

Perspectives

The blue dress

I hitched the strap of my purse higher on my shoulder and sorted through the blouses and dresses; then examined a few sweaters lying across a countertop. There were only six customers in the store, and it was a relief to have so much space to myself as well as a whole afternoon to browse. It had been a long while since deadline had lifted enough to allow such luxury of time.

As I made my selections, I noticed an elderly couple enter one of the fitting rooms with four dresses. "Nice," I smiled inwardly, that a man of any age, but especially one in his 80s would actually accompany his wife on an excursion like this.

I narrowed my choices and entered the remaining dressing room next to them. The booths were built for the privacy of the eye, not the ear, so it was impossible not to overhear their conversation. Though I've changed their names for the sake of discretion, I'll carry those words that drifted across that curtained was with me forever.

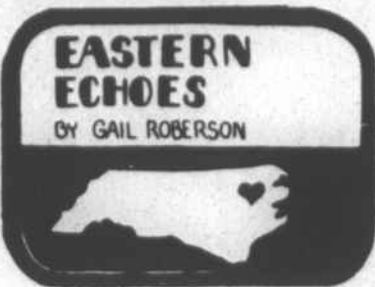
"Why don't you get them all, dear," the old man suggested. "They all fit you well and look nice on you." His voice was gentle, yet firm I got the distinct impression that he was accustomed to making the decisions in the family.

"No!" She replied emphatically in a voice that wavered a bit, apparently unaccustomed to such force. "There's no need for so much fuss, Henry," she said in a more gentle tone. "All I need is One dress. I like the blue one. Besides, it's your favorite color."

As I buttoned a silk blouse into place, my instincts told me that there was more going on here than just a shopping trip.

"I'm tired, Henry. Let's just get the blue one. I think it'll be perfect enough on me when my times comes."

"Don't be talking like that, Millie," he spoke anxiously to her. The curtain moved as if he reached out for her, striking the flowing fabric with his elbow. I stood in silence, tears spilling down my face with the realization of what was happening.



"You heard what the doctor said. We could have as long as six more months together," he urged gently, his voice hushed and melowed with age.

"Yes, Henry," she responded softly, "but I know it won't be that long. And I'm really tired today. Please let's get this over with so we can go on back home. I don't want to cover this up and pretend nothing's wrong anymore. I've got some things to do, some people to see, and a whole lot of plans to make."

There was silence between them as they shuffled about, her redressing and him hanging the discarded dresses on the rack on the wall.

"Well, I guess we might as well get me a new suit while we're here," he thought aloud, breaking the tension that filled the air.

"I don't suppose that would be such a bad idea, Henry," she answered immediately. "It has been a while."

As she walked slowly from the cubicle, I peeped through the curtain to get one last glimpse of the worn man with white hair. And, the words he whispered aloud to himself as he paused far behind his wife, have haunted me ever since.

"In over sixty years I ain't never been without you, woman, and I don't ever plan on being. I ain't about to let you take such a long trip as this Alone. I've got a few plans of my own to make, too."

And, with his head held high, he slipped his wallet from his back pocket and headed towards the cash register where she patiently waited for him to pay for the soft blue dress that she would be wearing when they finally took the last long trip...together.

Federal troops stationed in Perquimans County

In August, 1865, Perquimans County was conquered enemy territory so far as the United States government was concerned. Although local authority was ostensible in the hands of a provisional government, the Union Army was the true ruling force.

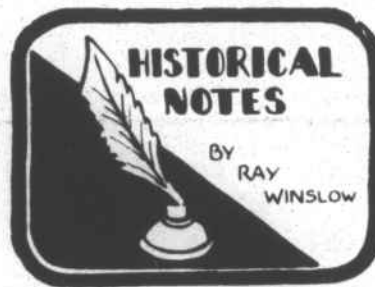
Federal troops were stationed in the county. As Nancy L. Learned, military occupation typically breeds crimes against civilians.

Early one Tuesday afternoon in the middle of August fifty-five-year-old Nancy was alone in her home near Woodlawn plantation in Harveys Neck. A man who would later be identified as Jack S. came to her door and asked if she had anything to sell, eggs or chickens. She replied she did not.

Jack asked her if she had seen any soldiers passing by that day. Nancy said she had not, and inquired what soldiers he meant. Jack told her they were soldiers who had been down Harveys Neck and were going to be stationed there. He claimed he was one of them, but the others had gotten ahead of them.

Jack then began to threaten Nancy, saying if he did not get what he wanted he or the other soldiers would kill her. As the terrified lady would testify in court, "He then came into the house, walked about awhile and then took a chair and sat down in front of and very near my bed, upon which I was at the time lying, very sick and unable to sit up."

"He again got up, walked about the room, threatened to take my life at least half a dozen times and said he was going to take one of my dresses, which was hanging in the room. I



then told him to go out of my house and let my dress and my self alone.

"He then came up to my bed and said 'he did not want the old dress' and seized hold of me. I screamed out. He said he would kill me right there on the bed if I said another. He then proceeded in his purposes and forcibly succeeded in having carnal knowledge and connexion with me upon my bed."

Jack then went off, armed with a crudgel and a walking stick. Nancy thought, but could not be sure, he had a knife in his pocket.

It took some time for the stricken Nancy to attract the attention of a passerby and for a posse to be gathered. About twelve hours after the crime, Nathan Tucker, Carlton Parish and others arrested Jack about a mile and a half from Nancy's house. While they were taking him to a magistrate, Jack jumped a large ditch and escaped through a field.

