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HIGH EXPLOSIVES IN NEW BERN

State Insurance Department Criticizes Fire Department of New Bern and Finds that Negroes Had High Explosives Stored in Their Houses

Raleigh—Criticizing the city fire department, estimating the loss at \$2,250,000 and asserting that a large amount of high explosives was found in the negro houses and even in one of their churches, the state insurance department issued the report of W. A. Scott deputy commissioner on the New Bern conflagration.

"A strange incident of the fire," says the statement, was the finding of many high explosives in the negro houses and even in one of their churches.

As to the origin of the fire it was unquestionably due to ignition of a shingle roof by a spark from a terra cotta flue in use for twenty years in the home of Henrietta Bryan, colored. A small boy discovered the fire and told Henrietta and she, with a half dozen others saw the fire burning around the flue in the attic.

Owing to the delay of the fire department five houses were burning fiercely and the wind blowing a gale before help arrived. When the department arrived it found it had left a nozzle and on procuring the nozzle had to go again for a wrench that had been left.

The Rowland Lumber Co's fire outside the corporate limits had the entire fire department there when the other fire begun and precious time was lost by the company not having a standard size coupling, causing great delay, where the loss was \$300,000 with a total value of \$550,000 and a blanket insurance coverage of \$430,000.

The loss in the city is estimated at \$2,250,000 with insurance of only \$35,000. The lumber fire was from friction in a hot box and it is suggested that a law be passed requiring private fire systems to have standard couplings.

Captain Scott says that he found a forest of chimneys where 1500 houses stood on an area of forty blocks that of the 6,000 rendered homeless nearly all were colored and that none was seriously hurt or burned, the only casualty being that of an old colored woman, who being unable to walk was burned to death.

SEEKS A NEW TRIAL FOR AN OLD CRIME

Sentenced to serve from 25 to 30 years in the state prison for the murder of his wife 29 years ago, Ves Winkler of Wilkes county, who, if the evidence against him is to be believed, is guilty of what is perhaps the most revolting crime in the entire history of the state, yesterday had his last appeal at the hands of the law when the case was presented to the supreme court, by T. C. B. of Jefferson.

The record of the case bristles with revolting details and the circumstances surrounding the trial in Superior Court are most peculiar. Gladice Winkler, wife of the defendant, died in May 1893. On May 16 a coroner's inquest was held and on May 23 the body was exhumed and another inquest held, the coroner's jury rendering a verdict that Mrs. Winkler had met her death by falling out of the loft of the cabin of the defendant and receiving fatal wounds. No further action was taken in the case until this year, the defendant continuing to reside in the community, in the meantime marrying again and raising a family.

Winkler took out a warrant against the son of one John Shepherd, charging assault on Winkler's daughter by the last marriage. The accused has since been a fugitive from justice, but John Shepherd, two days later, took out a warrant charging Winkler with the murder of his wife 20 years before.

At the trial in Superior Court, Shepherd, who testified that Winkler had confessed to him and three aunts of the first Mrs. Winkler were among the chief witnesses of the State.

According to Winkler's story his wife met her death by falling from a ladder on which she had mounted to the loft to secure some soap, while the State alleges that Winkler killed his wife with a mattock and concealed the crime.—News and Observer.

MRS FRANK BEECH TAKEN TO THE STATE ASYLUM

Sheriff Critcher on Saturday last, took Mrs. Frank Beech to the western Hospital at Morganton for treatment, this being her fourth trip to that institution. Her attacks of violent insanity seem to come on her periodically, and she is absolutely wild, and much of the time extremely dangerous, the family being powerless to care for her. She is a good woman and it is hoped that she will steadily improve and again return

NORTH CAROLINA ASSURED OF AGRICULTURAL RANKING

North Carolina has made such great progress in agricultural development this year that it is "assured of fifth rank, or better, in crop values," and its "contribution in taxes to the national treasury" is remarkably high," Frank A. Parker, agricultural statistician of the state and Federal departments of agriculture, declared Friday in predicting greater progress will be made in 1923.

