

Former Resident Thought To Have Been Decapitated

Head Found Near Norfolk Is Believed To Be That Of Walter Barr

Walter E. Barr, native of Washington and for a number of years a resident of Williamston, is believed dead, late developments having uncovered gruesome facts and created one of the greatest murder case mysteries for Norfolk police in many years.

The case had its origin on October 3 when Barr and his companion, Mrs. Mamie Smithwick, disappeared after leaving their rooming house in the 200 block of W. 28th Street in Norfolk to attend a drive-in theater. Three days later on October 6, the body of Mrs. Smithwick, 53-year-old widow of Worley Smithwick, former maintenance superintendent of the Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh, was found in Lake Smith near Norfolk. No trace of Barr could be found, and although relatives and friends of the man maintained he was not the type that would murder, Norfolk police charged him with the crime. His Plymouth car was found parked just off a busy street in Norfolk a few days later, police stating that there was evidence of a terrific struggle, blood stains, teeth chips and a hole in the top believed to have been caused by a small caliber bullet.

Acquaintances thought they saw Barr in this section of North Carolina, but his wife, the former Miss Elizabeth Howard who makes her home here with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Furney Howard on Beech Street, still maintained that her husband had met with foul play.

Weeks passed and there were no developments. Last Saturday afternoon a dog dragged the head from a clump of bushes in the Burton's Station section of Princess Anne County, and it was recovered by a colored youth and turned over to officers. A search of the area did not reveal any trace of the torso, but officers are still continuing their investigation there.

Early Saturday evening, an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, called into the case several weeks ago, came here to get a description of the missing man's dental work. Mrs. Barr was questioned along with a local dentist but no definite description could be given. It was explained that Barr had had dental work done here, that he had some gold teeth, but no picture of the dental work was taken, and a definite description could not be had, but there was enough evidence to cause officers to believe that it was the man's head.

It was learned that the head was sent to Richmond yesterday for laboratory tests to be made of the hair found in Barr's comb and of the hair on the head. No report on the findings could be had.

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Art Exhibit Now At School Library

The art exhibit, for the benefit played in the library room on the second floor of the old high school building today, Wednesday and Thursday is receiving praise from early viewers. This collection of 150 Fine Art Prints is said to be the most artistic exhibit ever shown here. The originals of these are in the most famous art galleries of the world. Portraits, landscapes, marine and pastoral scenes in the original colors are on display.

This exhibit may be seen from 8:30 a. m. to 3:00 p. m. and 3:30 p. m. to 4:30 p. m. each day as well as from 8:30 to 9:30 p. m. Wednesday evening.

The exhibit was to have been shown at the Woman's club building last week but failed to arrive in time and is being placed at the high school this week because the Woman's Club is booked for the present week with other activities.

Proceeds from the small admission charge will be used to purchase prints for the classrooms at the school.

Medal Presented At Rites Last Week



Awarded posthumously to Pvt. Harry Paul Roberson for heroic achievement beyond the call of duty, the Bronze Star Medal was presented to the young man's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Roberson, of Everett, during military funeral rites held for their son in Williamston's Woodlawn Cemetery on Sunday, November 4. Colonel M. S. Ryan is pinning the medal on Mrs. Roberson while Mr. Roberson, standing just behind her, looks on. The soldier with his back to the camera, served as honor guard. Pvt. Roberson was fatally wounded in action near Chumang-ni, Korea, on February 14, 1951, dying four days later in a hospital.

Hold Funeral For Mrs. Ida Whitaker Sunday Afternoon

Mrs. Whitaker Died At Her Home In West End Last Saturday Noon

Funeral services were conducted in the local Pentecostal Holiness Church Sunday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock for Mrs. Ida Virginia Whitaker. A former pastor, the Rev. N. J. Ward, of New Bern, conducted the rites and interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mrs. Whitaker, suffering a stroke some time ago, had been in declining health but she had almost recovered and was getting along very well and was active until last Thursday when she was fatally stricken. Removed to a local hospital, she died at 12:35 o'clock Saturday afternoon.

