

The Franklin Press and The Highlands Maconian

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WIMAR JONES Editor
BOB S. SLOAN Business Manager
J. P. BRADY News Editor
MISS BETTY LOU FOUTS Office Manager
CARL P. CABE Mechanical Superintendent
FRANK A. STARRETTE Shop Superintendent
DAVID H. SUTTON Stereotyper
CHARLES E. WHITTINGTON Pressman

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MARCH 25, 1954

Now Who's To Blame?

To quote the Clayton (Ga.) Tribune, the AAA Motor Club of Georgia has slapped a "not recommended" tag on US 23 and has branded the rough mountain route through Georgia as "a bad way to go."

The Tribune calls US 23 the "life-line of the tourist trade flowing through Rabun County".

This, The Press feels, calls for some expansion—US 23 also is the life-line of Macon County, whose highways are now hacked to pieces by new highway projects. Until this new construction (Franklin to Dillsboro and US 64 to Highlands) is completed Macon is depending entirely on US 23 to bring its tourists.

So, the Georgia motor club is putting the "evil eye", not only on Rabun County, but on Macon as well.

And, according to the Tribune, the blame for the whole situation seems to be in North Carolina:

"Originally, word spread that the entire stretch of new highway from Clayton (Ga.) to North Carolina would be completed in the year of 1954, as agreed upon by North Carolina.

"However, informed sources say North Carolina will be unable to finish their road program, and this has been delaying the action by Georgia."

It is a well-known fact that Highway Commissioner Harry E. Buchanan in June of last year "borrowed" the \$450,000 allocation for a new link of US 23 from Franklin south to the Georgia state line and is using the allocation to "speed up" the completion of a 9.42-mile link of US 23 from Cowee Gap to Dillsboro in Jackson County.

Even so, The Press submits that the present highway from Franklin to the Georgia state line, although obsolete by today's standards, still is adequate to handle the flow of tourist traffic and when compared with some in other states is in excellent condition.

The flimsiness of Georgia's alibi suggests that the blame should be elsewhere.

Blessing In Disguise

There is something in the Bible to the effect that all things work together for good, and many observant people have been amazed at how often that proves true; how what seem disasters at the time prove blessings, in the long run.

That easily could be the case about the destruction by fire of the old Franklin high school building.

There is grave doubt as to whether that building ever would have been entirely satisfactory, for any purpose. But so long as it stood, many persons—possibly including school officials in Raleigh—would have felt it should be used, rather than putting up a new building. The debate could have gone on and on for years, with nothing done. Now the debate is ended for us!

To turn this misfortune into good fortune will require some effort, perhaps some sacrifice; but the destruction of the old building paves the way for the whole community to get behind a program for an adequate auditorium, to serve the school, Franklin, and the county. The "whole community" backing such a project should, and almost surely will, include all Macon County.

Exit McCarthy

It is our guess that Senator Joseph R. McCarthy is on the way to oblivion. It would not be surprising if his name disappeared from the front pages within the next year, or possibly within the next few months.

The reason is simple: A few persons have at last summoned the courage to challenge McCarthy.

Senator McCarthy's stock in trade has been fear.

His vast power has been built on fear. "If you don't support me, I'll destroy you", was the implied threat he has used constantly. And so senators and congressmen, government bureaus, and sometimes the White House itself, it has appeared, have abjectly surrendered.

But at last he is being challenged. Among the first, in congress, to speak out was North Carolina's Senator Hoey who, early in the McCarthy-Stevens controversy, said flatly that McCarthy was wrong. Others have followed. And today the McCarthy who always was attacking is on the defensive.

Some people have opposed him—and have kept their heads; he has been proved less terrible, less powerful than was thought. Others will take courage.

A bully can continue bullying only so long as his bullying tactics create fear. The bully whom nobody fears is the most ridiculous figure imaginable.

Baptist Debate

The state papers are full of the Baptists' controversy over the three Baptist Student Union leaders who have been asked to resign—and the reaction of many Baptist young people.

It's largely a Baptist, rather than a newspaper, problem; besides, The Press poses as no Solomon.

But we do suggest there is much about the controversy that is healthy and encouraging.

There have been times when a lot of people have wondered, in recent years, if there was enough life left in any of the Protestant churches for them to get really excited about anything. Well, those people have their answer.

The loyalty of Baptist students over the state to their leaders is heartening, regardless of the merits or demerits of the controversy; and it should be encouraging to their elders that these youngsters feel so keenly about a church matter.

