

IN RE: CONTEMPT OF COUNSEL,
George Stephens, Steve Kirk,
and Ralph Blagg

CR96-799

938 S.W.2d 859

Supreme Court of Arkansas
Opinion delivered March 12, 1997

CONTEMPT — MASTER APPOINTED. — Where one attorney subject to a show-cause order accepted responsibility for failure to perfect appeal and offered his sincere apologies, but three others denied responsibility by pleading not guilty and requested a hearing, the supreme court appointed a master to conduct the hearing, directing him to make findings of fact and to file them with the court.

Appointment of Master.

PER CURIAM. On February 17, 1997, we issued an order for attorneys George Stephens, Steve Kirk, Ralph Blagg, and Mel A. Jackson to appear and show cause why any one or all of them should not be held in contempt of court for failure to perfect the appeal in this case. Defendant Robert Caple was convicted on May 18, 1995, and almost twenty-two months later, no transcript has been filed in his appeal.

[1] For his part, Mel A. Jackson accepted responsibility and offered his sincere apologies. Stephens, Kirk, and Blagg deny responsibility by pleading not guilty, and request a hearing. Therefore, we appoint the Honorable Jack Holt, Jr., as a master to conduct the hearing. After the hearing, we direct the master to make his findings of fact, and file them with the court. Upon receiving the master's findings, we will decide whether counsel should be held in contempt. Until then, we reserve imposing punishment against Mr. Jackson.
