

THE PILOT

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"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep this a good paper. We will try to make a little money for all concerned. Where there seems to be an occasion to use our influence for the public good we will try to do it. And we will treat everybody alike."
—James Boyd, May 23, 1941.

Beauty Brings Them

It's a pity that some of the people around here who tend to turn up their noses at the idea that trees and flowers and natural beauty in general are important assets of this community did not take in the Garden Club tour last week. They would have been obliged to change their minds. For they would have seen more than 400 people who had come to our town from all over the state and beyond its borders for no other reason than to enjoy some of its beauty spots.

If they had gone on the tour they would have seen lovely sights and heard much favorable comment to make them proud of the attractiveness of this town, and they would have seen in action our Southern Pines Garden Club. Remembering what this organization has already done in planting the school grounds and other localities, they would have noted the fine job of promotion accomplished in bringing so many people here. The receipts from the tour will doubtless go for further town beautification.

It's a pity that the doubters didn't take a look at the tour and even more that no member of the town board or Chamber of Commerce took this opportunity to give the women of this organization the compliment and encouragement of their presence.

We submit that they deserve such recognition and we include the many who worked so hard at the Shaw House serving lunch to the visitors. The whole thing was an outstanding success. It proves that the beauty of our town is still one of its most important assets and is proof, too, that we have, in the Garden Club and Shaw House members, women whose public-spirited interest in their home town makes these groups outstanding as citizen organizations.

North On East; South On West

In choosing Easter Monday to start the one-way traffic trial the town commissioners have taken the bull right by the horns. Certainly if the plan works now, when the town is as crowded as it is likely to be this year, it will continue to work as the seasonal visitors thin out. Those who are pessimistic about the success of the idea will have the full weight of all possible difficulties right on their side from the start, with police, townspeople and visitors all learning together.

However, this newspaper is not on the side of the pessimists. We don't see why it went wrong here just as well as it has worked elsewhere. We think our people are just as quick to catch on to something new as any other people and that our town police force is entirely capable of handling the situation. Furthermore, the fact that the two one-ways of Broad Street are in view of each other, separated only by the railroad tracks, ought to make it easier. In most towns, you have to drive around at least one block before you can get going the other way; here you only have to cross the tracks. And that goes, too, for being able to park, reasonably near the store you're headed for.

People have been divided on this plan, of course. There has been a lot of discussion, most of it, however, pretty good natured. There are good sensible people on both sides of the argument. The fact that this is announced as a trial effort, with a three-month limit at which time it will be decided whether or not the plan is a good one, has reassured those who are opposed to it. That is certainly a very fair way of doing it and we believe our people will respond in kind. Patience is called for, and tolerance of each other and the other fellow; in fact, restraint all 'round and, especially, a light touch on the gas till we get used to things the new way.

One-way is starting as this part of the paper gets written; by the time our readers have it in their hands, we'll all be rolling up East and down West, for better or worse. We predict it will be for better.

Stop! Look! Listen!

Our hat is off to Vice-President C. E. Bell of the Seaboard Airlines' public relations office for the courtesy of his reply to the letter of a visitor in Southern Pines who complained bitterly of the amount of whistling his railroad's trains carry on at night. As we read the exchange of letters as reprinted in last week's Pilot, we made up our mind that Mr. Bell is a master practitioner of the slogan that the public is always right.

As to the question at issue of the whistling trains, we are moved to offer a few observations, and if they happen to conform somewhat to what Mr. Bell would like to have said and didn't, we imagine that will be all right, too.

So, with a bow in the vice-president's direction, here it is:

First of all let us say that we feel the utmost sympathy for the disturbed sleeper: sleep is certainly made difficult by the whistling, and we agree that some people are probably kept from coming here, or go away when they do come, because of the noise, but let's look at the thing squarely. If you were the engineer of Diesel, weighing a good many tons, at the hammer end of a train of sixty, seventy, eighty cars, weighing goodness knows how many more, coming through a town where the busiest street runs on both sides of the track with eight crossings, and where a considerable number of automobile drivers make it a practice to pay no attention at all to the signal lights, what would you do? Would you whistle or wouldn't you? Add to that the fact that quite a few cars and people here have been hit by trains, and the answer is pretty plain: you'd whistle and you'd whistle a lot.

