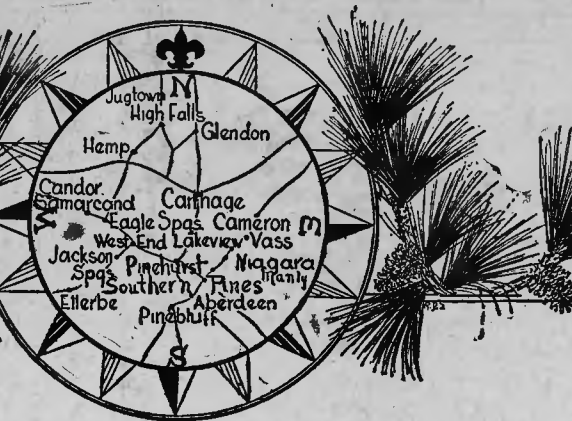




THE PILOT



Struthers Burt's Telephone Call Baffles Rotarians, Who'll Pay You to Solve It

Fake Accident Call May Mean War Savings Stamps to Readers of THE PILOT

Struthers Burt, famed novelist and Southern Pines resident, was guest speaker at Friday's Rotary luncheon meeting at the Highland Pines Inn. The Rev. Tucker G. Humphries said, in introducing Mr. Burt, "I offer no apologies for the brevity of my introduction of the speaker. The radio networks announcers when introducing an eminent person of national reputation say, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Blank.' So I have excellent precedent and authority, knowing our speaker's reputation, to follow suit and say, 'Members of the Rotary Club, Mr. Burt.'"

Mr. Burt related a story that has all the trimmings of a detective thriller, except there is no Holmes to offer an answer or a solution. A mysterious telephone call starts it off, a probable kidnapping injected, a trip to the West Indies, a rendezvous with the FBI. Here in part is Mr. Burt's story:
"In midwinter of 1938, I had to go to the West Indies, and Mrs. Burt was going with me. We were to leave on a Monday from New York, and Mrs. Burt left here on Friday to visit our son and daughter, who were in school in New York, over the weekend. I had an engagement here but planned to join her Sunday night.
"Around 7:00 o'clock Saturday night the telephone rang. It was a collect call from New York. Thinking it was Mrs. Burt, I accepted the charges. I remember it was snowing heavily. (Something wrong with Mr. Burt's memory. He must have meant when he got to New York.) But it was a man's voice, cultured, and of a pleasing tone, and a noticeable foreign accent.
"Mr. Burt, this is Dr. Blank of the Cornell Medical Center. We have a young man in here that was hit by a truck late this afternoon. There's nothing to identify him except a piece of paper with the name written on it, Struthers Burt, Southern Pines, N. C. I believe, too, he is a Southerner."

"Naturally, I just knew it was my son. But when he described the youth as being short, and rather stout and dark, I was tremendously relieved. It wasn't my son.
"I told him that I would be in New York Monday, gave him the names of some friends of mine there, and offered anything I could do to help identify the youth. He thanked me, and hung up, but not before I heard a curious chuckle as the receiver clicked.
"In New York, I could find no Cornell Medical Center, and was referred to the Cornell Hospital. They told me no one there had been hit by an automobile or truck. And the doctor's name I tried to pronounce didn't fit any on their staff.
"At lunch with a friend, I told him what had happened. He was excited as my story ended. Two weeks before he had received a telephone call, and it was his niece who had been hit by a car, and the same conditions applied, but she was visiting in a middle Western city and that day they had received a telegram from her, so they knew she was all right. He turned it over to the FBI as his niece was wealthy enough for a kidnapper to think about.
"My friend suggested that with my children in New York alone, a kidnapping plot might be in the making and I should call the FBI.
"Well, I discounted the kidnapping theory, as did the FBI. They told me to finish my trip, they would investigate, and I needn't worry about the kids.
"When we returned from the West Indies, my first stop was at the FBI. If they had discovered anything they were disconcertingly polite about not revealing it. I didn't bother to tell them that I had run into the same incident in the West Indies, and before we left New York I bumped into people who had had the same telephone call, the identical fake accident story. I was hopeful as we arrived here at home that I could get the matter off my mind. But I didn't for at a luncheon party, there was one there who had had the fake ac-

(Continued on Page 8)

BASKETBALL

Southern Pines High School basketball teams will play the Pinehurst girls' and boys' teams here this evening, Friday, January 28. The first game is scheduled for 7:30 o'clock.

Pinebluff Welfare Group Gives Report

Outstanding Program of Work Is Accomplished; Funds Show an Increase

That 1943 was a successful year for the Pinebluff Maternity and Welfare Committee is shown by the treasurer's report for the period ending December 31... a success both from the standpoint of service rendered and financially.

