THE PILOT

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THE TAIL-END OF A GREAT STORM

The showers of Monday cleared the air of a smoke cloud that had been more or less fitfully hanging over this section for a couple of weeks, but which several days ago reached a climax that was the outskirts of the greatest smoke and dust cloud the United States has seen in many years, if it was ever equalled at any time. This vast cloud was greater in the North where it reached from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic ocean, and covered most all of the North from here to the St. Lawrence river, much of the cloud laden with smoke, ashes, and dust, a covering some three miles thick, and carrying millions of tons of sediment. In some places the settling dust clogged the roads, houses were blackened with it, the ground was drabbled, and at times the darkness required drivers to keep the lights burning on their cars in the day time.

The whole North was swept with fires, from the Rockies east to the Hudson and the Delaware rivers, and to make matters much worse the winds that blew gales from the scene of the fires carried dust and ashes in quantities that made the air a soggy saturated mass.

Here in the Sandhills we had the smoke of our own fire, but with it was the fringe of the great cloud that swept from the West. The picture here was one of somber magnificence for a considerable time, but from what the papers and the people of the North say it was unrivalled as well as terrifying up that way. One estimator said that more tonnage of material was moving overhead in the air than was aboard all the freight cars moving on the railroads, for the load in the sky was an unbroken mass two or three miles thick, and covering the entire area all the way from Wyoming and Dakota to the Atlantic and over all of the North.

THE END OF AN EVENTFUL LIFE

As the night closed for Charles B. Grout last Saturday an eventful life in the story of Southern Pines reached its end. Starting with the qualities that go to make up one of the finest men ever known in this section Mr. Grout was in the embryotic settlement of Southern Pines with the first of those bold spirits who undertook to develop here a village and a center of human activity, and he had an active finger in practically everything that tended to further any logical proposition. Half a century his contact has been at work, and in all that time there was no hesitating hour until age laid a hand on his shoulder and compelled a modification of his activities. Grout was here with that early group that included Patrick, Stebbins, Clarke, Dr. Swett, Sadelson, Von Herf, and who began at once to plant vineyards, build homes, experiment with orchards, establish various business institutions, and they were a great group of pioneers and intelligent workers. Southern Pines is a monument to their energy and business tact, to their progressiveness and their integrity and good citizenship.

Personally Charles Grout was one of the most likable of men. He early set up a business on the main street of the village and built himself one of the prominent houses up the street toward Manly. His trade reached a desirable volume for his methods were clean and his relations with his people kindly. He was an excellent type of that sort of man that has given rise to that old time name of gentleman. When the bank was projected in Southern Pines Grout became its active head, and his name gave character to the institution. Every new thing that came up with a promise for the common good found a backer down at Grout's feed store. It is probably safe to say that no man ever lived in this community who had so completely the esteem and confidence of the whole people and so little criticism. It is hard to find a man who ever said a mean word of Charlie Grout or who ever heard him say a mean word of any other individual. He had the cleanest slate in this part of the footstool, and those who have known him through his years of life in this section have been richer in his friendship than if they had gold or great possession, for the friendship of an upright man is beyond all compare.

SENATOR REYNOLDS GIVES SOME FIGURES

The Congressional Record of last week contained an interesting page presented by our own Senator Reynolds, which gives some startling information for his peaceable constituency down here in North Carolina. The occasion was the return of Mr. Insull to Chicago to jail, and at the same time the commotion made by the hectic doings of Mr. Dillinger and the whole nation in the chase after him. Senator Reynolds says he still believes in the law enforcement authority of this great government, but he gives a knock-out blow when he presents his figures on our crime records. We are a crime-soaked people, stacking up about 3,000 kidnappings a year, 50,000 robberies, 40,000 burglaries, 100,000 felonious assaults, an everage of 1,000 murders a month every 45 minutes, and we have increased our murder rate 350 per cent in 35 years. To offset the crime it appears that in 1926 the chair and the other 11,925, out of 12,000 murders 75 offenders went to the gallows or like Old Mother Hubbard's dog, got nothing. That same year London, which has one murder to every half million people, had 17 murders, against our 50 murders for every half million people. We murder fifty times as many people as is done in London. In 1926 the murders in this country were one-tenth as many as all the killings in all the wars this country has been engaged in from the Revolution to present including the world war. The only real killer that is at all a rival to the murderer of the United States is the American automobile, but it is a social instrument, and we don't count its thousands of fatalities.

