



2007 Ghost Walk

Ghosts played by Jim Wellington, Gary Yoggy, Christine Gill and Joe Edkin

The Great Love Story of Samuel Clemens and Olivia Langdon

My name is Katie Leary. You probably don't know who I was, and that is all right with me. I never sought fame or fortune, although I did attain some measure of both due to my connection with one of the most famous families of my time: that of Mr. Samuel Clemens (known better by his professional name of Mark Twain) and Miss Olivia Langdon. I was Miss Langdon's maid when Mr. Clemens courted her and I stayed at her side until the day she died. I remained with Mr. Clemens and their daughters for years after that.

I'm sure you are all familiar with Mr. Clemens and his writing. I'm not here to tell you about that. Nor am I going to dwell on the unhappiness that befell Mr. Clemens and Miss Langdon. Every family must experience sadness, and Mr. Clemens was not immune: he outlived his brother, his wife, his son, and two of his three daughters. No, let us not spend our short time together this evening talking of tragedy. Instead, let me tell you one of the greatest love stories of my time, the story of the eternal devotion of Mr. Samuel Clemens held for the lovely Miss Olivia Langdon and their four children.

The first time Samuel Clemens came to Elmira, it was at the invitation of Charley Langdon to spend a few days with the Langdon family. Mr. Clemens met Mr. Langdon aboard the *Quaker City*, a steamship that took them on a five month cruise to the Mediterranean. Mr. Clemens liked Mr. Langdon well enough, but he was completely infatuated with Mr. Langdon's sister, Olivia.

Mr. Clemens' affections for Miss Langdon began onboard the Quaker City when Mr. Langdon showed him a miniature portrait of his sister during one of their all night poker games. One look at Miss Langdon's beautiful face was all that was required to stir Mr. Clemens's ardor. When Mr. Clemens returned to New York City, he had the opportunity to meet Ms. Langdon in person three times prior to that fateful trip: once at a hotel where the Langdons were staying during a trip to Manhattan, then at a lecture given by the author Mr. Charles Dickens, and finally at a New Year's Day party. With every meeting, Mr. Clemens' affections grew deeper. The invitation to visit the Langdons at their home was just the opportunity he sought to woo Miss Langdon. And when he arrived here on August 22nd, 1868, that is exactly what he set out to do.

What a world of difference there was between the two: Mr. Clemens started life poor out west. Olivia was the daughter of millionaire Jervis Langdon, a man who'd made his fortune in coal and was Elmira's richest man -- richer even than the Arnot family. Mr. Clemens's father was a slave owner, who'd abused his slaves and helped send abolitionists to prison. Miss Langdon's mother and father were dedicated to the end of slavery and used Mr. Langdon's coal trains as part of the underground railroad to help slaves escape from their owners. Mr. Clemens's family were distant and, as Mr. Clemens remarked, would only kiss one another if one of them was on their deathbed. The Langdons were openly affectionate and were not embarrassed to publicly demonstrate their fondness for each other. Mr. Clemens was a robust man who learned to live rough in the west and traveled around the world. At twenty-two, Miss Langdon was ten years younger than Mr. Clemens and very fragile due to an illness that had confined her to bed.

But it was all these differences that drew Mr. Clemens to Miss Langdon. Miss Langdon was drawn to Mr. Clemens, excited by the life he led and the places he'd visited, places she had only

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read about. With a keen interest in books, Miss Langdon was easily charmed by the cigar-smoking, hard-drinking writer.

During his first visit to the Langdon home, Mr. Clemens found an opportunity to speak to Miss Langdon alone and declare his love for her, asking her to marry him. She was tempted, make no mistake, but she was a woman of great common sense. Having spent only a few days with him, she was compelled to decline his proposal. But she did say that the two may correspond with each other -- but as brother and sister, with his letters sealed within envelopes addressed to Mr. Charley Langdon to keep them from the prying eyes of postal workers.

Over the next seventeen months, Mr. Clemens wrote Miss Langdon 184 letters. During that time, Mr. Clemens supported himself by giving lectures about his voyage on the Quaker City. Any time his missives became too ardent, Miss Langdon would rebuff him. Once, when he wrote that he'd made "quite a pleasant addition to the family circle" during his visit, she replied that by staying two full weeks, he'd overstayed his welcome. This response sent Mr. Clemens into a state of despair, fearing she would never write nor speak to him again. But, the truth was that Miss Langdon was as drawn to Mr. Clemens as he was to her. Soon, she wrote him again and sent him a photograph, rekindling his hope that they would one day be married.

