

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The picture that Jesse Gullede brought in the office and I wrote about last week was taken at Fort Story, Va., in 1938. Most of the men have been identified, but a few are still unknown to this writer at this time. So come by and take a look and see if you can complete the identification.

This week Sam Snead of Red Springs brought two pictures into the office that were made while Battery 'F' (the other Raeford outfit) was on strike duty in Gastonia during the early thirties. I haven't had a chance to really go over these pictures since they were put on my desk, but know that they would interest some of the readers of this column.

So come in and take a look at these pictures and maybe I can guess your age if you know most of these men.

While on the subject of age, last week Bob Drumwright, who is spending his last week in town, came by the office and said he was going to file a complaint against the paper. When I asked him what was wrong, he said we had his age wrong in an article in the paper.

So to set the record straight before he leaves town Bob Drumwright is only 29 years of age. He has not reached the age of 30 as was stated in this paper last week.

We offer our apology to Bob and hate that we aged him so before he left town. Maybe some other things put a few years on the city manager.

Mrs. Lewis Upchurch was by the office last week and asked that I remind folks that the "Friends of the College" concert drive would end on March 13. If you would like to be a part of this drive, get in touch with Mrs. Upchurch. She can be reached at telephone number 875-2163.

Mrs. A.A. McInnis returned home Saturday from Moore Memorial Hospital where she was a patient for two weeks. Mrs. McInnis would like to thank everyone for their visits, flowers, prayers and cards she has received while a patient in the hospital and since she has been home.

Marty Vega, reporter for *The Fayetteville Times*, had an interesting feature in that paper last week about Harry Jones and his purchase of coffee at Dundarrach. Harry, who is at this time a patient at Moore Memorial Hospital, had a good thing going in buying coffee until the clerks found out the pricing machine had gone haywire.

If you didn't see the article, check with Harry when he gets out of the hospital, or go by Dundarrach Trading Company and the clerks can tell you about it.

Mary Archie McNeill, music director at Hoke High School, was by the office this week and was smiling from ear to ear. The Chorus and Chorale had traveled to Rockingham last week and came home again with "Superior" ratings.

The article about the achievement is elsewhere in the paper, but we would like to add our congratulations to her and the students that make up these two groups.

Don't forget the concert tonight at MacDonald Gym by the Hoke High Chorus, Chorale and Band and the Upchurch Chorus and Band. This concert is free and should be enjoyed by folks of all ages.

Also you can become a Hoke County Music Booster by signing up while at the concert.

An event that you can place on your calendar will come up March 18. It is the Hoke County Special Olympics that will be held at the Hoke County High School Stadium (See AROUND TOWN, Page 15)



LET IT SNOW -- Lee Ann Hubbard poses with the snowman she built in her front yard on McRae Street in Raeford last Friday. Thursday afternoon a few venerable Hoke County residents were recalling the 18 inches of snow that fell here 51 years ago, and that night it seemed history might repeat itself. But morning revealed a slight accumulation, not even enough to close the schools. By noon Friday, the snow had all but vanished.

County Board Okays Two New Positions

County Manager James Martin was authorized to hire a financial director and an accounting clerk by the Hoke County Board of Commissioners at its meeting Monday morning.

Both jobs were formerly handled by the late T.B. Lester, Jr., who was Hoke's first county manager. Martin assumed his duties here in January. The two new positions will be paid with federal funds.

The accounting clerk will be paid through the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) and the finance director will be paid from anti-recession funds.

In other business, the board appointed Oleta Lopez assistant clerk. She will have additional

secretarial responsibilities in the county manager's office.

The board approved a recommendation that the Council of Governments apply for administrative support for family planning and for an older adults nutritional program in Hoke County.

Sheriff Dave Barrington was authorized to accept bids for a new patrol car to replace one destroyed last week when it crashed into a utility pole on Prospect Ave. after skidding on the icy street. The driver, Deputy James Peterkin escaped serious injury.

The board accepted a petition that Koonce Drive in Townsend Estates be maintained under the state highway system.

