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THE AIRPORT PICTURE

"Too little and too late" has been the curse that has doomed many a good project. It will be a pity if it should prove the Jonah in the airport picture.

It is a complicated picture and supporters of quick and effective action in the current problem involving Piedmont Airlines should not minimize the difficulties. The lease of the field by the county to Resort Airlines, Inc., did not specify that the field should be maintained for the use of any but the local line and private planes. Therefore the extra expense that will be incurred by having Piedmont's big DC3 planes come in and leave four times a day, is a new factor to be dealt with. Resort will not pay it and Piedmont cannot; at all other stops on Piedmont's flights charges are paid by the municipally-owned fields.

A further complication is presented by the local line's inability, thus far, to be certified for scheduled flights.

There appears to be little doubt of local wishes: increased air service is considered an enormous advantage to this section from every angle. The industrial centers of Aberdeen and Robbins want the air passenger and mail service as much as do the resorts of Pinehurst and Southern Pines. That being the case, something will have to be worked out and the point is now that it shall be done quickly enough and amply enough to prove effective.

The general feeling appears to be that there might be a division of the costs between the county and the various townships, with the two resorts, perhaps, paying a larger share than the other towns. Another suggestion was that made at the recent commissioners meeting by L. C. Burwell that there be a change in the whole set-up. The county, Burwell suggested, might operate as well as own the field, leasing it under certain conditions to both Resort and Piedmont.

The more the problem is studied, the more conviction grows that the entire matter needs reorganization. With air travel growing, with the Sandhills also expanding in every direction, the future of aviation here and, specifically, the uses to which our airfield should be capable of being put, appear to be boundless.

This is too large a matter, too complicated a one for our commissioners to be expected to carry single-handed. It is too much for the casual enthusiast to be capable of deciding.

If the present concern over the Piedmont Airlines' application has done nothing more than reinvigorate our airport committee, it will have been worthwhile. But it is to be earnestly hoped that much more will be accomplished than that. The sum needed is not large: from \$3,000 to \$3,600 a year. That amount, shared around, should not put an excessive burden on any one section. It is this paper's opinion that we ought to go ahead and try it out on that basis for the coming year.

AUDITORIUM

It is indeed good news to hear that our school people have submitted sketches of plans for the proposed construction of a cafeteria, gymnasium and auditorium to the county commissioners, with their plea for sufficient funds to make these greatly needed additions to the school plant.

While nobody knows what the result will be, there is good reason to hope for favorable action by the board. Never neglectful of the needs of the schools of the county, they are fully aware of the special condition that exists here, due in part to the condemning of the gym-auditorium last year, and it is a fair guess that they will do all in their power to lend a hand.

As for the three needs presented, there is no division of opinion in Southern Pines as to their merit. Each one is a necessary adjunct of any good school; we have long felt their lack.

In fact, though the gymnasium and cafeteria are strictly school affairs, it looks as if the auditorium were in a different category, which might well bring it to the

close attention of the general public.

Our town sadly needs an auditorium, apart from any school need. There is no place here for concerts or plays; no place, any longer, for town meetings. There is no place where other large groups can meet such as Pinehurst possesses in the Carolina ballroom. This is a serious lack.

It appears to us that, when plans are being made for the school auditorium, consideration should be given to the possibility of its use in some of the above ways. There is no reason that we can see against it, and a great many reasons for it.

We would like to see a committee appointed by the mayor to meet with the school board and study the present plans with this end in view: to construct a school auditorium large enough and with facilities adequate to meet the varied needs which the town's life as well as the school's might demand.

It may be that the present school plans are adequate. It may be that there are some objections to the above suggestion, or that, if a combined building were to be constructed, it would raise the costs too much. It may be that the county set-up precludes such a project, but that appears doubtful, as most school auditoriums are definitely part of the town life and in frequent use for more than school purposes.

If there are valid objections, let us hear them. If there aren't, then let us see if we can't build the best school-town auditorium that ever was imagined by stary-eyed school-marm or proud citizen. For no one can deny that the town needs an auditorium and theatre about as badly as the school does.

G-H-DAY

Did he or didn't he?
This is the question which is harassing the minds of folks in the Sandhills this week.

On Sunday walkers scoured the woods in search of likely holes. It was whispered that sabotage was being planned; sentinels to be posted ready to block the exits at the first sign of emergence.

