

The Chapel Hill Weekly

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LOUIS GRAVES Contributing Editor
JOE JONES Managing Editor
BILLY ARTHUR Associate Editor

ORVILLE CAMPBELL General Manager
O. T. WATKINS Advertising Director
CHARLTON CAMPBELL Mechanical Supt.

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A Proposal: The Impounding of Cars

There is a wide difference between one judge and another, and between one jury and another, in the degree of severity toward violators of the traffic laws.

The record proves that Judge Stewart here in Chapel Hill and Judge Phipps over in Hillsboro are not reluctant to hand out stiff sentences when they are deserved, but the reports of trials in some other local courts show far too much tenderness for drunken drivers, speeders, and other offenders.

At a recent gathering of highway patrolmen one of them expressed the opinion that the legislature should act to compel a closer approach to uniformity in punishment. He declared it tended to lower respect for the law for a person to draw in one court a sentence widely different from the sentence imposed in another court for the same offense.

If violators of the traffic laws go unpunished it is not always and probably not mainly, the fault of the local courts in which they are first tried. In thousands of cases in the State every year persons found guilty and sentenced use their right to appeal to the Supreme Court and are there freed in jury trials. In most cases, of course, the instrument in the defeat of justice is a defense lawyer alert to take advantage of every legal technicality and practiced in the art of persuading juries.

It seems to me that what is most needed to promote justice in trials of traffic cases is a form of punishment that would really mean something to violators. Nothing could serve that end more effectively than to take the use of their cars away from them. The suspension of a driving license fails to accomplish this because the violator so often goes on driving without a license and is not caught at it. I believe that the impounding of automobiles would be the best penalty. This was proposed once in the Legislature but not enough support for the bill had been built up. I hope that a bill providing for impounding will be introduced at the next session.—L. G.

Another Man Who Was Born on August 6

Because of my connection with the paper and because my colleague, Joe Jones, wanted to do something nice for me, my having a birthday was made into a big story, with a picture, and splashed on the front page of the Weekly. This is not fair to another man in Chapel Hill who was also born on August 6th and I am now going to right the wrong by letting the world know about him. Not that he gives a hang at not having his birthday mentioned; in fact, I know he'd rather have it ignored.

The man I allude to is Roulhac Hamilton. We are just five years apart in age: he was born August 6, 1878, and I was born August 6, 1883. We meet often at the post office, both having the habit of going there for our mail around 11 to 12 o'clock at night, and as we stand before the lock boxes for a few minutes we join in deploring the state of the world, and one of the things we deplore with the deepest feeling is that we were born so long ago. He tells me about how he has recurring pains in his legs and I tell him about how I am short of breath and so have to walk slow and stop every now and then for a rest. (I don't mean to imply that these are all the ravages of age that we discuss; we've both got a store of such topics that's ample to save these post office conversations from monotony.)

With only 365 days in the year and a world population of 2 billion, 500 mil-

lion, on an even distribution every day of the year would be the birthday of 7 million people, so being born on August 6th or any other day is no rarity. Chapel Hill has a population estimated at 8,000 (not including the students). One 365th of that is 219, and I'll not be surprised if, after this piece comes out in the paper, Roulhac and I are informed by several citizens that they belong to the August 6th club. One person I know who qualifies for it is Mrs. Wagstaff; and the late Eugene C. Branson, who lived across the street from her, was a member.

A former Chapel Hillian, a friend of Roulhac's and mine, the celebrated writer, Gerald W. Johnson, now living in Baltimore, is another member. That made five of us who were neighbors at this end of the village when Mr. Branson and Mr. Johnson were here. For all I know I may have another close-by neighbor who, without my having known it for all these years, has the same birthday as mine. Phillips Russell is only a day apart from me; he was born August 5, 1884, in Rockingham. I remember my wife's discovering that two of our good friends who lived within sight of us, Mrs. Klutz and Vernon Howell, had the same birthday as hers.

As far as I know the most famous of Roulhac's and my birthday mates, taking in the dead and the living, is Alfred Tennyson. He was born August 6, 1809. He lived till 1892. This was 14 years after Roulhac's birth and 9 years after mine, time enough for him to hear about us, but I doubt if the Poet Laureate was ever informed of these two transatlantic honors that had come to him in his old age.

