

## United States surveyors massacred by Indians, Lone Tree, Meade County, Kansas

### Section 1, Pages 1 - 30

This manuscript is about the 1874 Lone Tree massacre in Meade County, Kansas, where six government land surveyors were murdered by Cheyenne Indians. A longer account of the massacre has been published in the Kansas Historical Quarterly, volume 1.

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Date: 1874

Callnumber: Historical collections: Meade County

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 219011

Item Identifier: 219011

[www.kansasmemory.org/item/219011](http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/219011)



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## United States surveyors massacred by Indians, Lone Tree, Meade County, Kansas

*Montgomery, Mrs. Frank C.*

### UNITED STATES SURVEYORS

Massacred by Indians

Lone Tree, Meade County

1874

On the east side of Crooked Creek in Meade county, there is a lone gnarled cottonwood tree about nine feet in girth. It stands as a sentinel of nature near the bluffs, beside a small bridge on the State Lake road, on section four, about six miles southwest of Meade. Near this historic landmark an entire party of six government surveyors were massacred by Cheyennes, before dusk on Aug. 24, 1874. The only other landmarks in the near vicinity are the farm house occupied by a tenant about 150 yards south of the tree, and a monument to the oil industry - a derrick - located about one and one half miles due south of the tree. The depression of the common grave of the surveyors was still visible in 1885, about one eighth of a mile southeast of the tree, but no sign was left of their camp site, which was less than one eighth of a mile east of the tree.

( Note 1, Meade Globe, Aug. 9, 30, Sep. 26, 1907; Globe News, Aug. 21, 28, 1924; Frank Fuhr and B. E. Brown statements; Thrasher's mss. map. 1874.

Several attempts have been made to mark the sites connected with the massacre. Any memorial honoring these surveyors should bear the names of the deputy U. S. surveyor and contractor, Oliver Francis Short, aged forty-one years, one month and fifteen days; his son, Daniel Truman Short, aged fourteen years, one month and ten days; James Shaw, aged forty-one; his son J. Allen Shaw, about seventeen; Harry Jones about twenty-two; John H. Keuchler about eighteen, all of Lawrence, Kansas. The young men were university students, working during their vacation.

( Note 2, Adj. Gen. Rept. 1873-4, p. 20, 21, 34. )





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This survey begun in August of 1874 in southwest Kansas, by Captain Short, Captain Abram Cutler and Captain L. A. Thrasher, was finished by the latter in early March, 1875. This marked the completion of surveys of all government lands in Kansas including the boundary line between Kansas and Colorado surveyed in 1873.<sup>3</sup>

(Note 3, Rept.to Sec.Int.from Com'r Gen.Land Off, 1873-4.Vol.1,p.8, 93, 98.  
 " " " " " " " " , 1875, p.4,8,30,39,40,93,98,210-<sup>214</sup>  
 These include names of contractors, cost, mileage, number of plats )

It was found from statements of Captain Short's family that he had been one of the first professional surveyors engaged in the first surveys of county and township lines of northeast Kansas. This began on the Missouri river on the base line between Kansas and Nebraska, thence to the west line of Marshall county, south to the Kaw river, east to Wyandotte, thence along the Missouri to the initial point. These surveys began after the legislature had established the counties, in 1855.

In March of 1855, Captain<sup>2</sup>~~X~~ Short started for Texas, but met friends at St. Louis and came with them to Kansas, under promise of a position as compassman by a government contractor. He was but twenty-two years old then, but he became identified with the free-state party. During the troubles of 1855 and 1856, he had many narrow escapes from rabid pro-slavery men during his surveying. He was engaged on the frontiers of ~~the~~ Kansas for nineteen years, except for the time he was editor and owner of the "Squatter Sovereign" in 1857-8, then a free-state paper. He sold this to John A. Martin of Atchison on Feb. 11, 1858, and he changed the name to "Freedom's Champion", the first edition of which was dated February 20. Captain Short's valedictory appeared then, in which he stated that his ill health induced him to sell. He was a member of the Atchison city council in March, 1858, but moved to Leavenworth in 1860, and to Lawrence in 1865.

(Note 4, Agr. Rept. 1877-8, p. 105; Andreas, p. 375, 378; Biog. Sc. Bk, S, Vol. 9, p. 183, 191-193; Freedom's Champion, Feb. 20, 1858; Squatter Sovereign, Dec. 5, 1857; Meade Globe-News, Aug. 21, 28, 1924. )

It has not been possible to trace all the fields of Captain Short's surveys in the time allotted for this article. In the archives he is first found as a contractor in August, 1864, called "Deputy U. S. Surveyor, and was loaned a tent and six rifles for a party of six men, but his location was not named.<sup>5</sup>

(Note 5, (Jour. Office Work, Surv.Gen. Kan., p. 82, Arch.Dept.)

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In 1869 he was engaged in surveys in Cowley and Sumner counties with Henry C. F. Hackbusch of Leavenworth, and in early 1870 took field work in counties of Wallace and Kearny, and may have continued in the western counties with Mr. Hackbusch who had completed his contracts in June 1874 and was sent to survey in the Indian Territory. (Statement H.C.Short,1931)

The surveyor general of Kansas, C. W. Babcock, had arranged for the survey for more government lands in Kansas than had hitherto been subdivided and sectionized in one year. On July 8, 1874, O. F. Short and A. Cutler signed contract No. 382, and the firm of Steele, Thrasher & Jones (Wm.C ), had contract No. 381, in which Harmon Scott of Iola <sup>was</sup> interested. The final cost of Short and Cutler amounted to \$9,677.92, for 1,055 miles of section lines. The other firm surveyed 920 miles of section lines, at a cost of \$9,117.35. Captain L. A. Thrasher's party finished the contract of Short and Cutler, and finished up all townships in the southwest corner of the state, in Ranges 41 and 42.

(Note 6, Law.Trib.,Nov. 19, 1874; Rept. Int. Dept, & Com'r Gen.Land Office,1875, pp. 210, 212-214, which includes record of other contractors. )

The plats and field notes of these surveys are in the state auditor's vault at Topeka. A hasty examination of these for this period, revealed no mention of a halt in work by reason of the massacre, no mention of it. Strange to say, the plats are signed by Cutler as if completed in 1875, although he returned to Lawrence on Sep. 2, 1874. There was no mention of the massacre in the reports of the general land office commissioner. No connected history of government surveys in Kansas has ever been written. It must be dug out from federal reports, and the records in the auditor's office, a laborious task which would require years to complete thoroughly.