That night watchers were out observing the starry sky. Up until then the prayers for fair weather had been approaching the point of hysteria, now, suddenly, all was different.

"You don't think the sun will shine tomorrow, by any chance?"

"Well, the weather man says... but of course he doesn't really know. Look how wrong he was last Thursday."

Similar remarks were whispered back and forth. But still folks searched for encouraging whispers in the clear night sky. Not a cloud dimmed the stars. The groups dispersed and went to bed, to dream of horrible dark shapes emerging from darker holes, of the sinister Shadow starkly silhouetted against the gleaming ground. The dark shape bolted with a roar of horror, and with a similar roar the sleeper awoke to lie in a cold sweat, thinking of those forty days. Impossible, horrible to contemplate.

And then, fulfilling the worst prophecies, Monday brought the complacent sun, beaming down through ice-coated trees. It glittered on the frosty branches of the dogwoods till they seemed to burst into bloom. Against the evergreens, their boughs appeared laden with shining blossoms. In the tops of the pines, each spray was a sparkling halo.

Out in the fairy woods everything was ominously still. Here and there little tracks printed the white expanse; the round firm prints of the squirrels with just a brush of tail showing on the turns, fussy, sharp bird scratchings, the inane loopings of a rabbit or two. But not, not... praise be to Pan... the square pedestrian trail the searchers dreaded to see.

They looked diligently. Every mark was examined. Could this be it, could that? Slowly they shook their anxious heads. Not a sign of G.H. so far.

And that seems to be the way the matter stands, to date, leaving folks hereabouts in a state of horrid uncertainty.

Did he or didn't he come out on Feb. 2? That is the question. Because if he did... well, you'll know what happens then.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

"Phut!" said the downy, hanging to the frosty trunk of the big pine. He drove his sharp beak again at the ice-coated bark. "Phut!"

There was a good deal of plaintive melancholy in his repeated exclamation, but even more was there irritation.

"What the blinking blazes has come over this blamed place, anyway!" he croaked, "Here am I, hanging onto this slippery perch, hammering away for dear life... and I mean 'dear life', while the snow crackles around me and icicles slide down my neck... all

this in the great mid-south resort. What's the matter with this place... what's the matter with you folks..."

"Hold on now," a voice echoed up from below.

The bird squinted his head around and peered down his long nose. "And just who might you be? A polar bear, I suppose. Well, that's at least appropriate, if singularly useless, as far as I'm concerned." He turned back to his attack on the trunk.

The small chunk of white wood at the foot of the tree wrinkled her black nose in a gesture of supreme contempt.

"Polar bear!" she said. "Huh! I always knew a bird's eye view was a pretty silly business. I'm a Sealyham, 'dog', to you. This happens to be my woods and my tree that you are hammering."

"Oh, is that so," said the woodpecker. "Well, then why don't you do something about it. Get you an icepick and come up here for instance."

"What for?" said the Sealy.

"If that isn't like a dog," said the pecker happily. "Why, to dig the bugs out of the bark, of course."

"What for?" said the Sealy.

The bird gave a mad flutter of exasperation. "Never mind," he croaked, "Never mind. If you don't know without being told, just forget it."

The dog continued to gaze up at him. "You eat them, I suppose, or something horrible like that. Why don't you eat seeds, like other birds do?"

The bird's beady eye turned red with indignation. "And just how would I get seeds on a day like this?" his voice rose into a squeak of fury.

"You might fly round the house to where my folks have put them out or haven't you that much wit left after all your hammering?"

"W-H-A-T?" said the woodpecker. "Round the house, did you say? Lawd-Lawd-Lawd...!" and off he fluttered.

The sound of a terrific squawking and fluttering told the Sealy that he had arrived to claim his place amidst the other squawkers around the seed tray.

The Sealy walked carefully to the corner of the house and stood gazing in aloof dignity. There they were: juncos, two cardinals, a finch, a blue jay, chipping sparrows, of course, two nut hatches, a Carolina wren tweaking her long tail, a brown thrasher... a yelp from the quince bush drew attention: a robin, by gum. Early for robins to be coming around.

The Sealy sighed: What a place this is for birds, she thought, and turned away from the disgusting sight... just like a bunch of silly fluttering hens!

She dropped her black nose to the ground and followed the prints of a squirrel through the powdery snow.

GANDHI

The assassination of Mahatma Gandhi shocked the world in a peculiarly cruel sense.

