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"If the choice were left to me whether to have a free press or a free government, I would choose a free press."—Thomas Jefferson.

FRIDAY MORNING, APRIL 8, 1932

POPULATION DATA

CITIES AND TOWNS

Salisbury	16,951	Gold Hill	156
Spencer	3,129	Granite Quarry	507
E. Spencer	2,098	Rockwell	696
China Grove	1,258	Faith	431
Landis	1,388	Kannapolis	13,912

TOWNSHIPS

Atwell	2,619	Morgan	1,327
China Grove	8,990	Mt. Ulla	1,389
Cleveland	1,445	Providence	2,589
Franklin	2,246	Salisbury	25,153
Gold Hill	2,642	S. Irish	1,251
Litaker	2,562	Steele	1,142
Locke	1,904	Unity	1,406

ROWAN COUNTY.....56,665

THE SALES TAX

The sales tax issue is one full of dynamite either as a national or State issue, and while most candidates are willing and anxious to let it alone, we find Mr. Maxwell bravely facing it and thus challenging his political foes to do likewise.

Mr. Maxwell was an uncompromising foe of the sales tax during the last session of our Legislature. And now that he is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor he evidently sees no reasons for sidestepping or remaining silent on this question. In his speech in Greensboro Mr. Maxwell advanced such impressive arguments against this method of taxation that we are quoting practically in full what he said:

"One of the strongest developments of this time has been the ill-considered growth of opinion that we can work ourselves out of these troubles by putting additional taxes on everything we buy.

"My objection to sales taxation is deeper than a mere expediency. Fundamentally it goes to the root of one of the biggest problems of our modern highly organized and specialized social structure. I haven't one drop of liking in my soul for the extreme doctrines of socialism. I wouldn't swap the opportunities of citizenship in this land of the free for a thousand years of bolshevistic limitations in Russia. And yet we know that, in sober reason and conservative judgment, the too rapid and too large accumulations of wealth, while so much of poverty and want exist around us, has become a major problem in this country. We have yet to find adequate and practical means within the limitations and guaranties of our constitutional system to solve it.

"The power to tax is one of the constitutional powers that does go straight to the heart of this problem. And at a time when a need for its invocation is greater than at any time in our history, we seriously consider a reversion to the other extreme, and seriously consider the adoption in State and Nation of a major tax policy that ignores ability and wealth and puts its levy on the common necessities of all the people.

"When we tax income we leave untaxed an exemption that is presumed to cover a comfortable living, and beyond that point we grade the tax in increasing scale beyond the point of a livelihood, but your general sales tax takes its toll from the poorest citizen in all the land, and at the same rate of tax upon his purchase as from the wealthiest citizen in all the land.

"If we ever permit this principle of taxation to become embedded in the tax systems of our State and country its inevitable effect, now and throughout the years, will be to enrich wealth and to impoverish poverty.

"No wonder that we find men like Borah in the Senate and our own Bob Doughton in the House fighting to prevent it.

"No wonder that we find the unbroken record of the Democratic party from its foundation opposed to this principle of taxation.

"No wonder that we find the American Federation of Labor and the greatest farmer

organizations in the country actively opposing it.

"We have no right to put this additional load onto the shoulders of the struggling masses in their fight to live."

FACTS OF RAILROAD OPERATION

The outstanding features of railroad operation in 1931 were recently summarized by Dr. Julius H. Parmelee, Director, Bureau of Railway Economics. These facts, among others, were produced:

The level of freight movement in 1931 was down to that of 1921.

Total passenger-miles were less than any year since 1904.

Total operating revenues were 21 per cent below 1930, and were lower than in any previous year since 1917.

Net railway operating income was 40 per cent under 1930.

Rate of return on railway investment was 1.98 per cent, as compared with 3.36 per cent and 4.84 per cent in 1930 and 1929, respectively.

The index of railway efficiency was higher than in any year from 1920 to 1929, inclusive, and five factors of railway performance made new records during the year.

