

The Mount Airy Daily News

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Wife of Gov. Trinkle Seriously Burned When Mansion Ignites

Fire, Following Christmas Festivities, Destroys First Floor of Mansion and Much of the Priceless Historic Furniture.

Mrs. Trinkle and Children Escape by Leaping From Third Story Window—Structure 114 Years Old

Richmond, Va., Jan. 4.—The official residence of the governor of Virginia was transferred tonight to Memorial hospital here, where Mrs. E. Lee Trinkle, wife of the executive, lies in a very serious condition from burns sustained this morning when she dashed through a wall of flames on the first floor of the executive mansion and up the stairway to across her sleeping son on the next floor. An operation will be performed on Mrs. Trinkle tomorrow morning to relieve her suffering from burns about the face, neck and arms and the governor, deprived of his home by the fire that gutted virtually the entire lower floor of the mansion, has taken a suit of rooms in the hospital to be near his wife.

Mrs. Trinkle is suffering from what physicians describe as "first degree" burns about the face and neck and "second degree," or more serious burns on her arms. Dr. Mura Willis of this city, will operate on her tomorrow morning to relieve her suffering and in the hope of keeping the burns from leaving scars. The governor's wife was in such great pain today and tonight that physicians confined their efforts entirely to relieving her suffering, and have not as yet made a thorough examination of her injuries.

Children Escape

An examination this afternoon of three-year-old Billie Trinkle, whose sparkler ignited the Christmas tree in the parlor of the mansion, and four-year-old E. Lee Trinkle, Jr., whose mother was trying to arouse when she was burned, showed neither was returned, nor was the elder boy hurt when he was forced to follow his mother in leaping from his bedroom window to the ground three stories below. Mrs. Trinkle also was not hurt in the fall from the window.

Irreparable damage was done to the 114-year-old structure by the fire which destroyed priceless paintings, antiques and other heirlooms. The building itself is not believed to be seriously damaged, but the massive columns, parquet flooring and beautiful woodwork placed in the mansion by James Monroe, when he had the structure built after the Jeffersonian style of architecture, are ruined.

Started by Sparkler

Mrs. Trinkle was in the kitchen of the mansion when the alarm was spread that the building was afire. Little Billie in extending the Christmas holidays, had got near the tree in the parlor with a sparkler and ignited it and from there the flames spread rapidly through the lower floor.

Clayton Setgray, a negro butler, endeavored to extinguish the burning tree when he entered the room, but finding this impossible, ran to the door to call for aid. It was probably his call that Mrs. Trinkle heard which caused her to rush to the phone to call for the fire department.

Mrs. Trinkle then remembered her son Lee was sleeping on the third floor, and tried to mount the back stairs, but found these blocked by flames. Taking the only other approach to the upper part of the house she had to pass through the parlor and it was probably in going through the flames that she received her injuries. Mounting the front steps amid the clouds of smoke that poured the house, she fell twice before reaching the room of her son she said. "Lee we're trapped" she called him as she fell for the third time to his bed.

"Yes it looks like it," he answered. The boy helped her to the window insisting that she jump first.

Firemen Try to Help

In the meantime, firemen had placed ladders up toward the window, but a rope had broken and the ladder reached only half way. Captain H. D. Rust, one of the firemen, was on the top rung, and as word reached for her to jump the ladder swung eight feet, Mrs. Trinkle

parently fell from the window. The fire captain seized her by an ankle and Policeman J. E. Cook, several rungs below on the ladder caught Mrs. Trinkle's suspended body as she fell from the ladder to the ground. In the fall Rust broke his shoulder. Lee followed his mother, but the ladder gone, he had to jump the whole three stories, his fall being checked when he fell into the arms of Setgray.

Governor Arrives

Governor Trinkle arrived just as Mrs. Trinkle was being helped from the ground. He had been writing a letter of sympathy to a friend when Acting Budget Director J. H. Bradford informed him of the fire. Rushing over he had thought of Lee, Jr., and started through a side door to go after him, thinking, he said, that Mrs. Trinkle was not at home. But the smoke drove him out.

