

4-1-1980

## A Maine Lynching: The Violent Death of James Cullen at Mapleton, 1873

George S. Rowell

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rowell, George S.. "A Maine Lynching: The Violent Death of James Cullen at Mapleton, 1873." *Maine History* 19, 4 (1980): 207-226. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal/vol19/iss4/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).

A MAINE LYNCHING  
THE VIOLENT DEATH OF JAMES CULLEN  
AT MAPLETON, 1873

In the early fall of 1858, the editors of the Maine newspapers were invited to visit Aroostook County. Maine was then losing her population by the steady and large emigration to the West, and it was imperative that something should be done to attract the attention of Maine people to her own large resources, and particularly to her broad and extensive acreage of fertile and unoccupied lands, and, if possible, to turn this tide of emigration and keep our people at home.

Aroostook County was then an almost unknown country. While our citizens were more or less acquainted with the many and varied attractions of the Far West, this large tract of available farming land was practically unoccupied, and it was deemed essential to bring before the people a knowledge of its great value and make known to its citizens the many advantages of settling in their own state. The late E. H. Elwell, Esq., has already given the story of this excursion, as well as the one twenty years later, in a most valuable and interesting pamphlet published by him in 1878 — a book teeming with interesting facts and incidents. It is only therefore necessary to state that from this small beginning dates the rapid growth and prosperity of this large and flourishing county. From that time, its population and development have rapidly increased, and today, the whole region is dotted with flourishing villages, and here one will find as good farms as anywhere in our country. Its lands have been appropriated by the hardy farmers, and they have indeed caused “the wilderness to bloom and blossom like the rose.”

In riding along its roads, the eye is everywhere greeted with flourishing farms, and, if your visit is in the early fall, these fields will be loaded with growing crops, which, for extent and abundance, will surprise you at every turn. The large extent of this country (nearly as large as the whole state of Massachusetts), the fertility of its soil, the intelligence of its people, the general prosperity and enterprise of its towns, its rapid increase of population, all tend to make it the pride of Maine citizens, and it well deserves the title of "the Garden of Maine."

I remember well the editorial excursion of 1858, as my father, Maj. E. Rowell of Hallowell, was a member of the party and, on his return, was full of enthusiasm and gave us glowing accounts of the beauties and attractions of this almost unknown land. One day, soon after his return, a man came into his office and asked him if he really believed all he had published in his paper about the wonderful fertility and resources of Aroostook County, saying, "I am going up there, move my family, give up my business, take up a farm in this wilderness, and, if you have misrepresented things in your paper, *I will make it hot for you.*" My father assured him that all he had written was true and that he was ready to stand by it. The man left Hallowell and, with his family, went to Aroostook. He was a truckman, a poor man, who, with the help of his sons, was able to make a living, but he and his boys were rich in "days' works," and they felt that if my father's stories were true, they could live better on a farm than toil as he had all his life for a mere living. Twenty years afterwards, I visited the man, accompanied by my father. He took us over his large and beautiful farm which, by his own labor and that of his sons, he had hewn out of the forest: broad acres teeming with bountiful crops, situated on the banks of a stream on which he had built a saw mill. As he pointed with pride to his beautiful farm, stretching out as far as the eye could reach, he said to my father, "I never made a

better move in my life. I am perfectly satisfied, and I owe this prosperity to taking your advice.” That was Mr. Freeman L. Ball, after whom the flourishing village of Ball’s Mills (Mapleton) takes its name. His sons still live there, honored and respected, as well for their father’s forethought and courage as for their own integrity and honest worth.

The wonderful stories told by my father no doubt biased my mind and early awakened in me a desire to see the wonderful land, and to this is due, no doubt, the fact of my early visit and residence in Aroostook. It was in the winter of 1866 that I first saw this promised land. I was working in the *Kennebec Journal* office at Augusta during my college vacation when I was offered the position of school teacher in Ashland, then called No. 11, which I accepted. Never shall I forget the long, cold ride. Starting from Bangor in a sleigh, we were four days, – long days, starting early in the morning and riding until late at night – before we reached our haven. Ashland was then, as now, a small village, which in the winter was bustling with life, as all the supplies for the lumber camps in that region were hauled through the village, and the hotel was the last stopping place for the teams before entering the woods. This hotel was filled with lumbermen and drivers of the “tote teams” as they were called, and to me their stories of life in the woods were a revelation, and many hours were pleasantly spent in listening to them.

