

NORTHERN KENTUCKY VIEWS PRESENTS:

A Deposition by Ham B. Meyers in regard to Night Rider Activity

May 29, 1908

Conducted by
The U. S. Adjutant General's Office

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Cincinnati, Ohio, May 29th, 1908.

STATEMENT OF HAM B. MEYERS.

Ham B. Meyers being first duly sworn, testifies to the following facts:-

- Q. What is your full name please?
- A. Ham B. Meyers.
- Q. How old are you Mr. Meyers?
- A. Twenty-seven.
- Q. Where do you reside?
- A. Over home, at Cedron, Ohio, Clement County.
- Q. Who do you live with at home?
- A. My parents.
- Q. Are you a single man?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Were you born and raised there at Cedron?
- A. Yes, sir, born and raised there.
- Q. Do you know where Boudes Ferry is?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know Paul Kautz?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you know where his ware house is down there at Cedron, Ohio?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. When was the last time you was at Boudes Ferry previous to his fire?
- A. He didn't own the house it was owned by Bram Waterfield.
- Q. When was the last time you was down there before the fire?
- A. Well I went up to Augusta on some business for my brother.
- Q. This fire occurred on the 24th of April.
- A. I know it was in April some time.
- Q. Do you remember the night?
- A. On a Friday night. I was over there on some business for my brother on Friday afternoon.
- Q. Then you went over the river that afternoon who accompanied you?

A. Bill Schinkle went with me. He runs a store in Cedron.

Q. What time in the afternoon did you cross the river?

A. It was just 2 o'clock.

Q. And what time did you return?

A. About four or four thirty.

Q. When you came back that evening did you stop any length of time on the river bank?

A. No, sir.

Q. Whose skiff did you use to go over in?

A. We didn't use any skiff, we used the ferry boat.

Q. And after you came over where did you go?

A. Right straight home.

Q. Did you walk home?

A. No, sir, went home in a buggy.

Q. How far is your home from the river there.

A. About three and a half miles, that is from Boudes Ferry.

Q. When was it you heard of the fire?

A. The next morning about six o'clock.

Q. Who told you?

A. I was down at the store and somebody told me.

Q. Whose store?

A. Schinkle's store.

Q. This same man?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. When you was over in Augusta that afternoon what did you hear concerning that barn?

A. A man told me -

Q. What is his name?

A. Thompson.

Q. That does he do?

A. He is in the shoe business.

Q. Works in a factory there?

A. No, sir, owns it himself. On Main Street.

Q. What did he say?

A. He simply told me - He wanted to know how the Equity was running and I told him, he said, "Well do you see that warehouse over there, do you? I said, "Yes," he said, "When you go across the river you take your farewell look at it." That is what he told me.

Q. Did you take your farewell look at it?

A. I took his word for it.

Q. Did you stop?

A. No, sir, I just glanced at it as I passed.

Q. Don't you remember fixing your shoe or something over by this place?

A. We wiped our feet off there.

Q. Did you notice anybody in or about the warehouse?

A. I seen this Paul Kautz looking out of the window.

Q. Did you see a man by the name of Hines there?

A. I believe I did.

Q. Did you see the colored man?

A. No, sir, I didn't see him.

Q. You know Dick Walton?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well, was that the only conversation you had in reference to the Night Riders coming up to burn him out?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Didn't you tell somebody you knew it was going to burn that day at five o'clock?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Who?

A. Albert Bystaffer.

Q. Where is his place at?

A. At Schinkle's Ridge.

Q. Did you have a conversation with anybody else in Augusta about that going to be burned?

A. No, sir. I heard some men speaking on the corner and I heard them say; some man was there to fix that barn that night.

Q. There were they, standing on a corner?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know them?

A. One or two.

Q. What were their names?

A. A man by the name of John McCain alias Banty.

Q. Where does he live?

A. He lives about 3½ miles over south of Augusta near Gertrude.

Q. Do you know his business?

A. A farmer.

Q. What other ones did you know?

A. Well the other one was Charles Worthington he lives the next neighbor to Banty.

Q. He is also a farmer?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Anybody else?

A. No, sir, that is all I seen.

Q. Do you know Jim Main?

A. No, sir.

Q. He lives in Kentucky?

A. I don't know him.

Q. Never heard tell of him?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did you ever hear who the leader was, that is the leader of the gang that burned Kautz's place?

A. No, sir, but I think this McCain was the leader.

Q. You say the first you heard of the fire was the next morning?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you remember being out on that Saturday morning at about three o'clock with two Hoovers, ^{your} brother Otis and the two Schinkle's and a man by the name of McBreen and a colored man named Belt?

A. No, sir.

Q. You wasn't out that morning at three o'clock at Felicity?

A. No, sir.

Q. Do you ever remember six or eight of you being out at a watering trough at Felicity at that time?

A. No, sir.

Q. Do you remember meeting a man named Lannan?

A. No, sir, I wasn't in that bunch.

Q. Who was in this bunch that Lannan met that morning at three o'clock?

A. I couldn't give you the names of all of them.

Q. Well, give us what you know.

A. Harry Lauderback, Albert Hiles, George Woodmansee, Walter Fredrick, Howard Winterrod, Solie Schinkle, Nat Riley and Jedd Woodruff.

