

INTRODUCING A FEW SOLONS AND OTHERS

It is hard to get cuts and data for members of the legislature at the same time. We are running the pictures of several members of whom I wrote in the last issue, and possibly of some of whom we may write later.

Then, as in the case of Dr. Wayland Mitchell, or Senator Mitchell, I am telling you now and hope to secure his cut later.

From Bertie when I entered Wake Forest in 1888, I found several fine Bertie County boys already advanced to the high and mighty state of sophomores and maybe one or two to that of juniors. Wayland Mitchell, from Colerain, was one of the sophomores. It will be 44 years in a few days since one of the hottest society political contests ever waged in North Carolina occurred in the Euzeliaor Hall at Wake Forest. There were two factions and the battle was fought out and won by the poor folk faction all along the line from president down to doorkeeper, but the crucial line-up was between Bernard Spilman (now Rev. B. W. Spilman, D. D., of national and international fame) and Wayland Mitchell, both members of the class of 1891. We poor folk won, and Wayland was defeated by two or three votes.

Soon he is gone back to Bertie with his sheepskin. Later I begin to hear of him as Dr. Wayland Mitchell. For these two score years he has been a friend of the sick and distressed in good old Bertie, not once till last year, I believe, ever seeking political recognition. But the legislative bug bit him last winter and he went out, as did a number of other physicians, and won the nomination for the senate. And on the extreme right of the senate hall you will find the Bertie senator—and you will not find many, if any worthier fellows in the body.

I have hoped to be able to get several chats with him and thus to renew old acquaintance, but it seems hard to find the fellows when you can talk with them. Yet as usual there are a few ubiquitous ones, whom you can see almost at every turn—just a happen so, as with the case of my tall friend Hobbs of Raleigh, long-time drummer. If he is in a town, I almost invariably see him within a short sojourn, and of course he sees me—both of us having an attraction for each other.

When R. E. Sentelle Was a School Boy.

Skip from the winter of 1891 three years and I too have had my sheepskin since June 1892 and am teaching up at Clyde, Haywood county. Over in another valley to the southwestward a few miles Rev. R. A. Sentelle was teaching a fine lot of boys and girls, for Haywood was almost unquestionably the most advanced county of the mountain area in educational facilities. Waynesville had an excellent brick building, with a Sampsonian, Tate Wilson, afterward a professor of astronomy in one of the middle states, as co-principal. Clyde had a fairly good brick building; Bethel (I believe that was the name of the Sentelle school) had an excellent brick building; possibly the Crabtree community had another. Canton, then a tiny village, considerably less than Clyde, probably had a wooden building.

I was invited over by Principal Sentelle to be one of three judges in an oratorical contest at his school. R. E. Sentelle was a senior, as I recollect, and a participant in that oratorical contest. I have forgotten who won, but not young Sentelle, I am quite sure. However, I recall that the speeches were

marvels for high school boys.

Rev. R. A. Sentelle seemed an old man to the youth who is now sixty-five. But close to forty of the intervening forty-one years were spent by the aging school man in his work as minister and teacher. He died only a year or two ago at an age above ninety. His life was a benediction to Haywood county, and that son R. E. has thus far lived a most useful life. Like his father, he became a teacher, and



SENATOR JOHN SPRUNT HILL
Former strong supporter of prohibition who is fathering a bill to establish State liquor stores.

like him a county superintendent. But now the boy of forty-one years ago is a lawyer and is representing Brunswick county in the house of representatives. If he isn't on the Education committee he should be. If the son lives as long as did the father, you may expect R. E. Sentelle to be coming back to Raleigh if he chooses to, for a third of a century more. He is a high-type man, and few counties have sent a worthier one to the 1935 legislature than has Brunswick.

Another Veteran School Man.

He is not a member of the legislature, but librarian for the senate. Nevertheless, there is scarcely a more interesting character in either of the houses than Mr. W. D. Martin, a veteran school teacher of 80 years, still strong and robust of body and mind. Mr. Martin began teaching in 1874 up in his native county of Yadkin. Yadkin is almost as Republican as Wilkes, but the Democrats are kind to the lonely Democrats, and I find Mr. Martin librarian in the senate and Mr. Holcomb as disbursing officer over in the house, a man who is quite popular with the representatives when they are not right up to the notch on the payroll.

Six Worthy Sons and One Daughter.

Mr. Martin was in the school business 57 years, 17 of which he served as teacher examiner and county superintendent. His last teaching was in 1932, but he says, and I can readily believe him, that he could be teaching now. But the remarkable thing about the man's life is the fact that upon his farm and from a salary of something like thirty dollars a month, he educated six sons and one daughter—and I mean educated them. Yet our dear girl teachers will starve upon an income twice as great in dollars as Mr. Martin's income from both farm and school averaged for thirty or forty years!

Read here the names and professions of those children and marvel at the output of that piedmont farm home. Right here in Dunn is Doctor J. F. Martin, eye, ear, nose specialist; yonder at Lumberton is Dr. J. A. Martin, general practitioner and baby specialist; at

Raleigh is Dr. W. T. Martin, dentist; at Smithfield, G. A. Martin, lawyer; at Benson, Miss Leona Martin, a member of the Benson school faculty; and on the farm is Clyde, while at Yadkinville is D. D. Martin, principal of the town school.

