

The Manassas Journal

Mrs. J. B. T. Thornton
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MANASSAS, VIRGINIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 1926

\$1.50 A YEAR IN ADVANCE

MYSTERY SHROUDS DEATH OF WOMAN

Peculiar Circumstances Surround the Fatal Shooting of Mrs. Walter L. Keys.

The neighborhood of Dumfries, this county, was aroused early Wednesday morning, January 20, when a shooting affray took place at the home of Walter L. Keys, resulting in the fatal wounding of Mrs. Keys, his wife, and her unborn babe. Mrs. Keys died Thursday in a Fredericksburg hospital.

Details of the affair have been meager; all sorts of reports having been circulated in regard to it, and the county authorities have been reticent in giving out information to the public, until certain clues leading to the probable perpetrators of the crime shall have been run down. The Commonwealth's Attorney and sheriff have been upturning in their efforts to solve what appeared to be a deep mystery and at this writing they feel assured that they have uncovered the main facts in the case, and arrests will probably follow in a short time.

Mr. Keys stated that early Wednesday morning he was awakened by some one calling to him from the front yard of his home. Hastily putting on some clothes he went down, and throwing open the door asked who was there. "You know who I am," came the reply. "Throw up your hands." Seeing a gun leveled at him, Keys quickly stepped aside and slammed the door. Immediately a loud report of the gun and the tearing away of the door panel by a load of shot brought Keys to a realization of the fact that his move had been just in time.

Alarmed by the report of the gun, Mrs. Keys, who had been aroused when the man first called, rushed in and moved across the room towards her husband. Just as she crossed directly behind the door, there was a loud report. A full load of shot struck her on the left side, entering her arm, abdomen and chest. Picking up two of her children, who had followed her into the room she rushed upstairs and fell. Three more shots followed in rapid succession, any one of which would probably have killed the children had not the wounded mother carried them with her. The paneling of the door was completely demolished.

Keys says he then got his gun and went into the yard in search of the assailant but he had disappeared in the darkness.

Mrs. Keys was given first aid treatment at home and medical assistance was sent for as soon as possible. Dr. Stewart McBryde, of Manassas, answered the call and on his arrival at the home, after giving her necessary treatment, had Mrs. Keys sent to the Fredericksburg hospital.

Weakened from loss of blood and suffering from shock, Mrs. Keys was in a critical condition upon her arrival in Fredericksburg. More than one hundred shot had pierced her body, some having penetrated the woman's intestines. An operation was decided upon, which was performed by Dr. Barney, assisted by Drs. Scott and Quinn, revealing twenty-five intestinal punctures. Eight shot had entered the body of her unborn infant.

According to Mr. Keys' statement he has been employed by the Washington Terminal company and has been unable to be at home every evening, but recently on account of illness he has been on a vacation. While walking through the woods on his place a day or two before the shooting took place, Keys claims he saw a strange man on the edge of an adjoining farm and two others farther back in the woods. He states that upon asking, in a friendly way, what was going on, the stranger nearest him replied, "None of your business," and disappeared in the timber. Keys says he believes the men were moonshiners and were under the impression that he had or would inform on them, and coming to his house Wednesday morning, attempted to assassinate him in a spirit of revenge.

The alleged facts of the case as stated by Mr. Keys have been given above, but rumors and reports from other sources appear to shed a different light upon the affair. It is reported that a gang of moonshiners operating in the Keys neighborhood had been bringing liquor from the still at intervals and hiding it near

MRS. N. A. POSEY DIES

Mrs. Nancy Ann Posey, widow of George Posey, of Hoadly, died at the home of her grandson, Mr. Charles Arrington, Friday, January 22, at Woodbridge. She was eighty-one years old.

She is survived by five daughters and two sons: Mrs. Edgar Cornwell, of Manassas; Mrs. Burgess Sullivan, of Newasco; Mrs. William Posey, of Fairfax; Mrs. Harrison Cornwell, of Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. Emmett Schaffner, of Richmond; Fred Posey, of Baltimore, Md.; and Columbus Posey, of Ellicott City, Md.; two brothers, Zebe Fox, of Baltimore, Md., and Warner Fox, of Independent Hill. She is also survived by nineteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Her remains were laid to rest beside her husband in the family burying ground at Hoadly.

NEGRO KILLED IN BOOTLEG ROW

Warrenton Pike Scene of Shooting Scrape in Which Man and Horse Lose Lives.

Walter Thornton, colored, about 30 years of age, was the victim of an alleged bootlegger gang about six o'clock Friday evening, when he was shot to death.

