

The Franklin Press

and

The Highlands Maconian

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Gold Through Our Fingers

FOR nearly a century Macon and the other Western North Carolina counties have been getting gold slip through their fingers.

The movement of people to the West during the last decades of the nineteenth century was particularly marked in this region, and it robbed the mountain region of much of its best blood, much of its ambition, talent and spirit. As example, Buncombe county furnished a Pacific Coast state oil and water engineer, Clay lost to Texas a single who later became one of the great preachers of a later time, our own Macon provided a first Washington state with a governor, and the list could be extended indefinitely.

Then came the early years of the twentieth century, and with them the trick from the mountains to the new industrial area of the Piedmont. Again we lost heavily. And again the list of those mountain men and women who took their talents elsewhere, and made good, is a long one.

Following World War I, there was a great exodus from the small towns and rural areas to the cities. And the story of the mountain region's loss is the same. As one Macon County person remarked, half seriously, at the time: "I don't know what New York and Asheville would do without Macon County to supply them with new blood!"

And the 1940's have witnessed the greatest movement of all, that resulting from the war. This county contributed to the armed forces alone an estimated 1,500 young men and women.

In the other movements, we lost persons of all ages, and we lost some undesirable citizens along with the many who were highly desirable. But the group that entered the armed forces was made up exclusively of youth, and it was only the superior physical, mental and moral standards—that was accepted, in short, the 1,500 who left here to fight for their country represent not only the bulk of our male youth, but the cream of that youth.

They were that when they went away from home. Today, after one, two, three, four, or five years in the service, they are matured; they are widely traveled; they are broadened by rubbing shoulders, and ideas, with men of all types and classes, from every corner of the world; and they are, in many cases, the products of specialized training.

Their experience probably is the equal, possibly the superior, of a college education. And a large number of them plan to add to their army training the education the G. I. Bill of Rights makes possible. Never before has Macon County had so large a proportion of its youth so well educated.

Some 90% of these youths already have been discharged, and many of them are back at home—in Franklin, in Highlands, at Otto, on Cullasaja and Cartoogehave and Cowee and Nantahala, and in every community in the county. Others are arriving every day.

All of us have said, repeatedly, that we owe these young people much, that nothing is too good for them. And surely the first thing we owe them is a chance to come back home to live, if they wish to do so.

They are entitled to an economic opportunity at home, to jobs that will utilize their capabilities and skills, or to a chance to go into business for themselves. They are entitled to every encouragement and assistance the people of their home county can give them. And they are entitled to some other things—to decent housing, for instance, and to a richer life, with some of the social, recreational, and educational advantages they can find elsewhere.

But if we can contribute something to these young people, they can contribute far more to us. For if there is any one thing that every community needs—if there is any one thing that Macon County, especially, needs, it is youth; young men and women with a broadened outlook, with ideas, and with the enthusiasm and drive that only youth possesses.

Giving these young people a chance to stay at home is a matter of elemental duty. Making it possible for them to stay, and doing everything we can to persuade them to stay, is a matter of self preservation for Macon county.

Let no man presume to give advice to others who has not first given good counsel to himself.—Seneca.

There are two kinds of cynics in this world. One laughs at other people, while one laughs at himself as a key to other people.—Voltaire.

LETTERS

SEES IMPROVEMENT

My own opinion is that paper quality has improved since your paper was first published in 1911. I have decided to send you a letter to let you know that you continue to do a good job. I hope you will continue to do so in the future. Very yours, W. C. LAYTON

Others' Opinions

G. I.'S AND CHILDREN

IN the wake of American victory, your heart would rejoice to see these G. I.'s giving so freely of human kindness. I've seen guys with wall-weary faces sweep children up in their arms and talk baby talk and get their first real grip for many a month. Kids over here run out to us as we walk by, and grab our fingers and walk along with us, not in the least afraid. Servicemen writing from Germany to The Christian Science Monitor.

STOP EROSION AT ITS START

NEARLY every intelligent tiller of the soil appreciates the importance of the fight against erosion. It is gratifying that a number of our farmers have taken progressive measures to prevent surface water from washing away the valuable top soil upon which fertility depends.

