

# THE PILOT

Southern Pines North Carolina

"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.

## The Public Schools Must Be Preserved

During the recent Press Institute of the North Carolina Press Association in Chapel Hill, editors and publishers of daily and weekly newspapers affirmed their "belief in the primary importance of the preservation of the public school system of our state" and pledged their support "to Governor Hodges in his determination to maintain it."

We are heartened by this unanimity of opinion on the part of Tar Heel editors and feel that it bodes well for the future. It is one thing to examine with interest and to speculate on various procedures, adopted or considered by other states, envisioning abandonment of the public school system, but we don't believe North Carolina can or will ever take legislative steps that would abolish the public schools, no matter how tightly it might be squeezed in the jaws of the Supreme Court school segregation decision.

All states no doubt are proud of their public schools and are conscious of the efforts that have brought progress to the public schools in the past half century; but it seems that schools occupy a special place of honor in the North Carolinian's system of values—whether he be of high or low estate. We have the feeling that, in the time of showdown, the average Tar Heel will not tolerate abandonment of the public schools, even at the cost of compliance with the Supreme Court decision.

If anybody is smart enough to figure out how

all the children of the state are going to receive adequate schooling without the public schools, he ought to be smart enough to figure out how the schools can be maintained.

Some of the finest words that have been published on the matter of preserving the schools came a few weeks ago from the faculty council of the University of North Carolina. The council's resolution—urging the people of North Carolina "to set their faces firmly and finally against every proposal to abolish, abandon or weaken our public schools"—pointed out that abolishing the public schools would "mean crisis or collapse for the State's system of higher education." Surprisingly, this is a point that has not often been made, as we have all tended to think only in terms of the secondary schools. But, says the faculty resolution, "The roof cannot stand without the house."

The University faculty calls the public school system "the greatest single heritage our finest past leadership has bequeathed us."

It is because we think most North Carolinians also believe our public schools are truly our "greatest single heritage" that we are confident they will not let them be abandoned.

We, the rank and file of North Carolina citizens, do not stand helpless. No one can destroy our schools unless we, through our representatives in the General Assembly, will that they be destroyed. If it comes to a test, we do not believe that Tar Heels will allow this to happen.

## A Needless, Senseless Way To Die

There is a peculiar horror in the type of traffic accident that took four lives on No. 1 highway north of Southern Pines January 22—the accident in which one driver crosses the center of the road to strike an approaching vehicle head-on.

This is the kind of highway smash-up that might happen to any of us, regardless of how carefully we are driving or how alert we are to the hazards of the road. It is unnecessary, senseless and horrifying as only an event can be that seems a sheer stroke of fate. A moment's different timing of the victim's trip and it would not have happened. This kind of accident even lacks the dignity of tragedy in the classic sense whereby some flaw in the victim has led him inexorably to his doom.

Double-lane, parkway highways go far in eliminating this type of collision, although the two-lane roads have by no means brought an end to traffic accidents.

Assurance that the State plans to double-lane No. 1 for its entire length in North Carolina, given at the recent meeting of mayors and highway officials here, offers some hope that such head-on collisions will be eliminated on this highway, when the improvement program is completed.

About all the conscientious driver can do in regard to the head-on collision problem is to see in every approaching automobile the deadly weapon that it could become—and to make sure that at least it is not his car that goes over the center line.

## The Oh-So-Popular Newspaper Editor

"No letter today!"—such was the lament of a wartime sentimental ballad. It could never be the theme song of a newspaper editor.

A full mailbox is the rule in this business. The editor, that all-powerful personage who decrees what will or will not be printed, is wooed by the most amazing assortment of correspondents, most of whom—just to make clear that the editor does not get mail simply because people love him—have something to sell but don't want to put any money into advertising to sell it. They want the editor to write about it in his news columns and they turn verbal somersaults to attract his attention and win the reward of a few lines of type.

Somewhere, even as we write this, a public relations expert (we picture him with sharply creased trousers and with his french cuffs turned back one fold to indicate his devotion to toil) is no doubt compiling a tasty "release" that will greet us a few mornings hence and captivate us with an urgent message without which our subscribers, he indicates, will be unable to exist.

You never know what you'll get in the mail. Today, comes this, for instance: "There are 1,296,000,000 or more uninvited guests in every square inch of carpeting in your home. . . . These live viable bacteria. . . diseases. . . children. . . Dr. Stokesberry's findings. . . contamination. . . this remarkable percentage. . . healthful sanitary living. . . professional cleaning. . ." Such are the phrases that greet our startled eye. Dr. Stokesberry, it seems, wants our readers to know they got bugs in their rugs and that rugs can be cleaned.

