

Hidden Guns May Renew Virginia Feud as Garrett Boys Face Murder Juries

By BOB DORMAN
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CUMBERLAND COUNTY
COURTHOUSE, VA., Aug. 15.—There
is melodrama here. And the
tense breathlessness of the mounta-
inous feud.

For days the murder trials of the
Garrett brothers have been drag-
ging on in the little brick court-
house, a 108-year-old relic. They
are being tried separately for the
killing of Rev. E. S. Pierce, circuit-
riding pastor of five small Baptist
churches in Cumberland county.

First the trial of Larkin Garrett,
and then of Robert Garrett. The
one already has been spectacularly
halted, a mistrial; Larkin will be
tried again next month, and mean-
while the task of preparing a jury
panel occupies the interval before
Robert Garrett's trial Aug. 20.

The brothers were indicted for
murder—for the death of the min-
ister in a gun duel that followed a
bloody fist fight, while the clergy-
man's wife with her six-weeks-old
baby in her arms struggled to save
his life.

Who Fired First?

Who fired first? Larkin or Bob
Garrett—or the pastor, his skull
fractured, nose broken and face
streaming with blood, staggering
into his house and out again with a
shotgun in one hand and a pistol in
the other?

Pistols are the fear and dread in
the little courthouse now.

Deputy sheriffs, detectives, and po-
lice borrowed from neighboring
towns, patrol the courthouse. Every
man entering the courtroom is
searched for weapons.

There is the dread of a sudden
explosion of the feud that has sepa-
rated this countryside into two hos-
tile camps—such a sudden tragedy
as the melodramatic scene of a few
years ago when bullets flew in a
Virginia courtroom and murder
came swift on the heels of just such
a murder trial.

You must go to fiction to parallel
the scene here now: A sleepy coun-
try village sky; winding roads,
flower-bordered, leading into dusty
Main St.; miles with flopping ears,
elbowing dingy flappers; the general
store where you can buy anything
under the sun, or get into an argu-
ment instantan.

Barefoot urchins and their elders
in overalls perch like birds on the
wooden fence that bars the crowd
from the velvety lawn of the court-
house. The stile is guarded, and
you must have a pass from Judge
B. D. White or from King Adams,
50-year-old sheriff.

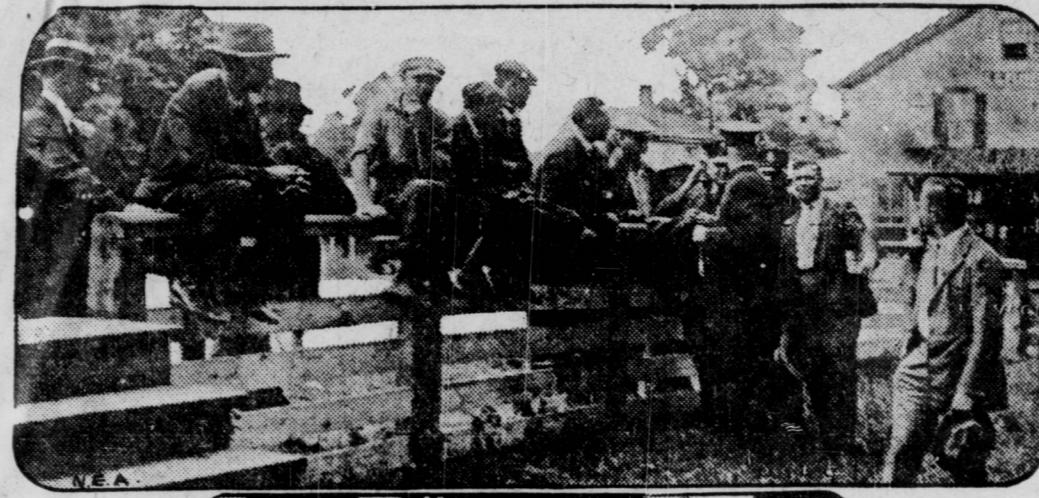
Many Queer Angles

There are many queer angles to
this melodrama of a Virginia village.
Bob Garrett is clerk of the court
trying him for murder, and Larkin
Garrett is chancellor in chancery.
A temporary clerk of courts was
brought from Powhatan County, and
a judge from Princess Ann County.

Politics and family ties make a
tangled skein running through the
machinery of the law. The Garretts
walk about among the deputies and
detectives and policemen, and half
the gathered countryside greets
them with handshakes and smiles,
and the other half stares at them
silently, with grim lips.

Vigilant officers, tense and watch-
ful in this strange scene to which
they have been transplanted, slap
pistol pockets indiscriminately at
the courthouse steps. Few guns
have been found, though—or corn
liquor either—for careful persons
park both at the little hotel, where
seven rooms bulge with lawyers and
partisan spectators.

