

LUTZ WEAKENED ON THE GALLOWS

The Pittston Wife-Murderer Fainted Before the Trap Would Be Sprung.

SHOCKING SCENE ON THE SCAFFOLD

The Man Who Had for the Past Two Years Been Seemingly Indifferent to His Fate, Lost His Nerve at Sight of the Noose, and Broke Down—His Knees Gave Way and His Last Words Were Expressive of Abject Fear.

Special to the Scranton Tribune.

Pittston, Jan. 21.—John Lutz, of West Pittston, died this morning at 10.28 on the gallows in the Luzerne county jail at Wilkes-Barre, and the murder of Mrs. Augusta Lutz, his wife, whose head he cleaved with an axe, has been avenged. The stolid indifference and the surly demeanor which Lutz had maintained during the two-year interval, from the committing of the crime to the payment of the penalty, gave way as the day for the execution drew near, and although he walked to the gallows with a seemingly careless swagger, the drawing of the noose about his neck was too much for him, and the trap which was to take Lutz falling over in a fainting spell.

The outcry of the doomed man against his executioners and his collapse on the scaffold as the trap was sprung were features which made the execution one of the most remarkable that has ever taken place in this county. It was witnessed by about 500 people.

The last hours of the condemned man's earthly existence were spent pacing the corridor of the jail. He was clad in a black sack suit, with white shirt and necktie, and a collar which was a narrow black tie, crossed, but not tied at the front. Alternately puffing on a cigar and picking his teeth with a wooden toothpick, Lutz seemingly unconscious of his impending fate, walked round and round the corridor, and at times turned to give the public, and during his last earthly hour received calls from two nephews who came him farewell. A very slight tremor was noticed as he responded to their adieu. He seemed interested in his son, Albert, and of both visitors.

Lutz was rather surprised about 9.50 when he inquired of the keeper: "What time will the thing take place?" and was told it would be shortly after 10 o'clock. "I thought it would be in the afternoon," said Lutz, and when Warden Llewellyn, who followed him, told him that the execution would not be held off until about 3 o'clock, but made no protest when the warden said the matter rested entirely with the sheriff.

At 10.03 he was marched to the watchman's office to prepare for the scene. Dressed in his prison life, Lutz has become an inveterate tobacco user and his last request before he left the watchman's office was for a "chew of tobacco," which was granted him.

At 10.11, Lutz was taken to the keeper's office, where he was finally restrained by Warden Llewellyn to Sheriff Jacobs. As Mr. Llewellyn turned to leave him, Lutz asked that he accompany him to the gallows and the march through the jail yard was commenced. Sheriff Jacobs leading, and Lutz linked arms with Warden Llewellyn, following two deputies. Lutz walked with seemingly unflinching step and walked up the stairs to the platform unassisted.

Scene on the Gallows.

The scene which took place on the platform was dramatic, if not sensational. Lutz, looking steadily at the trap door, and Sheriff Jacobs removed the condemned man's hat and placed the noose about his neck. Lutz had maintained his nerve to this time and would doubtless have stood the ordeal to its end had there not been a slight hitch in the work of execution. The feet were quickly bound with a stout strap, and two deputies were binding Lutz's hands behind his back, but before they were securely bound, Lutz withdrew one hand and reluctantly allowed the guards to retie it, coupled with this, the back had not been properly adjusted and the sheriff found it necessary to remove and replace it. In the few seconds it required to do this, Lutz lost his nerve and as his executioners were about to leave the platform he reeled forward. As he fell, the noose about his neck yielded rather inaudibly, but distinct to those close by: "Oh, don't!" and just as he reeled backward the trap was sprung and with a groan, the doomed man slid, rather than dropped to his fate, the back of his coat brushing the side of the trap door.

Five minutes after the drop, which fell at 10.18, Dr. Wolfe, the prison physician examined Lutz's pulse and found it just about normal; two minutes later it was still strong but was beginning to weaken and at 10.25 he was pronounced dead.

The body was allowed to hang until 10.41, when it was cut down and taken in charge by Undertaker Kniffen, of Wilkes-Barre, by whom it will be shipped to the agent of the anatomical board of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia, the victim's family having made no claim for the body.

In the opinion of Dr. Wolfe death resulted from strangulation, the position of the man's body when the trap was

sprung having taken up two of the five feet slack rope, thus reducing the effect of the fall and sudden stop at the rope's length. The neck was not broken.

The Brutal Crime.

