



Paul Winkler, local insurance man, surveys partial damage done by power mower last week. Mr. Winkler said his billfold fell from his overalls pocket as he mowed his lawn, and on the next round was caught in the mower blade. Several money bills (borrowed, he said), were shredded to bits,

along with credit cards, driver's license, Social Security and identification cards, as well as pictures and other papers. He was unable to explain how a small pocket Bible excerpt and picture of Greenway Baptist Church were not damaged in the accident. —Staff photo.

LETTER TO EDITOR

Makes Appeal For Vets Of First War

The general public is entitled to the plain facts of how the Veterans of World War I have been forgotten. These old soldiers, many thousands of them, and the widows of the veterans of 1917-1918, are living under the handicap of not being able to supply their meager wants and needs, these veterans have reached an average age of 70 years, many are unable to get medical care, or hospital treatment, here in the richest nation on earth. This is a disgrace to say the least.

Millions of our tax dollars are being used to feed and care for the unfortunate citizens of foreign lands, while these needy veterans and their dependants are being forgotten, it seems that charity should begin at home, but alas this is not the case with these needy, aged veterans.

Our Representatives should be contacted by letters from our citizens, asking them to provide a decent pension for

these men who served their nation honorably during World War I. All veterans of previous wars were granted pensions with no strings attached, why discriminate against the World War I veterans and their dependants? Something should be done to relieve this national wrong. So write your Representatives asking them to support the pension Bill H. R. 2332 in this session of Congress, in a small way show our desire for help to the needy veterans in their last few years of life.

Sincerely yours,
Jack Dunwoody,
Junior Vice Commander
Dept. of North Carolina,
Veterans of World War I,
U. S. A., Inc.,
P. O. Box 583,
Lenoir, N. C.

Alumni Day Program Is Enjoyed At AHS

Appalachian High School held its annual Alumni Day celebration Friday, August 30. Upperclassmen and last year's seniors attended a short program in the school auditorium.

Student body president Phil Hampton opened the program. Then the 1963-64 cheerleaders led the students in several cheers.

Bill Bingham, previous editor of THE LAUREL, announced that the yearbook was dedicated this year to Miss Doris Jones, a former sophomore English teacher at Appalachian High. Miss Jones has since left the high school to teach at Wesleyan College in Athens, Tennessee.

Dr. Blanton addressed several remarks to the students and then dismissed them by classes to receive copies of the 1963 LAUREL.

The Student Council capped the celebration by sponsoring the annual Alumni Dance, an informal affair held from 8 to 11 p.m. in

the high school auditorium. Several graduated classes were represented as well as the present students. Music was provided by recordings.

Many teachers were in attendance at the dance, acting as chaperones and giving autographs. Miss Doris Jones was the guest of honor.

The dance was a rather sad affair in that some of those attending were inside the dear and familiar walls of AHS for perhaps the last time. Yet everyone seemed to enjoy the "last meeting."

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Colorado Newsman Says Watauga Is On The Move

(Editor's note: The following feature was written from Boone to the Pueblo (Colorado) Chieftain recently, when the newspaper man made his first visit to Watauga county. He is a nephew of Charles Wilkinson of Zionville.)

By BRUCE WILKINSON

This part of the South in the early 1860's is full of surprises for the first-time visitor from the West.

For one thing, northwestern North Carolina which includes Watauga County, is on the move, economically, socially and culturally.

Despite a wage scale low by standards of the highly industrialized cities of the North, the people here enjoy prosperity.

This is not to say they have a lot of money or spend wastefully. But they do live in fine homes. Even laborers often have solid red brick homes that in many other sections of the U.S. would be associated with the middle income group.

They eat well, dress well and live well. Probably the most direct explanation for their prosperity is that the family functions on three fronts. The typical head of the home cultivates a small farm that invariably includes a prized tobacco patch varying from a .6 of an acre to slightly more.

Tobacco Top Crop
Burley tobacco here is the leading cash crop; a man can make \$1,000 or more on this size field but can't plant more than his allotted acreage because of federal quotas adopted during the depression when tobacco became so cheap nobody could make anything on it.

