. While the attendants were stepping back out of the light he squeezed himself back as though to seek a still more comfortable position. At the same time he raised his head, now almost completely hidden by the leather helmet that covered the upper part of his head and face. The next second the shock came.

When the law was avenged and the witnesses were gone, the prison attendants removed the body to the mortuary room, which adjoins the death chamber. There it lay for four hours until an undertaker, authorized by the Beattie family to prepare it for burial, removed it to his morgue. Later it was taken to the Beattie home where funeral services, attended only by the family, will be held. Interment in Maury cemetery will follow Sunday.

When the funeral cortege moves to the cemetery Sunday afternoon the morbid will not find places near the grave to satisfy their curiosity.

The police have received orders to clear the cemetery during the service there, and to permit no one to enter the burial ground save the Beattie's and their dead.

Tonight the Beattie family is alone with its grief. The window shades in the residence are drawn tight and no movement is seen about the place. Respecting their sorrow, neighbors and townspeople who would like to offer a word of consolation and sympathy are remaining away from the home. The idly curious did not share in this feeling, however, for the same general crowd that stood in the down pour before dawn at the penitentiary gates was on hand throughout the afternoon hoping to catch a glimpse of some member of the stricken family. They maintained their vigil until darkness drove them away.

Events moved so rapidly during the day that Richmond still is gasping. The sudden production of the murderer's confession caused a profound sensation. There had been rumors of the existence of such a document, but the rumors were based on nothing tangible. Emphatically and persistently they were denied by the family of the slayer, by the attorneys who had taken part in the celebrated case and by the prison authorities. The ministers refused to discuss the reports, putting off all interrogators with the simple statement that "they hoped for a confession."

The acknowledgement of his crime by Beattie was nowhere received with more quiet joy than in the executive mansion. Governor Mann, who resisted all pressure brought to bear upon him to commute the sentence or to issue a reprieve, has worried himself into a state bordering on nervous breakdown through entertaining the fear that he might be permitting an innocent man to go to his doom.

WHO WILL BE FIRST?

We have a large number of subscribers who are in arrears on subscription. We need the money and will appreciate it if you will come forward with the goods. The label on your paper will tell how much you are behind. If you are paid up this does not mean you; if not send us a dollar or two and we will continue to dish out the news. We mean business.

The same deep satisfaction is shared by the jurors who convicted Beattie, the attorneys who prosecuted him and by the witnesses whose evidence, sent him to the chair.

Beattie was convicted solely on circumstantial evidence. There could be found no one who had seen the fatal shot fired, nor any person who could deny emphatically Beattie's illogical story of the tall, bearded stranger, the mythical person whom he charged with the murder. This doubt, in the face of damning circumstantial evidence, so linked as to be practically conclusive, is cleared away by the slayer's posthumous acknowledgement of a murder that has held the interest of the whole country.

The crime for which Henry Clay Beattie, Jr., was executed today was one of the most sensational in the criminal history of Virginia. Interest in the murder was country-wide, owing to its unusual features and the swift movement of justice.

On the night of July 18 last, Beattie drove his automobile into Richmond carrying with him the body of his wife which had a gaping shotgun wound in the head. He declared that a tall bearded man had accosted him on the Midlothian turnpike, five miles from Richmond, and when he had requested the man to make room for him in the road, the stranger without warning fired the shot which killed Mrs. Beattie. He added that he had grappled with the man, but was overpowered, and that the murderer had fled, leaving the gun behind. This story of the crime was maintained by Beattie to the end.

For a brief time Beattie's story was given some degree of credence, but within a day or two suspicion began to point to him, and he was kept under the closest surveillance. Bloodhounds, taken to the scene of the crime, refused to leave the place, circling around the bloodspot on the road.

Beattie, it eventually transpired, had thrown the shotgun into the tonneau of his automobile after the shooting, but in passing over some railroad tracks not far from the scene it had been jolted out and was picked up later by a negro. This gun, which Beattie alleged had belonged to the mysterious highwayman, proved the means of sending the young man to the electric chair.

At the coroner's inquest the weapon was identified by Paul Beattie, a second cousin of young Henry, as the weapon he had purchased for young Henry with money furnished by the latter. Beattie was arrested immediately after the inquest. This was on July 21, and on August 19, one month and one day after the day of the murder, the trial was begun before Judge Walter A. Watson, in the picturesque little court house, 16 miles from here.

