

THE WEATHER
S. C. Fair Tuesday; Wednesday show-
ers, warmer on coast.

THE DAILY INDEPENDENT

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MARITIME FORECAST
Sandy Hook to Hatteras: Gentle to moderate shifting winds becoming easterly over south portion and fair Tues.

Disaster Inquiry Reports

Effort to Save Heating Costs Brought Death to 426 From Basement

New London, Tex., March 22.—Natural gas piped into the New London rural schoolhouse to save a 250-a-month heating bill, caused the explosion which destroyed the \$300,000 building and killed 426 pupils and teachers last Tuesday, an inquiry board reported today.

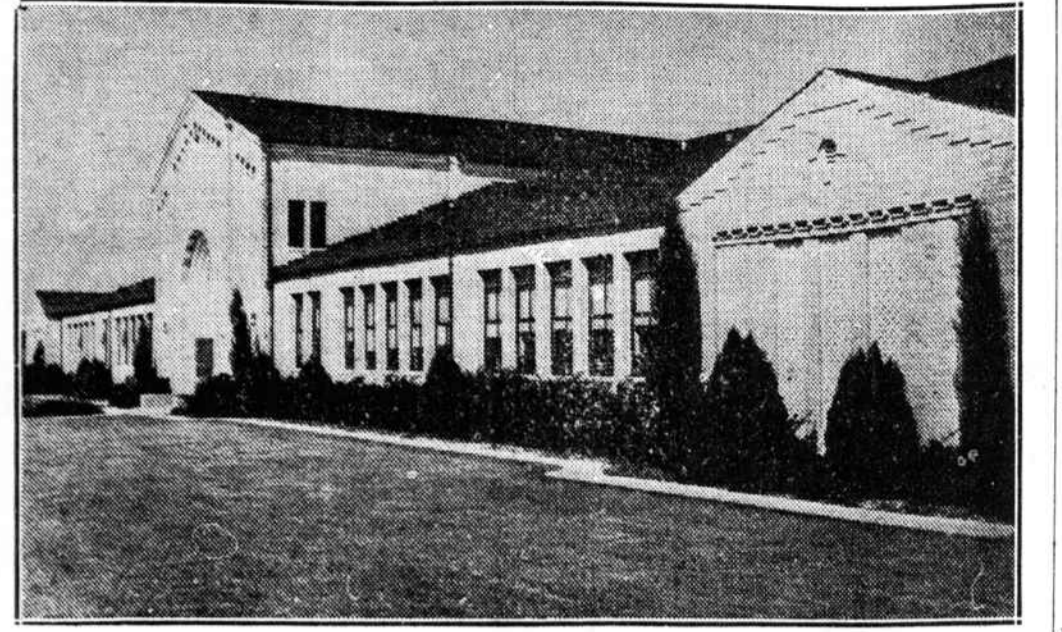
The findings were announced after William C. Shaw, 61-year-old superintendent, appeared before the board, his head swathed in white bandages, and admitted the gas used to heat the building was stored from a nearby oil field pipeline.

The white-haired school head, whose 19-year-old son died in the explosion, nearly collapsed and had to be assisted from the witnesses.

Board's Findings
Shortly afterwards, Dr. E. P. Schenk, explosion expert from the University of Texas, announced the board's findings and Col. Clarence E. Parker lifted martial law from the school zone.

Evidence presented to the board left no culpability for the disaster, Schenk said.
"We all feel that the trustees of the school acted for the very best of the best intentions," he said. "They were not aware of that proper installation of gas equipment was and did not know their danger."
Dr. Schenk's report said:
"In the basement there were approximately 70,000 cubic feet of gas. The maximum force of natural gas is reached with 6.5 per cent mixture with air."
It was one of the 72 three-circuit in connecting pipes through the basement to the 72 gas radiators was left flowing accidentally for 17 hours, this maximum ex-

The School That Was a Death Trap



HERE is the consolidated school building as it appeared before the explosion that brought death to 426 pupils and teachers. Grammar and the advanced high school grades were merged in the building, largest such school in the world.

Clark Defends Court Plan; Chief Justice Has His Say

Retired Justice Sees Change As Being Constitutional

San Diego, Calif., March 22.—John Hessin Clark, the only living former justice of the United States Supreme court, broke his long silence in public affairs tonight to defend the constitutional validity of President Roosevelt's judiciary program.

The 79-year-old retired justice, in a speech delivered over a nationwide radio network, described as "plainly constitutional" the president's proposal to have congress increase the number of justices on the court he served for six years.

Is Impersonal
Clark carefully avoided expressing a personal opinion on the plan itself, discussing only the "naked legal question" of the controversy.

"The wise men who framed our constitution," he said, "may have had more confidence in the wisdom and patriotism of the congresses and the presidents which were to come after them, and less confidence in courts than some seem to have today. Whether or not they were wise in entrusting to the congress and to the president such extensive powers over the courts as we have found they possess and have long exercised—are not questions which are now before us. The single question I am considering is, would a conditional increase of the number of judges of the Supreme court, by act of congress, as recommended by the president be constitutional or not?"

