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CHARGES OF CRUELTY TO CHAIN GANG CONVICTS

INVESTIGATION BEING CONDUCTED BY F. H. DOMINICK.

Testimony To Be Reported to Next Court. Startling Revelations Made On Wednesday.

There were some rather startling revelations in the testimony taken on Wednesday afternoon by Referee Dominick, in the investigation, ordered by Judge D. A. Townsend, of the charge of alleged cruelty to the convicts on the county chain gang, reported by the grand jury in their final presentment at the last term of court. The evidence will be reported to the next court.

The reference, which was held in Referee Dominick's office, was begun at 1 o'clock and continued for about two hours, at which time an adjournment was taken until one day next week. J. B. Hunter, Esq., appeared for the county supervisor and the chain gang authorities.

Three witnesses who had been subpoenaed by Referee Dominick were examined and then a number of witnesses were put up at the request of Attorney Hunter.

Mr. Ben. M. Koon, against whom as guard of the gang several of the charges of cruelty were made in the testimony taken on Wednesday afternoon, died some weeks ago.

The testimony taken is as follows:

ALBERT SCHRODER, who is a farmer living about six miles west of Newberry, sworn, on direct examination by Mr. Dominick, said that while the chain gang was working near his place last summer, he had seen Guard Ben Koon hit a convict twenty-five licks. Then the convict who had received twenty-five licks went and gave another convict seventy-five licks.

200 LASHES ADMINISTERED. Then the convict who had received the seventy-five licks, testified Mr. Schroder, went and got John Jones, a third convict, and Mr. Schroder had counted 200 lashes which had been given John Jones when witness' wife called him and he left. It had taken four negroes to whip John Jones. The fourth had taken hold when Mr. Schroder left. Jones' clothes were removed and the lashes were on the bare skin. Year before last he had seen one negro whipped. He did not know for what purpose the negroes were whipped. So far as he could see the negroes were working very well. The weapon was a strap such as the convicts wore around their waists. He had once worked the gang two weeks as guard and had never hit one.

On cross-examination witness said he was about 150 yards away when he saw the whipping last year. Mr. Koon was the only guard present at the time. The strap was about an inch or an inch and a half wide and pretty heavy. He thought the whipping last year took place about the latter part of October or the middle of November.

On re-direct examination witness said it looked to him like the blows were pretty heavy.

ARTHUR WILSON, Mr. Arthur Wilson, sworn, said he had known a good deal about the workings of the gang for several years and had fired the engine several days last summer, and he had seen only one negro whipped, and that negro was given about fifteen lashes with a leather strap, not on the bare back.

PALMER DAVENPORT, Mr. Palmer Davenport, sworn,

and he had seen the gang a good deal about the last of last November when it was near his place. He had seen a negro, Henry Johnson, given about seventy-five lashes on his bare back. Witness was about 150 yards distant when this whipping occurred. The negro worked all day afterwards.

Cross-examined: witness said Mr. Ben Koon was present when whipping took place.

FOR THE DEFENCE.

Referee Dominick announced that the above were all the witnesses he had subpoenaed so far, but that he would be glad to have testimony taken from any witnesses the defense might desire to put up.

THE COUNTY SUPERVISOR.

County Supervisor John M. Schumpert, sworn, on examination by Mr. Hunter, said that last fall T. P. Richardson was general superintendent of the gang and Messrs. Ben Koon and M. B. Chalmers were guards. It was never reported to him that Mr. Ben Koon had cruelly treated a member of the gang. If it had so been reported to him and he had found it to be true, he would have discharged any one guilty of such cruel treatment. His instructions had been to give only a few lashes if necessary to make negroes work.

Cross-examined by Mr. Dominick, he said he knew of John Thomas, a convict on the gang, dying, but he knew nothing of his having been whipped seriously. He had sent Thomas to jail when the negro was sick, but on the advice of County Physician McCullough, the negro had been sent back to the gang. The negro had died a short time after, the same week or the next week or something like that. No inquest was held. Dr. Senn pronounced heart failure the cause of death. That was last fall, during the time Mr. Richardson was in charge the negro was in jail several weeks before being sent back to the gang. Witness said he went to see the negro while in jail. The negro didn't say what was the matter with him, just that he was sick. He was one of the grandest scoundrels on earth. Mr. Schumpert said he had told County Physician McCullough that the negro would play off on him if he could, and to send him back to the gang as soon as he could.

