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NO. 21

THE DYNAMITE CASES.

The trial of L. S. Wintersteen, charged with being an accomplice in the attempt to blow up the residence of L. E. Waller with dynamite, began on Tuesday.

EMINENT COUNSEL EMPLOYED.

The Court House crowded, and the interest manifested by the public has not been equalled since the trial of the Molly Maguires twenty years ago.

JUDGE ERMENTROUT OF BERKS COUNTY, PRESIDING.

On the morning of September 11th last at about three o'clock, the citizens of Bloomsburg were aroused by a loud explosion that shook the windows of nearly every house in town. A report like a gun had been heard about an hour earlier, but no one paid any attention to that. The second report, however, aroused the residents of Fifth street and an examination showed that the residence of Levi E. Waller Esq., on the corner of Fifth and Center streets had been damaged by an explosion of some kind. The floor of the front porch was torn up, the ceiling of the porch was shattered, the glass and sash in the front windows were broken, and more or less damage was done on the interior of the library and parlor. A piece of fuse was found on the porch, and other evidence showed that the explosive used was dynamite. Great excitement prevailed, and could the perpetrator have been found, he would no doubt have been roughly used. There seemed to be no clue to the criminal, and the public generally had no suspicion as to the guilty party. It seems that Mr. Waller had suspicion, and he employed a detective on the case. Nothing more was heard of the matter until December 28th, when the community was shocked by the report that Clifton C. Knorr had been arrested, and that he had made a statement implicating Lloyd S. Wintersteen as the instigator of the act. Knorr was brought here on Monday, December 28. Mr. Wintersteen went to Philadelphia on Sunday, and on hearing of the charges against him, he returned home the following Thursday, and delivered himself to the officer having the warrant. A hearing was held before John M. Clark Esq., at which C. C. Knorr was the principal witness.

Under the evidence, Knorr and Wintersteen were both held in \$5000 bail for appearance at court. At the February term indictments were found against them, and a motion was made to quash the indictments, before Judge Metzger of Williamsport specially presiding, and the cases were continued pending his decision on this motion. At May term they were postponed until the 25th inst. and the trial began on Tuesday morning last, with Judge Ermentrout of Reading, on the bench, in place of Judge Ikeler.

The Commonwealth is represented by District Attorney John G. Harman, assisted by Grant Herring and W. H. Rhawn of the local bar, James Scarlet of Danville, and District Attorney Geo. S. Graham of Philadelphia. Wintersteen's counsel are Col. J. G. Freeze and Fred Ikeler; A. S. L. Shields of Philadelphia, and J. Howard Jacobs and H. P. Keyser of Reading.

The court house doors were kept locked on Tuesday morning until ten o'clock, and when the bell ceased ringing they were thrown open, and the crowd that had been waiting rushed in, and soon every seat was filled, and many were standing in the aisles. At the reporters' tables there were representatives of the Philadelphia Record, Ledger, Press, Inquirer, and Times, Catawissa News-Item, Bloomsburg Daily, Republican and THE COLUMBIAN.

J. D. Howery of Danville, was appointed assistant to Stenographer Walker, to take the testimony in the case.

L. S. Wintersteen and his counsel were the first to appear, and took seats at the counsel table farthest from the bench. They were soon followed by Mr. Waller and the Commonwealth's attorneys. At 10.05 Judge Ermentrout and Associates Fox and Kurtz entered the court room and ascended the bench. Court was duly opened by Crier Coffman, and the court ordered the list of jurors to be called, all answered to their names except William Hildebrandt, Samuel Miller and Olden Stokes.

Geo. S. Graham, J. H. Jacobs, A. S. L. Shields and H. P. Keyser were, on motion, admitted to practice in Columbia County.

Attachments were ordered to be issued for the jurors not answering to their names.

The Judge then inquired "Is the District Attorney ready for trial, and if so, what case is called?" Mr. Graham moved that the defendants be called upon to plead. Fred Ikeler arose and moved for a severance of the cases of C. C. Knorr and L. S. Wintersteen, on the ground that Knorr had confessed his part in the crime, and that Wintersteen denies all complicity in the crime, and has a complete defense to the charge. Mr. Graham suggested that the motion was premature until the pleas were entered. The court ordered the pleas entered, and the defendants stood up while Clerk Henrie read the several indictments, to each of which C. C. Knorr pleaded guilty, and L. S. Wintersteen plead not guilty, and asked for a separate trial, and refused to challenge the jury with C. C. Knorr.

