

ARKANSAS TRAVELERS.

ON THEIR LAST LEGS.

Six of Them Will Be Swung From a Stage Into the Styx Simultaneously.

ANOTHER FORT SMITH STRANGLING BEE.

BLOOD-CURDLING CRIMES COMMITTED BY THE BRUTES—FORT SMITH TO BE THE SCENE OF THEIR SLAUGHTER.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat of Thursday gives this graphic pen picture of the crimes perpetrated by the six murderers who are to be hanged at Fort Smith soon: On Saturday, the 5th inst., the United States Court room was the scene of another wholesale sentencing. The court room was densely crowded at an early hour to hear the death sentence passed on six men convicted of murder. The first one brought out was Aaron Wilson. Aaron Wilson is a negro, born in Virginia, about five feet seven inches tall, and about twenty-five years of age. He is heavily built; has a retreating forehead, thick, bull-like neck, his whole physique indicating brute force and brutish instincts. He was convicted of murdering an old man named James Harris, about fifty-six years of age, and a boy—son of Harris—twelve years old, about twelve miles from Fort Hill, in the Indian country. The old man and his son were traveling through the Indian country to Texas, in a wagon containing a trunk and a box, in which were some calico, clothing and other articles. Wilson followed them for some miles. He seems to have killed the father first. While this was being done, the boy endeavored to escape by running, but was pursued by Wilson and killed about 175 yards from his father. They were both shot, the boy's body being literally riddled with buckshot. After

MURDERING HIS VICTIMS.

Wilson took both the horses from the wagon, hid the vehicle in the brush, dressed himself with clothing from the wagon, and took a number of other things which he carried off in a handkerchief. He went with his plunder to the Wichita Agency, and told the Indians that he had taken the things from two white men whom he had killed, supposing from what he had heard of Indian character that it would recommend him to them. The Indians, however, reported him to the agent. He afterwards denied all knowledge of the killing, but the property was so fully identified as to leave no doubt of his guilt, without taking his confession into account. For stolid indifference as to the result of his trial this man surpassed any other ever tried at this place. After describing the scenes in court and giving the full text of the judge's address and sentence the Globe-Democrat correspondent reviews the other cases as follows: Jaham Seely and Gibson Iahntaubbe are both Choctaw Indians, about the same size and age, being about five feet eight, and about twenty-one or twenty-two years of age. From their appearance they would be taken for brothers. They are not remarkable for blood thirsty or ferocious countenances; on the contrary, they are of a sleepy cast of countenance, with the usual Indian features. They were indicted and tried for

THE MURDER OF A COLORED WOMAN

by the name of Mason, in April, 1873. The history of the case is briefly as follows: An old Indian doctor, named "Funny," lived about eight miles from Stonewall, in the Chickasaw Nation, and had the negro woman Mason employed to cook for him. Seely and Iahntaubbe appeared, from the testimony, to have threatened the life of "Funny" sometime previous to the killing. The night before the killing they went to Funny's house and stayed all night. Toward morning they got up and killed both Funny and the woman. Funny was killed with an ax by Iahntaubbe and the woman with a gun-barrel by "Seely." They were not indicted for killing "Funny." He being an Indian and the murderers being Indians, the United States Court has no jurisdiction. The morning after the killing they returned to the neighborhood of their homes, bringing with them a pair of boots, a dress and a pair of pants, and told several Indians at and near their homes that the clothing belonged to Funny and the woman, and that they had killed them. They afterwards burned the clothing and tried to hide the evidence of their guilt. No disclosures were made until after Iahntaubbe fell out with a woman with whom he was living. The woman stated what he had told her. This put the deputy marshals on the track, and they worked up the case to a full development of all the facts of this brutal murder.

SENTENCED THROUGH AN INTERPRETER.

These men, not understanding English, were addressed by the court and sentenced through a Choctaw interpreter. They both protested their innocence and alleged perjury on the part of the witnesses. There is nothing, however, in the case to warrant belief in their story. They received the sentence with the utmost unconcern, and upon being returned to the jail, just before the shackles were put on Seely, he jumped up, cracked his heels together, and shouted out, "Chick-a-Me," which has about the same meaning as the word "hully." Office McGee was next brought into court. Office McGee is a Choctaw Indian, about twenty years of age, six feet high, and well built. He and his brother, David McGee, and another Indian named Homer, were indicted for murdering Robert Alexander, a white man, on Red river, near the mouth of the Boggy, in Choctaw nation, on the 22d of April, 1874. Homer was killed while resisting the officers who attempted to arrest him for his offense. Office and David McGee were placed on their trial together, the result of which was the conviction of Office and acquittal of David. The circumstances were about as follows: Robert Alexander and his brother had been quite efficient in ferreting out and arresting criminals in their section of the Indian country, which brought them

UNDER THE BAN OF THE OUTLAWS

and resulted in the murder of Robert Alexander, while the murder of the brother is considered only a question of time, and is but one of many instances of murder of men who dare in that country to aid in the enforcement of the law. Alexander started out of the house of a Mr. Miller, about an hour and a half before dark with a gun to shoot some wild turkeys, which he heard a short distance from the house. About half an hour after his leaving Miller's house Miller heard two reports of a gun or pistol. Miller waited supper for him some time. Not returning that night, he hunted for him until dinner time the next day, when he informed Alexander's brother, who, with Miller and others resumed the search, and found the body a quarter of a mile from the house, with a frightful wound

in the neck, from which it was apparent that he must have been shot by a man on horseback, but a few feet from him, his hair being burnt and part of the wadding from the gun being found in the wound. Alexander's brother immediately procured a commission as deputy United States marshal and started out to ferret out the murderers, who took the gun and a pistol which Alexander had in his possession when killed. After several months' searching, the McGee brothers were arrested, and the proof of possession of the gun and pistol by Office McGee was traced to him, and it was shown that he had told several conflicting stories regarding the possession, as well as that he was seen within a mile of the place of the killing, loading a shot gun, shortly after the shots were heard.

