

Mount Airy News.

Mr. Airy, N. C. Aug. 23, 1923.

J. E. JOHNSON & SON, Publishers.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

One year \$4.00

Six months \$2.50

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Mount Airy, N. C., under the act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

TOBACCO PRICES HIGH

It will be good news to tobacco growers in this section to know that tobacco is selling well on the markets that have opened. The average for the whole sale where the auction sales are made is around 25 cents per pound.

A most interesting situation has developed in the tobacco business that is most certain to work for the benefit of the grower for a time, at least. When the country tried to get all the farmers to join the cooperative association strong opposition developed. Many farmers refused to join and enough refused to make it profitable to continue to operate the auction warehouses. The custom of selling at auction has built up a business of large proportions in the way of buyers and their helpers who care for the tobacco after it is delivered by the farmer. Now this large force of men and buildings, for buildings are owned by the leaf dealers at many places, is an expensive proposition unless it is busy.

Now that the country has had a taste of the way the cooperative association does business there is a strong disposition of the part of those who have not yet joined to line up and help to get good prices. These men are willing to stay out if they can continue to get good prices, but the day the buyers let the price drop that day they are going to join the association. This fact is so evident to the buyers that they are on the fence all the time as to what to do to avoid a stampede to the association; for this would make their jobs as buyers of no account for the factories. It is an open secret with the buyers for the factories on the auction markets that the only hope for the auction end of the tobacco market is for the price to stay up to a point that is highly satisfactory to the farmers. And it is very evident that any drop in the price of the leaf on the auction floor is certain to cause the farmers to stop bringing the leaf to the open market and line up with the association.

Just so long as this state of affairs continues the farmer will get a reasonable price for his tobacco, or until he produces enough of it to glut the market, which he may do.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the manufacturers are moving heaven and earth to create a demand for manufacturers tobacco in its various forms. Until recently it was only in exclusive society circles that women smoked. Now they print it in the papers that forty per cent, nearly half, of the women of this nation are smoking cigarettes. Of course if the nations of the world all turned to using the weed in its various forms it will require a mint of it to supply the demand.

FOR OUR FAR AWAY READERS

It will please our far away readers to know that this section of country has had a splendid growing season up to this time, and it is now late enough to be able to tell with a degree of accuracy as to how the crop will be. We had a dry July here. But little rain fell during the month of July and crops of all kinds were beginning to injure badly when general rains came and saved the day. As it is the corn and tobacco are good and, everything considered, we are to have a wheat harvest this year. The fruit was injured badly in the spring and no great amount of apples will go out from this market this season, but there will be some to ship, and a plenty for home use. One can see apples all about the country on most trees along the roadside. But they say that the big commercial orchards are badly short on crop.

One can hardly refrain from writing about our system of good roads when he gets to talking about the county. It is a delight to go about over the county now that we have a system of roads that opens up almost every section.

We have had the roads long enough now to see what they mean to us. The officials are able to keep the roads in fine condition. Many were fearful that after we had issued bonds and borrowed money and graded our roads we would let them wash away. And there was reason for this fear. But it is now very evident that no such will be our lot. The county road forces are busy all the time keeping the roads in condition. And they are doing the work well. So well are they doing it that it is a common remark to hear that a certain trip was made across the county in less than an hour, and it is more than 25 miles across the county. There is not a road in

the county, we do not suppose, that is not in such condition that automobiles go over it at the legal rate of speed, which is 30 miles an hour. The authorities have also put up a splendid system of road signs that tell of the distance to all important points. It is simply wonderful what progress this county has made in the way of road work. One who has not been here could hardly believe it.

Summer School at Dobson Closes

The teachers' summer school which has been in session at Dobson for six weeks closed last Friday with everybody in touch with it declaring that the course had been a great success. Seventy teachers enrolled at the beginning and the school closed with 64 successfully passing the examinations, the other six having to give up the course on account of unavoidable reasons. Prof. Hendren tells us that he has never seen as much enthusiasm among the teaching force of a county as this year. All the teachers have gone to their various homes for a few weeks rest before taking up their duties for the coming school year. The schools of the county are expected to open on Monday, Oct. 1st.

The County school board has recently purchased three new school busses to be used in transferring high school students from the country districts to the schools located in the towns of the county. The new school law requires the board to place in reach of every child it desires, it the high school course and in many places the county must convey these pupils to the schools of the town. The busses just purchased will be used for transferring high school pupils from Thurman to Elkton, from the Ararat neighborhood to Pilot Mountain, and from Beulah in Stewart's Creek township to Dobson.

