Somerset Herald.

...R. SCULL, Editor.

...April 27, 1898.

...E. Fyan, a prominent citi-...ll, is visiting with Somerset

...showers of the past few days ...ddding fruit trees a wonder-

...ertainment by the Bethany Col-...ll at the Opera House, Fri-...ll be the event of the season.

...Stifel, child and nurse, ar-...Baltimore last week and are ...at their new home on Union

...daily papers has increased ...Somerset during the past two ...s a rule the newsies dispose ...stock within an hour after ...the papers from the cities.

...N. B. Hartzell, died at her ...Jenner, on Wednesday morn-...She was a native of Jenner ...being a daughter of John and ...both of whom are dead.

...Allowed to the following ...were unsolicited for at the ...John Conn, Geo. Finley, ...Jas. B. Miller, Elizabeth ...Sanley, F. M. Vankirk, ...Street.

...tatement of Mrs. Catherine J. ...postmistress at this place was ...of the Senate on Wednesday. ...ter of the office will probably ...in May 1st. The salary is ...year.

...Dan King will conduct relig-...ice in the Reformed Church at ...Sunday, and at Lavansville at ...Sunday evening the Lavansville ...will hold a missionary en-...beginning at 7:45 o'clock.

...Miller died at her home in ...on Sunday evening, 17th ...of Bright's Disease. Deceased was a life-...member of the Reformed Church. ...survived by her husband and a ...children by a former mar-...

...K. E. Parker and L. M. Phillips ...for Baltimore and Philadel-...they will purchase a stock of ...for the new store they will open ...next week. Their storeroom, on ...corner of the public square ...prepared for their reception and ...the model storerooms of the ...

...J. D. Hicks arrived in ...Friday morning and remained ...nearest constituency until 3:22 ...he left for Washington. Mr. ...had permission of the Gov-...raise a volunteer regiment in ...congressional district. He believes ...raise a regiment of 1,000 men in ...days.

...time, an aged German, who was ...released from the county jail, ...had been confined for several ...for the instance of his wife, for ...he had failed to provide, was in-...left on the railroad on Sunday, ...officer was a former resident ...Meadville and was well known ...of the county.

...Rev. Gore, of Denver, Col., ...at the home of Mr. and Mrs. ...Gore. Mr. Gore was formerly ...agent of the Pennsylvania Rail-...company, but was compelled to re-...position several years ago on ac-...of his health. Several years spent ...have fully restored his health ...again enter the service of the ...company.

...session of a recent visit of ...Inspector Cadwalader Bid-...Philadelphia, that official said: ...Somerset jail is the cleanest and ...prison in the Commonwealth," ...a very high compliment to ...Sheriff's management. Mr. Bid-...have added that the atmos-...in the jail was as pure as the outside ...which very rarely found in a building ...where men are confined.

...Saturday the Roddy boys re-...for their pictures," declaring ...they did not want to have their feat-...appear in the newspapers. Satur-...morning, however, they concluded ...would like to have their photo-...taken in order that they might be ...by their relatives, and asked ...Sheriff if he would arrange to ...them. Sunday morning, after ...arranging their toilets, they ...to the hospital department of ...prison where a photographer had his ...apparatus ready and secured the plates ...from which the photographs were printed.

...Western Union lineman ...Friday posted a notice ...for volunteers for a military com-...that evening he enlisted about ...well-known young men about ...are anxious to tender their ...to Governor Hastings for the ...meeting was held at the Opera ...House was evidence of the patriotic ...of our young men it should be said ...who volunteered did so with-...mercenary question. Mr. Crouse ...connected with the Nation-...Guards has been a member of the ...company, and is a good drill-...and expects to have his company ...drill equal to any in a day or two.

...number of residents of the county ...jail during the past few ...of seeking an in-...with the Roddy boys, and on ...occasions the crowd was so great ...good-natured official than ...would have turned a ...deaf ear to their appeals. The Sheriff ...let all who applied, by any ...for any reason that, had he done ...would have found his time fully ...in that way and would have ...to attend to his official du-...week preceding the execu-...only those persons who had a right ...the condemned prisoners were permit-...

...those who witnessed the execu-...were Mr. Valentine Ber-...father of the murdered man, and ...brother-in-law, Mr. Lewis Berkey, ...Goshen, Indiana. The former ...county in 1884, and notwith-...the fact that he has made re-...visits to the old homestead in ...county, this was his second visit ...since the first having been at the ...Roddys' first trial. Mr. Berkey ...the picture of physical manhood ...a man of refined manners and ...address. He disclaimed any feel-...bitterness, other than a desire to ...the sentence of the law was car-...out. In conversation with the ...representative expressed his be-...the condemned men would make ...confession at the last minute.

