

William Gardiner.

Superintendent Staunton

was away like last, but it was Harsent that said my only love had been unfaithful to me by going with Gardiner and now i must confess that no one will act imorall with her again as . . . before I killed her and Gr must thank God they was not sreved (served?) but they will do even my troues and shirt was drowned with brick end in side them, but shall not say were fined out, i have to take lodmun to inset (induce?) sleep as i cannot rest without my own darling pet had i not have took all my letters out of rose box i should be where G is, and had the rope now but go on let G have it, or else D he is the corse of this, he is been the ruin of my young life, and now i must conclude by saying it will be a good job done with. from H.B. the murder of my own darling lover i could not think of her having . . . by that — Davis i shall put a bullet straight through them as i shall be coming back in six months. now i am a murderer.”

Cross-examination continued—Did you get a list of the names of the men working at the brewery at Burton, who came from Peasehall?—Inquiries were made at Burton, and it was found that the only maltster with a mōther to keep was a man named Albert Goodchild, living at Badingham. I wrote to the police at Burton, and they sent me an envelope, written by him. The writing on the envelope did not seem to be like that in the anonymous letter.

Have you ascertained whether Goodchild was in Peasehall on the night of the murder?—I have not ascertained. He left Wickham Market and got to Framlingham, and then reached Badingham at seven o'clock. He might have got to Peasehall afterwards.

Did you realise it was obviously disguised writing?—No, I do not think so.

Don't you see the writing gets to be smaller?—It gets smaller; it is written by a man who does not write very

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much; there are characteristics all through, showing it is not disguised.

He says in this letter: "I wrote the other letter"?—He makes some small "i's," whilst in the other letter there are capitals.

Have you noticed on the fifth line he spells Davis in the ordinary way, and then on the 16th line he spells it with a small "d"—"dovice." Is that a sign of disguise?—That shows he is illiterate.

Where is Goodchild now?—He is at Burton-on-Trent.

Did you also find out he came home with Harsent, the deceased girl's brother?—Yes, he came with him as far as Wickham Market. Harsent went on to Darsham for Peasenhall.

He is not the boy called, is he?—No, he is older.

Is he a maltster?—He is not now.

He was at the time the murder was committed?—Yes.

He came home from Burton on the night of the murder, with Goodchild?—Yes.

With regard to the shoes, have you any malting shoes here?—No, I have a description of them, and they had no bars across them.

You have not troubled to get Goodchild or the malting shoes?—No.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE—He could not pursue everything; he would be very foolish if he did. You are speaking as if he was wanting in his duty. He would be wanting in his duty if he had followed up these suggestions in this anonymous letter.

Re-examined by Mr. DICKENS—Did you find out Goodchild's movements at the time the letter marked "A" was posted?—Yes; when the letter "A" was posted he was in the train returning from Burton-on-Trent.

Could Goodchild have posted the letter at Peasenhall?—No.

Now another thing I want to ask you, was there such

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a thing as a sofa in the kitchen or girl's bedroom?—I never saw one.

In the letter it says: "I was with her on the sofa on the night of the murder," and he says: "My shoes was all blood." Did you see any traces or footprints in blood?—There were no traces.

Have you in fact found that the maltster did not have barred shoes?—Yes.

Were they plain, leather-soled shoes?—Yes.

When did you first get this letter?—I first got the photograph of the letter on 16th January of this year. I had been trying to get the anonymous letter. The *East Anglian Daily Times* said they had not got it. Mr. Leighton spoke about it in the passage here. After he left I went to the *East Anglian Daily Times*, and they said they had it. On the 10th of December I asked Mr. Leighton for it, and he said he had consulted Mr. Wild, who had advised him to send it to the Treasury. On the 14th January he had a handwriting copy, which was practically useless except for words. He ultimately received it on the 16th January—less than a week ago.

Up to what time did you trace Goodchild's movements?—Up to the time he got home on the night of 31st May.

By Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE—Where is Badingham?—It touches Peasenhall. The village part is 2 or 3 miles away from the village part of Peasenhall. It is west of Peasenhall.

