

Frank P. Rose Shot to Death Behind Prison Walls for the Cowardly Murder of His Wife Last Christmas

PENALTY PAID FOR FOUL DEED

Rose Went to Death Unshaken.

Three Bullets Pierced His Heart and Death Was Instantaneous.

Criminal Makes a Long, Rambling
Statement to His Guard, Claiming
Credit for Many Crimes.

FRANK P. ROSE is dead—shot through the heart in the yard of the Utah State prison at 10:10 o'clock yesterday morning.

When that bright-eyed, chubby baby boy was found—starving where he was left to starve—by his murdered mother's side, the doom of his father was sealed.

When conscience made the man coward, fate pursued him, eager, anxious, relentless, until he marched to jail, and his end was certain.

When he sat in his lonely cell, cowering in dread of the future, when no mortal was near, quaking in the shadow of the doom about him; when despair cast its anchor in the harbor of his mind, then traveled like a nightmare in the arena of his dreams, there was no hope for him.

Without hope, without friends, there was no mercy for the miserable wretch who committed the most cruel murder ever done within the limits of Utah.

The only manly thing he ever did was to surrender.

And when he toppled over in that strapping chair in the prison yard, that strapping chair had done their fatal work, there was only a sigh of relief and no pity among those who viewed the scene.

Terror, with pale finger, had painted death upon his brow. Remorse, that grim Nemesis of evil-doers, gnawing at his vitals, made death welcome.

His soul may live to suffer for the sins of the flesh. But here's peace to his soulless flesh.

At the Prison.

Utah State prison, April 22, 1904.

The brass going over the prison door clangs and it is 9:45 o'clock.

A restless group of men are chatting in front of the iron door of the prison. It is a gloomy morning. All nature is set to smiles. Bright and blue skies canopy the scene with spring-time splendor. Like huge, irregular lumps of loaf sugar the snow-tops of the Wasatch mountains gleam in the sunlight. It is a glorious day—to die.

It is three minutes of ten and the iron doors open and the restless throng pours into the prison yard.

On the east side of the prison-yard the spectators find an inclosure roped off with twisted wire. Two red-covered tables stand near the wire.

An armed and uniformed guard paces listlessly back and forth on top of the high stone wall.

Within the roped inclosure is an empty wooden chair upon a slight platform with the back fastened to a solid wooden frame pressed close against the stone wall.

Exactly opposite the chair with its greasy straps and buckles is a huge double door in one of the prison buildings, covered with blue-black cloth.

From this blue-black cloth five round holes front ominously.

Before the Shooting.

The prison guard walks back and forth upon the high stone wall.

Newspaper reporters take seats at the red-topped tables and begin to make notes.

Among the spectators that crowd closely upon the rope wires are numerous men wearing badges indicating that they are sheriffs from other counties.

Blue-coated, brass-buttoned deputies stand within the wires and keep the spectators back.

At 10:08 o'clock there is a noise at the south end of the prison yard and a group of men appear around the corner of the prison building.

In the group three men stand out in front conspicuously. They are Frank P. Rose and two deputies.

The deputies clutch the arms of the doomed man tightly and move quickly forward to the vacant chair. The other officers follow close behind.

