

The Warren Record

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BIGNALL JONES, Editor — DUKE JONES, Business Manager

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The Fourteenth Amendment

While many persons have read the Constitution of the United States its lack of pertinency to any particular problem of the time of reading perhaps is responsible for a certain later forgetfulness. This failure in many cases could be responsible for a great deal of misunderstanding at the present time.

The 14th Amendment is certainly pertinent now as it is the Amendment under which the Supreme Court decision of 1954 concerning the integration of schools was handed down. It reads:

"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privilege or immunity of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

In 1954 the Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools were a violation of the 14th Amendment and were null and void and ordered that the schools be integrated "with all deliberate speed." For some ten or 12 years most states complied with every resource in their command. Prodded by Civil Right laws passed by the Congress and by rulings of HEW North Carolina schools adopted a freedom of choice plan under which integration was considerably hastened until more than 15

per cent of Negroes were attending predominantly white schools.

The Office of Health, Education and Welfare in recent years has withheld or threatened to withhold federal funds unless certain of their edicts to hasten integration were carried out. This action has caused deep resentment from people who look upon these edicts as usurpation of powers not conferred upon the agency. That might well be. But it could well be that HEW considers these steps not as laws but as implements of the Supreme Court decision.

Many persons have been led to believe that if the States refused to accept Federal funds that they would be permitted to operate their schools as they choose. Such is far from the truth. Even if all funds were refused, the schools would be integrated under federal court order. Government grants are simply an inducement to comply with integration of the schools without court order.

During the past 14 years the South has learned with some understandable elation that the North was guilty of the same kind of segregation of the schools of which they charged the South. In fairness, it should be pointed out that the North had de facto segregation while the South had de jure desegregation. Which means that the North had desegregation in a sneaky kind of way through subterfuge while the South had legal segregation. However, while the results have been the same, there is quite a difference in the eyes of the law.

We think it is unfortunate that the Courts did not allow more time for the Freedom of Choice Plan to be given a chance to work out. It seemed to be working with a minimum of friction and a good deal of success, and the same results could have been achieved with only a few more years delay. Customs and mores of hundreds of years can not be wiped out overnight without

violence to a people's sense of fairness.

The mistake that the State made was not in adopting the Freedom of Choice plan soon after the Supreme Court handed down its decision. If we had adopted this plan in North Carolina even as late as 1960, in all probability we would not be having our present difficulties.

However, the Courts have decided that only 15 per cent integration in 14 years is not "at all deliberate speed," and have ordered that all segregation in the South must end by the beginning of the 1969-70 school term and that a dual system of schools will no longer be permitted.

Southern white people, by and large do not like this state of affairs; colored people, by and large do. White people, who have been operating the schools, charge Federal dictation and nullification of State's Rights. Colored leaders feel that it represents a big step towards first class citizenship.

In many business offices are to be found small signs reading, "The boss may be wrong, but he is still the boss." Southern whites may well believe the Supreme Court was wrong; but it still is the Supreme Court. In a nation built upon laws, it is still supreme.

In The Name Of Truth, Carl Tells This Tale

By CARL GOERCH In The State Magazine

This happened several years ago, but I have kept the disgraceful affair secret to keep from embarrassing a dear friend. However, in the interest of fearless journalism, truth and honesty, the story must be told. It concerns Bill Sharpe, editor of this magazine (the aforesaid dear friend), and another individual to be named later.

One time the Olin Mathieson plant in Brevard installed a new paper-machine and invited people from all around to tour the plant, see the machine, and attend a picnic in Strauss Park. Among the guests was our editor, and after getting his plate of barbecue etc., he began to mingle with and fraternize with the other guests.

He walked over to another plateholder who was standing apart from the crowd. "Howdy," he said, "Quite a fine occasion, isn't it?" "Certainly is," responded the man.

"I'm Bill Sharpe from Raleigh," said Bill. "I'm Bill McGuire from Charlotte," the other said.

"Are you connected with Olin?" asked Bill. "No; I'm with Duke Power Company." Now this immediately aroused Bill's interest. "Well, well," he said smoothly. "I'm an old power hand myself. I used to be with CP&L. Fine outfit. So is Duke, of course. Do you happen to know Tom Hill, who used to be manager of the Winston-Salem office of Duke?"

"Why, yes, I know Mr. Hill. But you realize a lot of people work for Duke and I don't know them all."

"Of course not. But I tell you one thing—you didn't make any mistake when you joined up with Duke. A young man like you has a great future with such a company."

McGuire lowered his eyes modestly, "I'm glad to hear you say that. I certainly hope I didn't make a mistake."

