

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUDING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

The Doniphan Bandits.

On Saturday evening, October 21, 1899, Mr. Kuchs looked at his clock and decided to go to the postoffice for his mail. He was alone in the store and was in the act of locking the front door, when his attention was attracted by a noise behind him. Turning he looked down the barrels of two rifles. "We want your money", said one of two masked men. Mr. Kuchs, realizing his position, said, "Well, all right", and led the way to the money drawer, the robbers following him closely, one behind and one in front of the counter. There were only about \$7.00 in the money drawer, and this did not satisfy them. They made Kuchs turn his pockets inside out, and then asked to be shown the safe. The safe contained nothing but papers,

and Mr. Kuchs unlocked the drawers and set them out for examination.

When the robbers marched Mr. Kuchs into the store at the points of their rifles, Calvin, a colored man, happened to be passing, and taking in the situation he hastened to the postoffice and gave the alarm.

John Braun, aged 23, son of Postmaster Anton Braun, got a revolver and went directly to Kuchs' store, while John Schaff went across the street to Schnell's to borrow a shot gun. Reaching the front door of the store, revolver in hand, John Braun called out to the robbers, who were back at the safe, and asked, "What are you doing here"? One of the robbers replied, "What business is it of yours"? With that both the robbers raised their rifles and fired. The first

shot struck Braun over the left eye and he fell dead upon the sidewalk. Mr. Kuchs had a small revolver in his hip pocket, which he had put there on Friday night, after an attempt had been made to burglarize his store, and when the men turned their backs to him he tried to pull his gun, but it caught in his pocket. While tugging away, one of the robbers noticed him and asked, "Have you got a gun?" "No, sir", replied Mr. Kuchs, and both his hands went up.

The robbers did not take time for further examination, but rushed out of the building. The crowd of boys that stood at the window when Braun was shot, commenced to gather again and the robbers began a promiscuous fire to scare the crowd and keep it back. John Schaff, who had come up with Schnell's shot gun, was secreted behind the corner of Kuchs' warehouse. He saw Braun fall and as the desperadoes came out of the door, he shot at one of them, wounding him seriously. The primer of the shell in the other barrel of the gun refused to fire. The other robber picked up his wounded comrade and carried him across the street, where he cut off the handkerchief mask. It was found saturated with blood. The robber's hat, a light brown Derby, also saturated with blood, was found in the same place. One shot entered the hat and evidently lodged in the robber's head. There was part of a tooth in the handkerchief, indicating that the charge had struck him in the side of the face. A copy of the Atchison Globe and a St. Joseph paper lay beside the hat and handkerchief, but the name on the papers had

been torn off. The wounded robber rested here only a few minutes. His partner stayed beside him, taking an occasional shot, that cleared the streets. The robbers fled south toward the Doniphan lake, and the thickets on the bar.

Mr. Kuchs received a flesh wound on the arm during the shooting. Stooping low beside the window he was watching for a shot. The robber evidently saw his head, for he sent two bullets through the woodwork, one of which made the wound.

Sunday morning, Chief of Police Seip, Sheriff Hartman and Officer Dickerson, of Atchison, joined the Doniphan county officers in the search. By the middle of Sunday afternoon fully a thousand people were on the island, less than a hundred of whom were doing anything to help the officers. About four o'clock in the afternoon a pair of bloodhounds arrived from Atchison. These were given the trail but could trace them no farther than the officers. About five o'clock a young man ran onto the log behind which the robbers lay. A gun was pulled on him and he ran back to where the officers were trying to get the dogs to take the trail. Charles James and two or three others ran in the direction whence the boy had come and in less time than it takes to tell it they were back again, young James having received a bullet through his arm. Sheriff Larzelere, Eli Cromwell, Officer Dickerson, and half a dozen others had advanced, Sheriff Larzelere, Eli Cromwell and Officer Dickerson in the lead about twelve feet apart. They had gone but a short

