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Two Drown In River Over The Week-End

Earl Morris And John S. Williams Lose Their Lives

Third Drowning Reported Near Plymouth; Others Nearly Lose Lives

Two white men, Earl Morris, 27, of near Elm City, and John Staton (Bud) Williams, 69-year-old retired farmer of the Gold Point-Poplar Point sections of this county, lost their lives in Roanoke River during the week-end. A third person was reported to have drowned near Plymouth late Saturday, but no details could be learned.

Morris, herring fishing with three companions from the Rocky Mount section, lost his life when the boat carrying all four capsized in the strong current of the river a few hundred yards above the landing at Jamesville last Friday night shortly before 10:00 o'clock.

Morris, married and father of one child, was a veteran of the Navy and was regarded as an able swimmer, and it was thought he had made it to shore, but extensive searches conducted all Friday night and almost continuously were futile until late Monday afternoon when friends of the man from Rocky Mount riding in Jesse Swain's boat accidentally hooked the body. The searchers were about to abandon the search and were returning to the wharf when the body was hooked several hundred yards down the stream from the point where the boat turned over. The body was returned to Rocky Mount late yesterday for burial in Pineview Cemetery this afternoon.

Leasing a boat at the landing Friday night, the party of four was advised not to load more than two in it. "We'll be careful," one of the party was quoted as saying. They had been in the boat only a short time and were turning around near the old Hassell fishery when the boat was caught in the whirl of the flooded stream and capsized.

Morris, an able swimmer, started for the shore. Richard Pridden, 30, caught hold to a partly filled oil can, and Lee Sharp, 30, caught hold of a small roll of roofing paper and they drifted several hundred yards down the stream, finding it expedient to drift until they could be rescued. Fred Pridden, 50, and a fourth member of the boat party, was wearing a leather coat and enough air was in it to keep him afloat, but when rescue parties reached him his head was under water and he was unconscious. Artificial respiration brought him around and he was removed to a hospital, late reports stating that he was getting along all right.

One of the younger members in the party said he talked with Morris, that Morris told him he thought he could make it to shore, that the last time he heard him he was swimming and apparently was doing all right.

It was thought that Morris had made it to the swamp on the off side of the river and searchers went into the swamp but failed to find any trace of him. His widow was not convinced for sometime that he had drowned.

The second drowning was reported between 11 and 12 o'clock Sunday morning when John Staton (Bud) Williams and his son, Lory, were fishing in the river at Slade's eddy between Williamston and Hamilton. The father, a great fisherman, insisted on fishing that morning and the son went to please his father. They had fished their perch nets and went to a logging camp to talk with friends.

"We were making ready to leave and I cranked the motor, but we had traveled only a few feet when a propeller pin broke," young Williams said. "Before I could reach for the paddle, the boat was thrown against a log barge and turned over. The current carried me under the barge and I drifted the full length of

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Business Bureau Formed at Meeting Here Last Evening

The organization of a business bureau was advanced at a meeting of fifty or more interested professional men, merchants and other business leaders in the county courthouse last night. There was a strong support expressed for the organization.

Sam Bundy, former local school principal and secretary of the Farmville Chamber of Commerce for several years, addressed the group. Although he spoke in a humorous vein, Mr. Bundy stressed the necessity of such an organization to further the commercial aspects, to build good will, to bring new industries and people into the community. It was pointed out that Williamston has been too long without such an organization. While the various civic clubs do untold good among the

people of the community, it takes an organization of business and professional men with the primary objective of making their town a better place in which to live, an organization that will really make the town better known and noteworthy. The speaker advised the organization of such a bureau and suggested it affiliate with the N. C. Merchants Bureau.

Following Mr. Bundy's talk and on nomination from the floor, Ernest Mears, local manager of Belk-Tyler, was elected chairman of a seven-man board of directors. Other directors elected are: R. Edwin Peel, J. D. Woolard, D. V. Clayton, Frank J. Margolis, Urban Rogers and Ben D. Courtney. The board is to meet soon and complete the organization.

