

AS FLOYD ALLEN TELLS IT

Roanoke, Va., March 20.—Floyd Allen, whose sentence to one year imprisonment led to the tragedy in court at Hillsville last Thursday, today gave his story of the tragedy. It reads: "I and my son have been locked up here nearly a week now. I want a square deal. In the first place, my son Victor never fired a single shot. We both expect to be electrocuted. Our murder is as certain as the sun will rise tomorrow. But it will be plain murder, if they put Vic in the chair. Me? Why, sure, I fired. But before God I give you my solemn oath I did not start the firing. I did not know when Judge Massie pronounced sentence that there would be any shooting. It came unexpectedly to me. That there was a conspiracy is a lie."

"Of course, when everybody else started shooting I got my pistol and joined in the fray. Why shouldn't I? It was in self-defense. When our people went into the courtroom they intended to kill nobody, and I at heart was ready to go to jail. I am not afraid of death, and that is what is looking us in the face. Judge Hairston is my lawyer but they won't give him any show. We will be all tried in Carroll county if I have any say about it, and we Allens—we are fighting men—will show them how an Allen can go to his death; but Vic, I want you to help save him. The boy never drew his gun, maybe he ought to have, but he didn't."

Ex-Judge N. H. Hairston said: "I was asked by Mr. Allen to visit him today, and when I saw him he insisted on my acting as his counsel. I have not decided whether I will do so or not, but no matter what position I take I would like printed this statement: 'Both Victor and Floyd Allen have given me their solemn oaths that they did not start the firing that day in the Hillsville Court-house. I believe them. These are not the ordinary type of mountaineers. These people are men of property and sense. No matter what crime a man may have committed he is entitled to a fair hearing, and these people will get theirs or I will know the reason why.'"

Floyd Allen is, comparatively speaking, old, but he is still strong and vigorous. Standing over six feet in his socks his carriage is erect; he is alert and vigorous with a mass of curly gray hair covering his head. His brow is broad; his eyes twinkle and flash as he speaks. He is better educated than the usual mountaineer and he talks with intelligence upon ordinary current topics. Judge Hairston was permitted to visit him today only after repeated attempts. A minister also visited him for more than an hour and after he left said: "Whatever this man's crime may be he has repented and the gates of Heaven will not be closed against him."

In his talk with his lawyer, Allen bent down and wept. Judge he said, "I am not afraid to die, but my wife, I love her today as much as I did when I married her when I was a boy. These people won't let me see her or send her a message." "Will you advise them to give in?" asked Judge Hairston. "Never!" was the emphatic reply. "We are now marked men. To give in would be to sign our own death warrants. No, the Allens will fight." Here the old man broke down and wept pitifully and implored the lawyer to save Victor.

Hillsville, Va., March 21.—Another tragedy was enacted in the old Carroll county court house today. Another troop of mountaineers rode in, shot the judge down off his bench and duplicated the gruesome assassination of a week ago—but this time it was only for the moving pictures. The moving picture actors did more firing and made more racket and caused almost as much fuss as the real outlaws did and Hillsville almost had as much excitement over again. The only real fighting was between the moving picture men. Hillsville riot, which extends from the court house to the blacksmith shop, was not replete with amateur. Theatians who wanted to take a part in the scene, and competitions for their services was keen. The pictures were finally made after much re-arranging, while the camera men clicked off the reels and the stage managers with megaphone made noises in the nearby hills. Meanwhile the chase of the outlaws for all that most folk here know, has not progressed,

but Governor Mann and the authorities are panning a coup. A plan is afoot which is expected to materialize the last of this week or the first of next. The Governor admitted this today and declined to discuss his plans.

"I don't think it proper to say what these steps are," he said, "but they are vigorous and, I think in the right direction."

The posse which left here so hurriedly on Tuesday night has not been seen or heard from since. It is now known that the hunters will not quarter in Hillsville but will stay out in the mountains and camp on the trail of the outlaws. This latest move supports the theory that the two small posses which have been operating in and out of town were merely blinds to conceal the movements of the larger posse, which has been secretly brought over into the mountains from the coal fields, and that the detectives have been feinting with the smaller posses for the benefit of those friends of the Allens who are supposed to have been keeping them posted.

Hillsville, Va., March 22.—Sidna Edwards, aged 22, a tall rugged mountaineer, sat calmly in the darkness of the little brick jail here tonight, the first catch of the posses who have been scouring the mountains for those of the Allen gang who got away after the court house assassination of March 14, when a judge, prosecutor, sheriff and two bystanders were killed and two others were seriously wounded.

Tonight young Edwards, emaciated and worn from a week's wandering in the thicket, protests his innocence of the indictment of murder against him, and the hunters, spurred on by a days success, are up in the Blue Ridge hunting for the same charge, his brother, Wesley Edwards, his uncle Sidna Allen, and his cousins, Claude and Friel Allen.

Detective Legrand Felts and W. W. Phaut, heading a posse, came upon Edwards at 4 o'clock this morning, asleep in an empty hut a mile from his home. He was unarmed and when he awoke the detectives were at his side. He made no resistance and went to a farmer's house near Lamsburg, Va., and started for Hillsville with his captors early today. Jack Allen, his uncle—one of the Allens who was not at the court house on the day of the tragedy, joined his nephew on the way in and galloped along with the party and cantered in and paused while the moving picture men clicked off a few hundred feet of film. Detectives carrying rifles followed closely. The party turned in at a little lane where the raiders a week ago drew rein and left their ponies while they went to wipe out the human factor of Carroll court. Sidna left his mount and was hustled to the little jail across from the stable. He protested against being put into a musty cell and wanted to occupy the corridor, but his keeper was stern and locked him up.

