

OPTIMISM REIGNS IN MURFREESBORO OVER NEW HIGHWAY

People in That Town Believe
Opening of Traffic By State
Commission Will Be Boon
To Trade

HAS GOOD OUTLET OVER GOOD ROADS

Is Culmination Of Long Hard
Fight To Convince The
State Officials

"Murfreeseboro real estate has taken a decided boost and I would not be surprised if it were not worth 25 per cent more today than it was ten days ago," said a Murfreeseboro man last Monday. "Business is good;" "We've landed just exactly what Murfreeseboro has so long needed;" "Murfreeseboro is no longer isolated from the rest of the world."

These and other expressions of extreme optimism are made and repeated over again during the days immediately following the taking over of the highway from Murfreeseboro to the Virginia line, between Franklin and Suffolk, Virginia.

This new State project has been sought by Murfreeseboro and Maney Neck people ever since Chairman Page of the State Highway Commission agreed to meet the Virginia road at some point along the line. All of Hertford County representatives, both in the State Senate and House, have worked on the proposition, and appeals have gone up from the people of both townships affected.

When the Commission listened to the pleas of the latest delegation, composed of Attorney D. C. Barnes, J. B. Worrell, J. B. Majette, and W. T. Taylor, it decided there was nothing else to do but assume the liability and build those people a road. It has been a hard fight but a determined one, and the Maney Neck and Murfreeseboro folks are rejoicing over it, while the rest of the county looks on and says amen.

This road gives the upper end of the county an outlet to the ordinary channels of trade used by them, and provides a means for traffic that will to a large extent offset the lack of railroad facilities. It provides an outlet to the cities of Franklin, Suffolk, Norfolk and Richmond. Not only does it do that, but it will serve to bring Maney Neck back into Hertford County; that is, it gives them a state-owned road all the way from their front door to the county seat, Winton, and thence to other principal towns in the county.

Murfreeseboro is now the real center of State highway traffic within Hertford County. It has a highway to Conway, the nearest railroad, and from whence much of their mail comes, as well as express and freight. It is also connected with Winton by a highway now being constructed; and, with a good county road to Cofield and Tania, it will be in close touch with the Atlantic Coast Line railroad. Conway, so the Murfreeseboro people say, is only a matter of twenty or thirty minutes now.

All Murfreeseboro lacks in the way of roads is a first class highway to Ahoskie; and even in that respect, the county has done more for them than it has at the Ahoskie end. For several miles out of Murfreeseboro the county road has been graded and a bed built. It now awaits the surfacing with gravel, and several sections are already graded.

For years Murfreeseboro has been held back and its growth retarded by its inaccessibility, a fact that was much played up during the agitation for removal of Chowan College. It has tried as hard as mortal, man or municipal could to provide better means of traffic; and the results have not always been satisfactory. There are still sweet memories of a railroad—the first in the county.

Today, Murfreeseboro has taken on new life; it has almost reached the goal towards which its people have been striving. And, there is pretty sure evidence of it on all sides. The county's handsomest church building,

SQUIRE PRUDEN IS DEAD AFTER MUCH SUFFERING

For Many Years He Had Been
Most Popular Marrying Jus-
tice in The County

Squire Charlie Pruden died last Friday, March 23, at noon. He was 79 years old a few weeks ago. Death was not unexpected, as he had suffered much pain during the last three months, and the end was in sight several times. On two or three different occasions, his children and other close relatives had been summoned to Ahoskie. Upon each visit here, they saw him rally and gradually increase his resistance against his disease and pain.

For many years past, he had been Hertford County's favorite marrying justice, and probably united more love stricken couples than any other one person in the county. As a trial justice, he was always popular, and litigants who wanted a fair deal were wont to select him as the "judge."

Several years ago, he moved his family from Harrellsville to Ahoskie, and during his residence in Ahoskie was one of the town's most loved and respected citizens. Within the last two years he has been too feeble to fill his accustomed place up the street with his associates and companions. However, he was able to be about his own home, and was a familiar figure on the front porch of his home in East Ahoskie. It was only within the last few months that he gave up and went to bed.

