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To give you the best newspaper possible and practical.

37th YEAR—NUMBER 25

# HEAVENER LEDGER

The Official Publication for LeFlore County

HEAVENER, OKLAHOMA, THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 1940.

**Our Policy—**  
To support every worthy cause to the limit of merit and truth.

Official Publication for LeFlore County

## Heavener In States Mine Explosion Tuesday

### Citizenry Awaits Exhibition Of The "Southern Belle"

After turning out almost en masse Friday to get a hasty exterior view of the K.C.S. steamship, "Southern Belle," Heavener's citizenry was looking forward this week to examining the train more completely when it stops here Saturday for a thirty-minute exhibition on its return trip to Kansas City.

Although the train will be here for an hour Saturday, the exhibition period will be for only thirty minutes. Arriving here at 12:30 p. m., the "Southern Belle" will be on exhibition at 12:45, at which time citizens will be allowed to board the train and inspect it throughout. The exhibition period will be called to a halt at 1:15 to make ready for the departure fifteen minutes later. Heavener is one of 25 cities along the route where the exhibitions are being held.

Coming through here Friday afternoon on its maiden trip to New Orleans, the "Southern Belle" stopped for only a few minutes to change crews and present a brief musical program. However, despite the fact that it was scheduled for an advance stop here only a few minutes, throngs of townspeople crowded the K. C. S. platform here to see the new, streamlined aluminum creation on its initial run.

Serving as members of the train's crew on its maiden trip Friday were four local men. Bringing the train to Heavener were Charles Edges, Sr., engineer, and Terrill Lewis, Jr., fireman. Boarding the "Southern Belle" here for the Heavener-to-Queen run were M. A. White, engineer, and Dan Kelly, fireman.

Saturday's exhibition will not only include an inspection of the train and the mechanism but the presentation of railroad officials of the K.C.S. and Louisville & Arkansas railways and girls entered from 15 cities in the "charm" contest, sponsored by the two roads in connection with the celebration.

Both officials and "Southern Belle" contestants were aboard the train Friday, however.

The train, powered by a Diesel-electric locomotive, is completely air-conditioned, equipped with radio throughout, a telephone communication system between cars, a public address system connection and many other innovations in rail transportation in the southwest.

The new train will be placed in regularly scheduled operation on the Kansas City Southern Railway & Arkansas lines September 2, it was announced.

**Sexton Services Held In Hodgden Sunday Afternoon**

Funeral services for Mrs. Lillie Ann Sexton, pioneer Indian resident of Hodgden who succumbed Saturday, were conducted Sunday afternoon at the Baptist church in Hodgden, with Rev. S. G. Rogers, Methodist pastor of Heavener, officiating.

As a part of the service at the church, Mrs. J. D. Bell, accompanied by Mrs. Karl McClelland, both of Heavener, sang "Amazing Grace" in the Cherokee language.

Mrs. Sexton, the widow of George H. Sexton, was 74 years of age and was born in Hodgden when the community was a part of the Choctaw nation.

### Heavener Man's Corn Is Possible Winner

Possibility that Emmett Milligan, farmer living 12 miles west of Heavener, might win the state agricultural department's tall corn contest became greater last week when three officials from the department visited Milligan's farm Thursday and made measurements of his entry, a description of which was sent to Oklahoma City a few weeks ago.

Officials from the state department, making official measurement of the 16 high-ranking entries, said that the winner of the contest would be announced over radio station WKY, Oklahoma City, at the week-end. Milligan's stalk, chosen for entry, measured 16 feet, 11 inches tall and was grown in bottom land. The first ear of corn on the stalk was growing 9 feet, 9 inches from the ground, measurements showed.

Milligan's entering the contest following an announcement of details of the contest in the Ledger a few days previous.

### Heavener All Set For Highway Meet

Everything was in readiness late Wednesday for the starting of the state meeting of the Highway 59 Association here today when local Lions club members and highway boosters will play hosts to delegates from over the entire state.

Heavener did its bit this week to make the affair a success when four local men made a tour Tuesday through Pine Valley, Smithville, Hodgden, Broken Bow and Iabel soliciting delegates from those towns to attend today's convention. The four were Ernest Hall, president of the Reeder Thorton and Roy Knecht. The group that they were virtually assured of at least a small representation from each of the towns visited Tuesday.

Meanwhile, civic groups and highway boosters in other parts of the state were busy soliciting attendance for the affair. Groups from Stilwell and Poteau were reported to have made their good-will trips last week in an effort to insure representation from sections affected by the highway.

Expected to be the chief topic of discussion at the meeting is the hard surfacing of numerous stretches of Oklahoma's portion of Highway 59, the only transcontinental highway running north and south in the United States. Oklahoma's portion of Highway 59 is the major portion of the system of which a major portion is not paved or hard-surfaced.