"This state has been called the 'try-out State' of the union. It meant that any thing that would succeed here would do so anywhere," he said. "This being the testing area, others must wake up, for the tar heel realizes its backwardness, and not asking help from any one, is striking out for itself.

"Who would have dreamed of this unpretentious State, with its backward farming and business methods, affaining the enviable rank it now holds in value of crops, manufactures and revenue among the States of the nation.

"Even though tobacco and cotton are highly responsible, there is something back of it all which should not be overlooked. This State has the largest percentage of native American and Anglo-Saxon blood of all. She has had the largest conflict between capital and labor, or perhaps in railroad strikes and manufacturing curtailment. Whatever the main reason, the situation today indicates that North Carolina, in an economic sense, is fairly sound as compared with other States. Trade early became active here. Failures have been much fewer than for the preceding two years.

"Even though agricultural products declined much, faster and further than others, and even though they have been slower to start in the recovery cycle, yet the farmers are still on the job. There has been no strike. Their dollar of wages had to compete with the urban two or three dollar scale. This meant the families, including women and children, had to produce the food that some industrial striker lived on while shirking the national responsibility of getting back to normal, as the unorganized but far more loyal farmers had to do and did the right way.

"The few farmers who have kept their heads above the expanse flood are slowly recovering from the shock but many will never get well. The surprising part of it all is that the urban business men have rarely yet realized that the farmers' welfare is always a barometer to their prosperity.

"If they would only invest more generally in practical means of bettering the farming interests they would butter their own bread, thus helping both sides.

"The start is made; the movement is on. Let us all join in to hasten the exchange of more products and money," he stated.

EVERYONE MUST READ SCRAWLS WRITING IN SKY

Captain Cyril Turner had to go two-miles up in the air to astonish New York.

He is the man who writes in the sky. A thick jet of white smoke issuing from his aeroplane writes words for the crowds below to read. He's a British aviator who is trying to sell the sky at space rates for advertising purposes.

"Sky writing is a success in England," says Turner, who lives at Hotel Pennsylvania when he isn't up in the air. "I've advertised everything from cigarettes to camisoles. I'm going to tour America now."

Turner considers himself the first person to come from Europe with a message for America which everybody will have to read whether he wants to or not.

"The airplane travels 125 miles an hour," said Turner, "and the smoke pipe releases 250,000 cubic feet of smoke per second. I've written with a 70 mile gale blowing. Some times the smoke letters retain their shape for half an hour. The letters are written horizontally and are a mile in length—but 10,000 feet in the air they look only a few feet high.

More than 7,000 telephone calls reached Turner after he wrote his telephone number in the sky.

"Just curious, most of them," he said. "Some were advertisers—and some wanted me to write the sort of messages you read in the personal column.

"Not a bad idea that. I could find Jane's missing sweetheart by writing in the sky—or tell Jim to come home that all was forgiven!

"One bashful chap wanted me to help him propose! What a mix up if I wrote 'Mary—Marry me? John.' All the Marys in New York would be standing on the curbs and the house-tops trying to signal me with a Chau-tauqua salute."

Turner shuddered. "No I draw the line at love letters."

BOONE, THE LOCAL COMMERCIAL CENTER

While the business men of Boone are striving, ever striving to bring our town to the front, hundreds of people in Boone and the county at large are blocking its progress by trading through mail order catalogs. They never seem to realize that our village of a few years ago has grown into a bustling, wide-awake, progressive town of today, with good markets, stores, banks, manufacturing plants, etc. All of these, mentioned further along in this article are controlled by good honest, conservative business men, who beyond everything else, strive to give you a fair deal, courteous treatment and good will in anything you may try to accomplish. Practically all of them are county men, and those who are not have come into our midst with the hope of making Boone the liveliest little town on the map, and Watauga a county well worth living in. Blood of this kind is more precious than gold and encouragement in large measures should be offered to every new man who casts his lot in the town of our choice. But are we offering the right sort of encouragement? Sometimes we are lead to doubt it.