Indictment number one was first taken up, and Mr. Shields suggested that the indictments be all tried together, to which Mr. Graham replied that the District Attorney had already made his election, and the court could not alter it. A jury was ordered to be called, and came as follows:

Boyd A. Hawk, after being sworn, being examined by Mr. Scarlet, said he lived in Main twp, never met Wintersteen; conversed with no one about the case; had been asked his opinion of case, but didn't give it. Takes no county paper. Don't know man who asked my opinion. Don't think I have expressed an opinion on this case. Have not formed any opinion. In answer to Mr. Jacobs he said he could not go into the jury box and render a verdict entirely by the evidence. He hesitated in saying that he had no other impression of the case except what would be created by the evidence.

Commonwealth challenges for cause and the juror retires.

Isaiah Howell was next called. Lives in Mt. Pleasant; knows Wintersteen by sight; has not formed or expressed any opinion as to guilt or innocence of defendant; has heard people talk about it; no one has tried to influence him.

Cross-examined he said he was not acquainted with anybody connected with case; knew three counsel for prosecution by reputation. No challenge, and juror enters the jury box.

Thos. E. Brittain was next called. Live in Briarcreek; a farmer; have slight acquaintance with Wintersteen; have no opinion as to his guilt or innocence. Do not know Mr. Waller. Accepted.

John W. O'Conner called. Lives in Centralia, works about his mother's hotel. Wintersteen was counsel for him two years ago; not a client now; have formed an opinion in this case; it would influence me in the discharge of my duty as a juror. Could render a verdict according to the evidence, without being influenced by that opinion. Challenged by Commonwealth, and juror retired.

C. W. Snyder called. Live in Bloomsburg; know Wintersteen, have no business connection with him, have only speaking acquaintance; have no opinion as to guilt or innocence of defendant; have talked some with customers about case; could try the case entirely on the evidence. Met Wintersteen once more than two months ago, before I was drawn as juror. Have no relations with Mr. Waller, only speaking acquaintance. Juror stood aside by Commonwealth.

Enos Bangs called. Live in Greenwood. Don't know Wintersteen except by sight. Have no opinion on the case. Have heard it talked about a little; nothing to influence me. Have no feeling or bias for or against Wintersteen, and relations with Waller. Accepted.

William Hoffman called. Live in Center twp., engineer employed by Low Bros. Have formed no opinion; have heard some talk; no one expressed an opinion; don't know

whether my employers are clients of Wintersteen. Juror stood aside.

William M. Frantz called. Live in Berwick; have no opinion on the case; don't know Wintersteen; an engineer at Jackson & Woodin Mfg. Co. Juror stood aside.

Wesley Hess called. Live in Sugarloaf; farmer, don't know Wintersteen; have not formed an opinion; could try the case on the evidence. Accepted.

Cyrus Robbins called. Live in Fishingcreek; don't know Wintersteen except by sight; have heard case talked about; could decide the case on the evidence. Know Waller when I see him. Accepted.

Simon Shaffer called. Live in Bloom, day laborer, know the defendant well, have formed no opinion, have worked for Wintersteen, been out fishing together; can't tell what talk I have had with other people. Juror stood aside.

M. J. Kline called. Live in Greenwood, know defendant, sold him a book once as an agent, five years ago. Juror stood aside.

Fred Laubach called. Live in Sugarloaf, don't know defendant, have formed no opinion, can try case impartially under the evidence, have heard talk among neighbors. Don't know Waller, have no feeling against defendant, and no relations with the prosecutor. Accepted.

John Watson called. Live in Bloom, know defendant, have talked on the subject, and have an opinion, but it will not affect me as a juror; it would require evidence to remove it; know Mr. Waller as well as I do Mr. Wintersteen. Challenged for cause, challenge sustained, and exception for defendant.

B. F. Sharpless called. Live in Bloom, know defendant, have no business relations with him, had some a couple of years ago, as an officer and director in Keystone Foundry & Machine Co., not my attorney, have not formed or expressed an opinion, had no special talk about case, have no opinion now, have read the papers, my friendly relations with defendant would not affect the verdict under the evidence, am friendly with Waller, live next door to him, don't know whether I have talked with him about this case, have seen him nearly every day, never said a word to him expressing sympathy, any opinion I may have formed would not influence me in any way. Challenged by defendant, challenge sustained.

At 12 o'clock court adjourned until 2 p. m.

Court opened promptly at two o'clock, and the selection of a jury continued.

