

# UNCOVERING THE SLAYER OF PROFESSOR WHITE

By GEORGE BARTON

## Most Mysterious Murder Mystery in Philadelphia's History.

(Copyright, 1908, by W. G. Chapman.)  
 (Capt. James I. Donaghy, chief of the detective bureau of Philadelphia, is a fine type of the level-headed investigator of crime of the present day. He has been in the department for 30 years, he never wore a disguise of any kind in his life; he knows every rule of the game, and has occupied every separate position in the service from that of sub-policeman up to the responsible post which he now fills with signal success. He was the conspicuous figure in the famous White murder case although he modestly disclaims the credit, saying that the glory belongs to the entire police force of the Quaker City. The story, outside of its own interest, is important as a fair illustration of the unromantic and businesslike methods now generally used in the detection of criminals in the large cities of the United States.)

On the night of May 19, 1900, Prof. Roy Wilson White, a fellow of the law school of the University of Pennsylvania, and a lecturer on Roman law at the famous seat of learning, was mysteriously and brutally murdered.

Prof. White, although a man of less than 30 years of age, had already won an international reputation in his special branch of study. He was quiet and unassuming in manner, and enjoyed the reputation of being the most popular instructor at the university. So far as known he did not have an enemy in the world, and the news of his murder came as a terrible shock, not only to his family and friends, but also to the thousands of students with whom he had come into personal contact during the period of his tutelage.

On the day of the murder all of his movements were accounted for from the time he said good-by at his home in the morning until the moment he left the classroom for the night. During the afternoon he had a long talk with one of his associates concerning a work in which the two men were mutually interested. He took dinner alone at a small hotel near the university, and after that lectured to the law class under his charge. He was confident and enthusiastic, and never appeared to better advantage. About ten o'clock at night he left for his home in Germantown, a suburb of Philadelphia. He started in the direction of the Powelton Avenue station of the Pennsylvania railroad with the purpose of boarding the 10:15 train.

Less than an hour later a policeman walking along Thirty-second street, adjoining the railroad tracks, stumbled against a body on the sidewalk. It was quite dark in that section—in fact it was afterwards declared to be the darkest spot in all of Philadelphia. The officer flashed his lantern on the inert mass before him, and was shocked to find a man, mangled and bleeding. His head was crushed and he was unconscious. The pockets of the white vest were turned inside out and his gold watch was missing. The little green bag that he always carried by his side was spattered with his life blood. It contained among other things a text-book on "Pleading"—a book from which Prof. White had been lecturing that evening. Some notes on sheets of paper which he had utilized in his "Quiz" class were also in the bag. A pocketbook contained a life insurance policy, an invitation to a class reunion in another state, and a sum of money in greenbacks. A few yards away, imbedded in the soft earth, was an iron bar, quite thick, and about 18 inches long. It was such a thing as is used on the platforms of freight cars.

The disfigured corpse was removed to the university hospital, and the best medical and surgical aid summoned. But it was too late; the vital spark had fled, and all that the professors and students had left to them was the memory of Roy Wilson White's gracious life.

The shocking nature of the crime seems to have aroused the authorities into instant and universal activity. Superintendent of Police Quirk and Chief of Detectives Miller held a consultation to determine what should be done. While they were talking James A. Donaghy, a member of the detective staff, passed the open door of the outer office. Quirk espied him. "Hello, Jim," he cried.

"It had been raining 'cats and dogs' all the afternoon. Donaghy entered the office water-soaked from head to foot.

"What's the matter with you?" said Miller.

"You ought to know," was the rejoinder. "You sent me down to Media to get a pickpocket."

"Did you get him?"

"Sure," was the rejoinder, "and got soused in the bargain."

"Well," said Miller, "we've got something bigger than a pickpocket to look after now; listen."

