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WHOLE NO. 2156

BRUTAL WORK OF NEGROES.

Four Members of Family Murdered—Mr. Isaac Lyerly and Three Members of His Family Killed with Axes While They Slept at Their Home in Rowan County—Those Whom the Coroner's Jury Accuse in Mecklenburg Jail—The Details of the Crime.

The following account of one of the blackest crimes on record is condensed from the Charlotte Observer:

Friday night between nine and ten o'clock, at their home, two miles east of Barber's Junction, Rowan county, Mr. Isaac Lyerly, aged 68 years, his wife and two children, Johnnie, a nine-year-old boy, and Alice, a five-year-old girl, were assassinated. An axe or axes were used to commit the deed and all were killed outright except Alice, who died at 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon.

The Lyerlys, who were hard working and honest people, retired Friday evening, the father and the son occupying a bed in the corner of a room on the first floor and the mother and Alice in the opposite corner of the same room. Three other daughters, Mary, Addie and Janie, slept up stairs. About 10 o'clock Addie, aged 16 years, was attracted down stairs by the smell of smoke. When she entered the sleeping room of her parents she found the beds burning. On examination she found her father, Johnnie and the mother dead. Alice lay moaning at the side of her dead father. The little girl was carried into the front yard and laid on the grass. Her skull was crushed just above the left eye. The older sisters returned to put out the fire and drag out the remains of the dead bodies. There was no one to help them about extinguishing the fire. They went to their nearest neighbor, Mr. B. F. Cook, carrying with them little Alice. Mr. Cook began to notify the neighbors and in a short time people began to assemble at the Lyerly home.

In an effort to get some clue of the murderers some threats were recalled. Nease Gillespie, a negro about 40 years old, had fallen out with Mr. Lyerly and had made threats against him. And as late as Monday Gillespie had made some threats. Gillespie's wife said that her husband knew something of the murder and near the home of Gillespie was a freshly burned spot where a straw bed and other things had been burned, also a piece of clothing and some scorched blood. Jack Dillingham, another negro, had also had some trouble with Mr. Lyerly and Dillingham's wife had sauced Mrs. Lyerly. The verdict of the coroner's jury was to the effect that the Lyerlys were murdered with axes in the hands of Nease Gillespie, his son, John Gillespie, Jack Dillingham and wife and George Irvin and Henry Lee. Revenge is thought to have been the motive of the murder.

Henry Gillespie, a young son of Nease Gillespie, said that his father and John Gillespie committed the crime and that the other negroes were implicated. All the male members of the prisoners were taken to the Mecklenburg jail at Charlotte for safe keeping. They spent Friday night in the Rowan jail at Salisbury, where a mob gathered that night and made an effort to get into the jail, but did not get the prisoners.

The next morning scenes at the house are thus described by Mr. J. C. McNeill in the Charlotte Observer: A score or so of neighbor women had come in to be with Mary Jane and Addie Lyerly, the only two survivors of the family, and to dress their murdered mother for burial. On the steps and part of the yard were scattered feathers and burnt pieces of cloth, and in the hall singed feathers and straw were heaped in a corner and thrown about the floor. There was a smell of scorched feathers and flesh.

The room at the right contained two beds, in one of which Mr. Isaac Lyerly slept with little John, 9 years old, and in the other Mrs. Lyerly and little Alice, 5 years old. On the middle of the floor was a great pool of blood, not yet congealed. Pillows, thrown into a corner, were soaked with blood, as were the partly burned quilts and sheets that had been on the beds. At the head of Mr. Lyerly's bed the floor and a heap of charred mattress straw were wet with kerosene oil. The side-rail and head of the bedstead were half-burnt.

The body of little John Lyerly lay on the floor, parts of it burnt

black and below his knees the dry skin was loose and broken. His whole body was purple. Exactly in the top of his head the blade of an axe had been driven, perpendicular to his forehead. From the look of the cut the axe must have sunk half-way to its eye; and from its position the boy must have been sitting up. The high head of the bed would have made such a stroke impossible while the child slept.

