

## Farm Purchasers Hold Meeting In Courthouse Here

### Work Accomplished Under Tenant Purchase Act Is Reviewed

Eight farm families who have received loans from the Farm Security Administration to buy farms in Martin County, under the terms of the Bankhead-Jones Tenant act, met here yesterday, to take inventory of their first year's work and to make plans for the new year. Three families were unable to be present.

David Modlin, FSA county supervisor, said a summary of the records of these families show that they have been able to meet their obligations to the government in a satisfactory manner and have made promising gains as revealed by increased inventories.

Now that they are permanently located, with a chance to improve their own farms and reap the benefits therefrom, the families have an altogether new outlook and a keener interest in community affairs, Mr. Modlin pointed out.

The farmers attending the meeting gained valuable information from one another, in going over their record books and in talking over their farm problems. The wives also swapped ideas about improvements in the home—running water in the kitchen, screened in porches, year-round gardens and things to be done to make their new homes more attractive.

"It is the purpose of the FSA, in cooperation with the extension service and other agricultural agencies, to render as much practical assistance to these families as possible to help them build up their farms and to carry out the farming practices best suited for their individual farms," the supervisor said. "Farm improvement is not a one-year job but should continue year after year on the basis of carefully laid plans. Therefore, in addition to our regular visits to the farms during the farming season, these meetings will be held at the close of each year to measure progress and to help the farmers with their plans. Results of this first meeting indicate that our tenant-purchase borrowers have been sold on this idea and already have taken initial steps toward a better balanced farm program."

In addition to those borrowing to buy farms, there are 81 other farmers in this county, both tenants and small farm owners, who are borrowing under FSA's rehabilitation program to buy fertilizer, seed, farm equipment, livestock and other things needed on the farm. Only those buying farms (and who have made at least one crop) attended the meeting. The tenant-purchase program is a gradually increasing program and has been in operation in this county only one year.

Mr. Modlin stated that Mayo Harrison, Gaston James and J. R. Winslow, the three local farmers composing the county tenant-purchase committee, have rendered valuable assistance in carrying out the program, as has also Miss Emeline Evans, home supervisor, his invaluable associate in farm security work.

## Church League Will Hold Meet Sunday

The Martin County Young People's Interdenominational League will hold its first meeting of the new year in the Rosen Sharon Free Will Baptist Church, near Bear Grass, Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock. Miss Mary Elizabeth Keel, president of the league, announced today that a splendid program had been prepared and that a full attendance is expected. Dr. H. S. Hilley, Atlantic Christian College president, will be the guest speaker.

Each church in the county is being urged to have a representative present for the session.

Much work has been accomplished by the league during the past year, and the leaders are planning greater accomplishments in 1940.

## Money for the Asking, and Yet Farmers Will Not Ask for It

There's gold waiting for Martin County farmers in the soil conservation program, but strange as it may seem, quite a few of the growers won't bother to ask for it, according to information coming from the office of the county farm agent this week. A last call for applications for cotton price adjustment payments for 1939 is being issued, and nearly 100 farmers are being urged to perfect their applications for soil conservation payments due them under the 1939 Agricultural Adjustment Administration program.

January 31 has been set as the deadline for filing applications for the cotton price adjustment payments, the farm agent's office explaining that 902 applications had been filed and that 1,619 cotton farmers had received their checks a long time ago. Only a few farmers have not filed their applications, but

## Ask Farmers To Plant Below Their 1940 Tobacco Quotas

Declaring that only a half crop of tobacco was needed to meet the demand, J. B. Hutson, tobacco administrator in Raleigh Wednesday, urged farmers to plant 10 per cent less than the acreage called for in the allotments released to them this week.

"The cut in production should be about 35 per cent instead of 20 per cent the farmers voted to make in the referendum last fall," he said.

Continuing he said, "We might as well face the facts and warn farmers not to incur the expense of heavy plantings. Flue-cured tobacco is a worthwhile crop only as long as it returns an income above expense of growing it. Tobacco growing will not be profitable until the huge surplus is used."

The assistant AAA administrator points out that about the only salvation for the farmer rests in a small acreage, an acreage actually

below the allotments, complete participation in the soil conservation program and a live-at-home policy that will provide adequate food and feed supplies for the farm and home.

