

## Listless Meeting Town Authorities Here Last Night

### Refuse To Accept Responsibility in Car-Bicycle Accident

Holding a listless session, the local town commissioners last night held their last regular meeting as members of the old board, the group to meet as a new board on June 5, subject to the outcome of the election in progress today. Very little new business came before the meeting, the members handling that with dispatch and adjourning before nine o'clock.

Explaining that he had a nurse's bill for \$178, Joe Mitchell, father of little Jimmie Mitchell, who was critically injured in an automobile-bicycle accident during a fire call here last March, appeared before the board and asked for any help the commissioners might be willing to offer. Mitchell explained that no consideration or thought had been given to the possibility of bringing suit against Fire Chief G. P. Hall, driver of the car figuring in the crash, or against the town. Ruling that the town and fire chief were not responsible, the authorities withheld aid.

The last chapter in the town's proposed improvement program was written last evening when the board abandoned all hope of executing a contract for a \$128,000 PWA project. Granted \$50,200 outright by the PWA early last fall, the town could not sell its bonds at an attractive figure and before it could apply for a loan direct from the government, the deadline for receiving applications had passed. The matter was carried direct to Washington, and after receiving some encouragement from minor officials in the PWA offices there, local authorities were advised last week that it would be impossible to reopen the application under the 1938 law governing PWA applications, loans and grants.

While that application has met with failure, local authorities are hopeful Senator Meade's proposal to appropriate half billion dollars for taking care of projects proposed but not accepted under the old PWA. The proposal to appropriate the half billion has been attached by Senator Meade as a "rider" to another bill which is awaiting action in Congress at the present time.

Arrangements were made for holding the election today, the board members stating that they believed only a small vote would be cast today.

The only other business before the meeting was a request by Roy Ward, wood and coal dealer, urging the board to tile a ditch across a lot on South Railroad Street, just off Pearl Street. The board ordered no action taken there at the present.

Charles Toxey, Jr., teacher in the local schools last term, applied for the managership of the municipal swimming pool, but no action was taken at the meeting.

The board was advised that the filtering plant for the swimming pool had been shipped and would probably be ready for installation within a short time. The foundation for the bathhouses will be poured this week, and it is possible but hardly likely that the project, a veritable white elephant, will be ready for use by June 1.

## Negro Critically Stabbed Sunday

"Preacher" Pettiford, colored employee of the Saunders and Cox Lumber Company, was critically stabbed by Booker T. Williams at Ward's Store on East Main Street here last Sunday evening about 8 o'clock. Treated locally that evening Pettiford was removed to a Washington hospital yesterday where his condition was described as grave today.

Without warning, Williams, an employee of the Standard Fertilizer Company, was said to have slipped up on Pettiford and driven his knife blade into the man's head. The first blow did no serious damage to the man's skull, but striking a second time, Williams is said to have driven the several inch blade into the man's head up to the handle.

Dancing in the small store, Pettiford fell to the floor and had to be carried bodily to a doctor's office. He was said to have been drinking, and his condition was not thought to be serious until a second examination was made early yesterday.

Williams, fleeing the scene of the attack, has not yet been apprehended.

## One Hundred and Fifty Are Graduated by County Schools

The closing of the six white high schools in this county last week saw a record number of graduates going into the various channels of life, reports stating that comparatively few of the 150 boys and girls will continue their education in the institutions of higher learning. Again the number of girl graduates is far greater than the number of boys completing the 11-year course of study in the schools of this county.

Hardly more than ten or twelve per cent of the graduates will enter college. A fairly sizeable number will enter business schools and several of the young ladies plan to enter hospitals for special training in nursing, leaving quite a number with nothing definite to do.

As the 150 completed their work in the high school, the nine elementary schools moved 226 seventh

grade graduates into the high school. Taking into consideration the large number of students who drop out of high school before completing the course of study, it is apparent that the number of graduates is now approximating a peak because it is likely that more than 76 of the 226 will quite the school room before another four years are spent.

