

The Chapel Hill Weekly

LOUIS GRAVES Editor

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Politics and Death

The "Under the Dome" column, on the front page of the Raleigh News and Observer Monday, told of the banter, on the subject of W. Boddie Ward and politics, that went on at the Washington Day dinner of the Democrats.

This has aroused great merriment in North Carolina political circles, because Ward has long been active in politics. State Senator Larkins, instead of beginning with "My fellow Democrats" when he arose to speak at the dinner, began with "My fellow Washingtonians" and explained the salutation thus: "That's the way to address you since Boddie Ward is here and since he eschews politics."

Which brought forth loud laughter from the assembled company. "Under the Dome" says: "Most frequent comment among politicians about the 'no politics' sentiment is: 'When the leopard changes his spots, Boddie Ward will give up politics'."

It so happened that, alongside the "Under the Dome" column on the News and Observer's front page that day, was an article with the headline, "Two Young Sisters Killed in Auto Crash Near Here." Rufus L. Slater, his wife, and their one son and five daughters, in the family car, were coming toward Raleigh on the new Durham-Raleigh road Sunday afternoon. A car crashed into them from behind. The Slater car was knocked up a 10-foot bank, toppled back to the concrete pavement, and, turning over and over, rolled 25 yards down the road. Two of the girls, 15-year-old Cleo and 8-year-old Rosie, were killed instantly. The five other members of the family were injured. The driver of the following car gave this explanation to the highway police: "I tried to apply my brakes, but they didn't catch."

Upon reading these articles so close together on the page—the one about the killing of the Slater girls, the other about the joking on the subject of the motor vehicles commissioner and politics—naturally we thought of the relationship between the two.

Of course we do not mean to suggest that Commissioner Ward is responsible for the fatal accident last Sunday afternoon or other fatal accidents. We have no doubt that since he took office last year he has been making a sincere effort to reduce the dangers on the roads of the state. What we are thinking about now is not the responsibility of any one person; it is the collective responsibility of the men who have been charged with running the government and enforcing the laws of North Carolina for a score of years—Governors and other executive officers, legislators, judges, and the police. We are not unmindful that the public in general and reckless drivers in particular are partly to blame for North Carolina's shameful record of slaughter on the highways; but the chief blame rests upon the men in public office.

The many thousands of deaths from automobile accidents on the highways of the state, since automobiles came into common use, have been largely the consequence of the inefficiency, the neglect, and the selfish intrigues which are summed up in the word politics.

The problem of safety on the

highways is of the very highest importance—just as important as any other government problem. Governors and legislatures have not given it the serious attention it deserves. They have treated it as a subordinate question, a side issue. When they have given it any attention at all, they have trifled with it. Legislatures, in enacting traffic laws, have failed to put teeth in them, either out of ignorance, or indifference, or fear of offending automobile owners. Politicians, instead of persons of experience and of proven ability and independence, have been appointed chiefs of departments and bureaus having to do with the control of traffic. State, county, and municipal law enforcement officers have not

been vigorous enough in making arrests for speeding and other offenses, and the courts have been too soft in meting out punishment to persons convicted of serious violations of the law.

North Carolina's record of slaughter on the highways is not going to show any appreciable improvement until taking politics out of the administration of the traffic laws becomes something more than talk. Commissioner Ward can do something to improve it if he is determined to—and he may be helped by the better care of cars that has resulted from war-time restrictions—but he cannot do a great deal while the laws stand as they are now. Drastic changes in these laws are needed,—mainly in respect to instruction and tests for applicants for driving licenses, speed limits, police action, and penalties,—and the man who has more power than anybody else to bring about these changes is the Governor. We are informed that he has been giving deep study to the problem and is preparing to submit a thorough revision of the traffic code to the legislature that convenes next winter.

Great Resources Are Not Enough

When the late General Leonard Wood was leading the movement for preparedness, in 1915 and 1916, he used to say that great resources, unused, would do a country no more good in a fight than tons of gold "way down under the earth in Alaska would do to stop a panic in Wall street.

We are reminded of this by a passage in a letter from H. M. Waystaff which appeared in the student paper, the Tar Heel, one day this week. His general theme was that a distressingly large proportion of the American people failed to realize the gravity of the nation's danger, were unwilling to face realities, and were too prone to rely on our possession of great natural resources.

"It is the skilful use of materials, not the materials themselves, that win wars," he wrote, "and the skilful and effective use of power is wholly dependent upon unity of purpose, upon a coherent national spirit, a spirit that will accept no defeat, will brook no denial short of victory over enemies."

