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CONTEMPT OF COURT

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This episode examines key themes and events related to justice, social order, and violence in Newton, Kansas, primarily drawing from newspaper accounts and court records from 1872 to 1887. The sources highlight a period of significant unrest and the community's evolving attempts to establish order.

Main Themes:

- **Prevalence of Violence and "Lawlessness":** The sources paint a picture of a frontier town where violence, particularly linked to alcohol consumption and "bad characters," was a recurring problem.
- **Citizen Self-Regulation and Vigilante Justice:** In the face of perceived inadequate official law enforcement, citizens frequently took matters into their own hands, leading to both swift, often fatal, justice and organized efforts to enforce order.
- **The Role of Saloons and "Hell Holes":** Saloons and dance houses are consistently identified as major contributors to crime and disorder, leading to calls for their regulation or closure.
- **Challenges to Official Authority:** The effectiveness of the police and judicial system is questioned, with accusations of leniency towards certain individuals and a failure to enforce existing ordinances.
- **Community Desire for "Respectability":** Despite the violence, there's a strong underlying desire within the "respectable and law-abiding citizens" to transform Newton into a more orderly and honorable place.
- **Shifting Perceptions of "Justice":** The definition of justice in this period is fluid, ranging from formal legal processes to immediate, often violent, retribution and community-imposed exile.

Most Important Ideas/Facts:

1. The James Brewer Case (October 1872 - June 1873): A Complex Legal Saga

This case illustrates the complexities and often contradictory outcomes of frontier justice.

- **Initial Charges and Counter-Charges:** James Brewer filed a complaint on **October 26, 1872**, against Benjamin Ferguson, Peter Ferguson, and C.A. Tracy, for assault with intent to beat and bruise him on **October 19, 1872**.
- **Alternative Narrative and Political Context:** C.A. Tracy, possibly a political opponent, published a counter-statement signed by Peter and Benjamin Ferguson, asserting that Brewer shot Benjamin Ferguson first. This suggests the charges against Tracy were circulated to "defeat him" politically.
- Peter and Benjamin Ferguson state on oath: "on the 19th of Oct. 1872, we went to the house of James Brewer to get a plow for which we had an order from the owner. James Brewer came out of the house with gun in hand, cocked and shot Benjamin Ferguson, who fell, and Mr. Brewer jumped upon him." They then called Tracy, who "pulled Mr. Brewer off of a man supposed to be mortally wounded; and that is all that Mr. Tracy had to do with the transaction whatever."
- **Legal Outcomes: Brewer's Conviction:** Six months later, Brewer was "judged guilty of shooting with intent to kill, and sentenced to one year in the Penitentiary." (The Newton Kansan, April 17, 1873). However, a later pardon notice clarifies the conviction as "shooting with the intent to commit manslaughter." (The Newton Kansan, May 1, 1873).
- **Ferguson's Conviction:** Benjamin Ferguson was "found guilty of simple assault, and fined \$40 plus costs." (The Newton Kansan, April 17, 1873).
- **Brewer's Early Release:** Despite his one-year sentence, James Brewer "was released by the Governor about three weeks ago, and is now at his home" by **June 26, 1873**, after applying for a pardon on May 1, 1873. This highlights the potential for political influence or executive clemency to override judicial sentences.

2. The George Halliday & M.J. Fitzpatrick Affair (November 7, 1872): A Defining Moment of Vigilante Justice

This "Horrible Affray" served as a critical turning point for Newton, showcasing extreme violence and immediate, decisive community response.

- **The Incident:** On **November 7, 1872**, M.J. Fitzpatrick, described as "one of the most noted murderous and wicked men in the country, especially when under the influence of that which has caused more untimely deaths than any other thing - liquor," shot and killed George Halliday, Esq. (also intoxicated) in the Gold Room saloon.
- **Initial confrontation:** "Some trifling words passed between them, for they were ordinarily good friends, when Fitzpatrick struck him aside the head with a revolver, at the same time he pulled it down to his breast and missed fire once, pulled it again and it

was discharged, killing Mr. Halliday almost instantly." (The Newton Kansan, November 7, 1872).