One of the greatest leaks in Watauga's resources is the produce of the county. All of this is moving by trucks and wagons into Tennessee and other markets and sold at a much higher price than produce grown elsewhere for the reason that it is from that far-famed trucking county Watauga; and with the produce moves the greatest lump of Watauga's money. Other markets reap great benefits from our efforts, while the men who have put their capital into business enterprises here in our own town must suffer the consequences. Taking the matter of marketing buying and living in Boone we give an insight to the following business houses, all of them awaiting your demands:

WHOLESALE—The Boone Produce Company, dealers in country produce, hides, crude medicinal roots and herbs pay in accordance with New York lists, also carry a large line of groceries, feed, grain, etc. wholesale and retail.

The Boldin Wholesale Grocery Co carries a well appointed stock of groceries.

John W. Hodges & Son, wholesale flour, grain, and feed. Well stocked at all times.

GENERAL MERCHANDISE—The M. B. Blackburn Store is known all over Watauga as a store of high quality, with a complete line from groceries to clothing.

The Watauga Supply Company with a slogan of "Quality and Service" which is well carried out, gives you fair treatment and honest merchandise six days a week.

D. J. Cottrell down in East Boone with a line that will please and prices that are fair.

R. M. Greene's Five and Ten Cent Store sells for less. "Nothing Cheap But the Price."

HARDWARE—The Boone Hardware Company dealers in hardware all the way through, welcome an opportunity to serve you. Their motto "if we haven't got it we will get it" is in perfect accord with their policies. They are now preparing to move into their commodious quarters in the Watauga County Bank block, where their business relations with you can be carried out with a greater degree of nicety.

J. L. Qualls with a partial line of well-selected goods plans to open his store within the next few weeks.

DRY GOODS—The Davidson Department Store always on the alert for better bargains for their trade greet you with a display of goods unsurpassed in much larger towns.

T. Hill Farthing specializing in ladies ready-to-wear, keeps his stocks new and up-to-date at all times.

DRUGS AND CONFECTIONERY—Boone Drug Company, "the Rexall Store" boasts of one of the most modern small town stores in Western North Carolina under the care of a registered pharmacist. Fountain in connection.

Greene & Bingham the Edison Parlor, phonographs, fountain service, books, choice confections, etc. Modern and complete in every respect.

FURNITURE—J. M. Moretz, house furnishings, coffins and caskets, is now preparing to move his business into one of the store rooms in the Jones Building where a larger stock than ever before handled will await the purchaser.

BUILDING MATERIAL—The Watauga Furniture and Lumber Company dealing in "Everything to Build a House—Cellar to Chimney" are now erecting a large woodworking plant on the lots recently purchased from R. C. Rivers. Estimates furnished and plans given on any building large or small.

GROCERIES—Besides the general merchants carrying Groceries we have two exclusive stores, W. A. Thomas and L. L. Critcher, both handling every thing good to eat.

GARAGES AND SALES ROOMS—J. B. Taylor, Dealer in Lincoln and Ford Cars trucks and tractors, complete line of repairs, serves the public in a pleasing manner.

W. R. Winkler dealer in Nash trucks and cars solicits your trade with a promise of good work at low prices.

BANKS—The Watauga County Bank with resources of more than half million dollars appreciates your business and gives kind and courteous treatment free with every transaction. Now preparing to move into their new building, possibly one of the most modern in Northwestern Carolina.

The Peoples Bank and Trust Company now seeking larger quarters in the Jones Building is a newer organization, taking great strides in advancement on the basis of impartial treatment and sound business policies.

HOTELS AND EATING HOUSES—The Critcher Hotel, American plan, hot and cold water in every room will give you the most courteous treatment and the best of service.

The Blackburn Hotel remodeled and hospitable.

The Boone Cafe in its new brick home specializes in home cooking and service that satisfies.

The Greene House, with steam heat and baths, new and elaborate, is just opening for business.

MILLINERY—Miss Jennie Coffey's Store, Millinery and a general line of Ladies' Wear.

BARBER SHOPS—Hodges, O. K., and Hi-Land Barber Shops all well equipped and conducted by barbers who know how.