The surveys of Indian lands have been written about <sup>are</sup> and, but the early territorial surveys only briefly covered.

(Note 7, His.Col. Vol. 7, p. 318; Vol. 8, p.1-3,73, 77; Vol. 17, p. 479; " Field Notes ", Vol.1, No. 2, 1905, pam.by H.A.Rowland, McPherson. )



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( 4 )

Three government surveying parties made their general<sup>2</sup> camp near Lone Tree camp in August of 1874, for mutual safety. They were divided into three parties of six men each, with four others detailed for camp duty. Capt. O. F. Short ranked as leader, and preceded the others in marking out the township lines. This meant that he was to be away from camp for six days. Capt. L. A. Thrasher and Capt. Abram Cutler returned each night with their men whose duties were to mark ~~the~~ out the section lines. This was at a time when the Osages were attacking hunters and settlers in southern Kansas from Sumner county westward, and the Cheyennes were out on the war path from the Smoky Hill ~~country~~<sup>in</sup> Wallace county to the ~~the~~ Indian territory. These surveyors had no military protection but seemed to have been well armed. 8  
( Note 8, Adj. Gen. Repts., 1873-4, p. 5-35; and 1875. p. 3-74. ) )

Captain Oliver Francis Short was born in Ohio, July 9, 1833, son of Rev. Daniel Short and Diana (Petefish) Short of Virginia. One of them said to be of Dutch extraction. After a short residence in Ohio, they moved to Illinois where on May 15, 1857 Captain Short married Frances Celia Ann Catlin of Springfield. He served under every surveyor general of Kansas from John Calhoun to C. W. Hancock. This survey was to have been his last, as he expected to make the last payment on his farm and retire for rest of his life.

Mrs. Short accompanied Captain Short in the field during 1863, having been advised to live out doors for her health. She acted as flagman for four months and was paid a man's wages. She road over 1,600 miles on her mustang pony or the surveyors wagon, on the north and western frontiers of Kansas, and from the Nebraska line to the Dakota line. She slept on the ground with a saddle for a pillow, swam the Republican and Platte rivers, and chased buffalo with the men. Many Indians were seen, with

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On p. 5, Ind. P.

Correct five to six, and insert name of  
Leonard S., before daughters name



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whom Captain Short and his wife were friendly. Once while ten Cheyennes visited their camp after a hard battle with Sioux, Mrs. Short was alone in camp with the cook. She gave orders to feed them coffee, bacon and bread, and helped serve them. At another time she gave her own blanket to protect a papoose from cold. She also nursed a squaw for three days and prepared her body for burial. In no way did Captain Short and his wife deserve the revengeful spirit of the Indians against all surveyors.

Five children were born to these pioneers, Harold C., Daniel Truman, Sherman H., O. F. Jr., and Celia Metalla. Sherman died at the age of ten. Daniel T. was best known as Truman, and was born on the farm near Lawrence on July 10, 1860. This was his third season in the field with his father and the first time he had acted as flagman, he and Harold having worked as chainmen during the summer vacations. Truman was three-fourths of a mile in advance of his father when he set his last flag, which remained there for weeks. He was well armed and rode back to the aid of his father, instead of escaping back to the camp. This was proven by his cartridge shells lying thick on the trail. His gun held sixteen cartridges and he was an expert marksman. His horse was stolen by the Indians.

Harold Short was very reluctant to have Truman go out without him on that fatal day, but under his father's orders he stayed in camp to harmonize some camp troubles. Harold was born at Atchison, Sep. 17, 1858. After the killing of his father and younger brother, he returned to the university, but was unable to graduate, having to help support younger members of the family. Since 1885 he has been a resident of Leavenworth where he still conducts the oldest abstract business in the county. He has been a member or chairman of the board of county commissioners since 1904, his present term ending in 1933, then rounding out a service of twenty-nine years.

( Note 9, Biog.Clips, Sh-Sl, Vol. 9, p. 183, 191; Biog. Rec. Leav. Doug. & Fran. Co's, 1899, p. 363-4; Direc. Leav. Co., 1926, p. 247; Hist. Leav. Co., 1921, p. 189, 530; H. C. Short statement 1931; U.S. Biog. Dic, Kan., 1879, biog. by Speer, p. 107-110 )

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James Shaw who was fifty-one years old, had come to Lawrence in 1866, and had a farm near there. His widow lived with her daughter Mrs. Joel S. White after the massacre. Both Captain Short and James Shaw had provided for life insurance policies for their wives just before their last survey. J. Allen Shaw, aged ~~six~~<sup>about</sup> seventeen, had been a newspaper carrier for The Lawrence Tribune, on the south route.

(Note 10, Lawrence Trib. Sep. 3, Nov. 19, 1874; Meade Globe, Aug. 9, 30, & Sep. 26, 1907; Adj. Gen. Rept. 1873-4, p. 20, 21, 34.

Harry C. Jones, one of the surveyors slain, was a nephew of Abram Cutler, with whom he lived when not in the field work. His parents lived in Rochester, N. Y., but he was buried in Lawrence.



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The massacre of Capt. Oliver F. Short and his men on Aug. 24, 1874, was a short and desperate struggle, and none were left to tell the tale. The facts here recorded have been obtained mainly from statements of Mrs. Short, the widow; from Mrs. Mary A. Browne of Plains, the sister of Captain Short; <sup>and</sup> from Harold C. Short, his son who happened to remain in camp on the fatal day. Their accounts are supplemented by official records of the adjutant general and the governor, and statements of surviving surveyors as found in Lawrence papers. The location of the last stone set by Capt. Short, was <sup>from</sup> Meade county records, and government reports supplied the details of contracts and mileage of the surveys.

C. W. Babcock, surveyor general of Kansas, office at Lawrence, let the contracts on July 8, 1874 for survey of a large scope of lands southwest of Dodge, to Captain Short and his partner, Abram Cutler both of long residence in Lawrence. Another contract was let to Captain Luther A. Thrasher and partners, <sup>including</sup> Harmon Scott, both of Iola. The latter was a brother of John W. Scott, and uncle of Charles F. Scott of Iola.

The surveying expedition was formed at Lawrence, where more young men had expected to join, but <sup>backed out</sup> after the Osages killed some settlers and hunters in southern Kansas. Captain Short left Lawrence on July 29th for Wichita where he bought oxen and some equipment, and was joined at Dodge City on Aug. 4th, by his two sons, James Shaw and son, J. H. Keuchler, Harry Jones, Fleming Duncan, Frank Blackridge, William and Richard Douglass, and Captain Abram Cutler. They were joined by Captain Thrasher and others and all left for the field on August 10th. The general camp force consisted of 22 men, 18 for field work, four for camp duty. The location of the field in general being 40 miles south and 20 miles west of Dodge City, camp near Crooked Creek. It had been agreed that if any of this force were attacked by Indians, they should set fire to the grass as a signal to the others. Unfortunately all the grass had ~~all~~ been burned off in the vicinity of the massacre.



