

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY MARCH 18

1384

WEST VIRGINIA PENITENTIARY

Description of Convict _____

Not Eligible for Parole _____ Military Service *None*

No. 21649 Name *Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson* Crime *1st Degree Murder*

County *Harrison* Convicted *12-10-31* Sentenced *12-12-31*

To be Executed _____ Received *3-10-32* Full Term _____ Death _____

Former Imprisonment *State Pen. 1928* Commutation off _____ Death _____

Age *39* Eyes *Blue* Occupation *Stone Keeper* Education *High School* Descent *Caucasian*

Height *5-2 1/2* Hair *Black* Habits *Temp.* Religion *Methodist* Where Born *Holland*

Weight *187* Complexion *Pale* Uses Tobacco *Yes* Married, Single, Widower _____

Personal Property:

*Coat shaped so back of neck,
3/4" faint so above st. elbow sutures,
So on tip little finger on left hand.*

RELATIVE OR FRIEND

Wife: *Louella Powers, 204 Allen Ave,
Chapelsburg, W. Va.*

On March 18, 1932, convicted murderer Harry F. Powers, the "Bluebeard of Quiet Dell," was hanged at the West Virginia Penitentiary at Moundsville.

CSO: SS.8.3, SS.8.4, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (Harrison County Circuit Court Records, State of West Virginia vs. Harry Powers, Ar1965)

Document 1

1. Did the judge award Harry Powers a new trial?
2. What method of execution does the court suggest to carry out Powers's sentence? When was the execution to be completed?
3. How can this document be used for historical research?

Document 2

4. In which county was Powers's trial held?
5. Did Powers face a trial by jury? If so, what constitutional amendment would afford that right?
6. Who was the signatory of this document? Was he representing the state of West Virginia or the defense?

Think Critically: What is the job of a juror? What rules ensure the jury comes to a fair and correct verdict? Describe the role of the judicial branch and its role in our government. Do you think that executions carried out by the state are an appropriate deterrent to violent crime? Why or why not? What additional court documentation would you like to see to learn more about Harry Powers?

State of West Virginia

vs. // Upon an Indictment for a Felony No. 10357
Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson.

This day came again the State by her Prosecuting Attorney as well as the defendant, Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson, in person, who was set to the bar of the Court in the custody of the Sheriff and jailer of this County, and represented by J. E. Law, his attorney; and the motion of the defendant, made at a former day of this court, to set aside the verdict returned by the jury in this action on the 10th day of December, 1931, and to grant him a new trial herein having been argued by counsel and considered by the Court is hereby overruled and said new trial denied; to which ruling and action of the Court in overruling said motion and refusing a new trial herein the said defendant duly excepted.

And it being demanded of the said defendant if there was anything he knew or had to say why the sentence of the Court should not be pronounced against him, and nothing being urged in delay thereof, it is considered and ordered by the Court that he, the said Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson, be hung by the neck until he is dead, and the execution of this judgment to be done upon him, the said Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson, by the Warden of the penitentiary of this State at Moundsville on Friday, the 18th day of March, in the year nineteen hundred and thirty-two; said execution to take place within the walls of said penitentiary according to law.

The Clerk of this court is hereby directed to deliver a copy of this order to W. B. Grimm, Sheriff and jailer of this County, who shall retain the custody of the said Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson, until a properly authorized guard, sent by the Warden of said penitentiary to receive him, shall convey said defendant, Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson, to said penitentiary; and the Clerk shall also notify the

Warden of said penitentiary of the conviction and sentence of the said defendant that he may as soon as practicable be removed and safely conveyed to said institution there to be kept in the manner provided by law until the said 18th day of March, 1932, when the execution of the judgment aforesaid shall be done upon him, the said Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pierson.

And the said defendant expressing a desire to apply for a writ of error and supersedeas to the judgment aforesaid, it is ordered that the execution thereof be, and the same is hereby suspended until the first day of the March Term, 1932 of this court, to enable the said defendant to make such application. and the said defendant hath leave to prepare, tender and have his bill or bills of exception signed, sealed and made part of the record herein within sixty (60) days from the adjournment of the present term of court.

Thereupon the said defendant was remanded to jail in the custody of the Sheriff and jailer of this County.

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA)
)
COUNTY OF HARRISON)

TO-WIT:

IN THE CRIMINAL COURT OF SAID COUNTY, November TERM,
1931.

The Grand Jurors of the State of West Virginia,
in and for the body of the County of Harrison, and now
attending the said Criminal Court, upon their oaths
present that Harry F. Powers, alias Cornelius O. Pearson,
on the ___ day of _____, 1931, in the said County
of Harrison, feloniously, willfully, maliciously, delib-
erately and unlawfully did slay, kill and murder one
Dorothy Prueher Lemke,
against the peace and dignity of the State.

Found upon the testimony of C. A. Duckworth,
duly sworn in open court to testify the truth and sent
before the Grand Jury, this the 10th day of November,
1931.

W. E. Morris
Prosecuting Attorney.

we the jury find the defendant
Harry F. Powers alias, Cornelius O. Pearson
guilty of first degree murder
as charged in with in the
Indictment # 10357

Mathan E. Richards (Foreman)

State of West Virginia

vs (Indictment No. 10357)

(For a Felony)

Harry F Powers, alias
Cornelius O. Pearson

A True BILL

Wm Beel

W. F. Powers
Foreman

The Crime At Quiet Dell



*Ex Libris No. 47
112-13
P. S. Hancock &
Parkerburg*

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PUBLISHED BY
LEIGHTON D. DAVIES AND A. H. GROW
PARKERSBURG, W. VA.

Price 25¢



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