



Captain Thomas Benton Rose

1837-1865

The following articles describe incidents and people involved in the May 31, 1865 mob lynching of Thomas Benton Rose. Thomas was born in 1837 to Freeland W. Rose and Mary (Collard) Rose in Lincoln County, Missouri and he was married to Laura Jane Cassidy.

Many thanks to Laura Rose and Thomas Burkemper, descendants of Tom Rose for initially telling me of his story. Pat Rose has been of I have tried to copy the content of the articles as accurately as possible and left any questionable language usage or spellings as they were written except when MS Word/Works chose to do otherwise. I made a trip to Quincy to try and obtain better copies of the articles and made some headway but not much. The copies are poor so it is my hope that my citations are good enough to allow a person to go and look at the microfilm themselves should they wish.

There is a lot more to this story that has been omitted due to space constraints. Several other newspapers ran shorter versions of the events of that night in 1865 and the aftermath of the event.

Thomas Rose  
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*I want to note from the beginning that although Tom is referred to as Captain Rose in a couple of these clippings, I have not been able to establish any military service in either the Union or Confederate armies, and have not found any information regarding his commission as an officer under Kirby Smith.*

*THE QUINCY DAILY HERALD*

Quincy, Illinois  
May 23, 1865  
LOCAL AFFAIRS

BUSHWHACKERS IN ADAMS COUNTY

We learn from a gentleman who came down on the train last evening, that a party of six men rode into Fowler Station on the O.B. & Q.R.R. twelve miles from this city, about 9 o'clock last evening and robbed the store of Mr. James Knox, and the office of the Station agent. They took from Mr. Knox all the money he had in the store, amounting to a considerable sum, and also as large an amount of goods of various kinds as they could carry off. They also took from the station agent all the money he had in the office. The men were dressed in jeans - with the exception of one who wore a blue military coat, and were well mounted and armed. They are supposed to have been from Missouri, as one of the party stated that his father's house had been burned and his property confiscated and he has sworn to avenge him. We understand that arrangements are being made to pursue them as we write, which we sincerely trust will result in the capture of the bold villains. We are an advocate of mercy on general principles, but it would be a mockery of justice, as well as trifling (?) with the peace and security of our citizens, to show other than the mercy of the wolf to the lamb or the eagle to the hare. We expect them to be caught or they are punished, but when caught - which we trust will be soon - may they each of them be hung with until the last spark of vitality leaves their miserable and villainous carcasses. We are particularly liable to incursion from such desperadoes the present summer, and it becomes necessary that we adopt vigorous measures in regard to them.

*THE QUINCY DAILY HERALD*

Quincy, Illinois  
June 1, 1865  
LOCAL AFFAIRS  
ADAMS COUNTY INVADED

But a few days have elapsed since we recorded the raid of six thieves upon the little town of Fowler, only a few miles from our city. Since that time we have heard several times of the miservants, who committed the deprivations, and day before yesterday the Captain of the gang was arrested in this city by Gen. Prentiss and E. K. Stone. After finding out that he was completely caught, he came out, and made a revelation of the proceedings of his gang. In which he implicated several families of Adams county. Having informed our authorities of the whereabouts of the remaining bushwhackers, it was deemed advisable to start a party after them, and accordingly of twelve men under command of our efficient City Marshal Jefferson Renfro, with the captured raider, were started on the track of the knaves. They left our city about 11 o'clock on the night of the 29th (day before yesterday), and made their way toward Marceline, in

this county. Arriving within two miles, and west of that place, they were re-inforced by a party from the aforesaid town, and immediately started to the supposed retreat of the bushwhackers, which was at the house occupied by a man by the name of Riley, in the bottom, near Lima Lake. The scouting party arrived at the above place at 6 o'clock yesterday morning, and were closing in around the premises, when they were surprised by the guerrillas, seven in number coming boldly out of the house, and firing with great rapidity upon them. The fire was returned, with equal spirit, and for a number of minutes war was being enacted in good earnest upon the free soil of Adams county. After discharging their revolvers, the bushwhackers attempted to escape by rapid flight, and three of them were succeeded, though it is thought by the traces of blood, at least two of them were wounded. The saddest part of the engagement was the killing of Mr. Thomas Trimble, a worthy man of Marceline. He was shot through the abdomen and expired within a few minutes after receiving the wound. Mr. James Wade was wounded slightly. - Wash. Wren slightly, and another member of the party was slightly wounded - the remaining members coming out unscratched. Three of the party were arrested, also the man Riley. Before leaving, the scouts applied a torch to the house at which the fight took place, and it now lies in a smouldering ruin, a fair warning of what may be expected from the bands of an injured community, to those encouraging and abetting such lawless men.