Hutson reservedly commented on the price outlook when interrogated by Dr. I. O. Schaub, director of State College Extension. Asked if the 1940 crop would average 12 cents or 25 cents, Hutson stated he believed that average would be nearer the lower figure.

Reviewing briefly the activity of the government on the markets last fall, Hutson said that the Commodity Credit Corporation financed the purchase of around 175,000,000 pounds of tobacco for \$38,000,000. The Imperial Tobacco Company is expected to exercise its option on these purchases on or before June of next year.

## New Mercantile Firm To Operate Store Here

PRESIDENT



Sylvester Peel, leading county citizen and Christian gentleman, was recently reelected to the presidency of the Martin County Mutual Fire Insurance Association. He is now serving his sixth term with the organization.

## Small Child Badly Burned Near Here

Critically burned while playing with matches at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Gurkin, in Griffins Township last week-end, little Jimmie Gurkin, about five years old, was reported to be getting along as well as could be expected today. While he is expected to recover, the little fellow was said to be suffering much pain.

Playing with a four-year-old relative, the child fired a small building in the yard of his home and the fire caught his clothes. His clothes on his right leg were burned, and all the skin on the limb came off. His little playmate tried to throw dirt on him, but he darted into the house where his mother threw a blanket around him and smothered the fire. Following first-aid treatment, he was placed under a bed tent at his home.

Reports state that the little fellow a short time before fired some old tobacco cloth hanging on a fence.

## Builder Escapes Injury In Fall From House Top

Albert Gurkin, building contractor, was slightly bruised, but not badly hurt the early part of this week when he slipped on ice-covered timbers and fell from a house near here.

## Martin Supply Co. Located In Bowen Brothers Building

Recently Organized by Well-Known Local and County Business Men

The Martin Supply Company, recently organized by leading local and county business men, will open a general mercantile establishment in the Bowen Brothers Building on Washington Street next Wednesday, it was announced this morning by Eddie M. Trahey, manager of the new firm.

A large stock, purchased just a few days ago, will be moved into the store this week-end or just as soon as remodeling work on the building is completed. The opening for the new firm was created when Bowen Brothers dissolved partnership after operating a number of years following the death of Mr. John M. Bowen, one of the founders and partner-operator for several years.

Under the management of Mr. Eddie Trahey, who was prominently connected with the firm of Harrison Brothers for several years before the business was liquidated a year ago, the new firm is owned by the following stockholders, Messrs. Noah R. Peel, Luther Peel, Oscar Peel, Irving Griffin, Woodrow Tice, James M. Peel, J. Edward Corey, Clarence Griffin, J. G. Corey, Wheeler Martin, Garland Coltrane, Stephen Manning and Mr. Trahey. These men are recognized as among the leading citizens of the county and are able business men. They are widely known throughout this section of eastern Carolina, and news of their business venture will be well received over a wide territory.

"We plan to carry a complete stock of merchandise to meet the every need of the farm and family," Mr. Trahey said, in announcing the formal opening date. Large stocks of popular merchandise have already been purchased, and the firm, operating on both a cash and credit basis, will specialize in the sale of general farm supplies, including fertilizer, seeds and feeds and staple groceries.

Mr. Stephen Manning, leading county farmer and merchant, will be actively associated with the management of the firm, it was announced.

## Former Resident Of County Dies

Mrs. Elizabeth Green Slade, a resident of Hamilton for a long number of years, died at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Alston in Warrenton early last Tuesday following an illness of long duration. She was the daughter of the late Dr. Simon Thomas and Martha Bowers Jenkins Green, of Warrenton.

Following her marriage to Thomas B. Slade years ago, she made her home in Hamilton. Some time after Mr. Slade's death she moved to Littleton about 1931, later going to Warrenton to make her home. She was a member of the Emanuel Episcopal Church and services were conducted there. Interment was in Suffolk, Va.

She leaves no children, but several nieces and nephews survive her.

## Will Build Recreational Hall For Colored Children

Sponsored by local colored citizens, a modern recreational center will be established near the cemetery here within the near future. The National Youth Administration has appropriated slightly more than \$5,000 for the project, the remainder to be financed by the sponsors. The definite cost of the project is not definitely known.

