

Jones Journal

"A BETTER COUNTY THROUGH IMPROVED FARM PRACTICES"

VOLUME TWO

TRENTON, N. C. WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1950

NUMBER 17

Du Pont Plant Is Coming To Lenoir County

The Rumor By Rumor Story From March 25th to Close of the Big Deal

On March 25, 1950 Lenoir County Representative Marion Parrott was unusually busy with a series of knotty matters in his law office on East Gordon Street when he was interrupted by a visit from Dave Smith of Wilmington. Although a stranger to Parrott, Smith like Parrott was an alumnus of The Citadel and he stated his business briefly. He had come to Kinston to attend to another matter but had found a telegram waiting at Hotel Kinston calling the deal off. Being an active and ardent Citadel alumnus, Smith told Parrott that he had decided to stop in and see if he could get a donation for their alma mater.

Needless to say, Parrott, very busy with an accumulation of matters, was not too deeply concerned over the state of the Citadel Alumni Association treasury. But in politely endeavoring to get rid of Smith, Parrott had revealed to him the larger purpose that had brought Smith up from Wilmington.

Smith said that negotiations had been underway for some time with Henry B. W. Canady for an option on a 635 acre tract of land in Contentnea Neck Township. Smith's employee, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, was trying to get this option for a tremendous industrial plant that it hoped to persuade to come to live beside its tracks.

About all Smith was able to tell Parrott was that it came and he hated to see Lenoir County lose a chance at such a big expansion.

Parrott by now had forgotten his legal problems and was all ears. He asked Smith to sit down and asked him if he would consent to talk to several people that he'd like to call in on the discussion. Smith agreed, although he pointed out that there was little good in doing this, since it was apparent from the telegram he had received on arriving in Kinston that the "deal was off."

Still grabbing at this multi-million dollar straw Parrott called Ely Perry, real estate agent and chairman of the industrial committee of the local chamber of commerce. Then he called Leo Harvey who is just about the biggest gear that the county affords.

In a few minutes the four men had their heads together listening to Smith retell in greater detail what he had already told Parrott.

Not too much longer Mr. Canady was called in and his side of the problem was presented. He said that he most assuredly was not opposed to a big plant coming to the county and he would cooperate in any way to help. However, he pointed out that his refusal to do business with earlier representatives came from their methods.

"Their method", Canady stated, "consisted of sticking an option under my nose and telling me to, 'sign it.'"

By the 27th the wrinkles were ironed out of the question and an option was given to Mr. Dave L. Smith for the purchase of the 635 acres. The option was to expire on June 30, 1950.

About the only request made by Smith was one specifically on the subject of publicity. He asked through Parrott that it be kept out of the local papers if at all possible. Parrott talked with both newspapers and received their quick agreement to

let the thing stay in the rumor stage until some definite and positive step toward purchase of the site was taken.

Once the option was obtained officials of "the company" started visiting the county. Soon after their arrival they saw another site that looked good and here again they called on Parrott. Harvey and Perry to get options. This trio enrolled Jale West, local tractor dealer, as a most valuable assistant in this option-getting effort, since instead of one man to deal with, as in the case of Canady, eleven options had to be obtained in order to get the amount of land that "the company" wanted.

Once these sites were under option geologists moved in and began checking both for water potential and for strength of foundation. After prolonged checks the newer site came up short in the foundation department. The Canady site got a good mark in this department and remained in the race. On June 30th the option was renewed until September 1st.

During this time identical checks were being made at an optioned site in Wayne County near Grantham, at a site near Fayetteville and another near Florence, S. C. No one knew which had the edge except a few men in the top level of "the company."

One day an ACL official with one of Kinston City Manager Bill Heard. After introductions—which included name but not business affiliations. Heard was told, "These men want to ride around and look over Kinston. They want to ask a lot of questions but they don't want to be asked any questions."

Heard, who had more than an inkling of what was going on, agreed without having his arm twisted. For several hours they

Missed The Boat

Editor Jack Rider went home in a hurry Tuesday to put a tie and a clean shirt on when he was told that the representative of the Du Pont Company was coming around to pass out the official poop on the purchase of a site for a huge nylon plant in Lenoir County's Contentnea Neck Township. While home, Rider stopped off long enough to inhale an tasty apple dumpling in addition to the quick change act. When he came steaming back into his office a few minutes later at 1:30 all prettied up for the 2 p. m. appointment he found that the biggest story in the history of Kinston had been handled by C. B. Lodgaard, production manager of the Lenoir County News Co. wearing his dirty apron and his hands covered with ink.

rode, missing very few of Kinston's streets. They asked about taxes, property prices, rents, building costs, schools, recreation facilities and a lot more things. Heard kept his promise and answered all the questions and in spite of his king sized curiosity he asked none.

