

Nehemiah Ham

Karen

Here's the info I have on the murder of Nehemiah Ham. I got it from another researcher very early in my genealogy "career" so I was not diligent about getting sources. I believe it's from the Hist. of Mont. Co., of which I have an unindexed copy, but I haven't made a detailed search of the book to find it. I believe you once did an index for the book rthough...maybe you can check it out and let me know the page if you have it?

It's a nice gory one...enjoy
Debi Ham

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The following info was provided to me by Kathaleen Susan Zook Meiers, a descendent of Mordecai McKinsey. Nehemiah also went by the name Meyer or Miah:

Nehemiah disappeared April 28, 1866 and his body was found June, 1866. The following story appeared in the book "History of Montgomery County":

Murder of Meyer Ham.

In the month of June, 1866, while driving a herd of cattle into a pasture one mile north of Alamo, in Ripley Twp., Montgomery County, Indiana, Issac Davis, Tom Patton and Monroe Watson saw a turkey buzzard fly from the bushes, and it appeared to these men that possibly the bird had found a dead sheep, as a flock was grazing nearby. But upon investigation, they discovered to their horror that a man had been beheaded and his flesh was being carried off by the buzzards, his eyes having been dug out out of the sockets. The news was circulated. At the investigation of the Horse Thief's Detective Association, several men were arrested and put in jail at Crawfordsville, including Joseph Wert and Joseph Ingersoll. The body of the man had been identified beyond doubt by merchants who had sold him his clothing, and by a shoemaker who had sold him his boots. A large crowd of farmers saw to it that the arrested men, five in all, were kept safely in jail until such time as the right man or men should be found from out of the number, believing as they did that they had the one in jail they wanted. The sheriff at that time was Newton McConnell, to whom Ingersoll finally confessed but implicated Wert along with himself. Both men were indicted for murder and the other three set free. Ingersoll's confession showed that he

and Wert planned the robbery of the dead man but had not intended injuring him. They were to get him intoxicated and then rob him of what money he had. He had sold property valued at a thousand dollars not long before this and was spending it as fast as he could. They did not make the plan work, as Ham would not drink enough to be pliable in their hands. Hence it was said in the confession that they hit him with brass knuckles, stunning him sufficiently to enable them to take from his pockets four hundred dollars in cash which they divided and left. But upon hearing his unearthly moans, and thinking he might be heard, went back and took a knife out and cut his throat. This story was denied by Wert. While Ingersoll was in jail, through some unknown means he made his escape, for which the community greatly criticised the sheriff. After long delay, the trail of Wert came on. As nothing but the confession of Ingersoll was against him, the jury acquitted him. Later it was reported Ingersoll died in Mississippi, while Wert remained a citizen of this county. Thus the murder of an innocent man was never avenged.

Great story! Tom Patton was my g-grandfather. My guess is that "Isaac Davis" would be Isaac Thomas Davis, the son of Josiah and Jane Davis, since he was Tom Patton's brother-in-law.