

"Hanging of Taylor!" article, *Waynesburg Democrat*, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, 11 April 1890, page 1, columns 2-9. Microfilm archived at the Cornerstone Genealogical Society.

Transcribed by Candice Buchanan.



## **Hanging of Taylor!**

## **The Penalty Paid!**

## **Arrested, Tried, Convicted, Hung.**

## **Matters Connected with the Trials.**

[Transcriber's Note: *The following letter appears in the newspaper as an image of the actual handwritten note. The original was written with inverted letters, i.e. letters that should have been small were capitalized and letters that should have been capitalized were written small. Punctuation is also unusual because periods follow almost every word. For ease of reading these two factors have been corrected here; however, misspellings and unusual breaks in words have been maintained to give a sense of Zacharias' writing style.*]

March 29 1890 Anne Jane Taylor

I am well to day. Hopeing this will find you well. Is last letter to you from your Pap. But God knows I am as innocent of that crime as you are or as a little child. I was not out of Masontown that day and I call on God to judge me and not this people whether I don't speak the truth or not and He will judge those that swore my life a way with out a cause. They can deceive this people but they can't deceive God if God forgives all my other sins I am sure of Heaven. I know he has no charge of murder against me. I speak it from my hart. It is a put up thing and that is as true as you have to die or that you havve a God to meat. God alone can solve this great mystery and I pray he will bring the guiltey man to justice that the inocent may not have to suffer. With menney thank to you fore your kindness to me in the past. I will hoping if we don't meat in this world we will meet in Heaven. Where it is hard too be take a from my family may God bless them. Remember when this you see and bear in mind a trusty friend is hard to find. If my face you never see, will you in prayers remember me. Zachrias Tayl.

The above is a fac simile of the letter addressed to his daughter by Zack Taylor, the above copy being reduced in size and made by a photographic process which gives each letter exactly as he formed it. He could not write in the ordinary way and formed letters like the above when addressing his friends.

## **The Crime Committed.**

Taylor was executed for complicity in the deliberate and cold blooded murder of William McCausland, and while we have already given a synopsis of the matter in former issues of the Democrat, yet for the benefit of many who wish to preserve the present issue with its history and illustrations of the case we again briefly narrate the facts.

William M'Causland was a quiet and gentlemanly drover who lived in Allegheny City and bought and shipped stock, buying in this and surrounding counties. He was about 44 years of age, and had a wife and five children. On Sept. 9, 1887, he left them to come into Greene county, and within a few hours of that time was shot twice by cowardly robbers, who were concealed in ambush; one ball penetrating his hand and another crushing through his skull into his brain. His assailants, after thus shooting him had sprung forward and hit him a heavy blow in the head which crushed his skull in. His body was then robbed, very hurriedly, and thrown over the bank and so nearly were the murderous robbers overtaken at their work that they fled leaving the drovers hat, whip, and revolver, and their own tell-tale pistol as well, lying in the road, while the body of the murdered man was left in the position indicated in the picture still gasping but unconscious. On this occasion it was known that he had bought stock in this county, a portion of which he had shipped, and the remainder of which he was to call for at a future day. It was known that he paid for his stock with the cash, and it was a natural conclusion to arrive at that on this occasion he would have a good sum of money with him, since the stock was already bought, but unpaid for.

That enquiries were made about when McCausland would return has been definitely proven, and it was by means of knowledge thus gained that enabled the murderers to so completely time their acts to be at the selected spot at the proper moment. The scene of the murder is in a depression on the McCann's Ferry road, about one mile from McCann's Ferry. McCausland landed from the boat Jas. G. Blaine about 9 o'clock, and was seen by Neil Gray and Frank Ewart, but a few minutes before he was shot, and various persons heard the two sharp reports from the revolver which inflicted the wounds that killed the unsuspecting man so suddenly. Before the men had succeeded in removing the body, hat, whip, etc., S. T. Areford a merchant living near the scene, approached, and the robbers fled. Had Mr. Areford been a few minutes later there would have been ample time to have concealed the body and to have removed other evidence of the crime, and the widowed wife and five little ones would never have known the fate of the husband and father, nor is it probable that there would have been a clue to the perpetrators of the crime. The murder was one of the boldest and most daring nature, committed on a public road in broad daylight, the only safety to those who committed the deed lying in the fact that the depression in the road was such as to shut off the view on each side until a near approach was made and in the other self-evident fact that Guards must have been stationed where they could see an approaching person and give the signal. The hollow down which the murderers fled, and where they were seen by old man Parker, is one well calculated for the purpose of escape, and there is no doubt but had the evidence of the murder been removed at the time this case would have been remembered by the family and a few others only as an inexplicable mystery, while the fate of Wm. McCausland would never have been known.

