

# 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 V. THE PRISONER'S STORY.  
Attempts to escape were constantly made, but were generally known only to the trusted few concerned in the scheme. Now and then we heard from soldiers who escaped from the Island and reached the Union lines in safety. When once on the main land there were even chances of getting through safely. Many of the citizens and the negroes generally, through the country, would aid and pilot escaping Union prisoners, for whom a regular trial had been established.

The last scheme in which I was concerned was a plan for a general "break out" to make our escape en masse, by fighting. It was planned that a number of prisoners assemble at each guard post, and at a given signal rush on every guard, disarm, or dispatch him, if need be.

At the same signal, a general rush on the reserve was to be made, seize their arms by force of numbers, and fight our way to our own lines, with the captured guns; this we believed could be done as there were very few troops in and around Richmond at that time. By some means the scheme was discovered, likely through traitors or spies in camp. The guard was at once strengthened by the addition of a regiment of infantry and five pieces of artillery were added to the batteries commanding our camp, most of them on the Richmond side of the James river. They were now prepared to quell a general break, and the plan was abandoned.

It was this same winter, on the night of Feb. 9th, 1864, that the great tunnel delivery was made from Libby prison. The excitement in our camp, as well as in Richmond, was intense. The guards told us in the morning that five hundred Union officers had escaped from Libby by a tunnel; the exact number was one hundred and nine of whom forty-eight were recaptured and returned to Libby. Sixty reached the Union lines, and one was drowned crossing a stream.

George S. Good, R. R. contractor, and present resident of Lock Haven, was one of them and was recaptured. As soon as the Libby prison delivery was discovered, on the morning of Feb. 10th, the alarm was sounded; dispatches were sent out by every electric wire; cavalry and infantry, with blood hounds, started out in wild pursuit in all directions and during the afternoon, at irregular intervals, small bands would return in triumph, with a few of the run-away U. S. officers, to be re-admitted to Libby.

Some people, not fully informed, would misjudge the dog that bears the awful name of "blood-hound," believing that no sooner would a band of them come up with a fugitive, than they would attack and tear him. This is not the case. But the fugitive must halt, and wait for the arrival of the master. Should the fugitive run, and not heed the warning growls, the blood hound will seize and hold him. This, the "Yankees" knew, and benefited by that knowledge. As stated, one hundred and nine escaped by the tunnel and struck for "home" in pairs and trios, through groups and crowds in the streets of Richmond unrecognised, in all directions, along routes previously planned, traveling only after night, and hiding in swamp, brush and negro huts during the day.

General Reed and two companions moved down the peninsula toward Fortress Monroe. Early on the morning of the second night of their escape, they hid in the brush in a ravine, and had lain down for rest and the return of night when something lightly touched the foot of Gen. Reed; he raised his head and saw two blood hounds standing over them, pleasantly looking at them. They had followed the trail given them, to the very feet of the resting men, and smelling the shoes, touched the foot of Gen. Reed, and roused him.

A low whistle was heard, and the Johnny pursuers were on hand. They said, "Come boys, you will have to go back," and all started on their return to Libby.

Almost daily arrivals of prisoners rapidly swelled the number, until Belle Island Camp, twice enlarged, was a prison-city of over eight thousand, made up of all classes of men known to the world: Students, lawyers, doctors, teachers, mechanics, and machinists, every trade and branch of art and industry, had its representatives here, by masters in their line as well as scamps and cheats in great numbers, dying by degrees.

There were toy, relic and memento

Continued at foot of next column.

## THE NEW YORK WORLD.

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## Fish Eggs.

At the Erie station there are 46,300,000 white fish and 10,000,000 lake herring; at the Corry station, 3,640,000 trout eggs; at the Bellefonte station, 2,500,000 trout eggs, and at the Allentown station, 1,000,000 trout eggs, making a total of 63,440,000 eggs.

## The Bradford-Smith Cattle Sale.

The Bradford-Smith cattle sale held at the Old Fort Saturday afternoon was well attended. The stock sold at reasonable prices, some fancy young heifers bringing the top figure.

George Durst, who is a lover of fine stock, bought a five months old heifer for \$35.00.

## Select Your Dates.

There is every indication of an unusual number of public sales in this county this year, and those contemplating disposing of farm stock and implements should select their days early and thus avoid conflict with others. The sale register of the Reporter is a means of giving a sale publicity other than the posters. No charge is made for notice when the bills are printed at this office.

