

Mary Ann Hall

(1815 -29 Jan 1886)

The National Intelligencer, June 14, 1839, p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT - Thursday, June 13

...

Francis Leonard was put upon trial upon two cases – for assault and battery upon Elizabeth Hall and for breaking the windows of Mary Hall, on the 6th day of May last. The accused was found guilty on both indictments, the jury having retired but for a few moments. The circumstances of this case have been much spoken of in this community since the time of the assault. It appeared by the testimony that the defendant, with two other persons, on the 6th April, 1839, had made an attack upon the house of Mary Hall, and had fired several bullets, through the windows, one of which passed directly over the bed where a female was sleeping.

Immediately after the return of the verdict, Messrs. Coxe and Carlisle, counsel for the defendant, moved for a new trial and arrest of judgment, on the ground that the verdict was contrary to evidence. The motion was resisted by the District Attorney and Mr. Hoban, for reasons assigned. The Court held the motion under advisement.

The National Intelligencer, June 17, 1839, p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT - Friday, June 14

...

His Honor Judge Dunlop this day overruled the motion made by Messrs. Coxe and Carlisle on the previous day, in the case of the United States vs. Francis Leonard, convicted of an assault and battery on the person of Elizabeth Hall, and of breaking the windows of Mary Hall.

The Judge then sentenced the defendant, for the first offence, to pay a fine of fifty dollars, and give security in the sum of three hundred dollars for his good behavior for the space of one year; and for the second offence, to pay a fine of one dollar and costs.

In passing sentence upon Francis Leonard his Honor Judge Dunlop addressed the defendant in a very impressive manner, reminding him of the very awful situation in which he would have been placed if the balls fired into the dwelling of the complainant had struck her and proved fatal.

The Judge pointedly reprobated the practice of carrying deadly weapons concealed about the person, and dwelt upon the dreadful consequences which had grown out of the practice, and which were like to grow out of it unless the law marked it with the severest animadversion.

Being, however, under the impression that the defendant had been led away by the evil example of older persons, who, of course, were much more culpable than himself, the Court, also taking into consideration the youth of the defendant and other extenuating circumstances, would not go the length of sentencing him to undergo imprisonment hoping that the public admonition given to him on this occasion and the lenity of the Court would cause him to take heed to his ways for the future.

The National Intelligencer, October 31, 1839, p.3

The grand jury that indicted Mary Ann Hall is given as follows (those at Congressional are highlighted):
fidelity and impartiality. The following gentlemen were sworn of the Grand Jury :

Peter Force, Esq. Foreman,	Ninian Beall,
Nathan Luffborough,	John Myer,
Charles R. Belt,	George W. Young,
Joseph Forrest,	Benjamin K. Morsell,
Abner Peirce,	Roger C. Weightman,
John F. Cox,	Edward Simms,
Robert White,	George Parker,
George B Migruder,	John W. Maury,
Walter Snoot,	Jehiel Brooks,
John P. Van Ness,	Griffith Coombe,
John Boyle,	Thomas Fenwick,
Michael Shanks,	Daniel Carroll.

The Grand Jury adjourned about 1 o'clock.

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, October 31, 1839

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. vs. Mary Ann Hall

Not guilty

The National Intelligencer, November 1, 1839, p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT – Thursday, October 31

...

Mary Ann Hall was indicted and tried for keeping a house of ill fame in the city of Washington. The District Attorney, in opening the case, represented the house kept by the defendant to be one of the worst description, where scenes of disorder and profligacy had frequently occurred, which were outrageous to the public morals, and a nuisance in the neighborhood. Mr. Hoban, counsel for the defendant, made a very earnest and powerful defence, in which he contended that the District Attorney had completely failed to prove that the house kept by the defendant was of that disorderly character charged in the indictment. The Jury retired about 1 o'clock, and, at the time the Court adjourned, had not returned their verdict.

The National Intelligencer, November 4, 1839, p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT – Friday, November 1

In the case of the *United States vs. Mary Ann Hall* indicted for keeping a house of ill fame in this city, the Jury, who had remained in their room all the preceding night, came into Court this morning, and returned a verdict of Not Guilty.

The National Intelligencer, November 4, 1839, p. 3

Another Incendiary Attempt

A few nights ago some unknown incendiary attempted to set fire to a brick dwelling occupied by a female named Mary Hall, and situated on Maryland Avenue and Four-and-a-half street. Some combustible articles together with a quantity of cotton wool, saturated with spirit of turpentine, were placed under the sill of the front door. But the diabolical attempt was proved abortive, owing to the combustibles not igniting in a way that was maliciously intended. We understand that the building was

insured, so that, had the incendiary succeeded in destroying it, the principal sufferers would have been the members of the Insurance Company.

The Daily National Intelligencer, February 15, 1841, p. 4

By G.L. Giberson, Esq. On the 11th instant, Lucretia Clark, free colored woman, charged, on the oath of Elizabeth Hall and Mary Ann Hall, with stealing, at sundry times, within the last month, between \$300 and \$400 in gold and silver, the property of said Halls. The prisoner was arrested by W. Wallis, constable.

The Daily National Intelligencer, November 22, 1841, p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT – Friday, Nov. 19, 1841

The whole of this day was occupied with the trial of the United States vs. [John] Barney Manly, on an indictment charging the prisoner with riotous and disorderly conduct in the house of Mary Ann Hall. The District Attorney, with Mr. Carlisle, appeared as counsel for the prosecution. Messrs. Wm. L. Brent and Lenox acted as counsel for the prisoner. The witnesses for the prosecution testified that the prisoner, at sundry times during the month of March, 1841, and on other occasions, had entered the house of Mary Ann Hall, with several other persons, calling themselves “rangers,” who addressed the prisoner as their “captain;” that they had thrown stones at the windows, broke up the stair carpet, rode, and eaten, drank, and done whatever they pleased in the house, to the great terror of the said Mary Ann Hall, who had been obliged to conceal herself from the said Manly and his “rangers.” The evidence also went to show that on one occasion Barney Manly had taken with him into the houses of the said Mary Ann Hall about fifty persons, some of whom were mere boys, not more than twelve years of age, who behaved in a very riotous and disorderly manner, doing pretty much what they pleased, having taken possession of the house; and that, on some occasion, after the said Mary Ann Hall had been compelled to call on the police for protection, he (Manly) had threatened that he could whip any police officer or constable, and held them completely at defiance. It was also proved that the prisoner and his “rangers” had entered the house repeatedly, on one occasion with their faces blacked and dressed like Indians; and that Mary Ann Hall had been afraid to enter her house one night while the “rangers” were there and a bout the door.

