

STEEL CREEK STIRRED

FARMERS FEAR TROUBLE

General Belief Among Steele Creek Farmers That Three Recent Fires Were of Incendiary Origin—All Spare Cotton Either Being Stored or Sold—Insurance on Buildings and Barns Being Taken Out—Farmers Sleeping in Their Stables With Loaded Guns—Turbulent Negroes Believed to be Source of Trouble.

The burning of the barns of Mrs. Charles Knox, Mrs. Brown Orier and Mrs. W. H. Choate this week has stirred the farmers of Steele Creek township as nothing has done in years. The belief is general that the fires were of incendiary origin, and a feeling of unrest prevails in the entire country-side. This was manifested yesterday in Charlotte, for 34 bales of Steele Creek cotton were brought in to be either sold or stored and a dozen wagons of hay and fodder were marketed. A dozen of the leading farmers of the community in which these fires occurred, visited the local insurance offices yesterday, taking out policies on their buildings and barns which also had their stock insured. It is estimated that between \$10,000 and \$15,000 of stock insurance was issued.

A hidden danger is always the most feared. The trouble in Steele Creek is that no one knows who will be visited next. The identity of the supposed torch-bearer has not been learned. Hence the feeling of unrest. The barn of Mrs. Orier was discovered in flames just after dark Tuesday night. An hour and a half later, the fine barn of Mrs. Knox was burning, five miles distant. The next night the new barn of Mr. Will Choate was in ashes. These three fires all coming together, under circumstances of peculiar nature, have made the people of Steele Creek uneasy. They are up in arms.

Visitors in the city yesterday from the lower section of the county stated that all the stock is now being kept in the pastures at night and that a careful and constant watch is being maintained about all barns in which hay and fodder is stored. All cotton is being either sold or stored in warehouses, and all roughness placed in protected places. Insurance is being taken out on everything of value. If there is a conspiracy afoot to burn barns the farmers are making ready for the emergency.

Mr. Frank Erwin, a leading young farmer of Steele Creek county, spent yesterday in the city on business. An Observer reporter asked him about the uneasiness which prevails in the community in which he resides. Mr. Erwin's eyes were red and he looked sleepy. In explanation he stated that he had spent the greater part of the night "out." "There are many who believe," said he, "that the three barns burned in Steele Creek township this week were fired by negroes. For myself, I really don't know what to think. I know almost every man, woman and child in Steele Creek township, and I can't bring myself to believe that any of them would wilfully and maliciously act. On the contrary, there are many who are of the opinion that the three fires were of incendiary origin. I haven't had time to think since Tuesday night. I know one thing, however, that if another barn burns in Steele Creek this week, a number of negroes will leave the country. They seem so much alarmed we are the white people."

Mr. Sam Knox, a son of Mrs. Charles Knox whose barn was burned Tuesday night, brought four bales of cotton to Charlotte yesterday and sold them. It will be recalled that Mrs. Knox lost five bales in the fire. Mr. Knox also spoke of the feeling of unrest which is prevalent in the township. He mentioned that the farmers were sleeping in their barns with loaded guns watching for any one who might be prying around. He looks for further trouble.

It is stated that the negroes of Steele Creek township are organized into some sort of society for some purpose, what it is not known. Some of the more radical farmers believe that the fires this week were planned and carried out by members of this colored organization. Nothing definite has ever been learned which would connect the two.

Mr. J. B. Watt, of Steele Creek, was also here yesterday. He stated that a string of wagons passed in front of his home yesterday morning loaded with cotton bound for Charlotte. In all there were 34 bales, an unusual number to be marketed at this season of the year. Among those who brought in cotton were Messrs. Tom Nealey, four bales; Lee Knox, ten bales; Sam Knox, four bales; J. L. Milner, seven bales; Will Choate, nine bales; Frank Nealey, eight bales; John Parnell, four bales; Frank and Will Quoy, nine bales; John Price, ten bales; and Sam Choate, six bales.

A number of those who secured money for their cotton went around at once to the insurance offices to make arrangements for securing policies on their dwellings and barns. That the great majority of the farmers of the neighborhood believe that the fires are of incendiary origin is evidenced by the fact that a meeting of those concerned was held at the home of Mr. W. H. Choate Thursday afternoon for the purpose of discussing the situation and taking some steps looking to protection. It is reported that several dinkies are under suspicion. Arrangements have been made with the county whereby the bloodhounds at the convict camps may be secured at a moment's notice.

