

# ADAMS AND A PREPARED BROMO SALTZLER BOTTLE

## Details to Date of the Already Famous and Mysterious New York Poisoning Case.

### Handwriting Experts Identify the Sender of the Deadly Poison Intended for Cornish, But Which Killed Mrs. Adams.

**Roland Burnham Molineux Gradually Drawn Into a Trap and Shown Up as the Man Who Applied to Have Done the Deed, Out of Hate and Jealousy.**

**NEW YORK, March 4.**—(Special.)—The famous Adams-Molineux poisoning case has reached a climax. Roland Burnham Molineux has been indicted for the murder of Mrs. Katherine J. Adams and will soon be arraigned.

The principal evidence against Molineux comes from an act of handwriting experts who declare that Molineux wrote the address on the bromo-saltzler package to Harry Cornish at the Knickerbocker Athletic club.

And as the man who rented the letter box in the name of H. C. Barret, who was also poisoned, and died in his room at the Knickerbocker Athletic club in October.

The history of this case up to the present time is one of intense and thrilling interest.

It will be remembered that during the latter part of December, a package was received at the Knickerbocker Athletic club by Harry Cornish, the physical director of this club. The package contained a silver bottle holder, in which appeared to be a small bottle of bromo-saltzler. The package contained no card. Cornish supposed it was sent by some friend, and joked with Mrs. Cornish as to whether she would want a dose from the bottle, but could find no water at the time. The lack of water was his clue.

Cornish boarded with Mrs. Rogers, a widow who had been his mother. Mrs. Adams died two or three days after the receipt of the package. Cornish was awakened by Mrs. Rogers one day and she told him that Mrs. Adams was unwell. All three of the parties had breakfast at the Knickerbocker Athletic club on the evening of Cornish had shown the bromo-saltzler bottle to the ladies on the previous day and the dead woman was seen at it when it came. However, no suspicion of the contents had been aroused. Cornish on the bottle, prepared a dose, and gave it to Mrs. Adams. After swallowing it she complained of its intense bitterness, and in a few seconds fell over in a fit of convulsions. Cornish himself then tasted the concoction and was made very ill. He, however, ran out for a doctor, but before anything could be done Mrs. Adams was dead. The doctor touched his lips to the powder contained in the bottle and he was made very ill. Cornish and the physician, however, recovered.

**Investigation begun.**

The police and the entire detective force were called in and immediately began work on the case, for more than a month. It seemed that no clue to the man who sent the poison in the bromo-saltzler bottle could be gotten. Chemists analyzed the powder and found it to be cyanide of mercury. It was said that no one but a chemist or a photographer could buy it. Cornish was closely questioned as to who would have any personal grudge against him. Suspicion was centered upon Roland D. Molineux, a young chemist, living in Brooklyn, and the son of General E. L. Molineux.

About this time attention was called to the suspicious death of H. C. Barret, a member of the Knickerbocker Athletic club, who had rooms at the club and who died during the previous winter. It was suggested that his death was caused from an overdose of Kurov powder, which he was in the habit of taking. This information led to the exhuming of the body of Barret, removing the stomach and intestines and chemically tested. It was found also that traces of cyanide of mercury were evidenced in the organs.

The detectives and police then went to work with renewed vigor to discover the enemy of both Barret and Cornish. It was discovered that someone had rented a box in a private postoffice up town in New York at one time in the name of H. C. Barret, and at another time in the name of H. C. Cornish, and had received various packages addressed to this point.

It was also discovered that the silver holder from the bromo-saltzler bottle was bought in Newark, N. J., by a man with beard. It was also proven that a false beard had been bought from a wigmaker in the same city on the same day.

It was further ascertained that Molineux was employed by a firm of chemists at Newark, N. J., and that the package, containing the poison, was mailed from the general postoffice in New York. It bore the simple address, "Mr. Harry Cornish, Knickerbocker Athletic Club," etc.

