

## Some Notes on Kansas Cowtown Police Officers and Gun Fighters—*Continued*

NYLE H. MILLER and JOSEPH W. SNELL

### MASTERTON, WILLIAM BARCLAY—*Concluded*

(1853-1921)

AS FAR as Sheriff W. B. "Bat" Masterton was concerned the year 1879 started off auspiciously. On New Year's Day he journeyed to Trinidad, Colo., after one of the West's most wanted men, Dutch Henry.

This man was then considered to be one of the most successful horse thieves, escape artists, and all round outlaws in the West. His fame approached that of Jesse James and the Younger brothers back East. Naturally the capture of such a character would be quite a feather in most any law man's hat.

Officers of Trinidad arrested Henry on Bat's telegraphic request. When it was found that no money was offered the Trinidad police were reluctant to turn the prisoner over to Bat. The Dodge City *Times*, January 4, 1879, said:

#### DUTCH HENRY.

Sheriff Masterton learning that Dutch Henry was under arrest at Trinidad, proceeded to that place Wednesday. He telegraphed County Attorney Sutton as follows: "Sheriff wont deliver up Dutch Henry unless I pay him \$500. He says he can get that fer him in Nevada." So Mr. Dutch Henry is high priced and the silver State can take him.

Three days later, January 7, the *Ford County Globe* announced that Bat had brought Henry to Dodge:

#### CAUGHT AT LAST.

##### THE RENOWNED DUTCH HENRY, THE OUTLAW CHIEF, HAS FALLEN.

Hearing that this great king of outlaws was in the hands of the Las Animas county officers, at Trinidad, Sheriff Masterton went up last Wednesday to see what he could see, and, if possible, secure the prisoner and bring him to Ford county to answer for the many "irregularities" in his conduct toward the owners of horseflesh in this vicinity. The following is from the Trinidad Enterprise, which explains what action was taken there:

"Dutch Henry," the man who seems to be wanted in different states and territories for a variety of crimes, such as horse-stealing, mail robbery, and

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even murder, and of whose arrest here we gave an account in yesterday's Enterprise, was brought before Judge Walker to-day, upon complaint of Sheriff Wootton, that he is a fugitive from justice in Ford county, Kansas, charged and indicted for grand larceny. The sheriff of Ford county, Mr. W. B. Masterson of Dodge City, was present as a witness. Mr. Caldwell Yeaman appeared for the prosecution, and Mr. Salisbury for the defense. We learn that in the course of the proceedings there was some sparring between one of the attorneys and the visiting sheriff from Dodge, in which the legal gentlemen became considerable excited by unwarrantable mention of "unmentionable" matters by the witness. Now it is generally the witness who gets badgered and excited, and it may be well enough for gentlemen of the legal persuasion to happen upon a witness who can give them an opportunity to know how it is themselves. The result of the examination was that "deutcher Heinrich" was bound over to appear at the March term of the district court, and it was ordered that in default of bail he shall be confined in the Bent county jail. A motion was made by the prisoner's counsel that the case be referred to Judge Henry in chambers at Pueblo, and Justice Walker took the matter under advisement. "Dutch Henry" is rather a genteel looking man for a horse-thief, road-agent and murderer. He has black hair and eyes, black moustache, long face and Roman nose. His eyes are bright and penetrating, and indicate quick intelligence. He is dressed in a good suit of black, white shirt and other corresponding clothing.

Sheriff Masterson arrived with Dutch Henry in charge last Monday morning and how he obtained possession of him we will relate below. Masterson received news that Dutch Henry was at Trinidad in company with Charley Morrow, Mysterious Dave (Mather?) and others, and had been there several weeks. Masterson telegraphed the officers to arrest Henry, which they did, and after doing so telegraphed to various parties to find out what reward was offered; but they were disappointed in finding any reward whatever. Then they agreed to release Henry if he would pay expenses of arrest, etc., which Henry agreed to do, and would have done [so] had not some stock men prevailed upon the officers to hold the prisoner until news could be received from Ford county. As soon as Masterson arrived Henry was tried on the charge of being a fugitive from justice, and bound over in the sum of \$500 bail, in default of which he was ordered committed to the jail in West Las Animas. Masterson desired to bring the prisoner to Dodge, but having no requisition from the Governor of Kansas, was in a bad fix, and when the subject of bringing him here was first spoken of Henry made a talk for himself, in which he took recourse to threats of exposure, etc. This made Masterson all the more determined to bring him and he finally succeeded in making an arrangement by which he was given possession of the prisoner, and he is now safely ensconced in our jail. When the officers went to arrest the notorious Henry he was in a saloon watching a pool game, and was evidently off his guard, making no resistance whatever. He is now suffering from sickness, and has very little to say to any one. His trial will take place as soon as the witnesses for the state can be subpoenaed.

#### DUTCH HENRY.

A GLOBE representative visited Dutch Henry in the county jail this morning. Henry was lying on a mattress, and on inquiry as to his health said he was feeling better than on the previous day, but was still far from well. He talked

very composedly and when his probable trial was referred to did not seem uneasy in the least. Said he thought the officers arrested him more to make capital for election purposes than anything else. (This may be a little policy talk, but we give it as part of his conversation.) He says he had been at Trinidad several weeks and was well acquainted with everybody there, including the sheriff and officers, and never had any suspicions of any intent to arrest him, and never carried arms; was not armed when the officers arrested him. Says he was thinking of going into business at Las Vegas, New Mexico. He spent last summer catching wild horses, and last fall killed and dried a load of buffalo meat which he sold in New Mexico. He says his character as a horse-thief is greatly over-estimated, and it has become the custom of all the thieves in the country to saddle their crimes upon him. Says he never stole a white man's horse in his life. Says there are many old settlers here who have known him heretofore and who he thinks will not believe all the stories told about him. For these parties he seems to have a warm regard and says he has saved Dodge from ashes several times, when some of his associates wanted to burn the town to get revenge for treatment from some of the citizens. Of his early history Henry has but little to say, as he does not wish his friends in his eastern home to identify him. During a recent visit home, where he remained several months, he frequently received papers from the west, containing accounts of horse-stealing, etc., which was all charged to Dutch Henry, while in reality he was a thousand miles away. He says he could make some revelations but does not wish to, and will not if he is treated fairly.

The appearance of Dutch Henry is that of an educated German-American, and his language is very slightly broken. His career opened in the west in 1867, when he joined the Custar expedition, since which time he has been a roving plainsman. He says no one in the west knows what his real name is. His examination, on the charge of stealing Emmerson's mules, about a year ago, takes place as soon as the witnesses arrive. Parties who claim to know say that Henry's real name is Henry Borne.

The Dodge City Times, January 11, 1879, reported:

#### DUTCH HENRY.

The ubiquitous individual who wrestles with horse flesh, under the well-known sobriquet of "Dutch Henry," is again in the toils. He was brought to this city and placed in jail by Sheriff W. B. Masterson, Sunday night last. Dutch Henry was arrested in Trinidad, Colorado, and the subjoined account is taken from the Trinidad Enterprise. Sheriff Masterson deserves a great deal of credit for the venture, and it is only one of the many successful official moves he has made since holding the important office of sheriff.

Dutch Henry has become famous in the western States and Territories, and has made many bold and successful escapes from justice. He has broken jail and escaped from officers no less than three times within a year; but he has found himself within the iron grasp of a vigilant and brave officer, and will no doubt receive a sentence for one of his many crimes.

How Bat got possession of the prisoner without the payment of a reward and without a gubernatorial requisition, will probably be explained in one of the pages of a yellow-backed story book, which will detail the mysteries and crimes of the early settlement of this border. We are not curious to know

just now. History will give us all the enlightenment we care to know. That is one of the things we hand down to posterity. But here is the interesting account from the *Enterprise*. It seems Bat was a match for that squalid lawyer. . . .

From this point the *Times* reprinted the same *Enterprise* article that the *Globe* used on January 7.

Two short items from the *Trinidad News* were copied in the *Globe* on January 14, 1879:

Considerable merriment was created in Justice Walker's court on Saturday, during the hearing of Dutch Henry's case, by Sheriff Masterson of Dodge City, Kansas, insinuating that the attorney for the defense, Mr. Salisbury, had left Kansas under a cloud. The answer made by the sheriff was under oath, and may have caused some to believe that there was truth in it. But we happened to overhear Mr. Masterson say to a party of friends that night that there was not a word of truth in it; that he was driven into a corner by Salisbury, and had to say something to let himself out. We make this statement not because we have any reason to think that any person would seriously believe that there was anything in it, but because it is due to Mr. Salisbury that any false impression should be removed.

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Dutch Henry has left Colorado and returned to Kansas. He agreed to waive his rights and to save the trouble and delay of having a requisition made upon the governor by the governor of Kansas. Accordingly he went east with Sheriff Masterson on Sunday morning. Of course he was not ironed, and was really not a prisoner. If he should undertake to violate his promise and to walk off while still in Colorado a serious complication might arise. He would have a strict legal right to do so, but it is hardly probable that Sheriff Masterson would consent to follow a policy of masterly inactivity in such an emergency. It is more probable that he would himself become a violator of the law, and would make Henry his prisoner whether he "could" or not.

On January 11, 1879, the *Times* said that "they tried to habeas corpus Dutch Henry before Judge Peters, but it didn't take," and "the preliminary trial of Dutch Henry will be had before Justice Cook this Saturday." The *Globe*, January 14, 1879, reported Henry's examination:

A large crowd assembled at the Court House yesterday to hear the preliminary examination of Dutch Henry, who was arrested on a charge of grand larceny about a year and a half ago, but who at that time made his escape through the key-hole of the jail door. He was again arrested and brought here from Trinidad, Col., by Sheriff Masterson. He waived a preliminary examination and the court bound him over for his appearance at the next term of the district court in the sum of \$600, in default of which he was committed [to] jail.<sup>26</sup>

Henry was tried at the adjourned term of the Ford county district court. The *Times*, January 25, 1879, recorded:



Dutch Henry's trial occupied two days of the time of the court, and Thursday night the jury brought in a verdict of not guilty. The prisoner was charged with horse stealing. Insufficient evidence and barred by statute of limitations, though the latter point was negatively decided by a jury, probably led to the prisoner's acquittal. Colborn and [Thomas S.] Jones conducted the prosecution and [H. E.] Gryden and Hurd for the defense.

So Henry was released. He eventually traveled to Wichita where he was arrested by Deputy United States Marshal C. B. Jones and delivered to the sheriff of Shawnee county to answer another charge of jail breaking.<sup>27</sup> Thus continued the career of Dutch Henry *ad infinitum*.

Back in Dodge City—the January, 1879, term of the Ford county district court was convened by Sheriff Masterson on January 7. The *Times*, January 11, 1879, reported the early days of the session:

#### DISTRICT COURT.

The January term of the Ford County District Court, S. J. Peters, Judge, presiding, convened Tuesday afternoon. The following officers were promptly at their posts:

County Attorney—M. W. Sutton.

Sheriff—W. B. Masterson.

Clerk—H. P. Myton.

Tuesday afternoon the time was occupied in the usual preliminaries required for the working order of the court.

Wednesday morning, the case of James Skelly, charged with stealing a horse and gun, was taken up. The prisoner was found guilty of the charge.

Wednesday afternoon, the trial of Dan. Woodard, charged with assault with intent to kill, took place. The prisoner was defended by H. E. Gryden. The prosecution was conducted by County Attorney Sutton, who made a vigorous and able argument against the "pistol practice" in Dodge City. The jury was out but a short time and brought in a verdict of guilty. The defense moved for a new trial.

Frank Jennings, charged with horse stealing, was found guilty.

James A. Bailey plead guilty to the same charge.

H. Gould, alias Skunk Curley, plead guilty to the charge of assault with intent to kill.

In the case of Thomas O'Haran, charged with the murder of H. T. McCarty, a motion for a change of venue was filed [see the section on McCarty].

The trial of M. A. Sebastian was being had Friday, but up to the time of going to press no verdict had been reached. Sebastian and Bill Brown are charged with stealing twenty-seven sacks of corn. The trial of Brown will follow that of Sebastian.

The next cases on the docket are those of G. U. Holcomb and G. A. Watkins, charged with stealing cattle.

The trial of Dutch Henry will close the criminal docket. This may not be had until the adjourned term of the court [see above].

The sentences of the several convicted prisoners will be passed before the adjournment of court.

The following attorneys were in attendance: E. F. Colborn, Thomas S. Jones, H. E. Cryden, Nelson Adams, Geo. A. Kellogg, D. M. Frost, Judge [J. C.] Strang, Judge W. R. Brown.

There was a large attendance during the entire session of court. Many of the spectators were interested parties, as jurors, witnesses, &c.

The large criminal calendar suggests the "probability" of an "endeavor" on the part of the officers to do their duty. To an unprejudiced person, somebody has been making things lively. Sheriff Bat Masterson, Under Sheriff Bassett, and Deputies Duffy and [James] Masterson, have evidently earned the high praise accorded to them for their vigilance and prompt action in the arrest of offenders of the law.

The energy of the indomitable and untiring worker, County Attorney Sutton, is manifested in the successful prosecution of these cases. Mike certainly "got to the joint" in his accustomed and able manner, and is deserving of the many good words spoken in his behalf for his efficient services in the cause of justice.

The court adjourns this Saturday evening, until week after next, when the remainder of the criminal cases will be tried and the civil docket disposed of.

On Saturday, just before the court was adjourned, Judge Peters passed sentence upon the six who had been convicted. The *Ford County Globe*, January 14, 1879, reported:

#### THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR.

To all who witnessed the scene in the court room last Saturday evening, the proof was positive that "the way of the transgressor is hard." The room was crowded with curious spectators, who had heard that the convicts were to be sentenced that evening, and as sentences in this community have been almost as rare as angels' visits in the past—few and far between—it was natural for the people to assemble as they would to witness a contest in the arena. The Judge was seated at his desk, his grave and solemn countenance told that his thoughts were stern and decisive. Groups of attorneys conversed in low whispers within the railing, all of whom, save one—the prosecutor—had failed to get the ear of the jury, and their spent eloquence was as pearls cast before swine—trampled and trod upon. In a row in front of the Judge sat the six sinners for whom they had labored; all were convicted, and from their features every ray of hope had fled. The whispering was hushed in the room as Judge Peters finished writing, laid aside his pen and reflecting for a moment, said, "James A. Bailey, you may stand up." The first of the six slowly rose to his feet. He was a man of fine appearance, and to questions propounded by the Judge, answered that he was born and raised in New York; was 42 years of age; had received an education, and before coming west was employed as traveling salesman for his brother. When asked if he had any reason to offer why sentence should not be pronounced, he said he had none, as he had plead guilty; but in view of the fact that he was already advanced in years, he hoped the Judge would not sentence him to a long term, as he would be unable to survive it. He asked that the fact of his being under the influence of liquor be considered in mitigation of his crime.

He had stolen a horse.

Frank Jennings was next called up. He was from Pennsylvania; was

26 years old; had been in Kansas five months; has a mother living; by profession a house carpenter. Was under the influence of liquor. Begged the Court to treat him with leniency. His offense was horse stealing.

James Skelley, convicted of stealing a gun. Was 27 years old; been in the west two years; from Illinois; parents both living; by trade a glass blower; uneducated. Was under the influence of liquor; hoped the Court would be lenient.

H. Gould, assault and battery with intent to commit murder. Mr. Gould wore a smiling countenance, and did not seem to fully comprehend his situation. Was a native of Kansas; by occupation a herder of cattle; age, 24 years. Was influenced by liquor. In view of his tender years he asked the court to be merciful.

Mr. Sebastian, charged with stealing 26 sacks of corn, was the only one of the six who claimed to be innocent, 31 years of age.

Mr. John Brown, charged with the same offense as Sebastian, said he supposed, from the evidence he was guilty. Was 36 years of age and by trade a butcher. Was intoxicated at the time of the theft.

After the prisoners had all been thus questioned, Messrs. Cryden, Jones and Kellogg, in behalf of their respective convicted clients, argued to the Judge, and directed his attention to the "brightest spots" in the lives and acts of the criminals, and asked that mercy be shown them. The Judge then passed the following sentences, the date of imprisonment to commence Jan. 7th, 1879; Bailey, two years and six months; Jennings, two years and six months; Skelley, two years and three months; H. Gould, two years and three months; Sebastian, eighteen months; Brown, two years and three months.

The remarks of Judge Peters on this occasion were very appropriate, and the advice he gave should be followed by all who heard it and witnessed this sad scene. It was long after lamplight when court adjourned, and the crowd dispersed, free to go where they pleased, while the doomed six filed out under heavy guard to seek what comfort they might within the narrow bounds of their lonely prison cells.<sup>28</sup>

"Sheriff Masterson, City Marshall Bassett, [County] Commissioner [A. J.] Peacock, and District Clerk [H. P.] Myton started to the Leavenworth penitentiary last Saturday evening [January 11] with the six prisoners," said the *Globe*, January 14, 1879.

About the time he delivered the six prisoners to Leavenworth, Bat revoked the appointment of his deputy sheriff in Spearville township. A local correspondent of the *Times* reported, January 18, 1879:

The action of Sheriff Masterson in revoking the appointment of Murray Wear as Deputy, is approved by all citizens in this township, and all are satisfied that he could make no better selection than to choose the portly L. M. Deputay as the successor of Wear.<sup>29</sup>

In the same issue, January 18, 1879, the *Times* recorded the fact that "Sheriff W. B. Masterson has been appointed Deputy U. S. Marshal."<sup>30</sup>

After the adjourned session of the January, 1879, term of the Ford county district court, Bat had more prisoners to take to the state penitentiary. The *Leavenworth Times*, January 28, 1879, said of the sheriff:

#### FORD COUNTY'S CONTRIBUTION

##### SHERIFF MASTERSON AND UNDER-SHERIFF BASSETT BRING UP ANOTHER INSTALLMENT OF DODGECITES TO THE STATE PENITENTIARY.

Sheriff W. B. Masterson and Under Sheriff Bassett, of Ford County, arrived on Sunday from Dodge City with another installment of prisoners for the State Penitentiary, turning their charges safely over to the authorities of the prison. During Sheriff's Masterson's term of office he has contributed liberally to the State's boarding house and has kept things as straight as a string in his county. He is one of the most noted men of the southwest, as cool, brave and daring as any one who ever drew a pistol. He was with Gen. Miles' expedition in 1874, and was present at the time of the capture of the Germain children. He was also one of the twenty-six who defended the Adobe Walls in 1874, against some eight hundred Indians, and although he has been in many a tight place he has always managed to save his scalp. Under-sheriff Bassett is also well-known, and has a good record. They left for Kansas City Sunday afternoon.

"M. W. Sutton, W. B. Masterson, C. E. Bassett, tarried in Topeka, after safely lodging the prisoners in the Leavenworth prison. They are Senator lobbying," said the *Dodge City Times*, February 1, 1879.

From Topeka Bat visited his home near Wichita, returning to Dodge February 10, 1879.<sup>31</sup> On his way to Leavenworth Bat had stopped at Kinsley and placed this notice in the *Edwards County Leader*, February 6, 1879:

#### NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PARDON.

Notice is hereby given that on the 14th day of February, A. D. 1879, application will be made to his excellency John P. St. John, Governor of the State of Kansas, at the executive office in the capitol building in the city of Topeka, in the state of Kansas, to pardon and set at liberty one Thomas Gott, who was convicted of an attempt to rob the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad Company, at the June term of the district court held within and for Edwards county, Kansas, in the month of June, A. D. 1878.

Dated at Kinsley, Kansas, this 28th day of January, A. D. 1879.

W. B. MASTERSON,  
Sheriff Ford County, Kansas.

Although the petition asking for Gott's pardon has not been located in the files of the Historical Society, letters written by Governor St. John indicate that the petition was received, that the pardon was considered but that it was turned down. In a letter to Sheriff Masterson dated June 25, 1879, the governor gave Bat this rather confusing explanation: "I have examined into the application of Gotts for pardon but cannot find it consistent now with my duty

to turn him loose at present. The fact is the population in the penitentiary is increasing so fast that I am compelled to go very slow about issuing pardons."<sup>32</sup>

In February, 1879, there began in Kansas an interesting phenomenon somewhat akin to the war crimes trials of the post World War II era. It will be recalled that in September, 1878, the last Indian raid was made through Kansas by a group of Cheyenne expatriates who were attempting to return from their reservation in the Indian territory to their former home in Dakota territory. Led by Dull Knife and Little Wolf the Cheyennes threw the western portion of Kansas into a frenzy of excitement by their depredations which included at least 40 Kansas deaths. The small band was eventually captured north of Kansas and the last Indian raid in the state was over. Naturally the pioneers of western Kansas did not then know that the Red man would never again threaten their families. Consequently stringent measures were proposed which would forestall future depredations. One solution was to punish, as criminals, the braves who were known to have participated in the raid.

