

cuting attorney, W. W. Ramsay, were indefatigable in their exertions to discover a clew to the mystery.

In the meantime, strange rumors began to reach the public ear from the Talbott mansion. The family claimed that the house had been attacked by armed men, an entrance had been forced through the door, a battle had been fought, revolvers and shotguns had been emptied at short range; but a bullet-hole through Albert's coat, and divers bullet-holes in the ceiling and walls, all passing outward, were the only results that appeared. After this strange affair, shooting was almost of nightly occurrence around the house. The family claimed that some one was thirsting for their blood, and reported so to the sheriff, but when protection was offered it was refused.

At this juncture a man named Jonas V. Brighton, who claimed to be a United States detective, from Kansas, appeared on the scene, and the Talbott boys, whose entire confidence he secured, soon revealed to him the fact that they had killed their father. In the meantime the sheriff, who had obtained evidence enough independent of Brighton to warrant an arrest, with the assistance of William Toel, Hosea Torrence and Nicholas Jones, arrested Mrs. Talbott, the two boys and the hired man, Henry Wyatt. The parties offered no resistance, although from Albert there were taken two revolvers and a bowie knife, and a revolver from Charles. The prisoners were brought to Maryville; and a preliminary examination held October 27-8, 1880, resulted in Albert P. and Charles E. Talbott and Henry Wyatt being bound over to answer a charge of murder in the first degree, while Mrs. Talbott was held in a bond of \$1,000 as being accessory.

The grand jury, at the November term of the Nodaway County Court, found a true indictment against Charles E. and Albert P. Talbott and Henry Wyatt, but failed to indict Mrs. Belle Talbott, and she was thereby discharged.

The trial of this case occupied about ten days, and excited more public interest than any other trial that ever took place in Northwest Missouri, or perhaps in the state, the leading papers of the state and of Chicago, Cincinnati and New York publishing the proceedings almost in full. The defense was ably conducted by Lafayette Dawson, Thomas J. Johnston and M. G. Moran, who did all that could be done for the prisoners. The prosecuting attorney, W. W. Ramsay, was assisted throughout by his partner, John Edwards, and by Scribner R. Beech.

At the beginning of the trial the defense asked that the cause be tried before another judge. The request was granted, and Hon. John C. Howell, Judge of the Twenty-eighth Judicial Circuit, was selected. Judge Howell conducted the trial throughout in the most impartial manner; was sustained in all his rulings, and received from all parties the highest encomiums.