

# Poor Raphael Byrne

Byrnesville, Barnesboro, Northern Cambria, Cambria County, Pennsylvania

< [Down Home in Clearfield, Pennsylvania](#) | [Byrnes Family & Friends Reunion 2005](#) >

sunday, february 1, 2009

## Poor Raphael Byrne

### SHOOTING AT HASTINGS Cambria Freeman June 15, 1888

On Wednesday night the new town of Hastings [incorporated in 1889] had its first baptism of blood. Mr. Caley [sic, Caleb] Gray, has a hotel at that place and his son-in-law, Edward W. Jones, the young man about 25 years of age, is the manager, lives in the house and has general supervision over it.

On Wednesday evening, Raphael Burns, a somewhat \_\_\_\_ted character who is often involved in quarrels, put in an appearance at the house and about 10 o'clock when Mr. Jones wanted to shut up the house, he requested Burns to leave. Burns refused to go and a struggle ensued which finally resulted in Burns seizing a chair and making for Jones, at the same time threatening to do Jones up.

Jones seized a revolver that was concealed nearby and blazed away, the ball striking Burns in the side of the mouth and glancing on the side of the jaw, followed the jaw bone around the side of the face and came out at the side of the neck. Burns has an ugly wound, but is not dangerously hurt, which is a good thing for both men.

Jones came to this place [Ebensburg] with the intention of giving himself up, but on the advice of his attorney, he concluded that he acted in self-defense and he would lit the law take its course and await a warrant if Burns saw fit to prosecute.



#### related websites

- [Cambria County Genealogy](#)
- [Life of a Sm Town Photographer](#)
- [Northern Cambria PA Website](#)
- [Po's Peek at the Past Magazine](#)

#### Byrnesville Web Visitors

since June 2008:



#### byrnesville contents

- [Byrnes Family Tree](#)
- [The Byrnesville Snow Train](#)
- [Byrnesville On A Map](#)
- [Byrnes Family & Friends Reunion 1981](#)
- [Byrnes Family & Friends Reunion 2005](#)
- [Poor Raphael Byrne](#)
- [Down Home in Clearfield, Pennsylvania](#)
- [Descendant's of Edward R. Byrnes](#)
- [Pauline's Poems](#)
- [Byrnes Family Picnics](#)
- [Thomas J. and Sarah Miller Byrnes](#)

## A Troubled Cousin

Raphael Burns in the shooting article is Raphael Byrne (1855-1909) my first cousin three times removed. In different words, Raphael Byrne is my great-great-great-grandfathers' brothers' grandson. He is the fourth son of Francis Byrne and Isabella Weakland.

They called him 'Raff' or 'Rafe', I read, when they called him at all. Poor Raff was a trouble maker and a somewhat demented character according to the Cambria Freeman of Ebensburg article and my records show that he never married. In 1880 we know that Raff was living with his brother Cosmos, his sister in law Elizabeth, and their two young children.

Raff seemed more troubled than a trouble maker. By now all his brothers and sisters are married and have started families. Raff has no wife or children. It looks like Raff is spending much of his free time drinking and getting in trouble in the area bars. During the cold Pennsylvania winter days, maybe half hung over, Raff is working as a logger in Driskel Hollow.

Then one night he gets shot and has an ugly scar wrapped around his face to show for it. Life probably isn't looking that good to Raphael Byrne. For years after being shot Raff made the rounds keeping an eye on all the bartenders and tavern keepers in the area.

It looks like he drank too much and held a perhaps consuming grudge against bartenders since one shot him. For whatever

#### cousin connection

[cousin connection](#)



### DANE CASTLE

Collections of Arms and Armor  
 Medieval Equestrian Combat  
 Royal Guests and Castle Tours  
 Great Hall and Grounds Rental  
 Strongtown, PA 15957  
 (814) 749-7341

<http://www.danecastle.com>

reason Raphael Byrne brought charges against nine individuals of nine different establishments in Hastings, Carrolltown, and St. Boniface.

All the charges he made were for various liquor law violations such as serving alcohol to minors and serving alcohol on Sunday.

Some of the men charged paid fines and some were acquitted. At the time of these various court proceedings Raff tried to kill himself and was sent to jail for it. This was in 1893. We don't learn anything more from the records again until 1907 when Raphael Byrne is committed to the Dixmont Insane Asylum in northwest Pittsburgh.

Raff died in May of 1909 at Dixmont, his remains were taken to his sister's (Sarah Catherine Byrne Stich (1861-1936) house in Carrolltown. Services were held at St. Benedict's Catholic Church and Raphael Byrne was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

The following written by D. J. Byrne in his book, *Valley of the Pines* gives a little more of an idea of life of the logger.

"An early logging camp consisted of a log building, hurriedly thrown up by the woodsmen, with a bark or shake roof, and a dirt floor. A fire was built in the center of the floor, and there was a hole in the roof directly over the fire, and hopefully, most of the smoke would go out through the hole. The gaps, between the logs, were stuffed with moss, and mud, or whatever could be quickly gathered up.