Re-examination continued—Have you seen a reproduction, a facsimile, of the letter marked "A" in one of the public papers?—Yes.

Not a mere print, but a reproduction of it?—Yes.

Mr. DICKENS (to his lordship)—It is a very improper thing, my lord.

Mr. WILD—I have had nothing to do with it or my clients.

Mr. DICKENS—I do not suggest you had. (To witness) I understand you to say there were two other anonymous

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letters?—Yes. One was on the leaf of a pocket-book, found in Devonshire by the police, and the other was a letter sent from London to Constable Nunn at Peasenhall.

The witness then produced the letter on the leaf of the pocket-book, which was read by the Clerk of Arraigns. It ran as follows:—

“ Dear wife,—Can you see me at Stone Challenger tonight. I find the police has got Gardiner, who is said to have killed the servant. It was me. Excuse me for breaking secrets of that sort. Please not tell anyone of the crime.—I am your loving husband.”

Re-examination continued—The third letter came from London?—Yes.

This also was produced and read by the Clerk of Arraigns. The third stated:—

“ I cannot keep silent any longer; my thoughts are all of that terrible night. When I visited the one I love I cursed the day when first I knew the way many men would visit Rose Harsent. . . . Oh, that terrible night. I was desperate. Rose so would have screamed. What did I do. Where did the knife come from. I was sorry afterwards I put Rose’s nightdress over her head to stop the blood. I lifted her up, but she fell. I got the lamp to see if she was dead. Down went the lamp, but I put the flame out. I walked out of Providence House down the street on the pavement, and then into the road. My rubber shoes that Rose admired so is worn out, like myself. I cannot rest. No peace. I cannot work now, my mind is only of Rose. Oh . . . Brother Gardiner, I never thought you would be charged with the murder of Rose Harsent. Rose said you were her best friend. No beastly talk from you. Must I give myself up to the law? I cannot. My beard is grown like Brother Gardiner’s. I must wander on the sea. . . . Oh, Rose, I shall see you before God. Good-bye, I can walk to the sea. Good-bye, I cannot write.”

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Re-examination continued—The envelope had the London postmark, and was posted on 18th November, 1902, at 9.15.

Dr. JOHN CHARLES RYDER RICHARDSON, examined by the Hon. JOHN DE GREY—I am a medical practitioner, and on 3rd June I made a post-mortem examination of the body of the deceased, Dr. Lay also being present. I saw the wounds in her throat. There was one extending from underneath the angle of the right jaw, right across to the left angle, which completely severed the windpipe. From under the right angle of the jaw, and from under the commencement of this wound was another wound running upwards from underneath the chin. Besides this, above the junction of the angular bone and the breast-bone was a punctured upward wound which communicated with the big wound across the throat. Either of the two incised wounds would have been fatal.

Look at this knife (accused's). Were the wounds such as would have been caused by that knife?—Yes.

With regard to the punctured wound extending upwards, must that have been caused by some instrument having a sharp point and blade?—Yes.

Such as this knife?—Yes.

Could the wounds have been self-inflicted?—They could not have been. There was a bruise on the right cheek, and also a small superficial cut. There were numerous semi-circular cuts about her hands, most of which were caused by upward blows such as in warding off blows.

Did you notice any marks of burning on the body?—A considerable amount of charring.

Where?—Chiefly on the right side under both flanks, extending as the body lay upwards on to the abdomen.

Can you form any opinion as to whether the body was burned before or after death?—After death, I should say.

Evidence for Prosecution.

Dr Richardson

What was the cause of death?—The cuts in the throat and the hæmorrhage.

Cross-examined by Mr. WILD—If the wound straight across the throat had been caused first, the power of screaming would most certainly have been gone.

Did you see any blood on the floor?—It had been cleaned up when I was there.

Was the body in a healthy condition?—Yes.

And the girl was strong?—I should say so.

Who was at the post-mortem?—Mr. Lay, Mr. Chaston, Mr. Staunton—

And the reporter?—There was another one, but I had my work to look to; I looked to Mr. Chaston as being the man in charge.