To get the full force of these facts, it should be remembered that the railroads were prevented from making an adequate return on investment even during years of inflated prosperity. Thus, they are in a very different position from industries which, while suffering bad times now, made large profits during good years. The relation of railroad taxes to earnings steadily rises and more and more railroad business goes to competing transport agencies, some subsidized by the government, and all either unregulated or half regulated.

Even in the face of adversity the rails were able to make new records in efficiency and service to the public. But unless something is done to relieve the lines of their unfair burdens they will not be able to do this much longer. The inevitable result will be a drop in the standard of service and severe railroad retrenchment—and the public will, in the long run, be the one to suffer when that happens.

TEACH FIRE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS

Chief Frank C. McAuliffe of the Chicago Fire Insurance Patrol, recently advanced the opinion that fire prevention should be more widely taught in schools. Fire prevention in the home, he pointed out, is purely a problem of instruction, and by putting the subject into the school curriculum children will grow up with an innate knowledge of fire hazards and dangers and the ways to offset them. The young mind is much more receptive than the old one—and the generation which really understands the fire menace will be the generation that will conquer it.

Fire prevention lessons on a similar scale would unquestionably produce equally valuable results. The reason our national fire loss is so disgracefully high is that so great a part of the population is not only careless in its habits, but does not understand the simple ABC'S of fire prevention. Too many adult minds present a strange resistance to the influx of knowledge. Making fire prevention a subject in our schools will not solve the problem today—but it is the best insurance we could obtain for lowering fire loss ten or twenty years hence.

VALUE OF A LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Of what value is a newspaper to its community?

A newspaper can't build a town; it can't make a good one out of a bad one; it can't make a town grow! It can't bring factories; it can't improve the schools; it can't rebuild churches and enlarge the congregation. It can't defeat bad candidates for office and it can't elect good ones, at least not very often.

But a newspaper can encourage people. A newspaper can be the eyes and the voice of the community. It can watch the trend of affairs; it can note the important things other communities are doing; it can keep the people posted, and then it can lead the way.

