



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On September 17th we held a 60th birthday party for James Farm director, Beth Beckett. It was held at the Claybrook park shelter. Twice we had storm front winds but even though we could see clouds and lightning to the north, we only had a couple of minutes of light sprinkles. It was hardly enough to wet the concrete apron. The party was attended by long term past and present farm employees and Friends of the James Farm members. The food was great and meeting old friends was even better. Best of all Beth was completely surprised. It was a great get together.

This year has seen a lot of work done on the farm house and currently the decking on the West and South sides of the museum is being replaced. Crews will also be working on removing broken and downed trees from our storm last summer.

I have always been afraid that someday we would not be able to hold our shoots at the farm and sadly, that day has come. Not one thing has made this happen, but a collection of things including new safety measures, the cost to remove lead from the backstop and local development behind the site. Our shooting backstop has been removed and the big rock slab engraved with a stagecoach holdup scene from the firing line has been moved to the front gate. The whole range has disappeared.

Despite this, we are hoping to have three fundraising shoots next year as well as a membership reunion. We aim to have three firm shoot dates to tell you about in our first of the year newsletter. The Sugar Creek range worked out very well and I would like to hold them there. As with the last two years, the pandemic progress will determine our ability to hold a reunion next year. Fingers crossed and watch this space! **Bryan Ivlow**



BY BRYAN IVLOW



Some of the group celebrating Beth's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, with a beautiful rainbow in the background.

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## OBITUARY



### Carlida Breckenridge Wymore 1926 - 2021

It is with great sadness that we must share news that Carlida Breckenridge Wymore passed away on November 3, 2021, aged 95.

Carlida was born September 9, 1926, to Earl and Amy (Thomas) Breckenridge in Smithville, MO and lived in Clay County most of her life. She was a 1944 graduate of Smithville High School where she was Class Valedictorian. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in 1947 from Central Missouri State College. While there, she was a member of Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority, Kappa Delta Pi honor society and president of Alpha Phi Delta. Carlida received a Master of Arts degree in Education from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1956. She taught biology at Smith-Cotton High School in Sedalia, MO, and North Kansas City High School. She enjoyed her students and attended many of their class reunions. On December 24, 1954, Carlida married Jack B. Wymore in Smithville, MO and was an active member of the Liberty United Methodist Church. She and her husband established the Jesse James Bank Museum in Liberty, MO, in 1966 and today it is operated by Clay County Parks. Carlida belonged to the Daughters of the American Revolution, Alexander Doniphan Chapter and was a 64-year member. She was also affiliated with other historical organizations including the Clay County Museum and Historical Society, Clay County Archives, and Friends of the James Farm. Additional activities Carlida enjoyed were playing bridge with her friends, collecting antiques, cooking, and reading. She was a loving wife and mother who devoted her life to her family. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her. Carlida was preceded in death by her husband, parents, and a brother, Billy Hugh Breckenridge. Survivors include a son, Thomas Wymore, and a daughter, Ann Cole and son-in-law, Scott, all of Liberty, MO; one sister, Florence B. Holmes, Smithville, MO; three step grandchildren, Gregory (Kelsey) Cole, Patrick (Mai) Cole, Claire Hansel (late husband, Roger); and two nephews, Brent (Dia Demmon) Williams and Breck (Kelly) Williams.

We send our sincerest condolences to Carlida's family.

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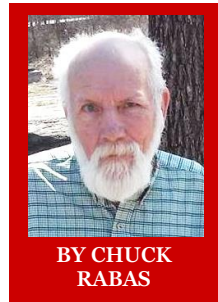


# THE LITTLE KNOWN DOVEY MINES ROBBERY

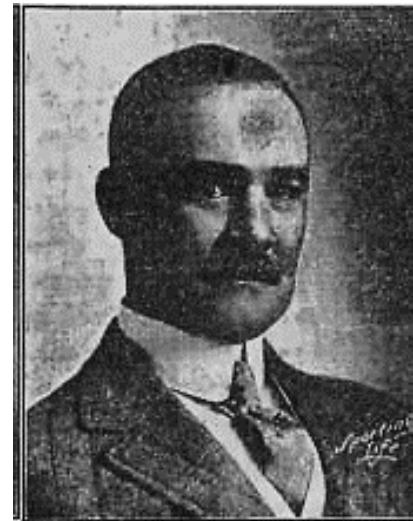
*Although the James Gang was wanted for several train robberies between 1879 and 1881, this robbery is often ignored and so I thought I would tell you something of it here. I have kept the original spellings, punctuation, etc. that were in the originals.*

## From A History of Muhlenberg County (Kentucky)

One of the few old stories occasionally told around the mines is of what is known as the "Dovey Robbery." One day during the summer of 1881 [sic] a stranger came to the Dovey mines at Mercer, then operated by John Dovey and his sons William and George B. Dovey. He asked for employment, and was told that he could go to work in a few days. In the conversation that followed he inquired in a casual way as to when the railroad pay-train would be due, and was informed that it had passed through the morning before. John Dovey incidentally remarked that the following day was pay-day for their miners, and that William Dovey had gone for the money and would return some time during the night. The next morning, after all the miners had gone to work, three strangers entered the Dovey store. Two of them immediately stepped in front of the building and guarded the place, while the third remained in the store and with cocked pistol in hand demanded the contents of the safe. George B. Dovey unhesitatingly opened the safe and proceeded to hand out all it contained -- about thirteen dollars in cash and a gold watch with his father's name engraved on it. William Dovey, expected home the night before, had been delayed and had not yet arrived with the pay-roll money, which would have been in the safe had he come back at the time he originally intended to return. In the meantime two men and a woman, living near the mines, came to the store to make purchases. They entered the building, little suspecting that the two strangers in front were guarding the place. Immediately after they had stepped in, one of the strangers followed and with drawn pistol politely requested them to sit down and keep quiet while "young Mr. Dovey was transacting business with his friend." (George B. Dovey was then nineteen years of age.) After the robbers were satisfied that they had gotten all the cash and the only watch in the store, they quietly walked out of the building. By the time the three customers and George B. Dovey had recovered sufficiently from the shock to step to the front door the three strangers were nowhere to be seen. However, an investigation made shortly after showed that the robbers had gone toward Pond Creek, then to Rosewood, and across the cliffs into Logan County. It was not known until about a year later that Jesse James was the man who had robbed the store, and that he had come to Mercer for the purpose of robbing the pay-train. In April, 1882, when Jesse James was killed, the John Dovey watch was among the things found in his possession, and his administrator, seeing the name engraved on it, located the Doves and returned the stolen property.



