

ORANGE CITY MURDER MAY BE UNRAVELED – NEGRO CONFESSES CRIME

DeLand News
Wed, 28 July 1920
Vol. XXXV. No. 29 (IMG_1758-1770)

The murder of Susan B. Clark of Orange City and the assault on Mrs. Laura A. Marshall of Orange City Junction, which took place on the night on November 11, 1919, may be cleared up – and then again it may not be.

A negro going under the name of Mose Gibson was arrested recently at Topoca, Arizona, charged with the murder of Mr. And Mrs. Roy Trapp, at Fullerton, California. He was taken to the county seat of that county, Los Angeles, Calif., tried and convicted of the murder of the Trapps. He then confessed to the “murder of a woman at Orange City Junction in 1919.” No woman was murdered at Orange City Junction in 1919, or at any other time.

Telegram from Los Angeles

The following telegram was received by the News Friday night:

Los Angeles, Calif., Editor DeLand News DeLand Fla. - Mose Gibson, negro, just sentenced to hang here for murder of Roy Trapp and wife, confessed to five other murders, including one at Orange City Junction, Florida. He says he killed a woman there in 1919, entering house for robbery. Used hammer to commit crime. Was such murder committed? Please wire. Rush 300 words details of crime, woman's name, etc. Will send our story if you want it.

City Editor, Los Angeles Examiner.

Confesses Other Murders

Gibson is either the greatest murder or the greatest liar in seventeen states. An Associated Press dispatch says:

Sheriff Jackson, in a message today to Sheriff Cline, said Gibson had confessed also to having killed J. R. Reavis of Baton rouge, La., about ten years ago, a watchman at a sugar mill at Gramercy, La., in November, 1916 and a storekeeper at Wagoner, La., also in November, 1910.

Gibson, since his sentence had been under investigation in connection with the murder of Mr. And Mrs. Jacob Erhardt, an aged couple, in their home here the night of June 6.

Story of the Crime

It will be remembered that Mrs. Susan B. Clark was tied, beaten up and killed and her rooms ransacked over her store in Orange City on the night of November 11 last; on the same night, Mrs. Laura A. Marshall was horribly beaten up and robbed at her little store at Orange City Junction, and may have been left for dead. No clues were ever obtained, so far as to the perpetrators of the crime though suspicion has pointed toward three white men, who have been under observation. The murder of the perpetrators of the crimes did not point toward a negro.

Mrs. Clark, who left an estate which has been estimated of a value of twenty thousand dollars, is supposed to have had considerable cash on hand. No cash was found later. Therefore, the object of the crime is supposed to have been robbery. At least three white men knew of the cash she had on hand.

Big Reward Offered

Rewards aggregating twelve hundred dollars have been offered for the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators of the crime but even this heavy reward has not brought forth the information expected.

Confession Probably a Hoax

Gibson has been sentenced to hang on September 24. He may have made confession to this series of crimes just to stave off execution while they are being investigated, in the hope of securing his release in the meantime.

Not Known Here

No negro by the name of Mose Gibson is known here. There are several families of Gibsons here, but no Mose Gibson. From his own story, Mose has been a wanderer, committing a murder in one town and jumping to the next. He stopped in one place only long enough to rob or murder. The murder and assault at Orange City and Orange City Junction were apparently committed by some one who was thoroughly conversant with the habits of the town women and with that of Mr. Pratt, whose horse was stolen and ridden the same night.

Story from Louisiana

Shreveport, La., July 24 – Mose Gibson, negro under sentence to be hanged in California, is believed by Judge William C. Barnete, former district attorney of Bienville Parish, to be “Monk” Gibson who in 1907, was sentenced to a term in the Louisiana penitentiary from blenville parish.

Judge Barnete stated that as district attorney he acted as prosecutor at the trial of Gibson, who was charged with shooting at another negro from ambush.

Prior to 1907 Judge Barnete, according to his statemtnt today, defended Gibson when he was tried for shooting and wounding another negro.

Louisiana planters, Judge Barnete stated, employed legal talent to defend the negro as he was regarded as a good farm hand. After serving his term in the Louisiana penitentiary Gibson left for Florida.

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Los Angeles, July 24 – a telegram asking if Mose Gibson, negro, who according to the police, has confessed to seven murders, admitted murdering Mrs. Susan B. Clark and Mrs. Laura Marshall at

Orange City Junction, Fla. November 11, 1919, was received here today by Sheriff J. C> Kline from Sheriff Lee Morris of DeLand, Fla. Officers yesterday said Gibson confessed he murdered one woman at Orange City Junction in November, 1919.