No witnesses were called on the prisoner's behalf. His counsel, however, labored hard in his defence, commenting with severity on the character of the witnesses for the prosecution, and of the house which was the scene of the alleged riot. The learned counsel also honored the City Reporter of the National Intelligencer with a fair specimen of their vituperative faculties, for having, in his previous notices of the prisoner's case, spoken of him as the “notorious Barney Manly,” and so (though not intentionally, as one of the gentlemen admitted) thrown obstacles in the way of a fair trial, exciting prejudices, etc. After a reply from the District Attorney and Mr. Carlisle, in which the counsel contended that, whatever was the character of the house or of the females, they were citizens entitled to the protection of the law, as well as amenable to it for any alleged violation thereof; the District Attorney added that, to show the law was not inoperative, he would state that Mary Ann Hall, the principal witness for the United States, was then under indictment, and would be dealt with, so as to prove that the character of her house would be brought before the Court and a jury, whose province it was to take cognizance of it, and not a lawless and outrageous band of “rangers” and ruffians who set law and justice at defiance. The jury, in a very short time, found the prisoner guilty of riot.

(Witnesses: Mary Ann Hall, Susan Moore, Rosetta Cooper, Catherine Hall, Mary Ann Bryan, Susan Weeden, Elizabeth Hall, John Fleming)

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, March 1, 1842

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. v. Mary Ann Hall

(Witnesses for prosecution: Richard Adams, James O'Neale, A.M. Thomas, Wm. Wise, I.M. Berry, R.R. Burr, Alex. Warner, James Wilson, W. Hickerson, C.H. Wittberger, A. Rothwell)

(Witness for defendant: Geo. W. Hinton)

No verdict reached. Note "Jurors withdrawn by order of court, 3rd March."

Daily National Intelligencer, March 14, 1842, p. 3

Criminal Court

...

James O'Neale, indicted for riotous and disorderly conduct with John Barney Manly and others in the house of Mary Ann Hall, was found guilty, and sentenced to be imprisoned in the county jail twenty days, to pay a fine of \$25, and to give security in \$300 for his good behavior one year, and to stand committed all security be given.

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, March 18, 1842

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. v. Mary Ann Hall

Verdict: Not Guilty

(Witnesses for prosecution: Richard Adams, A.M. Thomas, Wm. Wise, Alex Warren, Jas. Wilson, Peter Force, Susan Weeden, Jas. O'Neall, C.H. Wittberger, A. Rothwell, W.E. Howard, R.R. Burr, W. Hickerson)

(Witnesses for defense: John Fleming, Geo. W. Hinton)

The National Intelligencer, March 21, 1842, p. 4

CRIMINAL COURT, March 18, 1842

Mary Ann Hall was put upon her trial a second time (the jury not having been able to agree on their verdict on the first trial) for keeping a house of ill-fame and a disorderly house in the city of Washington. This trial lasted nearly the whole of Friday and Saturday, and the accused was ably and successfully defended by Mr. Hoban. The jury returned a verdict of not guilty, after a short absence, on both counts of the indictment.

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, June 20, 1843

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. v. John Langdon

Not Guilty

(Witness for prosecution: Mary Ann Hall, Ann Tucker)

Daily National Intelligencer, June 23, 1843, p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT

George Hall was again indicted and tried for riot in the house of Mary A. Hall on the 8th March, 1841. The defence was conducted by Mr. Woodward.

Daily National Intelligencer, November 2, 1843 p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT – Wednesday, November 1

The Court room was crowded this morning by a number of persons who went there in the expectation of hearing the trial of Mary Ann Hall, Catherine Hall, Elizabeth Hall and Emma Reed, against whom an indictment had been preferred for a riot; but the case was not tried.

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, March 15, 1844

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. v. Lewis Goldsmith

Guilty

(Witnesses for prosecution: Mary Ann Hall, Catherine Hall, Rebecca Patton, Martha Grumble, John H. Goddard)

Daily National Intelligencer, June 21, 1844 p. 3

CRIMINAL COURT – Wednesday, June 20

...

Lewis Goldsmith, convicted of an assault and battery on Mary Ann Hall, to pay a fine of twenty dollars, to give security in one dollars to keep the peace, and be of good behavior one year, and to stand committed till the security be given.

...

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, November 11, 1844

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. v. Mary Ann Hall

No verdict reached. Jurors withdrawn 13 Nov

(Witness for prosecution: K.H. Lambell, John Simon, W.I. Gary, R.R. Burr, W.T. Porter, John Franks, John Fleming, Wm. E. Howard, Benj. F. Middleton, Jno. M. Young, H.B. Robertson, Andrew Rothwell)

Daily National Intelligencer, November 15, 1844, p. 3

Criminal Court

...

Mary Ann Hall was indicted and tried for keeping a house of ill fame. James Hoban, Esq., counsel for the defendant. The jury, who retired to make up their verdict, and who were in deliberation three hours, had not agreed at the adjournment of the Court.

Daily National Intelligencer, January 31, 1845, p. 3

Criminal Court

...

Mary Ann Hall was indicted on two counts for keeping a disorderly house and a house of ill-fame in the city of Washington. The defence was conducted by Mr. Hoban. At 1 o'clock the Court was adjourned, the trial not being ended.

Yesterday the trial of Mary Ann Hall was resumed and continued until 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Hoban addressed the jury for three hours in behalf of the defendant. The District Attorney will reply this morning.