We have seen cars cross the tracks in front of an approaching train time and time again. Ask any of the engineers and they will tell you that they are constantly scared out of their wits, coming through Southern Pines, by cars darting out in front of them. And it happens at night even more frequently, they say.

Now one reason for this is the old saw: familiarity breeds contempt; we get careless about our trains. But there's another one, and maybe something could be done about it that would help the situation. There are times when a train is dropping off cars and switching back and forth and the red signal lights are going, and yet you can cross in safety. So, those of us who live here get in the habit of creeping up close to the track to see if a train is really coming or if it's only an engine switching. Then, too often, even if a train is coming we think we can make it and we go on over. Perhaps if it were possible for a switchman to disconnect the signals at such times, it might get people out of the way of this sneaking across.

There are, it seems to us, several things Mr. Bell might well have pointed out and courteously didn't. And there's another. We have always felt that our town should carry out its part of the bargain made with the railroad when it promised to close the New York avenue crossing if the road would install signals at the other crossings. The road kept its promise but Southern Pines did not. Incidentally, Mr. Bell might also have pointed out that it would reduce the whistling to have one less crossing, a point also made in Mr. Ruggles' letter.

We appreciate what the Seaboard Railroad has done for this town. We think the way they have cooperated in putting in signals, in fixing up the station, in arranging to save our fine shrubbery, and in helping to promote this section has meant a lot to us and we're deeply grateful. We feel sure, now, that the road will do everything possible to abate the whistling, but we know, too, that it will always put safety ahead of comfort, as a railroad must. It has already, of course, changed the tone of the Diesel whistles to make them much less objectionable though we do not minimize the nuisance they still are as sleep-destroyers. However, if a town builds itself along both sides of a busy through railroad and then goes skittering back and forth across the tracks regardless of signals, we don't see what the railroad can do except whistle.

But there is something the town can do: it can cultivate patience and restraint. If nobody ever crossed the track in the face of the signal lights, the whistling would be unnecessary. A little education in not taking chances, and taking on our own shoulders a full share of the blame for the whistling nuisance is clearly in order. It will be another hard job for our already hard-pressed police force, but we would like to see a few people pulled in for crossing the tracks against the lights. Though we suppose the Law would have to jump over the train to catch them.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

The fiddlers came to town Monday night; also the guitarists, the banjo-pickers, and the bull-fiddlers, not to mention mouth-harp artists and, for all we know, jug-blowers, virtuosi on the saw, the triangle and other rare instruments. And did we say the drummers? Undoubtedly the drummers were there.

This passel of musicians turned up and tuned up at the Legion Hut and mighty sorry we were that we couldn't be there. We are told that everyone had a fine time and there was a mighty elaborate set of pigeon wings, sashays, do-si-does, and swing-your-partners when the folks cut loose.

One thing about the announcement intrigued us and we wish we might have been there to see how it came out. The entrance fees were set down as: "Couples \$1.25; Gents Sole \$1.00" and then, below, it said: "Ladies and Scholars 50 cents."

We've given this considerable thought and we are puzzled: how did they know? That is, how did the one who took the money at the door make up his mind? You could fix up an I. Q. test for the Scholars, maybe, but how about the Ladies? Ticklish business this. And why that difference in price? Ladies might possibly stomp and wear out the floor less than the rest, though that wouldn't be true of some we've seen in action in a square dance figure, but the Scholars, now: you can't beat some of these grinds for tearing things to pieces when school is out.

Yes, we regret missing that Legion hi-de-ho Monday night, though it would have been hard to decide whether to go in and cut capers with the folks or stay outside the door and watch them rassing with the Ladies and the Scholars.

