

The Daniel-Potter Feud

By John Carver Edwards, Published in Old West magazine, Fall 1980

Arkansas' frontier attracted adventurers from all quarters during the 1880s. As settlements moved westward, farmers, nesters, and cattlemen devoured huge parcels of government land in a greedy race for wealth and influence. In time competition grew fierce as more and more men vied for less and less land, and this rivalry resulted in quarrels, fisticuffs, and finally shootings.

Such confrontations caused many personal injuries and even some killings, but only a small number ever reached the feud stage. The Daniel-Potter feud and its bloody aftermath in the Three-Corners District of Yell, Montgomery and Garland Counties was the worst.

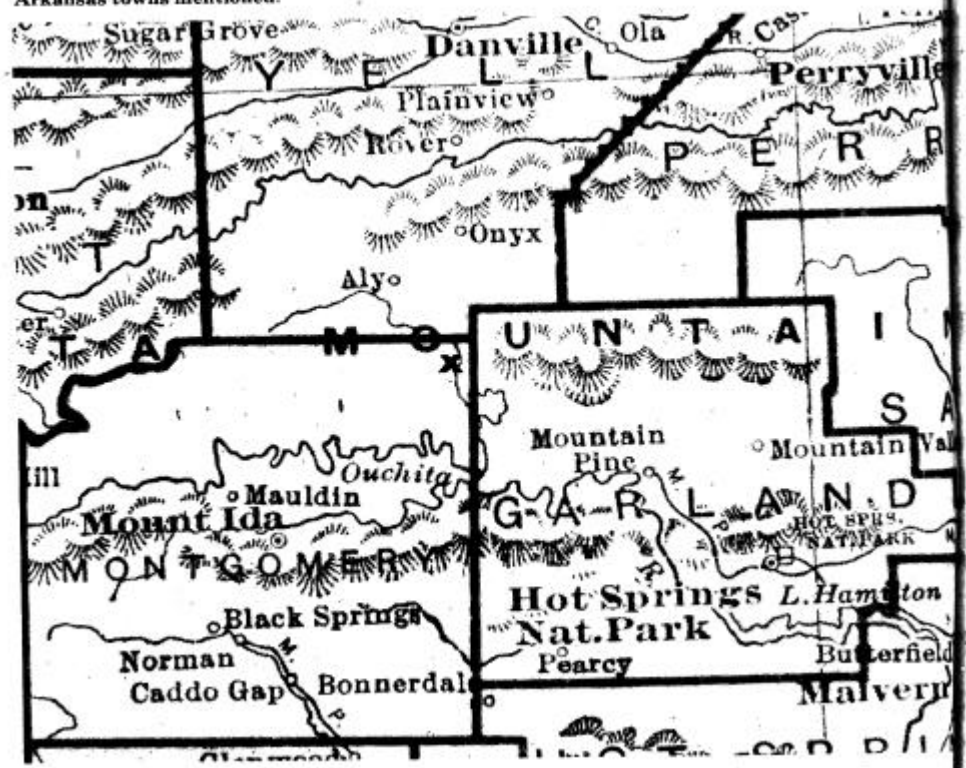
Jack Daniel was no ordinary back-country ridge runner, but rather the scion of a prominent Georgia family. The head of his line, Captain Allen Daniel (1738-1814), migrated in 1785 to what is now Madison County. The Captain had commanded a company of Virginians during the Revolution, and for this action he received nearly

300 acres in Georgia. Jack's great-grandfather, Brigadier General Allen Daniel, Jr. (1772-1836), served fourteen sessions in both houses of the state legislature between 1802-1823. After the War of 1812 in which he served with the state militia Judge Daniel sat on the Inferior Court for sixteen years. The legislature honored Daniel by naming Madison's county seat (Danielsville) after him. Grandfather Russell Jones Daniel (1796-July 3, 1880) oversaw his plantation of 755 acres and a lucrative ferry service across the nearby Broad River. Jack's

grandfather and his great-uncle, James, also represented their constituency in the Georgia General Assembly, Russell as a Democrat and James as a Whig. Only the young man's father, John A. Daniel (February 1, 1820 —April 25, 1888), avoided the public eye and contented himself with agriculture.

