

# THE LANCASTER NEWS

LEDGER 1852

REVIEW 1878

ENTERPRISE 1891

VOL. 3. NO. 48. SEMI-WEEKLY.

LANCASTER, S. C., MARCH 21, 1908.

PRICE 5 CENTS PER COPY

## Interesting Murder Case.

### Trial and Conviction in Monroe of Negroes for Killing Young Furr, Who at One Time Lived in Lancaster County, with his Brother-in-Law, J. Harvey Flynn.

Monroe special in Thursday's Charlotte Observer: The jury in the case of Sue Watts and Charles Stratford brought in a verdict of guilty of murder in the second degree at 10:30 tonight after being out six hours. The sentence of each is thirty years in the State prison at hard labor.

The trial of Sue Watts and Charles Stratford, both colored, charged with the murder of Thomas Furr, a white boy 18 years old, was begun in Superior Court yesterday morning.

The body of young Furr was found in a field near the house of Sue Watts early in the morning of January 22nd last. He had been shot through the heart, and County Physician Stewart testified that death must have been instantaneous. Mrs. Sallie Furr, mother of the deceased, said that her son left home riding a mule about a quarter of an hour before sunset the evening before. During the night the mule returned without saddle or bridle, and later another mule hitched to a buggy, both the property of Harvey Flynn, Tom Furr's brother-in-law, was found standing near Mr. Flynn's barn. There were blood stains on the sides of the buggy and a pool of blood inside. Harvey Flynn was awakened, and he and his wife and Mrs. Furr went to Sue Watts' house, about a quarter of a mile away, the reason for their going there being that the riderless mule had returned from that direction. Sue stated to them that she had not seen Tom since early in the evening. Mr. Flynn told Sue to come back over to his house; at first she refused to do this, but finally consented and went with them and remained there for about an hour when she returned to her cabin. In the meantime Mr. Flynn notified Ben White and Lee Medlin, two colored men who live in the neighborhood, that Tom was missing and he suggested that they come to Monroe for bloodhounds to track the missing man. The two colored men came to Monroe but could not get the bloodhounds ("mad dogs" old Lee Medlin called them when he testified) and Medlin decided to call at the house of Charles Stratford and see if Tom had been there, because, as he said, he knew Tom and Charles to be very friendly. When the negroes reached Charles' house, they had some difficulty in arousing him, and when they told him of Tom's disappearance and the suspicion of foul play he said, "Surely not; Tom was over here this evening and went away all right". Other witnesses testified that young Furr had been at Stratford's house early that evening, but remained only a short time. Stratford went back to bed and did not go with the men to search for Furr.

George Flynn, Harvey's brother, who lives two miles from Harvey's house, was sent for and he went over there between 4 and 5 o'clock in the morning. Harvey suggested that they all go over to Sue Watts' again, and the body was discovered shortly after they arrived. They called

Sue out, and then it was noticed that there was blood on her arm and breast. G. W. Russ, who came there after the others testified that he saw Sue go in the house and come out with Tom's hat under her arm, and that she went to where the body was and tried to slip the hat under the blanket which covered the body. Russ went in the house and saw blood on the floor near the fireplace and spatters of blood on the woodwork over the fireplace. When Chief Laney reached the scene, about 9 o'clock, he found a lot of bloody clothing in the woman's bedroom, and there was water on the floor of the other room as if an attempt had been made to wash up the floor to remove stains of blood. The Watts woman refused to say anything at the time, saying she would tell all later.

