

Wayne State University

Memorandum

To: Charlie Spearman

From: Craig Roney  
Subject: 456 Orchard Dr.  
Northville, MI 48167  
Date: 4/20/90

**Received**  
**APR 24 1990**  
STONE RIVER  
NATIONAL  
BATTLEFIELD

_____	Supervisor
_____	Ext.
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Enclosed is Bierce's "A Cold Night"  
Hope you enjoy the story.

I really enjoyed our phone  
conversation the other day.

Best wishes

Craig Roney

A Treasury of Victorian  
Ghost Stories Everett  
F. Bleiler (Ed)  
Scribners, 1981

RCE

he was thrown to the floor.  
candle. In the center of the  
proved by his gallant death  
but this strange apparition  
before, as he believed, there  
nerves, and he cried aloud.  
room, but had not retired,  
empted to enter. The door  
agitated to open it, Granier

inquest held, but what has  
d. The most diligent efforts  
ailed to identify the dead.  
hat death had occurred but  
ne was able to divine the  
apparently healthy condi-  
or poison.

ved a letter from Charles  
hat city of Charles Farqu-  
had known when all were  
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n look like the dead it was  
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n observed that the death,  
was said to have occurred  
ote for further particulars,  
had been made of Farqu-

er in reply; "so his naked  
Tower of Silence, as those  
s fighting for them and  
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btained authority to open  
ntly not been disturbed.  
trifle moldy. There was

1872, George J. Reid, a  
ia, O., fell while walking  
ne family consisted of his

*Bodies of the Dead*

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father, mother, two sisters, and a cousin, a boy of fifteen. All were present at the breakfast table. George entered the room, but instead of taking his accustomed seat near the door by which he had entered, passed it and went obliquely toward one of the windows—with what purpose no one knows. He had passed the table but a few steps when he fell heavily to the floor and did not again breathe. The body was carried into a bedroom and, after vain efforts at resuscitation by the stricken family, left lying on the bed with composed limbs and covered face.

In the meantime the boy had been hastily dispatched for a physician, who arrived some twenty minutes after the death. He afterward remembered as an uncommon circumstance that when he arrived the weeping relations—father, mother, and two sisters—were all in the room out of which the bedroom door opened, and that the door was closed. There was no other door to the bedroom. This door was at once opened by the father of the deceased, and as the physician passed through it he observed the dead man's clothing lying in a heap on the floor. He saw, too, the outlines of the body under the sheet that had been thrown over it; and the profile was plainly discernible under the face-cloth, clear-cut and sharp, as profiles of the dead seem always to be. He approached and lifted the cloth. There was nothing there. He pulled away the sheet. Nothing.

The family had followed him into the room. At this astonishing discovery—if so it may be called—they looked at one another, at the physician, at the bed, in speechless amazement, forgetting to weep. A moment later the three ladies required the physician's care. The father's condition was but little better; he stood in a stupor, muttering inarticulately and staring like an idiot.

Having restored the ladies to a sense of their surroundings, the physician went to the window—the only one the room had, opening upon a garden. It was locked on the inside with the usual fastening attached to the bottom bar of the upper sash and engaging with the lower.

No inquest was held—there was nothing to hold it on; but the physician and many others who were curious as to this occurrence made the most searching investigation into all the circumstances; all without result. George Reid was dead and "gone," and that is all that is known to this day.

A COLD NIGHT.

The first day's battle at Stone River had been fought, resulting in disaster to the Federal army, which had been driven from its original

ground at every point except its extreme left. The weary troops at this point lay behind a railway embankment to which they had retired, and which had served them during the last hours of the fight as a breast-work to repel repeated charges of the enemy. Behind the line the ground was open and rocky. Great bowlders lay about everywhere, and among them lay many of the Federal dead, where they had been carried out of the way. Before the embankment the dead of both armies lay more thickly, but they had not been disturbed.

Among the dead in the bowlders lay one whom nobody seemed to know—a Federal sergeant, shot directly in the center of the forehead. One of our surgeons, from idle curiosity, or possibly with a view to the amusement of a group of officers during a lull in the engagement (we needed something to divert our minds), had pushed his probe clean through the head. The body lay on its back, its chin in the air, and with straightened limbs, as rigid as steel; frost on its white face and in its beard and hair. Some Christian soul had covered it with a blanket, but when the night became pretty sharp a companion of the writer removed this, and we lay beneath it ourselves.

With the exception of our pickets, who had been posted well out in front of the embankment, every man lay silent. Conversation was forbidden; to have made a fire, or even struck a match to light a pipe would have been a grave offense. Stamping horses, moaning wounded—everything that made a noise had been sent to the rear; the silence was absolute. Those whom the chill prevented from sleeping nevertheless reclined as they shivered, or sat with their hands on their arms, suffering but making no sign. Everyone had lost friends, and all expected death on the morrow. These matters are mentioned to show the improbability of anyone going about during these solemn hours to commit a ghastly practical joke.

When the dawn broke the sky was still clear. "We shall have a warm day," the writer's companion whispered as we rose in the gray light; "let's give back the poor devil his blanket."

The sergeant's body lay in the same place, two yards away. But not in the same attitude. It was upon its right side. The knees were drawn up nearly to the breast, both hands thrust to the wrist between the buttons of the jacket, the collar of which was turned up, concealing the ears. The shoulders were elevated, the head was retracted, the chin rested on the collar bone. The posture was that of one suffering from intense cold. But for what had been previously observed—but for the ghastly evidence of the bullet-hole—one might have thought the man had died of cold.

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