



In the beginning

there was the wood. And the Merb looked upon the wood and saw that it was good; straight of grain and sound of body. It was worthy of being turned.

And so The Merb took the wood unto his shop and therein removed those pieces not suited to its destiny. In his hands, through many turns of the creator lathe, its form took shape. Then came much rubbing with ever decreasing grits of the Holy Sandpaper until The Merb looked upon his creation and said, "It is good and I shall name thee, Gabel." He anointed it with the sacred Varnish and pronounced it ready to serve Her Worship, Mayor Murphy. Thereafter to sitteth at her left hand, its Four Bear Mission to seek out disorder and bring it to peace; to demand attention when attention was required; to boldly pound where no gabel has pounded before...

Her Worship looked upon Gavel and declared that hereafter it shall be her province alone and that no others shall touch it. Wrath be upon any who should deign to do so.

And so it came to pass that Gavel sat at Her left hand lo those many years, untouched, unpounded and unfulfilled in its destiny. Whereupon one day The Merb appeared with a new gavel; shiny, well polished and circled with a gleaming gold band engraved with the names of the Council of Five and Gavel despaired for it knew its days were at an end.

At the depth of its despair, Gavel called out, "take me from this place that I might at least see what wonders that exist outside of this realm. And lo it chanced that a member of the Council of Five was nearby and overheard its plea. "I shall take you unto me my friend," he said, "as I go forth into the distant land of Iowa. Maybe there Ye shall find new purpose and meaning."



And so began
The Epic Journey
of Mayor
Murphy's Gavel...



(Certain faces have been blurred to protect the disloyal)

Our journey begins in the quiet western Iowa village of Glenwood. Gabel could feel the excitement.



Off to an early start with its strange, wheeled traveling companions.



Gabel met Mayor Blackburn of Malvern, Iowa and was given the key to the city. "Alsa, Gabel," the Mayor said, I have no need of you. My calcified corn cob serves me well."



Next he came upon the Mayor of Tubor but Gabel had a hard time taking him seriously despite his saintly garb.



Alas, in the Town of Shenandoah, city hall was closed.



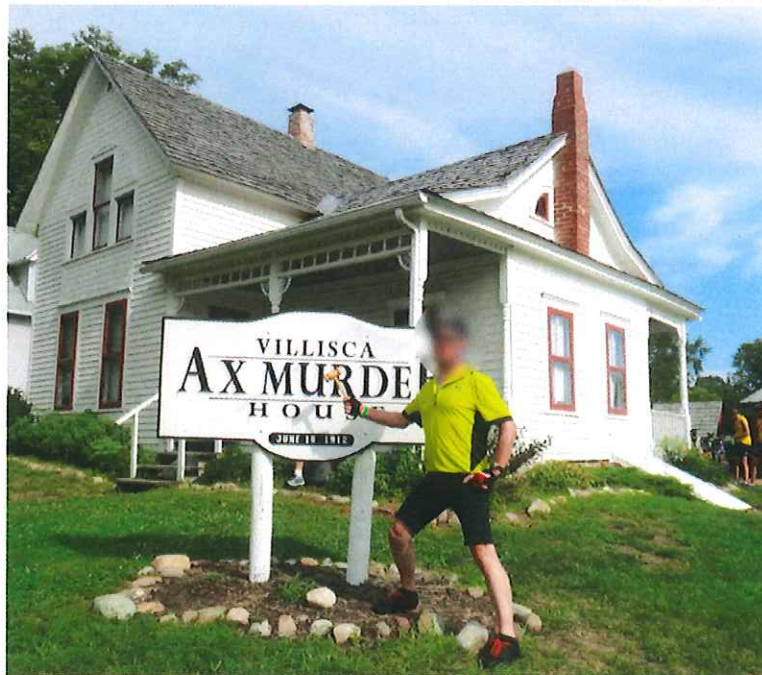
However, three fair maidens could hardly restrain themselves.
Gavel barely escaped with its honour intact.



In Vallisca, Iowa they held a parade in his honour.



They begged it to stay and be their gavel but Gabel feared any town that made a tourist attraction out of an axe murder's house.



Along the way to the next town, Gabel spent some quiet time with the local Sheriff.



Gabel's triumphant entry into the City of Corning



However, he had to flee for his life when he found himself in the hands of this man!



