

EXPECT WATSON TO GET AT LEAST 30-DAY REPRIEVE

Boy's Mother Directs Plea To Pardon Board As Death Date Nears

The mercy plea hearing delayed on account of the illness of Parole Commissioner Gill last Friday, a reprieve of at least 30 days is expected momentarily for Alvin W. Watson, who is scheduled to die in the gas chamber at Raleigh on Friday of this week for the murder of Thomas Holliday, young Robersonville man, at Robersonville last November. No change in the date of execution has been announced by the governor through the pardon commission so far, and unless some action is taken by the authorities at once, Trial Judge M. V. Barnhill is expected to ask that a reprieve of at least 30 days be granted that the case may be reviewed.

The arrangement to have Judge Barnhill intervene was announced following an interview between the trial judge and Attorney Henry D. Hardison who is pushing the plea in Watson's behalf.

Just when the case will be reviewed has not been determined, Attorney Hardison explaining today that he had sent a petition of the trial jury urging that mercy be shown the young killer, and that he was ready to go before the authorities upon short notice. The attorney said that he understood many letters had been forwarded from this county and also from the Georgia community where the Watson family lives, pleading that the death sentence be commuted to life imprisonment.

Watson's mother and brother were in Raleigh last Friday and had a long conference with Commissioner Gill, the doomed man said in a letter received by Sheriff C. B. Roebuck this morning. According to the letter there was some misunderstanding as to who was sick and when the hearing was to be held. Attorney Hardison was advised that the parole commissioner was sick, and Watson was of the belief that Hardison, his attorney, was sick. Expressing his regrets that Mr. Hardison was ill, Watson, grabbing at the proverbial last straw, appealed to the sheriff to have Roy Peel, jailer, write the commissioner in his behalf, adding that unless something is done and done quickly all will be over for him on Friday of this week.

The status of the case remains unchanged, it is understood here. No recommendations have been filed, as far as it could be learned, by Solicitor Don Gilliam or the trial judge, and no action is expected one way or the other by the murdered man's family.

Local Independents Lose, 39-31, Friday

Jesse Wilson Price's All-Star basketball boys fell before the Texaco Fire Chiefs, of Norfolk, in the last game of the season here Friday evening, the visitors taking home with them a 39-31 victory.

The locals were off to a slow start in the first period of the game and trailed 17-8 at the half. Gaylord, scoring 11 of the locals' points, led an offensive at the opening of the third quarter and tied the score, but that was as far as they could reach, the visitors, led by Freddie Edmonds, one-time pitcher in the Al-bemarle baseball set-up, forging ahead again. Edmonds' guard lost him during two or three minutes in the last part of the game and an 8-point margin was gained over the locals.

Oscar Anderson and Jack Manning played a hard game on the floor and jointly added 10 points to the score. Cobb featured afield with two difficult shots when far removed from the net.

Ham Princes and his boys, entering in a tournament in Bethel last evening, were ousted a short while later, riding home on the short end of a 55-to-35 score. Bethel ended the season there for the locals.

Two Colored Men Died Suddenly Here This Week

Sam Burt Brown, for 12 years an employee of the Williamston Motor Company, died at his home here on Sunday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock, the victim of a pneumonia attack and tuberculosis. "Shorty," as he was known, was about 20 years old. He will be buried here Thursday.

Washington Spruill, about 52 years old, died here early yesterday morning from a stroke of paralysis suffered the night before. Funeral services will be held tomorrow afternoon.

County Tax Collector For Martin Suggested

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM HELD AT SCHOOL HERE

Courses Described as Most Beneficial Ever Held In Local Schools

The first of a week's series of talks on mental health was held in the local high school Monday of last week when parents were given an opportunity to discuss aspects of mental health with Dr. Harry V. Bice, psychologist, who lead the discussion groups.

The program made accessible to students from the sixth grade up, was made possible through the parent-teacher association, the local welfare department in cooperation with the mental hygiene division of the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare.

At the chapel exercises on Tuesday morning, Mr. Bice spoke to the entire group of students in a joint session with parents and teachers. With emphasis he defined and illustrated the meaning of mental health and its relations to physical health. After the chapel period, Mr. Bice spoke to the groups in the different grades taking boys and girls separately. In the first individual group lecture he discussed the development of negative mental health conditions and of changing them to positive factors in the building of happy adult lives. Fears, worries and other unfortunate behavior trends were taken up. On the second day with the individual groups Mr. Bice devoted his talk to instruction regarding the development of sex life and a normal attitude toward it. In the last talk of the program an effort was made to indicate the ways in which all aspects of life could be integrated. He stressed the importance of facing difficulties and attempting to work through them rather than seeking means of escape.

