

In the Oxley and Gatton tragedies there are some points of similarity.

In each case the victim or victims were taken away off the road into a quiet spot; in each case there was shooting in the head-Hill in the forehead and Murphy behind the ear; in each case a horse was shot; in each case the murdering was done on a holiday, and in each case a .380 bore revolver bullet was employed.

Could the crimes have been perpetrated by the one person?

Carefully studying the matter out, I should say certainly yes.

Of course this theory, like many other theories, which have arisen in connection with the Gatton case, may not be right.

At all events, the police are not going on the assumption that it is.

On the subject, a Gatton correspondent made inquiry, but has not been able to gather any information. He writes thus: -" If an empty cartridge-case has been found at the scene of the Oxley tragedy, and only one, it confirms strongly my impression that the murders were committed by one person. It is not necessary to recapitulate at length the points of similarity, which I mentioned on the particulars of the Oxley tragedy being made known.

Briefly, some were:

1. Both crimes on a holiday; (Not true).
2. Victims in each case taken or persuaded away off the road;
3. Both crimes committed only a short distance from the road:
4. Hill and Murphy shot in precisely the same way, and just behind the right ear;
5. The horse shot in the forehead in each case;
6. Hill carefully covered up, and his hat placed under his arm so that it could not blow away;
7. Norah Murphy placed on a rug;
8. Michael Murphy's empty purse placed in his hand; (Not quite true).
9. The same class of cartridge .380 used in each case;
10. I cartridge found at both scenes although 2 shots were fired;
11. The hammer mark on the firing cap of both weapons deviated from the centre;
12. And now-if your report is correct-one empty cartridge case found at each place.

At first I was under the impression that a small-bore rifle, firing a .380 revolver cartridge, had been used because of the empty case being ejected.

Now I am satisfied that the shooting may have been done with a revolver-a weapon out of order so that after each shot the empty cartridge case would have to be ejected.

The police can perhaps satisfy themselves that the same weapon was used in both tragedies. If a revolver out of order was used it is quite likely that the blow of the hammer on the percussion cap in the cartridge would not be quite true.

If there is a peculiarity noticeable on the percussion caps and it applies to both, I

think it will be very strong evidence coupled with the other circumstances mentioned that the one man is answerable for both tragedies.

I hope that the police will have the indentations where the blow was struck to explode the cartridges very carefully examined, and by an expert. There may be points of similarity, which a microscope would bring out very plainly. If the police have not an expert, I would suggest they get the evidence of Lieutenant-Colonel Hutchison, who not long since gained some distinction in a small arms course at Netley, or the master armourer at headquarters of the Defence Force would be able to give an opinion worth having.

The report of further evidence having been obtained tending to show that both the Oxley and Gatton tragedies were committed by the same person or persona has given great relief here.

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