

EXCITING DAYS PRECEDED COMING OF MR. BUTLER

Traveled 14,000 Miles To Get
Story of Oil Wells in
Russia

WESTERN EXPERIENCE

(Continued from page 1)

tile newspaperman are too well known in his adopted state to need re-capitulation; it is his early life and fascinating experiences as a newspaper man that this sketch is to be built around. I had the pleasure of visiting Mr. Butler in his charming home, Valhalla Farm, tucked away beneath the towering oaks and majestic pines at the edge of the Writers' Colony in Southern Pines. Here I met his gracious wife and equally charming daughter, Helen, who ably assisted him in giving me this story of his unique activities before he conquered his "wander lust" and settled under the pines and dogwood of Carolina.

Bion H. Butler is the son of Mary and Lieut. Col. Butler of Western Pennsylvania, and his family consists of his wife and three children who, as he whimsically remarked—"... are an improvement on the old folks." He began to learn to set type in 1869, and by 1874 was publishing a country newspaper in Pennsylvania. But the desire to go places and see things became so insistent that in a few years he began his career as a drifting printer, and in this manner his itinerary carried from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Also, in this manner, he filled his active mind with a vast store of useful knowledge, not alone of places and things, but he gained a most comprehensive understanding of people which later proved invaluable in his work as reporter, free lance and editorial writer.

Lured To The West

When asked to give some specific incidents of his early work as a wandering reporter in the days when responsibility sat lightly on his carefree shoulders, Bion Butler settled comfortably in his chair and thus began his reminiscences:

"About fifty years ago I was associated with Captain Rule when he established The Journal in Knoxville, Tenn. Later I was with Colonel Collyer on The Nashville American in Nashville. But I did not stay either place very long as I wanted to go further west. The stories I had read and the vivid accounts I had heard of that, to my thinking, magic region so fired my imagination that I was simply forced by an inner urge to go and see for myself. Well—" said with a smile—"I found out plenty, and for awhile lived quite a hectic life. I wish that I could tell you of the many and varied experiences I had in the land of bucking bronchos and purple sage, but it would require an entire newspaper to take care of it. Suffice it to say that I set type in the Territories, and was in Texas when that country was still raw and new, the home of the cow men who realized that the quickness of the trigger finger was their chief asset.

"Also," he went on with his story, "I was a foreman of The Carson Appeal in Carson, Nevada, a half century ago, in the days of the great Comstock silver boom when fortunes were literally made overnight. Men rode to dizzy financial heights on the silver wave of prosperity that burst when the gold standard was introduced, dashing them on the barren shore of adversity almost as quickly as the money had been made. I was in New Mexico and Arizona in the eighties in the hectic days of 'Billie the Kid,' of 'Wheelie the Cutter,' and several other citizens of that type who were very prominent in conducting the affairs of that period of swift justice and hemp rope necklaces. But that period of intense activity was what taught me to look out for myself—and the lesson has proven valuable."

As Industrial Editor

By 1893 he grew tired of a wandering life and returned to his home state, Pennsylvania, where he became attached to The Pittsburgh Times as industrial writer; his varied experiences in the mining section of the West made him peculiarly fitted for this position. His acquaintances with the American industrial world, especially in iron and steel, oil, gas and coal, those major products which made Pittsburgh an industrial center of the world, gave The Times outstanding prominence in the manufacturing and business affairs of the country.

Industrial development came to be the special province of Bion Butler, so when the oil fields of the Caspian sea country created a desire for in-

Bion H. Butler, Editor of Pilot, Leading Citizen, Dies at 77

Devoted Latter Years of His
Life to Upbuilding of Sand-
hills Territory

(Continued from page 1)

California, Nevada, picking up newspaper or tramp printer jobs as he went, but always with the craving for information on all manner of subjects uppermost in his mind. Thus he built up a store of knowledge which few men possessed. He could talk authoritatively on a multitude of subjects.

