

WEATHER FORECAST

North Carolina—Local rains to night and Tuesday; northeast winds, strong off the coast. South Carolina—Rain tonight and probably Tuesday.

THE WILMINGTON DISPATCH

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WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, MONDAY AFTERNOON, SEPTEMBER 24, 1917

PRICE FIVE CENTS

THE BODY OF MRS. BINGHAM DISINTERRED

Statements Issued Today By Graham Kenan and Dr. Chas. F. Nesbitt

EXAMINATION REPORT NOT YET RECEIVED

Body Was Removed From the Grave Last Wednesday Morning—Six Physicians Were Present.

The body of Mrs. Robert Worth Bingham, whose death occurred in Louisville, Ky., several weeks ago and which was interred in the Kenan plot, Oakdale cemetery, was disinterred on Wednesday morning, September 20, according to statements made to a representative of The Dispatch this morning by Mr. Graham Kenan and Mr. William E. Springer, president of Oakdale Cemetery Company, the latter speaking for Superintendent James A. Perry, of the cemetery, following a lengthy conference in the office of the Board of Health between Dr. Charles T. Nesbitt, Mr. Kenan and Messrs. Marsden and John D. Bellamy, Jr., after a heated discussion between Dr. Nesbitt and Taylor B. Moore, ex officio member of the Board of Health, wherein the latter insisted that Dr. Nesbitt answer any questions asked him relative to the Bingham matter or other matters handled through his office.

The statement of Mr. Kenan was prepared in the office of the Board of Health and given out at 1 o'clock this afternoon.

The disinterment took place on Wednesday morning of last week, according to a statement made to Mr. William E. Springer, for Superintendent Perry, who stated that the body was disinterred under the direction of Mr. James F. Woolvin, local undertaker, and taken to the cemetery lodge. He stated that it was later reburied but did not know what took place in the lodge.

There were six physicians present at the autopsy, Mr. Kenan stated, he having secured the best experts obtainable. He denied that any detective or detective agency had been employed which casts doubt on the reported presence in the city of William J. Burns, the noted detective.

The matter is now entirely cleared up, Mr. Bingham's body was taken from the grave on Wednesday morning of last week, taken to the cemetery lodge and an autopsy performed and it was later reburied.

Everything was perfectly regular, according to Mr. Kenan's statement, although he stated that no court order was procured in connection with the case. His statement carries the assurance that Judge Bingham's interests will be considered in any action that may be taken in the future and he further adds that the experts who performed the autopsy have made no report as yet of their findings.

The delay in giving out the facts in the case is explained in Mr. Kenan's statement, which says that the family wished to avoid as much publicity as possible in connection with the matter and that everything done was absolutely regular and above board.

Although Mr. Kenan stated that there were six physicians in the party when the autopsy was performed, he does not think it necessary to make public their names nor did he think it necessary to say whether the removed parts of Mrs. Bingham's body were carried from the cemetery lodge.

It is known that two local physicians were present when the autopsy was performed and the presumption is that the remaining four were from out of the city—experts. Mr. Perry stated that he recognized but one man in the crowd.

Graham Kenan's Statement. Following is the statement made by Mr. Kenan, brother-in-law of Mrs. Bingham. He said:

"The facts and circumstances relating to Mrs. Bingham's last illness and death and as disclosed to members of her family justified them in and made it their duty to consult leading physicians who advised that an autopsy be performed. This has been done in the usual and regular way in the broad daylight by the best experts obtainable, but the results of their investigation have not as yet been made known to the family.

All interested may be assured that any investigation which has been or may be made, has been and will be conducted in a proper and legitimate manner, and with absolute fairness to all parties concerned.

"The feelings of the family naturally made them desire to have as little publicity as possible given the matter.

"I hope the public will be fair enough not to jump at any conclusions." (Continued on Page Six).

JUDGE BINGHAM AWAITS THE NEXT MOVE OF OTHERS

Body of Mrs. Robert Worth Bingham Was Exhumed Last Week

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE ATTORNEYS

Charges Will Be Met With Facts, Says the Statement—Say Body Was Surreptitiously Removed

(By Associated Press.) Louisville, Ky., Sept. 24.—Robert Worth Bingham and his friends here today are awaiting the next move of those who, according to a statement given out last night by counsel for Judge Bingham, in the early hours of last Tuesday morning caused the body of his wife, buried at Wilmington, N. C., to be exhumed and an autopsy performed.

