

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. Wherever 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.

Time For Careful Thinking

The town has been in a turmoil over the past week because of a situation involving the East Southern Pines high school principal. Rumor is rampant; a petition is being passed around signed by a great majority of students; many parents are concerned.

The actual events are these: Mr. Irie Leonard received a private, personal letter from Schools Superintendent A. C. Dawson letting him know that his name would not appear on the list, to be submitted to the school board, of teachers chosen for re-engagement next fall. Clearly, the letter was designed to give the recipient an opportunity to resign, if he wished, and to seek another post; at least to prepare him for the coming official announcement. The principal apparently did not keep the contents of the letter to himself and the word quickly spread.

This newspaper earnestly hopes that by the time this editorial appears in print (it is being written Tuesday morning) second thoughts may have occurred to cool roused feelings. Nothing but harm could result from hasty public action. The harm, however, could be severe, especially for the party involved. And especially for the school.

To those who are voicing indignation over the school decision, calling it ill-advised, an obvious fact should be pointed out: no school official will give up an important member of his staff, and, in this case, a highly successful and popular athletic coach, without very good reason. The difficulty of replacing him, if nothing else, would make him pause. Added to that is the realization that many, ignorant of what lies behind the decision, are bound to condemn it, bringing down on the superintendent and board a storm of criticism. As has certainly been the case now. No public officials—few people, official or otherwise—are going to court such criticism if they can possibly avoid it.

Clearly, it took courage to take the action that removed from the school staff this energetic and popular young man who has made a friendly place for himself in the community. Just as, we might point out, it took courage for the same officials to take up for him two years ago when what one may guess to be the same characteristic that is behind the present

trouble brought him into a Moore County court. We would hazard another guess that the deciding factors at that time, in the minds of the school board, were (1) the conviction that a group of students must not be allowed the satisfaction of bringing about the dismissal of a teacher and (2) an earnest wish to spare the man himself and give him every chance. It seems clear that these two factors are present in today's situation and that there has been restraint and an attempt to do the right thing.

The main aim must be to do what is right for the school. In this connection it will be well if the public recognizes its own limitations. Remembering that to be a fine high school principal—and this school should be content with no less—calls for more than popularity or brilliant coaching or even talent as a teacher.

Under the law, a school board is not required to release the reasons behind the non-reappointment of a teacher. We are of the opinion that the Southern Pines board would disregard this rule if asked to do so—as may be the case, ere this editorial is read. However, we believe that from every consideration, such public interference is unnecessary and to be avoided.

Saving Mothers' Lives

More mothers than in any previous year received the benefit of the free bed at Moore Memorial Hospital, during the past year, because of the generosity of the public in last year's Tag Day of the Moore County Maternal Welfare Committee.

Again, on Saturday of this week, the little green and white tags will be sold in all communities of the county for the benefit of the committee's work—helping women who need help prepare for, have and care for their babies.

This is a program which, over more than 20 years, has literally saved the lives of hundreds of mothers and babies. The Pilot tips its hat again to the devoted group of people who have made the Committee a wonderfully effective social service organization. And we solicit the generous support of readers for the Tag Day on Saturday.

Two Unwise Pieces Of Legislation

A couple of pieces of legislation that are typical of the snap-judgment, emotionally-pressured attitude that sometimes seems to afflict the General Assembly at Raleigh are: the bill to legally punish unwed mothers of more than one child; and the bill that would give National Guard members the same power of arrest that regular law enforcement officers have, when sent into any county by the Governor.

Both bills passed the Senate last week, the unwed mothers proposal going to the House early this week—when these words are being written. The National Guard bill went to the House and was reported favorably out of committee, without full consideration. Whether or not it would be remanded to committee, for the hearings that would appear to be in order for such a controversial measure, was not known as this is written.

