

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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"The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first objective should be to keep that right, and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to choose the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive these papers and be capable of reading them."—Thomas Jefferson.

## The \$64,000 Question

As the last day for filing income tax forms nears, folks get into the usual dither, and wonder where all the money came from anyway, and why they didn't save a bit to square things with Uncle Sam.

And there's a bit of complaining—an occasional fellow will wonder why something can't be done to ease the burden down in the low brackets, where the pinch is the tightest, but there's no general outburst against the high levies or in favor of lower ones.

The politicians who were loudest in their cries against high taxes and high spending prior to and through the 1952 campaign, are now in the mind to let the thing ride, and go along with more foreign aid, more of everything else, and are apparently content to let the national debt mount.

In all the hubbaloos going on as a prelude to the next election it looks like some fellow would propose to ease the burden of the folks at home—those who are finding it hard to compete with a spiraling cost of living, on virtually the same income, and at the same time pay a considerable sum for income taxes so the folks across the ocean may get along better. If the thing would be brought to the attention of the people it would bring a mighty response, and votes world without end.

The editor of the Fort Pierce, Fla., Tribune thinks maybe the \$64,000 Question may trigger a demand for income tax cuts. We don't know, but he has this to say:

"The program has provided vivid illustration of the way confiscatory personal income tax rates stack the cards against risk-taking ventures. Tens of millions of listeners have seen people, because of tax considerations, decide against taking the chance of turning \$32,000 into \$64,000."

In its editorial, going into detail about the tax question, the Fort Pierce newspaper said:

"Once aroused, the people of this country are all-powerful—what they want is what members of the Congress will do. Fortunately it is not possible for any individual, or group, to know in advance what will take the people's fancy and arouse them. The \$64,000 Question has done just that and has focused their attention on just how tough and confiscatory the present federal income tax actually is.

"The average person looks upon the income tax as a necessary evil. But the tendency is to look upon it more as a device to soak the rich—an idea which some politicians go to great lengths to implant

without stopping to realize how unfair taxation impedes economic progress. But they get the idea when they realize that an average person, in going after the \$64,000 after having answered the question for \$32,000 gets to keep much less than half of the additional \$32,000.

"In short, the contestant takes all the risk. If he loses, the loss is all his. If he wins, Uncle Sam steps in and takes the biggest part. Yet, in winning, it is the contestant who furnishes the brains, and knowledge, and risk. Well, that is what has been going on for years! Individuals and corporations take all the risk to make big money so that Uncle Sam can take the biggest share of the profits! Some people now realize that, to actually win \$64,000 net, the prize would have to be \$448,711.11 to a single person with a regular income of \$4,000.

"Readers might be interested in comments, quoting figures, made on this same subject by the First National City Bank of New York, in a recent monthly Letter:

"Since the program was launched only a few persons have successfully doubled their money up to the \$32,000 mark and only 2 have successfully doubled their money to \$64,000.

"Hundreds of listeners from all over the country have written or telegraphed warnings that \$64,000 is not double \$32,000 but only about half again as much. The rules of the income tax supersede the laws of arithmetic. To a single person with a \$4,000 income from other sources, a winning of \$32,000 gets assessed an additional federal tax of \$15,400 leaving \$16,600 as the actual prize. An extra \$32,000 winning would get assessed a tax of \$23,292, increasing the prize by no more than \$8,708. Thus he is risking an assured \$16,600 for a chance to win an additional \$8,708.

"Although less well advertised, tax rules dictate answers of 'no' every day of the week to businessmen, investors, and professional men of every description. The injury is not only to the opportunities of people but also to the tax collections. Risk-taking enterprise affords the richest source of government revenues.

"In the consideration of changes in the personal income tax next year, Congress will do well to ponder the desirability of finding a schedule of rates that encourages people to go ahead. For people who feel the urge and have the talent to go ahead the real \$64,000 question is what the Congress will determine to do."