Mr. Clemens dedicated himself to impressing Miss Langdon and her entire family. To this end, he offered to give a lecture in Elmira and donate the proceeds to Charley Langdon's volunteer fire department. The Langdons could not refuse such generosity, and as sure as I am standing here today, I think Miss Langdon was anxious to see Mr. Clemens again despite her protestations. Mr. Clemens was invited to spend Thanksgiving of 1869 at the Langdon home. While he was here, he pressed and pressed Miss Langdon. Twice more did she refuse him before she finally accepted his proposal. Mr. Clemens was jubilant, but he still had to convince Miss Langdon's father, Mr. Jervis Langdon to give his blessing.

Mr. Clemens continued touring and giving lectures and writing in hopes of proving himself worthy to marry Mr. Langdon's only daughter. All this time, Mr. Clemens and Miss Langdon exchanged letters regularly. During this time, she undertook it to reform his ways: she wanted him to quit drinking, quit smoking, quit swearing, and to become a Christian. While other men might have taken offense, Mr. Clemens found it endearing. He did try to comply with her wishes, and for a time he was successful, but drinking, smoking, and swearing were so deeply ingrained in his soul that he could not give any of them up for long.

Still he was forthright about his past sins and present failings. As time progressed, Mr. Langdon became increasingly fond of Mr. Clemens, respecting the younger man's candor about his past failings and seeming determination to change his ways. On February 4th, 1869, he gave his blessing for Mr. Clemens to wed Miss Langdon. Mr. Clemens presented her with a simple gold band, the best he could afford given how deeply in debt he was, and she formally accepted him. But there would still be no wedding until Mr. Clemens had a steady job and a permanent home as the life of a touring lecturer was not suitable. Mr. Langdon tried to interest Mr. Clemens in the family coal business, but after more than an hour one evening of trying to convince Mr. Clemens, it was apparent that the writer had other interests. Finally, in an effort to make a



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respectable man of Mr. Clemens, Mr. Langdon loaned the young man \$25,000 with which to buy part ownership of a newspaper in Buffalo, New York.

For the next year, Mr. Clemens would travel regularly between Buffalo and Elmira, bringing with him the proofs of the books he was writing, *The Innocents Abroad*, a manuscript based upon his travels on the *Quaker City*. Miss Langdon would go over the galleys on behalf of her future husband. Throughout their life together, Miss Langdon would review all of his work, offering both praise and useful suggestions.

The Innocents Abroad was published in July of 1869 under the pen name of Mark Twain and would become one of the fastest selling books to that date. Only two others outsold it: Mr. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Its success allowed Mr. Clemens to pay off all his debts and secured his literary reputation. His plain-written prose was embraced by both critics and common readers.

With his future now seemingly settled, Mr. Clemens and Miss Langdon were married in the parlor of the Langdon family home on February 2nd, 1870. The wedding party then went by train to Buffalo where Mr. Clemens believed they would stay in a boarding house. What really happened was that the entire wedding party was taken by sleighs to a brick home that Mr. Jervis Langdon presented as a wedding gift to his daughter and new son-in-law.

For the next thirty-four years, Mr. and Mrs. Clemens would remain husband and wife, and best friends. They experienced wonderful financial successes and devastating setbacks. They endured the death of their firstborn son, Langdon, and their eldest daughter Susy. They were forced to live abroad during Mr. Clemens's bankruptcy. But through it all, their love and mutual respect that sustained them. Despite her best efforts, Mrs. Clemens could never stop Mr. Clemens from smoking or drinking. While she never herself took up smoking, Mrs. Clemens would drink a medicinal glass of ale every evening, so it would appear Mr. Clemens was a more persuasive force than she, at least on the subject of the benefits of alcohol.

Mr. Clemens was devastated when Mrs. Clemens died in 1904. She was buried her in Woodlawn cemetery in the town where she was born. Mr. Clemens never remarried as his great love for his beloved Livy did not die with her. When he himself died six years later, his body was buried next to hers.



