

The Franklin Press
and
The Highlands Maconian

Second class mail privileges authorized at Franklin, N. C.
Published every Thursday by The Franklin Press
Telephone 24

WEIMAR JONES Editor
BOB S. SLOAN Advertising Manager
J. P. BRADY News Editor-Photographer
ROLFE NEILL Reporter
MRS. ALLEN SILER Society Editor-Office Manager
MRS. MARION BRYSON Proofreader
CARL F. CABE Operator-Machinist
FRANK A. STARRETTE Compositor
CHARLES E. WHITTINGTON Pressman
G. E. CRAWFORD Stereotypist

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OUTSIDE MACON COUNTY	INSIDE MACON COUNTY		
One Year	\$3.00	One Year	\$2.50
Six Months	1.75	Six Months	1.75
Three Months	1.00	Three Months	1.00
Two Years	5.25	Two Years	4.25
Three Years	7.50	Three Years	6.00

MAY 9, 1957

... And Sympathy

This is being written before Tuesday's balloting in Franklin and Highlands. It is written, therefore, without knowledge of the results.

But to those elected, whoever they may be, The Press hastens to extend congratulations — and sympathy.

The tender of sympathy is not facetious. For even more impressive than the confidence of the voters in the winners is the burden of responsibility of those elected. Both towns face difficult problems. They will not be solved overnight; nor will they be solved without a lot of mental sweat.

Surely the candidates must have recognized that when they became candidates, and so surely those elected are prepared to bring their best to the job. We wish them success in their endeavors. We wish them, too, the prerequisite for such success — the sympathetic support of the citizens.

Municipal Job

That scrubbing given downtown streets a fortnight ago served at least two good purposes.

First of all, it dramatized the need — and the fact something can be done about it.

Second, it showed a lot of us, who had forgotten, what a clean street looks like.

The chore, of course, is not one that private citizens should have to do. It is a municipal job; one of the services residents of a town pay taxes for.

Here is hoping that, in 1959, the town board just elected can write high on its two-year record of achievements: "We got Franklin clean, and kept it so".

But We Don't

In its comments, two weeks ago, about the manner in which a superintendent of the Macon County schools was elected, this newspaper said all it had to say on that subject. This piece deals with a related, but a totally different, matter. Its purpose is to keep the record straight about an important fact — a fact, incidentally, for which the school board members are in no way responsible.

During the recent controversy about the superintendent's election, there frequently was heard some such comment as this:

"We elected our school board members. Now we ought to let them run the schools."

That viewpoint — the idea that decisions about the public's business should be made by duly elected officials — is widely held, and by many thoughtful persons. For the purposes of this discussion, we are not quarreling with it.

The trouble is, the conclusion is based on a false premise. We say we should let the school board members run the schools, because we elected them.

Well, we didn't elect them. We haven't elected a school board in half a century. Under state law, the

EXIT THE BATTLESHIP

HISTORY REPEATS MONITOR AND MERRIMAC INCIDENT

There have been few signs of the new age of nuclear weapons as dramatic as the announcement from London that the Royal Navy is to scrap all but one of its battleships. These majestic leviathans have symbolized naval pride and prowess for half a century. To the meanest landlubber, the sight of a battleship, anchored in a harbor, bristling with great guns and swarming with men, was a moving experience. In war, they formed the bulwark of sea defenses. In peace, they were ideal instruments of policy. "Send a battleship" was a suggestion often made in discussions of how to settle international differences. For the British, the passing of these vessels must be cause for par-

ticular emotion. They need a Kipling to do them justice. The battleship, the capital ship, the heavily armed primary unit of naval strength, developed first among the "wooden walls," the ships-of-the-line built of oak and propelled by the winds. The wooden ship-of-the-line reached a length of little more than 200 feet and a tonnage of perhaps 3,000, and carried as many as 120 guns—smooth-bore muzzle loaders. They engaged the enemy, preferably, at distances of about half a mile. Lord Nelson had twenty-seven ships-of-the-line at Trafalgar.

After the battle between the armored Merrimac and Monitor in 1862 it became clear that the biggest wooden ship, even if

most we are permitted is to nominate—in the primary of the Democratic party.