**Mrs. Mary Rexroat Named WPA Adult Education Head**

Mrs. Mary Rexroat, a teacher in the Heavener city schools for the past three years, last week was named district superintendent of adult education in the WPA Tulsa district, replacing Rivers M. Randle, who was moved to the state office in Oklahoma City as co-ordinator and advisor for WPA staff and project workers' training program.

Mrs. Rexroat is a graduate of Southwestern State Teachers college, at Weatherford and holds a master's degree from the University of Oklahoma. She has taught at Hobart, Blair, Seneca, Wilton, Cameron and Heavener. She will assume her duties immediately, replacing Mr. Randle.

**LABOR DAY EXCURSION TRIP OFFERED BY AMITA GROTTO**

All citizens of Heavener and vicinity were invited this week to take advantage of the Labor Day excursion trip to Shreveport, La., offered as a part of the arrangements for the annual meeting of the Southwestern Grocers Association to be held in the Louisiana city September 1 and 2.

### County Apparently Is Satisfied With Wister Dam Hearing

That a vast majority of LeFlore county citizens are heartily in favor of the proposed dam on the Poteau river near Wister was indicated at the hearing conducted by the United States War Department at the court house in Poteau.

With several hundred representative citizens for 24 hours, every section of the county present, not a single opposition was expressed. On the other hand, the champions were many and enthusiastic.

In a brief summary at the close of the hearing, Major H. E. Montgomery, district engineer for the War Department, who was in charge of the session, stated that in his opinion the meeting should go on record as favoring the project. "While a few persons are exercising their privilege to withhold final opinion, no direct opposition has been expressed," Major Montgomery stated. "We had hoped that if any opposition at all existed, it would be present and brought out at this meeting," the major added.

While the army officers were not in position, of course, to say just what would be the ultimate outcome of the project after it had passed from their report to Washington would be favorable for the dam's construction. Major Montgomery explained that eight tentative projects were set up in the original \$21,000,000 flood control program for the Arkansas river basin authorized by Congress in 1908. Three of the eight, considered the most vital, have already been approved and two are now under construction. One is on the Pacific Ocean near Blue Mountain, Arkansas, and the other at Nimrod on the Forde the Gulf of Mexico. The third, on the Canadian near Canton, will be started this fall.

However, the three exhausted the original \$21,000,000 appropriation, and it is now necessary that Congress set up additional funds for construction. (Continued on Page Eight)

### Local Man's Father Dies At Fort Smith Saturday

Elliot William Duncan, father of Orley Duncan of this city and a resident of Spiro for the past 30 years, died Saturday morning at four o'clock at a Fort Smith hospital. He was a retired farmer.

Funeral services were conducted at three o'clock Sunday at the Methodist church in Spiro, with the pastor, Rev. Alexander, officiating. Burial was in the Spiro cemetery with the final funeral home of Poteau in charge of arrangements.

A native of Green Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, Mr. Duncan was born November 4, 1868. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Alice Duncan; one son, Orley; Heavener, and two daughters, Mrs. Fred Ehlers, Kansas City, Kan., and Mrs. C. C. Carraker, Muskogee.

Elephants cannot jump; a seven foot chain is wide enough to stop them.

**Bill Weir Bids Good-Bye To Railroad After Nearly A Half-Century Of Service**

Climaxed nearly a half-century of continuous railroad service, William Milton (Bill) Weir, veteran trainmaster of Heavener, will bid farewell this week to active duty with the Kansas City Southern and the railroad profession when his retirement with the company becomes effective Saturday.

Weir, retiring under the provisions of the Railroad Retirement Act, announced that the would establish residence on his farm, two miles west of Heavener, Monday, September 3, 1940. A few years later the family moved to Bedford, Iowa, where the elder Mr. Weir entered the general merchandise business. Upon his father's death, Weir moved to Kansas City where he spent his last years.

### Mrs. J. M. Moore, Pioneer Resident, Succumbs Friday

Services for Mrs. J. M. Moore, a resident of Heavener for nearly a quarter of a century who succumbed here at the home of her son, E. E. Moore, August 25, were held Sunday afternoon at 2:30 at the First Methodist church. Rev. Lambert, Christian minister of Mena, officiated, assisted by Rev. S. G. Rogers, local Methodist pastor.

Mrs. Moore was born in Missouri, May 31, 1869, and has been a resident of Heavener for 24 years. The deceased is survived by a son, E. E. Moore of this city, and a daughter, Mrs. Wm. W. Moore.

Burial was in the Heavener Memorial Park with Hall Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

### Bandmaster Begins Organization Here

Robert Holland, Dundee man recently selected by the local board of education to direct Heavener high school band, arrived in Heavener last week and began preparations for the organization of the local band for the coming school year.