R. B. McHenry called. Live in Bloom, laborer, not acquainted with defendant, have formed no opinion, know E. B. Brower, not talked with him about the case, no one has said anything to me about it, have read some about it. Juror stood aside.

W. L. Shultz called. Live in Benton twp., farmer, don't know the defendant, have not formed any opinion, have not been spoken to by any one to influence me, have no prejudice in the matter, don't know Waller. Accepted.

Levi Weaver called. Live in Scott twp., farmer, know defendant when I see him, have formed no opinion, have read the papers, no one has spoken to me about the case; don't know Mr. Waller only by sight, know Mr. Scarlet, knew Col. Knorr in his lifetime. Accepted.

Eber McAfee called. Live in Beaver twp., don't know the defendant, have formed no opinion, work at day labor. Accepted.

Joseph Bitler called. Live in Berwick, work for J. & W. Mfg. Co., have not formed any opinion, don't know the defendant, have heard very little about the case. Accepted.

Elijah Peterman called. Live in Sugarloaf, don't know the defendant, have formed no opinion, never read about the case, have heard of it. Accepted.

Galen Bird called. Live in Bear Gap, don't know defendant, have heard some talk about the case, have formed no opinion, don't know Waller. Accepted.

This completed the jury subject to four challenges on each side. The Commonwealth struck off one and Frank Mathers was called. Live in Orangeville, don't know defendant, have formed no opinion, have heard case talked of, but nothing said to influence me, think Wintersteen did some law business for my father, that would not influence me. Accepted.

Another juror was challenged by the defendant, and J. L. Eves was called. Live in Pine twp., know the defendant, have formed no opinion,

have heard a little talk. Juror stood aside.

David R. Stroup called. Live in Hemlock twp, farmer, don't know the defendant, have formed no opinion, don't know Mr. Waller, read an account of the explosion, have no bias or prejudice in the case. Accepted.

Frank Brennan called. Live in Conyngham twp., tax collector, know the defendant, he was never my attorney, have not been spoken to about the case, have read about it, and I have an opinion, and it would take evidence to change it. Challenge for cause, challenge sustained.

C. O. Brown called. Live in Catawissa, have formed an opinion, it would not influence my action as a juror, have had casual conversation about the case. Juror stood aside.

M. F. Conner called. Juror stood aside.

Steward Girton called. Live in Hemlock twp., farmer, know the defendant when I see him, have been spoken to about the case, by other jurymen, nothing said to influence me in any way, have formed no opinion; don't know Mr. Waller. Accepted.

A. H. Bower called. Live in Center twp., farmer, don't know the defendant, have had no relations with him, have formed no opinion, read about it when it happened, no one has spoken about it to influence me. Accepted.

Chas. W. Mensinger called. Live in Mifflin, laborer, know the defendant, have had no business relations, he represented my mother settling an estate, have heard some talk, nothing to influence me, have formed no opinion. Juror stood aside.

A. J. Derr called. Live in Greenwood, merchant, know the defendant, had no business relations, formed an opinion when I read the papers, unless the evidence was strong enough to overrule the opinion, it would prevail. Challenged for cause.

Clark Smith called. Live in Mt. Pleasant, laborer, don't know the defendant, have formed no opinion, heard some talk. Stood aside.

C. V. Miller called. Live in Center twp., farmer, have no opinion. Juror stood aside.

Oscar Sutton called, and stood aside.

William Witmer called, and stood aside.

P. D. Appleman called and stood aside.

Isaac Boyer called. Live in Conyngham twp., employed by the Reading Co., don't know the defendant, have formed no opinion. Stood aside.

R. F. Johnson excused on account of his hearing.

W. L. Demaree called. Live in Bloom, lumber dealer, know the defendant, have had business with him two years ago, have no opinion; know Mr. Waller. Accepted.

The jury was completed at 5 o'clock, and sworn. They are as follows: Enos Bangs, Wesley Hess, Fred Laubach, W. L. Shultz, Levi Weaver, Elijah Peterman, Galen Bird, Frank Mathers, David R. Stroup, Steward Girton, A. H. Bower, W. L. Demaree.

At 5.15 Judge Ermentrout addressed the jury and cautioned them against talking with any one, or allowing any one to talk to them. Court then adjourned to 9 o'clock Wednesday morning.

Court opened at 9.15 a. m.

The jurors not impanelled were discharged.

