LIFE OF RYLAND RANDOLPH

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Chapter I
Early Life

According to contemporaries, one of the most interesting characters in Tuscaloosa County during the Reconstruction period was the young newspaper editor, Ryland Randolph. He made a brave fight for the county in those dark days; no one was truer to the white man's cause than he. For a period conservative people of the Democratic party fairly idolized him.¹

Ryland was the third son of Victor Moreau and Augusta Ellen (Granberry) Randolph, who were both from Curl's Neck, then in Culpepper County, Virginia. Victor Moreau Randolph was seventh in descent from the Indian princess, Pocohontas, and was related to Edmund Randolph, first attorney-general of the United States, John Randolph of Roanoke, and many other important Virginia Randolphs.²

Victor Moreau Randolph was commissioned from Virginia as a midshipman in the United States Navy in 1814.³ As he spent most of his time on board ship, his wife made her home with his mother who had moved near Clinton, Alabama.⁴ There Ryland was born October 28, 1835.⁵

¹. Interviews with Mr. Henry Jones, Mr. Thomas Clinton.
². Hearst's Sunday American, January 2, 1930.
³. Scrapbook of Ryland Randolph in the possession of Mr. Victor Randolph, Birmingham, Alabama.
⁴. Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
⁵. A Register of Officers and Students of the U. of A., p. 117.
Following his mother's death, when he was about three years old, Ryland was placed under the care of relatives. He spent most of his boyhood with his grandmother and aunt at Clinton, but he often visited his maternal relatives at Columbus, Mississippi.\textsuperscript{1}

While young Randolph lived in Clinton, he was under very strict religious rules. His grandmother was an Episcopalian and his aunt was a Methodist. Consequently, he was required to attend one church in the forenoon on Sunday and the other in the afternoon; and he never missed Sunday school. In his later life he declared that notwithstanding all that, he grew up "a pious and moral man with a wholesome dread of the fate of the wicked".\textsuperscript{2} His life at Clinton was pleasant but uneventful. The relatives with whom he lived were people of means, owning a large plantation and numerous slaves. Ryland had all the material things he needed, but lacked the restraining influence of his parents.\textsuperscript{3}

When Ryland had learned to write, he and his father corresponded regularly. Some of these letters are interesting. On learning that Ryland rode to school every morning on his pony, Victor Moreau Randolph wrote his son: "You lazy little whelp, why don't you walk to school?" But he was an indulgent father and suggested in the same letter

\textsuperscript{1} Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
\textsuperscript{2} Randolph, R., Memoirs, p. 1, MS. in the possession of Mr. Victor Randolph, Birmingham, Alabama.
\textsuperscript{3} Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
that the question be not taken too seriously by asking his son if he would like a nice saddle and offering to buy him one as a present.¹

Fearing that his life of irresponsibility would cause Ryland to grow up to be a man of no stability of character, his father kept him on the ship with him a great deal during these formative years. In the course of these trips with his father, Ryland traveled around the world three times.²

Young Randolph was given the best educational advantage. For his elementary training he attended Pratt's School in Tuscaloosa.³ Later he was sent to school at Greene Springs, Alabama,⁴ a high grade preparatory school for young men founded in 1847 by Professor Henry Tutwiler.⁵ His high school work was finished at Pike Powers' High School, Stanton, Virginia.⁶ He received his collegiate education at the University of Alabama, but he withdrew in 1854, his Junior year.⁷

In 1858 Randolph began living in Montgomery where his father purchased from James H. Clanton a beautiful

¹ Letter from V. M. Randolph to Ryland Randolph in the possession of Mr. Victor Randolph, Birmingham, Alabama.
² Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
³ Randolph, Memoirs, pp. 70, 25.
⁴ Ibid.
⁶ Randolph, Memoirs, p. 76.
⁷ A Register of Officers and Students of the U. of A., p. 117.
home only a few doors from William L. Yancy. One of Mr. Yancy's sons had been a school mate of Randolph's at the University, and Randolph visited the Yancy home on several occasions after tea. He greatly admired Mr. Yancy's ability and silvery voice, but thought his manner domineering and unsympathetic. He saw and became acquainted with the following leading men of the day: Jefferson Davis, Alexander H. Stephens, Howell Cobb, Thomas Cobb, R. B. Rhett, M. L. Bonham, and many army and naval officers.

James H. Clanton commanded a cavalry company in Montgomery called the "Mounted Rifles", the only horse company in the State. Randolph joined this company as a private. There were about one hundred and twenty men in it. They drilled and paraded on the commons near town, getting both enjoyment and exercise from it. They offered their services to the Governor, who sent them first to Pensacola for duty early in January, 1860, and later to East Bay as a coast guard. In the first year of the War between the States Clanton augmented his command to a regiment which was known as the 1st Alabama Cavalry. Randolph was a corporal in this regiment, but he was discharged July 15, 1861.

Randolph's father resigned his commission as

1. Randolph, Memoirs, p. 25.
2. Ibid, pp. 27, 28, 30.
3. Ibid.
5. Transcript of C.S.A. record from War Dept. No reason for his discharge is recorded.
commander in the United States Navy on the day Alabama seceded from the Union, and went to the Pensacola Navy Yard with the Alabama volunteers to take command of that station under the appointment of the Governor of Florida. Later he commanded the Confederate Naval forces at West Point, Virginia, and then at Mobile, Alabama. At Mobile young Randolph, after his discharge from the army, served for a time as acting naval ordnance officer and as secretary to his father.

The 7th Alabama Cavalry was organized in the spring of 1863. Randolph enlisted in this regiment July 22, 1863, at Montgomery as a first sergeant. He was soon promoted to the rank of second lieutenant, and later to the rank of first lieutenant. He served in this regiment until it was surrendered and paroled at Gainesville, Alabama, May 14, 1865.

The 7th Alabama Cavalry was under Colonel Joseph Hodgson in General Forrest's command. Hodgson said, "No officer did his duty more punctiliously in the camp or more gallantly in the field than Mr. Randolph." General Forrest declared that this regiment saved General Hood's army from complete destruction at Nashville in 1864. The regiment was complimented in orders from headquarters after Forrest's brilliant success at Johnsonville. Colonel

1. Scrapbook of Ryland Randolph.
2. Transcript of C.S.A. record from War Dept.
3. Ibid.
Hodgson stated that the success was due as much to Randolph as to any other commanding officer.¹

Two days before the defeat of the army in front of Nashville, General Hood sent an order for the best lieutenant of cavalry in Forrest's command and thirty picked men to perform a dangerous duty which was to go behind the enemies' lines and cut the telegraph wires. Hodgson chose Randolph as the best lieutenant of the service, who, without losing a single man, successfully performed the duty.²

Later a portion of the cavalry was stationed at Montevallo, and there Randolph recruited new members. He increased the number of mounted men from a few score to about six hundred. This regiment was placed in front of Wilson's command during the closing months of the war, and no officer did more than Randolph to encourage his men by word and act to check the advance of the enemy.³

When the war was over, Randolph, finding himself with nothing to do, made an extensive tour through Texas, where his father owned land. When he returned he visited his uncle, Theoderic Randolph, in Greensboro, Alabama. There he began to consider seriously what he could do to make a living. Having a certain ability to write, he decided to undertake a journalistic career.⁴

¹ Independent Monitor, October 21, 1869.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
Chapter II
First Year in Tuscaloosa

Ayland Randolph became a newspaper editor in 1867 when he purchased from John J. Harris the Independent Monitor,1 a weekly paper, for three thousand dollars.2 The first issue of this paper with Randolph as editor and proprietor appeared October 17, 1867.3 He had assumed control of a business practically new to him, for the only newspaper experience he had had was in writing a few articles for the Eutaw Whig and Observer.4

Randolph came to Tuscaloosa from Greensboro in a two horse wagon in which were a cot, bedding, chairs, and a trunk. These were to furnish his office, which he used as sleeping quarters for two and one-half years. The first night he stayed at the Mansion House, a famous hostelry of the time, where he spent most of the night wondering how he was going to fill ten or more columns of the paper with editorial matter. To think of the difficulties ahead of him made him nervous and desperate, and he seriously considered leaving town at daylight next morning. The main

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1. The office of the Independent Monitor was over Glasscock's Store which was located on Broad Street where the old First National Bank building now stands.
2. Randolph, Memoirs, p. 98.
3. Independent Monitor, October 16, 1867.
reason he did not leave was that the wagon which brought him had already started back to Greensboro; then, too, he would have lost the fifteen hundred dollar first payment already made on the paper.  

