

BAR ASSOCIATION MISSES DOCUMENTS AFTER MONTHS; WANTS SOME OTHERS HUNG

by Jack Rider

Here in April the Lenoir County Bar Association has discovered that the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners had removed copies of two documents that had been hanging in the courtroom of the court house for the past 10 years.

As one result of that one of the lawyers last Monday called on the board of county commissioners and exercised his concern rather heatedly and then that night in solemn convocation, and with little else to do the bar association unanimously adopted a rather lengthy resolution, which had as its first "whereas": "Whereas, it has come to the attention of the Lenoir County Bar Association that the Lenoir County Board of Commissioners, by motion unanimously passed on January 5, 1971, caused to be removed from the Lenoir County courthouse courtroom the framed edition of the Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights."

And with two or three other qualifying whereases the bar association resolved, unanimously,

that this petition be filed with the county commissioners of the county of Lenoir requesting that said commissioners direct that the framed copies of the Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights be returned to their proper place in the Lenoir County Courthouse to be there retained on public display. . ."

Since I am one of the county commission members who voted to take these documents down and one of those who is now being asked to reverse a decision of just four months ago let me give a full view of myself on this tempest in this legal teapot.

I was one of those sidewalk superintendents who looked on with amazement and pride some 30 years ago as the Lenoir County courthouse was built, and marvelled at the beauty of its design and the tender loving care its architects, Michell Wooten and John Rowland, lavished on their first major public building in Lenoir County.

Like most others I looked with awe and pride on the unbelievable beauty of the courtroom and the specially cut panelling

which came by special freight car all the way from the west coast.

First, the court room was not designed to serve as a gallery for portraits or the hanging of facsimiles of historical documents. It gave me a very severe pain when they began driving nails in these irreplaceable panels and hanging cheap copies of poorly framed documents and only because they had been framed in his dying years by a fine old gentleman, Judge Henry A. Grady, who puttered away his last few years in a little woodwork shop at his home near New Bern.

Rather than say "No" to the old man this abuse of the courtroom panelling was entered upon and there, grossly out of place, completely out of the reading range of any one, too high to be seen, but just hanging there, they remained for 19 years.

Then in January the board of county commissioners was asked to hang a portrait on these walls and I expressed the view to the board that I have expressed

here; that to me it was unalterably wrong to mar the panelling of the courtroom with any other hangings, and that I as a party of one would like to see the two items hanging there removed and put in a more logical place.

The board unanimously agreed and the two documents were taken down.

Now after four months the bar members have missed them, and what's more after 19 years they didn't even know what the documents were.

Actually, the documents were copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Magna Carta. Yet the bar association wants the bill of Rights and the Magna Charta rehung. This will be difficult, as this date, since Judge Grady did not frame the first ten amendments to the constitution for us while he was puttering away in his woodwork shop in those twilight years of his long and useful life.

So much for that, already Commissioner Ike Whitfield has cut and run, as usual, and he's ready to rehang whatever it is the bar association wants rehung.

I will make this one small concession: if a committee from the Kinston Arts Council will make a complete study of the courtroom, take a good look at the two gifts of the late Judge Grady, and also consider the size portrait the lawyers want to hang in the courtroom of Judge Vernon Cowper, I will be happy to accept whatever recommendation that the Arts Council Committee will come up with.

To me the matter of lighting, the matter of being positioned so the public can view them and the matter of what damage the panelling will possibly suffer are all items that would have to be considered carefully, but if the Art Council Committee took all of these factors into consideration and then recommended the rehangng these items I will vote to have it done.

But just a petition from the bar association whose membership didn't even know what documents were there after 19 years will not move me into any sudden action on this or anything else.

THE JONES COUNTY

JOURNAL

NUMBER 46

TRENTON, N. C., THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 1971

VOLUME XVII

Fearless Fireman?

Herbert A. Tolar of Wallace Road just north of Kinston was charged with public drunkenness, resisting arrest, assault on an officer and malicious damage to private property early Saturday morning. He was found sitting in front of his burning trailer home at 3 a.m. too drunk to fight fire but not too drunk to fight officers. Damage to the trailer was estimated at \$2,500.

BRONSTEIN GETS AWARD

Monday night Saint John's Masonic Lodge presented Dave Bronstein with a special award which commemorated Bronstein's 50 years as a Master Mason.

Long Time Jones Teacher Retiring

Lillie F. McDaniel, a veteran of 39 years service teaching in Jones County Public School, has announced that she intends to retire at the close of the 1970-71 school year this summer.

Commenting on her long years of service to Jones Countians, Miss McDaniel stated, "I have enjoyed working with the many fine students, teachers and administrators in Jones County throughout the years. I wish only the best for the Jones County Schools in the future."

Miss McDaniel will be missed by the two generations of Jones Countians that she helped educate.

Car Hits Home In Lenoir County

At 8:30 Sunday morning Mrs. Inez Overton of Moyock lost control of her car, went out of control for an estimated 650 feet before plowing into the home of Mrs. Eliza Hill on Highway NC 55 about 17 miles west of Kinston.

Mrs. Overton and her 15 year-old son Claude both suffered serious injuries and narrowly escaped death since their car caught fire with the impact and but for quick action by people in the neighborhood and the Seven Springs Volunteer Fire Department the fire would have destroyed the Hill home.