distance when Officer Dickerson addressed Sheriff Larzelere: "Is that a log?" Instantly there was a shot and the Atchison officer fell forward with a bullet hole through his head. Eli Cromwell fired two loads of buck shot in the direction from which the shot came. Sheriff Larzelere picked up the rifle dropped by Dickerson and took a shot as nearly as possible at the point from which the robbers fired the bullet that killed the police officer. He half turned to ask his fellow officers to deploy on his right and left, and found that he was alone. Believing that the robbers could see him and knowing that they were less than forty feet away out of sight, the sheriff discreetly went back to where the Atchison officers had stopped. He then asked for volunteers to go with him to surround the robbers. Under Sheriff Ramsey, Mace Culp and a man from Atchison were the only ones who would take the risk. Sheriff Hartman and Chief of Police Seip of Atchison, both declared they would not risk their lives before so nery desperadoes.

There was nothing to do but to try to hold the robbers at bay till more nery men and better fire arms could be secured. News of Officer Dickerson's death was sent to Atchison. County Attorney Cromwell at once secured all the weapons in the hardware store, and some forty men were armed and sent up on a Burlington special. The killing of Officer Dickerson bluffed the crowd which fell back half a mile, leaving but half a dozen to guard the place. When the Atchison armed men arrived they formed in

line, ten feet apart, and went in to recover Dickerson's body, which they did. No sound came from the log and it was soon discovered that the robbers had fled.

The body of the police officer was taken to Atchison in an ambulance.

Weather Dates.

The first snow of the winter of 1898-9 came October 17. Then it snowed as follows: Second snow, November 9; third snow, November 21; fourth snow, November 25; fifth snow, December 3—it snowed all that day; sixth snow December 11; seventh snow, January 5, at night; eighth snow, January 8; ninth snow, January 23; tenth snow, January 26; eleventh snow, January 28; twelfth snow, January 30; thirteenth snow, February 2; fourteenth snow, February 6; fifteenth snow, February 10; sixteenth snow, February 22; seventeenth snow; February 26; eighteenth snow, March 3; nineteenth snow, March 5; twentieth snow, March 11; twenty-first snow, March 23; twenty-second snow, March 26; twenty-third snow, March 27; twenty-fourth snow, March 30; twenty-fifth snow, March 31; twenty-sixth snow, April 3. These are not counting flurries of snow, only those that covered the ground with a white mantle.

Wolf River.

For many years Wolf River had been pursuing an erratic course, overflowing its banks, taking short cuts across rich bottom lands and meadows and destroying crops and property. Steps have at

last been taken to remedy these evils by straightening the river's channel. The following items concerning this undertaking are from the County Commissioners' report.

The cost of changing the Wolf river channel will be \$43,085.66.

The total present length of Wolf river from the Missouri river to the west line of Doniphan county, is 32 15-100 miles.

Total length of Wolf river from the Missouri river to the west line of Doniphan county, as now located, 17 miles and 4,146 feet.

The difference between the present length of river and as now located, 14 and 37-100 miles.

Total distance of excavations by changes, 8 and 21-100 miles.

Total number of acres overflowed by Wolf river in Doniphan county, is 3,293 54-100. Rate per acre, \$13.38.

Quantrell, the Peddler.

A little girl living in Doniphan county once showed me a fine time-piece saying, "Here's the watch, but Quantrell has the chain; mamma will tell you about it."

"We were staying at the Eldridge House", the lady said, "and my nerves had been keyed up, hearing rumors that the town was to be burned, until every stranger became a spy and every belated horseman an army.

"I was in the parlor one morning with a friend, and baby sat on the carpet playing with my watch, when her arm became tightly wrapped in the long chain. At that moment a peddler called and, asking permission to display his goods,

swung the pack from his shoulder and sauntered leisurely into the room. Seeing a fresh attraction the child attempted to free her arm to reach for what she wanted, when the young man, bending down, stroked her hair caressingly, unwound the chain, holding the watch in his hand as he did so. There was nothing remarkable in his appearance except that he was very young—not over twenty-five. He wore the first growth of a mustache, a fringe of reddish hue, and but for the prairie tan his face would have been as fair as that of any girl.

