



TRIALS AND TEARS

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Please note: This document was transcribed from the original newspaper articles.

PRELUDE TO TRIAL AND TEARS, PART A, Sept 4

►►*The Law and Politics of Firearms Regulation in Reconstruction Texas.

During the summer of 1870, Madison County was wracked by violence against freedmen. Tensions reached their peak on July 21, 1870, when a band of disguised men staged a jailbreak on the Madison County jail, releasing two murderers. In response, State Police Private, John H. Patrick, a Republican with ambitions for higher office, assembled a group of Black militias and began confiscating guns from any person carrying them, under color of the 1870 Act. Patrick's confiscation order, along with the fact that Blacks were enforcing laws against whites, led to widespread public outrage.

A local deputy sheriff formed a posse with the ostensible purpose of arresting Patrick, but an actual intent to foment violence against politically active Blacks and Republicans, based on the claim that Blacks had joined Patrick's militia unit with the intention of murdering whites. The posse sought Patrick at his home, but he was in Austin where a disciplinary hearing had been convened to look into his actions. The group instead killed two militia leaders.

In response to this incident and other chaos in the county—including militia members being killed, shot, and attacked, and freedmen being whipped by whites, Governor Davis ordered forty state police and three-hundred state guards into Madison County to restore order. Many of his opponents viewed these actions as tyrannical, and the event damaged the reputation of the state police and the Davis administration statewide.

In response to concerns about the effectiveness of the 1870 Act, and likely partially as a result of the confusion in Madison County, the Texas Legislature drafted a bill in 1871 that prohibited the carrying of any "pistol, dirk, dagger, slung-shot, sword-cane, spear, brass-knuckles, bowie-knife, or any other kind of knife . . . [without] reasonable grounds for fearing an unlawful attack on his person . . ." The bill punished first offenses with confiscation of the weapon and a fine between \$25 and \$100 (approximately \$500-\$2,000 with inflation) and up to sixty days in prison for a second offense.

The law's exception allowing publicly carrying a firearm when in fear of unlawful attack was further narrowed by requiring the defendant to show that the danger was "immediate and pressing," and "of such a nature as to alarm a person of ordinary courage," that "the weapon was borne openly and not concealed beneath the clothing," and that the claimed danger did not have "origin in a difficulty first commenced by the accused." This clarified that the exception did not apply when a person had carried a firearm due to a generalized fear of crime, but rather only when a specific threat existed. The penalties for the 1870 Act were also amended to provide for confiscation of the weapon and imprisonment for up to 90 days for subsequent offenses. The law granted the governor the power to exempt counties from the carry prohibition if they were dubbed a frontier county "liable to incursions of hostile Indians." The law also included exceptions for people carrying weapons on their own property or in their place of

business, members of the militia in active service, law enforcement officers, and the transportation of arms in the baggage of travelers.

The bill titled "An Act to Regulate the Keeping and Bearing of Deadly Weapons," was introduced by Republican Representative Frederick Grothaus on January 24, 1871. The bill passed out of the Judiciary Committee 5-3, receiving primarily Republican support. On March 9, 1871, the House passed the bill by a margin of 60-12, with all twelve Black representatives voting in favor of the bill. On March 29, 1871, the Senate passed the bill by a 20-4 margin with support of both of the State's Black Senators. In both chambers opposition to the law consisted primarily of Democrats, and conservative Republicans, who had served in the Confederate Army. Governor Davis signed the bill on April 12, 1871.

The new prohibition on public carry was widely enforced across the State, especially by the state police. Line police officers consistently sent their superiors reports of arresting those carrying weapons. Local law enforcement also participated in arresting those carrying weapons illegally. In fact, Governor Davis declared martial law in Limestone County, in part because of the aftermath of a shootout between police and a man they were trying to arrest for carrying a pistol. Davis specifically mentioned the citizens' failure to obey the law against carrying pistols and other weapons as a reason for the declaration.

While state and local law enforcement worked to carry out the ban, many citizens resisted. Some tried to circumvent the law by posing as state or local law enforcement that were exempted from the public carry restrictions. It was difficult to know who was lying, but in at least one case an imposter who was discovered carrying a revolver was arrested and fined.

Similarly, a few state police officers who were terminated for misconduct continued to fraudulently act as officers and on occasion were arrested for illegally carrying firearms. Some efforts to enforce the law turned violent, including the Lampasas Massacre of 1873, the deadliest single incident in the brief existence of the state police. Four state police officers were murdered by members of a local cattle-rustling gang when they attempted to arrest a gang member who was violating the public carry bans. Despite this resistance, law enforcement efforts to enforce the public carry prohibition continued.

►**The Governor's Hounds: The Texas State Police

"The disorder and bloodshed in Madison County are alarming," concluded the Journal newspaper. On November 17, 1870, Chief of Police addressed a crowd of approximately 150 white and 50 Blacks at Lookout in Sand Prairie, Madison County. He condemned the deplorable condition of the county where armed mobs raided homes at night, treated the freedman brutally and threatened to hang them if they supplied information to the State Police. Davidson declared that within a "short period of time" eighteen homicides had been committed in Madison County and yet not one had been arrested. Dastardly cowards called men out of their homes at night and shot them down. The good citizens of the county were "terror-stricken," no one had come out boldly and "denounced this midnight assassination." A man could not even travel to his cornfield without an "armed escort."

Until the end of Governor Davis's administration, Madison County continued to be a trouble spot. On the eve of the 1873 election, the registrar who had been sent to supervise the polling was conversing with various people when a man rode up and with no provocation stabbed him. The assailant was arrested, bail was established at \$2000. In default, Sheriff M. W. Burney took charge and placed the perpetrator with men "in sympathy with such lawlessness." Finally, a group of citizens, tired of the upheaval, the violence and constant disruption of the county government, requested assistance from the Governor. After the burning of the county courthouse, they wrote: TO BE CONTINUED TOMORROW!

Source: * Mark Anthony Frassetto, *The Law and Politics of Firearms Regulation in Reconstruction Texas*, 4 Tex. A&M L. Rev. 95 (2016)

**The Governor's Hounds: The Texas State Police, 1870-1873, Barry A. Crouch, Donaly E. Brice

(2022 MCHC Note: If you would like to read more about this, please send us your email address via Facebook Messenger)

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**The Governor's Hounds: The Texas State Police, 1870–1873, Barry A. Crouch, Donaly E. Brice

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PRELUDE TO TRIAL AND TEARS, PART B, Sept 5 (exactly as written)

➤ Petition to Governor

January 31, 1873, To His Excellency E. J. Davis, Governor of Texas,

We the undersigned citizens of Madison County would most respectfully represent to your Excellency that our county is in a state of lawlessness, to that extent the peaceable and law-abiding citizens no longer under their present states feel safe either in life or property. The law seems here a farce. The outlaw, gambler and rioter being the only persons that are free from danger, can express their opinions. There are a large number of criminals now infesting the county charged the gravest offenses such as murder etc., who go where they please, seemingly free of any dread of arrest, and menacing the lives and property of good and quiet citizens, until the peace-loving citizens are so intimidated that they fear to denounce them, or give any information concerning them; and if by chance some of them are arrested, they laugh to scorn the power of the law, for they know they will be allowed to escape without punishment. It is publicly known that an officer with a warrant in his pocket for the arrest of a party known to be guilty of an atrocious murder has been in company with, perhaps traded with the party, and yet has never offered to arrest him.

To illustrate the sad state of affairs, would state that here a few days since a man shot a freedman. Complaint was made and a writ issued for the arrest of the criminal, and placed in the hands of the Sheriff. Some days elapsed and no effort being made to arrest this man, he was emboldened to come into Madisonville, the County seat. He was pointed out to the Sheriff and even a citizen volunteered to the Sheriff, that if he (the Sheriff) would deputize him, he would arrest the criminal, and yet the man was not arrested, and allowed to remain several hours, and quietly return to his home. Still one more illustration—On the eve of the recent election the Registrar sent here was in quiet conversation with some man came up and without any provocation stabbed the Registrar. This man was arrested and Vernon J.P. examined the case, and on clear proof of these facts held the prisoner to bail for \$2000.00 in default of which to be placed in confinement. The Sheriff took charge of this party and placed him under view in sympathy with such lawlessness and he was permitted to go to the grocery or anywhere else he pleased, until such time as his friends could procure a horse when he mounted him without molestation and rode off. But the strangest feature, in this case, is the fact that this man now walks our street day by day, although he has never been tried for this offense, or given any bond; yet, is permitted to go at large, seeming the best friend of the Sheriff elect.

We can fill many pages in recapitulating such total disregard of law, but do not desire to be tedious. This dereliction of duty on the part of our officers has so emboldened criminals, that it has culminated in again having the courthouse with all the records of the county, entailing great pecuniary lass on the county as well as individual citizens, and under this state of facts many of us feel that there is no alternative but to abandon our homes and seek a more quiet county, where life and property are not left to the mercy of outlaws. But unwilling to take this step without one effort to redeem our county from such lawlessness, and knowing that the law gives your excellency the power to appoint a Special Police force for the suppression of crime and maintenance of law, we, therefore, most respectfully petition your excellency to empower Judge J. R. Burnett with the authority to appoint a Captain, and to furnish Judge Burnett with one hundred blank commissions for a Special Police to aid in restoring

order to our county; they are to give the necessary bond to be approved by the Judge of our District Court; they to serve only until peace and order are restored to our county, without pay or compensation of any kind.

Our reason for asking this is, that we are poor and cannot in our impoverished condition incur heavier taxes to pay Special Police such from another county and furthermore know the ones who are guilty, and their whereabouts, when strangers seek to arrest them would fail, from the fact that so soon as they appeared in the county these fugitives from justice would leave the county for a time only, to return when the danger is passed.

We would most respectfully but urgently urge upon your excellency to take under advisement our petition, and we would most respectfully ask of your excellency to confer with Judge Burnett, the bearer of this petition.

And would further beg leave to the state to your excellency that our county is a new and a poor one in pinch of material wealth, and that we have had one excellent court house burned before, and that we in our impoverished condition, cannot for a long time be enabled to build another unless we are aided, and under the present aspect of affairs, no citizen will be willing to have a court room over their building for fear that it would be burned; and under these dark prospects we have nowhere to look for aid, but to the State. We therefore would most respectfully ask of your excellency to lay our condition before the Legislature with the request that they may pass an act of relief for this county, by giving to the county, the taxes for a term of three (3) years to enable them to rebuild a courthouse.

We will in conclusion only add that a favorable consideration by your excellency of this petition, will receive the grateful remembrance of all the good citizens of this county. (Note: See Picture 5 of 5 for list of 35 signatures to this petition)

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PRELUDE TO TRIAL AND TEARS, PART C, Sept 6

AS TOLD BY MADISON COUNTY CITIZENS:

►MCHC VOLUME II

In the fall of 1870, a gang of desperadoes moved into Madisonville to eliminate a State Police Captain named Patrick. , who lived in the town. Patrick was accused of using undue authority over criminal and civil matters pertaining to the residents of Madisonville. It was believed that the state police used excessive force without thoroughly investigating a situation and Patrick had been branded the culprit.

Instead of finding Patrick, the gang found a man named Tinsley, who they thought was a member of Governor Davis' state police. It was initially reported that Tinsley was tied to a tree and shot, and that two other state policemen were also killed. Captain Patrick's wife with hearing of the report and fearing for her husband's life, dashed off a letter to him about the desperadoes. Patrick was apparently in Austin at the time of the incident. Mrs. Patrick wrote that the desperadoes "have sworn that they intended to kill every "G.Dmn" Radical in Madison County and then go down and clean out Grimes County."

Governor Davis, after hearing erroneous reports sent fifty state policemen and 300 state guardsmen to Madisonville, along with Adjutant General James Davidson, When Davidson arrived in Madisonville, he found that the reports had been exaggerated. Actually, the desperadoes were only seven men; S. Baston, Elisha Baston, John Jamison, Jack Rogers, Seeley Singleton, Tider McIver and Mat Burney.

The men were seen chasing Tinsley on November 4, 1870, across the prairie on horseback and it was never determined if Tinsley was caught. The gang returned to Madisonville the following morning and found John Copeland and four other freedmen milling around in front of Captain Patrick's home. The gang opened fire on the freedmen, but were soon stopped by Mrs. Patrick's pleas. The freedmen had taken refuge in the Patrick home after the firing started. Moments later, John Copeland tried to escape from the house and was killed instantly by a

hail of bullets. The other four freedmen escaped. Once the actual story came out, the police were recalled by Governor Davis and the town became relatively peaceful once again.

►► In 1954, Joel M. Jenkins wrote about his great-grandfather, Daniel M. Larrison, in the *Madisonville Meteor*: It has been previously noted that Madisonville was a “wild and wooly burg” in the 1850’s, and Norman G. Kittrell remarked that he even feared the town’s sheriff. He recalled that as a child accompanying his father through Madisonville, prior to the Civil War, he shied away from the sheriff. “I think he had two pistols, and he needed them in that county at that time. I was afraid of him as if he had been a bear, and I clung tenaciously to my father’s side”

As Madisonville grew in the late 1850’s, politics took on an added interest. The earliest political rally of significance was held in Madisonville in 1859. A brush arbor was erected one block south of the town square and General Sam Houston spoke to a gathering of people about his candidacy for Governor. Approximately 250 people, drawn from a ten-mile radius around Madisonville, “came on foot, on horseback and in wagons” to get a glimpse of their idol. General Houston was highly applauded and, later, the people of Madison County voted heavily for his election.

►► In 1936, Mrs. Lizzie Leonard interviewed two of the senior citizens of Madisonville, John R. McIver (age 87, b1849) and John James (age 84, b1852), to obtain information on the early history of Madisonville. The two men related to Mrs. Leonard how they remembered Madisonville in 1857. The jailhouse stood on the southwest corner of the square and was built of logs, two stories high. There was no door for the first floor. The prisoners were taken upstairs to the second floor by a ladder leaning against the building, and then let down to the first floor through a scuttle hole.

On the west side of town, Job S. Collard operated a general store. It was located on the site of the old First National Bank building. In the middle of that block, another building stood which was later used for the first elections after the Civil War. Mrs. Leonard wrote about the election as it was told to her: “Ropes and chains formed an isle from the shack to the grove of trees in the square. Armed Black men guarded the entrance. It took four days to hold the election. It was the only voting place in the county and polled about 250 votes. The election was held by a Black man sent down from New York by the Republicans. The town was under Marshal [sic] Law with a standing army of Blacks”.

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TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 1, Sept 7

►► Texas Ranger

March 9, 1854, Here is another ‘Texas item’ of the shady sort, which we clip from the *Leon Pioneer*: “We understand that Mr. E. T. Robinson, of this place, was shot at Madisonville, Madison County, on Monday evening and dangerously, if not fatally wounded. He was shot by Mr. McIver of that county, who, also, had his arm broken. As we have not heard the full particulars of this melancholy occurrence, we forbear further comments”.

►► The Central Texan

August 9, 1854, MADISON COUNTY – We learn from Antonio Rivers that James Wiseman was killed at Madisonville on Monday evening last, by a man named Nash. Nash, it seems, kept a grocery, and young Wiseman, for he was but a youth of some sixteen summers, called at his shop about sundown to request his two uncles, who were there, to accompany him to supper. Being invited to participate in a drink by some of the party, he unavoidably spilled some bitters upon the counter, for which trifling offense Nash drew his knife and inflicted a wound in the

region of the heart, which produced death almost instantaneously. Nash was immediately arrested, and while under a strict guard, on Tuesday night, was shot by someone (in the dark) in the back with nine buckshot, one of which passed entirely through the body. At last accounts, he was still alive, though his physician was of opinion that he could live but a short time.

►►The Brooklyn Daily Eagle

March 26, 1855, Report says that a few days since a man working for Mrs. Batson, a widow lady residing in Roger's Prairie, Madison County, Texas, went out into the woods to chop timber, and did not return. Search being made for him, a piece of one of his legs was found near the place where he had been chopping, and five dead wolves. It is supposed that he had been attacked by a gang of these animals, and that he had killed five of them with his axe before they had destroyed him. The story seems rather improbable.

►►Petition from the Citizens of Madisonville

November 3, 1855, To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives, (excerpts), The petition of the undersigned citizens of Madisonville and it's immediate vicinity, would respectfully represent, that in August 1854 this County almost unanimously voted against the retail of ardent spirits in quantities less than a quart; that notwithstanding this expression of public sentiment, there have been found those amongst us who have set this expression at naught, and have continued the traffic amongst us with impurity and ever without paying any license at all. We request the sale of ardent spirits is prohibited less than five miles from town. We are opposed to the sale in any quantity, except for medicinal or sacramental purposes. Where we may educate our own children and those who may be sent to our care, without having before their eyes, the action and examples of drunken men. We desire when we walk the streets of our own little town, our wives and children will not be insulted by a drunken or drinking crowd, who have lost all respect for the female character. (NOTE: See photos for actual petition and signatures)

►►Chicago Tribune

July 13, 1867, Mrs. Metcalf, who was nearly a hundred years of age, and one of the first settlers of Madison County, Texas, recently while returning from a visit to a neighbor, took the wrong road, which led, to the house of a Mr. Simms. Approaching the house, probably with a view of stopping tor the night, she being weary of walking, this poor old lady was attacked by a pack of savage dogs, and was bitten in many places, and bad her flesh terribly torn by the terrible animals. One arm was tom from the body, and her breast and throat almost eaten up. She expired soon afterward.

►►Galveston Daily News

July 24, 1867, J. M. Mathis, of Madison County, purchased of a certain firm in Houston last fall, bagging and rope other supplies to the amount of \$120 in gold. He had the money on hand to pay for the goods and was waiting for a safe opportunity to send it down, when he received notice from a Bureau Agent, through an attorney at Madisonville, that if the money was not paid in three days, the Bureau Agent would proceed against him according to the instructions received from Headquarters. Our correspondent says he does not ask the question of whether it is right or wrong to take an ex parte statement in such cases but only wishes to say to the people of the country that they had better be careful with whom they have dealings in Houston and Galveston. Very few, we presume, of the merchants in either place, and certainly some of the old and well-known houses, would call on the Bureau to collect for them, or could obtain its services if they should; but as there may be others capable of availing

themselves of such a convenience, we publish our correspondent's statement for the benefit of whom it may concern.

►►Galveston Daily News

January 30, 1869, Two horse thieves were taken from officers in Madison County on Monday, carried to the woods, and shot to death.

►►Galveston Daily News

March 5, 1869, Milton Clay, a Black man of a great deal of mouth, who figured in the Radical Convention at Montgomery as a representative of Madison County, has been sentenced to the penitentiary for claiming as his own a \$500 greenback lost by another person. He not only refused to deliver it up on demand but offered a witness \$200 not, to swear against him.

►► MCHC - Vol II

March 6, 1869, This is the family's account of the death of John Longbotham. John was shot in the back over a disagreement about hogs. The murderer brought two men with him, supposedly to make restitution for previous trouble, but when John turned to shake hands with the third man, he was shot in the back. His body was to be taken to the Ten Mile Cemetery, but the weather was so bad that he was buried at a small cemetery on Brushy Creek, now on the Poteet Property.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 2, Sept 8

►►Galveston Daily News,

August 9, 1870, "Lawlessness in Madison County" from His Excellency, E. J. Davis, Governor of Texas. The Sheriff is unable, without the aid of some extraordinary force always at his command, to maintain law and order in the County. The man who was indicted for the murder of Longbotham of this County was arrested and put in jail. Afterward, the accused sued out a Writ of Habeas Corpus before the Honorable Heart Davis, Judge of this District, who upon hearing the Writ refused bail, whereupon a mob consisting, as I am informed, of about 60 persons in disguise in the night time surrounded the jail, forced the keys from the Sheriff and turned the (accused) murderer loose.

It is believed, and many strong circumstances combine to support the belief, that the notorious Bill McIver, the murderer of David McDonald of this county, and also the murderer of Hurne, the policeman of Bryan; the Gardners and Poney Stephens, the murderers of Dr. Baldwin of Leon County, were the leaders of the mob. McIver and Stephens have left, I am told for Palo Pinto County. The rest are still here to carry on their desperate acts of lawlessness. The job they now have under consideration is the murder of Judge G. M. Neeley, former County Judge of this County, and if not prevented, I am sure they will affect the work, as they seem intent and industrious. Yet Neeley is appraised of their designs and will probably thwart them.

There have been but two terms of the District Court held in the County since the surrender of the Confederate Arms. No military or civil officers most of the time. Hence, it has been a safe retreat for the violators of the law in neighboring counties. They have never been disturbed here until the passage of the State Police Bill, which of late has caused some uneasiness, and they are slowly leaving, yet most of them have not yet been caught.

►►Galveston Daily News

November 15, 1870, THE MADISON COUNTY RIOT – The Houston Times learns that the following are substantially the facts of said "riot". A gang of Black men, under the leadership of a white lieutenant of the State Police, had

been for some time past in the habit of disarming citizens on the highway and then appropriating whatever property was found on their persons. One of the parties thus robbed sued out a warrant for the arrest lieutenant and his sable coadjutors, and when the sheriff attempted to make the arrest, he was fired on by the State Police. The citizens rallied to the assistance of the sheriff and to enforce the mandate of the court; the Black men resisted, and in the affray, one White man and two Black Men were killed two Black men were wounded. Of course, this circumstance will be used in the next report on lawlessness and crime.

►►Galveston Daily News

February 18, 1871, S. M. Gardner, alias Mills, etc., was arrested last Tuesday in this place by Joe Kelly, town policemen, and Bester South, of the State Police. He is charged with participating in the murder of Dr. McDaniel, which occurred in Madison County last year.

►► Letter to Texas Senate and House from Madison County citizens.

May 19, 1871,

To the Hon. Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Texas:

The undersigned members of the Police Court of Madison County would respectfully represent unto your Hon. Body, that the County of Madison is without a courthouse and also without a secure county jail.

Our courthouse was consumed by fire in June 1865. Our jail is old and nearly rotted down, and has not been secure for several years. Our people are generally poor and in debt, and to levy a special tax for the purpose of building a courthouse and jail, in addition to the large taxes they already have to pay, would be excessively burdensome to them. In order that such a burden, be not imposed upon them, we would most respectfully ask that portion of the District Ad Valorem State Tax, not appropriated to a special purpose. As also the State Occupation tax to be collected for the years 1871 and 1872 in this county, be given to the county, to be used under the direction of the county court for the purpose of building a good court house, and secure county jail. And as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

----C. G. Scott, Presiding Justice, and Members of the Police Court: John Vernon, Thomas J. Goree, C. B. Hollis

►►Madison County Court Records

January 23, 1881, Cases before the court: Loud Laughing Calculated to Disturb, Disturbing Religious Worship, Theft of Cattle, False Swearing, Unlawfully Removing Stock From Range, Theft, Theft of Yearling, Carrying a Pistol,

►►Huntsville Item

November 10, 1872, In Madison County, we hear the Registrar got into difficulty and was stabbed several times.

►►Petition from the Citizens of Midway

December 28, 1872, To the Honorable Members of the Senate and House of Representatives. (excerpt)

Good order cannot be maintained in any community where spirituous liquors are sold. We request you to pass another law prohibiting the sale of spirituous liquors within five miles of Midway.

We would represent in by so doing, you will comply with the almost unanimous desire of all the classes of people within five miles of Midway, male and females, white and colored. (Note: see the three pictures for the actual document)

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 3, Sept 9

1873, Leonard Sweat tried his hand at sharecropping. Leonard became involved in several shady deals and at the time of his death in 1873, he was wanted in Madison County District Court on three charges. Leonard was killed in 1873 and all charges were dropped in December of that year due to the death of the defendant. Family stories relate that he was having a feud with local families and that he and his youngest son, Gadi, were ambushed and shot.

►►The Galveston Daily News

January 15, 1873, Rev. Mr. Jenkins, of Madison County, was found dead in the woods, where he had been hog hunting, shot through the body, and his unloaded gun lying by his side. It is thought lie shot himself accidentally.

►►The Galveston Daily News

January 24, 1873, A distressing fire occurred in Madisonville, Texas, on Monday night, the 20th. The following were losers: B.C. & F.J. Westmoreland \$3000-no insurance; Henry King, \$6000-no insurance; Wilson, Yarborough & Co., \$6000-no insurance. The law books of M.Y. Randolph were also destroyed. James Ken lost \$500. The records of Madison County were destroyed and about one hundred deeds that were on file. It was evidently the work of an incendiary. This is the second burning of records of Madison County since the war.

►►San Antonio Weekly Herald

February 22, 1873, State of Texas, "Amongst other proceedings of the legislature on the 14th, we hear that the special committee appointed to visit Madison County, to investigate the disturbances that have so much alarmed the governor, has returned and reported as the result of their investigation, that ten or fifteen desperadoes were the cause of the alarms and disorders in the county. Said committee censured severely the district judge, the sheriff, and the judicial functionaries; some because they sympathized with the criminals, and all because of their incompetency.

►►Austin American Statesman

March 19, 1873, In Madison County, contestants show, by the testimony of M. Y. Randolph, Federal Supervisor of the Election Board for Madison County, that the regularly appointed Board of Officers of Election for that county did, all save one, absent themselves, and positively fail and refuse to open the polls for election in the town of Madisonville, in Madison county, on the first day of the general election, and that a new board was chosen and appointed, by the district clerk, sheriff and the remaining number of the old board; who did about noon, proceed to open the polls and receive votes, day one (150) one hundred and fifty votes were polled for the contestants, and that they telegraphed the Governor of the refusal of the regularly appointed board to serve, and the Governor responded back that his appointees should hold the election.

On Wednesday, the second day of the election, they did return and open the polls, throwing out all the votes cast on the previous day, which was (150) one hundred and fifty; some of whom did return and vote again, though many did not, thereby being deprived of the right of suffrage. Whereupon, the undersigned, minority, being of opinion that said the election was not held in conformity with either the spirit or intent of the law, and should be on behalf of the people, declared void, and remanded back.

►►Madison County Court Records

August 12, 1873, JOHN HOLLAND GUILTY. We the jury find the defendant guilty of an assault with intent to murder and affix the punishment at three years in the State prison at hard labor. – R.S. Page, Foreman

►►Madison County Court Records

August 13, 1873, STEPHEN TOWNLEY GUILTY. Having been duly convicted upon a plea of guilty, of theft of a gelding, and the penalty assessed by the jury as five years, hard labor confinement in the Penitentiary, and no motion for a new trial or in arrest of judgment having been made and the defendant in an open court having waived further notice, said the defendant was asked in open court if he had anything to say why sentence would not be pronounced by the court and said nothing, wherefor said the defendant was duly sentenced.

►►Madison County Court Records

April 8, 1874, IRA L. WAKEFIELD GUILTY. We the jury find the defendant guilty of simple assault and assess the fine at \$100. -W.R. Barrett, Foreman. Whereupon it is considered by the court that the State of Texas do have and receiver of the defendant Ira L Wakefield, the said sum of One Dollar together with all costs in this behalf expended and that he be committed to the jail of said county until said fine and cost are paid.

►►The Dallas Daily Herald

October 1, 1874, Governor Coke offers the following rewards for the apprehension of the criminals named: In Madison County, \$500; Neal McMillan, Sr., and Neal McMillan, Jr., for the murder of John Longbotham, in Madison County.

►►The Bryan Appeal

October 6, 1874, The Bryan Appeal gives an account of the robbery of Mr. M. V. Allbridge, of Burleson County, by four white men, who had blacked their faces. The robbery took place near the lines of Grimes and Madison counties. They demanded his money, but he told them that he had none, and, at the same time, attempted to draw his pistol. They then fired at him, and one struck him down with his pistol. When he recovered his senses, he was covered with blood from the blow on his head. They robbed him of \$175 in money.

