A Most Unusual Gathering

Survivors of Quantrill's raid at the semi-centennial memorial reunion, 1913, Lawrence.
William Clarke Quantrill at the head of some 450 mounted guerrillas entered Lawrence, Kansas, shortly after five o’clock on the morning of August 21, 1863, without the citizens having any prior warning. One eyewitness who was a guest at the Eldridge House called the wild scenes of the ensuing four hours “not a fight, not a murder, but the most terrible, cold blooded fiendish massacre ever heard of in this country.” Altogether an estimated two hundred men and boys were killed or later died of gunshot wounds. It required a week’s labor to gather up and bury the dead. It was estimated that the married men who were killed left behind eighty widows and 250 fatherless children.¹

Reverend Richard Cordley, pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church and an eyewitness to the tragedy, said the loss of property had been variously estimated, some putting it as low as $750,000, and others as high as $2.5 million. He thought it could not fall below $1.5 million. Approximately two hundred buildings were burned, including some seventy-five business houses on the main street. The Eldridge House was burned after the sixty-five guests were removed to another hotel and personally protected by Quantrill. Fifteen African American employees of the Eldridge were reported to have escaped the wrath of the bushwhackers by taking flight. The dwelling and business houses that were not burned were in most cases robbed, and women as well as men were robbed of their money, watches, and jewelry. Between four hundred and five hundred horses taken as fresh mounts were packed with valuable goods stolen from stores and

residences. No women are known to have been raped or killed. Many housewives stood up boldly to the guerrillas and by ingenious means saved their men-folk and extinguished fires in their homes. Albert Castel, a leading authority on Quantrill and his bush-whackers, claimed that the Lawrence massacre was the most atrocious single event in the Civil War, and it gave Quantrill a reputation as “the bloodiest man in American history.”

In the years following the Civil War the leaders of Lawrence and local war veterans created a fraternal organization, built a new cemetery, and set aside a day in memory of the Civil War dead and the victims of Quantrill’s massacre. Survivors of the massacre first joined other townspeople on Decoration Day on May 30 each year to decorate the graves of Union soldiers and victims of the massacre. Beginning in 1891 they organized an association of survivors of the massacre and from time to time held reunions to which the general public was invited. Furthermore, a monument was erected and dedicated to the memory of the citizens of Lawrence who fell victim to the ferocity of the border guerrillas. This article will explore the background to and execution of plans for the semi-centennial memorial reunion at Lawrence, Kansas, on August 20–21, 1913. It will show that in 1913 the human and material resources of Lawrence were mobilized and that some two hundred of the survivors gathered to celebrate their escape and to honor the memories of the citizens who fell during the raid.

After the Civil War several developments fostered the growth of patriotism in Lawrence and gave rise to major ceremonial occasions. In 1866 the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was founded; it was a national society of Civil War veterans who served in the Union forces. According to Charles M. Correll, the GAR was a comradeship to preserve common memories, to care for the widows and orphans of soldiers and to promote all that could advance the spirit of patriotism in the community. . . . in the early 1890’s, when the organization was at its peak, there were somewhat less than 500 posts with a membership of not much over 20,000, while it was estimated that the probable number of Union veterans within the borders of the state was some 100,000.


Quantrill’s 1863 raid on Lawrence was described by one eyewitness as “the most terrible, cold blooded fiendish massacre ever heard of in this country.”

Local posts of the GAR were urged to establish memorial halls for reading rooms and historical mu-


seums, and to ensure that patriotism was taught and the national flag displayed in public schoolrooms. Decoration Day (later known as Memorial Day) was founded in 1868 as an annual national holiday and major ceremonial occasion on May 30 for the purpose of decorating the graves of soldiers who had died in defense of their country during the Civil War. Another development was purchasing and laying out Oak Hill Cemetery. It was acquired in the form of unimproved farmland by a committee of the city council in 1865 and became the principal burial ground in Lawrence. The Lawrence Republican Daily Journal of April 16, 1873, noted that “the refinement and culture of a community” could be judged by “the respect paid to the resting places of its dead.” Lawrence was said to rank high in this respect: “It is seldom that a more naturally attractive spot is selected for a cemetery than the inclosure now known as Oak Hill, and we are glad to see that the gentlemen in charge of the grounds are adding to this naturally beautiful site the aids of art.”

On May 11, 1870, a meeting of Lawrence citizens was held at the council chambers to arrange for the due observance of Decoration Day, the new national festival. After a report from a previously appointed committee, several resolutions were adopted. The first requested the mayor “to invite the citizens of Lawrence to consecrate Monday, May 30th, to the memory of our patriot dead.” It was also resolved that a committee be appointed “to arrange for the decoration on that day of the graves in and near Lawrence of Union soldiers and of our citizens who were the victims of the Quantrell massacre, and for an appropriate public ceremonial.”

At the community-wide celebration of Decoration Day in 1875, the crowd at Oak Hill Cemetery proceeded from the graves of Union soldiers to those of citizens killed in the Quantrell raid. Sidney Clarke, U.S. congressman from Kansas, delivered the address, in part of which he said:

> Nearly all the professions and employments in life furnished victims for this common grave. The educated and uneducated; native and foreign born; the white and the black, will sleep here side by side till the morning of the resurrection shall identify them for the great hereafter. . . .
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> We must live together in the future as one people, proud alike of a common heritage, and equally interested in the name and fame of a nation which presents the world with the most wonderful civilization of modern times.

