

Samuel Moody's Story.

- , Skegness Lincolnshire
- Skegness Man Nearly Filled a Murderer's Grave

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Moody Murder Trial – Deathbed Confession after 60 Years

Revelations begin with the death of Captain Sam Moody in December 1922...

Old Seaman's Death

A well-known figure has been removed through the death of "Skipper" Samuel Moody, who passed away at his home, Jessamine Lodge, Roman Bank, Winthorpe, on a Thursday in November, 1922 at the age of 78.

Some two years ago heart trouble developed, and although Mr Moody was not laid aside throughout this period, he had recurring attacks, and the end came on Thursday as stated.

The deceased gentleman spent the greater part of his life on the sea and held a captain's certificate.

He and the late Messrs. Joseph Scupholm and Edward Green sailed together many times in their younger days, Mr Moody retiring about 18 years previously.

The funeral took place at Winthorpe.

Captain Samuel Moody's Grave, St Mary's Church, Winthorpe, Skegness

Details of a thrilling story concerning the late "skipper" have come to light on his death:

Note: You may find it helpful before reading the story below, to read the 1860 account of the *Sam Moody Elijah Lynn Murder Trial*

A Tragedy of Bygone Days

Deathbed Confession

How a Skegness Man Nearly Filled a Murderer's Grave

The passing of the late Mr. Samuel ("Skipper") Moody, of Roman Bank, brought to a residential close the history of a family who will always be remembered for their long association with Skegness and the neighbourhood, the history of this branch of the Moody family dating back for a period of over three centuries.

The father of the late Mr. Moody was a member of the Skegness Lifeboat crew from 1851; to which also belonged his two sons, the late Mr. Arkin Moody, and, for a short period only, the deceased.

It is in connection with the late Mr. Moody's father and the painful tragedy which, until a few years before his death, remained associated with his name, brings to light one of the most painful episodes in the criminal history and records of the County of Lincoln, and it was at the deceased's

request that on his passing the full facts of the case should be made public, in the hope that the few who were closely associated with him and who still remember, may know that the family name upon which the shadow of disgrace has so long rested is now and for ever removed.

In the early sixties [1860s] there lived a man around whom the story centres, named Thomas Lynn, who at that time lodged with the late Mr. Thomas Green, who resided in Winthorpe.

Lynn worked on a farm, known as Dymok Kerman's Farm, and one evening he visited the Vine Hotel, Skegness.

In the course of the evening he was joined by the late Mr. Samuel Moody's father and several other men.

When the hotel closes at 10 o'clock Lynn and Moody, with five other men, left, and came down the Drummond Road and High Street.

When they reached the spot now known as the Lumley Square, some unpleasantness occurred (largely owing to their condition) and the disturbance continued until after 11 o'clock.

Nothing serious appears to have resulted from the brawl and eventually they separated, some going up the Wainfleet Road, and Thomas Lynn and Samuel Moody along the Roman Bank.

It is now known that these two were accompanied by another man. This latter fact was stated at the subsequent proceedings by a casual witness who saw the men part, but which evidence, unfortunately for Mr. Moody, was entirely disregarded by the jury on the ground of unreliability.

What occurred after the man separated has now only become known. Suffice to say that on the following morning two little girls named Mary A Moody (a sister of Coun S Moody, JP) and Fanny Ann Senescall, whilst on their way to school saw the body of a man in a dyke near to where Mr. J T Wholey now resided and directly opposite to the National Schools.

In great alarm they reported their discovery to the schoolmaster and the police were duly notified.

At this junction the cap worn by Mr. Moody on the previous night was picked up a few yards away.

A visit to Moody's house was paid by the police, but in response to their enquiries he confessed that he had no recollection of what had occurred on the previous night.

He could not recall, he said, doing any injury to Thomas Lynn, and could give no reason for the finding of his cap at the spot named, except in so far as his condition made it possible.

He was, however, promptly arrested, and after the inquest – at which a verdict of willful murder was recorded by the jury – he was committed on a Coroner's warrant to stand his trial.

In due course, he appeared at Spilsby and from there committed to take his trial at the ensuing Lincoln Assizes on the capital charge.

It was at this stage that two gentlemen, believing that a gross miscarriage of justice had, and would, ensue, and believing firmly in Moody's innocence, actively interested themselves to secure either his acquittal or a reduction of the charge. Their names – still held in gratitude and esteem by all

concerned – were the Rev Allington, of Candlesby (more generally known as Squire Allington) and the Rev Tozer, then curate at Winthorpe, and who afterwards became the celebrated Bishop Tozer, of South Africa.

