1925



# MRS. JOE PERSON DIES IN NEW MEXICO OF APOPLEXY

*With Sister Was en Route to Arizona When Overtaken by Death—News Reached Charlotte Yesterday Afternoon at 4 O'clock.*

*Accomplished Greatest Work Ever Done by Any Women in State — Heroic, Noble Brilliant Woman — Inventor of Mrs. Joe Person's Remedy*

Mrs. Joe Person, the most widely known and most remarkable woman North Carolina has known in a century died yesterday in Sante Fe, New Mexico of apoplexy.

The news, which will be heard with personal sorrow in every household in North Carolina—for the whole state was her home—came yesterday afternoon at 4 o'clock in a telegram to Mrs. Person's son, Mr. Rufus Morgan Person. The message came from Mrs. Person's sister, Mrs. J. B. Beard, of Hickory, N. C., in company with whom Mrs. Person left for the West last Saturday. The message said: "Sister died today of apoplexy."

Mr. Person lives on the Sugar Creek road four miles from the city. He happened to be in town however, when the shocking news came, but as he could not be located the telegram was delivered to Mr. T. M. Constable, a close personal friend of the family. He at once went in search of Mr. Person, and conveyed the sad intelligence to him, it being a peculiar incident that when Mr. Constable's father died Mr. Person received the death telegram and broke the news to Mr. Constable.

Throughout the city the tidings of sorrow went. "Mrs. Joe Person is dead!" was repeated o'er and o'er. It seemed impossible, for even though this beloved, great and heroic woman was going "adown the brae of life," she was so full of life, energy and happiness that one never thought of death in connection with her—for she was the embodiment of life. News of her death cast a gloom over this city.

A second telegram received by Mr. Person this morning from Mrs. Beard said: "I went out of the room for a moment. On returning found sister dead on the floor—death very sudden—apoplexy cause."

Mrs. Person had not been well for the past four months. She had indigestion, and was on rigid diet, but no one knew this except her family and a few intimate friends, as she kept on the go, never relaxing her energies, for a minute.

She and Mrs. Beard made a trip to the Pacific this summer a year ago and Mrs. Person was enthused on the subject of the West.

The News repeatedly published cards and bits of letters from her, sent to the city editor and others connected with the paper—in fact there were few who were not remembered by Mrs. Person, from the land of scenic wonders.

Possibly thinking that a trip would benefit her, she started again for the West in company with her sister. Their destination was Adam Anna, Arizona, in the district of the petrified forest, which, Mrs. Person in writing the News a year ago said, "is the most marvelous place in the world."

They reached St. Louis in due time, Mrs. Person writing from there to a friend: "We both feel well and are well." From St. Louis they continued their trip reaching Sante Fe yesterday morning, en route to Adam Anna. There the messenger of death overtook her, coming, though swiftly, in just the manner she desired.

A friend recalls that Mrs. Person once saw a young boy drop dead after the effort of holding a pair of horses to prevent a serious runaway. The reins fell from the boy's hands and he expired instantly. "That is just the way I want to die," said Mrs. Person who witnessed the death. The wish was registered where the prayers of noble souls like her are heard, and God gave her sleep in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the task to which she had set herself was accomplished. The reins of life fell from her hands and she went hence.

**Biographical.**

Mrs. Joe Person was born in Petersburg, Va., July 23, 1840, and was therefore rounding out her 73rd year. Her father was Samuel Morgan, and her mother, Esther Robinson Morgan, both of Petersburg. She was one of four children, the others being: Rufus Morgan who died in California several years ago; Alfred Morgan, now living in Murphy, N. C.; and Mrs. J. B. Beard, of Hickory—with Mrs. Person at the time of her death.

Mrs. Person's childhood was spent in Virginia at her parents' home. She was educated in Petersburg. When a girl of 16 she came to North Carolina for the first time, to attend the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Person, of Franklinton, the latter, Miss Robinson, of Virginia, and a kinswoman of Mrs. Person.

At this marriage she met Mr. Joseph Arrington Person, and the meeting was destined to become the supreme event of her life, shaping her future and giving to North Carolina the most remarkable woman in the confines of the state. She married Mr. Person December 17, 1857, being just 17 years of age. The marriage took place at the ancestral home in Virginia, and the young couple came to Franklinton to live. To them were born nine children, four of whom are dead, viz: Robert Lee Person, Henry H. and Leven K. Person, and Mrs. Esther Person Blackwell, wife of W. H. Blackwell of Raleigh. Those surviving are Mrs. W. H. Harris, of Wake Forest, Wiley M. Person of Laurinburg, Rufus Morgan Person, of Charlotte; William M. Person, of Corey, Ala., and Miss Josephine Person, of Hickory. Mr. William M. Person married a sister of Col. A. B. Andrews of Raleigh and Mrs. T. H. Haughton of this city.

Mr. Person—Mrs. Person's husband—died in Franklinton in 1883. For 20 years before his death he was a paralytic.

