

HOMOCIDE AT CATAWBA JUNCTION

There was a terrible fight between two colored men near Catawba Junction last Wednesday morning. One of the participants Jeff Wylie, was killed, and the other Charlie McManus, so seriously cut with an axe that for several days that for several days his life was despaired of. Charlie McManus, who is now in jail, and who is still in a somewhat critical condition, is the only witness the killing.

He tells his story substantially as follows: He had been working a crop of cotton for Wylie on shares—half the crop. Week before last he commenced picking, and, as there was no understanding between himself and Wylie as to what would be done with the cotton, he stored it in his own house. After McManus had been picking for several days, Wylie wanted the cotton brought up and put in his (Wylie's) cotton house. McManus claimed that he had as much interest in the cotton in the cotton as Wylie and would not agree to the arrangement. As the result of the difference they quarreled. Wylie struck McManus with a rail and McManus defended himself with a stone. Wylie seized an axe and following McManus, who ran away, cut him in the back. McManus ran to his house followed by Wylie. Here McManus got his gun and Wylie ran back after him. McManus then proceeded to Wylie's house, and, Wylie, who was standing in the yard ordered him to halt at the same time raising his gun and firing. McManus then fired at Wylie and killed him. After firing the shot he fell into a swoon from loss of blood and did not know any more until after some men, who were attracted by the shooting arrived.

Trial Justice Waters, acting as coroner, summoned a jury and held an inquest over the body of Wylie on Wednesday afternoon. Two witnesses, Thomas Sitgraves and H.C. Webb, were examined. They testified that upon their arrival on the scene Wylie was lying dead in his back door with his gun leaning on the door facing. McManus was lying in the yard resting on his knees with his gun standing in front of him. The jury verdict as follows signed by Sep Massey Forman: *"We find that Jeff Wylie came to his death from a gunshot wound on September 23d 1891, in Catawba Township, in the said county and State fired by Charley McManus from the yard of the said Jeff Wylie, with a felonious intent to kill and murder the said Jeff Wylie"* McManus, it will be remembered, it one of the negroes who was charged with complicity in the Abernathy murder about two years ago. There was no proof against him; however the grand jury returned no bill.

September 30, 1891