In 1869 Jack married Lucinda Potts, and left Madison County to begin a new life in the West. For twelve years the couple resided in Saline County, Arkansas. Diminishing crop yields prompted them to move in 1880 to a section known as the Corners District of Yell, Montgomery, and Garland

Arkansas towns mentioned.



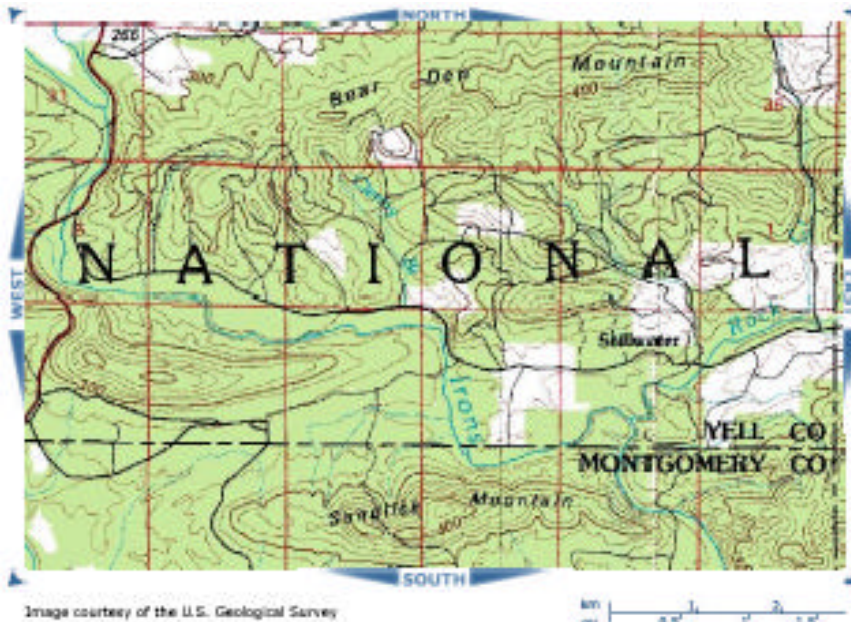


Image courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

Counties. Jack and Lucinda chose a fertile valley just inside Montgomery County, where they erected a rustic home on Iron's Creek. Meanwhile, Jack's brother, John W. (Bud) Daniel, relocated with his industrious family, and soon this clan was earning a modest livelihood.

After several years of peaceful coexistence in his new community, Jack became embroiled in a bitter feud with a neighbor, William Potter. The wealthy and influential Potter and his brothers owned a number of cows, horses, and hogs on sizeable summer and winter pasturage. The Potter animals grazed extensively on this sparsely settled government land, and the family used every device to prevent others from homesteading the public domain.

Over the years the 43-year-old Potter developed a rather unsavory reputation

for intimidation and reprisal in defense of his territorial empire. For example, in 1880 a Mr. Killian, the constable for Sulphur District (Montgomery County) moved into the settlement on the Hot Springs and Bluffton Road. Within days the overbearing Potter began to harass Killian. The one-sided contest might have ended in tragedy had not Potter's "nerves become so affected that he drew in his horns."

Shortly thereafter Jack arrived, and the local baron started on him. At first Potter took a liking to young Daniel. When Jack refused to join in driving others from the district, however, Potter began spreading rumors that the Georgian was a rustler. During this unpleasantness Daniel discovered one of his colts dead and informed Potter. The latter brazenly accused Jack of killing his own animal to precipitate trouble. On May 1, 1882, Daniel wrote his enemy:

'Mr. William Potter: I will write you a few lines, as I don't wish to talk to you on the subject that seems to be your whole

study. I thought I had told you plain enough that I would not go into any such obligation as you want me to . . . The advice you gave me is liable to get a man in trouble, for this is government land. I don't see how you can have the face to ask me to curse and accuse men of stealing that come in this valley to look at land.

You say you and your crowd rule the country, and if I will join hands with you we will have a good thing... You say you have a way of taking men up the creek and leaving them, if they don't do to suit you.

