The Chapel Hill Weekly

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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A Chapel Hillian Conducts Chautauqua

How a man can live hundreds of miles away from his work and yet do it as well as though he were in the same town with it—this has become commonplace now, but to me it never ceases to be miraculous.

After the discovery of the wheel, back in remote ages, there was practically no speeding-up of travel and communication, except the little that was achieved by military roads and mountain-top signals, until steam began moving vehicles not much more than a century ago. When people rode in cars pulled by a locomotive at fifteen miles an hour, about 1830, they were sure they would never go faster, and a good many of them thought moving at this rate of speed was a kind of blasphemy.

Rumors of every new invention—the telegraph, the telephone, the automobile, the airplane, the radio—were greeted with disbelief. People said such a thing was impossible. One of my earliest memories is of the sensation caused by the introduction in the 1890's of the safety bicycle, with two wheels nearly the same size and then exactly the same size, in succession to the clumsy contraption (which the users of it hadn't thought clumsy but wonderfully efficient) with a big wheel in front and a tiny wheel behind.

You might suppose that one incredible invention after another would have prepared people for any new marvel, but I can remember that, the year I was graduated from the University, the newspapers ridiculed the performance of "those crazy Wright brothers" at Kitty Hawk, the first flight of an airplane under its own power, as though the locomotive, the telegraph, the telephone, and the radio had never been heard of.

How a man could use the airplane to attend to work at different places in the same season, or to live a good part of the time at home when he was on a far distant assignment, was first impressed on me by the late Howard W. Odum, head of the University's sociology department. He told me that when he was at the University of Utah one summer he flew to institutions in Oregon and Washington to deliver lectures, and that when he was a visiting professor at Yale he flew home to Chapel Hill every two weeks to be with his family.

Then there was Ove Jensen, the chemist-salesman for the DuPont Company, and Robert M. Lester of the Carnegie Corporation and the Carnegie Foundation (now of the Southern Fellowships Fund), and many others who have been enabled by automobiles and airplanes to live in Chapel Hill and do their work far away.

The man I am thinking of at the moment is Ralph McCallister, managing director of the Chautauqua Institution in western New York State. Through the fall, winter, and spring, he conducts in Chapel Hill the business of that celebrated summer community where fifty thousand people gather every year for rest, recreation, and cultural activities. For eight or nine months he carries on here an enormous corespondence by mail, telegraph, and telephone; he makes occasional trips to Washington, New York, Boston, and other big cities to interview artists and their agents; and some of them come to see him here. Then, about the middle of June, he shifts his headquarters from Chapel Hill to Chautauqua.

One year he and his family were at the Farrar home on Laurel Hill road. This last year they were in an apartment at Glen Lennox. Now they are getting ready to build a home.

By a coincidence, after I had read one day last week a circular about Chautauqua that I had asked Mr. McCallister to send me, I opened "The Wisdom of America" by Lin Yutang and came upon a passage quoted from one of the essays of William James. When I had read it I said to myself: "Any Chapel Hillian who has had entrusted to him an institution spoken of in such words by as great a man as William James certainly deserves to see, and his fellow citizens will surely be interested in seeing, these words in the home-town paper:

"I have spent a happy week at the famous Assembly Grounds on the borders of Chautauqua Lake. The moment one treads that sacred enclosure, one feels oneself in an atmosphere of success. Sobriety and industry, intelligence and goodness, orderliness and ideality, prosperity and cheerfulness, pervade the air. Here you have a town of many thousands of inhabitants, beautifully laid out in the forest and drained, and equipped for satisfying all the necessary lower and most of the superfluous higher wants of man. You have a first-class college in full blast. You have magnificent music—a chorus of seven hundred voices, with possibly the most perfect open-air auditorium in the world. You have every sort of athletic exercise from sailing, rowing, bicycling, to the ball-field and the more artificial doings which the gymnasium affords. You have kindergartens and model secondary schools. You have general religious services and special clubhouses for the several sects. You have perpetually running soda-water fountains, and daily popular lectures by distinguished men. You have the best of company, and yet no effort. You have no zymotic diseases, no poverty, no crime, no police. You have culture, you have kindness, you have equality, you have the best fruits of what mankind has fought and bled and striven for under the name of civilization for centuries. You have, in short, a foretaste of what human society might be, were it all in the light, with no suffering and no dark corners."

