

# Pulaski County's 1892 Events

by Gary Knehans

A devastating fire in Richland, severe late spring weather, the fortunes of two local politicians, a heavenly visitor, and a shocking murder and suicide made 1892 a most interesting year in county history. And, even though the civil war was more than 25 years in the past, its loyalties and rivalries continued to influence many facets of political, community, and domestic life.

County residents had hardly said goodbye to the old year before disaster struck in Richland. In the early morning hours of January 3rd, a fire erupted in the Herrin and Jones' grocery store and quickly spread to other buildings in the downtown area.

(Jan. 3rd dispatch from Richland, printed in the Rolla Herald, Jan. 7th)—The most destructive fire that ever visited this town occurred here last night. About 2 o'clock this morning fire was discovered in the grocery store of Herrin & Jones. Before the flames had made much headway several persons were on the scene and had nearly got the fire under control when a keg of powder exploded, and the flames rapidly spread throughout the building. C. L. Evington, who was helping to put out the fire, was blown out of the building into the street, but fortunately was not seriously hurt. By this time the flames had reached the Home Hotel, a two-story frame, and in a short time it was enveloped. Then the two-story brick on the south, occupied by Groom & Warren as a general store, caught; also the large frame building on the north, used by Highsmith & Co., dealers in poultry and eggs. It looked for a while as though the whole block would go, but by great efforts the flames were confined on the north to the Highsmith building, although the two-story frame building owned by H. H. Wrinkle & Bro., was in imminent danger, and was saved only by heroic efforts. The flames did not reach farther south than the Groom & Warren building. The walls of that building fell on to the one-story brick occupied by Gibson and Hendricks, grocers, and the one-story brick occupied by S. L. Gibson as a drug store was nearly ruined by the falling of the walls of the large building. Fortunately the flames were checked here. Herrin & Jones lose their entire stock, which was partially insured. Groom & Warren lose \$6000 in stock, with only \$3000 insurance. They saved some goods, which were damaged by mud and water. The three brick buildings were owned by Mrs. John B. Gordon, of Springfield, and are nearly a total loss; partially insured. The Home Hotel was owned by Judge Burhans, of Stoutland, and uninsured. The frame building occupied by Highsmith & Co. was owned by L. D. Groom; total loss, small insurance. The total loss is about \$20,000, with not over \$10,000 insurance. The barber shop of A. J. Combs over Herrin & Jones' store is a total loss. Nearly all stores on the block removed their goods, and much loss and damage was sustained thereby. How the fire originated is unknown.

The county's top Democrat, Clerk E. G. Williams, made the political plunge early in the year. His decision to seek the party's nomination for State Railroad and Warehouse Commissioner was received well by Democrat newspaper editors in southern Missouri. As he hit the campaign trail, Williams seemed well on his way to realizing his quest for higher office.

Meanwhile, a tragic accident in Dixon injured a well known resident of that community.

(Rolla New Era, Jan. 23rd, reprinted from the Waynesville Democrat)—On last Monday evening during the snow storm, while F. S. Huckins was on his way home from town, he was struck by a moving train and severely hurt. The snow was falling thick and fast, partially blinding Mr. Huckins, so that he did not see the train until it was too late to escape. He was knocked down and pushed before the pilot for some distance, when he was fortunately thrown off the track and out of reach of the wheels. He was badly cut about the head, but received no injuries that will be likely to prove fatal.

County residents followed closely the first murder trial of the notorious outlaw, Wils Howard, which began in February in Lebanon. An article in the "Lebanon Rustic" from that month tells of the attendance at the trial of a large number of Pulaski County citizens, who were witnesses in the case. Included among them were J. A. Rayl of Waynesville and Tom Imboden of Dixon. Imboden was commissioned in 1891 to go to California and bring Howard back to face trial for the murder in 1889 of a Maries County deaf mute. Imboden's role in the extradition of Howard obviously helped propel him into the office of Pulaski County sheriff later in 1892.

(The first Howard trial resulted in a hung jury in the summer of '92. Readers will find on other pages in this publication, and in last year's edition, more complete accounts of the Wils Howard case).

