

The Centre



Reporter.

VOL. CVI.

CENTRE HALL, PA., THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 1932.

NO. 9.

Two Murder Cases Disposed of In Centre County Criminal Court

COLLINS CONDEMNED TO
DIE IN ELECTRIC CHAIR.

Murderer of Betty Hickok, Psychiatrist's Daughter at Rockview Penitentiary, Takes Sentence With Grin.—Governor Pinchot Set Date for the Execution.

Fred Collins, the negro, will go to the electric chair for his brutal murder of Elizabeth Hickok, on the morning of January 13, last, on the Western Penitentiary farm at Rockview.

A Centre county jury, in a session of criminal court, last Thursday, brought in a verdict of first degree, adding that they recommended the death penalty as prescribed by law. The case opened in the morning; the jury took it under deliberation at 5:30 o'clock and reached a verdict a little over two hours later.

The courtroom was filled to capacity and a large crowd milled about the corridors and on the outside of the court house.

Collins was brought into the courtroom by Sheriff Boob, and was constantly under the surveillance of a State police. He showed little or no interest in the proceedings; in fact, a grin appeared on his countenance for the greater part of the time. He is a short man, with powerful shoulders, and when he walked to the witness stand, with arms reaching to his knees, he resembled nothing so much as a gorilla. His neck and head were as one.

Collins was defended by Johnston & Johnston, the junior member of the firm taking the active part. Their sole aim was to prove Collins insane, but there was a feeling prevalent everywhere that this would prove a difficult thing to do,—and so it was.

The jury was selected only after forty-one jurors were examined. Twenty-nine were rejected because of pronounced ideas about the guilt of the accused; several women declared they could in no wise change their mind as to his guilt. The jury was finally selected, composed of the following:

Forrest L. Gill, Rush township, a bricklayer.

W. H. Corrigan, Zion, farmer.

Robert Funk, Mingoville, steward at the Country Club.

Miles Stein, Philipsburg.

H. S. Moore, Bellefonte, retired.

Walter Auman, Bellefonte, track foreman.

William Neese, Spring Mills, laborer.

Albert Thompson, Bellefonte, mechanic.

Arthur Bennett, Boggs township, laborer.

Lynn R. Daugherty, State College, real estate.

William Reese, Rush township, painter.

Gilbert Noll, Pleasant Gap, painter.

District Attorney John G. Love, the prosecutor, first called to the witness stand, W. R. Heaton, county coroner. He recited how he found the comparatively nude body of Bettie Hickok on the bath room floor of her home on the penitentiary grounds, bearing evidence of having been criminally assaulted and then murdered with a butcher knife, with which the accused cut the girl's throat from ear to ear. Commonwealth exhibits presented were the girl's pajamas and slippers and the instrument of death, all of which were identified.

Dr. W. A. Barret was witness No. 2. He is the prison doctor. He corroborated the testimony of Dr. Heaton.

W. J. McFarlane, deputy warden at Rockview Penitentiary, was next called, and told how Collins, after he had committed his dastardly deed, came to him, saying, "I want to go to the electric chair." "Fred, what are you talking about?" said McFarlane. "I murdered Dr. Hickok's daughter," said Collins. "What did you do that for?" asked McFarlane. "Well, I couldn't have her, and I didn't want anyone else to have her," was Collins' reply.

A prison shirt which Collins wore, and bearing blood stains on the sleeve, was presented as Exhibit No. 5.

Counsel for the defendant elicited from the witness information which proved that Collins bragged of his deed, feeling elated over its accomplishment.

Dr. Cornelius Whorley, of Pittsburgh, specialist in nervous and mental diseases, was called, and proved the star

HEATON FOUND GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER.

Sentenced Saturday Evening by Judge Fleming to from 6 to 12 Years in Western Penitentiary for Killing Robert Moore, 17, in Drunken Brawl in Mountain Camp Near Clarence.

The jury who passed judgment on the guilt or innocence of Warren Heaton, charged with killing Robert Moore, found a verdict of voluntary manslaughter, a conclusion satisfactory to the court, district attorney and the general public. The verdict was rendered after due deliberation on Saturday at a night session set especially to hear the jury's verdict and give sentence, if such was demanded.

