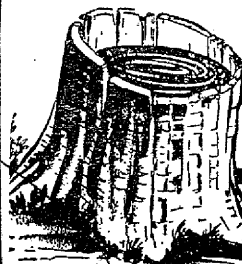
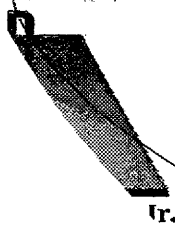


(By Rick Friedman)



# Stump Water

By PENN JONES JR.

(Reprinted from Manhattan East)

Naturally, nobody believed Slim Harrison, an Assistant District Attorney on Staten Island, when he said he had solved the assassination three years ago of the Borough's U. S. Senator, Hell, everybody knew he had his eye on the District Attorney's job!

Sure, Harrison said he had a signed confession from a former ferry boat captain, S. I. Ferry. But that didn't impress anybody. Why, they all asked, didn't Ferry confess three years ago when he did it? And why didn't he offer his confession to the Borough President's Commission?

The F.B.I., of course, had no comment on S. I. Ferry, other than to say they had investigated him right after the assassination and found no confession in his possession. And Warren Leavit, who had served as an Assistant Counsel for the Commission, was quick to point out that the Commission had asked the F.B.I. about S. I. Ferry. And the F.B.I. had told them that S. I. Ferry was working for the New York Ma-

rine and Aviation Department when the assassination took place. That was good enough for the Commission. "We couldn't call every damn suspect in the country to Staten Island," Leavit said. "Or we would have been there right through the 1964 election—maybe even the 1968 election, too."

When Slim Harrison announced he had S. I. Ferry's signed confession, everybody demanded to know two things: What was Harrison personally getting out of solving the assassination? Was he selling his story to Ramparts Magazine? The hell with S. I. Ferry! These were the two important questions that needed answers!

Then, last week Ferry was found dead on the beach in Staten Island, shot through the head with an arrow. The bow was nearby, sticking up out of the sand, its bow string broken. It was quickly pointed out that Slim Harrison had been hounding S. I. Ferry with that damn confession for weeks, and this had been making Ferry extremely nervous.

And in a nervous state, Ferry had apparently accidentally shot himself in the head while pulling back the bow. His death was ruled an accident.

What was S. I. Ferry doing with a bow and arrow on the beach? It was quickly pointed out that he was a bit of an eccentric who liked to salt-water fish with a bow and arrow.

Then the politically ambitious Slim Harrison arrested five Staten Island men for allegedly plotting the assassination with S. I. Ferry. The Staten Island Times, reporting the arrests in detail on page 35, said that all Harrison had to go on was the word of a couple of eyewitnesses who claimed to have overheard the six men allegedly plotting together.

The public immediately demanded to know one thing! Where did Harrison dig up a couple of unreliable witnesses? One was a 30-year-old ex-Wagner College student now selling used cars. Who could trust the word of a man selling used cars? Would Slim Harrison himself buy a used car from this witness?

The second witness was an ex-alcoholic who claimed he was drinking under the Staten Island boardwalk three years ago when he heard the six men plotting the assassination.

What's more, everybody wanted to know how come Slim Harrison didn't give all his evidence to the F.B.I.? Everybody knew that if he gave what he knew to the F.B.I., the F.B.I. would check it out carefully, find out it didn't amount to a damn thing, then classify it "Top Secret" in the National Archives so nobody could see it until 2010 A.D.

Harrison could also have given what he knew to the press and saved all the trouble of a long trial. Or to the Borough President's Commission, particularly if he had something that proved the one-arrow theory on S. I. Ferry's death. A high source in Staten Island hinted that Harrison's evidence could possibly be Volume 27 of the Commission's Report.

But Harrison, who apparently was gambling his political future

on little evidence and a lot of nerve, remained completely unreasonable. Even when the five men he had arrested (who were out on \$1,000 bail collectively) crashed in the private plane they were riding on the way to a hunting trip in Mexico City. They had smashed into a mountain side, and bullet holes were found in the plane's fuselage, motor, wings, and tail assembly.

A quick investigation showed the bullet holes were probably made by careless hunters. Due to a lack of any eyewitnesses who could prove the contrary, the five deaths were ruled accidental.

Then, the ex-alcoholic was found at 4 a.m. two days ago, staggering around in front of the broken window of a liquor store with his throat cut from ear to ear. The witness died on the way to the hospital. A quick investigation determined he had apparently gone off the wagon, jumped through the plate glass window for a drink, and accidentally cut his throat.

That left Slim Harrison with just one witness, a man who sold used cars!

Yesterday, the politically ambitious Assistant District Attorney, Slim Harrison, was found dead in the alligator pit of the Staten Island Zoo. A quick investigation revealed that Slim Harrison had apparently become severely despondent because he had never uncovered any real evidence in the assassination. And that around 4 a.m. yesterday, he apparently broke into the zoo's reptile house and jumped into the alligator pit, committing suicide.

The death of Slim Harrison, tragic though it was, erased any doubt some people may have had that the Borough President's Commission was wrong. But as one astute Staten Island Times columnist pointed out, there would in all probability be a new outcry from the lunatic fringe to reopen the Borough President's Commission because of the seven accidental deaths and one suicide in the past two weeks of people remotely connected with the assassination.