



AHOSKIE PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE—These photographic studies of famous Ahoskie buildings evoke a mood reminiscent of imposing public architecture in big cities. At right the facade of First Baptist Church, on Main Street, built in the 1930's. The Gothic lines of the windows are repeated in the paneled interior. At left,

the columned front of the old Farmers-Atlantic Bank on Main, built in the mid-1920's. When built, the classic-fronted institution was one of the most imposing public buildings in the Roanoke-Chowan section.

HERALD

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the mud and dust; support of the state-wide campaign for better roads which culminated in the present-day system of highways; improvement of agriculture through the employment of home and farm demonstration agents—a long and hot battle against lethargy and conservatism; improvement in court procedures and the establishment of a Recorder's Court. And there were many more in which The Herald assumed initiative and became the voice of liberal and progressive leadership in town and county.

(I know about these things, for soon after Roy Parker became editor of The Herald in 1915, as his kid brother of 14 years I was taken into the print shop for sweeping chores after school and to learn to set type. It was all done by hand in those days. I learned to set type. I also learned many other things about printing and newspapering and of the business of being an adult, as I stood at the type cases and heard the talk of the partners, Vinson and Parker, and of the lawyers, politicians, farmers and businessmen who came into the newspaper office to transact business or for simple conversation. Life was more leisurely in those days when automobiles were a novelty, telephones were just coming into use, there were no paved roads, radio was not invented, and airplanes had not been heard of. Among the things I learned was an abiding appreciation of the influence of the printed word and a high regard for the art and craft of printing. And through employment in the printing plant of The Herald, working afternoons after school and Saturdays, I became a printer. It has been a rewarding art and craft to practice.)

In 1928, after schooling when summers were spent at jobs in printing plants in various places and three years of editorship of

Belk-Tyler's Is Success Story

AHOSKIE—A good sign that the depression was nearly over came to Ahoskie in 1937, when the first big Belk-Tyler Department Store opened on Main Street. At that time, it was located in the Parker building at the junction of Railroad and Main streets, formerly the office and plant of the Hertford County Herald.

William Henry Belk, founder of the Belk chain, had started in 1888 with \$1,200, in a store he called the "New York Backer" in Monroe. He believed that he would prosper, selling all merchandise for cash, with price tickets displayed on each item—an idea over which older merchants shook their heads. But Belk's store, and the many which followed it, proved the

wisdom of this principle, and today there are Belk's stores throughout the southeastern states. Arthur L. Tyler, executive vice president and general manager of Belk-Tyler Stores, joined Mr. Belk in 1932. The Belk-Tyler stores are now located in 14 eastern North Carolina communities.

When Belk-Tyler's opened in Ahoskie, its first manager was Rupert V. Massey, who had been manager of the Elizabeth City store. During the past 22 years, he has seen the Ahoskie store grow in importance and size to the present location at the corner of Catherine and Main streets.

From the 1937 site, Belk-Tyler's moved across the street to the opposite corner of Railroad and

Main in 1942. That building, now leased by Thornton's Furniture, was vacated in 1957, when the new Belk-Tyler store was opened at the present location.

The present building is leased from E. R. Evans, who constructed the \$100,000 building, using the walls of the former Ahoskie Motor Company building structure. The store has a modern 100-foot front on Main Street, entrances at the corner and on Maple, and a parking lot for 125 cars.

W. Vesco Greene, who recently received the Distinguished Service Award from the Ahoskie Junior Chamber of Commerce, is assistant manager. Both Massey and Greene have been noted for their service in civic and church organizations in Ahoskie.

their respective areas. In 1932 the company, with the assistance of Miss Addie Mae Cooke, also established a newspaper in Gates County where none had existed for many years.

The acquisition of the printing and publishing of these additional newspapers was the beginning of the expansion which has continued until the present time. In 1928 the company had four employees—J. Roy Parker, J. Mayon Parker, one linotype operator and one apprentice printer. Today the firm of Parker Brothers, Inc., employs thirty-four persons in its publishing and printing operations. Coming to the partnership in 1928 as linotype operator-machinist was John J. Hill. He today is vice president of the corporation. In 1940 succeeded the Parker Brothers partnership. His ability and diligence in the mechanical field matched the editorial and business enterprise of the senior partner, Roy Parker, giving a solid foundation for the expansion that has resulted in today's newspapers published by Parker Brothers, Inc.

But today's Herald, now published twice weekly, and today's printing service furnished by the publishing firm of Parker Brothers, Inc., have not reached their fiftieth anniversary without their trials and tribulations. For just after the formation of the Parker Brothers partnership in 1928

that intervened between 1934 and 1957. They were busy years, years during which Ahoskie and the expanding community that The Herald serves have experienced much growth and progress. There were bitter years of World War II. There were frantic years of speculation and inflation following the war. Through all these years The Herald has not deviated from its purpose of community service and of fostering and encouraging economic, cultural, educational and spiritual progress and growth. It has followed this purpose in example as well as precept.

Grown now far beyond the one-man efforts of the youthful years of its beginnings fifty years ago, The Herald and all its staff nevertheless are guided still by the purposes of those who founded it and established it firmly as "An Institution of Community Service."

There followed soon after the great depression of the 1930's. But the thinly stretched financial resources of the partnership held together until better times arrived with the Roosevelt era of recovery in 1934. Yet it suffered a grievous blow in that year, for the strenuous efforts of newspaper work and community activity had taken its toll of vitality from the senior partner, Roy Parker in that year suffered an attack of tuberculosis which incapacitated him from further active participation in the business operation of the newspaper he had made into an institution of leadership and of community service.

