

THE DEMOCRAT

SAINT LOUIS FRIDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 5, 1862.

FROM NEW MEXICO. HORRIBLE TRAGEDY AT FORT STANTON.

DR. WHITLOCK, A PROMINENT CITIZEN, BASELY MURDERED BY THE MILITARY. HIS DESPERATE ENCOUNTER WITH CAPT. GRAYDON.

LIEUT. MORRIS AND HIS COMPANY PURSUE AND KILL HIM.

THE CONFESSION OF GRAYDON.

COLONEL CARSON BUSY AT FORT STANTON.

(Special Correspondence of the Missouri Democrat)

BARCLAY'S FORT (N.M.) November 16, 1861 (sic)

It has become my unpleasant task to transmit you the particulars of a horrid affair that occurred at Fort Stanton a short time since, which resulted in the death of Doctor J. M. Whitlock, one of our best and most prominent citizens and an old resident of this Territory. The gentleman from whom I obtained them is perfectly reliable, and was an eye witness of nearly all that transpired. They are as follows:

Doctor Whitlock, in company with several other citizens, was on his way to Fort Stanton to ascertain the condition of a sawmill, which he had erected in that vicinity previous to the evacuation of that post by the troops, and on the way he fell in with a soldier by the name of Lumby (or Lundy) who related the particulars of a fight that had just taken place between a detachment of the New Mexico Volunteers, under command of Captain Graydon and a band of Apache Indians in which two chiefs - Mamulito and Jose Largo - and nine warriors were killed. From the run of his story the ~~Captain~~ Doctor suspected that Captain Graydon had acted treacherously in the affair, and expressed himself to that effect, in which view Lumby concurred. Shortly after the Doctor's arrival at the post, Graydon returned from a scout, on which he killed four Indians and took a few prisoners, and meeting the Doctor at the sutler's store, he shook hands with him in a friendly manner, and left soon after. In a short time he returned, somewhat excited, and inquired of the Dr. if it was true that he had made harsh remarks about him in relation to his fight with the Apaches. The Doctor replied that if he would state the time, and place, where this was said to have occurred, he might be able to answer him satisfactorily. Graydon then gave Lumby as his authority, and the Doctor again demanded date, place, and particulars, to refresh his memory, as he thought he could then

give him the exact words he made use of, on which Graydon left the store, and returned with a note which the Doctor, being occupied, received and thrust into his pocket without a perusal. After waiting a few moments, Graydon asked him if he did not intend to read his note. The Doctor said he did, and would reply to it in the morning. Graydon said ~~he~~ that he wished an immediate answer as he was placed in a peculiar position, and wished no delay in the matter. The Doctor replied that he was busy, that it was late, and he thought he could wait a few hours, until morning, when he would have an explicit answer. Graydon then left the room, but soon after entered an adjoining one, and indulged in considerable abusive language, to which the Doctor paid no attention whatever. On the following morning, as the Doctor was walking through the camp with several friends, he discovered Graydon at a distance and walked up to him. He handed him a note, and they conversed together for ten or fifteen minutes in a quiet tone, after which each went his way, and the lookers-on inferred that everything had been amicably adjusted between them. Shortly after this, however, (about 9 o'clock A.M.) as the Doctor was standing at the camp fire with Colonel Carson and several others, Captain Graydon came up to a low fence that enclosed the Colonel's tent and camp-fire, and handed the Doctor another note, and ~~at~~ at the same time placed ~~his~~ one foot on the lower part of the fence and his elbow on the upper part, resting his face on his hand, while he grasped his pistol with the other, watching the Doctor closely as he read the note. The Doctor smiled as he perused it, when Graydon cried out, "Doctor, if you insult me again in that way, I will horse-whip you." On hearing this the Doctor placed his hand on his pistol also, and both drew them at the same instant, but Graydon commenced retreating, crying out as he did so, "he is going to murder me, he is going to murder me." The Doctor remained motionless, holding his fire, and contenting himself by saying loudly, "Look at the coward, see how he runs." When this taunt reached his ears, Graydon sprang behind a carriage he was passing, and commenced firing at the Doctor with a heavy dragoon revolver, to which the Doctor replied with a light five-shooter.

Graydon emptied one revolver and then drew another, firing it as fast as possible. One of Graydon's shots had taken effect in the Doctor's wrist, (without breaking the bone) and had also inflicted a flesh wound in his side. Another of his shots had glanced on a standard of the carriage and wounded a mule. The Doctor had only been able to fire three shots, as Graydon's person was only partially exposed, and two charges had failed fire; his last shot, however, had struck Graydon in the breast, causing him to cry out, "Oh, he has murdered me, he has murdered me." The Doctor, on finding himself defenceless, while his antagonist still held a loaded pistol in his hand, walked rapidly towards the sutler's store, which was about one hundred yards distant; while Graydon, after standing a few moments by the carriage, began to sink, and was conveyed to his tent.

All this had occurred so rapidly, after affairs had assumed a serious aspect, that no one could interfere to prevent it, and as Graydon was now helpless, and the Doctor had left, it was thought by all that the affair was finally settled. The Doctor, however, not being aware of the condition of his antagonist, reached the sutler's store, and finding a double-barrelled shot-gun loaded, to his hand, he caught it up and started back, wounded and bleeding as he was, to see the matter out.