Holland, replacing R. W. Sockwell in the local position, comes to Heavener with four years teaching experience in the public schools. He has held teaching positions in Wortham, Texas, McKean and Dundee. His Dundee band captured the sweepstakes trophy for the past two years in their district and the Arkansas river institutional tourney held in Durant.

In addition to his serving four years in public school systems, Holland has had wide experience in the military band organizations in Texas, serving six years with the 144th Infantry band, almost two years with the 111th Medical Regiment band of Fort Worth and one encampment with the 24th Cavalry band of Mineral Wells, Texas. He has played with bands and orchestras of North Texas State Teachers college in Denton, Baylor University in Waco, Trinity University in Waco and the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

As to educational qualifications, Mr. Holland has his B. A. degree with a major in music, education and government and a minor in history. He holds the stand at cornet with the University of Oklahoma band during completion of a Masters degree, having already written a thesis. He studied for one summer with Edward Kautsky at the University of Chicago in Chicago on band arrangement and conducting and with Leonard B. Meyer at the University of Oklahoma on the art of Swiss flag swinging.

In organizing this year's group, Holland announced that many positions were open to students as musicians, special flag swingers and writers. Holland stated that, upon request of the students.

**ATTEND STATE MEETING**

Mrs. Loretta Finnell, local home economics teacher, and Miss Lola Beth Maxwell, home economics teacher in the Poteau schools, are attending a state meeting of vocational home economics teachers at Stillwater this week.

A 30-day leave of absence took a 30-day leave of absence from the Missouri Pacific to try out for a position as brakeman at Mena, Ark., with the Pittsburg & Gulf Railway, now the K.C.S. On Christmas day, 1902, he took his last trip with the Missouri-Pacific, and a short time later severed connections with the latter road and entered the service of the P-G Railway.

A promotion to conductor came at Mena September 20, 1903, while on August 1, 1917, he was promoted to trainmaster.

He was advanced to superintendent of the Southwest Division May 16, 1933, leaving Heavener at that time to establish residence in Shreveport, La. On Jan. 1, 1937, however, he returned to Heavener to take charge of this capacity until his retirement.

Ten years and two months of Weir's railroad service have been spent with the Missouri-Pacific while the remaining 37 years and eight months have been with the K.C.S.

### Exact Origin of Tragedy Undecided Wednesday

#### Younger Considered Likely To Start First Aggie Game

The Oklahoma A. and M. sports publicity department revealed this week that Leslie Younger, Heavener boy starting his second season with the Aggie grid team at Stillwater, was considered a likely backfield starter for the Cowboys' initial contest with Central State college at Stillwater on Friday night, September 20.

Younger, the A. and M. source said, developed fast as a sophomore last year and sparked in spring practice. Observers at Stillwater say Younger is one of the best line-backers among the Cowboy backfield candidates. Wilson Barnes, of the Aggie Sports News, says that the Heavener boy's uncanny solving of enemy plays and sure tackling ability make him a valuable hand. He plays the quarter back or blocking position in the Aggie system. A member of the 1938 All-Oklahoma high school squad, Younger is one inch over six feet tall and weighs 175 pounds.

#### Orton And Pymale Bound Over Tuesday

Elmer Pymale, Fort Smithian, who along with Delia Orton, also of Ft. Smith, is alleged to have attempted a safe robbery at the Heavener Auto Sales August 3, was bound over to district court on a charge of second degree burglary at a preliminary hearing held in Judge A. S. Johnston's office here Tuesday afternoon.

Orton was bound over to district court on a charge of second degree burglary at a preliminary hearing held in Judge A. S. Johnston's office here Tuesday afternoon. Bond for both men was set at \$750.

The hearing, originally scheduled for Friday, was postponed until Tuesday at the request of the defendants. Called to the stand at noon were the state in Tuesday's hearing were Charles Crawford, Heavener night lawyer; W. E. Henders, owner of the Heavener Auto Sales, and Bert Kell, Fort Smith, of Police here. Crawford testified that the general physical characteristics of Orton and Pymale were somewhat similar to those of the two men he chased from the Heavener Auto Sales building at 2:30 on the morning of August 3. It being dark, Crawford said, he could not positively identify the men as the two.

Kell, in his testimony, said that, apparently, Pymale was the man who escaped from him at Howe's a few hours after the robbery.

Pymale, called to the stand; said that he was not in Heavener on the night he was alleged to have been an accomplice in the local robbery. His testimony was followed by that of his mother, Mrs. Annie Pymale, and his sister, Mrs. Rose Shawinsky, both of Heavener, who testified that Pymale did not leave home on August 3 for a sufficient length of time to have come to Heavener.

R. E. Hough of Fort Smith was attorney for the defense while Clyde Followay, county attorney, represented the state.

#### Funeral Services Held Sunday For Mrs. Richey

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at one o'clock at the First Baptist church for Mrs. Richey, of Heavener. Services were conducted by Rev. E. W. Westwoodland, assisted by Rev. Karl McClelland.

