

Forest Fires Rage Over Large Areas During Past Week

County Forest Fire Warden Asked To Investigate Fire At Edge of Town

As Hitler and his German hordes lay waste to property worth untold millions and human life beyond reasoning value, we in America are savagely attacking among other things our timber-resources. Forest fires during the past few days have been raging in several states, reports stating that the fires have lapped the edges of several towns in New Jersey and caused great damage. Sunday night in Norfolk, palls of smoke poured down on Norfolk, giving unmistakable proof that valuable timber lands were being devoured by fires miles away.

Several fires were reported in this county during the past few days, one leaving charred brush and trees to offer a saddening sight along the highway. On the edge of Williamston, two young boys are said to have willfully or carelessly fired woodland on Dr. J. S. Rhodes' farm. Large volumes of smoke poured into the sky Sunday afternoon and late into the night. Dr. Rhodes himself with several boys and hired help fought the fire several hours in an effort to check it. Damage was estimated in the hundreds of dollars. County Forest Fire Warden Marvin M. Leggett is said to be planning an investigation with the possibility that some action will be taken in connection with the fire here.

No extensive damage has been reported in any one section of the county, but during the past few days many fires have been reported. Forest Warden Leggett stating that he received three calls in thirty minutes the other day. In Washington County it is estimated that the damage to timberlands will approximate \$50,000, one man estimating his loss at \$25,000.

Caught by a southeasterly wind, smoke and fine embers almost choked local streets about 5:30 o'clock yesterday.

A timely report on forest fires was released this week by the North Carolina Extension division, as follows: Destructive mortality accounts for 13 per cent of the drain on living timber in the South, says R. W. Graeber, extension forester. The destructive forces are chiefly fire, insects, disease and wind.

Timber farming is a great industry in the Southern states," Graeber said, "but it can be a greater and higher income-producing industry if care is taken to control destructive forces."

Recent data compiled by the U. S. Forest Service and other agencies shows that 40 per cent of the timber used in the South is made into lumber. Another 29 per cent goes for fuel wood, 4 per cent for hewed cross ties, 4 per cent for pulpwood, 3 per cent for fence posts, and 7 per cent for other uses by man.

North Carolina, a typical Southern state, has more than 10 million acres of farm woodland, or more than 50 per cent of the total farm acreage. Another million and a quarter acres of idle land can and should be returned to forests throughout planting, the extension specialist stated.

"We in North Carolina can use our woodlands more advantageously by cutting conservatively, preventing fires, and growing more timber," Graeber stated. "Firebreaks can wisely be constructed along property lines, to divide timber into small units of 20 to 25 acres each."

Other points in progressive timber farming are listing by the forester in the form of questions: (1) Have you made an effort to stop fires from reaching your land from adjoining property? (2) Do you cooperate with your neighbors and the county fire wardens in preventing and controlling fires? (3) Have you had your land posted against hunting, fishing and camping without permission? (4) Do you inspect your woods for "lightning strikes" after each storm to remove damaged trees and thereby prevent insect outbreaks?

Mrs. Mary Powell Dies Last Saturday

Mrs. Mary Emily Powell, 85 years old, died at the home of her stepson, J. A. Powell, near Gold Point, last Saturday morning following a long period of declining health. Her condition was not considered critical, however, until about four days before her death. Mrs. Powell was a native of this county and lived here most of her life except for a short time spent in Pittsboro.

She was first married to Jefferson Norwood, two children, Mrs. J. W. Perkins and T. C. Norwood, both of this county, surviving the union. Her second marriage was to J. A. Powell, late of this county. Three step-children, J. A. Powell, of Gold Point; Mrs. A. A. Peel, of Williamston; and Mrs. W. J. Martin, of Baltimore, survive.

Funeral services were conducted Sunday afternoon at the late home of Elders B. S. Cowin and William E. Grimes. Interment was in the Robersonville Cemetery.

Man Hospitalized Here After Drinking Mouse From Bottle

Bill Bullock, Bear Grass Township farmer, entered a local hospital yesterday—just before noon for treatment after drinking a soft drink from a bottle with a mouse in it. His condition was little improved early this afternoon, and it is likely that the patient will continue in the hospital several more days.

