

County Officers Start New Term Monday Morning

Crowds Gather in Offices, Halls and Courtroom for Induction Ceremonies

Without pomp or detailed ceremony, Martin County officers were sworn in for a two-year term by Clerk of Court L. B. Wynne in the courthouse here yesterday morning. Large crowds, gathering in the offices, halls and courtroom for the regular routine of county happenings as they center around the "first Monday", were present for the informal induction ceremonies.

Amidst the confusion caused by those calling for their old-age pension checks or welfare aid, and by those who would file their monthly reports, and by those who were rushing to make ready their defenses in the county court, W. Hubert Coburn subscribed to the oath of office and became a full-fledged judge in a corner of Clerk L. B. Wynne's office at 9:30. Only one or two witnesses were on hand for the ceremony. Five minutes later, the old board of commissioners went into final session at the call of the retiring chairman, John E. Pope. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved following a discussion of the 1939 tax books. Bills, contacted under the old board were inspected by all members of the board and approved for payment. Mrs. C. A. Harrison, retiring treasurer, submitted a final statement which was accepted, the acceptance marking the last official act of the old board.

Chairman John E. Pope and Member C. A. Fleming addressed a few parting remarks to the board, and the new board, including C. Abram Roberson, of Robersonville; R. A. Haislip, of Oak City; R. L. Perry, of Bear Grass, re-elected, and Joshua L. Coltrane, of Williams Township, and C. D. Carstarphen, of Williams, recently elected members, subscribed to the oath of office. A reorganization of the board was perfected in less than a minute after Clerk of Court L. B. Wynne administered the oath. R. L. Perry, who has a long and able record of service as a member of the board, was made chairman upon the motion of Commissioner C. Abram Roberson. Chairman Perry, pledging his best efforts to the county as head of its governing body, expressed his appreciation to the members of the board for the honor bestowed upon him.

The first act of the new board was to reappoint Don Elphonsa Johnson solicitor of the county recorder's court, the action being recognized as a mere formality following the recommendation made by the Democratic primary last May. Solicitor Johnson subscribed to the oath of office at 10:35, and at 10:40 another branch of the county government, the recorder's court, was functioning with the recently elected judge, W. Hubert Coburn, on the bench and Solicitor Johnson again at the prosecutor's table. Retiring Judge H. O. Peel appeared in court to assist in the handling of unfinished business. A motion for non-suit made before Judge Peel at a session several weeks ago was sustained by the new judge in the case charging John Robert Lawrence with violating the liquor laws. A continuance was again granted in the case charging Ben Biggs with violating the liquor laws, it having been explained that the defense counsel could not be present.

Upon the suggestion and approval of the retiring judge, a capias was issued for the arrest of George Allen who had not complied with a previous judgment in the court.

Judge Coburn then called his first case.

After getting the court functioning, the clerk returned to his office long enough to administer the oath of office to R. H. Smith, recently elected treasurer. Mr. Smith's bond for \$40,000 having been just approved by the new board of commission-

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Injured In Wreck Near Washington

William O. White, local white man, suffered a broken nose, and several other persons were injured, three seriously, in an automobile accident at Old Ford in Beaufort County Sunday afternoon. Mr. White, driving the car belonging to his brother-in-law, Mr. Frank Weston of Williamston, was taking Mrs. Ralph Jones and her two-year-old son, Larry, to their home in Beaufort County following a visit here with Mrs. Jones' sister, Mrs. Weston, when two colored men, Willie Cobb, Jr., and Sam Tucker, started to pass another car and crashed head on into the machine driven by White.

The two colored men were seriously hurt, and the Weston car was wrecked. Mrs. Jones, who suffered severe cuts and bruises, was reported to be getting along very well in a Washington hospital today. Her son suffered painful cuts on his face.

Charges will be brought against the operator of the Negro car, Patrolman J. G. Spivey was quoted as saying following an investigation of the wreck.