It was later learned that Jack had made his way to Norfolk. Only after a long series of requests to the military authorities in New Bern, Raleigh, Richmond, and Norfolk could the accused felon be brought back to Perquimans for trial.

For best results pick zucchini hourly



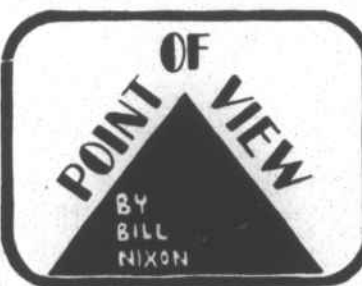
Take time to enjoy the simple pleasures of life

"Old dogs and children and watermelon wine." According to balladeer Tom T. Hall, these are the only things that are really important to life.

According to his song, old dogs care about you even when you make mistakes. God blesses the little children before they learn to hate, and when all else fails, a good shot of watermelon wine cures anything else.

Of course, we all know there is more to life. It isn't quite as simple as this. But neither should it be as difficult as we often make it.

I often find myself thinking of a man I knew as a child. Starting from humble beginnings, this man, at his death, was worth millions of dollars. He worked all his life to amass a fortune, to be able to afford the things in life that many believe will bring happiness. Early in life, he and his wife worked in the fields by lantern light in order to save having to hire help. A cigar smoker, he made sure he got everything out of one possible. After



smoking it down to a level where it nearly burned his lips, he would knock the fire from it and chew what remained. He approached everything in life with his penny-pinching logic.

As the years went by, he continued to attempt to remain active even though his health and reflexes were greatly diminished. Without thinking, he stopped his truck in the road one day to look at crops in the field. He was in the middle of a sharp curve and traffic coming behind him was

not able to see him until it was too late. While he wasn't killed instantly, he died later of the injuries.

After living a frugal life, he left this world without a thing.

All the millions he had worked so hard to accumulate were left behind for someone else to enjoy.

Certainly, we should have goals in life and should strive to better ourselves. We should have dreams, for without them life would be of little value. But we shouldn't allow ourselves to become so involved in seeking material things that we overlook the things that God has given us to enjoy. Nothing sums up what our outlook on life should be better than the time-worn phrase, "Take time to smell the roses."

Chances are, you know someone who seems to take this philosophy to heart. And chances are, you probably wonder why this person has no "ambition," why he seems to be satisfied with few of the material things so

many seem to feel are the important things in life. We have become so engrossed with attempting to be a success in life that we often forget to enjoy it.

So often I hear people complain about how difficult it is to make it today. Whereas one could work a few years ago and be able to afford the basics of life, now it takes two, and often, that isn't enough. Perhaps part of the reason is because our "basics" have changed. We've placed so much emphasis on material things that we have forgotten what it is to enjoy the things we have.

Years from now, when we are nearing the twilight of our lives, we'll probably look back and wonder why we didn't take the time to enjoy the simple pleasures God has granted us. As we think about all the time we spent looking for greener pastures, we'll probably realize the only place the grass is greener is over the septic tank. But by then it will be too late.

Veeco pays county taxes

20 YEARS AGO
Veeco Presents \$12,562 Check To County For Tax: J.R. Haden, Albemarle District Manager of the Virginia Electric Power Company, has presented real estate and personal property tax checks totaling \$162,000 to county and town tax collectors in Veeco's Albemarle District.

First Cotton Bloom: Nurney B. Chappell of Belvidere called in last week and reported the first cotton bloom of the season. Mr. Chappell stated not only had he found the first cotton bloom, his entire field was blooming.

Dixie Auto Supply Opens In Harris Shopping Center: The Dixie Auto

Supply at the Harris Shopping Center is now open for business. Charles Ward, manager, is well known in Perquimans. He is a native and has long been in business here. Charles and Thomas Ward are sons of the

manager. All three men are well known and are qualified men.

Drycleaner Is Honored Here: Lizzie Harrell, Cannon Cleaners, Grubb Street, was honored this week for her professional drycleaning skill.

TRY CLASSIFIEDS

New Feature Beginning July 9

This feature will be called the Perquimans County Resident of the week. This feature will highlight citizens of the county, their activities and interests.

Anyone who would be interested please call or contact Gina Jepson, at the Perquimans Weekly Newspaper at 426-5728.



THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

Established In 1932

Published Each Thursday By The Daily Advance, Elizabeth City, N.C.
Second Class Postage Paid at Hertford, N.C. 27944 USPS 428-080

Gina K. Jepson
Editor
Anzie L. Wood
Advertising Manager

ONE YEAR MAIL SUBSCRIPTION RATES
In-County \$10.00 Out-Of-County \$11.00

119 West Grubb Street
P.O. Box 277
Hertford, N.C. 27944

Member
North Carolina Press Association
National Newspaper Association
North Carolina Association of Community Newspapers

NEWS COUPON

The news and editorial staff of the Perquimans Weekly would like you to tell us what kind of stories you like to see in the paper. If there is something or someone you feel is important — or some provocative issue you would like us to examine — please, let us know.

Just clip and fill out this coupon. Include as many details as possible (Names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc.) It may not be possible for us to use some of the stories suggested but we are always looking for new ideas.

So, next time you think of something you feel would make a good story, send it to: News Coupon, Perquimans Weekly, P.O. Box 277, Hertford, N.C. 27944.

STORY IDEA:

COMMENTS:

The Perquimans Weekly
119 W. Grubb St. Hertford
426-5726