Q. Any of the Hoovers in that bunch?

A. No, sir. Jesse Metzger, I believe that is all.

Q. This was on Saturday morning following the fire at three o'clock when these people were met by Lannan. Who told you about this bunch meeting?

A. This Solie Schinkle.

Q. He had a conversation with you?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where at?

A. At his brother's store at Cedron.

Q. What did they say about these people?

A. It was the night they shot this Newmann.

Q. Now look, we will try to forget all about these meetings and confine ourselves to the night of the Paul Kautz fire, anything outside of that we don't want to know at the present time. What do you know about the burning of the Kautz place? What other people did you ever hear was there.

A. I overheard a conversation in Augusta and I heard two men say they were there, but I don't know them.

Q. When did that occur?

A. After the fire I heard them say they had been there.

Q. You heard the conversation?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How did you happen to hear it?

A. I was standing on the corner, and I simply heard them talking on the corner.

Q. Could you identify them?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Now you know, and you know there was a lot of people

that was over there that night when Kautz's place was destroyed.

A. I don't believe there was any Ohio men in that crowd at all.

Q. You don't?

A. No, sir.

Q. Isn't it a fact that you and Otis were there?

A. No, sir, we were not there.

Q. Isn't it a fact the two Schinkles were there?

A. No, sir, they were not.

Q. How do you know they weren't there?

A. I don't think they were.

Q. Look here, we know positively you were there that night.

A. Well, I can give you proof that I wasn't there. I am telling you the straight.

Q. Where can you prove you were?

A. I was at home.

Q. You know Miss Johns?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You heard that she had given a statement to the Fire Marshal's Office, and she had received twenty-five dollars for the same?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Who told you that?

A. Mr. Smith.

Q. You didn't tell that to Smith?

A. No, sir, he told me.

Q. Did you ever tell her you heard that?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did Otis?

A. No, sir, not that I know of. Mr. Kautz he simply gave her that to convict me.

Q. Kautz didn't know anything about her statement she gave it to the Fire Marshal's Office. Did you ever meet Lannan any night that you were out on any of these raids at a watering trough?

A. No, sir.

Q. Where does Lannan live?

A. At Felicity.

Q. You didn't have a conversation, where he said, "what are you doing here?"

A. No, sir.

Q. That party of men on horse back was there?

A. I couldn't say, unless it was this same party right here.

Q. Who told you these people were up there?

A. Solie Schinkle.

Q. You say that was on Friday night?

A. I believe it was, but I wouldn't say for certain.

Q. You didn't think it worth your while when you heard that fellow tell you about Kautz's barn going to be destroyed to tell Kautz about it? Your friendly with him?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you tell anybody at all that the barn was going to burn?

A. I told Schinkle and Bystaffer.

Q. You never told a man by the name of Clark?

A. I just mentioned it, I didn't come right out and tell it. I told him, "From what I could hear at Augusta there would be a fire".

Q. Where does he live?

A. On Schinkle's Ridge. He is a brother-in-law of mine.

Q. Married to your sister?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you talk to Schinkle on the way home about the fire?

A. Yes, sir, I told him what Thompson told me.

Q. What did Schinkle say?

A. He didn't say anything to me.

Q. Did he and you talk about it on the way home from Augusta, about what you heard?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did you tell anybody you got up two or three times that night to see if a fire was in the neighborhood?

A. I told my brother.

Q. What did you go over to Augusta on that afternoon for?

A. I went over there - My brother had gotten some little books concerning a horse and I went over there that day to the express office.

Q. Did you get the package?

A. Yes, sir I got it.

Q. You signed for it and everything?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Well Meyers your statement is contradictory of what we have sworn statements of up there. Now if you want to tell the truth about this matter.

A. I just simply told you the truth and nothing else.

Q. We don't want to know anything just now only about the fire.

A. I said I would tell you right out all I knew and I am.

Q. Did you ever tell your brother-in-law Mr. Smith when you came down to see him along about the early part of May

A. I wasn't in Cincinnati, about that time.

Q. When was it you came down to your brother-in-law Mr. Smith?

A. It was on the 10th of last month.

Q. It was the 10th of May it was after the fire occurred?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you ever have a conversation with him about the fire?

A. No, sir.

Q. When you came down what conversation did you have with him?

A. On that business I was into is what I came for. I seen him up at Augusta that day when they had that meeting and he was up there and he told me there would be something doing and he would have a job for me. Then I talked the matter over with him.

Q. Was that the first time you ever had a conversation with him in reference to that fire?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was you at Augusta on the fifth or sixth of May?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. It was a few days after that you came to Cincinnati?

