

# In the Discharge of His Duties

## THE MURDER CASE OF TROOPER HOWARD F. SPELLICY

Thomas H. Mungeer  
NYS Troopers PBA, President

### The Incident

In the early morning hours of Saturday, Oct. 17, 1925, Troopers Howard F. Spellicy and Edward L. Keely, both assigned to the Troop D Palmyra substation, were patrolling westbound along the Clyde-Savannah Road in Wayne County returning from Auburn where they had attended Cayuga County Court.

Earlier in the day they had been advised by SP Oneida to be on the lookout for a murder suspect possibly en route from Chicago to New York City who might be using the roadways in the area. At about 1:30 a.m. they came upon a parked Ford car that aroused their suspicions near the intersection of Hadden Road, known locally as "Hadden's Corners" or "Italian Hill" about two miles west of Savannah.

As Trooper Keely pulled their open touring car alongside the parked car, a woman suddenly screamed from inside. Keely called out that they were State Troopers but the vehicle abruptly sped away. Trooper Keely turned the troop car around and began a pursuit toward Savannah.

They soon caught up with the car and were able to pull alongside of it and shout a warning to the driver, later identified as Robert H. Brooks, a local 34 year-old threshing contractor and father of six. Brooks ignored their warning to stop and instead tried to evade the Troopers by zig-zagging the car back and forth so they couldn't pass him, twice forcing their car into a ditch. The pursuit took them down Main Street of Savannah before Brooks abruptly turned right onto Spring Lake Road. All the while, Keely sounded the siren and Trooper Spellicy blew on his whistle, but to no avail.

At one point, Keely finally was able to pass Brooks yelling, "We're New York State Police. Stop that car!" Trooper Keely was able to pull the troop car ahead enough and slowed down so Spellicy could jump out and attempt to flag Brooks's car to a stop, but Brooks apparently had other plans because he sped directly at Spellicy causing him to dive into the ditch for safety. Dusting himself off, Spellicy jumped back into the car and the chase resumed.

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DAILY SENTINEL, ROME, N. Y., M

### Trial of Rome Trooper On Manslaughter Charge Opens Today at Rochester

Three Jurors Chosen.

Rochester, April 5.—(P) — Only one juror had been selected by noon for the trial of Howard Spellicy, state trooper in Supreme Court here today.

The juror selected is George Miah of Rochester, a salesman. Admitted prejudice against state troops was responsible for objections to a number of prospective jurors examined today.

Justice Nelson Sawyer is presiding. Among those at the session today was Mrs. Lucy Rotach who was riding with Brooks in his automobile when he was shot. Brooks's widow and his aged father.

Three more jurors were accepted as the afternoon wore on, but it was evident that completion of a jury would require the rest of today and part of tomorrow. Justice Sawyer frequently admonished the attorneys to expedite their efforts, as a heavy calendar is before the court.

Rochester, April 5.—(Special)— Howard F. Spellicy, Rome state trooper, went on trial for second degree manslaughter here this morning.

Noticeably affected, with his face thin and drawn, by the strain under which he had been since October 17, 1925, when he shot and killed Robert H. Brooks, Clyde farmer, the young trooper appeared relieved as the formality of drawing a jury began.

### On Trial



Judge and jury in Supreme Court, Rochester, today were considering the evidence at the case of Howard F. Spellicy of Rome, state trooper indicted for second degree manslaughter for the death of Howard F. Brooks, Clyde farmer, near Savannah on the night of October 17, last.

### Where Spellicy Shot Brooks



Near Savannah, Wayne county, on the night of October 17, 1925, State Trooper Howard F. Spellicy, of Rome, telling his companion, Trooper E. L. Keely of Brooklyn, that he "guessed he would take a shot at one of the tires" of the car ahead, killed Robert H. Brooks, Clyde farmer who, riding with Mrs. Lucy Rotach, had refused during a six-mile chase to stop at the troopers' command.

White streak at left of picture, made by flour on the grass the morning after the shooting, indicates course of the left wheels of the troopers' car. Arrow at left marks hole into which front wheel of troopers' car dopped as Spellicy fired. Arrow at right shows where Brooks car left the road.