When Mr. Areford approached the ravine on horseback Maggie Clark, a girl of about 15, was standing on the rise in the road on the McCann's ferry side of the ravine, a few rods from where the body lay, and was motioning and calling to two little boys, sons of Frank Clark, Jr. The road

at this point is some 10 or 12 feet wide and the hat, whip and revolver were lying in the road; but she did not observe them as she afterwards testified before the court.

In addition to the effects of Wm. McCausland which were lying in the road, was a revolver bearing the initials J. T. C. and this gave what seemed to be a clue, and was an important factor in bringing matters to their present culmination.

A partly smoked cigar and a partly burned match were also found, and it is possible that Mr. McCausland stopped to light his cigar, and while his hand was upraised in the act of applying the light the first shot was fired, the ball striking the hand and penetrating it from the palm side, and that quickly following this came the second shot which entered the head and accomplished the work. The pause made by the drover to light his cigar was doubtless seized upon as an opportune moment to perform the horrible deed. Mr. McCausland is supposed to have had from \$1200 to \$1500 upon his person, but when the body was discovered the pockets were rifled of their contents, and turned inside out, while papers, etc. were strewn down the ravine below the road, and a pocket book was left there, being looked upon as of no more value than the body of the innocent and unsuspecting man who was deliberately killed by human fiends who had for days past been planning his murder, for the purpose of robbing him, and who had taken this means of adding a few dollars to their own store. It was a cool, calm and deliberately planned affair, requiring a man to carry it out who could steadily aim a deadly weapon at the head of a harmless man, and deliberately kill him, risking the chance of being himself sent before his Maker with the stain the crime of murder on his soul. Comparatively few men would thus venture, comparatively few could calmly keep their mind intent on such a crime day after day, and it is only the man who will dare to face his Maker with any crime upon his soul who would so deliberately and cold blooded a scheme. And yet the men who killed McCausland did it with the knowledge that they might fail to kill him and might themselves be hurried into eternity and compelled to face their God while their hands were red with the warm blood of an intended victim. Yet the perpetrators of such a crime are willing to run the risk. The future has no influence on such minds to restrain their owners from committing any sin in the very face of death itself.

### **History of Taylor's Case.**

Although McCausland was murdered on September 10, 1887, yet so well had the murderers concealed their tracks, and so great was the reluctance on the part of some to become implicated in the trial as witnesses that it was not until on December 27, 1887, that information was made against Zack Taylor, and on the following day, December 28, he was arrested, now considerably more than two years ago. On January 2, 1888, Taylor, through his counsel, waived a hearing, and was finally and formally committed to jail to await his trial. On January 6th a true bill was found against the defendant; on January 9th a habeas corpus argument was held by counsel, and defendant was remanded to jail. October 15, '88, petition was filed by the defense for a change of venue, but this was not argued before the Court until the 10th of December following, and four days later, December 14th, change of venue was refused by the Court. On January 15, 1889, a severance of trial was granted, and the Commonwealth elected to try Zack Taylor.

On January 15th, 1889, counsel for the defense moved to quash the indictment against Taylor, but the motion was overruled, and Zachariah Taylor stood formally indicted before the Court for the murder of Wm. McCausland. Taylor plead 'not guilty,' and the empaneling of a jury was begun the same day.

In glancing over the above our readers can see how closely the battle was fought, how bitterly every step was contested, how every legal effort was made and every know resource applied for the benefit of the accused man. Messrs. Sayers and Lincoln, as leading counsel for the defense, left no loop hole open, and there was not a move made but what it was keenly scanned, and every circumstance taken advantage of by the wide awake attorneys. On the other hand, District Attorney Huss and assistant, S. R. Huss, aided by R. F. Downey, Esq., were equally alert in meeting and combat these movements. While W. S. Anderson, of Youngstown, Ohio, stood ready to catch on to any and all moves, proved himself an expert in cross examining witnesses.