Accordingly, on November 11, 1878, Gov. George T. Anthony had written the Secretary of War:

On mature reflection, and with thoughtful reference to the demands of law and justice, as well as the ends of public safety, I feel it an imperative duty to call upon you for a surrender to the proper officers of the civil courts of the State of Kansas, for trial and punishment under its laws, the principal chiefs, "Dull Knife," "Old Crow," "Hog," "Little Wolf," and others, whose identity can be established as participants in the crimes of murder and woman ravishing.

I believe there is a precedent for this demand, in the surrender to the civil courts of Texas of "Satana" and one other chief in the year 1872. But if there is no precedent public necessity and simple justice would, I believe, be ample justification for this demand.<sup>33</sup>

On December 31, 1878, Maj. Gen. John Pope, commander of the Department of the Missouri, wrote this answer to Anthony's plea:

I have the honor to inform you that I have received orders from the War Department to turn over to the civil authorities of Kansas, such of the Cheyenne prisoners en route to this place [Fort Leavenworth] as can be identified as the criminals who committed murders or other crimes during the raid of the Indians through Kansas in September last. As it is desirable not to keep these Indians here longer than necessary, I have to request that such persons as may be needed for the identification of the criminals be sent to meet the Indians on their arrival here. . . .<sup>34</sup>

County Attorney M. W. Sutton, on January 15, 1879, had sent the governor, now John P. St. John, a letter enclosing warrants for the

arrest of Dull Knife and other Cheyenne Indians and requesting a requisition on the governor of Nebraska for their deliverance. St. John answered that the Indians were in the custody of United States military authorities and were soon to be in Leavenworth for identification. Possibly because of this early request on the part of Ford county, the trial of the Indians was to be held in Dodge City. At any rate, on February 6, 1879, the governor sent this telegram to Sutton:

All that is left of Cheyenne raiders will be at Leavenworth soon—What can be done from your section of the state to aid in identifying them—Answer by mail.<sup>35</sup>

Mike's answer was handed to the governor by Bat Masterson:

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
DODGE CITY KANSAS, FEB 11TH 1879

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

JOHN P. ST. JOHN.

GOVERNOR OF KANSAS.

DEAR SIR,

This will introduce to you the bearer W. B. Masterson Sheriff of Ford County, who has the witnesses with him to identify the Cheyenne Indian prisoners.

He comes to you for instructions, as to the manner of proceeding in this matter of identification, a subject which is new to me, and that I do not thoroughly understand, and hence am unable to advise upon.

I would suggest, if not improper, that the Adjutant Genl accompany him to Ft. Leavenworth, and assist him in the matter.

Respectfully yours—

M. W. SUTTON  
County Attorney.<sup>36</sup>

Bat must have visited the governor on February 12 for on that date St. John telegraphed for passes which would provide Masterson and his four witnesses transportation from Topeka to Leavenworth.

The Dodge City *Times*, February 15, 1879, published a resume of what had thus far been accomplished and identified Bat's four companions:

#### IDENTIFYING THE CHEYENNES.

The remnant of the Cheyenne band arrived this week at Fort Leavenworth, from Fort Robinson, Neb. This remnant comprises that portion of the Cheyennes that escaped the slaughter at Camp Robinson, a few weeks ago. There are seven bucks in the band, together with fourteen squaws and papooses. These Indians are the remaining ones of the band that made an incursion through Kansas last September. Their operations of murder and depredations are familiar to our readers.

It will be remembered that a few weeks ago County Attorney Sutton filed complaint against Dull Knife and his band for the murder of five persons, who were killed during the raid. The complaints were filed with the Governor, who is aiding County Attorney Sutton in bringing the murderers to justice. The prisoners are in the hands of the military authorities. With a view of transferring the prisoners to the civil authorities, an identification of the murdering savages has been required. For this purpose, Sheriff W. B. Masterson left Tuesday night for Fort Leavenworth. He was accompanied by Deputy Sheriff C. E. Bassett, James Masterson, Capt. A. J. French and Kokomo Sullivan, who, it is believed, can identify the prisoners. These gentlemen are all old timers on the plains, and are familiar with Indians and Indian ways. Kokomo Sullivan (the first name is a sobriquet,) was a long time engaged as a scout. Capt. French experienced an episode with the Indians last September, as they passed Meade City. The Indians did not harm the inhabitants of the village, but killed Washington O'Connor as they were retiring from the settlement. The Captain concluded he had marvelously escaped murder, as Dull Knife and his band were on their murdering and depredating tour. Jim. Masterson has had experience with Indians. Bassett's long experience on the plains and knowledge of Indians, will be of service in the identification. Sheriff Masterson has had many engagements with Indians, and will be able to discriminate with good judgement. The party stopped over at Topeka, Wednesday [February 12], for instructions from the Governor, and the next day proceeded to Fort Leavenworth. They will probably return by the time this matter appears in print before our readers. If the Sheriff succeeds in making a proper identification of the Indian prisoners, they will be turned over to his charge and brought to Ford county for trial, which prosecution will be conducted by County Attorney Sutton.

The prisoners were heavily ironed and are now at Fort Leavenworth. The trial of these savages will add no little to the zest of an exciting life on this frontier, and will generally excite comment and interest.

At Fort Leavenworth identification was made and a transfer from military to civil control accomplished. The Leavenworth *Times*, February 16, 1879, reported:

#### DUSKY DEMONS.

THE CHEYENNE ROBBERS AND MURDERERS FALL AT LAST  
INTO THE HANDS OF THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES.  
THAT THEY WILL NEVER AGAIN RAVISH WOMEN  
AND KILL CHILDREN IS A CERTAINTY.  
THEY WERE TAKEN AWAY YESTERDAY TO BE LODGED  
IN THE FORD COUNTY JAIL FOR TRIAL.

Yesterday morning there gathered a throng of people about the Union Depot whose faces were a study; they had heard much of the atrocities committed by the renegade Cheyennes in Meade, Ford and other counties, and many of them being old frontiersmen said little. Their eyes betokened curiosity to see the devils who had desolated so many homes, and the firm set of lips of the "old timers," when their names were mentioned, indicated anything but a friendly feeling.

## THE PRISONERS.

At ten o'clock, Lieut. Pardee, of the Twenty-third Infantry, in command of a strong guard of soldiers, arrived at the depot with the prisoners, seven in number, the guard and the prisoners being in government wagons, drawn by four mules each. The command was halted at the corner of Cherokee and Front streets, and the soldiers ordered to get out of the wagons and keep

## CLOSE TO THE PRISONERS

while they were being transferred. The crowd of interested spectators meanwhile became so dense that it was necessary for the soldiers to use some force to keep the more eager men back. Lieut. Pardee, after examining a warrant presented by Adjutant General [P. S.] Noble, of Kansas, the following Indians were delivered from the military to civil jurisdiction:

Wild Hog, Old Crow, Big Head, Left Hand, Blacksmith, Porcupine and Nosey-Walker, making seven in all who had been identified except Old Crow, as participants in the crimes of murder, rape and robbery charged in the warrant. General Noble then transferred the prisoners to Sheriff W. B. Masterson, of Ford county, who took them in charge, and conducted them to one of the passenger rooms in the Union depot, all being in irons, except Old Crow. The latter is said by the army officers to have been a valuable, faithful and trustworthy scout of the Government, and one who bears a good reputation, and that belonging to the Crow Indians could have had no hand in the depredations of the Cheyennes.

## WILD HOG,

who is reputed to have been the worst of the band, in getting out of the wagon was forced to use a long piece of board for support, being yet weak from a recent attempt to commit suicide by stabbing himself with a pair of shears. The others all alighted nimbly as could be possible shackled as they were.

## IN THE DEPOT.

After they had been elbowed through the crowd into the passenger room, they were all seated in a row and it required all the patience that Sheriff Masterson's posse possessed to keep the crowd at a comfortable distance without force. Sheriff Lowe who was present knew some of the captives having at one time furnished them with beef, and in consequence had some conversation with them as did a *TIMES* representative. Mr. Lowe bought them some clay pipes, which after being filled were smoked by the prisoners with evident enjoyment.

One of the party, after passing the pipe to another, endeavored to say that he was no Cheyenne; that he was the baby of Three Bears, a noted Sioux. Old Crow, who is really an intelligent looking old fellow, had little to say, although he seemed to understand all that was going on about him. Wild Hog took a piece of silver, cut to represent the sun and attached to a chain from his neck, and handed it to Mr. Lowe, who read the words "Wild Hog," that were engraved on one side. He pretended to know no English, but Mr. A. J. French, who was one of the sheriff's posse, says he can speak the language very well.

The remainder of the prisoners seemed much broken down and sat with their heads resting in their hands, to all appearances unmindful of the excited audience about them. They were put on the train at 10:40 and under the care of Sheriff Masterson, his two brothers,<sup>27</sup> Mr. A. J. French and Mr. Bassett,



City Marshal of Dodge City, left for Topeka, from which place they will be conveyed to Dodge City, for trial, which will not take place until some time next June.

Traveling by way of Lawrence, Bat reached Topeka the first day and remained in that place overnight. The Topeka *Commonwealth*, February 16, 1879, described the journey that far:

#### DULL KNIFE'S BAND

The Indians who have lately been turned over to the county authorities of Ford County for trial were brought from Leavenworth yesterday, and placed in the Shawnee County jail over night. They are in charge of Sheriff W. B. Masterson, of Ford County, who is assisted by City Marshal Bassett, of Dodge City. The Indians are seven in number—all that remains of Dull Knife's band of ninety-one. The rest were killed at the time these were captured. Their names are Wild Hog, Old Crow, Big Head, Left Hand, Black Smith, Porcupine, and Nose Walker.

Big Head had one hand shot away and carries his arm in a sling. Left Hand and another were wounded in the legs, and limp painfully. All are heavily ironed, either hands or feet or both. They are strong, hard-looking men, with repulsive features, suggestive of their being murderers, as charged. The prosecution will probably be made for complicity in the outrages. Mr. Masterson and Mr. Bassett say positively that these are a part of Dull Knife's band. They were encamped at Dodge about a year, and they had frequent opportunities for becoming acquainted with them.

They are in a very desperate condition of mind, and would, it is thought, commit suicide if they had a chance. They will therefore not be allowed to use a knife and fork, but will convey the fare of the Hotel de Disbrow to their mouths with their dirty fingers.

The arrival of the Kansas Pacific train from the east was eagerly waited for by a crowd of probably one thousand people, who had come to see the "real live wild Indians." The prisoners were put into one of Terry's busses and conveyed to the jail.

Sheriff Masterson says that at Lawrence he had much trouble, and was obliged finally to fight his way. The first man he struck happened to be the City Marshal, who retaliated by taking Batt in charge. Explanations followed, and matters rightened. The prisoners will be taken to Dodge to-day via the Santa Fe.

The *Ford County Globe*, February 17, 1879, reported the band's arrival in Dodge City:

#### THE CHEYENNE PRISONERS.

PITIFUL REMNANTS OF A ONCE POWERFUL BAND.  
THEY ARE BROUGHT TO DODGE CITY FOR TRIAL.

The seven Cheyenne Indian prisoners arrived from Fort Leavenworth last Monday morning, in custody of W. B. Masterson, Sheriff of Ford county, assisted by City Marshal Chas. E. Bassett and Deputy Sheriff James Masterson. The train arrived about 5 o'clock and there being no carriage in waiting to receive our distinguished visitors, the motley band was compelled to walk up to the jail, a distance of several hundred yards. This was the longest walk they

had taken since leaving Leavenworth and it proved too laborious for the delicate health of one of the wounded chieftains, who, after limping and struggling along for some distance, sank helplessly to the ground, where he remained until a wheelbarrow was procured, upon which he was placed, and carted to his destination.

The Indians were placed in the jail, where they still remain, their hands and feet closely shackled. They sit in a row upon the damp floor of the dim dungeon with sorrow and despair deeply engraven upon their manly countenances. All hope of future happiness in this wicked world has forsaken their breasts. Death in any form would be welcomed by them as a healing balm to their bleeding hearts. In this desperate state of mind they would commit suicide if the least opportunity presented itself. But not the least murmur or sign of complaint escapes them. Believing, sincerely, that the bloody deed with which their hands are stained, was committed in the sight of their Great Spirit, and sanctioned by that Deity, they will never repent. As they have no interpreter, they do not attempt to converse or make known their desires, save that they are anxious to have their wives and children near them. As is truly characteristic of the noble race, they wish it to be said of them, after their death, as uttered by the immortal Logan, "there runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature." Their preliminary examination will take place in a week or ten days. Wild Hog is the principle chief. He accepts the situation with the dignity of a conquered General and receives the fruits of disaster with a countenance stern and unyielding.

Below we publish extracts from Leavenworth and Topeka papers [printed above] indicating great excitement manifested by the semi-civilized natives of those towns. At every station a mob of hoodlums assembled and made such demonstrations in their eagerness to see the Indians that Sheriff Masterson was compelled to use physical means in preventing his pets from being trampled upon. At Lawrence the mob was almost overpowering, and our officers were involved in a fight which resulted in victory for Dodge City, as usual. The Mayor, City Marshal and a large portion of the able bodied braves of Lawrence undertook to capture Masterson and his outfit, but were repulsed in a very neat and workmanlike manner. The Indians think a great deal of the Sheriff and heartily welcome him when he visits their prison. In this most trying hour of the noble Indian's life it is a remarkable fact that his appetite remains intact, and he feasts heartily three times a day. Sheriff Masterson and Marshal Bassett have a very high opinion of both Governor St. John and Gen. Pope, from whom they received very gentlemanly treatment.

There is less curiosity to see the captured Cheyennes among the citizens of Dodge than any town in the State. The sentiment here is that curiosity would be better exercised in getting close enough to see the Indian when he is on the war path—close enough to get a sight on him with a rifle or six-shooter. Our people are not the kind to turn out en masse to gaze at sick and wounded prisoners, and the arrival of seven thieving Mokes would have excited just about the same interest.

As our readers are familiar, the charge against these Indians is that of murder, committed during their raid through Kansas last fall.

The Dodge City *Times*, February 22, 1879, pursued the same line as did the *Globe* in praising the officers and people of Dodge and condemning those of Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Topeka:

## THE CHEYENNES.

THEIR SAFE ARRIVAL IN DODGE CITY AND CUSTODY WITHIN JAIL WALLS.

Sheriff W. B. Masterson and party, consisting of the City Marshal, Charles E. Bassett, officer James Masterson, Capt. A. J. French and Kokomo Sullivan, arrived in Dodge City Monday morning, having in charge the seven Cheyenne prisoners who were lately brought to Leavenworth from Fort Robinson. There was no demonstration in Dodge City whatever that awaited these prisoners, though their arrival was duly heralded. A solitary policeman, outside the usual depot attendants and passengers, was the only person who welcomed the gentle savage with a bloody stick to a safe lodgment in the Ford county jail. The prisoners were taken from the cars quietly and noiselessly, and thence to quarters in the jail, where they now remain.

The names of these red gentlemen, who some months ago paid the environs of Dodge City a visit, and who threw the city and country into such a tremor of excitement, are given in pure English as follows: Crow, Wild Hog, Tall Man, Old Man, Run Fast, Young Man and Frizzle Head. They are fine specimens of the genus Indian—stalwart braves—apparently comfortable under their distressing circumstances.

Some of these prisoners are suffering from wounds received during the slaughter at Camp Robinson. The wounds are not dangerous, however, and under proper treatment, which they are receiving, they will shortly recover. Wild Hog has an ugly wound in the left breast, caused by his own hand, while attempting to take his own life.

The prisoners are under the immediate charge of the humane jailor, Col. John W. Straughn, who will liberally provide for them in the comforts of prison fare, and such accommodations as are usually given prisoners. We visited the jail on Monday, in the capacity of a reporter, but we made no inquiries, and will give only such facts as we have learned through other sources. We know our anxious readers will look for elaborate details, but they must be content to feast upon a few bare facts. We have saved the labor of interviewing Mr. Lo, because we believe his broken English would afford little knowledge of his depressing condition. We know the prisoners will be kindly treated and amply provided for. An Indian is contented with a full stomach and plenty of tobacco. These luxuries will not be denied them. They will go far to render their condition comfortable, and thus allay any apprehension regarding an escape.

Sheriff Masterson and party speak in the highest terms of Governor St. John and Adjutant General Noble, for their kind treatment and assistance rendered them in executing the identification of the Cheyenne braves. Gen. Pope also treated the officers and identifiers with courtesy, and they are profuse in words of praise. But a couple of incidents occurred which marred the otherwise harmonious trip. The Sheriff of Leavenworth county and the Marshal and Mayor of Lawrence were more eager to pay homage to the stinking savage than render assistance to the officers. The ill-treatment and discourtesy by these officers is roundly condemned by Sheriff Masterson and party. Were they engaged in a similar service in Dodge City, no pains would be spared to make their work agreeable. But the infuriated mob, so anxious to feast upon a red savage, may in a measure be overlooked. It is not often such a curiosity is gratified, and while Sheriff Masterson and his menagerie of wild Indians were passing through the country, it is not to be wondered that somebody

"beat" his way to the show. And it happened to be the officers we mentioned.

The officers' account of the trip from Leavenworth to this city exhibits the morbid curiosity which seizes the noble denizen further down the plain. At every station, and far into the night, great crowds congregated at the depots, all eager to get a glimpse of the gentle savage. This was extremely embarrassing and annoying, and gave the party much trouble. The Indian took it, no doubt, as a great ovation intended for him. It is a proof of what penchant the American has for strange things, even if such things be no more than Indian savages and murderers. But it only excites the dread of these beings and renders fear more susceptible. How different with the people who have more knowledge of savage crimes and butchery. Not a ripple of excitement was observed as the Indian prisoners entered the village.

Mr. Lo, however, is not caring for all this. His inquiries are for Mrs. Squaw and Master Papoose. When the Indian dies he wants his family about him. He may little know the course he is to pursue; he awaits, nevertheless, with intense solicitude, having no knowledge, probably, what it all means. He is aware that he is disgraced by being in captivity. Could he wipe out that disgrace he would rapidly hie himself to the happy hunting grounds. The utmost precaution will be used, and to avoid suicide, the now tranquil savage will be carefully watched and no implement more dangerous than an iron spoon placed within his reach.

The preliminary trial of these prisoners will take place as soon as witnesses reach here. The examination will be conducted by County Attorney M. W. Sutton, whose recent successful prosecutions have been the admiration of a law-abiding people and a terror to evil-doers.

The chains which bound the Cheyenne prisoners belonged to the state of Kansas and not until he was reminded by Adjutant General Noble did Bat remember to return them to Topeka. He sent this letter of apology:

DODGE CITY KANSAS FEB. 20<sup>th</sup> 1879

P. S. NOBLE Esq  
Topeka, Kansas  
FRIEND NOBLE

I am in receipt of your letter this morning and I am Sorry I was So dilatory in Sending back the hand cuffs and leg Irons however I have Expressed them to your address [to]day and hope you will receive them all right. the Indians are all well and in good spirits but want their Squaws and paposes, which I am in hopes they may get

I am very respectfully

W. B. MASTERSON,

Sheriff Ford County<sup>88</sup>

The Cheyennes were given their preliminary examination in Dodge City but were granted a change of venue to Lawrence. On June 26, 1879, Governor St. John sent Bat passes on the railroad to transport the braves and five guards to their new place of trial. Bat and Charley Bassett returned to Dodge on June 29. The Indians were released in October, 1879, but their Ford county in-

carceration had a telling influence on the November election for sheriff.<sup>39</sup> This will be mentioned later in this section.

While Sheriff Bat Masterson was in eastern Kansas securing the Cheyenne prisoners two of his jail prisoners escaped in Dodge City. The *Globe*, February 17, 1879, said:

#### JAIL DELIVERY.

Last Saturday [February 15] evening about 8 o'clock two prisoners escaped from the Ford county jail and, like the Arab, folded their tents and silently stole away. Their names are G. U. Holcomb and Geo. Watkins. They were both under arrest for stealing about 75 head of cattle from Dunham & Ward, south of Cimarron station. The means by which they escaped was as follows: They were not considered desperate men and were accordingly allowed to remain in the outer prison during the day time. The iron cells or cages into which they were placed at night are about seven feet high and reach to within one foot of the ceiling of the jail. The ceiling is ordinary pine ceiling. On the day in question one of the prisoners secured some kind of a knife and climbing on top of the cell cut a hole through the thin ceiling and also through the floor above. Through this hole the two men crept and found themselves in the County Treasurer's office, which was unoccupied. They then gently opened the window on the east side of the room which opens out on an old shed on the east side of the Courthouse. Climbing out on the roof and from thence to the earth, they found themselves free men, with darkness to assist them in their escape.