The daughter of the late John Ransom and Mary E. Rawls Swain, she was born in Cross Roads Township 68 years ago on April 13, 1883, and spent her early life there. She located near Williamston some years ago, and was an active member of the local Pentecostal Holiness Church.

In early womanhood she was married to J. B. Whitaker. Surviving besides her husband are six sons, Earl, Dennis, Archie, R. T., Horace and Curtis Whitaker, all of Williamston; two daughters, Mrs. Joe Martin of Robersonville and Mrs. Dan Gurganus of Williamston; three sisters, Mrs. Hoyt Holliday and Mrs. J. E. Harrison, Sr., of Williamston, and Mrs. Buck Terry of Cross Roads; eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Suffers Broken Hip In Fall Here Friday

Mrs. Bettie Teel, well-known local resident, suffered a broken hip in a fall at her newly remodeled home on West Main Street last Friday evening. She started to sit down in a chair and fell.

Mrs. Teel, about 85 years of age, was removed to a local hospital.

TURKEY SHOOT

Those who would like to have a turkey for Thanksgiving and test their skill with a gun at the same time, have a chance get on the firing line tomorrow and Wednesday in the annual "Turkey Shoot" of the local Kiwanis Club which is open to all comers and is to be held on Critcher property near the Standard Fertilizer plant on the Roanoke River. The firing will start at 7:30 p. m. and last as long as the turkey hunters wish to keep firing. Guns and ammunition are being supplied by the club. The second round of the event will be held next week on Monday and Tuesday at the same place and at the same hours.

Weather Conditions Halt Peanut Harvest In County

Delayed by unfavorable weather peanut farmers yesterday started the 1951 peanut harvest off in a big way, reports declaring that the dust was flying from the tenners. But the harvest operations were just about halted by light rains falling early today, adding to the uncertainty of marketing as well as harvesting activities.

Reports indicate the yield is running between fourteen and seventeen bags in the county this year, compared with about a 11-bag average last year. While no bumper yield is in prospect, it is almost certain to be above the average and in those sections where failures or near-failures have been experienced for five consecutive years, the farmers are more encouraged as they start threshing operations.

Ex-Slave Died At Home Here Early Monday Morning

Funeral Thursday For Carthina Price, Aged 103 Years

Carthina Price, ex-slave and highly respected neighbor and citizen, died at her home here on Rhodes Street yesterday morning at 6:10 o'clock. She would have been 103 years old the 26th of this month. Despite her advanced age, she was unusually active up until a short time ago, explaining that she ate so much she felt obliged to work to earn her keep. She was ill only about eight days and was confined to her bed only a short time during that period. Infirmities of age were given as the cause of her death.

Born on November 26, 1847, she was a chattel of the late Samuel C. Whitley and lived on the Whitley plantation on Highway 125 for a number of years. She lived through a smallpox epidemic that wiped out about fifty of the 100 Whitley slaves just before the Civil War, and safely weathered the war and the nearly four score and ten years after the war.

She lived at peace with her neighbors, and was a devout member of the Sandy Point Primitive Baptist Church. Even though she was born in slavery, and her lot was cast in humble surroundings, she contributed much to society in her daily walk through life, setting a worthy example for others to follow.

In early life she was married to Wait Price who died about 15 years ago.

Surviving are four children, twenty-four grandchildren, forty-three great-grandchildren, and twenty-three great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be conducted Thursday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock.

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Freak Accidents Reported In The County Recently

Two Victims Have Fingers Almost Cut Off; Foot Badly Broken

Not all the accidents in this section recently were on the highways, reports from various sources stating that there were quite a few mishaps, several of them of a freakish nature.

Coming here from RFD 3, Greenville, with his parents to visit relatives Sunday afternoon, Edward Frizzell, eleven months old, almost lost small portions of two fingers when he got them caught in a lawn mower. He was reported to be getting along very well yesterday.

Last Saturday morning while her sister was using an axe to tear down a dog pen at their home on Pine Street here, Little Barbara Speller, two and one-half-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Speller a five-stitch cut in the forehead. Although the blade went right to the skull, the little victim was hardly dazed and was up and about yesterday.

While working on a car engine Sunday afternoon, Mack Nicholson of North Houghton Street almost lost part of a finger from his left hand when he got it caught in the fan belt. It was sewed back on in a local hospital a short time later and was reported to be doing all right yesterday.

