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OPPOSITE MOUNT AIRY DRUG CO.

MOUNT AIRY, N. C.

Second Stage of the Open Shop in the Granite Industry at Mount Airy.

Mr. Editor and Citizens, including the Granite Cutters:—

We are going to ask you once more to allow us to make further explanation in reference to our granite business at the quarries in-as-much as this open shop movement, or American plan, has now reached its second stage and orators from other parts are addressing our people on the subject and making statements in connection with our business and the industry that are absolutely contrary to the facts existing in the case, and consequently we feel it our duty to present this article.

As explained in previous letters, we made a strenuous effort to get a settlement with the local union at the rate of \$6 per day of 8 hours with but slight consideration from them; and owing to the fact it was impossible to secure business on the basis of the \$8 day, and had we continued attempting it there was no possible solution to the question but to eventually close down the cutting department, we decided it would be better to establish the open shop and at least make an effort to keep running, believing it was better for our business, the locality, and the workmen to receive \$6 per day of 8 hours than to hope to get \$8 and employment for but a few. "High pay and no work does not help anyone, but the highest pay possible and steady work is what counts." This we are trying to accomplish, and are more concerned at the present time in the securing of business for those who are remaining loyal to the business than we are in convincing the men of the \$8 ideal that they should return to work.

In the recent speech made here at our city hall the granite manufacturers were accused of being unfair. We cannot understand why the orator would select the granite industry for his attack in-as-much as from all sources we can get information we learn that the granite industry has the shortest hours and the highest pay, even at \$6 per day, of any manufacturing industry of its magnitude in the Carolinas.

He also spoke of the unhealthy conditions existing at the cutting plants. This is "ghost talk" and entirely without facts back of it as applied to Mount Airy, but it does fit in the colder climates of the north where during the winters the sheds have to be artificially heated and to do this must be very closely built like a dwelling house and the dust then stays in the room where the workmen are working and they inhale much of it. In this section, however, the cutting sheds are open to the winds which blow thru the shed at all seasons of the year and clarify the atmosphere and our granite cutters do not die of consumption any more than men of any other trade; your local doctors will tell you that there is no more consumption among the granite cutters of Mount Airy than there is among the farmers. Neither have we denied our men the privilege of discussing working conditions with us, even now under the open shop principle we are glad at any and all times to discuss questions of policy about the works in which the workmen are interested. We have always done this and hope to continue doing it, and our men know this fact.

Mr. Barrett must have been very poorly informed about conditions here, or else he was attempting to convey a false impression to our citizens, as many things he said were without foundation. His speech seemed to be more particularly a matter of working on the sympathies of the public—sentimental talk and belittling the efforts of the granite manufacturers of Mount Airy in their attempt to save their business from ruin, where it was surely headed had we continued to allow the granite cutters' union to dictate its policies as they have attempted to do in the recent past.

The granite cutters arbitrary attitude on the various important questions, such as the number of apprentices we could employ; the objection to working overtime when it was absolutely necessary for the welfare of the business, even though 50 per cent additional was paid them for any time worked over the regular hours; the restrictions placed on the operation of machinery which would have reduced the cost of granite to the consumer and made it possible to have made greater sales; their arbitrary attitude in the matter of wages, refusing to liquidate from a war-time condition, and the restricting of production—all these things and others are the reasons why we have had to separate our business from the union or be ruined.

There is no justice in the granite

cutters demanding the full war-time wage even if the manufacturers could get business on that basis, as it is their duty, as well as that of other citizens, to assist in liquidation so that business may go on again. Furthermore, they can purchase more with the \$6 daily wage today than they could with the \$8 during the war. The union has no magical power to produce wealth—the same old economic principles are in force now that have been in force since the world began and the unions cannot change them. The union has nearly destroyed the granite industry of the United States and will complete the destruction if allowed to continue as they have in the past few years.