It is a great wonder that prisoners have not taken advantage of this mode of escape from the jail before this, as the work of cutting a hole through two thicknesses of pine boards could be accomplished in one hour's time. By all means the county jail should be lined overhead with iron or something that would be proof against an ordinary pocket knife. Holcomb is a lawyer who practiced some time in Cimarron. Watkins was also a resident of Cimarron where his family now reside. Watkins was foolish for escaping, as he would not have been sentenced for more than a year, and then could have returned to his family. Now he is a fugitive and if he attempts to go to his family or have them come to him he will almost certainly be recaptured. His wife spent several weeks here and worked hard to secure leniency for her husband. She went to the cattle men from whom he had stolen the cattle and plead with them until she aroused their sympathy and made them promise to deal gently with her erring husband.

We cannot see any occasion to censure the officers. The commissioners should either make the jail more secure or employ a guard to watch the prisoners.<sup>40</sup>

Bat recaptured Holcomb on February 21. The *Ford County Globe*, February 25, 1879, reported:

#### A JAIL BIRD CAPTURED.

G. U. Holcomb, who escaped from the Ford county jail about ten days ago, was captured in Pueblo, Col., by Sheriff Masterson. The sheriff received news that Holcomb was traveling west by freight and took the first train in pursuit. When he arrived at Sherlock, fifteen miles this side of Lakin, he learned that

Holcomb had boarded the freight a few hours ahead. Masterson went on to Pueblo, where he arrived about the same time Holcomb did, and after a short search found him in South Pueblo. He immediately took the young truant under his wing and placed him in the Pueblo jail until the next train went east, when he escorted him to Dodge. The Pueblo officers were very obliging and offered all the assistance they could. Holcomb said he was expecting some money by mail to Pueblo and as soon as it arrived he intended to light out for the mines and mountains of Leadville. Alas, how his fond hopes were shattered.<sup>41</sup>

A week later, on February 26, Bat took Holcomb to Topeka to appear before the supreme court. The Topeka *Commonwealth*, February 28, 1879, told why:

Geo. Holcom, who was brought here by Sheriff Masterson, of Dodge City, on Wednesday, was taken before the Supreme Court yesterday on a writ of *habeas corpus*. The charge against him is stealing eighty head of cattle, in one of the Counties attached to Ford County for judicial purposes. The stock was driven into Ottawa County, and Holcom arrested. The legal point to be decided was the legality of the act attaching the County referred to, to Ford County, and so, the right of Ford County officials to detain him.

The *Commonwealth* mentioned the case again on March 1, 1879:

#### AN IMPORTANT CASE.

The *habeas corpus* case before the Supreme Court, which we mentioned yesterday morning, is likely to be a most important one, affecting persons who have heretofore been arrested for misdemeanors in the counties attached to Ford County for judicial purposes, and in case Holcom is released, the decision will cause the release of the remaining members of Dull Knife's band of Cheyennes, now in jail at Dodge City, awaiting trial. It is evident that if Ford County has no jurisdiction over the counties attached for that purpose to it, there is no county in the State which has. Nelson Adams, of Larned, is the attorney for Holcom. The State asked and obtained two days' time in which to file briefs. The opinion will be delivered today perhaps, and perhaps not until Monday. Hon. J. G. Mohler, of Salina, has been retained to defend the Indians.

Bat brought his prisoner back to Dodge City on March 5. The Dodge City *Times*, March 8, 1879, said:

#### THE HABEAS CORPUS CASE.

Sheriff Masterson returned from Topeka Wednesday morning, with the prisoner, G. U. Holcomb, who had been taken before the Supreme Court under a writ of *habeas corpus*. The point the prisoner's attorneys wished to determine was the constitutionality of the act attaching unorganized counties to Ford county for judicial purposes. This matter involves the legality of the conviction of prisoners who were tried at the last term of the District Court, and the arrest of those now awaiting trial. The matter for the State was presented to the court by M. W. Sutton, County Attorney, and Gen. H. B. Johnson, of Topeka. The court will render a decision on the 31st of March.

The opinion of the court, delivered by Associate Justice David J. Brewer on April 25, 1879, was that "the petitioner [Holcomb] is not entitled to his discharge, and must be remanded to the custody of the sheriff of Ford county; and it is so ordered."<sup>42</sup>

Holcomb was not tried at the June term of the Ford county district court. His ultimate fate remains unknown.

The March, 1879, resignation of County Commissioner George Cox revealed the less than cordial relations which existed between the commissioners and Sheriff Masterson, a situation which had not before been mentioned in the papers. The *Globe*, March 18, 1879, reported:

#### RESIGNATION OF GEO. B. COX.

By reference to the official proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners, it will be seen that Geo. B. Cox, chairman of the Board, has resigned and that his resignation has been accepted. The cause of his resignation, as he states in his letter, is a lack of harmony between other county officers and the Board which, he says, would deter him from discharging his official duties. For a long time the relations of the Sheriff and the Board have not been amicable, and frequently high words have been spoken. Mr. Cox being naturally of a very retiring disposition and not, like most men in office, always ready to maintain his opinions and enforce his ideas at all hazards, just quietly resigns and will have nothing more to do in an official capacity. Many will regret very much to hear of his resignation, as he is a leading business man, a large property holder and a man in whom the people have confidence. His place on the Board will be supplied by J. B. Means, the County Clerk, until the Board see fit to appoint some one to fill the vacancy, or an election is held.

When the Santa Fe railroad contested right of way through the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas—the Royal Gorge—with the Denver and Rio Grande Western Bat Masterson was asked for help. The *Ford County Globe*, March 25, 1879, failed to mention how the sheriff of a Kansas county could legally aid a private corporation in another state:

#### TROUBLE AHEAD.

Last Thursday evening Sheriff Masterson received a telegram from officers of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe road at Canon City, asking if he could bring a posse of men to assist in defending the workmen on that road from the attacks of the Denver and Rio Grande men, who were again endeavoring to capture the long contested pass through the canon. Masterson and Deputy Duffey immediately opened a recruiting office, and before the train arrived Friday morning had enrolled a company of thirty-three men. They all boarded the morning train, armed to the teeth, Sheriff Masterson in command, and started for the scene of hostilities.

The Denver News of Wednesday published an item to the effect that trouble is again brewing between the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe folks and the D. & R. G. road with regard to the right of way through the Grand Canon of

the Arkansas. Litigation has been pending several months, and the News declares that the Rio Grande people want to break the recently entered into lease, and if the decision of the U. S. court is in their favor they will hold the canon. The Santa Fe folks are arming their men with weapons and making every arrangement to repel with force any attempt of the Rio Grande people to take possession of the canon upon order of the court. On Saturday last a train left the end of the Santa Fe's track for Grand Canon loaded with provisions, tents and a force of men, ostensibly laborers. Since that time until yesterday a number of cases of ammunition were sent after the men, and the intent of this action is clearly plain. The whole proceeding has been conducted with great secrecy, and to keep the knowledge of it from the Rio Grande men a new force of employees was put in charge of the trains.

If the decision of the Supreme Court is in favor of the Rio Grande, the managers of the road are going to take possession of the canon. They had a little experience in hold-out against an armed Santa Fe force some time ago, and stood the siege pretty well. Gen. Palmer is at Colorado Springs, aware of every move taken by the Santa Fe people, though they are carrying them on so secretly.

"Sheriff W. B. Masterson and thirty men left Dodge Saturday last [March 22], for Canon City, where they were called in anticipation of railroad troubles, but we do not hear of any," said the *Dodge City Times*, March 29, 1879.

On April 5 Bat and his boys came back to Dodge for a weekend. The *Globe*, April 8, 1879, reported:

Sheriff Masterson and several of the boys returned from Canon City last Saturday evening, where they had been guarding the canon through which the A., T. & S. F. road is building its branch from Canon City to Leadville. The boys report having had an easy time, nothing to do, plenty of chuck and \$3 a day from the railroad company. They spent Sunday in the city and went back on Monday to resume their duties. So far there has been no trouble, and about five miles of the road is completed. About 100 men are employed just to see that no attempts are made by the Rio Grande men to drive the A., T. & S. F. workmen from the disputed canon.

The local papers did not state whether Bat went back to Colorado with the men but possibly he did for his name does not appear in the *Dodge City* press until the *Globe*, June 10, 1879, stated that he had again left for Canon City:

#### BOUND FOR THE CANON.

In response to a telegram from headquarters of the A. T. & S. F. railroad, Sheriff Masterson opened a volunteer recruiting office in this city, and half an hour from the receipt of said telegram he was whirling westward with an engine and one coach containing sixty men, at the rate of forty miles an hour.<sup>43</sup>

Having left on June 9, Bat and his posse returned on June 12. The *Dodge City Times*, June 14, 1879, reported:

Sheriff Masterson and party of fifty men returned from Pueblo on Thursday



morning. He had been placed in charge of the railroad property there, but surrendered his authority upon writs being served by U. S. officers. The Denver & Rio Grand has possession. And "our boys" didn't smell any powder. Their voice is for peace.

More routine sheriff's duties now occupied Bat's time. On July 1 he delivered another prisoner to the state penitentiary. The *Globe*, July 8, 1879, said: "The only prisoner sentenced this term was Vanderhoff, for stealing \$25 of Mrs. D. B. Lewis. He went 'up' for one year. The Sheriff took him 'down' last Tuesday."<sup>44</sup>

The Leavenworth *Times*, July 6, 1879, apparently was a little confused by all the Mastersons when it reported:

James Masterson, the sheriff of Ford county, who knoweth not the name of fear, brought E. Vanderhoff to the penitentiary as his Fourth of July party, and turned him over. He has one year for grand larceny.

On July 22, 1879, the *Ford County Globe* reported that "W. B. Masterson, last week, purchased a house and lot of G. M. Hoover on 2nd avenue," and on August 2 the *Times* said that "Sheriff Masterson has taken a few days' visit to Wichita."<sup>45</sup>

Bat was soon back in Dodge and once again on the trail of horse thieves. The Dodge City *Times*, August 30, 1879, reported in its Spearville column:

A valuable team of horses was stolen on Sunday [August 24] from James Vandermark, six miles south of town. The owner and a neighbor, J. B. Gray, traced the thief across the river and then hurried to Dodge City, soliciting the aid of Sheriff Masterson, who at once recognized the rascal by the description given him, and is confident of his capture. On his advice the Board of County Commissioners offered a reward of \$50 for the apprehension and conviction of the horse thief.

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County Attorney Sutton, Sheriff Masterson and Register Muller were down the road Wednesday [August 27] to make arrangements for the capture of horse thieves.

Another of Bat's prisoners had made a break for freedom on August 25 but this time not for long. The *Times*, August 30, 1879, put the blame on the board of county commissioners:

A prisoner broke from the Ford county jail on Monday last, but was promptly captured. We are not surprised at this, for the walls of the jail are barely security against the escape of prisoners. With a board flooring above for a roof, and a dirt floor underneath, unless there is a constant and vigilant watch, the prisoners are liable to escape with little effort on their part. The prisoner on Monday escaped by digging a hole under the door. Some time ago two prisoners escaped by cutting a hole through the board floor above. The wretched and insecure condition of the jail is a matter that demands the serious attention of the Board of County Commissioners. Upon

them alone rests the responsibility of the security of the prisoners; for the insecure jail is no fault of the sheriff's officers, who are liable for the safe custody of the prisoners. The people naturally look to the sheriff and deputies for a proper discharge of their duties; but under the present management of affairs the officers are almost rendered powerless. The entire community is at the peril of horse thieves and robbers. To the community the sheriff's officers are the protectors of the lives and property. These officers should have such means at their command to carry out the responsible duties of their trusts. The proper thing just now for the Board of Commissioners to perform, is to repair the jail quarters and render them fit for the confinement of prisoners.

Horse thieves again were on the young sheriff's agenda late in August. The *Times*, September 6, 1879, reported the capture of four:

#### CAPTURE OF HORSE THIEVES.

Sheriff Masterson and officers captured in the city, Friday last [August 29], two horse thieves, who had stolen stock nine miles north of Great Bend. The prisoners had a preliminary examination before Justice Cook, and were held over in the sum of \$800 each, but were subsequently taken to Great Bend, where they will no doubt be held for trial. A third person engaged in stealing with these two, managed to elude the vigilance of the officers and escaped. The prisoners gave fictitious names before their trial, thus attempting to avoid identification.

On Sunday two more persons were arrested, charged with horse stealing, and having in their possession fourteen head of horses, supposed to be stolen, which they had secreted on the range south. The prisoners were taken before Justice Cook, on Monday, but the trial was postponed for ten days.

On Wednesday Sheriff Masterson received a dispatch from J. B. Matthews, at Fort Griffin, Texas, telling him to hold the two men arrested by him on Sunday. The prisoners' names are Charley and Jack Lyon, and they had eight horses stolen from Matthews. These horses are in possession of the Sheriff.

Horse stealing has taken a fresh start in the country, and since the wholesale conviction of thieves last winter that crime had not been on the rampage until within the past few months. The officers of Ford county are on the alert and watch with a vigilant eye every suspicious character lurking in our midst.

"County Attorney Sutton and Sheriff Masterson went to Great Bend, Wednesday last, to be present at the trial of the horse thieves," said the Dodge City *Times*, September 13, 1879.

Bat visited Topeka on September 15, this time bringing with him an unfortunate person sentenced to the state hospital. The Dodge City *Times*, September 20, 1879, stated:

Louis Snizek, the person adjudged to be insane, was taken by Sheriff Masterson to the Insane Asylum, at Topeka, on Monday morning last. Snizek's case is a hopeful one, and he may soon be entirely cured of lunacy.<sup>46</sup>

"Messrs. [C. E.] Beeson, Masterson and [G. M.] Hoover have gone to Kansas City to attend the fair," recorded the *Globe*, September 23, 1879.

In early October Bat was on the trail of some reward money which he apparently never obtained:

Dodge City Kan  
Oct 2nd 1879

Gov. JOHN P. ST. JOHN  
Topeka Kansas  
Dr. Sir,

Will you be so kind as to inform me in regard to the reward offered for one Dan Henson—alias Cherokee Dan. . The reward was offered by Ex. . Gov. . Geo. T. Anthony. . Amount \$500.00 five Hundred Dollars. . I think I can arrest him with some little Expende and if the reward is Still Standing I will make an Effort. . it was for the murder of one F. U Wyman in Commanche Co. Kan

You will oblige me by an immediate answer

Very respectfully  
W. B. MASTERTON  
Sheriff  
Ford Co Kan 47

On October 7, 1879, Bat wrote another letter to the governor this time asking for information concerning the reward offered for John "Scotty" Scott who murdered William Taylor on June 3, 1873. W. H. Ward, the governor's secretary told Bat the \$500 reward was still in effect.<sup>48</sup> There is no record of Bat's capturing Scott, one of Dodge's earliest murderers.

As November approached the newspapers of Dodge City featured more and more election news. On September 16, 1879, the *Globe* contained this letter from a subscriber:

#### CANDIDATES FOR SHERIFF.

Speareville, Kan, Sept 14.

EDITOR *GLOBE*:—Will you be kind enough to let the farmers of the east end of Ford county know through the columns of your paper who the candidates are that are seeking the office of Sheriff this fall, besides Masterton? We have enough of the Masterton rule.

SUBSCRIBER.

For the information of our subscriber we will say that as yet we have heard the name of but one man mentioned, aside from the present sheriff, and that is George T. Hinkel, of this city, who would make an excellent officer. He is not seeking the office, but would certainly make a strong candidate.

The *Times*, long a pro-Masterton organ, immediately came out with this rebuttal:

SPEAREVILLE, KAS., Sept. 17th.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *TIMES*.

In reply to a communication published in the last issue of the Ford County *Globe*, in reference to candidates for the office of Sheriff, we beg to state that the most diligent inquiries among farmers and settlers in this neighborhood have thoroughly convinced us that W. B. Masterton is beyond doubt their

choice for the office. Judging from the fact, that no one acquainted with the excellent success with which he has so far discharged the duties of his office, could be induced to cast his vote for another candidate; and the high esteem and respect with which Masterson is regarded by all authorities, not only in this, but in other counties of this State as well, is sufficient guarantee of his superior qualifications for the office. Outside of a few soreheads, only the friends of evil-doers desire the election of a man who will as Sheriff be less dangerous to them and their associations.

W. H. LYBRAND.<sup>69</sup>

Bat was nominated on an Independent ticket to run for re-election. The *Times*, October 25, 1879, said of the candidate for sheriff:

#### THE INDEPENDENT NOMINEES.

The Independent Convention, held at Dodge City, on Saturday last [October 18], was composed of the representative men of Ford county. Each precinct was fully and fairly represented by first-class and honorable men. The harmony of the proceedings and the unanimity by which the nominees were accepted, is a guarantee that there will be a triumphant success at the polls.

W. B. MASTERSON, the nominee for the office of Sheriff, is the efficient incumbent of that office. Bat is acknowledged to be the best Sheriff in Kansas. He is the most successful officer in the State. He is immensely popular and generally well liked. Horse thieves have a terror for the name of Masterson. He was the unanimous choice of the convention, and will be elected by a heavy majority. Every hater of horse thieves will rejoice over Bat's triumphant election; and the friends of good order and peace will contribute to his success.

The election was hotly contested. Bat's opponents used the expensive Cheyenne Indian trial as a major issue against his re-election. The *Ford County Globe*, a determinedly anti-Masterson paper, opened the ball with this preparatory statement of October 21, 1879:

#### AT LIBERTY.

As will be noticed by an article from the Lawrence Tribune on the fourth page of this paper, the Cheyenne Indians have been released from custody and are now at liberty. A large number of witnesses were present and the defendants were ready for trial. The prosecution was almost entirely abandoned, only a faint effort for a continuance being made. There is a suit now pending against Ford County for a large bill of costs in this case, and as will be seen by the proceedings of the Board, J. C. Waters, of Topeka, has volunteered his services to defend the county against paying these costs, amounting to several thousand dollars. The suits against the county are brought by W. B. Masterson, Sheriff.

Next week, the *Globe* began to take pot shots at Masterson and his Independent cocandidates:

Just think of Ford county having to pay \$4000 for the simple arrest of seven lousy Cheyenne Indians and that without even an effort to convict them. Hoover is against all such frauds. Don't his vote show it on Sheriff's bills?

Masterson and Sutton made it hot for the Nations Wards whom they so cunningly conspired against, and brought to Ford county for the people to look at. They now desire to make it hot for the poor tax payers of the county, by getting them to pay the bills incurred in their innocent amusement. The Governor has gone back on them. He hasn't any funds on hand to give them so they have to fall back on the dear people of Ford county. Let them appeal to the Secretary of the Interior, Carl Schurz.<sup>50</sup>

Other expenses must have played a part in the campaign for on October 25, 1879, the *Times* said: "Bat Masterson is Sheriff of thirteen unorganized counties. Of course it costs something to run so much territory."

In northeast Ford county the *Speareville News*, October 25, 1879, also used the Cheyennes as ammunition against the Independent ticket:

Mr. Masterson has already received about three hundred dollars on the Cheyenne Indian account, and he and some others have instituted suit against Ford county for twenty-one hundred dollars more. Joe Waters, attorney for the Santa Fe, has volunteered to defend the county. Where is Mr. Sutton?

R. B. Fry, new editor of the *News*, pulled no punches in his campaign against Bat. On November 1, 1879, he published several items designed to injure the sheriff's chances at the polls:

#### DODGE-OZED.

The little Bull dozed on us the other night, because we saw proper to use our influence against him in the coming election, by using such weapons as he has deliberately placed in our hands. And we here emphatically reiterate that we never have, to our knowledge, nor never will support a man for an official position the second time, that during that time, has been a law breaker himself. And now voters' for the "Doze" "I am going to make this a personal matter and follow you up and if I hear you saying any thing more about me I will shoot you through the g-t-s, and when I come, you be prepared". Personally we have nothing against Mr. Masterson, officially we have; and whenever Mr. Masterson or any other man places themselves before the public, they become public property, and we shall handle them as such, in accordance with their deserts.

N. B.—For the want of space, and the respect we entertain for our patrons, we omit the obscene portion of the "doze."

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We understand that "Bat Masterson" is going to shoot his way into the office of sheriff. This manner of conducting a canvass may do in Mississippi, but not in Ford county; many that had intended to support "Bat" will not do it now.

