

# The Centre Reporter.

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## CENTRE COUNTY IN THE CIVIL WAR.

### 148th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

By T. P. Meyer, Sergeant Co. A., 148th Regiment, P. V.

[To be Continued.]

#### CHAPTER IV.

In our forward movement our Regt. passed through a truck patch and I filled my haversack with green tomatoes.

We lay in line of battle, and nearly froze. About ten o'clock I "stood myself up," and said to my chums let us go back behind the hill in the woods, build a fire, get warm, and fry and eat my green tomatoes, while we wait for the coming of day, and the opening of the fight; we will be back before day-break.



FRYING TOMATOES.

They said, we dare not do it; not one would go with me. So I went alone, started a fire, fried and ate tomatoes. I had a lonely but nice time by my cheerful fire, undisturbed. I had a comfortable night and just before day-break I finished the tomatoes and returned to the line of battle, where the boys were lying on the ground, shivering with cold and doing considerable growling.

In the afternoon of Oct. 2d we had a slight diversion in our division, the 1st of the 2d Corps, when comrade Small, a soldier of the 66th N. Y. vols. was shot in the usual formal way, for desertion. Our division was turned out to witness the butchery, and the Confederates on the heights on the south side of the Rapidan, in bunches, were also spectators, and, no doubt, looked on with satisfaction to see us gradually reducing our army. Friday was execution day and no Friday passed without shooting deserters in some part of the army. This was the first execution for desertion in our Division; it was a butchery. The victim was shot four times; the executioners emptied their guns on him. He received two bullets into his head from a navy revolver in the hands of an officer at close range, before the surgeon in attendance pronounced him dead.

Then the whole Division was required to march in single column close by, to view the mangled and blood covered body of this hapless mortal. The idea of these public executions, was to impress upon the soldiers that desertion would be punished according to military usage in time of war.



COOKING THE ANCIENT GANDER.

During the afternoon of Oct. 4th, Jesse Long, one of my pioneers was out prowling and foraging. He returned with an old white gander, a big one. We immediately turned butchers and commenced skinning this old Confederate gander; we got along fairly well till we tried to part the hide from his turtle back bone, when there was trouble. The hide of this diabolical, centurian Confederate gander was so firmly fixed to the back bone, that after much labor we had at least scraped most of the feathers off, and we gave it up. We dissected him with a hatchet and put him in a camp kettle over the fire and had him boiling furiously before sunset. In a few hours we tried him and found he was still very tough. We tried him frequently after that. He was the toughest case we had ever met. At three o'clock in the morning, Jesse tried him again, and declared he was getting tougher. We concluded it was high time to quit cooking him. The pot was lifted, and we began to chew

on that gander. Four of us—William Meyer, Henry Meyer, Jesse Long and I chewed on that gander till dawn of day, and we had a good deal of that Confederate, leather-bodied gander left over. We offered part of that invincible gander to some of the boys and told them that it was a very good mess. They looked at the wreck, but they would not bite.

Peace to the memory of that South Land Gander. On Oct. 6th at two o'clock in the morning we were routed out; we packed up and soon after moved out of our position on the Rapidan, and marched back to Culpeper C. H. twelve miles, and went into regular camp in reserve. We began to dig wells and put up "annexes," as if for a prolonged stay.

For several days we lay quietly in camp near Culpeper Court House; but on Oct. 10th (1863) the 2d Corps made a hurried march back to the Rapidan river to reinforce the 3d Corps, which had made a reconnaissance in force, south of the river, now hard pressed by the Confederates, and was in full retreat.

We reached the river, formed battle lines, and put forward a heavy skirmish line, to cover the retreat of the 3d Corps, whose wagon and artillery trains were then crossing the river, to the north side, with great haste, and passed to our rear, followed closely by the troops of the Corps. By two o'clock on the morning of the 11th, the entire Corps was safely on the north side of the river. The pontoon bridges were hauled out, loaded up, and moved out with the general retreat of the army. There was a good deal of skirmishing and artillery firing, but the 148th sustained no casualties.

Their feeble resistance and willingness to fall back, gave rise to the suspicion that they were "luring" us with a small force in our front, and were advancing in force on our flank; this soon became apparent. Therefore, at midnight we again resumed a rapid march in retreat, recrossed the Rappahannock by the same pontoon



PICKETS ON THE RAPIDAN.

bridges near the R. R. and, with the exception of a halt to show fight in the forenoon, we kept up a rapid march till late in the night when having made twenty-five miles, and completely worn out, we bivouacked in the woods.

We had no sleep nor rest for three days and nights, and we were so tired out that we actually wished that the war was over. It was pitch dark and raining.