The commander of the bushwhackers is now in jail. He gave his name as Charles Barnasconi. But papers found upon his person, in the shape of passes from the military authorities, show that he has misrepresented himself in one particular, as he signed a pass from the Captain of Co. "I" (?) Sixth Regiment E.M.M. Salvata Barnasconi. He is about five foot five inches in height, dark eyes, dark complexion and black hair, is about twenty-two years of age and is about as hard a looking customer for that age, as one would wish to look at. He says that he has been engaged in pillaging since 1861. A great portion of his time was spent in Missouri, but, using his own language, as related to us. "Times were so d--n dull," that he left Missouri and came to Illinois, and "found it a d--n sight worse." He recognized one of his Fowler victims yesterday, from whom he took a pocket-book. He paid quite a compliment to the citizens of that little village. He says they are the "politest people he ever saw," but insists that the raid made by his men upon that town has been grossly misrepresented, as he never got \$500 - \$29 (?) was the extent of the pile realised. He says he never made such a poor raid in all of his experience.

The intention of the marauders was to have burned and sacked Canton last night, and in endeavoring to purchase ammunition in this city, the leader was captured. The people of Canton have every reason to thank the citizens of this county, who were so prompt in turning out and saving their quiet little town from bloodshed and pillage.

The parties deserve some credit for the manner in which the whole proceeding was conducted. We extend our sympathy to the friends and relatives of the unfortunate killed.

The company spoken of as being looked for arrived at a late hour yesterday afternoon, bringing with them three males and two female prisoners, all of whom were lodged in jail. Two of the males were wounded, one of them mortally. He is a native of St. Louis County. His name is Thomas Rose...(cut off)

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THE HANGING OF ROSE

About 11 o'clock last night our city was rife with excitement, occasioned by the attempt, and final breaking open of the jail doors, and the taking of Thos. Rose, one of the party arrested near Lima Lake. He was taken out to the edge of town, and hung by a mob. We were present, having out of curiosity followed the crowd, and had the privilege of making a short sketch of the life of Rose as a soldier. We have not room for it this morning, but will give it, with the confession and life of the others in Saturday morning's issue.

We do not doubt that Rose deserved death, but think that the manner and spirit should have been different. The law would probably have doomed him to a similar fate.

THE QUINCY DAILY HERALD  
Saturday, June 3, 1865  
Page 2 (?)

THE LATE SCENES OF VIOLENCE

Our readers will find in our local columns this morning a detailed and graphic account of the lawless and violent scenes of which our city has been the theatre during the last few days. While admitting that the Bushwhacker Rose, and his associate robbers and murderers, are villains of the deepest dye, and are deserving of no other fate than immediate death, both (scuff) a just punishment for their outrageous crimes and as a proper warning to similar desperadoes, we are yet unable to divest ourselves of mingled feelings of sorrow and shame when we reflect on these terrible events. - In common with our fellow citizens, we feel humiliated at the thought that the fame of our city, hitherto unsullied in this respect, has been deeply tarnished, and, more in sorrow than in anger, we deplore that an excitement that was otherwise just, should have been so unwisely and unfortunately directed. The rule in guerilla warfare has been and should be to shoot such villains on the spot where they are taken. This is legitimate according to the rules, as well as the practice, during the last four years, and it is also justifiable in every respect, as they are villains who, by the act of raising their hand against every man, invite every man's hand to be raised against them - and moreover, experience has proved that the safety of the community demands such a course against characters who by their lawless acts have placed themselves beyond the pale of the law. Upon this reasoning, which we regard as just by every fair consideration, we think if the party which had the contest with Rose and his gang, had taken no prisoners except the women, the act would have met with universal approval. But when they chose to waive their acknowledged right to shoot down these men, and by taking them prisoners,

give them the implied promise of being treated like other prisoners, any subsequent demonstration, especially on the part of others who had no connection, whatever, with their capture, and could not plead the natural excitement of contest or loss of comrades to irritate and incite them, we cannot help viewing an outrage in every sense of the word, and meriting the surest (swiftest ?) reprobation by every reflecting citizen. Rose, though deserving of hanging, was in the custody of the law. The best protection of the citizen and the community is that the law be respected and its majesty be preserved inviolate. Trample under foot the legal and ordinary rules of proceedings in case of offenders, and inaugurate mob violence in their stead (?), and the result will be fatal to individual safety, and the peace of the community. This cannot be denied in the light of experience, nor by any man who will reason logically, in regard to the question.