NARA, RG 21, Entry 43: Criminal Court Minutes, February 5, 1845

CRIMINAL COURT

U.S. v. Mary Ann Hall

Juror withdrawn on 8 Feby. 1845

(Witnesses for the prosecution: K.H. Lambell, W.I. Garey, John Frank, John Fleming, John Sessford, Andrew Rothwell, Hy. B. Robertson, W.E. Howard)

Daily National Intelligencer, February 7, 1845, p. 4

Pursuant to adjournment, this Court met on Wednesday last. . . .

Mary Ann Hall was indicted on two counts for keeping a disorderly house and a house of ill-fame in the city of Washington. The defence was conducted by Mr. Hoban. At 4 o'clock the Court was adjourned, the trial not being ended.

Yesterday the trial of Mary Ann Hall was resumed and continued until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Hoban addressed the jury for three hours in behalf of the defendant. The District Attorney will reply this morning.

Daily National Intelligencer, February 10, 1845, p. 4

Criminal Court, Friday, February 7, 1845

. . .

The case of the United States vs. Mary Ann Hall was resumed at the opening of the Court. The District Attorney replied to Mr. Hoban, and continued to address the jury for nearly an hour and a half. The case went to the jury about twelve o'clock, when they retired to their room and so continued until four o'clock, at which hour the Court adjourned, no verdict being then rendered.

1850 CENSUS

7th Ward, Washington, DC

Mary A. Hall	33	F	S	Substitute	DC	(value of real estate owned \$11,498)
Elizabeth Hall	31	F	S	Substitute	DC	
Emma Reed	22	F	S	Substitute	NY	
Elizabeth Lowe	33	F	S	Ex-substitute	DC	
Judy Fleet	50	F	M		VA	

The Evening Star, May 7, 1858, p. 3

Robbery – Last night, Nancy Henson and Alice Miller, two colored girls, servants at Mary Ann Hall's, were arrested by Officer Allen on suspicion of robbing one of the female boarders of some valuable jewelry and a small amount of coin. They were taken to the guard house, and this morning Alice was sent to jail, and Nancy admitted to bail for a further hearing, by Justice Donn.

1860 CENSUS

6th Ward, Washington, DC

Mary A. Hall	42	F	S	DC	(Value of real estate \$14,600; personal \$3,700)
Elizabeth Hall	40	F	S	DC	(Value of real estate \$2,500)
Ellen Davis	19	F	S	VA	
Maria Green	47	F	S	MD	Servant

The Evening Star, September 14, 1861, p. 2

Our Military Budget

Another Excitement

Between five and six p.m. yesterday there was a general alarm or rather turnout in all the camps on the other side of the river. It was occasioned by news of a forward movement on the part of a body of the enemy, variously estimated at from 15,000 to 25,000 men, then apparent to our pickets. These troops were in motion from Fairfax Court House and Flint Hill on the road to the village of Falls Church. . . .

They also burned the houses of Basis Hall, Mr. Sweet, Samuel Birch, Mary Hall, and it is said of Mr. Gilbert Vanderwerken, ere retiring, which they did on perceiving that the advance of our pickets that had been driven in were reinforced with infantry and artillery sufficient to sweep the marauding and incendiary part or parties if not quickly falling back. . . .

The Evening Star, September 25, 1861, p. 1

The Army of the Potomac

The Richmond Dispatch of the 13th gives the following news from Munson's Hill:

. . .
From Upton's it is an easy matter to throw shell upon Hall's Hill, and it would be but little work to destroy entirely the house of Mary Hall, now used as a lookout or observatory by Federal pickets. That house has now become quite a centre of attraction, and there are many visitors who climb to its roof in order to get a glimpse of the Confederate camp near Upton's house.

On Sunday last a number were assembled in both houses, and stood peering at each other through glasses for some hours. We in Upton's house waved a handkerchief to those opposite, and the salute was immediately returned; but soon after, possibly when it was suggested that the signal was for an attack, there was a general stampede, and we saw no more of them for some hours.

. . .

The Evening Star, May 14, 1862, p. 3

Emancipation Commissioners

. . .

Mary Ann Hall, 4 slaves – Rosanna, William, Alexander and Caroline Gordon

Compensated Emancipation:

Petition 181 of 966: Filed May 13, 1862

Mary Ann Hall of Washington claims compensation for four persons:

1. Rosanna Gordon, aged 24, chestnut colored about five feet tall. [Value \$1,200]
2. William Gordon child of Rosanna, aged eight, mulatto. [Value \$500]
3. Alexander Gordon, child of Rosanna, aged four mulatto. [Value \$300]
4. Caroline Lucas, aged 23 (?), chestnut colored. [Value \$1,000]

Hall purchased for \$359.81 on Jan. 9, 1846, Rosanna Gordon, who was then about eight years old, from James P. Gannon and Cornelius Cox through K.N. Lambell. She purchased Caroline Lucas for \$275 on Feb. 15, 1844, from J.P. Cannon through K.N. Lambell.

[Commissioners paid Hall per T.E. Lloyd, atty., \$1,138.80: Rosanna Gordon, \$438; William Gordon, \$175.20; Alexander Gordon, \$87.60; Caroline Lucas, \$438.]

The Evening Star, May 24, 1862

Running Off A Hack

Wednesday evening, a hackman was engaged by three or four officers to take them to Miss Mary Hall's establishment, on the Island, and in a trice he landed them in front of the house, into which they readily obtained admission. The driver was invited into the house to receive his pay, and left his hack and horses standing in front; but when he came out they were non est. A search was at once made and the parties were tracked to the Navy Yard, afterwards to Tin Cup alley, where the team was recovered. Henry Somers and Cornelius Mix, who had just left the hack, were found in the house, and were both arrested and taken to the Tenth District Station, where they had a hearing before Justice Stratton Thursday morning; Somers giving bail for a further hearing, and Mix being discharged. Somers was subsequently dismissed by Justice Stratton.