...hearing in a hotel license ...case, Judge Brubaker, of ...county, exhibited considerable ...concerning the statement that he had ...threatening anonymous letters ...those who had evidently been ...because they or some friend ...to get license. He said that ...had evidently been sent for ...purpose of intimidation, but they did ...the intended effect on the landlord no good. He ...warning that such methods ...deserve him from the line of ...expressed the belief that coun-...applicants were encouraging ...If such is the case, said the ...they are violating their obliga-...fouling the court of justice, and ...dirty bird which fouls its own ...several applicants for license had ...him at the back door of his ...which was extremely improp-...their counsel had sent them, ...ascertain this fact, Judge ...declared that he would at once ...a rule to show cause why they ...be disbarred from court.

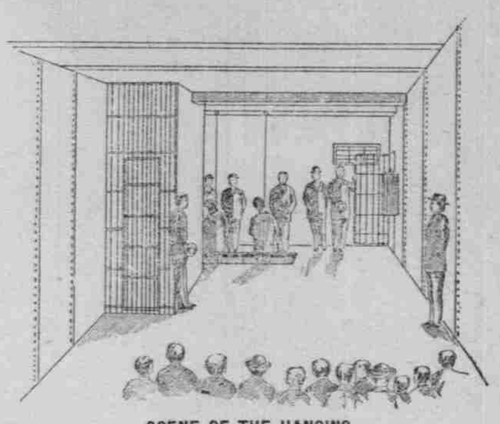
Roddy Boys Executed.

JOHN RODDY. JAMES RODDY.

They Suffered the Penalty for the Murder of Farmer David Berkey.

Proclaim their Innocence to the Last.

Their Iron Nerve Finally Gave Way and They Prepared to Meet Death.--Forgave Their Enemies.--Had Been Model Prisoners --Their Last Night,--Closing Scenes of the Tragedy.



SCENE OF THE HANGING.

James and John Roddy, convicted of the murder of David Berkey, paid the penalty of their crime at 12:52 o'clock this afternoon. The execution took place in the county jail on the same double death-trap that was used on one former occasion, when the Nicely brothers suffered the death penalty, and which has become part of the bloody record of Somerset county.

Sheriff Hartzell had all of his arrangements perfected long in advance and they were carried out to the minutest detail without a single hitch.

After the straps and handcuffs had been placed upon the boys and the ropes around their necks, and with the black caps on the top of their heads, John Roddy spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen, you see me. I am as innocent of the Berkey robbery as the stars in heaven and know nothing about it. I leave lots of prayers behind me. I forgive you all and hope to meet you in heaven."

James spoke practically the same words, adding, "I have maintained my innocence for two years. I am going now to a court where I will have a new trial and justice!"

The doomed men assisted in arranging the straps and caps, and when they said: "Good-by Sheriff," the signal agreed upon, the trap was sprung and the murder of David Berkey was avenged.

A few short convulsive struggles and all was over. John did not move perceptibly, his neck having been broken. Dr. Kimmell pronounced him dead in eleven minutes.

Jim was pronounced dead by Dr. Gardner in twelve minutes.

The bodies were cut down at 1:15 and placed in the coffins provided for their reception. They will be taken to Johnstown on the 5:40 train.

At 12 o'clock a light lunch, consisting of canned peaches, pears, a custard, cake and coffee was served in the cell. Mrs. Hartzell had placed two buttonhole bouquets of carnations on the tray, and the boys placed them on the lapels of their coats. They ate heartily and spoke feelingly of Mrs. Hartzell's many kindnesses to them.

Just before the lunch was served Valentine Berkey, of Goshen, Ind., a brother of the murdered man, entered the cell. The boys greeted him cordially. John expressed his satisfaction at having an opportunity to tell a member of the Berkey family that he was innocent of the murder. He said that he felt very sorry for the Berkeys, especially for Mrs. Berkey, whom he declared had been influenced by the detectives. "Tell her that I forgive her and hope to meet her in heaven," he added.

Mr. Berkey replied that he knew nothing about the case, but his disappointment was apparent, as he believed the boys would break down at the last minute and confess.

At 12:15 o'clock Revs. Mullendore, Cameron and Vogel were closeted with the condemned men and remained with them until the drop fell.

The handcuffs used were the same that were used at the execution of the Nicely brothers. The steel wristlets are engraved with the initials of the Nicelys. The cuffs worn by Joe Nicely were placed upon the wrists of John, while the steel bands that encircled the wrists of Dave Nicely performed a similar service for James Roddy.

A solitary woman found her way into the jail about noon and gazed into the cell occupied by the boys until she was discovered by the Sheriff and asked to retire.

Revs. Mullendore, Cameron and Vogel arrived at the jail at 9 a. m., and were with the doomed men until the last, giving them such spiritual consolation as was in their power.

Rev. Mullendore was closeted with James, while Rev. H. N. Cameron retired with John to the cell he has occupied during the past two weeks. The clergymen read from the scriptures and prayed with the boys and then led the boys in prayer. At 9:24 Rev. Mullendore entered the cell of John and Rev. Cameron went into James' cell, where private devotional exercises were continued for a few minutes, after which the clergymen and the boys returned to the corridor of the prison, where they were joined by Elder Peter Vogel and the death watch, A. E. Bittner.

