

# The Rowan County News

Morehead, Kentucky, Thursday Morning, May 10, 1956

## 1886 Legislature Laid Down An Edict That Rowan County Feud Must Stop Or The County Would Be Discontinued

To every group regardless of how secure they may feel, there always comes some event which jars them back to normalcy and makes them realize that something must be done. The event which happened in Rowan County which caused much hatred, bloodshed, etc. was the Rowan County Feud. This feud when looked upon from one angle was very disastrous, but in viewing it from a distance it can readily be seen that it took this disaster to make the citizens of the town and county realize what they needed to do in order to make this county what it is today.

This feud started in 1884 and caused the whole county to be in an uproar. It started on elec-

The Rowan County News has the story of all the gruesome and seemingly almost inhuman killings and deeds of the Rowan County War as historians compiled, and in many instances, magnified, the three years of the struggle in which citizens were afraid to walk on the streets or be out at night. Hundreds upon hundreds of present Rowan Countians are descendants of the Tollivers, Logans, Youngs and others who participated in the feud. Reprinting the story of the Rowan County War could mean only embarrassment for scores of our fine, progressive citizens of today and it is not the purpose of this edition to start any more feuds—to lay blame on any faction—or to rehash a period in our history that is best forgotten. The Publishers thank the some 30 people who brought in copies of the book of the Rowan County War and the famous song about the feud.

tion day. Several people were killed of whom many were innocent. Without any further explanation, one can determine that the basis of it all was politics. A lot of details could be gone into telling the gruesome events which happened at this time, but it would be much better to stress the important outcome.

A fact that caused a great commotion among the people in general and one which made them start thinking clearly was the proposal by the legislature in 1886 to dissolve Rowan County unless the feud stopped. Balance of this story concerns citizens' meetings taken from old public records.

### The Mass Meeting

There was a large attendance at the mass meeting Saturday. Senator Huff was the principal speaker, and he told the people of Rowan of the great danger there was in abolishing the county, and that the only hope there was for us was to go on probation for two years and then if the laws were enforced, dram drinking stopped, and people pursued the peaceful pursuits of life, the bloody record of Rowan would be remembered against her no more forever. Short speeches were made by D. B. Logan, James E. Clark, and G. W. Saulsbury. A rising vote was taken as to whether the citizens of Morehead would stand by its officers in the performance of their duty, and everyone in the house stood up. A large number signed a petition against dismemberment and the meeting adjourned.

### Our County

The temper of the legislature mind has been to abolish Rowan County, but a reaction has come and a chance will be given the good people of the county to work out its redemption. This can be done only through a faithful execution of the laws and there is no mistaking the fact that another season of violence and crime will settle her existence forever. It is believed that the conservative law abiding elements of the county can correct any existing evils and secure the just punishment to those who have violated the laws. It well becomes those who desire to perpetuate the county to discharge the duties of citizenship by seeing to it that each officer performs his official duty faithfully, and stands by him in his performance of it, or if he fails or refuses to do so, bring him to

punishment for his failure. The law is ample to correct all the evils that affect society if administered and looked to, and secure its administration in Rowan if you would have it perpetrated.

### Farmers

March 1, 1888—In pursuance to a called meeting of the citizens of Farmers and vicinity, S. Crain was called to the chair and J. M. Brain appointed Secretary. The following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved as citizens of Farmers precinct No. 2, Rowan County, Kentucky, believing whiskey and ardent spirits a evil, will use all honorable means to suppress this evil. Further, we pledge our support to the officers to see that laws are enforced, and that law breakers have no place in our midst. We further thank our Marshal, Robert Cassity, for his work done in this county.

Resolved: That we ask our senator and member of the Lower House to vote against any bill which might be brought up before the Legislature to abolish the county of Rowan.

Resolved: That we forward the proceeding of this meeting to the Mt. Sterling Gazette, Highland Blade, Owingsville Outlook, Flemingsburg Gazette, Mt. Sterling Sentinel Democrat and they be requested to publish it.

The Christian Gospel Temperance Union under the leadership of L. L. Abbott of Lexington, Kentucky in holding a series of meetings at this place with good results, having organized a lodge of about 70 members with the following officers:

President, Capt. S. Crain, First Vice President; James M. Brain, Second Vice President; Mrs. Kate Glover, Secretary; James W. Tabor, Assistant Secretary; Mrs. Maggie Crain, Treasurer; J. C. Manhier, Senior Chorister; Mrs. H. C. Sherman, Assistant Chorister; Miss Sallie Scott, Executive Committee; John Ingram, Mrs. Sue Brain, Mrs. H. C. Sherman, W. G. Everette, Hugh Teal.

These meetings are being largely attended by all classes of citizens and great good is likely to result from them.

The citizens of Farmers have determined that whiskey and lawlessness must go, and law and order be reinstated in our town and county. Every barroom, and grog shop in this place is closed up at the present, and the good citizens intend to make it hot for any man who undertakes to sell or handle the stuff in this city contrary to the laws of the state.

We have about 300 inhabitants with three fine lumbering mills in full operation at the present time, and a good place for capitalists to invest their money, if we succeed in restoring our county to law and order.

### The Rowan Matter

At a large meeting of the citizens of Rowan County held at the courthouse in Morehead, Monday, Jan. 16, 1888, J. T. Hazelrigg was called to the chair and A. J. Thurber was appointed secretary.

Whereas: We have heard with much concern of the proposition pending before the Legislature of Kentucky to repeal the Act establishing the county of Rowan, therefore

Resolved: That we appeal to the Legislature as a body not to divest us of the rights with which we are invested by the Act of Assembly establishing the county.

2. That we appeal to our Senator,

3. We call the attention of the Legislature to the fact that it is not only in the county of Rowan that a season of lawlessness has prevailed.

4. That Rowan County should be henceforth as famous for peace and for preservation of law and order as it has been riot and disorder and that we hereby

pledge ourselves that in the future we will by all means in our power, do all that we can in the interest of peace. We will uphold and maintain the integrity of the law, enforce in enforcing the law, etc.

5. It is said that we are a pauper county. We maintain that the charge loses much of its force when it is known that we have 16 miles of the Newport News and Mississippi Railway with all its property and is subject to taxation and in this connection that within all our borders we now have peace; that two good schools are being maintained and taught in Morehead.

The people of Rowan County had learned their lesson. They were ready to do everything possible to preserve the county which had come to mean so much to them. The first step was the establishment of the Normal School and Mr. Button and his mother came here to take charge. Churches began to develop and in 1901 the Church of God was added to the list.

Clubs, banks and other businesses began to spring up.