Within Powers
"I think that the answer to this question is yes."
(Continued on Page Three)

Lightning Rod Augurs Return Of Prosperity

Success of Salesmen Indicates Better Times Are Ahead

By MRS. J. L. MURPHY
Manteo, March 22.—Prosperity has returned to North Carolina, and its advent was well demonstrated a few days ago along with the first signs of spring.

Proof of the fact that prosperity is in our midst again was clearly indicated recently, not in growing bank deposits only, nor in increased car loadings, but by the skillfully presented case of the lightning rod.

For more than half an hour the proprietor of a general store in a rural community let the waiting customers wait while he listened to the smooth oratory of the lightning rod salesman and examined his latest 1937 model, tripod-supported white porcelain-insulated nickel-tipped and ball-decorated lightning rod truly a thing of beauty.

The customers almost forgot what they had come to purchase, they became so enraptured in assisting the proprietor to decide which color ball should decorate his lightning rod and whether gold, silver, blue, red or white should shoo the lightning away from his domain. This rod was a thing of beauty and something to be proud of, a mark of rare distinction, proclaiming to all and sundry who gazed aloft to the roof.

(Continued on Page Three)

Letter From Hughes Read Before Senate Committee

Washington, March 22.—(U.P.) Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes said today in a letter to Sen. Burton K. Wheeler, D. Mont., that President Roosevelt's judiciary reorganization plan was likely to impair the efficiency of the Supreme Court.

Wheeler read the letter to the senate judiciary committee as opponents of the plan opened their attack on the measure. In it the chief justice cast doubt on the constitutionality of dividing an enlarged court into sections to speed its work, a suggestion made by administration witnesses.

Brandeis Assents
Hughes said he spoke with the concurrence of Justices Louis D. Brandeis and Willis Van Devanter, who are considered the No. 1 liberal and conservative, respectively of the court. He added that while he had not had time to confer with all members, he believed

(Continued on Page Three)

BEST SPELLER WILL RECEIVE A SILVER CUP

Winner to Be Determined In Test: Something Entirely New

Elizabeth City High School students have won cups for debating, athletics and other activities, but this year for the first time in the history of the school a silver cup is to be awarded for spelling, it was announced yesterday by Superintendent Edgar E. Bundy.

Knapp's Case Ends In A Fizzle

Government Makes a Very Sorry Showing In Court

Fines of \$1 Each

Mr. Knapp and His Co-defendants Enter a Plea of Nolo Contendere Rather Than Defend Themselves In A Frivolous Prosecution.

The government's exultation back in December over the apprehension of five too many ducks in the possession of certain rich men, and threats to make an example of alleged "malefactors of great wealth" fizzled in the United States Court here late yesterday afternoon when the case against Joseph P. Knapp, Lee W. Maxwell, Giles Whiting and Isaac Doney was called.

Messrs. Knapp, Maxwell, Whiting and Doney were charged with possession of 45 ducks from a day's kill, in violation of the law fixing the bag limit at 10 ducks per man. Messrs Maxwell and Whiting were guests of Mr. Knapp at Mackey Island, and Mr. Doney, one of Mr. Knapp's superintendents accompanied the party.

St. Clair Lewark and another deputy game warden confiscated the ducks.

(Continued on Page Three)

No Imported Speaker For Graduation

Bundy to Have Graduating Students for Speakers at Commencement

Instead of importing some editor, minister or college professor to make the Commencement Address at the graduating exercises of the class of 1937, of Elizabeth City High School, Superintendent Edgar E. Bundy this year will inaugurate the innovation of having the graduates make all the speeches at the graduating exercises.

Chrysler Accused Of Withholding Evidence

Madame Fontanges Says Mussolini Was Her Man

Frenchwoman Who Shot Diplomat Whom She Accused of Wrecking Her Romance, Says She Was Mistress of Il Duce From April to July

Paris, March 22.—(U.P.)—Exotic Madeline de Fontanges, held for the shooting of the Count de Chambrun because he shattered "my hours of unforgettable love" with Premier Benito Mussolini, today told an examining magistrate that she was Il Duce's mistress between April and July of last year.

The magistrate asked her, during a two-hour hearing at the Palais de Justice, whether she ever had been intimate with Mussolini.

"Yes," she replied blandly. "I was his mistress between last April and July."

Referring to her last rendezvous with Mussolini in July, she said: "He was tender and sweet with me as he had been on the previous occasions."

She described how, last November, she tried to commit suicide in Rome after Mussolini had jilted her.



MADLINE DE FONTANGES
actress and journalist, described the events of her adventurous life and scattered loves up to the point of her attempted suicide. Then the magistrate adjourned the hearing until April 8.

The man responsible for Il Duce's lost love, she said bitterly, was the Count de Chambrun whom she tried to kill last Wednesday. He violated her confidences, she explained, and caused Mussolini to end their clandestine romance.

De Chambrun, she said, shattered "my hours of unforgettable love."

The dark-haired beauty, whose lurid diary of "confessions" threatens to create an international scandal if ever made public, told of repeated rendezvous with Mussolini.