Walter Brown, colored, had his right foot badly broken and mangled and his left foot bruised and torn in a log train accident during a logging operation for the Atlas Plywood Corporation near here last week. He is a patient in a local hospital. Robert Bell, riding the train with Brown, had part of the flesh torn from his right leg in the same accident. He is able to be out following hospital treatment. It was reported that a rail broke, causing the cars to jack-knife.

Mrs. Bettie Teel suffered a broken hip in a fall at her home on West Main Street Friday evening. She underwent an operation in a local hospital yesterday and was reported to be getting along well today.

Mary Gray Passes At Her Home Here

Retired Supervisor Of Negro Schools Had Been In Ill Health For A Year

Mary Satterwhite Gray, 61, died at her home here on South Smithwick Street yesterday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock following a heart attack suffered the day before. She had been in declining health for about a year, but was getting along as well as usual until the fatal attack Sunday.

She was born in Granville County and following her graduation from St. Augustine College in Raleigh in 1915, she came to this county in 1916 as supervisor of elementary education in the Martin County Negro Schools. The marked progress of the schools during the thirty years she was supervisor serves as a monument to her untiring efforts.

Years ago when she found it difficult to operate her car, but she continued to work with the youth of the county as a teacher in the local school and later in veterans' work until May of last year.

As supervisor and teacher she stressed Christian leadership and helped advance friendliness and understanding among the races. She never resorted to the sensational way of doing things, but followed the Christian pattern in solving the problems as they presented themselves from day to day.

Few persons in this county have headed more drives for the benefit of suffering humanity than she did. Once convinced that her service was needed in the name of humanity, she worked wholeheartedly for every good cause and seemed to find happiness in her work whether it was for one of her own race or some less-fortunate soul across the seas.

She was a leader in civic matters.

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Citizens Calling For Jamesville Election

NEARING GOAL

Meeting in the county courthouse last Friday evening, Farm Bureau leaders were advised that the membership drive was nearing its goal in this county and that the 2,000 members would be safely in the fold before the next meeting is called.

More than 1,700 members have been enrolled, leaving less than 300 to go before the goal is reached.

Native Of County Died In Norfolk Saturday Evening

Funeral Being Held This Afternoon In Jamesville For F. C. Williams

Fernando Cleveland Williams, retired farmer-builder, died in Norfolk last Saturday night at 11:00 o'clock of a heart attack suffered about two hours earlier. He had been in declining health for almost five years, suffering with asthma which was aggravated some time ago by two slight heart attacks.

Leaving Jamesville Saturday morning with his daughter, Mrs. Laverne Stallings, he was going to visit a son in Cape Charles. His son met them at Little Creek and they were sitting in the car when he suffered the attack shortly after 9:00 o'clock, and died en route to a Norfolk hospital.

He was born in Griffins Township 66 years ago on January 29, 1885, and spent most of his life there, locating in Jamesville about twenty years ago where he continued to farm and work as a builder. He also engaged in saw mill work until ill health forced his retirement.

In early manhood he was married to Connie Griffin. Two daughters, Mrs. Laverne Stallings of Scotland Neck and Mrs. Clara Bell of Jamesville, and three sons, Roy and Wesley Williams.

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Elect Several To Church Positions

Several Martin County people were elected to positions in the Christian church during the 107th annual convention of the North Carolina Disciples of Christ held in Kinston last week.

Mrs. John L. Goff of Williamsville was elected second vice president of the 1952 Convention. Elbert S. Peel was elected a member of the board of trustees through 1954. Mr. Robert Haislip of Oak City was named to the Rural Church Commission, and Mrs. G. G. Woodard of Williamsville was elected to a place on the Interracial Relations Committee.

Sherwood L. Roberson of Robersonville was made president of the State Men's Christian Fellowship or Layman's League.

A motion carried that the Lions Club endorse a resolution calling for immediate steps to be taken to change the underpass on West Main St. here, in order to eliminate the existing traffic hazard.

