

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA



Giuseppe Rosario Ficarrotta (1868 – 1909)

Giuseppe Rosario Ficarrotta and Family

Giuseppe Rosario Ficarrotta immigrated to the United States in the 1880's. Like many Italian immigrants he found work in the sugar cane fields of St. Cloud, Florida. At the time St. Cloud had the largest sugar mill in the country. The work was hard but Giuseppe was able save enough money to send for his wife and daughter in Sicily to join him in the United States.

When Giuseppe's wife Nicola Pirello arrived in Tampa, he was dismayed to learn that an overbearing aunt convinced Nicola to sail to America and kept their child Paolo in hope that he would return. Paolo would not see her father until she was 16 when he was able to send a cousin to force the aunt to return Paola to her parents in Tampa.

Giuseppe had established a bakery at 636 Main Street and his wife shared some of her talents of cooking. One "edible piece" of history which was handed down is her recipe for Sicilian Meat Scachatta. Her granddaughter, Florence Ferlita won recognition from a Tampa Tribune Food Contest in the 1950's where it was published. To this day it is a part of most family celebrations. The bakery was later sold it to Rosario Ferlita a future father-in-law to his daughters.

Giuseppe built a new life in America from working sugar cane fields in St. Cloud to becoming a prominent member of West Tampa, as reported in the Tampa Morning paper, Giuseppe Ficarrotta was a wealthy businessman, who was well liked in the community. He lived on Green Street (according to a 1920 US Census the address was 518 Green Street) in West Tampa and operated the G. Ficarrotta & Co. Wholesale Feed Store at 191 -193 Main Street, was Vice-President of West Tampa B&L Association and a member of the West Tampa City Council.

On April 10, 1909 the family's two decades of hard work the family suffered the ultimate tragedy when Giuseppe was assassinated on a Saturday of Easter weekend. Giuseppe was buried in the City's Woodlawn Cemetery and later moved to a cemetery on Florida Avenue which is now the site of Sacred Heart Academy. Giuseppe's wife refused to relocate his remains a third time when the cemetery was moved to build the school. The Ferlita – Ficarrotta mausoleum lies within the children's playground and the last person entombed was Giuseppe's daughter Vincenta Rose Ficarrotta the wife of Giuseppe Ferlita

The family research of Giuseppe Ficarrotta's assassination is still ongoing. During the time when Giuseppe's surviving children were alive, it always pained them to recall that black day, even after decades of healing. Much of the knowledge of this killing now comes from newspapers and other recorded facts. We are happy to share this information on this web site through various period newspaper accounts.

Giuseppe Ficarrotta's children believed one of the killers was Castenzo Ficarrotta (no relations) that was lynched in 1910 during Tampa's Cigar Strike of that year. Castenzo was charged for the murder, but he was never successfully accused of the killing so the murder was never solved.

[Following pages are from period newspapers of 1909 – 1910]

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 1909

DREAD "BLACK HAND" SNATCHES AWAY LIFE OF FICARROTTA * AT VERY GATE OF HIS WEST TAMPA HOME

Assassins Lay in Wait to Blow his Brains Out – Leave Guns in Street and Flee toward River For Safety

NO CLUE FOUND

WEST TAMPA IN FURORE OVER SECOND ASSASSINATION THIS YEAR

Officers Arrive on Scene Immediately, But Only Evidence They Find is Dead Man and Empty Guns on Grounds

Returning to his home on Green street, West Tampa, after making a trip to the City, G. Ficarrotta, the well known wholesale grocer and member of the West Tampa City Council, was shot and instantly killed by unknown parties, who waited in ambush just outside his gate. After doing the shooting the unknown men escaped by running at full speed in the direction of the river, dropping two shotguns as they ran. A few seconds later neighbors rushed out and found Ficarrotta breathing his last without having had an opportunity to state who his assailants were.

There were several persons on the street within a distance of two blocks at the time of the shooting, and one of these, Rafael Blonde, declares that after the shooting he saw three men run away, but he did not get close enough to them to see who they were or note anything about them by which they can be identified. He then rushed to the assistance of Ficarrotta, and found him lying in a dying condition in the middle of the street.

Mystery is Baffling

Who the parties are who did the killing and what their purpose was in committing the act is a deep mystery which is puzzling the authorities and which may never be solved. Members of Ficarrotta's family and his close friends say that they know no reason why he should have been assassinated, as he had no enemies so far as known and has never done anything which could possibly excite the ire of a blank hand or mafia organization. Ficarrotta's relatives were in such an excited condition last night they were unable to give very coherent replies to the questions asked them by the authorities.

One of the first men on the scene was Chief Logan of West Tampa fire department, who rushed to Ficarrotta's house as soon as he heard the shots. He picked up and took charge of the shotguns which were left by the assassins and later turned them over to county officers. On examination it was found that both barrels of each gun had been exploded and all appeared to have been recent. Witnesses state that they heard only three shots fired, and some say that one of them sounded like a rifle. It is believed that both barrels of one of the guns were shot at the same time, and that one of the barrels of the other gun was fired, the other empty shell being accounted for by some recent hunting expedition. That rifle, if there was one, was carried away.

Officers Arrive

Immediately after the murder took place, parties telephoned Sheriff Jackson and he sent Deputy Sheriff George Bell at once, that officer arriving within half an hour after the shooting. Later other officers arrived, and they at once went to work with Mr. Bell on the case. Among those going over from the city when the news reached Tampa were Deputy Sheriff Tom James and Acting Municipal Judge Larimore. Constable Gonzalez and members of the West Tampa police force went to work and representatives of the sheriff's office and investigated everything which they thought could possibly be of value in tracing the criminals.

Thinking that there might be something about the two shotguns which would identify their owners, Deputy Sheriff Bell subjected both to a minute examination. Both were of the ordinary variety such as are used for hunting quail and game. One of the guns had a leather sling by which it could be swung over the shoulder and more easily carried. The shells were examined with the result noted above. There were no names, initials or other strange marks which could make them distinctive or in any way make known the names of their owners., but the guns will be kept and a more careful examination will be made today, when the officers will have more time to devote to it.

Bloodhounds Suggested

It was suggested to one of the officers that, as the guns belonging to the men had been secured, bloodhounds might be put on the scent and lead to the capture of the guilty parties. For a time the matter was considered, but it was decided that the dogs would be no use on such a frequented street and where so many footsteps cross and recross each other. By the time the dogs could have been put on the ground the scene of the murder and adjacent ground for several blocks would have been trampled upon by several thousand people.

Inquest Is Held

Arriving at the scene a short time after the murder, Justice Boyett began to work on the case, and secured a coroner's jury to view the body, which had been left lying in the street in the same position in which it had fallen. A jury consisting of Lee McLaughlin, J.W. Brooks, Walter Andrews, G.H. Riggsbee, Arthur Schlemann and Juan Romera was secured to make the necessary investigation. An examination of Ficarrotta's body showed that all three shots had taken effect in the back of his head, coming out in parts of the face and left eye. The body was covered with blood and horrible to look upon.

Justice Boyett questioned as many witnesses as possible, but nothing very material was developed. He attempted to secure a statement from members of the Ficarrotta's family regarding any possible cause for the affair, but they were so broken up that no intelligent statement could be gotten from any of them and it was decided to take adjournment until tomorrow morning, when every phase of the case will be gone into fully as possible and no stone will be left unturned which may lead up to the apprehension of the guilty parties.

Heart Rendering Scenes

Members of Ficarrotta's family were nearly crazed with grief last night, and wailed loudly for several hours after the murder. In vain did neighbors attempt to comfort them or offer consolation. At one stage of the horrible affair and before the body had been taken into the house, the dead man's wife and daughter insisted in staying in the street and falling prostrate beside the remains. With loud wailing they would take the dead man's head and hold it and beg him to come back to life once more. But the dead never answer, and the only result was a sigh of intense pity which went up from the hundreds who crowded about.

Ficarrotta leaves a wife and several children, some of them grown, to mourn his loss. Never was family sorer distressed at the loss of a loving husband and father, and scores of friends last night joined in comforting the family as best they could. No arrangements were made last night for the funeral everyone being too wrought up to attend to them. The body, however was turned over to Undertaker Reed and afterward removed to Reed undertaking establishment. The arrangements probably will be made today and the funeral probably will take place tomorrow.

Was Leading Citizen

G. Ficarrotta, the man who was assassinated, was one of West Tampa's leading, most progressive and substantial business men and citizens. He had been in West Tampa for years and had a wide acquaintance among all nationalities. Everyone who knew Ficarrotta liked him and hundreds were proud to call him their friend. The deceased has scores of friends among the business men with whom he has had dealings for many years, having been engaged in the wholesale business and owning the largest wholesale grocery in West Tampa. Ficarrotta was recently elected to the city council and during the brief time which he held that position fulfilled his duties to the satisfaction of all.

The killing of Ficarrotta is, in some respects, on a parallel with the murder of Antonio Urso, committed early in December, when he was a guest at a christening, when he was called to the front gate and shot. Antonio Chiramante was declared to be the murderer, but in spite of all, the efforts of the officers, is still at large. The frequency of these affairs has aroused the authorities to a more determined activity than ever, and every effort will be made to stamp them out. It is getting so that no citizen can with assurance call himself safe on the streets after dark.

Search Given Up

At 1 a.m. officers after spending several hours in unsuccessful search for the assassin, given up the search for the night, as there appeared to be nothing left to do. The chase will be taken up this morning and prosecuted with renewed vigor and, it is hoped, a good chance of success.

(*) The newspaper used an incorrect spelling of the name, Figarota which was later corrected.

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TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE, MONDAY, APRIL 12, 1909

NO DEVELOPMENTS IN FICARROTTA CASE

OFFICERS ARE ENTIRELY AT A LOSS AS TO CULPRITS

No Clues Have Been Discovered by
Which the Assassins Can Be
Traced or Identity Discovered

Unless some new clue is discovered at once regarding the assassination of G. Ficarrotta, the wealthy West Tampa wholesaler, in front of his home at 8 o'clock Saturday night, there is believed to be small chance that his assassins will ever be discovered or brought to justice. Dilligent search and inquiry made yesterday by acting members of the sheriff's office failed to elicit any information which can be of any aid to them in ferreting out the mystery. The men are believed to be concealed by confederates in some part of the city.

Among those questioned yesterday by the officers were members of Ficarrotta's family, all of whom declared that they knew no cause for the assassination and were at a loss to explain it. None of them knew of any enemies which Ficarrotta might have had or any reason why he should have been sought out for the vengeance of a Black Hand organization. Ficarrotta's two little boys and little daughter, who were standing near him at the time of the shooting, having come out from the gate to meet him, cannot give an intelligible account of the affair.

Gun May Be Clue

One of the mysteries of the affair is why the murderers dropped two of their guns after Ficarrotta had been killed. It is generally supposed that they did this because they perceived the approach of neighbors, and threw the guns down that they might make better speed in their flight.

On the stock of one of the guns is a small silver plate of unusual design, and today inquiries will be made of Italians, Cubans and American in all parts of West Tampa as to whether they have ever been seen the gun before.

This morning the jury of inquest, which Saturday night viewed the body of Ficarrotta as it lay disfigured and covered with blood in the street, will meet with Justice Boyett to continue their investigations.

Funeral Yesterday Afternoon

From the residence on Green street at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, the funeral was conducted, interment taken place in Oaklawn cemetery under direction of J.L. Reed. The funeral was one of the most largely attended in the history of the city, and as the procession sadly wended its way through the streets, scores of people bared their heads in accordance with the Latin custom.

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TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 1909

FIVE ARRESTS IN FICARROTTA MURDER

JURY OF INQUEST HELD SECRET
SESSION YESTERDAY

Senlito Renezro Held, Charged With Being a Principal in the Assassination of Wealthy Wholesaler

Behind closed doors the jury of inquest, in the Ficarrotta murder case yesterday morning held its deliberations in West Tampa, everyone except witnesses, officers and members of the jury being excluded. The jury remained in session from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., hearing in that time a large number of witnesses. The evidence introduced was of such a nature that four arrests were made during the course of the proceedings. They were Sam Y'Italiana and Vito Spoto, brothers and Earl Simmons, a negro. After questioning the men thoroughly, all were released. Simmons is the negro who states that he saw the three assassins lurking about in the vicinity of the waterworks and among the palmettos near Ficarrotta's house a short time before the murder.

Among the witnesses heard at the inquest were the three little children of Ficarrotta, who were standing near him when the fatal shots were fired. What these children testified to could not be learned, but it is understood that they were able to give no intelligible statements, having run away as fast as they could without having a chance to see the three men. Just what testimony was submitted by other witnesses it is impossible to say, but before the end of the session Constable F. Gonzalez was sent out to arrest Senlito Renezro. Renezro was found, arrested and taken before the jury. Members of the jury and Justice Boyette questioned him closely and his replies were so unsatisfactory that it was decided to hold him, pending further investigation. It is understood that Renezro claimed to have been in Ellinger City at the time of the shooting, and later contradicted himself by stating that he was in a coffee shop on Main street. Just how much evidence there is against Renezro is not known, but he is in strict confinement in the county jail. The jury adjourned until Thursday morning, when it is hoped that additional evidence may be secured and other arrests made.

