

Fayetteville Observer-Times

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HOME EDITION

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 1997

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Marching along: The 15th annual Dogwood Parade brightens a cloudy morning and sets the tone for the rest of the festival, 1B

LOCAL & STATE



Ancient history: Artifacts from the archaeological site of an important Israeli city are displayed at the N.C. Museum of Art, 1F

ARTS & LEISURE



Mostly sunny; high near 75, 10B

WEATHER

Fate entangles lives of 2 men

In 1921, Cumberland County lawman Alfred Jackson Pate was trying to enforce the county's prohibition laws, while Marshall 'Carbine' Williams was making liquor in the woods. The two met in a deadly exchange near Godwin.

First of a four-part series
By Pat Reese
Staff writer

Alfred Jackson Pate, a tough, two-gun deputy who once stood off an angry lynch mob in downtown Fayetteville, died in a hall of gunfire during a raid on a liquor still near Godwin on July 22, 1921. The man convicted of killing him was the son of a well-to-do landowner, an unruly 21-year-old who quit his railroad job to become a moonshiner — Marshall Williams.

LARGER THAN LIFE
The 'Carbine' Williams story

before he was pardoned by Gov. Angus McLean in 1926. The pardon came after he invented a light-weight carbine rifle while working as a trustee in the machine shop at Calcraft's prison camp. Williams was called Marsh by people who knew him, but his firearm invention earned him fame as "Carbine" Williams.

World War II and the Korean War. Al Pate's descendants are unhappy that the lawman's life is practically forgotten, while the man convicted of killing him was paid special tribute by Fayetteville in 1952 during the premiere showing of a movie about his life, "Carbine Williams." The controversy over the killing has lived long since the Friday evening when it occurred almost 76 years ago. Williams' relatives have insisted through the years that he did not kill Pate, that the guilty man was a hired still hand named Randal A. "Ham" Dawson, one of the prosecution's key



Alfred Jackson Pate: The deputy died during a raid on a liquor still in 1921.



Marshall 'Carbine' Williams: A moonshiner who went to prison for killing Pate.

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A special kind of care

Costs hurt disabled students' education

By Kim Nilsen
Staff writer

Frank and Anna Finch know of a device that would help their autistic son — 6-year-old Nicholas, who does not speak — communicate with others in his class. But the Cumberland County school system doesn't have the money to put the device in the class of autistic children at T.C. Herrick Elementary School. The school system also stopped Nicholas' occupational therapy, because he wasn't showing enough progress. His mother thinks the therapy was, at least in part, cut off because it was too expensive.

"I think the money is not there like it should be," Anna Finch said. Local school officials and parents of disabled children want state and federal governments to shoulder more of the cost of educating disabled children. A study by Cumberland County last year showed that state and federal funding has not kept pace with the rising cost of providing daily lessons, therapy, equipment and even school-based medical attention to these students.

Lowell Harris, a Department of Public Instruction official, said the state knows it costs 2.3 times as much to educate a child with disabilities. But state and federal funding has never reached that benchmark. That leaves Cumberland County to pick up the slack or look for ways to scrap.

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Nicholas Finch, 6, turns the pages for special education.

mother, Karen Burke White, she reads to him, Nicholas, who is autistic; goes to T.C. Herrick Elementary School on North Street. The Cumberland County school system doesn't have the money to put a device in Nicholas' class that would help him communicate with others.

Staff photo by Steve Adolph

Tire plant, labor talks continue

By Catherine Pritchard
Staff writer

Negotiators for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Co. in Fayetteville and its union agreed Saturday to continue contract talks, avoiding the possibility of a strike starting early this morning. The decision means the plant will continue operating as usual, according to spokesmen for the company and Local 959 of the United Steelworkers union. The agreement came only hours before expiration of a contract covering nine other plants owned by Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. Although the Fayetteville plant isn't covered by that "master" contract, local union negotiators had been sitting in on talks in Cincinnati and conferring whether to call a strike here if those plants decided to walk.

It wasn't known at press time what happened in the Cincinnati talks when the contract expired at midnight Saturday.

A three-year contract covering the Fayetteville plant expired in

September. Since then, union members have rejected two proposals by wide margins and have been working under terms of the old contract.

