

Willis Cole Released

Willis Cole Arrested Upon Suspicion of Being Implicated in the Murder of Geo. Thomas More than Ten Years Ago Released by the Court.

Thursday 22, Mr. Willis Cole who had been arrested 8 or 10 days before, upon suspicion that in some way he was implicated in the murder of George Thomas on Little Laurel 10 years ago last June was brought before Justice of the Peace, Roy L. Gudger, for preliminary investigation. The skeleton of George Thomas was exhibited in the court room at the trial. It was a most ghastly sight. The skull and nearly all the bones of the body and the shoes he wore at the time he was murdered had been collected put in a box and brought to the trial.

The evidence showed that while some men were cutting timber for W. C. Cook, on the side of the mountain about Little Laurel Creek in the Belva section, the skeleton of a human being was found among the thick laurel shrubbery and brush, a very isolated place. Trees had been cut and the tops fallen on the spot where the skeleton was found. The stumps and trees cut were about decayed. Finding of the skeleton was reported to Mr. W. M. Thomas, of Big Laurel, brother of deceased. The disappearance of George Thomas had been discussed so much, and from the bones and other evidences the parties finding the skeleton seemed to think it was the remains of George Thomas. Mr. W. M. Thomas and others gathered up the bones and other articles found and securely boxed them.

George Thomas had a broken leg, making that leg some shorter than the other. When last seen he wore brogan shoes, of rather peculiar make, which had been half soled with leather belting. He had a decayed lower jaw tooth which gave him trouble. W. M. Thomas, identified the shoes, as being the shoes George Thomas wore just before he disappeared. He also testified that George had a short leg which had been broken. He also testified about the decayed lower jaw tooth, which gave George trouble. Dr. Frank Roberts testified that the skeleton was that of a human being. That one of the lower leg bones had been broken, which would make that leg some shorter than the other as the bone was lapped. The skull above the eyes had been broken in or had rotted away, the doctor could not tell which. He said the cavity in the jaw tooth would cause the person while living to suffer pain from it. All told the evidence seemed to be conclusive that the skeleton was that of George Thomas.

For years the disappearance of George Thomas had been discussed in the Little Laurel section and over a large scope of that country many stories had been circulated with as many different colorings.

Some time after Thomas disappeared it was reported that Thomas and some others near

where he resided had gone to Virginia or Kentucky. One man told it several times that he saw George Thomas in West Virginia and that he had married there and had two children. The evidence showed that the parties who it was reported went off with Thomas were not missing at all from home at the time it was reported they were gone. Owing to the many reports a large number of witnesses were subpoenaed, but when brought to testify it was found that there was but little foundation for many of the reports.

Mr. Capps testified he saw George Thomas pass his place with his dinner bucket going toward the place he was working at a saw mill the day he disappeared. He never saw him any more. Tilman Gosnell testified that he was working at logging and mill business and he talked with George Thomas late on the evening that Thomas was last seen. That he and Thomas talked after the other men had left. Thomas told him he would be back to work the next morning but Thomas never came and he never saw him any more. Thomas was seen by many that day and worked on his job all day. If any one saw him after that evening it was not shown.

Josh Gunter testified that one or two years after Thomas was missing, that he and another man went to where Willis Cole, the defendant was charged in making liquor, Cole passed the cup around and the other man became more or less intoxicated and talked a great deal. Cole said with an oath: "They talk about George Thomas, by G—I can go where he is or to his grave in 30 minutes." The other man is dead.

Ezekiel Gosnell testified that some 6 or 7 years ago that he and Cole, and Ike Payne were upon the mountain in the Little Laurel country and Cole was drinking and he got to telling how he killed old man Johnson and his wife in Tennessee, how he shot the old lady Johnson through the head and her brains splattered on the door. He then said "that he could go to the grave of George Thomas or where he was in 15 or 30 minutes." Ike Payne is dead. Tilman Gosnell testified that Ezekiel Gosnell told him this same story about 5 or 6 years ago. There was the ghastly skull with sockets that eyes did once inhabit, but if there was any one present or anywhere else that was connected with the foul murder of George Thomas there were no eyes in the silent dead sockets to reflect accusing rays of light; no brain in the hollow, empty skull, to think; no tongue in the skeleton jaws to tell the story of the desperate struggle with the murderer or murderers to save the life of the body that then covered the now dry and ghastly looking bones, an in the presence of the court and spectators. Part of the teeth were gone but the bad jaw tooth, with deep cavity, that wrecked the nerves and body of George Thomas with pain, as if by destiny, was still firmly set in the jaw bone.

