

THE NEW BERN MIRROR

Published Every Friday at 111 King Street,
New Bern, N. C., by the Sole Owner

J. GASKILL McDANIEL Editor and Publisher

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

One Year\$2.50 Six Months\$1.25

Entered as second-class mail at New Bern April 4, 1958,
under the act of March 3, 1879.

NO ELECTION IS UNIMPORTANT

On this Memorial Day, as we approach Saturday's battle of the ballots, it would be well for us to remember that no election is a trival occurrence.

Whether citizens are electing a president, a governor, a county commissioner or a constable, the matter is not to be taken lightly.

Democracy and its manifold function need strength at every level. Weakness anywhere, from the lowliest public office to the White House itself, is as destructive in the final analyses as a termite that undermines a seemingly stout structure.

You may not see the bloodstains intermingled with the printer's ink on the ballot you are handed tomorrow at your polling place. The bloodstains will be there nevertheless, if only in a symbolic sense. It will be the blood of heroes, spilled at Valley Forge, Gettysburg, Salerno and Guadalcanal.

Some of it came from the torn veins and arteries of farm boys reared on Craven County soil, a lad whose Street of Dreams was Middle, Broad, East Front, or perhaps Metcalf.

That small, unseen splotch in the corner of your ballot once coursed through the young and hopeful heart of a Cherry Point Marine who hailed from Arkansas, Wisconsin, or maybe Minnesota. Crimson as the red in Old Glory, it is his lasting contribution to this election and every election in America for all time to come.

Can we then, do less than vote seriously and conscientiously? Call politics dirty and rotten if you care to, as you might do in all truthfulness; but be cognizant of the fact that clean politics will never stem from the unforgiveable indifference of citizens who vote thoughtlessly, or worse still, don't bother to vote at all.

Voting is more than a privilege, great though that privilege is. It is a duty, with us always, and none of us can escape its awesome aspects, though we may chose to ignore it.

There will be an unmarked ballot waiting for you tomorrow, and it will remain unmarked at sundown unless you have stirred out of your complacency sufficiently to do something about it.

You can stay away from the polls, if you feel so inclined, and many citizens of New Bern and Craven County will do just that. But you can no more erase from your unmarked ballot the blood of heroes who died for your citizenship than you can justify your attitude.

Once, in a far away land, another individual likewise shirked his duty and responsibility. He too was confronted with bloodstains, the pending bloodstains of a soon-to-be crucified Man of Galilee.

In a dramatic gesture of cowardice, he tried to wash his hands of the matter; but down through the ages the finger of guilt has pointed to him, and thus it will ever be.

Each of us, even as Pontius Pilate, is called upon to serve in the role of judge and juror when election day rolls around. Our decisions, admittedly, won't send a Savior into the anguish of Gethsemane nor subject him to the torture of Calvary's cross.

But even in so called "little" elections, we are asserting ourselves as citizens, and influencing the destiny of our own lives and the lives of posterity.

Is voting important? Maybe not, but thousands of young Americans died believing it was. There again, you alone must be the judge and act accordingly.

Village Verses

POPPIES FOR SALE

I've bought a poppy for today, it's paper petals red and gay,
And just like you, I'll pin it near my heart;
Somehow I almost hear it say, "Remember Flanders, far away,
Remember boys who played the hero's part."
There where they share eternal sleep—dreamless slumber deathly deep,
The torch of freedom must not flicker low;
In conquered countries life is cheap, the women and the children weep
When kids and old men off to battle go.
The larks above still bravely fly, where bombs once tumbled from the sky,
And breezes sing a haunting, sad refrain;
With muted voice, they ask us why each generation's sons must die
To feed a strife that often seems in vain.
These things I'm thinking of today, as I see poppies bright and gay.
—JGMCD.

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Here's a Prayer for Your Memorial Day

Dear God, Thou Who art perfect in Thy holiness, limitless in Thy power, infinite in Thy wisdom and gracious in Thy forgiveness; we bless Thee for the privilege of prayer.

We thank Thee that Thou hast made it possible for us to know and serve Thee, and may our ever awakening thoughts be of Thee. And as we close our eyes to sleep, may we do so with complete trust that Thou wilt bless us while we sleep; and as we live our lives day by day, give us the assurance of Thy presence so that we may think the thoughts that are wholesome and pure, say the words that are kind and true, and do the deeds that are constructive and helpful.

We thank Thee for those who have served our country, and paid with their lives the price of the freedom that we enjoy today. Let us not forget them, and let us not forget the principles of human freedom which we enjoy today because of their service and sacrifice for our country.

May we give ourselves, our time, our energy and our means in order that this and succeeding generations may have the privilege of knowing and loving and serving Thee. Forgive our mistakes, and enable us to live victorious Christian lives. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in Whose name we pray, Amen.

—The Rev. Denver S. Blevins,
Neuse Forest Presbyterian Church

New Bern's Battery A Inspired Poetry

New Bern's Battery A, 113th Field Artillery, was part of the 55th Field Artillery Brigade during World War I.

This is what Grantland Rice wrote:

"Here's to their memory, here's their Good Luck

On from the General down to the Buck,

On from Sevier to the last hills of France,

Holding their drive through the final advance;

St. Mihiel knew them, and when they were done

On to the Argonne with caisson and gun,

Taking each highway that led to the Hun!

Slogging along through the mud and the flame,

On to the finish still playing the game,

Playing the game as the game should be played,

Here's to the 55th F. A. Brigade!

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News For Veterans

Successful use of a new drug product to reduce swelling and speed healing of injuries and infections was reported by Veterans Administration.

Streptokinase-streptodornase, in tablet form, was given to 57 patients with conditions involving abscess, swelling and blood clots, a research group at the Fort Howard, Md., VA hospital said.

The researchers, Dr. Joseph M. Miller, Dr. George C. Godfrey, Dr. Milton Ginsberg and Dr. Constantine J. Papastrat, said results were excellent in most cases.

Some improvement in inflammation and swelling was observed within 24 hours after the drug was administered, the group of surgeons said, and preventive use of the tablets permits surgical repair of extensive wounds with only a fraction of the swelling that normally occurs.

The doctors said the new tablet form of streptokinase-streptodornase also eliminates the pain and annoyance that some patients experience from injections of the drug.

The tablets are allowed to dissolve in the patient's mouth next to the cheek, with absorption taking place through the cheek membranes.

Since the drug mechanism permits passage of bacteria from the site of an infection to other parts of the body, the Fort Howard surgeons said it is essential that pa-

tients suspected of having an infection be treated with an antibiotic at the same time they receive the tablets, as was done in the VA study. The doctors reported their findings in a recent issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

G. R. Huffstetler, Jr.

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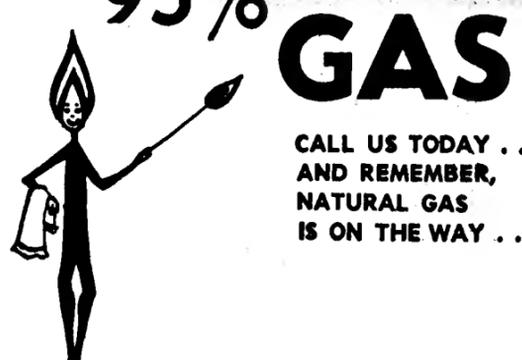
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