Following is a list of high school and seventh grade graduates, by schools, the first figures representing the high school and the second figures representing the seventh grade output: Jamesville, 14 and 30; Farm Life, 10 and 11; Bear Grass, 10 and 14; Williamston, 42 and 57; Robersonville, 53 and 53; Oak City, 21 and 16. The strictly elementary schools are sending the following number of seventh graders into high school: Everetts, 31; Hamilton, 7; and Hassell, 7.

## EPIDEMIC

A whooping cough epidemic is sweeping through Jamesville Township and a part of Griffins, according to a report coming from the county health office today. Thirty-one cases were reported in the Jamesville area yesterday, the office stating that approximately 60 cases had been reported previously. The cough is no respecter of color, the reports stating that both the white and the colored are falling victims to it.

Dr. Wilson, head of the department, said today that the epidemic could have been checked weeks ago had proper reports been filed. Pointing out that the cough takes more lives below one year of age than any other disease, the director said that the individual violates the law when a report of a communicable disease is not reported.

## Jamesville Names New Set Officials

Showing a marked interest in politics, leading citizens in Jamesville braved stormy weather to settle their town politics for another two years when they met in convention in the school auditorium there last Friday evening and nominated a new mayor and a new board of commissioners.

Their selection for mayor was readily agreed upon when Dr. W. T. Gibson was nominated to succeed Mr. Luther Hardison, resigned. Dr. Gibson asked to be relieved, but the convention would not listen to his objections and he was chosen unanimously.

When nominations for commissioners were called for, nearly one-half the convention was offered. The names of A. Corey, U. S. Hassell, J. G. Long, E. H. Ange, R. C. Sexton, W. W. Walters, Jr., C. A. Askew, Stencil Brown, C. C. Fleming, J. H. Holliday, and O. W. Hamilton were placed before the convention. After five ballots were taken, C. C. Fleming, J. H. Holliday and O. W. Hamilton were selected as the convention nominees.

Called in accordance with a recent act of the legislature, an election will be held there on May 30, reports stating that there is little or no likelihood that an independent ticket will be offered. Registration books have already been opened and will be held open during the next two Saturdays. On the Saturday before the election, the books will be opened for challenge.

## Parents-Teachers Sponsor Convention-Square Dance

Badly in need of funds to meet some urgent obligations incurred in providing lunches for needy children during the term just ended, the local parent-teacher association will sponsor an old-time fiddlers' convention in the high school auditorium Friday evening of this week at eight o'clock. The convention will be followed by a square dance in the school gymnasium.

Cash prizes in the sum of \$11 will be offered along with valuable premiums to the winners. Four of the leading string bands in this section are slated to compete, but the competition is open to all. A sound system will be used, and the sponsors are looking for a packed house at both events. The program is being advanced for a very worthy cause, and the patronage of the general public is cordially urged.

Mesdames Rush Bondurant, C. G. Crockett and Fenner Wallace were visitors in Norfolk today.

## Oak City Seniors Hear Address By State School Man

Clyde A. Erwin Delivers Commencement Talk Last Friday

Marking the close of the last white school in the county last Friday evening, Clyde A. Erwin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, delivered a timely and fitting address to the Oak City graduating class of twenty-one members and a large number of patrons who braved a stormy night to witness the first real crowning event of the thirteen young girls and eight young men.

Following a number by the glee club, Superintendent of County Schools J. C. Manning introduced the speaker, and during the course of 45 minutes the State school man encouraged the young graduates to seek the finer things in life, urging them to be patriotic, have faith in God and man, cooperate in the mutual advancement of mankind and work diligently and honestly.

Paying a tribute to the head of the schools in this county when he said that the department recognized J. C. Manning as one of the most able and efficient young school men in the State, the speaker then directed his remarks to the young graduates, inviting the large and appreciative audience to sit in and listen.