Events as well as persons are identified with certain days of the year. Most of us hold in mind only the most famous—Christmas, Washington's Birthday, and a few others. At the beginning of every month the New York Times Magazine publishes a list of coming events and anniversaries in that month. In the latest of these lists I find an event that I never before knew was connected with the Tennyson-Hamilton-Graves-Johnson-Mrs. Wagstaff birthday. The entry reads: "August 6, 1806, the Holy Roman Empire came to an end when Francis II of Austria was forced to surrender his title. (This agglomeration which was called the Holy Roman Empire is neither holy nor Roman nor an empire)—Voltaire."

In the category of events another member of the August 6th Club is the Atom Bomb. It fell on Hiroshima August 6, 1945. It's an association that's not pleasant to think about and I am happy to drop the subject and end this piece by telling about a tribute to Roulhac Hamilton. He comes to the quarters of the Southern Historical Collection in the Library early in the morning and his customary leaving time is around noon. On this last Monday the staff managed to keep him a little later than usual and sprang a surprise on him: a birthday party with punch and cookies and compliments. And maybe some caresses; I wasn't there and am not sure about that.—L. G.

Is Sgt. McKeon Guilty?

(The following editorial was written for the Weekly by Robert H. Bartholomew of Chapel Hill, who was a member of the U. S. Marine Corps from 1941 to 1945.)

The question most often heard these days by former Marines is, "Is Sgt. McKeon guilty?"

In the opinion of one former Marine, McKeon has not been on trial. Instead, the system of training Marines was on trial.

Is McKeon guilty? McKeon is guilty to the same extent that parents are guilty when they place a discarded ice box in the garage and invite the deaths of their children. General Pate had the right idea when he said McKeon should be reduced one rank and transferred.

Parris Island is no bed of roses. It's a small sandy island where there is a great deal of toil and misery. Its streets are named for the valor of the Marine Corps sons who have fought and died in far off places: Nicaragua, Belleau Wood, Haiti, Chateau Thierry.

Marines feel about Parris Island the way they do about their decorations. They are proud to have them, but would not care to undergo again the experience that won them.

In a recent article in a national magazine a drill instructor at Parris Island summed up the Marine training by saying, "I give them (recruits) every chance to crack up. It's better to weed

The Germans Like Tom Wolfe's Play

A play by Thomas Wolfe entitled "Mannerhouse" is having a great success in Germany. I learned of this Saturday in a letter from Walter Eaton. He referred me to an article about it in the August number of Theatre Arts and Mrs. Sanford of the University drama department lent me the magazine.

"So far as I know," wrote Mr. Eaton, "the play has never been produced professionally over here. The only production I ever saw was made by the Yale undergraduate dramatic club, when it was a failure. Perhaps it has been done in Chapel Hill, but I think not. But lo and behold, it has been produced all over Germany in the last few years, and with much success. It seems Wolfe is greatly esteemed in Germany, and his name brought people to the theatre. And once there they evidently found values in the play which were not apparent to our play agents. The whole business of Wolfe in Germany was news to me."

Mrs. Sanford looked up the record and found the play had never been produced here.

Horst Franz, professor of English and chairman of the comparative literature program at Indiana University, who has just returned from a year's study of American plays on German stages, is the author of the article in Theatre Arts.

"Thomas Wolfe, whose novels have delighted German readers for almost twenty-five years, has captured the German stage. Early this year Gustaf Grundgens, West Germany's brilliant and often controversial actor-director, presented Wolfe's Mannerhouse—translated by Peter Sandberg under the title of Herrenhaus—in the Deutsche Schauspielhaus of Hamburg. The Hamburg premiere of Wolfe's play was hailed as a major theatrical event of the season.

"Wolfe began writing this play in 1921 when he was studying dramatic composition with Professor George Pierce Baker at Harvard University; at various stages of progress he called it The Heirs, The

Wasters, The House and finally Mannerhouse. Near the end of 1924 he lost the play when his suitcase was stolen in Paris. He rewrote it, and the result was, as he put it, a 'bigger and better' play than the previous version had been. After it was completed he submitted it—without success—to various American producers, among them Alice Lewison of the Neighborhood playhouse in New York, to whom he expressed the hope, somewhat pretentiously, that his play would "belong to no world that ever existed by land or sea." Readers of Of Time and the River (1935) will recall that the hero, Eugene Gant, reads Mannerhouse to two of his friends. Here Wolfe gives at some length his own criticism of the play, naming Shakespeare, Shaw, Rostand and Chekhov as the "masters" by whom he had been influenced. When a reading version was published in 1942, ten years after Wolfe's death, it received little attention. The only review I have been able to find—by George White Grace in the March, 1946, issue of Theatre Arts—was not very favorable and referred to Wolfe's dramatic work as "a very young and smallish bird on the back of its author's maturer eagle." The reviewer maintained that it would need "much cutting and fitting and refining" to be an actable play.

