

Week

CRAZY MAN SAID THAT HE WANTS TO KILL ONE MORE SHERIFF

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His name was J. P. Wright but his last name seemed to be misnomer for he seemed to be considerably off. Wright was the individual who escaped from the insane asylum at Columbia and endeavored to burn the jail on last Thursday morning.

According to Wright himself he is a bad actor. He told Sheriff Dabney when imprisoned that he had killed nine sheriffs and that he intended to escape again from the Columbia asylum and kill one more sheriff to make it an even ten. After the fire in the local jail he said "I generally burn down every jail they put me in."

Wright was picked up by Sheriff Dabney at Pleasant Hill after a call had been received from E. R. Beckham. Wright was carrying a long stick at the time and it was with difficulty that the sheriff induced him to leave the stick behind. Wright said that the stick came in handy and that he always carried one.

When Sheriff Dabney drove up to the jail with the man he recognized the building immediately and cursed the sheriff madly. After being locked up he tried to break down the door with a heavy bench. He was then locked in a cell where he found a couple of matches on the floor and set fire to his mattress.

The smoke in his cell was stifling from the smoking mattress and Wright placed a blanket tightly

around his head to prevent him from inhaling the smoke. Prisoners in the jail succeeded in getting the crazy man out of the cell as the lock was not clamped on the latch. Had the lock been clasped the insane man would probably have burned to death or at least have been seriously injured by fire. As it was he would probably have been overcome by smoke if he had not placed the blanket around his head.

Wright gave as his excuse for setting the mattress on fire that Deputy Sheriff Ferguson had promised to bring him tobacco and had not done so. "I'll teach them to bring me tobacco when I ask for it" he said.

After the fire Wright was tied to a tree on the premises of the jail. He seemed to think that such treatment was not deserved and he complained strenuously saying that it was against the law to be tied to a tree.

When officers arrived from Columbia to take him back to the state asylum he was still tied to the tree. "Ain't I in a hell of a fix" said the crazy man to the officers.

Wright appeared to be a man of about fifty years of age. At times he seemed to be perfectly normal and talked very reasonably.

He attracted much attention while tied to the tree in the lot adjoining the jail.

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