

AMERICAN SHIPS TO BE ARMED

President Gives Orders for Arming American Ships Against German Submarine Warfare

EXTRA SESSION OF CONGRESS CALLED TO MEET APRIL 16

Natural and Unavoidable Step—Issue Rests Entirely With Germany

President Wilson from a sick bed today ordered the arming of American merchant ships against Germany's ruthless submarine warfare, and at the same time issued a proclamation calling an extra session of Congress to meet April 16th.

The President's decision came suddenly late this afternoon, following the action of the Senate yesterday in revising its rules to permit prompt action on important questions and the submission of formal opinions by Secretary Lansing and Attorney General Gregory that he has the power to arm merchantmen without action by Congress.

Details of the government's armed neutrality plans for defending the merchant marine were withheld to avoid endangering Americans and their ships by permitting the information to reach Germany. The only statement at the White House and the Navy Department was that the President had determined to fully protect American rights.

An Unavoidable Step
The decision, coming at the end of a period of tense waiting, was generally hailed as the natural and unavoidable step in the policy adopted by the President when he broke off relations with Germany and gave warning that the United States could not tolerate attacks on American ships and citizens in violation of international law.

Fraught with the grave possibility of war with Germany, the action was taken by President Wilson only after he was convinced that Germany actually was proceeding with her campaign of ruthlessness, and had made efforts to plot with Mexico and Japan against the territorial integrity of the United States.

Long before the order was given from the White House all necessary preparations for the arming of merchantmen had been completed at the Navy Department. Secretary Daniels, however, issued an appeal to the press of the nation to refrain from discussing these preparations.

The President's action sent a thrill through the Senate, meeting in special session, and through the government departments. Still hoping that war with Germany will be avoided, officials and Senators declared that the issue rests entirely with Germany.

In deciding that he has power to arm merchantmen, the President took the position that an old statute passed in 1819, cited in the Senate debate as prohibiting such a step without congressional action, has no application to the present situation. He is satisfied that the nation stands behind him, and accepts the overwhelming vote in the House on the armed neutrality bill, and the known opinion of a large majority of the Senate, as proof of the attitude of Congress.

Although the bill which failed of passage in the Senate provided for a bond issue of \$100,000,000 to pay the expenses of armed neutrality, the government has sufficient money available for its immediate purposes. Congress will be asked to provide more when the extra session convenes.

Under a bill passed during the last days of the Congress the funds at the disposal of the Federal war risk bureau to insure American ships was increased to \$15,000,000.

Expected to Remove Blockade
Armed neutrality is expected to remove the practical blockade of American ports and place the issue of eventual war squarely upon Germany. An attack upon an armed American vessel will precipitate a fight if the ship gets in sight of the submarine and an unwarned attack would be regarded by the United States as an act of war.

LUMBER BROKER DISAPPEARED

Wife of J. E. Crook of New London is Hunting for Her Husband—He Was in Lumberton February 26 and Left That Evening for Home But Never Got There

Mr. J. E. Crook, a lumber broker whose home is at New London, this State, has mysteriously disappeared, according to a letter received from his wife by Mr. W. H. Shooter of Lumberton. Mr. Crook was in Lumberton on February 26th and bought some lumber from Mr. Shooter. He left Lumberton on the Seaboard 6:19 evening train telling Mr. Shooter that he was going home that night and come back down to Lumberton the next day to buy some timber. He never went home and it is reported here that his baggage was found in a hotel lobby in Charlotte and that he registered at the hotel the same night he left Lumberton, but there was nothing to indicate that he ever went to his room. It is said that Mr. Crook had quite a bit of money in his pockets when he left Lumberton.

Mr. G. E. Rancke, Sr. went yesterday to Dillon, S. C., where he will spend some time visiting relatives.

QUESTION OF PEACE OR WAR WILL BE SETTLED IN 10 DAYS

Differences Between U. S. and Germany Will Reach Climax When First Armed American Merchant Ship Meets a German Submarine

Washington Dispatch, March 11.
Within 10 days the question of actual hostilities or peace between the United States and Germany will be settled. With American armed merchantmen prepared for the dash through the war zone of German ruthlessness, President Wilson and his advisers tonight settled down for a period of "watchful waiting."