The jury was made up almost entirely of farmers, and on this fact Beattie based his claim that he had been convicted, not for the murder of his wife, but because of his relations with Beulah Binford, a notorious young woman. He insisted to the last that a jury composed of city men would have freed him. Beattie was defended by H. M. Smith, Jr., and Hill Carter. The prosecution was conducted by L. C. Wendenburg and L. M. Gregory.

The trial moved swiftly, though many witnesses testified, and on September 8, after 58 minutes of consideration and prayer, the jury, in chorus, instead of through its foreman, declared Beattie to be guilty of the murder of his wife. Motion for a new trial was denied, and November 24 set as the day for the execution.

On November 13th the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals refused to grant an appeal on a writ of error, and two days later Governor Mann, who had been appealed

to for commutation or reprieve, issued a statement declaring that the interest of the people of Virginia demanded that Beattie should die in the electric chair.

THOMASVILLE MAN IS FOUND DEAD IN WOODS

Thomasville, Nov. 25.—The body of Charles Lee Everhart, who mysteriously disappeared so suddenly Saturday morning, was found late this evening nearly three miles south of this place in a patch of woodland by two boys while out rabbit hunting, the dogs spreading the alarm as they ran. Soon a number of people gathered and guarded the body and waited until Coroner Peacock, with a jury, arrived.

The following facts were found: Two bloody places were found, one about 40 feet from the body, one about 30. His gun was lying 25 feet from the body. The body was lying on its face. Upon examination of the body a number of things were found in his pockets, but no money was found. It was reported that the deceased had more than one hundred dollars with him when last seen, and that he was on his way to a shooting match. It was found that he had been shot just below and back of the right ear, and the load coming out through the face, tearing away his teeth and terribly disfiguring the face. The body was turned over to Undertaker Green until 8 o'clock tomorrow morning, when the coroner's jury will render their verdict.

Robert C. Leonard, who was last seen with Everhart, was arrested on suspicion and hurried to Lexington by automobile and placed in jail for safe keeping.

The preliminary hearing will be held tomorrow at 1 o'clock and interest centers on the hearing. Leonard claims to have left Everhart about noon at Frank Workman's store, and it was just at that time and place that all trace of the dead man was wiped out until today, when his dead body was found.

DEATH OF MR. W. M. CATES

Mr. W. M. Cates was seized with an attack of appendicitis while at Graham, Friday, Nov. 17th.

He grew worse in his home and on Tuesday was taken to St. Leo's Hospital, Greensboro, where he was operated on and thought to be improving. Saturday about 2 o'clock a message was received by his wife, stating he could not live through the night. While preparing to go to his bed side another message was received, announcing his death. The body was carried to Grey's Chapel Sunday, where funeral and burial was conducted by Rev. J. D. Andrew Modnay.

Mr. Cates was 39 years old and a member of a very large family, there being sixteen children. For the past several years he has been engaged in the furniture business, being connected with the M. B. Smith furniture house at the time of his death.

He was a man of an excellent character, being a deacon in the Burlington Reformed Church, and a very active Sunday School worker. He leaves a wife and two sons, one six weeks old and the other three or four years.

He was a native of Durham county, and was married to Miss Ednora Routh of Randolph county several years ago.

His estate is remade slowly. Forty years after the Chicago fire Mrs. O'Leary's cow is acquitted of that kick.

Death of Mrs. Mebane.

Mrs. Margaret Foust Mebane, wife of J. Robert Mebane, died in her home in Burlington Nov. 27, 1911, aged a little more than 54 years. She had suffered for six or eight weeks with cancer of the liver. She leaves a husband, two sons and six daughters, also one brother and four sisters, she being the first of her father's children to be called to the spirit land. In early life she professed faith in Christ and united with Mt. Hope Reformed Church in Guilford county. Recently she removed by certificate to the Reformed church in Burlington. Her religious training was under the late Rev. Dr. G. W. Welker together with the following four laymen, viz.: her father S. E. Foust, her husband's father W. M. Mebane, John Corbie and Daniel Welker. Under the devout training of these God-fearing men a blessing came to the congregation in which she was reared. The Hon. C. H. Mebane, now of Raleigh, Dr. C. Banks McNairy, proprietor of Foot Hills Sanatorium, of Lenoir, Rev. W. H. McNairy, pastor of the new Heidelberg Reformed Mission in Lincolnton, the late Rev. C. A. Starr and the writer came in the next class and now when they get together always recall with great pleasure the childhood days when they heard the voice of these departed saints in exhortation and prayer.

She came of devout religious parentage. Her funeral was conducted in the home at 11 a. m. Nov. 28 by her pastor, and her body was laid to rest beside her son in Pine Hill Cemetery. It will be recalled that her son Robert met his death by jumping from a train in Virginia in July 1910. The sadness of this event is deepened by the fact that just one week ago the wife of Wm. B. Mebane, her oldest son, who resides in Rome, Ga., died, being sick only 24 hours.

