

MORE ABOUT

Robertson

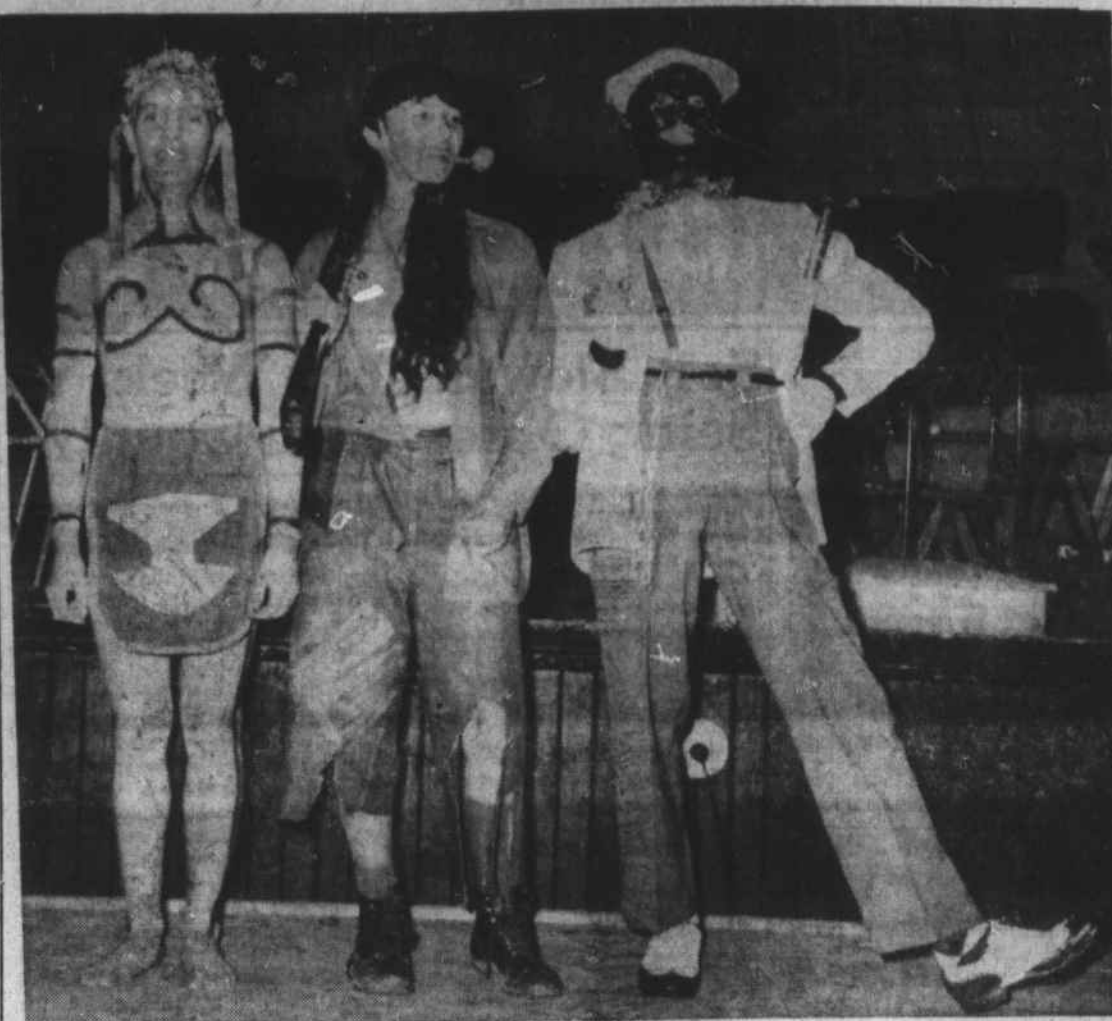
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Dave Kerr — witty, eloquent and having an Irishman's inborn instinct for politics. A political bigwig was coming to Canton for an election rally, and Dave, in order to be sure of a good big attendance, herded the entire group of Italians and Bulgarians into the meeting. After the meeting was over, the speaker commented gratefully on the enthusiastic reception he received even from the foreigners. Dave then confessed that a certain amount of pre-planning had entered into the evening's success. Dave had placed the foreman of the foreign crew in a spot where he could signal to him. One finger raised meant clappa da hands—two fingers raised meant stomba da feet—three fingers meant yell like hell. Properly rehearsed, the crew, none of whom could understand a word of English, put on a fine show of democratic enthusiasm. I believe Dave's friend was elected.

