

The County Record.

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Postmaster Assassinated!

Lake City the Scene of Mob Violence.

POSTOFFICE BURNED DOWN.

Baker and His Infant Child Shot to Death and Their Bodies Cremated.

WIFE AND THREE CHILDREN WOUNDED

A Mob of Fiends Set Fire to Baker's Residence and When the Negroes Attempt to Escape, They Are Shot Down Like Dogs.

One of the most brutal and horrible deeds that has ever occurred in this State took place in Lake City last Monday night when postmaster Baker and his baby were killed and the other members of his family were wounded by a mob.

For several months the people of Lake City have been troubled with the misdeeds of the colored postmaster and several times have attempts been made on his life. The brutal acts of the mob that killed the poor negroes last Monday night are without parallel in the history of this county.

Frazier B Baker, a black negro, was appointed postmaster of Lake City last August. He was at that time a resident of Florence county, but moved to Lake City and took charge of the office. He moved the postoffice to a small, rudely constructed, log hut on the outskirts of the town and there the citizens had to go for their mail. Just after the appointment of Baker he was shot by some unknown party, but was not hurt much. He clung to his office, relying upon the United States government to protect him. In December the assistant postmaster, another negro, was shot from ambush by parties unknown. He was not seriously wounded. Last January the postoffice was burned to the ground with its entire contents. Whether this fire was accidental or of an incendiary origin was never known. For some time after the burning of the office there was no mail received for transmission or delivery at Lake City, but a few weeks ago Baker re-established the office in a small, two-room negro shanty that had been formerly used as a school house. The postmaster's family, consisting of himself, a wife, three daughters and three sons, lived in the little room in the rear of the room used as a postoffice. They ate cooked and slept all in the same small room. Last Wednesday night a mob attacked the building and fired several shots into it, apparently trying to get Baker out of the house in the dark.

But the end came last Monday night when a mob, said to have numbered several hundred, went to the house and committed the horrible deed related below. The following facts were brought out at the coroner's inquest Tuesday afternoon:

Baker's family were all asleep when, about one o'clock, his wife was awakened by some strange noise. Upon arising she found that the house was on fire and she immediately called her husband and children. Just as she did so a perfect volley of shots was heard and the bullets came whistling through the walls of the house. Baker attempted to put out the flames, but the firing caused him to leave that off and tell his family to follow him out of the house. The wife took the little infant in her arms and Baker opened the door. Just as he did so, he was shot down. The baby was shot out of the woman's arms and killed. The same bullet that passed through the baby's body entered and fractured the mother's arm. All the children screamed that they were shot. The flames of the burning building were close behind the poor wounded negroes and the mother made a leap from the house right into the face of the assassins, followed by her children who were able to walk. The mob then quickly disappeared, and the neighbors having been awakened by the noise of the shots, and seeing the burning building, came to the house. The woman had been shot through the thigh after leaving the burning building, and could not walk. She was picked up, and, together with her remaining children, was carried to the home of a negro friend about a quarter of a mile away, where they were interviewed by a County Record reporter Tuesday afternoon. The charred remains of Baker and his little infant were found in the ruins of the house Tuesday morning.

Coroner Burrows was notified and at once went to the scene. He empaneled the following jury and commenced the inquest: H H Singletary, foreman; H E Moody, Joe Woods, H C Edwards, John Webster, M B Spring, W W Moore, E P Prosser, Essie Brown, (colored), Tom Henderson, (colored), Josiah Graham, (colored), P E Severance. The only witnesses to examine were the members of the negro's family, so after viewing the remains the jury went to the house where the wounded people were. The sight here was horrible to behold. In one bed lay the mother with her left arm shot all to pieces, and her thigh pierced with a ball from a rifle. In the same bed was the youngest daughter, a negroess about grown, whose right hand was shattered and with a bullet in the groin. In another room was the other surviving daughter with her left arm shattered at the elbow. It is thought that she will lose her arm. Near her lay the 12-year-old boy who had been shot through the abdomen and whose left arm was shot almost entirely off. Two little fellows had escaped unhurt—a miraculous escape, as there was a regular fusillade of bullets.

