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BOONE SKETCHES

By J. C. R.

LET'S FLAY SANTA CLAUS!

Untold dozens of letters to Santa Claus are finding their way to The Democrat office . . . rough, misspelled, poorly written little messages, marred sometimes by the dirty hands of the juvenile scribe. Faith in Santa Claus, faith in humanity, faith in God . . . all of these impelling virtues manifest themselves in little children when they scrawl these simple words, "Dear Santa Clause." Kids without daddies, kids without mummies, kids without homes, kids without friends, . . . each and every one of them dream dreams of a cheerful, round-bellied old gent who resides up at the North Pole in a castle of ice, and on the Day of the Nativity distributes his goodies with prodigal hand to good little children in every land!

Christmas, day of peace and good will, brings its pitiful parallels. There are the hundreds and thousands of satisfied children, with dolls and tricycles and air guns and toy soldiers and teddy bears and candy and fruits . . . little tummies brimming over with the choicest foods, little bodies clothed in the finest of garments, little lives surrounded by the beneficent protection of indulgent parents. But turn the page, and another picture comes into view . . . untold thousands of destitute boys and girls; untold thousands of little faces drawn by poverty; untold thousands of little hearts longing for the "foolishness" of the Yule season; untold thousands of empty stockings dangling limply at cheerless hearthstones; untold thousands of little minds disillusioned by the broken promises of the Patron Saint of child hood.

The local American Legion post is making a sincere effort to bring Christmas cheer and Christmas ketch-knacks into every hut and hovel of Watauga County. It is a tremendous undertaking. It entails weeks of work and worry, hundreds of dolls and toys, hundreds of pounds of candy and nuts, hundreds of yellow oranges . . . and hundreds of dollars in cash! Citizens of the county, who love the Lord and His unfortunate children, are asked to co-operate in this worthwhile movement . . . or, in other words, are given the opportunity to share their worldly goods and their earthly pleasures with the poor and needy of the country-side. Crusading wets and dries, whose shibboleth for many, many moons has been the "spiritual" upbuilding of mortality are urged to coordinate their views on speak-easies, saloons, State-control, beer, wine and potent prohibition slop, dig down in their pockets, lend their voices to an undeniably Christian cause . . . and do a job that will honestly and truly bring joy even to the angels in Heaven!

Donations may be left at The Democrat office or turned over to members of the Legion committee. It's up to the men and women of Watauga County . . . and they've never failed!

AS AN AXE CUTTETH!

Thomas Edward Bingham, whose clarion voice for many years has rilled the shingles of Watauga's temple of justice as he hurled the "whys" and "whiches" of Blackstone, et cetera, into the hairy ears of jurors without number, heaping damnation or tributes of praise, as the case might be, on the troubled carcasses of a thousand defendants . . . is a versatile authority in things far removed from the legal pasture. Mr. Bingham strode into a local hardware store a few days ago for the express purpose of buying an axe. The obliging clerk procured a dozen implements and displayed them with auspicious courtesy in front of the prospective customer. Picking up a double-bitted specimen, Lawyer Bingham cast an appraising eye down the beam, ran expert fingers along sharpened surfaces, balanced it in his hands . . . and vocally ruminated as to the cutting qualities this particular axe possessed. A small crowd assembled, and the obliging barrister elaborated on his timely subject. He delved into the far-distant past and recalled numerous gliblets of "concrete evidence" in defense or disparagement of each tool. Weight, balance, the size and surface of the flying chip, the ease of manipulation, the joys and sorrows of a woodcutter . . . every intricate phase of an intricate "profession" was outlined for the benefit of his embryonic

DISCONTINUING OF LOCAL HATCHERY BRINGS PROTEST

Citizens Cite Advantage Gained from Operation of Rutherford Plant and Ask Officials to Retain It. State Game Officers Are Abolished in Departmental Reorganization and Etheridge Is Named Head.

