

THE ROWAN COUNTY TROUBLES
by Stuart Seely Sprague

Condoning

W.D.R. The Story of A Mt. Feud.

Rowan was a quiet, rural Eastern Kentucky county between its creation in 1856 and the coming of the railroad in 1881. During that time only six murders occurred. But between August 1884 and late June 1887, violent deaths were recorded at the rate of six a year. This was the time frame of the Rowan County Trouble, one of America's severest feuds.

According to experts, feuds are caused by the isolation of Appalachia. If such a contention is correct, this mountain vendetta is an exception to the rule. For along with the coming of the railroad came a logging boom. Men from Ohio and from Rowan's neighboring counties converged upon the burgeoning towns of Morehead and Farmers. In the past it had been said of Rowan that the county could be depended upon giving the Democratic Party a small majority. But the influx of newcomers seeking economic opportunities created great political instability. "The mountaineer," according to the Louisville Courier-Journal, "would rather die than forswear his party, and is ready to believe that a man on the other side would poison his father." This was the backdrop against which a hotly contested Sheriff's race took place between Democrat Gooden and Republican Cook Humphrey.

Passions reached their climax on election day, held in early August. Fiery talk and one suspects alcohol, led to violence and death for Solomon Bradley, father of seven. Depositions differ and to this

day no consensus exists as to ^{what} exactly transpired. As an outsider explained later, "I have heard hundreds of things in Rowan that may not be true. It is easy to hear anything in Rowan County." It is clear that rocks were thrown, punches were exchanged, three participants were decked, pistols were drawn and shots were fired. A number of accounts declare that Sheriff John Day ~~commanded~~ the peace only to become the target of rock throwers. One version, still current is that the feud's first victim ran forward to catch a falling man. In that superheated atmosphere it is easy to believe that Sol Bradley's action was interpreted as a hostile move; that Sol was going for the fallen man's gun.

Sol supported Cook Humphrey who won the election by a mere twelve votes. The election day death, one of three in the state, was further politicized by disagreement as to whom was responsible for the killing. Some claimed it was John Day while others declared Floyd Tolliver was the guilty party. Bad blood existed and rumors were common. "As soon as the leaves put out good," John Martin allegedly remarked, "I aim to get Floyd." Floyd Tolliver reputedly said, "I'll bide my time till the brush gets green; then I aim to have a reckoning. That Logan outfit, well-wishers of the Martins, are getting to uppity." From the prominence of these families the vendetta that followed has sometimes been called the Tolliver-Martin or Logan Feud.

With the ill will that existed, a chance meeting between John Martin and Floyd Tolliver was predictably unfriendly. According to the Courier-Journal the following words were spoken:

Floyd: I have nothing against you.
John: I have nothing against you either.
Floyd: I understand that you have been telling
that you intend to mob me.

An angry exchange ensued and John drew and fired. Floyd's last words were "John you have killed me." The Martin version of the incident differed. According to it John Martin came to Morehead to pay a debt but ran into former Sheriff John Day, the losing candidate for Sheriff Sam Gooden and Floyd Tolliver. Floyd started the conversation belligerently: "John you have been waiting to bulldoze me, but I'm not going to permit it." To this John responded mildly: "I haven't tried to bulldoze you Floyd." Floyd was not at all pacified by that response and shouted out heatedly: "Yes, by God, you have and I am not going to permit it. I want you to understand it." Martin did not reply. He walked away from Tolliver but Floyd followed him into the bar room. John saw Floyd and resigned himself to a clash, stating: "Well, if you must fight, I am ready." The men drew and Floyd cried out: "Boys, remember what you swore to do; you said you would kill him, and you must keep your word."

John Martin was arrested for the killing and transported some fifty miles away. The examining trial was set for December 10, 1884, eight days after Tolliver's death. In the interim, however, the trial was postponed indefinitely. Martin's wife took the next train to Winchester to relay the good news to her jailed husband and to bring him some cornbread and clothing. Quite naturally when a group of Tolliver partisans arrived with orders to transfer him to Morehead, John Martin suspected foul play. His earnest pleadings availed him naught and a manacled John Martin was brought down to the depot and placed aboard the train. The train traveled east, passed over the Licking River and slowed to a stop at the town of Farmers. Masked

men boarded the train and gunned down the handcuffed prisoner. Though seven slugs entered John Martin's body, he managed to make a dying declaration accusing the Town Sheriff of Farmers and others with the cold blooded crime.