H.

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We understand that Mr. Masterson has introduced the Yazoo plan in Ford county.

D.

There is a report being circulated that J. M. Stevenson had to pay Mr. Masterson for hunting and catching his horse, and thief. We are informed by Mr. Stevenson that such is not the case, it is also substantiated by Mr. Myton, who was present at the time Mr. S. offered to pay him. We make this voluntary correction, through justice to Mr. Stevenson, and Mr. Masterson as well, notwithstanding we are opposing Mr. M's reelection, we propose to be fair in the matter, and use such weapons, only, as he has forged himself.

Mr. Stevenson himself came to Bat's aid through the *Dodge City Times*, November 1, 1879:

I desire to inform the people of Ford county that all parties circulating the report that Bat Masterson charged me \$25 or any other amount, for the finding and return of my stolen pony last fall, is telling an unmitigated falsehood as was ever uttered by any evil-minded persons. My transactions with Mr. Masterson have always been perfectly satisfactory. I expect to vote for him and work for his election.

JOHN M. STEVENSON.

SPEAREVILLE, Oct. 29, 1879.

The combination was too great, however, and the Independent ticket went down to defeat on November 4, 1879. Bat was beaten in all six of Ford county's voting areas. His final tally was 268 votes to George T. Hinkle's 404. Whether Bat was beaten as an individual or because he was one of the "gang," as represented by the Independent ticket, is a matter of open speculation. At any rate the entire party fell, soundly defeated by the "Peoples'" ticket.

The *Times*, November 8, 1879, mused over the blow:

There is a good deal of speculation as to the causes of the late defeat in Ford county, of the Independent ticket. The reasons given would fill a large volume; but we conjecture the most powerful influence was in the beer keg; and of course people fighting for honesty and reform wouldn't use money.

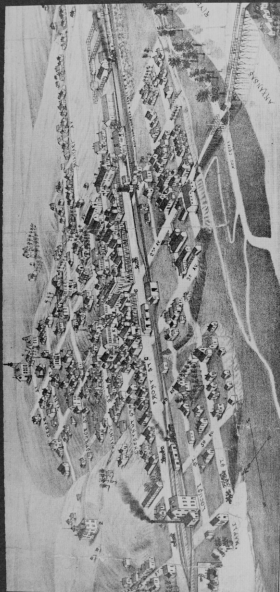
According to the *Times*, November 15, the Peoples' party was not the only group glad to see the defeat of Sheriff Masterson:

Since the success of the Peoples' ticket horse thieves have become emboldened. A fine span of mules was stolen from J. H. Werner in the Windthorst settlement, a few nights ago. The thief had previously held a parley with the owner of the mules, and the thief expressed satisfaction over the defeat of Sheriff Masterson. That night the mules were stolen.

Bob Fry of the *Speareville News* continued to publish articles detrimental to the character of Bat Masterson even after the election was over. Two of them appeared in the November 8, 1879, issue of the *News*:

We hear that Bat. Masterson said he was going to whip every s--- of a b---- that worked and voted against him in the county.

The above was given us on the best authority and taking into consideration the source of our information and the fact that two or three citizens already



Source: Redman, W.

1. Court House.
2. School House.
3. U. S. Signal Service Office.
4. Old Fellows Hall.
5. A. T. & S. P. R. R. Depot.
6. Post Office, Lloyd Shinn, P. M.
7. Dodge City Union Mill, H. F. May & Co., Prop. &
8. Methodist Episcopal Church.
9. Presbyterian.
10. Roman Catholic.
11. Union.

BIRDS EYE VIEW OF

## DODGE CITY, KANS.

COUNTY SEAT OF FORD COUNTY

1882

POPULATION : 200

- D—Dodge City Town, N. R. Klaine Edy and Prop.  
 E—Ford Co. (Shake, Pratt & Shinn, Edy and Prop.)  
 F—Dodge House, Carr & Boyd, Prop.  
 G—Lows  
 H—South Side House, North end of Bridge.  
 J—Grand Western Hotel.  
 K—Wright House.

Black & Pearl, Livingstone, W. W. W.



Survivors of the last Indian raid in Kansas (September, 1878), these seven Cheyennes were photographed April 30, 1879, on the steps of the Ford county courthouse at Dodge City where they had been taken to stand trial for murder.

Various authorities have identified them as: top row—Tangled Hair (or Frizzle Hair or Wakabish), Left Hand (or Manitou or Rain in the Face), Crow (or Old Crow), Porcupine (or Left Hand or White Antelope); bottom row—Wild Hog, George Reynolds (interpreter), Old Man (or Noisy Walker), Blacksmith (or Muskekon). The bearded man at the top is probably Franklin G. Adams, first long-time secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society.



have been fearfully beaten, by himself and friends, would give the above statement a credence, that but few would attempt to deny. We publish in this issue, a statement of Chas. Roden, one of the men that he should have assaulted, of the manner in which he was attacked, also after he had went out on the street, he was searched for pistols and his discovery afterwards, that his pocketbook was missing, carries with it a degree of conviction that the above threat was made and deliberately being carried out. We have talked with several of Mr. M[']s. supporters and everyone without an exception, condemn such a course on his part. The question remains, if the above reports are true, how long will the citizens of Ford County permit this to go on.

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(CORRESPONDENCE)

SPEAREVILLE, Nov. 6, 1879.

EDITOR NEWS: Being in Dodge City on a visit in company with some ladies, and while walking down Main street and in front of Col. Jones office. Mr. Jones called me in to have a little talk. When all at once Sheriff Masterson came in, stepping in front of me and said: "You have been doing good work down in the East end," and before I had time to reply, he struck me several times; after I had got out on the street, some official, I believe it was the sheriffs brother, searched my pockets, he said to see if I had any pistol, but did not find any. When I got ready to go home I felt in my pocket for my pocket-book to pay my bills and found it gone. I would advise every person from the East-end, that voted the Peoples' ticket to be on their guard.

CHAS. RODEN.

It seemed that Mr. Roden was telling something less than the truth for on November 15, 1879, the *News* published a letter from Col. T. S. Jones, a prominent Dodge City attorney and owner of the office in which the altercation took place, which placed a different light on the matter:

EDITOR SPEAREVILLE NEWS: In justice to myself, as well as to Mr. Masterson I wish to correct some erroneous impressions as to the difficulty which took place between Mr. Chas. Roden and Sheriff Masterson in my office a few days since, an incorrect report of which was given in the last Speareville News signed by Roden containing statements untrue and unjust.

Mr. Roden and myself were engaged in a friendly conversation when Mr. Masterson entered my office, in response to an invitation extended him during the early part of the afternoon, as I wished to see him in reference to a matter of business. Roden was standing up and in the act of leaving, when Masterson came in, they met face to face and to all appearances the greeting between them was mutually friendly, soon after which a conversation commenced between them, in which Masterson accused Roden of using language against him before the election, which was untrue and which he had no right to do. Roden replying, that was alright.

They then assumed the attitude of belligerents, Roden putting his right hand in his rear pocket, evidently for the purpose of intimidating Masterson and making him believe he intended something more serious. Masterson immediately seizing him by the hand dealt him several severe blows, saying at

the same time "pull it, if you can." Roden finally made an unceremonious exit from the scene of strife into the street and from thence into Mr. Mueller's shoe shop. Masterson was unarmed. While fighting is to be deprecated, frankness impels me to the belief, that in this instance, there was a merited rebuke visited upon the person of the wrong-doer. Your

T. S. JONES.

The above communication from Col. Thomas S. Jones of Dodge City puts a different feature on the case. The columns of the *News* are always open for controversy in a courteous manner.

A footnote to the character of Bat's accuser, Charles Roden, was printed in the *Speareville News* just two weeks later, November 29, 1879. Roden, it seems, had been engaged in thievery at Spearville, storing the loot in his house. When arrested he gave bond to appear the next day but skipped town singing, according to Editor Fry, "Oh! for a lodge in some vast wilderness."

Of course, Bat was not one to take the accusations of Bob Fry charitably. He sent this rebuttal through the editor of the *Dodge City Times*, November 15, 1879:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

In answer to the publication made by Bob Fry of the *Speareville News*, asserting that I made threats that I would lick any s--- of a b---- that voted or worked against me at the last election, I will say it is as false and as flagrant a lie as was ever uttered; but I did say this: that I would lick him the s--- of a b---- if he made any more dirty talk about me; and the words s--- of a b---- I strictly confined to the *Speareville* editor, for I don't know of any other in Ford county.

W. B. MASTERSON.

Bat's retort had its effect. The *Times*, November 22, 1879, reported that "Bob Fry, of the *Speareville News*, exhibited to the Hon. Nelson Adams, while on the train going west the other evening, a self-cocking pistol, that he was carrying for Sheriff Masterson. Better hitch yourself to a cannon, Bob."

Next, Bat was caught up in the tangle of jurisprudence. The *Ford County Globe*, November 18, 1879, reprinted an article from the Buckner (later Jetmore) *Independent* and added some comment of its own:

#### THE HORSE THIEVES RELEASED.

It seems that there were some thirty horses stolen from Milton Harrison, of the Pan Handle, who with a few companions followed and found the horses in the vicinity of Hays City, in the possession of W. B. Rogers and four other men, who were and are supposed to be the thieves who stole the horses from the Pan Handle. He took his horses and the thieves and arrived at Hays City on election day; lodged the prisoners in jail and had them detained a couple of days.

For some reason unknown to us and to the sorrow of every law-loving citizen, Mr. Harrison and party pursued their journey without obtaining the proper papers to take the prisoners to Texas, and arrived at Dodge City on the evening of the 13th inst. They turned the prisoners over to W. B. Masterson, sheriff of Ford county, who, Mr. Harrison says, promised to return them to him. But the prisoners succeeded in getting the ear of M. W. Sutton, the County Attorney of Ford county, who filed a petition before the Hon. Probate Judge of said county, asking for a writ of habeas corpus. The said sheriff made the following answer.

STATE OF KANSAS, Co. of Ford.

To the Probate Court: I hereby state that I hold the within named parties without any authority whatever; that I have had no commitment of them.

W. B. MASTERSON,  
Sheriff.

We are informed that the sheriff did not notify Mr. Harrison that the writ was served on him until some time after the prisoners had been released.

This release may be justifiable under the law, for the reason that Mr. Harrison ought to have obtained, to say the least, a warrant, if not a requisition at Hays, to give him the authority to remove the prisoners. But notwithstanding Mr. Harrison did not fulfill the requirements of the law, his intentions were undoubtedly to do so, and we look upon it as Mr. Masterson's express and official duty to have notified Mr. Harrison of the writ, and we can not understand why he did not so do.—Buckner Independent.

The above detailed statement as given in the "Independent" is substantially correct as far as the theft is concerned, and the arrest of the guilty parties and lodging them in our jail for safe keeping as well as the release that followed. We think that there are other officers that are equally as liable for this wholesale jail delivery as Mr. Masterson, our Sheriff. We find that the county-attorney Mike Sutton lent a willing hand to assist these thieves out of their trouble—instead of informing Mr. Harrison that he was doing an illegal act and instructing him how to proceed, so that he might bring to justice the parties who had robbed him out of all he possessed; instead of counseling the thieves,—we say it would look much better if Sutton had been on the other side of the question, but he was not, as the facts in the case will show.

He filed with the Probate Court, N. B. Klaine, publisher of the Times, (a man that talks about "rings, fraud," etc.) an affidavit setting forth the illegal restraint and incarceration of these thieves, and prays that a writ of habeas corpus issue from said court so that these parties may have a hearing and show cause why they should not be released. The court promptly issued said writ and a hearing was had, and, of course, the parties were released, as they say, "on the ground that they were illegally held and that no one appeared against them." That, also, may be true. Not a single attorney in the city knew anything about this case outside of Sutton. The probate court didn't even continue the case sufficiently long to get word to the party that brought them here so that he might give an explanation of his acts, and we doubt very much whether Mr. Klaine cared to do so.

The whole transaction was done after night or so early in the morning that none but the trio know what was being done in this honorable (?) court. At all events it was done before the time had arrived for Mr. Harrison to go to the Sheriff and reclaim the parties he had turned over to him for safe keeping.

and when he did go, imagine his surprise, when he is informed by the Sheriff that they had been legally released. Klaine may possibly be enabled to explain to the people in his next issue that this was a square deal, right and just and all that sort of thing; but we venture the assertion that this is a far greater ring than he would have the people believe was inaugurated at the late election.

Bat answered the charges in the *Dodge City Times*, November 22, 1879:

A CARD.

"We are informed that the Sheriff did not notify Mr. Harrison that the writ was served on him until some time after the prisoners had been released."

The above quoted words are from the *Buckner Independent* and commented on by the *Ford County Globe*. In response thereto, I will say that I had a writ of habeas corpus served on me in the evening about 5 o'clock, and issued by the Probate Judge of Ford county, commanding me to have the defendants B. W. Rogers et al, before the Probate Court at ten o'clock the following day, and to show by what authority I held the above named defendants; and I will state here my reasons for not informing the parties plaintiff in the above cause: that when the hour of ten o'clock came the following day, that none of the parties plaintiff could be found, with the exception of one, and he was in such a beastly state of intoxication that he could not be aroused; and I am positive that if I had been able to have got him on his feet he would not have known the difference between a writ of habeas corpus and a Texas steer. When he turned the prisoners over to me he conducted himself in a turbulent and quarrelsome manner.

The defendants told me while in my charge that they were willing to be turned over to some legal and responsible officer, and be taken back to Texas for trial; that they had not stolen the horses, and were prepared to prove it; but they did object to being turned over to a drunken mob, and be taken out and hung without jury or trial, as the party in charge had threatened to do so as soon as they were far enough away from Dodge to be safe.

W. B. MASTERSON.

Retaliation of a sort occurred on November 30 when Bat swore out a warrant for the arrest of the *Globe* editor, D. M. Frost. The *Globe*, on December 2, 1879, was the first to report the arrest:

ARRESTED.

Again the *GLOBE* has a choice morsel of news for its readers. The election excitement had about subsided, the *Times* had exhausted its stock of weeping and wailing, and a quiet spell seemed inevitable, when, on Sunday evening last, W. B. Masterson, Sheriff of Ford county and Deputy United States Marshal, relieved the monotony by arresting D. M. Frost, one of the editors of this paper, on a United States warrant, issued by United States Commissioner R. G. Cook. The complaint, or information upon which the warrant was issued was signed and sworn to by W. B. Masterson, and charges Mr. Frost with having violated that portion of the United States Statutes which prohibits the buying or selling of stolen government property. The date of the transaction is something over a year ago, at which time it is alleged that Mr. Frost

received some government stores from Sargeant Evarts, an employee of the Quartermaster's department at Fort Elliott, Texas.

Mr. Frost was taken before his Honor, United States Commissioner R. G. Cook, who set December 18th as the time for holding the preliminary examination, and required the defendant to give a bond for his appearance on that day in the gentle sum of five thousand dollars. The value of the goods alleged to have been purchased was about one hundred and forty dollars. The bond was given with neatness and dispatch, and it would have been just as promptly forthcoming had it been fifty thousand instead of five.

We do not know whether it is the intention of the prosecuting parties to hang the defendant on a sour apple tree, burn him at the stake, or imprison him for life in the bastille on a bread and water diet, but it is evident that they would "smile all over their faces and half way down their backs" to see him in either of the above predicaments, as their love and affection for him is not of that tender and sympathetic nature which is said to have existed in the breast of the Saviour when he sacrificed his life to save a lost and ruined community.

The affair is liable to cause Mr. Frost considerable trouble and expense, but his vast fortune will be poured out like water from the clouds to secure his vindication. But if, on the other hand, it shall be proved that he has been systematically plundering the government of the United States and wearing government socks purchased from one of the brave defenders of his country, then we shall be tempted to place our right hand upon our left breast and swear a mighty oath that the human race has lost its virtue, the devil is a saint and "things are not what they seem."

The *Globe* will endeavor to keep its numerous intelligent readers posted on the progress of the case and large posters will be struck announcing the locality and hour for the hanging to take place.

And now in conclusion we will suggest that if the great and good Nancy Balderstone of the *Times* wishes to offer an exhortation on the subject of honesty, morality and the degeneration of our race, the present is a fit moment for him to "shoot his little wad."

The *Dodge City Times*, December 6, 1879, went to great pains to report the arrest as if the principal were not the editor of a rival newspaper but merely another unfortunate:

#### ARREST OF D. M. FROST.

D. M. Frost, editor of the *Ford County Globe*, was arrested on Sunday last by W. B. Masterson, Deputy U. S. Marshal, and taken before R. G. Cook, U. S. Commissioner, to answer to the complaint sworn to by W. B. Masterson, which alleges that on the 1st day of May, 1878, D. M. Frost did obtain 300 pounds of white lead, two gallons of varnish, three kegs nails, a lot of stationery, to the value of \$127 54, the property of the United States; and that he did unlawfully, wilfully, feloniously, knowingly steal, take this property contrary to the statutes, peace and dignity of the United States, obtaining said property of Jos. Evarts, a soldier of the 19th Infantry, employed and entrusted with the care of said property belonging to the United States; said Frost knowing that said Evarts was a soldier and employed by the Government, that said Jos. Evarts had no right to sell the property of the United States; and that

Frost did conceal and aid to conceal, with intent to convert to his own use, the articles mentioned; that said property had been embezzled and purloined by Jos. Evarts, said Frost knowing said property had been embezzled, purloined and stolen; said Frost knowing it to be the property of the United States.

Frost gave bail in the sum of \$5,000, for his appearance before Commissioner Cook, on the 18th of December, to answer to the charges set forth in the complaint, when a preliminary examination will be had. Jos. Evarts, the soldier mentioned, is now serving a sentence of three years imprisonment in the military prison at Fort Leavenworth. His trial took place at Fort Elliott only a few months ago.

Frost was indicted by a grand jury at Topeka on April 14, 1880. On August 18, 1880, a petition signed by prominent Dodge City residents was presented to Charles Devens, attorney general of the United States, asking for a dismissal of the charges. The ultimate fate of the case is not known, but to all appearances it did not injure the career of D. M. Frost.

In December, 1879, Bat learned that the county clerk, John B. Means, had forged county scrip in the sheriff's name. The *Times*, December 27, recounted the story:

#### FORGED COUNTY SCRIP.

John B. Means has resigned the office of County Clerk. The reason for Mr. Means' sudden termination of the office so close to the end of his term, was from the fact that he had forged two pieces of county scrip; one for the sum of \$256 60, in favor of W. B. Masterson, Sheriff, "for services in conveying prisoners to the penitentiary." Another piece of county scrip, for the sum of \$278 25, in favor of Hamilton & Co., stationers. How the discovery of the forgery transpired may be briefly stated as follows: On Monday night Means was pretty well "boozed," as the saying is, and was bantered to make a bet on a game of billiards; and not having the "needful" he drew forth the first mentioned piece of scrip and called the game. This was a grand mistake—undoubtedly the wrong piece of scrip was put up as a wager. Some cunning eye noticed the large amount for which the scrip was drawn, and the name of W. B. Masterson being thereon, suggested the fact that "Gid" was dealing in "crooked" county indebtedness.

Sheriff Masterson was immediately apprised of the circumstance; and confronting Means inquired if any of his bills had been allowed for which he had not yet received the county warrant. Means replied no. Masterson then demanded the piece of scrip bearing his name, saying it was a forgery. Upon further investigation it was found that Means had the second piece of scrip above described, which also proved to be a forgery.

The two county commissioners residing here were immediately notified, and they peremptorily demanded Mr. Means' resignation. An examination of the scrip book did not disclose the forgeries, because the forged pieces were issued on numbers properly drawn. Means states that these two pieces are the only ones "out" that have a crooked imprint. The name of "A. J. Peacock, Chairman," was signed by him, which he states was done at a time when several parties were waiting to have scrip filled out, and he signed several blank pieces

in order to facilitate business. The name of "C. H. Lane, Treasurer," in the registry of the scrip is a skillful forgery.

The scrip purports to have been issued on the 6th of July and registered on the 11th of that month. Mr. Means fully exonerates Mr. Peacock of any knowledge in the matter, and says that gentleman signed blank scrip at his request, as he desired to fill out scrip for jury fees. No one had complicity in this fraudulent scheme.

His intention was to dispose of these forged pieces of scrip after his term of office expired; but being well up in his "cups" he inadvertently unearthed his own rascally action. Gid is not a shrewd forger. The State and not the county pays the Sheriff for conveying prisoners to the penitentiary. He should have carefully concealed the forged pieces. "They will not do to bet on."