Holding the foregoing views, we can do no other than regret and reprobate the occurrences of the last few days. But in still another point of view do we find much room for mortification and regret in considering these recent events. In common with almost every citizen who feels a becoming interest in the future of Quincy, we are compelled to admit, that during the whole of Thursday - the first day of June - the day of National submission to the will of the Almighty Father, in view of the great bereavement with which He had inflicted us - on that day, the city of Quincy was entirely at the mercy of a mob of excited men - her best citizens threatened with violence - her authorities powerless, for whatever cause, to preserve the public peace - all law an authority, both civil and military, set at defiance (?), and to her preservation from still further scenes of blood, alone indebted to the exceptions (?) of two or three private citizens - immortal honor be to their names! How all this should have occurred, we must confess we cannot understand, but the fact - the mortifying and discreditable fact, stands out in bold relief. The city being filled with all sorts of rumors, devolving blame first upon one (?) and then another, several prominent citizens who have called upon us suggest both the interest, and the good name of Quincy require that a public meeting be called for an investigation of the matter. We concur in this suggestion, not with any view of making any one responsible for the state of affairs on Thursday, but to take counsel as to the best manner in which to deal with a similar crisis.

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#### EXCITEMENT WEDNESDAY NIGHT

About half past ten o'clock on the night of Wednesday, a large crowd numbering about 500 citizens and soldiers congregated at the court house, filling the jail yard, the passage in the court house and the street in front. It is proper that we state here that a majority of the crowd were drawn thither through curiosity. Those not interested in the mob, for such it was, were very violent in their actions, and demanded the keys of the Jail in terms that clearly indicated that an excitement was up, which, under the circumstances, could not be satisfied without a taste of human blood. The Sheriff, although somewhat frightened, refused to deliver the keys. Some parties scaled the high fence which protects the entrance to the Jail yard, and by means of billets of wood and hammers forced an entrance, and seized the body of the wounded and dying

bushwhacker, Thomas Rose, and immediately dragged him into the street amid the vociferous cried of "hang him," "shoot him," &c. The miserable man, bleeding from the wounds received in his breast and abdomen but a few hours previous, was forced hurriedly along Fifth Street to Hampshire, from thence to Seventh and up Seventh to Broadway, from thence out to the prairie east of town to a grove of timber, a distance of about a mile. Arriving there, a circle was formed and the wounded bushwhacker placed in the center. Too weak to stand, he laid down on his right side or hips and rested himself on his elbow. This was the first that we saw of him. After gasping for breath, the wounded guerrilla - well aware of the near approach of his end, in a clear and audible voice asked his executioners to find some one to pray for him. - The question was asked by one of the men, a soldier: "Is there any one here that will pray for this man?" A German entered the ring and tendered his services. On his appearance, Rose got upon his knees reverently, and the minister of the Gospel began administering to the spiritual welfare of the poor wretch. The preacher said he endorsed the action of the mob, that the man deserved death, and that it was right that he should die, and prayed that God might be merciful to him. After finishing his prayer, if it could be called such, we gained admission to the ring and seated ourself by the wounded man for the purpose of eliciting such information relative to his past life, as would be interesting to our readers, and also assist in implicating the remaining portion of the thieving company. As we sat by him we had a good opportunity of seeing this man, and we particularly noticed his words, actions, and even the working of the muscles of his face. Knowing that a great many stories would be circulated about the affair, we were determined to give a true one in every respect.