BY CHUCK  
RABAS



George Dovey

Friends of Mount Moriah cemetery website

them.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said one of the three men who entered Dovey's store at Mercer's Station, Ky., "but will you please hand me the five hundred dollars out of your safe?" and he politely levelled a revolver. "Sorry to disoblige," Dovey replied, "but there isn't a cent there;" and he affably opened the safe for them to see. The robbers made a thorough search and then withdrew.

This news item appeared in identical form in a number of newspapers around the country in early August, 1882.

The briefest of mentions in the media.  
Sedalia Weekly Bazoo, 5 October 1880.

Charles Dovey, a commercial traveler, whose home is in Philadelphia, was agreeably surprised on Saturday by receiving by express a valuable gold watch which he had handed to Jesse James in June, 1880, at the latter's request, a loaded revolver being one of the arguments used by Mr. James. At that time Mr. Dovey had charge of a coal-mining company's office in Kentucky, and the unexpected visit of Jesse James and his three confederates was made on pay day. It happened that the money had been delayed on its way from the bank and the robbers only got few dollars and Mr. Dovey's watch, which has just been returned by Mrs. James with the following note: "Kansas City, June 15, 1882--Mr. Chas. Dovey--Dear Sir: Inclosed you will find a watch. If it is yours please send me by return mail a receipt

for the same. Yours respectfully, Mrs. Jesse James." Mr. Dovey is informed that Mrs. James is making a general restoration of the stolen property left by her lamented husband, so far as she can ascertain to whom it belongs.

It should be noted that the first account said there were three robbers, and that George Dovey handed over the watch belonging to his father, John. In the second, it said there were four robbers, and that the watch was surrendered by Charles Dovey.

The Dovey coal mine was reportedly near Mercer, in Muhlenberg County, Ky. No such town now exists, but there is a Mercer Cemetery that would indicate the town was nearby.

I've found that the Dovey family was also involved in coal mining in Pennsylvania and that their one mine, located on their 1,000 acres in Kentucky, was likely a branch from their main holdings. Their Kentucky mine merged with several other companies around the turn of the century and declared bankruptcy in 1912.

Frank Triplett's book, *The Life Times and Treacherous Death of Jesse James* book states that Bob had told officials "there were two watches and some diamonds in the house." These could not be found at first but were eventually recovered. "The property found in the house of Jesse James after the assassination, still remains in the possession of Marshal Craig," Triplett's account continues and goes on to describe the two watches, one apparently taken from John A. Burbank in the 1874 Hot Springs robbery, and the other belonging to Judge Rountree. It also mentions Lizzie Rountree's diamond ring. The paragraph closes with: "The Marshal will hold them until the rights of property are determined, and then turn them over to their legal custodians." [p311] It's odd that Dovey's watch is not mentioned if, as suggested by the article, it had been found among Jesse's belongings. Perhaps Zee kept it hidden. What prompted her to track down the owner and return it is anybody's guess. **CR**

## VISITS AND VISITORS



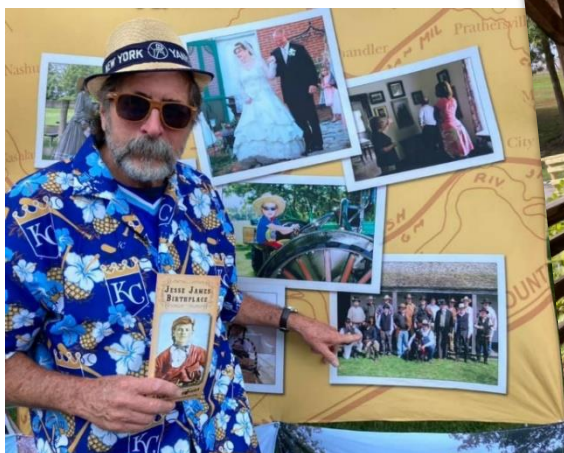
Despite the ongoing challenges provided by the coronavirus pandemic, the Jesse James Birthplace and Museum has continued to welcome visitors from all over the world. That being said, on 12 August 2021, we welcomed a more local group - the Civil War Roundtable - for their meeting and a tour. We hope they enjoyed their time with us.

On 10 August 2021, a group of dedicated individuals, including Greg Higginbotham, seen bottom left, attended

the local Tourism Day to promote the Jesse James Birthplace and Museum, the Jesse James Bank Museum, Historic Mt. Gilead School and the Pharis Farm.

Efforts to restore and make improvements to the Birthplace and Museum are ongoing in preparation for the 200th anniversary of the original cabin and the county of Clay in 2022. Look left for an image of the new decking around the museum.

More details to follow.