Racketeers, robbers, arson and other crime bills amount to about seventeen billions a year, making war look like a little boy's game of plunder, from which it would seem that if we are to allow murder and robbery and loot and all the trimmings go on, it is small matter whether we fool over wars or not. They are only chicken feed in the great game of life, and we may as well tell Japan to take her ships in off of the Pacific for we don't want to play those childish games in the back yard. We are going to join with the Dillinger chase and the real games that put hair on your breast and make your muscles swell up until they split your coat sleeves. This is a great nation, but you got to eat plug tobacco, and pick your teeth with a bowie knife and drink blood if you play.

Grains of Sand

Dry North Carolina note:

The State Highway Patrol reported that 126 persons were arrested on highways in North Carolina last month for drunken driving, the largest number of such arrests in any month since the patrol was organized three years ago.

Capt. Charles D. Farmer issued the report showing 736 persons were arrested on various charges, including 213 for driving without licenses and 24 for reckless driving. Patrolmen gave drivers 5,082 warnings during the month as they traveled 128,299 miles.

It finally rained and Harrison Stutts and Will McNeill report a rush for seeds this week.

Candidates for the Legislature are pretty quiet on the sales tax, auto drivers' licenses, etc. The voters would like to hear from them.

CORRESPONDENCE

CANDIDATES VIEWS SOUGHT

Editor, The Pilot:

While serving as County Chairman on "The Emergency in Education" so many people asked me the platform of our aspiring legislators, that I would be glad if you would ask them to state their attitude towards better educational facilities in your next issue, may 25th.

Another thing we would like to know, what is their stand on the Sales Tax?

—MRS. J. M. Guthrie.

Cameron, May 14, 1934.

PRAISES HOSPITAL

Editor, The Pilot:

You may use this communication as a basis to say in The Pilot this week that I am again on foot and able to look after my farm and other business and am again able to resume my post on the Board of County Commissioners.

I left the Moore County Hospital on April 30th, the 20th day after being operated on, kept my bed one week and have been up since, considering the seriousness of the operation I consider this a remarkable recovery and speaks highly for the efficiency of the staff, of whom I can not speak too highly.

—E. C. MATHESON.

Eagle Springs, May 14, 1934.

THE LIBRARY'S NEEDS

Editor, The Pilot:

I was shocked, and frankly rather ashamed, to find that the Southern Pines Library is so badly in need of funds that it has become necessary to reduce the hours to one morning and one evening a week, suspend the buying of new books, dispense with free memberships for school children, and, probably, do without the services of Mrs. Fisher as librarian during the summer. Perhaps in the past I have taken the library too much for granted. Apparently I accepted it like the gentle rain from heaven, which falls alike upon the just and the unjust. Only this, it appears, is going to be a dry season. Having lived most of my life in places where public libraries are supported from town funds dependent on taxation, I did not fully realize how small a group of people, relatively, has given its time, interest, money and books to supply Southern Pines with library advantages. Perhaps others have not realized either.

Of these advantages there can be no question. For a town of this size, the library is singularly well managed and well equipped. Mrs. Fisher is always ready to suggest, to welcome your suggestion, to choose books for shut-ins who cannot come in person; if you have not been there lately, you will be surprised to see, even in these parlous times, how many good new books are on the shelves. Winter residents of Southern Pines have appreciated the facilities offered them, and have shown their appreciation in tangible terms. Naturally anything which makes our winter guests more willing to come to Southern Pines, and more content to stay, is of value to the business and social interests of the town.

There is also the matter of the library's direct service to the Southern Pines schools. Last year free memberships were available for all children below high-school age; for high-school students there were fifty-cent memberships, with special arrangements for supplementary reading lists in science, history, art and literature courses. Between November and May of this year, I understand that the library, from its dwindling funds, has spent $22.50 for books specifically for use in high-school courses. In addition, it has lent 250 volumes to be used without charge at the school itself. These books have, of course, had the hard and constant wear of text books; when they are returned many of them, perhaps most of them, will have to be rebound. The bill will be, probably, somewhat over $100. Such expenses as these in many towns are met by the schools, whose funds, again, are supplied by taxation. Since we are not taxed to maintain our library, it seems only fair that we should do what we can to support it.

