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SEVENTY-SIX DEAD IN A SCHOOL FIRE

A Lamp Explosion Causes Horrible Tragedy Kershaw County, in South Carolina

SCORES OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, ATTENDING COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES, WERE THE VICTIMS

Seventy-six persons, many of them children, were burned to death in a fire last night that destroyed the Pezeland school in Kershaw county, South Carolina, about forty miles from the Union county line, while commencement exercises were in progress, according to tourists who passed through Monroe this afternoon.

Many of the dead were charred beyond recognition, and the remains of thirty or more of those perished are being interred in one grave near Beulah.

But twenty-five bodies were identified, the bodies were so horribly charred. These bodies have been turned over to their horror-stricken relatives.

The explosion of a kerosene lamp, swinging from the ceiling of the auditorium, where several hundred patrons and friends of the students were seated, started the fire that ended in one of the greatest tragedies ever recorded in this section of the country. The lamp blazed like a huge meteor, and one or two heroic men, advices stated, grabbed the burning receptacle and tried to throw it out of an open window. Unfortunately, however, it struck the side of the house, and the burning oil was scattered in all directions, much of it flying on the clothes of men, women and children. Pandemonium reigned. Women and children shrieked as a rush was made for the small exits, their clothes blazing.

The walls of the building and the decorations, suspended from pillar to pillar by the teachers and children to give color to the auditorium, blazed up like celluloid, blinding the terrified spectators with smoke.

Children were trampled under the feet of the terrified people as they surged to the rear. Mothers screamed as they saw their children, many of them just out of toddling clothes, trampled under heavy feet.

By the time the survivors reached the open, the two-story building was a mass of flames, a gigantic funeral pyre. Efforts at rescue were hopeless.

When the flames had died down, smouldering bodies were seen scattered over the ruins of the building. Near the spot where the foot of the stairs had stood, were found a mass of little bodies. These little children, it is believed, were herded to this spot by some heroic soul, only to expire with safety within their reach.

The tourists stated that there was some question about the exact origin of the fire. One report had it, they stated, that the wick of the lamp, turned up too high, had burned a hole in the ceiling. Another report, that the lamp exploded, falling to the floor. All reports, however, agreed that an attempt was made to throw the burning lamp out of the window, and that failing in this aim, it struck the side of the wall.

The windows were screened, it was said, and it was believed that the man risked his life in an effort to avert the disaster and must have thrown the lamp with great force.

TOURIST FIRST BRINGS THE DISTRESSING NEWS TO MONROE

News of the Pezeland fire, the greatest disaster that ever struck this section of the country, was first received here when a passing tourist, who came through Camden this morning, informed Mr. N. C. English of the horrible details. Mr. English notified The Journal, and after interviewing the tourist, Mr. Higgins put in a long distance call to Camden and received a verification of the disaster from the Sheriff of that county.

The fire occurred about nine o'clock, too late for the morning newspapers to receive an account, especially since the school was located in the rural section, some distance from Camden.

A traveling man who arrived here on a noon train stated, however, that the Columbia State received a special from Camden early this morning telling of the tragedy, but it must have been after the Associated Press wires had been closed, as neither the Charlotte, Raleigh or Greensboro morning papers carried the story.

News From Monroe Route Six

On May 9th, 1923, God in His infinite love and mercy came and took to Himself, the spirit of our much loved friend, Mrs. I. R. Duncan. Although sad because of her going from us, we will be resigned to the will of God, who makes no mistakes, but causes all things to work together for good to them that love Him. We want to extend our heart-felt sympathy to her family in their sad bereavement, and point them to the great Comforter.

Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Strider of Unionville were the dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Presley on last Friday.

Mrs. J. W. Haywood spent last week end with her daughter, Mrs. A. B. Yandle of Charlotte.

Miss Ruby Helms, who has been at the bedside of her sister, Mrs. T. B. Price of Unionville has returned home. Mrs. Price has been quite ill but we are glad to report that she is improving nicely.