- Prior violence: Fitzpatrick "had beaten four other persons in the face and over the head with his revolver, and shot a man through the hat" before killing Halliday. (The Daily Democrat, November 8, 1872).
- **Marshal Johnson's Action:** After killing Halliday, Fitzpatrick walked into the street "defying any person to attempt to touch him." Marshal Johnson, facing Fitzpatrick's drawn revolver, "crossed the street, borrowed a Henry rifle and in another minute put an end to his existence - shooting Fitzpatrick dead in the street." (The Newton Kansan, November 7, 1872).
- **Immediate Citizen Response and Vigilance Committee:** "A committee was in fifteen minutes thereafter organized, the names of several hard cases and their roosts taken down, and what could be found were ordered to leave town and to stay away." (The Newton Kansan, November 7, 1872).
- "Farmers came into the town armed with rifles, and uniting with the better citizens of Newton, paraded the streets and closed all the saloons by force and virtually put the town under martial law." (The Hutchinson News, November 7, 1872).
- **Community Sentiment:** The event, though tragic, was viewed by some as a positive development for the town: "While we lament the death of Mr. Halliday, we believe this has been one of the best days our thriving young city has ever seen. Our respectable and law-abiding citizens have taken the matter into their own hands, and will see that hereafter Newton shall give no shelter to men who live by murdering and robbing good people, but shall win that reputation near and far that shall be to it an honor and not a disgrace." (The Newton Kansan, November 7, 1872).
- **Halliday's Background and Memorials:** Halliday was a "well known, highly esteemed and prominent citizen," a Scotchman by birth, engaged in land and law business, leaving a "young wife to mourn his loss." (The Newton Kansan, November 7, 1872). He was buried with Masonic honors.
- **Long-term Impact:** The incident is remembered fifteen years later as a turning point where the "committee of citizens met and organized and drove every rough character out of the town, and from that time to this the city has been quiet and peaceable." (The Newton Kansan, November 24, 1887). Halliday's body was later moved from "Boot Hill" to the Masonic grounds in the city cemetery on **November 23, 1887**, and the bullet that killed him was recovered.

3. "A Sober Reflection" (November 14, 1872): A Critique of Law Enforcement and a Call for Reform

This editorial, published shortly after the Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident, articulates the community's frustration with the lax enforcement of laws and identifies the root cause of the violence.

- **Condemnation of Laissez-Faire Governance:** The author laments the "sad events" and criticizes the current administration: "our laws – where are they?... Our laws are being laughed to scorn, and our police government has been but a farce." (The Newton Kansan, November 14, 1872).
- **Saloons as a Primary Cause:** The editorial strongly links violence to saloons and a permissive attitude towards public drunkenness: "all that has been necessary for the biggest loafer in Christendom to do to take the sidewalks and run the towns business of this place in opposition to the whole police department, was simply to get drunk and then treat the crowds." (The Newton Kansan, November 14, 1872).
- **Ineffective Justice System for "Loafers":** If arrested, "he is given a school-boy trial; if he can't pay his fine and doesn't make any threats (providing he is a stranger or from the country) he is marched to the calaboose, left until sober, and then let out, the expenses being charged up to the city." (The Newton Kansan, November 14, 1872).
- **Call for Strict Enforcement:** The piece advocates for carrying out existing ordinances to ensure "perfect peace and quiet at all times," hoping for a "new year, determined to in the future do better."

4. "The Moral" (June 12, 1873): Victim Blaming and Public Sentiment

This reflection from Rev. J.P. Harsen of Wichita, published in the Newton Kansan, highlights a common sentiment regarding the responsibility of individuals in violent frontier towns.

- **Personal Responsibility for Safety:** "The moral we would draw from the shooting affrays of last week is, that as men value the safety of their lives they should keep away from places they ought not to be in." (The Newton Kansan, June 12, 1873).
- **Saloons and Dance Houses as Danger Zones:** Harsen explicitly states: "Most of the shooting and killing that has taken place in this vicinity and the neighboring town of Newton, has occurred in these places above mentioned."
- **Conditional Sympathy:** While expressing sympathy for sufferers, there's a clear caveat: "if men will go to such places they must expect to take the consequences." This indicates a degree of victim-blaming prevalent in the understanding of frontier violence.

5. Frontier Justice: Local Adaptations (October 12, 1874)

This brief snippet offers a glimpse into a more unusual and specific interpretation of "justice" at the local level.

- **Unorthodox Legal Rulings:** "A Justice of the Peace has decided that it is legal for any householder, from his own premises, to throw water upon an organ-grinder who refuses to move on." (The Newton Daily Republican, October 12, 1874). This amusing anecdote underscores the practical, often informal, and sometimes arbitrary nature of local rulings.