Besides his aged wife who is herself a sufferer and was unable even to attend the funeral of her lifelong companion, he is survived by six children and several grand children. His children are: C. H. Pruden, of Windsor; Louis Pruden of Emporia, Va.; Mrs. H. T. Waters, of Emporia, Va.; Mrs. Sam Robinson, of Petersburg, Va.; Mrs. H. C. Mitchell, of Ahoskie; and Mrs. W. E. Jordan of Cofield.

Funeral services were conducted from the Ahoskie Methodist church, of which he was a member, Saturday afternoon at half past three o'clock and interment was made in the city cemetery.

Many of his relatives from out of town attended the funeral and burial; and a large number friends in Ahoskie and other parts of Hertford County also were present. The floral wreaths were many and beautiful.

Squire Pruden served throughout the Civil War first as private in Company G of the 31st Regiment of North Carolina Infantry, and later as Sergeant in Company E of the 68th Regiment. As private he served from 1861 to 1863, and as sergeant from 1863 to the close of the war. He had been a justice of the peace for about forty years.

MAY REMODEL STORE TO PROVIDE OFFICES

Walter L. Curtis, owner of the store building in which the Army & Navy Store has been operating, is figuring with local contractors to remodel the building which has been damaged by fire, and convert it into an office building. According to tentative plans, offices will be built on either side, with a corridor extending the length of the building.

A committee from the chamber of commerce has taken up with Mr. Curtis the matter of renting two of these offices for use of the local body. At present the office is conducted in the building with D. P. Boyette, insurance man.

If the Curtis building is remodeled along tentative plans, work may begin within the next few weeks, and occupancy will be possible not later than June 1.

ARREST DRUNKS

Mayor's court in Ahoskie is beginning to function again. Within the past week, Constable Britton has made several arrests, including a hopeless drunk (who spent a while in the new town jail), and a couple charged with an affray. Fines were paid in each instance. The new town ordinances will be distributed in pamphlet form within a few days.

a much needed brick high school building, a new college structure, and several new residences are right now under construction. Its banks are in excellent shape, merchants are enjoying good sales, and its hotels will always be the mecca for hungry souls—for they do feed.

Murfreesboro Township Is Next To Bottom In Taxes Paid County

Four hundred and fourteen persons pay poll taxes in Murfreeseboro township, with an almost even break between the whites and colored: whites, 204; colored, 210. The total value of all taxable property, except corporation holdings, listed on the 1922 scrolls in that township is \$1,422,504, divided among the races as follows: whites, \$1,257,522; colored, \$164,982.

Almost one million dollars of the total valuation in Murfreeseboro township is listed as real estate, outside of the town limits, the latter property being listed as town lots. There are 31,478 acres of land listed, and white persons own more than five-sixths of it. Timber lands listed are valued at \$2,150, and is owned exclusively by white persons.

There are 224 lots listed in Murfreeseboro, 163 of which are listed by white persons. The total value of all real estate in Murfreeseboro is listed at \$209,844. Real estate outside of Murfreeseboro, timber lands, and town lots, which includes all real estate holdings within the township other than corporation holdings, has a total value of \$1,031,009, and is divided among whites and negroes as follows, \$897,971 and \$133,038, respectively.

A little less than four hundred thousand dollars worth of personal property is listed as owned by taxpayers of the township. The total is \$391,495, and of that amount \$359,551 is owned by white persons.

Personal property listed is as follows: Merchandise—\$43,573, all owned by whites; materials in process of manufacture—\$3,350 by whites, \$225 by negroes; net value of household property, less \$300 exemption—\$22,384 by whites, \$603 by negroes; horses—195 listed by whites at \$14,110, 143 by negroes at \$10,620; mules—221 by whites at \$17,545, 105 by negroes at \$6,770; sheep—39 by whites at \$81; goats—8 by whites at \$8, 12 by negroes at \$12; hogs—7,647 by white at \$4,291, 1017 by negroes at \$2,500; milch cattle—138 by whites at \$3,131, 52 by negroes at \$1,035; other cattle—121 by whites at \$1,589, 87 by negroes at \$887; dogs—6 by whites at \$505; items 53-80, including firearms, etc.—\$31,746 by whites, \$5,496 by negroes; solvent credits—\$217,238 by whites, \$3,797 by negroes.

With the corporation's holdings excepted, Murfreeseboro township will therefore pay into the county treasury in 1922 taxes a grand total of \$13,086.04. This township is fifth in amount of taxes paid for county purposes. Maney Neck being the smallest taxpayer. Of the taxes paid for county purposes it is allocated among the three objects as follows: for schools, \$7,396.02; for roads, \$3,556.26; for county administrative purposes, \$2,133.76.