Suspicion was attached to Molineux. He employed Dan P. White, a well-known lawyer to defend him. He pretended to add the detectives in their work, declared he was not guilty, and laughed off intimations to that effect. He said it was true that neither he nor Barret, nor he and Cornish were very friendly. In the meantime, handwriting experts from all over the country had been employed, but they could get no samples of Molineux's handwriting to compare with the address on the pack-

age sent to Cornish. The coroner's jury met. District Attorneys Gardner and Osborne were extremely hard in dealing with Cornish. They were pleasant and apologetic during the examination before the coroner's jury lasted for many days. It would appear that the officers of the district attorney's office were endeavoring to prove Cornish the guilty party and to exonerate Molineux from any complicity in the affair or responsibility for it. Molineux was charged by these tactics, when a few days ago it was suggested to him to write the same address for the detective which was on the package sent to Cornish, he did so, and gave them many samples of his handwriting. Immediately after the handwriting expert from the treasury department at Washington was telegraphed for. Other handwriting experts from all over the country were called to New York. From all of them examined the samples, and each and every

### THIS IS THE INSCRIPTION ON THE POISON PACKAGE



one of them declared emphatically that Molineux wrote the address on the poison package.

The party who had rented the private letter-box to the person representing himself as H. C. Barret, was put upon the stand and identified Molineux as the man who rented the letter box. He had received several packages therefrom in the name of H. C. Barret and the name of Harry Cornish.

It was likewise proven before this coroner's inquest that Mrs. Edward D. Molineux, who was formerly Miss Blanche Chesbrough, was enamored of Barret, and that Molineux was extremely jealous of Barret. Blanche Chesbrough had refused to marry Molineux until after the death of Barret. Some very damaging evidence was brought out in regard to the connection of Mrs. Molineux before her marriage and Barret, and it was shown that Molineux had manifested jealousy and hatred for both Barret and Cornish.

Immediately the jury brought in a verdict that Mrs. Katherine J. Adams came to her death on December 28, 1898, in No. 81 West Twenty-sixth street, mercuric cyanide administered by Harry S. Cornish, to whom said poison had been sent in a bottle of bromo-saltzler by Roland D. Molineux.

The scene was an extremely sensational one. Molineux was immediately arrested and remanded to jail. Since then the grand jury has found an indictment against him for the murder of Mrs. Katherine J. Adams.

**Of An Old Family.**

Molineux is a representative of one of the best known families in New York. His



MRS. R. D. MOLINEUX.

Who was that person Molineux? Who had that poison Molineux? He took ten or twelve days for Barret to die. He had every symptom of diphtheria, and in the case was diagnosed, and he was treated for that disease and certificates of burial made out to that effect after he had died. Everything went off easily, very easily. So much so, in fact, that

and she finally consented to do so. But she should Barret.

"She came to New York and went to live with me to place who no apparent means of support and no one to care for her, and now we came to see of the most remarkable thing in connection with this case."

Colonel Gardner picked up a letter which had been sent to Barret by Mrs. Molineux. This letter is the one most remembered, was written to Barret while he was in the Colonel Gardner. After reading the letter, said:

"It is that the language of one ordinary friend to another."

General Molineux, who had been sitting quietly beside his son, near Colonel Gardner, jumped to his feet and up longer, shouted at the top of his voice:

Colonel Gardner, addressing Coroner Hart, said:

"May I ask the court to have the person removed from the room who is interrupting my remarks?"

Colonel Gardner insisted that quiet be maintained, and Colonel Gardner resumed:

"I have no doubt but that the man who was sent this man within six weeks of the time she had written that letter. She had been married but sixteen days at that time, and yet her husband, Molineux, swore on the stand that he had paid for the flowers which she had sent to Barret. My friends, we know human nature too well to believe anything like that. It does not go that way exactly. It is clear that Mrs. Molineux loved her son. How Molineux had good prospects and wanted to be taken care of. There's the motive."

