

## Files Special Report On Street Financing

### Seven Of Town's Twenty Miles Of Streets Surfaced

#### State Provides Maintenance Of Only 3.73 Miles Of That Total

In a hearing before the North Carolina Municipal Commission here last Wednesday evening, Williamston officials reviewed street conditions and financing problems and, along with a number of other towns, pleaded for some type of relief from State funds.

The town specifically asked that the dangerous traffic hazard at the railroad underpass on West Main Street be eliminated, and urged that larger allocations be made for the maintenance of streets. Members of the commission, appointed by the governor in accordance with legislative act, studied the underpass problem along with Highway Commissioner Henry G. Shelton and Division Engineer W. N. Spruill. The group was convinced that something should be done, but no concrete proposal was advanced. One member of the group, speaking for himself personally, declared that it appeared to be a joint highway-railroad responsibility and that something should be done to remedy the condition.

In making their report to the commission, local officials explained that there were 20.2 miles of streets in the town, that 7.3 miles were paved, and that only 3.73 miles were now subject to State maintenance.

The town this year is spending almost \$31,000 to maintain its street department, the figure including the cost of the sanitary street work, such as sweeping and garbage collections. Slightly more than one-third or \$75,000, of the town's bonded debt was contracted for the construction and paving of new streets, the issues dating back as far as 1920-21.

The report stated that the town is being allotted a fairly large amount from the highway fund for 1949-50, explaining that most of the amount will be spent on resurfacing Highways 17 and 64 within the town limits. The allotment for the period is \$16,859.00, the officials pointing out that the allotment for the next period will likely be very small, if not negligible.

It was also pointed out in the report filed with the commission that the Town of Williamston for the past fiscal year paid a tax of \$612 on gasoline used in its trucks, road machines and fire engines that operated for the most part on streets built and maintained by the town.

It was fairly apparent that the commission was impressed by the reports filed by Williamston and a dozen or more towns in this section of the State at the hearing last Wednesday. The commission's report is due to reach the lawmakers at the next session of the State Legislature.

While here last Wednesday, the commission members, riding in a special bus, inspected quite a number of streets, visited the Williamston Peanut Company where favored with bags of shelled peanuts, and dined as guests of the town before appearing in a public meeting at the courthouse.

#### ROUND-UP

Crime flared up after a serious nature in this section over the week-end when officers arrested two men for attempted criminal assault. Three others were jailed for drunken driving, assault, issuing a bad check, and a tenth one for an alleged old crime. Seven of the ten were white, and ages of the group ranged from 19 to 57 years.

#### HOLIDAY

With the exception of the peanut market and possibly some other heavy industry, Thanksgiving Day will be observed as a general holiday here. The peanut plants will not operate but the market will receive farmers' stock peanuts, it was announced.

The main observance program for the day will be held in the Baptist Church Thursday morning at 10:00 o'clock when Rev. E. R. Shuller preaches a union service.

All county school will close at the usual hour 3:15 Wednesday afternoon until next Monday morning.

## Victim Of Fire Buried Friday In This County

### Kenneth W. Barnes Lost His Life In Trailer Fire At Plymouth Friday

Kenneth Wayne Barnes, eighteen-month-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Barnes, Jr., was accidentally burned to death in his trailer home at Plymouth last Friday morning.

The father, Walter Barnes, Jr., formerly of this county, was away at the time, and the mother, the former Miss Verna Mae Elks of Pitt County, had gone out a few minutes before to work in the yard. When she glanced back at the trailer home she saw it in flames and tried to enter but was blocked by the fire, suffering burns on the forearm in the attempt.

Bringing the fire under control, Plymouth firemen entered the burned trailer and found the little charred body. It is thought the child was suffocated, and that he never moved the position in which he was left sleeping.

Surviving besides his parents are his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Barnes, Sr., of Williams Township. The child was born in Washington County March 16 of last year.