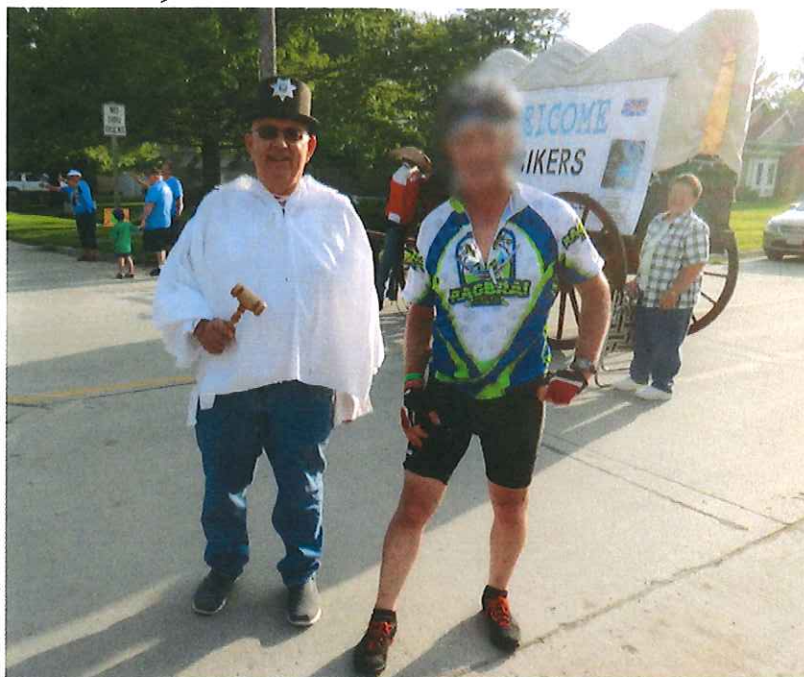
Another close call in the town of Diagonal. Gavel was taken by pirates but escaped when it pointed out that they were nearly 2000 miles from any ocean.



Rolling into the busy town of Mt. Airy, Gabel encountered His Worship. The Mayor took Gabel in hand but after a sip from the Red Solo Cup decided he was already smashed enough.



Not one to stand in the way of fashion, the Sheriff of Humestown or maybe he was Mayor, (he did not seem to know for sure) fell enraptured with Gabel but Gabel felt his sheet may have once had a hood and decided to move on.



While in Humestown Gabel decided that since he had been witness to much bull in his home town, he should experience some Iowa bull as well to round out his experiences.



Long days on dusty roads along with strong ale led Gabel to this well decorated place of repose.



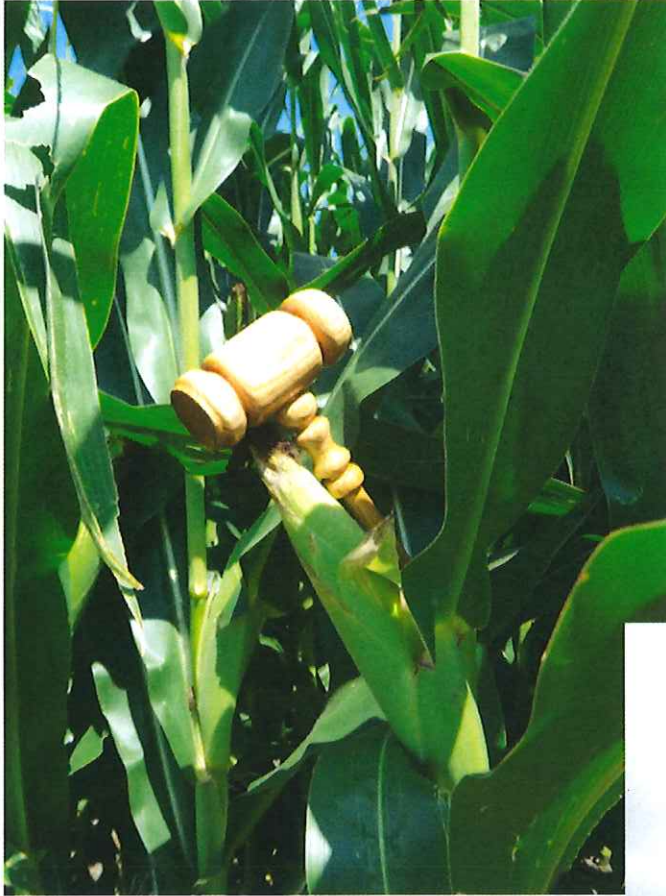
"Goly gee," said Gabel, "I don't think we are in Kansas anymore!"
"Ye never were ye knothead," said his nameless companion, "ye were
and are still in Iowa."



In Moravia, Gabel was introduced to a really loud son of a gun.



Finding itself in the middle of Nowhere without a bathroom in sight,
Gabel was forced to utilize a natural resource.

