

The Centre Reporter.

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Jacob From Will Be Tried For Murder of Josiah C. Dale

JUDGE ORVIS INSTANTLY DECIDES THAT JACOB FROM BE HELD FOR TRIAL—JAMES FROM OUT ON BAIL—WITNESSES GIVE DAMAGING EVIDENCE.

Mrs. Mary Decker, the Star Witness, Supported by a Statement Made by From Since in Jail to John Trafford—Court House Filled With Spectators From all Parts of County—Stenographic Report of the Hearing.

"We will hold Jacob From for trial, and decide in the case of James From on Monday," was the substance of the court's order after the habeas corpus hearing Saturday morning.

After adjournment of court Judge Orvis and the attorneys for the Commonwealth and defendants held a consultation when it was agreed that James From should be released upon bail in the sum of \$1000. This bail was furnished by Benner Walker, west of Centre Hall, and the younger From was released.

It was just twelve minutes after ten when the habeas corpus hearing was opened and exactly two hours after when President Judge Orvis gave the decision noted above.

The court house was packed—every available seat and chair was occupied and the three aisles filled—with people, men and women, from all parts of the county, before court was called to order. Throughout the entire hearing the audience was very attentive, and one could read on the faces of the spectators how the evidence was received. When Mrs. Guistwite, whose age is eighty-one years, took the stand and had completed her statement, the house was thoroughly convinced that she had given her story as she really believed it to be true. Other witnesses also shared the belief of the audience that their testimony was true and given in good faith.

Throughout the trial the Froms exhibited great nervousness which became more noticeable in each as evidence was being given that proved damaging. The elder From continually twisted a handkerchief, and repeatedly put the ends between his teeth and bit on them vigorously.

The evidence reprinted below is from a stenographic report of the hearing obtained from Miss Olive Mitchell, and consequently is correct. The editor took extensive notes, but prefers to give the evidence in the exact words of the witnesses.

The first witness called was Mrs. Kate Dale. She simply testified that her husband, Josiah C. Dale, left home at noon November 12, 1906, went to his farm—the corn field—on Nittany Mountain, and was brought into her home dead at about 8:30 that evening.

The testimony of Dr. M. J. Locke, who conducted the post mortem, was that the wound was "one-half inch from the lower border of the scapula, two and three-quarter inches from the median line of the spinal column. The wound was ragged in character, measuring 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Found five shot holes outside the wound described, the one the most distant being 1/2 inch. The wound extended inward and slightly downward. Death was due to hemorrhages resulting from the gun shot wound."

Cross examination by Meyer. Undoubtedly, from the size of the wound, the gun was discharged at close proximity to the person. I found a number of shot inside the body. The wound extended clear through the body and part of the shot lodged just over the sternum bone in the muscles. Death occurred within two minutes after the infliction of the wound.

Re-examination by Love. From the character of the wound, it was absolutely impossible for it to have been self-inflicted.

The evidence of County Coroner Dr. Fisher was similar to that of Dr. Locke. He said he found a wad in the buggy.

MRS. MARGARET MOYER. I live at Centre Hall; am acquainted with Jacob and James From; have known them ever since I can remember anything. I knew J. C. Dale. We moved to Mr. Dale's farm the last of last March—March, 1906.

Q. Mrs. Moyer, did you ever have any conversation with Jacob From about Mr. Dale and about the cattle?
A. No, sir, not any more than what he told us.

Q. Well, what did he tell you?
A. Well, he wanted us to make Mr. Dale sell his cattle and take his cattle—take Mr. From's cattle. Mr. Dale wouldn't hear to it and of course he got angry.

Q. Who got angry? A. Why Mr. From; and he said, some time he would meet him on the road and lay him low.

of it.
Q. But he found fault with Mr. Dale, didn't he? A. Yes, sir.
Q. And did he say that Mr. Dale would have to suffer for what he had done? A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he say when he would have to suffer? A. No, sir.
Q. Who was present? A. Mr. Robert Smith.

Cross examination by Meyer. Q. Mr. Shutt, he didn't say whether he would have to suffer in this life or the life hereafter? A. No, sir, he didn't mention that.

Q. Did he say it in a very serious mood or was he joking? A. Oh, I wouldn't swear to that, whether he meant business or whether he didn't.

ROBERT SMITH. I live right above Centre Hall; am acquainted with Jacob From, and with Frank Shutt; was in Frank Shutt's shop some time previous to the Dale murder and saw Jacob From there.

Q. Now, what did Jacob From say? A. Well, I can't repeat just the words that he said but he said he would get even with Dale before long, or something to that effect.