He went to the back, knowing, he said, that it was there only that his son might escape. He saw that Billy was safe in the hands of his nurse as he went to the back, and knowing that Helen Sue, his young daughter, was at school, only Lee need be worried about.

Governor Trinkle arrived at Mrs. Trinkle's side just as she was starting for the hospital across the street. Firemen in the meanwhile had brought the flames under control, throughout the lower floors they had aged, but fighting them was made easier by the portals on the side of the mansion.

Worst Damage in Parlor

It was in the parlor that the serious damage was done, although the first floor rooms suffer damage, as do the rooms upstairs.

The large reception room, or parlor, is one of brilliant halls and rebrations since its building was reduced to a complete wreckage. Standards in the parlor at the entrance to the room, four massive columns, are ruined and are reminiscent of the grandeur that was before the burning. The Christmas tree, made skeletons of 14 priceless ornaments, erased the over a century old woodwork, wiped out antiques scattered through the 114 years and reduced the room and its contents to wreckage.

A magnificent grand piano was a victim of the flames as were beautiful rugs and furnishings, but the irreparable loss came in the destruction of woodwork around the rooms of the lower floor of the grandeur of the days of James Monroe. Enough of this remains, though badly damaged, to allow for its reproduction, however, it is believed.

Paintings Destroyed

Among the most valuable of the portraits were those of Lady Spotswood, Colonel Archibald Cary, and Mary Randolph Carey. All three of these were originals painted between 1735 and 1750. Portraits of Patrick Henry, John Smith, James Madison, Henry Clay, King Carter, and other famous Virginians also were destroyed.

The fire was brought under control before it reached the upstairs or the rooms which surround the larger reception room, but the intensity of the heat and water did considerable damage to these, particularly to the woodwork and walls. All of these would be gone over.

Before going to the hospital Mrs. Trinkle's first request after learning that her sons were safe, was that her violin be rescued. An accomplished violinist, she played often for charitable performances. Firemen managed to rescue one of her violins, but two, including one valued at \$10,000, were lost.

Irreparable Damage

The fire today was the first that has ever occurred in the mansion, although the building is covered by

\$40,000 insurance and \$10,000 is carried on its contents, the damage wrought is thought irreparable. Estimations on the cost of repairs place the loss at from \$20,000 to \$30,000. During the next few days Governor Trinkle will remain at the Memorial hospital with his wife. A five-room suite has been set aside as a temporary "Governor's Mansion." The three children were taken to the homes of friends, many of whom offered their homes to the chief executive.

Throughout the afternoon telegrams of sympathy were pouring into the governor's office from over the state and from chief executives of other states. Half an hour after the fire, Governor Trinkle said, flowers had begun to arrive at the hospital.

Mrs. Trinkle was resting comfortably tonight under the influence of opiates, but earlier in the day she suffered considerable pain. Dr. Willis, a specialist in burns, expressed the belief that no scars would be left to mar her face, though her arms and hands were more seriously burned. Physicians considered it nothing short of miraculous that Mrs. Trinkle was burned so badly and escaped without even scorching her clothing.

The reception of the governor and his wife to the members of the general assembly, which was to have taken place the night of January 13 was definitely called off late this afternoon. Whether Governor-elect Harry F. Byrd and his family will find the mansion ready for occupancy when Governor Byrd assumes office February 1 could not be definitely stated. He is expected shortly to oversee redecoration of the building.

WALKER NOW MAYOR OF GREATEST CITY

Tammany Controls Both New York State and City Governments Now

New York, Jan. 1.—James J. Walker, ex-song writer, ex-state senator and Tammany protégé of Governor Smith, became mayor of New York today.

Thus for the first time in its history, Tammany controls both state and city governments at the same time.

