

HISTORIC SKETCHES OF SHELBY COUNTY

By William J. Holliday

IV

The following is a continuation of the partial list of the name of old settlers:

In township 59, range 10: James Ford, John Ralls, Samuel Cochrane, James G. Glenn, Robert McKethen, Peter Looney, Joseph Moss, James Turner, Ferdinand Carter, John Moss, Peter Stice, John Surat, Lewis Kincaid, Elijah Hall, Hiram Rockwood, Sandford Pickett, James S. Pickett, William H. Chinn, Nathan Baker, and others.

In township 57, range 11: David D. Walker, David Wood, Malcolm Wood, William Wood, James Carrothers, Wm. Coard, Nicholas Watkins, Perry B. Moore, Isaac W. Moore, Mrs. Mary Wailes, Prettyman Blizzard, James B. Barr, Lacy Morris, Stanford Drain, Jus. Carroll, Barclay Carroll, John B. Lewis, James Parker, George Parker, Capt. B. Melson, Major Taylor, Robert Bruington, Henry Bruington, and others.

In township 58, range 11: J~~no~~. Thomas, John Dunn, Elijah Pollard, Philip Upton, John T. Victor, William Victor, Aaron B. Glasscock, Martin Baker, Richard See, and others.

In the early settlement of the county a great many cattle died from a disease known as the Bloody Murrain. I never knew the cause; but since the country has been more thickly populated, but few losses from this disease have been reported, although, at this writing there are probably

twenty times as many cattle as when the disease was more troublesome.

Hog cholera has never distressed the owners of hogs but little in this county; in parts of Marion, Monroe and Lewis counties, however, farmers have suffered severely from its effects.

In the fall of 1837, there was not a church or a school house in the county. The Methodists held a camp meeting at a spring on the land now owned by Mr. Solomon Evans. A circuit had been established of which the southeast portion of the county was a part. Rev. Richard Sharp, a local preacher who lived in Sharpsburg, Marion county, frequently preached in this county.

On the Fourth of July, 1836, there was a barbecue and free dinner at the spring on the farm on which Miller's mill now stands, to celebrate the anniversary of American Independence. About two hundred person were present who passed a pleasant day.

The next Fourth was celebrated on the bank of Black Creek, south of Shelbyville, at what is known as Carnagy's Spring. A large crowd assembled, and drunk too freely at the grogg in Shelbyville, and a general row was anticipated; but by dent of extra and prompt exertions on the part of the officers of the law, the shedding of blood was prevented. James M. Rider was Justice of the Peace, and J. M. Eaton, Constable of Black Creek township.

At this time (1837) there were in the town of Shelbyville, two dry goods stores, two grocery stores, one tavern, one blacksmith shop, one saddler's shop, and one Doctor. Nearly all the houses then in use have been town down; the only ones yet standing are, Mrs. Jane Cossett's, Mr.

F. Boetcher's, the one occupied by Mr. F. Metcalf as a wagon shop, and the old log warehouse west of Mr. C. Shackelford's store.

In the Spring of the year 1838, Mr. Joseph Ennis bought lots 7 and 8 in block 8, on which he built the frame house which has since been removed to lot 5, block 9; and during that year he dug, on his premises, the first cistern well in Shelbyville.

The same year, the writer hereof, built a saw mill on sec. 27, township 58, range 10; Perry B. Moore being the millwright.

A great many acres of prairie land were broken up during the year 1838.

Considerable dissatisfaction was caused this year at the Fair, by the decisions of the various committees. Many who considered themselves justly entitled to a premium, received none and were not satisfied.

The smallpox made its appearance in Shelbyville that year and carried off heads of families, among whom were Dr. Hawkins, Mrs. Owens, and others. Quite a large number were taken with the feared malady and barely escaped with their lives, and carried pock-marked countenances the remainder of their lives. The disease was introduced by the family of Henry T. Sheetz, at least it was so supposed at the time. If I remember correctly, the smallpox began its ravages in the spring; and in the following fall the town was visited by the pneumonia, which carried off several of the young business men. John W. Jewell, Epapluroditus Cossett, and some others were fatally attacked. Chills and fever also extended over the entire county.

In No. II of my sketches, I stated that the court was held in the Court House the 21st of November, 1836. That is a mistake. The court records, however, so stated, and although I was nearly satisfied that there was an error, I considered the records more reliable than my memory.

