

## Court Customs in Polk County's Early Days

### Dignity and Ceremony Lacking in Court Procedure.

By J. B. Cleveland.

Columbus stagnated for years, a kind of Cranford. The event of the year was court week, when the little hotel would be filled with lawyers from Concord, Gallert and Justice, who afterwards became Judge, from Rutherfordton, Shipman and others. What struck me most was the lack of ceremony, although the Judiciary and lawyers were the equals of my own state and the law in many respects better than ours. There was no ceremony and less dignity in opening and conducting court than in South Carolina. Here it was the custom, now discontinued, for the sheriff to escort the Judge with military hat adorned with a large plume, and drawn sword, to the court house. When the Judge withdrew to his private room and put on a large silk gown and all the lawyers would stand and bow. No lawyer was allowed to address the court in other than a black coat. After court adjourned the sheriff with the same ceremony would escort the Judge back to his boarding place.

Attending court at Columbus a very cold day, I heard a lawyer making a speech apparently to no one in particular. On closer inspection I saw a crowd of men sitting around a stove and among them the Judge smoking his pipe. It was not uncommon when a jury was out on a case another would go out to the shade of some large tree, and squatting on their hunkers with the every handy pocket knife, whistling a stick reach their conclusion under the inspiration of their nature. When a witness was wanted the Judge would say to the sheriff "Call him at the window." When the officer would go to a broken pane of glass and cry as loud as he could the name of the person wanted, I am not criticizing, I am only a faithful chronicler stating facts. I am a North Carolinian by descent and no one is prouder of the fact that North Carolina is now the empire state of the south. The late R. K. Carson who boasted he was from Polk County never failed to attend court there in his younger days, and illustrated the times among the many anecdotes he told with much glee by the following:

"A native returning home late at night from attending court covered with cuts and bruises was met at the door by his wife, much troubled she said 'John, what in the world is the matter?' 'I was down at Columbus. I never drunk a dram, never cussed an oath, never threw a rock, never spoke to a woman, and see what they done for me.' The probabilities were that he had been guilty of all these indiscretions."

The day court was to begin the inquiry went around 'Has the Judge come, has the Solicitor come, has Mr. Ralph Carson come, then we will have court'.

Another of Mr. Carson's anecdotes may not be amiss. "In the adjoining room he heard the following conversation between a man and his wife sitting by a blazing fire on Sunday morning. 'Where are you going today he asked.' 'The answer was, 'I thought of going down to the big meeting at the brush arbor. 'Where are you going.' He replied, 'I am going to Sheban's still house.' 'She answered, 'That is just like you. You always wish yourself at the best place.' These anecdotes are only illustrative of the time and were not peculiar to Polk County. What a change has taken place. Columbus is now destined to grow since the completion of the new highway from Tryon. I drove over there a few days ago from Spartanburg in a little over an hour. Was never more pleased and surprised, the town seemed turned around. And to be entered by the back door. The brick church formerly back in the woods is now on the main highway. The hard surface road with cement bridges and easy grades is one of the best engineered roads in the county. It will be the making of Columbus. And at last 'Town' has arrived. My next will be of some people, early settlers of Polk Co., and the building of the Asheville railroad.



## The Polk County News Wishes You A Happy New Year

### COURT COLLECTS \$500 IN LAST SIX MONTHS

Costs and fines collected by the Municipal Court here during the past six months totaled approximately \$500 according to W. S. Green, Mayor.

Of this amount \$394 was collected in fines and turned over to the Polk County Board of Education, and the remaining \$106 was placed in the town treasury.

Twenty-six cases have been recorded on the docket during the present administration, the majority of which were charged with being drunk and disorderly. There were three cases of traffic violation.

The last two months have seen an exceptionally low number of arrests for drunkenness or disorderly conduct according to the mayor and in spite of expectation at this particular season of the year there were no arrests on either Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

### TRYON ROUTE ONE

Some of the young people on the route held a watch party New Year's Eve to ring out the old and ring in the new.

Santa Claus must have done his duty on the route because we have heard no complaints. However one of our girls is missing. We think Santa Claus must have carried her to Mr. Edgerton's in Mill Spring as James Edgerton and Pearl Edwards were happily married at the Parsonage.

Miss Essie Edwards is spending the holidays at home.

Mr. Ford's family have measles in their home.

Mrs. Franklin died Sunday morning.

We wish you all a happy and Prosperous New Year.

### Tribute To Small-Town Paper.

Speaking recently at a Washington State Utility Conference, Charles E. Blackwell, a successful county merchant located at Okanogan, paid a high tribute to the small-town paper as an advertising medium. He said:

"There are many lines of publicity that the country store can use to advantage, but the one he can use to best advantage is his home-town paper. I venture to say that if the money spent each year for fancy calendars and other knick-knack give-aways were invested—I say invested, not spent or donated—in carefully planned newspaper publicity, the actual net returns to the advertiser would be ten times as great, to say nothing of the advantage the small-town paper would derive from the additional and much needed revenue."

