



The *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 15, 1864

THE COLUMBIA COUNTY CONSPIRACY

John Rants, A Ringleader, Sentenced.

He Pays a Fine of \$1000, and is Imprisoned for Two Years in Fort Mifflin.

SAMUEL KLINE IS SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS

William Appleman is Sentenced.

The Findings of the Court in all the Cases Tried Approved by General Couch.

Special Correspondence of the Inquirer.

HARRISBURG, Nov. 14, 1864

The general orders of the Commanding General in regard to JOHN RANTZ, SAMUEL KLINE, and WILLIAM APPLEMAN, convicted of charges of violence to officers of the law, and of conspiring, combining and counseling against the draft, and resisting the execution of the conscription, have reached the Commission in session here. It will be remembered that these men, with others, were on trial for resisting the execution of the draft in Columbia County. The evidence in full has been published in THE INQUIRER. JOHN RANTZ was a leader in the conspiracy, as the evidence clearly indicated. He was the man who publicly connected his fellow-citizens to keep their money out of the volunteer bounty fund, and to save it to “buy powder to kill the Abolitionists.”

As hinted in my letter yesterday, the findings and sentences in the case of those who were more deeply implicated in the conspiracy that was WILLIAM APPLEMAN are far more severe. The findings of the Court could not be made public until the general orders of the Commanding General were issued, and I am now able to give you the findings and the orders.

The Fate of John Rantz.

HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SUSQUEHANNA, CHAMBERSBURG, PA., NOV. 9, 1864

General Orders No. 69- I, Before a Military Commission, which convened at Harrisburg, Pa., on October 17th, 1864, pursuant to Special Orders, No. 248 dated October 14th, 1864, Head-quarters Department of the Susquehanna, Chambersburg, Pa.,

and of which Colonel Charles M. Prevost, Sixteenth Regiment Veteran Reserve Corps, as President, were arraigned and tried:-

JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pennsylvania, on the following charges and specifications-

Charge First- Entering into, confederating and assisting in forming combinations to resist the execution of certain provisions of an Act of Congress, approved the third day of March, 1863, entitled, "An Act for the Enrolling and calling out the National Forces, &c." and the several supplements thereto.

Specification First- In this, that he, the said JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pennsylvania, did unite, confederate and combine with SAMUEL KNLIN, ROHR MCHENRY, and many other disloyal persons, whose names are unknown, at or near the residence of the said JOHN RANTZ to resist the draft, and prevent persons who had been drafted under the provisions of the said Act of Congress, approved March 3d, 1863 and the several supplements thereto, from entering the military service of the United States; and the said JOHN RANTZ did afterwards resist and evade the execution of certain provisions of the said Act of Congress, and the several supplements thereto.

All this in or near the township of Benton, Columbia county, Pennsylvania on or about August 14th, 1864

Specification Second. In this, that he, the said JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pennsylvania, did unite, confederate and combine with SAMUEL KLINE, ROHR MCHENRY, and many other disloyal persons whose names are unknown, and form or unite with a society or organization, commonly known and called by the name of the "Knights of the Golden Circle," the object of which Society or organization was and is to resist the execution of the draft, and prevent persons who have been drafted under the provisions of the said Act of Congress, approved March 3d 1863, and the several supplements thereto, from entering the military service of the United States.

This done at or near Benton, Columbia county, Pennsylvania on or about August 14th, 1864, and at divers times and places, before and after said mentioned date.

Specification Third. In this, that he, JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pennsylvania, being one with many others, formed organizations, and constituted themselves into companies or squads, and armed themselves for the purpose of resisting the military authorities of the United States, in the execution of the laws of the United States, and military orders. This at or near Benton township, Columbia county, Pennsylvania, on or about August 14th 1864.

Charge Second- The commission of acts of disloyalty against the Government of the United States, and publicly expressing sympathy for those in arms against said Government, and uttering disloyal sentiments and opinions, with the object of defeating and weakening the power of the Government, in its efforts to suppress the unlawful Rebellion now existing in the United States.

Specification. In this: that he, the said JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pa., did by words, in substance threaten and declare that he would resist all the officers and others in arms or the Government of the United States, concerned in enforcing the laws of the United States for enrolling and drafting any and all persons subject to military duty under the laws thereof, and counseled and advised citizens not to pay any

money for bounty, but to save their money, and lay it out for powder and lead, and kill the officers and others concerned in enforcing said laws.

This at or near Benton township, Columbia county, Pa., on or about August 14th 1864, and at divers times and places, before and after said mentioned date.

To which charges and specifications the accused JOHN RANTZ, plead not guilty.

Finding, the Commission after mature deliberation on the evidence adduced, find the accused, JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pa., as follows:-

On the first specification of the first charge, guilty; of the second specification of the first charge, not guilty; of the third specification of the first charge, guilty; of the first charge, guilty; of the specification of the second charge, guilty; of the second charge, guilty, except the words "and publicly expressed sympathy for those in arms against said Government."

