

THE NEW BERN MIRROR

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MAKE OURS SMALL

One of the complaints most often aimed at small towns is that everybody knows your business. If they don't know it, they guess it, or manufacture a choice bit of gossip from their own vivid imaginations.

This can be pretty irritating, and in its crueler forms is nothing short of vicious slander. But, human nature being what it is, all of us as long as we live are going to talk about our neighbors.

We'll be happier, and our acquaintances will be happier, if the bulk of what we say is kind, considerate and complimentary. Actually, there's nothing much wrong with gossip if it isn't aimed at destruction, embarrassment and humiliation of others.

There's a mean streak in all of us, and in varying degrees we get a semblance of pleasure out of discussing the faults and shortcomings of the other fellow. At the moment, he may be picking you to pieces too, which in poetic justice is what you deserve.

However, sooner or later in a small town—or a medium-sized town like New Bern—there'll be good things as well as bad said about you. And, in turn, you'll say some rather nice things every now and then. If you aren't too sinful on the one hand, and too vicious on the other, the law of averages will sort of even the score.

Of course, if you don't want to be talked about you do stand a good chance of getting some relief by moving to a big city. There you won't be talked about, for the simple reason that the milling millions won't be interested in adding you to their conversation.

You'll be a little fish in a big pool, unnoticed in the same manner that all the other little fish are unnoticed. The fact that prying eyes and wagging tongues won't cramp your style isn't helpful to your vanity, however. Knowing that there's no one around to even care is rather depressing.

We speak from personal experience. Having walked for blocks and block in New York City without seeing the first friend to say "Howdy" to, it didn't take us long to wish we were back on Middle street. To tell the truth, we even missed the cold looks of those home town folks who, for one reason or another, don't like us.

Having someone look upon you with disfavor has its good points. It serves to remind you that you wouldn't get all the votes in a popularity contest, and that maybe you aren't perfect, after all.

Besides, if you bump into your enemies often enough on Main Street, and have a bright and beautiful morning tarnished to some extent, you might get the ill feeling out of your system for your own peace of mind.

Fortunately for most of us, in a town such as ours, there'll always be friends along the thoroughfare to exchange greetings with. Day after day you'll see the same familiar smiles, and hear the same comments on the state of the weather.

Over and over it will be the same, but it won't grow monotonous. If your heart is half-way right, and you love people, your life will be wonderfully enriched by trifles such as these.

You'll feel good inside too, when you speak to a stranger and the stranger speaks back. The chances are you'll never see him again, but in one fleeting moment—with a word and a look—you placed a glowing candle on his pathway to eternity.

Yes, small towns afford an opportunity for neighborliness that a teeming metropolis never can. And in a small town there's less suspicion and distrust. Not that suspicion and distrust aren't justified in big cities, considering the number of guys who are ready to work you over for a fast dollar.

Small towns have such characters too, but word gets around pretty quickly. Usually a shake-down artist has to move on to some other locale after a short time, and is apt to head for a larger place where the mortality rate for his pitch isn't as high.

All things considered, we'll still take the smaller community. And when folks get nosy we'll try to understand that much of their curiosity is a genuine interest in their neighbor's joy and heartbreak.

Historical Gleanings

—By—

FRANCES B. CLAYPOOLE
and
ELIZABETH MOORE

PETITION of WILL: GASTON, for PETITIONER, 1826.

Thomas C. Hooper vs Richard Jones and wife, and John C. Stanley. Petition. Service and Subpoena admitted April 10th, 1826.

To the honorable, the Judge of the Superior Court of Law for the County of Craven, the Petition of Thomas C. Hooper.

