
BY COALE & BARR

Friday, Jan. 30, 1863.

The Execution.

On Friday last, pursuant to sentence, the two negroes, Jerry and Jim, who brutally murdered Mr. Wm. McDaniel Jr., of this county, in October last, were hung in this vicinity.

When the circumstances of the murder for which these incarnate devils were executed are called up—its unprovoked atrocity—the inoffensive and amiable character of the victim—the large and helpless family so cruelly bereaved—the vicious and dangerous character of the outlaws who perpetrated the deed—no stronger evidence could be given of the high moral tone and law-abiding disposition of this community, in not inflicting prompt and merited punishment without the form of law, immediately after the apprehension of the culprits.

Not only were they tried by a regular Court with able counsel assigned them, but a respite of more than thirty days was given them to prepare for their fate. During all this time they were allowed the exhortations and advice of the ministers of religion, and every immunity that far less guilty wretches could have expected. Indeed, forbearance under the circumstances was a wonderful virtue.

Jerry, the master spirit in the crime, manifested far more penitence than his accomplice, and much greater dread of the gallows. At about a quarter past 12 the drop fell, and they swung off into eternity. They struggled but little, but life lingered in Jim some 15 minutes longer than in Jerry, tho' the struggles of the latter were the most violent.

As usual, on such occasions, there was, taking everything into consideration—the many persons absent from the country, the familiarity of the people with death-scenes, and the unfavorable condition of the roads—a very large concourse present to witness the sight.

At an early hour they began to pour into town from the farthest limits of this and adjoining counties, and from the gorges and coves of the mountains. They came by railroad, in wagons, on horses and mules, and hundreds came wading up to their knees in mud. Some rode bare-backed, others on sheep-skins, and others again with halters and blind-bridles.— Little boys and negroes, galloped into town almost breathless, bespattered with mud and wild with excitement to see two negroes choked to death. But stranger still was it to see probably not less than a thousand hearty, robust young men, jostling and elbowing their way through the dense mass of humanity towards the field where the scene was to be enacted; and when we saw them working and twisting their tortuous way like so many eels in the mud, we wondered if they would have been as eager and as hurried if there had been a squad of Yankees in that direction. If Stonewall Jackson had them, he would cross the Potomac in a week. *But he hasn't got*

the Potomac in a week. *But he hasn't got them.* Wonder if they will be here when Maj. Terry holds his court?

But this is a digression. We will close the account with the confessions of the culprits, as voluntarily given:

JERRY'S CONFESSION.

The following is the substance of Jerry's confession on the evening before the execution. We take it from a letter dictated by him to his mother:

I send you a few lines concerning the murder of Mr. McDaniel, which will be the last you will ever receive from your dear son.— Jack, Jim and myself were walking along, when we saw a man coming across the hill towards us with a gun. We went to the fence and were sitting on it, when he came and got on the fence, and asked us where we got such large rolls of leather. I told him we got them in Tennessee, and were going to the Salt-Works. He asked us if we didn't know that everything was bound down in Tennessee, and that we couldn't bring anything out of the State. We told him we brought it out of the State. He said, "boys, it looks mighty strange

State. He said, "boys, it looks mighty strange to see you carrying such big rolls of leather through the woods—pick it up and take it down to Mr. Preston's."

Jim said to Mr. McDaniel, "You stay here by the leather till we go to the spring and get a drink, and then we'll come back and carry it to Mr. Preston's." I said, "Jim, come back and carry the leather where the man told you—I aint going to carry mine over." I put my hand in my pocket as if I was going to pull out a pistol, and Mr. McDaniel said, "Don't come too close," (standing with his gun cocked.) I said to him "shoot and be d—d. I've got as many shooting irons as anybody." I said to Jack, "get over the fence there and take hold of him." Jack got over and took hold of him, while I tried to get the gun out of his hands. I couldn't get it out, and shot it off in his hands. I then snatched the gun out of his hand and hit him on the arm. I hit him three or four licks, and cut a long gash on his temple, and one on his arm, with the gun.

We all left him, took our leather and went across the field into the pines. I left my clothes, and had to go back. I saw one of Mr. Preston's men coming, and we took him up through the woods to keep him from seeing Mr. McDaniel, and I told Jim to go back

and cover up Mr. McDaniel, and to take my clothes and go back to the woods where the leather was. We had left Jack to stay by the leather till we got back. Jim came to me and told me Mr. McDaniel was not dead. We then went and took him to the side of a log, and covered him up—he was still alive.

Between sundown and dark we all went to where he lay to take him to the railroad.— Jack and Jim got there before I did, and he was still alive. We tore up a sack and tied strings around his feet and neck, and started to carry him on the gun, when the stock broke off. I went to the fence and got a rail, and Jack and Jim carried him to the creek. He died before we got to the creek. Jack hit him the first lick with a stick.

During the scuffle, Mr. McDaniel said—“Boys, if you’ll quit I will—I won’t say anything about it.” Jack said, “why didn’t you go on and attend to your own business then?” Mr. McDaniel said, “Oh, boys, don’t kill me. I have a large family.”

I went along with Jack and Jim, and carried Mr. McDaniel’s gun, coat and hat, and the boys’ coats and hats. We all put him in the creek and left him. I went to Col. Preston’s, and Jim and Jack went to James Preston’s.

JIM'S CONFESSION.

This also is taken from a letter dictated by Jim to his mother, on the morning of the day of execution:

I must say to you how sorry I am for having had anything to do with the murder of Mr. McDaniel. Jack struck him the first blow with a stick, as he had his gun pointed at me while I was walking away from him, after telling him to stay by the leather while I went to the spring. Jerry threw up his arm and struck the gun. I went back to cover him up, and found he was not dead. I struck him—he raised his head, and I walked away from him. Shortly after Jerry and myself took him to the log and covered him up. Between sundown and dark Jack and myself carried him to the creek.

I am condemned to be hung to-day, being guilty of the murder of Mr. McDaniel. I am not yet prepared to meet death, and to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. I am earnestly engaged in prayer to God for Christ's sake to have mercy on my soul.
