

Wishing You
A Happy and Prosperous
NEW YEAR

THE SANFORD EXPRESS

FOREMOST
IN CHARACTER and
CIRCULATION

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FIVE CENTS

THIS LAND HAT

BY O. T.

Did you know that the oldest building to be found now in the business section of Sanford was a bar room 40 years ago?

This building, a small wooden structure, is located on Chatham street between the building owned by the heirs of the late W. T. Buchanan and a small brick building owned by Dan C. Lawrence. Forty years ago and more in and around these bar rooms men bought and drank raw corn liquor to excess, and raised more unadulterated hell than Carter had oats. Fist and skull fights often took place here and some time revolver were brought to play in the game of lawlessness that went on especially afternoons and nights. On one occasion it was Christmas morning—a man came out of this bar room flourishing a quart of liquor in one hand and a cocked pistol in the other and after crossing the street he started a row which brought on a race riot which terrorized the town for a day and night. The following morning the sheriff of Moore county came to Sanford arrested 23 negroes and lodged them in jail at Carthage, where they remained for a period of four months at the expense of the county. Those negroes were released without punishment. They were more sinned against than sinning.

That race riot on that beautiful Christmas day was the thing that put bar rooms out of Sanford. The late Duncan Brander Melver, at that time and for years afterwards the leading citizen of Sanford, drew a bill and secured the passage through the General Assembly, the bill providing that whiskey should not be sold within two miles of Steele street Methodist church. That was the best piece of work that Melver did for his town, for when the signs of the bar rooms came down the staples of churches went up. After these came the graded school, the establishment of which cost the town \$10,000. Not a vote was cast against the establishment of these schools. In many other ways Melver rendered this town the finest kind of public service. His eloquent voice was always articulate for the public good. His picture may be seen in the auditorium of the East Sanford school building. That building, now called the Melver building, was named in honor of this public spirited man.

Senator Cross and Representative Makepeace have selected their seats in the State Capitol so as to be ready when the new General Assembly meets in January. Makepeace, who is a successful business man, is not without legislative experience, as he has represented his district in the Senate and his county in the House, and he will no doubt be a valuable member of the House.

Cross, who is a successful real estate and insurance man, will be serving his first term in the General Assembly, but the people of Lee county expect him to give a good account of himself at Raleigh this winter. Both Makepeace and Cross are pledged to vote for removal of the 15 cents tax on land for the support of the six months school term.

Taxes? By George, its taxes here, its taxes there and its taxes everywhere you turn. Your land, if you are so unfortunate as to have any, is on the tax books at three times its present value. When you go down to the Court House you find your largest items of taxes go to support a system of county government which has undergone little change for a century and which needs to be simplified and operated in a more economical and business like way. Town taxes are also burdensome. The rate is not high but the valuation is all out of proportion if compared with the real value of the property. When you ask for your town and county taxes you find that you have a sizeable burden on each shoulder. But this is not all for there is the state and Uncle Sam, both of whom are constantly running their hands into your pockets to get what is left. The people of Sanford now owe more than \$1,000,000 in taxes for the year 1931, and years previous to that time to say nothing of the 1932 taxes now due. These taxes simply cannot be paid with 6c cotton, business in bankruptcy and buildings which have small rental value and in many instances no rental value at all.

The President of the Greater University of North Carolina, Dr. Frank Graham, has within the past two weeks spoken twice in Sanford, first to the members of the Florian Club and then to a joint meeting of the (Continued To Page Two)

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE LAST WEEK

Brevities

Luke Riddle, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Riddle, was a holiday visitor from Tuscaloosa, Ala., where he is a medical student in the University of Alabama.

Mr. Joe L. Phillips, of Greensboro, was the guest of his sister, Miss Ruth Phillips, Sunday and Monday.

Miss Emma and Fred Van Sant were home for the holidays. They are students at Mars Hill College.

Miss Sarah Griffin left Thursday for Raleigh to visit Miss Barbara Harris.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon S. Smith, of Charlotte, are spending the Christmas holidays with the family of Mr. S. D. Porter and other relatives here. They are accompanied by Mrs. J. Wallace Smith, also of that city.

Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Oliver and daughter have returned from Winston-Salem where they spent the Christmas holidays.

Mr. Arthur Boal, of New York, visited Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Camp during the Christmas holidays. He was on his way home from a trip to Florida.

The trouble concerning the Big Springs school has at last been settled. The school will open in a few days and continue through the winter and spring months. By a vote of the patrons of the school it was decided that the school should not be consolidated with the Greenwood school.

