

## Tornado at Lewistown on the Fourth of July.

### SIX LIVES LOST.

#### THREE MEN AND TWO BOYS INJURED.

#### Fall of the River Bridge—Glamorgan Furnace No. 2 in Ruins—Lutheran Church Spire Blown Down—Presbyterian Church Unroofed—Houses, Barns and Stables Destroyed or Injured—Loss of Property \$100,000.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of the 4th a thunder-storm approached from the west and another from the north, and the two seemed to mingle in fury directly over the town, causing such a war among the elements that stout-hearted men, as well as women and children, were struck with terror. The roar and din created by the rattling of rain and hail, the howling of the wind and the pealing of thunder was simply appalling. Suddenly the storm assumed the shape of a tornado, and swept over the town with irresistible fury, prostrating buildings, trees and fences in every quarter, and leaving scarcely a single property without at least some slight damage. About one and the same moment the River Bridge was lifted from its piers and thrown violently into the river-bed of the stream, Glamorgan Furnace No. 2 was crushed together as if its stone walls had been paper, one end of Blymyer's Brick Steam Mill at the canal was prostrated, the Lutheran Church Spire was blown down, the Presbyterian Church unroofed, the Apprentices' Hall was made a wreck, and desolation was

spread in every direction. The saddest part of the story remains to be told. Three lives were lost by the falling of the Furnace and three more by the falling of the Bridge, while a number of persons were seriously injured.

The bridge was regarded as a substantial structure, having been used by the Pennsylvania Railroad Co. for the running of their trains between Lewistown Junction and Sunbury, as well as those of the Mifflin and Centre Co. Branch. Its length was 629 feet, and the height of the floor above low water mark about 34 feet. The force of the storm was exhibited in the lifting up of this immense structure and its being buried bodily from its piers. The timbers of which it was composed were stretched from shore to shore in a mass of indescribable confusion, but so firmly packed together by the fall that they could be safely traversed the whole distance.

Just as the storm began, four young men from Mifflin and vicinity entered the bridge from this end, and Mr. John Swan and Conrad Ulrich, Sr., of Lewistown, with Louis Pfeilsticker, a former resident, entered it from the other end. Jos. Crawford, a railroad employe, residing near the Junction, was also on the bridge, having entered it either to cross or to seek shelter. When the storm reached its height, the bridge began to rock, and Mr. John Swan started for the gate house, calling to his companions to follow. He had scarcely taken a step, however, before the telegraph wires came down, entangling his feet, and throwing him upon the floor. While endeavoring to release himself the whole structure fell, carrying down all who were upon it. Mr. Swan sustained but slight injuries, strange to say, and succeeded in climbing up from beneath the water through the timbers to a place of safety, and gained the shore unaided. He had a gash in the back of the head, a finger

nearly severed, and his back somewhat injured.

"Father" Ulrich was very badly injured, but was soon extricated, and conveyed to his home, where he lies in a very critical condition.

Louis Pfeilsticker was instantly killed, and his body so wedged in among the heavy beams that it required hours to recover it. He was a German, well on in years, and worked in Lewistown at shoemaking for some time. Recently he has been at his home near Irwin Station and came to Lewistown to spend the Fourth as a visitor. He leaves no family.

While these three were within one span of this shore, the five others mentioned above were near the opposite side, and were also precipitated among the crashing timbers.

By what seems a miracle Clayton Weidman, of Oakland Mills, near Mifflin, escaped with bruised ankles.

Harvey Sherk of Patterson, was very badly injured, and was removed to his father's home, in that place, where he now lies in a very critical condition.

Charles Goshen, a son of George Goshen, of Patterson, was horribly crushed and mangled, and lived but a short time after being taken out of the wrecked mass. He died at the Junction Hotel, and an inquest was held upon his remains, as well as those of Mr. Pfeilsticker.

Wm. Bartley, a son of Alvin B. Bartley, of Fermanagh township, Juniata county, was also fatally injured, and died on Saturday evening, as he was being put upon the train for conveyance to his home.

Jos. Crawford was very badly hurt, and is lying at his home on the opposite side of the river, under the care of Dr. Worrall. There is some hope of his recovery.

It is difficult to estimate the loss occasioned by the destruction of the bridge, but it will not fall far short of \$25,000.

A full force was put to work, soon after the storm had subsided, to clear away the debris, and a temporary bridge is now in progress of erection,