

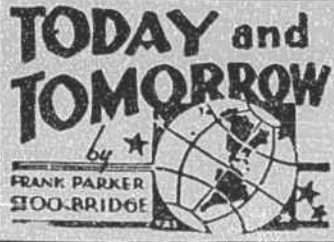
WATAUGA DEMOCRAT

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SECTION B—EIGHT PAGES



NEWSPAPERS 13,000

Every thoughtful observer who visits America from abroad is amazed to discover how much the people of the United States know about what is going on, not only in their own country but all over the world. The American people know more than the people of England, Germany or Russia know about what's going on in their own countries.

The reason for America's wide knowledge of events and public affairs is that we are the greatest nation of newspaper readers to be found anywhere. More of us can read, more of us are eager for information—and we have more newspapers.

Few even among Americans realize that there are more than 13,000 newspapers published in the United States. About 2,000 of them are daily papers, the rest weeklies or semi-weeklies. That doesn't count the enormous number of magazines of all kinds, of which we read more than do any other people. No wonder we are so well informed.

FREEDOM opinions

The German or the Russian or the Italian can read in his newspaper only what his government wants him to read. No editor in the totalitarian nations dares to print anything which criticizes the government. Most of them have to submit every line to some government official before it gets into print.

Nothing of the sort is possible in America. Government may not like what a newspaper says, but it can't do anything to stop an editor from printing any news or opinion he chooses to print. So long as he does not libel anyone, advocate the overthrow of the government by violence or incite people to riot or crime, or use indecent language, anyone who has access to a printing press can print whatever he wants to print.

The supreme court of the United States has just ruled that this freedom of the press, guaranteed by the constitution, extends to pamphlets, who may not be restrained from distributing circulars, handbills or any other form of printed matter. This is a restatement of what is perhaps the most fundamental of all our liberties, the right to express our ideas and to tell the truth as we see it, without let or hindrance.

POLITICS truth

Politicians who want to make themselves the rulers of the people, rather than their servants, don't like newspapers because they are too likely to tell the truth about what's going on behind the political front. Every attempt ever made in America to suppress or control the press has originated in political cliques or gangs who were up to some skulduggery that they didn't want the voters to know about.

Up to about 150 years ago every newspaper was owned or controlled by politicians with an axe to grind. The first newspaper to set itself free from such control was the London Times. Its founder, John Walter, figured that if he could get enough small advertisers so that it wouldn't ruin him if a few dropped out, he could run an honest newspaper and print the truth about public affairs.

That was the beginning of the real freedom of the press. There are still a few newspapers tied up with political backers, but nine-tenths of American papers are free. The freest of all are the ones that have the most advertising.

CONTROL "legals"

When Huey Long was making himself "Kingfish" of Louisiana he got his hand-picked legislature to pass laws of many kinds intended to cripple the newspapers. Some of those laws were upset by the supreme court, but one which still stands on Louisiana's statute books is held responsible for the orgy of financial crookedness in the state since Long's death.

This law abolishes the publication of so-called "legal" advertising. Most states require all proposals involving the use of public funds, tax lists, bond issues and the like, to be advertised in newspapers in every county. Those things are the public's business. The Long scheme kept the public completely in the dark as to how much money the politicians were collecting from the people and how they were spending it.

The procession of political grafters that has recently started for the Louisiana penitentiary is evidence that the people have waked up to the fact that they were being robbed, and how. But until the state resumes the publication of official reports of its financial matters, there's always a chance of something being put over.

ADVERTISERS whims

Every once in a while somebody comes out with a book or a magazine article trying to tell people that advertising is an economic waste; that if it wasn't for the cost of advertising they could buy things cheaper. The precise opposite hap-

pens to be true, as every publisher and every advertiser knows. If it wasn't for advertising no concern could do a large enough volume of business to sell his product at reasonable prices.

Some of these same wrong-headed critics contend that newspapers are under the domination of advertisers. I've run several newspapers, and have studied the inner workings of the business for years. I've never encountered an instance of a newspaper adapting its editorial policy to the whims of its advertisers.

One newspaper I worked on had a large advertiser who disliked the paper's attitude on a certain matter and pulled out his daily full page advertisement. A year later he offered advertising copy again and the publisher refused to let him into the paper.

DEWEY DEPICTED AS CHILD WHO WRITES TO "SANTA"

Chicago, Dec. 7.—Thomas E. Dewey was depicted as a small boy writing to Santa Claus for the Republican presidential nomination, in a cartoon yesterday in the Chicago Daily News, which is published by Frank Knox, 1936 Republican nominee for vice-president.

In a cloud over Dewey's head was his vision of Santa, with the head of the Republican elephant, carrying a sack labeled "40 Nomination."

John Q. Public was peering around a corner and remarking: "Now isn't that cute?"

The Washington monument cost \$1,300,000.



COVE CREEK HIGH SCOOPS

The Cove Creek high school monthly, the "Wacovian" is slated to come from the press on December 15. This issue, a special Christmas edition, will contain many features pertaining to the Yuletide. The December issue is the second time that the paper has made its appearance this year. The third printing will take place about the middle of January.

Harold Mast Honored

Harold Mast, talented young cartoonist of the "Wacovian" staff, was recently lauded by the state department for his work in connection with that publication. In a letter to Principal S. F. Horton, young Mast was praised by the officials for having given to the state a distinctively new type of artistic work.

Debating Club Prepares for Meets
For the past several weeks, Cove Creek students have been preparing for the triangular contests of the North Carolina Debating Union.

The high school has entered the state-wide contests and will participate in the meets to be held next spring; the query as stated by the officials of the union is, "Resolved, That the Federal Government Should Own and Operate the Railroads." Students now engaged in a study of this question are Harold Mast, Foy Parker, Geraldine Bingham, David Love, Billie Harmon and Walter Thompson.

Parent-Teacher Association
The Parent-Teacher Association,

reorganized here recently, will hold its next meeting on Thursday, December 14. A program committee headed by Mrs. Roby Greer was appointed by Mrs. C. I. Billings, president of the local unit, at the last meeting two weeks ago. A varied program will be given entirely by students at the next meeting some two weeks hence.

LIKES SPECIAL EDITION

Following are some excerpts from a personal letter received by Mr. G. F. Hagaman from Rev. J. Norton Atkins who is now in Rumford, Va.: "I read with much interest the recent special issue of the Watauga Democrat celebrating the completion and approaching opening of the tobacco warehouse in Boone. It was a good piece of work and a credit to all concerned. I am sorry I cannot be in Boone when the warehouse is opened for business.

"We are spending the winter in Virginia, in the vicinity of Richmond and find it a very pleasant and agreeable location. There seems to be quite a number of North Carolinians in and around Richmond, so we do not have a feeling of being total strangers."

WPA ENROLLMENT AGAIN HITS THE 2,000,000 MARK

Washington, Dec. 7.—WPA enrollment totaled 2,023,551 in the week ended November 29, an increase of 36,633 over November 22.

Not since August 9, when 2,052,160 were enrolled, officials said today, has the roster passed the 2,000,000 mark. The record high of 3,350,000 was on November 1, 1939.

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Esso Laboratories organization has just been given the 1939 National Award for Chemical Engineering Achievement. This is the first time it has ever been given in the oil industry. The award was made for Esso's many advances in developing super-fuels for aircraft and other high-powered engines. We appreciate this formal recognition of Esso Leadership.

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