Mr. F. E. Street, who has for some time been located at Elizabeth City as a Federal Prohibition Agent, is spending the Christmas holidays at home with his family. He expects to be transferred to Raleigh in a few days where he will make headquarters.

Gurney F. Hood, State Commissioner of Banks, states that the sum of \$1,118,145.92 has been released to 28,710 creditors of closed State banks since October 1st. The list of payments to depositors includes the sum of \$1,118,145.92.

Mr. C. J. Post, who has organized and is now training a band and orchestra at this place, has moved his family from Florence, S. C., to Sanford, where they will make their home. Mr. Post tells The Express that he expects to have a band of 24 pieces trained and ready to make music for the town next spring. He says there is some fine talent in the band.

Tourists are now passing through in large numbers. Many tourists leave their homes in the North immediately following the Christmas holidays and spend the next two or three months at Southern Pines, Pinehurst or the Georgia or Florida resorts. They will continue to go to these resorts till the last of the winter and return late in the spring.

Mr. Joe D. Melver, of the Buckingham section, who was in Sanford Tuesday, informs The Express that Mr. T. A. Ausley, of Corinth, recently killed three hogs that weighed 1,400 pounds. Mr. Stamey Jeffries, of the same section, also killed two that weighed from 1,100 to 1,200 pounds. Mr. Melver stated that there were many other large hogs killed in that section, but he did have information giving the weights.

Heretofore Christmas presents sent through the mail from Sanford and this section to relatives and friends at a distance were goods of some kind bought from the local stores or shipped in from mail order houses. The express is informed that due to the depression many people born and reared in this section, but now making their homes in other parts of the country, received as Christmas presents such things as fruit, nuts and vegetables. These things were sent by people who were not able to buy presents. These things should be just as much appreciated as the costly gifts.

When the program of work was made up for 1932 a special recommendation was included urging that wood be used for fuel in public schools, local industries and private homes. In checking over this project last week, County Demonstration Agent and Welfare Officer E. O. McMahon found that wood is being used for fuel in the County Court House, the county Home, and all the school buildings of the county. A thousand and fifty cords of wood have been purchased from farmers of the county at \$2.00 per cord. This means that \$2,100 were kept in Lee county instead of being sent out of the state for coal as in previous years. The cutting of this wood gave a large number of laborers employment and helped to support their families at a time when they were sorely in need of help.

FIRE DESTROYS BIG DEPARTMENT STORE THURSDAY

Destructive Blaze Occurs Here
Last Thursday Night At
9:45 O'clock.

BUILDING IS INSURED

Last Thursday night just before 10 o'clock the fire alarm sent the fire company to Steele street. The fire was discovered in H. Isaacson's store by some one passing on the sidewalk. The window shades had been lowered and the fire was discovered by the intense heat breaking the glass in the front windows. The flames had gained much headway in the building and the firemen realizing that they had a serious job on their hands to extinguish the fire, the second truck was called out. Soon Steele and other streets leading to the scene were crowded with people from all parts of the town to witness the conflagration. Volunteer firemen were called into service for the next hour or two, and the fire department put up a fight that would have done credit to fire fighters in a much larger town than Sanford. By their heroic work the firemen kept the fire confined to the one building and saved thousands of dollars to property owners in the business district of the town. It seems that the fire started in the back section of the building and the room was soon full of smoke which prevented the firemen from entering and fighting the flames on the inside. When a section of the roof fell in this gave the firemen an opportunity to turn the water into the building from roofs of adjoining buildings. At times it looked as if the fire would reach the adjoining buildings, the United Bank & Trust Company, on one side, and the Cross-Marks building on the other. The thick walls and work of the firemen saved these buildings. The furniture was moved from the United Bank building to the second floor of the Cross-Marks building as a precaution. The origin of the fire has not been determined.

The stock of goods in Isaacson's store and the furniture and fixtures were destroyed by fire and water. Mr. Isaacson had some insurance on his stock, but no insurance on the furniture and fixtures. He estimates his loss on the latter at \$8,000. Mr. J. H. Monger, who owns the building, carried some insurance on the property. The total loss is estimated at something like \$30,000. The walls of the building seem to be intact, but it is not yet known what the damages are.

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Personal

Mr. and Mrs. B. E. Walton, of Lexington, spent the Christmas holidays with the family of Mr. F. E. Street.

Richard Street, who is studying medicine at Tulane University, New Orleans, is spending the Christmas holidays at home with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Street.

