



The Kings Mountain Herald

Established 1889



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TODAY'S BIBLE VERSE

For the Son of man has come to save that which was lost. Matthew 18:11

Improvements Mandatory

Saturday's train-car accident, costing four lives and hospitalizing another person, shocked Kings Mountain area citizens and reminded them of what they already know: Kings Mountain, with its long stretch of main line rail track, has all too many one-track crossings, and quite a paucity of protected crossings. Total of the latter is three, the U.S. 74 bridge, the adjacent "old" overhead bridge, too narrow for today's autos and with dangerous means of egress, and the too narrow underpass south of the city at Glass Grocery.

More or less amateur engineers have come forward since Saturday with numerous suggestions for improvement to prevent future tragedies, most of them quite costly in treasure. But, as many also suggest, who can measure the value of a human life?

At the Gold street crossing, the short approach from the east, as well as the short approach to westbound traffic entering from South Railroad avenue, adds to the crossing hazard and makes alleviation of the problem more difficult. Most agree, however, that immediate installation of the red-flashing lights with bell signal, such as employed at the Mountain street crossing, would be helpful.

Some of the sidewalk engineering suggestions include:

- 1) Construction of an underpass to replace the Gold street crossing.
- 2) Construction of an underpass to replace the Gold street crossing with concurrent closing of the Mountain street crossing.
- 3) Construction of an underpass at the Cedar street (Kings Mountain Cotton Oil Company) crossing.
- 4) Extension of Railroad avenue south to link with the county road serving the Margrace community, to cut crossing traffic.

Large expenditures are indicated in any or all these suggestions, and demand, of course, the services of a qualified traffic engineer.

It is not proper in this instance to damn the Southern Railway, which naturally would be happy to see all the crossings along its right-of-way plowed up and closed.

At the same time, the Kings Mountain problems and the many others along the long Southern route, must be assumed to be of much concern to the railway company, as ours are to the citizens of Kings Mountain.

Here is an area the officials of the city of Kings Mountain, Kings Mountain Chamber of Commerce, North Carolina Highway commission, and Southern Railway Company need to examine closely and together with firm intention of alleviating both short-term and long-term this continuing and increasing hazard to life, limb, and property.

Canard Labeled

When Judge L. Richardson Preyer announced his candidacy for governor, his supporters quietly acknowledged that there appeared only one speck of rust on his otherwise quite bright armor.

It was the fact that he had defended the convicted Communist, Junius Scales, and, it was understood, had subsequently signed a petition asking a reduction of Scales' six-year sentence to federal prison for violation of the Smith Act.

Typically, Candidate Preyer has made the full facts public. The salient ones are:

- 1) He accepted the Scales case as one of two court-appointed attorneys.
 - 2) He withdrew from the case when it became apparent that Scales was, in effect, going to be his own attorney and ignore the advice of counsel. (Judge Preyer would be party to no soap box utilization of the courtroom for espousing Communism.)
 - 3) He did not sign the petition.
 - 4) He addressed a letter to the judge presiding in the case (as many have done and will do again) saying he felt Scales was finally maturing from an undue and misguided intellectual idealism. The canard is labeled.
- And the speck of rust never was on the armor.

Matter of Money?

While leaders of the pro and anti forces on the amendment to the state constitution changing the make-up of the General Assembly have waxed eloquent in the extreme, the rank-and-file citizen has expressed comparatively little interest.

It is therefore easy to predict that a paucity of the state's voters will go to the polls Tuesday to determine whether the amendment is ratified or rejected.

The proposal, if approved, would reduce House membership from 120 to 100, with one from each county, and raise Senate membership from 50 to 70, based on population. It looks like an even swap, but it isn't.

Presently, 20 "extra" House members are allotted the more populous counties. Adoption of the amendment would cost Mecklenburg County probably two of its eight-member General Assembly delegation. Forsythe and Guilford would probably drop a member, but, with the added Senate membership, Gaston and Buncombe would qualify for their present three-member delegations.

At home, Cleveland, now qualified for one and two-thirds members, would, by the numbers, rate two, a Representative and Senator at each session. Yet the political leadership opposes, apparently regarding Cleveland as a "big" county, when, population-wise, Cleveland is a "middle-sized" county.

Filthy lucre is a factor in the argument, as is hardly unusual. The larger counties, for instance, oppose the upcoming \$100 million state school bond election on cash grounds. These reason that the percentage return of their tax money will be much less than percentage paid in taxes.

Yet Mecklenburg would hardly send the cash to Raleigh it sends were it not the hub of the Piedmont and shopping mecca of the whole of the Piedmont Carolinas. Obviously, much of the sales tax and income tax sent to Raleigh by Mecklenburg, Forsythe, and the other large counties is actually derived from citizens of the small counties.