The husband and children have the sincere sympathy of a host of friends in this sore bereavement.

By her pastor,
J. D. Andrew.

Card of Thanks

We desire to thank our friends and neighbors who have been so kind and sympathetic during the serious illness of our wife and mother. May the kind Heavenly Father repay each one for these kind deeds.

J. R. Mebane and Children.

For Sale.

We, the undersigned, have a few articles more or less useful we would like to dispose of between this and the 7th of December. Among other things we have a "Sunny South" cook stove, a "Perfection" oil stove, both almost new, one of those wonderful "Kitchen Cabinets," 2 porch rockers, two parlor rockers, four split bottom chairs, one cheap bureau, one cot, one refrigerator, a lot of brown leghorn chickens etc.

Rev. J. A. Hornaday.

Hasting-Mebane.

Mr. Ernest Hasting and Miss Jessie Mebane were married Sunday evening by Rev. A. B. Kendall at the Christian Parsonage. Only a few friends being present. They left on train No. 22 for Chapel Hill to visit his sister.

From Santa Claus.

As I have not decided what day I can meet the children at The 5, 10 & 25c. Store, will have to write you later.

The installation of Pastor C. I. Morgan at the Lutheran church last Sunday was interesting and well attended. Rev. Dr. M. M. Kinard, President of the N. C. Synod delivered the charge to the pastor. In pointed remarks he showed what the true minister should be, do, and teach. At 3:30 Rev. V. Y. Boozer, president of the northern Conference delivered a very interesting and practical address to the congregation in which he set forth in excellent terms the duties of church members.

PROGRAM

The Burlington Township Sunday School Association will convene in the Christian Church, Burlington, N. C., Sunday, Dec. 17, 1911. Everybody invited. Sunday School Teachers and workers urged to attend.

First Session, 2:30 P. M.

Song
Devotional Service—
Rev. A. B. Kendall
Song
Words of Welcome—
J. H. Vernon, Esq.
Response—
Rev. J. D. Andrew
Roll Call & Reports
Song
Address—
J. Van Carter,
Field Sec. of the State S. S. Association
Song
Election of Officers
Intermission

Second Session, 7:30 P. M.

Song
How to deepen the Spiritual life—
Rev. A. B. Kendall
The Baraca & Philathea Class—
J. Van Carter
Selecting place for next convention
Song
Benediction

Notice of Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting of the stockholders of The State Dispatch Publishing Co., will be held on the 5th day of December, 1911, at 2:00 o'clock, in the afternoon, at the office of the company in the Waller Building, Burlington, N. C., for the purpose of electing a board of directors, and receiving and acting upon the reports of the officers, and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

In accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina, no stock can be voted upon which has been transferred on the books of the company, within twenty days next preceding this election.

November 23, 1911,
Dr. J. A. Pickett, Pres.

Native of Alamance.

Rev. W. S. Clapp, who is a native Alamance county boy now residing at Landford, Pa., writes that he has recently been called to the pastorate of Trinity Reformed church, Collegeville, Pa. This church is attended by the Faculty and students of Ursinus College and is one of the charges in the Philadelphia Class of the Reformed church. This is quite an honor to Rev. Clapp to be elected to such an important field and especially so early in his ministry. Rev. Clapp has many friends throughout the State who will read of his success with pleasure. He having served as a supply in our sister county, Guilford, while but a ministerial student. He is a man of great force and our only hope is some day we may have him return to the land of sunshine and flowers and reside in Alamance.

Death of Mrs. Huffman.

Mrs. Edna Huffman, widow of the late Daniel Huffman, died in her home between St. Marks and the Brick Church Tuesday evening, Nov. 28th, aged nearly 80 years. She leaves two sons, P. P. Huffman of Burlington and Thomas L. Huffman who resides with the mother and three sisters, Mrs. Mollie Clapp and Misses Annie and Laura Huffman. Her funeral will be held in the home at 10 o'clock a. m. Thursday the 30th by her pastor and her body will be laid to rest in the graveyard at St. Marks Reformed church where for a long time she has been a member. Her health has been bad for a long time and her hearing almost gone. The writer has been her pastor for eighteen years and no member of his congregation appreciated a visit to her home more than "Grandma Huffman. She was a very kind-hearted mother and a good neighbor.

J. D. Andrew.

The McNamaras are in part going to be tried by special correspondents or so it seems.