

WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 1

This is the first of a series of West Jefferson vignettes: it will cover an interesting assortment of items, many which appeared in Madison County papers in years gone by.

MURDER IN WEST JEFFERSON: October 2, 1889, Local grocery owner, Samuel Stickley, was assaulted by a man named George Bowles, who beat him over the head with a revolver, fracturing Mr. Stickley's skull, causing his death a few days later on September 26, 1889. The murder took place in front of Mr. Stickley's store on the corner of Main and Walnut Streets. It was later owned by Henry Heath who operated the grocery store. There is a picture of this store in West Jefferson Remembers.

Samuel A. Stickley was born to Isaac Stickley in Virginia in 1843. He is buried in Pleasant Hill Cemetery along with wife Lida (1848-1930). He married Lida after his previous wife, Eliza Garrabrant whom he had married July 4th 1867 had died. He served as a Pvt. in Company K, 95th O.V.I. August 11, 1862 to February 28, 1863, discharged on disability. He enlisted in Company C 154th Ohio National Guard May 1864-September 1864. Lida Stickley was granted a widows pension on August 21, 1890 on Samuel's service.

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December 11, 1895: Ollie White who killed her husband last May, was captured in Gallopolis, Ohio, and later sentenced to life in prison. The only record of Mrs. Ollie White of Madison County stated that she died May of 1895, same one?

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ANOTHER MURDER IN WEST JEFFERSON: September 23, 1896, West Jefferson has another murder to add to its list of unfortunate homicides. Edmund Buck, who owned Hotel Buck, was killed about noon by Marsh (March) Ricks, a local barber, near the same site that Mt. Samuel Stickley was murdered. Ricks was jailed by officers George Baber and Oscar Sprague. Ricks was taken to London, for fear of his being lynched. December 23, 1896, March Ricks received life in the Ohio State Pen for the murder of Ed Buck. Ed Buck owned the Hotel Buck which sat on Main Street on the present site of the Huntington Bank.

March Ricks was born in Ohio in 1870 the son of Martin V. and Perine Ricks. He married Laura Martin August 7, 1891. Martin Ricks was born in Mississippi as a slave in 1842, in 1863 he and Perine escaped to Ohio when Grierson's raid through Mississippi and freed slaves. They ended up settling in West Jefferson. On August 27, 1864 Martin enlisted in Co. G 27th U.S. Colored Troops serving until September 5, 1865. He received plaque #B-43 in the Africa American Civil War Memorial. In 1865 he and Perine founded the A.M.E. church in West Jefferson which sat on the present site of the Apostolic Church on E. Pearl St. Martin had a "truck" garden and sold vegetables, On August 1, 1905 he was hit by a fast freight train while crossing the tracks when returning from London. The tracks weren't elevated until 1912, He was highly esteemed by the citizens of West Jefferson. He is buried in Hampton Cemetery with a military maker. Perine applied for a widow's pension on August 12, 1905.