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"The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first objective should be to keep that right, and were it left to me to decide whether I should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to choose the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive these papers and be capable of reading them."—Thomas Jefferson.

BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1963

Grandfather's Gold

A report of the U. S. Geological Survey, relayed to us through Mirjam Rabb, State Travel Editor, says that gold exists in four places on Grandfather Mountain, where the formations are said to be one billion years old.

And now a new flurry of activity is expected at the mile-high tourist center, when the rock-hounds begin to gather in the region.

Over fifty years ago when Tom Williams and his family and some of his nephews came down from upper New York State to live in Boone's Yellow house, to engage in hard rock mineral prospecting, they centered their activities on the slopes of the Grandfather. Precisely where we do not know, but it seems to us it must have been around on the Foscoe side of the lofty hill. Their sponsors after a year or such a matter withheld further investment and the Williamses disposed of their barrows, their picks and shovels, and other equipment and returned to New York.

On the night before their departure, as was the custom in those days, our daddy went down to say goodbye and wish them well. As a child we went along, and recall Mrs. Williams' remark: "If I had a million dollars I wouldn't hesitate to sink it in the vicinity of Grandfather. The ore is there, and can be found with money enough." And Charlie Williams, who called on us a few years ago, echoed his aunt's and his uncle's conviction that the innards of the great mountains were laced with the rich yellow fingers of gold.

And so the geological engineers find out through scientific methods what an old prospecting family found out by pecking around with chisels and picks and a little powder more than half a century ago. Besides gold, there is copper, feldspar, iron mica and lead. But the wealth of the old mountain is in the people who come to enjoy the resort Hugh Morton has created next to the clouds.

Brotherhood Foundation Of System

President Kennedy, the Honorary Chairman of Brotherhood Week, which is to be observed in Boone and throughout the country next week, says, "Human brotherhood is not just a goal—it is a condition on which our way of life depends." The President continues:

"The question for our time is not whether all men are brothers. That question has been answered by the God who placed us on this earth together. The question is whether we have the strength and the will to make the brotherhood of man the guiding principle of our daily lives. Can we match our actions to our words?"

"We look for support and brotherhood to millions, hundreds of millions of Americans of different creeds, of different colors, who share our aspirations but sometimes are not convinced that we believe strongly in the doctrines that we preach. I believe as a nation we must be committed to these goals.

"The Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God is a basic principle which has directed this nation through many years and I am confident will direct it with increasing vigor in the years to come. I urge all Americans to join a nationwide observance of Brotherhood Week."

Of Valentines And Hearts

Valentine's Day with its hearts inspires most lads to think of love, courtship and dainty morsels of chocolate candy.

But to Robert Janus, the heart means an organ that does enough work in 12 hours (obviously a non-union heart) to lift a 65-ton tank car one foot off the ground.

Not content with such an unhappy comparison, Janus goes on to report that the heart pumps blood through about 100,000 miles of blood vessels—a distance equal to five round trips between New York and Sydney, Australia.

A man's heart is only about the size of his fist, yet it pumps approximately 1,800 gallons of blood through his body each day.

In its first stage of development, the human heart is like the heart of a fish—only a simple tube. Then it resembles the heart of a frog, then that of a snake. When it's fully developed, it resembles the heart of a bird.

Janus should know. He's science editor of World Book Encyclopedia. Mrs. Janus doesn't care—she'd better get her heart-shaped box of candy, or else.

Bye, Bye Bluebird

(Charlotte News)

The bluebird of Thoreau carried "the sky on his back," winging in then as he does now to herald the coming of spring, a symbol of happiness for men, a thing of joy for little boys and girls who find those pale blue eggs nestled in some tree or post.

Tragically, though, our "happy little bluebirds" are diminishing rapidly in number.

The current issue of Audubon Field Notes reports that the Eastern bluebird, which suffered severe losses in 1958, continue down the pathway to extinction.

Its population now is less than 20 per cent of normal, the "lowest ever recorded."

Severe winter storms have been

blamed by some naturalists for the demise of these lovely feathered friends.

But in something of an ironic footnote, the Audubon publication points out that pesticides also are suspect.

Long plagued by passer domesticus, the imported house sparrow which usurps their nests, the bluebirds are now called on to battle the weather and mankind.

