

The Piedmont Historical Society

Notes have been inserted by the transcriber to define certain surnames and relationships mentioned in the testimony.

*Those tracing any of the surnames included in this testimony, please contact:
Glenna Bryant Kinard, 204 Redbay Road, Elgin, S. C., 29045. email:
gkinard@sc.rr.com*

(Transcription Copyrighted by Glenna B. Kinard; do not use w/o permission)

Transcripts of testimony by [William Bryant](#) and [Reuben Bryant](#)

Testimony taken by
U.S. CONGRESS JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE
to inquire into
THE CONDITION OF AFFAIRS
IN
THE LATE INSURRECTIONARY STATES
SOUTH CAROLINA

Volume I
Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872
Spartanburgh, South Carolina July 11, 1871

WILLIAM G. BRYANT

Sworn and Examined.

By the chairman:

QUESTION: Have you any recollection of where you were on the night preceding the last election -- the election in October?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Do you recollect of hearing the next day of who were whipped down in Limestone Township?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I heard of several.

QUESTION: Who did you hear of?

ANSWER: I heard of a man named **Champion** being whipped -- a white man - - and of a Negro woman, and of two Negro men, and of a white man, I think, by the name of **Price**, if I mistake not.

QUESTION: Did you, on that night preceding the election, see any considerable body of men, three or four or more?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: On the night they were whipped?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Have you made any statement to the effect that you did see any body of men on that night?

ANSWER: I made a statement that I saw one man.

QUESTION: Who was that?

ANSWER: Do I have to answer that question?

QUESTION: That is what we desire, to get at information. Was he in disguise?

ANSWER: When I saw him he was not.

QUESTION: Our purpose is to ascertain, if we can, who were the men who were out there on that night when these people were whipped, and if you will go on and state any facts that you think have a bearing on that subject, please to do so without special questions.

ANSWER: So far as that question is concerned, I will give you a narrative without questioning.

QUESTION: I would prefer you should do it in that way.

ANSWER: On the Sunday night previous to the election on Wednesday, the 19th ---

By Mr. Van Trump: QUESTION: The first night that you have been asked about was the night before the election: Is this the same night?

ANSWER: No sir; I do not mean it as the same night.

By the chairman: QUESTION: Go on with your narrative in your own way.

ANSWER: I was in Cleveland County, N. C., six miles this side of Shelby Courthouse. It was my purpose to be at Limestone Springs (SC) on Wednesday, at the election for the Legislature. I came over on Monday morning, which, I believe, would have been the 17th, and crossed Broad River at Surratt's, and came over and took dinner with an old gentleman named **Turner**. There he related to me the depredations carried on on Saturday night and on Sunday night. I did not see them. He stated that these men were whipped -- badly whipped -- and other depredations committed in connection with the whipping. I came from Turner's in the direction of home, some seven or eight miles, and stayed all night. I stayed one mile this side of Cowpens Furnace in this county. I learned that there was going to be no election at Limestone Springs; that the election was broken up. It was my purpose to be there. It was broken up -- so said the citizens -- by the violence of some parties unknown to me.

QUESTION: Did that relate to the whipping of the managers?

ANSWER: It was so said.

QUESTION: Proceed with your statement.

ANSWER: I stayed on Monday night one mile this side of Cowpens Furnace. There was a man passed by me. I stayed at a camp right in the fork of a road one mile this side of Cowpens Furnace, in Spartanburgh County; that was Monday night, the 17th, sir. He asked me my name -- it was very dark, you understand, and I think it was about 9 o'clock; I had a small fire, but there was no light, only what the coals gave. He asked me how far it was to Camp's Crossroads. It told him it was three miles. He asked me which road went there. I told him the road he was in -- the right hand road there. The old road was the nighest, but it was filled up and thrown away, out of use. He then asked me my name. I gave him my name. I asked him his name. He said he was a stranger in that country. I then asked him what time in the evening it was he passed my house. I live six and a half miles from here, on the Rutherfordton Road. He said he supposed about an hour by sun. It was too dark then for me to identify this person, but his voice I was well acquainted with -- more of that after awhile. He came on back next morning, and I had learned by Mr. Turner, after his giving an explanation of their whipping so many citizens in that country, that two Negroes, one named Witt, and another b, (former owners, Lipscomb and Fernandes,) had fled from there, one to Spartanburgh, and the other to Laurens. I said to him jokingly, I didn't supposed they would get Witt or Charlie that night. He says simply, "Why?" I told him I had learned that one had gone to Spartanburgh and the other to Laurens for protection. About an hour before day I heard him pass back.

QUESTION: Who?

ANSWER: The same man that has passed me by. Now you may ask questions and see why I knew it was the same man, but I will come to that directly. I heard a man come by the camp and accosted him in this way: "I suppose you didn't get **Witt** nor Charlie," and he said, "no". He came on back home that morning, and I never got home until evening; late in the evening I came home, but he passed my house as he went home. I had heard of his making some statements that I did not think was correct; that I knew were not correct -- that were false, as representing me, my own person, and my personal character.

QUESTION: That who was doing this?

ANSWER: This same man. He made them after he came to this town. I heard this. I came into town a few days afterward, and a gentleman with me from my own neighborhood, and I saw this man walking down here by the livery stables, and I says, "I will ask that gentleman concerning the reports I have heard he has made, and his declaration toward me;" and I came up to him and I asked him, and he said he hadn't made them. He asked me who told me. I told him. He says, "Let us go to him, for I did not make them." I told him, "I don't go about chasing up news nowadays; it was not worthwhile," and asked him some questions. I asked him if he found the Crossroads that he inquired of me some

nights before. He said he did. I asked him how he knew when he got there -- how he knew the place -- being that he was a stranger. He said he knew by a post oak that stood in the forks of the road. The road crossed in this way, [illustrating], and there was the post oak. I asked him how he knew the post oak when it was so dark. He said he rode up and felt the blaze on it. I said, "were the other boys there when you got there?" He says, "No sir." I asked him how long it was. He said three quarters of an hour before they came. I said, "did you alight?" He said, "No sir; I sat on my horse all the time." I asked, "Did they come?" He said, "Yes sir; they came, but after three quarters of an hour."

QUESTION: Go on.

ANSWER: That is about all of it. You must ask now any questions you please.

QUESTION: Who was the man who came to you in your camp there that you spoke of -- what is his name?

ANSWER: Miles Gentry.

QUESTION: Where does he live?

ANSWER: Somewhere in this town.

QUESTION: What night was that?

ANSWER: Monday night, the 17th of October (1871).

QUESTION: Was that the night after you heard **Champion** was whipped?

ANSWER: It was the night after I heard he was whipped.

QUESTION: How was he dressed that night; was he in his ordinary dress or in disguise?

ANSWER: I don't think he was in disguise. I thought he was in ordinary dress. It was dark, and I could not see whether he was or not, but it was not my impression that he was disguised.

QUESTION: Did you see him clearly enough to recognize him that night?

ANSWER: I did not see him clearly enough, and would not have recognized him but that I knew his voice, and the statement I have made to you -- don't you understand?

QUESTION: You spoke to him in this town on the supposition that he was the man, and then this conversation followed?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: **QUESTION:** Is **Miles Gentry** the same man you met in town and put these question to?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: The same man that rode to the Crossroads?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: The same man that waited three quarters of an hour for the boys?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: The same individual all the time?

ANSWER: Yes sir; all the time. Now will you please to understand me; when he passed my camp that night it was dark, and my fire was nearly out, and I could not have recognized his person. I was acquainted with his voice. He asked my name -- I believe he knew -- I said Bryant. He said which **Bryant**. I said, "W. G." I asked without further question what time he passed my house -- for I lived on the road -- and he said, "I am a stranger in this part of the country." I said, "You rode very hard;" that is 21 miles from this town.

QUESTION: Had you no suspicion at that time of who he was?

ANSWER: I knew who it was, so far as voice would be concerned after a long acquaintance.

QUESTION: Do you say the point where this occurred was 21 miles from this town?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: **QUESTION: What time of night was this?**

ANSWER: I can't tell.

