

The Franklin Press and The Highlands Macon

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man of the board of county commissioners, he was equally conscientious in discharging his civic duty.

During his service, in recent years, on the county board of education, this newspaper sometimes found itself in disagreement with Mr. Byrd on policies and methods, but never was there any question of his sincerity. Ed Byrd was honest, in the broadest sense of that term; nobody could doubt his motives — always his purpose was to do what was best for his county.

Retiring, soft-spoken, he was anything but dogmatic; he was always ready to listen. But once he had made up his mind, on what he considered a matter of principle, there was no moving him.

We need more men possessed of that kind of character.

VIEW

By
BOB SLOAN



Saturday is election day in the Democratic party primary. Every Democrat should, first as a citizen and second as a party member, go vote. As has been said different times in many different ways, democracy does not function properly unless the people express their sentiments. This can only be done with effect by voting.

Little interest has been shown in the primary this Spring, but it is important that we have the best man available in the office of Representative and as members of the Board of Education. All members of the Democratic party should do their part Saturday to see that their party selects as nominees the best man possible. They can do this by voting.

Here is a suggestion about voting. Do not be influenced in the decision of whom you will vote for by any last many charges you might hear against any candidate. When you go to the polls Saturday, vote the way you would have voted last week. Oftentimes in order to defeat a man, right at the last minute such rumors are started as, "So and So is for organized labor," or, "Did you know he is a socialist," or in a Democrat Primary, "His family are all Republicans, "Don't believe that stuff particularly when you hear it right at the close of a campaign. If it were so, you would have heard it long before then. The people who spread such gossip wait until the last minute because they don't want the man to have a chance to disprove it.

When the Little League begins their first day of play, Saturday many people will have had a hand in making it possible, but my hat is off in particular to Bob Carpenter. As the saying goes, he has really "laid with it" to bring this about. It is a fine contribution toward better recreation for the children. Congratulations, Bob.

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Misses Rebe Sloan, Hester Penland, and Olive Patton have returned home from Breneau College, Gainesville, Ga., to spend vacation.

Dr. Paul Robinson arrived home Sunday from Philadelphia. He graduated in pharmacy, but being under 21 years of age, his diploma is withheld until he attains his majority, which will be next year.

Mr. Y. A. Sanders purchased Dr. W. A. Rogers' interest in the harness shop of T. T. Angel, and the firm is now Angel & Sanders, and they have moved into the house recently purchased from Col. A. A. Howe. Grover Jamison has also moved his jewelry shop into the Howe building.

25 YEARS AGO

Mr. and Mrs. Bob King and their daughter, Miss Mahala King, spent the week-end here. They plan to open their beautiful summer hotel, King's Inn, within a short time. — Highlands item.

Mrs. Cecil Pendergrass and children left last Sunday for Morganton where they plan to spend this week visiting Mrs. Pendergrass' parents, the Rev. and Mrs. D. S. Richardson.

Miss Ada Brunette Trotter, who is attending Western Carolina Teachers' College at Cullowhee, spent the week-end here with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John S. Trotter.

10 YEARS AGO

T. J. Griffis, of Buffalo, N. Y., personal counselor of the Van Raalte Company, the concern which last week announced plans to erect a textile plant in Franklin, was here Wednesday.

Miss Lillian Beeco, who has been visiting her brother, James Beeco and family, at Cedar Point, Md., has returned to her home on Franklin, Route 4.

Fred L. Hannah, who is teaching school in Haywood County, spent the week-end at his home, Franklin, Route 1.

(See Back Page, 1st Section)

Let's Have A Say-So

Since this county and state usually — though not always — go Democratic, the voting in the Democratic primary election Saturday may well decide who is to serve us in county, state, and national office. (The Republicans usually name their candidates in convention.)

The choice of nominees for U. S. senator, governor, and other state offices is important, terribly important; for usually we get state and national government of about the same calibre as the men we put in office.

But if the only nominations to be made Saturday were for two local offices — this county's representative in the Legislature and membership on the county board of education — it would be worth the while of every registered Democrat in Macon County to go to the polls and vote Saturday.

Because this county's representative not only will help pass the laws that govern us all; he will help shape state policy, at a crucial period, on such vital matters as taxation and education. And the men we name to the three-member county board of education will determine the policies and fix the direction of Macon County's schools for the next two years.

It's our business — yours and mine — that county, state, and national governments transact. If we're smart, we'll have a say-so about who handles that business.

Slipping Backward

North Carolinians have been accustomed to think of their state as progressive, a leader, especially in the field of education.

Once that was true. But Tar Heels have become complacent — and now North Carolina is falling behind in education. Consider these figures:

Everybody knows the importance of individual attention for the child in school, but only two other states in the Union have a higher number of pupils per teacher.

In only three other states has the average adult completed so few years of schooling.

This state ranks 41st in the amount spent per pupil for school operating expense.

And here is how the gap is widening between the average teacher salary in the United States as a whole and the average in North Carolina:

In 1950-51, the average North Carolina teacher drew \$280 less than the average for the country as a whole. The next year, the difference jumped to \$355. The following year to \$457. In 1953-54, we gained a little ground, reducing the difference to \$430. But in 1954-55, it had jumped to \$588, the next year to \$700, and the estimated difference for this year is \$875.

