

The Mountaineer
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THURSDAY, MAY 10, 1934

OL' MAN RIVER'S TAMER
 Down in the Mississippi River valley, in the little cabins under the levees, new verses have been added to an old song, says Meigs O. Forest, writing in Liberty. These are the verses:

Oh, de Mississippi River ineter ra'm an' roar,
 But de river ain't a-ca'arin' an' a-ca'arin' no mo'.

Ask de Mississippi River how he goneter run,
 Says: "De way I gets ma' orders, Gin'ral Ferguson!"

"Gin'ral Ferguson" is General Harley Bascom Ferguson and he is the man who has tamed Ol' Man River and made him behave. In less than two years he has accomplished what many others, over more than a century, and at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars, had vainly sought to achieve.

The story, as Mr. Forest tells it, is truly, as Liberty says, "dramatic." We wish that we could reproduce it here in full. Liberty features it over six pages. That is its estimate of its national interest. But outside of the Mississippi Valley it is of greater and more peculiar interest to Western North Carolina than to readers anywhere else.

Do we have to tell the readers of The Citizen that "Gin'ral Ferguson" is one of our own mountain boys, a native of Waynesville? Not all of them, anyway.

Describing the long and tremendously costly battle to bring the Mississippi under control as a great "Comedy of Errors" the bill for which had approximated a billion and a quarter dollars, Mr. Forest raises the curtain finally on a new and different act, the central figure being "a gaunt pipe-smoking North Carolinian with a memory." Says Mr. Forest:

He remembered a day when he was about twelve. He had stood on the bank of Raccoon Creek on his father's farm in Haywood County. He had watched a "Nigra" with a mule hitched to an old bull-tongue plow taking a short cut up the bed of the creek. After they passed, the boy had watched, fascinated, what the water was doing to the creek bed where the old plow had gouged. He never forgot it. He remembers things like that.

His name was Harley Bascom Ferguson. He got to West Point; was graduated in 1897, a second lieutenant of Engineers. He served in the Spanish-American War, in the Boxer Rebellion in China, in the Philippines. Outside the service, nobody much heard his name until 1910 and 1911. Then—just to remind you—he was the man who, when nobody else wanted the job, went quietly down to Havana and raised the Maine from her bed in the ooze of Havana's harbor. In due time he went to France with Pershing and, an A. E. F. brigadier general of Engineers, won the Distinguished Service Medal.

He was, and is, one of those quiet, non-spectacular, hardworking officers. Solid. Profound technical knowledge. Loads of plain horse sense. In the Army Engineers for years, when there has been an engineering problem that didn't have any answer in the back of the book, the big shot of the moment has said to his adjutant, "Send for Fergie." That kind of a man.

Back in 1930 the call came down the line to the Engineers for certain qualified officers to submit plans for the control of Mississippi River floods, as a memorandum for the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors. The plans came in. Only one struck out on a new uncharted path. It came from Norfolk, Virginia. It was signed "H. B. Ferguson, Colonel Corps of Engineers; Division Engineer, South Atlantic Division." Peace-time eagles had replaced the wartime stars on the Ferguson shoulders.

Presently he was a brigadier general again, and was notified officially he was the new president of the Mississippi River Commission. They chuckled in the army, some of them, at the tale of the day he reported in Washington to Major General Lytle Brown, Chief of Engineers. General Brown is a Tennessean—another of those gaunt pipe-smoking men from the hills. He and Ferguson faced each other through the pipe smoke. All Ferguson said was, "Do you want me to write a book or fix a river?"

General Brown grinned through the haze. "Fergie," he said, "you get the hell out of here and go fix that river."
 It was on June 15, 1932, that General Ferguson took over his new job and started in to "fix that river." He has fixed it. "In his memory was a clear picture of Raccoon Creek. He was going to apply what he had first learned on that tiny creek to the mightiest river on the continent." There were plenty of scoffers. He paid no attention to them. Gradually they ceased to scoff. Little by little they grasped what he was about. It was elementally simple; only it was the very reverse of what had always been attempted before. In the past the effort had always been to hold the river back. General

Ferguson widened the neck of the bottle and let it run. He worked out his system and demonstrated its soundness. The engineers were convinced. So was every one else. Even the Congress-men could understand the plan once it was explained to them.