## “HE DIDN’T KILL SCUDDER AS MUCH AS HE THOUGHT HE WOULD.”

*On 9 July 1870, A. R. McGinnis appeared before Franklin Graves, Justice of the Clay County Court, to swear that he had seen Jesse James at the home of Mrs. Fox on 8 December 1869, the day after the robbery and murder at Gallatin.<sup>1</sup> Five years later, and with those Gallatin alibis degraded and the list of robberies increasing, McGinnis was planning on using the James’ growing notoriety to have them framed for murder.*



BY MICHELLE  
POLLARD

Alfred Riley McGinnis was born in Mayslick, Kentucky on 17 July 1825 to Dora and Cassandra [Riley] McGinnis. In 1847, he married Susan Riley, daughter of Major H. M. Riley, and the pair set up home in Liberty, Missouri.<sup>2</sup> Following the death of his first wife, Alfred married Silence Jane Scudder on 19 February 1852.<sup>3</sup> The 1860 census shows thirty-five-year-old Alfred, a farmer, living in Washington Township, Clay county, Missouri, with his wife and three children, Charles aged 7, James aged four and one year old, Mary. The next entry listed the family of Minerva Fox, at whose home McGinnis had seen Jesse on 8 December 1869. Mrs. Fox, mother of ex-guerrilla, Dory Fox, was McGinnis’ sister.<sup>4</sup>

Alfred McGinnis was regarded as a respectable member of the Kearney community, a “good man at heart”, but he was also a man who had, by 1875, been “greatly demoralized by too free use of spiritous liquor.”<sup>5</sup>

A few years before, on 31 December 1871, Joseph Scudder, father of Silence McGinnis, had died “after a short but severe illness,” leaving his son, Hugh, to administer his estate.<sup>6</sup> In his will, Joseph left half the 240-acre family farm to Hannah, his wife, and half to his son, Hugh, who already lived and worked on the farm.<sup>7</sup> When Hannah died in 1874, Hugh took control of the entire estate, despite indications that his mother’s section of land was to be shared with his sister.<sup>8</sup> McGinnis, believing Hugh “did not do him right in the administration” and, expecting “to find a willing tool in the person of a poor but honest laboring man named John Brock,” hatched a plan to murder his brother-in-law.<sup>9</sup>

Brock had recently returned from Kentucky and McGinnis assumed he would therefore be desperate for work. With this in mind, McGinnis offered Brock \$500 for killing Scudder, saying the money would be paid within twelve months and as soon as his wife, then sole heir, was in possession of the Scudder estate. Brock initially thought the proposition a joke, but McGinnis persisted and to such an extent that Brock decided to go to the police. On hearing Brock’s story, Sheriff Groom encouraged him to agree to the plan and report back any details.

The first assassination attempt failed due to McGinnis having company at home and being unable to leave the house and a second attempt was planned. Under the cover of darkness, both McGinnis and Brock approached Scudder’s home. “Scudder being a bachelor, lived alone, but as he had previously been advised by Sheriff Groom of the contemplated assassination, he was conveniently not at home.” Finding no one on the ground floor, McGinnis instructed Brock to go upstairs but then called the younger man down again after he believed he saw someone outside. It was the sheriff’s posse and both men were arrested and taken to Kearney for safe keeping.<sup>10</sup> “Both Scudder and McGinnis are well-to-do farmers,” a reporter for the Kansas City Journal wrote, “and this diabolical attempt of the latter to enrich himself by taking the life of his wife’s only brother, has created an intense feeling of horror and indignation.”<sup>11</sup> There also seemed to be an air of inevitability as some had noticed that the accused “has of late become quite reckless and dissipated and, according to his own



Alfred Riley McGinnis c. 1894



confession, ready to commit the blackest crime.”<sup>12</sup> Caught red-handed, McGinnis made no attempt to deny the charges against him, instead he “acknowledged to his captors that he had also recently stolen a trunk out of the house containing a lot of gold, silver, clothing and other valuables.” This theft, committed some months before the murder attempt and while Hannah Scudder still lived with her son, seemed to serve another, sinister, purpose. It was McGinnis’ hope that “thus ticketing the victim, he might create the impression that the murder was committed by the James Boys.”<sup>13</sup>

Bail was set at \$2,000, but with no one prepared to pay it, McGinnis remained in jail to await trial. Although no record seems to exist of the trial itself, during the October 1881 term of the Clay county court, it was discovered that while Scudder had previously “testified that, at the time of the trial, he lived in Clay county, there was no testimony to show in what county the house was situated which was entered, nor any other evidence of the venue of the offense.” The previous judgement was subsequently overturned.<sup>14</sup>

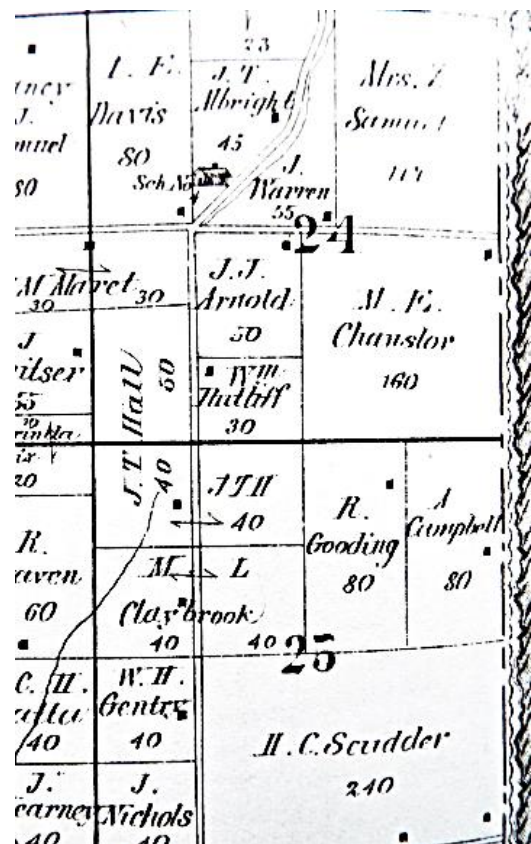
In 1900, Alfred and Silence McGinnis were still residing in Kearney, though not on the Scudder farm, which remained with Hugh and his wife, Laura. Despite his deviations from respectability, the McGinnis’ had remained married for an impressive 48 years and had given life to seven children, all of whom survived into adulthood.<sup>15</sup>