A. Yes, sir, that was on a Wednesday and I came here on Saturday.

Q. You were a member of the Equity at the time Kautz's barn burned?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Are you still a member?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you ever attend any of their meetings?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Whereabouts?

A. At home

Q. Who done the speaking there?

A. A fellow named Fitch and Warren Sargens

Q. At these meetings did they every say, mentioning the name, "We will burn their barn? ?

A. I heard Solie Schinkle say that. He said a barn ought to be burned.

Q. Whose barn?

A. He didn't say

Q. At any meeting you were at did you ever hear them mention that Paul Kautz ought to be treated the same as he was in Kentucky?

A. Yes sir, by Ed Metzger

Q. Who else?

A. His boy Emerson

Q. Anybody else

A. No sir

Q. This was at a public meeting?

A. Yes sir

Q. Do you know how many days it was before Kautz's barn burned?

A. No sir, I couldn't say

Q. A week ?

A. Well probably it was, may be it was two weeks.

Q. Was that the meeting occurred at the school house a White Oak ? Did you attend that meeting?

A. No sir

Q. Whereabouts did you folks meet at there ?

A. Just right there

Q. Where was this meeting held ?

A. At the school house

Q. Now Ham, it is this way with us, you say you are innocent of this, now we have made the proposition to you, if you were guilty we would assist in seeing you treated all right. As long as you have told us you wasn't there and don't know

anything about the burning of that, and we go ahead and find out you was there, you can't expect anything from us.

A. I am innocent

Q. At the present time we are in a position that we owe you nothing, because we can prove that you are interested in this with others, and that you know something about this. Our promise to you ^{no}is good now, and we will have to withdraw that because you told us you wann't there and we have testimony that you was there.

A. I am perfectly innocent. This Hoover was at our house and satyed all night.

Q. Where was Otis?

A. Right there at the house

Q. How did this Hoover happen to come there that night?

A. He often comes down to our house and stays all night

Q. Did you get up to look for the fire?

A. I did

Q. Was Otis up too?

A. Not that I know of

Q. What time did you get home ?

A. Just about six o'clock

Q. Where was Otis when you got home?

A. There at home

Q. When did Hoover come ?

A. At seven o'clock

Q. Just came to visit you?

A. Yes sir. He often comes down and stays all night

Q. Did Schinkle come with you?

A. Yes sir

Q. Where was Schinkle when you was in Augusta talking to this Shoe man?

A. I couldn't tell you right exactly.

Q. He wasn't with you at the time?

A. No sir.

Q. You were well acquainted with the shoe man, were you?

A. No, not very

Q. What was his name?

A. Thompson

Q. What were you discussing at the time?

A. I just stopped in there because it was raining, and I took a pair of shoes to change for my brother-in-law. He asked about the Equity, and how things was.

Q. Is he an Equity man?

A. Yes, sir

Q. Is he a member?

A. I couldn't say

Q. He believes the Equity are right?

A. Yes, sir

Q. Then you came back across the river about four o'clock?

A. Just about four or half past

Q. Did Schinkle come across with you on the Ferry?

A. Yes sir

Q. When did you first mention the matter to him?

A. As we was coming down the grade on the other side I told him.

Q. You pointed the barn out to him?

A. Yes, sir, I did

Q. You say you didn't know Thompson very well?

A. No, sir

Q. Did he say he was going to participate in the burning?

A. He talked that way

Q. Tell me all you can about the burning of that barn?

A. I said to you a while ago and that is all I can tell you. He said, "See that barn, take a farewell look at it as it will be your last."

Q. Did you make any remark to him?

A. No, sir

Q. Did he know you as an Equity man?

A. Yes, sir

Q. Did he say anything about Kautz's former fire over in Kentucky?

A. Yes, sir, he told me about the time that tobacco was

rolled down the hill. They went over the time they took the tobacco and rolled it down the hillside

Q. What did he say to you about that?

A. He said it ought to be done

Q. That was before the first burning?

A. Yes sir. That happened I judge about a month before the last barn was burned.

Q. Have you seen Thompson since this fire?

A. No, sir, I haven't. I saw him that day they had the Equity meeting, but I didn't talk to him. That is all I know about this and just as straight as can be.

Q. Where does Schinkle live from where you live? That one was with you?

A. He lives at Gedron and runs a store there about a quarter of a mile from me

Q. Is he an Equity man?

A. Yes sir

Q. A member?

A. Yes, sir

Q. What was his feeling towards Kautz?

A. He didn't say much about it. He didn't express himself.

Q. You told him Kautz's barn was going to be burned and he didn't express himself?

A. No, sir, just said they would never do anything like that

Q. Now you are not certain about the night that those fellows were up around the watering trough, are you?

A. No, I don't know

Q. You thought it was on a Thursday night?

A. Yes, sir

Q. Might it have been on a Friday night?

A. No, I know it wasn't. I would have heard anything like that the next morning.

Q. How is it that you know about all of these raids?

A. I am a member of the Equity. That had a meeting that night, or whatever night it was.

Q. Might it have been the Thursday night immediately before the fire ?

A. May be. No, it couldn't have been, it was a week or more. It was the night this man got shot. Word came the next morning about it. I heard that right there at this store.