Important Cotton Referendum Will Be Held Next Saturday

Cotton growers of North Carolina and other states in the nation where the lint crop is produced will go to the polls Saturday to decide in a referendum whether to have cotton marketing quotas in effect on the 1941 crop. Quotas have been in effect for the past three years, including 1940.

E. Y. Floyd, AAA executive officer of N. C. State College, urges every farmer who produced cotton this year to go to his community polling place and express his opinion. "A large majority of cotton growers voting will mean that the referendum outcome represents the true opinion of producers as a whole," he declared.

The nation-wide vote in favor of cotton marketing quotas for 1940 was 877,297 for quotas and 84,976

against quotas, or 91.2 per cent of those voting in favor of the quotas. North Carolina gave 1940 quotas a 50,737 to 5,767 vote (89.8 per cent) vote of approval.

Floyd pointed out that cotton lands which have helped this year in maintaining cotton farmers' incomes can be made available to cotton growers in 1941 only if marketing quotas are approved in Saturday's referendum. The Agricultural Adjustment Act, passed by Congress in 1938, specifically provides that if quotas are proclaimed and then voted down, loans cannot be made.

The Triple-A officer also said that if marketing quotas are rejected, the 1940 cotton loan program would have to cease at the time ballot results are announced, and a loan could not again be available until August 1, 1942.

POOR RESPONSE

The call for discarded toys and surplus clothing for distribution among the less fortunate in this community at Christmas time went virtually unanswered here yesterday afternoon when the Boy Scouts canvassed the town and returned with hardly a handful of toys and no discarded clothes.

The canvass was disheartening in view of the fact that numbers of homes are cluttered with toys and yet busy housewives could not find the time to cooperate with an inexpensive move to gladden the hearts of others.

A second canvass will be made by the Scouts next Saturday morning. The response to that canvass will determine the success or the failure of the Christmas Cheer movement.

Submarine Offers Serious Threat To British Shipping

Greeks Score New Successes In Fight Against Italy In Albania

Rising as one of the most serious threats to Great Britain, German submarines are claimed by the Nazis to be playing havoc with British shipping. Up until noon today, the Germans claim seventeen British ships sunk within the preceding 24 hours. According to the claim, fifteen merchantmen and a destroyer were sent to the bottom out of one convoy in the Atlantic a few hundred miles off the Irish coast. The total tonnage lost, according to the German claims, is 161,000 tons.

British sources scoff at the claims, but it is admitted by the English that the submarine warfare is proving even more serious than the devastating air raids made on their cities. Realizing the great submarine menace, England is now looking to the United States for the purchase of sixty new ships.

In addition to her losses on the high seas, England is still undergoing attacks from the air. Bristol underwent its second attack in two days last night, one report states that the wreckage and loss of life was greater than at Coventry more than two weeks ago. London had a quiet night last night, but three raid alarms were sounded early today in rapid order. Other English cities have been savagely attacked, including Birmingham, during the past few days.

The only other activity in the air yesterday and early today was reported over Naples which the British raided extensively.

As England was bearing the blunt of sea and air attacks, the Greeks continued their march against the Italians in Albania. Late reports state that the valiant Greeks have cut off the greater part of Mussolini's eleventh army in Southern Albania, closing supply routes to the large number of men. The Greeks now are

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Keen Competition in Holiday Decorations Expected Locally

According to early reports, Williamston merchants, home owners and public building employees are making extensive plans for throwing a gala attire around the ole town this Christmas season. More people are expected to participate in the program, add a few lights and place the artistic touch to the decorations that the spirit of the period might be advanced in every nook and corner.

Sponsoring the contest for prize-winning decorations, the local Chamber of Commerce is out collecting a number of valuable prizes, which will be awarded winners in three groups. For the first time, prizes will be made available to public employees. Prizes will also be awarded for the best home or doorway arrangements and yard decorations.