Rowan County was in an uproar, especially after County Attorney Z.T. Young declared the order forged. Including kinfolks each side in the feud could count upon seventy five armed men. "Further bloodshed may be predicted," the Courier-Journal predicted grimly. The following March the prophecy was fulfilled. County Attorney Z.T. Young and Deputy Sheriff Baumgartner rode together to Elliottville. Young journeyed back alone through a blinding snowstorm that afternoon. Three miles from Morehead he was ambushed. One .44 caliber slug slammed into his right shoulder and exited through his chest while a second shot went wild. Young could barely make out two shadowy forms. He urged his horse forward and managed to reach the comparative safety of town.

Ten days later the deputy with whom Young had traveled was waylaid on the same road. An Elliott County mail carrier ran across the lifeless figure, which had been badly torn up by animals. One bullet had caught the deputy squarely in the neck while another entered his chest. Baumgartner's death set off a mass exodus. Among county officials, only the Clerk, Major Carey remained, and he did so despite threats that sent the rest of his family packing for the peace and quiet of Kansas.

Shortly thereafter, on April Fool's Day to be precise, a ludicrous incident occurred at George W. Nickell's pool hall. The new Sheriff, Cook Humphrey and Ed Pierce invaded the establishment. Ed Pierce drew a bead on Jeff Bowling. But ex-Sheriff Day had Humphrey in his sights. Day's triumph was shortlived as Bowling had Humphrey covered. A hasty truce was improvised and lasted only until the participants reached

their respective hotels. Rifles cracked and the firing subsided only after the foursome had exhausted their supplies of ammunition. No injuries were reported.

The conflict was further escalated when the Tolliver faction attacked the Martin homestead. That event brought state troops to Morehead and caused the Tollivers to accuse the soldiers of "stand [ing] squarely on the Martin side." The Martins lived not thirty feet from a road and seventy-five from the railroad. John's widow's house was a substantial two story frame building that was sometimes frequented by Sheriff Cook Humphrey and Benjamin Raybourn. The Tollivers learned of their presence and determined to get them.

According to the widow Martin, Ben Raybourn helped her oldest daughter, Sue, rob a hive the day of the attack. A bee stung Raybourn and he yelped. Sue chided him, declaring that he made "more fuss than if the entire Tolliver gang were after them." The Tollivers were at the time secreted within earshot of Sue and Ben. Craig Tolliver led the invaders, crawled up to the house, slithered inside and crawled up the stairway. There Cook Humphrey spotted Tolliver, grabbed a shotgun and fired. Craig's friends rescued him. The attacking force, seven of whom are known by name, surrounded the homestead. The besieged feared that the building would be torched. Raybourn and Humphrey determined to make a run for it and exited via the east door. They leaped the yard fence, dashed through a cornfield and sought the safety of the woods. The pursuers rested their rifles on the yard fenced and opened up on the fleeing figures. Raybourn fell. According to Cook Humphrey who was lying on his Winchester in the underbrush, the attackers fired several shots into the lifeless body, robbed him of his money and divided the spoils.

Angered at the escape of Humphrey, the attackers took out their frustrations on the Martin building, burning it to the ground. Sue Martin, it is said, ran out of the building and into Craig Tolliver, whose face was still bloody from Cook Humphrey's shotgun blast. Craig threatened to kill Sue if she dared to go to town. Sue dashed through the bushes and flattened herself in a ditch where she waited until twilight. Then she made her way to Morehead where the authorities spotted her, arrested and jailed her. The other Martins spent the night in the woods.

Governor J. Proctor Knott could not countenance such a flagrant disregard for law. He sent troops and soon thereafter A.J. McKenzie became the new sheriff. Seven men were rounded up for the murder of Ben Raybourn. No consensus was reached at the examining trial and the defendants were released. The commander of the troops was disgusted at the proceedings. When armed men attacked the Gault House, Morehead's most prestigious hotel, three ladies, he declared, "were standing in a porch across the street and recognized some of the mob." Their grand jury testimony led to their being indicted for perjury. The commander stated that before making a tour of the feud counties of Breathitt, Rowan and Larue, he "was willing to say that the reports had been exaggerated," but as respects Rowan, "I can only say in the language of the Queen of Sheba, 'the half has never been told'." 5

Attorney General P. W. Hardin tended to agree with Commander Major Kinney. According to Hardin the Sheriff was a partisan "of the severest stripe" and the County Judge "seems to be very much intimidated."