He had to work the greater part of two nights to get the paper ready on time, because the numerous visitors in his office during the days took up most of his time, and he had too much pride to call in help. On the desk in his office these visitors saw a collection of weapons, a double barrel gun, two derringer pistols, and a spring blade knife, and began to speak of him as the "fighting editor".  

After the first issue of the paper Dr. Marlowe, a friend of his college days, told him that all whom he had heard express themselves liked the paper and approved its tone and principles. This gave Randolph self-confidence, and relieved him of further trouble writing editorials.  

Randolph took charge of the Independent Monitor at a critical time in the history of Tuscaloosa. The Radicals, Spencer, McGown, Crossland, Dykous, with their negro confederates, Shandy Jones and Wash Quarles, controlled the negroes who were organized in Loyal Leagues. Few Democrats were fearless enough to stand boldly by their sincere political convictions. Randolph became the bold and  

2. Ibid., p. 180.  
3. Ibid., p. 102.  
slashing spokesman for these Democrats. The people began to look to his paper for guidance, and, because he believed it was a cowardly sin to be neutral at a time like the Reconstruction period, his paper became the unrelenting opponent of the carpetbaggers and scalawags.\(^1\) He chose for its motto, "The White Man--Right or Wrong--Still The White Man". He believed that a newspaper should be a relentless censor whose editor might as well be without brains as nervous.\(^2\)

Ku Klux Klan organizations had been formed in certain sections of Alabama in the winter of 1866, soon after the soldiers returned from the war.\(^3\) Under Randolph's leadership a local Klan was organized in the spring of 1868.\(^4\) It was an independent organization, having no connection with the general Klan.\(^5\) About twenty men banded together and chose Sipsey Swamp, which was about fifteen miles west of Northport, for their headquarters.\(^6\) New members were added until there were finally about sixty men in this Klan.\(^7\) Randolph, the Ku Klux chief, had the title of Grand Giant of the Province of Tuscaloosa County.\(^8\) His

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1. Independent Monitor, November 8, 1870.
2. Ibid., January 12, 1869.
4. Randolph, Memoirs, p. 84.
6. Randolph, Memoirs, p. 84.
8. Ibid., Letter from Randolph, p. 666, n.
paper was the "worldly medium for the expression of Southern Opinion"¹, or the Ku Klux spokesman.

The Monitor stated that the,

"origin of the Ku Klux Klan is in the galling despotism which broods like a nightmare over these Southern States. It may be deemed a fungus growth superinduced by the fostering of Loyal Leagues, the abrogation of our civil laws, the habitual violation of our National Constitution and a persistent prostitution of all government resources and powers to degrade the white man by the establishment of negro supremacy."²

The purpose of the Klan was to terrorize and punish insolent negroes and disreputable whites who seemed to affiliate socially with them.³ For protection and to frighten the negroes, a disguise was worn. It consisted of a sheet wrapped around the body and belted at the waist. The lower part reached to the heels and the upper part had holes cut in it for the eyes and mouth. Each member carried one or more pistols in a holster buckled around his waist.⁴

The Klan met regularly about once a week. At these meetings they discussed the obnoxious characters of the county and by a majority vote decided whom to punish. Often a Ku Klux note of warning was enough to cause a drastic change in the conduct of troublesome individuals.⁵ A few of the most offensive and unbearable negroes were

1. Independent Monitor, April 1, 1868.
2. Ibid., April 14, 1868.
4. Ibid., Letter from Randolph, p. 674, n.
5. Ibid., Letter from Randolph, p. 678, n.
taken to the old boneyard on the outskirts of town and
given sound whippings after which they were left tied to
trees until some of the neighbors heard their cries and
released them.\textsuperscript{1}

Randolph wrote Ku Klux orders which he posted on
the streets of Tuscaloosa and later published in his paper.\textsuperscript{2}
They were for the purpose of notifying members of proposed
movements and of frightening Radicals.\textsuperscript{3} An example follows:

"Ku Klux
Serpents Den - Deaths Retreat
Hollow Tomb - Misery Cave of the
Great Ku Klux Klan, No. 1, 000.
Windy Month - Bloody Moon
Muddy Night - 12th Hour

General Orders No. 1.
Make ready! make ready! make ready!
The Mighty Hobgoblins of the Con-
federate dead in Hell-a-Bulloo assembled!
    Revenge, Revenge!
Be secret, be cautious, be terrible!
By special grant Hell freezes over
    for your passage. Offended ghosts
put on your skates and cross over to
mother earth!

    Work! Work! Work!
Double, Double toil and trouble
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Ye white who stick to black,
Soulless beast! the time arrives
    for you to part. Z.W.X.W.V.U., and
so from Omega to Alpha
Cool it with a baboons blood
Then the charm is firm and good.
Ye niggers who stick to low whites-
Begone, Begone, Begone! The world
turns round - the 13th hour approacheth
so one, two, and three - beware!
White and yellow.
J and T- P- and L- begone-
The handwriting on the wall warns you

\textsuperscript{1} Randolph, Memoirs, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{2} Fleming, \textit{op. cit.}, Letter from Randolph, p. 678, n.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 679.
From the murderer's gibbet, throw
Into the flame. Come high or low.
By order of the Great
Blufustin.
G.S. K.K.K. 1

It was usual for newspapers to say that the orders had been found or had been sent to them for publication. 2
Randolph wrote a special order for his own paper. It follows:

"Headquarters S.V.W.
Ancient Commandery
Mother Earth
1st Q'r New Moon
1st Year of Revenge

Special Order:
The Worldly Medium for the expression of unopposed unrequited
is notified to publish for the eyes of humanity the
orders of the offended Ghosts. Failing to do so, let
him prepare his soul for traveling beyond the limits
of his corporosity.

Cyclops warns it—print it well,
Or glide instantly down to h--l!
By order of the Great Blufustin." 3

General George G. Meade, military commander of the
third district, issued an order that any paper which published matter tending to produce intimidation, riot, or
bloodshed would be stopped and the proprietor, editor, and other parties connected with it would be tried before
a military commission. 4 The editor and proprietor of the Monitor did not pay much attention to this order, except
that he did not publish any more notices of the Klán; and

1. Independent Monitor, April 1, 1868.
3. Independent Monitor, April 1, 1868.
4. Ibid., April 14, 1868.
the Klan had to resort to verbal messages.  

As a warning to negroes a Black List was printed in the Monitor listing the names of the negroes who were especially odious and incendiary. Some were in the employ of whites and they were notified to discharge them or be branded as enemies of the community along with their black employees. A negro could have his name removed from the Black List by withdrawing from the Radical party and making public announcement of the fact in the columns of the Monitor. The Ku Klux then undertook to protect these negroes from their former political friends.

W. E. Foster, a negro, published his withdrawal from the Radical party, as the Ku Klux had warned him to do, and the night of the day it appeared in the paper his house was attacked by a number of negroes who broke the windows with brickbats and other missiles. It was a problem, therefore, for the negro to decide which he should fear more, the Ku Klux Klan or the Radical Loyal League.