The record should read, "Court was held at the house of A. Vandiver;" but the Clerk had styled the private residence the "Court House." That building was finished in 1838 and the first court was held there on the 17th day of December

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The troops from other portions of the State had collected in large numbers under the command of Gen. John E. Clark and, previous to the disbanding of the regiment under Gen. Willock, marched on Far West, the Mormon headquarters, and captured the whole Mormon nation. I was sent, by Gen. Willock, with an express to Gen. Clark, and reached Far West a few hours after the surrender of the Mormons. I learned that the officer who had captured Joe. Smith, the great prophet, had started for home, taking his prisoner with him, and that on the first night out, having stopped at a cabin for lodgings, Joe. Smith raised the puncheons which constituted the floor, and crawled away, leaving the troops to get home as best they might without his company.

I saw, at Far West, Brigham Young, Heber Kimball, Orson Pratt, and others, who were pointed out to me as being the prominent men among the Latter Day Saints. I did not consider the outward appearance of any of them very prepossing, and in fact, they seemed to be rather a hard set of people.

They had a cornfield containing several hundred acres of good corn, besides other large farms with splendid crops.

From what I saw, I am inclined to the opinion that there were not more than 800 or 1,000 of these people in and about Far West.

The Mormon war was soon forgotten, as it had not caused the loss of

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a single man killed or missing.

The citizens of Shelby county now expected that they would be permitted to remain at home without having to make any further warlike demonstrations in any quarter, but they were disappointed; for but a short time after the Mormon war terminated, the States of Iowa and Missouri got into a dispute in regard to the boundary line between the States. Missouri, claimed all of the country south of the Des Moines River, in consideration of the Act of Congress, which made the Des Moines Rapids the line, and our people asserted that it meant the rapids or falls of the Des Moines River. Iowa, on the other hand, claimed that the rapids referred to meant the rapids in the Mississippi, at Keokuk. The Collector of Clark county, in this State, was arrested by the Iowa authorities for collecting taxes in the disputed territory, whereupon, the Governor of Missouri issued a proclamation calling out the militia to protect the officers of the State. Shelby responded by sending one company of infantry to the front, which marched through frost and snow to the seat of war. Happily for both sides, they were stopped before any blows were struck, and the matter was referred to the courts for adjudication. The troops returned to their homes and disbanded with not a man killed or missing, although, being poorly clad and limited in supplies, together with the inclemency of the weather, they endured many hardships.

The land in Shelby county, although not the richest in the State, is above the third grade in point of fertility. It is well adapted to grass, and susceptible of great improvement by subsoil plowing. I have seen dirt, which was taken out of the ground twenty-two feet below the surface, and

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spread upon the surface have the same effect upon the growing crops, as plaster of Paris. I think the farmers of Shelby county may always improve their land by plowing deep.

Prior to 1840 the farmers had no Hessian flies or chinch bugs to destroy their crops, although I think the latter were in the country when I first came here, for I remember that while assisting in the early survey, I frequently noticed spots on the prairie upon which the grass had died. We could not account for the peculiarity, and attributed it to the lightning; but since I have become acquainted with the chinch bug, I am satisfied that they, and not the lightning, caused the grass to die. About 1841 or 1842, they appeared in force and proved very troublesome. They attacked the wheat, corn and oats. About the same time, we were visited by the Potato bug, for the first time.

The farmers received but little encouragement to raise crops, on account of the low prices received. Pork sold in Shelbyville for \$1.50 per hundred; beef \$1 per hundred; corn, 61½ cents per barrel; bacon, 2 cents per pound. A good steer, five years old, would not bring \$8. Cows brought from \$6 to \$8. No land could be sold at any price. The government was doing all that kind of business, getting \$1.25 per acre for all land entered under the preemption law.

About this time a man named Philip Upton, who lived on a farm on Salt River, nearly west of Shelbyville, shot and killed a young man named Thomas. It was reported to Mr. Upton that the young man had spoken disrespectfully of his daughter, which so enraged the old man that he swore that should Thomas ever step his foot on his land that he would shoot him.

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Upton was true to his word, for he did shoot him, and was afterward arrested, tried and sentenced to the Penitentiary for seven years. After serving about two years, the Governor, in consideration of his good behavior, pardoned him and he returned to Shelby county and moved to the Chariton River, where he was shot while making rails in the woods. The assassin was never discovered.

