

Two Views of the Famous Cabarrus Black Boys

THE BLACK BOYS

Bright Stars in the Regulator War—Gun Powder Plot Viewed in a New and Not Very Creditable Light.

To The Editor of The Observer:

In today's paper you give a very interesting report of a speech by Judge Morrison Caldwell, of Concord, at a meeting of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Monday night bearing on the approaching celebration of the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in Mecklenburg. From his eulogistic references to the "Black Boys," while tendering the assurance of Cabarrus in attending the celebration, I draw the inference that he was recommending the giving of a place in the historic pages to the perpetrators of the "Gun Powder Plot" near Concord in May, 1771. If this was his purpose, I suggest that the program committee make a careful study of the Regulator episode before giving recognition to the "Black Boys." Historic participants should be historically correct.

The only men in the memorable 1776 meeting in Charlotte who held back and made objection to declaring independence from Great Britain, even after explanations and appeals for unanimity by Col. Thos. Polk and other patriot leaders, were those who had been engaged in the Regulator uprising of 1768-1771. And throughout the seven years struggle for freedom the bulk of the 6,000 Regulators and their sympathizers, generally estimated at about 90 per cent, were Tories. Those that fought at all, fought on the side of the King, from the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge till the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. And even after the British Regulators had given up the fight, the North Carolina patriot soldiers had for months to remain under arms to protect the families and homes of patriots from the savage raids of the unsubduing Tories, concentrated in the old Regulator counties of the State.

The "Black Boys" were the bright stars of the Regulator war. They were nine white men who blacked their faces, and at night blew up the ammunition train coming up from Charleston for the use of Gen. Hugh Waddell's army composed of State militia companies—not British soldiers—on their way through Mecklenburg and Rowan to join the militia from the east under Governor Tryon at Hillsborough, the favorite rendezvous of the Regulators. The Regulator army of 6,000 men was commanded by Herman Husband, William Butler and others, all of whom, with one or two exceptions, became Tories and fought for the King throughout the Revolutionary war.

Gen. Hugh Waddell, whose powder wagons the "Black Boys" destroyed, was the foremost militia soldier of his day and one of the best loved patriots of the Cape Fear section. Under him were Cois. Robert Harris, Thomas Polk and Moses Alexander, of Mecklenburg; Cois. Griffin Rutherford and William Lindell, of Rowan; Col. Samuel Spencer, of Anson; Col. Thomas Neel, of Tryon, and others from the western counties, all names that

shine gloriously in all accounts of the Battles for Liberty. Under Governor Tryon were James Moore, commander-in-chief of the Carolina army which so signally defeated the Scotchmen and Regulators at Moore's Creek Bridge, the first big battle of the Revolution; Richard Caswell, Alexander Lillington, John Ashe, John Baptista Ashe, Philemon Hawkins, Willie Jones, Francis Nash. Great names are these in North Carolina history!

It is a lamentable distortion of history that the "Black Boys" are now held up as Revolutionary patriots by the D. A. R. and some other organizations. Because they destroyed the ammunition of an army marching to put down a formidable band of outlaws, who had for three years spread terror and chaos throughout a large part of western Carolina. Their complaints and grievances and rebellion were not against the King or Parliament or the Royal Governor, but against the laws, especially the revenue laws of the Assembly, an independent legislative body, composed of men elected by the votes of Carolina citizens. And the revolt was not so much against the laws, as against the administration of them by corrupt and extortionate county officers and practicing lawyers in Orange, Rowan and Anson counties.

I have not been able in my readings of the records of these most interesting times to discover whether the "Black Boys" rebelled themselves during the Revolutionary War, or whether they fought with the other Regulators into the Tory Army. Here are their names: James White, Jr., James Ashmore, John Hadley, Robert Davis, Benjamin Cochran, William White, William White, Jr., John White, Robert Caruthers. Perhaps some people in Cabarrus can supply this information. They were pardoned by the King on Assembly in December, 1771, eight months after the collapse of the Regulator War, as were about all the 6,000 other Regulators, except Husband, the ring leader, who deserted his followers on the field in Alamance before the first gun was fired, and fled to Pennsylvania. He never appeared again in North Carolina, and the only later mention I can find of him is as a leader of the whiskey rebellion in Pennsylvania, which President George Washington put down with the Army of the United States.

But to return to the "Black Boys." Whatever their record in the war for independence may have been, they are not entitled to recognition in celebrating the Mecklenburg Declaration because of the "Gun Powder Plot" in the Regulator War. That inglorious affair was not connected in the remotest degree with the meeting in Charlotte May, 1773, or with the war which followed.

F. M. WILLIAMS.

Newton, March 18.

A quarter-mile relay for women will be included in the program of the big indoor meet of the Cleveland A. C., at Cleveland on March 21.

