

Common Mystics Podcast

Season 2 Episode 8: Outlaws, Gamblers and Gunslingers in Washington Co., AR

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00:00:53 On this episode of Common Mystics, we share the exciting tale of the Shannon Fisher feud, a legendary tale out of the Wild West. But does that legend hold up to new scrutiny? I'm Jennifer James. I'm Jill Stanley. We're psychics. We're sisters. We are Common Mystics. We find extraordinary stories in ordinary places. And today we have a story for you out of Washington County, Arkansas,

00:01:19 Jen, we are not here to bust anybody's balls. We're not? No, Nope, Nope. We're just here to shed some lights on the Shannon Fisher feud. And I want to remind you that I am so excited. I know you like this one. This is another story we happened upon from our Common Mystics road trip. When we went to go see our brother in Kansas and we found ourselves in the northwest corner of the state of Arkansas. We sure did. Can you remind everyone of our intention? Well, I shall do so. We asked the spirits to lead us to a verifiable story that we previously knew nothing about, but also, and most importantly, to give voice to the voiceless.

00:02:09 That's right. And we're driving south from Missouri into Arkansas. And I am seeing our mother holding playing cards in her hand as if she's at a poker table. Oh my gosh. What were you seeing? When we were driving past the Prairie Grove Battlefield? I so wanted to go in there, but unfortunately we didn't have a chance to because it was right around closing time. However, I was super drawn to the Prairie Grove Battlefield.

00:02:39 What about you? I was hearing in my head the Brandy Carlisle song "The Story." Love that song. Not my favorite, not my favorite. My favorite is "My Song," but I was hearing The Story in my head and it was just, it would not go away. It was just over and over and over again. Interesting.

00:02:57 She's got so many great songs. Anyway, I was seeing two things, like, in the same vision. I was seeing Native Americans and I was also seeing, like, an old time farm. Okay. Weird. And what about you? I was seeing, I was seeing, like, an old ranch and a rancher. And what was weird about it is that in my mind's eye through the ranch, I was seeing a horse trotting, but the horse didn't look like just any old horse. It looked like a horse that had like a victory wreath around its neck, similar to the, um, the wands card. Do you know what I'm talking about? When he comes back and he's on a horse with a wreath?

00:03:40 In the Tarot deck? Yes. Oh, kind of like a victory wreath. Yes. Like the horse had been in a race. Right. Very, very cool. So those were our hits while we were in the car driving through the county. Right. And we were in the, like I said, the northwest area of Arkansas that would be Washington, Washington County. Can you tell me a little bit about Washington County, Arkansas? Oh my gosh. Jill. So interesting. Back in the day, this county would butt right against, butt up against Indian territory to the west. So it was like the end of the country.

00:04:16 Mm. You know what I mean? Yeah. It was the outskirts of the US. So it's, I mean, it's a busy place. It's a regional hub of economics, education, culture, but also there is a very happening town called Evansville in the county. Right now, Evansville is right on the border between Arkansas and what was Indian territory, quote unquote Indian territory. You know, it was actually called Indian territory. And just for our listeners, I know that the proper terminology today would be Native American, but please understand I am reading from historical documents

and the place was legit called Indian territory. And so because of Evansville location right there, right on the edge of wild, untamed, "uncivilized wilderness" and Arkansas, it had a lot of rough traffic, including traders, cattle, rustlers, whiskey smugglers, and other sort of outlaws and desperadoes. And so for hopeful merchants, wow, this was a great place to set up and make some money because of all the traffic, but it was also a super rough place to be. Right. And we were traveling south through Fayetteville, down through Evansville, and we were coming into Oklahoma. That was our route as we were navigating during our road trip. So yeah, that's pretty cool. Right. So we are, you are literally describing for me in my mind's eye, the wild, wild west of like the TV shows.

00:06:00 Yes. Yes. Is that not cool af? I am so excited about this. It is! And tell me a little bit, you said we found a feud? Tell me about this feud. Oh my gosh. Well I think most of them, our listeners have probably heard of the Hatfields and McCoys. I certainly did. Of course, Hatfields and McCoys were two families who had this legendary feud out of West Virginia. Is that right? Jill?

00:06:25 West Virginia and Kentucky. And it went on for like decades. Oh my gosh. Well, Washington County, Arkansas has their own version of this family feud and it is called the Shannon Fisher feud. And of course it happened between the Shannon family and the Fisher family. Ooh. So tell me everything. How did it start?

00:06:47 Oh my gosh. It starts in December of 1868. And there's this young boy named Maurice Shannon. He's 18. So he's not that young, but he's 18 years old. Okay. And he joined a card game at one of Evansville's rough taverns. Damn. Now, Maurice grew up in the area. He is the eighth of 12 children. Did he grow up all rough and tumble? Well, he was the son of a thriving pioneer family. His daddy was Granville Shannon.