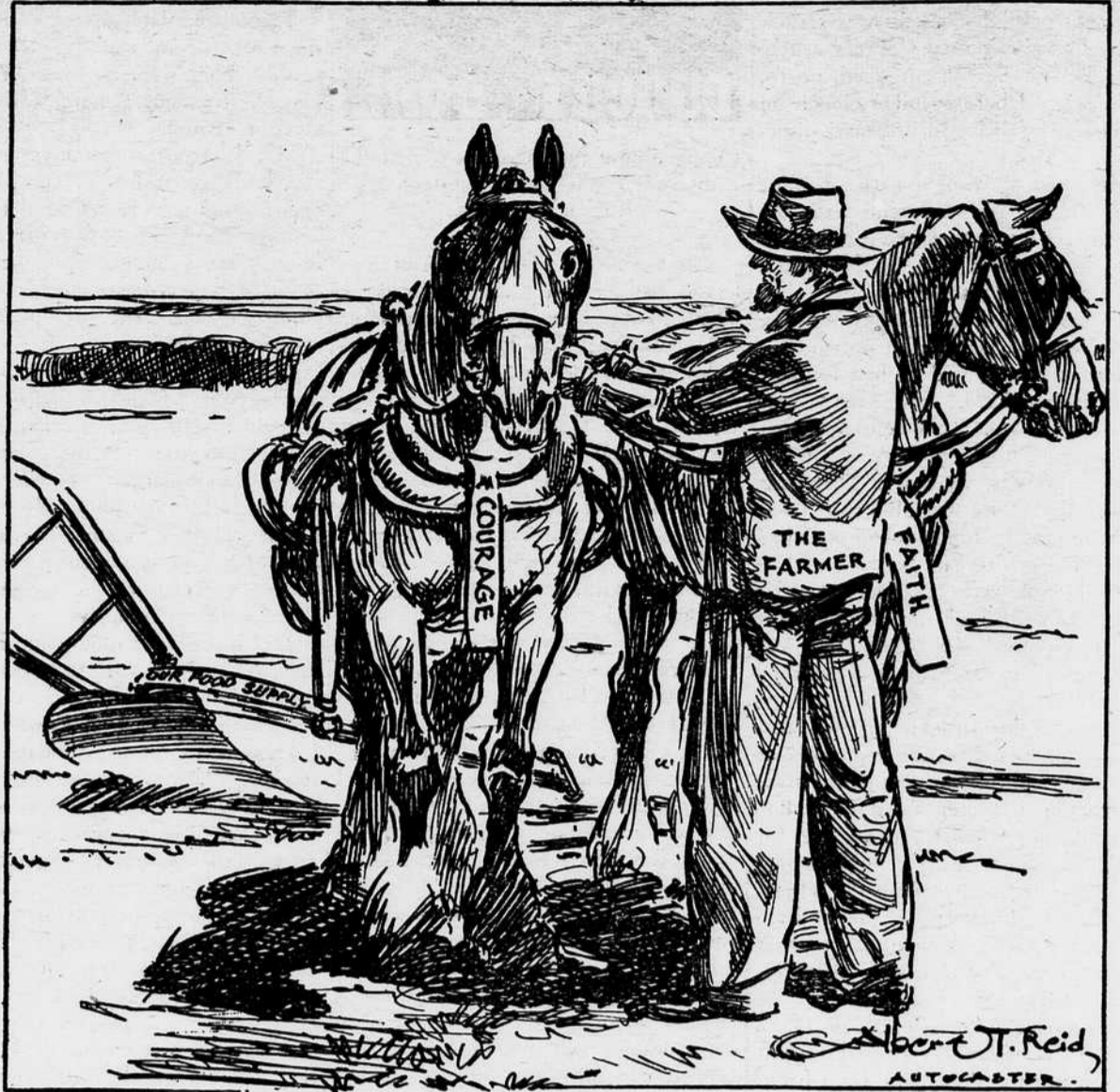
A newspaper published by a successful man or woman can point the way; it can show how things can be accomplished, it can create a wholesome atmosphere in which people can realize the beauties and joy of life, and then progress is made.

Can any other institution render greater service to humanity?

Shaw said: "The profession of journalism—God help it." I say to the rural and small city publishers who have an honest determination to get ahead, whose hearts are filled with joy, "The profession of journalism—God be praised!"—*Southern Missourian*.

A Reliable Old Plow Team

By **Albert T. Reid**



THE WATCHMAN TOWER

Mr. Hill Trexler,
 Master Mechanic,
 Southern Railway Company,
 Spencer, N. C.

My dear Mr. Trexler:
 I have heard many compliments about you and the manner in which you are conducting the Spencer shops since you were placed in charge recently. You have shown rare judgment and exceptional ability in the discharge of your duties and in the management of your important post.

Quite a number of railroad men, who have been idle for a number of months because of the depression, have been put to work again, under your instructions, I am informed. I know many hearts have been made glad and grateful by virtue of this added employment.

Allow me to congratulate you upon the manner in which you are conducting your office and I wish for you continued success.

GOVERNOR MATTHEW ROWAN.

Mayor B. V. Hedrick,
 Salisbury, N. C.

My dear Mayor:

Your drive to make Salisbury the cleanest city in North Carolina deserves commendation. This is not only an effort to increase the beauty of our city but is also a big item in health and sanitation.

I feel certain every citizen in Salisbury will co-operate with you in making Salisbury a clean city—a cleaner city. Cleanliness, it has been said, is next to godliness.

GOVERNOR MATTHEW ROWAN.

Mr. Bryce P. Beard,
 Salisbury, N. C.

My dear Mr. Beard:

I am glad to learn that sentiment over the state in legion circles is shaping up rapidly in support of the campaign being waged to make you departmental commander of the state. I have every reason to believe you will be elected to this high and important post and I know of no one in the state better qualified for this position.