Immediately on my arrival at Ashland, I visited the country store, just opposite the hotel, to make some needed purchases. As I entered, I heard voices behind a pile of barrels which divided the store, and one man said, “I understand that they have got one of those green apple sass Kennebeckers for a school-marm in our district.” This was a terrible blow to my sophomoric pride, for I certainly expected, coming as I did into this far-off country, fresh from college, that I should be the wonder of the town.

Crestfallen, I went behind the barrels where the men were conversing and told the old gentleman who had made the remark that, after traveling due north for four days, I had not expected to be greeted as a "green Kennebecker." I afterwards learned that "Kennebecker" was the name for a green countryman, and it originated from the large black bags which the men carried with them into the woods and called "Kennebeckers." On returning to the hotel, I was asked if there was anything new "outside," – which puzzled me until I found out that all the world except the county of Aroostook was called by the inhabitants "outside" and the term "outsiders" is still applied to strangers.

The winter passed very pleasantly. My school consisted of thirty scholars, and I had thirty-one classes, from A.B.C. to Latin. As this was my first school, I had dreaded the examination which was then required in order to get a certificate to teach. I knew I was decidedly rusty in some of the studies that I should be required to teach. It was, therefore, with fear and trembling that one evening after I had been teaching three or four weeks, I was requested to appear before the school committee at the corner store to be examined as to my qualifications for teaching. I found the committee at the store and awaited the ordeal, which I had so long dreaded. The chairman asked me if I could play checkers. I told him that I did not play a good game but knew how to move the men after a fashion. He insisted that I should play with him, and I was badly beaten every game. Then the other members wished to have the pleasure of beating the "school-marm," which they did without much effort. We played for over an hour with much the same result, – I always being the defeated party. One of the committee asked me if I ever smoked. I told him I did, and, thereupon, they all had a smoke, some cheap cigars being furnished at my expense. "Do you drink, young man?" Fearing that I should be obliged to

again treat the crowd, I answered evasively, "Not often." The evening passed in telling stories, until at nine o'clock, one of them said, "Well, I must get home." "Wait a minute," said the chairman. He went to the desk and wrote a certificate, reading, "Having examined, etc., we find the bearer capable and well-qualified to teach school in District #1," and each of the committee signed the document and went their way. Thus passed the dreaded examination. After school closed, I liked Aroostook so well that I left college and became the editor of the *Aroostook Pioneer*, then published in Presque Isle.

During the presidential campaign of 1868, it was my good fortune to exercise the right of suffrage among the good people of Aroostook, and many were the incidents which will long be remembered. Party spirit ran high here, as it did all over the country, and almost every evening the "good people" were addressed by orators of one or the other political parties who did their best to fire the hearts of the voters and present their cause in the most favorable light. How well some of the people understood the issues that were at stake in the campaign will be shown by the mention of a few incidents which occurred.

It will be remembered that the people of Maine were called upon to vote on a constitutional amendment permitting the assumption of the war debts of the cities and towns by the state on the same day that they voted for governor. At the town hall in a certain village, while watching the people as they assembled on election day and listening to their heated discussions, I was called one side by a Republican who anxiously inquired if I had voted. Upon learning that I had not, he asked me if I was going to vote "Yes" or "No" on the question of *assuming the rebel debt*. He said he was never so surprised in his life as he was to see men who had upheld the government in the late war, and even men who had served in the army, voting

for so infamous a proposition as the assumption of the debt contracted by rebels in their attempt to destroy the government.

In the heat of the campaign, Grant clubs and Seymour clubs were organized all over the county. There was one club composed of some twelve or fifteen members, all of whom fully believed the only salvation of the country lay in the election of Horatio Seymour to the presidency, and only one of their number could read. Every Saturday evening, they assembled at the schoolhouse, and, as none of them could make a speech or even say a word in discussion, they agreed that the evenings should be occupied by reading the newspapers and appointed the member who had better "book larning" than the rest were blessed with to become the reader. The literature selected was the Bangor *Democrat*, and night after night the faithful assembled and listened to the *truth*, congratulating themselves that they were not as other men, Radicals, Black Republicans, and Treasury thieves. One night the learned gentleman was not present and so the meeting adjourned, as they had nothing to do, and nobody to do it for them.