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Captain Short's last letter to his wife was written from " Crooked Creek ", on Aug. 16, 1874, with post scripts ~~added~~ on the 22nd and 23d (Sunday). He wrote that water had been scarce, but on Saturday, 16th he had found a marsh and excellent spring water. They had been fighting prairie fires to save the grass for their cattle. His force returned on Saturday, 22nd, from a weeks exterior township work, finding plenty of water, grass, springs, and stones for the markers. He had driven his pump at the camp, and it brought up cool water. He wrote until dark, and sent his letter Sunday morning by hunters returning from Adobe Walls. Truman Short had also written to his mother but it was mislaid somehow, and did not reach her. Mrs. Mary A. Brown stated that this letter was written at the main camp <sup>near</sup> the Lone Tree ~~at~~ the line of section four, She gave <sup>at Odess Grove</sup> the whole story of the massacre at a meeting of old settlers, Aug. 28, 1907, This grove in which the meeting was held, belonged to the Petefish family who were related to Captain Short. One branch of the Adobe Walls road passed east of Crooked Creek, and near the camp.

After the hunters left on Sunday, the surveyors washed their clothes, this humble duty being done by Captain Short for himself and his sons. After dinner he joined in the camp singing of hymns, and he read passages from his testament in the original Greek, which he had carried with him ever since he won his diploma as a student in classics at Wesleyan College in Bloomington, Ill. On Monday morning, the three divisions of the survey separated. Captain Thrasher was to run the section lines north and east, Captain Cutler was to work south-east. Captain Short left after dinner to run the exterior lines of township 33, Range 28 in Meade county and was expected to be away from camp for the whole week. His party had reached the south-west corner of the township, then they went about ~~about~~ a half mile north of a stream known later as Short's Creek. Here were discovered the first blood signs, where it is believed that Captain Short was the first shot



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to be shot. The surviving surveyors surmised that, from the fact that he being a seasoned plainsman, would have directed a defense from the shelter of the wagon, but he was evidently ambushed by Indians from the ravine. The surveyors made a running fight from the wagon, urging the oxen on back to the camp. As each man was killed, his body was laid in the wagon, until almost within sight of the camp, the last man killed was supposed to be James Shaw, Sr., as indicated by tracks made by the irons on his boot heels. The victims and the empty wagon, were found on section 20, <sup>township 33</sup> range 28, near noon of Wednesday, Aug. 26th, by Captain Thrasher's division. His men had finished setting a stone on the corner of section 23. One Crist (Crist?) was the first to see the wagon, and notified Captain Thrasher who assembled other surveyors, including Richard Douglass, S. W. Howe, — Woolens, and two chainmen. They armed themselves, unhitched their oxen and drove them ahead to the empty wagon. They found the bodies of Captain Short and his men laid in a row on the ground beside the wagon. The oxen were dead in their yokes, still hitched to the wagon, with their hind quarters cut off. The camp dog was dead beside its master. <sup>Captain</sup> Short, <sup>Short</sup> Truman and Jones had been scalped, and the heads of two others crushed in. The pockets of all were turned inside out. There were 28 bullet holes in the wagon, and eight bullets were found in the water wagon. It was learned later that the Indians had carried off their own dead and wounded. The bodies of all the men were carefully examined, placed in Short's wagon, and hauled back to the camp, where Harold C. Short witnessed the return of his father and brother.

All the bodies were buried <sup>near sundown,</sup> about 100 yards southeast of the Lone Tree, in one long grave three feet deep, tent cloth being used for their shrouds. For future identification, initials were carved on rough stones placed at the head of each man. Then Captain Thrasher, Douglass and others rode back to trace the line of attack. On the trail they found water kegs, mess kit and other equipment thrown out to make room ~~for~~ in the wagon for the dead.



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The trail led from the wagon back to the point of first attack, three and one half miles, and blank cartridge cases lay thick along the route, which indicated a desperate fight. The next morning, hunters passing the camp reported that they had seen a band of Indians 15 to 20 miles west of the camp, and after they were well out <sup>of</sup> sight, the hunters examined their camp finding Short's compass, chains and papers, and arrows showing that they were Cheyennes. It was learned later that several of the Chayenne braves had been killed in the fight, and that Truman Short's black horse had been found in the camp of Chief Medicine Water in the Indian territory. These Indians had been angered by the military order which sent 300 soldiers from Fort Dodge to drive the Cheyennes back to their reservation. These soldiers had passed by the camp of Captain Short and he asked for a small detail to act as scouts. He was informed that they had no orders to comply with his request, and that there were no Indians about there. However they were in the rear of the troops and took vengeance on the surveyors who were outnumbered four to one at least. They retreated to their camp about 100 miles west of Camp Supply. Their agent, John D. Miles promised his efforts to bring them to justice. A squaw called Mochin admitted to Mrs. Short afterward while she and some of her tribe were imprisoned at Fort Leavenworth, that she had been with the Cheyennes who killed Captain Short's party, and also had taken part in the massacre of the John German family September 1874, on the north fork of the Smoky Hill river. Some of the chiefs who took part in these massacres were sent to a Florida prison afterward.

( Note 11, Adj.Gen.Rept.1873-4,p.20,21,34; Biog.Clips Sh-S1,Vol.9, p.183,191; Bio.Rec.Leav.Doug.&Fran.Co's,p.363; Dir.Leav.Co.p.64,247; Hist.Leav.Co., 1921,p.189,530; Hist.Col.Vol.17,p.255,263,266; U.S.Bio.Dic,187p,p.107-110; Meade Co.Globe,Aug.23,30, Sep.26,1907; Meade Globe-News, June 19,26, Jul.10, Aug. 21,24, 1924. )

However the punishment of the Indians was short lived. Many years later Chief Yellow Horse began to boast of his prowess in the Short massacre to H. C. Perkins of Topeka, then temporarily in the territory. He stopped short when he found that Mr. Perkins knew all about it, fearing that he might inform government officials about him.



