

The Franklin Press
and
The Highlands Maconite

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Whose Business?

Government is everybody's business. We make it our business by voting. But if you and I, and our neighbors, do not vote, government becomes nobody's business. Then everybody suffers.

So . . .

Vote as you please, in next Tuesday's general election, but be sure you VOTE.

Nobody Seems To Know

Under state law, the taxable value of the property of public service corporations is fixed by the State Board of Assessment, and the amount set is handed down to local authorities, who may not change it.

Thus, when the Western Carolina Telephone Company this year listed its property in Macon County and its two towns, it listed it not with the town and county authorities, but with the Raleigh board.

In 1953 the telephone company had reported to the state board it had 1069 miles of line in Franklin, and 1935 in the entire county. This year it listed only 381 miles of line in Franklin and only 961 in the county as a whole. That is, it said it had only about a third as many miles in Franklin this year as last, and only about half as many in the county.

That report was accepted by the State Board of Assessment and handed down to the local authorities as the basis for taxation!

After the discrepancies between the miles of line this year and last had repeatedly been called by local persons to the attention of the telephone company's headquarters in Weaverville, the company announced it had made an error, and that a revised report would be submitted to Raleigh.

In the revised report, the number of miles listed is approximately the same this year as last, but the value per mile has been drastically reduced. The net result is that the report has been revised, but the amount of taxes the telephone company will pay is little changed by the revision.

In 1953, the telephone company's total valuation in Franklin was put at \$74,109. Under this year's first and erroneous report, the value was put at \$34,849 — less than half of last year's. And under the revised report, the value is put at \$44,129 — only a little more than half of last year's.

In the county, in 1953, the phone company's property was valued for taxes at \$134,129. Under this year's first and erroneous report, it was valued at only \$88,588. Under this year's revised report, it still is valued at \$88,588!

So far as this newspaper knows, the telephone company made an honest mistake in its first report.

Nor is this newspaper in position to deny that the value of the phone company's property in Franklin has shrunk by 40 per cent since last year, and nearly 34 per cent in the county.

We just don't know. It isn't our job to know.

But the point is that nobody seems to know.

For a state board that would accept a report indicating that telephone wires have shrunk in length by from one-third to one-half, and then accept another report that the value of the same property has shrunk by from 34 to 40 per cent — that board obviously doesn't know.

And it is its job to know.

A lot of children turn out well in spite of, rather than because of, their parents.

'Biological Age'

People's "biological age" should be determined before they are forced into retirement at 65, says a noted heart specialist.

Biological age — that is, age in health and capacity — does not always correspond to age in years. Many people are old at 40, while others still are young at 65, explains Dr. Irving S. Wright, of New York. Millions can keep on being productive after 65, he says.

Then, in something of an understatement, he adds that work often is good for the health of those past 65.

But aside from what is good for the individual, can America afford to toss into the ashcan the productive abilities of millions, just because it's simpler to fix retirement age in calendar years? Even those whose physical energies are abated have a lot left to contribute, not the least being judgment acquired through long years of experience.

Automatic retirement at a fixed age in years is typical of a nation that generally is considered the most wasteful in history.

Bouquet

Traffic over a road that is under construction must be an annoyance to the construction forces. More serious than that, it delays the work, and thereby costs the contractor money.

Nobody, therefore, could seriously blame a road contractor if he went just as far as the state would permit him to go in keeping traffic off the road he was building.

That, though, has not been the attitude of Macon Construction Company, in building the eastern link of the Franklin-Dillsboro highway. Quite the reverse

That road has been kept open a large part of the time, and motorists have found the construction personnel courteous and obliging. Last week, the builders went a step farther — the dirt portion of the road was being sprinkled to keep down the dust!

That, we think, calls for a big bouquet — from all of us.

Letters

MORE ABOUT MRS. FURR'S CACTUS

Gentlemen:
Re attached clipping appearing in your October 7th issue.
For Mrs. Furr's information, the plant in question is a Stapella (stah-pee'-il-ah), a member of the succulent family. It has the common name of carrion-flower because of disagreeable odor of the odd showy flowers. I have grown these plants for many years in Miami.
We want you to know how very much we enjoy reading your paper for it seems to keep us in close touch with our home and friends there.