Donaghy listened. And the more he heard the more absorbed he became. He forgot all about his wet clothes. He forgot everything but a desire to get on the track of the man or men

who had so foully murdered an inoffensive gentleman. While they talked a newcomer joined the group. It was Robert J. McKenty, another member of the detective staff, afterwards marked out to be a member of the mayor's cabinet.

Donaghy, as a result of the conference, immediately started for the scene of the murder. It has since been said that the White tragedy was "his case." He protests against this distinction. "It was a case of team work," he says. "Thirty detectives and over 2,000 policemen were engaged on the White case, and they made good." At any rate, Donaghy made good because less than an hour had elapsed before he was in conversation with a youth named Ralph Hartman, who testified that he had seen two colored men near the scene of the murder shortly after ten o'clock, and had talked to one of them. Best of all, young Hartman, who had intelligence beyond his years, was able to give a vivid description of the two men. Hartman was employed as a messenger in the Powelton Avenue station of the Pennsylvania railroad, and knew every foot of the ground in that neighborhood. Donaghy felt instinctively that the knowledge possessed by this boy would prove to be

### Capt. Donaghy Given Credit for Business-Like Solution of Tangle Which Convicted and Hanged Three Men—Legal Formalities Overcome.

Besides this Donaghy was convinced that they were men totally devoid of education. He deduced this from the fact that they had evidently not even bestowed so much as a passing glance on the books in Prof. White's green bag. It is a known fact that a man of education or refinement is irresistibly attracted by a book. If a volume is lying on a table even in the house of a stranger, he can no more resist picking it up and going through the pages than a moth can avoid the flame. The murderers evidently had not the slightest curiosity toward the little work in the green bag.

The detective's summary, therefore, was that the crime had been committed by two or three men; that they were negroes; that they were brutal

When the last of the prisoners had been brought in the work of elimination began. Donaghy and McKenty were intrusted with this delicate task. Some of the suspects were obviously out of the question. For instance, mulattoes were set aside. So were several one-eyed persons. So was a lame man. And the work kept on until the list of possibilities was reduced to 16.

These 16 were lined up with their hats on and young Hartman was brought into the room. It was a motley gathering. Probably 16 ugly men had never been assembled before. They looked brutal and all of them seemed capable of murder. Could the boy tell one from the other? Could he identify the man who had spoken to him the night before? Would he be

protested vehemently that he had nothing to do with the murder of Prof. White.

Ivory was short in stature, with skin as black as anthracite coal, and very repulsive features. Criminologists pronounced him to be the lowest type of the uneducated negro. The detectives resorted to every device known to the profession to force a confession from the man. Finally, after an hour of the "sweating" he blurted out:

"Well, I done told you I was there, but it wasn't me that struck the blow."

He was put in a cell and Donaghy and his associates started out for more evidence. They obtained a description of the watch that had been stolen from Prof. White. The number of the case was 39,875, and that of the movement 915,938. These numbers were telegraphed to every pawnbroker and every watchmaker in the city.

The response came much sooner than was anticipated. A negro named "Buddy" Brown was arrested while trying to pledge the watch with a pawnbroker in West Philadelphia. Brown said the watch was not his, but belonged to a man who had a room in his mother's house. He had only lived there a few days and had given "Buddy" the watch to pawn for him.

The strange negro was promptly located and arrested. He proved to be William Perry of Georgia. Perry was not very communicative at first, but finally admitted that he was in the neighborhood of Thirty-second street on the night of the murder. He said that a third man had been in his company. These admissions, while important, were not conclusive. There were still links to be fitted in the chain.

At this period of the investigation a new character came on the scene in the person of John Leary, an employe of the city water works. He had been reading a great deal about the murder, and he felt impelled to step forward and give his own experience on the night of the murder. He had quit work at midnight and was crossing the Girard Avenue bridge when he met two colored men. They stopped, and one of them asked him for a match. One of these men answered the description of Ivory. Perry he did not recognize.

