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# THE HAWAIIAN STAR.

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## MURDER ON THE HIGH SEAS

### The Captain of the Schooner Fred J. Wood is Stabbed to Death With a Knife in the Hands of a Japanese Cabin Boy.

The American four masted schooner Fred J. Wood bound from Astoria, Oregon with a cargo of lumber to Kua Chow, China, arrived and anchored off the harbor yesterday afternoon with her ensign flying at half mast. Today the flag of all the other ships in the harbor are similarly placed in respect to the story of the high seas tragedy that the schooner brought. A murderous attack by a Japanese cabin boy upon a kind hearted captain, the body, embalmed with rude but willing skill and tenderness, ascended among the deck load and a young wife left a widow with two tots of children who are chasing the sea beams on the deck while she, heart broken, mourns the loss of her husband foully murdered in cold blood but a few minutes after he had left her side.

At Portland Captain J. J. Jacobson, master mariner and captain of the schooner Fred J. Wood, shipped as cabin boy a Japanese boy who for company had that of the cook also a Japanese named Ota. The boy's name was Tanbara. The boy proved stubborn and lazy often neglecting to do his work. For such conduct the first mate, H. Meyer, once wanted to argue with the boy as lawyer fashion, but the captain remonstrated, and saved the boy a licking which he probably deserved. One of the sad points of the story lies in the unanimous praise that the crew, a mixed one of Frenchmen, Portuguese and Norwegians bestow upon the captain and their asseveration that he was unusually kind towards his men in both language and actions.

To understand the story clearly it should be premised that the time of the tragedy was six thirty in the morning, five bells. The first mate's watch was below. The second mate aft of the mizzen mast. Beneath the deck at this point are the cabins of the officers and the dining room with the captain's quarters still farther aft. Between this and the mainmast lies the waist of the schooner with the hatches well covered with a deck load of lumber in the natural logs and some cut timber.

Hard by the mainmast the funnel of the donkey engine sticks up above the deck. A rough ladder leads as a companionway to the donkey engine room, taken up on the starboard side by the engine and to port with a narrow shelf and a small part of the machinery also. A narrow passage some thirty inches wide runs between this shelf and the boiler and furnace, leading to the cook's galley. This does not extend across the entire width of the engine room but has a part of the galley on the starboard side behind which are two dirty bunks used by Ota and the murderer. Forward again of this lies the forecabin where the first mate's watch lay asleep. The only communication between the forecabin and the galley is by means of a scuttle or sliding panel, through which the gruesome scene was witnessed by a member of the crew a Frenchman named Claude Jean More. The men have communication with the deck by their own ladder leading through the forward hatch.

At six thirty, the captain having had his usual cup of coffee brought to him by the cabin boy, stepped up on deck where second mate Nelson was mending sails. He passed a remark with him concerning certain ship's duties and strolled forward. He entered the cook's galley and, according to the testimony of that individual, asked him if he had a cook book, stating, on learning that he had not that he would show him how to cook dried apples and sage. He then asked where the boy was and the cook pointed to the berth where he lay, at the same time telling him by the arm and told him to get along and get to his work.

Here the cook says that he kept his back to the whole affair and did not see what happened. The captain is believed to have come back after the boy had got up and to have found him sitting on a small bench which is just to starboard of the doorway between the engine room and the galley. Then he remonstrated with him. The whole space available is pretty well used up in the galley when three men are in there and it is thought extraordinary that the cook should have remained obstinately with his back turned away while the murder was committed.

The next point in the story is taken up by Claude Jean More, an intelligent Frenchman, aged thirty-nine, who was below asleep when awakened by a cry of "Boy! boy, give me that knife." He started to the panel through which food is passed to the men's quarters and sliding aside the scuttle saw the cook Ota just disappearing up the ladder leading from the donkey room to the deck. The captain and the boy were meanwhile engaged in a deadly struggle. Blood was running from a slash across the captain's forehead and he had his right hand clutched on the boy's shoulder near his throat while his left sought for the hand which held the knife of which the boy had somehow possessed himself. Another moment and the two staggered into the little passage way of the engine room and the boy had sent the butcher knife into the right groin of the captain, cutting through trousers and drawers and plunging into the abdomen. They fell, the captain on top and the boy with his head wedged into the corner of the donkey room underneath the shelf that runs along the port side. More had by this time attempted to take the knife away from the murderer. Neither of the combatants had uttered a word since the first "Boy give me that knife" and the captain was now past speech or action with his life blood welling away in streams.

As More sprang through the galley into the engine room or donkey room, as the men call it, second mate Nelson, following forward a man whom he had sent to the donkey room for oil, appeared at the foot of the ladder leading to the deck with the man needing the oil, Louis Samuel. He saw More in the entrance between the engine room and the galley.