The good people of Lake City had sent to the poor, unfortunate creatures food, clothing, etc., and they had received the best of medical aid at the hands of Drs. Williams and Fulmore, but the sight

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COURT OF GENERAL SESSIONS.

MUCH WORK DONE IN TWO DAYS OF LABOR.

The Eloquent Charge of Judge Gary.—The McCallister Shooting Compromised.—Other Matters.

The February term of the court of general sessions convened last Monday. Judge Ernest Gary, solicitor Wilson and stenographer Parrott were all at their respective posts, and the usual preliminaries were quickly gone through with.

The charge of Judge Gary to the grand jury was an unusually strong and lucid one. He called attention to the fact that if the grand jury would always do its duty and bring everyone who committed a crime to trial, that that would have the tendency to reduce the commitment of evil deeds. His honor spoke of the grand jury as "the right arm of the law." The entire charge was said by these who know to be one of the finest that has ever been heard here.

One thing that commands attention is the fact that the calendar of the court had not a single case upon it when the court convened Monday morning, and the entire "machinery of justice" was at a standstill after the retirement of the grand jury until a true bill was presented. The Judge spoke of this fact, saying that in all his career as a lawyer and Judge he had never before seen a court calendar entirely clear.

The case of shooting Mr. George McAllister by his wife was compromised, and the Solicitor nolle prossed the case.

The grand jury brought in "true bills" against Billy Scott, colored, charged with forgery; Jno McFaddin, colored, burglary and larceny, and Henry David and Jane Matthews, white, adultery. The first case called for trial was that against Billy Scott. Billy was beseeched for an explanation of his eccentric demeanor last March, he having while in need of some goods fractured section 295 of the statutes of South Carolina with a forged order on Mr. J S McCollough, drawn on Mr. W H Kennedy. Billy's explanation did not suit the jury, so, at the suggestion of the presiding Judge, the negro accepted a job on the county chaingang for a period of one year.

The next case called was that against Henry Davis and Jane Matthews. Davis had never been arrested, so only the woman was tried. She was without counsel or witnesses, and made no defense whatever. She was convicted, and the Judge sentenced her to pay a fine of \$100 or to be confined in the county jail for a period of six months.

The case against John McFaddin was then called. John is a boy in years and he fell in love with the cotton in a Mr. Rodgers' ginhouse. So much enamored with the cotton was he that he became an infidel on the subject of law and proceeded to run things his own, sweet, black way, which way was to break into the ginhouse and purloin 26 cents worth of the fleecy staple. Confinement in the county jail, however, somewhat cured John of his unbelief, and he acknowledged stealing the cotton, and the Judge recommended him to the tender care of the superintendent of the county chaingang. John will remain under the care of the su-

perintendent until the expiration of six months, unless sooner pardoned by the Governor.

William Kennedy, white, was next called. He was too fond of getting married, and had joined himself in the holy bonds of wedlock to more women than the law allows, so he was charged with breaking the statute relating to bigamy. Kennedy had evidently become very much grieved at having been so unwise as to take unto himself more than one wife for when he was arraigned for trial he plead guilty. The Judge was very light on the unfortunate bigamist, and sentenced him to pay a fine of \$50 and serve of the county chaingang for a term of six months.

At the conclusion of this case the Judge adjourned court until 10 o'clock Wednesday morning, Tuesday being a legal holiday (Washington's birthday).

Wednesday morning the case against Mr. J Z McConnell, Jr., was called. The defendant entered a plea of guilty, and made a statement that, while he did use the funds held in trust by him while judge of probate, it was not done with fraudulent intent, he hoping to be able to replace the money. The sentence of the court was that Mr. McConnell should be confined in the county jail for one year and pay a fine of one thousand dollars.

The case against the boy Abram James, colored, was called next. The grand jury had found "ho bill" as to the charge of murder, but a "true bill" as to carrying concealed weapons. James plead guilty as to the charge of carrying concealed weapons and the judge in sentencing him, said that as he had been in jail for about two months, he would make the sentence light. He will work on the chaingang till March 1st.

David Spring and Lugenia Castleman, white, plead guilty to the charge of adultery, and were sentenced to six months in jail or one hundred dollars fine each.