Mr. Lyerly's body had been transferred to the other bed. His face, framed with gray hair and gray chin whiskers—he was 68 years old—was perfectly calm. They told me that his eyes were shut when the first of the neighbors struck first and killed while he slept. There were two blows, however; one on the front, which seemed to have been made by the axe handle or a club; and the other behind his left ear. The latter was made by the butt of an axe, and crushed the skull completely in. It was blood, blood—on the floor, on the bedclothes and night-clothes of the dead people; and while half a dozen neighbors moved silently amid the horror of it, cleaning it from the cold faces and dressing the bodies for the grave, the big clock on the mantel went on measuring time—nic-noc.

Across the hall is the parlor, neatly carpeted and furnished with taste. Here Mrs. Lyerly, who had been 40 years old, lay on the floor. Her white face wore a strange suggestion of a smile. Where her head lay on one side it showed plainly the broadside blow of an axe; the butt of which had cut off the lobe of her left ear, and the print of the body and blade of the weapon remained on her jaw and neck. The awfulest item of all the butchery was the other wound. The axe blade had been struck through her skull parallel with and about half an inch back from her forehead. Evidently she had been waked by the falling of her husband and was sitting up when the assassin dispatched her. Portraits of herself and her husband hung side by side on the wall, and looked from happy, young eyes at the whispering women who occupied the room. Her husband's portrait showed him in the Confederate uniform.

This is a horrible story to tell, but it is true so far as words can reproduce the scene, and its record should not be lost from the annals of crime. Along with the tragedy goes also a story of wonderful heroism.

So quickly and stealthily were the crimes committed that there was not enough noise to wake the three girls who were sleeping upstairs. Addie, 15 years old, was the first to wake. She smelt the burning cloth and ran downstairs. Her father's bed was in flames, and upon the body of her little brother a bureau drawer, full of combustibles and saturated with oil, was blazing. She dragged the bodies off the bed, thereby burning her own feet and hands. Her mother's face was under her pillow, and little Alice was groaning. Addie did not go to the other bed, however, since it was not on fire; but ran back upstairs and waked her sisters, Mary and Janie, respectively 17 and 12 years old.

"Papa and mamma are killed," she told them, "and the house is on fire."

How they came down in their night-dresses, those three little girls, dragged the flaming mattresses and feather-beds into the yard, drew and hauled water from the deep windlass well in the back yard, and fought the fire for more than half an hour, until they had conquered it; how they then scouted the premises, searched the numerous outhouses for the criminals or signs of them, this without waiting to dress; how they then set out for their nearest neighbor's three-quarters of a mile away Mary carrying little Alice in her arms, and Addie leading the other small sister, Janie—all this makes a story of heroism worthy never to die.

Mary and Addie were at the inquest this afternoon, sweet-faced girls, with gentle voices. The fire was perhaps a fortunate circumstance for them; their fight with it seems to have averted the shock, which they must have sustained otherwise. They dictated their evidence and signed it quietly, and it was only when a friend came up to Mary and kissed her without a word that tears sprang into her eyes and she sobbed. Oh, it was pitiful!

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REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS.

Dudley H. Britt to Nancy A. Britt, lands in Back Swamp township; consideration, \$2,000.

E. S. Ansley to B. Tolar, lands in Lumber Bridge township; consideration, \$60.

Mrs. A. W. Bennette et als to Mary Lena McGeachy, lands in Lumberton township; \$10 and other considerations.

A. B. Pearsall and wife to L. M. Cook, lands in Red Springs township; consideration, \$1,000.

Robeson county to T. A. McNeill, lands in Blue Spring township; \$1 and other considerations.

M. J. McNair and wife to Rory McNair, lands in Robeson county; consideration, \$900.

J. L. McMillan and wife to David H. Brown, lands in Saddle Tree township; consideration, \$400.

E. J. Smith and wife to L. T. Cottingham, an interest in lands in Howellsville township; consideration, \$375.

D. F. Lowrey to Pembroke Supply Co., a lot in Pembroke; consideration, \$200.

A. J. McKinnon and wife to A. C. McKinnon and wife, land in Maxton township; consideration, \$200.

Irvin Jenkins, assignee of LeRoy Townsend, to Neil C. Graham, lands in Howellsville township; consideration, \$200.