Q. Was he talking or discussing the lawsuit that he had with him a short time before that? A. I think that is what it came from, if I am not mistaken.

Q. Just repeat what he said? A. I don't know the exact words.

Q. Just as you remember? A. He said that he would get even with Dale before long, or something like that.

MARY DECKER. I live at Centre Hall; have lived there two years; the last week of this month; am acquainted with Jacob From and James From; couldn't tell just how long I have known them; suppose may be for sixteen or more years. I live about 20 feet from Jacob From—the width of the alley. On the 12th day of November 1906 I was at home all day until 5 o'clock in the evening when I went to the office. The I stopped at Mrs. Jacobs and came up and it was about six o'clock when I got home; it was dusk. When I came home, I saw some one in front of Mr. From's house; I saw the line of a man right in front of the gate start up the pike with something long in his hand.

Did it look like a gun? A. Well, that I couldn't say, for it was dark; I wouldn't swear it was a gun.

Q. Do you know who the man was?
A. Well, no, I don't exactly; I wouldn't just exactly swear to a name.

Q. Who did you think it was, when you saw him? A. Well, it walked like Mr. Jacob From, but, of course, there are lots of people walk alike.

Q. How far did you see this man go?
A. Well, I suppose he had gotten up to the lamp post at the upper corner of his yard.

Q. Where did you go? A. I went into the house; ate my supper and washed my supper dishes.

Q. Did you hear a shot that evening?
A. Yes, sir, about seven o'clock.

Q. Now did you hear anything over in From's house after the shot that evening?
A. I heard them talking over there; I didn't understand what was said; I didn't stop to listen. The next day Jacob From said to me that Mr. Dale had gotten his end at last and I said it appeared so, and he said that he would be taken for it, because they had this lawsuit. On Wednesday he told me where Dale had been killed. He said he had been shot at 7 o'clock at the end of the Nearhood road. That is on the Centre Hall side of the mountain—on the lower side, below the top.

Q. Now what threats did you hear from From against Dale? A. One time when Mr. Dale went up past there he was in front of his shop and he called him an old rotten son of a b— and said he would kill him. I was sweeping out around.

Q. How long was that before the murder? A. It was before the court—before the lawsuit, after Mr. Dale had him arrested for the timber.

Q. Now what did you hear Mr. From say in the alley about Mr. Dale?
A. Well, he was in the alley there one day and he was talking to himself and he said that he had killed him, that he had taken his gun and gone up on the mountain and shot him.

Q. You heard him say that? A. Yes, sir, I did. He was in the alley between the two houses, and then he acted like he was chasing some one that was coming into my house and I went to the window and looked out and there was no one coming. It was daytime; I don't remember whether it was forenoon or afternoon. It was just about three weeks before Mr. From was arrested.

Cross examination by Meyer. Q. Are you not known by the name of Mrs. Lyon. A. That was my former marriage, before I was married to Mr. Decker. My name never was changed in the mail and I go by that name yet.

Q. Have you been on friendly terms with From? A. Why I ain't envious toward him; of course he has been very envious to me.

Q. Do you call at his house? A. No, sir, I do not.

Q. Have you been in to see his sick wife? A. No, sir, I have not, because I was forbid to come.

Q. Now, Mrs. Decker, you say you saw a man outside the house there lying on the ground? A. No, sir, I did not say he was lying on the ground. I said I saw him at Jake From's gate and I saw him walk away from there with something long in his hand. I couldn't tell what it was, for it was dark.

Q. Have you not said to some people there that it was a stick? A. No, I didn't.

Q. Did you say it was a gun? A. No, sir, I didn't.

Q. You didn't believe and don't believe now it was a gun? A. I won't swear what it was, because it was dark and I couldn't see.

Q. Did you look at the clock before you came out? A. I can't be mis-

taken about the hour; it was about 6 o'clock. About an hour after that I heard a shot—about 7 o'clock. It is may be a mile and a half from my house to Andy Moyer's where Mr. Dale's farm is. I located this shot at the gravel hole—not very far above that. I was in the house when it was fired but the door was open; my son had opened the door to step out on the porch and just as he opened the door this shot was fired. We all heard the shot. I located it out beyond the gravel hole.

Q. Have you a son? A. I have a son—Samuel Meyer. He was home that day with a cut foot—he all day, except the time he went to the doctor's to get his foot dressed.

Q. Does he have a gun? A. Yes, sir, we have a gun.

Q. Now, Mrs. Decker, did you see Prof. John Hosterman there that evening? A. Where? Q. Right in front of From's house? A. No, I didn't. I didn't see Samuel Rowe there that evening; did not see Mr. From talking to them about that time. I did see Jacob From bring his cows home that evening. He came home from the corn field I suppose about half past 4 o'clock. He had been working that day. This was Monday, the 12th.