Heaton was sentenced to the Western Penitentiary for a period of from six to twelve years. He was very grateful for the leniency of the district attorney, who in his address to the jury stated the cause of justice would be satisfied with a verdict of first degree murder with a recommendation of mercy. This eliminated the electric chair.

Before being sentenced Heaton asked to speak, and in making his "speech" promised the court he would hereafter refrain from drinking, playing cards, carousing, etc., and be loyal to his family.

The murder was committed at a mountain camp, near Clarence, to which Heaton had gone with a number of others with the intention of harassing a party of young people, boys and girls, among whom was his victim. The testimony indicated all were "sooused" with beer and liquor before starting and that more intoxicants were taken on the way.

UNIONVILLE MAN IS FATAL INJURED

George W. Murray, aged 65 years of Unionville, died at the Centre County hospital Saturday afternoon of injuries received about 4:30 when he was struck by an automobile driven by Walter R. Cliffe, general superintendent of the American Lime and Stone company, Bellefonte. Mr. Cliffe was coming east on route 220 at Unionville when Mr. Murray stepped from a truck which was parked on the left side of the highway, and started to cross the highway. Mr. Cliffe in order to avoid hitting Mr. Murray swerved to the left side of the road, but Mr. Murray became confused and stepped in the path of the car. He was taken to the Centre County hospital where he was found to have received a fracture of the left leg and chest injuries. He is survived by his wife and one daughter, Mrs. McDonald, of Coleville.

ONE DAY SALE.

Extra special value—an eleven-inch mixing bowl, triple coated ivory enamel on extra heavy steel. Weight of bowl, 2½ lbs.; a dollar value; on sale Saturday only at 49c.—The Hosterman & Stover Co., Millheim.

(Continued from previous column) witness. He told of Collins' apparent sanity, of his ability to read and write, of his having held positions as butler in several private families; of his position as a stockman in a 5- and 10-cent store prior to his incarceration at Pittsburgh. He regarded him sane to day; that Collins understood the gravity of his offense, knew the consequences of his act and that he did it knowingly, wilfully and deliberately. He stated that a normal person can feel as Collins did over his act.

Fred Collins, the accused, was called to the witness stand by his counsel at 3:40 o'clock. He told of an accident to his head in 1909, caused by a beer bottle; of having been knocked unconscious several times; that "spirits" bothered him constantly, in fact, "one or dem is saying to me now, 'You're the dirtiest thing that ever got on the witness stand!'" He blamed the "spirits" for the crime for which he stood indicted.

Dr. Whorley, in being recalled to the stand, stated that Collins spoke to him about the crime without having made any reference to "spirits" annoying him.

Governor Pinchot will set the date for the electrocution of Collins at Rockview Penitentiary. He is now in safe keeping in the Western Penitentiary at Pittsburgh.

(Continued on next column)

P. R. R. STATION AT OAK HALL IS WITHOUT AGENT

The railroad station at Oak Hall Station no longer has either an agent or a clerk. On Monday the services of Frank Ishler, who for a number of years was stationmaster and later reduced to the standing of a clerk, were dispensed with. Shipments from Oak Hall Station are taken care of at Lemont. Trains will stop there regularly to dispatch and receive mail, but passengers will not be able to procure tickets. Freight shipments to that station must be prepaid, and will likely be placed in the warehouse, but not protected.

James C. Gilliland was the first stationmaster at Oak Hall. During the early period of the history of Oak Hall and Linden Hall stations there was a profitable business from both points in car load shipments, mostly lumber and later, hay.

YOUTH "TINKERS" AT BANK DOOR AT SPRING MILLS

A youth was discovered "tinkering" at the door of the First National Bank at Spring Mills, one evening last week. He was disturbed by parties walking by, and ran to the rear of the building. He soon came from his place of hiding and again worked at the door. No damage was done to the door or lock, indicating he endeavored to use a master or skeleton key.

While the youth is positively known, the bank officials, it appears, will not prosecute because of surrounding circumstances.

ROAD URGED FOR ROAD BUILDING

An additional \$5,261,052 in Federal funds for road building in Pennsylvania may be provided by Congress.

The emergency Federal aid highway construction bill to provide \$120,000,000 for loans to the States specifies the \$5,261,052 for Pennsylvania. The money is to be given to the States on condition that it is reimbursed to the government through deductions from the regular annual grants over the next ten years.

