

THE ENTERPRISE

Peace on Earth
Good Will Toward Men

Son Asks Court To Set Aside Will Of William H. Rogers

Claims Brother Obtained Signature By Undue and Improper Influence

J. Haywood Rogers, son of the late William Henry Rogers, has appealed to the superior court of this county, asking that the will of his father be put aside. The caveat alleges that the signature of his father was obtained by Frank Lester Rogers, the propounder, by "undue and improper influence." The will dated in November, 1935, gave the caveat \$5, a brother, Minga E. Rogers \$5, and five grandchildren \$50 each, the residue of the estate, including the homeplace inherited from his mother, Henrietta Rogers, and containing 130 acres, to his son, Frank Lester Rogers.

The caveat, recently filed in the courts, read, in part, as follows: "J. Haywood Rogers, Caveator, respectfully shows to the court the following facts:

"That on the 6th day of February, 1940, W. H. Rogers died in Martin County, North Carolina.

"That thereafter Frank Lester Rogers presented to the court a paper writing purporting to be the last will and testament of the said W. H. Rogers, and, as the caveat is informed and believes, the said Frank Lester Rogers alleged and alleges that the will was and is the last will and testament of the said W. H. Rogers, and procured the same to be admitted to probate in common form as the last will and testament of the said W. H. Rogers.

"That Frank Lester Rogers has obtained from this court letters of administration upon the estate of the said W. H. Rogers.

"That the caveat is the son of the said W. H. Rogers, deceased.

"That the paper writing was not and is not the last will and testament of the said W. H. Rogers, deceased, for the reason, as caveat is informed, believes and so alleges, that the signature of the said W. H. Rogers thereto was obtained by said propounder by undue and improper influence amounting to duress upon the said W. H. Rogers in that said will was prepared at some place other than in the presence of the said W. H. Rogers and its contents not explained to him to his thorough understanding.

"That the said paper writing was not and is not the last will and testament of the said W. H. Rogers, deceased, for the reason that at the time of the execution thereof and continuously thereafter until his death the said W. H. Rogers did not have the capacity to make and execute a will for and in that he was not of sound mind and disposing memory at and during the said time."

Announce Services In The Local Christian Church

Bible school, 9:45 a. m. Subject, "Running for the Prize." Young People's service, 6:30. Subject, "We Finish to Begin." Evening service, 7:30 p. m. Subject, "A New Road." Junior choir meets 7:15 and the Senior choir meets at 8:00 Monday evening.

Mid-week service Wednesday, 7:30 p. m. Subject, "The God Who Dared To Be Man."

GREETINGS

Appreciative of the patronage and friendship they have enjoyed during 1940, local merchants and other business operators are extending cordial greetings to the people of this section through the little messages appearing elsewhere in this paper.

Without these greetings, the Christmas season would somehow or other appear a bit empty. Read the little messages and know that the local merchants and other business men are interested in your welfare and hope for you a joyous season this Christmas time.

County Registrants To Get Reports On Recent Blood Tests

Health Officer States Nearly 200 New Cases of Syphilis Found in County

By DR. JOHN WILLIAMS
Martin County Health Officer

From the two thousand blood samples we took of the draftees we have the laboratory report on eighteen hundred. About ten per cent of them are reported as positive, many of them reported as doubtful or unsatisfactory.

We are requesting all parties interested to call at the health department after Christmas for the reports.

Those whose report is positive, doubtful or unsatisfactory should have another blood test made at once as a check before any definite conclusions are drawn.

If after a recheck the positives run ten per cent it means that we have found in this survey more than two hundred new cases of syphilis in this county. Many of these men have families which this survey will lead to an examination of their blood.

No matter how many cases are found, Martin County is well prepared to take care of all cases who are not financially able to have the services of a private physician.

The reports will be made in all confidence. No report will be given to any messenger and it is particularly necessary that all positive or doubtful cases have private interviews with the health officer.