The statement issued last night by Judge Bingham's attorneys contained the first definite assertion that Mrs. Bingham's body had been disinterred. The exhuming of the body was carried out surreptitiously and without notice to Judge Bingham, the statement said, adding:

"It belongs to the public to form its own opinion of this ghastly drama."

After reciting that when Mrs. Bingham became ill three physicians had been called in attendance, the statement added that when two weeks before her death, her condition apparently became serious, her brother, William R. Kenan, was sent for and came to Louisville. He and Mrs. Bingham's sister, who was called to Louisville a few days later, were informed of the measures that had been taken and gave their approval, the statement asserts.

In its concluding paragraph the statement said, "If whispered suspicion shall end in the making of charges, the charges will then be met with facts."

The text of the statement follows: "On Friday morning last (September 21) the press was full of rumors to the effect that the body of the late Mrs. Robert Worth Bingham was to be disinterred. Her grave is in the cemetery at Wilmington, N. C.

"Neither Judge Bingham nor any of his friends knew anything whatever about the matter, and the same is true of Helm Bruce, counsel for the executors and legatees under Mrs. Bingham's will. The dispatches stated that the health officer of Wilmington would make no statement and would not even affirm or deny that he had granted any permit for disinterment. It was further stated that the collateral relations of Mrs. Bingham had put a guard over her grave.

"On Saturday a friend of Judge Bingham was in Wilmington to ascertain exactly the condition of affairs. It now appears that at 3 o'clock on last Tuesday morning (September 19) the disinterment took place; that the autopsy was performed in the presence of William J. Burns and several physicians; that vital parts of the body were removed and that these parts were turned over to some one and taken to New York. It is needless to say that all this was surreptitious and was a secret closely guarded until the object was accomplished.

"It is presumed that the disinterred body was reburied. It was then that the supposed necessity arose of jealously protecting the grave from violation.

"It belongs to the public to form its own opinion of this ghastly drama.

"Mrs. Bingham was attended in her last illness by Dr. M. L. Ravitch, Dr. W. F. Bogges and Dr. S. A. Steinhilber. On Thursday, July 12, two weeks before her death, Mrs. Bingham had a severe attack. Her brother, William R. Kenan, was summoned by Judge Bingham and came. He conferred fully with Dr. Ravitch concerning Mrs. Bingham's condition and approved everything that was being done.

"On Sunday, July 22, Mrs. Bingham's condition was such that Judge Bingham wrote her sisters that he thought that they should come. Responsive to this, her sister, Mrs. Wise, came, arriving Wednesday evening, July 25th. Mrs. Bingham was then fully conscious and remained so until Thursday night. Mrs. Wise re-

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BIG GUNS AGAIN ACTIVE ALONG THE FLANDERS FRONT

Signs Point to Possible Early Resumption of Infantry Activity

RUSSIAN ACTIVITY ON THE RIGA LINE

Number of Prisoners and Guns Captured From Teutons—Germans Take Stores at Jacobstadt.

(By Associated Press.) Heavy cannonading was again in progress last night on the Flanders battle front, northeast of Ypres, but the infantry had a relief from the recent hard fighting.

Signs of possible important activity impending are appearing in other sections of the British front, notably in the Arras region near the Scarpe and in the vicinity of Lens. Considerable artillery activity is announced from these sectors. The artillery on both sides is also notably busy on the French front in the Verdun region.

Although suffering a heavy reverse in the recent German operations in the Riga-Dvinsk front, the Russians on the Riga-Dvinsk front are showing recuperative power, and today a substantial Russian victory is reported in the sector south of the Riga-Pskov road, the Russians capturing the German positions they attacked, retaining them after a hard struggle. The German losses were more than 400 killed and the Russians took a number of prisoners and ten machine guns.

The Berlin official statement today claims the capture of large quantities of provisions by the Germans when Jacobstadt, on the Dvina, was taken in last week's assault.

M'ADDO TO ANNOUNCE BOND ISSUE DETAILS

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Sept. 24.—Details of the second Liberty bond issue probably will be announced by Secretary McAdoo tomorrow.

The terms of the bonds, their denomination, the interest rate and the amount of the offering constitute the chief details which have not as yet been announced. Indications are that the offering will approximate \$3,000,000,000 and that a bond will run approximately 25 or 30 years. The interest rate, as fixed by law, may be up to four per cent., and it is considered likely that the issue will bear the four per cent. rate.