The Evening Star, March 13, 1863

Cyprian Affinities

Annie Smith, Alice Martin, and Cora Wilbraham, three fallen angels, sojourning at Mary Hall's Hades, yesterday secured a barouche and driver for the purpose of taking an airing, and in order to keep their spirits up, they stopped at sundry restaurants and put the spirits down to such an extent that they imagined themselves in Dixie, and commenced shouting for Jeff. Davis and singing the "Bonnie Blue Flag." At the corner of seventh street and the Avenue a mounted Provost Guard ordered a halt, and attempted to arrest the trio, when one of them jumped out of the hack, but was persuaded to get back, and the party were then escorted to the Provost Marshal's office, where Annie Smith and Alice Martin again allowed their secesh proclivities to stick out, and continued to hurrah for Jeff. and rebellion. Cora Wilbraham, however, being somewhat sober, was more quiet, and endeavored to dissuade her companions from being so disorderly. The whole party was sent to the Central Guardhouse, and were subsequently released upon the payment of a fine.

The Evening Star, January 15, 1864

Heavy Raid Upon The Fancy

The Big Establishments Attended to

Mary Ann Hall and others of the Elite Marched up to the City Hall

The Grand Jury have recently been at work among the bawdy houses and having found several indictments, yesterday the court ordering bench warrants for the arrest of several of the parties.

This morning, Sergeant Hepburn, of the 10th District police, into whose hands the warrants were placed, dispatched his officers to arrest the parties named, and this afternoon the following were taken to the Court House:--Ann Benter, of Tin Cup alley; Ellen Bride, of Pear Tree alley; Mary Heissler, better known as "Dutch Mary," of Third Street; and Mary Ann Hall, keeper of the "old and well established" ranche on Maryland avenue,

The parties arrived at the court-house singly--Ann Benter arriving first, in company with one of her girls, and she at once took her seat in the prisoners' deck, where she was shortly afterwards joined by Ellen Bride. Mary Hall, who appeared in a suit of virtuous black, next arrived, in company with her sister Lizzie Hall, and proceeded to the Marshal's office, where Lizzie went security for her sister. Mary Heissler, on arriving, went to the Marshal's office, and sent after security.

The Evening Star, February 19, 1864

Bawdy House Case--Trial of Mary Ann Hall Criminal Court, Judge Olin

This morning the case of Mary Ann Hall charged with keeping a bawdy house on the corner of 4th street and Maryland avenue, was taken up; Mr. Joseph H. Bradley, Sr.; appearing for the defense.

Officer Gessford testified to having seen hacks frequently in front of the house, from which he had seen males mostly get out. He had seldom seen females alight. Witness was in the house about two years since, and again about a year since, he was called there by a hackman who complained that a gentleman had "slied" him, and witness was invited in and waited until the gentleman came down. Witness had seen when the Anderson Zouaves were here, a number of women there, but, never had seen any of any account on any other occasion. The front door had a ball and chain on it, so that it could be opened about six inches that persons might be seen before being admitted. Witness was called there another time about a watch which had been lost but he did not see any women on that occasion.

Charles Walter (late Justice of the Peace)

Witness has had occasion to go to the house in question three times within the past eighteen months. Witness knows Mary Ann Hall, but does not know whether she lived there or not, he saw on his visit there eight or nine women. It appeared that a wedding party was going on--champagne was being handed around--there were six or eight citizens and several officers present. Witness remained until Lieut. Wood, of the Patrol had examined the passes on the first visit. The second time he went in company with Lieut. Franklin, but saw nothing but what he saw the first time. Witness went there the third time with Sergt. Hepburg to search for a girl who was missing from Baltimore. He saw eight or ten women in a lower room. Two who were in the parlor he had seen at the guard house. Witness has heard that these two were prostitutes. One of them was talking to a gentleman and the other women were to officers of the Army and Navy.

J.A. Clarvoe testified that he had been called there on several occasions to take persons from the house, and on going in, met Miss Mary at the door. This was four or five months ago; a yellow man came to him and said Miss Hall had sent for him; Miss Hall said she sent for him to take away a couple of disorderly soldiers who were in front of the door, and witness started them away.

About a year since he was called about 12 o'clock by Miss Hall from a window to take away a colonel, and witness took him to the guard house. At another time he went to the house (thinks it was in November) on business. He went in the parlor and found it very handsomely furnished--first-class furniture, very showy. Witness saw Miss Mary in the parlor, and had some conversation about some parties whom she thought were bogus detectives. Witness saw on this occasion three girls who were said to be prostitutes. These women were called in to give a description of the men, and one of them (Miss Kate) said she knew one of them. Miss Kate looked as though she had just 'got up.' There was no

man present but himself. This was about 10 o'clock in the morning. Witness had seen other ladies at different times. Witness did not ask how these ladies employed themselves, but did not see any implements of industry about the house. Witness has seen hacks go there at all hours of the night, with officers and soldiers and sometimes females.

W.M. Kelly (detective) testified that he went to the house in November last on business, in company with Detective Barry, and an elderly lady met them at the door, when they asked for Miss Hall, were invited in, and after waiting some time they were invited into the back parlor, and Mr. Barry asked if she was Miss Hall, she replied yes. Mr. Barry asked if she was the keeper of the house to which she replied in the affirmative. Witness and Mr. Barry left after transacting the business they were on (in relation to a watch).

Michael Barry (detective) testified that he had been in the house three times. The first time was 18 or 20 months since, when he did not see this lady (pointing to Mary Hall). This time went into the basement and saw four or five women. Had seen some of them before in New York, where he was formerly a detective, the others he had seen in Washington on the avenue. Witness went there again on the fifth of November last, when he met Mr. Kelly, whose testimony he corroborated. Witness on that on that occasion saw a lady who has since learned was named Mrs. Isaacs. Witness went there again to inquire about a difficulty which took place previously. Witness has passed the house often and had seen hacks there.