While hauling logs to a mill, the farmer stopped at a store in Bear Grass and bought a frozen soft drink. He sipped part of the contents and sucked some of the mulch from the bottle. As the frozen contents of the bottle began to thaw, he detected a bad odor. Making a close inspection he saw a dead mouse, its body in an advanced stage of decomposition. One report stated that the teeth were

about to fall from its mouth and the hair was floating free of the skin. Several customers were in the store and examined the bottle contents.

Returning to his home, Bullock, a farmer of about 25 years of age, became desperately nauseated about an hour later and was removed to the hospital. A stomach pump was used and a course of medicine was prescribed. His fever chart readings could not be learned immediately, but visitors to his bed side late last evening stated that he was a "mighty sick man."

County health authorities were notified and the bottle and part of the drink were turned over to them, but it could not be learned whether an investigation would follow.

Town Calls For Bids For Street Surfacing

Will Let Contract At Special Meeting On Board On May 2

That the election scheduled to be held on Tuesday, May 6 is attracting more attention than the convention of last Thursday night did, is evidenced by a report coming from Registrar John E. Pope today. Five persons—one-eighth as many as the number voting in the convention—have registered to date. Of course, it is possible for an independent ticket to make its appearance, but one is not likely and straight voting is predicted at the polls when the election, a mere formality in town politics—is held.

The books will be open for the last time next Saturday for new registrations. On the following Saturday the books will be open for the challenge of any registrations.

Preliminary Report Issued On Roanoke River Flood Survey

August Flood Damage in Roanoke Basin Estimated At \$5,430,000.

At the request of Congressman Herbert Bonner, the United States Department of Agriculture last week released the following preliminary report on the Roanoke River flood survey:

The preliminary examination report on the Roanoke River and its tributaries has been completed by field personnel of the department engaged in flood control work. This report indicates that a program of remedial measures on the watershed of the Roanoke River and its tributaries will aid materially in reducing the prevailing flood hazards. Floods in this area are, to a large extent, due to mismanagement of the land and neglect in the treatment of cultivated areas, pastures and forests. This condition is typical throughout the greater part of the Piedmont area, and good land use practices are recognized as an effective solution to the problem.

The average annual flood damage to agriculture alone on the watershed of the Roanoke River and its tributaries is estimated at \$579,000. This loss is concentrated chiefly among the flood plains of the Roanoke and Dan Rivers, and more than half of the average flood damage occurs within the major flood source area above Clarksville. Damages from the August, 1940, flood, an extreme overflow, were estimated at \$5,430,000, of which \$3,206,000 was to agriculture and \$2,224,000 non-agricultural.

A number of watersheds of high priority for survey, including that of the Roanoke River and its tributaries, are being carefully considered at the present time, with a view to outlining a tentative program for the fiscal year, 1942. I will advise you of the possibility of surveying this watershed as soon as the department has had an opportunity to more definitely plan the program that can be carried out with the funds that may be available for next fiscal year.

Bear Captured At Liquor Distillery

Liquor manufacturing on the R.F. D. front has gone to the bears in the Free Union section of Jamesville Township. Raising in that area yesterday, officers found a plant deserted except for a small cub. The animal, trapped in a box, was captured and brought here this morning. The still operators, troubled with bears, had placed the trap at the plant and apparently forgot about it. Officers state the animal apparently had been in the box trap several days and was half starved.

Greedy Hands of Hitler Are Being Pointed To Other Parts of World

Apparently pushing his devastating march into little Greece to a raging conclusion, Killer Adolf Hitler is now extending his hand into other areas. The fight in Greece is not over in its entirety, but a gloomy future is staring the valiant Greeks and their co-defenders battle against tremendous odds. The Greek defenders have offered a stubborn resistance, but the mighty machine in hands of mad men has called for withdrawals all along the line. But the Greeks still maintain that they have retired to new and stronger positions, that they will fight the invading hordes to the bitter end.

Claims from Germany state that part of the Greek army has been cut off and that it is now quite likely that Britain will lose a large portion of its expeditionary force. The fate of Greece is hanging on one battle along the 40-mile defense line thrown across Greece. Generally agreed that Greece can't hold out much longer, observers are predicting that Turkey will swing over into Spain and start a march toward Gibraltar. Hitler is said to be seeking a path for his troops across Spain presumably to stage an attack on the mighty rock simultaneously with a German-Italian drive across Egypt toward Alexandria and the Suez Canal in a huge effort to wrest control of both ends of the Mediterranean from England.