Respectfully sheweth unto your honor, your petitioner, Thomas C. Hooper, that Jeremiah Vail formerly of Craven county was seized in fee of two tracts of land, both situate in said county and on the South side of Neuse river, one tract estimated to contain four hundred acres, which had been granted to Nicholas Rutledge by patent bearing date the 27th June, 1746, lying on the South side of Wherry Branch, beginning at a red oak, thence South 53 degrees East 200 poles to a stake, thence North 37 East, 320 poles to a poplar and an ash, then to the first station; the other a tract of 150 acres more or less, which had been granted to the said Jeremiah by Patent bearing date 15th October, 1775, beginning at a white oak, Rutledge's and Powell's corner, near Neuse road, thence running along said Rutledge's line, South 40 degrees, East 50 chains or 200 poles to a gum, then North 70 degrees East 31 chains or one hundred and twenty-four poles, to a white oak, Peter Hand's corner, thence along his line North 48 West 80 chains or 320 poles to a pine, said Hand's other corner, then South 70 degrees West 26 chains of 104 poles to a small white oak in Mrs. Powell's line, and then along her line South 53 degrees East 30 chain or 120 poles to the first station. AND your petitioner further shows that the said Jeremiah Vail being so seized as aforesaid, departed this life sometime before the year 1776, intestate, and thereupon, the said tracts descended upon the six daughters of the said JEREMIAH VAIL, viz: ELIZABETH, SARAH, MOLSY, NANCY, MARGARET and NELLY, who became seized in fee thereof as tenants in coparcenary. AND your petitioner further shews that MOLSY one of the said coparceners intermarried with a certain

Village Verses

GRATITUDE

Teach me, dear God, that life is worth the living,
That everyday should bring its own Thanksgiving;
Not one brief Thursday, named in late November—
Throughout each hour and week, let me remember.
Let me be thankful, all my whole life through,
Grateful, dear God, for little things You do.
The way you paint Your sunsets, in the flaming west,
Cheery songs you give to birds—music at its best;
Snowflakes, flowers and stardust, and kindly thoughts
You have a way of sprinkling in barren hearts.
I'm thankful for big things, yet countless blessings small
Perhaps more than we realize are the biggest of them all.

—JGMcd.

JOSEPH LEECH, and died intestate prior to the year 1795, whereby her share and interest in the said tracts descended upon and vested in GEORGE, MERRICK LEECH, her only son and heir at law, and that NANCY, another of the coparceners aforesaid also died intestate, prior to the year aforesaid, whereby all her right, share and interest descended upon and vested in her two sons, WILLIAM TRYON HOWE, her only son by her marriage with THOMAS CLIFFORD HOWE, her first husband, and ALEXANDER SCHAW, her only son by her marriage with ROBERT SCHAW, her second husband, and that, the aforesaid SARAH, MARGARET and NELLY, all died intestate, and without issue prior to the year last aforesaid, whereby the whole of the said tracts accrued unto and were the common property of the aforesaid ELIZABETH VAIL, GEORGE M. LEECH, WILLIAM T. HOWE and ALEXANDER SCHAW, the said ELIZABETH and GEORGE being proprietors each of an undivided third between them. AND your petitioner further shews that on the 5th day of July, 1796, the aforesaid ELIZABETH VAIL and GEORGE M. LEECH conveyed unto FRANCES LEECH, niece of the

aforesaid ELIZABETH, and sister of the said GEORGE, all the interest which they could convey in the said tracts so that the said FRANCES became proprietor in fee of two undivided third parts thereof, and shortly thereafter, viz. in the year 1798, the said WILLIAM T. HOWE departed this life intestate and without issue, whereby his interest and estate there descended upon his only brother, and heir at law, ALEXANDER SCHAW, who thence forth became proprietor of and was seized in fee of one undivided third part thereof. AND your petitioner further shews unto your honor that the said ALEX-

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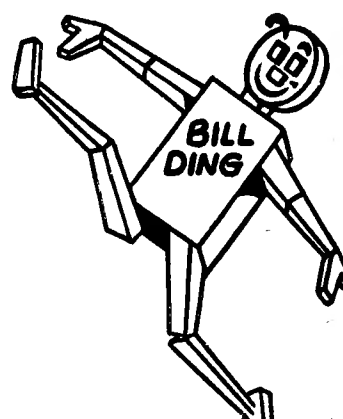
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