

# HOLMES WEEPS A LITTLE

## The Supposed Murderer of Pietzel Temporarily Breaks Down.

### MISS YOKE PLACED ON THE STAND

#### Detective Geyer Testifies, but Is Not Permitted to Refer to the Murder of the Three Pietzel Children.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 31.—H. H. Holmes, charged with the murder of Benjamin Pietzel, lost his nerve for a moment to-day and wept. The name of "Miss Yoke" as a witness was called this morning. Holmes had expected that the woman whom he had lured into marriage in the belief that he was single, would be called upon to give testimony against him, but the prospect of her appearance in the witness box completely unnerved him. He called eagerly to his counsel and urged them with earnestness to object to the witness. In the meanwhile, however, Miss Yoke had taken her place in the witness stand.

From his behavior as she did so, it would seem as if Holmes really loved this woman. As she came forward, his pallid face flushed to the brows, and then the blood retreated, leaving him ghastly white. He looked appealing at her, but she carefully avoided glancing in his direction. When the girl so evidently avoided even so much as looking at him, Holmes bowed his head and struggled with a sob that shook his frame, while he wiped the tears from his face. He appealed piteously to his lawyers to have the witness taken from the stand. They combated as well as they could the evidence of the District Attorney that Miss Yoke was not Holmes's legal wife, and was therefore competent, under the statutes of this State, to testify against the prisoner. The testimony that there was at least one, and probably two other women with whom Holmes had gone through a legal marriage ceremony, was convincing, and Judge Arnold allowed Miss Yoke to testify. She seemed to have no knowledge of any of the events bearing directly upon the murder of Pietzel or the children.

The first gleam of hope that has come to him since he was arraigned, came to Holmes to-day, when his attorneys succeeded in keeping from the jury all evidence bearing directly upon the murder of the Pietzel children. The decision of the Court ruling this evidence out, left the prosecution in confusion, and, in consequence, the District Attorney asked for time in which to re-arrange his case. The Court granted the request, and no night session was held. Despite the decision of the Court in refusing to admit testimony on this point, District Attorney Graham is convinced that the evidence he has already presented to the jury will convict Holmes.

#### The Fort Worth Frauds.

Sidney L. Samuels, a Fort Worth (Texas) lawyer, was the first witness to-day. He had a strong Southern accent, and spoke with great rapidity in giving his testimony. He identified Holmes as "the individual in the cage there, whom I knew under the name of Pratt."

Mr. Samuels's testimony showed that Holmes or Pietzel never obtained any money on the note for \$16,000 signed by Pietzel as Benton T. Lyman, but used it to extort the \$5,000 from Mrs. Pietzel. Whether it is possible that Holmes could have been plotting Pietzel's death in April or May he probably only knows, but he certainly had some motive for obtaining a regularly drawn-up note. The way he retained possession of it was to tell Mr. Samuels that he had lost the original note, and another one was drawn up, leaving the first in his hands.

William E. Geary, the agent of the Fidelity Insurance Company, was recalled for the purpose of proving that the prisoner has a wife in Willamette, Ill., as well as the woman who is in this city now, and whom he married under the name of Howard. As it was the evident intention of proving the identity of the woman in Willamette as Holmes's wife, that "Mrs. Howard" might be placed on the stand, the defense made a vigorous objection to Geary testifying. The objection was overruled, and Geary testified to the fact of seeing and talking to a woman in Willamette who was known as Holmes's wife, and was so acknowledged to be by him. A letter from Holmes to the woman in Willamette, in which he speaks of their marriage, was read to the jury.

#### Holmes Weeps.

Holmes, for the first time since the trial began, to-day gave way, and so acute was his emotion that he wept. This was when a fair, blonde-haired girl was led toward the witness stand. When Holmes saw her he started, and his pallid face flushed and then grew ghastly pale. He beckoned eagerly to his attorneys, and, with tears running down his cheeks, talked with great earnestness to them.

The witness was asked her name, and gave it as Georgiana Yoke. Then the reason for Holmes's eagerness was apparent. It was this girl whom he married under the name of H. M. Howard. Holmes urged his lawyers to use every means in their power to prevent the witness from testifying, but their efforts were useless, as the Court overruled all their objections, and ordered the examination to go on.

The witness kept her eyes cast down, and a court officer repeated her low answers to the jury. Never once did she glance at the man she once thought was her husband. He, on the contrary, looked longingly toward her, and occasionally wiped away a tear.

Miss Yoke testified that she knew the prisoner under the name of Holmes and Howard. She met him in St. Louis, and while he was in jail engaged Thomas B. Harvey and Jephtha Howe as lawyers to defend him.

Mr. Graham made no reference to any marriage between the prisoner and Miss Yoke, but went on and asked her if she was in Philadelphia with him in August, 1894. She said she was, and then he asked her if she remembered a man calling to see Holmes at 1,905 North Eleventh Street on Saturday night, Sept. 1. She did. This man, Holmes has since told her, was Pietzel. Holmes said at the time that he had an engagement with the man next day. The next day he was out of the house from 10:30 to 3:30 or 4 o'clock.

