

# WHO'S WHO?

## Where G. H. RUSSELL Was in 1917-'18-'19

The office of solicitor, in the administration of the criminal law, though performing different duties, is as vital to the public interest as the office of judge. The offender must be sincerely and vigorously prosecuted before a jury will convict, unless the case is an "open and shut" case. The defendant, as a rule, employs the best talent. He gets the lawyer who is best read, knows human nature from a broad experience, and has had a successful experience in the practice of law through a period of years. As to the fitness of Gilbert H. Russell for the important position of solicitor I desire to set forth plainly the facts touching his fitness and his claim upon the people for first consideration. Nothing herein is intended as a personal reference to or reflection on the character and integrity of either of the gentlemen who oppose him for the nomination. Mr. Russell is making his campaign upon, first, fitness for the office and, second, the service and devotion he has rendered to increase the blessings and benefits to the masses of the people and to forever make the emocratic party the dominating party in North Carolina.

Mr. Russell was born in the back woods of Montgomery County back in days when the people knew the full meaning of the words, "want" and "necessities of life" and "poor folks." Few boys in the late Seventies and early Eighties had a ghost of a chance in life, and yet out of that period has come stalwart manhood, safe, sane and enduring leadership. The boy who has money and education and opportunity urged upon him and enters a chosen profession without even the handicap of a school debt, deserves no special credit for getting along. But the boy who without money, without a literary training and without a "pull" has found his own chance despite his handicaps and made good, demonstrates indisputable evidence of possessing an unusual character. If the present status of governmental, social and religious development were in some concrete substance so that we could abstract from it all the contributions which have been made to it by the boys who had no chance, but who succeeded despite the chance, we would have nothing left but confusion and chaos. Gilbert H. Russell did not have a chance, but he had a clean character and a burning ambition that would not let him rest in penury and obscurity. The way to success and usefulness was long and tedious, but he would not give up. His life as a farm boy, and then as a wage earner in railroad shops and at lumber plants, and again as a farm hand, and then a tenant farmer and later as a small land owner has led him through all the hard experiences of life and in reality made him one of that vast and innumerable multitude of common people who have worked for all they have and know heartaches and discouragements that the more fortunate cannot understand. True sympathy is founded in similiarity of experience. Mr. Russell knows how to truly sympathise with the multitudes in their wants and disappointments, their failures and sorrows, and can truly rejoice with them in their joys, ambitions, ideals and successes.

Soon after Scotland County was created, Mr. Russell, though a tenant farmer, had shown such devotion to duty, such traits of character and sound judgment in personal and public matters, that he was elected Register of Deeds of the county. Still urged on by a desire for more usefulness, he afterwards became a student at Trinity College where he studied Law under Prof. S. F. Mordecai. Upon the completion of his law course he returned to Laurinburg with a deeper interest in the education of the children of the masses and not merely the children of those who were able to send their children to a private school. He always maintained that every child is entitled to a chance to an education. He became Superintendent of the Public Schools of Scotland County and, although the position was practically non-remunerative at that time, he gave unstinted and constant service to the task of improving the public schools of Scotland County. Under his administration signal progress was made. General interest was quickened. Inadequate and inefficient schools were consolidated; special districts were formed for the first time in the county and with and from his administration there has grown up in this county as fine a system of public schools as can be found in any other such county. He is today a trustee of the Laurinburg District which includes Laurinburg and a large area outside the town. Since he became a trustee plans have been completed and bonds sold for the construction of the High School Building costing approximately \$15,000.00, and with its completion Laurinburg will have as splendid school facilities as any town two or three times its size. In the performance of his duties as School Trustee he has, after freely consulting the mothers of the children, uncompromisingly stood for what he believed to be the best policies.

For 12 years I have been associated with him as law partner. Prior to that time he was associated with Mr. E. H. Gibson. I believe I know him as I do few men. The motives and impulses of his life are pure and unselfish. His sobriety and moral cleanliness and hatred for profanity are known by all men who have known him. Every moral movement from the time of his youth down to this good time has had his hearty support. The defeat of Prohibition in the Eighties by 25,000 majority was changed into an everlasting and eternity-long victory in 1908 by the consistent sobriety and personal efforts of such men as Gilbert H. Russell. He has

been superintendent of one of the Sunday Schools in East Laurinburg for a number of years trying to be of some service to those whose pathway has not always been strewn with flowers and who have not always lived on beds of ease.

As a laborer, as a tenant farmer, as a landowner, as a public official, as a lawyer in active practice and as a Christian gentleman, Mr. Russell has had a broad experience and training which fits him, above his opponents, for the important and responsible position to which he aspires.

