

Is a Paper Devoted to the Upbuilding of the Sandhill Territory of North Carolina

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CHESTER O. BELL

Chester O. Bell, County Auditor, was unanimously elected Commander of the Carthage Post of the American Legion at the last meeting.

Mr. Bell served with distinction throughout the World War and the trouble with Mexico, previous to the "Big Time." He went to the Mexican Border as a private and returned from France as a First Lieutenant. He had the remarkable distinction of being the only lieutenant in the 30th Division to be recommended for appointment to an infantry school of arms for training as divisional instructor, this honor having been conferred upon no one under the rank of major before that time.

Mr. Bell is also secretary of the Carthage Masonic Lodge and secretary of the Sandhill Shrine Club. He is an alumnus of Wake Forest College and Georgia Institute of Technology.

Mr. Bell's service record follows:

He was a member of the National Guard, and was called into service June, 1916, as private, Company "G," second N. C. Infantry; transferred to Company "A," 2nd N. C. Infantry July, 1916, with rank of Sergeant; served on Mexican border as 1st Sergeant, Company "A," 2nd N. C. Infantry. On outbreak of war with Germany, stood examination and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant and assigned to 119th Infantry, Machine Gun Company; served with Machine Gun Company of 119th Infantry throughout the entire war, being promoted to 1st Lieutenant before going to France, and serving as Company Commander after reaching France until wounded in action in September, 1918.

Was detailed to Infantry School of Arms, Ft. Sill, Okla., 1917, and after completing course was awarded certificate of Divisional Machine Gun Instructor.

Mr. Bell is better known in this county through his work as county auditor. His success in establishing Moore county on a systematic financial basis and the savings he has made the county since he came to Carthage have made him one of the most prominent among the official force at Carthage. Under the direction of the board of commissioners he expects to accomplish still more in simplifying county financial affairs and he will be heard from frequently as the days go by. The auditor's office at Carthage has an open door, information for everybody and the utmost cordiality for every visitor.

American Federation at El Paso has fight on to oust carpenters' union with 350,000 members from the federation.

The turpentine and rosin output for 1923-24 was \$36,718,745, and for 1921-22 only \$24,586,360. Part of this increase was due to improved methods of turpentine trees, introduced by U. S. Forest Products laboratory.

LOW ATTENDANCE RATE IN SCHOOLS

Moore County Children Make an Inexcusable Record

To The Pilot:—

There is nothing connected with the Government of our county that is as important or as expensive as our schools. All our people are interested in the amount of taxes we pay, but as a business proposition what we get for what we pay is more important than what we pay. Everyone interested in the progress of our county should be interested in our schools, because we believe that intelligence makes for progress.

Now, what we get from the taxes we pay for schools depends on two things—efficiency of the schools and the attendance of the children of the county on these schools. The most of us, by showing our interest and helping wherever it is possible, can improve the efficiency of the schools of the county, and we can certainly improve the attendance, and we are writing this because we want to appeal to those interested in the advancement of the county and interested in getting value received for the money we spend for schools to use their influence in improving the attendance.

There are 5,172 white children and 2,950 colored children, according to the census for the school year 1923-24, entitled to attend the public schools of Moore county. Because of the fact that some of these are in other schools or colleges, some have quit school for good, and others because the children themselves or their parents are not sufficiently interested to see that they even started to school, we had only 3,053 white children and 1,922 colored children enrolled. As stated above, there were quite a number of these children who were in school elsewhere, some of them married, and some of them because of their health unable to attend, but we are forced to believe that of this number—3,147—that did not even attend school for one day, there were a good many that should have been and might have been in school regularly.

But this condition is hardly as bad as the one we want to call to your attention next, for while there were 3,053 white children enrolled, the average daily attendance was only 2,148, or about 70 per cent of the enrollment and with 1,922 colored children enrolled in our schools, the average daily attendance was only 1,229, or about 64 per cent of the enrollment. We think it is fair to call attention to the fact that there was an unusual amount of sickness in our county last year, which made these figures worse than an average, but we know that there is not a big difference in the percentage averaged for last year and for years in the past. In comparison with the one hundred counties of the state, Moore stands sixty-first as to the attendance of her white children and sixty-seventh as to the attendance of her colored children, and when a small, water-logged county like Dare can have an attendance of 87.6 per cent for her white children and 80 per cent for her colored children, this is not a very enviable position for the county to occupy.