## Eight Cases Called In Recorder's Court By Judge H. O. Peel

Comparatively Short Session Held by County Tribunal Last Monday

Carrying only eight cases and attracting very little attention from the general public, the weekly criminal docket in the county recorder's court was cleared in a comparatively short time last Monday. Judge H. O. Peel presided and Solicitor D. E. Johnson was at his desk to head the prosecution. The court was adjourned before noon.

Proceedings: Charged with simple assault, Vance Brooks was sentenced to the roads for a term of thirty days.

Prayer for judgment was continued until March 11 in the case charging James E. Whitaker with violating the motor vehicle laws.

Leamon "Red" Taylor, charged with reckless and careless driving was fined \$25, taxed with the cost and had his license to operate a motor vehicle revoked for a period of one year. He appealed and bond was required in the sum of \$100.

David Page, charged with passing a worthless check, pleaded not guilty. The case was continued under prayer for judgment until the second Monday in September, this year.

Pleading guilty in the case charging him with an assault with a deadly weapon, Charlie Francis Gray was sentenced to the roads for a period of thirty days.

Judgment was suspended upon payment of the cost and the guaranteed good behavior of the defendant for the next two years in the case charging Floyd Simpson with hit and run driving. Simpson pleaded guilty to the charge.

Harvey Rascoe pleaded guilty of drunken driving and was fined \$50 and taxed with the case costs. His license to operate a motor vehicle was revoked for one year.

In the case charging George W. Coltrane with disorderly conduct and an assault, a motion for non-suit was granted by Judge Peel at the conclusion of the evidence offered by the State.

## Woman's Club Holds Meeting Wednesday

Organization Votes To Sponsor Birth Control Clinic In County

The regular meeting of the Woman's Club was held in the club rooms Wednesday afternoon, January 10, with a considerable number of the members in attendance. The meeting was featured by a splendid program on the Pre-School Child, presented by the education department, Mrs. Harrell Everett, chairman.

Rev. Z. T. Piephoff made a short but impressive talk on "Why the Pre-School Age Is Important", in which he stressed the value of proper training and its influence throughout the child's life.

Mrs. John L. Goff then spoke on "Children's Rights," reviewing the rights of a child and pointing out the responsibilities of parents toward their children. "Learning by Doing" was the topic of remarks by Miss Josephine Harrison, in which she discussed the importance of correct kindergarten training in preparation for school work. The program was concluded with an interesting playlet entitled, "Who knows", given by ten pre-school age children, assisted by Mrs. A. J. Osten.

During the business session of the meeting the club voted unanimously to sponsor a birth control clinic in Williamston, the work to be carried on by the Martin County Health Department in conjunction with state and national health service.

Plans for establishing the clinic have not been formulated as far as it could be learned here today.

## Property Owners Are Slow To List Taxes In County

Although the month is nearly half gone, less than one-fifth of the property owners in the county have listed their property for taxation.

H. M. Burras, list-taker for Williamston Township, said yesterday that while he had been fairly busy since the work was started nearly two weeks ago, hardly more than 200 property owners had listed their holdings as required by law. With no time extension likely to be granted by the commissioners, a last minute rush is now expected as the final date draws near.

The number of listings to date has been so small that it is difficult to offer any reliable prediction as to the valuation trend, Mr. Burras said, adding that he believed there would be a slight increase.

## Chamber of Commerce Directors In Meeting

Name Billie Clark As Secretary For New Organization

Directors Draft G. H. Harrison To Serve As President First Year

Showing a marked interest in its possibilities and recognizing the need for an active local chamber of commerce, recently elected directors in a special meeting at the Branch Bank tentatively launched a program of action for the organization last Wednesday evening when Billie Clark was named secretary and instructions were issued for a large and representative membership among the various groups, including merchants, manufacturers, professional and other business men.

Having hurriedly conducted a round-up of the possible membership, the organization committee told the Wednesday evening meeting that it had met with a far greater success than was anticipated and that the outlook was unusually bright for an active and valuable commerce organization here. Although hardly more than a third complete, the membership drive has already pledged approximately \$1,000 in support of the movement. This figure does not take into consideration any participation by the tobacco board of trade or the merchants as a unit under a regular merchants' organization.

