

THE RAILROADS ARE IN HANDS OF OWNERS AGAIN

Government Operation Ceased Tuesday at 12:01 a. m.—Benefits of the Experiment Worth the Cost, Thinks Mr. Hines

At 12:01 o'clock Tuesday morning the government returned to the owners 240,000 miles of main line railroad and terminals and equipment, valued at approximately \$20,000,000, over which its direct authority has been exercised since Dec. 28, 1917. President Wilson signed the railroad bill late Saturday afternoon.

Director-General Hines, it is announced, will continue in his present capacity until about May 1. Although without any railroads to direct, he still faces the settlement of literally thousands of claims, contracts and grievances. Only 147 of the 230 compensation contracts with the corporations actually were signed during government control, and the remainder will continue to be subject of negotiations. Damage claims have arisen, of which many still are pending. Labor has several thousand cases before the government wage boards, and Mr. Hines has assured the labor spokesmen these will be concluded. Some will require the payment of retroactive wages, if decided in favor of interpretation of agreement, which labor of course will refuse to have altered by the corporations. Many affect general labor policies and represent vitally important questions from the labor view.

In noting the change the Associated Press says the roads go back to private control under largely new conditions. The railroad bill, signed Saturday night by the President, gives the systems certain new privileges, but as an offset it enlarges the interstate commerce commission, both in power and personnel. The corporations no longer are masters completely of their bond issues, nor are they allowed to stand solidly against labor, for labor's demands, if not met by arbitration and negotiation between the parties concerned, go to the high court provided in the bill on which sit, in addition to labor and railroad representatives, public representatives as well.

As for finances, Mr. Hines has asserted that the corporations would have had difficulty in obtaining the necessary credit had the government not extended its care to them during the war. This difficulty has been swept aside to some extent, for the roads can obtain loans from the government in these days of strained credit, it was explained. The interstate commerce commission also is bound by law to consider the roads' financial status in rate making so the properties may always stand on a solid base.

Development of water transportation instituted by the railroad administration is to be continued under the direction of the war department. The whole organization which has handled this part of the railroad administration's duties will be transferred to the jurisdiction of Secretary Baker. This includes the operation of barges and towboats on the Mississippi river between St. Louis and New Orleans; between the Alabama coal fields and the Gulf of Mexico on the Warrior river project; on the Delaware and Raritan canal.

In operating the railroads the government accumulated a deficit of \$715,500,000 in 15 months. But while the deficit appears large, "Federal operation has cost the public considerably less under the condi-

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WORKING MAPLE SUGAR INDUSTRY IN WATAUGA

Mr. W. M. Hensel of the U. S. department of agriculture and the State bureau of extension, a specialist in sugar plant work, is in Watauga and Avery counties planning and making preparations for greater development of the maple sugar industry this season.

Last season was Mr. Hensel's first work in these counties. He established a sugar plant at Linville City on the property of the Linville Improvement Company. He has made a careful survey of the possibilities of the maple sugar industry in this section. He has carefully gone over the territory and has estimated that there are 1,000,000 trees that will furnish a sufficient amount of sap for making an average of one gallon of syrup for each tree. Syrup is now selling for \$4 per gallon. A \$4,000,000 industry for these counties would be a handsome thing.

BLOWING ROCK TO VOTE ON STREET BONDS

Recently the commissioners of the town of Blowing Rock passed an ordinance providing for an issue of \$15,000 street improvement bonds. In this ordinance was a clause calling for an election on this bond issue, provided a petition signed by a certain number of citizens was presented before the mayor and commissioners asking that the question be put to a vote. Such a petition, signed by one-third of the voters of the town, has been presented to the mayor and commissioners, and a call has now been issued for the election. The election will be held on the 30th day of March. A new registration has been called, with Mr. H. E. Coffey as registrar and Messrs. G. S. Watts and Ed. Robbins judges of election.

