

Stories

A Country Blacksmith Shop

The rural blacksmith or "smithy" as he was called, was an important person in the 18th, 19th and the first part of the 20th centuries in America. He performed a vital function in most peoples lives in that era of American life. Usually stereotyped as making horseshoes and shoeing horses, the blacksmith actually did much, much more. He made most of the tools the people used, including his own. Metal hardware including metal fittings for wagons, braces, bars and most metal things used by the people were for a time made by blacksmiths, including lumbering equipment.

The blacksmith shop located on the farm formerly owned by William Laubscher, now occupied by Nelson Laubscher, his son, was built in 1958 and enlarged in 1960. William, who learned his trade from his brother Charles, made most of the tools in the shop, some of which are 60 years old, some older.

Some of the tools found there are various types of tongs to handle the hot metal made soft enough to work, a coal scoop to remove hot ashes from the forge, a vise, hammers to mold the soft metal and cold cuts, special tapered hammers to cut hot iron by fracturing it. Wheel making tools were also present.

In these times blacksmithing is little more than a hobby with a handful of people - few and far between. In the Swissdale area the remnants of a by-gone lifestyle which was more than just an occupation; it was truly an art.

The information listed here was taken from History of Clinton County by Cora Suiter, the History of the Probst Family, Swissdale History by Florence Laubscher. All this can be found in the Ross Library.

****Donated by Dean Laubscher****

The Renovo Record -Thursday November 8, 1888:

The Cook's Run Mine Disaster

17 KILLED AND ONE DIES FROM HIS INJURIES

The disaster which took place, near Cook's Run, this county, on the Kettle Coal and Mining company's mines, last Saturday afternoon, has already been detailed so minutely in the daily press that we will but add the result of the Coroner's Jury.

THE DEAD AND INJURED

Michael Curran, age 37 years. He eaves a wife and seven children.

Patric Donley, age 55 years. He leaves a wife and seven children.

Chas. Alman, aged 25.

John Carlson, aged 25.

John Anderson, aged 20.

Martin Pierson, aged 20.

Aaron Carlson, aged 35.

John Beckus, aged 28.

George Beckus, aged 32.

Michael Marcy, aged 22.

Sylvester Marcy, aged 19.

Dom Closkey, aged 40.

George Mellets aged 35.

Maurice Yanks, aged 27.

One unknown, aged 24.

The injured are Wesley Smoke. Aaron Anderson and John Anderson, all of whom, though badly cut and bruised, are likely to recover. Many of the dead were terribly disfigured and mangled.

THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSION

The testimony at the inquest all went to show that the mine was properly ventilated and that no blame belongs to any one except the miners themselves. Their familiarity with the dangerous explosives which they used in their daily vocations, had no doubt rendered them careless in the manner of handling it and led to the disaster, which resulted in their deaths. The force of the explosion must have been terrible, as every particle of clothing was stripped from many of the dead bodies.

HOLDING THE INQUEST

Coroner Mader empaneled as a jury Messrs. Hugh McLeod and Theodore Runion of Lock Haven, Jos. Seel of Renovo, Mr. Gleason and Mr. Bunnell of North Bend, and James Smith of Westport. The testimony of a number of witnesses was heard and a verdict was rendered. The Coroner stated that the testimony went to show that the explosion was caused by dynamite. The miners were were known to have had a considerable quantity of dynamite in the mines, and shortly before the explosion occurred one of the men called at the supply store and obtained a quantity of fuse with which he returned to the mine. The Coroner states that the testimony of the man from whom the fuse was obtained , was to the effect that the explosion occurred within fifteen minutes after. There was a double explosion, owing to the fact that the powder used by the miners was kept in different places.

Anson Smoke, one of the injured miners, died yesterday, which makes 18 victims from the sad disaster.

The bodies of three Sweedish miners who have relatives living in town, were taken to North Bend on Teusday, and interred in the cemetery of that place. Eight of the victims were buried in Drury's Run cemetery; one was taken to Snow Shoe in Centre county.