Long days and anxious nights of waiting for news from the war zone will now occupy Washington and the country. The administration was tonight convinced that the differences between the United States and Germany will reach a climax when the first armed American merchant ship meets a German submarine. While all ships' movements were shrouded behind impenetrable secrecy it was stated tonight that the departure of American commercial ships carrying naval guns and gunners would be a matter of but a few days, and that within 10 days armed American ships would be in the war zone.

With the gunners aboard American ships under order to fire at once on any submarine which approaches in a threatening manner, the encounter between an American ship and a German undersea boat will bring definite, decisive results.

BAGDAD CAPTURED BY BRITISH

Chief Turkish City in Mesopotamia Falls Before British Advance—Ends German Hopes of Near-East Dominion

London Dispatch, March 11.
General Frederick Stanley Maude, in command of the Entente forces in Mesopotamia, telegraphed today the welcome news for the British of the occupation this morning of the city of Bagdad, the chief Turkish city of Mesopotamia and formerly the capital of the empire of the Caliphs.

The fall of Bagdad, besides ending German hopes of near eastern dominion, based on a Berlin-Bagdad railway, will reverberate throughout the Mohammedan empires and it is believed will more than rehabilitate British prestige in the far east, damaged by the earlier loss of Kut-el-Amara.

Bagdad has been the base for all Turkish operations in Persia. Up to within a few days ago the Turks occupied about 30,000 square miles of Persian territory, but with the Russians pressing them closely from Kirmanshah as well as from the direction of Erzerum, indications point to a speedy junction of the British and Russian forces which would soon compel the Turkish evacuation of Persian territory.

RECORDER'S COURT

Negro Bound to Court on Charge of Rape on Negrress—White Man Charged With Slander

Saturday was another busy day in recorder's court circles. Harrison Sinclair, colored, was given a hearing on the charge of rape and was bound over to Superior court without bail. The evidence of the defendant, Winnie Stokes, also colored, was that Sinclair came out of the bushes and knocked her down in the road and accomplished his purpose. There was mud and water in the road and when she reached home she told her husband what had happened.

Luther Campbell was given a hearing on the charge of slandering Miss Eva Byrd, a daughter of Mr. McKay Byrd. Prayer for judgment was continued upon payment of cost. The evidence was that Campbell did not tell the report as true, but that he had heard it.

Berkley Smith, colored, was fined \$50 and cost on the charge of bastardy.

To Erect Monument to Stephen Little

Mr. Berry Little, who lives near Fairmont, is circulating a subscription list to raise money to erect a monument at the grave of his son Stephen Little, who was killed on November 26, 1915, at Nogales, Arizona, while serving with United States troops on Mexican border duty. Stephen Little was killed by Carranza soldiers who fired on United States troops, mistaking them for Villa troops. His remains were brought to Fairmont and interred on Sunday, December 5, 1915. Mr. Little began circulating his list Saturday in Lumberton and received quite a number of subscriptions. Stephen Little was the first soldier killed on border duty and it is fitting that the people of his home county erect a suitable monument at his grave.

Remains of Negro Who Went North to Work Brought Home

The remains of Angus Cameron, colored, who went to Pittsburgh, Pa., a few weeks ago to work, passed through Lumberton yesterday en route to his home at St. Paul. Angus contracted pneumonia soon after going North. He had been dead two weeks yesterday. His remains were kept till the money was sent from his home people to have them sent back home. It is reported that thousands of the negroes who have recently gone North to work are dying. They cannot stand the weather.

WAS HE DROWNED OR DID HE RUN AWAY?

Ben W. Lovett Has Disappeared and Opinion is Divided as to Whether He Was Drowned or Ran Away—Boat in Which He Left Boardman Found Bottom Up in River

Was he drowned or did he leave to keep from facing trial? is a question that has puzzled the people of the Mt. Eliam section since Wednesday of last week when Ben W. Lovett mysteriously disappeared. Lovett was last seen at Boardman when he left going up Lumber river in a small canoe. He had arranged with Mr. Atlas Britt to meet him at Piney island, where he usually landed his boat, and after waiting for him a good while after the time he was to be there Mr. Britt started down the river in a boat and after going a short distance found Lovett's boat bottom up in the river, but found no trace of Lovett.