Mostly Personal

By BIGNALL JONES

Under date of Sept. 9, we received the following letter addressed to the Editor of The Warren Record:

"Dear Mr. Jones: "A few weeks ago in your paper, column of court cases, it read as follows: 'William Justis Alston, Route 1, Littleton, pled guilty of drunk driving and was fined.'"

"I came from Littleton, Route 1, and my wife came from Warrenton and it can be a lot of talk about this item, which unfortunately could have been avoided, if you had specified white or colored. This was a colored man and I am white."

"Since my wife and I have heard such talk about this, I would appreciate it if in your next paper you will put a correction on this matter. This has only been slander to my name and I will tell you truthfully I do not appreciate it."

"Thank you for your attention to this matter. "Yours very truly, "WILLIAM JUSTIS ALSTON."

The letter from Mr. Alston, I hope, will serve to correct an injustice to his good name, as obviously anyone would not wish to be falsely accused of a serious offense. It will also tend to show the confusion that can be caused by the fact that so many white and colored persons bear similar names in Warren County. Unfortunately, this is further compounded by the fact that many people of each race bear similar names.

Mr. Alston was right in stating that the confusion could have been avoided if we had a policy of stating colored or white in reporting cases. Unfortunately, this identification is not made in court records, and this newspaper has no way

Letter To Editor LIKES HAWK KILLER

To The Editor: I went to my waste basket to read again the fascinating story of Mrs. J. R. James, 63, of Warrenton, Route 1, killing a great hawk in her chicken yard with her bare hands. It was such an exploit as I longed and tried to do as a boy on a Virginia farm.

Hawks were a pest by day and minks by night, so bold they'd go after chickens in our henhouse even before it was dark. I had one battle with a hawk, grappling with a hen, but didn't succeed as did Mrs. James.

My brother had better luck with a mink. The screaming hens one night took him on a run to the hen house in time to see a mink trying to squeeze out through a hole too small for him. My brother caught the animal by the hind legs and dashed it against the side of the house. But he didn't kill it until it had left half a dozen hens dead.

If only we had had Mrs. James! But it was long before her day. Maybe it's still time for her to help her neighbor troubled with hawks. To me her's was a wonderful deed. S. L. MORGAN Hamilton, N. C. 97 Sept. 23.

History Of Town Told In Old Minutes Of Board

By BIGNALL JONES

Through the courtesy of J. Edward Rooker, Town Manager, I have been able to examine the minute book of the town of Warrenton covering the period from 1891 through 1916, reflecting a period when the town grew from a village to a small town.

In these minutes are contained much that is still of interest, and much that still may be of profit as showing how another generation met the problems. From time to time as space and time permits these proceedings will be published in this newspaper. Items and meetings which have a pertinent bearing on the present and which reveal the history of the past will be used. Accounts of routine meetings and routine items will be omitted in what is intended to be a running account of governmental activities of the town covering a period of a quarter of a century.

In the front of the minute book, preceding the minutes of the board, is a single sheet of paper concerned with tax valuations for a four year period. The series of articles begins with this data.

The amount of real and personal property listed in Warrenton in 1891 was \$275,586. The number of white's listing property was 60 and the number of colored 103. The number of dogs listed for taxation was 13.

A year later, in 1892, the amount of personal and real property had decreased to \$264,022. The number of white polls was 60 and the number of

of knowing the race of any defendant from the court records, from which the new reports are made.

A number of years ago newspapers, realizing that headlines about crimes bearing the word "Negro" often tended to reflect unjustly on the Negro race, began to omit the word Negro from its headlines and in most cases from their stories. They realized that the papers did not say "Jew shoots neighborhood," or "Greek shoots," and seldom "White man shoots," and asked in fairness why say "Negro shoots."

At the same time that newspapers were dropping the word "Negro" from their headlines, courts and numbers of governmental agencies also began to drop the identification from many of their records.

However laudible the reason, the practice has tended to cause some confusion, and sometimes injustice as in the case of Mr. Alston.

In this connection, the Federal Government in its census report of 1960 failed to list the population by race by townships and towns. Obviously this is a handicap to those interested in knowing the growth or loss by race in the county for business, or other reasons.

This is a confused and confusing world and rapidly becoming more so. If it gets much worse, identifications will have to be made by number instead of/or with names, a trend that has already made much headway.

Under the circumstances, I think, one may be forgiven if one sometimes longs for the simpler days when there were fewer ideas and no recognized race problem, no boll weevil, and no income or withholding taxes.

colored polls was 40, making a total of 100 persons paying poll tax in 1892. The number of dogs listed has increased to 22.

A further decrease was noted in 1893 when the value of real and personal property was listed at \$256,645, in a more detailed report. The number of white voters under 50 years of age was 56 and the number of colored voters under 50 years of age was 36, a drop of eight from the previous year.