►►The Waco Daily Examiner

October 10, 1875, We regret to chronicle the accidental killing of a young man named Wm. Moorey of Madison County by our townsman, Mr. Tom Boyett, one-day last week, in the eastern part of this county. Mr. B. was one of a party of camp hunters from Bryan, and it appears that Moorey was also on a camp hunt. He was killed from a stray shot from Mr. Boyett's gun, he had fired at and killed a deer some fifty yards distant. Mr. Moorey was about one hundred and fifty yards behind the deer and was not in sight of Mr. Boyett when he shot.

►►Galveston Daily News

November 2, 1876, Jake Summerville, who, together, with twelve others, broke jail here about two months ago, was recaptured and again lodged in our jail last night. He was captured at McKeever's place in Madison County, about fifty miles from here, by two men who were sent there for that purpose by the sheriff of this county. They rode fifty miles in seven hours after making the arrest. Too much praise cannot be given to our able and efficient sheriff for the energetic and successful manner in which he has prosecuted the search for Summerville and the prisoners who escaped with him. Of the thirteen who broke jail, eleven have been recaptured.

►►The Galveston Daily News

November 3, 1876, MADISON COUNTY, Plain-Dealer: On the evening of the 24th, at Zulch's store, on Willowhole Prairie, Jos. McIver and Jas. Mosley, both old men, had a difficulty, which resulted in the beating, bruising, and stamping of Mosley by McIver to such an extent that he died from the effects on Wednesday.

►►The Galveston Daily News

February 25, 1877, Mrs. Armitage, of Madison County, was so severely burned on 12th last, while cooking for her family, that she died in four days.

►►The Galveston Daily News

June 6, 1877, Friday evening Mr. London, drummer for Heidenheimer Bros., of Galveston, left Madisonville, on the Bryan Road, en route for Zulch's store, on Willowhole Prairie, got into Iron Creek, five miles west of town, and drowned his pair of fine buggy horses, capsized his buggy in the channel of the creek, and narrowly escaped drowning himself.

►►Austin American Statesman

July 19, 1877, Capt. Caldwell, of the frontier battalion, has arrested W. P. Wolfe, the notorious Madison County desperado. This sort of chaps are being brought to grief pretty fast.

⊛The Dallas Daily Herald

August 11, 1877, The Messenger says, Pat Wolf, who killed the father of the Sandell boys of this place, four years ago, in Madison County, and has since been a fugitive in the west, passed through Rockdale, last week, on the train, in charge of the Sheriff of Madison County.

⊛San Marcos Free Press

February 8, 1879, The prisoners confined in the Madisonville jail made their escape on Wednesday night of last week, by cutting through the inner cage. The notorious Pat Wolf, charged with murder and horse stealing, was one of the number.

►►Daily Fort Worth Standard

August 23, 1877, Dan McMillen, charged with having murdered several Black men in Madison County several years ago, was arrested in Ellis County last week and lodged in the Madisonville Jail. While the Ellis County officers had him in charge, they were attacked by two sons of McMillen, who attempted to rescue the prisoner. The officers repelled the attack, wounding both of the young men severely.

►►Austin Weekly Statesman

January 3, 1878, Dave Quarles furnished the prisoners in the Madison County jail with knives to work their way out, and consequently, he has worked his way into the penitentiary for four years.

►►The Galveston Daily News

January 21, 1879, Walter Nupier, sheriff of Karnes County, passed through this evening with William Long, alias Mason, wanted, under \$250 reward, in Madison County, charged with a murder committed in 1874.

►►Brenham Weekly Banner

March 21, 1879, Frank Conner, an old citizen of Madison County, had an ex-convict employed on his farm who had been making improper advances to Mrs. Conner. When ordered to leave the place he refused to go. Conner seized his gun and again ordered him off. He opened his coat and dared Conner to shoot; he shot and there was a dead convict.

►►Tri Weekly Herald

May 27, 1879, A man named Dorman was recently drowned in Madison County. It seems Dorman had left two horses picketed on the bank of a stream near, his house. The stream rose during the night, and in trying to liberate the animals the next morning, Mr. Dorman lost his life. He had recently moved to this State from Alabama and left a wife and six children.

►►MCHC - Vol I

June 23, 1879, John Spencer Wolfe was on horseback when he was shot and killed on his way home from visiting his wife-to-be. His killers were never known. He was 23. According to an article in Volume I, he was born in Madison County on May 5, 1856. Since there were no formal burial grounds in the area, his parents, James Allen and Elender Amanda Gabriel Wolfe, donated the land to start a cemetery. John Spencer was the first to be buried there, in what is now known as the High Prairie Cemetery. His is the only grave enclosed in a rock wall. His headstone lists his date of death as June 23, 1879.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 6, Sept 12

►►MCHC - Vol I

September 30, 1879, Annie Mitchell Drake first married Bennett Keefer, when she was thirteen years old. They had one son, Maxia Clarence, born in 1872. Bennett was killed and died from injuries when he was driving a wagon across the Navasota River at Bundic Crossing. Another man was coming, meeting him; neither one would wait for the other to cross and hung wagon wheels out in the middle. They began to fight right there, and the other man stuck a knife in Keefer's chest, cutting off the tip of his heart. He died October 8, 1879, living nine days after being stabbed. He was 29 years old. He is buried in Keefer Cemetery. Annie then married Aaron "Bud" Drake and they had nine children.

►►Harrisburg Telegraph

October 29, 1879, Mrs. Spears, of Madison County, Texas, has confessed her complicity in the murder of her husband some time ago, by conspiring with two of his enemies. She rode with her husband in a wagon, and got him to go back in the road after something she pretended to have dropped. Two men then sprang upon and murdered him. Mrs. Spears is in jail.

►►Austin American Statesman

December 12, 1879, Sheriff E. B. Seay, of Madison County, will leave this morning for the above county, taking back with him two prisoners, Fred Mathers, charged with theft of cattle, and Sam Monroe, charged with horse stealing.

►►Galveston Daily News

December 17, 1879, HUNTSVILLE, Gabe Sweat, who broke jail in Marlin, Falls County, charged with murder, horse-stealing, and various crimes, was summoned to surrender by the sheriff's posse in Madison County. Sweat refused to do so, and assaulted the posse with his six-shooter, and in consequence was shot dead on the spot, dying as he said he would, with his boots on. He had made brags that would not be arrested. The justice, after the inquest, discharged the parties concerned.

►►Austin American Statesman

December 23, 1880, Last week T. A. McDonald, county judge of Madison County, shot and killed John Christian in the courthouse at Madisonville. A suit instituted by McDonald against Christian for the hire of county convicts was the cause of the homicide.

⊛MCHC - Vol I

1880, Thomas Alexander McDonald was elected Justice of the Peace in the Midway precinct in 1872. Then he was elected County Judge of Madison County in 1876, 1878, and 1880. The year of 1880 was a sad and tragic year for Thomas. His wife died that year, and he was left with three small sons to rear. To compound his problems, he became embroiled in a political feud and killed a man right in the Courthouse in Madisonville in 1880. While under indictment for manslaughter, he was reelected to a third term as County Judge. He must have been very broken over his troubles because he started drinking very heavily. When he was finally tried in 1884, he was found guilty and actually served some of a five-year sentence, but he was pardoned by Governor Lawrence Sullivan Ross. Over 500 citizens of Madison County, including all twelve men who had served on the jury that convicted him, signed a petition to Governor Ross asking for his pardon.

➤MCHC – Vol I

In the 1880s, Jim and Hulda McCan Winborn bought a house in Connor. At that time the county contained a few bands of outlaws who plundered, stole, and murdered. While spending the night away from home, the outlaws burned their house to the ground, so they moved to Jenkins where they lived the remainder of Jim's life, until Hulda was too old to live alone.

➤Tri-Weekly Herald

January 24, 1880, San Antonio, Ranger Rousseau yesterday arrested a party who answers the description of Clint Lewis, who murdered his mother-in-law in Madison County some time ago. Rousseau will take him to Austin for further identification. The man says he never was in Madison County.

Madison County Court Records

January 4, 1882, Sheriff, E.B. Seay expenses as related to State of Texas vs. W. R. Lindley, charged with the offense of accessory to murder. Verdict, indictment quashed. Arrest, \$1.00. 50 miles to arrest @ 0.05/mile, \$2.50. Summoning 8 witnesses @ 0.50/each, \$4.00. 78 miles in summoning and attaching witnesses @ 0.05/mile, \$3.90. Summoning jury, \$2.00. Grand Total, \$13.40. Approved by District Judge, John R. Kennard. (case disposed of Dec 1881, no appeal taken)

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 7, Sept 13

➤Galveston Daily News

June 19, 1884, Madison County - Lycurgus McCracken, an escaped convict, and notorious desperado, was arrested here today and jailed to await transportation to Huntsville. The prisoner killed a man in Gonzales and was acquitted on the plea of lunacy. Subsequently, he was pursued for horse theft and in the running fight was wounded in the leg and captured, not, however, until he had killed the horse of Deputy Sheriff Beatty and shot the officer after his horse was killed. He was sent up for ten years, broke out of jail, and made good his escape. He was followed to Tarrant County, where he was arrested after he had shot and disabled two deputy sheriffs. He was conveyed to the Madison County jail and again made his escape with others. At the time of his arrest here, today, he tore up a lot of papers in his possession, stating, after they had been torn into atoms, that the papers memoranda of his program and he would give away a horse he had staked out in this city, which in all probability would yet be necessary in carrying out his projected business.

►►The Galveston Daily News

August 23, 1885, F. Tyler, who is wanted in Madison County, TX for murder committed there fourteen years ago, was turned over to Sheriff Black at Texarkana on Monday.

►►The Weekly Truth

August 28, 1885, R. K. Defee was arrested in Madison County, TX, last week for a crime committed in DeSoto over sixteen years ago. In 1866, while under the influence of liquor, without cause or provocation he killed a Black boy, and fleeing from justice, eluded the vigilance of the officers of the law until his arrest as stated above.

►►Linn County Republic

November 6, 1885, Wm. Mosley has been arrested at Texarkana, for a murder he committed in Madison County, TX, in 1869.

►►The Galveston Daily News

May 22, 1886, Bryan, Tex., Sheriff Dawson returned with Egbert Moorman, who escaped from the Madisonville jail last week. Moorman says he only broke jail to have his case continued.

►►MCHC - Vol I

1887, Mr. Redden Page was hanged from an oak tree by the Texas Rangers by mistake. He's buried in Park Cemetery.

►►Fort Worth Daily Gazette

February 21, 1888, A GHOST STORY. A Ghost Suspended From the Tree Upon Which Red Page Was Hanged In Madison County.

Since the hanging of Red Page one of the horse thieves of Madison County, last month by a mob of enraged citizens, various rumors have come to the town of Madisonville about twenty-two miles from here, to the effect that a ghost could be seen suspended from the identical tree upon which Page had been hung. Several parties reported that on riding along the road, which runs within twenty paces of the tree on which the horse thief was hung, they had seen hanging in midair a ghost like figure at least eight feet in length, and which emitted a pale silvery light. At first, it is stated, the whole tale was laughed at and the idea hooted that anything of a supernatural character had been seen.

Finally on last Monday three citizens of that county came to Madisonville and reported that in company with two others they had gone down to see for themselves, as they had heard of it and, not believing such thing they wished to satisfy themselves in regard to it. Upon arriving opposite the spot, they saw the unearthly thing of which they had heard. Sure enough, there it was between earth and heaven; a long white figure giving forth a pale, weird light. The matter was the talk of that town for the parties were known to be men of undoubted veracity, and not likely to be made the victims of a practical joke or deluded by their imagination.

It created such excitement that a crowd of twenty-five persons was made up that night to go down and investigate, and it any joke was being perpetrated to expose it, as many residents of that neighborhood had been greatly frightened by what they believed to be a veritable ghost. When the party came to within 100 yards of the spot a halt was called and it was agreed that five or six should go forward and see if the "thing" made its appearance. They rode forward and seeing nothing, called for the crowd to come up. There stood the tree upon which Page had paid the last great penalty, but no ghost or goblin was to be seen.

The crowd were sitting on their horses discussing the whole matter when suddenly someone happened to look towards the tree. An exclamation of surprise and horror broke from his lips, for there, not twenty steps distant, hung the ghostly object. A feeling of horror pervaded the entire crowd. One of the parties present thus describes

his sensations: "The blood ran chill and cold in my veins. An indescribable sensation -- a sickening, terrifying feeling crept over me that I shall never forget until my dying day. What was it like? Why, sir, Bulwer himself could not describe it. It seemed to be composed of a grayish, white substance and was surrounded by a faint, pale mysterious light, and appeared to be about eight feet in length, with a long shining shriveled neck. Its face could not be seen distinctly. After viewing the unearthly object for some minutes the crowd rode off a few hundred yards and a consultation was held, but of all the brave men in that crowd there was not one who would approach it. We were all satisfied that it was not of this earth and no one present was particularly anxious of forming a more intimate acquaintance with this weird visitor from the great unknown. We returned to town without investigating further. What it is, where it came from or what its object in coming is I do not know, but as sure as faith I saw it. I looked at it, I scrutinized it carefully, and from that moment I will be a firm believer in ghosts" The ghost still remains a mystery and people of that neighborhood are nearly frightened out of their wits.

►►MCHC - Vol II

1887, Jefferson Davis Arrant married Millie Batson on August 25, 1886, in Madison County. They had a small homestead and Jeff raised fine horses to sell. He was shot and killed at his home in Madison County by a horse thief in April 1887.

►►Fort Worth Daily Gazette

November 18, 1887, Yesterday at Madisonville about 4 o'clock p.m., the jury returned a verdict of not guilty in the case of the State of Texas vs James K Ford charged with the murder of one Thomas J Nutson at Willowhole, Madison County, Tex., on the 26th day of January 1885. There has been much interest manifested in this case from the beginning, and the verdict was not a surprise to anyone, as Ford acted solely on the ground of self-defense. The case of the State of Texas vs W T Martin, which was a companion case to the above, was dismissed by motion of the District Attorney, after the verdict in the Ford case was read by the judge.

►►Madison County Court

November 21, 1887, We the jury find the defendant, Tobe Moorman guilty of theft of a horse and assess the punishment at confinement in the penitentiary for the term of five years. (2022 MCHC Note: per prison records, Mr. Moorman served the entire 5 year sentence, photo included.)

►►The Buffalo Times

January 5, 1888, The sheriff of Madison County, Texas, has applied to the governor for troops.

►►The Tecumseh Chieftain

January 14, 1888, "Reformers" lynched three men in Madison County, Texas, last week.

►►Ft. Worth Gazette

January 25, 1888, MADISON COUNTY MURDER. Edward B Seay, an Ex-Sheriff and Prominent Citizen, Killed. News has just reached here that night before last murder was again committed in Madison County, it being this time one of that county's best citizens Mr. Edward B. Seay, formerly sheriff of that county. Mr. Seay had the misfortune to live near the thieving and murdering element of that section and hence was much in their way. He was the only man, however, who had ever succeeded in getting true bills against these lawless wretches that would have any effect, and it is a fact, that whenever he was a member of the grand jury he was compelled to go loaded down with arms.

►►MCHC - Vol II

1888, The first Madisonville newspaper was printed by J.B. Hall, a Baptist minister. He called the paper The Texas Watchman and, unfortunately, it was short-lived. One of the earliest copies of the paper, dated April 21, 1888, carried a headline in bold type that read, "SENTENCED TO BE HANGED, W.H. ROE, THE WIFE POISONER, DOOMED." The article that followed reported that Judge Norman G. Kittrell passed the death sentence and set the execution for May 26, 1888. (MCHC NOTE: this trial was moved to Madison County on a change of venue from Walker County. Later it was moved to Grimes County)

►►Fort Worth Daily Gazette

December 25, 1890, Shooting Affray Near Madisonville. Berry McIver shot and dangerously wounded William Ford the day before yesterday, in the Willowhole neighborhood. From the best information your correspondent can gather it seems that McIver first knocked him down with a six-shooter, striking him a heavy blow, nearly breaking his neck. He afterwards shot him while lying down, the ball entering near the small of the back and coming out near the neck, passing under the shoulder blade. He is in critical condition. The shootist is under arrest.

►►Knoxville Republican

June 3, 1892, Virtue Will Be Protected. At Midway, Madison County, Texas. Friday night, a mob went to the house of Arthur Burrows, who was accused of seducing a young girl of the neighborhood, and shot him five times killing him instantly.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 8, Sept 14

►►The Lake Geneva Herald

August 24, 1894, At Midway, Texas, Mrs. Allen was seized with colic. Physicians and nurses after six hours pronounced her dead. She was dressed and placed in her coffin. As the cortege was about to start to the graveyard a neighbor asked for a last look at her. The neighbor thought she discovered signs of animation. The suspected corpse was taken from the coffin, placed in a tub of water and soon revived.

►►Galveston Daily News

December 24, 1882, On Monday morning last, the little son of S. T. Allphin, one of our leading merchants, was playing with an old powder cap, and discovered some powder in the bottom of the can and ignited a match and touched off the powder, and the explosion burnt the little fellow's eyes and face severely; but the physician who was called in says the sight is not at all injured, yet his face and eyes are much swollen, and he suffers much from the effects of the burn. I do not think that children should be permitted to have more than a pound or two of powder at a time.

County court for the trial of criminal causes has been in session this week. Hon. T. A. McDonald presiding. A number of cases have been continued and several determined. In the case of the State of Texas against Samuel Jolly, charged with having committed an aggravated assault and battery, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty. In the case of the State of Texas against Alf Whitton, charged with having unlawfully driven an ox from his accustomed range, there was a hung jury and cause continued. District court will convene at this place on Christmas Day, and it is expected that a number of murder and other felony cases will be disposed of. It is also expected that the grand jury will indict quite a number of those who have, it is said, been displaying too great an appetite for fresh pork.

Cotton picking is suspended generally until after the holidays; in fact, business generally seems to be at a standstill just now. Some of our citizens are moving to the country and others moving to town. E. C. Mitchell has sold his handsome residence to Judge W. W. Visor, and Mr. M. has purchased the farm of Mr. Austin McGary, six

miles east of this place. Mr. M. is moving out today, and Judge Visor will move to town in a day or so. Mr. McGary will, I am informed, purchase a home near the city of Austin, and settle on it for life. He will prove to be a valuable to the community where he may locate.

Much pork is being brought to town, and is being sold at from 5 to 7 cents per pound, according to quality.

►►Galveston Daily News

November 23, 1895, BLACK MAN SHOT. The Madison County lynching turned out to be a shooting, instead of a hanging. The details as told here today are that a Black boy ran his horse over a white girl, whereupon a mob went after him and the boy's father interfered and was shot, the boy meanwhile making his escape. The affair occurred in the northwest corner of the county, remote from this point, and the names of none of the participants are known here. There seems, however, to be no doubt of the killing.

►►The Galveston Daily News

February 18, 1895, CHILD'S FATAL FALL. Midway, Madison Co., Tex., Today a little girl of Mrs. W. E. Riley, who lives one and a half miles west of this place, while playing in the snow, fell off of a gallery, which caused a concussion of the brain, from which she died in about hour after the fall.

►►The Galveston Daily News

April 1, 1895, Midway, Madison Co., Tex., TENANT HOUSE. A tenant on the Turner plantation six miles south of this place, lost his house and contents by fire the night before last. This is the fifth house that has burned on this place in the last four years. Two farmers living two miles west of town lost a good deal of fencing yesterday by fire, it being so extremely dry that when a fire gets started It burns very rapidly, and is hard to control.

►►The Galveston Daily News

April 3, 1895, Madisonville, Madison Co., Tex., A BOY MURDERED. Yesterday evening, five miles north of town, Willis Shannon, a Black boy, was shot. He lived with his father, Wilson Shannon, three miles north of town. Young Shannon was talking to a Black boy was plowing near the home of Mr. Curtis Kelton. A party intoxicated, supposed to have been hunting, came up, and after abusing the boy for some time, he discharged his gun close to the boy's head. The boy caught the gun and tried to turn it from his body. This angered the assailant very much, and he forced the boy to relinquish his grasp on the gun, then running; at the same time for his life. The assailant then fired at the fleeing boy at close range, breaking his arm and wounding him in the side. The boy's horse ran three-fourths of a mile before the boy, weakened by the loss of blood, fell from the saddle. The sheriff and a searching party started out to look for the boy, his horse having gone home covered with blood, and the father having come in for the sheriff, fearing that his son had been murdered. At 11 o'clock last night the searching party found the boy, who was still alive. He told the sheriff the circumstances under which he was shot. The murdered boy was buried here late this evening. Will Hawkins, who is connected both by blood and by marriage with the oldest best families in the County, is now in jail awaiting an examining trial. Hawkins claims to know nothing of the shooting.

►►Galveston Daily News

April 18, 1895, Madisonville, Tex., Stolen from R. W. Blackwell at Midway, one black horse, about 15 hands high; 7 or 8 years old, branded JO on the left shoulder, one white foot, saddle marks. Stolen from J. J. Green at Midway, one sorrel horse, about 15 hands high, 8 or 9 years old, branded LL on left shoulder, two little curls in the forehead. For information leading to recovery. will pay a reward. -F. M. Black, Sheriff Madison County.

➤➤Galveston Daily News

June 3, 1895, MADISON COUNTY. I have in jail two men on the charge of horse stealing of the following description: Jim Lindley, 27 or 28 years old, 5 feet 10 inches dark hair, light eyes, will weigh 150 or pounds; says he has lived at Cameron, Calvert. Charlie Clark, alias Sam Smith, about 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, dark complexion, black hair, blue eyes, about 35 , maybe 40 years old, will weigh 155 or pounds. He says he is from San Antonio but has lived at Calvert for six or eight months, where he kept a feed stable.

These men had in their possession the following described stock: One sorrel horse, branded 3 P on left hip, about 8 years old, white spot on face and snip on nose; one dun horse, about 14 hands high, 6 or 7 years old, branded 33 on left hip and 3 on left shoulder; one sorrel horse, branded O on jaw and M 2 on shoulder, 6 or 7 years old, 14 hands high, one white foot; one brown or bay horse, white face, 10 or 11 years old, one white hind foot, no brand; all gentle to ride and work. Anyone wanting either man or horses will find them here. --F. M. Black, Sheriff, Madison County.

➤➤The Galveston Daily News

August 25, 1895, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex., KILLED WITH A BEER BOTTLE. Sam W. Harris and his; brother-in-law had difficulty at Willowhole, Madison County, yesterday evening in which Harris was struck on the head with a beer bottle and killed. Harris was about 20 years of age and leaves a family.

➤➤The Eagle

August 29, 1895, A TRAGIC AFFAIR. News reached here Saturday of the killing of Sam W. Harris, the popular young merchant of Willowhole, and his many friends were greatly shocked at the sad intelligence. Mr. John B. Mike, for whom Mr. Harris formerly clerked in Bryan, went over to attend the funeral, and the facts in the case, as gathered from Mr. Mike, are about as follows: Mr. Harris held an account against his brother-in-law, Isra Rumfield, and sent it to him by a collector. The latter returned to Willowhole accompanied by Mr. Rumfield Saturday afternoon, and in some manner, Harris, and Rumfield became involved in a difficulty about the matter and the former received a fatal lick on the head with a beer bottle and was killed. The unfortunate altercation occurred about 2 o'clock Friday afternoon and Harris died late in the evening.

Rumfield had not been apprehended up to the time of Mr. Mike's departure. Mr. Harris was buried with Masonic honors and his funeral was one of the largest ever seen in that locality. Deceased leaves a wife and four children. He was a very popular and successful young businessman. And had a wide circle of warm friends. Mr. Mike thinks the killing was an awful ending to the difficulty not anticipated by any of the parties connected with it, and more greatly deplored by all than can well be imagined. Sadly, the land is mourning for the deeds of unbridled passion.

➤➤Galveston Daily News

September 14, 1895, Madisonville, Madison Co., Tex., A REPORTED KILLING. News reached town this morning that a young man who lives in the western part of the County had shot and killed a by the name of F. Sweat.

➤➤Galveston Daily News

September 14, 1895, Madisonville, Madison Co., Tex., KILLING NEAR MADISONVILLE --Joe Darter, white, shot and killed Lige Shannon, a Black man, this evening at 5 on the Bryan and Madisonville Road one and one-half miles from town. Darter after the killing rode into town and surrendered.

➤➤Galveston Daily News

November 23, 1895, Jim Brownlee vs. State – From Madison County: Appellant was convicted for carrying a pistol on and about his person. On the trial appellant set up two defenses, the first that he was a traveler within the

contemplation of the statute; second, that an attack was being made on him that was so impatient and threatening as to preclude time for having the party arrested. We find upon an examination of the record that neither of these defenses are supported by the facts. He was not a traveler, as tested by the law applicable to this case; the evidence does not show that he wore the pistol because he was apprehensive that he would be attacked by the Griffiths at the political gathering, which he appears to have been attending. It shows, to the contrary, that he used it in a sudden quarrel. The judgment is affirmed. - Opinion by Henderson

►►The Houston Post

December 12, 1895, Bryan, Tex., FATALLY STABBED. In a difficulty in High Prairie in Madison County yesterday, Jim Ford was seriously stabbed several times and is not expected to live.

►►The Galveston Daily News

October 16, 1895, Bryan, Tex., AN OLD MAN ARRESTED. Yesterday Sheriff Nunn lodged in jail an aged white man named John Ferrell. He was arrested near Midway, Madison County. The new delivery wagon and harness stolen last week from R. M. Nall and B. M. Mu___(illegible) were recovered. He is not only old but quite decrepit.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 10, Sept 16

THE DEATH OF BETTIE CROCKER

►►The Galveston Daily News

October 28, 1895, Bryan, Tex., A WIDOW KILLED. News reached here yesterday of the killing of a widow named Mrs. Crocker near Willowhole, in Madison County. The details could not be obtained.

⊕The Galveston Daily News

October 30, 1895, Madisonville, Tex., A WOMAN MURDERED, Fate of a Widow Near Willowhole – Two Arrests. At an early hour this morning, a runner came in Willowhole for Sheriff Black. He announced that Mrs. Bettie Crocker, a lady living two miles from Willowhole and fourteen miles from Madisonville, had been foully murdered the night before.

Sheriff Black was soon on the way scene of the crime. Just at sunset this evening Deputy Sheriff, Sam Casey came in with Van Seay, a neighbor of the murdered woman, and locked him up in the County jail. An hour later Sheriff Black followed with Mr. Crocker, a stepson of the unfortunate woman, and locked him up also.

The murder was one of the most fiendish in the history of the County. The murdered woman lived alone with two orphan boys. These little fellows say that just at dark their aunt lit a lamp and commenced to do some needlework. At her request, the two boys went to the wood pile just behind the house to bring in wood for the next morning's fire.

While at the pile they heard the woman scream, and immediately they ran into the house. There they found her, half fallen from her chair, her head resting on the box which sat beside her, and her brains spattered on the wall and floor. As the boys entered, a man in his shirt sleeves ran from the house. The boys went a mile away and informed a neighbor.

The whole community was aroused. Deputy Sheriff Casey was soon upon the ground and held the crowd together until daylight when he took the trail for the murderer and followed it for some distance. The west end of the County is in a state of great excitement. More developments are expected.

⊕The Eagle

October 31, 1895, A widow woman named Mrs. David Crocker was foully murdered at her home near Willowhole last Friday night. Some person slipped up behind her while she was sitting before the fire and dashed her brains

out with what was said to be a piece of buggy spring. A citizen of Brazos County was at first arrested by a posse of Madison County people, but it was soon conclusively proved that he was an innocent man. Two men have since been arrested and jailed, charged with the crime. One of them is a son-in-law of the murdered woman, a man named Seay who has heretofore borne a good reputation in the county. It is asserted that Seay owed his mother-in-law a note which stipulated that it need not be paid in the event of her death, and that the note will soon fall due.