T. P. RICHARDSON.

who was superintendent of the gang last fall and until January 1 of this year, on direct examination by Mr. Hunter, testified that the supervisor had instructed him in case of serious matters to whip the convicts in order to make them work or to have one of the guards do it. He knew nothing about the whipping of convicts when they were given 200, and 75 lashes each. Today was the first time he had heard anything about the whipping below Mr. Schroder's place. Mr. Koon had worked three negroes below Mr. Schroder's house only one day.

Cross-examination by Mr. Dominick, witness said some of the negroes were whipped pretty often. From 3 to 5 to as many as 25 and 30 lashes were given. He knew nothing about the whipping Mr. Davenport referred to. He didn't think 75 lashes with a strap such as the convicts wore around their waists, an inch and an inch and a half in width, administered on the naked back as heavy as it was usually put on by the guards, would amount to anything.

WHIPPED ON THE DAY HE DIED.

John Thomas, testified Mr. Richardson, lived only a day and a half after he came out of jail. Mr. Richardson had given him ten lashes on his bare back the day he

(Continued on Page 5.)

HON. GEO. W. CROFT DIED IN WASHINGTON

REPRESENTED THE SECOND DISTRICT IN CONGRESS.

The End Came Yesterday Morning—He Had Been Ill For Eight Weeks—A Native of Newberry.

Special to The Herald and News.

Columbia, March 10.—Hon. George W. Croft, representative in the national house of representatives from the Second District of South Carolina, died at his residence in Washington at 7:08 this morning.

Mr. Croft had been suffering from blood poison, with complications of stomach trouble and heart failure, due to a protracted illness. Mr. Croft's illness dated back about eight weeks, when he experienced sharp pains running through the base of the thumb. His niece examined the hand and picked from the thumb a minute splinter. For a time the inflammation decreased and Mr. Croft was able to attend to his duties at the Capitol. However, it became acute again and the whole right arm was affected.

Mr. Croft was a native of Newberry county, having been born December 20, 1846. His early education was at the common schools in Greenville. He was at the Citadel when the cadets of that institution were placed in the Confederate army and Mr. Croft continued to serve there until the close of the war.

He subsequently studied law under B. F. Perry, at Greenville, and was admitted to the bar in 1869, and in 1870 located at Aiken where he has continuously practiced his profession.

Mr. Croft served two terms in the house of representatives of this state and also served in the state senate. He was twice president of the South Carolina Bar association.

He was elected to the Fifty-eight Congress (the present Congress).

He was a law partner of the Hon. James H. Tillman and was the leading counsel for Mr. Tillman in his trial for murder in the killing of Editor N. G. Gonzales, in which trial Mr. Tillman was acquitted.

TILLMAN UNDERGOES OPERATION.

Stood A Successful Operation On His Throat Yesterday—He Is Now Without Fever.

Special to The Herald and News.

Charleston, March 10.—Senator Tillman's throat was successfully operated on today. He is now without fever, and only needs complete rest.

Senator Tillman was regarded as a very sick man yesterday.

He has been confined to his residence in Washington for more than a week by a severe attack of grip, accompanied by a severe sore throat. He thought a few days' rest would enable him to proceed to his home at Edgefield for a change of air and surroundings. Instead of getting better he grew steadily worse and his physicians ordered him to bed.

The result of the operation on his throat today is very gratifying.

A NEW POSTAL SCANDAL.

Congressmen Who have Used Their Influence To Lease Postoffice Buildings or To Get Better Pay for Postmasters.

A dispatch from Washington states that another chapter in the postoffice investigation of last summer was revealed when Chairman Overstreet, of the house committee on postoffices and post-roads, laid before the house of representatives a closely printed document of 218 pages recounting the instances on file in the postoffice department in which members of the senate and house of representatives had used their influence with officials of the postoffice department, with more or less success to get increases in salaries of postmasters, additional clerk hire, and advantageous leases for buildings for postoffice purposes.

The cases are set forth in which members of Congress own buildings which are leased by the government for postoffice purposes. The members involved are J. W. Wadsworth, of New York; J. D. Bowersock, of Kansas, and George L. Lilley of Connecticut.