"Mr. Potter, I don't want you to think, because I have begged for peace, that you can scare or bluff me out of here . . . If you don't intend for me and you to get along, please don't try to break peace with me and the balance of the neighbors by talking about me which you have begun to tell all kinds of scandalous falsehoods on me, which I think, if I had the means to back the suit and a mind to, I could sue you for slander and make you as poor a man as I am. You say that men that don't do to suit, you make good turtle bait. If I don't do to suit you by acting honorable, you will have to make turtle bait out of me, I reckon. Don't never name those things to me any more, if you please. Remember that almost any man can be aggravated to do things that he don't want to do. I am willing to join hands to go according to principle, honor, and justice. If this don't suit you, I won't suit you....

THE POTTERS rebuffed their neighbor's blunt peace offering and inaugurated a renewed campaign of harassment. William Potter and company accosted Jack several days later and began cursing the

Georgian while he was engaged in some road repair near his cabin. Daniel endured Potter's jibes as long as he could, and then grabbed for his dinner satchel to leave. The young man's detractors, thinking that he might produce a weapon, beat a hasty retreat.

Potter next persuaded a friend to "nestead" part of Jack's land, which the Daniels had cleared and fenced. Placed in this awkward position, Jack informed the interloper that he must do one of two things — pay for the improvements or clear out. Potter's associate abandoned his spread by late summer of 1882.

That fall Rial Blocker moved into the neighborhood four miles from the Daniel home. Potter leveled his usual charge of larceny against the newcomer. Because the Daniels believed that Blocker was being bullied by Potter, they offered the newcomer their friendship. Regrettably for Jack, Rial had sequestered a number of Potter's hogs, and the rightful owner uncovered eight of his brands in Blocker's own stable. The rest of the contraband Blocker divided among his relatives. Potter "swore to his hogs," but never regained his livestock. Fearful of the Potter family's revenge, Rial scrambled about for allies, and tried to implicate his old friends in the affair.

On the morning of April 18, 1883, Blocker rode to the Daniel farm and told Jack

that Potter had accused them both of stealing his animals, and that on the previous day Potter attempted to bushwhack him. Rial dramatically showed Jack where Potter's bullet passed through his shirt. He entreated the Daniels to go with him and parley with Potter.

Jack recalled that Potter had threatened "to make turtle bait of him," to "take him up the creek and leave him." Naturally the Georgian, remembering these threats and seeing the hole in Blocker's shirt, became uneasy about his own safety. Potter's alleged irrational behavior convinced Jack to accompany Blocker. Bud refused to go, however, until Jack and Rial promised not to "raise any row with their antagonist, but simply "give him a talk." That afternoon Bill Potter was killed.

EVEN TODAY there are conflicting accounts of the homicide — the Daniel/Georgia version and the Potter/Arkansas version. According to Jack's written testimony the trio meekly approached Potter while he was plowing. Infuriated by the sight of his enemies, Potter, according to Daniel, ran for his rifle sixty yards away:

"I'll shoot—" Before he could raise his deadly weapon and send the fiery missile whizzing through some innocent victim's core, and put out his light everlastingly Jack's unerring needle-gun rang out like the scream of despair on a burning ship. Potter, grasping his weapon, attempted to raise it, but at this critical juncture Bud, knowing the time present when decisive measures must be taken, cried mildly but positively, "Don't

raise that gun, Mr. Potter; we came here for no harm, intended no injury, though you cruelly frightened us by shooting at Mr. Blocker . . . , Mr. Potter, seeing all hope of revenge gone. . . walked off some two hundred paces, sat down by the fence, and gave himself to solemn reflections . . . Potter breathed his last with little comfort in his last moments.

The firing brought friends, and soon he was borne to the home of comfort, and the worthy physician summoned; but, alas! all skill must bow before that mandate: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Briny tears flowed freely; friends wept; loneliness pervaded the solemn mansion. Like wildfire the ill-fated tidings spread, and soon the entire band of 'Carry them up the Creek' were assembled to pay the last debt of gratitude to their crest-fallen chieftain, who had led them so often where "Danger frowns and Death's cool smiles seemed to harmonize and buy victory at costless price.'