Means makes a humble confession of his guilt. He is really to be pitied; and we exceedingly regret that we are compelled to make these statements of his conduct. But poverty stared him in the face. He is broken down physically; is subject to epilepsy and boozeism. The man's deplorable physical condition excites sympathy, and for this reason no prosecution will probably be made; notwithstanding the offence is a grave one, and one deserving punishment.

We presume the Board of County Commissioners will present a complaint to the District Court which will be in session week after next.

Means was not jailed for his misdeed but was permitted to leave the city. By late January, 1880, he was as far west as Santa Fe, N. M.<sup>51</sup>

Apparently the effort of Joseph G. Waters to defend the county against payment of Sheriff Masterson's Indian bills failed, for on January 5, 1880, the board of county commissioners allowed Bat over \$1,000 expenses in the case.<sup>52</sup>

On January 6, 1880, Bat opened the January term of the Ford county district court<sup>53</sup> and then on January 10 departed on his last official duty as sheriff of the county. The *Times*, January 17, 1880, said:

Sheriff Masterson went to Leavenworth Saturday night last, having in charge George Parker and Fred L. Baldwin, charged with horse stealing, and convicted at the last term of the Ford county District Court. They were sentenced to twelve and sixteen months imprisonment respectively.

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Ex-Sheriff W. B. Masterson and Ex-Deputy Chas. E. Bassett, returned from the Leavenworth prison, having safely lodged the two prisoners, Baldwin and Parker. This is Bat's last official act as sheriff.

Early Dodge Citians were famed for the jokes they pulled on one another and on strangers who seemed to ask for the full treatment. A "practical joke" on a so-called "doctor of medicine," was recorded in the *Ford County Globe*, February 17, 1880:

## IN AND OUT OF DODGE.

EXPERIENCE OF A SCIENTIFIC M. D. ON THE LECTURE PLATFORM.  
PISTOLS, POWDER AND PRIVATE DISEASES.

Dodge City has been shaken from center to circumference during the past week by the advent of a gentleman of distinction who bore the unassuming name and title of Meredith, M. D. He was what the boys would call a "daisy." The general outlines of his outward appearance did not indicate that he had ever finished his education with foreign travel, or that he had at any time during his earthly career peregrinated with a circus—therefore he was not thoroughly posted on the modes and costumes that prevail in chaste and civilized cities with advanced ideas, such as Dodge possesses, and to all appearances is wonderfully proud.

The Doctor had written to some of our citizens wishing to know whether Dodge would be a good field for his line of science, which he designated as Phrenology and the treatment of certain diseases which it is not here necessary to mention in detail. He was encouraged to come, and recommended to Major James Dalton and Mr. Luke McGlue as prominent citizens who would be likely to take a deep interest in his cause. Immediately after his arrival he determined to deliver a lecture defining his particular sphere that the public might understand his great mission and come unto him to be cured and to have their organs examined.

The old Lady Gay dance hall was engaged for the occasion and thither at early candle-lighting a large concourse assembled. Mr. W. B. Masterson, Esq. was chosen to act as chairman and introduced the speaker in a few neat and well chosen remarks.

Dr. Meredith opened his address by saying that he had not intended to deliver a lecture, but "at the urgent solicitation of numerous prominent"—

"You lie!" shouted some one in the audience.

Chairman Masterson rebuked the insult, and when order was restored the doctor began again. Proceeding further in a like manner, he was again interrupted by an insulting remark from one of the audience, and it was only by stern commands and threats of annihilation that the chairman brought the house to order.

Again the Doctor proceeded and was just wading deep into a scientific problem when a loud, profane and fiendish yell from Luke McGlue turned the house into an uproar of excitement, and all efforts to restore order were in vain.

Just at this critical moment a southside exhorter with one eye in a sling made an effort to drag the orator from the stand, whereupon Chairman Masterson drew from beneath his coat-tails a Colt's improved, nickel plated, size 44 shooting instrument and formed himself in a hollow square in front of the horrified Doctor, determined to defend or die! A crash was heard—the lamps went out instantaneously, windows were smashed, missiles flew through the darkness, the air was filled with demoniac yells and shooting commenced in rapid succession. In the language of the poet we may well exclaim

"What a row was that, my countrymen!"

It was only after all the ammunition in the house was expended that the murderous carnival ceased and a lamp was lighted by which to remove the dead and wounded. But the dead and wounded had ere this time escaped and even the Doctor was nowhere to be found. Search was made, and at last



he was discovered coiled up under the speaker's stand with his hands over his marble features and a ghastly bullet hole through the crown of his hat.

The meeting adjourned sine die.

Following the completion of his term as sheriff, the gold fields in Colorado next attracted Bat. On February 28, 1880, the *Times* reported: "W. B. Masterson, formerly sheriff of Ford county, left for Leadville Wednesday morning, where he will remain a short time. Bat has many friends who wish him a successful career, and trust he may shortly return."<sup>54</sup>

The young ex-sheriff returned to Dodge on March 6 or 7, depending on whether one consults the *Times* or *Globe*. "W. B. Masterson returned from Leadville last Sunday and gave a glowing account of the immense business of that mushroom city and the richness of its mineral surroundings," said the *Globe*, March 9, 1880. "W. B. Masterson returned from Leadville on Saturday last. Bat says there is going to be some big openings in the Gunnison country. Things are getting to a solid basis in Leadville. It takes money to make money," reported the *Times*, March 13, 1880.

On March 10, 1880, Bat donated \$20.00 to the defense of his friend J. J. Webb in Las Vegas, N. M. Of 42 donors, Bat was one of four who gave such a large sum.<sup>55</sup>

Bat continued his interest in politics. He attended the county Republican convention on March 20 and the state convention at Topeka on March 31. He was firmly for Grant, the *Globe* indicated.<sup>56</sup>

"W. B. Masterson has gone to take a look on the Gunnison country. We hope he will 'strike it big,'" said the *Times*, April 17, 1880.<sup>57</sup>

On May 4, 1880, the *Globe* repeated a rumor involving Bat: "A report reached the city yesterday from Colorado that Ex-Sheriff W. B. Masterson had made a big commotion up about Buna Vista by a dexterous use of his revolver. As the report has not been confirmed we can give no particulars."

The gold bubble soon burst for Bat. On May 29, 1880, the Dodge City *Times* mentioned a letter he had written concerning the value of the Gunnison country:

W. B. Masterson writes to M. W. Sutton that he is in Denver and will probably return to Dodge City this week. He says "the Gunnison is the worst fraud he ever saw. There are no mines anywhere near Pitkin or Gunnison City, the closest being Ruby City, and there is three feet of snow in the streets, and it will be impossible to do anything there before the middle of July." Bat advises his friends to keep away from the Gunnison country, if they have any show of making a living, where they are living.

"W. B. Masterson returned from Colorado Tuesday morning [June 1]. Bat does not give a glowing account of the Silver State," said the *Times*, June 5, 1880.<sup>58</sup>

Bat arrived in Dodge just in time to be enumerated in the tenth United States census. His occupation was listed as laborer, his age as 25 years. The census taker also stated that he was living with one Annie Ladue, a 19-year-old concubine. The date of the enumeration was June 22, 1880; the enumerator—it should be pointed out—was W. C. Shinn, brother of one of the *Globe's* coeditors, Lloyd Shinn.

On July 6, 1880, the *Globe* reported that "W. B. Masterson has gone to Ogallala, Nebraska." According to Robert M. Wright, an old time Dodge resident—the Wright of Wright, Beverley & Co.—Bat made the trip at the instance of his friend Ben Thompson to rescue Ben's brother Billy who had been wounded in a gun fight in that Nebraska cowtown. This was substantiated several years later by Thomas Masterson, Jr., Bat's brother.<sup>59</sup>

It was recorded in the local press at the time that Bill Thompson was wounded in an Ogallala gun battle, and was reported in the *Times*, June 26, 1880:

Wm. Thompson had a difficulty with a Texas man in Ogallala, a few days ago. A number of shots were fired. Billy received five shots. He was not dangerously hurt.

It was also recorded that when Bat came back to Dodge City he shared his wagon with Bill Thompson. The *Times*, July 17, 1880, reported his return:

W. B. Masterson arrived from a visit to Ogallala, this week. He says Nebraska is dry and many people are leaving the State. He came by wagon, and was accompanied by Texas Billy Thompson. The latter has recovered from his wounds.

Beyond that the Dodge City newspapers had nothing to say about Bat's "rescue mission" to Ogallala. Latter-day writers, however, have contended it was a daring whisking away of a man from under the law's snout.

Bat's name did not again appear in the papers of Dodge City until December 7, 1880, when the *Globe* said that "Ex-Sheriff W. B. Masterson arrived in the city a few days ago." The *Times*, December 11, stated that "he lives in Kansas City. Bat was welcomed by a host of friends."

Apparently Bat remained in Dodge for about two months and then on February 8, 1881, left for Tombstone, Ariz., "where he expects to remain next summer."<sup>60</sup>

The Dodge City *Times*, February 24, 1881, reported that "C. M. Beeson received a letter from W. H. Harris, who states that W. B. Masterson arrived at Tombstone, Arizona. The old Dodge boys are seeking fortunes in the gold fields of Arizona."

In April, 1881, Bat was suddenly called home to Dodge to aid his brother Jim, now ex-marshal, in a difficulty with Al Updegraff and A. J. Peacock. The *Ford County Globe*, April 19, 1881, printed the first of many articles on the affair:

#### THE FESTIVE REVOLVER.

AGAIN ITS MUSICAL VOICE IS HEARD IN THE LAND.

SHOOTING ALL ALONG THE LINE AND ONLY ONE MAN HURT.

Last Saturday about noon one of the most daring and dangerous shooting scrapes took place that Dodge City has ever experienced.

The facts as near as we can gather them are about as follows:

A. J. Peacock and James Masterson have been partners in the dance hall and saloon business in Dodge City, and for some time past their business relations have not been as smooth as polished glass.

A few weeks ago Mr. Al Updegraff was employed as bar tender in the dance hall, and it seemed he was a strong friend of Peacock's.

Something occurred last week which caused an open quarrel between Masterson on the one side and Updegraff and Peacock on the other. Pistols were drawn and several shots fired, but no one was hurt.

It appears that immediately after this quarrel Masterson telegraphed to his brother, Bat Masterson, in New Mexico, asking him to come to Dodge and help him out of his difficulties. In response to the invitation Bat came on the first train, arriving here last Friday morning about 11:50. About the first objects that met his eyes were Peacock and Updegraff walking across the street. He followed them up, hailed them, and immediately the shooting commenced. Masterson fortified himself behind an embankment near the railroad track, while Peacock and Updegraff took shelter behind the corners of the calaboose building. Both sides continued to shoot for about three or four minutes, during which time the excitement along the street was rather lively, as the shots from the calaboose party were in direct range with the stores and business houses. One bullet passed through the front of Dr. McCarty's drug store, one through the Long Branch, and one through the front of G. M. Hoover's wholesale liquor store. Some unknown party was at one time seen to fire two or three shots from a point to the right of Masterson's position, at the Peacock party, and then disappeared to be seen no more. It is asserted, and is probably true, that several shots were fired by other parties along the street at Peacock and Updegraff. When the shooting, which lasted but a few minutes, had ceased, it was found that the pistols of Masterson and Peacock were empty, while Updegraff had one shot left. Updegraff was the only man hurt. He was shot through the lungs, the ball passing entirely through his body. The wound was at first thought to be fatal, but there is now fair prospect of his recovery.

Masterson was arrested by the city officers and fined in the police court for disturbing the peace. A State warrant was issued later in the evening

for several parties connected with the affair, but they were allowed to leave town, with the understanding that they were not to return.

Great indignation was manifested and is still felt by the citizens against the Masterson party, as the shooting was caused by a private quarrel, and the parties who were anxious to fight should have had at least a thought for the danger they were causing disinterested parties on the street and in business houses.

Such was the nature of the affair that the officers thought best not to undertake the process of criminal prosecution, although many advised it. At any rate the citizens are thoroughly aroused and will not stand any more foolishness. They will not wait for the law to take its course if such an outrage should again occur.

A correspondent's article appeared in several Kansas newspapers. The following copy was printed in the *Caldwell Commercial*, April 21, 1881:

#### THAT LITTLE AFFAIR AT DODGE CITY.

DODGE CITY, KAN., April 17.—The new administration, with A. B. Webster at its head, has taken charge, and law and order is the watchword. This, however, was sadly violated yesterday, when a remarkable fight and killing occurred. It seems that for some time trouble has been brewing between A. J. Peacock, Al. Updegraff and James Masterson, proprietor of the *Lady Gay* dance hall. This culminated several days ago in Masterson being shot at a number of times and slightly wounded. The Mastersons have a fighting reputation, the eldest, Edward, having been killed while Marshal, and all having been shot and wounded at divers times. W. B. Masterson, who is the "boss," and has been Sheriff of this county and Marshal of this city, was telegraphed for at Tombstone, N. M., to come and settle the trouble. He came at noon yesterday, and while taking a drink with some friends seen Updegraff and Peacock crossing the railroad. He immediately followed them, and, coming within twenty feet, said: "I have come over a thousand miles to settle this. I know you are healed; now fight."

All three immediately commenced firing, Masterson having the advantage of a slight embankment at the railroad track, while Peacock and Updegraff retreated to the corners of the city jail and fired from there. Two other parties opened fire from the saloon on the north side, while Masterson, thinking he was fired on from behind, laid down to reload, when he again commenced firing. Updegraff, who was shot through the right lung, retreated, and Mayor Webster, with Sheriff (Fred) Singer, coming up with shotguns, compelled Masterson to give up his pistols. This happening in the heart of the city, with over a hundred people in sight, it is remarkable that only one was killed and two wounded. While lying down to reload, a bullet threw the dirt into Masterson's mouth, and rebounding struck James Anderson in the back. Several bullets entered the saloons and business houses, and there were many narrow escapes. The Mastersons were arrested, pleaded guilty, fined \$10 and costs, paid their fines and left on last night's train for the West. Fifteen extra police were on duty last night, but now all is quiet. It was the most determined fight made since the days of "Wild Bill" (Jim Hickok) and his celebrated fight at Springfield.

Even Bat's long time supporter, the Dodge City *Times*, could find little excuse for the ex-sheriff's actions this time. On April 21, 1881, the *Times* said:

Al. Updegraff, who was shot in the street reconre Saturday last, is recovering slowly, and will soon be well. The shot entered the lower part of the right lung, and shattered the ribs. The cause of the shooting arose from trouble between the proprietors of the Lady Gay dance hall. Al. is barkeeper of the house. He was shot by Bat. Masterson, who came up from New Mexico to take his brother's part. The firing on the street by Bat. Masterson, and jeopardizing the lives of citizens, is severely condemned by our people, and the good opinion many citizens had of Bat. has been changed to one of contempt. The parties engaged in this reckless affray were permitted to leave town, though warrants were sworn out for their arrest. Bat. Masterson, James Masterson, Chas. Ronan and Tom O'Brien were the accused, and there is good reason to believe they will never darken Dodge City any more. We believe the authorities did perfectly right in permitting these men to go. If they will remain away there will be no more trouble in Dodge City. Should they return they will be prosecuted.

By April 21 Updegraff was well enough to write a letter explaining his version of the affair to the *Ford County Globe*. It was published on May 10, 1881:

#### THE TRUE STATEMENT OF THE SHOOTING AT DODGE CITY.

##### MEDICINE LODGE INDEX.

DODGE CITY, KAN., APRIL 21, 1881.

EDITOR GLOBE: There having been several statements published relative to the shooting that occurred here, in which I was wounded, and as my relatives and friends live in your city, I desire to make a brief statement of the affair for the purpose of correcting the erroneous statement heretofore published, that all concerned may know that I am not entirely to blame for it all. When I arrived here from Medicine Lodge I went into the employ of Peacock & Masterson, as bar-keeper. During the time I was so employed a friend of Masterson's robbed a woman of \$80 by entering her room while she was absent. I advised her to have the party arrested, which she did, through the proper officers. Masterson thereupon came to me and insisted that I should make the woman withdraw the complaint, which I refused positively to do. He, Masterson, thereupon informed me that my services as bar-keeper was no longer needed, and I must quit. Mr. Peacock, the other member of the firm, thereupon insisted that I should stay, as I was right. Masterson having claimed to be a killer, then undertook the job of killing me, and attempted it on the following evening by coming into the saloon and cocking his revolver in my face. I got the best of him by a large majority, and notwithstanding his reputation as a killer, he hid out and was next morning arrested upon my complaint.

He or his friends then telegraphed an inflammatory dispatch to his brother, Bat Masterson, who arrived in due time, and met Mr. Peacock and myself midway between the two front streets and without any warning to us, commenced shooting at us. We of course returned the fire and soon drove Bat

Masterson behind the railroad embankment where he lay down out of range of our fire. We were then fired at by parties from the saloon doors on the north Front street, from one of which I was shot through the right lung, now six days ago. I feel that I will soon be around again, and will not die as the party wished me to. The parties who participated in the affair against me were by the citizens bounced out of town, and I invite anyone who doubts this statement, to correspond with any respectable man in this place, who, I am satisfied will corroborate this statement.

Respectfully yours,

AL. UPDEGRAFF.

In view of Bat's writing ability it is unfortunate that he did not offer for publication an explanation of his side of the shootout.

Bat again received notice in the May 24, 1881, issue of the *Globe* after his picture had appeared in the *Illustrated Police News*:

It must be very consoling to W. B. Masterson's friends to see his photograph by the side of a ducky who is to be hung for murder, both of which figure very prominently in the late issue of the *Illustrated Police News*.

Bat was in Pueblo, Colo., when he received this letter which the *Times* reprinted June 9, 1881:

#### REACHING TO THE BOTTOM.

The following letter, which was addressed to W. B. Masterson, S. Pueblo, has been handed us for publication. The contents will be well understood by the citizens of Dodge City:

DODGE CITY, Kas., June 4, 1881.

DEAR BAT: I am sitting in Kelley's; we have just took a drink, and Jim says to drop you a word—the damn town has been torn up over the telegram of your coming. Webster telegraphed to Sargent and the shot gun brigade was up all night. They consisted of Webster, Singer, Bill Miller, Deger, Tom Bugg, Boyd, Emerson, Bud Driskill, Hi Collar, Peacock, Updegraff and others. Nate Hudson refused to support them. Kelley and myself will be up one of these days to see you. I have an annual and have written for a pass for Kelley. Dont give away what I tell you Bat; it is damn hard for me now to stay here, because I have pronounced myself in your favor; so has Kelley and Phillips, Mose Barber, Dave Morrow and several others. You ought to hear Old Dave ROAR. Charley Powell is here, the same good fellow as of old. Kelley is looking over my shoulder and says "tell him Sutton is at the bottom of it all, damn him."

YOURS as ever,

H. E. GRIDEN.

The letter created so much interest in Dodge City that the *Times* printed it again on June 16, 1881, along with a version in rhyme:

#### REACHING TO THE BOTTOM.

Last week the following appeared in the *Times*. As there was considerable demand for the paper and we were unable to supply the call for extra papers, we reproduce the letter with a paraphrase in rhyme, written by a well known bard who was present last week. The "take off" is in the writer's most happy

vein, but he does not claim literary distinction on account of this local sensation.

[The letter above appeared here.]

The following lines in rhymes were written for the TIMES, and they will make you laugh until you feel sore, when you hear the roar:

*"Better Walk 100 Miles to See a Man than Write a Letter."*—VAN BUREN.

Dear Bat: I am sitting in Kelley's  
And we are filling our bellies  
With something to drink;  
That is fair, we think.

Jim says to send you word,  
For we have just now heard  
That the damned town is humming  
With the news of your coming;  
They say that "the shot gun brigade"—  
(Kelley bring me a lemonade,)  
Was up all the night;  
It was a hell of a sight  
To see Webster, Singer and Bugg  
Each biting off the very same plug,  
And Deger, Boyd and Miller,  
Fill up their glasses and swill'er  
Down, while Driskill, Peacock and Collar  
Were enough to make you holler.

Nat Hudson I know does not belong,  
You hear me sound my gong.  
I'll try my best and be up some day,  
And from the looks of things I'll come to stay;  
I'll get a pass for Kelley to ride on,  
As sure as my name is Harry Gryden.

It's damned hard for me to stay here,  
At night, by day in constant fear—  
Have to stand them off for beer,  
And the shot guns are always near.

And you may bet your belly  
That I and Kelley,  
And I state it flat,  
Are for you, Bat;  
And so is Morrow,  
To his own sorrow;  
And there is Barber,  
They will not harbor,  
Because he is sound and true  
For truth, freedom and you.