A subscription to the Monitor was considered a sure safeguard against Ku Klux invasions. It meant that the subscriber was on the Democratic side politically. Such advice as the following appeared in the paper:

2. Independent Monitor, Sept. 8, 1868.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., May 11, 1869.
"All these rascals had better subscribe for the Monitor and become galvanized by Democracy or they will rue their offensive speeches. We will have an eye on them henceforward and something else on them unless they behave better. We have many rare truths to tell on the unconscionable negro lovers."¹

The Ku Klux had a regular system of by-laws. The names of the members and the acts of the Klan were secret. If any member revealed these, the Klan inflicted the same penalty on the traitor that it inflicted on enemies.²

Another rule was that a Klansman should take the part of a member of the Klan, even to giving his life if necessary, if that member became involved in a difficulty with a Radical, white or black.³

Randolph soon became involved in serious trouble suffering imprisonment and trial, because he protected a white man against negroes according to the policy of the Klan. It was customary to hold auction sales every Saturday in front of Rhea's Store,³ opposite the Monitor office. On the afternoon of March 28, 1868, the usual sale was being held with about two hundred negroes and a score or more white men present. Randolph, at work in his office, heard an unusual noise and confusion from that direction. He knew that the disturbance probably meant trouble between the whites and the blacks, because he had heard of threats made by negroes who were excited and angry over the punish-

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1. Independent Monitor, September 28, 1869.
3. Rhea's Store was located where the building occupied by Liggett's now stands.
ment some of their race had received at the hands of the
Ku Klux; so he armed himself with a derringer pistol and
a long bladed knife and hurried over to Rhea's Store.
There he found two big negroes clubbing a small white man
whom they knocked down on the side walk. The negroes in
the crowd encouraged the two assailants, while the white
men looked on without attempting to stop the fight.
Realizing that he could not shoot either of the negroes
without endangering the bystanders or the white victim,
Randolph fired into the air. Both negroes now left the
white man, whose name was Hollingsworth. One ran away;
the other, Balus Eddins, rushed at Randolph and struck at
him with his club. Randolph caught the blow glancingly
on his arm, and plunged his knife repeatedly into the
negro's body, finally breaking it, and leaving about an
inch of the point in Balus' back. Balus fell to the
ground, and Hollingsworth, desiring revenge picked up a
flagstone and began beating him on the head. Randolph
made him stop, because he believed the negro was dead. He
then wiped the bloody knife on his shoe and went back to
his office.

In a few minutes some of his friends hurried to the
newspaper office and begged him to leave town, because a
menacing crowd of negroes was gathering at Spiller's Store1
preparing to attack him. These friends had a horse for him

1. Spiller's Store was located where the City National Bank
now stands.
in the street back of the office building. They urged him to slip out and go to Foster's settlement for safety.

Randolph refused to leave, because he knew that the good he had done the town by his daring fight would be undone if he ran away, and arming himself, he went down to the crowd. He raised his gun to take aim; but there was no need to fire, for in a very few minutes no negro was to be seen on the street.\(^1\)

Randolph was arrested but secured release on bond of fifteen hundred dollars to answer at the next circuit court, over which Judge W. S. Mudd, "loyal" officer, would preside. It was not likely that this Judge would show Randolph any special favor.\(^2\)

Dr. James Guild worked especially hard to keep Balus from dying. He knew that the death of the negro would make matters worse for Randolph. Balus recovered, but he always had a decided limp.\(^3\)

The military authorities interfered in this case, because they heard reports that the civil court would fail to convict Randolph. General Shepherd in Montgomery issued an order for Randolph's arrest and sent a squad of twenty cavalry to Tuscaloosa to take him. These Federal soldiers searched the houses of Mrs. J. J. Eddins, William A. Battle, James H. Fitts, S. J. Leach, Joseph Pegues, and John M.\(^4\)

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2. Independent Monitor, April 21, 1868.
Martin. The Monitor stated that they performed their disagreeable duty with as little offensiveness as was compatible with the unlawful outrage. But Randolph was not found. He had heard that the soldiers were coming, and had gone to Montgomery to give himself up.¹

He found General Shepherd to be agreeable enough socially. The General declared that it was much in Randolph's favor that he had given himself up, which sounded very encouraging; but later he denied Randolph bail although he was able and willing to furnish bail of a half million dollars. Major Jewell, commandant of the Montgomery post took charge of him to take him to prison. As Randolph and the major were leaving, General Shepherd came up and shook hands heartily with the prisoner.²

He was marched through the public streets of Montgomery to prison and was confined in the carpenter shop of the military camp with a sentinel guarding him always, but he was allowed to see a few friends. General James Clanton and Colonel Warren Reese visited him often.³

During Randolph's absence from Tuscaloosa, two lawyers, Somerville and McEachin, had charge of the Monitor.⁴ Randolph wrote these two friends to continue to conduct the paper fearlessly and unsparingly.⁵

1. Independent Monitor, April 21, 1868.
2. Ibid., April 28, 1868.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., April 14, 1868.
5. Ibid., April 28, 1868.
After a few days in Montgomery, he was sent to prison in Selma. The people of that town showed him every attention, sending him flowers, food, and writing him letters.¹

The citizens of Tuscaloosa were aroused over the affair; they considered his arrest by the military authorities an outrage, as the case was already in the civil court and Randolph was under heavy bond. They believed the real reason for the interference was his political opinions expressed in the Monitor, and the fight with Balus Eddins was used only as a pretext.²

They held a public meeting at the Court House in Tuscaloosa to consider the case, and to express their sentiments regarding it. Resolutions were drawn up in which the people stated that Randolph's arrest was an unnecessary interference of General Shepherd in civil affairs; that the President be called upon for Shepherd's removal; and that sympathy be expressed for the prisoner. These people declared that they were ready to aid Randolph in any lawful and proper manner.³

A committee of five was appointed to determine the charges and to petition Meade to remand the case to the civil courts.⁴ The General refused to recommit the case.

¹. Independent Monitor, May 6, 1868.
². Ibid., April 28, 1868.
³. Ibid., May 5, 1868.
⁴. Ibid.
and the military commission in Selma tried Randolph for assaulting and attempting to murder Balus Eddins. The counsel for the accused were Colonel J. J. Jolly, Major J. G. Pierce, Major W. H. F. Randall, and Mr. H. M. Somerville.1

During the trial, Richard Busteed, United States district judge for Alabama, granted a writ of habeas corpus, and, although both Meade and Grant were prepared to submit to the decision of the court, Randolph wanted the military trial to go on.2 The military commission found him not guilty,3 and telegraphic orders from General Meade at Headquarters ordered his release.4

Randolph returned triumphantly to Tuscaloosa about eight o'clock in the evening on May 19th. A carriage was sent two miles out on the Greensboro Road to meet him, and the great honor of driving it was given the Democratic negro barber, Dossie Roberts.5 As they approached town, all the church bells began to ring which was the signal for the citizens to assemble on Greensboro Street.6 People crowded around his carriage when he reached the outskirts of town, many enthusiastic ladies following behind his carriage.7 When they came to the main part of town, the

1. Independent Monitor, May 12, 1868.
3. Independent Monitor, May 19, 1868.
4. Ibid., June 2, 1868.
foremost citizens made speeches welcoming him home and commending him for upholding the white man's cause so gallantly. 1

Randolph considered his fight with Balus Eddins the proudest act of his life. He believed the results advantageous to the whites of Tuscaloosa, and the example helpful to other communities that had insolent, overbearing negroes. The effect of it was felt for a long time. 2 It caused many uncertain whites to come into the Democratic party. 3

A few years later Balus was to be found working in Randolph's garden. He was a good worker and was always most deferential and respectful. 4

The military authorities in Tuscaloosa began a system of espionage upon Randolph's actions after his return from Selma. Realizing that there was danger of the Monitor being suppressed if he continued to criticize the reconstruction policy and military regime as severely as he had done heretofore, he announced that he would be obliged to conduct the paper differently in order not to give the authorities an excuse for taking action against him. He wanted the people to understand that he had not changed his attitude toward the prevailing system in the least, but that he would necessarily have to be more

1. Independent Monitor, May 26, 1868. 
2. Randolph, Memoirs, pp. 95, 96. 
3. Independent Monitor, April 7, 1868. 
For the next few weeks there was great excitement in Tuscaloosa. Captain Hedberg, commandant of the troops was absent, and Lieutenant Johnson, who was in command, tried to bully gentlemen on the street. This officer even went to see Randolph in his office, but as Randolph was "perfectly sound in body and otherwise prepared to receive him, he went away with a flea in his ear." Business was paralyzed and the people could think only of the troubles caused them by the soldiers. Johnson hung a large United States flag over the sidewalk on the main street of town, and stationed soldiers there with bayonets to force the people to walk under it. An old lady who refused to obey that order was dragged under the flag by the soldiers.