This is the reason we have employed an attendance officer, and this is the reason that we would appeal to our intelligent citizenship to take an interest in improving these conditions. An old philosopher once said that it did not make so much difference where we stood as which way we were going—and let's everybody help—the children, parents, teachers and welfare officer, in the year 1925 to place Moore county nearer the top in the school attendance reports.

The above refers to all the schools in the county, but the state superintendent of schools gives the figures for the fifteen smallest special charter schools in our state—and it happens that our county has three out of the fifteen small special charter schools—

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SEEING THE PEOPLE

(BION H. BUTLER)

Brewer and I went over to the county seat Monday. This seems to be a habit that is growing on us. Everybody we run afoul of over there told us Happy New Year. But not a mother's son of them said anything about a cork screw. Carthage is funny in some things. However at the present time they are not thinking so much about the makings of a Happy New Year as they are about Governor Morrison's conversion. Just to illustrate we went in to the commissioners' office and the one thing that seemed to be on foot there was the problem of how to make the income spread out thin enough to cover the demands made on it in all directions. Pro bono publico and citizen and those fellows were trying to show the commissioners where money should be applied to various things and the commissioners were listening and Mose McDonald had that winsome smile at work and John Wilcox was following it up with another one, while foxy Dan McLaughlin was keeping his eye on an old moss back from out the road, recognized by everybody as Taxpayer.

I don't mind telling you that old Mr. Taxpayer was getting a lot of attention. And where ever any new proposition came before the commissioners old Taxpayer raised his long bony finger and the commissioners noted the movement and the citizens sitting around nodded their heads in approval. Taxpayer met a good many of his friends Monday at Carthage. The road commission was in session up on the third floor. They also had some visitors. Seemed to be about the same family type. Citizen, Pro Bono, Voter. You know them. But over along side the door was old Taxpayer, and every time anybody proposed a new road with trimmings out in Hoophole township or Possum walk, old Taxpayer bit down on his tobacco, and the commissioners looked at each other, and everyone of them directed the attention of Citizen and Pro Bono to old Mr. Taxpayer, whose chilly influence was felt there as well as down stairs.

Down in the office of the school superintendent the venerable Mr. Lawhon, John McQueen and the others were struggling with the job of helping the children of Moore county to a better chance, and old Taxpayer sat like a spectre at the head of the table, a kill joy here, the same as in the other places. Over in Bell's office the auditor seemed to be the only man who had a hip lock on Taxpayer. Evidently Bell is not much worried by the old geezer, for in that department he has to step up with his toes to the mark. Mr. Bell is looking after the taxes, and trying to see that every man who should pay taxes pays his share so that those who are willing to pay are not obliged to pay more than their share. He is also endeavoring to see on the other hand that Taxpayer gets value for the money he pays and that none of it is lost or wasted. We talked with a good many people over at Carthage, Monday, and no matter what the theme we started with we didn't go very far until this question of taxes was the main topic. The sentiment seemed to be that when Governor Morrison stepped on the reverse gear of his flivver he just about set the woods afire. And it looks to me as if old Taxpayer is going to have the floor this year and insist that before we go much farther in raising taxes or bonded debt we take stock of the situation and see just where we are headed. If the rest of the state is like Moore county the coming session of the legislature is going to make a big hit if it goes mighty slow about going ahead. The people we talked with want to know where they are before they turn on the gas again. And when they start again they want to know they are started right.

STORE COMPANY MAKES ADDITION

Little River Company Takes Lakeview Store and Lakeview Mills

The Little River Store Company announces this week an addition to its chain of stores by taking in the Lakeview store at Lakeview. This gives the company now three stores, one at Vass, one at Lakeview and one at Southern Pines. This adds materially to the strength of the organization, although in the recent past they have been working together, as the owners of Lakeview store were stockholders in the Little River company. And the management of the two concerns has been the same. This also brings the Lakeview Mills practically into the organization of the Little River Store Company, as the stockholders here again are of the two concerns.

The Lakeview mills will continue to manufacture their specialties of whole wheat flour and water ground corn meal in which two products they are building up a business that extends over a wide territory. The mills will be operated under their old name, doing entirely a manufacturing and wholesale distributing business. They handle several lines of flour and feed and have built up a big trade.