Two Mose Gibsons

The News, is informed that there have been two "Mose Gibsons" in DeLand in times past. A negro who has lived here for years states that there was a man here named Mose Hall, who later married the widow of a negro named Gibson (the latter being killed by the falling of a pine tree on him) and that Mose Hall took the name of his wife, being known as Mose Gibson. He has moved away from DeLand.

A white man informs The News that there was a Mose Gibson years ago, who came to DeLand from Orange City and worked for W. C. Cannons, that this negro was known as "Circus" while working at the Cannons stable. He also has left DeLand.

May Lead to Guilty Party

The alleged confession of Mose Gibson in Los Angeles may lead to the arrest of the party who really committed the murder. The probability is that Mose knows who committed the murder. He may have run across him in his wanderings, and got up his story from tales told by the murderer. That he himself committed the murder is very doubtful. In his "confession" he entirely forgot to mention the Orange City murder, and confused this murder with the Orange City Junction assault.

Further Investigation Promised.

Sheriff Morris, in answer to his telegram about Gibson, received the following reply:

Santa Ana, Calif., July 24 – Mose Gibson confessed to killing woman at Orange City Junction in November 1919. Your telegram indicates there were two murders. He only confessed to one. Gibson is now in state prison. Expect to see him again soon. Will question him as to the second murder. Any further information will be wired to you immediately upon receipt. C. E. JACKSON, Sheriff

APPENDIX xxix

MOSE GIBSON CONFESSION ORANGE CITY MURDER SEEMS RATHER MIXED

**DeLand News, Wednesday, 18 August 1920
Vol. XXXV No. 32 (IMG_1823-1831 & 1838-18490)**

Sheriff Morris is in receipt of the following correspondence with reference to the negro Mose Gibson, who several weeks ago was arrested and convicted of the murder of a man and his wife in California, and later confessed to the murder of Mrs. Clark of Orange City on November 11 last.

The letters are self-explanatory:

Letter From Sheriff Jackson.

Santa Ana, Calif., Aug. 9th, 1920.

Mr. Lee Morris, Sheriff of Volusia Co., DeLand, Fla.

Dear Sir;

Your favor of July 25th received. Enclosed you will find copy of the statement made by Mose Gibson of his connection with the murder and assault committed in your County in 1919.

This statement was taken down by a Court Reporter at San Quentin on August 1st. Gibson declined to sign the statement under oath, saying that he had but a few days on earth and that he would not lie to me. As the report could not be written up for several days after it was taken down, I could not have Gibson sign it, but personally I feel that he has told the truth, and having been taken down by our regular Court Reporter, whom I took to San Quentin with me, I feel that the statement is practically as strong as if it had been made under oath.

The reporter's fees, exclusive of his traveling expenses, are \$18.00, statement for which amount I am enclosing.

I hope that the enclosed statement will help you to clear the matter up. In the event that I can be of any further service to you, I should be pleased to have you advise me.

Assuring you of my willingness to co-operate with you at all times, I am.

Ours very truly,

C.E. JACKSON, Sheriff

APPENDIX XXX

Statement of Mose Gibson

August 1st, 1920

(1823-1831)

DeLand News Vol. XXXV No. 32 18 August 1920

(Said statement made at San Quentin, California. In response to questions by C. E. Jackson, sheriff of Orange County, California; after some preliminary discussion on the part of Mose Gibson along religious lines, the following questions were had.)

By Mr. Jackson:

Q. - If you will just let me ask you a few questions we will all get through with it. All I want to do is to clear up the case at DeLand, Florida; now, this first lady was Mrs. Marshall, you of course didn't know her name at DeLand that is the oone, the first one, then here was the second one that same night, do you recall that?

A. - Now, I remember all that I told you, that, just like I told you it was.

Q. - What they wanted is a little more details in regard to how that was done, Moses.

A. - I haven't any details at all in regard to that; I told you before; I am very sorry I couldn't oblige you, but my mind is upon different things. I am not able to give you full details how it is because I don't feel like going through that to-day because it is Sunday, a very interesting day to my business, to-day is my day, Sunday, and I am deeply interested in other things to-day and my mind is not exactly on it I will be honest with you.

Q. - I am sorry I can't stay over tomorrow, Mose.

A. - I am sorry myself, Sheriff, I will tell you true to be on the square with you, my mind is absolutely not on that today, it is deep in the Lord's business and I wouldn't stop making a step for the Lord after getting this far for no man in the world.

Q. - You would do it for some other man's life?

A. - Of course, as I told you, but if you can't take my word for it - - -

Q. - That Orange City Junction case, Mose, one woman was murdered and another one was badly beaten up, tat was cases you did?

