

## Features



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# Dedication of Historic Marker in Bloomfield

SEPTEMBER 02ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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**Bloomfield, Missouri** - Historians Jim and Sue Mayo along with Dr. Frank Nickell, and Rev. Ron Dunavin were on hand for the unveiling of the latest historical marker at the old Stoddard County Courthouse in Bloomfield on Sunday afternoon.

Dr. Frank Nickell, director of the Southeast Missouri branch of the Historical Society of Missouri told a story of Asa Ladd, a Bloomfield native who enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861 and was executed along side six Confederate soldiers who were innocent of any crimes. It was an incredibly sad tale of a Civil War hero who was executed for the deaths of six Union soldiers.

Dr. Nickell read two letters from Asa Ladd, one to his wife and one to his father. Neither of the letters ever reached his family. Amy lived the rest of her life not knowing what really happened to her husband.

</images/2015 Images/Asa 1.jpg>

"Asa had written a [letter to his father](#) explaining what was to happen between two and 4 o'clock. He told his father not to worry about the state of his faith as it was well founded. He asked that his father take care of his debts and stated that he wanted his family to come back to his home place. The original letter still remains yellowed, and crumbled, tucked away in the bible of my Aunt," commented Ron Dunavin.

"He wrote a letter to his dear wife Amy. He advised her not to cross the St. Francis River when the water was up. He told her to stay there until the dry season. It has been told that Amy did not receive the letter for she had packed up and went to her home lands in Ark before the letter had ever arrived. Ransom had spent many months trying to locate Amy. It is said that Amy never received the letter from her husband and it was kept in Ransoms Bible until it was one day claimed by Asa's son-in-law Ike Emery," stated Dr. Nickell.



On the bronze plaque outside of the courthouse the marker reads, "Dear wife and children, I take my pen with trembling hand to inform you that I have to be shot between two and four o'clock this evening. I have but a few hours to remain in this unfriendly world. There is six of us sentenced."

Rev. Ron Dunavin traveled from Arkansas to attend the dedication. He is a direct descendant of Asa Ladd. His mother was the granddaughter of Asa and Amy.

According to military records, Asa Ladd enlisted in the Civil War March 10, 1861 in Stoddard County, Mo. He served with Jacksons Co A, Burbridge's Regiment, 4th Missouri Calvery. He was captured by the Union army in Sedelia, Mo. on October 16, 1864.

He was then taken to Jefferson City and remained there for eight days, then was sent to Gratiot Street prison in St. Louis on the 25th of October 1864.

Asa had been a farmer, and all this fight and run tactics must have been very wearing on him. He seemed to be quite confused at his interrogation in Gratiot Street Prison; he answered some questions as though he were not entirely sure of his answers. For example: To the question "Have you a wife - children?" he replied, Wife and four children. The Census Records show that he had seven children. To the question "Have you relatives in the Rebellion?" he answered that he had two brothers-in-law; this was scratched out and "a brother" inserted. (His brother-in-law, John Allen, served in the Union Army).

One can only imagine what he was going through and what he must have worried about during



those long desperate One thing for sure is that Asa was a Godly man. He was raised of the Methodist faith; his father pastored at the Sadlers Chapel Church in Dexter.

At the Battle of Pilot Knob, near Bloomfield, Mo., in September of 1864, Union Major James Wilson and six of his men were captured by the Confederates.

According to Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Fletcher, USA, "they were held for one week, then turned over to Major Tim Reeves, CSA of Marmaduke's command. Major Wilson was taken out and hung and his men were shot.

When word of his execution reached Gen. Rosecrans, commanding the Department of the Missouri, he issued a retaliatory order to the effect that a Major and six enlisted men of the Rebel captives be shot.

In carrying out this order, only those prisoners who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance to the Federal Government were selected. These men were taken into a room where they were ordered to draw marbles, of which there were six black ones, was held above eye level so the men could not see the color they were drawing. The ones drawing a white marble were freed - those drawing a black one were to be executed. Asa drew a black marble. and hence the execution of Asa Ladd went into the history books of man who paid for a crime he did not commit.

It is a dream of Jim and Sue Mayo to complete 21 total bronze markers in the area. This was number ten. Taps was played while the unveiling of the marker commenced and a prayer was said over the marker.

***Shown in the photo are Dr. Frank Nickell, Jim Mayo, Sue Mayo, and Rev. Ron Dunavin.***

LAST UPDATED ON SEPTEMBER 02ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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