### "In the Ring"

The circle formed by the mob and the idle curious was on an

inclined plane, the fall extending northward, at the base of which the gallows was erected, (i.e.) a rope had been thrown over the limb of a large tree, the branches of which partially covered the crowd, and extended over an area of about 1500 square feet, and was about 60 feet in circumference, estimating from these figures, we thought there were about 300 persons present. The prisoner was in a reclining position upon the ground, and presented a spectacle of pain and abject misery. As the glimmer of four or five lighted candles, mingled with the dusky moonbeams, shed their glaring and sickly light upon the prisoner, we confess that we felt a little strange, and had we not been present would have been gratified. His head was bare, and his hair in wild disorder, inclined naturally to curl, and being full of dust looked anything but pleasant. His beard was probably two inches long, and the clotted blood which oozed from his mouth and nostrils, mingling with the dust, was sickening in the extreme. His feet were in a manner bare, one of them covered with a worn out sock and the other with the crown of an old felt hat, added but little to the novelty and romance of the scene. His shirt, a dirty, much worn flannel, was thrown open, leaving his breast bare, and exhibiting his blood-stained breast, which was very much swollen from the wound received on the morning previous. He appeared to be much fatigued, but exhibited a great degree of nerve and firmness under the circumstances

which our readers will say were very trying. We did not get the information we desired, on account of the frequent interruptions of different persons propounding questions and then

profanely disputing the answers. The following is all we could obtain from him, which was given with much pain and labor, the prisoner stopping frequently to gasp for breath. -

"I live near Troy in Lincoln County, Missouri, have a wife and three children living there now. In 1860 I voted for Stephen A Douglas for President and for John B. Henderson for the Convention. - About this time I got into a personal difficulty with a man by the name of Creed, and through his influence was arrested by the Militia and placed in prison, where I staid a long while. My house was burned by the Militia in August last, and I found I could not stay at home, so I went to Arkansas, and was commissioned by Kirby Smith as a captain in the Confederate Army."

He did not state when he came back or what he came for. The confusion was so great that we could not get him to say. He acknowledged that he commanded the squad that robbed Fowler, and said that they had contemplated marching on Canton on the night of Thursday; but were only going after guns. He designed going south. His commission as captain dated from August last.

He endeavored to exonerate the boy now under arrest, also the man

Riley. He said they knew nothing about him or his company, as he told Riley when he went to his (Riley's) house, that he (Rose) wanted to board a few days. He said that he had come to the conclusion to quit raiding, and had so declared himself to the boys. The names of the remaining members as yet at large are Henry Snead and Jo. Bradburn. Rose frequently spoke of his wife and children, and regretted very much that he could not see them. The crowd were so eager to hang him, that we could gain no more, and being invited to leave the ring, we complied with as much rapidity as possible.

"The Gallows"

After the ring was cleared, a rush was made for the prisoner, and he was dragged to the place of execution - the tree. He did not display the weakness of a coward on such an occasion, but seemed to nerve himself for the worst. There was nothing unusual about his appearance, more than a bright and lustrous eye. He was placed upon some boxes, prepared a s a platform, with his hands pinioned behind him. Before the rope was placed around his neck, he fainted, and fell groaning backwards to the earth. Considerable confusion resulted from this, and cries from the crowd were vociferously sounded, "tie him where he lays," "hurry him up." Rose was again placed upon the stand, growing weaker every minute. Just before the handkerchief was placed around his eyes, he asked to be shot, and again spoke of his wife and children. The noose was adjusted, and the boxes kicked over, and Rose was left dangling in the air. He struggled but little. We thought his neck was broken by the fall. The execution took place five minutes after twelve. Rose was a well-built man, very muscular, about five feet five or six inches in height, and twenty seven years of age. While hanging, some of the participants in the execution caught hold of the body and started to swing it to and fro. Others uttered brutal jests - "Is he fat? He'll make good sausage," and others to obscene to put in print. The winding up was a warning given by someone in the crowd to "Copperheads and rebels," to which cheers were given. This is, without embellishment, as plain and simple as we can make it, of the affair as it happened.

We have served a short time in the United States Army in the rebellion, and have witnessed several rough scenes, but this outdone anything we have ever witnessed. Whilst we know that Rose deserved death, we sincerely deprecate the lawless manner of his execution. We do not believe in mob law, and consider it not only disgraceful but extremely injurious to any community tolerating it. It exhibits to the world abroad a deplorable state of morals, and it is not justifiable in the eyes of God or man. It is bad enough to know that such lawless men as Rose are roaming our country, committing deprecations unparalleled in any civilised country, but, worse by far, to see our citizens outdoing them in lawless action. God knows, and an uncharitable world abroad knows, and will speak in days hereafter of the burning disgrace enacted on the night of the 31st of May, in Adams County, Illinois.