★The Eagle

November 7, 1895, Robert Seay and Harrison Chambers of Madison County were jailed here last week for safekeeping, the former being a witness in the Crocker murder case, and the latter charged with implication in the same. Chambers has been released. Seay is a boy about 18 years of age and a son of Van Seay, who is held upon a charge of committing the murder.

★Galveston Daily News

January 30, 1896 - Madisonville, Madison Co., Tex., At 4 o'clock this evening Sheriff F. M Black rode quietly into town with little Jesse Randle behind him. The murder of Jesse's aunt, Mrs. Bettie Crocker, a few weeks ago was reported to The News.

Jesse, a boy, 13 years of age, was arrested at the time of the murder, but subsequently released. Through the kindness of the sheriff, several newspapermen, with a News reporter, were admitted to the jail tonight to hear the boy's story. A bag of apples and nuts sufficiently aroused him from a sound sleep which he was enjoying. He commenced with tears in his eyes. His story seemed very natural and candid, but one of the reporters, looking him squarely in the face, asked him if was not lying. To this question, he replied that he was lying. Then he began to waiver, first saying that his statements were true and as quickly denying them. His statements are so contradictory that no conclusion can be drawn.

★Austin American Statesman

February 1, 1896, Madisonville, Tex., FERRETING OUT A MURDER. Last October, Mrs. Bettie Crocker was most brutally murdered, being literally chopped to pieces. The State offered a \$300 reward, which the citizens supplemented by another \$300. Yesterday Sheriff L. Lindley arrested Isaac Randall, her 13-year-old nephew. He confessed, saying he killed her with the axe while she was knitting him some socks. and that his 10-year-old brother was in the conspiracy.

They murdered her to cast off her restraint and get her money. At the jail the youngster told the Statesman reporter that another party who really committed the murder promised him \$200 to assume the guilt, assuring him that on account of his youth he would not be punished. He also said later that he did the killing himself. Officers incline to the belief that it was a man who did the killing, and will soon make another arrest.

★Marshall Evening Messenger

February 1, 1896, STORY NOT BELIEVED. A Twelve-Year-Old Boy Confesses to the Murder of His Aunt. Last October, Mrs. Bettie Crocker was most brutally murdered here, being literally being chopped to pieces. The state offered \$300 reward, which the citizens supplemented by another \$300. Sheriff Lindley has arrested Isaac Randle, her 12-year-old nephew. He confessed, saying he killed her with an ax while she was knitting him some socks, and that his 10-year-old brother was in the conspiracy. They murdered her to cast off her restraint and get her money. It is not believed that the boys are the principals to the murder, but that someone else really committed the crime. Other arrests are expected.

►►Galveston Daily News

November 26, 1895, The Madison County lynchers killed the wrong: man, but explain as a mitigating circumstance that the victim was a relative of the man they were after.

►►The Galveston Daily News

December 1, 1895, Midway, Madison. Co., Tex., ACCIDENTALLY SHOT. Virgil Franklin, about 17 years of age, son of Mr. G. Franklin, who lives near here, was accidentally shot through the neck with a target rifle by his little brother, about 8 years old. The ball entered the right side passing between the bone and windpipe, ranging down and lodging under the skin on the left side.

►►The Galveston Daily News

December 26, 1895, Midway, Madison Co., Tex., LOST A TRUNK. Last Friday night while Mr. E. Clapp was attending the game supper someone went to his residence, succeeded in getting in at one of the windows, and carried off a trunk that contained \$50 in money and a number of papers of lesser value. They carried it some distance from the house, broke it to pieces, and took the money. Mr. Clapp discovered the loss when he returned home and gave the alarm. No clue has been obtained.

►►Galveston Daily News

January 25, 1896, Pete Farris from Madison County: Conviction for murder in the second degree; punishment five years in the penitentiary.

►►The Houston Post

January 30, 1896, Willowhole, Tex., BITTEN BY A MAD DOG. There has been considerable excitement recently on the subject of mad dogs. This immediate vicinity has been infested with the rabid canine, and a number have been slain. One young man bitten by a dog was supposed to be mad. The generous citizens of this vicinity in the course of some thirty hours after he was bitten raised him \$187.90 to go to Chicago for treatment.

►►The Galveston Daily News

March 11, 1896, Midway, Madison Co., Tex., SHOT WITH SQUIRREL SHOT. Last Friday morning Dink Harrison and Bill Coleman, two Black men, living three miles east of this place, got into difficulty, in which Harrison was shot with a shotgun, which was loaded with squirrel shot. A physician picked forty-three shots out of the Black man's back and legs. He has a serious wound. The Black man who did the shooting came to town and surrendered to the officers and was held to await the action of the grand jury under a bond of \$200, which he gave.

►►The Galveston Daily News

April 22, 1896, A BODY FOUND. Willis Williams Shot and Killed by Unknown Parties, Madisonville, Madison Co., Tex., Yesterday a farmer named Ghist came and reported that while hunting on Caney creek he found the body of a dead man in a slough about five miles northwest of town. Sheriff Black, Deputy Sheriff Park, Dr. J. E. Morris, Jr., and a crowd of citizens started immediately for the scene at 7 o'clock last night they returned to town with the body of a Black man, who identified, as Willis Williams, alias Nine Williams. Willis Williams, the murdered man has been living with his stepfather, Jake Bledsoe, in Houston County on the farm of Mr. J. R. McIver of this place.

Last Monday Mr. McIver came over from his farm to spend a few days with his family and brought with him Jake Bledsoe and Willis Williams to haul wood. On Monday they commenced hauling wood from the creek three miles above the town, Willis the cutting and Jake Bledsoe the hauling. On Tuesday Jake came, as usual, carrying Willis' dinner to him. He found the coat, ax, and saw of Willis, but Willis himself could not be found. Nothing serious was thought of his absence. Jake supposing that he had returned to his home in Houston County. Nothing more was

thought of the matter until his lifeless body was found three miles farther up the creek with two ghastly bullet holes in his breast.

Near the slough in which the body was found was a large puddle of dried blood, a piece of rope with which he had been tied, and a trail where the body had been dragged to the edge of the water. There were also tracks of two horses, where they had been tied.

Justice Sam Lindsey held the inquest evening and the first witness, Dr. J. E. Morris, Jr., testified that his death was caused by two gunshot wounds. He had been dead for three or four days.

Jake Bledsoe testified: "I know the dead Black man here; his name is Willis Williams. sometimes called 'Nine' or 'Nine Spot'. I last saw him about 11 o'clock last Tuesday at the slough bridge, about 100 yards this side of Mitchell Lake, on the Madisonville and Sand Prairie Road. He was cutting wood and I was hauling it to town for Mr. John McIver. I brought a load of wood to town about 11 o'clock and left him to cut wood until I came back. I have never seen him since until today; he is my stepson." Other witnesses corroborated this testimony. Justice Lindsey's verdict was that "Willis Williams came to his death by, gunshot wounds inflicted by unknown parties."

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 12, Sept 18

►►Ft. Worth Daily Gazette

April 22, 1896, VILLAINOUS MURDER. A Black Man Murdered. Bound Hand and Foot and Thrown Into a Pond. Madisonville. The body of a harmless Black man, Will Davis, was found in a pond five miles from town. He had been shot twice in the breast and his hands and feet were tied together before being thrown into the water. Two white men are suspected but have not yet been arrested. Indignation is very high, as this county has no sympathy for assassins, even if the victim is Black.

►►The Galveston Daily News

June 11, 1896, FOUND MURDERED. An Unknown Young Man Meets With Foul Play on Dry Creek. Bryan, Tex., News was brought to Bryan this morning by Mr. A. Drake of Madison County that an unknown young man was found murdered near Willowhole on Dry Creek, Monday evening. He was about 25 years old, 5 feet 6 inches in height, and weighed about 135 pounds; he has a light complexion, blue eyes, a red mustache, and no beard. He had on jean pants, striped jumper, white shirt with large white buttons, No. 8 gaiter shoes, well worn, no hat found.

He had three Santa Fe railroad maps, a small bottle of Franklin mineral wells water, a piece of navy tobacco, a new three-blade pocket knife, and an old pocketbook with 10 cents in money, in his pockets. He was shot about the chin, and the bullet came out near the ear. He was also fearfully beaten about the head with some blunt instrument. His fingernails were long and well kept, and his hands were white and soft, showing that he was not accustomed to manual labor. There were no signs of a struggle, and the handkerchief and coat were folded and laid under his head. The supposition is he was murdered while asleep. He had only been dead a few hours when discovered by Thomas Stewart, who notified Mr. Burris, working nearby. No clue as to the assassin.

►►The Eagle

June 23, 1896, Sheriff Black and Deputy Sam Casey of Madison County were here Sunday and the sheriff informed the reporter that he had everything he wanted in the murder case near Willowhole recently, except the man who committed the terrible crime, and as every effort is being made for his capture, it will doubtless be affected in the next few days. The man wanted was the traveling companion of the murdered man there appears to be no doubt the victim was murdered for what money he had. It appears that the two men had been working together in the lumber region of East Texas.

►►The Galveston Daily News

July 8, 1896, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex., CHARGED WITH MURDER. Sheriff F. M. Black and Deputy Sam Casey, Madison County passed through here today en route to Madisonville with Tom Ross, a young white man 25 years old, charged with the murder of William Troop near Willowhole on June 7. Troop was the unknown man found in the woods and reported at that time. The officers have been trailing Ross ever since the crime was committed.

He came in and surrendered to Sheriff Black at Kerrville. When seen by The News reporter, Ross had no statement to make about the killing: "I want to say about my character, though," he added. never was guilty of robbing a man in life. I was reared near Willowhole, belong to a good family of people, and was thought of. Mr. Black has treated, me as fine as a prisoner could be treated, and I haven't tried to get away and won't try."

⊛The Galveston Daily News

July 11, 1896, Bryan, Tex., KILLING OF BILL TROOP. Tom Ross, the man brought back from Kerrville charged with the murder of Bill Troop, near Willowhole, Madison County, June 8, has confessed to the crime and alleges self-defense. Ross says he had loaned Troop some money, and they were on the way from Bryan to Madisonville, Troop raised a row with him about the loan, regarding which they disagreed. Troop leveled a Colt 41-caliber six-shooter on him, whereupon he (Ross) struck the pistol with a stick he had been walking with and bent the barrel when Troop struck at him with the pistol and he returned the blow with the stick. After the killing, he laid Troop out and put the coat under his head, threw the pistol in the Navasota River, and left. His story of the escape and capture is about as heretofore in The News. Ross says he and Troop were friends, but that he had to kill the latter in self-defense.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 13, Sept 19

➤The Galveston Daily News

July 23, 1896, Body Recovered. Midway, Madison Co., Tex., Yesterday at about 10 o'clock the body of a drowned boy was found about 80 yards down the river from where he went under. He was brought here and buried.

➤The Houston Post

November 16, 1896, Bryan, Tex., - STOLEN CATTLE FOUND. Sheriff F. M. Black of Madisonville was in Bryan yesterday on his return from Galveston, where he had found thirty-three head of cattle that had been stolen in Madison County and shipped there. He had already wired Madisonville and had the thieves, two Black men and one white man, arrested. The cattle will be returned next week.

➤Austin American-Statesman

December 10, 1896, Huntsville, Tex., A KILLING AT HUNTSVILLE. In a difficulty between Frank Ward and Joe Darter, Ward was shot and killed, at the Lone Star cotton wharf at 9 o'clock tonight. Both parties are well-known citizens of the Madison community and were here with cotton. There bail been a prior dispute up town, and the same was renewed at the wharf with the above result. Marshal Maxey arrested Darter after firing several shots. Darter was lodged in the penitentiary for safekeeping, the same being used for Walker County jail.

➤The Eagle

December 17, 1896, WOOLLEY CAPTURED. Sheriff Black and Deputy Sam Casey of Madison County, arrived in Bryan yesterday morning on the early southbound train with John Woolley, wanted in Madison County on a charge of cattle stealing. Woolley was captured between Reagan and Marlin. He ran from the officers and was fired on but not injured. He was lodged in jail here several hours and then taken on to Madisonville after being made to pay the

jail fees. Wooley is charged with stealing the 33 head of cattle which were shipped from this place to Galveston sometime since and recovered by Sheriff Black.

►►The Houston Post

January 25, 1897, Bryan, Texas, TRAGEDY REPORTED. In a difficulty at Willowhole, in Madison County yesterday afternoon Mason Railey shot and killed Bungus Andrews. The full particulars of the difficulty have not been learned.

★The Marshall Messenger

January 29, 1897, Jan, 25, Shot and Killed. Bryan, Tex., Bungus Andrus was shot and killed three miles this side of Willowhole on the Bryan Road. A telephone message from Willowhole states that a man rode up with a shotgun to a spot where some men were playing cards and after standing around a while, addressed Andrus regarding the cause of the trouble, which is not known here, and fired. He then galloped away. A party gave himself up to Sheriff Black at Madisonville.

►►MCHC - Vol I

In the late 1880s, The Pee Dee family had an underground cistern for water and a spring in a branch that ran through the Jimmy Wells' place. Someone poisoned the water in the spring, and the family of eight were killed and buried in Pee Dee Community Cemetery, southeast of Pee Dee Lake located in Jimmy Wells' pasture. (2022) Harold Gene Wells stated he believes this happened to the Finney family in the late 1800s.

►►The Houston Post

August 2, 1900, Madisonville, Texas, STABBED TO DEATH. In a difficulty at a dance on the edge of town Saturday night, Wall McDonald was stabbed and died about an hour later. There are some conflicting reports The parties were the best of friends, to the time of the difficulty, and reside here. No arrests have yet been made.

►►History of Madison County, by William Ray Malone

In 1901, however, a local option election caused the Madisonville Independent School District to become "dry." At this time E.B. Evans opened the Rough Edge Saloon some two miles east of town on Highway 21, just across the border of the school district. Across the road, and about a mile farther on, Bill Camel operated the Last Chance. In 1903, prohibition's influences extended over all of the county, and these last saloons were closed. This is why, in 1905, when the railroad to Madisonville was completed, bottles of liquor ordered via express from Navasota formed the main item shipped.

The author's grandfather, B.S. Malone, a former Confederate soldier with Steele's regiment - the Seventh Texas Cavalry - was a scallywag whom Governor Edmond Davis had appointed as special policeman for Madison County. He narrowly escaped lynching when he failed to join a group of mounted men from Midway who rode to Madisonville to lynch the Republican County Judge. They later found and hanged the Judge when he and his wife were caught crossing Bedias Creek as they fled to Huntsville for safety. The Sheriff had been shot and killed in another County, possibly by someone who had followed him from Madison County. This County was placed under martial law, enforced by an under-strength company of Texas State Militia, as the National Guard had not yet been created at that time.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 14, Sept 20

►►MCHC - Vol II

1901, Jacob Booth "Jake" Williams and Mary lived and farmed in Madison County until 1901, when he was shot and crippled and his brother, "Bony", was killed by their sister's husband, "Black Joe" Williams, in a family feud at Wickson Creek near North Zulch.

►►The Houston Post

August 23, 1901, Bryan Tex., REED ADMITTED TO BAIL. The examining trial of John Reed who killed young Morris Smith at Willowhole a few days ago was concluded at Madisonville yesterday. He was granted bail in the sum of \$3000. He had not given bond when the last reports came over from there.

►►St. Louis Post Dispatch

May 22, 1902, PASTOR RACED DEATH WITH SON BOY. POISONED BY AFFECTION OF A MAD DOG. ANIMAL LICKED HIS HAND. Youth Had Suffered a Cut and Inoculation Followed - Father Hurried Him to Pasteur Institute.

S. J. Powers, an aged Baptist minister of Willowhole, Texas, and his 16-year-old son, William, who was inoculated with hydrophobia virus, in a peculiar manner Saturday night, reached St. Louis Wednesday, en route to the Pasteur Institute, Chicago. Father and son are racing with death. The young man's arm, wherein the poison has taken effect, has swollen to double size already. The flesh is discolored and it gave him great pain while he was waiting for a train at the station.

Mr. Powers, who has spent all his savings to defray the expenses of the trip to Chicago, believes that the physicians at the Pasteur Institute will be able to counteract the effects of the poison in the youth's system.

The boy was poisoned by the saliva of a pet dog belonging to his brother George, which went mad Saturday. The dog did not bite William. but instead, approached him and licked his hand. Foam from his mouth fell upon a small cut which the boy had suffered a few days before, and the poison took effect.

His hand began to swell and the true nature of his malady was ascertained Monday when it was discovered that the pet dog was mad. The dog was killed.

Mr. Powers realized that heroic treatment was necessary to save his son's life. He had heard of the Pasteur Institute at Chicago, where many persons bitten by mad dogs have been cured. But he had little money and the trip north involved great expense.

The minister did not hesitate. He collected his savings and prayed for divine guidance. A friend who pitied the boy's plight offered some money, and this, with the old preacher's hoard, was sufficient to buy two tickets to Chicago.

Mr. Powers believes that when he reaches the hospital, he will be able to secure free treatment for his boy. When the old man and the boy stepped from the M. K. T. train at Union Station Wednesday night their appearance contrasted oddly with the well-dressed crowd on the midway.

Mr. Powers was in his shirt sleeves and the boy's injured arm was protected by a red bandanna 'kerchief. The old minister told Ben Brown, the train-caller, of his anxiety to reach Chicago by the earliest train, and Brown saw him safely on a train that left Union Station at 9 o'clock.

►►The Eagle

July 3, 1902, Mr. Wm. Powers has returned from Chicago where he has been treated for a mad dog bite.

►►Austin American Statesman

September 27, 1902, TWO SHOT. One Killed and One Fatally Wounded in Difficulty Near Madisonville, Tex., Oscar Fox shot and killed Robert Jackson, a Black man, and fatally wounded Lewis Curtis, some miles from here. The cause of the difficulty is not known.

►►Fort Worth Star-Telegram

April 26, 1903, JUSTICE OF PEACE IS FOULLY MURDERED - Justice of the Peace Sam Casey was called to the door of his home at Willowhole in Madison County and shot to death by unknown parties

►►The Houston Post

February 20, 1904, Barn at Madisonville. The barn belonging to the Brizzolari hotel caught fire and burned in a few minutes. No insurance.

►►The Houston Post

February 24, 1904, ONE MAN KILLED. NUMBER OF SHOTS FIRED AT MADISONVILLE, Bryan, Texas, A telephone message was received here today from Madisonville, the County seat of Madison County, relative to a fierce race war, or pitched battle between white and Blacks, near town last night. About seventy-five shots were fired and several persons were wounded. Mr. Sam Seay, one of the foremost young men of the County, was killed. The whole County is up in arms today and the country is being scoured for the Black men. A later report was received at 3 o'clock stating that one of the Black men had been arrested and jailed and the search was being continued for the others.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 15, Sept 21

►►Galveston Daily News

March 29, 1904, TRACED BY A SADDLE. Will Tullis Arrested on a Charge of Horse Theft. Sheriff Brooks of Walker County was the city today. He came down to get Tullis, wanted in his county on the charge of horse theft, under indictment by the grand jury. The horse was the property of John Randolph of Madison County. Sheriff Brooks traced the accused through a saddle that had been shipped to San Antonio, where Tullis was arrested on information from Sheriff Brooks sent to the officers there. The prisoner had been brought here from San Antonio and tonight the Sheriff left with him for Huntsville.

►►MCHC - Vol I

May 7, 1904, A short time afterward they moved to Madison County, Texas. Robert William was a farmer near Midway. Robert was shot on his way home from town in May 1904. He had witnessed two of his neighbors rustle some horses, and they were afraid they were going to be hanged, so they ambushed him. They were later caught and sent to prison for his murder. Eventually, they were paroled.

►►Galveston Daily News

May 10, 1904, FATHER AND SON ARRESTED. They Are Charged With Killing H. W. Blackwell. Place and Tralers Dickey, father, and son, of Leon County, are in the custody of Sheriff Vann, charged with the killing of B. W. Blackwell of Madison County. Examining trial set for Friday next.

►►Galveston Daily News

May 11, 1904, MIDWAY BLACK MAN KILLED. Harmon Jordan Lost His Life. Bob Wiley Granted Bond. Granted Bond. Bob Wiley, Black, on Friday shot and killed Mr. Harmon Jordan, also Black. The trouble arose over some alleged family matters, Jordan had been paying attention to Wiley's daughter. Deputy Sheriff Defer took him in charge shortly after the shooting. At the inquest proceedings of Bob Wiley Saturday for the murder of Harmon Jordan he was granted bail in the sum of \$__ (illegible) and released from custody.

►►Galveston Daily News

May 18, 1904, BLACK PREACHER KILLED. Inquest Showed Him In Having Been the Aggressor. Another Black man was killed Saturday about seven miles south of Midway, near the Huntsville Road. Tom Jersey shot and instantly killed Jake Cleveland, he says, in self-defense. The inquest was held by Justice Goree and the facts obtained corroborated his statement and he was allowed and made bond without trouble. It is said Jake made some serious threats, which he undertook to execute with a six-shooter, firing twice before the fatal shot was fired. The dead man was a preacher and a would-be politician, but not popular with his race. So public sentiment is in favor of the boy who shot him.

►►The Weekly Advocate

May 21, 1904, Another killing occurred in the country near Midway, the dead man being a Black prisoner.

►►The Houston Post

October 27, 1904, Madisonville, Tex., LACEOLA GIN BURNS. The gin of D. M. Donaho A Sons, situated at Laceola, about six miles west from this city, burned yesterday morning. A number of bales of cotton, several tons of seed, and a couple of wagons were also consumed. The origin of the fire is not known. Loss of about \$2000; no insurance.

►►Galveston Daily News

November 4, 1904, BEATEN AND ROBBED. William Thompson's Arm Broken, by His Assailants. The news was received here by telephone today that William Thompson of Madison County, who was here yesterday trading, was set upon and beaten and robbed on the way home last night. It is alleged his arm was broken and that between \$25 and \$50 was taken from him. He made his way home and reported the matter.

►►The Houston Post

November 18, 1904, Anent Madison County Is Not Borne Out by Facts. The full count of the ballots in the congressional race in Madison County gives Pinckney 545, MacGregor 187. The statement of Mr. Griscom of the MacGregor campaign committee, published in a recent issue of the Houston Chronicle, to the effect that Judge Pinckney's majority in Madison County secured by the fright and alarm produced by the fusillade or bullets fired into a church where the republicans were holding a meeting preparatory to the organization, causing a great number to remain away from the polls, is absolutely without foundation. There has never been any intimidation of voters in the history of Madison County, and no man has ever been prevented from voting as he pleased. There are not over 400 republican votes in this county when a full vote is polled, and as the Democratic primary settled all local contests there was but little interest in the election this year, especially by the Black population, there being no local contestants, consequently no meetings, booze or anything else in it for them.

►►Fort Worth Star-Telegram

December 18, 1904, Madison County went dry in the prohibition election held here Thursday by over two to one. The majority is larger than two years ago.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 16, Sept 22

►►The Houston Post

December 21, 1904, HUNTER GIBBS DEAD. Said that He Was Murdered by White Men. Madisonville, Hunter Gibbs the young man who was shot from ambush Saturday night while seated in a buggy with two companions, died this morning at 6 o'clock. A surgical operation developed the fact that his bowels had been badly lacerated with buckshot. Morris Wells was struck by six bullets but received only flesh wounds. William Bruce was unhurt. The

funeral of Gibbs occurred this afternoon. The Black man arrested on suspicion yesterday was released this morning and no other arrests have been made. Yesterday afternoon Gibbs made the statement that a white man did the shooting.

★The Houston Post

ARREST BY RANGERS

Jan 21, 1905, Madisonville, Texas, Caused Considerable Commotion at Madisonville. Adjunct General Hulen arrived here yesterday, coming at the request of several citizens to investigate complaints against one of the Rangers who arrested a citizen. Much indignation was expressed at this arrest and no little excitement resulted from the expression of this indignation. The habeas corpus hearing of "Red" Harle and Horace Carter was had before District Judge Boone this morning. The parties are charged by the Rangers with the killing of Hunter Gibbs. Both were admitted to bail.

★The Eagle

January 27, 1905, Telegram to the Governor. Madisonville, Tex., To Hon. S. W. T. Lanham, Austin, Texas. -- One Dunaway, a ranger under Captain McDonald, on yesterday made a severe and unprovoked assault upon a good citizen, M. D. Seay, arrested him for a misdemeanor, disarmed, beat him over the head with a pistol, breaking his cheekbone, kicked, cursed and treated him outrageously upon the streets and placed him in jail, though offered bond Citizens will not tolerate such conduct. Send General Hulen to investigate.

Answer: K. B. Seay, C. E. Gustavus & Co., John K Morris, M.D, James E Morris, M. D., J. F. Tinsley. W.T. Hawkins, Wilson Adams, J. H. Heath, J. N. Robinson, J. C. Thompson, R. W. Coombs, R. A. Robinson, L. M. Robinson, C. C. Simonton, F. E. Ward, M. Y. Randolph, R. J. Randolph, T. W. Massey, Joseph C. Webb, T. C. Farris. R. S. Rather, J. H. Robinson, H. L. Hensarling, J. W. Dean, A. Viser, George Wallace, T. W. Byers, T. F. Panisel, E L Byers. Ben Leonard, H. S. Wallace. W. N. Hale, R. C. Burtis, H. B. Huston, W. A. Yarborough. D. Leary, R. M. Connor, M. M Leonard, J.W. Smith, E. M. Sloan, Leonard Harle, J. A. Herring.

General Hulen in response to this, visited Madisonville but it seems no action satisfactory to the citizens who requested his presence was taken. The excitement continued to be at fever heat and in order to prevent further trouble Captain Seay decided to take his son away. They left yesterday and arrived in Houston this morning and will spend some time in Huntsville. Captain Seay's son is about 35 years of age, and has lived in Madison County all his life, and has a large family.

★The Galveston Daily News

February 1, 1905, TOM FARRIS ON TRIAL. He Is Charged With Being an Accomplice in the Murder of Hunter Gibbs. Madisonville. The examining trial of Tom Farris, charged as an accomplice in the murder of Hunter Gibbs wherein Horace Carter is charged as principal, was begun today. The State appeared by W. E. Pope, Berry Ford, Harper Jones Co., Attorney Massey, and the defendant by Randolph & Randolph and Jackson & Gustavus. The theory of the State is that Tom Farris, Jeff Farris, Red Harle, and Horace Carter entered into a conspiracy to kill Hunter Gibbs and Bill Bruce. The State examined nineteen witnesses who were not crossed by counsel for the defendant. As far as can be seen there were new developments in the case today. The court adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

★The Houston Post

February 11, 1905, RANGERS HAVE GONE. Left Madisonville to Attend the Court at Groveton, February 9, Rangers Delling and Smith left this morning for Groveton, where Captain McDonald and Ranger Dunaway preceded them several days ago. This leaves no Rangers here now, and the excitement that prevailed for some time in connection with their investigations of the murder of Hunter Gibbs and the arrests and examining trials of "Red" Harle, Horace Carter, and Tom Farris has entirely died away and everything is tranquil.

★The Houston Post

March 24, 1905, DISMISSED. NEW CHARGE TO BE FILED On Complaints Against Ranger Dunaway at Madisonville. It is said on good authority that new information will be filed against Ranger Dunaway and further proceedings be had against him in the courts of Madison County. The case against him was dismissed in the County court Monday, the attorneys for the prosecution alleging that the information was insufficient. The Post correspondent has been informed by the prosecuting attorneys that one or two more counts will be added to the information. The following, which is a copy of the motion to dismiss, gives the nature of the charge and the reasons why the State desired this case be dismissed:

"State of Texas vs. J. D. Dunaway. In County Court, Madison County, Texas, March term. A. D., 1905: Now comes to the State by her County attorney and moves the court to dismiss this cause for the following good and sufficient reasons, to-wit: Because the information and complaint herein charge the defendant with an aggravated assault by the use of a deadly weapon. The testimony, in this case, may develop that the defendant is guilty of an aggravated assault and battery in other ways than that charged, and for the ends of justice, it is thought best to have a complaint and information that will meet the testimony in all of its phases. Wherefore, the State moves, by her attorney, the court to dismiss this case. T. W. Massey, County Attorney, Madison County, Texas."