### Don't Waste Time.

When a man says that he is willing to change his opinion if you can convince him that he is wrong, it's a sign that you'll never be able to convince him.

### Chamber Of Commerce Dinner At Oak Hall

The Chamber of Commerce of Tryon will have a dinner on Wednesday evening, January 3, at 8 o'clock at Oak Hall. Plans are being made by the entertainment committee which will include one or two special features to be followed by a business discussion of large interest and importance to Tryon and its future.

Every member of the organization will be expected to attend the dinner and tickets will be placed on sale this week.

### TRYON GRADE SCHOOL TO OPEN MONDAY JANUARY 7

Classes will be resumed following Christmas recess for the Tryon Grade School on Monday morning, January 7.

There has been an increase of 125 percent in the attendance of the school in the last three years according to members of the school board. This year there are fifty more pupils in the school than last.

An effort is being made now to have the school made an accredited high school. It is said that owing to the fact that there are three or four pupils under the quota Tryon school has not been made accredited.

### NATIVITY PAGEANT IS GIVEN AT PARISH HOUSE

The fifth presentation of the "Pageant of the Nativity" was given at the Parish House on Sunday evening preceding Christmas.

The pageant, a religious one, portrays in six scenes the events pertaining to the Birth of Christ, beginning with the prophecies of Gabriel and Zacharias, the song of Mary, the Message to the Shepherds and the visit of the Wise Men to the birthplace of Our Saviour.

Preceding the pageant, a miracle play "The Christmas Guest" was given by a group of children.

### JACKSON AND JACKSON INCREASE OFFICE SPACE

The firm of Jackson and Jackson have taken over the entire second floor of the Postoffice building increasing their office space by two rooms.

All of the office rooms have been completely renovated and several changes made in the rooms to accommodate the various departments of the business which has increased to a large extent in the past year.

### LANIER CLUB WILL MEET THURSDAY, JANUARY 10

The next meeting of the Lanier Club will be held next Thursday afternoon, January 10, at 8:30 o'clock at Lanier Library.

The essayist will be Miss Mary Fuller, late professor of History at Smith College. Her subject will be "The New Psychology."

Visitors are cordially invited to this and to all meetings of the Lanier Club, and, if they wish, to become associate members. Tea will be served as usual.

### Cotton Growers Will Meet At Sandy Plains

Cotton growers from every section of Polk County will meet on Saturday, January 12 at 2 o'clock at Sandy Plains school house to discuss plans for the local district of the Cooperative Association for this year.

Reports will be made by committees of interest to all of the planters of the county. The meeting has been called by A. J. Humphreys, president, who urges every planter and others interested to attend the conference.

### DRAMA CLUB TO PRESENT "LOYALTIES" ON JAN 17

Gaiworthy's "Loyalties" will be the next play to be presented by the Drama Fortnightly on Thursday evening, January 17, at the Parish House. The cast will include Mrs. Elizabeth Williams, Miss Mary Lindsey, Miss Helen Morton, Dwight Smith, Edgar Upton, Eugene Brownlee, R. B. Peattie, L. A. Avant, W. B. Stone, Mr. Mazzonvitch and Dr. M. C. Palmer.

The drama is a strong one dealing with a salient feature of English modern life and enjoyed a long run in New York recently as well in London where it was originally produced. The play will be under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Peattie.

The great success of the last play given, "The Truth About Blaydes" under the supervision of Mr. and Mrs. F. P. Bacon has given a great impetus to the attendance at the Parish House and the arrangement of the stage and lights by J. F. Searles has contributed to the enjoyment of the audience in the plays.

Many new members have joined and the prospects for this season are very bright. All visitors to Tryon are invited to these readings and it is hoped that they will unite with the members in making them a success.

### NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION AT THE LANIER LIBRARY

The Lanier Club held its annual New Year's reception last Tuesday afternoon, the officers of the present year and seven ex-presidents receiving.

The occasion was one looked forward to annually with pleasure by Tryon society and the many annual visitors who spend the winter season here. The familiar room was most attractive with its book-lined walls, the open fireplace, the decorations of natural greens and the charming table. It is a room of many beautiful associations and holds the chief place in the social life of Tryon.

Delightful holiday refreshments were served by Mrs. Vernon, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Brown and Miss Stone. Mrs. Frost was responsible for the decoration of the room.

Those receiving were Mrs. Peattie, Mrs. Beatson, Mrs. Holden, Mrs. Orr, Mrs. Grady, Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Ernest Missigine, Mrs. Howard Strong, Mrs. Morton and Miss Diana Nash.

### INCOME TAX IN A NUTSHELL

Who? Single persons who had net income of \$1,000 or more or gross income of \$5,000 or more, and married couples who had net income of \$2,000 or more or gross income of \$5,000 or more must file returns.

