

They Must Have Been Busy Chickens

By Clint Fuller
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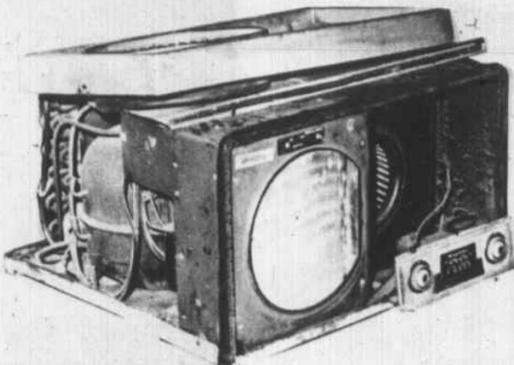
The light fixtures were given by one of the Commissioners to a county official who in turn donated them to his church. The official also said that he was given the metal awning off the rear steps to the courthouse. No one seems to know what happened to the metal awning over the door to the Commissioner's Room.

This reporter verified from officials of both Franklin Christian Academy and Franklin Academy that neither of the schools obtained any furniture or other items from the courthouse. It has been rumored that one or both had received some desks or other items.

The disclosure of the missing air conditioners last week brought on a number of inquiries and comments from citizens in almost every section of the county. Some citizens suggested that the insurance companies be called on to make good the monetary value of the missing items. These people apparently believed that the county was covered by theft insurance. A check shows this is not the case. The county has no theft or burglary insurance. Nor do the insurance companies possess an inventory of the contents of the courthouse before or after renovation. Some particular departments do have an inventory of furniture and fixtures contained in their offices and this information presumably is in the possession of the insurance people.

The whole matter could conceivably be cleared up come October. A key official says the possibility is great that the Grand Jury will ask the Board of County Commissioners for an accounting of the missing county-owned property when the Grand Jury convenes.

This action could scatter some chickens. And it could drown some ducks.



Unofficial Inventory Of What's Left

The following articles believed to be the property of Franklin County is now stored in the county-owned Griffin building on the corner of Market and Johnson Streets:

- 1 Office Desk
- 1 Air Conditioner partly disassembled
- 2 Tables
- 1 Painted table with drawers
- 1 Book rack
- 16 Folding chairs
- 2 Wooden chairs with broken legs
- Several venetian blinds
- Floor pallets used to hold books
- Two benches like those used in courtroom
- Several church pews
- 1 Wall book rack

When that high county official remarked last week that "the chickens" got the air conditioning units taken from the county courthouse last year preparatory to the remodeling of the building, he might have added, "And a whole lot of other stuff as well." Commenting on the "other stuff," a second official—probably using a take-off on the comment by the first—said: "Maybe the ducks got them."

Ducks or chickens notwithstanding, there are a number of taxpayer-owned items that were once in use in the county courthouse that are no longer there. And the disturbing thing about it all is that nobody seems to know where—if not there—they are.

A limited investigation by this newspaper revealed last week that 15 window air conditioners were removed from the courthouse in May of last year. None were ever returned. The investigation resulted in the finding of seven of the units—four in the Family Counseling offices, two at the Louisville Rescue Service building and one still stored in the old county-owned Griffin building. Seven are still unaccounted for. However, one report indicated that the Centerville Rescue and Fire Department has one and another report says that the Justice Fire Department was offered, but refused, the use of another. One of the missing units, it was learned, was the property of the Bar Association. It was a Philco unit purchased for the Law Library, according to a reliable source.

Among the items not now in the courthouse are an undetermined number of office desks; at least two stand-mounted electric fans; three ceiling fans; venetian blinds, two outside metal awnings; an undisclosed number of comodes and two electric water coolers. There are perhaps, also some tables and chairs unaccounted for but there has been no direct mention of such items. Also missing, but accounted for, are the globe light coverings.

Memory being a receding thing, it is virtually impossible to determine how many office desks were in the courthouse before the renovation started. Nobody seems to know for sure. At best guess, there are six desks missing from the offices in which they were in use prior to the move. Two of these,

according to reports, are upstairs in the solicitor's new office. Two others—not included in the six—have been reworked and are in use in the Magistrate's office.

Alex Wood, Register of Deeds, reports that he is still using one of the old desks in his office. He says "One and a piece" are missing. And he says he has no idea where they are.