Q. You always heard it when any of the Ohio fellows had been out on a raid?

A. Yes, sir

Q. Who told you about it the next morning?

A. The Schinkle boys

Q. Bill?

A. No, he wasn't there, Doc, a cousin of his

Q. What did he say ?

A. Just said, "Did you hear the news," I said, "No." He said, "They burned that Kautz ware house last night." He said he heard it over the telephone.

Q. Did you ask him whether he knew any of the people who were in it?

A. No, I didn't ask him. I told him, "yes, you heard what that fellow told me in Augusta yesterday, looks like he knew something about it?"

Q. You said that to Doc, or Bill?

A. I said that to Bill. Bill was out and he came in while we were talking about it and I made that remark to him.

Q. You are well acquainted with Kautz ?

A. Yes sir. I know his father

Q. You saw him in his ware house that afternoon?

A. Yes, I took it be him

Q. You didn't speak to him?

A. No, sir

Q. You knew it was him?

A. I took it ^{to} be him, he was standing up looking out of the window, he and somebody else. I told Schinkle, "There is Kautz now."

Q. That barn wasn't more than fifty or sixty feet from the ferry ?

A. No sir

Q. You could tell them at a glance?

A. The windows were dirty, but I just took that man to be Kautz. I couldn't swear it was him at all.

Q. You stood there quite a length of time?

A. We cleaned our feet there

Q. Did you go up the road past where the colored fellow lives?

A. Yes, sir

Q. Does Kautz belong to the Equity?

A. No, sir

Q. You said a while ago that Banty was the Leader of those fellows that burned the barn that night?

A/ Yes, sir

Q. Who did you learn that from ?

A. Charles Worthington. He lives in Kentucky near this Banty.

Q. When was it he told you that?

A. It was one time I went over there to see about a horse for my brother, and he told me

Q. Did Worthington tell you he was there that night?

A. No, sir

Q. Did anybody ever tell you they were down there that night ?

A. No, sir

Q. Did you ever stop in Thompson's since the fire?

A. No, sir

Q. Did you ever meet Thompson since?

A. No sir

Q. How did the conversation come up ?

A. It was raining and I stopped in there with a pair of shoes to be changed for my brother-in-law

Q. What is your brother-in-law's name ?

A. Clark. I got over there and Thompson is an Equity man and I asked him about his tobacco, if he had sold his 1906 crop, and directly he told me this.

Q. Didn't it seem funny you arriving there, and you friendly with Kautz and passing his place on your way home and a man telling you that Kautz's place was to be destroyed that night, you didn't stop in to tell him?

A. I didn't think simply at the time, I didn't think much about it

Q. You thought enough of it to get up a couple of times to see if there was a fire?

A. Well, I heard what those Kentucky fellows would do. I didn't think a great deal of it.

Q. You thought well enough to say to Schinkle, "There is Kautz now" ?

A. No, sir

Q. When you were passing up the ridge?

A. Yes, sir, I said it

Q. You thought of the fire going up then?

A. Only of what that man told me

Q. You didn't think it was your duty? to stop there and tell him what you had heard or anything like that?

A. No sir, I didn't think a great deal about it.

Q. When I asked you in reference to a party of fellows that met at Felicity and this Lannan spoke to them. You say that was on a Thursday morning ? That was before the fire?

A. I couldn't say

Q. Could it be possible that it was on the next morning after the fire and shortly after that he learned that the barn had burned?

A. I couldn't say

Q. What makes you think it was some other morning?

A. You asked me and I am telling you my best recollection

Q. How did you learn of these men meeting at the watering trough at Felicity?

A. They didn't meet at Felicity.

Q. I mean the morning they came back. Now you know they were there? Do want to let somebody else get in here and tell about this before you do?

A. I didn't go out that night, they wanted me to go. That is the night they destroyed the tobacco beds.

Q. Did they come to your house after you?

A. No, sir

Q. Where did you meet them?

A. At Cedron at Schinkle's store.

Q. When you left that night after the fire you started up a mud road and somebody said, "don't go that way, come up here somebody will know you." Then you went up to the stone road and into Felicity and this man Lannan was standing there and you said to this man, "What are you doing out at this hour of the morning." And then he asked you, "what are you doing out there." Then you made him promise he would never mention he saw you fellows, and this was on the following morning? Is that right or wrong?

A. It isn't so

Q. You wasn't in that bunch?

A. No, sir

Q. What bunch was you with? Don't you know it is a fact you were done there when the barn was burned and you know who got the lamp and put the oil around the place?

A. No, sir, I wasn't a bit more there than you was

Q. Wasn't you ever at any night raids?

A. Yes sir. I was in one happened in Theesburg in Brown County.

Q. Wasn't you in one raid in Clermont County where a man got shot?

A. No, sir.

Q. Didn't you see the shooting?

A. No, sir

Q. Who done it?

A. I don't know the fellows told me a man named Fredericks

Q. What happened that night you didn't go with them?

A. These fellows came and told me and I said Solie Schinkle and I will meet you there at a certain time. I had my horse but I didn't go. They never came at all and I waited until eight-thirty and then I came home.