## Death of J. D. S. Gast.

John Daniel Spyker Gast, who has been in the mercantile business in Millinburg longer than any other merchant of the town, and was the proprietor of the oldest continuous business in the town, dating from 1830, died Wednesday of last week.

Mr. Gast was born in Millinburg, Nov. 24, 1835, died Dec. 2, 1903, aged sixty-eight years and eight days. He was the son of Henry and Mary Spyker Gast both deceased.

He is survived by one son, Harry A. Gast, and three daughters, Margaret, wife of R. E. Snodgrass; Mayme, wife of Guy F. Roush, and Katharine, wife of N. A. Kurtz, all residing in Millinburg. He is also survived by one brother, Dr. J. R. Gast, of Millinburg, and one sister, Mrs. J. A. Montelius, of Piper City, Ill.

## Continued from first column.

stores, a restaurant where corn-pone was sold, barber shops, jewelry shops, etc. Market street, so called, was on every fair day crowded from morning till night, with men, ragged and dirty, loudly offering something to sell and extolling its merits, with an earnestness that rivaled a stock exchange.

There all imaginable things, peculiar to the place, consisting largely of toys and curios made in camp, were hawked, sold and traded. Some of the finest specimens of "wood-cutting," carvings in wood, ivory, human and beef bones, wonderful in design and workmanship; also, beautiful pencil drawings and landscape sketches, and famous battle scenes.

It was the more distressing to see so many talented and highly educated men in rags, loaded down with filth, dirt and vermin, down to the level of barbarism, slowly but surely dying.

Common pocket knives were the only carving tools and common lead pencils, the only instruments of art.

There was absolutely nothing for the prisoners to do here. Therefore, for want of occupation for the mind, many fell to brooding, scolding, cursing the war and the stoppage of exchange.

## THE SPOOK OF SPOOK HILL.

By H. W. Shoemaker, New York City.

Much was added to the air of mystery and romance which has always surrounded the steep, oak-covered knoll near Pine Station, Clinton county, when, in 1860, some workmen in digging a cut for the Philadelphia & Erie Railroad, unearthed the foundation of an ancient stockade and block-house.

From that time to the present, the antiquarians and local historians have wrangled over the name and traditions of this fort, some declaring it to be the ruins of Fort Horne, in reality a structure of more recent construction, and columns have been written in the newspapers, but apparently none were aware of the true history or connected this mysterious fort, in any other than a remote way, with the famous headless spook who haunts the spot where the old fort stood, and gave Spook Hill its name.

From the lips of an ancient citizen of Pine, I heard what he declares to be the true tale of Spook Hill and the fortress; and my informant tells me that his authority is from no less a personage than Peter Pence, the Indian fighter, who in turn heard it from still earlier settlers.

"One cold night," said the aged citizen of Pine, "Lieutenant Gaston Bushong, of the French trading post 'Numero Sept.' was sitting before the blazing beech-wood fire in the block-house, half dozing under the gentle influence of the crackling logs. He was the second in command of a chain of posts which extended from Lake Erie, east of Shickshinny (Luzerne county) and was noted as a shrewd trader, and a stern but honorable friend of the Indians.

At a home-made slab table nearby sat his niece, the beautiful Jacqueline Le Van, who was busily engaged in writing a diary of her experiences in a huge leather-bound copy book. Jacqueline was a girl of much talent, of excellent family, who had left her parents' chateau in the south of France to accompany her uncle to the wilds of Pennsylvania, as she was ambitious to learn enough of life in the new country to compile a book of travels, which it was her dream to publish when she would return to France.

In a corner lay four sleeping French trappers, in ragged suits of buckskin, and beside the iron-bound door was crouched a spotted, one-eyed hound.

Suddenly the hound jumped up, sniffing the air and barking loudly, while a sound of foot-steps could be heard from outside. Everything became in a state of confusion in the block-house. Lieut. Bushong seized his pistol, the sleeping Frenchmen leaped to their feet and slouched to the gun-racks, until a voice from without called, "Bushong! Bushong! ouvrez la porte. C'est Le Brun."

Lieut. Bushong evidently recognized the speaker, for he replaced his pistol on the table and ordered one of the trappers to unbolt the door. This was done as quickly as possible, and in walked a young man of about twenty-five years, swarthy and bearded, clad in semi-military, semi-backwoodsman's garb. He was followed by four trappers, each carrying three or four guns, the last one dragging a heavy bag of ammunition.