CALDWELL SCHOOLS ENTER THE STATE-WIDE DEBATE

Lenoir and Oak Hill—Granite Falls Will Probably Enter—Lenoir's Preliminaries to Come Off Tuesday Night

Two Caldwell high schools—Lenoir and Oak Hill—have entered the eighth annual contest of the high school debating union conducted by the University of North Carolina. Granite Falls will probably enter the State-wide debate, bringing the county entries up to that of the past years.

Tuesday night Lenoir debaters will have their first preliminary for the coming tryouts with Hickory and Morganton.

In all 250 high schools have entered the union for this year. Eighty-four counties are represented. Guilford and Roberson lead with nine schools each in the contest. Buncombe and Mecklenburg have eight each, Johnson and Pitt have seven each, and Gaston, Iredell, Nash, Rowan and Wake are represented by six schools each.

The State-wide debate will be held late in March, the final contest at Chapel Hill for the State championship and the Aycock memorial cup early in April. The query which will be debated is "Resolved, that the United States should adopt a policy of further material restriction of immigration."

As an aid to the debaters the University has distributed to all the schools in the union a hundred-page booklet on "Immigration" with briefs of both sides of the question, arguments by authorities, material for speeches, and references to further material. Seventy-five copies of this booklet have recently been ordered by West Virginia University, which is starting this year a debating union modeled on the North Carolina union and which will use the booklet for distribution among the schools of that State.

The winners since 1913 have been Pleasant Garden, Winston-Salem, Wilson, Graham, Waynesville, Wilson and Durham. Sixteen hundred and sixteen high schools have participated in the debates in the seven years, and it is estimated that an average of 80,000 persons have listened to the debates each year.

BOONE METHODISTS SECURE A GOOD ARCHITECT

Boone Methodists have secured Mr. G. W. Carlton of Chattanooga, who drew the plans for the Lenoir Methodist church, to draw plans for the new church which they are planning to build. Mr. Carlton was in Boone several days ago to go over the ground with the local building committee. The plans selected give a seating capacity of 285 in the main auditorium. It is so arranged that six classrooms may be turned into the auditorium, giving a total seating capacity of 750. The building will be similar to the Methodist church here, with assembly and classrooms in the basement and six classrooms with the pastor's study and ladies' parlor to the rear of the pulpit. In the dome a classroom is arranged with a seating capacity of 150.

INFLUENZA FLAREUP AGAIN IN BOONE, OTHER NEWS

Grief at the Death of Capt. Jones; Boone National Forest Named; Had the Longest Spell of Wintery Weather

(By J. M. Downum)

The people of Watauga regret to hear of the death of Hon. Edmund Jones, as he was always a conspicuous figure during court week and always pleasant, cordial and helpful.

Influenza has sprung up again in Boone, this time in the families of Mr. F. A. Linney and Register of Deeds Roy Gragg, taking hold of most of the members of these families, but at last accounts they were better.

Miss McCartney, who had gone to nurse Mr. Linney's family, was brought to Lovill home Friday night sick with influenza, and two young ladies from the school who had gone to assist in nursing the same family came to the home Sunday possibly sick with the same disease. They are Misses Agnes Garland and Katie Holshouser. Until these cases were taken the situation had improved very much, there being only one case in school.

Watauga is now passing through the longest spell of wintry weather that has come during the entire winter, but it has cleared away and the weather may be pretty before this message leaves town.

Noting the fact that President Wilson has proclaimed that the government purchases of lands in western North Carolina shall be called the "Boone National Forest," the people of this section are especially interested in the proclamation owing to the fact that aside from Mount Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Rockies, the next most important peak is Grandfather mountain, the highest point of the Blue Ridge, and this, it will be noted, is in the only national park east of the great river, and is a distinct honor to the great pioneer long after he has passed from the scenes of earth.