THE PRISONER STOICAL.

When asked if he had anything to say why the sentence of the law should not be passed upon him, he replied that he was not guilty; that the possession of the gun of the murdered man was all he had to do with it. It was necessary to use an interpreter in his case, he being a Choctaw Indian. He received his sentence without any display of feeling whatever. Asa Sanders was then requested to stand up. Asa Sanders was charged with killing Thomas H. Carlyle, a white man, in the Cherokee Nation, about twelve miles from Talequah. Sanders is a full-blood Cherokee Indian, about twenty-nine years of age, and about five feet eleven inches high. He is a fair specimen of his tribe, with a dull, but, at the same time, vindictive expression of countenance, and, throughout his trial, acted with the utmost unconcern. This murder seems to have been committed solely for plunder, under the following circumstances: Thomas H. Carlyle was a thrifty, industrious man, and had in his house and on his person some \$1,200 in money and Cherokee warrants. Carlyle and his wife were sitting on a porch, about five or six steps from the front gate of his house, about dark on the 6th day of August, 1875. Sanders, and an unknown Indian, came up to the gate and spoke to Carlyle, who invited them in. They not understanding the fastening on the gate, he sent his daughter to open it for them. When they came onto the porch, Mrs. Carlyle noticed that they both had pistols. So soon as they got on the porch, the unknown Indian grabbed Carlyle and endeavored to throw him. Mrs. Carlyle begged Sanders, whom she knew, to make the man desist, when

HE DREW HIS PISTOL ON HER,

and then went to where the struggle was going on. Mrs. Carlyle then made up her mind that they were intent on murder, and ran to gather up her children and hide with them. While engaged in this, she heard three shots. She ran to a ditch, about 150 yards from the house, with part of the children, where she remained about half an hour, when her little boy, with two little girls, came and called her. She returned to the house, and found her husband lying on the ground dead, his pockets turned inside out, and a trunk, in which the Cherokee warrants and money were, was gone. None of the property has been recovered. The only feeling shown by Sanders was at the house of Carlyle the day after the murder, he claiming that he was sick at home at the time of the murder. A relative of Carlyle measured tracks at the house and measured Sanders's shoe, which was found to fit the track and had a heel plate on it just like the mark in the track. At that time he shook as if with ague and turned very pale. He has made no confessions regarding the killing. Sanders denied all knowledge of the murder, and said the men who did it were still at large. A Cherokee interpreter had to be used for him. He received his sentence without any emotion. William Leach was

THE LAST OF THE SIX DOOMED MEN.

He is a white man, about forty-two years of age. Born in Georgia, is about five feet eight inches high, heavily built, gray eyes, dark hair, slightly mixed with gray. There is nothing in his appearance which would indicate that he was capable of a crime so atrocious as he was found guilty of. The charge was that of murdering John Watkins, a white man, in the Cherokee Nation, about eight miles from Cincinnati, in Arkansas. After the killing, it seems that leaves and grass were gathered around the body and dried, burning the body badly. The killing was done on the 8th of March, 1875, but the skeleton was not found until the 9th of April following. With the skeleton was found a piece of fiddle-bow, pieces of cloth, some buttons, a knife, small screw-driver and a glove. The history of the case, in brief, is that the parties started from Cincinnati, Ark., together, Watkins riding and Leach on foot. Watkins had in his possession a violin and a small four-barreled pistol, and Leach a gun. They stopped at a blacksmith shop, where it was noticed by two parties that Leach wore shoes and Watkins boots. It seems that they traveled together about eight miles, and that Watkins was never afterward seen. The scraps of cloth found were shown to be like the clothes worn by Watkins. The screw-driver was identified, and a gun, the pistol and boots were traced back to the possession of Leach, and fully identified. It required

THE TESTIMONY OF SEVENTEEN WITNESSES

on the part of the prosecution to make the chain complete. The case, however, as made out, shows the murder was committed for property, the value of which could not have been more than \$12 or \$15. Leach has remained silent thus far as to the killing. When the verdict was rendered, his wife and only child, a boy about 12 years of age, were present, and broke out into lamentation and shrieks, which brought tears to the eyes of most of those present, the prisoner being apparently unmoved. Like the five who preceded him, he claimed to be innocent of the crime. He had but little to say other than that his conviction was the result of a conspiracy against him, and that all he could say would be to no purpose now. He evinced deep feeling while the judge directed his attention to the facts of his case and pronounced his sentence. It should not be forgotten that none of the murders for which these men were convicted were committed in Arkansas. The court is located in the state, but all the offenses were committed in the Indian territory.