

# The Mount Airy News.

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## GREAT AIRSHIP WRECKS IN TERRIFIC STORM WAS PRIDE OF AMERICAN NAVY

Huge Craft Was Caught in Air Currents That it Could Not Survive—Broke Into Three Parts

### One Section of Ship Traveled 12 Miles Before Landing— 14 of Crew Killed

Caldwell, Ohio, Sept. 8.—Fourteen of the crew of the Shenandoah, giant dirigible, are dead, and two others were seriously injured early today when the pride of the United States Navy cracked during a severe storm on its western cruise from its Lakehurst, N. J., air port.

Among the dead is Lieutenant Commander Zachary Lansdowne, captain of the ship. After battling the elements for several hours, the huge aircraft suddenly shot upward to an altitude of approximately 7,500 feet from a 3,000-foot level, where the dirigible buckled amidship. The pressure and twisting was so great that it broke the ship in three sections.

#### Cabin Broke Away

The control cabin, swung beneath the fore-section of the ship proper, broke away and crashed to the ground while at an altitude of several thousand feet. It carried most of the crew who were killed.

Released of the control cabin, the fore-section, measuring about 150 feet and bearing seven survivors, free ballooned for more than an hour and finally was landed near Sharon, twelve miles from the control cabin crashed near Ava.

The main section, carrying 26 survivors, landed with a crash which sent several of the crew diving thru the outer covering to the ground. A middle section of some 15 or 20 feet settled down in pieces over the countryside.

#### Thrilling Ride

Those aboard the nose section had a wild and thrilling ride and landed twelve miles from the place where the cabin compartment crashed. Several of the officers had just left the control cabin and were climbing up the ladder into the cat-walk of the ship proper when the cabin broke loose.

Suspended in mid-air and hanging to a girder, they crawled and were pulled to places of comparative safety.

One, not so fortunate, F. J. McCarthy, chief rigger, was swept from his perilous perch in the forward end of the nose to the ground when the motorless craft struck a tree. He is in a Marietta hospital in a serious condition.

#### Ably Handled

With three men in the forward end and three in the aft, the craft was maneuvered to safe altitude after brushing trees and at least off farmhouse. Lieutenant Commander C. E. Rosendahl and Lieutenant J. B. Anderson directed the release of the helium gas and gasoline in such a way that the nose landed without severely injuring any aboard. The dead were then taken to Belle Valley, a nearby village, where they were placed in an improvised morgue.

The men apparently were killed instantly. At least one man was torn in two. Others had broken bones and skulls and were otherwise mutilated. The bodies will be kept at Belle Valley until tomorrow, when a board of inquiry officially will establish the cause of death.

This board will be headed by Commander J. H. Klein, executive officer of the Lakehurst station, who is en route here today. Another board is expected to investigate the cause of the accident and to determine what disposition, if any, will be made of the wrecked airship.

The Shenandoah started from Lakehurst, N. J., late yesterday afternoon and had an uneventful trip until it crossed the Ohio River into Ohio.

While on a line between Cambridge and Byesville, heading westward, the ship encountered a severe electrical storm. It was unable to make any speed. After some maneuvering, officers managed to head the ship southward, seeking to clear the storm area.

Near Ava, eight miles north of here, the ship encountered the line squall, the variety of storm most feared by air men, and was carried from a 3,000-foot level to 4,500 feet, where it remained stationary for a few minutes. Then, with the ship's

nose headed southward and four of the five motors going full speed, the pressure again hoisted the ship to a still higher level, about 6,500 feet. Lieutenant Commander Lansdowne, survivors say, ordered all motors stopped when the ship reached an altitude of about 6,500 feet.

#### Killed Instantly

At this point the ship began to break apart. The nose section continued its ascent to about 7,500 feet and then started downward on its cross country flight. The control cabin was twisted off and dropped to the ground when more than 5,000 feet in the air. The seven men aboard this section were killed instantly.