Finally, as one on the outside looking in, we suspect that, basically, this is a clash of ideas, of conservative vs liberal thinking. Out of such a clash, bitter and unfortunate as it may seem at the time, there nearly always come clearer thinking and new vitality.

It seems always to have been particularly true of the Baptist Church, as a matter of fact, that the freedom it gives its individual churches and its members encourages debate, and thus thinking.

Bouquet

To the Franklin girls' basketball squad, for winning the Smoky Mountain Conference championship for the second straight year, our best mountain manners, and a big bouquet.

A bouquet of big red florist roses? Of camellias? Of orchids?

No, indeed!

For these mountain lassies, that most exquisite of spring flowers, the tiny, fragrant trailing arbutus that is found beneath the leaves on mountain-sides, about this time of year.

Others' Opinions

JUST HOW CRAZY?
(St. Louis Post-Dispatch)

The Truman and Roosevelt administrations were administrations of unadulterated betrayal to communism and deep-dyed treason that last 20 long years. Such is the impression that the Lincoln Birthday orators of the party in power are attempting to put over this week.

This is an insult to the intelligence of the American people. Apparently these partisan blabbermouths cannot remember something that the American people know very well. This is the fact that Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles enjoyed both trust and preferment in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.

The blunt truth is that if it had not been for the opportunity for service accorded Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles by Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles would not today be the No. 1 and No. 2 men in Washington. Had it not been for their part in the administrations of "Communist treason," the chances are the world would never have heard their names.

Just how crazy can politicians get?

AMERICA'S ULTIMATE ANXIETY
(Greensboro Daily News)

Dr. James Cleland of the Duke Divinity School, a native of Scotland, probed deeply at the psyche of America in his speech to the North Carolina Press Association at Durham last week end.

He found three significant traits in the "average American":

(1) A pragmatic assurance ("The American lives in a country which is remarkably sure of itself. He can evidently do anything he has a mind to do; if it is impossible, it just takes longer."); (2) a general neighborliness ("This is a country of joiners. . . . It is no wonder that group discussion is an American phenomenon. The American is unwilling to be left alone. If, by mischance, he is forced to solitariness, on goes the radio or the television"); (3) ultimate anxiety ("There is an underlying uneasiness of mind respecting the meaning of life and the outcome of individual existence. . . . It is partly due to the fact of international responsibility. It is ultimately due to the certainty of death. Therefore this average American often has a sense of futility, of transience, and of personal insignificance.").

Dr. Cleland's analysis of Americans was charitable and came from an understanding heart; he was transmitting in kinder words the message recently delivered by James Marquand's "Point of No Return" and Arthur Miller's "Death Of A Salesman". The American, as we have known him from the frontier days through Sinclair Lewis's Babbity and Fortune Magazine's series on "How To Be An Executive's Wife", is supremely the salesman and the builder. He found a virgin continent and made it an empire; he was the natural-born salesman and he sold his product because it was a good one—which the world respects, admires and envies. Abroad the U. S. still means steel mills, automobiles, fountain pens, superior plumbing and fabulous material comforts; most of the world wants these things, but like the U. S. it does not always remember that gadgets are not enough. America's automobiles were made to go 90 miles an hour on the road to the country club, not the road to eternity; the salesmanship prize, the big promotion are worthy goals only when they are not primary goals; the end product of human existence is not a high standard of living but a high standard of character; the aim of the national budget may be solvency, but the aim of the human life must be service—to something larger than self.

All this Dr. Cleland is saying as Marquand and Miller have been saying recently and as Sinclair Lewis and others said earlier. For the paradox of America is, indeed, its pragmatic assurance coupled with its ultimate anxiety. And the trouble is, as Dr. Cleland sees it, "an underlying uneasiness of mind respecting the meaning of life and the outcome of individual existence" even in the midst of material opulence beyond the imagination of nine-tenths of the world.

This philosophy does not deny that America has tremendous power, but it does express doubt about whether America knows how to use its power wisely and well. It does not satirize Babbity as harshly as Lewis or expose it as bleakly as "Death Of A Salesman", but it does make the quiet point that America will not find peace of soul until it puts first things first. For we stand in the shadow of great empires of the past which could not stand up under prosperity. Nothing succeeds like success; but nothing corrupts like power.

Will America survive her astounding prosperity which Charles Darwin (grandson of the great scientist) said in 1952, is an "unusual" phenomenon in the 20th Century? Is America changing and maturing under the stress of new conditions? Will our "ultimate anxiety" give way to serenity of conviction?

These questions will be answered by the historians of another era when they put their fingers on the pulse of the 20th Century as brilliantly as Dr. Cleland did at Durham last week.