After the congressman’s lengthy address, young ladies wearing white dresses decorated the graves with floral offerings that were said to be quite beautiful.

Prior to 1891 the survivors of Quantrell’s raid were reported to have met informally every August 21 to recall the events of that fatal day. A general observance of the raid anniversary probably was not considered necessary because formal ceremonies had been held annually on Memorial Day and Independence Day. Some of the survivors feared that the proceedings of a public reunion would degenerate into a conflict between those who would revive old grievances against the Missourians and others who were inclined toward conciliation. Moreover, to have declared a holiday on August 21 would have interfered with the county’s agricultural and the town’s business activities. The local newspaper editor suggested a compromise when he wrote on August 21, 1886, “Business men may well stop a moment to consider the terrible events of twenty-three years ago.”

Readers of the Lawrence Daily Journal on August 20, 1891, noted in the section headed “City News in Brief” that “The reunion of those who escaped Quantrell’s men will be of interest to the general public and everyone is invited to come and enjoy good speeches, music, plenty of ice water and comfortable seats, at the park tomorrow night.” It was not the purpose of the reunion to teach vengeance upon those who were responsible for it, insisted the Daily

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5. Republican Daily Journal, May 12, 1870. Note that most sources well into the twentieth century spelled the name “Quantrell” rather than “Quantrill.”

6. Ibid., June 1, 1875.

7. Ibid., August 21, 1886.
Journal, “but that the young generation should learn of the patriotism that actuated those who saved Kansas from the invaders and made it, by their heroism, what it is today.” Another purpose was “to arrange for a permanent organization of the survivors. . . . There is much work that should be done that no one but the survivors can do, and they can do it only through united effort.” Two days later, at a meeting in South Park, it was resolved that the survivors organize the “Association of Survivors of Quantrell’s Massacre, of the Citizens of Lawrence, Douglas county, Kansas, August 21, 1863, and that the officers of the said association shall consist of a president, three vice-presidents, secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer and an executive committee of five.”

On Sunday, August 21, 1892, the survivors of the raid held their annual meeting in South Park. A very large crowd gathered there to listen to interesting speeches. An article in a local newspaper noted that the survivors were fewer than the previous year and the ranks were growing thinner. He expressed hope that until the last survivor was gone the organization would be kept alive and that coming generations would learn from these survivors what it cost to make Kansas free.

On May 30, 1894, the survivors and others who were interested met at the courthouse, organized the Lawrence Monument Association, and appointed a committee to make arrangements for building and erecting a monument. The committee proceeded to solicit funds, secure the monument, and have it erected and dedicated. On Memorial Day 1895 the people of Lawrence and Douglas County turned out in great numbers. “In the morning the G.A.R. and its kindred societies decorated the graves of the dead in both cemeteries [Pioneer and Oak Hill].” The afternoon was devoted to the procession to Oak Hill cemetery for the dedication and unveiling of the monument that was erected near the graves of numerous victims of the massacre. The beautiful memorial is made of Vermont granite, eight by four feet at the base and eight feet seven inches high, bearing the inscription:

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY CITIZENS WHO DEFENCELESS FELL VICTIMS TO THE INHUMAN FEROCITY OF BORDER GUERRILLAS LED BY THE INFAMOUS QUANTRELL IN HIS RAID UPON LAWRENCE. AUGUST 21ST, 1863. ERECTED MAY 30TH, 1895.

The Citizens Memorial Monument was erected by the people of Lawrence and friends living elsewhere who numbered about 150 and contributed a total of fifteen hundred dollars, the cost of the monument.

Although local survivors of the raid and massacre gathered to hold memorial services every August 21, it was not until 1913, the semi-centennial or fiftieth anniversary of the tragedy, that both a memorial and a reunion were conducted. The first public announcement that leaders of the community were considering such a memorial and reunion appeared in a lead article in the Lawrence Daily Journal-World on May 17, 1913. It told of a suggestion that the survivors who lived elsewhere be invited to return for a week, during which time Lawrence citizens would act as hosts to the “older members of the family” in an “old home week.” Continuing, the article said:

The twenty-first of August is a date which Lawrence people can never forget. Heretofore the day has been remembered in Lawrence by the old settlers who recalled the events of that day, but there has never been a general observance of the day. Lawrence people never felt that it was a gala occasion. It was the saddest date in the history of the city. But Lawrence has grown into a city now and the growth began immediately after the Quantrell Raid. It is urged that this is a befitting date on which to celebrate this growth.

The article closed by informing readers that the movement would soon be taken up in earnest.

9. Ibid., August 22, 1892.
10. Ibid., May 29, 30, 1895; Topeka Daily Capital, May 31, 1895.
Eleven days after the above article appeared a meeting of Lawrence citizens was convened. Fifteen (later seventeen) town leaders were selected to plan and head the Quantrill raid victims semi-centennial memorial reunion. One-third of the members of the committee were to be women who survived the massacre. Colonel John K. Rankin was elected chairman and Clarence S. Hall secretary. The committee was instructed to ask every organization in the city to cooperate in furthering plans for the memorial. A short editorial in the Journal-World said the committee of seventeen had been appointed to arrange a fitting memorial for the victims of Quantrill’s massacre. A major task was “to find the names of the survivors no matter where they may be living and have them here on August 21.”