The Arkansas press stated that Potter and a neighbor (George Noles) discovered their hogs in possession of Blocker and the Daniels. Since most farmers in the district allowed their swine to run free, the owners quietly established claims with no apparent objection. Within days the threesome cornered Potter in his fields near Cedar Glades and ordered him to accompany them to some nearby woods. These visitors were dragging the victim toward a suitable tree, intending to hang him; when Potter's screams aroused his wife. Unnerved by the prospect of a pitched battle with the Potters the men shot the hostage and fled. The dying man informed his hysterical wife of the particulars, and the

woman ran from house to house stirring up the settlers from Iron Creek to the north fork of the Ouachita.

Following the shooting, the Daniels repaired to the mountains accompanied by a frightened Blocker. A posse set out in pursuit; surrounded the two and kept them encircled nearly three days. While in this predicament Blocker insisted upon an immediate surrender to Montgomery or Garland County constabulary. The brothers overruled him, however, and finally made their escape. On the run, the brothers exhibited open contempt for their bungling pursuers especially toward small bands of possemen. Jack recorded for posterity amusing segments of the chase:

‘One morning as they were in an old field about ten acres lo and behold! Up rides the posse and surrounds them, hut not seeing them (we reckon, for they went away as quiet as Mary’s little lamb), they moved gracefully forward as if pure, undefiled devilment never entered their Henry Clay (?) brains, and left Jack, Bud and Rial Blocker to hold the fort. Now, these villains knew full well we were there; hut while they could act so very manly (?) in presence of women and children and frighten little boys here, at the scratch of the game, where honor called them to face lead, and innocent, hound-hunted victims who knew how to

use it, they faltered, grew blind.

At another time we were eating breakfast. They surrounded the house, but we, not going out, having good appetites, and better consciences and like Davy Crocket in the Legislature, seeing nothing to be scared at? They stood round, like boys courting, with hands in pockets, turned round, and, as usual, went home without any game.

THE FUGITIVES, armed with revolvers and 16-shot Winchester rifles, hid in the woods near their homes. Through emissaries they unsuccessfully tried to secure a change of venue from Potter’s home county of Yell to Garland or Montgomery. All three men were most anxious to know into whose hands they would fall upon surrender.

Jack’s apprehensions were well founded. He perhaps remembered an incident several summers earlier when an angry Perryville mob murdered a newspaper editor who supported an unpopular country judge. Even Governor Thomas Churchill’s entreaties failed to prompt Perry and Yell County sheriffs to arrest the known killers, so the chief executive called out the militia. This action soured area peace officers who, afterward, regarded themselves as proper courts of last resort.

Little Rock’s Arkansas Gazette defiantly concluded, “Of course, no one possesses authority to treat with these criminals, who should be given to understand that they must surrender without conditions, or be driven out of the state. Of desiring justice it can be obtained in Yell County. But that is the one article they do not want.” Overly zealous

reporters wrote that the Daniels were running with scores of horse thieves and murderers. A typical interview with a lawman ran as follows:

Q. “Are the Daniels dangerous?”

A. “Yes, sir. They are desperadoes in every sense of the term, and I believe if they have any sort of a show will never be taken alive. They were poor farmers, one of them owning a couple of small patches. They lived in a hollow in the mountains about four miles from anyone else, and have large families.”

Q. “Did you go to their houses?”

A. “Yes, and it is a wretched place. The poor women (Lucinda and Mollie) with their dozens of children told me they would gladly leave there if they were not too poor to pay the expense.

Through this biased press the poverty of the Daniels was somehow equated with criminality. Subsequent reports accused the brothers of the most heinous offenses imaginable and usually concluded that it was “unnecessary to review the past crimes of these outlaws.”

The sheriffs of the three counties, accompanied by large posses in excess of 300 men, constantly roamed the district in pursuit of a \$1,500 reward offered by Governor James H. Berry. These deputized opportunists soon proved more objectionable to the citizenry than the alleged criminal element. Posses repeatedly rode up to cabins, ordered rations cooked for fifteen or twenty men and feed for as many horses. These “officials” left their broken-down mounts and impressed others, many of which they never returned. Angered because they were unable to catch their quarry, they heaped abuse upon the

local populace accusing them of aiding and abetting the Daniels. Governor Berry threatened to indict any man, woman or child who failed to show a cooperative attitude to his lawful emissaries.