It would make you sore,  
To hear old Dave roar.

Let's have some beer;  
Charley Powell is here,  
He is not wise as he becomes older;  
Kelley looks over my shoulder,  
And says to send you a kiss,  
And tell you, at the bottom of this,  
Is that sinner and glutton,  
Whom you know as Mike Sutton.

So be kind to yourself and clever,  
And I am, Gryden, as ever.

Bat was becoming a legend in his own time. His skill with a six shooter was known throughout the West and, as with all legends, his prowess seemed to increase each time his story was told. One absurd yarn was printed in the *New York Sun* and reprinted in the *Ford County Globe*, November 22, 1881:

A MILD-EYED MAN,  
WHO HAS KILLED TWENTY-SIX PERSONS.  
LETTER TO NEW YORK SUN.

At Gunnison, Col., last August, while waiting for the small hours of the morning to come around, we were entertained with narratives illustrating the customs of the country, given by Dr. W. S. Cockrell, Lieutenants Febriger, Wagner and Wetherill, gentlemen connected with the United States army, and others familiar with life and death in the western wilds.

Dr. Cockrell, on being asked whether the reports of killing affrays were not greatly exaggerated, replied that some of them were, while in other cases the truth had never been told.

"There is a man," remarked the doctor, indicating a medium sized, mild-eyed person, who stood in the doorway looking into the billiard room of the Tabor House, "who has killed twenty-six men, and he is only twenty-seven years of age. He is W. B. Masterson, of Dodge City, Kan. He killed his men in the interest of law and order. Once he shot seven men dead within a few minutes."

"How?"

"While in a frontier town news was brought to him that his brother had been killed by a squad of ruffians just across the street. Taking a revolver in each hand, for he shoots readily with both, in this manner (the doctor here crossed his right wrist over his left in the form of an X), he ran over to avenge his brother. The murderers became terror-stricken when they saw him coming, and hastily locked the door. Masterson jumped square against the door with both feet, bursting it open at the first attempt. Then he sprang inside, firing immediately right and left. Four dropped dead in a shorter time than it requires to tell it. The remaining three ran for their horses in a vain attempt to escape from the town. He followed them up so closely that before they reached the outskirts all three had bitten the dust."

"At another time," continued the doctor, "two Mexican half-breeds, a father and son, became very troublesome in the mining camps. They were the sharpest shots in the country, working together with a precision that made



them invincible. As soon as one had emptied the chambers of his revolvers, he would reload under cover of the other. Many a miner had they murdered and relieved of his outfit and treasure. A standing reward of \$500 was offered for their bodies or their heads. Finally, Masterson resolved to kill the half-breeds. They occupied a cabin in a little clearing in an almost inaccessible place in the mountains. One morning, hours before daybreak, Masterson crept to the verge of the clearing with a repeating rifle in his hands. Hidden by a friendly bush, he reclined on a sack that he had brought from his horse, which he had fastened in a glen a mile away.

"Shortly after sunrise the door of the cabin opened wide enough to permit the shaggy head of the old man to protrude. After sweeping the boundaries of the clearing with searching eyes, the head was slowly withdrawn. In a few minutes the head reappeared, followed by a body with a belt of pistols strapped around its waist and a rifle slung over its shoulder. The old man carried a water pail, and at his side walked the son fully armed. Masterson covered the old man with his rifle over a path to and from a spring at a hundred yards or so from the cabin at right angles. The father and son were conversing earnestly, seemingly unwilling to re-enter the cabin, before the door of which they stood for some time. Thirty minutes passed, which seemed hours to Masterson, before he could obtain what he considered a favorable shot. Finally, the old man made a move which uncovered his son. Masterson took advantage of this opportunity, and the young man fell to rise no more. Before the smoke revealed from whence the shot had come the old man was a corpse alongside of his boy. Cutting off their heads, Masterson placed them in his sack, and started to exhibit his trophies in order to obtain the promised reward. A two-days' ride under a hot sun swelled and disfigured the heads so that they were unrecognizable, taking advantage of which the authorities refused to pay the reward."

After the story had appeared in the *Sun*, the Kansas City (Mo.) *Journal* interviewed Bat who was then a visitor in the city. The interview was published in the issue of November 15, 1881:

#### BAT'S BULLETS.

A TALK WITH THE FRONTIERSMAN WHO IS "ON HIS THIRD DOZEN,"  
OR AT LEAST IS SAID TO BE.

BAT. MASTERSON IS REFERRED TO—SOME OF HIS MORE TRAGICAL EXPLOITS.

The gentleman who has "killed his man" is by no means a *rara avis* in Kansas City. He is met daily on Main street, and is the busiest of the busy throng. He may be seen on 'change, and in the congregations of the most aristocratic churches. He resides on "Quality hill," or perhaps on the East Side, or again in the five story buildings which bear in letters of living light at the doorway: "Furnished rooms for rent, 15¢, 25¢, 50¢, and \$1.00 per night—reductions to regular lodgers." This ubiquitous individual may be seen almost anywhere. He may be found behind the bar in a Main street saloon; he may be seen by an admiring audience doing the pedestal clog at a variety theater; his special forte may be driving a cab, or he may be behind the rosewood counters of a bank.

If he has been here any great number of years, his "man" was

## PROBABLY A PIONEER,

and died in the interest of "law and order"—at least so the legend runs. And no one dares dispute the verity of the legend, for behold the man who executed a violator of the law without waiting for the silly formalities of a judge and jury, mayhap now sits in a cushioned pew at an aristocratic church, and prays with a regularity, grace and precision only equaled by his unerring arm with a revolver, the great Western civilizer.

The gentleman who has killed his man is therefore a ubiquitous individual in this city, and may be met at every corner. He is usually quiet in demeanor, sober and thoughtful in aspect, somber in dress, and the last man on earth one would suspect of having notches on the butt end of his pistol. He may take a drink occasionally, but seldom gets drunk. He plays a game of pool at times, but never quarrels over the game. He perhaps goes down to West Kansas and tackles the tiger, but when there are loud words over the cloth of green he is not the man who utters them. He is quiet—fatally quiet. Your gentleman who has dropped his man is a blue eyed or gray eyed man in nine cases out of ten, and his hair and beard are brown, unless grizzled or whitened with the frosts of the many winters which have come and gone since the glories of the old Santa Fe trail began to wane.

Your gentleman who has dropped his man is, therefore, no uncommon individual, but when you see a man who has entered upon

## HIS THIRD DOZEN,

it is about time to be civil, for he may begin to fear that material is about to run out, and may have an uncontrollable desire to hurry up and finish that third dozen. Such a gentleman was introduced yesterday evening to the iron-clad reporter of the JOURNAL, and the person referred to is none other than the famous H. [sic] B. Masterson, of Dodge City—known, by those whom he has not shot, as "Bat" Masterson. Mr. Masterson (it is well to be respectful) was met at the door of a Main street restaurant about 8 o'clock last evening. He was in company with Mr. H. E. Gryden, prosecuting attorney of Dodge City. An introduction all round followed, and the reportorial magnet was applied to Mr. Masterson to draw out whatever reminiscences he was willing to relate of his crusade in the interests of law and order. It may be well first to describe

## MR. MASTERSON'S APPEARANCE.

He is a medium sized man, weighing perhaps 150 pounds, and reaching five feet nine inches in height. His hair is brown, his rather small mustache of the same tint, and his smooth shaven cheeks plump and rosy. His eyes are blue, and gentle in expression, his attire modest but neat, and withal he is about as far removed in appearance from the Bowery frontiersman as one could well imagine. Strange as it may seem, he is grave and quiet in demeanor, and polite to a fault. This latter characteristic was evidenced not only in his demeanor to the news man, but to an impertinent admirer (1) who wished him to go down the street and confine his attentions to him.

In answer to a very leading question, Masterson said he had not killed as many men as was popularly supposed, though he had "had

## A GREAT MANY DIFFICULTIES"

and had in fact been tried four times for murder in the first degree and acquitted each time.

"How about shooting some Mexicans, cutting off their heads, and carrying the gory trophies back in a sack?"

"Oh, that story is straight, except that I did not cut off their heads," replied Bob [sic]. He then related the account of the "affair," which is in substance as follows:

A Mexican half breed and his son became very troublesome in the camp where Bat was then sojourning. They were good shots, and always worked together. They had murdered many a miner, and relieved him of his outfit and dust. A reward of \$500 was offered for their heads, and Masterson, both for the sake of the money and for the purpose of ridding the camp of their dreadful presence, concluded to annihilate them. [The remainder of the story was quite similar to that published in the *Sun* except that the sack upon which Bat rested while waiting for day light was changed to a blanket and that Bat was not mentioned as having cut off the heads of the two desperadoes. The *Journal* article then continued:]

On May 14, 1878, his brother Ed. was

#### MURDERED IN DODGE CITY.

Ed. had tried to arrest a man named Walker for some offense, and had grappled with him, seizing him by both shoulders. Walker was known to be a dangerous man, and meanwhile a desperado named Wagner had come to the rescue, "Bat" heard of the trouble, and rushed to his brother's relief. Meanwhile an army of roughs had gathered to the rescue of Ed.'s prisoner, and affairs looked dark. Just then Bat arrived, and taking in the situation, he shouted, "Ed., shove him away from you." At that moment Walker drew a pistol and shot Ed through the body, inflicting a wound from which he died in about fifteen minutes. Bat immediately began firing. His first bullet laid Walker low, his second struck Wagner in the breast and glanced around, inflicting a dangerous but not fatal wound. His third and fourth shots laid low two more of the mob, and three more were forever forbidden to come to Dodge City by Masterson. They walked out of town and never returned.

IN APRIL, 1881,

Bat's second brother was killed in Dodge City by two men named Updegraff and Peacock. These men remarked after the killing: "The Mastersons were born to run." Bat was then in Tombstone, Ari., and was telegraphed of his brother's murder. Though eleven hundred miles away from the scene of the tragedy, he packed his grip that day and started for Dodge City. On his arrival he learned that one of the men had said "the Mastersons were born to run," and this infuriated him more even than the death of his brother. The story is related in a very few words. Bat Masterson shot Peacock and Updegraff dead, disproving, at least, the assumption that "the Mastersons were born to run."

Regarding his exploit in Texas with the soldiers, Mr. Masterson was quite reticent. In answer to a direct question he said, "I had a little difficulty with some soldiers down there, but never mind, I dislike to talk about it." It is popularly supposed that he

#### ANNIHILATED A WHOLE REGIMENT

and this belief is strengthened by the fact that there was an urgent call for recruits about that time. Only West Point graduates escaped, and being officers they sought places of safety early in the engagement.

Alluding to the killing of Ed. Masterson, Mr. Gryden said: "The man walked some distance before he fell. I saw him coming, and in the darkness of the evening he seemed to be carrying a lighted cigar in his hand. I re-

marked to a friend that the cigar burned in a remarkably lively manner, but as the man drew near we saw that the fire was not at the end of a cigar but in the wadding of his coat. He fell dead at our feet.

#### THREE YEARS AGO

a gang of men attempted to rob a Santa Fe train near Dodge City. Bat, who was sheriff of that time, pursued them, and single handed and alone brought in three of the robbers at the muzzle of his revolver."

H. [sic] B. Masterson, the subject of the above sketch, came to Kansas in 1869. He is now but twenty-seven years of age, so that he was a mere boy of fifteen when he reached the state. For a time he shot buffalo for the government. In 1876 he was elected deputy marshal of Dodge City, and in 1878 sheriff of that county. He is a wonderful shot, and possesses the rare ability to shoot with equal precision with either hand. When he has a large audience to entertain he crosses his wrists like a letter X, and enters the action firing with two revolvers at once.

Masterson leaves the city to-day, but will return in a few days and make a brief sojourn here. Whether he has killed twenty-six men as is popularly asserted, cannot be positively ascertained without careful and extensive research, for he is himself quite reticent on the subject. But that many men have fallen by his deadly revolver and rifle is an established fact, and he furnishes a rare illustration of the fact that the thrilling stories of life on the frontier are not always overdrawn.

It is interesting to note that of the stories which could be checked, only the death of Ed Masterson falls anywhere near the truth—at least he did die. If Bat really told the other stories he obviously enlivened them in true Western story-telling style, perhaps in the same spirit as in later New York days when he would occasionally purchase a second hand revolver, notch the butt and give it away as his authentic "peacemaker."

The *Atchison Champion*, November 17, 1881, brought the whole thing back into focus with this amusing editorial:

#### TOO MUCH BLOOD.

THE CHAMPION is the last paper to discourage any citizen in a worthy pursuit, or to deprive any Kansan of the fruits of his honest toil, or of honors earned; but really the newspaper correspondents east and west credit some of our people with more bloodshed than rightfully or reasonably belongs to them. We do not stickle about a few tubs full of gore, more or less, nor have we any disposition to haggle about a corpse or two, but when it comes to a miscount or overlap of a dozen, no conscientious journalist, who values truth as well as the honor of our State, should keep silent. To credit unjustly a man with having killed thirty or forty people when his accomplished book-keeper, with the undertaker to check off, can only find two dozen has a tendency to bring Kansas statistics into disrepute, and also to discourage some humble beginner in the field of slaughter who has as yet sent only four or five to act as foundations for the daisies.

Somebody out at Pueblo, in a letter to the *New York Sun*, started the story that ex-Sheriff "Bat" Masterson, of Dodge City, had killed twenty-six men, and was as yet only twenty-seven years of age, with a long life of usefulness before

him. Two of the men were Mexicans, whom Mr. Masterson bagged at one hunt, and whose heads, we are informed, he cut off and carried to Dodge City to sell for whatever the market price was at that time. Mr. Masterson being in Kansas City since, in company with the celebrated romancist, Mr. Harry Gryden, a Kansas City paper comes out with the *Sun's* story greatly renovated, repaired and generally beautified. Mr. Masterson is represented as modestly disclaiming the statement that he decapitated the two Mexicans. The reporter had got ahead or, rather, two heads of him there, but, while he wished no public reception, brass band, or anything of that sort, he was the bright and morning star that had shone on twenty-six graves, besides a fight with a fragment of the United States army, which had led to Gen. Sherman's earnest request for more men.

Now this may all be so, but we "allow" that twenty six men is a good many. They would make a string about one hundred and fifty feet long, or well on to half a cord. Incorporated, they would make a city of the third class in Kansas, and the crowd largely outnumbers the Democratic vote in some counties, though not much "deader" than that party in some localities. Twenty-six, two dozen with two "brought forward!" It may be all right, but it seems too much for a small man only twenty-seven years of age, and we call for a re-count.

From Kansas City, Bat was next heard of in Denver. The *Leavenworth Times*, May 21, 1882, stated that "Bat. Masterson has been regaling Denver newspaper reporters with the stories of old times in Dodge City, when Bat. was city marshal, and had a private graveyard staked off especially for unruly cowboys."

In August Bat was in Trinidad. The *Dodge City Times*, August 3, 1882, mentioned that Bat had sent a letter of introduction to Luke Short:

Two Chinamen are added to the population of Dodge City. They are directly from Trinidad, and brought with them letters of introduction from Bat Masterson to Luke Short. They engage in the washee business. There are four gentlemen of the Celestial Kingdom now residents of Dodge. All are pursuing the wash business. Mr. Fred Wenie provided the new arrivals with quarters. Fred is chief mogul among the Chinese. He speaks their language fluently. But he can't go their diet of rats, mice and rice.

By 1883 the *Dodge City Times*, which had once been such a staunch supporter of Bat's, and the *Ford County Globe*, his one time political enemy, had reversed their positions. This switch became apparent with the *Times* of February 8, 1883:

Bat Masterson rescued a prisoner who was in the hands of an Iowa officer, at Trinidad, some days ago. Bat tried the means of false papers, but failing in that, he took the prisoner by force. There are some people in this city who would like Bat to return. We think Trinidad is more congenial to him.

The *Times* item naturally stirred up the Irish in Bat Masterson who immediately wrote a blistering reply which was published in the *Globe*, February 20, 1883:

EDITOR GLOBE:—Sir: Having noticed a short squib in the last issue of the Dodge City Times in reference to myself and as it was evidently written with a view of doing me a malicious and willful injury, I deem it as a duty devolving on me to refute the malicious statement contained in that short paragraph. I am actuated in writing this explanation of the rescue referred to by the editorial nonentity of the Times in order to give what friends I have left in Ford county who read the Times an opportunity to judge for themselves whether my statement or that of the Times is correct.

I am accused by old Nick of the Times of having rescued a prisoner from the custody of an Iowa sheriff by force and that I first tried to get possession of the prisoner by means of false papers and finding this could not be done, I resorted to force, which is as infamously false as it is ridiculous. I will dispose of the whole statement by saying that I had no false papers of any kind, and that I did not demand the prisoner from the Iowa sheriff or attempt to take him by force, and furthermore had nothing whatever to do with the prisoner, but simply went to the train in company with Miles Mix a deputy sheriff of Chaffee county, Colorado, who had a copias warrant for the arrest of the prisoner on a charge of murder committed in Chaffee county two years ago. I was solicited by Mix to accompany him to the train which I did as a matter of friendly courtesy and nothing more.

Mr. Klaine can ascertain the truth of this statement by referring to any official in this place, or to sheriff Landes of Iowa, if he feels so disposed, but I am satisfied he has no desire to do so, as he has never been accused of either telling or writing the truth by anyone who knows anything of his Missouri or Kansas reputation. He concludes his scurrilous article by saying that some residents of Dodge City are anxious that I should return but adds that Trinidad is a more congenial place for me. To this I will say that I have no desire to return to the delectable burg, as I have long since bequeathed my interest in Dodge City and Ford county to the few vampires and murdering band of stranglers who have controled its political and moral machinery in the last few years. In conclusion I will say that Dodge City is the only place I know of where officials have taken people by brute force and without the sanction of law, and that on all such occasions the officials who committed the unlawful act never failed to receive a laudatory puff from the long haired Missourian who edits the Times.

Respectfully,

W. B. MASTERSON

TRINIDAD, COL., Feb. 12th, 1883

In May, 1883, the "Dodge City war" broke out between Luke Short and the authorities of Dodge. Before it was settled Luke had enlisted the aid of such personages as Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, and possibly Doc Holliday. The difficulty was involved and the settlement long in coming but by June 10, 1883, Bat and Wyatt were on the Santa Fe headed back west. For the complete story of the war, including the part played by Bat, see the section on Luke Short.

Toward the end of summer Bat returned to Dodge in a more peaceable frame of mind. The *Ford County Globe*, September 4,

1883, noticed his coming: "Ex-sheriff Bat Masterson arrived in Dodge City a few days since. We understand he will engage in the mercantile business at this place."

It is doubtful that the mercantile business interested Bat as much as the approaching election. On October 16 sheriff candidate Pat Sughrue made a statement in the *Globe* that, contrary to rumor, if he were elected Bat Masterson would not be appointed under sheriff, "not that Mr. Masterson wouldn't be fully competent and acceptable. . . ." Bat, it seems, was considered a resident of Colorado by Sughrue and not available for the position.

Apparently Bat took an active part in the election through the pages of the *Globe*, at least the *Times*, November 1, 1883, thought so:

#### BAT MASTERSON

Col. Bat Masterson, a well known character in the west, has discarded his former illegitimate business and has adopted newspaper writing as a profession. While Col. Masterson's literary effusions do not have moral or religious tendencies, they are chaste productions in a literary way. The fine artistic style in which Col. Bat wields the pen is adding fame to his already illustrious name. Col. Masterson is now associate editor of the *Ford County Globe*, and the last number of that paper bears ample evidence of this statement. The *Globe* has long needed a brainy editor, and the substitution of brains for adipose tissue is certainly commendable, and must be highly appreciated by the readers of that journal. As a newspaper writer Bat is gaining distinction.

The *Globe*, November 6, 1883, answered:

We are charged with having an associate editor, to-wit: Mr. Masterson, and from the showing the *Time's* man gives the distinguished gentleman, we feel somewhat flattered. But as Mr. Masterson has left the city, the *GLOBE* will be rather a tame paper this week. Yet we have managed to put together a few sentences that may not set well on the opposition.

Though Bat had left Dodge he returned for election day with another ex-police officer. The *Globe*, November 13, 1883, reported:

W. B. Masterson, formerly sheriff and ex-city marshal, and Wyatt Earp, ex-city marshal of this city quietly and unostentatiously dropped in onto our inhabitants early last Tuesday morning, and their presence about the polls on that day had a moral effect on our would-be moral element, that was truly surprising. It is needless to say every thing passed off quietly at the city precinct on election day.