Cracks Mar Ceiling Of New Fire Station

Flurry Of Motions Opens Lane Trial

The trial of Lloyd Stephen Lane was remanded to Hoke County Superior Court Tuesday after attorneys for Lane filed a petition Monday to remove the case to federal district court.

Lane, 25, pleaded not guilty to charges of first-degree murder and armed robbery following the fatal shooting of a Cumberland County special deputy, R.G. Smith, in a convenience store holdup last September.

Federal District Court Judge Hiram Ward denied the petition to remove the case to the federal courts Tuesday after District Attorney Ed Grannis filed the state's answer to the petition Monday night. Court recessed Monday afternoon and Judge James Baley, Jr., of Asheville, trial judge assigned to the case, sent the jurors home when he ruled that he had no jurisdiction to rule on the petition.

Court resumed Tuesday at 2 p.m. and Judge Baley announced that the case would be tried in Hoke County Superior court.

When attorney for the defense, Karen Galloway, requested that some pre-trial motions be heard in the judge's chambers, Grannis said "I object to anyone other than the jurors being excluded from hearing the motions." He cited the people's right to information about the trial as the reason for his objection.

Judge Baley granted the motion to hear part of the motions in chambers, but in open court a motion to sequester the state's witnesses due to pre-trial publicity was denied. A motion requesting complete recollection of all proceedings was granted, while the motion to regulate the dress of police witnesses was denied. Action on a motion requesting the transcript for voir dire of jurors at the time of sentencing was deferred.

Judge Baley also denied a motion to strike and quash the death penalty claiming it was unconstitutional. According to statistics presented by Galloway, 10 persons from Hoke County were executed between 1910 and 1964 for charges of first-degree murder or rape. Seven of the 10 were black, and the only convicted felon during that

period to receive a commuted sentence was a white man. On the basis of that evidence, Galloway claimed that the application of the death penalty in the Hoke County court would be racist.

She also told the court that the Supreme Court, when it ruled the death penalty constitutional, had not addressed some of the issues which she felt were pertinent.

"You don't expect me to overrule the supreme court?" Judge Baley responded. Galloway explained that she did not "intend to try the court's patience" and requested that the court bear with her. Attorneys for the defense and District Attorney Ed Grannis then received permission to approach the bench.

Judge Baley also ordered that 50 jurors be selected prior to tomorrow's session. Only 29 remained today from the original pool of 48.

According to the petition to move the case to federal district court. (See LANE, Page 15)

High School Bloodmobile This Friday

The Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) and the Hoke High School Chapter of the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) will host the Piedmont Carolina Red Cross Bloodmobile on Friday, March 10. The MacDonald Gym will be used because of its size and central location.

Sally Young, teacher-advisor for HOSA explained the team effort, with DECA providing the advertising and the Food Service Class serving the refreshments for donors. Mrs. Young pointed to the need for a large number of donors from the county to replace the blood used by Hoke citizens in the area hospitals.

The Bloodmobile will be at the High School Friday from 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Donors must be at least 17 years old and weigh at least 110 pounds.

Problems with the ceiling at the new fire station, appointment of a committee to study downtown revitalization, and selection of an interim city manager to fill in for Robert Drumwright, who has resigned, were among items before the Raeford City Council at its regular monthly meeting this week.

Fire Station
The board was told by E.J. Austin, of Austin Associates, architects for the project, that there are cracks in the ceiling of the new fire station on E. Prospect Ave. because the contractor failed to follow the specifications. It means firemen will be delayed still further in moving into the new facility.

Instead of gypsum cement, the contractor used portland cement. Austin explained that portland cement requires control joints in the ceiling to allow for expansion and contraction, while gypsum does not.

"There's only \$50 or \$100 difference in the material used by the contractor, but the ceiling was designed specifically for gypsum and doesn't have control joints," he said.

Austin said he thought it was an honest mistake by the contractor, DWC Contractors, Inc. of Fayetteville, and he told the board that any material used in the ceiling would develop some cracks because of artillery fire at Ft. Bragg and the activity of military jets in the area.

But he said the material used by the contractor is more susceptible to cracking than the material for which the ceiling was designed.