Nevertheless, there are many signs of damage from erosion, and it is perhaps well to urge all those connected with agriculture in McDowell county to be alert in the battle against the forces of nature, whether they arise from surface drainage on the farm itself or from flood waters of surrounding streams.

It would be a good idea for every agriculturist to make a careful inspection of his holdings for the purpose of spotting the small washes that will become gullies and in time rob the land of its strength. A little precaution, at the right time, will save heavy loss in fertile soil and avoid more extensive efforts later on. —Martin Progress.

MORE SLEEP ACREAGE

THERE is a move afoot by two national associations of bedding manufacturers to provide more sleep acreage for six-footers. It is suggested that an additional standard length of 78 inches—the present is 74 inches—for beds and mattresses be established to improve sleeping comforts for basketball centers and their likes.

This comes as mighty good news to those of us a fraction of an inch over 74 inches. In the winter especially we have to sleep in fashion or take the chance of having our toes tweaked by Jack Frost. We once knew a six-foot-down-Mainer who blanketed his feet in heavy wool socks and just let 'em hang over the end, sub-zero temperatures notwithstanding!

Strange as it may seem, the housewife is the one who is really pulling for this 78-inch bed. One wife whose husband has to go outdoors to stretch says she was tempted to drive in spikes to anchor the bedclothes.

We highly endorse the 78-inch bed. It will bless the entire family of any six-footer.—Christian Science Monitor.

DICTIONARIES' IMMORALITY

AS behind-the-scenes news leaks out about Mussolini, Hitler, and others in the totalitarian gang, they are found to have been as immoral in their private life as they were brutal in public acts. Mussolini had a wife who helped him when he was poor and unknown, but he was buried with his mistress when justice overtook him.

The pictures and diary of Eva Braun show the lewd and unlawful life of Hitler in a country where before totalitarianism the old honest family life was usual.

Last week when the industrial nabobs in league with Hitler were rounded up, the telegraphic account says of one of the ring leaders: "He was found in bed with the blonde daughter of a German baron."

Infidelity and immorality and disrespect of popular government go hand in hand. When you find an egotist who thinks he was born booted and supped to ride over the rights of men, disrespect for womanhood is sure to follow. With such brutal rules the Ten Commandments are abolished along with democracy.—News and Observer.

"CITY OF TREES"

SHELBY has many alias or nick names, some deserved and others unnatural and undeserved. Among her many names so thrust upon her are: The city of springs, the city of trees, the office trust, the political center, the capital of Western North Carolina, the little state capitol, and even others.

The thing that enlists attention here is a name derived from natural surroundings, that of being a "City of Trees." Time was when no city or town in North Carolina offered as much pure shade and beauty as Shelby. There has been a steady spread of shade trees in and around the heart of the city, and the shade of course erection of modern structures and laying of paved streets did away with many trees over the city.

There is one beauty spot still left, the classic shades of the county courthouse through which may be glimpsed the beautiful white-gray temple of justice, beauty spot second to none anywhere. But the trees on the square are slowly dying and are but ghosts of the former beauty and glory that were theirs—in fact at night and through the light the spindly trees, with the white background of the courthouse, present a somber and funereal aspect premonitory of an early barrenness that will beggar description. So, with fullness of pride and in answer to beautification's call, we thus petition the County Commissioners to obtain the services of a good landscape gardener, before it is too late, and properly place or plant new trees and otherwise improve the premises to the end that the beauty and glory of the old court green shall be possessed of a continuity that shall know no end.—Cleveland Times.

BIG MONEY

The prudent and thrifty people of America did not content themselves with buying War Bonds and increasing their bank balances in 1945 to an extent that is a financial marvel. Coincidentally, they bought more new life insurance than in any year since 1931.

Dave Satterfield, the former Virginia congressman who now is executive director of the Life Insurance Association of America, gave some interesting statistics the other day.

On January 1, he said, 71,000,000 policy holders will have a total life insurance coverage of \$154,600,000,000 in American legal reserve companies. Policies written this year will have totaled more than \$15,000,000,000. In 1945 two and one-half billions will have been paid out, about half in death claims, the other half in maturities.