REPUBLICANS ENDORSE HARSHAW FOR CONGRESS

Instruct Delegates for Pritchard for President Amid Much Oratory; Watson for Delegate to the Chicago Convention

Caldwell county Republicans have instructed their delegates, elected at the county convention held here last Friday, to vote for the nomination of Jeter C. Pritchard for President, John M. Morehead for national committeeman, Frank A. Linney for State chairman, W. B. Watson for delegate from this district to the Chicago convention, and Moses N. Harshaw for Congress.

The meeting was well attended and quite a bit of enthusiasm was displayed. The convention was for the election of State, congressional and senatorial delegates. The following men were elected: M. N. Harshaw, E. F. Wakefield, Dr. A. B. Goodman, W. B. Watson, T. M. White, T. C. Robbins, T. F. Seehorn, S. S. Jennings, A. V. Miller, W. E. Starnes, A. A. Blackwelder, Robert Campbell, J. R. McNairy, Alonzo McGinnis, D. M. Cline, F. R. Tilley, J. W. Hollifield, Will Estes, and any other Republican who wishes to attend.

Aside from the election and instruction of delegates the outstanding feature was the speechmaking by Moses Harshaw, Jr., and E. F. Wakefield.

"I think every man ought to take enough interest in his country to see that men that represent his views are elected to office to the end that the principles he favors may be enacted into law," said the young speaker. "Being a soldier of the government, I don't think that I ought to be a bitter partisan or become too much agitated over the election while I wear the uniform," he continued.

"However, my enlistment as a soldier will expire about Aug. 1, when I hope to return home and be of such service to you and my country as I can. I shall be young, of course, in the campaign, but I hope and believe I shall be right in my party affiliations. I think every man should ally himself with that party whose principles he believes will best subserve the interests of his country. I hope in the fall campaign I shall be able to give account of the faith that is in me. It may be of interest to you to say that when my times expire as a soldier I will have served the government three years. During that time I have visited the large cities of America and a great deal of the country. I have twice crossed the Atlantic ocean, visited the most of the large cities of France, took part in some of the greatest battles in the world war, among them St. Michel, Champagne and Argonne Forest. I've heard the cannon roar and seen the airships drop their deadly bombs and saw my friends killed, but thanks to the good Lord I escaped unhurt. After the armistice I went through Belgium, Luxembourg and into the enemy's country on the Rhine, where I remained eight months and returned last August to Hoboken, N. J."

"Again I say I'm glad to be back. In all the world I've seen nothing that equals good old North Carolina and Caldwell county. I hope to make this good country of our my home, my present intention being to make a living on my native health practicing law."

CIRCULATED INFAMOUS LIE, SAYS REV. ALBERT SETZER

The following statement by Rev. Albert J. Setzer, the blind preacher, about whom a news story appeared last week telling of his warlike inclinations, makes a denial of certain parts of the news story and charges the person who circulated the story with telling an "infamous lie." The story and the facts in the story were given the News-Topic by a good citizen of Mr. Setzer's community. Mr. Setzer denies a certain part of the story, yet he fails to say just what he did do on this occasion. His statement follows:

"I observed in a recent issue of your paper an article published concerning me. I want to say that a part of this article is not true, and for two reasons I want the matter corrected. First, I believe that the public is entitled to the truth, and I feel satisfied that this is the purpose of your paper; second, a report of that kind is calculated to injure me as a minister of the gospel and a public school teacher."

"Part of the article stated that I had secured a revolver and went to murder my rival and then commit suicide, but before I could accomplish my purpose I was disarmed. I wish to say that this is positively false. A thing like that never entered my mind. I do not know who circulated the report, but I want to be plain: Whoever did it circulated an infamous lie."

SAY WEATHER HAS BEEN SEVERE ACROSS THE RIDGE

Visitors here from Boone say that the weather during the past week has been very severe. Snowstorms, cold winds and zero temperature have prevailed for several days, they say. There is very little influenza in the county now. Attorney F. A. Linney has been one of the last to have the disease.

Mr. Brownlow Reece of Mahel, Watauga county, has caught 18 muskrats, one muskrat, one mink and five red foxes during the present winter season. He sold the pelts for \$105.

