

PLUMB TO PLEAD INSANITY

Counsel for the Man Who Killed Masterton Foreshadows Defense.

STATEMENT WRITTEN APRIL 11

Copied by a Typewriting Firm on that Date, Showing Long Premeditation of the Crime.

James Neale Plumb, the murderer of Alexander Masterton, spent yesterday in a cell in the Tombs, and according to his jailers his demeanor is that of a man who has reached the goal of his ambition and is perfectly satisfied with the result of his work. He did not once mention his crime or the name of his victim to any one except his counsel, Henry Thompson, who called to see him. He has expressed no remorse for his act, and he appears perfectly sane and collected. He took no exercise yesterday. His meals were sent in from a caterer's.

There is little doubt that the defense in Plumb's case will be insanity, this being foreshadowed by a statement made by Mr. Thompson before he saw his client yesterday. Plumb has refused to see any one except his counsel, and in answer to numerous cards sent to him he wrote:

"I am sorry, but by advice of my counsel I have nothing to say to any one."

Mr. Thompson called at the Tombs yesterday morning, and a few minutes later Plumb was conducted into the reception room.

"Good morning, Henry! How are you?" was Plumb's cheerful greeting to his counsel. A conference of half an hour followed, after which Mr. Thompson would make no statement.

Before the conference, however, Mr. Thompson said that, in his opinion, Plumb's mind was certainly deranged when he committed the murder.

"I should not have been surprised to have heard at any time," said Mr. Thompson, "that Mr. Plumb had attacked Masterton. He has been brooding over his wrongs for a long time, and they were not fancied wrongs, either. This feeling had been growing since 1888, when Plumb's daughter sued him for an accounting of her mother's estate. It existed to a certain extent before that, but the daughter's suit seemed to have capped the climax, although the denouement did not come for many years afterward. I believe that Plumb had been moodier than ever since the anniversary of the coming of age of his daughter, on April 20, and that this constant brooding unsettled his mind. The sight of his enemy roused all the passion in the man and brought on the tragedy.

"There is no truth in the story of an estrangement between Plumb and his wife. They were very happy together, and when she died, in 1877, she left her husband only \$5,000 at the latter's specific request. He feared that he might be held accountable for some debts of his father, and did not want to see the estate of his children dissipated. He used the \$5,000 bequeathed to him to put a memorial window in a church at Islip, L. I., which the family attended. As to the typewritten statement, that was prepared entirely without my knowledge. There is no question of money involved; for, although I do not know the exact state of Mr. Plumb's finances, I do know that he is not in straits."

Although the determination to kill Masterton may have become more firmly settled in Plumb's mind after April 20, he had evidently been preparing some time before, for it was on April 11 last that he had prepared the typewritten statement of what he called the Masterton conspiracy. This statement was copied from the original in the offices of Z. & L. Rosenfield, in the Empire Building. Miss Zerlina Rosenfield, in speaking of the matter yesterday, said:

"On April 11 Mr. Plumb called at the office and asked that a written statement of forty-two pages be copied on the typewriter. It was written by one of our girls and I compared it. There was nothing in it that hinted at crime, and seemed to be a story of the man's life and his connection with Masterton. The condensed statement was written at our up-town office and there were no threats in that either. Although the business done here is of a confidential nature, I would have hesitated had it been evident that murder was being planned, and would have consulted an attorney. But it will be noticed that the caption of the story "Why I, J. Neale Plumb Shot Alexander Masterton," was added by Mr. Plumb after the typewriting was done, just as he afterward added the postscript about being an instrument in the hands of God to remove the man he killed. Consequently, while we considered the story a remarkable one, there was nothing in it that would have led us to believe that a crime was contemplated."

Coroner Bausch yesterday held an autopsy on the body of Masterton in the undertaking rooms in Sixth Avenue. It was found that death was due to a pulmonary hemorrhage caused by a bullet that had passed through the apex of one lung, and a hemorrhage of the liver caused by a bullet that had pierced that organ and the intestines. At 3 o'clock the body was removed from the undertaker's shop to the residence of the dead man in Bronxville under the direction of the murdered man's brother and son-in-law, who accompanied the coffin. The funeral will be held in the Bronxville Reformed Church to-morrow afternoon, and the Rev. Dr. Watson, a close friend of the dead man, will officiate. Burial will be in Woodlawn.

Policeman Diehl yesterday took to the Coroner's office the clothes worn by Masterton when he was killed and the property which was on his person. The property included \$78.62 in cash and checks to the amount of \$1,097.65; also a photograph.

The photograph was that of a young and comely woman, and bore the imprint, "Forschew, Hudson, N. Y."

Coroner Bausch will hold the inquest on next Wednesday morning.