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STORY OF AN OLD CRIME (CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE)

job with a second blow. But the most atrocious deed was to come. The woman went to work, cut the body into small pieces and burned it bit by bit. The entire night and all the wood available were consumed in burning the body. The hickory tree, a dog house and the door steps went up in the effort. It is believed that her mother and youngest brother helped to dispose of the body. In fact she confessed as much to a woman who called on her in jail. I believe the killing was a conspiracy entered into by the whole Stewart family.

"Of course we knew nothing of the crime at my father's house. Franky came early the next morning, stopping where my mother and the girls were washing for Christmas and remarked: 'You are hard at it early.' My mother answered: 'Yes, we are trying to get ready for a rest.' 'Yes' said Franky. 'I've been at it myself ever since before day.' She told mother that Charles had gone up the river to George Young's.

"That same afternoon Franky came over and reported that Charles had not returned. She expected him earlier. Mother noticed that she was a bit nervous, but thought it was on account of the prolonged absence of Charles. She said she would go down to her father's home three quarters of a mile away, if some of the boys would attend to the feeding of her cow; explaining that Charles had fed her that morning, but, when we went there that night we saw none but women tracks.

"Charles didn't show up the next day, nor the one following. Franky told mother that as he had remained away so long she did not care whether he ever came or not, and went back to her father's.

"After several days had passed and nothing was heard of Charles the alarm was given. The word was put out all through the mountains. No track or trace of him could be found. The river was searched, for some thought that he might have gone through the ice. He had not been to George Young's. My father was greatly stirred up about it. He was ready to do anything. So when he heard of an old guinea negro over in Tennessee, 40 miles away, who had a kind of a conjure ball that told things, he set out to see him. The negro was not at home, but the man, a Mr. Williams, for whom he worked, said he could interpret the behavior of the ball. He hung the ball up like a pendulum and marked off the points of the compass. Father told Williams all about the location of the house where Charles lived and drew a map of the section round about. The ball didn't seem to point away from the house and Williams asked: 'Wasn't it possible that the man was done away with at home?'

"Father said that was impossible for if Franky had desired to do so she couldn't have killed Charles and hid his body. Williams finally said, 'Well, his kindred.' That was toward his own house, from ours. Later in the day Williams tried his ball and told my father that it indicated that the body had been found. Sure enough it

was. "On the very day that father started for Tennessee the mystery was partially solved. Some one of the searching party suggested that the cabin and the premises be examined. An old man by the name of Jack Collis thought it wise to look around the house. He went about the yard and cabin probing with his walking cane. In stirring the ashes in the fireplace he found several pieces of bone, which caused him to say: 'There's too many bits of bone in this fireplace and the ashes are too greasy.' A small rock taken from the ashes was put into water to see if any grease bubbles would rise. They did in great plenty. It was discovered that fresh ashes had been poured in a mortar hole near the spring. Pieces of bone and flesh were found there; also a heel-iron, such as Charles wore on his hunting moccasins. After all this evidence, strong and convincing was found, a jury was summoned and an inquest held. As an immediate result, Frank, her mother and youngest brother were arrested. All were bound over to court.

"A more thorough investigation about the place revealed substantial proof. On the ground, under the floor a circle of blood as large as a hog's liver was found and the walls were speckled. There could be no doubt. Charles had been murdered and his body burned.

"Franky was tried at Morganton at about the third court after she killed Charles. She got out of jail dressed in a man's clothing and escaped into the country, following the wagon of her uncle. The sheriff of the county, discovering that his prisoner had fled, hurried on her trail and overtook her several miles out of town. He rode up close and said: 'Franky'. She turned and answered: 'I thank you, sir, my name is Tommy.' 'Yes,' her uncle put in, 'her name is Tommy.' He gave himself and the woman away by saying 'her'. She was returned to her prison cell and on the appointed day, the 12th of July, 1883, in the presence of a great throng of people hanged. It was hoped that she would make a public confession on the scaffold, and she seemed prepared and ready to do so, but her father yelled out from the midst of the crowd: 'Die with it in you, Franky.' There was a sight of folks there to see her hanged.

"Franky Stewart (that was her maiden name) was a mighty likely little woman. She had fair skin, bright eyes and was counted very pretty. She had charms. I never saw a smarter little woman. She could card and spin her three yards of cotton a day on a big wheel.

"The motive for the crime will never be known. Jealousy, she claimed, in a printed ballad that she made, gave rise to the first thought. No one could ever imagine anyone that she had cause to be jealous of, for Charles was true to her. He laughed and talked to the women of his acquaintance, but that was all.

"The surviving members of the Stewart family met violent deaths one form or another. The old man, Franky's father, lost his life while cutting a rail tree; a limb struck him on the head and crushed out his brain. The mother died from the effects of a

snake-bite, and was in great agony the last hours of her life. Jack, one of the brothers, was killed during the civil war. Joe met a sudden death, but I have forgotten the facts concerning it. Blackstone, the brother charged with helping her burn my brother, went to Kentucky, stole a horse and was hung for it. All went. It looks like God made way with them on purpose. I believe that they all conspired to kill Charles. It was a horrible deed. He was a fine fellow. We loved him. Thus ends the story of the old man. It was told with the directness and power that inspires a truthful man.