Germany's march into Greece has been a costly one, reports declaring that Hitler has moved without regard for the lives of his own men. German dead will number well in the tens of thousands, one claim declaring that 20,000 were killed in less than 24 hours at one stage in the campaign.

Britain's strategy for meeting Hitler's newly proposed moves remains secret, but surely reverses will greet Hitler as he continues to spread out in his mad dash to dominate the world. Germany's drive in Africa is almost certain to feel the power of the British before they drive much farther there. Tripoli, a supply base for Hitler's African campaign, was virtually wrecked in a concerted attack early today and several air transports for troops were brought down on

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Germans Continuing Devastating March Against Greek Army

Referendum Will Be Held Next Saturday In Producing Areas

The importance of the peanut referendum to be held throughout the producing areas in several states on Saturday of this week was vividly and frankly pointed out to a good number of farmers attending the bi-weekly Farm Bureau forum here last evening. It was frankly stated that there is an up-hill fight and that it is fairly apparent the proposal to establish peanut marketing quotas will go down in defeat if farmers in the old peanut belts fail to round up a sizable vote between 7 o'clock Saturday morning and six o'clock that evening.

Opening the meeting, Farm Bureau President Charles Daniel pleaded with the farmers to study the problem and get out a big vote. It is estimated that 3,300 farmers or persons interested in farming including those who derive a certain income from peanuts are eligible to vote in the referendum.

Discussing the situation as it exists today, Will Rogers from the AAA office in Raleigh reviewed production figures. In 1916, according to Mr. Rogers, North Carolina and Virginia produced 90 per cent of the crop. That percentage figure had dwindled to 33 now. In 1930, Georgia planted 315,000 acres; Alabama, 161,000; Texas, 120,000; and North Carolina, 205,000. In 1940, Georgia planted 663,000 acres; Alabama, 290,000; Texas, 295,000; and North Carolina, 255,000 acres. During the past ten years, other states have doubled their peanut acreage, while North Carolina gained a very small percentage. In 1940, the entire peanut crop in all states sold for about \$53,000,000. North Carolina receiving approximately \$10,000,000. But the government had to step in to insure that price, the diversion program costing nearly three times as much as it did just two years ago. Last year the government paid 20 cents out of every dollar the farmer received for his peanuts, the AAA representative declaring that there is no telling what the price would have been without the diversion program.

Mr. Rogers explained that there is no more to force the farmers to support.

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Blue Mold Attacking Tobacco Plants Over Most of County

Making its appearance in large numbers of tobacco plant beds in this county during the past few days, blue mold is now causing much concern among farmers and others directly and indirectly interested in the No. 1 money crop. Ordinarily reaching a climax on or about the 10th of May, transplanting will follow on a delayed schedule this year nearly every farmer frankly admitting that it is impossible to say when the plants will be ready for transplanting from the beds to the fields.

To date, the mold has caused no great damage to the plants. The recent dry and hot weather aided plant growth, but strong winds rising last night and with temperature reading falling as much as 30 degrees in 15 hours, the outlook is not encouraging. Possibly anticipating the worst, quite a few farmers are of the belief

that the small plants will be destroyed by the blue mold, that a marked shortage in plants is to be expected. Although the tender plants have grown rapidly during the past week, many farmers state that they are too small for the blue mold to attack. Other farmers state that their plants are just at that stage of growth to be wiped out by the mold. Several farmers were making preparations to start transplanting work next week, but the blue mold made its appearance yesterday and they are now forced to await the outcome of the mold.

Briefly stated, the outlook for tobacco transplanting is not at all encouraging in this county at the present time. A few farmers in the lower counties have started transplanting, but the work there is advancing very slowly, it is understood.

Ask Peanut Farmers to Support Control Plan

Farmers Are Told Campaign Is Necessary To Get Large Vote Out Saturday

Realizing the wanton destruction of timberlands, the Martin County Farm Bureau in a regular meeting here last evening pledged a greater support of the forest fire protection program. The group will call in an official of the Department of Conservation and Development for a discussion of the forest fire problem at its next meeting on May 5th.

It was pointed out at the meeting that farmers were not applying for permits to burn ditch banks and hedgerows and that carelessness was causing a marked increase in fires this season.

SUPPORT

After offering the testimony of seven witnesses, the plaintiff rested just at noon today. "We have builded a bang-up case," a representative for the plaintiff said just before the court recessed for lunch. The defense is to have its say this afternoon, one lawyer in the case intimating that the evidence will be in by mid-afternoon, that the remainder of the day would be spoiled by attorneys' argument.