The recent orator attacks the employers of the granite industry. We would ask him, "Who they are?" and answer the question by telling him they were the employees of yesterday. Every resident owner who is managing granite affairs in Mount Airy today came here as an employee with no better hope of success before him than now lies before each of the men who are attempting to destroy this local industry, and the employees of today will be the employers of tomorrow; and we only wish they knew better the inside condition of the business as we think then they would not be so persistent in their attempt to destroy the business.

The parent company, The North Carolina Granite Corporation, as is well known to the citizens here, has been operating many years and it started with a piece of barren rock that was worthless until it had been exploited. Men put their time, money and energy into this deal to introduce this stone and have been successful to the extent that it is being used in a large portion of the granite business being done in the country today. This material is in great quantities here but is useless unless brought to the buying public by men of experience. It seems only fair that the people who have carried this business on to this stage would have some reward and it might interest the people of Mount Airy to know that for fifteen years the stockholders of this company have not received a penny in dividends on their investment, while the community has profited by the payrolls that were turned loose here, and we are proud to know that even Mr. Barrett allows our industry a fair credit for the up-building of our city.

Mr. Barrett states that we are attempting to reduce wages without passing this along to the trade. We wish to correct this statement and to say that the price on cut granite was reduced 25 per cent last fall by a circular letter sent by our company to all of our cut stone buyers. This 25 per cent was made possible by the reduction in quarrymen's wages, the saving we were getting on the various materials we were purchasing for our business, and the fact that we eliminated our profit in order to keep our crew organized while we were negotiating for a reduction in the wage rate, hoping to make a fair profit later. This reduction was denied us, consequently the open shop.

It might be well to state here at this time that the open shop in the granite industry in Mount Airy has come to stay. We would be very glad to have our granite cutters who were with us return to work if they wish to do so. They will be used as well, or better than they were before, but will receive \$6 instead of \$8; the hours will be the same and pay day the same. We, however, reserve the privilege in our open shop to work as many apprentices which we secure from the immediate vicinity as the business justifies.

Mr. Barrett criticizes us severely but offers no fair or businesslike solution of the question, but simply that we work union men and pay \$8. If Mr. Barrett feels justified in criticizing and condemning our present methods perhaps he can show us a businesslike method by which we can get orders that will enable us to pay \$8 for eight hours to our workmen. This he knows he cannot do, consequently his speech is like that of other labor agitators—inflammatory, sentimental and destructive. Nothing constructive can ever come from it.

We understand that he considers the meeting here a very successful one. The results as we find them are as follows: That thru his efforts here he has taken from our plants, collectively, from eight to ten granite cutters who were working and satisfied; these men were getting \$6 for eight hours work, and now they are walking the streets. It may be possible he has done these men a favor but we cannot see how it can be so.

If granite cutting is to be done in Mount Airy in the future it will be done on the open shop, American Plan, basis. This part of the letter we are addressing particularly to the granite

cutters. If they wish to close up the cutting industry in Mount Airy they may possibly do this if they are successful in getting the cutters to leave the works; this, in our opinion however, they cannot do, but should they do this we will simply remain closed until we can get cutters to work in the open shop. This may take a year or two years—whatever length of time it may take is the amount of time we will consume in establishing the open shop. If the granite cutters of Mount Airy wish to give up their occupation and go elsewhere to work we have no objection and wish them well and will be glad to favor them in any way we can. We have respect for them and the fact they are fighting for something they no doubt think is right. We again say they have our best wishes and simply demand that in going their way they allow us the same privilege, and this we will insist upon.