Q. Then he didn't see Mr. Dale going to his farm that day? A. I don't think he had seen him, because he was not at home. I saw Mr. Dale going, it was in the afternoon, after dinner.

Q. Now this conversation that you say you heard was a conversation that he was having with himself? A. Yes, sir. Q. He was just talking to himself and close enough for you to hear him and he said that he had been up on the mountain and had shot Mr. Dale?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Mrs. Decker, did you then believe any such thing had occurred at all? That he had shot Mr. Dale? A. I always had a belief that he was implicated in it, because he was a bitter enemy of Mr. Dale's.

Q. Was your son on good terms with Mr. Dale? A. Yes, sir, he was and he worked a good bit for him and he said he would just as soon work for Mr. Dale as anybody he knew of.

Q. Well, will you give the exact language that you say Mr. From used in that alley? A. Yes, sir, I will. He said that he had killed him; he had taken his gun and gone up onto the mountain and shot the son of a b—. He was talking to himself; there was not anyone in the alley; he was walking around in the alley. He would walk to the end of the alley and let on he was chasing some one that was coming into my house, and there was nobody about.

Q. Did anybody else hear him say that? A. My mother. She was out in the summer house at the time.

Q. How far away was he from your house? A. Why there is just this alley between us. The alley is I suppose about twenty feet wide. He was right square in the alley, I suppose about ten feet away. The next day he said to me he supposed he would be taken, that he would get the blame for it, because he had this lawsuit with him.

Q. Was there any other time when he had a conversation with you? A. Yes, sir. Q. What was this and when was it? A. Well, that was on Wednesday and he said he had been shot at the end of the Adam Nearhood road.

CONFERENCE AT TYRONE.

Methodists are Preparing for Their Annual Meeting on March 20th.

The thirty-ninth annual session of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, will convene in the First Methodist Episcopal Church at Tyrone, March 20th. Since the first session of the conference in 1869, it has not met two successive years in the same church, as is the case now, the conference having met in Tyrone last year. This will be the third time it has been entertained by the First Church of Tyrone. Thus far in the history of the conference only two other churches have had this honor. Bellefonte and Chambersburg have each entertained it two times. The conference was also held in Harrisburg, Danville, Carlisle, Lock Haven, Altoona, Huntingdon, Williamsport, Harrisburg and Tyrone.

The Rev. D. S. Monroe has been the conference host five times during his ministry. Five other members will share the honors of having been the conference host two times with the Rev. John H. Dougherty, the pastor of the First Church of Tyrone at the present time. They are the Revs. B. C. Connor, James H. McGarrath, W. A. Houck, G. W. Stevens and R. H. Gilbert.

Bishop W. F. McDowell, of Chicago, will be the presiding officer. He is one of the ablest bishops of the church having been elected to that office at the last General Conference held at Los Angeles in 1904.

Green Decker Tells of North Dakota.

A most pleasant half hour was that spent with Green Decker, of Fleisher, North Dakota, and daughter, Miss Ella M. Decker, of near Potters Mills. After a residence in Dakota for three years, Mr. Decker is back looking younger than ever, and tells what a wonderful country he has lived in. He is the owner of a 320-acre tract, and last year raised 800 bushels of corn, the method being to simply plow the sod, drop the corn into the furrow, and the next work at the crop was to husk the golden ears, some of which are a foot long. As evidence of the quality of corn, Mr. Decker brought with him some of the ears. Last year's crop of wheat was 1100 bushels of the maccaroni variety, worth from 60 to 70 cents a bushel, the yield being 40 bushels to the acre. Another crop was 600 bushels of oats, now selling at 45 cents, and still another crop was 100 bushels of flax seed worth \$1.25 per bushel. A fine grade of potatoes and all kinds of vegetables can be raised. Mr. Decker and his son put up sixty loads of prairie hay, worth at present \$4 per ton.

The climate, Mr. Decker thinks, is no more severe than here, and they have experienced no blizzards in his locality since living there. This winter they had about a foot of snow. Cattle and horses are turned out during the entire winter, and keep in good flesh.

The sod house and stable are the common shelters in Mr. Decker's locality. Some of these houses are plastered within and without, silled with boards and present a splendid appearance, and altogether comfortable.

North Dakota is all Mr. Decker desires it to be, and if any one wishes to cast his lot with a rapidly developing country, he is ready to show them the land where all the staple crops can be grown and where three years of labor have made him look and feel younger.

Move Early or Lose Vote.