Lovett was under bond to appear before Recorder E. M. Britt Saturday on the charge of drunkenness and disorderly conduct. He was also under a heavy bond imposed at a recent term of criminal court for good behavior, and while some think he left to keep from facing trial, others think he was drowned. It is said that he was accustomed to having some sort of spells and that he remarked before leaving Boardman that he was feeling bad. It is also reported that before he left home he gave his wife, his Woodman button and told her if he failed to get back home at the proper time to have him searched for.

Citizens of the community in which he lived have searched the river for Lovett's body, but to no avail.

YOUNG MAN KILLED BY ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE OF GUN

Mr. Dock H. Hedgpeth of Proctorville Killed Saturday—Was Crossing Wire Fence When Gun Was Discharged

Mr. Dock H. Hedgpeth, who lived near Proctorville, accidentally shot and killed himself while rabbit hunting Saturday afternoon. The unfortunate man was crossing a wire fence about 150 yards from the Hedgpeth home when his gun was discharged and the load entered his side. A brother who was near by heard the report of the gun and heard Mr. Hedgpeth make a noise and rushed to him to find him breathing his last. Deceased was 28 years old and unmarried. He was a son of Mr. Wm. H. Hedgpeth and is survived by his father and five brothers and three sisters.

The funeral was conducted from the home yesterday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock by Rev. I. P. Hedgpeth, pastor of Big Branch Baptist church, of which deceased was a member. Interment was made in the family burying ground near the home. A large crowd of sorrowing relatives and friends attended the funeral.

Mr. Hedgpeth was a model young man, quiet and unassuming, and had many friends who were shocked to learn of his horrible death.

News Notes and Personals From Lowe

Correspondence of The Robesonian.
Lowe, March 12—Farmers are taking advantage of the pretty weather and are preparing land for another crop.

Miss Louise Townsend spent the week with home folks. She is one of the teachers at Raft Swamp school.
Mr. W. R. Tyner of the firm of L. E. Tyner and Son, county agents for Overland cars, left Saturday for Charlotte, accompanied by Mrs. Tyner and their daughter, DeLesline, and Miss Dovie Prevatt of Lumberton. Mr. Tyner has cars in stock there and went to bring one back.

Measles is something fierce in this community. Almost every house you pass there is measles.

They Dugged a Pit at Night

Mr. Jeff D. Taylor, who lives about two miles east of town, told a Robesonian reporter Saturday about a mighty deep hole being dug in an old cemetery near his home Friday night. The hole was about 5 x 6 and looked to be about 15 feet deep. He said the hole was dug at night and from the depth it must have taken three men practically all night to dig it. This thing puzzles Mr. Taylor. He says the hole was dug about the same spot where a man was buried 75 years ago. Mr. Taylor thinks the diggers might have been looking for cash.

Blaenboro Couple Married Here

Mrs. Rosa Prince and Mr. Melton Watts, both of Blaenboro, were married in the office of Register of Deeds M. W. Floyd here Thursday afternoon. Justice A. A. Wright of Parkton officiated. Quite a number witnessed the marriage.

E. W. Mincher, Lenoir county convict, guard under sentence of 12 months on roads for whipping a convict, gets commutation from the Governor to payment of \$25 fine and costs. The Governor says investigation convinces him there was a frame-up against Mincher, who was only guilty of technical violation of the law.

Gov. Bickett granted 3 pardons Friday: to Mrs. Gussie Hand of Pender county, serving 2 years for manslaughter; Robt. L. Taylor, Wilkes, 2 years for secret assault; Harry Sellers, Guilford, 4 years for aiding prisoners to escape. Mrs. Hand killed her brother when he was threatening to kill her. A child was born to her 18 days after the tragedy.

