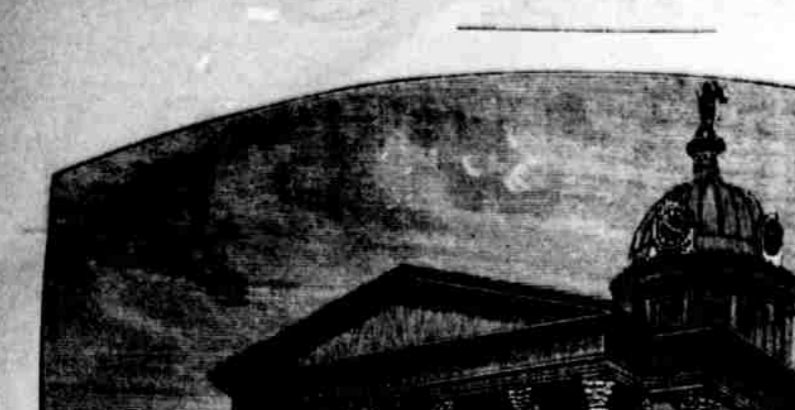


THE THREE HALLS OF JUSTICE.

TWO OLD-TIME EXECUTIONS



THE PRESENT COURT HOUSE—1854.

OUR COUNTY COURT HOUSES

TRACING THEIR HISTORY DOWN TO THE PRESENT GENERATION. The days when Justice was dealt out in Postlethwaite's Tavern—The Court House of Revolutionary Times—The Old State House—Story of the Present Temple of Justice.



THE OLD STATE HOUSE—1752.

Recalling the notable trials held in the court house last week, when the interminable Brickerville church case was decided, Joseph Herzog sentenced, and Joseph J. Deoch convicted, the imagination finds it rather difficult to travel back to that early day, in 1750, when John Postlethwaite's tavern, seven miles southwest of the present city of Lancaster, was the temple of justice for the sturdy yeomanry of that time.

The fifth day of August, in the third year of the reign of our Sovereign, Lord, George the Second (1729), "that the first recorded Lancaster county quarter sessions court was held. The particulars of this episode of justice have already fully appeared in these columns, but it will be refreshing to those who so often walk the stone pavements that surround the present court house and glance up at the blind goddess who holds the scales of justice through sunshine and storm, to recall the vast strides in the road of progress that have been made since the dusky Red men looked in wonder at the primitive place where justice and drunks were dealt out together.

Many gatherings that were fraught with great moment for the future of the county were held in this historic building. In 1774 there assembled within its walls the governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and New York at a treaty with the representatives of many Indian tribes. There, too, in the troublous days of 1776, the Lancaster patriots met to protest against the English tyranny of taxation without representation. And when that glorious fruition, the Declaration of Independence, was signed in Philadelphia July 4, 1776, a big convention of Pennsylvania militia was in progress in the court house for increasing the efficiency of the state soldiers. All through the Revolution it was the centre where the news of American successes or defeats were announced and discussed, its career was ended in 1791, when it was destroyed by fire.

THE TRIALS OF DANIEL SHEAFER FOR THE MURDER OF AN AGED WIDOW AND HEIRY SMITH FOR KILLING BENJAMIN PEAR Features of Their Hangings.

On November 25, 1851, Daniel Sheaffer was put on trial for the murder of Elizabeth Bowers, an aged and cretaceous widow living at Marietta. The jurors who tried the case were Jacob Carpenter, John L. Slaymaker, Jacob Hertzler, John McCallister, Henry Steiner, John Connolly, Abraham Grod, St. Dennis, and William D. Fitch. Daniel Pear, Samuel Beecher and John Bachman, Jr.

THE HANDSOME COURT HOUSE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF EAST KING AND NORTH DUKE STREETS, WHICH IS STILL ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MOST CHARACTERISTIC MONUMENTS OF THE FAITHFUL AND CAPABLE ARCHITECTURE OF THE PRESENT GENERATION.

THE REMOVAL TO LANCASTER. Some one absolutely fix the date of the removal of the court from Postlethwaite's to Lancaster, but it was somewhere between the year 1750 and 1752.

On Monday, October 23, 1857, a negro named Henry Smith was caught in the act of stealing a couple of pigs, the property of Benjamin Pear, residing in or near Columbia. Mr. Pear seized the robber, and in the struggle the latter shot and killed the owner. Smith and called for help. A neighbor named Cruzar came to his assistance and Smith also stabbed him and then fled. Mr. Pear died from the effects of the wounds and Smith was arrested and committed to the county jail.

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