QUESTION: Where was this Crossroads?

ANSWER: Camp's Crossroads -- three miles from where I was.

QUESTION: Was any person whipped on that night that you knew of out there?

ANSWER: I didn't hear of any this night. This was Monday night.

QUESTION: Was it the Monday night preceding the election?

ANSWER: Yes sir; on Sunday and Saturday night the whipping took place, I was informed.

QUESTION: What boys did you refer to as meeting this man?

ANSWER: I jokingly meant what he had went to meet.

QUESTION: What do you mean?

ANSWER: I mean just this; from the information I had learned of the depredations committed, I meant that he had went to meet a set of men who were going to commit more crime.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: **QUESTION: You meant the Ku Klux?**

ANSWER: I did sir; that is what I meant.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: **QUESTION: Did you speak that to him in such a way that he would understand what you did mean?**

ANSWER: I do not know whether he did or not. I spoke it to him as I speak it to you. I asked him first if he found his place. He said yes. I asked how he recognized it. He said by the post oak in the forks of the road. "How?" "By the blaze." "How did you know the blaze?" "I felt it." I said, "How long did you wait; were the boys there," or "how long did you wait?" He said they were not there, but he waited three quarters of an hour. I asked, "did you alight?" He said that he sat on his horse.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: **QUESTION: He did not ask you who the boys were?**

ANSWER: No sir.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: QUESTION: Did you say anything to **Mr. Gentry** about having been at the meeting of the Ku Klux?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Or about knowing of the whipping to **Champion** or **Clem Bowden**?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Have you given all the conversation?

ANSWER: I have given you what occurred between him and me there and here.

QUESTION: Did you tell him distinctly that you recognized him out there that night, or just begin the conversation in the manner in which you stated here?

ANSWER: I began it in the manner in which I stated it. He knew -- but it would not be proper for me to say -- I was going to say he knew I recognized him. I recognized him by his voice, but as to his person I could not say I recognized it, because it was dark, but his voice was familiar, and his conversation that took place proved that I recognized him, and I asked him what time he passed my house and I, being very familiar, and his telling me what time he passed

QUESTION: Had you been well acquainted with him before?

ANSWER: Yes sir; very well.

QUESTION: Did he give you any caution about saying anything on the subject?

ANSWER: None whatsoever.

QUESTION: Was there anything said about men being disguised at all between you and him?

ANSWER: Not a word sir, I don't think.

QUESTION: Did you ask him anything about what he was out there for?

ANSWER: I did not ask him anything what he was there for.

QUESTION: And he did not tell you?

ANSWER: He didn't tell me. Just as I before stated, I asked him if he found the place, and if he recognized the place, and jokingly asked him how long before the boys came. You may infer from that I had a notion from the information I had that day and the two nights previous.

QUESTION: You live six miles and a half from town?

ANSWER: Yes sir; on the Rutherfordton Road.

QUESTION: What is your business?

ANSWER: I am a farmer. I have spent a good deal of my life in teaching. I am a farmer by trade.

QUESTION: How long have you lived in this neighborhood or this county?

ANSWER: I have lived in this county, with the exception of 15 years, all my life. And that 15 years was spent in the adjoining county of Greenville.

QUESTION: How old are you?

ANSWER: 62 on the 8th of September last; so my age is recorded. I followed teaching school about 15 years in Greenville County.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: QUESTION: What was it you said about the night before the last election?

ANSWER: I don't think I said anything about it? I don't think you will find it so recorded on your minutes. The night before was Tuesday night, and I was that night at home.

QUESTION: When did you understand that the whipping of Champion and these other parties take place?

ANSWER: On Sunday and Saturday night, which I believe would enclose the 15th and 16th of October.

QUESTION: It was on two nights -- Saturday and Sunday night?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: When and where did you see "this man" that being the way you characterized him in the first place, whom you now call "Gentry"?

ANSWER: In this county, about one mile this side of Cowpens Furnace, on the road leading either to Limestone or Surratt's Ferry, or to Cowpens Furnace.

QUESTION: When was that?

ANSWER: It was on the 17th of October, I think?

QUESTION: What day was it?

ANSWER: On Monday night, sir.

QUESTION: Was that the first you saw of him?

ANSWER: Yes sir; on that occasion up there.

QUESTION: On Monday night, the 17th of October?

ANSWER: Yes sir; at think it was the 17th of October.

QUESTION: Some whipping had taken place the night before?

ANSWER: Yes sir; two nights previous to that -- Saturday and Sunday nights.

QUESTION: Were you living at the place where you first saw him?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: What were you doing there?

ANSWER: I was camped there. I had been traveling a little.

QUESTION: Where had you been?

ANSWER: To North Carolina.

QUESTION: On what business?

ANSWER: Some various business.

QUESTION: What was it?

ANSWER: Some of the business was to see my relations. That is one thing. That is the most correct I could give. Other was to look at the country.

QUESTION: Nothing else?

ANSWER: I can't say that there was anything else in particular, sir.

QUESTION: Who did you take to North Carolina with you?

ANSWER: A young lady, my sister-in-law.

QUESTION: What for?

ANSWER: To introduce her; to take her to her brother-in-law's -- her sister's -- in Polk County, N.C.

QUESTION: Then the principle business was not to see your friends, but to take your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: I can't say it was my principle business. I had friends there that I hadn't seen for several years. I went to see them.

QUESTION: What trouble or difficulty was it that occurred before that which led you to take your sister-in-law to North Carolina?

ANSWER: I didn't have any.

QUESTION: You swear so?

ANSWER: I didn't hear any trouble or difficulty. In what way do you mean? Speak it plain, so I can understand you.

QUESTION: You understand whether there was difficulty?

ANSWER: No sir; I don't understand that there was any difficulty. There was a misgiving got up after I had gone.

QUESTION: What was it?

ANSWER: It was settled when I got back. It was an error.

QUESTION: What was it -- a misgiving?

ANSWER: Yes sir. That don't concern the case I was qualified on.

QUESTION: Are you to judge of the matter?

ANSWER: No sir; but I leave it to the chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is a proper question to test your recollection.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: QUESTION: What was the misgiving?

ANSWER: It was that I oughtn't to have taken her.

QUESTION: Why?

ANSWER: Because they didn't think it was my place.

QUESTION: What was the reason of that?

ANSWER: They had got out rumors after I had gone. I am satisfied or was told -- and it took me some trouble to clear them up -- that I had taken her for my own purposes, if you want to know the whole of it; that as the rumor after I got back, not before I started.

QUESTION: Were you a married man?

ANSWER: I was sir.

QUESTION: You did not know anything of the misgiving before you went?

ANSWER: No sir; not until I got back.

QUESTION: How did you clear up that misgiving?

ANSWER: Stating to the people where I had staid; how I introduced her at the general hotels where I had staid.

QUESTION: How long before the 17th of October was it when you went to North Carolina?

ANSWER: On the 16th of September.

QUESTION: You went there with this sister-in-law on the 16th of September?

ANSWER: I did not go to North Carolina on the 26th of September. I left on the 16th.

QUESTION: Where did you leave your wife? (note: *William G. Briant's 4th wife, Hulda Gossett Piehuff; dau. of Lemuel Gossett/Elinor Quinn.*)

ANSWER: At camp meeting.

QUESTION: Did you start from camp meeting?

ANSWER: I started from home.

QUESTION: You had been at camp meeting, and you left your wife at camp meeting?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: You went from home with your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How long did you stay at home?

ANSWER: I do not know. There was time pieces there but I did not notice.

QUESTION: You had a time piece?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where was it?

ANSWER: At home.

QUESTION: Do you mean a clock?

ANSWER: Yes sir; and watch too.

QUESTION: Did you look at them?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: What time did you get home with your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: I suppose about 10 o'clock.

QUESTION: In the daytime?

ANSWER: In the nighttime.

QUESTION: How far was the camp meeting from your home.

ANSWER: About three miles.

QUESTION: Did you leave in the nighttime from the camp meeting?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: When did you and your sister-in-law determine to go to North Carolina?