Rev. Cameron sang a solo, "I Was Once Far Away From Jesus," the sweet tones of his sympathetic tenor voice penetrating to the furthest corner of the cell and affecting all who heard it.

Rev. Mullendore read the "Beatitudes," and "description of heaven." The services were concluded by Elder Vogel, who offered prayer.

John asked Rev. Mullendore to accompany the bodies to Johnstown, which he consented to do.

At 10 o'clock Gen. Coffroth, W. H. Ruppel, Esq., and Chas. F. Uhl, Esq., counsel for the boys entered the corridor and held an interview with them. All of the attorneys were deeply affected, tears streaming from their eyes when they said "good-by."

Undertaker A. H. Huston delivered two coffins at the jail at 8 o'clock. They were placed in the Sheriff's office.

The ropes were adjusted at 10:30 o'clock by Isaac Jones, the veteran sailor and well known contractor and lumber dealer. They were attached to the rings by knots only such as old sea-dogs can tie.

Joseph Jackson, a brother-in-law of the boys, was admitted to the jail upon the arrival of the morning train from Johnstown. He witnessed the execution and will escort the bodies of his relatives to the home of their parents. "What time will the funeral take place," asked John. His kinsman said he did not know, but the funeral would be in charge of undertaker John Henderson, of Johnstown, and that graves would be dug in Grandview Cemetery, the Roddy family having recently secured a lot in that burying-ground.

John Lorditch, a Johnstown friend of the boys, spent an hour with them in pleasant conversation, recounting incidents in their past lives.

THEIR DYING DECLARATION.

Just Before They Embraced the Christian Religion the Roddy Boys Asserted Their Innocence.

Elder Mullendore spent the greater portion of Monday closeted with the doomed brothers. According to his statement he never before pictured hell in such awful form as he did to them, or made more powerful pleas to men to confess their sins. At no time during the period he was with them did they intimate that they had any knowledge of the Berkey murder, while on the other hand they repeatedly declared that they were as innocent of the crime as the minister of God whom they addressed.

At the instance of the condemned men Elder Mullendore reduced the following statement to writing, which the Roddy brothers have requested be published to the public as their dying declaration:

SOMERSET, PA., April 25, 1898.

John and James Roddy desire to leave this their dying statement: "That we are innocent of the Berkey robbery, and that we, neither of us, know anything about it. We are sorry that the Berkey people allowed the detectives to influence them into the belief that we were the parties that tortured and robbed them. We believe they were honest, but they were mistaken. We hope to meet them at the bar of God, where the truth will be known, and where they will find us innocent. We will forgive them all and wish them well. We leave this word for other people's crime. We are glad that if we must die we will die innocent of the crime for which we stand convicted. Some of the witnesses were honest, but were mistaken, others swore falsely. We are not blaming the honest ones. The dishonest ones we forgive as we hope to be forgiven."

JAMES RODDY.
JOHN RODDY.

Their Last Night.

The condemned men spent the early portion of the night in the corridor in front of their cells talking with several friends and the death watch. They rehearsed the evidence in the case and pointed out certain features in the testimony against them which they declared to be false. Both declared that the only regret they felt on leaving the world was the grief their death would bring to their mother. "The rest of them can stand it," said John, "but I'm afraid it will kill mother." Both of the boys smoked constantly and asked for a lunch, which they said they would eat during the night.

Just before Sheriff Hartzell locked the condemned brothers in their cells, John asked him to walk out to the death trap with him. With his feet resting on the trap, John said: "Sheriff, I hope everything will go off all right to-morrow; I don't want any accident to occur. About a half-hour before the time comes I want you to come to my cell, when I will tell you something. Then I want you to take me out to the trap and while the deputies are putting the straps on our legs I want you to put the rope around our necks, and then I want to say something that will surprise a few people, and then down will go my meat-house."

The condemned brothers retired at 11:45 o'clock and a few minutes afterwards both were sound asleep. They awoke about the same hour, 5 o'clock, the morning of the execution, declaring that they never felt better in their lives. At 7 o'clock they were served with a substantial breakfast, which they ate with apparent relish.

IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Roddy Boys Declare They Will Proclaim Their Innocence Before the Almighty.

INTERVIEW WITH THEIR LAWYERS.

Shortly after their return from Harrisburg Friday morning, Gen. A. H. Coffroth and Chas. F. Uhl, Jr., visited the Roddy boys in their cells.

After telling the prisoners of their failure to influence the Pardon Board in their behalf, General Coffroth said:

"Now John, I have done everything in my power to establish your innocence without success; your fate has been uppermost in my mind for many days and I have spent sleepless nights thinking how I could save your life. You have only four more days to live and you must not go before God with a lie upon your lips. I want to know for my own personal satisfaction whether you are guilty of the murder of David Berkey; your mother and father, both old and gray, want to know whether their sons are murderers deserving death, or whether they shall cherish their memories as they will if you are innocent. Don't leave them in doubt, but answer me truthfully as you will have to answer in a brief time in the presence of Almighty God."