Newspapers Ruled Out

A newspaper man endeavored to secured permission to be present at the inquest, giving his personal word of honor not to divulge more than the court and jury thought proper. This was refused, notwithstanding the fact that he agreed to place a \$25 bond to be forfeited in case he failed to keep his word, also agreeing to take oath to that effect in the presence of the jury. One of the jurymen made a motion that all newspaper men be excluded, and the matter was brought to a vote, resulting in four voting in favor of a secret session. The jury consists of Lee McLaughlin, J.W. Brooks, Walter Anderson, G.H. Riggsbee, Arthur Schlemann and Juan Romera.

It is understood that sensational developments are shortly expected. The authorities have been trying to puzzle out the motive of the crime and have come to the conclusion that the killing was done on account of some personal enmity or desire for revenge and not because of a black hand plot. So far as know, Ficarrotta had no enemies. The mystery remains one of the most puzzling of many which this city has known. West Tampa authorities declare that it is the worst which has ever occurred there, and will make every effort to arrest the guilty parties and bring them to justice

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THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 1909

EDITORIAL

A FEW HANGINGS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE

Simply because the parties concerned are Italian and assassinations have been rather frequent among our adopted citizens of that nationality, does not constitute any reason for going about the investigation of the murder of G. Ficarrota, of West Tampa, in any other than the most thorough manner of which the local authorities are capable.

The Tribune believes that large rewards should be offered for the apprehension of these assassins who waylaid a peaceable citizen and shot him down as he walked homeward with his little children.

Past experience, however, makes it extremely improbable that the local officers will be able to accomplish anything definite in the case, as it is easily recalled that not one Italian has yet been punished for any degree of homicide in this country since this so-called "Black Hand" business began, and it is no more likely that local sleuths will be any more successful in the present instance than they have been in the past. One or two of the best detectives in the country should be brought here to investigate the case. The spectacle of two or three Italian assassins hanging from the gallows would be very edifying and effective one just about this time

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TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – FRIDAY, APRIL 16, 1909

TO EXHUME BODY OF FICARROTTA; FIND NEW CLUES

*IF THEORY OF OFFICERS PROVES CORRECT IT IS EXPECTED
THAT MORE ARRESTS WILL BE MADE*

JURY STILL IN SESSION

CHIRAMANTE'S MOTHER AND BROTHER AMONG ARRESTS

One Theory Is That Apprehension of Chiramante Had Something to Do With Malice Against Victim

A sensation was sprung in the Ficarrotta* assassination case yesterday morning when the coroner's jury, in an adjourned secret session, decided to have the body exhumed in Oaklawn cemetery at 10 o'clock this morning for purpose of making a closer examination of the wounds which caused the death of the wealthy wholesaler than they were able to conduct on the night of the murder. This decision was arrived at after much discussion and is understood to be the result of new developments in the case which have been kept from the public and regarding which every effort is being made to maintain absolute secrecy.

In spite of the absolute secrecy maintained in both the session of the inquest jury yesterday morning and Monday morning from which both public and newspaper men were barred, the fact that the body would be exhumed this morning gained circulation and caused a great deal of comment, especially after the rumor was found to be correct. According to the arrangements made yesterday, the exhumation will be conducted by Undertaker J.L. Reed and Dr. Fitta and the jury will be on the ground to make a close and careful examination regarding the points which they wish to settle. Then the body will be interred once more.

Much Interest Manifested

A great deal of curiosity is expected to be manifested, as is usually the case in an exhumation, and it is possible that a cordon of officers will be posted to prevent the overcurious ones from pressing too close to the grave and interfering with the secrecy of the proceedings. The exhumation of the body of Ficarrotta recalls the exhumation of the body of Ed Wallace, who was killed in Ellinger City two years ago, and for which Francisco Alfano was placed on trial. The purpose of the exhumation was to determine whether Alfano had killed Wallace by shooting him in self defense, or whether Alfano had first killed Wallace with a blunt instrument and afterwards shot him for the purpose of throwing officers off the scent.

Another Sensation

Another result of the secret session held yesterday morning was the making of four additional arrests. The news of the additional arrests being made caused considerable excitement among West Tampan and a great deal of speculation was indulged in regarding how much evidence the jury had against them. Those arrested were taken before the jury and Justice Boyett and closely questioned regarding their possible connection with the case, but beyond the fact that they denied having had anything to do with the assassination it could not be learned what the questioning revealed, if anything.

Whether these arrests were made on account of a new theory advanced by the state regarding the murder or is the result of circumstantial evidence against the parties is not known. As nearly as could be learned regarding the inquest proceedings the parties are held because of circumstantial evidence pointing to them

either as being principals or accomplices to the murder. But the idea that the arrests were made on account of new theory by the state is strengthened by that two of the parties arrested are the mother and brother of Orniferio Chirmante, the man now in jail pending trial for the murder of B. LaBella, the wealthy New York broker. The others arrested besides Chirmante's mother and his brother, Paolo Chirmante, were Castenzo Vallone, Vicente Greco and Castenge Ficarrotta, the latter being a cousin of the murdered man. The Vincente Greco arrested is not the V. Greco who is a wealthy property owner in Ybor City, and so far as known, is not related to him, the latter Mr. Greco being in Ybor City at the time of the assassination of Ficarrotta.

Cases are Connected

Thus it seems that the murder of B. LaBella for his money and the assassination of G. Ficarrotta for causes at present unknown, are intimately connected, and this theory has been gaining ground among officers for some time. In what way the two are connected is not known, but it is believed possible that Ficarrotta was killed on account of possible assistance which he may have rendered officers in the arrest of Chiramonte and it is also rumored that some of Chiramante's friends or relatives or some society Chiramante may have gone to Ficarrotta for money toward raising a sum with which to defend Chiramante and that, when Ficarrotta refused to contribute, his assassination was arranged.

Just what is known by the officers which may connect the two cases, they will not give out, but it is declared that the officers and coroner's jury are in possession of a great deal of information which they are keeping strictly secret and which would cause a profound sensation throughout the city. Why the cousin of Ficarrotta should be mixed up in the murder is a matter of conjecture among outsiders, but it is believed that the coroner's jury is in possession of this information. Two new witnesses were examined yesterday besides those who were heard Monday. It is stated that Vellone is held in jail principally as a witness, and Sheriff Jackson stated Wednesday that Senlito Renezro, the man held by the jury of inquest on Monday, is in jail for the same cause. This makes nine arrests in the Ficarrotta case, five being held in jail and four being turned loose.

League of Citizens

There has been a persistent rumor on the streets for several days that a league of citizens for the purpose of assisting the officers in maintaining law and order in this city and for the purpose of assisting in hunting down the murderers of Ficarrotta has been formed or is about to be formed. Every effort has been made to verify the report, but those who have been heard to speak of the matter when gone to by newspaper men have either denied any knowledge of same or have declared that they were not at liberty to state what they knew or who is behind the movement. If there is such a movement on foot, it is being kept very quiet. Sheriff Jackson, Solicitor Raney and other officials declare that they have heard nothing of the matter, but Sheriff Jackson admits that this is a case where he is compelled in a large measure to rely on aid furnished by outsiders.

Every effort is being made by Sheriff Jackson, the coroner's jury and the officers on the job to catch the right men as soon as possible, the officers on the case being required to report to Sheriff Jackson at frequent intervals for suggestions and advice. Frequent conferences are held with Justice Boyett, Deputy Sheriff George Bell, who has been working on the case ever since Saturday night, declares that he has been able to eat only one meal home a day since Monday and has lost a great deal of sleep. Mr. Bell is being assisted by Deputy James Keggin, formerly a member of the police force, while Marshall Logan of the West Tampa department, and F. Gonzalez, Judge Boyett's constable are working night and day on the case. Gonzalez made all the arrests yesterday morning with the exception of one.

Ruin's City's Reputation

Every citizen of West Tampa is aroused over the murder of Ficarrotta, coming so soon after the murder of Antonio Urso by Antonio Dechedue (*) and murder of B. LaBella, of which Orniferio Chiramante is accused. They realize that such a series of murders, if kept up for long, will ruin the reputation of the city and decrease property values. Every effort is being made among Americans to bring the murders to justice, and Ficarrotta has scores of friends among his own countrymen who are enthusiastically co-operating.

West Tampa authorities declare that the assassination of Ficarrotta is the worst crime ever committed in that city. The murdered man was not given a show for his life, but was leaped upon by three men and shot from behind before he had opportunity to lift one finger in his own defense, and he was killed in front of his own doorstep and in the presence of his own children. The realization that the men who did the act are among the worst villains who ever drew breath is what is spurring everyone on to bring them to justice and is largely responsible for talk now going on about organizing a committee of citizens. The law and order league which was organized early last year after Grana affair seems to have had a healthy effect as no more murders and attempted assassinations took place until December.

Other Affairs

The assassination of Ficarrotta recalls the case of two Italians who were ambushed and shot to death on Seventeenth street, Ybor City, within half a block of the principal business thoroughfare, on the night of September 4, 1906, and for which no one was ever brought to justice, the relatives of the men assassinated being afraid to tell what they knew. These numerous affairs, which have been tracing a bloody course from month to month for several years, brings to the realization of Tampans the possibility of an organization existing in this city which is protected in a measure by fear that it inspires and the fact that its agents, who always strike in the dark, have never paid the penalty of any of these crimes.

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(*) The correct spelling of the Diecidue.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 1909

POSTPONEMENT IN EXHUMATION TAKEN

INDEFINITE DELAY ANNOUNCED BY CORONER'S JURY

Could Not Take Place Yesterday Morning on Account of Failure to Secure Necessary Permission

The body of G. Ficarrota was not exhumed at Oaklawn cemetery yesterday morning as announced this being impossible on account of the fact that the coroner's jury had failed to get permission from the state board of health and the county physician and had not communicated with any members of the board of county commissions regarding payment to the undertaker for his services. Until these arrangements were made Undertaker J. L. Reed, who was engaged to do the work, declined to proceed. Another balk was experienced in getting permission from Ficarrota's widow, Judge Boyett having a hard hour's work in convincing her of the necessity of the action.

As it was impossible for Judge Boyett to inform members of the jury of the state of affairs, the jury gathered one by one, at the cemetery, only two of them, however, arriving at the appointed time. There was a wait of nearly an hour before Judge Boyett arrived, this being due to his being detained in getting Mrs. Ficarrota's permission. When it was learned that permission would have to be secured from the board of health and other authorities, many of the jurymen and officers present were in favor of securing the permission at once, but some of the authorities could not be located. After remaining in the vicinity of the cemetery until noon, adjournment was taken, it being announced that the next meeting of the jury would be Wednesday morning.

Everything Arranged

Yesterday afternoon the jury and the justice got together and communicated with the various authorities mentioned securing permission from them that the exhumation may be performed at any time. After making these arrangements, the jury and Justice Boyett would make no statement other than that their exhumation had been indefinitely postponed. However, as each day adds to the difficulty of the examination which will be performed, the exhumation will not be put off for long although a rumor gained credence yesterday that the exhumation would not take place until next Wednesday. Whenever the exhumation does take place, Undertaker J. L. Reed and County Physician A. C. Hamblin will be in charge. Instead of meeting next Wednesday the coroner's jury will meet this morning to consider new evidence.

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TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – MAY 1909

RELEASE ITALIANS FROM COUNTY JAIL

Only One Suspect in Ficarrotta Case Remains

Strenuous Work of Officers For Past Five Weeks Seems To Have Resulted in Little Progress

With the release yesterday from custody of Paolo Chiramente and Ignacio Ferlita, or Felipe Ignacio as officially given out, there remains now in jail only one main in connection with recent sensational assassination of G. Ficarrotta, the West Tampa councilman and wholesaler. One by one the half dozen

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TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE, FRIDAY, MAY 14, 1909

GRAND JURY TAKES REST UNTIL JUNE

Indicts Dechedue for Murder of Antonio Urso

Still at Work on Ficarrota Case and Will Begin Where Left Off When Reconvenes on June 14

After bringing in an indictment against Antonio Dechedue, charging him with the murder of Antonio Urso in West Tampa last December, the grand jury yesterday decided to take a recess until June 14, each member being in great need of rest, having been kept at high tension ever since that body convened. On June 14, the grand jury will take up the thread of business where they left off yesterday.

The murder of Antonio Urso is still fresh in the minds of Tampanians, despite the two similar affairs which have occurred since. Urso was attending a christening at a house in West Tampa, when a man, afterwards declared to be Dechedue, appeared at the gate and requested some one to call Urso. As soon as the latter appeared, Dechedue engaged him in conversation at the gate, and then emptied a pistol into him.

Dechedue Escaped

In the quickly gathering twilight, Dechedue made his escape, being followed by officers and citizens for some distance. The West Tampa police and the sheriff's office immediately went to work on the case, but Dechedue had hidden himself securely. He has never since been heard from and it is believed that he has been able to make his way safely to Sicily.

Although the most strenuous work has been done on the Ficarrota case, there remains much yet to be investigated, and it is partly for the purpose of awaiting new developments that the grand jury yesterday decided to take adjournment. Scores of witnesses have been examined, and much of an interested and sensational nature has already been found out, but it is believed that more startling information will shortly be on tap.

Another Postponement

Another postponement was yesterday taken in the LaCarse contempt case, Col. Robert McNamee, representing the man and the two women, asking that the case be again postponed until 9 o'clock this morning, on account of the illness of one of the women. Dr. Helms was directed to investigate her condition and will endeavor to put her in shape to appear in court this morning.