"It was the middle of July, and the weather during the whole month was oppressively hot, and as our apartment was small my husband would sometimes go down to the parlor at night while I lay awake listening; for we Lawrence women were trained listeners, especially at night when men slept untroubled by haunting fear.

"One night I heard a sound in the distance like the stampede of cattle, and running down stairs was about to enter the room where my husband lay asleep on the sofa, when I saw a strange man at the window; but he turned and walked away. Then there were two or three shots, when I awoke my husband. 'For God's sake!' he said, drowsily, 'do let me sleep. With your sudden alarm and this terrific heat I haven't slept a whole night for a month. The season for prairie chicken shooting begins today, and the boys are out shooting chickens for breakfast, that is all.' Just then shots were heard in the basement, and springing up he said, 'Mary —', but the word

died on his lips, for he fell at my feet, shot by the leader of the band of murderous men, which was now filling the room. It was Quantrell, the peddler.

"There was no indolent halting in Quantrell's manner now, but lithe as a panther, the young chief seemed to be in a dozen places at the same time, as with perfect composure he directed the one-sided fight.

"But about the watch? Well, it was in the chamois bag I wore, with some other tricketts, but the chain had been left on baby's pillow.

"My child and her unconscious father were placed in a handcart and, in bare feet, clad only for the night, I pushed the cart with its precious burden, through a rain of bullets, out of town to a spring in the ravine, where we stayed until the Regulars arrived."

Professor Quantrell, father of the distinguished outlaw, was principal of the Union Schools at Canal-Dover, Ohio, for several years, and his son who had been nurtured in the Calvinistic faith, often read the scripture lesson at devotional exercise, and upon the death of his father, young William was promoted to the position of teacher in the Grammar grade.

After the Kansas horror, friends of the family, hoping to bring a measure of peace to the heart of the unhappy mother, tried to convince Mrs. Quantrell that her son was dead, and years afterward a well known gentleman, a member of the Fraternity that had cared for the aged lady during her declining years, took her to Topeka that she might examine for

herself the State Annals. She was then taken to Jackson county, Missouri, to meet her son's comrades-in-arm, who testified to his death; and at Louisville, a plat of ground worn almost as smooth as marble was pointed out to her as his grave, and when the earth was removed and the casket opened, the stricken mother, seeing a peculiar lap of the teeth, was convinced beyond a doubt, that the body long since buried there, was indeed that of her boy, and she brought away with her a lock of brown hair.

E. McC. L.

The Freeman Tragedy.

On the evening of August 4, 1891, Samuel Freeman, a resident of Severance, shot and killed his wife, his child and himself, after a few words of quarrelling with his wife. This occurred in Severance on what is familiarly known as Ax-handle street. The story of the shooting as told by Frank Caudle, one of Freeman's near neighbors, is as follows:

"I heard gun shots this evening about 7:30, east of my house. I heard four shots fired, and a few minutes afterwards I learned that the shooting was at Freeman's. I went to find the constable, Mr. Stirling, but he was out of town, and then went after the justice of the peace, Mr. Campbell. He came, and others, and there was quite a crowd there. It was dark and I went and got a lamp. It was getting dark when I heard the shooting. About five minutes before the shooting Mr. Freeman and myself were talking near his house, and he went to the house with a pail of milk. At

the west door, on the north side of the house, Mrs. Freeman met him. She said, 'Floyd, let's go to town', speaking to the child about two and a half years old. Mr. Freeman said, 'I am tired living in dirt'. She did not reply to him that I heard. Mr. Freeman went into the house and in about three minutes the shooting began. This was the last time I saw Mrs. Freeman alive. When we went into the last room Mrs. Freeman was sitting in the southeast corner of the room in a rocking chair. She was dead and her head was hanging almost to the floor. There was a great deal of blood in the room. I saw her child lying dead about three feet north of Mrs. Freeman. I saw a pistol shot wound on Mrs. Freeman's head, and also saw that the child was very bloody. I also saw Mr. Freeman lying on the floor three or four feet from Mrs. Freeman's body. He was not dead. He did not speak. He was unconscious. He was lying in a mass of blood. I saw a revolver lying between his legs. It looked like a 38-calibre revolver. I never heard Mr. Freeman and his wife quarrelling. I didn't see anyone about Mr. Freeman's house at the time of the shooting. I do not know who killed Mrs. Freeman and her child. I was in the front yard and could have seen anyone coming to the house and leaving it. I don't think Mr. Freeman was under the influence of liquor. I think to the best of my knowledge and belief that Samuel Freeman killed his wife and child."

