

# SHOT DEAD IN HIS HOME BY A BURGLAR

## Thrilling Encounter of a Camden Baker and His Son With a Robber, Who Killed the Father.

### Three Shots Through a Window and William G. Kairer Moaned and Died.

#### The Murderer Believed to Be a Colored Man Who Pawned His Victim's Watch—Police Working on a Clue in Philadelphia—The Son's Story.

William G. Kairer, Sr., a well-to-do Camden baker, was aroused from slumber yesterday morning by the visit of a burglar. A few minutes later he fell dead, with a bullet from the robber's revolver lodged in his body. The murderer escaped, but the police are at work on a clue which promises to lead to his identification and arrest.

The scene of the murder is a two-story brick house, 429 Beckett street, where the victim resided with his married son, William G. Kairer, Jr. The other occupants of the house were the son's wife and child, and a servant, Annie McCuen. The house is on the north side of Beckett street, at the corner of Avon street, a narrow thoroughfare which runs along its west side.

The only witness of the shooting is young Mr. Kairer, who stood by his father's side and held him in his arms until he died. The young man tells a thrilling story of the encounter with the burglar.

He occupied the front bedroom in the second story and his father the rear room. This is his story:

#### The Son's Story.

"The door opening into my bed room from the hall sticks at the top and the rasping noise made as the door was forced open awakened me about ten minutes before 5 o'clock. As I opened my eyes I saw a man's arm and part of his body in the doorway. I jumped out of bed and yelled 'Man in the house!'

"The burglar ran toward the stairway and I ran in pursuit. Turning quickly at the head of the stairs he grasped one of the bars of the railing to steady



WHERE THE MURDER WAS COMMITTED.

himself. I reached over the railing and struck at him with my fist. The man swayed and escaped the blow, and in doing so wrenched out the bar. He dashed down stairs. It was so dark that I could not tell whether the man was white or black.

"My father was awakened by the noise. He lit a match and, without stopping to dress, we hurried down stairs. The door leading into the kitchen, the door of the inclosed shed and the gate opening on Avon street were all open. The burglar had evidently escaped. Spread out in the shed we found a shawl ready to wrap plunder in.

"Returning to the dining room we lit the gas and looked around to see what had been taken. The silverware on the table had apparently not been disturbed. We noticed that the gas was burning low in the parlor and the lower sash of the one big parlor window was raised, although the inside blinds were closed and the catch turned to hold them together.

#### Three Shots Quickly Fired.

"There is a wide doorway between the parlor and dining room, hung with a portiere. My father was standing in this doorway facing the parlor window, and I was at his left side and slightly in his rear, when the inside blinds of the parlor window were suddenly dashed open and I saw three flashes in quick succession.

"My father gave a groan, staggered and was about to fall when I caught him in my arms. I laid him gently on the floor, pillowed his head on my arm and implored him to speak to me. He moaned feebly for a few minutes, gave a gasp and died.

"The shots and my cries had alarmed the women and the servant screamed for help. Neighbors soon came and then the police arrived. I cannot describe my father's murderer, for I merely caught a glimpse of him in the darkness."

The family of William H. Upton, next door to Mr. Kairer, were aroused by the shots. Mrs. Upton and her daughter ran to the front window and saw a man skip across Beckett street and then walk leisurely down White street, a narrow thoroughfare opposite Avon. Mr. Upton slipped on his pantaloons and ran into Kairer's house. He found the parlor filled with smoke and young Mr. Kairer supporting his dying father.

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# KILLED BY A BURGLAR

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L. R. Weldy, a milkman, who was serving a customer on Line street, above West, heard the shots and ran around into Beckett street, but he saw nothing of the murderer.

## Work of the Police.

The scene of the murder is not far from No. 1 Patrol House, and the police were soon at the house. They found one of the burglar's bullets imbedded in the ceiling immediately above the spot where the murdered man stood. Another had broken the globe on the chandelier in the dining room and imbedded itself in the rear wall. The third had entered Mr. Kairer's body near the centre of the breast.

The county physician found very little bleed outside the wound and death was apparently due to internal hemorrhage, resulting from the cutting of a main artery by the bullet. The county physician will make a post-mortem examination to-day and an inquest will be held later in the week by the authorities.

Chief of Police Davis was at first inclined to doubt young Mr. Kairer's story, and placed all the occupants of the house under surveillance, refusing to allow the son to go out. His suspicions were groundless and were dispelled by a close examination, which corroborated the son's story.

At first it was thought the murderer had secured no plunder except fifty cents taken from a child's savings bank. About three hours after the tragedy young Mr. Kairer notified the police that his father's gold watch was missing. It had been taken from a vest lying on a washstand in his father's bedroom. Under a blanket near-by was \$600 which the burglar missed.

The Camden police at once sent a description of the watch to the Philadelphia Central Station detectives and patrolmen were instructed to notify the various pawnbrokers.

At a pawnshop the location of which detectives refuse to divulge, the watch was recovered about noon. It had been pledged ten minutes before the policeman notified the pawnbroker by a colored man, who is supposed to be the murderer.

This description of the man is given: About 35 years old; very dark; five feet eight inches in height; heavily built, weighing probably 175 pounds; very thick neck; big nose and heavy lips.

The height of the window through which the shots were fired shows that the murderer was a tall man.

Chief of Detectives Miller last night refused to give out any information whatever at the Central Station concerning the case. The Camden officials, however, were more courteous. County Detective Gallagher and Lieutenant Smith came over from Camden late last night to get an accurate description of the colored man and to effect his arrest if possible. They suspect a colored man in South Camden, who will be arrested to-night if they can find him.

## The Victim Well Known.

William G. Kairer, Sr., the murdered man, was well known in Camden, where he had been in business as a cracker baker for many years. His two sons, William G., Jr., aged 28 years, and Charles, aged 25 years, aided in carrying on the business at 416 and 418 Line street. There is another son, Frank, 14 years old, who had started from home yesterday to attend a boarding school. Mr. Kairer also had a daughter 19 years old, who recently married Thomas White, of West Philadelphia.

The deceased was a leading member of the First M. E. Church and was active in evangelical work. He frequently conducted the Sunday morning religious services at the city or county jail, and took an interest in the Salvation Army and in similar religious work.

He was a member of Pettawatomie Tribe of Red Men, Fidelity Ledge, No. 3, Ancient Order United Workmen, and of the Odd Fellows and Legion of the Red Cross.

The Camden police last night arrested three colored men who resemble the description of the murderer. Theodore Lambert, who answers in nearly every particular to the description, was arrested in the Eighth ward. He admitted having committed a recent robbery.

The other two suspects are Louis Riley and Joseph B. Stevenson, who were picked up in South Camden.