

DC Panel - Significance

1.

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1D

It is a pleasure to me to speak to you on this most interesting occasion. I feel that I am among friends, because the late Mrs. Elizabeth Hays, the wife of the founder of this fine estate, was for many years the correspondent in this neighborhood for The Journal-World, and it has been my good fortune to know other members of the family.

I knew Sam Stonebraker, who fifty years ago was one of the many Black Jack citizens interested in politics. They told it on Sam that, *at* one time when he was addressing a Republican gathering, someone in the audience asked him a very embarrassing question. Sam's friends thought that he would be floored, but quick as a wink he turned to one of his old cronies and asked, "Do you remember that pretty little filly we used to court down by Squire Blank's?" The crowd roared and everyone forgot about the unanswered question.

At another time a candidate from Lawrence was telling about the terrible time he had the night before at a rally down here, and said, "Why so and so called me a liar". "Oh that's nothing", said a friend, "That is often done in politics". "But", added the candidate, "He proved it on me."

I am glad that The Kansas State Historical Society and the Kansas State Chamber of Commerce, are doing something for Kansas that we long ago should have been interested in doing for ourselves. And I wish to add good words for Roy Bailey, under whom the movement started; Fred Brinkerhoff, the energetic and efficient chairman of the committee; Kirke Mechem, secretary of the Historical Society, and to Governor Ratner, whose favorable consideration this summer revived the project.

We should be remiss today if ~~we~~ attention were not called to the monument erected on the site of the Battle of Black Jack in February 1916, more than 24 years ago. In the Journal-World of February 18, 1916 there appeared a picture of the monument, ~~together~~ with George Roe, W. E. Barnes and George Jones, survivors of the battle standing beside it. ~~I understand~~ This monument was erected by the ~~D.~~ A. R.

I know that we are all grateful to the Hays family for their generosity and cooperation, and to little Miss Barbara for the gracious manner in which she unveiled the marker.

2D

The struggle for the liberation of the slaves and for a united nation began in Douglas county, and thru the sacrifice of property and life, the pioneers paved the way for Kansas to enter the Union as a Free State. Yet, knowing this, to the best of my knowledge, the first monument to be erected by general contribution in the county was that placed in Oak Hill cemetery in Lawrence, some forty-five years ago, in commemoration of those who perished at the hands of Quantrill. A few roadside markers have been placed, and the huge boulder at Lawrence marks the spot where the first N.E.E.A. pioneers landed. We should have within the county at least one fine monument to the soldiers and sailors of the Civil War.

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Looking back 84 years I see a tall, gaunt, stern, unyielding and courageous man, who then as now was little understood. Hunted by H. C. Pate with his Westport Sharpshooters, or "Shannon's Sharp Shooters", John Brown, <sup>the foe of slavery,</sup> instead of hiding out to save his life, himself turned hunter and flushed his quarry as Pate and his larger force lay intrenched in the underbrush <sup>within a few yards of the ground upon which we stand today.</sup> ~~at this now historic spot.~~

Following a few hours of shooting in which ammunition on both sides was nearly exhausted, Pate sent a man with a flag of truce to discuss plans for surrender. Brown held the envoy and sent for Pate. The memory of the slaughter at Dutch Henry's Crossing was fresh in the minds of Pate and his men, and they dare resist no longer, some thirty men surrendering to possibly half their number.

<sup>That in a few words is the story of the battle of Black Jack.</sup>  
 In men engaged, in those killed or wounded, the battle of Black Jack was a trifling affair. The killing of an Archduke of Austria in June 1914, was also in itself a trifling affair. But the battle of Black Jack marked the beginning of armed resistance in Kansas which tolled the knell of human slavery in the United States; and the murder of the Archduke plunged the world into war.

Appeasement, a word which recently has been brought into disrepute, might well be used to characterize the policy of those who founded Lawrence. From the first the settlers of Lawrence tried to pacify and appease. Finding squatters on the chosen townsite, instead of driving them off, they bought them off. But we cannot justly classify their acts as cowardice, because they were friendless in a new land and without the support of territorial or national government. The armies and the laws were all against them.

