

7 Towns' Water Situations Told

—Continued From Page One

clerk, says Sylva wanted a filter plant for three reasons:

1. There were not enough storage facilities for water. (Sylva's new filter plant has a 1,375,000-gallon settling basin; until this was added, the town had but one reservoir, a 375,000-gallon tank within the corporate limits.)

2. The watershed lies high above the town and incoming water had pressures so high that mains frequently burst and faucets often leaked; when the filter plant was added, pressure reducing valves were installed to bring the pressure down to a desirable level.

3. The town wanted to use meters, but couldn't because unfiltered water from the watershed contained foreign matter which would cause meters not to operate.

So, Sylva put a filter plant on the watershed.

"Right now, our system is a dream," says Mr. Nicholson.

The town has \$20,000 annual revenue from water and expenses are \$9,419. For the first 3,499 gallons of water, a Sylva consumer pays \$1.25. There are no tap fees for getting onto the town water main.

During the most acute shortage in this region, the town always has had at least a million gallons in reserve, says Mr. Nicholson.

The Mead Corporation, big industrial concern at Sylva, does not use town water in its industrial process. Rather, it taps Scott's Creek which runs through the town and by Mead's front door.

Nevertheless, Mead is the town's biggest water user, running anywhere from a million to a million and a half gallons a month. This is used in washrooms, drinking fountains, and the like.

Mr. Nicholson says of Sylva's soft water: "You can lather anything in it."

He regards it as folly—regardless of where the water comes from and how clean it is reported to be—not to put a minimum amount of chlorine in it. "It's good health and I guarantee you, you can't taste it. We've got the best water in the world."

When Sylva built its filter plant, equipment for putting fluoride into the water was installed but has not been used. Fluoride is the controversial chemical which most health authorities agree retards tooth decay.

Sylva has customers outside the town limits on its water mains but recently declared that no new out-of-town customers would be taken.

Mr. Nicholson says Sylva's water system, without any expansion, can accommodate a big, new industry. "In fact, we think we've got one coming," he proudly relates.

DILLSBORO
Until 10 years ago, Dillsboro used a watershed. It was a long way to go for water—from Dillsboro to Cowee Mountain—but the

For Purpose Of Comparison, Here Are Franklin Water Facts

For purposes of comparing Franklin with its neighbor towns, here are some facts about the Franklin water system:

The town's water rate is \$1.50 for the first 1,000 gallons, five cents a hundred for the next 5,000 gallons, and four cents a hundred for the next four thousand. Business rates are the same as residential.

There is a tap fee of \$25 here, regardless of the size of the tap. Until last July, there was no fee. Water rates were increased at the time the fee went into effect.

Franklin has five wells and is digging a sixth. Its water is not filtered and not chlorinated.

Estimated income from water and sewage fees this fiscal year is \$36,000. For the first six months of the fiscal year, expenses have been \$8,427. That does not include capital expenditures. Interest on bonds, also not included in the expense figure above, will be \$4,310 for the entire year.

There are 25 or 30 water customers outside the town limits, including Franklin Hosiery Company, the system's largest user.

seige River. However, it draws none of its supply from there.

HAYESVILLE

Hayesville figures it's in good shape, as far as supply is concerned. What it needs is a new pumping system. Water Works Superintendent C. Earle Standridge says the system has to operate 11 or 12 hours a day.

The town is supplied by two springs. Nevertheless, Mr. Standridge would like to see a well sunk—"as insurance against an extra dry summer."

Hayesville is soft water.

It is chlorinated. It is not filtered. Income from the water system is \$4,500 a year. Rates are \$1.50 for the first 3,000 gallons inside the town, and \$2 for those outside. It is 50 cents a thousand for all over that amount.

The operator of a Hayesville tourist court says he has had several compliments on the town's water.

Mrs. Christine Prater, mayor, says, "There is no better water anywhere."

MURPHY

Murphy had an argument over watershed vs. river supply. An Atlanta engineering firm was hired to survey the water situation there.

The firm's report suggested that Murphy build a new filter plant on the Hiwassee River—the town already had an outmoded plant there. Use the river water, the engineers advised, to make up the difference between what the town's watershed provides and what the town needs.

There was a vote on a bond issue of \$190,000 last year, with the money earmarked for a filter plant. The voters approved it.

Two of Murphy's leading citizens fought hard for the watershed. One of those two still thinks he's right.

Lon Davis, operator of a woman's ready-to-wear shop, is convinced that an adequate watershed is available for Murphy, despite the fact that the engineers say there isn't.

W. S. Dickey, Esso oil distributor and the town's fire chief, gave up on the watershed idea when the engineers said it couldn't be done.

Murphy, a town of 2,500 population, was getting two-thirds of its water from the town-owned watershed on Marble Creek, with one-third coming from the river.