But what about his patriotism? Some one, in writing in behalf of one of Mr. Russell's opponents, has asked, through a newspaper article, "Where was Russell during 1917, 1918 and 1919?" He was where duty demanded that he should be. He was feeding and caring for his family, he was buying as many bonds as he was able to take and pay for, he was persuading others to buy, to stop the waste, conserve the food for hungry Europe, he was making speeches begging the people to support our great and glorious government with themselves, their money, their boys, their prayers. That is not near all. He furnished two boys whom he loved as devotedly as any father ever loved sons. One of them was among the first group of American soldiers who landed on French soil, and among the first to hear bleeding France shout in tears of joy, "Hail, Hail, America Has Come!" One of them was in the first battle in which America fought. One of them was gassed and desperately wounded in that terrible and tragic battle of Argonne Forest, and for months lay in a hospital "somewhere in France" fighting to save his life from the ghastly gangrene, with not one word or bit of message coming back to father and mother. Can you imagine their fears and tears while awake, and their dreams and nightmares while sleeping. I saw the father of that boy morning after morning when he did not have to tell me that he had not slept. The bitter suffering and agony of the human heart is beyond comprehension. And yet, that newspaper article in which that question was asked has been published throughout this district as a paid political advertisement. This is written in the absence of Mr. Russell. I have stated the facts as they exist, despite the fact that he requested that nothing be said which might put him in the attitude of trying to win on the patriotism of his boys. That is not the basis of his appeal for this important office.

But Mr. Russell has another claim. Does being a consistent Democrat for thirty years and fighting for a free and untrammelled white government mean anything to the voters of this district? Shall those who have come in at the eleventh hour push aside and supercede those who have borne the heat and burden of the day? Mr. Russell was killing Republican votes in Montgomery and Randolph Counties by the time some of his opponents were born. He acquired such efficiency in that art up there, that he fell into great prominence as a leader here after the memorable defeat of Democracy in 1896. A member of that organization known as the Red Shirts, which was the chief influence in changing the complexion of the magistrates and deputy sheriffs in this and other counties. Those men, including Mr. Russell, time and again took their lives in their own hands and by their valor struck consternation into the negroes and their white leaders, but through and beyond the dangers they saw the triumph of Democracy and the salvation of the pure white womanhood from the encroaching and horrible menace of negro ambition and hellish designs. Shall the women of this district, in the glare of recent events, forget the dangers that once lurked at their very doors?

But Mr. Russell has yet another claim on the women of this district. He has always maintained that his mother and wife were as capable of voting as he was and ought to have the same privilege. This great privilege did not come to the womanhood of our county suddenly, but rather through influences which worked during a long period of years. Those influences were the men and women who believed in the ability of women, even when so many women themselves did not want the ballot and doubted their own ability. In 1913, when the writer was a member of the Legislature, the bill to allow women to serve as members of school committees, colleges and other state institution trustees, and as members of the text-book commission, was introduced. Mr. Russell, so much interested in schools and believing in the wisdom and gracious influence of the women, insisted that the bill should become law, and through his influence the writer cast his vote for the bill which became law by a small margin of votes. The greatest friends of Woman Suffrage have been those who worked quietly but effectively. Mr. Russell, as a member of the delegation to the Democratic State Convention just prior to the adoption of the amendment to the Federal Constitution, voted from first to last to put the state convention and the Democratic party on record in favor of the adoption of the Amendment.

The people of Scotland County feel that they have a candidate who, by varied experience, self-determination, training, character and practice is best qualified for the position of Solicitor, and by long and devoted service and sacrifice in behalf of better morals, better schools, equality of rights and privileges, and the establishment of Democracy, most deserves the honor which he seeks.

W. H. WEATHERSPOON.

(Political Advertisement)

his crop after he had a number of hours work on the soldier would quit he had worked six hours battle field. The farmer rested in his crop, and he count the hours. He is for results. He is after on, and work is the only or production.

farmer is never the man ls down on civilization as er. He goes ahead and s what is needed to the his ability, and the world m by giving him the nd of everything that it e gets the smallest wages occupation, in spite of his ay of servitude. You think that the farmer g probably seventy hours in the hot sun would get han the man working or forty hours a week in elter of a roof, but it is The man with the short eek gets the big wages. e the farmer got a dollar r, what a howl would go e worry about the burden es the farmer pays, but e he got wages or returns her folks in other lines. uld pay his taxes and them from his bigger in- nd never feel like it. We or the little tribulations farmer but for the big he real ones, we have no n. Work is nothing—if a ts a fair return for it. The is perfectly willing to And the world should pay r it.

being the season, we feel mov- ay that love is like everything the shape of trouble. The e think about it the worse it

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