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A Condensed, If Biased, History of The Arnots of Elmira

Anyone who has lived in Elmira any length of time knows the name Arnot: John Arnot, Stephen Arnot, John Arnot, Jr., Matthias Arnot, Aurelia Arnot, Fannie Arnot, Marianna Arnot (later Ogden). Merchants, politicians, industrialists, bankers, benefactors. It seemed in the second half of the 19th century, you couldn't swing a dead cat in Elmira without hitting an Arnot, the patron saints of this city! They were instrumental in creating the Chemung Canal and making Elmira a nexus for multiple railroad lines. They built the Chemung Canal Bank into the institution it later became and were instrumental in the growth of the Elmira Gas Light Co.

But how many of you know my name? Hmmmm? How many of you remember Seymour Lowman? I lived here in Elmira for many years. I was involved in politics. I served as the Lieutenant Governor of the great state of New York. I even served in President Herbert Hoover's cabinet. But do you see my name on any streets or hospitals or art museums in this city?

Ah, you don't want to hear about me, do you? I can see it in your faces. My name doesn't adorn a shopping mall. No, you want to hear about the Arnots. Well, fine. If the only way any of you are going to remember my name is because I knew the Arnots and am here to tell the story, then so be it. I'll tell you their story.

John Arnot, Sr. and his children were remarkable individuals. I don't deny that. In fact, you could say that John Arnot's story was the American dream—an immigrant who made his fortune and his mark. His children carried on the tradition, but along the way faced great tragedies. It's the kind of story that sells well in politics and why you're still talking about the Arnot clan even when my name warrants only a passing line in history.

John Arnot, Sr., was born in Perthshire, Scotland, on September 25th, 1789. He and his family emigrated to the United States in 1801 and settled near Albany, New York. In 1819, John moved south to the Town of Elmira and established a mercantile business named John Arnot & Company. Most business was done on a barter basis, and John Arnot & Company would trade necessities, such as dry goods and cloth, for farm produce, which he would warehouse until it was time to transport the goods to Manhattan. Twice a year, the long journey was made between Elmira and Manhattan. Goods would be carried by wagon to Seneca Lake. Then they would be carried by boat across Seneca Lake to the Erie canal to the Hudson River to New York City. The goods would be sold or traded in order to secure new merchandise for his store that would then have to make the arduous trek back upstate. It was a slow, inefficient system, but John Arnot, Sr., was a shrewd businessman and he made it work, becoming one of Elmira's richest men.

When John Arnot and Company was founded in 1819, the closest bank was in Ithaca, New York and moving goods in and out of Elmira was extremely difficult. In 1833 two events occurred that would propel John Arnot, Sr. to even greater heights as a successful businessman: construction began on the Chemung Canal and the Chemung Canal Bank was founded. Arnot was one of the original stockholders and directors of the bank. Completion of the canal made moving goods to and from New York City easier and more profitable, and Arnot's fortune grew. After serving a one year as president of Chemung Canal Bank in 1842, Arnot was named cashier by the succeeding president. Now that's where the real power was—it was the cashier who



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actually managed the day to day business of the bank. In that role, Arnot was directly involved with every public effort to expand commerce and industry in Elmira.

To some, Arnot was a visionary. To others, he was an opportunist. Either way, there's no denying the impact he had on the growth of Elmira. One of the most foresighted projects he joined was the construction of the Erie Railroad. As the fourth president of the Erie Railroad, he personally conducted the negotiations to extend the line from Bingamton to Elmira. Of course, what was good for John Arnot and Company was good for the town too. He then became involved with the Chemung Railroad Company that provided a line from Elmira to Watkins Glen.

In 1852, John Arnot bought control of The Elmira Gas Light Company. The gas company used bituminous coal to manufacture gas which was used for lighting throughout the town. Improvements he initiated made to the gas company the most reliable service in the country—at least, that's what he'd say if you asked him, and there were many who agreed. In 1864, yet another railroad line, the Northern Central, came to Elmira providing transportation south to Baltimore and Washington, DC. More important to Arnot and his three sons was that the line passed through Northern Pennsylvania, providing them easier access to the mines that provided the coal to their gas company.

It was in 1857, though, that Mr. Arnot achieved the goal he truly sought—to become the president and sole owner of the Chemung Canal Bank. For the next 46 years, the Chemung Canal Bank remained a private bank, controlled by John Arnot and his sons, Stephen, who was name vice-president, John, Jr., who was named cashier, and Matthias, who was made assistant cashier.