## Seek Rail Increase

Major Southern railroads are joining with lines east and west in asking for a five per cent increase in passenger fares, which they hope may be made effective by May 15, presumably to augment the dwindling revenue from rail travelers.

The basic passenger fares in the South are 3.85 cents per mile first class and 2.75 in coaches. The basic eastern fares are 4½ and 3.75 and in the west 3½ and 2¼ cents.

A spokesman for the southern carriers pointed out that the last time Southern railroads increased passenger fares was November 1951, and we would hasten to agree with them that costs of all sorts have risen tremendously since that time.

We don't know much about railroads, other than that it seems we used to spend most of our money through a railroad ticket window, before we had ever expected to own an automobile or board an airplane. But when the loss of passengers on the rails has dwindled to the point that most of the trains have already been discontinued, it's hard to tell how better income will accrue from higher fares.

Southern railroads have, it seems to us, given up their passenger traffic without much of a struggle. It's true the diesels have taken the place of the big steam loco-

motives with the plaintive whistles, but otherwise the equipment looks about like it used to, and if the schedules have been upped to the point of competing with other forms of land travel we haven't heard of it.

With air travel, if you take into account the food, tips, and Pullman accommodations, being fully as cheap as travel on the rails, who'd swap the high speed, spotless, courteous trek through space for a jostling along the rails at about the same speeds that were common forty years ago, no matter how much per mile?

Better service, faster schedules, and better equipment would tend to bring more folks back to the trains, no doubt, but in this age of two car families, and expanding air travel, it could of course be hard to justify such expenditures. Might be throwing good money after bad.

## What's A Yankee?

(Chicago Tribune)

Foreigners call all Americans Yankees. Southerners say that Yankees are northerners. Northerners say that Yankees are from the New England states. People in New England say it is the Vermonters who are Yankees. Vermonters reply that a Yankee is just someone who eats pie for breakfast.

## EACH SEES VICTORY

By Paul Berdanier



## Stretch's Sketches

By "STRETCH" ROLLINS

### Borrowed, Blue, Old and New

REVISED VERSION—Sometimes you need, a little help when you try to parlay a typewriter, a sheet of paper, and a blank stare into a weekly newspaper column.

Relayed by Cloice Burrell in the Charlotte Observer from the Sanford Herald is a story which deserves a smaller (but more select) audience. Asked what he had learned in Sunday School, the story goes, a youngster told his mother: "Well, our teacher told us about when God sent Moses behind the enemy lines to rescue the Israelites from the Egyptians.

"When they came to the Red Sea, Moses called for engineers to build a pontoon bridge. After they had all crossed they looked back and saw the Egyptian tanks coming. Quick as a flash, Moses radioed headquarters on his walkie-talkie to send bombers and blow up the bridge, and saved the Israelites."

"Wait a minute," exclaimed the startled mother, "is that really the way your teacher told that story?"

"Well, not exactly," the youngster said, "but if I told it her way, you'd never believe it."

APPLIANCE ALLIANCE—A financial writer says electric appliance makers have committed

themselves to a program of "planned product obsolescence." Which means they will introduce new styles and features every year to make owners of even late models dissatisfied with what they have and eager to buy the new ones available.

Well, it may be something new, but it has always seemed that—  
There must be some sort of conspiracy or alliance

By everyone who manufactures a household appliance:

Any time I buy a new tv, vacuum cleaner or refrigerator,

It nearly always turns out that I should have waited a little later;

Because as sure as I do,

That seems to be their cue

To revolutionize the product with improvements that are quite extensive—

And not only that, but the new model is even less expensive!

SCANTY SKETCHES—Headlines and Footnotes: "Polly Bergen Launches Azalea Festival at Wilmington." (What'd she do, break a bottle of Pepsi-Cola over the mayor's head?) . . . "Chinese Reds Called Free From Income Tax." (Probably free from income, too.) . . . Something blue? That could be the color my nose turned when I ventured out into last Sunday's spring weather.

