

The County Record.

VOL. XIII. KINGSTREE, SOUTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1897. NO. 45.

KILLING UPON KILLING!

BLOODY WORK DONE IN WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS.

MR. PHILIP POSTON, WHILE IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS DUTY, IS SHOT DOWN AND KILLED.—ONE OF HIS ASSAILANTS KILLED AND ONE PLACED IN JAIL.

Aaron James Shoots and Kills Elliot Snowden.

Both of These Last Named are Colored Boys, and the Killing is Said to Have Been an Accident.—James is in Jail.—Sam Turner, Who Shot Mr. Poston, Killed Near the Jail in Kingstree.—The Deed Done in the Dark by Unknown Parties.—No Clue to the Murderers.

The past week has been one of the bloodiest in the history of this county. Killing has followed killing in rapid succession. One of the deeds was committed right near the jail, and in the dark.

The first killing was that of Mr. Philip Poston, the next was Elliot Snowden, colored, and the third was Sam Turner, the negro who shot Mr. Poston, in the order named. Before the killing of Turner occurred, we had the account of Mr. Poston's violent death into type, so we give it as it was originally written:

One of the most unfortunate and deplorable tragedies that has ever occurred in this section took place early last Thursday morning at Mr. W P Price's store in the Johnsonville section. Mr. Philip Poston was killed and a negro, Sam Turner, was badly wounded.

The first news of the killing that reached Kingstree was very meagre and the reports were conflicting. It was at first reported that Mr. Poston and the negro both were killed—shot by each other. Another report said that the negro had killed Mr. Poston and a mob had lynched the negro. Nothing definite could be learned.

However, we obtained the following account of the trouble from one who was present at the inquest:

Sometime during the first of the week Sam Turner, a negro, had his buggy repaired at the shop of a Mr. Johnson, who lives in the neighborhood. When Turner went for his buggy he had some trouble with Mr. Johnson about it, and Mr. Johnson swore out a warrant before Magistrate L L Ard charging Turner with breach of the peace. Mr. Ard placed the warrant in the hands of Mr. Philip Poston, his regular constable, to be served. Mr. Poston together with Mr. Roswell Harmon went to Turner's house to serve the warrant. The negro went along with the constable and Mr. Harmon till they arrived at the store of Mr. W P Price, on the "county line" road; that is, the road which divides the counties of Williamsburg and Georgetown. Here the men entered the store and Turner asked Mr. Price to read the arrest warrant, which he did. Mr. Price then talked to Turner a little, telling him that he could not be forced to go upon that warrant. Mr. Poston insisted upon Turner's accompanying him, and they went out together. Mr. Price called Turner back and the negro again entered the store. The conversation which then took place between Mr. Price and Turner is not known. Mr. Poston called his prisoner, who re-

fused to come out. The constable and Mr. Harmon went into the store and tried to take Turner by force. Mr. Price shoved them all out of the door, closed and fastened it, he remaining inside. The two white men and the negro scuffled on and several pistol shots were fired. Another negro, Abram Green, who was there took a hand in the struggle, and when Harmon and Poston had Turner down, Green struck Mr. Poston on the head a terrible blow with a heavy billet of wood, crushing the skull. Mr. Poston fell back wards, Turner jumped up with his own and Poston's pistols, and shot Mr. Poston squarely in the forehead. Green ran off. Turner tried to run but felt, he having been shot three times in the struggle. Mr. Harmon called to Mr. Price, who did come out. Several men gathered around, and members of Mr. Poston's family were summoned. Mr. Poston died instantly; the negro Turner was picked up and carried to a negro house where he was attended by physicians.

Magistrate Ard held an inquest Thursday afternoon over the body of Mr. Poston. As the killing occurred right in the road it could not be decided whether the deed was committed in this or Georgetown county, so Magistrate Carter of Georgetown, held another inquest Friday. Mr. Poston was shot in three places, and struck on the head. Turner was badly hurt, having been shot in three places.

A warrant was issued for Abram Green, who struck Mr. Poston, and he was arrested. Threats of lynching were heard and he was at once brought here and placed in jail. A reporter for the County Record interviewed him Monday and he told the following about the killing:

He was at the store when Poston, Harmon and Turner entered; he did not hear Price tell Turner that he could not be made to go; he did not hear the conversation between Turner and Price after Price called him back; when Price pushed the three men who were struggling out, he was pushed out too; he did not "take a hand" in the fight, but stood off and looked on; he saw Poston shoot Turner twice and saw Turner shoot Poston twice; he did not pick up the piece of wood at all; he was several yards away from the struggling party all the time; when Poston fell, he only walked away to his home and remained there until a short time before his arrest; he did not know what he was arrested for until he reached Kingstree.