More closed with the pair and attempted to wrest the knife from the hand of the cabin boy. He knocked his knuckles on the floor, twisted his wrist and snatched at the blade, cutting his fingers in the attempt. The mate also assisted and gained possession of the weapon. This in his excitement the second mate tossed overboard. This act he has apologized for repeatedly and sincerely, stating that it was his disgust and horror that caused him to lose away the weapon. It is not absolutely certain that the knife went into the sea but it has not been found.

Right here, as the men were struggling for the knife, first mate Meyer, who had been called by Ota to the cook hold of the proceedings and brought them into order, United States District Attorney Breckons and the others who have looked into the testimony are found in their praise of the mate's prompt actions and course generally adopted. Out of a ship's crew confused at their captain's death he drew good witnesses and formed a coroner's jury that has woven a net of evidence around the murderer that will leave the murderer small chance of escape. Mate Meyers forgot nothing and navigated the ship successfully besides. A vigorous approbation of Mate Meyers and his actions has gone forward to E. K. Wood and Company, owners of the schooner and it is thought that he will be given the command of the schooner.

When the mate arrived on the scene both the second mate and More were pulling the now dead body of the captain off the cabin boy and securing the body. Meyers gave More a topical, a species of methyl, and told him to guard the cabin boy. The captain's body was then taken up on the deckload. The widow had also heard the cries and came forward to be confronted with the fearful spectacle. The whole crew and all the deck crew, the vessel chattered and the mizzen mast, the vessel jibed and the course set for Honolulu.

Under the direction of the disconsolate widow the body of the captain, almost drained of blood was washed, covered with alum and alcohol poured down the throat. Clean sheets were used as coverings and a box lined with tarred canvas and the seams caulked with putty, formed the casket. The swathed body was also tarred and the box caulked and tarred again on the outside. The improvised coffin was placed in a niche among the deck lumber.

The murderer was placed, heavily ironed, in the little dining room aft of the mizzen mast and kept there. The cook who was generally thought to have abetted the boy was displaced from the galley and kept on deck during the day and looked up at night. An inquest at which the deposition of the men were taken down by the first mate, was held and all hands examined. The widow and the witnesses all told their tales and the prisoner was brought up. He maintained a sullen apathy. The verdict adjudged him guilty of murder. All the evidence that could be collected regarding the position of the blood stains, the appearance of the lost knife, all that any one remembered that might have possible bearing on the case was collected with an astuteness that has amazed the professional evidence-gatherers ashore. Afterwards the mate transcribed the evidence into his log book, the official log book of the voyage and set down the reckoning of the ship's position.

Then for seven days the widow sat in the cabin apart from the men who stepped softly about the ship and forebore to look in upon her grief. She was the only woman aboard. The little one called for papa once in a while but once or twice they are five and twenty-one months old respectively, their loss was a heavy one.

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PHONE 31.

The Japanese was possession of a savage temper, however, and when aroused was dangerous. On one occasion he threatened to kill Russian Frank. The latter's wife tried to dissuade the Japanese from such a project, but the Japanese who seemed to entertain some resentment against his employer continued sullen.

The man became worse and finally it was evident that he was insane and he was committed to the Asylum. He remained there six months, but was discharged as cured. During his insane attack, the Japanese talked of having killed a carpenter at Laysan Island. After being released from the Asylum, the Japanese returned to work at Russian Frank's place, but he was such a disagreeable, sullen man, that he was discharged. Russian Frank and wife said that they would go and ask to see the prisoner, for they may be able to

bring reality to them and their happy laughter served only as a fresh reminder to the wife.

There are two distinct proceedings regarding the dead man whose condition at the time when he made signed a will forty years ago has suddenly become a matter of court inquiry. The proof of the will was by witnesses whose names are among the best known of the old days in Honolulu, and the witnesses swore that when Holt signed the document he appeared to understand it, and to approve of its contents. It was signed by Holt with a very weak and trembling hand.

On the next day, in the Supreme Court, witnesses swore that Holt was incompetent, and a petition was filed in which he declared himself incompetent by reason of age and "infirmities," while some of the witnesses indicated that the condition which made a guardian necessary had lasted for some time.

The will of Robert William Holt, admitted to probate on July 26, 1892, after the usual proceedings according to the usage of the period, left to his widow \$800 per year in quarterly payments, and divided the rest of his estate among his four children, in the form of a trust. They were to receive the income during their lives, and the property was to pass to their heirs afterwards. The children were John D. Holt, Owen J. Holt and James R. Holt, and Mrs. Aldrich. A codicil left \$500 to the Queen's Hospital, William A. Aldrich was made executor. John D. Holt and James R. Holt are surviving petitioners.