## From Early Democrat Files

### Sixty Years Ago

April 8, 1896

Miss Jennie Council has returned after spending the winter in Salisbury.

Attorney E. S. Coffey is rapidly completing his law office, and he hopes to occupy it by court.

Mr. J. F. Hardin is having his buildings in town repaired. When completed they will be occupied by Attorney Council and family.

Married on Thursday of last week at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. R. H. Hodges of Brushy Fork, Mr. George Teague and Mrs. Naomi Hodges.

Congress is daily dabbling on the Cuban question. It is hard to know what is the matter. Something will perhaps be done this week on the resolution. Much fighting and many outrages are going on in Cuba. The insurgents are holding their own as usual. Now and then the Cubans are recruited by men from own own country, and nobody can see the end yet.

### Thirty-Nine Years Ago

April 12, 1917

Quite a snowfall on Sunday, but it soon melted off and was followed by a heavy downpour of rain.

Mr. Linville Waters, prominent cattle dealer of Hopkins, died in a hospital in Winston-Salem Saturday, after an illness with pneumonia. The remains were brought home for interment which was yesterday.

When the question of the road bonds for Watauga county was first agitated the sum to be asked for it was decided, would be \$150,000. But later the Good Roads Commission and other prominent men throughout the county decided that the amount was inadequate and that, to give each township in the county the full benefit of the system, it would be necessary to vote bonds to the amount of \$200,000. This amount, augmented by the \$50,000 from the Federal fund, will accomplish the end sought, and surely every thinking man in the county will deem it a privilege to vote for the bonds.

Rev. John Ingle, who is eighty years old, will preach for the people of Blowing Rock the fifth Sunday in April. Mr. Ingle is very active for a man of his age, and still retains full possession of his mental faculties.

President Wilson asked Congress, assembled in joint session, to declare a state of war existing between the United States and Germany.

### Fifteen Years Ago

April 16, 1941

Alex Auton, 67, resident of the Middle Fork section, met instant death Tuesday near the W. M. Winkler farm when he touched an electric line carrying more than 6,000 volts of electricity. A crew of highway workers, under John Greer were cutting a tree which had threatened to slide into the road. . . . Auton was warned to stay away, and after the tree had broken the high tension wire, the workers screamed at him to stay away from the locality. . . . However, he deliberately took hold of the end of the wire dangling from a limb of the fallen tree. . . .

## Letters Of Appreciation

Dear Mr. Rivers:

I would like to express the appreciation of the Boone Junior Woman's Club for the publicity services that the Watauga Democrat has afforded us during the past year.

This service greatly increased the effectiveness of our program. Your generosity and genuine interest in Boone and Watauga County is an important asset to our community.

MRS. JAMES C. WHITE, JR.  
Corresponding Secretary

Boone, N. C.

Dear Bob:

I would be less than human if I did not appreciate that unusually strong editorial, "A Wise Decision," in the Watauga Democrat this week. I don't deserve that but I appreciate it just the same.

I'll try to be as useful as possible to the community as District Governor of the Rotary.

STANLEY A. HARRIS

## KING STREET

By ROB RIVERS

### ANOTHER LANDMARK GOES . . . END OF AN ERA

The work of razing the Miss Jennie Coffey store building goes on steadily, and considerable interest has attached to the removal from the street of the dilapidated old structure, which was bright and new back in the gay nineties, and which, so far as we recall, is the last of the old general store buildings which served the Boone trade as the nineteenth century—the happy time of bright gowns and gay blades, snappy songs, and two-seated bicycles—gave way to the age of the machine, of the automobile, the airplane and of internationalism, and of the big wars.

### J. M. MORETZ told us a few years ago that he constructed the old building in 1896, and that he and the late A. C. (Collie) Farthing used it for the sale of general merchandise for a number of years. . . .