Funeral services were conducted at the graveside in the Riddick's Grove Baptist Church that afternoon at 3:30 o'clock by a pastor, Rev. W. B. Harrington, assisted by Rev. P. B. Nickens, Plymouth minister.

## Operating On Lad At Duke Hospital

Unable to ride a bicycle or participate in even the minor sports, Jack Harris, 12-year-old Bear Grass boy, is scheduled to undergo a delicate heart operation in Duke Hospital tomorrow, and he goes there holding to the earnest hope he'll be able, in time, to ride a bike, attend school regular and enjoy a fairly normal life along with other boys and girls.

Operating on the lad is the county's first "cag-nosed" "blue baby" is offering a brave fight for life. Friends declare that his will to live and be able to ride a bicycle will match the expert skill of the surgeons, that he longingly awaits the time when he, too, may participate in some of the lighter games along with other boys and girls after just looking on the greater part of his life.

While no appeal for aid has been made by the family, friends, recognizing the financial strain the operation and hospitalization will place on the widowed mother, are coming to the lad's rescue. Contributions, ranging from \$1 to \$25, have been turned over to Mrs. Irving Terry, RFD 2, Williamston, for the little fellow, and they are determined to see him through the ordeal. The Ruritan club is going into action in the lad's behalf. No large amount is sought, but a few hundred dollars will help defray the expenses and prove of great value to the little victim.

## Several Seriously Injured Last Week In Car Accidents

### Broken Back, Wrenched Neck and Skull Fractures Listed Injuries

Three persons were injured, all of them seriously, in two accidents on Martin County highways early last Friday morning. Property damage in the two accidents approximated \$1,500, one report said.

The injured included, "Boss" Reed, colored tenant on the Sam Mobley farm in Bear Grass Township, fractures of back and several ribs and a punctured lung. Last reports received here stated that pneumonia had developed and the victim was given little chance to recover.

Herbert Lee Hardison, wrenched neck, bruises and shock. Harmon Roberson, skull fracture, bruises and shock.

Both accidents were reported about the same time—1:00 o'clock Friday morning.

Hardison, just recently out of the armed services, was driving his father's car, a 1947 DeSoto coupe, toward Jamesville about two miles out of Williamston on Highway 64. Accompanied by Roberson, the driver, apparently running at a fast speed, lost control of the car just after crossing Sweet Water Creek bridge. The machine rode the creek embankment about 150 yards, mowed down a number of posts on the fill and cut a telephone pole in two nine feet from the ground, turning over several times. Investigating the accident, Patrolman E. P. Simmons said there were signs indicating the pole had been hit about fifteen feet from the ground. The front seat of the car was found 21 feet behind the spot where the car stopped and Roberson, unconscious, was picked up twenty-five feet beyond the car in the direction of Jamesville.

When the patrolman reached the scene he found the Hardison boy standing beside the wreck. Roberson was removed to Brown's Hospital where preliminary examinations revealed the head injury. Asked if he was hurt, Hardison maintained he was all right at the time, explaining that he was just drunk. He was carried to the jail where, a few minutes later, he complained about his neck hurting. Officers immediately transferred him to the hospital, Jailer Roy Peel stating that the young man walked out of the jail without assistance, went to a toilet alone and got into the car for the trip to the hospital. X-ray pictures showed a neck injury and he was removed to a veterans' hospital in Fayetteville the next day in a Biggs ambulance. Driver Tommy Bland stating that the patient slept most of the way there. Last reports reaching here stated that the neck was not broken, that it was wrenched and that it was thought the victim would be able to return home shortly.

Roberson regained consciousness last Saturday night, but it is understood his condition continues serious.

Investigating the second accident, Patrolman John T. Rowe said that Reed, driving a Pontiac, was on the machine on a straight stretch of the recently paved Bear Grass road near the Sylvester Taylor home, and that the car turned over in a field. It could not be learned immediately if passengers in the car were hurt.