00:07:29 Gotcha. He was a rich boy. Richer. Yeah. He was a rich boy. Right, right. His Daddy was an orchard owner and a rancher and the family had money. So they would have lived on the outskirts of town. And Maurice would've known that Evansville, it would be a place to go if you wanted to gamble, visit the brothels, drink, you know, that sort of thing. Yeah. He was looking for trouble. So he's 18 and he's betting alongside a guy named Major Jarrett Fisher. We're going to call him Jarrett Fisher, but some of the sources call him Major Fisher. But the point is that this Jarrett Fisher, he was an older dude, like most of the other people around the table and a seasoned gambler.

00:08:19 All right. So, as they're betting, Maurice is losing money. This Maurice Shannon is losing his money and it's come to the point where he's got to bet something other than the coins in his pocket. So on his last bet, he bets this nice horse and fancy saddle because he's out of money, but he bets the horse and the saddle.

00:08:43 And guess what happens? He won. And he went home so proud. And that's where the story ends. Just kidding. No, he loses. He loses the horse and saddle. Maurice.. Okay. So here's the problem. One of the problems, one of the many problems with the situation is that the horse and saddle actually didn't belong to 18 year old Maurice.

00:09:08 Okay. That's bad. That's bad. It is. Who did it belong to? The horse and saddle actually belonged to his daddy. Granville Shannon. Ohh, that's even worse. And you can imagine that Granville Shannon was not too pleased to find out that his 18 year old son lost his horse and saddle in the game.

00:09:33 So guess what he does? What'd he do? So, Granville, Daddy, who's in his sixties, rides into town and he confronts Jarrett Fisher. And he's like, dude, that was not Maurice's property that you won in a game. Ooh, this just got humiliating. Exactly. That was my shit. And it's worth \$30. And so you owe me \$30. And that's a straight up burn.

00:10:01 Now \$30 back in 1868 is like \$570 something dollars today. If Maurice was already feeling bad about himself, this is like, he doubled dipped on the humiliation. Cause this is just bad. This is bad. Yeah. This looks really bad for little Maurice. Anyway, So, um, Jarrett Fisher is like, all right, man. So he, he pays, he pays Granville Shannon the \$30. Well, that's good. But now he's talking shit. It is good. And he's telling everybody in town, you know what? That Maurice is going to pay me what he owes me.

00:10:40 Which is fair. Well, which is fair. He knows what he knows where he sat, like Maurice, okay. This is my question to you. I'm posing this question. Do you think that Jarrett, realizing that Maurice was young and he did come from someone with more money, took advantage of the fact that he sat at that table? Or do you think, you know what? Maurice is like 18. He's like a man, kind of, like he knew where he was sitting. What, what are your thoughts?

00:11:08 I actually think it's a little bit of both. I think both parties are, are trying to take advantage of the other. Jen, this is the wild west. You need to take a side, you need to take a side. Well, here's the thing. Jarrett Fisher clearly knows that this is an 18 year old kid whose family has money.

And he obviously doesn't know how to gamble. Right? But on the other hand, stupid Maurice comes and injects himself into this hard ass city, into this gamblers game. I mean, what is he thinking is going to happen. Exactly. I mean, I think both, both are at a wrong, but at this point now I do not fault Jarrett Fisher at all for wanting his money from Maurice. I mean, a game is a game. You have to make good on a bet

00:11:53 Yeah. For sure. And he didn't have to give that money back. He could have been like take that up with your pussy ass son, bro. Right. But, he didn't. He gave the money back, but now he's like that little bitch owes me money. That's true. Go on. So, Maurice of course, hears all the rumors that Jarrett Fisher's talking shit about him. So, he sets up a rendezvous where he is going to sit down with Jarrett Fisher and talk it out. Maurice.

00:12:20 Now I have no idea what he was thinking, what, what his plan was going to be. And I don't think anybody knows what they actually talked about, but here's what we do know. Maurice and Jarrett did meet at a saloon again in Evansville. And as they're in the saloon talking, there's somebody else there. What do you mean?

00:12:41 Someone of note and the other person there is Finis Shannon, who is Maurice's older brother. Hmm. Now, Finis Shannon is not 18. He is 25. He's a man. And he is a Civil War veteran. He is a man. He is a grown ass man. Man. He is married. He has two kids. He's married to a doctor's daughter. And I also said he is a Civil War vet. So he's a war hardened person.