Young White Man Is Hold-up Victim Near Here Sunday

Ollie Bland's Life Threatened By Two Negroes Staging Daring Hold-up

Ollie Bland, young Williams Township white man, was held-up and robbed by two Negroes near the No. 90 filling station on the Jamesville Road in Williams Township early last Sunday night, the robbers taking a watch and chain and a small amount of change. Tom Jones, 23, and N. S. Nichols, 21, both colored, have been arrested in connection with the crime, and are now in jail awaiting trial in the Martin County Superior Court here next week. They were given a preliminary hearing here yesterday afternoon. Justice J. L. Hassell found probable cause in the case and required bond in the sum of \$500 each. Unable to raise the stipulated amounts, the two men were ordered placed in jail.

Making a purchase at the filling station, Bland started riding a bicycle to his home below the filling station on the Jamesville Road. Observing the purchase at the station and thinking he had money, Jones and Nichols are said to have followed Bland on a second bicycle with Jones pedalling and Nichols riding the crossbar. Overtaking Bland, the two men rode beside him a short distance, the three men exchanging greetings. Nichols was reported to have attempted to hit Bland over the head with a big pop bottle. Missing its mark, the bottle crashed on the concrete. Jones then turned his bicycle into Bland's causing Bland to fall to the road. Before he could get up Nichols was said to have grabbed him by one wrist and Jones caught him by the other hand. Reaching his hand into Bland's pocket, he got the change and one end of the watch chain. As he pulled his hand out, he snatched the man's watch, a cheap one. Jones hopped on the wheel and rode off. Nichols ran away. Bland failing in a chase after him.

Called to the scene, Sheriff C. B. Roebuck soon picked up a clue and at midnight, the officer, accompanied by Patrolman Whit Saunders, arrested Nichols under a bed in Wiley Lanier's home on an island in Williams Township. Jones was arrested in the courthouse yesterday morning when he came here to talk to Bland apparently in an effort to get him to withdraw the warrant. Nichols had the watch and chain on his person when the officers arrested him.

Car Stolen Here Thursday Is Recovered In Bertie

Stolen from in front of the Crockett home on Church Street on last Thursday evening, the Dodge sedan belonging to Abner Brown was recovered in Bertie County the following morning by Patrolman Scarborough. The thief had deserted the car temporarily when the patrolman found it. Very little damage was done to the machine.

Child Killed While Playing With Calf Saturday Morning

Last Rites Held Sunday Near Jamesville for Robert Harmon Davis

Robert Harmon Davis, nine years old, was killed while playing with a calf at his home near Jamesville last Saturday morning, the accident being rated as one of the most unusual reported in this county during recent years. Possibly choked to death, his neck broken and his face scarred and bruised either by a direct attack by the calf or as he was dragged across the rough ground and through a wooded area for a short distance, the youth's body was found almost cold by a sister after he had been missing from the yard lot the greater part of an hour.

Robert, the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Levi Davis, had his attention centered around the Hereford calf, and despite warnings to be careful, he spent much time playing with the animal, weighing hardly 200 pounds and standing less than three feet in height. Early Saturday morning as the father started to his work in the fields he warned his son against roping the calf, but the animal seemed friendly enough and the temptation was too great for the lad. Shortly after exchanging greetings with the mail man about 9:30 o'clock, the youth roped the calf and slipped the other end of the rope over his own neck, using a slip-knot. His sister saw the play in the lot, but lost sight of him for about an hour. Becoming uneasy, the sister, Belva Ray, 12 years old, went to look for him. Walking to a wooded ravine in a far corner of the lot, one hundred yards or more from the house, she found the boy and calf still tied together, the youth lying face down. Turning him over, she found his face black and cold. With a frightened scream, she summoned help and Mrs. Earl Hardison, a neighbor living across the road rushed there. Before they could loosen the rope, they had to fight the calf away with a stick. Mrs. Hardison picked the lifeless body up in her arms and rushed out of the ravine to the house.

Just how the little fellow lost his life no one knows. It is reasoned that he fastened the rope around his neck, that the calf jumped and snatched him down, tightening the rope around his neck. Possibly he was choked to death or his neck could have been broken before the animal dragged him into the ravine. It is thought by some that the animal attacked him with his hoofs, but other than on the lad's face there were no bruises or scars on his body. Bright-eyed, friendly and accommodating, the little fellow was as smart as a lark around the home and in school where he was a member of the fourth grade. He had a large number of little friends at school and in his home community, a few miles below Jamesville on the Plymouth Highway, and his death saddened the entire community where he, full of life and pep, had played and romped.