Dr. CHARLES EDWARD LAY, examined by the Hon. JOHN DE GREY—I am a surgeon, practising at Peasenhall. On Sunday morning, 1st June, I went to Providence House and made a superficial examination of the body of Rose Ann Harsent. The body was almost cold, and rigor mortis had practically set in, but not in the lower extremities.

Can you form any opinion as to how long death had taken place?—Roughly, four hours at least.

With regard to rigor mortis is it uncertain what time it sets in after death?—It is most uncertain.

How long have you known it to be delayed?—I believe it has been delayed as much as twelve hours.

Did you notice a good deal of blood?—Yes.

Where was that?—Almost on the left-hand side of the body.

Did you see any paraffin?—I saw what I believed to be paraffin on the chimney of the lamp and on the broken pieces of bottle.

Did you collect them?—I only took one piece on which I saw a label. I took it off. It is that now produced.

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Is part of that label in your writing?—Yes.

What is in your writing?—The “two and three teaspoonfuls” and “for Mrs. Gardiner’s chdn.”

Did you supply that bottle to accused or his wife?—Undoubtedly.

To whom?—Mrs. Gardiner.

When?—The latter end of March.

Cross-examined by Mr. WILD—Assuming the directions on the bottle were carried out, it would not take long to consume the bottle?—There are forty-eight teaspoonfuls.

So it would be finished in two or three days. Did you also supply a bottle of medicine to Mrs. Gardiner’s sister?—I did.

Was the staircase smeared with blood part of the way?—There were two places on the stairs, I believe.

Which way do you think the blood went?—I could not say.

Did you say on the 3rd of July before the magistrates, that the body was cold when you examined it?—I believe I said so.

Is that correct?—It was cold, but it was not absolutely.

Speaking as a medical man, you said before the magistrates that the body was cold?—Yes; I do not deny that.

Is not it very difficult for you to form a definite judgment as to how long the dead girl had been dead?—Yes.

The most you will say, it could not have been less than four hours?—Yes.

But it might have been more?—Yes.

Might it have been seven or eight hours?—It might have been.

You say rigor mortis, which is the rigidity of death, was not complete?—It was complete.

Can you not form any opinion as to how long the rigor mortis had commenced?—I could not form a definite opinion.

Evidence for Prosecution.

Dr Lay

It would be some considerable time?—In all probability it had been some time.

It could have been two hours?—Yes; it could not have been less.

Does not it usually commence five or six hours after death?—There have been cases where it has commenced immediately after.

I quite agree there have been exceptional cases on the battlefield, but is the normal time from five to six hours?—I do not think there is a normal time where there is such a variation.

It is impossible for you to say whether the girl had been dead four or eight hours?—It is impossible to say positively.

By Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE—Can you tell at all whether the deceased girl received her wounds while standing? Was there anything on the throat to show?—There was nothing to show whether it was done in a standing position.

Mr. DICKENS—I am told that Dr. Richardson will give his view about that.

Mr. JUSTICE LAWRENCE—It is a suggestion from one of the jurors.

Dr. RICHARDSON (recalled), examined by Mr. DICKENS—The wound right across the throat must have been done when she was lying down. The stab or oblique wound might have been done when she was standing up.

By Mr. WILD—Which wound spurted, do you think, up the stairs?—There would be a considerable amount of hæmorrhage from both these wounds, and, of course, you would get most hæmorrhage from the biggest wound.

By Mr. DICKENS—There must have been a good deal of force used in regard to the oblique wound?—There must have been force, and that would probably have caused her to reel backwards.

The other wound, you think, was caused when she was lying down?—Yes.

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Can you say he was facing the woman?—I should say he was on the right-hand side.