An election determines the wishes of the majority of the voters. How far the nomination of a school board falls short of being an election is indicated by two figures:

In the 1955 general election, the total Macon vote cast was 6,433. But in the Democratic primary that spring, the three nominated to the school board received an average of 1,240 votes. In other words, instead of having a mandate from the majority of the county's voters, they had a mandate from less than 20 per cent of the voters.

And that is only half the story. In this and most other counties, school board members are appointed by the General Assembly, usually on recommendation of the county's representative. And the General Assembly, on occasion, ignores the expressed wishes even of the Democratic voters, and names a school board of its own choosing. In the case of Macon County, that happened no longer ago than 1955.

We should elect our county school board. This newspaper has been saying that for ten years. But we don't.

Bouquet

Here's a somewhat belated but big bouquet for the small group of adults who made possible this community's latest thriving enterprise—the Franklin Teen Center.

These people no doubt were in agreement with the adage about an idle mind's being the devil's workshop. But they went a step farther to the positive side of that—they had faith in the essential high quality of our Macon youth, in its willingness to cooperate to create a place for wholesome recreation, and in its healthy response, once the place became a reality.

That faith has been abundantly justified.

This accomplishment, in the face of what sometimes must have seemed insurmountable obstacles, is one more proof that we can do and have almost anything we want. All that is necessary is for enough of us to want it, and want it badly enough—and then join hands to get it.

'Linger On'

(Southern Pines Pilot)

The case for the hometown newspaper is ably presented by Ralph Keller of Minneapolis, manager of the Minnesota Editorial association, with this analysis:

"The spoken word hits the ear, and is gone. The television image strikes the eye, and is gone. The printed picture and the printed name linger on.

"Numerous authentic surveys throughout the United States indicate that an average of 3.5 persons read every weekly newspaper that enters every home as an invited guest. The average length of time each copy is kept around the house is two weeks. Each copy is picked up and looked over by each reader an average of three times. The average length of time each reader spends with each copy of his hometown newspaper is fifty minutes.

"The newspaper is subscribed for, paid for, eagerly looked forward to from issue to issue, and read thoroughly with unquestioning confidence. It doesn't depend on the weather, is not subject to static or interference, is not a 'now or never' messenger—if the newspaper can't be read this evening, it will be read in the morning, or tomorrow evening. When radio and television impulses have petered out in heedless space, the hometown newspaper is still there, to be read and re-read and referred to again and again."

Letters

Likes Franklin

Editor, The Press:

Thanks for reminding me about my subscription to The Press expiring this month. I would truly miss not receiving the weekly issues of your paper, not only because of news of the people I know, but also because of news of the town and evidences of its continued growth and improvement. This exemplifies what impressed me about Franklin from the first—its energetic civic-mindedness and great community pride.

(MISS) CLEMENTINE WININGER

Richmond, Va.

New York Herald Tribune

powered by steam, would be no match for the little Monitor, carrying two shell guns in her revolving turret. The old monarch of the seas had been dethroned; a new race began. Iron ships gave way to steel; smooth-bore to rifled breechloaders; battleships grew in size, armament and speed until those still in service are 45,000-tonners, nearly 900 feet in length, firing 16-inch shells over miles of sea. But even these massive floating forts proved no match for the plane in World War II, probably the last great clash of battleship fleets. The carrier and the submarine have assumed a new, and decisive importance.

The battleship—"far-called," as in Kipling's "Recessional"—

"See! We Ain't Gonna Let 'Em Hog-Tie You, Cap'n Luther"



STRICTLY

Personal

By WEIMAR JONES

My visitor had been told a certain Macon County youth once had worked for The Press. He had come to me, therefore, to get my opinion of the young man's fitness for a government job in which he would have access to secret information.

I explained the employment had been part-time, seven or eight years ago, but that I knew the young man, personally, quite well. Then I added I considered him thoroughly trustworthy; in fact, one of the finest boys I ever knew.

I thought that statement, which was the exact truth, would cover the situation. I was wrong. My interviewer (who showed me his credentials

as a representative of army intelligence) had to ask all the questions, it seemed.

He wanted to know, in detail, exactly what were the duties of this employe, who had worked on Wednesday afternoons, a single summer, years ago. I told him as well as I could remember.