Very truly yours,
Miami, Fla. (MRS.) MARGUERITE LYTELL

Others' Opinions

READING AND CIVILIZATION
(International Paper Company House Organ)

For several centuries after the beginning of the Christian era, reading was a privilege enjoyed by very few, chiefly churchmen and scholars. Literacy was not encouraged, in those early days, by pedagogues, who jealously guarded their learning, or by rulers, Ignorance and illiteracy among the common folk strengthened the ruler's position. People were not supposed to think or ask questions. They were directed by edicts of the ruler or bulls by the church.

As late as the middle of the 16th century an act was passed in England forbidding anyone to read the Bible other than the men and women of the gentry or nobility. In 1674, Sir William Berkeley, governor of Virginia for about thirty years, uttered the "gem" of an era when he said "I thank God we have neither schools nor printing." The gentleman was a persecuting dictator, a fur monopolist and a tyrant who was eventually removed from office, by the king, under pressure from a long-suffering citizenry. Suppression of truth and education and of the press are always marks of dictators and despots. But the printed word was destined eventually to lead people out of darkness and ignorance.

Determined printers, type founders and paper makers in the 17th and 18th centuries multiplied and progressed. Writers and poets saw more and more of their efforts put into print and made available to the public. Literacy increased slowly but surely. More books and tracts were printed and more people learned to read. Prior to the 17th and 18th centuries news was broadcast by town criers or by oral gossip. But by 1622 news was appearing in print. The first newspaper, published at regular intervals, was printed in Germany in 1609. Thirteen years later, two years after the Pilgrims sailed for America, the first English newspaper appeared.

OUR DEMOCRACY — by Mat

"THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES A LITTLE LONGER"
— FROM THE MOTTO OF THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS

COSMO-ATOMIC LIGHT, HEAT & POWER CO.

News Making As It Looks To A Maconite
By BOB SLOAN

On the National elections in regard to the Senate and the House, I would like for the record to change my predictions made in September only slightly. At that time I stated that while it wasn't my wishes I felt that the Republican party would retain control of both the Senate and the House. Now I believe that the Democrats will gain control of the House, but the Republicans will control the Senate by one vote. That is contrary to the predictions of most of the professional prognosticators but still that is my guess. "Bird Dog" Wilson's comments will cause some House seats to switch in local areas where there is unemployment, but I do not believe that unemployment is of a general enough nature to cause Senate votes to switch. Also the President's personal popularity and the money of the Republican party will be strong weapons.

Do You Remember?
(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK
Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Slagle returned Friday from a visit to the World's Fair at St. Louis.

Mr. E. K. Cunningham sold his place Friday evening to Mr. T. B. Shepherd. The amount paid was \$3,000.

Mr. W. W. Sloan, who with his wife boards at Mr. Lee Crawford's, has an attack of typhoid fever, but we are glad to report it seems to be a mild case.

25 YEARS AGO
Four prisoners made their escape from the local jail the night of the 20th by prizing up the roof and letting themselves down with the bedclothes.

Nine Macon County students are enrolled at N. C. College (Woman's College) in Greensboro this year. They are: Misses Mildred Cozad, Hazel Higdon, Lenwood Ingram, Margaret A. McGuire, Virginia A. McGuire, Timoxena Crawford, Ora Sue Hunnicutt, Kathryn Porter, and Betty Sloan.

10 YEARS AGO
Paper bags are so scarce that Franklin merchants are asking shoppers to bring their own shopping bags.

Miss Betty Slagle, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred M. Slagle, became the bride of Capt. Paul Rodger Kemper October 19.

The Misses Marguerite and Clare Ravenel have returned to their winter home in Philadelphia, after spending the season in Highlands.

papermen, of course, are among the worst offenders. And the newspapers that prate loudest about "the dignity of the individual" are the most stubborn in refusing to bestow this little token of dignity. To most newspapers today, an unmarried woman is simply "Mary Brown". The fact that she's a gentle old lady of 80 makes no difference whatever.