A small two-story house at the corner of Franklin and Montgomery streets, in the borough of West Pittston, was the scene of the crime for which John Lutz today paid the penalty on the gallows. About 1 o'clock on the night of November 28, 1900, Lutz committed one of the most brutal crimes ever enacted in this county, slaying his wife as she lay sleeping in an armchair, the deadly weapon used. Lutz was employed as a stationary fireman and lived with his wife and five children—three boys and two girls—at the above place. He was not what might be termed a delicate man, but was of a peculiar and at times surly and severe disposition. Family quarrels were frequent. On the night in question Lutz came in about 10 o'clock, just as Mrs. Lutz was preparing the children for bed. He asked his eldest daughter to bring him a comb, and when she had brought it, he snatched it and struck her on the head, and too late to retreat. A quarrel ensued and Mrs. Lutz proceeded to take the two girls to bed. The eldest was about 10 years of age and the youngest a 2-year-old babe. The former slept with her mother and the infant slept in a crib in the same room. After seeing the children in bed, Mrs. Lutz, without undressing, lay on the bed with the girl. Lutz remained downstairs for awhile, went out for an hour or more and returned. He had evidently determined in the meantime to do away with his wife, and seizing a heavy, long-handled axe, he stole stealthily upstairs to the room where his wife lay on the bed. Raising his axe he dealt her two blows with the sharp edge, both striking in the forehead, and the first blow was so inflicting an ugly gash. Other blows were evidently varied off by the woman, as her left hand showed gashes between the fingers, inflicted, doubtless, as she raised her hand to protect herself. After committing the deed, Lutz fled to his room, where he attempted suicide by cutting his throat with a penknife, but his courage evidently failed before he had accomplished his purpose.

For two years Lutz retained a stolid indifference and refused to speak to anyone other than his attorneys. While in the past week, however, he weakened and consented to receive religious advice. Rev. Dr. Mills was called and visited him several times.

Lutz's last night on earth was spent outside the jail, in which he had been imprisoned for nearly two years. His first sign of weakening was displayed shortly after midnight, when he wept bitterly. Warden Llewellyn, who, with the death watch, sat at his side, sang a hymn, and this seemed to stir the condemned man's heart. After listening intently to the singing for several minutes, tears filled in his eyes and he broke out into weeping. At 1.30 he went to bed. He slept soundly and never awoke until 8.30 this morning, less than two hours before he was swung into the gallows. About 9.30 o'clock, Rev. Dr. Mills, pastor of the Memorial Presbyterian church, Wilkes-Barre, arrived at the prison and held services with the condemned man. The service lasted about fifteen minutes, when the clergyman left.

Lutz was the thirteenth man to die on the gallows in this county. It was his intention to make a statement on the gallows, but on the advice of friends this morning, refrained from doing so.

It was two hours later the young girl was released by the crowd, and she ran to the crib and arousing herself, she found her mother groaning. In endeavoring to awaken her mother, the girl found herself seated in a pool of blood and noticed the gashes in her mother's head. Calling her brothers, who slept in another room, and who soon summoned, the neighborhood aroused and the crime disclosed. Mrs. Lutz never regained consciousness and died within twenty-four hours. Lutz's wounds were dressed and he was later pronounced to be insane.

In due time Lutz's case was called for trial in the criminal court. He had able attorneys to defend him, who set up the plea of insanity. The circumstantial evidence was so strong, however, that everybody expected the prisoner would be promptly convicted. The jury, however, remained out sixteen days, the longest time ever recorded in a murder case in Pennsylvania. The failure of the jury to return a verdict after a week had passed caused unusual interest in the case.

Jury Indicated Its Views.

No news came from the jury room, but as the jurymen passed from the court room, the jurymen indicated to get menials they gave out information in an indirect way. Eleven of the number wore a green ribbon on the level of their coats. This was taken to mean that the eleven had agreed upon a verdict, but that the twelfth juror, without a ribbon, was holding out. And such was the case. On the sixteenth day the jury filed into court, and when asked whether they had agreed upon a verdict they said they had. This was duly recorded.

Then, when the jury was polled, a remarkable scene occurred. Juror Frank D. Koons arose in his place and said he had signed the verdict against his conscience. He claimed he was ill, and in order to get out in the fresh air he appended his signature to the verdict, but he did not believe in hanging an innocent man. In his opinion, the prisoner was insane. Judge Halsey, who presided at the trial, said the place for Koons to have made his protest was in the jury room and not after the verdict had been recorded.

DEATHS OF A DAY.

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. Lancaster, Jan. 21.—Professor I. S. Geist, of Marietta, long prominent in the school and industrial affairs of that place, and for many years editor and proprietor of the Marietta Times, died at that place last evening from Bright's disease, aged 70 years.

SUPPRESSION OF ANARCHY

Address by Assistant United States Attorney General James M. Beck.

THE INSANE CREED PROPERLY DEFINED

Peculiar Difficulty That Confronts Those Who Attempt to Solve the Problem Lies in the Fact That the Fanatics Who Embrace the Faith Are Ready and Willing to Die for It—The Federal Government's Power—How People Can Aid in Protection of the President.

ACCIDENT AT CROSS FORKS

Four Persons Are Killed on the Lackawanna Lumber Co., Road.

