

Man Gets 7-Month Sentence For Beating Wardlaw Student

Circuit Judge James Hugh McFaddin yesterday gave a stern lecture and a seven-month sentence to a big, pudgy-faced man who admitted badly beating a 15-year-old Wardlaw Junior High school boy.

"I do not tolerate gang warfare," said the judge, eyeing the 216-pound, 21-year-old defendant, Wayne Cook.

Cook had pleaded guilty to assault of a high and aggravated nature. City detectives had termed the beating, which required seven stitches and cost the victim a number of teeth, as inspired by a school-gang war.

Cook said he had been asked by some Gonzales Gardens boys to help beat Tommy Rabon, son of T. H. Rabon of 1830 Barnwell Street.

He told Judge McFaddin that he had never seen young Rabon before the beating, but understood from the Gonzales Gardens boys that Rabon was their enemy.

Judge McFaddin, saying he had never lectured anyone in his court before, told Cook there was "no excuse" for what he did.

He said this sort of thing could develop into a situation as found in New York and Chicago. "We (in this area) live in peace," the judge said.

He advised Cook to "stay out of other people's business" in the future.

City Detective J. L. Keefe said that several threats had been made on the boy's father to make him drop charges regarding the beating.

He said Mr. Rabon had come to police headquarters and cried. He quoted Mr. Rabon as saying he wanted to send his boy through school and could not cope with such a situation.

Cook, described as coming from a nice family, said that on the morning of the May 18 beating, Jimmy Wilson had come to his home and advised him of a situation regarding young Rabon.

He said he and young Wilson had met Carl Reese, Donny Nichols and Charles Brazell and had gone to the school. He stated that they had been told to leave the area by a teacher.

Cook said that when he returned, young Rabon was talking to a girl on the school yard. He told police that he had only hit Rabon once, in the jaw.

Young Rabon told officers that he never saw who hit him. He said that a number of blows were struck. He did not contest Cook's statement in court that only one blow was passed.

Judge McFaddin, before sentencing Cook, said that since the crucifixion of Christ, guilt has been a personal thing.

He said the situation between Rabon and the Gonzales Gardens crowd was personal, and none of Cook's business.

He told Cook that he could not replace Rabon's teeth.

Testimony had it that Cook left here for Salt Lake City, Utah, after the beating. Cook said that he stayed there with a brother. After hearing of the situation here, he said, he returned.

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