About midnight we heard the rattle of musketry in a skirmish not far away. All was excitement; was there to be a fight in this pitchy darkness

## THE NEW SCHOOL LAWS.

BY COL. D. F. FORTNEY.

The Legislature at the session of 1903 passed quite a number of laws relating to the public schools. Some of these relate only to cities, and of these nothing will be said in this article.

Of the laws enacted in 1903 which are general the most important are the act to establish "County Associations of School Directors"; the act relating to the collection of school taxes in boroughs and townships; the act providing the establishment of free public libraries in townships and boroughs, and the act regulating the minimum salary of school teachers.

These several acts will be considered in the order named. In the first, it is made the duty of the superintendent of the schools of the county to annually, beginning with 1903, call a meeting of all the school directors for the consideration and discussion of questions pertaining to school administration. These annual meetings are not to be held during the week of the county institute.

In the second section it is made the duty of each school director in the several districts in each county to attend this annual meeting; and for attendance upon this annual convention each director shall receive, for his necessary expense, mileage at the rate of three cents per mile, to be paid out of the funds of the district he represents. But expense shall not be paid for more than two days in any one year.

The provision made in this section for expense is not clearly expressed. At first glance it seems that each director was allowed his expenses, other than travel, but a careful examination of the said section clearly shows that all a director is entitled to receive is mileage at the rate of three cents per mile each way. As a rule this would only pay railroad fare, but if the director travels at excursion rates, or on a pass, or in his own conveyance, he is entitled to the three cents per mile each way. It would not have been unreasonable to have allowed each director mileage at the rate given, and at least \$1.00 a day to meet hotel bills.

Directors should note that it is made their duty under this section, to attend this annual meeting. All directors are sworn to obey the law and faithfully perform their duties. This is a new duty imposed by law and should be faithfully discharged. The act further provides that as soon as the directors have assembled they shall elect a president, two vice presidents, a secretary and a treasurer, who shall serve and perform all the duties usually performed by such officers for one year.

The officers shall also serve as a program committee and prepare a program for each annual meeting; secure competent speakers, and do whatever is necessary to make the said meeting a success. The county superintendent is ex-officio a member of the program committee, and is to render such assistance to the officers of the association as they may require of him. The program for the first meeting is to be prepared by the county superintendent. To defray the expense of these meetings the county treasurer of each county shall pay to the treasurer of the directors association out of county funds, one dollar for each director attending the annual meeting, but this sum in no case, to exceed one hundred dollars for any one meeting. Before this is done the treasurer of the directors association must present to the county treasurer a statement showing when and where the meeting was held, how many directors were present, who the speakers were and the expense incurred.

This act was passed to instruct and inform school directors in all their duties, and aid them in the proper and intelligent administration of school matters. If it is received in the spirit it should be, with a determination to accept all the benefits that necessarily flow from it, its effect upon the schools will very soon be felt in every school district in the county.

The executive committee of the existing school directors association of Centre county, in connection with the county superintendent is now preparing a program for the first meeting of the school directors of the county under this act. The funds drawn from the county is to enable the association to engage speakers, pay expense of printing, sending out programs, etc.

The second act to be considered relates to the collection of school taxes in boroughs and townships. Under it every collector of school tax shall on or before the tenth of each month after

receiving the duplicate deliver to the secretary of the board, for his district, a statement in writing signed by him, showing the names of all persons from whom he had collected school tax up to and including the last of the preceding month, the amount paid by each person and the date of collection, and shall also give the amount of taxes remaining uncollected. If required by any member of the board he shall exhibit the duplicate showing the uncollected school tax. The collector shall pay over on or before the tenth of each month during his term of office, to the treasurer of the school board all taxes collected during the preceding month, less, of course, his commission. It is also made the duty of the board of school directors and the collector of school taxes to meet together on the first Monday of February of each year, to examine the duplicate which the collector is required to exhibit before the board and ascertain the amount of taxes then uncollected. It is further made the duty of the collector to collect and pay to the treasurer of the proper school district, the whole amount of the taxes charged and assessed in the said duplicate less exonerations and commissions, on or before the first Monday of June of each year. Any tax collector who fails to pay over to the treasurer of the district, or to deliver to the secretary any of the statements required, or to produce and exhibit the duplicate to the secretary of the board when required shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding \$100.00.

This is a good, healthy law, and school boards should see that it is enforced in both letter and spirit. The third act we propose considering in this article is a supplement to an act entitled "An act for the establishment of free public libraries," approved June 28th, 1895, and provides that when any township surrounds or immediately adjoins any borough, school board or organizations having control of the schools of said districts may join in the establishment and maintenance of a free non-sectarian library, in the borough or in the township, or partly in both, the expense to be borne by the borough and township in such proportions as may be agreed upon by the school authorities of the respective districts, and for this purpose they may levy the taxes provided for in the act of June 28th, 1895.