Sentence.- And the Commission does, therefore, sentence him and said JOHN RANTZ, a citizen "to forfeit to the United States Government the sum of one thousand dollars, and to be confined at such prison as the commander general may direct for the period of two years:-

The proceedings of the Military Commission in the foregoing case having been submitted to the major-general commanding, the following are the orders thereon:-

The proceedings, findings and sentence in the case of JOHN RANTZ, a citizen of Columbia county, Pa., are approved. He will be confined in Fort Mifflin, Pa. The fine, when paid, will be transferred to the Chief United States (?) Officer at Philadelphia. The commanding officer at Fort Mifflin is charged with the execution of this order.

By command of Major-General GOUCH.

Jno. S. SCHULTZER, Asst. Adj.-Gen.

Official- T. BRENT SWEARINGEN

Capt. And Asst, Ad-Gen

SAMUEL KLINE

The charges and specifications in the case of SAMUEL KLINE are the same as those in the case of JOHN RANTZ, except in the specification of the second charge, where the words "counseled and advised citizens not to pay any money for bounty, but to save their money and lay it out in powder and lead." &c., do not occur, but the following words in lieu:- "Counseled and advised others to resist by force all officers and others in and of the Government of the United States, and prevent the arrest of the deserters from the military service of the United States," with the following addition:-

Charge Third. Threatening violence against an officer in the service of the United States.

Specification. In this that he the said SAMUEL KLINE, a citizen of Columbia county, Pennsylvania publicly state that if he could get a sight at Captain WILLIAM SILVERS, Deputy Provost Marshal of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, he would shoot him.

This on or about August 14th 1864, at or near the residence of JOHN RANTZ, Columbia county, Pennsylvania, in these or words to that effect.

To which charges and specifications the accused, SAMUEL KLINE, a citizen of Columbia county, pleaded "not guilty."

Finding. The Commission after mature deliberation on the evidence adduced, find the accused, SAMUEL KLINE, a citizen of Columbia county, Pa., as follows:-

On the first specification of the first charge, guilty; of the second specification of the first charge, not guilty; of the third specification of the first charge, guilty; of the first charge, guilty; of the specification of the second charge, guilty; of the second charge, guilty, except the words “and publicly expressing sympathy for those in arms against said Government;” of the specification of third charge, guilty; of the third charge guilty.

Sentence- And the Commission does, therefore sentence him, the said SAMUEL KLINE, citizen, to be confined in such prison as the Commanding General may direct for the period of two (2) years.

II. The proceedings of the Military Commission in the foregoing case, having been submitted to the Major-General Commanding, the following are the orders thereon:-

The proceedings, findings and sentence in the case of SAMUEL KLINE, a citizen of Columbia county, Pa., are approved. He will be confined in Fort Mifflin, Pa. The commanding officer at Fort Mifflin is charged with the execution of this order.

By command of Major-General COUCH.

(Official) NO. SCHULTZE, Asst. Adj-Gen

T. BRENT SWEARINGEN, Capt. And Ass't Adj-Gen.

WILLIAM APPLEMAN

The charges and specifications in the case of WILLIAM APPLEMAN are the same as these in the case of SAMUEL KLINE with the absence of the third charge and specification thereto attached. He pleaded “Not guilty.”

Finding. The Commission, after mature deliberation on the evidence adduced, find the accused, WILLIAM APPLEMAN, a citizen of Columbia county, Pa., as follows:-

On the first specification of the first charge, guilty; of the second specification of the first charge, guilty; except the words, “commonly known and called by the name of the Knights of the Golden Circle” Of the third specification of the first charge, guilty; except the words “formed organizations and constituted themselves into companies or squads and “ Of the first charge, guilty; of the specifications of second charge, not guilty; of the second charge, not guilty.

Sentence, And the Commission does, therefore, sentence him, the said WILLIAM APPLEMAN, a citizen, “To forfeit to the United States Government the sum of five hundred dollars, and to be confined at such prison as the Commanding General may direct until said fine be paid, provided such imprisonment shall not exceed the period of one year.”

II. The proceedings of the Military Commission in the foregoing case having been submitted to the Major-General commanding, the following are the orders thereon:-

The proceedings, findings and sentence in the case of WM. APPLEMAN, citizen of Columbia county, Pennsylvania, are approved. He will be confined in Fort Mifflin, Pennsylvania, until the provisions of the sentence are complied with. The fine, if paid, will be transferred to the Chief United States Disbursing Officer in Philadelphia. The commanding officer of Fort Mifflin is charged with the execution of this order.

By command of Major-General Couch.

JOHN S. SCHULTZE

Assistant Adjutant General

Official,

T. BRENT SWEARINGEN

Captain and Assistant Adjutant-General

The trial of the rest of the conspirators will be commenced in a day or two.