Scalding tears streamed down John's cheeks as he quickly raised his right hand and said: "General, I expect to raise my hand in the presence of God and declare that I had nothing to do with the Berkey robbery and murder; that I never saw Mr. Berkey in my life, and that I was never in Paint township."

Turning to James, General Coffroth repeated the same remarks he had made to John, and urged him for the sake of his mother and in the presence of death to tell the truth.

"I never saw old man Berkey in my life," said Jim; "I was never in Paint township, and had nothing to do with the Berkey murder."

Messrs. Coffroth and Uhl then urged the condemned men to prepare to meet their God, and suggested that they had better send for a minister. "Don't die like infidels," urged Gen. Coffroth, "you now know that death is only four days off, and if you are innocent a confession of faith will not only be comforting to your souls, but it will tend to make people believe that your dying statements are true; while if you go into an unknown world denying God, few persons will believe you."

"I believe in God," spoke up John, and have always been willing to send for a minister to read and pray for us, but "Jim" didn't want it that way."

"It was this way," said "Jim," "they were said to be christian people who swore our lives away, and I thought I didn't want to have anything to do with such people. I am agreed to send for a preacher now, however."

In view of the fact that their mother is a member of the Baptist Church, the unhappy brothers decided to send for Elder William Mullendore, of the Disciple Church, as he had visited them at intervals during their long imprisonment.

General Coffroth's frame shook with emotion when relating the above conversation to the HERALD reporter and his voice betrayed his deep feeling.

"I am thoroughly satisfied that the Roddys are innocent of the Berkey murder," he said, "and have felt that they were wrongly accused from the beginning. I have done everything that an attorney could do to establish their innocence, and without hope of reward further than the knowledge that I have tried to save two ignorant boys from ignominious death. During the past two years I have adopted every means to trap them into a confession, but on all occasions they have protested their innocence, and I am firmly convinced of it."

SHERIFF M. H. HARTZELL.

Mr. Uhl said: "When the Roddy boys were first arrested for the Berkey murder I thought perhaps that "Jim" had had something to do with the crime, but that John was innocent. Upon investigation, however, I became thoroughly convinced that neither of them had any knowledge of the Berkey robbery, and that conviction has since grown upon me, until I feel absolutely sure that neither of them had anything to do with it. The poor boys have been without means, but their counsel have done everything that could be done in their behalf."

Wm. H. Ruppel, Esq., who was associated with Messrs. Coffroth and Uhl in the trial of the case, said: "I am satisfied the Roddy boys are innocent of the Berkey murder. After the second trial I said to General Coffroth and Mr. Uhl, that we had been acting on the theory that our clients were innocent and that I thought the time had come to ascertain, if possible, if our theory was correct.

"With this object in view we visited the jail and after a long interview with the Roddys, in which we used every possible means to extract an admission of guilt from them, I became more fully satisfied than I had been before that they are innocent men, and my conviction has never faltered from that day to this."

Rev. Mullendore, in response to a request from the condemned brothers, visited the jail Friday morning and was with them alone for a long time.

Roddy Boys Baptized.

John and James Roddy were baptized Monday after the manner of the Disciple church, at the hands of their spiritual adviser, Elder Mullendore. A bath tub on the second floor of the jail was made to answer the purposes of a baptistry. The ceremony was brief and was witnessed by a number of the members of Elder Mullendore's congregation and the attorneys of the condemned men. John and James both expressed themselves as feeling better after the solemn ceremony had been performed.

The Jury.

Sheriff Hartzell selected the following well-known citizens to serve as the jury, and who afterwards certified to the death of John and James Roddy.

J. N. Whipkey, Middlecreek township.
Josiah Good, Somerset township.
Charles R. McMillen, Addison township.
Edward Gonder, Jenner township.
Wm. G. Knepper, Lincoln township.
Michael Ansell, Milford township.
Thomas Reese, Meyersdale borough.
N. J. Kretchman, Elk Lick township.
Garrett Ream, Paint township.
J. G. Barclay, Jefferson township.
D. E. Kreger, Upper Turkeyfoot Twp.
Edward Hoover, Somerset borough.

The court house yard was densely crowded with people at the time the drop fell.

LAST HOPE VANISHED.

Roddy Boys Learn the Action of the Pardon Board.

"Let her go, Gallagher," said John Roddy with a merry laugh, "the sooner it's over the better," when told by Sheriff Hartzell that the Pardon Board had refused to take favorable action in the appeal of himself and brother for executive clemency.

John was playing a game of solitaire when the Sheriff, accompanied by several newspaper reporters, visited his cell Friday morning, soon after the news was received from Harrisburg. His first remark was: "Haven't they done anything for us?" and upon being told that the last hope was gone, he spoke as quoted above.

"When will you let us drop, Sheriff, in the morning or afternoon?" was the next question he asked, referring to the execution.

"I haven't decided yet; but have you any preference?" inquired the Sheriff.

