

# Hey! There's a Baby in that Blanket

There has been a lot said about the cowardly attacks on innocent Missouri civilians during the Civil War by roving bands of Jayhawkers and Redlegs. Their atrocities ranged from simple beatings of male and even female Southern sympathizers to outright genocide. The pregnant Zerelda Samuels, mother of Frank and Jesse James, was stripped to the waist after being tied to a tree and whipped for refusing to tell the whereabouts of her two sons. Her beating resulted in a miscarriage.

Initially the Kansans were simply pilferers of the Missouri countryside. During one raid through the Blue Township just south of Independence Jayhawkers rode up to the Michael Casey farm. After generously feeding the soldiers from his own table they arose and started carrying off everything of value. Casey's newborn baby was lying in the bed wrapped in a blanket. One of the Jayhawkers grabbed the blanket, baby and all, and started off with it. Mr. Casey shouted after him, "Hey, hold on there, there's a baby in that blanket!" The Jayhawker thereupon unceremoniously dumped the baby out on the bed and made off with the blanket.

The leaders of these gangs of murderers and thieves set an early example for the troops they led. Charles Jennison leader of the dreaded 7th Kansas Jayhawker Regiment normally executed any Southerner he came into contact with. Those of questionable loyalty usually only had their ears cut off. One elderly Missourian who only had one eye had his other eye put out by the Jayhawkers. It was the normal operating procedure for another Kansas Jayhawker, James Montgomery when he as quoted as stating he "would first exterminate every vestige of pro-slaveryism in Kansas, and then invade Missouri for the purpose of kidnapping and freeing slaves, murdering slave owners and destroying property."

A Missouri citizen recalled a raid by Jennison. His gang came upon us stripped us of nearly everything and would have burned us out, but for proving that we were Union and had never done anything against the government. They burned 150 houses, helpless women and young children sick were taken out and left standing in the snow while all they owned on earth save the land was destroyed before their eyes. Later they came upon us while going a few miles from home and put me and my two children off in the mud a good distance from my house. It was well known that the plunder stolen from Missouri by Jennison was sold at his residence near Squiresville, Kansas.

One of Quantrill's guerrillas Harrison Trow recalled, "The first Federal officers operating in Kansas; that is to say, those who belonged to the State, were land pirates or pilferers. Houses gave up their furniture; women, their jewels; children, their wearing apparel; store-rooms, their contents; the land, their crops, and the banks, their deposits. To robbery was added murder; to murder, arson, and to arson, depopulation. One Missouri resident stated that the Jayhawkers took everything but the post holes and the wells.

A description of James Lane's army was described in the newspapers of the day. "Lane's army camped on the outskirts of Kansas City and began a wild orgy of plunder and rape. Despite the success of their earlier raids, his regiment lacked uniforms, shoes, blankets, and weapons. They were also as untrained and undisciplined as they had ever been." A camp visitor described the jayhawkers as a "ragged, half-armed, diseased, mutinous rabble, taking votes whether any troublesome or distasteful order should be obeyed or defied."

Given carte blanche to operate at will against the civilian community orders soon came for genocide

from the highest echelons of the Federal command. To the Jayhawkers depravity was added a brutality unknown in modern warfare. Jayhawkers rounded up the female relatives of Quantrill's men and kept them housed in a building in downtown Kansas City. Removing the supporting pillars in the basement of the building the structure soon collapsed killing five young Southern girls. Two of the murdered girls were sisters of guerrilla Riley Crawford. The Jayhawkers had already shot their father down in cold blood in front of his wife and children, then burned down his house in the middle of one of the harshest winters on record.

Besides murdering young women in the most horrible manner possible Northern soldiers also directed their fiendish desires on raping the female relatives of Quantrill's men. Captain Charles A. Longacre's mother and sister were both arrested and imprisoned but not before the Jayhawkers raped their slaves in their presence. Longacre also claimed that the soldiers raped his sister. Lieutenant Cole Younger's sister, Sally, was the sexual victim of a Yankee officer. Guerrillas John and Joseph Halls' sisters had been raped by Jayhawkers and their home burned down. Seventeen year-old Buck Fields and his two brothers, had seen their father murdered by Yankees in 1861. They joined Quantrill after discovering that two of their cousins had been raped by Jayhawkers. The Battle of Danville, Missouri was a direct result of retaliation on the Yankees who had raped the three sisters of brothers, Dick, James and Isaac Berry who rode with Quantrill.

With the passing of time, Federal atrocities increased in scale. Wounded guerrillas could expect to be tortured and their bodies mutilated in the most horribly manner. Yankees scalped Abraham Haller, James Bledsoe and Thomas Hamilton. Following the Lawrence raid Jayhawkers tracked down three of Quantrill's wounded men and scalped them. On September 12, 1864 Union Maj. Austin King killed five of Captain William T. Anderson's men. One was seventeen-year-old Al Carter and another was seventeen-year-old Buck Collins. After killing Carter, the Federals shot out his eyes then scalped him. Carter had long black curly hair, and the Federals believed they had killed Bill Anderson. The atrocity only showed the deep hatred of the Union troops toward the guerrillas and the brutal deeds of which they were capable. At the end of December, after learning of the atrocities committed by the Seventh Kansas Jayhawker Regiment, General Henry W. Halleck wired the following telegram to Gen. George B. McClellan, commander of all Federal forces: The conduct of the forces under Lane and Jennison has done more for the enemy in this State than could have been accomplished by 20,000 of his own army. I receive almost daily complaints of outrages committed by these men in the name of the United States, and the evidence is so conclusive as to leave no doubt of their correctness.

Union atrocities continued until they took a ghastly toll on the civilian population. Citizen Jacob Hall reported, "The whole three counties of Jackson, Bates and Cass are depopulated and a mass of smoldering ruins." Jackson County at the start of the war had a population of 14,000. 10,000 were either murdered or driven from their homes. A black swathe had been mowed through Lafayette County to the east. Cass County to the south was well nigh ruined. Where 10,000 people had once lived only 600 people remained and south of Cass County, Bates County brought no sight of a single habitation. South of Bates County, Vernon County was described as a desert. Is it any wonder that during the war over 1,500 Missouri families living along the border fled to Texas and other Southern states for relief.

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