That was the night Newman was shot

A. Yes

Q. Who was the crowd?

A. This crowd I gave you the names of. They didn't come and I went home.

Q. What was done the night you was in the raid over there in Brown County?

A. Just simply tore up some tobacco beds that was all.

Q. What date was that? Was that after or before the Kautz fire?

A. Before the Kautz fire?

Q. Ham, was Otis there that night?

A. No sir

Q. How did Hoover happen to come down to your house?

A. He often does

Q. How far does he live from you?

A. About three and a half miles

Q. Didn't you tell Dan Miller, City Marshal at Ripley on Wednesday before I met you on Thursday morning in Georgetown when he commenced asking you outside of that saloon of Heblings about this fire, didn't you tell him you was down there?

A. No sir I did not

Q. When he asked you, you said "Yes."?

A. He never asked me nothing about the fire. That was never talked over at all.

Q. Did you have a conversation with your brother-in-law about this fire?

A. I just told him what I told you.

Q. Did you tell me?

A. I told you what this man told me.

Q. After I spoke to you I asked your brother-in-law if you ever mentioned anything to him about the fire and he said, "No." He said the first you said was that morning in the hotel. You talked for three or four hours ?

A. Yes sir

Q. And over in front of the Mayor's office. Did he speak to you about this fire?

A. No sir

Q. Did he say anything to you in his room that morning?

A. No sir

Q. Did he tell you to stand up and deny this fire?

A. No sir

Q. Did anybody ?

A. No, sir

Q. What time did you get in today?

A. Five o'clock

Q. What time did you leave there ?

A. Left Felicity at 2:30 o'clock

Q. You were to come down last night?

A. Yes sir

Q. Why didn't you?

A. I went to see this Hoover, I telephoned to him I wanted to see him. I waited until 11 o'clock and he never came then I went up there and told him, "I heard he was going to get in bad about this fire business." I said "somebody wanted him in Cincinnati, as I had telephoned." He said he couldn't go then as he had his tobacco loaded and he had to haul it in the morning.

Q. When you accused him of being at the fire, what did he say?

A. He said, "You know where I was " "I was at your house and stayed all night."

Q. Did you tell him what to say?

A. No sir, just told him to tell the truth.

Q. Where was Otis?

A. Right there with him

Q. Was your father and sister and mother there?

A. Yes sir

Q. I don't see what object you would have in trying to shield anybody down at the fire that night?

A. I am not trying to

Q. Now how is it you don't know anything about that fire? You knew five or seven hours before the fire that it was coming off?

A. Yes sir

Q. Did you stop at Schinkle's store that night with Will Shinkle?

A. It was raining and I was in a runabout and we got out and got his buggy and he went with me.

Q. Did you stop at Schinkle's store that night?

A. Just to change our horse?

Q. Did you come back to the store that night?

A. No sir

Q. Did you tell Hoover what was going to occur that night?

A. Yes sir

Q. What did he say?

A. He didn't say much about it?

Q. Was there ever a hunch consisting of two Hoovers, two Schinkles, Metzger, McBreen and Belt ever out?

A. No sir

Q. Was you ever out with a party like that?

A. I was out with a party in Brown county

Q. Was you ever out with the people I just mentioned?

A. No sir

Q. Has the Hoovers been out in any of these raids?

A. Not that I know of

Q. Has the Schinkles?

A. Bill has

Q. You said something about Solie?

A. He is a brother

Q. Was he out in any of these?

A. Yes sir

Q. This colored man Belt, was he ever out in any of these raids?

A. I can't say whether he was or not, I don't think he was

Q. Never was in any you were?

A. No sir.

Q. Did you ever know him to be out in any raid you were in?

A. No sir

Q. Who was it said Banty was the leader?

A. Charles Worthington

Q. Where was it the conversation occurred when Worthington told you that?

A. Told me right there in the town.

Q. How long after the fire?

A. Well I couldn't say

Q. How did he happen to tell you

A. We were just talking about the Equity

Q. Did he say he was over there that night?

A. No sir, I heard he was there by a man I don't know

Q. Did Worthington ever tell you he was there?

A. He didn't tell me right out

Q. Did Banty ever tell you?

A. No sir

Q. What did Worthington say?

A. Said there was going to be a raid over there at Kautz's
There are two fellows are going to get him.

Q. You heard him say nothing afterwards?

A. No sir

Q. When was it he told you about Banty being the Captain?

A. After the fire

Q. Did you ever have a conversation with Banty?

A. Not very much. Just talked about the Equity and what they had done. Said the time they raided him over the river he was there.