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Conclusion:

These sources collectively illustrate the tumultuous early years of Newton, Kansas, marked by significant violence, particularly in saloons. The community grappled with how to establish and maintain order, oscillating between formal legal processes (often perceived as ineffective) and swift, sometimes deadly, forms of vigilante justice. The Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident stands out as a pivotal moment where citizens actively purged undesirable elements, reflecting a strong desire for a more "respectable" and peaceful town. The ongoing discussion about the role of alcohol and the responsibility of individuals further highlights the complex social and moral landscape of the American frontier.

Thought-Starters

What were the circumstances surrounding James Brewer's shooting incident in October 1872?

On October 19, 1872, James Brewer filed a complaint against Benjamin Ferguson, Peter Ferguson, and C.A. Tracey, alleging assault, beating, and bruising. However, a published statement from Peter and Benjamin Ferguson contradicted this, claiming they went to Brewer's house to retrieve a plow, and Brewer emerged with a gun, shot Benjamin, and then jumped on him. They called C.A. Tracy, who was nearby, to pull Brewer off Benjamin. This incident was politically charged, with accusations circulated to injure C.A. Tracy's reputation.

What was the outcome of the legal proceedings for James Brewer and Benjamin Ferguson?

Six months after the initial incident, James Brewer was found guilty of shooting with intent to kill and sentenced to one year in the penitentiary. He was taken to the penitentiary on a Tuesday in April 1873. Benjamin Ferguson, in a separate case, was found guilty of simple assault and fined \$40 plus costs.

Was James Brewer's full sentence served, or was he released early?

James Brewer did not serve his full one-year sentence. He made an application to the Governor of Kansas for a full pardon on May 12, 1873, and was released about three weeks before June 26, 1873, returning home. His conviction was for shooting with intent to commit manslaughter.

Describe the "Horrible Affray" involving George Halliday and M.J. Fitzpatrick in November 1872.

On November 7, 1872, in Newton, a "bloody affray" occurred in the Gold Room saloon. M.J. Fitzpatrick, described as a "noted murderous and wicked man" under the influence of liquor, entered the saloon with a pistol. He encountered George Halliday, a "well known, highly esteemed and prominent citizen," who was also intoxicated. After a brief verbal exchange, Fitzpatrick struck Halliday with his revolver, then shot him, killing him almost instantly. Fitzpatrick then walked into the street, defying anyone to touch him.

How was M.J. Fitzpatrick apprehended and what was his fate?

After killing Halliday, Fitzpatrick defied arrest in the street. Marshal Johnson, observing the situation, borrowed a Henry rifle, crossed the street, and shot Fitzpatrick dead in the street. This swift action was widely reported and seen as an immediate form of justice.

What was the community's reaction to the Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident, and what actions were taken by citizens?

The community's reaction was one of shock and immediate action. Crowds rushed to the scene, and within minutes, fifty men armed themselves and swore to kill Fitzpatrick. Following Fitzpatrick's death, a committee of citizens was organized within fifteen minutes. This committee identified and ordered "hard cases" and "rough characters" to leave town, vowing to ensure Newton would no longer harbor individuals who engaged in violence and robbery. This event was perceived by some as a turning point for the city, indicating a move towards order and respectability.

What broader social issues or critiques were raised in the aftermath of these events?

A "Sober Reflection" article published in The Newton Kansan on November 14, 1872, highlighted significant concerns about law enforcement and governance in Newton. It lamented the deaths of Halliday and Fitzpatrick, attributing them to the unchecked presence of saloons and dance houses, and the lax enforcement of city ordinances. The author criticized the "farce" of the police government and how minor offenses, often related to public intoxication, were treated leniently, leading to more serious incidents. The article called for a stronger adherence to existing laws and a more effective administration to ensure public safety and property.

What general "moral" or lesson was drawn from these violent incidents in Newton and neighboring towns?

In June 1873, Rev. J.P. Harsen of Wichita, commenting on similar affrays, drew a "moral" from the Newton and Wichita shootings: individuals should avoid places they "ought not to be in," specifically mentioning dance houses and saloons. He argued that human life was safe for those attending to "legitimate business," but those who frequented such establishments "must expect to take the consequences." This sentiment suggested a belief that many victims of violence in these areas were partly responsible for their fate by putting themselves in dangerous environments.