A. - Yes, sir.

Q. - Did you know you had killed one or both of them? Did you think you had killed both?

A. - Killed one.

Q. - You beat the other one up?

A. - Yes.

Q. - With what sort of instrument?

A. - I disremember now, I disremember what sort.

Q. - This Orange City and Orange City Junction - - -

A. - Sure, I am guilty of that, I know it is Orange City Junction.

Q. - They want details, how it was done.

A. - I tell you I don't feel like going through that, I tell you I am guilty, that is enough.

Q. The only thing, Mose, sometimes men are arrested on suspicion and they want to clear that up.

A. - They didn't have me arrested about that one, but I was arrested, and in jail they like to identified me about that same crime in Florida, but they sent me to the hospital a little bit and I got away from the hospital, went away from the hospital; they like to had me once about that, but I got away.

Q. - You were arrested on the Orange City job?

A. - No, I never was arrested on that, but they suspicioned me of being the one.

Q. - Arrested you on suspicion?

A. - Not only suspicion, but they arrested me of thievery before, but I got away from them.

Q. - You got about \$200.00 in money?

A. - About \$400.00

Q. - From Mrs. Marshall?

A. - Well, about \$200.00 apiece.

Q. - \$200.00 from each place?

A. - About \$200.00 apiece.

Q. - You killed her with a monkey wrench?

A. - I disremember what it was; I think a monkey wrench or hammer.

Q. - After you murdered Mrs. Marshall then you got on this horse and went back up the road to Orange City?

A. - I went back to Orange City, that is Orange City Junction, first got the horse went to Orange City Junction on the horse and after that I came back on the horse back to Orange City, then from Orange City went down to the toll bridge on this side of Pelacha, a place about four miles this side of the toll bridge, a town they call Pelacha, Florida; I got off the horse then I didn't want to carry the horse over the bridge, didn't want the watchman to know I had the horse; I got off, went over the bridge, got across, got another horse, come to Sanford, then come to Pelacha, and got me a train, then come on to Key West, Florida, down the coast, then went to Miami, then opened up a little place of business; they arrested me but they never did convict me.

Q. - That was when you got this \$400.00?

A. - That was when I got this \$400.00; I went down thee and opened up a little place of business and after I opened up the place of business, I went out and got my supplies, stuff out of about four or five different stores, bacon, cheese, stuff to sell, and a woman turned me up and they arrested me, put me in jail, they suspicioned me of that crime, but they didn't have nobody to identify me and I went to the hospital and left; that is the closest they got me to that crime, but that is the details of it.

Q. - Did you lose a watch then in the house at Orange City Junction?

A. - Yes, sir; I didn't lose it, I think I dropped the watch.

Q. - Dropped the watch there?

A. - Dropped the watch there.

Q. - What kind of a watch was it?

A. - If I am not mistaken an Elgin watch, open face.

Q. - Open face Elgin watch?

A. Yes, sir; open face Elgin watch, dropped it, I think I lost it, one of the two.

Q. - He states in this communication, Mose, it doesn't look like a stranger could have done that job, he thinks somebody was in it who knew the place and surroundings. Was anyone connected with you in that robbery?

A. - I wouldn't do that; these is something I wouldn't do'; I will acknowledge that I got a little tip off to it, but where I got the tip from that is not my profession to do it. I was tipped off but the people I got the tip from they didn't know what I was seeking. I couldn't afford to put them into it, they didn't know what I wanted but they gave me the full details inside and out of the place; I couldn't afford to do that, they would be perfectly innocent because they would go up on the gallows and be hung for something I done myself. Do you think that would be right?

Q. - They didn't give you that information with the knowledge you were going here to commit this crime?

A. - They didn't do tat; a woman will do many different things; but I received the information I wanted to get from a woman, she didn't know exactly what I was after because I didn't tell her my business. I went to her for one purpose, to get an admission of other things while I was there. She gave me the information I went to get.

Q. - What information did she give you in regard to these women having money?

A. - That wouldn't be anything for me to do, that would bring her into it, that would cause her a whole lot of trouble, the woman would be perfectly ignorant, of course they would be perfectly innocent of that I am not going to bring some one else to suffer on the gallows, I clear her because she is innocent; I am not going to bring her into it because she is innocent. That is something I am connected with myself, I am supposed to be man enough to stand my own punishment but not heap on another person. I will not do that. If you gave me some information that leads to a place and I get five or six thousand dollars and they go on and capture me, do you think I would be bad enough to turn and double cross you, turn you up? What would you think of me, what kind of a man do you think I am?