00:13:12 Okay. Who knows how to yield a weapon. And he follows his younger brother, Maurice to the saloon because he is worried about how this is going to go down. And so he does not come in and walk next to Maurice. No, no, no. Instead he hangs out in the doorway in the shadows, kind of out of sight, as this conversation is happening. Now, Jill, you can imagine that the conversation between Jarrett Fisher and Maurice Shannon at the bar, it's going to get heated.

00:13:50 I don't know what Maurice thinks he's going to even talk to him about. Like, I don't understand that logic, but go on. I can see it getting heated. Yeah. It was getting heated. And at some point, Jarrett Fisher makes a move. Now Finis would say that he thought that Jarrett Fisher was going for a gun, but Finis has already cocked and loaded and waiting. And he shoots a bullet right through Jarrett Fisher's head. Damn.

00:14:19 Dies instantly.. Damn. So what happens? So now Finis, Finis notably doesn't even run. He stops and he's like, holy shit. I just, I just shot him. And now, um, now we have a situation, as they say. Yeah, sure. There, this is the wild west. So the community calls a court session.

00:14:44 They bring Finis back to Fayetteville, which is the county seat. So they bring him there and they have like a short, immediate mock trial. And they're like, this is what happened. And everyone was like, no, no legit Finis was just defending his brother. His brother was going to get shot. And this is what went down. Right? Self-defense.

00:15:02 He's free. No charges. It was just an unfortunate accident. Misunderstanding. Self-defense. It looked like he was going for the gun. He's in the clear. Wow. Well RIP Jarrett, but that's not the end of it. What happens?

00:15:18 Because it turns out, as legend has it, this Jarrett Fisher, who was shot in the head by Finis Shannon, had a very famous outlaw brother. What? Why couldn't you be cooler like that? Named John Fisher or John King Fisher. Oh, I think I heard of him. Yeah. So this John Fisher is a notorious outlaw, criminal, a horse thief, murderer. Jesus. And he's out of town. He's out of town when this all is going down. He's actually at the races. He's at the horse races, out of town.

00:15:57 Lucky for Maurice and Finis. Lucky for them two. Right? So John Fisher comes back into town. He has his own posse, of course he does. And he takes Finis to Fayetteville and demands that he be rearrested and retried for this crime against his brother. Goddamn. Because his brother was shot in the head at the saloon by Finis. And this is a... This is not justice. Wow. And guess what? What? Same result. Same result. The court says, Nope. Nope. This was self-defense. He's cool.

00:16:31 You're late. We already tried this. Little late. Exactly. Alright. So, now after this failed attempt to put Finis Shannon behind bars for the death of his brother, John Fisher makes it known everywhere in Evansville that he plans to kill Finis. Oh, my. Uh huh. There's a ticking clock on this man's life. So now you got that happening in the town of Evansville. This is getting wild. Okay. So this is getting wild.

00:17:06 So basically. John Fisher vows revenge. And then what happens? Well, the Shannon's are hiding out. As you would. Because everyone's saying, yeah, everyone's saying, oh, this major outlaw is like hunting you. And so everybody who is a Shannon is like all crawling back into the shadows and crawling into their caves. You know what I mean? They're going home. They're locking their doors. But remember how I told you how Finis was married to a doctor's daughter? You mentioned that. Mm hmm.

00:17:37 Well, his father-in-law is Dr. McKinney and Dr. McKinney is in town, in Evansville. He's at the store. He's doing his thing. He's just hanging out. He's living life. He's doing his thing. He's shopping. Yeah, he is. He is, ya know, he's buying some, I don't know. What do doctors buy at the store in the 1860s? If you're Doctor Greed from the Swope family [episode], you're buying cyanide for "the dogs", but go on. He's making his purchases.

00:18:05 He's buying camphor and bandages, whatever. And John Fisher spots him, and he follows him into the store. They exchange words. And guess what? Bam. Through the heart, he kills Finis's father-in-law, Dr. McKinney. Shoots him in the heart and he dies lying in the shopkeeper's arms. That's messed up.

00:18:27 John Fisher, according to legend, is said to have confronted Dr. McKinney in the store. And he said, "I suppose you went to go see my brother shot and had pleasure in seeing it." And Dr. McKinney was like, what the hell? And then got shot in the heart. Wow. I especially liked that accent work. Oh, thank you. Thank you. I practiced. I want to say I'm really impressed with like, having such good marksmanship for those old ass guns. Like, are you serious? That's hard. You should see me trying to play Duck Hunt. I think he, I think they were probably pretty close.

