



# THE ROANOKE RAPIDS HERALD

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# FIND ONE MISSING BODY

## FUNERAL FOR W. S. BATTON

Pioneer Citizen Dies At Home Here Tuesday

Funeral services were conducted this afternoon, Thursday, February 11th, for W. S. "Uncle Bill" Batton, beloved pioneer resident of the city who died at his home on Jefferson Street Tuesday, February 9th, at 8 p.m.

Mr. Batton was well-known here, having lived in Roanoke Rapids for the past 31-years, during which time he was for many years foreman of Spinning Room No. 1, of Rosemary Manufacturing Company. A native North Carolinian, he was born in Rockingham, N. C.

Funeral services were held at the First Presbyterian Church, with Rev. L. I. Stell, pastor of the church, and Rev. J. N. Bynum, pastor of the Episcopal Church, officiating. Interment was in Roanoke Rapids Cemetery.

Pallbearers were: C. A. Wyche, A. N. Martin, Frank Wilson, Arch Lyles, G. M. Gurley, J. L. Cobb, E. W. Wright, Burnis Ryals and C. H. Speight. Honorary pallbearers included (Continued on Back Page)

## Thieves Attempt To Enter Office Clerk Of Court

An attempt was made to burglarize the office and vault of the Clerk of Court at the courthouse in Halifax one day this week, but was unsuccessful.

A. Leonidas Hux, Clerk of the Court, on entering his office one day this week, discovered one of the screens had been tampered with. Upon investigation he found someone had attempted to enter the vault by one of the windows, but did not succeed.

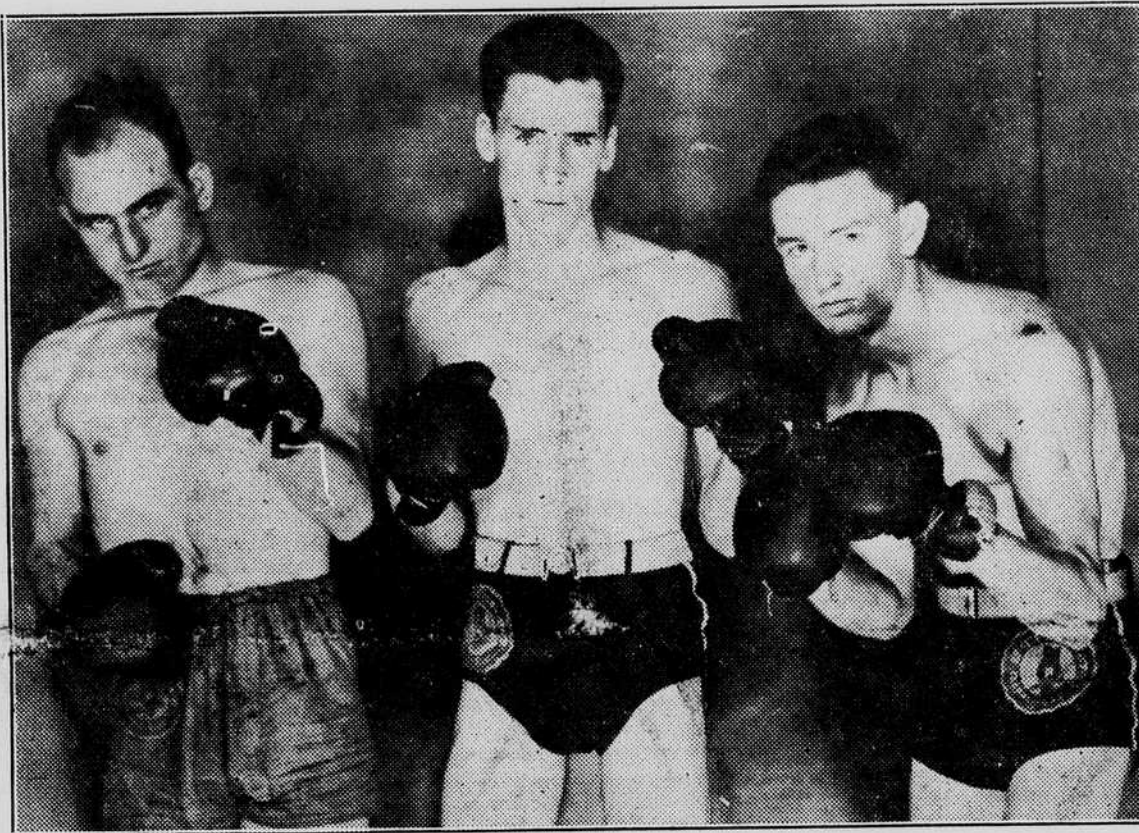
The thief left no clues, it is said, and his identity is unknown.

## TWO PRIZES ARE STILL UNCLAIMED

Two handsome prizes in the recent "Greater Roanoke Rapids Trades Days" event still remain unclaimed at the local office of the Merchants Association. The prizes are \$75 in cash, and \$10 in trade at any local store that is a member of the Association, and were intended to be awarded non-residents of Roanoke Rapids.