The valuation of town lots was \$140,958; cattle, etc., \$5,765; farming utensils, etc., \$20,114; money on hand, \$6,380; solvent credits, \$31,091; all other property, \$51,946; shares in incorporated companies, \$175; and one item, not legible, in the amount of \$16. The number of dogs listed had risen to 24, lacking one of doubling the figure in 1891.

The 1894 valuations showed some improvement. The total value of real and personal property had risen to \$280,763.18. White voters under 65 years old were 65, an increase of five over 1891 and the colored voters under 50 years old were 34 a drop of nine. The number of dogs listed was 23, a drop of one from the previous year.

No indication of the tax rate or the poll rate was given.

When one considers the difference in the value of money in the 1891's, property valuations compared very favorably with those of today. One studying this sheet would, I think, come to the conclusion that the town was one of substantial wealth, and that citizens invested their earnings into building the town, rather than investing in stocks and bonds, for in 1892 the value of stocks listed was only \$175, and quite probably that was in a local corporation.

Incidentally, the tendency to invest in local property continued until around 1925 or 1926 when those with surplus funds discovered the stock market; a discovery that led to heavy loss in the market crash only a few years later.

The first minutes of the board are found in May 4, 1891, when the board met to canvass the

results of the town election. The results showed that John L. Henderson has defeated H. A. Foote in the race for mayor by the vote of 74 to 60.

Selected for commissioners were J. M. Ransom, who led the ticket with 125 votes, and P. H. Allen, C. A. Thomas, W. G. Rogers, H. J. Burwell, J. S. Plummer, and W. H. Shearin, J. M. Ransom and J. S. Plummer were Negroes.

Unsuccessful candidates were R. P. Green, F. P. Hunter, J. J. Loughlin, J. S. Battle, J. W. Harris, and R. H. Alexander.

J. W. Williams was registrar for the election, and Peter Arrington and Aaron Hendricks were pollholders. Aaron Hendricks was a Negro.

Following the canvass of the votes, an organizational meeting was held. John White was named secretary and treasurer. H. T. Macon was elected constable. The salaries remained

the same, with the mayor receiving \$100 per year; the secretary and treasurer receiving \$100 annually; and the constable receiving \$200 yearly, plus 2.5% on all taxes collected, and the income from the town sales.

C. A. Thomas was appointed chairman of the finance committee; P. H. Allen, H. J. Burwell and William H. Shearin, members.

Named to the cemetery committee were P. H. Allen, chairman; W. G. Rogers, J. M. Ransom, and J. S. Plummer.

H. T. Macon offered the commissioners the use of his office as a meeting place provided the town would buy necessary chairs. The board agreed to purchase ten chairs at a cost not to exceed 75¢ each. J. J. Loughlin and J. Archer Johnson were issued permits to operate a bar for the retail of vinous, malt and spirituous liquor by measure of a quart or less.

(to be continued)

Thoughtful Planning Key

RALEIGH—Thoughtful planning is the key to successful home decorating, remind extension housing and house furnishings specialists, North Carolina State University.

If new furniture is part of your home improvement plan, you will do well to select furniture to suit your family's needs and tastes.

There will be three main furniture styles to choose from: informal or provincial, traditional and contemporary-modern.

Informal or provincial furniture, such as Early American, French, English or Italian styles, offers a charming, simple, homespun beauty. It's especially popular for families with children, because these pieces are usually sturdy and serviceable. Maple or maple-finished hardwoods and cherry are the woods often used for informal furnishings. Rough textures, allover patterns and warm colors are characteristic of upholstered pieces. Flexible in style, the traditional furnishings of one period or provincial design usually har-

monize with those of other periods.

In today's home, traditional furniture may be used formally and informally. Furniture reproductions retain their classic styles, but have been scaled to the proportions of the average size room to add beauty and balance. Details have been simplified for ease of care and to fit in with our informal living pattern. Traditional furniture is made from both light and dark woods, including walnut, mahogany and fruitwood. Elegance is reflected in rich, smooth fabrics and soft, muted colors.

Contemporary-modern furniture is popular because its simplified styling, comfort and construction are based on present day needs. The clean, uncluttered lines are scaled to the modern way of life and the ease of care appeals to many homemakers.

When selecting furnishings, you may wish to have one style dominate; accent with other styles.

An ounce of gold can be drawn into a wire 50 miles long.

Shop in your home community



It's more fun to do business with people you know

This is likely one of the big reasons you choose to live where you do. You know our hometown businessmen. They know you. You are only minutes away if you need their goods or services. You don't have to hurry. You don't have to worry about being pressured into unwanted buys.

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