

Douglas County Law Library E-Mail Newsletter



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Meeting and Event Announcements

The Defense Bar meets the second Friday of the month. This month the meeting will be on the 14th.

Local Opinions Database

A project to create a database of memorandum decisions authored by local district court judges has been in process for some time. The project has reached the point where Library users can begin taking advantage of it. The majority of opinions

written since the fall of 2004 are searchable on Workstation 2 in the Library.

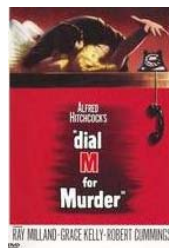
The database is currently searchable for names, dates, and any words that actually appear in the opinions. Terms of art and cause of action keyword are being added to individual opinions to make searching by them available as well.



The database is accessed and searched utilizing the Copernic desktop search utility, which is installed on the workstation. To open the search program, click on the Copernic icon on the desktop Workstation 2 in the Library.

User feedback is critical to configuring the database to best serve Library users. Please come in and try it out, and let us know that we can do to make it more useful.

Reels of Justice Film Series



The Law Library's "Reels of Justice Film Series" continues at 2:00 PM, Sunday, May 23rd with the screening of [*Dial M for Murder*](#). The film stars Ray Milland, Grace Kelly, and Robert Cum-

mings, and was directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

In the film, a former tennis pro (Milland) plots to have his wife (Kelly) murdered so he can collect on her life insurance. He blackmails an old college acquaintance into committing the murder, but when things go wrong and she survives, he frames her for murder. He knows she will be hanged if convicted, and that he will still be able to collect on her insurance. Her former lover (Cummings) tries desperately to save her.

The program will include an appearance by a local attorney who will give commentary on the film and on how the film portrays the justice system.

The screening will be in the Lawrence Public Library Auditorium. All screenings in the film series are free and open to the public.

The next film in the "Reels of Justice Film Series" will be [Legally Blonde](#), scheduled for screening in August 2010.

Current Art Gallery Exhibition

The May exhibits in the Douglas County Law Library Art Gallery and the Division IV Art Gallery are art glass by Daniel Kettle.

The exhibits will run through the end of May. All pieces are for sale and may be purchased directly from the artist. Contact information for Mr. Kettle is available in the Library.

The June 2010 Law Library and Division IV exhibitions are open and available for scheduling. More information on the exhibits will be in the June E-Mail Newsletter.

For more information on past, current, and future Art Gallery exhibitions, or for more

information on the Art Gallery, please consult the Art Gallery page on the Law Library's website.

If you would like to exhibit your art in our gallery, or know of local artists who would like to show their original art here, contact the Law Library at 838-2477 or by e-mail at info@douglascolawlibrary.org.

New Acquisitions

Newly acquired material added to the Law Library's holdings:

AALL Spectrum, v.14:6 (Apr. 2010).

Advance sheets of the Kansas Supreme Court and the Kansas Court of Appeals, v.289:4/v.42:4 (Jan. 2010).

Child Law Practice: Helping Lawyers Help Kids, v. 29:2 (Apr. 2010).

Juvenile Justice Update, v. 16:2 (Apr./May 2010).

Kansas Administrative Regulations, 2009 ed.: v. 1-v. 5, and Index.

Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Criminal, 3d, 2009 Supplement.

Search and Seizure Bulletin, v. 47:4 (Apr. 2010).

Did You Know?

Every month, a bit of Law Library trivia is posted in the Law Library and on the Law Library's website. The previous month's "Did You Know" tidbit is then published here in the Newsletter. The hope is for this to improve communication between the Law Library and its users.

April's entry was:

- The Law Library will mark its seventh anniversary on May 1.

This Month In Legal History

May 18, 1856 - John Jones shot in the back at Blanton's Bridge.

John Jones was born and raised in Schuyler County, Illinois, and came to Douglas County, Kansas Territory, in September of 1855 in a party of men from that state. He was a supporter of Kansas being admitted to the Union as a state that did not allow slavery, eventually joining the Wakarusa Guards to protect the Free-State cause in the Territory. Jones was described as "a young man whose character was above reproach. Morally and physically he was excelled by few, always prompt to respond to all calls. A dangerous foe as well as a staunch friend." Being of legal age, 19 or 20 years old, he was able to stake a claim in Douglas County about a mile and a half southeast of a toll bridge over the Wakarusa River known as Blanton's Bridge. The bridge, located about four miles south of Lawrence, had been built in early 1855 by Napoleon Bonaparte Blanton, known to some as "Bony" Blanton. Blanton had come to the area in October 1854 and settled where the old Fremont Trail crossed the Wakarusa. He was from Missouri, but unlike most others who had come to the Territory from that state, he was not proslavery, and did not support Kansas be admitted to the Union as a state that allowed slavery. In addition to the bridge, Blanton built a comfortable hewed-log house with stone chimneys that operated as a country hotel and another building that housed a grocery store. Being the only one over the river, Blanton's Bridge was widely known and heavily used. By late December 1855, tension between Free-State and proslavery partisans had cooled off somewhat for the winter, so John Jones was able to re-