It will be seen that his tale differs materially from that of the others.

When Green's father heard of his son's arrest he got his gun and went to Magistrate Ard's office and demanded the release of him. Of course, this the Magistrate refused, whereupon old man Green began to "raise Cain." He was arrested for breaking the peace, threatening an officer, &c., tried and sent to the chancery for a period of 15 days. He began service Monday morning. Several years ago old man Green attempted to take a prisoner from an officer, and fared pretty badly as a result.

Turner was raised in North Carolina. He had been living in Florida for some time and only went to the Johnsonville section about two or three weeks ago. He was considered a bad character.

Mr. Philip Poston was the oldest son of Mr. Emon Poston. He was about 40 years of age. He married Miss Nannie Orr Erwin, of Charleston, several years ago. She and several small children survive him. Mr. Poston was one of the best known men in this county, and he was indeed, one of the best citizens in it. He was noble-hearted, generous, loveable and was a consistent member of the Johnsonville Methodist church, in which he was a steward. No man in the county had a greater number of friends than he. His untimely end is much regretted.

The killing of Mr. Philip Poston last Thursday has a bloody sequel. The negro Turner who caused the trouble and who shot Poston, was cruelly murdered just outside of the jail yard here last Tuesday night. It is not known who did the killing, nor is there any clue at all to the murderer.

After we had the account of the killing of Mr. Poston into type, the shooting of Turner occurred. From the story of Mr. J. L. Haselden, who brought Turner here we got the following:

Turner was lying in a precarious condition at the negro house where he had been placed after the killing of Mr. Poston. There were threats of lynching on every side, and, as a precaution, Magistrate Ard ordered Turner's removal to the jail. Mr. Haselden, G. R. Dennis and L. Cannon were deputized to bring the prisoner to Kingstree. A mattress was put into a wagon and the wounded and helpless negro placed thereon and the trip to Kingstree made, the party arriving here at ten o'clock Tuesday night. Turner's wife, his brother and two other relatives accompanied the constables and the prisoner.

While lying in the wagon, and the people who brought him here were near, somebody slipped to the wagon and shot Turner in the left temple several times.

The coroner was notified and held an inquest Wednesday morning. Dr. W. V. Brockington made the *post mortem* examination. He removed part of the skull and found two pistol balls in his brain. No one knew who did the killing. Just after the firing, Turner's wife, who was sitting in a buggy nearby, cried that somebody had killed her husband, and turned her horse and drove rapidly away.

The following is taken from Mr. Haselden's testimony before the coroner's jury: When the party in charge of the negro got to the gate of the jail yard and found

that Mr. Britton was away, he (Haselden) went for him. Mr. Britton came to the wagon, and then went around the yard and entered at another gate, got his lantern and keys and came to the gate near the wagon. Just as Mr. Britton reached the gate, several pistol shots rang out, in or near the wagon where the prisoner was lying. The men gathered around the wagon and Dr. W. V. Brockington was summoned. When he arrived the negro was dead. Mr. Cannon told practically the same story, except that while Mr. Haselden was gone off after Mr. Britton, several men walked by the wagon, passing right through the crowd. He did not recognize any of the men. Mr. Dennis was in the lot and did not see the shooting. Mr. H. O. Britton was opening the jail-yard gate and heard the shots. He saw the flash of the last shot in the wagon, but saw no one. The verdict of the coroner's jury was that the deceased came to his death at the hands of unknown parties.

The affair is shrouded in the deepest mystery. The night was dark and the constables could see no one around. They were not very far from the wagon when the firing was done, but they saw no one run away after the killing.

The negro Green who was implicated in the killing of Mr. Poston is to be carried to Georgetown and placed in jail. A gentleman from the Johnsonville section told us yesterday that there was danger of Green's being lynched, that the people of that section were much worked up over Mr. Poston's death. Mr. W. P. Price, in whose store the Poston-Turner difficulty began, is in the Georgetown jail.