The big section, carrying 26 officers and men, tossed about in the air for a short time while the crew fought heroically to bring it under control. This section was so unevenly balanced that it settled to the ground, where it was further cracked.

The bulk of the mid-section fell into a small grove and three survivors skinned their way down to the ground. Radio Gunner Raymond Cole, who was making his first flight aboard the Shenandoah, was badly injured when the mid-section fell. He may recover.

Officers and men went about their work with coolness, doing their best to right the ship to a level keel during the storm and after the break-up. Survivors are loud in their praise for the manner in which the crew conducted itself. There was no disorder. The men sought to release helium as directed and when they crashed to earth they were thrown through the outer covering or scrambling to the ground on their own accord.

Col. G. C. Hall, United States Army observer aboard the Shenandoah, was among the survivors who were carried across the county in the nose of the ship. He was next to the last to leave the control cabin, being followed by Lieut. A. B. Anderson, who probably had the most thrilling experience. He grabbed a girder when the control broke away and finally managed to straddle it.

His back was to those who were up in the nose and he was unable to turn around and crawl up the girder to a more safe position in the hull. A rope was thrown to him by Lieut. R. G. Mayer. By reaching over his shoulder Anderson managed to turn around on the girder and crawl to the nose with the others aboard this section.

Anderson refused to talk about this adventure and Lieutenant Mayer told of it only after Lieutenant Commander Rosendahl had told him it would be all right. Lieut. Mayer is the officer who is credited with the responsibility for the safe return of the Shenandoah when it broke away from its mooring mast at Lakehurst on January 16, 1924.

#### Realized Plight

Lieutenant C. A. Bauch was in the main section when it crashed to the ground. He says there was no undue hurry or concern aboard. The men, he said, hurriedly realized their predicament and did everything they could to save the ship. Bauch has a nasty cut on the leg which he sustained when he was thrown from the ship when it crashed.

F. E. Masters, of Okron, O., aviation pilot, hung to a girder until the ship was within a few feet of the ground and jumped to safety. Had he stayed on the girder until it crashed he undoubtedly would have been killed, as the girder above the one on which he was hanging piled on top of the one he was riding.

"I thought my end had come," he said, "but had no particular sensation. When it was all over I saw the other men standing on a nearby knoll looking over the wreckage and congratulating each other on their safe landing."

#### Planned to Jump

Masters, on the scheduled return trip to Lakehurst, planned to jump by parachute from the Shenandoah as it passed over his home city—Akron—where he expected to visit his wife and week-old son.

Lieutenant Commander Rosendahl, third in command, took charge of affairs after the crash and was authorized

by the Bureau of Navigation, navy department, to send more than a score of the survivors back to Lakehurst by train. They left Cambridge, Ohio, early this evening. Two officers and two enlisted men from the Shenandoah are here with Lieutenant Commander Rosendahl to direct the disposition of the bodies and to assist the boards of inquiry.

The body of Lieutenant W. E. Sheppard, who must have been in the mid-section and immediately over the crack when the ship broke apart, was found in a hedge alongside a creek on the farm of Charles Nisewanger, a mile or more away from the main part of the wreck.

Clutched in his hand was a piece of rope, which evidently had given away when the crash came.

The dirigible designed by the Bureau of Naval Aeronautics and constructed at the naval airship station, Lakehurst, N. J., was an improved version of the Zeppelin L-33 and the British R-33 class, of which she was a very close duplicate in dimensions.

She was the first rigid airship built in America. Six hundred and eighty feet in length, with a maximum diameter of 78.7 feet, she contained 19 gas cells with a capacity of 2,115,000 cubic feet. Her power plant consisted of six 300 horsepower Packard engines, capable of driving her at a maximum speed of sixty miles an hour.

The Shenandoah was completed in the summer of 1923 and her test flights were very satisfactory. While attached to her mooring mast at Lakehurst on January 12, 1924, the ship was torn loose in a violent gale while only a skeleton crew on board.

