

The following letter, originally published in *Newman's Semi Weekly*, furnishes the particulars of the escape of Henry McCarty, *alias*, Henry Antrin, *alias*, Billy Bonney, *alias* "The Kid," who was convicted of murder in the first degree, at the last Mesilla term of court, and had been taken to Lincoln County to be executed.
Lincoln, N.M., April 20.

Dear Sir:

Kid killed his guard, Bob Olinger and deputy Sheriff J.W. Bell, last night and made his escape. It happened as follows:

Kid was kept as a prisoner in the southeast corner room of the Murphy building. He had on the shackles and handcuffs he wore when he came here. The handcuffs were off from one hand and his hands were really free. Bob Olinger left about 6 p.m. to go to supper and left Kid alone with Bell. He and the others who went to supper had just got into Sam Wortley's place and sat down to the table when they heard three shots fired from the building. Bob Olinger jumping up from the table, said "they are having a fight over there," started in the lead and ran over to the building. Just as he entered the gate Kid discharged Olinger's double-barreled shot gun at him, delivering the contents of both barrels into his head and breast, killing him instantly, and Olinger fell right in front of the post office door, the office occupied by Ben Ellis.

It seems Kid had struck Bell over the head with the handcuffs and back of the ear also, breaking his skull and stunning him and then grabbing from Bell his revolver; and Bell, after partially recovering from the effects of the blow, started to run out of the hall and down stairs and Kid fired a shot at him which passed under Bell's arms and clear through his body. Bell ran towards the kitchen and old man Goss was just coming out of it and Bell fell into his arms and expired without a word.

Ellis and myself had started for supper before Olinger and the others had left. We board at Rob Ellis' father's, and had got down the street as far as La Rue's store when we heard firing. As I looked back I thought the smoke came from west of the building and that perhaps it was some Mexicans firing up above the office and paid no attention to it but went on to supper.

After we had returned and got to Capt. Baca's we learned what had been done. Kid was then on the porch of the building with Olinger's shot gun, a Winchester and two revolvers, holding the fort and keeping any person from going to town, saying he would shoot the first man who started to give any alarm. He leveled the Winchester on old man Goss and made him saddle a pony that was in the corral and go into my room and take the blankets off from the bed.

Pat Garrett had stored arms which he had taken from the Tularosa prisoners, four guns and four revolvers. Kid broke the door in and took two revolvers, four belts of cartridges, and a new Winchester.

When Goss led the horse out of the corral he let him go, and Kid ordered Nunnely, one of the prisoners, to catch him and return him and help him on. He had broken one shackle on his leg; so his legs were free, except the chain and shackle was yet attached to the one leg.

It was more than an hour, after he killed Olinger and Bell, before he left. He had at his command eight revolvers and six guns. He stood on the upper porch in front of the building and talked with the people who were in Wortley's, but would not let anyone come towards him. He told the people that he did not want to kill Bell but, as he ran, he had to. He said he grabbed Bell's revolver and told him to hold up his hands and surrender; that Bell started to run and he had to kill him. He declared he was "standing pat" against the world; and, while he did not wish to kill anybody, if anybody interfered with his attempt to escape he would kill him.

After he had got all ready to leave the building he took Bob Olinger's double-barreled shot gun and broke it into pieces by striking it across the railing of the porch and then threw the pieces down on Olinger's dead body and said "here is your gun, G—d d—n you! You won't follow me with it any longer." He then took off his handcuffs and threw them at the dead body of Bell, saying "here, G--d d--n you! Take them! I guess you won't put them on me again.

Just at dark he mounted and rode to a Mexican house a few hundred yards off and bought a rope and said "Boys, I don't know these mountains," and started off through the bottom and struck for the Capitans. It is said he made violent threats against those whom he considers have injured him and that he said he did not consider he had been bad heretofore but would let people know hereafter what it is to be a bad man. When he rode off, he went on a walk, and every act, from beginning to end, seemed to have been placed and executed with the coolest deliberation.

I have understood that he had said he would give Judge Bristol, Judge Newcomb and Col. Rynerson a round up; but so many things are being told of him that it is hard to tell what he has said.

The old feeling of dread and fear has come back upon us again and it is hard to tell what the end will be. At the time this occurred, Sheriff Garret was at White Oaks on a collecting tour. The Sheriff and his posse have been warned time and again about using the utmost caution, but no avail. Only two days ago Olinger left his revolver loose on the table in front of Kid, and if a person had not taken it Kid would then undoubtedly have made a break. I have several times cautioned Olinger and he has replied that, as far as Kid's getting away was concerned, he had just as soon he had on no irons – he could not get away from him. His over-confidence in himself has been the means of his own destruction, as well as robbing the gallows of its victim. It is a great misfortune and one that will tell seriously against us. I have about abandoned the hope that Lincoln will ever come out of her condition of lawlessness.