

# MARION PROGRESS

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER DEVOTED TO THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE OF McDOWELL COUNTY.

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## W. W. COOPER, SUICIDE

Cuts His Throat With Knife in Statesville Sanatorium—Funeral Here Saturday.

The Statesville Landmark gives the following account of the tragic death of Mr. W. W. Cooper, who committed suicide at Dr. Long's sanatorium in Statesville last Friday morning:

Mr. Cooper's suicide was deliberate and evidently premeditated, although so far as known he had dropped no hint of such a purpose. During the four weeks he had been a patient at the Sanatorium, being treated for carbuncles, he was very quiet but much depressed and evidently suffered from melancholia. He remained in his room and in bed practically all the time and did not want to see people. When spoken to he talked pleasantly and naturally but he had nothing to say unless spoken to; usually he was cheerful and talkative. His wife, who lives at Marion, visited him on Tuesday. It had been suggested to him that he was well enough to leave the Sanatorium. Thursday Dr. Long told him he would be able to leave next day. He was averse to leaving. An effort had been made to get him to sit up in his room and go out on the porch, but he objected to this, preferring to stay in his room.

Friday morning, probably about 5:40 o'clock, Miss Pennell, a nurse on duty in the room next to that of Mr. Cooper, heard him let down the window shade and close the door. Almost immediately she heard a noise like that of a falling body. Finding the door fastened and the shade down, Miss Pennell called Miss Davidson, head nurse. The key to the door of Mr. Cooper's room was broken but he had fastened the door by placing a chair against it with the back of the chair under the door knob. Miss Davidson forced the door open, breaking the chair in doing so, and found Mr. Cooper on the floor with his throat cut. Miss Davidson caught the gaping wound and did what she could to stop the flow of blood. Dr. Long, who had been summoned, arrived promptly and Dr. Campbell a little later, but the patient had lost so much blood that the case was hopeless. He died in a little more than an hour after the wound was inflicted. He was conscious when help reached him and refused aid, in fact resisted as best he could, while consciousness lasted, efforts to aid him, except that he asked for relief from pain. "I did it," he said with reference to his wounds, and he told those about him that he wanted to die.

The fatal wound was on the right side of the neck and was three or four inches long, extending in depth to the gullet and windpipe and severing the big artery and vein. Investigation after death disclosed that Mr. Cooper had first stabbed himself in the left breast over the heart but the knife had been deflected by a rib and this wound would not have been fatal.

The weapon used was a two-bladed knife. The smaller blade, probably an inch and a half long, had been used. Efforts to save Mr. Cooper's life were made as he lay in the floor when he fell and

the knife was afterward found under his body. Where and how he obtained the knife is not known. When a patient enters the Sanatorium his personal effects are put in a package, labeled and deposited in a safe place until he is discharged. This rule was followed with Mr. Cooper as with all others. He had no knife when he entered the Sanatorium and it was not known that he had one until the deed was committed. It is supposed he obtained it surreptitiously with the purpose in view that he carried out.

William W. Cooper was the second son of the late William M. Cooper, a prominent and well known citizen of Statesville. He was reared in Statesville and was in his 41st year. Some years ago he engaged in business in Marion and lived there until six years ago, when he moved to Statesville. He married in Marion, his wife being a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. F. E. Gruber of Marion. About a year ago he returned to Marion to live. On account of an infirmity, which was his only enemy, he had been committed to institutions several times. Last year he was for some months in Dr. Taylor's sanatorium at Morganton and last winter he was in the State Hospital at Morganton for a few months. He was discharged from there early in April.

Naturally Mr. Cooper was a kindly, generous man and readily made friends. He was a successful business man and left considerable estate, consisting of personal property and valuable real estate in Statesville and Marion. Surviving him are his wife, a brother, Mr. R. A. Cooper of Statesville, and four sisters—Mrs. F. L. DeVane, Mrs. C. E. Orr, and Mrs. Chas. M. Cook, Jr., of Brevard, and Mrs. P. A. Setzer of Hickory. Four half brothers and two half sisters also survive—Messrs. J. B., Frank, Albert and Marius Cooper and Misses Bertha and Helen Cooper, all of Statesville.