DAIRYMEN'S LEAGUE PAYS \$1,343,000 OF CERTIFICATES

The Dairymen's League Cooperative Association, Inc., will redeem its Series AA Certificates of Indebtedness due May 1 on March 1 at face value and interest to maturity date, it was announced by Chester Young, treasurer of the Association.

Total amount of the Series AA Certificates outstanding is \$1,343,000, according to Mr. Young. The issue originally was for \$2,480,000, but since April, 1931, the Dairymen's League has bought back \$1,137,000 of the issue.

JEALOUSY MURDER INDICTMENT FOUND

Martin Snyder, 26, of McClure township, Snyder county, was indicted on a charge of voluntary manslaughter by the Snyder county grand jury.

He is accused of killing Harry A. Wagner, 56, retired McClure merchant, after accusing him of being intimate with his 18-year-old wife, Mae Snyder. District Attorney Henry J. Sommer had asked a first degree murder indictment. The trial was booked for this week.

The sale season is on, but it is too early to say much about the prevailing prices of cows, cattle, horses and hogs. It is predicted that since new farm machinery has not fallen in price, second-hand machinery in good condition will continue to command top figures.

The Collins murder trial, besides having its tragic and sordid sides, had an amusing side as well. The prosecuting attorney, John G. Love, furnished that first, he caused a ripple of laughter when, in his examination of a juror, he mixed up his question in saying, "Have you any objections to conscientious scruples?" Instead of "Have you any conscientious scruples against capital punishment?" A little later, in his plea to the jury, he made reference to Collins' remark on the witness stand that "four spirits" or "men" were persecuting him. The prosecuting attorney in alluding to these remarked, "Now gentlemen of the jury, these four horsemen"—and then recovered and went on. A second time he said, "these four horsemen." Again there were smiles by those who could hear. We feared the learned gentleman, if he started speaking for the third time of the "four spirits (men)" would bring the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" right into the courtroom.

A STOCKMAN AND FARMER IS J. FRED SLACK

A visit to the farm barn of J. Fred Slack, east of Old Fort, will convince one that Mr. Slack is both a stockman and a farmer. The more than thirty head of registered Holstein cattle now in his barn is easy proof that he is a stockman and the fact that he raises all of the coarse feed and much of the grain is final proof that he is also a farmer.

The fact that Mr. Slack has in his barn more than thirty head of cattle can be matched by many farmers throughout the county. The out-of-the-ordinary is that every animal is in prime of condition, and is registered; the cows have been tested for milk production, are tubercular free and also carry certificates showing them free of Bang bacillus.

Another important fact is this, that Mr. Slack three years ago sold a herd of thirty-one head of cattle, and now has in his stables the same number, all except one cow of which were bred and reared on his farm from his own stock.

Fifteen head of his present herd will be offered at public sale on Friday in conjunction with stock of the same type owned by his brother, John S. Slack, on the M. E. Stover farm, between Millheim and Coburn.

NO CHANGE IN P. R. R. SCHEDULE ON L. & T.

The new time table for the P. R. R. lines became effective on Sunday. No changes were made on the L. & T. and no trains eliminated.

The trains on the Bald Eagle Valley road will also run as heretofore, with the exception of but a few minutes time in the arrival and departure of trains.

MIFFLINBURG COMPANY GETS BIG CONTRACT

Postmaster General Brown has awarded a contract to the Ford Motor Company for 2,000 motor truck chassis.

Five hundred chassis of 500-pound capacity were bought for \$215.25 each. Fifteen hundred of 4,200 pounds capacity were purchased for \$352.00 each.

The Mifflinburg Body company of Mifflinburg, was awarded a contract for building bodies for the 500-pound capacity trucks at \$114 each.

The General Motors Truck company, of Detroit, will build the 1,500 bodies for the larger trucks at \$149.14 each f. o. b. Detroit with a one per cent discount for cash.

SO LEAVE PENN STATE BUT 90 MORE ENROLL

Ninety-five students were dropped automatically from the Pennsylvania State College at the end of the first semester for failure to maintain the scholastic standards required by the college, Registrar Wm. S. Hoffman announces. Ninety advanced and graduate students enrolled for the second semester, offsetting this loss in residential enrollment.

