

THE JOHNSON COUNTY MASSACRES

Transcribed by James Baker

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Early in the late war, around this place, was a scene of considerable strife and hostile action by both parties. At first the people were principally on the side the south, and B. Hornsby was the only leader of the abolition party. In June 1861, the first secession flags were raised in the village. The unionists attempted to raise their flags on the same day, but failed for want of numbers, and the southern women took axes and cut the unionists' flagpoles to pieces. In October of the same year, Gen. "Jim" Lane, of Kansas notoriety, dashed into the town and sacked all of the stores. During the following winter (1862) Maj. Herrick, under Col. Gennison, dashed down upon the place and drove out all the southerners, and burned their dwellings. Near the village they took nine men prisoners, and on the following morning killed eight, and the ninth one they cut a swallowfork in his right ear, saying: "We'll know you when you are caught again", then set him at liberty. About this time, the Kansas clan of robbers set on fire a great number of the dwellings in the county. A person that was a witness says: "I counted one evening, while standing on Brushy Knob, one hundred sixty houses on fire". Slaves were ravished by these desperados in the presence of their master's family, and the women and children were driven out of their homes without a morsel of bread in the world, or money to buy food. On account of southern feeling, Mrs. Nancy Longacre and her daughter were taken prisoners, and sent to St. Louis. General Wm. King, the father of the King family, went south and did not return until the close of the war. To heap fuel upon the already kindled flames of the war, the unionists burned him, on the public streets, in effigy.

When peace and quiet was being restored throughout the length and breadth of the land, and no one was dreaming of trouble, at the early dawn on May 7, 1865, about two hundred bushwackers under the daring leaders, Arch Clements, Dave Pool and Bill Anderson, swept down upon the quiet little village and commenced fire on the citizens that were just emerging from their night's repose. The citizens rallied for their lives with Capt. Leroy C. Duncan as their leader, but were so outnumbered that they could not withstand the assault of the raiders, who soon had possession of the town, which they left in ashes after robbing families of their money and clothing. On the evening previous to the massacre the vile murderers camped on Lause Run, a few miles away, in Cass county, and before they started for Kingsville, disposed of a prisoner by cutting his throat from ear to ear and leaving him on the spot. The following is a partial list of the dead and wounded: **James Paul (M.)**, Abner Ryan, Walton Burris, W. H. Duncan, L. C. Duncan, S. F. Duncan and Wm. Johnson.

B. A. Crain, Wm. Dock and Hiram Rose were taken prisoners, but released. After this, soldiers were sent by the Governor for the protection of the citizens, but the war caused no further trouble.

Source: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mojohnso/misc/MASSACRE.txt>

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The following account is from the days of "Bloody" Bill Anderson and Quantrill's Raiders in Kansas & Missouri (1861 - 1865). I'm pretty sure that the James Paul mentioned as killed/captured was James M. Paul, son of James A. Paul & Matilda Campbell. James M. was born in 1829. It's an interesting piece of history from the Civil War era.

James Mark Paul.