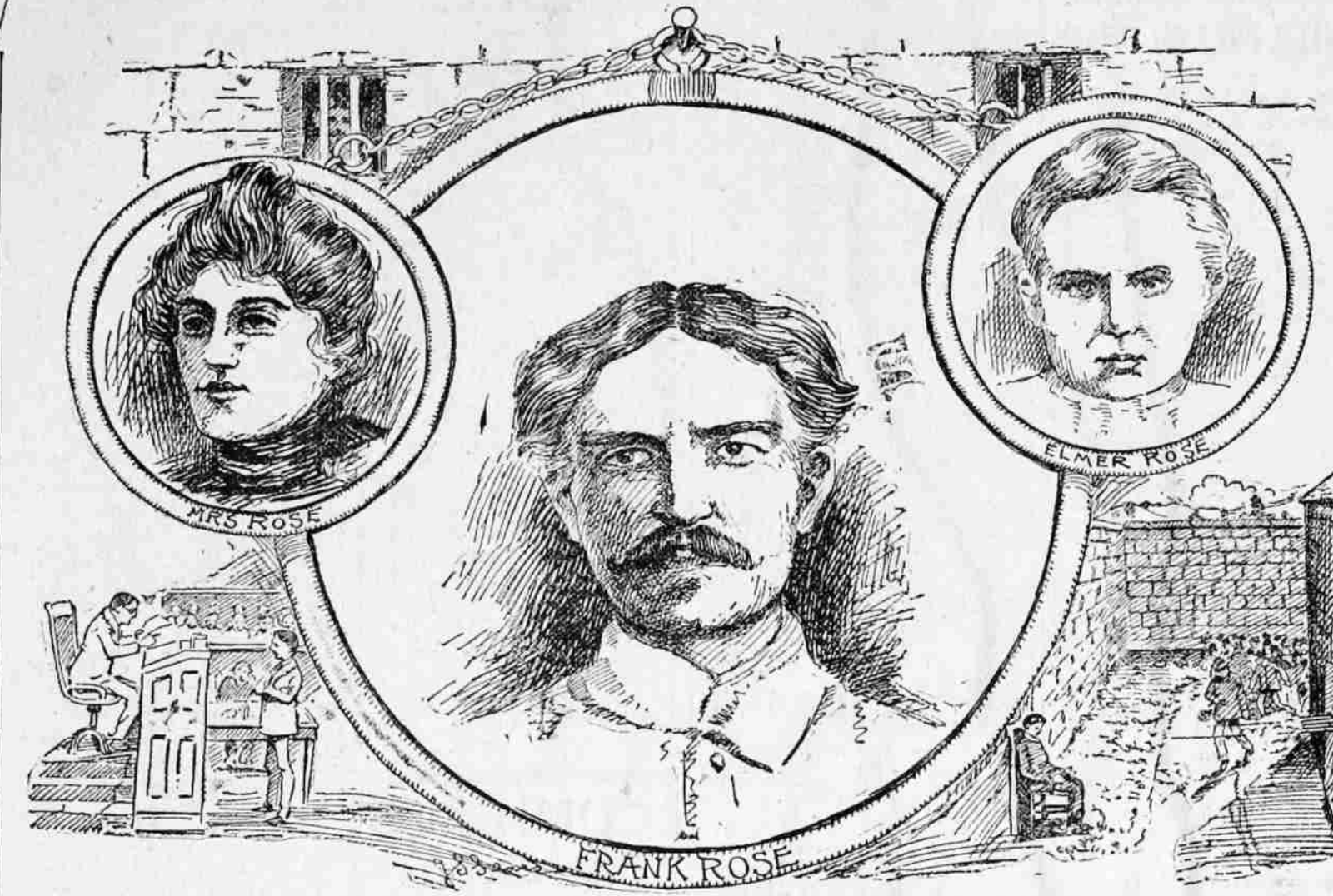
The prisoner's face shows a dark yellow pallor. He is dressed in a dark blue flannel shirt with gray trousers. He wears no suspenders and the shirt is open at the collar.

Upon the blue front of the shirt on the left side is a four-inch square of white cloth.

From five holes in the blue cloth door peer the muzzles of five rifles. The prisoner is placed in the chair. Deputies quickly strap his feet and hands and he sits erect. The only evidence of nervousness appears in the paleness of his face and in the manner in which his hands clench desperately and tightly the arms of the wooden chair.

It is 10:10 o'clock. The deputies examine the fastenings carefully. They speak a few words of farewell to the blindfolded man strapped in the chair, then fall back in a group to the right.

One of them lingers a moment, then goes back and shakes the limp hand of the prisoner, strapped at the wrist to the arm of the chair. He mutters good-bye and joins the other group.



There is a signal. Then, in the twinkling of an eye the rifles burst forth in one chorus of sharp, crackling sound. Only one report is heard, as if but one rifle had been fired.

Of the five rifles one contains a blank cartridge and no man of the five who fired the fatal shots, knows whether his is blank or bullet when he fires.

The Man in the Chair Starts.

Simultaneously with the crack of the rifles, the man in the chair starts ever so slightly. It seems, as if a tremor of surprise has run through his form. His head is erect upon his shoulders and there is not a motion of his pale, set features. He sits as if nothing has happened.

There is a tense silence among the spectators. The armed sentinel on the high stone wall has stopped his monotonous walk and leans eagerly forward, his rifle grasped firmly in his right hand.

Two or three seconds elapse and suddenly the head of the doomed man falls forward upon his left shoulder.

Frank P. Rose is dead—no, he gasps and convulsive shudders run through his form.

The deputies rush forward and gather about the dying man.

Everybody out! shouts the deputy. Reluctantly the spectators begin to leave. The newspaper reporters gather up their note books, dart under the wire ropes and join the prison deputies at the side of the prisoner.

At 10:14 o'clock the dying man is still twitching convulsively. A deputy leans forward and opens his shirt front.

On the white undershirt four blood spots, about the size of ten cent pieces, mark the place where the bullets entered the body. The spots are in a group, with scarcely any white space between. Seemingly three of them have perforated the heart and Frank P. Rose is, to all intent and purpose, dead.

But the inanimate clay is still twitching and gasping.