Then he asked to see records proving the boy once had worked at The Press. I wanted to ask: If my word is worth anything as to the young man's character, why not accept my word that he once worked here? But I didn't. Instead, I explained it might take considerable time to lay my hands on the records of a part-time employe of that many years ago. He wasn't satisfied, and showed it; but he finally let it go at that.

Abolish Freedom To Prevent Its Abuse?

(Reprinted from NEWSDAY)

Defense Secretary Charlie Wilson, who is neck-and-neck with John Foster Dulles for the title of "government official with the greatest knack for saying the most inappropriate thing at the worst possible time," has summed up his special talent with a maxim about whales: "Only when they're spouting are they likely to be harpooned."

A harpoon today could be aimed at F. B. I. Chief J. Edgar Hoover, who is an excellent law-enforcement officer, but when he spouts about other matters often leaves himself open to attack like any mortal whale. Hoover fired a salvo the other day on what he called "pseudo liberals" who have made "efforts in recent years to curtail the government's authority to defend our national security."

Hoover never precisely defined what he meant by "pseudo liberals," but we have our own views on the subject. "Liberal" and "conservative" once described the groups in American politics that were interested in reform and change as opposed to those who wanted things to remain the same. That distinction no longer holds. A more valid definition of liberal today cuts across political differences to left and right. Liberals are a group who have certain inderstructible principles of democracy, freedom and equality before the law that do not change for the expediency of movement.

Coincidentally, the same day that Hoover delivered his speech, Federal Judge Harold Medina was speaking on exactly the same subject—and behaving like an authentic liberal. Medina, who presided over the trial at which the first-string Communists were convicted, defended the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, which has been subjected to such abuse by the Communists and others. Medina said that he would rather see "every Communist go

in the face. He literally recoiled.

I had said it for fun, and I know his expression must have been funny; but it didn't strike me as funny then, because, by that time, I was beginning to lose my temper. Here was a man, in a highly responsible government position, suggesting that radical ideas and disloyalty were one and the same thing. And I got madder as I realized he was parroting questions handed down to him from above.

"What do you mean?" he finally gasped. "Why, any young man who thinks is likely to have some radical ideas; that is one of the marks of youth."

Then I cut loose with both barrels: "Since when," I demanded, "have non-conformist ideas become a mark of disloyalty? Since when have we started damning a citizen not for what he does, but for what he thinks? And since when has the government become the guardian of the minds of free Americans?"

He managed a washed-out half-smile, and explained: "O, what I meant was radical ideas about our form of government."

Then I did see red. "Go back," I told him, "and tell the folks you work for that

I couldn't have shocked the fellow more, had I struck him

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DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK (1892)

Mexican Mustang Liniment, a cure for the ailments of man and beast.—From an advertisement in The Press.

Messrs. Freds Moore and Johnston attended the judicial convention at Dillsboro last week.

Last week, there was a cave-in on the Cowee tunnel, on the Murphy branch of the Western North Carolina railroad, one mile west of Dillsboro. The tunnel is about 800 feet long. A strong force of hands was put to work and when the dirt had nearly all been removed, a much larger cave-in occurred which required the removal of about 700 yards of earth. All passengers and freight have to be transferred until the tunnel can be cleared.

25 YEARS AGO (1932)

The game between West End and Cartoogechaye, played Saturday afternoon in Crawford's bottom, went in favor of West End, 19 to 10. Claude Dills has been added as pitcher to the West End team.

In view of the hard times and in order to give delinquent taxpayers another opportunity to settle their back taxes for 1928, 1929, 1930, and 1931, the board of county commissioners has extended until June the deadline for payment.

Roy C. Dady has been elected teacher of the Bible class of the Methodist church.

10 YEARS AGO

T. W. (Tommy) Angel, Jr., nosed out two opponents to win a second term as mayor of Franklin in Tuesday's lively election. The contest brought out a total vote of 551—believed to be a record here.

A telephone is to be installed in the sheriff's office, the first time the office has had a telephone since the days of the late Sheriff C. L. Ingram.

The new one-story building adjoining the Burrell Motor Company will be operated by that firm, in conjunction with its automobile business, specializing in boats, motors, trailers, home freezers, and tires.

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