Dr. STEVENSON, D.M., F.R.C.S., Senior Official Analyst at the Home Office, examined by the Hon. JOHN DE GREY—On 9th June I received from Superintendent Staunton a number of articles which I examined and analysed. There was a grey coat, a grey waistcoat, a pair of cloth trousers, a cotton shirt, undervest, a pair of canvas shoes, a table knife, a purse with a sovereign in it, a double-bladed clasp knife, a mackintosh, blue coat and waistcoat, carpet slippers, boots, and broken glass bottle in paper. On the grey coat, grey waistcoat, and pair of cloth trousers, I did not discover any stain of blood or paraffin. The same applies to the cotton shirt. It was, however, stained in other ways (describing). There was no blood on the undervest. On all the other articles there was no stain of blood or paraffin, with the exception of the knife, which I noticed had been recently scraped inside, and that the two blades had been recently polished. It was a little oily, and had evidently been freshly cleaned and sharpened. It had been scraped inside the haft. On examining the interior of the handle and between the metal and bone of the handle I found a minute quantity of mammalian blood. I should say the blood inside had not been more than a month there. With regard to another portion, I could not say what age that was, probably not a very long time either. I found the bottle in many pieces quite crushed, but the neck of the bottle was not broken when I had it. The cork was very low indeed—three-sixteenths of an inch out of the neck. I could not get the cork out with my fingers. With regard to the pieces of bottle, they were stained with blood and paraffin, the blood being like human blood. The bottle had contained paraffin, and some blood had flowed on to it. The broken edges were clean, and probably had been fractured by heat,

Evidence for Prosecution.

Dr Stevenson

and some of the jagged fragments had from the mode in which they split. The whole bottle might have been shattered by heat. I also saw bits of a half-burned wooden match, and a very small piece of woollen cloth. That was also stained with blood and paraffin. The cloth did not agree in colour or texture with the clothes, and I carefully searched the latter, and found no piece absent such as that piece.

Cross-examined by Mr. WILD—What is the normal period before rigor mortis commences?—I should put it on an average in this climate about five hours.

Is there any normal period in which the body would cool?—It varies a great deal according to the exposure of the body, whether clothed or unclothed, on a stone floor, or exposed to wind. It is very variable.

Very difficult to tell? I think you put the normal period, in your book, at eight to twelve hours?—Quite that in summer.

It would take longer in summer than winter?—Yes.

It would take longer in the case of a well-nourished body?—I do not think it would make much difference.

Do you think pregnancy makes any difference?—I do not know. I rarely have the opportunity of observing.

With regard to this blood, mammalian blood can be the blood of a human being or the blood of a rat?—Yes.

It is difficult with a small portion of blood such as you take to judge of its age, within a week or two?—It is difficult.

It would become quite conjectural?—I would not put it outside a month.

You would not stake your professional reputation that it was not six weeks?—Oh, no.

With regard to this little piece of cloth (produced), I think you said it had the appearance of having been torn or hooked off?—Yes, as if it had caught on a nail.

And you looked very carefully amongst accused's

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clothes, and found nothing to correspond with it?—There was nothing.

Where did you find that little piece of stuff?—It had dropped out of the paper containing the glass, which was in a small box. I did not find it during my first examination, but a day or two after, when it turned out amongst the debris of the bottle.

FREDERICK JAMES DAVIS, examined by Mr. DICKENS—I am at present out of employment, and have returned to Peasenhall. My father's house, where I was living when Rose Harsent was killed, was next door to Providence House. I wrote the letters (produced), and gave them to Rose Harsent by hand. She asked me to give them to her. I was assistant to a grocer and draper, and used to call at Mr. Crisp's house two or three times a week for orders. When I called for orders, I gave her these letters.

I hope you are heartily ashamed of them?—I am.

Did you ever have any immoral intercourse with her?—No.

Did you ever walk out with her?—Never.

On the night she was killed, did you sleep in the same room with your brothers?—Yes.

And you had to pass through your father's room to get to your own bedroom?—Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. WILD—When did the policeman first come to you about this case?—A day or two after, I expect—it might have been a week or a month after the murder.

You did not give evidence until last Assizes?—No.

In the meantime you had left Peasenhall and gone to St. Paul's Churchyard. And now you have left there and returned to Peasenhall?—Yes.

When did you leave Peasenhall?—On 6th September.

Your house and that in which Rose Harsent was adjoin each other, and are built under one roof?—Yes.