

# The Kings Mountain Herald

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## NOT GUILTY OF MURDER

Says Cleveland Jury in Star Williams Murder case—Centered fight on Zeb Bell but failed to convict.

Below we give the details of the trial of the four Blacksburg boys for the murder of Star Williams in Kings Mountain on the night of March 17th. As chronicled by the Highlander of last Friday.

The Cleveland jury in the case of the Blacksburg boys, charged with second degree murder of Star Williams, colored, at Kings Mountain carnival, March 17th, were out all of Thursday night and Friday morning and returned a verdict of "not guilty" in the case of J. Z. Bell.

The other defendants—H. E. Davidson and James and Fulton Whisman—had already been given their freedom by motion of solicitor Newlan, who, at Thursday noon when the evidence was all in, asked for a nol prosequere, with leave in their cases, but the judge refused and the verdict of "not guilty" was entered in their case.

The arguments of attorneys and the judge's charge concerned J. Z. Bell only, who, the State believed was the guilty man.

Powerful speeches were made by attorneys for the defence, representing legal rights of three counties, Cleveland, Gaston and Cherokee (S. C.); Col. T. B. Butler of Gaffney, S. C., Mr. Stonewall J. Durham of Gastonia and Hon. Clyde R. Hoey of Shelby.

The solicitor handled his case well and made a fine speech. He was ably assisted in the prosecution by Mr. N. F. McMillan of Kings Mountain, and they made a better case than many believed was possible.

**The Judge's Charge**  
Judge Harding made a splendid charge to the jury, and a partial summary of this charge will give a fairly comprehensive resume of the case.

The judge said that no chain of circumstantial evidence was stronger than its weakest link, and the chain must be practically flawless in order to gain conviction.

The State presented this chain Star Williams was proven killed by a deadly weapon; State contends weapon was held in the hands of J. Z. Bell; that he secured weapon indirectly by passing first from hands of the negro barber (now on a Cherokee chain gang for larceny of butter) to the hands of Deck Fulton and from the latter hands to those of Zeb Bell, who is shown to have had the pistol all the evening until after the tragedy;

State contends that defendants assertion that he was at car, preparing to go home when the shot was fired is incorrect; that he was proven by witness Elliot to be with the other boys at or about the northeast corner of the bridge; contends that they had been drinking and were not at their car when the killing took place; that Elliott witnessed the killing, the shot coming from the direction of the group (to him) unknown person;

State contends that J. Z. Bell held the fatal pistol; that he, with the other boys, went to their automobile tried to crank it to get away from the scene of the deed, when if the defendant had

## Was Dedicated Last Sunday

Kings Mountain Methodist Church.

The dedicatory service of the First Methodist church was observed here Sunday. The beautiful new church, although sufficiently spacious for ordinary emergencies, was crowded to its capacity and numbers of people were turned away for want of room. The Sunday school room was opened up adjoining the main auditorium and was in a few moments taxed to its limit. The gallery was then resorted to and likewise it was soon full to the overflowing and the ushers had reached their limit.

A splendid program was carried out from the beginning. Special music had been prepared by the choir and a solo was rendered by Mrs. George A. Hoyle of Shelby. The outstanding feature of the program, was dedicatory sermon by Dr. Plato T. Durham of Charlotte. For considerably more than an hour this great pulpit orator held that vast congregation almost spellbound. There were several reasons why the speaker could hold the undivided attention of such a crowded audience for such a time and they already tired. First, he is an old Kings Mountain boy. Second, his world wide reputation as a preacher, and third, what he was saying was sufficient to hold anybody who wanted to learn. At the conclusion of the sermon the officers of the church lined themselves up in front of the chancel and H. T. Fulton presented the church and Presiding Elder Scroggs pronounced the sentence of dedication.

Kings Mountain Methodist church has a history which looks back over forty years when the society was organized in the year 1874 with nine members, as follows; Dr. J. W. Tracy, Dr. B. F. Dixon, Richard H. Garrett, Regins Tracy, Isaac W. Garrett, Bennett E. Williford, Peter E. Hines, Mary E. Hines and Sarah Garrett. The first pastor of the flock was Dr. Jno. W. North and Dr. L. S. Burkhead was the presiding elder. For the first ten years they worshipped in the school building until their house of worship was erected in the year 1884. The first building served the ever growing congregation until the present new structure was finished in 1906. The present building was projected under the pastorate of Rev. G. D. Herman and was built during the pastorate of Rev. M. H. Vestal and Rev. Geo. F. Kirby. The membership of the church has grown from nine to 350 members and the Sunday school has an enrollment of 225. The debt was paid off the new building in 1913 and was dedicated last Sunday. Rev. Plato Tracy Durham who preached the dedicatory sermon is a native of our town. As a young man he was highly educated and entered the ministry at an early date. His efforts have ever been attended with success and his promotion has been continuous and certain. He is at present presiding elder of the Charlotte district of the Western North Carolina Conference and is professor-elect of the chair of church history in the great Methodist university at Atlanta, Ga.

