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CONVICT CAMP IS RAZED BY FLAMES MONDAY EVENING

About 80 Negro Convicts Freed from Burning Building Without Injury. None Escaped, Supt. Lyda Said to Have Been Slightly Burned During Rescue. Convicts Moved to Old Camp in Wilkes County.

Fire supposed to have originated from a defective flue Monday night completely destroyed the prison camp on Highway 50 near Laxon post-office, where more than eighty negro convicts, used in the new construction work, were being housed. Reports indicate that none of the prisoners was injured or escaped as a result of the conflagration. Bed clothing and personal belongings were saved, but the buildings were a complete loss.

Superintendent Lyda is said to have received slight surface burns when he rescued a shackled prisoner from the inferno of flame.

Prison officials at Raleigh were immediately notified of the fire, and pending instructions, the negroes were transferred to an old camp which was vacated last week, and will remain there for the present. They will likely be admitted to State Prison or some other district camp, it is said.

Honor Roll for Month At Boone High School

Thirty-five students at the Boone High School had their names placed on the honor roll for January. The list follows:

Freshmen: Annie Adams, Mary Brookshire, Edna Mae Brown, Ollie Jean Coffey, Geneva Cooke, Elizabeth Cooke, Rena Mae Farthing, Edith Greene, Ralph Turman, Margaret Ray, Virginia South, Maude Stansberry, Gladys Hagaman, Edith Lambly, Winifred Hampton and Odessa Lookahlil.

Sophomores: Rex Hagaman, Gladys Hampton, Della Hayes, Ruby Shall, Wari Sawyer, Banner Miller.

Juniors: Helen Benson and Glenda Hampton.

Seniors: Ralph Hagaman, Mary Moretz, Dale Norris, Ruby Parsons, Margaret Taylor, Boyd Cooke, James Farthing, Mary Austin, Grace Edmisten, Lucy Greene and Grace Ashley.

Results Are Seen From Farm Campaign

The Live-at-Home campaign this year is already bringing results in all sections of the State," according to Charles A. Sheffield, assistant director of the North Carolina State College extension service. "Everywhere farmers and business men are co-operating to put into actual operation the slogan of the campaign this year, 'Farm to Make a Living in 1931'."

However, Mr. Sheffield finds that there are some misunderstandings among farmers relative to the raising of certain farm products. He found on trips made during the past three weeks, in connection with speaking engagements, that the farmers of the State had sold off brood sows quite heavily last year, to obtain ready cash. He thinks that this is an incorrect policy. He feels that the brood sow is one of the best investments on the farm and a sure money-maker. He urges farmers everywhere to increase instead of diminish their hog supply.

Another interesting farm fact learned during the January campaign was that farmers in sections where they kept no poultry records had sold off much poultry. "Where they did not know that they were making a small profit on the poultry flock, handled without much trouble and with a minimum time effort, many farmers depleted their flocks because they thought that they were losing money or making none. In most cases, if they had kept accurate records, they would have found that they were making a profit. A poultry flock of fifty or more hens ought to bring in a small but steady income to any farmer anywhere in the State," Mr. Sheffield urges the farmers this year to increase their flocks and not to sell too many hens for meat profits.

He also met several individuals who readily admitted that they made a good living last year, due to the raising of hogs, poultry and garden produce.

HOUSE BURNS AT ROMINGER

News reaches The Democrat of the loss by fire of a modern farm dwelling, belonging to and occupied by Mr. Bill Mast and family of Rominger. The conflagration is said to have been of unknown origin, and the loss of the building and contents was complete. No insurance was in force. It is said that besides the furniture, a sum of money was destroyed by the blaze.

Bill to Validate Boone Water Bonds Dropped Into Hopper by Lovill

A bill entitled "An Act to Validate Certain Water Bonds of the Town of Boone" was introduced on the floor of the Upper House by Senator W. R. Lovill on Friday, February 6. In the event that this bill is written into law all short-term notes held against this municipality will be taken up and long-term bonds issued in their stead. The text of the measure introduced by Mr. Lovill follows:

"Section 1. The proceedings of the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Boone adopted on the eighteenth day of March and the twenty-second day of May, one thousand nine hundred thirty, authorizing the issuance of twenty-eight thousand dollars water system bonds of the said town, are hereby validated and the said bonds may be issued accordingly when advertised and sold pursuant to the Municipal Finance Act and to chapter two hundred seventy-seven, Public Laws of one thousand nine hundred twenty-nine. The proceeds of the bonds shall be applied to constructing a water system for the said town and its citizens, including the payment of notes heretofore issued for that purpose, but the purchaser of the bonds shall not be obliged to see to such application.

Section 2. This act shall be in force and effect from and after its ratification."