The shooting occurred on the Warrenton Pike, about one and one-half miles from Gainesville, and as a result Richard Johnson, Heuser Johnson and Johnny Corum, all colored, are lodged in the county jail charged with the murder. Nathaniel Peterson, also an alleged member of the gang, is at large and is being sought by the county authorities.

Reports say that these men believed that Thornton had divulged what he knew of their bootlegging activities and they had for some days been trying to see him but he had eluded them. On Friday a party of the gang traveling up the pike from Gainesville, saw Thornton on the roadside talking to Mr. Thos. E. Sloper, who had dismounted from his horse. The gun play soon began and Sloper's horse was the first to fall victim, having received the first shot in his side. Thornton, who had been trying to keep the horse between him and the enemies guns, was now without protection and a bullet entered his cheek and, passing through his brain, came out at the side and rear of his head.

Deputy Sheriff Partlow pursued the murderers and succeeded in capturing the three named above.

As soon as the news reached here of the shooting, Commonwealth's Attorney Thos. H. Lion, in company with A. S. Boatwright, left for the scene of the crime. A coroner's jury was empaneled, composed of A. S. Boatwright, Arthur Ellis, R. E. Ellis, Haynes Davis, John R. Sweeney, Jr., and J. F. Clark, and presided over by Magistrate J. L. Rollins. The inquest was held in the Heflin store at Gainesville and the jury was in session until a late hour of the night.

The verdict of the jury was that Walter Thornton came to his death by pistol shot at the hands of Nathaniel Peterson and John Corum. It was not believed that Heuser Johnson was in possession of a pistol.

Walter Thornton had served five years in the state prison for killing a colored man by the name of Ewell. Through a reversal of fate, he himself has fallen before another man's gun.

MOSBY MAN DIES AT 97

Charles Fielding Chelf died at his home in Culpeper last week. He was 97 years old, but was active in business until a few years ago. During the war between the States, he served with Mosby's Rangers, resigning his position as postmaster to enter the military service. For nearly 50 years he has been deacon and treasurer of the Culpeper Baptist Church.

A road in a convenient place for loading on motor cars to be carried away, probably to Washington. The rumor is that Keys might have known where the liquor was cached at this particular time, for when the moonshiners arrived to load, the liquor had disappeared. The track of a motor car was discovered to lead from the cache to the Keys home. The rumor is that the moonshiners followed this track to the Keys home where a row ensued, resulting in the death of Mrs. Keys.

The Journal Changes Ownership

In announcing the sale of The Journal to H. B. Trundle and Sons, and our retirement after this issue, we take this opportunity to express our appreciation of the splendid support given us by our constituency as well as the co-operation shown in our endeavor to publish a local newspaper for the people of Manassas and Prince William county which would be a credit to the community.

Mr. Trundle has been associated with The Register and Bee newspapers, in Danville, Va., for a number of years and has had a large measure of success in his operations there. He comes to us highly recommended as a well-rounded newspaper man, and it is with a feeling of confidence that we leave The Journal in his hands. We have been most careful in considering the sale of the paper, which represents our life work, lest it fall into the hands of someone not in sympathy with the ideals of journalism which we have endeavored to maintain.

We bespeak for Mr. Trundle, and his son, Joe White, who will be associated with him, a continuation of the pleasant relations and hearty co-operation accorded to us in the thirty-odd years of our residence here, having come to Manassas from Loudoun county in 1895 to join the force of W. H. W. Moran, the founder of the paper. We hope to return after a much needed rest and will be associated with Mr. Trundle "in the shop." We are looking forward to the early resumption of our associations in Manassas.

Respectfully,

D. R. LEWIS

MRS. D. R. LEWIS

Referring to Mr. Lewis' announcement, above, we are taking over The Journal fully cognizant of the responsibility involved in our task. A newspaper that has withstood the storms and strife of thirty years and has attained that balance and poise which comes with maturity must needs be nurtured carefully, by experienced hands, to maintain its position. It shall be our purpose to continue The Journal upon the high plane which stands out strongly as the background of Dan Lewis' success as former owner and publisher.

In all matters affecting the welfare and progress of our community we shall take counsel with the "elder statesmen" that the best results may be obtained thru co-operation and understanding of our problems. To this end we invite criticism and advice. The Journal will be continued as a "community newspaper," giving first consideration to our own local affairs.

Politically, The Journal will be independent-democratic, and in no sense a personal organ promoting a selfish program. We extend a cordial invitation to the citizens of Manassas and Prince William county to come in for a hand-shake; let's get acquainted that we may labor together in the good work.

Respectfully,

H. B. TRUNDLE & SONS.

U. D. C. ISSUES FLAGS BOOKLET

Publish Attractive Pamphlet Showing the Correct Flags of the Confederacy.