#### First Accident

The whole mooring fitting and part of the nose framing were wrenched out of the ship, the forward gas bag was ripped and the following one was punctured, but the crew had four of the six engines running within two minutes of the break away. Fuel and water were released to restore her trim and she weathered the storm without further structural damage and was again housed in her shed after a few hours.

Last October the Shenandoah was given a remarkable test in the form of a trans-continental flight. Leaving the Lakehurst station on October 7 she cruised to the Pacific coast and returned in 235 hours, completing the round trip of 8,100 miles on October 25.

Including a stay of eleven days on the west coast, she was away from Lakehurst for 18 days. Her actual flying time between Lakehurst, Fort Worth, Texas, San Diego, Calif., and Camp Lewis, at Tacoma, Wash., and return, not counting the time consumed in locating the mooring mast thru the fog on two occasions, was 235 hours, 11 minutes, against the fastest express train time between these points of 272 hours, 30 minutes, deducting time for connections.

#### Helium Gas

The Shenandoah was inflated with helium gas, which is non-inflammable non-poisonous, and the next lightest gas to hydrogen. This gas, extracted from the natural gas of certain fields in Texas and Kansas, is not found in commercial quantities elsewhere. It is extracted by a government plant in Texas.

The dirigible recently was equipped with ten machine guns, two in the after car and two in the forward cabin, from which the airship was steered and one in each of the six power gondolas. This armament, it was stated, was for use in repelling airplane attack in time of war.

The success achieved by the Shenandoah in her transcontinental tour and other test voyages led to plans for her use in a United States naval expedition to the Arctic.

The plans as drawn up called for stationing vessels fitted with mooring masts at Nome, Alaska, and Spitzbergen, in the Norwegian archipelago.

It was hoped she would be able to reach the pole and her crew was eager for the trip, but after her storm experience in Lakehurst, in which she was torn from the mooring mast, plans for the Polar flight were abandoned by order of President Coolidge.

When five of his flock of thirty pure-bred Buff Orpington chickens died during a recent heat wave, a Milwaukee man attached an electric fan to the henhouse light socket and revived the other dying members of his flock.

A clothes moth lays 150 eggs and her descendants are capable of destroying 100 pounds of wool in a year.

## DROUGHT SERIOUS IN SECTIONS OF SOUTH

Areas as Far West as Oklahoma and as Far South as Louisiana Affected by Dry Spell—Mountain and Piedmont Regions Especially Hard Hit.

Washington, Sept. 5.—The United States weather bureau today said the drought in sections of the south had become serious. Areas in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana have had no rain since August 12. The usual tropical rains that come this time of the year and soak the ground missed this summer and temperatures have been slightly higher.

The mountain and piedmont regions of the south are hard hit. Many communities are having to stint themselves on water to tide over.

Former Senator Dial, of South Carolina, who has large business interests in the south, said today that no such a dry spell had been witnessed since 1881. Streams are drying up, trees many years old are dying, and crops have withered.

Senator Simmmons, of North Carolina, says that the western half of North Carolina has suffered very greatly. Some counties will harvest less than a half the average crop.

Weather bureau figures show that the drought stricken territory is very spotted. Rains saved crops in one county, but did not fall on adjoining counties.

Reports show that the drought in parts of North Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin has been checked by showers. The prospect for rain in the south is better than it has been for weeks.

The present dry spell started back in February, weather records show, and then it was noticed that the water in streams in southern states was lower than usual at that season of the year. The spring and summer months were comparatively dry.

Weather bureau officials report that a light fall of snow in the mountains of the south last winter has contributed to the present situation.

## NO RELIEF IN SIGHT FOR LONG DROUGHT

Weather Expert Says Widespread Storm Only Thing and It Is Not Near

Atlanta, Ga., Sept. 2.—There must be a storm in Texas sweeping across the gulf of Mexico into this section, before those sections of the southeast suffering from the most disastrous drought in more than 50 years can expect any relief.