"You have to stick to the rules, you know." The heck you do! My observation is that all rules are broken; and that most of them ought to be broken sometimes.

Besides, I don't like the rule. Nor have I ever heard any really valid reason for such a rule. Then there's that trend to refer to married women by their given names, rather than by their husbands'; "Mrs. Mary Smith" instead of "Mrs. John C. Smith". And women themselves appear to be responsible for this.

Why? Are they ashamed to be identified with the men they married?

Whatever their reason, the custom often is confusing. A person would remember a woman by her maiden name, "Mary Brown", or as the wife of "John C. Smith", but "Mary Smith" often just doesn't register at all. This, of course, is purely a personal idiosyncrasy. It really doesn't greatly matter — except as a possible symptom of what I often call The Great American Delusion.

That delusion is that everybody is just alike — if one person is different from others, there's something wrong with him. Therefore, since all individuals are just alike, there is no difference between men and women.

To assume that makes things simpler. It does not follow that the assumption is true.

Babblin' About
Centennial For Franklin
J. P. Brady

There's a great big birthday coming up February 10, 1955, and, if it is to be properly celebrated in a manner usually reserved for such occasions, it is none too early to start planning now.
Whose birthday is it, you ask? Franklin's!
Yes, Macon's thriving county seat is going to mark its 100th birthday — incorporated birthday, that is, for the town is considerably older than 100 years.

Back when I was a kid, they used to call trousers of that type (and I've begrudgingly worn hundreds of pairs) "high water britches".
And for me that still goes.
If the world should suddenly become flooded three inches over, then I might wear this "new look" in men's clothes just to keep from having to roll up trouser legs every time I penetrated the outside.
But until this happens, modesty demands that my trousers ride in the vicinity of my shoe tops.

However, it is customary for towns in this area to write this 100th (incorporated) birthday into the pages of history with a concerted celebration, including even the growing of "beavers" by the men folk.
This column is just passing the information along to those of you who might be interested in seeing Franklin write history with a centennial anything any of the other towns have experienced.
Would like to make one suggestion: This celebration, should it materialize, should be the "baby" of every civic organization and individual in town. Some kind of a planning committee composed of civic club representatives and businessmen should start NOW on the planning.
What do you think?

The poem appearing below is the fulfillment of a promise I made several weeks ago while attending the "Fellowship Hour" for Macon's young-in-heart at the Franklin Methodist Church.
During the program, Mrs. G. A. Jones, 92, stood and recited a poem "my mother taught me, and I think we all might benefit from it."
Several of the "youngsters" there were hard of hearing and requested the publication of the poem.
For two weeks now I have been trying to sandwich it in.

Here's another try:
"Sometime when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue,
And we shall see how all God's plans are right
And what seemed reproof was love most true.
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold,
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
God will reveal the calices of gold,
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God is keeping from us now Life's sweetest things because He knows it's good.

I was really astounded the other night while taking in a movie in Asheville to see some news shots of what the well dressed male is supposed to wear this year.

To appropriate music (it should have been "I'll Be Glad When You're Dead You Rascal You") about three or four males (this is an assumption, mind you) were prancing around in trousers that rode about half way between their ankles and their knees.
These trousers, the commentator assured the audience, were what well-dressed men would be wearing this winter.

At this time I would like to make public announcement of the fact that said commentator can subtract one from his list.
And that's me, thank you!

STRICTLY PERSONAL
By WEIMAR JONES

I'm all for today as contrasted with yesterday.

I think most of our modern gadgets add immeasurably to a better physical life. I am sure the majority of people think a lot straighter than they did half a century ago. And there is no question in my mind but that the proverbially disturbing "younger generation" is so much superior to older ones that there really is no comparison.
But there are some things about today I do not like. And one of my pet aversions is the way women's names are written.
I like to see a woman's name written with a handle — "Miss Mary Brown", or, if she's married, "Mrs. John C. Smith"; not just "Mary Brown" or "Mary Smith".
Maybe that's old fashioned. Well, if it is, I'm sorry; but I still don't like it. And I suspect there are a lot of people who feel just as I do.
My own profession, the news-