When we can first remember the place was unoccupied and the youngsters of the neighborhood found it a fine place to play on rainy days. . . . All the merchandise had long since been moved, but we remembered the bottles of pepper sauce which were left on one of the shelves and which many a lad was induced to sip. . . . Along about the time the first world war was shaping up in Europe Don H. Phillips published The Watauga News in the old store for about a year, and sometime later Miss Jennie Coffey moved her store up the street from the Critcher Hotel when she bought the property.

### IT WAS A FALSEFRONT . . . SHE REMODELED IT

Originally one of the false-fronted structures (that is the front was built up to two-story dimensions to hide the square-pitched roof which sheltered the one-story building) Miss Coffey added a second story and provided apartment space on the second floor which was readily rented as long as she was able to care for the building. . . . Miss Coffey, who had for many years been the town's only milliner before she moved to the Moretz building, was for a long time the dispenser of school books, also sold pencils and tablets and pins and pincushions, post cards and notions, and really did a good deal of business. . . . A good long while before she reached her century mark, her goods had all been sold; she didn't replenish her stock, and spent the remainder of her days living in the old store, and in summer tending her few flowers and rocking behind the screen of Virginia creeper which sheltered her porch from the afternoon sun. . . . Bought by W. M. Hodges, he will erect a modern business structure there, which will add to the appearance of the block.

### A GOOD MANY OF THE OLD-TIMERS

have come by to reminisce and to look back on the days before the modern grocery and department store, when beans and sugar and lard, and fish hooks, salt pork, gingham cloth, hair ribbons, plow points and axle grease were dispensed from a common stock, arranged in shelves and on counters alongside a pot-bellied stove, and when the news of the neighborhood was gathered from the hangers on at the general store. . . . Likewise the tales from afar sifted into the village from the drummers who came in their hacks to call on these early-day merchants.

THE GENERAL STORE, like the horse and buggy, was crowded out in the march of progress and supplanted by the super markets and the department stores, and other marvels of mass merchandising. . . . We're happy we live in a day when retail stores are neatly arranged, expertly managed, and where everything is at the finger tips of competent clerks. . . . But when the last of these old store buildings is being taken away, we have nostalgic memories of the pioneer merchant, scooping the sugar, siphoning the "lamp oil" and slicing the fatback. . . . We think of the big wooden buckets of candy, of the gallon jars of chewing gum, and the peanuts with the finger rings inside the package. . . . Then we recall the old residents who sat on the creaking chairs, on the counters, the cracker box and the sugar barrel and their commentaries on politics and progress, and their wise decisions on public matters. . . . They provided worthy ancestry for modern civic clubs and Chambers of Commerce.

## So This Is New York

By NORTH CALLAHAN

Bernard Baruch must have been in the mind of the poet who wrote about old age being the last of life for which the first was made. Mr. Baruch is the youngest octogenarian I know, both in looks and activity. He is not childish about it either. The other night he came to a social gathering, stayed awhile and chatted cheerfully with some of us, then left early. He realized, he said, that at his age he could not do what he had once done, nor even what he would like to do now. Asked why he recently declined the crowning of a local beauty queen, he quipped, "I am 87 and too old for that kind of job. You need someone in the early 60's."

They're still telling the story about the Texan who drove his best convertible up to the toll gate at the George Washington bridge here, and seemed in somewhat of a daze as he studied the structure of the great span, which represents one of the foremost engineering feats of the world. The attendant was sympathetic, but cars were lining up behind that convertible so he asked the Texan for the 50-cent toll. The latter finally turned his head and looked at the attendant. "Sorry, son," he said genially switching his heavy Havana from one side of his mouth to the other. "I never carry anything less than a \$500 bill. How much do you want for the bridge?"

Two men live in the Waldorf Towers who once had a close relationship, but now apparently view life differently. One is Herbert Hoover, among the most respected of our elder statesmen and who is known to answer his mail personal.

Now that spring is peeping through the recent snow scene here, one's thoughts go back to

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