★The Houston Post

June 24, 1905, WAS A MISTRIAL. In the Case of Ranger Dunaway Tried at Madisonville. The case of the State of Texas vs. Ranger J. D. Dunaway, charged with an aggravated assault upon M. D. Seay, alleged to have been committed on the 16 of January, was called for trial in County Judge Sharp's court' yesterday morning. The State was represented by County Attorney Massey and M. Y. Randolph. The defendant by E. A. Berry. The jury after being out twelve hours, reported today that they were unable to agree, and were discharged. The Jury stood five for acquittal and one for conviction. Besides Captain W. J. McDonald and Ranger Smith, Captain J. R. Hughes of the Ranger service, stationed at Austin, is attending the trial.

★The Houston Post

September 19, 1905, Dunaway Case Dismissed. Madisonville. Tex., State Ranger J. D. Dunaway was here today. The case of aggravated assault against him in connection with his arrest of Mr. M. D. Seay last January, which resulted in no little excitement was dismissed on motion of the State in county court this morning.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 17, Sept 23

►The Houston Post

July 22, 1905, Madisonville, Texas, TOM DEFEE DEAD. Brother Has Been Put Under Arrest. Defee, who was knocked in the head with an ax Wednesday night at this home at Midway while asleep, as reported in today's Post, died this morning at 11 o'clock. His brother John, with whom it is alleged he was sleeping when the crime was committed, has been arrested by Sheriff Payne and his examining trial will be held at Midway. John is a very prominent young man and was the principal of the Midway School at the last session. The affair has caused a sensation.

★El Paso Herald

July 28, 1905, DEFEE FATHER HELD AS ACCOMPLICE. BROTHER CHARGED WITH THE MURDER TOM DEFEE SAID TO HAVE BEEN KILLED BY JOHN. Father, in Whose Favor Large Insurance Policy Was Carried, Held as Accomplice—A Complicated Case.

John Defee and his father, R. K. Defee. who is charged with the murder of Tom Defee, brother, and son of the accused, while he was sleeping with the defendant's brother at the home in Madisonville, have been released on

\$1000 and \$250 bond respectively, by Judge Gordon Boone at Anderson. The defendants were first committed to jail without bond at the preliminary examination in Madisonville. but habeas corpus proceedings were instituted in Grimes County. The state alleges that the brother, John wielded the ax with which Tom Defee's head was beaten into a pulp as he slept and that the father was an accomplice.

In the morning after the tragedy young Defee was discovered by his brother, who slept beside him in an unconscious condition with his head mashed in and a bloody ax outside the window. There was no indication of midnight intruders and John who slept all night beside the brother claimed that he heard nothing unusual during the night. The wounded boy's skull was trephined in hopes of saving his life and he became rational once more but died the next day. He said he did not know of an enemy in the world and was more astonished than anyone else that he had been mortally wounded while asleep. The theory of the state is that young Defee was murdered as the result of a life insurance policy he carried in favor of his father, mother, and sister.

★The Houston Post

January 22, 1906, MADISONVILLE, Texas, DEFEE REARRESTED BY RANGERS. R K. Defee and his son, Prof. J H Defee were lodged in jail here last night by Rangers Ross and Dale. The Rangers have been for several weeks investigating the murder of Tom Defee, who was killed while asleep at the home of his father, R K Defee, at Midway several months ago by being struck with an ax. The arrest of the father and brother of the deceased followed, but the late grand jury found no bill and they were released. A petition was sent to the governor for Rangers to investigate and the petition was granted. Mr. R K. Defee has been a deputy sheriff for a number of years, while Prof. J.H. Defee has been the principal of the Midway school and has lately been teaching in Grimes County. Their examining trial will be held at Midway next Wednesday.

★The Eagle

September 24, 1907, Case Against R. K. Defee Dismissed. The district courtroom presented a busy scene yesterday morning with two venires of sixty men each present and more than sixty witnesses on hand, in the Defee cases, brought to Brazos from Madison by a change of venue. R. K. and John Defee, son and brother of Tom Defee; son and brother of the defendants respectively, near Midway, Madison County, July 20, 1905, it being alleged that the deceased was struck with an ax.

The case against R. K. Defee was dismissed on the motion of the district attorney, and the case of John Defee went to trial. The first venire was exhausted after four jurors had been secured, and another venire of fifty men was ordered for nine o'clock this morning. A big crowd of witnesses are here in attendance on the case, a large number of them having come by special train. E. A. Berry of Madisonville and Doremus & Butler of this city are representing the defendant and District Attorney Ralston representing the state. —the article goes on to name several dozen witnesses—

★The Abilene Farm Reporter

September 27, 1907, JOHN DEFEE NOT GUILTY. BRYAN. TEX., Sept. 26.- The celebrated case of John DeFee, charged with murder in connection with the death of his brother, Tom DeFee, at the family home near Midway, Madison County, in 1905, came to a sudden termination in the Brazos County district court yesterday afternoon. After all the evidence for the state was in, the same being largely circumstantial and of little import, the defense offered no evidence, and District Attorney J. F. Ralston asked the jury to render a verdict of not guilty, which was done, and the defendant was released from custody.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 18, Sept 24

April 16, 1890, Prominent Texans Murdered. News has reached Madisonville, Texas of the murder of Captain John Richardson and his wife at their country residence, eight miles from there. Robbery is believed to have been the motive. The supposition is that they were murdered by strangers who had accepted their hospitality for the night. Captain Richardson was one of the oldest and most respected citizens of Madison County.

★ Ft Worth Daily Gazette

April 17, 1890, Arrests for the Double Murder Near Madisonville. Parties just in from the neighborhood in which the late Capt. and Mrs. J D H Richardson lived, report that three Black men who lived in the neighborhood are under arrest for the killing, and that one had confessed. The killing was done with a black-jack club, which was found in the room covered with gray hair, and the brains of each were scattered throughout the room, their heads beat into a jelly and the eyes bloodshot and protruding. Altogether it was a sickening sight as described by eye witnesses. Capt. Richardson was over eighty years old and had resided in this county since its organization and was much esteemed by all who knew him.

★ Ft Worth Daily Gazette

April 18, 1890, A HORRIBLE CONFESSION. A Black Man Owns Up to Having Helped Murder an Aged Couple. His Accomplices Arrested and Probably Lynched. Arrested and Probably Lynched. The horrible murder of Mr. Jack Richardson and wife, an aged couple living in Madison County a short distance from the Walker line, which was briefly mentioned in The Gazette a few days ago has been an exciting topic here this week. Reports regarding the affair have been very conflicting but it is learned that suspicion points to a Black man named Bob Love, who was arrested. He, it is said, confessed the crime implicating two other Black men, who were also arrested. It was reported yesterday that these two had escaped, but it is hinted that ropes and an indignant mob were the main assistants in effecting the same.

Love, however, really got away, according to a late report, while some parties had charge of him at a creek with a rope around his neck. He unfastened the noose deftly and jumped into the stream, escaping the fire of bullets in the darkness. Hounds were sent for from this place to track him and it is thought that he was afterwards caught and hanged. The object of the terrible murder of this helpless couple was for the purpose of robbery, the report being current in that section that old man Richardson had drawn \$1500 from the bank a few days before. The scoundrels only secured about \$90, however. Mr. Richardson was upwards of eighty years of age and had resided in this section of the county a long time, being in Huntsville only the day before tragedy. A fence rail was used by murderers to effect their bloody deed, it being found in the room with the gray hairs of the old couple upon it.

★ Ft Worth Daily Gazette

April 19, 1890, No Doubt They were Lynched. The Black men who killed J D H Richardson and his wife Saturday night were captured last night, and before officers could get possession of them, they were hurried to the Bodia bottom by about fifty or sixty men, and nothing is at present known what they did, but I am satisfied they were both killed, as they had both confessed the killing and stated that it was for the purpose of robbery. The trunk that was supposed to contain their money was found in the yard broken open. Bob Love one of the men who did the killing is only about twenty-one years old and the other, Wesley Smith, is younger. Other evidence obtained besides the confession points conclusively to their guilt.

● ●MCHC 2022 Note: Captain John D. H. "Jack" Richardson was born abt. 1815 in Virginia. He first married Susan Ford on December 30, 1852 in Walker County. To this union one child was born. On July 14, 1884 Captain John married his second wife, Carry Hite. She is buried in Midway Cemetery. We are unable to locate Capt. Richardson's grave.

►►The Houston Post

May 7, 1905, COURT AT MADISONVILLE. Two Black Men Tried for Murder and Acquitted. Madisonville, Texas, Bob Wiley and Tom Josey, both Black men, charged with murder, were tried in the district court yesterday and acquitted. The motion for a new trial in the Will Tyler case, who was convicted Wednesday of murder in the second degree and given five years in the penitentiary, was overruled this morning by Judge Boone, and the case will be carried to the court of criminal appeals.

The special session of the grand jury, which met yesterday morning, adjourned today after finding two bills, one for murder and the other for assault with intent to commit criminal assault. No arrest has been made in either case, therefore the names of the accused or further particulars cannot be learned.

►►The Houston Post

June 21, 1905, Madisonville, Texas, CONVICTION AT MADISONVILLE. Seth Harrell was convicted in the County court for selling whiskey in a local option precinct and was assessed \$25 and twenty-five days in jail. Quite a lengthy docket is before the court. Ranger Captain McDonald and Ranger Dunaway are here attending court.

►►The Houston Post

January 24, 1906, Willowhole, Tex., KILLED BY CONCENTRATED LYE. While Mrs. Melo Jamison, who lives near this place was out washing clothes yesterday, her little 2-year-old boy drank concentrated lye, which was near at hand, and died from the effects at 5:30 o'clock.

►►The Houston Post

February 3, 1906, ROGERS PRAIRIE SAFE ROBBERY. One of the Men in Jail Here Says that the New Suspect Is Named Dillon. Madisonville, Tex., A man giving his name as William Quigley was arrested by Constable Mooring at Bedias this morning on suspicion of being connected with the safe robbery at Rogers Prairie Tuesday night and was brought here on the noon train by Captain E. R. Seay and Post Office Inspector Omer Rhodes and jailed. This party claims to be a railroad construction foreman and handler of explosives, said he last worked at Natchez, MS, and claims to have gone from New Orleans to Houston about ten days ago, where he stopped at the Travis house.

He also says he left Houston eight or nine days ago and went to Jewett, leaving then last Monday on the night of the robbery. He claims to have been at Smith's railroad camp at Willowhole and on Wednesday night claims to have stayed at Iola and last night at Bedias. He is heavy built, broad-shouldered man, about five feet eight inches tall, about 45 years old, ruddy complexion, dark hair sprinkled with gray, reddish brown cropped mustache, weight about 180 pounds, and talks with an Irish Brogue. The inspector informed The Post correspondent that it is probable this party is of the gang that robbed the La Porte post office, and that he may be Cassidy. Mr. Rhodes has gone on to the Rogers Prairie to make further investigation.

►►The Houston Post

March 9, 1906, MADISONVILLE, -- ACQUITTED. John Brownlee was acquitted on the charge of murder. The jury in the John Brownlee case at Centerville returned a verdict of not guilty last night. The defendant was charged by indictment with killing Wall McDonald in a boys' fight in this city several years ago. The case was moved to Walker County on a change of venue and later transferred to Leon County.

►►The Houston Post

May 4, 1906, Madisonville, Tx, Will Bruce was acquitted of assault to murder. In the district court, this morning Will Bruce was acquitted of the charge of assault with intent to murder. The case of the State vs. Guy Bruce, a companion case, was set for next Wednesday at 9 o'clock. At this writing, the case of the State vs. Oscar Fewox, charged with criminal assault, is on call. A conviction has been had in this case, but the defendant secured a

reversal from the court of criminal appeals. A large number of the citizens of Midway and of the east end of the County generally are here attending court, being summoned before the grand jury.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 19, Sept 25

►►The Houston Post

June 3, 1906, MADISONVILLE. Indictments Returned in Grimes County in the Hall Cases. The Grimes County grand jury, in session at Anderson, has returned indictments against John and Wallace Hall, charging them with criminal assault against the person of a woman in this County about two weeks ago. Defendants had their examining trial before Justice McDonald about ten days ago, and were released under bond. Upon learning that the district attorney had brought this case before the attention of the Grimes County grand jury the defendants were surrendered by their bondsmen and were placed in jail. The indictments having been returned in Grimes County. Sheriff Payne has carried the two men to Anderson. In obedience to the process issued out of the district court at that place, their trial will be held soon.

On another topic, the people of Madisonville are watching closely the reports from the bedside of Judge Norman O. Kittrell of Houston. The Judge is an old favorite of our people and is personally known and liked by almost every man in Madison County. For many years he has done all in his power to aid the development and progress of this County, and the people know and appreciate that fact and are thankful that he is recovering.

►►The Houston Post

December 11, 1906, Madisonville, TX, The Black man, George Collins, who was called to his door and shot through the body Friday night is in a precarious condition and it is feared he will not recover. John Brownlee and Drew Brown, the two young white men arrested in connection with the shooting have been released by Justice McDonald under a \$500 bond.

►►MCHC - Vol II

1907, A tragic episode occurred about 1907, wherein Dallas Andrus and his neighbor, Robert Lee Folsom, had a violent property dispute and Robert Lee was killed during a fight. Similarly, Edward Dallas, the eldest son of Dallas and Emma Ruth was shot to death on May 20, 1920, near the homestead. He was shot by a neighbor's wife, during an altercation with the neighbor, regarding Ed's milk cow poaching in his neighbor's garden.

►►MCHC - Vol I

January 8, 1907, William and Emma traveled by covered wagon to Texas, settling first in the Connor community of Madison County. They then purchased land in the Pee Dee community. Their son, Joel, was killed at a country dance near the old Pee Dee schoolhouse during an argument over a twenty-five-cent fee to be paid to the fiddlers by the young men. Jake Moore, a cousin of Townley, pulled his gun and shot the murderer. Both young men were buried the same day in the Park Cemetery of Madison County; the tombstones say, "Died — 8 January 1907."

⊛The Houston Post

January 10, 1907, SHOOTING AT A DANCE. JOEL TOWNLEY AND PERRY RAWLINS WERE KILLED. Trouble Originated Over Quarter With Which to Pay Fiddler. Jake Moore Placed in Jail After Tragedy. Two men are dead and one is in jail as a result of a shooting affray at a dance at John Lanier's, four miles Southeast of Madisonville, last night. The trouble originated over a quarter to pay the fiddlers. Joel Townley, a young man about 24 years old, was shot behind the right ear and instantly killed. Perry Rawlins, a married man about 32 years old, was shot in the left hand, in the chin, and through the heart and instantly killed.

Jake Moore aged about 24 years, is in jail. A 32-caliber pistol was found near Rawlins' body, with two empty shells and the other three chambers loaded. It was several hours after the shooting before Moore was arrested. Both the dead men were buried this afternoon in the Park Graveyard, a couple of miles east of town. It has not yet been decided when the examining trial of Moore will be held.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 20, Sept 26

►►MCHC - Vol I

September 26, 1907, COTTON GIN EXPLODED. The J. M. Kent Cotton Gin, boiler explosion occurred at about 9:50 a.m. on Thursday. The manager, Merrit Kent was killed instantly. Joe Halliday, eldest son of James and Mary Bowden Halliday was severely injured and lived until 8:00 p.m. that evening. He would have had a chance for recovery had it not been for a large splinter that entered his left side, passing near the heart and penetrating the left lung. At the time of his death, Joe was studying to be a lawyer, while also working as an engineer and fireman for J. M. Kent Cotton Gin.

►►Wichita Weekly Times

October 4, 1907, GIN BOILER EXPLODES. MADISONVILLE SCENE OF ACCIDENT-ONE MAN KILLED OTHERS ARE INJURED. Debris is Thrown Many Rods and Explosion Shock Breaks Windows. J M Kents about 20 years old was instantly killed here this morning by the explosion of the boiler at his father's gin plant. He was thrown for a distance of about fifty feet by the explosion and struck against a pile of wood. When he was picked up it was found that he was dead.

Joe Holliday, another young man employed at the gin, was thrown a considerable distance and sustained injuries from which he is in a critical condition.

Tom Dean, a young farmer who was delivering a load of cotton to the gin, was struck on the head by flying debris and is seriously injured.

Just before the explosion, it is said the steam gauge indicated a pressure of 175 pounds in the boiler. Large parts of the boiler were hurled from 300 to 1000 feet away, while sheet iron, bricks, stone and other debris were scattered in all directions.

Several windows were broken out of the courthouse and many other buildings while larger pieces of timber crashed through the doors and windows of Joe Randolph's residence, doing great damage. The main building and much of the machinery of the gin plant were badly wrecked, while the engine was completely demolished and pieces thrown all around the place. The damage will amount to about \$3500.

►►Austin American Statesman

March 26, 1908, NEW RECORD FOR EXPEDITION. Zulch Bank Satisfactorily Liquidated in Less Than a Month. AUSTIN, Texas,

Hon. J. W. Blake, special agent of the department of banking in charge of the affairs of the Zulch State bank, located at Zulch, Madison County, Texas, today made his final report to the department. Owing to the fact that there is not sufficient business in the community to support and sustain a bank, the stockholders did not desire to resume business, and Mr. Blake reports his agreement that it would have been unwise to attempt to do so.

►►The Houston Post

April 2, 1908, OFFER BIG REWARDS. Citizens of Normangee and Madisonville Aroused. Will Endeavor to Unravel the Mystery Surrounding the Death of Ed Amsler. Normangee, Texas, April 1 – A reward of \$315 was subscribed by the citizens of Normangee this morning for the arrest and conviction of the murderer of Ed Amsler, who disappeared from his hotel here Tuesday night, March 24, and his dead body was found near Boggy, Texas

yesterday. This amount was raised in fifteen minutes. There has also been subscribed by the citizens of Madisonville \$250 for the same purpose.

►►The Eagle

July 8, 1908, Man Giving his Name as Will Jones Held Here for Madison County. Officers, Horse Recovered. A man giving his name as Will Jones is held here for the sheriff of Madison County, on a charge of horse theft. The Madison County officer phoned Deputy Sheriff Conlee Sunday morning to look out for the party and horse, stating that it is believed he was on the way to Bastrop, his home. Mr. Conlee saw nothing of his whereabouts, but located him by telephone communication with George and Jim Dunn, as a result of which Smith was arrested yesterday morning by Jim Dunn and brought here and lodged in jail by Deputy Sheriff Conlee.

The horse and a forty-five pistol were taken from him. He had stayed all night at Geo. Dunn's and claimed to be an officer after some Mexicans, but excited suspicion by leaving before breakfast. Yesterday afternoon Mr. Conlee had a phone message charging that the same party broke in Will Henry's house near Edge and stole two razors, a new white hat, and a silk pocket handkerchief, the same being found in his possession. He will therefore be held here for trial. He is said to have gone by the name of Smith in Madison County.

►►The Houston Post

August 4, 1909, SHOOTING NEAR MADISONVILLE. Will Burk was seriously wounded by a shotgun. What may prove a fatal tragedy was enacted in the public road six miles above here this morning at 8 o'clock when Will Burk of Madisonville received two charges of birdshot from a gun in the hands of Morgan Hager. Dr. Sneer attended Burk and after dressing his wounds pronounced him very seriously, though not necessarily fatally injured. Burk was hit with nearly one hundred shots, the wound covering one entire side from his waist to the top of the head. Mr. Hager surrendered to Sheriff Payne this afternoon and after waiving an examining trial, was released, on bond.

►►The Houston Post

November 28, 1909, MADISONVILLE, Texas, News reached here this morning of a difficulty that happened near Midway last night, in which W. M. Forrest, a prominent farmer of that place, was shot by a Black man. From the information obtainable it seems that Mr. Forrest was called to one of his tenant's houses to quell a disturbance caused by his assailant when the shooting took place. They had not been captured when the latest reports were received. Mr. Forrest's wounds are not serious.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 21, Sept 27

►►The Houston Post

July 19, 1910, TWO POST OFFICES ROBBED. Believed an Organized Gang Is Working Around Bryan. The store of H. F. Payne and the post office of Benchley, located in the same building, were burglarized Saturday night. About \$10 of post office funds were stolen, and some pants and a lot of pocket knives were missed from the store. No arrests as yet.

The store of Dr. J. Zulch, of North Zulch, Madison County, and the post office, located in the same building, were broken into by thieves last Friday night and a rich haul was made. The thieves blew the safe with dynamite, and it is reported that \$1,700 of Dr. Zulch's money was stolen and some \$300 worth of stamps belonging to the post office. The officers are of the opinion that an organized band of thieves is at work in this locality.

⊛The Eagle

July 19, 1910, SAFE BLOWERS AT ZULCH. Post office Robbed of \$200 Cash and \$300 in Stamps Left No Clue

Safe-blowers entered the store and post office of Zulch and Bell at Zulch Friday night, blew the safe, and escaped with \$200 cash and \$300 in stamps. There is no clue to the robbers. Sheriff Payne was on the scene at about noon Saturday with dogs.

►►The Galveston Daily News

October 16, 1910, North Zulch, Tex., --Thursday night little Jim Powers, the 6-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. George Powers of this place, was run over by a loaded wagon and seriously, if not fatally injured. His father had just come home with a load of corn. The boy ran to meet him and was climbing into the wagon, unnoticed by his father, when his hold slipped and he fell under the rear wheel of the wagon. It passed across the lower part of his chest. Doctors were summoned and arrived immediately.

►►The Houston Post

May 3, 1911, AN UNUSUAL CHARGE. Grand Jury Probe Entailed by Anonymous Letters. MADISONVILLE, Texas, District court convened here today, with Judge S. W. Dean presiding and District Attorney E. A. Berry representing the state. Judge Dean created somewhat of a sensation by charging the grand jury to investigate certain charges made in anonymous letters from a convict farm, to Governor Colquitt. Judge Dean advised the grand jury that he ordinarily refused to take cognizance of a charge made in an unsigned letter, but, inasmuch as higher officials seemed to want the matter looked into, and owing to the fact that the parties charged with the offense were anxious for an investigation, he shared a thorough inquiry into the matters complained of.

►►The Houston Post

June 20, 1911, REV. H. H. JOHNSON KILLED. Baptist Was Shot to Death Near Madisonville. MADISONVILLE, Texas, News has been received here that Rev. H. H. Johnson, a Baptist preacher, was shot to death at a late hour Saturday night, the tragedy occurring nine miles north of Madisonville. It is reported that a man named Bacon is charged with the shooting.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 22, Sept 28

►►MCHC - Vol II

In 1912, George Decker was killed at a dance in the home of a friend. After dancing with a lady friend, he was called outside and was hit on the back of the head with a board from a picket fence. He died at home. Just after the burial, still, in deep sorrow, Dick was in front of the Madison County Courthouse when he saw the man accused of killing George. Thinking the man was out to get him, Dick shot him in what he claimed was self-defense. Dick was convicted and served time at the Pig Farm at the Wynne Unit at Huntsville. On May 11, 1914, Dick received a conditional pardon from Governor Colquitt. In bad health, Dick moved to Idaho. The cold weather was too much and they returned to, Trinity County until Dick's death.

►►The Eagle

June 12, 1912, THIRD BIG FIRE OF YEAR OCCURS AT MADISONVILLE. Another other disastrous fire was discovered in the business house of J. L. Cleere Monday morning at 1 o'clock, and when discovered had almost destroyed this building. The house of D. Brizzolara, across the street, which was occupied by Thompson Bros., general merchandise, was ignited, and this was also burned to the ground. Thompson Bros had a stock of \$15,000. with insurance of \$4500. Brizzolara had no insurance on the house; loss about \$700. Cleere had a stock which amounted to \$6000, with insurance of \$3000. His property loss was \$1600. This is the third big fire that Madisonville has had since February 6, this year.

►►The Eagle

November 12, 1912, YOUNG GIRL KILLED YOUTH WAS ARRESTED. Miss McWharters Was Shot and Fatally Wounded -- Man She Refused to Wed Arrested. Madisonville, Miss Irion McWharters was shot and killed Monday in the Cobbs Creek community. Clifton Plunkett was arrested and brought to Madisonville and jailed. Miss McWharters had refused to marry Plunkett. Miss McWharters was only 17 years of age, while Plunkett is about twenty years of age. It is alleged that the young man attempted his own life previous to arrest.

⊛(AP) Madisonville, Texas, Nov. 13. - Clifton Plunkett, who Saturday shot and killed sixteen-year-old Irvan McWharters because her parents refused to let her marry him when he took a wedding license to her house, was last night sent to Huntsville on a life sentence. He pleaded guilty.

⊛Ft. Worth Star-Telegram

April 28, 1925, The conditional pardon was granted to Clifton Plunkett of Madison County, who had served 15 years on a 99-year term for murder.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 23, Sept 29

►►The Houston Post

October 18, 1913, FORMER ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GUILTY. Madisonville Man Convicted on Eighteen Counts Charging Embezzlement of Funds. Albert S. Brown, formerly assistant postmaster at Madisonville, Texas, was found guilty by a jury in the Federal court late Friday afternoon on an indictment that contained 18 counts, charging him in each instance with embezzling money order funds. When the verdict was announced, Brown's wife, who occupied a seat beside him during the trial, wept bitterly. The couple's two small children were present.

The aged father of Brown was postmaster during the time that the money is alleged to have been embezzled. The amount that the Government claims was taken was between \$300 and \$400. While Brown was on trial Thursday the Federal grand jury returned another indictment against him charging him with the offense of falsely forging a United States money order. Brown's defense was a general denial of the charges. He claimed that if the shortage occurred it was due to the manner in which a large number of money orders were handled through the Madisonville office.

⊛The Houston Post

October 30, 1913, ONE ARMED MAN SENT TO PEN FOR 5 YEARS. Former Assistant Postmaster at Madisonville Found Guilty of Embezzling Honey. Albert S. Brown, a one-armed man. formerly assistant postmaster at Madisonville under his father, who was found guilty by a jury of the offense of embezzling money order funds by raising orders issued at the Madisonville office, was sentenced to a term of five years in the Federal prison at Leavenworth by Judge Burns Wednesday morning. The indictment against Brown contained 18 counts, and on all of them, he was found guilty by the jury.

While his case was on trial before Jude Burns the Federal grand jury returned another indictment against him charging the offense of forging. In that indictment, he was charged with raising a money order from \$1 to \$100. After Brown was sentenced the second charge against him was dismissed on motion of United States District Attorney Lock McDaniel. Brown's wife was in the building when the sentence was parsed, but she was not in the courtroom.

When asked by Judge Burns if he knew of any reason why that sentence should not be passed on him, Brown insisted that he was not guilty. Judge Burns told Brown that his aged father and mother and his wife and children were to be considered and that he should stop and think before telling the court that he was still not guilty. After having the sentence passed on him, Brown walked without a tremble back to his seat in the courtroom. Later when he left the courtroom he embraced his wife in the hallway, where she awaited his coming. Mrs. Brown wept.

►►Corsicana Daily Sun

October 8, 1913, J. A. Herring Chosen. (AP) Washington, D.C., J. A. Herring of Madisonville has been chosen by President Wilson for United States marshal for the Southern District of Texas.