Lock Haven, PA., Thursday, November 8, 1888

GREAT MINE HORROR

**Cook's Run, this County, the Scene
of the Explosion**

SEVENTEEN PERSONS KILLED

**Only a Few of the Unfortunate Men
Escaped Death**

THE CAUSE OF THE DISASTER

**The Mangled Victims - A Terrible
Scene - Five Injured - Coroner
Mader Leaves for Cook's Run -
Particulars of the Accident**

The Williamsport *Gazette and Bulletin* on Monday contained the full particulars of the terrible accident at Cook's Run, this county, on Saturday afternoon, and we adopt them as being as complete as anything that can be given. That paper says:

"A telegram was received in this city at 6 o'clock Saturday night stating that a terrible disaster had occurred at Cook's Run, Clinton county, in the mine of the Kettle Creek Coal and Mining Company. The dispatch, which was from Superintendent George L. Miller to J. C. Russel, stated that the explosion occurred in the new drift, and that a number of men had been killed. Later dispatches brought to light the fact that the explosion had been accompanied by a frightful loss of life, no less than fifteen men having been killed outright, and several others seriously injured.

THE FULL PARTICULARS

The accident occurred about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, when a dull, rumbling report was heard. Superintendent Miller hurried to the scene, and upon arriving at No. 2 mine found that the explosion had occurred there. Prompt assistance was summoned, and air was immediately forced to the face of the works. As soon as practicable men entered the mine, and feeling their way along the grimy passageways into the drift, met a terrible scene. Dead bodies were lying around convulsed and distorted by their dying agonies. The scene was a terrible one to gaze upon. The corpses were lying around in every direction. The rescuers gave immediate attention to the wounded, who were writhing in their torture. The search revealed six injured, one of whom died soon after being removed, and it is feared that one or two more will die. In an hour fourteen dead bodies had been recovered.

Samuel Killinger, Patrick Donnelly, Michael Curran and J. Carlson were the only English speaking men among the killed, the others being Italians and Hungarians.

BODIES OF THE DEAD

Prompt attention to the injured was given, Dr. Weymouth, of Renovo, and Dr. Brennan, the mine physician, doing all in their power to relieve their sufferings. Undertaker Beck took charge of the bodies, and prepared them for burial. Two or three who were in the mine escaped miraculously.

J. Farrel, a driver, was entering the drift at the time of the explosion. He was thrown violently towards the mouth, but strange to say was not hurt. The mule that he was driving was killed. The force of the explosion may be imagined when it is stated that several of the bodies were blown clear out of the drift.

THEORY OF THE EXPLOSION

The general theory is that in making a blast a gas feeder was struck, filling the space with gas, which, coming in contact with a naked lamp caused the explosion. It was one of those things which no one could foresee, and no blame is attached to any one. By a gas feeder is meant a pocket of gas imbedded in the coal, which as soon as a pick is struck into it, escapes and explodes.

The mine inspector was immediately telegraphed to, and was expected to arrive on the first train. The Coroner of Clinton county was also summoned to hold an inquest. The general talk among the miners is to the effect that the ventilation was good, and the mines were well supplied with air appliances.

THE COMPANY

The general offices of the Kettle Creek Company are located in Williamsport. Captain David Bly being the President. The mines have been operated since last spring, the coal mined being bituminous.

Information received yesterday was to the effect that seventeen men in all were dead. All arrangements had been perfected for the funerals of the victims which will take place to-day.

ANOTHER THEORY

A special says that among the rumors is one that the explosion was caused by the inexperienced use of dynamite, a hundred sticks of which were purchased by an Italian, but who was unable to get a fuse, and it is supposed he tried to set it off in some other way. Wesley Smoke and John and Aaron Anderson were badly injured but will recover."

Coroner Mader, of this city, went up to the scene of the disaster Monday and the mine inspector was also looked for. A surveying party Sunday found the body of a naked man fifty feet from the air hole.

FURTHER PARTICULARS

Our Renovo correspondent sent us the following additional particulars Monday:

There are fourteen men laid out, all lying close together, in the blacksmith shop at the mines, and two are with their families. They are burned so bad that they are beyond recognition. Undertaker Beck went up with sixteen coffins last night which nearly filled the baggage car.

There were no less than two hundred people at the mines yesterday and a number went up on the mail this morning. An inquest is being held this morning. Three will be buried at North Bend to-morrow afternoon and eight at Drury's Run. I got the report from the superintendent of the mines. It is impossible to get the names. There were Swedes, Hungarians, and Irish. One man was shot seventy-five feet up through the shaft and there were clothes out on the trees on the top of the mountain. The owners of the mines went up on the mail this morning.

MURDERS IN CLINTON COUNTY

PAST AND PRESENT OF CLINTON COUNTY.