The history of 161 cases is given in the report wherein members of Congress figure in getting authorization for clerk hire in excess of the amount the office in question was entitled to. Many of these increases were only temporary and have been discontinued.

Among those whose "influence" seemed good with the postoffice department are Senator Clay and Representative Griggs, of Georgia; Senator Pritchard secured an increase for clerk hire for Greenville, N. C., from \$70 to \$150 per annum, which on December 1, 1903, was discontinued altogether. He also obtained an increase from \$40 to \$140 for Wake Forest, N. C., which was reduced to the former amount October 1, 1903.

Senator McLaurin appears for an increase in South Carolina. Representatives Brownlow and Gibson obtained several increases in Tennessee, which have been reduced since. Six out of eleven cases in Virginia are down to the credit of Representative Swanson, while Park Agnew's name also appears for others in that state.

There are accounts of 177 instances in the report, where members of Congress have made recommendations in connection with leases of buildings for postoffice purposes.

Senator Overman is the owner of the building in which the postoffice at Salisbury, N. C., is kept. The report says that on taking his seat as a United States Senator he offered to surrender the lease, but the offer was declined by the government, it being held that the lease was not invalidated by his election as Senator.

The report declares that the files in the postoffice department indicate that the office at Tuskegee, Ala. is owned by Representative Thompson, of Alabama. The report gives the correspondence between Beavers and Representative Thompson in his successful efforts to have the rent allowance increased from \$240 to \$300 annually.

Among the names of senators and members appear in the report as having made representation to the postoffice department concerning leases of premises for postoffices, and for allowances for rent, fuel and light appears that of Congressman Finley, of South Carolina.

REPORT CAUSES LIVELY TIMES. Washington, March 9.—That an investigation of the postoffice de-

NEGRO LYNCHED FOR MURDER IN OHIO

LYNCHING FOLLOWED BY FEARS OF RACE WAR.

Troops Ordered Out To Preserve the Peace—The Situation Is Considered Threatening.

Richard Dixon, a negro, was shot to death at Springfield, Ohio, on Monday night by a mob for the killing of Policeman Charles Collis, who died to-day from wounds received at the hands of Dixon on Sunday.

At 11 o'clock the negro, Richard Dixon, was taken from the jail and shot to death in the jail yard, and the body was taken from there to the corner of Main street and Fountain avenue, and hung to a telegraph pole where the mob spent the next half hour riddling the body with bullets from several hundred revolvers. The mob forced an entrance to the jail by butting in the east doors with a railroad iron.

On Tuesday a race war in Springfield was threatened and the mayor ordered out eight companies of the state militia to preserve the peace. All the saloons were ordered closed. Threats were made by a mob to burn the negro section of the city and a building was fired, but the flames were checked. The negroes were surly and moody.

SITUATION ON WEDNESDAY.

On Wednesday the situation was considered by the authorities to be more threatening than at any time since the beginning of the race troubles. It was estimated that fully 25,000 people thronged the streets. The negro saloons and negro quarters were ordered closed. The mayor issued a proclamation warning people to keep off the streets and to refrain from congregating in public places.

In the Mayor's Court.

The monotony of no cases in the mayor's court yesterday morning was broken by one case. John Kelley, coal black, was brought before the bar of justice charged with cursing and drawing a knife on a negro woman. Mayor Earhardt sentenced him to pay a fine of \$3 or serve 15 days on the county chain gang.

partment by the house of representatives will result from the publication of the report involving members of congress in that connection, was indicated by every expression possible short of a vote in that body today. With a whirlwind of protest the report was taken up by indignant members, their personal connection with it explained, and epithets hurled at Fourth Assistant Postmaster General Bristow.

"The Bristow report was conceived in iniquity, born in sin and has traveled its course until it has struck the public of the United States as a great attack upon a body of men as free from wrong doing, corruption, crime and irregularity as any equal number of men on the face of the earth." This was the parting shot of Representative Grosvenor of Ohio in paying his tribute to the report.

"That document is the production of a liar and a scoundrel," shouted Representative Hill of Connecticut on making an explanation of his connection with certain leases. He added that he should vote to investigate himself and also the fourth assistant postmaster general.

"There is nothing in any of it to impugn any improper motive or conduct upon any member of the house," was the expression of Chairman Overstreet of the committee, who combatted the idea of an investigation.