## Some Chips From Ye Local Woodpile About Ye People

Guests Of Mr. And Mrs. Harmon

Mr. Gus Hardin and daughter Miss Pansy, of Patterson Springs visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Harmon here last Thursday.

**Petersons Back Home**

Mr. H. E. Peterson has moved his family back home from Sparrow Springs where they have spent a good part of the summer. Their chief object in taking this extended outing was for the health of the baby who was almost hopelessly sick at the time they went out there. The experiment was a success and the child is in fairly good health again.

**Miss Pearl Little Not To Be Here**

Miss Pearl Little music teacher in the graded school here for the past six or seven years, spent last week here visiting friends and arranging for the ensuing year. Miss Little will not be here this year but will conduct a private studio at Hickory, N. C., her old home. She has arranged for her friend Miss Essie Robinson of Hickory, to have charge of the work here.

**Mrs. Russell Guest Here**

Mrs. C. E. Russell and children, Iris and Gladys, formerly of Kings Mountain but now of Greenville, S. C. arrived in the city last Friday and visited around among friends until Tuesday when they returned to Greenville. The Russell family was among our most popular citizens while they lived here and we are always glad to have them visit us.

**Shumaker Comdany Leaves**

Mrs. W. D. Shumaker and daughter, Miss Lucy who have been on a several days visit to her son Mr. Sam Shumaker, and family here, left for Charlotte where they will visit relatives before returning to their home at Davidson. Miss Eloise Mays of Cornelius, N. C. returned to her home Tuesday after a visit to Mr. Shumaker's family.

**Some Good Old Time Peaches**

Mr. I. Boyce Falls presented the Herald a bag of good old-time peaches Monday. They are not the common nursery peaches. They are mighty fine but are usually tinted with something else other than the old original peach. But these peaches are all peach, pure old-time sweet, juicy peaches. Mr. Falls says that he has been raising this kind of peach for thirty years and that it always remains the same. He knows of at least four times when seed from these peaches have been planted and the same identical quality of peach produced. He says this is not common with the ordinary grafted peach. But instead the grafted peach when grown from a seed departs from the mother peach both in quality and flavor.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Baumgardner July fifth, a son.

**Kannapolis Merchants Credit System.**

The Mercantile Association of Kannapolis, N. C. has just issued a thirty-page booklet of the credit rating of practically every body in that whole section from the biggest buyer to the negro wench who might want a nickel's worth of snuff on credit. The list carries about 1,700 names and every merchant is provided with a book. The Herald boys published the book last week.

**Attended Dedication Here Sunday.**

The following out-of-town guests attended the dedicatory exercises of the First Methodist Church here Sunday. Rev. D. F. Carver, former pastor who preceded the present pastor, and is now on the Mocksville, N. C. station. Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Durham of Gastonia, Mrs. B. F. Dixon of Gastonia, Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Baber, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Hoyle, Jno. McClard, and Bob Watson, all of Shelby. S. J. Durham is a brother to Dr. Plato T. Durham who preached the dedicatory sermon and Mrs. Dixon is his mother.

**Old Bruin Wouldn't Do.**

There has been a terrible scare over about Ware School house about a bear being at large in the community. People were afraid to stick their heads out the door after nightfall and it was not considered safe for women and children to venture beyond the yard in broad daylight. Armed men scoured the woods in grave fear. Tracks as big as a man's hand were to be seen here and there. Faint hearts thumped in the throats of the population until the enemy of man and beast had been apprehended and put to death whereupon it was discovered to be a merino sheep.

**Mr. Long's Heart Goes Back.**

Mr. A. M. Long left Saturday for Monroe, Union county, N. C. his old home. He will not only spend several days wandering over his old plantation with friends but will make an effort to buy back and repossess the old homestead where he spent so many happy years. The splendid fields and orchards call him back to his younger days when he made a bale to the acre and had luscious fruit throughout the season. And too the old plantation is such a splendid community the old residence itself being in the very shadow, as it were, of Palm Academy which is recognized as one of the first high schools in the state. Mr. Long likes Kings Mountain and has strong business and family connections here. His only daughter, Mrs. C. Q. Rhyme lives here. But ye old hearthstone is calling him.

Mr. R. W. Houser of Greenville, S. C., a son of Mr. R. R. Houser of Kings Mountain, has just returned from Memphis, Tenn. where he went to meet his wife who had been on a two months visit to her mother in Marshall, Texas.

