

lawyers and professional men of western Wisconsin. The majority of the men engaged in mining were Cornishmen, who had from early childhood been bred to that occupation in the mining districts in England.

The Bank of Mineral Point had been chartered for the avowed purpose of supplying the smelters with the necessary funds to carry on their business, and paper money was current in the mines. But after the failure of that institution, which occurred in 1841, the miners would not take any paper money for their mineral. They insisted on receiving gold or silver, which was furnished by the Galena commission houses. On every return trip from Galena I brought out with me, stowed under the seat of my buggy, one or more thousand dollars in boxes for that purpose.

I became acquainted with S. B. Knapp, the cashier and manager of the bank, and with Porter Brace, the teller, a young gentleman of engaging manners and a pleasant companion. When these officers were arrested, charged with fraudulent practices, I was induced to become a bondsman for Brace. My confidence, however, was sadly misplaced. He fled, but was pursued, overtaken, brought back, and delivered up to the sheriff, and my bond was cancelled. I was not acquainted with the condition of the bank, and supposed the embarrassment to be only temporary; an investigation proved it to be a thoroughly rotten institution.

William H. Banks, a young lawyer of Mineral Point, who bore a high character for integrity, and who was universally respected, was appointed one of the receivers of the bank, and went to St. Louis to negotiate some of the assets belonging to the broken concern, but he never returned nor was he ever heard of again. His disappearance has remained a mystery. All inquiries and searches after him proved fruitless. Although in the minds of many, grave suspicions against his integrity arose, yet his reputation and character for integrity was so well established that most of the people accounted for his disappearance as the result of murder, or some accident which caused his death. From that time, however, the people of the mines, and par-