At the meeting of the committee of seventeen on June 6, a subcommittee of five was named to draw up a tentative program for the memorial. Besides the program subcommittee, other subcommittees were appointed at the meeting of June 13: historical, finance, entertainment, permanent memorial, invitation, and publicity. Each chairperson was given authority to select other members of his or her subcommittee. These members were reported at the July 20 meeting, at which time the committee of seventeen was said to be delighted to have the presence of George W. Martin, secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society, who approved of the general plan of the memorial.

Mary Clark was in charge of collecting the names and addresses of survivors. She was said to have a natural aptitude for this and worked with great care and thoroughness. An incomplete list of survivors was published in the Journal-World on June 9. The public was asked to read the list carefully and report at once the names and addresses of any other survivors who could be reached with an invitation. At the planning meeting on July 30 it was announced that more than five hundred names were on the list and others were expected to be added before the day of the memorial.

On the anniversary of the massacre, the Journal-World commented on the large number of survivors:

Fifty years is a long time and it is surprising that so many survivors remain. The town had a population of about 2,500 at the time of the raid and there are fully 500 survivors. It all argues that a race of brave men came to Kansas to make it a free state. They were men of courage and good conduct and they have remained with us long.

A minor reason for the large number of survivors may be that the group included men who were permanent residents but who were away on military service and buying trips for local stores on the day of the raid.

During the memorial reunion the Journal-World published a supplement entitled Lawrence: Today and Yesterday. Part of this supplement is devoted to the history of the massacre and the reunion, of which two pages contain the names and addresses of the 546 survivors of the massacre. This list is headed: “Men and Women, Boys and Girls [Who] Survived the Lawrence Massacre. This List Shows Those Living on Aug. 21, 1913.” Table 1 summarizes the geographical residen-

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13. Ibid., June 7, 14, 21, 1913.

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tial pattern of the survivors.

Table 1 shows that a little more than half of all survivors lived in Lawrence and Douglas County in 1913, one-eighth in other parts of Kansas, and two-thirds in Kansas as a whole. Three states adjacent to Kansas—Missouri, Oklahoma, and Colorado—in the aggregate accounted for nearly 15 percent of all survivors, and the three Pacific Coast states of California, Oregon, and Washington for 8 percent. Ten survivors each lived in New Mexico and Illinois, and seven in New York. Table 1 does not show the states and territories of residence of thirty survivors. These are summarized as follows: three survivors each lived in Iowa, Texas, and Indiana; two each in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Washington, D.C.; and one each in Arkansas, Montana, Ohio, New Hampshire, Utah, Nebraska, South Dakota, Idaho, Maine, Florida, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands. Of the 182 survivors living outside the state of Kansas in 1913, 100 were living in the states and territories to the south and west of Kansas. Kansas City accounted for the greater part of those living in Missouri. It is interesting that of the 140 survivors who were living outside of Kansas and Missouri, 102 lived in states and territories west of Missouri, and the remaining 38 lived east of this line. Thus, the residential pattern was one in which westerners predominated.

Other than a partial list, data are lacking for the survivors who attended the reunion in 1913. Newspaper accounts place the numbers present as ranging from four hundred to five hundred, but no exact total or geographical breakdown of those in attendance has been discovered.

Besides compiling a list of survivors and mailing them invitations to the reunion, the committee of seventeen instructed Mary Clark to request letters from the survivors “recounting their experiences of that dreadful day. It is desirable that each one in this list will at once write to the committee an account of his experiences of that day” and send them as soon as possible. Approximately one hundred of these letters are preserved in the Kansas State Historical Society. These recollections are of great value to historians, supplying narratives of the survivors’ wide range of experiences.17

A mong other problems encountered by the reunion committee, securing a speaker of prominence to make the principal address was no easy task. The first to be invited was Bishop William Lawrence of the Congregational Church. He was the son of Amos Lawrence, treasurer of the New England Emigrant Aid Company and a wealthy industrialist for whom the town of Lawrence was named. Bishop Lawrence, who was thirteen years old when the massacre occurred, retained a distinct recollection of the shock that this terrible tragedy caused in New England. When Bishop Lawrence wrote regretting that prior commitments made it impossible to accept the invitation, the committee invited Homer Hoch, former governor of Kansas, who was in great demand as an orator. He too declined, and Charles S. Gleed, who had taken a prominent part in Kansas affairs for many years, accepted the invitation to deliver the memorial address.18

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17. Lawrence Daily Journal-World, July 9, 1913. The recollections written by survivors of the Lawrence massacre at the time of the semi-centennial memorial reunion are in “Recollections of Quantrill Raid,” collection 159, boxes 1 and 2, Library and Archives Division, Kansas State Historical Society.

At a committee meeting on July 18, instructions were given to the subcommittee chairpersons to complete their parts of the program and report to the entire committee as soon as possible. Two weeks later Mrs. Paul R. Brooks was appointed chairperson of the subcommittee to take charge of decorating all graves of the raid victims. E. Otis Perkins was named chairperson of the subcommittee to provide conveyances to the Oak Hill Cemetery for the survivors and distinguished visitors on the anniversary day. According to the *Journal-World*, “The local autoists are expected to donate their cars for a short time on this morning so that the visitors can be properly taken care of.”