INTEREST INCREASED BY DIAMOND RING OFFER

Candidates Enthusiastic Over Opportunity to Win Diamond Ring for Two Weeks' Work—All New Subscriptions Turned In Toward Special Prize Will Receive Votes According to Regular Schedule and Also Apply on Highest Club Vote Offer.

- THE PRIZES. \$775 Ericson Automobile. Ford Touring Car. \$200 in gold. \$100 in gold. \$35 furniture suite. \$75 Columbia Gramophone. \$50 merchandise order at J. W. H. Fuchs' department store. \$25 wrist watch. Two \$60 diamond rings.

The extraordinary offer to give away a \$60 Diamond Ring as a special prize in The Dispatch Contest, as announced in the paper yesterday, has been received by the different contestants with various expressions of delight.

"It's sure one grand opportunity to pick up a handsome ring," is the way one of the candidates expressed her approval of the offer. And the contestant is perfectly right—it's nothing less than a wonderful opportunity to get a Diamond Ring for a little effort.

The ring was purchased from A. O. Schuster, the well-known Wilmington jeweler, who guarantees its value and increased opportunity of winning that goes with a good showing during the early days of a friendly struggle. Support extended a contestant at any time will be appreciated but will be doubly so at this time, when such support will really do the most good.

Contestants, who have not entered the contest actively, should lose no time, but should commence their campaigns now, when everything is most favorable for success at the finish.

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AGREEMENT UPON PRICE OF STEEL

Government and Producers Reach Agreement Which is Announced Today

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Sept. 24.—Steel prices agreed upon between the government and producers were announced today as follows: Steel bars at Pittsburgh and Chicago, \$22.00 per hundred weight. The recent price was \$25.50. Other prices agreed upon, all subject to revision January 1, 1918, but to become effective immediately, follow: Iron ore, basis, lower lake ports; Price agreed upon \$5.05 per gross ton, no change.

A "LEARN ENGLISH" CAMPAIGN STARTS

(By Associated Press.) New York, Sept. 24.—The "Learn English" campaign to enlighten and solidify the 500,000 foreign-born residents of this city was launched today with the beginning of registration for the hundred free night schools that will open October 1. An army of volunteer workers, under the auspices of the mayor's committee on national defense will visit shops and factories and do personal work in every foreign section of the city in an effort to increase attendance at the night schools.

The board of education has voted an extra \$78,000 to enlarge the scope of these schools, and at the college of the city of New York, special stress will be laid this year on such practical courses as will fit men and women for specialized and technical service in war time.

GERMAN HEAVY GUNS WERE ACTIVE TODAY

(By Associated Press.) London, Sept. 24.—German heavy guns were active early this morning on both banks of the river Scarpe, on the Arras front in France, Field Marshal Haig reported today. A German raiding party near LaBasseville was driven away after a sharp fight last night with British. The statement issued today by the British war office says:

"A hostile raiding party last night near LaBasseville was driven off with loss, after a short fight. A few of our men are missing.

"The enemy's artillery was active early this morning on both banks of the Scarpe and artillery activity also was shown during the night south of Lens and northeast of Ypres."

GOVERNOR BICKETT CALLS FOR FORCE OF 5,000 MILITIA

Wanted For the Purpose of Maintaining "Peace and Order" in State

TWENTY-FIVE MEN FROM EACH COUNTY

Between Ages of 31 and 45 Will Be Used for Guard Duty to Replace Absent Guardsmen

(By Associated Press.) Raleigh, N. C., Sept. 24.—Because of "conditions which now prevail within the State calling for the use and service of an effective force for the maintenance of peace and order," Governor Bickett, by proclamation has called into active service a force of 5,000 men between the ages of 31 and 45 now comprising part of the unorganized militia of the State.

With this force, to be selected by machinery now being provided by Adjutant General Laurence W. Young, upon the Governor's instruction, an adequate reserve force for every county in the State will be provided. In the main twenty-five men will be drafted from each county except those which are centers of large population. The absence of all national guard forces from the State and the growth of a feeling of unrest occasioned by repeated outrages on the part of negroes throughout the State hastened the Governor in his proclamation, although he had before instructed the Adjutant General to draw up a scheme for the organization of a State guard.