By J. Milton Furey

1892

The first murder occurring within the limits of Clinton county was what is known as the Pfoutz murder, in which a man named Jacob Pfoutz was indicted for the murder of Alexander Montgomery. A true bill was found against Pfoutz September 9th, 1856. And he was put in trial the next day. The case was tried before Hon. James Burnside and his associates, Nathaniel Hanna and Anthony Kleckner. The commonwealth was represented by T. T. Abrams, C. A. Mayer. and S. R. Peale, the former being district attorney. The jurors were Robert Ritchey, Thomas Kleckner. Wilson King. David Snook. Morris Mayers, John H. Auman. John Shoemaker. Valentine Hanna. David Irwin. David Summerson. Anthony Kleckner, Jr., and Jacob Rishel, the verdict of the jury rendered September 12th, 1856, was murder in the second degree. The sentence of the court. Pronounced the same date, was that "you, Jacob Pfoutz, undergo an imprisonment in the Eastern penitentiary for a term of five years. Pay the sum of \$100 fine and costs of prosecution."

The Harter Murder.

This event occurred at Mill Hall, Pa/. In the autumn of 1858. Theodore Rice, a young colored man. Of Herculean build. Met his death at the hands of Elias Harter. There has been an ill-feeling existing between the two men for some time previous to the killing of Rice. The parties met at a dance. Which was held at the old hotel stand. And became engaged in a dispute. Harter, it is claimed, had come to the place prepared for an encounter with Rice, and had brought with him a heavy club. Rice was a powerful man physically, and equal in strength to three men. Harter knowing this, determined to take the advantage of him if a quarrel took place. Rice, not knowing his intentions, was not on his guard, and during a quarrel was struck by Harter, and received a fracture of the skull, which resulted in his death a few days later. The case came before Court at the December term of 1858. Hon James Burnside was president judge at that time. And Nathaniel Hanna and Anthony Kleckner were his associates. C. A. Mayer was district attorney. He was assisted at the trial by John H. Orvis. A. G. Curtain. Samuel Linn and T. T. Abrams appeared for the defense. The following named persons served as jurors: Thomas Yarnel, Thomas Brooks. Benjamin Deise, John Strawbridge, Samuel Richard. George G. Irwin. James H. McKinney. George A. Achenbach. Thomas J. Rote. Daniel Eyre, Thomas Gottshall and Hugh Jordon. The trial lasted three days, and resulted in a verdict of acquittal. Elias Harter is now a resident of Michigan.

The Gaines Murder

The Gaines murder took place in Keating township July 13th, 1863. The murder was the result of a quarrel between two brothers. William and Robert Gaines. The former went to the house of his brother, and shot through the window at him, while he was eating dinner. The shot killed Robert Gaines. The murderer was arrested and lodged in Jail. He broke jail and escaped, but was recaptured at the mouth of Sinnemahoning creek. William Gaines was indicted for the murder of his brother, Robert, December 15th, 1863. The case was tried in Lock Haven before Hon. Samuel Linn. Cephas Batcheler and Joseph Quay. The trial occurred at the same term of court as the Thomas Leach case. G. Omet Deise was the district attorney at the time. He was assisted by C. A. Mayer and S. D. Ball. The defense was represented by Hugh Nelson McCallister. John H. Orvis and S. R. Peale. The jurors who sat on the case were Benjamin H. Baird, Samuel Best, Samuel Sigmund. Jr., Henry Caldwell, Benjamin Clark, Henry Krape, Samuel Wolf, Hugh Conley, Walter J. Westbrook, James T. Taylor, Jesse Laubauch and Matthew W. Ferguson.

The trial began February 10th, 1864, and a verdict of murder in the first degree was rendered by the jury February 21st, 1864. A petition for a new trial was presented by the defense, which was refused by the Court. William Gaines was brought before Court May 12th, 1864. and sentenced to be hanged. The case was carried to the Supreme Court, and the judgment of the lower Court not sustained. The case was then carried to Center county, and tried before the Hon. Samuel Linn. The jury at this trial rendered a verdict of acquittal. William Gaines resided in the county up to the time of his death. Which occurred a few years ago.

THE LEACH MURDER.