Settlement With County Officials Delayed

Since the completion of the audit of the books of the ex-officials of this county the parties interested have been trying to reach a settlement. All the officials met with the board Tuesday of this week, but none were prepared to make a final settlement and the time was extended at their request. The board did reach an agreement with A. E. Tilley as to his fee for the collection of the 1922 tax while he was special tax collector. They agreed on the sum of \$3250.00. Below is published the minutes of the meeting held Tuesday which shows the disposition of the various settlements that had been called for:

The Board of County Commissioners met at Dobson on the 21st day of August, 1923, according to adjournment for the purpose of making settlement with the ex-officials of the county.

Floyd Eldridge, ex-treasurer of the county, appeared before the Board and admitted the auditor, Mr. Hendrix was correct in his report and this report showed that on the 4th day of December, 1922, as treasurer, Floyd Eldridge was indebted to the County of Surry in the sum of \$39,943.64. Since that day he has made payments on this indebtedness and reduced the same to \$23,000.00 and odd dollars, subject to a credit of \$2,500 due him from the Board of Education and he was allowed, at his request, until the first Monday in September to settle with the Board of Commissioners for the amount due, with legal interest.

Henry Wolfe, ex-register of deeds of the county, appeared before the Board and the auditor's report showed that he is indebted to the county in the sum of \$495.91. Mr. Wolfe asked for further time to investigate and the Board allowed him until the first Monday in October.

J. A. Jackson, ex-clerk of the Superior Court, appeared before the Board and the auditor's report showed that there was due by him the sum of \$2155.75. Mr. Jackson asked for further time to investigate as the report of the auditor had not been in his hands sufficiently long to make a proper investigation and the Board allowed him until the first Monday in October to make final settlement.

A. E. Tilley, tax collector was allowed by the Board in full of all services as tax collector the sum of \$3250 and was ordered by the Board to make settlement immediately and pay over to the Treasurer of Surry County the balance in his hands. The Board appointed the auditor and the treasurer of the county to meet with Mr. Tilley immediately to make this settlement.

The auditor was ordered by the Board to make out, as soon as possible a complete report of his audit and when made out the same will be put in both of the local papers for the information of the people.

This the 21st day of August, 1923, Alexander Chatham, I. O. Wallace, W. J. Byerly, Commissioners.

City Sells Bonds

The last issue of bonds authorized was sold last Thursday for their face value. Owing to the condition of the bond market the city was unable to get any premium for this issue. These bonds were sold about three months ago for a premium of about \$700 but there was some technicality about the transaction and the sale had to be held again. Sixty-five thousand dollars in all was sold, \$35,000 goes for street work and the remainder to pay off the debt incurred by the Water and Light Commission in making improvements.

W. E. MERRITT BUILDING A LAKE

New Venture of Mount Airy Citizen Attracting Much Attention

The progress along all lines in this city has been great within the past ten years. Large numbers of buildings have been erected, our enterprises have increased and enlarged, we have built more streets and roads, we have tried to keep our school system up to the times—we have done all this but not until recently has there been any move made that offered very much recreation or diversion from the daily routine of life for the people of the town. From time to time movements have been started with the aim in mind to supply this city with a play ground, or swimming and boating place or fishing hole, or golf course, but all have failed to realize their aim.

Seeing the lack of some kind of place for more active and greater expansion of one's energy, one of Mount Airy's progressive citizens, W. E. Merritt, has in construction six miles north of this city on the Ward's gap road one of the wonders of this section in the way of a lake that he will stock with fish and also can be used for swimming and boating.

Sometime ago Mr. Merritt purchased nearly two hundred acres which comprise the water shed of the stream on which he is building his lake and with this large boundary of land from which to supply water for the lake there is no probability of its ever filling up. All the work he is doing is under the direction of the state and federal experts along such lines. Mr. Merritt selected a meadow of about 12 acres for his site. In the middle of this is a stream that has a flow of nearly three barrels a minute which will supply the lake with water. The lower end of the meadow narrows down to about one hundred feet wide with high hills on each side and in this narrow place a clay dam has been built. The dam measures more than a hundred feet wide at the bottom, and is about 25 feet high, and wide enough on top to drive a car over without making one the least bit nervous.

In building the dam the experts were particular to stress the fact that the dirt used should be the best clay on the premises and practically free from rocks and sticks. Even the soil was removed from the top of the ground before the teams began piling in the clay for it was said that the clay would not cement tight enough to the top soil, and so this was removed so that clay rested on clay at the very bottom, the tremendous weight from the top making it almost as hard as a brick.