The vendetta took an unexpected turn when Ed Pierce, the man who with Cook Humphrey had invaded Nickell's pool hall, was tried for robbery.

Pierce announced that he decided to tell all. He created a sensation by implicating Cook Humphrey, Morehead merchant Howard Logan and some eight to ten others of feud related crimes. Ed Pierce was specific in his accusations. Pierce alleged that he and Raybourn were to receive \$50 for gunning down Democratic leader Z.T. Young and \$25 per assassination for eight others. He claimed that Martin's sister now headed the Martin faction and that if Z.T. Young "persists in living in Rowan County, they will certainly kill him."

Naturally Pierce had raised a hornet's nest and his trial became a cause celebre. The prosecutor was the man he had attempted to assassinate, Z.T. Young, whom one unfriendly paper referred to as "the unscrupulous county attorney of Rowan." Shortly after the opening of the September term of the Bath County Court, the Paducah Herald opined that "these parties will be closely watched by the authorities and any attempts at Rowan County methods of behavior will be ripped in the bud." With one of the men Ed Pierce had implicated serving as defense attorney, it is not surprising that the defendant was found guilty.

Conditions calmed and in time the troops debarked. The situation remained quite tranquil until the following July. Some attributed the subdued atmosphere to a peace contract that the Governor and other state officials induced the leaders of the factions to sign. "Peace has spread its wings over that unfortunate district" is the way one paper put it. But then the fragile peace was severely tested. Deputy County Clerk Matt Carey, a Martin supporter, ran into Craig Tolliver. The two quarrelled as to who was responsible for the commencement of the hostilities. Merchant Howard Logan joined in. There was no violence. But there was renewed tension and both sides called for reinforcements, paraded in force and threatened

war. Craig Tolliver and Matt Carey gave different versions of the incident. According to Craig:

I was down near the post-office, and Mat Carey, a bitter enemy of mine, approached. As he did so he winked at me in a mean, malicious manner, as if he intended something wrong. I asked him what he meant and told him I wanted no difficulty. I could give him enough. He said he didn't wish to fight, and we started back together. Coming towards us I saw Howard Logan with his hand in his pistol pocket. When the latter reached us I told him to take his hand out of his pistol pocket and act like a man. He began to draw a revolver. I jumped into a doorway, and somebody shoved a pistol into my hands. I got the drop on Logan. He begged for his life, and I let him go without hurting him.

Matt Carey disagreed. According to his account:

I was passing by the hotel near the depot and Craig Tolliver asked me to go around some houses saying he wanted to talk to me. He is my bitter enemy, and I knew he wanted to get me off by myself where he and his gang could kill me. I was not armed and he was. I refused to go. He said I must come, and seized hold of me to drag me away. I grasped a bannister of a porch and held on, with him pulling at me. Some ladies called out and ran between us, begging Tolliver to let me go. Howard Logan approached. He had his hands behind him, and Tolliver pretended that he thought they were in his pockets, on his pistol. Logan shouted for me to come to him. I replied that I could not, and Tolliver's attention was diverted to Logan; the latter backed off into a house . . . The ladies finally persuaded him to go away, and the difficulty was avoided for the time.

"Logan is now in arms with Carey, and Cook Humphrey has been sent for. Tolliver has made headquarters of the noted Raine House, and again the outlook is again gloomy for Rowan. . . . Business is wholly suspended." Thus did the Courier-Journal describe conditions. The metropolitan daily editorialized that "a half-dozen funerals in Rowan County would materially improve its moral atmosphere, and if the principals were prepared for this at a rope's end, the effect upon the survivors would be more lingering and valuable."

The ink was scarcely dry before guns blazed away. ROWAN'S SHAME screamed the headline and beneath it ran a garbled account of the action. First information indicated that Sheriff William Ramey had been mortally wounded while his son Henry and a deputy named Bailey were also injured in an attempt to arrest Howard Logan. Logan's son was the only casualty on the other side. The Courier-Journal added that "a telegram just received at this place (6 o'clock) states that Cook Humphrey and others are raising a mob to kill the Rameys. The Sheriff has telegraphed Governor Knott for troops. The citizens are in great tremor."