"I can't tell," replied John, "until after we have heard from the folks at Johnstown and find out when they want to take us home." Continuing he said, "I don't see how the Pardon Board got over the evidence; most of it was perjury, but if we have to die, the sooner it is all over the better. No; I don't want to have my photograph taken; my mother will have about all she can bear without seeing my face depicted in the newspapers."

Passing on to the cell occupied by "Jim" the Sheriff said: "Well, Jim, I have unpleasant news for you; the pardon board has refused to interfere in your case."

"I can't help it," replied the prisoner, who turned over in his bunk. A moment later he arose and began to pace up and down his cell like a caged animal. Suddenly stopping, he faced the Sheriff and said: "I never did anything in my life that should cause me to get down on my knees and pray." Continuing, he intimated that the sentiment created against John and him among the farmers was responsible for their present predicament.

Interview With Sheriff Hartzell.

"There is no doubt in my mind about their guilt," said Sheriff Hartzell. "I was firmly convinced of their guilt at the time of the first trial, and the impression then formed was strengthened when a second jury found them guilty of the murder of Mr. Berkey. I have carefully watched their conduct during the time they have been under my care, and a number of little incidents have occurred that lead me to believe that John and Jim have a secret means of communication and thoroughly understand one another. Only one day last week I permitted them to be together for a short time in Jim's cell, and when I went to conduct John back to his cell Jim followed and put his mouth close up to his brother's ear and whispered something I could not hear. Again, I have frequently observed them communicating by signs. John is the stronger character of the two, and he appeared to be afraid that Jim would break down and confess, and for that reason encouraged him in the ways I have referred to. Then, too, Jim told the death-watch that he was innocent, but that he knew who the guilty parties are and that they could be found within a distance of twenty miles of Somerset. Personally I have liked both of the boys and have sympathized with them in their position. I have endeavored to give them every comfort I am permitted to provide for them, and have always urged them to prepare for death. As a matter of course, it is a trying position for me to have to hang two men who have slept under the same roof with me and my family for more than a year, but sentiment don't count alongside of duty. I have made all of my preparations with a view to having the execution pass off smoothly, and earnestly hope there will be no mishap to add to the distress of the unfortunate brothers.

"I have just been served with a paper by counsel for the condemned brothers, notifying me that I shall not admit any persons to the execution except those entitled under the act of Assembly—the jury, two ministers of the gospel, three physicians and my deputies. I am very glad that counsel have taken this step, since I have been unable to give passes to nine-tenths of the people who have applied for them, and it will relieve me of the care of looking after the crowd that would otherwise have sought admission to the jail."

"Remarkable Men," Says Elder Mullendore.

"John Roddy can look squarely in your eye and declare his innocence with the boldness and confidence of a child wrongly accused," said Elder William Mullendore last evening. "In fact, he is the most remarkable man in some ways that I have ever met. I followed the case from the beginning, and am unwilling to believe that the great number of persons who testified against him and his brother were mistaken, but in view of what has taken place and the interviews I have held with the doomed men, I must confess that their conduct is beyond my understanding. I have had little association with the criminal classes and it may be that I can be more easily imposed upon than others, but, to say the least, the conduct of the Roddy boys is most mysterious, standing as they are on the brink of eternity and within only a few hours of the moment when they shall stand before the judgment seat of God. During the past several weeks I have visited the boys at intervals, and during the past few days my visits, at their request, have been frequent. I have attempted to comfort them with the promises of the gospel, and have warned them of the awful consequences in store for them if they go before God with a lie upon their lips. Both of the boys have freely admitted their transgressions, which consist of those sins which many young men are guilty of, but from the first time I spoke to them up until the present they have both declared to me, and always in the most impressive manner, that they never saw David Berkey and are guiltless of his murder or any participation in that foul deed. John Roddy is the stronger character and, as I said before, he proclaims his innocence with the boldness and confidence of a child. The boys both asked to be baptized, and I performed that solemn function to-night."

Weeders and Fertilizers.

I have for delivery and shipment Fertilizers for all spring crops. Also, Hallock's Success Anti Clog Weeder. A big boy and a horse will weed and cultivate 20 acres of almost any crop in a day. How many hoes would it take to do this?

A. C. DAVIS,
Somerset, Pa.

TWO DOUBLE EXECUTIONS.

Victims of the Law's Inflexible Decree in Both Instances Were Brothers.

REMARKABLE COINCIDENCE.

For the second time within a period of eight years the majesty of the law has been called upon to avenge the murder of two of the peaceful farmer citizens of Somerset county. Both murders were committed in the perpetration of a felony, and in both instances the murderers were brothers.

Joseph and David Nicely, residents of Westmoreland county, were executed in the county jail on April 2, 1891, for the murder of farmer Herman Umberger, of Jenner township, whom they shot to death in his quiet rural home and robbed of some $16,000.

John and James Roddy, residents of Cambria county, suffered death on the gallows this afternoon for the murder of farmer David Berkey, whom they cruelly tortured by burning until death resulted, and whom they also robbed of a small sum of money.

In both instances no other parties were suspected of the crime and in both instances the evidence clearly showed that the men executed were the guilty parties.

