

EDITORIAL Weimar Jones Editor

Solution Over-Due

Franklin's mayor and aldermen are among the town's best citizens. They work hard and unselfishly; and for their services, they are paid little if any, and often less in thanks. Furthermore, they constantly face a series of nagging problems, all complicated by lack of sufficient revenue to do the kind of job they would like to do. The town officials have both our appreciation and our sympathy as they struggle with the problems of a growing community.

That, though, doesn't change something else. People who pay town taxes are entitled to services for their tax dollars; and among the services they have a right to expect, a primary one is abundance of good water—water that not only is pleasant to the taste and is pure, but water that is clean.

Well, the water some citizens are getting isn't clean, in the sense of being clear. Some users are getting water that is so rusty or muddy (or possibly both) that it is useless for washing clothes, that it regularly stains sanitary facilities, and that it often has a terrible taste.

Nor is the problem a new one. Though it may have become more acute, it has been with us for years. A solution is long over-due.

Now, obviously, those whose water is discolored aren't getting what they pay for. If the water supply were handled by competitive private business, the company whose water was rusty either would have to make financial adjustments with its customers or lose their business; and if it were handled by a public service monopoly, any state utilities commission worth its salt would require it to give good and equal service to all.

Haven't we a right to expect as much from our own town officials?

A Standard

We Americans are inclined to take our freedoms for granted. But if we are to keep those freedoms, we must remind ourselves, from time to time, that there is little freedom in most countries of the world; that we, ourselves, have not always been free; and that freedom is not an automatic grant—something we can be sure of. And what better time for such a reminder than the beginning of a new year.

We all know — but we sometimes forget — that freedoms can survive only so long as the citizenry are able and willing to govern. Democratic government is the only way to have freedom. But if it is to serve its purpose, it must function.

Ability and willingness is the freedom of opinion and ideas—unpleasant, as well as pleasant, and distasteful ideas, as well as those that are accepted.

One reason, of course, that the men who drafted the constitutional amendments Americans cherish is the Bill of Rights put the guarantee of a free press in the very first one.

Freedom of the press is not intended as a license for publishers — nor will it long last, unless it becomes that. Its sole purpose is to guarantee the citizen the opportunity to inform himself and to have access to new ideas.

The right of the press to be free is a right of the citizen, and it is the citizen who has the stake in keeping it free. That being true,

C. PRESS ASSOCIATION'S

A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Adopted In 1955

The newspapers of North Carolina, conscious of their obligations, and mindful of their own human imperfections, re-dedicate themselves to these principles which guide a responsible press in a free society.

I. Freedom of the press exists in a democracy, not for the power or profit or pleasure of any individual, but for the common good. The right of the people to know cannot be denied or diminished without endangering democracy itself. It is the obligation of the press to provide accurate, timely and complete information about all developments which affect the political, economic or social life of the community. Given the

facts, the people usually will reach wise decisions.

II. The trusteeship of a free press is the final responsibility of the publisher. He may share it, but he cannot escape it. The good publisher provides the necessary money and space for adequate coverage of the essential news and employs personnel of integrity, ability and sound judgment. He exalts accuracy above every other consideration, and insists upon prompt, full and even generous correction when errors occur.

III. Every citizen deserves the stimulus of a strong editorial page, on which the editor voices his own well-informed opinion clearly and forcefully, yet

the citizen has an interest in how well the press serves as steward of this freedom.

It is with that in mind that, in this very first issue of 1958, we re-publish on this page the Statement of Principle the press of North Carolina has set up as its standard. For the coming year, we re-dedicate ourselves to the task of trying to reach that standard.

'Homemade'

Time was when the term "homemade" was one of reproach. If an article were made at home, we admitted the fact apologetically; "it's just homemade".

Happily, there is evidence that today we are developing a more wholesome attitude on the subject. The do-it-yourself programs are one evidence; the growing popularity of handcrafts is another.

Obviously, some things can be made both more cheaply and better in a factory; but we are coming to realize that some can't.

The trend is illustrated in Christmas customs. Of all the gifts you received last week, which did you appreciate most? The chances are, it was something the giver made himself. Such a gift carries with it the assurance that the giver really wanted to give; it brings along something of the personality of the giver; and, in some cases, the gift is of a quality not to be found in a factory-made product. Where, for example, can you buy fabrics either as beautiful or as durable as the hand-woven things that many women in this area make and give?