Their bunks were what they called "muzzle loaders." The foot of the bunk was toward the center, and the roof was so close you had to crawl in over the foot end to get in it. There was a bench called a deacon seat, made from a split log with the flat side up, that ran the full length of the cabin, up against the foot of the muzzle loaders, one on each side. There was a grind stone, and a teapot, and a bean pot. In later years, there got to be cast iron stoves, and then even a separate cabin for a cook shack. A cook could make or -break a logging venture. Whole crews would up and leave if they didn't like the victuals.

They built horse hovels, or barns, where the animals were kept in better style than the men, with clean straw and a lack of smoke. Most times the teamsters slept in the hovels with the horses, by their own choice.

Their victuals generally consisted of beans, bread, salt pork, salt cod, Johnnycake, molasses and tea, strong enough to float an axe.

Some of the bigger outfits had what they called a "wangoon" or commissary where the loggers could buy bootcalks, one cent each; fourty two to a boot.

They could buy Brand L, pipe and chewing tobacco, Fig tobacco, Lucky Strike, and later, Five Brothers, and Dukes Mixture, or Bull Durham. For medicinal Purposes, they could get Epsom salts, and Johnson's Liniment. An axe cost \$1.25, and a peavy was \$1.50. The chain of command seemed to be from swamper, to chopPer, to head chopPer, to camp boss. Some camps had a wood butcher who built the tables, the furniture, the sleds, the hovels, the sluiceways, and the bridges. He made hinges from leather, and windows out of oiled paPer . There was something magic about a lumber camp. The morale high, and they always seemed to have a spirit of competition in these rremote places far from any town.

Some said these timbermen were half animal and half savage to live like they did, and this was often verified when they came to town, by their smell and appearance, and their talk and actions, as they got too many drinks, and proceeded to expend more energy, to see who was the toughest, in their brawls and fist fights. One big, bearded fellow exclaimed, "I c'n run faster, jump higher, squat lower, move sideways quicker, and spit further th'n any son of a bitch in camp. "

The first loggers cut only timber ten inches or up. They built a bed with poles and limbs for the tree to land on, when it fell, so it would be up off the ground a little, and easier to work on. The limbs was cleared away, and the tree was marked end to end with a string line to be the edges of the cut with the big, broad axes. They squared three sides, and some squared all four, but three was necessary for making the rafts.

They dragged the logs to the nearest point of a stream that was big enough to float a log. Many places on a hillside, they built a log run for a mile or rmore to a river at the bottom of the hill. There was a log on the bottom, and one up and out on each side, forming a V shaped trough, in which the logs were laid, to slide to' the bottom. At the top end of a half dozen or more logs, a team was hooked, by the use of a special grab. When the logs ran out at the bottom, or if the logs got going faster than the team, supposedly a driver could turn his team to the side, and the grab unhooked.

Some places they loaded the logs on big sleds, and on cold nights, a driver would pull his big barrel of water, back and forth on the road, sprinkling the ruts where the sled runners would go. The next day the teams of horses, or oxen, could move a mountain of logs, on the sleds, on a track of glittering ice. On the down hill grades, the track was left bare, and they used hay, or dirt, for a brake. On steep places, they left logs drag behind the sled for a brake."

Byrne, D. J. *Valley of the Pines*. Kurtz Bros: Loretto, PA 1989. pgs 119-120.



Maureen Hardegrece  
AUTHOR

Stories of the South  
Old and New

<http://www.maureenhardegrece.com>

creative commons



Edward A. Byrnes

my **LinkedIn** profile

Send your Byrnesville & Barnesboro area memories, facts, stories, & anecdotes directly to:

**Ed Byrnes**  
412 Taylor Street  
Rochester, MI  
48307-1848

or email them to:  
[edwardbyrnes@comcast.net](mailto:edwardbyrnes@comcast.net)

Posted by Edward Byrnes at 15:53 | No comments

Last modified on 2009-03-11 08:47

Karma for this article:



Current karma: 5 of 5, 1 vote(s) 315 hits

Trackbacks

[Trackback specific URI for this entry](#)

Comments

Display comments as (Linear | Threaded)

No comments

Add Comment

Name

Email

Homepage

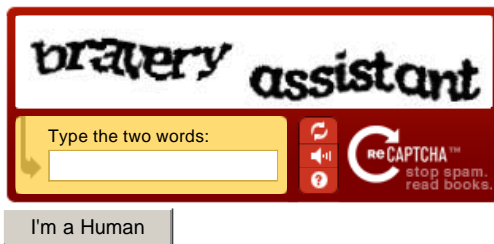
In reply to [ Top level ]

Comment

Enclosing asterisks marks text as bold (\*word\*), underscore are made via \_word\_.

Standard emoticons like :- ) and ;- ) are converted to images.

We need to make sure you are a human. Please solve the challenge below, and click the I'm a Human button to get a confirmation code. To make this process easier in the future, we recommend you enable Javascript.



Remember Information?

Subscribe to this entry