Plans were tentatively advanced to operate the three units under a single head, the group agreeing that in this way a fairly extensive budget can be easily financed than if the activities were limited to those common to the chamber of commerce as a single unit.

Several matters of public importance were discussed at the meeting, and the newly elected secretary is expected to get busy with them immediately.

Pending the action of the full membership in a regular meeting on February 2, no headquarters for the organization were established, the secretary to share another's office until after the regular meeting next month. By-laws and a tentative schedule of procedure will be prepared for consideration at the meeting.

Carrying on the work of a chamber of commerce and sharing the expense personally during a long number of years, Mr. G. H. Harrison advised the meeting that he could not accept the presidency of the organization. While the directors appreciated his position, they named a drafting committee to talk with Mr. Harrison in an effort to have him accept the job for at least a year.

The directors decided to schedule regular monthly meetings for the last Friday night before the first Monday. Permission for holding the sessions in the agricultural building will be asked.

There were fourteen directors present for the meeting this week, and judging from the interest shown it is quite evident that Williamston can and will support an active commerce organization.

Early reports from the field state that the newly elected secretary is being well received by business firm operators and professional men.

## Guaranty Bank Has Its Annual Meeting

The thirty-ninth annual meeting of the stockholders of Guaranty Bank and Trust Company was held in Greenville last Tuesday afternoon.

Prior to the meeting the branch cashiers and their boards of managers were entertained at a luncheon in the Proctor hotel dining room. Messrs. R. L. Coburn and D. V. Clayton represented the local branch.

The stockholders meeting was presided over by E. G. Flanagan, who has served the institution as president since 1912. W. H. Woolard, who has been executive vice-president since 1920, made comments on the condition of the bank as of December 31, 1939, at which time, he stated the bank had \$6,979,034.95, or 83 per cent of deposits, in cash or high-grade marketable bonds of short maturity. He expressed appreciation to the employees, directors and branch managers who assisted in making the enviable record for 1939.

J. H. Waldrop, cashier, submitted a report of operations and earnings, showing that the bank had had the best year in its history, and after making substantial additions to surplus, undivided profits and reserve accounts, dividend checks amounting to 15 per cent of the banks' common capital were distributed to the stockholders.

D. V. Clayton was reelected cashier of the local branch, J. W. Griffin, Miss Thelma Lilley and Phillip Keel were also reelected to serve on the staff of the local branch.

## Legion Post Will Operate Fair Here This Coming Fall

A. J. Grey, Former Service Man, To Manage Martin County Fair

Perfecting an operating organization recently, the John Walton Hassell Post of the American Legion will promote a fair in Williamston this coming fall, Mr. W. E. Dunn, spokesman for the organization committee, announced today.

Papers for the incorporation of the Martin County Agricultural Fair Association have been forwarded to the Secretary of State, and the organization will be ready to start advancing its plans for the fair within the next two or three weeks, Mr. Dunn explained.

A. J. Grey, former service man and successful manager of the Greenville fair during the past several seasons, has been named to manage the fair in this county. The fair grounds and property rights for holding the fair have been leased from the owner, Mr. Jim G. Steton, for one year, the lessors exercising the right to extend the lease for two or more years.

A radical change in the policies as they relate to the fair management will be effected, Mr. Dunn, of the organization committee, explained. General admissions will be reduced to ten cents, and the agricultural features will be stressed along with various club, school and other types of exhibits. Cash for the premiums will be raised and placed in a county bank prior to the opening of the fair and made subject to premium checks only. "We plan to offer this section a real agricultural fair, a fair that the section and its people rightfully deserve," Mr. Dunn added.

The organization committee, composed of William Gray, commander of the legion post; J. R. Winslow, H. G. Horton, W. E. Dunn and J. E. Boykin, asked for the incorporation papers with all members of the legion as stockholders.

The fair will be operated as a non-profit organization, it was pointed out.

Dates for holding the fair and the booking of shows and grandstand acts will receive consideration at a meeting of state fair association officials at a meeting to be held in Raleigh the latter part of this month.

