

# Fire Victim

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ence Morgan, Clarence Crawford, J. R. Edison, Guy Massie, Jonathan Woody, Harley Francis, H. R. Palmer, Ralph Dills, Crest George, Dr. Ed. Angel, W. L. Crown, Cameron Murray and John F. Harkey.

Mr. Sisk was born in Waynesville and was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Sisk. He was a veteran bus driver and had handled main lines out of Asheville for the past 26 years, with the exception of a period when he operated the Asheville-Enka bus lines. He started working for the Smoky Mountains Stages in December, 1940 and was one of their best known and most expert drivers.

He made the trip to Atlanta one day and returned to Asheville the next. His route of travel took him through Brevard and Highlands. He had left Asheville at 12:00 o'clock noon on Friday and had arrived in Atlanta on scheduled time at 8:10. He was to have left there Saturday noon for the return to Asheville making the same return schedule route.

Mr. Sisk with three other bus drivers for the Smoky Mountains Stages was occupying room 928 on the 9th floor of the Winecoff Hotel, which the company kept reserved for its drivers who made the Asheville-Atlanta run.

Two of the men, Harry W. Sorrells and William Bryson also lost their lives in the fire. Olin Hart, the fourth occupant of the room had left to start his 11 o'clock Friday evening run back to Asheville. He and Bryson and Sorrells all drove between Asheville and Atlanta making the route through Waynesville, Sylva and Franklin. They were well known and liked by the many local people who traveled the buses driven by them.

Mr. Bryson passed through Waynesville at 12:25 and had arrived in Atlanta at 7:30 Friday night, going to his room at the Winecoff. Mr. Sorrells had passed through here on his regular schedule at 3:30 and had arrived in Atlanta at 11:15 going to the room soon after Olin Hart had left.

Mr. Sisk and his wife have a large family connection in Haywood county and both formerly lived here.

Surviving are the widow, Mrs. Lavada Sisk, who has been connected with Efrid's Department Store in Asheville for several years; two sisters, Mrs. A. C. Spakes, of Campobello, S. C. and Mrs. Jessie Burnette, of Winston, Ga. and one brother, J. P. Sisk, of Waynesville.

# Water

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future growth. The additional 10-inch pipe was placed by the Asheville Paving company at a cost of \$40,000, which began work on the job during October.

From the water shed the water has been coming downgrade, running alongside the Allen's creek road, cutting across the golf course and going to the reservoir. The new line ties into the old one where it comes on level ground and gives more space for the water to be pushed uphill into the filter and reservoir. The lines run alongside each other, except for one minor change in direction in the new pipe line caused by houses over the old one.

The new pipe is 9,000 feet long, roughly half as long as the old one.

# Many Frantic Efforts Fail



These two views of the Winecoff Hotel during the height of the disastrous fire Saturday morning show the desperation with which trapped guests sought to save their lives. Sheets and blankets, which the guests tied together, served to get them to fire ladders, which could not reach past the eighth floor. When a string of blankets and sheets was dropped from the corner of the fourteenth floor almost to the ladder, frantic persons climbed to it from several floors. At least five persons fell to the ground trying to climb down this makeshift rope. One woman fell to the dining terrace on the hotel front, was struck by the hands with a rope and dangled just off the balcony. A fireman, seeking to free her, was struck by another falling body. The weight of the many persons on the rope caused it to break, and two more bodies fell, still gripping the raveled sheets. Another fell, struck the canopy and bounded to the sidewalk. After the rope broke some of those in the floor below the fourteenth used it to climb upward from the fire. From the fourteenth many climbed still farther on sheet ropes to the fifteenth and sixteenth, having to negotiate a wide ledge.—An Atlanta Constitution Staff photo, by Hugh Stovall.

# Hotel Fire In Atlanta Takes Lives Of 120

When the grim finger of death pointed to 120 residents of the Winecoff hotel in Atlanta's "second terrible December 7th," it came close to many of those who escaped, some without injury and some so badly burned that the death toll may mount higher in the next few days.

One of the first to know about the fire was Comer Rowan, night clerk at the Winecoff, a discharged army veteran who was training to become a hotel manager. He was on duty, and when he found out that the upper stories were ablaze, he telephoned his wife, Catherine, the hotel telegrapher, on the fourth floor.

Catherine, the laughter of Mrs. W. H. Limer, Waynesville, was told to come down as quickly as possible. She sensed an emergency, and on opening the door saw flames flying about in the hall outside. She ran to the window looked up and saw so many people hanging on ledges above that it appeared she would not be noticed by rescuers so wrapped a wet towel about her head and started out the door again.

By that time the fire was spread so badly she knew it was impossible to get downstairs so returned to the window of the room, climbed out and held on to the ledge. After what, as she told her mother, seemed hours, she finally was rescued, with only minor burns on her face and arms, suffering more from shock.