Alfred McGinnis died at Kearney on 28 June 1903 and Silence followed in 1919.<sup>16</sup> Both were buried at Mount Olivet Cemetery, Kearney, Missouri, not far from the grave of Jesse James, for whom Alfred had first offered an alibi and then planned to have framed for murder. **MP**

1. The Lexington Weekly Caucasian, 23 July 1870.
2. Liberty Tribune, 29 October 1847; 1850 census.
3. Missouri Marriages, 1750-1920, vol. A-D.
4. Liberty Tribune, 22 January 1897 containing Minerva’s obituary. In part – “James and Alfred McGinnis who now live in Kearney are her brothers.”
5. Liberty Tribune, 29 October 1875.
6. Liberty Tribune, 19 January 1872.
7. 1870 census; conversations with Linda Gay Mathis regarding Joseph’s last will.
8. Conversations with Linda Gay Mathis regarding Hannah’s last will. Hannah died in August 1874.
9. Liberty Tribune, 29 October 1875; Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce, 27 October 1875.
10. Details of assassination attempt. News of the planned murder appeared in all the local newspapers, as well as some newspapers further afield. Many saw the event as an outrage which some considered normal for the area. “Clay county has been the scene of many lawless deeds,” the Kansas City Daily

**A BOLD ROBBERY**—On last Wednesday night, the 10th, two mounted men, as developments have proven, went to the house of Mr. Hugh Scudder, living about two miles east of this place, in the dead hour of the night when the family, with unbarred doors, were wrapped in unconscious slumber. The robbers hitched their horses nearby, proceeded to the house, and to the room occupied by Mr. Scudder’s mother and her sister and took therefrom a trunk containing among other things, jewelry, gold and silver coin, and several gold nuggets in all to the value of about one hundred and forty dollars. It was carried to their hitching place and the above articles extracted, leaving the trunk and remainder of its contents on the spot, where it was found on Thursday morning, up to which time nothing was known by the family of what had transpired during the night. The horses were tracked to the main road through the field, but no further developments

Liberty Tribune, 19 March 1875



The Scudder Farm in relation to the Samuel Farm.  
An Illustrated Atlas, Clay County, Missouri,  
Edwards Brothers, 1877.

Journal commented on 27 October 1875, “but probably nothing in her criminal annals has awakened more profound indignation than the recently developed conspiracy on the part of one of her citizens to deliberately accomplish the murder of a peaceful and inoffensive man, his own brother-in-law, from a purely mercenary motive.” Others seemed amused by McGinnis’ failure. “He did not kill Scudder as much as he thought he would,” a reporter of The Lexington Intelligencer wrote on 6 November 1875.

11. Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce, 27 October 1875.
12. Kansas City Times, 28 October 1875.
13. Ibid
14. State vs McGinnis, Reports of Cases Determined by the Supreme Court of the State of Missouri Volume 74, By Missouri Supreme Court, 1882, Kansas City by Ramsey, Millett & Hudson, pp 245, 246, 247, with thanks to Linda Gay Mathis.
15. Hugh Scudder and Laura Story were married on 9 February 1876; Missouri Marriage Records 1822 – 1878, vol. A-D, p370; correspondence with Gay Mathis. The 1900 census confirms that Hugh had been married for 24 years although Laura was not listed in the household. Hugh was then living with his twenty-year old nephew, John.
16. The graves of Alfred and Silence. Their markers show an alternative spelling – McGinness.



A photo of the Old Men of Clay County from Centennial 1856 – 1956, Kearney, Missouri pp47-8.

Picture taken about 1894. Every man in it was 65 years old or more at the time.

They are, reading left to right:

Back row: William Warren, George W. Smith, David W. Creek, Albert Burgess, Albert Lincoln, Franklin Graves.

Middle row: James McGinness, Jesse Carey, J. F. Seymour, Ellis Williams, William T. Onan, Daniel Leach, Stephen Asbury.

Front row: Dr. Reuben Samuel, Albert Davis, Alfred McGinness, James Huggard, John H. Asbury, Jesse R. Cole, William B. Morris.

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# FRIENDS OF THE JAMES FARM SHOOT

## 7 August 2021

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Shooters on the porch of the Jesse James Birthplace.

The August 7 shoot went well. It would have been nice to have held it at the farm, but the Independence/Sugar Creek range was a good alternative. Board members Paul Carrington and Gary Blackwell, as well as the Sugar Creek Chief of Police, made this location possible for us and we thank them wholeheartedly.

The area had tables for registration, taken care of by Vivie Tison, and for loading. There was a wide handgun range where we had plenty of room between shooters as well as a 100 yard rifle range.

There was also plenty of room for parking near the range and we had the use of an air-conditioned building with a bathroom.

The only problem was the high heat and humidity!

The shoot was well attended and we had enough shooters that it raised much needed funds so thank you to all who came out.