The year 1840 was a period of great political excitement in consequence of the election of a president of the United States. This contest between the two political parties was styled the "Hard cider campaign." Gen. W. H. Harrison, of Indiana, was the Whig candidate, and Martin Van Buren, the Democratic candidate, for President. The Whigs made great ado about hard cider and coons, while the opposition claimed to have a great reverence for the negro and whisky. But hard cider and coons carried the day, for Gen. Harrison was triumphantly elected carrying every State but South Carolina. They made matters lively in Shelby county that summer and fall, as many old settlers will recollect.

The chinch bugs, as before mentioned, had troubled the crops somewhat in 1840 and 1841; but in 1842 they did a great deal of harm. They covered the young corn so thickly that whole rows were perfectly black with them. Fields of wheat and oats were entirely destroyed. It was a distressing season for all.

THE HERALD--August 9, 1871

HISTORIC SKETCHES OF SHELBY COUNTY

By William J. Holliday

VI

In 1844 a Colony of Germans came from Pennsylvania and Ohio, and bought the farms of Hays & Gore, Hiram Rockwood, Wm. S. Chinn, Bradford Huntsiker, and others. They also entered a considerable quantity of Government land, and built the town of Bethel on North River, where the State road from the mouth of the Des Moines to Paris crosses said river. They built the town of Elim, and the town of Mamre, all on the lands purchased from the above named parties. In Bethel, they erected a large steam mill, with a saw mill and distillery attached. They also put in operation a glove factory, and manufactured large quantities of the very best of buckskin gloves. The colony had a tannery, and made considerable quantities of leather. They established blacksmiths, wagon-makers, shoemakers, silver-smith, gun-smith and wheelwright shops, a fulling mill, carding machine, and brewery. They manufactured lime and brick, of which they built houses, besides selling to the citizens of the surrounding country. All appearances would indicate that the colony was in a flourishing condition. Its members had a religion peculiar to themselves, but I have never been able to ascertain exactly what it was. They bought a good many cattle, horses, mules, and hogs, which cost but little, yet the market thus created was very beneficial to the settlers of the county who had stock to sell. They purchased large quantities of corn and rye each fall, which they made into whiskey in the winter and fed to their stock. The colony has since been divided--a portion emigrated

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to Adair county in this State, and settled on the Chariton River, where they built the town of Ninevah. The largest portion went to the State of Oregon, where they yet remain. The community now at Bethel are still carrying on business as a colony, but on a far less extensive scale than formerly.

About 1841 or 1842, the Legislature of the State altered the county boundary, extending the west line six miles south, to the southwest corner of section 31, township 56, range 12, thence east to the southeast corner of section 36, township 56, range 12, thence north to the southeast corner of section 12, township 56, range 12, thence east to the southeast corner of section 12, township 56, range 9, thence north to the southeast corner of section 36, township 57, range 9; adding to the county of Shelby and taking from the county of Monroe, seventy-two square miles of territory, leaving Shelby county with five hundred and four square miles, instead of four hundred and thirty-two, which was its former area.

About this time Mr. Daniel Taylor sunk a tan yard on Clear Creek, at a point just below where S. W. Millers' mill is now situated. He made leather there for some years, but owing to the scarcity of tan bark, and the poor quality of that he obtained, he quit the business and left the tan yard to destruction. He had a splendid spring which afforded him plenty of water at all season of the year. This spring, I believe, is now owned by C. W. Vannort. I have counted 25 springs which flow into the little stream called Clear Creek, nearly all of which rise on one half section of land. That locality is the best watered of any in the county.

The section numbered 16, in every Congressional township was donated

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by Congress to the State, for the support of common schools, and when a majority of the citizens of any such township should petition the County Courts to sell that section, then the Court would make an order to that effect, and the land would be advertised for sale, and sold to the highest bidder, the purchaser being required to give bond and security for the payment of the principal and interest. As long as the interest was promptly paid, the purchaser need not pay the principal. In accordance with the law, the land could not be sold for a less sum per acre than \$1.25. The interest was set apart and used for the support of the schools of the township which contained said section, and the principal was retained as a perpetual school fund.

The government also gave to the State, and the State to the counties, all the swamp or overflowed land in such counties for school purposes. The county court sold all such land in this county at prices ranging from \$1.25 to \$10 per acre. The aggregate amount of school funds arising from the sale of swamp land and the sixteenth sections in this county, is \$45,663.