ANSWER: At the camp meeting. She wanted to go to her sister's. I had a letter from her brother-in-law that he was coming to Polk County on some business,

and she wanted me to take her there to see her sister. It is a little town called Marshall.

QUESTION: Was this sister-in-law your wife's sister?

ANSWER: She was.

QUESTION: Was she younger than your wife?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How much younger?

ANSWER: I do not know.

QUESTION: Give us your best impression.

ANSWER: Maybe I can give you a pretty good statement, [figuring with a pencil upon paper] I suppose about 13 years.

QUESTION: Younger than your wife?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What was her age?

ANSWER: Going on about 19.

QUESTION: Your wife, then, is younger than you are?

ANSWER: Yes sir; and very likely, too.

QUESTION: Good looking?

ANSWER: A good looking woman, yes sir.

QUESTION: Was this sister-in-law as good looking as she was?

ANSWER: I would not hardly think she was. My wife is a very good looking woman.

QUESTION: When did your sister-in-law and you at the camp meeting come to the conclusion to go to North Carolina?

ANSWER: I said part of it or most of it occurred at the camp meeting. She had asked me before that to take her to her brother-in-law's; some other was at my house.

QUESTION: In the presence of your wife?

ANSWER: I do not know whether she was present or not.

QUESTION: When did you finally agree to go? Was it on the campground?

ANSWER: I do not generally do anything I don't wish my wife to know.

QUESTION: Where on the campground and at what particular time did you and her finally agree to go to North Carolina?

ANSWER: Sunday evening, I think.

QUESTION: How long before you started home.

ANSWER: How many hours or days?

QUESTION: What was the time?

ANSWER: I do not know what the time was; it might have been on Sunday at 1 o'clock.

QUESTION: Was it Sunday night you left the campground?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you say what time you left the campground?

ANSWER: I do not know whether I did or not.

QUESTION: You said you got home about 10 o'clock?

ANSWER: I think I said 9 o'clock.

QUESTION: I think you said 10 o'clock. What do you think?

ANSWER: I told you I didn't notice the clock then.

QUESTION: You said it was about 10.

ANSWER: I do not know whether I did or not.

QUESTION: Did you start for home about night or not?

ANSWER: About dark -- it is three miles.

QUESTION: And it took you from just about night until 10 o'clock to get home?

ANSWER: No sir; I think I said about 9 o'clock. Has the gentleman got it recorded?

QUESTION: I am not under oath as a witness, and I can say I do not know.

ANSWER: I do not know either.

QUESTION: How did you travel home?

ANSWER: On foot.

QUESTION: Why did not your wife go home with you?

ANSWER: That is what I do not know.

QUESTION: Did you tell her you were going home?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Did you take your wife there to camp meeting?

ANSWER: I did.

QUESTION: With your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: I understand you to say you took your sister-in-law to the camp meeting?

ANSWER: No sir. I did not say so.

QUESTION: Who did take her there?

ANSWER: I do not know without she took herself.

QUESTION: Was it understood and agreed between you and her to meet at the campground?

ANSWER: I do not think there was any understanding to that effect.

QUESTION: Where did your sister-in-law live before that camp meeting?

ANSWER: At her father's.

QUESTION: How far from your home?

ANSWER: About two miles.

QUESTION: Did you go by her house to the campground?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Did you come by there?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: How long before the camp meeting did you see your sister-in-law last?

ANSWER: I do not know that I can answer.

QUESTION: You did not tell your wife that you and your sister-in-law were going home that night on foot after night?

ANSWER: No sir; I did not.

QUESTION: You did not tell her that you were going to North Carolina after you got home?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: And that you were going to stay nearly a month in North Carolina?

ANSWER: I did not.

QUESTION: When did you and your sister-in-law leave home for North Carolina?

ANSWER: I think that question has been answered and recorded.

QUESTION: I think not.

ANSWER: I am on oath and you are not.

BY THE CHAIRMAN: QUESTION: Answer the question.

ANSWER: I think it was the 16th of September.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: QUESTION: Was that the next morning that you got home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How early?

ANSWER: Very early.

QUESTION: How did you go to North Carolina -- how did you travel?

ANSWER: I came here and stayed until Tuesday, I believe.

QUESTION: With her?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Who was in the house with you with your sister-in-law that night?

ANSWER: Where?

QUESTION: At your house.

ANSWER: No person.

QUESTION: You and her stayed there together?

ANSWER: What time I did stay there we were together.

QUESTION: You both stayed in the house that night?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Nobody else was there that night?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: You came to town the next morning with the sister-in-law of yours?

ANSWER: No sir; I did not say that.

QUESTION: You came?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I came.

QUESTION: Where did you meet your sister-in-law after that?

ANSWER: I met her above her apiece.

QUESTION: Was it agreed between you and her before you left that morning where you were to meet?

ANSWER: Yes sir; and to take her to North Carolina.

QUESTION: What did you come to town for?

ANSWER: On business.

QUESTION: What business?

ANSWER: I was owing some money and some money was owing me.

QUESTION: You wanted to pay what you owed and get what was due you?

ANSWER: Yes sir; to pay and collect.

QUESTION: Was it your intention when you left to return?

ANSWER: It was.

QUESTION: Why did you want to settle up your business?

ANSWER: I did not want to settle up -- I left a good deal unsettled.

QUESTION: How did you travel to North Carolina?

ANSWER: Most of the time we were afoot -- a heap of the time.

QUESTION: In what other mode did you travel?

ANSWER: Sometimes I hired vehicles.

QUESTION: As you found them along the road?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What was the distance from your house to where you went in North Carolina?

ANSWER: I supposed 75 miles.

QUESTION: The most of it you and this girl walked?

ANSWER: Some part of the way we walked and some we did not.

QUESTION: You said most of it -- do you change that?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Where did you go to in North Carolina?

ANSWER: I went to Polk County.

QUESTION: To what house?

ANSWER: Principally to Polk County.

QUESTION: To what house in Polk County?

ANSWER: At a man named **Hinstons**.

QUESTION: A relative of yours?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Of your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: How did you stay there?

ANSWER: All night until next day sometime.

QUESTION: You did not intend to stay there long?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: You did stay with her at several other points along the way?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where did you start to go?

ANSWER: To Haywood.

QUESTION: Is that a town?

ANSWER: No sir; but Asheville -- that is a little town.

QUESTION: Who did you intend to see there?

ANSWER: My brother-in-law and sister.

QUESTION: What is his name?

ANSWER: **M. C. Mackabee**

QUESTION: Where does he live?

ANSWER: Close to Asheville.

QUESTION: Is Asheville his post office?

ANSWER: I think it is; he did not live at Asheville. Unknown to me -- I hadn't heard it -- he had moved to a little town on the Tennessee line. I cannot think of the name. He had moved there, but I did not know it; I thought he lived at Asheville.

QUESTION: You went to see Mackabee?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: He is your brother-in-law?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Who else did you say you went to see?

ANSWER: I did not say anybody.

QUESTION: Yes you did.

ANSWER: I might have said I went to see several of my relations.

QUESTION: You mentioned you went particularly to see several?

ANSWER: Refer to the book and see.

QUESTION: What do you mean by "the book" -- do you mean what the reporter has taken down?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you not say that you went to see Mackabee and some other particular relations?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What relations?

ANSWER: Mackabee.

QUESTION: What particular relations?

ANSWER: I do not think I named any relations particularly.

QUESTION: Did you not say you went to see **Mackabee** and other particular relations?

ANSWER: And other relations, I said. I do not know whether I said particular or not.

I do not think I gave the name.

QUESTION: Did you not say your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: I said **Mackabee's** wife was my sister-in-law.

QUESTION: Did you not say you went to see her?

ANSWER: I said I went to see her if she was where I thought she was.

I went to see Mackabee and his wife, who would have been my sister-in-law, but they had moved to that little town.

QUESTION: How long did you stay at **Mackabees**?

ANSWER: I did not see him; he had moved.

QUESTION: Did you follow him?

ANSWER: No sir; I turned back for home.