This murder occurred at Washington Furnace. October 12th, 1863. The particulars as near as we could learn, are as follows: Washington Iron works at that time were being operated by the Fallon Bothers, of Philadelphia; Samuel Watson was then superintendent. A dwelling, owned by the Fallons, was occupied by David Hoy. The said dwelling was rented by the superintendent to an Irishman named Thomas Leach; the latter desired to take possession of the same, And Hoy was preparing to vacate the place. But, Being detained in some manner, was not able to get out of the house as quickly as Leach desired. The latter took his gun and went to the house, and ordered Hoy to get out at once, and threatened him with death if he failed to comply with his arbitrary request. Hoy endeavored to explain his delay. Leach, who was a cold-blooded, heartless wretch. Without any provocation what ever, raised his gun to his shoulder and shot Hoy, killing him almost instantly. He was arrested by Sheriff John W. Smith. And a true bill found against him by the grand jury at December court of the same year. When the case was brought up the following jury was impaneled: David R. Summerson. George Shaffer, John E. Furst. Charles Russell. James A. Wilson. Robert Kleckner. John Clymer. Bethewel Johnson. Jacob M. Farley, Jacob Hess, Seth J Nelson and Augustus Jones. Hon. Samuel Linn Was presiding judge at the time, and Cephas Batcheler and Joseph Quay were his associates. G. Omet Deise appeared for the commonwealth. And C. A. Mayer for the defense.

Considerable time was spent in hearing the evidence and discussing the case, and it was not until Sunday morning, December 20th, 1863, that a verdict of "murder in the second degree" was rendered by the Jury. Thomas Leach was brought before Judge Linn, December 23d, 1863, and sentenced to ten years in the Eastern penitentiary.

During the time he was in prison his wife married again, and went with her husband to Nebraska. Leach served out his time in the penitentiary, and then returned to this county. When he learned his wife had married another man he became very angry, and swore he would never rest until he had discovered their whereabouts and murdered the husband. It is claimed by someone that he followed his wife and her new husband to their home in the West, and shot the latter, and that he met his death at the hands of a lynching party. The latter statement is denied by some, who claim Leach changed his mind and settled in the West, where he still resides.

THE HAMMERSLEY MURDER.

This murder occurred in 1884. Uriah Hammersley. An old resident of Leidy township. Was murdered by his son-in-law, John Kehoe. The facts of the case were as follows: Uriah Hammersley was an old resident of Kettle Creek. He had reared a family of children. One of his daughters was married to John, and another to William Kehoe. John Kehoe and his wife did not live peaceably together, and this was a source of strife between Kehoe and Hammersley. On several occasions the men had openly quarreled, and on one occasion Uriah Hammersley had received a severe beating at the hands of the Kehoe brothers. William Kehoe moved to the West, but John remained. And was prominently engaged in the lumber business. On the day of the murder Kehoe's wife, after a quarrel with her husband, left her home and went to her father's house, a short distance away. Kehoe went to the place and demanded his wife's return. Hot and angry words ensued between father and son-in-law. Hammersley finally seized a piece of board and rushed at Kehoe, striking him several times. The stick was wrenched from his grasp, and an effort made to pacify him, but in vain; seizing another club he rushed at Kehoe, who drew his revolver and fired four shots, all of which took effect in the old man's body. He staggered a few feet, and fell dead. He was an old man in his sixtieth year. Kehoe was arrested, and after a hearing released on bail. During the September

term of court of 1884 he was tried and convicted of murder in the second degree. He was sentenced to the Western penitentiary for three years and six months. After his term expired, he returned to Kettle Creek, and is a resident of the section at present writing. His wife died during the time he was in prison. At this

trial he was ably defended by T. C. Hipple and John Metzgar, Esq. The Commonwealth was represented by District Attorney George A. Brown, assisted by W. C. Kress, Esq.

THE COLBY MURDER

The Colby murder occurred in that part of Clinton county known as the Sugar Valley Narrows, on the road leading from Washington Furnace to Tylersville. Here, on the banks of a little stream called Cherry run, lived Isaiah Colby and Norah Colby, his wife. Their home was a rude dwelling, built of hemlock boards, containing two rooms, one of which was used as a kitchen and the other as a bedroom. The house was built on a tract of forty acres of land, owned by John Colby; only one-half of this tract was cleared, and even that was in such a neglected condition as to be almost worthless. The Colbys were a simple, harmless set, and eked out a miserable existence in this cheerless spot. Isaiah Colby was a son of Mrs. Anna Colby, born previous to her marriage with John Colby. Mrs. Colby's maiden name was Fritz, and Isaiah, when a boy, went by the name of Malachai Fritz. Nora Colby's maiden name was Nora Jordon, a daughter of Flavious Jordon, of Flemington, Pa. Young Fritz and Nora Jordon were both adopted by John Colby, and when they grew up they were married, and located on the farm before mentioned. Here they met their death at the hand of the assassin Saturday evening, August 6th, 1887. The particulars of the crime are as follows:

On Monday, August 8th, 1887, Mrs. Anna Colby, wife of John Colby, and a nephew named Charles, who lived on a farm, about two miles from Isaiah Colby's, went to the latter's house, having previously promised to assist on that day in harvesting the oats crops. Arriving there Mrs. Colby was Horrified to find the dead bodies of her adopted children lying near each other, about 120 feet from the house, where, from appearances, Isaiah had gone to cut grass. He was lying with the side of his face to the ground, a bullet hole in his right eye in the corner nearest the nose, and a basket, which had been filled with grass, near by. His wife was only about an arm's length distant. Entering the house Mrs. Colby and her nephew found the child of Isaiah and Nora, a bright, black-eyed little one, almost starved. And crying as though its heart would break.