turn to Illinois in January of 1856 for his widowed mother and his sister. They made the 620-mile trip back to Kansas in mid-winter. When the weather warmed up that spring, the troubles between Free-State and proslavery partisans began warming up too. In mid-May, United States Marshall Israel B. Donaldson was assembling a force of proslavery supporters to assist him in serving bills of indictment on several Free-State leaders who were in Lawrence. He had previously tried to serve them and had met resistance in the town, which was the headquarters of the Free-State movement in Kansas. On Sunday, May 18¹, Jones went to Blanton's grocery to purchase a sack of meal. While he was there, a party of men under Donaldson's command arrived on the scene. Blanton saw the men coming and, fearing that they were there to capture or kill him, ran off and hid in the brush a short distance away, leaving Jones and another young man named Blair to face the intruders. Jones slung the sack of meal on the back of his horse and was preparing to leave when one of the proslavery men ordered him to stop. The man said they were going to search the two young men for "incendiary papers." Jones stopped and asked by what authority he was detained. The man replied, "My captain is my authority." Jones drew and cocked his revolver, saying that he did not have any papers of that kind and would resist being searched. By this time several other proslavery men had come up and surrounded Jones, who stood holding his cocked revolver down at his side. The proslavery men told him that Blanton was the man they wanted, so if he would give his revolver to Blair as a pledge of good faith, they would give their word and honor that he could go in peace. Jones said he would accept the terms, handed the revolver to Blair, and mounted his horse. He had just begun to ride off when one of the proslavery men shouted two or three times, "Damn him, Kill him!" Jones turned and supposedly

said, "Shoot, I am your target!" No one did, so he turned his back on them and started off again. Jones had not gone thirty feet when someone called out to "shoot the damned Abolitionist." A shot rang out, followed closely by a second one. The first one missed, but the second one hit Jones in the back. He fell from his horse but was able to get up and lean against a tree. He told the men that they were a cowardly set of dogs to shoot a man in the back. Two women came out of Blanton's house and they and Blain were able to carry Jones into the building. Some of the men came in to see him, the captain of the group supposedly saying that he did not give orders to kill men, but only to take away their arms. Jones died there that night. When word of the murder reached Lawrence, two friends of Jones rode out to find him. They ran into two of the proslavery men encamped at Franklin, Kansas, which was located a few miles southeast of Lawrence. The proslavery men first insulted the two men from Lawrence, and then fired on them, killing one named Stewart. Stewart's body was brought back to Lawrence. In response to the killings, a group of men began forming to attack the camp at Franklin, but was prevented from doing so by Free-State authorities. Just two days later, on May 21, the large force of proslavery men that United States Marshall Donaldson had assembled, presumably including the men who had killed Jones and Stewart, attacked, sacked, and burned Lawrence under the command of the proslavery sheriff of Douglas County, Samuel Jones². The identity and fate of the man who killed Jones is unknown. No one was ever indicted or tried for the crime. When he died, John Jones left behind his grief-stricken mother and sister, and was buried in an unmarked grave at the foot of Blue Mound, southeast of Lawrence.

¹An article in the May 16, 1857, issue of the *Herald of Freedom* gives the date of the shooting as May 4,

