

Direct Economic Pressure for Eastern Carolina Seen in Cigarette Sales Drop

Of major interest and concern to this great tobacco producing area or Eastern North Carolina are recently released cigarette sales figures for 1954.

Percentage-wise the drop was just five per cent, which is not much if one says it quickly, but when this five per cent is applied to the overall sales picture the figure takes on an ominous note in an area where such a big part of the income is derived from the production of cigarette tobacco.

In 1953 some 423.8 billion cigarettes were made in the United States. Last year that figure ducked down to 402.5 billion — still a lot of cigarettes but 21.3 billion less than the year before.

The drop of 21.3 billion means a lowered consumption of cigarette tobaccos of about 63.9 million pounds. There are only four tobacco markets in the United States where that gross weight of tobacco is sold in an average sales season: Wilson, Kinston, Rocky Mount and Winston-Salem.

Tobacco is produced in such a small area that this drop has a very immediate reflection on the economy of that small tobacco-growing area.

About 990 million pounds of tobacco are grown in North Carolina each year which is approximately half of all the tobacco grown in the United States.

Nearly every North Carolina county grows some tobacco where an average of about 650,000 acres is planted, but only 28 counties have as much as 10,000 acres and in that shall 28-county area over 508,300 of those acres of tobacco are grown.

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Lung Cancer Scare Causes Sales Drop and Style Changes in Every Branch of Cigarette Manufacture

For the first time in the history of cigarette making there was a drop rather than an increase in sales. Since 1920, when sales of the thin, tobacco sticks totalled 44.4 billion each year has topped the previous by amazing margins.

In mid-1953, however the sudden deluge of statistical evidence which tended to indicate a connection between lung cancer and cigarettes hit the country and sales began to sag.

The last half of '53 saw a drop in comparison with the sales for the last six months of '52 but the gains registered in the first half of '53 over the first half of '52 were sufficient for 1953 to wind up with a net gain of 6.8 billion, which was the smallest gain in 23 years.

But when the '54 figures were all in, a far different story was revealed. A net drop of five per cent or 21.3 billion cigarettes was seen for '54 in comparison with '53.

Every major cigarette in the country registered the drop, with the one exception of PALL MALLS which climbed into third place with a 7.9 per cent increase over the previous year's sales; thereby earning itself the

honor of becoming the first king-sized cigarette to crack the "Golden Ring" that had been monopolized for so long by Camel, Lucky Strike, Chesterfield, Phillip Morris and Old Gold.

Camels, in spite of a 15.9 per cent drop last year still clung very firmly to the top rung of the smoke trade with 89.8 billion sales which was 24.6 billion more than its next door neighbor, Lucky Strike in second place which dropped 6.2 per cent and ended the year with 65.2 billion sales.

Pall Mall climbed over Chesterfield into third position with its 7.9 per cent gain to 54.4 billion. There was a little trick to this, however. Chesterfield regulars dropped 22.9 per cent, but Chesterfield Kings climbed 10.7 per cent. The Chesterfield total of 57.5 still gave it a combined total higher than Pall Mall's but each brand is rated on its individual sizes and variations.

Phillip Morris slipped 17.9 per cent to wind up with 24.8 billion sales and fifth place.

Old Golds which now come in three variations (regulars Kings and filters) wound up in sixth spot with their regulars, but their three variations total was 21.1 billion, and of that 15.6 billion were the regulars.

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This picture most inadequately records the end of a building, and more importantly, the end of an era.

With its windows gone, its roof and elevator cupola beginning to disappear the original Memorial General Hospital will soon be only a memory in a community where it served well, frequently even beyond the limits of its small capacity.

Six Kinston doctors combined their credit and talents to build and operate Memorial General Hospital. They felt the need for additional hospital facilities.

Doctors Paul and Stanley Whitaker, Charles Mangum, Vance Peery, Floyd Wooten and J. Garves Poole founded, financed and operated the original hospital which is here pictured as it sings its swan song.

As time and the philosophy of America changed the hospital was sold to a non-profit private group, The East Carolina Hospital Association which operated the hospital for many years.

The doctors stuck their necks out for this building in 1925 and in 1926 it was opened and began receiving patients.

The hospital was expanded twice under the direction of this private association. But then along came something called the "Hill-Burton Act" which made possible federal grants to publicly owned and operated hospitals for expansion, construction or renovation.

This caused the hospital property to be transferred to Lenoir County, which accepted the property on the condition that it would immediately be expanded to 125 beds capacity and modernized from stem to stern. But, building codes being what they are meant the certain end of that original 25-bed building which had been called "The New Hospital" by a generation of Kinstonians.

