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# The Meaning Of Our Tears: The True Story Of The Lawson Family Murders Of Christmas Day 1929



## Synopsis

On a snowy Christmas Day in 1929, Charles Davis Lawson, a respected tobacco farmer in rural North Carolina, murdered everyone in his family except one son. He left the world to consider the reason behind his extremely surprising and brutal act. Since that time, a huge and lonely mass grave has existed quietly in a small family cemetery deep in the North Carolina woods, and it has left generations of people wondering why. On the tombstone, the epitaph reads: "Not now, but in the coming years, It will be in a better land, We'll read the meaning of our tears, and then sometime we'll understand." This sad tale became an even more mysterious one after the gruesome murder scene was left intact for Depression Era tourists to visit and walk through. Sixty years later, more than could ever have been imagined surfaced from interviews with the elderly friends and family of the murderer. Many of whom finally had the courage to tell what they had known for many years. After so many long years, the Lawson family tragedy was documented in the original compelling 376 page collectible hard-cover edition of *THE MEANING OF OUR TEARS*. The beginning of this book sets the historical stage with true stories of the families involved. The book chronicles the lives of the people involved as they struggled to work and live in the foothill tobacco farming community. Of value also is that this book gives the reader a sense of what life was like in area during that era. Other heart-wrenching tragedies tested this family in many ways and preceded the mass murder. Once you are fully engaged in the story, the actual crime is amazingly reconstructed for the reader using the voices of family members, friends, period photographs, the information given by actual eye witnesses of the aftermath, and the funeral that was attended by thousands. Few murders have ever had so much information come forward so long after the crime was committed. Offered only in limited amounts as a collectible book, and having become very sought-after over the years -- for the first time -- the author is allowing this book to be offered in ebook form at an affordable price. This is an unforgettable telling of a tragic crime with the "voices" of those interviewed smoothly and uniquely woven into the fabric of the book as quotes. This has been handled in such a way that this true crime story is able to read like a novel, yet maintain the reader's knowledge of where all information originated. Once you have read the main portion of the book, it continues into a questions answered section and even gives previously unknown details about the movement of the infamous John Dillinger as he visited the crime scene that became the infamous Great Depression-era tourist attraction. Don't miss this poignant and tragic true story of a father's twisted love and all that happened in its aftermath. If you enjoy true crime, history, and the unusual, you will love *THE MEANING OF OUR TEARS*. For more insight into the life of the primary person responsible for much of the secret information that was brought forward to the author, read the book

that was released as a companion to this book, A CHILD IN THE MIDST, The Memoirs of Stella Lawson Boles.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is an excellent book built on research of an old case. I read the original book years ago. The writer (along with her father) did the earlier version, but Smith decided to rework the project after learning more details. It is very difficult to write a book on a historical murder, because many of the key players are dead. Fortunately, Smith was able to talk to some of the individuals who remembered the tragic murders. Although some stories varied and some newspaper accounts had contradictory information, the conclusions of the author make sense. In terms of the writing style, this book had a solid flow. The direct quotes in the middle of chapters were a bit distracting. They were fine to start new chapters, but I'd eliminate those in the middle of the text of the chapters. The book includes some photos which were helpful. I did not find those that were just "similar" to be of much value. An example of this would be a young boy with a mule but not the boy or mule from the actual story. This is one of the better true crime books out, and I really enjoyed reading the book. I did drop a star for excessive typos. There were also a few mechanical errors (mostly comma issues), but the

typos were just every few pages. Another reviewer mentioned this and got a message from the publisher. It didn't sound like the publisher believed the issue to be as serious as indicated, since this book is used in the graduate program at UNC Chapel Hill. Perhaps the students are not actually reading the book or are not mentioning the errors, because they are not hard to find (and I do not go into copy-editor mode when I read for fun).

I have this in the collectible hard cover, but also wanted the ebook version. This story is so very interesting that I could read this book over and over. The author did a fabulous job with her research. It is written in a unique way, especially because of using the quotes from people who knew the victims and the murderer. If you really like a true crime story, this is your book. This isn't your typical book, however, the author has written it more like a quality piece of literature. At times it reads more like a novel. I highly recommend it!

I cannot explain the sense of loss I felt after reading this book. Is it because I'm so unsure how a father could brutally kill his own children? It's heartbreaking even after all these years. The author must be commended. These people seemed to come alive while you were telling their story. Thank you....

This was a fascinating true crime story written more like a historical crime novel. These people had such difficult lives and lived through such hardship and tragedy and the author makes you feel connected to their lives and feel empathy for them. Even though I knew how it would end, I found myself hoping for a happy ending for this family who really seemed to deserve so much more out of life.

This book tore at my heartstrings unlike any other I have ever read. I kept finding myself wishing it was all a mistake. It also made me homesick for an era in which I never lived, but sure wish I did. Things were just so much simpler back then.

Very interesting read - one of those it's hard to put down. I had never heard of this case before, but feel as though I was almost part of the community while it was unfolding. First person accounts and family members' memories keep this story real all of these years later.

Excellent historical true crime. It's rare that I find a book that keeps me so riveted that suddenly I

realize that it's 2 am and I have to be up in 3 hours.. This book did just that and I kept right on reading until I finished the entire book. I am docking one star for the various typos that were peppered throughout, that could just have been an issue with the kindle version. Highly recommended.

A great book, this update reveals the ill fated Lawsons and their times in a vibrant, crisp way. 87 years after the tragic Christmas murder, the legends still haunt Stokes County, NC

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