QUESTION: Right away?

ANSWER: Yes sir. When I found he was gone.

QUESTION: You went to North Carolina to see **Mackabee** and his wife and turned right back home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: With your sister-in-law?

ANSWER: Yes sir. I came back out of my way somewhat to see some of my relatives.

QUESTION: How far did Mackabee live from Asheville?

ANSWER: I think, sir, as well as I recollect, about 45 miles.

QUESTION: You had already traveled about 75 miles to see him?

ANSWER: I think about that.

QUESTION: Having heard that he had moved 45 miles you turned about and came home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you come back by the same road that you went?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: What road did you come back by?

ANSWER: Up the Rutherfordton Road

QUESTION: Did you stop at Rutherfordton?

ANSWER: No sir; I stopped a little this side.

QUESTION: How long?

ANSWER: Through the evening.

QUESTION: How were you traveling with this sister-in-law?

ANSWER: On foot right there.

QUESTION: Had you any wardrobe along?

ANSWER: Yes -- spare clothes?

QUESTION: Yes.

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Had she a bundle too?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: How did she carry her clothes?

ANSWER: I don't think she had any along, except what she had on.

QUESTION: Where did you go from Rutherfordton?

ANSWER: The next place I stopped at.

QUESTION: You were traveling right on?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Do you recollect what time you got to Asheville, where you supposed your brother-in-law lived?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: How many days were you going from your home to Asheville?

ANSWER: I do not remember that, for I stayed sometimes with some of my relations.

QUESTION: Going out?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What relations?

ANSWER: Do you want their names?

QUESTION: Yes sir.

ANSWER: **Thomas McDade** and **Spartan McDade**.

QUESTION: Where do they live?

ANSWER: They lived on the head of these rivers out there.

QUESTION: What is the nearest town?

ANSWER: They lived nearest to Columbus Court-House, North Carolina.

QUESTION: Is that their nearest post office?

ANSWER: I do not know, sir.

QUESTION: How far from Columbus did they live?

ANSWER: About 12 miles I think, if I am not mistaken.

QUESTION: Did they live close together?

ANSWER: They lived about four miles from one another.

QUESTION: On the same road you traveled?

ANSWER: It was on the road I traveled.

QUESTION: Was that the main traveled road to Asheville?

ANSWER: No sir; not the main traveled road to Asheville.

QUESTION: What road did they live on?

ANSWER: I cannot tell you what road they lived on.

QUESTION: How did you find out where they were?

ANSWER: I knew where they lived.

QUESTION: Did you not know the road they lived on?

ANSWER: I do not think it was any road that has any name.

QUESTION: Which one did you come to first?

ANSWER: Thomas.

QUESTION: How long did you stay there?

ANSWER: Until next day sometime.

QUESTION: Did he know this sister-in-law of yours.

ANSWER: I told him who she was.

QUESTION: Did he inquire of you why your wife was not along?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Not a word about that?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: How long did you stay there?

ANSWER: From one day to the next.

QUESTION: And next day you went to the other relation?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What time did you leave Thomas' the next day?

ANSWER: I reckoned about 10 o'clock.

QUESTION: What time did you get to the other party?

ANSWER: I cannot say what time; I reckon it was about toward 12; they said it was four miles.

QUESTION: How long did you stay there?

ANSWER: Until next day.

QUESTION: Then you started to Asheville?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you stop at any other point between that and Asheville?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: You went direct to Asheville?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How long did it take you to travel from your home to Asheville?

ANSWER: I do not know as I have said.

QUESTION: You have refreshed your mind about the different stopping place?

ANSWER: Yes sir, but I do not know.

QUESTION: Guess at it the best you can do.

ANSWER: Well sir, it would be a guess, without I had more time to make the calculation, for I do not know.

QUESTION: About how many miles could you travel each day on foot with these little catchups of rides that you got.

ANSWER: I do not know that either, or how far we did go, or how many days we were going.

QUESTION: You cannot give us any one day's extent of travel either by riding or walking?

ANSWER: Yes sir, I could come pretty nigh that; I suppose some days 12 or 15 miles.

QUESTION: You took it leisurely?

ANSWER: Yes sir, I suppose so.

QUESTION: When you hired a conveyance did you jog on at a pretty good trot?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Taking the time you stopped at Thomas (Mc)Dade's and the other parties over night and part of a day, and the distance to Asheville, being 75 miles, were you over four or five days going to Asheville?

ANSWER: Yes sir, I think so.

QUESTION: How much more?

ANSWER: I do not know.

QUESTION: Give us an opinion.

ANSWER: I will make as good a calculation as I can.

It might have been seven or eight days.

QUESTION: Getting to Asheville and finding your brother-in-law not there, you were not disposed to follow him further, although you had gone 70 miles and you had turned back home?

ANSWER: I traveled back home.

QUESTION: How did you travel back home?

ANSWER: By Rutherford.

QUESTION: Did you stop with any relatives?

ANSWER: I stopped not far from Rutherford.

I stopped with a man named **Lemaster**.

QUESTION: Any relation of yours?

ANSWER: yes sir; a brother-in-law. (*note: The **Vandiver** family -- Wm.'s 3rd wife was Polly **Vandiver** -- had a dau. who married a **Lemaster**.)*)

QUESTION: How long did you stay there?

ANSWER: A piece of a day.

QUESTION: How far does he live from Rutherfordton?

ANSWER: About two miles.

QUESTION: That is his nearest post office, is it?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Would a letter reach him at Rutherfordton?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I think that is his post office.

QUESTION: You said you stayed there a piece of a day? Did you jog on homeward?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where did you go to then?

ANSWER: That night?

QUESTION: Yes sir; did you stop at another relatives?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Did you stop at a public house?

ANSWER: We stopped with a man named **Owens**, I think.

QUESTION: You and your sister-in-law stayed there all night?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I had an acquaintance.

QUESTION: Did you sleep together in the same house?

ANSWER: Yes sir; under the same roof, but I think she slept in a different room.

QUESTION: You think so?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I know it.

QUESTION: Why did you not say you knew it?

ANSWER: I spoke cautiously, you know, at first.

QUESTION: I advise you to be cautious.

ANSWER: I am cautious.

QUESTION: It is what a witness ought to be. You stayed there one night; where did you go to the next night?

ANSWER: I think the next day was a wet day -- very wet; and a man named **Eaves** lived close by --

QUESTION: And you stopped there next night?

ANSWER: No sir; I stayed with him the next night part of the night. He came up for me to go with him, and talk with him.

QUESTION: Where were you that he came from his house to get you to come down to his house and talk?

ANSWER: With a man named **Owens**.

QUESTION: And that is the man you spoke of before?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Then you did not travel that day towards home?

ANSWER: No sir; it was a wet day.

QUESTION: That was a lost day?

ANSWER: Yes sir it was a wet day.

QUESTION: Was the next day a wet day?

ANSWER: The third day? No sir.

QUESTION: How far did you travel that day?

ANSWER: I do not know how far. I'm not able to say. We got next day, I think, to a cousin of mine named **Dillon**.

QUESTION: You had another relative there?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: It makes no difference what road you traveled in that country you came to a relative over night?

ANSWER: I cannot say so.

QUESTION: You stayed with him that night?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you travel on next morning?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: What did you do?

ANSWER: Stayed there.

QUESTION: How long?

ANSWER: Next day and next day -- three days.

QUESTION: What is his name?

ANSWER: **Dillon.**

QUESTION: Where does he live?

ANSWER: Six miles, I think, southeast from Shelby Courthouse.

QUESTION: Is Shelby Courthouse his post office where he gets his mail matter?

ANSWER: I do not know.

QUESTION: Is there any nearer post office that you know of?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: At the end of three days you took up your staff again and walked?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where to?

ANSWER: That was for home.

QUESTION: Did you get home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What did you say about home?

ANSWER: I understood you asked me if I walked that day.

QUESTION: I asked you did you take up your staff and travel that day; you said you did for home; did you get home?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Where did you get to?

ANSWER: A mile this side of Cowpens Furnace.