Any voter who is going to change his residence from one voting district to another this spring, must move promptly on the 1st or 2nd of April, or before that date, or else lose his vote at the summer primary. The law requires a residence in a district of sixty days to vote at the primary. As the primary will be held on the first day of June this year—the first Saturday in June coming on the first day of the month this year—sixty days before will be April 2nd. Hence an early moving is necessary.

Overseer Stine Missing.

Daniel M. Stine, poor overseer of South Phillipsburg borough, has disappeared and his whereabouts are unknown. It is claimed that he is short in his accounts about \$300, but if this is true, his bondsmen are liable for the amount. Stine has enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the entire community and his disappearance has occasioned much surprise.

Public Sales.

Four public sales will be held within the next week, near Centre Hall. They are the sales of James C. Goodhart, near Centre Hill, Saturday, 23rd; B. D. Miller, at Farmers Mills, Monday 25th; Daniel Daup, near Potters Mills, Tuesday, 26th; James I. Lytle, near Old Fort, Wednesday, 27th.

Spring begins today (Thursday.)

TOWN AND COUNTY NEWS.

HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS.

Spring.
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kerstetter, of Pleasant Gap, have located at Juniata. The library in Grange Arcadia will be open to the public from 4 to 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon.

After being in the Bellefonte hospital for three weeks, Mrs. G. Perry Gentzel was discharged much improved.

The Penns Valley Echo is in print, the issue being the last before the editor, Rev. G. W. McInay, finished his pastoral year on the Penns Valley charge.

The Nittany Inn, at State College, changed landlords again last Monday. The new manager is H. A. Nicely, one of the proprietors of the bowling alley and poolroom.

A party in honor of George E. Swartz, of Rockford, Illinois, who is visiting in this section, was given at the home of Mr. and Mrs. H. N. Fiedler, near Madisonburg.

While William Houser was razing an old ice house near Chambersburg, he was surprised to find a number of snakes in the sawdust. At the end of the day he had killed fifty-six.

One day recently a horse, belonging to John W. Zrby, of Gregg township, in attempting to run out of the stall, in some way broke one of its hind legs. The animal was killed.

Mr. and Mrs. Robin Red Breast came to Centre Hall last week. They are building a cozy little home and will remain until the frosts come. They are the most welcome guests.

Mrs. Pearl Condo, of York, was the guest of Miss Roxanna Brislin, last week. Her two children and mother were at the home of ex-Sheriff Condo, Aaronsburg, while the junior Mrs. Condo, was in Centre Hall.

A young horse recently died for Jacob Herman, at Lemont, and later his son found something in the horse's trough that proved to be arsenic. The conclusion is that some evil disposed person placed the poison there.

Paul Meyer, the little son of Merchant T. F. Meyer, in Millheim, while coasting on his sled, was thrown against a fence and received a severe cut on his head. Dr. John Hardenbergh was called, who dressed the wound.

Rev. Warren J. Johnson, pastor of the Reformed church at Altoona, resigned Sunday morning. He was formerly pastor at Lock Haven, but had been at Altoona for three years. He and his congregation had grave differences.

The Reporter has a club laid back for the first man that shoves a poem on "spring" on the desk. We are all glad to have spring come, and consequently should not seek to inflict punishment by publishing poems on its loveliness.

Mrs. Irvin Shirk, of Glen Iron, writes that the Reporter furnishes her the home news so completely that she could not think of doing without it, and consequently purchased an 8 so that she would be sure every number would reach her.

The Millinburg Times contained the following: W. F. Smith, of Millheim, "cried" at Henry Walter's horse sale on Monday. William is an excellent auctioneer and gets good prices for horses, although he thinks Union county bidders are a little "slow."

In a note to the Reporter John H. Krumbine, furniture dealer and undertaker, at Rexis, stated that the rain of last week caused high water in that locality, the driveway between that point and Vintondale being covered to a depth of four feet, which cut off all communication for a short time.

A daughter was born to Prof. and Mrs. Irvin W. Zeigler, of Frackville, Schuylkill county. The birth occurred while Mr. Zeigler was visiting his mother, west of Centre Hall. This is the first heir, and the people of Frackville will undoubtedly feel more proud than ever of the principal of their school.

Just as was predicted in last week's issue of the Centre Reporter, Penns Valley was well represented at the habeas corpus hearing Saturday, and yet only a small part of the attentive listeners to the evidence came from the southern portion of the county. Every section of the large, populous county was represented.

The Nittany Valley railroad company began work on an extension out along the old turnpike which, when completed, will do away with the trestle near the toll gate, on this side of Bellefonte. They will run the road several hundred feet further out and cross the road on grade, connecting with the road in to the furnace by a switchback.

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