[The funeral was held from the residence of Mr. Gruber here Saturday at 3:30 p. m., conducted by Rev. J. C. Story, assisted by Rev. Ira Erwin, and interment made in Oak Grove cemetery. Many handsome floral designs covered the casket. The pall-bearers were: Messrs. R. H. Bennett, M. J. Hoover, W. W. Neal, J. H. Tate, C. M. McCall and Thomas Morris.]

## Robt. Presnell Dies at Morganton.

Morganton, June 23.—Mr. Robert K. Presnell, one of Burke county's honored citizens, died at his home here this afternoon at the age 77 years. He is survived by his wife and six children.

Mr. Presnell was for many years in the mercantile business in Morganton and was known throughout this section for his honesty and upright dealing. He retired from business some years ago, turning his business over to his son.

For the past few years he spent his life in looking after his farming interests, being owner of a valuable farm near here. He was also a large property owner in the town. He was an elder in the Presbyterian church and was a consistent Christian and gentleman of the old school.

[Mr. Presnell was a first cousin to Mrs. T. A. White of Marion and was well known here.]

## SUNSET ON MT. MITCHELL

A Trip to Mitchell's Peak and a Description of Sunset and the Scenery.

To the Editor MARION PROGRESS:

Last week I met several friends in Black Mountain, N. C., planning a trip to Mitchell's Peak. It had been raining a week and was raining still so our party dispersed. One man and myself decided to spend the night and give the weather one more chance. An old man down street said "it will clear off to-night for the Almanac says the moon changes." Our faith in the moon was well placed for sure enough the morning dawned bright and clear.

We left Black Mountain at five o'clock, hitting the trail through Montreat with our packs on our backs. By getting a lift on a logging train of five or six miles we reached the foot of Black Mountain by 11:30 and by 1:30 reached the summit of Mitchell's Peak exhausted and almost famished.

After satisfying our hunger we began to admire the scenery. It was a perfect day, hardly a cloud was to be seen; after a rainy spell the mountains are wonderfully clear. On every side nature's grand panorama was stretched out before us. To the east, south, west and north, in never ending succession, we could see mountain after mountain, here and there a bare place where the industrious hand of man tilled the soil, hamlet, village and town gave faint evidence of their existence. To the southwest we imagined we could see Tennessee, to the north, Virginia, and to the east the smoke of the Southern railway arose.

But it was the sunset I have set out to describe. Leaving a roaring fire of balsam and spruce, we climbed about fifty yards to the summit. About 6:30 we decided to watch the sunset for a boy in the lumber camps told us that "when the sun came within five or six feet (?) of the horizon it just dropped clean out of sight all of a sudden." We therefore went up early but the sun was two hours high it seemed. We therefore returned and rebuilt our fire, for balsam burns out very quickly, and it was 7:30 before the sun actually began to set.

Let us now imagine we are on the highest peak east of the Rockies, 6,711 feet above the sea level. At our backs stands a simple bronze shaft about ten feet high marking the fitting resting place of Elisha Mitchell. It is shameful that this shaft should be so meanly treated. It is riddled with bullets, hacked and scarred with stones, and literally covered with the names and addresses of visitors from New York to Florida and Maine to California. Cannot public sentiment be aroused against such wholesale desecration. It is 7:35 and the sun can be seen to perceptibly lessen the distance from the rein of clouds over the horizon. It is a great ball of fire revolving in space nearing the enshrouding clouds below. About the rim of the sun appear all the colors of the rainbow, now yellow, violet, green. We stand uncovered in the biting wind and with bated breath. It would take the soul of

the artist and the gifted touch of the painter to portray even faintly the grandeur of the scenery. The rein of clouds, which skirt the mountains for miles, once grey and leaden now has a silver lining, while the edges seem touched with gold. The azure sky line is now transformed into pink. At 7:40 the great yellow disk begins to sink into the silvery sea. Below, between rifts of clouds, it can be seen again until finally the last golden outline has disappeared, leaving behind a halo of glory. It seemed as if Heaven had pronounced a benediction upon earth. The glowing red of the horizon grows fainter and fainter until night's shadows fall and we wend our way in silence to our camp.