Lieut. Bushong was amazed to see the garrison of post 'Numero Six' at such an hour and so far down the Susquehanna, but before he could express his amazement, Le Brun, the leader of the newcomers, exclaimed: "Excuse our presence here, Sir, but an unfortunate thing has happened. One of our men killed an Indian Medicine man named Two Pines on yesterday. The Redskins are enraged; we fled for our lives."

"A grave mistake, a grievous blunder," said Lieut. Bushong, calmly. "No matter what the provocation, it was contrary to the policy of our company; but since your man has destroyed the life of this Indian, you had better make yourselves comfortable here until the matter can be referred to the Council of Chiefs."

Both parties of trappers were soon exchanging reminiscences. Lieut. Bushong and Le Brun discussed in undertones the different phases of the unfortunate killing. The beautiful Jacqueline Le Van resumed her voluminous diary writing, and the block-house once more resumed its night-time tranquility.

Next morning, to make sure, a reconnaissance was taken from the little watch-tower on top of the fort. No Indians were reported in sight, so the whole party spent the day sunning and packing furs to be shipped down the river. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon, Louis La Pite, a little hump-backed Frenchman, who was said to have slain the Medicine man, went out in the stockade to chop some wood, but he had scarcely raised his axe before a well-directed bullet, fired evidently by an Indian, pierced his skull, and he fell over, dead! This meant that the refugees had been followed

and a skirmish was imminent. La Pite's body was left out over night, no one caring to run the risk of going after it, but just before daybreak his companions buried him near where he fell. However, the cover of partial darkness proved deceptive. Before they could re-enter the block-house the sun rose and Indian sharpshooters commenced a fusillade, mortally wounding two Frenchmen.

Lieut. Bushong hurried to the watch-tower just in time to see a band of Redskins skulking away from a dense grove of pitch pines on the brow of Cable's Ridge, a point of high ground to the northeast of the fort. Quickly he aimed and fired, having the satisfaction of seeing a big burly savage roll over in death agony. Then he summoned the garrison, which besides himself, now numbered five men, to man the gun-holes in readiness for an attack. Hardly had he given this order when a shower of bullets from the ridge began to rain in on the fort; but the Frenchman replied gallantly, and for a time honors were even.

In half an hour the Indians tired of this waste of ammunition, and fifty strong the braves emerged from their thickets and made a wild charge down the hill to the block-house, the air resounding with their uncouth yells. Although they fell by the dozens, the remnant with a reckless courage attempted to scale the stockade, but as their heads appeared above the top of the fence they were laid low by the unerring bullets of the French defenders, and fell over one another shrieking with agony and hatred, not a few times their blood splashing into the faces of the trappers at the gun holes.

At last, the bravest having been killed, the Redskins retreated up the ridge, which sanctuary was only gained by eleven out of fifty who had so courageously dashed down on the block-house but twenty minutes before!

Lieut. Bushong then surveyed his men. Two of his five gunners lay dead, shot cleanly through the foreheads when their faces had appeared at the gun holes. Realizing the insufficiency of his force, he ordered the survivors to pack the valuables aboard the raft which was moored on the river below the fort, and make down stream to the next block-house, which stood pretty nearly on the present site of Williamsport. The survivors, who were glad for a chance to escape, tied together the most valuable hides, brought out the money from its hiding places, stacked up the guns and before long had loaded them aboard the raft. The time spent in embarking these accoutrements was valuable time wasted, as it gave the Indians a chance to recover themselves, with the result that before the party was adrift the Indian gun-fire began anew.

Lieut. Bushong, Le Brun, and Jacqueline seized their firearms and returned the volleys. The Lieut. commanded the trappers to make off and down stream, stating that he would protect them until they got out of firing distance, and would follow later in a canoe.

Thus at the noon hour, under a fierce fire, the raft with three Frenchmen, some furs, forty guns, three kegs of powder, and a chest of gold pieces, started away, and was soon swirling along with the current. When they were safely in mid-stream, Lieut. Bushong, Jacqueline, and Le Brun made a dash from the back exit of the block-house and down a steep bank to the canoe. Half way an Indian bullet laid low Le Brun, and regardless of their own great danger, the Lieut. and Jacqueline stopped and bent over his prostrate form, to ascertain the amount of his injuries.