In addition to the taxes paid into the county treasury, there are three special school tax districts in the township—Murfreeseboro, Woodrow, and Mapleton. The property valuations in each of these three school districts is as follows: Murfreeseboro, \$723,198; Woodrow, \$216,180; Mapleton, \$278,276.

ROAD BOARD ORDERS CEMENT FOR BRIDGES

At Monday's meeting of the county road board, one thousand bags of cement were ordered from J. N. Vann & Brother of Ahoskie to be used in bridge construction work. The members of the board are unanimous in their opinion that the construction program should be pushed during the good weather, and already they are discussing the next project to be graded.

About three miles of the Cofield-Harrellsville road has received a gravel surface, and with a few weeks of workable weather, this road will have been ready for travel. Either the Menola-Ahoskie road, or the Ahoskie-Murfreeseboro road will probably be the next in order for the gravel. In the meantime, the six township construction units are building new road beds where no work has hitherto been done, and putting the constructed road beds in shape for traffic, where construction work was done last year.

In Ahoskie township the road force is grading the new road to the Bertie County line via Stoney Creek. A new road bed has been staked off, and the force is now at work near the home of W. E. Sessoms.

Payrolls approved at the meeting this week approximated about \$6,000. This included gravel used on the road under construction and freight charges.

FARMERS BUSY

Several days of balmy spring weather has been the biggest boon farmers of this section have had since the advent of the new year. All available team and plows have been put into service during the last ten days, and farm work has begun to catch up after being held back by the continued rainy weather.

JUNIOR BETTERMENT FORM COUNTY UNION

Winton, March 28.—There was a business meeting of all the Junior Clubs of Hertford County in Winton March 24. We are very sorry that on account of the bad roads only two of the clubs were represented; namely, Winton and Murfreeseboro.

The purpose of this meeting was to organize a county council. But before the business part of the program began two of the Murfreeseboro girls made some apple jelly, which they expect to exhibit at the county commencement. A number of the girls made some wax beads and others trimmed school hats for county commencement.

In the afternoon the two clubs organized the county council. Neva Futrell of Murfreeseboro was elected president. Bettie Walter Jenkins, also of Murfreeseboro was chosen secretary. Willie Sue Matthews was elected treasurer. A committee of which Myrtle Banks is chairman, was appointed to arrange the social features of the next meeting. An Easter picnic was planned to be held on the grounds of Mt. Tabor church on the Friday after Easter.

After discussing the encampment and several minor features of business the meeting adjourned. No date was named for the next assembly.

The pictures of the first Junior County Council and also the officers of the Council were taken in front of the Court House.

BETTIE WALTER JENKINS,
Secretary of County Council.

DANCE AT AHOSKIE

There will be a subscription dance given in Sessoms hall, Ahoskie, Friday night, March 30. Many out of town visitors are expected to attend the big affair. Sam Simmons's orchestra will furnish music for the occasion.

PROPERTY VALUATION TO FACE BOARD ON MONDAY

Must Decide Monday Upon
Plan For Assessing Real
Estate in The County

An old, old issue, fraught with all kinds of talking possibilities, but with little or no prospect of ever being settled to the satisfaction of taxpayers will entertain the board of county commissioners at Winton next Monday. On that date, the commissioners are directed by the State Revenue Department to decide whether they shall order a re-assessment of real estate within Hertford County.

Under the law enacted by the late Legislature, the first Monday in April is designated as the day for county boards within the State to decide upon the method of assessing property for the next four years. The commissioners can either order the assessment of property to remain as it is now entered upon the list books, or they can appoint a county supervisor to direct the work of revaluation and revision.

In either case, the State Department of Revenue will be the final arbiter, and will decide whether real estate in the several counties of the State is properly valued at its money's worth. It will serve as an equalization board between the counties. The new act is similar to the Revaluation Act passed under the governorship of the late T. W. Bickett.

Should the commissioners decide to re-value property within the county, a county supervisor will be appointed, who in turn will name his township supervisors. A reasonable length of time will be allowed by the county for the supervisors to appraise the property in the county, and the results of their work will be reviewed by the county board and later certified to the Department at Raleigh.