After all, most people can afford a dollar for membership. And may I add that a five-dollar membership carries the right to take out all the books you like for a year without further charge?

—RUTH BURR SANBORN.

May 15, 1934.

"PRETTY RAW DEAL"

Editor, The Pilot:

I am saying what I have to say before the primary so that some thin-skinned, narrow-minded politician won't say I'm grinding my own axe. What I have to say is in the interest of fair play and justice.

If the truth were made known to the public about this one act of the present Board of County Commissioners not one of them would be renominated by their own party. I refer to their method of reporting favorably the proposed Hemp Sanitary District. In the first place, the law was not complied with in the petition of freeholders. The law calling for two-thirds petition of freeholders when in truth and in fact the commissioners actually had less than fifty-one (51%) per cent rightfully signed. In spite of the objections of County Attorney, Mr. Hoyle; in spite of seven affidavits alleging fraud in the procurement of certain names on the petition and in spite of a great many in attendance before the commissioners, pleading with them not to recommend the district which would plunge the Hemp community deeply in debt and increase taxes in and around Hemp, the commissioners recommended favorably to the Department of Health in Raleigh the creation of the District. In the first place, there are not more than ten families in Hemp who could afford to pay for installing equipment to use a public water works. To install the plant would take more than a third of the valuation of all the property in the proposed district, considering the present depressed conditions. The beauty of the Hemp community and the reason it has grown so in recent years is the fact that there are no town taxes to pay. The Hemp Silk Mill was, of course, left out of the proposed district, the only establishment really able to pay tax.

The commissioners' recommending that this little community be plunged into debt, in spite of the failure to have two-thirds petition of freeholders and in spite of affidavits alleging fraud in procuring many names already on the petition is nothing short of a political move of the rankest brand. Overriding the Legislature, using rulings of the Attorney General's office to further the matter and the method used to take away the rights of property owners, is enough to make a fair-minded man shudder.

The entire matter was rushed over the heads of property owners, with the sole view and purpose of creating a job for a certain political gang, a few of the "Ward Heelers," as Tammany would put it. This is only a part of what has actually taken place but I do not have the space nor time here to tell it all. As I said before, if the truth were known not a single member of the present Board would be renominated. A County Commissioner has no business playing politics after he gets into that position. He is there to serve the people and the County as a whole. The people in this County don't get the truth about matters. The present Board has practiced a rank brand of politics even in the drawing of jurors for Court service. This is bordering on tyranny and other things that smell unto high heaven. If a man does a fair, honest job of governing, let him stay in office; he is entitled to it. After a man is elected to public office he should serve those who voted against him just as impartially as those who voted for him. Setting in motion something that will put a mortgage debt on a person's property without due process of law, is a serious matter. We all favor progress but no one ever mortgaged himself out of debt or spent himself into prosperity.

Up to the present time about the only thing that can be said about the action in regard to the Hemp Sanitary District is that it was a pretty raw deal.

—H.F.SEAWELL, JR.

Carthage, May 14, 1934.

NIAGARA

I. P. Turnley is spending a few days in and around Cameron this week.

Mrs. Luella Reynolds, Mrs. Hatton and Mrs. Welch spent a day or two in Charlotte the past week.

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Spaulding, who have been pleasant guests here for the winter season left Saturday for their home in Boston, Mass.

Miss M. A. Williams left Tuesday for her summer home in West Orange, N. J.

Mrs. E. B. Franklin, who spent the winter here, left the first of the week for her home in Freehold, N. Y.

Mrs. D. J. Pierce of Cameron spent a few days in our village first of the week.

Mrs. W. H. Chatfield and step-son, Clayton, who spent some time here left on Tuesday for their home in Brownville Junction, Maine.

After several weeks' absence the Rev. C. R. Dierlawn filled the pulpit at the village church Sunday. Special music by Mrs. Marble and little daughter and a choir from Manly added much to the services.

