

Six Divorces Are Granted Recently In Superior Court

One Divorce For About Six Marriages In County This Year

Six divorces were granted during the December term of Martin County Superior Court, the six boosting the total for the year in this county to 53. A review of the court records shows that four teen divorces were granted last March, seven the following month, five in June, twelve in September, nine in November and six this month.

The ratio of divorces to marriages in the county this year is about one to six, nearly 300 marriages having been issued in 1946 to date. Unofficial reports place the divorce-marriage ratio for the nation at about one to three, and sociologists predict that the ratio will be one divorce for every two marriages in another ten years.

Divorces, all based on two years of separation except one, were allowed in the superior court recently, as follows:

Kathleen Abernethy against C. P. Abernethy.

Jasper Williams against Eccelle Williams.

Lettie Brooks against LeRoy Brooks.

R. T. Chance against Mary T. Chance. It was the plaintiff's third attempt to have matrimonial bonds broken for himself and his wife.

Loney Purvis against Jasper Purvis.

A divorce, based on grounds of adultery, was granted Lester S. White in his case against Leila Faye White.

In the case of J. E. Strawbridge against Benita Strawbridge, the plaintiff took a voluntary nonsuit.

One or two other civil cases were called during the last session of the court on Thursday. In the case of V. E. Brown against M. G. Donabaer, the plaintiff was given a judgment in the sum of \$477.25, less a credit of \$20.

Carried into court to explain why he was behind in his support payments to his wife and three children, Jesse Whitley, colored, waived citation, and agreed to pay \$12 a week until \$122 overdue is paid and then maintain payments at the rate of \$20 per month. If the defendant defaults he is to be held in contempt of court.

To Address Public Meeting In Club Tuesday Evening

Dr. Maynard Fletcher, regional chairman of the North Carolina Good Health Association, will ad- dress a public meeting in the Wo- man's Club hall this evening (Tuesday) at 7:30 o'clock. The educator and leader in the good health movement in this district was first scheduled to speak in the courthouse, but it was later decided to have him speak in the club building since the Woman's Club had already scheduled a meeting for that hour. Follow- ing Dr. Fletcher's talk, the club will hold its business session, the president, Mrs. P. B. Cone an- nounced.

One or two other meetings have been scheduled for the same hour, and efforts were made to avoid conflicts, but Dr. Fletcher, it was learned, has speaking engage- ments for nearly every evening

Minister Recalls Needs For Better Health In State

Concerned Over Conditions Existing Now In North Carolina

Concerned over the poor health conditions existing in North Carolina, Dr. Kelsey Regen, Durham minister, recently chose for one of his sermon topics in the Presbyterian church there, "The Healing Work of Christ." Excerpts from his sermon follow:

And now, in closing, I would like to bring all that we have been saying concerning the healing work of Christ to focus upon a timely matter that should concern everyone of us. I refer to the current program to arouse the people of North Carolina into a mighty and united struggle against the conditions of poor health that exist over our state and for the mobilization of all our resources for the correction of those conditions.

In all reverence, I say to you that if Jesus were on earth today, and living as a citizen of North Carolina, I believe he would be tremendously concerned about this thing that concerns so many of us. Moreover, I believe that he would not only put his blessing upon it but would also throw the weight and power of his energy and influence into it. For he would find it clearly congenial to his ministry of healing. I personally doubt if he would consider it "North Carolina's No. 1 Need"; though that is an excellent and admirable slogan for our purposes. He would still know that moral responsibility before God is and always will be North Carolina's—and all men's—No. 1 Need. But I believe he would be troubled over the fact that today there are 40 other states in which mothers have a better chance of surviving child-birth than in North Carolina; and 38 other states in which new-born babies have a better chance of reaching their second year than in North Carolina; and 47 other states where young men have a better chance of meeting the minimum standards of physical health required by an organization like an army than in North Carolina; and 44 other states where a doctor's care is more accessible to those who need it than in North Carolina; and 41 other states that have made more adequate provision for the hospital care of their sick than North Carolina. Yes I believe that were Jesus living here in North Carolina today, he would still look upon a situation like that and upon the people caught in it with a deep

(Continued on page eight)

Man Makes Wild Knife Attack In Home Near Here

One Victim In Hospital And Another Has Fifty Stitches

Said to have been intoxicated and apparently little realizing what he was doing, Tom Scott, farmer, forced his way into the home of Charlie Mason at Skewakey about 1:30 o'clock Sunday morning and launched a savage attack with a pocket knife on members of the Mason family and threatened others in an adjoining apartment.