Assumption that the small counties will align into a solid bloc to impress their will on the large ones is technically but not practically possible. The special interests of the many small counties of the east and of the west are co-terminal in only a paucity of matters.

Without especial excitement, the Herald recommends voting in favor of the "little federal" amendment Tuesday. The nation has operated successfully under a system whereby one house is based solely on geography, the other solely on population, and it makes sense for North Carolina.

Top Baseball Man

John H. Moss, the Kings Mountain citizen who had an idea and led it to fruition in spite of unaccountable odds, has been elected by sports writers and sportscasters as North Carolina's outstanding baseball man for 1963.

In 1960, 1961, and 1962, many of these same citizens "knew" that the fledgling Western Carolina (now Carolinas) would never go to post. It always did. The pay-off for Mr. Moss' imagination, persistence, energy and hard work was in 1963, when his league walked off with the major awards of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, known in the vernacular as "the minors."

His choice for the Will Wynne award given in honor of the state's first of many former and present major league performers is a high honor and mightily deserved.

The unheralded amendment at next Tuesday's election on allowing a wife to deed property in her own right without her husband's signature has been advertised as evening the deal. Not necessarily so, a veteran attorney says. While a husband may deed property in his own right without his wife's signature, the party of the second part would be ill-advised to accept such a deed. The wife, should her husband die, would retain a dower right in that property as long as she lived. Practically, the amendment change won't make a great amount of difference, but, as one citizen said, "We're getting along fine like we are."

MARTIN'S MEDICINE

By MARTIN HARMON
Ingredients: bits of news, wisdom, humor, and comments.
Directions: Take weekly, if possible, but avoid overdosage.

Last Saturday night, I was getting a closing time shoeshine from George Lindsay and the barbering contingent of Bill Bridges and Baxter Wright were admitting to clock-watching, after a very busy day. But, after the blinds were closed, Baxter took time to comment on a bizarre happening of Friday.

A motorist had the misfortune to lose a front wheel while navigating the Gold street rail crossing. The tale had a happy ending, as Good Samaritans helped roll the car off the tracks, while a wrecker was summoned to get the car to the auto hospital.

Just a fraction over an hour after Baxter related the tale, another car was crossing the track, but didn't quite make it, a southbound freight smashing it. The result was four deaths, with another passenger hospitalized with serious injuries.

Saturday night's tragedy may be the worse of many, from standpoint of numbers, of the many rail crossing accidents occurring in the Kings Mountain environs through the years.

Paul McGinnis' memory and the Herald files proved my childhood recall of an eight-death bus-train wreck at the Gold street crossing incorrect. The correct account was one death, the driver of the bus, with four passengers reported as "painfully injured." The injured, incidentally, were given emergency treatment by local doctors, transported to Gastonia and a hospital by the train (No. 28) which had struck the bus. It was the rainy and foggy night of April 16, 1924, a Thursday, and ex-President Woodrow Wilson had died only 12 days previously. The driver who was killed, named Paul Davis, wasn't a regular driver of the Studebaker bus, but was filling in for the regular driver, his brother-in-law. The depot at that time was located between Plonk's and Bridges Hardware.

No Kings Mountain crossing has escaped tallying a fatal accident.

There have been some miraculous escapes and among the more miraculous, Attorney J. R. Davis recalls, was the double-lick administered the late Claude O. Rhyne, who was struck first by a train going in one direction, then, his car tossed on the opposite track, by the oncoming train from the other direction. Mr. Davis says, "The car was a shambles, but Claude wasn't even scratched. Claude told me later he could hear the clackety-clack of the oncoming second train."

Paul McGinnis also remembers that happening. Mr. Rhyne proceeded to J. D. Hord's cafe for a cup of coffee and was visibly shaken. Then he revealed his narrow escape.

Dr. J. E. Anthony and the late Dr. J. S. Hood got a free ride for some distance many years ago that neither regarded as a bargain. Their car was struck at the Linwood (Craftsman Yarns) crossing, and car, with passengers, was carried on the cowcatcher almost to the present business district. Injuries were comparatively minor.