The gentlemen of the General Assembly seem determined to do something about illegitimacy, come what may. While the situation is not so simple as the old saw about the politician who is safely against sin and for motherhood (presumably legitimate motherhood although that point has not arisen in the traditional recitation of these allegiances), it does appear that the legislators are letting their commendable aversion to sin run away with their better judgment.

On the very day that the Senate struck its blow for sexual morality, the North Carolina Conference for Social Service report, "The Problem of Births out of Wedlock" was issued, concluding that punitive action against unwed mothers would not help the problem and that illegitimacy is primarily a social and not a legal matter.

The Conference for Social Service committee that compiled the report spent 18 months gathering statistics and exploring the problem. The gist of the report, from start to finish, if we can judge by an extensive summary of it in the press, is that the problem of illegitimacy can only be approached fruitfully through education—the home, the church, the schools—and through an improvement of the economic conditions that breed the ignorance and poverty in which illegitimacy thrives.

We hope that the report's message—available to House members now as it was not to the Senate before Senators voted—will inspire the House to reject the punitive proposal entirely.

The Henderson strike, of course, precipitated the National Guard proposal—and it is understandable that legislators might want to

free for their regular work many members of the State Highway Patrol who have been assigned to strike duty in Henderson, while highway fatalities have climbed far over last year's record, in the first months of this year.

Yet legislation that would throw its shadow into every peaceful corner of the state for years to come should not be enacted under pressure of a specific emergency. The bill would in effect create a second state police force, but a force that is trained primarily in military, not police, duties. Whatever police training that might be given the Guard, if the bill is enacted, would be at the expense of their proper military training.

While we could expect the average guardsman not to use his power of arrest invidiously, there would almost certainly be incidents that would create controversy and protest within communities and that would lower the status of the Guard in the public mind. It is one of the blessings of American life that members of the military establishment cannot detain or arrest citizens.

We are pinning our hopes on the House not to be emotionally pressured into enacting these two unwise pieces of legislation.

Man For The Job

We welcome the election of George Ross of Jackson Springs as president of the Moore County Historical Association.

Mr. Ross—a former director of the State Department of Conservation and Development, as well as a former North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture—is devoted to the interests of his native county of Moore. He is familiar with and at home with all aspects of the county's modern life—industrial, agricultural, and recreational. He has personally lived through the past half century of the county's history and his interests go back beyond that to earlier times.

Mr. Ross's attention to the history of mining in Moore has led to a meeting with State officials at which tentative plans were made for a geological survey of the county, so that an up-to-date check on Moore's mineral resources can be obtained. Thus, a look backward at the history of mining has led to a look forward and a project that may be of future economic benefit to the county.

We await with interest announcement of plans which Mr. Ross is said to be formulating for the Historical Association's activity in the coming year.

BUT LET'S SAVE SOME OF IT!

'God Bless America!' We Sing

By Weldon F. Heald
In "The Living Wilderness"

"I love thy rocks and rills, thy woods and templed hills." So runs one of our most popular national songs.

I have seen Americans stand and sing "My Country 'Tis of Thee" with tears of emotion in their eyes and selfless exultation in their bearing.

But I just don't believe it. The more I see of our blasted rocks, dammed rills, cut and burned woods, and bulldozed hills the more convinced I am that the average American has no consideration for them whatsoever. Or if he does, he seems apathetically unmoved by the destruction around him.

We love wealth, prosperity, and growth. We take pride in a high standard of living. We thrill to automatic gadgets, deep freezes, and jet planes. We boast of a mechanical, electrical, atomic civilization wrapped up in a package labeled, "Liberty, Democracy, and the Pursuit of Happiness—Handle with Care." There may be a super-streamlined Frankenstein inside. But God bless America. We love it.

Under Our Feet

However, there is another America. It is under our feet. It is around us. It is the land we live on—the forests, hills, valleys, mountains, and deserts we took from the Indians.

Do we love this America, too? Well, maybe. But it looks to me as if we were so dissatisfied with its general appearance and arrangement that we are trying to change everything about it in the shortest possible time.

