

LIGHTHALL'S DEATH.

THE STORY TOLD ON THE TRIAL OF BILLINGS.

Witnesses Examined for the Prosecution Yesterday—The Father on the Stand.

The case of the People against L. N. Billings, charged with the murder of Francis D. Lighthall, in March last, was resumed yesterday in Judge Armstrong's Court, with District Attorney Bruner and W. A. Anderson conducting the prosecution, and Grove L. Johnson appearing for the defendant. The family of the latter were present during the day.

The several witnesses for both sides were called, sworn, and placed under the eye of the first examiner was J. C. Boyd, County Surveyor, who testified as to the correctness of a map indicating the scene of the tragedy. Witness explained by the map the relative positions of the buildings, fences, trees, etc., on the place.

J. Frank Clark, County Coroner, testified to the circumstances attending the inquest held on the body of Francis D. Lighthall, on the 1st of March of the present year. Dr. G. A. White, County Physician, testified to having held the autopsy on the body of the deceased. Witness described the nature of the wounds on the body, of which there were two. One had entered the left side of the chest, passing almost directly through the body, and the other was in the hip.

District Attorney Bruner asked witness in what position the body of the deceased was, as shown by the direction taken by the bullet. To this the defense objected, and the question was changed so as to ask the witness if he knew what the position of the deceased must have been, and the question was admitted.

Witness said it would be impossible to state, beyond the fact that the left side was pierced, the direction in which the bullet having been pierced by a bullet. Witness identified the bullets taken from the body. Beside the bullet-wound in the chest, a slight abrasion on the bridge of the nose. To Mr. Johnson witness said he identified a document embracing a report of the autopsy held on the body of the deceased, as made to the coroner. He said the report did not contain a mention of the abrasion on the nose, as he had not deemed it of much importance thereto. He thought the wound would be made a blunt instrument, or might have been made by a sharp instrument.

Luther O. Lighthall, the father of the deceased, was then called by the prosecution, and examined by the district attorney. Bruner. Witness said he was a laborer, residing at Twenty-first and O streets. Had been in California since September, 1887. Francis D. Lighthall was his son. [Witness here broke into tears.] Have a daughter residing in Michigan. Have a brother named William A. Lighthall, who is 27 years of age at the time of his death on the 1st of March last, which occurred on the Billings ranch. This was the only child he had, and he was the only child of the deceased. He proceeded to relate the circumstances attending the killing of his son.

He said that his son had been in the yard on the 1st of March, when L. N. Billings and his son Ois came to the place. When Billings drove in he passed the house of day, he drove toward the barn, and witness followed him. Near the barn witness said to Billings, "I don't want you to meddle with my son without paying me." He said he never would pay; witness placed his hand on Billings' breast, saying, "I will not let anything else be said to me." He drew a club from his wagon and struck witness, his son at the same time leaping from the wagon and also assaulting witness with a club. Witness then seized a stick and attacked young Billings, and they knew where his son, the deceased, was at that moment. Heard a noise in another direction, and saw a man running toward the shooting witness's son; was "stunned" for the moment, and could not do anything. The horses ran away, and the elder Billings ran after and stopped them. He then came back and covered witness with his pistol. Young Billings declared to his father that he would be no more shooting. Turned to his son, and found he was dead. Young Billings assisted witness in carrying the body to the house.

Two clubs were here shown witness, which he identified as the ones used in the assault referred to in the testimony exhibiting considerable emotion. Witness, resuming, said he had seen Billings on three separate days during the week prior to the tragedy. Saw him the day preceding it. Had made arrangements for leaving the ranch. Had a discussion relating to the matter, were to leave the place. Billings came to the ranch and offered to pay witness \$125 to leave the place. [The last sentence omitted written out.] Billings was accompanied by his son. There were present the witness, Mrs. Hildreth and her little girl. Witness demanded the money, but Billings refused to place the furniture on the wagon to move it away. It was finally packed for removal, except the stove.

[Objected to and objection overruled.] One of the teams brought by Billings had been purchased by witness of defendant for \$225, but which had not been paid. Witness objected to Billings taking the horses away. George Lighthall, examining Billings' visit, and at the request of witness went to his father's house and returned with the \$225, which was paid to Billings, who surrendered witness's note. Cross-examined by Mr. Johnson—Witness did not remember in what month he went on the Billings place; it was not under a lease, but had an arrangement with Billings. There was afterwards a lease, in which Francis D. Lighthall and Francis Hildreth were interested. On the occasion of two of Billings' visits he came after his son; had been away from the ranch some of the time between last fall and the time of the tragedy; worked in the vicinity of Courtland, where he had a ranch the Sunday before the shooting; had not been away from the place any other time. When witness got home Mrs. Hildreth and daughter were on the ranch. The arrangement for moving away was made with Billings on the day before the tragedy. Witness and son called on Billings on the day the former returned from Courtland.