Mayor Walker succeeds John F. Hylan, for eight years stormy petrel of Metropolitan Democratic politics, who resigned a full day in advance of the end of his term to insure his pension rights.

Although formal inaugural ceremonies were set for noon today, Mayor Walker was sworn in previously so that he might become the city's chief executive at midnight when acting Mayor William T. Collins stepped out of office after a rule of but one day.

Mayor Walker's appointees include many officials of the Hylan regime, indicating that the split in the Democratic ranks occasioned by the primaries has been healed.

Mr. Hylan goes out of office with a pension of \$4,205 a year. His retirement from office follows one of the bitterest inter-party fights in the local democratic ranks in years.

His renomination was vigorously opposed by Governor Smith last fall.

Byron W. Huhn, silk hat manufacturer for most of the Presidents since the time of Grant, recently died at his Milwaukee home.

Another Side of Co-op Question

Several days ago there appeared in the state press dispatches sent out from Washington which printed a letter sent to Senator Overman by John H. Folger, of Mount Airy, in which Mr. Folger gave his opinion as to the success of the association in this section. In answer to Mr. Folger's letter the following was sent to Senator Overman which gives the side of the cooperative question as seen by one of its members—Mr. W. L. Seal of Round Peak section of this county:

Mount Airy, N. C.
R. F. D. No. 3
Dec. 31st, 1925

Hon. Lee S. Overman,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Sir:

I have just read the letter written to you by Mr. John H. Folger, of Mount Airy, N. C., about the Tobacco Growers' Cooperative Association, published yesterday in the Greensboro Daily News. As a member of this association, I want to write you about the information contained in this letter.

Mr. Folger says that he is speaking for the farmers of this county and for all the farmers of the Piedmont section. He seems to have a wide circle of clients. He may be speaking for his clients, the contract breakers, but he is not speaking for the farmers and is against their best interest.

He states that the present association is unsatisfactory and that 95 per cent of the members have found it detrimental and are dissatisfied and disgusted. I know that this is not true of my section and do not think it true of this county. In my school district we have what is called a local, and meet at our school house to discuss association matters. Every man in our district is a member save one, and every member is satisfied and loyal and will sign a contract for the next five years. I know three other districts near ours that feel the same way toward our association. I believe that instead of 95 per cent of the members in these four locals being dissatisfied, 99 per cent will sign a new contract, for we will regard it as our only means of salvation from our present financial distress.

He says that the members of the association suffered severely and have lost heart and hope. It is true that tobacco farmers have suffered for the past twenty five years, with the exception of two or three years during the war. It is also true that we will continue to suffer far more than we have unless we have sense enough to organize and stay organized. What is true just now of tobacco farmers is true of all one crop farmers over the United States. We have all fallen upon hard times on account of a one crop system and extravagance in the buying of automobiles, of land at inflated prices, and of hundreds of things we could well do without. These are the causes of our present suffering, not co-operative marketing.

It is my belief that the members of our association in Surry County are in a better condition than the farmers on the outside, and have not given as many mortgages. The secretary and treasurer of the Surry Farm Loan Board told me today that a list of loans for this county was approved last week by the Federal Farm Loan Bank for 21 men, and out of the 21 only three belonged to the Co-opera-

tion Association. A similar list of 17 was approved a few weeks before and only three of this list were members, and two of the three were contract breakers. Not over 15 per cent of the men in this county who have borrowed money from this bank during the past four years are members of the Association, and over two thirds of the farmers of Surry County belong to the Marketing Association.

Through the Credit Corporation for Surry County, members of the association are enabled to secure nine month loans thru Federal Intermediate Credit Bank at a very reasonable rate of interest to pay cash for their fertilizer and supplies. No farmer in our county, unless he is a member of the Marketing Association, can secure these loans, for our Surry Agricultural Corporation was organized by "Co-ops" who subscribed 85 per cent of its capital stock, the other 15 per cent being subscribed by some of our best business men. The County Bankers tell me that the "Co-ops" pay their notes at the bank more promptly than the outside farmers. So it would seem that the mortgages and suffering, Mr. Folger speaks of, are outside the association; at any rate they are not caused by it.