Sensational stories are often unreliable and this was no exception. The Sheriff's son stated that "My father and I were given warrants for Charles Bailey, Nathaniel Fowler, Thomas Harris and Cook Humphrey. I met Charles Bailey who said he would go all right, and he and I walked over towards Logan's store. I went in and Logan asked me if I had a warrant for him and I told him no, and he commanded me to get out. He seized me and pushed me out of the front door. As he did so he called me a very dirty name. I then struck him with my fist. He ran back into the store and returned with a double-barrelled shotgun, cocked and leveled. He fired, and one of the shots struck me in my side. My father walked up. Young Will Logan had drawn his pistol and the shooting began. I never fired a single shot. I never had a difficulty before. Howard Logan has to-day sent both me and my father word that he would kill us on sight."

The Courier-Journal sent a reporter to Morehead to ascertain the facts. "Henry Ramey," he wired back, "went into the store of Howard Logan. The latter asked him if he had any warrants for his arrest. Ramey replied in the negative. Logan then told him to get out of the store."

Ramey refused . . . Here accounts begin to vary. The Martin men say that Ramey drew his pistol and began to shoot. The Tolliver men say that William Logan . . . was the first to shoot. Cook Humphrey was also present. Old man Ramey was called to his son's relief, and the cracking of pistols was quite lively for a few minutes. When the fusillade ended it was discovered that Will Logan had been shot in the stomach and fatally wounded. Old man Ramey was shot in the hips, and his son received a ball in the thigh. Nobody ~~seemed~~ to know who fired the balls that hit the men. All but the wounded men skipped out of town . . . to gather their friends and prepare for war.

Even before the incident at Logan's store, people regarded the reopening of the feud as something inevitable. Elder B. F. Parker of the Owingsville Christian Church was "holding a protracted meeting at Morehead, but had to bring it to a close on account of the excitement incident to the state of affairs." The Logan store incident caused the Governor to send Judge Cole to determine if Rowan needed a special court session. The Judge returned and argued that unless troops were on the ground, a special court session would be a farce. He contended that "the people will be as peaceable as angels while the militia are here." Reluctantly, the Governor assented.

The troops arrived and there was an air of unreality about the stilled county. Soldiers slept on court benches, awaiting their tents. Craig Tolliver cracked jokes, exclaimed "How are ye, boys! Having much fun up here?" Cook Humphrey listened to knots of soldiers singing camp fire songs. "Nearly all the most active participant," declared an eyewitness, "are here, and . . . they don't seem to feel the slightest fear of Judge Cole's court." It was a setting for a Thomas Hart Benton mast-

erpiece. A town "nestling amid the hills," with "stray pieces of plank sidewalk" and a "few old women and children pass[ing] along the dusty streets." Old man Ramey stretched out in an American Hotel room with the Tollivers as neighbors. "By his side on a couch . . . was carelessly tossed a red silk handkerchief; beneath it was a sixshooter." Not far away lay Will Logan under the sedation of morphine, being tended by four or five doctors and being baptized a Presbyterian while unconscious. Yet all was real. Court day approached and came on. Judge Cole minced no words in addressing the jury:

You are not brought here by your own volition but by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, which has reached out its strong arm, and commanded you. You have taken an oath that you will take notice of all treasons, felonies, and violations of the penal laws. There is a high trust reposed in you, gentlemen. There could scarce be a higher. Our forefathers, when they built upon this great country, built it upon the idea that the people were to rule and to say who should carry out the laws. When the people speak, others should keep silent. The will of the people, the voice of the people, should be all powerful. Our government has been tried by the experience of a hundred years. It has grown from a few scattered people on the seaboard until it is now the greatest nation on earth. The bravest and the best. There are men in Kentucky as good as the best of them, and I believe there are people in Rowan County who are in favor of law and order. You, gentlemen, are to see that law and order are enforced here, and to learn who has committed violations of them. You have sworn that you will do that, and you will seek out all such felonies and breaches of the peace that have been committed in Rowan County, and I believe you will do it, or I would not have selected you. I am sorry, gentlemen, and it humiliates me almost to the dust, when I see the flag of the military flying in front of the courthouse. Although I have the greatest respect for that flag, I am humiliated because it is a sign to every one who goes up and down that railroad that disorder reigns in Rowan County and that the people here have not enforced peace as they should have done. That flag means that law and order must prevail in Rowan County. The military are here to assist the civil authorities, and it is a sad commentary that it should be so. It hurts you all. Let any man in Rowan County, no matter how honest he may be, go East or West or North or South and there is