J. S. Stone and wife to W. S. Stone, lands in Britt township; \$1 and other considerations.

W. B. Gaddy and wife to J. W. Crawford, interest in lands in Thompson and White House townships; consideration, \$800.

Arthur McArthur and wife to E. L. Crumpler, timber on certain lands in the county; \$40 and other considerations.

R. G. Inman and wife to C. B. Mitchell, lands in White House township; consideration, \$800.

A. E. Floyd to F. F. Floyd, lands near Ashpole; consideration, \$800.

Kills Phillips and wife to A. J. Britt and wife, land in Robeson county; \$25 and other considerations.

Wiggin Roberts and wife to Robert E. Lewis, lands in Howellsville township; consideration, \$100.

R. C. Lawrence, commissioner, to Kingsdale Lumber Co., timber on lands in Britt township; \$850 and other considerations.

A. E. C. Pitman and wife to W. T. Covington, lands in St. Pauls township; consideration, \$3,000.

W. D. McCallum to Clyde, lands in Thompson township; consideration, \$175.

John Hodge to W. K. Brock, lands in Robeson county; consideration, \$100.

W. E. Phillips to Beaufort County Lumber Co., timber on lands in Wishart township; consideration, \$350.

W. B. Sutton et als to Beaufort County Lumber Co., timber on lands in Wishart township; consideration, \$660.

A. T. Phillips to Beaufort County Lumber Co., timber on lands in Wishart township; consideration, \$1,100.

Davis Bullock to Mrs. Lizzie C. Inman, lands in Wishart township; consideration, \$67.50.

C. A. Oliver and wife to Mrs. Lizzie C. Inman, lands in White House township; consideration, \$165.

Correction—As to the real estate transfers of J. C. McNeill to Mr. W. McLean and wife, published a week ago, it was a mistake and there has been no deal between the parties.

Negro Kills His Wife.

Saturday evening about the time the eastbound train on the Seaboard passed Rockingham, Hannibal Lake, colored, shot his wife, who died from the effects of the wound about ten minutes later. Lake then made his escape.

It seems that Lake and his wife had been having some trouble, due to jealousy on his part. He had told some one during the day Saturday that he would kill her before night. She went to the depot that night to go off. She was standing in the waiting room door when Lake approached her. He asked her if she was not going back home and when she answered in the negative, he drew his pistol and shot her. The first ball struck her in the face. She turned to go and he shot her twice in the back. She went several yards and dropped dead. Lake left, going east from Rockingham, and had not been arrested when the latest news was received.

McPAUL-GRANTHAM.

Pretty Marriage at Iona Presbyterian Church—Ashpole Items.

Rev. David Fairly preached in the Presbyterian church last Sunday afternoon. We were much pleased with him and hope he may come from Fayetteville again to visit us.

Mr. and Mrs. E. Fisher have returned from a visit to Cumberland county.

We are glad to see Mr. F. S. Floyd out again after a severe attack of rheumatism.

The walls of the school building are rising fast.

Mr. J. M. Ashley, of Boardman, spent Sunday here with relatives.

Mr. Fred Pitman returned to his home in Birmingham, Ala., last Monday, to the great regret of his young friends.

We are glad to report Mr. N. A. Thompson much better.

Mr. A. J. Floyd has returned from Wilmington improved.

The Misses Proctor, of South Carolina, are visiting their aunt, Mrs. Hughes.

Mrs. Chat Townsend, of Raynham, delighted her Ashpole friends with a visit this week.

Mr. John Fisher, of Tolarsville, accompanied by his little son, Ralph, were visitors here last Thursday.

The excursion Thursday carried an unusually large crowd of merry-makers to Wilmington.

The marriage of Dr. W. A. McPaul, of this place, and Miss Clara Grantham, of McDonalds, which took place last Wednesday in Iona Presbyterian church, attracted a large crowd from Ashpole. It was a beautifully simple ceremony, carried through perfectly, and was much enjoyed by the spectators.

The many friends present and otherwise wish for them the best of luck. They left at once for the eastern shore of Virginia, where they will spend a short honeymoon.

There is a prospect of a new industry in town. Dr. Brown, the irrepresible, will soon begin raising alligators on a small scale. Ask him if it is not true.

The two brick stores of Messrs. A. L. Jones and Frank Pitman, on Main street, are receiving the finishing touches of paint and will soon be occupied.