The defense in both instances was an alibi and in both instances it fell to pieces before the eyes of the court and jury.

In both instances the condemned men persisted in their innocence up until the last, with the exception of "Dave" Nicely, who admitted to his spiritual adviser on the eve of his execution that he had been justly convicted.

THE SOMERSET COUNTY JAIL.

Here the similarity in the cases of the Nicelys and Roddys ceases. The Nicely boys were intelligent, keen-sighted, resourceful and fearless; and one of them—"Joe"—had a wide reputation as a cunning criminal. The Nicelys made two desperate attempts to gain their liberty, in the first making a murderous assault on Deputy Sheriff Milton McMillen.

The Roddy boys are densely ignorant, neither of them being able to read or write. From the day of their arrest for the Berkey murder until the trap was pulled that ushered them into eternity they protested their innocence, and at all times were apparently indifferent to their fate. During the twenty-two months of their confinement in the county jail they were as tractable as schoolboys, and won the sympathy of the prison officials to such an extent that they were granted liberties not usually accorded to prisoners convicted of a capital offense.

When sentence of death was passed upon them by the Court, the Roddys thanked the judge for his kindness, and when Sheriff Hartzell read the death warrant to them they laughed at the contents of the official document, apparently regardless of the direful consequences it authorized the sheriff to visit upon them.

The only concern manifested by either of the murderers was for the comfort of their aged mother, to whom they at all times referred in the most affectionate terms. They expressed no fear of death at any time during their incarceration, appearing only to be anxious to lift the burden of sorrow from the heart of their mother, which their actions had brought upon her.

LAST HOPE SWEPT AWAY.

Governor Hastings Refuses to Interfere.

Saturday evening Gen. Coffroth addressed the following communication to Governor Hastings:

HON. D. H. HASTINGS,
Harrisburg, Pa.

I am conscientious in my convictions that the Roddys, who are to be hanged on Tuesday at 1 o'clock, are innocent. Since the action of the Pardon Board they have positively declared to their minister and to their counsel that they are not guilty. The action of the Board was a great surprise to me. It certainly made no examination of the evidence or the strong papers filed. The fair name of the Commonwealth should not be stained with the blood of innocent men. If you read the affidavits and papers filed I am confident your generous heart will prompt you to say, "These men must not be hanged without further hearing." I pray you in the name of an aged christian mother, and the christian mothers of Somerset, whose petition is on file, to grant them a reprieve so that their case can be again heard. We are now sanguine that the murderers can be found. I appeal to you my dear Governor, for a stay of execution, for sixty days. Please let me hear from you.

A. H. COFFROTH.

Following is the Governor's reply, received by telegraph Monday afternoon:

Replying to your telegram of yesterday I am directed to say that the Governor will not interfere in the Roddy case.

LEWIS F. BEITLER,
Private Secretary.

Guarding Against Accident.

As soon as it was definitely settled that the Pardon Board would not intervene in behalf of the Roddys, Sheriff Hartzell began to make final preparations for the double execution. He found that the death traps were warped and rusty and that it would require some time to get them in shape for their destructive work. Saturday morning Mr. Barrett, of the Somerset Iron Works, was called in and kept busy throughout the day repairing the traps. The sound of his hammer, every blow of which resounded throughout the steel walls of the prison, fell upon the ears of the doomed brothers with startling effect, as they realized that every blow brought them so much nearer to death. "Jim's" nervous condition was made apparent by his constant walking up and down the contracted limits of his cell, and by his feeble attempts to whistle the air of a familiar hymn. Occasionally he would stop and listen to the harsh noise of the workman's hammer, only to resume his melancholy walk. John kept perfectly quiet throughout the day, only speaking in his accustomed cheerful manner to the death watch who sat before the grating of his cell. When evening arrived the traps responded promptly to the lever and everything was in readiness for the final act.

Just before Mr. Barrett had completed the repairs to the death traps John Roddy called Sheriff Hartzell to his cell. "Sheriff," he said, "I want everything to go off right next Tuesday and I wish you would be careful to guard against accidents. One of the rings in the ceiling above the death traps has been loose for some time and I think you should have it examined and tightened up."

The Sheriff promised him that he would attend to the matter.

Rheumatism Cured in a Day.

"Mystic Cure" for Rheumatism and Neuralgia radically cures in 1 to 3 days. Its action upon the system is remarkable and mysterious. It removes at once the cause and the disease immediately disappears. The first dose greatly benefits; 75 cents. Sold at Benford's Drug Store, Somerset

History of the Crime.--Review of the Evidence.

James and John Roddy—brothers—were convicted of the murder of David Berkey, a Paint township farmer, whose death resulted from torture by burning. The murder was one of the most cruel in criminal annals, and was committed in the perpetration of a robbery. The aged victim of the robbers declared with his dying breath that he hoped the men who had robbed and tortured him might suffer agony similar to that which he had endured during the interim between the night of the robbery, June 2, 1896, and the hour of his death on the night of October 2, 1896.