Lion D. V. Clayton was awarded the first place prize for being high salesman in the club's annual white cane bangle sale, while Charles A. Hamilton won the second place award. The winner sold his bangles for \$23.25, while the runner-up had a total of \$19.75.

President, Ben Courtney praised the work of Lion E. R. Shuller during his stay here the past four years, while pastor of the local Methodist churches, Lion Shuller expressed regret at having to leave the local club but stated that he hoped to transfer his membership to a club near his new pastorate.

Plans were announced for the possible organization of a Lions Club quartet or quintet, under the direction of Dr. Paul Burgess.

Six Accidents On Highways-Streets In Past Few Days

Two Persons Hurt; Property Damage Estimated At More Than \$1,300

At least two persons were hurt, both of them badly, in motor vehicle accidents on the highways and streets in this county during the past few days. According to preliminary estimates, property damage amounted to \$1,315.

The first in the series was reported on the Hassell fire tower road last Tuesday evening at 5:50 o'clock when William Arthur Parker, Jr., of Hassell, backed an empty school bus down the left side of the highway and stalled the engine. Jos. G. Coburn, of RFD 2, Robersonville, struck the side of the bus with his 1941 Ford, causing about \$50 damage to his car and about \$5 to the bus. It was Parker's second wreck in about a week.

Last Tuesday evening at 6:30 o'clock, "Lip" Cross, colored man of Hobgood, was driving his 1948 Chevrolet log truck on a dirt road leading off Highway 125 between Oak City and Hobgood when the steering rod came loose and caused him to lose control of the machine. The truck cut all kinds of capers, Patrolman B. W. Parker, making the investigation, said. Logs were thrown all over the roads, almost blocking traffic. Cross was not hurt but damage to his truck was estimated at \$300.

Driving east on Williamston's main street about 5:45 o'clock last Thursday morning, George Washington Joyner ran his 1949 Plymouth into an electric light pole near the highway underpass. Joyner said a truck forced him off the road, but town officers, making the investigation, said the man struck the pole on his left side of the street, that they could not figure out just what happened. Police cruising near the high school at the time, said they saw a flash of light when the car broke the pole and threw the wires together. "I thought lightning had struck," one officer was quoted as saying. Joyner and his passenger, Geraldine Smallwood, were both badly hurt, and officers estimated the damage to the car at about \$750.

While making a turn off Highway 64 about one-half mile east of Parmele, the 1951 Chevrolet driven by Mrs. Katherine Leggett James was struck from the rear by a 1949 Ford driven by Jeremiah Wallace of Everett's Saturday morning at 9:30 o'clock. No one was hurt, Patrolman B. W. Parker said. There was no damage to the Chevrolet and repairs to the Ford will cost approximately \$50, according to the patrolman.

Saturday afternoon at 3:30, James William Long stopped his 1949 Chevrolet on Houghton Street for the traffic light at the main intersection. Ulysses Brown, driving a 1942 Plymouth allegedly with improper brakes, plowed into the rear of Long's car, causing about \$50 damage to his and about \$10 damage to the other car, according to police who made the investigation.

Robert Elton Taylor lost control of his 1950 Ford pick-up truck on the Duplar Point road some time during last Saturday night and turned it over not far from where the Brown Paving Company's asphalt plant was located.

Endorse Plan To Widen Underpass

Members of the Lions Club heard reports of the Vocational Camporee held at Chapel Hill recently when three of the boys attending spoke at the club meeting last Thursday evening. Three members of the local Boy Scout Explorer group, Wade Bunting, Jimmy Snead and Tommie Harris, related their experiences at the camporee and entertained the Lions with their accounts of the event. The boys were presented by Scoutmaster Hack Gaylor, head of Lions-sponsored Troop 10.

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Starts Law Suit To Recover Damages

Miss Chloe Price of near Williamston last week filed a suit in the Pitt County Superior Court against David Smith, Wilson man, to recover \$5,145 damages alleged to have resulted in an automobile accident in Greenville on September 2. Miss Price was badly hurt and asks \$5,000 personal damages and \$145 for hospital bill.

She is one of several plaintiffs who were riding in the defendant's car when it crashed into another vehicle on a Greenville street. The several plaintiffs are asked for combined damages in the sum of \$24,450.50.