There is an armistice for the mo-



SCENES AT THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF VIRGINIA FEUD TRIALS. UPPER PICTURE SHOWS SIGHT-SEERS PERCHED ON THE "DEADLINE" FENCE AROUND CUMBERLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE. THE STILE AT LEFT BEING THE ONLY ENTRANCE; BELOW SERGT. H. A. EDEN OF PORTSMOUTH, VA., POLICE SEARCHING A VISITOR FOR WEAPONS AT COURTHOUSE DOOR. PORTRAIT AT RIGHT SHOWS LARKIN GARRETT AND AT LEFT HIS BROTHER, ROBERT GARRETT, BOTH ACCUSED OF MURDER.

ment in the smoldering feud of Cum-
berland County. You observe it best

in the string of idlers sitting on the
wooden fence—perched there like

birds before the storm, waiting for
the breathless thing that may come.

COUNTIES ORDERED TO ALTER FIGURES

Tax Board Demands Equali- zation of Assessments.

Ten counties in the State have been
ordered by the State board of tax
commissioners to equalize their assess-
ments on different classes of property,
following refusal of the county
boards of review to comply with rec-
ommendations made previously. The
complaints and equalization changes to be
made follow:

Burglar Visits During Absence

Albrecht R. C. Kipp, No. 4, the
Sutherland Apts., 525 Sutherland Ave.,

today told police a burglar entered
the apartment while Kipp's family
was away Tuesday. He was unable
to tell what had been stolen.

Government Firearm Stolen

Capt. R. L. Husson, 1305 N. Dela-
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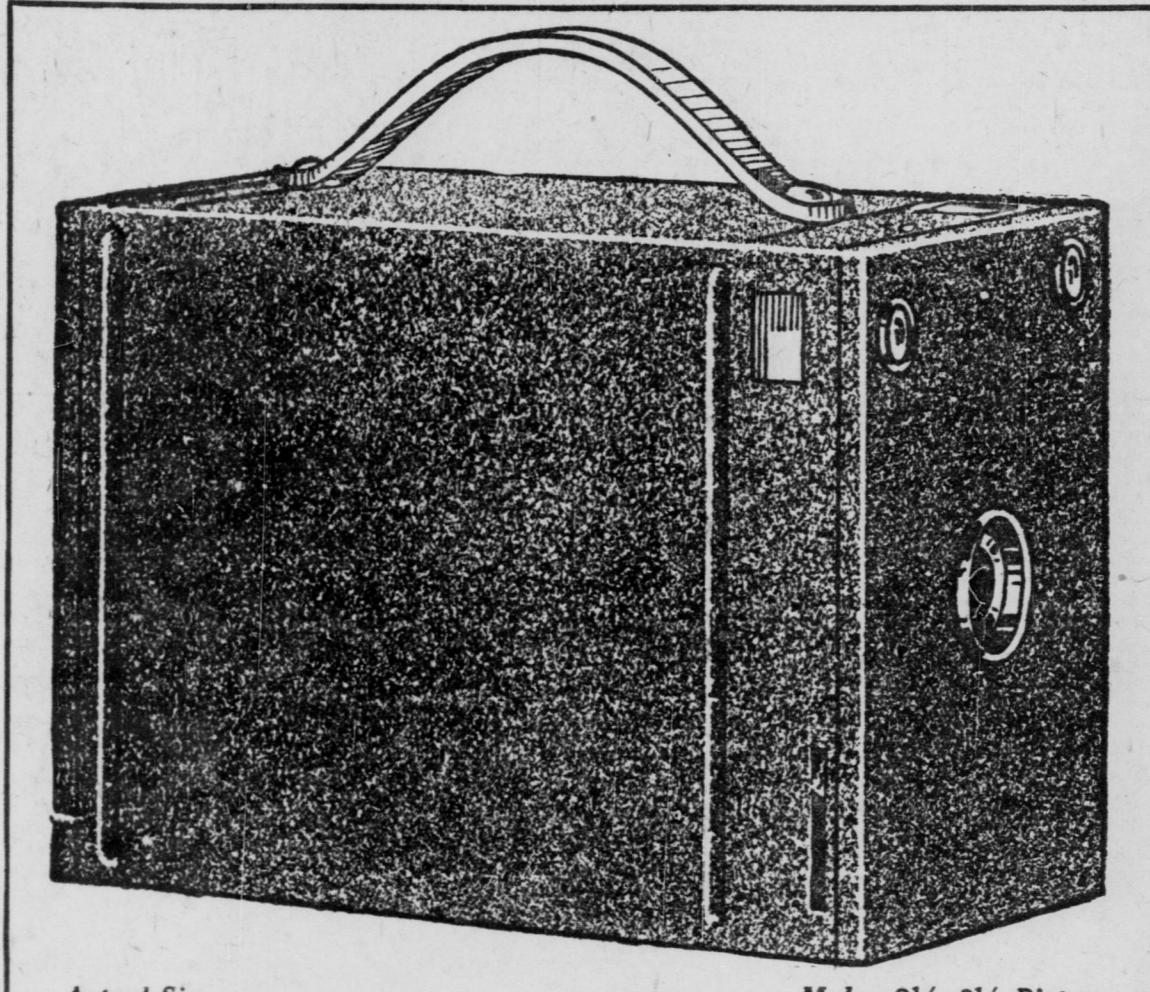
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