

ROSS, ELIZABETH

AUSTIN FOREMAN'S DEATH.

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Ross, Elizabeth - Investigator.  
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Austin Foreman's Death.

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Stories relating to tragical occurrences linger in many of the old neighborhoods. In the Park Hill locality persons live who remember particulars relating to the death of young Austin Foreman who lived in bygone years.

Austin Foreman was the son of the Reverend Stephen Foreman, a presbyterian minister, and was for some years engaged in assisting in making translations from the English into the Cherokee language. Austin Foreman, who had been a student at Williston Seminary, East Hampton, Massachusetts, went hunting one evening, intending to remain until sometime after nightfall. The men and youths of that locality often went hunting in the fall and winter seasons. Fur-bearing animals were numerous and raccoons, skunks, opossums and other small creatures were sought for their furry skins. Wild turkeys roosted in the woodlands and were likewise sought at intervals. Usually several persons composed a hunting party, but young Foreman set out alone with several dogs. He failed to return during the night and early on

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the following day search was instituted for him.

Sometime after the beginning of the search the body of the young man was found lying upon the ground. He had, evidently, been dead for several hours. The hunting dogs belonging to young Foreman were guarding the corpse, and menaced those who came upon the scene to such an extent that considerable time passed before the animals could be pacified and the body placed in a vehicle to be carried home.

The young man's death was caused by a pistol bullet. Near the base of some wooded ridges some distance from the Foreman home stood a tall and large hollow stump, a part of the trunk of a tree, the upper part of which had probably been blown away. The presumption was that the young man was in the act of climbing up the stump, perhaps in order to dislodge some small animal from the top, when the pistol fell from his belt and was discharged upon striking the ground beneath.

The fatal accident occurred in January, 1855. Burial was made in the original Park Hill graveyard, where some other members of the family of the Reverend Stephen Foreman lie buried; but in course of time the majority of the graves became obliterated and no one now knows in which portion of

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the abandoned spot the grave of Austin Foreman was made.

The death of Austin Foreman was one of several which occurred from gunshot wounds in the decade preceding the outbreak of the Civil War.