We are accustomed through the long history of martyred heroes to see the good man fall; we know that others take up the cross and carry it on, the symbol of man's hope. But here, before our eyes was a living demonstration of the power of the spirit. In this time of crisis, when man's terrible reliance upon brute force imperils the very existence of his world, to see this good man go down has been a shattering experience.

The dramatic timing of this deed added to its impact. All over the great land of India, as word of Gandhi's recent fast had spread, men had stopped fighting; business had ceased, stock markets had closed, the very life of the nation had turned toward the little man in the white robe who had staked his life on his belief in mankind.

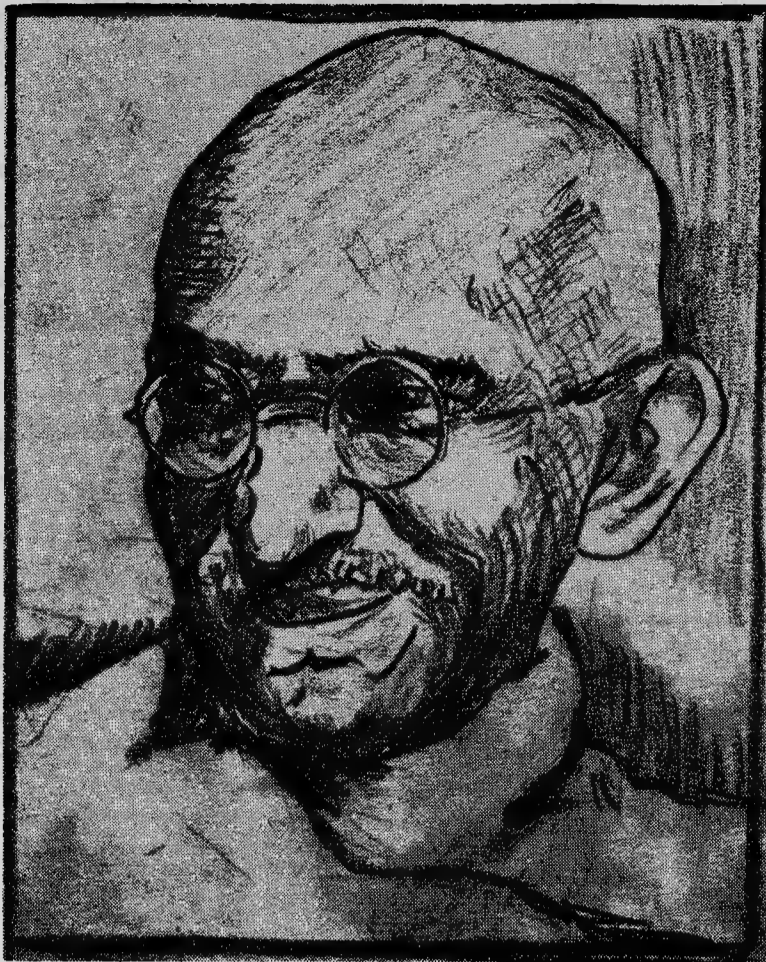
The world had watched and had taken new hope. Thoughts turned back to the story of this believer in non-violence, back to his law study in England, to his awakening in Africa to the needs of his people and the injustices of the rule of power. They followed him on through his extraordinary career with its twelve years in prison, its eleven major fasts, each undertaken for a compelling motive, each achieving its goal; then the salt boiling, the cotton spinning, symbolic of India's self-reliance and need of independence. The story culminates in the unbelievable relinquishment by mighty Britain of her Indian kingdom.

Tragedy followed: civil war between Hindus and Moslems. But, expecting it as Gandhi must have, saddened as we know he was, his indomitable spirit rose again and, by his latest fast, by the sheer force of his spirit, once more he caused the strife to cease.

Then came the assassin's bullet, and there can have been few who heard the news so spiritually strong as to remain unshaken. A terrible doubt struck the world: was this the answer? Could force, then, win?

Beyond all the talk of communism, of democracy, of totalitar-

Mahatma Gandhi



"It is dangerous to be too good," said Bernard Shaw when he heard the news of Gandhi's assassination. Churchill, King George VI, notables from every land expressed deep grief. The above sketch indicates the slain leader's quizzical humor, a factor in his close comradeship with his people.