John Arnot, Sr., was a powerful, ambitious, and wealthy man in Elmira, and that made him a natural candidate for Congress. He was never interested in partisan politics, having been at various times a Whig, a Republican, and a Democrat. The only office he ever held was an honorary seat on the School Board. While publicly-spirited, especially if it suited his own ends, he never sought elected office. That did not stop the Democrats from nominating him for Congress in 1858, an election he narrowly lost. No, it fell to his sons to become the politicians. John Arnot, Sr., was more than happy to control things from inside the boardroom. John Arnot, Sr., died in 1871, and was fortunate not to have lived to see the tragedies that would be fall his family.

Stephen Arnot was John's oldest son. Stephen was a weak child—at least physically weak—but he was strong in spirit and ambition. At the age of 22, he took an active interest in running the Chemung Canal Bank, becoming assistant cashier. When dad took control of the gas company, he placed Stephen in control of day-to-day operations.

But running a bank and a public utility wasn't enough for young Stephen. He wanted more power and he found it within the Democratic Party and Tammany Hall. Stephen was elected to several consecutive terms on Elmira's Common Council and served as Elmira's mayor in 1883 when David B. Hill had to leave office when he was elected Lieutenant Governor of New York.



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Stephen had his father's business acumen, and when the Northern Central railroad came to Elmira, Stephen used it to build their coal interests in Pennsylvania. In fact, the village of Arnot, Pennsylvania, was named after Stephen.

One of Stephen's greatest legacies to Elmira was his avid interest in the Fire Department. It was because of his personal fascination with firefighting and his patronage that the Elmira Fire Department made some of its greatest advances.

On Saturday, November 14, 1884, Stephen put in his usual hours at the bank. That evening at home, he became ill. Four days later, he died.

It was up to John, Jr., and Matthias to carry on the family name and tradition.

John, Jr., was definitely up to the task. Like his father and older brother, John, Sr., was a brilliant businessman. He, too, had a drive for politics. He served on the Board of Education and on the village's Board of Trustees from 1859 to 1862. When Elmira became a city in 1864, John, Jr., served as its first mayor. He was elected mayor two more times, in 1870 and 1874.

John, Jr., also accomplished something his father did not: he was elected to Congress as a Democrat in 1882. In 1884, he was re-elected as the candidate for both the Democratic and Republican parties.

John, Jr., was involved in the Elmira Gas Light Company and the Chemung Canal Bank. There's no telling how much he might have accomplished in business or politics if his life had not been tragically cut short, just like his brother's. One morning in 1884, he opened the doors of the Chemung Canal Bank in order to get ready for the day's business. Suddenly there was a gas explosion, and John, Jr. was knocked across the room, suffering extensive burns. He never fully recuperated, and was never again able to participate in business or politics. He died on November 20, 1886, two years and two days to the date that his older brother died.

John, Sr.'s youngest son, Matthias, was never as interested in business or politics as his father or brothers, but as the last surviving Arnot man, it fell to him to take control of the bank and his family's many financial interests. While he did so adequately, his true interests were literature and art. He amassed a large private collection of art that hung in his home. Upon his death in 1910, he bequeathed his collection and his home to the people of Elmira in order to establish a public museum, the Arnot Art Museum, where his private collection of art still hangs.

It wasn't just John, Sr.'s boys who helped shape Elmira's destiny. His eldest daughter, Marianna, was one of the city's greatest benefactors. She married William B. Ogden, one of the founders of Chicago. While she moved to Chicago and lived there, she never severed her connection to Elmira. Even at a distance, her benefactions to Elmira were numerous.

She had a hand in the growth of the Industrial School. An outgrowth of the Murphy temperance movement, the school was established to help pledge-takers to keep their pledges and assist their family. The school began as a sewing school where garments were remade for deserving families. As it grew, it also furnished meals and provisions for poor children. A gift of \$5,000



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from Mrs. Ogden put the school on a firm financial footing when it moved into a new building in 1884.

Mrs. Ogden also provided the funds for the Arnot Memorial Chapel attached to Trinity Church.

However, her greatest gift to Elmira was the establishment of Arnot Ogden Memorial Hospital. Using money inherited from her late husband, Mrs. Ogden had the hospital built at her own expense, the first and only hospital of its scope in this area at the time. Upon its completion, she turned the hospital over to the people of Elmira.

Yes, the Arnots were prime movers and shakers in Elmira. Their dedication to public service (and their private fortunes) helped transform a small town into the city it became. Their names can be seen on many building and institutions throughout the county. Deservedly so, I suppose.