Mrs. M. A. Van Dewalker | REV D N ROSWRI.

For six months, news of the Spellicy case captivated the Wayne County area.

As the two cars bounced along the rough road, Spellicy, trying to put an end to this already dangerous pursuit, decided to disable the vehicle by firing at the tires with his Colt .45 revolver. Standing with one foot on the running board of the troop car and the other hooked over the passenger seat, Spellicy fired three times. As he was firing, the troop car hit a depression in the roadway causing it to bounce considerably, which sent one of the shots high and inadvertently

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through the rear of the fleeing car.

The errant shot crashed through the driver's seat and into Brooks's back. Brooks, mortally wounded, slumped over the steering wheel, causing the car to veer into a ditch near a field owned by W.R. Wiles, ending the 3 1/2 mile chase. The female passenger, Mrs. Lucy Rotach, was shaken but uninjured.

The Troopers ran to the vehicle, surveyed the situation and immediately loaded Brooks and Rotach into the rear of their patrol car and sped the mile back to Savannah. They stopped at one house and inquired as to the whereabouts of the local physician and after acquiring directions, went directly to the house of Dr. Ephraim J. Goldman. Unfortunately though, Robert Brooks had died en route. Trooper Keely then phoned SP Oneida from the doctor's office and Lt.

Joseph P. Colligan and Trooper William F. Cassidy arrived a few hours later from Oneida.

### **The Investigation**

When Wayne County Sheriff Frank C. Rich, a lifelong farmer and real estate agent who had just recently been elected to the office, was notified of the shooting seven hours later, he immediately called District Attorney Wilford T. Purchase who demanded he respond and begin an investigation.

Rich, accompanied by Deputy Jeremiah "Jerry" Collins, headed to Savannah only to find that Brooks's body had already been removed to the premises of undertaker Reginald R. Stevenson. When he arrived there he found Lieutenant

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Colligan and Troopers Cassidy, Keely and Spellicy watching Coroner George D. Winchell and Dr. Goldman perform an autopsy on Brooks.

The Sheriff later stated that he "inquired who had done the shooting and a Trooper pointed out Spellicy." Then according to the Sheriff, "Lt. Colligan told the Trooper to stand down" and then the Troopers refused to answer any more of the Sheriff's questions including who had been Spellicy's partner.

According to later testimony by both Rich and Collins, Deputy Collins then saw Mrs. Rotach sitting off to the side and as he knew her personally, he began to speak to her and she stated she had been with Brooks when he was shot. "Let's step into the other room and talk this thing over," Collins said. At that, according to the Deputy, Lieutenant

Colligan directed the Troopers present to block the two from leaving the room. "I'm going to talk to this woman and all the Troopers at the Oneida barracks can't stop me," Collins allegedly told them. At that time, supposedly Sheriff Rich placed his hand on Colligan's shoulders and informed him that, as Sheriff of Wayne County, he was in charge of the investigation, and at the first sign of interference he would take Colligan and any other Troopers interfering to the jail and lock them up.

Sheriff Rich and Deputy Collins then took Mrs. Rotach to the law office of Edward M. Harvie and deposed her. Afterward, despite protests by the Lieutenant and what was described later as a very heated exchange, Sheriff Rich placed Spellicy under arrest for murder in the first degree.

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Later that night, he was arraigned before Justice Kent Whipple in Savannah during which he admitted that he had shot Brooks, but refused to tell why, stating that he had already reported those facts to his superior officers. Trooper Spellicy was subsequently committed to the Wayne County Jail in nearby Lyons without bail and Sgt. John Cosart later brought Spellicy some civilian clothing and took his uniform back to Oneida.

A three-way investigation into the shooting was begun by State Police Headquarters, the New York State Attorney General's Office and Wayne County authorities. Sheriff Rich was quoted in the Syracuse Herald that the "State Police flatly refuse to aid in the investigation" and that Spellicy had admitted to the shooting. He further stated that Troopers who had any knowledge of the incident were

ordered "not to say a word." District Attorney Purchase simply stated, contradicting Sheriff Rich, that Spellicy "admitted nothing."