Authorization of the discontinuance of the State fish hatchery at Rutherford, near Boone, as an economy measure of the Conservation Department, has brought a storm of protest from citizens of Boone and Watauga County, who contend that the hatchery is operated at a minimum cost to the State of North Carolina, that land and pipe lines for the project were given by the county, that relief funds have been used in beautifying the premises, that local sportsmen have contributed a full share to the success of the enterprise, and that by supplying the streams each season with game fish, the hatchery has brought to this section a vast income from visiting anglers.

Numbers of letters have been forwarded to Raleigh protesting the action of the board, and many believe it is yet possible to save the hatchery.

At the meeting of the department heads last Thursday in Raleigh, the offices of commissioner of inland fisheries and State game warden, held by J. S. Harget and Charles H. England, respectively, were abolished. Duties of the two officials were assumed by R. Bruce Etheridge, director of the conservation department, until the next meeting of the board in January. The assistant State game wardens were given additional authority over county wardens serving under them. They may appoint or dismiss county wardens with approval of the director.

Z. T. WATSON DIES TUESDAY NIGHT

Former County Commissioner, Penmanship Instructor and Church Worker Succumbs to Short Illness. Funeral Services Today.

Zachary Taylor Watson, 62 years old, former member of the Board of County Commissioners in Watauga, church worker and teacher, died at his home at Brookside Tuesday evening after an illness which had appeared serious for several weeks.

Funeral services are to be held today at 11 from the Pilot Mountain Baptist Church on New River, and interment will be in the nearby cemetery. Revs. H. M. Winkler, the pastor, and Rev. L. A. Wilson will be in charge of the obsequies. Arrangements will be in charge of Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home.

Surviving is the widow and the following children: Walter Watson, Detroit; C. D. Watson, Bristol; Mrs. G. H. McGuire, West Jefferson; Turner Watson, West Jefferson, and Murlie Watson, Brookside.

Mr. Watson was a member of the board of commissioners during one term, 1912 to 1914, and rendered efficient service to the people of his county. Since that time he has been engaged oftentimes to conduct community writing schools, and was a graduate in Sunday School institute work and applied much of his time to this endeavor. He was at all times a leader in religious work, but interested himself also in all other movements for civic betterment. He was widely known throughout this part of the State for his sterling traits of character and had a great host of friends and relatives.

Mrs. Newton Greer Succumbs Saturday

Mrs. Newton Greer, 83-year-old resident of the Triplett community, died Saturday from an illness which was precipitated by the infirmities of her advanced age. Funeral was conducted the following day at 11 and interment was in the family graveyard.