Nancy, the little daughter of Chas. and Franky Silver, grew into womanhood and married David Parker, who died fighting for the Confederacy at the first battle of Manassas. The widow married again and now said to be living in Madison county.

The Stewarts went to Burke from Ansen.

The following verses were printed on a strip of paper and sold to people that gathered to see Franky Silver executed. It is claimed that she composed it and gave it out as her confession:

This dreadful, dark and dismal day Has swept my glories all away. My sun goes down, my days are past. And I must leave this world at last. Oh! Lord, what will become of me? I am condemned, you all now see. To heaven or hell my soul must fly, All in a moment, when I die.

Judge Daniel my sentence has passed, These prison walls I leave at last, Nothing to cheer my drooping head Until I'm numbered with the dead.

But oh! that dreadful Judge I fear; Shall I that awful sentence hear; 'Depart ye cursed down to hell And forever there to dwell?'

I know that frightful ghosts I'll see Gnawing their flesh in misery, And then and then attended be For murder in the first degree.

There shall I meet that mournful face Whose blood I spilled upon this place; With flaming eyes to me he'll say: 'Why did you take my life away?'

His feeble hands fell gently down, His chattering tongue soon lost its sound, To see his soul and body part It strikes with terror to my heart.

I took his blooming days away, Left him no time to God to pray, And if his sins fall on his head Must I not bear them in his stead?

The jealous thought that first gave strife To make me take my husband's life, For months and days I spent my time Thinking how to commit this crime.

And on a dark and doleful night I put this body out of sight, With flames I tried him to consume But time would not admit it done.

You all see me and on me gaze, And never commit this awful crime, Be careful how you spend your days, But try to serve your God in time.

My mind on solemn subjects roll; My little child, God bless its soul! All you that are of Adam's race, Let not my faults this child disgrace.

Farewell good people, you all now see What my bad conduct brought on me— To die in shame and disgrace Before this world of human race.

Awful indeed to think of death, In perfect health to lose my breath, Farewell my friends, I bid adieu, Vengeance on me you must now pursue.

Great God! How shall I be forgiven? Not fit for earth, not fit for Heaven But little time to pray to God, For now I try that awful road.

If those lines had not been written under such dreadful circumstances they would be considered nothing more than doggerel, but they tell a pitiful story and make a warm heart sad. The verses are full of pathos. H. E. C. BRYANT

WEAVERVILLE (Too late for last week.)

The various organizations of the Weaverville Baptist Church are observing a week of prayer for the benefit of the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. In charge of the programme one day is the Woman's Missionary Society, another day the Royal Ambassadors, another day Young Women's Auxiliary, The Girls Auxiliary furnishes the program for Friday and the Sunbeams for Saturday. Miss Mary Williams who for some months has been very ill is slowly improving. Mrs. William Pope entertained a

number of her Marshall friends at the last hours of her life. Jack, one of the brothers, was killed during the civil war. Joe met a sudden death, but I have forgotten the facts concerning it. Blackstone, the brother charged with helping her burn my brother, went to Kentucky, stole a horse and was hung for it. All went. It looks like God made way with them on purpose. I believe that they all conspired to kill Charles. It was a horrible deed. He was a fine fellow. We loved him. Thus ends the story of the old man. It was told with the directness and power that inspires a truthful man.

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POWERS GETS SUPPORT AGAIN

Will you please allow me a short space in your paper. I have been reading about Rev. C. H. Powers and reading about the people that are against him. I want to say that he preaches the Bible as far as I know and I guess I know half as much as the howlers do that don't read the Bible. I guess the reason the hypocrites can't stand him, they are raising old Jesseb's, that's why. There is no christian that is going to howl about what Powers says, for the Bible says that the time will come when they would not endure sound doctrine and it is done and here that the old hypocrites and foppers can't stand it. I sure believe that he is a God-sent man, for if he was not, looks like he

Advertisement for STANDARD GASOLINE. Text: 'Many winter motor troubles can be side-stepped by good judgment in the choice of gasoline.' Includes an image of a gas pump and a car.

would be struck dead, for God is not mocked. Everybody just read the 3rd chapter of Isaiah and see what it says, and some of the old hypocrites said to come to them for dope on Powers, I wouldn't spend time to go and hear what the old ungodly hypocrites have to say. Everyone that will talk about him is not anything but hypocrites anyway. I guess there are as many children of God to stand for him as there are hypocrites to go against him. If everybody gets against him,

Advertisement for 'RED' GRANGE National Football Star. Includes a photo of a football player and a testimonial: 'While at college I learned that the condition of the throat is most important to an athlete. Coaches and captains know that throat irritation may even keep a player out of an important game. For this reason, I insist that my New York Yankees smoke only Luckies, when they smoke.'

Advertisement for LUCKY STRIKES CIGARETTES. Text: 'You, too, will find that LUCKY STRIKES give the greatest pleasure—Mild and Mel-low, the finest cigarettes you ever smoked. Made of the choicest tobaccos, properly aged and blended with great skill, and there is an extra process—ITS TOAST-ED—no harshness, not a bit of bite.' Includes an image of a pack of cigarettes.