In less than two years, and at a cost far below the estimates, the Mississippi has been made safer and more navigable than ever before, with changes a thousand to one against any 1931 flood. But should one come, the river could be handled without disaster one equal to that of 1927. Ol' Man River is licked at last—by the most daring original engineering attack this has ever been made on him. The man who didn't smoke his black brier and grin his slow grin when you ask him if that isn't true. "Well, there isn't going to be any flood to do any damage," he admits. "Can't lick the Mississippi. Fight that river, it'll crush you. Got to guide it. Let him have it his way. Guided or fought, the river stays behind the levees. Cities, towns, plantations, farms are safe. That's all the valley wants to know. The Mississippi takes its orders today from General Harley Bascom Ferguson."—A Waynesville Citizen.

MOTHER'S DAY

Twenty years ago, members of Congress passed a joint resolution fixing the second Sunday in May as a memorial to the mothers of America. Mother's Day this year is next Sunday, and as has been the custom for the past score of years homage will be paid the mothers of this country.

Mother's Day this year will be sadder for some because since last year, he has passed on; yet the memory of the one that toiled and lived for her family lingers on. For others the day will be happier than ever, because they have grown to know and love their mother more during the past year—so after all it is a day to look forward to.

Mothers are usually the recipients of gifts on Mother's Day, which they always appreciate whether they expect it or not, yet there has never been anything placed on the market that can be bought that shows one's real love and respect for his mother.

The best and most appreciative gift we believe any mother ever received from her children is the fact that they have brought to her heart more joy than sorrow. We do not feel that just a remembrance on one certain day each year is enough to show the mothers of our nation; but that each day we should strive to accomplish only those things that we are sure will add smiles of joy to her aging face rather than add wrinkles of worry to her brow.

THE SOCO GAP HIGHWAY NEEDS COMPLETING

Several of Waynesville's most influential business men are in Raleigh this week trying to persuade the state highway commission to let the contract for the road from Soco Gap to Cherokee. The route has been surveyed for several months, but action on the part of the highway commission has been delayed.

The road from Dellwood to Soco gap, a distance of about eight miles, has been graded and crushed gravel put on it, and the contract let for paving, but inasmuch as the road comes to a complete stop at the top of the gap it is of little importance except for the view that can be had from the top of the gap.

When the Soco Gap road is completed to Cherokee it will mean a saving of sixteen miles from Waynesville to Cherokee, to say nothing of the new country that will be opened up in the park area.

State highway officials have been told publicly by park officials that they considered the Soco Gap road the principal Eastern entrance to the park, and it seems that with this statement coming direct from the park officials the state board would fall in line and construct the eleven mile stretch of road between Soco Gap and Cherokee.

Thus far the state board has done everything to induce the federal commission to bring the park-to-park scenic route through North Carolina, in which we hope they succeed, but it seems to us that if the State would first show more interest in the park by providing the roads that the park officials desire, there would be less trouble in convincing the Federal commission of the advantages of coming the North Carolina route with their road.

WRONG BASE

A local oil man cut across the country going to Jal a while back. He got off the road over in Andrews County and finally got to a desolate ranch house and asked an old fellow who lived alone how to get to Jal. The rancher reflected. "Well, I believe I would go back about a mile and take the first right hand road. No I believe I would take the left hand road. Come to think of it, stranger, if I was trying to get to Jal, I wouldn't start from here at all."—Midland Reporter-Telegram.

Random SIDE GLANCES
 By W. CURTIS RUSS

If you want to see a place, where business is on the up and up, go to the Haywood County hospital. On Monday of this week they had fifty patients there and ones that mean the seven nurses have to rush—they should see them.