Robert Magee, formerly a corporation policeman, testified that he had been to the house but not for three years past. He had seen women go to the house as late as 12 o'clock at night. Witness looked upon them as low women, for he had been a hackman, and had frequently hacked them.

The Evening Star, February 20, 1864

Criminal Court, Judge Olin

This morning, in the case of Mary Ann Hall, indicted for keeping a bawdy and disorderly house, a seated verdict was returned of guilty on the first count and not guilty on the second. The case, however, goes before the Supreme Court, on the bill of exceptions taken by Mr. Bradley, which will probably be argued on Monday. The Court adjourned to Monday, and will probably then close the present term.

The National Republican, February 20 1864, p. 2

District Supreme Court – Criminal Term.

Judge Olin – February 20

Mary Ann Hall who was indicted yesterday on the charge of keeping a bawdy house, was convicted this morning. No business of importance was transacted, and the court adjourned to Monday, when they will pass sentence. The jury is discharged.

The Evening Star, February 22, 1864

Criminal Court - Trial of Mary Ann Hall on Charge of Keeping a Bawdy House

After our report closed Friday, the trial of Mary Ann Ball, for keeping a bawdy and disorderly house was continued.

The ranche in question has had, it is no exaggeration to say, a national reputation for the last quarter of a century; and the fact that the business concerns of this "old and well established house" were being overhauled in Court has really attracted considerable attention to the case.

Charles R. Vernon (policeman)-Witness served a warrant on Miss Mary. At the time, she said, "I expected it," or something of the line.

Barry C. Hepburn (sergeant of police)-Went there in company with Justice Walter, and saw seven or eight women. Some lounging, others reading. Witness did not think it was a wedding party. Witness went there another time with a young man of his acquaintance, when the same scene was enacted. Witness has seen hacks at the house frequently as late as 11 or 12 o'clock, and, he thinks, occasionally as late as 2 o'clock.

By Mr. Bradley-Witness has heard that the defendant has a residence in the country, but never knew that she resided there.

Charles Ashton (policeman)-Has been at the house three or four times. Once he was called by a lieutenant, and went in the house, when Miss Mary said a woman had been drinking and she wanted him to take her out. Witness waited until she came down, and the lieutenant stepped forward and said he would get a hack and take her away. The woman appeared as if she had been drinking. Witness saw two or three ladies pass back and forth. The women were dressed very well. Witness went there about three months ago with Officer Parker, when he saw Miss Mary and an elderly lady, and also two ladies going into their house. This was in the night-time. Witness has seen ladies at the door and seen gentlemen go in and out.

Becky Ford, a girl of about twenty years of age is a friend but not called by the prosecution, was called by the defense, and she testified that she has boarded in the house in question for six or eight months; that she contracted to board with Miss Emily Hinkerly who receives their and controls the house, presides at the table etc. Miss Mary Hall is very seldom at the house and assumes no control of the house. Miss Hinkerly some weeks since when there was trouble among the girls, said she was sorry that she ever bought out Miss Mary.

By Mr. Carrington-Since witness has boarded there, Miss Mary has been there. Witness heard Miss Mary say frequently that she would like to get a house. Miss Mary lived there like the rest of the girls. Witness did not know Miss Emily Hinkerty before she came here. Miss Emily is as old as Miss Mary, if not older. Miss Emily takes the head of the table and Miss Cora Wilbert the foot. Miss Mary, when she comes to the table, is next to Miss Emily, but her meals were generally sent to her room. Witness does not know who did the marketing, as she did not get up early enough. Mrs. Isaacs is not a boarder, but comes to the house often.

By Mr. Bradley-Miss Hinkerty exercises the control of the house.

Officer Veitch recalled by the defense-Witness had seen a house in Virginia which was said to belong to Miss Mary, and he had seen her going back and forth to the farm. Since the war commenced he had seen the farm, and did not think there is a fence on it.

Cora Wilbur (a handsome and modestly dressed girl was next called, and testified that she has resided at the house six or eight months, having contracted with Miss Emily, to whom she paid her board, and had seen other boarders pay. Witness had heard Miss Emily say that she was sorry she had bought out the house, on account of the trouble she had with the boarders. Witness never saw Miss Mary Ann Hall, managing the house.

By Mr. Carrington-Miss Hall has been there all the time witness has, but witness does not know what she does. Miss Mary does nothing with the rest of the girls. Witness paid \$20 per week board. The witness declined to answer a question about whether she had paid other money than for board. The day Miss Mary Ann Hall was indicted she was telling the girls in the parlor that the house had been indicted, when Miss Emily offered her regrets that she (Miss Emily) had got her (Miss Hall) into so much trouble.

John A. Wilson was called to prove that Miss Mary had a place in Virginia, where she resided until the soldiers rendered it impossible for her to live there, when she returned and employed the witness to dispossess a tenant of his in order that she might have a house to live in.

To his order of evidence, Mr. Carrington objected that Mr. Bradley took the following bill of exceptions: The defendant having given evidence --- to show that she was only a boarder at the house,

charged in the indictment now further offers to give evidence to show that more than two years ago she was residing in the state of Virginia, having rented the furniture of the said home to a third person. That about two years ago the Army of the United States took possession of the said property whereon she was so residing in the State of Virginia, and she was compelled to leave it, she returned to Washington, and there being no respectable boarding house in Washington in which she could get board, she rented this house to reside in and hath resided there ever since, that during the time she has so resided there she hath made reasonable efforts to regain the possession of another house which she owns in order to live in it as a private person, and from time to time while making these efforts she has declared that she is not the keeper of the said house, named in the said indictment, and that she was anxious to get out of it all of which was long antecedent to the finding of said indictment.

The United States objects to the whole of the said offered evidence, and the Court sustains the objection and the defendant excepts thereto.

Mr. Bradley proposed to prove by Mr. Wise that the said Miss Hall had denied that she was the keeper of the house in the presence of Miss Hinkerty and that the latter, acknowledged that she kept the house, to which Mr. Carrington objected, and Mr. Bradley took the following bill of exceptions, which the Court refused: The defendant offered to give in evidence that long before the finding of the said indictment an officer called to see the said defendant at the said house on business, and did see her in the presence of one Emily Hinkerty; that the said defendant told the said officer that she was only a boarder in said house, and wished earnestly to be out of it and said Emily said she herself was the keeper of it.