I fear that his information is not so wide after all, but is rather confined to complaints made to him by his clients, who are contract breakers. It is to be expected that these, together with the warehousemen, abuse the association. And I fear that it is from this source that he gets his information and inspiration. As a matter of fact our association has had about 60 suits in this county against contract breakers from a membership of over two thousand and Mr. Folger, as an attorney, has represented at least fifty of these and has lost every suit save one, and the Judge balled the jury out in open court for relieving this one of his contract.

Mr. Folger's information offered you may be disinterested. He says it is. I do not know who pays him as attorney for his services, whether the contract breakers, or the warehousemen, or the Imperial Tobacco Company, or whether anyone pays him. But I do know that I am a farmer of Surry County, a tobacco raiser, a member of the association, and am very much interested, not only for my own welfare but for my neighbors and friends, who make their living in the same way I make mine. I also know that I have never received one cent from the association except for tobacco delivered, and I am satisfied, and know that co-operative marketing is our only hope.

I do not mean to tell you that there are only a very few farmers in our county who are dissatisfied, nor that all locals are as well satisfied as my local or the other ones mentioned. For I know there are a great many who are discontented and blame the association for a great many things. But from my knowledge and information these kickers were either former warehousemen, or have been simple enough to fall for the faults and fraudulent warehouse propaganda that has been floated like a cloud of poison gas over our section.

I do not know anything about the bill now before Congress about Co-operative Marketing, but I can trust Senators like you to be wise enough to act upon it for the best interest of farmers like myself. Knowing that you will do so, I beg to remain, Yours very truly,
W. L. SEAL

Federal Highway Routings Not Very Satisfactory to All

Fight in State Highway Commission is Now Brewing and May Become National Issue as Dissatisfaction Continues to Grow.

Dissenters Think Chairman Page Was Arbitrary in Matter and Did Not Give All Interested an Opportunity to be Heard.

Washington, Jan. 2.—A fight between members of the State Highway Commission is expected to be staged at the next meeting of that body over the proposed designation of federal highways in North Carolina, which was adopted by the Joint Board of Interstate Highways on the recommendation of State Highway Commissioner Frank Page, it was learned here today.

Those discontented over the proposed designations will carry the fight before the State Highway Commission as a matter of courtesy, but they have every intention of carrying the fight on unless they get what they want from the State Commission. A hearing has already been arranged before T. M. McDonald, Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, on January 8 before the meeting of the executive committee of the American Association of State Highway Officials in Chicago a week later. Mr. Page is president of the association, which is expected to finally pass on the proposed designations at the executive committee meeting.

Opponents of the proposed designations insist that Frank Page made the designations and that all interested parties were not given opportunity to be heard. It was stated here today that the wishes of Senators and Representatives from North Carolina were disregarded by Mr. Page. Those who have conferred with Mr. McDonald stated that he is unwilling to make any change without the approval of Mr. Page.

Object to Number

The chief fight centers around the route number given the Atlantic Coastal Highway. Advocates of the Atlantic Coastal Highway want that route designated as Route 1 and object to the giving of that numeral to the route across the state via Norfolk, Henderson, Raleigh, Sanford and Pinehurst.

Highway Commissioners W. A. Hart, W. A. McGirt and Wheatley, "have already filed protest with the Joint Board of Interstate Highways," according to R. C. Dunn, of Enfield, president of the Atlantic Coastal Highway.

While the fight over the designation of the Atlantic Coastal Highway is assuming large proportions, it is by no means the only objection to the North Carolina federal highways approved by Mr. Page. Hugh McRae, well-known promoter, is sending copies of a controversy by mail which he has been having with Commissioner Page to members of the state delegation. The Blackbear Trail, a scenic highway which is dear to Mr. McRae's heart, has been left off the map and Mr. McRae is very vigorous about wanting it on.