Inspector Albert B. Moore, conducting the internal investigation from Albany, released a statement that Trooper Spellicy had "fired while in the discharge of his duties" and "accidentally" killed Brooks. Deputy Attorney General George V. Fleckenstein released a statement that his office conducted an investigation into the case and was satisfied that "no crime had been committed."

Sheriff Rich apparently did his best to try the case in the media and fan the flames of public opinion against the Troopers. He told a local newspaper that after Trooper Spellicy was placed under arrest he would not talk or "in

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any way explain why he shot down a farmer apparently innocent of any crime." He also released Mrs. Rotach's Oct. 17 statement to the press.

In her written statement, Rotach stated she had gone to get medicine for her children in Savannah when she met up with her neighbor, Robert Brooks, who offered her a ride home. A few minutes after he dropped her off, Brooks knocked on the door and stated that his car was stuck in a ditch and he needed her help to get it out. After freeing the vehicle, she decided to go for a ride with him. She further stated that she saw the two Troopers following them and she brought that fact to Brooks's attention.

She said the Troopers drove up next to them and made a remark she couldn't understand and then dropped behind again. "Why are they following us?" she said she asked

Brooks. He replied, "They're not State Troopers, just some friends of mine trying to have a little fun with us. I'm not going to let them kid me." She said they continued their leisurely drive into Savannah at about 25 miles per hour with the Troopers following them. After they turned onto Spring Lake Road, she was startled to hear a sharp whistle followed by two gunshots.

Initially, Spellicy was represented only by Deputy Attorney General Fleckenstein but he decided to also hire his own counsel, James T. Cross of Rome. As Trooper Spellicy was only a three-month veteran of the Troopers at the time of the shooting, his yearly salary was only \$900. By the goodwill of family, friends and his fellow Troopers was he able to secure enough funds to hire Cross. The choice of Cross was a wise

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one. He was from Spellicy's hometown of Rome and he was a former state Assemblyman and Deputy Attorney General.

The more strategic move was the retention of Fleckenstein. Not only was he an able attorney who once had a law practice in the nearby village of Clyde in the town of Galen, the same area that Brooks and Rotach were from, but he was also a prominent member of the Wayne County Republican Committee, along with District Attorney Purchase and Sheriff Rich.

This fact was important because in small town politics there are two types of people - locals and outsiders. The Troopers were clearly the outsiders as Spellicy had grown up in Oneida County, Keely was originally from Brooklyn and Lieutenant Colligan was born in Manhattan. Fleckenstein therefore was a familiar face in the tight-knit farming community where families had lived among each other for generations.

### **The Inquest**

The coroner's inquest the following week was probably the biggest event that took place in Savannah in some time. It was supposed to take place in the law offices of Mr. Harvie but because of its popularity it had to be moved to the Town Hall board room. Besides the state and county officials, 16 reporters representing several newspapers as well as 20 curious onlookers crammed the 30' x 15' room beyond capacity.

Despite public pronouncements by the Sheriff that the State Police refused to testify, Troop D Commander Capt. Stephen McGrath accompanied Trooper Keely to the hearing and allowed him to participate. The Clyde Herald reported that, "Mrs. Lucy Rotach, a comely, poorly dressed woman of 24, whose face told of worry and fear, was the first witness called."

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Her testimony, which contradicted some points from her Oct. 17 statement to the Sheriff's Department, lasted nearly an hour. One thing she added was that she clearly saw a uniformed Trooper hanging out of the car pursuing them and she stated that Brooks said he wasn't pulling over because he hadn't done anything wrong. She was followed by the testimony of Dr. Goldman, Undertaker Stevenson and finally, Trooper Keely.

Trooper Keely testified about circumstances and the events that unfolded that fateful night, giving the first official public rendition of the events. He stated that Trooper Spellicy tried to halt a desperate and reckless driver by shooting at the tires of his car. When they ran up to the car after the shooting, Spellicy gasped upon seeing Brooks's condition, "My God! That last shot must have gone wild when you hit that bump back there!"

After Keely's much anticipated testimony, Attorney Cross stated at the end of the inquest that, "If Trooper Spellicy is held for this shooting, every member of the New York State Police should resign. This shooting is purely accidental and there is absolutely nothing criminal about it."