Damage estimated at the time

Eight Cases Heard In Quiet Session Of Jones Court

Last Friday eight cases on the calendar of Jones County District Court were cleared in one of the quietest sessions of recent months.

Robert Hill Jr. was ordered to pay the costs for malicious damage to private property, a nol pross was entered in the charge of not having his car inspected against William D. Moore.

Edward E. Carter and Anna Q. Metts were each fined \$25 and costs for driving without a license.

Judge N. Kornegay paid the costs for driving on the wrong side of the road, Thomas Pennington and William G. Kornegay each paid a \$5 fine and costs for speeding and Rudy C. Shephard paid the costs for speeding.

to the home of \$2000 may be on the low side since closer examination revealed that the house was knocked off its foundation.

One Probate Action

During the past week Jones County Court Clerk Rogers Pollock reports his office has received for probate the will of Furney Wilder, under which Wilder's estate with an estimated value of \$6,650 is left to his son Aaron of Scotland Neck, who was also named executor without bond under terms of the will. Most of the holding was in real estate located in Jones County.

Airman Daugherty Gets Top Award

Airman First Class Glenn P. Daugherty, grandson of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Heath of Route 1, Trenton, has been named Outstanding Airman in his unit at Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam.

Airman Daugherty, a security policeman, was selected for his exemplary conduct and duty performance. He is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. He previously served at Holloman AFB, N.M.

The airman is a 1969 graduate of Jones Central High School.

APRIL 15th: DAY OF ANGUISH, ANGER; FRUSTRATION, FEAR; GUESSING & GRATIFICATION

by Jack Rider

In Eastern North Carolina April is the most beautiful of all the months, with azalea, wisteria, dogwood and endless other beauties perfuming the breeze and delighting the eye.

But a few years back some grudge around Washington decided to make the federal tax payer happier by postponing for one month that deadline with the "Infernal Revenue Service."

And with that decision the income tax filing deadline was moved from its most fitting time in the "Ides of March" to the beautiful season of April.

And here it is; time to confess enough to sound honest and cheat enough to stay solvent. It is the season of great panic in the land, and those poor souls who earn their bread by "helping" the innocent fill out the proper tax forms labor far into the night as they fight that midnight deadline of April 15th.

For some masochistic reason a majority of us wait until that last minute, little realizing that the tax rate on April 15th is exactly the same it was the day

one received his "W-2" form and was then ready to begin filling out the lines on that accursed tax form.

Refunds, if any, will come back more quickly to the early filer, and there will be no last minute reduction in the rate, or in the penalty to be paid if one in that last hectic few hours goofs and puts the right figures on the wrong line, or visa versa.

But what we do; rather fearing to put it all down on one piece of paper for the IRS to see, and doubt and nag about.

This year a new "simplified" form was issued to the American taxpayers, and it was as complicated as the confusing form of the year before and the year before.

The "simplicity" of this form has given rise to a new business in the land, or a flock of new businesses. They are loosely called "tax preparation companies" and they range from one-man outfits in the backroom of pool halls to huge outfits such as the H & R Block Company, which as of the latest count, had 5,287 offices in every cross-

road village across the land.

This year one of the biggest of the national chain stores, Sears Roebuck, got in the act and opened offices in 600 of its stores, where for a fee they will attempt to "simplify" the simple form.

Obviously millions of taxpayers who want to be honest, but want all the loopholes they can possibly enjoy turn to these agencies each year.

One such soul in the person of an anonymous Atlanta, Georgian this year turned to not one, but five of these companies (including two of H & R Block) and two visits to the IRS itself and as most any taxpayer could have told him in the beginning: He came up with seven different answers.

This "Mr. Atlanta," who for understandable reasons prefers to remain anonymous reports on his trial and tribulations in this week's issue of "The National Observer" in which he confesses that he had a gross income in 1970 of \$10,318.80, plus a reimbursement for moving from his employer of \$3,643.89.

In his seven efforts to be honest with the tax man and careful with his money "Mr. Atlanta" found a range of \$793.04 in the answers he received and paid out \$119 to the five companies who gave him these answers, and of course, got his two different answers from IRS agents "free".

Sears Roebuck hit "Mr. Atlanta" the hardest blow by telling him that he owed an extra \$141 to the federal tax collector, for which sad news he was charged \$15.

The highest fee for this "expert" service was charged by C & M Company, whose "expert" charged him \$31 to tell him that he had a refund of \$652.04 coming to brighten his summer vacation time.

On his first visit to the IRS office "Mr. Atlanta" was told that he was due a refund of \$466.10. Understandably a trifle confused by this time, the taxpayer went to another IRS agent for a last check and this time was told that the accurate refund he is due is \$400.94.

And, all of this mind you was

just on the subject of his federal tax liability. The spread for "Mr. Atlanta's" state tax program was almost equally unequal.

No two of the five professional services came up with the same state figure, and he was told his refund from the State of Georgia tax collector would range from \$55 to \$181.04. Even Sears told him he had \$111 rebate due from the state tax collector.

So armed with seven "expert" opinions, each of which was filled out in the presence of a reporter who went along to "help" his friend, "Mr. Atlanta" approached April 15th with the same dilemma of all the rest.

The best guess is that close to half of the nation's 77 million income tax payers turn to some kind of "expert" for help with filing their tax return.

The reason is fairly simple: no one trusts the Internal Revenue Service to give them a square deal, so they spend their money looking for someone who will, for a fee.