Dees are infallible storm prophets, seeking shelter before the approach of a storm is noticed by human beings.

GLORY OF THE BLACK BOYS

The Other Side of Their History Presented by the Cabarrus Champion.

To the Editor of The Observer:

Hon. F. M. Williams, a scholarly lawyer at Newton, has fired a broadside into the Regulators and the "Black Boys," the Bright Stars of the Regulator War. He suggests that the program committee "make a careful study of the Regulator episode before giving recognition to the Black Boys." To this I interpose not the slightest objection, but I shall ask the committee to study Volume 8 of North Carolina Colonial Records, and especially the unbiased judgment of that distinguished North Carolinian, the late Colonel William L. Saunders, who edited this volume. In his prefatory notes, Colonel Saunders makes a magnificent and unanswerable argument against the unjust and unwarranted aspersions upon the patriotism of the Regulators.

Referring to the petitions presented to the judges and Governor Tryon by the Regulators, Colonel Saunders says: "These petitions contain the complaints of the Regulators couched in their own language. They give no indication of a want of education, patriotism or regard for law. Verily, the Regulators might be content to rest their case upon these petitions."

Further, Colonel Saunders says: "Of the 47 Sections of the State Constitution adopted in 1776, 18, more than one-fourth, are the embodiment of reforms sought by the Regulators, and yet though many men have maligned the unhappy Regulators, no man has dared reflect upon the patriots of '76, who thus brought to such a glorious end the struggle the Regulators began and in which they fought, bled and died. The War of Regulation ended not with the Battle of Alamance, but with the adoption of the State Constitution in 1776."

I should like for Colonel Williams and the program committee also to read an extract from Boston Gazette of July 22, 1771, as printed in North Carolina Colonial Records, volume eight, page 639, as follows: "The accounts we have heard from North Carolina give us abundant reason to think that the people in that Province have been intolerably oppressed; that the Government, instead of duty attending to their repeated complaints and redressing their grievances, etc."

On March 7, 1771, about 500 Regulators encamped on the banks of the Yadkin, near Salisbury, assembled for a redress at grievances, one of which was the extortion of the officers at Salisbury in charging fees higher than the fees allowed by law. These officers signed an agreement with a committee of Regulators agreeing that if the Regulators would disperse and go home they would repay all persons whatever had been charged illegally, said amount to be decided by certain men as arbitrators. The day for settlement was set for the third Tuesday in May, 1771. Governor Tryon was advised by these officers of this agreement and the communication closes thus: "We flatter ourselves the measures we have taken will be approved of and acceptable

to Your Excellency." Colonial Records, volume eight, page 583. Imagine the amazement and mortification of these Salisbury officials, when on April 5, 1771, Governor Tryon replied: "Your agreement with the insurgents is unconstitutional, dishonorable to Government and introduction of a practice most dangerous to the peace and happiness of society." Colonial Records, volume eight, page 545. In pursuance of his plans to promote the peace and happiness of society, Governor Tryon ordered all the militia captains to march into the counties of the Regulators. Without permitting the Salisbury officials to carry out their agreement effective on the third Tuesday in May, we find General Waddell in Salisbury on May 2, 1771, waiting for the powder and ammunition which the Black Boys destroyed when it was within 20 miles of the place of delivery.

As proof of the cruelty and tyranny of Governor Tryon, note the following facts: Captain Benjamin Merrill of Rowan County, who was one of the men who had presented the petition for redress of grievances, received, the following sentence from Tryon's Chief Justice: "I must now close my afflicting duty by pronouncing upon you the awful sentence of the law, which is that you, Benjamin Merrill, be carried to the place from where you came; that you be drawn from there to the place of execution, where you are to be hanged by the neck; that you be cut down while yet alive, that your bowels be taken out and burnt before your face; that your head be cut off; your body divided into four quarters and this to be at His Majesty's disposal, and may the Lord have mercy on your soul." This martyr of liberty died singing Psalms of praise to God.

Old John Knox said: "If Princes exceed their bounds they may be resisted by force." The Scotch-Irish pioneers who wrote that Declaration at Charlotte on May 20, 1776, had been taught the same doctrine by Craighead, "Resistance to tyrants" was "obedience to God."

Mr. Williams casts a slur upon the patriotism of the Regulators, because many of them took no active part in the war and some actually fought for the King. It is well to be fair. If Mr. Williams will examine these Colonial Records he will discover that Governor Tryon, after the defeat of the Regulators, had compelled them all to take oaths ever after to support the King. They were liberty-loving, but God-fearing men, who regarded the sanctity of an oath. Fortunately for the future of this Commonwealth, Rev. David Caldwell and other ministers advised that when the sovereign ceases to protect and begins to oppress, the oaths of the subject to submit cease. In conclusion, Mr. Williams is concerned to know what the "Black Boys" did in the War of Independence. Only two of them ever took that oath because, only two ever surrendered. They were soldiers—all of them—and right nobly did they finish the work they began in May, 1771.