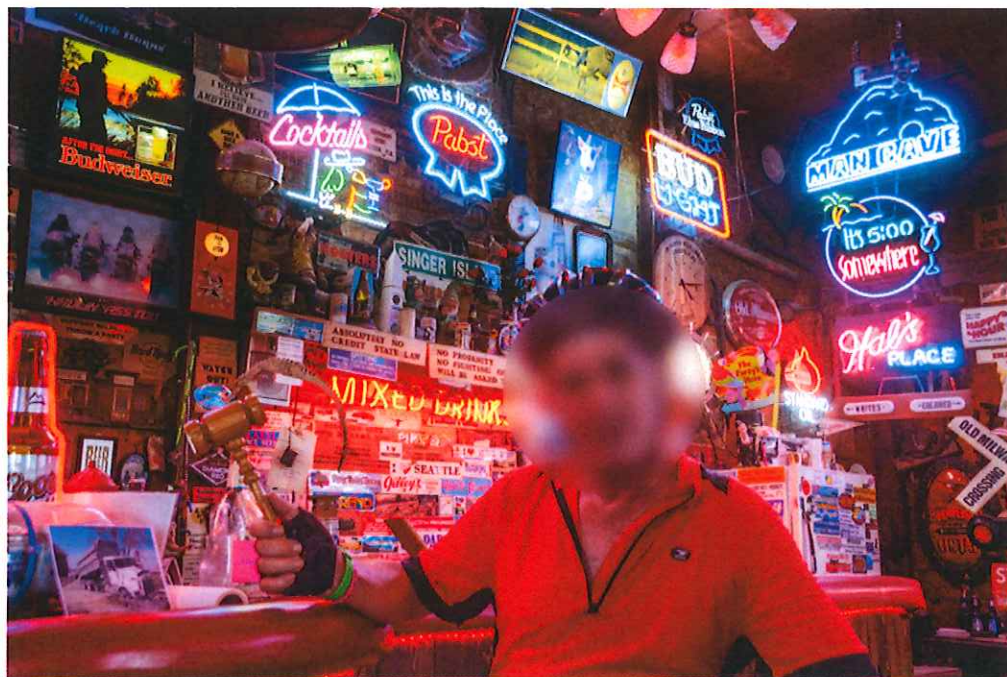


Having witnessed many others making an ass of themselves, Gabel
decided to give it a try.

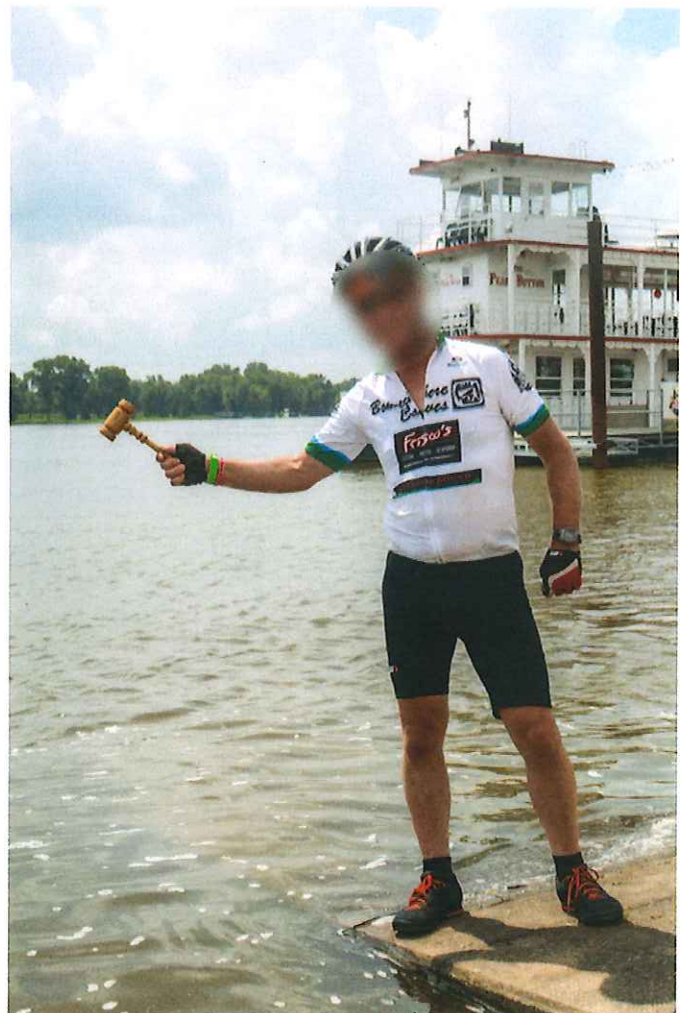
His quest nearing an end and feeling the depression that comes with a destiny unfulfilled, Gabel needed a lift. In the town of Sigourney, this troop cheered him up.



Questing is thirsty work and even oak needs refreshment from time to time. This wayside tavern proved a timely happenstance.



Fearing trouble along the final leg of its quest, Gabel asked for a military escort.



His long journey at an end and his quest unfulfilled, Gabel arrived at the shore of the mighty Mississippi River.

Resigned to its fate yet weary from its journey, Gavel contemplated suicide...



ear not gentle reader,

This tale has a happy ending. Upon its return to the Village of Eganville, Gavel learned that it had fled in haste. Nary was it to be delegated to the dustbin of forgotten power symbols. That which it feared was a replacement was a ceremonial object and nothing more. Soon the feared instrument with the shining band of gold was to be entombed in a steel box and sealed.

Gavel now feared offending Her Worship with its untimely departure and has left her this record of its journey along with its sincere regrets for ever doubting her devotion. Its only wish is to forever feel the gentle caress of her loving but sometimes sweaty hand.