1856. The article indicates that the account had not been published when it was written, but had been discovered in the newspaper's safe in the autumn before publication. A letter from W. B. Kennedy to F. G. Adams, dated October 27, 1886, gives the date of the shooting as May 18. In his letter, Mr. Kennedy writes that he lived on a claim adjoining Blanton's, heard the shooting, and was on the scene within a few minutes. His is the only known account written by someone who was there. The majority of other sources give the date of the shooting as May 19. Having three separate dates reported for the shooting is problematic. The sources of those separate dates needs to be examined to determine the one most likely to be correct. Kennedy's letter was written thirty years after the event, and it could be argued that failing memory might have caused him to be mistaken about the date, but the fact that he was on the scene and witnessed the events gives credence to his date being accurate. Assuming it is, the reasons for the other dates being in circulation need to be examined. If the shooting happen on the 18th, why did the *Herald of Freedom* article have the date as the 4th? Depending on when the account was written, it may have been in the newspaper's safe during the fire that destroyed the newspaper office when Lawrence was sacked on May 21, 1856. Perhaps heat from the fire somehow rendered illegible the date recorded in the material found in the safe. The source of the original account could have been mistaken about the date. There is always the possibility that the account was simply misread when the newspaper article was written, or perhaps the typesetter made a mistake when the paper was composed. There are strong indications that Stewart was killed on the 19th. If Jones were killed on the 4th, as the *Herald of Freedom* article reports, two weeks would have elapsed between Jones' shooting and Stewart and his companion riding out of Lawrence and having their own fatal encounter with the proslavery men from Franklin on the 19th. Stewart's ride was supposedly in response to Jones' shooting. Such a long time between cause and effect is not likely, which casts doubt on the 4th being the correct date. Why do other sources record the date of Jones' shooting as being on the 19th, which contradicts Kennedy's account? A possible solution is that if Jones were shot on the 18th, as Kennedy wrote, but did not die until after midnight on the 19th, the date of his death and not the date of his shooting would be the one widely reported and remembered by the majority of people. Taking all this into consideration, the most likely date of Jones' shooting is the one recorded by Kennedy, May 18, 1856.

²No relation to John Jones.

From: Letter, W. B. Kennedy to F. G. Adams, October 27, 1886 - Kansas State Historical Society Manuscript Collection; A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans, written and compiled by William E. Connelley, Chicago : Lewis, 1918, Chapter 28, [p. 2](#), and Chapter 29, [p. 4](#); A History of Missouri: 1820 To 1860 By William Earl Parrish, Perry McCandless; Herald of Freedom, May 16, 1857, vol. 2, no. 38, p. 1; and, How Bloody Was Bleeding Kansas? [p. 126](#); and, John Brown, 1800-1859: a biography fifty years after, by Oswald Garrison Villard, p.141.

Each month, an event from "This Month In Legal History," the history of law and jurisprudence of Douglas County that occurred during that month, is included in the Newsletter. The current entry is also posted for the month on the Law Library's website. Entries from past months are archived on the website. Submissions from readers are welcome and encouraged.

Law Library Volunteer Opportunities

The Law Library Volunteer Program provides a capable and dependable volunteer work force to assist with the day-to-day operations of the Law Library and with its special projects. This work force supplements the paid Library staff and allows the Library to provide the best possible service to attorneys, local judges, and the public.

The Volunteer Program is instrumental in linking a valuable community resource - the citizens - with a valuable community institution - the Douglas County Law Library - for the benefit, growth, and enrichment of both.

If you or someone you know might be interested in volunteering for one of them, or if you would like more information on our program and/or the positions we have open, please contact the Library or visit the "Volunteers" page on the Law Library's website.

Feedback

This Newsletter is intended to be useful to its readers. As in any enterprise, feedback on how the Newsletter is fulfilling this goal

is crucial to our achieving it. If our articles are helpful, let us know. If they are not, let us know. If you have suggestions on how to improve the Newsletter, please let us know. Thank you.

Submitting Articles for Newsletter

The Editor encourages readers to submit articles for publication and/or make suggestions on material to be included in future issues of the Newsletter.

To Subscribe

Contact the Law Library by mail, e-mail, or telephone and request a free subscription to the Newsletter. It will be sent to you as a PDF attachment to an e-mail. The Library's mailing address is: Douglas County Law Library, Judicial and Law Enforcement Center, 111 East 11th Street, Lawrence, Kansas, 66044. The Library's e-mail address is: info@douglascolawlibrary.org. The Law Library's telephone number is: 785-838-2477.

Classified Ads

Free classified ads may be placed in the Newsletter by contacting the Law Library. The Editor reserves the right to refuse anything deemed inappropriate and to add restrictions as the need arises.

No Ads this Month.

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Editor: Kerry Altenbernd
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The Douglas County Law Library,
Judicial and Law Enforcement Center,
111 East 11th Street,
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
Phone: 785-838-2477
Fax: 785-838-2455
E-mail: info@douglascolawlibrary.org
Website: <http://www.douglascolawlibrary.org>