In commenting on the program, Principal Anderson said, "It was one of the most beneficial courses we have had in the school. I wish we might have had Mr. Bice for a longer time. The students were extremely interested and took the subject matter presented seriously, asking questions on matters of minor concern to those of a more serious nature which convinced me of their interest and the great need of a trained person to meet this need to some degree."

Mrs. E. F. Moseley, who attended each lecture said, "I wish that every parent could have heard the talks given in the school last week by Mr. Bice. Those of us who heard him were more than pleased and are glad our 'teen-age girls and boys had such an opportunity. We feel that their futures will be happier and their lives more wholesome."

Report Heavy Raid On Chicken Coops

Thieves, four or five in number, raided the chicken coop of Mr. and Mrs. Amos Perry in Bear Grass Township sometime during Sunday night and carried away approximately 190 of their best barn-yard fowls. Hardly more than 15 chickens were left, Mrs. Perry explaining that they had sold what chickens they thought could be spared to the poultry car the week before and then along came the rogues. Several bushels of cured sweet potatoes were stolen and carried away with the chickens.

It was the second chickenhouse raid reported in that community in recent days, Farmer H. C. Green stating that he gathered together several coops but when he went to get his chickens for sale last week they were gone.

Officers exhausted all clues yesterday and found no trace of the missing chickens. It is believed that outsiders, working with local talent, are responsible for the raids.

Kinston Minister Speaks In Church Here Tomorrow

The Rev. Jack Rountree, of Kinston, will speak at the Lenten service at the Church of the Advent this Wednesday night at 7:30. Mr. Rountree has spoken here before and is most pleasantly remembered.

Plant beds in Robeson County have young tobacco seedlings with as many as six leaves at the present time.

Commissioners Vote In Favor of Bill To Create New Office

No Immediate Change In Present System Planned Chairman Explains

A pact to create the office of tax collector for Martin County was supported by the Martin commissioners in regular session Monday, the action not meaning, however, that the present system of collecting taxes would be abolished. According to the terms of the proposed bill, the commissioners will be empowered in their discretion to create the office of tax collector.

Prompted by "several" interested citizens, the proposed law is not expected to effect a change in the present collection system any time within the near future, according to J. E. Pope, chairman of the county board. "We will have the discretion to effect a change if one is considered necessary before the next session of the legislature," Mr. Pope explained.

The bill carries the same provisions as are embraced in present laws governing the collection of taxes with the exception of salary stipulations. The salary is to be fixed by the county authorities either on a commission or straight basis, "or pay part salary and part commission as, in their judgment, is for the best interest of the county." A subsection of Section 2 of the bill reads, "Any fees or commissions allowed the sheriff or tax collector, under the laws now in force or hereinafter enacted, shall be turned over to the general funds of the county."

Provision is also made in the bill to "appoint such elective or appointive officer as tax collector in addition to his other duties, and one person may hold both offices."

The tax collector, the bill reads, will be responsible for the collection and settlement, as provided by law, for all taxes in Martin County, whether general, special or privilege taxes.

Mrs. Lillie Hardison Brown Dies Friday At Jamesville Home

Last Rites Held at the Late Home Sunday for Victim Of Pneumonia

Mrs. Lillie Hardison Brown, widow of J. B. Brown, died at her home near Jamesville last Friday afternoon at 1:30 o'clock from pneumonia, following an illness of less than two weeks' duration.

Mrs. Brown, 69 years old, was unusually active up until she was taken ill about two weeks ago. Interested in her community where she was born and where she lived all her life, she was active in the events of the day. Mrs. Brown was held in high esteem by all who knew her, and was known as a thoughtful wife and an understanding mother. For nearly half a century she was a devout member of the Cedar Branch Baptist church. She held a large friendship with people in all walks of life, her kindness, understanding and willingness to aid others endearing her to everyone. She had made her home for some time with her daughter, Mrs. Annie J. Holliday, but visited her other children and relatives often.

Mr. Brown died some years ago, and she leaves seven children, Mrs. Annie J. Holliday and Arnold Brown, of Jamesville; Artis Brown, of Norfolk; Mrs. Lela Bell Blount, of Macks; Mrs. Mamie Fagan, of Dardens; Mrs. James Mizelle, of Plymouth; and Percy Brown, of Quantico. One son, David Brown, died in Williamston during the influenza epidemic nearly 20 years ago.

Funeral services were conducted Saturday afternoon at 3 o'clock by Rev. W. B. Harrington and interment was in the Brown Cemetery in Jamesville Township.

Rev. Charles H. Dickey Now in Virginia Hospital

Unconscious since he suffered a stroke in Raleigh last Saturday, a week ago, Rev. Charles H. Dickey, former pastor of the local Baptist church, continues in a serious condition, late reports received here stated. The popular minister was moved to a government hospital in Hampton, Va., Saturday.