Flushed with dreams of riches in the wake of the discovery of onyx in the county a few years previously, prospectors and speculators searched the land for valuable minerals, apparently with some success. A "Richland Cyclone" article in late February told of the discovery by Reverend J. D. Thompson of "a piece of ore supposed to contain silver." The paper said the ore was found near Frank's Switch on the Perry Helton farm. The "St. Louis Chronicle" on March 3rd said the piece of ore was assayed at two government mints and was pronounced of the best quality. It went on to say the silver was from a vein of 18 inches to two feet deep, which ran 300 yards in plain view.

The "Richland Cyclone" also reported some efforts to develop an onyx mining operation near Crocker.

(Rolla Herald, Mar. 3rd, reprinted from the Richland Cyclone)—The work of developing the onyx cave, near Crocker, will, it is likely, soon be begun in earnest. Mr. Craddock is preparing specimens to send to Boston, Mass., from which place letters of inquiry concerning the deposit have been received. A collection of very handsome specimens is to be seen at the office of Major W. H. Murphy, at Crocker, and better ones cannot be found anywhere. Specimens are to be sent to Springfield, to be placed on exhibition at the Mining bureau there. This will prove an excellent medium of advertising one of the most valuable resources of Pulaski county.

(Rolla New Era, Mar. 12th, with a Mar. 6th Richland dateline)—Interest has been aroused in the onyx deposits recently found near Crocker in this (Pulaski) county, by letters asking that a price be fixed on the lands in which they are located, giving the prospective purchaser an option for ninety days with the privilege of renewal. There are fourteen deposits on Judge W. H. Murphy's land, all of which give evidence of a superior quality and an inexhaustible quantity. An offer of \$10,000 was refused. Yesterday a St. Louis representative of Boston and New York capitalists made a conditional offer of \$1000 for each of these deposits, at which price they desire a ninety-day option, with a privilege of renewal. The offer has not yet been accepted, but should an agreement be reached some of the gentlemen interesting themselves will come out and investigate. But little work is being done at the caves, though a large number of handsome specimens of beautiful and variegated colors, and many of enormous size, have been taken out and are on exhibition.

If the account published in the March 3rd edition of the "Rolla Herald" was accurate, many Pulaski County residents were planting fruit trees in the spring of '92. The article claimed 150,000 fruit trees had been sold in the county during the previous six months.

The rumor mills must have been working overtime in late March when the prosecuting attorney of the county sustained a pistol wound. One newspaper account claimed it was a suicide attempt. Another paper said J. L. Johnson was injured accidentally.

(Rolla Herald, Mar. 31st, with a March 26th Crocker dateline)—J. L. Johnson, Prosecuting Attorney of this (Pulaski) county, attempted suicide this evening. At 4:45 he entered the general merchandising establishment of J. B. Christeson and inquired for cartridges. Upon being informed they had none he drew a pistol and shot himself in the right side near the nipple. The attending physicians think his prospects for recovery are good. Attorney Johnson is an old resident of this county and of one of the best families in Southern Missouri. He has made a

good record as Prosecuting Attorney, and all who have known him admire him as a straightforward man of rare legal ability.

(Rolla New Era, Apr. 2nd, reprinted from the Richland Cyclone)—News reached here, a few days ago, of the shooting, accidentally, of Mr. J. L. Johnson, prosecuting attorney of Pulaski county, at his home at Waynesville. Mr. Johnson was cleaning a weapon, when it was discharged, the ball taking effect in the left side, making a severe wound in dangerous proximity to the heart. Mr. Johnson has scores of friends here who wish him a speedy and permanent recovery.

While people discussed the different accounts of Mr. Johnson's wound, there was soon something else to grab their attention, the busting of a counterfeiting ring in Dixon.

(Rolla Herald, Apr. 28th, with an Apr. 23rd dateline from Dixon)—Considerable excitement is being caused here to-night over the arrest of a counterfeiter. The gang is composed of six men, and they made a dime which is the finest that was ever seen. It has the ring and the only thing that is wrong is the slippery feeling. The man arrested gives his name as S. H. Barnes of Springfield, Ill. On being searched he had three or four pounds of lead and a pound or two of glass, spoons and everything with the exception of the moulds.