QUESTION: That is in this county?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Near Cowpens Battleground?

ANSWER: I suppose it is.

QUESTION: Is that the place where you camped?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Who was with you?

ANSWER: Nobody but her. I aimed to have stayed at the Cowpens Furnace when I was told the gentleman was not at home. I generally stayed at what was called good houses; don't you understand?

QUESTION: I have no doubt of that.

ANSWER: I then came on a mile, and it looked a little like rain, and a man named **Henderson** --

QUESTION: **Henry Henderson?**

ANSWER: I do not know his given name.

QUESTION: What about him?

ANSWER: He told me he did not take in travelers, or want to be interrupted.

QUESTION: Was he the only gentleman who lived there?

ANSWER: Yes sir; the only one I knew of.

QUESTION: Was there any other in the neighborhood.

ANSWER: I do not know of any other; I was a stranger.

QUESTION: What time of day was that?

ANSWER: Getting dusk; that was a portion of the night I camped out.

I went to the house and tried to get to stay, and they did not seem disposed to. It looked a little like rain.

QUESTION: They had plenty of room?

ANSWER: I do not think they had. I asked them if they would take us in if it rained. They said they would if it rained.

QUESTION: Then you started off for your camp?

ANSWER: Yes sir; it was right close to **Henderson's**.

QUESTION: How far did you go to your camp?

ANSWER: Not 200 yards.

QUESTION: What do you mean by a camp?

ANSWER: Only a fire built up; that was the only time I did that. We generally stayed at good houses.

QUESTION: What time did you strike your camp?

ANSWER: About deep dusk.

QUESTION: Was this girl with you when this man came along?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where is she now?

ANSWER: At her father's, I suppose.

QUESTION: Where is that?

ANSWER: At her father's, about two miles from here.

QUESTION: What is his name?

ANSWER: **Lemuel Gossett**.

QUESTION: It was about dusk when you struck you camp?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What night was that?

ANSWER: Monday night.

QUESTION: What day of the month was Monday?

ANSWER: About the 17th.

QUESTION: What month?

ANSWER: October.

QUESTION: How near was that to your home -- where you lived at home?

ANSWER: I do not know sir. I expect it was about 19 miles.

QUESTION: Were you then on your way home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: It was about dusk when you struck up your camp?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: You say you built a little fire?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: When this man came along you said there was no light.

ANSWER: Only a little fire.

QUESTION: Just some coals, you said?

ANSWER: Yes sir; that was all.

QUESTION: He came riding along?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you hail him or did he hail you?

ANSWER: I think he hailed me, maybe.

QUESTION: Maybe; but I want the fact.

ANSWER: I think he spoke to me first.

QUESTION: What did he say?

ANSWER: The first word he said?

QUESTION: Yes sir.

ANSWER: I think he asked me how far it was to Camp's Crossroad. I think that was the first.

QUESTION: What did you tell him?

ANSWER: I told him about two miles.

QUESTION: What was the next question?

ANSWER: What was the next question?

QUESTION: Yes.

ANSWER: I think he asked me which of the roads went there.

QUESTION: What did you tell him?

ANSWER: I told him the road he was in -- the right hand.

QUESTION: Was that all that took place?

ANSWER: He asked me my name.

QUESTION: Did you tell him?

ANSWER: I told him.

QUESTION: What then?

ANSWER: I asked him his name. He said he was a stranger over there.

QUESTION: He did not tell you his name?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: As you say now you knew who that man was then?

ANSWER: I say I then thought I recognized him by his voice.

QUESTION: You say you were well acquainted with him long before that?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What kept you from speaking from speaking out to Mr. **Gentry**?

ANSWER: I don't think it would have been anything.

QUESTION: You had nothing on your mind to prevent you?

ANSWER: Nothing; for I had told him my name very deliberately, and asked him what time he passed my house.

QUESTION: How long did he stop with you?

ANSWER: Just a few minutes -- not many.

QUESTION: You did not speak to him as knowing him at all?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I asked him his name.

QUESTION: But you were satisfied with that, although you knew this was Mr. **Gentry**?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: You say there was nothing in your mind to cause you to refrain from addressing him as Mr. **Gentry**?

ANSWER: I say so.

QUESTION: When next did you see him?

ANSWER: I do not know.

QUESTION: How long was it?

ANSWER: Probably a week or two.

QUESTION: Where did you see him?

ANSWER: In the streets here.

QUESTION: Was that the first time you had seen him since that night?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What took place between you?

ANSWER: I told him I had heard of some things he had said.

QUESTION: What had you heard he had said?

ANSWER: He said he hadn't said it.

QUESTION: I asked what you had heard he had said?

ANSWER: I had heard he had said that he came across me camping out with that young woman; that would have been so because I couldn't no inn that night.

QUESTION: That irritated you?

ANSWER: No sir; I don't know that it irritated me. I have not done nothing. The citizens, wherever I have any account of, know I treated her for what she was, and treated her the same.

QUESTION: You had a purpose in seeing Mr. **Gentry**, and was determined to have an explanation of what you had heard he had said?

ANSWER: I asked him what did he say.

He said he hadn't said anything wrong.

He proposed to go and see the man.

He said he hadn't said anything wrong or seen anything wrong.

QUESTION: Did he admit to you that he had said what you heard he had said?

ANSWER: No sir, he didn't admit to me that he had said what I had heard he had said.

QUESTION: Did he not propose to go and see the very man who reported it on him?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: And you declined?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Who was that?

ANSWER: My brother.

QUESTION: Who?

ANSWER: **Marcus**.

QUESTION: Is Dr. **Bryant** your brother?

ANSWER: What Dr. **Bryant** do you refer to?

QUESTION: Dr. **Javan Bryant**?

ANSWER: He is my nephew.

QUESTION: Did Dr. **Bryant** tell you what Mr. **Gentry** said.

ANSWER: No sir; I don't wish to be so understood.

QUESTION: I asked you who told you.

ANSWER: I said my brother Marcus.

QUESTION: Where does your brother Marcus live?

ANSWER: About a quarter of a mile from me?

QUESTION: How far from town?

ANSWER: About six miles and a quarter from town.

QUESTION: Mr. **Gentry** proposed at once to go and see him?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did not Mr. **Gentry** deny having said any such thing?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Were you satisfied with that, and did you not push it any further?

ANSWER: I didn't push it any further.

QUESTION: You must have felt some concern about it, when, the first time you saw Mr. **Gentry**, you made an attack on him about what he had been saying.

ANSWER: I had this much about it, that if he had stated what I had heard he had said, it was not so.

QUESTION: You said he said that you were camped out with your sister-in-law? (note: *Lucinda Gossett, daughter of Lemuel Gossett/Elinor Quinn*).

ANSWER: But that was not all.

QUESTION: State what he did say.

ANSWER: He stated that he didn't say it.

QUESTION: What was it that you had heard he had said?

ANSWER: He said we were both lying on the same cover.

QUESTION: You could not well lie or anything else?

ANSWER: Yes sir we could.

QUESTION: How did you lie?

ANSWER: She lay there [on this side] and I lay there, [on that side].

QUESTION: You might have been on the same cover?

ANSWER: But it as not.

QUESTION: Did you lie there all the night?

ANSWER: Nearly all night.

I heard the gentleman up there where I had asked permission to stay the night before;

I heard him up before day.

QUESTION: Had it rained?

ANSWER: No sir. I went to his house to know whether I could get breakfast.

QUESTION: Did you get it?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where did you go?

ANSWER: To my home.

QUESTION: To your regular home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you take your sister-in-law there?

ANSWER: No sir, to her father's. The roads forked before we got to my house and she went to her father's. I went with her to that.

QUESTION: How far?

ANSWER: A mile and a half.

QUESTION: You went where?

ANSWER: I went to my home.

QUESTION: Was your wife there?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Was she surprised at your long absence?

ANSWER: She might have been.

QUESTION: Was she?

ANSWER: Surprised at it? I expect she was a little.

QUESTION: Do you not know that she was?

ANSWER: She seemed a little surprised at my coming up.

QUESTION: Was there not a difficulty between you and her about it?