By a vote of the council, the architects were instructed to request the contractor and bonding company either to give the city a five-year warranty on the ceiling, or to replace it according to the architect's specifications. The proposal further stipulates that the ceiling be inspected annually, with the contractor liable for any repairs that are needed.

Austin said he was unsure whether the contractor would accept this proposal. He said Austin Associates is holding back \$11,000 of the contractor's fee until the matter is squared away.

Construction of the fire station was approved by the voters in a 1976 bond referendum. The 6,800 square foot building is located on a 3-acre lot. The station was initially expected to cost \$200,000, but the bids were below this estimate.

Revitalization
The board approved formation (See COL ST II, Page 15)

The Throne Of King Cotton

by Charles Blackburn

Cotton was king in Hoke County years ago. That's why a bale of cotton is on the county seal today. The sovereign crop decreed that the main street of Raeford be designed to accommodate it. And so it was.

"When J.W. McLaughlin and Hector Smith, a surveyor, laid out Main Street, they determined that it should be the width it took a two-horse wagon to turn around without having to back up," explained Robert Gatlin, lifelong Hoke resident.

Those wagons needed a lot of room to turn -- Raeford's Main Street is wider than most. Loaded with bales of cotton, the wagons came, one after another, to a platform located by the railroad tracks, where the cotton was weighed.

If cotton was king here, that platform was certainly its throne, for at least 75 percent of the cotton grown in Hoke County was sold and shipped there.

Ten thousand bales, ranging from 400 to 600 pounds, were ginned in the county at the peak production. At one time cotton gins could be found in nearly every part of the county, among them: Oakdale, Thomas Brothers, Hoke Oil - Fertilizer, McGougan's, Dundarrach Trading Co., Rockfish, and the Johnson Co.

"I've seen Main Street, before it was paved, with two-horse wagons lined up from one end to the other waiting to be weighed at the cotton platform," Gatlin recalled. He said the platform was built

about 1911 by the same man who poured the sidewalks for the town. J.R. Steele of Bennettsville. The platform originally had a roof over it, but the roof burned long after it was built and was never replaced.

"The platform was a center of activity," Gatlin said. But soon it will fade into local history. The Bank of Raeford is planning a new office building on the site where the cotton platform stands, and this monument to a bygone era will have to go.

The platform has been idle for a

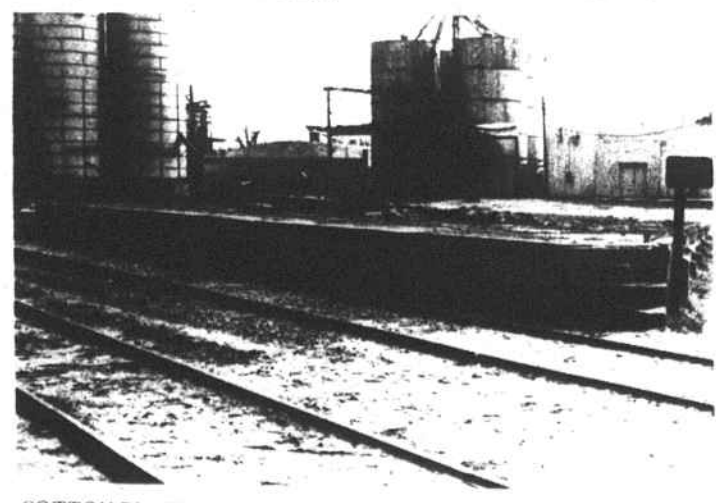
long time now. Younger Hoke County residents have passed it often, never realizing how important it once was to the livelihood of the area.

It was there that the Hoke County Cotton Weigher performed the duties of his elected office. He established the official weight of each bale, and the buyer paid a certain price per pound based on that weight. Martin McKeithan, F.L. Peeler, and H.A. Greene were some of those who held that office. Each buyer had a space on the

(See COTTON, Page 15)



UNUSUAL TEAM -- The sight of a bull and a mule pulling a wagon to the cotton platform in Raeford was so unusual that Robert Gatlin thought it worthy of a picture. It was taken in 1940.



COTTON PLATFORM -- This is how the old cotton platform in Raeford looks today. It was once a center of activity for the town but will soon bow to progress. The Bank of Raeford is planning a new office building for the site.