

TILLMAN GOSNELL PASSES SUDDENLY

WELL KNOWN CITIZEN OF
LAUREL SECTION LAID
TO REST SUNDAY

Friends of the deceased were very much shocked to learn of the sudden going Saturday of Mr. Tillman Gosnell, age 59, of near Revere. He died about one o'clock P. M., Saturday, of double pneumonia, having been seriously ill only since Thursday before. It is said that he worked all day Tuesday, the day of the election, and that Wednesday, while working in tobacco, began to feel somewhat ill and grew worse until the end. Mr. Gosnell is survived by his wife and ten children. He is survived also by three brothers, Henry and Neil of Madison County, and "Son" of South Carolina. He also leaves two sisters, Mrs. Vina Ramsey of Walnut, Alesie Bullman of Revere. Funeral services were from the home Sunday conducted by Rev. Malley Rice and Rev. Bob Freeman, interment following at the home cemetery. Monday's Asheville Citizen had the following to say about Mr. Gosnell:

Death Saturday removed Tilman Gosnell, 59, one of the most successful moonshine still raiders and one of the most unique law enforcement officers Madison County has ever had.

Mr. Gosnell, an influential farmer in the Revere section of Laurel, died at his home of double pneumonia contracted several days earlier. Funeral services were conducted yesterday afternoon and interment was in the family burial plot near the home. An unusually large concourse of friends was present for the services, among them Sheriff J. J. Bailey, of Buncombe county, under whom the dead man served in Madison county as an officer, and members of Sheriff Bailey's family. Mr. Gosnell is survived by ten children and a number of grand children.

"Gifted" Raider

Those who were associated with Gosnell as an officer declared that he was "gifted" as a still raider. Although a native of the mountain section he became a sworn enemy of moonshining and moonshiners. As is not altogether unusual, he developed a superstition in his work as an officer and followed his "hunches"

with remarkable success. For many years he had kept a hat which he reserved for wear only on still raiding occasions and claimed never to have missed finding a still when wearing the hat. He still had the hat when he died.

He had a method of locating stills which other officers said he employed also with phenomenal success. He always carried a large jack knife which enabled him to determine whether stills were at the heads of streams he crossed. He opened the large blade of the knife and stuck the knife in the sand of the stream's bed. If a still was above, it was only a short time until the "beer" sediment had settled in the groove of the knife's handle.

There are many amusing stories of Gosnell's methods and experiences as a moonshine raider, a career which he pursued alone most of the time he was an officer. 11/11/30