Besides his parents, he is survived by two brothers, Levi, Jr., and Durham Davis, both of the home, and four sisters, Mrs. William Hopkins, of Plymouth; Mrs. Horace Kendrick, of Birmingham; Mrs. Alexander Daniel, of Dardens, and Miss Belva Ray Davis, of near Jamesville.

Funeral services were conducted at the home Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock by Rev. P. B. Nickens, Plymouth Baptist minister. Interment was in a new cemetery on the home farm. His fourth-grade classmates served as flower bearers.

Retiring Treasurer Files Final Report

Mrs. C. A. Harrison, serving the county as treasurer by special appointment following Mr. Harrison's death in December of last year, yesterday filed a final report with the old board of commissioners. Accompanying the report was a personal statement, in which the retiring treasurer expressed her appreciation for the courtesies extended her. The board ordered a fitting reply to the note.

The statement shows that the county has \$75,063.08 to its credit in the several banks as embraced in the following accounts: general account, \$21,308.82; school account, \$15,431.73; road districts, \$28,444.08; state school, \$2,092.06, and sinking fund, \$7,786.39.

Mr. R. H. Smith, recently elected treasurer, succeeds Mrs. Harrison who was not a candidate for the office in the recent elections.

Car, Taken By Mistake, Is Returned To Owner

After reporting his Chevrolet car stolen from a parking place on Washington Street last Friday evening, D. M. Roberson learned the next morning that the car had been driven away by mistake.

Reminding a car belonging to the Roanoke Chevrolet Company and which she was supposed to drive home, Miss Mamie Clyde Taylor drove the Roberson machine to her home near here, not knowing until the following morning that she had Mr. Roberson's car. The error was quickly corrected.

Commissioners' Order Complete Revaluation of All Real Estate In County For 1941 Tax Year

JUDGE AND CHAIRMAN



A change in the county's judging and governing personnel was effected here yesterday when W. H. Coburn, left, occupied the judge's seat in the county court for the first time, and Robert Lee Perry, right, was elevated to the chairmanship of the county board of commissioners.

Plans To Enlarge Cemetery Heard By Town Officials

Proposed Plan Calls For the Purchase of Halberstadt Farm Land

A new proposal to enlarge the local cemetery was advanced at a regular meeting of the town commissioners last evening. Walter Halberstadt, appearing before the board, offered the town several acres of land near the present cemetery for approximately \$2,900. A detail of the proposed plan was not made. The officials selecting a committee from their number to make a study of the plan and to discuss the matter again at some future meeting.

The plan, recognized as an ideal one for enlarging and improving the cemetery, is being advanced while another one awaits action. Some months ago a movement was started to enlarge the cemetery on the southeast side. A Works Progress Administration project was given approval and a detailed survey of the improvement program was made by an engineer. For one reason or another, the peace of the dead has not been disturbed, and the old cemetery continues as a disgrace to the people here.

Commissioners Luther Peel and N. C. Green and Mayor J. L. Hassell were named on the committee to study the new cemetery plan.

Three applications to open wine stores here were considered, the board withholding licenses in each case.

Odds and ends on the town's sidewalk paving were discussed, the board authorizing the completion of walks on South Watts Street and on the east end of Marshall Avenue. A request to pave a sidewalk on Elm Street was left open, and the possibility of paving a walk on South Houghton Street is to be investigated. The sidewalk paving program is nearing completion. Street surfacing will hardly get underway before early spring, it is understood, and action then depends on favorable action by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in advancing a necessary loan.

Shortly before 9 o'clock, the board went into executive session, but a long-standing custom was reversed. Instead of excusing the chief of police, superintendent of the water department and a reporter, the board members, led by Mayor J. L. Hassell moved out of their office into the street. The topic for secret discussion was not revealed, but just before the board went into the outside huddle, the Hall-Mitchell \$10,000 damage suit was dropped as a bombshell into the meeting.

