

Some 1892 Maries County Events

by Gary Knehan

This year's research revealed only a few newspaper accounts of Maries County happenings in 1892. The major event of the year was the ill-fated first trial of Wils Howard, which resulted in a hung jury in June. This trial was amply reported in last year's "Gazette", leaving the following newspaper articles to somewhat illuminate the county scene one hundred years ago.

(Rolla Herald, Jan. 14th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—On Tuesday our people were startled and deeply pained upon receiving the news that one of our oldest, best known and most valued citizens, Judge M. W. Kinsey, of High Gate, was dead. He contracted a case of the grippe only a short time ago, which developed into pneumonia, and owing to his age he was soon gathered in. Though one of our wealthiest men, he was plain and unassuming, and was respected and admired for the rugged honesty that was one of his characteristics. It is remarkable the number of Maries county's pioneer citizens that have crossed over the dark river during the past two or three years, the loss of every one of whom has been deeply felt throughout the county.

(Rolla Herald, Jan. 28th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—Monroe

Johnson, of the southeastern portion of the county, died last week under rather peculiar circumstances. He had contracted pneumonia and Dr. E. B. Bowles was called in to prescribe, which he did; but, so we are told, a meeting of Sanctificationists, which sect has quite a following in that neighborhood, was held at the Johnson residence and it was decided to try the faith cure. The medicine was accordingly thrown away and the efficacy of prayer was relied upon to effect a cure, but the patient rapidly grew worse, and not until the end was very near was his physician again summoned, when it was too late to save his life. This is the report that came here, and we only give the facts as they were repeated to us.

(Rolla Herald, Feb. 4th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—Jonathan Kinsey, of the East Side, died last week, and at the same time came news of the death of Stephen Kinsey, in Kansas, both of them being brothers of the late lamented M. W. Kinsey. News was also received here of the serious illness of Dr. W. B. Kinsey, of High Gate, and of Mrs. J. B. Hayes, his sister, younger members of the family, though later reports inform us that they are improving. Death has been busy with the name of Kinsey during the past few weeks, and we truly hope the last male representative of the fam-

ily in this county may live long to re-establish and perpetuate it.

(Rolla Herald, Apr. 28th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—Last Thursday night while John Otto was examining a 32-caliber revolver it was accidentally discharged, the ball taking effect in his left hand, going entirely through it, then striking the ceiling and falling to the floor. He has suffered a great deal from the wound, but it is getting along all right now. The boys have joked John considerably about trying to commit suicide, which he takes good naturedly.

(Rolla Herald, May 12th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—A very sad and distressing accident occurred at the ford of the Maries between Westphalia and Koeltztown last Thursday. Chris. Berensmeyer and wife started to cross the stream, which was considerably swollen, with a wagon and double team, three mules and a mare. The water was too deep for fording, and the team and wagon were swept away, both the occupants and the three mules being drowned. Search was made for the bodies of Berensmeyer and his wife, but for several days was unavailing, though news reached here Wednesday that the body of Mr. B. had at last been recovered.

(Rolla Herald, May 26th)—Mr. London Marts Grovedale, Maries Co., furnishes the following concise description of the hailstorm of 14th instant in that vicinity: "The territory covered by the storm was 2 miles wide and 3 miles long. Storm began about 6:15 p. m., and although I am fifty years old, it excelled any thing I ever experienced in point of destruction. At dark there were banks of hail 2 feet deep, and saw some at least 1 foot deep at ten a. m., Sunday. Stock stampeded and ran wild over meadows and cultivated fields, and many animals are not yet found. Storm was accompanied by a wind that leveled fences in every direction, and did severe injury to trees. All crops are beaten down, and severe damage done by land washing."

(Rolla New Era, July 9th, reprinted from the Richland Cyclone)—Row at Vichy on the Fourth, growing out of old grudges. David and Willie Branson, sons of Andrew J. Branson, got in a row with William Ridenhour, and during the melee, Ridenhour was shot. He was so badly injured that it is said he will not recover.