Some Property Transfers. Mr. W. D. Rock yesterday sold a tract of land containing 28 acres, in Mallard Creek township, to Mr. B. W. McClure, of Henrico county, Va. The consideration in the deal was \$1,025. Mr. R. H. Jordan has sold his one-half interest in the following described tracts of land to Mr. John H. Alexander, receiving \$1,675. 44 acres in Paw Creek township, 23 acres in Long Creek township, 75 acres in Pineville township, and 50 acres in Long Creek township.

New Recruiting Stations Ordered. Major William B. Reynolds, United States army officer in charge of the Charlotte district, has received orders from Washington to open additional recruiting stations at Winston-Salem and Columbia, S. C. With those already in operation at Charlotte, Asheville and Hickory, and Spartanburg, and Greenville, S. C., the two new stations at Winston-Salem and Columbia, S. C., will make seven in all under Major Reynolds' supervision.

Death of Little Mary Grier Blain. Mrs. C. N. G. Butt received a letter yesterday announcing the death of little Mary Grier Blain, her niece, at Kashing, China, December 11th. The child was the oldest daughter of Rev. J. Mercer Blain and his wife, who was Miss Claud Grier, missionary to China, and was a beautiful little girl with winsome manners. She was only six years old.

WANTS \$2,000 PER ACRE

A Cabarrus County Farmer to Force Mr. J. W. Cannon to Pay Enormous Price for Small Tract of Land Near Kannapolis—The Story.

An interesting story comes from Concord of an effort made by a Cabarrus county farmer to force Mr. J. W. Cannon to pay him 60 times the value of a small tract of land lying near Kannapolis. Mr. Cannon purchased several hundred acres of land on the Southern Railway, north of Concord, for the purpose of erecting a new mill there. The mill village was to be known as Kannapolis, "the city of shuttles." He paid \$37.50 per acre for the tract. All the papers were looked into, accepted and the deeds passed. Mr. Cannon then selected the site for his mill and instructed his workmen to commence excavating for the foundations.

When the dirt began to fly, a farmer residing near-by, came over and warned the men to be careful not to get on his land, which he said, cornered within a few yards of the place where they were digging. Mr. Cannon was notified and an investigation immediately followed. It was discovered that the statement of the farmer was true and that he did own three and a half acres as he had claimed. Overtures were at once made him looking to the purchase of the property. A hundred dollars was offered, then \$200. This tender was raised to \$300, to \$400 and even to \$500. Blackwelder, the owner of the land, had evidently been appraised of its value and he steadfastly refused.

"What will you take for it, then," asked an agent of Mr. Cannon. "Well, I don't exactly know," Mr. Blackwelder is said to have replied, "but I guess \$5,000 will do at this time. That's mighty fine land for me and more so for you."

This price was turned down post haste. Later the offer was accepted. When the agent went to see Mr. Blackwelder to close the deal, he was informed of the fact that real estate about Kannapolis was booming and the offer of \$5,000 had been withdrawn.

According to the last accounts, no agreement has been reached. Mr. Blackwelder still holds on to his three and a half acres of dirt. This story reminds one of the famous controversy which George W. Vanderbilt had with the old negro man who owned a few acres of land at the foot of the hill on which he desired to erect his place near Blittmore.

A QUIET HOME WEDDING.

Miss Eulajohn Kirkpatrick becomes the wife of Mr. George W. Oldham. The marriage of Mr. George W. Oldham and Miss Eulajohn Kirkpatrick was quietly solemnized at the home of the bride's mother, Mrs. Gustie Kirkpatrick, at Oakdale, Shenandoah county, yesterday afternoon at 4 o'clock. The ceremony was performed by Rev. G. R. White. Besides the immediate family, those present were: Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Matthews, Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Kirkpatrick, Mr. J. M. Oldham and Rev. and Mrs. G. R. White.

The bride wore a green Eton suit and carried white carnations. Shortly after the wedding, Mr. and Mrs. Oldham came to the city. They were guests at the Hotel Buford last night, and will leave this morning for their future home at Huntersville. The bride is an attractive and cultured young woman. She belongs to one of the most prominent families in the county, and has a large circle of friends. Mr. Oldham is principal of the Huntersville graded school, and is a young educator of promise.

Will Move Entire College Here in the Fall.