"The subject of Mannerhouse is, in Wolfe's own words, 'the decline and fall and ultimate decay of all its fortunes and the final acquisition of its proud estate, the grand old columned house that gave the play its name, by a vulgar, coarse and mean, but immensely able member of the rising "lower class." General Ramsay, believer in 'one god, few masters, many men,' remains true to the past while his son Eugene, filled with Hamlet-like brooding and sardonic humor, is skeptical of the past as well as the present. He defends life against death, youth against age, peace against war, and humanity against the 'heroic' way of life. —L. G.

The Alma Mater of Camp Butler

The following article about office on Franklin Street he keeps—as a place to hang his hat, but in the office he habitually wears his hat, ready to take off in any direction on quick notice.

In June, he was led to go over to Butler one day. There, staff members and employees of the State Hospital pulled a surprise move as a portrait of Umstead was unveiled in the hospital's administrative building lobby—testimonial of his ardent sponsorship of that facility. Several hundred employees, patients, friends and citizens had gathered for the ceremony. As Dr. James W. Murdoch, chief of the State's mental hospitals, phrased it: "He may be 'Mr. 4 Percent' with insurance people, but he's 'Mr. Butler' with us."

If any institution ever had an Alma Mater, the Camp Butler development can so acclaim John Umstead. He led the legislative move to acquire the Army camp and hospital; he cajoled appropriations to take over and maintain the hospital for mental patients; he projected the center for first offense malefactors who perform farm and hospital chores; and since 1953 he had served as Chairman of the N. C. Hospitals Board of Control (a member since 1945).

In 10 sessions of the N. C. General Assembly, John Umstead has been the "Gentleman from Orange." By preference he has literally taken his seat in the back row. From that

them out here than have them crack up under fire, getting themselves and a dozen others killed."

Over 4,000 Marines were killed in the month-long campaign for the island of Iwo Jima. This was their bloodiest battle of World War II. Without a tough training program behind them, the figure could have easily been 10,000 or more.

About the only thing that all branches of the United States Armed Forces agree on is that the Marine Corps has the roughest and toughest training program of any military or naval unit in the world and the program has saved lives when the cards are on the table.

Boot camp, as the Parris Island training program is called, is no mere training ground where men are taught the fundamentals of combat. It is the price of membership in a proud fighting fraternity. It has a personality, a mood and a momentum of its own, which marks its graduates.

It has been suggested by many that

vantage point he has set up interference, diagnosed plays, called signals, and frequently carried the ball to score gains for many causes—popular and otherwise. He relishes scrimmage, huddles, interference assignments, goal-line stands, and touchdowns. Thus reminded by gridiron parlance, it is astounding to many that this demon Carolina alumnus stays away from football games—even Duke-Carolina clashes. He'll wish, he'll moan, and he'll re-play the games. But he will not watch 'em.

The University is an espoused cause with John Umstead. Colleagues may differ with the Umstead ideas of what's good for Alma Mater; few will deny the depth of his loyalty and the expanse of his advocacy. As a student fifty years ago he was an intercollegiate debater for UNC. He has been debating, arguing, and rebutting for the University ever since. He defends, attacks, contends, and wrestles—all for the University. A Trustee since 1939, an Executive Committeeman for 10 years, he speaks out and up for the University—for himself and in official capacities—among friends and foes, in forums of the street or the legislature, whenever the occasion calls. He is partisan without prejudice, positive without pomp, and personable without pretense.

Family roots run deep with Mr. Umstead. His wife (nee: Sallie Reade, a boyhood and neighborhood girl) has been his co-partner and counterpart from their marriage in 1914 at the old home church in the country. Two sons and two daughters (Frank, John III—a casualty in World War II, Sarah and Anne) made up the Umstead household.