The colossal dimension of the national debt loses something of its psychological threat when the wealth of our people is considered. Their life insurance companies alone have a nominal obligation to their policy holders which is more than half the debt of the United States Government. The enormity of the obligation of the insurance companies, however, can alarm no one, for there is a ratio of assets and current income to all potential current demands which means unimpeachable solvency.

So, too, the national debt is well within a safe ratio to the wealth and productivity of the American people. In short, it is manageable. But all thoughtful citizens will look earnestly to the time when the federal budget can be balanced and slow amortization of present liabilities can be begun. —Atlanta Journal.

OIL-BARREL STILL IS CAPTURED BY SHERIFF
Sheriff J. P. Bradley and his deputies captured an oil-barrel still last Monday at Lost Bridge on the branch above Herman Dean's sawmill place. They also took possession of a bushel of eye meal and a quantity of soap.

MACON YOUTH ENLISTS IN REGULAR ARMY
Two men from Macon and one from Jackson county, left Franklin Tuesday for Fort Bragg to enlist in the regular army. They are John L. Setser, 18, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bryan A. Setser of Franklin, Route 1 and Herbert L. Wilson of Speedwell, Jackson county. Setser is enlisting for 18 months, and Wilson for three years.

S. SGT. R. F. WALDROOP GIVEN HIS ARMY DISCHARGE
S. Sgt. Ralph F. Waldroop of Franklin, Route 2, was among those receiving honorable discharges from the army at the Mitchell Field Separation unit of the First Force base the latter part of last week.

BIGAMY HEARING ENDS WITH EVERYBODY HAPPY
NEW YORK—John Hughes, 27, a truck driver, was sullen and alone when he entered Bronx magistrate's court recently on bigamy charges, but he left in smiles with his children, his wife and another woman he is charged with marrying bigamously.

His wife, Florence, who made the charges, hired a lawyer to defend him, sobbed that she did not want to press the

358,000 Non-Agri Workers Aided

More than half of North Carolina's total non-agricultural labor force was at work in support of the war effort at the time of the peak of war production, roughly when the war ended in Europe.

Robert M. du Bruyne, acting state director of the United States Employment service, announced this week that an estimate places at 258,750 the numbers of workers who were contributing to the production of goods going directly to the armed forces, and at 99,150 the numbers engaged in supporting war work, or a total of 358,900 who were supporting the war effort, directly and indirectly.

Farmers last year set a new peak in the purchase of life insurance.

There are now seven times as many people who own life insurance policies in the United States as there were in 1900.

charges.

But, Magistrate Samuel Orr set a date for a hearing and fixed \$500 bail. Florence offered to furnish the bail.

Then Alice A. Alex of Chicago, whom Hughes was charged with marrying illegally last month, entered the court. The two women embraced and wept.

Hughes was freed in bail and with his children, Joan, five, and John, Jr., two, tugging at his sleeves he walked out of court with the two women.

TIRES

TRUCKERS' SPECIALS

8.25 x 20—10 Ply New Tires
7.50 x 20—10 Ply New Tires

Also we have just received a truck load of 7.50 x 20—8 Ply Recap Tires, going at \$20.00 each.

DUNCAN MOTOR

AS the New Year of 1946 gets under way, we wish to express appreciation for the patronage and loyal support we received during 1945 from our advertisers, patrons of our job printing and office supplies departments, and, last but not least, our subscribers.

And here's a hearty "thank you!" for the cordial reception and encouragement the new management of The Press has received.

It shall be our aim this year to publish a newspaper that grows more readable, week by week, and thereby we look forward to adding many new names to the subscription list of The Franklin Press and The Highlands Maconian. This, in turn, will enable us to give our advertisers more for their money. We shall strive, too, constantly to improve the service in our job printing and office supplies departments.

The growth of The Franklin Press is very closely tied in with the development of Macon County. Because this is true, we face 1946 with optimism and enthusiasm, because we are completely "sold" on Macon county and its future.

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