One person was slightly hurt when his head was jerked in the two-car wreck at the intersection of Houghton and Church Streets here yesterday morning at 8:00 o'clock. The injury was believed not serious, and the victim, Mayo Modlin, was able to continue about his work.

Modlin, driving a 1949 Chevrolet, was entering Houghton Street just about the time Glenn Cannon was driving his 1940 Ford on Houghton toward Main.

Officer Chas. R. Moore, investigating the accident, estimated the damage to the Chevrolet at \$100 and that to the Ford at \$150.

## Market Here Will Receive Peanuts Thanksgiving Day

Williamston's peanut market will continue open Thanksgiving Day to receive peanuts, but no milling operations will be carried on that day, it was announced late yesterday.

With real favorable harvest weather prevailing this year for the first time in four or five years farmers are making a record in picking their crops and placing the peanuts on the market. And it is well established now that the crop is critically short, and that it is about all marketed. It is conservatively estimated that between 85 and 90 percent of the crop has been picked and marketed in this county. Reports from adjoining counties indicate that while the work in them is well advanced, possibly no more than 60 percent of the crop has been marketed.

Operating a record number of pickers this season, Martin farmers made quick work of the task, old-timers declaring that the crop was harvested and marketed in record time.

It is declared that the crop will not run a bag over half the amount of the 1948 crop in this county. A broker outside this county was quoted as saying that he handled 30,000 bags last season, and had been able to buy only 14,000 bags this year.

The short crop has sent prices to almost record high figures, unofficial reports quoting a top of 12 cents with the market running from one to two cents above government price supports.

## Membership Drive Nearing Its Goal In Martin County

### Farm Bureau Canvassers Now Working To Get Needed 32 Members

The annual Farm Bureau membership drive is nearing its goal in this county, Secretary Mayo Hardison announcing at a meeting of the canvassers last Friday evening that 1,968 members had been signed, that the drive is now only 32 members short of the 2,000 goal.

Approximately thirty of the membership canvassers attended an oyster roast at the Williamston water plant Friday evening when nearly 400 additional members were reported to carry the drive almost to the assigned quota.

"We are confident that goal will be reached before next Monday night when the canvassers are to hold a meeting and make a final report to State headquarters," an official said. At the meeting next Monday night, delegates to the national convention to be held in Chicago next month will be chosen. The organization pays only a portion of the expenses to the convention, and for several years it has been difficult to get members of the organization to represent the county at the convention.

Reviewing the work of the membership drive to date, the officers announced that George C. Griffin of Griffins had led the county, signing up 228 members. Farmer Reuben Everett of Robersonville was second with 207 members and Farmer Sam Everett, a prominent leader in the organization for the past ten or twelve years was third with 184 members. Nearly all the canvassers made a splendid showing in the drive, receiving nothing for their time, not even any remuneration for their expenses.

Martin is about the third or fourth county in the State to approach the membership goal. However, it was announced a few days ago that the organization will sign up a record number of members in the State this year.

## Roof Damaged By Fire Here Sunday

Apparently started by a spark from a flue, fire damaged the kitchen roof on the T. C. Cooke home on East Main Street here Sunday morning at 8:00 o'clock. When discovered the fire was burning through the top of the roof near the flue.

Firemen put the fire out by using a small hose line from the truck tank, but not until the smoke had filled part of the home.

## Junior Order Plans Meeting

The Junior Order United American Mechanics is planning a free oyster supper for Tuesday night, November 29. Also a concert given by the concert troupe from the Children's Home (of the Order) from Lexington, brought here and assisted by Supt. Robert Bruton and wife, both talented musicians.

Also the following state officers will be present: Judge W. C. Purcell, Durham, past state council; A. Z. Goforth, state councilor, Statesville; Gurney P. Hood, Raleigh, state council treasurer, and Forrest G. Shearin, Scotland Neck, state secretary of the order. District Officer, J. A. Pritchette of Windsor will also be present.

