On the south fork of the South Branch of Potomac, in, what is now, the county of Pendleton, was the fort of Capt. Sivert.* In this fort, the inhabitants of what was then called the "Upper Tract," all sought shelter from the tempest of savage ferocity; and at the time the Indians appeared before it, there were contained within its walls between thirty and forty persons of both sexes and of different ages. Among them was Mr. Dyer, (the father of Col. Dyer now of Pendleton) and his family. On the morning of the fatal day, Col. Dyer and his sister left the fort for the accomplishment of some object, and although no Indians had been seen there for some time, yet did they not proceed far, before they came in view of a party of forty or fifty Shawanees, going directly towards the fort. Alarmèd for their own safety, as well as for the safety of their friends, the brother and sister endeavored by a hasty flight to reach the gate and gain admittance into the garrison; but before they could effect this, they were overtaken and made captives.

The Indians rushed immediately to the fort and commenced a furious assault on it. Capt. Sivert prevailed, (not without much opposition,) on the besieged, to forbear firing 'till he should endeavor to negotiate with, and buy off the enemy. With this view, and under the protection of a flag he went out, and soon succeeded in making the wished for arrangement. When he returned, the gates were thrown open, and the enemy admitted.

No sooner had the money and other articles, stipulated to be given, been handed over to the Indians, than a most bloody tragedy was begun to be acted. Arranging the inmates of the fort, in two rows, with a space of about ten feet between them, two Indians were selected; who taking each his station at the head of a row, with their tomahawks most cruelly murdered almost every white person in the fort; some few, whom caprice or some other cause, induced them to spare, were carried into captivity, - such articles as could be well carried away were taken off by the Indians; the remainder was consumed, with the fort, by fire.

The course pursued by Capt. Sivert, has been supposed to have been dictated by timidity and an ill founded apprehension of danger from the attack. It is certain that strong opposition was made to it by many; and it has been said that his own son raised his rifle to shoot him, when he ordered the gates to be thrown open; and was only prevented from executing his purpose, by the interference of some near to him. Capt. Sivert was also supported by many, in the plan which he proposed to rid the fort of its assailants: it was known to be weak, and incapable of withstanding a vigorous onset; and its garrison was ill supplied with the munitions of war. Experience might have taught them, however, the futility of any measure of security, founded in a reliance on Indian faith, in time of hostility; and in deep and bitter anguish, they were made to feel its realization in the present instance.

*A Seybert's Fort was situated on the South Fork, twelve miles northeast of Franklin, in Pendleton County. At the time of this invasion, there was a fort located on the South Branch, garrisoned by Capt. James Dunlap and a company of rangers from Augusta county. Preston's Register states, that on the 27th of April, 1758, the fort at which Capt. Dunlap was stationed, was attacked and captured, the captain and twenty-two others killed; and, the next day, the same party, no doubt, attacked Seybert's Fort, killing Capt. Seybert and sixteen others, while twenty-four others were missing. Washington at the time, placed the number as "about sixty persons killed and missing."

A gazette account, published at Williamsburg, May 5th ensuing, says: "The Indians lately took and burnt two forts, where were stationed one of our ranging companies, forty of whom were killed and scalped, and Lieut. Dunlap and nineteen missing."
Kercheval's History of the Valley gives some further particulars: That Seybert's Fort was taken by surprise; that ten of the thirty persons occupying it, were bound, taken outside; the others were placed on a log and tomahawked. James Dyer, a lad of fourteen, was spared, taken first to Logstown, and then to Chillicothe, and retained a year and ten months, when as one of an Indian party he visited Fort Pitt, and managed to evade his associates while there, and finally reached the settlements in Pennsylvania, and two years later returned to the South Fork. It is added by the same historian, as another tradition, that after the fort had been invested two days, and two of the Indians had been killed, the garrison agreed to surrender on condition of their lives being spared, which was solemnly promised. That when the gate was opened, the Indians rushed in with demoniac yells, the whites fled, but were retaken, except one person; the massacre then took place, and ten were carried off into captivity.

Still another tradition preserved by Kercheval, says the noted Delaware chief, Killbuck, led the Indians. Seybert's son, a lad of fifteen, exhibited great bravery in the defense of the fort. Killbuck called out to Capt. Seybert, in English, to surrender, and their lives should be spared; when young Seybert at this instant, aimed his loaded gun at the chief, and the father seized it, and took it from him, saying they could not successfully defend the place, and to save their lives should surrender, confiding in Killbuck's assurances. Capt. Seybert was among the first of those sacrificed. Young Seybert was among the prisoners, and told the chief how near he came to killing him. "You young rascal," laughingly replied Killbuck, "if you had killed me, you would have saved the fort, for had I fallen, my warriors would have immediately fled, and given up the siege in despair." - L. C. D.