

THE MYSTERY SOLVED.

MRS. TABBS CONFESSES THE DETAILS OF A HORRIBLE CRIME.

Wakefield Gains Slain by Wilson with a Chair in the House of His Female Accessory.

DISMEMBERMENT OF THE VICTIM'S BODY BY THE MURDERER.

Ghastly Recital of the Butchery, Disposal of the Remains, and the Arrest of the Principal.

The mystery surrounding the finding of the dismembered trunk of a human body in Tatham's creek, near Eddington, on Thursday last, was solved yesterday through the exertions of Chief of Detectives Kelly and Detectives Geyer, Crawford, Miller and Tate, who had been engaged in running out clues since Saturday. Early yesterday morning Chief Kelly visited Hannah Mary Tabbs, the negro, who had been arrested on suspicion, in her cell at the Fifth District Station House, on Fifteenth street, above Locust. In compliance with his directions the woman was brought into the corridor, where she was met by the Chief of Detectives. He inquired after her health and asked her if she had rested easy during the night.

When she had replied to both questions, he asked her whether she desired breakfast, and, after seeing that she was supplied with the meal, informed her that if she wanted to converse with him at any time during the day to notify the house sergeant, with whom he would be in constant communication. About 1 o'clock the chief sent Detective Crawford to the station house with instructions to endeavor to obtain from her some information bearing on the murder. Arriving at the district headquarters, the officer entered the passage way leading to the cell, and began interrogating the woman. At first she appeared averse to maintaining a conversation with the detective, and continually interrupted him by asking, "Why don't you get Wilson; why don't you get Wilson?" After the official had nearly despaired of getting her interested in the theme, she suddenly asked to see Chief Kelly.

After assuring her that he would be immediately notified Crawford telegraphed to the Central Station, and fifteen minutes later the chief of detectives, accompanied by Police Clerk John B. Moffitt, arrived at the station house. Mrs. Tabbs was then taken from the cell and escorted by the turnkey to Lieutenant Usilton's room, where the chief and his two subordinates were. The woman said that she desired to make a statement. Clerk Moffitt had already supplied himself with paper, and, as she gave in detail the "horrible facts of the murder, quickly reduced them to writing. The confession was as follows:

The Crime Confessed.

"On Wednesday morning, February 16, between 9 and 10 o'clock, at my house No. 1642 Richards street, in the kitchen, Wakefield Gains came there to see me. Three or four minutes after George Wallace, or Wilson, came in. Wakefield Gains was sitting on the settee reading a paper, and I was eating my breakfast. Wilson came and knocked at the door, and Gains opened it for him. His first conversation was about breaking up some wagons. Gains did not talk much. After that he said he was coming in again Sunday, and was going to bring my little girl in from Jekintown and take her out riding. I asked him what time he would be in Sunday, and he said exactly at 12 o'clock. Then Gains said to me, 'Is he going with her now?' I said: 'I don't know, and I don't care as long as I see my little girl.' With that Gains jumped up and struck George Wilson.

"Wilson ran backwards, as if he was looking for something, and Gains followed him up; then they clinched and fought all over the kitchen, and fell up against the sewing machine.

Killed Him With a Chair.

"Then Wilson grabbed up a green chair that was standing there and struck Gains on the head and knocked him against the stair steps, and from there he slid down to the floor. He struck him several times more with the chair while he lay on the floor. He never got up again and never spoke. I came down the steps and stepped over Gains' legs and said, 'George Wilson, this is awful.' He said, 'Well, he shan't get the best of me; he struck me first.' Then Wilson pulled the carpet from under him and I washed it out and hung it on the line. There was some blood on it and some on the steps. Then George Wilson grabbed hold of the body and moved the coal scuttle off the cellar steps and pushed and pulled the body down the cellar. He went down the cellar and I went half way down the steps. I said 'What are you going to do with him.' He said 'I am going to take off his clothes,' and he took them off and tied them up. I saw him pull his shirt over his head and take his other clothes off. I went down into the cellar and we stood there and looked at the body. He asked if the cellar window was open and he wanted something to put in front of it; he could not find anything and then said he would go out and would be back in a little while. He came back in about twenty minutes. I stood in the door in the meantime.