The hour and place of the supper will be announced later. This order has educated more than 6000 children of deceased members.

## Six Divorees Are Recorded Monday In Superior Court

### Tribunal Now Working On A Fire Damage Suit Against A. C. L.

Convening a two-week term of Martin County civil court Monday morning, Judge W. H. S. Burgwyn went over the calendar for the week with bar members and immediately threw the divorce mill into high gear, and ground out six divorce cases in short order.

All the divorce cases were advanced on grounds of two-year separation. A seventh case, brought by A. J. Stark of Edenton against Ouida Stark, resulted in a mistrial. The case was based on two-year separation grounds, the plaintiff counting in that two years the time he spent in the armed services. Judge Burgwyn ruled that that time could not be allowed, and a mistrial was ordered.

The following divorcees were granted:

- Cleopatra Bunch from George P. Bunch.
- William Sharpe from Elizabeth Sharpe.
- Marie M. Brickhouse from Louis H. Brickhouse.
- Mildred Thigpen from Alexis Lawrence Thigpen.
- Willis Williams, Jr., from Lucy Lee Williams.
- Daisy Dell Byrum from Charlie Ruffin Byrum.

It was pointed out that the court had granted a divorce last time, but that the decree had not become final because the plaintiff had not paid the costs in the case.

Three white women jurors, Mrs. Annie Mae Lilley of Jamesville, Mrs. J. A. Rawls of Oak City, and Mrs. W. O. Council also of Oak City, sat on the jury in four of the divorce cases.

About 11:00 o'clock Monday morning the court called the case of George C. James against the A. C. L. Railroad Company. Alleging that the defendant's train set fire and damaged a number of acres of his timberlands, the plaintiff is asking \$800 damages. The plaintiff completed its evidence before the court recessed for lunch. Taking over in the afternoon, the defense offered testimony during the afternoon session and is completing its evidence this morning with the likelihood that the case will reach the jury about noon today.

The court is scheduled to recess sometime tomorrow for the Thanksgiving holiday and will resume its work next Monday morning.

## To Hold Cotton Vote Next Month

The first cotton referendum since before the war has been set for December 15, according to G. T. Scott, chairman of the State PMA committee. On that date growers in North Carolina and elsewhere in the nation will go to local and county polling places to vote for or against continuing marketing quotas.

Marketing quotas on the 1950 crop were declared on October 12 by Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan. The referendum is being held in accordance with provisions of the 1938 Agricultural Adjustment Act, as amended, which directs the Secretary to proclaim quotas on the 1950 crop and to call for a referendum of growers to determine whether they want quotas continued. Only farmers growing cotton in 1948 are eligible to vote.

Marketing quotas will be in effect only if approved by at least two-thirds of the growers voting in the referendum. Any person who has an interest in the crop as owner, tenant, or sharecropper is considered a grower and may vote. No producer, however, is entitled to more than one vote even though he may have been engaged in cotton production on more than one farm.

"Marketing quotas furnish growers with a method of adjusting supply to demand and help growers obtain fair prices for the cotton they produce," Scott said.

## Lays First Brick For New Local Hospital

### Mr. Van G. Taylor Lays First Brick Monday Morning

Interested Group and Mayor Present for Informal Exercises

Mr. Van G. Taylor, one of the main supporters of a new hospital for this section, laid the first brick for the project at informal exercises held yesterday morning at 8:45 o'clock in the presence of a number of interested citizens. Mr. Taylor, recovering from a recent illness, was accompanied here from his home in Everetts by Mrs. Taylor and his nurse, Miss Helen Little, and he handled the task to perfection. The brick held its position when checked with the level, and immediately eight masons moved in to continue the task.

Mr. Taylor tarried just long enough for a photographer from the Royal Photographic Center, to take a picture of the history-making event, and then joined the other interested citizens for a group picture. No formal program had been planned, and attention was centered on the brick laying.

