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and
The Highlands Maconian

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Toward Something Better

MOST Americans are inclined to assume, without question, that we in the United States have the best of all possible civilizations. And assuming that, our tendency is to try to make every part of this country exactly like all the rest.

But have we developed, in this country, the best possible civilization?

If so, how account for the sordid mess that is currently being exposed in Washington?—that is part of American civilization! How account for the fact that our industrial system gradually is destroying the individual initiative and independence that have made America a great nation? How account for the rapid disappearance of the neighborliness and kindly consideration that were an essential feature of an earlier America? How account for our disregard for human life, as illustrated by the fact that our own automobiles kill more people than the guns of all our enemies? How account for our divorce rate, our juvenile delinquency rate, our suicide rate? How, finally, account for the generally recognized fact that few Americans are happy?

American civilization, much as it has to commend it, can be vastly improved. And the place to start is in the individual communities.

* * *

Can we here in Macon County build something that is a little better?

We can, but only if we:

1. Recognize that the standard American community leaves much to be desired.

2. Learn to discriminate between what is worthwhile and what is not.

3. Consciously seek to create here a good place to live.

This county, it should be remarked, is blessed in being one of the few places not yet entirely standardized—not yet, some persons would say, entirely ruined. But the drift is toward standardization!

Macon County undoubtedly has "it", as Mrs. Peck, in one of the series of guest editorials The Press concludes this week, points out. What chiefly gives it distinction is its people; for truly there is "no place where the folks are so real and kind", as Mrs. Emory so discerningly remarks. Because of the kind of people who live here, this community has the first attribute of any good civilization—it is a good place to live.

But there is sound sense in Mr. Jacobs' challenge:

"As a place to live, with friendly people, you can't find better! As a place of opportunity, it is well below par!"

It has become a habit with us to assume without examination of the facts, that there are no opportunities here for youth; and because of that attitude, the lack of opportunity often is exaggerated. The proof of that is the number of young persons—many of them without either educational or financial advantages—who are making good here. As Mr. Cochran suggests, Macon County today is something of a frontier.

But there are not enough opportunities! And the proof of that is the large number of young people who go elsewhere.

Is heavy and indiscriminate industrialization the answer? This newspaper doubts it. For what shall we have gained if we create job opportunities only to find we have created a community that is an undesirable place to live? Besides, unemployment often is at its greatest, and slums at their worst, in the most highly industrialized cities.

How then, can we provide our young people with opportunities to make a living and still have a community that is a good place to **live?**

A part, at least, of the answer, may be found in Mr. Smith's article this week:

Capitalize on our tourist possibilities plus small, diversified industry that would take advantage of the mountaineer's natural craftsmanship—his ability to work with his hands. Tourist development and the manufacture of hand-wrought articles would seem to go hand in hand. That combination might prove to be the solution of our problem of finding a way toward what should be the ideal of any community:

A good place to live, where there are opportunities to make a living.

Our American Civilization

Defining success in terms of dollars, over a period of a century; being shocked when some business men and public officials, members of the third generation reared under that definition, take us at our word.

'A Good Place To Live'

EDITOR'S NOTE

Six more entries in The Press' editorial contest appear below. (The 10 winning entries already have been published.) It is regretted that it has been found impracticable to publish all the articles submitted. Those that follow were selected because they represent half a dozen different—and stimulating—viewpoints on "Macon County as a Good Place to Live".

THE COMING ERA

THROUGHOUT most of Western North Carolina there have been two major eras since the first white pioneers settled the hills. First was the era of clearing new grounds and harvesting the vast amount of virgin timber that could be had for a song. Big sawmills were all over the area and remained until they thought that all of the timber was gone for a long time—then they moved west!

The second era was not fast in coming; it was held back by depression, wars, and the lack of good transportation. It has come and we are in the midst of it—the development of big industries that recognize the advantages of good land, good water, and most of all good people who are willing to work.