Available cash January 1, 1942, was \$270.54; net receipts from Golden Rule Shop Sales, \$836.40; cash donations, \$165.22; candy sales, \$7.00; interest-reserve account, \$10.53; cash loaned in 1942 and paid in 1943, \$45.20; cash advanced for repairs to Clinic absorbed by rent less electric bills, \$13.99; paid by landlord at termination of lease, \$110.64, making a total of \$1,459.52. Disbursements: Maternal health including transportation, medical and surgical aid, layettes, maternity and infant clinic, sundries, \$146.83; general health, including transportation, medical and surgical aid, venereal disease clinic (taken over by county April 30), eyes and glasses, sundries, \$257.18; economic welfare, including transportation, food and milk, clothes and shoes, old age assistance, accident relief, sundries, \$84.42; community betterment, \$4.37; management, including stationery, postage and telephone, \$46.69; cash loaned in 1943—not paid, \$21.55; cash reserved, deposited in savings account, \$410.53; total, \$971.57. Available cash December 31, 1943, \$487.95.

Couple Arrested in Royal Muse Robbery

Officers have arrested the soldier and young woman wanted in connection with an investigation into the robbery of Royal P. Muse, prominent merchant of Carthage, who was found dead in his car near the Carolina Hotel in Sanford Sunday morning, January 16.

The woman, booked as Ruby Minor, 24, of High Point, is being held in Moore County jail. The soldier, whose name was given as Pvt. John W. Lyle, was still at Mackall yesterday, but it is understood that he, too, will be lodged in the county jail.

Highlights of the woman's story, according to information given out by Sheriff C. J. McDonald, are that she and the soldier got up with Muse between 9:30 and 10 o'clock Saturday night and he agreed to take them to Southern Pines. A few miles out of town the soldier searched and robbed him then put the pocketbook back in his pocket. With Muse on the back seat asleep, they drove to Sanford, where the soldier put Muse, still alive, on the front seat and they went to a hotel and spent the night. From there they went to Southern Pines and Aberdeen, spending Sunday and Monday nights in the latter place.

An autopsy was performed on Mr. Muse and death was attributed to a heart attack.

A REMINDER

This is a reminder that the Southern Pines High School Athletic Association is sponsoring a scrap paper drive and that on next Monday, January 31, school children will canvas the entire town to make collections. Everyone is asked to save just as much paper as possible and to place it, tied in bundles, on their front porch or other convenient place. No scrap paper will be collected after Monday, but donors may deposit it at the old Southern Pines Garage office.

The PILOT Wins 2nd Award for General Excellence at Meet

Gov. Broughton Presents Awards Made By N. C. Press Association

At the Friday luncheon session of the North Carolina Press Association's annual meeting, held at the University in Chapel Hill last week, THE PILOT was awarded second place for general excellence among weekly newspapers in its classification in the State. The awards, made by the Association, were presented by Governor Broughton.

In this group, the first award, a twenty-five dollar war bond, went to the Sylva Herald. THE PILOT'S award, which was accepted by the editor, is a handsome certificate that is now being framed to be hung in the office. Honorable mention in this group was given the Sandhill Citizen of Aberdeen and the Spindale Sun. James Boyd, publisher of THE PILOT, Bessie Cameron Smith, editor, and Pvt. Daniel Boyd attended the luncheon. QM 3/c James Boyd, Jr., an alumnus of the University, spent the time visiting friends in the college community.

Gregg Cherry Will Speak at Bond Rally

American Legion to Stage Big Event at Aberdeen School Thursday Night

A big Fourth War Loan Bond Rally, sponsored by the American Legion, will be held in the Aberdeen High School auditorium next Thursday night, February 3, at 8 o'clock with Gregg Cherry of Gastonia, past department commander of the American Legion, as special guest speaker. There will be other speakers from Camp Mackall and E. C. Stevens of Southern Pines, county War Loan chairman, will be on hand to give a lift to proceedings. A 13th Infantry Band from Camp Mackall will play.

There will be an auction sale of bonds in connection with which around \$100 worth of bonds will be given away.
If the Legion Auxiliary of the State raises funds sufficient to pay for five hospital transport planes, a goal which it is trying to accomplish, the women will have the privilege of naming the planes. Anyone buying a bond may request that the sale be credited to the Auxiliary.

RETURNS TO HOSPITAL

Mrs. L. V. O'Callaghan, who has been ill for some time, returned to Duke Hospital the first of the week for further treatment.

