

Banking History in Ahoskie:

Bank of Ahoskie Started in 1905

AHOSKIE—Only 12 days after the first rural mail routes began operating from the Ahoskie post office, the town's first bank was chartered. On July 7, 1905, all of the original \$12,500 stock of the Bank of Ahoskie had been subscribed.

Among the leaders in the bank movement was Luther S. Savage, who had moved to Ahoskie from Whaleyville, Va., to work with the Branning Manufacturing Company. Another was J. T. Williams of Har-

rellsville, who with his brother operated the old "company store" near the Branning mill.

The bank began operations in November, 1905, in a small frame building in the center of the first block of East Main Street, where Rose's now stands. Williams, the grandfather of Clerk of Court A. W. Greene and T. W. Greene, Ahoskie insurance man, was the first bank president. James P. Freeman of Winton was first cashier, succeeded

a year later by D. R. McGlohon, who later became Clerk of Superior Court. Walter L. Curtis was assistant cashier, and later cashier. The need for the bank had stemmed from the fact that the nearest banking facilities were in Norfolk, and merchants did not wish to have to make the long trip to handle financial affairs. Nor did they wish to have large sums of money to protect from possible thieves.

The coming of the Bank of Ahoskie was a signal of the town's growth, and by 1914, The Herald was crowing over the fact that the bank had grown to \$135,000 in resources.

That same year saw the establishment of the second bank in Ahoskie. Dr. C. G. Powell, recently retired from active dental practice at the age of 82, was first president of the Farmers-Atlantic Bank. Dan P. Boyette, Sr., Ahoskie insurance man, was first cashier.

The original Farmers-Atlantic Bank building was in the present location of the Ricks Jewelry Store on West Main Street. In 1918, a three-story brick structure was erected. The bank prospered until the depression struck, but was not able to open after the moratorium. The building, beside the Richard Theater, is now used for furniture storage and offices.

Both the Bank of Ahoskie and the Farmers-Atlantic Bank were actively aiding the town's growth during the '20's. In 1925, after several years of haggling by economy-minded directors, the Bank of Ahoskie at last let the contract for the building in its present site.

Controversy had raged over whether the bank would build on land it had purchased on East Main Street, but this land was sold to the Ahoskie Department Store in 1919. The new bank building was completed in 1926, with great fanfare as the second large bank structure to go up in Ahoskie.

Disaster Hits
Disaster struck banks in the county in 1931 and 1932, when almost all were forced to close. L. S. Savage, who had become the Bank of Ahoskie's president, was credited with much of the successful movement to reopen the bank on March 24, 1933.

By the end of 1934, stability had set in again, and Bank of Ahoskie resources had risen to over half a million dollars. Thus encouraged, a branch in Aulander was opened in 1935. At that time, there were four employees in Ahoskie and Aulander, including Hugh B. Copeland, who came as cashier of the Ahoskie bank when it reopened.

First crop production loans were made in the middle '30's, and installment credit began in the late 1930's. Both items have since become important factors in banking operations.

In 1937, the Guaranty Bank and Trust Company of Greenville purchased controlling interest in the Bank of Ahoskie, which it retains today.

At the outbreak of World War II, total resources had risen to about one and a half million dollars. Dawn of the war era also spelled the end for old-fashioned fixtures and methods of bookkeeping. A night depository, air conditioning and other improvements were made, including microfilming items and latest machines.

By 1945, resources were boosted to over five and a half million dollars. In 1958, they rose again by a million dollars over 1957, to over eight million. The cycle of progress since the war has been evidenced by a new branch on Main Street in Ahoskie, opened in 1956, and a new building for the Aulander branch, occupied in 1957.

Interior expansion at the main bank building is planned for this year.

Officers now are: president, J. H. Waldrop, Greenville; vice president, W. A. Thomas, Cofield; H. B. Copeland, Ahoskie, vice president and cashier; W. Earl Bardin, Ahoskie, assistant vice president.

In 1948 and 1951, the Tarheel Bank and Trust Company of Gatesville applied for permission to open a branch in Ahoskie, but was denied each time. As the Bank of Gates, the Tarheel Bank was organized in 1904 in Gatesville, with \$10,000 as starting assets. Today that figure is over three million. The Bank of Gates is remarkable

for the fact that it not only weathered the depression without closing, but absorbed the Planters Savings Bank of Gatesville and paid off depositors there. In 1938, Tarheel bought the assets of the Winton branch of the Farmers Bank of Sunbury, and operated it as a teller's window until 1950.