Mr. Bradley stated he had no other evidence but on the points he intended to prove by Mr. Wise. The case was then argued by Mr. Bradley and District Attorney Carrington.

Saturday morning, as we stated, a sealed verdict was returned of guilty on the first count and not guilty on the second. The case, however, goes before the Supreme Court on the bill of exceptions taken by Mr. Bradley.

The Evening Star, March 9, 1864

Supreme Court in Banc.

This morning the bill of exceptions taken in the case of Mary Ann Hall, convicted at the last term of the Criminal Court of keeping a bawdy house, was argued by J.H. Bradley, Sr. appearing for the defense and District Attorney Carrington for the United States.

The Evening Star August 9, 1864, p. 2

Good From Evil

Under an act of Congress passed at its last session, the proceeds of all fines from selling liquor to soldiers, as well as from fines imposed by the criminal court, are to be paid to the corporations of Washington and Georgetown and the Levy Court of the county for the establishment and support of the public schools – one half to Washington and one fourth to each of the others. The first fine paid over agreeably to the provisions of the act referred to was the round one of \$2,000 imposed on Mary Ann Hall for keeping a bawdy-house some months ago, which was divided as above a few days since.

The Evening Star, August 12, 1864, p. 3

A Fight At Mary Hall's

The new comers and the old set at Mary Hall's ranche, corner Md. Ave. and 4-1/2 street, do not seem to harmonize. Wednesday evening Miss Lizzie Pearce, a buxom English lass, and Miss Lilly Ellis met

and had some words, which resulted in the English girl putting in two or three well directed blows as the deep mourning around Lilly's left eye shows. A short time after this Miss Mary Jackson and Miss Pearce met Miss Ellie Lewis near the hall and hopped in but no serious damage was done to either party. Miss Lewie immediately procured a warrant on which Miss Jackson and Pearce were arrested by officer Weeden and taken to the Tenth precinct station. Wednesday morning the case was heard, and resulted in Miss Pearce giving bail for her appearance at court, to answer for an assault and battery, and Miss Jackson bail to keep the peace.

Subsequent to this trial Miss Ellis obtained a warrant against Miss Pearce, for an assault on her and it was served by officer Weeden. The case was heard before Justice Boswell, and Miss Pearce was required to give bail in this case also. Miss Lizzie Brown, then charged Lilly Ellis with using threats toward her, and officer Gorman escorted her before the justice, when he held her to bail to keep the peace as well as Miss Ellie Lewie, who was arrested by officer Barker on the complaint of Miss Jackson.

The Evening Star, July 20, 1865, p. 3

The Income Tax

List of Tax Payers

. . . Mary Ann Hall, \$182.30; . . .

The Evening Star, September 20, 1872

Locals

About 7 o'clock last night, Officer Lewis found on the steps of Mary Hall's house, corner of 4 1/2 street and Maryland avenue, a white male infant, which was sent to St. Ann's infant asylum.

The Evening Star, Feb. 11, 1886

Hall. Departed this life at 2 a.m., Friday January 29, 1886, Mary F. Hall, long a resident of Washington. With integrity unquestioned, a heart ever open to appeals of distress, a charity that was boundless, she is gone but her memory will be kept green by many who knew her sterling worth. Funeral strictly private.

The Evening Star, February 11, 1886

The Estate of Mary A. Hall

John L. Hall and Basil Hall, by a petition in the Orphans' Court yesterday, renounce their right to letters of administration upon the estate of Mary A. Hall, deceased, and asked for the appointment of Messrs. Reginald Fendall and Randall Hagner, which was subsequently done, and the bond of each fixed at \$50,000. The deceased, who owned the property at the northeast corner of 4 1/2 street and Maryland avenue, died on the 29th of last month, leaving two brothers and sisters. She also owned a farm in Virginia, with household furniture and chattels, and \$57,200 in government and railroad bonds.

The National Republican, February 11, 1886, p. 4

An Old-Time Washington Figure

John I. Hall and Basil Hall, by a petition in the orphan's court yesterday, renounce their right to letters of administration upon the estate of Mary A. Hall deceased, and asked for the appointment of

Messrs. Reginald Fendall and Randall Hagner, which was subsequently done, and the bond of each fixed at \$50,000.

The deceased, who was well known at one time, and kept an establishment of national renown at the corner of Four-and-a-half street and Maryland avenue, died on the 29th of last month, leaving two brothers and sisters. In addition to the real estate in this District she was the owner of a fine farm in Virginia and, besides household furniture and chattels she left \$57,200 in government and railroad bonds. She had been living quietly at her farm for many years, but returned lately to her old mansion in this city, living there in entire seclusion and respectability.

The Evening Star, March 5, 1886, p. 2

This Is To Give Notice: That the subscribers, of the District of Columbia; have obtained from the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, holding a special term for Orphans' court business, Letters of Administration on the personal estate of Mary Ann Hall, late of the District of Columbia, deceased; all persons having claims against the said deceased are hereby warned to exhibit the same with the vouchers thereof, to the subscribers, on or before the Tenth Day of February Next; they may otherwise by law be excluded from all benefit of the said estate. Given under our hand this 10th day of February, 1886.

Reginald Fendall

Randall Hagner, Administrators

The Evening Star, October 21, 1886

Locals

The farm of Mary Hall in Alexandria Co. known as Maple Grove was sold yesterday for \$9,700 to Col. William B. Brockett of Louisiana.

The Evening Star, April 1, 1887, p. 3

PROBATE COURT – Judge Merrick

Today, estate of Mary Ann Hall; order of distribution.