Christmas Savings Checks Are Mailed

The Guaranty Bank and Trust Company mailed out over the weekend 150 checks to Christmas Savings depositors in and around Williamston. The fortunate members of the 1940 Christmas club are \$10,000.00 better off by having joined the club twelve months ago.

The sum above represents savings of over 150 members, which is the largest number as well as the largest amount of savings ever distributed by the local institution.

The 1941 club is now open and will remain open for at least four weeks.

Mrs. Oliver Gilbert is recovering from an operation in a Durham hospital and is expected home within the next two weeks.

New Board In Its Initial Meet Faces Complicated Task

Detailed Plans Will Be Placed Before Special Meeting Next Monday

The new board of Martin County commissioners, holding its first session here yesterday, faced at the start a complicated task. While the authorities were quite certain they could not handle the task perfectly or even to the complete satisfaction of everyone, they were agreed that something needs to be done and a revaluation of all real estate in the county was ordered. A lengthy discussion preceded the order calling for a complete revaluation of properties, but no definite plans were advanced for handling the huge task.

According to an unofficial report, the meeting considered several plans but delayed action until next Monday when the authorities will meet in special session to hear reports from S. H. Grimes, newly appointed tax supervisor, and Commissioner C. D. Carstarphen, who are to make a study of systems for the revaluation of properties in other counties. During the meantime, the commissioners are expected to give thought to the problem and contribute to the discussions at the meeting next Monday. The appointment of the list-takers is expected at that meeting.

It was suggested at the meeting yesterday to name to assessors for each township and arrange for them to visit and inspect each individual's property with the list-taker. The plan is not at all definite, but it is fairly certain that the new board is fully determined to iron out the admitted inequalities in the property assessments as they appear on the old books.

S. Harcum Grimes was reappointed tax supervisor, and he was also appointed to handle the personal property "insolvent" tax accounts. He is to receive 1.3 of the collections.

Waiting for the old board to clear its desk, the recent elected authorities were late getting started on their work yesterday. Subscribing to the oath of office at 10:35, the commissioners immediately settled down to their accepted tasks. The appointment of D. Elphonsa Johnson constituted the first official act of the board following its reorganization which placed Commissioner R. L. Perry, of Bear Grass, in the chairman's seat. Bonds were next approved for the various officers, as follows: Treasurer R. H. Smith, \$40,000; Register of Deeds, J. Sam Getzinger, \$5,000 and the same amount for Mr. Getzinger as county accountant; S. H. Grimes, special tax collector, \$2,000. Bonds were reapproved for the clerk of court, deputy court clerk, sheriff and coroner.

Completing its reorganization, the board appointed E. S. Peel, county attorney, the appointment providing a \$100 retainer's fee. John W. Bland was reappointed superintendent of the county home for one year.

The tangled up situation in which the township constabulary has found itself recently was partially cleared by the board, but there is some doubt if Clarence Sexton will accept the appointment as constable of Jamesville Township. The entry in the board's minutes as it relates to the Jamesville Township post of constable reads, "J. H. Hardison having forfeited his claim of election to the office of constable of Jamesville Township, the board upon motion of Commissioner C. A. Roberson, sec-

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Volunteer Firemen Receive Two Calls

After a long period of little activity, Williamston's volunteer firemen are having a fairly busy time. During the week ending last Saturday, the firemen received six calls but the law of averages should give them a brief respite for a short while.

Last Friday evening at 6:30 o'clock the firemen were called to a tool shed belonging to the contracting firm of Kiker and Yount near the river. The night watchman built a fire near the shed where the ground had been saturated with kerosene overflowing when flares were filled for use on the river fill. The oil was soon heated and the fire spread rapidly to the shed, wrecking the small building and burning up the contents valued at \$300. Several truck tires and a number of grease pumps were in the building.

Saturday morning at 10:50, the firemen were called to a small grass fire on Washington Street. No damage was reported there.