

Angry mob killed the constable

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The court turned its attention to a John Rogers, who was not mentioned in the Indianapolis *Journal's* list of those arrested, but was reputed to be the leader of the mob.

Odd as George Morgan's case was, Rogers' turned out to be even weirder. It started out conventionally enough. Rogers was charged with first degree murder and pleaded not guilty. In spite of the charge, he was released on \$2,000 bond.

Jurors Asbury Smith, James E. Sims, Issac M. Payton, Wylie Payton, Joseph Dearmin,

William H. Ealey, Simpson S. Skirvin, John Dearmin, Samuel Ealey, Jesse Cooper, Abram Caley, and James Hash had the responsibility of deciding his future. Aquilla W. Rogers was the bailiff in charge of them. The case of the State of Indiana vs. John Rogers was in the hands of a Prosecutor Pierce.

On Nov. 12, 1858, the jury found Rogers guilty of manslaughter, rather than first degree murder, and he was sentenced to six years in prison. However, there was a gap in time before he started serving his term.

Rogers was being escorted to the prison at Jeffersonville by a Deputy Sheriff Reeves, who made the mistake of turning his back on the prisoner for a few seconds after they got off the train in New Albany. Rogers saw his chance to escape and disappeared.

Embarrassed because Rogers had made a fool of him, Reeves said, "I just thought I could trust him," and offered a \$250 reward for his prisoner's re-capture.

The hunt for Rogers was on. His description at that time was:

"Rogers is twenty-eight or twenty-nine years old.

Height 6 feet. Weight one hundred seventy-five.

Dark skin. Heavy black beard. General appearance good and rather prepossessing. When drinking he is liable to be vain and boastful.

When escaped wore black frock coat, black cassimere pants, low shoes, satin vest and black felt hat."

It was certainly a description that could fit a lot of men. But Rogers made the mistake of hiding out with relatives in Tennessee. Re-arrested there and

returned to Indiana, he had served most of his six-year sentence when Governor Morton pardoned him with the provision that he serve in the Union Army during the Civil War. Rogers never returned to Indiana, and it was rumored that after the war he was killed in a brawl over a card game.

Jailing some of the Regulators didn't stamp out their nighttime brand of justice. However, by the 1900's their influence in the county was almost gone if not forgotten by the old men loitering around the courthouse.