Messrs. F. C. and Joe Jones are building a garage, I believe you call it, anyway a house to hold automobiles. One is expected any day.

Mr. A. L. Jones is recuperating among the pleasures of the seashore.

Mesdames J. D. McLean and A. S. Thompson left Thursday for a week's stay at Wrightsville Beach.

Ashpole, N. C., July 13th.

Odd Fellows Entertain at Installation of Officers.

A goodly number accepted the invitation and attended the installation exercises of officers of the Lumberton Lodge No. 245, Independent Order Odd Fellows, Thursday night, in their lodge room.

The exercises were opened with the singing of the "Installation Ode" by a quartette composed of Messrs. Frank Gough, Bruce Morrison, R. O. Edmund and C. B. Skipper, followed with prayer by Rev. Mr. Baker, pastor of the Presbyterian church.

Grand Master T. M. Stephens, of Durham, was present and installed the following officers: W. P. McAllister, noble grand; W. H. Humphrey, vice-grand; J. H. Floyd, treasurer; D. B. McNeill, financial secretary; J. R. Poole, secretary.

Rev. Z. Paris addressed the lodge and visitors briefly. Among other things he told how less than three years ago he was instrumental in organizing a lodge here of 45 members. He said that the order of Odd Fellows has paid out \$6,000,000 for support of sick Odd Fellows besides much other good work being done along this line.

Two features of the programme that were especially enjoyable were recitations by Mrs. F. J. Thomas and Mrs. J. R. Poole.

The programme was interspersed with several catchy selections of vocal music by the quartette. After the installation exercises were over, the members and guests repaired to the adjoining room where refreshments were served and toasts responded to. The hospitality of the lodge did not cease until all present had had a good time and departed for their homes.

and keep posted.

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Ornum News Notes.

Correspondence of The Robesonian.

After having spent a most delightful day at the Lake the Fourth. The crowd and others were very pleasantly entertained that night by an ice cream supper at Mr. Haynes Prevatt's.

Mr. Cuttino Bostick spent the Fourth here.

Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Britt spent Wednesday, the Fourth, at Wrightsville Beach.

Mrs. Walter Townsend, of Back Swamp, is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Haynes Prevatt.

Miss Flora Frink is over at Boardman sewing.

Messrs. Bascum, Harrington and Noblin, of Mullins, S. C., and Mr. Bill Jenkins, of Barnesville, were in town Saturday. Mr. Harrington called to see his cousins, Mac Williams and Mrs. Frink.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Shepherd spent Sunday with relatives at Rowland.

Mrs. Williams spent part of last week with her sister, Mrs. Sue Lennon, who has been very ill with rheumatism, though we are glad to report she is better.

Mr. J. M. Frink, of Bladenboro, spent Sunday with his family as usual.

Children's Day at Bloomingdale Sunday afternoon was good. Lots of people attended.

Mr. Haynes Prevatt and daughter, Jessie, spent Sunday at Back Swamp.

Mr. W. C. Powell, of Buie, was here Monday looking after the work on his house. He expects to be moved by school. Hurry up workmen, we are anxious for him to come.

Mr. Earl McGill and Miss Ethel Howell, of Boardman, were the guests of Miss Cora Floyd Sunday.

Mrs. M. Shepherd is spending today with her cousin at Boardman, Mrs. Tom Burton.

The children enjoyed a watermelon and ice cream party over at Mrs. Prevatt's Wednesday evening of the Fourth.

Little Fred Prevatt fell from the fodder loft Saturday afternoon and was injured right badly, though the doctor said there were no bones broken. He is improving.

Mr. Tom Smith, of Boardman, spent Sunday with friends here.

Mr. Dawson Lewis, of Ashpole, visited friends here Sunday afternoon.

Success to The Robesonian.

Ornum, N. C., July 11th.

YOUNG WHITE MAN IN JAIL.

Walter Brigman, of Proctorville, in Jail on Serious Charge.

Deputy Sheriff N. A. Ratley, of Ashpole, was in Lumberton Saturday. He brought Walter Brigman, a young white man of Proctorville, here and lodged him in jail.

