

# The Murder of John Heimann

In July of 1961 two escaped prisoners murdered John Heimann of St. Elizabeth. John was a cousin of my mother, Emma Rehagen Weidinger. The following five clippings from the Jefferson City News Tribune cover the event in rather complete detail.

14 July 1961

## Algoa Escapees Taken in Morgan

### St. Elizabeth Man Reportedly Beaten

Two Algoa Intermediate Reformatory escapees were captured today in Morgan County.

Donald Ray Blood, 20 and Richard Beeman escaped before dawn Thursday and by zig-zagging across the Osage River and taking advantage of rain showers, managed to elude police and bloodhounds all day.

The hunt was discontinued Thursday night when rain wiped out the men's tracks. It was resumed this morning when a 76-year-old St. Elizabeth man, John Heimann, reported to the Highway Patrol he had been slugged and robbed of money, two guns and his car.

Moments later Morgan County officers spotted the two near Barnett and captured Blood.

Beeman fled in another stolen car but later was captured by a trooper on Rt. 52 after a chase in which speeds reached 100 miles an hour.

Officials said "four or five" boats stolen by the two in their escape have been recovered.

Both Blood and Beeman denied hitting Heimann, who is listed in critical condition in a Tuscumbia clinic.

10 Aug 1961

## Accused Murderers Waive Preliminary

### Two Bound Over In Miller County

TUSCUMBIA (Special) — Donald Ray Blood and Richard Beeman, accused of first-degree murder in the death of a 76-year-old Elizabeth man, today waived preliminary hearing in Miller County Magistrate Court.

The two Algoa Intermediate Reformatory escapees were bound over to Circuit Court without bond provision.

Two Miller County sheriff's officials and two Highway Patrol Troopers escorted the pair from Cole County Jail to Tuscumbia for arraignment today in the courtroom of Magistrate Jack Stanton.

John Heimann, St. Elizabeth, died Tuesday in Humphreys Hospital in Tuscumbia where he had been virtually paralyzed since July 14, the date of the alleged beating he suffered while Blood and Beeman robbed him of guns and his automobile.

Stanton said Blood and Beeman's waiver came as something of a "surprise" to Miller County officials.

Both men demanded preliminary hearings on armed robbery charges which were held concurrently about 10 days after the incident at the Heimann home about a half-mile north of St. Elizabeth.

#### Beaten

At this hearing, the dead man's brother, Martin Heimann, and his sister-in-law, Mrs. Frank Heimann, testified that the two escapees inflicted a beating on John Heimann and then brought him inside the house and tied him to a chair. Both witnesses said they also were bound while the pair fled, Stanton said.

Neither Blood nor Beeman testified at the hearing, Stanton said, but both cross-examined the prosecution's witnesses.

They remained mute at today's hearing, Stanton said.

Stanton ordered the two men bound over to the court of Circuit Judge Claude E. Curtis for trial during the September term.

18 Aug 1961

## Teenager Jailed On Double Charge

### 12 Years Possible If Jury Convicts

An 18-year-old Jefferson City boy is facing a possible prison sentence of 12 years if convicted of charges of attempting to aid the escape of two murder suspects from Cole County Jail and carrying a concealed weapon.

Transcripts of criminal proceedings against John Lewis Bias, 1408r E. Miller St., were filed in Circuit Court today after a preliminary hearing Thursday in Magistrate Court.

Bias, accused of passing hacksaw blades into the jail cell occupied by Richard Beeman, 23, and Donald Blood, 21, and carrying a hunting knife strapped to a boot, is being held in the jail in lieu of \$3,000 bond on each charge.

Police officers Lt. Walter Dickson and Capt. Freeman Farmer testified during the hearing Thursday before Magistrate Foster S. Wheatly they discovered the knife while questioning the boy about his part in the attempted jailbreak.

Deputy Sheriff Fred Miles, who apprehended Bias at the jail after Bias inserted the blades through an exterior window, and Donald V. Cline, juvenile officer who had the youth under supervision, testified at the hearing.

A signed statement by Bias Wednesday indicated the youth agreed to pass the blades to Blood and Beeman for \$50.

Blood and Beeman are awaiting trial for the first-degree murder of John Heimann, 76, of St. Elizabeth, in Miller County.

Miller County authorities arranged to have the two men, escapees from Algoa Intermediate Reformatory, held in Cole County Jail for security reasons.

Blood and Beeman escaped from Algoa July 13 and allegedly assaulted Heimann the following day during the theft of Heimann's car and two guns.

Heimann died in a Tuscumbia Hospital Aug. 8.

13 Dec 1961

## Life Sentences For Two Slayers

### Guilty Plea Entered By Algoa Escapees

TUSCUMBIA (Special) — Circuit Judge Claude E. Curtis today sentenced two Algoa escapees charged with first-degree murder to life imprisonment.

Donald R. Blood, 20, and Richard Beeman, 22, pleaded guilty of the assault slaying of a 76-year-old St. Elizabeth man, John Heimann, last July.

Blood and Beeman escaped from the intermediate reformatory July 13 and beat Heimann at his home the following day when they robbed him of his car and two guns.

Heimann was paralyzed as a result of the beating, according to Miller County prosecuting attorney Norman J. Williams, and died in a Tuscumbia hospital Aug. 8.

Blood and Beeman surprised Miller County officials Aug. 10 when they waived preliminary hearing on the first-degree murder charges.

Earlier, the pair had been arraigned in Magistrate Court on burglary and robbery charges at the Heimann home, and had insisted on a preliminary hearing.

#### Two Testify

Two witnesses testified in that hearing, Heimann's brother, Martin Heimann, and his sister-in-law, Mrs. Frank Heimann, who were at the home when Blood and Beeman came.

They testified they were bound inside the house and that Blood and Beeman later brought John Heimann in and bound him before they fled.

Williams said he intended to prove Heimann was struck on the back of the head or neck with one of the guns when the three men were on the back porch.

Blood and Beeman admitted to a News-Tribune reporter Aug. 8 that Heimann was struck, but they would not reveal who actually made the assault.

When news of Heimann's death reached Jefferson City, the newsman interviewed Blood and Beeman in their cell in Cole County Jail where they had been transferred for security reasons.

14 Dec 1961

## Slayers Begin Life Sentences

Algoa escapees Donald Ray Blood, 20, and Richard Beeman, 22, who last summer won two days of freedom, Wednesday were confined in the Missouri State Penitentiary for life terms.

Blood and Beeman pleaded guilty of the first-degree assault slaying of John Heimann, 76, St. Elizabeth, during a hectic attempt to escape last July and were sentenced Wednesday to life-imprisonment by Circuit Judge Claude E. Curtis.

According to the case prepared by Miller County prosecuting attorney Norman J. Williams, Blood and Beeman struck Heimann on the back of the head or neck with a gun. Heimann died in a Tusculum hospital Aug. 8.

Both had been serving four-year terms at Algoa for burglary and stealing.