San Francisco Daily Morning Call June 12, 1864

Beasts in the Semblance of Men

A private examination was held in the Police Court yesterday, which revealed a shocking criminality that, for baseness, bestiality, and degradation, can scarcely be conceived. Teresa Ford, a young woman of prepossessing appearance, swore that a few nights ago she was standing on the sidewalk conversing with a person on the corner of Dupont street and St. Mark's Place, when a hack stopped opposite to her, and three men came from it, and, seizing her with force, carried her to the hack, and putting her inside, fastened the door, and took her to the Abbey, where James McKenna and Peter Tully got inside, and Tully forcibly held her down while McKenna, the hack driver, outraged her person. Then McKenna got out, and Tully forcibly outraged her in a similar manner, and during her struggles nearly bit a piece of flesh out of one of her fingers, which caused such excessive pain that she fainted away, and lay unconscious for some time. When she had somewhat recovered her senses, she found that her dress had been torn from her person, no clothing on but her chemise-the hack windows broken and both her dress and chemise were spotted with blood. She was taken to her residence on Dupont street by the same parties, at an early hour in the morning, and her condition was corroborated by the woman who let her in. There were two other persons with Tully and McKenna at the time, one of whom was Peter Daly, and the other man has not been found. Daly said that they drove the hack under a shed at the Abbey, and that while taking a drink with the hackman at the bar, they heard screams outside, and going to the hack, found Teresa with her clothes torn off, nothing on but her chemise, and exclaiming that Tully had bit her hand. Her clothing was bloody, and he helped put on her dress again and wipe the blood from her person. Miss Ford, who it appeared was a girl of previous loose habits, acknowledged that she had been drinking during the night, but swore positively that McKenna was in the hack and had been guilty of outrageous violence The Judge, in passing upon the testimony, remarked upon discrepancies between the statements made by Daly and the prosecuting witness, and in reviewing the transaction stated that the base and disgusting venality that had been forcibly committed by the defendants upon a defenseless woman, who, whether degraded or not, was entitled to the protection of the law so far as an attack upon her person was concerned, was abhorrent. He considered the hackman as especially culpable, for he knew that he was committing a crime when he gave the use of his vehicle for the purpose which had been shown, and was doubly culpable by his conduct afterwards. Inasmuch as Daly had been a witness in the case, he supposed that he should have to discharge him; but he found Tully and McKenna guilty of a criminal assault, and would sentence them on Monday, and should meanwhile require bail from both of them to a heavy amount. Officer Blitz informs us that McKenna's hack is number eighteen.