Grains of Sand

It fell to our lot a couple of weeks ago to phone in to the daily papers a news story involving the name Stevenson . . . The phone connection to the News and Observer at Raleigh was poor, and the reporter at the state news desk had difficulty getting the name . . . Finally we gave up trying to spell it and said firmly, "Stevenson—as in Adlai!" . . . That solved the problem promptly, and we went on from there.

Speaking of Adlai, in whom we are much interested (his local connections are too well known for us to go into them here), we were amused by a picture in last week's Life which showed Senator and Mrs. Robert Kerr in their hotel room in Omaha, Neb., as the primary day closed bringing defeat for Kerr and victory for Kefauver in the presidential primary . . . These two were the big contestants that day, the only ones named (for Presidential nominee) on the Democratic ballot . . . Mrs. Kerr is shown glancing dismally at a newspaper . . . The paper's big headline concerned neither Kerr nor Kefauver . . . But Governor Stevenson of Illinois.

An odd happening in the Pilot

office last June has resulted in the boosting of the school bus activities fund by \$13.

Somebody left a canvas bank bag in the office containing 26 silver half-dollars . . . It was during the big rush for rooms and apartments which took place when maneuver preparations got under way . . . Soldiers were in and out of here all the time, hunting housing information, grabbing papers and scanning the ads, then rushing for a telephone . . . When the bag turned up we felt sure it must belong to one of these men, and that he would soon be back to claim it.

Nobody came . . . We ran several stories about it in this column and some classified ads . . . Showed the bag to banker friends and everybody else we felt might identify it . . . A PX officer from Fort Bragg heard about it and came to see the bag, but said it was not theirs.

We put it away in the safe . . . And the other day decided those were truly orphan dollars and a good home should be found for them . . . The school bus fund was, by general consensus, the best . . . So the 26 half-dollars were turned over to Supt. A. C. Dawson as the most anonymous gift the fund

could possibly have.

In the Mailbag: "Dear Piloteers: Each day I have hoped to drop in at your office, to thank you for the pleasure The Pilot has given me this past year. Each day something has prevented, so I enclose my check and Easter greet-

ings to you all. Sincerely, Juliana F. Busbee, Steeds." . . . Thanks, dear Lady of Jutown . . . We love hearing your renewal and Easter greetings, but even nicer would be that visit from you, so please keep it in mind and come when you can . . . It would make us very happy!

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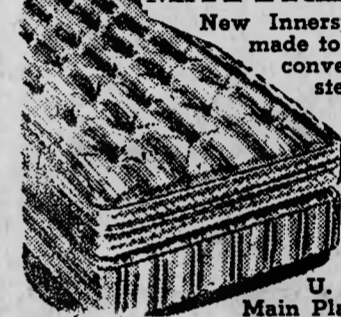
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LIKES BOOK REVIEWS

To the Pilot. I want to extend my congratulations for the inspiring and refreshing book reviews by Constance J. Foster.

May we have this interesting section continued as a permanent corner. Sincerely, Pinebluff. ANN GRAHAM.

TRIBUTE TO HOOVER

To the Pilot:

I read with much interest the report in your issue of April 11 of my purchase of a home in Southern Pines. In the past 45 years I have travelled a great deal all over the world, and I have found nothing more to my liking than the Sandhills of North Carolina for permanent residence, with the possible exception of the Karlsbad-Marienbad region of Czechoslovakia — now, unfortunately, "out of bounds" for the Western world.

Your report referred to my long association with Former President Hoover in the Department of Commerce, and in some of his many relief activities. Few Americans know how much of his life Mr. Hoover has given to humanitarian work, and I would say without hesitation that he is the foremost humanitarian of the 20th century. His outstanding attributes are humility and compassion.