But that doesn't mean you should spare a thought or two for me one in a while: Seymour Lowman. With all the construction happening in the area, perhaps you could name a mall after me to honor the work I did for your city. No? I didn't think so...



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One More Trial of the Century

I was wondering when you'd get here. So, you've heard the touching love story of Mr. Samuel Clemens and Miss Olivia Langdon (I knew them, you know). And you got yourselves a history lesson about the Arnot clan (I knew them too). But I'll bet love stories and history lessons are not why you're walking through a cemetery on a dark October night listening to ghosts. No, you want hear something shocking and salacious. Something with sex and blood, a murder trial or two, a daring escape from jail, and an execution, all topped off by a media circus?

Oh, don't look at me that way. I know what sells newspapers. It's not the agony aunts, or the comics, or the recipes, or the stories about brave boy scouts who help rescue kittens from trees -- no, no, no -- it's all about scandals and murder and celebrity gossip. I should know. My name is Frank McGovern and I was a writer for the Elmira *Advertiser*, one of several papers published in this city in the 1880s.

My job was to be a keen observer of human nature and report what I saw. It's something I've continued to do since I shuffled off the mortal coil. It amuses me how the living today all talk about how society has changed -- how much courser, rougher, more violent it has become. How society has become so obsessed with grisly murders, the twisted individuals who commit them, and the trials where bookies takes bets on the jury verdicts. It seems every couple months, there's a new trial of the century.

Every generation thinks things have gotten worse and look for something to blame: the internet, video games, television, rock music, comic books, penny dreadfuls, nickelodeons, pool halls -- it's always something. But that's the point -- it's *always* something, no matter when you lived or died. You watch appalled -- and titillated -- by Phil Spector or Robert Blake or Andrea Yates or OJ Simpson or the Menendez Brothers or Susan Smith and you ask yourselves how your world has come to this. What short memories the living have. What about Ted Bundy or Charlie Manson or Claus von Bulow or Josef Mengele or Baby Face Nelson or John Dillinger or Bonnie and Clyde or Leopold and Loeb or Jesse James or Lizzie Bordon or Oliver Cromwell or Vlad the Impaler or Caligula? No matter how far back in time you go, there will always be murderers and people -- people like you and me -- who are fascinated by their stories. It's not a modern phenomenon, no matter what we try to tell ourselves. All you have to do is go to the Steele Memorial Library and go through the archives of *The Advertiser* and see how our pages were filled with stories of murder and mayhem that took place right here in this town. I know. I wrote a lot of those stories.

I'm here to tell you the most famous local murder story of my time, one that is going to sound like you could have followed it on CNN or Fox News or MSNBC. In fact, if it happened in your time, you can be sure it would have been able to follow every step of it on Court TV and then watched it as a made for TV movie. If nothing else, it will prove to you that human nature never changes. Only the names change, but it has nothing to do with protecting the innocent. It's a the story of yet one more trial of the century, and it took place right here in Elmira as the Northeast watched, transfixed, devouring every new fact, every new twist.

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We're standing by the grave of Katie Broederhofs. Katie came to the United States from Germany in 1878. She worked as domestic for one Mrs. Listman who lived at number 520 East 89th Street in New York City. On December 31st, 1883, she left Mrs. Listman's home with a trunk containing her wedding trousseau, intending to marry Mr. William Menken in the city of Baltimore. Katie had met William that summer at a picnic for German immigrants. They began a courtship that led to their engagement. Before leaving New York City, Katie and William visited Katie's sister Mary on New Year's Day, 1884, to talk about their wedding plans. Mary was told that the couple planned to remain in Baltimore where Mr. Menken intended to open a bar. That wasn't Menken's real plan...

On January 2nd, Katie and William boarded a train, not for Baltimore, but for Elmira, New York. Why Elmira? Because it was all part of Meken's evil scheme. He knew the city of Elmira because he had been an inmate at the reformatory, having served a sentence for robbery. By telling Mary (and others) that he and Katie were on their way to Baltimore, no one would think to look for them here. He conveniently made sure they missed their intended train for Baltimore, but told Katie that they could take the soon-departing train to Elmira where they could board another train for Baltimore. Katie loved Menken and felt she had no reason to doubt his word or intentions, so she happily agreed to his suggestion. Her trusting and innocent nature played right into his hand. As they got on the train to Elmira, he was certain he could carry out his plot and leave the country before anyone was the wiser.