Regarding LaCarse himself, Colonel McNamee asked that he be allowed his freedom on bond; State's Attorney Phillips strenuously opposing this action and declared that public sentiment is emphatically against allowing bond for LaCarse on account of numerous disturbances which have taken place of late and on account of the strong belief that LaCarse is implicated in the Ficarrota murder.

Judge Grants Bond

Judge Wall yesterday morning refused to grant bond to LaCarse, but later reconsidered his decision and allowed him to be released under bond of \$1,000. Whenever the case is tried, Colonel McNamee will make a vigorous fight in his behalf and on behalf of his wife and mother-in-law, who are also under charges of having interfered with Mrs. Rometta, a witness before the grand jury in the Ficarrota case.

The trial of the case is looked forward to with interest, and after the three are arraigned on the contempt charge before Judge Wall, they will be arraigned before County Judge Graham on a charge of assault with intent to murder, Mrs. Rometta having sworn out a warrant making this charge.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 1909

FAMOUS MURDER CASE TOMORROW

CHIRAMENTE TO BE TRIED FOR MURDER OF LABELLE

Greater Interest Centers in This Case Than in Any Other Except the Assassination of Ficarrotta

Tomorrow the famous case of Orniferio Chiramente, charged with the murder of B. LaBella, the wealthy New York commission merchant, will open in circuit court and promises to be the most interesting and sensational murder trial so far this term. Greater public interest attaches itself to this case than to any other except the assassination of G. Ficarrotta, in which no indictment has yet been rendered, the grand jury having recessed until June 14.

It is believed that the state will, in this case, present perhaps the strongest array of circumstantial evidence ever presented in a murder trial in this county. It will be proven that Chiramente knew that LaBella was a rich man, that they were seen driving out of the city together returning from the place where the body was later found, that blood was found on Chiramente's wagon, that he sawed the top off to disguise it, that Chiramente was seen to have been scratched and scarred up as if in an encounter, that Chiramente's pipe was found near the grave and that there was also found near the grave a broken jug in which Chiramente is known to have purchased wine from Phillip Licata.

Lured to His Death

It is the theory of the state that LaBella was lured to take a ride out of the city with Chiramente and another man on the promise of being shown an orange grove he being interested in orange growing. It is supposed that Chiramente and his accomplice got LaBella to drinking heavily of the wine, that he went to sleep and that they attacked him with a blunt instrument, a wagon standard, the standard being found in the bushes some time later.

About a week after the crime, a hog raiser happened to pass and investigated the mound, thinking that the offal from some of the hogs which he had been missing might be buried there. He was horrified to find there the body of a man and immediately reported it to the sheriff's office. The stranger seen with Chiramente escaped and has not been located. Chiramente will be ably represented by Macfarlane & Davis.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – FRIDAY, MAY 28, 1909

LABELLA'S ALLEGED SLAYER IS ON TRIAL

HEARING OF ORNIFERIO CHIRAMENTE OPENS IN CIRCUIT COURT

Much Trouble Expected in Getting Jury – Two Special Venires Having to be Drawn

At 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon, Orniferio Chiramente was placed on trial in circuit court for the murder of B. LaBella, the rich New York commission merchant and broker whose body was found buried near the dam of the Tampa Electric Company on the Hillsborough River some months ago. The case is one of the most celebrated in the murder annals of the state, and intense interest will be manifested in it from start to finish. The evidence against Chiramente forms the most convincing chain of circumstances possible to conceive.

Chiramente sat in the court room yesterday apparently little moved while the task of selecting the jury was going on, but when the trial actually opened tense lines began to show in his face, evidencing the strong anxiety which he felt. While Deputy Sheriff Will Spenser, who hunted down most of the clues, testified, Chiramente paid careful attention to his attitude was a study as the officer related point after point of apparently damning evidence against him.

Fits Cogs into Cog

Mr. Spenser told of going to the defendant's home in West Tampa the next day after the body of LaBella had been found and of asking Chiramente if he knew where LaBella was. Chiramente made a characteristic gesture of innocent and stupid amazement, declaring that the wealthy Italian had left for New York.

"No." replied Spenser with emphasis, "LaBella has been murdered and we have found his body." Chiramente again executed the gesture of mock amazement. After asking Chiramente why he had not reported LaBella's mysterious absence to the authorities and receiving no satisfactory explanation, Spenser took him in charge.

Signs of Encounter

When Chiramente was arrested, his face was bruised and cut near the nose, showing that he had had a recent encounter with someone. One of his hands was in the same condition. Pursuing his investigations further, Spenser found Chiramente's pipe near the grave and an empty jug, which Chiramente is known to have purchased full of wine from Phillip Licata.

Near a stump hole was found a pool of blood and wagon tracks were seen leading to the spot. The tracks were measure and later found to coincide with Chiramente's wagon. On the wagon were found clots of blood and evidences that someone had applied soap and water in a vain attempt to remove the blood. The standards from the wagon had been removed with the apparent attempt to disguise its appearance.

Was Look for Hogs

N.S. Roberts, a farmer and hog raiser who lives near the place where LaBella's body was discovered, told of making the find. He had been missing some of his hogs for some time and set out to try to locate them. Seeing the newly disturbed ground, he conceived the idea that someone, after stealing and marketing some of his porkers, had buried the entrails there. On digging down a few feet he was horrified to find a man's knee sticking up. He telephoned the authorities, who responded in an automobile.

County Physician Hamblin told of making an examination of the body of LaBella and how he had come to the conclusion that LaBella had been murdered by being struck over the head with a blunt instrument. This idea was later borne out by finding in a palmetto clump not far away of a bloody wagon standard. Another witness, a countryman who had traded horses with Chiramente, saw Chiramente and another man driving away in Chiramente's wagon from the place where the body was later found and on the day on which it is believed the murder was committed.

Theory of State

It is the theory of the state that LaBella was lured to take a drive with Chiramente and his accomplice, who has never since been heard of on the plea that they would show LaBella a fine orange grove. On the way they purchased a jug of wine, of which they led LaBella to drink heavily and while under the influence of it they managed to kill him with the wagon standard after they had reached a place safe from observation. A copy of a Havana paper was found around LaBella's head in the grave, and this is thought to show that LaBella was sleeping at the time of attack, with the newspaper as a protection from flies.

Today other witnesses for the state will unfold the revolting story in its fuller details and startling revelations are expected during the progress of the trial. It is expected that the court room will be crowded daily. The defense will have a number of witnesses present, and it is believed that an attempt will be made to prove an alibi.

Had Hard Work

Considerable trouble was experienced yesterday in getting a jury to try the case. Many excuses were made by jurors, and the questions asked by both State's Attorney Phillips and Macfarlane & Davis, for the defense, were close and dealt with circumstantial evidence. Before a jury could be secured, the regular venire of fifty had been exhausted and two additional ones of eight and twelve respectively had to be summoned. The jury is as follows: L.B. Cooper, R.W. Pritchard, C.W. Whittle, R. L. West, R.W. Trapnell, John Browning, J.M. Byrd, G.W. Gause, G.D. Wiggins, W.M. Harding, C.A. Gause and S.B. Burnett.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – MAY 23, 1909

RELEASE ITALIANS FROM COUNTY JAIL

ONLY ONE SUSPECT IN FICARROTTA CASE REMAINS

*Strenuous Work of Officers for Past Five Weeks Seems to
Have Resulted in Little Progress*

With the release yesterday from custody of Paolo Chiramente and Ignacio Ferlita, or Felipe Ignacio as officially given out, there remains now in jail only one man in connection with the recent sensational assassination of G. Ficarrotta, the West Tampa councilman and wholesaler. One by one the half dozen or more men arrested at first by the authorities have been turned out and this has led many to express the opinion that Castenge Ferlita, the last one, distantly related to the murdered man, will be released also.

Chiramente and Ferlita were released on account of a lack of evidence, nothing of a substantial nature having been unearthed against them by the officers. The alleged sensations which were to have been sprung before the grand jury have not proved of sufficient importance to allow of indictment or further confinement, the men having already been in jail for over a month. What evidence there is against Ficarrotta is not known, but it has been alleged from the first that the evidence against him is stronger than against the others.

May Hold Ficarrotta

Asked last night if there is any substantial evidence against Ficarrotta or if he will be released shortly, State's Attorney Phillips declared that there is some evidence against him and that Ficarrotta will not be released for the present at least. Mr. Phillips stated that he expected to be able to introduce some new evidence before the grand jury when that body reconvenes June 14 which may fasten the stigma of guilt on Ficarrotta and lead to an indictment. Further than this Mr. Phillips stated that there was nothing to be said for publication.

If Ficarrotta is finally released the strenuous work which has been done by officers for the past five weeks will be in vain and it will be seen that they have been following a series of false clues and winding uselessly in a labyrinth of deceptions returning finally to the point of starting, confused and bewildered. Public opinion is strongly in favor of seeing the guilty parties punished in connection with the recent murders, and if it is found that Ficarrotta is not the right party a great deal of disappointment will be felt.

Even if Ficarrotta is indicted there will be two other guilty parties at large, three having been engaged in the shooting, as shown by circumstantial evidence. It is now strongly believed that the assault of LaCarse, his wife and mother-in-law on Mrs. Rometta indicates that they were accomplices.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE, SATURDAY, MAY 29, 1909

CONVICTION IS DEEMED CERTAIN

STATE RESTS IN TRIAL OF ORNIFERIO CHIRAMENTE

*Chain of Circumstantial Evidence Has Been Forged Together Link by Link
in Convincing Manner*

That Orniferio Chiramente is certain to be convicted of the murder of B. LaBella was the consensus of opinion when the state rested in the famous case yesterday afternoon after a day of the most convincing and damaging testimony against the defendant. Even Chiramente seemed to feel that there is no hope for him as he has sat silent and restless, hardly daring to meet the eye of anyone, and seen his doom forged link by link in a chain of circumstantial evidence of a most unusual order.

The feature of the day took place just before the noon recess when the jury adjourned in a body to examine Chiramente's wagon which stood in the court yard a mute but eloquent witness against him. The defendant watched with shifty, uneasy eyes and features as the jurors went over every inch of the vehicle, noted the big blood stain in the wagon bed which, it is alleged, Chiramente tried in vain to remove with soap and water, noted the blood clots underneath and fitted the bloody standard into its groove.

Brack Finds Weapon

Probably the principal witness put on yesterday was Deputy Sheriff Brack, who, some time after the body of LaBella was discovered, found the weapon with which the murder was committed while searching in a palmetto clump. This was a wagon standard stained with blood. Brack took the standard to the county jail where Chiramente's wagon had been taken and fitted the standard into one of the grooves made for the purpose and fitting a nail which had been driven through the standard into the hole from which it had been drawn.

Marshal Logan, who was with Deputy Sheriff Spencer at the time that he arrested Chiramente in West Tampa, told of the latter's peculiar actions and looks on that occasion. Mr. Aiken, a countryman, told of meeting Chiramente and a stranger driving away from the place where LaBella's body was later found. In spite of the cold weather, they were coatless and hatless and bore every evidence of haste and excitement. They were trotting Chiramente's horse at a very brisk pace up a hill. Aiken later told a Mr. Jackson and Buck Ellis of the matter. They suspected something wrong and searched about the woods for some time without finding out anything.

Saw LaBella with Chiramente

One of the most interesting witnesses on the stand was M. Valenti, at whose house LaBella stopped while in this city and who was arrested as a suspect at the beginning of the affair. Valenti declared that the last time he ever saw LaBella alive was when he drove off with Chiramente on the afternoon on which the murder is supposed to have been committed. Chiramente returned about 8 PM and Valenti asked him what had become of LaBella. Chiramente replied that he did not know. LaBella was to have left that night on the 9 o'clock train for New York.

Chief of Police Woodward and Tom James testified to Chiramente having been arrested on one occasion for peddling without a license and of LaBella paying his fine of \$15. The state rested about 3 PM and the defense announced that it was not ready to open as some important witnesses could not be present yesterday afternoon. Court adjourned until 9 o'clock this morning, when the defense will open with a number of witnesses. What tactics the defense will take is not known, but it is believed that an attempt will be made to prove an alibi. The state has several witnesses in rebuttal.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – MAY 31, 1909

CHIRAMENTE JURY HAS GOOD TIME SEEING TOWN

Enjoyed Tour of City in Afternoon, Ate Watermelon and Went to Church in the Evening

That the Chiramente jury did not suffer from ennui yesterday but rather enjoyed themselves was shown by the fact that the entire body, accompanied by a bailiff after enjoying a good dinner yesterday noon, took a long walk during which they visited various parts of the city and those who live in other sections of the community and were to see all the sights of interest.

First the jury went to the Mallory Line docks where they viewed the shipping and the tremendous terminal facilities that have been constructed there within the last year and a half, and then went in a body to the grounds of the Tampa Bay Hotel, where some time was spent in the shade of the palm and other trees which grace the beautiful spot.

Returning to the court house at 4 o'clock, members of the jury suggested cutting a big water melon, and a delicious melon was accordingly, secured. This was sliced into thirteen pieces and passed around. It was eaten with great zest. Some time was then spent in joking and telling humorous stories. In the evening the jury went in an ody to the First Methodist Church to attend services.