A determined attack on the Wake county jail, situated here, Friday morning all for the purpose of lynching an alleged negro rapist, were principally suggestive to the Governor of need at this time. The jail attack was thwarted by the presence of the Governor who persuaded the mob to disperse, while the removal of the negro from the State prison caused an abandonment of that attempt before it had progressed very far. Since the last attack, another negro has been lodged in the State prison to protect him from the fury of a mob of Harnett county men aroused by the negro's alleged attempt at criminal assault upon a white girl of that county.

PROHIBIT EXPORT OF GOLD TO SPAIN

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Sept. 24.—Treasury officials carrying out the government's policy governing the conservation of gold have virtually decided upon a policy prohibiting the export of gold to Spain. No gold has been licensed for export to Spain since the President's proclamation became effective, except several small shipments already loaded aboard steamers.

OKLAHOMA TOWN HAS A DESTRUCTIVE FIRE

(By Associated Press.) Lawton, Okla., Sept. 24.—Twenty buildings, all but two of which were of wooden construction, were destroyed by fire which broke out shortly after noon today and swept through an entire block on E. avenue, and a half block on D. avenue, entailing an estimated loss of \$135,000.

HOUSE IN UPROAR OVER DISCLOSURE

Heflin Denies Report That He Made Charges Against Congressmen

(By Associated Press.) Washington, Sept. 24.—Representative Heflin, of Alabama, replying in the House today to an attack upon him by Representative Norton, of North Dakota, denied that he had given a newspaper interview in which he could name 13 or 14 members of the House and Senate who had acted suspiciously and that he had heard a story that a card room was maintained in Washington where pro-Germans and pacifists could get money.

The House was thrown in an uproar while members discussed the disclosure that Count von Bernstorff, while German ambassador here, asked his government to authorize expenditure of \$50,000 to influence Congress.

Mr. Norton declared that Mr. Heflin should have made a full investigation before he charged members with corruption.

Mr. Norton quoted Mr. Heflin as saying in the interview that he could point to the men in the South "who I believe received money," and that their prosperous appearance indicated it. He also quoted Representative Howard, of Georgia, as saying that part of this money was paid directly and that he thought he could pick out the men who got it. Mr. Norton announced that he proposed to introduce a resolution requiring Heflin and Howard to prove their statements "or submit to the punishment they well deserve."

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PRELIMINARY TRIAL OF GASTON MEANS IN CONCORD TODAY

AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRANCE EAGER TO GET A FIGHT

Only By Stringent Orders Are Sammies Kept Out of Trenches

ARE LOCATED NEAR THE FIGHTING LINES

A Fine Body of Men Ready to Try Conclusions With the Germans—Visited By Associated Press

Somewhere Along the British Front in France, Sunday, Sept. 23.—(By the Associated Press.)—On a historic battlefield which merged into the fighting lines are encamped many American troops, far removed from the rest of their compatriots who form the vanguard of Uncle Sam's expeditionary force in France.

For military reasons, it is impossible to tell the world just where these men are, who they are, or what they are doing to further the interests of the United States. It is known, however, that they are doing it with authority to friends at home that they are a credit to the Stars and stripes which, for the first time in history by over a camp of American soldiers in this part of the war-torn world. Some of them have been working continually in a zone covered by the German guns and already two of their number have been wounded, a fact whereof they are exceedingly proud.

The Associated Press heard these men were here and sought them out. The visit involved a long motor trip but the sight of their bronzed faces and the sound of their cheerful, determined voices more than repaid for the long journey.

They are a fine healthy looking lot and nearly two months of hard work in the open under real campaigning conditions has put them in shape and they are ready for anything.

Especially are they prepared and anxious to try honors with the Germans. In fact, their only grievance is that for the present they are not permitted, except where necessity demands, to expose themselves to the enemy's big guns. They want to feel the thrill that one experiences when explosives are going up all about and when shells herald their approach across No Man's Land with a wicked whine. In fact, until a stringent order was issued recently, the American officers had a hard time keeping their men out of the British front line trenches. It is said that more than one American soldier has crept away when off duty and after making friends with the "Tommys" has taken his place beside them for a few glorious minutes while a minor battle was progressing.

It would have been unwise, perhaps, for the correspondent to inquire too closely whether any of the American officers had "done their bit" in this manner. Nevertheless the correspondent had grave suspicions that some of them had been "over the top" with their allies in the early days before orders forbade it. However, they are good disciplinarians and nobody is disregarding the edicts which have been issued by the higher command.