A few days later Bat headed for Texas. The *Times*, November 22, 1883, suggested he was going as another "peace commission" to aid the gambling element.

Gen. Bat Masterson, and Col. Luke Short, (the latter returned here for one day,) left on Friday [November 16] morning for Ft. Worth, Texas. The authorities in Dallas and Ft. Worth are stirring up the gambling fraternity, and

probably the celebrated "peace makers" have gone there to "harmonize" and adjust affairs. The gambling business is getting considerable "shaking up" all over the country. The "business of gambling" is "shaking" in Dodge. It is nearly "shook out" entirely.<sup>61</sup>

From Texas Bat went to Trinidad, Colo., where he was engaged in a controversy which was only partially explained by the Dodge City *Democrat*, January 12, 1884:

The always interesting, newsy and saucy Trinidad News, contains some letters signed W. B. M. and a reply from City Marshal Kreeger concerning the arrest of the alleged murderer, Hibbard. We are informed by under sheriff Fred Singer, that the statement of facts made by W. B. M. are verbatim et literatim, true. Yes, says Fred, and more too. But we enter our protest, and hope the News will chastise "Bat" for his deplorable carelessness in spitting out the truth about the "great and good." It was his great fault, here, and made him enemies, but the predominating streak in Bat's corporosity is that like Jim Bloodsue, "he wouldn't lie and he couldn't flunk, I reckon he didn't know how."

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In a controversy through the Trinidad Press, "W. B. M." shows himself almost as adept with the pen as he undoubtedly is with the six-shooter—a dual accomplishment much appreciated on the frontier. Won't "Freddie" take a hand in the writing as well as the chase?

Early in February Bat returned to Dodge. The *Democrat*, February 9, 1884, noticed his coming:

Col. Bat. Masterson, no doubt scenting a democratic victory in the breeze, dropped down from Trinidad on election day [township elections held February 5]. Bat looks as smooth, pretty and guileless as of old, and was heartily welcomed by his innumerable friends.

A few weeks later he again visited the Kansas cowtown. Said the *Democrat*, February 23, 1884:

The genial ex-sheriff, Bat. Masterson, is down amongst us. He was, we understand, drawn as a member of the Grand jury, soon to convene at Trinidad. Bat., who is constitutionally opposed to secret inquisition and condemnation courts, avoided serving as a juror by a visit to old Dodge. Better come to stay, Bat. What a genial City Attorney or rare old Police Judge you would make, eh?

By the time this notice appeared in the *Democrat*, May 3, 1884, Bat seems to have returned to Dodge City to stay:

Bat Masterson has the reputation of being able to face a six-shooter without flinching, but when a football patted him a gentle reminder under the left ear last Tuesday evening, he gracefully retired.

The same issue of the *Democrat* reported that Bat was one of the founders of a Dodge City base ball club and was serving as its vice-president. Other interested parties included Sheriff Pat Sugh-



rue, Robert M. Wright, A. B. Webster, and W. H. Harris. On May 17, 1884, the *Democrat* said that the driving park association, which was planning a gala Fourth of July celebration including a genuine bull fight, had named Bat to its committee on foot racing. Bat gained a little experience in the racing game by judging a contest on June 21. The *Globe*, June 24, 1884, reported the result:

A three hundred yard foot race for a purse of \$1,000, between a white man named Sawyer and a colored man named Hogan, of this city, took place last Saturday afternoon, on the railroad track below the depot. Hogan won the race by about three feet, and deceived a great many who had their money up on the white man. Over three hundred people turned out to witness the race, among whom were quite a sprinkling of the fair *Demi-monde*. "Bat" and "Til" [William M. Tilghman?] were the judges, therefore everything was on the square, and no grumbling was heard by the losers.

Though Bat was officially interested only in the foot racing aspect of the celebration he personally was so dissatisfied with the results of, or perhaps more correctly the judging of, the horse race that he wrote a fiery letter to the *Topeka Commonwealth* which was published July 6, 1884. The letter is particularly interesting in that it shows the earliest known attempt on the part of W. B. Masterson to write a descriptive sports article:

#### DOINGS AT DODGE.

A LIVELY HORSE RACE, IN WHICH DISSATISFACTION  
EXISTS OVER THE DECISION OF TWO JUDGES.

DODGE CITY, July 4, 1884.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

The Dodge City Driving Park and Fair Association was opened on the 2d, the first thing on the programme being a three hundred yard horse race for purses amounting in the aggregate to \$150, divided into two purses, first money \$100, and second \$50. This race turned out to be the most interesting event of the day, as there were three entries in the race, and the horses were probably the fastest for that distance of any three in the country. The little sorrel horse, Billy Burt, and the bay mare, Lulu Mc, entered by Joe Blackburn, of Gainsville, Tex., are two of the fastest quarter horses in this or any other country. Arthur Gilson's big sorrel, Lazy Bill, was the other entry.

The horses were brought up to the score and "tapped" off, Blackburn's little sorrel, Billy Burt, getting about thirty feet the worst of the send off, but notwithstanding this, and also the fact that Gilson's horse fouled him by running him into the fence, he ran a dead heat and passed under the wire with his nose along side the Gilson horse, Lulu Mc leading them about one length and a half, taking first money, but instead of the race being declared a dead heat between the two horses, and as the Hon. R. M. Wright, who was one of the judges, said it certainly was the other two judges gave the second money to the Gilson horse, thereby committing one of the most flagrant injustices ever perpetrated on a race track.

It is needless to say that the two judges who rendered this decision were

prejudiced and favorable to the Gilson horse. Those who are charitably inclined attribute this action to ignorance of the rules in horse racing, while a great many are loud in their denunciation of the two men whom they claim were so biased that they were willing to stultify their honor and manhood in order to gratify their preferences. The latter is undoubtedly the case, as they both had money bet on the horse. If the directors of the association are not more careful in selecting judges, they will give this organization a bad reputation abroad. Drs. Cockey and Chouteau may be very efficient in rendering relief to any one afflicted, but their heads are too small for judges on a race track. The association had better dispense with the services of those two fop-tailed nonentities.

B. W. MASTERSON.

Bat, apparently, came to know racing, for on July 19, 1884, the *Democrat* reported that "Bat Masterson and Walter Hart won \$2,500 at the Newton races."

Also on July 19, the *Dodge City Kansas Cowboy*, carried this advertisement:

LOST.

Knights of Pythias watch charm. \$5.00 will be paid for it if returned to  
BAT MASTERSON,  
Lone Star Saloon.

Along with an active interest in sports, gambling, and social fraternities Bat still had a yen for politics. The *Dodge City Times*, July 24, 1884, mentioned that Bat, heretofore a stalwart Republican, had switched to Democrat George W. Glick in the upcoming gubernatorial race:

Such men as Sheriff Sughrue, Judge R. G. Cook, Bat Masterson, and a dozen others, the backbone of the Republican party in this county, say they will support Glick for governor.—*Dodge City Democrat*.

We regret that the "backbone" has become weakened by this bolt. If the party can worry through the summer with a weak backbone probably a November breeze will stiffen the demented anatomical member.

When T. C. Nixon was killed by Mysterious Dave Mather on July 21, 1884, Bat was one of the first to arrive on the scene. For the testimony Bat gave at the preliminary examination see the section on Mather.

And midst all Bat retained his reputation as one who was ready to defend himself with anything handy. The *Cowboy*, September 27, 1884, reported a refurbishing of this reputation:

A LITTLE MELEE.

Quite a little "unpleasantness" occurred in a saloon in this city. We could not learn the cause of it, nor that there was any cause. There was a trial, however, and that developed the fact that one Mr. A. J. Howard, who is a cook in a restaurant, determined to make mince meat of Mr. Bat. Masterson, and con-

sequently he selected as a very appropriate instrument for that purpose a carving knife from a foot to eighteen inches long. As he commenced the assault some person hallowed to Bat, that he had a gun. Then the stalwart form of Masterson rose in its majesty. Fortunately perhaps, Bat, was unarmed. He seized "the first opportunity" and a chair, and went for his assailant, knocking him down. It was well for the safety of the chair and Mr. Howard's head that some person intervened. The affair drew quite a crowd, and for a moment, considerable excitement. The finale was that Mr. Howard was arrested, and brought before Esq. Cook, who gave him a good moral lesson and a fine of \$25, and costs. Mr. Howard evinced considerably intelligence and claimed to be a lawyer as well as a cook. But for the want of the requisite funds, Esq. Cook "cooked the goose" of the cook by sending him to the lockup to work out the fine.

Back in the world of politics, the Ford county Republican convention held in Dodge City on October 8, 1884, next held Bat's attention. At this meeting he, along with W. H. Harris, partner of Chalk Beeson, was named to the committee on permanent organization.<sup>62</sup>

In the October 21, 1884, issue of the *Globe*, now the *Globe Live Stock Journal*, an article signed by one "Coal House" appeared which cast political aspersions on R. E. Burns, Republican candidate for county attorney, E. D. Swan, candidate for probate judge, N. B. Klaine, editor of the Dodge City *Times*, and several others. The *Times* of October 23, 1884, accused Bat Masterson of authoring the article. True to form Bat was not long in answering the charge through the pages of what the *Times* called the "Gambler's Gazette":

DODGE CITY, KAN., Oct. 25, 1884.

ED. *GLOBE LIVE STOCK JOURNAL*:

I see by the last issue of the Dodge City *Times*, that I am accused of being the author of the article signed Coal House, which appeared in your last issue, and also that I am honored with the title of being the "boss gambler of the west."

As to the article I have this much to say, that any time the good (?) deacon of the *Times* or any of his scurvy outfit feel desirous of refuting any of the statements contained in Coal House's article I will consider it as an imperative duty, to sustain every allegation contained therein by the affidavit of every responsible man in Dodge City, and if I fail to do this, I will write an apology to every individual named in said article, and cause the same to be published in all the papers published in this city. There was not anything said in the article referred to that cannot be proven, and if Deacon Klaine, Burns, Schmoker, Swan, or the pestiferous cur who adorns (?) the editorial tripod of the *Clipper*, don't think I can furnish the necessary amount of documentary evidence to sustain my position in the matter, let them turn their monkey loose, and see whether or not I will be forthcoming.

As to being the "boss gambler of the west," I will say, that I have no desire

to usurp a title that the sapient scribe at the Times office bestowed upon one of our worthy citizens, a long time before he became a defaulter in Dodge City.

W. B. MASTERSON.<sup>63</sup>

As election time neared Bat issued a small newspaper which he called the *Vox Populi*. Only one issue appeared and unfortunately no copies seem to have survived. The *Globe Live Stock Journal*, November 4, 1884, gave Editor Masterson a promising review:

We are in receipt of the first number of the *Vox Populi*, W. B. Masterson, editor, which in appearance is very neat and tidy. The news and statements it contains seem to be somewhat of a personal nature. The editor is very promising; if he survives the first week of his literary venture there is no telling what he may accomplish in the journalistic field.

November 4, 1884, saw the election of those candidates favored by Editor Masterson. There was no more need of the *Vox Populi* so Bat wrote its obituary and published it in the *Globe Live Stock Journal* on November 11:

DODGE CITY, KAN., NOV. 8, 1884.

ED. *GLOBE LIVE STOCK JOURNAL*:

The Editor of the *Vox Populi* through the medium of the *GLOBE LIVE STOCK JOURNAL* wishes to return thanks to the people of Dodge City and Ford county for the many favors received, and the courtesies extended to the *Vox Populi* and its editor, during the latter's brief sojourn in the journalistic field.

The *Vox Populi* is no more. Its mission in this world of progress and usefulness is performed. While its existence was comparatively of short duration, the wonders it performed was simply miraculous. The blows it dealt to the venomous vipers whom it opposed had a telling effect as the returns from the different voting precincts has indicated, not one of this puerile outfit have been elected. Not one of the candidates that the *Vox Populi* supported was defeated. The cry of the Times, that the "gang must go," recoils on its idiotic editor with the force of a cyclone. No one but an idiot would have uttered such nonsense in the first place. It must be apparent to "Old Nick" by this time that the gang is quite numerous; it also must be obvious to him that they are not inclined to "trot in his class of political nags." The *Vox Populi* said nothing that it is sorry for, and with this declaration it says good day.

EDITOR.

In postscript the *Globe Live Stock Journal*, November 18, 1884, commented on the opinion of the *Trinidad News*:

Bat Masterson is the editor and proprietor of a daily paper at Dodge City called the *Vox Populi*. Bat is an easy and graceful writer and possesses real journalistic ability. The News will be glad to hear of his making a howling success—*Trinidad News*. Yes, the *Vox Populi* was a howling success, that is, if we know anything about that kind of success, for the howling over the only issue of that paper still goes on. Bat with his paper was on the winning side in the election.

After the election Bat took a trip to St. Louis, Mo.,<sup>64</sup> but returned to Dodge City on November 29 just in time to be the reported vic-

tim of a different type of confidence game. The *Dodge City Times*, December 11, 1884, warily—but with obvious delight—told of Bat's being taken:

ANOTHER VICTIM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

It had been hoped that the day of confidence swindlers had come to an end, but it seems that in this as in many other long wished for reforms, we are disappointed, and the confidence fiend still plies his nefarious trade in our midst gulling the innocent and cheating the verdant out of their honest (?) earnings.

Only last week there appeared upon our streets a young man, apparently about twenty-five years of age, accompanied by a boy who perhaps had seen seventeen summers—honest farmer looking sorts of fellows who might have been taken for a couple of Hoosier tenderfeet who had located claims somewhere in this Great American Desert, and had come into town to obtain a supply of beans and bacon. They had a common farm wagon, drawn by a pair of mules, such as is often seen here, and in addition a third mule hitched behind the wagon. Wandering apparently aimlessly about the town with mouths open and a smile that was childlike and bland, they came in contact with our enterprising fellow citizen, Bat Masterson, and in an easy green off hand sort of a way made some inquiries in regard to banking and finance, and from that the conversation drifted to agricultural and stock topics, and finally to the pulling qualities of mules in general, and this party's mule in particular, until our e. f. c. was induced to make a bet as to the pulling powers of the greenie's mule. The preliminaries were arranged, the mule was hitched to the load and walked away with it as easy as its green (?) owner did with our enterprising fellow citizen's money.

Such things ought not to be. If green horns are allowed to come in here, and swindle our unsophisticated people out of their money what are we coming to? What do we keep policemen for? If it is not to protect our citizens from being fleeced by the superior abilities of the country green horns. This fellow knew that Mr. Masterson's business had been of a financial nature nearly all his life, and that he knew no more about the pulling powers of a mule than the mule did of the ten commandments. The city has been disgraced, the character of one of our business men smirched and the perpetrator of the vile deed is still at liberty—Let him be hunted down, and let his fate be a warning to every granger that Dodge City will protect its citizens from the avaricious greed of the settlers, even if the Glick Guards have to be called out.

SCRIBE.

The Nixon-Mather murder case, mentioned before, was granted a change of venue to Edwards county and the trial held at Kinsley. Bat, of course, was one of the witnesses. The actions of the assistant prosecuting attorney riled Bat and he was not long in giving vent to his disgust. In a characteristic letter to the *Kinsley Graphic*, January 9, 1885, Bat settled the attorney's hash:

## BAT SPEAKS OUT.

DODGE CITY KANSAS JANUARY 2.

ED. KINSLEY GRAFHEIC!—Being one of the members of the Dodge City delegation that recently paid their respects to your little burg, as witnesses in the Mather case, I deem it but justice to your citizens to express our sincere thanks for the many courtesies extended to us while enjoying the hospitality of your city. This I do in behalf of the entire delegation who were witnesses for the defense. It is true there were some of the boys who felt a little miff at the remarks made to the jury about them by the learned gentleman who conducted the prosecution, but after considering the matter carefully from an impartial and I might add charitable standpoint, his pungent reflections upon their character and veracity are pardonable and consequently are forgiven. The fact that he is but recently from Missouri, and the further fact that gentlemanly deportment and a strict adherence to professional etiquette are not generally practiced in the lower courts of that sweet and verdant land that gave birth to the Fords and Liddells, this conduct is not to be wondered at. His stigmatizing all of the witnesses for the defense, as being pimps and prostitutes can only be considered in one light, (to-wit) the utterances of a coarse, vulgar, and untutored mind.

Mr. Vandivert in all probability was considered a good lawyer in Missouri. It doesn't require much material to gain such a distinction there, but to a casual observer in Kansas, he certainly lacks many of the elements that constitute a gentleman. This frequent allusion to pimps and prostitutes, would lead the ordinary person to believe that he possessed a greater knowledge of this class, than he did of law, for he scarcely ever referred to the latter. The ordure with which he besmeared the jury was fully appreciated judging from the verdict [not guilty]. This utter failure to induce the jury to stay out more than thirty minutes should be taken by this incipient deciple of Blackstone as a lesson to guide him in the future, and should cause him to pay more attention to law, and less to blackguardism.

Wishing you all a happy New year, I am respectfully yours,

W. B. MASTERSON.

Bat, said the *Globe Live Stock Journal*, January 13, 1885, "gives his opinion right out in meetin'."

With W. H. Harris, Bat went to Topeka around the middle of January, 1885, probably to witness the inauguration of John A. Martin as governor and the start of the new state legislature.<sup>65</sup>

From Topeka Bat may have gone on to Kansas City but he was back in Dodge by February 12 when he answered the letter of an Iowa lady regarding the now famous town. The woman had been advised to write to "Reverend Masterson" for information. In replying Bat couldn't help unloading on a doubtlessly surprised Iowan his opinion of the arch enemy who referred to him as "Reverend." Bat's letter was published in the *Globe Live Stock Journal*, February 17, 1885:

The following letter is one in answer to a letter to W. B. Masterson, from a lady in Iowa, who says she was recommended to him as a minister, by the

Post Master of this, Dodge City. She is desirous of coming here to live, and was making inquiry about the town and county:

DODGE CITY, KAN., Feb. 12th 1885.

MRS. C. LeBEAU, Harlem, Iowa.

MY DEAR MADAM: On my return from Kansas City last night where I had been for ten days, I found your letter awaiting me. I was somewhat astonished to find that you had addressed me Rev.; unfortunately, perhaps for me, I have not the honor of being a member of the clergy, and there is probably no man in this part of Kansas farther from it. I am a gambler by profession, and our esteemed (?) Post Master knew this to be so when he referred you to me. Our P. M. in doing what he thought a very smart trick, only demonstrated what has long been accepted as a fact in this community, relative to himself; (to-wit), that he lacks many of those elements that constitute a gentleman; he should at least, in my judgement, have considered you a lady and treated your letter of inquiry with the consideration that a lady is entitled to from a gentleman.

The name of our Post Master is N. B. Klaine, he is also editor of a nasty sheet published here, under the caption of Dodge City Times. He is a blatant prohibitionist, and a deacon in the Baptist church. A strictly moral man and a gentleman, as his letter referring you to me would indicate. There are several first class physicians here, all of whom are gentlemen, and any of whom he could have referred you to with a greater degree of propriety than myself. I herewith send the names of our most prominent physicians: T. L. McCarty, C. A. Milton and T. J. Wright. By addressing either of the above named gentlemen you can undoubtedly obtain the desired information.

I am respectfully,  
W. B. MASTERSON.

As the Globe said on another page, "Bat Masterson has his failings like other white folks, but he is a gentleman and does not sail under false colors."

On March 1, 1885, the Kansas state census was enumerated in Dodge City. Bat was listed as being 30 years old with farming as his occupation. Bat's younger brother Tom, 26 years old, was also in Dodge, according to the census, and practicing as an attorney. Jim apparently had not yet returned to his former home.

Bat continued to hound his foe, Nicholas B. Klaine, nipping his heels whenever he had the chance. The Kinsley Mercury, June 6, 1885, condensed another skirmish:

The Topeka Commonwealth of June 3rd, contains a letter written by some person in Dodge City and signed Tanous, in which the details of a postoffice robbery in that moral city are given and among other things that the article contains is a very strong reflection against Klaine, the postmaster and editor of the Times, intimating that he was a party to the robbery. The reader is warned by the newspaper publisher that he is not bound to believe the statements contained in the letter. The handiwork of the Rev. Bat Masterson is apparent in the letter. Klaine has our profound sympathy. He is surrounded

by a terrible hard gang and while he holds his own with them pretty well, they are always after him.

Later in the month an incident occurred which resulted in publicity reminiscent of that given the famous "war" of May, 1883 (to be discussed in the section on Luke Short). This time, as then, little was said in the Dodge papers but much was printed outside. Since Bat played a minor role in the affair it will be mentioned only briefly.

