

Roanoke Ramblings

(Editor's Note: Jerry Elliott, who has covered the municipal building activities for the Herald for the past five and a half months, writes of a few incidents told him by the late Mayor J. T. Chase.)

When this writer first came to Roanoke Rapids, Mr. Chase had just assumed the duties of mayor for the third time. He told us the first time we met him that "I'm going to tell you a lot and I'll trust you never to print those things I ask you not to. If you ever do print something I ask you not to — you'll never get another thing out of me." Then, to put us at our ease, he laughed.

One afternoon, we visited in his home for about two hours. He displayed several clippings — one from the Atlanta Journal in which a columnist for that paper had called him a real converted Southerner. He seemed to be even prouder of that than he was of his award from Woodrow Wilson for having been instrumental in capturing several German spies during World War I.

Mr. Chase was indeed very proud of the fact that he was a citizen of this city. He delighted in recalling incidents in the city's history, although he maintained — as he brought out in a short talk at the recent Semi-Centennial celebration ceremonies — that it was only by looking forward that the city could keep pace with its growth. (He always told the young men that the old-timers had carried the ball for fifty years and that it was now up to them.)

Shortly after he came, said Mr. Chase, there was a Dutchman living here who was just over from the old country. This Dutchman had picked up just enough street-corner English so that when he spoke he invariably cast aspersions on character and ancestry, although totally unaware of the import of his statements. One day, the citizens became particularly aroused against the immigrant, obtained a piece of rope of sufficient length and durability for the purpose and began seeking the culprit, determined to use that rope against the durability of the offender's neck. Seeking sanctuary, the Dutchman fled to the home of Mr. Chase, who, although disapproving of the language used constantly by the fugitive, did not especially relish the thought of seeing the man swinging from a limb.

So he hid the man and instructed him to escape via the back door when he saw the opportunity and keep going. He then went out on the porch and asked very innocently of the group what the purpose of their visit to his home might be. When told, he began delaying them with questions and other stalling tactics. Finally he allowed them to search the house and, naturally, they found nothing. Meanwhile, said Mr. Chase, the Dutchman had put several miles between himself and the city of Roanoke Rapids and, as far as he knew, was still traveling.

It was Mr. Chase, also, who told of the famous telegram sent by John Armstrong Chaloner to his brother, Bob, in New York when the latter was divorced by Lena Calvateria, the famous opera singer. Bob at one time had had John committed to the New York insane asylum, but John had escaped. When John heard of the divorce and the monetary transactions that accompanied it in which his brother did not fare so well, he had Mr. Chase drive him to the telegraph station in his wagon and sent the telegram, which read — "Who's loony now?"

Once, two men were drowned in the river and almost positive identification was made of one body as being that of a local man. Mr. Chase said it wasn't and, sure enough, two weeks later identified it as that of one of their sons. Mr. Chase and another fellow were watching the proceedings attendant to the identification when the other fellow said, "Joe, I'll make an agreement with you. Whoever one of us dies first will try to come back and contact the other one." Mr. Chase said he agreed, half in jest. The other fellow died and shortly afterward as they were sitting at home one night about 10 o'clock, they heard a racket upstairs that sounded "like someone was breaking up the furniture." Mr. Chase's first thought, he said, was of the agreement. "But, boy, were we relieved when we found out it was just the cat scrambling around in the attic!"

Mr. Chase knew all the old-timers, Chaloner, Major T. L. Emory and others, and he could tell anecdotes about them by the hour.

He was one of the founders of the Herald back in 1914, when several local citizens became persuaded that the town needed a newspaper. He said he thought the late Mr. C. A. Wyche named the paper. The first type was set up for three weeks, he recalled, while the press motor was broken down and no papers could be printed.

Finally, six colored men were hired to turn the flywheel on the press by hand and about 25 or 30 papers were printed in that manner.