Spokesmen for both sides said Saturday that no date has been set for resumption of the local negotiations. The biggest contention in the talks has been over Goodyear's plans to run the plant around the clock, seven days a week instead of six. That would mean several hundred new jobs, but it would also drastically cut the overtime hours that current workers have been required to work for years.

Some say their income would be cut between \$6,000 and \$11,000 a year, and they want the company to make up the difference.

The plant is the county's largest private employer, with about 3,000 workers. Of those, 2,500 are hourly workers, including 2,100 who belong to the union.

The plant is the top per-day producer of tires in the world, and regularly sets other records for quality and least waste.

Swelling river chases residents from homes

GRAND FORKS, N.D. (AP) — Authorities went door-to-door Saturday, ordering residents still in their homes to leave after the Red River overran miles of sandbag dikes and sent dirty water washing through their neighborhoods. Fire broke out in two downtown buildings but the floodwaters were so deep that firefighters could not get to them. By late Saturday, the fire had spread to other buildings. Crews tried to fight the fires by

dropping chemicals from planes but suspended the operation at nightfall. No injuries were reported.

"Our entire town is flooded, and now our town is burning," Battalion Chief Jerry Anderson said.

Most of Grand Forks' 50,000 residents abandoned the city earlier Saturday as the water moved in. But police and National Guardsmen

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Group homes affect schools, funds



By Kim Nilsen
Staff writer

Cumberland County has more therapeutic foster homes and group homes for children than other major metropolitan areas of the state.

With 135 such homes, Cumberland County stands far above Wake and Mecklenburg counties, the state's highest population areas, which each have 89 homes with similar licenses.

In the 10-county Cape Fear region, Robeson County has the next largest number with 33 such homes.

Home operators add to the tax base and sometimes employ

local workers. But growth in the number of group homes adds to the burden on county services, especially schools, county officials say.

This year, 50 children are residents of other counties but live here in group homes or foster homes. Those children are students in Cumberland County's special education program. They have problems such as autism or behavioral and emotional problems.

While the county gets state and federal funding for each child, local dollars are going to their education as well. Their

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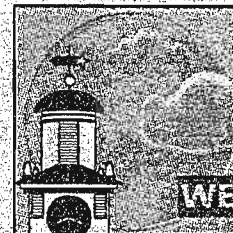
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First of a four-part series

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Alfred Jackson Pate, a tough, two-gun deputy who once stood off an angry lynch mob in downtown Fayetteville, died in a hail of gunfire during a raid on a liquor still near Godwin on July 22, 1921.

The man convicted of killing him was the son of a well-to-do landowner, an unruly 21-year-old who quit his railroad job to become a moonshiner — Marshall Williams.

Williams went to prison for killing Pate. He was sentenced to 30 years at hard labor, but served only eight

LARGER THAN LIFE

The 'Carbine' Williams story

before he was pardoned by Gov. Angus McLean in 1929.

The pardon came after he invented a light-weight carbine rifle while working as a trusty in the machine shop at Caledonia prison camp. Williams was called Marsh by people who knew him, but his firearm invention earned him fame as "Carbine" Williams.

Williams' rifle, with its short-stroke piston and floating chamber, was carried by American foot soldiers during the Pacific campaign of

World War II and the Korean War.

Al Pate's descendants are unhappy that the lawman's life is practically forgotten, while the man convicted of killing him was paid special tribute by Fayetteville in 1952 during the premiere showing of a movie about his life, "Carbine Williams."

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Marshall 'Carbine' Williams: A moonshiner who went to prison for killing Pate.



Alfred Jackson Pate: The deputy died during a raid on a liquor still in 1921.

Williams

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witnesses. Williams' youngest brother, Gordon, lives today near the Falcon exit on Interstate 95. He was just 7 when his brother went to prison. He says he has never believed his brother killed the deputy.

Pate's family remained angry for years. When his daughter died in 1978, a telegram sent to the newspaper by a family member sarcastically recalled his murder and Williams' subsequent fame.

Tough lawman

Pate died at 63. In his 20 years as a lawman, he shot two men — one fatally. He had scars on his face where he was slashed by a carnival worker who attacked him during fair week several years before his death.

In 1908, he held off an onrushing mob bent on hanging the man who murdered Fayetteville Police Chief James H. Benton.

