

William Alfred Pierpoint

REYNOLDS'S NEWSPAPER – 3 June 1888

BRUTAL MURDER IN CAMBERWELL.

The shocking murder of the boy Sidney Pierpoint, at Neate-street, Camberwell, has created the greatest excitement in that district, and a feeling of great indignation is expressed towards the father. The history of the tragedy is as follows :- A family named Pierpoint, who had been lodging at 158, Neate-street, Camberwell, were leaving there for a house in Runham-street, Walworth. Shortly before half-past ten o'clock Mrs. Pierpoint, it is stated, asked her husband, William Alfred Pierpoint, to take charge of Sidney, their little boy, aged two. He did so, but when a short distance from the house he suddenly picked him up by the legs and dashed his head on the pavement with great violence. There were a number of people close by, and on their running up to the man he made off, but was subsequently arrested by Police-constable Lunn. The crowd assumed a menacing attitude towards Pierpoint, who was conducted to Rodney-road police-station as quickly as possible. The boy, whose head was shockingly injured, was conveyed in an unconscious condition to Dr. Partridge's surgery, in the Albany-road, after which, acting on the advice of the doctor, Constable Elliot procured a cab, and accompanied the child to Guy's Hospital, where the little fellow died twenty minutes after admission. Subsequently the father was charged at the police-office with willfully causing his son's death. So far no reason can be assigned for the murder.

On Monday, at the Lambeth Police-court, William Alfred Pierpoint, 31, hammerman, living in Neate-street, Camberwell, was charged before Mr. Biron, Q.C., with the willful murder of his son, Sidney Gilbert John Pierpoint, aged one year and ten months, on Saturday night.

Eliza Stoor, living in Neate-street, Camberwell, said on Saturday night, about half-past ten o'clock, she was standing at her door, when she saw the prisoner a few doors off with the child in his arms. As he passed, she said, "What's the matter up there?" and the prisoner made some remark about his furniture. He seemed in great trouble, and cried. The witness urged him to let his wife go back and fetch the bed. The prisoner's wife, who came up then, went for the bed. The prisoner lifted the child up, and taking hold of its legs, said, "You shall be the victim," and then dashed it down on the ground.

Cross-examined : The street at the time was clear. The witness had only known the prisoner by sight. She knew him to be very kind to children.

Eliza Howell, living in Neate-street, corroborated the evidence of the last witness, and added that the child's head struck the kerb.

Cross-examined : At the station she heard the prisoner say, "I let the child fall."

By Mr. Biron : He did not let it fall, but dashed it to the ground.

Other evidence was given with a view of showing that the prisoner was greatly upset through having been turned out of his lodging for owing rent.

Police-constable 350 P said by direction of Dr. Partridge, he took the child to Guy's Hospital, where it died in a short time.

Mr. Biron ordered a remand for the production of medical evidence.

The inquest on the body was held at Guy's Hospital on Wednesday, and the jury returned a verdict of "Willful murder" against William Alfred Pierpoint, who was committed for trial on the coroner's warrant.

The Echo (London) - July 1888

FATHER CHARGED WITH MURDER. CHILD'S BRAINS DASHED OUT.

At the Central Criminal Court, to-day, William Alfred Pierpoint, a labourer, aged 31, of very respectable appearance, was put on his trial, before Mr. Justice Hawkins, on the charge of willfully murdering his son by dashing its brains out on the pavement.

PIERPOINT RECEIVING NOTICE TO QUIT.

The circumstances of the case will be fresh in the public recollection. For the past three years the prisoner, with his wife, had rented a room at 158, Neate-street, Camberwell. Latterly he had been out of work, and had paid his rent somewhat irregularly. This caused some differences to take place between him and his landlady. He was subsequently given notice to leave, and at ten o'clock on the night of 26th May he was about to remove his furniture, but was told he must leave a bedstead as security for the arrears of rent. He then left, taking the child with him. ... Without proceeding very far along the street, he was seen by some to be crying bitterly, when suddenly he kissed the child, and with both hands dashed it violently on the pavement. The defence was that the child accidentally fell out of the prisoner's arms.

VERDICT

The Jury returned a verdict of Guilty, with a strong recommendation to mercy.

The Judge passed sentence of death in the usual form, and said he would send the recommendation of the Jury to the proper quarter.

Morning Post - 23 July 1888

THE CAMBERWELL MURDER. – A respite has been received for the prisoner William Alfred Pierpoint, who was to have been executed to-morrow morning at Wandsworth Prison for the murder of his young child, Sidney Pierpoint, by dashing it upon the pavement near his residence in Neate-street, Camberwell. The jury had strongly recommended him to mercy on the ground that he was hardly conscious of what he was doing at the time. It is understood the prisoner will undergo a long term of penal servitude.

Isle of Wight County Press – 1 August 1896

PARKHURST

CONVICTS' DEATH. – On Monday Edward F. Blake, Esq., held an inquest at H.M. Convict Prison on the body of William Alfred Pierpoint, 39, a convict undergoing a life sentence, who died on Saturday night from natural causes. ... A verdict of "Death from natural causes" was returned.

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