The North Carolina Medical College, which is just completing a handsome building at the corner of Church and Sixth streets at a cost of approximately \$40,000, will move the entire institution to this city at the opening of the next term, in the fall, instead of just the three upper classes as has been planned before. The action was determined upon at a recent meeting of the board of directors of the college, the board deciding that better work could be done with the entire student body in Charlotte with the facilities here than divided between this city and Davidson. The senior class has been in Charlotte during the last three or four years.

A Big Physical Culture Class.

Dr. Mackenzie Schiff, of New York, has organized a class of 300 Charlotte people to take a course in physical culture. The Swaboda system will be used. Among the members of the class are some of the best known citizens of the city, the recruits being selected from a number of lawyers, bankers, a large number of business men, merchants, bookkeepers and others have enrolled their names with Dr. Schiff, who is said to be an expert instructor. The doctor has promised a weekly "hot water" massage who weighs only 95 pounds, to make him gain 29 pounds if he will take the course.

Two Dusky Damsels in Limbo.

A few mornings ago Mary McKee, colored, was a witness in the city police court. She was adjourned she started home and was accosted in front of the city hall by Mattie Watts and Sally Miller, two dusky damsels who had been offended by her testimony before the court. A quarrel ensued and the police arrived only in time to prevent a wood-gathering contest. Yesterday morning the Watts and Miller women were fined \$3 and the costs for their offense. They were unable to pay and were sent to jail. Mary McKee was arraigned on the charge of disseminating bores, but the case fell down.

What the Mule Pen Wants.

The following appeared in the advertising columns of The Observer yesterday: Wanted—Solicitors to leave town. Address "Solicitor" care Observer. The suggestion has been made that all bill collectors, sewing machine, insurance and book agents be included. If the young men of the Mule Pen believed that an advertisement would have any effect in procuring their absence, they would gladly provide for the insertion of a dozen like ads.

The Temperance Question to be Discussed.

A general meeting of all the ministers in the county has been called for next Tuesday morning in the parlors of the local Young Men's Christian Association. The purpose of the gathering is to discuss the temperance situation. The conditions in the city and those in the county will both be discussed. The meeting will be called at 11 o'clock. All ministers in the city and county are urged to attend.

"I had tried everything for my baby, until Dr. Little's recommended Cascaesol. I can truthfully say it is the best medicine I ever used for babies."—Nannie L. Bell, Va. Cascaesol is sold by Hawley's Pharmacy.

A POWER STATION IN CONCORD.

Southern Power Company to Build Power House in Concord—The Site Secured.

The Southern Power Company is arranging for delivering power in Concord at the earliest possible moment. The transmission lines are being built from the North Charlotte station, at which point connection will be had with the current from the river. Plans have already been made for the erection of a power house in Concord, as the following from The Concord Times of the 18th instant will show:

"The Southern Power Company, which has contracted with a number of the cotton mills of Concord to furnish power to turn their spindles, has bought several acres of land just below the Buffalo Mill, where Academy street crosses the railroad, and are now arranging to erect a big power house there. In addition to this, they will erect a number of houses for their employees, and the money to be spent on this plant will be considerable. Mr. Sampson, the manager, was here last week, and arranged for the hauling of 100 car loads of material to go in the construction."

WHEN WOMEN GET A SUPPLY.

Woman Purchases 14 Dresses in Half an Hour—A Scribe Learns Things From a Saleslady.

"I sold that woman 14 dresses of various kinds yesterday," remarked a saleslady in one of Charlotte's dry-goods stores to a reporter yesterday. "She spent about half an hour in the store and when she had finished I told her that she had purchased 13 dresses. I didn't want her to leave here with that unlucky number, so she was also averse to it, so she selected the 14th."

"Do many women buy that many dresses at one time?" asked the reporter, who is unmarried. "Very frequently," replied the saleslady.

"Without having had a fire or been in a railroad wreck or having any misfortune befall them?" queried the scribe.

"Yes, just ordinary occasions," was the answer. "A woman will often at the same time buy two or three dresses for evening or formal wear, two or three street dresses and half a dozen or more house dresses."

And those dresses are yet to be made, and no account has been taken of bonnets, shoes, et cetera, et cetera.

COL. J. F. NEWELL'S VIOLETS.

A Fine Bowl of Violets and Where They Came From—Col. Newell Reluctantly Explains.