Detective Imboden has charge of the prisoner. James Pruett, R. C. Stokes of the Frisco Hotel and Editor Gumert have organized a party and are searching the county for the rest of the gang and the moulds.

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Barnes was tried in late May in Springfield, found guilty, and sentenced to 18 months in the penitentiary. A key testimony against him was made by Ned Johnson, a student of the Rolla School of Mines, who told the court that the metal in the fake dimes was the same as a lump of metal Barnes had in his possession when arrested.

Also in May, an accident in Rolla sent Frank's Switch into mourning.

(Rolla New Era, May 7th)—A terrible accident occurred east of the depot on Monday evening about nine o'clock, wherein Frank Joseph Stanzel, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Stanzel lost his life, by falling under the cars. He was stealing a ride on the cars in company with two other boys, and it is supposed lost his hold and was dragged along quite a distance and crushed to pieces and cut in two. He had not been in the habit of jumping on the cars so his father informs us, but being downtown that evening, he could not resist the temptation to jump on as the other boys did, and paid the penalty with his young life.

Little Joe was born on Christmas day, 1881; his age being at the time of death, 10 years, 4 months and 7 days.

The burial of little Joseph Stanzel...took place Tuesday afternoon, some four miles this side of Dixon. The company that attended from Rolla left the Railroad at Frank's Switch (so named it is said from Mr. Stanzel himself who was long an employee on the road,) and them proceeded in wagons that were in waiting for

them, two or three miles to the south to a small church in the woods, immediately adjoining which was the cemetery in which our little friend was laid, and in which Mr. and Mrs. Stanzel had already buried two or three of their children. Neighbors and friends had gathered, the church was filled and a number more remained outside. A short service was rendered, a few words were uttered intended to be consolatory instructive and admonitory, and after prayer the body was immediately laid in the grave. Those who had gone from Rolla were then anxious to reach Dixon as soon as possible. The weather was threatening and Dixon was the nearest point at which we could take the train to return home. Three wagons heavily loaded started on the trip and a number of the company walked a large part of the way. A terrific storm came on when we were some two miles from the depot. The rain fell in a deluge attended with heavy hail. Almost all were thoroughly drenched and chilled. Some of us succeeded in making the shelter of an old dilapidated barn, and were thus partially protected. We reached Dixon about 6 o'clock much exhausted and worn out. Supper was served at the 'Frisco Hotel. Several of the company were obliged to replenish their wardrobe and provide themselves with dry clothing. We took a freight train about 10 o'clock and reached home safely at midnight. Mr. and Mrs. Stanzel have the sincere sympathy of all who know them.

That storm was a harbinger of things to come. Several newspaper accounts tell of severe storms and resultant flooding in late May and early

June. Pulaski County received a reported six inches of rain during the first week in June. Severe weather was reported in Richland, Rolla, Newburg, and other area communities. In the June 2nd edition of the "Rolla Herald", it was reported that the Big Piney River had risen up to the trains in the Newburg yards. The "Rolla New Era" on May 21st reported that Spring Creek near Beulah was at the highest level ever known. The Maries River also was reported to be up; and residents along it were moaning, "Rain, rain, go away."

By all standards, the storm that passed through the area on Monday, May 29th, was unusually severe.

(Rolla New Era, June 4th, with a May 29th Richland dateline, carrying the headline, "Richland Visited, A Tornado Swept Through Doing Great Damage")—This section was visited this afternoon by a violent wind storm, the funnel shaped cloud, the lightning, the darkness and all other cyclonic accompaniments being features of it. In the town no damage was done beyond the interruption caused by rain and wreckage of gardens, though there was great apprehension. About a mile north of town, however, the wind swept through the timber with fury. William Hathaway, who gives a graphic description of it, just having arrived from the scene, states that 100 trees in a very small stretch of territory were raised to the ground, and that the public highway and portions of the Cal Rush and Will Jones farm are impassable. Trees three feet through were leveled like cornstalks, and their limbs in

many instances were carried many feet away sometimes falling in an opposite direction from the course of the storm, showing it to have had conflicting currents.