PRINTING PLANTS—The Watauga Printing Company, commercial printing done by experienced hands.

The Watauga Democrat, printing and publishing. All new equipment.

Besides the many organizations mentioned above we have tin shop, shoe shop, harness shop, jewelry shops, livestock stable, truck and draying services, three taxi lines, and in fact everything that goes to make up a real live town. With careful thought upon the business houses above mentioned we can conceive of nothing more ridiculous than our own people choosing to spend their money with mail order houses and sell all their products to outsiders, who perhaps have no interest whatever in the welfare of our community except in the profits they reap from our efforts. How much longer will our people continue in this habit which is a stumbling block in the road to progress. All our town today is composed as we have said of the best of citizens, each of them awaiting an opportunity to offer you the treatment you want. Give them your trade and they will build for you a county widely known, a town unsurpassable.

We have churches and schools that have no peer, professional men as good as the best, a bunch of citizens that have no equal, and what more could a man contemplating on a place to trade or a town in which to live, ask for than this town of ours? Nestled in the hills, where sparkling waters and wonderful scenery holds sway, our town and our county can easily be put on the map in big letters if the people of the community will stand to the backs of our local men. Without the support of our own people, how can we expect outsiders to come in?

Remember that the eyes of the State are centered on Watauga "The Switzerland of North America" and the progress we make and the things we do in the future depend on our own people.

OBSERVATION

In passing up and down our county for the last eight years I have had a very good opportunity to observe the education, agricultural, and economical changes taking place.

Taking the county as a whole, we have Solomon's ideal citizenship in one respect at least, neither the very rich nor the very poor. I am not quite sure just what he would say about other necessary quantity about which he has so much to say. Wisdom, however I think he would pass us up as a good average at least and I think a little above.

The social and economical conditions have certainly made long strides forward in the recent years. You could hardly stop at any home in the county where you would not find a welcome and a good dinner on short notice.

Living conditions have greatly improved, better homes, nicely painted houses in the most remote sections, better living conditions in the homes, cleanliness and health conditions carefully looked after, with a decreasing fewness of exceptions.

Many of the old ideas of the former days have disappeared, however we still have a pretty good number of citizens of the moon and a few still have faith in the disembodied gentlemen on the first page of any of the orthodox almanac. There are things however that effect better the good citizenship of any community.

The agricultural progress of the county for these years has been marked, I would say, in every community in the county. The method of preparing the sale of crops has changed very much.

The one-horse plow in the rarest thing of all, in fact, I do not remember having seen one in use for five years. The old method of shallow plowing is no more tolerated, hence you see very little soil washing any more. The methods of cultivating have, perhaps change as much as any one thing. The one time method of cultivating corn by tearing up the roots with a single plow, followed by piling high hills around the corn is a thing of the past in Watauga.

The introduction of improved farm machinery, with the reading of agricultural papers and other means of farm education have made most marvelous changes in Watauga, however I have felt that we have not gone forward to the extent that we should in the very recent years. I have very recently had the opportunity of observing agricultural and other conditions in four of our neighboring counties and when I come back and compare our conditions and opportunities with others about us I am much impressed with the wonderful possibilities of our own county. It seems to me they are almost unlimited. It occurs to me as I go over the county that we are not making enough use of our sheep and certainly by the raising of cattle is much poorer than it was ten years ago. I do not know what the farm books show as the number of sheep, but one sees very few compared with a few years ago. It occurs to me that nature has given us a very broad hint by covering these hills with the finest grass in the world, while she has denied so many others. I do know that sheep raising under proper conditions is certainly one of the best paying propositions of any county so far developed.

Sheep raising in Watauga is very much like raising blackberries, get a good kind and well, just let them alone. The writer had a little flock of eight ewes last year from which I raised twelve lambs that averaged 92 lbs at selling time, and brought \$110. The total feeding cost of the ewes and lambs was about one dollar for the whole bunch besides the grazing.

I am sure that our farmers need a lot of education along the line of marketing in order that they may get above the cost of production.