DEATH OF CAPTAIN JONES BRINGS UNIVERSAL GRIEF

Death Followed Apoplectic Stroke Wednesday—He Was One of the State's Leading Men and Was Greatly Beloved

An unexpected apoplectic stroke Wednesday morning of last week, followed that night by the death of Capt. Edmund Jones, brought grief to the entire county and to hosts of people all over the State. The news Wednesday shortly before noon that Capt. Jones was stricken spread like wildfire. All during the remainder of the day and up until the hour of his death anxious inquiries were made of every passing person.

Death came shortly after 10 o'clock Wednesday night. Capt. Jones never regained consciousness after the stroke of the morning before.

The funeral services were postponed until Sunday to await the arrival of his son, Edmund, from Clint, Tex. His daughter, Miss Sarah Davenport Jones, and his youngest son, Eugene, arrived early Friday morning from Raleigh.

At 12:30 o'clock Sunday the funeral services were held in St. James' church by Rev. E. N. Joyner, assisted by Rev. C. B. Bryan of Petersburg, Va. From the church the remains were taken to Happy Valley and interred in the burying ground at the Chapel of Rest. At the grave Rev. H. A. Dobbins assisted in conducting the burial services.

The pallbearers were W. D. Jones, R. M. Jones, W. J. Lenoir, Walter Jones, Wm. F. Scholl and Bryan Jones.

The great friendship and the esteem in which Capt. Jones was held were attested by the abundant floral offerings.

In descent through Edmund W. Jones, Edmund Jones, the elder, William Lenoir and William and Martin Davenport, his family has always been a potent factor in the public affairs of the colony and State during the Colonial, Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary periods and in the years preceding and during the civil war, in which latter period Mr. Jones' own personal activities were exercised.

Mr. Jones' father, Edmund Walter Jones, one of the most highly esteemed men who ever lived in Caldwell county, was born at Palmyra, in the Happy Valley, but in the early '40s transferred the Palmyra estate to his sister, Mrs. Samuel L. Patterson, and established himself at Clover Hill, on the opposite side of the Yadkin river. He married Miss Sophia Caroline Davenport, daughter of Col. William Davenport, who was a munificent friend of Davenport Female College, named in his honor.

Edmund Jones the second was the youngest surviving son of this marriage, and at the beginning of the civil war was a lad of 13 years (born April 15, 1848), attending a school conducted by the late Capt. Edward W. Faucette near the village of Patterson. Subsequently he attended the State University at Chapel Hill, from which institution he withdrew in his junior year, before he was 17 years old, to enlist in Company F, 41st regiment, N. C. State troops (3rd cavalry), Confederate army, and participated in all the activities and many of the battles of the Army of Northern Virginia up to the end of the war at fateful Appomattox. He had three older brothers in the service—Col. John T. Jones, killed at the battle of the Wilderness; Capt. Walter L. Jones, killed at Gettysburg; and Capt. William Davenport Jones, who, although wounded, survived the war and died about eight years ago.

Although Mr. Jones' college course at the University was interrupted by his withdrawal to enlist in the Confederate army, his course of study there gave him the foundation for the broad system of reading, learning and general education that made him conspicuously interesting in his political and literary discussions and as an advocate before the courts and on the hustings. His much loved Alma Mater, through a happy inspiration, some years ago, called together all of her dear sons who left her to go to the war and gave them their diplomas of graduation in their declining years. This evidence of his Alma Mater's love and consideration was prized by Mr. Jones as one

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DANIEL C. ROPER IS TO RESIGN MARCH 15TH

Resignation of Daniel C. Roper as commissioner of internal revenue will leave vacant one of the most important posts in the government. Mr. Roper's intention to leave the bureau of internal revenue, which he has expanded for the collection of war taxes until it is perhaps the greatest tax collecting agency in the world, has been made known to officials in Washington, but his formal resignation will not be tendered until after the first installment of excess profit and income taxes for 1919 is paid, March 15. He has not announced his future plans.