While the authorities were browsing over the evidence they had on hand, they received word that a number of suspicious-looking negroes who had been picked up on the railroad near Trenton were now in the Mercer county workhouse. Donaghy and McKenty determined to go to the New Jersey capital and look at the men. They took young Hartman and Leary with them for purposes of identification. The colored men were lined up in the workhouse just as they had been in the city hall in Philadelphia. One of the negroes was a tall, shambling fellow. He was stoop-shouldered and knock-kneed, and otherwise lacking in symmetrical beauty. Both Hartman and Leary immediately picked him out as one of the men they had met on the night of the tragedy. He had given the Trenton authorities the name of William Fields, but afterwards admitted that his right name was Amos Stirling.

Stirling was taken from the line and brought into a private room. Here he was stripped, and it was found that his underclothes were covered with human blood. When his attention was called to this damaging fact, he said unconcernedly:

"Oh, that's nothing; my nose was bleeding."

Stirling was not in the state where the crime was committed. Hence legal formalities were necessary before he could be taken to Philadelphia. Donaghy made an attempt to break the record in the matter of requisitions. He took a special train to Harrisburg, went to the executive mansion and requested Gov. Stone from a sound sleep in order to get his signature on the papers. From Harrisburg he hastened back to Trenton, only to find that some over-willing lawyer had filed an objection to the removal of the prisoner. Although trivial, it took several hours to overcome. But in spite of all the obstacles, Donaghy complied with all the formalities and had his prisoner in the Philadelphia city hall in just 32 hours.

Three prisoners were now in custody. Could they be proven guilty? Two were silent. Stirling loudly protested his innocence. He said that if he were free he could prove an alibi.

"I'm free," rejoined Donaghy, "and if you'll give me the names of your witnesses, I'll work it out for you. If it's any good, I'll be the first to admit it."

The negro finally said that a certain lady of color, named Dolly Gray, who lived in Harrisburg, could prove that he was at the state capitol on the night of the murder. Donaghy patient-

ly traveled up the state in search of Miss Gray. By a certain humorous and yet grotesque coincidence, the hand-organists at that time were grinding out "Dolly Gray" by the ream, and as Donaghy came to the little street where the Dolly Gray of another color lived, two street-pianos, on either end of the thoroughfare, struck up "Good-bye, Dolly Gray, I'm going to leave you," with a vehemence that threatened to turn an unusually affecting tragedy into a roaring farce. Dolly, however, who weighed 300 pounds, calmly washed her hands of Stirling and declined to assist in proving his alibi.

On the very day of Ivory's arrest, Donaghy had taken him to the scene of the murder. The street where the body was found was a little-traveled thoroughfare and the footprints where the men had escaped by leaping the little iron fence were still visible in the soft earth. The right shoe was removed from Ivory's foot and the heel and toe fitted to a nicety into the footprints in the railroad yard. The marks were there as clearly as though they had been stenciled.

In the meantime evidence was piling up in other directions. Mrs. Mary Boyle, who was employed as a waitress in a restaurant near Thirty-second and Market streets, testified that she had served all three of the men on the day of the crime. This was important as establishing the fact that they were together. But this was not all. A gardener, named Lutz, said that earlier in the evening all three of the negroes had surrounded him at a point five or six blocks from where the White crime was committed. They did not use violence toward him, simply, as he put it, "acted suspiciously." He managed to elude them, however, and thought no more of the incident until he read of the arrest of the negroes in connection with the murder of Prof. White.

Within three weeks after the murder Ivory broke down and confessed everything. He said that Perry, Stirling and himself had met at the Buffalo Bill show that afternoon and, comparing notes, had resolved to get money at any cost. They crossed the Girard Avenue bridge and went along the river drive until they came to Thirty-second street. They had intended assaulting Lutz, the gardener, but when he ran away they were too indolent to follow him. They little dreamed that the man had nearly a thousand dollars in his possession, or he might have been the victim instead of the unfortunate professor. Finally Stirling picked up the iron bar near the Powelton Avenue station. They resolved that he should assault the first prosperous-looking man they met. Several persons were permitted to pass unmolested. At last Prof. White was seen coming along the dark street. Stirling turned to the others:

"There's a guy looks as if he had money."