Miss Cornelia Cheek, teacher in Mt. Gilead school, and Miss Lucile Cheek, teacher in Lilesville school, spent a week in Sanford, then went to the home of Mr. and Mrs. N. J. Dark, near S. R. City, where they plan to visit the remainder of the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Byrd, of Branchville, S. C., have returned home after a visit with Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Underwood.

Miss Lillian Phillips, of Campbell College, spent a week with her sister, Miss Ruth Phillips. She is now visiting friends in Dunn where she will remain until school opens.

Messrs. E. C. Heals, E. M. Underwood, C. H. Riddle, J. H. Heals, Harry Byrd, Myron Underwood and O. P. Makepeace have enjoyed a few days duck hunting at the Heals camp on New River.

Messdames E. M. Underwood, Harry Byrd, E. C. Heals, J. C. Watson, and Charles Watson, visited in Carthage Monday.

Miss Maytorina Bland, of N. C. C. W., and Mr. Charles Bland, Jr., of Campbell College, stopped to see their grand mother, Mrs. T. J. Bland, before going to their home in Wadesboro to spend the holidays.

Mr. Charles Bland, of Wadesboro, spent Christmas day with his mother, Mrs. T. J. Bland.

Miss Daisy Bland, who is teaching in the Siler City school, is spending the holidays at home. Miss Maude Brown, who also teaches in the Siler City school, is spending the holidays at her home at Wimbledo, S. C.

Miss Ruth Davenport, teacher in the Boy's Academy, Albany, N. Y., is spending the Christmas holidays with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Davenport.

Miss Marion Nail is home for the holidays from Southern Pines, where she is teaching in the city schools.

A reunion of the Gunter family was held in Sanford during the Christmas holidays, the members being in town for a week and occupying an apartment in the home of Mr. and Mrs. K. L. Baldwin. Those present were Mrs. Herbert Gunter, Miss Annie Louise and John Gunter, and Miss Ruth Gunter, of Greensboro; Mr. and Miss Johnnie Jean Rivers, of Fayetteville, spent the Christmas holidays at home.

Mrs. E. P. Rogers and daughter, Virginia, of Raleigh, are visiting Mrs. Rogers' parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. E. King. Mr. Rogers came up and spent the Christmas holidays with them.

Miss Mildred Jordan, of Mullins, S. C., has returned home after visiting her grandmother, Mrs. J. F. Rivers.

Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Teal and son, of Boone, spent Christmas with Mr. Teal's mother, Mrs. J. F. Rivers.

Old Graveyard Cleared

Mr. John W. Gilliam, who keeps some 40 to 50 laborers employed cutting and shipping pulp wood, has during the dull season in the fall and early winter had them clear and clean up some 50 acres of land owned by him over on Pocket creek in Pocket township. He also had them to clear off the old Pocket cemetery near the old plank road. The dates on some of the markers show that this old Scotch graveyard dates back more than 100 years. Many of the Scotch settlers, who came over from the old country in the early history of this country, are taking their last long sleep in the old burying ground which is in the heart of a thick forest. The cemetery is enclosed by a rock wall and an opening where the pall bearers entered bearing the bodies of the dead. Very few people have been buried in this old cemetery in many years. Most of the markers carry the name Melver, McGilvary, McIntosh, McRae, McLeod, McDonald, McQueen, McDougald and other familiar Scotch names. The Express published a history of this old cemetery a few years ago, giving the names of many who were buried there. The inscriptions on many of the markers are so discolored with age that it is impossible to decipher them. This is one of the many old cemeteries in this part of the State. Many of these cemeteries were started by the Scotch and other settlers before churches were built.

WILBUR McLEOD IS GIVEN PAROLE BY GOV. GARDNER

Negro Convicted of First Degree
Murder in Lee Superior
Court, March, 1927.

COMMUTED TO LIFE TERM

Governor Gives Parole On
Behalf Prisoner Innocent And
Desire of Judge

Wilbur McLeod, colored, who was arrested upon the charge of murdering Mrs. Rebecca Matthews at her home near Broadway in March, 1927, tried at the next term of Lee Superior Court, found guilty of murder in the first degree by the jury, sentenced to death by electrocution by Judge R. A. Nunn, who heard the case, and was sent to Raleigh and placed on death row to await execution. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court. After reviewing the evidence, which was circumstantial, the higher court ordered a new trial. The prisoner was sent back to the county for the second hearing. The hearing was held at the May term 1929, court. The jury was finally chosen after exhausting two venues of 150 men from Chatham county. The State introduced evidence by a number of witnesses, but the defense introduced no evidence. As the defense introduced no evidence it was agreed that the last speech should be made by attorneys for the defendant. The first speech was made by J. R. Young, attorney for McLeod. He made a good impression on the jury. He was followed by Solicitor C. L. Williams who made out a strong case against McLeod notwithstanding he had only circumstantial evidence to base his argument on before the jury. It was made difficult to handle the case on account of the evidence by the blood hounds having been ruled out by the Supreme Court. The jury was on the case several hours, but finally found the defendant guilty for the second time of first degree murder. He was again sentenced to death by electrocution and returned to the penitentiary to await the date of his execution.