At 10:15 o'clock the warden orders the body taken from the chair and placed upon a rude wooden table, near the door covered with the blue-black cloth.

The limbs are straightened out, the gray bandage is removed from the eyes. A physician turns back the eyelid and—

Frank P. Rose is declared dead.

A few minutes later and a wagon driven up with a coffin.

"I can't wake my mamma up," said little two-year-old Elmer Rose to the officers of the law, when they found his murdered mother's side.

Now little Elmer Rose can't "wake his papa up." Poor little orphan.

Wished to Die With Eyes Open

Incidents of the Day of Execution Leading Up to the Fatal Moment.

Sheriff Emery read the death warrant to the murderer in his cell shortly before 10 o'clock. Warden Arthur Pratt and Assistant County Attorney Whitaker were present. The prisoner's pulse was above normal, and, although Guard Shurtliff, who had the death watch from midnight until 8 o'clock in the morning said the prisoner slept well, his eyes were bloodshot and his features appeared a little haggard.

"That is pretty well gotten up," said Rose, referring to the wording of the death warrant after it had been read by Sheriff Emery. Warden Pratt asked him if he had anything further he desired to say before the execution, and he replied in the negative. Rose requested the Sheriff not to blindfold his eyes, saying he wanted to see the guns and everything that took place. He appeared disappointed when Sheriff Emery told him it was against the law

and that he would have to have his eyes covered.

Was Given Some Whisky.

It was a few minutes after 10 o'clock when the uxoricide was led from his cell to the death chair. Dr. Young acceded to his demand for whisky and gave him a large drink before leaving the cell. Rose said good-bye to the guards on duty and called farewell to Charlie Botha, sentenced to be shot in June, who but a few minutes before had been placed in a cell above the tier occupied by Rose, after being brought in by the officers of San Juan county, who had taken him to Monticello for residence.

Rose asked to see the death chair, and he was not blindfolded until out in the prison yard. From the corner of the building opposite to the side of the building where the crowd was gathered he was permitted to see the fatal spot.

He displayed wonderful control of himself and stood quietly while Deputy Sheriff Andrew Smith tied a handkerchief over his eyes. He could see somewhat beneath the bandage, and asked to be permitted to walk unassisted to the chair. Deputy Sheriff James Cowan and Joe Burdidge took hold of his arms on either side and the procession moved to the chair.

Rose walked as though eager to reach the chair. He seemed to pull the two deputies along with him. His step was firm and every movement indicated a determined resolve to die game, quickly the straps were buckled around his wrists and ankles. The work of fastening the prisoner was performed by Deputy Sheriffs Cowan, Burdidge and Smith and Clerk Stowe. Rose tested the bonds that held him and said:

"I can't get away—you've got me strapped tight all right."

Dr. Odell fastened the target over the prisoner's heart.

Drs. Young and Odell grasped the pulse of either wrist for a few seconds and then shook hands with the murderer. The others had fallen back. Dr. Beer stepped forward and said good-bye, grasping the man's hands.

"So long, boys!" said Rose. Those were his last words.

A long rifle barrel was poked through one of the holes in the door, then four more gleamed through as many more apertures. Guard Harrison came to a stop on the top of the wall, above the crowd, where at his post he patrolled all morning with a double-barreled shotgun on his shoulder.

That Fatal Word, "Fire!"

"Fire!"—the order was given by the Sheriff. Five reports sounded as one. The crowd rushed toward the death chair. It was all over in less than ten minutes. The aim of the marksmen had been true. All four bullets had pierced the target; three entered the bullseye; the fourth was an inch and a half lower down. A nickel coin covers the three bullet holes in the bullseye; they were so close together.

The corpse was removed to a table nearby and the crowd dispersed. Thirty minutes later a wagon was driven out of the jail and down the hill around to the east side of the prison. It was the hearse. Clerk Stowe, one or two guards and several convicts followed behind the wagon. They constituted the funeral procession. The grave was ready, and the rough wooden coffin, containing all that remained of Franklin Pierce Rose was laid to rest in the prison cemetery.

Not less than a dozen murders, besides scores of hold-ups and highway robberies, were committed by Frank Rose during his lifetime, according to a confession made by him to Death Watch George Pugsley on the eve of the execution. Few criminals ever lived that were so steeped in crime and

so degenerated as was Rose if the story of his life as related yesterday is true. So numerous and villainous are the deeds the wife-murderer claims to have committed, that it is hard to believe that he was telling the truth.

Murder was nothing to Frank Rose. If we are to believe the story of his crimes, related by himself. Paltry, indeed, was the price placed by him upon human life. For a few dollars he would "put a man away," and the sight of blood was no more to his eyes than so much running water. A trivial excuse for the taking of life, according to Rose's standards.

His Story of Crime.