They agreed with him, and the three black-hearted scoundrels followed the unsuspecting teacher. At a favorable opportunity Stirling let the iron bar come down with a crash on the skull of Roy Wilson White. The man sank to the sidewalk with a groan. The big brute continued using the iron bar until the face of the victim was unrecognizable. Then they went through his clothes and got a few dollars in money, a ring, and a gold watch. The assassins went to a nearby lot and divided the things. The watch was Perry's share of the loot.

Perry corroborated the confession of every detail. Stirling denied it until the last but weakened within the shadow of the scaffold. All three were tried, convicted and hanged.

Their arrest and conviction was a big accomplishment. Most people gave the credit to James I. Donaghy. He smiles, shakes his head and says it was simply good "team work" on the part of the police.

#### North Carolina's Precious Gems.

The state of North Carolina is one of the most notable in the union for the production of gems, particularly diamonds, emeralds, rubies, aquamarines, beryls, hididite, rhodolite, amethysts and remarkable rock crystals. These gems have been found mainly in the course of mining operations, although a few systematic searches for them have been made and two companies are now engaged exclusively in such work.

#### Woman School Superintendent.

Mrs. Alice B. Clark of Garfield county, California, has just received the indorsement of the normal institute for the office of state superintendent of public instruction. She is now serving her second term as superintendent of schools for Garfield county. Her indorsement by the normal institute was non-partisan.

#### Soon Available.

Scene—Matrimonial agency. Manager and gentleman applicant.  
 Mat. Agent—You want a wife?  
 Customer—Yes, sir.  
 Mat. Agent—Blonde or brunette?  
 Customer—I am not particular. I insist on but one thing—she must be a divorced woman.  
 Mat. Agent—Sorry, sir. I have none on hand, but if you can wait a few days I have one in preparation.—Bohemian.

#### The Way of It.

Proud Traveler—I have had such experiences with the bandits in Italy and Spain. Have you ever had an experience in the least like it?  
 Stay-at-Home Citizen—My dear sir, I can surpass your experience. There was a time of my life when I never went out that I was not held up by force of arms.  
 P. T.—Good gracious! How was it?  
 S. A. H. C.—It was when I was a baby and my nurse took me out for an airing.

#### VISITS WITH UNCLE BY

At the Dancing Party. The plutonian sky was spilling snowflakes as Bings and his wife left the house the other evening to attend a dancing party.

"Oh, Mrs. Bings," cried the maid, opening the door and hurrying down the walk. "Your mother thinks you had better wear your rubbers."

"Thank you," agreed Mrs. Bings, as her well-trained husband proceeded to place the protectors on her dainty feet.

In the ballroom the music swayed with voluptuous harmony as Bings joined his wife. The first waltz tragedy over and Mr. and Mrs. Bings had scarcely started before the number closed. Then Bings went away to dance with the hostess and several numbers had passed before he again sought out his wife. Meanwhile she had been dancing, as usual.

"The floor isn't good at all to-night," she told her husband as they two stepped down the room.

As they glided about, Bings made a mental note that Mrs. Bings must be tired. She is a fine dancer and usually they get along so rhythmically that the melting time seems a part of them. To-night it was different.

A half hour later, Mrs. Bings complained that she just "didn't know what was the matter with Mr. Spofford, who usually dances so beautifully!"

"We could hardly get along at all," she advised her husband.

At midnight, Bings and his wife tried to dance the good-night waltz and quit in the middle of it. Mrs. Bings went to the dressing-room. In a moment she came out as red as a peony.

"Do I look like a crazy person?" she demanded.

"Er—what's that?" ejaculated Bings.

"I said, do I look like a crazy person?" she reiterated.

"Why, no, my dear."

"Well, I am. I have been dancing all evening long in those toe rubbers and protesting that the floor wasn't in good condition!"