★A History of Texas and Texans, Vol. IV

During his residence in Madisonville and vicinity, Captain J. A. Herring has acquired importance in business affairs. He was president of the First National Bank of Madisonville, having assisted in the organization and incorporation of that bank, with a capital stock of fifty thousand dollars. He was president of the Cotton Oil Mill and Fertilizer Company, in the same town, and president of the company that organized and installed the waterworks. He was a member of the firm of Turner, Herring & Barton, at Midway, engaged in general merchandise trade, and is still senior member of the firm of J. A. Herring & Company, extensively engaged in stock farming in Madison County. Of his large agricultural interests, he has twenty-five hundred acres under cultivation, and almost all of that land has been improved by his own work and supervision.

►►The Houston Post

November 6, 1913, GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER. Ben Wynn So Pleaded in Court at Madisonville. Ben Wynn pleaded guilty to manslaughter in District Court today. District Attorney Berry requested the jury to give Wynn the lowest penalty possible, which they did, bringing in a verdict assessing his punishment at two years in the penitentiary. The jury also asked the court to suspend the sentence on Wynn, which request was granted. Wynn was charged by indictment with the killing of Frank Curry in this County in September 1912.

►►MCHC - Vol II

1915, Ray Whiteside was fourteen years old when he was accidentally shot and killed by his cousin after they had been shooting rats in the bam with a .22 rifle. He's buried in Rock Prairie Cemetery.

►►Corsicana Daily Sun

June 21, 1915, PREACHER DIES FROM WOUNDS. Leon Evans Arrested in Case Wherein Domestic Affairs Rule (AP) Madisonville, Texas, T. M. Evans, pastor of the Church of Christ, died today from blows received with an axe handle last Monday at the home of Leon Evans. The latter was arrested and released on bail. Domestic trouble is said to have been the cause of the tragedy. Although bearing the same name the men were not related.

★The Houston Post

November 10, 1916 - MADISONVILLE, Texas, LEON EVANS NOT GUILTY. He Was Charged With Killing Rev. T. M. Evans.

The case of the State against Leon Evans, charged with the killing of Rev. T. M. Evans in Madisonville in June. 1915, occupied about three hours of the court's time Wednesday, the jury returning a verdict of not guilty in 20 minutes after its retirement. The grand jury adjourned Friday after a five days session, in which 10 bills of indictment were returned, two for felony and eight for misdemeanors. One of the felony indictments charges J. J. Green with the killing of T. D. L. Hall in Madisonville last July.

►►The Houston Post

April 5, 1916 - \$7000 FIRE AT NORTH ZULCH. Two Dry Goods Companies Burned at Early Hour. A \$7000 fire occurred here this morning, which completely destroyed R. N. Wilson's dry goods store and Simpson Dry Goods

company. The loss to Mr. Wilson was approximately \$2600, with \$2600 insurance, while the loss to Simpson Dry Goods company was \$4500 with no insurance. New spring goods had just been placed, on the shelves, which caused the loss to be greater. The fire originated at about 2 a.m. in the Simpson Dry Goods company's store and quickly spread to Wilson's store. - Pane Brothers drug store caught, but was extinguished. Had a strong east wind not been blowing it is an evident fact that the whole business district would have been destroyed.

►►The Eagle

June 28, 1916, LENARD HALL KILLED, Died Several Hours After He Was Shot With Pistol. Madisonville. Texas. Lenard Hall was shot in the stomach at 12:30 Tuesday morning and died at 4 o'clock, three-and-one-half hours later. The shooting occurred on the street here when he and Joe Green, a night policeman, had a dispute. Hall lived in the Center community and came here to attend a show. A number of relatives survive.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 24-A, Oct 1

►►The Houston Post

January 17, 1918, Released on \$5000 Bond. - MADISONVILLE, Texas. In the examining trial of Onie and Horace White, charged with the killing of Dr. Bev Harrison of Bédias, was held before District Judge Berry in Madisonville Tuesday. Bond was allowed the defendants in the sum of \$5000 each.

⊛The Houston Post

January 9, 1918, Dr. Bev. Harrison Killed Near Bédias. Dr. Bev Harrison, a prominent citizen of the north end of this county, a former commissioner, is dead as the result of a shooting near Bédias, about 10 o'clock this morning. Up to the present time it has been impossible to secure any details. It was reported that a prominent white man has surrendered to the sheriff, but no confirmation has been secured.

⊛Jan. 8, 1918, Bryan, TX, Dr. R. H. Harrison of this city received a message this morning stating that his brother, Dr. Bev Harrison, had been killed at Bédias. Near his home. Dr. Harrison and his two sons, Henry and Sam, left at once for Bédias. This was the third of the Harrison brothers to meet death in this way, and Dr. R. H. Harrison himself was shot from his horse many years ago and left for dead while residing in that county.

⊛The Houston Post

July 16, 1920, 200 COME FROM GRIMES COUNTY TO TESTIFY AT TRIAL. Special Venire Necessary to Pick Jury to Hear White Case. Attorney for the State in the case of Onie White, charged with his brother Horace, for the death of Dr. B. Harrison on January 8, 1918, on the White farm, at Bédias, who went to trial in criminal district court on change of venue Monday afternoon, were preparing the charges at a late hour Monday night to be submitted to the jury at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday. Charges are being prepared on two theories, manslaughter and defense of his brother. From a special venire of 150 men, the jury was drawn at 2 p.m. Fully 200 witnesses were present, and a corps of lawyers from Grimes County. The case was transferred to Harris County on a change of venue. The brothers were granted a severance and both are pleading not guilty. Horace White will go to trial second.

MANY WITNESSES. Numerous witnesses for the State and defense took the stand, including the defendant. Onie White. The State's contention was that it was the outcome of a family feud growing out of a lawsuit a year previous over a yearling. Onie White testified that on the morning of the killing, Dr. Harrison came by the new ground where the brothers and John R. Shannon were working, which was about 75 yards from the house. According to the testimony, the doctor and Horace met, and Dr. Harrison, who was riding horseback, demanded to know where he (Horace) was going. Onie testified that he saw the doctor reach for a gun and the two began

struggling, and then he (Onie) ran into the house and got his gun. He admitted shooting the doctor, but said he did so, seeing the doctor holding Horace in one hand and pointing a gun at him with the other.

WIDOW SAYS DOCTOR'S GUN WAS HOME. Mrs. B Harrison, widow of the deceased, testified that the doctor owned only one gun, and that it was at home, and J. Lester, working at Harrison's at the time, testified that he saw Harrison leave on his horse and did not see a gun.

The defense contends that Harrison had beaten A. M. White, father of the boys, severely after the lawsuit and had threatened to "get" the boys. Testimony was introduced to show the animosity, hard will and ill feeling toward the White boys by the deceased.

District Attorney Branch. J. V. Lea, assistant and John Mathison. local attorney, are assisted in the prosecution by T. P. Buffington and J. F. Taubee. The attorneys for the defense are: C. P. Harper, A. F. Brigrance. Haynes Shannon, and H. S. Morehead of Grime County and E. A. Berry of Houston.

⊛The Houston Post

July 17, 1920, ONIS WHITE GETS TEN YEARS IN PEN. Onie White of Bedias, was sentenced Tuesday in criminal district court to ten years in the penitentiary on a charge of killing Dr. Harrison. His brother, Horace will go to trial in the same charge August 26. No notice of appeal has been given. After being out a little more than an hour the jury brought in the verdict at 5:30 p.m.

The courtroom was crowded all during the trial, both downstairs and in the gallery. Grimes County citizens and lawyers and the hundred or more witnesses thronged the courtroom. Attorneys for the State and the defense fought bitterly and the arguments were some of the best heard during the year, according to the opinions of the members of the bar who attended the trial. The State's contention was that there was a conspiracy between Onie and Horace White to kill the doctor. Attorneys held that the doctor was shot in the back and that he was unarmed.

Attorneys for the defense held that Onie White shot Harrison in defense of his brother, who, Onie said, was being held by the doctor with one hand and pointed at with a gun. Arguments in the case lasted about four hours.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 25, Oct 2

➤The Houston Post

September 6, 1919 - Will Try Madisonville Men for Moonshining - J. B. Patton and J. R. Price, deputy United States marshals for this district, departed Friday, for Madisonville, Texas, where three men are being held, charged with operating an illicit still for the manufacture of intoxicating liquor. The men will be brought to Houston Saturday for a preliminary hearing before Winston McMahan, United States commissioner. The still which, the men are charged with operating was discovered by United States revenue agents and was located near Madisonville. The men are held in the Madison County jail.

➤The Houston Post

November 26, 1919, CAPIAS ISSUED FOR D. D. LEACH WANTED IN "STILL" HEARING. Bond of \$1000 Forfeited When Defendant Fails to Appear in Court. - Upon the failure of D. D. Leach, one of the three defendants in the "still" case. to appear in federal court Monday, Judge J. C. Hutcheson Jr. forfeited his \$1000 bond and issued a capias for his immediate arrest.

Trial of the case which resulted in a mistrial early in the term was begun despite the absence of Leach. The other defendants are W. R. Coner and Robert Bockner, a Black man. They are charged with operating a still on the borderline of Grimes and Madison counties.

John M. Mathis, formerly of Brenham, and C. T. Harper of Madisonville are the attorneys for the defendants W. H. Jones of Brownsville, assistant United States attorney, is assisting in the prosecution of the case. Mr. Mathis told the court that he did not believe the defendant Leach had intentionally defaulted his bond and that he believed he

would be in court Tuesday. United States District Attorney Simmons also told the court that he expected Leach would be in the courtroom on Tuesday.

Rosie Johnson, a Black woman, on a charge of illegally transporting liquor from Louisiana to Houston, was convicted by a jury and sentenced to 60 days in jail. Upon the completion of the "still" case, Dr. D. L. Peeples of Navasota will be tried upon the charge of violating the Harrison anti-narcotic act.

►►The Houston Post

November 28, 1919 - JURY ACQUITS TWO OF DEFENDANTS IN WHISKY STILL CASE. Leach, One of Accused Two, Must Stand Trial In February. A verdict of not guilty was brought in by a jury in the United States district court late Wednesday night, acquitting W. R. Corner. D. D. Leach, and Robert Bocker, the latter a Black man, of conspiracy to operate a still for the manufacture of liquor in violation of the federal statutes. D. D. Leach, one of the defendants, was not present at the trial, having failed to appear, and in a bond of \$1000 was declared forfeited by Federal Judge Joe C. Hutcheson Jr.

Upon the announcement of acquittal by the jury, Judge Hutcheson informed the attorney for the defense that the court records would show that Corner and Bocker, defendants in the case, had been acquitted. But that a capias had been issued for Leach, whose case would be set for the February term of court.

John M. Mathis, formerly of Brenham, and C. T. Harper of Madisonville. attorneys for the defense said that inasmuch as two of the three defendants had been acquitted of the charge of conspiracy, technically, therefore, Leach was acquitted of the charge, as it necessarily required more than one person to conspire to violate the law.

The attorneys for the defense declared their belief that Leach was not aware that the case was on trial at this time, and expressed the belief that had he known it was to have been tried at this time he would have been in court. Every effort had been made to reach Leach by letter and telegraph, but up until late Wednesday no reply had been received, attorneys for the defense said.

Mathis said that Leach left Houston for his home in Alabama at the conclusion of the former trial of the case, under the impression that the case would be tried at the February term of court.

According to attorneys, Leach will at the February term be obliged to show why the collection of \$1000 bond money should not be enforced.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 26, Oct 3

►►The Houston Post

January 5, 1920 - Madisonville Man Is Beaten and Robbed. Elmer Dahlstrom was severely beaten over the head and robbed of \$3.35 at 8 p. m. Saturday near the International and Great North, told the police, was a white man. Dahlstrom was on his way to the depot to return home when accosted. He was struck over the right eye and on the right temple, causing large scalp wounds. He was slightly dazed by the blow and the assailant made his escape before he recovered. His condition is not serious. Detectives Blalock and Anderson are at work on the case.

►►Corsicana Daily Sun

May 29, 1920, Richland Man Has Brother Killed. Ike Andrus of Richland, who was here today, returned from Madison County last night where his brother, Ed Andrus, was shot and killed one day this week by a woman, Mrs. John Matthews, who used a shotgun. Mr. Andrus says that his brother and John Matthews, the woman's husband had just had a personal difficulty in which no weapons were used and that after their fight was over and his brother had started to his home nearby, when Mrs. Matthews appeared on the scene and shot Ed Andrus with a shotgun, killing him instantly. Mr. Andrus reports that both Matthew and his wife had been refused bond and both are in jail at Madisonville. The trouble occurred near North Zulch in Madison County.

►►MCHC - Vol II

Robert Henry Payne met a very untimely death on December 31, 1920. He was killed while he was returning to his home in

Willowhole from North Zulch. He was riding in his buggy when he was confronted by a neighbor he had known for a long time. There was a dispute over a common fence line they shared. An argument ensued and the neighbor attacked Robert with a knife. While he stayed in his buggy warding off the attack, the struggle resulted in Robert being stabbed several times and severely slashed about his arm causing him to bleed to death. The horse headed for home but Robert was dead upon arrival. The attacker was charged with murder and found guilty two times in the Grimes County District Court, but appeals prevailed and an acquittal was issued two years later in the Montgomery County District Court.

Robert was 62 years old at the time of his death.

⊕The Bryan Weekly Eagle

January 6, 1921, MOSELEY GIVES BOND FOR MURDER AT MADISONVILLE. Following an investigation on the part of the grand jury here today, A. A. Moseley was released on a bond of \$5,000 in connection with the killing last Friday of R. H. Payne in the western part of the county, near Zulch. Moseley and Payne were neighbors. Evidence was introduced to the effect that Moseley and Payne had quarreled over the dividing line between the farms.

⊕The Bryan Weekly Eagle

January 7, 1921, THE FUNERAL OF MR. ROBERT PAYNE WAS CONDUCTED AT ZULCH. Revs. Ollie Smith and J. W. Payne have returned from Zulch, Madison County, where they attended the funeral of the late Robert Payne, father of Rev. Payne, who was killed Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock by a man Moseley, Rev. Smith conducted the funeral services at 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon. Mr. Payne was sixty-three years of age when he was killed. He was passing along the roadway when he was attacked by Moseley and stabbed to death. The sad affair is deeply regretted by the many friends of the family in Madison and Brazos Counties.

➤The Houston Post

January 8, 1922, Madison Court Disposes Of 2 Murder Cases. Two important murder cases were disposed of at the December term of the district court, which adjourned here Saturday, January 7. The jury in the case of Mrs. John Mathis, charged with the killing of Andrews near North Zulch, returned a verdict of not guilty, after an all-night deliberation. The court gave an instructed verdict of not guilty upon agreement of counsel in the case of the State vs. O. E. Bethke, charged with the killing of Stell at North Zulch a year ago last fall. Venue in the case of the State vs. A. A. Mosley, charged with the killing of R. H. Payne near North Zulch a year ago, was transferred to Grimes County.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 27, Oct 4

➤The Eagle

January 16, 1922, Freeman Killed By Officers in Raid in Medina County. Madisonville, Texas. Bill Freeman of Madison County was killed Saturday night. Sheriff B. Cobb and Deputies Ed Nance and R. B. Bain of Leon County engaged in a pistol fight with a band of men in the southern part of Leon County, near the Madison line. Deputy Sheriff Nance was hit in the hand by buckshot, but none of the officers were seriously wounded.

The officers surprised several men who were loading two barrels on a wagon in the woods. The officers ordered the men to throw up their hands, but they broke and ran, one of the men firing a shotgun at the officers as he ran. Freeman was killed instantly. Four men escaped, according to Sheriff Cobb. Freeman was a resident of the Mount Tabor community, Madison County. The two barrels of corn mash and a still, which was later confiscated, have been turned over to Federal Prohibition Officer Floyd. The raid, according to Sheriff Cobb, was the culmination of

several night's surveillance of the woods to locate a still which it was thought had been producing a large amount of moonshine whiskey in the county.

►The Houston Post

August 12, 1923, RAIL AGENT KILLED AT MADISONVILLE. A. Garland, special agent for the Trinity and Brazos Valley Railroad was shot and instantly killed at 7:30 p.m. Saturday while walking on the streets of North Zulch about 20 miles west of here. Immediately following the shooting A. L. Lipscomb, cashier of the State bank at North Zulch surrendered to authorities but failed to make a statement concerning the shooting. A charge of murder was filed against him, authorities said. He was allowed to bond. The examining trial is set for Tuesday, they said.

►The Waco News Tribune

February 27, 1925, Madisonville, Tx. Parents Feel She Was Drugged AND Then Abducted. Mystery Message Saying She Was "Happily Married" Phoned to Fort Worth for Relay. (AP) Fear that Miss Eunice Parten, a popular 17-year-old schoolgirl living at Midway, 12 miles from here, was kidnapped Wednesday night by an ex-convict, was expressed by her friends Thursday, and peace officers over the state have been asked to aid in locating her. The girl was last seen at a boarding house in Huntsville at 7:45 p. m. Wednesday. She had gone to Huntsville with the Midway basketball team, which played the Huntsville normal team. She is said to have told Miss Margaret Myers, her cousin, that she was planning to return to Midway with a "shoe drummer named Riley." Wednesday morning, she had not returned home but a telegram was received by her parents saying she had been "happily married."

Investigation proved that the telegram had been sent from Fort Worth after being telephoned to the Western Union at 2 a. m. Wednesday. Miss Parten formerly clerked in a store at Madisonville and the ex-convict in question was said to have been a visitor at the store several times. The girl is said to have expressed a fear of him. Her parents believe she was drugged and kidnapped and that her captor will attempt to take her across the Mexican border. The man's car was seen in Huntsville at 10 p. m., it was reported. It is only 28 miles from Huntsville to Midway.

⊕The Taylor Daily Express

February 27, 1925, Marriage Stops Kidnapping Hunt. (AP) MIDWAY, Texas, A search for Eunice Parten, 18, believed to have been kidnapped by an ex-convict ended today when officials learned that she married Pat R. Rilee, an ex-convict in Ft. Worth Thursday. A statewide search was started when she disappeared, following a basketball game.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 28 , Oct 5

►The Marshall Messenger

September 15, 1925, OFFICIALS OF COUNTY ASKED TO QUIT POSTS. ULTIMATUM FOLLOWS MEETING AS RESULT OF QUARREL. County Judge and Commissioners' Court Have Until Saturday to Resign. TAX COLLECTION CAUSE. County Judge Ferguson of Madison County and the entire commissioners' court here have been given until Saturday to resign by a group of farmers and businessmen from over the county. The ultimatum was issued following a mass meeting here Saturday and attended by about five hundred citizens.

This action came as a climax to a quarrel caused by the recent action of the commissioners' court in contracting with a Dallas firm for collecting delinquent taxes in the county. According to the general understanding, the commissioners agreed to pay the firm \$7,500 and a percentage of all delinquent taxes collected.

⊕The Galveston Daily News

October 4, 1925, MADISONVILLE. Tex., Ousting of Judge and Commissioners Sought In Court Proceedings. A petition in quo warranto intended to oust County Judge T. Ferguson and the other four of the commissioner's court of Madison County was filed in court here today. Filing of the petition brought to an actual legal status

countywide upheaval which resulted here several weeks ago when Ferguson and the commissioners executed a contract condemned by citizens in two public conventions.

⊛San Angelo Evening Standard

January 26, 1926, Anderson, TX. JUDGE BEATS OUSTER SUIT. Madison County Citizens Sought to “Fire” T. Ferguson. County Judge T. Ferguson of Madison County was victorious late yesterday in District Court here in the ouster case brought by a citizens committee against him. The jury was out only forty minutes The case was brought against the Judge several months ago following mass meetings at Madisonville. Proponents of the move objected to a contract made with a Dallas firm for the collection of delinquent taxes.

Judge Ferguson received many congratulations from friends on the outcome of the case “There wasn’t a man on the jury who thought seriously of a verdict against me” he declared. Judge Ferguson also announced that he would be a candidate for re-election in July.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 29, Oct 6

➤MCHC - Vol I

November 27, 1927, Henry C. Seay, a Baptist preacher, was killed when he fell from the barn on a pitchfork. He fathered triplet sons: Reed, Ray, and Roy. He was 51 years old.

➤Corsicana Daily Sun

March 2, 1928, North Zulch Jail Building Burns. (AP) —The jail building at North Zulch in Madison County, about 50 miles northwest of Huntsville, was destroyed by fire last night, according to J. V. Rumsfield, deputy sheriff of North Zulch. The building was empty, and it is thought the fire was incendiary.

➤Corsicana Daily Sun

March 5, 1928, HELD FOR GIRL’S DEATH, BRYAN, March 5 - (AP)—Hamilton Neeley today was arrested in connection with the death of Elva Coldiron, 15, Sunday, of North Zulch who was shot Saturday night while horseback riding on a public highway near North Zulch. (NOTE: this article is incorrect. The victim was named Elver and was a male).

⊛The Madisonville Meteor

March 8, 1928, Elver Coldiron Killed. Elver Coldiron was shot on Willowhole Prairie Saturday night at about ten o’clock and died in the Bryan Sanitarium Sunday. Charges of murder have been filed against Houston Neeley by Sheriff Gibson and he gave bond to the amount of \$5000 to await examining trial which will be held on Saturday of this week before Judge Joe Whitley at North Zulch.

The trouble started when Neeley’s car ran off into some deep ruts, according to a statement made to Sheriff Gibson, and young Coldiron and some other boys came along and offered to help him out. They failed, however, in their efforts to get the car off a high center in the road, and the trouble started, perhaps, about that.

Young Coldiron was about seventeen years old and the son of Mr. Claud Coldiron. Neeley is said to be about thirty or thirty-five years old.

➤The Madisonville Meteor

March 8, 1928, STILL IS CAPTURED NEAR TO N. ZULCH. – Constable J. D. Rumsfield and Deputy Sheriff Grover Donaho found a complete still about three miles from North Zulch Monday and brought it to Madisonville and turned it over to Sheriff Gibson, who now has it in the county jail. The mash which had been prepared for use had been poured out on the ground, the operators evidently getting a hunch that they were being watched and escaped before the officers arrived at the scene.

JUDGE HARPER

►►Abilene Daily Reporter

March 4, 1928, DISTRICT JUDGE IS HELD UNDER \$5000 BOND IN MURDER CASE. HUNTSVILLE, Texas, Refusing to discuss the shooting in which Lee Rich or Houston, Texas Company employee and former middleweight wrestling champion of the Navy, was fatally wounded here early Friday night, District Judge Carl T. Harper, charged with murder was released under \$5000 bond Saturday. Previous to Rich's death, Judge Harper had been charged with assault to murder and was released on \$2500 bond.

County Judge T. H. Singletary before whom the preliminary hearing was held, announced that the examining trial for Judge Harper will be held in Huntsville next Saturday morning. It previously had been fixed for 1:30 o'clock today.

Young Rich was shot in the abdomen after a car in which he was riding with two co-ed students at Sam Houston State Teachers College was in collision with a car said to have been driven by Judge Harper.

Miss Beth Jones of Neches and Miss Mabel Armon of Batson who were with Rich, later identified Judge Harper's car in front of his hotel here as the one which figured in the crash.

"I have nothing whatever to say about the matter," said Judge Harper whose 12th Judicial district includes Walker, Grimes, Madison, Leon, and Trinity counties. "It will come out at the examining trial."

According to reports here, young Rich got out of his car after the accident and approached the Judge's car which, meanwhile had been parked in front of a hotel.

He and Judge Harper discussed the accident and the shooting followed. Rich was taken to the Huntsville Hospital at about 8 p.m. and died there shortly before noon Saturday. The charge of assault to murder filed against Judge Harper was changed to murder and the bond was raised from \$2500 to \$5000.

The Houston man, about 25 years old, lived in Pittsburgh, Pa., but has been working recently as a truck driver for the Texas Company at Houston. He is well known as a wrestler and has appeared in several matches at the City Auditorium, Houston. In the Navy, he has said to have won the title of middleweight champion. Residents of Huntsville said that he and Miss Jones were old friends. Mr. Rich frequently called on her during the weekends. Miss Ammon boarded at the same house as Miss Jones and accepted their invitation to go riding with the couple. Funeral arrangements for Rich had not been completed Saturday night.

⊕The Marshall News Messenger

March 4, 1928. DEFENSE ATTORNEY MAKES STATEMENT, Declares Judge Suffered Injuries in Fight After Collision. Huntsville. Texas, (AP) District Judge Carl T. Harper today was released on \$5,000 bond on a charge of murder in the death of Lee Rich, 25, who was shot fatally here yesterday.

Examining trial for Judge Harper was set for next Saturday, March 10, on motion by the State. The state contended that one of its witnesses, Miss Elizabeth Jones of Neches who was in an automobile with Rich shortly before he was shot, had collapsed and was in a hospital unable to attend the examining trial.

The charge was filed before Judge T. H. Singletary of county court as a result of the shooting at about 8 p. m. Friday, of Lee Rich, 25, of Pittsburgh, Pa., a truck driver for the Texas Company, working in Houston. Rich died at 11:33 Saturday morning.

Rich was taken to the Huntsville sanitarium with wounds in his intestines.

Miss Beth Jones of Neches and Miss Mabel Ammon of Boston, both about 18, students at Sam Houston State Teachers College, were with Rich in a coupe that collided with a roadster near the depot on the main street here Friday night. The two cars were not seriously damaged, but Rich's fender was bent. Both cars drove about 100 yards from the scene of the accident, and the roadster was parked in front of a hotel. "Rich left the girls in his coupe and walked to the roadster.

A shot was heard a few moments after Rich reached the other machine. "He shot me right here," Rich cried as he ran toward the girls in the machine, a short distance away. "Get his number."

Rich was taken to the sanitarium and the roadster was driven to another part of town. Judge Harper was arrested nearly six hours later at the home of a friend here.

★The Fort Worth Star Telegram

April 21, 1928, HUNTSVILLE April 21—District Judge Carl T Harper, 62, was indicted by the grand jury of his own court Saturday morning on a charge of murder.

Harper was formally charged with shooting to death Lee Rich, 24 of Houston, after an automobile collision on a main street of Huntsville about six weeks ago. Held under bond to the grand jury, Judge Harper continued to preside over his court until the grand jury was ready to report on his own case when he was disqualified. He was hearing a murder trial at the time the grand jury reported. The report with the indictment of Judge Harper was delivered by the grand jury to District Judge Price of Bastrop, who came here Saturday to sit on Judge Harper's bench. Judge Price transferred Harper's case to Washington County and set his bond at \$5000.

Rich was killed while visiting a young woman student at the Sam Houston State Teachers College here. Two young women were in his car when the collision with Judge Harper's automobile occurred. A quarrel ensued between the two men and Rich fell, with a pistol wound which caused his death.

Judge Harper was serving his eighth year as district judge here and was a candidate for re-election.

★The Austin American Statesman

May 10, 1928, Harper Acquitted In J. L. Rich Murder Case. A special telegram Wednesday from Brenham to the Houston Chronicle said that District Judge Carl T. Harper was acquitted by a jury there today on the charge of murder in connection with the death of James Lee Rich. Rich was shot to death on the street of Huntsville on March 3. The jury acquitted Judge Harper after being out for 21 minutes.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 31, Oct 8

►►The Madisonville Meteor

July 19, 1928, Liquor Charge Filed Against Aged Man. A search warrant was gotten out last week to search the premises of Mr. Bill Price near Midway and several gallons of whiskey were found by a Texas ranger together with Sheriff Gibson and Deputy J. Bozeman. He was brought to town and bound to await the action of the grand jury. He made no denial of the offense and told the officers where he had gotten the liquor. He is about seventy-four years old.

►►Madisonville Meteor

July 19, 1928. Dan Horton Released After Examining Trial. The examining trial of Dan Horton, charged with murder in connection with the death of his wife, was held at North Zulch before Justice Joe Whitley last Friday and the defendant was granted a bond of \$5,000 to await the action of the grand jury. No report had been made from the analysis of the contents of the stomach of the deceased at the time of the trial and a telegram from Austin Saturday stated that no poison had been found. The case will probably be dismissed as the case was based on the accusation that the woman was poisoned.