When the court opens at 9 o'clock this morning, the defense will open its case. Just what care the defense will play has been a matter of conjecture and intense curiosity for several days, and Col. Robert W. Davis stated Saturday afternoon that, at that time, the exact tactics to be followed had not been arranged. He admitted, however, that testimony will be submitted tending to prove an alibi.

After the defense concludes, the state will put on several witnesses in rebuttal. In the arguments which will follow, State's Attorney Phillips will make a strong plea for conviction. He declares he believes it to be certain that Chiramente will be convicted of murder in the first degree, as he considers the testimony as forming one of the most convincing cases ever known. Mr. Phillips declared that, if Chiramente should be acquitted, he will never attempt to secure another indictment for murder.

A portion of the body of Chiramente's wagon which contains the groove in which the bloody standard was fitted in the presence of the jury Friday morning, has been sawed out to be used by State's Attorney Phillips in making his closing argument.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 1909

CHIRAMENTE CASE IN HANDS OF JURY

Argument is Completed at Late Hour Last Night

Feature of Case Yesterday is Testimony of Defendant – Mistaken Identity Stunt Called Off

After holding a strenuous all day session and then a night session besides, the famous case of Orniferio Chiramente, charged with the murder of B. LaBella on February 2, 1909, went to the jury late last night. Judge Wall made an extended charge, in which he carefully reviewed all matters relating to the case and pointed out all questions to be decided. After waiting on the jury over half an hour Judge Wall decided to adjourn until 9 o'clock this morning, when the jury will report, if a verdict is reached at that time. The jury reported when adjournment was taken last night that there was not prospect of its coming to an agreement within a reasonable time. A mistrial is regarded as a remote possibility.

Arguments in the case were long and animated in the extreme and were listened to by an attentive audience which filled the courtroom to its capacity. However, the new rules of the court were enforced and no one was allowed to come inside the railing cut attorneys and court officials. Chiramente sat, tense with anxiety, by his side seated his wife, two small children and aged mother, forming an interesting study.

Defendant of Stand

The feature of the day was the placing of the defendant, Orniferio Chiramente, on the stand in his own behalf. Chiramente was on the stand practically the entire morning and told his story in detail. He stated that he was suffering from a violent toothache on the day of February 2 and that he spent nearly the entire afternoon in the salon in West Tampa at which several witnesses stated they saw him, and was there at the hour when the two Americans alleged they saw him driving away from the scene of the murder.

The defense desired to submit testimony showing that the countrymen might have been mistaken about seeing Chiramente, and to the effect that it is a very common occurrence for one man to be mistaken for another. To this end, the defendant's attorneys summoned Col. Robert McNamee and Col. W.R. Fuller, who were prepared to state that they had been mistaken, owing to a slight resemblance, on a number of occasions for Col. M. B. Macfarlane, one of the attorneys for the defendant. State's Attorney Phillips made a very strenuous objection to this procedure and Judge Wall decided against allowing such testimony to be introduced.

State's Case Not Proven

In his address to the jury yesterday afternoon, Col. M. C. Macfarlane declared that the state had ridiculously failed in its case and that it had failed to provide the first essential of Chiramente's guilt – the fact that LaBella had been murdered at all. He declared that not a single witness on the stand, and there had been a number who knew LaBella in life, had sworn that the man murdered was LaBella and the dead body found by the river had never been so identified by anyone.

The mere fact that letters addressed to B. LaBella, Mr. Macfarlane insisted, did not prove anything, as many a time letters belonging to one man have been found in the pocket of another, and many times an innocent man has gone to the gallows on some such flimsy proof. Mr. Macfarlane declared that, for ought anybody knew, LaBella might then walking peace the streets of the foreign quarter of New York. He held the state's case up to ridicule in every light possible, and injected so much sarcasm that he kept the jurors smiling nearly all the time.

Phillip's Strong Speech

State's Attorney Phillips made one of the strongest opening addresses ever heard in this city, summing up the case of the state in the most convincing manner possible. He impressed the jury with the gravity of the crime and the circumstantial evidence which had been linked together forming an almost incontrovertible chain pointing to the guilt of Chiramente. State's Attorney Phillips also made a powerful closing address at the session, in which he used in bringing the story of the crime more closely home to the jury. Col. Robert W. Davis, for the defense, made his usual eloquent appeal to the jury to do justice and give the defendant the benefit of the many reasonable doubts which, he declared, exist in this case.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1909

LIFE SENTENCE IF LOT OF MURDERER

JURY CONVICTS WITH RECOMMENDATION TO MERCY

When Jury Brought in Incomplete Verdict, Attorneys for Defense Insist on Additional Charge

Unless an appeal is made or a new trial granted, Orniferio Chiramente, who has been on trial for the murder of B. LaBella, will have to spend the remainder of his life in a prison cell provided the state pardoning board does not intervene. Attorneys for the defense have not yet decided whether they will ask for a new trial or not, but if it is decided to do so the usual four days will be allowed them to file a bill of exceptions. It is not thought, however, that any effort will be made in behalf of Chiramente, as the case made against him by the state was extremely strong and was declared by members of the bar to be one of the most complete and convincing cases of circumstantial evidence which has ever come to light in this or any other state, each link in the chain fitting into the other perfectly.

A verdict of guilty was rendered by the jury as soon as Judge Wall opened court yesterday morning, that decision having been arrived at some time previous. The verdict which was first brought in read: "We, the jury, find the defendant guilty as charged." As this was incomplete, the court had to instruct them to return to the jury room and amend the verdict so as to state the degree of guilt of which they desired to find him guilty. Col. Robert W. Davis for the defense, seeing how the case was coming out, seized this psychological moment to request the court to give the jury an additional special charge to the effect that if a majority of their number saw fit, the jury could recommend the defendant to the mercy of the court. Judge Wall consented to give this charge, and a few moments later the jury returned with a verdict of murder in the first degree, but recommending mercy.

Must Be For Life

This gives the court no option but to sentence the defendant for life, the law required that this shall be done when a recommendation for mercy is made. Chiramente was not sentenced yesterday, but probably will be sentenced the latter part of the week. The negro, Will Barton, who was recently convicted of murder in the second degree in connection with the killing of another negro in a restaurant in St. Petersburg, has not been sentenced, as motion for a new trial has been filed. Taft, who pleaded guilty to murder in the first degree in the killing of his wife at Plant City, will not be sentenced until after his confederates, Annie Joyner and S.P. Stewart are retried, date for the rehearing probably being set some day this week.

The fact that the jury in the Chiramente case made a recommendation for mercy caused intense surprise in nearly every quarter, as the general opinion has been that Chiramente is guilty and that his crime was atrocious and inexcusable. Probably the only reason why such a recommendation was made is the fact that the evidence in the case was entirely circumstantial and that the accomplice of Chiramente has never been arrested. Aside from the Chiramente case, it is known that Judge Wall is personally averse to sentencing a man to death on circumstantial evidence, as many cases have been known where executed defendants have afterwards been found to have been not guilty. It is alleged that three men on the Chiramente jury were for acquittal, but this fact cannot be verified and is declared untrue by State's Attorney Phillips, but at any rate the jury spent the entire night in discussion before deciding on a verdict.

Court Room Crowded

When the verdict was announced yesterday morning, the court room was crowded nearly all the spectators being Italians, many of whom have been present every day throughout the course of the trial. Great interest has been manifested in the case by Chiramente's countrymen, most of the better class of which seem to believe that he is guilty and ought to be punished. In making his final argument to the jury Tuesday night, State's Attorney Phillips declared that the community needs an example set which will warn other criminals from repeating Chiramente's crime and strike terror into the hearts of the outlaws who seem to have been operating successfully in this city for some time.

When the verdict was rendered the defendant showed no signs of emotion

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 9, 1909

CHIRAMENTE AND NEGRO GET LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Motions for New Trials in Both Cases Overruled by Judge Wall and Ninety Days Allowed for Bill

Orniferio Chiramente, recently convicted of murder in the first degree with a recommendation for mercy in connection with the killing of B. LaBella, the wealthy New York Italian commission merchant, and Will Barton, convicted of manslaughter in connection with the killing of Joe Butler, another negro, in St. Petersburg, were yesterday morning brought before Judge Joseph B. Wall to be sentenced. Both were given life imprisonment.

Attorneys in both cases made motions for new trials, but both motions were overruled and ninety days allowed for the filing of a bill of exceptions in case it is decided to make an appeal to the Supreme Court. That an appeal will be made is hardly thought probable, but seems to be more probable in the case of the negro whose plea in the killing was self-defense. The general opinion seems to be that, should an appeal be taken and a new trial ordered by the Supreme Court, that Chiramente would be found guilty without a recommendation for mercy.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 11, 1909

RUMOR THAT CHIRAMENTE HAS CONFESSED DENIED

Officials of the Sheriff's Office, County Jail, and State's Attorney Phillips Say Untrue

For the past several days there has been a persistent report on the streets of the city that Chiramente, the Italian recently convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of B. LaBella, has made a full and open confession involving several accomplices. This story has gone from mouth to mouth and was given general credence in many quarters yesterday, although no one would volunteer the exact nature of the confession or the parties involved in it.

Asked regarding the matter, State's Attorney H.S. Phillips declared that the confession could hardly have been made without him knowing it, and added that he knew nothing whatever about the matter. He stated that this was the first he had heard of the report. The report is denied at the sheriff's office and also at the county jail, Assistant Jailor Harkness declaring that Chiramente has not confessed at all, he knows nothing of it.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE, MONDAY, JUNE 14, 1909

GRAND JURY GETS DOWN TO HARD WORK

RESUMES INVESTIGATION OF FICARROTTA ASSASSINATION

After Taking Vacation to Allow Collection of New Testimony, Will Take Up Case This Morning

After being idle since the first part of May pending the development of new evidence in the Ficarrotta assassination case, the grand jury will resume its investigation of the celebrated case this morning in a section of the court house which will be reserved for that body. During the past month officers have been busy on the case and steadily pursuing their work. It is understood that new evidence of considerable importance has been discovered but just what this is those who know decline to say.

It is believed that the matter has been considerably unraveled, however, and that the evidence laid before the grand jury at this session will do much to clarify the killing in the minds of the jury and show the real motive which prompted the crime, something which has heretofore been in doubt. That the plot to kill Ficarrotta is a deeper and more far reaching one than has been generally supposed will probably be shown and also that it involves persons other than those heretofore arrested in connection with the crime.

Case is Extraordinary

The killing of Ficarrotta, the wealthy West Tampa wholesaler and councilman, who counted his friends by the hundred, forms one of the most extraordinary of several similar assassinations which have taken place in this city and forms a serious blot on the name of the city. Shot within a few feet of his own home with his two little children by his side, Ficarrotta died before he could make any statement as to who his assailants were, and then made their escape in the darkness of night undetected. Proceedings of a West Tampa coroner's jury, conducted in the greatest of secrecy, resulted in the arrest of a number of suspects, only one of which Castenge Ficarrotta, distantly related to the murdered man, being now held.

The necessity for the discovery had proper punishment of the parties who committed the fearful crime and the demand of public sentiment that such punishment should be meted out to the guilty ones, has determined the grand jury and State's Attorney Phillips to carry the investigation as far as possible and make every effort toward fastening the guilt on the men who committed the murder and, by bringing them to justice, prevent in future a recurrence of similar crimes.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 15, 1909

GRAND JURY AT WORK ON FICARROTTA CASE

Open Session Yesterday Morning and Hear Several Witnesses – Probably Will Report Wednesday

The grand jury resumed its work on the celebrated Ficarrotta case yesterday morning after a vacation of several weeks and heard several new witnesses. No new arrests resulted yesterday as a result of the investigation, but arrests may follow later. In the afternoon the jury adjourned until 10 o'clock this morning. Today the jury will thoroughly go over the testimony before them and probably will report their findings tomorrow.

The result of the investigation of the Ficarrotta case is looked forward to with great interest, as the assassination was one of the most notable occurring in this section in several years.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 19, 1909

ATTORNEY PHILLIPS RECEIVES LETTER ABOUT MURDER CASE

Unknown Writer Follows Ruse of Sherlock Holmes Novels to Conceal Identity from
Authorities

NAMES MURDERER OF FICARROTTA

GIVES ENTIRELY NEW MOTIVE FOR THE ASSASSINATION

Evidence Placed before Grand Jury for Whatever it is Worth in Unraveling Famous Case

Following the ruse employed in one of the famous Sherlock Holmes detective stories, an unknown writer has written a communication to State's Attorneys Herbert S. Phillips in which he gives what he declares to be a new clue on the Ficarrotta case and charges that Ficarrotta was murdered for a reason entirely different from any yet advanced regarding the famous assassination. The writer names a certain person as being sufficiently interested in Ficarrotta's death to pay a considerable sum to parties to have the job done.

When the communication was received by Mr. Phillips he was considerably surprised at this new turn of affairs and not a little taken aback. He studied the curiously arranged message with interest. The sender had chosen a plain postal card, upon the back of which he pasted certain words clipped apparently from an American and Italian newspaper and which gave the information above stated. Mr. Phillips' name was also clipped from a newspaper. Most of the words appeared to have been clipped from an issue of the Tribune.