Here the prosecution objected, and Mr. Johnson argued at length in support of the right of the defense to go fully into the matter of all the business relations between the witness and defendant, to which the prosecution finally consented, with the understanding that it should not be considered a part of the direct case of the prosecution, which should reserve the right to go more fully into it at a later period in the trial.

Witness still 1:30 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

On the reassembling of the Court Mr. Johnson resumed the examination of the witness. He said that when Billings came to the ranch on the day of the tragedy witness was near the house; thinks they reached the barn at the same time; could not remember what was the first thing said; think something was said about wire, but could not say what it was; witness took some wire from his wagon and laid it down. Witness then said to him not to meddle with anything on the place until he had settled with witness; something was said by Billings about the lock on the barn door; some one opened the barn door; the lock had been removed, but didn't know who did it; there were tools in the wagon; witness saw the place; Billings said he had always run the ranch, and always would; don't think he first said he had come there for the purpose of seeing his son; witness did not see him; witness saw him; witness did not want him to take anything, even his gun, because I wanted my gun; witness something for security; my son had consulted a lawyer, and the latter advised us not to let Billings take anything from the place; when witness had his hands on defendant's shoulder, the latter's son was standing on the wagon holding the horses; could not say where deceased was at that time; witness followed me to the barn, when Billings drove up; did not attempt to strike the defendant, but struck young Billings with some kind of a stick and pistol; witness knew that the blow was about the shoulder or neck; hit him but once with the stick; before hitting the report of the pistol saw my son lying on the ground; think it was after I had struck young Billings, but before we had clinched; did not hear my son take any part in the fight; may have said at the inquest that all four were engaged in the difficulty; suppose he was engaged in it; after paying Billings for the gun the latter was turned over to me; Billings

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Enthusiastic Meeting of Young Men—Provision Made for the Summer Series.

A meeting of citizens to arrange for open-air concerts this summer, convened at Justice C. W. Baker's office last evening. There were present Secretary of State Hendricks, J. O. Coleman, C. K. McClatchy, E. A. Crouch, J. J. Spieker, W. S. Leake, George G. Davis, Charles Barton, W. F. Humton, J. A. Howell, C. W. Baker, R. O. Kimbrough, Howard Kimbrough, A. J. Johnston, B. H. Preston, F. Griswold, O. W. Erlevine and I. A. Robie. C. K. McClatchy called the meeting to order. He stated that its object was to inaugurate the season for open-air concerts, which had during several years past proven to be very enjoyable affairs. He stated that there was left from last year's fund the sum of \$103.92, which, of course, could be merged with the collections made this year. Last season \$1,020.07 was subscribed, and each concert had cost \$40, not including lights, etc., which made the expense a trifle more.

A motion was then declared in order for election of a chairman of the General Concert Committee. W. S. Leake and F. Griswold were placed in nomination for the former, and declined, with thanks, Mr. Griswold was unanimously elected. C. K. McClatchy moved that a canvassing committee of six be appointed by the Chair, to be known as the Finance Committee, whose duty it would be to make a tour of the city and collect the funds necessary to defray expenses for the season. J. O. Coleman moved to amend by making the committee eight, or as many more as the Chair might deem advisable. The amendment was accepted, and the Chairman appointed the committee and appointed their canvassing districts from the order of the Mayor, as follows: J. A. Howell, west of Fourth street, and extending north and south through the main portion of the city; W. S. Leake, east of Fourth street, and extending north and south through the main portion of the city; C. K. McClatchy, Fourth to Eighth streets; J. J. Spieker and C. W. Baker, from Tenth street, eastward; Frank Griswold and A. J. Johnston.

C. K. McClatchy suggested that W. R. Ormsby be made a member of the committee, and the Chair appointed J. O. Coleman, W. R. Ormsby and F. W. Humton. A resolution was introduced by Judge Davis to the effect that each band alternate in playing at the Plaza and Capitol grounds—that is, that one band play at Capitol Park on one night and at the next concert the same one play at the Plaza. Mr. Davis explained that the object was to give the public a better opportunity of seeing the bands, and that they considered it not as good a plan for listening to five or six bands in playing at the two places.

The following committee on platform, lights, grounds, etc., was appointed: O. W. Erlevine, Howard Kimbrough and I. A. Robie. On motion of Mr. Coleman, it was ordered that all of the gentlemen present be appointed a Committee on Order and Carriage. C. W. Baker said he thought the question of the hour of the concerts—that is, the opening and closing hours—should be decided, as people were very anxious on that point. He suggested that 7 or half-past 7 in the evening would be a suitable hour for the opening of the concerts. A. J. Johnston moved that the matter be left to the Committee on the same day for four or five people. The temperature yesterday was 14° warmer than one year ago.

Delightful May Weather. The highest and low Signal Service temperature yesterday, was 82° and 51°, with fresh southerly winds prevailing. The highest and lowest for the corresponding date last year was 68° and 48°, with fresh southerly winds and a cloudy sky. The weather yesterday was certainly the most exciting person could wish for or desire, and it is to be hoped that a long run of such weather may be in store for our people. The temperature yesterday was 14° warmer than one year ago.

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