The North Carolina Fair Operating Company, Chambliss and Hamid, operators, withdrew from this field following the expiration of a five-year lease last fall. Several companies entered bids for the grounds, but the owner recognized the bid of the county legion post committee.

Names of the corporation officers will be made public shortly.

## Native Of Town Dies In Norfolk

Mrs. John T. Downey, Williamston native and a sister of Mrs. J. S. Cooke here, died in a Norfolk hospital last Monday morning from peritonitis developing following an operation for appendicitis about four weeks ago.

Miss Nellie Estelle Ray before her marriage, she was born in Williamston 60 years ago; the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Ray, prominent Williamston family. Ray Street here was named for her father.

In early womanhood she moved to Norfolk and married, her husband and four daughters, Mrs. Haywood Holland, Mrs. Sidney Proctor, Mrs. Howard Isaacs and Mrs. Howard Whitehurst, all of Norfolk, surviving. She leaves only one sister, Mrs. Cooke, of this place.

Funeral services were conducted Wednesday morning at 11 o'clock by her pastor, and interment followed in Forest Lawn Cemetery, Norfolk.

Mrs. Downey often visited her sister here, making her last trip to Williamston in late summer of last year.



Drafted into service by a special committee of the recently organized local chamber of commerce, Mr. G. H. Harrison, after asking that someone else be named to the post, reconsidered and formally accepted the presidency of the organization last evening.

## Growing Sentiment For A Long Range Leaf Control Plan

Member of Advisory Committee Says Farmers Favoring 5-Year Program

A movement started by resolutions passed by the American Farm Bureau Federation to create a long-range program for tobacco production control is gaining support rapidly, and it is generally believed that the present Congress will be requested to act on the proposal.

Claude T. Hall, chairman of the tobacco growers advisory committee, member of the State Board of Agriculture and a leader in the crop control movement, after a survey conducted throughout the tobacco territory reports a growing sentiment for a long range program.

In a statement issued a few days ago, Mr. Hall said:

"Recently I have taken a swing through the tobacco section and I find that the demand for a three to five year program for tobacco is greater than ever before. Growers are thoroughly aware of the fact that if we are to receive the greatest benefit and return from our sacrifice in reduction of acres, so as to make it more effective, we must have a program for more than one year. It is evident that the buyers will not pay as good an average where there is an uncertainty as to the size of each succeeding crop. It makes the program harder to administer because of the new growers taking up the increase in acres, by reason of increase in consumption, thereby, causing much dissatisfaction on the part of regular growers."

"Recognizing these advantages and disadvantages, I have sounded out the feeling and judgment of the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation, North Carolina Department of Agriculture, members of North Carolina Grange, Tobacco Growers Advisory Committee, State AAA, committees and several congressmen, and above all the growers themselves, and the feeling of all is that it is to the best interest of all concerned and that they are all ready to use their full force and support to join with us and Congress to amend the present bill so that we may have a chance to vote for a longer period."

"May I suggest to the growers that

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## Schools Here Are Faced With Serious Attendance Problem

Poor attendance in the local schools reached serious proportions during this week, a check of teachers' records revealing that an average of ninety-five children were absent from their classrooms each day. Attendance was at its worst last Monday when a total of one hundred and forty-five pupils, 122 elementary and 23 high school, failed to report. Slight improvement each day failed to bring the attendance record back to normal at the close of the week. School authorities are unable to account for the large number of absences since busses operated on schedule except on Wednesday when some mechanical trouble was experienced. Very little sickness exists in the school district and the severe cold weather of the week is hardly accountable for so many absences.

In addition to the losses in at-

tendance school records reveal that 33 children have moved from the district since the Christmas holidays and only ten have moved in and enrolled to take their places in the classrooms. According to the information available more of the losses are located in Beaufort County than in any other county.

With the expected break in the weather it is hoped that class work will proceed with normal attendance at the first of the coming week.

Incomplete reports point to record-low attendance figures throughout the county. Moving has been advanced on a comparatively small scale to date, the reports stating that few families have moved in to take the places of those who moved out of the county, several of the schools reporting losses and no gains in the number of pupils.