When? The filing period is from January 1 to March 15, 1924.

Where? Collector of Internal Revenue for the district in which the person lives or has his principal place of business.

How? Instructions on Form 1040A and Form 1040; also the law and regulations.

What? Four per cent normal tax on the first \$4,000 of net income in excess of personal exemption and credits for dependents. Eight per cent normal tax on balance of net income. Surtax from 1 per cent to 50 per cent on net incomes over \$6,000 for the year 1923.

### MAJOR GRAHAM DIES ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

Raleigh, N. C. Jan. 2. A sorrowful throng of state officials, agricultural workers, friends and relatives paused in their celebration of the holiday season and passed in reverence about the bier of Major W. A. Graham, Commissioner of Agriculture, as his body lay in state in his great monument the new Agricultural Building on Christmas day. For fifteen years, Major Graham had served the agricultural interests of this State and during that time had seen it grow to one of the greatest agricultural sections of the world. Just before day on Christmas Eve, he finished his work on earth, dying in harness as he had wished, and joined his illustrious ancestors awaiting beyond the grave.

All of those who worked with him in the Department of Agriculture will miss him sorely. It is true that he has been somewhat feeble during the past few years, because, had he lived until December 26, he would have been 84 years of age; but, he still had a remarkable grasp of the work being done by the Department and his kindly smile and gentle ways endeared him to those associated with him. His one outstanding trait was his love for North Carolina and his devotion to her farming progress. Because of this he helped to make North Carolina the great State that she is.

Major Graham was born at Hillsboro on December 26, 1839. Following his school days and his graduation from Princeton in 1860, he entered the Confederate army as Captain of Co. K. 2nd, N. C. Calvary and Major. From 1874 to 1876 and from 1878 to 1879 he served as State Senator and in 1905 he was Representative from his county in the State Legislature. During the years intervening he farmed successfully and took an active interest in the political life of his State. From 1893 to 1903 he was a mem-

## Trade Board Becomes Chamber Of Commerce

### Discuss Several Questions of Importance to Community.

Following a brief discussion at the last meeting of the Tryon Board of Trade, held on the Wednesday before Christmas, it was unanimously voted to change the name of Board of Trade to Chamber of Commerce of Tryon, and align that organization with the national organization.

In spite of inclement weather there were a fair number present who made up in enthusiasm what they lacked in numbers.

Mayor W. S. Green outlined the conference held recently with officials of the railway in regard to the crossing situation and then offered a plan for the consideration of the board to eliminate the danger, suggesting the cutting back of the bank between the two crossings and urging the cooperation of the board in making this possible by backing the commission in whatever steps they took to bring about this result. Following some little discussion the board passed a resolution to back the town commission in its efforts to eliminate the danger by cutting back the bank.

R. B. Peattie then outlined the plans of Western North Carolina, Inc., and urged the members to take action on the matter of Tryon participating in the benefits of that organization, pointing out the fact that Polk County's quota for the work planned would be \$1,000 per year for a period of five years. Following discussion of the question it was decided to make an effort to raise the money through a committee which would be appointed at a later date.

The Reverend J. J. Gentry, who was a guest of the Board at the meeting made a brief but interesting talk followed by adjournment.

### CHRISTMAS SEASON GAY WITH HOLIDAY EVENTS

Tryon is once more settling down to routine after a gay and busy Christmas season. Many of the young people have returned to their respective schools and colleges and business houses are beginning to take stock inventories.

The Community Christmas Tree, planned and erected by Carter Brown and G. F. Stone for the children of Tryon was one of the outstanding features of the holidays. The large tree was brought down from the valley on the Saturday preceding Christmas and decorated with lights and trimmings the following Monday. Promptly at 6:30 o'clock Santa Claus put in his appearance and distributed about 300 attractive boxes of candy and oranges among the large crowd of children. Carols were sung by the assembly.

The Southern Mercantile Company held its usual Christmas Tree for the children of the employees giving them toys, candy and fruit.

The carols singers were given a supper on Christmas Eve by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. White at the Parish House, following which they made their usual visit to the homes of a number of people singing the carols.

A Community Dance was held on Christmas night at Oak Hall.

Special Services were held in the churches on Christmas day, and several of the churches had trees for the Sunday School classes.

The Drama Fortnightly presented the play "The Truth About Blaydes" on Thursday evening at the Parish House to a large and delighted audience.

The Spartanburg Concert Company packed Lanier Library to capacity on Friday evening, all attending expressing themselves as delighted with the concert given under the auspices of the Ladies Aid Society of the Baptist Church.

There were a number of dinner parties given during the holidays several card parties and private dances for the young people.

On New Year's night the Boy Scouts gave their annual party in the Parish house with a large attendance. Games were played until a late hour followed by refreshments.

Member of the State Board of Agriculture and in 1908 he was elected to the office he held at the time of his death. He had been regularly re-elected in 1912, 1915 and 1920.