The second section of this act provides that where a free non-sectarian public school library has been established in districts, situate as aforesaid, the board may, instead of establishing another, join in extending aid to the library already established, upon such terms as shall be agreed upon between the managers and the school authorities of the respective districts, and taxes for this purpose shall also be levied, under the act of 1895. Managers of any public library receiving aid under this act must report under oath annually to the school board furnishing such aid, the amount of money received, and the account shall be laid before the auditors of the respective districts, and by them audited as other accounts are now audited.

The act of assembly approved April 9th, 1903 provides that after June 1st, 1904 the minimum salary of teachers in the public schools shall be \$35.00 per month. It is also made the duty of the president and secretary of the school board of each district, to report, under oath, to the superintendent of public instruction that the requirements of the act have been complied with, and every school district failing to comply with the said act shall forfeit its state appropriation for the whole time during which the act is not complied with.

In the general appropriation bill after appropriating \$11,000,000.00 to the schools for the two years beginning June 1st, 1903 in section VIII, of the bill, it is provided that \$100,000.00 out of the amount appropriated shall be set apart to be expended for the encouragement of township high schools, and that participation in the amount set apart for this purpose shall not be made to depend upon the teaching of any dead or foreign language.

This is a synopsis of the acts of assembly passed at the session of 1903 relating to the public schools, outside of the cities. They are all important, and if directors over the county will enforce them with a true purpose of accomplishing good, the standard of our schools will be greatly advanced within a very few years.

John Taylor, the Look Haven race horse, won a two thousand dollar purse at Columbus, Ohio. He won three straight heats.

F. A. Foreman next spring will move to the Wm. Goodhart farm, near Spring Mills, which he recently purchased for \$3,500.

Wm. A. Odenkirk, of this place, who is an extra agent for the Pennsylvania railroad company, is at present at Jersey Shore.

October 19 is the time set for the trial of the robbers captured in the Seven Mountains. The trial will take place before a Federal court at Scranton.

## EASTERN PENITENTIARY.

Charges of "graft," fraud and irregularities in the Eastern Penitentiary are multiplying. The latest contribution to the disgraceful series of disclosures is the confession of an overseer, who reveals a conspiracy by which the State was made to pay many times over for the same supplies furnished the institution. The material was stolen from the premises, carried outside and resold to the penitentiary. The scheme was worked by the aid of outside confederates, and the conspiracy seems to have been so ingeniously managed that the institution bought its own property a dozen times. The counterfeiting operations, the missing cigars and the allegations respecting the failure to credit counties with the full proceeds of convict labor in the penitentiary present a remarkable array of charges against an institution supposed to be under the strict surveillance of alert custodians at all times. The affairs of the prison evidently require a thorough overhauling. The Eastern Penitentiary since its establishment, in 1828, until a recent date, when it was forced to succumb to Ashbridgeism, was regarded as a model institution of its kind. During more than seventy years its record was unspotted by any scandal or exhibition of lax government. Its good name must be restored.

Having in view President Roosevelt's posing as a champion of labor organization in some directions with a positive contradiction in others, the New York "Sun" does not appear to have the highest opinion of Roosevelt mixing in with what it calls his "emotional fog." "As we have already pointed out" says the "Sun," "Mr. Roosevelt, in his frank and energetic pursuit of the vote of organized labor has plunged the whole country into a condition of turmoil and unrest the like of which has never before been known in its history or in that of any other country." And it adds: His inexperience and his total lack of even the smallest intuitions of a business life made it impossible for him to foresee the inevitable consequences of his acts."

Senator Reed Smoot, of Utah, has been re-elected an apostle of the Mormon church. At the services an elder upheld polygamy, and said it was a revelation from God, and he dwelt on the fact of all the children and wives being brought "to sit with Abraham." Is that defiance to the Edmunds anti-polygamy law, and will the United States Senate ignore this brazen parade of a licentious crime? And when that body finishes enforcing the law of the nation, not against a tenet of religious faith, but against a violation of the sanctity of marriage, what will the Senate do about its member, Apostle Smoot?

Everybody's Magazine begins to be something more than an entertaining ten cents' worth of fiction and articles. An identity has been developed—a sturdy and aggressive identity all its own and full of interest and promise. Thus far, the magazine has prided itself on the timeliness of its features and the healthy virility of its fiction. Now, it has found itself, entered on its own mission, headed out on its particular crusade. The key-note of this individuality is the article by Alfred Henry Lewis, in the October number, "The Madness of Much Money."