The Little River Store had become one of the strongest mercantile institutions of the Sandhills although organized only a few months ago.

With the three stores they are handling such a volume of trade that they have the advantage of buying in car load lots, which not only gives the best possible prices, but it very largely reduces the work of handling that is a feature where stores buy in smaller quantity. Mr. McCrimmon, who is manager of the stores says the business has been gratifying from the time the company was formed and that plans are on foot for broadening out further this year. The standing of the men who compose the organization gives it a high rating with the people.

JUDGE McIVER AS A POET

J. Alton McIver, clerk of the court and judge of the juvenile court, has published a little collection of poems on Christmas. Anybody who knows the genial official, who is far more of a Santa Claus himself in a quiet way than his official status would indicate, will realize that the Judge was liable to break into poetry. His verse is wholly Christmas. It doesn't reach very far out to cover the universe or attempt the impossible. It just appeals in a neighborly fashion to those who are his friends, and whose friend he would be. The Pilot has known Judge McIver a good while. It is perfectly willing to add this new occupation of poet to his virtues, for the only way he could be a poet would be along a Christmas line, a friendly sentiment for somebody—

"An ancient judge dispensing good."

Road between Smithfield and Selma to be paved.

CANNER ADVISES YELLOW PEACHES

Our Varieties Too Soft For Market He Says

To The Pilot:—The past peach season has forcibly directed public attention in the Sandhills to the large part that peach growing holds in the welfare of this region. Also, we see a limit to the amount of peaches that can be shipped. Accordingly, when we consider the many acres bearing in Georgia and coming into bearing in North Carolina, we wonder and wonder—and decide wisely to refrain from planting more shipping peaches. Is our development then at an end? No, we hope; but where are we to turn? "Can them, preserve them, make ice cream, England wider markets," we hear. Investigation shows a limited market and a sufficient supply for each above suggested, disposal of our present varieties.

Canned peaches offer an immense market for Yellow Cling varieties, but not for free-stone varieties. The market demands the best appearing peach in a can just as it demands the best appearing peach sold fresh. In view of this, Sandhill residents must no longer delude themselves that present varieties can be sold extensively canned. Our fresh peach is a beauty; our canned peach must be a beauty. Such calls for the yellow color and firmness found in Clings only.

Yellow Cling peaches must be planted. For them canned, there is a year round and an unsurpassed wide market. Recently, the California Packing Corporation let a contract for the erection of a cannery building 360 feet wide and 790 feet long. California will have a wider market for Clings. 50,000 acres of Cling peaches in California; 5,000 free-stones peaches here. California has Elbertas, but finds Clings better; therefore, the Yellow Clings and Yellow Clings in California. We must start on Yellow Clings.

The grower with Clings is fortunate. They are late in ripening and can be shipped after the market has recovered from Georgia's crop. Clings are yellow and will command a good price; yellow Slappers sold high last spring when there was a broken market for white peaches. The whole South has no peaches when Clings ripen and its markets are open. Cling trees are very vigorous and in some districts average 500 bushels to the acre. Cling peaches do not become soft as quickly as free-stone peaches. The market cannot fall so low as the free-stone market, since the cannery assures a minimum price, which probably will be as high as the average price of shipping peaches in the future.

Orders have already been placed with the Cumberland Nursery for some Clings. More are expected. Indications point to a price of \$2.00 a bushel for Clings sold free in the state markets when free-stones in the heavy season sell for \$1.00 lower. The first 200 acres put into Clings ought to be extremely profitable. With Clings, the cannery will be in a position to block glutted markets.

North Carolina wants home canned peaches. However, when a can is cut open, a yellow Cling is expected. Phillips, Tuscan, Wal'on Orange, Levy, Peaks, Pelora, Cling varieties must be planted. Fruits grown on the eastern coast of the United States seem to be better flavored than fruits grown on the western coast. We have an opportunity to see 50,000 acres of peaches in the Sandhills instead of 5,000; but they must be Clings for canning.

The country north of us has too short a season to grow Clings. Our hills produce better fruit than does Georgia. We have developed shipping peaches. Now, we must try Clings. \$40,000,000 is the value of the canned peaches sent from California each year. Are we going to bring part of that here? Yes, talk Clings, plant Clings. We must try Clings.

Wm. M. KETCHAM,
Carolina Canning Co.