Finally, orders came from Military Headquarters in Atlanta for the suppression of the Monitor, and Randolph took refuge with friends in Foster's settlement to escape arrest. There were no issues of the Monitor from June 23 until July 14, 1868; but, as it was a weekly newspaper, only two numbers failed to appear. The Phoenix, edited by John R. King, was published to give expression to the political views of the Democrats until the Monitor was allowed to

1. Independent Monitor, June 16, 1868.
2. The Flag was hung where Perry's Creamery is now located.
3. The lady was Mrs. Kyle.
5. Ibid.
take up its work again.\textsuperscript{1}

Because of the complaints from the people of Tuscaloosa, Lieutenant Ryan was sent to investigate the conduct of Lieutenant Johnson. Ryan soon received orders from Headquarters to permit Randolph to return unmolested to Tuscaloosa and resume publication of the \textit{Monitor}.\textsuperscript{2}

Dennis Dykous,\textsuperscript{3} editor of the \textit{Reconstructionist}, a Radical newspaper of Tuscaloosa, had taken advantage of Randolph's exile from home, during the suppression of the \textit{Monitor}, to allude insultingly to his policy and actions, and had even called him a "petticoat hero". He had published in the \textit{Reconstructionist} a letter signed X, which criticized the conduct of certain ladies in Tuscaloosa who had championed Randolph's cause in many complimentary ways. The letter indicated, without naming, certain widows who had followed his carriage when he returned from prison in Selma.\textsuperscript{4}

As soon as Randolph saw these papers, he was anxious to find Dykous. Happening to meet him on the street soon after, Randolph asked him the name of the author of the article signed X, but Dykous refused to tell him until he could first see the author. After a short discussion Randolph slapped Dykous in the face, and Dykous raised his

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}Phoenix, July 4, 1868.
\item \textsuperscript{2}\textit{Independent Monitor}, July 21, 1868.
\item \textsuperscript{3}Randolph, \textit{Memoirs}, p. 113: Dykous had been foreman at the \textit{Monitor} office but Randolph had discharged him for taking money for job work without accounting for it.
\item \textsuperscript{4}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 114.
\end{itemize}
cane. Thereupon Randolph drew his pistol and said he would kill him if he struck. Dykous did not strike. 1

Dykous swore out a warrant for Randolph's arrest, and the latter was tried and fined twenty dollars for breach of a city ordinance. 2

A little later, several men related to the insulted ladies, demanded the author's name of Dykous, and were told that the article was written by Lieutenant Ryan. M. A. King demanded a retraction, but Ryan refused. Ryan said he was insulted in every part of the town by women "Hurrahing for Randolph", and making their children call, "Oh, you stinking Yankee", "Oh, you dirty blue-belly, you". 3

When Dykous reported Randolph's attack on him, Ryan sent his soldiers to arrest the fiery editor, who now had to return to Foster's settlement for a while. 4 This order to arrest Randolph was a violation of General George G. Meade's General Order No. 101, July 14, 1868, 5 which stated that prisoners held for offences against the civil law were to be delivered to state officials. 6 Consequently, Ryan allowed Randolph to return to Tuscaloosa.

In the latter part of August, 1868, the Republican Banner, a weekly newspaper, took the place of the Recon-
structionist with the same Dennis Dykous as the editor. Randolph usually referred to him as "Dog Diecus", and he declared that the publication of that paper was a gross insult to the community. He advised all decent men to have nothing to do with it. Through the Monitor he notified Dykous that, if he ever alluded to him in his paper, he would administer to him a beating. Tuscaloosa was no place for a Republican paper. Public opinion, led by Randolph, was so strong against Dykous that he abandoned the attempt to edit the Republican Banner and left town. The Republican Banner had lasted only nine weeks.

In spite of Randolph's busy public life, he found time for things of quite a different nature during his first year in Tuscaloosa. Soon after his arrival he became engaged to a Miss Eddins, but the engagement did not last long, because Randolph met Miss Katie Withers, whom he married February 2, 1870. At the beginning of his courtship of "Miss Katie", as he called her until the day of their marriage, Randolph had a rival in the person of his friend, Professor B. F. Meek. This rivalry, however, did not wreck their friendship for each other. Randolph spent many hours with Miss Withers in the cemetery teaching her to shoot. Those were trying times in Tuscaloosa, and

1. Independent Monitor, September 8, 1868.
2. Interview with Mr. Thomas Clinton.
he wanted her to be able to protect herself. She seems to have had more influence over him than any one else ever had. For her, he gave up smoking and promised to read the Bible every day.¹

Randolph did not forget his father during this time. The latter, Victor Randolph, was ill at Blount Springs, and Randolph made several trips there to see him. These trips, which he made on horseback, were very long and tiresome, besides being dangerous, because many Radicals in the State were extremely antagonistic toward him.²

1. Letters from Randolph to Miss Katie Withers in the possession of Mr. Victor Randolph, Birmingham, Alabama.
2. Ibid.
Chapter III

Randolph Leads the Attack on the Reconstructed University

In 1865 Federal troops under General Croxton had set fire to most of the public buildings of the University. The home of the president, the house now occupied by the Misses Gorgas, the observatory, and the Round House were the only ones spared.\(^1\) The State soon began the work of rebuilding, and completed the buildings by the fall of 1868.\(^2\)

At a meeting in Montgomery in October, 1867, the trustees of the University had appointed Dr. W. S. Wyman acting-president. Under the new constitution, which Congress had imposed on Alabama, the duties of the trustees ceased, and a board of education was created which was also a board of regents for the State University.\(^3\) This board of regents, which was unfit to manage educational affairs,\(^4\) met in Montgomery in 1868, and offered the presidency of the University to Dr. Wyman, but he refused it.\(^5\) The regents then offered it to A. S. Lakin, a northern Methodist preacher from Ohio, and he accepted.\(^6\)

In September the Monitor announced that the scala-

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2. Independent Monitor, April 21, 1868.
wag, Dr. N. B. Cloud, State Superintendent of Education, and the carpetbagger, Rev. A. S. Lakin, had arrived to take charge:

"Cloud, the Radical Jockey, comes as trainer of Lakin, the negro loving Jackass. The one is a long slim creature of the matrix kind, the other is a short pursy reptile of the genus vatra-chia. Both would make first rate hemp stretchers."

As Lakin and Cloud passed along the streets of Tuscaloosa, they heard unearthly sounds which were evidently intended as flings and insults to them. They went to Professor Wyman to get the keys, but he refused to give them up. Lakin began to believe that it was not even safe for him to stay in town, and he spent the night at a place eight miles out on the Huntsville Road. That night about nine o'clock he heard the approach of horses. His host advised him to sit still while about twenty-five disguised horsemen passed by. There was a rope around the neck of one of the horses and all the men seemed to have pistols belted around them. The next morning Lakin, upon hearing through his host that the Ku Klux intended to hang him, left by the Huntsville Road. Cloud departed the day after in the direction of Montgomery.

A woodcut of a hanging scalawag and a carpetbagger appeared in the Monitor and caused great excitement throughout Alabama.

1. Independent Monitor, September 1, 1868.
3. Independent Monitor, September 1, 1868.
'Hang, curs, hang! Their complexion is perfect gallows.
Stand fast, good fate, to this hanging! If they be not
born to be hanged, our case is miserable.'

"The above cut represents the fate in store for those
great pests of Southern society--the carpet-bagger and
scalawag--if found in Dixie's Land after the break of day
on the 4th of March next.

"The genus carpet-bagger is a man with a lank head of
dry hair, a lank stomach and long legs, club knees and
splay feet, dried legs and lank jaws, with eyes like a
fish and mouth like a shark. Add to this a habit of
sneaking and dodging about in unknown places--habiting
with negroes in dark dens and back streets--a look like
a hound and the smell of a polecat.

"Words are wanting to do full justice to the genus
scalawag. He is a cur with a contracted head, downward
look, slinking and uneasy gait, sleeps in the woods like
old Crossland, at the bare idea of a Ku Klux raid.

"Our scalawag is the local leper of the community.
Unlike the carpetbagger, he is native, which is so much
the worse. Once he was respected in his circle; his
head was level and he would look his neighbor in the
face. Now, possessed of the itch of office and the salt
rheum of Radicalism, he is a mangy dog, slinking through
the alleys, haunting the Governor's office, defiling with
tobacco juice the steps of the Capitol, stretching his
lazy carcass in the sun on the Square, or the benches of
the Mayor's Court.
"He waiteth for the troubling of the political waters to the end that he may step in and be healed of the itch by the ointment of office. For office he 'bums' as a toper 'bums' for the satisfying dram. For office, yet in perspective, he hath bartered respectability; hath abandoned business, and ceased to labor with his hands, but employs his feet kicking out booteels against lamp-post and corner-curb, while discussing the question of office."