Bion Butler and his wife stepped off the one lone passenger car, attached to a freight train, in Southern Pines in the late nineties. They were looking for the ideal place to build their home. And it was while here that one day Mrs. Butler, back from a horseback ride, said to her husband, "I've seen the place and I've bought it." Their picturesque homestead, "Valhalla," out East Connecticut avenue toward the Fort Bragg Reservation, has been their residence since. There they have raised their three children, and there Bion Butler has woven the storied which have told the world the glories of the Sandhills.

Editorial Duties

During the days when Josephus Daniels was serving his President, Woodrow Wilson, as Secretary of the Navy, Bion Butler wrote the editorials for the Raleigh News & Observer. At other times he wrote feature articles for Mr. Daniels, serving as the predecessor of Ben Dixon McNeill in turning out a Sunday feature each week. He has written much for the Charlotte Observer, for other state papers, for magazines—all in addition to his constant grinding out of valued and interesting material for such local papers as the Sandhill Tourist, here, the Moore County Journal at Carthage, the Hoke County Journal at Raeford, the Sandhills Citizen of Southern Pines; later The Pilot, which Stacy Brewer founded in Vass and of which Mr. Butler became the first editor. He was a frequent contributor to the Pinehurst Outlook, and up to a few years ago did much publicity work for Pinehurst. Since the starting of the Sandhills Daily News a few years ago he has written an editorial every day for that paper, published through the winter season here. He never missed an edition until his health upset the schedule two or three weeks ago, and then only for a few days. One of his editorials appeared in the same issue of the paper that carried the report of his death yesterday morning. And some of the editorials in this issue of The Pilot were written this week by Mr. Butler. He died in harness.

Wrote Two Books

Bion Butler was the author of two books, "The Church on Quintuple Mountain," and "Old Bethesda, the Church at the Head of Rockfish," published two years ago by Grosset & Dunlap, an interesting story of this section. Another book, "The Tramp Printer," is in manuscript and will in all probability be published posthumously.

He was at one time vice president

formation from that quarter of Asiatic Russia. The Times sent him over there to investigate the situation. This was the longest trip at that time ever made by a newspaperman for a single item of information, covering 14,000 miles and leading down through Turkey when that war-racked country was bloody with the Armenian massacres.

A storm on the Black sea, through which he sailed 700 miles going out, destroyed shipping, wrecked wharves in the harbors and otherwise did much damage. As it was some six weeks after he had passed through this terrible storm center before he got back to where he could cable The Times' office, there was much uneasiness felt, because the editors knew that he was due to be in that vicinity when news of the storm drifted over the wires. But in spite of storm at sea and the fact that he was snow bound in the Caucasus mountains for days, he succeeded in getting his story and scooped the world on the Asiatic development. His story as written was the first definite information from that then new oil field which became a close second in point of production to the United States. Fifty thousand extra copies of The Times were printed on the morning the first story appeared; in the afternoon, that same day, calls came in for another thirty thousand. It was the newspaper event of the industrial world. And the plates were kept for a considerable time.

Sails For Russia

The remainder of the story had best be told in Mr. Butler's own

"30"



BION H. BUTLER

In a newspaper office the symbol "30" means the end of the day's work. It comes at the end of the last item received on the telegraph instrument.

of the North Carolina Press Association, later refusing the presidency just as years before in Pennsylvania he had fought off numerous efforts to elect him to public office. He was publicity manager of the North Carolina State Fair at one time. A few years ago he was awarded the loving cup at that time annually presented by the Kiwanis Club for the man who had done most for the Sandhills. A testimonial dinner was given in his honor at the Highland Pines Inn about five years ago, and Mr. Butler presented with a gold watch by the citizenry of Southern Pines. He is an honorary member of the Kiwanis Club and was recently elected a life member of the Southern Pines Chamber of Commerce.

Shunning the limelight himself, Bion Butler was probably sought after for guidance by more men in the forefront of affairs than any man in this section. The great and the near great, the rich and poor, the banker and the colored tenant farmer took their troubles and their problems to him, for they knew him as a valued friend and counsellor. He was in frequent correspondence up to the time of his death with members of the United States Congress, with leading geologists in the country, for geology was a favorite study with him; with prominent financiers; with men in all walks of life. They valued his opinions and his knowledge. In his quiet way he had much to do with the shaping of politics in Moore county. He was true to his candidates so long as they were true to the public.