For this, treats are cut down in the great north woods, ground into pulp and paper is made. For this trains roar across the continent and skilled postal personnel pop a message in our box: "There are 1,296,000,000 uninvited guests in every square inch of carpeting in your home. . ."

Yes, it's great to be a popular editor—and readers, we hope, are thankful that our wastebasket is handy, capacious and usually full.

## FROM 'THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY'

### What's Happening To Dulles?

Secretary Dulles, the diplomat, is first of all John Foster Dulles, the man. The recent series of inept statements by the secretary raises a question as to whether the strain of high office is proving too great for him to bear.

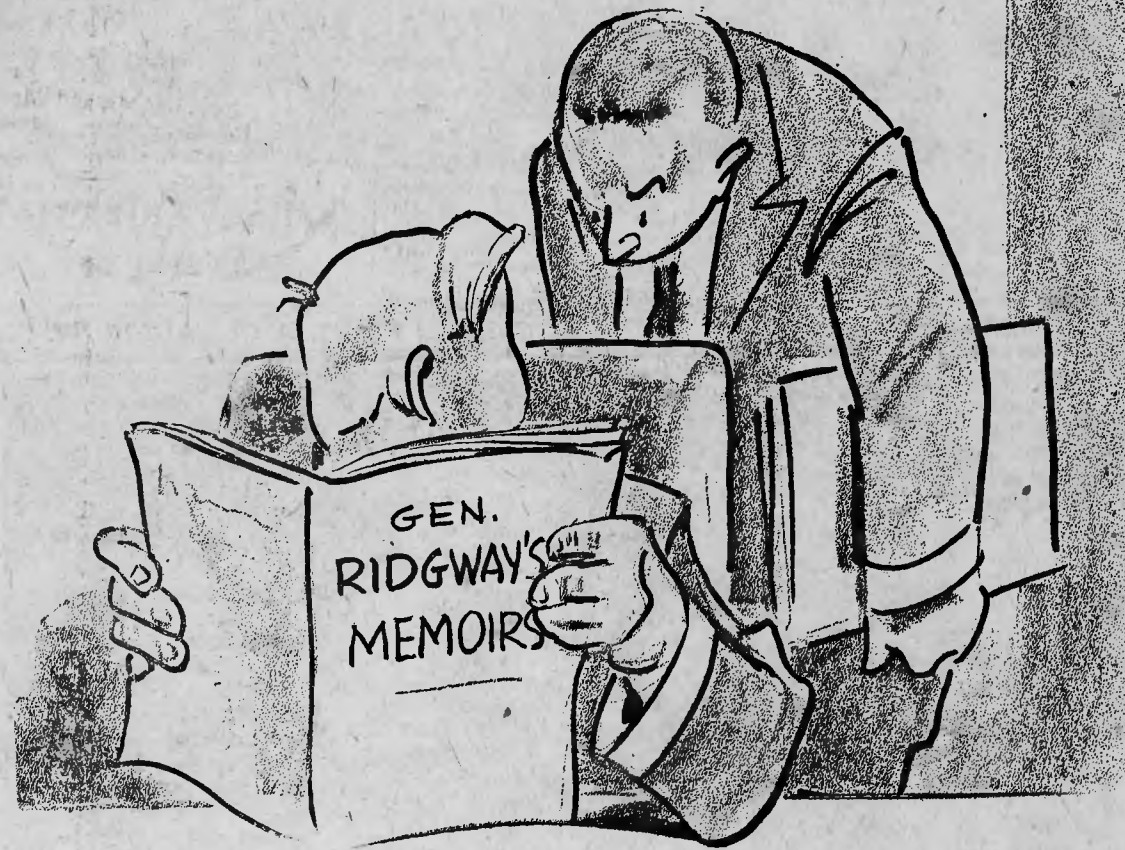
In November he played into the hands of the Soviet leaders when they were touring India by needlessly affronting India on Goa. Now in an article in Life, quotations from the secretary inflame the French, offend the British and give communist critics additional fuel for stoking international fires. Mr. Dulles is quoted as saying to the author of the article: "Of course we were brought to the verge of war. The ability to get to the verge of war without getting into war is the necessary art. We walked to the brink and we looked it in the face. We took strong action."

He was speaking of three occasions when, he claimed, he had averted war by threatening use of the atomic bomb. On the questions of enlarging the Korean war, getting into the war in Indo-China and into that in the Formosa straits, Mr. Dulles acknowledged that the ultimate responsibility was in the hands of the

President, but he took responsibility for advising the chief executive in this fashion.

