

Two Catawba County Teachers and Clubs Abroad



Sometime ago I was asked to report what occurred at our last S. E. meeting in Jackson, Miss., during the past summer. Because of my budgeting to take a trip abroad, I regretfully missed our state and regional meetings this year. However, before leaving the states, I sent contributions in money amounting to \$50.00 through the Hickory Women's Club and my personal solicitations for ads to the Golden Jubilee State program. I also sent to Bertha Johnson of Prentiss, Miss., information of our state welfare programs to include in her speech during the South Eastern session. Thus you see my heart was with you in both tangible and spiritual ways, but my finance was not elastic enough to stretch over expenses of my inter-session study at Columbia University, the trip to eight European countries, plus the two more local events. I must say I missed the Club Women sponsoring these organizations but my trip was in keeping with the South Eastern 1959 theme: "Bon Voyage to Grandeur Thinking" as applied to education through travel.

My trip to Europe included eight countries namely: England, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Austria and France covering a period of six weeks. I shall attempt in this article to give a brief account of the purpose, personnel and a limited description of what we studied in each country; concluding with the group's evaluation of the study.

Columbia University in New York sponsored a travel seminar entitled Education and Society to the countries mentioned for broader knowledge of the educational and social cultures of these countries. To see and mingle with people of these countries could best inform us of how they live and why they live as they do; would make for more understanding which is conducive to international peace.

The personnel offered valuable insight to various localities of our own United States. The party of 39 represented the following sections: Oklahoma, District of Columbia, Ohio, California, the state of Washington, Haiti, Michigan, New Jersey, Minnesota, Massachusetts, South America and North Carolina. The group had a variety of experiences and interest to share during the tour. Among the group were Superintendents of schools, authors, nurses, philoso-

phers, psychologists, teachers in a variety of fields, students and three small children.

My daughter, Mrs. Beatrice Smith, and I were among two of the four Negroes in the party. We visited the following cities and countries: London, England; Oslo, Norway; Stockholm, Sweden; Helsinki, Finland; Moscow, Russia; Prague, Czechoslovakia; Salisbury, Austria; and Paris, France.

We took the British Overseas Air Craft flight July 6 and reached London July 7. We stayed at Regent Palace Hotel in the center of London near Picadilly Circus. The tours in London included: The House of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, St. Pauls Cathedral, Trafalgar Square, London Bridge and The Tower of London.

In London we talked with teachers, political leaders, attended concerts, and visited schools including London University. By bus we went to Stratford Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace, and saw the famous play, *Midsummer Nights Dream*. The same day we saw Anne Hathaway's Cottage, the home of one of Shakespeare's wives. We visited Oxford, a museum and the National gallery.

By July 13 our time in London was up. By train we left there, across eastern England to New Castle where we boarded a ferry across the North Sea to Bergen. After being shaken by the Northern Sea waters on the Leader ship, we were glad to reach Bergen and retire for the night in Hotel Neptune.

The following day we set out by train to Oslo, Norway. En route we were charmed by the scenery of high mountains, water falls, artistically arranged farms, the flowers in and around most of the buildings and the general handiwork of God as viewed in the firmaments.

At Oslo we stayed in the Viking Hotel. Among the things we saw there were Oslo Harbor, The Viking Museum, Ekberg Hill, "The Old Town," Newer Housing developments and several institutions where we heard lectures on Norwegian politics and educational system.

The midnight sun caused confusion as to when to retire for bed. July 17 we left Norway for Stockholm, Sweden. Residing at Hotel Malmen, we enjoyed every comfort a tourist might hope to receive in a hotel. Here we needed a knowledge of Norwegian language. In the absence of the guide we could not interpret the menu of our first meal. One among our group had a fair knowledge of the language and came to our rescue at meal time.

Helsinki, Finland, came next on

our itinerary. The most outstanding visit in Helsinki was the world renowned Stadium where many of our Americans have competed in a variety of sports. July 25 was the date of our entrance to Leningrad, Russia. From what we had previously heard and read naturally we were apprehensive to a degree. We excitedly passed customs with a huge woman in charge of the blanks. To our surprise and delight the woman proved quite helpful in assisting with the blanks.

We stopped at Hotel October in Leningrad. Everywhere we went there, we saw statues or pictures of Lenin, the Soviet hero during the revolution, that overthrew the rule of Czars. We saw the play; Hunchback of Notre Dame, Pushkin Park, The Summer Palace and other historic places.

Moscow, Russia, the capital following Leningrad, on our tour. Moscow is more than 800 years old and was packed with cultural and educational phases of interest. One of our two guides had studied in the United States and knew about our American way of life.

The workers felt a tremendous responsibility for the development of their country. They told of the free medical educational and housing services given them; of how the government was for the welfare of all its citizens, as they saw it.

Despite the fact that many of their churches are used as museums, the milk of human kindness flowed in action wherever we went. Special courtesies were shown the four Negroes in our group. We visited the American Exhibit in Moscow, saw the Kremlin where we viewed the embalmed bodies of Lenin and Stalin. We encountered a few American Negroes who were studying at Moscow University, another place we visited. Other Americans we saw in Russia were John Daley, Edward Strichen, Carl Sandberg, Ralph Bunche and others.

Red Square was very impressive with floral designs and historic statues. Kiev was the third Russian city we visited. The highlight of this visit was an English speaking school where conversation was fluent and understandable. We saw the 11th century Cathedral, a monastery the place of live and dead monks. We had visits with top officials of the city and learned about their system of education.

Going from Kiev to Prague, Czechoslovakia, we enjoyed tours similar to other places we had been. One outstanding memory was a symbol of the Christ Child on one of the churches, holding a globe of the whole world in his hand. Salisbury, Austria, followed Prague. En route we saw the Blue

Danube River and the Alps mountains.

In Salisbury, we saw the birth place of Mozart, his statue, the Mozarteum, the place where annual musical festivals take place; we enjoyed two concerts there. We visited the Salisbury Seminar where American culture is taught by American scholars. By now it was August 14 when we packed for Paris, France: exciting because many of us had long wanted to see "Paree" and also because we were then on our home stretch.

Tours in Paris included the Eiffel Tower, The Louvre, Luxembourg Gardens, Napoleon's Tomb, the place where Marie Antionette was killed, shopping centers and several institutions of learning. Briefly evaluating the trip, we feel that our stated mission was more than accomplished.

With broadening horizons on international affairs and grateful hearts we took flight for the United States August 18, making a brief stop in Iceland, reaching New York by Pan American flight August 19. En route to the United States, we sang: *Mid Pleasures and Palaces Tho, We May Roam, Be It Ever So Humble, There's No Place Like Home.*

—Mrs. E. D. Moore

ANNUAL CONVENTION

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all guests.

Saturday, June 5th: Business Sessions of Adult Federation and Junior Federation.

Clubs are reminded to send a delegate or report by mail to Mrs. Collins. Trophies to be awarded the District having largest increase in both Senior and Junior clubs.

Get club activity reports to your District President or person named to compile reports for your District. One summary report will be made for each District as the District membership stand.

Contributions, to be made as delegate registers for club.

1. Scholarship, your amount will determine the continuing of scholarship already begun and adding of new ones.

2. Your club contribution to the Braille Magazine gives the blind opportunity to keep pace with what's going on which they would not receive otherwise.

Your attending may mean a sacrifice, but it will show interest and loyalty for your organization's aims and purposes, and appreciation of the host invitation and preparation. Be there.