(Rolla Herald, June 2nd, under the headline "Newburg in Mourning, John Deskins and Frank Withington Killed by Lightning Monday Evening")—During Monday evening's storm a bolt of lightning struck the southeast corner of J. M. Diehl's brick store at Newburg, eight miles west of this city, passing through the roof and wall into a vacant room, thence westerly about midway of the building, and then down into the store, following both sides of the door casing. Frank Withington, a boy about 14 years old, a son of Freight Conductor Withington, was standing leaning against the west casing of the door, outside, the door of the store being closed. The boy fell with the crash, as did John Deskins and five other persons who had sought shelter under the porch from the deluge. Deskins was standing about four feet east of Withington, leaning against the east door casing. The others were standing near, but not touching the building. Oscar W. Jones and Mrs. J. M. Diehl were behind the east counter in the store. Mrs. Diehl was behind the post office window and Mr. Jones about six feet from her. Both were knocked down and stunned. Others in the store—J. M. Diehl, John Manning, George Roach, and Will Hunt—were badly shocked, but recovered several moments before Mrs. Diehl and Oscar Jones, and those not fatally injured who were standing on the outside. Young Withington was dead when Mr.

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Diehl reached him, and Deskins remained unconscious for at least half an hour, and from then remained conscious to within a short time before his death, which occurred at 5 o'clock Tuesday.

(Rolla Herald, June 2nd)—A regular "cloud burst" swept over this city and county last Monday afternoon at about 5 o'clock. The wind, rain and hail, accompanied with sharp flashes of lightning and deafening peels of thunder, was fearful. Nothing like it was ever witnessed before in these parts. The little creek which bounds the western and southern limits of our city, swelled into a roaring stream in a few minutes, submerging the bridges on the streets and forming a lake extending from the railroad track up into Bishop's fields. The damage this storm has done to the farmers must be great, especially to those living on the various streams.

(Lebanon Republican, June 3rd)—The rivers are all up again. The Gasconade is washing everything away; Osage Fork, Bear Creek, and other small streams are now full grown rivers, and farms along their banks are lakes of water. The bridge at Arlington, which, ordinarily, stands 30 or 40 feet above the water, is reported to be in danger of washing away.

As the stormy weather gave way to a more typically hot and dry nature, summer doldrums set in, with some people seeking escape in mischievous ways. From nearby Plato came news of a shooting caused by drunkenness. And, the frisky folks in Dixon enjoyed the Fourth of July somewhat excessively.

(Rolla Herald, June 9th, reprinted from the Hartsville Press)—Tom and Dan Flannery, of near Competition, Laclede county, went to Plato, Texas county, on Thursday of last week and while there indulged freely in "bug juice" and made themselves very noisy. The justice of the peace told the boys to keep quiet and go home or they would be arrested. They said no man could arrest them, but they started for home and had got about a mile from town when the constable overtook and tried to arrest them. A fight ensued in which both the Flannery boys were shot. Tom was shot near the ankle and Dan in the leg. While the constable was trying to capture Tom, Dan got on the constable's horse and made his escape over the line into this county. It is reported that Tom is in a critical condition, and that amputation may become necessary. Dan's wound was only a flesh one. LATER—Dr. Lynch was summoned and amputated Tom's leg last Tuesday. He is some better but his physicians express every little hopes of his recovery.

(Lebanon Republican, July 9th)—In 1776 says a Dixon Correspondence in the Richland Cyclone, our forefathers met and declared these colonies were and, of right ought to be, independent states. In 1892 the people of Dixon and vicinity met and danced, drank whiskey and fought like Kilkenney cats. Have they lost all their patriotism?

Also in July, fire struck again in the county, this time destroying a lumbering operation and putting its employees out of work.

(Lebanon Republican, July 13th, reprinted from the Waynesville Democrat)—What was lately an enterprising lumbering camp on the Gasconade, Mc Corkle's saw mill, is now deserted. The fire which lately broke out early in the morning and wiped the plant out of existence, has thrown a large number of hands out of employment.