Among the granite cutters of Mount Airy are a greater percentage of workmen who own their own homes or business than is true of any other granite center to our knowledge. We find that 40 per cent of the journeyman cutters own their homes and we are proud of them and wish it was 100 per cent. We find there are many about this locality who are on farms or have mercantile businesses, etc., who originally got their start "working on the rock." This would not indicate that the men have been used particularly unfair at any time in way of wages or conditions. We would like to say, in closing, that in our opinion this condition now

existing between the workmen and the manufacturers here would not have occurred if it had not been for the propaganda published by headquarters in their journals and in their monthly reports, which continually teaches them to be distrustful and suspicious of their employers, and according to the various editorials we personally have read any one who employs must necessarily be dishonest. This propaganda and suspicion is kept up by the labor leaders shaping their plans in the direction of making sure their own jobs. The labor leader tries to create the impression that his own services are indispensable—he is the Moses who volunteers to stand between the task-master and the oppressed for a consideration, and he is continually stirring up strife and keeps alive the impression that the emergency calls for every man to stick by the guns. We have no record of a case, however, where the labor leader has gone without his own salary when the treasury funds have gotten so low that the striking workman could not get his strike pay.

These explanations in this letter are more or less of a family affair, and we regret the necessity of laying them before the public, but in-as-much as we have been accused wrongfully and untruthfully we feel some of these facts might be worth reading. In closing, we wish to again make this statement—we are finished with the granite cutters union, and again say we have no objection to those who wish to remain members doing so but if Mount Airy Granite is cut in Mount Airy it will be cut in Open

Shops where any American citizen who wishes to seek employment can get it when it is to be had without being forced to join a union unless he sees fit to do so. Thank you. THE NORTH CAROLINA CORP'N. J. D. SARGENT, President

Second Baptist Notes

Rev. J. H. Fulghum, pastor
Sunday school,9:45 a. m.
Morning worship,11:00 a. m.
Evening worship,7:30 p. m.
Wednesday services.
B. Y. P. U. Junior and senior, Thursday evening,7:30 p. m.
Prayer meeting Wednesday evening 7:30 p. m.

At the morning service Rev. J. M. Nester took the place of the pastor, who preached at the First Baptist church.

At the night service the pastor preached to a large congregation on, "Trying to Compromise with God." Everybody is invited to attend these services and visitors from the other churches are made welcome. Come and worship with us.

W. C. T. U.

The local W. C. T. U. met with Mrs. C. Binder Tuesday afternoon, Mrs. Key conducted devotional services and an interesting program was carried out under the direction of Mesdames Steele and Bray. Doughnuts and coffee were served after the business meeting.

Missionary Club Meets

The Girls Missionary Club of the Methodist church met with Miss Elizabeth Ashby Wednesday evening under the leadership of Miss May West.

The next younger group of girls was invited to meet with the club, for the purpose of enlarging the membership.

After a delightful evening during which appetizing refreshments were served the club adjourned.

Rusk News

Rev. L. B. Murray filled his regular appointment here Saturday and Sunday.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Sebastian recently a baby girl.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Sneed who were recently married in Winston-Salem are at home to their friends at the home of their father, M. G. Sneed.

Mrs. E. J. Burch was called to the bedside of her father and mother Mr. and Mrs. Andy Whitaker near State Road who are very sick with flu and pneumonia.

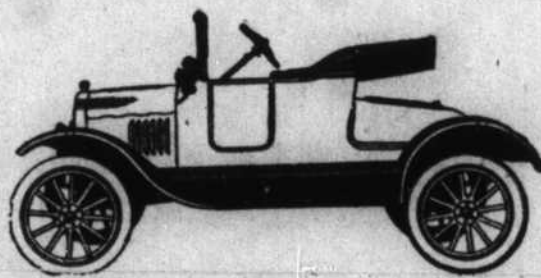
Miss Bertha Layne who is attending school at Booneville spent the week end here with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Layne.

Carl Wallace of Yadkinville was a visitor here Wednesday.

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. John W. Martin, Tuesday March 7.

Paul Burch of the Mitchell's river section spent Sunday here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. V. Burch.

Ford's Contribution to Happiness



The Ford Touring car has brought to the farm homes of the country and small towns more real pleasure, comfort and conveniences than perhaps any other one thing.

It has enabled the farmer and his family to mingle with friends, attend church, neighborhood functions, and enjoy the many pleasures that abound in country life.

Touring Car \$348

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Your order should be placed at once if you wish either a car or Tractor. Ask about our time payment plan.

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