

[Cecil Kanipe]

October 10, 1939

Cecil Kanipe (Textile Worker)

Kannapolis, N. C.

Ethel Deal, Writer

Dudley W. Crawford, Reviser

Original Names Changed Names

Cecil Kanipe Charles Camp

Catawba County Cook County

Kannapolis Cannonville

Mertie Kanipe Merle Camp

C9 - N.C. [?]

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Charles Camp, dressed in a suit of tailored serge, light blue shirt, red tie and tan shoes, was seated across the table from me looking interestedly through the open door at the curious crowd gathered in the sheriff's office across the hall.

“Must have been another wreck,” he said, as he went to join the crowd. Returning a moment later he continued. “Yes, two cars and a truck piled up together, two killed and six gone to the hospital. Seems like Cook county has more automobile killings than any other

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place in the county country . Down in Cannonville where I live we have a lot of killing, but it's generally caused by some one getting mad or crazy drunk.

“I've been living in Cannonville since I was fourteen. Dad owned a farm in this county and what little education I have I got in the public school here—haven't got much. I was slow in school; must have been awful dumb.

“My folks have always lived in town and it seems the farm was a sort of experiment. We worked like the dickens on that farm; raised cotton, wheat, corn, vegetables, hogs and chickens. Dad had five or six cows and there was always gallons and gallons of milk, cream and butter. Mother made more cheese than we could use and gave a lot of it to 2 the neighbors. We had plenty to eat, but it seems that we were unable to turn our products into money. When Dad bought the place it looked a sight, but when he sold it four years later it was in the best condition. The house had been remodeled and painted; barns, graineries and tool houses put in shape and painted. Dad owned his own tractor and truck, and our car was the best in the community; but when it come to extra money for clothes and the extra things we'd been used too, there was none.

“Fours years was enough on the farm. I believe if we had stayed four years longer we would have starved. I don't mean for lack of food; what I mean it was all work and no play. Dad moved to Cannonville where he'd been offered a good job as overseer. I persuaded him to let me work. He finally agreed thinking I'd never learn anything at school. I went to work as a doffer. That was piece work. I made two dollars a day. When I was fifteen I was made head doffer. My pay was increased to two-fifty a day.

“After working four years I quit and went to Knoxville, Tenn., hoping to get a better job. My folks opposed my doing but I had my way and at Knoxville got a job at the Brookside Mill laying up filling. This job paid ten dollars a week. I paid five for board, slept in a basement, and eat corn bread three times a day. Gosh it was awful. At 3 home mother had all the good things I liked, and corn bread was one thing I could not eat. When I looked around

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in that smutty basement, and compared it to my own nice bed room at home, I was sick. I couldn't afford better. My laundry cost me a dollar a week and there were hair cuts and pressing club bills. I stuck it out ninety days.

“Breaking the last dollar I had, I called Dad on the phone for some money to come home on. His voice over the wire was the beet thing I had heard in ninety days. Back in Cannonville I went to work in the mill again. I worked there nine months and was promoted to where I got forty dollars every two weeks.

“About this time I met a girl from another mill and fell in love. We soon got married. That was eight years ago and we've both worked ever since.

“Merle don't have to work, as my pay is sufficient to meet our needs. We have no children, I've been thinking seriously of adopting one. I guess I was pretty much of a fool, after I was married. We boarded and spent all we made for four years. I bought a new car every year. That's all we had to show for our work. Finally we rented a couple of rooms and went to housekeeping; Merle's a fine housekeeper. Renting didn't suit me; I wanted a home of my own.

“One day I took my brand new car and traded it for four lots. Merle was pleased, she too wanted a home. I'd been 4 car crazy, now I turned home crazy. There was only two of us, and no hopes of any more, so we built a small house; three rooms with bath and small kitchenette. It cost me twenty three hundred dollars. The house is a darling, perfect in every way.

“I used the best material that could be bought. There's a tiled front porch; the chimney is built beside the front door, with a arch over it. The little entry at the front resembles an entrance to a church. The living room is fifteen by eighteen, dining room twelve by fifteen, kitchenette, and a large bed room with screened in back porch. I like my house, but the

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lawn and the grounds are more interesting and keeps me busy. I tell you I never get tired working on my lawn and with my flowers.

“It sets in the center of an acre. The plot is square with a small vegetable garden at the back. I have hogs, and chickens I keep down in the woods. I've spent three hundred and fifty dollars for shrubby trees and flowers. My rose garden is the envy of all the women on our street. The rose arbors and lattice work I've done myself. The flag stone walks at front and back and the low white fence surrounds the place, I had some help on.

“About a year and a half ago I opened up a small store on some extra lots I'd bought. I sold it out and took the lumber and built me a garage and chicken house. I went in the hole on that store. I can't be hard hearted when folks put up a tale of hard luck, so I trusted them and let them have their groceries on time. Soon I had three hundred dollars on my books. Collecting it was out of the question, I didn't like keeping a store anyhow. I prefer to work with my flowers and plants. I still work at the mill eight hours a day.

“I'm going to buy me a new car this week. It's the first new one I've had in five years. I've never been without one to drive to work; we are more than a mile and a half from the mill. We go to town two or three times a day. At night, two or three times a week, we take in a show. I don't spend all my [money?] and time on a car; but I can't realize how anyone can do without one. I'm going to pay cash for this one.

“I'm out of debt except a few small bills. We have a bank account and carry life insurance. I like a show, good books, and baseball. I don't mind eating anything but corn bread. I got enough of that in Knoxville. We have what we want to eat, plenty to wear, and a good time.

“My Father can't understand why I jump from one hobby to another. I make eighty five a month and pay all the bills. Merle makes eighty dollars a month and puts fifty dollars in the bank. She has the balance to dress herself and spend for what she wants. We both vote

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the Democrat ticket. She is a Baptist, I'm a Methodist. Neither one of us goes to church very much. If I had to make a choice between a car and home I'd walk.”