"I went in curiosity for a day. I stayed for a week, held spell-bound by the charm and ease of everything, by the middle-class paradise, without a sin, without a victim, without a blot, without a tear."

True, William James went on from there to remark upon what he thought was the monotony of life at Chautauqua—its lack of "the element of precipitousness, of strength and strenuousness, of intensity and danger." He counted it a defect in the place that "there was no potentiality of death in sight anywhere." William James was a great thinker and his comments on any subject deserve respect. But, after all, he is on record as having enjoyed himself for a week at Chautauqua, and a week is a pretty good long time to enjoy oneself on a vacation anywhere. Most people who have gone to Chautauqua, having far less sensitive perceptions than William James had, and far less capacity for philosophical reflection, are not troubled by such afterthoughts as his.—L.G.

What helps luck is a habit of watching for opportunities, of having a patient, but restless mind, of sacrificing one's ease or vanity, of uniting a love of detail to foresight, and of passing through hard times bravely and cheerfully.—Goethe.

Action by an "Intolerant Majority"

By David Lawrence
in
U. S. News and World Report

The House of Representatives last week, by a vote of 225 to 192, recorded its view that, unless the Southern States abandon their convictions and surrender their principles, they should be punished by the witholding of federal funds for the erection of new schools and for other educational purposes in those States.

Fortunately, this amendment to a general bill which was to provide federal aid to education was nullified later when the entire measure was rejected. But the vote on the issue stands out as a disgraceful piece of attempted coercion.

For this was an effort to enforce conformity of thought in America.

The whole bill, of course, threatened an invasion of the historic right of the States to control their own educational systems. It never was intended that billions of dollars of taxpayers' money should be used to transfer control of our 48 separate educational operations from the States to a centralized bureaucracy in Washington.

The Eisenhower Administration, to be sure, has publicly frowned upon the imposition of any conditions in connection with the grant of federal funds to aid the public schools of the States. The roll call nevertheless showed 148 Republicans and 77 Democrats from the North voting for the coercive amendment sponsored by Representative Powell, of New York City.

This punitive proposal was a mockery of America's boasted freedom of conscience and freedom of thought.

What a tragic example of organized punishment and organized bribery—and this in free America, where the States are supposed to be sovereign and where even a Communist is given his full right of appeal from the lowest to the highest courts!

What new crimes will be committed in the name of "liberalism" and "equal rights under the law"?

What new extortions and demands will be made upon the minority by an intolerant majority which seeks to use the devices of legislative "racketeering" to establish conformity of thought in the House of Representatives today?

Chuck Hauser Finds Hot Dogs in Oslo

Chuck Hauser left the Weekly staff last month to go to Russia and is now somewhere behind the Iron Curtain. His plan was to see as much of the country as possible and to write articles about it for U. S. newspapers and magazines. He sent back one article before he reached Russia. With an Oslo, Norway, dateline, it appeared last Tuesday in the Charlotte Observer and is as follows:

There's something new under the midnight sun of Scandinavia. I can't place the name, but the taste is familiar. It's a "varme polser," and by any other label it would still be a hot dog.

The Norwegians aren't enthusiastic yet about American style rolls for their wieners, but these are slowly gaining in popularity on the thin, papyrus-like pancakes in which local hot dogs are usually wrapped.

The varme polser stands are scattered all over this capital city, as they are throughout most of the large towns in Norway and other Scandinavian countries.

The American visitor to Oslo is impressed more by the similarities between Norway and home than by the differences. At least, that is our impression.

Even the Russians in Oslo are like the Russians in Washington and New York—they're smiling these days, but they aren't going to sell their Aunt Ulanova down the river to help out an American.

My traveling partner, Barry Farber, and I are the first North Carolinians—indeed, the first Americans—to crash the Russian Embassy in Oslo requesting visas to enter the USSR.

We were questioned, not altogether unreasonably, as to why we hadn't obtained our visas before we left the States.

We explained that we had waited more than two months there, and decided to try a quarterback sneak from a little closer to the goal line.

The Russian Embassy is in western Oslo, at number 74 Drammensveien—a tree-shaded avenue flanked by stately buildings and gorged with dangerous traffic. The Embassy looks very much like a sturdy concrete blockhouse, surrounded by beautiful gardens and a front lawn which needs mowing.

There was no guard in sight as we approached, and the black iron gate to the front walk symbolically stood open.

We walked to the front door and pressed the bell button. An answering buzz unlocked the door and we entered to discover a bank teller-type cage to our right, and a poker-faced Russian behind it demanding to know our business.