"No bill" was found in the case against George Pinkney, charged with selling liquor.

The only other case to come up was that against J M Hicks, Douglas Hicks, Samuel Brown and Henry W Lee, all white, charged with riot. This case was continued, upon motion of John A. Kelley, Esq. defendants' attorney, until the next term.

Important Notice.

Owing to the burning of the Lake City postoffice, we have sent this week's Record to our Lake City subscribers to Mr. W. J. Severance, who will deliver them upon call.

For Sale.

One hundred bushels of King's latest improved cotton seed at \$1 per bushel. In lots of five bushels or more, 75cts a bushel. Terms, cash with order. Apply to W G Rich, Gourdin, S. C.

Dr. W J Garner, of Darlington, died at his home after an illness of only a few days last Saturday. Dr. Garner was married last July to Miss Carrie Montgomery, a daughter of Mr. E P Montgomery, of this county. Dr. Garner was one of the most prominent physicians in the State. He was a member of the State board of medical examiners, vice-president of the State club, and held several other positions of honor and trust at the time of his death.

FIERCE FOREST FIRES RAGE.

GREAT DESTRUCTION OF VALUABLE PROPERTY.

Every Section of Williamsburg County Visited by the Flames.

Terrible forest fires have recently swept the State. From almost every county comes the reports that great loss of property has been sustained. The following letters to the County Record show what the loss was in this county. From Dock we received the following:

This section was visited on the 15th by the most destructive forest fires ever seen in these parts. One came from towards Black river and passed through the Messrs. Rhem's turpentine farm, playing havoc with the timber and burning several of their tenement houses. Some of the inmates of the houses barely escaped with their lives. The dwelling of Mr. F Rhem was saved with great difficulty, as was a number of houses near by. The store was in great danger also. The fire passed on from that place towards the river. The wind was blowing a perfect gale, at times fifty miles an hour.

On the same afternoon some negroes let fire get out near Dr. J R Brockinton's and in a few minutes it had swept across the Georgetown road, going towards Mingo swamp. Mr. B F Brockinton was cutting turpentine boxes nearby, and hear with his men, came promptly to our rescue. All worked like Turks, but to no avail. We would hoe around the dead trees, but the wind would literally blow the fire from the level ground, and set fire to the top of trees at least three hundred yards distant. Mrs. McCutchen lost several thousand dollars worth of timber.

The wind veered around to the northeast and the fire back across the road. Then Dr. J R Brockinton's turpentine farm went under. Mrs. A Brockinton's quickly followed. Dr. Brockinton had great difficulty in saving his dwelling, barns, etc. Capt. F. E. Taylor lost all of his timber on the Wilson place. There was no rest or sleep for anyone in the vicinity. Messrs. Gardner, Stuckey, C E and W S Brockinton rendered valuable aid in fighting the fire Thursday night.

The third fire was let out on the Burrows place by negroes and was put out with great difficulty. Mr. R D Gamble had to fight with all his ability to save his place. I am not word painter enough to describe the fire in all its horrors. Old dead trees, covered with rotten wood, would take fire, when the wind would come, like so many screaming devils, and hurl it through the air for hundreds of yards. The falling of trees and the roar and hissing of the flames was enough to bring awe to the stoutest heart.

The loss from these fires are hard to place. The dryness will cause nearly all of the old boxed timber to die, therefore the amount will be great. I do not think I will be far wrong when I say fifty thousand dollars would not cover the loss. What damage was done beyond Morrisville I am unable to say, so I do not include in my estimate the damage done there. The pasture fence from Mrs. Brockinton's to the Wilson place was consumed. What will

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SHOES SHOES

We have the largest stock of SHOES that has ever been brought to this market and they are going at prices that will surprise you.

We are making a big run on

Hamestrings,

HAMESTRINGS,

Hamestrings.

You ought to see our

Double-Twisted

MULE BITS.

See this "scorcher":
11 Yards of Rope for
10 cents.

Bridles, 50c.

Bridles, 50c

Bridles, 50c.

BUCKETS, 2 brass
hoops, for 20c.

CURRY

COMBS.

Back Bands,

Back Bands,

Lesesne & Epps,

Kingstree, S. C.