

# THE BENNINGHOFF ROBBERY.

## Detection and Arrest of Three Implicated Parties—Four Robbers Probably at Large—Particulars of the Pursuit.

From the Titusville (Penn.) Herald, July 29.

The Police and the detectives have at last been partially successful, and the Benninghoff robbery, which created such an excitement in this vicinity last January, is in a fair way to be investigated by the courts, three persons having been arrested who are known to have been connected with it almost beyond a doubt. The clue to the robbery was obtained within a few days after it occurred, and on Saturday last three men implicated in the robbery, named LOUIS WELDLY, GEORGE MILLER and JAKE SHOPPORD, were arrested. On Monday they were conveyed to Franklin and lodged in jail. WELDLY and SHOPPORD were secured by the officers at Akron, Ohio, and MILLER at Sægertown, Crawford County. Four are yet at large of the five principal actors in the affair, and two or three parties who are suspected of having aided them. The following particulars of what happened from the time of the robbery to the arrest of the above-named parties are from persons acquainted with the working up of the case: During a few days previous to the robbery, JIM SÆGER, of Sægertown, Crawford County, was heard bragging at Meadville and Sægertown, of a speculation he was going into that promised to yield the greenbacks largely. Besides SÆGER, there were two or three other parties at or near Sægertown, among whom was WELDLY, who promised their friends that they would be flush in a day or two, and saying at the same time with a very mysterious air that they had a big speculation on hand. Of course after the particulars of the robbery became known, and those parties were noticed to be unusually well supplied with funds, suspicion was aroused, and a watch was set on their movements. SÆGER, WELDLY, MILLER and SHOPPORD were in Sægertown during the next two or three days after the robbery, spending money quite freely, and having a good time generally. On the third day SÆGER disappeared with SHOPPORD, but after being away some days they separated, the latter going to St. Louis, and the former to parts unknown. SHOPPORD spread around St. Louis for about a week, spending all but \$800 of his portion of the Benninghoff fund. The \$800 was in his trunk and one night the hotel at which he stopped was destroyed by fire, with the trunk and the \$800. After this loss he returned to his old haunts.

WELDLY staid at Sægertown for a week or two, offering to loan anybody or everybody sums of money. He then went to Akron, Ohio, where he purchased a distillery, a farm and a hotel site, meanwhile disbursing money quite lavishly, and living in very comfortable style. He stayed at Akron most of the time, and was, it is said, naving a good time in his distillery with some boon companions, when the officer appeared with the warrant for his arrest. MILLER, it appears, was, unlike the others, content to get rid of his money nearer home, and stayed for the greater part of the time in an around Meadville and Sægertown.

After being arrested, WELDLY and SHOPPORD partially agreed, it is reported, to turn State's evidence, and the following details of the plans for the consummation of the robbery have been partially obtained from them by detectives and other persons interested: From all that can be learned, JIM SÆGER was the originator and principal in the affair, and WELDLY was the first assistant. These two were observed a number of times during last Fall, talking at Sægertown with one of JOHN BENNINGHOFF's hired men. It is surmised that they obtained from the hired man such information regarding the situation of the Benninghoff residence, the amount of money that was kept in it, &c., that it induced them to form a gang and attempt the robbery. However this may be, certain it is that in November or December last they broached the subject to MILLER and SHOPPORD, who agreed to take part in the enterprise with them. A date was fixed at which the attempt was to be made, but about that time the two last mentioned backed out. SÆGER and WILDLY were, it seems, determined to have the handling of the Benninghoff bonds and greenbacks, notwithstanding the withdrawal of their confederates. After some consultation among themselves they thought it expedient to secure the assistance of a professional hand or two, and to this end they started for Philadelphia. Arriving at that place they ingratiated themselves among the roughs and were not long in finding four skilled house-breakers who agreed to engage in the Benninghoff speculation.

A new programme was arranged, and SÆGER, WELDLY and three of the professionals started for the scene of operations, leaving the fourth professional in Philadelphia, on account of some disagreement having taken place among them. How the Benninghoff family were secured, and how JOHN BENNINGHOFF was brutally beaten, the two hired men thoroughly frightened, and the \$250,000 or \$260,000 in bonds, greenbacks and specie carried off, are matters that our readers are well acquainted with. After the robbery a division of the spoils was made, SÆGER getting the lion's share. WELDLY was forced to be content with something like \$25,000 or \$30,000. To MILLER and SHOPPORD it is thought SÆGER gave \$1,300 each as hush money.

As soon as the division was made two of the professionals started for Canada, and the third made for New-York. Within a week or two after the robbery, the man who had been consulted in Philadelphia and who had been left there, laid what he knew before the Police. A clue of the professionals who had started for Canada was obtained by this man, and he in company with a detective started after them. After some search they were found in Montreal, where, while attempting to arrest them, one of them fired at and wounded a policeman. They were both arrested, however, and locked up, but, subsequently, one of them was released through some technicality of the law and escaped, while the other was held on a charge of attempting to kill the policeman whom he had wounded. A requisition was obtained a few days since for the surrender of the latter to the United States authorities, but it has not transpired whether he is still held at Montreal or not. The whereabouts of SÆGER and the three professionals is known only to the detectives, and the parties most interested. The three men who were arrested and confined in jail at Franklin, were on trial yesterday, but it was postponed until Saturday next upon the request of the prosecution.

The well-known services of GEORGE S. McWATERS on behalf of the families of Union soldiers and of the widows and orphans of the war, have received a handsome testimonial a few days since at the hands of the Ladies' Union Relief Association; with whose benevolent aims he has closely identified himself since the commencement of the institution. Mrs. JOHN A. KAMMER, who is President of the Association, presented Mr. McWaters with a very valuable gold watch purchased from the private contributions of the ladies of the Assn. as a testimonial of their appreciation of his energetic labors in the work they have so much at heart. The watch is richly chased, and bears on one side of the outer case the monogram "G. S. McW.," and on the other, also in monogram, "1868." The inner case has the following inscription:

"Presented to GEORGE S. McWATERS by the members of the Ladies' Union Relief Association, in appreciation of his services to the families of Union soldiers, 1868."

It is pleasing to note this handsome recognition of the quiet energy and modest worth of Officer McWATERS, who has in many ways, and frequently during the war and since, given remarkable evidence of how much good work, in an humble and unpretending way, is within the compass of a single individual, impelled by a spirit of true philanthropy.