The school man was strong in his defense of modern youth. "They are not irresponsible as many claim them to be," Erwin said, referring to an article that described youth as being irreverent, worthless and shiftless as far back as 1803. "You graduates will at some future date look back upon your work today and recognize it as a period of valuable training."

In his smooth flow of oratory, the speaker expressed the keen hope that every graduate would pause long enough to think what it means to be an American, the blessing found in free enterprise and realize that there is only one law to obey. In substance that law gives one the right to do as he pleases in this country as long as his acts do not conflict with the rights of others, it was pointed out. "It is great to be an American citizen," the speaker continued, urging his listeners to be patriotic. "We have our ups and downs, but when we compare our land with others, we have much to be thankful for," he said, referring to the little immigrant girl who saw the immense show windows in an American city and termed this "the promised land."

"In the midst of depression we have more than other nations. And I want you to work for it, learn to love it and reflect the same zealously reflected by your forebears in making it great," he said speaking to the graduates.

The spirit of faith was stressed as a vital necessity when youth looks

## Music Pupils In Recital Tonight At 8:00 O'Clock

The piano pupils of Mrs. W. K. Parker will be presented in a recital at the Williamston high school auditorium at eight o'clock this evening.

The following will take part in the program: Millie Biggs, Minnie Chesson, Marjorie Grey Dunn, Anne Fowden, Sylvia Greene, Thelma Griffin, Patsy King, Alberta Knox, Dorothy Leggett, Letitia Maxwell, Lillian Maxwell, Anne Meador, Lonnie Melson, Elizabeth Parker, Laurie Frances Peele, Mary Trulsh Peel, Betty Rogers, Dora Twiddy, Helen Weaver, and Evelyn Wynne.

## Reviews Results of Examinations In County's Schools

### More Defects Found Among White Than Colored Children

By F. E. WILSON, Director Martin County Health Department

During the first quarter of the year 1939 the first systematic and complete examinations were made in all the graded schools of Martin County by the Martin County Health Department. This was then a fertile field in which to gather statistical data for an accurate knowledge of the physical defects found among school children who had heretofore never had the advantage of health education through a local health department. The table at the end of this article gives more details and a comparison between the two halves of the county, and also a comparison between the white and colored children examined.

Two thousand three hundred and fourteen (2314) children in the first, third and sixth grades of the Martin County Schools were examined by the health officer during the past school year. Of this number, 1556, or 67.24 per cent, were found to have physical defects, and only 90 were found to be entirely free of any handicaps. Of the total number of children examined 1156 had repeated one or more grades, and 132 of them having repeated three or more grades, and a few had repeated as many as six grades. These repeaters were studied to determine whether their physical defects retarded them in school and it was found that 67 per cent had preventable defects which, if corrected early enough might have saved them from having to repeat, and thereby saving the taxpayers over \$25,000, since it cost this much for the 776 to repeat at \$34.00 per child per daily attendance during the year.

Comparing this amount to the total population of Martin County it would mean that every man, woman and child in the county would have to pay over one dollar each to bear the expense of these defects. This does not take into consideration the

fact that these children have to bear the insidious suffering of their handicaps which must necessarily duplicate their time in school and postpone their graduation, thus depriving them of an earlier start towards making their livelihood.

Mental deficiencies were not studied in these examinations, and of the physical defects decayed and infected teeth and poor vision head, the list. Infected and enlarged tonsils and adenoids with an associated diminution of hearing were responsible for many of the defects, and chronic skin diseases contributed largely. Nutritional defects were comparatively few. Many potential defects such as incorrect posture, glandular enlargement, and poor oral hygiene were not counted as defects unless they were to the degree of causing actual discomfort. Many cases of congenital and functional heart defects were found and this knowledge was transmitted to

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## Schedule Tonsil And Adenoids Clinics Here

Arrangements for holding a series of tonsil and adenoid clinics here beginning on Thursday of next week, were announced complete today by Dr. Charles J. Sawyer. Plans have been made to hold the clinics each Thursday during the summer at special reduced rates. Similar clinics have met with much success here during the past several years.