In addition to thefts of thousands of cigars and stockings and supplies in the Eastern Penitentiary, to say nothing of counterfeiting, it is discovered that large quantities of asbestos packing, lead and iron pipe, brass fixtures for plumbing, and other things, were stolen, secreted in the cellars, and resold to the prison authorities. Apparently the only reason why they did not kidnap Warden Bussinger was because of a doubt whether anything would be paid for his ransom.

If the Republican newspapers are as diligent in noting the closing of mills, furnaces, factories, mines, etc., as they were when they opened, they will have no trouble to secure news for the next few months. The opening of these industries was credited to the Republican supremacy. The closing of them will be charged to the possibility of a Democratic president succeeding a blatant president.

Judge Yerkes, of Bucks county, in refusing to send convicts to the Eastern Penitentiary, declares that that prison is too bad for criminals. He takes occasion to score the men who are responsible for the wrongdoing in the penitentiary.

A blindness that is very detrimental to the individual afflicted and to those who come in touch with him—spiritually or temporarily—is egotistical blindness.

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## TOWN AND COUNTY NEWS.

### HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS.

Diphtheria is prevalent in Burnham. One death occurred last week.

Mr. and Mrs. George Armbruster, of Farmers Mills, were in town Saturday.

October 3 is the last day taxes can be paid in order to guarantee a vote in November.

For first-class goods at the lowest cash prices go to W. B. Ripka's new cash store, Spring Mills.

Judge John M. Bailey, of the Huntingdon-Mifflin-Bedford District, died suddenly in Huntingdon.

Mrs. Davis, wife of Jefferson Davis, deceased, president of the Confederacy, is seriously ill at Buffalo.

Fleisher's school, Potter township, is without a teacher. The school is a small one, and is located east of Colyer.

The early sown grain is looking fine. The weather conditions have been ideal for the development of wheat plants.

There will be a meeting of the hospital aid society at the home of Miss Annie Lohr, Monday evening, Oct. 5, at 7 o'clock.

John S. Hosterman was continued as business manager of the Franklin and Marshall College weekly. He is now a senior.

W. B. Mingle, Esq., of Centre Hall, is one of the Democrats of Penns Valley, who Wednesday attended the formal notification of the state candidates at Allentown.

Mrs. Samuel Snyder Thursday last week went to Jeannette, where she will spend a short time with her husband who has been at that place for some time.

The Lewisburg fair will be well attended by Penns Valley people. The return train comes back as far as Coburn, but a goodly number of persons from this side of Coburn will join the excursion.

Dr. Charles Rhone, of Arizona, was the guest of Hon. Leonard Rhone last week. Dr. Rhone accompanied the dead body of his mother to Bellefonte, where interment was made Thursday last week.

Mrs. George Shetter, who has been the guest of Merchant W. H. Meyer and wife for some time, Thursday last week returned to her home in York. She is a native of Penns Valley, but had not been here for a number of years.

A heavy storm passed over the eastern part of the state Sunday. In Berks county hail did much damage to corn, and in one instance hindered the progress of an express train. Around Philadelphia there were very heavy rains.

Mrs. Phoebe Yearick is in Philadelphia, where she will remain for some time with her sons, P. Gross and H. H. Yearick. Mrs. Yearick has many friends in Centre Hall all of whom wish her a pleasant visit in the chief city of the state.

Real Natural History (not "animal stories" for the experts to squabble over) is the subject of a capital article by A. W. Rolker in the October McClure's, on "Babies of the Zoo." Most of the interesting things that happen in a menagerie occur at times when the public is excluded, and are witnessed by the keepers alone.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Duck, of Spring Mills, last week moved to Kermoor, Clearfield county, where Mr. Duck is the night telegraph operator in a railroad office on the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburg road. Mrs. Duck, before marriage, was Miss Gertrude Frank, daughter of Constable Philip Frank, of Potter township.

Messrs. B. D. Brisbin and W. Frank Bradford, who succeed Wm. Colyer as owner and operator of the saw mill at the station, are doing an extensive business. They recently came into possession of several tracts of timber land, one of which is a portion of the timber on the farm of Rev. James Boal, tenanted by D. W. Bradford.

J. Wm. Mitterling shipped a car load of cows to Philadelphia this week. He says Centre county cows are much sought after by dairymen who have had experience with cows from this locality. While the animals are not as large as those shipped from western Pennsylvania and Ohio, the Centre county cow is a much heavier milker and milks for a much longer period.

The building of the house of John Bubb, near Centre Hill, was credited to F. F. Palmer, of Potters Mills, and Samuel Shoop, of Centre Hall, in last week's Reporter. Instead of F. F. Palmer it should have been Thomas Palmer, who is the representative carpenter at Potters Mills. The former Mr. Palmer is yet disabled from performing manual work on account of an accident which befell him some time ago.