The old river filter plant was in such bad shape that six or seven parts chlorine were added to insure the safety of the water for drinking. (Usual rate is four or five parts per million parts of water, although it can be as little as 0.3 ppm or as high as 1.0 ppm.)

The Marble Creek watershed is 400 acres of fenced-in, unpatrolled land, several miles from town. Until recently, the water from it was not filtered and quite a bit of foreign matter ran into the water mains.

"The State Board of Health told us to start filtering the water from our watershed or close it up," says Town Clerk C. E. Johnson. "We have started filtering it."

Water from the shed is soft while that from the river is so hard that soda ash is put into it to give some of the qualities of naturally soft water.

With its bond money, Murphy is getting a new filter plant which will double the capacity of its present setup. Whereas, the old water ratio was one-third from the river and two-thirds from the shed, Mr. Johnson expects that situation to be reversed, once the new plant goes into operation.

Murphy's modern water system will take care of its needs for at least the next 30 years, the engineers estimate.

Mr. Johnson is hoping to have fluoride equipment installed at the plant and then talk the town board into putting the chemical into the water.

When complete, Murphy's water reservoirs will look like this: old filter settling basin, 85,000 gallons; new filter basin, 500,000 gallons; watershed dam, 1,800,000 gallons. The watershed will serve as a fire reserve, according to Mr. Johnson.

The engineers considered enlarging the watershed in Murphy but ruled it out because the available land would not provide enough water to meet the town's needs for the next 30 years.

There are some 780 customers for Murphy's water services. Water income is \$26,000 a year. Expenses are \$19,000.

Mr. Johnson is proud that he has put the town water system on a paying basis. He got the water rates raised two years ago from what he considered to be a ridiculously low figure. Now, a residential user pays \$2 for the first 2,000 gallons and commercial customers pay \$2.50.

Next in line for a raise, says the clerk, are water tap fees. Presently, Murphy charges \$12.50 for a half-inch tap, \$15 for a three-quarter, and \$20 for a one inch. Mr. Johnson thinks these should be in the neighborhood of \$50, \$75, and \$100.

When asked if he had any advice for Franklin, as it undertook to expand its water supply, Mr. Johnson said, yes, he had.

"Get in touch with an engineering firm that has had a lot of experience with small town water works. Get them to make

Moss At University For Church Meeting

The Rev. S. B. Moss, pastor of Franklin Methodist Church, was at Emory University last week for the annual Methodist ministers' convocation.

The meeting lasted Monday through Thursday.

Mrs. Moss and the children visited Mrs. Robert Walters, in Black Mountain. Mr. Walters is pastor of the Methodist Church in Black Mountain and attended the Emory meeting with Mr. Moss.

your survey. Then, be sure that their report gets wide publicity.

"Another thing I would suggest is that you get the State Board of Health's engineer, Mr. Blaisdell, to come to your town. Have a public meeting and let him answer questions. That way, everybody's happy; well, nearly everybody."

Among the people unhappy about the filter plant on the Hiwassee—old or new filter plant—were those who objected to cleaning up the sewage Hayesville dumps in the river up the way and then using the water in the town system.

ANDREWS

Andrews is a town proud of its water supply. Since 1908, the town has had a municipally-owned watershed. The shed lies only one mile outside the town limits, and is 600 acres in size. It is fenced. It is not patrolled.

Claude Angel, superintendent of water works, says Andrews has all the water it will need, at least for the next several decades.

S. J. Gernert, manager of Berkshire Mills, a plant outside of Andrews and a customer for the town's water, says when his firm considered Andrews it had an analysis made of the town's water. The study was made by a New England laboratory.

Berkshire officials were told by the laboratory that Andrews had the second most perfect water it had ever tested.

Andrews' population is slightly under 1,500 and the revenue from water service is \$16,000. The town has no figure for what water expenses are, but, Mrs. Zora R. Bryson, the town clerk, says income far exceeds outgo in revenues.

Three motor court operators interviewed by The Press at Andrews all agreed that the water is abundant and of good quality. Service station people say they have had no summer shortages. Rates for water at Andrews

are \$3 for the first 3,000 gallons. There are some 50 customers outside the town. They pay a flat \$2.75 fee.

Berkshire Mills uses 113,000 gallons a month, not a large amount. Its industrial process does not involve water.

ROBBINSVILLE

"We're unlimited in our water supply," says J. B. Cory, town engineer, for Robbinsville. "When we need more, we just add another creek to our watershed."

Rock and Bergen Creeks now are used by Robbinsville's watershed. Mr. Cory says another creek will have to be added within the year. A huge carpet manufacturing concern is moving to Robbinsville and will use quantities of water, according to the engineer.

The watershed is four miles from town. It is on Forest Service land. (Robbinsville is the only one of the towns surveyed whose shed is wholly on leased land; one of Highlands' two sheds is on federal acreage.)

That four miles of Robbinsville pipe was laid by W. P. A. labor in the '30's, says Mr. Cory, and at a cost to the town of only 35 cents on the dollar.

