

**Rollins, Martin: Coroner's Inquisition, Russell  
County**

## Metadata

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Title: Rollins, Martin: Coroner's Inquisition, Russell County

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(Virginia Russell to wit:

An requisition taken at the  
fords of Little Cedar creek in  
Libanon District in said  
County on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of  
April 1889 before J. B. Ficker  
Justice of the Peace of said County  
upon a view of the body of Martin  
Rollins Caldwell, there hanging  
dead.) The jurors, sworn to  
enquire, when, how & by what  
means the said Martin Caldwell  
came to his death, upon  
their oaths, do say: That a number  
Martin Rollins came to his death  
at the hands of a mob of men  
who took him from jail of Russell  
Co. by force, conveyed him to  
Little Cedar Creek one mile East  
of Libanon & there hung him  
& shot him until he was dead  
& then left him hanging to a  
tree, & that none of the men  
who engaged in the mob are known  
to us or can be identified,  
the testimony whereof the said J. P.  
& jurors have written out as follows  
This April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1889

W. H. H. H. H. H.

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Virginia Russell to wit  
An inquisition taken at the  
ford of Little Cedar Creek in  
Lebanon district in said  
County on the 3rd day of  
April 1889 before J.B. Fickle  
Justice of the Peace of said County  
upon a view of the body of Martin  
Rollins col'd [colored], there hanging  
dead.) The jurors, sworn to  
enquire, when, how & by what  
means the said Martin Collins  
col'd, came to his death, upon  
their oaths do say: That deceased  
Martin Rollins came to his death  
at the hands of a mob of men  
who took him from jail of Russell  
Co. by force, carryed him to  
Little Cedar Creek one mile east  
of Lebanon & there hung him  
& shot him until he was dead  
& then left him hanging to a  
tree, & that none of the men  
who engaged in the mob are known  
to us or can be identified.  
In testimony whereof the said J.P.  
& jurors have hereto set our hands  
this April 3rd 1889  
B. Fickle JP

E. S. Murray  
G. H. Gray  
E. H. Fields  
J. H. Meade  
C. J. Gray  
J. P. Purcell  
J. J. Korrige

} Jurors

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[struck: E.S. Quincey]  
G.H. Clay  
E.W. Fields  
J.H. Meade } JURORS  
C.J. [Goss?]  
J.P. [Purcell?]  
J.J. [Henritze?]

Common account  
to { Inquest on the  
{ body of Martin Peter  
Piper & P. F. F. F. F.  
1889 Apr 29 - 51

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Commonwealth  
Inquest over the  
body of Martin Rollins  
Before J B [Finkle?] J.P.  
1889 Apl 29th Filed



Cummanworth Suspect  
over Martin Rollins Cold  
Testimony

Seth Hill being duly sworn states

I know nothing about how  
the said Martin Rollins came to his  
death except that a crowd of men  
took him away from the jail of  
Russell Co. on last night, I do  
not know who the men were  
or who any of them were that  
took him from said jail. The  
said Martin Rollins was hanging  
by the neck with a rope to a willow  
tree at the road side on little  
Cedar Creek about 1 mile from  
Lebanon, & was shot some  
5 or six times ~~in the~~ three  
times in the head, twice in the  
body & one in the thigh, & was  
dead. This is all I know  
about it.

M. S. Hark next witness.

I live near when I found  
Rollins hanging just a little  
daylight on the morning of April the  
3<sup>rd</sup>. He was hanging by the neck to a tree  
by a rope, his pants down around his  
feet. There was no person here when  
I found him. He was shot once in  
the thigh, once in the right groin.

Commonwealth Inquest  
over Martin Rollins col'd  
Testimony  
Seth Hill being duly sworn stated  
I know nothing about how  
the said Martin Rollins came to his  
death except that a crowd of men  
took him away from the jail of  
Russell Co. on last night, I do  
not know who the men were  
or who any of them were that  
took him from said jail. The  
said Martin Rollins was hanging  
by the neck with a rope to a willow  
tree at the road side on little  
Cedar Creek about 1 mile from  
Lebanon & was shot some  
5 or six times Three  
times in the head, twice in the  
body & one in the thigh, & was  
dead. This is all I know  
about it.