BOARD EDUCATION ADOPTS NEW PLAN AT JANUARY MEET

High Certificates Required in Boone, Cove Creek and Blowing Rock Districts. Watauga Operates Her Schools at a Lower Cost Than Any County in North Carolina, Excepting Cherokee.

At its January meeting, the Board of Education passed the following resolutions: "That the school committees in Boone, Blowing Rock and Cove Creek districts be advised not to hire any teacher for their respective schools, except those now teaching, with a certificate lower than a Grammar Grade 'C', and that they first confer with the principal before hiring any teacher."

Teachers in large schools, a member of the board states, should be employed with reference to the particular subject or subjects which they are expected to teach. It is believed that the new resolution will go a long way toward improving the school system in affected districts.

The January issue of "School Facts," official publication of the State Department of Education, discloses the fact that Watauga operates its schools cheaper than any county in North Carolina, Cherokee excluded. Average cost of teaching a white child in the state, according to the publication, is \$30.32 for the term. Watauga's cost is \$15.94 and Cherokee's \$15.81, a difference of only thirteen cents. Durham County, the highest, spends \$39.10 on each of its students.

At present the average length of public school term in Watauga is 134 days.

Good Will Tour Will Include N. Wilkesboro

Mr. Carl Coffey, prominent business man and aviator of North Wilkesboro, was here Monday and says that arrangements have been completed for the Carolinas Good Will Air tour to make a stop in his city. Mr. Horton Grigg, local flier, has tickets for the flight and will furnish such information as may be desired to those who would like to visit North Wilkesboro when the ship is afloat. The tour starts from Charlotte on March 15th, will include 30 ships, tri-motors, amphibians and other types, but the definite itinerary has not been worked out. Stunt flying and parachute jumping will be featured at each of the stops. Plans are also under way to have Lenoir included in the tour.

I. G. GREER DISPOSES OF INTERESTS IN J & E STORE

Professor I. G. Greer recently sold his one-half interest in the J & E Grocery Store to Mrs. T. Milton Greer, wife of the manager and only other stockholder in the business. The trade does not in any way affect the management of the business, it is pointed out, and the sales force remains the same.

RETURNS TO MARKETS

Mr. Fred C. Church returned to Chicago last week where he will purchase spring lines of dry goods for F. C. Miller and Company, and shipments will begin to arrive within a few days. Mr. Church spends about nine months of the year in the Windy City, keeping in close touch with the markets, and making purchases as he is advised by his company here.

Many Farmers Expected at Institute Next Week

The Farmers Institute, which is to be held at Lovell Home on the campus of Appalachian State Teachers College, next Tuesday and Wednesday is providing the principal topic of conversation this week among the farmers of the county, as well as the business men, and the indications are that practically all those who look to the soil for a livelihood will be present one or both days of the meeting. Last year it was estimated that no less than 1,000 farmers came together to study their problems and those in best position to know feel that Watauga County's financial standing was preserved as a direct result of the systematic farming which followed the institute.

A program has been worked out which will give authoritative information along all agricultural lines, and it is expected that those having peculiar problems of their own to deal with feel free to ask any questions. It is important that every farmer in the county attend the institute, meet with technical and practical farmers and work together for the best interests of Watauga County. The complete program follows:

Tuesday, February 17th
10 o'clock A. M.—Song, Colored Quartet; invocation, Rev. P. A. Hicks; address, H. R. Niswonger, N. C. State

College, on Horticulture, including potatoes, cabbage, beans, the home garden and marketing; address by Mrs. Corneia Morris on "Living at Home," discussing canning and gardening.

1 o'clock P. M.—O. F. McRary, N. C. State College, will present general farming outlook and will suggest ways and means of making a living and money on the farm. The ladies will have another meeting at this hour.

Wednesday, February 18th
10 o'clock A. M.—Song, Prof. I. G. Greer; invocation, Rev. Dr. Chandler; address, L. I. Case, Research Department of N. C. State College, who will discuss beef cattle, sheep, and the present outlook.

1 o'clock P. M.—Poultry and Tobacco will be discussed by Mr. Parish of N. C. State College, and A. L. Brown, Harry Faw and others of Johnson City and Greenville, Tenn.

Wholesale produce men from Gastonia, Charlotte and other cities will be present and assist in working out the marketing problems of mountain producers. The drought relief loan will also be fully explained.

Dinner will be served by the ladies of the town and the homes of Boone people are open for everyone who may desire to spend the night.