As county superintendent Mr. Martin conducted the first county teachers' institute ever held in Yadkin. It was in 1882, when I was just twelve. The expert sent to assist him was none other than the late Dr. McIver, and that was his first institute. Thus Mr. Martin



SENATOR RIVERS JOHNSON
Veteran Duplin County legislator and probably the best speaker in the General Assembly.

has seen the schools run the whole gamut from a puny three-month term with teachers' salaries ranging from, say, \$18 to \$30, to a state supported school with high school open to every boy and girl in the state for eight months, and with more money spent annually upon them than was spent in all the schools, including pay schools, public schools, colleges, seminaries, institutes, etc. from 1860 up to that teachers' institute of 1882—and then perhaps a few millions to spare.

Evidently Mr. Martin was the J. A. Campbell of Yadkin or the R. A. Sentelle.

The "Country Boy" From Bladen.

U. S. Page was a tow-headed lad when I lived in Lumberton. He is now as representative from Bladen designated variously as "Bladen's Huey Long," "Bladen's Bombshell," and the "Country Boy from Bladen"—the latter is the designation that he himself prefers.

Mr. Page won renown as chief of police at Mount Olive, where he killed a bunch of assailants and because of which and possibly for killings elsewhere stood three trials for murder. He later was police chief at Dunn. He became so accustomed to weeding his row that he has undertaken to weed out the whole of Bladen; but the anti-Pagers down there are counting upon the senators from the district to backstand them. Watch the dailies for reports of what happens to Mr. Page's Bladen program—it will either be a "great victoree" for Mr. Page or his Waterloo.

But successful or not in his legislative program, Mr. Page is as independent as they are made. Down there at that beautiful Page's Lake he is as well fixed for living as any "country boy" should desire. He fed a big crowd of legislators and other friends at a barbecue some days ago, and spent about \$4 in cash in doing so—the pigs, yearling, and other foods came from that Bladen farm.

A Few Short Introductions.

It is probably a good thing that I do not know the full story of each of the members—I should never get even a god start in intro-

ducing them. Here is Mr. Page's neighbor, Representative C. D. Garrell of Columbus county. Like Mr. Page he is no college man, but a "country boy," though not playing up that fact. He resides at Tabor, one of the principal strawberry towns of Columbus. He beat out three opponents for the nomination last summer. He is a bright-looking youngster, and is making Columbus a good representative, I judge.

Granville's Senator.

Mr. John S. Watkins has fallen heir to the senate seat so often held by Mr. Hicks of Oxford. Mr. Watkins is no new hand at the legislative business, having served in the house in the sessions of 1923, '25, and '27.

His name also carries me back to Wake Forest days. He wasn't a Wake Forest man, but his brother George W. had just graduated and was often spoken of as preparing for the China mission field, a service that partook considerably of the heroic in those earlier days. Because of health reasons Rev. George Watkins forewent his aspirations for a missionary's life and became pastor of the Goldsboro Baptist church and wound up a most honorable career at Oxford in his native county a few years ago. Three of his sons, maybe four, are most honored citizens of Durham—two physicians and one lawyer.

Senator Watkins attended Scottsburg Normal College, a private institution over in Virginia. He has resided on his tobacco farm and operates a warehouse at Oxford during the tobacco season.

I adjudge Senator Watkins as one of the most sensible and dependable men in the legislature—it is that good old horse-sense which I have in mind.

Our Benson Neighbor.

It is rather difficult to change one's conceptions of Preston Woodall as one of our neighbor town Benson's best merchants and extensive farm owners to that of a legislator. But here sits our friend, and this is the third term that Johnston county people have had the god gumption to send Preston Woodall to the house. Sitting next to him in his colleague Mr. Lee, a first-termer.

If you find Mr. Woodall's picture on these pages, you will discover in his image evidences of only a solid, plain-appearing citizen. That is what he is, a man who was educated by the notable teacher Ira Turlington, and has played a straight-forward part in business, in the church (he is a Presbyterian), and in civic affairs. I would as lief place my confidence in the sound sense and dependability of Preston Woodall as in that of any man in the house.

Nash's Young Abernethy.

Nash's young attorney and representative is not of the group of Abernethies springing from the Rutherford college family, but of native Nash stock. C. C. Abernethy took his LL. B. degree at Wake Forest in 1927. He began to practice law at the good town of Spring Hope in his home county and from that place comes as one of the younger members of the house. Mr. Abernethy recently introduced a bill that had real merit, but which was killed on the plea that it lacked respect for the North Carolina judiciary, in that it deprived them of their right to use discrimination in penalizing convicted drunken drivers. Yet only a few days before the same house had defeated Representative Jonas's bill to give a judge discretionary power in capital cases in which the convicting jury recommended mercy, by sentencing such culprits to life imprisonment instead of to death, if

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