In the year 1843, or 1844, the county court ordered the building of a jail. Mr. Russell W. Moss was the contractor. It was built north of the court house on the public square, where the gate now is, and was built on the plan described as follows: Hewed oak logs, twelve inches square and eighteen feet long were formed into a wall nine feet high, with cracks between not more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. The sleepers, or lower wall, was laid with logs the same as the top and sides, and the floors were laid with two inch oak plank, well spiked down. There were no windows in the lower part, called the dungeon, except a hole 12 x 18 inches on the east, north, and south sides, which were secured by iron grates. Then there were logs twenty feet long, of the same size, built around the dungeon, and seven feet higher, which made a room eighteen feet square. The space between the outer and inner walls was filled with limestone, broken into pieces the size of apples. There were steps to go up on the outside of the building to a door which entered the upper story; then a trap door by means of which the dungeon was reached. The floor of the upper room was like unto the dungeon floor. This room was a debtor's prison, while the lower was used

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for criminals. At that time there was a law in Missouri providing that a creditor might put a debtor into prison and keep him or her there until the last farthing was paid, or until they had given up all the property they owned, under oath, when they were released under what was termed the "Act for the benefit of insolvent debtors." This was why we had a debtor's prison. The outside of the jail was weatherboarded, and looked like a common frame house.

Among the first prisoners placed in our new jail, were two brothers from Knox county, who were charged with stealing hogs. Mr. Joshua M. Ennis was Sheriff at the time, and his father kept the jail. He gave the prisoners their meals through the trap door. The weather was not very cold, yet they complained of its severity, and the jailor had a stove put in the dungeon for their especial comfort. Several times, upon opening the trap door, he discovered the lower room full of smoke. When he inquired of the prisoners if they were not uncomfortable on account of the smoke, they replied: "Oh no; the smoke all rises upward so we don't feel it down here." One morning Mr. Ennis made his regular visit to the jail with the prisoners' breakfast, but was astonished to find that the birds had flown. Further discoveries showed that they had burned a hole through the floor and walls, and burrowed through the broken rocks and made their escape. They were polite enough to leave a letter directed to the Sheriff, in which they said that he had treated them well, and that they liked their boarding house, but that their business was needing their immediate personal attention; so much so that they were compelled to leave; if, however, they had occasion to stop in the town at any future time, they should stop with him.

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The court had the house repaired, and in a short time another hole was made in the same place by an escaping prisoner, when the court, finding the jail unfit for further use, sold it and had it removed.

Since that time the county has been sending its prisoners to adjoining counties for safe keeping. Since the repeal of the law which authorized the imprisonment of debtors, the number of prisoners has been greatly reduced and the court finds that the expenses of our prisoners does not amount to as much as the interest would, upon the amount necessary to build a jail. ERRATA IN SKETCH V--The fifth paragraph, which reads, "The Mormon war was soon forgotten, as it had not caused the loss of a single man, killed or missing," refers only to the company raised in this county.

In the sixth paragraph, the printers misinterpreted the intended meaning. The State of Missouri construed that the Act of Congress established the line between the two States, as follows: Beginning at the mouth of the Des Moines, thence up the river to an imaginary east and west line which crossed the Rapids in said river; thence westward, etc.

THE HERALD--August 16, 1871

HISTORIC SKETCHES OF SHELBY COUNTY

By William J. Holliday

VII

About that time three Mr. Parsons and Mr. Henry Louthan were all successfully engaged in stock raising and buying, and others were doing the same in different parts of the county. Several farmers were engaged in improving their stock of sheep and hogs. Mr. R. W. Moss and Barton W. Hall had each imported very fine hogs of the most improved breed, and several others had fine sheep.

Mrs. Vannoy, a widow lady, and one of the early settlers of the county, who lived on Salt River above Walkersville, had a family of children--mostly girls. One of them went on the ice on Salt River, which broke. Two of her sisters went to her assistance, and all three were drowned.

The M. E. Church put up a church building on lots 5 and 6, in block 2, in Shelbyville, which was the first church built in Shelby county. The next was Bacon's Chapel, built by the same church. The third was a brick church on section 4, township 58, range 9, which was built by the O. S. Baptists. There was a school-house in township 58, range 11, one in township 57, range 11, one in township 59, range 9, and one in township 58, range 10.

