

FEARFUL TRAGEDY IN LEAVENWORTH CITY, KANSAS.

Foul Murder—Confessions of the Murderer—A Band of Conspirators Discovered—Two of them Arrested and Hung—Great Excitement Among the Citizens.

The telegraph dispatches published in the Sun yesterday gave an account of a fearful tragedy enacted at Leavenworth city, Kansas, on Friday night and Saturday morning last. Andrew Stewart, Esq., editor of the Steubenville (Ohio) Union, who left Leavenworth on Saturday night last, has furnished the St. Louis Democrat with the following details:

On Friday night, the 31st ult., a man named Stephens, living in Kansas city, came up to Leavenworth, and, while speeding around, went into a drinking shop called the Ward House. The barkeeper, named Baines, became very friendly, and after getting Stephens quite drunk, proposed a walk up the river, and took him to a spring on the bank of the Missouri river just above the Planters' House, where they were met and assaulted by two men who demanded their money or their lives. The barkeeper, Baines, gave his money up and ran off. When he got to the lower end of town he gave the alarm that a man was being robbed up the river at the spring. Several parties of citizens immediately went up and arrived on the spot just in time to find poor Stephens crawling out of the river, his body and head beaten and bruised with stones and clubs, and his chest and shoulders bearing several terrible stabs and cuts. The citizens ran to his assistance, but the unfortunate victim, though struggling to speak, was too far gone, and presently died without being able to utter a single word about the manner of his death, or the names of his murderers.

Suspicion at once alighted upon the barkeeper, Baines, and so outraged were the people, and so violent the presumptions of his guilt, that a posse of the citizens at once arrested and held him in close custody. The news in the meantime spread like wild fire all over the city and the excitement grew intense. An immediate trial of Baines was demanded, and finally it was agreed that he should be hung on the spot, without judge or jury. A rope was procured and put around his neck, and already he was being drawn up to the limb of an overhanging tree, when he expressed a wish to make a confession. The crowd yielded and let him down to the ground.

STARTLING CONFESSION.

He said that he had two men, one named John Quarles, from South Carolina, and the other called Knowlton, had laid the plot by which Stephens was robbed and murdered, and that the same men had murdered another man a short time before and thrown the body into the Missouri river. He stated also that he and the men Knowlton and Quarles belonged to an organized body of twenty-five men, who lived and carried on the business of robbing and murdering in Leavenworth city, on the island opposite the city, and in the towns of Lawrence and Topeka. He then gave the names of as many of the gang as he could remember to the authorities.

THE ARRESTS.

As soon as Baines had finished his revelations he was committed to the calaboose, a one-story stone building, about sixteen feet square. The crowd then went off in pursuit of Quarles and Knowlton, and in a short time had them arrested. Among the revealed conspirators was Wm. Woods, the proprietor of the greater part of Leavenworth Island, and regarded by his acquaintances as an honest man and good citizen. A party proceeded at once to arrest him, and, after making a thorough search of his house, found *twenty-five hundred dollars in counterfeit money, a lot of counterfeit-plate and other instruments, and a knife and pistol belonging to the murdered man, Stephens.* At these conclusive proofs of the correctness of the confessions of Baines the people were deeply moved, and held counsel together in large and small parties during the whole night.

THE PROCEEDINGS ON SATURDAY—QUARLES AND BAINES HUNG.

We here give the narrative of Mr. Stewart.—He says: "I went to the mayor's office on Saturday morning, and found an immense crowd awaiting the result of the examination of Woods and Knowlton. Baines and Quarles were in the calaboose. While the examination was going on, Judge Lecompte was outside making a speech and expostulating with the angry crowd in favor of law and order. The cry of 'Hang 'em, the d—d murderers,' arose frequently from the mob, but the milder counsels seemed to be prevailing, when at once some one shouted, 'To the calaboose! to the calaboose!' and away a crowd of about fifty maddened men started in that direction. The balance of the people followed after in smaller parties, leaving Judge Lecompte almost alone, and the mayor's office relieved of its throng of spectators.—They had been gone about fifteen minutes, when I heard a great yell. I started after the crowd, and followed it to the bank of a creek, which divides south and north Leavenworth, where there was a steep bank, and on its edge a large elm tree. I reached the spot just in time to see Quarles suspended from the tree, gasping in the agonies of death at the rope which was around his neck, while several of the mob were swinging on to his arms and legs, to make his death sure. His body had hardly ceased its convulsions when the shout was raised for Baines.

The rope was placed around his neck, and he was led to the edge of the bank, when some one of the citizens appeared by his side, and with a watch in his hand demanded five minutes' time for further confessions. They granted it; when Baines said, if they would let him, he would show them another man in town who was concerned in the operations of the gang. He was then taken to the calaboose, but for some reason did not give satisfaction to the people, and they demanded his body to be returned to them.—Judge Lecompte again addressed the people, and with some effect, for they seemed to divide into two parties, the one clamoring for the hanging of the prisoner, and the other demanding a trial for him. Marshal Denis of the territory was also present, and though he exerted himself with all his power, he could not maintain his position at the door of the calaboose, nor prevail on the crowd to disperse.

The wife of Baines also appeared; and, inspired by the dangerous situation of her husband, took a heroic stand on the entrance, and endeavored by frantic threats and entreaties to stay the wrath of the populace. But all efforts were unavailing; the peace party were overpowered. Judge Lecompte's voice was drowned by the shrieks of the mob. A large piece of hewn timber, perhaps twenty-five feet long and one foot square, that was lying near, was lifted up by a crowd of men, and plucked with fearful effect against the calaboose door. The sight of the wife's distress and the sound of her screams, mingled with the ragings and shrieks of the infuriated mob, was too much for me, and I turned my back and walked away. I heard another blow from the piece of timber, and a simultaneous shout from the crowd, which told me that the door had given way, and the prisoner was at the mercy of the people. I walked hastily around the square, for, with all its terror, there was a fascination in the sight, and reached the spot just in time to see the mob rushing down the street with the prisoner toward the creek and the elm tree. I pursued, and when I reached the spot the body of Baines was already in the air, and his last death-struggles were shivering along his limbs. The crowd then appeared to be satisfied. Woods and Knowlton meanwhile had been placed in an omnibus and hurried off to the fort. The city continued very much excited up to the hour I left, but no further violence was anticipated. All sorts of stories prevailed, and many of the mysterious disappearances and robberies which have occurred in the territory are all being referred to this band of murderers.