We said we wanted to see the Consul, Victor Baronkin. We were invited to wait in the front hall under a massive oil portrait of Molotov.

In a few minutes Baronkin—a well-fed and pleasant looking gentleman with graying hair—appeared, and we spent fully an hour conversing with him as we stood under the brooding Molotov portrait.

He didn't invite us into his office; he didn't suggest that we sit down; he didn't provide us with the opportunity to smoke.

And he didn't offer to shake hands when he first greeted us. By the time we were ready to leave, he had warmed up a bit, and we each received a cordial goodbye handshake which he initiated.

Two days later we were back at the Embassy.

This time, after another short wait, Baronkin appeared and invited us into his office. When we entered, he carefully locked the door behind us, shook hands, and sat down behind his desk. He motioned for us to have seats on an uncomfortable red couch beneath another large Molotov portrait—this one a color lithograph displaying an even darker frown.

This second contact was much friendlier than our first, and Baronkin promised to see what he could do for us.

Exactly a week and a half later we received our visas. We didn't consider it a rush job, but, after all, we finally had permission to cross the border, and that was the important thing.

In a way we'll hate to leave Oslo.

Our hotel, the Viking, is a fascinating international melting pot for East and West. We have shared our floor with delegations of Russians, Red Chinese and Yugoslavians.

For a while we had as next door neighbors a group of Russian athletes who had come to Norway to participate in a series of track meets.

The group included Vladimir Kuc, the blond sailor who once held the world record for the 5,000-meter run—a record captured a week or so ago by an Englishman who nosed out Kuc in the final strides of a run at Bergen, on Norway's west coast.

Our favorite elevator operator at the Viking is a swarthy Hungarian who speaks perfect English, delights in startling us with homey American idioms, and is an avid reader of Damon Runyon.

"The only thing wrong with Damon Runuyon," he remarked to me on a recent morning, "is that he didn't write enough."

There are other things we'll miss when we leave Oslo; the great numbers of local residents who speak English, the maddening intersections where five or six streets merge without the first hint of a traffic light or a stop sign, and, of course, the familiar varme polser stands where a hungry American can eat lunch for a couple of crowns (14 cents) and wash it down with a bottle of Coca-Cola that doesn't even need translating.

Isaac London's Vacation

For the first time in almost fifty years Isaac London, editor of the Rockingham Post-Dispatch, was absent on his paper's press day last week. He explained his absence as follows in his weekly column:

"My column appears as usual this week, but I am not in town. Got this up before leaving. I started newspapering in 1909, forty-seven years ago, and this is the first time I have ever been absent when the paper was put to bed. Neal, Hubbard, and the others are pinch-hitting for me in the news coverage, other than matter I have accumulated and put in type against my leaving.

"Last Sunday my wife, her mother, who is 82, and friend Dorothy McGee of Raleigh left here in the Dodge bound for St. Augustine Beach for the week. Won't feel natural not to personally get the Post-Dispatch out, after 47 years. The wife insisted on the trip."

As a postscript to the above, Mr. London added:

"I am minded of the crack, 'If you can't get away for a vacation, don't let it worry you; you can get the same feeling by staying home and tipping every third person you see.'"

Motor Boat Menace

(The Coastland Times)

Before we had automobiles there were no people killed by automobiles. There were no reckless, careless or drunken drivers. But there came a time when the fast-growing number of both cars and drivers resulted in slaughter so heavy, that an awakening public began to demand regulations and penalties in the hope of reducing the frightful cost of life and property on our highways. Unfortunately, enforcement has not kept up with the growth of losses and death we now witness.

And now that so many of the American people have turned to motor boating for sport, we face another such problem. An affluent American people enjoy about everything it wishes, and one of these new enjoyments is the motor boat in various sizes and prices, some costly and some built at home from a ready made kit. All sorts of people operate these boats, the reckless, the ignorant, the careless, and too many who are completely unskilled in the waters and their ways.

The innocent person or family bent upon the enjoyment of a quiet outing on the waters now become victims of the ill-mannered, reckless, dangerous operator of a motor boat, who zooms by at high speed where others are peacefully anchored.

Because of the great number of reckless boat operators, and the greater number of boats, it has now become vitally essential that something be done for the safety of the public. This recklessness on the water is keeping many people ashore and away from the enjoyment of boating. No man wishes to take himself, his wife, and his children out for a little quiet fishing at the risk of their being drowned as the result of the capers of some reckless and foolish squirt in another boat.

