

# DOUBLE MURDER.

## Two Women Beaten to Death at Hill Top, Md.

### KILLED WHILE THEY SLEPT.

Scenes of Avaricious Man Spoor Searchers  
in Maryland for Burglars,  
Whom Joseph Cooking Al-  
leges Robbed His Store.

Charles county, Md., was startled by the news of an atrocious double murder at Hill-top, eleven miles west, the victims being Mrs. Joseph Cooking, aged thirty years, wife of the storekeeper there, and Miss Daisy Miller, aged eighteen, her sister.

Mr. Cooking, the husband, was found in the cellar of his store, slightly injured. His feet were tied with a cloth-tie. The front door of the store was broken open, as was also the cash-drawer.

The whole county is being scoured for the murderers.

#### THE STRANGE STORY FIRST.

Between day break and sunrise Nicholas Jones, colored, aged sixty-five years, went to Mr. Cooking's store to buy a pipe and tobacco. He found the front door of the store ajar.

Jones, not finding Mr. Cooking, called him and heard an answer. He thought from the sound that Mr. Cooking was outside and went to find him. He called again and found that Mr. Cooking's voice came from the cellar. Jones entered the store, and after repeated callings discovered that the voice came from the cellar of the store. He found a trap-door, which he says was closed. Then Jones saw Mr. Cooking lying in the cellar. There were bruises over his right and left temples, and four scratches on his forehead, from two of which a little blood might have flowed. His mouth had been bleeding, his hands were scratched and on his shirt front was a splash of blood about two and a half inches square, with other drops of blood near by. His right shirt sleeve from the elbow down was saturated with blood and there were stains on his left shirt sleeve.

Mr. Cooking seemed dead when found, but later recovered and remained conscious. Jones assisted him up the cellar stairs and into the store, Mr. Cooking walking with Jones's assistance.

#### "DO NOT REMEMBER TO TALK ABOUT."

According to Jones Mr. Cooking then said to him: "There is something wrong upstairs. Go up and see." Jones objected to going into the ladies' rooms, but finally went and found Mrs. Cooking and Miss Miller dead.

Returning, he told Mr. Cooking that what he had seen was too terrible to talk about. He said Mr. Cooking asked no more questions.

To other persons afterward Mr. Cooking said that when the family retired at night there were in the house himself and Mrs. Cooking, their little son, five years old, Miss Miller and a colored servant.

#### WAS TWO MEN ATTACKED WITH.

Mr. Cooking says he slept in the small hall-room with his little boy. The child states that he slept there alone. The bed showed the impress of but one body, a small man. Mr. Cooking's story is substantially as follows:

"Thursday night I retired as usual, after locking up the store and the house. I went to bed in the hall room with my son. My wife was in her room and her sister in hers, on the other side of the hall. My two eldest children, a girl and a boy, were spending the night with Mrs. Miller, their grandmother. The colored servant was in the rear of the house.

"Something awakened me between one and two o'clock. Then I heard a noise in the store. Picking on my trousers I went down, passing from the hall into the dining-room door, which a door entered the store. I opened this door and was faced by two men. I cannot tell whether they were white or black.

"As soon as I opened the store I was struck with something of a blunt instrument. They both may have struck me, may be with their fists. I fell in the doorway. I was unconscious, but I have a recollection of feeling the men moving my arms and legs. I suppose they were tying me. Then I was carried through the general store into the grocery. They opened the trap-door and threw me into the cellar. That is all that I remember."

The two women were found dead in their beds by Jones when he went upstairs. Both were horribly lacerated about the head, and the hatchet with which the murders were committed was found on a counter in the store. The hatchet was a new one, with its blade rusted. It was saturated with blood.

Mrs. Cooking was lying upon her right side. Her head had slipped off the bolster and was on the sheet, nearly hanging over the outside of the bed.

Her hands were clasped over her breast. A deep cut extended through her left ear and temple bone, the main arteries being severed. Above this cut and back of it were three other cuts, all made by a sharp edge. Blood saturated the bolster and stained the sheet and floor.

In the center of her bed upon her back Miss Miller was lying. Her hands, too, were crossed over her breast, and there was a gold ring conspicuous upon her finger. On the right side of her head above the ear was a cut 1 1/2 inches long, which cut through the scalp covering an artery. On the left temple was a wound made by the "eye" of the hatchet. In the back of the head, above the left ear, was an irregular hole, which penetrated the skull to the brain. Her bed was soaked with blood and the floor about it was stained. A trunk in the room was broken open. In her bureau drawer was her pocket-book, containing \$2 10 and some jewelry.

#### COOKING HELD FOR MURDER.

Joseph Cooking has been officially charged by a coroner's jury with the murder of his wife and sister-in-law, Miss Daisy Miller, who were done to death with a hatchet in their beds at Hill Top, Charles county, immediately after the decision to hold Cooking for the crime was made, he was placed in a buggy in the care of a crowd that had gathered in front of the house and driven to Smoot's Hotel at La Plata, seven miles distant.

An armed guard accompanied him.