The Christmas card is another area in which there has been a welcome change. More and more people are composing the greetings that appear on their cards, and not a few enterprising young people make their cards outright. Along with that has come a tendency to write a personal word of greeting to the particular person to whom the card is sent.

All of which boils down, it seems to us, to the fact that some of us, at least, are coming to recognize that the warmth and individuality of personality count for more than mere dollar value.

Letters

Enjoys Press

Editor, The Press:

We enjoy The Press so much. It gets better each year. I love the pictures you put in, too.

C. B. WILLIAMS

Mount Gilead, N. C.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Looking Backward Through the Files of The Press

65 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK (1893)

Knee pants at Wright's.—Advertisement.
Hon. J. Frank Ray left Sunday for Raleigh to be present for the convening of the General Assembly today.
Dr. W. H. Higgins, who has been attending the Dental College in Atlanta, came home last Friday for the holiday vacation.

25 YEARS AGO (1933)

Federal Judge E. Marvin Underwood has called a hearing in Atlanta on the petition of J. F. Gray, receiver of the Tallulah Falls railroad, for authority to file an application with the Interstate Commerce Commission to discontinue operation of the line. D. D. Rice and M. L. Dowdle, members of a local committee formed several months ago to encourage continuance of service over the "T. F.", are planning to go to Atlanta to oppose the receiver's petition.

Charles L. Ingram, Macon County representing in the General Assembly, and Robert A. Patton, the new senator of the 33rd district, left Sunday for Raleigh to be on hand for the opening of the 1933 session.

10 YEARS AGO

The Tallulah Falls Railway company has bought two diesel engines to pull its freight trains.
The movement to build a Highlands school gymnasium, chiefly from private funds, has already received considerable popular support.

fair. To be fair, it must be accurate and complete.

Honesty demands objectivity, the submergence of prejudice and personal conviction. Fairness demands regard for the rights of others. Accuracy demands courage, painstaking care, and perspective to assure a total picture as true as its individual facts.

The final test of every story, every headline, every editorial, every newspaper is:
Is it honest?
Is it fair?
Is it accurate?

To the end that they can more frequently answer these questions in the affirmative, the newspapers of North Carolina adopt this statement of principle.

To be true, a story, together with its headlines, must be honest, and if it is not honest, it must be

"No, I Don't Trust Him Either—But He Has A Point"



Strictly Personal By WEIMAR JONES

That trip Mrs. Jones and I took to Puerto Rico last month was a vacation — the first long one we'd ever had. So we took it easy. I got so lazy, in fact, that after a few days, I found it exhausting to so much as raise my hand. (I did manage to get together enough energy, three times a day, to raise it to my mouth a few times.) And because it was a vacation, I forgot newspapers and newspapering.

So I gathered no startling statistics and arrived at no profound philosophical conclusions about what I saw; in fact, I didn't once take a note.

I did come back, though, with the memory of some interesting experiences, none of them new, perhaps, to the many people who have traveled to far places, but very new indeed to me.

First, though, let me set the record straight on two or three points:

Contrary to my own dire prediction, we were not seasick — not even once. We were "shipwrecked" — but, contrary to malicious reports published in this newspaper during my absence, I was neither steering the boat nor wearing Bermuda shorts at the time. And I did wear those much-advertised walking shorts.

Well . . . I wore them once! For, like all good wives, Mrs. Jones has the facility of seeing things exactly as they are. And when I climbed into my brand-new Bermudas, she must have seen how I actually looked; for, after one look, she wouldn't consent to my even taking off the tags.

"Maybe you can return them. Anyhow, one thing is certain: You'll never have any use for them in Franklin!"

Well, I asserted my head-of-the-house prerogative by angrily stalking out on deck, tags and all, and lounging, self-consciously, in a deck chair for a little while. Then I sneaked back inside, took 'em off and put 'em away. And that was that!

A series of mishaps made it look like we weren't intended to take that trip — and when we hit rough weather, we wondered if we were intended to get back.

In most respects, though, we were extremely fortunate. First, in a delightful visit with Dr. and Mrs. Cecil W. Mann, who went all out in taking us everywhere, to see everything, in the amazing city of New Orleans. Next, in being shown all over Puerto Rico by two Haywood County persons, Mrs. Kathryn Robison, manager of a shoe factory there, and A/lc Charles Leatherwood. Finally, the very experiences that seemed untoward were the most interesting things that happened.