The Commonwealth's case was opened by Grant Herring. He said that the defendant stands indicted with attempting to murder Levi Waller by the use of dynamite. The crime has hardly a parallel anywhere, certainly not in this county. We are unfamiliar with dynamite as an agent for destroying human life. It has been so used by anarchists, but seldom before in a quiet community like this. He then proceeded to describe the manner in which the explosive was prepared and set off, and the details of the damage done. Two persons are charged with this crime, Clifton C. Knorr and L. S. Wintersteen; Knorr has confessed that he was induced to do it by Wintersteen. In 1877 Wintersteen came to Bloomsburg and read law with Col. Knorr, and was admitted to the bar in 1879, and became a partner of his preceptor.

In 1837 Knorr & Wintersteen bought out the Bloomsburg Iron Co., and in 1889 Col. Knorr died, leaving a widow and two children, Clifton, and a daughter. Wintersteen became President of the Company, and from 1889 to 1894 no election of officers was held. He controlled the books, made all sales, collected all money, and in 1893 sold the whole plant, to H. C. Pease. No money passed, but

a mortgage of \$50,000 was taken, of which half was turned over to the Co. Pease began to tear down, and to build a stone building, until he was restrained by an injunction. For 5 years the heirs of Col. Knorr received no funds and no account from Wintersteen. Then a bill in equity was filed to compel an account, charging Wintersteen with mismanagement of the company. In this proceeding the heirs of Col. Knorr were represented by L. E. Waller. This we will follow by showing that Wintersteen constantly evaded these charges, making no effort to push the case to trial, but was endeavoring to buy off Mrs. Knorr and the children, in order to conceal his management of the business. We will show that within a month after filing this bill, Wintersteen's efforts were to buy out Clifton's interest; that Wintersteen knew Clifton's character and then began to try to use him for his purposes; sent a man named Witmer to Knorr at Reading, and bought his interest for \$3000, giving a check, but the next day the check was recalled, and Wintersteen then began to deal with Knorr directly; that subsequently Wintersteen bought Knorr's interest in the Iron Co. for \$2000; that Wintersteen knew that the stock was worth \$6000; that on Apr. 14, 1894 Knorr and Wintersteen were registered at the Commonwealth Hotel in Harrisburg; that Wintersteen subsequently offered to pay Knorr \$1000 if he could get his mother to sell her stock; that in May 1894 Wintersteen made Mrs. Knorr an offer for her stock; she declined to do anything without the advice of her counsel; he shook the paper in her face and said he could ruin her if he was not an honorable man, and advised her to see his counsel; that Wintersteen said "this fight is not between you and me, it is between Waller and me." In Dec. 1895 Clifton came home to live in Bloomsburg, and had two papers for her to sign, one being a paper to assign the stock, and the other to discontinue the equity suit. Clifton said if she didn't sign the papers Waller's life would be in danger, and used every effort to get her to sign them. Wintersteen also attempted to secure the stock of the daughter, Mildred. Col. Knorr owned a property in Harrisburg, and Wintersteen advised Clifton to start partition proceedings, and thus compel Mildred to sell her interest in the Harrisburg property, rather than have it sold and throw her grandmother, who lived in it, out of a home. Wintersteen agreed to pay all the expenses of these proceedings. The plan worked, and Mildred signed the transfer of her Irondale stock to Wintersteen. In Jan. 1895 Clifton made a deed to Mildred for his interest in the Harrisburg property, but the deed was dated June 1894. Clifton also tried to get Mildred to sign a paper to stop the equity suit, but she refused. Wintersteen got possession of all of Clifton's and Mildred's interests, and endeavored to get the widow's interest in order to end the equity suit that contained charges which if proven, would be so disastrous to him. Mr. Herring then detailed the testimony of several witnesses to whom Wintersteen had expressed himself showing strong feeling against Waller.

In July 1895 Clifton wanted some money, and Wintersteen met him at Reading; Clifton asked him how he could make some money, and Wintersteen replied that he didn't know of any way, unless his mother would stop the equity suit, or die. Further details were here given of efforts to get Mrs. Knorr to stop the suit, and also of expressions showing malice toward Waller. In Oct. 1895 Knorr received a letter from Wintersteen enclosing \$5, asking him to meet him at Espy. They met, and Wintersteen asked Knorr if he couldn't slip into his mother's house some night, and kill her, Knorr said he couldn't do it, as he was too well known. Wintersteen gave Knorr \$25, to go to New York to find a man to kill Mrs. Knorr, but Clifton didn't go to New York, but went to Reading and told Wintersteen that he had met with an accident. That Knorr and Wintersteen met at different times and places, and that Wintersteen gave him money at different times, and that it was arranged that Knorr should meet Waller at night and kill him; that he gave him \$10 and told him to go to Danville and buy a revolver, and that Knorr afterward met Waller on the street at night, and but for the fact that his little boy was with Waller he would have shot him.