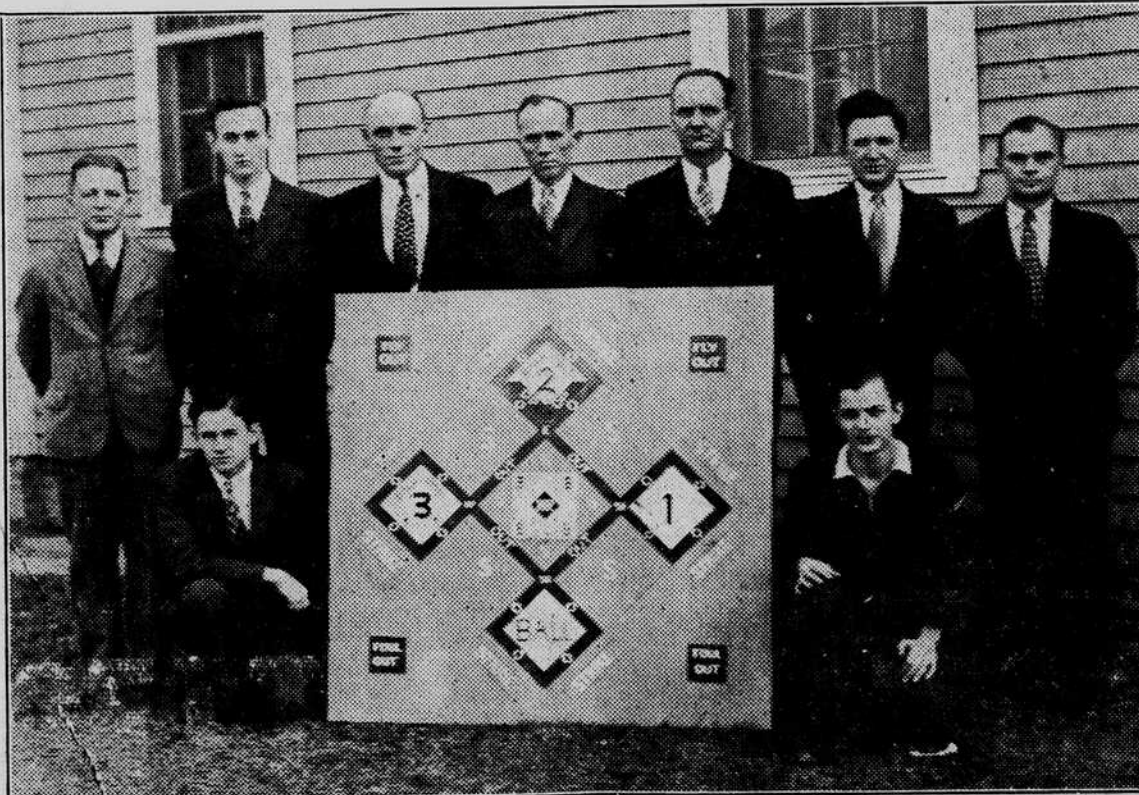
In spite of the fact that a second "award list" has been drawn by the Association, a claimant for the prizes has not yet appeared. Any store who is a member of the Association has full details of the prize award.

## AAU CHAMPIONS IN RALEIGH



ABOVE—Left-to-right: Woodrow Warren, Richard Collins, Phillip Hux. These are the three lads who really put Roanoke Rapids "on the map" at the Carolinas-Virginia Amateur Boxing Tournament at Raleigh last week. Warren and Collins received first honors and were adjudged AAU champs, while young Hux' efforts in the ring won him a coveted medal for second place. Collins and Hux may be seen "in action" in an all-boxing card at the local Arena next Saturday night. Details of their thrilling win in Raleigh will be found on Page Six.

## Rosemary Night Weavers 1st Half Champs



Above are the members of the Rosemary No. 1 Night Weavers, first half champions of the Rosemary Dart Ball League. Standing, left-to-right they are: Waters, Spencer, Hastly, Capt. Kidd, Wood, Collins and Mattie. Front Row: Spencer and Whitby.

## ROANOKE GIVES UP 1 VICTIM

Mystery Still Shrouds Death of Peter Smith

## FAIL FIND EVIDENCE FOUL PLAY

Body of Ralph Merritt Found After 60 Days

"Old Man" Roanoke River gave up another of its countless victims this week when the pitifully decomposed body of one Ralph Merritt, 21-year-old local youth, who had been mysteriously "missing" for 64-days, was found on the shore of one of the countless islands about four-miles upstream from the Roanoke Rapids river bridge by a searching party late Tuesday afternoon.

Young Merritt, with his companion Peter Smith, had been "missing" since December 8th when the pair left a younger brother of Smith to wade from the shore of the river to a nearby island "to get something to eat."

Young Robert Smith, accompanied by his elder brother and Merritt had been "hunting" along the banks of the Roanoke on the afternoon of December 8th, 1936. Late in the afternoon Peter Smith and Ralph Merritt left the younger boy on the shore saying they were going to a nearby island to get some food. Young Robert built a fire; he waited and waited, but the two boys never returned. In reporting the affair to local police, the younger boy says he heard several shots fired soon after their disappearance.

Speculation as to the two boys' disappearance was rife in Roanoke Rapids at that time. Today, with the finding of Merritt's body, it seems undeniable that both met their fate in a treacherous river . . . a river that both, no doubt, thought they knew, but which nevertheless snuffed out their lives, as it has countless other victims who "knew the river."

The finding of the body of Merritt by Jourdan Pearce and a party of friends late Tuesday afternoon started many rumors anew. There were reports to the effect that a coroner's jury disclosed the fact there was evidence of "foul play" . . . that the body showed definite (Continued on Back Page)