Knocking open the front door, Scott went into the adjoining apartment, attacked one of the occupants there with his fist and threatened others, officers said. Mason, hearing cries for help, went across the hall, took Scott by the arm and tried to lead him out of the house. Yanking out his knife, Scott sliced Mason across the face and directed another blow on the shoulder. Picking up a chair, Mason started working on Scott's head. During the meantime, Mason's daughter, Annie Clyde Davis, widowed just a few days ago by the death of her husband, Ananias Davis, started to help her father's rescue and she was met with a knife blow across the stomach, one report stating that the knife went to the hollow and bored the intestines. She was removed to a Washington hospital where, according to last reports, she was getting along very well. Her recovery is expected.

Declaring to officers that it looked as if Scott was going to carve everything in the house to death, Mason put more power behind his chair attack and before he had subdued the knife wielder he had torn the chair to bits. "I broke it into pieces small enough to go in a medium size heater," Mason was quoted as saying. During the meantime, Scott landed two more knife blows on Mason, one in the left side and another ragged one on the hip. Between fifty and sixty stitches were necessary to close Mason's wounds.

Scott, in a dazed condition, was removed to a local doctor's office where one stitch was taken to close a small gash on his forehead.

Christmas Party For Needy Tots

The local Junior Chamber of Commerce will hold its second annual Christmas party for underprivileged tots in the Woman's Club hall tomorrow evening at 8:00 o'clock. The Jaycees plan to present each one with a gift and a bag of confections. Special arrangements are being made to provide transportation for those who have no means of travel.

Santa Claus will be there to distribute the gifts and assist those in charge of the program which is being planned by a special committee headed by T. F. Davenport, chairman.

The party is open to the public.

Expected Home Soon From The Hospital

A patient in a Rocky Mount hospital for several weeks, Mrs. B. S. Courtney is improving rapidly and plans to return to her home here next Sunday or Monday. She was reported able to sit up some this week.

ROUND-UP

Fifteen persons were rounded-up and placed in the county jail last week, Jailer Roy Peel said this week. The jailer commented, "We'll have to start slowing down mighty fast if we are not to have any inmates in the jail Christmas."

Nine were booked for drunkenness, two for drunken driving, one for assault with a deadly weapon, one for non-support and two for larceny and receiving.

One of the fifteen was a white person. The ages of the group ranged from 24 to 60 years.

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William E. Davis Died In Hamilton Friday Afternoon

Funeral Services Conducted In St. Martin's There Sunday Afternoon

William E. Davis, retired farmer-merchant and member of a family prominent in the early history of this county, died at his home in Hamilton last Friday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock. He had been in declining health during the greater part of two years, and his condition had been critical for almost two weeks before the end. Pneumonia was given as the immediate cause of his death.

The son of the late William Whitmel Davis and Nancy Davis Davis, he was born in this county near Hamilton on March 3, 1882, living in that community all his life. He spent his early life on the farm, and was married to Miss Addie Crisp of Edgecombe County on March 3, 1901. Later in life he entered the mercantile business, from which he retired some time ago on account of declining health.

The body was removed from the Biggs Funeral Home here Sunday afternoon and carried to St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Hamilton where it lay in state for an hour before the last rites were conducted at 3:00 o'clock. Rev. John W. Hardy, the rector, officiated, and interment was in the family plot in Hamilton's cemetery.

Surviving are Mrs. Davis; five daughters, Mrs. W. P. Harris of Robersonville, Mrs. J. C. Andrews of Rocky Mount, Mrs. Grover C. Whitehurst of Bethel, Mrs. Slade Congleton of Robersonville, and Miss Lucille Davis of Hamilton; four sons, Whit and Edgar Davis of Hamilton, Jasper Davis of Windsor and Robert Davis of Bethel, and eight grandchildren.

Town Taking On Christmas Spirit

Seal Sale Nears Goal In County

The holiday atmosphere here, threatened at one time by the coal strike, is gradually emerging and tonight will assert itself in the approximately 1,000 vari-colored Christmas lights on the town's principal business streets. A special detail almost completed the installation work yesterday.

