

Around Our Town
—SHELBY SIDELIGETS—
— R. D. —

Another touch of Florida to Shelby and Western Carolina: A baby alligator now paddles about the fountain on the north side of the court square—a reminiscence of other days to the fire department.

Where the water that spurts up falls back in the pool is the sleeping place of the young gator, and now the court square has an added attraction, one that makes the youngsters stand back a-step or when he throws open his gaping mouth.

Dr. Scruggs, Charlotte surgeon who makes weekly visits to the Shelby hospital, whether or not he likes to be called an interne should be proud of the fact that he still looks young. A Star reporter securing a list of patients at the hospital this week saw Dr. Scruggs walking down the hall away from him and inquired who the new interne was. The reporter left before the surgeon was told of the query.

In recent weeks two mysteries have puzzled Shelby, neither a home affair as both are Charlotte conundrums. They are: What has become of Bailey Groomer and the silver cup that once decorated the pages of The Observer for would-be champions to look at and long for? And along comes—the announcement that Groomer has forsaken the newspaper game and will be secretary of the Chamber of Commerce at Laurinburg, and it is to be hoped the former sports writer takes as many new business enterprises to Laurinburg as he sent championships to Shelby. The cup? Oh, yes, with extension of the city limits school space hereabouts is so cramped that there is little room left for mere honorary cups.

This week maniac motorists are wondering what their number will be.

From the head of the alley between Riviere's and Rose's one sultry afternoon this week there came strains of "When You and I Were Young, Maggie." A blind man on a dry goods box grinding a hand organ. The crank turns on, endlessly, it seems, and the eyes, unseeing, look out into the hurrying humanity of the state. The steadiness of that gaze gives the appearance of one who really is gazing back into the happy boyhood days and youth's sweetheart. The battered black hat on the hot pavement contains only a few coins, a bit of charity by passersby, but the crank turns on and the music of the blind man unknowingly gives another air to the street as the minds of many flit back over the years to a youth and Maggie. A boy from the farming section walks by, becomes interested and engages the sightless musician in conversation. The care-wrinkled face lights up with a smile—the eyes cannot—just because someone talks to him. Perhaps friendly conversation is little in his life. And one wonders what life would be if one could not see and few people were interested to even talk the long hours away?

And many able-bodied men with two eyes, two legs, two arms and many friends call life hard! Did we say "men?" Or drop a coin in the hat?

The big real estate busses may shoot on to Lake Lanier, Lake Lure and the other lakes to the westward, but along in the afternoon when an all day heat has made things sizzle Shelby is little interested in lakes, but motors out to Rafe King's place—and if Rafe were a real estate agent he might call his place a lake. Which makes us think of a new contrast: Did you see a boy blistered with sunburn—cuddling a frozen sucker? It's somewhat similar to a colored hod carrier nibbling an Eskimo pie in August.

We wonder if the "Paint and Clean Up Week" got its idea from the renovation at the court house? And another wonder is why the dome of the court building was ever daubed with an outlandish red? Much will be the rejoicing if the time is changed while the painters are on hand. It's a heck of a way to mar the beauty of the skyline of the stately court square.

Old Phil Roseboro, the old Shelby negro, who once made coffee for Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson, will have to wait until December for his first pension check, those recently placed on the pension list having to wait until a new payment year opens in December. In the meantime we suppose Old Phil, who in his youth could have licked Harry Wills will cut a dozen cords of wood or more and dig a mile or two of ditches.

How would you like to look from your porch into the street and see a big motor truck bearing down on your young son as he played? Hear the moans coming from the mangled form as it's borne to a surgeon. One move during paint and clean-up campaign and the general improvement of Shelby is to have a city playground for the children. It's too late to wish the boy had been playing somewhere else after his life has been crushed out. Eventually there will be a city playground, and as a tip to the city fathers: Such property can be purchased considerably cheaper now than in the years to come when the business section spreads outward and vacant lots are scarce.

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