MORRISON CALDWELL.
Concord, March 20.

Well He Didn't Have to Be So Vehement About It



Late Photo



Lt. Col. James Pechet has been promoted to the rank of general and appointed to succeed Gen. William Mitchell as chief of the air service.

PROPERTY LOSS FROM TORNADO \$18,000,000

Death List Last Night Stood at 810 and Injured at 2,959, Many Unaccounted.

Chicago, March 23.—Warm sunny weather today prevailed over the area in southern Illinois and Indiana devastated by tornadoes last Wednesday and relief work progressed rapidly along with the burial of the dead and the housing of the homeless. Rebuilding tools glinted in the sunshine, while doctors and nurses worked hard to save the lives of the injured.

Reckoning of the casualty list with additional dead from wounds raised the totals in one place and reduced it in the other, leaving the total tonight at 810, without including a score supposed to have been burned to death at Murphysboro, where 150 blocks were blown down and the debris partly buried.

Red Cross workers also announced that the 2,939 listed as hurt probably did not include hundreds of persons who had been injured but who had failed to report the fact owing to the excitement

"Baby Market"



Markets where babies are sold are the objectives of the latest investigation by Los Angeles authorities. Around \$200 is the average price charged for infants in houses where expectant mothers are kept, officials charge. One arrest has been made in connection with the investigation, that of Mrs. Hazel Sims. She was traced through an advertisement in a local newspaper which read, "Adoption. Have private home for unfortunate girls. Babies adopted. She refuses to comment on this charge."

As a result of the ratification by the more than 40,000 members of the International Steam and Operating Engineers' Union of an insurance plan presented to the convention at Detroit, these members are now carrying life insurance on the payment of a premium of 25 cents a month. The insurance pays a benefit of \$100 for the first year of membership, \$200 after two years and for five years or more a benefit of \$500.

USE PENNY COLUMN—IT PAYS

Wins Berth



Meet Mr. Rube Bressler, erstwhile utility player of the Cincinnati Reds, who has been assigned the first base job left vacant by the death of Jake Daubert. Bressler began his career as a pitcher, but owing to his hitting ability he was converted into an outfielder and first baseman.

Post and Flag's Cotton Letter.

New York, March 23.—Sentiment in local professional circles is reported increasingly bullish with action to correspond on the ground that it is not too late to plant in the southwest and that it is too early to kill the crop. Added to this is the argument that trade advices generally show somewhat less favorable and that consumers cannot manage to pay even these prices to say nothing of any higher.

The time when the deficiency in winter rainfall in the southwest will make itself most acutely is during the hot weather of July and August but experience of past years shows that it is not too early even now to begin to make some allowance for the probable results as foreshadowed by previous seasons when similar conditions have prevailed. Mills in many instances may be in an uncomfortable situation as regards prices but there has as yet been no appreciable falling off in the output whatever may be the store for the future.

Present facts seem against any decline of importance but there is no law against discounting future possibilities as they present themselves to you personally. The bulk of present selling represents an addition to a short position already extended much beyond the bounds of prudence in the opinion of many of the best in the trade. All things considered the market is giving a very good account of itself and would quickly respond to any favorable developments.

POST AND FLAG.

LITTLE HEIRS ATTEMPT TO BREAK HIS WILL

Action Involves Certain Property Let by Bequest to Anson Sanatorium.

Wadesboro, March 21.—Judge T. D. Bryson, of Bryson City, will hold a civil term of Superior Court here next week, it being a special term.

At this term the Little will case, which is expected to be a case of unusual interest, will be tried: The case is an action brought by the caveators, children of the late R. E. Little, a prominent lawyer and capitalist and state senator for several terms, to set aside certain provisions of his will in which he left certain property to the Anson Sanatorium, a local hospital founded by the deceased and largely fostered by him.

A notable array of counsel, including some of the leading lawyers of the state, will appear on both sides. Appearing for the caveators are Col. J. F. Cox and F. E. Thomas, of Wadesboro; E. T. Gausler and John A. McRae, of Charlotte; John C. Sikes, of Montic, T. L. Spencer, of Carthage. For the proponents, the Bank of Wadesboro, will appear Robinson, Caudle and Puette and McLendon and Covington, of Wadesboro; James H. Poy, of Raleigh; R. L. Smith, of Albemarle; H. F. Seawell, of Carthage.

A Moore county jury will try the case here.

USE PENNY COLUMN—IT PAYS

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