A BADGE OF DISGRACE UPON HIM

There are good men here, but go where they will they will not be taken as honest until they have proven themselves so, and it rest with you, gentlemen of the grand jury, to remove the stain and disgrace from Rowan County. You see men running along the streets of the town each with a couple of 38 or 45-calibre pistols in his pockets. Ask him what he has there. He replies: Oh, only a couple of forty-fives. That man is a coward. No brave man would stick a pistol in his pockets. To do so makes him a coward and insolent. **Gentlemen, you are to enquire into all felonies . . . Felony is a crime for which a man can be sent to jail or suffer capital imprisonment.** As a general thing you have no trouble in

seeking out and ascertaining who commits crimes, but unfortunately it is a common thing that men come to the grand jury-room, hold up their hands, swear to tell the truth, and immediately tell lies. The majority of offenses in this county are caused by the habit of carrying concealed and deadly weapons and drinking whiskey. The two often cause men to commit crimes which they regret ever after. The law says that those who carry pistols shall be both fined and imprisoned, and if they do not pay the fine they shall be put at hard labor. You must indict such men. The petit jury will convict and I will see that the convictions are enforced. I will have this road lined with men wearing the ball and chain if necessary. If I cannot do it otherwise I will have this gatling gun turned upon them, and if there are not soldiers enough here I will get more. If these men thought they would be punished, do you think they would go loaded with weapons? No; it is the certainty that the law will not be enforced that causes them to do this. They feel sure . . . the petit jury will let them off. You must enforce the law.

YOU HAVE IN MR. CARUTH

as prosecutor one who is second to no man in Kentucky. Such is his reputation. He has been obtained from Louisville for you. We must have law in this place. The pendulum has been swinging too long one way. It is coming back now. I will adjourn all the courts in my district, and sit here for a twelfth-month, or have the law enforced.

Cole's address coupled with a successful challenge of J.W. Thomas, former jury foreman who consistently refused to indict Tolliver partisans, unnerved feudists on both sides. Shortly thereafter Thomas Gooden was arraigned for murder. The hard line was effective. Whereas "heretofore the town has been crowded with men, many of whom have openly boasted" of violence, they are now scattering hurriedly.

Z.T. Young badgered Ramey, telling him that "if he intended to be Sheriff he might as well be such." Cook Humphrey and Craig Tolliver were both arrested in town. But prosecutor Asher Caruth discovered to his dismay problems of evidence were greater than getting an impartial jury. He declared that "there is no very nice regard for truth when one side talks about the other." Some natives took a "plague on both your houses" attitude. Z.T. Young's opponents complained that that lawyer was too friendly with Judge Cole. Caruth concluded that the two were "intimate, but no more so than a Judge normally is with the leading lawyer of the town where he is." But in a town with an unofficial "dead line," that

conclusion carried no weight.

Caruth feared he would be unable to obtain a verdict of guilty. He later testified that "If there had been any chance on the face of the earth to get a conviction" for Craig Tolliver, "I would have tried it." But conceiving that as impossible, he consulted with Cook Humphrey's and Craig Tolliver's lawyers and agreed to suspend their cases if the men they represented would go into exile. Caruth contacted the commander of the troops; J.J. Nesbitt, a state legislator; the Governor; and the editors of three Louisville papers, before implementing his plan. The principals signed the agreement on August 9, 1886.

But the agreement broke down in February, 1887. Tolliver was reported in town the day court adjourned. March was full of activity as Dr. Henry Logan and Morgan McClurg were accused of a conspiracy to kill George Cole and were transported to Lexington. Craig Tolliver was reported in Cincinnati buying hardware and John Trumbo "accidentally shot and killed" N.J. Whicher, the slug "striking him just above the right eye. The next busy month was June.

The Mount Sterling Sentinel-Democrat headlined its account:

B L O O D Y R O W A N Two More Killings Added to Her Criminal Calendar. The Logan boys were served a warrant for kukluxing. Some alleged that the move was aimed to keep them from testifying at the trial of Dr. Logan. There was plenty of ill feelings between the Logans and the Tollivers. The Logan store incident had cost Will Logan his life and both Sheriff Ramey and his son were wounded there. Not unexpectedly, then, when Marshal Manning attempted to serve the warrants, the response was in buckshot. However, the elder of the two Logan boys agreed that they should surrender under a guarantee of safety.