Notice to Users of Explosives

Paul Robertson has been appointed explosive licensing agent for Chapel Hill by R. R. Sayers, director of the U. S. Department of the Interior's bureau of mines. This means that after March 1, when the old licenses expire, it will be unlawful for anybody to use dynamite or other explosives in Chapel Hill without first getting a license from Mr. Robertson. This regulation does not include the use of small arms. Mr. Robertson's appointment is for the duration of the war.

A Band Concert

The University's concert band, directed by Earl Slocum, will give a public concert at 4:30 Sunday afternoon, March 8, in the Hill Music hall.

Report on the Present Status of the Chapel Hill Negro Community Center

By Louis Graves

This is a report on the present status of the Chapel Hill Negro Community Center.

(I will not stop here to repeat what has already been published in this paper about the character and purpose of the Center; but, for the benefit of those who are not familiar with the project, a brief description of it will be given as a footnote to this report.)

The threat of war, and more lately war itself, have made the project a much more difficult one than it would have been in normal times; nevertheless, it has been carried ahead. More than four hundred men and women in the community have helped to build up the community fund that was needed to supplement the grant from the W. P. A. Many of these have said that they would add to what they have already given; and other citizens have expressed the intention to join the company of contributors.

Among the generous contributors have been several University alumni who do not live in Chapel Hill.

The W. P. A. has put in about \$16,000, and this just about completes the contribution that can be expected from that source. Individuals in the community, white people and negroes, have contributed, for the five acres of land and the building, \$5,950. In addition, \$2,250 has been expended on the building, in order to bring it to the stage where it would be available for partial use. This \$2,250 is represented by a loan of \$1,000 from the bank and \$1,250 in outstanding bills.

Several weeks ago, when the W. P. A. had fulfilled its commitments (which were based on the extent of the contribution made by the community), the building was still without a roof and without windows. No more work could be done on it until some more money was forthcoming.

To get the building "in out of the weather," and to have certain essential interior work done, the committee which is charged with conducting the project decided to borrow. Some of us endorsed a note to the Bank of Chapel Hill; and, when that was exhausted, urgently needed materials were bought on credit.

The building, out at the northwest corner of town, near the west end of Rosemary lane, can be visited now by anybody who wants to see it.

What will strike anybody who gets a close view of the building is that it is very strongly constructed. The outer walls are of solid stone, well joined with cement. The outer steps, and the floor of the basement, are of concrete. The window sashes are of metal. The roof is of asphalt. The timbers in the roof trusses and in the partitions were carefully selected and are of excellent quality.

The expenditures and obligations already mentioned are summed up in tabular form as follows:

Table with columns for expenditure type and amount. Total expended: \$24,200.

(Note: plastering, basic wiring, and some minor jobs, are included in the above expenditures, for the sake of simplicity of statement, though they are not yet completed. They will be completed within a few days.)

Covered by the foregoing expenditures are (besides the main structure) basic plumbing and wiring; concrete and wooden floors, heating pipes; and radiators. Not covered—to await later community action—are the boiler for the heating plant; plumbing fixtures; lighting fixtures; doors; and ceilings for rooms on main floor. Under consideration is a plan to install some plumbing fixtures before complete installation will be possible.

The immediate need, in the way of aid from individuals in the community, is for contributions to cover the obligations of \$2,250 that have been incurred for essential materials. (It is materials, mainly, that the community has to provide; the W. P. A. provides some materials and the greater part of the labor.)

White people in the community have contributed \$5,641. Negroes have contributed \$309 in cash and, besides, have made considerable contributions in the form of labor. Since most of the negroes in the community have a hard struggle merely to make a living, not much money can be expected from them; in proportion to their means they have given generously.

Table listing contributions by white people: 366 persons have contributed, in sums of less than \$50, a total of \$5,641.

This tabulation shows that 37 persons have contributed \$2,765, while 366 persons have contributed \$1,876.

It is bound to be that individual contributions will vary widely in amount, because some people are so much better able to give than others. Not only is there variation in income, but one person has many more obligations than another. The men and women who have undertaken to carry this Negro Community Center project through, by enlisting the aid of the community, cannot know, of course, what is a proper amount for this or that person to contribute. That is something that has to be decided by the giver himself. What we do ask is that everybody recognize the worthiness of this project—the great need for a Negro Community Center in Chapel Hill—and contribute as much as he can.

This appeal is addressed both to those who may be able to add to

what they have already contributed and to those who have not thus far made any contribution.

A contribution does not have to be made all in one payment; it can be made in installments. If you prefer the installment method, give us your schedule (dates and amounts) and a reminder will be sent to you when a payment is due.

Contributions to this project may be deducted from income under the federal and state income tax laws. The Center is owned by the municipality, and on the income tax return the contributions should be listed as having been made to the Town of Chapel Hill Negro Community Center. Contributions made in 1942 are not to be entered as a deduction on the income tax return until a year hence when the return for 1942 is being made out.