"It was this same crew that formed the storm centre of Canton's only riot. It seems that some mis-understanding occurred be-

tween the water boy on the job, a native of Haywood County,—and one of the "eye tallians" and soon an international free-for-all was in full swing with Italians on one side and Haywood County boys on the other. It required the skill of all of the sheriff's deputies that could be assembled to end the turmoil. It will interest you to know that our much loved and highly respected "old timer" Carroll Singleton was the water boy in question. I am told that he still feels important in remembering that he was the principle figure in an international incident!

"Then, too, there was the accident that occurred on the Southern railroad tracks where Main Street crosses. It seems that one of Canton's citizens had been struck and injured on a dark night by a Southern switch engine. The star witness for the defense was a colored switchman who testified that he had a lantern in his hand and that he swung it back and forth vigorously in front of the man, who was injured, as he approached. In spite of very exhaustive cross examination, the colored man stuck unyieldingly to his story, and the Southern won the case. After the trial, the Southern attorneys congratulated the witness and gave him full



IN REAL LIFE THE CHARACTERS above are, left to right, Charles Rogers, Joan Prevost, and David Farker. They are winners of the three \$15.00 cash prizes given by the Lions Club for the best costumes worn at the concert given by the Waynesville High School band Thursday night. (Mountaineer Photo).

credit for their success. The switchman then said, "Mr. boss man, them lawyers shore had me worried." Worried? What about? "I was afeared that one of them would ask me whether or not that 'ar lantern were lit!"

"Some of you will remember that at that time it took about as many engines as there were loaded cars to bring a freight train into Canton from Turnpike. Quite a contrast to the mile long, diesel-drawn trains that come into Canton today. That old method was good enough when our daily tonnage was 75 tons of sulphite pulp and 75 of soda pulp, but it would have collapsed completely under today's conditions when we produce over ten times as much finished product as we did then.

"I came to Canton at the beginning of a financial panic: Champion's mills were unfinished, and insufficient funds were available for either completion of construction or operation of the processes. During the first few years of my stay in Canton, my principal responsibility was to stave off creditors until we could get our plant into production, and profits began to come in. We did escape bankruptcy, but by an uncomfortably

narrow margin. I believe, however, that the experiences of those early days provided for all of us valuable lessons in caution and in resourcefulness. And that enforced resourcefulness resulted, ultimately, in our developing many new and profitable lines of production. We have to our credit a number of firsts in the paper industry. Our mill was the first large pulp mill in the South. It was the first to make spruce sulphite in Dixie. It was the first to successfully convert chestnut chips into soda pulp. It was the first to make southern pine into bleached kraft capable of use in fine white papers. It was the first to install an electrolytic bleach plant in a southern mill—the first to develop bi-product power on a large scale through the use of high pressure steam boilers with exhaust steam withdrawn from turbines for process use. We also installed the largest and fastest fourdrinier paper machine in the industry, of that day, and disappointed our competitors and the prophets of gloom by making it work profitably.

"Near the Lodge at Lake Logan, there is a bronze table commemorating the fact that Champion cooperated with Dr. Schenck, the famous forester, in keeping alive

progress, benefitting by experience, we now take a leaf from the love life of the porcupine, who, it is said, proceeds in his courtship with great enthusiasm and understandable caution.

"Many years ago, Champion adopted and has sincerely and conscientiously tried to apply in daily life, the principles of Fairness — Friendliness — and Faith — which have been summarized in our shorter slogan—"COOPERATION AND GOOD FELLOWSHIP." Our intention was, and is, to apply this philosophy not only in our dealings with the workers who permanently risk their future with Champion, but to our customers, our stockholders, and, above all, to our neighbors. The response, especially from our workers and from

our neighbors, has been magnificent and has given us the courage and confidence to plan for continued progress on into the distant future.

"In these days of another Civil War, we hear much of the dangers of Communism. We know that Democracy and Communism have only one word in common — that word is "equality"—but it has different meanings. In Democracy, it means equality in Liberty and Prosperity. In Communism, it means equality in Servitude and Poverty. Communism divides, it cannot multiply. It distributes, not wealth, but misery.

"Here in Haywood County, through the mutual respect, consideration and deep sense of civic responsibility that prevails in unusual degree, we provide a splendid

example of Democracy on the march.

"Every one enjoys the benefits of people's capitalism, and when such conditions exist, we need have no fear of subversive influences getting anywhere in our County.

"There are no more helpful groups than this very valuable Canton-Clyde-Bethel Association which sponsors today's meeting.

"The objectives outlined by Oliver Wendell Holmes, 'One hand, one heart One land, one Nation Evermore'

may well be used as the watchword of this community.

"Let us earnestly hope that it will be our guiding light as we move forward together into the problems and opportunities of an unseen, but challenging, future."

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