The correspondent visited two different commands and in each there were the same scenes of methodical activity characteristic of American methods. Things were moving smoothly and no false motions were being made. Efficiency was the byword everywhere.

It was noon when the second camp was reached and the officers and men were preparing for mess. Several clean cut young officers came out to greet the correspondent and it was a cheery welcome with a firm hand grip and a hearty "I'm mighty glad to see you." One would have known he was in an American camp had he been blindfolded.

An invitation was extended to the mess and it was accepted. "I'm afraid we can't offer you very much to eat," said one officer. "You see the cook is ill and just at this moment we are getting along as best we can. But we can give you plenty of beans and—well, plenty—more beans," he ended with an apologetic laugh.

So Boston baked beans were served, the first the correspondent had seen in two years of knocking about which

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Defendant Represented By Eight Lawyers Headed By F. I. Osborne

Dr. Burmeister, of Chicago, Says Mrs. King Could Not Have Held Pistol When She Was Killed By Fatal Shot

(By Associated Press.) Concord, N. C., Sept. 24.—Dr. William H. Burmeister, chief coroner's physician of Cook county, Illinois, testified today at the preliminary hearing of Gaston B. Means that in his opinion, it would have been impossible for Mrs. Maude A. King to have held the pistol which inflicted the fatal wound in the back of her head near here August 29.

L. A. Wellington, a Concord undertaker, who was the first witness, told of removing the body of Mrs. King from a Concord hospital to his undertaking establishment. Arton Means, he said, called him over the telephone to take charge of the body. A wound in the head behind the left ear, and fractured left ankle were the only wounds on the body, he said. He placed the body in an hermetically sealed casket and accompanied it to an undertaker's place at Asheville on August 31. There, he said, Gaston Means notified him "they had decided the body should be taken to Chicago."

Gaston Means and Mrs. Maude Melvin accompanied him to Chicago with the body, where it was placed in a receiving vault. They stopped over at Cincinnati, he said, "to do some telephoning and rest up."

He said he thought Mrs. Melvin wanted to order some flowers at Cincinnati. The defense did not examine Wellington.

Dr. William H. Burmeister, chief coroner's physician of Cook county, Illinois, was the second witness. He told of performing an autopsy on the body of Mrs. King.

He said her hair, a dark reddish brown, was apparently dyed. Burmeister continued to describe the body and the wound, saying the latter was two inches above the opening of the left ear. There was no evidence of powder burns. Above the left eyebrow was a small hemorrhage under the skin, but there was no abrasion on the outside. He told of finding the leaden portion of the bullet on the right front side of the brain, having been deflected by the front of the skull. The steel jacket of the bullet was found on the left side of the ear near the channel through which the bullet passed. He then described the fractured ankle, saying the fracture had occurred during life.

By the length of the right fore arm, he said, there was no question but that Mrs. King was right-handed.

Solicitor Clement asked Burmeister if it would have been possible for Mrs. King to have inflicted upon herself the wound described. The defense objected that this was not a question for an expert but a matter of common knowledge, and also that Burmeister had not qualified as an expert on pistols, even if it were granted that the question was an expert one. The witness was allowed to answer. He stated it was his opinion Mrs. King could not have inflicted the wound. There were no evidences of powder burns on the wound, or skin around it, he said.

Solicitor Clement objected to what he termed the reflection on the integrity of Dr. Burmeister, by Attorney E. T. Cansler, one of Means' attorneys. The coroner of Cook county ordered him to come here, he said, and the county is paying his expenses.

Dr. Burmeister was cross-examined in regard to powder burns and testified that a pistol shot fired ten inches from a blotter left marks on the blotter. Attorney Cansler, continuing the cross-examination of Dr. Burmeister, sought to show that if the woman's hair had been down when she was shot, the presence of the hair would have prevented powder burns on the skin. Burmeister said he found no powder burns or stains on the skin beneath the hair. He also said there was no evidence that the hair had been singed or burned when the shot was fired.

F. F. Ritchie, a salesman of a local hardware concern, told of selling Gaston Means, on August 29, a .25 calibre automatic pistol for target shooting. Means first asked for a .32 calibre pistol, he said, but Ritchie had none. He told also of Means buying another pistol and a rifle from Ritchie's store previously. After a brief examination, Ritchie was excused.

W. S. Bingham, who was a member of the party, which went target shooting, (Continued on Page Eight)