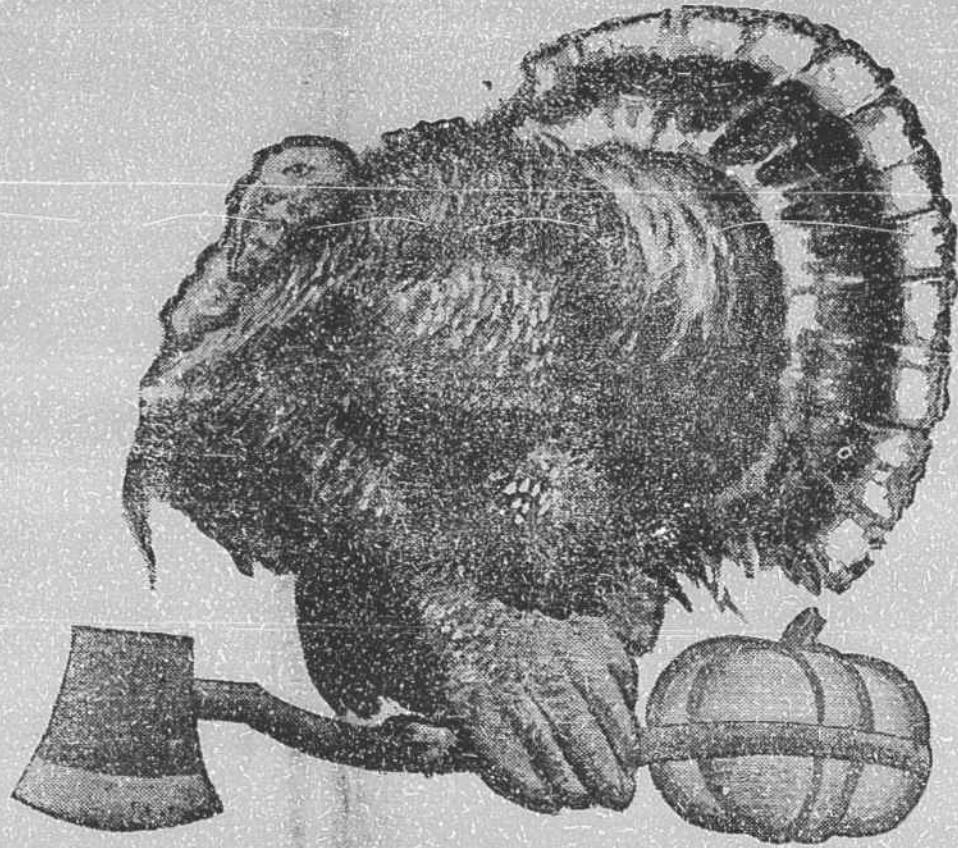
Surviving are three children; Jasper and Albert Greer, and Mrs. J. A. Hartley.

Mrs. Greer was the daughter of Daniel and Amanda Wheeler and had spent her life in the Triplett section. She was well liked by a wide circle of friends.

The peanut crop of Hertford County is reported to be very short with growers interested in borrowing money on the crop as in the case of cotton.

audience . . . and Alex Auton, emeritus professor of the chopping science, suavely offered repeated "amens" as the recital continued. 'Twas an able discourse that ended abruptly as the lawyer picked up a three-pound pole axe, favorite of the amateur, and headed for the tall timber.

Plays Tragic Role In Thanksgiving Festivals



Near Two Hundred Men Gain Work As Highway Projects Are Approved

One Watauga Community Has Not Accepted Any Form Relief

Other communities may rant and rave about the crime wave, the moral decadence of youth, and the want and misery coming in the wake of the panic with its millions of unemployed . . . but to the residents of the Cook School District in Watauga County, the depression has brought few tribulations—in fact so few that not once has the helping hand of the Federal Government been called upon to deliver to the people of this peaceful community even so much as one dust of flour or one thin dime in relief funds.

A Democrat man received this information at the office of Smith Hagaman, Superintendent of Public Welfare, the other day and he questioned his own ears when told that such independence was abroad in Watauga County, and it's the only example of this kind known in any county roundabout. Mr. Hagaman, noting that the people from that section never called at his office, became anxious. Tons of flour had been distributed, bales of cotton cloth, overalls and bloomers; "dugaloo" money had been distributed to the multitudes, and yet no request from the Cook School District. The relief office thought perhaps information was lacking down that way, and inquiries were sent to Miss Grace Mast, who tutors twenty boys and girls in the neighborhood school. Miss Mast in turn brought back the thanks of the people for the consideration of the relief workers and with them the information that the folks there had plenty to eat, enough to wear, were getting along fairly well thank

you, and didn't care for any outside aid. And that's news!

The Cook School District, in case you don't know, is located next the Caswell line, just beyond Blowing Rock, down under the mountain to the left of Bailey's Camp. Seventy-five people live in this secluded vale, and glance up occasionally to see the autos flash by high above on the Lenoir road, but they just go on planting and reaping and rearing their children, educating them and teaching them the fear of God, and the joy of honorable toil. It's a rich section in natural wealth, truck crops and produce luxuriate and furnish a regular income to the happy populace. A fine school is operated there and the folks support their church, as well as themselves. A fine, upstanding people, they live at peace, and enjoy plenty and doubtless smile at the way people outside the secluded valley depend on the government for sustenance.