Mr. S. [Hurt?], next witness  
I live near where I found Martin  
Rollins hanging just a little [after?]  
daylight on the morning of April the  
3rd. He was hanging by the neck to a tree  
by a rope, his pants down around his  
feet. There was no [person?] here when  
I found him. He was shot once in  
the thigh, once in the right groin

once in the right side, once in left side of breasts, once in left side of the craters of breast bone, once in the side of the nose & twice in the forehead & two cuts in right temple. These bones, & was dead & the indications were that he had been dead some time. He was floating in the air. I did not know the man, he was a stranger to me.

In the night of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April about 10 o'clock I heard pistol shot in direction of Lebanon, went up through field in that direction to see what it meant, heard hollering about Lebanon & many shot & much noise, went on - & heard about 40 men coming towards me, & heard an order to some one with an oath not to call on the Lord, the crowd halted near bridge, I was 300 yds from them, & I went to within 125 yds of them - I saw nothing & recognized no one, but heard some man say & then the prisoners came to - & heard not hear the balance, much profanity, the crowd of about 40 came on in this direction & I followed & heard some man say hold on & called Mount Clark's name, nobody answered & I recognized no man's voice. I then heard hold on Sam, no one answered & I recognized no one's voice. I was in this way every body that can unlock a door this makes two I have unlocked, & did not know any of these voices - & went to see where the hanging took place & remained there about one hour & then I heard pistol shot across

once in the right side, once in left side of bowels, once in left side of the centre of breast bone, once in the side of the nose & twice in the forehead & two cuts in right temple cheek bone, & was dead & the [indications?] were that he had been dead some time. He was swinging in the air. I did not know the man, he was a stranger to me.

In the night of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April about 10 o'clock I heard pistol shots in direction of Lebanon, went up through field in that direction to see what it meant, heard hollering about Lebanon, & many shots & much noise, went on- & head about 40 men coming towards me & heard an order to some one with an oath not to call on the Lord, the crowd halted near bridge, I was 300 yds from them, & I went to within 125 yds. of them. I saw nothing & recognized no one, but heard some man say to turn the prisoner over to \_ & could not hear the balance, much profanity, the crowd of about 40 came on in this direction & I followed & heard some man say hold on & called Mont Clark's name, nobody answered & I recognized no man's voice. I then heard hold on [Sim?], no one answered & I recognized no ones voice- next was it [tan't?] every body that can unlock a door This makes two I have unlocked, I did not know any of these voices. The crowd came on to near where the hanging took place & remained there about one hour, then I heard parties [ride across?]

the creek, rode back again to the crowd, heard a voice I did not know say "down this way come baby" & the crowd passed to this side of the creek where I found the body hanging - next think I heard was climb up them John & did not know voice, heard the lumber men say saw no one & knew no voice next I heard a pistol shot, in ordinary succession from one pistol as I thought next thing some one says "quit them before some body gets hurt" did not know voice" this firing took place where I found the body hanging - after this 5 minutes or more shots were fired at same place - then the crowd separated - 13 men passed me where I was by the road side & I think the balance of the crowd went toward Libanon - heard some persons talking on the ground when I went back - I did not recognize any of the 13 men who passed me & did not know any of the voices - that men passed me first before I thought the hanging took place while crowd was on the opposite side of the creek from where he was hung & I took one to be Dr. Barnes from home mark sign & did not know the other.

Law Distrof

I live in jail & had charge of the jail on the night of April 2<sup>nd</sup> - some men come to the jail & about 11 a negro was missing that was in jail & his name is Martin Rallice. I do not know which way they took him & do not know any of the men. I do not know the number but think about 15 went into the jail came toward where negro was hung - the crowd unlocked the door, took the keys from me & I do not know who took the keys from me it was dark - the man hung is same man we had in jail the men who took the keys from me were not disguised - it was about 11 o'clock at night that they took him out - I saw men & he was dead -

Dr. A. Barnes

I know nothing about the case - Mr Hunt was mistaken in seeing men -

Robt. Martin

I know nothing about the case I heard the crowd pass - did not recognize any body - I was at Pex Richardson's thought I recognize one voice I took it to be man Davis - I did not see the crowd - heard that a pistol was heard him as I thought say that you can't come to this country & kill one of our men & live a hallooed - God damn you