The wheat crops had been getting worse for some years until 1843 or 1844, when it was looked upon as very uncertain; still some good crops were raised in different parts of the county.

The price of hemp was so low that but few farmers sowed it. A number

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of farmers were now raising tobacco, which paid better than anything else. Although it was low, there was a market for it.

The pork packers from Hannibal and Quincy sent agents into this county, and engaged all the pork they could at their own price. They graded the price, so that hogs weighing 200 pounds and upwards, would bring \$5. If a hog only weighed 198 pounds, he would be graded so as to be worth \$4.75; and another that weighed 150 pounds, would be \$4.50. It mattered not how much over 200 pounds a hog weighed, he would only bring \$5, as they only graded one way. Beef was bought and sold the same way.

Mr. J. B. Marmaduke had two very fine steers which weighed about 1,800 pounds each, and which he tried to sell on foot. The best offer he got was \$30 per head. He refused that and concluded to have them packed and shipped. He sent them to Hannibal, had them slaughtered and shipped. The shipper sent him the returns of sale, which, after taking both of his steers, left him upwards of eight dollars in debt. I mention this, that people may see how a new country is made to "bloom like the rose."

Mr. Marmaduke shipped a heavy crop of navy beans, and Mr. Vandeventer shipped a good crop of wheat with nearly the same result, as far as profits were concerned.

In 1849 the county court ordered a fence made around the public square. Mr. Thomas J. Bounds being the lowest bidder, got the contract. During the same year Mr. William H. Vannort planted the square with locust trees and a few rose bushes, which were all the trees or shrubs ever planted there.

In that year occurred the first emigration from Shelby county to California. There were a number of men, who were of the bone a-d sinew

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of our population, went in 1849, 1850, and 1851 and who never came back; and very few who did get back, had made anything by the trip. A few made some money, about as much as they would have made here had they worked as hard and lived as they did there.

The Hannibal & St. Joe. Railroad was now talked of. The company was being formed and the stock subscribed, with the understanding that the road would run through each county seat on the line of the road from Hannibal to St. Joseph. The citizens of such counties, and the county courts, gave money to survey a route to test the practicability of such a road, which was done and reported to be a No. 1 route. The counties and individuals now subscribed for stock, and directed their Representatives to give the land belonging to the State, to the company, on each side of the road, by which the company got a million acres of as good land as there is in North Missouri. Shelby county subscribed for \$25,000 of stock, besides what was taken by individuals. The company then located the road where it now is, touching none of the said county seats that they could avoid. In the meantime there had been several calls made on the stockholders. Everybody saw plainly that the company was using their money to build up opposition towns along the route. Accordingly, they stopped paying calls, and forfeited what they had paid. The county court also cancelled their contract with the road, and withdrew the county bonds given for stock. Thus the county, and I think all the citizens, withdrew their membership from the company, after paying about 10 or 15 per cent of their stock. The land that the company received, was worth fully enough to build the road. The people now enjoy the full advantages of the road, by paying a higher freight and passenger tariff than on any other line. Its building, however, has largely

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increased the population of the county.

About this time, the mail was first carried in hacks from Hannibal, west through Shelbyville. The building of a High School was also being talked of by some, but no work done.

THE HERALD--August 26, 1871

HISTORIC SKETCHES OF SHELBY COUNTY

By William J. Holliday

VIII

In 1847, Shelby Lodge No. 33, I.O.O.F., was organized in the town of Shelbyville, with a Charter authorizing them to meet and work. They soon began to build a hall, which they furnished in 1852 as it now stands, on a part of lot 1, block 20.

St. Andrew's Lodge No. 96, A. F. and A. M., was organized some time previous to 1847, and about the year 1852, or 1853, they built their hall where it now stands, on lot 7, in block 9.

The members and friends of the M. E. Church, South, having decided to build a house in which to hold a High School, purchased lots No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8, in block 13, on which was the house now owned and occupied by Mr. John S. Duncan, and got an Act passed by the Legislature, closing up the alley running through the block. They then commenced, on lots 7 and 8, the building now owned by W. J. Holliday, but sold out to Mr. Hezekiah Ellis before completing the foundation. They then bought the ground where the High School building now stands, from Mr. Davis. The building of the house was undertaken by Mr. Bevis, but was finished by Mr. S. P. Engle. Mr. Hezekiah Ellis was principal of the first school taught in the house, and had a goodly number of pupils for a beginning. I think Mr. Ellis had taught two seasons, when some difficulty arose between him and the Trustees, and he gave it up. He then finished the house begun on lots 7 and 8, block 13, and opened a school, where he taught some time. He afterwards sold the

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property and removed to Marion county.