Charles Stratford testified that he was home all night that night, and the reason he did not go with Medlin and White to search for Furr was because he did not think that anything had happened to Tom. Stratford's wife, his brother and several other negroes who live in the house with him corroborated his statement that he had been at home. He testified that he had a little fuss with Furr the Sunday before the killing occurred, but it did not amount to anything and he and Furr were friends after it as before, as was shown by Furr's having visited him the evening before he was killed. The fuss was over at Sue Watts' house when the defendant and Furr were there and some others drinking the Sunday before. Defendant said he had never threatened Furr. In answer to the testimony of Jack Williams that he had heard Stratford threaten to kill Furr one day at noon about two weeks before the killing, it was shown by the payrolls of the Incomerlee Cotton Mill, where Stratford worked, that he was at work there from 6 o'clock in the morning till 6 at night on the day in question, and could not have been at the place where Williams said he heard the threats made. Mr. Robert Iceman testified that Stratford had lost only half a day from work during the month of January, and that was on the 20th, two days before Furr was killed. Stratford said that he went to the Flynn's house the morning after the killing on his way to work. He reached there as they were starting to go to Sue Watts' house the last time and he went with them. Harvey Flynn stated that Stratford said to them, before he knew anything about the blood in the buggy, "I am as innocent of this as the angels in heaven." When they reached Sue's house, Charles went in and, one of the witnesses said, he looked at Sue and noticing the blood on her sleeve pointed to it and said, "Sue, you say you know nothing about this, how came that blood on your sleeve?" Sue did not answer.

The testimony of Sue Watts, which was given at the night session, was most dramatic. Her story of the relations between her and young Furr is unfit for publication, but from the evidence of others it seems to be only too true. She testified that Furr came to her house that night, and seemed to be troubled about something. He asked her for his gun, which he kept there, and she told him it was in the room where it always was. He got it, and after holding it in his hands fooling with it for five minutes, and mumbling to him-

self like a crazy man, he said, "Sue, do the best you can," and went outside, saying he was going to kill himself. She said he had said such things before, so did not believe him and did not go outside with him. About 10 minutes afterward, she heard the report of a gun and rushed out to find Furr lying by a tree in front of her house. She said that the dead man had fixed the gun to the tree by a rope in such a manner that he could point the gun at himself and pull the trigger with the rope. She lifted him up, holding his head in her arms and resting it against her breast. She said she did not want Furr's folks to find the body lying near her door, so she went up to Flynn's barn and got out the mule and buggy and drove back, intending to take the body and leave it in Flynn's yard. She lifted the body and placed it in the buggy, she said, and started to drive up to Flynn's, she walking on the ground holding the reins. But the body fell out of the buggy, and she could not get it in again, so she dragged it to the place where it was found. She left the buggy where it was, and returned to her house. She took the gun off the tree and carried it in the house where she took the exploded shell out and put in a loaded one. This is the substance of her story. She made no attempt to explain the presence of the blood stains around her fireplace, and her explanation for the bloody clothing found in her room is also unfit for publication. She did not implicate Stratford at all, and the latter is considered to have made out a good defense.

## Dates Fixed for State and County Democratic Conventions.

The Columbia State: The State Democratic executive committee at the meeting last night fixed the time for holding the State convention for May 20, the county conventions for May 4, and the precinct clubs for April 25. This was the main reason for the meeting, although one or two other resolutions introduced were discussed. At the precinct or club meetings delegates will be elected to the county conventions and when the county conventions are assembled delegates to the State convention will be elected, each county being entitled to twice the number of representatives in the general assembly.

There was a very full attendance when the meeting was called to order and as soon as the dates for the convention were fixed Mr. Cole L. Blease brought up a resolution recommending to the convention the change in the constitution of the party so that the first primary might be held on the third Saturday in Augusta instead of the fourth Tuesday as at present. Mr. Blease stated that he had heard of a number of cases where mill operatives were not allowed to get off on Tuesday in order to vote and it was customary in the mills to give the operatives a half holiday on Saturday. This applied particularly to Richland county, he said. The resolution was opposed on the ground that it would delay the returns. It was finally tabled.

## Judge Buchanan's Wound Proved Fatal--Sketch of His Life.

Augusta, Ga., March 17.—Judge O. W. Buchanan, of Winnsboro, and one of the best known men in the Palmetto state, died here this morning, as the result of a bullet wound inflicted yesterday afternoon while he was on a train en route to Augusta. The bullet which caused his death was fired by an unknown party and crashed through the car window while the train was running near Wards, S. C. The bullet entered the right side and caused congestion of the lungs, which resulted in death at 11 o'clock today. The shot was from a 22 caliber weapon.