The heart of the community goes out to Mrs. Butler and to the children, Helen, Howard and Cyrus. Howard Butler suffered the double bereavement this week of the loss of both his father and father-in-law. The news of his father's death was broken to him over the telephone while he was completing a 600-mile motor trip to Kusbheque, Pa., there his wife's father, Elisha Kent Kane, a frequent visitor to Southern Pines over a long period of years, died on Monday of this week. They turned around and started back on receipt of the sad message.

words, taken from the first account he had published in The Times on March 2, 1896:

"On Monday, January 6, on reaching The Times office I found awaiting me a summons to the managing editor's office, which, when answered at 2:30 o'clock, brought forth an assignment to start for New York at 8:30 that evening, thence to sail for Russia to investigate the Baku oil fields. The growing scarcity of the territory available for the seeker after Pennsylvania oil and the rapid decline in stocks in the past two years had caused the producer to look with more or less rear toward Russia as a possible competitor in the world's market, and The Times determined to learn by personal visit to the wells and refineries just what the American producer should anticipate. In a general way the American producer had been aware of a threatening danger from the Russian field, but as to detail it had been hazy and clouded with doubt.

"I reached New York in time to sail on the magnificent American liner, the St. Paul, just after she had killed nine men by explosion of her pipes, and just prior to her inglorious grounding on the Long Branch sands. But the fates were kind to me for a starter, although they made it up later on. Delay in London to get my passports vised made me miss the train I wanted and permitted me to catch one that was snowbound two days in the Balkan mountains. That horrible detention in a land of Turks, hostile to Americans since the Armenian outbreaks, and where the

ELISHA KENT KANE DIES AT HIS HOME IN PENNSYLVANIA

Father of Mrs. Howard Butler
Had Been Frequent Visitor
Here For 40 Years

PASSED AWAY ON MONDAY

Elisha Kent Kane died at his home in Kusbheque, Pa., on Monday.

Mr. Kane had been for forty years a visitor to Southern Pines. His first trip this way brought him to Aberdeen in a transaction with the Aberdeen and Rockfish Railroad, then building out over the hill towards the Raeford section. More than thirty years ago the family made a practice of coming to the budding Southern Pines community every winter. They had arranged to come this winter when Mr. Kane's sickness, which has now proved fatal, prevented. Mrs. Kane at his death was in the hospital, seriously ill.

Mr. Kane was the son of Gen. Thomas L. and Dr. Elizabeth D. Kane who, with her two sons and their families, Dr. T. L. Kane and Dr. Evan Kane were winter residents of Southern Pines a number of years ago. Gen. Tom Kane was a pioneer in the development of north western Pennsylvania where he secured the opening of thousands of square miles of wild land which embraced the great oil and coal and lumber fields and the creation of enormous industries. Elisha Kent Kane is the namesake of his uncle, Dr. Elisha Kane, whose polar exploration at one time bore the record of farthest north and whose career was one of the most spectacular in all the stories of voyage and discovery in the past. The name of Kane is not unfamiliar to people over the world. The Kane Basin is found in every geography, the General Kane highway traverses the state of Pennsylvania, the city of Kane which the family established is a well known summer resort and its industries large and famous, one of the United States naval vessels bears the name of Elisha Kane. Mr. Kane carried on a gigantic lumber operation in northern Pennsylvania in connection with oil and gas and railroad and brick and tile plants that manufactured a special type of brick and tiles and pottery for home and foreign markets. His holdings in northern Pennsylvania included thousands of acres of industrial lands, and farms.

He married Zella Hayes of Du Bois, Pa., and they have five children, Mrs. Howard M. Butler of Coal Glen and Southern Pines, O'Neill Kane of Kane, E. Kent Kane, Mrs. Edgar Johnson, and Miss Virginia Kane of Kusbheque, all of them widely known throughout this section.

English language was practically useless, served to spoil the connection with the Black sea steamer, and I got away late enough to be tossed about several days on the nastiest piece of salt water in the orient during the storms that raged so severely, destroying over 100 lives and sinking many vessels. The dangerous and trying voyage had an end at last, and Baku was reached with slight wall, some 30 feet high, still stands in excellent condition.