Robber Holds Up Station Operator

Henry Harris, operator of a filling station on the road leading off U. S. Highway 17 at the Old Mill Inn, was held up and robbed about 10 o'clock last Friday night at his station. The robber, believed to have been a colored man and wearing a mask, walked into the station and ordered the station operator to hand over his money. Working a bit slow in getting his money out, the station operator was advised by the robber to hurry. A grandson, fearing for the station operator's life, was quoted as saying, "Doggone it, grandpappy, why in the world don't you hurry?"

The robber lifted \$4 in cash off the station operator and left. Sheriff C. B. Roebuck and Patrolman Saunders investigated the case, but no clue has been found that would lead to an arrest.

Hitler And Company Are Definitely On The Defensive Now

Devastating Raid Is Made On British City By Nazis Last Night

Scoring decisive victories in Africa and Albania, England and her gallant ally, Greece, are now believed to definitely have Germany and Company on the defensive. Hitler, jeering United States efforts to aid Britain in the past, is now getting angry, and the mad man indirectly has suggested that war be declared on this country. Japan, warning the United States to use precaution, is said to be studying our program of aid to England with the possibility that she will declare it equal to aggressive warfare and actively join Hitler.

It is generally believed that England has passed one great crisis, that the outlook this Christmas time is far brighter than it was a year ago. Russia has approved the resistance offered Mussolini, and Germany has been warned to change her bearings as they relate to the Balkan countries.

The war, however, is still going strong on land, sea and in the air. England and Germany have been trading telling blows in the air, a report Monday afternoon stating that the industrial city of Manchester, England, had suffered a devastating raid. It was described by some as being more devastating than the one made on Coventry some time ago. Many people were killed and large sections of the city were reduced to ruin. Blows were traded by the British airmen and costly damage tolls were exacted on German centers.

In Africa, the British forces are just about to wipe out the Italians. Early Monday, 40,000 Italians had been trapped in Libya and reinforcements were being rushed to the front by the British to take over the important base of Bardia. Hitler's attempt to relieve the hard-pressed Italians in far-off Africa by bombing men, women and children in England apparently had no effect on the plight the Italians are now finding themselves in.

The gallant Greeks continue their march against the Italians in Albania. The sun is shining in the Albanian mountains following days of snow and storms, and the Greek forces are again seeing the light and making progress against their would-be captors.

In the Far East, England and Japan are maneuvering for advantageous positions, reports stating that strong fortifications are being centered by the British at Singapore.

A four-man defense commission has been named in this country, to speed up the program in this country, and a 24-hour schedule is being predicted. President Roosevelt will discuss the present emergency in a fire-side chat to the nation next Sunday evening at 9:30 o'clock.

In a fifteen-minute address Monday afternoon, Winston Churchill, England's prime minister pleaded with the Italian people to overthrow Mussolini and stop the river of blood flowing between the two nations. Churchill assured Italy that it would be torn to shreds if it insisted on carrying on a struggle that the Italian people did not want. He traced the cause of the war to Mussolini.

(Continued on page four)

Tax Assessors Plan for Property Revaluation

WON'T BE LONG

Once measured in long days, the 1940 Christmas shopping season is now to be measured only in hours. And although it won't be long now until the day of days comes into being, let's remember the home merchant during our shopping activities in the few remaining hours.

Reports from the carriers clearly indicate that goods even at this last minute, are moving into Williamston stores in large quantities hourly.

Robbers - Thieves Active In Section

Several robberies and attempted robberies and number of petty thefts have been reported in this section during recent days. A filling station operator in Bear Grass Township was held up, attempts to rob two filling stations on the Hamilton Highway and several petty thefts were reported in the county during the week-end. The recent robbery of the Jamesville liquor store remains unsolved, officers stating that they are of the opinion that the same parties continued their work last week at Creswell where a liquor store was robbed. A store in Robertsonville was robbed Friday night.

The theft of gasoline from cars was reported in Williamston Sunday morning, the thieves draining the tanks and throwing the tank caps away. Numerous bundles have been snatched from cars parked on local streets. Police in other counties are reporting a stealing wave, centered mostly on petty thefts.