The posses also took out their frustrations on the wives of Jack and Bud Daniel. Bud's dog was shot as it stood on the "piazza" of his cabin, "so near the side of its mistress that it fell under her feet to die." Another group killed Jack's hunting dogs with poisoned biscuits thrown into his front yard. They were really meant, according to the elder Daniel, for his children. These same deputies threatened to burn Lucinda Daniel's home down over her and reputedly shouted at the cowering woman, "G-d d--n you, you are no better than Jack or you would leave him."

At both farms the crops were either ordered left in the fields to rot, or purposely destroyed by milling horsemen and ravenous swine. Lucinda's neighbors swore out warrants before a Montgomery County magistrate, declaring that the Daniels were "more sinned against than sinners," but to no effect. Eventually local authorities confiscated Lucinda's residence and banished the Daniel family to a crude outbuilding.

ON JUNE 21 the wanted men emerged from hiding and attended church services near the home of Jack's friend and fellow Georgian,

Dr. John Flood, at Chalybeate Springs. They sat quietly and attentively until the sermon was over, when Jack sent a paper forward which he asked the pastor to read aloud. The contents of the proclamation are still subject to speculation.

Pro-Daniel accounts suggest that the document contained character references sent from Georgia and Saline County and a "caveat" warning all pursuing parties from abusing the Daniels' families. Though an unfriendly press charged these visitors with intimidating the congregation by offering a promise of death to all who pursued them, after the service the boys filed outside, ate dinner with the crowd and "jollied" around with the congregation. Jack reportedly gave one posse member in attendance a severe scolding before an approving audience. The Daniels concluded the afternoon by advising friends not to refuse to go, when called upon to help hunt for them, but to be careful and always stay behind.

In mid-July Yell County authorities applied to Governor Berry for militia assistance. The request was denied, but the sheriff did receive permission to call as many men as he desired for the chase. Sheriff J.L. Davis recruited five deputies and "lay around and watched" those individuals sympathetic to the Daniels. When the sheriff's protracted surveillance of Jack's cronies proved unproductive, he employed a ruse against one of Jack's compatriots, Dr. John Flood.

The peace officer dressed in shabby clothing and hobbled up to the Chalybeate Springs next to

Flood's home. When the doctor came out to greet the stranger, Davis struck up a contrived discussion about the unjust plight of the wanted brothers. Flood boasted that he had fed the Daniels and would do so again. According to Arkansas law, the doctor was thus an accessory after the fact and guilty of murder. A gleeful Davis arrested Flood and dispatched him to the Danville (Yell Co.) jail despite the physician's Montgomery County residency.

On July 15, 1883 the Daniels and Blocker separated, and not until early August was Rial Blocker captured at Chalybeate Springs and sent to Danville. Disgruntled by Rial's exhibitions of cowardice and fearful that he might betray them, Daniel delivered Blocker to the custody of his father. Blocker, suffering from exhaustion and exposure, developed a violent fever and nearly died. Ironically, Charlie Blocker summoned Dr. Flood to attend his son just prior to the medical man's own arrest and incarceration. Young Blocker's weakened condition destroyed any chance of escape and abetted Sheriff Davis' growing arrest-record.

Jack concluded arrangements to surrender to H.J. Randolph, Jr., the sheriff-elect of Garland County. A native of Madison County, Georgia, and a former schoolmate of the Daniels, Randolph assured Jack of a fair trial. Hill Randolph was on his way to meet the Daniels when Sheriff Davis with a large posse, Deputy United States Marshal George E. Bentley, and bloodhounds struck the trail of the Daniels near the farm of their friend, John Coker. Coker was accused of hiding the fugitives and subsequently leading the posse into

an ambush after the sheriff made Coker accompany them in the chase.

When the dogs were within hearing distance of the Daniels, the boys were in the mountains of Perry County near the headwaters of the Fourche River. To confuse the dogs the brothers passed a small knoll about 75 yards from the road, returned upon the same track, then turned square off to the knoll. Atop this small rise Jack discovered a natural fortification in the form of a large pine tree which had fallen during a storm. Quickly the brothers chinked a few rocks under the log and waited.

Only seven of the possemen managed to keep pace with the dogs. The rest were either too slow or were straggling behind according to Jack's instructions. When the bloodhounds came to where the boys backtracked, they became agitated and started to circle. This pause gave the posse men time to tide up opposite to where the Daniels lay concealed. The first contingent included Sheriff Davis, Charles Carter (of Yell County), Shelton Caldwell (Bill Potter's brother-in-law), Charles Hearn and three others. By a twist of fate Deputy Carter was dressed like Detective Bentley, to whom the dogs belonged.

