

Integrity Of Pioneers Is Cited By Historian

By DR. J. E. HODGES
Maiden, N. C.

Recently, I overheard an interesting conversation between three gentlemen congregated on a sidewalk, evidently for a neighborly visit.

They appeared to be men of intelligence, at least a fair education, the type of men whose opinions might be expected to command a degree of respect.

As I passed they were discussing the integrity of officials and public employees, so I stopped in hearing distance to hear their express their opinions.

One gentleman said: "We still have men of integrity in office, mean who mean to do right and can be absolutely depended on. But," he continued, "we have too many of the other type."

The second man said, "You are mostly correct for we still have some patriotic officials who cannot be corrupted and will stand up to their convictions if the world falls, but I agree that we ought to have more of them."

The first speaker broke in, saying, "I agree with you, for I sincerely believe we have officials, from the top to the bottom, who would give up life itself before they would surrender their principles and go back on their people. But, don't misunderstand me, they are too darned few."

The third man then went into action and snorted, "You guys are off the track when it comes to public officials. I don't believe there is one today, from those who send to Washington down to the police of a one-horse town, but has his price. Shake a big enough roll in his face and he will sell his mother's chance for Heaven. Where is that old time honor our granddaddies used to talk about and practice? Men whose word was their bond. I tell you none of us have it any more. We all like money too well. Who, today would stand up to his convictions with a halter around his neck?"

"Officials are just men like the rest of us, and make the pile big enough and convictions can go to the devil. Maybe there are a few who would stick if the pinch came, but who are they?"

The men walked on still discussing the merits and demerits of people in general and public officials in particular.

This conversation was nothing new. All of us have heard similar ones many times. But somehow it clicked with me as it never had before, and set me into a more serious line of thinking and wondering how far we have traveled from the customs, traditions and the sturdy integrity and high conceptions of honor of our fathers.

One of the principal lines of the limited historical research that I have done is of the period of the American Revolution and the twenty years period immediately preceding it.

It is, perhaps, natural that I should use the men of these periods in comparing conditions of that time with those of the present.

What reader of history has not thought seriously of that group of patriots who signed the Declaration of Independence, doing it with the definite understanding that if the Declaration was not maintained they would be taken to England for trial for treason and their heads, probably, set up on London Bridge as a warning to

any provincial who dared to question the power of Great Britain? Yet not one of them hesitated.

They had been instructed by the colonies to declare independence, and they did it.

I have always been a great admirer of Samuel Adams of Boston, "Father of the Revolution." He did more than any other dozen to bring on the Revolution, was a poor man, never could make or keep any property or money nor seemed to care to.

However, he was absolutely incorruptible and spent years of his life in the service of his country.

At that time offices in England and the colonies were bought and sold and given as rewards as a material commodity and the King and his ministers could not conceive of any one refusing an office on any score.

They had their eyes on Adams and warrants for the arrest of him and John Hancock had been issued in England and had not been sent to Massachusetts for the sole reason that the King's attorney general and others were afraid they could not secure enough evidence to convict them.

But Gen. Gage, commander of the British troops quartered in Boston to overawe the people, decided to "buy" him, and sent Col. Fenton as his emissary to make the deal and to frighten Adams. The confidential and verbal offer sent by Col. Fenton was, two thousand guineas, a liberal pension and appointment to a lucrative office, a tremendous sum of money at that time.

Mr. Adams listened attentively and apparently with great interest, and when Col. Fenton closed with the warning that "it is the advice of Gen. Gage to you not to incur the further displeasure of His Majesty," he rose, quivering with indignation, and replied, "Sir, I have, I trust, long since made my peace with the King of kings. No personal consideration shall induce me to abandon the righteous cause of my country. Go, tell General Gage it is the advice of Samuel Adams to him no longer to insult the feelings of an exasperated people."

Col. Fenton returned and reported his failure, and the great surprise to Gen. Gage was that Samuel Adams would have the audacity to offer him advice, but he had a great deal more to learn about Samuel Adams.

Think of the public officials you know and what they would do under similar circumstances today.

Joseph Reed, the great patriot of Pennsylvania, was another the British tried to corrupt. Unlike Adams, Reed was not oppressed by poverty, but studied law in England and returned to Philadelphia where he supported the colonies against England from the beginning. Military secretary to Gen. Washington, member of the Philadelphia Assembly, Colonel of the Philadelphia troops, member of Continental Congress, Brigadier General of Cavalry and many other high positions of trust, the British tried to purchase him as his in-

Rotary Boys Are Chosen

Franklin Hamilton of Appalachian High School and Paul Yates of Cove Creek High School were selected by their respective student councils as "Rotary boys" of the month of February. These boys were dinner guests of the Boone Rotary Club on Thursday, February 7.

Franklin and Paul were selected for their outstanding work in the fields of scholarship, leadership, character and services in their schools.

Franklin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry M. Hamilton, Jr., of Boone, was a member of the basketball team for one year, wrestling team one year, tennis team three years, Men's A Club two years, band four years and dance band one year.

Paul, son of Julius Yates of Valle Crucis, is a member of the Student Council, has been a member of the basketball team two years, baseball four years, vice-president of his class for three years and F. H. A. reporter for three years.

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Dairy Meeting Set For Tuesday

A special dairy meeting will be held at Darius Hampton's farm on Tuesday morning, February 19, at 10:30 o'clock, to discuss the points on the sanitary inspection report, the farm agent's office announced this week.

Lewis Caton, sanitarian with the district health department, will explain the points on the chart and demonstrate the cleaning and care of the milk equipment, cows and barn. The county agent is helping to arrange this meeting in order that all may better understand the inspection report and be able to use the report as a guide in making changes. All dairymen are invited and grade A producers are especially urged to attend.

The Communications Workers of America Union has paid Southern Bell Telephone Company \$315,000 for physical damage inflicted on the company's facilities during the 1935 strike.

Payment by the union was the outgrowth of a damage suit filed in 1935 by the company. An agreement to this effect was reached by company and CWA attorneys, Southern Bell manager, H. M. Inabinet, announced here.

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