On one occasion the use of vitriol was suggested by Wintersteen to Knorr to throw in Waller's face. On another occasion diphtheria germs

were proposed with which to kill Mrs. Knorr, and Clifton procured some from a man in New York; that Wintersteen gave him \$5 to pay for them, and they were procured, but were not the kind to cause the disease by putting it in the clothing, but by inoculation; it failed, and other poison was procured, but could not be administered.

In June 1896 Clifton came up from Reading with a man named Wingert to see if Wintersteen would buy the interest of Knorr in his father's properties, which Wingert had bought in at sheriff's sale on a judgment against Clifton, and Wintersteen bought it in as he said, as a favor to Clifton.

Then the dynamite plot was proposed, and Mr. Herring here gave the details of how it was procured at Armstrong's quarry; of the meeting at Wilkes-Barre the night before the explosion; how Knorr set off the dynamite, and its results, and of Knorr's subsequent movements; of their meeting afterwards at Reading, and what happened there; and the subsequent developments that led to Knorr's confession and the arrest of Wintersteen. He closed at 11:40, occupying about two hours and twenty minutes.

During the speech Mr. Jacobs once objected to the statements made by Mr. Herring in his opening, but the court refused to interfere, and at the close an exception was taken by the defense.

L. E. WALLER SWORN.

Prosecutor in this case. Live on corner of Center and Fifth; On Sept. 10, 1896 my family consisted of myself, wife, son, and hired girl; my wife's parents and my daughter were away from home; before 2 o'clock in morning I heard an explosion, and smelt smoke; arose and concluded the noise was made by a cap on the railroad; went back to bed; before 3 o'clock, was awakened by a great disturbance, arose, went to window and saw neighbors on the street dressed; went down stairs and found front doors blown in, glass broken, sash out, porch floor gone, roof of porch damaged, pillars moved, hole in the brick wall. Photograph of Mr. Waller's residence shown witness and described by him. Went with Police Knorr to Armstrong's quarry after some was stolen, and found shed broken open. After Knorr's testimony before the Justice about the dynamite left in his mother's yard, I went with Detective Henderson and found dynamite where Knorr said he had left it, (Dynamite produced and identified.) I went to Wilkes-Barre and obtained the hotel register where Knorr and Wintersteen stayed on the night of Sept. 9th, at Exchange Hotel. Register offered in evidence, showing name of L. S. Wintersteen, room 69; on same page, A. G. Harding Allentown, Pa., room 69. On the following page, next day, appears the name of L. S. Wintersteen.

At 12 o'clock Court adjourned to 2 p. m.

Court opened at 2:10 p. m. and Mr. Waller's examination was continued.

After the explosion I employed a night watchman until the arrest, (Papers shown witness.) I received these from Mrs. Knorr last February, have had them ever since.

Cross-examined. Offered a reward a few days' after explosion, of \$500, after town had offered same amount, William Henderson is a detective of Philadelphia. I had first communicated with him the Monday or Tuesday following explosion; he was with me when we found the dynamite in Mrs. Knorr's yard. I filed the bill in equity in January 1894, which was my first employment by Mrs. Knorr, don't remember what proceedings were had in court, can't say whether I uttered a word in court, Mr. Scarlet was counsel with me.

Re-direct. Mrs. Knorr lives nearly opposite me. Before the filing of the bill I represented Mrs. Knorr, and when it was filed Mr. Scarlet was called in by direction of Mrs. Knorr. She consulted with me, and I advised them of what they could do. (Letters shown witness, and objected to by defense, objection sustained.) The offer of reward was withdrawn before I employed Henderson.

By Mr. Shields. I have paid Henderson no thousands. I paid him six dollars a day, there was no contingent reward.

P. G. MILLER SWORN.

Live in Bloom, on Market Street, coal dealer, know Wintersteen; in Spring of 1894 he came to my house for my wife to sign some papers, he was talking about making money, he

were proposed with which to kill Mrs. Knorr, and Clifton procured some from a man in New York; that Wintersteen gave him \$5 to pay for them, and they were procured, but were not the kind to cause the disease by putting it in the clothing, but by inoculation; it failed, and other poison was procured, but could not be administered.

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