Farmer Berkey, his wife, and an unmarried daughter retired at an early hour on the night of the robbery. Shortly before midnight the kitchen door was forced open, and two masked men entered. They proceeded directly to the first-floor bedroom, in which Mr. and Mrs. Berkey were sleeping in separate beds. In response to the question by Mr. Berkey, "What do you want?" one of the robbers replied: "Money, by God, and we are going to have it." Without further ado they carried the old man from his bed to the adjoining sittingroom, where they bound him fast in a chair with leather straps. Mrs. Berkey was carried from her bed to the one vacated by her husband, and was secured to one of the bedposts in full view of her husband.

Meanwhile the daughter—Lucy—having been aroused by the disturbance below, and realizing that robbers were in the house, attempted to make her escape and alarm the neighbors. In her excitement she fell from the upper floor of the porch, sustaining a broken leg and injuring herself internally. In this condition she dragged her body a few yards from the house, where she lay concealed behind a fence until the next morning, when she was found. She died ten days later from the effects of the injuries.

Mr. Berkey directed the men to his vest, in which they found a pocketbook containing one hundred and forty dollars in bills and silver. Among the money was a Confederate ten dollar note, which afterward played an important part in fastening the robbery and murder on the Roddy boys. After the robbers had ransacked the house from cellar to attic in search of money they returned to the room in which their victim was bound and gagged. One of the scoundrels struck the defenseless old man a powerful blow on the jaw, dislodging two of his teeth, and causing the blood to flow down over his snow-white beard in a crimson stream. They demanded of the old man in the face of immediate death that he reveal the hiding-place of his supposed wealth and government bonds, and turned a deaf ear to his protestations that they had secured all of the money concealed about the house. The robbers declared that he was lying to them, as they had personal knowledge of his having recently sold the coal underlying his farm, and of the further fact that he had received some fourteen hundred dollars only two days before from the sale of the coal. One of them set fire to a newspaper and held the flames to the soles of the old man's feet, while the other lighted an oil lamp, and as soon as the flame of the burning paper was exhausted, replaced it with the flame of the lamp. In the midst of this devilish performance the mask dropped from the face of one of the men, and in the glare of the light Mrs. Berkey caught a full view of his countenance; so it happened that when she testified in court she was able to positively identify "Jim" Roddy as one of her husband's murderers.

In spite of his prayers that death might come to his release, supplemented by the pleas of his wife that they refrain from killing her aged husband, the robbers continued with hellish malignity to torture the old man for a full hour and a half.

Finally tiring of their fiendish work, the robbers visited the cellar, where they secured a lot of edibles which they carried into the presence of their victims before eating. After subjecting Mrs. Berkey to unmentionable insults they took their departure, but not until they had threatened to return and kill the aged couple in case either of them attempted to raise an alarm.

As soon as the robbers left, Mrs. Berkey urged her husband to make an attempt to break the bonds fastening him. A prolonged effort in this direction was finally rewarded when Mr. Berkey released his right hand, and securing his pocket-knife, severed the straps. His blistered and charred feet would not permit of his walking, but, with heroic courage, he crawled on his hands and knees to where his wife was bound and released her.

As soon as she was free to move, Mrs. Berkey hastened to the home of her daughter, Mrs. Knavel, a quarter of a mile distant, where she rang a large dinner-bell, and the neighbors within hearing of its iron tongue, promptly responded to the alarm.

A physician was hurriedly summoned, and he and three other physicians who were afterwards called in consultation testified on the trial of the Roddy boys that the death of David Berkey resulted from burns on his feet, their examination having revealed that the flesh between the victim's toes was cooked to a cinder, while that about his ankles was broiled to the bone, causing a shock to his nervous system from which there was no escape save in death, and that death finally came as a happy release from most intense and agonizing suffering.

It developed that two horses had been stolen from the barn of Berkey's nearest neighbor, as were also the straps with which the old man was bound, and that the horses had been tethered and fed only a few rods from the house. The tracks made by the horses were followed for a distance of six miles before they were lost, but in the dim gray of the morning light the horses were discovered in a field where they had been turned to graze, while the saddles and bridles were found stowed in a convenient fence-corner. It was apparent that the robbers were three in number, one of them having remained outside of the house to guard the horses, and that they had abandoned the public road at the approach of dawn.

News of the robbery reached Somerset the same morning, when the county commissioners offered a reward of two hundred dollars for the capture and conviction of the robbers.