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Captain Thrasher who was not only second in command of the surveying party, but was the senior contractor, naturally took charge temporarily, but all the surveyors left the camp on Aug. 27th and assembled at Dodge City to await reinforcement in numbers, equipment and arms. The reorganization was accomplished at Dodge by Captain Thrasher, who took over the contract of Captain Short, at Mrs. Short's request. Captain Cutler resigned, not being willing to continue unless he was given supremacy over Capt. Thrasher. That Mrs. Short acted wisely will be shown by the successful manner in which Captain Thrasher pushed forward the survey to completion under the discouraging trials of the severe winter of 1874 and 1875, which will be related further on in this account.

It will be seen that Mrs. Short kept in touch with all affairs in connection with the massacre. From John D. Miles, agent of the Cheyennes, she learned on Jan. 4, 1875, that the surveyors were killed by Southern Cheyennes, led by Medicine Water, Bear Heart, Little Shield, Chief Killer, and 18 others. The last three named were at this time in close confinement at the Cheyenne agency, awaiting trial by a military commission. The agent believed them to be the same band which killed the German family. Medicine Water's band had surrendered on Dec. 20, 1874.

It was determined by Mrs. Short that all the murdered surveyors should be disinterred and removed to their homes at the same time. In this she had the help of Gen. John Pope of Fort Leavenworth, <sup>and</sup> C. W. Babcock, the surveyor general of Kansas. Accordingly, Richard Douglass, the surveyor, and others left Lawrence with six caskets on Jan. 20, 1875, and arrived at Dodge City on the 26th. There they given a military escort to Lone Tree camp and return. Captain Short and son Truman were buried <sup>on lot No. 119</sup> at Mount Muncie cemetery, at Leavenworth, their former home <sup>on February 6th.</sup> James and Allen Shaw, and H. C. Jones were buried at Oak Hill cemetery in Lawrence. John H. Keuchler's body was sent to his father, Doctor Keuchler of Springfield, Ill. (Note 12, Law. Western Jour., Jan. 28, Feb. 5, 1875.)

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( 12 )

Mrs. Celia Catlin Short, as administratrix of her husband's estate, filed a claim against the government, of \$10,000 for loss of the lives of her husband and son. Captain Thrasher joined her in a claim for loss of property taken from the surveyors. The claims were reported adversely in 1876 and 1878, although they were endorsed by J. D. Miles, Cheyenne agent, by the U. S. Com'r of Indian Affairs, by Enoch Hoag, Cent. Supt. Indian Affairs at Lawrence, and by C. W. Babcock, surveyor general of Kansas. Gov. Thomas <sup>A.</sup> Osborn was very active in pushing her claim also. Some years afterward, she was allowed \$5,000. Sometime before 1899, she was married to D. C. Hawthorne of Leavenworth. They moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, <sup>13</sup> where she died on May 22, 1912. and was buried at Leavenworth.

( Note 13, Archives, Gov. Osborn, Letter Impr. Book, 1875-77. No. 6, pp. 24, 40, 281; Poore's Desc. Cat., Gov. Pubs, 1774-1887, p. 1070; pts, 44th Cong. 1st Sess., Vol. 2, No. 421, 422, 423. of House Reports, and statement of H. C. Short, 1931; Biog. Dir. Leav. Doug. & Fran. Co, p. 363-4)

The record of Mrs. Short's devotion to her husband's work, the completion of the work by Captain Thrasher, and the yellow streak of a few of the surveyors, was all unfolded after perusal of manuscripts and newspapers now in the ~~the~~ custody of the Historical Society. Five years after the massacre, Capt. Abram Cutler wrote to a former associate justice of the supreme court explaining his reason for resigning from the surveying work. He returned to Lawrence on Sep. 2, 1874, accompanied by Frank Blackridge, Fleming (Clem) <sup>of his own division,</sup> Duncan and Harry C. Short whose mother and younger members of the family needed him, as he was their only means of support.



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Abram Cutler, aged forty-four, leader of the third division of the surveyors of Lone Tree camp, was one of the colonists from Massachusetts in May, 1855. He had a creditable record as a freestate militiaman, and Union soldier. He was one of the Lawrence Stubbs", a militia company which defended Lawrence and took part in the battles of Franklin and Hickory Point in Jefferson county. He was imprisoned at Leecompton for so-called treason for the latter affair. In 1857 he was captain of a company of volunteers enrolled to protect the ballot box at Delaware City, Leavenworth county. On the original muster roll he was recorded as aged 25, born in New York, but coming to Kansas from Massachusetts. Out of the 34 members, 16 other men were older than Captain Cutler. He was a member of the ways and means committee of the free-state legislature at Topeka, January 6, 1857, and sergeant-at-arms of the council, special session Dec. 7-17, 1857, also in the regular session of Topeka, Jan. 7, 1858.

In 1859 he went to Colorado, (Kansas Terr.) with other Lawrence men, and was one of the incorporators of a townsite called Parkville, Arapahoe county, chartered by the Kansas legislature of 1860. However the census of Douglas county, 1860, records him as aged 30, born in Massachusetts, a surveyor living at the hotel of Nathen Stone, with D. C. Cutler, aged 17.

Mr. Cutler was one of the claimants for losses in the troubles, 1855-6. In 1861, he was assistant adjutant of Gen. J. H. Lane's. His name appears as a private in Co. F., 3rd Kan. Vols, enlisting on July 24, 1861, also in Co. I, 10th Kan. Vols. of which Wm. C. Jones was Capt. July 24, 1861, but became captain of new Co. B, 10th Regt, one year later. Cutler was discharged from Co. I to accept promotion in the 2nd Iowa Vols, date unknown. He returned to Lawrence, and for strategic reasons was taken in partnership with Captain Short in July, 1874. He gave out some news of the surveyors from Dodge City on August 7th, to Lawrence papers. He returned to Lawrence on Sep. 2nd, bringing samples of Colorado gold, which attracted him later.



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Upon his arrival, he and his man gave out news that Captain Thrasher's party had seen Indians lurking in the vicinity of the Short party.

Five years later Mr. Cutler wrote to a Kansas editor and former judge, offering to write his side of the massacre story, making some charges against Captain Thrasher which cannot be substantiated. They only serve to prove that Captain Thrasher would tolerate no insubordination in time of peril. Neither the proffered story or Mr. Cutler's letter were ever published.