Last Monday morning the last gap in the dam was filled and the water has been collecting in the lake. It is estimated that it will take three months for it to fill, after which there will be a body of water 30 feet deep at places and covering from 10 to 12 acres. To protect the dam from washing away by the flow of the stream after it is filled a concrete spill-way will carry the surplus water ground the side of the dam and on down into the old bed below.

Mr. Merritt intends to stock the lake with our creek suckers sun perch and bass. He expects to secure several thousand bass from the government fisheries and this fish is supposed to furnish the most sport, although the perch makes mighty good fishing. The suckers raise very fast and are counted the best fish that can be secured in this section that will furnish food for the bass in the way of millions of minnows on which the bass lives.

Mr. Merritt also expects to build bath houses and a board walk on one side of the lake and also have some boat landings. And as time goes by no doubt there will spring up many cottages in the groves around the lake that will be used for camping parties and picnics. Mr. Merritt has not completed his plans of just how he will operate this new venture on his part, but he will perhaps organize a club composed of the people of this town and let the club have charge of the maintenance and operation of the place. Should such a course be pursued Mr. Merritt says he is willing to donate this land and lake as long as it is used as such and would only expect the club to reimburse him for the cost of the dam. All these details are to be worked out later, Mr. Merritt's main idea now being to see the lake completed and full and then after our people have seen it there is no doubt but that a large number will be glad to avail themselves of the privilege of this new rendezvous for recreation, outing and sport.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reeco were honorees at a delightful picnic at Kapps Mill last Thursday evening. Those present beside the honorees were Mr. and Mrs. Joe Haynes, Mrs. C. H. Haynes, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Bivens, Misses Anna and Ruth Reeco and Theodore Reeco.

FEDERAL AGENTS RAID A CITY

Liquor Dealers in Savannah, Ga., Rounded Up in Wholesale Fashion

Washington, Aug. 16.—Department of justice officials declared today that the leaders in the largest and most powerful "bootleg" ring in the United States have been taken into custody in the wholesale arrests made at Savannah, Ga., under direction of federal agents. Additional arrests are anticipated and it was stated that the case might lead to some state and federal officers.

William Harr, a one-time grocery clerk, is described as the principal leader of a ring which officials here claim operate a flotilla of craft, had its own cement lined storehouses in the swamps along the Georgia and Florida coasts, and supplied liquor along the Atlantic seaboard as far east as New Jersey, over the south and as far west as St. Louis, Chicago and Cleveland.

"The Big Four"

Heading forces of less wealth and strength, according to justice officers, were C. Graham Baughn, Richard Bailey and Sam Goldberg. These four are referred to as the "Big Four" and it was said they were so known in "bootleg" circles throughout the country. Harr is alleged to own a number of craft of British registry which were used to import intoxicants from Cuba, the Bahamas and other points in the West Indies. But the ring, the story goes, reached out even to Great Britain, France and Canada for its supplies. The craft bringing stocks from nearby ports would anchor outside the 3-mile limit, the claim is, and fast motor boats would make the transfers to storehouses ashore. Distribution then would be made by automobiles and trains.

Operations of the ring are said to have extended along the east coast of Florida and the Georgia coast, which, because of their numerous bays and inlets isolated by large swamps made their operations comparatively free from detection from shore. Finally efforts were made to break up the smuggling from the sea, but with hundreds of miles of coastline on which to operate the run runners usually were successful in evading capture.

On Trail Two Years

It was two years ago that information came to the department of justice that Savannah was the port for the receipt and distribution of much of the liquor reaching the southern and eastern markets. Mrs. Mabel Walker Willebrandt, an assistant to the attorney general, who is charged with the enforcement of the prohibition law, ordered prohibition enforcement agents to that city in an effort to break up the illicit trade.

By this time, however, the ring from beginning on a small scale had become, according to officials, a large and powerful organization with an efficient "intelligence" department. The result was that the agents sent in were quickly "uncovered," making it necessary to replace them by others.

The task of collecting evidence upon which to undertake prosecutions proved so difficult that Mrs. Willebrandt attacked the job from another angle. She sent for the federal tax returns made by a number of the suspected "bootleggers" and agents of the intelligence unit of the internal revenue bureau began an investigation. Bank accounts of the men in Savannah were examined and the trail of checks and drafts in large amounts and alleged to have been in payment for liquors

Phone 53 Phone 53 DRUGS Prescriptions Carefully Compounded—Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pens—Whitman's Candy Phone Us Your Order W. S. Wolfe Drug Co. Agent Van Lindley Flowers

were followed through banks in several cities including New York.