00:19:03 Alright. Anyway, So now, now the Fishers, John Fisher and his posse, because of course, he has a posse. They're riding their horses. They're shooting their guns. They're riding up and down the streets of Evansville. Just daring, daring, anybody, come on out, come get us, come get us you Shannon's. Hootin' and a hollerin' Oh yeah. Flexin' their muscles. Yellow Bellied Shannon's hiding. So apparently, they do this for about a half hour. And then they ride out of town and to the nation, the Cherokee Nation. Cause remember Evansville is right on the border there.

00:19:34 They probably got tired. Okay. But this isn't the end of it, of course, because Finis, Finis Shannon raises... He's got his own posse and they go in pursuit. Of course, they do. He just killed his father-in-law. They go in pursuit of the Fishers. They can't live in fear forever. Right. And they, they do catch up and then there's a minor, there's another minor, a gunfight in the town of Evansville.

00:19:58 I wouldn't say it's a minor gun [fight].. I'd say they, they engaged in a gunfight, but there isn't any major killings that day. But if you're living in Evansville, whew. Right, right. There is an old man who gets shot in the hip. And I think a horse gets shot in the leg, which is sad. But, um, that is sad. It is sad, but that is the extent of the damage on that, at this time. So then we have a period of a few weeks and everybody's like, just kind of like watching each other. They're waiting to catch the other, um, at a disadvantage, but things kind of quiet down. Alright. Ladies can walk on the street again, for a little bit. There's not active gunfire in the streets. Got it. Until there is a dance, a party, a grand, grand event in Evansville. Well, that sounds delightful. Doesn't it just sound peachy?

00:20:48 Makes me want to get my corset and petticoat. Mm hmm. Around this time, the governor has offered a reward for the capture of John Fisher. Okay. And so now really the dance is kind of like devised in a way by the Shannons to lure the Fishers back into town. Okay.

00:21:15 They're trying to trap the Fishers. Oh my gosh. Right? The Fishers do come into town for this grand old party. And guess what? The Shannons are able to ambush and attack the Fishers. And in that attack, they kill one of the Fishers' party. A man whose name happens to be Scott Reed. Mm mm mmm. Ask me why that's important. Um, I was gonna say it. Go ahead and say it. Okay. What's notable about Scott Reed is that he and his brother, James Reed apparently are besties with one Frank James. Jennifer. Do you know who I mean, when I say Frank James?

00:21:51 Do you mean the older brother of the one and only Jesse James? Yep. That's right. So that's huge. Holy shit. So, now our little Shannon Fisher feud. This is huge. Now, our little

Shannon Fisher feud has gone nuclear because now it has got the attention and the Fishers have now got the backing of one Jesse James and the James' Younger Gang. You got to pick sides in the old west. Jen. Holy shit. Holy shit.

00:22:26 Nuclear. So, so now Frank and Jesse James are backing the Fisher gang. They got skin in the game. Because of the death of their friend. Mm hmm. Holy crap. Okay. So that's scary. Okay. If I were a Shannon, I'd be like, oh, I do not know. Fisher who? I was just enjoying myself a little soiree.

00:22:54 It's just been some shooting. All right. So after the Shannon's ambush, the Fishers, the Fishers flee town and they're hiding out in the Cherokee Nation. Okay. But it's not only the Fisher boys who are fleeing, but also their sisters. The Fisher women? Yeah.

00:23:15 The Fisher women are moving out of town too. So pretty much anyone who's associated with the Fisher family is moving out of town. Oh, wow. And the sisters move into the Cherokee Nation and all the Fishers are kind of hiding out and living now in the Cherokee Nation. Well, they tricked them, you know. I wouldn't trust another party. The Shannon's, totally. Yeah. I'm like, I ain't going to your birthday. Yeah.

00:23:40 The Shannon's totally tricked them into coming. And then they ambushed. Right. Okay. And then in June of 1869, the Fishers come back into Evansville and they engage with a couple of the Shannon posse, and they kill two of the Shannons.

00:24:00 There's still a reward for John Fisher. From the governor. Right. And that reward is the reason why the sheriff of neighboring Crawford County gets together his own posse to seek out the Fisher boys and their posse. So he deputizes Finis Shannon. Makes him all legit to go out and hunt down the Fisher boys. So again, next level. So not only are they sworn enemies, but also now it's legit for him to go kill him. Exactly.

00:24:35 Finis Shannon goes from outlaw to lawman. Plot twist. Uh, it's not even fair. Oh my gosh. So this basically continues with them trying to both get each other, but it does come to an end. How? Well, apparently, according to legend, the law-abiding citizens of town pretty much organize and drive out both families and they both move out of town. And because of the actions of the law abiding citizens, it comes to an end. Wow.

00:25:05 I just hear the John Lennon song, "Give Peace a Chance" in my head. The Fishers would completely move out of the area, moving either to the Cherokee Nation or Mexico. How do you like that?