McLeod was paroled for about three years by Gov. O. Max Gardner. This was one of the most revolting crimes ever committed in this part of the State. Mrs. Matthews was dragged from her room in the "dead" hours of the night and criminally assaulted and then murdered. It is believed by many of her neighbors and those who heard the trial that Wilbur McLeod committed the crime. Following is a letter received by The Express from Governor Gardner setting forth the reasons to the Superintendent of the State Prison why he paroled the prisoner:

"The above named prisoner, Wilbur McLeod, was convicted at the May term, 1929, Superior Court of Lee County of Murder in the first degree and sentenced to death by electrocution. The prisoner's sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. This defendant was first tried by Judge R. A. Nunn and he expressed a great deal of doubt as to the prisoner's guilt. In the second trial in the Superior Court, Hon. G. E. Midyette heard the case and stated that the evidence was wholly circumstantial and that there was a probability of the prisoner's innocence. Others connected with the trial and conviction and Hon. Edwin B. Bridges, former Commissioner of Pardons, who went to the scene and made a personal investigation at the time of the crime, have expressed grave doubt as to the guilt of the prisoner. In view of this strong element of doubt upon the part of those most closely connected with the case, the prisoner's sentence was commuted from death to life imprisonment, as above outlined.

"After this prisoner started upon the service of the life sentence and shortly before the death of Judge Midyette, the Judge came to see me personally and expressed further doubt as to the guilt of the prisoner and urged that a parole be granted him. The Judge was to write a letter setting forth his feeling in this connection but he died before he had opportunity to do so.

"Since the prisoner has been confined I have made a personal investigation of all of the facts available. I have discussed the case with the prisoner and with others familiar with the circumstances under which he was convicted and I have done every thing possible to arrive at the truth in this matter. After much deliberation and after considering all of the facts brought out by my own investigation and added to this strong doubt in the minds of others who have gone into the case, I am convinced that this man is not guilty of this crime and is being punished unjustly and I now conceive it my duty to relieve him of further incarceration and he is, therefore, this day paroled for the remainder of his term, under the supervision of the

World Restoration Depends On Cooperation Says House

Negro Shot

While engaged in a row last Sunday night Thomas Hooker shot Ike Melvin in the side with a pistol. The wounded man was carried to the Lee County Hospital where an operation was performed and the ball extracted. He has returned to his home. All are colored. A negro by the name of Martin went gunning for Hooker and sprinkled him with shot from a shot gun. His wounds are slight.

COUNTY HOME TO OPEN NEXT WEEK

The people of Lee county are invited by the County Commissioners to celebrate the opening of the new County Home next Monday at which time the building will be accepted by the Commissioners and all invited to inspect it. They are asked to bring gifts to the Home such as canned fruit, vegetables and other things that can be used in the Home. They will keep "open house" for a week and the citizens of the county are invited to call any time during the week. The building is a great improvement over the old one and has many more modern conveniences. The people of the county have reason to feel proud of their new County Home.

KIWANIANS HAVE CHRISTMAS MEET

Kiwanians Play Santa Claus to
County's Unfortunates
During Yuletide.

The program put on by the Kiwanis Club at its meeting at the Carolina Hotel last Friday night, included Christmas carols led by J. C. Pittman, the presentation of a letter from the United States to the United Kingdom, and a letter from the United Kingdom to the United States. The program was a success and the Kiwanis Club at its meeting at the Carolina Hotel last Friday night, included Christmas carols led by J. C. Pittman, the presentation of a letter from the United States to the United Kingdom, and a letter from the United Kingdom to the United States. The program was a success and the Kiwanis Club at its meeting at the Carolina Hotel last Friday night, included Christmas carols led by J. C. Pittman, the presentation of a letter from the United States to the United Kingdom, and a letter from the United Kingdom to the United States. The program was a success and the Kiwanis Club at its meeting at the Carolina Hotel last Friday night, included Christmas carols led by J. C. 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