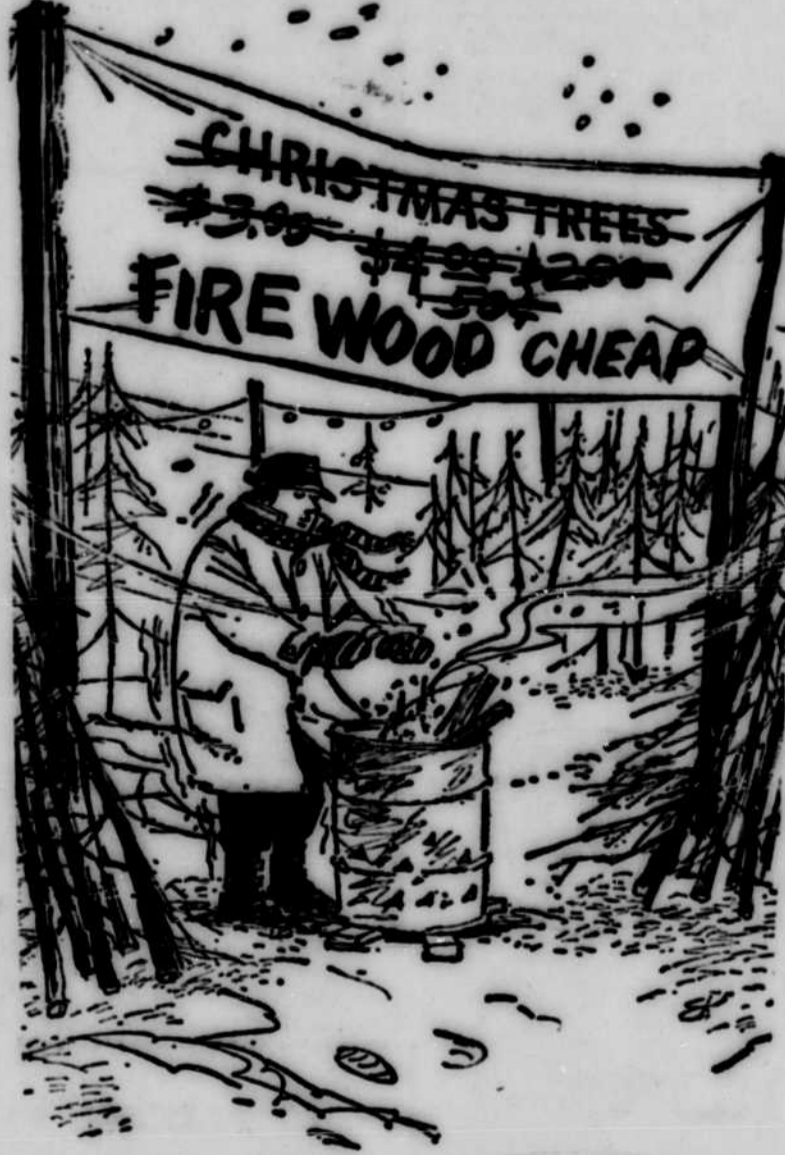
Unfortunately, most of the unwinning arguments between train and car are resolved tragically, as well as always in favor of the train.

All rail crossings are dangerous and the Gold street is among Kings Mountain's worse, due principally to 1) the short approach from the east, and 2) the "consistently heavy traffic this crossing accommodates. I manipulate this crossing a minimum of three times daily and sometimes many more times than that, and I've had several narrow escapes at this spot. The most recent occurred years ago. My mind was miles distant rather than where it should have been, and I stopped for a northbound switch engine with inches to spare. The fireman, half-scared and half-angry at such stupidity, shook his finger at me like an angry school teacher. If I shook back, it was because I was shaking all over.

Tragedies such as Saturday's shock the community, and the accident has a major topic of conversation since, concurrent with strong contentions that "something should be done."

Something should. Minimally, flashing bell signals, such as at the Mountain street crossing, should be installed. More ambitious planning would provide underpasses, not only at Gold street, but at other crossings. It is a problem which, with increasing auto traffic, promises to worsen, rather than improve.

January Sale



Viewpoints of Other Editors

SMALL JET STUDY

The Federal Aviation Agency probably will have a far easier time getting action on its proposal for a small, jetpowered airliner than it is having with its proposal for a supersonic monster to corner the trans-Atlantic trade.

A venture into the short-haul market assumes much more modest proportions than a supersonic push into the trans-oceanic field. Yet the short-haul market has not received the attention it demands. A speedier replacement for the 160-mile-an-hour DC-3 World War II design long has been needed. A successful model, seating between 14 and 20 persons, should interest foreign buyers as well as this country's 13 local-service lines and probably the military. Costs and design problems would not begin to compare with those of the supersonic transport.

It may be found that much of the future of the aviation industry lies in exploiting the immense potential of short and medium-haul markets.

St. Louis Post Dispatch

IN THE PYRAMIDS' SHADOW

Tourists visit the Pyramids of Egypt in part because it is the thing to do and in part, if they are sensitive, to feel the brooding of ancient thought and work, to catch an impression of the antiquity of man. For the same reasons, they leave buses behind in the desert and mount donkeys and camels.

But modernity has caught up with the Pyramids and the camels. The camel-drivers struck for higher rates, just as if they were driving New York City garbage trucks, and won. Probably Mr. Hoffa has not yet extended his tentacles to Gizeh, but the time is almost ripe. As Galileo is reputed to have muttered, when forced to affirm that the world stood still: "But it does move!" And we're not altogether sure we like it.