For a number of years I have had the privilege of observing your efforts and activities in behalf of the legion and ex-service men. These have been untiring and commendable. Through these various services, you have become associated with the problems of ex-service men and are therefore the logical man to head the state legion forces.

The Lance Corporal, in his column in a recent issue of The Watchman, suggested the slogan, "Bryce Beard or Bust." That expresses the sentiment and spirit of the writer of this letter. I know it expresses the feelings of every ex-service man in Rowan county and I hope and am confident it will soon be on the lips of every legionnaire

in the state.
 To you and to those who are handling the campaign for your election, I extend my sincerest wishes of success.
 GOVERNOR MATTHEW ROWAN.

COMMENTS

The Next Fight

To the Editor:

The next political fight in North Carolina is going to be between the followers of Jefferson and the followers of Hamilton inside the democratic party. Are you going to stand by the people or by a centralized government, by Jefferson or by Hamilton? The short ballot is short on democracy. If our Governor can put that over on the people he will have centralized government cinched, and have given the power to the Governor to organize about him a powerful political machine which will be dangerous to the rights of the common man.

A JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRAT.

Things That So Far Have Escaped Taxation—But The Children's Candy Must Pay Five Per Cent.

To the Editor:

It is noticeable that the House Ways and Means Committee has failed to include in the revenue bill any provision requiring blind beggars to secure Fed-who buy candy to pay an excise tax, or for confiscation of pennies placed on the eyes of corpses. Probably Chairman Crisp, hero of the sales tax, will see that these are included if he must choose between them and a tax on the value of unused land. S. D.

Ouch!

To the Editor:

It is the duty of Congress to balance the budget, but there stands in the way a huge deficit which must be removed.

Will Congress be able to budge it?
 ROSCOE M. PACKARD.

Reprint Of An Old Bible

To the Editor:

Having read with much interest about old Bibles, I have a Bible which belonged to my great-grandfather, Robert Doyne Semmer. His name is on the outside in gold letters. The Bible is a Douai, A. D. 1609; Old Testament first published at the English College at Douai. The New Testament first published at the English College



The Scrap Book

THE PASSING OF MARCH

By **Robert Burns Wilson**

The braggart March stood in the sea-son's door

With his broad shoulders blocking up the way,

Shaking the snow-flakes from the cloak he wore,

And from the fringes of his kirtle gray.

Near by him April stood with tearful face,

With violets in her hands, and in her hair

Pale, wild anemones; the fragrant face

Half-parted from her breast, which seemed like fair

Dawn-tinted mountain snow, smooth-drifted there

She on the blusterer's arm laid one white hand,

But he would none of her soft blandishment.

Yet did she plead with tears none might withstand,

For even the fiercest hearts at last relent.

And he, at last in ruffian tenderness,

With one swift, crushing kiss her lips did greet

Ah, poor starved heart!—for that one rude caress,

She cast her violets underneath his feet.

at Rhomes A. D. 1582 with annotations. The copy I have was printed in 1826.

MRS. C. S. BYRD.

But Are The Mayors, Dead Or Alive, Worth Anything As Collateral For Loans?

To the Editor:

"It was the practice of the Egyptian debtors to deposit, as security, the mummies of their parents; and both their honor and religion were bound for the redemption of the pledge." So we read in Gibbon.

Well, there is hope yet for Chicago, Philadelphia and New York. Those cities might deposit the corpses of a few dead Mayors with the greedy banks for the needed millions.

Or else how about putting the live Mayors in hock—Mr. James J. Walker, for instance?
 FRED VETTER.

Maine To Imprison Negligent Hunters

Augusta, Me.—The State of Maine will begin next fall an effort to cut down the number of hunting accidental shootings. In all cases where negligence is found the hunter will face court and a possible jail term if found guilty.

Peter Adaman, of Lewiston, is serving a one-to-two-year term in Thomaston State prison for negligently shooting Ferdane Barrialt, 19, of Long Pond, while on a hunting trip. The State plans to put others in prison for similar offenses.