Another unusual escape was made by the three-year-old son of Dr. and Mrs. Robert H. Cox, of Murphy, whose parents lost their lives in the tragedy. The little boy, Bobby, and his nurse, Josephine Delilah Chambers, Murphy, were on the 10th floor of the hotel with the parents. The adults tore off bed sheets, knotted them together, and made a rope to let the nurse down to the top of a fireman's ladder reaching to the flames below them.

Behind the nurse went Mrs. Cox, then Dr. Cox carrying the little boy. Mrs. Cox's grip slipped and she hurtled downward towards the street. The father was horrified, and let go of the rope, being fatally injured in the fall. But Bobby, when falling, landed on an awning some eight or nine stories below and bounced unharmed into the arms of a man on Peachtree street.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Bault, another Murphy couple, were on the 14th story. They worked their way to a room less filled with smoke, and with another couple blocked heat from the room with wet bed clothing and mattresses. Later they were led to a stairway and walked down to safety.

Exhaustive studies to determine the cause of the fire are now under way. Unofficial theories include that of spontaneous combustion; possibly from rags piled in a closet, and it was stated that painters had been working inside the hotel and may have left inflammable supplies in it. One guest is said to have reported sparks from an elevator shaft, which he believed from a short-circuit.

Among the 120 who died in the fire, the following persons were from Western North Carolina: Cleveland Dillard Sisk, Asheville; E. O. Thomas, owner of Thomas Buick Co., Asheville; Dr. and Mrs. Robert Cox,

# A Victim of Fire Led to Safety



The terror of the fire at the Winecoff Hotel, Atlanta, is clearly shown here on the face of one of the victims, who is dazed, hurt and frightened. The expression on his face, and that of his rescuer reflects the horror of the holocaust which snuffed out the lives of more than 120 people, and injured scores of others. This photograph made by Pete Roton, of The Atlanta Constitution staff.

# Influenza

(Continued from page one)

A year. Although there have been no serious outbreaks of influenza this season, the winter is yet to come. Since vaccination is much less expensive than medical care after a case of flu has been contacted, all students are being urged to get this protection.

Mrs. Howard Bryson, nurse with the health department, will give the vaccinations. They will be taken on a voluntary basis, with each student being charged only 50 cents—the actual cost of the vaccine.

A partial schedule to be followed in visiting the schools is announced by Supt. Jack Messer. Today (Dec. 10) Fines Creek students will be vaccinated, and if finished in time the nurse will begin at Crab-

Murphy.

Harry W. Sorrells, Asheville; Bill Bryson, Asheville; and Walter L. Baker, West Asheville; all drivers for Smoky Mountain Stages.

# Bishop

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October at Asheville. His sermons, remarks Rev. Paul Townsend, local pastor, were considered by all to have been the highlights of the conference.

"We are most fortunate in having such an outstanding Christian leader speak here," states Rev. Mr. Townsend. "Our doors will be open to people of all denomina-

tree this afternoon. She will be at Crabtree all day Wednesday.

On Monday, Dec. 16 Mrs. Bryson will give vaccinations at the Rock Hill school, during the afternoon. On Dec. 17 she will start at Maggie, at 9 a.m., and afterwards go to Dellwood and Lake Junaluska.

At 9 a.m., Dec. 18 vaccinations will be given at Cecil, and later in the day at Springhill and Cruso. On Dec. 19 at Bethel, and Dec. 20 at Central Elementary, Waynesville High, Hazelwood, and Clyde will be taken care of during open periods in the above schedule.

# Lions

(Continued from

injured, and excess damage that fill the here every week-end caused, he said, by the mechanical failure of the or the fact that people the rules of safe tri cause of "reckless regard" in the attitude age driver.

Violations most served are drivers no signals, keeping too vehicles on the road hills, curves and bridge less bicycle riding "The cause of most in Haywood county are less driving and drug Patrolman Roberts de of our deaths can be ly to alcohol."

Traffic officers also ous complaints about ing school buses. "It either," he said, "it people who are dit asked those present h served the school zone of 10 m. p. h.

"We are starting week to get drivers lights when meeting on the road at night, quires that you deflec in 200 yards of and any driver we see this will get a ticket.

The public contin protection against per not drive properly. Carolina has one of records of any state h he continued. More trolman are being month, "but not enou all accidents." Any someone violate one should report him im an officer. "Only if cooperates in highwa they get what they patrolman concluded.

# MARRIAGE LIC

Frank Jenkins to ward, both of Haywo

and we urge a possible to hear Bish

Tom Lee, owner of the Bus line, is giving free to the services. A spe leave the court house at 6:50 p. m., making t "he Waynesville resi tricts; and another bu Hazelwood at 6:45 p. all who wish to go to free of charge.

Bishop Hughes now home in Chevy Chase, expected to arrive in today, coming here fr speaking engagement. fees will begin each 7:30 o'clock.

# Led To Safety



An unidentified and frightened woman guest at the Winecoff Hotel is led from the smoke and flame-filled shell of the building by a taxicab driver early Saturday morning. More than a hundred were killed—Atlanta Constitution photograph.

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