Mr. Z. A. Presley and children, Woodrow and Edith, visited in Charlotte recently.

Mr. Marshal Helms of Charlotte spent Sunday in this community.

Rev. A. B. Haywood will preach at the Hemby school house next Sunday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock.

Mr. Dewey Yandle, who has been working in Charlotte is now at home for awhile.

Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Kiker spent Sunday with Mrs. Kiker's daughter, Miss Mayme Ritch.

Come on Indian Trail correspondent we indeed love to read your interesting pieces in the Monroe Journal. Don't let the Stouts correspondent persuade you to give her two columns and you only have one.

Mr. and Mrs. John Helms and children and Mr. and Mrs. O. V. Honeycutt and children, all of Monroe, were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Haywood Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Todd of Charlotte visited the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Helms Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Reid of Charlotte visited Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Presley recently.

Mrs. L. C. Yandle spent Saturday and Sunday in Charlotte.

Rev. Thos. L. Trott to Go to Statesville Church

Friends in this city of Rev. Thos. L. Trott, former rector of St. Paul's Episcopal church, will read with interest the following from the Raleigh News and Observer.

"Salisbury, May 16.—Rev. Thos. L. Trott, who has been in charge of two local Episcopal churches, preached his farewell sermons at these churches Sunday and will leave at once for Statesville where he has accepted a call to become rector of the Episcopal church there.

"Mr. Trott has many friends in this his native county who are sorry to see him leave but who will be glad he is going no further away than Statesville."

Missing!

A large blue print of a large tract of land near McBee, S. C., is missing from my office. It is wrapped in a large pasteboard roll. Can be of no possible service to any one but me. Return to my office at Bank of Union. W. S. BLAKENEY.

Forty or fifty persons from Camden were in the building, ten or fifteen of whom lost their lives. A number of prominent citizens from Kershaw county are in the fatality list, among them Coroner C. L. Dixon, C. N. Humphreys and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Brown, Jesse Pierce, Mr. and Mrs. M. L. McLeod and two children, Mr. and Mrs. Bunyan McLeod and one child, Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Davis and four children, Mr. John Phillips and daughters, S. G. West, a Hendrix family and the coroner's daughter.

The names of the dead were secured from the Sheriff of Kershaw county, who said efforts were still under way to check up the missing persons of the community.

Two Lads Narrowly Escape Death When Elevator Falls

Raymond Outen, son of Mr. W. R. Outen of Monroe, and William Howie, son of Mr. W. A. Howie of Mineral Springs, came very near losing their lives yesterday afternoon by the falling of an elevator in the brick building in course of construction by Mr. Raymond Shute on Hayne street. The lads are about sixteen and now lie at the Ellen Fitzgerald Hospital suffering with wounds the outcome of which appears uncertain. The Outen lad's leg is crushed so badly that it is a question whether it will have to be amputated or not. William Howie's skull is crushed.

MARSHVILLE MAY MAKE IT UNANIMOUS

It looks like Marshville is preparing to make it unanimous for the road bond issue to be voted on June 9th. Last night the Chamber of Commerce at Marshville held a very enthusiastic meeting, devoted entirely to the proposed bond issue. Only one or two attendants were at all inclined against the issue and they became thoroughly convinced before leaving that the county cannot afford at this time to discontinue the road-building program.

Mr. T. G. Collins showed from the auditor's report that 229 miles of topsoil roads have been built in the county, all of which are first-class roads as compared with the roads of the county several years ago. Marshville township has received a very liberal share of the road money already spent in the county and expects but little of the proposed issue, but there are lateral roads in Lanes Creek and New Salem townships that lead toward Marshville that need attention and the citizens of Marshville township are willing to continue the work in order that others may enjoy the same privilege that is theirs, and they are also willing for other sections of the county to have good roads.