They left this city that Sunday night, and went to Indianapolis. Holmes remained with her for a day or two in Indianapolis, and then went to St. Louis. He returned to Indianapolis, and from there they went to Franklin, Ind., the home of her parents, and from there to Indianapolis again. There he told her that he had received a telegram calling him to Philadelphia to close a deal with the Pennsylvania Railroad, and he came here. He remained away several days. This was the time Holmes was identifying Pietzel's body. Holmes returned from Philadelphia and went to St. Louis.

#### Miss Yoke Confused.

While giving her testimony Miss Yoke occasionally raised her hand to her brow as if bewildered or tired.

Holmes came back from St. Louis and told her that he had sold his property in Fort Worth for \$35,000, of which he said \$10,000 was in cash. Holmes told her of identifying Pietzel's body, but from his account of the matter to her he was only drawn into the case by accidentally meeting Howe on the train to Philadelphia. Of the money he said he got from the Fort Worth sale, but which was really the insurance money, Holmes told her that he had sent \$5,000 to his broker, Frank E. Blackman of Chicago, and that he had kept the balance himself. He gave her about \$2,000 in money and several valuable presents. Among Holmes's gifts to her was a Bible.

Holmes took her from Indianapolis to Detroit. This was the time he also had the Pietzel family moving along with him in two sections. Miss Yoke and Holmes reached Detroit about 11 o'clock at night and immediately after their arrival at the hotel Holmes went out for about an hour. From Detroit they went to Toronto, to which Holmes was also leading the Pietzel family.

Holmes took her to Prescott, Ogdensburg, and Burlington, Vt.—in fact, over exactly the same route as he took Mrs. Pietzel and her children. During all this journey, although they were probably traveling at or near the same times, Miss Yoke never saw the Pietzel family.

She identified the picture of Pietzel as of the man she had known in Fort Worth as B. T. Lyman, Holmes was in Fort Worth at the time she saw Pietzel there, and was passing under the name of Pratt. He told her he had assumed this name on account of his business troubles.

Mr. Graham said he was through with the

witness and then Mr. Rotan stated to the Court that his client insisted upon cross-examining the witness himself.

#### Holmes Cross-Examines.

Judge Arnold gave his permission and Holmes arose quickly to his feet. His voice was steady and stronger than it has been at any time since the trial. His questions were directed toward showing that it was no sudden determination which led him to leave the house at 1,905 North Eleventh Street, on that Sunday afternoon, but that the matter was fixed and decided upon beforehand. Holmes's manner was courteous and gentle as he led Miss Yoke on from question to question.

Miss Yoke admitted that they had talked of leaving that day, and when Holmes came home in the afternoon she had already half packed her trunk. In answer to a question she said Holmes appeared excited and nervous.

By the prisoner bringing out this point, it would seem that Holmes had decided on the suicide theory as a defense, as that is about the only reason he would have for wishing to bring out the fact that his manner was different from the ordinary. Holmes brought these facts out with much cleverness and then traced the journey from Indianapolis on to Burlington, that the District Attorney had taken Miss Yoke. His object was not very apparent, but he stated with much earnestness to the Court that the points he wished to bring out were of much importance to him. Holmes gave notice that he would probably call Miss Yoke as his witness later.

Miss Yoke was one of the Commonwealth's star witnesses, but her testimony was not as damaging to Holmes as had been predicted. Practically the only point of any particular importance brought out was the fact that Pietzel called upon Holmes, who was out of the house for a good part of the following day. As to the rest of her testimony it was unimportant as bearing directly upon the murder.

#### Mrs. Pietzel Recalled.

Mrs. Pietzel was called to the stand again this afternoon. As she was led to the stand Holmes looked fixedly at her as he did yesterday, and, incredible as it probably is, it seemed as if he were trying to influence her by the power of his mind over hers. Mrs. Pietzel gives ground for some such belief as this by the way she avoids Holmes's glance, and the terror and shrinking in her face when she does catch his look.

Mrs. Pietzel was only called upon to identify the tie, shirt, and trousers her husband had on when he left home, and then she was excused. Bessie Pietzel also identified the articles.

The prosecution endeavored to introduce the letters which Mrs. Pietzel had identified yesterday as those which she had given Holmes to mail, but which were found upon him when arrested, but the Court would not permit the reading at this time.