Send by Foreigner

Although the postal card was mailed at the post office in Tampa, there seems to be no doubt that the sender is an Italian or other foreigner, as the grammar employed in the arrangement of the words indicates someone, not entirely familiar with the English language. The postal card has been a source of wonder and curiosity not only to Mr. Phillips but to detectives and others to whom he has shown it, as it employs a method with which the Tampa officers in point of fact are not familiar, although it has been extensively employed in other cities. The information given has been placed before the grand jury for whatever it may be worth in the unraveling of the famous case.

Although he does not claim to accept the statements and theories of the sender of the communication, Mr. Phillips declares his belief that someone paid Castenge Ficarrotta \$200 for his alleged part in the crime, as that amount of even money in a neat little bundle was found in his safe the day of Ficarrotta's arrest, it being the only money in the safe. Mr. Phillips declares himself still of the opinion that the LaBella and the Ficarrotta cases are connected and that Ficarrotta was murdered because he refused to make a heavy contribution for defending Chiramente.

Chiramente's brother, who was at first alleged to have sought the money of Ficarrotta, was released from custody some time ago.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 20, 1909

FICARROTTA MURDER CASE TO BE AIRED

Judge Wall Grants Habeas Corpus Hearing

Forty Witnesses Summoned for Hearing of Case in Circuit Court at 10 O'clock Monday

Various features of the Ficarrotta assassination case which have been puzzling Tampan and which have been kept secret by officials ever since the famous murder took place, will be fully aired in circuit court at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning, when a hearing will be given on habeas corpus proceedings to Castenge Ficarrotta and Andrew Re, held by the grand jury for committing the crime. It will be the first time the public has had an opportunity to view the true facts in the case.

The hearing of Ficarrotta and Re on habeas corpus proceedings was acceded to by Judge Wall at the request of Attorneys McNamee and Larimore and H.C. Gordon, representing the defendants, who will try to get bond for their clients, it being understood that parties with plenty of money stand ready to go their bonds. The attorneys will make a strong fight to get the men released.

Over Forty Witnesses

Deputy Sheriffs George A. Bell and James Keggin have been kept busy at work for the past two days serving subpoenas for witnesses, over forty witnesses being summoned. What developments of a startling and sensational nature may develop it is impossible to say, for during the progress of the case it has been the policy of the officers at work to keep the newspapers as much in the dark as possible.

One reason why the attorneys for the defense desire a habeas corpus hearing probably is that in this way they will secure possession of whatever evidence the state may have against them and be more prepared to meet it at the trial, the habeas corpus proceedings being the usual course followed in cases of this kind and for the purpose names. At any rate, State Attorney Phillips will make a vigorous fight against giving the men bond, and it is possible that the state may hold back as much evidence as possible in order to keep the defense from getting the advantage planned.

Threat to Blow up Jail

The rumor recently circulated to the effect that threats had been made of blowing up the jail because of the incarceration therein of Ficarrotta and Re were yesterday confirmed by R.C. Jackson, nephew of Sheriff R.A. Jackson, who received the threats. At the time it was given out the matter had been merely a joke played on Mr. Jackson by his wife. This Mr. Jackson positively denied, declaring that he received the threats at 6:30 in the morning before his wife had arisen for the day, and added that she knew nothing whatever about it.

Mr. Jackson declared that within the space of a few seconds, three different parties called him on the telephone and informed him that there was a plan on foot to blow up the jail. The first two parties, who were men, rang off before he had an opportunity to ask central whose line the calls came from. Mr. Jackson asked the third party who she was and she stated that she was an employee of the Sanchez Haya factory, but refused to give her name. Although an extra watch was placed at the jail for a few days, no attempt has been made yet.

Another Habeas Corpus

Judge Wall has also granted a writ of habeas corpus returnable Monday morning for Orlando Wheeler, foreman of the Atlantic Coast Line at Orient, who is held as an accessory to the murder of Sam Porchia. He is represented by McNamee & Larimore.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 20, 1909

TWO INDICTED FOR THE MURDER OF WEST TAMPA MAN

Castenge Ficarrota and Andrew Re are Held for Famous Assassination of West Tampa
Councilman

RE NOT PREVIOUSLY SUSPECTED

Arrest of Cigar Manufacturer Causes Surprise

Startling Developments Within Past Three or Four Days and Probably Other Arrests to Follow

In the indictment by the grand jury and subsequent arrest of Andrew Re, a well known Italian cigar manufacturer, formerly running a barber shop on Garcia Avenue, Ellinger City for the murder of G. Ficarrota, the West Tampa councilman, one of the greatest surprises this city has known in many months was sprung. Re has always been a respected member of his nationality and never was once under suspicion until the finding of the jury was made public yesterday afternoon, Re was shortly afterwards arrested by Deputy Sheriff George A. Bell and placed in the county jail.

The substance of the testimony against Re officers who are in possession of it refuse to make public, but it is stated that it is of the strongest possible nature. If not one of the actual participants in the shooting, it is alleged that Re was one of the instigators of the crime. The state expects to prove that for several weeks before Ficarrota was killed, Re drove in a buggy to the West Tampa jail almost daily and held long conversations with Castenge Ficarrota, who is charged with being a principal in the killing.

Jailor is Threatened

Re's telephone conversation with Ficarrota are alleged to have been overheard by the jailor, who notified the authorities of the circumstance after the crime had been committed. This caused Re to be shadowed by the officers working on the case. Some time later the jailor received a threatening letter, advising him to leave the city at once or else lose his life. Although the authorities kept their investigation as quiet as possible, it is alleged that Re learned several days ago that he was likely to be arrested, and it was feared that he would attempt to escape. However, Re was found at his home when Mr. Bell called. He made no demonstration, but insisted himself ignorant and innocent of the crime.

Another indictment was found by the grand jury against Castenge Ficarrota, a distant relative of the murdered man, who was arrested a short time after the murder, and who has been in jail ever since. Castenge Ficarrota is alleged to be one of the men who did the actual shooting, as the slugs loaded into shotgun shells which caused the councilman's death were traces to Castenge Ficarrota, and other shells loaded in like manner were found in his home. These were the only indictments found in the Ficarrota case.

Statement by Sheriff

Speaking of the case yesterday afternoon, Sheriff Jackson said "There has been evidence of the strongest possible nature which has developed in the past three days, but we are not yet in a position to state whether it is more damaging against Ficarrota or against Re. There is believed to be no doubt but that the clues at present being followed by officers will implicate others, and there is strong likelihood of other arrests being made. Five or six may be arrested as accessories, and probably at least three will be arrested before the next term of circuit court."

Sheriff Jackson declared that there are two different theories to be followed in the case, one of them being that Ficarrota had been killed because he refused to make heavy contributions to defend Orniferio Chiramente, recently convicted of the murder of B. LaBella. Asked if he thought theory the more probable, Sheriff Jackson replied that he did not. Sheriff Jackson did not state what the other theory is. Asked if he thought the motive to be the one stated by the party who wrote the postal card to State's Attorney Phillips, Sheriff Jackson replied in the negative

Other Indictments Found

Marcelina Garcia, the mullatto bartender who killed another mullatto in a fight in Ybor City, and who indicted for murder in the first degree some time ago, was indicated for manslaughter. When, at the instigation of Attorney Robert McNamee, habeas corpus proceedings were brought, Judge Wall decided that Garcia could not be held on that charge, but sent him to be tried before criminal court on a charge of manslaughter. Judge Gordon decided that he could not try Garcia for manslaughter after he had been indicted by the grand jury for murder in the first degree, so the case was returned to the grand jury. Dennis Kinslow, a negro, was indicted of the killing which occurred at Harney several days ago.

Before adjournment yesterday, the grand jury brought in the following general presentment:

In the circuit court of the sixth judicial circuit of Florida, for Hillsborough County, spring term.

We, the grand jury, duly empaneled and sworn to diligently inquire and true presentments make of all matters presented to our body, beg leave to report as follows:

First – We have investigated all cases of homicide brought to our attention and have presented such indictments to the court as in our judgment the evidence warranted.

Second – For insufficient evidence we are unable to find a true bill against George Johnson for the killing of Eli Otis, which occurred at St. Petersburg.

Third – We have visited the county jail and find the prisoners to be satisfied with the general treatment and the premises are in good sanitary condition.

Fourth – We find the Sulphur Springs Traction company are operating their cars without fenders on the front of the same, thereby endangering the lives of pedestrians. We ask that this matter be looked at after by the proper authorities.

Fifth – Complaints are made by residents of the county that there are no provisions made at trolley line crossings to get over the tracks were they cross the county roads. The same conditions applies to the railroad companies. As they are now they are dangerous to the traveling public. We advise that this matter be looked after.

Sixth – The present place of deposit of city refuse is used also as a place for deposit of dead cats, chickens and dogs, and the stench arising from these deposits is dangerous to the health of the community. This nuisance should be abated at once by the health authorities.

Seventh – In conclusion we desire to thank the Honorable Joseph B. Wall, Judge of this court and the State's Attorney Hon. H.S. Phillips for their courteous assistance to this body during its deliberations.

Donald S. McKay, Foreman, G.W. Lyons, Clerk.

To Defend Italians

Seen yesterday afternoon regarding the matter, Attorney Robert McNamee admitted the report to be true that he had been engaged to defend Castenge Ficarrotta and Andrew Re. Mr. McNamee and other counsel which may be engaged will make a strong fight for them. Friends of Ficarrotta have engaged Macfarlane & Davis to prosecute.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 28, 1909

FICARROTTA CASE TO BE FULLY AIRED TODAY

Hearing of Two Men on Habeas Corpus Before Judge Wall at 10 O'clock this Morning

At 10 o'clock this morning, Castenge Ficarrotta and Andrew Re, the two men charged with the murder of G. Ficarrotta, will be given a hearing before Judge Wall in circuit court on habeas corpus proceedings, represented by Attorneys McNamee Larimore and H.C. Gordon. The details of the case, for the first time in any measure expose to publicity, will be gone into thoroughly. The defense will make an effort to get the state to show its hand, and the state will endeavor to submit merely enough evidence to have the two men held without bond.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – JUNE 30, 1909

FICARROTTA HELD WITHOUT BAIL FOR TRIAL ON JULY 6

AT END OF HEARING DEFENDANT BURSTS INTO PASSIONATE SOBS
BEFORE RETURNING TO PRISON

RE IS DISCHARGED FROM CUSTODY

GRASPS HANDS OF FRIENDS AS LEAVES COURT ROOM

Further Sensational Disclosures are Made, but Ficarrotta Does Not Take Witness Stand

Two days of testimony taking in the habeas corpus hearing of Castenge Ficarrotta and Andrew Re, charged with the murder of G. Ficarrotta, came to an end yesterday when Judge Wall announced that he would hold Ficarrotta without bail for trial in circuit court July 6 and ordered the release of Re from custody. Andrew Re as he stepped across the courtroom a free man hastened to grasp the hands of his friends and exchange hand clasps with Judge Wall and Sheriff Jackson. To the former he said "I thank you." Tears were streaming down his face as he left the room.

"And I am not allowed any bail of any kind" asked Ficarrotta in apparent surprise when the judge's order was explained to him by his attorneys. A short consultation was held in which it was explained to Ficarrotta that everything possible had been done for him and that he would have to stand trial for his life next Tuesday. With strong determination, Ficarrotta controlled his feelings admirably but later in Sheriff Jackson's office the hard lines in his face relaxed and he gave vent to passionate sobbing which lasted for some time. Officers in their rough way attempted to comfort the unfortunate man; telling him that there was still strong hope for him.

Made Long Arguments

It was after 5 o'clock when Judge Wall came to his decision in the case after attorneys had been arguing the question of bail for the two defendants during almost the entire afternoon. Col. M.B. Macfarlane for the prosecution opened immediately after the taking of testimony had been concluded pointing out the salient features of the case in his own inimitable manner. He was followed by Judge H.C. Gordon for the defense who made a strong plea for the two men and declared that the evidence against both of them is of the most flimsy nature.

Declaring that every circumstance in the case is woven together as strands in a cable and that they point straight to Ficarrotta as the guilty man, State's Attorney Phillips spoke at some length. He reviewed the testimony fully and declared it entirely too strong against Ficarrotta to admit of bail, but declared that the evidence against Re is of such a nature as to merit bail in his instance.

McNamee Hits from Shoulder

In closing for the defense, Col. Robert McNamee attacked every feature of the state's case from every conceivable standpoint and fired broadside after broadside into the circumstantial points on which the stand depends. One after another he took up the various incidents related by witnesses and held them to the

strongest possible investigation, showing that they by no means form an incontrovertible chain pointing to the guilt of Ficarrota. Col. McNamee declared that there is no proof against Re whatsoever.

Particular attention was given by Col. McNamee to the gun circumstance, which was made much of by the state. He declared that, according to the testimony of Will Spencer, there have been two guns of the same pattern in the city as was declared sold to Re and later found at the scene of the shooting. Col. McNamee declared that according to Spencer's testimony, the twin gun had been sold to another party, who had left the city some time ago. He called attention to the fact that the gun found at the scene of the shooting was positively identified by Spencer as the gun he sold to the other party several years ago. He declared that the other gun found at the scene of the killing did not coincide with that alleged to be carried by Ficarrota and that when the latter's house was searched his gun was found hanging on the wall, not having been discharged for some time.