A coroner's inquest was duly held, Justice of the Peace C. W. Conser summoning the following jury: Samuel Caris, forman; Emanuel Bressler, F.K. Miller, A.J. Grieb,

W.H. Rishel and Jacob Ocker. J.d. Hubler acted as clerk for the jury, and Mr. J.H. Huston was the examining physician. A verdict was rendered in substance that Isaiah and Nora Colby were shot to death by a person or persons unknown to the jury.

Owing to the fact the decomposition had set in, the remains of Mr. and Mrs. Colby were lowered in the graves prepared for them in the cemetery at Tylersville, at 10 o'clock Monday night, August 8th, but were not covered until Tuesday afternoon. A guard was placed over the graves, so that the bodies could not be disturbed. The funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, and hundreds of people assembled from all parts of Sugar Valley to witness the last sad rites over the murdered couple. Rev Dotterer, of the German Reformed church, conducted the services. During the day crowds of people viewed the remains as they reposed in the open graves.

Isaiah Colby was thirty-six years of age. Nora was nearly twenty-one years old; they had two children. One fifteen months old. And the other about four years old-the oldest living with its grandparents.

On Saturday morning, August 6th, 1887, William Ruhl, Ellis Frantz and Herman Bressler, Farmers who attended the Lock Haven market. Reported that they had been stopped on the highway in the Narrows above Washington Furnace, by a man who pointed a pistol at them, and compelled them to hand over what ever valuables they had. The victims of this villain agreed that but one man was seen, and their descriptions of the man were alike, all declaring that the man wore light side-whiskers, a moustache, had on a slouch hat and a dark cut-away coat-and as soon as they had "delivered," he ordered them to move on, saying: "You will meet four other men down the road, but tell them that you met me and they will let you pass."

On the following Monday evening, as Chief of Police Westbrook, of Lock Haven, was sitting in his office, endeavoring to study up some plan whereby the perpetrators of the robberies of the Saturday previous might be discovered, Constable Blakeslee came to him and told him of the murder of Isaiah and Nora Colby, which occurred in the same locality as the robberies. The next morning two parties left Lock Haven in search of clues that might lead to the detection of the robbers and the murders. The greatest excitement prevailed everywhere in Clinton county. One of the men robbed on Saturday morning, being positive that

he recognized James Kline, a weak-minded individual, as the highwayman, Kline was taken in charge by Constable Blakeslee, and lodged in the county Jail. John W. Johnson, who lived on the Colby place with his family prior to the removal there in by Isaiah and Nora Colbys, was the man on whom the greatest suspicion rested, and Sheriff May and Constable Ellis Myers, of Lock Haven, found him at work in one of his fields, near Hublersburg, and took him into custody. The sheriff, learning that Essic Kline, a brother of James, was in Lock Haven at that time, sent word by a swift messenger to Deputy Sheriff James Wensel to arrest him. When the message was received, it was found that Essic had left the city, and at that moment was on his way back to his home in the Narrows. The deputy, accompanied by County Detective Keller, started after him, and captured him as he was traveling along the highway. He was brought back to Lock Haven, and arrived there at the same time that Johnson was brought in by the sheriff.

Chiefs of Police Westbrook, of Lock Haven, and Vernes, of Renovo, constituted another party of searchers. It was known that at least one of the gang, who committed these robberies and the murder, was yet at large, as the man with the revolver and side-whiskers had not yet been apprehended. Westbrook and Vernes had gone on the track of a suspicious character who had been seen in the neighborhood, and were led into Union County. They run this clue out on Sunday, and found he was not the man they were looking for. When the sheriff was after Johnson he met ex-Sheriff Shaffer, of Centre county, who is a cousin to Luther's father. And who lives near Hublersburg, who told him that a man had passed through there on Thursday prior to the murder, and that he looked like Lute Shaffer.

On returning to Lock Haven a Conference of all the officers was held, and it was decided that the man believed to be Shaffer was the man they were after, but inquiry among his relatives failed to show that he was in this part of the country, they believing that he had gone to Kansas, as AL. Shaffer, a brother of Luther, a Missouri farmer, had told them he had intended doing.