Katie and William arrived in Elmira on the morning of Thursday, January 3rd. They stayed at Charles Snyder's hotel. After resting, they had dinner at the hotel then went for a walk. The next day, they made walking tour of the city, stopping at hotels and bars along the way to take meals and drink hot whiskeys. Menken made sure that Katie drank more alcohol with every stop they made.

To hear Mr. Menken's version of the story, the one he gave Police Chief Little, Katie had consumed too much alcohol and was unsteady on her feet. As they walked up Walnut Street in the late afternoon, Katie had occasion to lose her footing and grab onto her companion's arm. When he asked her if she was hurt, she replied, "No, never mind." As darkness fell, they continued walking towards Carr's Corners. They turned right onto Bancroft Road. Mr. Menken told police chief Levi Little that as they crossed the Heller Creek bridge, Katie once again lost her footing and fell off the side of the bridge. He went down immediately to see if she was all right, but she wasn't moving. He thought she was dead and removed the jewelry from her body, including her bracelets, earrings, finger ring, neck chain, and breast pin. He'd considered telling the neighbors about the accident, but not wanting his name in the papers, he simply returned to the hotel. He collected his and her things -- including her life savings: the \$150 in cash she had brought with her to start their new lives together -- bought himself a cigar, then went to the Erie train station where he purchased a ticket back to New York City. Really! I ask you -- even if you could take Mr. Menken's account as gospel truth, what kind of villain would have left the poor young girl lying -- alive or dead -- under a bridge on a cold January night, remove the jewelry from her body, then casually pack his bags, take her money, buy a cigar, and get on the next train out of town?

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Of course, his version of the story wasn't the truth as our forensic scientists testified in court. What? You thought forensics started with *C.S.I.* or, for people with longer memories, *Quincy, M.E.*? Hardly. Technology may have changed, but science has been applied (and, admittedly, misapplied) to solve crimes for centuries.

Ah, but I'm getting ahead of myself. Let us turn our attention back to January 5th, 1885 as this is where I come into the story. That morning, Katie Broederhofs's dead body was found near the Norton farm, nearly frozen under Heller's bridge by three young rabbit hunters. In fact, the place her body was found isn't far from here. It always gives me the shivers just to think about it.

The girl's body was a horrible sight -- I know, as I arrived here with the police shortly after her body was reported found. Katie had two bruises on the front of her head and a bloody wound on the back of her head. Her body was partially frozen in the creek's icy water. In fact, it took the police over two hours using axes and crowbars to extricate the poor girl's body from the ice. She'd obviously been lying there while the water froze around and over her. Everybody's first thought was that she had fallen off the bridge, hit her head, and died. The truth was much more sinister than that. Forensic examination of the body revealed that she had received a blow to the head. There were marks on her neck that looked like fingers, marks that indicated someone had tried to strangle her. But the most egregious thing was it was neither the blow nor the throttling that killed her. Whoever attacked her hid her body under a bridge where she slowly froze to death! Thanks to the vigilant reporting of yours truly, the good citizens of Elmira were outraged and they demanded justice for the poor girl. Her sad story was reported in papers throughout the northeast, including *The New York Times*.

The girl's body was taken to the morgue, and on January 6th, a crowd massed outside, drawn by morbid curiosity. Her body was misidentified twice before authorities from New York City brought Katie's sister, Mary, to Elmira to identify and claim the body. At that time, she was able to tell Chief Little more about her sister's relationship with William Menken, although she referred to the man as William Meyer. She also informed the police of the jewelry her sister was wearing when she left New York -- jewelry that was neither on her person nor at the hotel. Her sister's money was also missing. Of course, those of you who have been listening carefully already know what happened to the jewelry and the cash.

Chief Little's investigation filled in some of the gaps. He learned that Katie and Menken had stayed at Charley Snyder's hotel. He learned of their long walk through the city on the 4th. He'd learned of an exchange Menken had with Lizzie Kelley at Kelley's saloon where Menken asked if anyone was living on the Norton farm. He'd located three witnesses, guard from the reformatory, who had seen Menken walking along Bancroft Avenue with Katie. He'd discovered that Menken had departed from Elmira on a train headed for New York City the night Katie died. Menken was found on January 10th at his sister's home on Long Island. On his person was a large sum of money, and jewelry -- just like Mary had described to the police -- was found in the man's room. Menken was arrested and brought back to Elmira. He admitted that he and Katie were engaged, told the police Katie had given him the money and the jewelry for safe keeping until they could go to Baltimore to be married, but he denied having ever come to Elmira with her, insisting that the eyewitnesses who claimed to have seen him in Miss Broederhofs's company were mistaken.