The legal battle lasted from the 16th until the 26th of January 1889, at which time the jury brought in a verdict of Murder in the first degree,' after an absence of two hours and twenty minutes. Three days later, January 29, motion for arrest of Judgement and new trial was filed and rule was granted. The matter rested thus until the second day of the following April when motions were argued before the Court. One month later, May 1st 1889, the new trial was refused by the Court, and the motion in arrest of Judgement was overruled and dismissed, and on the same day Taylor was sentenced by the Court to be hanged by the neck until dead. On the 17th of the same month a writ of error was filed, and on the following October the case was taken before the Supreme Court of the state at Philadelphia where the case was argued by District Attorney Huss, Esq., for the Commonwealth and by James E. Sayers Esq. for the defense. As a last resource the Board of Pardons and the Governor were appealed to, and after considerable delay the decision was arrived at which left the law to take its course, and the Governor set the day of execution on the 9th of April, 1890. And now the most extreme penalty of the law has been applied and Zack Taylor is no more.

### **Testimony of Thomas Mountjoy.**

Thos. Mountjoy was one of the main witnesses on the part of the Commonwealth as to criminating declarations of Zack Taylor, made during several visits to the Defendant in the jail. In October following the murder, Taylor was coming down the river, and asked witness if he had heard of the arrest of John Clark, and the witness told him he had, when Taylor said it was a shame as John Clark was innocent. He said it wasn't very safe to talk about the murder and he wouldn't say much about it. When asked where he was on the night of the murder he replied that he laid on Dawsons hill on the river on the night of the murder and got home the next morning at 6 o'clock. He said that old Frank Clark and James Neff had gone after whiskey the morning of the murder which was a sham. That there was about a half dozen in the murder and that if they got the right ones they would hang two and send the rest to the penitentiary for life. At another conversation Mountjoy testified 'that on the morning of the murder, Taylor said he saw Jimmy McCallister go down across the field and climb over at Areford's store and go across the field and pass within a hundred yards of where the man was murdered and pass on down towards the Hatfield ferry. He said he did not know how old man Parker recognized him and George Clark as they went down the hollow from where he stood, and that Ben Provins did not know them from

where they went up and sheered across the river; he could not tell them that far away. He said they sheered across the river and got out and went up in the field to Masontown. That they landed at the Clark boat landing. He said it was strange to him that there were two shots fired and only one heard. I asked him how he knew there were two shots fired and he said it was just his way of talking, and just hung his head. At another time he told me he was mistaken as to where he had told me he had lain on the night of the murder, and that he had laid on the bank in Sterling's bottom, and another time he told me he laid within a hundred yards of Alf Clark's home, in the field, up in Sterling's field. He said that on the morning of the murder he just walked around on the streets of Masontown. He said that he could prove himself clear in the afternoon but that he didn't see anybody in the forenoon.'

Nathaniel Chambers, one of the prisoners in jail before Taylor's trial, testified that Taylor told him that he and George Clark did cross the river the day McCausland was killed, and that they had a right to hunt where they pleased, and it was nobody's business if they did, and the one of them had as pistol and the other a shot gun.

James Altman testified that on the morning of the murder, about noon, he was hunting for Zack Taylor, the defendant, in Masontown, and found him in the stable of C. C. Sterling brushing the hay seed off his pants. Witness asked defendant where he had been all morning, and the defendant said: 'Just quit for dinner, have been playing cards all forenoon with Jefferson Ache, J. W. Altman, Silas Provins and Bruce Sterling.' This was followed by the testimony of Ache, Altman, Provins and Sterling, that they were not playing cards with Taylor on the morning of the murder. William Barber, who was with Altman on this occasion, testified to substantially the same thing as Altman.

### **Ben Clark's Confession.**

As matter bearing on the cases just ended, and by request of some of our readers, we give the following statement of Ben Clark, which in so many instances seemed to corroborate witnesses, that it becomes an interesting document to be preserved with other matter in the history of these now noted cases.

Greene County, SS:

The voluntary confession made by Benjamin Clark on this day, June 19 and 20, 1888, before me, on oath:

'On Friday night before the murder, Zack Taylor was up to James Neff's to know when the man would be back, that is Wm. McCausland, and on the same night he went to Frank Clark, Jr's, and stayed there all night. He started away and said he was going on the other side of the river. Zack Taylor and George Clark had this revolver. George Clark got this revolver of Joe Martin some time before the murder. I seen Geo. Clark have this revolver several times. Do not know who put the marks on the revolver. I saw Zack Taylor have this revolver the night before the murder of William McCausland. When he went up to James Neff's on Friday night he had a jug of liquor with him. I saw George Clark and Zack Taylor on Saturday morning of the day of the murder. They went down and crossed the creek and went up the hollow a little after 8 o'clock a. m.