One told me she went on duty at seven that morning and would be working a nine that night—fourteen hours—but she was smiling over it as if that wasn't as bad as sixteen hours.

When I get to be president of these ladies, I'm a gonna try and induce everybody to take a special course in nursing and newspaper work—these are two of the best mis-underrated professions a going!

Lots of people can't understand why a nurse can't do this and so for them, and unless they were once a nurse they'll never know. Oh boy, the people that can't see why so and so can't go in print, and most of the time it's just cause and nothing more.

Nurses get about as many laughs as anyone, even though some of them come between the groans of their patient. This week an old man attempted to get a drink from the fountain in the hall of the hospital, and not being accustomed to working the fountain turned it too hard, which resulted in his getting a good Methodist sprinkling, and almost a fair Baptist immersion. Looking around with only one eye open, and rubbing his face, he remarked that he didn't know "that thing had so much pressure."

Congressman Zebulon Weaver dropped in to see us Tuesday. He doesn't change a bit—looks as young as he did eight years ago. Here's a tip about Mr. Weaver—if you are looking for information about the Great Smoky Mountains National Park just barely mention the subject to him—he not only knows it from A to Z, but delights in telling it.

I often wonder how he manages to campaign out in this area next to the park. He is so wrapped up in park matters that it seems he would forget everything else, even campaigning.

A 11 by 14 placard over the cash register in W.T. Denton's Hardware reads: "WHAT HAPPENED TO THREE OF MY CUSTOMERS?"

One said "I'll pay you Saturday if I live."
 He is dead.
 Another said "I'll see you tomorrow."
 He is blind.
 Still another said "I'll pay you sure next week or go to hell."
 He is gone.

The card does not go into detail where the third customer went, however.

Saturday was Candidate's Day in Waynesville. It being the last day to file for office brought many to the office of M. G. Stamey to make formal announcements of their aspirations for office.

One candidate told The Mountaineer Tuesday that after Monday's round of hand-shaking that three of his fellow candidates actually had blisters on their hands—and how well he ought to have known.

The Boss: "What's that item in your expense account. 'Overhead expense, four dollars?'"
 The traveling Salesman: "That was an umbrella I bought."

Johnny (to older brother): "What would you do if you were in my shoes?"
 Older Brother: "Clean them."

Policeman (at scene of murder): "You can't come in here."
 Reporter: "But I've been sent to do the murder."
 Policeman: "Well, you're too late; the murder's been done."—EX.

Patron: "That barber down the street has cut his prices down to 40 cents for a haircut."
 Barber (after a withering silence): "Yeah. Well, a good barber cuts hair and a poor one cuts price."

Talkative Lady: "A big man like you might be better occupied than in cruelly catching little fish."
 Angler: "Perhaps you're right. But if this fish had kept his mouth shut he wouldn't be here."—EX.

1st Neighbor: "How did that naughty boy of yours get hurt?"
 2nd Ditto: "That good little boy of yours hit him with a brick."—EX.

Mrs. Bight: "I hear you've got a new organ in your church. Now all you need is a monkey."
 Mrs. Gnasty: "And all you need in yours is an organ."

Golfer (to members ahead): "Pardon but would you mind if I played through? I've just heard that my wife has been taken seriously ill."
 Woman (about to attend political meeting): "I'm not prejudiced at all. I'm going with a perfectly open and unbiased mind to listen to what I'm convinced is pure, rubbish."

Junaluska P. T. A. Reached Standard 22 Years Ago in HAYWOOD

The final meeting of the Junaluska P. T. A. was held at the school house Thursday evening, April 22, with an unusually good crowd in attendance.

Following the call to order by the president, Mr. Francis sang a solo after which Mr. Hardy Liner led in prayer.