At that time, the Bank of Gates changed its name to Tarheel Bank and Trust Company, Inc., and opened the Winton window as a full branch. After the Ahoskie request was denied in 1951, a branch was authorized at Lewiston. At the January stockholders'

meeting this year, plans were announced for construction of the first new building in the bank's history, at Gatesville. The colonial type one-story structure will be completed late this year.

Present officers are: L. C. Hand, Sr., Gatesville, president; A. P. Godwin, Jr., Gatesville, first vice president; R. E. Miller, Gates, second vice president; J. K. Wyatt, Gatesville, third vice president; Paul F. Edmond, Gatesville, executive vice president and cashier; Ben L. Weaver, Jr., is cashier at Winton, and Roy L. Lowe is cashier at Lewiston.



BERTIE MAN — Joseph G. Hayes of Bertie County was typical of the young men who trooped to the Confederate colors in the exciting days of 1861. But young Hayes was to lose his life in the Civil War, another of the hundreds of lives which might have counted for much if they had not been called on for the bloody conflict. Hayes was a lieutenant in Bertie's Company F of the Fifth North Carolina Infantry Regiment. In the spring of 1862 as the giant Army of the Potomac moved up Yorktown peninsula toward Richmond the regiment threw itself in the path of the advancing federal army. More than a dozen Bertie men died in a furious fight near historic Williamsburg. Among those to fall was Joseph G. Hayes, lieutenant of not yet 20 years of age.

Lived in Hertford Area:

Wynns, Hill Leaders In Bertie Precinct

The political history of Hertford County begins, as does much of its history, even before the county was formally organized in 1759.

Many of the men who became early leaders in Hertford were leaders in Bertie and Northampton counties which preceded the new county.

Several of the early colony's top leaders came from the growing precinct on the west bank of the Chowan River.

Colonel Thomas Pollock, who was acting governor during the bloody Tuscarora War of 1712, lived in lower Bertie County. Other "west shore" men served as members of the Governor's Council and in various colonial offices during the early days of Carolina. Several proprietary governors lived in the area that is now Bertie.

And, by the time Bertie Precinct was formed in 1722 to embrace all this most western end of the colony of North Carolina, men who lived in what was to become Hertford were west shore political leaders.

In these days, the small colony of a few thousand people was ruled by a Governor named by the Lords Proprietors, who generally came over from England. He was served by a Council of a half-dozen top local leaders. The General Assembly was composed of representatives from the various "precincts" (the name was later changed to "county").

There was no established capital of the colony and meetings of the Assembly, and of the Council, were held in homes or in the crude courthouses that had been built at Edenton and in some other precincts. The colony, of course, consisted of what are today coastal counties and new Bertie was the "frontier."

Earliest list of Bertie Assemblymen (the precinct had the representatives in the earliest Assembly) included two men who lived in what was to become Hertford County.

That was in 1731, when Arthur Williams was one of the Bertie members, as was Captain George Wynns.

Wynns remained a Bertie Assemblyman until 1735. Williams was a member until 1739.

Another early Assemblyman who lived in what was to become Hertford was Benjamin Hill, who

Lowell Powell Gives Town Help in Civic Service

AHOSKIE—Lowell K. Powell, one of Ahoskie's most active boosters of Boy Scout and civic work, has tried his hand at a variety of jobs, including selling papers for The Herald.

A 1927 graduate of Wake Forest College, Powell came back to Ahoskie to work as bookkeeper-teller of the Farmers-Atlantic Bank, of which his father was president. This lasted until 1930, when the bank closed, and he went to work for the Universal Credit Corporation.

In 1935, Powell changed jobs again, this time to become sales manager for a Rocky Mount Ford dealer. But 10 years after his col-

lege graduation, Powell came back to Ahoskie for good.

In March, 1937, he began work as an agent for the Pilot Life Insurance Company, with a desk in the office of Dan P. Boyette, Ahoskie insurance man. Several months later, he moved to an office on West Main Street, and took on different types of insurance to round out his general insurance agency service.