The trouble began with the arrival of one Albert Griffin, a Kansas pioneer, editor of the Manhattan *Nationalist*, prohibitionist and officer in the State Temperance Union. Griffin had visited Dodge to lecture on the evils of whisky but once in town he attempted to obtain an injunction against the open saloons. Failing in that he began a campaign of public denouncement censuring County Attorney Mike Sutton, District Judge J. C. Strang, the Dodge City and Ford county police officers, and even Gov. John A. Martin for their lassitude in enforcing the prohibition amendment. Prohibitionist papers in Topeka helped spread Griffin's charges with vitriolic condemnations of the "sporting fraternity" of Dodge City. Of course, Bat Masterson was among those mentioned.

On July 2, 1885, in a foreword to Griffin's story of the Dodge City trouble, the Topeka *Capital* said that Bat was at the head of 300 ruffians who were bent on driving Griffin from town or, if they failed in that, killing him. The former Ford county sheriff was described as being "one of the most disreputable characters in the west." According to Griffin's own statement, however, Bat was the one who protected him from the mob which was actually led by a saloon keeper named Sheridan.

In a prepared statement published in both the *Capital* and *Commonwealth* on July 2 Griffin stated:

Bat Masterson, the reputed leader of the lawless elements of Dodge City, had voluntarily called on us and stated that neither Colonel [A. B.] Jetmore [who was in Dodge as a representative of the attorney general to investigate the saloon business] nor myself should be molested, and when the assault was made on Dr. [S.] Galland [owner of the Great Western hotel at which Griffin was staying and an ardent local prohibitionist, according to Griffin], he went out and ordered the mob to go across the street. . . . Bat Masterson stayed in front of our room for half an hour or more, and sent the men back as they attempted to come and they finally retreated across the railroad. So far as I know, Mr. Masterson steadily did all he could to prevent any attack being made upon us, but said to me that he would not be responsible for what would happen to the citizens of the place who had taken a prominent part in the movement for the closing of the dram shops, against whom he also evidently entertains the bitterest of feelings.



Safely home, Griffin wrote in his own *Manhattan Nationalist*, July 10, 1885:

Bat Masterson is a professional gambler who has killed two or three men and shot several others. He is smart and has many elements of a leader, but is unquestionably a vicious man. He did not want Assistant Attorney Jetmore or myself killed, and the reason he is said to have given his associates was that "they could not afford to bring down upon themselves the vengeance of the State government and the State Temperance Union." We had never had any personal intercourse, and, as he supposed we were simply operating as a matter of business . . . he probably felt no enmity toward us individually, and as he had already "made a long record" he had nothing to gain and everything to lose by permitting an attack on us.

Nevertheless, we would, in all probability, have been killed but for the accidental fact that he happened to be in our room when the mob made its rush for our quarters. While he was with them the rioters obeyed him implicitly, but when out of his presence they were ready to follow any ruffian who proposed to do something. I do not suppose Masterson is one of those human tigers whose chief delight is shedding blood, but no one who knows his history and studies his face would feel safe to have in his power a friend against whom he holds a grudge. The very fact that he has the qualities of "good fellowship," "occasional generosity," "steadfastness to friends," "fluency of speech" and "cool courage," make him all the more dangerous a man in such a community.

T. J. Tate, under sheriff of Ford county, stated in an interview with a reporter of the *Topeka Commonwealth* that on the evening in question he "met Bat Masterson, who had been sworn in as deputy sheriff, and told him to see that the boys did not create any trouble. He [Bat] then went over to Griffin's room. . . ."

Later in the evening Tate saw a crowd in front of the Great Western hotel and upon inquiry was told that Dr. Galland had struck Sheridan, apparently without provocation, and Sheridan had subsequently knocked the physician down. "Bat Masterson," said Tate, "was over there and the trouble there was over very quickly."<sup>66</sup>

Griffin's desire for publicity was the cause of the trouble, according to District Judge J. C. Strang of Larned. In a letter to Gov. John A. Martin, July 5, 1885, Strang wrote:

Griffin wants to close them [the saloons] with a proclamation, or with a great hurrah—with the State Temperance Union on the ground, & the Atty-Genl. and Judge of the district Court present, to do the bidding of the representative of the said Union, so he can send out an Associated Press dispatch to the world saying Albert Griffin organizer for the State Temperance Union has closed the Saloons in Dodge.

Judge Strang felt that the end of the cattle trade would soon enforce prohibition better than could the courts, the governor and the state militia combined. He continued:

Dodge City is in a transition state and will come all right soon of itself.

The quarantine law [prohibiting the entrance, between March and December, of Texas cattle "capable of communicating . . . what is known as Texas, splenic or Spanish fever" into Kansas] passed last winter is quietly working out the salvation of Dodge City. The festive cowboy is already becoming conspicuous by his absence in Dodge, and ere long he will be seen & heard there, in his glory, no more forever. The cowboy gone the gamblers and prostitutes will find their occupations gone, and, from necessity, must follow. The bulk of the saloons will then die out because there will be no sufficient support left, and the temperance people can close the rest as easily as they could in any other city in Kansas.<sup>67</sup>

Judge Strang was right. The *Capital*, August 6, 1885, confirmed his opinion:

There are silent but irresistible forces at work to regenerate Dodge City. The passage of the Texas cattle bill, the defeat of the trail bill [providing for a national cattle trail just west of Kansas] and the rapid settlement of the country south and southwest of Dodge, have destroyed that place as a cattle town. The cowboy must go, and with him will go the gamblers, the courtesans, the desperadoes and the saloons.

The most eloquent obituary for cowtown Dodge City, however, might have been this reminiscent item in the *Globe Live Stock Journal*, January 13, 1885:

A fashion item says that leather belts are in favor. They were in favor here at one time. Perhaps there was a difference in them, ours were stuck full of cartridges, and were very popular.

In spite of Albert Griffin's denunciation of Bat the deputy sheriff remained quite popular at home. At a Fourth of July celebration "a gold chain was voted to the most popular man, amid much good natured rivalry, and was voted to W. B. Masterson. The prize was to have been a gold headed cane, which we understand is yet to be given to Mr. Masterson as soon as it gets here from the east where it was ordered."<sup>68</sup>

On July 24 Bat ordered a fancy pistol from the Colt company. The letter he wrote is preserved in the Connecticut State Library:

OPERA HOUSE SALOON.

CARY & WRIGHT, PROPRIETORS.

Dealers in Imported Wines, Liquors and Cigars.

DODGE CITY, KAN., July 24th 1885

COLTS F. A. MG Co

HARTFORD CONN

Gents

please send me one of your Nickle plated Short 45. Calibre revolvers. it is for my own use and for that reason I would like to have a little Extra paines taken with it. I am willing to pay Extra for Extra work. Make it very Easy on trigger and have the front Sight a little higher and

thicker than the ordinary pistol of this kind. put on a gutta percha handle and send it as soon as possible. have the barrel about the same length that the Ejecting rod is.

28-B Express-COD

Will forward Thursday July 30/85

Truly yours

W. B. MASTERTON.

P. S. duplicate the above order by sending [words torn from sheet].  
M.

"W. B. Masterson went up to Pueblo Saturday [July 25], expecting to return to-day," reported the *Globe*, July 28, 1885.

Instead of returning Bat apparently moved on to Rawlins, Wyo., where on August 1 he refereed a prize fight. The *Globe*, August 11, 1885, said:

W. B. Masterson returned last Thursday [August 6] from a trip to Denver and Rawlins, Wyoming. At the latter place, the first inst., he acted as an umpire for [John P.] Clow, in the Clow and Hynds prize fight. He says there were special trains run from various parts of the country, and a good many parties present from long distances. There was no less than twenty thousand dollars bet on the fight, which was won by Clow, the sixth round. The Denver News publishes a full account of the fight, and says Masterson makes a ready umpire.

Clow and Masterson remained together. On October 23, 1885, they, with several other noted Dodgeites attended the races at Kinsley. The others included Bill Tilghman, Charley Heinz, Ben Daniels, and Neil Brown.<sup>60</sup>

A few days later Bat was found helping a fellow Dodgeite escape a Kinsley process server. The *Globe*, November 3, 1885, reported:

While at Kinsley last week, we heard that a prisoner had been taken away from an Edwards county officer at Dodge City, by a mob, in which was two officers. We were greatly surprised at the statement, and on returning made enquiry, and W. B. Masterson made the following statement to us of the whole affair. A Dodge City man, by the name of Phelps, obtained a license to run a game of chance at the Edwards county fair; the last day he heard that he was going to be arrested, so left town, and sent back word he would pay the association for his license. Terry, a deputy sheriff from Kinsley, came up here and arrested Phelps, who offered to pay the officer thirty eight dollars, being the amount due the association and the officers cost; Terry would not take the money. Masterson telegraphed A. D. Cronk that he would pay that amount of money to settle, and Cronk answered all right that is satisfactory, but the prisoner will have to come down and settle with the county attorney. The boys say that means the heaviest fine the law would allow, so they wanted in some way to settle without Phelps going down there.

Just before train time Terry and his prisoner were at the depot, and Masterson went over there alone, and spoke to the officer, saying he would like to speak to him a minute; Terry walked around the telegraph office leaving his prisoner alone, and when he came back his prisoner was gone. Terry then

came over on Front street and laughing, said, "boys you played it pretty fine, but I don't care, only I would like to get Cronk's money." He gave deputy sheriff Singer his warrant for Phelps, and in the afternoon went out to the fair grounds to see the glove contest; on returning to town he went up to Phelps's room over Cary's and spent over an hour talking to Phelps; what they said, nobody knows, but Terry came down stairs, hunted deputy Singer up, and took the warrant for Phelps, without making an explanation. Deputy Singer would have arrested Phelps on sight. Terry was with Phelps an hour or two after he had made his escape, why didn't he take him to Kinsley, nobody interfered in any way. There was no mob, one man, and only one, went to Terry to effect a settlement, and he walked off and left his prisoner.

We do not claim that Dodge City is the most moral place on earth, but we claim, know and can prove, that no officer ever came to Dodge City with proper authority after a man, but what our officers, if they knew of it, or were called upon, did not lend the visiting officer every assistance. If Terry had, on his arrival here, made known to one of our officers, his business, as he ought to have done, Phelps would have gone to Kinsley on the first train, even if it had been necessary to make a cordoroy road of dead men to walk on from Front street to the depot.

In early December Bat and Clow journeyed to Barber county where the fighter was scheduled for an exhibition bout with another pugilist named Ed Smith. Bat left a pleasant impression with both of the Medicine Lodge papers; the *Cresset*, December 3, 1885, said of him:

Bat Masterson, who has become famous as the leading killer of the west, is here this week making arrangements for a sparring exhibition between an Englishman by the name of Smith; and the champion pugilist of Colorado. . . . Speaking of the manager, Bat Masterson, considering his reputation, his general appearance is somewhat surprising. He certainly hasn't the appearance of a man who is said to have sent enough men up the golden stair to start a fair sized cemetery. He is a man of about the medium height, rather strongly built, with a fair complexion and a mild blue eye, this in a general way describes Bat Masterson, who is famous all over the west for his skill with a revolver, and, who is said to have put the light out of more than a score of men. It is said to his credit that he has never been known to take a cowardly advantage of an opponent, and, that the most of, if not all, of the men he has killed were more of an ornament to a graveyard than to society.

The *Barber County Index*, December 4, 1885, thought that Bat was a "plain, unassuming young man, with lots of horse sense and a very pleasant conversationalist." Could be Bat's statement that "Medicine Lodge is the best town he has ever struck in Kansas," didn't hurt his Barber county popularity.

On March 10, 1886, Bat made an astonishing switch from his previous pro-saloon feelings to inaugurate a determined crusade against the venders of alcoholic beverages. The *Dodge City Democrat*, March 13, was perplexed at Bat's actions:

Deputy Sheriff Bat Masterson has filed complaints with the county attorney against all of the saloon men and druggists in the city with the exception of Sturtevant, Garland and McCarty. Warrants have been issued and the parties have been arrested. The saloons are all closed now and the prohibitory law apparently enforced. How long this state of affairs will continue to exist is hard to tell and the object of the move will probably develop in the near future.

The Dodge City *Times*, March 11, 1886, said the action had roots in the coming city election:

CLOSED.

The saloons in Dodge were closed yesterday morning, complaints against the saloon-keepers having been made by W. B. Masterson. This step was produced by the candidacy of A. B. Webster for Mayor. Several saloon men signed the petition calling upon A. B. Webster to become a candidate for Mayor, and in consequence of this some feeling has been engendered. If Mr. Masterson will carry out his prohibition movement successfully he will have the gratitude of a generous public.

The *Globe Live Stock Journal*, March 16, 1886, agreed with the *Times* and offered a more detailed explanation:

A CHANGE OF BASE.

A petition published in the *GLOBE* of last week, so numerously signed by our citizens, asking ex-Mayor Webster to become their candidate for mayor at the forthcoming election, caused quite a flurry in our city as soon as it made its appearance in print, and aroused to action certain individuals who, heretofore were counted on in supporting him rather than to place themselves in direct opposition to his candidacy. While the present opponents were aware of the fact that he would be largely endorsed by the business men of the city, they did not count that one-half of the saloon druggists would also endorse him, which they did, thus leaving the other half to fight their own people and business, with great odds against them; made up of the neutral element, with a united temperance faction at their back.

This brought about a revolt within their own ranks, and ex-Sheriff W. B. Masterson and present deputy sheriff of Ford county, entered complaint against every saloon-drug store in the city, and going even further than this, including two legally licensed druggists who, he claimed were violaters of the prohibition law under which the complaint was made. Of course, arrests soon followed and all have given bonds for their appearance at our present term of district court, which convenes this day. This closed the saloons, and what the end will be, we, of course, at this time, cannot say any further than this. The ball has been started by one they counted as their friend, and even should he be inclined to hedge, the cases will not be dropped, as we are assured by the county attorney, but will be vigorously prosecuted to the end.

Ex-sheriff Masterson did not stop in his raid on saloon men, but has filed a complaint against a number of gamblers as well. He says he is going to make a general clean up in Dodge.

"'Bat' Masterson seems to be a bigger man just now than Attorney General Bradford, as he has succeeded in closing the Dodge City saloons, which was more than Bradford could do—or did do," said the *Spearville Blade*, March 19, 1886.

Bat's actions have never been satisfactorily explained but nevertheless the death knell had been sounded for the "Beautiful, Bibulous Babylon of the Frontier" and the wild cowtown fell into tranquil and sedate ways. The town shortly became too prosaic for Bat Masterson. In 1886 he moved his operations to Colorado though he did visit Dodge in September and November of that year.<sup>70</sup> On October 23, 1887, he was staying at the Delmonico Hotel in Dodge. He gave Lamar, Colo., as his home address.<sup>71</sup> Denver also attracted Bat for it was as wild and woolly as many of Kansas' earlier frontier towns. When Denver cooled down Bat would move to other fields, such as Creede, an 1892 Colorado mining town. On March 3, 1892, the *Leoti (Kan.) Standard* reported that "Bat Masterson, well known in western Kansas, is the city marshal [at Creede]."

In later years, of course, Bat forsook the West and moved to New York where he became a sports writer and a secretary with the *New York Morning Telegraph*. On October 25, 1921, he died, quietly, at his desk.

1. *Dodge City Times*, August 11, 1877. 2. *Ibid.*, September 22, October 6, 1877.
3. *Ibid.*, November 3, 10, 1877. 4. *Ibid.*, January 5, 1878. 5. Reprinted by the *Kinsley Valley Republican*, February 2, 1878, from its extra of January 27, 1878. 6. *Kinsley Valley Republican*, February 2, 1878. 7. *Ibid.* 8. See, also, *Dodge City Times*, February 9, 1878, and *Kinsley Valley Republican*, February 9, 1878. 9. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, Dodge City, February 12, 1878. 10. See, also, *Ibid.*, February 19, 1878, and *Kinsley Valley Republican*, February 16, 1878. 11. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, February 26, 1878. 12. See, also, *Ibid.*, March 19, 1878, and *Kinsley Valley Republican*, March 23, 1878. 13. *Ford County Globe*, March 19, 1878. 14. *Kinsley Valley Republican*, March 30, 1878; see, also, *Dodge City Times*, March 30, 1878. 15. *Ford County Globe*, October 29, 1878. 16. *Dodge City Times*, April 13, 1878. 17. *Ibid.*, April 13, 20, 1878; *Ford County Globe*, April 16, 23, 1878. The Mastersons had two farms in Sedgewick county. One consisted of 160 acres in Garden Plain township; it was the N. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 15, T. 27 S., R. 3 W. Bat's father, Thomas Masterson, paid \$500 for the place in May, 1875. The other farm was in Grant township, the E.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the S. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 24, T. 25 S., R. 1 E. 18. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, April 23, 1878. 19. *Dodge City Times*, January 12, 1878. 20. *Ford County Globe*, June 25, 1878. 21. *Dodge City Times*, June 29, 1878. 22. *Ford County Globe*, September 24, 1878. 23. See, also, *Dodge City Times*, December 21, 1878. 24. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, December 17, 1878. 25. "Records of the War Department, United States Army Commands, Fort Dodge, Kansas, Reports and Journals of Scouts and Marches, 1873-1879," National Archives. Microfilm copy in archives division, Kansas State Historical Society. 26. See, also, *Dodge City Times*, January 18, 1879. 27. *Topeka Commonwealth*, March 4, 1879. 28. See, also, *Dodge City Times*, January 18, 1879. 29. See, also, *Ibid.*, January 11, 1879; *Ford County Globe*, January 14, 1879. 30. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, January 21, 1879. 31. *Ibid.*, February 11, 1879; *Dodge City Times*, February 15, 1879. 32. "Governors' Correspondence," archives division, Kansas State Historical Society. 33. *Ibid.* 34. "Marking an Epoch—the Last Indian Raid and Massacre," *Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Board of Directors of the Kansas State Historical Society*, p. 30. 35. "Gov-

errors' Correspondence," archives division, Kansas State Historical Society. 36. *Ibid.* 37. Possibly the Times was mistaken in saying Bat's two brothers accompanied him. James Masterson was along but there is no record of Tom being with them. The fourth member of the party, as identified by the Dodge City Times, February 15 and 22, 1879, was Kokomo Sullivan. 38. "Correspondence of the Adjutants General," archives division, Kansas State Historical Society. 39. "Marking an Epoch—the Last Indian Raid and Massacre," *loc. cit.*, pp. 21-31; "Governors' Correspondence," archives division, Kansas State Historical Society; *Ford County Globe*, July 1, October 21, 1879. 40. See, also, Dodge City Times, February 22, 1879. 41. See, also, *ibid.*, March 1, 1879. 42. "In the Matter of the Petition of George H. Holcomb, for a Writ of Habeas Corpus," *Kansas Reports*, v. 21, pp. 628-637. 43. See, also, Dodge City Times, June 14, 1879. 44. See, also, *ibid.*, July 5, 1879. 45. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, August 5, 1879. 46. See, also, *ibid.*, September 16, 1879; *Topeka Commonwealth*, September 16, 1879. 47. "Governors' Correspondence," archives division, Kansas State Historical Society. 48. *Ibid.* 49. Dodge City Times, September 20, 1879. 50. *Ford County Globe*, October 28, 1879. 51. Dodge City Times, January 10, 31, 1880. 52. *Ford County Globe*, January 13, 1880. 53. Dodge City Times, January 10, 1880. 54. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, March 2, 1880. 55. Dodge City Times, March 13, 1880. 56. *Ibid.*, March 20, 1880; *Ford County Globe*, March 30, 1880. 57. See, also, *Ford County Globe*, April 20, 1880. 58. See, also, *ibid.*, June 1, 1880. 59. George C. Thompson, *Bat Masterson; the Dodge City Years* (Fort Hays Kansas State College Studies, Language and Literature Series No. 1, 1943), p. 36. Thompson held an interview with Thomas Masterson, Jr., on November 4, 1937. 60. *Ford County Globe*, February 15, 1881. 61. See, also, *ibid.*, November 20, 1883. 62. *Globe Live Stock Journal*, October 14, 1884. 63. *Ibid.*, October 23, 1884. 64. *Ibid.*, November 18, 1884. 65. *Ibid.*, January 13, 1885. 66. *Topeka Commonwealth*, July 4, 1885. 67. "Governors' Correspondence," archives division, Kansas State Historical Society. 68. *Globe Live Stock Journal*, July 7, 1885. 69. *Ibid.*, October 27, 1885. 70. *Ibid.*, September 28, November 16, 1886. 71. Hotel register in possession of Mrs. Merritt L. Beeson, Dodge City.

(This Series on Cowtown Police Officers To Be Continued in the  
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