

## Introduction Of Dial Telephones Attracts Crowds

### Event Tops List in Town's Forty-Seven Years Of 'Phone History

Not since the late Kader Lilley constructed a telephone line from his rural home to the Coast Line telegraph office here about half a century ago has a milestone in this section's telephone history attracted more attention than did the switch from the manual to the dial system by the Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company at its exchange here last Thursday night. Nearly 100 persons, including top ranking company officials, employes and special guests, crowded into the offices to witness the history-making event.

Telephone communications have traveled a long way since the old Williamston Telephone Company was organized on July 27, 1900, with \$800 capital stock. Improvements were made at, more or less, regular intervals down through the years, but all the past progress was eclipsed when the Carolina Company recently spent more than a quarter million dollars—\$275,000, according to official estimates—to give Williamston one of the most modern exchanges in the entire nation.

While the conversion to the dial system last Thursday night held the spotlight, the company, during the meantime, moved to give this section extensive long distance service by installing an eight-position switchboard and adding to its toll circuits. The rural system, serving approximately 220 subscribers, is possibly one of the most extensive in the State. At the present time the company is maintaining fifty toll circuits directly from its local office, including four to Norfolk, three to Raleigh, three to Rocky Mount, three to Tarboro, three to Robersonville, one to Greenville, four to Washington, one to New Bern, two to Elizabeth City, three to Edenton, two to Ahoskie, two to Hamilton, six to Plymouth, seven to Windsor and four to Columbia.

Williamston, recognized as one of the main communications centers in this section of the State, is indeed fortunate in getting one of the most modern exchanges in the nation. Officials of the company are pleased with the progress the exchange has made, and it was mutual pride that they, the employes and special friends assembled for the history-making event last Thursday.

Among the company officials and employes attending the informal program were, J. R. Porter, board chairman; E. W. Olschner, vice president and chief engineer; H. Dail Holderness, vice president and secretary-treasurer; J. T. Sadler, auditor; W. C. Darrow, commercial and traffic manager; C. R. Jones, assistant chief engineer; E. M. Friar, plant manager; W. W. Barrett, co-ordinator; E. P. Kittinger, traffic engineer; C. J. Logan, commercial engineer; E. B. Fowlkes, purchasing agent; W. B. Smith, engineer; Aaron Smith, engineer; C. M. Burns and A. N. Mason, maintenance; L. E. Thompson, district plant manager; Biscoe Howell, Geo. Remmer, J. S. Dorp, Leonard Raby, M. P.

(Continued on page three)

## Firemen Get Two Calls Saturday

Following a fairly long period of little activity, local volunteer firemen were called out twice last Saturday.

The firemen were called to Barney's Grill on Washington Street at 12:15 that afternoon when grease, spilled on the stove, caught fire. Very little damage resulted and business operations there were interrupted only for a short time.

Believed to have been started by prowlers, fire destroyed a small tenant house just back of the Dixie Peanut Company plant on Washington Street at 10:15 o'clock last Saturday night. The house was not occupied and the fire gained much headway before it was discovered.

## Handle First Calls On New Switchboard Fire Department



Promptly at 10:00 o'clock last Thursday evening, operators deserted the old switchboard in the local telephone exchange and took their seats at the new board where they are pictured handling their first long distance calls following the conversion from the manual to the dial system. Pictured above are (seated) Mrs. Thelma Caruso, Miss Dora Twiddy, Mrs. Anna Elizabeth Perry, Misses Dorothy Umphlett and B. Cherry; (standing) Miss Helen Stapleford and Mrs. Margaret Cone, supervisors.

## Make Switch To Dial Here Without Hitch

### ROUND-UP

Local and county officers had a busy period last week-end when they rounded up and jailed fourteen alleged violators of law and order. Eight of the fourteen were placed in the jail on Saturday.

Ten of the fourteen were booked for public drunkenness, and one each for larceny, forgery, investigation and the fourteenth was taken into custody to serve on old sentence.

Four of the ten were white and the ages of the group ranged from 16 to 35 years.