On Graydon's crying out that he was murdered, his First Lieutenant, Morris, said to his company, "Your Captain has been murdered, let us avenge his death;" and away they went like a pack of bloodhounds for the sutler's store, which they reached just as the Doctor came out, with the gun in his hand. As soon as Lieut. Morris saw him, he cried out, "That's the scoundrel -- kill him, kill him!" At the word they commenced firing. One ball shattered the Doctor's wrist completely, causing the gun to drop from his hand and he retreated back into the store, which he had hardly effected, when a volley was poured in through the door and window of the counting room, into which they soon effected an entrance; but the Doctor had escaped by another outlet, and was evidently endeavoring to reach the Colonel's quarters, where he knew he would find protection; but it was not so to be -- for scarcely had he left the store, when the hue and cry was raised on every side by the yelling hounds, "There he goes, kill him, kill him," while the crack of their rifles came from every quarter, in quick succession, and the bullets fell like hail around him, until he fell exhausted and lifeless in a ditch which he could not leap. Nor did it end there, for volley after volley was poured into his body by the infuriated mob, after life was extinct; even the gallant Lieut. Morris, completing the work he had commenced, by discharging a double-barreled shot-gun into the lifeless body, and ending the noble deed with the boast, that he had finished the d----d scoundrel.

The first intimation that Col. Carson had of this fiendish outbreak was the discharge of firearms at the sutler's store, and the yells of these hell hounds in pursuit of their victim. In an instant he grasped a revolver, leaped over the fence, and at the top of his speed he flew towards the acme of action but it was too late -- the fearful tragedy had closed before he could reach the spot.

Now let us return to Capt. Graydon, who lay in his tent stretched upon a pallet, from which he never expected to rise.

The cure, Father Taliaid, was at his side, to receive his confession and administer spiritual consolation to the dying man. The confession, however, was an open one, and many ears were open eager to drink in every word as it fell from his lips. But who can describe their astonishment when they heard him confess that

he had made an arrangement with his First Lieutenant, Morris, the previous night, that in case the Doctor should get the best of it in the affray he intended to inaugurate the following morning, then Morris was to take his company and kill the Doctor, come what would of it. He also added that he had hopes that by bringing on a difficulty in the presence of Colonel Carson, there would be no need of endangering his life in a personal combat, as he thought the Colonel would interfere and prevent it by ordering his arrest, and by driving the Doctor, (who was a civilian, and had no connection with the army) out of the camp; but matters were precipitated to the shooting point so suddenly that this programme was disarranged; but unfortunately the Lieutenant played out his part but too faithfully. Indeed so well and so quietly had he arranged it, that while the other officers and men were scattered in every direction on fatigue duty, he had contrived to retain his whole company, and in such readiness, that on Grayson's crying out that he was murdered, they were off after the Doctor at once, and reached the sutler's store nearly as soon as he did himself.

The Second Lieutenant, Hubbell, discovered that something was wrong, but could not learn what it meant until too late, and then his efforts to quell the storm were utterly unavailing.

Col. Carson was a warm friend of the Doctor's, and although unable to save his life, he took prompt measures to bring his murderers to justice.

Lieut. Morris, two Americans, and one Mexican, against whom there is conclusive evidence, were instantly arrested, and sent to Santa Fe for trial.

The surgeon, on examining the wound of Capt. Grayson, found that the ball, instead of penetrating the breast, as had been supposed, had come in contact with the ribs and glanced backward, lodging in his side. After extracting the ball the surgeon pronounced him out of danger unless internal hemorrhage should ensue, in which case justice would be deprived of her dues.

On examining the body of Doctor Whitlock it was found to be horribly mangled -- no less than twenty-eight rifle balls and ninety-eight buckshot having entered it, which is not surprising when we consider that nearly one hundred men were engaged in hunting the poor victim down to the death.

His loss will be severely felt in this Territory and by none will it be more sincerely regretted than by the officers at Fort Stanton, who, had they consulted their own feelings only, would have meted punishment to his murderers on the spot, instead of awaiting the tardy steps of justice: as it is, a short respite is given them to prepare for the last great change.

Colonel Carson is actively employed in repairing Fort Stanton and in stirring up the Apaches at the same time and intended taking the field in person on the 15th of this month. Some of them are beginning to sue for peace, as they always do when they think the day of reckoning is near at hand; but it is hoped ~~that~~ they will now receive a lesson that will prevent their yielding again at the first glimpse of temptation.

It is rumored here that the Nabajos (sic) have captured a Government train on the jornada between Fort Craig and Fillmore, killing several men and taking the mules and a large quantity of clothing, but the particulars have not reached ~~me~~ us; it is believed that Gen. Carleton will soon bring them up with a round turn, and we care not how soon.

S. B. WATROUS

NOTE: 15 August 1983. The above article was transcribed from a photostatic copy of the newspaper dated Dec. 5, 1862. Notice that the date-line is Nov. 16, 1861, but it should be 1862.

This article in the St. Louis, Missouri, paper and the "Proceedings of a Board of Officers Convened at Fort Stanton" are the most complete and most accurate versions of Dr. Whitlock's death.

Victor J. Dodier,  
Box 7275,  
Salem, Oregon 97303.