

no one had ever defeated his Giant Champion in a wrestling match." Henry Roberts was then proclaimed the Champion of Champions. Later it was discovered that the Colonel didn't have the \$25.00 prize to pay Henry for winning the match. Instead, he gave as a prize, a small orphan lad named Daniel Robert Tharp whose parents had been killed in the Civil War by General Sherman in his "march through Georgia".

D. R. "Dock" Tharp later became the godson of Henry "Splut" Roberts and was accepted as a part of his family. In 1880, the Decatur County census shows Henry Roberts with his second wife, Lucinda, and his three younger children by his previous marriage. Dock Tharp was living and working nearby on a neighbor's farm.

Later in October of 1880, Henry Roberts make his Last Will and Testimony. He appoints his oldest son, William Brown Roberts, to be the administrator of his estate and have charge of his personal property. (At this time Henry did not know about a murder conspiracy between his young wife, Lucinda, and his godson, Dock Tharp.) The will of Henry Roberts was recorded in Decatur County Clerk of the Ordinary's office and witnessed by his two neighbors, David Hurst and John Odom. Four months later on February 18, 1881, Henry Carson Roberts was killed by his godson, Dock Tharp. In the Spring Term of the Decatur County Superior Court testimonies revealed the details of the murder. "Henry Roberts was at the time of his murder building a stick and clay chimney over at his daughter and son-in-law's new home. Henry was up on a construction platform working on the chimney when Dock Tharp rode up on the family horse to within close range of Henry Roberts. He then asked Dock where he was going. Dock replied that he was going to go squirrel hunting. Henry replied "Not to kill them all." When he said this, Dock waited until Henry had turned around, aimed the double barrel shot gun and fired both barrels hitting Henry in the head and back, knocking him off the platform and killing him instantly. Henry's two youngest children were bringing his lunch to him when they heard the noise of the gunfire. Soon after this, Dock Tharp came galloping by on the old family horse hollering, that he had killed Henry Roberts. The two young children ran as fast as they could to where their father was. All during this time, Wes Young, the son-in-law and his wife, Mary, were working in their field nearby their house where Henry was working. All of the children arrived at the house about the same time."

Later it was noted in the Court minutes, that West Young and his neighbors would not let the Sheriff take the body of Henry C. Roberts until his daughters had washed and cleaned his body and wrapped it in a new blanket. Several of the neighbors helped place this giant of a man's body into the undertaker's wagon. Soon afterwards, Dock Tharp was caught trying to leave the county hidden and tied up under a wagon of one his friends.

During the trial, Lucinda Roberts, denied having anything to do with a conspiracy to kill her husband and go off to Alabama to marry Dock Tharp, as rumored by all their neighbors.

Daniel Robert "Dock" Tharp was tried in the Decatur County Superior Court for first degree murder in the May Term of 1881. Upon pleading guilty, Dock Tharp had an epileptic seizure while on the witness stand. The state prosecutor pleaded for mercy from the court for the life of Mr. Tharp. The grand jury later found Dock guilty of second degree murder. He was sentenced to a twenty year prison term at hard labor, to be served beginning immediately upon his release from the trial and to be transported by the sheriff to the State Penitentiary at Milledgeville, Georgia.