But The Herald and the corporation called Parker Brothers, Inc., which took over the partnership, has followed in the pattern established by The Herald's first editor, W. G. Smith, and of his successor, Roy Parker, Sr. It is a pattern of service and of growth—of community service and growth through better service.

Out of necessity when my brother became ill in 1934 I became The Herald's editor and served in that capacity until 1957. That was following his death and the acceptance of the editorial mantle by his son, Roy Parker, Jr., who is an able successor to his father.

There are many things that could be written about the years

Barnes-Sawyer Ahoskie's First Big Wholesale Distributing Unit

AHOSKIE—First of the large wholesale distributing firms to locate in Ahoskie was Barnes-Sawyer Grocery Company, Inc., organized by the late J. Bailey Barnes and the late J. L. Sawyer.

The Herald of September 4, 1919 announced the firm's opening on September 1, with headlines predicting great success for the operation.

Barnes had come to Ahoskie from Roxobel, where he operated Barnes Brothers retail firm, and before that had been a traveling salesman for several lines. He was joined in the Ahoskie firm by Sawyer, who had been a traveling salesman from Gates County.

One of the stockholders in

Barnes-Sawyer was the late H. S. Basnight, whose son, the late W. H. Basnight, learned the wholesale business and branched out into his own firm in 1927.

In 1923, J. L. Darden of Union became an office employee at Barnes-Sawyer, later traveling for the firm. Later in that same decade, Sawyer sold part of his stock in the company, finally disposing of the remainder in the 1930's.

Original offices were located in the three-story warehouse building on Railroad Street, which burned in 1946. The warehouse was rebuilt by the corporation, but offices were moved to the west side of the street, in their present location at the corner of Hayes and Railroad Streets.

Heavy and fancy groceries, with some drugs, sundries and hardware were the first lines handled by Barnes-Sawyer, which had about 12 employees when it opened. These same lines have since been augmented by building materials, and the payroll has grown to 35 persons.

Mr. Darden, who became a partner in the firm after Sawyer sold his interest, has been president and manager since Mr. Barnes's death in 1950. Present officers are J. P. Nowell, vice president; John B. Barnes, Jr., secretary and assistant manager; and J. W. Barnes, treasurer.

Walker Came With Model T in '14

AHOSKIE—Dr. L. K. Walker hit town in 1914, with his medical satchel and a Model T Ford.

By 1915, he had acquired a bride—Miss Grace Stoneham of Lancaster County, Va.—and a medical practice. The newlywed Walkers stayed at Zeb Bellamy's hotel, then boarded in a home where the present Standard Chevrolet building stands on Railroad Street.

His first office was in a little wooden shack near the Copeland Negro on Main Street. Several old Negro women, used to sit there all night long, afraid to go home where "there was somethin' under the doorstep."

In 1923, Dr. Walker obtained the first loan made by the newly-organized Hertford County Build-

ing and Loan Association, and erected his own building next to the Ahoskie Department Store location. The doctor's offices were in the rear of the store, with a soda fountain and drugs available in the front.

Dr. Walker acted as his own pharmacist, dispensing drugs as he had before he opened the drug store. E. D. Cherry was his first partner, and the firm was called Walker - Cherry. In succeeding years, Henry Holloman and Tom Boone became partners with Dr. Walker.

The name remains Walker-Boone Drug Company, although Boone has since opened his own drug store and Dr. Walker died in 1956.

Dr. Walker was prominent in county and civic affairs during his lifetime, serving on the County Board of Education during some hot controversies, and on the Ahoskie town council. He owned several important pieces of property in Ahoskie, including the site of Sessoms Brothers garage, and a number of farms. He was also active in the Ahoskie Methodist Church.

Dr. and Mrs. Walker became parents of three daughters. One of them, Margaret, married Oscar Speed, who now manages the drug firm. Another married W. Dare Boone, Jr., Charlotte architect. Miss Brinkley Hardin, who was Dr. Walker's nurse for 15 years, managed the drug store from his death until this year.

Jenkins Started Sales in Stable

AULANDER—In August, 1912, he late Charles H. Jenkins opened an automobile business in a livery stable in Aulander. Working with him were his brother, Wayland L. Jenkins, and Eddie Ward. During the company's first year, the trio sold one automobile.

Last August, Charles H. Jenkins and Company celebrated its 46th year in the automobile business—and total new car sales for 1958 were in the thousands.

By fall of 1923, the young Jenkins firm had grown to the point where construction was started on a new building on Aulander's Main Street, designed to give better service, keeping abreast of the blossoming auto industry. In 1925 the first Jenkins agency was added in Ahoskie,

as the Standard Chevrolet Company. The same year, Jenkins organized the Marsh Chevrolet Company to operate in Aulander.

The depression halted expansion temporarily, but the Jenkins Company picked up where it left off in '33, with the opening of an agency in Edenton. The following year the company established a subagency in Ahoskie, and operated it until '47, when it became an independent agency.

In 1938, fire destroyed the building in Aulander, but before the ashes had cooled, plans had been made to rebuild on the same site. The present building houses a modern showroom and repair shop there. Also in that year, Charles H.

Jenkins and Company of Williamston was organized.

Latest of the agencies is the Charles H. Jenkins and Company of Windsor, opened in 1950.

Mr. Jenkins's career as teacher, legislator and politician came to an end last year, with his death on November 1, 1958. During his lifetime, he served his state in many capacities, as highway commissioner, senator, and on the state Board of Conservation and Development.

Wayland Jenkins is now president of Charles H. Jenkins and Co., Inc. Other officers are to be elected at an annual meeting this month. Cecil McCoy, general manager, is also given credit for much of the firm's success.



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