"Now about the other man. One man had been diagnosed of diphtheria, and the trial was made for Cornish's life. Having seen that Molineux wanted to see the bread and butter taken out of his mouth, on the evening of the day of his resignation,



ROLAND BURNHAM MOLINEUX.

the name of 'H. C. Barret.' It was not Barret who hired it. Who was it? You heard a witness on this stand say very few swear that he saw Molineux there ten or twenty times and identified him as hiring the box in Barret's name.

"Now, you have seen witnesses go upon this stand as experts in handwriting and heard them testify that the man who wrote those letters signed 'Harry Cornish and 'H. C. Barret' wrote the address on the package of poison. Is there any doubt in your minds that Roland D. Molineux did it?"

During the talk of Colonel Gardner Cornish stood with his back against the wall with his hand lowered. At times his eyes would become red and there were tears in them.

### MRS. MOLINEUX, AS SHE APPEARED IN THE CASE

The theory of the police makes it impossible that Mrs. Molineux should not have been there.

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appeared to be the easiest matter in the world to get the other element.

**Molineux's Motive.**

"Who, in the killing of Barret, where was the motive? Barret was attentive to Blanche Chesbrough. His affection was her. He invited her to his room and she accepted. You can fancy the situation. They were, in fact, on the closest terms of intimacy. The other man who had been on the yacht with her wanted to marry her."

Molineux was met by Cornish on the stairway and said: "Well, you didn't do it, did you? You did the other man and you win. Does not that show a vast amount of hatred in these two words uttered in the spirit in which Molineux uttered them?"

**Cumulative Proof.**

Coming down to the hiring of the letter boxes, Colonel Gardner said:

"In one instance the box was rented in

the trial and hearing is of intense interest.

### THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S STATEMENT TO JURY

On his statement to the coroner's jury Colonel Gardner, the district attorney, in summarizing the evidence on Molineux, said he would say:

"It is proven that woman's character (meaning Mrs. Molineux) has been portrayed in this court room by her own husband. For a thousand years down to the present time, women of the kind, if it has been demonstrated, have been committed on account of two motives—jealousy or hate—and in the large majority of instances either a woman or a man.

Colonel Gardner then again alluded to the evidence of Mrs. Molineux, and designated her as a "woman."

"If any of you present," shouted Molineux, so that he could be heard from one end of the court room to the other.

Colonel Gardner turned so as to face Molineux, and said emphatically:

"In justice now it is considered proper to use all the expressions 'Woman' in preference to 'Lady.'"

Remembering his remarking up, he called attention to the preceding trial in which Mrs. Molineux's name was used.

"And there was another woman there, Mrs. Harriet (and was not her). That fixes their character pretty clearly."

Colonel Gardner went on to say that the death of Barret and Mrs. Adams could not be explained and added:

"Now, Barret was poisoned by a powder which was sent through the mail. Who was acquainted with the fact that occurred in the case? The only person who has been a person who was intimate with



Bromo-Saltzler

"The O. J. Case" and other handwritten notes.

Mr. Harry Cornish, Knickerbocker Athletic Club, Modern Art and Jewelry Gift Shop, New York City.



# JEALOUSY AND HATRED PREPARE

## DEATH IN A SELTZER BOTTLE

(Continued from Page Nine).

known of the fact that Barnett had been poisoned. They are, therefore, beginning at the beginning, and are making a record of the life of the woman from the time when she was the little girl, Blanche Chesebrough, down to the moment when she became Mrs. Roland Burnham Molineaux.

Inquiry is being made into those chapters of Mrs. Molineaux's life containing her acts when she was an unmarried woman; into her income at that time, both as to its source and to its amount; into her companions, her place of residence, her vocations.

The prosecution is particularly interested in obtaining a correct answer to certain questions asked Mrs. Molineaux when she was on the witness stand. She was asked if she had ever stopped at the house of a Mrs. Martin on East Twenty-fifth street. She denied it emphatically.