Chapel Hill Chaff

(Continued from Page 1)

favorite form of pleasure. "Isn't it fine to get back home?" people ask. My answer is yes. I would be there often, but I wouldn't be there long at a time if I could afford to be where I please as long as I please. My Wageless Slave says she is willing to go along but I wouldn't be surprised if she's glad we don't have the treasure that is needed to satisfy my wanderlust. She is much more fond of the things a person does around the premises, digging in the garden and such like, than I am. What I enjoy more than anything else is seeing new sights—and then seeing over again those I like best.

One way to be made homesick for a faraway place that you have visited is to be reminded of it by somebody you meet or by somebody who writes to you. Such reminders are why I happen to be on this subject now.

When Frank Graham and I were at the Memorial Hospital one day last week we dropped in on Mrs. Urban Holmes's mother, Mrs. Gemmill. Mrs. Holmes was with her and presently, egged on by my questions, they were talking about the place where they were born, Edinburgh; and this stirred my memories of Princes street and the Walter Scott Memorial, and the Castle and the Royal Mile that we saw from our hotel window, and afflicted me with a bitter case of homesickness. Oh, what a beautiful city is Edinburgh! Oh, how I want to go back there! (Substitute in this plaudit the name of any other of the places in my list above, and you will have me speaking with truth and fervor.)

Mr. Sleight was the next person to make me homesick. When he and I stopped for a minute's chat at the post office Sunday he said: "I stayed at the Saint Ermine too." This was apropos of his having read

I Like Chapel Hill

By Billy Arthur

It would happen to me. Things like it always do. The University Service Plants recently announced a new rate schedule for electrical power, which it said would reduce some 2,600 bills and leave unchanged some 600. It called the new schedule a reduction in rates.

The sleeper was a so-called demand feature, applicable to consumers who might use at some time or another four kilowatts per hour, to be measured by special meters in their residences.

Now, I've been informed that almost everybody enjoys the new rate schedule, although they don't understand it, except Paul Green and I.

Instead of going down, our bills went up. When I checked with Grey Culbreth about it, ours were the only residential bills he knew that were higher than the previous month.

And he explained that Paul and I and the Home Building and Loan (I mention that firm because it has more interest in my house than I.) were just too fortunate in having air-conditioning throughout our homes.

Or, we cooked while we ran the electric washer and dryer, or the water heater was pulling too much power while something else was happening electrically.

For the moment, I got a bit peeved and looked into the operations of other utilities. Without exception, each official I contacted admitted the demand feature was confusing to the consumer, was a means of getting more return out of big users of power (almost an about face from former policies of giving a progressively lower rate for each new piece of electrical equipment installed), and in effect, did that by giving customers the choice of the demand feature (which in some instances does result in lower rates) or the old rates it replaced.

The new demand schedule can best be explained this way:

A grocer marks his oranges at 10¢ each, or 12½¢ each in dozen quantities. You see, he can't afford to stock lots of oranges and gamble on selling them in dozen quantities, because he might get stuck with a dozen or so sometime. So he stocks less oranges, and charges less. If you want to buy a dozen, he charges a higher price, since his stock would be wiped out. Or something like that. Simple, isn't it?

If your bill goes up or if you are building a new house, there are two ways of licking the demand feature:

1. Have your electrician install a set of relays in your house that'll cut off the heavy power consuming electrical equipment at the proper time, and the special meter, therefore, won't show the 4 kw demand.

2. Don't run your dryer and water heater at the same time, or electric ranges and water heater and/or dryer at the same time.

In other words, you might consider washing a load of clothes at midnight and drying them at 6 a.m. That way the water heater won't be working while other electric stuff in the house is.

Why all this?

Well, I just want you to know that so far Paul Green and I are the only ones paying for the shiny new meters the Service Plants has bought and sticking on your house.

Aren't you proud of us?

These days when a child is tied to mother's apron strings, she's not likely to be his mother.

in the Weekly what I wrote about the Brownell tourists' being quartered at this charming old hotel in the neighborhood of Westminster Abbey. He said he stayed there 53 years ago, in the summer of 1903. I had one of my greatest thrills on our trip last year when I went out for a walk at night, an hour or so after arriving in London, and saw the Abbey in the moonlight.

—And then there is the mis-sive that makes me yearn to go to Rome again! It is a postcard from our classics professor, Mr. Ullman, showing a picture of the Forum at night. I remember seeing the Forum last September from just the same angle and writing to Mr. Ullman that it made me think of him and wish that he was there to answer my questions about the famous old ruins.

DON'T SWAMP IT!



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