This was the opinion today of C. F. Von Herrman, meteorologist in charge of the United States department of agriculture weather bureau here, who said that local rains, slight in nature, have no significance as harbingers of relief.

At present there is no indication of even a slight disturbance in the Lone Star state, where all the precipitation in this section originates. Mr. Von Herrman also said that September, October and November are the driest months of the year, especially the two latter. December, he said, is recognized as the wettest month and therefore he can see no promise of real relief before that time. If December runs true to form, he continued, relief should come then, but at the same time he called attention to the fact that July and August also are very wet months ordinarily, but did not run true to form this year.

Although the drought in existence now is described by Mr. Von Herrman as the most disastrous in 50 years, he did not mean that it is of the longest duration, as there have been several since 1879, first year of the operation of this bureau which rival this in length.

## Farmers in Hertford Will Plant Many Pecan Trees

Ahaskie, Sept. 5.—County Agent C. A. Rose expects Hertford county farmers to plant not less than 500 pecan trees this fall. He is taking orders for trees now, and since he announced the pecan campaign about a week ago, more than 700 have been ordered. In most instances, Mr. Rose says, the orders are for small amounts, five or six to the person. Many farmers in the county set out pecan trees last year, and good results have been obtained in most all instances, and to this success is partly due the revival of interest in the pecan campaign in eastern Carolina.

## Slump In Tobacco Prices On Eastern Carolina Markets

Farmers Advised to Hold Weed Off Market; Offerings of Poor Quality

—Tobacco prices have slumped again on Eastern Carolina markets, and tobacco growers are being advised by Eastern Carolina newspapers to keep their weed off the market. The low prices have been greatly disappointing to the tobacco farmers.

Opening prices on September 3 of last year averaged around 21 cents, while opening prices on September 3 this year averaged around 16 cents on most markets. The decrease of 5 cents a pound is explained in many quarters as being due to the poor quality of the offerings.

The poor quality of the first offerings would not account for the slump of 5 to 6 cents a pound in the first prices paid this year, as compared with last year, it is declared, and it is for this reason that Eastern Carolina papers, like the Kinston Free Press, are advising farmers not to rush their tobacco on the market.

The first and second primings are described as "very common," but from the second curing on thru the stalk the tobacco crop is said to be as fine as any ever grown in Eastern North Carolina.

#### Reports Great Disappointment

Reports to George Ross, chief of the division of markets of the state department of agriculture, show the average prices for August for the Fairmont market to have been \$18.60, while the average at Clarkston dropped to \$16.21. These markets opened at the same time as the South Carolina belt, so that these averages may be taken as a fair index of the way the prices run.

"Preliminary reports of prices from the Eastern Carolina tobacco market indicate that farmers have been greatly disappointed by the low prices," said Mr. Ross.

"The sales have been heavy, the quality and prices low. The yield will be greater this year than last."

While the quality of the tobacco sold so far is said to be sorry, it is declared to be better than last year because of the dry weather. Last year the wet weather made the tobacco sorry. The body is heavier this year, and the yield will average around 650 pounds an acre, which is above the average for Eastern North Carolina.

Mr. Ross said he had not had opportunity to visit any of the markets except in the southern tier of counties, and he had found the prices disappointing there, while reports from other sections were to the same effect. He indicated that he would go into the situation further, with a view to determining why the tobacco market has slumped.

## Rocky Mount Sales Average \$15.25

Rocky Mount, Sept. 5.—Total sales on the local tobacco market for the first week of the ensuing season, which opened Tuesday, aggregated 1,476,867 pounds at an average price of \$15.25 per hundred pounds, according to official figures obtained from Secretary E. G. Johnson of the tobacco board of trade today.

The figures apply to sales including yesterday's offerings, as following its regular custom the market suspends activities Saturday. The report shows that \$225,222.21 was placed in circulation here during the four days for which the market operated this week.