The educational committee of the Richmond Chapter, U. D. C., of which Mrs. W. B. Newell is chairman, has just had issued an attractively prepared little booklet showing the correct flags of the Confederacy, which has been prepared under the supervision of Mrs. Norman V. Randolph. An introductory note, explaining the reasons for the publication, says: "It having come to my knowledge that the design of the Confederate flags, as adopted by the Confederate congress and used during the war between the states, is not being adhered to by flag makers, and wishing to preserve a record of these flags of the Confederacy to hand down to our children, that they may know the true flags under which their forefathers fought and died; also heeding a request from the commander-in-chief of the Confederate Veterans that we use our influence to see that the original designs as adopted by the Confederate congress are used by all flag manufacturers, designers and engravers, the educational committee of the U. D. C. is offering to the U. D. C. of every state this little booklet containing cuts of the four flags of the Confederacy as endorsed by the United Confederate Veterans.

Each of the correct designs of the flags is shown and a brief sketch of each flag is given, the date being taken from an official publication of the U. D. C.

Particular attention is called to the Confederate battle flag, which is shown to be square with a white border, flags generally offered being oblong and without a border, although the Stars and Bars are shown.

It is announced that the proceeds from the sale of the publication will be used for the endowment fund of a scholarship at William and Mary College which will be given to a worthy descendant of some Confederate who fought during the sixties.

INAUGURATION OF BYRD MONDAY

Inaugural Parade to Be Headed By Marine Band; Public Reception at Night.

Winchester, Jan. 26.—In response to an inquiry today, Governor-elect Byrd stated that all arrangements of the inauguration on Monday, February 1, were in charge of the General Assembly. He would not, he said, send out invitations, but that all Virginians were invited and would receive a cordial welcome. In addition to the inaugural parade and ceremonies at noon, a public reception will be held at 9 o'clock that night at the Jefferson Hotel. No cards are necessary for the reception. In the receiving line will be Governor and Mrs. Byrd, former Governor and Mrs. Trinkle, and other state officials, also Senator and Mrs. Swanson and Senator and Mrs. Glass.

The Marine Band, of seventy pieces, will play at the reception. This is the President's own and cannot leave Washington without his personal consent. It has rarely been sent out of Washington and is a nice compliment from a Republican President to a Democratic Governor.

The parade will be at least one mile long, practically without cost to the state. For the first time in the history of Virginia and possibly of the nation, the entire inaugural ceremonies will be broadcast, without cost to the state, from station WRVA, starting about noon. Governor Byrd will deliver his inaugural speech at 12:30, which will take about thirty-five minutes. He will speak, if the weather permits, from the south portico of the capitol and by amplifiers, which have been installed, he will be heard by the thousands who will assemble in the capitol grounds.

EPWORTH LEAGUE SOCIAL

The Epworth League social was held January 23 at the home of Miss Williette Myers. An interesting program was carried out on Lee and Grant. Games were participated in, based on a track meet, after which a delightful buffet supper was served.

PURCELL-LANKFORD

Mr. William Marion Lankford, of Tampa, Fla., announces the marriage of his daughter, Chassie Louise, to Mr. George Purcell, of Baltimore, Md., the wedding having been a quiet event, taking place at the home of Dr. M. Ashby Jones, Saturday evening, January 9.

Mrs. Purcell is the youngest daughter of William Marion Lankford, who, for a number of years, was in the contracting business in Atlanta, the family having moved to Florida some time ago.

Mr. Purcell is a native Virginian and has been the Georgia representative for Daniel Miller company, of Baltimore, for a number of years. Both Mr. and Mrs. Purcell have a wide circle of friends who will be interested to learn of their marriage.

TOWN BECOMES A LEAGUE MEMBER

On Recommendation of Mayor, Manassas Becomes Affiliated With Municipalities Body.

The meeting of the Town Council, which was held Monday night, was attended by Councilmen G. L. Parrish, McDowell, Dorrell, Moser and Larkin.

Fines were reported by the mayor, amounting to \$139.00.

Several minor building permits were issued.

Mr. Swavely appeared at the meeting and requested a special water rate for Swavely School. It seems that the amount used at the school is so great that it makes the water tax almost prohibitive.

He also asked that a drain pipe be installed to pass through the "Smith Field," his intention being to convert the field into a model athletic ground. At the present time a great deal of water is drained from the town on the grounds and Mr. Swavely expressed a willingness to make the trench half-way in the matter. A fee to furnish a twelve-inch pipe had to be seen to its proper instalment.