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. Williamsport, Pa., Jan. 21.—A telephone message to the Gazette and Bulletin from Cross Forks, Potter county, says: "A frightful accident on the lumber road of the Lackawanna Lumber company occurred above here at 10 o'clock this morning and four men were killed instantly."

"At the place named the men were engaged in loading logs on a car, when a runaway car, consisting of four cars loaded with pulp wood, came dashing down the incline road at terrific speed, crashing into the car upon which the men were working. An Italian standing nearby saw the fast approaching car and tried to give warning, but too late for the men to get to a place of safety and the crash came with frightful force, killing the four men and smashing the cars into splinters."

"The names of the victims are as follows: H. J. Herbstreit, who leaves a wife and child; W. A. Bennett, who leaves a wife and two children; Peter Czec, widower, who leaves eight grown children; Oscar Sanber, single."

"The place where the fatality occurred is on the side of the mountain, and the grade is seventy-five feet to the mile."

"The four runaway cars broke loose about a mile above the spot and had acquired a speed of fully fifty miles an hour by the time they reached the log train."

GOV. TAFT TALKS OF PHILIPPINES

Says That the War is Confined to Two Localities—A Strong Native Peace Party.

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. San Francisco, Jan. 21.—Governor General Taft, who returned from Manila last night, landed this afternoon. He expects to start for Washington tomorrow, but will stop at Cincinnati, his home, en route. Discussing conditions in the Philippines, Governor Taft said:

"I wish to impress upon everybody that civil government is a success. There is a strong peace party in the islands, and it is composed of the most influential men among the Filipinos. They are not content with a mere peace, but are zealously toward bringing about happy relations between their countrymen and the government. They are doing all that is in their power to bring about that peace. I have never been so encouraged as to the prospects of the Philippines as I have within the last three months. There has certainly been a great change in the sentiment of the people. They are beginning to appreciate the fact that civil government means better times for them. I am encouraged and shall so report to Washington."

"There are thirty-five provinces capable of government. The only place where there is trouble is in the island of Samar. That is the most difficult island for military operations. There are no roads and the troops have to use water courses to follow the natives to their fastnesses. But we are all confident that it is only a question of a short time when the island will be pacified."

"The great question and difficulty that presents itself to the government is the land question. The titles to lands are very unsettled and it is a difficult matter to adjust them."

Governor Taft expects to return to the islands about March 1.

SEVEN LUMBERMEN ARE CREMATED

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. Hamilton, W. Va., Jan. 21.—About 4 o'clock this morning Camp 5, of the Otter Creek Boom and Lumber Company, several miles from here in the forest, took fire and burned so rapidly that seven of the forty men asleep in the building failed to get out and were burned to death.

ALTEMOSE FROZEN TO DEATH.

Rescued from Drowning and Left to Die from Exposure.

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. Stroudsburg, Jan. 21.—The frozen body of William Altmore, of East Stroudsburg, aged 30 years, was found early today lying stiff and stark between two piles of boards, in the East Stroudsburg Lumber company's yard, by an employee of that company.

Altmore was rescued yesterday from drowning by two companions, while fishing, and was placed on the lumber, where he was left, and died from exposure. No marks of violence were found on the body, although there were signs of a struggle near where the body lay.

WIDE LATITUDE IN HOUSE DEBATE

Unlimited Talk Allowed on the Urgency Deficiency Bill.

MR. SIBLEY SUGGESTS PROCRASTINATION

He Believes That Irrigation of Arid Lands Should Be Postponed Until the Next Generation—The Waste Lands Not Needed at Present. Senate Considers Philippines Bill.

CAUSE OF RESENT PANAMA BATTLE

The Exchange of Prisoners Responsible for the Disaster to the Panama Government.

THE GERMANS WERE ALSO OUR FRIENDS

Took No Part in Efforts of France and Austria to Make Trouble During the Spanish War.

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Disastrous Fire in the Camp of the Otter Creek Boom and Lumber Company.

THE IOWA SENATORS.

By a Strict Party Vote, Dolliver and Allison Are Re-elected.

MINE WORKERS ARE AROUSED

The Statement of Miss Meredith Stirs Up a Row at Indianapolis.

ADMIRAL SCHLEY'S APPEAL

Counsel Submitted Draft of Long Document to Him Today.

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WEATHER FORECAST

Washington, Jan. 21.—Forecast for Wednesday and Thursday: Eastern Part—sunny, rain Wednesday; probably sunny with snow with falling temperature; Thursday—sunny; light rain in the evening; snow on mountains.

PENSIONS GRANTED

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. Washington, Jan. 21.—Pensions granted: Evl S. Dingman, of Scranton, \$10; Catharine Maria (widow), of Scranton, \$8.

DR. RIXEY PROMOTED

By Exclusive Wire from The Associated Press. Washington, Jan. 21.—The president today promoted Dr. Presley M. Rixey to surgeon general of the navy, with the rank of rear admiral.

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