★Corsicana Daily Sun

December 2, 1930, Man On Trial For Alleged Poisoning Of His Wife in 1928. (AP) - Dan Horton, 35, a farmer near North Zulch, listened intently to witnesses today as they testified in his murder trial. He is accused. of poisoning his wife, Bertra, 25, on June 28, 1928, at their farm home. The state is asking for the death verdict. In his former trial

at Madisonville, he was given a five-year prison sentence, but District Judge S. W. Dean granted him a new trial, and the case was sent here on a change of venue.

★Wichita Falls Times

December 4, 1930 - JURY UNABLE TO AGREE IN DAN HORTON TRIAL. (AP) In retirement with Dan Horton's murder case for more than 36 hours the jury which tried the alleged wife slayer still had not arrived at a verdict shortly before noon today. No agreement was in sight it was reported. Horton a 26-year-old North Zulch farmer was accused of having poisoned Mrs. Horton. With shouts and in tears he denied that accusation when he testified. The \$4500 worth of insurance on her life he said, had been taken at her request. The husband swore, too: that on the eve of her death she had advised the family to eat heartily; had said It might be the last meal she ever would cook.

★Fort Worth Record Telegram

December 5, 1930, Jury Discharged In Horton Trial. The jury which tried Dan Horton for the murder of his wife having failed to arrive at a verdict was discharged at 2:30 p.m. today. It had been nearly 40 hours since the jurors took the case. The farmer thanked them, though he must stand trial again, barring anything unforeseen. Horton, 35 of North Zulch, was accused of having poisoned his wife and the prosecution sought to show that \$4500 worth of insurance on her life figured in the alleged transaction. He denied any responsibility for her death and said she herself had asked that the insurance be taken to provide for the couple's two children.

★The Bonham Daily Favorite

May 1, 1931, Man Tried 3 Times for Murder, is at Last Turned Loose. (AP) HUNTSVILLE - The jury here today acquitted Dan Horton on charges of fatally poisoning his wife in June 1929, soon after obtaining a life insurance policy for her. It was the third trial. He denied any blame for the tragedy.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 32, Oct 9

►►Corsicana Daily Sun

December 11, 1928 - Madisonville Youth Accidentally Killed. - Accidental discharge of a pistol, with which two boys were playing in a local cafe last night caused the death of Roy Mayfield, about 18 of this city. Mayfield and his friend, Thurman Hensarling, were playing with the weapon when it went off, wounding Mayfield, who died while en route to a hospital.

►►The Madisonville Meteor

December 13, 1928. Tragic Death Comes to Roy Mayfield, Jr., Monday Night.

Roy R. Mayfield, Jr., sons of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Mayfield of this city, was killed Monday night by the accidental discharge of a gun in the White Kitchen Café about 8:30 o'clock.

The accident happened, we are informed, when Thurman Hensarling attempted to hand a gun to young Mayfield, who was on a trade for same, the gun discharging and taking effect in his lower abdomen.

The wounded boy was placed in a car and rushed to the sanitarium at Huntsville but died before reaching there. The shooting was entirely accidental, as the boys had always been the best of friends.

The deceased was 21 years old last month. He leaves to mourn his untimely death, his father, mother, two brothers and two sisters, the brothers and sisters being younger than he.

Funeral services were held at the Baptist Church Wednesday morning at 10:30, being conducted by Rev. C. F. Andrews. Interment was made in the Madisonville cemetery.

The bereaved family have the tenderest sympathy of their many friends in all this section in this terrible heart-breaking tragedy.

►►The Madisonville Meteor

December 18, 1928, BOY FRIENDS OF ROY MAYFIELD PAY TRIBUTE. That Roy Mayfield was a youth beloved by his fellow friends, was evidenced by his many pals who got together and ordered two floral wreaths at \$15 each to place upon his grave. In the center of the two wreaths was a card with four words printed thereon and reading: "From His Boy Friends."

Those boy friends will miss Roy and they each pledge everlasting remembrance of his boyhood days with them. The early death of a youth is deplorable, and to these boys, as well as the family, Roy's absence is heartbreaking.

The Madisonville Meteor

December 13, 1928, Black Man Killed at Connor Thursday of Last Week. Raymond Thompson, 16-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Gid Thompson of Connor, hit a Black boy on the head with a stick Thursday of last week, from the effects of which the boy died four hours later.

The boy was named Winn and had come to this county from Alabama a short while ago. The trouble arose, as best we could learn, over Winn forcing the school children out of the road into the mud and taking all the road for himself. Young Thompson, we are informed, picked up a stick and hit the boy over the head.

►►The Madisonville Meteor

December 13, 1928, DISTRICT COURT CONVENES HERE MONDAY MORNING. The Madison County district court convened in regular session Monday morning with Judge Carl T. Harper on the bench and Sheriff J. R. Gibson and Clerk T. H. Wren at their respective posts. The docket was short and cases were set as follows:

- ★ State of Texas vs. C. M. Earnest murder, set for Monday, December 17.
- ★ State vs. Horace Sanders, charged with selling intoxicating liquor, set for Monday, December 17.
- ★ State vs. Byron Bledsoe, charged with selling intoxicating liquor, set for Monday, December 17.
- ★ State vs. Huston Neeley, charged with murder, set for Wednesday, December 19.
- ★ State vs. Jim Kittleband set for Tuesday, December 18.
- ★ The only important civil case set was W. R. Malone vs. the City of Madisonville, set for Tuesday of the fourth week.

Grand jurors empaneled were A. L. Lipscomb, foreman; C. C. Martin, W. A. Childress, Jim Hannah, C. H. Lewis, C. L. Broadway, E. A. McCorquodale, T. Ferguson, H. H. Barrett, J. F. Jenkins, John Malone, and Dewey May. Riding bailiffs are John Kittleband, S. L. Crow, T. R. Cannon, and Ernest Massey. Door bailiff-G. R. Madole.

►►The Madisonville Meteor

March 7, 1929, ED MCGAUHEY SURRENDERS AFTER TRAGEDY AT GROVETON. - Ed McGaughey, 35, grocery store operator, was held in Trinity County jail without bond Saturday on a charge of murder in connection with the shooting of Cleon McClain, 40, in the district court house here last Friday morning, McClain was shot once behind the ear while standing on the stairway just outside the courtroom where he was to go on trial on two charges of swindling \$800 from the minor children of McGauhey's dead brother of Madisonville.

McGauhey surrendered a few minutes after the shooting to Sheriff C. Chandler and requested the officer to examine McClain's body for weapons. The sheriff is said to have found an unopened pocket knife in McClain's hand.

County Attorney H. Crow, who examined the body, said that McClain was fired on at close range, the gun being held close enough to inflict powder burns.

Three witnesses to the shooting were to be summoned before the Trinity County grand jury, which meets Monday.

W. N. McGee, one of the witnesses, told Attorney Crow that no word was spoken prior to the shooting. The other witnesses were Dick and Hugh McGaughey, brothers of Ed. McClain was well known in Trinity County and about two years ago figured in a shooting that caused considerable excitement in the vicinity.

Shot Over School Dispute. The affair began when Homer Gibson, a trustee of a school near the Trinity-Houston County line, objected to the children of Frank and Hervey Johnson, who lived in Houston County, attending his school in Trinity County. Gibson was shot to death and two days later Frank Johnson was killed. Harvey Johnson was subsequently arrested and tried on a charge of murder of Homer Gibson and was given a five-year suspended sentence.

Cleon McClain, a brother-in-law of Gibson, his two brothers, Fount and Hagar, and Jesse Gibson, were indicted for the murder of Johnson. Gibson was tried and acquitted and the charges against the McClains were dismissed by the state.

The state alleged in the swindling charges, for which McClain was to be tried Friday, that McClain represented himself as an attorney for the probate court of Madison County and obtained \$800 from McGaughey's brother's children.

District Judge S. W. Dean was preparing to call the cases to trial when the shooting occurred on the stairway just outside the courtroom. Ed McGaughey was a former citizen of Madison County and is well known here and has many relatives in this county.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 33, Oct 10

►►The Eagle

July 1, 1929, KURTEN MAN ON RAMPAGE NOW IN JAIL. Four Serious Charges Filed Against Him Here. HEARING THIS WEEK. Also Under Bond In Grimes, Madison Counties. - Houston Neeley of Kurten went on a rampage Saturday night, according to county officials, and is now held at the county jail and will be brought before Justice J. T. McGee on four charges, two for assault with intent to commit murder, one for driving an automobile while intoxicated and one for carrying a revolver. In his effort later to evade arrest by Sheriff J. H. Reed, who had been called to the scene, Neeley overturned his car, and Grady Willis who was riding with him suffered a broken arm.

Neeley was brought to Bryan and placed in jail while Willis was taken to a local hospital, from which he was discharged yesterday. According to reports made to county officials Neeley appeared at the home of the McCleney's Saturday night at about 10 o'clock and made threats and fired several shots at the two men, none of which took effect. The fracas is said to have been the outgrowth of some family trouble. Neeley, in addition to facing serious charges before local courts, is out on a \$1,000 bond to keep the peace as a result of trouble some time ago in Grimes County and is charged with murder in Madison County as a result of a killing he was mixed up in some time ago.

The latter case was up for trial recently but was continued. His bond in the killing case is said to be \$250 and was fixed by Judge Harper after the justice before whom Neeley's examining trial was held had refused to release him on a bond. He was taken before Judge Harper on a writ of habeas corpus, it is said, and a bond was set.

⊛The Madisonville Meteor

December 19, 1929, HOUSTON NEELEY CASE TRIED HERE THIS WEEK. Madisonville – Houston Neeley was given two years in the penitentiary, Tuesday by a jury in the District Court here for the killing of Elva Coldiron some two years ago. The shooting occurred when Neeley and Coldiron met in the road where Neeley's car was stuck in the mud, near North Zulch. We understand that a motion for a new trial will be made and if denied an appeal will be taken.

►►The Madisonville Meteor

June 13, 1929, SHERIFF GIBSON AND DEPUTY BOZEMAN MAKE DOUBLE TRIP. Sheriff J. R. Gibson and Deputy J. Bozeman went to Gainesville Sunday to take Douglas Bradley, who was convicted in Juvenile court for breaking into Sam Wilson's store at Elwood sometime last winter. He was sentenced to two years by judge Robinson last week. Sheriff Gibson and Mr. Bozeman came back by way of Thornton and brought Jesse Simpson, who was indicted by the grand Jury for murder in connection with the death of an infant some two years ago in the northern part of the county Simpson was lodged in jail to await examining trial, the date of which has not been set.

►►Corsicana Semi-Weekly Light

October 1, 1929 - LLOYD DAVIDSON RECAPTURED; TWO OTHERS TAKEN ALSO HUNTSVILLE. Officers searched throughout East Texas today for convicts who escaped from the state penitentiary last Friday. Three were recaptured yesterday, two in a vacant house at Madisonville, 30 miles north of here, and one at Palestine, about 100 miles north of Huntsville. Lloyd Davidson, serving a 99-year sentence for murder from Navarro County, and Leander Gaines, a Black man, serving eight years for burglary from McLennan County, were caught at Madisonville. Jack Lebo, serving 50 years for murder from Shelby County, was retaken at Palestine. Numerous trails were picked up in the vicinity of Madisonville and in the Bédias creek bottoms, north of the farm, but bloodhounds had difficulty following them.

►►Madisonville Meteor

November 7, 1929, W. F. (BILL) FANNIN HURT IN AUTO ACCIDENT. Monday evening about 7 o'clock while returning from North Zulch, Mr. Bill Fannin's car left the road and turned over near the Cottonwood church, injuring Mr. Fannin badly, the extent of which has not been ascertained at this time. His worst hurt was in the lower bowels and his physician says it will take several days to know the extent of the injury.

The accident occurred when he looked back at the pig, he was bringing home in a sack, which was about to get loose in the back end of the car and when his attention was drawn to the pig, the car quit the road and before he realized what was happening, the car was in the ditch. It ran down the ditch until striking a bank at a culver, turning completely over three times, throwing Mr. Fannin some forty feet from the car as it went over perhaps the third time. The car which was a new Whippet Six was completely demolished. The pig which Mr. Fannin was giving his attention to at the time of the accident was instantly killed.

In the December 19th Meteor, Bill says he is glad to give up the pig instead of himself.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 34, Oct 11

►►The Madisonville Meteor

December 19, 1929, The case of Ed Weimer charged with transporting intoxicating liquor resulted in a sentence of one year. The case of Claud Coldiron charged with manufacturing intoxicants resulted in a one-year sentence. In the case of Jesse Simpson charged with the murder in connection with the death of a child was acquitted.

►►The Madisonville Meteor

December 19, 1929, NINE-YEAR-OLD BOY STILL SUFFERING FROM ACCIDENT. Some three or four weeks ago, Otis Lee Thompson, the nine-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Thompson of Midway, fell on an axe and cut a deep gash in his knee, right where the two knee bones join. The boy has been under the care of a Madisonville physician ever since he was hurt, and the leg has been placed in a form to keep it from being moved at the knee joint but the process of healing has been a problem. The boy was kept at the B. C. Smith home so as to be near medical attention, but it is thought that maybe he will have to be taken to A sanitarium. In fact, Mr. Thompson has been trying to get the boy placed in some hospital where the expense would not be too great, but hospital service and bills come high, and just now they have been trying to do all they can for the boy to get his knee well. An injury like

this that happened to Otis Lee is far more serious and painful than might be imagined There is always a danger of infection setting in, and the utmost attention must be given to the wound.

The pain to the boy is another thing that is awful, and everything known to medical science in the way of reducing pain has been employed to ease the little boy's suffering. Up to last week, the wound had not been healing very well, but the boy was reported as resting somewhat easier. It is to be hoped that the boy's knee will soon heal entirely well. A condition like this is very deplorable, especially in our own section, and no local hospital service. Someday no doubt such service will become a public utility to all suffering humanity. We at least pray for the boy and ask that his wound be healed-made whole and well.

Later, we learned that Mr. Thompson took Otis Lee to Houston Saturday and placed him in the Methodist hospital where the boy will receive expert medical attention. The surgeon at the hospital told Mr. Thompson they would operate on the boy's knee sometime Monday, also there was evidence of infection having taken place near the leg bone. Mr. Thompson was going back to the hospital Tuesday or Wednesday and until his return, no further information on the boy's condition will likely reach us. (MCHC NOTE: it gives us great pleasure to report young Otis survived his injury and lived to the age of 51. He is buried in Brookside Memorial Park, Houston).

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 35, Oct 12

►►Corsicana Semi-Weekly

June 2, 1931, FORMER DISTRICT JUDGE SLAIN IN HIS HOME SUNDAY. MADISONVILLE, Former District Judge Carl T. Harper was shot and killed in his home here today. Sheriff J. R. Gibson said two pistol bullets struck Harper, one entering the right eye and the other on the right side. He died instantly. Harper was, tried for murder in connection with the death of a sailor about three years ago. and was acquitted. "The information we got was that Judge Harper had been drinking heavily," Sheriff Gibson said. "We were told that he came downstairs this morning with a pistol in his hand. "I am going to kill you, he told his wife," The sheriff said he was told. "Our information was that she beat him to it," Gibson added. Mrs. Harper, the sheriff said, would probably be arrested later. She was in a highly nervous condition, he said. Harper was defeated for reelection to the bench some four years ago. The family is widely known throughout this section. County Attorney Luther Broadway said he did not think it likely Mrs. Harper would be taken into custody. "I do not believe any charge will be filed in the case," he added. If there should be, she certainly will be released on her own recognizance."

⊛Times Record News

June 2, 1931, MADISONVILLE, Tex., Wife Kills Ex-District Judge After Race for Loaded Pistol. Mrs. Carl T. Harper shot her husband, the former district Judge here, to death today and told her friends: "I have neither fears nor regrets for what I have done."

She had not been arrested this afternoon and County Attorney Luther Broadway said she probably would not be charged. If any complaint were filed, he added, she undoubtedly would be released on her own recognizance.

Harper according to the stories told by investigating authorities, had been drinking heavily, had threatened his wife's life, and attempted, even as she shot him, to shoot her. The former magistrate had hidden a pistol under a sofa, Sheriff J R Gibson said he was informed, and lunged for it, but Mrs. Harper reached it first.

When she first pulled the trigger, the cartridge did not explode. Harper was shot through the eye and the right side. He died instantly. The former Judge's career had been in some respects a stormy one. He was tried for murder about three years ago in connection with the killing of Lee Rich, a Houston sailor, and was acquitted. Two sons of the couple Paul 23, and Webb 21, took their mother's part after the shooting, friends of his wife said. June 3rd – Mrs. Harper did not attend the funeral.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 36, Oct 13

►►Corsicana Daily Sun

June 12, 1931, SEYMOUR, (AP) - Harry Ferrier, 19, who was shot and killed early today at a bridge camp near North Zulch, 70 miles north of Houston, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Ferrier, pioneer residents of Seymour. He graduated from Seymour high school this spring with an excellent record as a student and athlete. He went to North Zulch recently to work for a brother. Mack Ferrier, on a bridge contract. He was the youngest of 11 Ferrier children.

★Corsicana Daily Sun

June 12, 1931, FATHER OF GIRL YOUTH HAD BEEN WITH HIS SLAYER. QUARREL OF YOUNG COUPLE ALLEGED TO HAVE LED TO SLAYING NORTH ZULCH, (AP) - Henry Ferrier, the 18-year-old youth who had just graduated from high school, was shot to death in front of his rooming house about 5 a.m. here today.

Abe Casey, 45, of North Zulch, and father of the girl young Ferrier had been riding with last night, was charged with murder in connection with the killing. Casey was placed in the custody of the sheriff's department to await examining trial which probably will be held next week.

According to the information given to County Attorney Luther Broadway of Madison County, who is investigating the slaying, young Ferrier and the Casey girl had a "date" last night to go riding. About midnight they had a quarrel in the car and the Casey girl got out and went to a farmhouse near North Zulch. A couple of boys living at the farmhouse took her home and she told her father of the quarrel with the boy. About dawn, the father took his daughter and drove to the rooming house where young Ferrier was staying. The youth's landlady was told Casey wanted to see him.

The boy came out to the automobile where Casey and the girl were sitting. County Attorney Broadway said he was told the father and the boy exchanged only a few words before the shooting took place. Two shots were fired from an automatic pistol. One struck the boy in the chest and the other went wild. He slumped to the ground, dead, in the girl's presence. Constable J. D. Rumfield of North Zulch arrested Casey and a charge of murder was filed later.

★Abilene Daily Reporter

SLAYER OF SEYMOUR YOUTH IS RELEASED ON \$7500 BOND, Waives Examining Trial at North Zulch. - Abe Casey, a forty-six-year-old farmer, was bound over to the grand jury under bond of \$7500 on a charge of murder in connection with the slaying June 12, of Harry Ferrier, 16, who was alleged to have mistreated his young daughter. Bond was made at once.

The hearing was waived at North Zulch, near here, and bond was agreed upon by state and defense attorneys. The school auditorium where the hearing was scheduled, was jammed. Ferrier who graduated this spring from the high school at Seymour had been working on a road construction project with his brothers near North Zulch. On the night of June 11, he went riding with Miss Estelle Casey, 16 and at about midnight the girl appeared at a farmhouse and was taken to her home by two neighbor boys. The next morning about 5 o'clock Casey accompanied by his daughter, went to the boarding house where Ferrier was staying and called him out to the car. The shooting followed.

►►The Waco News Tribune

October 21, 1932, Sheriff J. R. Gibson of Madison County Thursday submitted to the Tenth court his appeal from a mandamus Issued by the district court at Madisonville compelling him to dip cattle, the owners of which refused to dip. Madison county farmers reputedly object to the cattle dipping, and Sheriff Gibson wants the mandamus set aside.

TOM GASSOWAY

►►Valley Morning Star

September 6, 1938, RUNNING GUN BATTLE ENDS WITH ESCAPE. Fugitive Flees Fire of Officers. MADISONVILLE, Texas - State Highway Patrolman Tom Gassoway was shot and seriously wounded here Monday night in a running gun battle with a man he and a brother officer, John Connor, were chasing. Officer Conner said Gassoway was shot once in the stomach after the man, who was unidentified, had leaped from his automobile at a filling station here, and raced to the stockyard fence about 50 or 75 yards behind the station.

The two officers began their chase north of Madisonville, between Madisonville and Centerville, then raced behind the man, who was driving a green 1937 sedan, until the latter abandoned the machine at the station, at the intersection of highways 75 and 21. The officers fired in the air as they drove up. The fugitive fled behind the station to a small creek in the rear, then to the stockyards. He made good his escape while Gassoway was rushed to the hospital here. Sheriff's officers and highway patrolmen threw a blockade on all roads leading into Madisonville. Connor did not say why the officers began their pursuit. He said the fugitive began firing from the stockyard.

⊛The Hearne Democrat

September 9, 1938, Highway Patrolman Shot By Speeder He Pursued. - Highway Patrolman Tom Gassoway of Bryan, suffered a flesh wound Monday night when a bullet was fired by a man, he and Patrolman John Connor were chasing. He was able to be on duty Tuesday. The two officers had chased a speeder from near Centerville to Madisonville and were close upon the man when he drove to the rear of a garage, left the car, and ran, with the officers in pursuit. When the patrolmen fired into the air and ordered the man to halt, he returned fire and a bullet struck Gassoway in the side. The man escaped in a car stolen at Madisonville and has not been overtaken.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 38, Oct 15

KITTLEBAND

►►The Waco News-Tribune

May 27, 1928, EAST TEXAS SHOOTINGS --Madisonville Grand Jury Investigating Two Fatal Affrays. Investigation of the mystery of two recent shootings was being made by the grand jury which is expected to make its report in a few days, officers said here Saturday. J. Kittleband, 49, bachelor farmer and laborer, Friday was placed under \$5,000 bond in connection with the death of Henry Walker, barber, at Midway, last Monday. Walker's death followed that of I. M. Wakefield, brother-in-law of Kittleband, who was found fatally shot at his home last Wednesday.

⊛Corsicana Daily News

May 30, 1928 --SECRET HEARING UNDERWAY INTO DEATH MIDWAY MAN. A secret hearing was being held here Wednesday in connection with the investigation of the death of Ira Wakefield of Midway, who was found shot to death in his bed there about 4 a. m. on May 16. State Rangers J. B. Wheatley and J. W. Aldrich, are conducting the examination of witnesses before Justice of the Peace Goree. The rangers, who arrived here Tuesday summoned neighbors of the Wakefields and others living in the vicinity in the hope of picking up some bit of information that might shed light, on his death. The theory of suicide is discounted by the rangers. "His head was partly blown away by the charge from the pistol," Wheatley said. "The pistol was found at his feet and it's hardly likely that the gun could have been fired from that position and do the damage it did. "It's not likely, either, that the gun could have fallen that far back if Wakefield had killed himself." There were no powder burns on the head either, the rangers said. If the gun had been held close to the head there would have been marks.

★ Corsicana Daily News

December, 11, 1928--MADISONVILLE MAN TO BE TRIED IN SLAYING. Jim Kittleband, charged with the murder last week of Henry Walker, a Midway barber, will go to trial! Dec. 18, The case was docketed yesterday. The slaying is alleged to have grown out of the killing of Kittleband's brother-in-law, Ira Coon Wakefield, Jr., who was chloroformed and shot.

★ Corsicana Daily News

Dec. 18, 1928--MURDER TRIAL IS SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN MADISONVILLE TODAY. Kittleband, charged with slaying Henry Walker, Midway barber, was to go to trial here today. Special veniremen have been summoned. The defendant was charged with the offense after Walker had been shot while standing in front of a drug store. A few days previous, Kittleband's brother-in-law, Ira Wakefield, Jr., was shot and killed under mysterious circumstances. A verdict of suicide first was returned, but investigation proved he had been chloroformed before being slain. Wakefield's wife and Walker were charged with the murder after an investigation by state rangers, but the crime has never been satisfactorily cleared up.

★ The Austin American

March 9, 1929, Honor of Girl Defense in Trial. Midway Barber Slain Last May (UP) BRYAN, March 8. Jim Kittleband shot Henry Walker at Midway, Madison County, in defense of the honor of his 15-year-old niece, he sought to show by witnesses at his trial on charges of murder, in district court, which continued here today. Walker was shot three times last May 19, in front of his barber shop at Midway. Oran Wakefield, Midway, testified for the defense that he had told Kittleband of improper suggestions by Walker to Kittleband's niece, Mary Helen Wakefield. Miss Wakefield testified that Walker had made improper suggestions to her many times. She said she had told "Uncle Jim," meaning Kittleband, of these advances. Walker was married and had one child.

★ The Eagle

March 9, 1929, KITTLEBAND NOT GUILTY FINDS JURY. One Ballot Is Reported Before Verdict Is Reached. KILLING IS ADMITTED. Evidence of Niece Is Thought Caused Acquittal. - James E. Kittleband, admitted slayer of Henry Walker at Midway, Madison County, May 21, 1928, and with another notch on his gun, was declared not guilty of murder last night by a jury of Brazos County residents who are reported to have taken but one ballot. Testimony in the trial began late Thursday afternoon. Witnesses for the state described the shooting, testifying that Kittleband fired three shots at Walker who made no attempt to defend himself and who had fallen to the sidewalk when the third shot was fired. The statement of Dr. Lawrence Curley of Midway, called by the state, bore out this testimony.

High points in the case for the defense were the appearance on the stand of Mary Helen Wakefield, the 15-year-old niece of Kittleband, and the defendant himself, the last witness called by the defense. The Wakefield girl testified that she had told her uncle, only a few minutes before Walker was shot, that he had made improper proposals to her. Kittleband, who was as calm on the stand as though he were fishing, stated that he killed Walker because of what his niece had told him. He said he wasn't mad though he might have been a little excited. He made no denial of the killing and even admitted that he shot Walker when the latter had his arms up as though to ward off a blow.

The jury, which returned its verdict at about 8:30 o'clock, was composed of George Smith, J. J. Dink, G. R. Blanton, T. C. Wade, N. H. McWhorter, E. A. Withers, B. C. Cash, E. J. Beard, J. T. Newcomb, C. C. Cobb, Frank Borek, and Joe Bond. One of the strongest arrays of legal talent engaged in a criminal trial in Brazos County courts in a number of years was seen in the Kittleband case. The state was represented by J. G. Minkert, who served as a prosecutor here in place of County Attorney W. E. Neeley, who is ill, County Attorney A. T. McKinney of Huntsville,

and M. L. Bennett of Normangee, retained by relatives of Walker. The defense counsel included F. L. Henderson of Bryan and M. E. Gates of Huntsville.

The case was brought to Brazos County on a change of venue because District Judge S. W. Dean before whom the case would have been tried, was disqualified by relationship. Judges S. W. and W. L. Dean also sat with the defense counsel during part of the trial.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 39, Oct 16

DR. GLOVER SPEER

►►The Houston Post

MCHC 2022 NOTE: Dr. Glover G. Speer was born in Lovelady on 10 Dec. 1880 and lived in Madisonville from 1902 until February 1915, when he moved to Houston to avoid conflict with Mr. Christian. Dr. Speer married Anna Waldrip on Jan. 18, 1904 in Madison County.

--August 28, 1915, FATAL SHOOTING AS RESULT OF TROUBLE LONG STANDING. – J. E. Christian, Insurance Agent, Dead. Dr. Glover Speer Gave Himself Up to Police. Charge of Murder Filed.

As he was leaving the premises of Dr. Glover Speer, 1117 Hardy Street, Joseph E. Christian, an insurance agent, was shot and killed Wednesday morning at about 10:30. In the custody of Max Domschke, city plumbing inspector. Dr. Speer. a few minutes later gave himself up to the police and is now in the county jail charged with murder.

