

Noted Outlaw Killed in Fight With Policeman

Otto Wood, a headliner in criminal news in this State since 1923, shortly after he murdered a Greensboro pawn broker, was brought to a sudden close in Salisbury Wednesday of last week in a gun battle waged by Chief R. L. Rankin and the outlaw. The daring man was attempting to perform another of his escapes that have attracted much attention throughout the State when he met his death. Four times he had escaped from the State Prison in Raleigh, and as many times from other prisons in other States.

If Otto Wood had accomplished his escape from the Salisbury office Wednesday—and he would have but for the daring of Chief Rankin whom he had "covered" with his pistol—it would have been his most sensational getaway. Recognized by the Chief and Assistant Chief J. J. Kesler and another officer, who had been "tipped off" to Otto's presence in the town, Wood had his pistol out, was climbing into the officer's own car and had ordered them to drive him to freedom. Then Chief Rankin took a chance, ducked, pulled his own gun and began the battle which ended with the eleventh shot, the shot that killed Otto Wood.

Hunted throughout the country since he made his fourth escape from the State Prison on July 10, Wood drove into Salisbury with a companion, Ray B. Barker, of St. Paul, about noon. An unidentified man told the officers he was in town and though the report was one that has been made in many North Carolina towns during the last months—usually without foundation—the Chief and his assistant went to investigate. They found Wood and Barker on East Innes Street a block and a half from the police station.

The Chief, driving the car, pulled up to the side of the curb.

"Come here, buddy," he called.

"What do you want?" said Wood, cursing.

"Let's see your other hand," answered the Chief, knowing Otto had lost a hand and suffered a leg injury when he worked as a railway brakeman.

"I'm Otto Wood, here's my hand," shouted Wood, whipping out a .45 calibre pistol. "Move and I'll kill both of you."

Wood ordered Barker into the rear seat of the car and with the pistol pointing at the officers, climbed into the seat beside him, ordering the Chief to drive him away.

Reaching for the gear lever, as if to obey the command, Chief Rankin

made his bid for fame. He opened the door, ducked and slipped from the car, drawing his own pistol as he left. Using the car as a protection, he fired at Wood through the windshield. The bandit returned fire.

The chief fired four shots, Wood three and Kesler, who left the car immediately after the Chief, two. Then came the finish which Chief Rankin described as follows:

"I raised up from behind the windshield. I wanted to end it. As I arised up I fired. Wood fired. We both shot at the same time. Otto missed. My bullet went home."

Wood's leg had been shattered during the fight but the shot which killed him hit him near the mouth and ploughed a great, shattering wound through the side of his head. He was killed instantly. Barker, who had an unloaded pistol in his pocket, took no part in the fight.

Wood was a native of Wilkes county, having been reared in the Dellaplains section, three miles out of North Wilkesboro.

Miss Lois Stanberry left Wednesday for Statesville where she will begin training for a nurse at the Davis Hospital.

OBITUARY

On May 18, 1930, it pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our dear sister, Mrs. J. R. Wilson, and we, the Woman's Missionary Society of Beaver Dam Church, wish to thank God for her life of usefulness among us.

At the age of 10 years she united with Beaver Dam Church and lived a devoted Christian life. We hold in our memories her love and loyalty to her God and her church, and we pray that we may give ourselves and what we have with love and self-sacrifice like hers. Keenly do we feel our great loss in her death, but "To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die," and surely in the heart of Beaver Dam Church, many relatives and a host of friends our departed sister, Mrs. J. R. Wilson, will continue to live.

She leaves a husband, ten children, father and mother, two brothers, one sister, and an unlimited number of friends to mourn her loss. We commend them to Him who says, "I am with you always," and we would remind them of the reunion beyond the river where she waits in one of the "many mansions." It seems that to give her up would be unbearable if it were not for remembering that God always knows best, and that our loss is her eternal gain.

Woman's Missionary Society Committee.

The Log Schoolhouse And the Country Church

By FRANK HOUSER

Years ago the little old log school house and the church served as a nucleus around which grew and developed the little villages and communities. They served as the center of the universe and everything revolved about them just as the planets revolve about the sun. However, a few years ago the old school house was auctioned off to the highest bidder and large buildings were erected to house the children of several communities. Our system of good roads has made it possible to truck children from one community into another several miles distant. There is no question in regard to the advantage in having several small schools consolidated into a large unit where each grade is placed in a separate room and where there is a teacher for every subject. In a school like this the children enjoy the advantages of being housed in a modern building equipped with electric lights, running water and steam heat. Consolidation has made it possible for the children to be under the supervision of teachers who have specialized in a specific field.

All these advantages have been given the children not by increasing the burden of the taxpayers but by using economy in the operation of our schools. In the consolidated school one fire will furnish heat for the children of several communities while under the log house system the taxpayers were forced to keep several fires burning. In my way of thinking, consolidation is just a big word for economy when applied to schools.

I have often wondered why we never tried consolidation of churches. In most sections it would be an easy matter to consolidate several small churches into one big union church. I know one community where if you would draw a circle with a radius of four miles you would include eleven churches in the circle. Now, most of these churches have preaching services only once a month because they are on a circuit where one preacher serves several churches. This arrangement is necessary because the small country church can not pay the full salary of a preacher. If we would apply consolidation to our churches just like we have to our public schools every community could have preaching services twice each Sunday. By uniting several churches into a big unit we could employ better preachers because one man would then take the place of several. We could triple the salary of the preacher and then the cost per family would be less than under the present system.

Consolidation is the only method by which the country Church will ever be able to keep pace with modern times. We must have churches that are attractive and inviting to the young people, otherwise they will finally lose interest in the church work. We know that some communities are not financially able to erect modern buildings but several churches could consolidate and erect a building that would be a credit to any present day school building or any city church.

Under this proposed system we would have better Sunday schools. Every child would be placed in a class according to ages. The cradle roll would not be mixed with the teenage group like they are in most of the country churches. Also, every child would be under the supervision of the best teachers the community could produce. You can easily see that we would have a larger group to select teachers from. We would be able to get teachers that are suited from the different classes. This would certainly stimulate the Sunday school and would go a long way in making it what it really should be.

I believe that we have come to the place where we should use economy

in the operation of our churches as well as in our schools. To economize by consolidating the country churches would not decrease the efficiency of the church but would afford the people of the community a better opportunity to carry on the work of the church in a much bigger and finer way.

Since we have moved the school from the center of the community and left the church alone, I can see no reason why we should leave it to struggle along under present conditions when by co-operation of several communities we can put it on the same level with our modern consolidated schools.

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WARNS PUBLIC

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