The disappearance of George Thomas was a great mystery. It is believed that for some reason unexplained that he was murdered, and at some time his

A Letter From Gastonia, N. C.

Gastonia, N. C.
508. W. Main St.
Nov. 22, 1923.

Editor News Record:

Last Friday we received the first copy of the News-Record since we left Marshall. Of course the first thing to happen was a quarrell in the family to see who would read it first. We were so anxious to hear more from Marshall. It was like a letter from home telling of all the members of the family.

We have found our new home to be in a splendid location. A fine people are located here. Their progress is surprising.

The people are not merely living today, they are thinking of the future.

The school system can be compared with any in the state. They have now, five schools filled to capacity, and a new High School building nearing completion to cost \$500,000. One of the very finest in the state.

Gastonia is the county seat of Gaston County. Gaston County is a great manufacturing center of cotton yarns, being the third county in the world in number of spindles, with over a million and one half spindles. And largest number of cotton mills of any county in the world, with one hundred and four in operation.

The people have not forgotten the one who made all this progress possible. They have just completed a new First Baptist Church costing over \$230,000, with a main Auditorium to seat over a thousand people. The First Baptist Sunday School has an enrollment of about eight hundred fifty pupils. The State Baptist Convention is to meet here in December. There are ten or twelve other denominations here with churches to be proud of.

With all such progressive surroundings, one cannot be satisfied without mountains, if he has once lived in the mountains of Western, N. C.

Wishing The News-Record much success.

H. Paul Dellinger.

body placed where his skeleton was found.

The defendant offered no evidence and moved to dismiss the case. It was not explained why Cole stated at different times that he could go in 15 or 30 minutes to the body of George Thomas.

The court was of the opinion that the evidence was not sufficient to hold the defendant Cole for grand jury investigation and Cole was discharged.

If the murder of George Thomas is living the sentence of condemnation is upon him and like one of old he is silently exclaiming:

"How is it with me, when every noise appals me?"

What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes!

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood

Clean from my hands?

No; this my hand will rather The multitudinous sea incarnadine making the green-one red"

If he died with the guilty secrets unrevealed he is suffering the tortures of hell, whatever that is.

Billy Sunday's Son Tries To Kill Self.

Found With Gas Tube In Mouth Police Declare Will Recover.

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 21.—George Sunday, real estate broker and son of the evangelist, William A. Sunday, was found in a bedroom of his home here yesterday overcome by gas jet leading to his mouth, according to police.

His physician said he was in a serious condition, but would recover.

Humorist Becomes Serious

When I say that the State of North Carolina has practically everything I mean literally just that, in the sense that she has practically everything which conduces to comfortable all-the-year-around living for the average human being. According to the best of my observation and belief, she has within her as complete an assortment of natural attractions and natural glories as is to be found enclosed by any set of state boundaries this side of the Pacific Slope. This witness equally is positive that, taking one season with another, she has on her Piedmont Plateau the most equable and agreeable climate of temperate North America. And certainly, at this present time of writing, she is the most up-and-coming State of the South, if not of the entire Union.—Irvin S. Cobb in Hearst's International for November, 1923.

Little Pine News

We had a Box Supper November 10. The proceeds will go to buy Supplementary readers for the school.

We have a traveling Library at our school house. We are enjoying reading the books.

There are measles in our school. These are the ones that has them; Paul Lunsford, Esmond Freeman, Alma Henderson, Lenard Bradburn, Sallie Sluder, Kate Payne, Louisa Farmer. They are not hurting them very much. We hope they will be able to attend school in a few days.

Mr. Ward Payne and Mr. Walton Tweed went to Cherry Flats Thursday night fox hunting they are expecting a good race.

Miss Hattie Howell was visiting her sister last week, she visited our school one day we were glad to have her.

Mrs. Mae Sprinkle has just recovered from an attack of measles. She was out of school two weeks. We are glad to have her back with us again.

Sixth Grade.

Mrs. M. F. Whitt is visiting Mrs. T. J. Merrill at her home at Amelia Court House, Virginia. Mrs. T. J. Merrill, daughter and son, James, Mrs. M. F. Whitt and L. C. Clark visited all the important places, Richmond, Petersburg and Buckroe Beach. Mrs. M. F. Whitt is leaving the 11th for Charlotte Court House back through Roanoke and Knoxville, then return to her home in Asheville.