What Roanoke Rapids Makes — Makes Roanoke Rapids

VOLUME XXXIII

ROANOKE RAP

THE ROANOKE RAPIDS HERALD

Growing With Carolina's Fastest Growing City

Herald Classified Advertising Gets Quick Results

Local High School Band in Parade Formation



Shown above is the 34 member Roanoke Rapids High School band, drawn up in parade formation in front of the school building. Members of this year's band are: Vance Collins, Jerry Kidd, Vivian Haggins, Herbert Moore, Doris Jean Smith, Mary Johnson, Patricia Topping, Peggy Ann Edwards, Payne Harris, E. W. Lee, Bill White (drum major), Max Rogers, Billy Murray, Roy Rawls, Lewis Ivey, Clyde Camp, Lewis Langston, Noah Sadler, Bobby Watson, Donald Reeves, Gene Watson, Alice Brown, Cora Mae Haggins, Jimmie Turner, Ben Marks, M. C. Crane, Kenneth Misel and Robert MacAdams.

Davis Decides To Remain As Local Chief of Police

Trims Hedge in Auto

A 41 year old resident of West Rosemary, booked by police as William L. Tripp, was arrested Tuesday night at 7:15 on charges of driving while drunk as the result of an incident that transpired in the 900 block of Jackson Street.

According to witnesses, an automobile driven by an apparently intoxicated man over the curb and into a hedge belonging to Mrs. M. B. Cooke at 919 Jackson Street.

Funeral Services Held Here Sunday For Crash Victim

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock for Jimmie Langford Wright, killed the previous Sunday in the crash of two Navy torpedo bombers over Albemarle Sound 15 miles south of Elizabeth City.

The body was recovered about one o'clock last Thursday afternoon, according to the public relations office of the Norfolk Naval Air Station, after Navy planes had conducted a four and a half day search for the bodies of Wright and Vic Dean McGinley, of Virginia Beach, pilot of the other plane.

The services, which were conducted by the Rev. W. R. Stevens, pastor of the Rosemary Methodist Church, were held from Williams Funeral Home and the multitude of people who attended attested to the esteem in which the 23 year old World War II veteran was held.

Sgt. Rufus S. Finch

Funeral services will be held in Middlesex Friday afternoon at two o'clock for Sgt. Rufus S. Finch, 31, the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. N. Finch of Roanoke Rapids, who was killed in action in Germany on March 5, 1945.

The body of the local soldier arrived in the United States this week after having been removed from the Henri Chapelle Cemetery in Belgium.

Survivors, in addition to the parents, include four brothers, John, Marshall, Alton and William Finch, all of Roanoke Rapids, and three sisters, Mrs. T. E. Moore of Raleigh and Mrs. Morris Morgan and Mrs. Douglas Williams of Roanoke Rapids.

November Permits Reach \$107,030 Total Here As Week Adds \$68,380

November continued to show a rise in building permits issued as this week added \$68,380 worth, of which \$16,000 worth was for two new residences, bringing to 97 the total of new homes for which permits have been issued this year.

Thus, in November up through Wednesday, the total amount of permits issued rested at \$107,030.

Permits This Week... Permits were issued during this week to Rosemary Manufacturing Company for an elevator and tower for stairs on the mill site between 11th and 12th Streets at an estimated cost of \$44,600; for window repairs, \$5000 and for substitution and switch room, \$2780.

Roanoke Rapids Chief of Police T. J. Davis, who last week submitted his resignation to the city board of commissioners, met with the board last Thursday night in an hour and 15 minute executive session. Saturday night, the late Mayor J. T. Chase announced that Davis would remain as head of the local department.

Just what went on in the commissioners' room in the municipal meeting has not been officially announced for, as Mr. Chase told newsmen that night after they had been readmitted to the meeting place following the period of waiting outside — "There are times when a family wants to have a private conversation."

H. G. Perkinson Hit By Pick-Up Truck

H. G. Perkinson, about 66, a resident of 313 Monroe Street, was struck by a pick-up truck about 6:15 Tuesday morning and taken to Roanoke Rapids Hospital by the driver, identified by police as K. Luter Bryant, a textile worker.

X-rays made Tuesday failed to disclose any broken bones and Perkinson was reported resting comfortably Wednesday.

The accident happened about midway between Fourth and Fifth Streets on Roanoke Avenue, according to police.

Bond Reduced \$7,500 For Williamston Negro At Tuesday Hearing

A hearing on a writ of habeas corpus filed by Williamston attorney, Elmer Peele, representing Walter Harper, 52 year old Negro charged with driving while drunk and manslaughter in connection with the death of nine year old Jackie Ray Etheridge of South Weldon last week, was held in Windsor Tuesday before Superior Court Judge Paul Edmondson, of Goldsboro.