Education Board Calls Architect For Project Here

Members To Discuss Plans For Bear Grass School At Meeting Friday

A climax in the school housing shortage was reached here yesterday morning when a special delegation, representing the local school committee and the parent-teacher association, went before the Board of Education and reviewed conditions in the local schools. "We know you have problems and that they can't be solved easily, but crowded conditions demand that something be done," Robert L. Coburn, member of the local committee and first spokesman for the delegation said.

"It has been ten years since the plant was expanded," Mr. Coburn said, adding, "There has been an enrollment gain of 113 in the past three years. The population of the town has increased from right at 4,000 in 1940 to possibly 6,000 now, and more new homes are being built every day. The school earned a new teacher this year, but there was no room for her. We have been packing now for several years, and there are eight rooms with enrollments of more than forty pupils, some going up to 45. We are not fussing, but we are here to point out that something has got to be done."

The school committeemen declared that conditions are so crowded that the school is able to do only second rate work; "in fact we have the poorest school in the county," he added. "We need four classrooms, a shop, science laboratory, cafeteria and home economics room," the spokesmen said, adding that he did not look for lower building costs. "Others are building and during the meantime school life is going forward," Coburn said, declaring that an entire generation will have been denied what it is justly due unless something is done to remedy the situation this year.

Ray Goodman, a second member of the committee said that an additional teacher had been earned this year, that, in all probability, another will be earned next term. "And we can't turn children away from school," he said.

Mrs. C. B. Hassell, representing the P-T. A. committee, said that 45 pupils were enrolled in her room, that facilities were not adequate to accomplish the best work.

Discussing the local school needs, the board agreed that something must be done. The superintendent was instructed to contact an architect to make a study of the problem. "We don't know what is the best thing to do, but every effort will be made to relieve the crowded conditions as soon as possible," a board member was quoted as saying.

A delegation from Bear Grass was down to get a report on the school situation in Bear Grass, but plans and cost estimates were delayed and the discussion was delayed until next Friday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock when the board will meet in special session and review the plans

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Johnson Reviews State's Finances In Ruritan Talk

Thinks State Should Assist School Building Program For Towns-Counties

In an after-dinner speech, free of politics for the most part but with a strong political undercurrent, Charles M. Johnson, candidate for governor vividly reviewed the State's finances in a talk last evening to the Jamesville Ruritan Club and about forty special guests, including old-line politicians from two counties. Just prior to Mr. Johnson's talk and after a delicious turkey dinner, served by the ladies of the Methodist church, was enjoyed, Secretary C. A. Askew read a report, reviewing the progressive work being handled by the club.

Introduced by Professor C. B. Martin, the speaker made it plain he was from the east, and said he would like to cut loose and make a political speech. "But under the conditions, I'll limit my remarks to what has happened and what to expect in our State," Mr. Johnson said, in opening a review of the State's finances.

"There has been a marked expansion in recent years in State activities. Prior to World War I, five million dollars were collected and spent by the State, but it is different now. Our system is more complex and more costly. What are necessities today were luxuries not so long ago. The modern agencies of government cost, but they cannot be cut loose.

"The government of North Carolina is handled differently from that in other states. Ours is the only state that constructs and maintains all roads. Other states construct and maintain only the main highways. North Carolina and Delaware are the only two states that support a nine-month school through the twelfth grade.

"This State took over those functions because we had the highest per capita debt in the country. Farms were sold and everybody was broke. We had to do something.

"Education is a state-wide affair," the speaker continued, explaining that every child, no matter where he lived, was entitled to an education. "Roads are a state-wide obligation, and every person, no matter where he lives, is entitled to a good road. Other states have good schools and good roads in and around the rich city centers, but in the poorer rural sections, their schools, and roads are no better than ours were thirty years ago.

"As long as our roads are not all-weather roads the best interests of the people cannot be served. School children in the rural areas lost much time during the bad weather, and now they are going to school on Saturdays and many will have to leave school before the term is out to work on the farm, all because they could not travel the dirt roads.

"There is some talk about three super north-south highways in our State," the candidate said injecting a bit of politics admittedly when he declared, "If I am made governor there'll be no money spent on super highways in North Carolina until all the rural sections are taken out of the mud."