Now, unless the Life article is pure invention, which is very unlikely, the secretary takes responsibility for boasting about having on three occasions successfully threatened to resort to the horrors of atomic war. Is he trying to make sure that future threats will lose their effectiveness? In addition, the author of the article reports Mr. Dulles believed the British reneged on a promise to go along on the Indo-China war. Repetition of this charge has infuriated the British press. That this should take place on the eve of the visit to Washington of Prime Minister Eden reveals a serious lack of political and personal consideration on the part of the secretary of state. And the fact that this is done when it is known that the British leader is coming here to concert measures for bringing peace to the Middle East raises the question how seriously Mr. Dulles takes his duties.

Is he a statesman invested with responsibility for life and death, or is he a political aesthete who regards balancing on the rim of a volcano as a "necessary art"?



DEFENSE DEPT.

## "It's Getting So They Don't Even Fade Away"

### AN ENTERPRISE SET APART

## 'Newspapering Is A Funny Business'

Addressing fellow newspaper editors and publishers during the recent Midwinter Institute of the North Carolina Press Association at Chapel Hill, D. Hiden Ramsey, retired Asheville editor, spoke observantly, affectionately and humorously of his lifelong profession. Readers, who often seem curious about how newspapers operate, may also enjoy Mr. Ramsey's look at the business from the inside. Excerpts from the address appear below, following portions of the talk that were printed here last week.

### Takes It As It Comes

The publisher does not create the news which he sells. Petty and powerful public officials, murderers, radiant brides, careless motorists, wise men and fools, rioting mobs in distant lands, the total unfolding tragedy and comedy of the day make the news. He never knows at the beginning of the day what the raw material will be. He merely takes it as it comes, printing some, discarding more, comforted with the thought that time outmodes all.

Furthermore, the raw material is never the same. Some days it is bountiful, other days scarce. All values are relative. A story which might rate front page today is elbowed by more important news into the remote recesses of the paper or into the gluttonous wastebasket.

To add to the perversity of the task, publishers differ from each other in their concepts of printable news. If the publisher is of a sensational bent of mind, his paper plays up murders, sex offenses and the other crimes altogether too plentiful in this world of sin and virtue. If he is conservative in his estimate of news value, crime is not accented with headlines and airblown stories.

### Vast Labor

Vast labor goes into the production of an issue. Many men and women—folks filled to their throatlatches with imperfections—of many skills and talents have had a hand in its creation. But it is born to die: the truth is that death sets in the moment it comes from the press. The task is to place it in the hands of the read-

er before life has completely left its ephemeral body. Although it is a highly individualistic enterprise, it is the end result of perhaps the most striking exhibition of cooperative effort which the world knows. Literally, thousands of unknown but pitifully fallible reporters scattered throughout the world gather the news which enters each year into its perishable texture.

### Excess Raw Material

The newspaper is the only business which assembles and pays for vastly more raw material than it uses. Any other industry would go broke if it discarded so much raw material. Conversely, the newspaper would become bankrupt if it undertook to utilize all the raw material which overwhelms it in the hurried course of each day.

The human element—a frail and untrustworthy thing, at best—is all controlling in determining which raw material will be consumed. Somewhere in the editorial hierarchy, an individual must decide in the twinkling of a chilly eye that the material is usable. His judgment is, of course, not a reasoned judgment. It is just a hasty trained guess and in making this guess, he must keep in mind the average reader—a guy whom he hasn't met and who really exists only in editorial imaginings. Change the person who makes the selection and often as not you change the decision.

### Commands Liberties

As we have learned in latter years, the federal government can lay heavy hands on individuals and industries. In times of emergency, it can fix prices, seize plants, restrict, even ban production. It can even establish power plans to create yardsticks for the electric industry, to the angry dismay of the power mag-

istrates. But the newspaper is an enterprise set apart from all others in the liberties which it commands. It enjoys a special immunity from governmental interference under the provisions of federal and state constitutions. If it is minded to do so—which few publishers are—it can sell a tainted product, slanted news, without being subject to pure food laws.

The newspaper enjoys other privileges, preferences, immunities, rights and licenses. It can gossip shamelessly without inviting the disrepute of the common gossip who whispers things of ill report. It can invade the privacy of the individual without being shunned in polite society as an institution of indecent curiosity. The morning newspaper editor can do what only a shrew does: he can scold at the breakfast table. It can even denounce commercialized college athletics in torrid editorials and then foster it blandly in its spacious sports pages.

### A Civil War

Yes, newspapering is a funny business. It is filled to overflowing with contradictions and curiosities, with unabashed human frailty and human nobility. Its vast unselfishness is always at civil war with its mortal selfishness and only the individual issue reveals how the battle has gone. Newspaper history records many Appomattoxes for unselfishness. For all that, it is a great game—the greatest in the world. It is no business for mere mortals of faint hearts, weak digestive capacities, and limited visions. It is no business for the person who cannot look beyond the earthy figures of a favorable balance sheet to a great democratic people struggling toward a freer, a happier and a more prosperous civilization.