After the election of Governor Chamberlain by an overwhelming majority, the canvass in Maine was neglected by both parties, and when the presidential election day came, many towns in the county were not even supplied with votes, and, on that account, many were prevented from voting, some not knowing whom to vote for. In the town of -----, a man came to the polls with a written ballot, which he had obtained in a neighboring town, and a gentleman of the opposite party took pity on him and wrote him enough ballots to supply his party, and he went on his way rejoicing. One old gentleman said he thought the county commissioner ought to be sued for not

furnishing tickets and, to my certain knowledge, consulted with an attorney in regard to the matter with the intention of commencing a suit.

It was said that one man in another town, being determined to vote, and knowing, if he did so, he must supply his own ticket, copied the names of several candidates for Congress from a New York paper and voted this as his presidential ticket.

An eloquent stump speaker, whom I heard during the campaign, after a long speech, concluded with these words: "Now, gentlemen, do your duty. Vote for God, Grant, and the Government, — Christ, Colfax and the Constitution!"

I have thus given you a few incidents of personal events that occurred during my residence in Aroostook over forty years ago for the purpose of serving as an introduction to the story of a terrible tragedy which took place in that county and, indeed, in the town in which I lived while I resided in Aroostook. It was, I think, the first and only case of Lynch law ever executed in our state. It is not even for the purpose of trying to justify in the least Judge Lynch but, rather, simply and briefly to tell the story of the crime and the swift and merited punishment dealt to the perpetrator of it.

It was a beautiful May day in the year 1873. Three or four of the citizens of Presque Isle were gathered around the stove in the drug store of that village when a man came in and breathlessly exclaimed, "Gran. Hayden has been murdered in a camp up in Mapleton!" In a little while the whole village was the scene of intense excitement, and, without delay, parties were formed to scour the woods in search of the murderer. They armed themselves with every conceivable weapon, and before noon, fifty men, divided into small parties, were dispatched in every direction. Mr. Granville A. Hayden was one of the deputy



sheriffs of the county and one of the best known men in the village, — a man loved and respected by all who knew him. The sudden announcement of his murder fell like a pall upon the little community. The long distance to the camp and the deep snow in the woods, at that time nearly four feet, made it difficult to learn any particulars until late in the day. Business was entirely suspended and hundreds of teams started for Ball's Mills, the nearest settlement to the lumber camp where the murder was committed. The story of what took place at the lonely camp in the woods on that May night was afterwards given at the inquest held over the bodies of the murdered man and the murderer.

On Saturday night, April 26th, the store of David Dudley at Ball's Mills, Mapleton Plantation, was broken into and a small amount of goods stolen therefrom, probably valued at about ten dollars. A warrant was issued on Monday for the arrest of James Cullen, upon whom suspicion fell, and Deputy Sheriff Granville A. Hayden of Presque Isle started Monday night in search of Cullen. Arriving at Ball's Mills, he learned that Cullen had left that place, and Tuesday, in company with Thomas Hubbard and M. Bird, started on snowshoes in pursuit of him. Just after dark, they arrived at a camp in the woods, which proved to be the home of a man named John Swanback, a settler who had lately taken up a farm here, having migrated from Hallowell, and here they found Cullen.

Nothing took place during the evening worthy of mention except that Mr. Hayden called Cullen out of the camp and, it is supposed, told him that he had a warrant for his arrest and hinted to him that if he would leave the country, he would not trouble him. This, however, is mere conjecture, as there is no means of knowing what conversation took place between them. On entering the camp, the only remark was made by Cullen who said,

“Boys, are you ready for the route?” meaning, no doubt, the route back to the mills. After this, they all retired to rest. The following description of the camp may be of interest and is vouched for by Bird, one of the witnesses of Cullen’s crime.