The New York Herald Tribune

SEASON IN THE SUN

The slanting sun now reaches down to the humble accents on the woodland's floor, the club mosses, venerable ancestors of all the trees that tower above them today. Some call them running pine and ground cedar, and they look like miniature evergreens seldom as much as a foot in height. Long strands of them will soon be gathered among the Christmas greens.

They date back perhaps 300 million years, to the Paleozoic era when they were huge trees in the fern forests that laid down today's coal beds. In our area there are about a dozen species of them now, all miniatures, mere whispers from the remote past. But they persist, still clinging to the ancient way of reproduction, by spores instead of seeds. Those spores, almost microscopic, form the lycopodium powder of medicine and industry.

How they lost their status as trees is a mystery, and why they persist is not really understood. Evolution seems to have passed them by, though it created from their kind not only the pines and hemlocks and all today's evergreen conifers but even the oak and the maple and the white-barked birch. They were here, in some form, before the first violet volved. And here they still are, older than the hills themselves. Perhaps they prove that nothing worthy is ever lost, that even beginnings are not forgotten. In any case, they come now to their own season in the sun, the thin, distant winter sun.

The New York Times

THE WORLD AFTER KENNEDY

Without much doubt, one of the main American interests in the coming decade will continue to be the prevention of nuclear proliferation and of the reduction of the risks of world war.

The present and future American Administrators may well welcome the prospect of Britain playing the role of candid friend and even of go-between. That was Britain's role during the more passive phases of President Eisenhower's Administration. But America is hardly likely to respond sympathetically if Britain is aiming to force U. S. policy by having a nuclear Bomb intended to trigger off the American deterrent at will. That is the true purpose of President de Gaulle's Bomb plans and neither this nor any other American Administration is going to react favorably to that kind of pressure.

Not only would a Bomb-less Britain encounter less suspicion in Washington than de Gaulle with his Bomb, Britain would also be able to address herself to Bonn free from the handicap of seeming to want to deny to West Germany what she deems essential for herself. It could be that Germany's diplomatic role may be enhanced in the months or years ahead. Any advance toward an agreement with Russia in Europe—whether on Berlin or on a network of military observers—will depend on German agreement. It may well be, therefore, that British influence will need to be exercised as much through Bonn as through Washington.

The Observer (London)

IF THE MACHINE GOOFS!

The Post Office Department has set three engineering firms to work designing a machine that will read and sort letters with ZIP code addresses at the rate of 17,000 an hour.

The purpose is to speed up the handling of printed matter sent out by mass mailers. Hand addressed letters from that cherished aunt of yours or a son or daughter at college would presumably get extra attention daily to the extent that the regular mail handlers were relieved of the junk mail burden.

A scanning - sorting machine would undoubtedly increase efficiency, and the Post Office Department is to be encouraged in its efforts to keep on top of the mounting pile of mail. But we have had qualms ever since we read about the subscriber who received 3,000 copies of the same magazine because a machine goofed.

Imagine the result if the new Post Office machine got stuck on your name and ZIP number for just an hour. The amount of junk mail reaching our mailboxes is bad enough now. But 17,000 pieces at one time. Whee!

Milwaukee Journal

10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Items of news about Kings Mountain area people and events taken from the 1954 files of the Kings Mountain Herald.

Jack White, Kings Mountain attorney and judge of city recorder's court, was elected chairman of No. 4 Township Young Democrats at an organization barbecue Friday night.

The city board of commissioners held a busy though largely routine session last Thursday.

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL
Mrs. Walter D. Harmon was hostess to members of the Queen of Clubs Bridge club Tuesday night.

Telephone Talk

By

F. B. HOUCK



THE POSTMAN WALKS ABOUT SIX MILES A DAY . . . the businessman around four . . . the average housewife walks over nine miles a day! From this we draw at least one conclusion. Extension telephones are the answer to every housewife's prayer. They save steps, time, and energy. An extension phone in just the right place . . . kitchen, bedroom, family room . . . can make a big difference in a busy housewife's day!

THE HOUSE OF DEEN WAH is probably the world's most unique telephone booth. It's located in New York City's Chinatown and is built like a small pagoda. A Chinese house-warming was held at its opening. Incense was burned, and a make-believe tiger frightened away evil spirits so that telephone users would meet with good luck in their business, social and romantic affairs. By the way, "Deen Wah" means "electric talker."

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: "Do you have the Area Code?"

CALLER: "No, just a bad case of hay fever."

AND SPEAKING OF AREA CODES . . . why not include them when making a list of numbers you use most often. You'll find many of them in the front of your directory, others you can get from the operator. Once you have your own personal list complete, keep it beside your phone for even quicker, more convenient Long Distance calling.

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