ANSWER: Not at all -- not at all.

QUESTION: You had been gone from the 16th of September until the 17th of October had you not?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I think that was about the time.

QUESTION: You were all that time in traveling up to and from Asheville?

ANSWER: Yes sir; but not direct.

QUESTION: How much out of the way did you go?

ANSWER: I had heard, sir, my brother-in-law -- you have not asked me that, and I did not think to state it -- that my brother-in-law had been indicted for stilling once before that. He was a native of this county and had been indicted for stilling.

QUESTION: I did not ask for that.

ANSWER: You wanted to have the narrative, I had heard or got a few lines from him to know if it was so that the Greenville Court was to set in a few days before I started.

THE CHAIRMAN: If Judge Van Trump does not want to know this you need not tell it.

THE WITNESS: He wanted to know the reason why I started, and the reason it took me so long to get there, and I wanted to tell that.

BY MR. VAN TRUMP: QUESTION: What is your politics?

ANSWER: I am a very poor politician sir.

QUESTION: Poor or rich, what is it?

ANSWER: My politics would be Republican Conservative.

QUESTION: You voted the Republican ticket did you not?

ANSWER: I have never voted the Republican ticket, that would be my politics if it was expressed.

QUESTION: To come back again to when you met Mr. Gentry here in town; tell all that took place then?

ANSWER: I think I did.

QUESTION: No you have not.

ANSWER: Ask the questions, and I will tell you to the best of my knowledge.

QUESTION: Did you and he elude to the fact of seeing each other on the road that night?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What was said?

ANSWER: In connection with that?

QUESTION: Of course.

ANSWER: I don't remember that anything special was said at all.

QUESTION: Try to tax your memory now.

ANSWER: I do.

QUESTION: You say that was the first time you saw Mr. **Gentry** after the time when you saw him that night as you were camped.

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Nothing special was said that you know of?

ANSWER: No sir; nothing special to introduce our meeting.

QUESTION: You introduced the subject of whether he had said that about the girl?

ANSWER: I mean outside of what I have already stated.

QUESTION: I asked for all that took place between you and **Gentry**.

ANSWER: I have stated it all.

QUESTION: State it again.

ANSWER: I bet **Mr. Gentry** and related to him that I thought there was some misunderstanding in connection with what he had said, which I have stated. He said he had said nothing. He asked me who told me.

QUESTION: Did you tell him what you had heard he had said, exactly to word it?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: And he denied it?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: And you proposed to go and see your brother?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did your brother said he had said it?

ANSWER: I never conversed with him about it.

QUESTION: How did you get the news from your brother about it?

ANSWER: Since that conversation.

QUESTION: Do you not live close to your brother?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: You can talked with him?

ANSWER: Yes sir. I don't think my brother told me, but his wife told me that my brother said that **Gentry** had said this.

QUESTION: And **Gentry** proposed to go and see him?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: And you would not go?

ANSWER: I did not have time.

QUESTION: What next was said?

ANSWER: I asked him if he had found the place he had inquired for.

QUESTION: Did you mentioned the place?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Speak the words he spoke then.

ANSWER: I asked him if he found Camp's Crossroads that he inquired for. He said he did.

QUESTION: What else?

ANSWER: I asked him how he designated or knew the place, as he said he was a stranger over there. He said he knew of a post oak that stood in the road or in the forks of the road. I jokingly asked him.

QUESTION: Is that all he said -- that he found the tree?

ANSWER: He did not say how he found it. He said he rode up to it and felt at it.

QUESTION: What did he find by feeling?

ANSWER: The blaze.

QUESTION: Had you told him of the oak or the blaze?

ANSWER: I hadn't, because I didn't know anything about it.

QUESTION: Now Mr. **Bryant** when and to whom did you first detail all of these facts?

ANSWER: These facts I have stated?

QUESTION: About **Gentry**.

ANSWER: I think, sir, the only time I detailed these facts was in a written note that was written down probably by **Dr. Bryant** and **Mr. Fleming** after the election.

QUESTION: The last election?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How long after the election?

ANSWER: I can't say.

QUESTION: This circumstance took place just before the election?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How long after the election did you tell that?

ANSWER: I don't know.

QUESTION: Give us an idea of how long?

ANSWER: I don't suppose it was very long; I don't know. I'll tell you what I do know: I know it was before the contested election was decided.

QUESTION: Was it during the heat of that contested election?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: To **Mr. Fleming** and your nephew, **Dr. Bryant**?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where did you meet them?

ANSWER: In this town.

QUESTION: Did you meet them together?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Where?

ANSWER: On the street here.

QUESTION: Did you tell it on the street?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Where did you go to?

ANSWER: To **Mr. Fleming's** office.

QUESTION: Did you tell them you wanted to see them?

ANSWER: No sir; they wanted to see me.

QUESTION: About what?

ANSWER: About that thing.

QUESTION: How did they know about it?

ANSWER: I do not know.

QUESTION: Had you told anybody?

ANSWER: I don't think I did.

QUESTION: Do you know?

ANSWER: I don't know that I had told any person; if I had, I don't recollect.

QUESTION: They commenced talking to you about this thing of **Gentry**?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What did they say?

ANSWER: They got to talking about the election being broken up at Limestone Springs.

QUESTION: What had that to do with **Gentry**?

ANSWER: They told me they understood I passed through there.

QUESTION: What had that to do with **Gentry**?

ANSWER: Nothing that I know of. They asked me what I heard passing through that vicinity. I stated as I have here.

QUESTION: Did you state the **Gentry** matter?

ANSWER: My memory is not correct whether I did or not.

QUESTION: You said they talked to you about it?

ANSWER: Yes sir; about what had transpired.

QUESTION: Did they speak of the specific thing between you and **Gentry** so that you knew what they eluded to?

ANSWER: I would not be willing to make a correct statement on that whether they did or not.

QUESTION: Then you might have been mistaken in saying a little while ago that they knew it before you told them?

ANSWER: Did I say that?

QUESTION: I understood you so.

ANSWER: I said that they had heard something; that I passed through that vicinity and heard about these men being whipped.

QUESTION: But I was asking how they came to know about **Gentry**. You said they knew it before you told them. I am talking about **Gentry**, and you about Champion. Will you bear that in mind?

ANSWER: I will.

QUESTION: Did you say they knew this thing before you told them?

ANSWER: I said if they did I did not know how it was. I said if they did know it I didn't remember how they knew it.

QUESTION: Have you forgotten that you stated distinctly a minute ago that they had been informed in some way of the **Gentry** matter before this interview?

ANSWER: Did I state that?

QUESTION: I think you did. I will not discuss it with you.

ANSWER: I don't think I did.

QUESTION: Do you recollect now whether they knew it before you told them?

ANSWER: I don't know that they did.

QUESTION: You went to the doctor's office?

ANSWER: To Mr. Fleming's office.

QUESTION: Now you cannot tell whether they or you first commented on the **Gentry** matter?

ANSWER: No sir, I don't know.

QUESTION: What was said and done in regard to the **Gentry** matter there, by whomever it was commenced?

ANSWER: What was taken down?

QUESTION: I did not ask what was taken down, but what was said or done in the office about the **Gentry** matter between you three?

ANSWER: As I told you before, I don't remember whether the **Gentry** case was taken down or not; but I recollect the circumstance of my hearing about these whippings was taken down; not that I saw any of it.

QUESTION: You related that?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: You do not remember whether anything was said about the **Gentry** matter there?

ANSWER: There might have been or might not; I don't remember.

QUESTION: You said that the first persons you told were Mr. Fleming and the doctor?

ANSWER: About what?

QUESTION: About this **Gentry** circumstance?

ANSWER: No, I don't know that I did.

QUESTION: I think you did. Take your time to think of it.

ANSWER: I am taking my time. [pausing]

QUESTION: Can you now say whether the first persons you told that to were **Mr. Fleming** and **Dr. Bryant**? What is your best recollection about that, without reference to what you have said to the reporter about it?

ANSWER: I say I don't remember.

QUESTION: Can you not recollect who you told first?