The prisoner, Sam Murchison, killed Benton outside his home on Green Street, just a few yards from St. John's Episcopal Church. Newspapers reported Benton and his family were having Sunday dinner when a woman ran into the front yard, crying for help. She said someone was trying to kill her.

Benton, a former newspaper editor, put on his hat and walked outside with his pistol in his hand. Murchison shot him to death just a few feet from his front door.

Benton's teen-age son picked up his father's pistol and wounded Murchison as he fled along the street. Murchison surrendered later in the day to a group of armed townspeople and was put in a two-horse buggy for the trip to jail. Hundreds of angry men, many of them armed, had gathered in downtown Fayetteville as news of Benton's death spread through the county.

The buggy driver, a man named Colerider, whipped his horses around the Market House and headed down Gillespie Street toward the courthouse on Russell Street.

One wheel came off the buggy as the crowd closed in, but Colerider kept going on three wheels. He made it to the jail yard, where Sheriff N.A. Watson and Murchison tumbled out of the buggy. Pate, who was the county jailer, drew one of his two pistols and ran to the front gate, shouting he would shoot anyone who tried to take the prisoner.

The mob backed away and Pate slammed the gate shut, saving Murchison, a black man, from a lynching. But Murchison died at the end of a rope anyway. One month and 23 days later, after a jury found him guilty of murder, Murchison was hanged at the courthouse.

Pate was one of the officers who helped Watson trip the trapdoor on the third-floor gallows built at the top of the courthouse stairwell.

Liquor in the woods

Crime in Cumberland County accelerated after prohibition became federal law in 1919. The county and other parts of North Carolina were already dry as a result of church-led campaigns in the late 1890s, but lawmen had shied away from strict local enforcement.

Men coming home from World War I found they could make more money selling whiskey than working on the farm. Dozens of moonshiners produced liquor in woods and swamps around Fayetteville.

LARGER THAN LIFE

The 'Carbine' Williams story



Pate



Williams

First in a four-part series

■ **Today:** A crackdown on moonshiners in 1921 brings together Al Pate, a tough Cumberland County lawman, and Marsh Williams, who is making liquor in the woods near Godwin.

■ **Day 2:** The raid on Marsh Williams' still turns violent and Al Pate is killed. Lawmen charge Williams with murder. Angry Fayetteville residents bury Pate.

■ **Day 3:** Marsh Williams stands trial and uses an insanity defense. One juror believes him and the case ends in a mistrial. A month later, he surprises county residents by pleading guilty to second-degree murder. He is sentenced to 30 years in prison.

■ **Day 4:** The warden at Caledonia prison farm is impressed by Marsh Williams' ingenuity. He makes him a trusty and lets him invent a gun in the prison shop. The carbine he invents is so impressive that the governor pardons him.

Federal revenue officers swarmed into the Southeast and churches exorted politicians to do something about the bootleggers.

Ministers and some officials called town meetings to plead for law and order after three deputies were shot to death and another seriously wounded in a year of lawlessness in 1920 and 1921.

Deputies Herman C. Butler and W.G. Moore were killed in a gun battle in Massey Hill in May 1920. Deputy Malcolm N. Blue was shot to death and Deputy A.O. Patrick was seriously wounded in a gunfight in downtown Fayetteville on Jan. 28, 1921.

There was constant pressure from ministers who blamed whiskey for most of the county's crime. Sheriff N.H. McGeachy's small force of deputies was kept busy, searching creek banks and swamps from Linden in the north to Beaver Dam in the south, dismantling liquor stills and pouring out fermenting mash.

Deputies often took the dismantled stills back to Fayetteville and put them on display on the jail lawn at the Russell Street courthouse.

Pate had two jobs in the Sheriff's Department. He was McGeachy's chief jailer and sometimes was the lead investigator in working major crimes. In February 1921, Pate asked McGeachy to take him out of the jail and put him to work as a full-time deputy. He was replaced at the jail by Deputy Bill West.

On July 16, 1921, Pate and West, during a downpour of rain, found two liquor stills in a swamp "just north of the state colored normal school," today's Fayetteville State University.

The officers poured out the mash and loaded up West's Ford with jars of liquor and the distillery cookers and coils. When they got back to the courthouse, the deputies added the stills to the jail yard collection.

A few days later, he and other lawmen headed to Godwin to raid another still — one that belonged to Marsh Williams.