Another article in the same issue advised Lakin and Cloud to look at the woodcut, but they had already left the town.

Many newspapers of the State criticized Randolph for the woodcut. They believed that it would cost the Democratic party many votes in the coming presidential election. General Clanton, Chairman of the State Democratic Executive Committee, publicly read Randolph and the Independent Monitor out of the Democratic party. The "Resident Committee" in Montgomery drew up a series of resolutions disavowing all sympathy with the Monitor's style of handling the enemies.

The Democrats were right; the woodcut was used as campaign material by the Republicans. The Cincinnati Commercial struck off 500,000 copies of it for that purpose.

As an apology for the woodcut and to regain the confidence of his party, Randolph explained that the woodcut was not meant seriously, but was merely to joke and ridicule.

1. Independent Monitor, September 1, 1868.
2. Fleming, op. cit., p. 611. Lakin did not resign and three years later got eight hundred dollars of the year's salary.
4. Independent Monitor, September 8, 1868.
5. Ibid., December 22, 1868.
scalawags and carpetbaggers, and that its spirit had been falsely interpreted by the press of Alabama. He deplored this false interpretation.¹

Between 1865 and 1871 the faculty of the University was organized eight times.² Thirty students was the highest number reached under the Reconstruction faculty.³

People of Alabama had a right to criticize the men selected by the board of regents to teach at the University, for most were not prepared to teach, and would have been objectionable anywhere.⁴

The regents decided to make another attempt to open the University in the spring of 1869 with the following faculty: R. D. Harper, president and professor of Mental and Moral Hygiene; J. F. D. Richards, Natural Philosophy and Astronomy; John H. Forney, Mathematics; Vernon H. Vaughan, Logic and Metaphysics; W. J. Callans, Rhetoric and Oratory; J. C. Loomis, Ancient Languages; and W. K. McConnell, Commandant.

The Klan, the Monitor, and the conservative people of Tuscaloosa, as well as in other parts of the State, were working against the Reconstructed University, with Randolph leading the attack. The Monitor made vehement, continuous,

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¹ Independent Monitor, October 6, 1868.
² Fleming, op. cit., p. 616.
³ Ibid., p. 614.
⁵ Independent Monitor, January 5, 1869.
and exasperating attacks upon the faculty. It took up the members one by one and excoriated them relentlessly.

The Monitor declared that the respectable people of the State preferred to have the University closed rather than have Harper, a Methodist preacher from the North, serve as president. He was a carpetbagger and an adventurer, and he reeked from his contact with the Freedman's Bureau. Harper wisely resigned, and Richards became acting-president.

J. F. D. Richards, a carpetbagger from Vermont, had an income of about twelve thousand dollars per year. He was senator from Wilcox County, sheriff of Wilcox County, contractor to feed prisoners, and professor at the University. He had supported all the most obnoxious measures introduced in the "nigger Legislature".

John H. Forney, who was a Confederate and a native, was elected under a misapprehension. He was not criticized in the Monitor, because Randolph knew him personally and believed he would not serve on the faculty when he found how the people of Tuscaloosa felt toward it. He was correct in this belief; for Forney left when he understood the situation.

1. Independent Monitor, December 29, 1868.
2. Ibid., March 23, 1869.
Randolph took a particular delight in finding fault with Vernon H. Vaughan. The two had served together for a while in the Army under General Clanton, and they were well acquainted.\(^1\) The *Monitor* accused Vaughan of having been drunk on the streets of Tuscaloosa, and of having been a member of the Loyal League. "In a few words, Vaughan is an ignoramus, an upstart, a drunkard, and a fool for staying in Tuscaloosa."\(^2\)

W. J. Callans had been elected at the same time Lakin was chosen president.\(^3\) He had written the board of regents, "I except the sit'erwation."\(^4\) According to the *Monitor*, even the negroes were concerned at having him for a neighbor. It quoted one as saying to a white man: "Lor, massa, how in dis world is enny body to raise chickens, having all these scholarwag 'fessors so nigh?"\(^5\)

J. C. Loomis was a carpetbagger from Illinois. He ordered off the campus the boy who was delivering the Independent Monitor to the students, and so Randolph set out to look for him one Saturday afternoon with a good stick and a repeater. He found him, and never had any more interruptions in the circulation of the *Monitor*.\(^6\)

Randolph considered McConnell a man of gentility and character and was sorry to see him in such a place.

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1. *Independent Monitor*, January 5, 1869.
McConnell stayed only a short time, because he soon realized that a position on such a faculty was no credit to him.¹

The University opened April 5, 1869. The faculty tried to keep the opening a profound secret from the town people; but Randolph and a few others heard of it and went out to see what was taking place. They were profoundly disgusted with the proceeding.²

Students who came to the University were visited by people from Tuscaloosa and urged not to attend the school. Randolph sent copies of the Monitor to them in order to show them the futility of trying to obtain an education in such a place. Many of them left.³

The faculty and their families were completely ostracized. People refused to sit by them in church or any public gathering.⁴ The Monitor advised them:

"Our opinion is, if these University harpies behave themselves and 'except the sitewation' (to use the classical expression of Callan's) of entire social ostracism; and abstain from robbing the hen roosts of their negro neighbors; and spend freely the money that they draw for services never to be rendered in their sinecure positions, and do not cross the paths of Sipsey Swampers--then, we think that they may occupy, or rather desecrate, the Professors' mansions without immediate 'let or hinderance'. But, we may be mistaken, and would not have our dearly beloved new friends act entirely upon our 'say so'."⁵

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1. Independent Monitor, April 13, 1869.
2. Ibid.
5. Independent Monitor, February 9, 1869.
Vaughan threatened to make use of a shotgun which he brought with him to Tuscaloosa if the Monitor ever alluded to him again. This threat had no effect on Randolph, who attacked him as vigorously as ever.\textsuperscript{1} Vaughan rejoined through the Alabama State Journal.\textsuperscript{2}

There was in the University a student named Smith, who was the son of regent Smith of the board of education and the nephew of Governor Smith. For having served in the Union army, he was made steward of the mess hall. Smith was charged with theft from the commissary, and Vaughan intervened to prevent his expulsion, after which the two became very friendly.\textsuperscript{3}

Randolph had reason to expect an attack from Vaughan because of statements made in the Alabama State Journal, but Smith was a stranger to him.\textsuperscript{4}

About twelve o'clock on the morning of April 1, 1870, Randolph was standing near the corner of C. M. Foster's store\textsuperscript{5} talking to some men, when Smith walked across the street and brushed against him. Randolph turned and struck him with his fist and Smith, backing, drew his pistol, while Randolph did the same. Smith fired first, the bullet striking an old-fashioned pocket book which was in Randolph's.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} Independent Monitor, February 9, 1869.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} Randolph, Memoirs, p. 118.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Independent Monitor, April 26, 1870.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} Randolph, Memoirs, p. 119.
  \item \textsuperscript{5} C. M. Foster's was located on the corner of Broad Street where the building formerly occupied by Lustig's now stands.
\end{itemize}
inside vest pocket. This pocket book, filled with fractional currency, was two or three inches thick, and it deflected the bullet. This disconcerted Smith, who retreated toward Spiller's corner while both kept firing at each other. Randolph at last emptied his pistol and then threw it at Smith, who realizing that Randolph was unarmed, drew another pistol and advanced on him, firing twice. Randolph drew a knife and attempted to stab Smith several times, slightly wounding him each time. Smith, retreating again, this time through Foster's Store, fired a shot from the middle of the store which struck Randolph just above the knee. Randolph pursued him to the door, but, faint from loss of blood, he sat down upon the pavement, and was carried into a neighboring store for aid, then carried home on an improvised stretcher. ¹

During the fight, William H. Byrd, an old man standing near, was killed suddenly by an accidental shot which the Coroner's jury said was fired by Smith.²

Vaughan watched the fight from the other side of the street, but did not take part in it. In his cart a double barrelled shot gun and two large pistols were found. He had used Smith as a tool to accomplish what he dared not attempt alone.³

¹. Independent Monitor, April 5, 1870; Randolph, Memoirs, pp. 118-121.
². Independent Monitor, April 5, 1870.
³. Ibid., April 26, 1870.
Smith fled to Vaughan's house at the University, where the sheriff and posse found him and brought him to town. Vaughan was arrested on the charge of having instigated the assault, and both were placed in jail to await an investigation.  