Another request was made to close the street immediately in front of the present school campus, between Main and Battle streets, and to open a new street along the railway between these two streets. The school having purchased the land lying between the railway right-of-way and the school grounds, Mr. Swavely desires to beautify and extend the campus to the proposed new street. The council was also requested to look into the unsanitary condition of the grounds back of the school caused by drainage pipes or sewers from the town.

The above requests were referred to committees for investigation, to be reported on at the next meeting.

Action was taken on the report of Fire Chief M. M. Ellis and on his recommendation the Public Safety Committee ordered the purchase of 250 feet of hose with nozzle.

On recommendation of His Honor, the Mayor of Manassas, the council agreed unanimously that the town become a member of the League of Municipalities.

The citizen's petition in regard to parking on Center street remains quiescent upon the table.

KIWANIS HOLD WEEKLY SUPPER

Jollity and Good Natured Banter Marks the Anniversary of the Club.

Friday evening the Kiwanis Club gathered as usual and enjoyed a short session and wit and stories, music and mirth filled the program. A Victrola furnished entertainment with classical and "otherwise" performances, and the Rev. A. Stuart Gibson, in an impromptu speech, gave a short review of the past year's progress of the club and a survey of the activities proposed for the coming twelve months.

The attendance was not large, owing to conflicting engagements of some of the members, but was highly enjoyed by all.

Gilbert Spies, who is the proprietor of a drug store in Strasburg, visited Mr. John L. Hynson the first of the week.

MONUMENT TO WOMEN OF SOUTH

Virginia Bill Would Erect Memorial to Those who Fought in Civil War.

Richmond, Jan. 26.—Virginia is to build a monument to the women of the Confederacy—the wives, sisters and daughters who suffered the hardships of the conflict of more than 60 years ago. The memorial is to be of a type that will be practical, in that it will be a home for these women and their descendants. Land worth about \$500,000 will be given by the State to this purpose. This memorial has been discussed for many years, but the State has never cleared its way to take the steps that would make such a thing come true.

At this time there is a Home for Needy Confederate Women in Richmond, a scheme which was worked out by Mrs. A. J. Montague, wife of the former governor. This home is now on one of the streets which is fast being converted to business purposes. It is planned to sell this property and with the proceeds to build the new memorial. The property will easily bring enough to provide a home for some 150 of these women. The new home will be located in the choice residential section of Richmond with spacious grounds, ample shade, with light and air on all sides. There appears to be no question of the enactment of the proposition.

When the bill, of which Senator Wickman was patron, was presented it was found that he had 21 other members of the Senate in accord as co-patrons. Mrs. Montague was on the floor of the Senate and expressed the hope that the members of the Senate would unanimously pass the bill to show the spirit of Virginians in the movement. The bill will easily pass the House.

BROTHER OF MR. H. LYNN DEAD

Mr. Joseph Ashford Lynn Dies at His Home Near North Fork, at Age of 81.

Mr. Joseph Ashford Lynn, Confederate soldier, died late Friday evening at his home near North Fork, from infirmities of age. Mr. Lynn was in the eighty-first year of his life and one of the few remaining Confederate veterans, having entered the service of his country in his 17th year, serving in Company A, 4th Virginia Regiment. He saw active service throughout the war and at one time was captured and imprisoned in the jail at Fort Delaware for sixteen months.

Mr. Lynn was a son of Captain John Thomas Lynn, of near Aldie. His mother, before her marriage, was Nancy Diggs Currell, also of Loudoun.

His late illness, borne with resignation, lasted only from Tuesday until late Friday. Mr. Lynn was a kindly disposed and generous neighbor, an unfailing friend and a ready helper to all who were in need. His Christianity was manifested by his consistent life and his generous deeds.

He leaves his aged widow, one brother, Humphrey Lynn, of Manassas; three sisters, Mrs. Edgar Ish, of Aldie; Mrs. Luther Reid, of Alexandria; and Mrs. Beverly Adams, of Manassas; a devoted friend, Dr. A. G. Crump, who has made his home with Mr. Lynn since boyhood, and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his decease.

Funeral services were conducted from his late home on Sunday morning at 11:00 o'clock by Rev. A. W. Graves, of Round Hill. A large number of friends and relatives accompanied the body to Union Cemetery, Leesburg, to pay the last tribute of regard to the deceased and to express their loving sympathy for the aged and bereaved widow. Rev. H. B. Jennings officiated at the grave.

Active pallbearers were Messrs. John Ball, Garnett Ball and Harvey Ball, O. S. Braden, Carroll Welsh and Dr. Andrew Crump.—Loudoun Times.

Miss Mattie May Athey, who has been visiting her brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Winfield T. Athey, at Huntington, W. Va., has returned to her home here.