Vanilla is America's favorite ice cream flavor. Chocolate is the second choice and strawberry ranks third.

Chapel Hill Chaff

(Continued from Page 1)

time the dentist decided on an extraction.

"It may be difficult," he said. "Do you think you can stand it?"

"Yes, go ahead," was the reply.

"He had a terrible time getting all the roots out," my mother told me. "The stuff he put in my jaw didn't deaden all the nerves. It was a trying experience. When it was over I had to ask the dentist to let me lie down on his couch for a few minutes. I'd have fainted if I were the fainting kind."

My mother's five sons and one daughter were born and brought up in the same house in Berryville, Va. Her mind dwells fondly on that house, but I believe her happiest memories are of the Carolina Inn here in Chapel Hill. During the World War II period she lived at the Inn, and there is no place she would rather be. Along with other elderly women at the Inn, she loved to sit in the lobby or one of the parlors listening to the brilliant and entertaining conversation of Judge Robert Winston, who also lived there at that time.

Of that immediate group, my mother is the only one alive today. After she left Chapel Hill she used to send the various others her regards by me when I visited her. Now they are all gone and the greetings she sends are for the Inn's staff members she knew and liked when she was there: Mr. Ridout on the front desk, Mrs. Neville the housekeeper, Laura the chambermaid, Dottie the elevator girl, and Bellboys Lilbert, Jesse, and William.

I think it was Victor Hugo who said that fifty is the old age of youth and the youth of old age. I'll be fifty this year. A sign of age I must confess to is a keener interest in the past. In former years I didn't pay much attention to my mother's stories about things that happened in the family before I was born. But on last month's visit I found myself raptly listening to reminiscences of her childhood at Goonie Manor in a cove of the Blue Ridge and tales of the exploits of her father as a first lieutenant in Cutshaw's Battery of the Stonewall Brigade.

Encouraged by my interest, she read some old family letters to me and I was fascinated. One was written at Roanoke College in Salem, Va., in 1861. It was from her cousin, George Piper, from whose family I got my middle name. He was writing home to Staunton to tell his parents he had decided to quit school and join the Confederate army.

Several of the letters were written by my father to his parents when he was a student at Hampden-Sydney College, where he was graduated in 1870 when my mother was four years old and didn't know he existed.

A letter written in 1857 in Missouri by my father's great-uncle advised my grandparents back in Virginia to come there and settle. He said the land was good but that some of the people were mean.

A letter filled with hope was written in April of 1864 at a bivouac near Orange Courthouse, Va., by Lt. John Hemstead, C.S.A., to Mr. and Mrs. James Piper of Staunton to ask permission to marry their daughter Florrie.

A letter that George B. Cutten of Chapel Hill might be interested in was written in 1810 in Philadelphia. It was from Lewis Mytinger to his father in Virginia. When my mother was here Mr. Cutten told her of a book he was writing about old American silversmiths, and my mother showed him a silver spoon made by one of her relatives, James Mytinger, who was a silversmith in Warrenton, Va., before the Civil War. Mr. Cutten went to Warrenton, dug through old records, and found out a lot more about James Mytinger than we ever knew. One thing he learned was that Mytinger failed at several other things before succeeding as a silversmith.

A strong phase of my mother's character is her ability to shed the years when she is doing something she enjoys. On a hot summer evening she may seem completely wilted, but open up a scrabble board and she sparkles with vivacity. Some of her friends come in to play scrabble with her almost every day. They keep returning, though she often beats them unmercifully. I believe scrabble has helped keep her going. Before scrabble it was canasta.

My mother is interested in everything and everybody with whom she comes in contact. She has always loved to travel, and she would take off for Thule or Xanadu tomorrow if anybody would go with her. Several years ago when she was flying from Virginia to Albany her plane was grounded at Atlanta by a tornado and she had to make the rest of the trip on a slow Central of Georgia train. She arrived unfazed in the middle of the night and said she had enjoyed the experience. One of my earliest memories is of my mother returning from visits to relatives at Waynesboro or Staunton or some other place up the Shenandoah Valley. She always came home on a train that reached Berryville an hour or so after suppertime. My sister would fix bacon and eggs and hot biscuits, and while my mother had supper the rest of us gathered around to hear her tell all about her trip and the people she had visited.

