

## **Wilburn Gets Life**

Fort Towson Enterprise – April 5, 1912 – transcribed by Ron Henson

The jury in the case of Will Willand [sic] assessed his punishment at life in the penitentiary. The case was hard fought by both the prosecution and the defense, and the jury was out with the case many hours.

The crime for which Willburn will serve the balance of his natural life in the state penitentiary is the murder of John Young on the evening of December 8, last. Young, who had been to Fort Towson, was returning home in his wagon, and when near his home at Spencerville a man stepped from behind a tree and emptied the contents of a double-barreled shotgun into him. Young was found in the road and carried to his home where he lived for several hours. Before he died he made a post mortem statement that Willburn was the man who did the shooting, and that he saw and recognized him as he stepped out in the road. Willburn was arrested on this statement and brought to Hugo and placed in jail. A few days after his arrest he refused to eat, trying to starve himself to death before he came to trial. The killing was caused by a feud which had existed between the two men for some time.

There were a large number of witnesses in the case, the whole Spencerville neighborhood, nearly, was summoned in the case. It was proved that Willburn had made many statements concerning Young which had great weight with the jury.