Spencer on Stand

Will C. Spencer was recalled to the stand as the first witness yesterday, and he told of selling one of the twin guns to a Cuban or Spaniard several years ago and that the man had since left the city. He positively identified one of the guns found at the scene of the murder and alleged to have been sold to Re as the twin gun which he had sold to the other party. He declared that he was able to swear positively to this from the fact that he had been called upon to place a new screw in the gun shortly after its purchase. Capt. Barnwell and I.S. Craft, of the Tampa Hardware Company testified that one of the twin guns had been in Spencer's stock when they took charge of his place and other members of the firm told of selling the gun to Re. They were unable to identify the gun found at the murder as the one sold to Re.

Louis Perez, a neighbor to C. Ficarrota, declared that Ficarrota's wife had offered him money to swear that he had seen the defendant seated on his front porch at the time of the murder. This Perez refused to do, declaring that he had not seen Ficarrota anywhere at the time. Mrs. G. Ficarrota, widow of the murdered man, testified that Castenge had frequently called on G. Ficarrota and attempted to get him into conversation on the front porch, frequently glancing uneasily toward the palmetto clump across the street as if expecting shots to be fired from it. Miss Alphonso Ficarrota related a conversation which Castenge had with her father in which he declared himself discouraged at his misfortunes, that he was thinking of committing suicide and that, for a small sum of money, he would be willing to kill any man. George Bell declared that he had taken the keys found in the palmetto clump and attempted to enter other doors in West Tampa, but that out of thirty-seven doors tried, the keys would unlock only three besides those at the house of Castenge Ficarrota.

Statement by Spencer

Regarding his connection with the case, Will C. Spencer has requested that a signed statement be published setting him in a clear light. The statement is as follows:

"I hate very much to appear in public print, but since certain near detectives and personal enemies have put me in a false position before the public in regard to the Ficarrota case, I deem it my duty to make a clean and straightforward statement of all the facts in the case, and let the people judge."

"In the beginning I wish to state, at the time G. Ficarrota was murdered, I was not connected with the sheriff's office, and was in no way an officer. Being a close friend to G. Ficarrota and for the aid he gave me in catching Chiramente, the murderer of B. LaBella, I felt it my duty as a citizen to help catch the murderers."

"I went to West Tampa and called on Mayor Rey and informed him that I had heard on the streets that Mr. Macfarlane would spend a thousand dollars to catch the murderers of Ficarrota. I further informed the mayor that if he would appoint me a special police, I would take hold of the case and catch the guilty parties. I further stated that I was in debt to Mr. Macfarlane something over two hundred dollars, and that if I was successful, I would not want the thousand dollars, but would be satisfied if Mr. Macfarlane would receipt me in full for my indebtedness to him."

“The mayor referred me to Mr. Macfarlane. I then went to Mr. Macfarlane’s office, but did not see him. I next saw Jose Fernandez and made virtually the same statement to him. He said that he would take the matter up with Mr. Macfarlane. I told him that he would have to quick or the parties might escape.”

“I also spoke to Mr. Benjamin in regard to this matter and he referred me to Mr. Macfarlane. I next saw James Henderson and he asked me what I knew about the case, I informed him that I had just seen the guns at the sheriff’s office and was satisfied that I sold one of the guns that did the killing and as soon as I looked at my book I could tell who I sold it to. I further stated that I was confident that with my knowledge of the foreign element and the case being so close to that of LaBella that I could pick the guilty parties out in forty-eight hours. I also stated to Mr. Henderson that I had heard of Mr. Macfarlane’s offer and if I was employed on the case I could save him money and at the same time pay him my indebtedness.”

“I am informed that Mr. Henderson stated on the stand that I knew who I sold the gun to and would tell Mr. Macfarlane would pay me two hundred dollars. I do not know whether he made the statement or not but if he did he swore falsely. In the entire matter I acted open and above board and do not say boastingly but with my long experience with the foreign element and my past success as an officer I would have made better headway than the officers assigned to the case. If they had spent more time working out clues instead of trying to get me in the hole they would have made better headway.”

“With the foregoing statement, I hope that the public will understand my position in the matter and they can readily see that my enemies are at the bottom of the whole affair.”

“Very respectfully, (Signed) Will C. Spencer”

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – SATURDAY, JULY 10, 1909

FICARROTTA CASE READY FOR TRIAL

TAXING OF TESTIMONY WILL BEGIN THIS MORNING

Judge Wall Overrules Motion to Quash Indictment, Sustaining Demurrer of State's Attorney

The case of Castenge Ficarrotta, charged with the murder of G. Ficarrotta will proceed to trial at 9 o'clock this morning, Judge Wall having sustained the demurrer of State's Attorney Phillips to the motion made by attorneys for the defense to quash the indictment on technical grounds, and a jury having been secured yesterday afternoon. The case is expected to prove one of the most interesting ever aired in circuit court, the killing of Ficarrotta being one of the most brutal ever recorded in this county, and the court room probably will be crowded with Americans and foreigners alike to watch the proceedings.

The jury which will try the case is as follows: G.W. Martin, W.E. Gebhart, J.A. Boyett, E.C. Durant, W.K. Jones, W.O. Hagan, R.B. Hackney, J.R. Bryan, J.H. Dishong, O.E. Archer, D.R. Morgan and B.L. McMullen. The work of securing the jury took the entire afternoon, court adjourning at 5:30 o'clock immediately after the jury was secured, and the indictment read to them. Great pains were taken in making a selection of jurors, both the state and the defense making a careful questioning of each one. Questions regarding circumstantial evidence, capital punishment and reasonable doubt figured largely. Several were disqualified because of having read newspaper accounts and having formed opinions there from.

Sustains Demurrer

The amended motion to quash the indictment against Ficarrotta was presented to Judge Wall immediately upon the opening of court yesterday morning. The reasons were the same as stated by the Tribune – that the grand jury, in violation to their oaths, had consulted with M.B. Macfarlane, an attorney in the case, who had not been sworn in to assist in the prosecution and during the absence of State's Attorney Phillips, who was perfectly able to be present in person, that the indictment had been found against the recommendation of State's Attorney Phillips, who advised them that the evidence against Ficarrotta was not sufficient to convict: that the indictment was only signed by twelve members of the grand jury.

After considerable argument Judge Wall sustained the demurrer of State's Attorney Phillips, ruling that the members of the grand jury were acting on their own responsibility and were therefore not in any way influenced by either of the attorneys. Court adjourned until 2 o'clock, the work of getting a jury was then begun. Despite his announcement several days ago that he would not represent Ficarrotta, Colonel Robert McNamee is again actively engaged for the defendant, more satisfactory business arrangements having been made.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – SUNDAY, JULY 11, 1909

PROGRESS MADE IN FICARROTTA TRIAL

SEVERAL WITNESSES GIVE TESTIMONY AT SESSION

Discussion of Burmudez Incident Indulged In – State's Attorney Declares Incident Reprehensible

Good progress was made in the hearing of the case of C. Ficarrotta, charged with the murder of G. Ficarrotta, in circuit court yesterday, witnesses testifying to the actual incidents of the killing being examined and telling what they knew of the murder. The testimony was about the same as that submitted at the habeas corpus hearing and before the coroner's jury.

The first witness was Dr. A.C. Hamblin, who described the nature and location of the wounds, having performed an examination of the body. The next was Jose Fernandez, tax assessor of West Tampa who was on a street car when he heard the shots which ended Ficarrotta's life. He rushed to Ficarrotta and found one of the guns which had been used in the murder. The witness drew a diagram showing the exact position of the body when he found it. Fernandez struck a match to see how badly Ficarrotta was wounded.

Found Loaded Shells

Arthur Schleman, who served on the coroner's jury, told of a visit which was made to the home of Castenge Ficarrotta and during which a search of his supply of ammunition was made. This revealed that certain shot gun shells had not been reloaded with slugs similar to that which caused the death of Ficarrotta and to that which was later found in his yard. The witness identified a fence picket through which one of the slugs was fired.

The witness stated that at the time he visited the defendant's house the latter was standing near the house of the murdered man and that an alleged associate of his was squatting in a clump of palmettos nearby. The defense objected to this testimony on the ground that it was irrelevant and prejudicial, and the matter was argued after the jury had been ordered to retire. It resulted in the testimony being withdrawn by the state. Other witnesses heard were Captain Barnwell, W.P. Clark and T. Martinez, the former two testifying to having sold a gun similar to one of the guns with which the shooting was done to Ficarrotta and a companion.

Incident Discussed

In a discussion of the Burmudez incident yesterday morning, Judge Gordon, associated with Robert McNamee in the defense of Ficarrotta, declared that he had nothing to do with the \$100 check alleged to have been offered Burmudez by McNamee, State's Attorney Phillips made a few remarks on the matter in which he declared the plan of Col. McNamee to be a very reprehensible one to be followed by a member of the bar, to which Judge Wall Agreed.

Speaking of Burmudez, Colonel McNamee declared that there was as much evidence against him as against \$100 check alleged to have been the defendant and that circumstances look very suspicious for Burmudez in connection with the killing. The defendant accused Burmudez of doing the killing while he was confined at the county jail.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – MONDAY, JULY 12, 1909

CHIRAMENTE SPENDS DAY WITH HIS WIFE

APPARENTLY NOT AFFECTED BY LEAVE TAKING

Greeting All His Old Friends Before Being Taken to Convict Camps Tomorrow for Life Sentence

Orniferio Chiramente recently convicted of the murder of B. LaBella, after spending five months in the county jail, was allowed to visit his family in West Tampa yesterday before leaving for the state convict camps tomorrow. Chiramente was accompanied by Deputies A.A. Gullette, George Bell and Jeff Burnett, who kept a close watch of him and saw to it that no attempt was made by Chiramente's friends to secure his escape.

Leaving the jail about 9:30 yesterday morning, Chiramente spent the rest of the day up to 3 o'clock at this home on Spruce Street, West Tampa, with his wife and children. A fine dinner was participated in by members of the family, Chiramente apparently enjoying the viands greatly after the jail fare. He partook freely of wine and cigars.

Visited by Friends

During the afternoon dozens of Chiramente's friends called on him to tell him good bye and these he greeted cordially. Chiramente at no time seemed to be affected and showed no traces of emotion. He did not kiss his wife nor his mother, but was seen to kiss several men who called on him. He showed no anxiety and was apparently free from care.

Chiramente's absence of emotion surprised the officers, and especially the coolness which appeared to exist between himself and his wife. After Chiramente left, his wife was seen coolly proceeding about her household duties as if nothing had happened. This partial estrangement is alleged to be due to the fact that Chiramente took steps to have his wife placed in an insane asylum several years ago, but it was decided that she was saner than Chiramente.

Has Not Confessed

For a long time the hope was entertained by officers that Chiramente would make a full confession and reveal the identity of his accomplice, but the prisoner has not done this and probably will not do so. His apparent satisfaction with his lot is believed to be due to hopes of making an early escape from the camps.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – FRIDAY, JULY 16, 1909

STATE RESTS IN FICARROTTA CASE

DAUGHTERS OF DEAD MAN ARE CALLED TO STAND

This Morning the Defense will Get to Work and Case Will go to Jury in Short Order

This morning the defense in the trial of Castenge Ficarrotta for the murder of G. Ficarrotta will get to work and evidence will be submitted tending to cast doubt as to the guilt of the accused. Attorneys McNamee and Gordon, who have been making a hard fight throughout, are prepared to make every effort to free the defendant. The state rested at three o'clock yesterday afternoon, nothing of a sensational nature having developed during the day. Court adjourned until 9 o'clock this morning to give attorneys for the defense an opportunity of consulting with their witnesses, and the remainder of the afternoon was occupied by them in this way.

Probably the most important testimony of the day was that given by the two daughters of the dead man, who told of several visits made by the defendant to the house before the murder and during which he appeared to try to get G. Ficarrotta into the street, at the same time nervously glancing over his shoulder in the direction of the palmetto clump from which G. Ficarrotta later was shot. Rafeal Burmudez was recalled to testify that Castenge, a few days after the murder, came to him and asked Burmudez if he had any idea who killed G. Ficarrotta. Burmudez replied that he had not, and Ficarrotta then told him he should have caught the man he chased on the night of the murder.

Heard Threat Made

During the day, T.W. Brooks, a member of the coroner's jury, testified that he had overheard the threats made to Judge Boyett by Castenge Ficarrotta in which the latter is alleged to have declared that he would kill somebody before he would pay his taxes. The matter of the telephone conversations between Castenge Ficarrotta and Andrew Re was brought up. This was objected to by the defense on the grounds that Re had been exonerated at the habeas corpus trial, but the objection was overruled. One of the young ladies from the telephone exchange was called in to verify the number of Andrew Re, which is "2043." It developed that the wife of Burmudez, during the alleged attempted bribery incident, had called to him in Spanish to speak loud, as someone wanted to hear the conversation. T. Martinez having told her to do so. Burmudez did not know who was listening until afterwards.