Evidently the Daniels knew Bentley by reputation as a deputy United States Marshal — detective — bounty hunter, and they bore

a particular grudge against this man. The fact that Jack confused Carter for Bentley probably cost the lawman his life. Undeterred by the remote chance of bloodshed, the crowd seemed carried away with the idea of catching the brothers and a share of the reward money.

Jack's inheritance of his grandfather's eagle eye helped win the confrontation with the posse, which ended in the death of two of its members. Noting that "the old men" on the Daniel side were acknowledged marksmen, Jack recalled that all faces turned ashen when the announcement "Daniel will shoot," was sounded. At the first flash of the Daniel Winchesters off came Caldwell — off came Carter. Deputy Caldwell died on the spot. Carter expired nine days later. A shot at Hearn struck the man's rifle — glanced off, and shattered his arm. Those who were not shot off their horses dismounted anyway, and laid flat on the ground.

It was Sunday, 9:00 a.m., July 29, 1883. The wounded cried aloud for water. Agitated by this turn-of-events, Sheriff Davis accidentally discharged his shotgun into the tree he was hiding behind. Finally, the posse stampeded, abandoning their horses and fleeing seven miles. Cautiously, the Daniels got up and walked about fifteen miles home. Deputy Caldwell died on the spot while Carter expired nine days later.

Following the shootout with the Daniels, Coker was arrested and would have been executed on the spot had not his friends in the community interceded. Sheriff Davis transported this Garland

County resident to the Danville calaboose but it was merely a postponement. Soon after Carter's death, on September 9, Flood and Coker were taken out of Danville jail and murdered. The lynching party consisted of fifteen men, mounted and masked.

They hitched their horses in Danville's suburbs, and then marched straight to the jail. When the guards inside refused to admit the mob, its leaders broke in the doors. The deputies lacked keys to the cells, so the vigilantes knocked off the fastenings with axes. Blocker was praying for his life when the men entered the cellblock. They asked him his name and when he answered, they told him to "dry up your blubbering; we don't want you, for the law will break your neck soon enough'. We want the others."

The crowd dragged Coker and the 73-year old Flood from the jail. Coker fought desperately, and begged to be shot. Dr. Flood maintained a sullen silence. The anonymous delegation conducted its prisoners to the iron bridge across the Petit Jean River and dropped them off at the center span crossbeam.

Governor Berry immediately placed a \$200 reward on the head of each lyncher, an action applauded by Arkansas' Weekly Mansion, one of the state's leading black newspapers:

"The law-abiding citizens of the county [Yell] hoped that the lynchers might be caught and punished, believing that a few of the ruffians who constitute the court of Judge Lynch were hanged legally the practice of hanging real or alleged criminals would become obsolete. Yell County has been repeatedly disgraced by acts of mob

violence, and the better class of residents were getting exasperated at such deeds.”

Jack Daniel wrote in his subsequent account of the hanging that the mob returned the next night and released Blocker in exchange for testimony against his old comrades. Daniel obviously learned that Blocker was loose, and assumed that he had tipped Davis as to Jack’s whereabouts. Actually Blocker broke out of Danville prison on September 12, 1883, even as Flood and Coker were being buried. Sheriff Davis recaptured Blocker a month later, only to have him escape again after two weeks behind bars. This time the fugitive reached the mountains ahead of the posse, eluded Davis, and faded into welcome obscurity.

Following the “Battle of the Pine Log” as Jack dubbed the shootout with the posse, the boys returned home briefly before fleeing Arkansas. Prior to leaving his family Jack retrieved several poisoned biscuits from his wife — those left by the posse — and he now distributed them along the trail to kill Bentley’s dogs. Daniel relished this tactic and afterwards recorded:

“On they went, down to the creek out about fifty yards; but for some unknown cause the dogs took deadly sick — in fact, died dead as Hector! Somebody said, ‘Maybe they were snake-

bit.’ Here blood-houndism ceased, and Mr. Bentley stopped...”