## LISTLESS

One of the judges of election was asleep, another was merely twirling his thumbs and still another was busily engaged doing something else as they patiently waited for Williamston voters to participate in the biennial town election. The election is proving a listless affair, Registrar J. E. Pope announcing at 1:30 this afternoon that less than two dozen people had cast their votes.

No independent ticket has been mentioned and if there has been any scratching done it was not detected by the election officials. Last year, 53 votes were cast. The ticket today carries the following names: J. L. Hassell, mayor; O. H. Harrison, N. C. Green, L. P. Lindsley, Luther Peel and V. D. Godwin, commissioners, all renominated at the recent convention.

# Commissioners of County Show Conservative Trend in Their First Discussion of Proposed Budget

## MERIT HONOR AND DISTINCTION



Of the several thousand pupils and the more than 100 teachers in this county no two people merit the honor and distinction recently accorded them more than Miss Sallie Gray Gurkin, Williamston High School graduate, and Miss Leona Moore, teacher in the Robersonville School.

Neither absent nor tardy during her eleven years in school and averaging 96.45 in her studies, Miss Gurkin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie

## Refuse To Grant Increase Asked By The Welfare Unit

### No Extension Allowed For Listing Property in County

Meeting in their regular monthly session here yesterday, the Martin County Commissioners struck a conservative note in the discussion of the first budget proposed for the year 1939-40. An increase asked by the welfare department was denied by the board, but after a lengthy discussion of the figures two of the members agreed that certain departments should have their funds supplemented. No vote was taken as one of the commissioners was called home that afternoon and the chairman was called out by urgent business, leaving the budget open for a later discussion.

Making a survey of the county recently, the welfare department pointed out in its budget requirements the need for accepting forty-five additions to the old-age list and a few needy tots to the dependent children group. Two of the commissioners agreed that provision should be made to care for 30 additional old people, but expressed themselves as being opposed to any increases whatever for dependent children or for other divisions in the department. It was estimated the increase, based on the acceptance of 30 old people, would call for an increase in the county budget of about \$610.

It was apparent that an increase from \$6,840 to \$7,260 for the administration of the entire welfare set-up would be denied by the board. The departmental budget called for an increase of \$1,615.00 for old age assistance and \$730 for dependent children, placing the figures respectively at \$6,075, and \$3,700. The total budget, considering all requests, would be increased from \$24,350 to \$27,452.96, a gain of \$3,102.96. While this amount represents the entire budget, the county would only have to raise a part of that sum, the State and Federal governments participating to a large extent.

No material changes were noted in the budget figures as they related to the operation and maintenance of the county home, outside poor relief, local medical care, dependent blind, hospitalization and the burial of the indigent.

There is a definite trend toward conservatism among the board group reports stating that at least one member would oppose all budget increments and propose a curtailment of present activities before he would vote for an increased tax rate for the new year.

Granting no extension for listing taxes, the commissioners subject late property listers to the dictates of the law. Late listing provides a ten per cent penalty and double listing in some instances and even indictment and prosecution in the courts. Unofficial reports state that the listing work is fairly complete in the county.

A delegation of colored citizens, appearing before the meeting, asked the board to appropriate \$30 a month for a colored home demonstration agent. The group, including representative colored citizens from several parts of the county, was assured no definite action. The

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## Thousands Attend Cross Roads Union

An estimated crowd of 3,000 people from all parts of Martin County and numbers from adjoining counties was in attendance upon the union church meeting held with Christian Chapel at Cross Roads last Sunday. It was one of the largest crowds to attend a religious meeting in the county in recent years, reports claim.

The church and the old school were crowded to capacity as two ministers delivered forceful sermons that morning. The afternoon program was featured by a special song service by the Maple Grove choir.

