

PEOPLE YOU SHOULD KNOW

At Wilson and other points last week the editor of this paper found a number of young men whom you not only "should know" but are almost sure to know, sooner or later, if you live long. It is most gratifying, indeed, to discover the great number of young men of apparent character who are beginning their careers with educational foundations that one in a thousand of the older generations could not have attained. On the other hand, it is equally gratifying to see others who have not been so blessed with educational opportunities during their youths coming right along and proving to the world that it is still possible to attain the knowledge and literary skills without spending a score of years in the schools, from the primary grades up to the final requirements for a Ph. D. degree.

Taffying the North Carolina Greeks.

An example of the latter kind is Silas Lucas, of Wilson, who, I believe, has never been to college a day but who has a mastery of the king's English that is astonishing, judged by the recent example of an address prepared by him and delivered before the assemblage of several hundreds of North Carolina Greeks in Wilson during the spring. Wilbur Royster was there and again performed the admired feat of addressing the Hellenes in their own language, but he admitted to the assemblage that Silas Lucas, while not able to speak Greek, couldn't be surpassed in his English laudits of the Greeks of old. I had Mr. Lucas to swing through a part of his peroration, and would Pericles have marveled at the eloquence of that tribute to Greeks as exemplars of freedom!

Mr. Lucas has served as mayor of Wilson and is now the nominee for solicitor of the county court.

I believe the N. C. Greeks have promised Mr. Lucas a visit to their fatherland at their cost. Wilbur Royster, I assume, had to pony up the cash for the expense of his stay in Athens a number of years ago.

Meet Wilson's Youthful Mayor.

Meet Wilson's youthful mayor—Charles Blount McLean. Note that "Blount." It signifies that he is a descendant of that distinguished pioneer citizen of Wilson, George W. Blount, and a nephew of the late Henry Blount, North Carolina's master of flowery English. Possibly no other North Carolinian has ever been able to string adjectives together as was Henry Blount.

Here is a youngster of just 33 years who is serving his fourth two-year term as mayor of the city of Wilson. He is a lawyer and is building his legal career upon the solid foundation of an LL. B. degree from Wake Forest College, which degree he secured in 1922.

Wilson's Most Precocious Youngster.

In an adjoining office to that of the young mayor is that of Wilson's most precocious youngster as measured by the age of his graduation from the Wilson High School. Up to this year Wade A. Gardner had the record of having graduated at the lowest age of all graduates of Wilson's rather famous school system. At the age of 19 he walked off from the University at Chapel Hill with his A. B. degree and at 20 with his LL. B. He and Mayor McLean were play-mates as kids and are now close friends.

Just around the corner of the hall in the big bank building from the offices of Messrs. McLean and Gardner is that of M. S. Revels, who boasts a regular bachelors' degree from Washington and Lee University and a course in law at the N. C. University. He has been practicing six years and is now serving as chairman of the Wilson county election board.

"The Noblest Roman of Them All"

You have met some of Wilson's youngsters; now step in and meet Col. John F. Bruton. Son of a Methodist minister, he has not forgot the preachments of his father. Accordingly, last fall saw him leading the anti-repeal forces of Wilson county to victory.

This veteran legal light of Wilson got his schooling at the old Bingham school at Mebane and in law at Chapel Hill. But he was a teacher before he became a lawyer and, as such, was one of the pioneer graded school superintendents of the State, serving as superintendent of the Wilson graded school in 1883 and 1884. In 1884, he turned to the practice of law at Wilson, where he has continued ever since. That has been exactly fifty years ago.

He wears the title of Colonel legitimately, for he was for a period colonel of the second regiment of the State guard, and as such was associated with a number of other distinguished sons of the State in the summer encampments.

He married Miss Hattie Tart Barnes, a sister of this writer's own class-mate, E. Tart Barnes, still a resident of Wilson and long a prominent banker of the city.

The Boykins in Wilson.