## No Developments In Attack Case

After extending their search over a fairly wide section, and after questioning scores of persons, officers are believed to have made very little progress in solving the case growing out of the attack on Miss Louise Corey, local young girl, on South Houghton Street here on the night of Saturday, May 31.

Several additional suspects have been detained and questioned during the past several days, but nothing tangible has been learned from any of them, it was said.

Special Agent Guy Scott of the State Bureau of Investigation, who has been here for almost a week at the request of the attack victim's father and who was assigned to the case at the direction of Governor R. G. Cherry, continues at work, and local and county officers are assisting him in every way possible. It could not be learned how much longer the agent would work on the assignment, but he plans to be here as long as he thinks it necessary. It is possible that he will withdraw from the case shortly but for a short time only.

## Local Young Man Gets His Degree At State

T. Stuart Critcher, son of Mr. and Mrs. Titus Critcher of Williamston, was graduated with honors at State College, Raleigh yesterday.

During the year just ended, the graduate, a student in Wildlife Conservation and Management, was president of the Wildlife Club, a member of the Ag Club, the Zoology Honor Committee, Alpha Zeta, and Alpha Gamma Rho, and an honorary member of the Forestry Club.

With the old sheepskin ready for the frame, the young man reported today to White Lake where he will work with the Wildlife and Conservation Service in making a survey of streams in that section.

## Operators Desert Manual Board At Designated Hour

### Porter In Talk Commemorating Historic Event In Local System

A new chapter in this section's communications system was recorded in the local offices of the Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company here last Thursday evening when a switch from the manual to the automatic system was effected, an informal but very fitting program marking the history making event.

Mr. Carter Darrow, traffic manager for the company, was in charge of the brief ceremony, and he introduced Mr. J. R. Porter, chairman of the company's board of directors, who briefly addressed company employes, officials and a few special guests.

"We are here to cut over from the manual to the dial system," Mr. Porter said after a casual fashion, explaining that it had been his pleasure to officiate at an informal program marking the switch from the old magneto to the common battery system following the purchase of the old Williamston Telephone Company in January, 1926, from the late W. C. Manning. Pausing briefly, Mr. Porter paid tribute to the former owner-operator of the system here, referring to him as one of the finest men he ever did business with. "He lived right, and he did right in his business dealings, and I enjoyed my relations with him before and after the purchase of the local system," the official said.

The speaker then paid fitting tribute to the personnel annexed with the purchase of the local exchange, referring mainly to Miss Clyde Hassell, now retired, and to Mrs. Lucy Mobley, and Mrs. J. A. Leggett, present employes of the company. "I have said that the personnel of the old company was worth every cent we paid for the property. They have stayed by their jobs all these years, and we appreciate it," he told the group gathered in the new long distance operating room.

"For the past several years we have operated under difficulties," (Continued on page five)

## Holding Bible School In Cedar Branch Church

The Cedar Branch Baptist daily vacation Bible school was opened yesterday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock with Mrs. Wendell Modlin in charge. A goodly number of co-workers are assisting Mrs. Modlin in conducting the classes which are being held each afternoon this week from 2:00 to 4:00 o'clock. Plans for the commencement Sunday will be announced later, the pastor, Rev. W. B. Harrington, said.

## Leamon Hopkins Dies In County

Joseph Leamon Hopkins, retired farmer, died at his home near Everetts last Saturday evening at 6:45 o'clock. Suffering a stroke some years ago, he had been in declining health, but his condition was not considered serious until about two weeks ago.

A native of Washington County, he moved with his parents to Griffins Township when quite young. Following his marriage in 1913 to Miss Nora Bennett he had made his home near Williamston up until about two years ago when he located on a farm near Everetts.

He was a member of the Riddick's Grove Baptist Church and his pastor, Rev. W. B. Harrington conducted the last rites at the home Monday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock. Interment was in Williamston's Woodlawn Cemetery.