E. G. Williams' campaigning for Democrat nomination for State Railroad and Warehouse Commissioner reached a fever pace in the heat of July. The moment of truth for the Pulaski County Clerk came at the party's state convention on July 20th, when Williams failed to achieve his political goal. Williams did come in a strong second among a field of seven candidates on the first ballot. The result of that ballot prompted three of the candidates to drop out of the race, dividing their support among the four men who remained in the race. On the third ballot, James Cowgill of Caldwell County received enough votes for the nomination. A subsequent newspaper report suggested that Williams was sacrificed in order to placate delegates from northern Missouri, who had been unsuccessful up to that point in obtaining the nomination of any candidate from that part of the state for statewide office.

Williams' loss still left a prominent Pulaski County politician in the campaign arena for higher office. Judge W. H. Murphy of Crocker had been successful in late April in obtaining the Republican party nomination for U. S. Congressman. Although faced

with an uphill fight to unseat the powerful Richard "Silver Dick" Bland of Lebanon, Murphy in the late summer and early fall travelled extensively to advance his candidacy.



WM. HUGH MURPHY

As the summer turned into fall, a couple of railroad accidents took place on the Frisco line. Neither was of serious nature.

(Rolla New Era, Sept. 10th)—A collision of two freight trains took place near Hancock on Thursday. Six cars of stock were ditched, but no person was injured.

(Rolla New Era, Oct. 22nd)—A tail end collision the early part of the week between two freight trains at Swedeborg did a good deal of damage. Collins and Highsmith, the poultry dealers at Lebanon and Richland, had a carload of poultry and eggs smashed up.

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Election day resulted in defeat for Judge Murphy in his bid to be the district's U. S. Congressman. Official returns, however, show that he did remarkably well at the polls against one of the most powerful Congressmen in the nation. Bland won by only 2500 votes. The final tally was 18,927 for the Congressman and 16,453 for Murphy.

Pulaski County voters went for Bland by a 1045-to-671 margin. In a reciprocal manner, Murphy carried Bland's home county 1392-to-1285. The judge also carried Camden, Dallas, Miller, Moniteau, and Osage counties.

On the county scene, voters rewarded Thomas Imboden's efforts in returning the outlaw, Wils Howard, to Missouri, by electing him sheriff.

Another Imboden entered the news and/or gossip scene about a month later. A dispatch from Springfield told how a Dixon woman escaped the enamored advances of a married man.

(Rolla Herald, Dec. 1st)—The Springfield Democrat of last Tuesday scores lawyer Clarke of Washington, D. C., who was here with Judge Morris and Stephen B. Clements examining war claims. Clarke was attempting to pass himself off as an unmarried man to Miss Imboden of Dixon, Mo., but Mr. Clements' stopped him. The Democrat says that Miss Imboden was completely infatuated with him, and he had arranged for a speedy marriage. He has returned to the bosom of the city of magnificent distances a wiser, and we hope, a better man.

A heavenly visitor apparently captured the attention of area residents also in late November. According to a report in the "Rolla Herald", a comet that was believed to be Biela's was to make its closest approach to the earth on November 27th.

While the article said the comet was to come closer than any other had previously, it apparently was not extremely visible. And, it apparently wasn't Biela's, as no subsequent newspaper account was written in the Rolla papers describing events of the 27th. According to the newspaper article, Biela's comet in 1832 "created a panic throughout Europe and frightened thousands in America, especially the black slaves of the South." The comet of '92 apparently fell far short of that impact.

While events concerning the comet fortunately failed to match the worst fears of the populace, a Waynesville woman faced fear of a most personal nature in early December.

(Rolla Herald, December 8th, reprinted from the Dixon Echo)—Joe Mc Gregor, of Waynesville, was attending court at Houston, Texas county, last week, and failed to return home at the appointed time. His wife became uneasy and sent for Jim Mc Gregor to meet her at Crocker and advise her what to do. On learning the particulars Jim telegraphed to Rolla and the message was sent to Houston by telephone, and the reply came back that he had left there Sunday morning. Supposing that he had reached home by that time Mrs. Mc Gregor returned home Monday. On Wednesday she again notified Jim that he had not yet reached home. Jim again communicated with Houston and the reply came this time that he had left there on Friday instead of Sunday, as first report-

ed. Jim immediately started for Houston going via Springfield, and has not yet returned. Joe's absence is causing a great deal of uneasiness with his family and friends. It is to be hoped that nothing is wrong.