Jack Allen came out and said to the newspaper men: "My nephew Sidna is the most peaceable man in the county. He wouldn't know what to do with a gun if he had it. In the presence of Detective Felts, Edwards talked freely tonight. "I know nothing of the cause of the court house shooting," he said. "I walked into the court room when I saw uncle Floyd jump up and say something. I could not hear what it was. Right away somebody began to shout from about Clerk Goad's desk, but I don't know who fired the first shot. I saw my uncle Sidna after the shooting began. I did not see my cousin or my brothers. As soon as I could with my lame foot I got out of the court house and stood at the bottom of the steps. I saw uncle Sidna and Mr. Goad shooting at one another. After it was over I got my mother's horse and rode home. Before I left I saw Uncle Floyd on a horse and then I saw him lying on the ground. If he had been able to ride we would have taken him away with us. I saw my brother Wesley on the road and that afternoon I saw Uncle Sidna at his store. I have never seen any of them or heard tell anything about them or where they are, since that evening. I stayed at home until Sunday and had started to a neighbor's when I saw the officers. I was in plain view from the road and they could have taken me then but I did not go back home because I heard the officers had orders to shoot all of us on sight. I went about and lived the best I could until the officers run up on me last night. I did not have a pis-

tol at the court house or while I was trying to keep from being arrested."

It is understood that witnesses before the grand jury which returned the indictment testified that Sidna Edwards handed a pistol on the court house green to Sidna Allen to enable the latter to continue his pistol duel with Clerk Goad.

Spencer, March 22.—H. T. Hackett of Spencer gives an interesting account of a visit made last fall to the Hillsville section of Virginia. He stopped at a splendid farm house and made arrangements with the landlord to hunt a few days in the mountains. Taking their guns, they started out up the mountain and were fired upon from ambush when only half way to the top. Mr. Hackett laid flat down in the wagon bed while his host took shelter behind the oxen they were driving. The owner of the team, realizing the dangerous situation took Mr. Hackett's gun and returned the fire, shooting a dozen or more times at his assailants. He received a score or more shot in the face and neck and had to return to Mount Airy for treatment. The effect of the shots fired by himself were unknown. His assailants were also unknown.

This occurred in the neighborhood of Sidna Allen. Mr. Hackett states that he spent a short time at his home, a splendid brick mansion with all modern conveniences. Although Mr. Hackett went to Carroll county to buy land, it took him but a short time to decide that he did not want to own a farm in that section of the mountains.

(Continued on First Page.)

Pulitzer's Passion for Truth.

In the April American Magazine there is a most interesting character sketch of the late Joseph Pulitzer, the blind editor of the New York World, who died leaving a fortune of twenty or twenty-five million dollars. The article is by Alleyne Ireland, who was one of Mr. Pulitzer's secretaries. Following is an interesting extract, showing Mr. Pulitzer's passion for truth: "In this connection I recall that it was Mr. Pulitzer's invariable custom to enquire of newly joined members of his staff what they deemed to be the functions, duties, and responsibilities of an American newspaper. When it came to my turn to discourse upon this topic I adopted a view which, in the absence of any strong personal conviction, I could at least defend as one commonly held by many Americans with whom I had discussed the matter. The chief duty of an editor, I said, was to give his readers an interesting paper. A sub-stratum of truth should run through the news columns; but since a million-dollar fire was more interesting than a half-million-dollar fire, since a thousand deaths in an earthquake were more striking than a hundred, no nice scrupulousness need be observed in checking the architect's estimates or in counting the victims: what the public wanted was the good 'story,' and provided it got that there would be little disposition in any quarter to blame an arithmetical generosity which had been invoked in the service of its own well-recognized preferences. So far as politics were concerned any newspaper could afford the strongest support to its views whilst printing the truth and nothing but the truth, provided it exercised some discretion as to printing the WHOLE truth. The editorial, I added, might be regarded as a habit rather than as a guiding force. People no longer looked to the editorial columns to form their opinions for them, but, having formed their opinions from a large stock of facts and near-facts, bought a paper which supported their views, and read the editorials for the purpose of comfortable reassurance.

"This somewhat cynical outburst brought down upon me an overwhelming torrent of protest from Mr. Pulitzer. If that was, indeed, my opinion, it disclosed a complete ignorance of American character and a deplorable misapprehension, alike of the high sense of duty which in the main animated American journalism, and of the foundations of integrity upon which alone a successful newspaper enterprise could be erected in the United States. The sensationalism, the flaring head-lines, the dramatic emphasis, were to American journalism what the drum and the trumpet were to the Salvation Army, a means by which the heedless multitude could be brought to listen to a message of

truth, liberty, and redemption. "And indeed in all that related to The World and to Mr. Pulitzer's unwearying activity on its behalf I can bear testimony to his passion for accurate information. No trouble was too great, no exertion too burdensome, no expense too heavy if at the end there was a reasonable prospect of the truth being discovered."

Fun Ahead

We are expecting some fun from that Senatorial primary. It will be remembered that in 1900 when the Democrats stole the election, that it was reported that through Mr. Simmons' efforts as State Chairman, Halifax county went Democratic by 5000 majority, when in fact there was not that many voters in the county. It was also reported that Mr. Simmons, when informed as to the tremendous majority wired back, "For God sake reduce your majority." The people over the state thought that it was Simmons who did the work, but come to think of it, Halifax county is where Gov. Kitchin was born and raised, it is the home of the Kitchin's. It looks to us like its going to be blackgum against thunder and lightning.—News Dispatch

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