MACHINERY FOR TOWN ELECTION SET UP BY BOARD

J. E. Pope, R. T. Griffin and S. S. Brown Named as Registrar-Judges

Williamston's town commissioners, in a short regular session last evening, set up machinery for the town election to be held the second Tuesday after the first Monday in May. J. E. Pope was named registrar and Roy T. Griffin and S. S. Brown were appointed judges of election. Arrangements were made to open the registration books on Saturday, April 3, holding them open each Saturday during that month for the registration of new voters and on the following Saturday for the challenge of any names appearing on the books. No date was mentioned for holding the nominating convention, the commissioners stating that arrangements for the convention could be completed the next regular meeting. Registration books are scheduled to be opened on Saturday before the next regular meeting of the commissioners.

The commissioners, receiving an appeal for aid from Mr. R. H. Goodman to send the Williamston High School band to Greensboro early next month, agreed to donate \$75, or about one-half the cost of the trip.

A petition was received from colored citizens asking that sewer and water lines be laid on Elm Street from Washington Street to Simmons Avenue. No action was taken in the matter, and it is not likely that any move will be made before the next budget is set up for the next fiscal year beginning in July. The petition carried the names of 6 or 8 persons living on Elm Street.

February Rainfall Is Below Record Made in January

Six-inch Snow Here Sunday Is Heaviest of Winter In This Section

Frequent rains fell during February, but they were small, and the month was fairly dry, compared with the heavy fall recorded in January. The weather station on Roanoke River reported 3.57 inches of rain and snow last month, the precipitation being about the average for February during the past seven years.

Nearly all the winter weather was crowded into the month, when the mercury went below the freezing point to remain even a short time. The only two snows of the season here fell during the month, one on the 5th and the other on the last day. The first snow measured 2 1-2 inches. Measuring right at 6 inches, the big snow of the winter started falling shortly after Saturday midnight and continued until about noon Sunday. Trees and shrubs were weighted to the ground by the flakes that formed in a gorgeous blanket on the twigs and wires. A few limbs and trees gave way under the added weight, but no great damage was reported in this immediate section. Light service in some sections was interrupted, but, with the exception of a break of a few seconds, power was available here. Fuses were blown on some of the lines, and service men were on duty all day and late in the night handling repairs.

Answer Is Filed in Suit for Damages

Answer was filed in the office of the clerk of the Martin County Superior Court a few days ago by defendants in the \$5,000 damage suit started by Jimmie Watts, young local boy, through his father and next friend, J. W. Watts.

While admitting the first four allegations in the complaint charging employment of Defendants J. S. Livingood and Russell Jones by Rose's stores, the answer declares untrue and denies other charges in the complaint.

The answer, filed by Perry and Kittrell, Henderson attorneys, and H. G. Horton, local lawyer, denies, "That Jimmie Watts was secretly and violently pulled into store of defendant by Russell Jones and knocked the floor and beaten; that said assault was violent, malicious, secret and without any provocation or justification whatsoever and was shocking to all good morals and decency. . . ; that because of assault, plaintiff has been greatly damaged, suffered great pain of body and humiliation."

Property Revaluation and Tax Listing To Be Decided Upon at Special Meeting of Board Today

Public Weighers for Poultry Advocated by Farm Leaders

Martin farmers cooperatively shipped 10,696 pounds of poultry last week, the shipment being one of the smallest handled since the first cars were handled about 11 years ago. The farmers were paid \$1,476.98.

While the cooperating farmers sold a little over five tons of the barnyard fowls, individual operators are reported to have bought approximately 30,000 pounds of poultry in this county during the week.

Going before the county commissioners yesterday, county agricultural authorities asked that a public

weigher be employed to weigh all poultry offered for sale in the county when the cooperative cars are operated. No formal charges were made against incorrect weights the agricultural leaders explaining that the proposed system should be welcomed by everyone. The commissioners were of the belief that state laws already provided the service, and it is understood that efforts will be made to have a public weigher in the county when the next shipment is made, if another one is made.

Crowded Off Docket By Other Matters at Meet Held Monday

Pass Resolution Requesting Surfacing of Highway Through Hassell

Crowded off the docket by other business yesterday, the matter of property revaluations was carried over until today for consideration by the Martin County Board of Commissioners. Holding forth until six p. m., the longest session held in recent months, the board yesterday discussed just before adjournment the possibility of a revaluation and received two applications for the position of tax supervisor, one from Clarence Stallings, Jamesville Township man, and S. H. Grimes, local man. No action was taken, Chairman J. E. Pope recessing the meeting until 10 o'clock this morning. Considerable time will be given the problem today, including recommendations for list-takers, it is understood.

Machinery for handling property listings or a complete revaluation will be set up immediately or in time to start work on or soon after the first of next month for the preparation of the 1937 tax books.