George Clark had a shot gun; Zack Taylor had the revolver. That's the night before I saw Zack Taylor have the revolver and Big George Clark have the shot gun the morning of the murder and I saw them going from Frank Clark's and went up the hollow toward where the murder was committed. George Clark told me that Zack Taylor fired the shot that killed Wm. McCausland. On the same Saturday evening of the murder I was over at George Clarks, when he told me that he got some bank notes and silver money, but did not tell me the amount. George told me at the same time and at the same place that Jas. Neff got three or four hundred dollars. George Clark came over the river with us the same Saturday night, and we met Jim Neff at our house, and I saw George Clark give Jim Neff some money; I do not know what amount; and I heard James Neff say to George Clark that he wished he would run across another drover like that; then George Clark went into the house and stayed all night, and Neff went towards home. George stayed all day Sunday and Monday till in the evening; then he started and said he was going home. George Clark told me that the reason that they left the revolver on the ground was, that they seen a man coming down the road, and they were afraid he would ketch them. The man was Areford. That, George Clark told me. George Clark told me that he threwed the man over the stone wall, and took the pocketbooks out of McCauslands pockets and after they got the money they went down back of Cloud's barn; and he told me that they went down the line fence, that is George and Zack; that is what he told me. Then they went on down along Gray's line fence, then they went down the creek; that is what George told me the same Saturday night he stayed at our house. George Clark told me that when they came over to Greene county the night before the murder, that they stole Ben Provins' boat and crossed in it, and after they crossed they turned it adrift. Big George Clark told me that he was over in Greene county the Wednesday before the murder, and was up in McCann's Ferry road when James Fordyce went past, and he said he had a revolver with him at the time. George Clark and Zack Taylor both told me that they had seen Little Frank Ewart cross the hollow and go down the road just before the murder. George Clark told me that Zack Taylor was in the bushes by the stone pile when McCausland passed along the road. George Clark told me that Zack Taylor had gone over to Masontown early on Saturday morning and returned to Greene County before the murder. I saw George Clark and Zack Taylor have right smart of money after the murder, more than poor men generally have. Jim Neff came down to our house on the morning of the murder and said that his horse was not very well, and [newspaper torn here] for his horse [newspaper torn here] Fredericktown. Neff got liquor; I saw it when they came back from Fredericktown. I told them that there was a man killed down there. Jim Neff wanted me to come up and swear that I saw the revolver on the ground before he inquired of Dr. Crow about the revolver, and told Neff.' (The revolver shown to Ben and identified by him as being the same revolver that he seen Zack Taylor have the night before the murder of William McCausland.) 'The reason that I know it is the same revolver is by the marks that is on it, that is J. T. C.'

Benjamin Clark

Sworn and subscribed before me this 20th day of June 1888.

W. T. Webb

W. T. Webb Sworn:

Q. Where do you live, squire?

A. Waynesburg.

Q. What is your position, what position do you hold?

A. Justice of the Peace.

Q. State if at any time you were called upon by any one to take the statement of Benjamin Clark, this defendant?

Here the attorneys for the defense asked that the jury be retired. The request was granted. [Newspaper torn here] the examinations proceeded as follows:

Q. Well, state, Squire if you was called upon by any one to take a statement of Ben Clark?

A. I was.

Q. Do you recollect when it was?

A. 19th of June.

Q. Of what year?

A. 1888.

Q. Well, what did you do in pursuance of that request?

A. Well, I came over to your office and Ben Clark was brought in.

Q. Well?

A. I took his statement.

Q. Now, then what if anything was said about who induced him to make the statement?

A. Well, I asked Ben if there was any inducement held out to him to make that statement. He said there was not by any body.

Q. By any person?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What further was said to him with regard to making a statement, as to whether it was free and voluntary?

A. He said he made it with his own free will. You made some remarks to him you could not [newspaper torn here] him anything [newspaper torn here] be used against him on his trial.

Q. What did he say to it?

A. He said he was making it with his own free will.

Q. Did you take the statement, Squire?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you write it down as he made it?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you date it, date the statement?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you take all the statement that day?

A. No, I went back on the 20th of June.

Q. At whose request?

A. Well I think Sheriff Lemley came after me the next day, I am not positive about it.

Q. Did you go?

A. Yes, sir I went.

Q. Well, what conversation had you with Ben Clark with regard to the statement made the next day what did he say he wanted done?