After a preliminary investigation for the murder of W. H. Byrd, Smith was remanded to jail without bond to wait an indictment for murder. Vaughan was discharged and immediately left town. He went to Washington and was appointed to an office in Utah territory. 

Although Captain Mills of the United States Army had the responsibility of guarding Smith, he escaped from jail. The sheriff was convinced that he was set free by the guard, as the lock had been forced from the outside. Governor Smith offered a reward of four hundred dollars for his arrest, but he was never caught.

Randolph's wound was considered serious but not dangerous. Days passed and he got no better. Gangrene set in. Finally, it was necessary to amputate his leg to save his life. It was taken off about four inches from the body.

1. Independent Monitor, April 5, 1870.  
2. Ibid., April 26, 1870.  
3. Ibid., July 26, 1870.  
4. Ibid.  
6. Independent Monitor, April 5, 1870.  
The doctors had given Randolph morphine constantly to enable him to stand the pain, and at the end of six months he was a slave to it, imagining he could not live without it. Becoming alarmed one day at the sight of his wild, emaciated appearance and glassy eyes in a mirror, he decided to drop morphine. For several weeks his suffering was terrible, but he won the fight.¹

For the rest of his life he suffered neuralgia because the ends of the nerves became diseased.² He was not able to use an artificial leg successfully although he tried many times. His leg had been amputated so close to the thigh that he was not able to control the movement of the artificial one. He finally began using a crutch and a cane entirely.³

For the session 1870-71 William R. Smith served as president of the University. He had led the cooperationist forces in the secession convention and was a man of ability and education. But seeing no prospect for success, he resigned at the end of the term.⁴

The greatest number of students that session was twenty-one. By April there were only four, and one morning an envelope containing a letter for each was found

¹. Randolph, Memoirs, p. 124.
². Ibid.
³. Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
hung upon a dagger which was stuck into one of the doors of the University. They were all very similar. This was one of them:

"David Smith--You have received one notice from us, and this shall be your last! You, nor no other d-d son of a d-d Radical traitor, shall stay at our University. Leave here in less than 10 days; for in that time we will visit the place, and it will not be well for you to be found out there. The State is ours and so shall our University be.

Written by the Sec'y by order of the Klan."

This warning was sufficient; all four students left.

In 1871 Joseph Hodgson, a Democrat, was chosen Superintendent of Education, and two regents were of the same party. The faculty was organized for the eighth time since 1865, and a staff of natives elected.

The Monitor was satisfied. It proposed to give the University all the succor in its power and called upon the press of the State to do likewise.

2. Ibid.
Chapter IV

Racial Conflict and the Ku Klux Klan

The administration of the University was only one of many annoyances which the people of Tuscaloosa County had to endure in the Reconstruction period. In the spring of 1869, at a time when the attack on the University faculty was being carried on energetically, there was so much trouble between the whites and blacks that Governor Smith sent Charles A. Miller and D. L. Dalton to investigate. They reported that the desperadoes of Sipsey Swamp, who were "reckless tools in the hands of Ryland Randolph" had caused most of the excitement.¹

The trouble began when two young white men,² returning home from a trip to Northport, passed a negro boy. One of the whites suggested jokingly that they had better take him along with them. This so frightened the boy that he hurried home and told his father who armed himself, pursued, and overtook the two young men. The negro menacingly pointed his gun at them and cursed them but did not hurt them.³

The whites then went on; but they were not willing to let the matter rest there, and the next night they and

¹ Daily State Journal, May 13, 1869.
² Dalton and Miller reported that they were intoxicated.
some of their friends went to the negro's house to punish him. They found a number of armed negroes within the house, because an attack was expected. The father of the boy who had been frightened loosened a plank in the floor and crept out of the house to the bushes. He fired at the crowd of white men and killed Murk Findley.  

That ended the belligerent proceedings for that night. The whites withdrew in disorder, but they were aroused to white heat. The next day a messenger was sent to Randolph to come to Northport and take the leadership of a squad of extemporized cavalry to pursue the murderer and avenge the death of Findley. Randolph found about eighty men mounted and awaiting him on the principal street of Northport. In the course of a few hours a negro implicated in the murder of Findley was shot to death by these men.

A Coroner's jury from Tuscaloosa held an inquest over the body and rendered the verdict that the negro's death had been caused by parties unknown. The jury declared that they regretted the spirit of lawlessness manifested in such cases, but they were of the opinion that much of the disregard for legal processes was caused by the apathy and

5. Independent Monitor, April 27, 1869.
inefficiency of the peace officers of the County.¹

One negro, charged with participation in the murder of Findley, was arrested and put in jail in Tuscaloosa. As he knew many of the mob, he was an important witness. He was taken from the jail by a mob and murdered in front of the old State House.²

The ringleader of the negroes escaped at the time. About twelve months later he was traced to Hale County where he was regarded with suspicion, because he wore a revolver even while working the field. After a visit of two Tuscaloosa men to that county, he was found dead by the roadside.³

Randolph's friends felt that the report made by the State investigators, Dalton and Miller, and published in the State Journal slandered him. The report stated that Randolph was "the head devil of all the lawlessness that has afflicted and brought disgrace on the County and City of Tuscaloosa".⁴ Dalton and Miller asserted that they had met with all classes of citizens in Tuscaloosa, whites, blacks, Democrats, Republicans, county officers, merchants, lawyers, mechanics, hotel keepers, and planters, and not a human being was heard to speak of Randolph except in terms

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¹ Independent Monitor, April 27, 1869.
² State Journal, May 13, 1869; Damer, op. cit., p. 115.
³ Damer, op. cit., p. 115; Interview with Mr. Thomas Clinton.
⁴ State Journal, May 13, 1869.
of the most unmeasured denunciation.¹

This statement of Randolph's unpopularity was denied by friends in Tuscaloosa and other parts of the State. In a letter to the Montgomery Mail Mr. Whitfield of Tuscaloosa refuted all the accusations of the State investigators and declared that there was no more honorable man in the community than Randolph, who challenged the respect even of his bitterest foe.² The Montgomery Mail warned:

"if a hair of Ryland Randolph's head is hurt through the murderous suggestion made by the State Journal the outrage will be met with retaliative measures which will bring grief to the tyrants who are striving to intimidate the Press."³

Randolph thought the murder of the negroes was justified. He believed there would have been no punishment for Findley's death if matters had been left to the negro-elected authorities, and there probably would have been much more trouble between the races. After the retaliatory measures of the whites, the negroes resumed their work with renewed application.⁴ Despite the peace and quiet which prevailed in Tuscaloosa, Federal troops were sent, and the town was subjected to military supervision.⁵ The Governor

¹. Independent Monitor, May 18, 1869.
². Ibid., May 25, 1869.
³. Scrapbook of Ryland Randolph.
⁴. Independent Monitor, May 11, 1869.
⁵. Ibid., June 1, 1869.
seriously considered declaring martial law in the county.\(^1\)

By fall Randolph felt that all trouble between the races was over. The negroes were contented with their lot. No one dared teach them that they were the equal of white men. They were extremely polite, and their behavior was generally unexceptionable. Randolph believed this condition existed because the first negroes who forgot their places were dealt with in a drastic fashion.\(^2\)

In numerous parts of the South the Ku Klux Klan began to degenerate into a vile means of wreaking revenge for personal animosities. About the year 1870 there was an almost universal collapse of this organization when the good and brave men abandoned it in disgust. The Klan was blamed for many outrages committed by persons who never belonged to it, but who used its costumes and methods.\(^3\)

In 1871 the Monitor stated that there were no secret organizations of either race in Tuscaloosa. Ku Klux outrages had been a necessary sequence of Loyal League diabolism. As soon as the Loyal League ceased to be, the Ku Klux Klan vanished from view, for it was no longer needed.\(^4\) Immunity from harm was guaranteed all decent men who came to Tuscaloosa, and they did not have to be overly decent for there were a few who had lived in rascality for years without the slightest molestation of any kind.\(^5\)

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1. Observer, August 21, 1869.
2. Independent Monitor, August 17, 1869.
5. Ibid., June 28, 1871.
Chapter V

Brief Career as a Legislator

In the summer of 1869 the leading citizens of Tuscaloosa requested Randolph to run for membership in the House of Representatives in the State legislature to fill the vacancy made the year before by the death of M. M. Crossland. He consented and won over his opponents, Moses McGuire and Albert Smith (negro), by a majority of six hundred.