## Jas. K. Gurganus Dies Last Saturday In Greene County

Funeral Held at Skewarkey Church Here Sunday Afternoon

James K. Gurganus, native of this county and a retired farmer,

died at the home of his son, Norman Gurganus, near Snow Hill, in Greene County last Saturday morning at 2:30 o'clock following a long period of declining health. Making his home with a daughter, Mrs. Charles Keel, near Everetts, Mr. Gurganus left last February to visit his son and was taken ill a few days later. About three weeks ago he suffered a stroke of paralysis which was followed by another just a short time before the end.

The son of the late Simon D. and Mahala Woolard Gurganus, he was born in Robersonville Township seventy years ago last February. About 1892 he was married to Miss Alice Bennett and bought and located on a farm near Williamston. He later moved to Cross Roads Township and directed farming activities in other parts of the county, living in Martin all his life with the exception of a few months.

During the past twenty years he was partially and later totally blind from cataracts with the exception of about 30 days following an operation. A member of the Primitive Baptist church at Skewarkey for more than 40 years, he possessed a quiet demeanor, and was highly respected by all who knew him. He bore his affliction without complaint and enjoyed a wide friendship circle over the county. He was recognized as a leading farmer in this county for a number of years.

Besides his widow he is survived by five children, Mrs. Charles Coltrain, of Robersonville; Ralston Gurganus and Mrs. Charles Keel, both of Cross Roads Township; Norman Gurganus, of Greene County, and J. Simon Gurganus, of Williamston. He also leaves three brothers, William D. Gurganus, of Williams Township and J. Henry and Robert Gurganus, both of Williamston, and ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at the Skewarkey church Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock by Elder B. S. Cowin. Interment was in the churchyard cemetery.

## Game With Wilson Is Postponed; Martins Idle

The game with Wilson postponed on account of rain and wet grounds, the Martins are idle today. The game will be made up in Wilson on Friday of next week by a double schedule. Tomorrow the Martins go to Snow Hill. The Billies will come here Thursday. The Martins will be hosts to New Bern here Saturday and Goldsboro on Sunday, two games in a row at home.

## MORE CHECKS

Soil conservation checks are still coming in for farmers in this county, the office of the county agent announcing that an additional \$7,360.81 is being distributed this week to 104 farmers. To date, \$119,748.17, representing 1,029 applications, has been distributed under the 1938 program. There are approximately 258 applications now awaiting attention.

## Reappoint Local School Teachers

The Williamston school faculty was reappointed in its entirety for the 1939-40 term by the local school committee in session last week as follows:

Misses Josephine Harrison, Rebecca Harrison, Mrs. Paul Simpson, first grade;

Misses Mary Benson and Estelle Crawford, second grade;

Misses Lela Barnhill and Ruth Manning, third grade;

Mrs. W. H. Coburn and Miss Dorcas Knowles, fourth grade;

Lewis Enloe and Mrs. Charles Godwin, fifth grade;

Misses Mildred Talley and Mary Whitley, sixth grade;

Mrs. C. B. Hassell and Mrs. Arthur White, seventh grade;

Miss Clara Louise Jones, public school music;

High school: Frank Neely, Charles B. Toxey, Miss Irene Mizelle, Mrs. S. R. Edwards, S. R. Edwards, Foster Ferguson, Miss Nancy Glover, Mrs. Garland Barnhill, and David N. Hix.

## Board Education In Meet Monday

The Martin County Board of Education met in regular session here yesterday, the calendar for the day carrying very little business for consideration by the group.

A proposal to consolidate the Gold Point school in its entirety with the plant at Robersonville was settled amicably when it was pointed out that a reorganization of the school would possibly be effected for the next term.

The proposal to consolidate the school had its beginning in the Gold Point district, according to unofficial information received here.

More than two dozen interested citizens appeared before the board of education in the interest of a better school in their district.

## Last Rites For Infant Held This Afternoon

Last rites for the few-hours-old baby of Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Ivey were held this afternoon at the old Ivey home in Johnston County. Mr. Ivey and two children, C. L. Jr., and Miss Edna Ivey, and Mr. Albert Coltrain were among those from here attending the last rites.