"Baku is nearly 100 feet below the level of the Caspian sea, which is salt water with no outlet. Its coast skirts the city situated on a slight rise above it. The oil wells are drilled to a depth of from 300 to 1,500 feet below the surface, and were it not for the clay in the loose sand the sea would percolate into every well drilled; for some of them are but a few feet distant from the beach. While Baku is the center of the oil field, there are no wells in the city, but on the contrary are situated in four separate points in its vicinity.

"The man who has not seen a Russian well flow oil cannot have a conception of what 150,000 barrels a day means. It was my fortune to see the Zoubaloff well doing its 160,000 barrels a day, and the sight was a revelation to me. While I stood beside the stream that flowed away from the derrick the Tartar guards stood beside me, and would not allow me to go too close lest the treacherous sand might slip and I should fall into the stream of oil and drown. Luckily for the American, two or three things stand in the way of the full development of the Russian oil field, such as insufficient transportation of the product to the markets of the world, and the superior energy and hustle of the American for a market for his oil.

"In due time the task was finished, and with a glad heart I turned my face westward again. In 24 hours detention, except a few hours in some

Hospital Charity Ball Plans Call For Varied Program of Features

Tag Day

School Library To Benefit
From Proceeds of Sale To-
morrow in So. Pines

By Miss Sarah Goggan

Tag Day! You who live in Southern Pines, have you come to associate that day as an annual event for the Southern Pines School?

Even though 1934 was the first year this was observed here, patrons and friends responded so gladly and well that the pupils and faculty of the school are entering upon the same undertaking in 1935 with glee, feeling that you will respond in the same friendly and interested way.

Last year the money received was spent for athletic uniforms. Although each boy and girl received benefit from this in an indirect way, this year the money is going to be spent so that each boy and girl can very directly enjoy the benefits.

And you ask how can this be? By buying new books for our high school and elementary school libraries. Standardization of the elementary school library is one of the goods of the present school year.

A well selected and representative library for children of elementary school age will contain today some hundreds of books suited to their personal pleasure and entertainment. These will include many well-known classics not originally written for children, but appropriated by them from generation to generation as well as the best books of leading contemporary writers who have written especially to the young.

Literature has had a long struggle to win and its unique and independent value is not yet fully recognized in the curriculum. The children's own stumbling efforts during their early school years must be richly supplemented in order to secure that happy introduction and sustained acquaintance units choice books which is conducive to developing a love for reading and taste in selection.

A wise teacher once said, "There are some children who are born readers. You cannot keep them from books. If the nearest book is miles away they will find it and read it. And there are some children who will never read. But the great majority of children are open to influence and whether or not they grow up to be readers will depend entirely upon influences brought to bear upon them in early life."

When the girls, boys and faculty of Southern Pines School approach you with a red tag tomorrow, Saturday, buy it, and let your response be as much as possible."

more snow.

"Baku is a city of about 130,000 people. It was originally a walled city, and contains many interesting old towers and buildings. For a hundred years or so it has been a Russian possession, being early in its occupation by Russia a penal colony. Now the place is an oil town, having far outgrown the limits of the great stone wall that surrounded the original ancient settlement, although the gladness gave way to apprehension, for our train was stuck in the worst snow that had fallen in the Caucasus mountains in 25 years. These mountains reach a height of from 3,000 to 3,500 feet, the lowest summit crossed by the Trans-Caucasus railroad at Pomi being nearly 3,000 feet above sea level.

"Seven Days in Mountain Pass - "Seven days we lay there in a mountain pass, unable to move the length of the train, fearing an avalanche, economizing fuel and many long miles away from civilization. While I did not know it at the time, I occupied a state room with the press censor, Prince Bariatinsky, a most excellent fellow if he is a press censor, and a thorough gentleman. The prince was the only man who could speak English, but as he was pretty busy caring for his party, providing rations, and trying to get the train out of the snow, there was not time for much conversation with him.