Six years after her marriage, at the age of 23, Mrs. Person became bread winner for the family, Mr. Person being incapacitated for work by his affliction. With an invalid husband and six little children to support this great woman set herself unto her task. She supported the family; educated the children in the best schools in the state, made a fortune and died having left as her monument—beside the great remedy she discovered—the greatest work ever undertaken and done by any woman in this state—a work accomplished by heroic effort, by self sacrifice, by phenomenal gifts, mental and physical, and the most uniquely magnetic and delightful personality in the state.

**Invents Mrs. Joe Person's Remedy.**

Ten years ago Mrs. Person wrote the story of her life and gave the book into the keeping of her son, Rufus, who has kept it in his safe from the day she entrusted it to him. In that book is the story of "The Remedy" as she always spoke of it, but the writer is going to tell a little of the story as told her by Mrs. Person on the train en route to Hickory several years ago. In reply to the question as to the origin of The Remedy, Mrs. Person said:

"My daughter Josie, a baby in her crib, was at the point of death with scrofula. Everything had been tried and failed and I had given her up for dead. As I sat by her a neighbor came to me and said: 'Mrs. Person, you think there is no hope for the child—that she will die.' I replied, 'She is dying.' She said: 'I remember a remedy given my mother by an old Indian woman which was fine for blood diseases—if we can find the herbs and you have any whiskey, will you try it if we can get it mixed?' I replied, 'Yes, willingly.' 'Then come with me and we will get the herbs, if possible.' We found them. I had no whiskey except a little old corn. This we used with the herbs, and the neighbor gave the doses at intervals. In an hour's time the child moved, later became conscious, and I am on my way now (1909) to see her in Hickory.

"As soon as I saw the results of the medicine, I said to myself, 'It is the Lord's work—He has shown me the way. It shall be my work—my bread and meat.' I went to Raleigh and advertised free treatment and free medicine to any afflicted with scrofula. They came by the hundreds.

"I then began the work of my life, and by it have educated my children and kept our heads above water."

Mrs. Person began the manufacture of her remedy in Kittrells, N. C., calling it "Mrs. Joe Person's Remedy."

She moved the plant to Charlotte, thence to Tarboro, thence back to Kittrells, and finally back to Charlotte, where it is now manufactured by the company to which she sold it several years ago for a handsome sum of money and a handsome annuity, as long as she lived. Mr. Guy V. Barnes, of Kittrells, was the purchaser. He organized a company—The Mrs. Joe Person Remedy Company.

The first gross of the Remedy Mrs. Person sold was to Mr. W. M. Wilson, then in the drug business in the Belmont hotel building. Her son, Mr. Rufus Person, to whom she was tenderly and devotedly attached, was associated with her in the manufacture of the Remedy. For 22 years they worked together.

Mrs. Person went on the road with the Remedy. She traveled continually for 40 years or more, covering more territory possibly than any other person in the South, or country at large. She had a desk full of mileage books when she left here Saturday for the West. She was "at home" on the road and was never as happy as when on the road. A trip to her was no more than a walk up street to the average woman. She was always ready. She could take a train at a minute's notice. As she went to and fro in the land she taught in her own radiant natural way the gospel of good cheer. Her very presence was an inspiration, and her conversation was as exhilarating as a glass of champagne. She was the embodiment of life, of wit, of repartee, of suggestive thought, of buoyancy, of mental and physical activity. She was endowed with a remarkable brain and equally as remarkable physical being. She lived the gospel of work—and yet no one ever knew her to be tired. She was ever ready with a witty salutation, or farewell. The late J. P. Caldwell, who considered her the most remarkable woman in the world, told of meeting her one day, and "passing the time of day."

"How are you, Mrs. Person," he said.

"Just as well as I can be, and just as happy as you would have me be," was her immediate reply, taking his extended hand and keeping it while she replied.

She believed in advertising and was the oldest advertisers in the city. Although spending much of her time in Charlotte, being always a guest of the late Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Eccles of the Central to whom she was greatly attached and who in turn loved and admired her as "the greatest woman in the world," she came to Charlotte to live only ten years ago. Her son Mr. Rufus Person, lived on North Church street, next to Mr. Ross. She made her home with them after Mr. Person moved to the city she lived at Mr. and Mrs. Ross' immediately opposite. They were among her greatest friends. Their home was her home—frequently said, and she was never tired to the family.

Mrs. Person was a gifted musician. As a pianist she was known throughout the state. She found time, between trains, to keep her fingers limber She played at the Old Fiddlers' convention last fall and the audience was wild with appreciation. She loved music as she loved life, and people and the things that make for happiness.

She was broad in love, broad in charity, in thought. She saw only the good in people; she said only the kind word. If she thought else, it was unspoken. She was great, noble, heroic. Pettiness, littleness, jealousy were foreign to her nature. She was built on a high plane, and those who were close to her but needs come up to the standard she maintained.

In head, heart and soul she was a Christian, her religion being lived on the triple basis, "faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity." She made a fortune. She gave away a fortune. Only those nearest her know that she had given $40,000 to the poor; that no call of charity went unheeded by her. Her people were Episcopalians. She was connected herself with that church when young.

The remains cannot reach Charlotte before Monday. Notice of the funeral will be given later. The interment will be in Elmwood, this city.

Big Dance at Lakewood tonight. It