Touching on state finances, Mr. Johnson said other states adopted a policy of pay as you go. "But in 1921 we issued \$115 million in bonds. We have had the use of our roads during the meantime, and it did not bankrupt us as some predicted. In three years all bonds will have been paid or there will be sufficient money in the sinking fund to retire them.

"During the war when equipment was not available, a surplus of sixty million dollars was accumulated in the highway fund. It is being spent and will be spent by next year on a pay-as-you-go basis," Johnson said without advocating a 100 million-dollar rural road program.

Explaining that the highway fund is maintained independently of the general fund and vice versa

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County Commissioners Asked To Provide Hospital Election

Making Plans For Vote On Beer And Wine In County

Religious leaders, including nearly every minister in the county, and a goodly number of prominent citizens from just about every section of the county are scheduled to meet in the Memorial Baptist Church here this evening to discuss plans for supporting a referendum to ban the sale of wines and beer in Martin County. Few details of the movement have been made public, but it was learned that mail contacts with leaders throughout the county had received favorable responses, that the movement launched by the Williamston Ministerial Association some months ago is gaining momentum rapidly.

While answers had not been received over the week-end from every minister in the county, it was learned that others, including representatives of the Primitive Baptist Faith, are supporting the movement vigorously.

The action, one source pointed out, is being taken because the present control laws are not coping with the situation, that any number of places are selling the beverages of small alcoholic content without regard for the law, that some centers are rapidly becoming a menace to common decency.

To get the question before the people, fifteen percent of the qualified voters must sign a petition, urging the county authorities to call a special referendum or election. The meeting this evening is expected to advance plans for getting the necessary signatures, and it is fairly certain that the first step in banning beer and wine sales in the county will encounter little or no opposition.

Declaring that a band is no better than its individual members, Professor Jack Butler asked the members of the Band Parents Club in session at the high school last night to make every effort to see that their youngsters get in at least 15 minutes of practice each day.

Expressing the hope that the band will be able to move out of the beginners class by late summer and speaking of expanding plans for the organization, Professor Butler said that there is ample talent in the band to make it a first class outfit. Its ability to learn march routines was highly praised by the director.

Professor Butler said that he did not mean to infer that all the young musicians were neglecting practice but said that as a general thing there was not enough individual effort in mastering the various techniques of the instruments. He recognized the inconvenience of practicing in some of the homes where there were small children or older people who did not need to be disturbed, but said the high school was open to children who wished to practice after school hours for a brief period or as long as they and their parents deemed advisable so as not to neglect their other studies and possible odd jobs.

Lightweight summer uniforms were authorized for the band and will be ordered for use on any occasion this summer and during the first several games of the 1948 football season.

Firemen Called To Grass Fire Friday

Volunteer firemen were called to a grass fire near the water plant just off South Sycamore Street last Friday evening. The firemen finished burning the grass field, protecting property while the menace was eliminated.

HIGH WATER

High water in the Roanoke continues to delay seine fishing in the stream at Jamesville, and fishing operations in general are being limited.

The river this morning stood at 11.1 feet, about thirteen inches over the banks. It is predicted the stream will rise to 13.2 feet late Thursday, but a rise of only one-tenth of a foot was reported since yesterday morning.

The Roanoke has been in flood stage almost continuously since the early part of this year. Logging operations have been at virtual standstill during that time in the river swamps, and other activities associated with the stream and adjoining swamps have been limited.

County Board Has Little Business On Its Monday Slate

Upward Trend Inevitable In Welfare Department Budget For 1948

Meeting in regular session Monday, the Martin County Commissioners received a powerful delegation from the several civic organizations and heard a strong plea for action on a proposed hospital for the county. Acting favorably on the request, the commissioners ordered that machinery be set in motion as quickly as possible, providing for a referendum.