We will try to get a Saturday near the end of September or early In October when the temperature should be far better for a second shoot this year. After the shoot three of us shot three historic rifles. Next time with some cooler weather maybe more will try these old rifles. **BI**



BY BRYAN IVLOW

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### THE CAP & BALL WINNERS OF THE GENERAL SHOOT:

**First place:** Gary Blackwell

### THE ANNA JAMES SHOOT:

**First place:** Deane Schidmer

### THE CARTRIDGE REVOLVER WINNERS OF THE GENERAL SHOOT:

**First place:** Wayne Leatherby

**Second place:** Gary Blackwell

**Third place:** Dell Warren

### THE CARTRIDGE REVOLVER WINNERS OF THE SPECIAL TARGET:

**First place:** Wayne Leatherby

**Tied Second place:** Del Warren and  
Scott Engleman

**Third place:** Scott Yingling



## SOME INTERESTING FIREARMS ON DISPLAY AT THE SHOOT

As Bryan said in his report, there were some interesting firearms brought along to the shoot by Del Warren of the James Country Mercantile. He very kindly sent us some images.



The first photo is this one and “the rifle of interest”, Del says, “is the top one in the photo of 2 on the wall. It is a Swiss 96/11 converted by a civilian gun smith from 7.5 Swiss to 22 LR. The bottom rifle is a Russian 91/30 shown just to illustrate how long the Swiss Rifle is. I brought the Swiss rifle to the pistol shoot.”



LR stands for long rifle and is a standard designation. “The best information I have on the rifle,” Del said, “is that it was made sometime between 1915 and 1920. When it was converted.... Who knows!!”

Two further photos show both the overall action and the 22LR liner that was installed.



Another rifle brought along to the shoot was a 45-70 Sharps buffalo rifle made by the same company that made the 34 inch barreled rifle for the movie Quigley down under. The 27 inch barreled rifle shown below came with vernier tang sights like the movie gun but which I replaced with a period Malcolm style telescopic sight explained our resident gun expert, Bryan Ivlow

**MORE SHOOT DATES  
COMING SOON!**



The Sharp's Buffalo Rifle

## FRANK JAMES TIMELINE OCTOBER 1882- FEBRUARY 1915

October 4, 1882

Frank James boards a Missouri Pacific train in Independence. He is headed to Jefferson City, Missouri, where he will surrender to Governor Crittenden the following day. At Sedalia, newspaperman John Newman Edwards, who has arranged the surrender, joins his old friend for the remainder of the journey. They will check into the McCarty House in Jefferson City and Frank will register as B.F. Winfrey.



BY MICHELE  
POYNTER

October 5, 1882

After a walking tour of the state capitol, Frank James and John Newman Edwards enter the governor's office for a well-staged and dramatic surrender. The crowd includes newspapermen from all over Missouri and state officials who were invited by Governor Crittenden for an important announcement. The press described Frank James, aged 39, as being gaunt, having a mustache, standing about 5'11" and weighing around 145 pounds.

October 6, 1882

Frank James returns to Independence, Missouri by train. The trip back is interrupted with frequent stops along the way as Frank greets well-wishers. In Independence, there are emotional reunions with his wife, 4-year-old son Robert, and his mother Zerelda. Frank registers his family at a local hotel and attends a reception with friends. Then he is taken to the Independence jail. He spends 112 days there in amazing comfort, with cigars, furniture, carpets, music, food delicacies and flowers before being transferred to Gallatin in January 1883.

The jail ledger indicates that the bill for Frank's room and board totaled \$47.90.

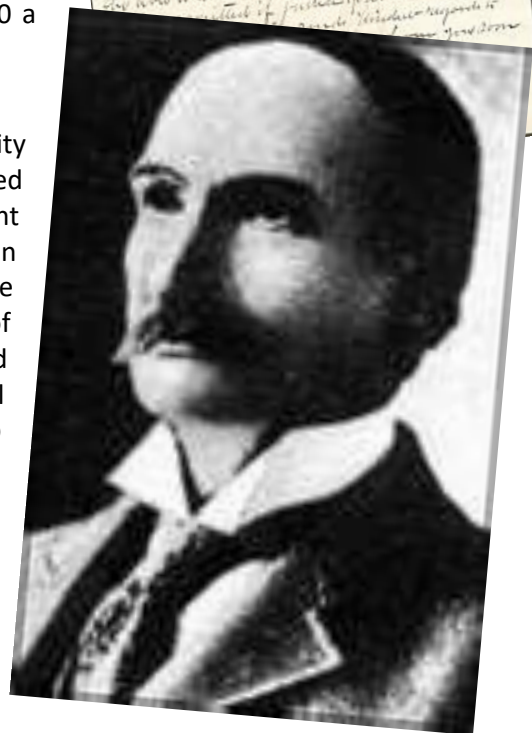
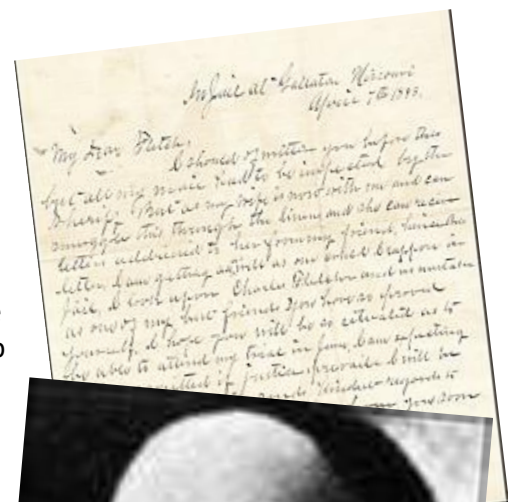
At the time Frank surrendered in Missouri, the Ford Brothers were in New York attracting large crowds at Bunnell's Dime Museum. Bob gives a shooting exhibition and he and Charley earn about \$500 a week. The tour then proceeds to Chicago and Cincinnati.

