

The Author's First Introduction to the Emma Bond Story

Delia Sabine Greene (1889-1984), as mentioned in the foreword of my book, was my great-aunt, and the niece of Emma Bond, the victim in *Nameless Indignities*. She was also the person responsible for bringing Emma's story to my attention. On Feb 09, 1976, at the age of 86, she sat down to do an oral family history interview with my mother. This was apparently the first time that this then-almost-100-year-old story was shared with the later generations of our family. While Delia had the basic events correct, some of her more detailed recollections would later prove erroneous - not that surprising, since she wasn't born until almost six years after the trial's conclusion. My guess is that she first heard the story herself as a teen or young adult, and that it was probably relayed to her by her own mother, Maggie Bond Sabine (who was Emma Bond's sister and my great-grandmother). These words of Delia's were all I knew of Emma's tragic story until 2003, when I accidentally discovered the full scope of the crime, the trial, and the public's fascination with it. This is my mother's transcription of that interview, which was not included in my book. (Even though it preceded "The Bond Family" in the actual interview, I am including the section titled "The Housley Family" at the end, for those with an interest in Grove City history or Bond/Housley genealogy.) Comments/corrections in brackets are mine.

The Bond Family

The six daughters of Abner Dobbins Bond and Margaret Eliza [Housley] Bond are listed above [here, below]. Much of the Bond family history is in Grandpa Sabine's autobiography [Life of a Suckerboy] and makes interesting reading. Aunt Delia Sabine Greene recalls the following story involving one of Bond's daughters, Emma, a school teacher:

"In June 1882, Emma was finishing the last day of school (exam day). Three men hid in the school loft and after the students had gone home, they came down, grabbed her, put her shawl over her face, dragged her into the loft and raped her, kept her there all night. No one checked because Grandpa Bond thought she'd gone to the boarding house and at

the boarding house, they thought she'd gone home. One of the men was named Pettus (a relative of our former next door neighbors in Taylorville that Grandma Sabine disliked intensely), also a man named John Montgomery. The next morning Emma was in such a tragic state that the men slashed her wrists to see if she was dead. The maniacs were caught but Aunt Emma had so much pain from a back injury that she became addicted to morphine. Affidavits were given to a Col Van deVeer [H. M. Vandever], a Dr. Cornwell, and a Dr. Finey. The men were jailed in Taylorville and tried there, but the jury disagreed and the trial was moved to Hillsboro. They were convicted and ready to hang, with ropes around their necks but Grandpa Bond had to give the signal – and he couldn't do so. Whether they finished their lives in prison or not is unknown. Emma straightened out her life, married a man named Johnny Jordan and lived in Kansas City.”

The Housley Family

"Your great-grandmother, Margaret Eliza 'Sis' Bond, was the daughter of George S. Housley who came to Illinois from Canal-Dover, OH. The family owned a 160 acre farm at the corner of Buckhart Grove (2.5 mil northwest of the Abner Bond farm), north of Taylorville, IL. There were six boys and three girls in the family:

“George S. Jr. was killed during the Civil War at Pittsburg Landing, buried Grove City. Samuel was also killed during the Civil War at Manassas Junction, buried in Grove City.

“Levi was a soldier in the Civil War and a prisoner at Libby and the infamous Andersonville prisons for ten months. Was part of a 'prisoner exchange' and sailed from Savannah, GA to Baltimore where great-grandfather Abner Bond, Levi's brother-in-law, drove out to meet him and bring him back in a wagon. Levi was half-starved and Grandpa Bond had to restrain him from gorging himself on food offered by sympathizers on their journey home. Levi is buried in Kansas.

“Daniel owned a store and was Postmaster at Grove City, also buried in Kansas [actually buried at Grove City Cemetery.]

“Rufus was a painter and paper hanger in Grove City, buried there.

“Henry, known as Hank, inherited the Housley farm but lost it on non-payment of loan to Grandpa Bond [his brother-in-law]. He married Sophronia Porter, buried in Grove City.

“Minnie H., the oldest of nine children, was married to Charles Parsons, lived in OH. She had a son, George. [Minnie was actually not the oldest, but the third youngest.]

“Margaret E., your great-grandmother, was the first wife of Abner Dobbins Bond [Jr.] They had six daughters: Arabella (Belle) Goodrich, Margaret Elizabeth Sabine, Emma Jordan, Etta Logan, Frances Henson, Josephine Baughman. Abner's second wife was your grandfather Lester F. Sabine's sister, Delia Delile, and as noted elsewhere, she was not only my aunt, but also my step-grandmother . . . not quite as bad as the song ‘I'm My Own Grandma!’

"Becky H. [Anna Rebecca] was the wife of William Armstrong. Our cousin, Leonore Hensley Armstrong, was married to Bill Armstrong, one of his descendants.

"The Housley farm was eventually sold to Austin M. Sims of Springfield, formerly of Chatham, close neighbors of the Sabine family."