DURING the early morning hours of July 30 the Daniels secured a skiff and glided down the Ouchita River to Cedar Glades. Jack reconnoitered the hamlet and learned that its entire male population seemed about to join an ever-growing ‘manhunt. From that point the brothers trudged 100 miles overland to Little Rock, subsisting on game and roadside truck gardens. They encamped near Little Rock, and the next morning Jack and Bud entered the city:

“We bought a boat 25 feet long and five feet wide, very deep in the hull. Then we purchased provisions — lard, ‘meat, sugar, coffee, rice — cooking utensils, and as we would be exposed to miasma, dews, fogs, etc. We secured a large jug of good whiskey, and emptied much quinine into it. Then we bought a large trotline and many hooks, and went down street in old fisherman’s style, thus evading suspicion; for you will remember that the lawmaking manufactory is open at Little Rock and persons would be likely to notice the least move in the wrong direction. So thus equipped for a regular fish, we moved to our craft for which we had shelled down \$15 current money with the merchant, and about 10 o’clock spread sail, hoisted our oilcloth, and moved down the Arkansas....

From the capital the Daniels poled down the remainder of the Arkansas and on August 6 lost all possible pursuers in the mighty Mississippi River. Meanwhile Bentley’s men stalked about Saline County where the detec-

tive deduced the boys might be hiding with friends.

The Daniels criss-crossed the river, stopping briefly in Arkansas City, Greenville and Bayou Sarah, Mississippi, Baton Rouge, Plaquemine, and finally in New Orleans on August 14, 1883.

“We felt proud to come out of desperate hands and fall into men of principle, appreciation and humanity. So we secured good lodging at the St. Charles hotel, for two days, enjoying the gentle breezes, wholesome society, and general excitement of the momentous occasion. We then bent our course up the river to White Hall; there we remained three months, working for good wages; good society and clever people.”

The brothers’ homeward journey brought them to Mobile, Alabama; and Pensacola, Tallahassee, Live Oak, Jacksonville, and Callahan, Florida. Again short of funds, the wayfarers lingered in Callahan several months before proceeding into Georgia. Finally Jack and Bud headed home with brief layovers in Waycross, Thomasville, Albany, Macon, and Union Point. The elder Daniel recalled this final phase of his long sojourn:

“We then steered for Athens, a city of about ten thousand people, several fine schools, good cotton market, rich croppers around, and thence where honor, duty and friends invited us. We rushed right into friends in five or six counties, who received us as life from the dead. Kind homes outstretched arms, but ‘Where is Lucinda?’ ‘Not here! Not here! What’s the matter?’ Our joy was to be full when we met — we had waited long — but alas! demons in human form had either killed my wife or caused her own hands to do the awful deed.”

The Daniel brothers' flight left their wives, Lucinda and Mollie, in a hard and unsettled country. Still, they survived marginally, until Bud's wife moved to Saline County in October. Shortly thereafter Lucinda's mind gave way to grief. Her nephew, W.T. Bennett, had made arrangements to bring her back to Georgia, when news came to Madison County that she had committed' suicide. The Arkansas Gazette attributed the suicide to Lucinda's "straitened circumstances and sheer desperation," and the Atlanta Constitution related in gory detail the final death scene:

"Being unable to fire the gun with the caps which had become damp, the determined victim, with grim resolution, kindled a fire and placed the breech of the weapon in it holding the muzzle against her body till the fire discharged the fatal contents through her vitals."

Lucinda delivered a son only weeks before her death. Her absent husband swore that his wife was murdered by a Potter sympathizer, John Furgerson. Daniel later recorded:

"And when my dear wife lay weltering in gore, the first man who reached the sad scene was Mr. Furgerson. My wife, seeing him said, 'Take the gun and shoot me again!' Suspicion rests upon him; that word 'again' means 'once before' and I will recollect it!"

Distressed by this news,

the Potts and Daniel clans sent young Bennett to Arkansas to settle affairs and to bring home seven orphans. An honors graduate from the University of Georgia and the clerk of the Superior Court at the age of twenty-five, Bennett possessed the necessary credentials to undertake the delicate mission.