An Observer reporter, nosing for news, climbed the stairs leading to the second floor of the Wilkinson building yesterday morning and drifted into the law office of Col. Jake F. Newell.

In the midst of a great stack of papers and books, which littered the fat-top desk in the center of the room, was a large bowl of magnificent violets. The touch of color in such an unexpected place was startling.

"Where did you get them?" queried the newspaperer, his curiosity aroused.

Col. Newell smiled and answered hesitatingly. "They came from a client of mine for whom I am getting a divorce, you know."

Does Coffee disagree with you? Probably it does! Then try Dr. Hoop's Health Coffee. Health Coffee is a clever combination of selected cereals and nuts. Not a grain of real coffee, remember. In Dr. Hoop's Health Coffee, you get flavor and taste matches closely old Java and Mocha Coffee. If your stomach, heart, or kidneys can stand coffee drinking, try Health Coffee. It is wholesome, nourishing, and satisfying. It's safe even for the youngest child. Sold by Miller-Van Ness Co.

The Mere Possession of a Stieff Piano

puts the seal of supreme approval upon the musical taste of its owner.

CHAS. M. STIEFF

Manufacturer of the Artistic Stieff, Shaw and Stieff Self-Playing Pianos. SOUTHERN WAREHOUSE: 5 West Trade Street, Charlotte, N. C. C. H. WILMOTH, Mgr.

The Tate-Brown Co.

EXTRA QUALITY DUNLAP & CO. Celebrated Hats—Derby, Silk, Opera, Alpine. Spring styles now ready for your inspection and selection.

The Tate-Brown Co.

No. 6 South Tryon Street.

Boys' Knee Pant Suits

After the holiday trade we find that we have a good many Boys' Suits in broken lots that we are anxious to get rid of to make room for our spring and summer suits. Our Boys' Clothing is made up with a view to giving satisfaction, Clothes that are built for rough and tumble wear. We have them in a variety of fabrics, such as Serges, Worsteds and Thibets—Black and Colors. Good School Suits at \$2.00 and \$2.50; better ones at \$3.50 to \$7.50. All sizes, 8 to 17. Boys' Knickerbocker Pants, ages 3 to 16, \$1.00 each.

Yorke Bros. & Rogers

Sole Agents for Knox Hats.

Odd Pants Just the season to buy a pair. Often a pair will help you over to a spring suit. Now, don't think you can't be fit. WE FIT EVERYBODY. There is not a man or youth in Charlotte that can't get a perfect fit at our store. We delight in giving the man a fit that the other fellow fell down on. Remember: Mellon's Clothes Fit. Ed Mellon Company Leading Clothiers.

Are You to be Married Soon? Were You Married Last Fall?

You will have to buy Furniture and Carpets when you go to housekeeping. We try to make it easy for you to furnish your home at this store. We carry everything to furnish a modern home complete and our stock is so varied and well selected and reasonably priced that it is easy to select and be suited here. Even in our low-priced goods the talent of the expert designer and the work of the high-grade maker is reflected. New goods always arriving. At this time we offer special inducements in the prices. All goods guaranteed the best that the dollar will buy.

Parker-Gardner Comp'y

HERE'S YOUR HAT Just received a full line of all the new spring shapes of those famous hats made by JOHN B. STETSON. That's recommendation enough. It guarantees perfection in hats. We have them to fit all heads. LONG-TATE CLOTHING COMP'Y GOODS SENT ON APPROVAL RETURNABLE AT OUR EXPENSE.

Good Furniture Need Not be Expensive Furniture Your dining room should be made the most inviting place of the home, as well as all the conveniences should be added to lighten the duties of the housewife. No dining room is complete without a sideboard, Extension Table, Chairs, China Closet, Buffet or Side Table. All these furnishings are essential for entertaining guests and to the home comforts of the family circle. Dining room Furnishings can be had here at very low prices, which means you can obtain these goods from this store at less price than is usually charged elsewhere for same quality of goods. Golden Oak Sideboard, regular \$14.00. Our January Price \$11.50. See our 3-foot Pedestal Table, 48-inch top, full quarter-sawn oak and highly polished golden finish; regular value \$21.50. Our January price \$18.00. Tables range in price from \$5.50 to \$70.00. Don't supply your Furniture wants until you see McCoy. He'll save you money. W. T. M c C O Y SOUTH TRYON STREET.