Q. You mean at Burlin?

A. Yes sir

Q. Well we know who it was, a man named Jett. Do you know him?

A. Yes, sir, I have heard of him

Q. After the fire you heard through Worthington that Banty was the leader of the mob?

A. Yes sir

Q Did Banty ever tell you?

A No sir, he never came right out and said it

Q. What do you mean by come right out and tell?

A In a round about way. He said, "I was over there and you ought ot have been there."

Q/ There is no doubt in your mind that he was there?

A. Yes sir

Q. Can you give the exact language?

A. That's just the way. He just said he had been to the fire and he wanted to know where I was and said we ought to have been there with him and said they had a good time

Q. How long after the fire was that and where?

A. Right in Augusta

Q. How long after the fire?

A. I judge about two weeks

Q. Was anybody else there?

A No sir

Q. Did you ever tell Kautz who it was?

A. No sir

Q. Ever tell anybody?

A. No sir

Q. When you left Augusta that night before the fire and bid the tobacco ware house goodbye, where did you do?

A. I went right home

Q. What time did this Hoover come there?

A. About 7 o'clock

Q. After he came to your house how soon did you tell him about this ?

A. I told him a little while after I had been there

Q. What did he say?

A. Not much about anything. He said I believe they would do anything like that ?

Q. Did you tell your father ?

A. No sir

Q. Did you tell Hoover?

A. Yes sir

Q. What did he say

A. He said, "He didn't know what those Kentucky fellows would do ."

Q. You didn't talk it over with any of the neighbors?

No No sir

Q. What was your idea in keeping it a secret?

A. I never made it a business of talking much about anything to anybody

Q. This man that told you is an Equity man?

A. Yes sir

Q. Are your orders such that you are supposed to keep your meetings secret?

A. I never made it a business of telling much to anybody

Q. This man that told you is an Equity man?

A. Yes sir They have secret meetings but I never was there

Q. You have two crops on hand now

A. Yes sir

Q. Have you any insurance on it?

No. No sir

Q. Aren't you afraid?

A. Well, you can't always tell

Q. What do you mean by a secret meeting?

A. I never was to a secret meeting. When they have these secret meetings is when they go out and make these raids. Just the members were admitted.

Q. A short time after the fire you saw McCain, what did he say at that time?

A. That is all he said, what he told you before

Q. What did you reply, if you remember, when he told you?

A. I replied to him in this way, I don't believe in any burning, and as far as these tobacco beds are concerned that is all right.

Q. What did he say?

A. He said they would have to do it in order to win out

Q. Where were you when you heard this conversation?

A. In Augusta. Right on the corner of Second Street

Q. Anybody else present?

A. No sir

Q. Have you had a conversation with any other men that said they were in the burning?

A. No sir

Q. Have you seen Mr. Thompson since?

A. No sir

Q. Has Worthington said anything since the fire about being present?

A. Just what I said a while ago. Said he was over with the bunch

Q. Can you remember his language?

A. He said something like this: He wanted to know why I wasn't there, he said "You ought to have been with us."

Q. He told you this at his place?

A. Yes sir. Then he told me down town in Augusta.

Q. Talked to you twice?

A. Yes sir

Q. McCain lives near him?

A. Yes sir

Q. Did you talk to McCain?

A. No sir, I didn't see him.

Q. What is Worthington's first name?

A. Charles

Q. In a conversation with Worthington didn't he tell you about getting the negro and his property all out?

A. I heard that from my brother-in-law Austin Clark. This negro told him

Q. Did Worthington or McGain say the night they went over to the barn Paul Kautz out that they got the negro and brought him down to Smith's house, so he wouldn't see anything?

A. No sir. I heard this negro said seven men went up to Kautz's and brought him out.

Q. You never had a conversation with anybody about going up and bringing the negro out?

A. No sir

Q. You wasn't out that night?

A. No sir

Q. Otis wasn't

A. No sir

Q. Hoover wasn't

A. No sir

Q. That negro know you?

A. Yes sir

Q. Did you ever see Kautz a few days after the fire?

A. No sir

Q. How long after the fire did you see him?

A. I haven't seen him since. He passed through Cedron one night, but I didn't see him.

Q. It isn't possible you and Otis turned around and looked at him?

A. No sir.

Q. Are you pretty well acquainted with the shoe man over there?

A. No sir

Q. Didn't you think it strange he would tell you a thing like that?

A. Yes sir, I did

Q. When you and Schinkle talked about it on the way coming home had he express his opinion as to whether the

men and told the truth?

A. No sir, he didn't

Q. What did he say?

A. He said, "you can't tell about those Kentucky people what they will do, or mean to do."

Q. Do you live in Clermont County or in Brown?

A. In Clermont

Q. Mr. Myers, this is the situation. we expect to protect you, but we expect you to help us, and we want everything there is about this because if we should find afterwards you have misrepresented things, we would not be any protection for you.

A. Yes sir, I understand, but I have told you straight, just as straight as I possibly can.

Q. You don't know of any man on the Ohio side being present at that fire?

A. No sir, I do not. One day I was talking to Thompson in Augusta, and he pointed to some men walking up and down the street who wore straw hats and he said they are Night Riders and they are from Gertrude.