Bond, originally set at \$10,000 in the case, was reduced to \$2500 by Judge Edmondson with the understanding that "the Texas-born negro plead guilty to the charges when arraigned in Halifax Superior Court on November 24th, according to Sheriff H. A. House who transported Harper to Windsor for the hearing."

The meeting opened at 7:30 Thursday night and Chase made the announcement that the board would meet in executive session with Davis. This automatically expelled newsmen from viewing the proceedings and they left the room.

Davis went into the board room and after about 45 minutes emerged for a five minute wait. Then he was again summoned inside and at 8:48, reporters and the city clerk were admitted.

"We have a statement for the press and radio," said Mr. Chase and then he gave the following announcement: "The board has refused to accept Chief Davis' resignation. We intend to issue a further statement within the next two days."

Saturday night, Davis told Mr. Chase that he had decided to stay in Roanoke Rapids.

Halifax County Health Clerk Gets State Post

Mrs. F. S. Moore, Senior Clerk of the Halifax County Health Department, was elected chairman of the Secretary's Section of the North Carolina Public Health Association at the 36th annual session of that group held in Charlotte November 3, 4 and 5th, it was announced today.

The Secretary's Section is composed of the clerical personnel from all the local health departments throughout the state and from the State Health Department. Mrs. Moore has served faithfully and efficiently with the Halifax County Health Department since September, 1934 and is well known to the citizens of the county.

The Local Week . . .

WOMEN JURORS HERE TO INSTALL OFFICERS. The annual meeting of the Halifax District, Boy Scouts of America, will be held at the Rosemary Cafe tomorrow night, November 14th, at 7:30 p. m.

The main business of the meeting will be the installation of the two elected officers John Hines, District Chairman, and D. E. Bennett, District Commissioner and the chairman of the operating committees who are to be appointed by Hines.

Scout Executive John Hackney of Wilson will attend the meeting.

GLOSSON HAD WITHDRAWN. Police officer T. L. Glosson who had submitted a verbal application for the job of chief of police in Roanoke Rapids prior to Chief Davis' decision to stay and who was named by city commissioner D. C. Clark as having "roughed up" a prisoner (a charge denied by Glosson), withdrew his application Thursday afternoon.

"I feel it best, in the interests of unity and cooperation among the members of the force, to withdraw my application. I feel that the present confusion within the force arising over the selection of a new chief is a discredit to Chief Davis and his work here. I assure whoever is chosen that he will have my wholehearted cooperation and obedience to orders," Glosson said in announcing his withdrawal.

M. D. Collier Assumes Post Temporarily

Choosing New Mayor Will Be Difficult He Points Out

Veteran City Commissioner Marvin D. Collier, who has been on the board of commissioners since December 2, 1919, has succeeded temporarily to the office of mayor left vacant by the death of Mayor J. T. Chase.

Collier, who has been chairman of the present board, will serve as mayor pro-tem until the board selects a man to fill out the unexpired two year term which Chase had held since May 6th of this year.

"We are not going to hurry in selecting a new mayor," said Collier. "It is something that requires careful consideration. It will be a hard matter to replace Mr. Chase for the mayor's position is one that has grown into a full time job and needs an active man. It will be even harder to find someone in view of the fact that the job doesn't pay enough for the work it entails."

Collier, owner of a downtown grocery, has been in poor health himself of late and, as a result, does not consider himself able to perform the duties of the office. He was appointed to the board on December 2, 1919 to fill the unexpired term of Howard Leister who had resigned and when the board holds its next regularly scheduled meeting on December 2, 1947, he will begin his 29th year as a member.

He first came to Roanoke Rapids on February 15, 1896, he said, when he was only a boy. There was only one mill, he recalls, the one down by the river and there was absolutely nothing in the present "uptown" section. In fact, said Collier, there was practically nothing anywhere.

"But we'll get everything straightened out when things settle down. We'll have a new mayor and things will straighten out after awhile," he said.

Construction Contract RR-Aurelian Springs Road to be Let Soon

Construction contract for the long awaited paving of the highway between Roanoke Rapids and Aurelian Springs will be awarded either in December or early in January, 1948.

Source of this news came in a communication from T. J. McKim, division engineer to J. R. Manning, chairman of the Roads and Streets Committee of the Roanoke Rapids Planning Commission.