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However, absolute proof of Mr. Menken's visit to Elmira was discovered a month later. Katie's trunk -- the one containing her wedding trousseau -- was found in New York City. It had been left abandoned at the lodging house of Mr. E. Reich. Mr. Reich, who had been following the story in *The New York Times*, realized that the trunk, which had been left behind by a lodger in January, might be the evidence that the police sought in order to bring Katie's murderer to justice. Mr. Reich immediately informed the police that he was in possession of the trunk. Inspectors examined it and determined its authenticity. It still had its tags showing that it had been carried by train from New York City to Elmira and back again. Mr. Reich then identified Mr. Menken from a photograph, conclusively stating that Menken was the man who'd left the trunk behind. Of course, just as Mary had thought the killer's name was Meyer, Mr. Reich knew the man as Mr. Meinege with a "g."

(And, for those of you keeping score, Menken's brother told authorities that their family name was Meineke with a "k." With all these names, our readers began having trouble keeping track of Menken's identity. So did I. If you look at my paper's reporting at the time, we alternated between calling the villain Menken and Meineke. By the end, we decided to stay with "Menken" and that is what I intend to do for the rest of this story.)

With proof positive that he had been in Elmira and had been in possession of Miss Broaderhoff's trunk, Menken had no choice but to change his story. He confessed to Chief Little that he had been in Elmira and that's when he spun his fanciful tale of Katie having accidentally fallen off the bridge and hitting her head. Menken faced the grand jury in March and was indicted for murder.

Menken's trial was held in Elmira, and began on Tuesday, April 22nd, 1884. Despite all I've been saying about how similar my time was to yours, there is one huge difference. Justice was much swifter in my day. In your time, it might have taken years for Menken to come to trial, and the trial to last months. Not so in my day. Menken was brought before a jury three months after he was arrested, and just one month after being indicted. The trial lasted four days from opening statements to final verdict. It was a media circus. Reporters from all over the state and the northeast came to Elmira to watch the proceedings. The gallery was filled with women and men, all wanting to witness justice take its course. Based on all of the evidence presented, the jury had no problem rendering a verdict. Menken was found guilty of murder and the following week, he was sentenced to be hanged on June 10th.

Menken's lawyer, Judge Smith, filed and was granted an appeal. Menken's second trial was held in November of 1884 (the same month that Stephen Arnot died, you may recall) in the city of Binghamton. It was argued that a change of venue would be the only way to guarantee Menken a fair trial. The end result was exactly the same. His conviction was upheld and he was sentenced to hang, with his execution set for Wednesday, January 21st, 1885.

But there's more to this story... On Wednesday, January 14th, around 11pm, William Menken escaped from jail! The guard at the jail had left Mr. Menken untended while he sought his uncle who was scheduled to relieve him for the night. Upon returning to the cell, he discovered that Menken was missing. The alarm was sounded, but Menken was nowhere to be found. It was not



2007 Ghost Walk

Ghosts played by Jim Wellington, Gary Yoggy, Christine Gill and Joe Edkin

until Saturday night that Menken was found by a farmer in Owego, New York. The police were summoned and Menken was returned to custody.

Wednesday, January 21st passed, and Menken was still alive. Judge Smith had petitioned the court for another appeal. At the last minute, the execution was stayed until the court decided whether Menken should be granted another retrial. The request for the third trial was denied, and the hanging was set for July 2nd, 1885.

On that day, a large crowd gathered on the Courthouse plateau to see justice finally done. Menken, who was given a large dose of morphine and a glass of whiskey. He staggered from the jail to the gallows. Asked if he had a final statement, Menken continued to proclaim his innocence. Unmoved, Sheriff Brown placed the noose around the murderer's neck, lowered a black hood over Menken's face, and proceeded with the hanging. Sixteen minutes later, Menken was proclaimed dead and Katie's murder was avenged.

I'm sure if we had movies or TV at the time, I might have been able to sell her story to one studio or another and made my fortune. Instead, she lays here at peace, nearly forgotten, and I still tell her story to anyone who stops long enough to listen.