#### Detective Geyer's Story.

Detective Geyer testified that he had an interview with Holmes in this city after the latter was brought here from Boston. Geyer said to Holmes that he understood that the body found at 1,316 Callowhill Street was a substituted one. Holmes told him that on Sunday, Sept. 2, he went to New-York and got the body from a medical student he knew, brought it to this city in a trunk the same afternoon, and met Pietzel at the Western Union office at Tenth and Chestnut Streets and gave him the check for the trunk. He then went to his boarding house, in Eleventh Street, and that night left for the West. Holmes told him that the next time he met Pietzel was in the Post Office at Detroit. Holmes said that he had given Pietzel instructions how to prepare the body for the swindle. He was to place it on its back, one hand upon the breast, one by the side, and to place some liquid in the mouth and cause an explosion. This liquid was a wash that they were making for cleaning clothes. He also told him to burn the breast and arm. He also instructed Pietzel how, by working the arms of the corpse, he could inject chloroform into the stomach.

At a subsequent interview Holmes retracted the above statement, and told Geyer that the body was that of Pietzel. On hearing this, Geyer said: "Holmes, if that was Pietzel's body, you murdered him and killed the three children."

"No I didn't, Mr. Geyer," replied Holmes. "I will tell you about it."

Holmes then told Geyer the story that Pietzel committed suicide, and of his finding him dead Sunday morning. Holmes went to the house and found that Pietzel had killed himself by laying a cloth across his face and allowing chloroform to drip from a bottle upon the towel. Pietzel left a note for Holmes telling him that he intended to kill himself and advising him to make such use of his body as they had intended to do with the bogus corpse. After some reflection, Holmes says, he did this, and fixed the body as it was found.

In explanation of the whereabouts of the children, Holmes said they had gone to London with Minnie Williams. When asked where their trunks were, Holmes said he left them in a hotel in West Madison Avenue, Detroit. At another interview Holmes contradicted himself by stating that he had given the boy, Howard, in charge of a man named Hatch at Indianapolis, and that he had never seen any of them since he sent the girls from Toronto.

#### A Struggle Between Counsel.

Mr. Graham proposed now to have Geyer tell of the finding of the children's bodies. The defense objected strenuously, and the jury was taken from the room while the argument upon the question was made to the Court.

The matter before the court was the most important that had yet come up. The Commonwealth undoubtedly has based much of its case upon the evidence of the killing of the children by Holmes, not alone for the effect it would produce, but to show that the murder of Pietzel was but one link in the chain of deaths he plotted. If evidence of the murder of the children was barred out, the Commonwealth's case would lose much of its strength, as the evidence of the killing of Pietzel is purely presumptive and circumstantial, and the prosecution might have difficulty in proving directly the murder by Holmes. With these facts in view, Mr. Graham argued at great length and with much earnestness.

Mr. Rotan quoted from authorities sustaining his position. His plea was that the courts of Pennsylvania have decided time and again against the admission of evidence of one crime to help convict a man of the offense for which he is being tried. The arguments consumed an hour, and then Judge Arnold rendered his decision. He had not spoken half a dozen sentences when it was evident that he intended to rule the evidence out, and this he did on the ground that the killing of the children had no direct bearing on the case for which the prisoner was arraigned.

While the Judge was speaking, Holmes kept his eyes intently on his face, and when he heard the words that may give him a fighting show for his life his face lit up, and he swallowed a lump in his throat that had been nearly choking him.

#### A Trick Tried.

The jury was brought back, and Detective Geyer resumed his place on the stand for cross-examination. This was very brief, and then Mr. Graham tried to work what looked like a clever trick to introduce his evidence of the killing of the children. He asked the Court if he could not introduce evidence disproving Holmes's statement that the children were given to Minnie Williams, but Judge Arnold somewhat dryly replied that he considered that statement had already been sufficiently disproved.

Geyer then stepped aside, and Superintendent of Police Linden was called to the stand. Superintendent Linden had an interview with Holmes on Jan. 6, 1895. In this interview Holmes repeated to Linden the story of Pietzel's suicide, much as he had told it to Geyer. To Linden Holmes also denied that he killed Pietzel. Prior to making this statement Holmes had told him the story of procuring the body of a corpse from New-York.

Mr. Shoemaker, in cross-examining the witness, returned to the coroner's warrant that was mentioned in yesterday's testimony and began to question Superintendent Linden about it. Mr. Graham objected, but this was the District Attorney's unlucky day, and Judge Arnold would not sustain him. Nevertheless, the defense obtained no information regarding the warrant. It is the contention that this warrant was one for murder, and it was used to terrify Holmes into confessing to the insurance swindle.

Superintendent Linden was excused, and court adjourned until to-morrow.

#### Not Suicide, but an Elopement.

Isaac Alkus, a medical student of 304 Van Brunt Street, Brooklyn, has been arrested upon the charge of abducting Annie Gertrude Hunt from her home at Coney Island, Sunday night.

The girl is sixteen years old, and her father keeps a hotel on Surf Avenue. After she disappeared, her father found printed on the wall a statement in the girl's handwriting that she was going to commit suicide by drowning.

It has been ascertained that Annie and Alkus left the island in a carriage, and then went to the Eastern District. Alkus was arraigned before Justice Nostrand yesterday, and said he took the girl from Coney Island, but at her request. He was committed in default of \$1,500 bail. The girl is still missing.