Mrs. Richey passed away last Thursday following a long illness. She came to this country from Fort Wayne, Ind., and has made her home in Heavener and Heavener for the past six years.

Mrs. Richey is survived by one son, Rev. R. C. Richey, pastor of the Heavener Baptist church, and two daughters, Mrs. Anita Purvis, Ark., and Mrs. C. C. Moore, Rowe, and 5 grandchildren.

The burial was held at Hartford, Ark., with the Hall Funeral Home of Poteau in charge.

#### Last of Victims Bodies Are Not Removed Until Hours After Blast

Exact origin had not been determined Wednesday of the explosion killing ten men which occurred at the Bates Coal Company's No. 2 mine near Bates, Ark., about 5:45 p. m. Tuesday.

Although Arkansas State Mine Inspector J. W. Fitzsimmons was at the scene of the tragedy late Tuesday night and conducted an investigation, no decision as to the origin of the explosion had been issued late Wednesday.

The ten-man night shift machine and bruising crew, all of whom were killed, had entered the mine only a few minutes before the explosion occurred. The dead were listed as follows:

Murray Herndon, rural route 1, Heavener.  
Gilbert Johnson, Bates.  
Mayo Johnson, Jenny Lind, Ark.  
Alvah Whitley, Greenwood, Ark.  
Earl Renfro, Bates.  
Tom Barkley, Huntington, Ark.  
Alvin L. Vashley, Mansfield, Ark.  
Odis Harris, Huntington.  
Cliff Huff, Clarksville, Ark.  
J. E. Manning, Hartford, Ark.

Rescue crews took the last of the ten bodies from the mine shortly after 11 p. m. and Ben H. Redwell, Ft. Smith, manager of the mining company, said no others were missing. It was about an hour after the explosion occurred before the first body was reached, he said. Six of the men were removed before 9:30, however.

A milling throng of about 75 or 100 persons, many of them grief-stricken relatives of the dead miners, were at the entrance when the men were removed. Redwell said most of the relatives watched their dead removed from the mine with stoical calm.

The explosion, occurring in the eastern section of the mine about 1,700 feet from the entrance, was declared by observers to be the worst in the history of mining operations in the Bates area. Five men, however, were killed in the same mine in an explosion in 1938. The mine is known as the old Packard mine.

Seven of the ten killed in Tuesday's tragedy were reported to be on the east slope where the explosion occurred. (Continued on Page Eight)

#### Two Local Boys Enlist For Service In Marines

Pat Bennett, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Bennett of this city, and William Arlie Stewart, son of Mr. and Mrs. O. Stewart, both of Heavener, enlisted last week for service in the U. S. Marine Corps and left for the marine station at San Diego, Calif., Saturday.

Both have been members of the Heavener high school band for the past few years.

Other LeFlore county youths enlisting last week for service with the marine corps were: John W. Hood, Spiro; Archie P. Beckes, Panhandle; Kenneth H. Babb, Poteau; Clifford E. Raymond, Spiro; and Billie M. Robertson, Howe.

#### HAILEVILLE PASTOR TO BE AT CHRISTIAN CHURCH SUNDAY

Christian church members were making preparations this week to welcome Rev. Spears of Haileville, who will be in Heavener at noon Saturday to make ready to preach at the First Christian church here Sunday morning.

As a special feature of Spears' visit, a covered dish luncheon will be held at the Christian church Sunday. It was announced that all members are requested to bring a dish and to this country from Fort Wayne, Ind., and has made her home in Heavener and Heavener for the past six years.

**RECOVERING FROM OPERATION**

Junior Nelson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Nelson of this city who underwent an operation at the Beville-Rolle hospital in Poteau Saturday, was reported Wednesday to be "getting along nicely."



# Bates Mine Explosion

(Continued from Page One)

occured, the group meeting death by suffering broken bones and severe burns. The remaining three, on the west slope, were cut off from their air supply, and their death was attributed to "black damp." Men said to be on the west slope were Murray, Herndon, Gilbert and Mayo Johnson. The Johnson men were brothers. Those on the east slope were Whatley, Renfro, Barkley, Yeakley, Harris Huff, and Manning.

All ten of the men were brought to Heavener by Hall Funeral Home soon after the removal of their bodies. Later, however, several of the group were moved to funeral establishments

in the vicinity of their homes. Moved to Hartford for funeral arrangements were the bodies of Whatley, Manning, Gilbert Johnson, Mayo Johnson, Yeakley and Harris. Barkley was removed to Mansfield and Huff to Clarks-ville. Hall Funeral Home will be in charge of funeral arrangements for Renfro and Herndon.

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1940 Bates No. 1 Mine explosion NEWS

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