January 23, 1883

Frank is transported from the Independence jail to a Kansas City courtroom where his trial dates are to be set. He is to be charged for his alleged roles in the March 1874 murder of Pinkerton agent Joseph W. Whicher and the 1878 robbery of a bank in Independence, Mo. Much to the surprise of almost everyone in the packed courtroom, the prosecution drops the charges for a lack of evidence and announces that Frank James will instead be charged with the 1881 Blue Cut train robbery. The case is postponed until May and will eventually be dropped after prosecutors develop enough evidence to charge Frank in the 1881 Daviess County train robbery in which two men were killed.

August 24, 1883

The 'Trial of the Century' begins in Gallatin, Missouri. Frank is on trial for the murder of passenger Frank McMillen during the Winston train robbery. The trial had to be moved from the small



courtroom to the Opera house. More than 3000 people packed into the town, hoping to get one of 400 tickets to enter the building for the trial.

April 16, 1884

The 10-day trial of Frank James in the Alabama paymaster robbery begins in Huntsville. His friend, John Newman Edwards, has assembled a top-notch legal team for Frank, much like the representation he enjoyed during his 1883 trial in Gallatin, Missouri. It includes a former Secretary of War in the Confederate cabinet. A former Alabama governor leads the prosecution. Dick Liddil will testify that he not only heard Frank and Jesse plan the robbery, but he also heard them admit they had committed it.

April 26, 1884

Spectators applaud as Frank James is acquitted for the Muscle Shoals robbery. Within minutes, however, the Cooper County, Missouri sheriff, who is seated directly behind Frank, arrests him for an 1876 train robbery near Boonville.

February 2, 1885

Frank's wife, Annie, gives birth to a daughter. She appears to have been stillborn. (Research conducted by Chuck Rabas)

February 21, 1885

The last charge against Frank James is dropped. It involved the 1876 Missouri Pacific train robbery near Otterville, Cooper County, Mo. in which over \$15,000 was stolen.

September 9, 1887

Frank James is working as a clerk in a dry goods store in Dallas, Texas, when a writer visits him from the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*. Frank was standing behind the counter in Mittenhalls, according to the account. "His coat was off and he had a tape line over his neck." Since the reporter was rushing to catch a train, the visit was short, but Frank recognized him and remembered that he had covered the 1883 trial in Gallatin. The resulting story of the encounter suggests that Frank was hoping to become a storekeeper himself.

March 30, 1900

Frank James appears in a benefit performance - for himself - at the Standard Theatre in St. Louis. Frank, apparently feeling the pinch of hard times, sent out tickets to the benefit to hundreds of his friends. The cover letter mentioned how difficult it was for him to ask for assistance. He stressed that if the recipients returned the tickets instead of sending money it would not be "construed as unfriendly."

November 10, 1901

"Frank James Is to Be an Actor" is the headline on a *St. Louis Post Dispatch* front-page story. Frank will have a "brief, and I hope inconspicuous, part" (Frank's words) in the 10-week run of an already successful play entitled *Across the Desert*. The company will tour the eastern states and parts of Canada. The lengthy news story goes on to reveal that Frank had been working as a ticket taker at the Standard Theater in St. Louis, and as a race official at smaller tracks in Ohio and Kentucky. He frankly admitted he had no delusions about his acting talent but was taking the job to build his financial security, so he would not end up in the Confederate Veterans Home. In 1900, because of financial problems, Frank admitted he had been forced to hold a benefit for himself in St. Louis.

November 26, 1901

Frank James' acting debut at the Masonic Temple Theater in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, draws front-page headlines and a standing ovation from the packed house. The new actor admitted to suffering stage fright. "It takes more courage to be an actor than to be a bandit," he said. In the fourth act of the melodrama, Frank arrives just in time to save one

**Frank James' play is to be called  
"Across the Desert" and it will not ap-  
pear west of the Mississippi there no  
longer being any desert here.**

The Benedict [Kansas] Courier, November 15, 1901.



of the characters from being scalped. Then he utters this line: "The man who refuses to forgive his fellow man burns a bridge over which he himself must pass", which brought the house down.

April 1903

Cole Younger puts together his new Wild West show in Chicago. Chief investors are Val Hoffman, who was a Chicago businessman, and Steve Elkins, whose life Cole had saved years earlier when Quantrill suspected Elkins of being a Union spy. Cole will be the manager and Frank James will be arena manager and appear in some performances. Frank will be paid about \$300 a week. The two hold trial runs in the Chicago area and are amazed when one day's receipts total \$15,000.

May 4, 1903

The two old cronies, Frank and Cole, officially begin touring in 'The Great Cole Younger & Frank James Historical Wild West Show.' Thirty freshly painted railroad cars left Chicago for the performance in Galesburg, Illinois. "The Great Cole Younger and Frank James Historical Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World" was painted on one of the cars along with portraits of the two men. There were circus cars, stock and baggage cars, three sleepers, two advance cars and an elaborate car for the managerial staff. Because of the restrictions on his pardon from the Minnesota penitentiary, Cole could not actually perform, but he does sit in the audience and chat with those around him. Frank participates in skits and rides in the grand finale. Grifters often accompanied traveling shows of the day – not a good thing for Cole and Frank who had reputations to live down. Presumably because of this, Frank left the show in September while it was playing in Monett, Missouri. He and Cole parted as friends and Cole eventually filed a successful lawsuit against the show's owners.

November 22, 1904

The *Kansas City Star* reprints a short speech that Frank gave after his performance in a play in Chillicothe, Mo. Although the play, "The Fatal Scar," was a comedy, the evening-ending monologue was a bit defensive. However, the audience loved it. Frank described his hurt feelings at the treatment he had received four years earlier when a minister stated openly that it was not appropriate for the former outlaw to be starting races in Livingston County. (Some had even suggested that Frank's acting ability was perfected on the witness stand during his two trials.)

