

OFFICE OF
F. E. WETMORE
LAWYER

HART, MICHIGAN

January 24th 1944

Harry L. Spooner,
812 Biglow St
Peoria Ill

My Dear Sir: Your letter of the 19th was forwarded to me here and I got it this morning.

We left Hart on the 19th to come here for about a month when I have to go back and into Court.

I cannot give you from here the date of the Dudgeon trial at Hart but I think it was in 1920. Judge Barton Presided, although it was then Judge Vanderwerp's Circuit. That trial lasted 20 days and Robert Bennett and Herman Dudgeon were acquitted, but Lee Dudgeon was convicted of Manslaughter and sentenced to 8 to 15 years in prison.

Judge Barton and I had several controversies, the first was because he insisted on injecting himself into the case as Judge, and again about his charge, and this and the case against Alice Dudgeon (the mother) was appealed on the charge alone, and those are the only two cases in the Michigan case law, where an appeal was taken on the charge alone. Alice Dudgeon and Medy Hodell had been tried and convicted at Whitecloud before I was in the case, but I assisted in the appeal of all three cases. The Lee Dudgeon case as well as his mother's was reversed on the charge, but Medy Hodell appeal failed because it developed that her attorneys had requested the objectionable part of the charge.

After the cases were reversed they came on for trial again at Whitecloud and I objected so strongly to Judge Barton, that he withdrew and Judge Dingman was sent to try the cases, and Lee Dudgeon was acquitted and the jury disagreed as to Mrs Dudgeon, standing 9 for not guilty and 3 for guilty, and later the case was dismissed as to her. If, about the 15th of March you will write me again at

Hart, I can then give you the dates of these trials and any other data that you may desire.

I remember you and was surprised and glad to hear from you, and will assure you that I shall be glad to assist you in any way possible.

I might say to you that there is now a movement on foot to obtain a pardon for Medy Hodell, and that is being sponsored by a crowd of good women from Detroit.

I furnished them with what information they wanted, within the past two weeks.

Harry Royal died during the past year, thus removing another of my old friends and acquaintances.

He was certainly a bright, active man and a good citizen, one that we can feel proud that we knew, and associated with.

I might say to you that while I am past 80 years of age my health is still good and when home am engaged in the active practice of law.

Respectfully

F. E. Wetmore
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