It is generally conceded that the state has made out a good case of circumstantial evidence, and it is considered that the case is a much stronger one than was at first expected to prove the case. However, the web of circumstances is not as strong and conclusive as in the case of Orniferio Chiramente, recently convicted of the murder of B. LaBella. Unless the defense springs a surprise, there will be but few witnesses and the case will now to the jury in short order.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1910

TWO MEN TAKEN FROM OFFICERS AND HANGED



[PHOTO COURTESY FROM THE USF SPECIAL COLLECTION LIBRARY]

Castenge Ficarrotta and Angelo Albano Victims of Lynch Law While Being Transferred to County Jail by Officers

DRAMATIC NOTES PINNED TO FEET

MEN WERE ARRESTED ON CHARGE OF ACCESSORY TO SHOOTING OF
EASTERLING

LYNCHING PARTY MADE UP OF LATIN CITIZENS

*Ficarrotta Recently Figured in Murder Trial,
Charged with Killing his Uncle*

“BEWARE”

*“Others take notice or go the same way. We know seven more. We are watching you. If
any more citizens are molested, look our Justice”*

This tragic note, written in black ink, on a large-sized piece of paper, was pinned to the trousers of Angelo Albano, Italian, who with Castenge Ficarrotta, Italian, was hanged by a mob last night three and one-half miles from the county court house. The notice was written plainly and each letter of each word was a capital. It found a resting place on the feet of Albano.

Swing in Moonlight

Two human bodies, the forms of the coatless men bathed in a wealth of light given from a full moon sending its days through the luxuriant foliage of a giant Oak and full upon the lifeless beings, was a gruesome picture presented city and county authorities last night.

Two victims of lynch law, said to have been sent to a hurried grave through the reign of lynch law, participated in by Latin-Americans and Americans, who secured their prey through holding up two representatives of the sheriff's office, they showed little signs of violence on their persons. Quite a quantity of new five-eighth inch rope, however, bore eloquent testimony of all things having been prepared for the death trap while the helpless prisoners, handcuffed to one another, gave mute evidence that neither had been able to resist the blood lust possessing their captors.

Back to Back

Back to back the bodies of these Italians depended from a limb branching westward from the giant tree a distance of twenty-five feet, the feet of both being about seven feet from the ground and the limb from which they were hanged being about eighteen feet above the level of the ground.

It was this picture that confronted the view of the many citizens and authorities who journeyed to the scene from Tampa and West Tampa in all kinds of conveyances.

The picture was the more realistic and interesting in that Ficarrotta, a man about 45 years of age, five feet, five inches in height, and wearing a beard of two days' growth and a heavy black mustache, still had his derby on his head and a small pipe in his mouth.

His body faced toward the East – toward Tampa. His shoes were unpolished and his trousers were unclean. His suspenders lowered, lay close to either side of his person. His belt was fastened loosely about his waist and his head found a resting place at an angle of about 60 degrees against the back of his fellow. His shirt was loose at the collar. His feet were tied together but not in the same knot which fastened those of Albano.

Albano, twenty-five years of age, was more neatly arrayed. His white shirt first attracted the attention of officers to the scene of the hanging fifty feet South of the Westerly extension of Grand Central Avenue. His linen was cleaner and he wore collar and four-in-hand cravat of light color, the whole showing him to be much neater in his personal pride than Ficarrotta. His hat, a straw one, had fallen two feet to the side of his body.

The Hold-Up

Albano and Ficarrotta late yesterday afternoon were arrested on a charge of having been parties to the attempted assassination last week of J.F. Easterling, the assistant bookkeeper, now at the Gordon Keller Memorial Hospital as a result of a bullet wound inflicted at that time.

Albano was the first arrested. He was taken from a group of Italians in West Tampa by Deputy James Keaggin, who is constable in the West Tampa district. He smiled when told as the officer of the charge he was wanted on and declares he had no fear as to the outcome of the case.

Ficarrotta was next arrested and as remarked that he didn't "give a d---m" on what charge he was arrested, also intimating that he would come clear.

Marshal Logan of West Tampa worked with Mr. Keaggin in the case. They made the arrests on information from the sheriff's office that H.E. Easterling, son of J.F. Easterling has sworn out warrants for both men.

Sheriff Jackson sent W.E. Evans as a deputy to convey, the men from West Tampa to the county jail and Mr. Evans deputized Captain Bryan, whom he met on the way to go with him after the men. Captain Bryan is in command of Heights Fire Station No. 9 and he willingly asked to accompany Deputy Evans, yesterday being his day off from duties. The two officers rode to West Tampa in a hack driven by Will Lowe.

Get the Prisoners

Ficarrotta and Albano were surrendered to these officers and in the same hack Evans, Bryan, Albano and Ficarrotta started for the return to Tampa. These officers after conference with Marshall Logan and Deputy Keaggin chose the return route via Howard Avenue to Grand Central Avenue and thence direct to Tampa.

Both officers declare that while driving on Howard Avenue and only an eighth of a mile from the intersection of Grand Central and Howard Avenues, and still within the limits of the City of West Tampa they were halted in the shadow of several pine trees.

Lowe, the driver and Evans were in front. Captain Bryan with the prisoner, who had been handcuffed before the start, were in the rear seat. Albano was seated on the knee of Captain Bryan while Ficarrota was at his side.

From the shadow of these pines a score of men halted the hack. The two horses were stopped. The officers with guns at their ears, were relieved of those in their charge and in moment, the crowd had disappeared into the night going rapidly in three autos toward Grand Central Avenue and West on that thoroughfare.

Deputy Evans discharged his revolver four times and then, with Bryan and Lowe, rode rapidly to West Tampa. They secured Marshal Logan and Deputy Keaggin and with Sheriff's Office and the Tampa Police informed the officers started on the hunt for the abductors.

On the way to the intersection of Grand Central and Howard Avenues, the party passed twelve or fourteen people, these speaking in broken English, Italian and Spanish. These declared the abductors had gone West with their prisoners in automobiles and the next people encountered were Police Chief Woodward, C.F. Aulick and others in machine. This was stopped and the Police Chief, Marshal Logan, Deputy Keaggin and Mr. Aulick in auto started out in pursuit.

To Rocky Point

Messrs. Evans and Bryan did not make this trip. The officers in the auto, in the hope of overtaking the people in the three autos, went as far as Rocky Point and it was not until their return trip that they discovered Albano and Ficarrota hanged from the tree.

Albano's white shirt attracted the attention of the officers in automobile. Investigation and discovery followed in a moment.

The news quickly spread. Immediately the scene of the hanging was visited as rapidly as automobiles and other conveyances could carry the occupants.

The hanging occurred between 9 and 9:30 o'clock and it is the supposition of the officers, who made the journey to Rocky Point, that the hanging must have been quietly enacted while they were on their way. The hold-up part must have gotten in their vengeance while hiding in the woods.

All Through the Night

The men were left hanging all through the night. At 9 o'clock this morning Justice Boyett will conduct an inquest. Constable Keaggin last night empanelled the following jury, which viewed the remains through the light given out by a lantern and which will assemble at the inquest this morning: Foreman, Clint Gibbons, A.B. Turner, Steve Kissinger, F.A. Rust, Will Regar and J.F. Lee.

Other than the rope, tracks having been dimmed through the great number of foot prints about the place, officers up this morning had their only clue as to the perpetrators although Police Chief Woodward, Marshall Logan and Deputy Keaggin believe they will be able to get something more like a clue today.

Will Lowe, the hackman, believes he could identify an Italian, who participated in the release of the prisoners. The statements of all the officers appear later in this story.

Leave Relatives

Angelo Albano spoke English fluently. For the past six months he has represented a Tampa insurance agency in West Tampa. He is survived by a mother, brother and sister. He was 25 years of age, about six feet in height and handsome.

Ficarrota is survived by a wife and several children, including a beautiful daughter of about 20 years old, and a number of cousins, resident of West Tampa. The group formed an interesting circle at the two trials in which Ficarrota was on trial in connection with the assassination of G. Ficarrota, former president of the City Council of West Tampa, wholesale grocer and one of the most prominent members of the Latin-American colony.

All these relatives were apprised of the tragedies before midnight.

Among troubles Albano is alleged to have figured in was that of several attempts to burn the home of Mr. and Mrs. Oates in West Tampa several years ago, the attempts finally proving successful and he was also accused of having been implicated in an attempt to poison a small daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oates.

Ficarrota, so far as can be ascertained, had no regular employment and both he and Albano were regarded with fear among some of the Latin-American population, this being held as possible reason for the hanging of last night in which several nationalities had representation.

It has been intimated frequently that both men had taken an active part in affairs of the so-call "black hand" society.

A Quiet Affair

The quietness with which the capture of the two men was affected by the lynchers is shown through it being within limits of West Tampa. The same silence is shown to have existed through the hanging having occurred on a main artery of travel leading westward from Tampa.

The historic Oak, where the men apparently died easy, the tongue of neither protruding from his mouth, is within half a mile of several homes and within a mile of a well populated section of West Hyde Park.

Easterling Not Informed

J.F. Easterling, who was shot last Wednesday afternoon in front of the Bustillo factory, where he was returning to work, and who has since been confined in the Gordon Keller Memorial Hospital, for the attempt on whose life the two men lynched were arrested, was not informed last night of the exciting events of the evening. He slept most of the night and his nurses did not think it advisable to wake him. He will be informed this morning, when he probably will be shown the newspaper accounts of the affair.

At first hovering between life and death, his life for several days hanging in doubt, Mr. Easterling has steadily improved until it is now certain that recovery will take place in due course of time. Mr. Easterling's condition has been very satisfactory for the past several days. He has slept well during the night and has been able to take nourishment freely. The nurses and physicians attending are satisfied with the progress which their patient is making and are eagerly, as is himself anticipating the day when he can be discharged from the hospital.

Deputy Sheriff W.E. Evans, formerly of the city detective force in whose custody and that of Deputy Sheriff Bryant the prisoners were when they were held up by the mob, made the following statement before going to the scene of the lynching with the coroner's jury:

Statement of Evans

"Following the instructions of Sheriff Jackson and Chief Logan, of the West Tampa Police, Deputy Sheriff Bryant and myself proceeded in a hack with the prisoners toward the county jail, where they were to have been incarcerated. We were all talking together pleasantly and Ficarrotta was joking about being arrested, saying that they hadn't been able to convict him when he was tried for the murder of his cousin, G. Ficarrotta, and he would not be convicted this time either."

"Suddenly the hack was surrounded by twenty-five or thirty people and every man had a gun of some kind. I saw that something was up and shouted to the driver, Will Lowe, to whip his horses up as fast as he could. By that time two men had grabbed the horses, and another man who looked like a Cuban, put his pistol to the driver's ear and made him hold up his hands. I don't know who the man was but the driver says he can identify him if he ever sees him again. Then two big men, bigger than I am, jerked both prisoners, who were hand-cuffed together, bodily out of the hack."

Covered by Pistols

"My companion and myself could not move because we were covered by a score of pistols, but as soon as we could disengage ourselves from the mob, I ordered the hackman to gallop his horses back to the West Tampa City Hall as fast as he could. The place where the mob surrounded us was on Howard Avenue near Grand Central, where a clump of pine trees throws a thick shadow across the roadway. As soon as we could get back to the City Hall I notified Sheriff Jackson and Chief Woodward to send help, and we proceeded back to the place, accompanied by Marshal Logan and Constable James Keaggin."

"We met Chief Woodward and several men in an automobile and began searching the road but could not find any trace of the men or the mob. Some one on the road told us he had heard four pistol shots some time before, but those were the shots fired by myself to summon aid. When we were held up I noticed two automobiles beside the road. We followed their tracks or the tracks of some other automobiles, until they left the main road and went into the woods. Thinking we were on the wrong scent, we returned."

"Those of the mob whom we saw appeared to be foreigners and not Americans. I don't remember seeing an American in the bunch or anyone that I knew."

Surprised at Affair

Marshal A.C. Logan of West Tampa, who came to the City Hall in Tampa in company with Constable Keaggin, Chief Woodward and Deputy Sheriff Evans to secure a coroner's jury said:

"After their arrest we had the men in jail in West Tampa, but it was thought advisable to move them to the county jail. I had Mr. Evans leave with them in a hack about 9 o'clock. We were surprised when Evans returned and reported that the man had been taken away from him. We stopped a group of men by the side of the road in front of the Samuel L. Davis cigar factory and asked them if they knew anything about the affair. They said the mob had gone in the direction of Rocky Point. I know some of the men we were talking to. They were Cubans and Italians."

"Ficarrotta and Albano were arrested in connection with the shooting of J.F. Easterling. We have one eye witness who saw Albano fire the shot which struck him. Ficarrotta ran away right after the shooting. They are charged with attempting murder."

Constable James Keaggin told the following story of the affair:

Did Not Suspect

"I arrested Castenge Ficarrotta and Angelo Albano about 6 o'clock for shooting Easterling. We have been on their trail and trying to get enough evidence for some time. The prisoners were put in the West Tampa jail until such time as convenient to remove them to the county jail, which it was decided to do after dark. There was no demonstration when the men were arrested. No one appeared to be interested. I thought everything was all right and when one or two people asked me what we were going to do with the men I did not hesitate to tell them that they would be removed to the county jail later. The men who asked me about it were Cubans and Italians."

Chief of Police Woodward said: "When I was notified of the hold-up from the city hall, West Tampa, I went to the scene in an automobile, meeting Marshal Logan, Deputy Sheriff Evans. We searched the roadway for some distance, going to Rocky Point and back, but all the crowd had dispersed. Returning we saw the two men hanging to a tree, back to back, handcuffed together. They had not been shot but evidently died from strangulation. Ficarrotta still had his derby on and had an old pipe in his mouth. Then we came back to get a coroner's jury."