Quick as a flash, a young Indian who had crept around from the ridge and lain concealed in some water birches by the river's edge, sprang forward, and unobserved drew Lieut. Bushong's sword from the scabbard; then he dealt a terrific blow which severed the gallant officer's head from his shoulders, and in another instant he grasped Jacqueline by the hair and dragged her back into the bushes. As he caught her she uttered a piercing scream which was heard by the trappers aboard the raft, now almost to the Pine Creek riffles. In a couple of more minutes a crowd of nine or ten Redskins emerged from the brush.

Their leader, the Chief Susquee, picked up the severed head of the Lieut. and danced and waved it about, finally pitching it out into the river, where it dyed the water red as it sunk.

But even death did not bring peace to the brave spirit of Lieut. Gaston Bushong, as now the farmer boys who cross this fateful hill at noon, even when the summer sun shines brightest, aver that they see a headless figure in powder-stained regimentals, searching among the tangled saplings, poke berries, elders, and grape vines, perhaps for the head he seems never destined to find, but which found him an ignoble place in history as the Spook of Spook Hill.

## BILLIARDS FOR WOMEN.

According to Shakespeare, Cleopatra  
Played the Game.

In France a gentleman is not ashamed to take his wife to see a professional billiard game. Frenchwomen are good billiard players and like to see all the fancy shots made by professionals as soon as they begin to attract attention. They read the billiard news in the daily papers and subscribe to journals published especially for billiardists. According to Shakespeare, women have played billiards from the time of Cleopatra. In 30 B. C. she makes the Egyptian queen summon Charmian to billiards. Mary, queen of Scots, was passionately fond of the game. On the evening preceding her execution she wrote to the archbishop of Glasgow that her billiard table had been taken away from her as a preliminary step to her punishment. The Empress Josephine used to rouse Napoleon from his gloomy moods by a game of billiards. Adelina Patti became disgusted with her English table and had one made in New York for which she paid \$2,500.

The efficacy of billiards as a health restorer is beyond dispute. The motions gone through will reach every part of the body and operate on the entire system. They completely dispel languor and "that tired feeling." The tension of the muscles is tested and the blood sent in swifter circulation through the veins.

## He Left the Stage at Hicero.

At an auction sale that lasted for the best part of a week the auctioneer's throat began to trouble him greatly, and to save himself as much as possible he had one of his employees read off the number and name of each article as it came up for sale. The assistant's pronunciation of such words as "marqueterie," "Francois," "Sevres," "Delacroix" and "Beauvais" was so weird that the audience "got on to him," and all those who were not too busily engaged in making bids were reading their catalogues to follow the assistant's blunders. He met his Waterloo when he started to read "Bronze and ormolu empire clock, set of three pieces, supported by Egyptian figures, chased"—and as he came to a full stop the catalogue readers burst into a roar of laughter that was inexplicable to the rest of the audience. The word after "chased" which the assistant simply refused to have a try at was "hieroglyphics."—New York Press.

## Peculiarities of the Carnation.

The peculiarities of the carnation are such that under cultivation it has been made to take almost any character as to color or form of flower desired by the careful cultivator. It has been very popular with one generation of men and equally unpopular with the next. When in favor, the flowers increased in size, and the varieties became numbered by the hundreds. At one time fringed petals were in great demand and were secured; at another the smooth edged petals only found acceptance.

Two hundred years ago the gardeners thought the flowers imperfect if the calyx did not burst, and refractory flowers were knifed into fashion's line. But during the last 150 years the burst calyx has been deemed a defect, yet all efforts to prevent it in large flowers have not been wholly successful.

## Historic Bachelors.

Many eminent men whose names are household words and who have left their impress upon the world were bachelors. Beethoven, Schubert, Bellini, Cimarosa and Donizetti, all great German musical composers, were bachelors. John G. Whittier, our American poet, was a bachelor. Kant, the great philosopher; Erasmus, the scholar and philosopher; Leibnitz, the German mathematician; Humboldt, the philosopher; Galilei, who discovered the application of the pendulum and that the earth revolves; Hugen, the German astronomer who discovered Saturn's ring and one satellite; Leibig, the chemist; Dr. Hahnemann, the originator of homeopathy; Dr. Franz Joseph Gall, the originator of phrenology, and Guericke, the inventor of the air pump, were all bachelors.

## A Feat of Horsemanship.

For the sake of a wager a remarkable feat of horsemanship was some years ago accomplished by a sporting nobleman in a certain London mansion. He made a bet with a friend that he would ride his pony from the ground floor of the house to the top and down again. His steed required a good deal of persuasion to attempt the task, but it was finally performed, though the damage done to the stair carpets and other things amounted to almost \$1,000, which had to be paid by the winner.

