

The Next Man Scheduled To Die

By **Alexander Baron** - May 22, 2015



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In the small hours of August 22-3, 1961, James Hanratty carried out one of the most notorious crimes of the decade, murdering Michael Gregsten then raping his companion Valerie Storie before emptying his gun into her leaving her paralysed, and driving off in the dead man's car. He was arrested on October 11 after a complex investigation, and executed at Bedford Prison on April 4 the following year. Hanratty's trial was at the time the longest murder trial in English criminal history; he also filed an unsuccessful appeal. Justice was done, and was seen to be done in less than a year.



James Hanratty

On October 8, 1983 on the other side of the Atlantic in Grayson County, Texas, Lester Leroy Bower murdered four men, shooting them dead, and stealing a light aircraft. He was arrested the following January and sentenced to death May 10, 1984. As things stand, he will die June 3 this year. Maybe.

The transcript of his **failed 2005 appeal** is fairly straightforward, as was the case against him. It beggars belief that a man responsible for four murders is able to drag out the judicial process for over three decades.



Lester Leroy Bower

Should Bower be granted yet another stay of execution, the next man likely to be put to death in the US is either Hubert Michael on June 5 or Richard Strong on June 9. Michael was convicted of **only one murder**, but it was a particularly heinous one, and unlike Bower he does not have even a smoke and mirrors defence because he admitted kidnapping, raping and shooting a 16 year old girl.



Hubert Michael

Michael is on death row in Pennsylvania 21 years after his conviction, but if he is granted yet another stay of execution, as is mooted, then Richard Strong will be next up. As with Michael, there is no question about his guilt. Strong murdered his girlfriend and her 2 year old daughter in October 2000; he was sentenced to death by a Missouri court on May 9, 2003. Again, it beggars belief that after he has had due process and then some, in this case a clearly guilty double murderer has not yet been executed.



Richard Strong