( Note 14, Adj. Gen. Rept. 1861-5, p. 368; Andreas, p. 334, col. 2; Wilder's Annals, p. 204, 293; Auditor's Rept, orig., 1860; p. 51 Blackman, orig. mss. Foster; Census Doug. Co. 1859, ms. Archives; Census Doug. Co., 1860, p. 34, line 26; in Archives; Cutler orig. let., vault, Biog. C., No. 1. date Jan. 30, 1879; His. Soc. Coll., Vol. 1 & 2, p. 225, 227, Vol. 4, p. 582, Vol. 6, p. 296, 401, Vol. 10, p. 169, Vol. 11, p. 224, Vol. 13, p. 236, 240-248; Laws Kan., 1860, p. 203, Library. Lawrence Tribune, Aug. 20, 27, Oct. 29, 1874. Law. Western Home Jour., Sep. 3, 1874. )

However, fuller and true particulars were obtained in November, when Richard and Hugh Douglass arrived in Lawrence, bringing all the field notes of the survey to that date, to be filed doubtless in the office of Carmi W. Babcock, U. S. Surveyor General for Kansas, from 1865 to 1875. They preceded Captain Thrasher's arrival by a few days. He returned for business reasons only, and left in a few days for continuance of the survey.

A true account ~~account~~ was published in an editorial in the Lawrence Tribune of Nov. 19, 1874, taking one and one-half columns of space. For the benefit of the survivor's families the editorial declared that former accounts were "grossly inaccurate" and quoted the real facts <sup>(already mentioned)</sup> as reported by Richard (Dick) Douglass and Frank. Their accounts disproved the report that Captain Thrasher's party had seen the Indians. A life long friend of Captain Thrasher, said that had he known that Indians were near Captain Short's party, he would have gone to their rescue if he had to go alone. On its return to Dodge City, the oxen of the surveyors ran away and Douglass recovered them from 18 to 20 miles away. The <sup>men</sup> finally reached Dodge on Aug 31st. There they waited for reorganization, equipment and arms, ~~left on~~ resumed survey on Oct. 1st, about 15 miles west and 12 miles north of Lone Tree, and after surveying on the Cimarron, reached Dodge City on October 9th.



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Captain Thrasher returned to his camp late in November, to find four men with frosted feet, after the blizzard of Nov. 27th. He pushed out in the field again with additional clothing and fresh supplies. He kept Mrs. Short informed, and she reported progress of the work for the benefit of the surveyor's families, as here quoted. "The energy and bravery ~~which~~ which this contractor has maintained the field since the massacre of his co-partner O. L. Short, is worthy of respect."<sup>15</sup>

( Note 15, Lawrence Tribune, Nov. 19, 1874, p. 2, col.1.  
Law. Western Home Jour., Dec. 3, 1874. )  
Hist.S.Coll. Vol.16, p.721, Babcock term.)

Captain Thrasher had begun the reorganization of the surveying party on Sep. 1, 1874, as will be shown by his ~~letter~~ found in the archives.

" Governor T. A. Osborn,

Topeka, Kas.

Dodge City, Sep.1,1874.

Dear Sir.

Six of my men have been killed by Indians. Am here reorganizing again for the field, which I expect to take in a few days, with a party of 20 men, for the equipment of which I require 10 stand of arms and 2000 rounds of ammunition. I learn that a number of Sharps improved carbines are here at Dodge City and not in use. If you can outfit us, will try to give a good account of ourselves in all encounters which we may have in the future, with the Indians. Am sure that this request will be cheerfully granted by your excellency if in your power.

Very respectfully yours,

L. A. Thrasher,"

The adjutant general wired to the Santa Fe agent at Dodge City to deliver a case of ten guns and 1000 cartridges. He was also furnished a guard of soldiers from Fort Dodge for a short time. The former governor, S. J. Crawford had made an appeal to Governor Osborn to send guns at once to Captain Thrasher, whom he had appointed quartermaster of the 19th Kan.Vol.Cavalry in October, 1868. On Dec. 30, the adjutant general wrote to S. J. Crawford to see that 20 Sharps carbines and unexpended ammunition loaned to Captain Thrasher, be returned at once. In the meantime, Captain Thrasher

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had been compelled to go into camp on Dec. 20, on account of an eight inch snow covered with a hard crust. The grain for the cattle gave out on Jan. 6, 1875 and he started for Dodge City with the stock and three men, leaving 12 men in the camp. He made 10 miles the first day despite the snow, and 20 miles the next day when they encountered a blizzard. They got the stock into some underbrush, and hastily made a dugout for the men. Finally they reached Dodge and sent food back to the men left in the camp. In all this they lost no men or stock, and returned to the field on January 6, 1875. On Feb. 22, 1875, Captain Thrasher wrote to Governor Osborn that he was ready to ship the guns loaned to the surveyors. He reported that two guns had been stolen by the Indians at the time of the massacre of Short's party, and he assumed that the state would not hold him responsible for them. He would also return two unused boxes of cartridges. He signed himself as "Deputy U. S. Surveyor". He returned to his home in Iola in March of 1875.

( Note 16, Archives, Adj. Gen., Acc. No. 18; Gov. Impr. Bk. No. 3, 1874, pp. 206, 212, 213; Gov. Teleg. s, 1874, p. 22-25. Law. Wes. Home Jour., Feb. 4, 1875. Iola Reg. March 6, 1875 )

Thus ended the most disastrous of all surveys in Kansas. Another massacre of Kansas surveyors by Cheyennes, occurred Mar. 19, 1873. Capt. Edgar N. Deming and his three men were killed about three miles south of the Comanche county line and about three townships west of Alva, Okla. One of the men was Daniel Short, evidently no relation to Captain Short. There is a monument at Arkansas City where their bodies were removed, many years after.

( Note 17, Archives, Adj. Gen. acc. No. 19; Gov. acc. No. 894. Report Adj. Gen, printed, 1879-80, p. 44, 45. Rept. Sec. Int., & Land Comr, U.S., 1873-4, p. 374. Biog. Scr. Book, D., Vol. 1, Deming biog. )



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Captain Thrasher, who finished the \$20,000 surveying contract in Meade county, was a man of outstanding ability as a surveyor, soldier and revenue agent, in the service of the state or the government. Until recently, the only biographical data about him, was obtained by research through the adjutant general's records, original census volumes in archives, and U. S. official registers. Census records revealed that in 1860, he was a farmer in Iola township of Allen county, aged 25, born in Virginia, as most of his family were. He was listed as a school teacher in 1865 and 1870, living with Archibald Thrasher, his father. Both Luther and a younger brother, Archibald Elias, were listed as members of the 3rd Kansas which was merged into the 10th Kansas Volunteers. A younger sister, M. V., was born in Ohio. An elder brother, Wm. C. Thrasher, who was listed with a family of his own, began as a miller, and was county treasurer of Allen county from 1871 to 1875. Captain Thrasher's wife was Amanda L., daughter of the pioneer McClure family, and she was a pioneer school teacher of Iola. Their two children were Luther E., born in 1873, and Sara Emily, born 1884. Although sent from coast to coast in line of duty, Captain Thrasher always considered Iola his home. The atlases of Allen county, 1906 and 1921, show that he had owned land in four locations in the Neosho valley in Iola township. In 1921, his name was still written on the plat, on the 160 acres in section 32, two miles west of Iola.<sup>18</sup>

( Note: 18

[Atlas, 1906, p. 9; 1921, p. 15.