## Tobacco Association Has Leased Redrying Plants

Raleigh, Sept. 5.—The Tobacco Growers Cooperative association will do much of its own redrying business during the coming season and will handle a large proportion of its redried tobacco in its own plants, according to the statement appearing this week in the Tri-State Tobacco Growers, the official organ of the marketing association.

The organized farmers who have been able to decrease the costs of their redrying every year since the beginning of the association have now leased plants at Darlington, S. C., Rocky Mount, Fremont, Danville, Va., South Boston, Va., and Chatham, Va.

## Lumberton's Tobacco Market Average \$14.75

Lumberton, Sept. 5.—Lumberton's

auction tobacco market closed a successful week although averages show that the big slump in prices which was felt so keenly on the eastern North Carolina markets also left its impression here. During the week 650,962 pounds were sold here for the sum of \$94,836.65, an average of \$14.75 the largest quantity of inferior types were offered than during any week this season but the reduction in price on better grades was very noticeable.

Monday's sale was exceptionally good an average price of \$17.90 per hundred pounds being paid for 184,832 pounds. Friday sales were slightly better than on the two previous days. Warehousemen and growers are confident the prices will have an advance with the opening of a new week.

## Tobacco on Kinston Market Averages 15.23 Cents Lb.

Kinston, Sept. 5.—Tobacco prices here this week were higher than estimated. The official report for the week of Ernest Webb, market statistician, showed an average of 15.23 cents a pound. Sales totalled more than 2,180,000 pounds.

Webb said buyers' limits for good offerings were the same as last season, but growers had graded poorly and mixed much inferior tobacco with good.

## REYNOLDS IS BIGGEST PAYER

## Winston Man Leads in Income Tax in State

Raleigh, Sept. 2.—Although approximately 80,000 persons filed individual income tax returns, over one third of the round total of \$5,000,000 individual income tax assessments of the federal government in this state for 1924 was against the incomes of less than 100 persons, it is shown by the records of the internal revenue officer of the state made public here today by Collector Gilliam Grissom.

Of the 80,000 persons who filed returns, however, only about half had to pay income taxes, nearly half of the number filing returns claiming exemptions to their incomes.

The largest single tax was assessed against W. N. Reynolds, of Winston-Salem, brother of the late R. J. Reynolds. His tax was \$243,385. Although this was a decrease of about \$25,000 over his tax of the previous year, it indicated a larger income because of the lower income tax rate.

Bowman Gray, of Winston-Salem another official of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco company, came second with a tax assessment of \$214,049. The third largest was that paid by Charles A. Cannon, of Concord, whose tax was \$112,849.38. H. S. Richardson, of Greensboro, came fourth with a tax of \$93,488.

Others in the order of the amount of tax paid were: James A. Gray, of Winston-Salem, \$80,908.12; Mrs. Graham Kenan, of Wilmington, \$77,272; Mrs. Sarah E. Morrison, wife of former Governor Cameron Morrison, \$69,292; and Jeanette Cone, of Greensboro, with a tax assessment of \$53,979. The only other tax of more than \$50,000 was that of \$50,438, assessed against R. E. Lassater, of Winston-Salem, an official of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco company.

Between two and three hundred people paid from \$500 to \$1000 and several thousand paid between \$100 and \$500. The greater number of individual tax amounts, however, were in the single and double digit class in dollars.

Fifty-three persons paid more than \$10,000, the total of their tax payments being \$1,601,284. About 350 were assessed tax amounts of \$1,000 or more. Six of these were assessed more than \$50,000 tax.

That the amount of tax paid by an individual cannot be taken as an accurate means of determining his income was emphasized by Colonel Grissom. Due to business losses or interest paid out, a man with a large gross income often pays little tax, he said. Then too, many persons of wealth have their money invested in tax exempt bonds.

Protection of California fruit orchards against frost has become almost an exact science because of the accurate temperature predictions by the weather bureau.