The following telegram from Representative Abernethy to T. F. Moffett, secretary of the New Bern Chamber of Commerce, describes the attitudes of the opponents of the present designations and the situation with regard to them:

"In company with Congressmen Lyon, of North Carolina, Gasque, of South Carolina and Edwards of Georgia, I called on T. H. McDonald, chief Bureau Public Roads, relative to marking of highways running north and south. Tentative map proposed is very unfair to entire eastern section of state. Trouble we are having is the tentative map has been approved by Chairman Page of the State Highway Commission. Suggest you confer with Senator Simmons and get his views. We have asked McDonald to hold up matter until reconvening of Congress and have suggested January 3 to appear before him together with all interested parties. Are doing everything possible to correct situation, but we have a desperate fight ahead of us."

Mr. Moffett has written Mr. Abernethy that "Mr. Page has granted all interested parties the privilege of appearing before the next meeting of the State Highway Commission of North Carolina to discuss this matter."

Inasmuch as the difficulty that you are encountering is that Mr. Page approved the present system of numbering and, on the advice of state highway commissioner and other parties interested in this matter, we feel that the thing for us to do as a matter of courtesy is to first appear before the state highway commission, discuss the respective status concerning and secure the action we desire through them, if possible, and if not able to secure the action we desire through them, to then carry the fight to the Bureau of Good Roads at Washington.

"The Atlantic Coastal Highway along the general route from Maine as far south as Richmond, Va., is designated as Federal Route Number 1," writes Mr. Dunn, "and the same number is given to the southern link of the said Atlantic Coastal Highway from Miami northward to Jacksonville, while the territory embraced in the Atlantic Coastal Highway from Richmond, Va., on the north to Jacksonville on the south is given various federal markings and numbers, thus breaking the continuity of the Federal Route Number 1 already given to the larger part of said Atlantic Coastal Highway. There is no reason why the marking of federal route number 1 should not be continued all the way up the Atlantic Coastal Highway. The marking as proposed by the joint board of Interstate highways would be decidedly confusing and would discriminate against the Atlantic Coastal Highway in a way which we do not think would be at all fair. To change this marking and give federal route number 1 to the Atlantic Coastal Highway and to allocate to the territory west of the Atlantic Coastal Highway other numbers except Number 1 would not discriminate against such territory."

"You Don't Believe I Will Do It," Girl Said As She Drank Poison

Salisbury, Jan. 2.—Miss Grace Matthews, 23, and a member of a family group which have been furnishing a musical vaudeville program at a local theatre for the past week, committed suicide shortly after midnight this morning.

The group of players, which included the father of Miss Matthews and a sister and brother and brother-in-law, were apparently enjoying life in the reception room of the theatrical apartments when the young woman placed a vial of lysol to her lips and saying, "you don't believe I will do it, do you?" drank the contents. She was taken to a hospital where she died.

The girl was a member of the chorus and was also a cornet and saxophone player as well as taking part in acrobatic acts with her brother. No reason is assigned for the act.

AUTOMOBILE OWNERS PAY 11 MILLION DOLLARS

Four Hundred Thousand Motor Vehicles Are in Use in North Carolina, Raleigh Reports

Raleigh, Jan. 2.—North Carolina's nearly 400,000 automobile owners paid the state of North Carolina more than eleven million dollars for the privilege of operating their vehicles in the state during 1925.

Figures released by the department of revenue today placed the total yield from the gasoline tax, automobile licenses and title registrations at \$11,647,224, an increase of more than \$2,200,000 over 1924. The gasoline tax yielded \$4,080,046.08, automobile licenses \$5,413,407.02, and title registrations \$721,328.63.

Aside from the maintenance expense of the automobile license, which cannot exceed four per cent of the total yield from these sources goes for highway building, a part of the sinking fund for retirement of state highway bonds and the remainder for road maintenance.

The Department of Revenue of 1925 from the tax of license and title registrations was \$11,647,224.