The warranty expired within a hundred yards of the house as did the two Logans. A few days later Craig Tolliver was waylaid and was lucky to escape with but a shoulder wound. On the 14th Sheriff Ramey and his son were ambushed, but escaped unscathed. A nearby paper declared: "The citizens are terrorized since anarchy and crime reign supreme."

But this was the beginning of the end as Boone Logan, incensed at the murder of the two Logan boys, and realizing that justice could not be achieved with the Tollivers in control of the county government, determined to engage the Tollivers in a large scale action. He set out for Cincinnati where he "expended as much money in Winchester rifles as would have bought a Rowan county farm." The guns were sent in cases clearly marked "hardware" and on the night of June 21-22, 1887, the invaders rendezvoused at Gate's Station. The County Sheriff was dragged from his bed to make the actions of the Law and Order Party legal. The leaders issued twenty-two new Winchesters. The other ninety-nine men, it is presumed, had their own firearms.

The action began about nine o'clock the next morning. Craig and Jay Tolliver were working in a stove yard from whence they retreated at the first fire. At their hotel they were joined by Bud and Andrew Tolliver and Hiram Cooper. With the attackers inching forward, the Tollivers made a run for the woods north of town. Bud Tolliver crawled into Mel Johnson's yard but was followed and had his head blown off. The others changed course and holed up in the Central Hotel. Some reports declare that Boone Logan sent Jim Mannin's wife to parley with the besieged and that she came away "wringing her hands and crying." Earlier promises of safe conduct proved worthless, consequently the refusal to surrender is understandable. The Law and Order Party threatened to set the premises

ablaze. The Tollivers exited hurriedly and a ring of dust puffed up around the departing refugees. Craig was hit in the back, wheeled and fell, rose to his knees, was hit in the chest, rose again only to be cut down for a third time. Jay Tolliver was killed in a lot adjacent to the hotel. Andrew Tolliver made good his escape to the woods, receiving but two flesh wounds. Hiram Cooper was according to most accounts located and killed in a second story room of the Gault House. The morning train had been halted for safety's sake. A lone telegraph operator informed the outside world of the battle in progress:

Mt. Sterling June 22

Information is received here that Craig Tolliver and two of his brothers were shot dead in Morehead this morning. . . . The train is, however, about two hours late . . . The fight is still going on in Morehead.

Frankfort June 22

Governor Hindman just received the following telegram from Lexington: Fight all morning at Morehead; Craig, Bud and Jay Tolliver are already killed. Don't know of how many more. Town is full of armed men, and after every guilty one. Think the worst is over.

Once the gunfire faded, the bodies were laid out in a hotel room. Since all of the deceased were named in warrants, one wonders whether some of those documents were written in a post mortum fashion. The Law and Order Party held a public meeting at the court house the same day with a view to the formation of a Citizens' Protective Association. Three days later another meeting was held with Secretary of State McKenzie present on the same subject. It appears that a request was made for troops, but the governor turned it down and sent McKenzie instead. The Secretary of State picked up some "war relics," but accomplished little else.

Two myths or at least unsubstantiated stories developed out of the Big Shoot Out. According to one, Boone Logan wired the Governor once the battle was over the cryptic "I have done it." This implies that the Governor approved of the action. Logan denied the story under oath. The second belief is that the engagement brought about an immediate peace. This was wishful thinking. The Louisa Big Sandy News was typical of editorial opinion in the state when it declared that "The Rowan County troubles . . . have done more, perhaps, to injure Kentucky's reputation for peace than anything else." But though the rest of the state wanted to forget the recent past, many in the county would not abide by the results of the late blood bath. Rifles were imported afresh and a new show down appeared imminent. For the third time state troops were sent into the county and they were followed by an investigating commission. The consensus was to follow a suggestion that appeared in the Carlisle Mercury in June. "Nothing remains," declared the journal, "but for the Legislature to abolish the county and throw the various portions back into the counties from which they were taken."

But cooler heads prevailed and the county remained intact. The threat of extinction of the county by the Legislature was sobering. The Governor encouraged the Reverend O. Barnes to hold a revival. In the long run the Rowan County Trouble proved beneficial to the county as its notoriety made it stand out from the crowd. Rowan attracted the attention of William Temple Withers who believed that Christian education was the answer. His \$500 was accepted by the State Board of the Christian Church and that fall the ancestor of Morehead State University, which is the economic lifeline of the community with an enrollment of 6500, began with a single student.