Coroner Winchell didn't waste any time and filed his report on Oct. 24 with the Wayne County Clerk. It stated,

*"Robert H. Brooks came to his death about 1:30 o'clock on the morning of Oct. 17, 1925 in the town of Savannah, County of Wayne and State of New York. I find by the testimony and autopsy that the death was due to a bullet wound to the heart. I find that the bullet was from a gun in the hands of one Howard Spellicy, a state trooper."*

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### **Legal Proceedings**

Attorney James Cross made an application for bail before Justice Adelbert P. Rich (unknown if he was related to the good Sheriff) on Oct. 31 at a special term of Supreme Court in Wayne County, but it was denied two days later. For the next four weeks, Spellicy sat in jail waiting for the grand jury to convene on Nov. 16.

On Nov. 23 the grand jury finally rendered the verdict; Spellicy was indicted on manslaughter in the second degree. Two days later, despite the objections of the District Attorney, Spellicy was finally allowed to be released on \$5,000 cash bail after spending 40 days in the county jail. He immediately returned to Rome to his parents' home and later was allowed to remain on duty at Troop D Headquarters in Oneida.

Cross's next step was to try and change the venue of the trial to Monroe County, based on the local public outcry of the shooting and his client's probability of getting a fair trial diminished mostly by the actions of Sheriff Rich and the small town political forces. The local paper, The Clyde Herald, tried in one instance to take a responsible journalistic view of the situation and printed, "Charges, counter charges and more or less accurate stories have arisen since the tragedy with the result that the real facts and truth in the matter will not be known until legal action takes place." The Herald, however, printed in a year-end review of local events about the time Cross was making his change of venue application, "Oct. 17 - Robert Brooks, Lockpit farmer, murdered by State Trooper Howard Spellicy."

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On Dec. 26, Supreme Court Justice Benjamin B. Cunningham granted the change of venue to Monroe County. He stated that he was granting the request not because of alleged prejudice against the State Police but rather that the general belief throughout Wayne County was that Trooper Spellicy was guilty of a crime. Sheriff Rich, apparently not one to keep his feelings to himself, told the Clyde Herald two weeks later that he estimated that the transfer of the Spellicy trial to Rochester would cost the taxpayers of Wayne County an extra \$20,000.

### **The Trial**

Staring at a possible 15 years behind bars, Trooper Howard Spellicy went on trial in Rochester the following April before Justice S. Nelson Sawyer. The prosecution was led by District Attorney Purchase and assisted by Lyons

attorney Edson W. Hamn. Trooper Spellicy was represented by Cross and Fleckenstein.

Right from the start there was controversy. District Attorney Purchase alleged that Oneida County Deputy Sheriff Ferdinand Baker and a Rochester-based detective agency attempted to tamper with the jury by speaking to them about the case. Although the charges were never substantiated, Judge Sawyer did sequester the jury for the duration of the trial. Newspapers from across the state closely followed the trial as it had long ranging consequences of not only a man's guilt or innocence, but also the verdict would help to establish the duty and power of a New York State Trooper.

The trial began on April 7 with attorney Hamn opening for the prosecution. He stated that because Robert Brooks

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thought his friends were having some fun with him that fateful night instead of State Troopers, he was now "in his grave and State Trooper Howard Spellicy is on trial" for his death. He also read the indictment returned by the Wayne County grand jury accusing Spellicy of causing Brooks's death "without authority, willfully, feloniously, and with culpable negligence."

The two main witnesses were Lucy Rotach and Sheriff Rich. The Sheriff testified that Trooper Spellicy admitted to him after the shooting that he did not have a warrant for Robert Brooks and therefore had no right to stop his car. Although it was reported that she gave "damaging testimony" against Spellicy, Mrs. Rotach rehashed the same story of a leisurely night ride that ended in tragedy once again. She stated under cross examination that she and Brooks were

on the side of the road at that early hour engaging in talk of farming and "pulling beans." After Dr. Goldman's medical testimony and the entering of Brooks's bloody clothing as evidence, the prosecution rested.

