

**Judge Gerry's Death Sentence of Packer
Hinsdale District Court
Case # 1883DC379**

"It becomes my duty as the Judge of this Court to enforce the verdict of the jury rendered in your case, and impose on you the judgment which the law fixes as the punishment of the crime you have committed. It is a solemn, painful duty to perform. I would to God the cup might pass from me! You have had a fair and impartial trial. You have been faithfully and earnestly defended by able counsel. The presiding Judge of this Court, upon his oath and his conscience, has labored to be honest and impartial in the trial of your case, and in all doubtful questions presented you have had the benefit of the doubt.

A jury of twelve honest citizens of the county have set in judgment on your case, and upon their oaths they find you guilty of willful and premeditated murder - a murder revolting in all its details. In 1874 you in company with five companions passed through this beautiful mountain valley where stands the town of Lake City. At this time the hand of man had not marred the beauties of nature. The picture was fresh from the hand of the Great Artist who created it. You and your companions camped at the banks of a stream as pure and beautiful as ever traced by the finger of God upon the bosom of the earth. Your every surrounding was calculated to impress upon your heart and nature the omnipotence of Deity, and the helplessness of your own feeble life. In this goodly favored spot you conceived your murderous designs.

You and your victims had had a weary march, and when the shadow of the mountains fell upon your little party and night drew her sable curtain around you, your unsuspecting victims lay down the ground and were soon lost in the sleep of the weary; and when thus sweetly unconscious of danger from any quarter, and particularly from you, their trusted companion; you cruelly and brutally slew them all. Whether your murderous hand was guided by the misty light of the moon, or the flickering blaze of the camp fire, you can only tell. No eye saw the bloody deed performed, no ear save your own caught the groans of your dying victims. You then

and there robbed the living of life, and then robbed the dead of the reward of honest toil which they had accumulated; at least so say the jury. To other sickening details of your crime I will not refer. Silence is kindness. I do not say these things to harrow your soul, for I know you have drunk the cup of bitterness to its very dregs, and wherever you have gone, the sting of your conscience and the goadings of remorse have an avenging Nemesis which have followed you at every turn in life and painted afresh for your contemplation the picture of the past. I say these things to impress upon your mind the awful solemnity of your situation and the impending doom which you cannot avert. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. You, Alfred Packer, sowed the wind; you must now reap the whirlwind. Society cannot forgive you for the crime you have committed. It enforces the old Masonic law of a life for a life, and your life must be taken as the penalty of your crime. I am but the instrument of society to impose the punishment which the law provides. Will society cannot forgive it will forget. As the days come and go, the story of your crimes will fade from the memory of men.

With God it is different. He will not forget, but will forgive. He pardoned the dying thief on the cross. He is the same God today as then - a God of love and of mercy, of long suffering and of kind forbearance; a God who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and promises rest to all the weary and heart-broken children of men; and it is this God I commend you.

Close up your ears to the blandishments of hope. Listen not to its flattering promises of life; but prepare for the dread certainty of death. Prepare to meet thy God; prepare to meet that aged father and mother of whom you have spoken and who still love their dear boy.

For nine long years you have been a wanderer upon the face of the earth, bowed and broken in spirit; no home; no loves; no ties to bind you to earth. You have been indeed, a poor, pitiable waif of humanity. I hope and pray that in the spirit land to which you are so fast and surely drifting, you will find that peace and rest for your weary spirit which this world cannot give.

Alfred Packer, the judgment of this Court is that you be removed from hence to the jail of Hinsdale County, and there be confined until the 19th day of May, A.D. 1883, and that on said 19th day of May 1883, you be taken from thence by the Sheriff of Hinsdale County, to a place of execution prepared for this purpose, at some point within the corporate limits of the town of Lake City, in the said County of Hinsdale, and between the hours of 10 A.M. and 3 P.M. of said day, you then and there, by the said Sheriff, be hung by the neck until you are dead, dead, dead, and may God have mercy upon your soul."