Banner Elk since came forward as the perfect town, but Cook School District occupies an equally enviable position. Unlike Banner Elk, it is incorporated only by the bonds of its rigid independence, and is governed by the thrift and integrity of its people. Such folks never run afoul of the law either, so maybe the record of the Avery County community is excellent. Anyway, Cook School District should have a blue ribbon furnished it, large enough so that it could be seen for miles around. It is, we deem, as perfect as human beings could make a settlement.

FUNDS ARE BEING SOLICITED BY LEGION FOR COUNTY-WIDE CHRISTMAS TREE

Extensive Plans Being Made to Make the Kiddies Happy Over Christmas Times. Children Urged by Legion to Be in Boone on Saturday Before and Receive Presents, Several Thousand of Which Already Have Been Donated. Expect to Reach All Needy Families.

A special committee, appointed by Watauga Post American Legion for the purpose of entertaining the needy children of the county at a Christmas tree, reports that plans going forward indicate that the huge undertaking is destined to fill its mission in a most successful way.

The Legion is trying to guarantee that the county-wide Christmas tree events will be complete and the effort is being made to give all the poor and needy children of the county some small token in keeping with the Christmas spirit. Santa Claus is scheduled to visit Boone on Saturday, December 23, with toys for the poor kiddies, and it is asked that parents of these children make every effort to have them in Boone on that day as it will obviously be hard for the good Saint Nicholas to reach all the homes affected.

Several thousand items, according

to a member of the Legion committee, have already been given for this distribution and if a sufficient amount of cash can be raised it is hoped that Santa will have something for every child who visits Boone while he is here.

If the weather permits, Santa can distribute the presents from the Christmas tree which is to be placed on Main Street, and merchants and other business men are urged to decorate their places of business in keeping with the holiday season, in an effort to make this the best Christmas Watauga County has ever known. Citizens are asked to be as liberal in their contributions as possible, and send check or cash at once as it will be necessary for the committee to have the funds within the next few days so that the toys, fruits, nuts and candies may be purchased at wholesale.

(Continued on Page 8)

Civil Works Employment Office Was Opened Last Thursday by R. S. Swift and More than Six Hundred Unemployed Have Registered. 381 Jobs Will Be Given to Watauga County Citizens.

190 Now at Work and More to Be Added Soon

Almost two hundred men have already gone to work on the pay roll of the Civil Works Administration, following the approval of five highway projects in Watauga County, and the remainder of the allotment of 381 will desert the ranks of the unemployed just as rapidly as possible, it was said by R. S. Swift, manager of the local employment offices, Monday evening. Those who have already gained employment represent the number taken from the relief rolls of the county, the remainder of the quota to come from registration under the C. W. A. The rate of pay ranges from 30 to 50 cents on roads and 45c to \$1.10 on other projects.

Five Projects Approved

Information coming to the State Highway offices Sunday was to the effect that all projects asked for this county were approved. They include improvement and surfacing of the road from the Wildwood Nurseries on Blowing Rock road to Aho, the building of a road from Bethel to Reese in Beaver Dam Township, a new Meat Camp-Pottertown road of two and a half miles. The beautification, planting and clearing away of the right of way on the road from Boone to Blowing Rock and on to the Caldwell county line on the Yonahoessee is also contemplated, and projects embracing work at the college and at various county schools are expected to gain approval soon. The men, it is understood, are working for the most part under the regular road foremen, and work will be pushed as rapidly as the weather will permit, each man being allowed thirty hours per week.

Registration Brisk

The employment offices were opened by Mr. Swift Thursday morning and a multitude of unemployed swarmed about the courthouse during the succeeding days. Blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, lawyers, preachers, farmers and laborers rubbed shoulders as hundreds of filing cards were filled by the office force, preliminary to the selection of the county's quota. Monday, however, the cards gave out, and activities had to be suspended until Wednesday when a new supply of the blanks were made available. Six hundred and twenty two registered and testified that they wanted a job, and some two or three hundred more are expected by the end of the week.

ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH

On the first Sunday in each month services will be conducted at the Advent Christian Church in Boone by Rev. W. L. Trivett. Kenneth Barrs will conduct the services on the second and fourth Sundays, and C. G. Hodges on the third Sunday. Sunday School each Sunday morning at 10 o'clock; Loyal Workers Sunday evening at 6 o'clock, and prayer services and choir practice Wednesday evenings at 7 o'clock.

TEACHERS MEET WELL ATTENDED; FIGURES ON COST

Practically All Teachers of the County Present at County-wide Session; Five Such Meetings to Be Held During Coming Year to Develop a Health Program. Superintendent Hagaman Submits Figures.

Every high school principal and teacher in Watauga, with one exception, and practically all the elementary tutors gathered at the Demonstration School last Saturday evening to participate in the county-wide meeting, which was the first of five similar gatherings to be held within the next year. Each meeting will be devoted to planning and developing a health program for every school in the county.

"Our teachers are a fine, capable and loyal group, said County Superintendent Smith Hagaman, in discussing the meeting, and added that the taxpayers of Watauga are getting more and better schools for less money than ever before. "It costs, all told," Mr. Hagaman continued, "about \$21.80 per child for the eight months term or for the average family of two \$43.60. The average family pays for this \$3.00 in sales tax, leaving \$40.60 to be paid by someone else.

"Think of getting an eight months school for an average family for only \$3.00 and this paid in a way that the taxpayer can't miss it—like you buy your postage stamps."

"We now have an eight months school term in Watauga with a greatly reduced tax," said Mr. Hagaman, "and it is quite probable that the much maligned sales tax is destined to be the most popular tax that has ever been levied in our State, if it is possible that any tax can ever be said to be popular. I hope to see the day come when all taxes will be paid in properly adjusted income tax, manufacturers tax, inheritance tax, privilege tax, small sales tax, etc., so that when the fiscal year ends all taxes will be paid—paid in lilies through the year, like you pay your gas tax. Then there will be no sheriff or tax collector around to see you; no homes or property ever to be sold for taxes."

W. C. GREENE IS NAMED DISBURSER

War Veteran Will Distribute Checks for Wages Under Civil Works Projects. Checks Will Be Delivered Each Saturday Morning.

Walter C. Greene, World War veteran of Boone, has been appointed disbursing officer for the Civil Works Administration in this county. Mr. Greene is peculiarly suited for this position on account of qualifications as well as experience in the army along similar lines. The appointment came without solicitation on his part, and in taking up the new duties, Mr. Greene has issued the following statement:

"All persons employed under the CWA in this county will be paid by check drawn on the Treasury of the United States.

"It is requested that on each Thursday afternoon, immediately after time is checked and included for Thursday, that each foreman or time keeper turn in the time to the County Administrator of all persons working under him.

"This should be done promptly so the pay roll can be made up and the checks issued for delivery on the following Saturday morning. These checks will be delivered to each foreman at the county Disbursing Officer's office for the persons who are working under him.

"The county Disbursing Officer will not deliver any checks to persons or foremen on the job where they are working.

"It is our desire to co-operate with each one so far as we can, that the CWA program may be carried out as accurately as possible."

Joe Greer House Is Damaged by Flames

Fire of an undetermined origin damaged the residence of J. E. Greer Saturday and threatened to consume the structure which is located on North Water Street. Firemen were able to extinguish the flames but not before the building was damaged perhaps to the extent of hundreds of dollars. Most of the household furniture had been removed before the flames were placed under control. The loss is said to be partly covered by insurance.

Tanning hides at home will supply durable leather which may be used for all ordinary purposes and the methods of tanning are clearly explained in a recent extension circular prepared by the animal husbandry department at State College.