The special Christmas scene, designed and displayed by German prisoners of war in camp here last Christmas, has been installed by a special Jaycee committee on the Presbyterian Church lot on East Main Street, and it will add greatly to the holiday decorative scheme in its new location.

After working about 100 man hours, the Jaycees completed the Nativity scene installation last Friday night. The lights were turned on and a few details are being arranged to make the scene as impressive as it was a year ago.

Carroll Coltrain, chairman, W. T. Ross, Bill Throver, Exum Ward, Jr., Walton Hamilton, Ernest Mears, Wheeler Manning, Thad Harrison, Edwin Peel and Dallas Roberson handled most of the work with Jaycees Lawrence Lindsey, Jim Manning, Bill Howell, Oswald Stalls, Carroll Jones, James Williams, James Wynne, James Bullock, Jack Manning, Dan Sharpe, T. F. Davenport, J. C. White, Jack Edmondson and Wallace Tarkington making "one night stands." The work, calling for considerable time, is a credit to the creators and to those handling the installation.

Power Company Expands Main Street Quarters Here

Its present offices crowded by a growing operating personnel, the Virginia Electric and Power Company recently leased the store building now occupied by Nat Israel's store and will distrib- ute part of its force there early next year. R. H. Goodman, man- ager of the company's Albemarle District, announced following his return from California last week- end. The store operator, his lease expiring, is closing out his busi- ness. Retiring temporarily after the first of the year, Mr. Israel states he will look for new quar- ters later.

The company's detailed plans for expanding its offices have not been announced, but it was learned that the store front will be removed and replaced with a modern one. A goodly portion of the store building will be occupi-

Two Killed In Auto Wreck Late Sunday

Four Others Are Badly Hurt When Two Cars Collide

Third Car Plows Into The Wreckage And Driver Is Jailed Here

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Henry Ward, 69-year-old Pitt County colored man, and a 19-year-old colored girl whose identity could not be determined immediately, were killed instantly when the two cars in which they were riding crashed in a head-on collision. Webb Ward, driver, and owner of a new 1946 Studebaker sedan, suffered a broken leg and other injuries which were described as serious.

Jesse Spain, owner of the 1937 Chevrolet car figuring in the wreck and who was believed to have been under the steering wheel at the time, suffered a broken leg and other injuries. Mary Brown, also colored, had a leg broken and suffered other injuries. A man whose identity could not be determined but who was believed to have been riding in the Spain car, was cut and bruised and suffered shock. Apparently in a daze, he was able to walk when patrolmen reached the scene of the accident.

The elder Ward, cut and bruised badly in several places on his body, was said to have died as a result of a bad skull fracture. The unidentified girl suffered a broken neck.

Shortly after the two cars crashed, John Rogers, colored man of Robersonville, came along and plowed into the wreckage just about the time the two cars caught fire. No one was hurt in Rogers' car which was damaged very little. Rogers, maintaining that he was not driving at the time, was arrested and jailed for alleged drunken driving. His accusation was denied in open court Monday and Judge Smith sentenced Rogers to the roads for six months for drunken driving and six months for reckless driving. The last six-month sentence is to be suspended upon the payment of a \$50 fine and costs. His driver's license was revoked for two years.

Cpl. W. T. Simpson and Patrolman W. E. Saunders investigated the accident and the investigation had not been fully completed late Monday. Those who survived the accident were so badly dazed and hurt they could offer few details, and all the names of those in the first two cars could not be learned at once.

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Plan Advanced To Rotate Senators In The Local District

Party Executive Committee Met Recently In Plymouth

An agreement on a proposed new system for the rotation of nomination of Democratic candidates for State Senator among the seven counties of the second senatorial district was drawn up by the chairman of the Democratic executive committee of the district's counties at an all-day meeting held in the Washington County courthouse in Plymouth recently, according to reports from Attorney Carl Bailey, of Plymouth, acting as proxy for E. F. Still, Washington County chairman, who was absent at that time.

Under the proposed system, Mr. Bailey declared, appointment of the nominees would be mathematically determined according to a definite formula, based entirely upon the population of each of the district counties.

The formula would read: when number of the population of any one county, multiplied by the number of years since that county last had a senator, is greater than the number of population of any other county, multiplied by the number of years since it last had a senator, then the county with the larger number is entitled to nominate a senator for the following two terms. Allowances would be made, of course, for fluctuations in population figures.