Veteran Service Officer George Champion says one desk was taken from his office and moved to the "warehouse" for storage. Beyond this he says he knows nothing of the whereabouts of the others.

Sheriff William Dement says one old desk is still in use in his office and that one is missing. He says he believes one of the two desks moved upstairs is from his office.

Magistrate Will Pace says his two have been reworked and that a third was placed, at one time, in the vault of the Register of Deeds office.

Clerk of Court Ralph Knott reports that he obtained new desks in 1962 and that all are now in use in his office that were in use there before the courthouse was remodeled. He says the same desk is being used in the Superior Court, Judge's office and that a new desk was purchased for use by the District Court Judge. He also reports that the same table is being used in the Law Library and a new table was bought for the jury room.

County Accountant Kenneth Braswell reports that two desks were removed from his office and he believes that the two moved upstairs came from his office. This conflicts with the Sheriff's belief that at least one of the two came from his office.

One of the missing desks reportedly belonged to a former State Trooper stationed here. According to reports the Trooper returned to claim his desk when he learned it was to be moved from the courthouse. Some legal obstruction hindered his removing the desk it was said, and the last anyone remembers seeing it, it was sitting on the front porch of the courthouse.

A reliable report says that when the old venetian blinds were returned to the courthouse it was learned that they were too worn to be used. The source says he believes they were discarded.

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Quite a difference is shown in the pictures above of the Tar River here. The photo at left was taken with the photographer standing on the floor of the River last September 25 when the long dry spell had taken its toll of the local water supply. Photo at right taken from the Boulevard bridge shows the Tar as it

measured 13.75 feet here Wednesday. Normal is described by Louisburg weatherman G. O. Kennedy as between 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 feet. The River reached 14.20 feet at 7 A.M. Wednesday but has receded to 7.25 feet today. Staff photos by Clint Fuller.

Franklinton Awaits HEW Approval Of School Plan

W. P. Pearce, Jr., attorney for the Franklinton City Board of Education, revealed Wednesday that the Franklinton system has renamed the B. F. Person-Albion School the Franklinton Elementary School for the coming school year. It was announced earlier that the system will become totally integrated this fall.

Pearce said that a plan agreed to last year which called for grades 1, 2 and 3 to be housed along with grades 10, 11 and 12 in Franklinton High School and grades 4 through 12 to be contained in what is now Franklinton Elementary School was physically impossible to implement. He said this plan had been approved by HEW last year. The plan recently approved by the Board calls for grades 1 through 5 to be housed at the Elementary School and all other grades will attend the High School.

"More teachers and pupils made it physically impossible to do it that way," Pearce said. "We don't anticipate any difficulty in obtaining HEW approval of the changed plan," he added.

In 1966, Dewey E. Dodds of the U. S. Office of Education, recommended that Franklinton establish one high school and one elementary school. Dodds and two assistants surveyed the Franklinton system at that time. Dodds ruled that Franklinton's freedom of choice plan was inadequate at the time.

The Board refused to make such a move then and continued with full freedom of choice until last year. In the 1968-69 term, grades 10, 11 and 12 were totally integrated at the Franklinton High School and an agreement was made, according to the August 5, 1968 minutes of the Board, that "in the fall of 1969 transfer grades one through five, teachers and pupils of same, from B. F. Person-Albion School to the Franklinton High School and transfer grades six, seven, eight and nine, teachers and pupils of same, from Franklinton High School to the B. F. Person-Albion School."

Last year, except for the top three grades, all other students were given freedom of choice to attend either school.

Franklinton schools are slated to

open on August 27 for pupil orientation between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 12 Noon. August 28 is the first full day and the cafeterias will be in operation. September 1, Labor Day will be a holiday with full classes resuming on Tuesday, September 2.

Holidays as announced for the Franklinton system are as follows: Thanksgiving, November 27 and 28; Christmas, December 22 through January 2; Easter, March 26 through 31. May 29 is the final day of school.

Board Orders Taxes Collected

The Board of County Commissioners reappointed C. W. Strother to a two-year term as Tax Supervisor and a one-year term as Tax Collector here Monday and "authorized, empowered and commanded" him to collect \$27,000 in 1968 taxes still on the books.

It was explained that by law the term for the Superior is two years and for Tax Collector only one year at the time. Strother has served in both capacities since 1966. His term as Supervisor expires on June 30, 1971 and as Tax Collector on June 30, 1970.

