

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY OCTOBER 17



Elias and Troy Hatfield

On October 17, 1911, Elias and Troy Hatfield, sons of "Devil Anse" Hatfield, were killed in a shootout at Harewood in Fayette County.

CSO: 8.24, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (*Montgomery News* October 20, 1911)

1. Describe the basis of the argument that led to the shooting of Elias & Troy Hatfield.
2. What did Troy Hatfield say to his brother in his final moments about the dispute?

Think Critically: Summarize the progressive reform movement in West Virginia during the early 1900s. Was the business that Elias & Troy Hatfield ran unusual for Appalachia? What happened to the distribution of alcohol the following decade?

Octavio Jerome, Italian Who Fired the Fatal Shots Into the Bodies of the Hatfield Brothers is Also Dead as a Result of Troy Hatfield's Effective Return Fire

The first break, or death in a family of thirteen children, sons and daughters of Anderson and Levisa Hatfield, occurred Tuesday shortly after the noon hour when Elias and Troy Hatfield succumbed to bullet wounds inflicted upon them by Octavio Jerome, an Italian who resides here in Montgomery with his family and who was also killed by Troy Hatfield, after he had received his death wounds.

The shooting occurred at Harewood a short distance below Boomer, and about three miles from Montgomery on the Kanawha & Michigan railroad, in the house of another Italian by the name of Angeline with whom Jerome was transacting business matters when the Hatfields arrived.

The killing is the outcome, it is said, of the violation by Jerome of an agreement that existed between Carl Hanson, who conducts a saloon at Cannelton, just opposite Montgomery and Elias Hatfield who conducted a saloon at Boomer. It is said that at the time the Cannelton saloon was established, an agreement was made between Hatfield and Hanson that neither would encroach upon the other's territory in the sale of beers and liquors and that a certain boundary was defined which was mutually satisfactory. Jerome was employed by Hanson to solicit orders from Italians and others along the K. & M., for liquors and beer and that he made regular deliveries of the goods sold in this manner. On several occasions, it is said Jerome violated the agreement and on these occasions, he was warned by Hatfield not to repeat them. The warnings had no effect and recently Jerome was taken severely to task, and it is alleged was given a thrashing. Still Jerome continued to solicit orders at will where-ever he pleased and on Tuesday he boarded the 11:10 train at Cannelton and went to Boomer, it being his intention to meet a wagon at Boomer that he had started in that direction from Cannelton loaded with beers and liquors. It is further stated, that Elias Hatfield learned of this, and in company with his brother, Troy, started down the railroad track to see Jerome about the matter. On the road they met the wagon and caused the driver to turn and go back, toward Cannelton and then they proceeded to the house of Angeline where Jerome was.

house and as the foreigner was falling forward three more bullets pierced his body. These bullets entered the breast, one below each nipple and the other midway between these two.

Another story of the affair is to the effect that the entire trouble arose because of the objection of Hatfield to Jerome supplying trade formerly supplied by him, and that recently an argument with reference to the matter ensued between Elias Hatfield and Jerome in which the latter came out pretty badly used. It is said by persons at Boomer that Jerome had been warned, that the Hatfields were on their way to Harewood on the day of the shooting, and he was prepared to meet them. It was stated that Jerome was on the porch of the house and he saw the Hatfields coming, and remarked that he had better be going, and went into the house leaving his friend sitting on the porch. The brothers then arrived at the house and following incidents were about as stated in the beginning of the account of this affair.

Elias Hatfield lived but a minute or two, and managed before life left his body to crawl to the back yard. He said something to his brother and indicated on his body the location of the wound. Troy, lived forty-seven minutes and was conscious up to the last.

Another brother of the Hatfields, Joseph, who was at Boomer arrived at the scene of the trouble within a few minutes and conversed with his brother, Troy. The dying man told his brother that no one but Jerome, Elias and himself were mixed up in the affair, and that it was his desire that no further trouble be raised about it. His exact words are said to have been "Let no further trouble come of this, as only we three are concerned, and we will all be dead."

News of the affair was received in Montgomery within a few minutes after it occurred and caused no little excitement, as details were lacking.

Constable Harry, policeman Warren and other officers went immediately to Harewood in Judge Simms automobile but their services were not needed. When they arrived Angeline had been placed under arrest by an officer, but was released when Troy Hatfield told the officer that he had nothing to do with the shooting or the trouble

The two brothers walked upon the front porch of the house and knocked on the door, and the door was opened to them by Angelina, who occupied the house with his wife and children. Elias knew Angelina well and shaking hands with him, asked if Jerome was there. Angelina responded in the affirmative, stating that he was in one of the back rooms. Elias started into the house while Angelina stepped out on the porch, and just as he stepped within the room a pistol shot rang out. Turning slightly he stepped farther into the room and two more shots were fired and the elder of the two brothers fell to the floor, with three bullets in his body. Troy stepped over his brother's body and in quick succession three more shots were fired by the Italian all of them striking Troy. Troy ran out of the house in pursuit of the Italian who had jumped out of the back door into the back yard, and with his life blood took deadly aim and in a flash flowing freely from the wounds, had sent four bullets into Jerome. The first bullet fired by Troy struck the Italian in the right side of the head and came out through the left eye causing instant death. Upon being hit by the first bullet the Italian turned his front to Troy, who was supporting himself by leaning against the

that led up to it.

While the account of the affair as given above is generally thought to be as nearly true as it will be possible to ascertain, many other reports have been circulated differing somewhat as to just how the shooting was done, and as to the causes leading up to it, but all of these stories have as a basis alleged encroachment of Jerome upon territory that he should not have gone on. It is also said that Elias Hatfield fired at least one of the shots that struck Jerome, but this is not thought to be true. His pistols were found lying on the floor of the room in which the shooting started, but the authorities or others have been unable to find the persons who picked up the revolvers, neither have they been able to locate the weapons. Troy Hatfield's pistol contained four empty shells, and those who are familiar with his ability to shoot, are reasonably certain that only he and Jerome did any shooting. Jerome used a 32 Colt's Special, and fired the six bullets, dividing them evenly, three at Elias and three at Troy, all of them taking effect. The bullet which caused the almost instant death of Elias entered the back just below the right shoulder and passed through the body coming out at the left breast. One other bullet struck

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