Yesterday, the court awarded Joe Bunting a judgment in the sum of \$75 in his case against Ben Roberson, colored, of Goose Nest.

Preliminaries in the Rogers will case brought by Haywood Rogers against F. L. Rogers, were completed in about thirty minutes yesterday, and the proponders called their first witness, J. L. Hassell, at 10:38. The witness told the court that he wrote the will for the late Mr. Rogers and also for Mrs. Rogers, that he considered Mr. Rogers was of sound mind at the time the will was prepared in November, 1935. The witness also stated that Mr. Rogers had outlined how he wanted his will made, that the estate was to be left to his son, Lester, for his life time.

Carroll Wilson New Road Commissioner For This Territory

Governor Broughton's Appointment Meets with Favor in This Section

Since Governor Broughton did not see his way clear to name George H. Harrison of this county, the appointment of Carroll Wilson, Roanoke Rapids newspaperman, to the State Highway Commission was said to have met with general approval in this section.

This county while advancing an able candidate of its own discussed the appointment frankly with State officials, offered no claim to the appointment, Mr. Harrison explaining to the Governor that he would appreciate the appointment but advised that he did not want the chief executive to feel under any direct obligations to him. After presenting their candidate and pointing out his qualifications, leading citizens of this and those in several other counties left the appointment entirely in the hands of the governor.

Wilson emerged victorious over Warren County's candidate for the position, and it is believed that no reported agreement been reached. Mr. Harrison's candidacy would have received favorable consideration.

There is every reason to believe that the new commissioner of this, the first district, will give much study to road problems and act according to his own findings from the standpoint of every county in the district and the highway commission as well.

Mr. Harrison, closely associated with the road problem in this section as a part of a progressive policy in advancing eastern North Carolina, has pledged the new commissioner his cooperation, and the people of this and other counties in the district are looking forward to a progressive period in highway development under the new highway set-up.

Lawrence Beaton Prince, Hendersonville lawyer, is the commission's new chairman.

John Cooke Hurt In Auto Accident

John Cooke, local man, was badly hurt on the knee and bruised on other parts of the body early last Sunday night when the car in which he was riding struck a parked automobile on West Academy Street here. Reports state that he was thrown from the car and that several stitches were necessary to close the knee wound.

Driving west on Academy Street, H. O. Peel accompanied by Mr. Cooke was blinded by the lights of another car and crashed into the parked car owned by Ernest Mears. The driver was not hurt.

It was estimated that the damage to the Peel car will approximate \$100, while \$50 will repair the damage to the Mears machine.

W. H. Rogers' Will Sustained By Jury In Superior Court

Start Trial Today On \$10,000 Suit Against Town of Robersonville

In an all-day law suit, a Martin County Superior Court jury yesterday upheld the will of W. H. Rogers, late of this county, the trial attracting a large audience in addition to about thirty witnesses. This morning the court called for trial the \$10,000 damage suit brought by Willie Lee Chesson against the town of Robersonville as a result of an automobile accident on a Robersonville street last October. The plaintiff, his broken neck supported by a special harness, appeared in court this morning. Attorneys J. C. Smith and H. G. Horton, representing the plaintiff, and Attorneys Paul D. Roberson and Elbert Pool, representing the defense, selected the jury in a comparatively short time and by 10 o'clock the first evidence was offered by the plaintiff's counsel. Names of jurors in the case are: T. F. Davern, H. U. Peel, J. B. Glenn, G. A. Harris, Jr., Robert Davis, G. H. Forbes, Roy Coltran, C. C. Parker, J. L. Pritchard, Sheelton Hall, Joseph S. Griffin, and John A. Hardison. Trial of the case is likely to last a greater part of today.

After offering the testimony of seven witnesses, the plaintiff rested just at noon today. "We have builded a bang-up case," a representative for the plaintiff said just before the court recessed for lunch. The defense is to have its say this afternoon, one lawyer in the case intimating that the evidence will be in by mid-afternoon, that the remainder of the day would be spoiled by attorneys' argument.

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C. D. Carstarphen, the next witness for the proponders, identified Mr. Rogers' signature and those of the witnesses, and stated that he considered Mr. Rogers of sound mind at the time the will was made. After offering the testimony of J. E. Pope, the proponders rested.