Late in 1884 Detective Bentley unwisely dogged the wanted men into Georgia for the reward. Governor Berry had raised the bounty to \$750 each, since the brothers' remarkable getaway had proven an embarrassment to his office. News of Bentley's arrival in Gainesville's railroad terminal spread as "fired stubble," and Jack raced to town to confront his old adversary. When one considers each man's hatred for the other, Daniel's recollection of that encounter would probably seem incredibly moderate to local observers:

"Well, a man to come so far must be respected as he must be on a weighty errand; and liking to see old friends (?), I went, like Caesar into Gaul, on a strain... But, alas! when I sought him he was not. We wonder what was the matter! The people of Gainesville would have treated him well. I will say to a generous public, the reason he hulled out was, a man named Daniel followed him to the gate where he was to stay overnight, and seeing Jack Daniel and Bud had a legion of friends he sustained his course in protecting himself, he just walked that night to train and off!"

Bentley's unsuccessful bid to bring the Daniels to Yell County justice temporarily stymied Arkansas' extradition efforts.

Undoubtedly, many fair-minded leaders of that state — especially the officialdom of Montgomery and Garland Counties — were appalled by the excesses of Sheriff Davis' posse in search of revenge and monetary gain. The Daniel-Potter feud not only set community against community, but caste against caste as well and resulted in instances of personal harassment, the confiscation of property, several senseless killings, two brutal murders, and a tragic suicide. The guilt or innocence of those whose actions precipitated this violence can never be proven, since there were no disinterested witnesses in Potter's field that day.

Little information remains on the whereabouts of the Daniel brothers following their return to Georgia. In April 1885, Jack and Bennett collaborated on a chronicle of the Arkansas tragedy entitled, *The Trials and HairBreadth Escapes of R.J. and Bud Daniel*. This slim work served Jack and Bud as an historical apology, as an appeal to Arkansas to rescind its wanted status against them, and as a final blast directed at Yell County's constabulary. To his friends in the Corners, Jack wrote, "I am in good health, have friends, do good work, and make good wages," obviously as a farm laborer. To his enemies he penned a warning to those who desired to repeat Bentley's fruitless chase:

"If you ever repeat the experiment you will find about five or six counties with marksmen who will lift your cowardly jackets from those who drove the wedge! I am proud of my Winchester. I would not disgrace my wife and children by surrendering to bloodhounds and murders. I expect to meet you in

awful judgment, and if you ever enter the paradise, look right close behind and see your humble servant. I pull off my hat and wave it to you.

Nearly six years after the Potter shooting, on April 6, 1889, Arkansas' manhunt struck pay dirt with informa-

tion about the Daniels' whereabouts in north Georgia. Governor James P. Eagle requested their immediate extradition and dispatched Detective G.W. Rice to Macon to receive the fugitives. On April 8, Governor John B. Gordon issued a warrant for their arrest and return to Arkansas.

Bad news reached the brothers ahead of the law, and this time they were compelled to abandon Georgia. Following another extended odyssey Jack migrated to Lufkin, Texas and Bud settled near Lakeland, Florida — both men finally secure from their constant pursuers and a Danville lynch mob.

A NOTE ABOUT THE GEOGRAPHY: Many of the references suggest that Jack and Bud lived in Montgomery County, however the map suggests otherwise, e.g. in Yell or perhaps even Garland County. Cedar Creek or Cedar Suck is stated as the location and that Cedar Creek flows into Irons Creek. On the current USGS map Cedar Creek flows into Rock Creek which flows into Irons Creek. These differences probably represent modern changes in name usage, but none of it was in Montgomery County unless the county boundaries have changed.

JW (Bud) Daniel selected a place at the intersection of Cedar and Iron Creeks. That would be in Section 11 just north of the county line. Next to him on Irons Creek (and in Yell County) lived Wm. Potter. The clear spot in the west half of Section 11 would seem a likely place. RJ Daniel had his place a little further up Cedar/Rock Creek, perhaps near the location of Stillwater. This, too, could easily border on Potters property. Furthermore it could put Jack's property between the creek and Potter's land, thus cutting off easy access for Potter to water his livestock.

Blockers place was three miles east up Cedar Creek from Jack. That would put him well into Garland County perhaps in or near Section 5. Support for this is that the creek flowing SE from section 5 will wind up in the Blockers Creek part of Lake Oachita. The name is probably not just a coincidence.