Surviving are his widow; three daughters, Mrs. Lester T. Cherry of Albany, N. Y., Mrs. J. R. Lawrence of Supply, and Mrs. Hansel Lower of Phoebus, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Wilson Holliday of Roanoke Rapids, and Mrs. Wilson Rogerson of Aulander, and several grandchildren.

## Principal Named For Bear Grass

H. V. Parker, Jr., of Murfreesboro, has been elected to the principalship of the Bear Grass School to succeed Professor Chas. A. Hough, resigned, it was announced by Mr. E. C. Harrison, chairman of the local committee, last week-end.

Mr. Parker, a World War II veteran, has had two years' experience in the teaching profession, one at Ahoskie and one at Mars Hill in Bertie County. He plans to move his family, wife and two children, to Bear Grass later in the summer.

Reports state that there are several openings in the elementary department of the school, and that all the teachers in the high school had resigned. Applications are being considered, but no elections have been effected, it was explained.

## Seventy-Year-Old Farmer Has Unique Health Record

R. C. Brown, Martin County farmer observing his seventieth birthday last Sunday, pointed out to friends one of the most unusual health records in this county's medical annals.

Married fifty years ago, the 30th of this month, Mr. Brown said that he and Mrs. Brown had reared eight children, that he never had the first doctor's bill. While he explained that there had been some illness such as the minor contagious diseases and times when he did not feel so well, he had never found it necessary to summon a physician to render medical aid.

Commenting briefly on other subjects, the builder of the unique health record said that he raised no tobacco on his farm in Goose Nest Township and declared that he was never broke during the depression when tobacco farmers were losing their shirts back in 1920 and again in the early thirties. "It just goes to show that a farmer can live without raising tobacco," a friend added.

## Members Resign Effective June 30

### Not Certain of Their Status As Employes, Firemen Comply With Order

Not certain of their status as employes of the town and in keeping with a recent order of the local board of commissioners, calling for the resignation of all town employes, members of the local fire department last evening tendered their resignations as of June 30.

In submitting their resignations the firemen explained that they were not certain if they were recognized as paid employes, or were overpaid or underpaid, that to eliminate any doubt they were complying with the board order calling for wholesale resignations in all town departments. The firemen, signing the formal resignation in a block, said they were tendering their resignations with the assurance that they would be glad to abide by the wishes of the board. In other words, the firemen said they were willing to step out for replacements or continue at their posts if they could be of further service.

Individually, several officials have expressed the opinion that the order was not applicable to the firemen, and it isn't considered likely that the resignations will be accepted. It was pointed out at the meeting last evening, however, that by taking the action the firemen would give the officials an opportunity to accept or reject any or all applications.

It could not be learned how many of the various department employes had tendered their resignations, but it is being rumored that some changes in personnel could be expected. However, no wholesale changes are anticipated in any of the departments. A meeting of the town board will be held next Monday evening at 8:00 o'clock and it is likely that some changes in the personnel will be announced soon thereafter.

## Lions Consider Carnival Offers

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the local Lions Club was held at "The Switch" last Thursday evening, when Lions K. D. Worrell and Claude J. Goodman entertained the group with a steak supper.

Following the meal, the business session was held, with President H. P. Mobley presiding. Among the items of business discussed were the reports on the cost of construction of the grandstand at the local ball park. It was reported that a total of \$1368.04 had been spent for this structure, and this figure does not include the work done by the Lions themselves.

Also discussed were offers from three carnivals that want to bring their shows here this fall for the Lion's third annual Harvest Festival. Action was delayed on this matter.

Those attending the meeting were Lions H. P. Mobley, K. D. Worrell, C. J. Goodman, W. C. Griffin, W. M. Baker, D. V. Clayton, Homer Barnhill, E. M. Trahey, Geo. H. Gurganus and John H. Edwards.

## Commissioners Fix Tax Rate At \$1.05

### Budget Calls For \$83,325 Exclusive Of County Schools

### Income Other Than From General Taxation To Finance General Fund

Martin County's 1947-48 tax rate was tentatively fixed at \$1.05 by the board of commissioners in special session here last Friday morning. While the rate remains unchanged, there is a general increase in departmental costs which are being offset by a fairly large gain in taxable property values and estimated gains in revenues other than that raised by general taxation.