Q. - They had no knowledge what you were after?

A. - They had no knowledge.

Q. - The thing we are trying to do, Mose, - - -

A. - I was by myself, I went by myself; all I received was information from the woman, I acknowledge that because I wouldn't lie. I acknowledge that, I am telling the truth'; I received information from a woman and I received information from a boy, of course I don't know his name, but I wouldn't tell, of course the woman. I wouldn't tell on her. They were the ones gave me the information for the things I committed, hat led me into it, opened my eyes; of course I thought there was a little bit more money than there was. I thought four thousand instead of four hundred, but who they were I wouldn't do it, they were perfectly innocent, I come seeking them, they didn't know what I wanted – just treated them kind.

Q. - Wouldn't be guilty of any crime?

A. - No, sir; and as far as than, understand, I ain't going to cause them any trouble, they were innocent, they didn't put a hand in it, they didn't know the details, that is something I never did do, tell anything on nobody else because nobody else would be mixed up in it, that is my profession, never convict nobody else. I did that once, it hurt me to my heart to do it. I have told you the truth about it, they are not guilty either.

Q. - Well, I will say for you Mose, I believe you are telling the truth.

A. - They are not guilty, all they gave me was information, they were perfectly innocent, of course I guess if she had known – I don't know whether she would have told because I treated her very kind, but at the same time - - -

The rest relates to other cases.

APPENDIX xxxix

SHERIFF LEE MORRIS GOES TO CALIFORNIA TO SEE MOSE GIBSON

The DeLand News, Wednesday, August 25, 1920
(IMG_1850-1855)

The town of Orange City having guaranteed expenses of the trip, Sheriff Lee Morris left on Monday for California to see Mose Gibson, the negro arrested and convicted near Los Angeles for the murder of a man and wife, and sentenced to hang on September 24. Mose has confessed to the murder of Mrs. Clark in Orange City on November 11 last, and also to the assault on Mrs. Laura Marshall on the same night, and to robbing both women.

Mose has already made a confession, but he seemed so mixed in his story that some people doubt that he committed the crimes. Others believe that a white man was mixed up in the affair, and Sheriff Morris will try to get the real facts in the case, providing Mose knows them at all and is not just plain lying.

Mose has confessed to the murder of some seven persons – but he probably could have made the story read seventeen just as well. Mose is not even a smooth liar.

APPENDIX xxxii

**MOSE GIBSON HANGED FOR
CALIFORNIA MURDER**

Saturday September 25, 1920
(IMG_1920 09 25 Mose Gibson Hanged.jpg)

The negro Mose Gibson, convicted of the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Roy G. Trapp, and who confessed the murder of Mrs. Susan B. Clark of Orange City and the assault of Mrs. Laura A. Marshall of Orange City Junction was hanged in San Quentin, California, prison yesterday.

FINAL EDITION

Register

Santa Ana Register

Final Edition

FINAL EDITION

NO. 11 100 011

SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1920

NO. 11 100 011

'TOMB' DEATH MYSTERY GROWS

Murderer Of Roy Trapp Pays For Crime On Prison Gallows

Former Death Row's 'Moose' Leads to Finding of Deane Body

ARREST SUSPECT AS BUILDER OF MINING MAN'S CELLAR GRAVE

NOOSE SNUFFS OUT LIFE OF ARCH FIEND; DOOMED MAN MAKES NO STRUGGLE

TRAPP MURDER ONE OF MOST BRUTAL IN ANNALS OF COUNTY

MAILS HURLS WINNER FOR CLEVELAND

Former Death Row's 'Moose' Leads to Finding of Deane Body

ARREST SUSPECT AS BUILDER OF MINING MAN'S CELLAR GRAVE

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MAILS HURLS WINNER FOR CLEVELAND

RUTH RAPS OUT PAIR OF HOMERS

NEW SENSATIONS IN SOX SCANDAL

'30' BULLETINS

NEW SENSATIONS IN SOX SCANDAL

BASEBALL RESULTS

BASEBALL RESULTS

ARREST SUSPECT AS BUILDER OF MINING MAN'S CELLAR GRAVE

H. H. ROPER, S. A. PIONEER, DIES

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GOV. ATTORNEYS TAKE STAND IN FUND QUIT

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STATE PRINTER OUT UNDER FIRE

STATE PRINTER OUT UNDER FIRE

RUBBER SKIN' NOT BANDIT PROTECTION

RUBBER SKIN' NOT BANDIT PROTECTION

30 STICKS DYNAMITE FOUND AT L. A. PLANT

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S. J. PACKING PLANT DAMAGE \$2,000,000

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MEX. BANDITS RAID CAL. BORDER TOWN

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GRANGE MARKET

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BRITISH MINERS HEAT STRIKE FOR ONE WEEK

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REGULAR BIDS MAKE N. Y. STOCK EXCHANGE

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KNOCKED DOWNS, MONEY FAILS TO RAISE BID

KNOCKED DOWNS, MONEY FAILS TO RAISE BID