A Christmas killing occurred near Lambert's postoffice last week. Following closely the terrible Poston-Turner-Green tragedy at Johnsonville, a negro boy, Aaron James, shot Elliot Snowden, another negro lad, from the effects of which wound he died Sunday morning. Magistrate L L Ard held the inquest and sent James up to jail. Our reporter went to the jail Monday, and in company with deputy Britton, had a talk with the boy about the killing. James looks to be not more than 17 or 18 years old, and he said that the negro he killed was about the same age. Here is the substance of the interview:

Aaron James, Elliot Snowden and several other negro boys were at Hemmingway's store last Friday night making Christmas purchases; a whole wagon-load of the negroes, including the two named above, started homeward, all yelling and celebrating the occasion; James had an old pistol in his pocket which he pulled out and fired into the air, as he was replacing it in his pocket the pistol fired again. The boys kept up their fun, and when about a mile further Snowden said that James had shot him when he was firing some time before; matches were struck and it was found that Snowden had been shot in the side by the accidental discharge of the pistol, the boys drove hurriedly to Snowden's home and summoned Dr. H. L. Baker; Snowden lived until Sunday morning, as above stated.

We could find no one else to interview about the homicide, so cannot give anything but what James himself tells.

MINOR LOCAL MATTERS.

AFFAIRS CAUGHT BY OUR LOCAL REPORTER AND NOTED.

Written in Condensed Form and Printed in Like Manner for the Sake of our Weary Readers.

Mr. T J Brown spent Christmas with relatives in Darlington.

Several of our young men celebrated Christmas by going hunting.

Miss Alberta Team, of Camden, spent Christmas with Miss Louise Gilliland.

Tuesday morning we were greeted with the heaviest frost of the season, and the weather since that has been very cold.

Mr. Edwin Hirsch left Tuesday for Columbia to enter the South Carolina college. Mr. Hirsch will take a course in law.

If the crowds in town during the past few days have been any indication of the amount of business done, our merchants have no cause to complain.

At the recent meeting of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Charleston, Mr. Louis Jacobs was elected District Deputy Grand Master of the 15th State district, which comprises all of the lodges in Williamsburg and Georgetown counties and the lodge at St Stephens.

A very important meeting of the local camp of the Woodmen of the World will be held next Monday night. Officers for the ensuing year are to be elected and other business of importance is to be transacted. A full attendance of the members is desired.

Christmas day passed off very quietly in Kingstree, everything was pleasant except the weather, which was very disagreeable. The weather was cold, and the rain fell nearly all day. The streets were practically deserted, only a few people standing around in little groups. An occasional shout went up from some crowd, but otherwise the day was more quiet than the one just preceding it. The hotels served extra fine dinner, and so did the housekeepers, and in all everything went along merrily.

Among those who spent Christmas with relatives in Kingstree we noticed the following: Geo. P Logan, Esq., of Columbia; W S Logan, of Charleston; Julian Jacobs, of Sumter; Clarence and Louis Jacobs, Jr., of Charleston; the following male college students: Heber Epps, L W Gilliland, Claude Martin, C J and A D Epps, W S Lynch and Ed Brockinton; young lady students: Misses Louise Gilliland, Mary Brunson, Alma Kelley and Ossie Epps; teachers: Misses Florence Beaman, Margaret Brunson, Ivah and Nettie Epps.

The negroes of Kingstree will celebrate emancipation day next Saturday. A parade, speeches, &c., will be the features of the day. Rev. H. M. Murphy is to be the orator of the occasion, and Rev. J. E. Wilson, E. H. Deas, S. J. Jackson and other prominent negroes are expected to be present. James Tharpe is master of ceremonies, and he promises the very best of order and that everything will pass off smoothly. One feature of the parade, as promised by the program, is to be one hundred little girls all dressed in white. The addresses, music, &c., will take place in the court house.



HE IS PLEASED

That is, the man who trades with us. We strive to please all, and we always succeed.

Give us a trial and see if we can please you. We are sure we can.

CARROMS,

A New Parlor Game.

Fascinating to Old and Young.

It is the very latest game Cheap, and everlasting. A scientific game. Just see it! Don't let a week pass without buying a board for Carroms. You will get more genuine enjoyment out of a game of Carroms than from anything else. Be sure to call and see it.

Point's Pickles

And Queen Olives in greater variety. Just call and look over our stock. We have an immense stock of best

Gill Edge Butcher. It is fine. Try a pound of it. You will be pleased. If you or your boy want a

Pocket Knife

Just call and see our line. All the celebrated makes at the lowest possible prices. Of course, everyone must wear

SHOES

Our line of shoes is large and complete. Prices right. Just call and see us before buying your shoes.

We have been watching the condition of the country and keeping acquainted with the times.

We know the tastes and means of the people, and the markets of the country.

We've got goods and prices down to the hard pan of an economical basis, and cordially invite you to save money by examination of our stock. We culled out the best, particularly in the Grocery line, for your purposes.

Prices are not given in this invitation. We want you to see prices and goods together. They help each other and will help you. Give us a call.

Yours truly,

Lesesne & Epps.