The people of Macon County can look over the protective mountains that surround us and see and smell some of the large industries that have found this country attractive. We can listen to the statistics of pay rolls, tax receipts, etc., etc., and some may think that Macon County is backward not to have a Canton, Ecusta, or an Enka. Undoubtedly we could send out a chamber of commerce delegation and could attract such industries, because we have the water, the timber, and the labor—but what price would we pay?

On foggy mornings a heavy, persistent and depressing odor would fill the valleys of Cullasaja, Cartoogechaye, Cowee, and the other spots dear to us. Our clear streams would become cesspools of industrial waste and the fishing would be gone. The independence of our mountain people would gradually give way to the drudgery of factory slaves whose pallor betrays their indoor work, and the labor unions would soon dictate the terms and hours of work.

The mountains would no longer contain the mountaineer.

The third era is fast approaching and is the hope of Macon County. The Appalachian mountains are finally being recognized as the true playground and inspiration of the East. Thousands are now flocking here to gain a relief from the pressures of city life. They are looking for exactly what Macon County has to offer and they are willing to pay for their pleasure. Also the timber that the big sawmills thought was gone has come back, through the husbandry of the U. S. Forest, and now it is here to stay, offering jobs every year from now on for the mountaineer, who thrives on the business of harvesting timber. Clean industries that do not despoil the air or the water should be welcomed, for the mountaineer is a craftsman who can make fine carvings, furniture, and works of art.

I have lived for several years in Macon County. I have also lived in the swamps of Louisiana, the plains of Texas, the hills of Arkansas, the lake country of Wisconsin, and now in the Piedmont of North Carolina. I feel that I am ably qualified to point out the merits and the dangers of Macon County, and I also feel that I should, for in a few years I plan to return to live on the side of Leatherman Bald.

Mebane, N. C.

WALTON R. SMITH.

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WE, THE PEOPLE OF MACON COUNTY

WHEN we travel along our paved highways on a crisp bright autumn day observing as we go the acres of green pastures, the lazy fat cattle, the harvested crops stored away against winter, the modern new homes and in our county seat the bustle and hum of a busy flourishing town, we cannot help but feel that Macon County is indeed a good place to live.

But we must go deeper than that to find what our county really is like. The true worth of a town, a county or a nation lies concealed in the character of its individuals.

We mountain people were given a very precious inheritance by our pioneer forefathers. It was that quality of character known as integrity. Now what have we done with our inheritance? Some of us, I fear, have almost smothered its glow in our struggle to get ahead in the world. Some of us have sold it outright in exchange for money, power, or position. But there are many of us, thank God, who have held on to it through grim hardship, poverty and temptation, and for these people we should be grateful.

We have many brilliant minds in our county. This intelligence, coupled with integrity and its related qualities, can insure the future of Macon. When integrity guides the hand of leaders and followers alike, inspiring a mutual confidence and trust, the possibilities of our county will become unlimited.

So it is up to us. Let's make Macon County not only a good place to live, but one of the best!

MRS. HELEN H. COFFEE.

Highlands, N. C.