Checks or pledges may be sent to Paul W. Wager, Treasurer, or to me. Contributions sent to me will be deposited at the bank, to the credit of the Negro Community Center, and the receipt will be sent to Mr. Wager. If there is anybody who finds it more convenient to leave his contribution at the bank, Mr. Thompson or one of his assistants should be asked to deposit it to the credit of the Negro Community Center and send the receipt to Mr. Wager.

Colonel Pratt, president of the Municipal Recreation Commission, which is the agency having legal control of the Negro Community Center, would be named here as one of the persons receiving contributions, but he is absent from Chapel Hill because of illness.

All contributions will be acknowledged. If by any chance error a contributor should not receive an acknowledgment within one week, he is requested to telephone Mr. Wager or me.

Condensed Description of the Project for a Negro Community Center in Chapel Hill

About four years ago a group of men and women in Chapel Hill launched a movement to build a Negro Community Center. An excellently situated 5-acre tract, which had been involved in litigation, was about to be sold by court order. A loan was obtained from the bank, on the endorsement of ten citizens, and the land was bought at the bargain price of \$1,600.

The W. P. A. offered to bear part of the cost of the building. The other part was to be borne by the community—which meant that money had to be raised by individual contributions. The first contributions were used to repay the land-purchase loan.

The land was conveyed to the town of Chapel Hill. The aldermen created, in accordance with state law, a recreation commission to control and manage the Center.

The purpose of the Center is to provide social and recreational opportunities for a part of the population that has been forced to find its social life, in large part, on the streets and in resorts of an unwholesome character.

The building is to contain a day nursery where negro mothers who work may leave their little children during the day; an assembly room which can be converted into a hall for social gatherings and indoor games; a kitchen where meals may be prepared for dinner meetings as well as food prepared for the children in the day nursery; club rooms for negro organizations such as the Boy Scouts and the Civic Club; headquarters for the negro nurse; a woodworking shop where older boys, out of school, may learn the use of tools; shower baths, for the use of all the negroes of the community, not merely for those who use the athletic facilities.

The grounds—five acres in extent—are to be developed into playing fields.

Law School Changes Its Rules because of War

(Continued from first page)

may secure enough credit for graduation, reducing the period of study required for graduation from the law school to two calendar years. Thus, a student may begin the study of law earlier and, under the accelerated program, may be enabled to complete all, or a substantial part, of his legal study prior to being called into military service.

The teaching staff of the law school this summer will include Judge J. Warren Madden of the United States Court of Claims, Lon L. Fuller of Harvard, Elvin R. Latty of Duke, and Willard J. Graham of the University of Chicago.

Judge Madden, a law teacher of many years' experience, is best known in this country for his work as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board

during the critical period of its development. He will teach the course in Labor Law. Mr. Fuller is a legal scholar of note and an authority in the field of damages, which is the subject that he will teach. Mr. Latty will give a course in chattel transactions, using his own materials, and Mr. Graham will give the course in accounting in law practice, a subject of increasing importance to lawyers.

Resident members of the faculty who will give courses this summer are Albert Coates, domestic relations; Frank W. Hanft, public utilities; M. S. Breckenridge, trade regulations; and M. T. Van Hecke, trusts.

The dates of the summer law school will be the same as those of the University summer session: first term, June 11 to July 21; second term, July 22 to August 28.

HOUSE AND LAND

Will sell, lease, or rent 15 acres and farmhouse on road back of University laundry. Write Mrs. H. G. Dorsett, Jr., Trading Ford, Route 4, Salisbury, N. C.

BABY CARRIAGE, BED, AND CHAIR

For sale: Baby carriage, baby bed, and high chair. All in good condition. Mrs. D. A. MacPherson, Telephone 4966.

COTTAGE FOR RENT

For rent: Small cottage on Hillsboro Street; formerly occupied by the Whichards. Central heat. Call Elizabeth Branson at 6296 or 7921.

THE "NEWS & OBSERVER"

Would you like the "News and Observer" left at your door early each morning? Price, 25 cents

per week. We are trying to improve the service of "The Old Reliable" in Chapel Hill. If you wish to subscribe, phone Mrs. Ernest Taylor, 9481.

HOUSE FOR SALE

For sale: My house on Gimghoul Road. Mrs. Watters. Telephone F-3101.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

For rent: Three-room unfurnished apartment, with heat, light, and water furnished. For immediate occupancy. Close in. Call 8821.

LOTS FOR SALE

For sale: Six beautiful adjacent lots, each 25 feet by 200 feet, facing Calvander Road one-half mile from town limits of Carrboro. A bargain if sold at once. Write Box 1595, Richmond, Virginia.