J. A. Northcott, register of deeds and clerk to the county board, says it cost the county \$5,000 to appraise the county real estate under the 1921 Revaluation Act. If supervisors are appointed it will probably require an equal amount this year. If this is not done, a special day will be set apart by the commissioners for the purpose of equalizing property assessments in the county, and grievances for over-valuation will be heard. Under the latter plan, the present list value of real estate would continue in force for the next four years, if the State Department did not order another assessment under the new plan.

It will be up to the county commissioners to settle the question of method at the Monday meeting, and, since taxes will be the principal by-product of whatever valuation is made, there is sure proof of plenty of discussion.

AHOSKIE NEAR ENOUGH TO VIRGINIA LINE

Declaring that Suffolk, Va., was already too close to Ahoskie and that they did not believe it should be brought any closer, the directors of the Ahoskie Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday night discharged its committee appointed two weeks ago to take steps towards securing a direct state-owned highway from Winton to Suffolk.

The directors did not believe anything would be gained by having a route 15 to 22 miles nearer Suffolk and Norfolk, and decided to keep silent in seven languages about a state road from Roduco to Somerton, thus connecting with the Virginia road leading to Suffolk.

A meeting was held here last week in which Whaleyville, Va., was represented. Three of the road board members of this county also attended the meeting and all gave their unqualified approval of the plan to present a plea to the North Carolina State Highway Commission for a direct route.

The committee report was made Tuesday night and met with little or no advocacy from the directors.

Several visitors attended the session of the directors this week, and W. L. Curtis, one of the onlookers, made a strong

AHOSKIE ELECTION HAS BEEN CALLED BY TOWN COUNCIL

Commissioners, Mayor and Con-
stable Will Be Chosen Mon-
day, May 7, According
To Ordinance

THREE TRUSTEES WILL BE ELECTED

Slate Making Has Begun But
Avowed Candidates Have
Not Announced Themselves

Over in Elizabeth City Editor Saunders has sounded a note of warning to the voters of that town that it will be too late to "raise Hell after election." In last week's issue of his paper, The Independent, he concludes an editorial on choosing city councilmen and mayor with the following sentence. "If there's any hell-raising to be done in local politics this year, lets do it now and not after the Primary when it will be too late."

Not that the Ahoskie town council and its mayor wants to see any such thing resorted to here, but acting within its authority, an election has been called for May 7, Monday, at which time three commissioners, a mayor, and constable will be elected to administer the affairs of the town for the ensuing two years.

Paul Holloman was selected as registrar for the election, and J. E. Overton and T. M. Forbes were appointed judges of the election. Registration books will be opened on Saturday, April 7, and will close three weeks later, or April 28. During that period, all those who are not already duly qualified voters will have an opportunity to register.

At the same time, the council agreed to request the trustees of the Ahoskie High School to meet with them next Monday night, and settle upon the method of nomination to be used. Two years ago, a primary was held during certain specified hours of a day set apart by the council and trustees. Up until that time, the method of selection had been by regularly called convention.

Three new trustees of the school will be elected in May, and the charter of the school says the election shall be held in conjunction with the municipal election. The joint session in prospect for next Monday night will settle what would ordinarily be decided by the party executive committee. However, there is no prospect of any party alignment in the candidates for these offices, the Republican vote being negligible and of such small proportions as to preclude any possibility of a Democrat-Republican contest.

Party politics will play no part in the selection of candidates or in the election to follow. What the issue will be has not yet come to the surface, although there are rumblings of an issue that will center about retrenchment or the addition of more municipal improvement and an enlargement plan.

Slate making has already begun even in advance of the call for election, although the word "they" is consistently employed when some one says certain names have been suggested. There are no candidates for any of the positions, openly and avowedly. The present members of the council are H. W. Stokes, D. P. Boyette, and J. Roy Parker. L. C. Williams now holds the mayoralty position and O. H. Britton is constable. These men shut up like clams when you ask them about "running for office", the nearest approach made to any answer being a disapproving wag of the head.

R. H. Jernigan has been prominently mentioned as mayor for the town, while the name of his father-in-law, J. E. Garrett, has also been suggested. Among those who have been suggested for the position of councilman are, besides the present councilmen, H. S. Basnight and J. B. Barnes.

booster talk. Only minor details were dispensed with at the meeting.