An article headed “All in Readiness for the Memorial” summarized the committee’s proceedings on the night of August 15 at the city library. It was decided to hold all meetings downtown in the Bowersock Opera House. This included the evening meeting on August 20. It was announced that because Leavenworth had accepted an invitation to send a delegation, the mayor of that town should be invited to make a short speech or provide someone to do it. The scarcity of flowers was not expected to interfere with decorating the monument in the cemetery since a large wreath would be provided. Badges and programs were being printed and would be ready in time. Headquarters for the survivors were to be maintained in the opera house lobby, and all visitors were to be escorted(323,917),(459,946) by the entertainment subcommittee, of which Mrs. H.B. Asher was chairperson. Mrs. S.D. Alford reported at the same meeting “that she had obtained a list of about forty buildings in Lawrence that are now standing, that escaped the flames that followed the massacre.” She said that the list had been placed in the hands of Dr. Edward Bumgardner, a local historian, for revision and to arrange to mark these buildings.

The opening meeting of the semi-centennial memorial reunion was held at the Bowersock Opera House on Wednesday evening, August 20, 1913. More than 200 of the nearly 550 living survivors of the Lawrence massacre were in attendance. Colonel John K. Rankin, chairman of the reunion committee, presided. He and his cousin had been in Lawrence at the time of the massacre and shot at some of the guerrillas. He also led a party of Lawrence men under the command of Senator James H. Lane in pursuit of the guerrilla band after they departed the burning town. Rankin opened the meeting with the following words:

Ladies and Gentlemen: I want to pay a particular tribute to those of our citizens who passed away in the massacre of fifty years ago. Who were they? They were the cream of the immigration which came West at that time to make the country a free country—young, energetic, capable men and women. They were the men and the women who made this country what it is, who made this town and this state what it is, and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid.

Following the chairman’s opening remarks came short addresses of various incidents of the raid by Judge Samuel A. Riggs, Mrs. S.D. Alford, Mrs. H.B. Asher, Henry Albach, Gurdon Grovenor, and others.
The *Journal-World* reported that many interesting stories were told:

many a story of narrow escape, of terror and murder and destruction. These people were here on that day, they saw the guerrillas sweep the city, they saw it afterward, a heap of cinders and ashes with the bodies of their relatives and friends and neighbors strewn about the streets where they had been shot down. To them the occasion last night was long to be remembered, they saw persons there whom they had not seen for years and it made their hearts glad and their spirits lighter than they had been for some time.

That evening the audience was asked to sing “The Star Spangled Banner” and “Home Sweet Home.”

On Thursday morning, the anniversary day, groups of Lawrence people who had been planning the memorial set out to accomplish their tasks. One group went early to the cemetery to mark and decorate all the known graves of massacre victims and the monument in their honor. The reception committee at the opera house supplied badges and programs to survivors who had arrived late the previous night or in the morning. Motor cars awaited the visitors at the opera house to carry them to Oak Hill Cemetery. Another group, also in automobiles, covered the city placing placards on all buildings that had been standing at the time of the raid. The newspaper listed the addresses and owners at the time of the raid of ninety-two buildings where placards were posted. “It was rather a surprise to find so many old buildings about the city that withstood the ravages of that day and have remained here fifty years longer,” said the *Journal-World*. A special marker was posted at the home of Edward Bumgardner at 724 Vermont Street. This building, which had been the Methodist church, was converted into a temporary hospital and morgue on the day of the massacre.

Another group, including Mayor E.U. Bond, went across the bridge to the Union Pacific Railway depot to welcome members of a delegation from Leavenworth who had been invited to participate in the exercises of the day. The people of Lawrence felt that this sister city should be shown special favor because of its aid given Lawrence. A long article in the *Leavenworth Times* detailed the aid measures that had been forthcoming. When Mayor Daniel Anthony had learned that the drug stores in Lawrence had been destroyed, he had made arrangements for several doctors to start for the stricken town with various medicines. On the night of August 21, Mayor Anthony had called a public meeting to raise money for the relief of Lawrence. On the following day the Leavenworth newspaper had published a list of the subscribers to the relief fund, which amounted to more than ten thousand dollars in one day. Continuing, the newspaper had reported that “Not only did Leavenworth send money, coffins and resolutions of condolence to her sister city but many of her citizens upon first word of the massacre mounted horses and hurried to the aid of the stricken city.” The 1913 delegation consisted of twelve Leavenworth citizens, several of whom had come to the aid of Lawrence on the morning after the massacre.