For, all over the country powerful interests, representing themselves as the majority, are closing in, bent on despoiling and obliterating every last vestige of original America. Although national parks preserve less than one per cent of our land in primeval condition, giant dams are proposed for four of them, and lumbermen demand the finest forests in a fifth. National forests provide less than one per cent of the nation's cattle feed requirements, yet embattled stockmen are asking for the forests as their private preserve. Miners and sheepmen want the national monuments. State parks are succumbing to commercial interests. Marshes are drained, lakes emptied, and predators exterminated so that wildlife suffers from unbalance. Each year thousands of acres of timber are indiscriminately hacked and burned, the range is depleted, soil exhausted, erosion accelerated, streams polluted, air contaminated.

Truly, this is a love that passes understanding!

Years ago Americans who val-

ued this original America became alarmed at the rapidity with which it was disappearing. They started a movement for the preservation of natural resources, both economic and scenic, which has ever since been known as CONSERVATION. From it have grown the national parks, national forests, national monuments, the state parks and all other attempts to preserve some of our nation's heritage for the use and enjoyment of Americans who love, value and appreciate the land they live on. Today, there

are thousands enlisted in the battle to preserve the resources and character of our country. But they are still woefully in the minority.

The front-line minutemen of the revolution fought at Lexington and Concord for the America they loved. Those historic patriots won against great odds. It can be done again. But don't wait for orders. Start firing NOW! Join the present-day Minutemen by thinking, talking, reading, and spreading the importance of CONSERVATION.

God bless America—and let's save some of it.

"If He Ain't Running, He's Sure Doing Some Fancy Riding"



Birds Herald Spring's Arrival

By RENA B. LASSITER
In The Smithfield Herald

Spring comes in various ways to individuals. The poet says "In the spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." To someone else it may come in the form of a flowering tree bursting out in bloom. To another it comes in the first pushing up of the gold and purple crocuses. To a fisherman, spring is sitting on a river bank with a fishing pole in hand. To the farmer it may be the smell of newly turned earth. To Wilmington, it is likely the Azalea Festival. To Secretary of State Thad Eure it is a new straw hat. To me this year it is the birds.

First Bluebird

It was in January that I saw the first bluebird—two in fact—that lingered briefly in our yard. Though bluebirds are said to be the harbingers of spring, their visit during the cold of January was all too brief to give me the feel of spring. But since the latter part of March, the birds have really been heralding spring to me. Cardinals, male and female, show up regularly at the feeding station. Robins searching for worms and insects dot the lawn. A pair of mourning doves, the first I ever saw, had breakfast at the feeding station about two weeks ago. I have heard their haunting, mournful Ah-Woo-Woo-Woo ever since we have lived in the wooded southwestern part of town. But I never could see the birds. But there was no mistaking the pair I recently saw from my kitchen window.

Discovered Nest

Then there are my brown thrashers. I call them mine, for they have built a nest in the big shrub at the corner of my room. I had noticed these busy brown birds with their long tails, striped breasts and barred wings for several days. Then one day I saw one of them with a bluejay's feather in his big beak fly to the bush at the corner of the house. A little later I discovered the nest.

I miss the little juncos that were so numerous all winter. They have flown to a colder clime. But in their place we have sparrows. Not until this spring have I seen sparrows around our place. And when I began to watch them closely I knew they were not the common everyday English sparrows. I consulted my bird book and found out that there are forty kinds of sparrows in the United States. The most of

those in our yard have definitely striped crowns that set them apart. I have identified two of these striped crowned sparrows as the white-throated sparrow and the lark sparrow. The latter has a small black spot on the breast that has been termed a stick pin. And this week I saw what must be what the book calls Harris's sparrows. They have a black head and bib.