Southern Pines Building and Loan Plays Prominent Part in Development of Town

Institution Organized in February, 1922, Has Two Hundred Fifty Members

By Charles Macauley
The Southern Pines Building and Loan Association is approaching its twenty second birthday... it having first seen the light of Carolina sunshine in February 1922, and entering into business the following month. The lusty infant soon outgrew its swaddling clothes, attaining its majority last year showing every promise of reaching an honored and prosperous old age.

Started in our booming years of the early twenties the institution gained such a firm foothold under the careful guidance of its officers that it successfully stood as a rock through the continued stresses of the depression years from which it emerged stronger than ever. As a purely local institution financed by the money of its shareholders, it has played a prominent part in town development by enabling many of these shareholders to erect comfortable dwellings or to modernize older houses and in financing contractors to the same end. With the impressive totals of these loans, \$800,372 in all, \$670,422 has been repaid leaving outstanding loans of \$118,952 secured by first mortgages on property located in or near Southern Pines. Of the very few foreclosures instituted by the Association no loss has ever been made on the properties they have been obliged to take over. Starting this year, another progressive step forward has been made by the Association, which has changed from the customary serial loans to the direct reduction loan plan, a feature which has become popular with loaning institutions during the past few years.

Escaped Prisoners From Camp Mackall Stage Bold Hold-Up

Draw, Sub-Machinegun on Vass Lumberman and Take Bookkeeper's Car

Three escaped Army prisoners from Camp Mackall, armed with a sub-machinegun, held up B. S. Futrell and his bookkeeper, Miss Blanche Sturdivant, in the office of Futrell Brothers Lumber Company on Highway 1 in Vass around 7 o'clock Thursday night of last week, took the keys to their automobiles and left in Miss Sturdivant's car.

Futrell gave this account of the occurrence: He had been away from his office for a while and upon his return, saw three soldiers walking toward the rear of the grounds. He asked what they were doing and was told that they were on maneuvers. Thinking nothing more about it, he went into the office. Presently an automobile motor started up and Miss Sturdivant recognized it as hers. Futrell went out and found the trio in the young woman's car with the engine running. He asked what they meant and one of the boys replied that they were cold and had started up the car to warm by the heater. Futrell told them that they might go into the office and warm if they were cold, so they got out of the car, Futrell removed the keys, and the four went into the office.

Presently, as two of the men stood near the heater, the third drew a gun on Futrell with the remark: "You can see we mean business." The spokesman demanded the keys, saying they wanted to get to Sanford. Futrell's offer to drive them to Sanford was refused and he was forced to hand over the keys of his and Miss Sturdivant's cars. Before leaving the office they pulled the telephone wire loose, then locked Futrell's car and drove away in that of Miss Sturdivant.

The soldiers did not see the telephone in an adjoining office, so as soon as they were gone Futrell notified officers and an all-night search was begun which ended Friday morning when the three were caught in Raleigh after they had asked a Raleigh officer the way to the airport. They had abandoned the car about five miles from the city. The three were returned to Camp Mackall in an Army truck with armed guards.

The prisoners are said to have forced two rides before taking the Vass car and to have ordered their last benefactor to remain in his car at the rear of the Vass office until they got transportation.

They were listed at police headquarters in Raleigh as Staff Sgt. Zack B. Martin, Pvt. Thomas G. Malcolm, and Pvt. Russell J. Chaney.

Pvt. Willie McNeill Goes On Trial For First Degree Murder of Oscar Michael, Prominent Southern Pines Taxi Operator

Special Venire of 75 Summoned from Moore County; Other Cases

The trial of Pvt Willie McNeill, 23-year-old Negro soldier of Camp Mackall whose home is in Sanford, on a first degree murder charge in connection with the brutal stabbing of Oscar Michael, prominent taxi operator of Southern Pines, around 2:00 a. m. on the morning of November 2, eclipses in interest all other cases on this week's docket in Carthage. Judge Allen H. Gwynn is the presiding judge and Earl H. Gibson is solicitor.

Post War Planning Is Kiwanis Subject

Burt Suggests Units to Work for Needs of Each Individual Community

By Howard F. Burns
Struthers Burt, author, in an address to the Sandhills Kiwanis Club at its weekly meeting Wednesday at the Pinehurst Country Club stressed the importance of the club's appointing a post war planning committee to represent Moore County in order to prepare for the economic change that is most certain to come after the war.