The rowdy nature of Dixon surfaced again in December when the "Dixon Echo" complained that "the boys of this place are in the habit of catching pigs and putting them in the ante room of the church in time of public worship."

The Fourth of July foray and this latest incident surely were in the mind of some residents who started pushing for incorporation of Dixon.

(Rolla New Era, Dec. 17th, reprinted from the Dixon Echo)—A movement is again on foot to incorporate Dixon which we earnestly hope will materialize. Hoodlumism has been tolerated in Dixon for so long that even the little boys can't go to church and behave. Let us all get together and incorporate the town and elect officers who will do their duty and see if we can't have order for a while. Nothing runs a town down worse than to allow a set of ruffians to come in and shoot pistols and yell like Indians till peaceable people are afraid to get on the street. Dixon is too far advanced for this

The seriousness of Dixon's concerns about law and order paled in comparison to a shocking murder that took place in early December in the southern part of the county.

(Rolla Herald, Dec. 8th, reprinted from the Dixon Echo)—News reached here to day of the killing of Elmer Hayes by John Bell, both of the south part of the county, yesterday morning. It is impossible to get the particulars yet, but it seems that Hayes was murdered without the least cause whatever. Hayes was hauling wood and had a young man chopping for him some distance away. The young man hearing three pistol shots fired in rapid succession went to learn the cause, and found Hayes dead and Bell standing over him. Bell then went to a neighbor's house and told what he had done. He is still at large.

(Rolla Herald, Dec. 8th)—John Bell, of Pulaski county, the man who killed Elmer L. Hayes, a neighbor, last week, came to Rolla last Sunday night and surrendered to the proper officers. Mr. Bell is about 36 or 38 years of age, unmarried. He was taken in charge by Sheriff Long of Pulaski, and Mr. Murphy of Dixon. Attorneys Mitchell and Harrison was (sic) secured to defend him. The killing was over the settlement of a threshing account.

(Rolla Herald, Dec. 8th, with a Dec. 6th Waynesville dateline)—Jo (sic) Bell, who killed Elmer Hays in this (Pulaski) county last Wednesday, was brought to Waynesville last night by Sheriff Long. He is accompanied by Gen. E. Y. Mitchell of Rolla, but both refused to give statements. He will plead self-defense. There is talk of lynching and the county jail is well guarded.

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(Rolla Herald, Dec. 15th, reprinted from the Waynesville Democrat)—As predicted by the Democrat last week, John Bell, who killed Elmer Hayes, was under arrest ere the week had ended.

Bell made no effort to flee the country—and only eluded the officers a few days until he could procure counsel and arrange for his defense.

After the killing, he went to the residence of W. D. Ichers, where he stayed that night. Then he went to the house of Mr. Hansons, near Arlington, and sent for his attorneys, who advised him to surrender.

He then went to Rolla, and Gen. E. Y. Mitchell telegraphed Sheriff Long to come get his man. The Sheriff went to Rolla and returned with Bell last Monday, placing him in the county jail that evening.

Repeated efforts to interview the prisoner and his counsel have elicited no information further than they would plead justifiable homicide, and believed they have a strong defense.

Since the tragedy, rumor has followed rumor, and it is frequently hinted that there will be some startling and sensational revelations. But these rumors are so much at variance, one with another, the Democrat gives little credence, and deems them not worthy of publication.

Bell's examination will take place next Monday before Justice Mc Donald. His attorneys are Gen. E. Y. Mitchell and J. B. Harrison, of Rolla, assisted by Hill and Locker of this place. The State will be represented by Prosecuting Attorney J. L. Johnson, who will be assisted by W. D. Johnson, attorney-elect.

The Democrat will endeavor to obtain a full report of the preliminary trial next Monday, which it will give its readers in next issue.