The officers were all at sea, and did not know where to turn next. But when matters looked the darkest Mrs. Swope, a sister of Shaffer, sent word to the sheriff she wanted to see him. Then it was that the sheriff learned that Luther Shaffer had been there that afternoon, and after a stormy interview with Mrs. Swope, had left. The sheriff then informed his colleagues of what he had learned, and the first thing they did was to search the house of one Mary Baney, who was

known to have been a friend of Luther's when he was at home before; but they discovered no trace of him there, The officers were now satisfied they were on the right trail, as Shaffer answered every description they had received of the highwayman, and as having been seen in the vicinity of the Colby house on the Saturday before the murder.

On Friday morning, August 18th, as Sheriff May was standing at the passenger station waiting for Erie mail, his son handed him a telegram from Associate Judge Crawford, dated at North Bend, which read as follows:

"Come on first train; Shaffer up creek."

The sheriff then looked about for somebody to go with him, and spied Westbrook, who had just got off the train. Officer Vernes was also on the train, and when they arrived at North Bend, Westbrook got off the train and ordered a team to be in readiness in half an hour. The sheriff and Vernes went on the Renovo, the former to transact his business, and the latter to change his garb to that of a woodsman, after which they rejoined Westbrook at North Bend.

It was about an hour before noon when the party started up Young woman's creek after their man, having secured the services of John Quiggle, of North Bend, as driver and guide. They arrived at Dick Francis' camp Friday afternoon. And learned that Shaffer had stayed there the night before and had left that morning. Pushing forward they reached Oleona in time for supper, and found that Shaffer was only a few hours ahead of them. Darkness overtook them when within a mile of Germania, and at a point where a road crossed the one they were on, at right angles Here they lost the trail. They went on to Germania. However, and after making a search of the town, changed teams, and started for Pike Mills, where they arrived about 3 o'clock Saturday morning. It was here decided that Vernes and Westbrook should go to Gaines, on the narrow gauge railroad, while the sheriff and Quiggle drove to Lyman's Mills. At 11 o'clock they again met at Pike Mills to compare notes. They had discovered where Shaffer had spent the previous night -at a farm house about two and one half miles off the public road, but at the point the trail was lost, and they knew not in which direction to go. It was then decided that the party should divide, one-half to go on the back track, and the other to visit Smith's lumber camp, and if Shaffer was not found there this party was to go on to Coudersport. Without losing a moment's time, it was

decided that the sheriff and Quiggle should take the back track and Westbrook and Bernes the other route.

The latter party then went on toward Smith's lumber camp, located in what is known as Wood Hollow, on the west branch of Pine creek. Observing a man coming down the hollow that led to the camp, the officers hailed him, and learned that a stranger answering the description of the man they were seeking had arrived at the camp just before dinner, and complained of being very tired. By an arrangement with the gentleman whom they had met it was the intention to make the capture quickly, and not give the man any chance to fight. This was successfully accomplished, the officers getting within ten feet of their man before they were seen by him. Shaffer was sitting on a little rise of ground watching other men who were engaged cutting fire wood. He was in his short sleeves, having left his coat hanging inside the tent. He offered no resistance when Mr. Westbrook stepped up to him and told him he was a prisoner. The irons were soon placed on his wrists, and he was taken down to where the wagon was standing, put aboard and driven to Ansonia, a Station on the Pine creek railroad, and that same night he was lodged in the Lock Haven Jail.

On Friday afternoon, September 9th, 1887, the four men under arrest were arraigned before Alderman John P. Harris, of Lock Haven, and the testimony of the witnesses called being deemed sufficiently strong to hold them all on the charges of robbery and murder, they were committed to jail for court. Shaffer, however, by the advice of his counsel, waived a hearing, and stood committed, but he was allowed to remain in the room while the examination of witnesses against the others was proceeded with. The only evidence adduced that connected the four men jointly with the crimes was the testimony of Kate Bartley, who swore that she prepared a supper for the four men at Kline's house at 12 o'clock of the Friday night preceding the robberies, and that they left together shortly afterward. This testimony, however, had since been shown to be false, and the girl herself had admitted that it was untrue.