Study Guide: Newton's Tumultuous Times

I. Overview of Key Incidents

This study guide focuses on two major incidents in Newton, Kansas, during 1872-1873, as well as broader commentary on law and order in the frontier town. The incidents involve James Brewer and the Fergusons/Tracy, and the fatal affray between George Halliday and M.J. Fitzpatrick. The sources also provide insights into public sentiment, law enforcement, and the social issues prevalent in Newton during this period.

II. Case Studies

A. The James Brewer Case (October 19, 1872 - June 26, 1873)

Key Events and Contradictory Accounts:

- **Brewer's Complaint:** James Brewer accuses Benjamin Ferguson, Peter Ferguson, and C.A. Tracy of assault, beating, and bruising on October 19, 1872. A warrant is issued.
- **Ferguson/Tracy Defense:** Peter and Benjamin Ferguson, along with C.A. Tracy (who is running for office and facing "false charges"), provide a sworn statement. They claim they went to Brewer's house for a plow. Brewer came out with a gun, shot Benjamin Ferguson, and jumped on him. Tracy intervened to pull Brewer off Benjamin, and this was his only involvement. This statement aims to clear Tracy's name.
- **Later Legal Developments:** Six months later, P.M. Morgan sues James Brewer. Brewer is found guilty of "shooting with intent to kill" and sentenced to one year in the Penitentiary. Benjamin Ferguson is found guilty of "simple assault" and fined \$40 plus costs in a separate case.
- **Brewer's Imprisonment and Pardon:** Brewer is taken to the penitentiary. He applies for a pardon from the Governor, stating his conviction was for "shooting with the intent to commit manslaughter." He is released by the Governor about three weeks after his application.

Themes and Questions:

- **Contrasting Narratives:** How do Brewer's initial complaint and the Fergusons' sworn statement present vastly different accounts of the same event? What motives might each party have for their version of events?
- **Political Influence:** How does C.A. Tracy's political campaign intertwine with the legal proceedings?
- **Justice System on the Frontier:** What do the varying charges and outcomes for Brewer and Ferguson reveal about the legal process in Harvey County at the time?
- **Executive Clemency:** Why might Brewer have been pardoned so quickly after his conviction?

B. The George Halliday & M.J. Fitzpatrick Affray (November 7, 1872)

Key Events and Public Reaction:

- **The Incident:** M.J. Fitzpatrick, intoxicated, enters the Gold Room saloon. George Halliday (also intoxicated) is present. After "trifling words," Fitzpatrick strikes Halliday with a revolver, attempts to shoot him, misses, and then discharges the weapon, killing Halliday instantly.
- **Fitzpatrick's Aftermath:** Fitzpatrick walks into the street, defying arrest. Marshal Johnson attempts to arrest him, but Fitzpatrick draws his revolver. Johnson retreats, borrows a Henry rifle, and shoots Fitzpatrick dead in the street.
- **Citizen Response:** A committee is formed within minutes, ordering "hard cases" and "rough characters" to leave town. Saloons are reportedly closed by force, and the town is "virtually put under martial law" by farmers and "better citizens."
- **Newspaper Accounts and Moralizing:** The Newton Kansan describes it as a "Horrible Affray" but also one of "the best days our thriving young city has ever seen," as it signifies citizens taking control against lawlessness.
- **Other papers like The Daily Democrat and The New York Sun** report the shooting of a "Justice Holiday" by a "desperado."
- **The Hutchinson News** connects the affray to earlier robbery attempts and uses it as an example of what happens when saloons are seen as signs of prosperity.

- The Newton Kansan later publishes a "Sober Reflection" criticizing the city's officials and police for lax enforcement of ordinances, linking it to the recent "sad events."
- Halliday's Background and Aftermath: Halliday was a Scotchman, a land and law businessman, and a Mason. He leaves a young wife. His body is initially buried in "Boot Hill" and later moved to Masonic grounds in the city cemetery.
- "Peep" Newton Correction: A correction clarifies that P. Newton, the saloon keeper, was not shot, but the man who took his place was.

