

The Cheraw Chronicle

"Tis Not in Mortals to Command Success, but We'll do More, Sempronious, We'll Deserve it."

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PRISON FOR WHISKEY DISTILLER.

A. K. Atkinson sentenced to Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta.

Savannah, Ga., March 21.—A. K. Atkinson, a whiskey distiller of this city, who came here from North Carolina, was convicted in the United States court today for defrauding the government by failing to pay the tax upon all his product. The jury had spent two days on the case, having many intricate points to decide. When the court pronounced sentence of a year and a day in the federal penitentiary at Atlanta, he said that many offenses against the revenue laws in Georgia had been freed upon the promise that they would never transgress again, but that Atkinson's case was different because of his standing and his intelligence and because he should have known better.

No Alternative Given by Judge Emory Speer.

A. K. Atkinson, who was convicted in the United States court at Savannah Saturday of defrauding the government by failing to pay the revenue tax on all the liquor he distilled, is a former South Carolinian, having been a resident of Cheraw for a number of years. The government officials say that Atkinson has spent his life in the whiskey business, having successively operated a barroom, a blind tiger, an "original package shop," and a blind tiger at Cheraw; a barroom at Hamlet, N. C., after being driven out of Cheraw through the alertness of the dispensary constables; a barroom at Savannah, after Hamlet was voted dry, and then a distillery near Savannah. He has been in the courts a number of times and his proteges at Cheraw were fined often and heavily by the courts for violation of the dispensary law.

Atkinson was also a noted gambler and there was usually a stiff poker game on hand whenever he was around. He was a great lover of horses and frequently won large purses at the State and county fairs in South and North Carolina. He is said to be a handsome man and a man of more than ordinary intelligence. He is married and is a man of family. Although he was "investigated" by the dispensary constables on frequent occasions and there was never a lack of proof as to the nature of business he was conducting at Cheraw, he always managed to escape a jail sentence and whatever fine was imposed he was able to pay.

The town officials of Cheraw, working in constables, finally made it so warm for Atkinson that he moved away.

Judge Emory Speer refused to listen to the earnest appeals of Atkinson's counsel, who pleaded with him to sentence their client to pay any fine which he might choose to impose but not to give him a penitentiary sentence.

Atkinson was convicted on one count and Judge Speer sentenced him to serve a year and one day in the penitentiary at Atlanta and to pay a fine of

\$100. He was taken in charge by the marshal after sentence was imposed, and, unless he is needed as a witness in the case against the government Storekeeper-Gauger Jones, will be taken to prison within a few days.

Counsel for Atkinson made an earnest plea for clemency. First, Col. C. M. Bernard of North Carolina, who was associated in the case, spoke. He referred to the prisoner's aged parents, a 68-year-old father and a 65-year-old mother, and a wife and two little children. His father, counsel said, is a wounded ex-Confederate soldier, and he and others mentioned are dependent upon the prisoner for their support.

Money Was Lost in Distillery.

Mr. Bernard asserted that Atkinson informed him that he lost instead of made on his enterprise near Savannah. He

ly violated the law. I have never seen a man who bore himself more worthily during his trial, and I am convinced that you have much excellence in your character.

"I wish it were possible for me to impose a sentence upon you which would be very mild in its penalties in the suffering you would experience therefrom. That indeed has always been my purpose. There are hundreds of men now, who have been engaged in the violation of this same statute in another form, who are at large on parole in my district, under suspension of sentence, working on their farms and making good husbands, good fathers, and good citizens. In fact, the practice of illicit distillation, which was so common at one time, has almost entirely ceased in this district, and I believe that it is through the result of

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pleaded to the judge to be as lenient as possible, to impose a fine and let the property which the government seized cover that, and then suspend the imprisonment sentence so as to save Atkinson from the stigma of being a convict. Counsel asked the court to do this and allow the prisoner to return to his home and take care of his old father and mother and the children.

Fred T. Saussy, Esq., also of counsel for the defendant, spoke a few words in behalf of his client. He contended that the evidence didn't show an aggravated violation of the law. He said the uncontradicted evidence showed that Atkinson ran the distillery from October, 1905, to February, 1907, and yet the government charged irregularities only between October, 1906, and February, 1907. Mr. Saussy said the prisoner practically lost everything he had while he was engaged in the business.

Pity of the Court.

"I confess to a very earnest and sincere pity for you, Mr. Atkinson," said the judge. "While I am convinced that you have steadily and persistent-

the clement methods which the court has felt at liberty to adopt.

A Government Distiller.

"Your case, however, is different. You are a man of fine intelligence; you were a government distiller. You were carefully instructed in every form and method of carrying on the business. You were sworn to the performance of many of your duties. You are a skillful distiller, and it must be true that the operations of your still have deprived the public treasury of several thousand dollars—how much I do not know.

"After a fair trial, in which your counsel exerted every possible expedient of law in your behalf, you have been convicted, and I think fairly convicted."—Columbia State, March 24.

Best Healer in the World.

Rev. F. Starbird, of East Raymond, Maine, says: "I have used Bucklen's Arnica Salve for several years, on my old army wound, and other obstinate sores, and find it the best healer in the world. I use it too with great success in my veterinary business." Price 25c. at T. E. Wannamaker drug store.



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