There was little opposition to the probating of the will, all those present in the Supreme Court when Justice Robinson heard the matter, with one exception, declaring themselves satisfied. Charles R. Bishop, who is still living, in San Francisco, was the first witness sworn. He swore that he was present when Holt made the will, and that he knew that Holt made the will, Bishop said:

"The will was made at the house of James Robinson & Co., in the dining room of Mr. Robinson's house. This paper now presented to me is the will that I saw made. The deceased executed the will and codicil in my presence. He wrote his name with his own hand. His hand at the time was very sore and had cloths upon it. Robert Lawrence and James W. Austin were present at the signing of the will. Mr. Holt understood the nature of the will, I think. The will was read over and explained to him in the presence of the witnesses and he appeared to understand it. He seemed to understand the will perfectly and seemed competent to do what he had done."

James W. Austin, attorney, swore that he drew up the will for Holt, at his request. "He said that the will was such a one as he wished. He signed the will in the presence of myself, C. R. Bishop and Robert Lawrence. I saw him add a codicil on the following day. Although not of strong mind he seemed perfectly to understand the contents of the will and competent to make it. I judge from his having asked me a few days after if he had not done right in making the will as he had, without my attending to the subject at all, that he understood fully its purport."

Robert Lawrence was also sworn. He referred to Holt's sore hand and said that it explained the bad signature. "The will was read over to the deceased by Mr. Austin," said Lawrence. "He appeared to understand it and said he liked it."

"James Holt objects to the will because the property is left in the hands of a trustee," says the minutes of the clerk of the court, G. W. Brown, "but does not object to the division of the estate." John Holt asked the court to explain the will and then said he had no objection to the division of the property. Owen Holt said he was satisfied. Mrs. Holt, the widow, said she was satisfied. Aldrich said he was willing to act as executor, as provided in the will, and the court considered the will proven and appointed him, under \$20,000 bonds. He at once qualified, with himself and C. R. Bishop as sureties.

The inventory showed that Holt left a personal estate valued at \$98,464.95. The largest item was cash from the firm of James Robinson & Company, \$49,786.56. The sum of \$57,575 was represented by notes.

The files of the Supreme and Circuit Courts since 1867 contain a large bundle of documents of the estate, which has been administered without opposition ever since. There are numerous reports of trustee and orders of the different courts. Considerable property, both real and personal, has been transferred by the trustees of the estate, and an order revoking all past appointments of trustees might affect some titles.

(Continued on page two.)

The Oriental Life Insurance Company is the Home Company and doing a nice business. You had better join the profession.

(Continued on page five.)

## EVIDENCE IN HOLT CASE

### SUPREME COURT RECORDS OF TESTIMONY OF FORTY YEARS AGO.

#### SOME SURVIVORS MAY ADD FURTHER EVIDENCE.

Charles R. Bishop one of the Witnesses, Evidence For and Against the Old Will.

The petition filed yesterday in the Circuit Court to set aside the will of Robert William Holt, probated in 1892, opens a case in which some of the oldest records of the Supreme Court of the Kingdom of Hawaii play an important part. There were no typewriters for court records when the case was heard before Supreme Justice G. M. Robertson, and the records of the clerk, written with pen and ink, are on paper that is turning yellow with age, though the ink remains clear.

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## AFTER AUSTIN NEXT TRIED INCENDIARISM

### MANDAMUS TO SECURE THE WARRANTS.

#### Governor Dole and Officials Have Another Conference About the Chinatown Fire Commission Awards.

A writ of mandamus to compel Auditor Austin to deliver the warrants for the Court of Fire Claims awards is the next possibility in the Circuit Court. The warrants are all made out, but they are held up by the Auditor, in accordance with a resolution reached by the Executive Council, to the effect that they ought not to be given out until there is money to pay them. This morning Governor Dole and officials interested had another conference.

It is said that some of those who paid charge fees for the certificates, the right over them will not by any means be settled, as even when a certificate is secured it is useless without warrants on the treasury. Most of the holders of certificates are satisfied to have the matter remain as it is, but some of them want their warrants.

In the event of there being a decision that the Commissioners cannot charge for the certificates, the clerk of the Commission will probably refuse to give out any more certificates at all. The work of making them out was done by Riggs outside of the hours as clerk of the court. A large part of them were made at night and during early morning hours at home. Charging by the hour at the rate of his salary while clerk, it was figured that he was entitled to \$25, and this sum was paid him out of the fees collected. If the payment and collection were illegal the Commission may want its money back.

It is said that some of those who paid fees are preparing to bring suits in assumpsit to recover the amounts they paid in. In this event, it is said, they have no right to the certificates and the Commission may answer by telling them to give up the certificates. The claimants cannot afford to do this, as they need the certificates. It is claimed that the Commission is not under any obligation to give out certificates at all.

### OFFICES VACANT.

The death of John S. Smithies makes vacant the positions of Deputy Collector of Customs at the port of Mahukona, postmaster at that place, notary public, and agent to grant marriage licenses. The appointment of a successor as deputy collector of customs, lies with Collector Stackable, E. A. Fraser has been acting deputy collector since Smithies left Mahukona a few weeks ago.