NINTH OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES

FROM THE BACK SEAT

By DR. ERNEST M. POATE

Why not discuss Literary Trends today? After all, I've got to talk about something . . . And as regards this particular Trend, unless I hurry up it will be all over with, and I might as well have saved my time.

The Trend to which I refer is that represented by the Hard-Boiled Boys: like Dashiel Hammett, and that other chap who always made the postman ring twice; for fear he might barge in onto something that would shock him, no doubt. I mean the brilliant young exponents of what one might call the B.-B. School. And not air-gun shot, either. More metaphorically, one might refer to these gentlemen as the slums which have grown up beside the Hemingway.

Isn't that one a nifty? And I made it up all by myself, too.

These are the gents who delight in the "good old Anglo-Saxon words" which you can be pinched for printing. Their characters are—as one might say—out-spoken. They believe in calling a spade not merely a spade, but a stable-fork.

Even so, in reading their productions one senses a certain lack. Such ladies as are accustomed to say to their gentlemen friends, "You're such a xxx" (look in the book: "you'll find the word printed in full there, but I shan't use it.)—Well, what I mean, they wouldn't stop with that. Probably what they really said was, "You dirty xxx, you're such a xxx-xxxed xxx." If you know what I mean.

That is, even in these emancipated days, one can't print quite everything. Imagination still has some play.

That being the case, it seems to me you might as well leave them all out, since you must leave out most of them. Smutty words, I mean. (This rhetorical construction is known as "Aposiopesis" — scattering periods about without any regard to sentence formation. I'm quite good at that. And some day I intend to try doing a "Zeugma"—if only I can find out what it is.)

The "Adventure" magazine used to reason that way, and still does, as far as I know: That the reader can fill in all gaps just as well as he could fill in most. So they always print it like this: ".. .. .. it to . . . ." said he. "You're a . . . . . ed . . . . . ing . . . !" Or something of the sort.

After all, every tenyear-old boy—and most of the girls, too—have heard all those words: the ones the B.-B. boys print, and the ones they leave out. You can find them scrawled on the walls of freight houses, livery-stables (when they had them) and various public retiring-rooms.

Authorities recognize only seventeen smutty words, anyhow. (Though a few include xxx, making eighteen: and Schmallhausen regards xxx and xxx as colloquical, and therefore I recognizes only fifteen.) These everybody knows: he doesn't need the B.-B. school of literature to teach him.

Wherefore I suggest this arrangement. Let the B-B boys print a brief glossary, in the back of their novels: it could be on a perforated page, with all the smutty words there are arranged in order, and numbered. Then, in the body of the book, they could just use references.

"Why, you . . . . (2)," for example. ". . . . (5) . . . . . (3) you to . . . . (7)."

Or, if preferred (for the sake of variety), it might be written like this:

"You dirty six-nining twelve!" (says the heroine to the boy friend.) "I'm going to knock your five-threed head off, you six-seventeen."

Thus, ordinarily respectable folks could read the book through without offense: the free souls could use their imagination and probably fill in the gaps quite as well as the authors.

While those few who lacked an ordinary common - school education could take the reference-numbers and look in the back of the book and get absolutely everything in the line of Freedom of Expression.

Everybody else could tear the glossary page out when they bought the book. If they bought the book.

I think this is a grand idea, and I offer it to the ten-minute egg school of authorship free. (Though if anybody wanted to send a small check—or even a large check—as a free-will offering, purely a recognition of my outstanding services to Literature, it can be done. Address me care of this newspaper: and be sure to send Post Office money-order, New York draft or cashier's check. These personal checks fly back and hit you in the face sometimes, plus one-seventy-five protest fees.)

Anyhow, it seems to me a very silly notion that one can't give an accurate, realistic picture of life without using a dozen-odd short and dirty words—when the language is chock full of words. So many that not even the most erudite author can hope to know them all. It shows a lack of the creative imagination: or so I think.

Not that smutty words do much harm, if any. We've all heard them before. They are merely vulgar, displeasing—in bad taste. There are plenty of passages in books recommended for the young as being "sweetly romantic" which are so nasty-nice as to do very much more harm to imaginative youth than crude, blunt smut possibly could.