Military Training Camps

The 1923 Citizens Military Training Camps will be held this year from August 1st, to August 30th, at the following Camps: Camp McClellan, Ala., Fort Barrancas, Fla., and Fort Bragg, N. C. The camp at Camp McClellan will be for Infantry, Cavalry, Engineers; at Fort Barrancas for Coast Artillery and at Fort Bragg for Field Artillery. The age limit for these camps is from seventeen to twenty-four. All expenses will be paid, and it is a fine opportunity for a vacation at the expense of the Government for ten young men from this county, ten being Union county's quota. A number of boys applied last year, but were disappointed by reason of the fact that the applications came in so late that Union county's quota was filled from other counties. I have been appointed by General Albert L. Cox, as Chairman of the C. M. T. C. work for this county, and have all necessary application blanks on hand.

Belmont News

Mrs. J. G. Connell and two daughters spent last Tuesday with Mrs. Connell's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Les Helms. Mr. James Hill of Charlotte was the guests of his parents last Sunday.

Mrs. David A. Simpson of Unionville spent last week with her sister, Mrs. Lela Chaney.

There will be a memorial service Sunday at Emanuel cemetery and everybody is invited that will go, and we hope that every one who has relatives and friends buried there will take a wreath of flowers and decorate their graves. After the service there will be preaching at Union Grove Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock by Rev. R. M. Haigler.

The Hopewell choir went to Polkton last Sunday and it was enjoyed by all who were there. There was a large crowd of people from Brown Creek church but we were unable to get them to sing for us.

Misses Mike and Spine Helms spent last Sunday with their sister at Bak...

Humility is one of the ingredients a self-made man occasionally forgets to mix with his material.

Beauty is only skin deep—and the same may be said of freckles.

FILLING STATIONS MANY AND VARIOUS

(N. C. Christian Advocate) Itinerant, in his perambulations, passing along the streets of a little town until he chanced upon a man who had every appearance of being the manor born. Engaging the gentleman in conversation, this question was put to him: "How many filling stations have you in this town?" After a moment's pause the reply was forthcoming, "five."

This led Itinerant to put another query: "How many newspapers have you?" With little hesitation came the reply, "One, and it has a hard time to get along."

To ask about the book stores would have been useless. A book store or a library had never once entered the mind of the most visionary citizen, and none had ever stopped to ask, "Why this state of affairs?" But somehow, the matter of filling stations took hold of Itinerant and he could not get away from the fact that filling stations of greater variety were needed.

Think of five filling stations for automobiles and not one for the mind! Gas and go are not all of life; vision and thought have a place. Fewer gas stations and more book emporiums would secure a finer balance in the life of a people. Will not a better adjustment have to be made before proper proportion can be maintained in life's values? Millions are poured out like water for schools in the wonderful advance of the present time in educational effort, without any notable increase in the demand for the stations furnishing supplies for the mind. Why is this? Does it mean that books have but small place in the life of the modern man? Green says that in the days of the Puritan, England became a nation of one book; it would seem that America has become a nation of no book. We live on headlines of newspapers and the pictures in magazines and the movies, entrusting our salvation to gas and go.

Men Make the Town

Men make the town—men with broad views and notions; Men without patience with the knaveries born Of narrowness and faith in foolish notions— Men who can climb the hill and meet morn. Men, and not towers, not temples and not vanes— Men with the soul to lose while country gains.

Men make the town—men with the wisdom won

From service and custom in the public weal; Men that can lift their faces to the sun Men that are stalwart and not blind with zeal— Men, and not meetings, resolutions, charts— Men who have spirit, high-minded men with hearts.

Men make the town—not avenues and places;

Men, and not monuments, museums, domes— Men who can keep yet spread the essential graces; Men with the industry to fashion homes; Men with the broad, unselfish spirit glowing To set things going and to keep them going.

Men make the town—not streets and parks and highways;

Men, and not relics; the men you have count more Than all the building in the numerous byways. Than all the mills and factories that roar— Men who can lift a city to the peaks Where conscious purpose its high meaning speaks.—B. B.