Trooper Keely's testimony formed the backbone of the defense but Lieutenant Colligan created an uproar by submitting into evidence two bottles containing wine that he stated he found in Brooks's car. The wine, according to Colligan, was a possible reason why Brooks had refused to pull over as it was illegal to possess during the Prohibition as per the Volstead Act. It had been tested by a Syracuse chemist, who certified that it consisted of 15.39 percent alcohol by volume. Dr. Goldman also testified that he saw the bottles of wine on Oct. 17 after the Troopers had confiscated it.

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Lieutenant Colligan also submitted into evidence a bottle of medicine found on the passenger side of Brooks's car indicating that Rotach never returned home as she previously testified. District Attorney Purchase vigorously tried to have the evidence suppressed because he believed he and Sheriff Rich were in charge of the investigation and as such, any evidence should have been turned over to them; however, he was unsuccessful.

Captain McGrath and newspaper reporter Harry Glenn both testified that they saw a depression in the roadway which measured 8 inches deep, which apparently caused one of Spellicy's shots to go astray. Also, a parade of well-to-do people testified to Spellicy's good character including Rome Mayor Jeremiah H. Carroll, former Oneida County Sheriff Fred S. Weiss and Ernest L. Springs, vice president

of the Rome Manufacturing Company, the company for which Spellicy worked before joining the Troopers.

Trooper Spellicy then took the stand to begin his long-awaited testimony but before he could go into too much detail, a court observer died suddenly and court had to be adjourned until the following day.

When Spellicy began for a second time he recounted his and Trooper Keely's day previous to the shooting. He told of returning from court in Cayuga County, stopping for dinner at a restaurant in Port Bryon and of watching traffic on the side of the road in Savannah, cognizant of the BOLO. He then went over the events immediately preceding the shooting in great detail. He described how the car was bounced about and he did not realize that he had shot

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someone until he ran to Brooks's car, expecting to arrest him for reckless driving but instead he found a mortally wounded man.

After the defense rested the prosecution called several new witnesses and recalled several others for rebuttal. Hamn's aim was clear - he pointed toward a State Police cover-up in the case and tried to cast a pall over the Troopers' credibility.

Raymond Bixby, Savannah highway commissioner, disputed the Troopers' description of the condition of the roadway. Farmer Clarence I. Bryon testified that he had driven between Port Bryon and Savannah about the time the Troopers stated that they had done the same and he did not see them either driving or watching traffic in Savannah. Bryon also stated that he saw Brooks sitting alone in his car at Hadden's Corners.

Alfred B. Johnson stated he was delivering milk in Savannah about the time the Troopers stated they were there but he failed to see them. Lucy Rotach denied the testimony of both Troopers Keely and Spellicy that she screamed while in Brooks's car, that the Troopers never passed their car and ordered Brooks to halt and denied that the medicine found in his car was her property. Perhaps the most puzzling testimony which left the Troopers flabbergasted was that of Port Bryon restaurant owner and Savannah resident Milo R. McNair, who denied the Troopers' statement that they had eaten at his establishment that night.

After eight days both sides rested. James T. Cross, in his summation, told the jury that "vague and unidentified testimony without any proof had been offered by the

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people to tarnish [the Troopers'] characters." He stated that Lucy Rotach, the prosecution's star witness, had consistently changed her account of what happened that night and thus had no credibility. She had attempted to "save face" with her neighbors and with Mrs. Florence Brooks, whom she had known her whole life, because she had been caught in the early morning hours with a married man. She was "maliciously lying to save her face in the presence of the widow of the man with whom she was riding on that night; to save her face in the neighborhood," he explained. Additionally, he credited his opponent Edson W. Hamn with a "power of superlative sarcasm that made it impossible in his presence not to think something must be wrong somewhere." Cross contended the trial grew out of "the indignation of a newly

elected sheriff who sought to vent his jealousy at an alleged invasion of the prerogative of his office.

"The whole Department of State Police, yes, every peace officer in this state, is on trial today," Mr. Cross told the jury. "Every law abiding and respecting citizen in the state is awaiting your verdict. If you find Howard Spellicy guilty of the crime indicated here, it will be impossible for any city or county to obtain for officers any except the spineless, the type entirely devoid of courage." Lastly he added, "If you convict the defendant, officers will permit every desperate man to escape and the law will fall into ridicule." Trooper Spellicy, "your servant and mine, was doing only his duty and yet you are asked to brand him with everlasting disgrace."