THE QUINCY WHIG AND REPUBLICAN  
Saturday, June 10, 1865

#### ARREST AND LYNCHING OF BUSHWHACKERS IN ADAMS COUNTY

Last Wednesday evening we gave our readers a brief report of the encounter of a company of citizens of Quincy and Marceline with a gang of guerrillas in the bottom near Lima Lake, believed to be the same gang which sacked Fowler Station a week ago last Monday evening. The result of the affair was that Thomas Rose, Thomas A. Wilson and \_\_\_\_ Riley, as their names are given to us, and a man whose name we don't know, were captured and brought to this city and lodged in jail, the first named severely and probably mortally wounded. The particulars of their capture are as follows: Charles Barascone came into the city on Tuesday evening to procure ammunition for the gang, was suspicioned and arrested. He thereupon made full confession and gave information of the whereabouts of the balance of the gang. About midnight City Marshal Renfrow, assisted by Gen. Prentiss and E.K. Stone, summoned a posse of some twelve citizens, and started with B. for a guide to the place nearly opposite Canton, Missouri, which latter place, according to their own confessions, the guerrillas intended to rob and plunder that night. On reaching Marceline they were reinforced by a number of citizens, and proceeded to the residence of \_\_\_\_ Riley, the supposed retreat of the bushwhackers. There they arrived about 6 o'clock Wednesday morning, and were closing in around the premises, when they were surprised by the guerrillas, seven in number, who came boldly out of the house and commenced firing rapidly upon them. The fire was immediately returned, when the bushwhackers attempted to escape by flight, when three of them, with Riley, were captured as above stated. Before leaving, however Riley's house was set on fire and burned to the ground.

Charles Barascone, who was in command of the gang, is about five feet five inches in height, dark eyes, dark complexion and black hair, is about twenty-two years of age, and hardlooking enough for a "guerrilla," or any other devil in human shape. He confessed to having been a bushwhacker of considerable experience in Missouri, and had come to this State to better his chances for plundering. His name and appearance indicate that he is Italian.

The parties arrested reached the city late Wednesday afternoon and were lodged in jail. The news spread like wildfire over the city, creating immense excitement. About 11 o'clock at night a large number of soldiers from the hospital broke open the jail doors with a sledgehammer and getting



hold of Thomas Rose, took him out to the grove beyond 12th street and hung him to the limb of a tree until he was dead. He confessed to being the leader of the gang which sacked Fowler station, said he was 27 years old, had a wife and three children living in Lincoln County, Missouri, and had a Captain's commission from Kirby Smith. Although we cannot approve of the violent and uncertain method of procedure, there is no doubt that Rose richly deserved his fate.

Yesterday forenoon the excitement again was of an alarming character, and likely to result in the execution of the other prisoners. A large number of soldiers surrounded the jail with the intention of forcibly removing them, but after much effort they were dissuaded from their purpose by Gen. Prentiss, Lieut. Cooper and others, who assured the crowd that justice should be mated out to the culprits. Afterwards the prisoners were turned over to Provost Marshal Fiske for sage keeping.

Last evening a company of the 146th Illinois from Springfield arrived in the city to assist in sustaining the civil authorities.

We learn this morning that Cap. Loveday, of the 146th, has arrested several of the soldiers engaged in the proceedings.

Wednesday night marshal Renfrow started out with a party to arrest the three remaining bushwhackers. They were found at 3 o'clock yesterday morning about two miles east of Woodville, at the residence of the brother-in-law of Zach Williams, one of the gang. Williams was shot and killed at once, and his body brought to the city yesterday and buried this morning. The others fled, pursued by a party of citizens numbering at least a hundred, who will doubtless secure them before long. It is believed the escaped bushwhackers were badly wounded judging from traces of blood by which they were tracked some distance.

These are all the particulars we have been able to gather concerning the invasion of Adams county by bushwhackers and the subsequent fate of their leaders. We hope to report some interesting developments tomorrow.

We think there is, or soon will be, a general feeling of satisfaction or acquiescence in the abandonment of the design to lynch the prisoners yesterday. These men are now in military custody, where they are safe from rescue, and are sure of punishment, and may be useful in the discovery of other outlaws. We presume, however, no more prisoners will be brought in for either the civil or military to take care of or excite the community to an illegal punishment of their crimes. The fate of Williams will probably be the treatment of future bushwhackers in this vicinity. -Daily June 2.

Updated 11/27/07

A photo of Tom Rose is in the Genoskey Photograph Collection at Quincy University.