"Seven miserable days we stayed in the snow, getting one meal a day, the snow falling furiously all the time. At length 6,000 men succeeded in opening a channel through which the train proceeded with just enough fuel to reach the next station, seven miles distant. There we found more fuel, and so on through 30 miles of a canal dug in the snow, worked a way to freedom, dodging landslides and avalanches in the steep mountains all that distance.

"For a few days luck was my way again, but the culmination was reached when in New York bay, the New York, on which I returned to America, went in the mud off Swinburne island. Still, in spite of the mishaps,

Fred Kibler's Casa Novans and
Local "B. O.'s" To Furnish
The Music

Everything that can be done to make a party a roaring success has been done by the finance committee of the hospital auxiliary which is sponsoring the Charity Ball on February 26.

Fred Kibler's Casa Nova orchestra will play, and all know what excellent dance music that is. At intervals during the evening the Casa Novans will be relieved by the local amateur orchestra known delicately as the "B. O.'s," consisting of Mrs. Herbert Vail, Herbert Vail, Bob Page, John Leland, and Liv Biddle.

Tables will be set up in the big main lobby of the club. An accordion player has been engaged to wander about among them, playing any tune anybody asks for. The dancing will take place in the regular ballroom. Specialty acts and stunts have been arranged to entertain between dances.

Mrs. Myron Marr and Mrs. Percy Thomson will be in charge of a "take a chance" booth, where the customers may win a small fortune or lost their shirts. Donald Sherrerd will act as official barker to lure suckers in! Tickets for chances are on sale now at the Carolina Hotel, and can be bought anytime before the ball, and at the booth during the ball.

Our well known artists, Walter Frankl, Henri Merz, and Mrs. H. M. Dingley, jr., are going to contribute posters of various kinds, amusing, decorative, and even sketches of local celebrities, which can be bought at auction. The bidding is expected to be hot and heavy because these attractive and original posters are going to be just what you've been looking for to liven up some particular corner of a room that has never looked just right! Livingston Biddle and a committee will act as floor managers. There are so many attractions going on at once that this committee was thought necessary to see that things do not overlap too much, and to keep the ball rolling merrily and smoothly.

Bridge tables in a secluded place will be in readiness for everybody who wants to play.

Tickets for this gay three-ring circus, are \$5.00 for a couple, and \$3.00 for a single person. Supper is not included in this, but the Club Grill will be prepared to serve supper.

Don't forget! February 26, at the club. This is an event you can't afford to miss. And besides the fun you'll have, think of how much good your money will do for the hospital.

The finance committee consists of the following: Mrs. H. M. Dingley, chairman; Mrs. Leonard Tufts, Mrs. Myron Marr, Mrs. C. T. Crocker, Mrs. Percy Thompson, Mrs. Eberhard Faber, Mrs. Heman Gifford, and Mrs. Clarence Rudel.

ANNIVERSARY WEEK AT THE CAROLINA THEATRES

This week marks the anniversary of the opening of the Carolina Theatre at Pinehurst and of the opening of the re-modeled Carolina Theatre at Southern Pines.

"A glance at the program in both theatres will convince anyone that the attractions are worthy of the occasion," said Manager Charles W. Picquet yesterday. All of them are outstanding entertainment and particularly suitable for our patrons. It is our desire to make this week a landmark in the history of the two theatres and we invite all to cooperate with us to the extent of making it a special go-to-the-theatre week. "If you believe that we have done our utmost, even if we have not always succeeded, in giving you the best attractions available, we would appreciate the opportunity to welcome you at our Anniversary programs.

TRIBUTES

(Continued from page 1)

leaves a vacancy that will be hard to fill. His eminent knowledge of the section and his ability as a counselor placed him in a field of his own. The entire town grieves over the passing of Mr. Butler.

Miss Florence M. Brown of Rochester, N. Y., who has been the guest of Miss Alice May Holmes, left Monday night for Washington.

Miss Eleanor Lawrence of New York is a guest of Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Biddle.

that at times looked dangerous and twice perilous, I landed back in Pittsburgh, and The Times has the story I traveled 14,000 miles to get. But, I most emphatically declare, that winter is not a good time to go to Russia."