While the Company were building the Hannibal & St. Joe. Railroad, there was employment for men and teams. The road also made a market for what the farmers had to sell, and at far better prices than ever before.

There was a firm in Quincy that had bought cattle in this county for several years, and, had become quite popular with the cattle raisers, who sent buyers to engage cattle, on condition that they would wait for their pay until the beef was sold and the proceeds received. The firm, to secure the payment, would give a Warehouse Receipt. This was a new lein, but most of the sellers took it. The beef was packed and sold--and the farmers still have the Warehouse Receipts, which I suppose they would sell at a discount should an opportunity offer. It is more than possible that they will be unavailable assets when their estates are settled. Finally, they lost thousands of dollars by the operation.

In the Summer of 1855, there was considerable excitement on the subject of a road from Shelbyville to Shelbina. There was a petition presented to the County Court praying that body to change the State road from its location, and causing a new road to be made, running from Shelbyville to Walkersville, thence to Shelbina: and to vacate the old road. The Court appointed three Commissioners, and instructed them to view both routes, measuring the distance of the established road, and the one projected, and report the facts. They did so and gave their preference to the route already established. The petitioners however were not satisfied with the decision, and asked for a review, which was granted, and another Board of Commissioners was appointed, who after a careful review reported like their

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predecessors. Again the friends of the Walkersville route expressed dissatisfaction and demanded yet another review, which the Court again granted, and the Board decided as before. So the matter ended with a county road crossing Salt River at Walkersville, and the State road crossing said river where the bridge is now being built.

In 1855 Know Nothingism began to be very much talked of in the county, in anticipation of the Presidential election, to come off the following year. In 1856 a good many joined that organization, which was of a secret, political nature, and paid an initiation fee of \$1.50. Many of the members afterward regretted that they had thus thrown their money away; while others satisfied themselves with the thought that the money they had paid all went into the School Fund. The officers of the organization kept a correct list of the names and number of their members and were certain of their ability to carry the State; but the results of the election showed that they had counted without their host, for the Democracy beat them badly, notwithstanding the fact that the Know Nothings had a majority of all the legal voters in the State, on their list of members.

Up to the year 1852, voting was done VIVA VOCE or, by crying out, the name of the candidate preferred by the voter. The Constable of each precinct, stood at the polls and interrogated every voter after this manner:

"Mr. _____, Who do you vote for for Congress?"

The voter replies, "Mr. Clark!"

"Who for representative?"

"John Doe!"

And so on through the entire list of candidates. As soon as the voter had named his candidate, the election clerks would enter on the poll

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books the names of his chosen candidates. By this style of voting every body could know how the respective candidates were running, and how the election was going. Riders would ride from one precinct to another and carry statements of the election. Competing candidates were kept posted, and made calculations accordingly. Sometimes, when more than two individuals were running for the same office, the news from other precincts would cause the friends of the candidate, who was hindmost in the race, to throw him overboard and concentrate their strength on some other, and thus secure his election.

Fights on election days were not unfrequent. Some one would accuse another of having agreed to vote for a certain aspirant for office, when it was well known he voted for another. Thus the party assailed would deny, and a crowd gathering round, a fight generally took place and before the matter would be ended probably a dozen fights would occur at that precinct.

THE HERALD--September 6, 1871

HISTORIC SKETCHES OF SHELBY COUNTY

By William J. Holliday

IX

The Democratic party had supreme control of the State when I came to it in 1833, and held the reins of power until 1860, without any check or change. It is a well known fact that a party long in power becomes corrupt; and such has always been the case ever since the government was founded; and therefore it is not singular that the Democratic party in Missouri, having had control of the State for thirty years or more should have made laws for their own particular benefit. A State Bank was instituted with a capital of \$5,000,000, two thirds of which amount was taken by the State, and therefore the majority of the officials were Democrats. The charter was granted for the period of twenty years. The State borrowed the School Fund for the use of the bank, and paid interest on the same at the rate of ten per cent per annum, while the Bank for several years declared a dividend of only one per cent semi annually. The Governor and Secretary of State had a supervision over the State's interest in the institution. The Shawneetown, (Ill.) Bank did a heavy business and had its bills scattered all over the country, but reports were circulated that the Bank was about to fail, and holders of its bills made efforts to get clear of them; the Governor of Missouri sent to the State Bank, a notice to not receive any more of the Shawneetown bills, and the officers said they would stop receiving them, but when the Shawneetown Bank stopped payment; it was found

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that the State Bank of Missouri had \$125,000 of the money--which was a dead loss, and the amount had to be made up by the citizens of Missouri.