Themes and Questions:

- Frontier Justice vs. Formal Law: How do the actions of Marshal Johnson and the citizens' committee exemplify "frontier justice"? How does this contrast with the formal legal system seen in the Brewer case?
- Role of Alcohol and Saloons: The sources repeatedly link the violence to intoxication and saloons. What role do these establishments play in the narrative of lawlessness?
- Public Opinion and Morality: How do the newspaper accounts shape public perception of the events? What "morals" are drawn from the affray?
- Civic Action and Vigilantism: What does the immediate formation of a citizens' committee and the expulsion of "bad characters" suggest about the community's response to perceived threats?
- Newspaper Bias and Accuracy: How do different newspapers portray the events, and what do the corrections and retractions suggest about reporting standards of the time?
- Memory and Commemoration: How is Halliday remembered by the community (Masonic resolutions, later body removal)?

C. The Moral and Frontier Justice (General Commentary)

- Rev. J.P. Harsen's Sermon (June 12, 1873): Harsen argues that most shootings occur in saloons and dance houses. He suggests that if people avoid these places and attend to "legitimate business," human life is safe. He states that while there is sympathy for sufferers, those who frequent such places "must expect to take the consequences."
- Kansas City Justice of the Peace Ruling (October 12, 1874): A decision that a householder can legally throw water on an organ-grinder who refuses to move on.

Themes and Questions:

- Personal Responsibility vs. Systemic Failure: How does Harsen's "moral" place responsibility for violence on individuals' choices rather than societal or governmental failures?
- Defining "Legitimate Business": What does Harsen's statement imply about what constitutes acceptable behavior and places in a frontier town?
- Scope of Frontier Justice: How does the organ-grinder ruling, though seemingly minor, reflect a broader theme of informal or local interpretations of law on the frontier?
- Perceptions of Safety: How do contemporary observers like Harsen assess the safety of frontier towns?

Quiz

1. What was the initial accusation made by James Brewer, and against whom was it made?
2. How did the sworn statement from Peter and Benjamin Ferguson contradict James Brewer's initial complaint regarding C.A. Tracy's involvement?
3. What was the final legal outcome for James Brewer in the P.M. Morgan lawsuit?
4. What was the immediate cause of George Halliday's death, and who was responsible?
5. How did Marshal Johnson respond to M.J. Fitzpatrick's defiance after Halliday's shooting?
6. Describe the immediate actions taken by the citizens of Newton following the Halliday-Fitzpatrick affray, beyond the Marshal's actions.
7. How did The Newton Kansan initially frame the overall impact of the Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident on the city?
8. What "moral" did Rev. J.P. Harsen draw from the shooting affrays in Newton and Wichita?
9. According to The Newton Kansan's "Sober Reflection," what was the main critique of Newton's city officials and police after the Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident?

10. Where were George Halliday's remains initially buried, and where were they later moved?

Quiz Answer Key

1. James Brewer made a complaint on oath, charging Benjamin Ferguson, Peter Ferguson, and C.A. Tracy with unlawfully, feloniously, maliciously, and with intent assaulting, beating, and bruising him on October 19, 1872. A warrant was subsequently issued for their arrest.
2. The Fergusons' sworn statement claimed that C.A. Tracy only intervened to pull James Brewer off Benjamin Ferguson after Brewer had shot Benjamin. They asserted this was Tracy's sole involvement, directly refuting the idea that Tracy participated in an assault or beating of Brewer.
3. James Brewer was found guilty of shooting with intent to kill in a lawsuit filed by P.M. Morgan. He was sentenced to one year in the Penitentiary, though he was later pardoned by the Governor after serving a short time.
4. George Halliday died after M.J. Fitzpatrick struck him with a revolver, then fired it at his breast, killing him almost instantly. The incident occurred in the Gold Room saloon following some "trifling words" between the two men.
5. After Fitzpatrick defied arrest, Marshal Johnson crossed the street, borrowed a Henry rifle, and then shot Fitzpatrick dead in the street. This action effectively put an end to Fitzpatrick's defiance and his life.
6. Immediately after the affray, a committee of citizens was organized. They took down the names of "hard cases" and "rough characters" and ordered them to leave town and stay away, effectively initiating a cleanup of undesirable elements.
7. The Newton Kansan initially framed the Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident as a positive turning point, stating it had been "one of the best days our thriving young city has ever seen." They believed it showed respectable citizens taking control to rid the town of murderers and robbers.
8. Rev. J.P. Harsen's "moral" was that individuals should avoid places like dance houses and saloons if they value their safety. He suggested that most shootings occurred in such venues, implying that those who frequent them must accept the consequences.