A great majority of the busy small farmers augment their income with a parttime or full-time job such as carpentering in Boone, the county seat. Many of the younger women hold jobs in one of Boone's three leading industries—all new or nearly new—the International Resistance Corp. electronic plant, the Shadowline, manufacturer of ladies' undergarments and the Melville shoe factory.

With three incomes, each one modest alone, and comfortable farm living and eating, the average family here is secure and self-sufficient.

A traditional if not uncomplicated source of ready cash to these people descended from old line English, Scotch and German stock—moonshining—is depended upon by few Wataugans even as a supplement to their income much less a mainstay. But this is not entirely the case in neighboring Wilkes County, if one can be-

lieve the natives here.

One lean, toilworn hill country tobacco and corn farmer near Boone allowed. "They'll make moonshine in Wilkes County as long as time lasts. Why, God, they've got to do sumpin." The legal climate in both counties is excellent both from the standpoint of the bootlegger and his sometime teammate in the periodic local option hassle, the Baptist, who for quite different reasons sees no end of evil in open liquor.

This is a land of contrast. Over the hill from Boone's top source of revenue and prestige, mushrooming Appalachian State Teachers College, live oldtime mountain people who don't grow enough to eat. Some depend on surplus foods given out here to about 1,000 persons at the rate of \$20,000 a month, and who have cultivated little ability to read or write.

The traditions of the South, particularly retention of the nearly sacred land in one family generation after generation, have been altered by the automobile and the integration of the people here into the modern scene of urban living but they die slowly.

It is not uncommon even today for a man to live on and perhaps work a plot of ground that contains a little family cemetery on the hill where the remains of his parents, grandparents or even great-grandparents, are buried. He, too, may want to be buried there.

Some of these private burial grounds are kept up by faithful children or grandchildren; others are overrun by cattle, grown over with weeds usually because no first or second generation descendants are left.

Cane Growing Slackens

Cane sorghum or molasses was produced extensively here until a few years ago by many farmers but now little cane is grown despite a continuing demand for the oldtime biscuit sweetener. Tending cane takes a lot of time and making the sorghum is arduous and time-consuming.

"This younger generation, I don't know what's gonna become of them. Why, they won't do nuthin," the owner of one of the few family cane mills left, lamented.

Learning I didn't smoke, the veteran farmer said in mock disgust, "We'd be ruert (ruined) if everybody was like you." Referring to the popular boughten plug tobacco and twist made from leaf tobacco such as that grown on his own place, he said, "That's the reason I use it."

I could hardly help but agree this was about the only good reason a man could have for

developing the habit to the high degree of proficiency demonstrated everywhere here.

When you first see the profusion of tobacco plants in the draws and on the sidehills of this fertile territory you wonder how there could be enough demand to get rid of it all. After a visit with some of the twist users who dominate the landscape you wonder how enough can be grown to meet the needs.

In contrast with the fashion trend in the West, quite a few of the native women and even some of those from other areas who dwell in the palatial summer homes liberally strewn throughout the densely forested tilting terrain still wear dresses from time to time. There are shorts, of course, but

they aren't as universal or generally as economically designed as in some other places.

News Of Our Servicemen

COMPLETES TRAINING

Fort Sill, Okla.—Army Pvt. John R. Hodges, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank C. Hodges, Route 1, Boone, N. C., completed advanced artillery training as a cannoneer at the Artillery and Missile Center, Fort Sill, Okla., Aug. 17.

The 23-year-old soldier entered the Army in March 1963 and completed basic training at Fort Gordon, Ga.

Hodges is a 1958 graduate of Appalachian High School.

Dotson At Oak Ridge

Oak Ridge, Tenn.—Robert G. Dotson, science teacher at Winecoff School in Concord, is participating in a special ten week training course administered by the University Relations Division of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies.

Dotson is one of 33 specially selected teachers from schools in 20 states and Montevideo, Uruguay, enrolled in the fifteenth session of the Oak Ridge Science Lecture Demonstration Program.

This program is designed to provide specialized training to selected groups high school science instructors as part of the Atomic Energy Commission's effort to stimulate the interest of students in science and science teaching careers.

Mr. Dotson is the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Dotson of Rt. 3, Boone. He is a graduate of Appalachian High School and Appalachian State Teachers College.

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