

# "BILLY" SMITH IS BURNED TO DEATH

AT REEDS, THIS COUNTY—DELIB-  
ERATELY COMMITTED SELF-  
DESTRUCTION.

HE JUMPS INTO BRUSH FIRE WAS

Was Forty-Two Years Old and Was  
Deaf Mute—Came From Daviess  
County.

The motives which prompted Wil-  
liam Smith, better known as "Billy"  
Smith, a resident of Reed, to commit  
self-destruction will never be known.  
His death occurred Friday at Reed  
and was quite tragic.

Billy Smith, extremely unfortunate  
in life—he was deaf and dumb—  
walked westward from Reed on the  
road that leads to the mouth of  
Green river and about 10 o'clock  
reached the point where a number of  
hands were cleaning the Stanley  
ditch. The place where they were  
working was within forty yards of  
the spot where, on Monday of last  
week, Houston Leonard met a horri-  
ble death in the explosion of a charge  
of dynamite that had been placed  
under a stump.

In the only language known to the  
unfortunate man, working his fingers  
in the deaf mute language, he was  
conversing with Jeff Bentley, the  
overseer of the work.—He had just  
mentioned to Bentley that one brush  
pile—they had fired a number of  
them—was burning particularly well,  
its flames leaping into the air twenty-  
ty or thirty feet. Smith turned to  
leave Bentley and the latter, with  
his back to Smith, returned to his  
work. Bentley supposed that Smith  
had started back home and, upon  
hearing a noise and turning around,  
was horrified to see Smith lean into

was horrified to see Smith leap into the center of the burning brush pile and fall. He rolled over and Bentley ran up to him and succeeded in pulling him away from the fire and extinguished his burning clothes by throwing water over him. He had been burned on both sides of his body and his legs and hands were burned, but his face was unscathed.

Smith was immediately taken to his home where he was given aid by Dr. G. E. Mitchell. Smith endured the terrible agony of his pains stoically, the only sound he could make being a heart rending mumbling which no one could understand.

Smith died about midnight and was buried Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Brick Wall grave yard, Rev. Luke Lacer, of the General Baptist church, conducting the ceremony.

When Smith made his fatal leap he had in his pocket a leather wallet containing \$216 in currency and \$1.09 in coin—he had a hatred for banks—and the purse with its contents were entirely unharmed.

Smith was forty-two years old and had always been quite a character around Reed where he was known by everyone. He was raised in Daviess county near Birk City, and had resided in Reed about twelve years. He was unmarried and is survived by a sister, with whom he lived and several nephews.

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