1901-1907

During his trials and a few years after, Frank lived off and on at the Farm. He had several odd jobs during those six years, including shoe salesman, horse tender, door keeper at a vaudeville theatre, and working in a dress factory. He also helped his mother with tours at the Farm when he could.

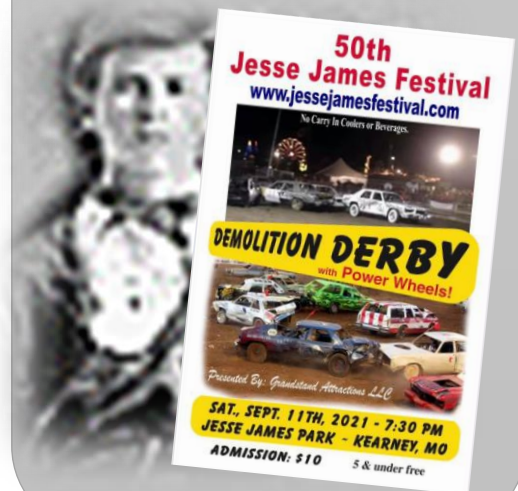
## THE DEFEAT OF JESSE JAMES DAYS NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA



Photo courtesy of Julie Eddy

As events begin to return to our calendars, Northfield welcomed visitors back to its Defeat of Jesse James Days, while, more locally, the Jesse James Festival celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> event!

**WELCOME TO THE 50<sup>TH</sup>  
JESSE JAMES FESTIVAL**  
SEPTEMBER 10 - 11 AND 16 - 19, 2021  
JESSE JAMES PARK, KEARNEY, MO



March 3, 1907

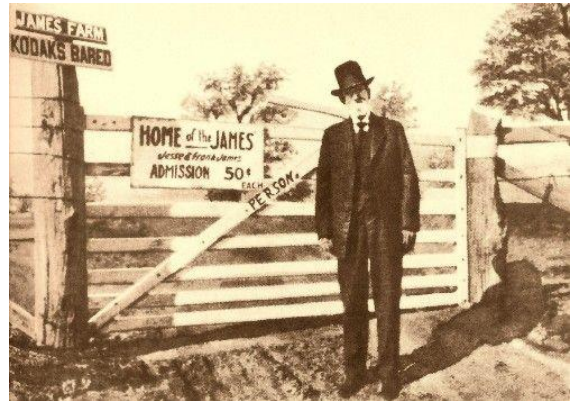
Frank purchased 160 acres near Fletcher OK for \$2,777, money he saved from his various jobs and performances. He and his family left Kearney on October 1, and had a 6-week journey to the new spread. He built a house and barn, planted several pear trees, grew alfalfa and corn, and raised chickens and hogs. He and his family had a quiet, peaceful life.

February 10, 1911

After a lengthy visit with Frank in Oklahoma, Zerelda Cole James Simms Samuel, age 86, dies of a heart attack while a passenger on a train. She was returning to her farm in Clay County, Mo., accompanied by Frank's wife Anna.

Frank immediately arranged to move back to the farm with his family. He had his farmhands take care of his property until it was sold (Frank kept the mineral rights).

Frank took over Zerelda's tours of the home place, and thousands of people came to meet him and hear his stories.



October 15, 1912

After an assassination attempt on Presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt, Frank James writes a letter offering his services as a bodyguard:

Kearney, Mo  
Oct 15th 1912  
Col Theodore Roosevelt  
Mercy Sanitarium, Chicago

I'll offer my services as one of one hundred or less number as you may suggest as a body guard the remainder of campaign. Choose for yourself ninety-nine, allow me to name myself making the one hundred. Would choose no one who is not willing to go into Eternal darkness for you if it is necessary to do so.

Will pay my own expenses.

Frank James

The reply Frank received:

Mercy Hospital, Chicago  
October 19 1912  
Frank James  
Kearney, MO

My Dear Mr. James:

Colonel Roosevelt wishes me to express to you his hearty thanks for your kind telegram of sympathy. He will probably be able to do little or no campaigning before Election. He is feeling as hearty as a Bull Moose, he says.

Elbert Martin  
Secretary

The attempt on Roosevelt's life was made on Oct 14, 1912 in Milwaukee WI, by a schizophrenic former saloonkeeper, John

## NEW MURAL IN KEARNEY



This project combined the efforts of the Girl Scout Troop #4300, Kearney/Holt CAN, Pieces Of My Art, City of Kearney Street Department, and the Kearney National Honor Society to create amazing pieces of art on the Washington St Walkway!



Flammang Shrank. His folded 50-page speech and eyeglass case slowed the bullet enough to keep the bullet from penetrating too deeply.

February 8, 1915

Frank writes a letter to his doctor stating he has "been confined to my home since November 20, and in a bad way generally. Am not confined to my bed all the time. For the past ten days have had a discharge of blood from my bladder... this morning bled more than any time since I first noticed it. Having confidence in your ability to prescribe intelligently in all cases that the human body is heir to, will ask you to send me prescription for the symptoms above described... Tell me what causes this blood flow..."

February 18, 1915

Alexander Franklin James, 72, dies of a stroke at the family farm in Clay County. He had been in ill health and suffered an earlier stroke in November. His son, Robert, and his wife, Anna, survive him.

