

## Robert James Tunaley (surgeon), Medical Adviser in the the Stanfield Hall Double Murder Case of 1848

Robert James Tunaley was one of two physicians who assisted in the conviction of James Bloomfield Rush, the killer in the notorious Stanfield Hall case of 28 November 1848.

The murders, involving wealthy and powerful individuals, appear to have been, partly at least, the culmination of fraud and intrigue relating to the true ownership of Stanfield Hall.

As such, the interest generated in this nineteenth century Victorian murder became of national status, perhaps on a scale comparable to the twentieth century Lucan case (1974).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murders\\_at\\_Stanfield\\_Hall](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murders_at_Stanfield_Hall): "The Murders at Stanfield Hall, were a notorious Victorian era double murder on 28 November 1848 that was commemorated in print, pottery, wax, as well as a 1938 novel by Joseph Shearing" (*P. T.: pseudonym for Margaret Campbell*).

The Stanfield Hall murders and the "Joseph Shearing"/Margaret Campbell novel "Blanche Fury" that was based on the Stanfield events then became the inspiration for the 1948 British drama film of the same name starring Valerie Hobson and Stewart Granger".

(N.B. A wax hanging mask of Rush had been displayed in Madam Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors between 1849 and 1971).

"The victims, Isaac Jermy (Recorder of Norwich) and his son also Isaac (*both of whom could have been members of another wealthy family - the Prestons*) were shot dead on the porch and in the hallway of their mansion, Stanfield Hall, Norwich".

The killer, James Bloomfield Rush (1800-1849), a tenant farmer and Jermy's own bailiff, was hanged at Norwich Castle on 21 April 1849. A third involuntary party to the attempted fraud and murder was one Emily Sandford, whom Rush had employed as a governess but who had also become Rush's mistress. Rush's own wife and parents had previously died in suspicious circumstances with Rush inheriting money on their deaths.

Robert James Tunaley's primary role in the conviction of Rush was, along with a second surgeon Mr. Nichols, an autopsy of the bodies of Isaac Jermy and his son.

From:

<http://www.jermy.org/anon49c.html>

“Messrs Nichols and Tunaley, surgeons, stated their examination of the bodies of Mr. Jermy and his son showed that in the case of Jermy Snr. the fourth, fifth and sixth ribs were shattered and the shots had carried away the entire body of the heart.....the body of the younger Jermy had a very small wound, about half an inch in diameter”.

A second account of the murder and trial together with an account of the Jermy funeral is given at:

<http://www.jermy.org/baynebk.html>

(A.D. Bayne, 1849)

“The mourners and friends of the family then took their place in three mourning coaches which included T. Preston Esq., of Lowestoft (only surviving brother of the late Recorder, .....,Mr. Tunaley”.

A full account of the ownership issues that preceded the murder is given at

<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/tripartite/The%20Murders%20At%20Stanfield%20Hall.htm>

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