Q. And that is the only way you could identify them?

A. Yes sir.

Q. How do you suppose Thompson knew their business?

A. I couldn't say anything about that?

Q. Thompson wasn't drunk, when he told you this?

A. No sir.

Q. What time of day was it?

A. About three o'clock.

Q. Where were these men?

A. Just walking around the streets of Augusta.

Q. Was other people wearing straw hats?

A. No sir. Gus Kramer saw them pass in skiffs over the river and he said there were about fifty. He lives near Smith's on the Ohio side. There was four or five skiff loads full. This Kramer is a river man over there.

Q. Does he own those skiffs?

A. No sir, he just works for somebody else

Q. Did he say he knew anybody?

A. I never heard

Q. In your visit to Augusta ever learn about anybody else, but McCain and Worthington that was over there that night?

A. No sir. I didn't inquire into it very much. I was afraid to.

Q. Meyers, when you learned this barn was to be burned and you saw the owner, and you didn't say anything to him or anybody else, in keeping it away from him was that some of the teachings of the Equity?

A. Yes sir.

Q. You wouldn't have been a good Equity man if you had told Kautz about this?

A. No sir

Q. Did you know this man Smith, where they took this colored man?

A. Yes sir, I know Charles

Q. Is Smith an Equity man?

A. I couldn't say, but I think he is.

Q. Have you ever talked with Smith, since the night of the burning?

A. No sir. I think he is up in Virginia.

Q. He was there that night, wasn't he?

A. I couldn't say.

Cincinnati, Ohio, May 30, 1908.

Ham D. Meyers.
(Continued)

Mr. Meyers I forgot to ask you a few questions last night.

Q. On the afternoon that you and Schinkle went over the river, what was Mr. Schinkle's business there that afternoon?

A. I couldn't tell you right out. I went to his store and asked him to go with me. I believe he wanted to get a pair of pants.

Q. Did he buy a pair?

A. No, I don't think he did.

Q. Where was he when you went to Thompson's?

A. Looking at pants. I know he didn't buy any because he said he couldn't get his size.

Q. How long were you folks separated in Augusta?

A. I judge about an hour?

Q. During all of that time was you in Thompson's store?

A. No, sir, he went to the depot with me to get an express package. Then we walked back and I went to the drug store to get some medicine. Then I came back and stopped at Thompson's and I told him I would be there and would wait until he came back.

Q. In any conversation you had with Schinkle before leaving Augusta did he say anything in reference to the Night Riders coming over there that night?

A. No, sir.

Q. Were you the first one told him they were coming over?

A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir, I told him what Thompson told me.

Q. What was the exact language that Thompson said to you about these fellows pointing to the different men, and what they were going to do, and what they said?

A. He said, "You see these men coming along there toward Gertrude?" I said, "Yes." He said, "There is going to be something doing tonight, that warehouse of Kautz's is going up, why don't you stay over and go with me?"

Q. He didn't say he was going to accompany them over?

A. No, sir.

Q. But you believe he was there?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did you say to that?

A. I didn't say anything.

Q. Schinkle's position in the Equity is what?

A. He just belongs.

Q. He is not officer?

A. No, sir.

Q. Is he the Schinkle that was at the meeting when Schinkle and Metzger said, "We ought to burn Kautz's barn?" ?

A. No, sir, just Metzger and his son.

Q. But outside of Metzger and his son was there anybody else?

A. No, sir. There may have been, but I didn't hear it.

Q. Now Ham, you know the burning of a place or this place was talked about more or less around where you lived about what was done there, and so on?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you ever during the time of this fire hear anybody living in Brown or Clermont county accompanying the Night Riders this night?

A. I heard this man Grigston, John Grigston, I heard he was down at Cedron, he was with ten men. He was down near Hall's house.

Q. What Hall?

A. Clark Hall.

Q. Does he live over there in Brown county?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How far from Boudes Ferry does this Clark live?

A. About three and a half miles west.

Q. How did Grigston happen to tell you about these ten men?

A. He didn't tell me, I just heard it over in Cadron. Then after I heard they were coming up, then I heard it was all a mistake.

Q. Did you ever hear from anybody living around there how many men were in the raid that night?

A. I heard several different things. I heard forty, then twenty and then twelve.

Q. Did you ever have a conversation with that colored fellow?

A. No, sir.

Q. Is Smith a member of the Equity?

A. I couldn't say, he has been working in Virginia.

Q. This fellow at Boudes Ferry, is he a member?

A. I couldn't say.

Q. Do you know his son?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was he ever in any of these raids?

A. No, sir. The only colored man was Belt.

Q. He wasn't up in Brown county, he never got up there?

A. No, sir.

Q. You swear positively you wasn't there that night?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What night was it you fellows, I mentioned the names before, stopped to water your horses? You was in that number?