The petition presented to the board by representatives of the Williamston Lions and Kiwanis Clubs and Junior Chamber of Commerce, Jamesville Ruritan Club, Oak City Ruritan Club, Robertsonville Rotary Club and Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Williamston Woman's Club, reads, as follows:

"We the representatives of the civic clubs of Martin County feel the greatest need for proper hospitalization for all the people of Martin County, whereas we feel the people should express themselves as to their desires, whereas we are requesting your board to take under consideration the following:

"1. To provide sufficient funds through a special bond election to construct a hospital as set forth by the Medical Care Commission on a per capita basis, 2 1-2 beds per 1000 population, total 58 beds, in conforming with the Hill-Burton Bill and the State of North Carolina.

"2. To provide sufficient funds to guarantee an efficient operation of such a hospital for two years.

"3. In event the qualified voters vote in favor of erecting or obtaining a hospital, then to appoint a Board of Hospital trustees as set forth in General Statutes, Article 2A, The County Hospital Act."

The county attorney was instructed to make plans in conformity with state law for holding a referendum. The question must be placed before the people for as many as ninety days, it was pointed out, and while a special registration is necessary the election may be held on a special date or right along with a regular election. It is possible that the hospital question will be discussed publicly from every possible angle, and that it could be timed to be held along with the general election next November. However, plans are tentative and may be altered so as to make it possible to hold the election at an earlier date.

Very little business was handled by the commissioners in their regular meeting Monday, but they did not complete their work until about 1:30 in the afternoon, much time having been spent hearing long, drawn-out reports and discussing preliminary budget figures for the welfare department. "It is fairly evident that there will be an upward trend in welfare needs for the new fiscal years of 1948-49," one official said, explaining that hospitalization costs are certain to increase along with the needs of the aged and dependent children.

Williamston's Kiwanis Club was given permission to locate a soft drink vending machine in the courthouse.

Appearing before the board a small delegation asked that a road beginning near the residence of Leo Gardner in Jamesville Township on the Ward-Glade road and running westwardly via the M. H. Ange farm, J. L. Waters, B. O. Ange, P. M. Ange and others to M. E. Ange's residence be placed on the highway map for maintenance. The road has been cleared and "pulled up" and is used by school buses.

Tax Collector M. L. Peet reported that all but \$27,967.56 of the 1947 tax levy of \$293,466.95 had been collected.

It was pointed out that Pamlico has not sent a man to the State Senate in over half a century, possibly 55 years.

TEST WELL

Contractor Butler started moving in equipment here yesterday to start work on a test well for the town's water department. The work was delayed on account of material shortages, but with favorable conditions existing from now on, the test well should be completed and work started on the main well within the course of a few weeks.

Accident Victim Has Big Family

John Staton (Bud) Williams, retired farmer who lost his life by drowning at Slade's eddy in Roanoke River between Williamston and Hamilton last Sunday noon, is survived by a large family.

He was a son of the late Seth and Lucy Phillips Williams and was born and reared in the Gold Point section and lived there most of his life, spending much of his time in recent years in Poplar Point. He was almost 60 years of age.

In early life he was married to Miss Emma Taylor of this county and she survives with eight children, Leroy, Cecil, Clarence and Raymond Williams, all of the Robertsonville Community, J. D. and Dallas Williams of Newport News; two daughters, Mrs. Geraldine Faircloth of Smithfield, and Mrs. Idell Rawls of Williamston; five sisters, Mrs. Mamie Knox of Robertsonville, Mrs. Lossie Stalls of Hassell, Mrs. Lyda Corbitt of Greenville, and Estelle and Addie Williams of Philadelphia; and three brothers, Thurman Williams of Hassell, and Seth, Jr., and Jesse Williams of Robertsonville.

Senate Line-up Is Taking Shape

The line-up for State Senate from this the second senatorial district is gradually taking shape, according to reports reaching here.

Convinced that it was time for the smaller counties of the seven in the district to send a man to Raleigh, Hugh G. Horton, after serving last term, stated a short time ago he would not be a candidate.

Samuel Campen, merchant-farmer of Alliance down in Pamlico County, is planning to announce, and it was stated in a report from Swan Quarter down in Hyde County that O. L. Williams, a wordy, may run, and it is understood that Rodman will be a candidate to succeed himself although he has made no formal announcement.

It was pointed out that Pamlico has not sent a man to the State Senate in over half a century, possibly 55 years.