

# HOMICIDE AT LORD HOWE'S ISLAND

*(From the S. M. Herald, June 11)*

The following report, in regard to the alleged murder at Lord Howe's Island, was yesterday forwarded by Mr. Cloete to the Hon. Colonial Secretary.

“Water Police Office,  
“Sydney, 9th June, 1869.

“Sir — I do myself the honour to forward herewith the depositions taken by me at an inquiry held at Lord Howe's Island, which terminated on the 2nd June instant, concerning the alleged murder of a man called John Leonard. I also enclose certain depositions taken by the inhabitants of the island touching the same matter, and which were in course of being forwarded to the Government here. Immediately on my arrival, and before it was generally known who we were, I had the accused man (Lloyd) arrested, and took him on board the *Thetis*, as I could see from the nature of the island that it would be almost impossible to apprehend a man who wished to secrete himself in the mountains. After a very careful investigation, extending over three days, I discharged the prisoner, feeling clearly convinced that he (Lloyd), who is an old man, 70 years of age, having been without provocation brutally assaulted by the deceased Leonard, a young and strong man, 32 years of age, had used his knife only when he believed his life to be in positive danger, and when he had no means whatever of escape.

“The history of the case is briefly this: Lloyd has been a resident of Lord Howe's Island for about twelve years, and bore the character of being an industrious and peaceable man. The deceased, Leonard, was an American, a native of Lowell, in the State of Maine, and had deserted at Lord Howe's Island about five years ago, from the American whaler *Gayhead*. He lived with Lloyd for about two years, when he left with Lloyd's daughter, and they erected a homestead of their own, Captain Field having read the marriage ceremony to them. Since then there have been constant quarrels between them, the young woman (Lloyd or Leonard) being of a very passionate and violent temper, and, as I was generally informed, having complete control over Leonard. On the 13th of February, the day before Leonard's death, Lloyd and Leonard were both on board the ketch *Sylph*, which had just arrived from Sydney. They went on board together, mutually assisted each other in getting their stores, and came again on shore together, apparently on very friendly terms. Lloyd then went to work at an angle where two fences joined inwards, and where the banyan tree, palms, and other vegetation close in so thickly as to prevent the retreat of any man there attacked. He was so seen at work that evening by the witness Whybrow, with whom he left, saying it was too dark to finish the fence then, but he would come back early in the morning and do it. He was then using (in whittling pegs for the fence) the identical knife with which he voluntarily stated he had stabbed Leonard. Lloyd states that the next morning he returned to the work, and had not been there more than two minutes when, in the act of stooping to pick up a batten, he received a severe blow at the back of his head. He turned round and saw Leonard. Lloyd said ‘So you mean to kill me?’ Leonard replied ‘Yes, you old ——,

and Mooney too.’ Leonard then pursued him into the garden, and kept on assaulting him until he (Lloyd) received a violent blow in the pit of the stomach, when, feeling dizzy, and believing he was being killed, he used the knife with which he had been whittling pegs, which he had in his hand when attacked, and struck Leonard the blow from which he died. Lloyd gave himself up to the people, who found a wound bleeding in the back of his head, and the exterior of both of his arms, on the guard, and chiefly from the elbow down, most severely cut and bruised. The wounds, as described by the witnesses, were such as would be received by a man in guarding his head. This is so far confirmatory of Lloyd's statement. Leonard, on receiving the stab, said ‘Now I shall get the gun and shoot you,’ but he was exhausted by loss of blood when he reached home, and bled to death, probably from want of proper and efficient means to staunch the wound. Lloyd wished at once to be sent to Sydney, and volunteered to allow himself to be battened down or put in double irons, or taken down in any way the people chose, so long as he could but surrender himself to the proper authorities in Sydney. He never attempted to leave the island, but always expressed his anxiety to be tried, and have the matter inquired into.

“It might seem strange that, after being so amicable on the 13th, Leonard should so suddenly and so violently assault Lloyd on the 14th; but the motive is here supplied by the fact that on the evening of the 13th Lloyd's daughter (Mrs. Leonard, as she was called) went to the house of a man called Thompson, to whom she expressed her surprise at not having received a letter from her sister, in Sydney, by the ketch that day; when Thompson told her that perhaps it was because of the letter her father had written, saying that she was not his child, and complaining of her conduct generally. Another person also informed her that Mooney had written this letter for Lloyd. I believe it to have so acted on her mind as directly or indirectly to cause the attack on Lloyd next morning. It would also account for the expression stated by Lloyd to have been used by Leonard — ‘Yes, you old ——, and Mooney too.’ Whilst Lloyd had many wounds and bruises, Leonard had only but the one stab on the top of the right shoulder, which would corroborate Lloyd's Statement, that he had all the time acted on the defensive solely, and had at the last moment only, and when he believed he was being killed, struck Leonard with the knife. Under these circumstances I did not consider it my duty to bring Lloyd to Sydney, but, calling all the people together, I explained the whole case freely, and told them the conclusion I had arrived at.

I omitted to remark that, though Leonard was sensible for an hour before his death, he never said a word as to how the affair had occurred, or mentioned Lloyd's name to any one of the people who were in constant attendance upon him, but only to Mrs. Leonard, as she states. The whole evidence, therefore, against Lloyd is solely his own statement.

“In a separate paper I have given a general account of the island, so far as time allowed me to inquire and observe.

“I have the honor, &c.

“(Signed) P. L. CLOETE, W.P.M.”