Born In North Carolina

North Carolina has always been a population exporting state. You can find a Tar Heel in almost any locality in the United States. A native of the state traveling through other states is usually surprised at the number of people he runs across who were born in North Carolina, but who are now living out of the state. One gets the idea that we must have lost a considerable number of natives to other states. And so we have. The people born in North Carolina but now living in other states number 443,844, and they range all the way from seventy-five in Vermont to 113,151 in Virginia. As far away as California you will find 5,742 native Tar Heels. In Washington there are 5,729, in Arkansas 11,128, in Texas 14,960, in New York 17,803, in Pennsylvania 20,877, in Missouri 5,476, in West Virginia 13,636, in Florida 17,358, in Tennessee 27,744 in South Carolina 50,040, and in Virginia 113,151 or so in 1920.

List of Subscribers

Grady Woodson, Alexander; D. S. Tweed, Marshall, R 4; Miss Bonnie Ammons, Snow Hill; L. J. Ammons, Mars Hill; R. P. McCracken, Mars Hill; M. C. Faulkner, Marshall R-3; Mrs. George Meadows, Asheville; John Nelson Jr., Morganton; A. C. Gentry, Belva; Mrs. A. J. Rector, Caryville Tenn.; R. M. Gahagan, Allenstand; Mrs. N. W. Lane, Hot Springs; Mrs. L. N. Odell, Lockhart S C.; Susan Gentry, Big Laurel; Noah Rice, Big Laurel; Miss Gertrude Tweed, Marshall; Ed Hixon, Big Laurel; Robt Dill, New River, Tenn.; H. W. Grooms, Mars Hill; J. G. Ramsey, Jr., Marshall, R-4; L. G. Buckner, Buckner; Mr. T. S. Rollins, Asheville; M. T. Duckett, Hollywood, Cal.; Lee Wallin, Revere; G. W. Hunter, Marshall R-3; J. L. Shelton, Johnson City, Tenn.; W. T. Huntersinger, Mars Hill; J. M. Hunter, Marshall.

About Our Sheriff

Dear Editor:— Please give space for the following remarks:

It is with great pleasure that I, and I think I can speak for the greater part of No. Three Township, note the success of our Sheriff, Mr. Ramsey, in bringing to justice the offenders of the law. We recall with great interest the whiskey stills that have been demolished, the many gallons of whiskey that have been captured; and the number of bootleggers, whiskey transporters, and other notorious criminals that have been taken into custody.

Therefore let us, the people of Madison County, do our whole duty as citizens of North Carolina by reporting to the sheriff all helpful information by co-operating with him in bringing to justice all criminals, thereby doing our bit in helping to make the enforcement of the law one hundred per cent in Madison County.

Henry H. Buckner.

A good newspaper helps to make a good community but the editor needs the co-operation of the community to build a good newspaper.

Why Our Forests Should Be Preserved

BY JOHNNIE ROGERS

The people of the United States inherited from their fathers one of the richest heritages the world has ever seen, an area of timber land which seemed as frequently remarked inexhaustible. Less than a generation ago if one had been lecturing on forest conservation people would have said "what foolishness is that man talking?" No one lecturing on forest conservation to-day is called foolish. The people from one end of the land to the other have begun to realize a period of timber shortage which they only began to realize before the war. They realize it when they buy a newspaper and pay twice or three times the former cost. They realize it when they go into a furniture store and ask the price on the tables and chairs needed, they realize it when they come to building their homes. Before the war lumber was twenty eight to thirty two dollars per thousand feet cut, now it is seventy five to eighty five dollars per thousand feet.

It is estimated that eight hundred twenty two million acres of forests are left. Practically two thirds of this is in the United States. We are cutting every year from our forests twenty six billion feet and only growing six billion.

The Cape Fear river before deforestation began was navigable for one hundred twenty five miles. The annual depth of the river for eight months in the year was six to seven feet before deforestation but now it is twenty one inches.

The water sheds rich and fertile have been cleared, and there are no lakes nor glacial soil to catch the water wasted which should have been absorbed by the soil, this escapes to the stream in the natural way. The leaves and branches of the trees prevent the rain from beating the soil as it does in the open.

The Literary Digest for April 26th, 1919, tells us that some seven hundred thirty two western towns and cities depend on the national forests for their domestic water supply.

Examination by the forest engineers has been made and they say that it will cost the government two million two hundred sixty five thousand dollars to restore this water back to its former depth. Congress made appropriation to begin work at once. Scientists investigated and say if the lands are deforested in a short time they will be as bare as the hills and mountains of Palestine and as France has already become under like conditions.

Pie Supper

There will be a pie supper at Enon School House, on Saturday night, December 1st, 1923. There will also be some good music. The proceeds will be used for the benefit of the church. Everybody cordially invited.

Full Standard 4 yard Sheeting 15c. worth 18c. at G. L. McKinney's