A. He had got something wrong in the statement, he wanted to hear it read and corrected. After I read it over, he said [newspaper torn here] right and added more to it on the second day.

Q. He added more?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he request you to put more in it?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he say that free and voluntary?

A. After he was through I asked him how he came to make such a statement. He made the remark to me: if ever you get into trouble you will feel like telling all you know about it.

Q. How many times was this statement read over to him before he signed it?

A. Several times.

Q. Did you read it sentence by sentence and ask him if it was right?

A. Yes, sir; as I took it down and then afterwards I read it over to him two or three times.

Q. Did he sign the statement?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he swear to it?

A. Yes, sir.

(Showing paper.) I wish you to look at this statement and see if it is the same statement you took?

(Examining paper.) Yes, sir, that is the same.

Q. That is in your hand write?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. That signature is in the handwriting of Benjamin Clark?

A. Yes, sir, Benjamin Clark write his name.

### **Would Have Made a Good Witness.**

The following testimony has been referred to but has never been printed before. It having been in the hands of the Board of Pardons until very recently.

Testimony was taken by Notary Public Samuel M. Smith, at Carmichaels, Nov. 13, 1889.

J. R. Gray being sworn and examined said: I live in the boro of Masontown, Pa. On the morning of the 10th Sept. '87, I was below Provin's ferry in a buggy with Miss Gertie Hall. We were there on a sand bar on the Fayette county side of the river, we were about 8 or 10 yards below the ferry: it was between 10 and 11 o'clock, I think before the baptism took place. [Newspaper torn here] a small crowd [newspaper torn here] for the crowd [newspaper torn here] we saw some parties over on the Greene county shore, and down the river below where we were I saw a dog boat or skiff with a man in it rowing it. I think the boat was nearer the Greene county shore than the other. I think the boat was coming up the river, a little above the bend in the river. I think Miss Hall called my attention to the boat, and said to me: 'What are they doing in the skiff?' I told her I thought they were fishing with a trot line. I thought this as they were paddling around in the stream. Do not remember as she asked me who they were, but think I said it was some of the Clarks fishing - or something of that kind. Do not remember if the party rowing had his back to me or not. Cannot say for sure whether there was any other party besides the rower in the boat or not. Could not say whether it was a dog boat or skiff. I said at one time I thought it was a dog boat, but I could not swear that it was. It was above the mouth of Whiteley creek where we saw



the boat, and I think it was before the baptizing commenced but do not know how long before. Do not know how long the boat was there.

On cross-examination Mr. Gray said he did not know the man in the boat, would not know George from Jno. Clark. Know Zack Taylor. Don't know whether it was him in the boat or not.

Gertie Hall, sworn: - Live in Cumberland Township. Am a daughter of Samuel Hall. Was with Mr. Gray on the morning of Sept. 10, '87, at baptizing and saw the boat in the river down near the bend and nearer the Greene County shore and rather coming up the river. I supposed they were taking up a trot line. Could not say how many were in the boat. I know there was one and there might have been more. Think I called Mr. Gray's attention to the boat by asking what they were doing down there and he said he supposed it was some of Clarks fishing. George Clark's name was not mentioned as I did not know there was such a person. I said there was two persons in the boat but cannot swear that there was. I intimated to my father that there were two in the boat. I believe, yes I know it was after the trial I first mentioned it at home. We were talking about the boat when I told it at home, it was in connection with the George Clark trial. My father told about the trial then I told this. Mr. Gray said, 'If it was known what we saw there we would make good witnesses,' and I do not think I made any remark about it. The conversation took place between Mr. Gray my father and myself at our house in which he said we would be subpoenaed as witnesses if they knew what we saw.

### **Jury.**

The jury which gave the verdict in the Taylor case is as follows: David Steele, farmer, Dunkard. Armstrong Grim, farmer, Springhill. W. B. Fox, farmer, Wayne. John Goodwin, farmer, Richhill. Byron Watson, farmer, Dunkard. George McCollum, farmer, Morris. Edward Daugherty, laborer, Jefferson. Luther E. Hartley, farmer, Perry. Daniel Simmons, farmer, Jefferson. J. W. Elbin, farmer, Aleppo. James Hamilton, potter, Greensboro. Rob't Watson, farmer, Center.