ANSWER: I don't remember that I told any person. I recollect giving the statement of the circumstances as I heard they occurred in that vicinity.

QUESTION: You mean as to the whippings?

ANSWER: Yes sir, as I heard them.

QUESTION: But that does not include this **Gentry** matter, as you think?

ANSWER: I am not positive; I can't say.

QUESTION: That is, you cannot say who you first told about this **Gentry** matter?

ANSWER: No sir, I don't think I can; I don't remember.

QUESTION: How long ago was it that you first told somebody?

ANSWER: I don't remember of telling it.

QUESTION: To nobody?

ANSWER: I recollect of speaking to the gentleman who went with me when I met Mr. **Gentry**, and having some conversation about it afterwards.

QUESTION: How is that?

ANSWER: I recollect of the gentleman who went with me when I met **Mr. Gentry** in the street, and having some conversation about it afterwards.

QUESTION: You say a gentleman was with you when you had this conversation with **Gentry** on the street?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Who was he?

ANSWER: **Berryman Barnet**.

QUESTION: Where does he live?

ANSWER: On this road.

QUESTION: Which road?

ANSWER: On the Rutherford Road.

QUESTION: How far from here?

ANSWER: About a mile and a quarter from here.

QUESTION: Did he hear all that took place between you and **Mr. Gentry**?

ANSWER: I do not know.

QUESTION: How close was he standing?

ANSWER: I do not know. He was in company with me, and heard part of the conversation.

QUESTION: Where did you meet **Mr. Gentry**?

ANSWER: Down here, not far from the livery stables.

QUESTION: His stables?

ANSWER: Yes sir, I suppose so.

QUESTION: By **Miles Gentry**, you mean **L. M. Gentry** of this town, who has the livery stable?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: And this man was along?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did he go down there with you?

ANSWER: We were just coming into town, me and him.

QUESTION: Did you come together?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Did you go down to the stables together?

ANSWER: No sir, we came that way.

QUESTION: You were coming to town together?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: Were you on horseback?

ANSWER: We had them hitched at the Baptist Church, and walked together.

QUESTION: You walked to **Mr. Gentry's**?

ANSWER: We were not at **Mr. Gentry's**.

QUESTION: Where were you?

ANSWER: At the livery stables.

QUESTION: At **Mr. Gentry's** stables?

ANSWER: I did not know that they were his. They are called his, they change once in a while.

QUESTION: Change what?

ANSWER: Change owners.

QUESTION: Is that the fact, that sometimes **Mr. Gentry** owns them, and sometime someone else?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: You were standing together?

ANSWER: Yes sir; me and the man with me.

I think we were pretty close together.

QUESTION: You think he might have heard this conversation if he had paid attention to it?

ANSWER: I think he might have, some or all of it. I don't know.

QUESTION: You said that you said something to the gentleman who was along with you, and went on to describe where you met him and who he was. Now, when did you have any talk with him about this **Gentry** matter?

ANSWER: I think if you understand me aright, this gentleman was with me, and not with **Mr. Gentry**, when we met him.

QUESTION: I understand that you said something to this gentleman you have mentioned. What was it you said to him?

ANSWER: I said we had some conversation about it since.

QUESTION: With that gentleman?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: What was that conversation?

ANSWER: Merely talking over the circumstances.

QUESTION: You told him exactly as you have told it here?

ANSWER: Told that man; yes sir.

QUESTION: How long was it after this meeting with Mr. **Gentry** that this conversation with that gentleman occurred?

ANSWER: I don't know.

QUESTION: How about how long was it?

ANSWER: I don't know.

QUESTION: How long is it since you have talked with anybody on this subject?

ANSWER: I think I named it -- I think me and this same man named it a few evenings ago.

QUESTION: To whom did you name it?

ANSWER: To Mr. Barnet.

QUESTION: But to whom did you name it?

ANSWER: I do not remember that I named it to any person?

QUESTION: How did it come to be known to the committee here, so that you were summoned here; do you know that?

ANSWER: No, I can't say that I do.

QUESTION: Do you say that you do not know how this committee became acquainted with these facts?

ANSWER: It may be possible -- I say my recollection fails me -- that these men, Dr. **Bryant** and Mr. Fleming, in taking down the circumstances that occurred, or that I was told occurred, in whipping these people as I came through that vicinity -- it may be that the **Gentry** case was talked over, but I don't know whether it was or not.

QUESTION: You are giving your recollection now to some extent, are you?

ANSWER: That is about what I stated before. I don't wish to keep back anything I know, or any question you see fit to ask.

QUESTION: We will not discuss your disposition. We have our opinions about it, perhaps, whether you talked about it at the time that they took it down or not, do you not know that since that time Fleming and the doctor knew it?

ANSWER: I don't think that we had any conversation about it.

QUESTION: Do you not know they knew it?

ANSWER: I don't know.

QUESTION: Have you talked with them lately about it?

ANSWER: No sir, I have not talked with them.

QUESTION: How long have you been in town?

ANSWER: I came in town this morning.

QUESTION: Have you been in town lately?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: How long since?

ANSWER: Three weeks, I think.

QUESTION: Have you seen **Mr. Fleming** and **Dr. Bryant** since you have been here?

ANSWER: No sir; not since I was here.

QUESTION: But during this visit to the town, to be a witness, have you seen them?

ANSWER: No sir. I saw **Mr. Fleming** since I have been here this morning.

QUESTION: You have not seen **Dr. Bryant**?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Had you a talk with **Mr. Fleming** about this?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Not a bit.

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Had you three weeks ago?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Do you know by what means you became a witness here?

ANSWER: No sir; I did not know what I was summoned for when I came up here.

QUESTION: Did you ever here how this **Gentry** transaction came to be reported in the country?

ANSWER: No sir; I never heard it got to be reported to the country.

QUESTION: Were you astonished this morning when you were inquired of about it?

ANSWER: I am thinking of something that maybe would give you and me satisfaction, and it is a new thought, and maybe it is correct, but I am not certain, and will not tell it positively; but it strikes me that this man **Barnet** might have related that circumstance to a man named **Cessler**. I don't know that that is so.

QUESTION: What makes you have that idea about it?

ANSWER: What makes me have an idea about it was, I asked **Barnet** a few evenings ago, when we had a conversation, and he said he thought the local people who knew nothing about these matters would be troubled as witness -- don't you understand, here? And I went on to remark I did not know what such a man as me would be troubled for witnessing for, and he made some statement, now I don't know, but he made some statement that allowed me to infer that likely he had told **Cessler** that conversation he had heard, but this is

not positive. I am not talking now like I was on my oath, and **Cessler** might have it through Dr. **Bryant**.

QUESTION: How long ago did he tell **Cessler**, if he did tell him?

ANSWER: He didn't say.

QUESTION: From the state of feeling in this county on this question, if you had told a living person at any time, shortly after this conversation with **Gentry**, or a long time afterwards, or sometime ago, that **Miles Gentry** had done such a thing, would it not have rung through this county like a tocsin, if it had got to be known in any way?

ANSWER: That I don't know.

QUESTION: Do you not believe it would?

ANSWER: It looks reasonable like it might.

QUESTION: You do not have a very good feeling toward **Mr. Gentry**?

ANSWER: O, me and **Mr. Gentry** are friendly. I don't wish him any harm.

QUESTION: You are certain of that?

ANSWER: Very friendly.

QUESTION: Did you tell you wife that your sister-in-law had been with you all that time when you got home?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

(End of testimony of William Bryant)

////

Testimony taken by

U.S. CONGRESS JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE

to inquire into

THE CONDITION OF AFFAIRS

IN

THE LATE INSURRECTIONARY STATES

SOUTH CAROLINA

Volume I

Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872

Reuben Bryant sworn and examined by the chairman.

QUESTION: In what part of this county do you live?

ANSWER: On the lower side.

QUESTION: In what township?

ANSWER: Pacolet Depot Township.

QUESTION: What do you follow there?

ANSWER: Farming.

QUESTION: How long have you lived in this county?

ANSWER: Ever since I was born.