Discussing the budget until the noon hour, the commissioners lopped seven cents off the over-all rate when they estimated that outside revenue—income from sources other than general taxation—would finance the general county operations, including administration and current operating costs. The authorities estimate that \$101,240 will be required to finance the general county fund, that ordinarily a rate of seven cents on the \$100 property valuation would be necessary to finance it. But, according to estimates, "outside" revenue will amount to \$106,525.00, leaving over \$5,000 to apply to costs in other departments. This outside revenue, it was pointed out, includes the following: Remittance B licenses, \$500; beer licenses, \$1,500; piccolo licenses, \$125; superior court costs, \$1,000; recorder's court costs, \$7,000; clerk fees, \$2,300; sheriff's fees, \$1,600; register of deeds fees, \$4,800; tax collector's fees, \$5,800; tax penalties, \$500; board of elections \$150; board, jail prisoners, \$150; intangible taxes, \$1,800; alcoholic beverages board profits, \$80,000, and miscellaneous, \$200, a total of \$106,525.00.

The health levy, calling for \$11,100, was increased two-tenths of a cent and now stands at \$0.67. Debt service, costing \$50,406 for the new fiscal year, calls for a rate of 26 cents, a figure four and five-tenths cents below the old levy. Old age pensions, costing the county \$11,700, call for a 7-cent rate compared with a 5-cent rate levied in 1946-47. A three-cent rate is to be levied to raise \$4,860 for aid to dependent children, the figure jumping from one and five-tenths cents. Welfare administration, costing right at \$1,000 per month, calls for a rate of four and four-tenths cents, an increase of nine-tenths of one cent over the current figure. The county is to be refunded a portion of the administration cost.

Other than the schools which call for a 55-cent rate, the county is to operate on a 50-cent levy during the new fiscal year. The figures are based on an estimated property valuation of \$17,500,000. (Continued on page eight)

## Four Marriage Licenses Issued

Paying little more than casual attention in recent years to June as a month for operations, Cupid got down to business in this county last month and indications now point to a record number of June brides.

Four licenses were issued to white couples by Register J. Sam Getsinger last week-end, the average holding to almost two a day so far. Licenses were issued last week-end to, Robert Worsley James and Mamie Elizabeth Keel, both of Robersonville; Francis Biggs Howard and Bettie Zereela Leggett, both of Williamston; Edward Ashley Roberson and Joyce Garnell Keel, both of Robersonville; Leroy Mobley of Williamston and Elsie Speller of Windsor.

### CLINICS

More than 5,000 persons have been given protection against typhoid fever in the county during the past few weeks, and an additional 3,000 or more are expected to get the protection before the special dispensaries are closed, the health officer said.

A clinic will be held in Hamilton on Friday morning of this week and on Friday morning of next week. A clinic also will be held in Hassell Friday morning of this week at 11 o'clock, and at Jamesville next Monday morning. After that time, the protection will be offered at the established clinics, including the one at Robersonville each Wednesday and at Williamston each Saturday morning.

## Layman Talks To Prisoners In Jail

Making his annual visit in this section last week, John W. Bartram, Episcopal layman of Fitzgerald Georgia, "broke" into the county jail and propounded the principles of religion. Only a few prisoners were there to greet the religious leader who has visited jails and prisons all the way from Florida to Virginia for the past thirty-two years.

Forced off the highway with his old car and trailer by gas and tire shortages during the war, he continues to travel by bus, and despite his 72 years he is holding up well.

Depending on voluntary contributions to finance his missions, Mr. Bartram says the going is tough at times, but he believes he is accomplishing something, and declares that much work needs to be done. He has pleaded with youth in jail, pointing out that tens of thousands of them are being held and that their parents don't seem to care. "We must wake up and change our ways or we are all going to hell," the layman declared. He stated that he had two converts in this State who are carrying on the work. Both of them were drunk and down and out when he helped pick them up in jail and started them on the road in the service of the Master.