ARMED NEUTRALITY WILL BE STATUS OF UNITED STATES

This Will be Situation When First Merchant Ship Under American Flag Puts to Sea With Cannon Mounted for Defense

Washington Dispatch, March 9.
Armed neutrality will be the status of the United States the moment that the first merchant ship under the American flag puts to sea with cannon mounted for defense. President Wilson made this clear in his address to Congress February 26, when he asked specific authority to arm merchant ships for defense against submarines—the steps he ordered today upon his own responsibility.

Preparedness Move
Writers on international law have held that armed neutrality consists in placing the country in a position to defend itself and its neutrality against threatened attacks or inroads by belligerents. This state of preparedness may last an indefinite length of time, through good fortune in avoiding contact with belligerent forces afloat or ashore or through the design of the belligerent to confine its declaration of purpose to infringing the neutrality of a country to mere threats unsupported by action.

On the other hand the status of armed neutrality may change into one of actual hostility through a collision—such as a submarine attack on an armed merchantman.

President Wilson has said that it may not be necessary to put armed forces any where into action. All will depend upon the future attitude of Germany and the treatment of American ships by German submarine commanders.

LUMBER BRIDGE LOCALS

Soldier Boys Will be Given a Rousing Welcome Home—Electric Lights on Streets Now—New Bungalow and New Store Building—Measles—Roads in Bad Condition

Correspondence of The Robesonian.
Lumber Bridge, March 9—Everybody is on the quiver over the expected return of the boys from the border. It is a matter of great satisfaction and thankfulness to all that no serious sickness has been among them and that all will return safe and sound, and as a rule in better health than ever before, showing that Uncle Sam has taken good care of his protectors.

This being the only company from Robeson county, we hope there will be a large and enthusiastic crowd to welcome them on their arrival. Large delegations are expected from Parkton, Red Springs and Maxton, as these towns have contributed so largely towards filling the ranks of the company. The Parkton band promises to keep things lively for us.

The electric lights made their appearance on the streets on the night of March 8th. Mr. J. L. Pitman, who with his family has recently moved into our midst, has charge of the plant.

Mr. J. S. Hodges is building a modern brick bungalow near the Presbyterian church.

Mr. C. H. Usher and son have nearly completed a new brick store near the railroad. These will add much to the appearance of our town.

After being prevalent in the surrounding community, measles has now invaded the town. So far, no one has been very sick with it and all are doing well.
Messrs. D. Z. McGoogan, M. L. Marley and R. A. Monroe were in Lumberton Monday in connection with the new road law. We hope something will soon be done to improve the roads, as all around are in bad condition.

Mr. Dan Marley has moved out into the country to his farm. Our popular druggist, with his family is now occupying the house vacated by him.

Mrs. James Strickland of Jacksonville, N. C., has been with her mother Mrs. S. E. Newby, who has been sick at the Central hotel.

Water Supplied by Town is Suitable for Drinking Purposes

Mention has been made several times recently of the great improvement in the water supplied by the town through its pipes since the filter was installed. Supt. Geo. L. McNeill, in response to an inquiry, received from the State Board of Health a letter, dated March 1 from which the following is taken:
"This is to advise you that since the October analysis there has been a marked improvement in your public water supply, and from the indications of these several analysis it would seem that if the quality of the water retains its present standard it should be very satisfactory for drinking purposes."

Box Supper at Joe Branch March 15

Correspondence of The Robesonian.
Fairmont, March 7—There will be a box supper at Joe Branch graded school, near McDonald Thursday night, March 15. In connection with the box supper there will be concerts and speeches, also a voting contest for the prettiest girl present. She will be given a prize and a necktie will be given to the school boy wearing the prettiest necktie.

M. N. Folger Makes Assignment

Mr. M. N. Folger, who has conducted a grocery store on Chestnut street for several months, made an assignment this morning. Mr. T. A. McNeill, Jr., is named as trustee.

BROAD RIDGE BREEZES

The Right Way to Advertise—Ways to Fight High Cost of Living—Opposed to Bond Issue—Gov. Bickett is Battling for the Farmers—Personal

Correspondence of The Robesonian.
Broad Ridge (Lumberton, R. 4), March 8—Farmers of this section are rebidding their land and getting ready to plant corn, cotton and tobacco.