Few creatures can survive such an onslaught, and it is rather sad commentary that men, who value the bluebird most for its beauty and its association with the end of winter, may share in its destruction.

Look long at the next bluebird you see. The memory may soon be all that's left.

Shutting Off Debate



From Early Democrat Files

Sixty Years Ago

February 12, 1903.

Now that we have asked for a special tax for the purpose of building bridges in some parts of the county, is it not time for our people to build roads thereto. A bridge without a road leading there to is an awful failure. Did you ever think of that?

J. W. Todd of Todd, who has been working in the coal fields of Virginia was badly hurt by an explosion of dynamite some days ago, but has sufficiently recovered to return home, where he is expected this week.

Mrs. John F. Hardin left yesterday morning for Greensboro, where she will spend some time with her daughter, Miss Mary Lillington, who is now in school in that city.

We are told that application will be made to the board of managers of the World's Fair at St. Louis for room to exhibit our historic old court house, erected by the pioneer settlers of Watauga. A committee of three will be sent to St. Louis to look after a suitable site and should it be put on exhibit it will prove quite a curiosity to civilized people.

Prof. B. B. Dougherty and Capt. Lovell are off to Raleigh in the interest of a Training School for Teachers in Western North Carolina, that was to have been argued on Tuesday.

As we are determined to keep the old courthouse as an "heirloom" how would it do to re-

pair the fence around the public square. You know historic buildings are always kept up and beautified by taxation. Think of this; and remember the duty you owe to our old hull, erected by our forefathers.

Prof. L. G. Maxwell of Riverside, brought three of his daughters up Monday and entered them at Watauga Academy.

Four men who make it their business to crack safes at the midnight hours were run down and caught with bloodhounds near Monroe last Saturday. This is the kind of news we like to hear.

Yes, it seems that the man who promised us the wood on subscription is still waiting for the roses to bloom.

Thirty-Nine Years Ago

February 14, 1924.

Mr. A. K. Moore, a student at Trinity College was forced to abandon his studies on account of eye trouble, caused by a powder burn he received in one of the battles in France. He is back at the A.T.S. where he graduated last year. He hopes to be able to take some courses there, studying about half the day, that will be of great advantage to him when he returns to college.

Mr. and Mrs. Grover Robbins gave a birthday party at their home in honor of their daughter, Lena Miller, when she celebrated her second birthday.

Just One Thing

By CARL GOERCH

"Hello, Jim; how are you feeling?"

"Pretty good, Frank; and you?"

"Oh, I'm feeling all right."

And that's the end of the conversation. When we inquire into the health of one of our friends we do so in a casual manner and without any great degree of interest. It's mostly done for the sake of making conversation. This wasn't true, however, with the late Sherwood Upchurch of Raleigh, who was a rugged individual in many ways. When you asked him a question he regarded it as his bounden duty to answer it, and he always did. With Sherwood the conversation went something like this:

"Hello, Sherwood; how are you feeling?"

"Not so good, Tom. I had a rather bad night last night and couldn't seem to go to sleep. Something is wrong with my stomach and my food doesn't agree with me. I went to the doctor last week and had a thorough examination made. Sometimes, when I do any great amount of reading, I get a splitting headache. Maybe I need to have my glasses changed. Another thing—"

By this time the friend would be beginning to squirm, but Sherwood wouldn't turn him loose until he had completely exhausted the subject of his personal health.

We were present on one occasion when he went through this procedure and asked him why he went into such detail.

"When folks ask me how I'm feeling," he replied, "I take it

for granted that they want to know, so I tell them. If they don't want to know, they've got no business asking me."

A little story about the Umstead family.

About forty years ago, John Umstead and the late Governor Bill Umstead went bird-hunting. After having walked a considerable distance, they sat on a rail fence to take a brief rest. In seating himself on the top rail, Bill dragged up his gun and accidentally discharged it.

The shot fanned John's face. They stared at each other for a moment and then went home. John didn't shoot another gun for fifteen years, and Bill never fired a gun again.

Poor Colonel Kinne! The Colonel is stationed at Fort Bragg. While on foreign duty he got bit by some kind of a bug and had to take a lot of shots at Walter Reid Hospital when he got back home.

They gave him all sorts of medicine and finally cured him. But here's what happened. Prior to becoming ill, the top of his head was as clean of hair as a billiard-ball. In recent months, however, it has started to sprout and he now has a good growth which steadily is becoming thicker.