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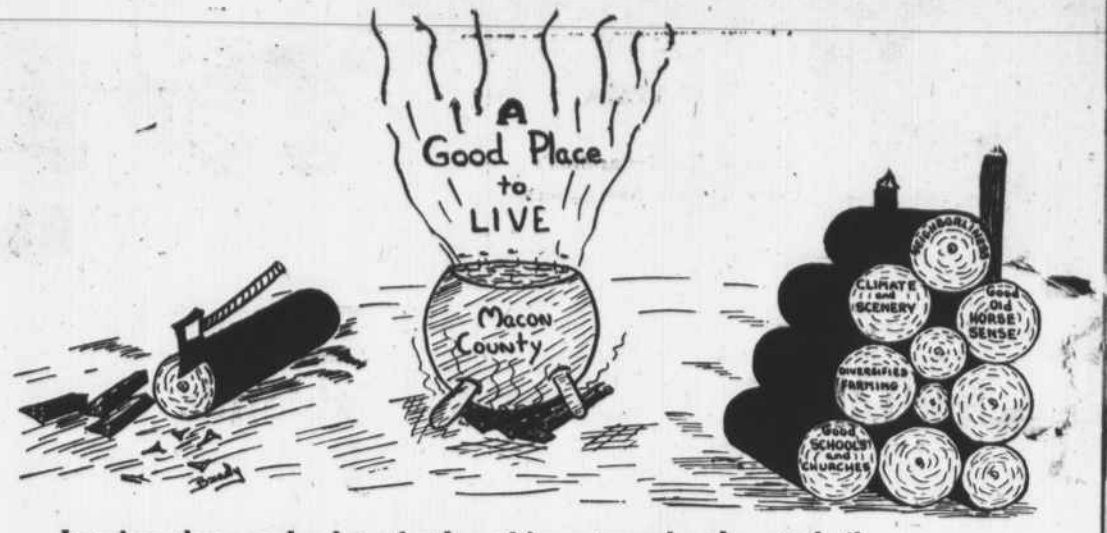
BECAUSE FOLKS ARE REAL AND KIND

BEING limited in education, I hesitate to attempt to say what I want to be said about this wonderful county of my birth. It is not only beautiful to the eye in every respect but such a quiet, peaceful place to spend one's days and nights. No place where the folks are so kind and sympathetic. I've never traveled very much, but have lived in several different states and towns and I find no place where the folks are so **real** and kind.

Our county is growing each year in every way. Look at the difference in schools, roads, business and many other things too numerous to mention since even 1920. Then we country kids had to pay to go to Franklin High school. The few of us who ventured to go. If it was too far to walk from our homes we stayed with city folks and washed dishes, milked cows, etc., for the bread we ate. Of course some of the folks who inherited money from ancestors didn't have it as tough but the general run of country children worked hard to learn what little bit we got. Our parents had very little income.



It takes these and a lot of other things to make the pot boil.

Today the average farm family has lights, water and all modern conveniences and a bus to ride to school. The parents have an income from poultry, stock and many other things unheard of then. Any boy or girl now has a better chance to be, as the old folks used to express it, **Somebody.**

If any one is worth his salt he can have plenty to eat and clothes enough. After all, it isn't the "coat that makes the man or the dress that makes the woman". It's what is in the person's heart.

I don't think you will find a county where any more kind, good people live. Most of them are not hypocrites nor in the least artificial. Maybe our grammar isn't perfect but we manage to make ourselves understood.

As one old man remarked, "John haint got no larnin', but he shore cin plow a straight row", and as John plowed, he saw the beautiful sunrises and sunsets and all the other things we love, such as gazing on old Wayah Bald. Listening to the whippoorwill at night mingled with the tinkling of cow bells is much sweeter music to me than all the hustle and bustle of the big cities.

Once, years ago, a high official of Franklin remarked, "Nobody is left in Macon County but morons". The lady he made this remark to answered very tartly, "Sir, it's such a pity you stayed behind with all of us morons. Why didn't such a **bright** person leave, too?"

In my long life I can't see the ones who return every summer for a **free** two weeks' vacation are nearly so happy and

Continued on Page Three—

• Others' Opinions

THE SOLE GREAT ISSUE

As the Presidential candidates jockey for position and favor, it appears that the 1952 Republican battle cry (Taft style) will be "crime and corruption" while the Democratic slogan (Truman style) will be "prosperity and peace."

We have each of these things in varying quantities. Crime and corruption have come in the wake of a great war, as crime and corruption always do. Prosperity is surface-deep, far below it near the crust of the economy lie rock-hard inflation and debt. The only issue of real consequence is peace—and how to get it.

