

"WILL NOT INTERFERE," SAYS GOV. HARRINGTON

Exhaustive Review Of Case Against Snowden And Declares That Man Must Hang Friday

Because he will not interfere Gov. Harrington has evidently dealt with justice in the case of John Snowden, indicted of the murder of Mrs. Brandon, and sentenced to hang next Friday. The governor, in his review of the evidence and expression of his decisions yesterday, said:

John Snowden was duly indicted by the grand jury for Anne Arundel county on the October term of the Circuit court, therefor for unlawfully, feloniously, and of his malice aforethought, in the county aforesaid of killing and murdering Lottie May Brandon on or about the 9th day of August, 1917. The writ upon proper suggestion and usual return of the State's Attorney, for Anne Arundel county was removed from this county for trial and was by the court understood by consent of counsel, though the record does not so disclose, sent for trial to Baltimore county.

The defendant elected to be tried by the Judge Duncan presiding, and on January 31, 1918, the jury brought in a verdict of "guilty of murder in the 2d degree," and on February 23, 1918, the court passed sentence; "it is the judgment of the court that you, John Snowden, be delivered by the warden of the Baltimore county jail to the sheriff of Anne Arundel county and there to safely kept in the jail of Anne Arundel county until such time as the governor of Maryland shall appear when you shall be taken thence to the sheriff of Anne Arundel county and be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and may God have mercy on your soul."

Bills of exceptions were filed to the trial of the court below and an appeal taken to the Court of Appeals of Maryland. The court below was more than indulgent to the counsel for the defendant in extending his time for the filing of bills of exceptions. On the 16th day of January the Court of Appeals with any dissenting vote affirmed all of the rulings of the lower court in this case.

No Racial Feeling.

The accused had able counsel, had every opportunity for summoning any witnesses desired, had a fair and impartial trial, and there has been absolutely lacking throughout any feeling of racial hostility against the accused on account of the grave or heinous charge for which he was indicted and tried.

Now the executive is requested and urged to commute Snowden's sentence to life imprisonment. Certainly the

his, found the wife lying on the bed at their home, No. 29 Second street, Annapolis, either dead or desperately injured, and at once sought aid from his nearest neighbors and summoned a doctor as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Burch, who lived only two doors from the Brandon home, was the first to respond, and it was at once discovered that Mrs. Brandon was dead. Brandon, with some other of the neighbors and with Dr. Joyce, of Annapolis, went in only a few seconds behind Mrs. Burch and Dr. Hopkins and Dr. Welch, also of Annapolis, were likewise called in. The home practically consisted of three rooms, front room, middle room and kitchen, on the first floor, and Mrs. Brandon was found lying on the bed in the middle room with her head towards the foot of the bed and her feet toward the head of the bed, a pool of blood was under her head which had come from a wound on the head, on the right side front under her hair, and this blood had gone through the mattress and stained the floor. Her neck had been bruised and her face scratched. She was bare from the waist down, her stockings had been pulled off or down, one of them hanging only by the toe, and bruises were found in several places on her arms and on her legs. Mrs. Brandon would have become a mother in about two months. The doctors all agree that Mrs. Brandon was choked from behind, that the bruises or scratches upon her neck were done by fingernails which were applied from the rear, and that she had been struck on the head with some blunt instrument, and that she furthermore had been raped or an attempt at rape had been made upon her.

The Doctor's Verdict.

The doctors, who were called in about 5.30 p. m., said that Mrs. Brandon had been dead at least five hours, and that she had died from the combined effects of a blow, strangulation and shock, that Mrs. Brandon had never moved after the blow had been struck.

Dr. Joyce, Dr. Welch and Dr. Hopkins all testified that in their opinion Mrs. Brandon, beyond any doubt, had been murdered and she had been raped or an attempt at rape had been made upon her, and in my opinion, the evidence in the case proves beyond a reasonable doubt the correctness of their conclusions.

Two defenses were put up in this case. First, that there was no murder in the case but Mrs. Brandon died from eclampsia. Second, that if there was a murder Snowden is not the guilty person.

I do not think that the first contention is entitled to any serious consideration. The scars and scratches on her neck, as well as the blood from the blow on the head show conclusively

that neither Mr. King nor Mr. King had the slightest motive for such a crime. There is nothing in the record to connect them with the crime, and I shall not further discuss them. The only man left except Snowden is Brandon, the husband.

There is not the slightest evidence in the record against Brandon, and while there are some rumors of possible motives on Brandon's part on account of alleged rumors of possible misconduct on the part of his wife suspected by him, all of this suspicion, if it can be dignified by even the designation of suspicion, is rendered absolutely worthless of consideration by the overwhelming weight of the most reliable and conclusive evidence of circumstance and human testimony that Brandon did not and could not have committed the crime.

The Evidence Against Brandon.

It is contradicted and uncontradictable testimony, that Brandon left home eight o'clock on Wednesday, as usual, and did not return to his home until quarter to five or five o'clock, at which time the doctors all unite in testifying that Mrs. Brandon had been dead at least five hours. Brandon went over to the Experimental Station in the usual boat, worked all day and returned on the boat, and any number of the most reliable and responsible witnesses will so testify; and in fact, this is conceded by everybody connected with the case, so that if Brandon killed his wife, he must have done so before he left home that morning, and it is likewise being conceded that Mrs. Brandon never moved after the blow was struck, it then became certain, if Mrs. Brandon was seen on Wednesday alive after Brandon left home that Brandon was not the murderer.

