



Executive Department

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Raleigh 16th Sep^r 1873.

Hon^{ble} A. M. Tourge

Dear Sir,

Several letters have been received at this office from you, complaining because I have not pardoned two colored men convicted in the Superior Court of Guilford County of the Murder -

I determined long ago, & so expressed my purpose, not to pardon or mitigate the punishment of any one, white or colored, Republican or Democrat, who belonged to this damnable and infamous organization and who were lawfully tried and convicted & sentenced for crimes committed by them. I intend to adhere to this determination no matter whom it may displease or disquiet, and I had hoped that my course would be approved by good men of all parties, & especially

by Republicans who suffered most at the hands of these midnight marauders and assassins.

I am informed by good Republican authority, that the men for whom you intercede were inveigled into a submission under the promise that if they would plead "Guilty" it would be much better for them, and that judgment would be suspended upon payment of costs - that this arrangement was made with the knowledge and consent of the presiding Judge & the prosecuting Attorney - that after their submission the Solicitor desired to carry out this agreement in good faith, but the Judge, for some cause or other, refused to abide by it and demanded of the Solicitor that he should "pray judgment" - That the prisoners then proposed to withdraw their plea of "Guilty" and take their chance before a jury, but the Judge would not allow them so to do - These are facts which I get from a Republican whose statement is credited by me - If it be true, "it has a very bad look to a man with two eyes"

Now as you seem disposed to censure me because I do not release these prisoners,

I propose to open the matter for further consideration whenever the Judge or Solicitor shall certify to me the facts as they actually occurred on the trial, and if it shall turn out that my informant was correct in his statement I will most certainly interpose my authority in behalf of the convicts, because they have not had a fair and impartial trial -

Other charges have been insinuated in your letters against my official conduct which are utterly groundless and which it is altogether unnecessary for me to notice -

I have the honor to be,
with proper respect

Your Obedt Serv^t
J. W. Caldwell

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