The Evening Star, January 4, 1888

The Mary Hall House

The School Trustees Have Not Decided to Abandon It-- Danger That The Miner Fund May Be Withdrawn

School Trustee Ros A. Fish says the statement that the board of trustees have concluded to abandon the Mary Hall house is incorrect. He says that as the controversy over the occupancy of the Hall house by the colored primary and industrial schools appeared to be centered in Trustee L.A. Cornish and Superintendent Cook, of the colored schools, the trustees decided to leave the matter to those two gentlemen for settlement. At the same time, Mr. Fish says, the committee on manual training agreed to permit the industrial school to be located in the Miller building, provided that some of the colored primary schools be transferred to the Mary Hall house. The committee asked this because they would be assisting the Miner fund for the education of the colored primary schools be transferred to the Mary Hall house. The committee asked this because they would be assisting the Miner fund for the education of the colored youth of the District, to which the Hall house belongs, and also because it would provide a

place for the accommodation of the large surplus in the John F. Cook school. Mr. Fish also says it was understood by the trustees that Mr. Cornish favored this plan and would agree to it. But now it appears that Mr. Cornish is determined no colored school shall be placed in that building. Mr. Fish says that, so far as he knows, the trustees will not consent to the abandoning of the Hall house. He says that if it is decided to locate all the schools, primary and manual, in the Miller building, it will leave the surplus in the John F. Cook building in its present condition, and in all probability cause the trustees of the Miner fund to remove it from the District. He says that Mrs. Stroud, the agent of the fund, has called upon the Commissioners and himself and threatened to do this. The matter will likely be settled at the next meeting of the school board on Tuesday night.

Both Commissioners Webb and Wheatley declared to a Star reporter today that they have not interfered one way or another in the difficulty. They reiterated the statements which they have made prior to this date that the subject is one for the trustees to settle. They referred the reporter to Trustee Fish, who, they said, knew all about it.

The Evening Star, January 5, 1888

The Miner Trust and the Mary Hall Building To the Editor of The Evening Star

The remarks of Trustee Fish, as reported in The Star, gives confirmation to the statement that the Miner trustees are seeking money. The threat of Miss Stroud to take from this District the Miner fund, if made, should not alarm any one. The fund amounts to about \$40,000, collected by the late Miss Miner, the greater part of which is invested in a schoolhouse on 17th street northwest, for which the Government pays over \$2,000 rental per annum. Miss Miner, during her life, established a normal school for colored girls to a scheme for the reclaiming of a bad locality and reformation of abandoned people. The use of the fund collected by Miss Miner for the present purpose of the trustees is a violation of the letter and spirit of their trust. The present persistent attempt to get the Government to pay more money to this fund is a bold effort to render successful a bad venture in the purchase of the old Mary Hall house. To place a public school in that house simply to pay a part of the school fund to the Miner trustees would be a fraud; it is known that the place, on account of its surroundings, will not be used by respectable colored people as a school; they will not allow their children to attend such a place, and if any part of that building is rented for a public school the whole affair will be reported to Congress and an investigation asked, that this community may know the inside of this attempt to use the public school funds for a private enterprise and the connection of certain parties with it.

Colored Citizen.

The Evening Star, January 9, 1888

The Mary Hall Building Dr. Shippen Calls Upon the Authorities to Purify the Locality

Rev. Rush R. Shippen, who is one of the trustees of the Miner fund, devoted his sermon at All-Souls church yesterday in part to the controversy respecting the proposed location of colored public schools in what is known as the Mary Hall building. Referring to the purchase of the building he said that it was hoped that by placing in it some city schools of the primary grade the city authorities could then drive from the vicinity all rum shops and kindred iniquities, while in other rooms the Miner trust, with its small income, could introduce sewing, cooking and carpentry schools, and also enlist the generousities of charitable people and churches to join in filling the building with industrial teaching. The origin of the controversy, he said, really lay in the fact that the colored people were repelled from the Miner building,

in which matter Dr. Shippin thought they may have some just cause for grievance, especially if true, as he had heard, that their children as far north as O street were to be sent south of Pennsylvania avenue. There were, he said, south of Pennsylvania avenue swarms of colored children, enough to crowd the house, already living among the evil surroundings of that vicinity. The misfortune of the Miner fund is that so much money has been absorbed by purchase of the building and its thorough renovations by plumbing and painting, which altogether approaches a cost of \$20,000, thus heavily diminishing the income for the annual work of the trustees. It is impossible for the trustees to have any selfish desire for money. All they have and ask is for disinterested beneficence among the colored children.

"I have been deeply impressed with the fact," said Dr. Shippen, "that for a month we have been loudly proclaiming that there is a square within a stone's throw of our Capitol which is unfit for a children's school. By that confession our city stands disgraced before the civilized world. What do we propose to do about it! Are we to pray that God's Kingdom may come except upon this spot reserved for Satan's tenure? If there is a swamp let it be filled up. If there is dangerous miasma and infection our first business is to purify it. In the North End slums of Boston Father Taylor planted his chapel, and more recently the benevolent women of the city have carried on kindergartens till the neighborhood is being redeemed. I understand the President has been urged to forbid schools being placed in this Miner Trust building. Better were it to enlist his great authority to send there a regiment of police to make the vicinity fit for a school. It is said Congress is to be petitioned. For what? Shall we put upon that august body the extraordinary affront of asking them to recognize a square in sight of their very windows as yielded to Satan with unconditional surrender? Better ask them to apply dynamite enough to turn the square into part of the public mail. At the city police headquarters I am assured that there is law enough and police force enough and authority enough to clear out the locality in sixty days. Then let it be done. I call upon the Commissioners and our colored brethren, and this church, and people of the whole community so to rise in their moral sentiment as to remove this scandal and disgrace, and so to purify and carry forward in the line of Miss Miner's noble charity the education and uplifting of the colored children of our city."

New York Times, April 18, 1999

Archeology Find: Capital's Best Little Brothel

By Francis X. Clines

WASHINGTON, April 17

Enough of "Monica's Story." Archeologists digging in the Mall have happened upon the historically tantalizing story of Mary Ann Hall, a determined 20-something who built and managed one of this city's finest 19th-century bordellos.