Attacking the validity of the will, Haywood Rogers took the stand for the caveators and stated that his father was in bad health before 1935, that he had had a face cancer and a stroke prior to 1935. He stated that the three sons handled the business for their father, that the father's mind was bad in 1935. On cross examination, the witness stated that his brother, Lester, looked after the farm and waited on him, that he did some. It was also admitted by the witness that he got in debt and that his father paid most of it for him.

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Respected Citizen Dies In Bear Grass

Mrs. Mattie Harrison, highly respected county citizen, died at her home in Bear Grass Township Sunday morning at 9:15 o'clock following an illness of about six months' duration. She had been confined to her bed only a few weeks, however. A native of Bear Grass Township, she was 58 years old.

Miss Mattie Roberson before her marriage to Redmond Harrison who died about 20 years ago, she was a great believer in the Primitive Baptist faith and attended services regularly. Possessed of a quiet and unassuming character, she was a good neighbor and a highly respected citizen.

Funeral services were conducted Monday afternoon at the home at 3 o'clock by Elders B. S. Cowin and A. B. Ayers. Interment was in the Mobley Cemetery in Bear Grass Township.

She is survived by five children, Gussie, Ernest, Reuben, Dennis and Mrs. Lula Rogerson, all of the home community. She also leaves a sister, Mrs. Minnie Ward, and a brother, Dossie Roberson, both of Robersonville, and a step-daughter, Mrs. J. Frank Weaver, of Williamston.

Two Young Men Are Rejected By The Army

Two young Martin County men who left for service in the army last week were rejected on account of physical disabilities. Leamon Fouch Keel and Vernon Whitehurst, two of the four boys leaving from this county, were rejected.

Nearly 100 young white men passed through here last Thursday for Fort Jackson, an unofficial report stating that one-fifth of them were rejected on account of physical disabilities or for other reasons.

DECREASE

An apparent decrease in Williamston's dog population has followed since April, 1940, according to a report coming from the vaccination center here last Saturday.

A year ago more than 400 dogs were vaccinated here. Last Saturday about 135 were vaccinated.

The number of dogs has been materially decreased or the owners are simply ignoring the law requiring vaccination. The records are being checked for possible action in the courts.

Band Is A Feature In Festival Parade

Taking to the streets again after an interval of four years, the Williamston High School band scored a distinct hit last Friday as they marched and played in the Tulip Festival Parade in Washington. Thirty-two youthful musicians, most of whom have studied music for only five months, joined fourteen other high school bands in making the Beaufort county festival an outstanding success. Dressed in uniforms of green and white, and led by five young majorettes, the local group swung down Washington's main thoroughfare in perfect order, executing a difficult pinwheel during the line of march. Townspeople viewing the parade were quite pleased with Williamston High's new musical organization, and reported complimentary expressions from spectators along the streets.

Rapid progress has been made by the local band during the past few weeks under the direction of J. F. Butler. During commencement the band will play on several occasions, including class day exercises and graduation night. Several outdoor appearances will be made at the close of school.

Recover Body From River Here Sunday

The body of Willie Adams, the fisherman who lost his life in the Roanoke River here last Saturday a week ago, was recovered early last Sunday afternoon. In an advanced state of decomposition, the body was removed from the stream and placed under the new bridge to await a Greenville undertaker. Funeral services were conducted at the grave near Falkland, a few hours later.

Coming here ten days ago from his home in Pitt County to fish, Adams was in a boat in the middle of the river when he mysteriously fell overboard and drowned just below the Standard Fertilizer Company plant. Efforts were made at frequent intervals to locate the body and dynamite was used without success. Sunday afternoon a tug boat, towing three large barges, was coming up the river and the body came to the top of the water just ahead of the boat. The river captain, unable to find and pick the body up, yelled to fishermen along the bank and they tied the body to a tree. Officers were notified and they towed the body ashore. The body came to the surface of the water hardly fifty yards from the spot where the man was drowned.

An anxious father and the drowned man's son, a little fellow eight or nine years of age, were on the river patiently and anxiously seeking to find the body. They were down the river when the recovery was made, but they followed to the bridge a short time later. While the tension on the elder Mr. Adams' face had lessened somewhat, there was still a far away look in his eyes as he and his little grandson stood watch while waiting for the undertaker.

The drowning was the second reported in the river off the Martin County shore so far this year.