A. No, sir.

Q. You wasn't there?

A. No, sir, I never was.

Q. At any place?

A. No, sir.

Q. Were you ever in a party when you met Lannan?

A. No, sir.

Q. This Hoover that came down with you what is his name?

A. Bruce.

Q. What time did he come to your house on that night?

A. About seven thirty.

Q. Who was with him?

A. His wife.

Q. What business brought him over there?

A. I don't know.

Q. How long did he stay?

A. Until the next morning.

Q. He came to your house after supper?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. After he came down there did you folks go any where?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did you tell him what you had learned over in Augusta?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did he suggest going down to see it?

A. No, sir.

Q. Who was there that night in the Clermont County raid?

A. That was in Brown county.

Q. Who was with you?

A. Clarence Holden, Doc Schinkle and two Goslings and the Carter boys and a fellow named Bystaffer.

Q. You had arranged for that?

A. No, sir, they came after me at two o'clock in the night. They said they were Kentucky Night Riders and wanted me and my brother to go with them. They asked, "if this was Henry Meyers' house, and I said, "No, this is William Meyers'. Then they said, "I want you to go out". They said, "A man is going to haul his tobacco away and we want to get up there and stop him." They said, "Hurry up we want to go". I didn't know the fellows until we had gone about two miles.

Q. You got up and got your horse when they told you to?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you put a mask on?

A. Yes, sir. We just used a handkerchief for a mask.

Q. What did you do that night?

A. Tore up about fifteen beds of tobacco. Took the canvas off.

Q. What does that do to them?

A. That will kill them.

Q. How far does those fellows live from you?

A. Four miles from me.

Q. Was you ever out any other time, but this?

A. I was out one night, just a little raid. We didn't dig but a few beds.

Q. Who made that proposition?

A. This Solie Schinkle and Metzger.

Q. Did you ever see those farmers since to talk to that their beds were burned?

A. No, sir.

Q. Nobody ever suspicion you down there?

A. No, sir. I heard I was accused of it.

Q. Are you married?

A. No, sir.

Q. You are twenty-seven years old?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is Otis married?

A. No, sir.

Q. Is Bruce married?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. He is a cousin of yours?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. This man Smith is a brother-in-law of yours?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know where this Bystaffer lives?

A. Two and a half miles from Schinkle Ridge.

Q. In Brown county?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Any other ones up there?

A. No, sir.

Q. Do you remember any person being up there around Brown County or Boudes Ferry when the fire occurred?

A. Now this old man named Bondler I believe he had.

Q. Did you ever have a conversation with Bystaffer?

A. No, sir, only that evening as I told you last night about what Thompson told me.

Q. What was that?

A. I asked Bystaffer what kind of a man this Thompson was.

Q. Did you have to pass Bystaffer's house on your way home?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did he say?

A. He said he was a hot Equity man.

Q. Did you ever have a conversation with Bystaffer after the fire?

A. No, sir.

Q. Did you ever have a talk with him, when he said, "They are trying to bring me into that fire, but I can prove an alibi, I set up with a corpse that night"?

A. He said they accused him of being in the raid. He told me that.

Q. What did he say?

A. He said they just accused him of it and a man by the name of Jones that lives close to him.

Q. Do you know where he was that night?

A. No, sir.

Q. How did this conversation come up?

A. He was asked to sit up.

Q. That was the night of the raid?

A. No, sir.

Q. How many raids in Brown county were you personally present at?

A. Just the one.

Q. Whose place was that?

A. This man I was just telling you about. That was in Brown county.

Q. Whose farm was it?

A. We went to George Jennings and tore up the tobacco beds.

Q. Did you go to any other farm?

A. We went to Perdin's.

Q. What did you do there?

A. Tore up the beds and took the canvas off. The other fellows tramped it up.

Q. When you went to these places did the owner come out to the door?

A. Yes.

Q. Who was the leader?

A. Clarence Holden and Doc Schinkle.

Q. Who acted as leader?

A. Holden.

Q. What did he use as a mask?

A. A red handkerchief.

Q. You people done nothing else, but destroy the tobacco beds?

A. No, sir. This Holden told me he put a note on Marriot's tobacco, and I heard there was a note on it afterwards.

Q. Did he tell you what was on it?

A. Told him not to deliver that tobacco.

Q. Did you see the note?

A. No, sir.

Q. Was you at Hook's house last Friday night a week?

A. No, sir.

Q. Was you in that vicinity?

A. No, sir.

Q. Any of the boys down your way up there?

A. No, sir.

Q. This man Schinkle that accompanied you across the river that afternoon did he ever speak to you about what he heard that night, or about any of these fellows coming over?

A. No, sir.

Q. You never spoke about the fire, from that afternoon up to the present time?

A. No, sir.

Q. After the fire when you saw Schinkle did he ever say anything to you?

A. No, sir. He just kind of laughed and said, "I didn't think they would do a thing like that". That was the evening coming home.

Q. I mean after the fire? Have you been in his store since?

A. No, sir.

A true copy.

Col., Ass't Adjutant General.