## Funeral Held In County For Mrs. Julia Roberson

### Aged Widow Of Confederate War Veteran Died In Poplar Point

Funeral services were conducted in the home in Poplar Point Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock for Mrs. Julia Etta Bland Roberson who died at her home there Saturday morning at 12:55 o'clock. She had been in declining health for a number of years and her condition was serious for some time before the end.

She was born near Williamston 82 years ago, and was married to James H. Roberson between 45 and 50 years ago. He died in 1925, and she was one of the last two remaining widows of a Confederate veteran in this county. For the past ten or twelve years she had made her home with her sons in Poplar Point.

Surviving are two sons, Harry and Theodore Roberson, of the home; a sister, Miss Fannie Bland, of near Williamston, and two grandchildren.

Rev. James Perry, pastor of the Robersonville Christian Church, conducted the last rites, and interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery in Williamston.

## Autos In Wreck On Tater Ridge

Damage estimated at about \$100 resulted when two cars crashed on a little narrow tater ridge used as a public road in Williamston Township last Saturday afternoon. James Robert Bullock was driving his 1939 Plymouth along the rural road, leading off the Prison Camp Road, and met James A. Hassell in his 1941 Chevrolet. Both rear fenders on Bullock's car were smashed, one by the Hassell car and the other by the ditch bank.

Patrolman John T. Rowe made the investigation. No charges were preferred by either, and the cars were repaired on the spot.

Two wrecks were also reported in the Robersonville-Parmele section, one victim suffering a broken leg.

## Home Destroyed By Fire Saturday

Thought to have started from sparks pouring out of a defective flue or chimney, fire destroyed the six-room home of Rev. William Keyes in Piney Woods near Dardens last Saturday afternoon. Reports reaching here stated that very little was saved, that the fire spread rapidly and threatened a nearby home.

Plymouth's fire department answered a call to the section and prevented the fire from spreading to other homes.

No estimate of the damage could be had, and it was not learned if insurance was carried on the property.

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The hospital is being built by Drs. Jas. S. Rhodes, Jr., J. T. Llewellyn, G. G. Himmelwright and Chas. I. Harris, Jr., and enhances the medical facilities for this section, giving the county a service unequalled possibly in other areas where federal and state grants are being made. The project, financed by private capital and other citizens interested in expanded hospital facilities for the people of this section, will house forty-four beds, a clinic, including a dentist's suite, operating and delivery rooms, laboratories and so on. It is being built according to approved specifications prepared by Herbert Whitley.

For the brief ceremony yesterday morning, Mrs. Chas. I. Harris, Sr., came up from Rome, Ga. Dr. and Mrs. Himelwright were over from Washington. Mr. and Mrs. Van G. Taylor and Miss Helen Little were down from Everetts with an employee from the Taylor household. Others present were Dr. and Mrs. J. T. Llewellyn, Dr. and Mrs. Harris and son, Van Taylor Harris, Dr. and Mrs. James S. Rhodes, Sr. and Jr., Dr. Wm. Gray, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Whitley, Chas. H. Manning and Mayor Robt. Cowen.

(Continued on page eight)

## Millions Train Under GI Bill

Approximately 6,340,000 veterans have had some sort of GI Bill training since the law went into effect in June, 1944, according to the Veterans Administration.

Classroom studies attracted most of the ex-servicemen. More than 93 percent were enrolled in schools, 6 percent in job training establishments, and 1 percent in institutions of higher learning.

The study revealed that 65 percent of the veteran-trainees had had some high school training at the time they entered their GI Bill courses. Eighteen percent had gone to college, while 17 percent had not progressed beyond elementary school.

## PUNCHBOARDS

Ruled out by State law, punch boards are still being picked up now and then in the county, a report from the sheriff's office this week stating that a knock-out punch was delivered to three boards in Oak City last Friday. No warrants had been drawn in the cases immediately.

Receiving complaints about gambling of various types in piccolo joints and other spots, Sheriff M. W. Holloman is mapping plans for county-wide raids.