

FOR MURDER AND ARSON.

John A. Moore Under Arrest for Killing His Five Children.

HITCHESON, Kan., March 22.—A fiendish crime, similar to the recent Gilbert murder in Clay county, occurred here yesterday morning. Five children were murdered by their father while sleeping and the house afterward burned over them. The children were Carl Moore, aged 12; Mary, aged 10; Pearl, aged 8; Charlie, aged 7, and Lee, aged 3 years, all the children of John A. Moore.

Last evening, after the close of the coroner's inquest, Moore was arrested upon the charge of murdering the children and is now in jail.

At 2 o'clock yesterday morning the house on East Tenth street, where Moore and his family lived, was partly destroyed by fire. When the fire was gotten under control and the firemen entered, Moore's five children were found dead upon a bed on the floor. Their bodies lay side by side, just as they would be when sleeping. The lower parts of their bodies were badly burned.

During the day the belief spread that the children had been murdered before the house was burned. At first the only evidence of this was the fact that the children had not moved in their bed and the presence of blood upon parts of the bed.

An inquest was held which developed the fact almost beyond a doubt that the children were murdered by the father. Before the inquest physicians made an examination of the bodies. In the skull of each was found a fracture made by a heavy blow by some blunt instrument. With one exception, each child also had a cut in the neck, evidently made by a knife.

The father's story told before the coroner was that he slept in the next room to the children. He accounted for the fire by saying he left a lamp burning in the children's room and that it had exploded. Moore talked indifferently about the affair. He said he was awakened by the smoke and rushed out doors. He was about fifteen minutes recovering from the effects of the smoke and gas.

He then awakened a neighbor who lived about twenty feet west on the next lot. He did not try to get the children out, as the fire had too much start. When others arrived he could not tell where the children were sleeping. No one else was at the house, the mother having gone out to nurse a sick woman.

Moore's testimony was given before he had an intimation that it was known that the children had been murdered. He said when he saw the children could not be saved he went to his wife's father's and stayed until morning. When the doctors testified that the children had been murdered Moore gave close attention, but his countenance did not change. Once or twice he sneered at the evidence. When the verdict of the coroner's jury was brought in, charging him with the crime. He acted as indifferent as before. He refused to talk after the trial.

John Moore has no relatives in Kansas and his native state is not known. He is a medium sized, dark complexioned man. Those who know him say he talks very little, and that his main ambition has always been to educate his children, having had little or no education himself. He came here from Emporia three weeks ago and has brooded much over being out of work. He spent last summer farming in Oklahoma, but formerly lived in Emporia and returned there last fall.

His wife's father, M. W. Franklin, lives here, but the family knows very little about Moore. He has no appearance of being insane and has never shown any such symptoms, so far as can be learned.