Brigman has two charges against him, one a very serious one. He is charged with carrying concealed weapons and with shooting at Mr. N. A. Carter with intent to kill.

Brigman was among the excursionists who went on the excursion which was run Thursday from Elrod to Wilmington and which was managed by Mr. Carter. Brigman was drinking heavily and was very disorderly. Between Ornum and Proctorville Mr. Carter put him off the train and started the train on. As the train was moving, Brigman drew his pistol and shot at Mr. Carter. The ball entered a window and narrowly missed the heads of several passengers before it embedded itself in the top of the car.

Brigman was arrested Friday afternoon and tried by Squire D. L. Page Friday night. A bond of \$200 was required for carrying concealed weapons and \$500 for attempting to shoot Mr. Carter. In default of bond he was brought to jail to await court.

Suit Brought Against Town.

Mr. Wm. Carlyle last week brought suit against the town of Lumberton, asking \$50 damages for injuries to a horse. The case was tried Thursday afternoon before Squire Reynolds and was decided in favor of plaintiff, allowing him \$38. The defendants appealed.

The circumstances are that Dr. W. O. Edmund, while driving one of Mr. Carlyle's horses along a main street of the town some nights ago, drove into a ditch the town was opening in the street to lay a sewer line. The plaintiff alleges that proper signals were not displayed to warn the public of the existing danger.

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LOCAL BRIEFS.

Rev. M. A. Stephens will preach a funeral at Oak Grove church Thursday morning at 11 o'clock.

There will be a regular meeting of St. Alban's Lodge No. 114, A. F. & A. M., tomorrow evening. Degree work.

Those who know Mr. Murdock H. McKinnon, of Red Springs, will be sorry to learn that he is very ill at Wadesboro.

The examinations held by Supt. J. R. Poole the past week for county teachers were taken by 12 white teachers; nine Croatians and 20 colored.

Mr. A. J. McKinnon, of Maxton, has been elected president of the North Carolina Cotton Grower's Association, to succeed Mr. C. C. Moore, of Mecklenburg, resigned.

Miss May Ketchin, who resigned her position as stenographer with Messrs. McLean, McLean and McCormick, left Saturday night for her home at Wimsboro, S. C.

Miss Mary Davis, who had been stenographer for Messrs. McIntyre and Lawrence, resigned and returned Saturday night to her home in Raleigh. She is succeeded by Miss Ada Howell, of Goldsboro, who arrived Sunday.

Friday night a fight took place between Messrs. Charley and Archie Prevatt and Ira Bullard. Bullard made some remarks during the week that reflected on the character of the Prevatts. When they heard of it they met Bullard on the streets. A fight ensued, the Prevatt's giving Bullard a fist flogging. At a hearing before a magistrate Saturday the Prevatts were fined \$5 each and the costs.

Automobile Line Between Ashpole and Lumberton.

In a very short time an automobile line will be in operation between Ashpole and Lumberton. It will carry passengers, and mail also if satisfactory arrangements can be made. Anyhow, it will carry passengers.

Mr. F. C. Jones will operate this automobile service. He will run a machine to begin with that will carry five passengers and later on will put on a larger one. The automobile will leave Ashpole every morning about 9 o'clock and will leave Lumberton on its return after the arrival of the train from the west. It will also make a trip in the afternoon, leaving Ashpole at about 4 o'clock and returning leave Lumberton after the arrival of the train from the east, which is due here at 3:35 o'clock.

The distance between Lumberton and Ashpole is ten miles and Mr. Jones expects to make the trip one way in about an hour. If the mail for Ashpole and nearby points is handled over the line it will give the Ashpole people their mail several hours earlier than under the present arrangement. Congressman Patterson is now at work on the matter and hopes to secure the arrangement.

Mr. Walters Waylaid and Shot.

A young man named Walters, son of Mr. Jim Walters, of Barnesville, was waylaid Friday evening by someone who was concealed in the woods and was shot at with a pistol twice. One ball entered the young man's thigh and the other ball passed between his legs.

One or two parties are suspected, but no one has been arrested. Policeman Edmund, of Chadbourn, went to Barnesville Saturday with his bloodhounds, but the trail was too old to follow.

Rev. Mr. Hedgpeth Called.