### **Zachariah Taylor.**

Zachariah, or Zacharias Taylor, as he writes it, is represented in the above cut. He was born in Maryland and is 39 years of age. His father's name was James Taylor, and his mother's name was Mary Anne Taylor. His mother died when he was 12 and his father died when he was 14 years of age. He was married to his wife, Elizabeth Taylor, on the 10th of June, 1875 and has lived in Fayette county since that time. They were married by Rev. McClintock. Six years ago Zack was baptized by Rev. Andrew Sterling and became a member of the Progressive Dunkard church. About four and a half years ago he decided to join the Old Dunkard church, and was re-baptized by Rev. John Johnson, and became a member there, and he has had a membership in that church since. He worked by the day, at times as deck hand on the river boats. Four children were born to them. Annie Jane, aged 14 years, William, aged 10, Minor Edgar, aged 8, and Rose Belle, aged 4. They have two children dead, one a twin of Minor Edgar, who is now 8 years old, the other would be six years of age if living.

### **Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor.**

Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, wife of the executed man an excellent portrait of whom is given above, was born in this county, is 33 years of age and is a sister to George Clark, who was executed on Feb. 26, last. Mrs. Taylor stayed with her husband for some two weeks, and left on Monday morning for her home, where she will be left with four children, the oldest of which is a girl of 14 years.

### **W. S. Anderson.**

Wm. Shaw Anderson, was born at North Jackson, Mahoning county, Ohio, on Dec. 31st, 1847. His father, David Anderson, was born in Ireland. W. S., studied law at Warren, Ohio, with Hutchins and Glidden, and was admitted to the bar, April 7, 1870, and began to practice at this profession shortly after at Canfield, Ohio. He had received his principal education at the district schools of his vicinity. In 1877 he moved to Youngstown, Ohio, where he has since resided. In 1864, he was married to Mrs. Louisa M. Shields, and they have now four children, and a happy home. Mr. Anderson has been engaged as counsel in a dozen murder trials at Youngstown and elsewhere, acting in some cases on the side of the prosecution and in others for the defendants, and has been generally successful in winning his cases. He was attorney for the defendant, James Robinson, at Pittsburgh, Penn'a, who was charged with being an accomplice of the notorious Blinkey Morgan. Robinson was acquitted. He was also Attorney for Lewis Webster who was twice convicted of murder in the first degree and at the third trial and turned free. Mr. Anderson was employed in his first murder case when only 21 years of age. He has now a large spread reputation, a large practice and is able to command good fees. He is a very popular man wherever he goes, our people will remember his cordial, friendly ways when here. He met every man as an equal, and was kindly in disposition and friendly in his relations with all. He has few superiors as a criminal lawyer.

In his address to the jury in the Taylor case Mr. Anderson made a profound sensation, not that his address was of a sensational character but because of its revelation of a perception and keenness in catching and holding together the various links of evidence which served to make the chain, and because of his unusual powers of divining the motives of witnesses and principals in the case. As for the address itself, taken as a whole it was at once earnest and practical, at times eloquent, and while he took advantage of every discrepancy in the testimony of a witness or in the argument of an opposing counsel, yet he used no harsh terms, cast no undue reflections, and acted in his pleading as elsewhere, as a perfect gentleman. At Washington in the Neff trial the newspapers said his address was the best ever delivered before a jury in that place.

By special request we reproduce in this column the illustrations used at the time of the execution of Geo. Clark with a brief synopsis of the history given at the time. This is done at the request of parties who failed to get a copy of the Democrat at that time, and who will get the present issue. George Clark is a son of Zadock Clark, was born in Cumberland township, Greene county, on Feb. 10, 1854. He worked about at all kinds of common work, and was an able bodied man. He was at one time before the court at this place, we believe on the charge of assault.

### **George Clark.**

George was arrested for the crime of murder Dec. 28, 1887, and was indicted at the January term following. He was first called for trial April 3d, 1888. He plead not guilty and was formally arraigned. It took two days to secure a jury, which when empanelled consisted of the following named persons, viz: 1 J. K. Loughridge, farmer, Richhill; 2 Edward Bond, farmer, Richhill; 3 D. W. Hopkins, farmer, Morris; 4 Lot McClure, farmer, Dunkard; 5 Henry Fletcher, farmer, Richhill; 6 George Willson, teamster, Franklin; 7 Jas. W. Donley, teacher, Dunkard; 8 Jesse Phillips, farmer, Wayne; 9 Joseph Dinsmore, farmer, Richhill; Hiram Smith, farmer, Center; 11 Edward Leonard, laborer, Richhill; 12 H. C. Lucas, druggist, Waynesburg. John S. Robb, of Pittsburgh, Dist. Atty. D. R. P. Huss, R. F. Downey and S. R. Huss, Esqs., of Waynesburg conducted the trial for the Commonwealth. Charles E. Boyle, Esq., of Uniontown, and Jas. E. Sayers, Esq. of Waynesburg, and Thos. Lincoln, Esq., of Carmichaels, acting for the defense.