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Afterward, the Clyde Herald reported that both sides seemed to think they prevailed and the jury was left to decide whether "it was a justifiable accident performed in the line of duty" or if "Spellicy exceed his authority."

On April 15, 1926, after deliberating for only an hour and a half, the jury answered that question and acquitted Trooper Howard F. Spellicy. His father, a former Rome policeman, was at his side when the verdict was read. Spellicy thanked each jury member by shaking their hand and then with his fellow Troopers in tow, hurried to send a telegram to his mother who awaited the decision at their home in Rome. "This verdict shows," he declared as he departed the courtroom, "that a man has nothing to fear if he does his duty and tells the truth."

Judge Sawyer thanked the jury for the patience they displayed "under disagreeable circumstances." He also stated

it was unfortunate that the "case involved a contest between officers of the law" and that when there is such a contest the "lack of unity of purpose [was] regrettable."

Afterward, attorney Cross declared, "Spellicy is a real man. I have never seen anyone hold himself together so well while his fate appeared in doubt." He added, "This decision, the only fair and just one according to the testimony, will maintain confidence in the state constabulary in its effort to preserve law and order by lawful and proper means."

Spellicy's hometown newspaper, the Daily Sentinel opined, "His character unimpeached. His judgment justified, his faithfulness as a State Trooper commended, he emerges a victor from a six months' legal battle to clear himself... So Spellicy may return to the Oneida barracks, safe in the

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knowledge that his uniform cannot be taken from him. He has held the confidence of his commanding officer, Capt. Stephen McGrath, and of his associates from first to last. Never has he been relieved of duty... In a broad sense, the Spellicy verdict upholds the authority of the State Police. The defense professed to see in a possible verdict of 'guilty' a weakening of the state's structure to prevent crime."

### **The Aftermath**

With the trial ended, several Troopers stated that although they harbored no ill feelings toward District Attorney Purchase and the other Wayne County authorities, they did not feel that way toward Edson Hamn. They cited Hamn's closing statements in which he made several sarcastic remarks and insinuations directed at Trooper Spellicy and they were particularly angered that Hamn referred to him as a "yellow dog," or a coward.

Immediately following the trial there was an uproar among the citizens of Wayne County. Charles H. Betts, editor of the Lyons Republican newspaper and former New York state assemblyman from Wayne County, publicly criticized the verdict of the jury which he said was "contrary to the law and the evidence and was a miscarriage of justice." He also cited an earlier case in which a Trooper shot and injured a woman (Trooper Joseph R. Cannon on Dec. 29, 1925) outside

the village of Malone under similar circumstances and was convicted and sentenced to 13 months in prison while Spellicy killed a man and walked away "scot-free." It is no wonder that the Lyons Republican had constantly added to the rhetoric associated with the shooting and trial the previous six months.

Within days, Wayne County Assemblyman Harry A. Tellier introduced two bills resulting from the local agitation caused by the trial. The purpose of one bill, according to Tellier, was to attract a better quality and more mature applicant to the Troopers. It would raise the starting pay of a Trooper from \$900 to \$1,200 per year and fix the minimum age of enlistment at 25 years. Wayne County officials commented that the "present age [of] 21, allows youths to enter [State Police employment] who should not be allowed to carry guns under the conditions whereby Troopers operate alone, free from the restraining eye of superiors." It should be noted that both Troopers Keely and Spellicy were over the age of 25 when the Brooks shooting occurred.

While the first bill never gained any ground the second bill did and changed New York state policy as it allowed for a citizen to file a claim for damages against the state. The bill's intent was to empower Mrs. Florence Brooks, widow of Robert, to take a claim against the State Police to the Court of Claims. At this time, the law did not allow such

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an action. Gov. Alfred E. Smith signed this bill into law later in the year and Florence Brooks, who was already separated from her husband at the time of his death and was left with six children, ages 2-12, to care for, sued the state of New York. She subsequently was granted a \$36,000 judgment by the Court of Claims on Jan. 23, 1929.