John Swanback’s camp was situated in the plantation of Chapman three miles from the road and about seven miles from Ball’s Mills in Mapleton Plantation. It was, therefore, about fourteen miles from Presque Isle. It was built of dry cedar logs covered with splits. It was about thirty feet long and sixteen feet wide. A long partition divided the camp into two rooms of about equal size. There were two doors, one on the north end, and one on the south. The murder was committed in the south room, on the west side of which was a fireplace, and in the northeast corner, a bunk. Swanback and Bird occupied the bunk, and Cullen laid on the floor at the foot of the bunk while Messrs. Hayden and Hubbard were near the door.

Swanback testified at the inquest that after going to sleep, he was suddenly awakened by a crash. He jumped from the bunk, rushed to the door, and kicking down the stick which held it, made his escape out of the camp. On waking, he had seen Cullen standing between Hayden and Hubbard with an axe raised and evidently about to strike them again. Swanback, finding that he could not get away from the camp without snowshoes, laid down in the snow a short distance from the camp. In a short time, he saw Bird and Cullen come outside, and Bird began to throw snow on the camp, which was then on fire. When he saw that Bird was not killed, he went back to the camp, and Cullen said to him; “If you ever tell what I have done, I will follow you and kill you.” Cullen then took Swanback one side and asked him if he thought Bird would tell. Swanback said he thought not. Cullen answered, “If I thought he would, I would kill him.” The murderer then commenced to roll out flour and provisions that were in

the burning camp. Swanback was a German and had occupied this farm for about a year. He was a cripple, and it would have been impossible for him to have contended with Cullen. Cullen was a tall, stout man, weighing over two hundred pounds, of sandy complexion, with red hair and whiskers. He was a villainous looking man and was feared by the people generally where he lived. He came from the Province of New Brunswick where he had committed some crime and did not dare to return. For two years, he had been the terror of the little community where he lived. He was a coward and would not have dared to attack the men if they had been awake. His brothers, who afterwards came to Presque Isle to learn the particulars, said, "Jim was the best one of our family." One of the brothers was afterwards sent to state's prison, serving a sentence for murder.

Bird testified that upon being awakened by Swanback, who had to jump over him to get out of bed, he saw Cullen with the axe raised. Cullen turned towards him with an oath and struck at him with the axe but missed him. Bird said he was so near him that he felt the wind on his face as the axe descended. "Jim," he remonstrated, "Don't strike me." Cullen answered, "I won't. You've got my word." Cullen then turned and struck Hayden and Hubbard again on the head with the axe. Bird followed Cullen, who still had the axe in his hand, out of doors. Cullen then began to carry wood into the camp, and, in a few minutes, it was on fire. Swanback then came back, and Cullen made them both swear that they would never tell what he had done. He then called Bird one side and asked him if he thought Swanback would tell. Bird replied, "No, I will warrant him." Cullen said, "If I thought he would, I would kill him."

Bird was a mere boy, of small stature, and, of course, no match for Cullen. Neither of the men had any weapon, and, alone in the woods, three miles away from any living

person, with a fiend, they both took the only chance for their lives by promising never to reveal this awful deed. Soon after, Swanback and Bird both made their escape, leaving Cullen still at the camp. They made their way to the village of Ball's Mills on snowshoes where they told the story, and parties were immediately dispatched in pursuit of the murderer.

There is no means of knowing how long Cullen remained at the camp, but, from the fact that his victims were nearly consumed, the general opinion was that he must have put them on the fire and piled wood upon them until he thought he had destroyed all evidence of his crime.

Cullen was at last found at his own home near the village. He hid himself in the cellar, and a man who did not know what fear meant entered the cellar alone and secured the villain. He made no resistance and was taken to the mills. He had not been in the house fifteen minutes when he was arrested. On entering, he handed his wife a paper to read, which is supposed to have been the warrant that Mr. Hayden had for his arrest, and ascertaining what it was, he burned it. A jackknife belonging to one of the murdered men was found in the possession of Cullen's little child. It was also thought that the money about their persons was also taken, but it was never found. Mr. Hayden had some \$75, and Mr. Hubbard, about \$50.