Judge Buchanan had served his state in several honored positions, having been circuit judge, legislator and attorney general. He was born in Winnsboro, Sept. 16, 1858, the son of R. A. Buchanan and Rebecca Woodward. On both sides he was of Revolutionary stock. His uncle, Maj. John Buchanan, was one of the signers of the Ordinance of Secession.

Judge Buchanan was educated in the common schools of his county and at Mr. Zion institute. He studied law in the office of Jas. H. Rion, and after an examination by the supreme court was admitted to practice in 1880.

Mrs. Buchanan, to whom he was married at Clark's Hill, Jan. 2, 1880, was Miss Sophia A. Tillman, a daughter of the late Congressman Geo. D. Tillman and a niece of Senator B. R. Tillman.

Judge Buchanan was twice elected a representative from Fairfield county to the general assembly; was appointed assistant attorney general by Attorney General D. A. Townsend, and upon the election of Mr. Townsend to the bench in 1893, was elected without opposition to fill the vacancy thus caused. On Dec. 4, 1894, he was elected judge of the Third circuit. At the expiration of the four-year term he was reelected, his second term commencing Dec. 8, 1898. For several years he has been practicing law at Winnsboro.

## Chester Negro's Loss by Fire.

Chester Reporter: The barns and stables of Will Pratt, colored on the West End road, about a mile from the city, were destroyed by fire last night. Pratt's loss is very heavy, including two horses, three head of cattle, farming implements and a supply of feed. The fire is supposed to have been of incendiary origin.

## Struck in Eye by Nail.

Gaffney special in yesterday's Observer: Mr. Perry Hill, the efficient superintendent of the county farm, sustained quite a painful accident Monday. He was engaged in driving a nail with a hammer and in striking it a glancing blow the nail struck him in the left eye.

## Mr. George Moore Dead.

### The Well-Known Former Lancastrian Passed Away in Texas, the State of His Adoption--To be Buried Here.

The many friends in Lancaster, his former home, will be shocked and grieved to hear of the death of Mr. A. G. Moore, of Rockdale, Texas, which occurred Thursday afternoon at Waco, that state. The sad news was conveyed here by wire Thursday evening to Mr. Moore's mother, Mrs. N. C. Moore. The telegram gave no particulars, but his death must have been sudden, as it was only a few days ago that a communication was received here from Mr. Moore in which no reference was made to his being sick. As is well known, Mr. Moore's home was in Rockdale, where he had been engaged in the newspaper business for some years—was editor of the Rockdale Reporter. It is not known here why he was in Waco, where he died, but it is thought he had gone there to get some one to take his place in his office in order that he might come to Lancaster to meet his brother, Mr. William Moore, who is in the government's postal service in Panama, and who is expected here on a visit in a few days.

Mr. Moore was born and reared in this community. He was a son of the late W. A. Moore of the Lancaster bar and was forty-three years of age, and unmarried. He left here some 18 or 20 years ago, going to Texas, in which state he resided the greater part of the time. He was a skilled and successful newspaper man, having started in that business here during his young manhood, in the office of the old Lancaster Review. It will be remembered that he spent a few weeks in Lancaster, his old home, last summer.

As characteristic of all his family—parents, brothers and sisters—Mr. Moore was a man of exceptionally bright mind. It was apparently no trouble for him to readily master any kind of a problem, however intricate and perplexing. He was also possessed of a generous, open-hearted nature, pleasing personality and companionable disposition, all of which tended to win for him friends of all with whom he came in contact. Of splendid physique and commanding presence, his was a striking figure in any crowd.

Mr. Moore is survived by his mother, Mrs. N. C. Moore, and the following brothers and sisters: Messrs. Ernest and Paul Moore and Mrs. R. L. Crawford, of this place; Mrs. J. C. Lindsay, of Rock Hill; Mrs. F. O. London, of Atlanta, Ga., and Mr. William Moore, now of Panama. The remains are being brought to Lancaster for burial, and are expected to arrive here tomorrow or Monday.