Before leaving the Berkey farmhouse, one of the robbers, by a simple act of condescension, left a mark which, as soon as it became known in the north of the county, where the Roddy family had for merly resided, was recognized as "The Roddy Mark," and was the first clew that led to James and John Roddy's being suspected of the crime. Detective John T. Harris, of Johnstown, was given charge of the case, and, with the suspicious circumstance above referred to before him, he soon accumulated sufficient evidence to warrant the arrest of the suspected brothers and Richard Jackson, their brother-in-law. "Jim" was arrested on June 10th at the home of a neighbor in Morrellville, Cambria County, and John and "Dick" Jackson were captured on the night of June 14th. John was taken at the home of his parents in Morrellville and Jackson was found at a Morrellville saloon. A peculiarly shaped brown slouch hat was found in John Roddy's bedroom, which was afterwards identified by a number of witnesses as the headgear worn sometimes by John and again by "Jim" as they passed along the road leading from Morrellville to the Berkey farmhouse on the afternoon and evening preceding the robbery. The prisoners were taken to the Berkey home, where two red handkerchiefs, found in their pockets when they were arrested, were tied over the faces of John and James Roddy after the manner in which the robbers had worn their masks, when Mr. and Mrs. Berkey both positively identified them as the men who had visited their house on the night of June 2, 1896, for the purpose of robbery.

Upon the trial of the case the defendants were represented by Gen. A. H. Coffroth, William H. Ruppel, and by Charles F. Uhl, Jr., Esqs. District-Attorney A. J. Colborn was assisted by Gen. W. H. Koontz, P. J. Kooser, and L. C. Colborn, Esqs. The case was heard by Judge Longenecker, and a remarkable feature of the trial was that only three or four exceptions were filed to the Court's rulings.

Eight days were consumed in the trial. The strongest evidence for the commonwealth was given by Mrs. Berkey, wife of the murdered man, and by a fifteen-year-old lad named Jackson Ripple, who was watering a horse on the public highway leading to Berkey's on the evening preceding the robbery, when three men passed along and made particular inquiry in regard to the location of the Berkey house. Young Ripple picked the Roddy boys and Richard Jackson out from a score or more of prisoners in the county jail as the men he had seen that evening, and later on picked them out in the crowded courtroom. The dying declaration of Farmer Berkey, in which he averred that the Roddys were "the same men that robbed and tortured me" was admitted in evidence against the earnest protest of counsel for defendants. In addition to the evidence cited above, the commonwealth traced the Roddy boys step by step from Morrellville to within a short distance of the Berkey home, and, on the morning following the robbery, placed them at a point on the B. & O. R. R., where they would naturally have crossed after abandoning the stolen horses in order to avoid passing through Johnstown, where they were well known, and to take a short cut to their homes in Morrellville.

Mrs. Naugle, a neighbor of the Roddys, testified that on the day following the robbery James Roddy destroyed a Confederate ten dollar note in her presence, remarking as he did so that it might be the cause of getting him into trouble.

The defense was an alibi, the defendants and a number of their close relatives declaring that they were at home and in bed on the night of the Berkey robbery; while a Morrellville saloonkeeper named "Andy" Leonard testified that the Roddy boys and "Dick" Jackson had been at his saloon at 10 o'clock that night. The defendants were able to account for their whereabouts only on the fateful second day of June of all the days in the year, and created a bad impression upon the jury. The strongest evidence in their behalf was given by a Morrellville coal operator named Hill, who swore that John Roddy had worked in his coal mine on June 2d and 3d, and offered his books to corroborate his statement. It developed on cross-examination that Hill had no personal knowledge of the facts he swore to, as he had made the entries in his book from a slate kept by a boy in his employ.

"Dick" Jackson elected to be tried separately, and was placed on trial immediately after the jury in the Roddy case had retired to deliberate. Without knowing the nature of the verdict returned in the Roddy case, the Jackson jury on the night of December 24, 1896, returned a verdict of "not guilty"—four days afterwards. The testimony against Jackson was not nearly so strong as the evidence against the Roddys, while the alibi set up in his defense was much stronger.

A few days following the conviction of the Roddy boys a reporter for the Johnstown Democrat discovered that Robert Herdman, the witness who had placed the defendants at the B. & O. R. R. on the morning following the robbery, had borne false witness, as he (Herdman) was in Gettysburg, Pa., at that time. When this fact was brought to the attention of the court Judge Longenecker promptly granted the defendants a new trial.

And now comes one of the most singular features of this celebrated case. Nicholas Slick, a veteran of the Mexican war, who has lived in Johnstown for a number of years, appeared at the second trial and supplied the link in the chain of evidence against the Roddys that had been broken by this discovered false statement of Herdman. Slick declared that he had seen the defendants on the morning following the Berkey robbery at almost the identical time and spot where Herdman had placed them.

On the 24 day of June, exactly one year following the Berkey robbery James and John Roddy were found guilty of murder in the first degree the second time for the murder of David Berkey. Three weeks later they were sentenced to death, and when Judge Longenecker pronounced the fateful words condemning "Jim" to death on the scaffold, the prisoner looked squarely into the face of the Court and smiling said "Thank you sir."

An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court on the grounds that the dying declaration of the murdered man had been improperly admitted in evidence, but the highest legal tribunal in the State after reviewing all of the evidence decided that the old farmer's dying statement had been proper evidence for the consideration of the jury, and that the defendants had had the benefit of a fair and impartial trial.

ROYAL BAKING POWDER
Absolutely Pure

MILLINERY OPENING
...AT...
MRS. K. B. COFFROTH'S
...STORE...
Wednesday and Thursday,