I trust our farm demonstration agent may be able to help them work out many ways and means of increasing the income.

Next week I desire to give some of my observations by townships.

Smith Hagaman

A TIRELESS LETTER WRITER

Palmetto Post.

Your home paper is really a tireless letter writer, if nothing more. Week after week we prepare this printed letter for those living here and for those who have moved away to some other locality, telling of marriages, births, deaths, the coming and going of people, of business accidents, crops, improvements, meetings, and so on. In fact everything of importance and interest. If you should undertake to write a letter to an absent friend every week telling all the news, you would get a faint idea of the task of preparing a newspaper. Some of our townspeople recognize this and take pleasure in giving items of news and also by sending the paper regularly to absent relatives and friends. It helps us and is appreciated.

BIG GROWTH AT BANNER ELK

Attorney L. D. Lowe Writes Entertainingly of the Present Building Program at Banner Elk—Educational Advantages.

Banner Elk is forging its way by the construction of magnificent and costly buildings. Three stone structures have been erected and others of the same material will follow. The first stone building to be constructed is the Presbyterian Church, the second is the rock house on the corner called the "Ten Room" and the first one of the three buildings of the Woodrow Wilson Junior College is nearly completed. The building has a slate roof, the rooms have been nicely plastered and it will be ready to be occupied by spring. As soon as this building is completed work will be begun on the construction of the second. It is understood that the two other college buildings will be of the same size as the one nearing completion, and the three will be designated as the North Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee buildings respectively. Such buildings as these college buildings will cost from \$40,000 to \$50,000 each.

The workmanship on these stone structures is well done by native talent and a vast amount of cement is used to tie the stones together, and it would require something like a tropical earthquake to jar one from its foundation.

During the fine weather considerable headway was made on the hospital. This building is to be of Tennessee brick, with concrete basement and concrete floors throughout and steel will be used where wood is usually employed for building material and the building will be absolutely fireproof, so there will be no more danger of fire than there would be in a vault. The hospital is to have a heating plant in the basement, laundry, three sun parlors and all equipments and appliances are to be modern and up to date in every respect. It will require an expenditure of something like from \$40,000 to \$50,000 to construct, equip this hospital and grade and beautify the surroundings.

From where and whom does all this money come? This question naturally arises when we learn of such undertakings, but when we are informed that one woman gave \$18,000 toward the erection of the hospital, that not long ago a man gave \$10,000 to the school and provided an endowment fund of \$50,000 in addition thereto, then it is to be remembered that this school has been receiving liberal contributions and donations for the past number of years.

When such institutions are once established and become well known they are often remembered by those who are approaching their early dissolution, and having large fortunes to dispose of, they feel inclined to make liberal provisions for educational, religious, benevolent and charitable causes.

Within the past fifteen months Banner Elk township has been consolidated into one public school district, a high school building has been constructed at Banner Elk at a cost of \$17,000 and with the aid of a School Bus all the children of school age in the township attend this school during the fall winter and spring, except those who see cause to attend Lees-McRae Institute during the spring, summer and fall and about fifty children at Grandfather Orphanage, where a separate school is taught for the benefit of the orphans.

So during a great portion of each year from eighteen to twenty teachers are engaged in school work in and near Banner Elk, and if we can have a system of good roads so as to connect ourselves with other sections this section will improve rapidly for years to come.

L. D. LOWE.

Banner Elk, N. C.

PROTRACTED SERVICES CLOSE

The protracted services held at Howard's Creek Baptist church for several days, by the pastor, Rev. Dan Wheeler, and the Rev. Sebastian, a noted divine from Wilkesboro, came to a close last Sunday. We are told that much good was accomplished. There were quite a number of additions to the church, and great interest was manifested throughout the series of meetings.

Mr. Thompson of Blowing Rock in company with Mr. T. H. Coffey of that town, was in Boone Friday. The former in the promoter of the Watauga Power project, and was here primarily to consult with some of our leading men relative to furnishing both towns with "juice" for lighting and commercial purposes, by June 1923.