The chief event on the morning of August 21 was the service in Oak Hill Cemetery honoring the massacre victims. Automobiles loaned by citizens of Lawrence conveyed a hundred or more survivors to the city. Reverend O.C. Brown, pastor of the First Baptist Church, delivered a short address appropriate to the occasion. A song also was sung by the audience in the cemetery. “Gathered about the big granite monument erected in memory of those slain on that day, the survivors with damp eyes paid tribute to the dead whose bones reposed beneath their feet,” wrote the *Topeka Daily Capital* reporter. Most of the victims had been buried the day following the tragedy in what was later called Pioneer Cemetery and is now part of the west campus of the University of Kansas. There a great trench was excavated and the bodies of many unidentified persons were laid side by side, some with and many without coffins. Later, however, all but a few of the bodies of the victims were moved to Oak Hill Cemetery for final interment. The *Journal-World* reported that a list

21. Ibid., August 20, 21, 1913; *Topeka Daily Capital*, August 21, 1913.
of the killed had been compiled containing the names of 143 victims, but that the estimates were as high as 185.24

The principal and final meeting of the memorial reunion was held at the Bowersock Opera House on the afternoon of August 21. According to the Topeka Daily Capital, four hundred or five hundred had been present in or near Lawrence at the time of the massacre. “The building was filled with citizens and with visitors from far away countries,” reported the Journal-World. Furthermore, this local paper noted:

Many a survivor of the raid had come hundreds of miles to be in Lawrence once again, to be here and see the town which fifty years ago he watched burn. Some of them were only children then and but faintly remember the day but others saw it all and can never forget that picture of crime and suffering. But for all it was a memorable occasion here today and the Memorial was in every way a great success.

To the editor of the Lawrence Daily Gazette, the meeting at the opera house was one of the most unusual gatherings ever in Lawrence. Men and women came together to talk over one of the most painful periods of their lives, a time of widespread disaster and conditions of which the younger generation had no first-hand knowledge. Although friendly greetings and cheerful conversations were abundant, still throughout the whole proceedings a note of sadness showed plainly on the aged men and women who had never forgotten the sorrows of fifty years earlier.25

Presiding at the afternoon meeting was Judge Samuel Bishop, former mayor of Lawrence and a survivor of the massacre. After the audience sang a patriotic song, he introduced Charles Sumner Gleed, the speaker of the day, whose memorial address was entitled “The Lawrence Massacre and its Lessons.” Gleed was born in Vermont in 1856 and came to Kansas after the Civil War. He was a student at the University of Kansas from 1876 to 1880, was admitted to the bar in 1884, and thereafter had a distinguished career as a business executive and trustee of the University of Kansas.26

Gleed traced the history of Lawrence and its early settlers. They came not only from New England but also Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Germany, and other parts of Europe and North America. These people believed in the dignity of labor, he said; they were humanitarians who were, almost without exception, hostile to the institution of slavery. He spoke in a conciliatory manner regarding the traditional South, pointing out that slavery in the United States was not the invention of the Southern states. Instead, it was brought to the New World by European slave traders. Neither was the peculiar institution upheld by such great statesmen of the South as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, James Madison, Thomas Hart Benton, and hundreds of other national leaders. But the truly great men of the South, he de-


25. Topeka Daily Capital, August 22, 1913; Lawrence Daily Journal-World, August 21, 22, 1913; Daily Gazette (Lawrence), August 22, 1913.

clared, were ultimately ignored by the majority who pursued a course of "reckless and unmoral commercialism" that grafted slavery on the South and led to the Civil War.

After recounting the troubled and violent history of territorial Kansas, Gleed asked, "Who and what were the raiders who came to Lawrence to murder and destroy?" He answered that Quantrill and his guerrillas "were technically Confederate soldiers, but they received no orders, made no reports, and were in every way as irresponsible as when they were stealing horses and cattle and Negroes on their own accounts."

Focusing on William Quantrill, Gleed made it clear that he found no redeeming qualities in the guerrilla leader. Quantrill was described as "a thin, cold, bloodless man with great personal vanity, jealous of all who dared to try to divide the spotlight with him, cruel and relentless in all his methods." Having begun his outlaw career as a petty thief, he had degenerated into "a great dry-land pirate with plunder his object and murder his pastime."

Although Quantrill had no redeeming qualities in Gleed’s opinion, his men were said to have had "many grades of criminality." Some of these men said that because Kansas Jayhawkers and Red Legs had committed atrocities in Missouri, they were justified in seeking revenge at Lawrence for personal losses or grievances. We know today that Gleed was wrong to dismiss all the charges by the Missourians, however right he was to assert the uniquely destructive and vicious nature of the Lawrence massacre. While most of Quantrill’s gang were described as "thoroughly bad men, criminals by instinct, by training," a few of them "made some efforts on occasion to prevent murder and there were others who declined to do any murdering themselves." Another group that came to Lawrence "were almost innocent followers, who afterwards became good citizens. All these have always regretted the Lawrence murders," according to Gleed.

Gleed next asked, "What was done that day in Lawrence?" He answered that only the historian could tell with any completeness, but that nearly two hundred men and boys had been murdered. But he used the word "murdered" advisedly, since war had no sanction for killing noncombatants.

There was none to resist and practically nobody resisted. Two hundred men were murdered because they could not resist. They had nothing with which to resist. Their political leaders were all present, but they had no military leaders. General Lane was in the Senate, but happened to be at home. He ran to the country and gathered a small body of farmers with arms returning when no help could be rendered. Governor Robinson was on Mt. Oread where he could see the burning city, but he was powerless to help. . . . Such utter helplessness in time of war can scarcely be comprehended.

Gleed then addressed "the story of that day’s work," noting that this "must be had of the historian," but he gave his listeners "suggestions of what happened" to a number of victims:

As an opening episode, the Rev. S.S. Snyder of the United Brethren Church, at work on his premises was riddled with bullets.

Seventeen young recruits of the Fourteenth Kansas [Cavalry], without arms or uniform, were shot to death.