We have not had much rain for the past two weeks.
A very nice advertisement appeared in The Robesonian advertising Dunlop's flour. Whitfield & French tell exactly what it's made of and who made it and who grew it. This writer thinks this the right way to advertise goods, "That ye may not be deceived."

Mr. W. H. Bullard is doing a nice piece of work in way of ditching his farm.
Farmers take notice! Mr. Redman Ivey is leading this section in growing wheat. This is one way to fight the high prices.

Beware of high prices. Farmers are giving their live stock the very best attention possible. This is another way to reduce the high cost of living.

The people of this country as I see it now don't favor the bond issue to build roads. I am not in favor of spending more money on roads until we have a better system of work on public highways. Our system has always been very incomplete, and very little profit have we out of the money which is expended for this purpose. The thing to do is to drain the swamps, bays and ponds and then come on with your bond issue for roads. The cart is before the horse and the cars.

Mr. J. Z. Stone attended prayer services here Sunday.

Misses Jessie Floyd and Nina Bryan, teachers of this section, were Lumberton visitors Saturday. They attended the teachers' meeting.

Governor Bickett seems to have the farmers at heart and battling hard for us, and the battle is on to win, and if there is need of soldiers in this battle the brown hands that hold the plough are ready to help in the battle till the victory is won.

Misses Gertrude and Bertie Britt and Masters Lewis and Claude Parker of this section were Mt. Eliam visitors Sunday.

Messrs. Bailey Floyd of Fairmont and Warren Bryan of Lumberton were at the box supper Saturday night, February 24. Mr. Claud Britt attended the box supper. He is from the 10 mile section.

TOLARVILLE TOPICS

Late Tobacco Plants Doing Nicely—Marriage of Miss Idell Honeycutt and Mr. Garland Barnes—Personal

Correspondence of The Robesonian.
Tolarville, March 8—There is not much farming going on in this section on account of the cold weather. The late tobacco plants have come up, and are doing nicely.

A beautiful home wedding took place on the 21st of February at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Honeycutt, when their daughter Idell became the bride of Mr. Garland Barnes of Stoneville. Only a few friends were present.

Mrs. A. H. Graham spent a few days last week visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Neill Humphrey, of St. Paul.

The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Cain has been very sick for the past week, but is improving now.

Sorry to report Mr. H. C. Flowers on the sick list.

Miss Ruby Williams attended the teachers' meeting in Lumberton Saturday.

Mr. Sam East of Lumberton attended B. Y. P. U. here last fourth Sunday afternoon.

Mr. Burdick Martin of St. Paul spent a few hours in this section Sunday p. m.

COUNTY MEETING OF UNION

Farmers' Union Will Hold Meeting in Lumberton March 21
A county meeting of the Robeson division of the Farmers' Union will be held in the court house in Lumberton Wednesday, March 21. All locals are urged to send delegates to this meeting. All union members are also urged to attend, whether delegates or not.

F. GROVER BRITT,
Sec.-Treas. Robeson Division.

Carranza Elected President of Mexico

Mexico City Dispatch, March 11.
Elections were held today throughout the republic for President, Senators and Deputies. The election of Carranza, who as first chief of the constitutional revolution has dominated Mexico since the overthrow of the Huerta government, was conceded.

It was the first national election since that which lodged Francisco Madero in the presidency for his short lived term of office.

Messrs. M. F. Caldwell and S. R. Feneagan spent yesterday at Latta, S. C., visiting relatives.

Mr. J. B. Strickland spent yesterday at Dillon, S. C., visiting friends.

\$1.00 PER DOZEN FOR BIG EGGS
On March 24th R. D. Caldwell & Son will hold their spring egg contest. \$1.00 will be given for the largest dozen eggs. Commence now to save the big ones.

BRIEF ITEMS OF LOCAL NEWS

—Mr. T. C. Barnes went Saturday to Wilmington, where he entered the James Walker Memorial hospital for an operation for a head trouble.

—St. Paul Messenger: Mr. N. A. McIntyre is now building on a lot he recently purchased near Mr. Humphrey, on South 2nd St.

—W. G. Johnson of East Lumberton was arrested and locked up Saturday afternoon by Chief of Police Alf H. McLeod on account of being out on the streets.