Rev. I. P. Hedgpeth, of Lumberton, has been called to the pastorates of the Baptist churches at Lilesville and Marshville.

Este Jay, correspondent of The Ansonian, says: "The Lilesville Baptist church in conference last Sunday extended a unanimous call to Rev. I. P. Hedgpeth, of Lumberton. This brother comes with the highest commendations, and we understand that Pleasant Grove church and the Ansonville Baptist church will also extend calls to him at their next meeting."

Mr. Alex. M. Long, postmaster at Rockingham, died suddenly Sunday morning about 3 o'clock at his home in Rockingham. He was about 45 years old. One child and several brothers and sisters survive.

MISS MCKINNON ENTERTAINS.

A Merry Evening in Maxton Social Circle—Maxton Guards Elect Officers—Personals.

From 9 until 11:30 o'clock Wednesday evening, Miss Margaret McKinnon entertained at her mother's elegant new home, on North Patterson street, in honor of her guests, Miss Rosabel Sistrunk, of Millbrook, Fla., and Miss Cornelia McNeill, of Galveston, Tex.

Thirty odd young people were present and spent an evening fraught with pleasure and amusement. An atmosphere of fun-making pervaded the spacious and cool verandas, which are so admirably adapted to a summer night's reception. When the time arrived for the contest, which formed the nucleus of the diversion, the crowd was ushered into the wide hall, the young ladies going up to the stair landing, the boys remaining below, and a Punch and Judy show ensued. Each boy selected one of a number of partly colored ribbons, depending from the second floor, to the other end of which was attached his partner for the evening. When all the fish had bitten, the fair anglers descended in a body from above and each claimed the beau to whom her string was tied. Next on the programme was "Guessing in Green" being questions and answers, each set of which, in either interrogatory or reply, was included something green (besides the guessers). It was a novelty here and provocative of much mirth. The result was a tie, save for orthographic errors, between the two guests of honor and their partners and on account of remissness in that respect on the part of one of the young men who was trusted to write down the answers, the prize was awarded to Miss Rosabel Sistrunk with Dr. DeWitte Clinton McIver. Miss Bessie Williams and Mr. John M. McKinnon were consoled with a horn of green "Hoyt's." The awards were presented in a very happy vein by Hon. G. B. Patterson. Last but not least, came refreshments, served in a prettily improvised booth, very welcome to the industrious green goods-men.

A merrier evening has not happened along here since the world grew green again.

Miss Annie McLean, of Laurinburg, spent several days here the first of the week with relatives.

Hon. T. A. McNeill and Mr. D. P. Shaw, of Lumberton, were here Saturday afternoon on their way home.

Dr. C. W. Regan, of Laurinburg, spent Sunday here.

Mrs. Joe Person, of Charlotte, and Miss Andrews, of Raleigh, spent Sunday here at the McIvies hotel.

Rev. W. T. Walker, of Rowland, preached here Sunday in the Presbyterian church.

Misses Cornelia McNeill, of Galveston, Tex., and Rosabel Sistrunk, of Florida, who have been the guests of Miss Margaret McKinnon for some time, returned to Laurinburg Thursday morning.

Mr. Chas. Wilkinson, of Atlanta, Ga., spent several days with Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Fore, of Alma, this week.

Mrs. J. C. McCaskill, Jr., returned from Bennettsville Monday night where she has been visiting her father.

Miss Ethyl Johnson, of Red Springs, was here Monday afternoon, returning home after a visit to friends at Lumberton.

Rev. E. McWhirter left Tuesday afternoon for a visit to different points in Alabama.

Messrs. G. B. McCallum, Geo. McKay, Ed Purcell and McB. Austin, of Red Springs, were here Thursday night.

Miss Kate McKeithan, of Carthage, arrived Friday night and is the guest of the Misses McNair.

At a meeting of the Maxton Guards, held on Thursday night, W. O. Burns was elected captain vice Capt. A. B. Croom, resigned, and J. J. Barrow was elected first lieutenant vice P. L. Black promoted to battalion adjutant. The company leaves on the 25th for Morehead City for a ten day encampment.

Maxton, N. C., July 14th.

The State Firmen's Association, in session in Asheville the past week, re-elected officers and decided on Wilmington as the next meeting place.