In this connection it is quite pertinent to hear the story of this Mrs. Martin. She kept, in November, 1907, a furnished room house at No. 112 East Twenty-fifth street. Since the beginning of the coroner's inquest Mrs. Martin has told a story to counsel of a certain person in the case, of which the following is an outline:

Mrs. Martin had advertised one of her rooms, having a bay window, for rent only during the day. On or about November 20 a tall, stylishly dressed young woman called, looked at the room, said she was delighted with it, and added that she would require it only from 11 o'clock in the morning until 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Mrs. Martin describes this young woman as having blond complexion, with a cast in one of her eyes. The stranger agreed to pay \$12 a week for the room.

The day on which the blond woman took possession of the room a man called upon her. He was a daily visitor for ten days thereafter. Mrs. Martin said that she afterward learned this man was H. C. Barnett, who lived at the Knickerbocker Athletic club. The woman she learned to know as "Miss Blanche." Barnett usually stayed in the house from 11 o'clock until "Miss Blanche" departed in the afternoon. Champagne and fruit were usually sent to the room prior to the coming of "Miss Blanche."

### Barnett Paid Bill for "Miss Blanche."

At the end of ten days "Miss Blanche" gave up the room, but instead of paying the rental, gave Mrs. Martin a sealed note to H. C. Barnett, at the Knickerbocker Athletic club. Barnett was not found when Mrs. Martin called, but he subsequently came to Mrs. Martin's apartments and paid the bill in person.

Mrs. Martin said that during "Miss Blanche's" stay in the house her distinguished appearance was frequently commented upon by the neighbors, who speculated vainly as to who she was. Mrs. Martin said that she saw "Miss Blanche" at rare intervals after the young woman had ceased to be her tenant. The young woman, she said, called upon her at the boarding house of a Mrs. McCready, in west Thirty-fourth street, whither she (Mrs. Martin) had removed after giving up the Twenty-fifth street house.

The last time she saw "Miss Blanche" Mrs. Martin said, was shortly after the death of H. C. Barnett. "Miss Blanche" had said:

"The world seems very black to me since 'Hennie' died. I don't think I shall ever recover from it.

Mrs. Martin said that she did not see Barnett again after he had paid the bill of \$26; nor had she ever seen him before the time he appeared in her house as the friend of Miss Blanche.

### Mrs. Martin's Statement Valuable.

Mrs. Martin's personal history does not make her an impressive witness in the absence of corroboration—but there is much of corroboration. It can be proved that Mrs. Martin did go to the Knickerbocker Athletic club, and found ample opportunity to learn the identity of H. C. Barnett.

Her statement was made at a time in the progress of the investigation of the case when she could not have had access to information upon which to build falsehoods. Furthermore, there appears no motive for deception on her part.

The police are fast gathering facts which will prove or disprove Mrs. Martin's statement, which, in view of the death of Barnett, becomes of first importance. The relations thus suggested between Barnett and "Miss Blanche" supply the strongest possi-

ble motive for some one, jealous of this woman, to send poison to Barnett.

## CORNISH HAPPY AT THE OUTCOME.

Cornish cried with relief when District Attorney Gardiner explained at the inquest that the attacks made upon him by Mr. Osborne were solely to trap Mollineaux. Yet today he is persuaded that he knew all about the plan of the district attorney from the first. He said today:

"Well, it has come out just as I predicted it would. From the start I was convinced Mollineaux was the man. I knew the reputation of the man, his terrible jealousy, and felt he was capable of doing anything in order to harm any one whom he regarded as an enemy.

"Mollineaux, with all his cunning, walked into a pretty trap. At no time did District Attorney Gardiner consider me in the light of the guilty one. Mr. Osborne's attacks on me on the witness stand were prearranged. He asked me to play a part so as to lead Mollineaux to regard me as the suspected person and to eventually induce Mollineaux to submit specimens of his handwriting to the experts. He had refused to give specimens to the police. He took the bait."

Cornish said that he had only the best of feelings toward District Attorney Gardiner and Mr. Osborne.

"There is more evidence against Mollineaux," concluded Cornish, "than the testimony at the inquest indicates."