By now the proposition was street corner gossip. It was to cost anywhere from a half million dollars to a half billion. It was another hydrogen bomb plant, a paper mill—The stink, My Goodness! The usual belly-achers had their corner stands and were giving odds that "Old Ely will slip around and get it on his land somehow." Harvey also had a little of this kind of jockeying from a distance by smaller bore individuals.

ing to figure an angle to get "in on it" themselves. (Me too.) The Wayne County site turned up short on the availability of water and the Goldsboro crowd threw in their sponge and began rooting for Lenoir County. From Goldsboro one amusing rumor drifted out to the effect that Lenoir County had gotten the nod over Wayne because Lenoir Commissioners had had "the foresight to buy a site and

Here's Du Pont's Official Release On Purchase Of Site For Lenoir Factory

give it to 'the company' free of charge."

On August 1, 1950 a five car special train pulled by a swanky, freshly painted diesel locomotive pulled in on the ACL. This was a sight in itself since it had been over a decade since passenger thrains had run on this ACL line.

Railroad officials admitted that ACL President C. McNeill Davis was aboard the special train as well as ACL Vice-President L. C. Jeffords and C. G. Sibley and to keep these number one gears company was none other than F. B. Langley of Savannah, Ga., general superintendent of the ACL. When questioned about the rest of the party of some dozen men aboard the train the railroaders clammed up tighter than a frightened oyster.

For one hour and five minutes the train sat at the siding between Gordon and North streets, waiting for five men who had gone in an automobile out to the Canady Site. When they returned the train pulled out and rumors really got into high gear.

During the following week rumor had it that T. A. Loving, East Carolina's biggest building contractor was organizing a group to build 1,000 residential dwellings in Kinston.

The same week that the "Loving" rumor was making the

announcement that E. I. DuPont de Nemours had been engaged to construct a hydrogen bomb plant. The story went on to point out that a 200,000 acre site would be required for this project. That did not deter local rumor makers, however, who quickly forgot the 635 acre size of the local site.

Some local folks were moving to the mountains. Some even

(Continued on Back Page)

E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company has taken an option on a tract of approximately 635 acres on the Neuse River between Kinston and Graingers for the site of a nylon plant.

"We are looking forward with pleasure to this new location in the South," said A. E. Buchanan Jr., assistant general manager of Du Pont's Rayon Department, in making the announcement here today.

"We have had mutually fine relations with the people where our other plants are located and we will be working closely with the people of the Kinston area from now on," said Mr. Buchanan. He was accompanied by Dr. G. W. Filson, manager of the Nylon Division; C. W. Switzer, assistant manager, and William T. Wood, director of nylon production.

Located on the northeast bank of the river about six and a half miles from Kinston, the tract is bounded by State Highway 11 and is adjacent to the main line of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

Approximately 1,200 people will be required to operate the plant when completed. Construction work, which will be handled by the Engineering Department of the Du Pont Company with sub-contracts for such specialties as job conditions warrant, is expected to start early next year. An estimated 300 men will be employed during the construction.

Approximately 18 months will be required for completion after start of construction.

The plant here will be Du Pont's fourth nylon yarn plant and the ninth major expansion of its nylon manufacturing facilities since World War II. The world's first plant at Seaford, Del., is being expanded at present as is the plant which was opened at Chattanooga, Tenn., in 1948. Both projects the scheduled for completion early next year.

Two weeks ago, the company announced an expansion project for the plant at Martinsville, Va., which was built in 1941 and enlarged in 1945-46.

Immediately after the war, Du Pont completed a new plant at Orange, Texas, for the manufacture of nylon basic chemical ingredients. Construction is under way on a new plant at Victoria, Texas, for the manufacture of additional basic ingredients, while capacity for other basic materials required in the production of nylon is being expanded at a unit of the Niagara Falls, N. Y., plant which was built in 1947-48.

In addition to nylon yarn, Du Pont's Rayon Department manufactures viscose process rayon at Buffalo, N. Y., Old Hickory, Tenn., and Richmond, Va. Acetate rayon is manufactured at Waynesboro, Va., and "Orlon" acrylic fiber is produced at Camden, S. C.

Measles Outbreak In Lower Jones

A minor outbreak of measles has many school-age boys and girls in the Hunter Creek section of Jones County missing the first weeks of school, Public Health Nurse Alma Vassey reports. Not considered a serious outbreak but enough to cause comment, some 17 boys and girls are absent with official leave due to attacks of "red measles", she says.

Here Is Where Huge Plant Will Be



One square mile (635 acres) of the area pictured here was purchased Tuesday, September 5, from Henry B. W. Canady of Kinston by E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Company of Wilmington, Delaware. This aerial view of the site which will be the location of a multi-million dollar nylon plant was taken looking

south toward Kinston. Visible in the picture are the Highway and Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Tracks. The area purchased by the Delaware company lies between the highway and Neuse River which is to the left and just out of the picture. (Photo by Whitaker-Leffew)