Fifteen of the ninety-five who were dropped were reinstated by faculty action upon review of the individual cases, the registrar said. Students are automatically dropped after making unsatisfactory records in half of their subjects. Any extenuating circumstances are considered by the faculty in reviewing the action.

George O. Benner contemplates opening a hardware store in his store room at the railroad station. He also will carry other lines of goods.

Escapes County Jail With Aid from Outside

W. G. WILLIAMS, SENTENCED TO FROM SEVEN AND ONE-HALF TO FIFTEEN YEARS FOR ROBBERY IN PHILIPSBURG, SCALPS PRISON WALL.

Less than five hours after he was sentenced to seven and half to fifteen years in the Western Penitentiary for robbery and a violation of the firearms law in connection with the robbery of the Citizens' Building and Loan Association at Philipsburg, last December, W. G. Williams, 34 years old, of Franklin, escaped from the Centre County jail, Saturday evening, and his disappearance was not known until two hours later.

Sheriff John M. Boob and his deputy, John Bower, were at a night session of court in charge of Warren Heaton, being tried for murder, when Williams, in some way, secured a board long enough to enable him to scale the twenty-foot wall and jump to the ground below. He left without hat or overcoat and the fact that it was raining hard and most people were at the courthouse, helped him escape detection by anyone and his

GOODHART—GILBERT.

Franklin D. Goodhart, of Centre Hall, and Miss Cleda O. Gilbert, of Johnstown, without notice to any of their relatives or friends, on Friday evening of last week were united in marriage at the Presbyterian parsonage, East Beaver Avenue, State College, by Rev. Edward H. Jones. After the ceremony the couple drove back to Centre Hall where the groom is permanently located.

The bride is a daughter of Mrs. Lou Gilbert, of Johnstown. She is a graduate of the High school in that city and is held in high esteem by a large circle of the younger set.

The groom is the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Goodhart, also of Johnstown, but formerly of Centre Hall. He like the bride graduated from the High school of his home city. Several months ago he came to Centre Hall to engage with his uncle, F. V. Goodhart, in conducting undertakings and house furnishings, following E. W. Miller, who filled that place for several years.

Since the Junior Mr. Goodhart has been living here, Miss Gilbert, now his bride, spent much of her time in town, stopping with her aunt, Mrs. W. F. Keller. The couple have long been more than friends. They will begin housekeeping as soon as they can find a suitable place for doing so. Congratulations.

INTERESTING NEWS NOTES FROM PRESBYTERIAN MANSE

To-night (Wednesday) is the date for the Mission School in the Presbyterian church.

Mrs. Sarah C. Smith attended the funeral of Charles Long in Bellefonte on Wednesday afternoon.

Early gardeners are beginning to look longingly over the back lot and are wondering whether or not it would be advisable to set onions, sow lettuce and beets—none of which young plants are much effected by freezing weather.

Mrs. Lucy Henney, of Centre Hall, wishes to announce to her customers that she has just received a line of Spring hats for ladies and misses—everyone stylish and moderately priced. You are invited to come and see them, whether you buy or not.

Mrs. E. Devine is ill at her home here from mumps, having contracted the disease from nursing one of her two sons who had the same sickness. Mrs. Devine is the only adult person in town afflicted with what is generally considered a children's disease.

Mrs. Bradford, while serving at the Hotel Restaurant conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bradford, became violently ill on Sunday from acute indigestion. Dr. Morrow was summoned several times in succession before relief was found. Monday morning the patient was much improved and since fully recovered.

Miss Sarah Donelson, R. N., of Marlinton, came to the home of her sister, Mrs. C. A. Spyker, here, on a visit, and finding Mrs. Spyker and several children sick turned her social visit into a professional one and gave all the best of care. All have recovered, except Martha, who is ill at this time with mumps.

The first of the home owners in Centre Hall to begin the improvement of their properties on the exterior is Harry E. Fye, who is having his dwelling house repainted. The work is being done by J. M. Coldron, a local artist. Mr. Fye, since acquiring the property referred to, has made material improvements. The first was to fill in a deep depression in the lot, and later the interior of the house was rearranged, repainted and redecorated.

Squire E. T