The Board set Sunday, August 24, as the date for the long awaited Open House inspection of the renovated courthouse. The public will be invited to tour the facility between the hours of 2 P.M. to 6 P.M. A spokesman said that departments heads would be on hand and refreshments would be served.

In other actions, the Board approved two road petitions and denied two others. Approved were a request for improvement of Wilkins Lane in Cypress Creek for a distance of .06 miles and improvements on Pender Street in Franklinton. Denied were requests pertaining to State Roads 1120 and 1208.

Audits of the Register of Deeds office and the Tax Collector's office were received and approved and Louisburg CPA Lonnie Shuping was awarded a contract to audit the Tax Collector's office this year at a fee of \$350.

Commissioner E. M. Sykes was appointed as the county representative on the Board of Franklin, Vance, Warren Opportunity, Inc. for the term beginning September 1, 1969 and ending August 31, 1970.

Some Hope Expressed For Freedom Of Choice Bill

Congressman L. H. Fountain reports, in a release made public today, that the House of Representatives last week "adopted two significant amendments to the \$17.5 billion HEW Appropriations bill. He refers to the two measures as "anti-busing" and "freedom of choice" amendments.

Lee Bandy, Washington correspondent for WRAL-TV Raleigh news, reported Wednesday that some hope exists that the two amendments will receive a more favorable reception in the U. S. Senate this year than similar proposals received the past two years. Bandy reports that the Nixon administration is "quietly supporting both measures."

The House has for the past three years passed amendments softening the forced integration procedures of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The Senate has either killed the amendments outright or watered them down to ineffectiveness.

Congressman Fountain reports the amendments as follows: "Sec. 408. No part of the funds contained in this Act may be used to force busing of students, the abolishment of any school, or to force any student attending any elementary school to attend a particular school against the choice of his or her parents or parent."

"Sec. 409. No part of the funds contained in this Act shall be used to force busing of students, the abolishment of any school or the attendance

of students at a particular school as a condition precedent to obtain Federal funds otherwise available to any State, school district or school."

"The amendments," says the Congressman, "do not specifically overrule any court opinions or provisions of any Civil Rights Law. They do clearly prevent the use of these funds to deprive students of freedom of choice or to force busing of students in an effort to achieve forced integration."

He says that if the amendments are passed by the Senate, "They should serve notice upon Federal bureaucrats that when they want to make law, they must come to the Congress. Funds appropriated for education must be used for education and not for forced integration."

The Congressman relates an interesting sidelight to the House action which involved Congresswoman Edith Green of Oregon. The following is

taken from the Congressman's release: "One of the most impressive arguments in support of Sections 408 and 409 was made by a Member of Congress who described herself as a 'committed integrationist.' She is the gentlewoman from Oregon, Mrs. Edith Green, who has supported all Civil Rights legislation. In her own words, she is 'committed to an integrated

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Highway Chairman Says

Franklin Growth Tied To Wake

Highway Commission Chairman Lauch Faircloth has been quoted as saying that Franklin County was placed in a group with Wake, Durham and Orange counties "because Franklin's development and growth is really tied to Wake County's."

Commenting Tuesday on the new alignments of various counties in old highway divisions, Faircloth said there will be only slight changes in the way in which funds are allocated.

He explained that Durham and Wake Counties were placed together under Commissioner Clifton L. Benson because, "We've got one of the biggest projects in the state, the new Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Expressway in that division."

"It would be just silly not to put Wake, Durham and Orange together," the Chairman added.

"Under our new system, the 14 old division lines are preserved for engineering and administrative purposes," Faircloth continued. "But the primary road funds will now be dispensed on an 'area-wide' basis, that is to the areas represented by different commissioners."

"Although we'll now have area-wide distribution instead of division wide-distribution," Faircloth said, "the major determining factor will continue to be mileage."

"An area under one commissioner which has twice as much mileage as another area, under another commis-

sioner, will be getting twice as much money," he explained.

Faircloth noted that distribution of secondary road funds is set down in state laws and split up on a proportionate county by county basis. Urban road funds are dispensed under a population-mileage formula.

"Of course the commission will hold a little money in reserve for state-wide needs," Faircloth said. He said "it is still too early" to say what percentage of the total highway budget will be reserved for state-wide needs.

"It will be spent on the recommendation of the entire commission,"

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Weather

Clear to partly cloudy and a little warmer today and Friday. Low today, near 63; high, 84 to 89.