The Commonwealth undertook to prove the presence of the accused in the vicinity of the murder at a time corresponding with that when the murder was committed, and to show that Clark was seen rather hurriedly leaving the scene by way of the hollow leading to the river at the mouth of Whiteley Creek, accompanied by Zack Taylor. That they were seen by John Parker as they went down the ravine, and were afterwards seen by Ben Provins as they crossed over the river to the Fayette county side, and still later on the other side of the river approaching Masontown. An alibi was claimed by the defense, but was not sustained. After a long legal battle the jury retired and after 24 hours and 58 minutes returned with a verdict of Guilty of murder in the first degree. From that time on until the day of execution Mr. Sayers devoted much of his time and energy to the interest of his client, and spent both time and money in appealing to the Court at Waynesburg, to the Supreme Court of the State, and to the Governor and Board of Pardons. In these efforts he was ably met by Mr. Huss, and finally the Governor became convinced that justice demanded the execution of the law, and after many delays and changes of time, Geo. Clark was executed on Wednesday Feb. 26, 1890, by Sheriff Goodwin, who was the first to execute the death sentence on a convicted man in the history of Greene county. Mr. Goodwin is a farmer, and was born on the old Goodwin property, in Center twp., Greene Co., Pa., on July 3d, 1840. Mr. Goodwin has been a faithful and efficient officer since assuming the duties of Sheriff upwards of a year ago, and will be always found consistently aiming to do what may be necessary to maintain his position with honor and credit. He is a deacon in the Baptist church, and a first-class citizen in every respect.

### **James E. Sayers.**

Was born in Waynesburg in May 1845. Mr. Sayers enlisted in the army at the age of 17. He was made First Sergeant, and afterward commanded a portion of the 85th at Appomattox. He graduated at Indiana State University in '89, and was admitted to practice at the Waynesburg bar in 1874. Mr. Sayers developed a character for persistency of purpose and a courage under adverse circumstances in the present trials which brought him prominently before the public. The great part of the work of the defense has rested with him as the leading local attorney in all the Clark cases, as well as in that of James Neff and Zachariah Taylor. In the Taylor case, Mr. Sayers did all that could be done for his client.

### **Dist. Att'y. D. R. P. Huss.**

D. R. P. Huss, Esq., Dist. Atty. is a native of Little Greene, and was admitted to the bar at Waynesburg in 1864, since which time he has been in active practice of his profession with the exception of a few years spent on his farm. He is now serving his second term of District Attorney, having been first elected in 1884. He was an indefatigable fighter in these cases which have become so widely known and so inseparably woven into the history of our county. In the present case he was assisted by W. S. Anderson, R. F. Downey and S. R. Huss, all of whom were able assistants and who have won credit by their alertness and skill as manifested in the trials.

### **On Monday Night.**

On Monday night Zack rested well. He engaged in conversation on Monday not only in a cheerful but often jovial manner. He went to bed about 12 o'clock, and in 10 minutes was fast asleep. He rested well until about 4 o'clock at which time he got up and partook of a lunch and then again retired and was soon in a sound slumber from which he did not awake for some time. On Tuesday morning with only 24 hour between himself and death, he was engaged in conversation, and seemed in no wise concerned about the coming morrow. As far as outward appearances go he did not manifest anything like the appreciation of the situation that George Clark did at the same stage in his case. On Monday morning Taylor's wife left him, knowing that when she would see him again it would be as a corpse. She took the parting very much to heart and sobbed piteously. At this trying time Zack retained his composure and stood at the bars of the door counseling his wife to control her grief. 'Let them kill me,' said he, 'I am innocent and I'll be at that much better off.'

After the parting his wife took her departure with her brother-in-law who had come after her on Sunday.

Elder Campbell Jobes, of the Disciple church, visited Taylor in his cell on Monday evening. He counseled Zack in regard to his future and urged him to repentance and confession. As far as the crime is concerned Zack denied all knowledge of it, and when Mr. Jobes went to leave Zack requested him to be present at the execution. Mr. Jobes said 'I have no desire to witness such a scene out of curiosity, and do not know that I could well stand it under any circumstances.' 'Why?' said Zack, 'I would think you could stand it if I can.' To this bit of philosophy Mr. Jobes could make no reply.