Goods, stolen from the L. B. Williams Company store in Robertsonville Friday night were recovered by a warehouse watchman, Ed Bullock, when he saw the robber carrying a sack on his back late that night.

Cantata Well Received Here Last Friday Night

The Christmas Cantata, directed by Mrs. Louie P. Martin, was well received by a fair-sized and highly appreciative audience in the Baptist Church last Friday night. The program was described as the best of the local choral club.

Real Property To Be Listed At 60 Percent Of Value

Assessors Will Start Work on New Revaluation Early Next Month

Meeting in a joint session with the commissioners, Martin County property assessors Monday made plans for handling a complete revaluation of all real estate in the county, the work to get underway on Thursday, January 2. Briefly stated, the revaluation program will be based on actual sale values with the listings to go on the books at 60 per cent of that figure, the assessors to use "common sense" in handling the work.

The meeting, held in the court-house auditorium, was opened with a prayer by Farmer Charles L. Daniel, who asked divine aid in handling the revaluation work and in effecting a just and equal listing for all property owners.

Addressing the thirty assessors, R. L. Perry, chairman of the board of commissioners, stated that the purpose of the order calling for a revaluation of all properties was not necessarily to raise the total assessed valuation, but to smooth out existing inequalities. "If these inequalities can be ironed out, I believe the total listings will show an increase," Mr. Perry added. Continuing, he said, "Farmers have about all they can carry, but we don't want to unduly burden anyone, and I want you men to study the problem and give it serious thought. As for personal property, some have given in fair lists, but others have gotten by just as low as they could." Mr. Perry said in stressing the need for equalizing the tax burden rather than trying to alter the total valuation.

Tax Supervisor S. H. Grimes, stating that he knew there was room for improving the assessment structure in the county, pointed out there were inequalities as they existed between townships and between individuals, but no specific cases were cited. Every effort to eliminate the inequalities will be made, he declared. Each township board of assessors will be charged with determining the values in its respective district, but on Thursday of next week, the assessors will meet in the court-house, receive their revaluation abstracts and make a joint survey of properties in all of the townships. The assessors will travel in a body during Thursday and Friday of next week and possibly a day or two in the following week until they are satisfied that they can maintain a uniform schedule of values in their respective districts.

Each board of assessors is to visit every piece of property, the tax supervisor pointing out a few things for the assessors to consider, such as location of property, type of land, condition of buildings and so on. No schedule of values was mentioned. (Continued on page four)

Openings For Young Men Announced In CCC Camps

Seven openings have been announced for young Martin County men in the Civilian Conservation Corps, and application for places in the camps are now being received by the welfare department.

So far five white youths and 25 colored youths have filed applications for places in the camps. Other applications will be received during the remainder of this year. The successful candidates will enter the camps sometime in January.

Farmers Applying For Soil Benefit Payments

Nearly \$150,000 To Be Distributed In County Next Year

Claim To Benefit Payments On Peanuts Forfeited By Martin Farmers

Arrangements are being made in the office of the county agent for paying out nearly \$150,000 in soil conservation payments to Martin County farmers early next spring. T. B. Slade, assistant to Agent T. B. Brandon, stating that quite a few applications had been filed by farmers, both landowners and tenants, and that applications would be received as rapidly as possible after the holidays. Application forms for more than 600 farmers have already been prepared in the office of the county agent, and 100 of them have been signed and sent to the State office in Raleigh.

Briefly stated, Old Santa is now busily packing his sack and making ready for a special trip to Martin County farm homes in late February or early March. While the payments come from a thoughtful government, they are not gifts by any means. The special payments only partially offset the inequality between the prices farmers receive and the actual cost of producing crops. Then, too, he earns the payments by following certain soil building practices, enriching the land for those who will follow in the next generation.

Going back to a tobacco control program this year, Martin County farmers are increasing their soil conservation payments from \$52,000 received from the 1939 crop, to almost \$150,000 for the 1940 crop year. Martin farmers broke over the traces when it came to the peanut crop and forfeited virtually every claim to benefit payments provided for peanuts. A few farmers will receive conservation payments on their peanut crops but, as a whole, Martin County has forfeited claim to around \$27,000 that could have been earned by peanut farmers.