Dr. Speer told a Post reporter he fired two shots at Christian from a second-story window in his home. He used a double-barreled shotgun loaded with buckshot. Both charges took effect, striking Christian at the base of the brain. Part of the skull was torn away and he died almost instantly. Dr. Speer said he passed Christian coming off his front gallery and shot him as he was running along Hardy Street. He asserted that there had been threats to take his life upon the part of Christian and also went into other matters as a reason for the breach between them. Dr. Speer reiterated that he could have killed Christian several times and been perfectly justified in so doing but that desired to avoid trouble and at last fired the fatal shots because he felt there was no other course open to him.

RUMORS OF TROUBLE BETWEEN MEN. The killing is also a sequence to an episode of a few weeks ago when Officers Daniels and Richardson arrested Christian in an empty house, next to Dr. Speer's home. He was armed with a shotgun at the time. Charges of trespassing were filed against him but they were later dismissed. Rumors of the trouble between the two men then cropped out, according to the police. In Madisonville, where he had resided and built up a profitable practice, Dr. Speer said the trouble first started about the first of the year.

MOVED TO HOUSTON IN FEBRUARY. In the latter part of the month, he decided to come to Houston and moved here on February 1. His wife joined him here on April 17 and with their 7-year-old boy, an only child, they went to housekeeping on Hardy Street. "I knew Christian well," Dr. Speer said. "He was a clerk in my drug store at Madisonville and there first became acquainted with my wife." "I had seen him a number of times in Houston and I learned through letters that he was to be at my home a certain night. This was in March. I could have shot him then but did not want to. I was on the gallery when he neared and he passed on. I saw him last Monday and again in the middle of the week. He seemed to always be watching me."

DR. SPEER DESCRIBED SHOOTING. "This morning I left home shortly before 10 o'clock and went downtown to get a shave. When I returned in my automobile, I saw him coming down from the gallery and rushed upstairs for my shotgun. He was running down the street when I reached the window and sent both barrels at him. I saw him fall and that is all."

Mrs. Speer declined to make a statement to the newspapers, but she told District Attorney John H. Crooker, who was among the first to reach the scene, that she was sitting upstairs with Mrs. Myrtle Parsons, who has apartments in the same dwelling when the shooting occurred. She had refused Christian admittance to the house a few minutes before, she said, and sent him away. He was there, Christian told her she asserted to see Dr. Speers.

Mrs. Speers said that she and her husband had trouble in Madisonville, but she denied emphatically that Christian was to blame. Mrs. Parsons told Judge Crooker the same story regarding Christian's call as did Mrs. Speer.

MR. CHRISTIAN HAD LARGE FAMILY. Mr. Christian was about 52 years old, married, and had six children, one of whom is ill in the Baptist sanitarium. E. C. Harris, 409 Pecore Street, Woodland Heights, is a brother-in-law, at whose home Mr. Christian spent Wednesday. Mrs. Christian was in Houston to see her daughter the same night. W. M. Sauls, a Black man, living at 1327 Pannel Street, was the only eye-witness to the shooting so far as the police were able to ascertain. He was crossing Hardy Street in a wagon and one of the shots glanced and struck his horse in the side. He said he saw Christian running from the gate of Dr. Speer's home. When the first shot was fired Christian stumbled, and with the next fell face downward. Dr. F. M. Bourland, who has an office with Dr. Speer at 1616 Conti Street, just around the corner from the Speer home, reached Christian as his pulse was ebbing. He died while he held his wrist, he said. The remains were shipped to the former home of the dead man Friday night at 9 o'clock. The widow and two daughters who were in this city accompanied the body. Arrangements were made for the shipment and for the burial of the body by Sid Westheimer Undertaking Company. The charge of murder against Dr. Speer was filed in Justice Ray's court. A hearing will be given him Monday.

WAS INTERESTED IN REAL ESTATE. Mr. Harris stated that Mr. Christian was interested in real estate in Crockett and had been traveling in and out of Houston for several weeks. He said he had not heard him speak of trouble with Dr. Speer. In fact, Mr. Christian, he asserted, was a man who kept his business to himself. Dr. Speer is 34 years old. He appeared calm and composed as he related the details of the shooting at the police station, and is hopeful of acquittal. Dr. Speer reiterated a number of times that he could have killed Christian on several occasions but did not want to. "I stood it as long as I could because I wanted to avoid trouble." He said.

DR GLOVER SPEER CONTINUED TOMORROW.....

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 40, Oct 17

DR GLOVER SPEER CONTINUED

★The Houston Post

August 31, 1915, \$5000 BAIL GRANTED DR. SPEER AMID CHEERS AT EXAMINING TRIAL,

Dr. Glover Speer, accused on murder, was granted bail of \$5000 and furnished it, following his preliminary hearing in Justice Ray's court Monday afternoon. As Judge Ray made the announcement spectators who had packed the little courtroom until they were clustered about the witness chair, cheered and yelled. The cheering lasted perhaps two minutes. Intermingled in the crowd were more than a score of well-dressed women, who apparently took a deep interest in the trial, being among the most enthusiastic in the applause that followed the granting of bail.

Many in the gathering swarmed around the defendant and shook his hand. He had descended from the witness stand after cross-examination of nearly an hour, only a few minutes before bail had been fixed. The ovation coming upon the strain under, which the physician labored on the stand left him with mingled emotions. He had just finished telling how he killed Joseph E. Christian, once his most intimate friend, Friday morning last, as Christian was leaving Dr. Speer's front gate.

MANY CLASHES BETWEEN COUNSEL. The all-afternoon hearing was featured by many clashes between counsel, delighting many of the auditors to the point of interposing shouts of approval. Dr. Speer was the last witness called by the defense and was on the stand for more than an hour and a half. In that time, he poured out, sometimes reluctantly details of his domestic and private life. It was evident from the outset that the defense would attempt to prove that Christian had "invaded his home" and made many threats against his life, while in cross-examining, the physician the State tried to establish the fact that Dr. Speer had some other motive for the killing, namely, that he feared exposure on rumored charges. Dr. Speer, however, strenuously denied that this was the case.

FIRE TWICE TO KILL CHRISTIAN. "How many shots did you fire at Christian?" asked District Attorney John H. Crooker. "Two." "Did you hit him the first time?" "Yes." "Why did you fire again?" "Because I wanted to kill him." "Why?" "I have already told you he invaded my home and made threats against my life. "Are these the only two defenses you are relying on?" "Yes." "Hadn't you heard talk of charges to be made against you in connection with an operation on a Madisonville girl in Houston?" "I had heard talk yes." "Did you ever wait on such a girl?" "No." "This Isn't a new matter to you, is it?" "No. not exactly." "Had Christian ever talked about it?" "Yes." "Isn't that the reason you killed him?" "No sir."

TALKED WITH CHRISTIAN THREE WEEKS AGO. Dr. C. V. Barnes of Madisonville proceeded Dr. Speer, testifying that he had talked to Christian on a train coming to Houston three weeks ago about Mrs. Speer. He also stated that Christian threatened to kill Dr. Speer if the latter "made any more", two months ago. "I met Dr. Speer in front of the Milby hotel and told him what Christian said," Dr. Barnes testified. "Where did Christian say he was going?" asked Judge Lee of Madisonville, attorney for the defense. "To Houston", "Anything else?", "Yes, he said Dr. Speer didn't have the grit to kill him." "Did you tell Dr. Speer what Christian had said about his wife?" "No."

Asked more of what Christian said about Mrs. Speer, Dr. Barnes testified that Christian told him that he had hypnotized Mrs. Speer so that she would love her husband and in so doing "got in with her."

WITHDREW DIVORCE SUIT FILED IN MADISONVILLE. Dr. Speer told the court that he first heard stories about his wife early in the year and that he moved to Houston to "start life over again." In the meantime, he had withdrawn a suit for divorce against his wife and decided after he was in Houston to take her back. She came in April, he said. Later he got possession of letters addressed to his wife in the name of Mollie Jean Rhodes, and that he wrote a decoy letter to Christian making an appointment with him. Dr. Speer said he was waiting on the front porch when Christian arrived, but that the latter did not come in. He walked past several times and then disappeared. He said his wife didn't know this. "Why didn't you kill him then?" District Attorney Crooker asked. "Because I didn't want to." Dr. Speer said this was Christian's first trip to Houston. He also told of another occasion later when he discovered Christian under a window at his home knocking lightly for admittance. When he appeared on the porch with a shotgun, he said, Christian fled.

TOLD OF THREATS MADE BY THE DEAD MAN. Dr. Speer then testified that Dr. L. O. Barnes of Bedias told him of the threat between the time he had Christian arrested next door to his home on Hardy Street, about a month ago and his trial on a charge of trespassing. Officers Daniels and Richardson testified that they arrested Christian in a vacant house next to Dr. Speer's in July. Both stated that Christian was standing at the top of the stairs with a shotgun in his hand when they entered. It was loaded. They took him to the station. When they asked him why he was there, he said "to defend himself." Mr. Richardson testified.

TOLD OFFICER MAN INTENDED TO KILL HIM. Mr. Daniels swore that when they arrived at the house, Dr. Speer met him and said that a man was in the yard with a shotgun and that he intended to kill Dr. Speer. Both officers agreed that Christian had stated he and Dr. Speer had had trouble. Dr. Speer testified that his wife had steadfastly denied that she and Christian had any relations. On cross-examination, Dr. Speer said he had not believed her. Rev. William Sauls, a Black minister, testified to having seen the two shots fired that killed Christian. He said Christian was running from the house at the time. Domschke who arrested Dr. Speer said that the physician made no attempt to get away. "I asked him who did the shooting." Mr. Domschke testified, "and he said he did." I asked him why and he said, "it was over domestic trouble."

Many friends of the defendant were in the courtroom. Among them were W. T. Rogers of Madisonville, S. W. Monzingo of Crockett, Dr. R. H. Harrison of Brownsville, and T. R. Waldrip of Madisonville. Mr. Waldrip, Dr. Speer said was his father-in-law, and that he had expressed his sympathy and offered to do all he could for him.

Dr. Speer took his trial with composure. Once during the testimony, he stopped a newsboy who had elbowed through the crowd and bought a newspaper, glancing over it for a few minutes.

.....**COME BACK TOMORROW FOR THE VERDICT!**

DR GLOVER SPEER CONTINUED, VERDICT

⊛ The Houston Post

March 7, 1916, Suspended Sentence Ends Murder Trial. HOUSTON, Texas. The trial of Dr. Glover Speer, charged with killing his former business partner, J. E. Christian of Madisonville, in this city, was unexpectedly concluded this afternoon. By agreement of counsel, Speer entered a plea of guilty to manslaughter, the State waiving the murder charge, and was given a 2-year sentence. The sentence, however, was suspended. The agreement came after the defendant had testified on his own behalf.

➤ MCHC - Vol I

--Museum Musings by Laura Ann Cannon, Jan 11, 2021

J.R. (Joseph Reuben) Gibson served as Sheriff of Madison County for eight years, 1927-1934. This was during the "Clyde Barrow-Bonnie Parker" era; and, because one of their gang members, Floyd Hamilton, was being held prisoner at the nearby Ferguson prison farm, Mr. Gibson became involved in a gun battle with this gang.

The escape of Floyd Hamilton from the Ferguson Prison had been engineered by the Barrow-Parker group, and the prison officials alerted Sheriff Gibson that the car containing them was headed toward Madisonville and that they were heavily armed. Since this was prior to the day of a shortwave radio, this was done by telephone. Sheriff Gibson had only one deputy, Jay Bozeman, so he immediately deputized several of the leading citizens and an ambush was set up on the road to Navasota, as they had been advised that this was the expected route of escape.

The men were successful in capturing the group of escapees, but only after a gun battle with the outlaws who abandoned their car and took refuge behind the Mormon Church building at Jozye, a small community several miles from Madisonville. Although the breakout had been instigated by Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker to liberate their companion, it was discovered that they were not with the group. (The gun battle occurred near the present-day Jozye Cemetery on Highway 21 south of town.)

Joseph Reuben Gibson was born February 23, 1878, in Madison County. He was married to Mary Belle Walker on November 13, 1910. They were the parents of four daughters: Melba, Josie, Bonnie, and Lucy Marie. Joe Gibson died December 2, 1942, in Houston, and is buried in the Madisonville Cemetery.

W. H. ROE POISONS WIFE

2022 MCHC Note: William H Roe was born in Walker Co. in 1856. Research shows he lived in Madison County a few years between 1872-1878. He married Virginia "Jennie" Kelley in 1882.

➤ Galveston Daily News

April 9, 1886, A MYSTERIOUS DEATH. A Huntsville Coroner Investigating the Case of Mrs. Roe. The sudden and mysterious death of Mrs. W. H. Roe, is still the exciting theme of conversation here. A coroner's secret investigation has been going on all day. A large number of witnesses have been examined, and one or two parties are held on suspicion. An autopsy of the body has been made, and the stomach forwarded to Austin for analysis. If it is proved that this worthy lady has been foully dealt with, our citizens will leave nothing undone to bring the guilty to justice. The funeral took place this evening, and was conducted by the Knights and Ladies of Honor, of which order, deceased was a member, holding a policy for \$3000. The action of the coroner's jury in conducting the investigation with closed doors, and refusing to even admit representatives of the press, is commented upon.

April 22, 1886, THE ALLEDGED WIFE POISONING CASE. Preliminary Examination of W. H. Roe – Synopsis of Testimony – “Papa Please Don’t Go,”

The following testimony has been taken to the preliminary examination of W. H. Roe, who is charged with the poisoning of his wife, at this place, and an outline of which has previously been telegraphed.

The principal witness for the prosecution (Lewis Cotton, Black) testified about as follows: “On Wednesday, the 7th day of April, Dock Bennett called at my gate and told me that W. H. Roe wished me to come down in town.” After a while I came on down in town, and met Mr. Roe near Bradley’s saloon, being then 10 or 11 o’clock a.m. Roe said to me “What makes you look so drawn up?” I told him that I was not feeling very well. We went into the saloon and I bought 25 cents worth of whisky, and we went out in the back yard and drank some of it. We then went into an alleyway and talked over the election of the previous day, counting up those who had voted against Roe. We then returned to the streets, when he handed me 25 cents and told me to get him 25 cents worth of strychnine, saying he wanted it to kill dogs. I started off and got some six or seven steps, and stopped to talk with some parties, when he told me to hurry up. I told him that I was in no hurry. I then went to Mr. Cotton’s drug store and bought the strychnine.

When Mr. Roe told me to get the strychnine, he said if anyone asked me what I wanted with it, to tell them it was to kill wolves and dogs, and that is what I told Mr. Cotton when I got it. Afterward, I met Mr. Roe in front of the opera house gate, when he asked me if I got it. I told him yes, and handed it to him. He said, “if anyone asks you what you did with this bottle, tell them you put it in your overcoat pocket in the Tavis restaurant.” The last time I saw Mr. Roe he was crossing the street in the direction of his home, some four or five minutes afterward. About one hour after Mr. Roe left me, Ann Denny came by the restaurant and said that Mrs. Roe was dead, this being the first knowledge I had of the fact. I immediately went down to Roe’s house, and, after running some errands, Mr. Roe told me not to leave, that he might want me to attend to some other matters; he also remarked, “Don’t tell anyone that you gave that bottle of strychnine to me.” I asked him why, and what did he do with it? He made no other statement to me at that time about what he did with the strychnine.

I did not see Mr. Roe anymore until next morning, about 9 o’clock. I was told that Mr. Roe wanted to see me, and I went to the place designated and Mr. Roe came to where I was. After some conversation, he told me to stick to what I had said relative to the matter. I told him I did not want to go to jail. He said, “I am going to stick to what I have said. If I have to go to jail, you had better do the same.” He told me that he was at my house the night previous, but I was not there. I stayed elsewhere that night. I asked him what he wanted, and he said he wanted me to go out in the country. He did not say what for.”TO BE CONTINUED TOMORROW

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 42-B, Oct 20

CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY.....

On cross examination, witness testified about same as the above. Ann Deary, the second witness for the State, testified that she was at the house when Mrs. Roe died, Mr. Roe having previously engaged her to go down, and said when she got there, Mrs. Roe expressed gratification at seeing her. Then about that time the defendant took two little papers out of his pocket, and gave one to the deceased and put the other on the mantle. She heard the defendant tell the deceased that the medicine was quinine. She took the powder given her, poured it in a spoon and put some coffee on it. It looked exactly like salts, and not like quinine. She tried to dissolve it with her little finger after pouring the coffee on it, and remarked, “Papa, it is very singular quinine. Where did you get it?” He said at Mr. ____’s drug store. After taking the medicine she swallowed about two tablespoons full of coffee, ate a little and got up and took her little baby in her arms and went into her room. Defendant followed.

The next I heard she asked him where he was going. He said that he was going to town, that he was on the jury. She said, “Papa, please don’t go, I feel so bad.” She told him to throw some camphor in her face. Mr. Roe called me

in and asked what was the matter with her. I told him I did not know. This was not a half hour after taking the medicine.

Witness was then handed a bottle of strychnine and asked if there was any resemblance between the contents of the bottle and the medicine, she saw Mrs. Roe take. She said it was just like what Mrs. Roe took. From the time she took the medicine to the time she died could not have exceeded one hour. She took no other medicine that I saw.

CROSS EXAMINED. I could not swear it was the same kind of stuff Mrs. Roe took, but it looks just like this in the bottle. Witness was shown by the defense a vial of quinine which she recognized as quinine. She was then shown a bottle of morphine but could not tell whether it was quinine or not, but stated it looked like quinine. She was then shown a vial of salts and recognized it as salts. Dr. Prince, the third witness for the State testified to having made an autopsy together with Dr. Oliphant in the presence of the sheriff and other witnesses. The examination will be continued, Prof. Everhart, state chemist, of Austin, who analyzed the stomach, is here and will testify regarding the contents found therein.

⊛Fort Worth Daily Gazette

April 8, 1888, TO HANG TILL DEAD. W. H. Roe, Sentenced at Anderson Grimes County, to be Hanged for the Murder of His Wife. (Headlines only)

⊛Fort Worth Daily Gazette

May 24, 1888, A BIG CROWD EXPECTED. The execution of William H Roe for the murder of his wife by poisoning will take place publicly at Anderson next Saturday May 26. The scaffold is in course of erection and is located half a mile south of the town. The Roe case was one of the most remarkable as well as heinous ever tried in the criminal courts of Southeast Texas, and for this reason as well as for the large acquaintances of the condemned it is estimated that over 10000 spectators will be present. Roe has been converted and baptized in the Christian faith but still declares his innocence although it is said by those in position to know that he has prepared a written confession to be read after his execution in which he acknowledges his guilt and implicates several prominent and influential parties.

⊛Wilkes-Barre Times

May 29, 1888, Navasota, Tex., had a spectacular hanging affair. Ten thousand people assembled to see it. The victim was W. H. Roe. The drop was seven feet and death was instantaneous. (2022 MCHC Note: FindAgrave shows he was a former prison guard, deputy sheriff, and city marshal.)

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 43, Oct 21

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➤Dallas Daily Herald

April 13, 1883, From the State Capitol. The bill diminishing the jurisdiction of the county court of Madison County passed.

➤Austin American Statesman

November 16, 1887, Murder in Madison. News reached the city this evening of the foul and atrocious murder of Jacob Zobel, an old and highly respected German citizen of Madison County, who lives about forty miles in the interior. Saturday night he was called to his door by an unknown party. While standing in the threshold he was shot and mangled with buckshot. The murder is supposed to have been caused by evidence given by Zobel before the Madison County grand jury. The murderer is still at large.

➤Austin American Statesman

January 5, 1888, BLOODY WORK. A Madison County Mob Lynching Objectionable Characters. Reliable news reaches here from Madison County, thirty miles west of here, that a mob of 200 or 300 men went to the town of Madisonville yesterday and shot down one Will Bobo on the public square, in presence of the sheriff. The mob went from there to the house of one Red Page and took him out and hanged him; also shot Alf. Whiting, it is supposed, fatally, and killed one other party, name unknown. The county has been in a state of terror for years by a band of horse and cattle thieves committing depredations, and recently two witnesses against certain parties were foully murdered. The lives of others were threatened, and the people became almost afraid to be seen out. To offset this the best citizens of the county organized themselves into a mob to clean out the set. It is stated they were not half through their work. The governor has been appealed to for troops. The parties composing the mob were unmasked.

⊕Corpus Christi Weekly Caller

January 14, 1888, The Madison County Trouble. A bad state of affairs is reported from Madison County, Texas. Several bad characters had been committing numerous crimes and when they were reported to the grand jury the thieves would invariably get the witness put out of the way. Some of the best citizens were found murdered by the roadside because they were brave enough to report the scoundrels. On the 3rd day the good people could stand it no longer. They held a meeting 200 strong, and determined to take the law in their own hands. Armed with Winchesters and shot guns, they marched to Madisonville where they found William Bobo, a man of desperate character and the one who has furnished the backbone to most all the lawless element and who has frequently indulged in threats against good citizens of the county, and killed them on the streets, in open daylight, in the presence of the public. From here they went to Whitten's and made war upon him. He was on horseback and made for the bushes. They fired some twenty shots at him and it is believed wounded him, but nothing definite has been learned. Whitten was regarded as a leader of the lawless. They then went to the home of Redden S. Page and carried him to a tree in the woods nearby and hung him. Page was a notorious sneak thief and shrewd scoundrel. Newton J. Williams of the east, Clay Roberts of the west, Joice Wooley of the north, and J. L. Conner of the south part of the county, all first-class men, were the leaders in this crowd.

➤Ft. Worth Gazette

November 23, 1895, The Father Interfered and Was Shot and Killed. Further particulars of the Madison County lynching are to the effect that the father of the man wanted, interfered with the mob and was shot and killed, his son escaping in the melee.

➤The Houston Post

July 25, 1901, MURDER DOUBLE TRAGEDY WAS ENACTED IN MADISON COUNTY. W. C. Simonton Shot Down Mrs. Grantham and Then Blew Out His Own Brains. Madisonville. W. C. Simonton a well to do citizen residing at Connor, and Mrs. Grantham, a widow, residing near Simonton were shot and killed in the house of Mrs. Grantham with a pistol at 7 o'clock this morning. Screaming and pistol shots were heard and the neighbors ran in and found the parties lying near each other dying with a pistol lying between them. The woman was shot in the breast and the man in the head.

The decision of Justice Sharp was that the parties came by their death at the hands of W. C. Simonton. The cause of the tragedy is shrouded in mystery.

July 24, News has just been received here by long distance phone of a horrible tragedy early this morning at Connor seven miles from Madisonville. The particulars learned were as follows: Simonton had been somewhat unbalanced for a couple of days and had been out in the woods and had eaten nothing nor drank any water. Soon this morning he came home and after eating a lunch told his wife he was going to leave her and took his pistol and left. He went directly to the home of Mrs. Grantham and shot her dead, and then killed himself by placing the

pistol against the back of his head and firing. In his pockets were found a bottle of whisky and a bottle of morphine.

Mrs. Grantham was a widow and leaves one child. They were tenants on Simonton's place. Simonton was a man advance in years, leaves an invalid and several children. He was the father of Eugene Simonton, who was killed by Seth Duncan in Madisonville last year, who also killed one other man and wounded another at the same time, an account which appeared in The Post at the time. Mrs. Grantham was raised in this county and both parties have many friends here, who deeply regret the tragedy.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 44, Oct 22

►►The Eagle

June 12, 1912, MASON RAILEY KILLED. J. S. Williams of Madison County, Brother-in-Law, Charged with the Shooting. Mason Railey, a white man about thirty-five years old, living on what is known as the Eugene Zuber place near College Station, was shot and killed here about 3 o'clock this afternoon. The shooting occurred in the store or B. Kaczer & Co. on Main Street, and that thoroughfare being crowded at the time, it naturally created great excitement. The store was closed at once to keep out the crowd, and it was extremely difficult to get the facts of the shooting, or any of the causes leading up to it. Williams and Railey were brothers-in-law, and it is said that family trouble was at the bottom of it. Williams lives near Cross, in Madison County, and is said to have come over from there today.

Just where the parties met this afternoon, or what transpired between them, could not be learned. The first seen of them Railey came in at the front door of the Kaczer & Co. store and ran toward the back with Williams pursuing him. The shooting took place in the rear of the building about the foot of the stairs and two shots were fired, one of which at least took effect in Railey's head. He fell right at the foot of the stairs and death ensued at once. After the shooting Williams is said to have gone out the rear door and onto the courthouse, there he surrendered to Constable C. L. Baker and turned over to him his Colt's forty-five pistol. Williams positively refused to make any statement. An inquest was being held by the officers when The Eagle went to press, and Williams will also be given an examining trial this afternoon, if possible.

⊛September 14, 1912, DISTRICT COURT. The grand jury returned a true bill for murder in the second degree against J. S. Williams, charging him with the killing of Mason Railey. Judge Scott set the bond at \$2500. Williams made bond.

⊛October 8, 1912, DISTRICT COURT. J. S. Williams Acquitted of the Murder of Mason Railey in This City. The case of the State of Texas against J. S. Williams of Cross, charged with killing Mason Railey in this city last spring, was concluded in the district court this morning, the jury returning a verdict of "not guilty."

Williams and Railey were brothers-in-law, Railey's wife being a sister of Williams. Reports of cruel treatment on the part of Railey towards his wife reached Williams, and when they met here the killing took place. Railey lived on the E. H. Suber place near the college.

The case went to trial last Thursday and every inch of the ground was closely contested by both sides, the defendant being represented by Judge V. B. Hudson and the state by District Attorney Davis and the firm of Doremus, Butler & Henderson. There were a large number of witnesses and others interested in the case present from both Grimes and Madison counties. They returned to their homes today.

►►The Eagle

August 5, 1913, CHARGED WITH THEFT. Fred Law, of Madison County, has been arrested by Sheriff J. D. Conlee, and brought to Bryan, charged with theft. It is alleged that several weeks ago he took a belt worth about \$200.00 from the Eden Gin. Sheriff Conlee recovered the belt, and it has been returned to its owners. Bond was fixed at

\$1,000, which was given, and Mr. Law released. The examining trial will be held before Judge L. D. McGee next Thursday.

⊛August 8, 1913, The examining trial of Fred Law of Madison County, who is charged with the theft of a big drive belt from the Eden Gin Co. of this city, valued at more than \$50, consumed the entire day in Justice McGee's court yesterday. Quite a number of the friends of Mr. Law were here from Madison County, and several witnesses were examined. After hearing the testimony Judge McGee bound Mr. Law over to await the action of the grand jury in the sum of \$1000, which he readily gave and was released.

⊛September 26, 1913, This morning the Fred Law felony case was called and both sides being ready a jury was empaneled the taking of testimony begun. The case may occupy the court the court for the remainder of the week.

⊛September 27, 1913, The Fred Law felony case consumed the time of the court this morning, the case going to the jury about 1 o'clock. The Jury was out only a short time when they returned a verdict of "not guilty." Judge Scott then recessed court until Monday morning.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 45, Oct 23

►►Brownsville Herald

November 2, 1933, A CHECK WRITTEN BY JOB HUNTER. Money Withdrawn Before Payment Made; Man Later Fired.

T. Ferguson of Madisonville, formerly county judge of Madison County, who said he had been a political manager for James E. Ferguson (Governor) in that section for 20 years, came before a legislative committee today to tell what he knew about, the "selling state jobs."

Ferguson, who replied "I hope not," when asked if he was related to the former governor and husband of the incumbent chief executive, revealed that he had given a check for \$100 with expectation of obtaining employment, but later took his money out of the bank before the check was presented.

TALKED WITH "JIM". T. Ferguson told about talking over the telephone with James E. Ferguson to complain after he had been discharged from employment with the Texas Live Stock Sanitary commission and of accepting an invitation from James E. Ferguson to come to Austin "thrash it out." T. Ferguson said he went to Fort Worth, headquarters of the Live Stock Sanitary commission to see about getting a job. He said he wrote out an application and placed it in a drawer.