February 20, 1915

In accordance with Frank James' wishes, no religious services are performed at his funeral. Pallbearers, including several former Quantrill raiders, are Ben Morrow, George Shepard, Bill Gregg, Gabe Parr, John Workman and Thomas T. Crittenden Jr. The latter is the son of the late Missouri governor who put together the reward fund that eventually led to the killing of Jesse James and the surrender of Frank. Judge John Phillips, a former Union sympathizer who successfully defended Frank at his 1883 Gallatin, Mo., trial, delivers the eulogy in the front yard of the James farm.

After the service, Frank's casket is placed on the 6 p.m.

Burlington train to Kansas City. His son Robert, nephew Jesse Edwards James, and Constable Charles M. Polk accompany it, and they stay with the body until it is cremated in St. Louis. Since Feb. 22 was a bank holiday, Frank's ashes are kept at the farm until they can be locked in the New England Safe Deposit Co. vaults (in Kansas City). In 1928, Robert James moved his father's ashes to the Kearney Trust Co. where they remained until they were buried with Anna James' ashes after her death, in 1944. **MP**



Anna Ralston James  
1853 - 1844



**FALL  
ARRIVES  
AT THE  
JAMES  
FARM.**





## THE DAY MR. HOWARD PRESERVED A MAN'S LIFE

On 20 April 1882, under the headline, *At Last*, the Kansas City Evening Star featured an interview with Mrs. Jesse James. The following morning, rival newspapers were full of attempts "to cast discredit upon the genuineness of the interview," attempts the Star editors put down to jealousy. They argued that the interview had been arranged by Mrs. James' attorney, R. J. Haire, and that, although they could not state that the interview recorded her words exactly, "the information it contained was printed just as it was given by Mrs. James."

One section of her interview mentioned one of her husband's business transactions – the buying of two car loads of flour from O. F. Noel on speculation. In an effort to prove the interview genuine, the Evening Star, on 21 April 1882, printed the recollections of George Massengale, who had witnessed the transaction.

"Mr. Massengale was with the firm of O. F. Noel & Co, Edgington, Tenn., and among others transacted business several times with a man known as J. D. Howard. Among other trades was a sale of 200 barrels of flour to Howard, who shipped it to Nashville on speculation. Mr. Massengale became quite well acquainted with Howard, who would occasionally come into Noel & Co's place on business or for a friendly talk. One day Howard happened to be there when a farmer, known as a desperate character in that country, came in to settle for some wheat he had sold. There was some trouble in fixing the price. Mr. Massengale claiming that the grain was not up to the grade he had bought it for and the farmer determined to accept only the price he had sold the wheat at on his statement of its quality. The farmer acted in a rather suspicious manner as the argument became warm, siding up towards Mr. M., and walking around in an excited manner, and finally Mr. Massengale noticed Howard walk to the fireplace, pick up a heavy poker standing in the corner and place himself near him. Finally the farmer left. Howard then turned to Mr. M. and asked: 'Did you notice that fellow, what he was doing?' Upon Mr. Massengale replying that he had not noticed anything except the fellow's anger, Howard then stated that he saw the farmer draw a knife, open the blade and conceal the weapon in his sleeve. 'Then,' said Howard, 'I picked up that poker, and if he had made a move toward you, I would have broken his arm for him.'"

Having read Mrs. James interview, Mr. Massengale recalled the event and realised that "Jesse James and Howard were one and the same individual, and one whom he had always considered a friend, if not a preserver of his life, for there is no doubt in Mr. Massengale's mind but that the farmer would have used his knife upon him had not Jesse James been present."



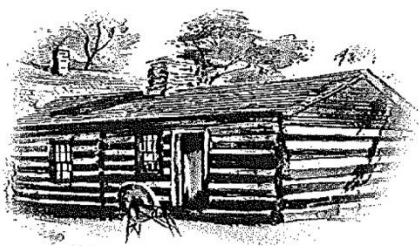
Confederate Veteran magazine, Vol. 14, p 327  
With thanks to Linda Gay Mathis.

Mr. George P. Massengale, for several years business manager of Mr. O. F. Noel's milling interests, has severed his connection with that house, and left Sunday night for St. Louis, where he becomes a member of the well known firm of Massengale & Knox, in the cotton, grain and flour line. Of the business changes made in Nashville with the incoming of the new year, none will be more regretted than this. Mr. Massengale, by tact, enterprise and energy, had made himself almost invaluable in his late position, and with other good qualities gained an innumerable large number of friends in trade and social circles. His many acquaintances, while deploring his departure, will wish him prosperous times in his new relations. St. Louis gains a young, energetic business man, who will be found fully posted in the trade and with a natural adaptability to making friends wherever he may be.

Nashville American, 7 January 1879

**Friends of the James Farm**

c/o Jesse James Birthplace  
 21216 Jesse James Farm Road  
 Kearney, MO 64060  
[www.jessejames.org](http://www.jessejames.org)  
 816.736.8500



James homestead cabin —  
 Original art by Jim Hamil

**Return Service Requested**

**YES**, I want to renew my membership with the Friends of the James Farm or begin a new membership. I have checked my level of membership in the box and enclosed a check or money order for the amount indicated.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please mail membership form and payment to:*

**Friends of the James Farm**  
 c/o Jesse James Birthplace  
 21216 Jesse James Farm Road  
 Kearney, MO 64060



You can also scan  
 QR Code to visit our  
 website.  
[www.jessejames.org](http://www.jessejames.org)

### **Membership Levels** *(Mark One)*

- ☐ Bushwhacker . . . . . \$25  
☐ Clay County Irregular . . . \$50  
☐ Road Agent . . . . . \$100  
☐ Long Rider . . . . . \$250  
☐ Home Guard . . . . . \$500

Is this a renewal? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Outside the continental U.S.,  
 please add \$5 to your membership  
 contribution.