Dr. C. F. McCormick, being called, testified as follows:

"This evening about 8:30 I was called to the residence of Samuel Freeman. I

found Mrs. Freeman in the rocking chair, dead, her head hanging about six inches from the floor. I found a gun shot wound in the head entering back of the right ear and coming out about the forehead on the left side of the head. I think this would be sufficient cause for instant death. I also saw a little boy on the floor, dead. He was lying three or four feet from his mother in the same room. I saw a gun shot wound in the top of his head the bullet coming out on the left side of his face, fracturing the left inferior maxillary bone. I saw Samuel Freeman lying near the door with a gun shot wound on his right temple and also on the top of his head. He was living but unconscious. The brain was oozing out of the top wound. I think it extremely doubtful if he will recover. I do not know the cause of the shooting."

The following jurors found "that Samuel Freeman shot and killed Ellen Freeman and Floyd Freeman with a 38-calibre Smith & Wesson revolver in the hands of Samuel Freeman, on the 4th day of August, 1891."

Geo. H. Robb, foreman; Thos. Fry, R. G. Drake, Ed. Heeney, J. D. Gilmore, C. H. Courtin.

It was afterwards discovered that Mrs. Freeman was in the act of writing a letter when she received her death wound. A copy of the unfinished letter is here given:

"Severance, Kansas, Aug. 4, 1891.

Mr. J. B. WILLIAMS,

My dear father:—The mail train came in from the east last night at 8:30, bringing me your card, and after reading it

three times I immediately took a 'bee line' for the express office to see if there might be anything for me, and sure enough the agent says, 'Yes, there is a basket for you, just arrived on the last train, and from the way it smells I should judge it contains something pretty good'; and I agree with him entirely. The peaches and grapes were both well preserved to have traveled so far. The crab-apple was a little worse for the trip, but we ate it all the same. We ate them all till we didn't dare to eat any more last night. They tasted so good. We have some of the grapes yet, but the peaches and crab-apples are all gone. Mr. Freeman carried one of the peaches all over town this morning, showing it to all of the people. Everybody says they were fine. You cannot know how much I thank you for them. We are all well. The weather is very good at present."

This is all she had written, and to judge from the appearance of the last few words, they had been written under excitement, the letters being hastily and unevenly formed. She must have been writing on a board in her lap. The letter was found lying by the side of the chair in which she was found dead. She was dressed ready to go up town with Miss Hutchison who had promised to call for her, and no doubt was making haste to get the letter finished.

Freeman never gained consciousness after the shooting, but lay groaning until about 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the next day, when he died. Among the dozens of things that were said concerning the cause of the quarrel and the shoot-

ing, there was little truth and much fancy. It was known that he was of a jealous disposition, and that he was possessed of quick and uncontrollable temper. The shooting was witnessed by no one. The woman was Freeman's second wife, and they had been married only a few years.

Church History.

A brief list of religious organizations of the county, giving date and place of organizing, is here given:

1842

Presbyterian church at Highland, organized as a Mission, with seven members. Meetings were held in the University chapel.

1855

Smithton M. E. church, organized August 1, by Rev. Hiram Burch, pastor in charge, and Wm. H. Good, presiding elder.

Palermo M. E. church organized with the following members: John J. Anderson, Nancy J. Anderson, John Hays, Elizabeth Hays, Mary A. Wakeman and Jane Brazelton.

Doniphan Catholic church organized by Rev. Father Henry Lemke, O. S. B.

1856

Doniphan M. E. church, South, organized by Rev. Wallace. First services were held in the hotel.