The three-story brick house of the entrepreneurial Ms. Hall flourished for four decades just down from Capitol Hill--a monument in its way, to capital power and sex but also to a level of discretion that seems rare in modern Washington.

"She was obviously a successful independent woman and she clearly maintained connections throughout her life," Donna J. Seifert, an archeologist who unearthed the dregs of Ms. Hall's brothel--champagne bottles and gilt dinnerware shards--said in a recent interview. It is now a grassy stretch of the Mall where the Smithsonian Institution's new National Museum of the American Indian is to be built beginning in September, immediately east of the Air and Space Museum.

"Unfortunately we never found her little black book," said Elizabeth Barthold O'Brien, an archeology historian, who also worked on the dig three years ago and co-wrote an archeological report with Ms. Seifert that amounts to a new chapter in the underlife of historic Washington.

Without impeaching a soul in retrospect, Mrs. O'Brien and Ms. Seifert documented through city and court records, Ms. Hall's place in Washington life and how she profited elegantly near the Capitol in an

era when lawmakers lived more of the bachelor's life and the lobbying arts included what historians say were the services of prostitutes.

It was a moralizing era, as ever in Washington, but Ms. Hall and her employees never came close to entry on the police blotter, even as hundreds of streetwalkers and prostitutes in shoddier houses were written up routinely as nuisances, despite the legality of prostitution. Rather, Mrs. O'Brien found Ms. Hall listed on city records as an upstanding taxpayer as her property value compounded over the years.

The doughty madam stood out as the rare woman who became wealthy across the go-go years of the Civil War. Far from any whiff of Brothelgate, she succeeded scandal-free at a time before house of prostitutions were banned here in 1914 in a wave of civic righteousness.

"Mary Hall was the antithesis of all the moralizing warnings of her day," Ms. O'Brien said. "She lived a long life, made a lot of money, and left a gorgeous grave." Her towering stone memorial in the once-rural Congressional Cemetery, a mile southeast of the Capitol, and just down from a phalanx of smaller stones of departed lawmakers, depicts a beautiful young woman wistfully pondering life's passage.

"I pored over tons of documents, but Mary Hall remains a mystery," said Ms. O'Brien, speaking of such unanswered questions as how the young woman found the money and pluck for her enterprise.

The two researchers tracked a good deal of lost information but found no photograph of Ms. Hall. She maintained a classic "parlor house," their report concludes, a sanctuary where "men of wealth and distinction" were wined, dined and sexually served by women "noted for their youth, beauty and social refinement."

Ultimately, Ms. Hall rented her property to a women's health clinic in her retirement years, about 10 years before she died. This was when prominent Washington women had begun crusading opening in behalf of their "fallen sisters."

"Respectable women bravely introduced Washingtonians to the novel concept that some women turned to prostitution by necessity rather than choice," the archeology report notes of days when cities were largely devoid of economic opportunities for single women.

Ms. Hall's death in 1886 at the age of 71 brought on a court fight by siblings over her fortune and an obituary in the Washington Evening Star that praised her civic integrity and "a heart ever open to appeals of distress." Finding the old litigation record, Ms. O'Brien discovered the contents of Ms. Hall's top-of-the-line brothel, from expensive Brussels carpets to suits of red-plush furniture.

"Her memory will be kept green by many who knew her sterling worth," the obituary concluded. But her memory, as with the dust of her myriad clients, was well faded until the researchers dug into the history of the proposed construction site, as required by Federal preservation laws. Their report was entered into the archives without fanfare in this city of endless homage and ceremony for the more idealized aspects of Americana.

The archeologists found no mention of Mary Ann Hall in history books. But they uncovered bureaucratic records of her bordello in a day when "prostitute" was an accepted occupation in the Federal census. Ms. Hall's house at 349 Maryland Avenue, with 18 "inmates" and fine food and furnishings, was rated at the top of the list of 450 brothels catalogued by the Federal Provost Marshall's office in 1862, when the city teemed with transient men, encamped soldiers and an estimated 5,000 prostitutes.

Her house stood out in what was then the city's tenderloin, dubbed "Louse Alley," a canal-laced warren adjacent to the sprawling, "Hooker's Division" neighborhood--a popular word-play on Gen. Joseph Hooker, whose Union troops bivouacked on the future Mall and patronized local prostitutes.

In undertaking the assignment to research the construction site for John Milner Associates, historic research specialists, Ms. Seifert and Ms. O'Brien delved into a time when sex and politics seemed to have been a far less public sensation than has lately been the case.

"I thought, what's going on here?" Ms Seifert related when Ms. Hall's old garbage dig yielded masses of corks, bottles and broken plates of long-ago revels, giving her the first clue to the human endeavors that had taken place there. By coincidence, she had previously researched the underpinnings of the new Ronald Reagan Building to the west, near the White House, and there, too, found a brothel's remains.

A muckraking book from 1883, "Mysteries and Miseries of America's Great Cities," told of the finest prostitutes being employed by corporate lobbyists to influence legislation. "The type of house she ran, as well as its proximity to the Capitol, would certainly have made it a possibility," the archeological report carefully concluded.

Ms. Hall managed an "upper-ten" establishment--a 19th century New York term for the very best in private trysting places. Ms. O'Brien diligently searched criminal court records for any charges against Ms. Hall but all she found was mention of an angry defendant demanding to know why the authorities never troubled Ms. Hall's house.

"There's some evidence that women came and left with Congress," Ms. Seifert said, suggesting a certain seasonal aspect to the life of democracy. "It was just treated as part of the way things were," she said of the fact of prostitution and the corollary notion of the time "that men couldn't really be expected to control their sexual appetites."

In the scandal-weary eyes of modern Washington, there may be particular relief in the fact that the researchers uncovered no profiteering kiss-and-tell narratives about this buried part of Washington's past, "Mary Ann Hall's brothel was a large and prosperous household that offered material comforts to its inmates and guests and made Hall a wealthy woman," the researchers concluded with all the sensibility of the departed madam.