## To Retain County Milk Ordinance

In a recent meeting, the Martin County Health Department passed a resolution calling for the continuance of a county milk ordinance requiring all milk sold commercially be of Grade A. Considerable trouble has been had with milk regulations in some sections of the State, but wholesalers are cooperating with the health department in this county, it was pointed out.

The department also passed a resolution requiring all teachers in this county, both white and colored, to submit a film of their chests before the opening of school next fall. The film will be handled without cost to the teachers in cooperation with the TB Association and the Health Department.

Miss Mary L. Taylor, former nurse with the department, will resume her old duties some time in August after a leave of absence spent in the U. S. Army Nurse Corps in Germany.

Mrs. Sarah DeCato, department nurse, is spending a month in a nurse's training school in Goldsboro.

## Describes Condition Of His Tobacco Crop

Describing the condition of his tobacco crop, Farmer Don Johnson of Poplar Point, said this morning, "We have about two-thirds of a stand, and it ranges in height from a dole bug hill to about two inches. It looks bad."

## Red Cross Group In Meeting Here Friday Evening

### Committee To Name Chairmen For Various Positions; Reports Heard

Meeting in the courthouse last Friday evening, members of the Martin County Red Cross Chapter executive committee and several fund drive leaders reviewed the work handled by the organization during the past year and heard various departmental heads submit their reports.

Recognizing the need for work in water safety and production for the world's needy and preparedness for the proper handling of emergencies in case of disaster, the group named Mesdames D. V. Brown and S. H. Grimes and Mr. C. B. Clark, Jr., to get chairmen for the three departments. The chapter organization hopes to be able to offer courses in life saving, to maintain an active production unit for the needy, and have a chairman ready to act in case of tornado, flood or other disasters.

Reviewing the work handled by the Junior Red Cross, Mrs. D. V. Brown, who organized the work and who made splendid progress with the young people during the first year of organization, stated that 2,191 children were enrolled that they had made and shipped 40 gift boxes containing 940 articles to needy children in war-torn countries. An additional fifty gift boxes are to be shipped, Mrs. Brown said. The chairman of the Junior organization stated that the treasury had a balance of \$256.43 and planned to send two initiators to a training school in Covington, Ga.

Although the organization is in its first year, the juniors showed much interest in its activities. Farm Life led the chapter in membership and proportionately prepared more of the gift boxes than those of any other school. Bear Grass was second, while little interest was shown by the young people in Williamston.

Treasurer Herman Bowen stated that the Red Cross, exclusive of the Junior organization, raised \$3,206.08 in the last fund drive, that approximately 40 percent of that amount goes to the national organization.

Mrs. Edna Laughlinhouse, head of home service work, reviewed the work of her department, explaining that approximately 70 cases were being handled each month, most of them for war veterans. Nearly \$400 had been contributed to worthy cases and quite a few veterans, experiencing adverse conditions, had been aided with transportation and similar expenses. Miss Chloris Kellum, home service field worker who attended the meeting with Miss Janet Cox, field representative, explained that the funds were held in trust for the public, that while the organization was ready and willing to help in any emergency, its leaders must be certain that the professional beggar and unworthy cases do not share in the funds contributed by a generous public.

Mrs. John W. Hardy, chairman of the local chapter, presided over the meeting.

Fund Drive Chairman C. B. Clark, Jr., briefly discussed the last drive and expressed his appreciation to all those who made the canvass and those who supported it. Bear Grass was represented along with Williamston, but no other districts sent delegates to the meeting.

## Crowds Attend Church Meeting

Opening a series of revival services in the West End Baptist Church last Sunday morning, Rev. C. W. Bazemote, home mission director for the Roanoke District, is being heard by large congregations. Services are being held each evening at 8:00 o'clock and the meeting will be brought to a close next Sunday evening.

The new church at West End was just recently completed and the pastor, Rev. W. B. Harrington, held the first preaching service there in the afternoon of June 1.