Upon admission to the House in November, he sent this telegram to the Monitor, "I have been admitted into the Legislative Menagerie."

Two days after he had taken the oath of office, his right to a seat was challenged by one Turner (negro), who offered a resolution that, since Randolph had accepted a challenge to a duel which was contrary to the provisions of an act passed by the State legislature July 29, 1868, a special committee of five should investigate his case. Mr. Randolph suggested that the negro member from Elmore had probably been prompted to offer the resolution by some of his carpetbagger friends. This suggestion caused a

1. Independent Monitor, July 13, 1869.
2. Ibid., November 17, 1868.
3. Ibid., August 10, 1869.
4. Ibid., November 16, 1869.
5. Journal of the Session of 1869-70, p. 32.
Cox (negro) favored tabling the resolution, because he thought Randolph would not do much harm after all. The dignity of Green (a negro) had been offended when Randolph called the colored members "niggers", but he favored letting Randolph retain his seat, because he had criticized white folks so much who had associated with negroes that he wanted him to occupy a seat on the same floor with "niggers".  

The resolution was passed after an amendment was added which provided that the case should be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections rather than to a special committee.  

It was true that Randolph had accepted a challenge to a duel in the spring of that year. He had alluded disparagingly in the Monitor to E. W. Peck, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama, and Peck's son-in-law, J. M. Martin, had written Randolph, demanding retraction, which he refused. Martin had then demanded that Randolph name a place beyond the State where the correspondence could be renewed. This meant, of course, that Martin wanted to settle the affair on the field of honor.  

Randolph named Peabody Hotel, Memphis, Tennessee, March 9, 1869, nine A.M. Randolph and Martin with their  

1. Independent Monitor, November 23, 1869.  
2. Ibid.  
seconds met there, but a group of Memphis friends persuaded them to refer the matter to arbitration. The arbiters decided that, in the reference to Peck in the Monitor, nothing more was intended than to ridicule a prominent political opponent, and was no cause for challenge. Amicable relations were restored.¹

The Committee examined the Martin-Randolph letters concerning the affair, and found no word in the correspondence which would establish the fact that the object of the trip to Memphis was to fight a duel with deadly weapons. The object as expressed in the notes was to go beyond the limits of the State to renew the correspondence. In any case their misunderstanding was settled and they became friends; so the Committee reported that it could find no sufficient grounds to unseat Randolph, and the report was accepted by the House without a dissenting vote.² This was a great surprise to Randolph, and he facetiously wrote the Monitor, "I fear my constituents will think I am becoming too popular with these fellows."³

In the House of Representatives there were fifteen negroes seated promiscuously among the whites. There were seventeen Democrats and sixty-five Republicans. The Democrats realized they could do no good except that of exposing

¹ Independent Monitor, March 16, 1869.
² Journal of the Session 1869-70, pp. 184-188.
³ Independent Monitor, December 21, 1869.
the villainy of the party in power, and Randolph boldly began to do that through the Monitor. He usually referred to the lower house as the House of Misrepresentatives, or lower house of the Menagerie. In weekly letters to the Monitor he described the "antics of the animals."  

Randolph, trying to do his correspondence in the house, found it almost impossible because of the noise. He described a typical meeting:

"At times as many as a score of the variegated animals address the chair at the same time. The colored monkeys are 'personizing' one another so insultingly that all that is needed to bring them to blows is a few coconuts placed in their paws."  

He wrote Miss Withers:

"But for you I would have whipped, ere this, at least a half dozen of these low creatures. But I know, that did I follow the bent of my inclination you would declare that I did not love you much."  

In spite of his contempt for these "low creatures", the negroes and white Radicals, they treated him with the utmost respect; some were oppressively obsequious.  

As Randolph had once made his home in Montgomery, he had many friends in the town, and they insisted on his presence at their homes for entertainments. His leisure hours were spent among people of refinement and education,
and proved a welcome relief from his associates at the Capitol.¹

Randolph made a report in the house on a remarkable bill which provided that marriages contracted during the War between the States should be annulled. As the report was unfavorable, the Radicals refused to receive it. Their object was to amend the bill so as to apply the provisions of it to Tuscaloosa County only² as a punishment to Randolph for ridiculing the action of the Supreme Court of the State.³

Randolph made a scathing speech in which he declared that the passage of the bill would reflect no credit on the legislature, but he was glad to see the Republicans trying to force the bill through. They were proving his assertion that the legislature was a menagerie, and were making themselves more ridiculous than he had ever sought to make them.⁴

The bill was indefinitely postponed.⁵

Randolph was married February 2, 1870, to Miss Katie Withers in Tuscaloosa,⁶ and, while he was absent from his seat for this occasion, the House of Representatives expelled him without giving him a hearing. The following resolutions

1. Letter from Randolph to Miss Withers.
3. Independent Monitor, February 1, 1870.
4. Ibid.
6. Independent Monitor, February 8, 1870.
were passed:

"Whereas, In a recent number of the Independent Monitor, bearing the date January 25th, 1870, a newspaper published and edited in the city of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, by Ryland Randolph, a member of this House, an article appears from the said Randolph couched in such language as to leave no doubt that it was intended to bring this House into public contempt; and whereas, it is the prerogative of every legislative body to preserve intact its dignity against the assaults of every species of libellous men; and whereas, the said Randolph as a member of this body has under his own signature grossly insulted and slandered members of this body; therefore,

"Resolved, That the said Ryland Randolph be hereby expelled as a member of this body."

Randolph was not discredited by this expulsion. In fact, his friends considered it the best indorsement he could have of his gentility and fearlessness in the discharge of his duty. That was the end of his legislative career.

In the fall of that same year his friends wanted to return him to the legislature, but he refused. He had lost his leg that spring, and he had no desire to return to public life at that time.

In 1871 he declared himself a candidate for the State Senate from the counties of Fayette and Tuscaloosa, but he soon withdrew from the race for several reasons.

First, his maimed bodily condition made it impossible for

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2. Independent Monitor, February 15, 1870.
3. Ibid., October 4, 1870.
4. Ibid., February 28, 1871.
him to canvass promptly and thoroughly. Second, the only other candidate was a man of practically the same political opinions as Randolph, and the campaign would have been merely a scramble between two Democrats for a little office. Third, Randolph believed he could accomplish no material good for his party if elected, because his relentless opposition to the Radical party had rendered him personally and politically unacceptable to the majority of State senators. Fourth, he believed he could accomplish more for his party by remaining at the helm of the \textit{Monitor}.\footnote{Independent Monitor, June 7, 1871.}
Mrs. Randolph worried constantly for fear her husband would be injured or killed by some one whom he had reprobated in the Monitor. Just two months after their marriage he had almost lost his life in the pistol battle with Smith of the University, and she began then to urge him to retire from the newspaper business. By the latter part of 1871 Randolph admitted that the Monitor had received more censure than praise in its impartial exposure of evil and evil doers, and that he had grown tired of making war alone. He confessed that he had committed some blunders through his editorial policy, and that his efforts to effect good had sometimes produced evil. He sold the Monitor to Colonel Joseph Taylor of Eutaw, who took possession January 1, 1872. The Monitor and Observer were combined and called the Times. Taylor and John F. Warren were the proprietors.

Randolph and his wife left Tuscaloosa and went to St. Clair County. There Randolph tried farming, but he was not interested in it. In about eight months the Randolphs returned to Tuscaloosa, where he became editor of a news-

1. Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
2. Independent Monitor, December 15, 1871.
3. Ibid., December 27, 1871.
4. Ibid., November 1, 1871.
5. Times, January 17, 1872.
6. Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
paper which he called the Blade. He had returned to the newspaper business, because he liked it and because he was encouraged to do so by numerous friends who were dissatisfied with the Times. Taylor was indignant that Randolph should edit the Blade or any paper in Tuscaloosa, because he understood when he bought the Monitor that Randolph would not become his rival. There had been no written contract to that effect, but Taylor considered the establishment of the Blade a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the contract between them. This attitude of Taylor's did not deter the Blade's career.

