

# INVESTIGATION OF WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY DISPENSARY BOARD.

AUDITOR W. B. WEST AND SOLICITOR W. H. WELLS PROBE THOROUGHLY INTO THE MATTER OF ALLEGED GRAFT IN WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY DISPENSARIES—THE OFFICIAL REPORT.

[Continued from last week.]

Q. Dr Bass, have you ever written a letter to Mr Blank in reference to that visit of his?

A. No sir, nothing to Mr Blank. I wrote to the house and asked where was Mr Blank. Asked them to let me know where was Mr Blank.

Q. What did you want to know about Mr Blank?

A. I was suspicious and I wanted to know if he knew anything about it. I wrote to the United Distilling Co. and asked them if he was still in Charleston.

Q. If you had found out that he was still in Charleston what would have been your next move?

A. I don't know, I suppose I would have watched him.

Q. Did they answer your letter?

A. Yes sir, they said he was still in Charleston.

Q. Their representative?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Have you the letter you received from the United Distilling Co.?

A. No sir, I don't know where it is. It was in the office. I put it on file.

Solicitor Wells:

Q. Where did you see this man Blank?

A. He came to my house.

Q. On February 19 of this year in the presence of Mr Coward and Mr Brown in the dispensary office, did you say you had written them probably three months afterwards for the reason that he might kick up some devilment around the State, referring to Blank?

A. I don't remember that I ever mentioned it to them.

Q. Do you deny it?

A. I don't remember. There is nothing to deny about it if I had said it. I never wrote Mr Blank and so stated.

Q. About two weeks ago did you see Garrett's wine man?

A. I did not.

Q. He didn't come down there and want to buy any barrels from you?

A. No sir.

Q. Did you get a quart bottle of wine at the dispensary but afterwards when they went to check up in the presence of Mr Brown and Parker tell them to charge it to the breakage account, and Mr Parker did charge it to breakage account?

A. Some time ago they got in some wine they could not sell and I went in there and got a bottle to see what the trouble was.

Q. Did you pay for it?

A. I do not know whether it is charged to breakage account or not. I do not remember whether I paid for it or not. They said it was no good, was spoiled, and I got it to see whether it was or not. Did not think it was necessary to pay for it.

Q. Did you tell them that you intended to bring the bottle back so that it could be put in as breakage?

A. I don't remember charging it. I did not think it necessary.

Q. Suppose Mr Brown or Mr Coward would make a statement to that effect?

A. Well, it might have been. I took it out to see whether the wine was spoiled or not. Got the bottle in the presence of all of them. Do not remember what I said to them. It is for medicinal purposes and not for drinking purposes. But what I did with it I do not remember. I did not think it of any importance.

Q. In the latter part of the old administration did you say in the presence of Mr Coward in the dispensary something that Mr Gilland has stated that you said that Bluthenthal & Bickert were a rotten set of Jews and also spoke in bad terms of the Big Springs Distilling Co.?

A. I do not know that I spoke of Bluthenthal & Bickert, but spoke of Big Springs Distilling Co., and also of Richland Distilling Co.

Q. Why did you buy so freely

from them?

A. There was no body else to buy from. All of them are Jews but they gave us the best prices on things.

Q. In the dispensary last September in the presence of Mr Brown the clerk and Mr Coward did you tell them not to sell Coast Line from W P Ives & Co., that you had reasons to believe there was something wrong between these people and Mr Parker?

A. I don't know that I said between them and Parker. I told them not to push their goods.

Q. How could you be suspicious of them without being suspicious of some member of the board?

A. I did not call any name, I don't think.

Q. You were not suspicious of Mr Snowden?

A. No sir.

Q. Well, then, if you had no suspicions of him you must have been suspicious of them and Mr Parker?

A. I do not think I mentioned that. I told them not to create a demand for it.

Q. But there has been a lot of whiskey bought from W P Ives & Co since that time?

A. Yes sir. I did not suspicion them after that time, had no occasion to.

Q. Did you tell Mr Brown in the dispensary that Mr Parker seemed to stick to the Big Springs Distilling Co and seemed not to want to buy any thing from any body else?

A. I do not remember.

Q. You do not deny it?

A. I do not think I could have made any such statement. Not to them, I confined my suspicions to Gilland and said very little outside.

Q. Your last statement that you confined your suspicions to Mr Gilland—didn't it strike you as being very singular that you trusted him with going to Savannah?