Though watersheds are thought of in terms of gravity flow—that is, no pumping required—Robbinsville does use pumps. There is not enough pressure to push the water to high points around town, the engineer says, so pumps must be used.

While Robbinsville thinks of itself as unlimited in water supply, nevertheless, it has had water shortages the past several summers. "We should have brought in another creek long ago," in the opinion of Mr. Cory. "But now at last, we're going to get around to it."

The town has no meters. There is a flat rate of \$2 in the town for a house with three faucets. Robbinsville's population is about 600.

"We have soft water here. We have good water. There's nothing like mountain water and visitors often tell us that," says Mr. Cory, a retired Nantahala Power and Light Company employee who in his retirement still does the engineering work for the town.

(NEXT WEEK: Highlands, Macon County's other town, has its own peculiar problems. The Highlands situation will be described in the third article of this series, to appear in The Press next week.)

Local Soldier Participates In Germany Game

Pfc. Ray DeHart recently participated with the 11th Airborne Division in "War Hawk", a field training exercise in Germany according to the Army Home Town News Center.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred DeHart, of Franklin.

The 20-year-old soldier is a rifleman in the division's 188th Infantry Regiment and has been in the army since June, 1954. He received his basic training at Fort Bragg. Prior to entering service he attended Franklin High School.

Brady Is Speaker At Hendersonville Jaycee Banquet

J. P. Brady, of Franklin, was guest speaker Monday night at the Hendersonville Jaycees' annual ladies' night and officer installation banquet.

The Hendersonville club also presented its distinguished service award that evening.

Mr. Brady is immediate past state vice-president of District I of the Jaycees.

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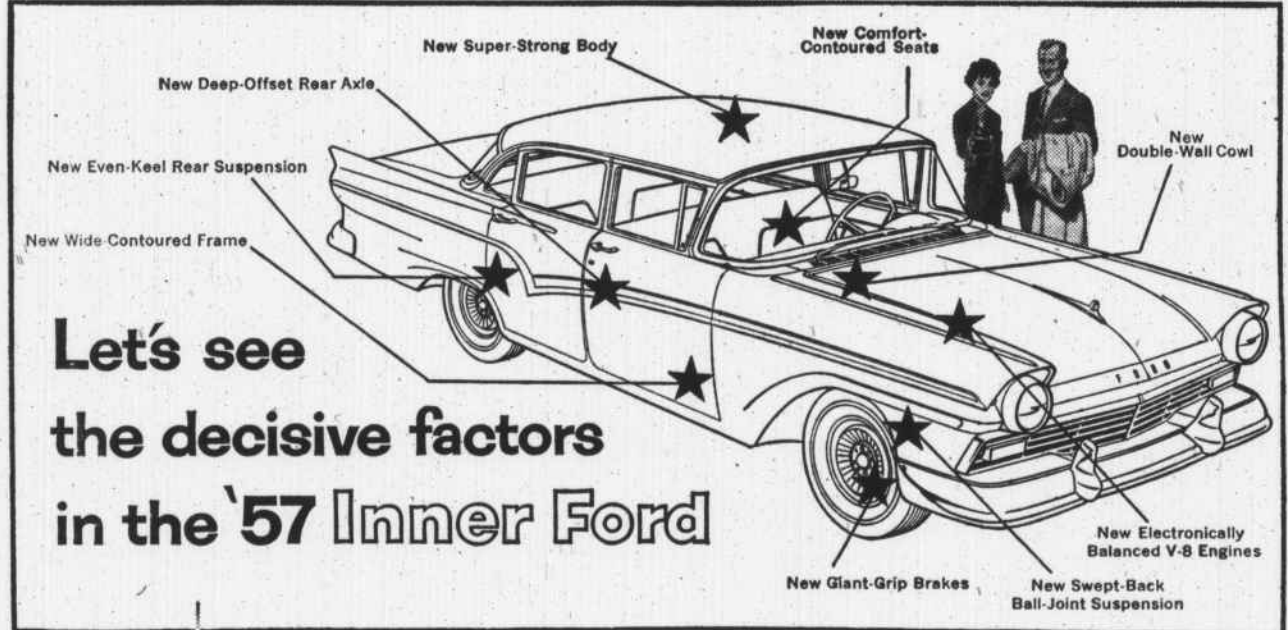
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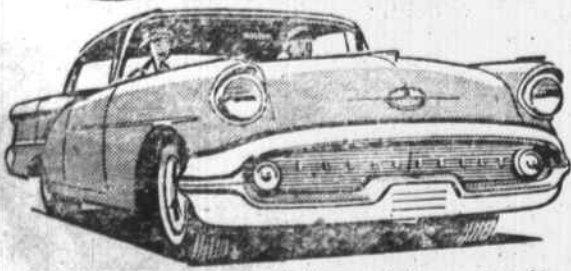
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