—Mr. A. Weinstein left last evening for New York and Baltimore, where he will spend several days buying spring and summer goods for his department store.

—License has been issued for the marriage of Ben Israel and Celia Freeman; D. Gaus Collins and Estelle Lamb; L. W. Tedder and Luella Cox; Melton Watts and Rosa Luelle.

—Mr. J. Ed Glover has leased the McNeill blacksmith shop, Fourth street, and will conduct the business. Mr. W. B. Beasley, who had been operating the shop, has returned to his old home near Smithfield.

—The Griffith building, Elm street, formerly occupied by the National barber shop, has been remodeled and painted on the inside and will be occupied by Mr. L. C. Townsend, who will conduct a tailoring establishment.

—Mr. C. P. McAllister left this morning for Richmond, Va. He went to return with his father, Mr. J. A. McAllister, who has been under treatment in a hospital there for some time. Mr. McAllister's health is greatly improved.

—Mr. Albert Boggs, who it will be remembered spent several months in Lumberton during the sickness and death of his father in 1915, is now at Shornecliffe, Engand, having joined the arm yin Canada. A letter received here yesterday brought this information.

—A meeting of the Robeson County Poultry and Exhibit association has been called for tomorrow night at 7:30. The meeting will be held in the commissioners' room in the court house, and all who are interested in the Robeson county fair for next fall are urged to attend the meeting.

—Rev. D. C. Barnes of R. 5, Lumberton, was among the callers at the Robesonian office Saturday. Mr. Barnes has been taking The Robesonian for years and remarked while in the office Saturday that to get along without it would be next to getting along without bread.

—Miss Josephine Breece will have her millinery opening tomorrow and Wednesday. Messrs. R. D. Caldwell & Son will have their millinery opening Thursday and Friday, and the Style shop, of which Miss Amelia Linkhauser is proprietress, will have a showing of new spring millinery Thursday, Friday and Saturday of this week.

—The fire company was called out yesterday about 5:30 on account of a blaze in the small metal store of Mr. S. D. Sanderson, Elm street. The fire started in some trash under some matches and it is supposed from the signs that a rat caused the fire by chewing the match heads. The fire was extinguished before any damage had been done.

—Mr. W. S. Britt returned Friday night from Kershaw, S. C., where he spent some days on account of the illness and death of his father-in-law, Mr. W. U. Clyburn, whose death occurred on the 3rd inst., mention of which was made in last Monday's Robesonian. Mr. Britt was with her father when the end came and will remain at Kershaw for some time before returning home.

—The following gentlemen boarded the train here this morning for Newbern to attend a W. O. W. meeting tomorrow and Wednesday: Dr. R. T. Allen, Messrs. J. E. Gilmore, J. C. Maxwell, Lumberton; W. H. Lamb, Long Branch; Jake Baxley and W. C. Townsend, Raft Swamp; Ed Bass, Back Swamp; W. H. Powell, Saddle Tree; S. C. Dean, Center; W. H. Howard and C. L. Johnson, St. Paul.

—Another guessing contest is on at the store of Messrs. R. D. Caldwell & Son. An automobile wheel has been placed in a window in the hardware department and the wheel continues to turn all the while. The wheel is run by an electric fan and the one who guesses the nearest the number of miles the wheel will run in 14 days—the wheel not running at night—will be given an inner tube for an automobile. The one guessing the second nearest number of miles will receive a gallon of Supreme oil. The window was designed by Mr. E. L. Whaley. A speedometer is attached to the wheel which will register the miles. The wheel started on its journey this morning.

—More than a score of people were killed and 150 injured, some probably fatally, in a tornado which wrecked more than 3000 homes in Newcastle, Ind., yesterday afternoon.

STATE NEWS

—Carl Cheek, a young white man who lived near Elkin, danced to his death from the top of a freight train near Greensboro Saturday. Two women who were watching the freight, which was running very fast, saw the tow men on top of a box car dancing as if in high glee. One of them stopped and the other kept dancing, apparently not realizing that he was approaching the end of a car. Presently they saw him fall and he died a few minutes later.