00:25:20 Well, holy poop stain. I cannot even believe this. The Shannon family has 12 children. They're all a Jesus loving, thriving, pioneer family, that's notable in Washington County. He has a little Maurice. Really shit the bed on this one. Okay. Wrong decision, like to a 10. Right. What were you thinking? Absolutely. He goes to the bad part of town and eggs on and gambles like some hardened gamblers. What, dude, what? Honestly, what were you thinking? Right.

00:25:54 He sat down at the wrong gambling table. Hella wrong table. Engage with the brother. The brother of a notable outlaw, who has connections to the James-Younger gang. That is just not smart. Then his daddy goes and to this like notable outlaw's brother, again, humiliating to the max, to be like, yeah, that was my stuff. I mean, this whole situation with Maurice is just cringy. I'm cringing thinking about it. If I, Like I feel like someone needs to be like, hello, think, think a little bit. I know. And poor Finis. I feel for Finis because

00:26:33 he knows, like his younger brother is... Is an asshole? Rash and stupid. And he's following, he's following him in the shadows just to make sure things are going to be okay. And then when he shoots Jarrett Fisher in the head, he does it because he's really worried about his brother and he really thinks his brother's in danger

00:26:58 Are you over-identifying, just a little bit? Settle that down, just a tiny bit. Just a little. I know what it's like to have a stupid little sibling. I knew that was coming. So, you just got to wait, the insult's coming around the corner. Just right in there. All right. No, that's fine.

00:27:13 So no, really Jill, I mean, after reading this, I was struck with this Shannon family is an upright law abiding bunch of people. And really just this younger brother makes a bad choice and just gets caught up in this whole feud because of the Fisher's involvement with these hard-ass criminals.

00:27:34 It is an intriguing legend. It's very intriguing. However, not much of that is true. What do you mean? What do you mean? Well, Jen, I, as you know, am a subscriber to newspapers.com and ancestry.com. And none of this... I know, not sponsors, but we're open to it... None of this checks out, like none of the paperwork checks out at all. So I had written down some of the things that we did find, some of the actual factual information about John King Fisher. Can you take it?

00:28:13 Sure. So John King Fisher was a very notable Texas rancher, outlaw and criminal of the time. He was charged with horse theft and that was actually his first crime, but he was also charged with murder.

00:28:30 Can you stop for a second? I just want to say, what is hysterical about his first crime is that he said that he had borrowed the horse, but just didn't mention it to the owner. I just thought that was clever. That's something like I would say I'd be like, well, I just, I didn't steal it. I just borrowed it. And just forgot to tell you. Yeah, what's the problem? I was going to... I was going to leave a note. Oh, you didn't see that note? I put it with the, with... on the tree. You didn't see? It must have blown off. My bad. I'm sorry. Okay.

00:29:01 Go on. Anyway. His ranch became a place where drifters, criminals and rustlers would hang out at and he was generally feared and respected. I love this. I love this. There was a certain road that branched off into two directions and there was a sign on the road that said, quote, "This is King Fishers road. Take the other." Damn. I frickin' love that. Wow. So, but eventually... I know, right? But eventually Fisher decided to leave to live a quieter life. He settled down, he got married. He became a deputy sheriff and then an acting sheriff in 1883. His life ended when he was gunned down in 1884 in a theater in San Antonio,

00:29:48 The 1800s was not a century that you would want to hang out in theaters. Apparently, dangerous places. Good point. Good point. So he was a real life, legendary figure, Jill, but there's a big problem with the credibility of the Shannon Fisher legend. And that is that at the time of the gambling incident, John King Fisher was 14 years old living with his mommy and daddy in Texas.

00:30:16 He didn't even commit his first crime of horse stealing. Right. Wah wah. This is not the same John Fisher. Okay. Okay. Who was Jarrett Fisher then? Was that part true? Jarrett Fisher? Yes, absolutely.

00:30:32 Jarrett Fisher's murder by Finis Shannon is supported by fact, by the Fayetteville weekly Democrat. Uh, the death of Jarrett Fisher was reported on January 9th, 1869. And again on February 3rd, 1869 and the Daily Arkansas Gazette. So that is supported by fact. Finis

Shannon absolutely shot Jarrett Fisher in the head in the saloon. However, John Fisher did not have a brother named Jarrett. John King Fisher did not have a brother named Jarrett.

00:31:06 Correct. Okay. So it appears that the legend has it wrong. And that Fisher is such a common name, Jill. Mmmm. It appears that the oral legend linked the famous John King Fisher to the Fishers of the Shannon Fisher feud, but there is no fact to support that.