The speaker explained that we will have various problems to solve in this county and each community should be divided into units; first, a Moore County Unit and second, a Pinehurst, Southern Pines and Aberdeen Unit to work toward a common end to fit the needs of each individual community. Pinehurst is an established winter playground, he said, while Southern Pines is more of a year round town. He recommended for the latter a number of well run apartment houses and small furnished homes. Aberdeen, on the other hand, is the business and industrial center of the Sandhills. It should go after certain specialized types of industry so as not to affect the resort industry of Pinehurst and Southern Pines. Mr. Burt recalled his listeners' attention to the fact that the Sandhills is one of the finest vineyard growing countries in the world and one of the few sections that can grow scuppernong grapes; that at one time grape culture was one of the principal industries of this county.

Mr. Burt stressed the importance of giving our men jobs when they return from the fighting fronts, pointing out that it would be a sad state of affairs to lose our men to other communities because of the lack of employment.

In conclusion, he said, "There are two sides to a peace. We are citizens of the world. We are no longer isolated. The people of this country must think in world terms. The other side of the peace is the domestic issue in which the people of this nation should give more serious thought to the important issue now facing the Congress such as the matter of subsidies, the soldier's vote and the tax issue." Mr. Burt declared that he did not approve of subsidies any more than Senator Bailey, but that we must have it to avoid inflation whether we want it or not. He further pointed out there is a definite lack of interest in these matters by the American public. We must have peace if we expect to preserve civilization, he said; we may not like the English and the Russians, but we must have intelligence and live in agreement with other nations as this country can no longer.

WARTIME PHYSICAL FITNESS INSTITUTE

A Demonstration Institute on Wartime Physical Fitness for North Carolina High Schools will be held in the Aberdeen school auditorium on February 2, beginning at 10:30 a. m. and closing at 2:30 p. m., County Superintendent H. Lee Thomas announced this week. Small groups of students and physical education teachers from each high school in the county are expected to attend. The Institute will be under the direction of Charles E. Spencer and Ralph J. Andrews of the State Department of Education, Raleigh, assisted by a woman physical education teacher from one or more of the following colleges: Meredith, Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, the University of North Carolina and Eastern Carolina Teachers College. Demonstrations will include the teaching of rhythmic, class organization, callisthenics, teaching of combatives, tumbling, games and sports.

McNeill was arraigned early in the week and entered a plea of not guilty. The Court appointed Attorneys U. L. Spence of Carthage and J. Talbot Johnson of Aberdeen as counsel for the defendant and ordered the Sheriff to summon a special venire of 75 men to report at 9:30 Wednesday morning.

Two jurors were selected Wednesday from the regular panel and ten from the special group. The Judge ordered a thirteenth juror and he was chosen from the special venire.

Hearing of testimony began Thursday and the trial will probably consume the remainder of the term. McNeill was arrested at Camp Mackall on Saturday of the same week that the murder was committed. The murder weapon, a paratrooper's knife, was found buried in the garden of his home in Sanford. After his arrest the Negro was confined under guard in the prison stockade at Camp Mackall until removed to State's Prison the following week.

John Howard, charged with burning a tobacco barn, was found guilty, with a recommendation of mercy, but sentence had not been passed Thursday morning.

Other Cases
Divorces were granted, effective upon payment of the costs, in the following cases: B. B. Thompson versus Gertrude Thompson, the plaintiff being awarded sole custody of the three minor children; William B. Zadorozny versus Catherine A. Zadorozny; Alphonso Joseph Symansky versus Rita Symansky, alias Rita Hansen.

Hugh Walker, Fred Perkins and Jack Perkins faced an old charge of breaking and entering the Stutts-Taylor Store in Vass and Walker was charged with larceny of a truck. A nol pros with leave was taken as to Fred Perkins. The other two pleaded nolo contendere. It appearing to the Court that the defendants had completed service of a three-year term each in a case tried in Hoke County, the causes occurring about the same time as those in the cases at hand, it was ordered upon recommendation of the Solicitor that any sentence be suspended. Each of the two was given 12 months in jail to work under the supervision of the State Highway and Public Works Commission, suspended for four years upon good behavior, abiding by the law, and applying himself to some gainful occupation.

FOURTH WAR LOAN

The latest report through Richmond credits Moore County with \$180,000 on the Fourth War Loan, which is approximately one-third of the county's quota. However, this report runs around two days behind the actual sales.

Southern Pines has raised about 40 per cent; Pinehurst, 75 per cent, and Robbins has reported \$15,000 on its quota of 79,800. Figures from other towns are not available. Chairman Stevens states that sales of the large bonds seem to be lagging, but that "E" Bond sales are better.

In Southern Pines there is keen competition between the Women's Division and the Stevens Office. Each day the sales of each are posted in Mr. Stevens' window on West Broad Street and many passersby stop to see how the race is going. So far, the women are \$7,000 ahead.