Dr. A. J. Osteen, veterinarian, was appointed to supervise the vaccination of all dogs in the county against rabies this year. The commissioners ruled that the doctor is to be assisted by Sheriff C. B. Roebuck. It was remembered that this county, during the past two years, successfully handled the vaccination of dogs, and the commissioners are believed quite anxious that the record be maintained.

Hearing a delegation from Hassell and community, the commissioners passed a resolution similar to the one passed at the request of Griffins Township citizens at the February meeting. There was some misunderstanding about the resolution of the Griffins Township citizens, but the variations were cleared up when the commissioners took the following action:

"Upon motion of R. A. Haislip, seconded by C. Abram Roberson, that since resolution requesting road in Griffins Township, the Board finds similar conditions existing in upper end of the county on the Hassell Road, and hereby request as follows:

"Road beginning at Butlers' Bridge on Highway 125, extending to Fountain Forks, connecting with Tarboro Road, via Town of Hassell, a distance of nine miles, be considered for early surfacing."

The final drafting of the Griffins Township road resolution reads, in part, as follows: That at the next letting of roads in Martin County, the Jamesville-Washington Road be surfaced. . . .

Local Lawyer's Leg Amputated

His right leg amputated by doctors in a Richmond hospital last Saturday morning at 11 o'clock, Attorney W. Hubert Coburn, local man, was reported this morning to be getting along as well as could be expected. Direct information from the hospital stated that his condition was improved, that while he is a mighty sick man he is expected to recover.

Suffering an attack of pneumonia several months ago, the Martin County recorder's court prosecutor is believed to have developed phlebitis as a result. He entered the hospital for treatment and returned home, but when his condition became worse he re-entered the hospital two weeks ago today. When he failed to respond to treatment, doctors amputated his leg, taking it off just below the knee.

Jamesville Sends Team To Semi-Finals in Tournament

Participating in the Atlantic Christian College basketball tournament in Wilson last week, the Jamesville school quint established a scoring record when the county lads defeated Elm City, 68 to 8, in the early rounds of play. The only team from this county in the tourney, the Jamesville boys next turned back Moss Hill, 29 to 18, to gain a place in the semi-finals. Saturday morning, Princeton, a dark horse in the scheduled games, came out to shelve Jamesville by a 36 to 29 score.

Snow Brings an Enforced Holiday for Three Schools

With the possible exception of the one at Jamesville, all schools in the county are expected to be on a regular operating schedule tomorrow, according to information coming from the office of the county superintendent today. The Williamston, Farm Life and Jamesville schools have been closed since last Friday, the others managing to operate without interruption despite the Sunday snow fall.

Martins Sign Contract With St. Louis Browns

Contract as Manager Sent To Art Hauger, Former Big Leaguer

Contracts Now Pending for Twenty-five Or More Ball Players

Perfecting a working agreement with the St. Louis Browns, local baseball officials today virtually announced complete arrangements for participating this season in the Coastal Plain League, recently turned professional. Signing a contract with the American League team yesterday, officials announced virtually completed plans for hiring a manager and 20 players. Present plans now point to a rounded-out team within the next week or 10 days.

The St. Louis Browns have agreed to pay \$1,500 to the Martins for the right to select any and all players held under a local contract, but the players are not to become the property of the St. Louis club until after the season is completed, if then. The contract with the major league unit carries few provisions other than the selection rights, and it is not likely any players will be furnished by the St. Louis Club. Rights are reserved by St. Louis for a renewal of the contract in 1938, R. H. Goodman, president of the local club, said.

A manager's contract was forwarded yesterday to Art Hauger, Springfield, Minn., man, and he is expected to accept the terms. Hauger, one-time player in the majors and experienced manager, headed a winning organization in the Missouri-Arkansas league last season. The Bentonville (Ark.) club, managed by Hauger, surrendered its franchise at the close of the 1936 season, and the manager decided to apply for a managerial post in this section of the country. He has had several offers, but his connection with the Martins was considered almost certain today.

Hauger has acquired the contracts of several players on the Bentonville club in addition to several others he scouted in recent months. It is quite likely that he will bring several members of his last year's team with him. Several players on the Martins' roster last year are expected back, contracts having been forwarded to at least four of them, it was learned from President Goodman.

Hauger is expected here about the middle or latter part of next month to enter upon his contract, and training for the season will get underway shortly after that time for the opening of the season on May 15.

Prospects are very encouraging for a good team and at less cost. President Goodman said in commenting on the outlook for the coming baseball season.

Mack Knox Found Dead In Bed Early Yesterday

Mack Knox, middle-aged white man, was found dead in bed at the home of Toby Barber in Williams Township yesterday morning. Said to have taken excessive doses of sedatives for a severe headache the day and night before, Knox retired Sunday night and never woke up. Burial was in Williams Township, near the No. 90 filling station.

One brother, Will Knox, of this county, a sister and his mother, of Rocky Mount, survive. One son, Leroy Knox, is in Suffolk.