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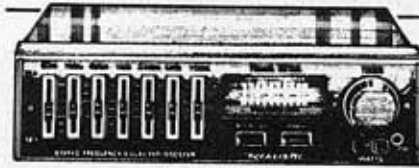
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(Rolla Herald, July 14th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—A very unfortunate affair occurred at Vichy on the Fourth, by which one man will very likely lose his life, or perhaps by this time has already done so. Wm. Ridenhour was shot through the lung by David Branson, the ball entered the body just a little to the left of the backbone, ranging upward and lodging a half-inch from the surface near the left nipple where the ball was cut out. Branson was immediately placed under arrest by Sheriff Mc Keever, who was present, and taken before Squire W. S. Lacy, who bound him over in the sum of \$1,000.

Trouble occurred also at a picnic on the Tavern, in which Fayette Meltabarger was cut pretty seriously with a knife, but his wounds are not dangerous. At that place also there was a great deal of shooting, but no one was hit. At Dixon on the south and Linn on the north there was much fighting, and while several persons were considerably beaten up nobody was injured to any great extent.

There are so many conflicting statements in regard to the affair at Vichy that it would be folly for us to endeavor to give the correct version. All good citizens regret these affairs, as they will tend to give Maries county back her old reputation, which she does not now deserve.

(Rolla Herald, August 18th, reprinted from the Vichy Hustler)—Wednesday afternoon news reached Vichy that Mr. Stephen Shinkle, father of Mr. Albert Shinkle, proprietor of the Vichy grist mills, who lives about five miles northeast of Vichy, had accidentally shot himself while repairing an old gun. Dr. Moreland was summoned at once but upon his arrival found the man already dead.

Wednesday morning a gentleman named Devault started to town with a gun to have it fixed. The gun had not been used for ten or twelve years. As he passed Mr. Shinkle's shop he stopped and Mr. Shinkle informed him that he could repair the gun. He proceeded to the work at once and soon had the gun taken apart. The breech pin on account of rust had tightened and so the barrel was placed in the forge to heat. While the gun was in the forge it was discharged either because of accumulated gas or an unknown load. The charge passed through the lower part of his body and entered the left thigh striking the main artery. This was about 11 o'clock. The wounded man walked as far as the yard gate, a distance of about 200 yards from the shop. He then fell and was carried into the house and at about 1 o'clock he breathed his last. It is thought that if a doctor could have reached him in time

the flow of blood might have been stopped.

Mr. Shinkle is an old and respected citizen of Maries county and has ever been known as a most careful person. He has worked largely with machinery and has had but very few accidents before. The people of Vichy extend sincere sympathy to the bereaved ones.

(Rolla Herald, Sept. 8th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—Abe Rowden and Mark Whittaker recently discovered what they believe to be a rich silver mine over in Miller county near the Maries line. They took some of the ore to Rolla last week to have it assayed, but with what results we have not learned.

(Rolla Herald, Nov. 3rd)—On Sunday last in the neighborhood called "The Bend" in Maries county, a young man named Breeden shot and killed his step-father, "Spoon" Johnson. The testimony at the coroner's inquest showed that Breeden first attacked Johnson with rocks, while the old man was at the house of his wife's father to see his child. Johnson was badly injured in the first attack and it is supposed he ran out to secure a weapon of defense of some kind. On his return Breeden shot him with a gun loaded with turkey shot through a crack in the wall, the lead taking effect in Johnson's neck killing him instantly. Johnson's wife was Breeden's mother, and were not living together. There was bad blood between the parties. The location of the murder is 4 miles east of Vienna on the Gasconade.

(Rolla Herald, Nov. 24th, reprinted from the Vienna Gazette)—Simon Breeden, the young man who a week ago last Sunday shot and killed his step-father, W. S. Johnson, had his preliminary hearing before Squire Terry last Saturday and was admitted to bail in the sum of \$500. On Wednesday M. Feeler, B. F. Branson, Simon Snodgrass and Tillman Feeler went on the bond and Breeden was given his liberty. The bond would seem to be rather insufficient for such a grave offence, but we presume the authorities knew best.

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