If the Colonel just knew whether it was the bug that caused this or whether it was some combination of shots that he took, he undoubtedly could make many millions of dollars. As it is, he has to be satisfied with his own personal improvement.

Mr. T. Hill Farthing returned from the markets the last of the week where he bought heavily for the spring trade. Hill is a good buyer and a great caterer to values. Goods from his shelves are always dependable.

Dr. and Mrs. G. H. Jeffcoat were guests in the home of Mr. L. C. Norris on Tuesday night of last week. The home of Mr. Norris is truly a hospitable one.

Miss Nannie Rivers will close her term of school on Sampson the last of the week and is expected home Sunday.

Mrs. F. A. Linney who has spent several days with relatives beyond the ridge, returned to her home the last of the week.

Mr. T. H. Coffey of Blowing Rock, who recently returned from Charlotte where he took treatment for a few days, was in town on Monday and Tuesday looking after the interests of the Peoples Bank and Trust Company. He and some of the directors were checking up notes in that institution.

Fifteen Years Ago

February 12, 1948.

Mrs. A. J. Ragan is ill with influenza at Watauga Hospital.

Mr. John W. Hodges has been ill for the past week at the home of a son, Mr. John W. Hodges, Jr.

Mrs. L. H. Smith suffered a severely fractured hip in a fall on the streets of Blowing Rock Monday. After receiving emergency medical attention at the Watauga Hospital, she was taken to Charlotte Memorial Hospital for treatment by a bone specialist.

Mrs. J. L. Goodnight returned home Saturday after spending a month visiting with her sons in Gastonia. She was accompanied home by Mr. and Mrs. Neil Goodnight, who spent the week end here.

Mr. Clarence Trexler has returned home from a Charlotte hospital, where he was treated for a complicated fracture of a leg, which was sustained some time ago. He is well on the way toward recovery.

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde R. Greene spent Sunday at the home of Dr. and Mrs. W. O. Bingham in Elizabethton, Tenn.

Mrs. L. L. Norris of North Wilkesboro, spent the week end with her daughter, Mrs. Earl C. Norris.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Owens of Gastonia, spent the week-end with Mrs. Owens' parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Cooke.

Mrs. Ralph Winkler, Mrs. Wiley Smith and Mrs. A. R. Smith are spending a two weeks vacation in Miami, Fla.

Mr. and Mrs. Meri Long spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. James Coffey at their home in Shulls Mills.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Nave have moved here from Franklin, N. C. Mr. Nave will be manager of Coble's Dairy at Sugar Grove.

Mr. Ben Miller of the Merchant Marine, is spending some time with Mrs. Miller at their home here.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Lewis and daughter, Alice of North Wilkesboro, spent the week end with relatives in the county.

KING STREET

BY ROB RIVERS

Of Skunks . . . There's A-Plenty

Skunks, the dainty-stepping, odiferous little creatures which are better known as polecats, have about taken over Alleghany county, we hear, and a crash program is being undertaken to deplete the ranks of the little stinkers for the protection of the small game of the county. . . Lawyer Floyd Crouse says over 100 skunks were killed on his farm one night a while back, and automobiles are crushing them, but they continue to replenish, and feed on the young quail, grouse, rabbits, etc., left untended while the mama creatures do their foraging.

Trapping and poisoning is expected not to eradicate the creatures but to get their hordes back down to tolerable numbers.

Night Hunters . . . Scare

And an old pole cat and possum hunter would opine that changes in the habits of mountain men have been largely to blame, and the improved economic status of the country has worked to the advantage of the night-prowling creatures of field and forest. . . Used to be a lot of fun to get with a good group of boys and hound dogs and go out for the possums and the polecats on the clear, crisp nights of early autumn, and to come back in dawn's early light with a possum or two in a sack and a polecat maybe. In the latter case one had to get his clothes off in the woodshed, or the barn. . . And besides the fun in these night-time forays, a good possum hide would fetch a quarter sometimes, and a black skunk skin could command even a couple of dollars—even if the hunter did spoil twenty dollars worth of clothes and shoes and stuff.