The next trick was a loss of another \$125,000 by the Bank--stolen by some person or persons unknown, although the Teller, a gentleman named Childs, was charged with the crime, arrested and tried. At the trial it was proved that the banking house had a back door which was used by the negroes, belonging to the President of the Bank, to call their lord and master to supper; but Democracy had a law preventing a negro from giving evidence in a court of justice, or else there might have been something told concerning the robbery, that would not have been proper for the world to know. The charter expired in the year of grace 1856, after having cost the tax-payers of Missouri the sum of \$750,000, together with a heavy loss at the wind up.

In 1855 the streams in the county all rose to an unusual height. Salt River and North River were higher than I had ever seen them before; although I have heard old settlers say that North River was highest in the year 1844. Both were very high in July, 1865, but it is not always the case that both streams are high at the same time.

On the 12th day of May, 1855, there was a heavy frost, in the county which killed the hickory leaves, red clover, all fruit, and nearly all the wheat, which was partially headed. The fruit and leaves on the mulberry trees were killed, and another crop of leaves and fruit was put out the same season, and the fruit matured.

In January of the same year, a snow fell twelve inches deep, which was followed by a high wind from the north, which kept the snow moving for

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eleven days, so that making roads was a fruitless task, for a road made during the day was filled up during the night, and could not be found the next day. On the prairie the snow was blown off the north and west sides of the fields, and deposited on the east and south sides. Where the snow was blown off, the hard freeze killed the grain; but where the snow remained and melted there was a tolerable fair crop.

In November 1856, the Presidential election came off. Buchanan was the Democratic candidate, Fremont, the Republican candidate, and Fillmore, the candidate on the American or Know Nothing ticket. There was a very small vote polled in Shelby county, and Fillmore received a majority.

The winter of 1856-7, was the hardest winter I ever experienced. Early in October there fell a great deal of rain, after which it turned cold, and the ground froze hard; another rain fell and another freeze followed. Such was the weather during the entire winter. Sometimes the mud was so deep that cattle could find no place dry enough to lie down on, and no spots in the fields to place feed for the stock and consequently large quantities of feed were wasted. The feed being expended early, the stock fared badly, especially as the grass was late in coming up the following spring; not making its appearance until about the 25th of May. Many cattle died from exposure and want of provender. A market was opened in Iowa for milch cows, as that State was being rapidly settled, and, during the early part of the Spring mentioned, some men bought up a drove of cows, destined for the Iowa market, but owing to the backwardness of the season, they did not start until about the 10th of June, when finding insufficient grass to maintain their herd they were forced to stop on Salt River and remain in the bottoms waiting for the grass to grow. They finally reached

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their destination in Iowa, where they realized a good price for their cattle, but having had to buy feed for two months longer than they had expected, the expenses took up all the profits and the speculation did not prove a successful one.

In the spring of 1857, there was being paid at La Grange, for bacon sides, five cents per pound; hams seven cents, and lard seven and a half. Domestic cotton, by the bolt cost nine cents per yard; brown sugar from five to seven cents per pound; molasses from thirty to forty cents per gallon, and other merchandize in about that proportion. Wheat was worth from fifty to seventy-five cents per bushel according to quality.

Shelby county is underlaid with a very fine quality of limestone, which extends from the east line of the county, to within a short distance of the line dividing Range 10 from Range 11. It crops out of the bluffs on all the streams in the eastern part of the county, and appears to sink as the streams are ascended toward said Range line, where it entirely disappears, and west of that line there is none that I ever heard of.