This, he asserted, would assure an equity of representation among the seven county units, since the system would provide that each county, in turn, would have the right to designate the Democratic candidate for State Senator.

Attorney Bailey, acting as secretary for the chairman, was delegated by them to make a full draft of the agreement embodying the nominations formula, and has reported that the draft will be finished sometime during the latter part of this week.

Upon its completion, mimeographed copies of the system will be forwarded to the chairmen of the seven Democratic committees in this district, who will present it for approval or rejection by their respective groups at special meetings to be called for that purpose. If all seven committees endorse the agreement with a majority vote, it will then be filed with the chairman of the State Democratic committee in Raleigh and will be binding, determining the rotation of nominees from and after the filing.

A. H. Harris, chairman of the Pamlico committee, was elected by the group to preside over the meeting. Represented at the conference were Washington, Martin, Hyde, Pamlico, Beaufort, and Tyrell counties. The Dare county chairman was unable to attend the meeting, but gave his vote of consent to the agreement via telephone.

Two Cases Heard Recently By Jury In Superior Court

Defense Attorney In Cap- ital Case Allowed a Fee Of \$150.00

Of the approximately thirty criminal cases called in the Martin County Superior Court last week only two were placed before the jury for a decision. In one of the two the defendant was found not guilty. The jury, however, after a more or less cut and dried fashion decided six divorce pleas and granted a judgment in another civil case.

Although only two criminal cases were left up to the jury for decisions, cost of the service ran into the hundreds of dollars.

The special venire called for the Ragland case cost approximately \$300, and the service of the regular jurors represented a cost of approximately \$240.

No audit has been made, but it is estimated that the Ragland case alone cost right at \$750, exclusive of special services rendered by patrolmen and transportation costs. According to Clerk of Court L. B. Wynne, the costs were itemized about as follows: jury, \$360; defense counsel fee, \$150; stenographer's fees, \$100; special officer, \$5; meals for jurors, \$20, and incidental expenses, \$100.

Allowing the \$150 fee for Ragland's defense counsel, the court did not specify whether that amount would cover the counsel cost for perfecting the appeal to the supreme court.

Reviewing the manner in which the thirty cases were handled, the clerk said that fourteen of the defendants pleaded guilty, four were not proessed or dismissed, and directed verdicts were reported in three cases. Several other cases were continued, and defendants in two cases failed to report when called during the term.

Quite a few of the defendants facing the court received road terms, but just about all of them were placed on probation or had their sentences suspended. With no maximum sentence fixed for the crime, the judgment calling for not less than five and not more than seven years in State's Prison was thought by some to be "light" in the case charging Frank Belcher with manslaughter.

Proowler Enters Hamilton Homes

A prowler, whose identity has not yet been established, entered one home and knocked for ad- mission at another in Hamilton early last Sunday evening, it was learned from the sheriff's office Monday.

Remaining home alone while other members of the family went to church that evening, Mrs. Her- man Farmer was addressing Christmas cards in the living room when she heard someone enter the unlocked back door. The intruder walked up the hall where fortunately he found the door to the living room bolted. He knocked lightly and Mrs. Farmer asked who it was. No voice an- swered, but he rapped heavily on the door and kicked it. Mrs. Far- mer, badly frightened, jumped out the window and ran for help. When she returned with others, the intruder had disappeared.

Mother Of Local Resident Passes

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Mrs. Browder, 73 years old, is survived besides her son here, by her husband, Mr. Daniel Browder, who is visiting here, three sons, W. M. and R. H. Browder of Charleston, and C. L. Browder of Russellville, S. C.; a daughter, Mrs. H. H. High of Charleston, and two sisters, Mrs. J. P. Kelly and Mrs. John Guess, of Colum- bia, S. C.

Firemen Called Out Twice Here

Local volunteer firemen were called out twice last week-end. Thursday evening, shortly after 8:00 o'clock, they were called to put out a fire in a stump hole on West Main Street in front of the Sanford Roberson home.

Last Saturday afternoon at 4:20 o'clock, they were called to the comparatively new three-room home of Della Staton just off West Main Street near the road leading to the Blount farm. Start- ling when a portable oil heater went out of control and exploded, the fire wrecked the interior of one room, burned a hole in the floor and warped the wall cover- ings. Most of the clothes and two beds were burned. Some of the furniture was damaged when neighbors tried to remove it from the house. No official estimate on the loss could be had, but it will run into the hundreds of dol- lars.

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