She described how, last November, she tried to commit suicide in Rome after Mussolini had jilted her.

Not Candid With LaFollette Investigation Committee

Spied On Employees

Strikers Have Added the Crime of Burglary to Others, Declares Company Man.

Detroit, March 22.—(U.P.)—Threat of a general automotive strike in Detroit faded tonight as Mayor Frank Couzens announced after a conference with union officials that the police department would not interfere in "peaceful so-called sit-down strikes."

Police evictions of sit-downers in small factories through the city had led to a threat by Homer Martin, United Automobile Workers, president, to call a general strike of automotive workers here.

Detroit, March 2.—(U.P.)—Chrysler corporation, nine of whose plants are held by 6,000 sit-down strikers, was accused tonight by union officials of blacklisting, labor espionage and of withholding data from the LaFollette senate civil liberties committee.

The charges, made by Homer Martin, president of the United Automobile Workers Union, were denied by B. E. Hutchinson, Chrysler finance committee chairman.

General Strike Threat
Martin, holding the threat of a general automotive strike in Detroit over police who have been raiding lesser sit-down strikes, declared the union had found "irrefutable" proof of the charges. Richard T. Frankenstein, organizational director for the union, showed newspapermen what he said were photostatic prints of Chrysler corporation records to back up the charges.

Loyal Troops Prepare Drive On Rebel Base

Francis' Men Have Been Forced Back 20 Miles Since Tide Turned

March 22.—(U.P.)—Loyal troops swept into new rebel base territory on the Guadalupe river and prepared to attack the rebel base of Siguenza.

Covered by continued victories, Siguenza Loyalist Commander Gen. Jose Mijangue urged his newly-recruited militiamen and international brigade to continue the offensive against Gen. Francisco Franco's foreign legionnaires and Italian-aided rebels to remove the imminent threat against the capital from the north. The rebels have been forced back 20 miles so far.

The loyalist army attacked the village of Algora from three sides.
(Continued on Page Three)

Senator Bailey Publicizes Letter To This Newspaper

Army To Fight Cancer Is Being Organized Now

Enlistment Campaign On In The Albemarle This Week

Columbia, March 22.—The following 12 captains in the counties of the first congressional district of North Carolina are directing an enlistment campaign this week in the Woman's Field Army for the Control of Cancer, it was announced today by Mrs. W. S. Carawan, vice-commander of the district.

Miss Margaret Pearing, Pasquotank; Mrs. Wheeler Martin, Martin; Mrs. B. F. Koonce, Perquimans; Mrs. J. C. Mullin, Gates; Mrs. B. C. Cuthrell, Camden; Mrs. (Continued on Page Three)

WPA Foremen Will Meet Here This A.M.

There will be a meeting of all WPA foremen in the counties of the Albemarle at the Community Building on Dyer Street this morning at 10 o'clock.

Mr. Lee Wallace, District WPA Director, and other district officials will be present.

Frank Vosper's Body Is Washed Ashore

Eastbourne, Eng., Tuesday, March 23.—(U.P.)—A nude body washed ashore near here was identified today as that of Frank Vosper by two relatives of the English actor-dramatist who disappeared mysteriously two weeks ago from the French liner Paris.

The body, washed in from the sea at Seven Sisters Cliffs, between here and Scafoard, was identified by the actor's father, Dr. Percy Vosper of Stanmore, his uncle, Maj. P. Vosper of Pevensey Bay. The father viewed the body while major Vosper identified it from a photograph.

TODAY'S LOCAL CALENDAR

- 7:30 Sunrise service First Methodist
- 8:30 Mens Christian Federation P. M.
- 6:15 First Baptist YWA
- 6:30 Kiwanis Club
- 7:00 Local Institute class First Christian
- 7:30 Jr. O. U. A. M.: Eureka Lodge Masons;
- 7:30 Special services City Road
- 8:00 Special services First Christian, "Atonement"
- Library Hours: 2-8, 7-9

New Obstacle May Delay Edward-'Wally' Wedding

London, March 22.—(U.P.)—British legal experts warned tonight that Mrs. Wallis Warfield Simpson's first divorce, obtained in the United States 10 years ago, may be invalid under British law.

The new complication, they said, may jeopardize the early marriage of the former Baltimore girl and former Kink Edward if the case is brought into British courts.

Arthur Berriedale Keith, outstanding authority of constitution law, was responsible for the latest surprise development in the "world's greatest romance." He wrote to the Edinburgh Scotsman saying that Parliament might be obliged to enact special legislation legalizing Mrs. Simpson's divorce.

She divorced Earl Winfield Spencer, U. S. naval officer, at Warrenton, Va., in 1927.

Added Bus Service To Benefit New Bern And Morehead City

Effective Friday March 26, the Norfolk Southern Bus corporation will inaugurate an added bus service, giving through service between Norfolk and Elizabeth City, New Bern and Morehead City.

There will be two buses leaving the Norfolk union terminal at 4:10 p. m., one for Raleigh and one for New Bern and Morehead City, both via Williamston.