Mrs. Bings stuck out one foot from beneath her lacy skirts. There was the rubber just where Bings had placed it as they left their home.

In the laugh that followed Mrs. Bings joined heartily.

"I'm glad of one thing, though," gasped Bings between laughs, "you haven't forgotten how to dance well."

"And I'm glad of another thing," broke in Mrs. Bings. "If you tell that story not a person on earth will believe you!"

#### English as She Is Writ.

A correspondent from Rural Route No. 2 in a certain Ohio county recently "went some" when he wrote the following for his home newspaper:

Once more the drapery of heaven was spread and the fearful rays of the flashing sun gently beamed down to moisten the dusty earth. For the eventful hour that took place at the home of S. C. Wiley Sunday evening. While the guests amid excitement and the steam of frying viands, were waiting at home, Master Hoadley of Zanesville, bound by the ties of holy love to his sweet-faced and smiling bride, was silently and easily on the rock bound narrow-gauge, rolling into Caldwell. There they were met by Miss Mabel and a friend, with as fine a pair of blacks as ever wore shoes. We, sitting by our lonely fire, heard the rolling of the carriage wheel and the prancing hoof go by. The rest to us was but a dream.

#### Tickle Grass.

The burglar is seldom desirous of getting into the limelight.

The waistband of a boy's trousers is never expected to fit after about 2 o'clock on Christmas afternoon.

There are two distinct businesses that depend absolutely upon the mail—the mail order house and the post office.

When for a boy at college quits writing home for money with which to buy books, it is a safe bet that he has all the football togs he needs.

Going to church service on Christmas day always seems out of place to the small boy when he knows the Christmas tree was robbed of all its presents the night previous.

#### Times Change.

Times have changed wonderfully during the last decade. Twenty-five years ago this writer was chasing a Spanish pony up and down the cotton rows in his shirt tail and barefooted, and was thankful for a long shirt. Now the boys are crying for tailor-made suits and fancy vests before they discard three cornered garments and learn to talk plain.—Garland (Tex.) News.

Byron Williams

#### Red Cotton Bug India's Pest.

One of the most destructive as well as one of the most offensive pests that afflict the planters of India is the red cotton bug. The insect has been reported as a cotton pest from every part of the country. Its presence is detected by the offensive odor.

#### Nor Any Other Kind.

Employer—"When you went to collect that bill from Mr. Tightwad, did he answer you with acrimony?" Office Boy—"No, sir; he didn't give me any kind o' money."

### BRIEF POPULARITY FOR ROSES

Favorites of Other Days That Are Now Seldom Seen.

What becomes of the former favorites of the rose tribe? Each has had its day and has reigned right royally in its particular period, says the New York Press. All old New Yorkers must have soft spots in their hearts for the Jacqueminot. For many years it was the most popular blossom

among rich and poor. A quarter of a century ago the street vendors sold hardly anything except the gorgeous red "Jack" roses and the most fashionable florist had to be extremely cautious in trying to push another variety ahead of it. Then came the American beauty, which had a long sway. Bride roses followed in the affections of the people, more on account of their association than be-

cause of superior beauty. Long before the brides and American beauties and "Jacks" there flourished the Marochel Niel, always the subject of controversy as to whether it was a tea rose or a noisette. Of a more beautiful yellow than the flower named for the famous marshal of France was the cloth of gold rose. As its name implied, it was a rich golden color. Fully as handsome as the general Jacqueminot, the original name of the "Jack" was the baronne prevost. Another gorgeous rose was

the giant of battles. Among the climbers were the queen of the prairie, the Baltimore belle and the ayrshire. A flower loved for its perpetual blossoming was the souvenir de malmaison, finest of the Bourbon roses. The Bengal was another perpetual and an attractive bloom. Even the gigantic cabbage rose, though it became the fashion to laugh at it, had its share of popularity for awhile. Where are the roses of yesteryear?

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