Nowadays . . . A Difference

But long ago the old kerosene lantern was hung on the peg, its smoky chimney never to glow again, the possum dogs are baying at the moon, and the guys who combed up the slim sycamores and shook out the grinning possums and waded into a polecat with a lethal frail, have become bankers and lawyers and doctors and merchants. . . And a lot of them have followed the yapping perps into the misty chill of the last long night. . .

Groups . . . Like On Links

And on this possum hunting and pole cat circuit, there were groups who followed the swaying beam of the lantern and dreamed up dreams of possums bigger than a big, big groundhog, and they were like foursomes on a golf course. . . Coot Halgier, whose black and wholesome countenance would bust open in hilarious laughter at the slightest provocation, and who didn't like for time to be mentioned on a nighttime hunt, has shaken off the mortal cares. . . He vowed that the polecat stink would cure his colds, and loved baked possum, and yams. . . Ceage Lovell, one of the most faithful of the old hound dog hunters, who made about the best company around a warming fire you ever saw, gave up the struggle some years ago. . . Carl Payne who could climb up a forty foot poplar without a limb in sight, like a squirrel, to shake the grinning critter from his perch, and who found that the least possum always climbed the highest tree, died years ago, and Jim Rivers, whose patience when the trails were cold, and there was nothing to eat, was like unto that of Job himself looks out from his desk, where he heads a corporation in the city, and we sometimes think of chill nights in the trackless forests and in the evening can imagine that the lantern is trimmed and burning, that the dogs are in good voice, and that the old friends are still around with tales of the hunt.

And the skunks and the possums have multiplied no end, and they stink up the highways, before the whirling wheels literally grind them in to nothingness. . . Folks don't need the money from their pelts anymore, and good roast beef has taken the place of browned possum. . . Only trouble about skunks is that the game's been neglected, and folks who used to hunt them are driving Cadillacs to gay parties and dances and bridge games.

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The same thing once known as a Jew's harp, and which actually always came out "juice" harp. . . He selected one of the strange little contraptions which suited him, and strummed as off a few bars of "Groundhog," with professional ease, pocketed the little game and proceeded down the street talking over the world of finance and business. . . For a little relaxing, there's nothing to beat a little juice harp music, this is if one don't pick nothing. . . Like a banjer, that is.

Uncle Pinkney

HIS PALAVERIN'S

DEAR MISTER EDITOR:

You will recollect that here awhile back the feelers at the country store was in favor of reducing each state to one Senator and cutting the House members in half. It was figured that this move would pay off the national debt in about 10 year.

Well, Mister Editor, I got some powerful new fodder for this campaign. It is a well known fact that Senators and Congressmen has got to git votes, and to git votes they got to spread the gravy on pritty thick back home. The figgers has just been released on how thick the gravy is getting.

The item I got here says that in 1962 we had 2,538,390 civilians working in Government offices. This is a increase of 46,045 over 1961 and they is estimating that in this year of 1963 the number will go up another 20,000. This piece says it is now taking over \$14 billion to pay these Government workers.

Congressman Earl Wilson of Indiana says when he first come to the Congress 20 years ago, he was in a state of shock the first week from watching Government secretaries polishing their nails, reading movie magazines and writing letters to their boy friends. And he says it is twice as bad now. He claims that today, in addition to all them other things, they is busy working crossword puzzles, walking around in the halls with transistor radios hung around their neck, and some of 'em is even knitting sweaters.

It looks like the gravy is getting too thick to stir and about the only way the taxpayers can thin it down a bit is to thin out them Senators and Congressmen.

Furthermore, I see by the papers where, while the Congress was adjourned, we had 27 U. S. Senators and Congressmen, some of 'em defeated in the last election, taking tours at Government expense. They call 'em "fact finding" trips, but it seems they has to take their wives and relatives along to help git the facts.

And I have took note, Mister Editor, that right now during the cold weather, most of the facts that need finding out about is to the South where it's warm. In the summer time the facts shifts to the North.

Senator Harry Byrd said last week that the 46,045 civilian workers the Government added last year cost the taxpayers \$297 million extra, and that the 20,000 they was figuring in adding this year would cost another \$112 million. That's mighty hard on the taxpayers but I reckon it's good for the transistor radio folks.

We got a heap of fine and honest men in Washington, and we got some that ain't so fine. The fellers at the store is maintaining that if we cut the number in half, we can keep a better watch on which is which.

Yours truly,

Uncle Pinkney

(MacKnight Syndicate)