Weather Man Dishes Out Half-Dozen Balmy Days

Notwithstanding the fact that Old Man Groundhog saw his shadow on Monday, Feb. 2, the weather man dished out six days of balmy temperature and sunny skies in Watauga last week. J. T. C. Wright, observer at the local weather bureau, has compiled the following report which shows an average temperature for the week well above the freezing mark:

Average maximum temperature, 52 degrees.
Average minimum temperature, 22 degrees.
Average temperature, 37 degrees.
Average daily range in temperature, 30 degrees.
Greatest daily range in temperature, 35 degrees, date, 6th.
Average temperature at 6 p. m. (time of observation), 17 degrees.
Highest temperature reached, 58 degrees, date, 7th.
Lowest temperature reached, 17 degrees, date, 3rd.
Number of clear days, 6.
Number of cloudy days, 1.
Direction of prevailing wind, west.
Dates of heavy frosts, 3rd and 5th.
Date of light frost, 1st.
Other phenomena described as follows: Solar halo on 5th.

Sollie Brown Dies at Statesville Hospital

Sollie Brown, 21 years old, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Brown of the Blowing Rock section, died at the Davis Hospital, Statesville, on Monday night at 10:30. He was taken there several days ago for an abscess operation, but peritonitis had developed and there was no hope for his recovery.

The body was conveyed to Boone Tuesday by a hearse from Moretz Funeral Home, and the funeral was held yesterday morning at 10 o'clock by Rev. W. D. Ashley. Interment was in the Hampton Cemetery.

Striving are the parents, one brother, Milton, of Blowing Rock, three sisters, Essie and Elvira Brown of Blowing Rock, and Mrs. B. D. Yates of Boone R. F. D. 1.

Roy Martin Is Freed From State's Prison

Roy Martin, convicted in Watauga Superior Court for the slaying of Fred Elison and sentenced to serve a period of five years in the State penitentiary, has been paroled by the Governor, it has been learned. Martin had served about a year of the sentence imposed. John E. Brown, Boone attorney, was instrumental in securing his release.

GORDON TAYLOR NEW OWNER OF CASH FEED COMPANY

Mr. Gordon Taylor of Valle Crucis has purchased from Mr. George V. McGinsey the Cash Feed Company on Depot Street, and is now managing the business. Mr. and Mrs. McGinsey having returned to their home in Lenoir where he is engaged in similar business pursuits with a brother. The same high quality lines of feed and fertilizer will be handled by Mr. Taylor.

Councill Cooke, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Cooke, was taken to Presbyterian Hospital, Charlotte, on last Thursday, where he is suffering from a severe illness. Mr. Cooke returned Friday, but Mrs. Cooke will remain until his condition is improved.

"Farmer Payer" Favors Veterans

For several weeks reports have been current in Watauga that Congressman Doughton of the Eighth North Carolina District was opposed to the payment of soldiers' adjusted compensation certificates. One veteran of the World War, who doubted the authenticity of this story, wrote to Congressman Doughton concerning the matter, and his reply, in part, follows:

"There is not a word of truth in the report that I am against the present payment of soldiers' adjusted compensation certificates. In fact, I am doing everything I can to aid the movement.

"The Ways and Means Committee, of which I am a member, has been holding hearings in this connection for nearly a week, but the President and Secretary Mellon are fighting the matter with all their might and I do not know what we will be able to accomplish; however, I shall continue to do everything possible to see that the veterans receive adequate relief."

RUSSELL LAY DIES FROM ACCIDENTAL GUNSHOT WOUNDS

Son of Jones Lay and Grandson of John Lay of Watauga, Accidentally Killed in Bluefield, W. Va. Shotgun Sends Lead into Abdomen. Funeral Services and Burial at Home in North Fork.

Russell Lay, 22 years old, died on February 1, at Bluefield, W. Va., after having received an accidental gunshot wound about seven hours previous. Young Lay had been hunting, according to reports, and upon returning, was attempting to remove the shotgun from an automobile. The hammer in some way caught on a part of the automobile, was released and the full load is said to have torn its way into the abdominal region.

Deceased was a son of Mr. Jones A. Lay of North Fork, W. Va., and his parents were natives of Watauga County, his father being the son of Mr. John Lay. He was raised in West Virginia and at the time of his death was a college student in Bluefield. Funeral services were held and interment made in the cemetery at North Fork, W. Va.

Other than the father and mother, there is no information available as to the survivors.

Paving Bid on Route 60 Accepted at 101,460.40

On Tuesday the State Highway Commission met and received bids on thirteen highway projects, involving the construction of almost one hundred miles of highway as well as a bridge across the Cape Fear river at Lillington. The total of the low bids amounts to more than a million and a half dollars.

One of the projects calls for the paving of 4.89 miles on Highway 60 from Boone in the direction of Deep Gap. The Guilford Construction Co., Greensboro, submitted the low bid, \$101,460.40. While no time definite has been given out, it is thought that actual work may begin soon as contracts are completed and the weather will permit.

At a prior letting the Powell Paving Company, Winston-Salem, furnished the low bid, but it was necessary to reopen the matter on account of specifications not having been complete when the original bids were made.