00:31:23 So now, this legend takes a whole different turn. We're going to Cobra Kai this shit, because, and if you do not get the reference, check out, Netflix it is Cobra. Kai, you are not going to like Daniel LaRusso. I guarantee it. Team Johnny on that. Right? Tell me about it, Jen, right?

00:31:46 For all of you Karate Kid fans. Yeah. I mean this whole story now flips upside down because now the Fishers aren't a connected family. They're not connected to a notable outlaw. And by association, they're not connected to the James-Younger game.

00:32:03 But, what still is true... we have a rich, prominent family, who has 12 brothers or 12 children, some... the Shannons. The Shannons and some of them are hardened from war. And daddy has been a staple in the area since the early 1800s. So this is a connected family with wealth.

00:32:27 Right? And so Maurice, he's a cocky little guy. He's a cocky little poop. He goes, and he sits down at the gambling table in a rough ass town with seasoned gamblers. And he knows this because he's from the area. I can just picture Jarrett being like, okay, I'll bite. You know what I mean? Like, okay, this will be fun. Mmm hmmm. Trying to put the little cocky SOB in his place.

00:32:51 That would make sense. And he loses his daddy's good horse and saddle. Humiliating. He gets home and his dad is pissed off. Rightly so. He rides into the bad part of town to try to get his shit back.

00:33:05 Mm hmm. And he's not-- he's a well-connected guy. Well respected member of the community. He's not afraid. He just was like, Hey Jarrett, that's mine. I need it back. And Jarrett was like, oh, sold it already. But I got you. I got money on it. Here you go here. Cause Jarrett didn't have to do that. No, he did. Honestly. Jarrett could have been like, he could have been like, take that up with your little pussy ass son who came in here, brandishing your stuff. That has nothing to do with me. He bet. He lost. Fair and square. But no, Jarrett was a good guy in this sense. He was like, oh, I got it, dude. No disrespect. Here you go. But everyone... don't play with Maurice because daddy's going to come, and anything you win is going to be taken back because Maurice doesn't have anything. Right.

00:33:47 And also Maurice owes me some money now. Mmmm. Maurice still owes him money. Sure does. So, and I'm sure that Jarrett Fisher's talking shit about Maurice in town because I would, too. . I'm talking shit-- I'm talking shit about Maurice now. Right. So here he goes back into Evansville and the two of them meet Maurice Shannon and Jarrett Fisher, just like the legend says except--

00:34:14 Let's talk about Finis. Yes, that's right. So now Maurice is hearing all over town that he's, he's a little shit that doesn't have anything. Jarrett is talking mad shit. So he goes to confront Jarrett. But what he doesn't tell Jarrett is that outside the saloon door, his big brother with a gun locked and loaded, aimed right at his head. So as soon as the confrontation starts and Maurice is all being like, what, what, what acting all cocky... And then Jarrett was like, what you little piece of....what? And then like, he goes to go slap him or something and then Finis...ba boom... boom... shoots Jarrett right in the head. Right.

00:34:56 It changes it a hundred percent. Because it seems like a set-up. I don't think that he was going for his gun. It seems like a setup. Oh, it absolutely... It was an ambush. Mmmm. Maurice went in there to bait him, to bait him, to bait him, to be angry enough, to almost appear as if he's going for his gun. He could have just went to slap him across the face. They didn't even give him the opportunity to, they just got them all baited up, wound up all angry, yelling back at Maurice. And that's all they needed to set the stage for Finis to shoot him. So now everyone knows that, in town, don't mess with the Shannons. Even if their little brother is a little punk ass biotch.

00:35:35 Okay. So two things. One, it was unfair to Jarrett because he did not know he had a gun on him. Right. And he was completely set up. What about the fact that Finis didn't run afterwards and the witnesses agreed that it was self-defense? What do you make of that?

00:35:51 They literally just demonstrated what happens when you cross the Shannon family, whether they were right or wrong, because obviously they were wrong, but Jarrett just got shot in the head. So yeah. So Finis was all like, who's gonna, what, whatcha gonna do? Yeah, I'll go to court.

00:36:10 You think that the witnesses were afraid of the Shannons? Okay. And therefore supported that self-defense uh, narrative? Yeah. The Shannon's went straight to 11. Okay. And so it is the fact that this incident did cause a chain of events and one of them being the death of Dr. McKinney, Finis's father-in-law, but at the hands of a John Fisher, but not THE John Fisher. Not THE John Fisher. So there legit was, as I reported the quote from John Fisher, before he had shot Dr. McKinney out of the Daily Arkansas Gazette on February 3rd, 1869, a John Fisher was brother to Jarrett, just not THE John Fisher, the legendary gang outlaw.