Its construction and usage had not left it in any fit condition to continue serving even if it had served so well during its 29-year life.

The tragedies, the joys the hardwork that had gone on under its roof could have nothing to do now with its end.

When it was built, just 30 years ago, the shadow of what today is loosely called "Socialized Medicine" had not begun to grow.

With its end, and with the opening for use of the complete new hospital which replaces it, a giant step has been taken in the direction of socialized medicine.

The medical profession which resists anything with a semblance of socialized medicine has accepted, even if reluctantly, the principle of publicly owned and government-operated hospitals.

At present the welfare laws guarantee hospital care for welfare clients when it is prescribed. See Hospital page ten

New Parking Meters

City employees and a factory mechanic this week installed new automatic parking meters on Queen Street from King Street to Peyton Avenue. The new meters "sell" up to one hour of parking, and accept pennies or nickels. The old meters also accepted these two coins but two hours of parking could be purchased. All side street parking meters are still of the two-hour variety. This change was made by city officials in an effort to create a greater turnover in downtown parking.

Four Jones Arrests Reported By Yates

Jones County Sheriff Brown Yates reports the arrest of four men in the past week.

William C. Conway of Kinston was indicted by Patrolman Marvin Thomas on charges of reckless and drunken driving.

John Wesley Gooding of Kinston route three was picked up on a charge of violating his probation conditions and he was committed to the roads for a term of 24 months.

Harold Hill of Trenton route one was booked for public drunkenness and disorderly conduct.

Emmanuel White of Pollocksville was indicted in a warrant charging him with trespassing.

Fashion Authority To Give Talk For Jones Home Clubbers

Jones County Home Demonstration Club members will have an opportunity to attend a special discussion on home sewing by Mrs. Jane Scott at 2 March 10 at the Agriculture Building in Trenton. Her talk will include a demonstration of how to determine the correct pattern size for various adult figures — the prime requirement for making a well-fitting garment.

Other subjects of interest to be included in her discussion will be styles becoming to various figure types and suitable fabrics and colors for each. Diagrams and charts will illustrate some of the features Mrs. Scott will point up. She will also show new types of fabrics and will give suggestions for accessorizing your wardrobe.

Pleasant Hill Benefit

There will be a benefit barbecue supper from 4 until 8 p. m. Saturday at the Pleasant Hill Christian Church in Upper Jones County where an all-country-cooked barbecue dinner with the fine trimmings will be served for the benefit of the church building fund.

Shady Grove Benefit

Friday afternoon from 5 until 7 a benefit barbecue supper is to be served at the Shady Grove Methodist Church in Upper

Jones Fire Fighter Killed Instantly In Wednesday Accident

Thirty-Two Year Old James Anton Kennedy, forest fire fighter whose home is in the Sasser Mill section of Jones County, was killed instantly Wednesday afternoon at about 5 while fighting a fire in the Cove City section of Craven County.

Kennedy, father of three, was driving a caterpillar drawn fire plow, cutting a lane in an effort to cut off a spreading woods fire. It appeared that the caterpillar tractor had struck a large stump just as Kennedy raised up in his seat. This caused his head to strike the brush bar with terrific pressure.

Jones County. All proceeds from the supper will go into the parsonage construction fund and the public is invited to help build the preacher a home and share a fine supper at the same time.

Coach Frank Mock's 'Short Green Line'



A recent movie-release is "The Long Grey Line" but Monday when the first turn-out for spring baseball practice came for Coach Frank Mock at Grainger High School the title might have been "The Short Green Line."

Although post-season basketball play delayed the arrival of a number of potential baseball players, Coach Mock was faced with his most difficult team-building chore in his 20 years at the local brain factory.

For the first time he saw his entire varsity nine graduate last spring. Some of the hopefuls who turned out Monday for the first limbering up have had considerable baseball experience, and are not as green as that first line may have indicated.

Only 21 students turned out for the Monday session, while over 100 is a usual turnout for

football practice. Baseball has slipped considerably in the aspirations of students of today, Mock admits, in spite of the fact that there is a bigger demand, higher pay and longer life ahead for the professional baseball player than for any other athlete.

In recent years in spite of having teams of championship caliber, Grainger High had next to no support for its baseball teams. Thousands turn out with flags flying and band playing when the football and basketball teams appear, but many times during the baseball season with championship games being played there were nearly as many people on the field as in the grandstands.

Baseball is sick. What do you prescribe for its cure? (Polaroid photo-in-a-minute by Jack Rider)