There are two distinct families of Boykins in Wilson—the scions of the old Virginia tree and those of the Sampson county tree. In tide-water Virginia one finds the town of Boykins and in old Sampson Boykin's mill, Boykin's bridge, and Boykin's Chapel. In French history and in the American press I occasionally find the French name Bourquin or Boiquin. In a survey of the old names of my native community, of which Boykin is one, I find two or three French Huguenot names. I ask myself if "Boykin" is a corruption of the French name Boiquin or of Bourquin? If so, the Virginians and the Sampsonians fixed upon the same simplification of the name. But the presence of the Boykins in close association with the Killeets and Ezzells suggests the possibility of the Boykins, with an anglicised name, being another group of Huguenot extraction.

Auditor W. J. Boykin a Virginian.

Mr. W. J. Boykin, long auditor of Wilson county, came down from Richmond, Va. He tarried in Oxford for three years, but came on to Wilson in 1893, where he was engaged in the tobacco business for many years. He became auditor in 1921. Meet him and you meet a most pleasant gentleman.

The Sampsonians.

David and Robert Boykin, young men when I was a boy, went up to Wilson nearly fifty years ago and prospered. Robert moved to Hamlet a few years ago, but David is there now taking his old age in ease and comfort.

It is interesting to note that Lewis Killeet had preceded the Boykins to Wilson. One of his sons, Ed, as he was known in both Sampson and Wilson, served as mayor of the town a number of years. Up there the accent got moved back to its original place and it was Mayor Killeet—ett, not Kill-it. A. B. Carroll, of the Alderman stock, is still a later Sampson comer to Wilson. He has conducted one of Wilson's most popular groceries for a number of years. And from Warsaw, over in Duplin, went Mr. Johnson, a brother of Rivers, and Dr. Johnson of Goldsboro, who became a prominent merchant in Wilson, but is now an invalid in Asheville.

Wilson's Superb Jury Lawyer.

Atlas Finch, or Mr. W. A. Finch, is generally recognized as Wilson's most successful court room lawyer. If you get in trouble in Wilson if Atlas Finch cannot get you out you needn't bother to try to get out—take your medicine however bitter it may be.

Associated with Mr. Finch is Mr. Oliver G. Rand, a native of Goldsboro, sometimes a resident of Smithfield and for the last six years an associate of Mr. Finch. He got his degree at the University just in time to go to the war. Over there he participated in the great Meuse-Argonne offensive. He went off a second-lieutenant and returned a first lieutenant. He is young enough to be heard from later.

"Tobe" Connor No Stranger.

There is little use in mentioning "Tobe" Connor. North Carolinians should know Wilson's great legislative leader if they know anybody. But people soon forget unless one's name is kept before them. He signs his name, "H. G. Connor"; it used to be Junior, for he has his distinguished father's name. And what a heritage those Connor men have in the memory of that great and good man, Judge Henry G. Connor! George is, as you should know, on the supreme court bench, upon which his father sat with such honor to himself and to the State.

Mr. B. M. Hill is Mr. Connor's associate, and has been since 1921. A fine fellow he, too.

The Man Who Raced Congressman Kerr.

A man who on his first candidacy came within about 3,000 votes of winning over Judge John Kerr for the congressional seat the latter has held for quite a number of years should be worth knowing. Out of a total vote of 38,000 Kerr's majority was about 3,000, and that means that a change of only, say, 1600 would have given A. O. Dickens the nomination in the Second congressional district.

John Kerr's genial personality has long carried him successfully to his political goals, but it can scarcely be denied that in A. O. Dickens a man has arisen in the Second who can match John in personality, not to speak of ability at all.

But think of this man of such splendid physique, genial personality, and with a thorough foundation in the schools. He got his high school training under L. W. Bagley in that excellent old Littleton school and in the Rocky Mount High School. In 1914 he took a regular B. A. degree from Wake Forest and followed that with a LL. B. degree the next year.

He has a war experience also, having served in the

National Guard on the border and risen to the rank of captain in the famous 30th Division in the World War.