Census Allen Co. 1860, pp. 21, 41; 1865, pp. 25, 26; 1870, pp. 35, 36.

1875, p. 5; 1885, p. 20

Allen County History, p. 66 )

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The records of the Adjutant General of Kansas, show that Captain L. A. Thrasher enlisted at Iola, August 28, 1861, in Company C, 3rd Kansas Volunteer Infantry under Col. James Montgomery, became 1st sergeant, November 20, 1861. The 3rd was consolidated with the 10th Kansas Volunteer Infantry, on February 11, 1862, at which time he was transferred to Company C, 10th Infantry. He was transferred to Company I, of the 10th Infantry, on May 22, 1862. On December 14, 1863, he was recruiting for Company E, 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry, and was commissioned captain, March 9, 1864. Col. J. M. Williams was commander of this regiment which became the 79th U. S. Volunteers. Captain Thrasher became quartermaster, probably June 13, 1864, of the 2nd brigade of the 7th army corps, frontier division. He was mustered in at Fort Scott January 13, 1863, and mustered out at Pine Grove, Arkansas, October 1, 1865. Abram Cutler was also a member of Company I, 10th Infantry, with Captain Thrasher. The 1st Kansas Colored Regiment was in many engagements, including Cabin Creek and Poison Springs. Captain Thrasher also served in the severe winter campaign against the Indians, as quartermaster of the 19th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, under Col. S. J. Crawford and Gen. P. H. Sheridan. He was mustered in at Topeka, October 17, 1868 and mustered out at Fort Hays, April 18, 1869.

( Note: 19

Adjutant General Report, 1861-5, pp. 352, 354, 368, 369, 582.

Adjutant General Rolls, 3rd, 4th, 18th, 19th Regiments, pp. 23, 24  
113, 114.

Andreas, pp. 200, 210.

Historical Collections, Vol. 6, pp. 44, 48; Vol. 10, pp. 446, 657, 660, 663.  
Report Lt. Col. J. M. Williams, in Thrasher Memorial pamphlets. )



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The archives department received on August 19, 1931, some manuscript records of Company D, 19th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, from a nephew of Capt. John Q. A. Norton. The papers include original receipts and returns of A. Q. M. Gen., A. L. Thrasher, ranking as lieutenant. His records date from General Orders No. 1, October 26, 1868 at Camp Crawford at Topeka, to April 13, 1869 at camp near Fort Hays, where the regiment was discharged. The papers pertain to everything from ordnance to pants and plug tobacco, the monthly allowance of which was one half to one pound to each man. His reports included losses through theft or negligence of deserters named. This accession will be filed with other records of the regiment, given in 1905.

Through the kindness of Charles Frederick Scott, of Iola, member of congress from 1901 to 1911, also of Mrs. J. W. McClure of Iola, sister-in-law of Mrs. L. A. Thrasher, the Historical Society received recently some personal reminiscences, newspaper clippings, and a memorial pamphlet about Captain Thrasher, written by his widow in 1916. From these authentic sources, the following facts are learned, supplemented by records of the internal revenue department, and items from the Iola Register.

Luther A. Thrasher was born at Lynchburg, Loudoun<sup>?</sup> county, Virginia, on June 26, 1835, removed to Belmont county, Ohio in 1845, to Champaign county, Illinois, in 1856, and to Allen county in 1859. He was married to Amanda McClure of Iola, on November 10, 1870. She was a pioneer school teacher of the county, born at New Carlisle, Ohio, May 11, 1836.

Captain Thrasher taught in the public schools from 1865 to 1867, then he organized an expedition to drive Texas cattle to Abilene, Kansas. Then followed his service in the 19th Kansas Cavalry 1868 and 1869. He

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was principal of Iola schools in the fall of 1869 and in 1870. In his memory, Mrs. Thrasher provided in 1916, for the bronze bust of President Lincoln. This was placed in Jefferson school <sup>in Iola,</sup> on the site of the old school where Capt. Thrasher was principal. He is said to have surveyed for the Santa Fe railroad, and platted some of the towns on that road in 1872 and 1873. Then followed this government survey, and his work as commissioner to select indemnity school lands in 1877-8.

For twenty-two years or more, except during President Cleveland's term, he was engaged as an internal revenue agent for the United States treasury department. He was appointed from Douglas county, before July 1, 1881, assigned at San Francisco, 1882. His son Luther E. Thrasher (Lute), was appointed from St. Louis in 1893, as a clerk in the revenue service, being last employed at San Francisco where he became despondent and committed suicide on August 28, 1901. The family home was at Iola, but various assignments took them from coast to coast, San Francisco, Washington, Wisconsin, Chicago, St. Louis, Lawrence, Philadelphia, Richmond and Lynchburg at the last. Mrs. Thrasher returned to her home in Iola, where McCook Post, G. A. R. held a memorial service for their comrade.

Many stories were related of Capt. Thrasher's daring and successful raids on moonshiners operating illicit stills in the southern mountains. One of these raids was said to be the deadliest in the history of the service. He was a man of iron nerve, though averse to using extreme measures until absolutely necessary. His health was affected by the death of his son and the end came on November 15, 1903, at his birthplace, Lynchburg, Virginia.



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The funeral service was held by the G. A. R., in a crematory chapel in Washington, attended by C. F. Scott, W. A. Calderhead, J. M. Miller and Justin D. Bowersock, congressmen from Kansas, and a delegation from the revenue department. Next day his ashes were inurned at Arlington cemetery, a detail of soldiers from Fort Meyers firing a volley at the grave, and a bugler sounded "Lights Out". The casket was draped with the battle flag of the First Kansas Colored Regiment, a tattered relic loaned by Col. J. M. Williams, a devoted friend of Captain Thrasher. About the same time, the ashes of his son were sent from San Francisco and placed in the same tomb with the father's ashes. The widow and daughter, Sarah Emily, returned to Iola. The daughter married E. W. Rowe of Baltimore, but divorced him and died at Iola on September 29, 1915. With the death of Mrs. Thrasher in 1924, passed out all that family.