Untoward acts might well have destroyed them, yet their continued yielding made their burdens all the harder. Because they believed it best not to defend Lawrence, the town was sacked by Sheriff Jones and much property was destroyed. There had been those who would have fought from the start, and if they had, perhaps they might have met an end like that of John Brown at Harper's Ferry and Charlestown.

In Lawrence the pacifists were represented by Robinson, while those who urged action were typified by Jim Lane. It is probable that John Brown was a trouble maker, a disturber, an unhappy man to have around; and while he could not comprehend the policies of Robinson, neither could Robinson, nor Lane look as deeply into the future as did Brown. Robinson and Lane wanted to make Kansas a Free state, Brown wanted to stamp out slavery.

Historians should not forget that it was the pro-slavery men and not John Brown, who first committed murder in Kansas. Even Judge Lecompte, pro-slavery man that he was, said that Sheriff Jones' raid on Lawrence was illegal. He acted on the findings of a jury and without the authority of a court. The leaders in Lawrence, like a hen trying to hover her chickens in the path of a tornado, offered no resistance, but it did not stay the ruthless hand of Jones and his outlaw followers.

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What was it that brought things to a head? The action of John Brown, a few miles south of Pottawatomie, where five men who led a small party to the banks of the Pottawatomie,

were killed in cold blood. It was an atrocious murder, but those who try to hallow the memory of those killed are trying to make heroes out of a bad lot. I knew personally August Bondi; and Noble L. Prentiss, whom I also knew, quotes Bondi as saying: "The men killed had been our neighbors and I was sufficiently acquainted with their characters to know that they were of the stock from which came the James brothers and the Youngers, who never shrank from perpetrating crime, if it was done in the interest of the proslavery cause."

Of the many books that I have read regarding John Brown there are two which are favorable to him. James Redpath, doubtless, is the one who made a national hero of him, and the late William F. Connelley in his book, "John Brown", published in 1900, treats him in a fair and kindly manner.

Of the many traducers of John Brown there are at least two who may have found it profitable to defame him. For some years I have had the book published in 1902 by George W. Brown, M. D., entitled: "Reminiscences of Gov. R. J. Walker; with the True Story of The Rescue of Kansas from Slavery." This book was dedicated to Mrs. Sara T. D. Robinson, widow of Governor Charles Robinson.

~~In this book~~ <sup>in this book</sup> No one could be more bitter, nor use more scathing language, than Dr. Brown, in vilifying John Brown. Having read this book, written by the man Dr. Robinson brought to Lawrence to edit "The Herald of Freedom", what was my astonishment a few years ago when reading a copy of "The Herald of Freedom", of February 7, 1857, published just eight months after the slaughter at Dutch Henry's Crossing, on the <sup>this same</sup> Pottawatomie; to find the following signed article by Dr. G. W. Brown.

~~Read attached copy.~~

6 THE HERALD OF FREEDOM  
Lawrence, Saturday, Feb. 7, 1857

"Pottowatomie Creek, Jan. 17th. - In passing south, before coming to the Pottowatomie Creek, we passed the ruins of several Free State houses; amongst them the distinguished Capt. John Brown's and his sons', John Brown, Jr., and Jason Brown. These were all intelligent and enterprising men, and came to Kansas to build up homes for themselves, improve the country and save it to freedom.

"Old Capt. Brown has been a man of distinction, in the East. He was of the firm of Perkins & Brown, in Ohio, who took the premium at the World's Fair in London, and also in New York, on the finest and best wool. They were known through the country as importers of the best Spanish, French and Saxony sheep.

"Capt. Brown traveled over Europe, and examined the various woollen manufactories, for the purpose of benefiting the wool growers and manufacturers in America. In other branches of agriculture he also took leading premiums. His sons brought with them to Kansas imported stock of Devonshire and Durham cattle.

"One of them had established here a fine vineyard, and had in thrifty growth fine varieties of grapes. He also had a nursery of the most choice varieties of fruits.

"These were not the men to be intimidated or subdued; of course they must be destroyed.

"John Brown, Jr., was arrested by the U. S. Dragoons, for treason, for offering to defend the town of Lawrence on the 21st of May last, and was marched in chains, with several others, for thirty miles, in one of the hottest days in June, without food or water. He was then confined in the U. S. camp for nearly four months, without even an indictment against him.

"Jason Brown was also arrested, but was afterwards set free.