QUESTION: How old are you?

ANSWER: I shall be 67 years old on the 16th of October, if I live to see it; so my parents say; 67 or 68.

QUESTION: Have the Ku Klux been at your house at any time?

ANSWER: Yes sir; they call themselves Ku Klux.

QUESTION: Proceed and state to the committee all that occurred at that time and when it was.

ANSWER: It was the last of last May. It was the same night they were at **General Bates** and was somewhere about the last of May -- I cannot tell the exact day of the month. I didn't expect to be called, and I didn't memorize it.

QUESTION: Go on and tell what they did and said.

ANSWER: They came sometime after midnight. When I found them out they had the house surrounded, and they hallooed and told me they wanted some guns, and if I would get up and give the guns to them they wouldn't hurt me; and if I did not they intended to have them. I told them if they promised not to hurt me I would get up and give them the guns. I knew that if they intended to have them they would have them.

QUESTION: What guns had you there?

ANSWER: It was a couple of United States guns that my son had brought there for me and my tenant. I had them wrapped up securely. They have to be wrapped up securely. I never shot them at all. One was upstairs and the other downstairs, to be there if I wanted to use it at any time. I gave them the first one, the one I really claim. I didn't consider it his, but it was in my care. I told them I claimed no other. They told me I was a God damned liar. That there was another gun there, and they intended to have both. They didn't come into the house. I had given them one, and the other I had, and blundered up for the other; they wouldn't let me get a light.

QUESTION: Was that all that occurred with them at that time?

ANSWER: They didn't hurt me at that time. They talked, some of them, very imprudent.

QUESTION: What did they say?

ANSWER: They cursed me when I opened the door; the one I call the captain and another man was standing on one side and the other the other, and he seemed to be very boisterous and called me a God damn old hypocrite and a traitor and a turncoat; the captain -- I called him that -- took notice; none of the rest did. He appeared to be a moderator; he tried to keep order; he said he had always heard I was a gentleman. He had always understood I was a gentleman and I should not be hurt.

QUESTION: Was this all that occurred?

ANSWER: Do you want all the talk that I can recollect that they said?

QUESTION: Tell us all they said and did, without special questions.

ANSWER: They told me I must go and have my name registered in The Spartan; that I was a Democrat; I had always been a Democrat; and when my son came out as a Republican candidate, of course I voted for him. I voted the Republican ticket that time only, and it was an easy matter to do that, because I had always been a Democrat; that had been my principles; they said they intended to kill my son just as certain as he was then living or anything could be, if he did not go immediately and announce his principles and have it published in the paper; they said nothing was any surer than that they were certain to kill him.

QUESTION: What son?

ANSWER: The only son I had then. **Dr. Javan Bryant.**

QUESTION: Had he been a candidate for the legislature?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: In pursuance of that did you publish a notice in the paper?

ANSWER: I sent up a little notice: "This is to certify I have always been a friend of my country and a Democrat in principle, although I did at the last election vote a Republican ticket."

QUESTION: Would you have done that if it had not been for this visit and demand?

ANSWER: By no means; and when I came to this place I was advised by one of the prominent lawyers not to do it; that they all knew my principles and did not blame me a bit for voting for my son.

QUESTION: What motive led you to make this publication?

ANSWER: They said they would visit me again and play hob with me if I did not.

QUESTION: Was it the apprehension of that?

ANSWER: Yes sir; I didn't want to be killed; it was very easy for them to do it, and I would not have belied my conscience hardly to have saved my life.

QUESTION: How many of these men were there?

ANSWER: I could not tell you, if was to guess; they were all around the house besides those before the door.

QUESTION: How were they dressed?

ANSWER: It was in the night; they seemed to be one color and another; the one I called captain was spotted all over. The one who stood by was the one who talked so impudently.

QUESTION: Did you recognize any of them?

ANSWER: I couldn't swear positively to any of them. I could tell you who I believed this one was who talked so mean and impudent. Would that do any good?

QUESTION: Tell us why you believe so.

ANSWER: You see they all talked somewhat Irish. The captain made very good Irish in his speech. The others would disguise their speech this way and that way; they were not so well trained in it. They asked me where I got the guns, and how. I told them, and this one spoke and says, "what is the reason he didn't give them to me." And then he spoke in his own language that word.

QUESTION: Did you recognize him from that?

ANSWER: I can tell you who I believe he was; but will I not be in danger? I have not told anybody yet.

QUESTION: That is for you to judge.

ANSWER: They might come and devour me. (pausing). I don't want to pull down a sword upon my own head. They have got the one I believe was there already indicted for Ku Kluxing at another place, bound over to court. That is one I believe it was. It is for his conduct at another place the same night.

QUESTION: I think you had better give us the name.

ANSWER: But you'll publish it, won't you?

QUESTION: It will be in the testimony when it is published.

ANSWER: I cannot swear positively to him, understand that. I tell you he spoke in his own language one word, and his behavior and his general talk comported with the man I believe it was and his size and all.

QUESTION: Is that the only one you recognized?

ANSWER: Yes sir. I suppose I am sworn to tell my opinion.

QUESTION: You are sworn to tell the whole truth about it.

ANSWER: I believe it was **John Vandiver**. He is indicted for going into **General Bates** house the same night.

They recognized him, and he is now bound over for it.

QUESTION: Was this the same night that the visit was made to **General Bates** house?

ANSWER: Yes sir so I understand. I was not at **General Bates**.

QUESTION: Was this the only visit they ever made to your house?

ANSWER: The only visit they ever made that I know of; that I am sure of; but I believe they were there another night, a portion of them; but I didn't see them.

QUESTION: Were you at home the second night?

ANSWER: No sir.

QUESTION: Where were you?

ANSWER: I was lying out in the woods, if you want to hear the truth, trying to save my life, and my wife too. I had no other family.

QUESTION: What took you to the woods?

ANSWER: I was afraid they would come and devour me.

QUESTION: Had there been any threat made?

ANSWER: They threatened that night that they would give me four days to do it, and some prominent friends advised me not to. They said my politics were

so well known, and I didn't have my name put in that paper, and the four days had expired, and I was afraid. If they had asked I would have give them everything I had in the house.

QUESTION: You say your wife lay out?

ANSWER: Yes sir.

QUESTION: How old is she?

ANSWER: 26.

QUESTION: A young wife? (note: *Joanna Harvey*)

Answer: Yes sir; and as right and fine a woman as any, I reckon. She has brought me a fine son (note: *Edward Green Bryant*) since that time, just a few nights after that. She was in a bad fix to see that awful looking gang there that night.

QUESTION: Are there other people in your neighborhood who have been lying in the woods?

ANSWER: The neighborhood, sir, is generally under the dread and fear, if you can believe what they say. I believe what I have heard them say of the Ku Klux. You see I live on the road, and they pass there frequently, right along my house.

QUESTION: Have you seen the Ku Klux pass?

ANSWER: I have seen men pass I believed were them.

QUESTION: But when they were in disguise, riding as such?

ANSWER: No sir. I didn't see them in disguise.

QUESTION: Who did you refer to as passing along the road?

ANSWER: Those that they said were Ku Klux.

QUESTION: Have there been many instances of people lying out in the woods?

ANSWER: I have heard of many, very many, instances. They said General Bates laid out for weeks previous to this, afraid to be in his own house. But this is only what I have heard. I have told you all that I know myself.

QUESTION: Have people told you they laid in the woods for this reason?

ANSWER: I have heard it rumored all around. I have an old neighbor between 80 and 90 years old, as he says -- he lives almost in sight of me -- as harmless a man as there is in the state, a hard working old man. His children have all left him to work for his living in his old age. These men went there and threatened to shoot the poor old man, and abused him tremendously.

QUESTION: Who was that man?

ANSWER: **Joseph Harvey.** His daughter wanted to know what they wanted. She said they had done no harm. One of them said, "It is that damn old father of yours we are after." She turned and halloed and screamed, and the old man raised up in bed; but she kept between them and him, and begged so

powerfully, though they cursed a great deal, they didn't hurt her. This I had from them.