An Alleged Murderer

Castenge Ficarrotta was charged with the murder of his cousin, G. Ficarrotta, a prominent wholesale grocer and president of the West Tampa City Council, who was shot down in front of his house at 8 o'clock on the evening of April 10, 1909. The first hearing of the case in Circuit Court ended in a mistrial. On second trial Ficarrotta was acquitted. The State made out a strong circumstantial case but Ficarrotta defended himself with the alibi which is usually made use of in such cases. During the trial Hugh C. Macfarlane, the West Tampa promoter, who is now a member of the Board of Public Works, of this city testified that Ficarrotta had offered to kill man as half payment on a lot worth \$400. Col. Macfarlane was indignant and kicked him out of his office.

Albano was connected with the second Ficarrotta trial because of his persistent attempts to get himself appointed interpreter. State Attorney Phillips was suspicious and would not allow him to serve in that capacity. Albano is alleged to have been associated with Ficarrotta in different ventures. He is said to have left New Orleans very suddenly after the outbreak some years ago in which the Chief of Police of that city was assassinated. Ficarrotta is believed to have left New Orleans about the same time.

Quick Telegraph Service

Within four minutes after a "flash" was sent out from the Tribune last night over the Associated Press wire to all sections of the country, a message had reached Tampa over the wires of the Postal Telegraph Cable Company's wires from the New York Herald to the local correspondent in the office asking for full details of the lynching. Within the space of twenty seconds the "flash" went to every corner of the Associated Press leased lines, and the Herald was quick to respond.

A bulletin giving a brief statement of the facts followed the "flash" over the Associated Press wires, which was followed twenty minutes later by the full story with detailed statements from the officers and a history of the Easterling shooting and the troubles leading up to it. At the same time a complete story was telegraphed to the New York Herald over the Postal lines and was rushed through immediately. That made some of the quickest wire service in the history of the country.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – SEPTEMBER 22, 1910

QUIET AGAIN REGINS; PROTEST OF ITALIANS BRINGS INVESTIGATION

STATE TROOP READY, IF NEEDED TO MAINTAIN ORDER

Governor Gilchrist Telegraphs Sheriff Jackson – Victims of Double Lynching Buried

Quite reigned yesterday, following the exciting events of the evening before, in which two Italians, Castenge Ficarrotta and Angelo Albano, were lynched by a mob of unknown men, and there was hardly a ripple of disorder or uneasiness which indicated that anything unusual had happened. Officers deemed the quietude remarkable and were convinced that all trouble for the present is over. The lynching was widely discussed in all sections of the city. The well-known reputation of Ficarrotta divorced all sympathy, while the fact that Albano is known to have fired the shot which struck Easterling convinced many that the summary treatment handed him was more effective than that usually given through the courts.

The coroner's jury, which had been empanelled the night before, met yesterday morning at 9 o'clock with Coroner J.J. Boyett, at the place where the lynching occurred. The bodies were still hanging just as they had been left. A number of photographers also put in an appearance, taking views which found a ready sale at various down-town stands during the day. During the morning hours, and previous to the time the bodies were cut down by the coroner's jury, the place was thronged with hundreds of people, eager to see the work that had been accomplished by the mob, which had been graphically told them through the columns of the Tribune.

Necks were Broken

County Physician Hamblin made a minute examination of the bodies at Albano and Ficarrotta. He declared that the necks of the two men had been broken, the members of the mob having allowed the bodies to drop the necessary four to six feet. Thus death was instantaneous, and did not come from strangulation, as is first supposed. A wound caused by a pistol shot was discovered in the abdomen of Albano when the two bodies were stripped of clothing in the offices of the Tampa Undertaking Company. It is supposed that the wound was received by Albano because of his vigorous resistance. Ficarrotta had not been shot.

Not having heard of the lynching early yesterday morning the young son of Ficarrotta appeared in the sheriff's office, in the court house, and asked permission to visit his father in the county jail, where he believed him to be. The child was overcome when informed of the tragedy. Several members of the family of Ficarrotta and relatives of Albano were at the scene of the hanging during the inquest. When they beheld the horrible spectacle, they were prostrated, a grown daughter and a young son of Ficarrotta appearing most affected. It was hard for the lad to realize that his father had been taken from him.

Probe Resumed Today

Having heard the testimony of County Physician Hamblin and viewed the bodies, the coroner's jury adjourned until 2 o'clock this afternoon, when the investigation will be resumed. Eight witnesses have been summoned to appear before the body. Judge Boyett declared last night that so far there is absolutely no clue as to the identity of the members of the mob, but that it will be the endeavor of the jury to ascertain this if possible. He admitted that hope of ascertaining the identities of the person was slim.

The bodies of the two men were turned over to their relatives, and a double funeral held late yesterday afternoon. The interment occurred in Woodlawn Cemetery, in charge of the Tampa Undertaking Company, was attended by several hundred people, both friends of the men and morbidly curious. Short services were said at the graves. Although some indignation was expressed by Italians over the lynching, there is believed to have been a great deal of relief felt, as it is alleged that Ficarrota and Albano were generally regarded as assassins and were feared by the Italian people.

Italian Officials Protest

Consul General Cav. C. Papini, representing the Italian government, yesterday read of the lynching in the Associated Press dispatches sent out by the Tribune. He at once telegraphed Consul John Savarese, of this city, instructing him to make a formal protest to Governor Gilchrist and to ask that protection be furnished for Italian subjects. Consul Savarese was ill, but the matter was attended to by Vice Consul R.A. Scotti. Consul General Papini also telegraphed the Italian ambassador in Washington. The matter will be taken up officially, with the possible result that a formal protest will be made by the Italian government.

Governor Gilchrist replied to Vice Consul Scott at once, informing him that measures would be taken to protect Italian citizens and that a full investigation of the affair would be made. To Sheriff R.A. Jackson Governor Gilchrist at 2:57 o'clock yesterday afternoon sent the following telegram:

Tallahassee, Sept. 21, 1910

"R.A. Jackson, Sheriff, Tampa, Fla. – It is reported to me by the Italian consul that two Italian citizens were lynched in Tampa last night and that the lives of Italian citizens are menaced by mob rule there. Answer as to this by wire, and report fully on situation by mail. You are instructed to use every resource at your command to preserve order and protect lives. Telegraph me immediately if necessity arises for military assistance."

A.W. Gilchrist, Governor

Sheriff Sends Reply

To this telegram Sheriff Jackson sent the following reply:

"Governor A.W. Gilchrist, Tallahassee – Two Italians lynched last night. Everything remarkably quiet today. Have situation in hand. Prominent Italians little disturbed. Will keep you informed. Full particulars by mail."

R.A. Jackson, Sheriff

Later Sheriff Jackson sent another telegram, as follows:

Tampa, Fla., Sept. 21, 1910

"Governor A.W. Gilchrist, Tallahassee – Two Italians lynched last night were American citizens."

R.A. Jackson, Sheriff

The information that the two men lynched were American citizens was gained by Sheriff Jackson from Constable James Keaggin. The constable declared that during the trial of Ficarrotta for the murder of G. Ficarrotta he had occasion to see Castenge's naturalization papers. He stated that he was reliably informed by men who knew Albano that the latter was born in this country, and was a native either of New Orleans or of some other city in Louisiana.

Passed as American

State Attorney Phillips, who prosecuted Castenge Ficarrotta in two trials, was asked whether he had ever seen Ficarrotta's naturalization papers. He replied that he had not, but that Ficarrotta had claimed to be an American citizen, and that he had participated in elections. He knew nothing about Albano. Mr. Phillips declared that he had not received a telegram from Governor Gilchrist. He had not heard that the latter had ordered an investigation, and stated that he did not know what the line of procedure would be: Mr. Phillips stated that he supposed that the next grand jury summoned by Judge Wall, at the fall term of the Circuit Court, would be charge to make an investigation, but that his experience was that such investigations usually prove fruitless. He deplors the lynching of the two men and declared mob rule to be a dangerous tendency.

Vice Consul Scotti stated last night that the relatives of the two men lynched had come of him and represented Ficarrotta and Albano as Italian citizens and subject to the protection of that government. The records of the local United States Court will be investigated to ascertain whether the men were naturalized here or not; but if they were naturalized, it is believed probable that they secured their papers in New Orleans before coming to Tampa. It was stated as a precedent that in the New Orleans lynching of Italians some years ago, the Italian Government interested itself in behalf not only of Italian citizens, but of Italians who had been born on their native soil and later been naturalized.

Statement of Sheriff

Asked yesterday if he had anything to say for publication in regard to the lynching, Sheriff Jackson replied in the negative. He stated that when he first heard that the men had been taken away from the officers, he thought the plan was merely to deport them, and was surprised when he later received the news that they had been lynched. He stated that, although he anticipated no further trouble, he was prepared for whatever might turn up and would keep order at all costs.

"Have you any clues as to the members of the mob?" he asked.

"I do not think it advisable to discuss that," he said.

"But you will bring the guilty parties to justice if you can?"

"Most assuredly."

No More Arrests

Constable James Keaggin, who arrested Ficarrotta and Alban Tuesday afternoon was asked to discuss the case.

"We have no clues that we can discuss" he said. "The men who did the job were Americans. The attack was entirely unexpected. Had we known of it we would not have attempted to move the prisoners. We will not make any more arrests at present. We have a number of men under suspicion."

Mr. Keaggin would not say whether the number was seven, as suggested on the note attaché to Albano's feet and declared himself at a loss to know why the members of the mob stated the number of suspects to be seven and how they gained that information.

Whether they were present physically or not at the lynching, a prominent Latin citizen yesterday declared that the summary treatment of the guilty parties had the moral support of a large number of Latin people, who, he declared, are opposed to assassinations.

Marshal Logan last night reported everything quiet in West Tampa and stated that no more trouble was anticipated there. He stated that the police force had been greatly increased.

Ficarrotta's Famous Pipe

The manner in which the breaking of the necks of the two men was brought about by the mob was widely discussed yesterday afternoon, as it takes a drop of from four to six feet to accomplish the result. State Attorney Phillips suggested that the men might have been made to stand on the top of one of the automobiles, which was then driven from under them. Later they could have been strung up higher and the pipe placed in Ficarrotta's mouth.

A pipe, alleged to have been the property of Ficarrotta, was found on the scene of the assassination of G. Ficarrotta and figured in the two trials of Castenge. The pipe which Ficarrotta was smoking when lynched was either the same one, or a similar one to that which figured in the murder trial. State Attorney Phillips declared he could identify the pipe if he saw it again.

Were Expecting Assistance

According to the statement of Will Lowe, who was driving the hack from which the Italians were taken, he believed, when he first saw the mob in front of him on the road, that it was a scheme to release the prisoners, and was being participated in by their friends. The prisoners also seemed to believe this, for they sat watching the mob complacently while the trouble was going on. Later all parties found out the difference. Lowe declares himself and officers were covered by pistols from all sides, and that the members of the mob disguised themselves by some kind of paint on their faces. He declared he considered it the narrowest escape of his life, but that is all happened too quickly to frighten him.

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1910

J.F. EASTERLING IS LAID TO REST

SECRET ORDERS ATTEND FUNERAL IN LARGE NUMBER

Post Mortem Examination Held at the Reed Undertaking Establishment by Physicians

In Woodlawn Cemetery yesterday afternoon, J.F. Easterling who died as the result of an assassin's bullet, was laid in its last resting place leaving sorrowing relatives and friends to mourn his demise. Many wreaths were piled on the grave by friends who had known and loved MR. Easterling during his life time, among them members of secret orders to which he belonged. The funeral, which was largely attended, was conducted from the Reed Undertaking parlors at 2:30 o'clock, the Rev. John F. Porter officiating. Members of the Odd Fellows and Knights of Pythias attended in a body in uniform.

A post mortem examination of the body of the bullet victim was conducted at the Reed establishment yesterday morning by Dr. L.S. Oppenheimer, assisted by Drs. J.D. McRue, W.P. Adamson, A.R. Beyer, T.B. Fitts and Sheldon Stinger. The examination showed the result of the operation performed by Dr. Oppenheimer the day following the shooting to have been satisfactory. The physicians had previously agreed that, as the bullet had not entered any part of the alimentary canal, its lodging place was not a matter of importance, and the examination showed the bullet had located itself in the liver. Death was found to have been caused by a hemorrhage resulting from ulceration of the stomach.

Some uneasiness was felt yesterday throughout the city regarding the possible effect of the death of Easterling on the strained situation which at present maintains in the city and which caused the lynching of Castenge Ficarrota and Angelo Albano, the two men charged with the shooting. Although he did not anticipate any disorders, Sheriff Jackson increased his force of deputies on duty throughout the city in order to be prepared should anything have turned up. As the evening wore on, however, and nothing occurred it became certain that nothing would happen during the night hours which would disturb the peace.

Mrs. Easterling, widow of the assassination victim, has asked the Tribune to print the following card of thanks:

"Will you please express my deepest, most heartfelt gratitude to the devoted friends who have shown such interest in the trying illness of my husband. Especially do I wish to have you tell the good doctors who were so kind and skillful in their treatment of him and the devoted nurse who did not leave his bedside day or night during those terrible weeks. I will never forget them."

"MRS. J.F. EASTERLING"