The United States is living in a new world much of its own making. Anyone who cannot see the utter futility and danger of economic and political isolation is purblind. This country has committed itself to the leadership of the free nations, who worry only whether it might fail them. It has strung military garrisons and air bases all around the world—so far around that their number and disposition would, if known (we are not among those who know), amaze the American people. Billions have gone into aid programs to salvage Western democracy, and more billions will go in. General Eisenhower, the most popular American of his day, is building through NATO the first international army ever raised in peacetime.

All of this program for peace—for peace with honor—is built upon the Marshall Plan, the United Nations, NATO, Point Four, and the containment of communism. It is a program aimed at equating our power with that of Russia or over-matching it, at which point it may be possible to negotiate a peace. The program belongs to no man or party. It is a program of internationalism. That above all.

In this troubled decade most other issues grow pale. Fair Deal or Old Deal, the domestic essentials of social justice will be dealt with as the people wish, while the unessentials which are so much politics will be recognized as such.

American leadership, internationally-minded, in a free world's quest for peace is the sole great issue. It is a cut and dried matter of national survival and international morality. The assignment is ours of necessity. In carrying it out we shall have to tread a long, hard, painful road for most of our lives.

The question to ask of any candidate for President is whether he will go the distance.—Asheville Citizen.

• Poetry

EDITH DEADERICK ERSKINE
Editor
Weaverville, North Carolina.

INVICTUS

For O, the courage in the world
So far outweighs the fear—
This the Truth that dawns on us
More clearly year by year,

-As we climb the Hills of Life
Through shadow, rain and sun—
This the great unfolding Truth—
That God and man are One.

BESS HINSON HINES.

Highlands and California.

Business Making News

• By BOB SLOAN

Dependability is a virtue that should be prized highly in this uncertain world of today. With that in mind we would like to hand out an Acolade for dependability to certain groups here in Franklin in connection with the Christmas season. The Franklin Fire Department for putting up the Christmas lights—It was a nice job and sure makes Main Street more attractive. Sammy Beck and the Franklin high school band for giving such a cheery welcome to Santa. It doesn't matter what the occasion you can depend on the local band to really come through with a good performance. Perhaps some of the bandsmen or bandsladies played a little more lustily than usual Saturday in an effort to redeem themselves with Santa for previous slip ups. Henry Dillard, who isn't a native of Macon, but should be adopted for his part in Santa parade each year. Incidentally I got to talk to Santa Saturday and in the course of the conversation he remarked that what he would like for Christmas would be a new suit. If we enjoyed the program Saturday and would like to show our appreciation to Santa let's show it by mailing a contribution for a new suit to J. C. Jacobs and mark it Santa Fund.

* * *

Standard Oil Company of New Jersey is building a new attractive gas station at their site near the depot. While we are in the oil business. Watch for a new Amoco station to go up

(Turn to Back Page 1st Section)

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The Press is informed that a poplar tree was cut on Mr. P. B. Williams' place on Ellijay last week and after cutting off ten feet from the butt, a stock was cut 16 feet long that scaled 3,482 and two-thirds feet of lumber.

Mr. J. C. Wright had two hogs slaughtered yesterday that weighed 257 and 237 pounds, total 494.

Mr. J. L. Barnard has received a position as traveling salesman for a large Philadelphia clothing house. He left Saturday for the Quaker City to enter upon his work.

25 YEARS AGO

We may be guilty of many sins, but we cannot be charged with using an X for Christ in the word Christmas.

Mrs. George A. Jones, Mrs. J. V. Arrendale, Mrs. Lester Conley, and Mrs. Robert Davis motored to Waynesville Thursday to attend a meeting of the officers of the Woman's Missionary societies of the Methodist church in the Waynesville district.

Attorney C. C. Poindexter left last Monday for Waynesville, where he will open law offices.

10 YEARS AGO

C. Gordon Moore was named master of the Franklin Masonic lodge at this week's meeting of the Junaluskee lodge.

From 1,500 cases output in 1931 to 15,000 cases in 1941 is the record made by the Nantahala cannery, one of Macon County's home-owned and home-supported industries.