Stone coal is found in the bluffs of Clear Creek above the Era Mill; also in the bluffs of Salt River, being found near Lakenan, and at different places up the river near Walkersville. There is a vein of coal in a bluff on Black Creek south of Shelbyville and down the creek two and a half miles, where I once had a saw-mill. The water in falling over the dam washed up the coal, which burned with a clear light and I supposed it to be canuel coal. If there is any quantity of coal about there, it is under the bed of the creek.

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HISTORIC SKETCHES OF SHELBY COUNTY

By William J. Holliday

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In the years 1856-7 the troubles in Kansas were at the highest, and as Shelby county was a Democratic county, she furnished some of the Border Ruffians. Young men were induced to go, and did go; and voted at the elections held in that State. The number of those who went from this county was not large, for although the parties who furnished the money were very anxious that the State Constitution of Kansas should be chosen in the interests of Slavery, they did not like to donate much money for the purpose. As the Kansas war is a subject of history and most of the readers of the Sketches are familiar with the events that then transpired, I will leave the matter and pass over to the exciting days of 1860.

At that time the rebellion began to crop out largely. All who did not curse the Abolitionists were "spotted" by the rebels; which means that they were marked for future punishment. The Secessionist talked all they could, and sent for others to come and make speeches to try and influence the public mind in favor of secession. Thomas L. Anderson, of Palmyra, came into the county and made a speech advocating war, but I never heard of his doing any fighting during the war. James S. Green was also sent for, and made a speech in the court house, in which he, in speaking to the Union men, said, "If you gain Missouri, we will leave the State; if we gain it, we will make you leave it."

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The Presidential election came off that Fall, and we had a lively time on the day of election. Men were pointed out who, the secessionists said, would vote for Lincoln. I never heard what was to be done with them in case they did vote for him but at any rate, nothing was done with them that I heard of.

At the Circuit Court, on the fourth Monday in November, 1860, the slaves belonging to the estate of Geo. Gaines, deceased, were sold at the court house door, and during the sale there was a little Dutchman, who was about half drunk, and who swore it was not right to sell negroes. Although he talked very broken, the bystanders understood enough to think he was saying something against the Divine Institution of slavery, and he was arrested, taken before a Justice of the Peace, and had to give bond for his appearance at the next court, or go to jail to await the action of the Grand Jury, at the next term of the Circuit Court, as his was an indictable offense under the Statute of Missouri, which said that if any person should say anything in the hearing of a negro calculated to make them rebellious or insubordinate, such person, on conviction, should be sent to the Penitentiary for a term of not less than five years. The Dutchman gave bond for his appearance but did not appear, for if he had he would have stood a good chance to go to the Penitentiary, for the negroes were not allowed to swear whether they heard certain remarks or not, and men were convicted on the testimony of prosecuting witnesses who swore they "believed the negroes heard," etc. This was the way such trials were generally managed. I have no doubt but that plenty of men in Missouri who were sent to prison on charges of this kind, were entirely innocent; but they had come from a free State and attended to their own business; did not buy a slave if

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they were rich, or curse the Abolitionists or negroes, if they were poor,-- it was quite enough to create a suspicion that they were rank Abolitionists. It would soon be whispered about that such was actually the case, and finally their best friends would look upon them with suspicion, and avoid them. Every negro in the State might swear that they never heard the person or persons accused, say a word, yet they would not be believed on any account; but if a negro should say that any white person had talked to him on the subject of freedom, every one would believe that statement, but would not believe any contrary statement.

The winter of 1860-1 wore away, and in the spring of 1861 a company of about eighty men came from Knox and Lewis counties, and camped in the bush on the Tiger fork of North River. The company was fed by the citizens, and after doing nothing for five or six weeks, left the country. That was the first organized band I had ever seen in this county, but by August the whole country literally swarmed with armed men. We could not pass a week without hearing of a horse or gun having been taken from a Union man. Sometimes the house of Unionist would be visited in the night and the man taken out and hung until nearly dead, and then made to swear that he would not tell who the parties were that thus abused him, which promise he generally made as he satisfied that that was the only way he could save his life. Some men who were treated in this manner have kept the names of their persecutors a secret to this day.

As this brings these sketches up to the time the war began, and as most of the subscribers of the HERALD know as much of the history of the times from then until now, I will close by wishing that all the citizens of Shelby county may enjoy peace and great prosperity, and may unite in

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developing the inexhaustible resources of the county until she takes her place in the family of counties, where the gifts of a bountiful Providence entitles her to stand.

THE END

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