

Way We Were

Written: 24 May 2013

For: 29 May 2013

Title: A Serious Cutting Affair

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### A Serious Cutting Affair

When discussing the history of early Park City tragedies such as miner's consumption are prevalent, but seldom does the topic of physical abuse come up. For Maggie Scanlon life was difficult enough after losing her husband, shift boss at the Ontario Mine, and trying to take care of their family and their home as a single mother at the turn of the century without having to deal with the violence of her neighbors.

Maggie was twenty years old when she left Ireland for America with her parents in search of the ever elusive American Dream. She met her husband John Scanlon in Virginia City, Nevada, and in 1895, at age 45, Maggie and John set off for Park City. He died a mere fourteen years later, leaving Maggie to raise their five young children and tend their home, 133 Woodside Avenue, by herself.

Life went on relatively undisturbed until one afternoon in June of 1916. The incident between Maggie Scanlon and her neighbor made the Police Court News of the Park Record, and was reported on in full. According to the article, "A serious cutting affair occurred at the Scanlon home last Friday. It appears that John Franish started to build a fence between his property and the Scanlon property, and was told to stop by Mrs. Scanlon. At this Franish commenced to abuse Mrs. Scanlon when her son, Tom, took a hand and started in to thrash Franish for insulting his mother. This he was doing very nicely when Frank Franish, a brother of John, appeared on the scene with an ax, and attacked Tom Scanlon, severely cutting him. So bad were his wounds that he was taken to the Miners Hospital, and for a time it looked as if they would prove serious." Perhaps the atypical side passage/side entrance to this house is what bothered Mrs. Scanlon of the building of the fence, which would then block their view.

Franish was charged with disturbing the peace and fined \$25, and his brother was arrested for assault with intent to do bodily harm and fined \$500. Upon Maggie's death on January 24, 1922, the house passed to two of her five children, Tom Scanlon and Gertrude McClean.

Interested in learning more stories about our historic homes and their infamous owners? Join the Park City Museum for its annual Historic Home Tour on Saturday, June 15, 2013. For more information contact the Park City Museum at 435-649-7457.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum

Caption: 133 Woodside, the house where Maggie Scanlon raised her five young children after her husband John died.