Every week, without fail, my mother sends me a lively letter, written in her own longhand. In it she discusses the affairs of the world as well as of the family. Just last week she wrote: "I'll be glad when the presidential election is over. I only hope the right man will be elected, and I think probably it is Eisenhower."

I am immodestly proud of my mother, who is shown here at 23 in a picture taken when her first baby was two years old and at 85 in a picture taken by one of her many grandchildren

I Like Chapel Hill

By Billy Arthur

Norman Cordon came down from the highlands last week, a-toting some advance information about a meeting of all the Scotch clans at McRae Meadows near Grandfather Mountain in August. He was exuberant about all the big Scots from all over, the brass and the bagpipe bands, the dancers, the preachers, and the athletes who would be there.

We asked him how he happened to figure in the event.

"I'm Publicity Man Hugh Morton's publicity man," snapped Norman. "Already up there they're calling me MacCordon."

* * * * *

The big voiced and big footed Norman told, too, what he and I both considered some choice language. He had heard it up Watauga way, coming from a native and relating to one of the old-timers.

"He's not getting along to well, now," Norman quoted the native as saying of another. "He's 80 years old, you know, and he's run himself down so far there ain't a key made that could wind him up again."

* * * * *

You can't tell the Arthurs we can't grow vegetables. Right at the foot of our drive is a stalk of corn, growing as pretty as you please. We didn't plant it or tend it. Either a seed washed down there or a bird dropped it after having taken it from the Doaks' or the Hargroves'. But it's on our property, and it's our'n, by gum.

* * * * *

"I wish Harvey Bennett were smiling today," said Tom Rosemond the other morning as he espied Harvey on the other side of the street.

"Why?" we asked.

"Well, because if he were smiling, I'd know the money market was easy today and I coud borrow just about any amount I wanted from Tony Gobbel. You see, Harvey keeps up with things like that. Everytime the money market is easy, he smiles. When things get tight, he won't smile at all," Tom observed.

"Is Harvey any kin to John Bennett?" someone asked.

"No, sir," Tom replied. "Different families. John came from down in Carteret County. He's tried mighty hard to lose that brogue, but he hasn't quite got rid of it yet. Now, Billy Arthur, don't you go putting this in the paper."

"Okay, I won't," I lied with a straight face and no conscience.

Come to think of it, though, John still does have a little Core Sound twang in his voice.

* * * * *

I can't understand why I can't get a discount on a belt every time I buy one. After all, I don't use but 27 inches of a 30-inch belt.

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Maybe some girls do shrink from going in the surf, but our observation at the beach is that the bathing suits have done more shrinking than the girls.

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Too often it's the goodness of the good that dies young.

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Marriage not only promotes thrift. It demands it.

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Those who have been shouting so long for summer must now admit they've been heard.

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A psychological moment is when the audience or the congregation is awake.

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While some people are glad to find books in running brooks, others prefer trout.

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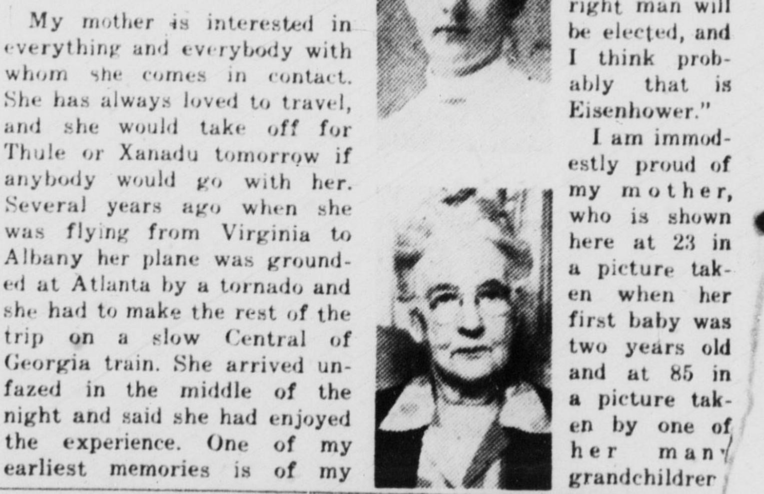
What makes a girl mad when she's kissed is having to act as if she's mad.



HOME OF CHOICE CHARCOAL BROILED HICKORY SMOKI
STEAKS—FLAMING SHISKEBAB—BUFFET EVERY SUNDA