Besides, we hit a lot of luck. Just a little while after we'd started the 100 miles down the Mississippi River from New Orleans, for instance, the ship's captain, bluff, hail-fellow-well-met, and young, called to us from the bridge:

"Come on up here and help me get this ship out of the d—river". And so we had a grandstand view of what was about to happen.

We knew nothing about the width or the intricacies of the river channel at that point. But even landlubbers like us could see, just moments later, that the ship and a heavily-laden barge, being pushed upstream by a tug, were headed toward each other. We held our breaths. Then it came; we both saw and felt it.

An instant later, the barge, cut loose by the tug just before the collision, was moving out toward the middle of the river, turning end to end, like a child's swing when the ropes that hold it have been twisted and then released.

"See whether there's any damage", the captain ordered.

A moment later came the answer:
"She's got a hole in her side big enough to throw a horse through . . . right at the water line."

So we turned and went back up the river, to the dock we'd left a little while before. And there we sat, for seven days and nights! And while we sat there, the moonlit nights, we'd picked our sailing date for, passed. The moon rose, those nights, as usual, but not over the ocean, or even the Mississippi, but over the endless wharves and warehouses and assorted other grimy buildings on our side of the river. It was the one really serious disappointment of the trip.

There were compensations, though. For one thing, I found it fascinating to watch them load the 10,000 tons of cargo (of every description) our freighter carried. And since they had to unload the holds where the damage occurred before they could start repairs, and then had to re-load them afterward, there was plenty of interesting activity, day and night, just below us.

And, once the repairs were complete, we saw something we'd never seen and probably never would have seen but for the accident — a professional diver, with all his equipment, go down, time after time after time, to inspect every part of the ship below the water.

The second experience, said to be unusual in this area at this time of year, was what the ship's officers called a gale, but what to us was a storm; in any case, I don't ever want to see any worse storm. You'd look down at the water and see, just beyond the nearest swell, what is properly called a "trough", but what looked to me more like a valley — a little like Wayah Valley as seen from the top of the Bald. And if you managed to keep from rolling out of bed at night, it was because you were lucky — and braced yourself; not because there wasn't abundant opportunity for such athletic feats.

It was, though, the most magnificent thing I've even been permitted to witness. And as the water, picked up by the wind and thrown the 30 or 40 feet up to our deck, burst into spume, the colors were indescribably beautiful — mostly blues and greens, but occasionally a full rainbow. They

reminded me of the colors in the soap bubbles I blew as a child.

That weather experience, worthwhile in itself, was doubly welcome, because it gave contrast to the summery days and incredibly smooth seas on the return trip.

Incidentally, I had left home thinking water was water. Well, I learned better. There's the muddy water of the Mississippi, the greenish water of the Gulf of Mexico, the blue-green of the Atlantic, and the blue-blue of the Caribbean. And at one end of Puerto Rico, where the Atlantic and Caribbean meet, not only is there a difference in the colors; the waves from one come one way, those from the other another. You actually can see the line where the two bodies of water come together.

Then there was our first night in Puerto Rico.

It has been said that the Lord looks after children and drunk people. I think you might add another group — those who go off on vacations, as we did, without making elaborate plans.

On our ship was a couple from Chicago who knew exactly what they were going to do, each day, and had made hotel and other reservations accordingly. When the delay came, they were miserable; feverishly, they began radioing for new reservations, trying to salvage something from a trip they were sure was completely ruined.

Well, foolishly enough, we hadn't given hotels a thought; didn't know even the names of any of them. (What we did know was we weren't going to the swank American hotel in San Juan of Chicago friends were headed for; we were sure of that, because the rate was \$25 a day!)

We ended up at an ancient place someone had recommended. The outside was so unprepossessing, we hesitated about going, but we decided to take a chance.

Once inside, it was a little being transported to a castle old Spain; the most charming place we'd ever seen. Beautiful, in many colors and patterns; 12- or 14-foot ceilings, air of old but unmistakable elegance.

When we were taken to our "room", it turned out to be a suite, even to its own balcony. And just outside, looking down the corridor, floor-to-ceiling arch, picture of a sunlit lagoon, beyond that, the white of the breakers. (Our fashions wouldn't have been conspicuous in such an unmodern place; we wouldn't have exposed them for any amount of time.)

Just below our balcony was a beautiful old world union Protestant day night before two Maconians, at home, who had been in but Spanish

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