## At Elbethel August 15

Homecoming and Dedication

There will be a Homecoming at Elbethel Methodist Church on Saturday, Aug. 15, and the following program will be rendered: A Historical Sketch of Elbethel..... Rev. M. B. Clegg. What Elbethel Has Done for Methodism. Rev. E. N. Crowder. Present and Future of Elbethel..... Rev. J. F. Armstrong. Why Should I Love Elbethel?..... Rev. J. C. Harmon. Methodism. Rev. J. R. Scroggs.

There will be good music by the choir. The exercises will begin promptly at 10 o'clock A. M. Everybody is cordially invited to be present. Dinner will be served on the ground.

The Dedicatory Sermon will be preached on Sunday, Aug. 16 at 11 a. m. by Rev. W. R. Ware of Salisbury, N. C.

**Mayor Cline Visits Old Home.**

Mayor and Mrs. A. E. Cline returned last Wednesday night from Statesville, N. C. where they had been since Friday previous on a visit to his parents and old home. They were met there by the mayor's brother, Mr. J. T. Cline, a wholesale man of Oklahoma. Mr. J. T. Cline brought the mayor and wife home on his automobile Wednesday afternoon and took the mayor to Shelby Thursday to attend court returning to Statesville in the afternoon. Mr. J. T. Cline was accompanied to Statesville by his wife and three children and made the trip from Oklahoma by automobile.

**Prof. Cox at Randleman.**

Prof. R. C. Cox writes from Asheboro, N. C., where he has spent the summer at the old home place assisting his mother with the farm, that he will be located at Randleman, N. C. as superintendent of the graded school for the coming year and that he will move there and set up housekeeping this week. Randleman is the largest town in Randolph County and has a school as large or larger than the Kings Mountain school. This is Prof. Cox's native stamping ground and his home folks gladly recognize his superiority as a school man.

Prof. Cox was superintendent of the graded school here last year and established a precedent for all around work that his successors may well strive to repeat.

**Mr. Ben E. Cornwell orders the Herald sent to his address at Palmersville, N. C.**

Mr. Horace Rüdissill orders his address changed from Princeville, Ill. to Primghar, Iowa.

Mr. G. N. Ennett of Newbern, N. C. visited his brother-in-law, Mr. C. F. Hunter here last week. He was enroute to Black Mountain.

Mrs. R. E. Houser is visiting her son, R. W. Houser and family at Greenville, S. C.

Mrs. S. E. Hoyle spent Saturday night in Charlotte as the guest of Mrs. Wright.

If you want the news from all over the state read the "State Items" on page six.

## OUR SOLDIERS ARE AT HOME

Lee Barber of Manila, Philippine Islands—Ed Ware of the New Hampshire—John B. Ware of the Kearsarge.

Messrs Lee Barber, Ed Ware and Jno. B. Ware, of Uncle Sam's war department are here on a visit to home folks.

Thomas L. Barber (Lee Barber) is the son of our townsman, Robt. R. Barber. He has just completed his second three-year term in the United States Army and is now preparing to enlist for seven years more. The first three years of his army life was spent at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in the Company F, 13th. Regiment. When he re-enlisted three years ago his regiment was transferred to Manila, Philippine Islands, where he remained until about thirty days before his arrival at home which time was spent enroute. Mr. Barber is very fond of army life and expects to leave within a few days for re-enlistment in New York State. He will have to re-enlist for seven years, four years of active service and three either active or reserve. The reserve term may be spent at home or about business anywhere but he will be subject to the call of the government at anytime during the term of enlistment.

Mr. Barber tells a very interesting story about a visit to the city of Nagasaki, Japan, while on his way home. He says that he saw only one automobile and one horse in the city. The streets are not adapted to rapid traffic. They are very narrow and very hilly. The chief means of private conveyance is the rickshaw. The rickshaw is a narrow gauge one seated two wheeled vehicle and is drawn by one man without any harness. The wheels are on the bicycle order and the seat is large enough for one passenger only. The natives who pull the rickshaws make fine guides and do good traveling. Their speed is the trot which they can hold indefinitely. Up hill and down hill rain or shine they keep trotting. For this means of conveyance only nominal charge is made. Three yans or \$1.50 hires one for the day. These rickshaw pullers, as we stated, make fine guides. They are extremely careful with their foreign patrons not to allow them cheated in a business transaction where the foreigner doesn't know the value of things.

W. E. Ware (Ed Ware) is the son of Mr. N. M. Ware of Kings Mountain and is just finishing his second year on the United States Battleship New Hampshire with headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia. Mr. Ware states that he didn't like life in the navy for the first year or so but that now he has learned to like it and thinks that he will re-enlist when his present term is up. The term of enlistment in the navy is four years instead of three as in the army. Recent rulings, however, have made the term in the army seven years.

Mr. Ware has never been across but has seen life in Mexico for six and a half months. He was at Vera Cruz during the Madero trouble and the election last year. Relief ships were sent and the New Hampshire departed the Mexican coast before the recent trouble there, while Norfolk.

(Continued on editorial page)