L. D. Mother

was on the street & heard a general rumor that the deceased was to be lynched that night - & about 10 o'clock I went up back alley & saw six men & went into hotel office & left

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the creek, rode back again to the crowd, heard a voice I did not know say "down this way every body" & the crowd passed to this side of the creek where I found the body hanging - next think I heard was climb up there John I did not know voice, heard the limbs creaking saw no one, & knew no voices next I heard 5 pistol shots in ordinary succession from one pistol as I thought next thing some one says "quit [that?] before some-body gets [hurt?] did not know voice" this firing took place where I found the body hanging -after this 5 minutes 2 more shots were fired at same place - then the crowd separated - 13 men passed me where I was by the road-side & I think the balance of the crowd went toward Lebanon - Heard some persons talking on the ground when I went back - I did not recognize any of the 13 men who passed me I did not know any of the voices -

Two men passed me first before I thought the hanging took place while crowd was on the opposite side of the creek from where he was hung & I took one to be Dr Burnes from horse [make?] size &c & Did not know the other. [Lan Ristraf?]

I live in jail & had change of the jail on the night of April 2", some men came to the jail & went in & a negro was missing that was in jail & his name is Martin Rollins. I do not know which way they took him & do not know any of the men. I do not know the number but think about 15 went into the jail came toward where negro was hung - The crowd [unlocked?] the door - took the keys from me & I do not know who took the keys from me it was dark - The man hung is same man we had in jail The men who took the keys from me were not disguised - It was about 11 o'clock at night that they took him out - I saw man & he was dead -

Dr O. S. Burnes

I know nothing about the case - Mr  
Hurt was mistaken in seeing me -  
Robt Martin  
I know nothing about the case  
I heard the crowd pass - did not recognized  
any body - I was at Peg Richardson's [draught?]  
I recognized one voice I took it to be [illegible]  
Davis - I did not see the crowd - heard shots  
of pistol & heard him as I thought say that  
you can't come to this country & kill one of  
our men & live & hallowed [i.e., hollered] God-damn [gun?]  
L. A. [Mothena?]  
was on the street & heard a general  
rumor than the deceased was to be lynched last  
night - & about 10 oclock I went up back ally &  
saw six men & went into hotel office [& told?]

By Campbell & he & I went into the Court House  
& heard them men come then demand the keys & had  
a key & heard shooting in jail & heard several hallow  
& saw crowds of men come out through the yard &  
heard several hallow at the gate "O Lord" - dark  
in Court House & when I got out the Court  
was opposite Court office & I heard John called  
over or twice - did not know voice & went  
home - the crowd stayed in front of my house, &  
I thought there was 30 to 40 men, cursing  
& saying what they were going to do - about  
half past 2 o'clock I found the deceased  
hanging & was dead - I do not know any  
of the men - recognizing no one

J. W. Meade.

B. J. Wagon - M. C. Clark left Lebanon yesterday  
the second of April 1889 at 12 o'clock for Knoxville  
Tenn. & I am satisfied he was not in the County  
of Russell last night -

J. W. Meade

I do not know who took the deceased from  
jail & hung him it was dark - I could not  
positively recognize any one.



Esq Campbell & he & I went into the Court House  
 & heard these men come there demand the keys & heard  
 a [lick?] & heard shooting in jail & heard deceased hollow  
 & saw crowd of men come out through the yard  
 heard deceased hollow at the gate "O Lord" - dark  
 in court house & when I got out the crowd  
 was opposite News office & I heard John [called?]  
 once or twice. - did not know voice - I went  
 home - the crowd stoped in front of my house, &  
 I thought there was 35 to 40 men, cursing  
 & saying what they were going to do - about  
 half past 2 oclock & found the deceased  
 hanging & was dead- I do not know any  
 of the men - recognized no one -  
 [struck: J. N. Meade]

B. J. [Wysor?] - Mr C Clark left Lebanon yesterday  
 the second of April 1889 at 12 o'clock for Knoxville  
 Tenn - I am satisfied he was not in the county  
 of Russell last night -

J. N. Meade

I do not know who took deceased from  
 jail & hung him it was dark - I could not  
 postively recognize any one.

Contributions Message

Bill, LVA, Mallory Todd, Jed Temple, Gianluca De Fazio and The Library of Virginia