### **The Participants**

The widow Florence Brooks moved to Newark, Wayne County after the trial and later to Palmyra where she was engaged in farming. She was living in Lyons in 1947.

Lucy J. Rotach was back in the newspaper just two weeks after the end of the trial but this time she was in local court charging her husband, Charles, with assault and non-support. Her attorney was Edson Hamn. She was separated from her husband and living with her five children, ages 2-11, on Lockpit Road in Galen, Wayne County in 1930.

Wilford T. Purchase was the Wayne County District Attorney from 1918 until 1930. He was a former justice in the village of Newark and resided there until his death in 1952 at the age of 78.

Edson W. Hamn was a native of Lyons, Wayne County, N.Y. He was a member of the New York State Assembly from Wayne County from 1906-1909. He maintained his law practice in Lyons where he served as a self-proclaimed "simple, country lawyer" until his death in 1945 at the age of 83.

Frank C. Rich served one term as Wayne County Sheriff from 1925-1927. He was a farmer and real estate agent, which he resumed after his law enforcement stint. He was the town of Butler supervisor from 1916-24. He died in 1937 at the age of 62 in Wolcott, Wayne County.

Jeremiah Collins served as either Sheriff or Deputy of Wayne County over a 51-year career with the Sheriff's Office. He retired in 1933 after his third separate term as Sheriff (1907-1909, 1913-1915, and 1931-1933). He died in 1939 at the age of 83 in Lyons, Wayne County.

James Thomas Cross was a native of Rome, Oneida County, N.Y. He was a member of the New York State Assembly from Oneida County 3rd District, 1910-1912 and a justice of the New York Supreme Court 5th District, 1936-1948. He died in office on Aug. 8, 1948 at the age of 63.

George V. Fleckenstein was a native of Rochester, N.Y. but conducted a law practice in Clyde, Wayne County during the early 1920s. He was a WWI veteran who served in France and Belgium. In 1924 he was named a deputy assistant

attorney general by Attorney General Albert Ottinger. He died in 1966 at the age of 72.

Joseph P. Colligan was a Camp Man joining the State Police on June 20, 1917. He spent the first part of his career in Troop A and rose in rank from Trooper to Corporal to Sergeant. He was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned to Troop D. He resigned on April 1, 1927. He died on April 12, 1982 in Winter Park, Fla. at the age of 86.

Edward L. Keely joined the State Police on Feb. 1, 1923 at Oneida, Troop D and resigned with the rank of Sergeant on Feb. 1, 1928. He later became an inspector with the New York State Board of Medical Examinations.

William F. Cassidy served as a Trooper from 1921 until he resigned and was appointed Chief of the Scotia Police Department on April 10, 1931. He retired in 1953 and died on March 25, 1978 at the age of 84.

Howard Francis Spellicy was born on Feb. 12, 1898 to William and Elizabeth Welch Spellicy of Rome, N.Y. He starred on both the football and baseball teams while attending Rome Free Academy. As captain and end of the Rome Free Academy 11 in 1917 he proved himself one of the greatest leaders and wingmen in the school's history. He later played first base in the Rome Industrial League where he was regarded as the best at his position in the area.

He initially worked as a toolmaker for Rome Manufacturing Company for five years before joining the New York State Police on July 15, 1925 at Oneida, Troop D. Following his acquittal, he remained active and was the President of the New York State Police School, Class of 1927. He was subsequently promoted to Corporal and then Sergeant. During a long and illustrious career he worked in many of the stations around Troop D besides the aforementioned Palmyra station including Oneida, New Hartford, Port Bryon, Sylvan Beach, North Syracuse, Pulaski, Auburn, Aurelius, Weedsport, Hamilton, East Herkimer and Phoenix. He retired on May 15, 1951.

After retirement, he continued to reside in Oneida and was employed as a security guard at Bristol Laboratories and at Vernon Downs. He died in Belle Glade, Fla. on Nov. 2, 1957 of an apparent heart attack while traveling to visit relatives. He was survived by his wife, Margaret McCandrew Spellicy, a son, Terrance M. and a daughter, Margaret Ann. He was predeceased by a son, John in 1953. He is buried in St. Helena's Cemetery in Oneida. □