Holes In Pine

I have roamed the place for more nests besides that of the brown thrashers. I have found one on the branch of a naked tree, but I can't decide whether it is a new nest or one of last year's. I am sure the robins and towhees are building in a brushy area close by. And there is a dead pine full of round holes that the woodpeckers have chiseled out. I have heard the a-rattat of their mighty beaks often. And once I saw a red-head exploring the back of a live pine for beetles.

Yes, it is spring when the birds begin to mate, and when their songs fill the air. "Do you ne'er think what wondrous beings these? Do you ne'er think who made them, and who taught the dialect they speak, where melodies alone are the interpreters of thought?"

KEEP HIM HERE!

Down at Cape Canaveral, where the missiles are launched, live a whole group of scientists, psychologists and doctors who spend their time trying to find the right man whom they will launch toward the moon when the time comes. They have filed thousands of index cards describing top physical specimens and administered Rorschach tests to hundreds of volunteers. Machines constantly process these findings.

The list of available candidates is now down to fifty, and eventually this concerted hunt will narrow down to one man, physically sound, psychologically right, and smart. Truly, he will be a mens sana in corpore sano.

But there is something absurd about the purpose of this team. Having found the perfect man, it seems the last place they should send him is to the moon. Rather they ought to keep him here, to help propagate the race. They ought to shoot off the least qualified man, because we need the best man like we never needed him before.

—HARRY GOLDEN in The Carolina Israelite

Grains of Sand

Paging That Oldtimer

Echoes from the days when Charles Macauley was a valued member of The Pilot staff still come, and how we cherish such nebulous reminders of our colleague who died several years ago!

For instance, cleaning up our desk, we came across that postcard (already noted in this column some months ago) addressed to Mr. Mac here at The Pilot:

"Dear Sir: Would you kindly furnish me with a list of all shipwrecks off the New Jersey coast, noting the date, location, and cargo of same."

WE can't answer that card, but we know he could.

Just the way he could tell you the date, location and any other facts of all the happenings around here. Fires especially. Mr. Mac ate up fires—and breathed them out again in great black smoke from his old pipe and burning sparks of biting comment. There's never been such a reporting of fires since his day.

Nor such a general ruckus going on around the person of anyone else in this newspaper establishment. How we miss him!

School News, 1878

Mrs. Dan R. McNeill of Southern Pines writes that she found the following old newspaper clipping while visiting in New Hampshire last summer:

"School District No. 4 has voted to raise \$800 to build a school house in that district. The doctor went for them in his school report, March 18, 1887."

That's all there was to the clipping. Mrs. McNeill comments: "I'm wondering if the doctor 'went for them' because they had not appropriated anything until that time, or because he did not think the \$800 was sufficient. What do you think?"

The answer, we suspect, will remain wreathed in the mists of District No. 4's history, but the clipping—which Mrs. McNeill thinks came from the Kearsage Independent of Warner, N. H., shows that money and controversy, which are two of the basic factors in school operations today, were just as important 80-odd years ago.

Prediction

Ike London of the Rockingham Post-Dispatch predicts that Adlai Stevenson will be the Democratic Presidential candidate in 1960.

Ike notes that "anti-south Liberals" are now in the saddle, but in the convention deadlock which he foresees, "the Southern votes will go to Adlai Stevenson—and he will be elected come November, 1960. . ."

Women

Cheer up, ladies! Mid all the lambasting to which American women are being subjected by authorities on this and that comes the voice of Phillips Ruesell of Chapel Hill famed biographer, teacher and philosopher:

"Women continue to gain freedom. Women are our best product. A first-class American woman is a world-beater. She is good-looking, dresses well, keeps her house well. She works in offices and is a good housewife. Hope for a better life for all lies with the American woman, our foremost latter-day pioneer. . . In my classes I used to dispense this piece of advice on the last day of the term: You hear much about winning success. Let me tell you how to do it. Pick out a smart girl and marry her. Never mind how she looks, you won't notice it after the first thirty days."

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