At the September term of the Clinton county Court true bills were found against Luther J. Shaffer, John W. Johnson, and James and Essie Kline, around whom a strong net-work of circumstances had been woven, leading to a suspicion that all four might be implicated in the murder of the Colbys. Although all might not have been active participants in the commission of the crime. The trial was set down for a special term to begin December 5th, and at 2 p.m. of that day court

convened. The railroad trains on the morning of December 5th were freighted with jurors, witnesses, and others, who poured in to Lock Haven to become spectators at the trial. It was the Mecca to which the curious journeyed. Hotels were crowded. And in the thronged offices and reading rooms of the different hostelrys no other subject seemed to be discussed but the Colby tragedy.

At 2 p.m. Court convened, a panel of sixty jurors having been drawn. Hon. Charles A. Mayer, president judge, and associates W. Kipp Chesnutt and James W. Crawford occupied the bench. A great legal contest was anticipated—District Attorney George A. Brown and T.C. Hollahan, Esqs., for the defendant Shaffer. Just as the work was to be commenced. W.H. Clough, Esq., counsel for Johnson and the Klines, presented a petition, asking that the men be tried separately. The petition was granted, and Shaffer was selected by the prosecution. The indictment was then read, charging him with the murder of Nora Colby. The purpose and omitting the name of Isaiah Colby was that if Shaffer should by any technicality be acquitted on the charge of killing Nora, he could then be arraigned ofr the murder of Isaiah.

Shaffer was ordered to stand up while the indictment was read. He rose to his feet; there was not a single indication of nervousness; his form was erect, while his eyes, to those who carefully watched him, bore that peculiar keen, searching and vengeful appearance so characteristic of them. The question was asked: "What say you, Luther Shaffer, to the indictment, guilty or not guilty?" Fixing his gaze on Clerk Brown, with a smile that seemed defiant, and in a voice as firm as that of a military commander, he answered, "I am not guilty!"

The twelve men selected, in whose hands was at rest the life of Luther Shaffer, were as follows:

Emanuel Robbins, farmer, PineCreek township.

John Pluff, farmer, Chapman township

Frank Barnhart, laborer, Colebrook township.

Miles Caldwell, laborer, Bald Eagle township.

Samuel Smith, laborer, Woodward township.

William Eyer, farmer, Beech Creek township.

Thomas Burke, laborer, Noyes township.

Frank A. Heydrick, barber, Second ward, Lock Haven.

Jacob Messerly, laborer, Dunnstable township.

Frederick Amm, farmer, Green township.

Charles Shoemaker, clerk, Second ward, Lock Haven

George Iler, carpenter, Dunnstable township.

The trial of Shaffer ended on Thursday afternoon, December 8th, 1887. The jury were out but a few moments, and returned with a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree. A new trial was asked for but refused by the Court, and Shaffer was sentenced to be hanged for the murder of Nora Colby.

The day set apart by Governor James A. Beaver for the execution of Luther J. Shaffer was Wednesday, April 4th, 1888. The gallows built for Nelson E. Wade, the murderer of the McBride family, was brought from Williamsport, and erected in the jail yard at Lock Haven, and upon this structure the murderer was executed. Previous to his death he professed religion; embraced the Catholic faith, and was buried in the Catholic cemetery on Susquehanna avenue, Lock Haven, The execution of Shaffer was conducted by Sheriff W. J. Leahy. The Klines were afterwards discharged by an order of the Court, and allowed to return to their homes. Johnson was tried for being an accomplice of Shaffer, as the threats he had made against the Colbys led people to think he was guilty. He was, however, ably defended by his attorneys, W. H. Clough and John B. Myers, and was acquitted.

NOTE-We are indebted to the publishers of *Pennsylvania Grit* for the facts given above, as the points were taken from a history of the Colby tragedy, published by them at the time when everything was fresh in the minds of the people

THE CLEARY MURDER.

The Cleary murder occurred at Renovo, Clinton County, Pa, march 12th, 1889.

Policeman Philip M. Paul was shot and killed by Charles Cleary. Paul had arrested Cleary for boisterous conduct, and had taken him to the lock-up. While the officer was in the act of opening the door, Cleary drew a revolver from his pocket and fired; the ball took effect in the officer's body, and he died in a short time. Cleary escaped for a time, but was captured and brought before Hon. C. C. Mayer and his associates, James W. Crawford and W. Kipp Chesnutt, at the May term of court, 1889.

The commonwealth was represented at the trial by District Attorney Brungard and Hon. T. C. Hipple. The attorneys for Cleary were W. C. Kress and C. S. McCormick. The jurors were as follows: D. C. Chambers, Byron Vandersloot, C. Smith, Robert Miller, Harry E. Evans, E. E. Chandlers, N.C. McCloskey, Adam Earon, Thomas Armstrong, Stirling McKean, Stewart Law and Jesse Ricker.