The man who succeeds Mr. Roper will have the task, not only of collecting \$6,000,000,000 in taxes this year, but also of enforcing the nationwide prohibition law. While President Wilson is known to have the prospective appointment under consideration, there has been no intimation of who will be named for the post.

INCOME TAX-RETURNS ARE TO BE FILED BY MAR. 15

Internal Revenue Man Here Next Week to Assist in Making Out Returns—Other Dates in This Section Given

C. H. Hayes, chief field deputy of internal revenue in his State, is sending out internal revenue officers to assist corporations and individuals in making out the proper income tax reports. Next week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, P. P. Jones of the internal revenue department will be in Lenoir to assist persons here in making out these reports. W. S. Gardner will be in Boone today, tomorrow and Saturday.

Complete returns, both of individuals and corporations, must be in the hands of collectors of internal revenue on or before March 15, 1920. Considerable discussion has arisen here as to whether or not there would be any extension of time. Extensions will be granted only in specific cases where there is urgent need. This extension cannot be granted by anyone here, and where an extension of time is desired permission must be secured from J. W. Bailey, internal revenue collector for North Carolina, Raleigh, N. C.

Last year, if for good and sufficient reasons it was found impossible to complete a return by March 15, corporations were permitted to file on or before that date a tentative return and were given an extension of 45 days in which to file a complete return. Conditions which then justified this do not exist this year.

Where additional time is actually required, because of illness or absence, the collector of internal revenue may grant an extension of not to exceed 30 days upon written application therefore made before the return is due. If before the end of the 30 day extension an accurate return can not be made an appeal for further extension must be made to the commissioner of internal revenue in Washington, with a full recital for the causes of delay. The commissioner will not grant an additional extension without a clear showing that a complete return cannot be made at the end of the 30-day period.

The tax may be paid in full at the time of filing the return or in four installments, the first of which must accompany the filing of the return. The subsequent installments are due on or before June 15, on or before Sept. 15, and on or before Dec. 15.

Taxpayers are urged by the bureau of internal revenue not to delay in the filing of returns and to pay taxes in as few installments as possible. During the coming days of the period for filing returns collectors of internal revenue are overwhelmed with work and cannot devote as much time as is desired to the instruction and assistance of taxpayers. Prompt action means better service and the avoidance of probable later difficulties.

R. M. SMITH RESIGNS AND IS SUCCEEDED BY Y. D. MOORE

Mr. Smith Goes to Rutherford County as Farm Demonstrator—Mr. Moore Assumed Charge of the Office Monday

The resignation of R. M. Smith as county school superintendent, pending since about the middle of February, was accepted at the regular meeting of the county board of education Monday, and former County School Superintendent Y. D. Moore was elected as Mr. Smith's successor. Mr. Smith's resignation came as a surprise to his many friends here and over the county. It was not known that he was contemplating any other line of work until last week.

Mr. Smith was elected county superintendent in July, 1914. During the five and a half years at the head of the school system of the county many improvements have taken place. This school expenditures during this time have increased from \$32,000 in 1914 to \$64,000 last year. Twelve new school buildings have been built, five consolidations have been effected, and four special tax districts have been formed.

The new school buildings erected during Mr. Smith's terms are at Baton, Whitnel, Philadelphia, Yount, Patterson, Collettsville, Rufus, Globe, Warrior, Laytown, Hibriten, Saw Mills, and the completion of the handsome high school building at Oak Hill. The Oak Hill school had formed a consolidation and with a special tax had begun the erection of the new building during Mr. Moore's term in office, and shortly before Mr. Smith succeeded him. During the present year Mr. Smith had planned further improvements. Two more special tax districts were being worked on and plans had been made for painting and improving some of the buildings already built. Recently he had ordered paint for fifteen of the school buildings. There are twenty buildings in the county already painted.