### **Tuesday.**

On Tuesday Zack spent the day very pleasantly, talking in an unconcerned manner about little matters, laughing and chatting as contentedly as any man in town. A good part of the day a crowd stood outside the jail in the alley and Zack would go to the jail windows and converse with them. He was as little concerned as any one in the crowd outside. When the enclosure was being nailed up he paid no attention to the noise. Once or twice during the day he held up an open hand saying: 'Look at that, isn't that steady enough?' Undertaker Ganear was to furnish the coffin and wanted Zack's height, but didn't like to broach the subject, so they concluded to get it incidentally without letting Zack know the object. They entered the cell and soon began to talk about their relative heights, when Zack said: 'Here, just get out your tape line and measure me, I know what you're after.' They had no further trouble.

On Tuesday night Zack did not go to bed until about half past 2 o'clock, his son was in the jail with him, and at that hour Zack knelt down with him and offered a fervent prayer. He then requested the guard to inform the writer of that fact and retired to his bed, sleeping until morning. At about midnight he said that he wished that morning would come and the sooner the execution was over with the better, and for his part he could see but little difference between a man about to be hung and any other.

He also requested the privilege of offering up a prayer after being taken to the scaffold.

### **Wednesday. The Last Scene. Taylor Dies on The Scaffold.**

A very few minutes before this paper was printed Zack Taylor was led forth from the prison cell in which he had been confined since December 28th, 1887. He was in the midst of life, in the prime of manhood, in ordinary health, and perhaps, with a keener and more lively appreciation of life and a stronger desire to live than that experienced by any other individual present. As a living human being he was brought forth, marched upon the platform, had the rope adjusted around his neck, the black cap drawn over his face - and in a moment more he was hurled from his position and hung suspended between heaven and earth and now, a lifeless corpse, the dead body of Zack Taylor lies confined and ready for burial. Representatives of the Democrat were present at the execution and the following is a correct description of the scenes as they transpired.

Inside the enclosure was a number of spectators, reporters from various newspapers, both from this and other places, and a jury of twelve men, as follows:

Hon. John Blair, Perry; Seth Goodwin, Center; Joseph Wiley, Waynesburg; Harvey Day, Franklin; I. M. Ames, Richhill; James Hoge, Center; Robinson John, Whiteley; E. P. Miller, Richhill; Samuel Roach, Richhill; Porter Phillips, Jackson; George Arrison, Waynesburg; L. L. Rich, Jefferson township.

At precisely 11:02 the Sheriff and his attendants entered the enclosure, and at once ascended the seven steps leading to the scaffold, in the following order; first came Dr. J. T. Ullom and Rev. James A. Maxwell, followed by Sheriff Jno. T. Goodwin and his prisoner, Zachariah Taylor, with Deputy Sheriffs Randolph Goodwin and Ed. S. Goodwin.

Zack stepped forward and addressed the crowd saying in most emphatic terms that he was innocent. 'Gentleman I am an innocent man. I never saw the man who was killed, I never set my eyes on him, I never saw him with my eyes. God knows I never saw him, and God knows I am innocent.'

He was then followed in prayer by J. A. Maxwell. He spoke of the prisoners declaration of innocence; spoke of the laws as being ordained of God, and spoke of the assurance that if man had erred, there was the full assurance that God would not, and put up a strong petition for the future of the man about to die.

Taylor then knelt down and repeated at first in audible but in constantly weakening voice, the Lord's Prayer. The first few sentences were firm but the latter somewhat less so.

After rising to his feet he again spoke, declaring his innocence, saying: 'Farewell gentlemen I am going home.' I hope to meet you all in heaven. He asked if he had a friend there who wished to shake hands with him.

Coolly stooping down he hooked his own ankles together by the straps prepared for the purpose. He then kissed all those on the platform bidding farewell, and saying to each 'God bless you.' Several of those on the platform were in tears. The cap was then drawn and at 11 [newspaper torn here] the drop fell, there was a few convulsive moves of the body, his arms rose and fell, his legs drew up slowly and dropped again a number of times. At 11:15 pulse 125, at 11:17 pulse 145, at 11:19 pulse 72, at 11:20 1/2 pulse gone, at 11:23 Zack Taylor was dead, and was then taken down and his body given to his friends."