

**AKERBLADE, WALTER ISAAC**  
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**NEWS ITEM**

Clay "Tricky" Riggle is being held in the local jail without bond for the double slaying of Frances Irene Williamson and Walter Akerblade. Six eye-witnesses saw Riggle appear at the open door of the Angle lunchroom in Wheatland last Saturday evening about 8:15 and after saying "I told you I'd get you" he pumped nine shells into the bodies of Mrs. Williamson and Akerblade who were seated at the first two stools on the west side of the lunch counter in the Angle lunchroom.

Walter Akerblade partially raised from his stool and staggered toward the back of the lunch counter where he fell into the arms of Joe Ferguson who was seated at the far end of the counter on the same side with Mrs. Williamson and Akerblade.

Mrs. Williamson fell to the floor following the shots and both she and Akerblade were dead when authorities arrived. Akerblade had four bullets in his body and the fifth one went through his hand and grazed his face. Mrs. Williamson had four wounds in her body. Each victim had a bullet through the heart causing instantaneous death.

Following the shoot, Riggle, who had driven his car to the door of the Angle lunch room and had left the motor running jumped into the 1937 Chevrolet and headed east down the alley.

Jim Angle, proprietor of the café, immediately notified authorities and within 15 minutes all roads out of Wheatland were blocked, and a search was underway for the killer.

After an all night search Saturday following the shooting a large posse was formed on Sunday morning with instructions to shoot Riggle on sight. Several airplanes were also used in the man hunt and about 10 a.m. Sunday, John Phifer spotted the killer's car from a plane. The car had been driven to the west entrance of the Phifer ranch and then down into a deep gully where Riggle abandoned it. Further evidence revealed that Riggle had struck a telephone pole east of town in his wild flight and had sheared it off but didn't damage his car enough to hamper his escape. He did lose his hat, however, at the scene of the crash.

Following the finding of the fugitive's car, the search turned to that area of the country and first Riggle's dog was used in hopes it would lead the posse to the hunted man. The dog showed no interest other than being happy to be in his master's car.

Another dog that was part bloodhound was used in the hunt Sunday and this dog led the party back toward Wheatland in a southwesterly direction down toward the power plant where it failed to find further scent. It then worked back toward Chugwater creek.

On Sunday evening a trained bloodhound was brought from Laramie to Wheatland and about 5 o'clock Monday morning a new search was started with this dog. The bloodhound seemed to work pretty much in the same direction as the first one and later Monday snow and rain halted the search with this dog.

Although no definite clues had been found up to Monday evening, all local authorities, including Sheriff Bill Sutherland and his deputy, George Waln, were of the opinion that Riggle was still in this area.

Sheriff Sutherland and his assistants were just organizing further searching parties

Monday evening when Dick Dockter, Charles Perry and Don Sherard appeared at the court house with the wanted Riggle.

Dick Dockter, who is manager of the Perry Brothers Lumber company, had gone to the partly furnished home of Willard Perry, to get some paste he needed for laying some tile in his new home. Dick said he went upstairs in the partly finished Perry house about twilight, and before he realized it, he was face to face with the killer. Dockter who has been asked repeatedly if it scared him says of course it did. Dockter was speechless when he face Riggle and started to step backwards when the fugitive asked him, "Did I scare you?". Dick said after some effort he was able to tell Riggle that he certainly did.

Riggle then wanted to know what happened to Mrs. Williamson and Akerblade. He did not know until this time that both of them were dead. Riggle then asked that Dockter get Charles Perry and return to the Willard Perry house.

Dockter then left Riggle and rushed to the Charles Perry home and they in turn stopped at the Don Sherard home and asked that he go with them to bring Riggle in. The three of them talked to Riggle a few minutes before he consented to go with them to the sheriff's office. Riggle then turned his 22 automatic rifle over to Docktor and went with the three men who turned him over to the authorities about 7:35 Monday evening.

Riggle's chief concern over going to the sheriff's office was that they would shoot him on sight.

After taking Riggle into custody, officers grilled him for about three hours Monday evening, but he refused to talk. He was asked repeatedly why he had killed the two victims and where he had been since the killing, but he would give no answer.

Dick Dockter and the Perry brothers are of the opinion that Riggles had probably been hiding in the partly finished home since shortly after the killing. Riggle, who was an employee of the Perry Brothers Lumber comapy, knew all about the new house; and their guess was that he hid in a hole under the floor during the day when the workmen were there, coming up at night after the workers had left. Riggle, however, has refused to divulge how long he had been there.

If Riggle was hiding in the house during the working hours on Monday, he probably overheard workmen say the posse was instructed to "shoot on sight", and that probably is where he got the fear that they would kill him on sight when he turned in.

He did remark to the sheriff that after leaving his car on Saturday evening he went quite a distance south and then into town. And he told one of the Perry brothers that he came up the hill past the water tank south of Wheatland, en route to the partly finished house where he was found.

Upon leaving the house with the three who took him in Monday evening, Riggle remarked "Well, it's been raining", which is further evidence that he was probably in the house for quite some time.

At the coroner's inquest which was held at the Schrader Funeral Home on Monday afternoon, six eye-witnesses to the double killing: James B. Angle, John Faas, John Burke, Emil Bolte, Joe Ferguson and Charles Randall testified they all witnessed the double shooting by Riggle Saturday evening with the exception of Charles Randall who had his view obstructed by two of the other witnesses.

Joe Wickam, night policeman who was called to the scene of the shooting, testified at the inquest just prior to the shooting that he had received information that Riggle was going to "get someone"; and Wickam was looking for Riggle at the time the shooting took place.

Riggle had served a 32-month sentence in the Wyoming State penitentiary for a former

attempted shooting and was considered dangerous with a gun. Policeman Wickam had searched Riggle on one other occasion when he was reported to be carrying a gun but had found no weapon on him.

The coroner's inquest found that Frances Irene Williamson and Walter Akerblade both came to their death by gunshot wounds inflicted at the hands of Clay "Tricky" Riggle.

At the preliminary hearing on Tuesday afternoon of this week, Riggle was represented by Attorneys D.N. Sherard and William G. Watt. Riggle still refused to talk at the hearing and his attorneys entered a plea of "not guilty." Justice of the Peace I.J. Belt ordered Riggle bound over until district court without bail.

Frances Irene Williamson, 53, was the operator of the Mountain View camp in Wheatland. She was part of Riggle's act at the county fair here last year and stood while Riggle threw knives that completely outlined her. Walter Akerblade, 60, was a former ranch hand and a long time resident of this community.

The double murder in this community was the first time the state of Wyoming has had an opportunity to use their new two-way radio system to any great extent, and Highway Patrolman Ray Karpinski was very enthusiastic about the very effective use they made of it locally. As previously stated, all roads were blocked out of this community within fifteen minutes after the shooting, and the killing was radioed to every officer in the state and surrounding areas immediately. All railroads were also alerted and all were checked.

One of the planes used in the hunt on Sunday was flown by George Nelson, head of the state C.A.A. and was radio equipped to communicate with officers in their cars who were conducting the ground search. It was this plane being flown by George Nelson and accompanied by John Phifer, that spotted the Riggle car.