In his cell at the State prison, with the hour of his execution close at hand, the criminal related to Guard Pugsley the story of his criminal career. With the same air of bravado and lack of conscience that has characterized his actions since the time of his arrest, he recounted scores of crimes that he claims to have committed.

Rose made the confession of his own free will, and no influence of any kind was brought to bear on him. The subject came up in a rather peculiar way.

Thursday afternoon the murderer and Guard Pugsley were chatting, and Rose said:

"Don't you know that I always believed that Roosevelt was responsible for the death of McKinley? I am satisfied that he hired some one to do that job."

"I don't think that could be possible," replied the guard, "how could he do it?"

"Oh, that would be easy enough. I've seen the time when I'd do that for a few dollars," said the wife-murderer.

Then followed a conversation in which Rose hinted at his career of crime, and finally, in reply to a question from the death watch, began:

He Began When a Boy.

"I turned my first trick when I was a kid, if you years old. One night I broke into Robinson's Hardware store in Middleton, Mo., and got away with \$182.35. I made my get-away safely, and a little later robbed Canyon's drug store at Montgomery City."

"A few weeks later I turned 'dip' and picked the pockets of old Joe Hunt, one of the prominent citizens of the town. I made a good haul and was quite pleased with my success."

"Soon after that I got acquainted with a number of young women, and after gaining their affections, I had them marry some wealthy duffers. As soon as the girls could get hold of the money we would skip out and take a long ride in a hired car, and in this way, but finally had to cut it out."

Some Cutting Scrapes.

"In St. Louis I got into a lot of cutting scrapes, and once was pretty badly carved up. I tackled three men on the street, and in the mix-up I nabbed one of them in the body, breaking the blade of the knife and leaving it sticking in the fellow's side. Another one slashed me across the throat, and I thought I was done for. I finally got away, but after wandering about the streets during the night, I knew that they would get me, anyhow."

"I started for the police station, but just as I was about to enter I had an idea. A fellow came along the street and I borrowed his pocket knife. While he was waiting for me to return I made a slash and pretended to cut my throat. The stranger called the police and they carried me into the station. Everybody thought I had attempted suicide and they gave me the best of care until I was well, when they turned me loose."

Only Two Got Away.

"In the year 1892 I held up thirty-two persons in St. Louis, and only two of the bunch got away. I had some exciting times, and once or twice I did some shooting, but I don't believe I ever killed anybody."

"After that I went to the Territory (Oklahoma) and joined the Dalton gang. I was with Bill Dalton until a few weeks before his death, when I left and traveled with the Starr gang. We made some good hauls from the boomers that year and quite a number of them turned up missing."

"When I went back to St. Louis I quit the hold-up game, but made several good rolls. I caught a live one in

a Sixth street saloon one night and the next morning they found him dead down in the Dago district. His head was cracked open and the newspapers said he fell and fractured his skull."

"That day I went down to the morgue to investigate and found it was the same fellow I had given the cholera to the night before."

"Another time a fellow flashed a roll of bills that looked good to me, and I said right away, 'There's my Injun.' Before morning I had his roll and a big sixshooter that he carried besides."

His Life in the Jail.

At the penitentiary Rose was numbered convict 1635. He occupied cell No. 129, on the bottom tier of the south side of the south cellhouse. There were only six other prisoners in all the numerous cells on the south side of the south cellhouse, and Rose chafed under confinement.

Botha was his nearest neighbor in a cell on the tier above him. The two were often together, taking their exercise at the same time. Rose complained because of his incarceration and longing for the day of his execution. He often said he would rather die than exchange places with the shortest term man in the prison. At his request his baby was brought to see him on March 11th. The father was in no way touched by the meeting, and his actions indicated that he would have liked to kill the child. He bade the child an emotionless good-bye. Since April 7th the murderer has been kept under close guard, a guard standing sentinel at his door every hour of the day to see that he did not cheat the law by committing suicide.

How Child Was Found.

The officers found the tale of the crime only too true. They found the two-year-old child lying in the room of the mother, who was unable to get up. The child was found by a nurse on the following day that Maud Eliza Rose had been killed by her husband, Franklin P. Rose.

He Was Wanted to Die.

A plea of guilty was entered by Rose upon his arraignment in the criminal division of the District court before Judge Charles B. Morse. Attorney Soren X. Christensen was appointed by the court to defend the prisoner, and his plea of guilty was changed to one of not guilty. Letters were received from a sister of the defendant saying that he was insane, and a defense of insanity was put up by his attorney.

The trial of the case began on February 23rd. A jury was secured by March 1st, after the examination of many talesmen. On March 3rd the jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the case was set for execution.

On March 7th Judge Morse sentenced the murderer to be shot, and fixed April 22nd as the day of execution.

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