Mr. Y. D. Moore, who succeeds Mr. Smith, is well equal to assuming again the work he left in 1914. The six years off the job will have added vigor and new ideas for building up a greater county school system. He enters his new work with a forward look.

DELAY IN CONGRESS BRINGS SHARP SPEECH

Points Out That Nothing Has Been Done to Aid the Country in a Greater Production and to Reduce the H. C. of L.

"Joshua commanded the sun to stand still in order that he might fight the battles of the Lord, and the sun obeyed. Will Hays, the chairman of the Republican national committee, has commanded this Congress to stand still for the purpose of political expediency, and it has obeyed."

This was the assertion made on the floor of the House by Representative Robert L. Doughton of this district in attacking the failure of the Republican majority to aid the farmer to feed the world by carrying out the rural good roads program initiated by recent Democratic Congresses.

Mr. Doughton pointed out the "vital connection between good roads and farm and the still more vital connection between farming and the high cost of living" and denounced a "penny wise and pound foolish economy bound to work great injury to the entire country," asserting that "what we need to do is to encourage and stimulate and not discourage those engaged in the most important of all pursuits—that of raising food for our own people and the hungry nations of the world."

He pointed out that the 63rd Congress inaugurated a comprehensive good roads program providing Federal aid for States that agreed to stand a proportionate share of construction, and that the last Congress had increased the total to the extent of \$275,000,000, being available during the period of 1917-21. By contrast he asserted that the present Republican Congress has done nothing, and in addition has held up a bill directing the war department to turn over to the highway authorities of the various States roadmaking machinery, machinery, etc.

"It would be interesting to know why this legislation has been so long delayed," said Mr. Doughton. "Is it possible that it is being strangled for political expediency, or has the Republican national chairman given orders that it must be killed by long delay? If this kind of tactics is to be continued by a Republican Congress, then Mr. Hays will need to offer more than \$10,000 for some one to write a satisfactory platform, and to appoint a larger advisory committee, containing 177 members. You need not be deceived; the people will not be mocked."

"The farmers of the country know what party has given them substantial relief by the enactment of numerous pieces of legislation in their interest, such as the rural credits law, good roads legislation and so forth, bringing more favorable conditions to those engaged in agriculture. But when they ask relief or help in any way of this Congress they are confronted with the response that every thing must be subordinated to 'economy.' When the people ask bread they are given a stone."

"Political expediency is the governing policy of this Congress, and has been since the day it first assembled. Instead of considering first the needs of all the people, the needs of the Republic in the coming campaign are given the right of way."

"As the matter now stands the last appropriation for carrying on the work of road building expires at the end of the fiscal year 1921 and the bureau of roads do not know whether to go ahead with plans for the future. If this Congress intends to continue the splendid work now in progress it should by appropriate legislation extend the present road-building plan, or one similar, for a period of at least three years so the bureau of roads can go ahead with its work."

"As a result of our legislation," said Mr. Doughton, "the country prospered before the war, during the war, and since the war. Where is your program of constructive legislation, either enacted or contemplated, to match such legislation as the Federal reserve law, rural credits act, farm demonstration act, bureau of markets, parcel post law, Federal trade commission, and numerous other salutary measures which might be mentioned? You will not dare repeal any of this legislation, not even the Underwood tariff bill, against which you inveighed incessantly before coming into control of Congress."

WIFE OF MANLY McDOWELL IS DEAD IN MORGANTON

Mrs. Tilly McDowell died at her home in Morganton Wednesday of last week after a short illness from influenza. She was the wife of Manly McDowell, one of North Carolina's foremost and best known citizens, and was reared in Burke county, belonging to one of the county's most historic families, and was formerly Miss Tilly Falls. She is survived by her husband, who is just recovering from an attack of influenza, and two children.

EX-CONGRESSMAN J. M. GUDGER DIES AT ASHEVILLE

James M. Gudger, Jr., an ex-congressman, and for many years a central figure in western North Carolina politics, died suddenly at his home in Asheville Sunday morning from heart failure.