Of Captain Thrasher, Charles F. Scott said in the <sup>Iola</sup> Register of November 27, 1903, "I can hardly remember when I did not know him. Among my earliest recollections is the feeling of terror which struck to my childish heart when I heard that he and my father, then engaged in some government work on the plains, had been captured by the Indians. I do not remember the story in much detail now. I only recall the impression that there were two brave men".<sup>20</sup>

( Note: 20.

Amanda McC. Thrasher, pamphlet, "In Memoriam, L. A. Thrasher, 1833-1903"

Iola D. Register, November 16, 17, 18, 27, 1903

United States Official Register, 1881, p. 85; 1893, pp. 119, 224;

1901, pp. 258, 300

Charles F. Scott, letters to Archive Department, March 16, <sup>Aug. 7,</sup> 20, 1931. )

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The work referred to by Mr. Scott was not in connection with the but was a survey of Thrasher in 1867.  
Short survey, ~~SA~~ Recent letters from Charles Scott and brother, W. A., of Lake Creek, Texas, show that their father, John W. Scott, was appointed just after the civil war to survey and mark a trail through to the western part of the state, then unsettled, along which the Texas cattle could be driven, thus preventing the spread of Texas fever among native herds. John W. Scott selected Capt. L. A. Thrasher, his son Winfield W. Scott (deceased), and a Lieutenant \_\_\_\_\_ of the civil war, to assist him. This surveying party was outfitted at the leader's home five miles north of Iola, with provisions, good team and wagon, and two riding horses.

Somewhere beyond Wichita they camped at night, and next morning Captain Thrasher rode up the creek to investigate smoke seen there. Mr. Scott and the lieutenant rode on west leaving Winfield Scott in charge of camp and team. They had ridden but a short distance when they were surrounded by a number of yelling Indians who circled around them, hitting them with ropes. Scott was unarmed and the lieutenant was advised by him not to shoot, then they were driven to the Indian's camp where they held Captain Thrasher. The Indians held them until the next day when they took their supplies and turned them loose, allowing them their horses. As yet, no other record of this survey has been found.

The act under which this cattle road was made, was approved by Governor S. J. Crawford, February 26, 1867. It provided that any person or association might select a certain route within prescribed bounds, whereon cattle might be shipped out of the state, but <sup>not</sup> unloaded within the state. The governor appointed J. W. Scott to survey the road and he selected Captain Thrasher and ~~the~~ other man to assist him,



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as has been told above. Settlers who had native cattle were furious when Texas herds were brought into Kansas, spreading the Texas cattle fever. Charles Scott wrote that one Sunday during church services, word came that a herd from Texas was being driven through the town. The men all left church, stopped the herd and turned them back.<sup>21</sup>

(Note: <sup>21</sup>

Laws of Kansas, 1867, p. 266, Section 12.)

John Walter Scott was a pioneer town builder of Olathe, old Carlyle and Iola. He and his brother Harmon Scott, who in 1874 was a contractor with Captain Thrasher, were the men who took a load of poles and marked the line of a territorial road from Carlyle, Allen county, to Hyatt in Anderson county. Mr. Scott surveyed the townsite of old Florence in Allen county, which became a farm before 1883.

He was born August 29, 1833, and came to Kansas in 1857. He was a member of the territorial legislature 1860 and 1861, and state, 1866 to 1868. Then he was a director and land commissioner of the L. L. & G. (now the Southern Kansas) from 1869 to 1877. He was regent of Kansas University from 1879 to 1883, and then became agent for the Ponca, Pawnee and Otoe tribes in Oklahoma, 1884 and 1885. He was engaged at Kansas City in work of the United States Bureau of Animal Industry from 1891 to 1893, then returned to Oklahoma where he was elected to the legislature of 1899, but died on January 19, shortly after it convened. He had been a director of the Historical Society from 1885 to 1889, succeeded by C. F. Scott, who was president of the society in 1916.<sup>22</sup>

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( Note: 22

(Andreas p. 668

Allen and Woods County History, p. 491.

Historical Collections, Vol. 7, pp. 126, 687, 707.

Annals, pp. 285, 292, 307, 315, 337, 449, 471, 845, 868 )

The first record of Captain Thrasher's surveying, was found in the Archives collection of road maps. He surveyed the road from Garnett to Humboldt by way of Elizabethtown, in 1865-6, assisted by John Cowan. His signature, bold and graceful, is seen on the field notes. He was also road commissioner of another road in 1865, surveyed by Wm. C. Jones who was his partner in the Meade county survey in 1874.

The Historical Society has the original diary of L. A. Thrasher, to be printed later, with entries dated December 30, 1867 to January 2, 1869. This reveals a chapter in his life not generally known, being a record of his organization of a cattle expedition December 30, 1867 from Iola to a cattle camp in Texas, on the Colorado river about 25 miles southeast of Fort Chadbourne. He returned to Abilene before October 1868 with his cattle which he sold for \$1,963.25 on October 22. One of his entries tells of an attack on his camp by Indians on March 30, when they ran off all but three of his camp horses. These were mounted by Thrasher and two herders who gave a whirlwind chase and fired at the Indians, two and one half miles from camp, wounding one. They recovered all but two horses, captured some of the Indian's ponies, saddles, and moccasins. The Indians had tried to make a stand and a bluff, but fled after firing one volley, including a shot at Thrasher. While at Abilene Thrasher was appointed quartermaster of the 19th Kan. Vol. Cavalry.



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It was quite fitting that Captain Thrasher was appointed December 24, 1877, on a state commission to select indemnity school lands in Kansas. Former governor, S. J. Crawford, state claim agent in Washington, had secured an opinion of the United States land commissioner, approved by the interior department, whereby Kansas was entitled to indemnity school lands in lieu of the Indian lands lost to the state and turned over to the railroads. The United States land office requested the governor to select the lands through a commission. The executive council arranged to pay the commissioners, in anticipation of legislative appropriation. For this service, Captain Thrasher was paid \$468 on May 14, 1878.<sup>23</sup>

( Note: 23

(Archives Secretary of State, Thrasher's letters

Historical Collections, Vol 16, p. 702. Vol. 12, p. 203-5. )

Public Documents, Kansas, 1877-8, Gov. St John Mess., p. 19.

Anthony Message, pp. 3, 7, 13, Gov. Anthony Mess., p. 3. 7. 13.