R.C. Dix and many others at the Johnson Hotel, were promised safety if they would come out. They came out and were murdered.

George W. Bell, County Clerk, with a friend, took refuge in the rafters of an unfinished house. One of the murderers began shooting at them. Bell recognized him as a man he had entertained at his home, and begged for his life, or at least that of his

27. Ibid.
friend. They were promised immunity, but were shot as they came down.

Mayor Collamore and an employee were driven into the well on their premises where they died. A friend, Captain J.G. Lowe, entered the well to try to save the life of the mayor, and he died.

Levi Gates was shot and horribly mutilated.

Dr. J.F. Griswold, S.M. Thorp, J.C. Trask and Harlow W. Baker were induced to leave the Dr. Griswold's home on assurance that they would merely be taken prisoners. They were promptly shot. Griswold, Thorp and Trask were killed. Baker was shot five times, but pretending to be dead, was left still alive and finally recovered.

Edward P. Fitch was called to his door and shot and burned with his home.

D.W. Palmer was wounded and left in his store to burn.

James Perine and James Eldridge were clerks. After they had given the raiders all that was valuable in the store where they slept, they were shot and burned.

Mr. Burt delivered his pocket book and received a bullet.

Mr. Murphy handed one raider a drink of water and was repaid by instant death.

Mr. Ellis, a blacksmith, ran into a patch of corn with his child. A raider left him dead with the child in his arms.

Mr. Albach was ill in bed. He was carried out of his house by his family and was shot by the raiders.

G.H. Sargent and Charles Palmer were shot. Sargent was not instantly killed. His wife fell upon his prostrate body. A murderer placed his pistol over her shoulder and sent a bullet into her husband's head.

Mr. Thornton was shot five times and then beaten over the head, but lived many years in a frightfully crippled condition, never knowing freedom from pain.

Mr. Langley was pursued about his home and shot a dozen times.

John and William Laurie were murdered each begging for the life of the other. William Laurie's wife was present. One murderer said to Mrs. Laurie: "We are fiends from Hell. Get into the house or we will serve you the same way."

George Holt and J.L. Crane were butchered in their shoe store.

John Speer, Junior, seventeen [sic—nineteen] years old, was wounded and fell near a burning building. He begged to be moved, but was shot to death.

Robert Speer [age seventeen and brother of John Speer Jr.] and his companion were sleeping in the printing office, and were murdered.

Young Collamore, son of the Mayor, was shot and left on the road. [He recovered.]

John Bergen and six other prisoners were shot. All were killed except Bergen, who was left for dead, but recovered.

Robin Martin, twelve years of age, was shot as he ran from his home.

Two negro preachers, Stonestreet and Oldham, were murdered, the latter in the presence of his daughter.

Judge Louis Carpenter was pursued through his house and mortally wounded. His wife and sister [sic—sister-in-law] threw themselves on his prostrate body, but were thrust aside enough to permit the final shots.

Mr. Young was shot and burned, but lived.

The last man killed, like the first, was a preacher—Mr. Rothrock of the Dunkard denomination [sic—he was wounded and recovered].

Gleed concluded this part of his address by saying that the full story of the massacre as written by William Elsey Connelley "fills the reader with horror. I would not if I could recite it all here. Such is not our object at this hour."

In the closing paragraph of his masterful and eloquent address, Gleed eulogized the martyrs of the massacre:

We cannot forget those who died and those who suffered; those who fell in the hour of attack and those who survived, broken in health or in heart; those whose life's hopes and plans were cruelly blasted, blasted forever; those who were, in one way or another, martyrs to the cause of freedom and equality in the founding of our great state. For every one of them there must be glorious reward.

In God's great economy there is no loss. Every drop of blood spilled that day nourished the flowers of liberty. Every cry of anguish reached the heart of civilization and brought help against oppression. Every golden thread of love and friendship, that day broken, was not broken, was not 28. Ibid.
broken in vain, for God saw. The day of restoration and requital will come, and when that eternal day has dawned, joy, God given, unspeakable joy, will have come with the morning.29

Following Gleed, an address was delivered by William Connelley, a leading historian of Kansas and the West. Connelley had a varied career as a schoolteacher, civil servant, businessman, manuscript and book collector, and author. In 1912 he was elected president of the Kansas State Historical Society and two years later secretary and director, serving the Society in the latter capacity until his death in 1930. Among Connelley’s numerous books, his *Quantrill and the Border Wars*, first published in 1909 and twice reprinted, has been the most influential.30

Connelley was not a modest man when the impact of his book about Quantrill was in question. He said he had had no doubt that his labors had helped to revive public awareness of the tragedy of the people that the memorial reunion was honoring. When Connelley began his investigation, he said there was little reliable information concerning Quantrill’s life and times. Although some accounts were based on truth, he contended, they usually were distorted or exaggerated. “The only event of which there was a fair account was the Lawrence massacre, and of it the preliminary movements were little known.” Since many Kansans and Missourians believed the falsehoods Quantrill told, Connelley contended it was “necessary to the truth of history that some reliable and accurate account of Quantrell be published.” Quantrill “was rapidly becoming a hero in Missouri where he was regarded as one who had been driven out of Kansas because he sympathized with the South.” Connelley feared that if the truth were not told, Quantrill would be venerated as a martyr by many Missourians.31

Connelley said that Quantrill had spread abroad falsehoods regarding his treatment by Kansans so that he might accomplish “his base and cynical purposes.” He believed that had his book not been published, Quantrill would have attained such a place in the minds of Missourians that it would have been difficult for the truth to prevail. Instead, Connelley claimed that his book was “as a flood of light poured into an area of darkness.”