We looked forward to a repetition of glory at sunrise but the morning's sun was hidden by heavy clouds and scarcely shone at all until we were well on our way to Graphiteville.

To my readers I have some advice: Go to Mt. Mitchell by all means but take plenty of heavy clothing and blankets and an extra supply of rations. T. G. T.

## Public Schools of North State Moving to Front.

Washington, D. C., June 20.—Illiteracy is rapidly on the decrease in North Carolina, owing chiefly to the wide-awake leadership of men and women of prominence, especially women, who have set industriously to work to improve the schools of the state and secure a greatly increased attendance, according to information obtained today from the national board of education.

Reports have been received from different counties in the state from time to time, showing the steady general improvement in school facilities, general attendance and the deeper interest taken by parents in the education of their children, but the most notable improvement is that reported from Wilkes county.

In discussing the report received from Wilkes county, the educational board has the following to say:

"Thanks to the wide-awake leadership of men and women, especially women, interested in the schools, a number of southern communities are making in winning fight against illiteracy. Wilkes county, N. C., for instance, reports, together with other notable indications of school betterment, the fact that illiteracy decreased from 13 per cent in 1900 to 2 per cent in 1912."

Several other counties in the state showed improvement almost as marked as that of Wilkes, and the prediction is made that before long North Carolina will be able to compare favorably with any of the other states as far as educational facilities are concerned.

## Nebo Will Celebrate the Fourth.

Nebo will celebrate the Fourth of July as is its usual custom. An interesting program is planned and everybody is invited to attend and bring a full basket. There will be all kinds of amusements, balloon ascensions, speaking, baseball and lots of other attractions. A good time is promised and it will be worth while to take a day off and attend this celebration.

## STATE NEWS OF THE WEEK

Items Concerning Events of Interest and Importance Throughout the State.

The State Bar Association will meet in Asheville next week.

A. C. Link was Tuesday recommended by Congressman Webb to be postmaster at Hickory.

Burgin Smith, an Asheville hotel man was found dead in his room in Asheville Friday morning.

It is estimated that 900 to 1,000 Confederate veterans from this State will attend the Gettysburg celebration next week.

The Boone Democrat says that in two weeks J. A. Profit, a Watauga farmer, caught in deadfall traps around a two-acre lot of corn, 100 field mice and 72 ground squirrels.

Rev. W. L. Sherrill of Pineville, Mecklenburg county, and a well-known member of the Western North Carolina Methodist Conference, has been unanimously elected secretary-treasurer of Davenport College at Lenoir.

The Asheville Citizen says Gov. Craig has agreed to furnish 50 State convicts to aid in the construction of the Hiwassee Valley railroad, now under construction from Andrews, N. C., via Marble and Hazel to Hiwassee, Ga. The road is an electric line, 35 miles long and will be a standard gauge.

Expert Yeggmen pried open the door of the Waverly postoffice some time Sunday night, opened the safe without injuring the combination, abstracted between \$300 and \$400 in stamps and money, closed the safe again, and disappeared without leaving the slightest clue to their identity.

## Underwood Bill in Senate Caucus.

Washington, June 20.—Important reductions in the Underwood tariff bill rates on iron, steel and other metal products; the addition of cattle, wheat, pig iron, Angora wool and many other articles to the free list; and an increase in rates on many classes of cotton goods and some silk products, were the chief features of the revised Senate Democrats today by Chairman Simmons, of the Finance Committee.

After weeks of work, in which every item had undergone close scrutiny by subcommittees of the majority membership of the Finance Committee, the redrafted measure was brought into the Democratic caucus today. For two hours the important changes were explained to Democrats and the bill was then made public. Experts of the committee at once began work on a comprehensive summary of the changes.

President Wilson's desire for free sugar in 1916 and free wool at once prevailed in the redrafting of the bill. To the list of "market basket" reductions the Underwood bill contained, the Senate Committee added many important items.

Senator Simmons, chairman of the committee, believes that the caucus will discuss the bill not longer than a week and after the bill has then been submitted to the full membership of the Finance Committee, it will be reported to the Senate.