~~Governor's Message, pp. 3, 7, 13, Gov. Anthony Mess., p. 3. 7. 13.~~

~~Historical Collections, Vol. 12, pp. 203-205.~~

The history of the "Indemnity School Land" matters is to be found written briefly in Historical Collections, Vol. 12. Through the efforts of S. J. Crawford, state claim agent for Kansas in Washington, he secured in his first year an opinion of the United States Commissioner of the General Land Office, approved by the Interior Department, whereby Kansas was entitled to indemnity school lands in lieu of Indian lands lost to the state and turned over to the railroads. The United States Land Office requested the governor [Anthony] to have them selected and certified in the several land offices in Kansas. Governor Anthony and the executive council

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arranged to select and pay the commissioners, that sum to be paid  
by legislative appropriation in 1878. The commissioners were  
appointed in December 1877, after the favorable action of the  
Unites States Comptroller <sup>of the</sup> Treasury, on the state claim.



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Mr. Ezra Delos Smith, a Meade county pioneer and member of the Historical Society, furnished explicit information to Geo. W. Martin, former secretary, as to the location of the massacre of the Short party. On Jan. 11, 1911, he wrote of the massacre in 1873 of Edgar N. Deming, Daniel Short and two other U. S. surveyors in the present Oklahoma, which had been confused with the Short massacre of 1874. He then added this authentic record of the surveyor [Thrasher] who finished the work of Short, described <sup>as</sup> follows.

" Certified copies of the official field notes, made by said surveyor now on file in the office of the county surveyor of this, Meade county, have the following notes:

" South between sections 31 and 36 at 17 chains, find tally pin lost by Mr. Short's men when attacked and killed by Indians. At forty chains deposited charred stakes and built mound for (1/4) one fourth section corner.

" This temporary corner was set by Short, the last one he set, and <sup>was</sup> the last work he did, and the attack began there. He was going north, and his camp was at the lone tree pond, about six miles northeast of that point. He made a running fight, and was killed, or at least the wagon got no further away than a little over half way to camp."

" The corner named is on the range line between ranges 28 and 29. The above copy from the field notes was phoned to me by Mr. Moses Black, who has always been county surveyor without reference to who held the office, and who was acquainted with Mr. Short." [ He was county surveyor in 1885 and <sup>(later county treasurer.)</sup>

Again he wrote on Jan. 16, 1911 as follows.

" My former letter ~~letter~~ on the matter of the Short surveying party was not very carefully written..... First, I was using modern language in speaking of the camp as the lone tree. In that time, 1874, there was another and better known landmark in the valley north of where Meade now is, known as THE LONE TREE, while this place until lately as the lone tree pond. It is south of Meade, some five or six miles and <sup>at</sup> then, as now, a large cottonwood tree stood beside a pond in the valley, and near a spring; this land mark was called the lone tree pond, and near it Short established his camp. The quotation which I made in my first letter which was made by the U. S. Surveyor [ Thrasher ] who finished the work after Short's death, is in his field note book, being a record of the line between Ranges twenty-eight and twenty-nine. He [Thrasher] was going south on that line, and notes



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first the finding of the tally pin dropped by Short's men, and later the temporary corner established by Short and which he located permanently, with the marks quoted in my first letter. This corner is the one common to the southeast corner of the northeast quarter of section thirty-six in township thirty-three south of Range twenty-nine, and the South-west corner of the northwest quarter of section thirty-one in township thirty-three south, of Range 28. It is near a water course known as Skunk Aroya, which empties into Crooked Creek on the west side near the pioneer post office of Odee, being when established, the cattle and also road ranch of O. D. Lemert, the post office name being the initials of Mr. Lemert spelled out. This corner, the last one surveyed by Short, is between fifteen and eighteen miles south west of of Meade, as the trail ran, Meade being on sections two and eleven Township Thirty-two, Range Twenty-eight. The camp was about six miles almost due south of Meade, being near the north line of section three in Township thirty-three, Range twenty-eight. Short seemed to be working north on the before mentioned range line when attacked. He had with him an ox team and wagon, and into the wagon the men got, and whipped the team north-east towards camp, firing from such shelter as the wagon bed afforded.

The bodies of Short and his men were picked up and taken to his camp at the lone tree pond, where they were buried on section three in township thirty-three, Range twenty-eight. A Mrs. Brown came with her son to Plains some years ago, and being a sister of Mr. Short, she visited the locality of the tragedy, and then wrote a history of the incident, which was published in the Plains Journal.....If I remember the story right, she made a mistake in the locations or the direction, or the printer made them for her. Mrs. Brown has now removed from the county and I think is living near Joplin Missouri. .... Truly Yours, E. D. Smith. "



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It seems from accounts of Mrs. Brown and E. D. Smith that there were two well known cottonwood trees which were landmarks in Meade county, as was explained<sup>i</sup> as follows, in the Meade Globe. " The Lone Cottonwood spoken of by Mrs. Brown in her address, and the Lone Cottonwood spoken of by Billie Jobling in the News a week or two, <sup>later</sup> appear to have been two separate and distinct trees. Moses Black [county surveyor] says the tree referred to by Mrs. Brown is still standing on the Jim McKinister place, and every one who has gone down the valley knows the Tree. The tree mentioned by Jobling stood on the bank of the draw near the Mulligan brick kiln, and was cut down in the early 1880's. This was known as Lone Tree Draw." <sup>24</sup>

( Note, 24, Meade Globe, Sep. 26, 1907 )

Moses Black, Co.Surv, Agr.Rept. 1885-6, p. 365 )

Mr. E. D. Smith's statements may be as authentic, but he seems to have been mistaken as to Lone Tree, which all other authorities said was in section four. He was a pioneer settler of Meade county, Jan. 6, 1886. He took up a claim three miles southwest of Meade where he lived in a commodious sod house for many years. He was born Nov. 9, 1854, and died Feb. 16, 1926. He was county commissioner in 1887, later deputy county attorney, deputy probate judge, and justice of the peace. Always a farmer, he was also a lawyer, and editor of the Meade News in 1909-10. He was a life member of the Historical Society, for which he wrote the story of his great uncle, Jedediah Strong Smith. The <sup>latter</sup> was the trader and explorer on the Santa Fe road from 1818 to Sep. 24, 1831, when he was killed by Comanches near present Fargo Springs, Seward county. He had camped in 1818 in a grove on Crooked Creek near present Meade, and near a pool on the farm owned in 1926 by Wm. Markle, according to Mr. Smith's story in the Globe News in 1926, shortly before his death. His uncle J. S. Smith was honored by a monument in his memory, erected in Los Angeles by the Native Sons of California.