From a hero who had been wronged here in Lawrence, Quantrell stood forth a marauder and a murderer. Instead of being an injured individual in Kansas, the truth made Quantrell, the kidnapper of free negroes, the stealer of cattle, a horse thief, an incendiary fleeing from justice. He left Kansas fearing the heavy hand of the law for many crimes. And in leaving he plotted to murder, and did murder in the most treacherous manner, a number of Kansas Anti-Slavery men whom he induced in their zeal to cross the border in search of passengers for the Underground Railroad.

The story of Quantrill was then emerging into the true light in Missouri, said Connelley. He called attention to a report in the *Kansas City Star* that no more reunions of the survivors of Quantrill’s guerrilla band would be held “to celebrate the sacking of Lawrence.” Instead, the Quantrill organization was to be merged with that of Upton Hays, who was described as a less bloody and ferocious guerrilla. “It is now beginning to be realized in Missouri that Quantrell brought fire and sword to Jackson County,” Connelley declared.32

As did Charles S. Gleed, Connelley ended his address by praising Lawrence in its days of adversity and heroism in words both meaningful and eloquent:

Lawrence stood as a rock about which beat for ten years the rage of border-Ruffianism—the stronghold of liberty against which rolled those barbarous hordes that crossed our borders to force upon us human slavery. She led in the Kansas conflict. When Kansas won, the death knell of slavery in the nation was sounded. When Quantrell and his murderous guerrillas turned from this devastated town the Confederacy was waning and the end of the war could be seen. . . .

Lawrence made a glorious stand in those days. The fame of that conflict will grow as the importance of it is realized.

29. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
Connelley told his audience the spirit that had moved them to gather at the memorial reunion should be preserved, that the organization should be made perpetual. It should be made the medium of lofty ideals in which the people would teach their children patriotism that would lead them up to Lawrence in the future to commemorate not only the massacre but also other struggles of this city for freedom for America.\textsuperscript{33}

It should not be thought that the memorial reunion was an event without certain inconsistencies and contradictions. One local newspaper reported that a few local citizens had feared the memorial would reopen old wounds. It was conceded that grievances were long-lived and injuries difficult to heal, and it had taken the town a long time to reach the point where it could have a reunion in the proper spirit. Fortunately, it was asserted, the wounds of fifty years ago were all healed. “The sorrows of those days live with us and the memory of heroism cannot be allowed to perish. But the bitterness is gone.”\textsuperscript{34}

The \textit{Topeka Daily Capital}, however, contradicted this view:

At the mention of Quantrell the blood of these survivors still boils, and some of the speakers indicated that they still would listen to a proposal to swoop down upon the reunion of the survivors of Quantrell’s band, now in progress in Missouri, and wreak a belated vengeance for the blood which was shed in Lawrence fifty years ago. Rather harsh words also were spoken by some because officers of the United States army did not pursue and fight Quantrell’s gang after the bloody massacre and because some of these same officers prevented the incensed neighbors and home guards, mustered after the raid, from pursuing Quantrell and wrecking vengeance of their own kind.

That the \textit{Topeka} newspaper’s account was more perceptive of survivor attitudes is suggested by the following \textit{Lawrence Daily Journal-World} article of August 21, 1909: “The story of the raid never grows cold here and the blood of the old settlers who survived the blood lusting raiders, still boils when they read each year of the celebrations at Independence of the very men who shot down their friends and neighbors and relatives and burned their homes and stores.”\textsuperscript{35}

Planners of the reunion, while they concentrated their efforts on memorializing the victims, were not always consistent in their objectives. This was borne out at the first planning meeting on May 17, 1913, when it was reported a movement had been started that had a two-fold objective—to honor the memory of the men and boys who had been killed and to celebrate the town’s present greatness. In subsequent weeks short editorials appeared that commented favorably on plans for the memorial but

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., August 21, 1913.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Topeka Daily Capital}, August 22, 1913; \textit{Lawrence Daily Journal-World}, August 21, 1909; August 21, 1913.
insisted it should have a focused purpose: “The plan is to have the entire city feel that it has a direct interest in this memorial. It is a sacred occasion and will be carried out in a reverent spirit.” “This is in no sense a parade or show but a solemn memorial. It has been half a century since the raid and it is time that Lawrence as a town did something to commemorate the memory of the martyrs.” “This is not in any sense a celebration; it is a memorial and as such the solemnity of the occasion will be maintained. It is fitting that after half a century the people now living should do honor to those who gave their lives for a good cause. The memorial is a town affair and the town generally will participate.”

While the planners proceeded with plans for a reunion of the survivors to commemorate the martyrs in a solemn and reverent spirit, other leaders, chiefly those who were influential in the Lawrence business community, made plans to celebrate the town’s achievements. In his book Main Street on the Middle Border Lewis Atherton asserts that everywhere in the country towns of nineteenth-century America men were enamored with the idea of progress, believing that while the present was superior to the past, the future held even greater promise. Writing in the 1950s Atherton said:

As yet, most country towns retain their traditional philosophies of “progress.” Town fathers continue to think in terms of population growth and rising real-estate prices. They stress the virtues of industrialization, of exploitation of local mineral resources, of improved transportation, and of trade-at-home, home town loyalty as keys to “progress.” In doing so, they are captives of their own past.