In June, 1956, a new brick building was constructed for the Powell Insurance Agency on Memorial Drive, near the Roanoke-Chowan shopping center. The agency offers a general mutual insurance line, and Powell admits he dabbles a bit in lots and houses—"but I'm not a real estate man," he emphasizes.

Mrs. Powell is her husband's assistant, with Mrs. Hazel Knight. The Powells are active in church and civic affairs, and he credits his business with prospering in spite of all his outside activities.

Powell has been given the Silver Beaver award for distinguished service to Boy Scouting, and is president of the Northeastern N. C. Amateur Radio Club, in addition to posts in the Ahoskie Kiwanis Club.

whose name was taken by the new county's second incorporated town, served in the Assembly from Northampton County in 1760, and was — like Benjamin Wynns—to be a premier legislator for the new county.

Of course, the Assemblymen were not the only political leaders up of the precincts and counties.

Counties (the early "precincts") were run by groups of Justices of the Peace who met every three months as a "Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions."

This "court" transacted all business commonly done today by a variety of county officials. They received and recorded wills, estate accounts, deeds, mortgages and other official papers. They appointed guardians, ferry and road keepers, inspectors, and other county officials. They elected the Sheriff, who was the principal administrative officer of the county.

Many of the men who were leaders in early Bertie and Northampton became citizens of the new county of Hertford.

Many of the men who served on the earliest Court as Justices of the Peace in the new county had been on the Courts of the earlier two counties.

R-C Youngsters Served As Members of Junior Reserves

Boys of Northampton and Bertie County marched off to war in a youthful Confederate regiment in the summer of 1864.

The First Junior Reserves—70th regiment—was organized in the waning months of the Confederacy. It was composed of youngsters under age for regular units and was used for service in North Carolina.

In Company K, youngsters of two Roanoke-Chowan counties saw service.

The unit included Lt. W. D. Pruden of Hertford, and Lt. J. C. Bridgers of Northampton.

It served along the Blackwater River just north of Hertford County in the fall of 1864, later along the Roanoke River.

In the early spring of 1865, the Junior Reserves joined the regular army, and fought against Sherman's hordes at the battle of Bentonville. Young Pruden was wounded in this largest of fights on North Carolina soil.

The unit surrendered with Johnston's army after the battle in Johnston County.

Lt. J. A. Beale of Bertie served in the Second Junior Reserves, a unit organized at the same time as the First. The youngsters served for sometime in Bertie County, guarding against an attempted federal landing at Colerain in January, 1865.

Boyette Agency Is 51 Years Old

AHOSKIE—Dan Parker Boyette had his first taste of the business world as a part-time clerk in his uncle's store at Mapleton — and he liked it. In 1908 his family moved to Ahoskie, and for the past 51 years he has watched it grow.

After attending high school and Davis-Wagner Business College young Dan got his a short-lived job as "butcher" or news vendor on the ACL train from Rocky Mount to Charleston, S. C. He forsook this for a clerk's job in Portsmouth, Va., but credits the late Dr. A. W. Greene and others for helping him become assistant cashier at the Bank of Ahoskie, before long.

When the Farmers-Atlantic Bank was organized in Ahoskie in 1914, he resigned from the other bank to become cashier, later vice president of the new bank. In 1921, he left that post to enter the life insurance business. During the '20's he operated a mercantile business with the late M. D. Gatling and F. C. Earley as partners. He was also an officer in the South Atlantic Realty Company, until the firm closed.

When the depression struck in 1932, Dan Boyette went into the general insurance business for good. For 27 years, he has operated the Dan Boyette Agency, Inc. A Democrat, Baptist and Kiwanian, Boyette has worked actively in

all three organizations. A strong Chamber of Commerce backer, he has served as president, secretary and director at various times. He is a past secretary of the Ahoskie Kiwanis Club, holding this position for 15 years, and has served as clerk, treasurer and Sunday School teacher at the First Baptist Church.

For 20 years Boyette was secretary and a member of the board of trustees of Ahoskie High School, and has served on the Ahoskie town council. In 1915, he married Miss Blanche Gerock, and they have two sons, Dr. Dan P. Boyette, Jr., pediatrician, and Dr. Edward G. Boyette, dentist, both practicing in Ahoskie.



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