An attempt will be made to ready the road so it will be included in letting new schedules for Dec. 18th, the communication said, but if not included in that date it definitely will be in the first letting in January 1948.

This road is an essential link in the very important interstate highway and shortest distance between Raleigh and Norfolk.

Express Admiration For Deceased Mayor

Throughout the city this week were heard expressions of regret at the death of Mayor J. T. Chase, coupled with praise for his many years of service to the city. Everywhere, from people in all walks of life, were heard remarks that can only be merited by a lifetime of unselfish giving of one's time and energy to a community.

M. D. Collier, city board chairman, now acting mayor, told reporters, "I was out of town Sunday and when I got back my daughter called me up and told me the news. I was shocked to hear it. Mr. Chase was a fine man. He will be a difficult man to replace."

Howard Pruden, also on the board, said, "The town has lost one of its most valuable citizens and, I think, one of the best mayors we've ever had. He was really a fine man. The program which he had laid out for the town is one of the finest we've ever had. The job has grown into a full time one and Mr. Chase was the ideal man for it. He was an engineer and an executive, an ideal combination."

Chief of Police T. J. Davis, who only Saturday night told the mayor he had elected to remain in Roanoke Rapids, said, "I certainly did hate to hear about it. I am glad now that I told Mr. Chase Saturday night that I was going to stay here."

W. Bernard Aillsbrook, city attorney and himself a former mayor, told the Herald, "I met Mr. Chase very shortly before locating in Roanoke Rapids. My first impression of him was that he was very kind and, in the 15 years that followed, I found that

my first impression of him was most true. I had occasion to call on him numerous times, always asking favors, and I never found him too busy to see me and he never denied me a favor.

"He was a genuine friend to all those who were closely associated with him, and those who knew him best loved him most. Seldom do men shed tears, but there were few dry eyes among the men who assembled to pay their last respects to J. T. Chase."

"Personally, in the death of Mr. Chase, I have lost a true friend, as have so many others, and the City of Roanoke Rapids has lost one of its finest and most valuable citizens, and one that will be most difficult to replace.

"We mourn his departure, but we are deeply grateful that he was permitted to come our way and abide in our midst for a season."

D. C. Clark, member of the board of city commissioners told the Herald this morning that he had known Mr. Chase and worked with him for many years. "In fact," said Clark, "I grew up working for him and I feel the loss just as deeply as if it were one of my own family. Truth of the matter is, I sort of regarded Mr. Chase as one of the family. He came to the aid of the men under him in high and low water when he was with the power company and he took his duties as mayor just as seriously, while in the mayor's office words are a poor mirror of my thoughts because they aren't sufficient to indicate my feelings."

(Continued on page 6—Sect. A)

Local Mills' Payroll Will Be Increased \$775,000 Annually Company Offices Announce

The local textile mills payroll will be increased by approximately \$775,000 annually as a result of the wage increase announced by the local management of the Roanoke, Rosemary and Patterson Mills companies, which took effect last Monday.

The wage boost brings the payroll of the local textile mills up to the rate of about \$8,600,000 annually. This added to the payrolls of other local industries undoubtedly lifts the Roanoke Rapids industrial payroll to around \$10,000,000.00 yearly, which is probably the highest industrial payroll enjoyed by any city in eastern North Carolina and is among the highest in this state.

This is the second increase in wages given textile workers this year. A ten percent voluntary increase was given last February 14th. Thus a total of 19 percentage points in wage increases have become effective this year, which figures a 20 percent boost inside the year 1947.

The announcement of the textile mills' management stated: "In keeping with our well-known employee wage policy of paying

the highest wages possible consistent with our ability to sell the goods that you produce, we are glad to announce a wage increase effective Monday, Nov. 10, 1947. The present minimum wage of 80¢ per hour is being lifted to 87¢ per hour. The wages of other hourly workers and piece rate workers are being increased 9%."

Community Chest Quota Reached, Akers Reports

Henry Akers, chairman of the 1947 Roanoke Rapids Community Chest drive, reported today that the city had reached its quota of \$14,030 and, with a few more contributions expected, would surpass that sum by a slight margin.

Akers told the Herald he hoped to be able to release final tabulations next week.

WILL SPONSOR DANCE

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Halifax Post 3702, will sponsor a Thanksgiving Eve Dance at the Roanoke Rapids Armory on Wednesday November 26th.