

By Kathryn Dodd

We continue the January 2019 story with the shooting in 1918 of Otis Myers by Yancy Story in the Krum post office and the trial. Otis Myers, age about 45 years and single was shot eight times and instantly died in the lobby of the post office at Krum shortly before noon Friday. Following the shooting, Yancy Story, also single and living about seven miles northwest of Krum, came to Denton and gave himself up to the officers.

Denton Record Chronicle-June 10, 1918 –Part 3**Preliminary Trial of Yancey Story Is Begun Here Monday****Afternoon Hearing**

L.J. Amons of Krum was the first witness called in the afternoon and he testified to seeing the shooting. He said he was just entering the post office with one foot on the porch when the first shot was fired. He looked thru the glass and saw Otis Myers falling. Myers was facing south and Story east. Witness heard two shots and ran back a distance of 20 feet to the telephone office. While at the office he was Story come nearly to the door and then go back, stooping over and discharging his gun into Myers' body. Myers was on the floor flat on his back. Witness did not hear Story say anything.

On cross-examination, witness said he did not see the first shooting and did not see what the parties were doing before the shooting. He said he had seen Myers early in the morning but did not hear him say anything about Story. Witness had never heard of any difficulty between the two men except a fight several years ago. He did not see the fight but saw Story afterwards with his clothing cut across the back and the sleeve with a knife. Witness said he had heard a great many people say Myers was dangerous and that he told Story about it a month or so ago. Story told witness he did not want any trouble with Myers and was staying out of his way as much as he could. He told witnesses he regarded Myers as dangerous.

Tells of Myers Threats

W.F. Clevenger, rural mail carrier out of Krum, was called and told of threats he said Myers had made. He said he was riding with Myers between Krum and Fort Worth and that Myers remarked: "I am afraid I'll have to get that fellow (Story) someday." "Myers was drunk at the time and I didn't pay much attention to it." Mr. Clevenger said, "And I don't think I told Story about it."

Mr. Clevenger was in the post office at the time of the shooting and told of how he was. He said he was behind the V shaped cabinet dividing the lobby from the work room when he heard the shots. He ran to the door in the cabinet, and look through. He was Myers lying on the floor with his feet almost touching the cabinet under his open box which was at the northeast end of the V. His head was extended north. Story was in the front, outside door but turned and came back, taking a pistol from his pocket, and in a stooping posture shot into Myers' body, emptying his gun. Witness said he did not hear any talking before the shooting and before he got to the cabinet door he heard three shots fired and thought he heard the gun click two or three times.

Note: Could not find any other newspapers online about this story until March 1919 when Yancy Story testified and a verdict was given.

Prior to the testimony on March 27, 1919 about the incident Story explained that he had known Myers for around 16 years. Story was living with his mother north west of Krum. Several years prior he had had a fight with Myers who had used a knife cutting 1 or 2 places on his clothing. Myers never spoke to him after the fight but issued threats through other members of the community. Story eventually moved out of the county for 4 or 5 months just so he was not around Story. He quit trading at Harvey's in Krum because Myers frequented it. Below is Story's testimony about the shooting.

Denton Record Chronicle

March 27, 1919

Events of the Morning

Defendant said he came to town to get groceries for Mexican laborers on his place and a piece for the binder. While in Sewell's store for the binder part, defendant saw Myers across the street. A short time afterward, he thought of a couple of letters he had to mail and went up the north side of the street and crossed to the post office on the south side to avoid meeting Myers. The mail was being put up and the window was closed so he waited for it to open so he could get stamps for his letters. A number of people were in the post office probably 1 or 2. Defendant stood at the northwest corner of the desk on the east wall. The first time defendant knew Myers was in the room was when Myers turned around, facing defendant, one arm extended towards him and the right hand in his pocket. Myers looked at defendant with a vicious look and defendant's first impulse was that he had his hand on a gun. "When he looked at me, I knew the time had come for one of us to be killed," he said. "Then I pulled out the gun and just fired the gun. People began to run out. I did not remember clearly what happened then. It was all like a big dream. The building was full of smoke. The next thing defendant remembered was that he was at Sewell's hardware store and N.C. nail asked him to come to Denton and give up "I did not want to hurt Myers," he said. "I shot to protect my own self. I had heard so much and I knew the man I was contending with."

Severe Cross Examination

Story was given a severe cross examination by County Attorney Hopkins. He said he was 32 years of age and said he did not know whether Otis Myers was dead. He said others had told him he killed Myers. He said he fired the pistol but did not know how badly Myers was hurt. He carried the guns in scabbards-one on each side-but did not remember whether they were attached to his clothes by a hook or a button. The scabbards were left in his automobile when he came to Denton he thought. Defendant said the first difficulty was 3 or 4 years before the shooting and that he did not provoke it... He went over carefully the relative position of himself and Myers just prior to the shooting saying that Myers was 3 or 4 feet away and facing him when he fired the gun. When asked to explain how he shot Myers behind the right ear, he said it seemed as if Myers ducked when he fired. Story said he did not know he had fired a second gun, a 44 caliber pistol until he was at the Byron Brier place on the way to Denton when he reloaded it.

Denton Record Chronicle -March 28, 1919

Jury Finds Yancy Story Not Guilty Of Murder Charge

After having the case in its hands for fourteen hours, the jury before which H. Yancy Story was tried on a charge of murdering Otis Myers at Krum last summer returned its verdict of not guilty at 2:15 o'clock Friday afternoon. The case one of the hardest fought in the local court for some time went to the hands of the jury shortly before 12 o'clock Thursday night when argument closed. Nearly eight hours had been consumed in argument each side having been allowed four hours for discussion. Speeches were delivered by R.H. Hopkins, Ben W. Boyd, W.W. Alcorn, J.W. Sullivan and Alvin C. Owsley for the defense. All of the addresses were heard by crowds that packed the court room.



W.F. Clevenger

Stay Tuned: This will not be the last that the town of Krum hears from the Story family. Stay tuned for the continuing saga in the April and May 2019 Museum Musings articles on this web site.