Butchering the Corpse.

"After he came back he had a butchers' cleaver. I did not see him bring it in. I went up stairs and looked through the slats out of the window to see if any one was coming and he went down into the cellar. When he came up he said: 'I have got it fixed now.' I went down in the cellar. The head was wrapped up in paper, the body was sitting up against the side of the steps, and the arms and legs I did not see. They were underneath the steps. He said: 'I am going out with this head and will bring something back to wrap up this body, and if you can make away with that I want you take it to Media and I will get away with the rest of it.' I told him I couldn't take the big body. He said he had cut it off very short and it wasn't heavy, and the way he would wrap it up I would have no trouble. He said: 'We can get it all out of here to night if you just help me.' Then he wrapped up the body and I agreed to take it, but told him I did not know the way to Media, that I only knew the way to Bucks county, and he would take it there.

Carrying the Body Away.

"This was about 12 o'clock, and he went away. I stayed up stairs at the window until 5 o'clock or after, when he came back. I was all dressed. He brought the body up from the cellar. I got an old skirt of Annie's off the sewing machine and the shawl strap out of the closet up stairs. It belonged to Gains. It was too light for me to go out yet, so he went down the cellar and brought up one of the legs wrapped up in an old bag that he brought with him and took it out. After he was gone I started off to the depot and met him on Seventeenth street, below Spruce. He said, 'I can't get in,' and I handed him my key. He said, 'When will your husband be home?' I told him at 8.30. He said he would meet me at the depot.

"I took the 8.30 train and bought a return ticket for Cornwells Station. I did not get out at Cornwells, but went on to Eddington and paid the conductor the difference. I got out at Eddington, went to the ticket office and got

my ten cents. Then I started up the hill and stopped at a house. I knocked at the door. A white lady came to the door and I asked her the way to Bridgeport. I left my two bundles at the gate, for I had a bundle containing Gains' clothes besides the body. A colored man came out with a lantern and showed me the road. He asked me if I wanted to go to Mary Courson's house. I told him 'No; I was going this way, up by Eddington Post Office.' He started to walk up with me, but I didn't want him to go, and I walked on faster, and stopped in somebody's yard until he went past. He went on as if hunting for me, and then came back and blew out his light. I then went on to the bridge, set down the bundle of clothes and took the shawl strap and calico off.

The Trunk Thrown in the Creek.

"I then threw the body over in the water. It went on the side where I threw it, and did not sink, as I expected. I threw the shawl strap over and brought the piece of calico over the bridge and threw it down. Two men came along in a buggy at that time, and they were talking about the roads being muddy. I ran up close to the bushes until they drove past. I brought the bundle of clothes away with me. I walked back to Cornwells and got on the train after nine o'clock. I did not throw the clothes in for fear Gains' name was on them. When I came out of Broad Street Station Wilson met me. We walked along a piece and I told him I threw the bundle over but it didn't sink. He said because it was wrapped in brown paper. I gave him the clothes, and he left me at the corner of Market street and said he would be up to see me in the morning. He came the next morning about 8.30.

"I didn't say much, for I didn't sleep all night. He said, 'Is anything out?' I said, 'I don't know what is out.' He stayed only about five minutes. Friday he came back and said it was in the papers, and told me not to give him away; if I did it would be an awful thing, and would be as bad on me as it was on him. I have not seen him since that time nor heard from him. HANNAH MARY TABBS."

How She Told the Story.

During the recital of her story the woman showed but very little excitement or emotion, but acted and spoke as though she had fully made up her mind to make a full breast of the part she had taken in the terrible affair. She did not falter once in relating the circumstances, and gave the impression almost from the first that the only thing left out in her history of the affair were more definite particulars of the origin of the quarrel. Since Chief Kelly had the interview with her on Monday evening, he has believed that she took an active part in the murder or in a quarrel which may have preceded it, from the fact that one of her eyes had been blacked, evidently by a blow. When asked about its origin, however, she said she had received the injury by a fall on the street. After the confession had been made, she was taken back to the cell to await future developments.