Poetry

Editor
EDITH DEADERICK ERSKINE
Weaverville, North Carolina

COMMENT

Pride goes up and Pride falls down
As well as laughing humans
Who stub their toes and break their skulls—
And never a light illumines.

So why should we be high and proud
And gather ecstatic tattle
Or complimentary sighs and ohs—
From man's effusive prattle?

LENA MEARLE SHULL

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WIMAR JONES

CHAPEL HILL.—Spring comes early down here. To a mountaineer, it seems incredible how early.

It begins to feel and smell like spring in January, and by early February, you know spring is on the way. By this time, Spring is at its height, and what a beautiful place Chapel Hill is in the spring.

I am not the one qualified even to try to describe it, but just how pretty it is, it seems to me, is suggested by the story in William Meade Prince's book about this University town, "The Southern Part of Heaven".

Meade tells how, in the old days, one of the well known village figures was about to die and the equally well known and beloved Presbyterian minister called on him.

In the course of the conversation, the sick man asked the minister:

"So you think I will go to heaven?"

"Yes", was the reply, "I think you will."

Then, after a long pause:

Another long pause, ending with the reply:

"I think it must be a good deal like Chapel Hill in the spring."

A recent letter from our daughter-in-law, in New York with the baby en route to join our son in Europe, told about the number of servicemen's wives and children being "processed" for the trip to join their husbands (and fathers) in Europe, and some of the odd things she observed.

Notable was this one: One mother with two sets of triplets, all six children mere infants!

When I told that to friends here, a lady (who was reared in Haywood County) remarked it reminded her of the rare expression a little mountain girl had for the idea of something being plenty, or ample. The child would say it was "a God's lavish".

So, said our friend who for-

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News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

Rep. George M. Shuford, from our congressional district voted wrong last Thursday. Furthermore he let down the people who chose him to represent them in Congress.

When Rep. Shuford voted against a bill sponsored by members of his own party which would raise the individual exemption for each taxpayer and dependent from \$600 to \$700 and would knock out of the tax bill a cut in the tax on dividends from corporation stock, he must have had a lapse in memory.

He must have forgotten the people he represents and the traditional stand of the party in which he claims membership and from whose members he asks for loyalty in a general election.

Rep. Shuford was wrong because traditionally the Democratic Party has been the champion of the masses and the working man. It has expounded the economic theory that if the purchasing power of the working people is kept high our economy will have a sound foundation to rest on. This has been contrary to the Republican theory that if industry is given sufficient encouragement by tax and tariff benefits that industry will prosper and eventually a sufficient amount will "trickle down" to the common everyday working people.

If Rep. Shuford is aware of the fact that production and consumption are the two wheels of the economic cart in which we all ride he does not seem to realize that today the consumption wheel has been deflated more than the production side. In fact, a glance at the nation's warehouses will quickly show that the production tire seems to be suffering from too much pressure. Certainly increasing the amount of purchasing power so that everyone has a little would do more to increase the nation's ability to purchase consumer goods than reducing the tax on stock dividends. The extra money these people gain by this tax benefit will most likely be used only to purchase more stocks since for the most part people are inclined to purchase the things they need in the consumer goods line before they start investing in stocks. On the other hand had the personal exemption been raised for everyone, many people would have been able to purchase consumer goods which they want.

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Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through
the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The Press is making arrangements to move to the Higgins building next week and will occupy the ground floor on the east side.

Last night at 10 o'clock, lightning struck and tore to pieces the large locust tree in the back yard of Mr. W. R. Johnston's house on the corner near the Potts shop.

Mr. Wm. Watkins has gone back to Washington, after spending some time at home.

25 YEARS AGO

Mr. I. C. McGee, recently of Asheville, is now manager of the local A & P store, succeeding in this position, Mr. Ralph Ensey.

Nobody reads editorials, some say. But just bawl somebody out in one and see what happens.

Wonder how many farmers in Macon County are plowing over \$100,000 worth of minerals to grow 50 bushels of corn?

Last November the people of Macon County were determined to have a change. They got it. At nearly every move they have jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. Now they will just have to sizzle.

10 YEARS AGO

Major Gregg Cherry, of Gastonia, candidate for the democratic gubernatorial nomination, for governor of North Carolina, paid a brief visit to Franklin last Tuesday.

Alex Arnold has accepted a position on the Franklin post office staff.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Sloan will leave Saturday to attend the graduating recital of their daughter, Miss Dorothy Sloan, on Monday evening.