Meantime the evidence thus disclosed convinced officials here that they were on the trail of the largest "bootleg" force in the country at least from a standpoint of the size of operations, and William J. Burns, director of the bureau of investigation of the department of justice, was asked to take up the case. This was last May and Mr. Burns sent several agents to Savannah, who worked in cooperation with the internal bureau officers.

Later the federal grand jury returned indictment against the "Big Four" and four or five others charging a violation of the revenue act through failure to make proper returns. It was charged that Harr had failed to make a return on income in excess of \$1,000,000. These cases are set for trial August 29 before Judge W. J. Grubb, of Birmingham Ala., who is holding the current term of the federal court at Savannah because Federal Judge Barrett is in ill health.

A week ago those in charge of the "bootleg" investigation decided they had sufficient evidence upon which to base action. Accordingly indictment for the "Big Four" and many others were drawn in the department of justice at a conference participated in by Mrs. Willebrandt, White Miller, of Chattanooga, Tenn., assistant of the attorney general, delegated to prosecute the case; Harold Allen, of counsel for the internal revenue bureau, and Oliver Hegen, indictment expert of the department.

40 Agents Sent In

With the stage thus set for what has proved to be the largest roundup made by the government under the national prohibition law, 40 additional agents of the bureau of investigation were dispatched to Savannah. They began assisting the agents already on the ground and much additional evidence was obtained.

The arrest of John J. Powers, a leading banker of Savannah, came as a surprise to officials here, who said they had not yet been advised as to what connection with the ring he was alleged to have had. There also were taken in the roundup others whose alleged connections had not been made clear in reports to the department.

One of the leaders escaped arrest, he is described by Mr. Burns as H. H. Brown, who has a long string of aliases and who is wanted by the police in a number of cities. Justice officers believe he obtained information of the impending roundup and skipped some days ago.

Mrs. Miller, in making public some of the details of the investigation, declared all of the units of the government called upon in the case had "worked together like one man." "Mr. Burns' men did most of the work in connection with the conspiracy to violate the prohibition law," she said, "while the internal revenue men did the work on the tax cases, but their tasks interlocked at many points and there was splendid cooperation."

New President Hustles Fast

Washington, Aug. 17.—Visitors at President Coolidge's office today noted that his desk brought out the contrast between him and the late President Harding. It was stripped down to bare necessities, whereas that of his predecessor was scattered here and there with mementoes, gifts and personal things, such as his mother's picture and the card left by President Wilson when he called.

President Coolidge's desk today had on it no papers and no untransacted business. There was a blotter and a pen cushion, a pencil tray filled with pencils, the leather appointment-slip holder, a wooden box for rubber bands a neatly arranged stack of paper and a clock. Directly in front of him were half a dozen reference books, such as the congressional directory, and a comparative study of the last tariff laws.

The only embellishments were a bronze desk light, a bronze encaused thermometer and a vase of pink roses, such as is placed every morning on the desk of the President. There was an unadorned ash tray slightly to the left.

President Harding's ash tray was one presented by a golf admirer, having on its sides the reproduction of two or three golf balls. His desk often indicated, by the piles of documents, one of his own beliefs, that it was impossible to keep abreast the routine work of being President. Mr. Coolidge either has not started to wade into the stocks of documents awaiting him, or has taken them in smaller and quicker bites, so as to keep his desk constantly clear.

Doesn't Have to Stand Mother-in-Law's Tongue

Columbia, S. C., Aug. 15.—The duty of a wife to stand abusive language from her spouse "may not be extended to cover the tongue of a cantankerous mother-in-law," the state Supreme court of South Carolina held in opinion written by Associate Justice J. H. Marton.

The case was that of the state against Sam Bagwell, who lived in a mill village at Laurens, S. C. He was convicted of non-support of his wife, and he appealed to the Supreme court which upheld the lower court.

Mrs. Bagwell contended she had to leave the abode of her husband because of the abusive language of her mother-in-law and had to support herself. The court held that the husband must supply his wife with a home "free from abuse, ill treatment and unwarranted interference from members of the household," if not the wife had a right to leave and in so doing she is "not only not guilty of desertion but may charge the husband with desertion."

Sydnor & Sparger Insurance Agents MOUNT AIRY, N. C.

Auction Sale Sallie J. Poore Home Place On Worth St. Friday, August 4, 1923, at 2 P. M. Six room dwelling. Out buildings. About 2 1/2 acres subdivided. Eight lots all level and excellent home sites. TERMS:—One fourth cash; balance 6, 12 and 18 months. Bank of Mt. Airy (Trust Department)