The Murderer Captured.

When the Chief returned to the Central Station he detailed Detectives Geyer and Crawford to arrest Wilson, and sent them to Seventeenth and Dickinson streets, where he was known to have lived. Detectives Miller and Tate were also ordered out on the same mission, and proceeded to Twelfth and Lombard streets. Inquiries in this neighborhood revealed the fact that Wilson resided with his aunt, Mrs. Martha Wallace, at 1214 Lombard street. The officers concluded to watch the house. Shortly after 6 o'clock last evening they saw Wilson approaching and placed him under arrest. He was taken to the Central Station and subsequently into the presence of the Chief of Detectives, who told him of the charge upon which he had been arrested. He did not appear excited, but quietly maintained that he knew nothing of the matter except what he had read in the papers. When asked where he was on the day of Gains' disappearance, he stated that he had been at work in the furniture factory of Matthews & Lee, in the rear of the premises occupied by his aunt.

His Statement Contradicted.

Messrs. Matthews & Lee, when interrogated, said that he was not around the place on that day, and when he returned Thursday morning explained his absence by saying he had been to Darby on business. At the conclusion of the interview Wilson was placed in a cell in the reserve's quarters to await a hearing. The prisoner is a light-colored negro about eighteen years of age. He was sent to the House of Detention by his aunt when seven years old on the charge of being incorrigible. During the nine years that he spent in that institution he was taught chairmaking. About two years ago he was released, and since that time has worked at his trade.

An effort will now be made by the detectives to discover the missing portions of the body and to ascertain the whereabouts of Annie Richardson, about whom the trouble originated. It is believed that the girl is in Darby. Chief Kelly will accompany the Coroner's physician to Bucks county to-day, and the dismembered body will be exhumed for further examination. It will be viewed by Mrs. Cannon, the sister of Wakefield Gains, who is positive that she can identify it if it is that of her missing brother. Wilson will be given a hearing this morning before Magistrate Smith at the Central Station.

Philadelphia Detectives Complimented.

District Attorney Eastburn, of Doylestown arrived in this city last evening in response to a telegram from Chief Kelly. He states that he had read the account of the workings of the Detective Department in the newspapers. He thought that their method of securing evidence in the case was splendid and he was greatly gratified with the result.

Yesterday morning Detective Geyer went to Eddington, and returned in the afternoon with a number of witnesses. He brought with him the bloody skirt found on the bridge which spans Tatham's creek, and the paper in which the remains were carried from this city to that point.

The following telegram, which may throw some light on the disposal of the head of the murdered man, was received last evening from THE INQUIRER correspondent at Burlington, N. J.:

A Human Head Found.

"BURLINGTON DEPOT, N. J., Feb. 22.—A human head, wrapped up in a blue cloth, was found this afternoon on the grounds of Miss Sarah Taylor's residence, about three miles from Burlington. It was first discovered by a negro, who happened to be passing along the road, and whose attention was attracted to the ghastly object by the actions of several dogs, which were gathered around it. As soon as his discovery was made known, a messenger was despatched for Coroner Taylor, of Burlington, who soon arrived and took charge of the head.

"Upon examination several contusions upon the skull were discovered and slight traces of decomposition were visible. It also had the appearance of having been severed from the body. It is thought this discovery may have some connection with the Eddington mystery, although the physicians declare the head is that of a white man. No clues have as yet been obtained, but some new facts may be brought out at the Coroner's inquest to-morrow."

Gains, the murdered man, was a remarkably light mulatto, and considerable difficulty would be experienced in distinguishing the difference between him and a white man. It is said that he possessed almost every facial characteristic of a Caucasian, and his hair is described as having been long and straight.