9. The Newton Kansan's "Sober Reflection" criticized Newton's city officials and police for lax enforcement of existing ordinances. It argued that their lenient administration allowed lawlessness to flourish, making the police government "a farce."
10. George Halliday's remains were initially buried in "Boot Hill." Fifteen years later, on November 23, 1887, his body was removed from "Boot Hill" and reinterred at the Masonic grounds within the city cemetery.

Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the portrayal of law and order in the James Brewer case versus the George Halliday/M.J. Fitzpatrick affray. What do these two incidents reveal about the formal legal system versus "frontier justice" in Newton during this period?
2. Analyze the role of public opinion and media (newspapers) in shaping the narrative and outcomes of the events in Newton. How did different publications report on the Halliday-Fitzpatrick incident, and what were the potential motivations behind their various perspectives?
3. Discuss the societal issues contributing to violence in Newton as presented in the sources. To what extent do the texts blame individual choices (e.g., intoxication, visiting saloons) versus systemic failures (e.g., ineffective law enforcement, lack of ordinances)?
4. Examine the concept of "reputation" as it applies to individuals and the town of Newton itself. How did the actions of individuals (like C.A. Tracy or M.J. Fitzpatrick) and the community's response to violence impact Newton's reputation, both internally and externally?
5. Trace the evolution of George Halliday's narrative in the sources. How is his death initially reported, how is he commemorated, and what new details or interpretations emerge years later with the removal of his body? What does this reveal about memory and history in a developing frontier town?

Glossary of Key Terms

Affiant: A person who makes an affidavit (a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation, for use as evidence in court). In the Brewer case, James Brewer is the affiant.

Affray: A public fight or disturbance. Used frequently to describe the violent incidents, particularly the Halliday-Fitzpatrick confrontation.

Boot Hill: A common name for a cemetery in the American Old West, especially for gunfighters or those who "died with their boots on." George Halliday was initially buried here.

Calaboose: A slang term for a jail or prison, particularly a small, local one. Mentioned in the "Sober Reflection" as a place where those who couldn't pay fines were sent.

Distilled Spirits/Liquor: Alcoholic beverages. Heavily implicated as a cause of violence, particularly in the Halliday-Fitzpatrick case and the "Moral" commentary.

Feloniously: Pertaining to a felony; an action done with criminal intent, often with malice. Used in Brewer's initial complaint.

Gold Room Saloon: The specific establishment in Newton where George Halliday was shot and killed by M.J. Fitzpatrick.

Henry Rifle: A lever-action repeating rifle, popular during the American Civil War and in the American West. Marshal Johnson used a Henry rifle to kill M.J. Fitzpatrick.

Information (filed against someone): A formal accusation of a criminal offense, made by a public prosecutor, without the necessity of a grand jury indictment. Mentioned in relation to the accusations against C.A. Tracy.

Intoxication: The state of being drunk; impaired by alcohol. A significant factor in the violence described, particularly concerning M.J. Fitzpatrick and George Halliday.

Justice of the Peace: A local judicial officer with limited powers, typically dealing with minor offenses, civil disputes, and performing marriages. James A. Popkins served as a Justice of the Peace for the sworn statement in the Brewer case.

Maliciously: With malice; intending to do harm. Used in Brewer's initial complaint.

Marshal: A law enforcement officer. Marshal Johnson played a critical role in stopping M.J. Fitzpatrick.

Masonic Grounds: A cemetery section or plot designated for members of the Freemasons, a fraternal organization. George Halliday's remains were moved here.

Modus Operandi (M.O.): A particular way or method of doing something, especially one that is characteristic or well-established. Used in the "Sober Reflection" to criticize the method of civil government.

Ordinances: Laws passed by a municipal government (city or town). The "Sober Reflection" criticizes the lack of enforcement of Newton's ordinances.

Penitentiary: A state or federal prison. James Brewer was sentenced to and served time in the penitentiary.

Quarterly Court Register: A record book of court proceedings, typically updated on a quarterly basis. The source for James Brewer's initial complaint.

Simple Assault: A less serious form of assault, typically without the intent to cause grave bodily harm. Benjamin Ferguson was found guilty of this charge.

Topeka: The capital of Kansas. George Halliday had resided there before moving to Newton, and his remains were taken there for interment.

Unlawfully: Not authorized by law; illegally. Used in Brewer's initial complaint.

Warrant Issued: A document issued by a judge or magistrate that authorizes a law enforcement officer to make an arrest, search premises, or carry out other actions. Issued for the arrest of the Fergusons and Tracy.

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