As we have paid our teachers less and less, as compared with salaries in other states, the schools have been penalized:

In 1954-55, we lost 2,700 teachers. Less than 200 of them retired—the others presumably sought better paying jobs.

As of now, 75,000 elementary children are being taught by high school children, due to the teacher shortage.

We need approximately 3,000 new teachers every year to fill vacancies, but far fewer than that number are being graduated from our teacher training schools, and many of those do not go into teaching.

This newspaper takes these statistics, like all

others, with a grain of salt. But it would be stupid to assume that all of them are wrong, that all these and dozens of other similar signs have no meaning.

The meaning is unmistakable: something is wrong.

And just as North Carolina blossomed when it was going forward in public education, just so it will wither as it lags in that field.

The proper agency to reverse the trend is the General Assembly. But that agency will act only when spurred by public opinion. If you and I, and other Tar Heels, want something done about the situation, and say so, often enough and loudly enough, the General Assembly will act. Otherwise, we'll continue to slip backward.

Negroes And Republicans

Kidd Brewer, candidate for lieutenant governor, urges appointment of more Negroes to state boards.

We have no quarrel with that suggestion. In fact, we think it an excellent idea — but with one reservation. A Negro should not be named to a public position merely because he is a Negro, any more than we should divide the membership of the State Supreme Court between men with blue eyes and men with brown. The only test should be the man's qualifications for the post.

Mr. Brewer's suggestion recalls a penetrating remark of the late Ralph Fisher, Transylvania Republican, a few years ago, when the agitation first became strong for giving Negroes more representation on such boards.

"Fine!" said Mr. Fisher. "I'm all for it. But what about Republicans? Nobody ever suggests, you know, that North Carolina Republicans have any representation at all on these boards". And he went on to add that there isn't a Republican supreme or superior court judge in the state, no Republican county board of education, no Republican county superintendent of schools, etc.

The contrast is a commentary on our consistency.

Edward B. Byrd

Edward B. Byrd took his citizenship seriously. Whether he was casting his vote at the ballot box, attending a precinct meeting, or serving as chair-

Stat Magazine Cites Macon Attractions

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following from the last issue of The State magazine.)

Up in the Cowee Valley near Highlands amateur rockhounds dig for rubies — and finding them. So far the gem fang have been coming in flocks of dozens, but because of the growth of rockhunting and publicity given the old Cowee mines, it is expected that hundreds will find their way to the region this season. The "boom" is spreading throughout western North Carolina.

The State is confused about the location of the ruby mines. Instead of being near Highlands, which lies southeast of Franklin, they are a few miles north of Franklin, just off Highway 28. — Editor.

At least two landowners have opened up their farms to the ruby-hunters on a fee basis. You pay \$1 and dig all day, and keep what you find. Everybody doesn't find a ruby, but a lot of people do. One girl found a 25-carat gem reputedly worth several thousand dollars. Most of the

gems are pretty little chips of more modest value, but still worth mounting.

The Cowee ruby mine field was first opened about 1880 but as a commercial venture the operation was not especially successful.

Under this setup, though the mines pay handsomely. The mine-owner gets a steady income and the "miners" pay their own wages.

A recent story in a national magazine has started a flood of inquiries, and the mine-owners, Weaver and Carroll Gibson and Will Holbrooks, have been swamped with inquiries from people planning to come down this summer.

The story about the ruby mines is just a fragment of the larger story about the rock-hunting fad sweeping North Carolina — and a good part of the U. S. Up at Highlands recently Ed Poits said fully 75 per cent of the summer cottagers at that resort now were rockhounds. They have an active minerals club which plans regular expeditions to likely spots.

There was a time, said Ed, when

the summer people walked just for the fun of it, or for exercise. This hobby has been dying out for a long time, and was confined to the confirmed outdoorsmen.

It is coming back in the rock-hunting craze. The amateur prospectors walk miles and miles over old mine dumps or down stream beds.

Their rewards are specimens from the "mineral sample case" which is North Carolina. Rockhounds hoard, display and swap specimens just as stamp collectors do. Some of the things they find are precious or semi-precious stones and gems, and these they make into jewels. I am told that a gem cutter who set up business in Highlands grossed \$30,000 last year catering to this business. (The State probably refers to Archie Jellins. — Editor.)

U. S. 64, where a lot of this gem-hunting is going on, some of these days is going to be modern highway. Piece by piece it is being improved. All in all, I think it is the most varied and interesting highway in North Carolina.

Talking about Highlands—that town had an unusual windfall from the weather. It is the highest resort in North Carolina—over 4,000 feet—and when it gets cold, the visitors leave. But last winter it got so cold that the ponds and lakes all froze solid. The word spread, and skaters from all around flocked in to enjoy ice-skating. On week-ends, people had to open their homes to accommodate these unexpected "tourists." The skating season lasted for about two weeks, and Highlands hopes for another one next year.

In Highlands, William J. Trowbridge, manager of Kings Inn, has also taken over the Bascom-Louise. He plans a new restaurant to serve the guests of both hotels. He also is planning a swimming pool. The Country Club has added some new cottages and rebuilt the casino, useful for conventions and group meetings.

Highlands right now is proud of the fact that it has acquired two doctors — a surgeon and a general.