In conversation, while under arrest and confined in Dudley's store in Mapleton Plantation, Cullen was asked if he killed Mr. Hayden. The murderer answered, "Yes, and I am glad of it." He denied that he cut their heads off and would not tell what he had done with the bodies. He said they were both buried but would not tell where. He also said he wished his child was dead. To every one that he talked with, he made the confession that he did the deed and was glad of it. He said that he swore to himself that

night that he would kill them. He did not sleep but watched his chance. Getting up, he went across the camp, kicked the fire, saw that no one moved, then seized the axe and committed the awful deed. All the time he was under arrest, he seemed insensible to remorse and exulted over the grief of the bereaved community. He said the only thing he was sorry for was that he had not had a chance to kill others whom he named. He said he did not care what they did with him. He had broken out of Houlton jail twice and could do it again.

The continued bravado of Cullen and his utter want of remorse for his awful deed enraged the people to an uncontrollable degree. He was fettered with ropes and for several hours was confined in the store where he was visited by hundreds of people. Some told him to his face that they were going to lynch him and that he had better prepare himself for death, for he would never live to see another sun. To all these threats, Cullen answered, "You dare not harm me. I am not afraid. I wish I could only be free a little while as there are a few more men that I would like to kill." This talk of the murderer so enraged the crowd that it was with the utmost difficulty that the sheriff was enabled to restrain them from doing injury to the prisoner. The party, which had started for the camp immediately on hearing of the murder, returned about dark. They had found the camp still burning. They also found a few bones, the only remains of poor Hayden and Hubbard, which they brought to the mills in a small salt box. When the enraged people saw these relics, their anger knew no bounds. It was then known that Cullen had remained at the camp and piled wood upon his victims' bodies until they were entirely consumed, excepting a few bones.

All during this May afternoon, the excitement, not only at the store in Mapleton, but also at the village of Presque Isle, increased and the people poured in from the

surrounding country. Many were the schemes proposed for the summary vengeance to be dealt to the murderer, and each one suggesting some new outrage until reason was out of the question. People everywhere were for revenge, and scarcely a word of remonstrance was raised, but all seemed to add fire to the zeal of those who proposed vengeance. It was evident that it was impossible to restrain the crowd, and long before the sun set, all knew that the murderer's doom was sealed. The great fear was that, with ungoverned rage, they might torture the victim and add further disgrace to the deed and thus outrage the public and call upon the community the punishment of outraged law. The utmost that could be done was to try and restrain the mob. If vengeance must be meted out by taking the law into their own hands, it should be free from all torture, — decently and in order. To this end, many of the least excited people devoted themselves, seeing that they could not prevent the crowd from taking vengeance. They would not listen to anyone who suggested that the authorities were able to punish the murderer. No, he had bragged that he could break jail, and he would do it. He should never leave the town alive. This was the talk, and, as the day waned, the fact became more and more evident that Judge Lynch should claim his victim.

It was still daylight when the officers with a guard of half a dozen men started with the prisoner for Presque Isle. During the afternoon and early evening, men visited the various houses and stores in the village and said, "You'll be there tonight, sure." "Be on hand about dark, as possibly you may be needed." This was all, but each man understood the summons. So sure was I that the execution would take place that I had partially penned my despatches, which I sent out on the next morning to the "outside" papers.

As the darkness gathered, frequent horsemen were seen on the Mapleton road, hurrying as if on some important

errand. Strange to say, there were no two near enough to recognize each other, but, singly and alone, each horseman sped to the rendezvous. The village was nearly deserted, excepting by a few who, from fear or infirmity, remained behind, anxiously awaiting the result.