The president called for committee reports, which were as follows:
 Treasurer reported a balance of \$18.87.
 Mrs. Queen, chairman of the membership committee reported 52 paid members.

Mrs. Glavich reported that a meeting had been held each month, and that the patrons had served very willingly on the programs.

Mr. Francis reported that full publicity had been given each meeting, and that all had been written up for the county paper.

The public relations committee reported that the public had been very cooperative in subscriptions to the Child Welfare Magazine.

In the absence of Mrs. Stentz, Mrs. Toy gave a report on the study course which was held one each week for a month, during the winter. Mrs. Toy recommended that the study course be held in October next year.

The reading of the by-laws of the organization was followed by the announcement that the 1934 state P. T. A. meet would be held in Asheville. The association voted to contribute four dollars toward Mrs. Messer's expense to the recent state meeting in Durham.

It was also decided to pay \$1.25 toward the expenses of the tea at the LaFaine Hotel in March.

Mrs. Toy appointed the following committees to serve for next year:
 Music—Mrs. Queen, chairman, with Mr. Burgess as assistant.
 Program—Mrs. Glavich, chairman with Mrs. Peck as assistant.
 Publicity—Mr. Francis and Mrs. Moore.
 Hospitality—Mrs. Burgin and Mrs. Claude Medford.
 Welfare—Mrs. Threlkeld and Mrs. Hardy Liner.

Four Square League and Study Course—Mrs. Stentz.

The association decided to leave the soup room in the hands of Mrs. Liner for next year, with necessary adjustments to be made in the fall.

The president made a short talk on the condition of the schools in the state, and the salaries of teachers, stressing the need for study of the situation, and wise voting, in order to improve conditions in the future.

The announcement of the approaching marriage of Miss Flora Rathbone was made in verse by Miss Moore. Plans were made for a shower to be given Miss Rathbone on Thursday afternoon, April 26, at the school house.

News was received that the Junaluska P. T. A. had reached its goal for the year—a standard organization.

The last feature of the program, and a most enjoyable one, was an old-fashioned spelling match, in which parents, teachers, and visitors took part.

"Baby's fond of you, isn't he?"
 "I should say he is. He sleeps all day when I'm away, and stays awake all night just to enjoy my company."

"So you think you would be a suitable valet for me," said the old man to the applicant, "I must remind you that I'm pretty much of a wreck. I have a glass eye, and cork leg, an artificial arm that needs looking after, not to mention a wig and false teeth."
 "That would be all right, sir," responded the other. "I've had plenty practice. You see, I once worked in the assembly room of a big motor concern."
 Explorer (speaking of advance of civilization): "In the past the Eskimos used to eat candles."
 Old Lady (seriously): "And now, I suppose, they eat electric bulbs."
 Dr. S. Parke Cadman had been telling his small granddaughter a bedtime story that held her breathless attention. At the end of the tale, when she had recovered her poise, she demanded, "Grandfather, was that a true story, or were you just preaching?"—Readers Digest.

(From the file of May 10, 1934)
 The Waynesville Public School closed for this season with a Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. The exercises were closed with a presentation of "Masque of Columbus."
 Crawford did the Columbus perfection and "Pocahontas" was happily presented by Mrs. Alice Abel. Miss Nora Swift sang impersonated the Good Spirit in the contest for the silver medal. Tuesday morning, Miss Myrtle was the winner with the play "The Bridal Winesap."
 Mr. Noble Garrett and Mrs. Lou Moody were united in matrimony Tuesday afternoon May 7, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ashby. The Black Silk Taffeta Wedding. The Paris Saturday only, 2000.
 Mr. James Musick of Waynesville spending sometime in Waynesville.
 Miss Georgia Miller will leave next week for L. N. S. C. where she will be the guest for several weeks of her sister, Mrs. D. D. Perry.
 The raising of the Maine, the greatest engineering feat in the world, is well known, and the accomplishment of a Waynesville boy, Mr. Harley B. Ferguson, is being shown at the Biou here this week.
 Miss Jennie Ray entertained an evening with a dance complimentary to her guest, Miss Inez Walden of Hendersonville. The guests were taken to the moving picture show and went later to Miss Ray's home for dancing.