## Hasty Afterthought.

"Policeman," said the stranger, addressing the officer who was guarding the muddy crossing, "can you direct me?"

"Here he slipped and fell. —"to the nearest place," he continued, gathering himself up and surveying his soiled garments, "where they clean clothes?"—Chicago Tribune.

Take VINTENA and the good effect will be immediate. You will get strong, you will feel bright, fresh and active, you will feel new, rich blood coursing through your veins. Vintena will act like magic, will put new life in you. If not benefited money refunded. J. D. Murray, Druggist.

## TOWN AND COUNTY NEWS.

### HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS.

Centre Reporter \$1.00 a year.  
Farmers, have you ever studied the benefits of shredded cornfodder?

Three months of the public school term are over. Has the time been improved?

The combined weight of two hogs killed by D. L. Zerbe, of Millheim, was 1403 pounds.

The killing of deer is out of season, but the hugging of the deers only depends on agreement.

Clarence Kiater has resigned his position as assistant postmaster of Millheim and Francis S. Ulrich has been appointed in his place.

T. Milton Osman, whose former address was Salt Lake City, Utah, is now located at Mercour, Utah, and is with the Consolidated Mercour Gold Mines Company.

Oscar, son of J. A. Nestlerode, of Eagleville, met sudden death by accident at Millville, near Pittsburg. He was crowded off an overloaded trolley car while going to a place of amusement and killed. He was aged 21 years.

Hon. L. Rhone and daughter, Miss Florence, are in Wilkes-Barre attending the sessions of the Pennsylvania State Grange. Miss Rhone is an officer of that body and Mr. Rhone is a member of one of the important committees.

The First Presbyterian church of Lewistown, has extended a unanimous call to Rev. William L. Mudge, pastor of the Phoenixville Presbyterian church, to succeed Rev. William Harrison Decker, who accepted a call from Homestead.

William C. Farner, of Colyer, was a caller Monday morning. Elsewhere in this issue will be found the announcement of Mr. Farner as a candidate before the Democratic caucus in Potter township for the office of supervisor of roads.

There is no rubbing it out that the breeding of strictly first class cattle is profitable. The sires found in most of the barn yards are a little better than scrubs, and the best they can do is to reproduce themselves. The only way to improve a herd of cattle is to head it with a sire that has been bred straight for a number of generations.

The Christmas National Magazine is fairly packed with attractive pictures. In "Our Southern Rival," Geo. M. L. Brown discusses the rapid rise of the Argentine Republic. Among topics of immediate interest dealt with in affairs at Washington by Joe Mitchell Chapple, the Panama canal and Cuban reciprocity stand first.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company has made a ruling in regard to the building of its bridges hereafter which is of particular significance to bridge companies. Hereafter its principal bridges are to be constructed of stone and concrete. Stone bridges have proved to be more durable than steel ones, although their first cost is greater.

Meta, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rupert, living near Bald Eagle station, was frightfully burned while playing with other children on the second floor of a summer kitchen. The children had matches and in some way Meta's clothes caught fire and were almost consumed. The child's face was unrecognizable, the sight of her eyes being destroyed.

The palace of agriculture at the World's fair, at St. Louis, is the largest building ever constructed to contain a single department. It is 546x 1660 feet, and contains more than twenty-three acres floor space. The inside Inn is 400 by 800 feet, but as it is three stories high its actual floor space exceeds that of the great agriculture building.

Dr. J. E. Ward is just home from a two weeks' stay in Ipswick, South Dakota, and so enthusiastic is he about the resources and products of that great State that a stranger would class him at once as a real estate agent employed by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, says the Watchman. Ipswick is the county seat of Edmunds county and the Doctor was so favorably impressed with its advantages that he and his brother-in-law bought up a tract of land and are going into the business on their own account.

Mrs. Benjamin Bitner, of Fidelity, Jasper county, Missouri, accompanied by her son, Charles Bitner, arrived at this place last week. It is about twenty-three years since Mrs. Bitner and her husband went west. The Bitners at one time lived east of Centre Hall, on the farm now occupied by Adam Neess, and owned by Samuel Brass. This is Mrs. Bitner's first visit east. It is needless to say that she was a very welcome guest at the home of her step-mother, Mrs. Catharine Durst. The son, Charles Bitner, is engaged with a lead mining company.