When the sheriff and his force had proceeded about a mile from Ball's Mills, just as they had arrived at the top of a long hill, they were suddenly encountered by a party of disguised men, numbering, the officers afterwards said, about a hundred. These men were carefully disguised, having handkerchief ties around the lower parts of their faces, which effectually hid their features. As the pung containing the prisoner and his guard reached the top of the hill, men suddenly sprang out of the woods which lined the road, and it seemed as if the whole wood was alive with them. Overpowering the guard who made scarcely any resistance, one of the boldest of the lynchers sprang into the pung, and in a second, adjusted the rope, which had the regulation hangman's knot, around Cullen's neck. At a given signal, the rope suddenly tightened, and the huge body of the murderer was dragged a rod or more to the tree over a large branch of which the rope was adjusted and shot up into the air. To secure him in the pung, holes had been bored through the board floor, and his feet fastened with rope to them. At the sudden pull of the rope, the board remained dangling to the victim's feet. This rope was manned by many hands, and, silently, they accomplished the work. Among the guard was a doctor. When the lynchers thought the victim must be dead, they called upon the doctor for his opinion. Lowering the body, the doctor felt his pulse and said in a quiet tone, "He is dead, but I guess you better let him hang a little longer." The party was so well disguised that no one knew his neighbor, and, as soon as they were satisfied that the murderer was dead, they scattered in every direction, and, in ten minutes, there was no one in sight but the

officer and his men, while hanging to the tree, in the full sight of the road, was the lifeless body of the murderer Cullen. The mob, in their unrestrained anger, had dealt out punishment by taking the law into their own hands.

When the party went into the camp, they took with them a large box for the purpose of bringing the bodies of Hayden and Hubbard, which, as has been shown, was not needed, as a small salt box was large enough to hold all that remained of the men after the cruel murderer had finished his hellish work. This box was on a team behind the sheriff's party, and, as soon as the lynchers had dispersed, the body of Cullen was placed into the box. It being too small, the body was crowded into it without regard to consequences. When the party had proceeded a short distance, another crowd (smaller than the first) was met who intended to inflict torture of some horrible kind upon Cullen, and, if they had met him first, his death would not have been so easy and, no doubt, would have been one of horrid cruelty, as they were uncontrollable and gave not a thought to future consequences of the rash act. When informed that Cullen was already dead, they too scattered in the woods.

On arrival at Presque Isle, the body of Cullen was placed in an unoccupied store and, in the early morning, was viewed by one Swede who went in to see him, expressed his indignation of the crime by spitting in the dead man's face. Never has it been my lot to see a whole community so excited, and I never wish to see so pitiless a crowd again. Pity there was none and, as one and another viewed the lifeless body, expressions of approval were unanimously offered. Judge Lynch was, for the time being, the synonym of Justice. And yet the crowd was composed of law-abiding citizens, men who usually would have been loath to approve such a deed, but the provocation, the deep grief, and the fear of some escape for the murderer



so wrought upon them that they viewed the lynching as a measure of justice. Afterwards the verdict of nine-tenths of the people was that it served him right. No attempt was ever made to find out who were the perpetrators of the deed, and the general public, while not feeling like saying that the Lynch law was ever justifiable, quietly acquiesced in the severe measure in this case.

About nine o'clock in the forenoon, the authorities placed the body in a punga and started with it towards the cemetery, intending to bury it there, but they were quietly informed that if they did so the mob would dig the body up and burn it; that they would not have the villain buried in that place. Thereupon the procession turned back and again deposited the body in the store.

The village newspaper, early in the morning, came out with an extra deploring the event and stating that the lynching was done by a party of roughs from neighboring towns and that none of the citizens of Presque Isle were concerned in the matter. The editor called upon the United States Marshal to come and investigate the facts and punish the perpetrators of the base deed, which, he said, had brought a lasting disgrace upon the town and county. I met him on the street about four o'clock in the morning, and he was in a perfect rage and even prohibited me from sending anything about the matter to outside papers that would in the least indicate that Presque Isle people had anything to do with the matter. My despatches had already gone, a horseman taking them forty-three miles to Houlton where they were telegraphed to the paper I represented.

As soon as the extra was on the street, the editor was informed that he must suppress the edition and not allow any such matter to appear in his regular edition. When he objected, he was told if he did not comply, not only his office but even his house would be destroyed by the

enraged people who would not for a moment let such an expression of disapproval be published to the outside world. After such vigorous arguments, the editor concluded that discretion was the better part of valor and complied with the request.