These two gentlemen succeeded in getting the charge reduced to one of manslaughter, and Moody was tried and finally sentenced to penal servitude for life, the same to be spent in the Penal Settlement, then known as Dieman's Land and now called Tasmania.

And now comes a strange incident in the condemned man's career.

The Governor of the settlement to which Moody was sent became firmly convinced of his innocence of the crime was founded on truth.

At the expiration of the third year he (the Governor) wrote a letter, couched in strong and earnest terms to the Home Secretary, recalling all the circumstances of the case and most earnestly desiring him to take action, either in commuting the sentence, or, as he hoped, ordering the man's immediate release.

The Home Office finally adopted the latter course, and Moody found himself unconditionally released.

At the time of the trial Mr. Moody was a widower with six young children – 3 boys and 3 girls. After his release the Governor and some friends assisted him to get a farm near Guildford, and he eventually married again and had two children, a girl and a boy, who are still alive [in 1922]. Samuel Moody died some 16 years ago.

And now comes the sequel to this tragedy of bygone days and the unhappy circumstances associated with it.

One afternoon in September of the year 191* Mr. Samuel Moody was on the railway station at Skegness, and when the 4.40 train arrived it deposited an old gentleman who enquired where Mr. Samuel ("Skipper") Moody was to be found as he had a most important message to give him.

He was taken to see the late Mr. Moody and this is the message he brought:

My brother *** living at *** (not ten miles from Skegness) wished me to come and give you a confession of his guilt, as he could not go into the presence of his Maker without doing so. He said: "Tell Mr. Moody that myself, his father and Thomas Lynn came away together when we left the others and came down the Roman Bank until we got to the place where the body was found. We – me and Mr. Lynn – had a few angry words and in a fit of passion I hit him, but be sure and tell Mr. Moody that I had no intention of killing Mr. Lynn, but I did. On finding that I had done this I pulled the body through the hedge and threw it into the dyke. I then returned and knocked Mr. Moody's cap off, so as to make the police believe it was him who had murdered Lynn – and then I bolted.

Tell him how sorry I am, and that his father never attempted to interfere and that he had no knowledge whatever of what had occurred and for which I alone was guilty."

The old gentleman then returned to *** and that evening his brother passed away.

Such is the story: Circumstantial evidence – a cap – and, but for the two gentlemen named, a murderer’s grave for a representative of one of the oldest and most highly respected families of which Skegness history holds record.

Notes:

Trusting you’ve read the initial Moody/Lynn Murder Trial, you’ll notice there are a few disparities between that and the account above. 1/ Here the murdered victim is referred to as Thomas Lynn, whereas the trial named him as Elijah Lynn. As yet I have no explanation for this, but the General Records Office records him as Elijah Lynn. 2/ The original account says that the body was found by “a boy named Senescall”, contrasting to the “two little girls named Mary A Moody (a sister of Coun S Moody, JP) and Fanny Ann Senescall,” as recalled above.

The newspaper report as transcribed above, omits the name, residence and exact year of death of the man who confessed to Lynn’s murder. However, if we look back at the trial, we are told that David Howard was the third man present when the altercation took place on Roman Bank. Coincidentally, the GRO records the registration of the death of a David B Howard in March Quarter of 1920. This means that the death could have occurred in the last days of 1919, concurring with the obscured year “191*” given in the story above.

When Sam Moody was convicted, the youngest three of his six children were admitted to the Spilsby Workhouse at Hundleby, and the three older children took servant jobs at local establishments including the Vine Hotel and a bakery at Burgh.

Sam Moody Elijah Lynn Murder Trial

Title: Samuel Moody, one of 306 convicts transported on the *Lincelles*, 30 September 1861.

Details: Sentence details: Convicted at Lincoln Assizes for a term of 15 years. Penal Servitude.

Vessel: Lincelles. Date of Departure: 30 September 1861.

Place of Arrival: Western Australia.

Source: Australian Joint Copying Project. Microfilm Roll 93, Class and Piece Number HO11/18, Page Number 372 Author/Creator: Great Britain. Home Office. ; State Library of Queensland. Subjects: Moody, Samuel ; Lincelles (Ship) ; Convicts — Australia — Registers ; Australia — Genealogy Publisher: Canberra A.C.T. : Australian Joint Copying Project Is Part Of: Criminal : Convict transportation registers [HO 11]

Surname Christian Name(s) Reg No Occupation M/S Child Height Hair Eyes Face Complexion Build
Reg No Distinguishing Marks

Moody Samuel 6081 fishermam W six 5' 7 1/2" brown light hazel full fair stout 6081 Widower; Scar under eyes and over right eye, anchor rope cross etc. left arm, boat on right arm