00:36:55 Okay. So for me, this version changes everything because now, instead of this innocent, little Maurice sitting down at the wrong table with an, with a guy who has connections with organized crime and outlaws and, and Jesse James. Now it looks like the Shannon's ambushing, this Fisher guy. And now the Shannon's look to be more at fault and not so innocent and law abiding. They are the provocateurs. The provocateurs? Mm hmm That's what judge Judy would call em. Alright. Do we have any evidence to support this alternate version, Jill?

00:37:31 We do, Jen. Tell. There was a citizen who had documented the events in a local paper by one Adon Wort, in a local paper. Jen, tell us about it. He wrote to the editor on June 10th, 1869. He wrote to the Fort Smith Weekly Herald out of Fort Smith, Arkansas. Now we've already established that there was a John Fisher, not THE John Fisher, but there was a John Fisher that shot Dr. McKinney, but Adon Wort says, and I quote, "the Fisher boys shot Dr. McKinney after which they left the country. During their absence, the Shannons have been driving peaceful citizens out of town by threatening their lives, on account of their supposed friendship of the Fishers and by their insults and threats, they compelled the Mrs. Fishers to leave Evansville and seek a home with the Cherokee Nation. And when the young ladies visit town to make purchases, they are insulted by the Shannon's. Fitzwater, one of the party taking a particular amusement in it." Wow. Wow. So here he's describing the Shannons as real pieces of work. They're driving the Fishers out of town. And then when the ladies come back to town, they're enjoying harassing them.

00:38:47 I can just picture it in my head. That's sickening. Oh, well, you know, the other thing that they're doing is... Tere, there is a lull in the, in the murderous activity. And so they're lulling

the Fishers back into town by, by harassing the ladies. They're using the ladies and that's not right either. Just leave the ladies out of it.

00:39:06 I didn't even think of that. I didn't even think of that because the girls are going to go back to their brothers and the Fisher men to be like these Shannon's, I can't even go to the store. They're all up on us. And just like being really aggressive. And of course the guys are going to be like, that's not okay. And they're going to defend their women's honor, whether wives or sisters. Right. Oh, I didn't even think of that. So according to Adon, Adon Wort, who writes the letter to the papers, um, the little rich ass Shannon boys are offering a thousand dollars in cash and property to anyone who will kill the Fishers. Now that is like \$20,000 today.

00:39:42 Okay, now wait a second. Okay, now stop. This whole thing with Maurice started over like \$30. Oh. If these people have a thousand, or \$20,000 in today's money, this did not have to happen. Exactly. They obviously, this was never about money. This was about the street cred and everyone talking shit about Maurice, which again, Maurice kind of deserved, kind of deserved. Right. And again, the Fishers aren't a big gang [affiliated] family. They're just a dude that was good at gambling, apparently. And his family. This is just a family,

00:40:24 According to the legend, this all ends because citizens band together and oust both parties. But actually there is no evidence to support that. Not at all. What actually... what I actually find when I go through the records is that the Fisher families leave the area. They go to different counties or they leave the country and stay with the Cherokees or go down to Mexico.

00:40:47 Okay. so, basically the Shannon brothers are bad dudes. They're bad thugs. Yeah. Finis Shannon was arrested multiple times for bootlegging, for robbery, for not paying taxes and ended up dying like in his fifties. And I think it was 1897. Another Shannon brother actually dies from a gunshot wound from a feud in the street years later in 1871, but Maurice Shannon...

00:41:16 Maurice Shannon really, really takes the cake. Maurice Shannon lives out his life to 75 years as a faithful Christian who has 11 children and lives a wonderful, peaceful life in Oklahoma until he dies. That kind of bothers me. Little bitch ass shit starter.

00:41:39 I don't know why it bothers-- I know. I wonder if he thought about his entire life. Like I basically am an idiot and because I am, because of my stupidity, ten, like seven to ten men were killed. I wonder if he thought about that. I wonder. Anyway, what about the Fishers? The Fishers? Because the Fishers left the area, there wasn't a lot of ways for me to track them because they left. Fisher is a very common name. So I found the Fishers, but not THE Fishers. I couldn't attribute them to this feud.

00:42:14 As far as you could tell, was anyone ever arrested for any of the crimes against either the Fishers or the Shannons? None. No. Ma'am Nope. No siree Bob. All right. Wow. What I love, I mean, this is a tragic story in some ways. Um, what I love about it is that it is so much more compelling than... mm hmmm... the legend. I mean, the legend is like, oh, you know, Jesse James is involved in this... You know what I mean? And, and uh, you know, this John King Fisher's a big outlaw, but really these were just like everyday neighbors who were acting.... Right... Actin' the fools, with guns and bravado up and down the streets of this town.