A. I did not send him there.

Q. You agreed to it and told him you thought it would be a very good thing?

A. I did not tell him to go. He went of his own accord.

Q. Don't you think it strange that you suspicioned him and then trusted him to go to Savannah?

A. I had the utmost confidence in him up to the time I got those two letters. I had the utmost confidence in him up to that time.

Q. Did any body tell you they saw Parker talking with liquor men?

A. No sir, I heard of his being in Charleston and other places and I was suspicious of him on that account. But never heard any thing else.

Q. Did you ever know of him communicating with Jim Farnum?

A. No sir. I had no suspicion of him except for these parties telling me they had seen him on different occasions and at different places.

J M Parker being sworn says:

Mr West:

Q. Mr Parker, are you a member of the Williamsburg county dispensary board?

A. Yes sir.

Q. What position on this board have you held?

A. Well, as one of the members.

Q. Were you chairman?

A. No sir, Dr Bass was chairman.

Q. When did you first hear of rumors that there was suspicion of graft among the members of the board?

A. I saw some irregularities about August, I think.

Q. You suspicioned some then?

A. It looked suspicious.

Q. What did you suspect?

A. I suspected orders were either being stuffed or duplicated.

Q. What made you think so?

A. Because the dispensers got a great deal of goods that they did not order. But later having Mr Gilland's statement as to why it got in such a rush it seemed reasonable to me. That the dispensers in ordering goods put in an order first of the week and if he didn't get it first of the week would order again and it is possible that in that way the goods kept coming.

Q. Did you examine the records to find out after this whether these orders had been padded?

A. There was no special way of telling whether they were or not. The clerk explained it in this way to me.

Q. Were you satisfied with his explanation?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Have you ever been connected with the old State dispensary of South Carolina?

A. Yes sir.

Q. In what capacity?

A. I was clerk in the dispensary at Scrantou.

Q. You are familiar with whiskeys?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Please state at what rate whiskeys are bought as to their relative commercial values.

A. We buy as a general thing the brands that are called for oftenest.

Q. In purchasing did you ignore the competitive bids?

A. We didn't always buy from the lowest bid submitted.

Q. In ordering out this stuff it appears that sometimes you cut down one award to one party and increased the award of another?

A. That is just as the dispensers ordered it, that is what they got.

Q. Did you ever notice after orders had been placed as to whether or not you were in excess of the award?

A. We did not regard that as a matter of importance, as we reserved the right to increase or diminish.

Q. What good could that statute do in the law requiring county dispensary boards to advertise under your statement—would it be worth anything?

A. I hardly think it would.

Q. You simply took the law in your own hands?

A. I simply did as other county boards are doing. We advertised for bids and bids were submitted and we ordered what we thought was needed.

Q. Was it for the purpose of keeping county boards from overstocking?

A. Yes sir, possibly; I thought the board ought to keep the goods there and keep selling.

Q. Did you receive a copy of these letters Mr Gilland acknowledges having written to Bluthenthal & Bickert?

A. No sir, I did not.

Q. What members of the board were present at the time of the November purchases?

A. Dr Bass and myself.

Q. Do you remember how many drums of whiskey were awarded to Bluthenthal & Bickert?

A. I do not recall right now. The award will show.

Q. Do you remember how many drums of Old Joe were gotten from them?

A. I think we got about 72.

Q. Why did you suppose Old Joe would be in demand?

A. Always has. Is a good seller.

Q. If the prices were the same between the two, Old Joe and Silver Brook, which would be the better seller?

A. I regard Old Joe as such.

Q. Did you have Old Joe analyzed?

A. Yes sir, we had recently.

Q. Do you remember what it tested?

A. Not exactly.

Q. Do you consider Old Joe with test of 80.9 to be as valuable compound as Silver Brook which would test 100 per cent?

A. I certainly do not.

Q. Did you realize as a member of this board that the board had the right to make any concern furnish goods in compliance with the bids?

A. Why in a general way, I did.

[Continued on page 3.]

### New Train Schedule.

The following schedule of the new train from Lane to Florence, which went into effect Monday, December 17, has been furnished us by Mr J P Taylor, the courteous and efficient agent of the Atlantic Coast Line railroad at Kingstree:

North Bound Arrives	
No. 80	7:37 A. M.
*No. 46	11:42 A. M.
No. 50	6:36 P. M.
South Bound Arrives	
No. 89	9:18 P. M.
*No. 47	5:46 P. M.
No. 51	10:52 A. M.
* Daily Except Sunday.	

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