1857

Doniphan M. E. church, organized May 10, by Rev. B. F. Bowman. There were five members—James W. Snow,

Rebecca Snow, Joseph McCrum, Melissa McCrum and Hanna McCrum.

Geary City M. E. church, organized early in the spring, by Rev. James Shaw.

Highland M. E. church, organized in March, by Rev. Dana Fox. The Seavers, Grahams, Bonesteels and the Dougtys, were members.

White Cloud M. E. church, organized by A. L. Douney. The members numbered about thirty.

Brush Creek M. E. church, organized; name of first organizer unknown. In 1865, Rev. G. R. Houts reorganized and built a church.

1858

Oakland M. E. church, organized in the spring, by Rev. T. McK. Munhall. This was called Independence. Rev. A. Bennett, Rachael Bennett, Celinda Bennett, Francis A. Baker, Caroline Shaw, Diantha Edgerton, Jacob Smith, Rachael Smith, Moriah Smith, William Smith and Matilda Adams, members.

Wathena M. E. church, organized during the summer, by Rev. T. McK. Munhall.

Wathena Baptist church, organized in June, by Elder William Price and Rev. E. Alward, with eight members.

1859

Troy M. E. church, organized June 26, by Rev. B. F. Bowman.

Bellefont M. E. church, South, organized. Two of the first members were Mesdames Creal and Bryant.

St. Mary's Catholic church, organized by the Benedictine Fathers of the Atchi-

son Abbey. There were nine families in the congregation.

Troy Episcopal church, organized by Reverend Ryan.

1862

St. Benedict's Catholic church, organized by Rev. Father Thomas Bartl. A large stone church was erected.

1865

Troy Presbyterian church, organized by the Reverend Sheldon, with fifteen members.

Highland Congregational church, organized October 5, by H. P. Robinson, with fifteen members.

1867

White Cloud Congregational church, organized May 25, by Rev. H. P. Robinson, with eleven members. A church, costing \$3,200, was erected.

Wathena German Society M. E. church, organized in October, by H. M. Meniger.

1868

Ridge Prairie M. E. church, in Union township, organized during the winter, by Rev. A. Bennett.

Burr-Oak German Society M. E. church, (Sec. 29, town 2, range 22), organized by Rev. H. Meyer.

Center Township, German Society M. E. church, (Sec. 26, town 3, range 21), organized by Rev. H. Meyer.

German Reformed Zion's church, (Sec. 33, town 2, range 22), organized by Rev. John Biery.

1869

Wathena Catholic church, organized by Rev. Father Thomas Bartl, with a

membership of one hundred. A brick church, costing \$5,500, was erected.

1871

Wayne township Norwegian Lutheran church, organized by Rev. Mr. Brown. A \$300 church was erected.

Severance M. E. church organized January 25, by Reverend W. K. Marshall presiding elder, and Rev. B. F. Bowman pastor in charge. There were nine members.

1873

East Norway Baptist church organized by Rev. A. Bennett.

Wathena Second Colored Baptist church organized September 22, by Reverends Lee, Bourn, Williams, Clarkson and Jackson.

1875

White Cloud Colored Baptist church organized by Rev. J. H. Strawther.

1877

Independence Creek Baptist church organized in the early sixties, reorganized by Rev. D. G. Saunders.

1879

Fanning St. James' Catholic church or-

ganized by Rev. L. Shriner, O. S. B. A church costing \$1,300 was erected.

1880

Leona Baptist church organized in October by Rev. Aylward, with eight members.

Troy St. Charles' Catholic church organized by Rev. Father J. H. Timphaus. A building costing \$1,000 was erected.

Severance St. Vincent de Paul's Catholic church was built by Father Permin M. Koumly.

1884

East Norway Lutheran church organized by Rev. Dr. Martin. A fine large church was built.

1893

Severance Christian church organized by Rev. J. H. Speer. The school house was bought and refitted for use.

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It is impossible to get the dates of organizing of all the county's churches, because in many cases no records have been kept and the ministers who organized the congregations cannot now be located.