The trial began May 14th, 1889, and a verdict of murder in the first degree was rendered May 17th, 1889. The defense applied for a new trial, which was refused. The case was then carried to the Supreme Court, and the judgment of the lower court set aside.

The second trial of Cleary occurred at the April term of 1891, before Hon. A. C. Mayer and his associates, James W. Crawford and James W. Clark. The commonwealth was represented by A. W. Brungard and Hon. John H. Orvis, and the defence by Messrs. Kress and McCormick.

A verdict of murder in the first degree was rendered, May 2d, 1891 and Cleary was sentenced to be hanged. The case was again carried to the Supreme Court, and the judgment of the lower court sustained. June 7th, 1892, was appointed by Governor Pattison as the day of execution. The case was then taken before the board of Pardons, and the sentence commuted to imprisonment for life. Charles Cleary was then taken to the Western penitentiary, where he is now serving the first year of a life sentence.

THE LOVETT MURDER.

On the morning of December 14th, 1889, two brothers, William and John Lovett, left their homes in Gallauher township, and drove to Lockport, opposite Lock Haven, where they left their team and wagon, and crossed the river bridge to Lock Haven. Upon their arrival in the city they fell into the company of two brothers, William and Charles Brown. A feeling of enmity existed between the Lovetts and

Browns, and during the day a quarrel took place. William Lovett was a large, powerful man, greatly feared by the Browns, who had on several occasions been roughly handled by him. On this occasion the bitter feeling resulted in murder. The Browns crossed the bridge during the evening, and there awaited the coming of the Lovetts, who were accompanied by a man named Sweesey. Charles Brown took the brake stick from Lovetts' wagon and awaited their coming at the end of the bridge. At the appearance of the Lovett party, who were unaware of their danger, Brown raised his club and brought it down with full force upon the head of John Lovett. William Lovett, who attempted to assist his brother, received a blow which felled him to the earth. After he had fallen Brown continued to beat him until his own strength failed, when he walked away, leaving Lovett in a dying condition. The Browns went to their homes, and the brother and companion of the murdered man, not realizing the full extent of his injuries, dragged him into a shed near by, and built a fire. About daylight on Sunday morning a man named Lindsay came along and discovered the men, who were asleep. Upon investigation he found that William Lovett was dead. His companions were aroused. Lewis Hoover, who resided near, was awakened and called to the scene, and Sheriff Leahy was sent for. Upon arriving at the spot and learning the particulars of the murder, he at once took steps to prevent the escape of the Browns. He secured the assistance of Constable Ellis Myers, and together they proceeded to Dunnstown, to the home of the Browns. The home of William Brown was first visited, and himself taken into custody. They then proceeded to the house of Charles Brown, who was arrested and both lodged in jail.

Coroner J. S. Mader empaneled the following jury: Orrin T. Noble, Lewis Winner, X. B. Ringler, A. L. Merrill, S. Mclsaac and P. W. Keller. After viewing the body the jury adjourned until Monday morning, when they met at the office of Alderman J. W. Harris, and rendered their verdict, as follows: "That William Lovett came to his death from wounds received at the hands of Charles Brown." William Brown was afterwards released from custody, and at the next term of court, beginning Monday, February 24th, 1890, Charles Brown was convicted of the murder of William Lovett. The verdict of the jury was murder in the second degree. Brown was sentenced to the Western penitentiary for a term of ten years and six months. It is said that since his incarceration he has increased the length of his term by bad conduct toward the prison authorities.

William Lovett, the murdered man, was aged thirty-eight years. He was a married man, with a wife and two children. Charles Brown, the murderer, was

also a man of about the same age. He had a wife and three children, who yet reside in Dunnstown. In this trial the commonwealth was represented by District Attorney Brungard and T. T. Abrams, and C. S. McCormic and H. T. Harvey for the defense.

Note 1.-In the sketch of Gallauher township the name Jack Lovett appears by mistake; the name William Lovett should be used.

Note 2.-Several other murders have occurred in Clinton county, one of an Irishman, who was killed at Ferney's Run and another of a man who was killed at the Washington Iron works. The true facts in these cases could not be obtained. The person or persons who did the killing in both cases escaped, and their names remain unknown.

Note 3.-As we intend issuing a second edition of this work, we will consider it a favor if our readers will call our attention to any errors or facts or dates.

CONCLUSION.

It was intention of the Author to add many other points of history before concluding this volume, but space will not permit. Hoping our efforts to make this work one of interest and usefulness will be understood and appreciated by this readers, we remain,

Very truly yours,

The Author.