

0. ATTEMPTED COVER-UP - Story Preface

1. MURDER AT HARVARD

2. ATTEMPTED COVER-UP

3. AN ASTONISHING DISCOVERY

4. WEBSTER TRIED FOR MURDER

5. A DEATH SENTENCE

6. READ MORE ABOUT IT



At the time of his murder, Dr. George Parkman—from Boston—lived in a beautiful home located at 33 Beacon Street (a 4-minute walk from the Massachusetts State House). In this photo, maintained at the Library of Congress, we see double parlors on the second floor of the Parkman House. Photo by George M. Cushing, taken on behalf of the U.S. Federal Government, in 1968. Library of Congress call number HABS MASS,13-BOST,116-4. No-known copyright restrictions. Click on the image for a better view.

Now what? Panicked, Dr. John Webster thought of only one thing: He must get rid of the evidence that he had ended the life of Dr. George Parkman.

Webster must have forgotten some folks knew about the pair's quarrel over money. He must have forgotten the janitor, Ephraim Littlefield, had seen both men arguing that day.

Only one thing mattered to Webster, however: Hide the crime.

Bolting the lab door so that no one could enter, Dr. Webster butchered Dr. Parkman's body. He wanted to cut-up everything so that he could burn the pieces faster. As he burned what he could, Webster must have thought no evidence would be left but ashes.

How would anyone identify ashes?

When Parkman didn't return home (his house still stands at 33 Beacon Street), his family became frantic. They issued a reward for knowledge of his whereabouts.

Credits:

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ATTEMPTED-COVER-UP-Murder-at-Harvard-John-Webster-Story)

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See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/ATTEMPTED-COVER-UP-Murder-at-Harvard-John-Webster-Story)

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Media Stream

Portrait of Ephraim Littlefield.



Ephraim Littlefield

Image online, courtesy the Maryland State Archives.

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Parkman's Beacon Street Residence

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