Miss Fletcher Becomes Bride of Mr. Barnhardt

Miss Lina Fletcher, daughter of Mr. J. C. Fletcher, formerly of Boone but for the past several years a resident of Lenoir, was married to Mr. O. E. Barnhardt, Statesville, on Monday, February 9th, at Mountain City, Tenn.

The bride received her early education at the old A. T. S., later graduated from N. C. C. W., Greensboro, and for several years has been a popular teacher in the schools of Caldwell County, where she enjoys a wide circle of friends.

Mr. Barnhardt is a member of one of Statesville's leading families and has been employed with a business concern there for several years. The couple was accompanied to Mountain City by Mr. Fletcher, Mrs. J. M. Russell and daughter, June Lea.

The Barnhardts will make their home in Lenoir for the present.

The House has passed a bill introduced by Mr. Lovitt, to "prohibit" drunkenness in Avery County. We are awaiting details to learn just how this is to be done.—Charlotte Observer.

OVER A HUNDRED COUNTY FARMERS APPLY FOR LOANS

Government Fund Being Drawn on for Feed and Fertilizer. V. C. Taylor, Representative of State Department, Spends Week in Watauga. Township Committees Named. Average Amount Asked \$110.

V. C. Taylor of Dobson, representing I. O. Schaub, who will supervise the distribution of drought relief funds in North Carolina, spent last week in Watauga, aiding the county board in setting up loan machinery here. Mr. Taylor has been over much of the territory affected by the extreme dry weather of last season, and states that Watauga is in much better condition than most of the sixteen counties in the area. Fertilizer for potatoes, corn and beans seems to be the crying need of county farmers, and he is of the opinion that funds will be available to take care of all applications passed by Watauga's Board, composed of George P. Hagaman, W. H. Gragg, C. M. Critcher and C. D. Taylor.

More than one hundred applications, ranging in size from \$25.00 to \$600, have already been made to this committee, and many of them have been forwarded to Mr. Schaub, who passes on each of them before forwarding to Washington. It is the belief of local men that those who would borrow in Watauga are holding amounts to the minimum, figuring out the smallest possible amount they can carry out farming activities with during the coming season. The average size of loans so far applied for is around \$110.

The following township committees have been appointed to aid the county board in their work:

Beaver Dam (community)—Don Hagaman, Asa Reeco, Clyde Perry, Mabel (community)—Ed S. Williams, A. N. Mast, Spencer Dishman, John Greer.

Meat Camp—Alex Turman, W. A. Deaton, Alvin J. Coe.

Cove Creek—W. H. Walker, W. F. Sherwood, Sam Ackins.

Blowing Rock—J. T. Miller, H. C. Hayes, J. E. Young, W. L. Farthing, Blue Ridge—J. T. Hampton, F. L. Hampton, J. G. Story.

Elk—C. C. Triplett, P. G. Carroll, Clay Hodges.

Lamont Creek—D. M. Edmiston, J. R. Trivet, W. E. Winkler.

Story Fork—A. G. Miller, Sherman Wilborn, Dan Wilborn.

Shulls Mills (community)—S. F. Gragg, L. M. Hodges, T. C. Baird.

Shawneelaw—W. L. Welch, Albert Mills, Lee Cawden.

North Fork—A. N. Thomas, W. C. South, M. J. Wilson.

During Mr. Taylor's visit, he stated that the government is ready to begin distribution of the loans and all applications will be acted upon within forty-eight hours after their receipt in Washington, provided they are properly made out. No one person will be allowed over \$600 and the aggregate loan to all the tenants of one landlord will not exceed this sum.

The money will be distributed as loans, and not as gifts, declares Mr. Taylor. All loans will be due on November 31, and are protected by a chattel mortgage on the crop. If the crop has been previously mortgaged or hypothecated in any way, waivers must be secured by the applicant before he will get a government loan. The note securing a loan bears interest at 5 per cent.

The loans will be made for seed for planting, fertilizer or plant food, dust and spray for protecting the crop, feed for the livestock and oil and fuel for tractor. No farmer who can get local credit or has any other source of income will be allowed to participate, says Mr. Taylor.

Banner Elk, N. C.—Last week Mr. Leo K. Fritchett, principal of Lees-McRae College, and Mr. E. T. Erickson, director of the new course in Mountain Farming, drove over 450 miles, visiting thirteen high schools to offer to the students scholarships in Lees-McRae College. While this offer is primarily for Mountain Farming, it is also open for any other department of the college.

The requirements for this scholarship are unusual. It is offered to high school graduates, one from each school, to be chosen by the faculty of the individual school, who not only has made the highest scholastic average but who has excelled in leadership.

The course in Mountain Farming is to be a course in leadership as well, working out the principle of Lees-McRae, taking young people from the mountains and training them to return to their own communities to take a leading part in its affairs, social, religious and industrial, hence the emphasis laid upon leadership as an essential for this scholarship.