00:43:05 It's almost by putting the James Gang and John King Fisher is cheapening the story, because this was literally every day life in the wild west. And how we come to think of the wild west. You think in this surreal fantasy of Jesse James, but not really... no, this was a war zone. Yeah. You know what I mean? Like it has this different texture to it. Like this wasn't like this

fantasy of Jesse James and in their exploits, this was just like, life in the west was just right where a feud can break out with people getting killed on their way to the grocery store. Like that feels to me like a war zone.

00:43:46 A hundred percent. Wow. Yeah. So are you ready to debrief? Yeah, let's do it. Jill. Jennifer. Hey, hit me up. You were seeing Mom holding, playing cards in her hands. What do you think that meant? I think she was showing us the poker game. I agree.

00:44:05 I agree. When I... Jill helped me out with this one, when I was feeling a strong pull towards Prairie Grove Battlefield. Why do you think that was? Okay. So a couple of things you didn't explain in the beginning, but you were feeling as if we needed, like you were being pulled back to the [battlefield]. Like we kept going, but you're like, no, let's go back. Let's go back. But we were like, there's no way we're staying here another day to do it. And reminds me of the historical buildings in Evansville were brought to the battlefields of Prairie Grove. Not only that, but it also has, it's like a very thin analogy for how Finis kept going back to be tried in Fayetteville.

00:44:50 Wow. What about, all right. What about the Brandi Carlisle song, The Story? So there was a Willie Carlisle from Fayetteville, Arkansas. That's like a famous country western singer. Weird. Had no clue. Same last name as Brandi. Exactly. Which is cool, but also The Story, it's like, they wanted us to get the story. Yes, the real story. They wanted us to understand the real story, the context of the real story,

00:45:17 What a cool breadcrumb! I love that. When I was thinking of Native Americans and white girls, that is obvious now that the girls, the Fisher girls moved into the Cherokee Nation and were living amongst the natives there. Crazy. Wow. And the old rancher, Jill. That is crazy. And the horse, with the victory wreath on its neck.

00:45:38 Ah, there's, there's so many different levels to this one. The old ranchers could-- Finis was called a rancher or farmer in some of the, in some of the census records, but also the victory wreath around the horse's neck... John Fisher, not THE John King Fisher, but John Fisher came back from the horse races when he found out that his brother Jarrett was murdered by Finis. So the rancher could be symbolism for Finis and the victory that he killed Jarrett and that being known by John Fisher when he arrives back from the horse races.

00:46:19 Wow. Mind blown. All right, Jill.. So who are the voiceless in our story? Well, I really think that, um, John King Fisher was probably like, just leave me out of this man. Like I, like, I did not have anything to do with this. Yes. I'm a hard-ass but like, not in this way. Yeah. I can't take credit for this. I was 14. Exactly. Mmm hmm.

00:46:46 He's like, I was still in Texas doing my thing. Um, but also I think Jarrett, Jarrett Fisher? I don't think Jarrett... Yeah... I don't think he was going to shoot Maurice. No, I don't either. I think Maurice came in there, like I said, baiting him. He came in there and he, he was being accosted by Maurice and he was like, look at this little bitch. And he was basically in my head, I keep thinking that he was just like, who do you think you are? And if he did make a gesture that was intimidating. It was probably to slap him, like literally in my head talking to you intuitively I get the image of, of a back of a hand. Like he wasn't even like, he was just backhanding. It was just going to be like, get outta here. I don't think that he really was after the \$30. I think he was just like this kid's a joke. Yeah.

00:47:34 So definitely the voiceless is Jarrett Fisher, but also all the Fishers because legend really paints them out to be this badass, outlaw-loving, connected family. And that's really not

who they were at all. And you see that they left the area, the whole family left the area. They weren't looking for a fight.

00:47:54 They didn't want to fight. Right. The way the legend has it. Not even in the legend. If you go to history websites about Arkansas, if you read about the sheriffs at the time they referenced the Shannon/Fisher feud as having connections to the Young... the James Younger Gang. Oh. Yeah. So yeah. It's not just like, this is legend, like in actual Arkansas history on different sites it says that this feud has happened, and John Fisher was THE John Fisher, John K. Fisher who was involved with the feud. Right. So this is like, accepted as fact. Exactly. And it's so far from the truth, poor Fisher family.

00:48:41 Well, hopefully we helped a little bit with that today. Jill, please tell the people where they can find us. Please check out our website, commonmystics.net. Find us on Facebook, our our Instagram page. And on Twitter. You can listen in on Audible, Amazon, Stitcher, Tuned in, Spotify, Google Podcast, and Apple Podcast where you can leave us a positive review. So other people can find us. Thank you so much for listening. Thank you. Good night.