I recall an incident in Lithuania in the winter of 1939-40 when the Commission for Polish Relief, the organization of which Mr. Hoover had inspired, was aiding destitute and homeless refugees who had fled before the advancing German army. A prematurely-old lady, in great distress, came to my office one day to say, in Polish, "God bless Mr. Hoover. He saved my life 20 years ago when I was a refugee in Eastern Poland; now he is doing the same for my children."

Relief from the U.S.A. to this woman, and to countless others in Central and Eastern Europe, always meant "Hoover Relief," although as a matter of fact it was never announced as such. By and large, the people of the United States seem to have little knowledge of Mr. Hoover's manifold and never-ending activities in the humanitarian field, but I believe he prefers to have it that way.

I had the pleasure of renewing acquaintance with him in New York only a week ago. Despite his 70-odd years, and his daily toil of 12-14 hours, he appeared to be in excellent health and spirits, though naturally somewhat depressed over the current Washington scene and the international outlook. He is now at work on the third volume of his Memoirs. The first volume (covering the period 1874-1920) was published about six months ago; the second came out this month; and the third volume, I understand, will probably be ready for the publisher by midsummer.

These Memoirs should be required reading for every student and adult in the United States. Not since Abraham Lincoln has any American had such a record of honest hard work and accomplishment to report. This world would have been much poorer but for Herbert Hoover, and, to me, it is amazing that a people so warm-hearted and generous as the American appear to have been so tardy in recognizing his greatness. It would have been a complete fantasy if Mr. Hoover had gone down in history as the man who happened to be at the helm when the world-wide economic blizzard struck in 1929, and it is interesting

to speculate on what might have been the course of history if Al Smith, a great politician, had defeated Mr. Hoover for the Presidency in 1928, and then been succeeded by Mr. Hoover in 1932. In that event, in my humble opinion, there would today have been no Russian menace, no staggering national debt, no reckless squandering of public money, and no rubber dollar. Respectfully, GILBERT REDFERN.

Pilot Commends Student Effort In Speech Contest

LaNelle Kirk won third place for Southern Pines in the district speaking competition of the World Study high school group which took place at Asheboro Saturday, April 5. The coveted first place, bringing a trip to New York and the chance to compete in the national contest, went to Ruth Rush of Asheboro, with Martha Sue Robinson of Biscoe in second place.

We note with pride this achievement by one of our students. While it would have been fine to have her come in first, we feel she did extremely well. But beyond that competitive matter lies the real benefit not only to our students but accruing to the community through their participation in this sort of study and contest. LaNelle is surely right when she says that individual understanding and assumption of responsibility is desperately needed to implement the foreign policy that will bring peace.

LaNelle enjoyed her trip to Asheboro and was enthusiastic in her praise of the winners. "They were really wonderful," she said. "Their speeches were splendid and their delivery couldn't have been better." While generously maintaining the superiority of the winning speeches, the local girl attributed part of her own failure to the fact that both winners spoke without papers or notes, while she had read her speech. "They knew their speeches by heart," she said, "and spoke easily and naturally. You couldn't help but be impressed."

LaNelle won the local contest, held at Weaver Auditorium the previous week on the subject: "Building World Peace; How to Combat Communism." After listing the various steps this country has taken to implement foreign policy, from economic and military angles, including the pacts entered into through the UN, LaNelle turned to communism itself, describing how it penetrates the minds of men, especially the poor and discontented. She spoke of the need of Asia and the grave danger that communism may gain a foothold there, through its appeal to the underprivileged masses. "We must help Asia," she said, "to create for its people a decent and hopeful life that will keep them from turning in desperation to the easy promises of communism."

In closing, the speaker stressed the role of youth in being willing to accept responsibility as future citizens. "We, the youth in America," she said, "hold in our hands the hope of the world and the fate of the coming years. Let's make that fate a strong union of all the countries in the world combined to promote an international peace and the material well-being of every human being, as God would have it to be. Don't let this be a dream; let's work together to make it a reality." —KLB