

The Murder of Marjorie Church Logan

By Mitchell M. Schwartz, Village Historian, July 2022

On the morning of July 24, 1946, residents in Flower Hill would be jarred awake to the news that a murderous madman was on the loose.

That morning, 23-year-old Ward Beecher Caraway, a butler at a Flower Hill estate, broke into the estate of William John Logan, who had served as the 2nd Mayor of Flower Hill, between 1931 and 1937. Once inside, Caraway confronted Marjorie Church Logan, William's wife. Caraway then shot and killed her after he demanded money from her.

Caraway then proceeded upstairs, into the bedroom of Marjory Jeanne Logan, their daughter, assaulting her and shooting her twice. Despite being seriously injured, Logan was able to flee the home and get help from Theodore Click, a painter working at a nearby home; she ultimately recovered.

By the time the authorities arrived on the scene, however, Caraway had fled and was nowhere to be found. An intense investigation then began, and a large search for the "stare-eyed" suspect, whom authorities were still trying to catch, was proving to be unsuccessful.

Then, they found him, and on the night of August 2, 1946, Caraway confessed to the murder, ultimately being charged with the murder. He had also revealed that after fleeing the scene, he found an open field nearby, where he dismantled his firearm.

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees pertaining to police service in the Village was held on August 1, 1946, with several residents in attendance, including Ralph Pulitzer, Jr. and Adolf Rust. The Village Trustees motioned to open the meeting with a resolution in support of the Logan family, with the following preamble and resolution recorded in its minutes:

“Before proceeding with the matter of police service, the Mayor directed attention to the death of Mrs. William John Logan, the wife of former Mayor Logan of the Village of Flower Hill, stating that he thought it fitting for the Board to place upon the minutes of this meeting a resolution as an expression of sorrow and condolence. It was then moved by Trustee Arnell and seconded by Trustee Thompson to record the following preamble and resolution:

WHEREAS by an act of cruel violence, the wife of William John Logan, a former Mayor of the Village of Flower Hill, has been taken from him and WHEREAS the circumstances of the crime were such as to deeply shock and grieve the community of which Mr. Logan and his family have been for many years valued and respected members, NOW on motion duly made and seconded it is unanimously resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Flower Hill extend to Mr. Logan their sincere and heartfelt sympathy in his hour of bereavement, with the hope that God will give him the strength and fortitude to bear up under his great sorrow and it is further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to Mr. Logan as an expression of condolence and respect on the part of the Village.”

Caraway was ultimately sentenced to death for performing the crimes, and he was executed by electrocution at Sing Sing Prison in Ossining, New York on the night of Thursday, July 3, 1947.

Sources:

-Village of Flower Hill. Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees, 1 August, 1946.

-*Newsday*, 1946-1947.

-*The New York Times*, 1946-1947.