### SMITHIES' WILL FILED.

A petition for probate of the will of the late John S. Smithies, of Mahukona, postmaster at that place, notary public, and agent to grant marriage licenses, was filed today. The deceased left about \$1,100 in personal property. The heirs are the sons and daughters.

### BROKE BOTH LEGS.

While doing some work on a smokestack at the Waimea Plantation last Monday, a Porto Rican fell and sustained a fracture of both legs.

### GETTING HANAIEI READY.

The work of getting the steamer Hanaiei ready for her special trip to Laysan Island, is being rushed by the Inter-Island Company. Captain Mosher will command her. It is expected she will get away either Friday or Saturday. She will be given stores and returned with a load of guano. If the weather conditions are favorable, Captain Mosher expects to make the round trip in 15 days. It is thought that the bark Ceylon which is now out so long from Laysan Island, may have rolled her masts out, or else may have been piled upon the beach at Laysan Island.

Five gamblers arrested by Detectives Renear and McDuffie were fined \$5 and each each this morning by Judge Wilcox.

J. Rego a dray driver, was before Judge Wilcox this morning to answer to a charge of having driven down a little boy Judge Wilcox considered that the affair had been an accident, and discharged the defendant.

### WENT TO VISIT HIS SISTER.

A. J. Cottingham went to Washington Co., Ark., U. S. A., to see his sister and while there was taken with flux (dysentery) and was very bad off. He decided to try Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy and was so much pleased with the prompt cure which it effected, that he wrote the manufacturers a letter in praise of their medicine. Mr. Cottingham resides at Lockland, Ark., U. S. A. For sale by all druggists, Benson, Smith & Co., general agents.

### BEDSPREADS.

Big values in bedspreads at L. B. Kerr & Co., Ltd. The largest assortment in the city with prices ranging from 65 cents to \$6.

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### WELL LAID PLAN FRUSTRATED BY ACCIDENT.

#### An Attempt to Burn Up the Liver Planing Mill Was Made Early This Morning—Its Discovery.

A daring and well-planned attempt at incendiarism was discovered and frustrated early this morning by the fortuitous fact that Chinese butchers go to work early.

The attempt was made to burn down the River Mill Company's building at River and Pauahi streets. The building is used as a planing mill and some of the employees and perhaps owners sleep there. The building is raised three or four feet above the ground and on one side of it is a vacant lot.

About 4 o'clock this morning a Chinese butcher passing the building along River street saw the light of flames underneath the building and immediately shouted a warning to whoever might be in the building. Just as he gave the alarm, he saw two men come out from under the building and run away. In the early dawn and the excitement the butcher was unable to make out whether they were Chinese or white men. He only caught a glimpse of them.

The sleeping men in the building were aroused by the shouts of the butcher and quickly put out the flames.

It was found that a tin pall had been filled with cotton saturated with kerosene oil and hung to one of the door-joists and lighted. Above it, a bottle of benzine had been hung in the expectation apparently, that the heat from the burning cotton would explode the benzine, set it afire and scatter it about.

The proprietor of the mill notified High Sheriff Brown who sent an officer to investigate. The circumstances of the attempt at incendiarism were clearly evident, but there was no clue to the perpetrator.

## KILLED BY EXPLOSION

### TWO CHINESE MEET AWFUL DEATH ON KAUI.

#### One was Trying to Open Tin of Powder With a Hatchet When The Accident Occurred.

Two Chinese were killed by an explosion of black powder on Pe Aw's rice plantation Mana, Kauai last Saturday. News of the accident was brought this morning by Purser Friel of the steamer Kauai which arrived from Kauai.

Chung Kai a Chinese man about 30 years of age, tried to unswear the top of a 25-pound tin of black powder which was to be used in loading a gun with which to shoot rice birds. Ah Tong a Chinese boy aged 12 years, was standing close by, watching the performance. The Chinese could not get the top open, so he took a hatchet to break open the top tin. A spark is thought to have been caused by the hatchet striking against the tin, and this spark ignited the powder, for there was an explosion which left both Chinese bleeding objects. Both died of their injuries within a few hours.

### FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Don't forget Camarinos of the California Fruit Market when you want fruit and vegetables. He always has on hand a fresh supply of both California and Island fruits. Telephone Main 378.

### SEMI-WEEKLY STAR.

Honolulu people who are going abroad can have the Semi-Weekly Star mailed to any address for the small sum of twenty-five cents a month. The Semi-Weekly Star contains all the local news of importance, besides the daily stock quotations.

### BARGAINS IN TOWELS.

You know you cannot do better elsewhere. L. B. Kerr & Co., Ltd., offer genuine bargains in towels. Only 50 cents a dozen.

### HAMILTON BROWN SHOES



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