"Someone told me that I'd probably get it sooner if I could contribute \$100, so I wrote a check, folded it up with the application," Ferguson testified. "Later, I got to thinking about it and decided the job would not be worth \$100, so I went down to the bank and took out what I had on deposit. I do not whether that check ever was presented for payment."

REMOVED FROM JOB. Ferguson said he finally was put on as a county tick inspector.

"I was employed on the 13th the month," he testified. "On the 16th I received a letter from Leo Callan of the commission which complimented me about the fine work I was doing. On the 17th I received a telegram telling me to do nothing. A day or two later I received a letter discharging me. They paid me for seven, eight, or ten days of work. "I called Jim Ferguson on the telephone and asked him 'What's wrong with those fellows up at Fort Worth, are they crazy, crooked, or what?'

"Jim told me they all would down here on the following Monday and for me to come on and we'd 'thresh it out. I came down and went to the governor's office. I couldn't see Jim right away. While waiting there I saw members of the livestock commission come from the governor's office. I could not get to see Jim until late that afternoon. He was pretty busy. I went in and he me he did not have anything to do with it. I turned around and walked out, I would not talk with "I went down to the hotel and saw some of the livestock sanitary commissioners. I gave them a piece of my mind and told them how low down it was." MCHC NOTE: In 1934 Texas made it a felony to sell State jobs.

►►Houston Post

Mar 25, 1920, CONVICT TRUSTY PREVENTS ESCAPE OF 125 PRISONERS. Holds Ferry After Horse Is Shot From Under Him. MADISONVILLE. A convict "trusty," for the present unidentified, is the hero of the hour at the Ferguson convict farm near here. By quick wit and loyalty to the confidence imposed in him by the prison authorities, he prevented the escape of something like 125 convict workers on the State farm. In doing so, a horse which he had hastily "borrowed" for the occasion was killed, and he is reported to have suffered a minor bullet wound.

The story of how the convicts at the Ferguson farm sought to gain freedom is just beginning to seep through the barriers of official antipathy to publicity. From what can be learned here, Bill Price, one of the guards at the State farm, 16 miles southwest of Madisonville, got down off his horse to help in repairing a broken plow for one of the convict gangs. While he was employed in this fashion one of the members of his squad seized him from behind while another drew his revolver from its holster.

Forced to Remount. Price then was forced at the point of the gun to remount his horse. The convict who, had seized him got up behind and with the revolver compelled the guard to drive in the direction of another squad under control of Prison Guard Mayes. Using Price as a shield, the convict with the pistol overpowered Mayes and members of his gang, seized his rifle and pistol. Price's squad had followed along behind the horse and the two squads, 40-odd men, thus released and supplied with firearms, two shotguns and two pistols, began to make their way toward the ferry over the Trinity River, taking the two guards with them.

Convict Trusty Halts Move. Meanwhile, a trusty convict whose duty it was to oversee the pastures and care for the horses, got information of the movement. He mounted one of the horses and rushed to the ferry. There he warned the ferrymen and, arming himself with a rifle, made war on the approaching mob of escapers. His horse is reported to have been shot from under him and he himself wounded, but he held his ground and kept the men from taking the ferry.

Balked at getting across the river on the ferry, the two squads of convicts scattered. Some went back to release other gangs, until 125 in all were free of the guards. The scattering prisoners cut the telephone wires, but not before word had gone out of the attempted escape. Sheriff Longbotham and a posse of citizens from Madisonville hurried to the farm. They report that by 2 o'clock Wednesday morning all but two of the escapees had been rounded up and returned to the camps.

►►Corsicana Daily Sun

July 27, 1926, POSSES OF OFFICERS ON TRAIL OF EIGHT DESPERATE FUGITIVES IN PRISON ESCAPE.

Posses of officers, heavily armed and expecting battle, continued on the trail Friday of eight desperate fugitives who participated Wednesday night in the Ferguson Farm prison break, during which Will Rader, aged 50, a picket guard, was slain. Two of the men sought stormed the prison farm cell house where prisoners were confined, killed Rader released six prisoners and all escaped in a speeding automobile while exchanging shots with other guards. Authorities centered their efforts on an endeavor to pick up the trail lost after the car had been traced to a ferry crossing on Trinity River, between Midway and Crockett, a few miles from the prison farm.

Pursuing officers describe those sought as men of the most desperate type. Five of the six freed, according to Warden Speer of the Huntsville penitentiary were sentenced to long terms for major crimes. The sixth, Richard Naylor, a youth of 17, was serving a two-year term for theft.

The prisoners liberated, their crimes and sentences were: George Dixon, theft and burglary, 34 years; Charlie Pryor, murder, 30 years; E. H. Holland, highway robbery and intent to murder, 25 years; Robert Barnard, burglary, 34 years, and Ireland Alvin, bank robber, 20 years.

Warden Speer also said the liberators of the prisoners are escaped convicts. Guards of the prison farm, he said, identified them as being Harve Ennis and Charles Frazier, both of whom escaped recently from the Ferguson farm.

►►Corsicana Semi-Weekly

June 14, 1927, Three Men Reported Have Been Captured. Three of thirty-five convicts who escaped from the Ferguson state prison farm at Madisonville during the night were recaptured early today, it was said at the state prison here this morning. The convicts were being trailed by dogs, the prison authorities reported. They said they anticipated little difficulty in recapturing the remainder who were believed to be in the vicinity of the heavily wooded Trinity River bottoms where recent heavy rains it was believed, would slow down their progress.

The report of the prison break to the authorities at the penitentiary here said that 153 men were housed in the wooden building. The guard who discovered their attempt to get away came upon the men as they were leaving through a hole which prison officials understood they had sawed in the floor.

The amazed guard came upon the men as they were leaving one by one and immediately covered the remainder with his weapon. They docilely submitted, according to this report. Other guards were aroused and five packs of dogs were placed on the trail of the men who were by this time making for the nearby woods. In accordance with custom, citizens turned out to assist in the search for the absentees and about forty of them, the prison authorities said, took up the trail.

At the prison here it was said that this is the first major prison escape accomplished at the farm.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 47, Oct 25

►►Ft Worth Star Telegram

August 14, 1923, H. & T. C. AGENT SHOT AT NORTH ZULCH BRYAN Aug 14 —A. Garland H. & T. C. agent at North Zulch, was shot at 7 o'clock Saturday night through the stomach and lived 55 minutes according to reports reaching here. A. L. Lipscomb, cashier of the County State Bank, was arrested in connection with the killing. The dispute is said to have originated over whether the railway company should supply water to a gin owned by Lipscomb. Burial is scheduled at North Zulch Wednesday.

►►Normangee Star

August 21, 1923, TRAGEDY AT NORTH ZULCH. A most deplorable affair occurred at North Zulch late Saturday afternoon. A Garland, agent for the H. & T. C. Railway, was shot in the stomach with a pistol, the ball passing nearly through the body. He died a few hours later in great agony. He was buried Monday afternoon in the Willowhole Cemetery amid the largest funeral assemblage ever gathered in that part of the country. Mr. Garland had been a resident of that place for a number of years and was highly thought of as a citizen. He leaves wife and several children. Rev. J. R. G. Darby, Baptist pastor at Madisonville, conducted the funeral services, Mr. Garland having been an active member of that denomination. On Monday was held in Madisonville, before Justice of the Peace Bullard, the examining trial of A. L. Lipscomb, charged with the killing. Bond was set at \$5000, which given. Mr. Lipscomb has been a resident of that town for many years, engaged in the banking business there. To us who live at this short distance from the scene of trouble, acquainted with both men, knowing them to be good, quiet, law-abiding citizens, it is hard to understand what kind of a spirit could have brought about the awful tragedy. It seems, from reports that have been received, that the immediate cause is connected with a dispute over water. The Central reservoir is the source from which North Zulch obtains its water supply. Lipscomb is financially interested in the cotton gin which gets its water from the Central reservoir. It seems that there was some question of this supply being cut off. The two men were at one of the garages when the shooting occurred.

►►Ft Worth Star Telegram

December 20, 1924, NORTH ZULCH CASHIER IS FREED IN SLAYING—A L Lipscomb cashier of the North Zulch Bank, near here, yesterday was acquitted of a charge of murder In connection with slaying of A. Garland railroad agent, at North Zulch, Aug 11 1923.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 48, Oct 26

►►The Eagle

October 30, 1908, TOO MUCH CHLOROFORM. Bédias, Texas. The wife of Dr. J. E. Smith of Cotton just east of this place, died Sunday from chloroform poisoning. It appears she was subject to nervous headaches and frequently used chloroform. Sunday she placed the drug on a cloth and placed it over her face and died from its effects. Dr. Smith was called away in the early morning and returned about 12 o'clock and found her dead. Some small children were all the persons about the place and they thought her asleep. This was Dr. Smith's fourth wife, all of whom are dead. He is 42 years old and a physician of prominence. Deceased was a sister to R. B. Tuck of this place and Mr. A. Tuck of Cotton, and had one sister, Mrs. K. Bullard of Madison County. She was 32 years old and the mother of one child.

MCHC Notes:

Ida E Tuck was born September 13, 1880 and died August 8, 1905. She married Dr. Jeremiah E Smith on June 7, 1903. Ida is buried in Willowhole Cemetery. Ida's sister, Lucy E. Tuck (the subject of this article) was born December 10, 1874 and married Dr. Jeremiah E. Smith on December 20, 1905, just four months after Ida's death. He was born December 4, 1861 in Angelina County, Tx. He died October 4, 1926 and is buried in Bédias Baptist Cemetery. Lucy was born December 10, 1874 and died October 25, 1908. She is buried in Bédias Baptist Cemetery.

Dr. J. E. Smith also married:

- Nannie Nobles Blunt (1874-1902) on May 22, 1898, in Montgomery County, TX
- Tarrie Elizabeth Simpson (1861-1935) in November 1909, in Grimes County, TX

►►Galveston Daily News

August 21, 1887. ANOTHER LOSS. Mr. Shult, a merchant doing business at Willowhole, Madison County, Texas, twenty-three miles northeast of Bryan, lost his storehouse and entire stock of goods by burning this morning at 2 o'clock. He has been doing business at that place about twenty-one years, most of which time he carried a heavy insurance. At the time of the burning, he had not a dollar insured. There was nothing at all saved. The total loss was about \$9,500.

►►The Times-Picayune

May 4, 1861, Mr. Ochiltree, of Texas, today offered a memorial from the citizens of Texas on the necessity of establishing an armory in Madison County, in Texas. The memorial, without being read, was referred to the Military Committee.

►►Madisonville Meteor

July 25, 1929, Public health officials agree that many serious diseases may be contracted by licking stamps. As we realized long ago the best thing to do is to lick a finger and rub it across the back of the stamp. The glue that remains on the finger may then be licked off.

►►Madisonville Meteor

May 10, 1928, Marvin Hall Injured. Mr. Marvin Hall was seriously hurt last Friday afternoon while trying to kill a snake that had run up a tree. Mr. Hall climbed up to kill the snake and the limb broke on which he was standing and he fell to the ground, breaking his right arm in two places and bruising his breast and cutting a bad gash in his jaw. He was not resting well at last report but his hurt is not thought to be dangerous.

TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 49, Oct 27

►►Ft Worth Daily Gazette

February 18, 1888, MURDERED IN TEXAS. To Prevent an Appearance as Witness. Peter Preacher in Jail for Killing His Brother-in-Law. The Wife of the Prisoner Dies by Her Own Hand in the Presence of Her Five Children. Montgomery, Ala.

The real facts concerning the terrible murder of F M Gafford a former Alabamian, in Madison County, Texas, a few weeks ago, have been brought to light and the result is profound sensation in this state. What make the affair more shocking and sensational is the fact that Peter Peacher, formerly of Montgomery, and a member of one of the best families in the city, and a brother-in-law of Gafford, is charged with the murder, and is now in jail.

Mrs. Gafford, widow of the murdered man, returned to Alabama a few days ago, and was visited today at Sandy Ridge, Lowndes County by a representative of the Advertiser, who obtained an interview with her and got the bottom facts concerning the tragedy. Gafford left Sandy Ridge for Texas in October 1882 About the same time Peter Peacher, who had married Gafford's sister, also moved to Texas, both locating near Madisonville, Madison County. In 1886 Gafford moved with his family to Williamson County, Texas. Meanwhile true bills had been found against Peacher and a man named Alf Whitten in Madison County, charging them with cattle stealing. Gafford received a summons to appear in a criminal court against Peacher and Whitten, it being known that he knew something about the crimes. In the spring of last year Gifford received a letter warning him that he must not attend the trial as a witness against Peacher and that he had better come to Alabama and get out of the state. Gafford returned to this state, leaving his family in Texas, and located at Birmingham. He obtained work on the coke ovens at Pratt mines and remained there several months.

Late in the summer, however, he returned to his former home and family in Texas thinking that the excitement had blown over. In this he was fatally mistaken. In October last he received a second summons to appear as a witness in the cattle stealing cases, to be tried at the November term of the Madisonville court. He left his home at Corn Hill, Williamson County on November 3, going horseback through the country to Madisonville, a distance of over 100 miles. He reached Madisonville safely but the cattle stealing cases were postponed for a week, and he left the town about night to go to the home of a friend four or five miles distant. He was never again seen alive. After he had been missing several weeks his wife wrote to the sheriff at Madisonville making inquiries about her husband, and he could give her no information.

On the 1st of December last, a man named Wells reported at Madisonville that he had found the body of a dead man buried in the sand about two miles from the town. Wells was riding through the woods hunting and was attracted to the dead body by his dog. The Sheriff and citizens investigated and the body was identified by the clothing as that of Gafford, the missing man. The top of his head had been blown off with a Winchester rifle. The next day the Sheriff having received from Mrs. Gafford the letter from Peacher to her husband warning him not to attend the trial, arrested Peacher and his associate, Whitten on suspicion. The prisoners were given a preliminary trial and Whitten was discharged, but the proof against Peacher was so strong that he was placed in prison, his bond being fixed at \$2500. Mrs. Peacher, wife of the prisoner and sister to the murdered man remained with her husband throughout the preliminary trial which lasted ten days. After her husband was found guilty and put in jail, she returned to their home fifty miles distant and was found dead in her house the next morning. She died very suddenly and alone with her five little children, and the general supposition was that she committed suicide.

Peter Peacher, the prisoner who is charged with the brutal murder of his wife's brother, is a son of Mr. J A Peacher of this city. He has two brothers here and two in Decatur Ala all good men and useful citizens. It seems that when Peacher went to Texas he lost his property and started on the down grade to the dogs and the devil. In Alabama he had borne a good character and went in the best society. The lady whom he married, and who died in grief over the murder of her brother and the fall of her husband, belonged to one of the first families in Alabama. One of the gang of cattle thieves and robber of which Peacher was a member was shot down in the streets of Madisonville by the outraged and indignant citizens. Threats of lynching induced the authorities to slip Peacher off, and he was placed in jail at Anderson in an adjoining county for safe keeping, where he will remain till the final trial. His father Mr. J A Peacher of Montgomery is now in Texas caring for Peacher's motherless children.

MCHC Notes:

The July 25, 1888, Greenville Advocate newspaper states "At a recent term of the Circuit Court at Madisonville, the case against Mr. Peacher was thrown out of court due to lack of evidence. Mr. Peacher was allowed to go, a free and happy exonerated man. The five little children then all moved to Alabama with their father.

Mrs. Peter Peacher was Martha Annie Gafford, born about 1857 in Alabama. She married Peter H Peacher on March 5, 1874 in Alabama. She died by her own hand in December 1887 in Madison County, TX. Her brother, Frances Marion Gafford (the murdered man in this article) was born in 1858 in Alabama and died about November 7, 1887 in Madison County, TX. At the time of her death, all five of children were under the age of 11.

If you are interested in reading more about this tragedy, there is another newspaper clipping in this post that was not transcribed.

CONCLUSION TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 1 of 3, Oct 28

♥The Eagle,

January 13, 1909, SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF. Time was when Madison County, adjoining Brazos on the northeast, had an unsavory reputation, whether deserved or not. but that is ancient history now. There has been little immigration and external conditions have changed less than in almost any part of Texas, but the moral development has been extraordinary and the county is perhaps as close up to the Arcadian standard as can be found anywhere in America. While unwilling to concede the Meteor's claim that Madison County is the one and only civilized spot in the Lone Star State, The Eagle is glad to echo this outburst of enthusiasm: The "booze fighter and fool killer" is a thing of the past In Madison County. The quietest Christmas ever known in the county. Everybody seemed to have a good time. There wasn't an arrest made in Madison County, the first time in the history of the county. Where is there another county in the state that can say as much? Hurrah for old Madison County! We are proud of her citizenship. Who wouldn't be? This proves what we have often said--Madison County has the best people on earth. If you want to be happy and prosper, come to Madison County, the civilized spot of the Lone Star State.

♥Madisonville Meteor

January 17, 1929, An Interesting Letter From a Former Citizen of Our County.

Every new enterprise that comes to the town; I share in your interest because it is building my hometown. I appreciate it. I am glad that you all are not neglecting the educational advantages that are within your grasp, by building a modern and up-to-date high school. In course of time, you people will be amply repaid for your labors; when you can say, that I had a part in the program that has made Madison County what it is. Well do you and I

remember, when there was not a graded road, a decent school house, a well-kept cemetery, and but a few church houses within the borders of the County. Madison County has many resources that many other counties do not have. I hope in the near future the citizenship of the county will be perfectly satisfied to live where they are and build good homes and a fellowship that they will be proud of.

-----Your friend, Pete Norwood.

♥The Madisonville Meteor (excerpt)

July 25, 1929, We have frequently asserted that Madison County is the greatest county in Texas. This assertion was brought forth from the writer of this article because of a Grand Jury report in one of our East Texas Counties last week. In this particular county returned 111 felony bills. We know that there are a lot of good people there too because we lived there for some time and we never met a more loyal law-abiding people on earth, but undoubtedly, they have a class of population in that section that we did not meet while we were so journeying in their midst.

If a Grand Jury in Madison County should find that many bills at one setting, we would not know what to think or if they should find one-third that many, we would feel like we were disgraced.

CONCLUSION TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 2 of 3 Oct 29

♥The Madisonville Meteor (excerpt)

October 3, 1929, Former Madisonville Citizen Writes What He Saw Here During Fair Visit After Several Years' Absence.

After eight years we have had the pleasure of a visit to our old hometown of Madisonville. We were impressed with the marvelous changes as we approached from Huntsville over a splendid concrete highway. We recalled another time when we made the same drive. The shadows of night were gathering around us, the road a veritable sea of water and mud. Doubts and fears possessed us, water and mud distressed us, and look where we would, there was not place good, for that was Bedias bottom.

Substantial residences have replaced the shacks, and small cottages and vacant lots and blocks are now adorned with palatial homes of beauty and modern conveniences. A splendid system of good water sufficient to supply a city of ten times the present population and a company of husky determined firefighters has replaced the old bucket brigade. The courthouse square which used to be so muddy or dusty is now paved and marked for modern traffic. The town branch which used to be so crooked and dangerous has been straightened and deepened, now a concrete bridge makes it safe for the little kiddies going to and from school.

A modern high school building, which is a credit to the citizenship and an asset to the town has just been completed and the landscaping around it has converted an ugly pond of filthy stagnant water into a place of beauty. Where once cattle and horses ranged at will and annoyed the housewife who tried to make her home attractive, the dilapidated old fences have been removed and beautiful well-kept lawns with flowers add to the beauty.

A graded highway through the county east and west, soon to be concreted has revolutionized travel across Caney creek bottom. What used to be a nightmare to those who must cross when the road was wet has been changed to a thrill of pleasure as one speeds along this splendid road.

But the greatest change which eight years have wrought is in the people themselves. Through the vicissitude of the passing years and amidst the changes in our country, town and people one thing has reminded constant, unchanged by the passage of time. The unalloyed friendship of the people to their eternal credit be it said that the same cordial greetings, the warm handclasp, the same solitude for our well-being, the glad welcome to their hearts and homes were so genuine and enduring mountains of granite. In conclusion, I will say it is not the Madisonville of 1920 but a wide-awake little city which is keeping step with the progressive march of this progressive age. ----Doctor H. A. Berry

CONCLUSION TRIALS AND TEARS, PART 3 of 3 Oct 30

♥IT'S ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA TO TELL THE GOOD♥

♥The Madisonville Meteor

Sept. 6, 1928

We heard a Madisonville citizen say the other day to another man: "Madison County is the biggest little county in the State." Superb!

Let's say it again. "Madison County is the biggest little county in the State." Good. Magnificent! So good that we all should memorize it and use it as an affirmation every morning after sunrise. The beauty of it all, in that it is truthful. Truth and love are the two most powerful forces in existence. And since it is powerful forces that are needed in this day and time, we are glad to run across some fragments of it like this citizen put out into the ethereal waves build for a greater and better Madison County.

The citizen went on to say or rather told about the cattle raising industry as a secondary agricultural pursuit to the cotton growing industry. Telling things like that helps. HELPS! It builds and sustains on a solid foundation of rock. It last eternally and keeps on building forever. It is always a good idea to tell the good. The good builds and lasts unto all eternity.

MADISON COUNTY SHERIFFS and COUNTY JUDGES ARE LISTED BELOW

James Clark	Elected 4 April 1853 and served until 7 August 1854
D. C. Lewis	Elected 7 August 1854 and served until 4 August 1856
George S. Harrison	Elected August 4, 1856, and served until 2 August 1858
C. W. Crabb	Elected 2 August 1858 and served until 6 August 1860
G. C. Blackburn	Elected 6 August 1860 and served until 4 August 1862
A. Whitten	Elected 4 August 1862 and served until 1 August 1864
S. R. Folsom	Elected 1 August 1864 and served until 19 September 1865
S. T. Allphin	Appointed 19 September 1865 by Governor A. J. Hamilton and served until June 1866 when he resigned
J. W. McKinzie	Elected 25 June 1866 and served until sometime early in 1869 but exact date not known

A. Whitten	Apparently appointed in early 1869 but only his name is in the State Election Register with no dates given. Second time to serve as Sheriff.
George Neely	Appointed 31 March 1869 by General Canby's Special Order #75 but was disqualified. May have served until July 1869.
G. W. Dean	Appointed 6 July 1869 by General J. J. Reynold's Special Order #158 but failed to qualify. He may have served until October 1869.
Elisha Chambers	Appointed 8 October 1869 by General J. J. Reynold's Special Order #238 and served until December 1869
J. W. Neighbors	Elected 3 December 1869; re-elected 2 January 1871 and served until February 1871
Thomas Keese	Appointed 2 February 1871 and served until 12 September 1871
H. M. Crabb	Appointed 12 September 1871 but "commissioned by mistake"
James F. Whitney	Appointed 12 September 1871 and served until 11 November 1871
H. M. Crabb	Appointed 11 November 1871 and served until 8 November 1872
M. W. Burney	Elected 8 November 1872 and served until 15 February (November?) 1876
Austin McGary	Elected 15 November 1876 and served until 5 November 1878
E. B. Seay	Elected 5 November 1878; re-elected 2 November 1880 and served until 7 November 1882
F. M. Black	Elected 7 November 1882; re-elected 4 November 1884, 2 November 1886, 6 November 1888, 4 November 1890, 8 November 1892, 6 November 1894, 3 November 1896, 8 November 1898 and served until 6 November 1900

W A. Berry	Elected 6 November 1900; re-elected 4 November 1902 and served until 8 November 1904
John T. Payne	Elected 8 November 1904 and served until 6 November 1906
J. B. Hamilton	Elected 6 November 1906 and served until 3 November 1908
John T. Payne	Elected second time 3 November 1908; re-elected 8 November 1910 and served until December 1910 when he resigned
J. A. Sowell, Jr.	Appointed 12 December 1910 and served until 10 September 1912
R. R. Batson	Appointed 10 September 1912; elected 5 November 1912 and served until August 1915
J. T. Longbotham	Appointed 23 August 1913; elected 3 November 1914, 7 November 1916, 5 November 1918, 2 November 1920 and served until 1 January 1923
W. V. Jones	Elected 7 November 1922; re-elected 4 November 1924 and served until 1 January 1927
Joe R. Gibson	Elected 2 November 1926; re-elected 6 November 1928, 4 November 1930, 8 November 1932 and served until 1 January 1935
Joe A. Batson	Elected 6 November 1934; re-elected 3 November 1936 and served until February 1938
Morris Seay	Appointed 21 February 1938 and served until 1 January 1939
B. H. Morgan	Elected 8 November 1938; re-elected 5 November 1940 and served until 1 January 1943
Rodney F. Chambless	Elected 3 November 1942; re-elected 7 November 1944 and served until 1 January 1947
Ben F. Waldrip	Elected 5 November 1946; re-elected 2 November 1948 and served until 1 January 1951

R. G. Kyles	Elected 7 November 1950 and served until 1 January 1953
Grady Lindsey	Elected 4 November 1952; re-elected 2 November 1954 and served until 1 January 1957
Travis S. Connor	Elected 6 November 1956; re-elected 8 November 1960 and served until November 1961 when he resigned
Floyd Adams, Jr.	Appointed 22 November 1961; elected 6 November 1962 and served until 1 January 1965
J. T. Park	Elected 3 November 1964 and served until 15 May 1968 when he resigned
Ed Fannin	Appointed 15 May 1968; elected 5 November 1968 and served until 1 January 1973
Richard Grall	Elected 7 November 1972 and served until 11 October 1976 when he resigned
Ed Fannin	Appointed October 1976; elected 2 November 1976, re-elected 4 November 1980, 6 November 1984 and served until 1 January 1989
Travis E. Neeley	Elected 8 November 1988 and served until 1 January 1997
Daniel W. Douget	Elected 4 November 1996; resigned due to health January 2011
Travis E. Neeley	Appointed 2011; Elected 6 November 2012 and served until January 1, 2021
Bobby Adams	Elected 3 Nov 2020

MADISON COUNTY JUDGES

W. C. Gibbs	1/12/1878-12/1/1878
T. A. McDonald	Dec. 1878-2/13/1883
G. S. Yarbrough	2/13/1883-12/31/1886

E. L. Byers	1/1/1887-12/31/1888
J. C. Morris	1/1/1889-11/30/1894
Boon Anderson	12/1/1894-12/31/1896
R. Wiley	1/1/1897-11/30/1898
C. E. Gustavus	12/1/1898-12/31/1904
Tom D. Clark	1/1/1905-9/30/1912
W. W. Sharp	Sept. 1912-10/12/1914
Joe E. Webb	10/12/1914-12/31/1917
T. J. Ford	1/1/1918-12/31/1918
J. M. Roberts	1/1/1919-12/31/1920
A. H. Menefee	1/1/1921-12/31/1922
T. Ferguson	1/1/1923-12/31/1926
W. V. Jones	1/1/1927-12/31/1928
W. L. Robinson	1/1/1929-12/31/1932
R. P. Gibbs	1/1/1933-12/31/1933
J. Luther Broadway	1/1/1934-12/31/1934
D. F. Brown	1/1/1935-12/31/1942
W. N. Coleman	1/1/1943-12/31/1948
D. F. Brown	1/1/1949-12/31/1954
J. C. Wells	1/1/1955-3/31/1976
William F. "Billy" Carter	4/1/1976-12/31/1978
James R. Fite	1/1/1979-12/31/1994
Cecil N. Neely	1/1/1995-12/31/2006
Arthur M. Henson	1/1/2007-12/31/2014
C. E. McDaniel, Jr.	1/1/2015-12/31/2018
Tony Leago, died while in office.	1/1/2019-06/21/2022
Clark Osborne	Appointed to fill Leago's Unexpired term Jul 2022 Elected Nov. 2022 for 4 yr term beg. 1/1/2023