According to Mr. Slade, the tobacco farmers will receive approximately \$95,000 in parity payments. This income is figured at the rate of a cent a pound, the poundage being based on allotments rather than actual sales, it is understood. Cotton payments, figured at the rate of about \$4 an acre, will amount to approximately \$25,000. In addition to that amount, cotton farmers will receive approximately \$25,000 in price adjustment payments.

The peanut payments are figured at the rate of about \$1.35 an acre. To get the payments, landowners and tenants must sign the applications. The proper forms are being prepared in the office of the county agent, and farmer are being notified direct when to report and affix their signatures.

Distributed to farmers in early spring, the payments are of great value in financing operations for many farmers, and serve to offset the seasonal decline in business activities for the agricultural sections.

Santa Rings The Bell On Man's Head Here Saturday

Robert Harrell, playing well the role of Santa Claus for Washington Street merchants here last Saturday afternoon, rang a Christmas bell over the head of Bill Raynor. The blow was not a damaging one, but served its purpose. Raynor was said to have kept pestering Santa and ignored kindly warnings for a greater part of an hour.

Coming in on a Norfolk bus, Santa was met by a crowd of nearly 300, including quite a few grown-ups and the mayor.

TWO-DAY HOLIDAY

Reconsidering their announced plans, Williamston merchants and other business operators have now agreed on a town-wide two-day holiday. Closing late Christmas eve, the stores, business houses and offices will not be reopened until Friday morning, giving the employees a two-day holiday. The action was taken following the circulation of a petition Monday morning.

An holiday, almost air-tight, will be observed here Christmas day. The filling stations even will remain open for only three hours, 9 to 12.

Two Cars Turn Over During Week-End

No one was hurt and no great property damage resulted when two automobiles turned over near here during the week-end, one on the Washington Road early Saturday night, and a second on the Everetts Highway, just this side of the county home, Sunday afternoon.

Jimmie Watts, just home from school, lost control and the car he was driving turned over on the Washington Road about 8 o'clock Saturday night. The car ran off the concrete and went out of control as the driver tried to turn it from the soft shoulder. The young man was not hurt and the car belonging to Ernest Cox was not badly damaged. Going out of control just this side of the county home Sunday afternoon, the car belonging to Stallis Morgan, Elizabeth City Negro teacher, turned over twice. The driver and occupants were slightly bruised and damage to the car was estimated at \$100.

Holiday Crowds Larger Than They Were Year Ago

Holiday shopping crowds in Williamston are described as being much larger than they were a year ago. Early reports state that heavy purchases of serviceable merchandise are more evident than they were a year ago. It is apparent also, that old Santa is packing a full sack for the little folks.

The holiday trade is being supported by a bumper peanut crop.

Christmas — 1940

Nineteen hundred and forty years ago, three men were journeying towards Bethlehem, when the radiance of a star came to them from afar, lighting their way to the humble manger where lay the infant Jesus, most blessed of babes.

Over him bowed the Virgin Mother, starry-eyed . . . awed by her Gift. Mary . . . holy Mother of Jesus . . .

The miracle of His birth has been the wonder of all men on earth for generation upon generation. Yet still more wondrous is the conception of life as He lived it.

A simple carpenter by trade, He was, by inspiration, a simple philosopher; by practice, the great teacher, and in truth, the noble sufferer . . .

In every era do we have great men . . . and so, in every age, is greatness the inspiration to teach the truth.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Christmas . . . 1940 . . . and still the star of Bethlehem casts its mighty beams of light over all the world.

Great is the spirit of Christmas that can wipe away the years and change grave men and women into smiling children, ready to serve and to be served in the sweet simplicity of childhood . . .

Strong is the spirit of Love that can bring us all to understand that there is none less, none greater, none rejected on this blessed Christmas Day . . .

We are all children of one family, at peace in the name of a Child . . .

Merry Christmas — and may the New Year bless you immeasurably.

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