Subscriptions
 The following subscriptions have been received since March 15th:
 Mrs. J. P. Dicus, city; T. J. Carley, Rt. 3; Mrs. H. H. Keener, city; J. E. Edwards, Seattle, Wash.; J. S. Jackson, Clyde; Mrs. Maria Head, Rt. 2; Mrs. Jas. L. Robinson, Ithaca, N. Y.; George Bishop, Hazelwood; J. B. Swayngim, Rt. 3; S. E. Combs, Clyde; R. H. Terrell, Rt. 2.
 J. K. Davis, Hazelwood; Geo. H. Boring, Hazelwood; Crom E. Calk, Canton; Linwood Grahb, City; E. A. Macon, Asheville; John Smith, Rt. 2; Walter Massey, Rt. 2; L. J. Winchester, Rt. 2; T. W. Cathey, Rt. 3; B. A. Angel, Clyde; Jas. L. Williams, Woodstock, N. J.; R. E. Owen, Rt. 2; Frank Smathers, Miami, Fla.; Fred M. Howell, Providence, R. I.; R. L. Noland, Waynesboro, Va.; C. D. Medford, Rt. 2.
 John Jones, city; Mrs. J. W. Noland, Crabtree, Rt. 1; J. W. Kinsland, Rt. 3; Lee Ferguson, Rt. 2; H. R. Caldwell, Rt. 2; J. A. Parks, Rt. 2; Frank L. Rogers, Rt. 2; I. S. Smathers, Rt. 1; Mrs. G. P. Boston, Rt. 2; Miss Hester Owen, Rt. 2; F. H. Saunders, city; Walter Cunningham, Rt. 3; Claud H. Shipley, city; C. H. Burress, Rt. 2.
 W. T. Mehaffey, city; S. W. Whidden, Dellwood; N. L. Stephens, Dewey Price, Crabtree, Rt. 1; I. B. Winchester, Rt. 1; Mrs. D. C. Campbell, Maggie; E. R. Davis, Union, S. C.; Mrs. Jesse Smith, Baker, Ore.; Mrs. Glenn Boyd, Rt. 2; D. L. Messer, Clyde, Rt. 1; G. D. Gossett, Canton; E. D. Bunn, Apex, N. C.; Citizen-Times, Asheville; J. P. Francis, Raleigh.
 R. M. Fisher, Crabtree, Rt. 1; Crawford Best, Clyde, Rt. 1; Robert Clyde, Clyde, Rt. 1; R. G. Sanford, Clyde, Rt. 1; Joe S. Thompson, Canton, Rt. 1; F. W. McLean, city; Miss Pearl Underwood, Rt. 1; James M. Wells, Canton; G. W. Burnett, Rt. 1; J. E. Massie, city; Miss Grace Bowles, city; J. H. Howell, city; G. H. Palmer, Rt. 1; Lee V. Rogers, Rt. 1; Clyde; Miss Nettie Mehaffey, city; W. A. Bradley, city; Mrs. Ralph Ensley, city; G. C. Swayngim, Rt. 1; Tom Chambers, Crabtree, Rt. 1; G. B. Hogan, Rt. 2; J. Manson Medford, Rt. 2; Mrs. M. K. Sutton, Mt. Sterling.

A Definition Of A Prescription
 "A written direction for the preparation and use of a Medicine."
 Thus says Noah Webster, but we here at ALEXANDER'S can see much more in a prescription than that.
 Every little white slip of paper which the doctor has covered with those mysterious characters and figures, to US represents an opportunity for this institution to ease the pain or assist in the recovery of the ill and suffering.
 Isn't it unlikely that there should be ever a trace of carelessness or unscrupulousness within an organization that has caught such a vision of its work?
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