Now let us consider the evidence on this point. Mr. and Mrs. King who lived next door to Brandon, both testified to seeing Mrs. Brandon at 8.30, after Brandon had left home, and that Mrs. Brandon was at her kitchen window, sitting in a rocking chair rocking, and Mrs. King was at her window. Mr. King, who left home about 9 o'clock, so testifies, and Mrs. King says that she also sat and talked with Mrs. Brandon that morning at 10 o'clock, Mrs. Brandon being at the kitchen window and Mrs. King at her kitchen window, and that there was nothing the matter with Mrs. Brandon at that time. And there are two more witnesses who saw and talked with Mrs. Brandon that morning between ten thirty and eleven o'clock under such circumstances that the date and the time cannot be mistaken, and these witnesses, both are her white neighbors, and both of them of the highest credibility. Mrs. Burch, who lived but two doors from Mrs. Brandon, testified that sometime between 10.30 and 11 o'clock that morning, Mrs. Brandon came out on her porch and picked up her morning newspaper and exchanged the greetings of the morning with her and went back into the house, that the reason she remembers it so well was that her little boy had been playing with Mrs. Meyer's, one of her neighbors' girls, they both

The accused had able counsel, had every opportunity for summing up any stories desired, had a fair and impartial trial, and there has been absolutely lacking throughout any feeling of racial hostility against the accused on account of the grave or heinous crime for which he was indicted and tried.

The executive is requested and urged to commute Snowden's sentence to life imprisonment. Certainly the courts ought not to interfere under any circumstances with the verdict of the jury and the sentence of the court unless upon one of two grounds, either on the ground of clemency, or based on the ground of a reasonable doubt of the guilt of the defendant. The executive might exercise his prerogative on the first ground if there was extenuating circumstances. The executive could exercise his prerogative on the second ground hardly without the discovery of some new testimony unknown and unconsidered by the petit jury before whom the defendant has elected to be tried. The reasons to be asked are these:

First: Is this a case, if the defendant be guilty, for executive clemency?

Second: Is there anything in the record of this case or anything before the executive that would show a reasonable doubt to any reasonable man?

Find the Body.

Can you see what this case is. On the night of 1917 Valentine Brandon, husband of Lottie May Brandon, at the quarter of five or five p. m., on his return from his usual day's work as a Photographer with Admiral Kitchin at the Experimental Station near the Severn river from Annapo-

reasonable doubt the correctness of their conclusions.

Two defenses were put up in this case. First, that there was no murder in the case but Mrs. Brandon died from eclampsia. Second, that if there was a murder Snowden is not the guilty person.

I do not think that the first contention is entitled to any serious consideration. The scars and scratches on her neck, as well as the blood from the blow on the head show conclusively that it could not have been done by a woman even in Mrs. Brandon's condition, either by one fit or several fits. The bruises or scratches show that the skin had been drawn back from the front by someone's hands and nails from the rear, and the pool of blood shows, as the doctors state, Mrs. Brandon never moved after the blow and that she was in the position where she was found upon the bed when the blow was given.

I cannot but for a moment at least with any degree of patience under the circumstances of this case discuss the possibility of Mrs. Brandon dying from natural causes.

Four Persons Suspected.

Now in the second point. A foul and damnable murder, if not outraged, has been committed. Who is the guilty party? There have been four names that I have heard mentioned in this case. I regret to have to mention two of them: Mr. and Mrs. King, who occupied the house immediately joining the Brandon house on the side next to West street, and Brandon, the husband, and Snowden. The Washington Times, edited by Arthur Brisbane who employed the woman detective and lawyer in this case, is responsible in large part for the groundless suspicion towards Mr. and Mrs. King, and some of the Baltimore papers, with better motives, however, have helped in large part to queer what is a very simple case. Although this newspaper point of the danger of suspicion of Mrs. King, it is now by every one admitted the deed was not done by a woman and

highest credibility. Mrs. Burch, who lived but two doors from Mrs. Brandon, testified that sometime between 10.30 and 11 o'clock that morning, Mrs. Brandon came out on her porch and picked up her morning newspaper and exchanged the greetings of the morning with her and went back into the house, that the reason she remembers it so well was that her little boy had been playing with Mrs. Meyer's, one of her neighbors' girls, they both had gone down Second street some where and that Mrs. Meyers and herself were both looking for them, and that she, Mrs. Burch, sat on her porch and a Mr. Miles went to look for the children. Mrs. Burch said she did not go into the house until after 11 o'clock and that she was on the porch fifteen minutes at least.

Mrs. Meyers Corroborates.

Mrs. Meyers corroborates this statement and adds further that the children had been playing in her yard but had gotten away somewhere when Mrs. Burch came to look for her boy, that about that time her husband came home from the Naval Academy. It was pay day and he came home on a wheel and she asked him to go to look for the children. She said "I walked down the street to meet my husband and just as I got along in front of the Brandon home, Mrs. Brandon came out on the porch and picked up her morning paper, that Mrs. Brandon had been sitting at her front window in the rocking chair and that the rocking chair from which she had gotten up when she came out on the porch was still in motion, that Mrs. Brandon spoke to her and she spoke to Mrs. Brandon, that she was sure of the time of the day, that she went into the house a minute or so before eleven and that Mrs. Burch was still on the porch at that time and she was sure of the day, it was pay day and the pay days of the academy are the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 31st.

It is proved beyond any doubt whatever by absolutely reliable witnesses that Mrs. Brandon was still alive at 11 o'clock and that this circumstance precludes the possibility of Brandon being the murderer, and if we believe the testimony of the doctors, and we must believe it, Mrs. Brandon was dead by 12 o'clock. Then the evidence seems to be conclusive that Mrs. Brandon was murdered between 11 and 12 o'clock.

The Evidence Against Snowden.

Next the question as to Snowden. Mary Perkins, a colored woman who lived next across the street from the Brandon home, testified that on the morning of the crime she got up late

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