That trial was marred by a dramatic, and totally unexpected, development that occurred before Christmas.

(Rolla New Era, Dec. 24th, reprinted from the Pulaski County Democrat)—This (Friday) afternoon, while the lawyers were speaking in the murder case of John Bell, the audience was startled by the announcement that one of the witnesses had suicided. The news quickly flashed throughout the city, and soon a large crowd was at the scene of the tragedy—the Pulaski hotel—pressing for admission to the room wherein lay the lifeless form of T. L. Binley, who had only a few hours previous been slain by his own hand.

The unfortunate man was a well-to-do farmer, living about ten miles south of Waynesville, was married and the father of four children. He has been a resident of Pulaski county about three years, moving here from Kansas. He was to have been a witness in the Hayes' murder case, and has been much worried and alarmed since that tragedy—claiming at times that he was spotted for vengeance by some persons; and this hallucination seemed to prey heavily on his mind. He confided his feelings to several, but little attention was given to his story.

Thursday morning he wrote a letter and gave same to F. C. Kerr, with a request that if anything should happen to send same to his wife. He also told Mr. Kerr of his apprehension.

Thursday night he slept at the hotel. Friday morning he paid his bill and went out. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon he was discovered in the room ly-

ing in a pool of blood on the floor. He was lying with feet towards the door, hands under the body and knife protruding from under left side. On the stand and under a mirror was a wash bowl filled with blood, indicating that he had faced the glass when he plunged the knife into his throat, and then stood over the bowl as long as his strength permitted, when he fell on the floor where he was found.

The letter to his wife was very brief. It said: "I am going to be lynched. Take care of the children. I want you to administer on my estate." Also told her of having deposited money with Mr. Clark.

Esq. Lane, as coroner, held an inquest, and the jury returned a verdict that deceased came to his death from wounds inflicted by his own hand.

(Rolla Herald, Dec. 29th, reprinted from the St. Louis Chronicle)—General E. Y. Mitchell, of Rolla, Mo., commented at the Laclede this morning of the suicide of John Binley, of Pulaski county, which took place at Waynesville last Friday morning.

"Binley," said the General, "was my principal witness for the defense of John Bell, charged with the murder of a man three weeks ago in the northern part of Pulaski county. At the preliminary examination myself and colleagues, J. B. Harrison, of Rolla, and Judge Hill, of Waynesville, intended to set up the theory of self-defense, but we had decided not to place Binley upon the stand. Binley had heard the man who was killed make threats against Bell, and he was evidently frightened at the strong swearing of the witnesses for the prosecution, the State being represented by C. H. Davis and J. D. Manes, of Pulaski county, and J. L. Johnson of Waynesville."

"Binley was found in his room about six hours after the deed and from appearances it seemed that he had deliberately stood before a small mirror, felt for the jugular vein and inflicted one deadly stab about an inch wide with a sharp pocket knife."

"Then he had bent over the wash-bowl and allowed the blood to spurt into it, until overcome by weakness, he had sunk to the floor."

"Feeling ran high among Bell's neighbors, but I see no reason particularly for Binley's rash act. Bell was committed to jail at Lebanon and bail was refused. The case will probably be heard at Rolla before Judge Bland on the 27th inst."

The unexpected suicide left the murder case in limbo for the rest of '92.

Meanwhile, during the holiday break, area teachers attended the annual convention of the South Central Teachers' Association, which met in the assembly room of the School of Mines in Rolla. Young lady teachers in attendance included Anna Wade of Dixon, Lizzie Stewart of Richland, Nora Hill of Waynesville, Lizzie Huff of Richland, Belle O. Halloran of Richland, Grace Hatton of Richland, Jessie Lawrence of Crocker, Drusa Allen of Hancock, and Stella Wade of Richland. The men teachers at the meeting included R. L. Holmes of Dixon, Frank Weidner of Dixon, R. B. Tilley of Waynesville, and J. A. Jordan of Crocker.

And so ended the eventful year of 1892. From the fearsome Richland fire at the beginning of the year to the sensational Waynesville suicide near the end of December, it proved to be a year packed with a number of exciting events that kept the county gossip mills at full employment throughout.