Atherton ends his book by asserting that “The real problem of the country town thus demands only an honest answer to the Biblical question, ‘For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul.’”

Beginning on July 24, 1913, the Journal-World announced that it would publish a magazine supplement to the daily paper to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the massacre. The supplement would contain about sixty-four pages, profusely illustrated, that aimed “to prove that ‘Lawrence Today’ is a leader in the march of progress of live cities and energetic citizens.” In mid-August the headline in the paper was “Lawrence to be Widely Advertised.” Orders for the supplement to be entitled Lawrence: Today and Yesterday had been received from a score of Kansas towns and nine states. Readers who assumed that the publication was simply a money-making scheme for the publishers were said to have too narrow a vision. The newspaper claimed that “It is a public spirited enterprise that will give Lawrence, the university and the state of Kansas the most favorable advertising that they have ever received from a publication of this character.”

On the day following the reunion an article entitled “Memorial Was a Splendid Success” was published in the Journal-World. It said, in part:

Nothing marred the events of yesterday and the Lawrence Massacre Memorial was conducted just as planned, just as was hoped and everyone who attended was immensely pleased. It was not an occasion for mirth and pomp and splendor; this was a solemn occasion, an occasion for patriotism and a time for paying tribute to the dead. But there was a certain happiness and joy in the occasion, joy for the veterans to be reunited again with those

they had not seen for years and joy for the younger
generation to observe and to hear them.

The Memorial Committee is immensely
pleased with the success of the undertaking and
Lawrence should feel proud of the results of the
gathering. The visitors were all greatly pleased and
to them it will be an occasion long to be remem-
bered.

The same paper carried a short editorial saying that
although the reunion was a great and fitting one and
the people of Lawrence were “rebaptized with patri-
otic fervor,” such things should not pass out of the
memory of men. “The world needs to be reminded of
what suffering there has been, of what price has been
paid for freedom and personal liberty. It was a fitting
meeting throughout and the best part of it was the
survivors who got together and talked over the
raid.”

The Lawrence memorial reunion was held at a
time of many Civil War battle reunions and
GAR encampments throughout the United
States. By far the largest was the three-day semi-cent-
tennial reunion of the Battle of Gettysburg in July
1913, where upwards of fifty thousand Union and
Confederate veterans were encamped on the battle-
field and where many old friends and old enemies
had opportunities to talk over old times. On May 26,
1914, the Thirty-Third Encampment of the Kansas
GAR opened at Topeka with approximately five thou-
sand Union army veterans in attendance.

While the reunion at Lawrence was small by com-
parison with those held at Gettysburg, Topeka, and
elsewhere, it is significant in that it memorialized a
tragic event of great importance in Civil War Kansas
and the United States. It brought from states near and
far the survivors of the Quantrill massacre to meet
with old friends who remained behind. Never before
or after was such an assemblage of people gathered
who, having had fifty years to reflect upon their ex-
periences, had the opportunity to meet with friends
and talk over old times. Evidence that the reunion
was the town’s most important public event from
1865 to 1917 is demonstrated by the newspaper cov-
erage it generated. From mid-May to late August
1913 the leading paper supplied the public with full
accounts of planning sessions that culminated in
page after page devoted to the proceedings of the re-
union, including lists of victims and survivors and
the full texts of the addresses of principal speakers.

To appreciate the uniqueness of the gathering in
1913, one needs to understand the special features of
the raid itself. As Reverend Richard Cordley, long the
town’s leading authority on the raid and massacre,
pointed out in his memorial sermon on August 21,
1892:

The Lawrence Massacre will always stand among
the marked massacres of the world. In some re-
spects it was unique, and had features of its own
that distinguished it from any other. In the sud-
denness with which it fell, the speed with which it
was accomplished, the hatred and vindictiveness
with which it was persecuted, the violence and
brutality by which it was characterized, it stands
alone as something unique in history.

To Albert Castel, a modern authority, the Lawrence
massacre was the most atrocious act of the Civil War
and the outstanding event of the Civil War in Kansas.
The fact that the massacre took place during a four-
hour period on one day in the life of the people of
Lawrence, that they were taken by surprise, were vir-
tually unarmed and leaderless, and gunned down re-
morselessly, meant that, unlike most kinds of re-
unions, it was no easy task to have a large-scale
reunion until the bitter feelings of the past fifty years
were largely healed. Probably the most enduring and
underlying meaning of the reunion was that of psy-
chic tension and conflict between the Civil War holo-
cast and the subsequent material progress of the sur-
vivors. This struggle is symbolized by the seal of the
City of Lawrence depicting a phoenix rising from the
ashes and the seal of the State of Kansas depicting the
progress from pioneer hardships to agrarian prosper-
ity with the Latin inscription, “Ad Astra Per Aspera,”
translated as “To The Stars Through Difficulty.”

40. Lawrence Daily Journal-Tribune, August 22, 1892; Albert Castel, A
Frontier State at War: Kansas 1861–1865 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University