It was to be the policy of the Blade to promote peace and prosperity. Randolph declared that the Blade would not be recreant to its duty as a servant of the people when men and measures became such nuisances to the common welfare as to demand positive abatement. It was no partisan organ, but held itself ready to labor and fight for the best interests of the country. It occupied but one position on every question, and there was never any trouble in ascertaining exactly what that position was. The Blade sponsored the following organizations: Grangers, Order of Progressive Farmers, Good Templars, Masons, Odd

3. Times, August 14, 1872.
5. Ibid., March 19, 1874.
6. Ibid., April 16, 1874.
Fellows, Glee Clubs, Patrons of Industry, Labor Reform Unions, Randolph establishing departments of all of them in the paper. He joined several of these organizations and kept in close touch with all of them.¹

The _Blade_ was established only a short time before the presidential election of 1872, but Randolph had no advice to offer regarding the candidates, because, he declared, he had been abandoned and left at sea by his own party. He said he would vote for neither Grant nor Greeley.² His paper gave its attention to local matters and supported the State ticket led by Thomas H. Herndon.³

One of the principal local matters which immediately attracted Randolph's attention was the county convention system of nominating candidates. He disapproved of these conventions as they were generally manipulated. In 1872 he declared that no man need feel bound by party name to vote for the men nominated by the county convention.⁴ In reality only the managers of the party, not the masses, had much to do with selecting men for office.⁵ Men who controlled the conventions were generally aspirants for office, and members of the County Executive Committee too often used their positions as stepping stones to official positions.

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¹ _Blade_, February 5, 1874.
² _Ibid._, October 17, 1872.
³ _Ibid._, September 5, 1872.
⁴ _Ibid._
⁵ _Ibid._, October 10, 1872.
Until the promotions should be made mostly from the rank and file of the party instead of almost wholly from these sub-committees, this nominating system would be defective. By 1874 Randolph was not quite as critical of this convention system as he had been. He still felt it was imperfect and liable to abuses, and had been used to thwart the public wish in many cases; nevertheless, he felt it furnished the only practical means of adjusting conflicting aspirations in the conservative ranks in Alabama.¹ Several of the county beats had claimed a larger representation in the convention than they were entitled to upon the basis of the Democratic vote cast for Governor in the election of 1872. A committee readjusted that fault,² and the convention held in the summer of 1874 was representative of the people and fair to all Democrats. The convention adopted the issue of race supremacy, and no independents were to be tolerated.³ In that year Randolph served as a member of the Democratic Executive Committee of Tuscaloosa County,⁴ and also of the Executive Committee which had charge of political affairs in the city of Tuscaloosa.⁵

In June Randolph was a delegate to the State Convention of the Democratic party which met in Montgomery.

¹. Blade, April 1, 1874.
². Ibid., June, 1874.
³. Ibid., October 29, 1874.
⁴. Ibid., August 13, 1874.
⁵. Ibid., November 26, 1874.
There the Democrats decided to fight the approaching political contest on the issue of white or black supremacy. Randolph was one of the pioneers in founding the White Man's Party, for the Monitor had advocated the acceptance of the race issue in 1867. In 1874 Randolph stood on the race question where he had stood in 1867, and the Democratic party at last accepted that issue. Randolph advised the Democrats not to solicit the negro vote, because white men had no business addressing negro political meetings or haranguing before negro clubs. The best way to manage the negro politically was to let him severely alone. The only method of maintaining the integrity or power of white men was to hold aloof from all mistakes looking toward securing negro suffrage.

Tuscaloosa County was thoroughly aroused. In each precinct a White Man's Club was organized, and these clubs reported on all men, classifying them in three groups, white man, Radical, doubtful. The State and Tuscaloosa County returned Democratic majorities. For the first time since the beginning of Reconstruction, the Radicals had lost control of the State government. In the city of Tuscaloosa the negro vote was the heaviest ever known. Only forty or

1. Blade, July 30, 1874.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., September 10, 1874.
4. Ibid., October 15, 1874.
5. Ibid., September 3, 1874.
fifty negroes voted with the white Democrats, and these were threatened by the Republicans. 1

The Blade advised moderation after the victory. It urged that the negro be treated kindly, because he was only the dull tool in the hands of the carpetbagger and scalawag who mislead and frightened him by tricky acts. Randolph advised the white men to prove that a Southern State under its own rule was freer from crime and outrage than under the rule of Radicals. 2

In December the municipal election was held. The Democrats had gained such complete control that not a single Radical vote was cast. Randolph was elected alderman from the third ward. 3

October 18, 1875, Randolph published his last number of the Blade. After editing it for over three years, he sold it to Montgomery I. Burton. It was with reluctance that he severed his connection with that paper. 4

Randolph's life had been much quieter while he was editor of the Blade than it had been when he was in charge of the Monitor. Possibly this quiet was due to his physical handicap which, he said, placed him in the humiliating attitude of a noncombatant and took away the occupation of his delight. 5

1. Blade, November 5, 1874.
2. Ibid., November 12, 1874.
3. Ibid., December 10, 1874.
4. Ibid., October 18, 1874.
Chapter VII
Later Life

After selling the Blade, Randolph and his family moved to St. Clair County again. There he began to operate a hotel, but at the end of about three years, having lost most of his fortune in this venture, he decided to return to journalism. The Randolphs moved to Birmingham, and for a short time he edited a paper called the True Issue. That paper supported the Democratic ticket in the State elections in 1880, but opposed such local nominees as Randolph thought should not be elected.

Randolph used very severe language in his paper regarding Alexander O. Lane, editor of the Iron Age and later mayor of Birmingham. One morning, soon after the publication of the critical article, Lane, who was in his office, saw Randolph across the street. Lane went out, and, as he approached Randolph, he told him to defend himself. Lane fired immediately, and the bullet struck Randolph in the neck. Randolph fell, and friends intervened to stop the difficulty. Randolph's friends admitted that Lane had cause to be aggrieved, but he at least should have given Randolph a chance to defend himself. It was unfair to shoot

1. Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
2. Scrapbook of Ryland Randolph.
him before he had time to draw his pistol. The fact that Randolph was a cripple made Lane seem even more cowardly.¹

The shot came within a fourth of an inch of the carotid artery, and almost proved fatal to Randolph.²

Randolph never edited another newspaper after that affair. When he recovered he contributed to the *Argus*, the *Bessemer*, the *Age-Herald*, the *Evening News*, the *Eutaw Whig*, the *Tuscaloosa Times*, the *Montgomery Advertiser*, the *Huntsville Democrat*, and the *Fernandina Mirror*.³ His wife, to make sure that he got into no more trouble, read his articles and often compelled him to modify certain passages which she thought unnecessarily offensive.⁴

In his declining years, Randolph endured both mental and physical suffering. The pains in his mutilated leg grew so severe that he had to use morphine to deaden them. He realized that the remedy might in the end be worse than the disease, but the desire to be buoyed up even temporarily was irresistible.⁵ Every year he grew more and more helpless and dependent upon the assistance of others.⁶ He suffered mental anguish, because he thought poverty stared his family in the face, and he considered going to some place where they were unknown, as he believed the humilia-

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¹ Scrapbook of Ryland Randolph.
² Randolph, Memoirs, p. 133.
³ Scrapbook of Ryland Randolph.
⁴ Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
⁵ Randolph, Memoirs, pp. 59–60.
tion of their diminished estate would be less in a strange place. But his wife objected to moving. He felt remorse and self-reproach, for he believed many of his misfortunes were brought on by his own follies.¹

Mrs. Randolph died in 1901, and Randolph had no desire to live after that. In the latter part of March, 1903, he boarded a trolley for his home. Standing in the aisle, he leaned heavily on his crutches. The car started with a jerk, and he was thrown backward full length. His head struck the iron plate which covered the door sill, and he was knocked unconscious. He never recovered his strength, and he died April 5, 1903. He was survived by two sons: Ryland, who is now dead, and Victor Moreau, who lives in Birmingham, Alabama.²

¹. Randolph, Memoirs, p. 131.
². Interview with Mr. Victor Randolph.
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