The Public Speaking

The Editor
Southern Pines Pilot

Does Southern Pines know the joys of a community freezing plant? I live where one was installed during the war, as a safety box, more valuable than the one in the bank, to sustain our life. Each locker holds 200 pounds, and rents for \$15 a year. Come snow, come sleet, come thunderstorms, the electricity to the plant holds, and does not go off, like privately owned ones, and endanger all your garden prowess or poultry products. In privately owned boxes, I have had friends lose several years' accumulation.

The plant was started by public-minded citizens, and is now run by a commercial firm. One can buy meat wholesale from them, and pay a processing fee and have them deepfreeze it, butcher and dress it and put it in your locker. Last year I saved 30 cents a pound on all beef purchases. This method is the best insurance I know of against reckless living.

Do, Southern Pines, consider this well-tried and successful method of eating

A "dam Yankee,"
EDITH BAILEY DENT
Pinehurst

Editor,
The Pilot,
Southern Pines.
Dear Editor,

Upon reading last week's issue of your publication, I came across a letter you had printed, written by D. H. Turner, attempting to arouse the public's interest on a matter on which he is just 100 per cent misinformed. I have charge of the engineering and preliminary surveys on

ianism or socialism or imperialism, beyond all these questions or any others that face the world today lies the greatest question of all: the question of might versus right.

It is more insistent now than ever before, and this assassination of Gandhi places it squarely before us. Yet, as his death poses the question, we know that, just as clearly, his life answered it. For the spirit which animated this Indian, enabling him to accomplish veritable miracles during his life on earth, cannot be extinguished by an assassin's blow.

Whether his martyr's death will bring the peace he sought for India, or whether the Wheel in which he believed will turn full circle before the fruition of his dreams takes place, who knows. Perhaps it does not matter. But what does matter is that we shall banish the doubt from our hearts.

Firm in the knowledge that Gandhi's life was a victory for the forces of righteousness so can we feel sure that the funeral pyre by the river will be an enduring, brightly shining torch to light those forces on their way to certain triumph.

FREEDOM TO PRINT

water main construction in the towns of Sanford, Norlina and Ahsokie, all in North Carolina, which involves use of a lot of materials such as fire hydrants, pipe, steel, concrete and numerous other fittings.

Orders for these materials have been placed as far back as July of last year, all the way from Birmingham, Ala., to Chicago, Ill., with legally recorded delivery dates ranging up to 450 days on some items.

Maybe Mr. Turner can talk it up for me and get some action for me. I guess I'm just like the town board, I am not doing anything. I only spent about \$40 on long distance phone calls last week, trying to push things a little and get some more material rolling somewhere, somehow.

While in Richmond, Va., one day last month, I bumped into a Johns Manville salesman from Ramseur. He and I were talking pipe construction, and when he learned that my home was in Southern Pines, he mentioned the fact that he had just then, recently, been down and sold the town some pipe. But that doesn't mean it was delivered, it was only confirmation of the sale. Delivery and installation of this type of material is the No. 1 headache of 5,000 towns and cities just at present.

Yours truly,
STANLEY C. TOBIN
(For both Mr. Turner's and Mr. Tobin's information: yes, the town board did have its troubles, getting the pipe and hydrants. Ordered last June, they arrived six months later and are now being held until weather permits their laying. Winter, the board decided, is a bad time for tearing up the streets.—Ed)

jamin wrote a defense of a basic right. "Without freedom of thought," he said, "there can be no such thing as wisdom; and no such thing as public liberty without freedom of speech; which is the right of every man as far as by it he does not hurt or control the right of another." Benjamin, 16 years old at the time, went on into quite a distinguished career. His two hundred and forty-second birthday, which falls next Saturday, will be celebrated as part of "International Printing Week," which opens today.

For those of us whose occupations connect us with it, printing has an endless fascination. The very smells of ink and paper, the look of type in galleys and forms, have fond and enduring associations. But printing is important only because people like to read, and reading is important in a democracy for the reasons young Franklin gave. Printing remains, in spite of the radio and the motion picture, the primary means of getting at the facts one needs to make up one's mind. Its techniques have changed and will change, but its freedom is essential now as it was in 1722.

This freedom permits the publication of many things that had better not be printed. But democracy demands that with few exceptions the decision as to what is good and what is bad be made by the reader himself and not by censors. As Franklin himself said, in later life, "When truth and error have fair play, the former is always an overmatch for the latter."
(N. Y. Times Jan 11.)

VALENTINES

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