One can hardly know Mr. Dickens and not be convinced that he has a bright future before him.

Mr. Dickens was reared on a Halifax county farm.

Three More Grady's.

In writing a word about A. S. Grady of Mount Olive in the June 15 issue of The Voice, I spoke of the fact that the younger generation of Grady's is becoming rather ubiquitous in North Carolina's professional life. On a trip up the A. C. L. R. R. to Weldon I located three of those Grady youngsters. R. A. and his half-brother E. N. are Wilson lawyers. The former has been practicing quite a while, but E. N. only about two years. He taught for eight years before studying law. I was particularly interested in E. N., as he has a double strain of the Grady blood in him, his mother being a Grady as well as his father. And then I discover that he is a great-grandson of the old singing master, Gibson Carr, who was the first man I ever heard sing some of the Moody and Sankey hymns. He is a first cousin of Senator Paul Grady, as is R. A., and on his mother's side a nephew of R. G. Grady of Wilmington, and by the same token a first cousin of Robert Grady Johnson, of Pender, who will prove a sturdy candidate for the speakership of the next house, though Pender's superfluity of State honors may hurt his candidacy.

E. N. Grady seems about the best equipped of the whole bunch to make a mark in the world. He studied two years at the Naval Academy, Annapolis, also at the State University, and got his diploma from Atlantic Christian College at Wilson, and then in more recent years took a law course at Wake Forest. Included in his educational advantages, also, was some postgraduate work in history and education at Duke University.

The third Grady referred to is the youthful editor of the Roanoke News at Weldon. I believe he is the first of the name to break into the journalistic field.

Two Old-Timers.

At Wilson, I found an old-timer from Moore, A. L. McIntosh, who was for several terms register of deeds of that county and was engaged in newspaper work at Carthage, Sanford, and Wilson during his career. He is taking it easy now as a justice of the peace.

He and Editor Gold of the Wilson Times contrast as old-timers in the newspaper game with young Grady of Weldon. Mr. Gold, brought up in the newspaper work under his doughy father's tutelage, has been steadily and unostentatiously plugging away at the publication of The Times and his father's old church paper, organ of the Primitive Baptists denomination in this State.

Older members of the North Carolina Press Association remember the romanesque stature and dignity of the former editor and minister. He was one of eastern North Carolina's most useful men.

Lunsford Long's Partner.

Former Senator Lunsford Long has hied away from Roanoke Rapids to Raleigh, but he has left his law firm there in operation with his partner, J. Winfield Crew on the job. When necessary the senior partner comes to young Crew's aid. But that young scion of the Northampton family of Crew's seems prepared to manage almost any ordinary matter, carrying as he does two degrees from U. N. C., A. B. and J. D., the latter one of very few registered at the University, I believe. He also did special research work at Yale in 1929-30. He is a genial youngster.

Roanoke Rapids' Fine Schools.

For years Roanoke Rapids' school system has been most highly regarded in North Carolina. Its three white schools and one colored school train annually about 3,000 boys and girls. Of course, you recall that Rosemary is now an integral part of Roanoke Rapids. Mr. C. W. Davis is the efficient superintendent of the Roanoke-Rosemary schools. He has served in that capacity for five years and had proved his fitness for the task by serving previously as high school principal and business manager. He had formerly held a similar position in the Burlington high school. Mr. Davis is a native of Orange county and graduated at the University in 1918.

Halifax's New Senator.

I failed to meet Halifax's new senatorial nominee, Julian R. Allsbrooks, but did find his youthful partner in the office at Roanoke Rapids—Mr. M. S. Benton. Mr. Allsbrooks has been practicing law since 1924. He got his law education at the University at Chapel Hill. He won the nomination for senator over Dr. Long by a majority of 605. Young Benton, a native of Gates county, is another example of the superior advantages which the younger fellows have enjoyed. He is a B. A. of Guilford College and a B.S.

(Continued on Page Four)