Never have I passed such a day of excitement as was that. Throngs of people from all the neighboring towns filled the little village. The streets were crowded with excited people, and it was a critical time indeed. For the least spark was liable to kindle a fierce fire. In the excitement, the crowd was likely to perpetrate any deed of violence against any one who questioned their authority or criticized the deed. One young man, I remember, would say as he met some one whom he thought he recognized, "You were there last night." He was told that if he did not keep a closed mouth, he would get himself into serious trouble. After this warning, there was no such talk. I never heard one man say that he was present at the hanging, and, years after, the subject of the actual presence of anyone was never mentioned. Even if there had been an investigation, it would have been impossible to have obtained facts, and no jury could have been drawn that would have been able to have convicted the persons, if they had been found out.

The authorities were informed that in order to proceed legally it was necessary to hold an inquest upon the body of Cullen, and they sent to Fort Fairfield for a coroner who, on arrival, called an inquest. The verdict of the jury was "that James Cullen came to his death by being hung from a tree in Mapleton Plantation, by some party or parties, to the jurors unknown." After the inquest, it was thought, for the sake of decency, that the body should be furnished with a robe, but, on application at the various dressmaking shops, no lady would make it, and so some of the men formed a sewing circle and manufactured the robe. Cullen's body was then taken to a swamp, a little outside of

the village, and buried in a clump of bushes a few rods from the road on state land. A few days after, the head was severed from the body and sent by express to a professor of phrenology who offered the princely sum of five dollars for the same. Thus ended one of the most terrible tragedies ever enacted in Maine.

A few days after the hanging, two men visited the village who expressed a wish to visit the grave of Cullen. They said they came from Cullen's residence, which, by the way, was a place on the border line between Maine and New Brunswick called "Rogue's Roost," a resort of a hard set of men who had escaped from New Brunswick and did not dare to return, fearing arrest for past crimes. At the grave, they made some threatening remarks and intimated that Jim's friends would take vengeance for his sudden taking off, remarking that Jim was the best of a large family of boys and that his punishment was unjust, etc. They afterwards said they were the brothers of Cullen. On their return from the grave, they went into one of the stores and appeared to be looking round for some purpose or other. The proprietor who knew them and had heard of their threats went to a reel of rope in the front of his store and commenced unwinding and measuring off rope. At last, he appealed to the bystanders, holding up the rope and making slip hangman's knot, to know if that was enough rope for two. The two brothers cast a frightened look at the man and, without a word, left the store. Hurrying through the village, they never stopped until they were miles away, and travelers that arrived at the village inquired what the matter was with those frightened men they met on the road.

It was rumored that a party of Cullen's friends from "Rogue's Roost" were planning to burn Presque Isle and thus avenge the death of their friend. Vague rumors were spread that a large party of men were seen in the woods

around the village, but these rumors could not be traced to any reliable source. For weeks after the event, many people in the village kept their lights burning all night and there was a general timidity about being out after dark, especially by the women and children. But, in a short time, the fears of old women and cowardly men were laughed at, and the village quieted down to its normal condition. The demoralizing effects of this event were apparent for a long time and, no doubt, caused the death of another criminal who, a few years after, was shot near Caribou by a party who were trying to arrest him. But happily, the event did not call for any further violence, and the people were not again attempted to take the law into their own hands. If ever Lynch law was justifiable, it certainly was in this case, and, as it proved, it was the best thing, as it saved the county a large bill of expense and did not materially injure the morals of the people. The general verdict all over the state was that it was the best thing that could have happened, and there was not even a remonstrance raised in any of the public journals or by any prominent citizen that I have ever heard of.

The limb on which Cullen was hung was cut into small pieces, and one was sent to the late Judge Goddard and also to other advocates of capital punishment. The rope was taken to Boston where it was distributed in small pieces to friends of the traveling man who bought it.

*George S. Rowell was born in Hallowell on March 18, 1846, the son of Major Eliphalet Rowell, the publisher of the Hallowell Gazette. Like his father, Mr. Rowell was a veteran of the Civil*

*War. He attended Colby College, Class of 1869, but did not graduate, preferring instead to pursue a newspaper career. In 1889, after working for several Aroostook County journals, Mr. Rowell became the owner and publisher of the Portland Advertiser which was subsequently merged with the Evening Express in 1910. At the time of his death on November 19, 1933, Mr. Rowell, an avid student of Maine history, was thought to possess one of the largest private libraries in the state.*