## The Public Speaking

### BB Guns Worse Than Cats

To the Editor: I like both birds and cats, although I don't have a cat. Nor does anyone in the neighborhood. I also like boys.

Not too long ago the male of a pair of chewinks (towhees) disappeared from our bird-feeding place. Later a neighbor told of seeing a boy kill a male chewink with a BB gun. Simultaneously, we said, "Boys with BB guns are worse than cats," and agreed that one boy with a gun kills, or what is worse, maims more birds than twenty cats.

A few days after this conversation, early in the morning,

barely light, when birds are breakfasting, I saw two boys, one aiming with a BB-gun up into a tree not twenty feet from our bird-feeding place.

Why do parents allow boys to have BB guns? Don't they realize that they are breaking the law? Is Southern Pines a Bird Sanctuary or isn't it? Are we satisfied with just calling it one? We attract birds by feeding them, only to betray them to boys with BB guns. It is an uncomfortable, mean feeling to know that you have betrayed the trust and confidence that any person or animal has placed in you.

MERTA UNDERHILL

## Grains of Sand

Could Be Worse Things look pretty bad for this country's relations with India. Yet the President is sending Secretary Dulles out there. Believe he'd do better to let well enough alone.

Column L-1-1-left! Notice in the Pinehurst Outlook that Mr. Wisacre agrees with Senator Scott on farm policy. Always wondered when that column would start living up to its title.

Keep your eye on him, Nelse! "Bloating Aside. . ." The campaign to bring the consolidated Presbyterian College to Southern Pines has already accomplished some discernible good.

While the campaign was being organized and committee members were casting about for salient facts for the sales campaign, quite a bit of soul-searching went on among Southern Pines citizens. They asked themselves, What brought me to Southern Pines, why do I live here and what do I like about the community? Such healthy thinking ruled out all gripes and consequently since the start of the campaign early last summer all has been sweetness and light in the community. (Ahem).

One of the lesser group gatherings almost developed into an old-fashioned experience meeting, when an ardent Southern Pineser announced that only since coming to Southern Pines has he had any relief from asthma. Immediately another was on his feet with earnest testimony of reduction in his bloated condition—but at this point the chairman interrupted. "Friend," he said, "I know just what you mean, but maybe we'd better think up another kind of sales idea."

Guilt By Association So Editor Nelson Collingwood Hyde is sojourning in Bermuda with William A. Willets, former pepper-upper of Sandhills society.

Mrs. Hyde and Mrs. Willets are somewhere about, too, we believe. They have our sympathy. Time was when these two companions formed a formidable combination.

"Time was. . ." That was the time when, one evening of shall-we-say more than massive carousal, following which said Willets vanished for some hours in the company of sundry congenial spirits, Mrs. Willets was asked by a would-be sympathetic friend: "Aren't you worried about Bill?"

"No," said that hardy lady. "Not a bit. It's the people who are with him that are doing the worrying!"

Bet You Didn't Know Have you seen the shining new stainless steel sleepers on the Silver Star named "Southern Pines" and "Pinehurst"? Bet you didn't even know our Sandhills towns had been thus honored.

We confess we wouldn't have known it, either, if Charlie Patch, Sr., hadn't told us. You can bet he has seen them and is plenty proud of them. His old friend, Henry Crain—a former Southern Pines boy, by the way—who has been in the Seaboard's auditing department for about 35 years, wrote Charlie about them.

In case you want to see them, the Silver Star is due in Southern Pines at 8:11 p. m. on its way to Florida, and on its trip back North it passes through in the middle of the night.

Thanks, Folks! Rumors were flying thick and fast Monday. "Somebody from Sanford pledged! . . . Head of one of the colleges pledged here! . . . Fayetteville man said 'Southern Pines has the edge on us!'"

And Sanford claims as one of that town's advantages: "Proximity to Southern Pines and Pinehurst, world-famed resorts!"

## The PILOT

Published Every Thursday by THE PILOT, Incorporated Southern Pines, North Carolina

1941—JAMES BOYD—1944

Katharine Boyd ..... Editor  
C. Benedict ..... News Editor  
Vance Derby ..... Asst. News Editor  
Dan S. Ray ..... Gen. Mgr.  
C. G. Council ..... Advertising  
Mary Scott Newton ..... Business  
Bessie Cameron Smith ..... Society  
Composing Room  
Lochamy McLean, Dixie B. Ray,  
Michael Valen, Jasper Swearingen

Subscription Rates:  
One Year \$4. 6 mos. \$2; 3 mos. \$1.  
Entered at the Postoffice at Southern Pines, N. C., as second class mail matter

Member National Editorial Assn. and N. C. Press Assn.