

# A famous Tar Heel duel



Samuel Price Carson, an early important figure in the history of both North Carolina and Texas, and a participant in one of this state's most famous duels, was born on January 1, 1798.

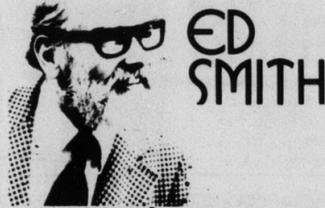
The Carson family home, now restored, is a well-known tourist attraction in McDowell County.

Carson, a spellbinding orator and staunch supporter of Andrew Jackson, was elected to the state legislature at the age of 24. Four years later he defeated Dr. Robert Vance for the office of U. S. Congressman. Shortly after the election in January, 1827, the two men fought a duel in Saluda Gap, just across the line in South Carolina (to avoid this state's law against dueling). Vance, an uncle of North Carolina's most famous governor, Z. B. Vance, was mortally wounded.

Carson's second that day was Davy Crockett, who rode all day on horseback to take the news of his survival back to the Carson family. Vance's death preyed on Carson's mind for the rest of his life, however, and on several later occasions he persuaded contemporaries to call off such "affairs of honor," one such being a proposed duel between the governors of North Carolina and Georgia!

Defeated in a bid for reelection to Congress, Carson followed Davy Crockett to Texas, signed that new "nation's Declaration of Independence and helped draft its constitution.

On January 20, 1840, the state's first tuition-free public school opened its door in Rockingham County.



A year earlier, in January of 1839, the General Assembly had authorized state financial assistance for the establishment of such schools. Voter approval was required in each county wishing to take advantage of state aid.

In January, 1881, (exact date unknown) Mrs. James Abbot Whistler died in England while visiting her son James, a struggling American-born artist.

Born Anna McNeill in Clarton, N. C., "Whistler's Mother" was destined to become one of this state's most famous women, although the portrait which immortalized her sold originally for \$625. Today it hangs in the Louvre and is valued at one-and-a-half million dollars.

Ironically Mrs. Whistler was disappointed in James, who

had flunked out of West Point, and disapproved of his career as an artist.

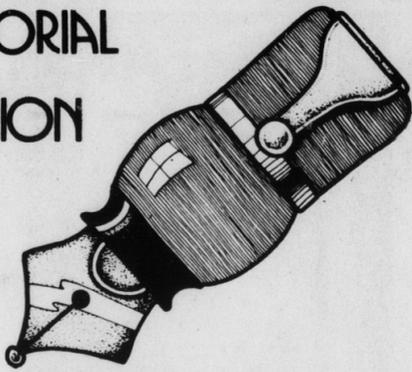
In January of 1868 a convention was held in Raleigh to rewrite the state's constitution.

Under conditions laid down by the U. S. Congress, no former Confederate state would be readmitted to the Union until its state constitution had been rewritten to conform to the U. S. Constitution, including provisions granting full rights to blacks.

Few meetings in this state's history have evoked such controversy, however, or such bitter comment in the press, even though a statewide election to hold the Constitutional Convention had passed by a margin of 90,000 to 30,000. Although it was called a "Carpetbaggers' Convention" and a meeting of baboons, monkeys, mules and jackasses" by Democratic newspapers, the resulting blueprints for state government is still in operation, although it has been heavily amended over the past 108 years.

Contrary to popular belief, only 15 of the 120 delegates were black, and only 18 were Northern-born. The overwhelming majority was apparently native white Carolinians anxious to reduce the friction of Reconstruction and get on with the business of rebuilding the state. All but 13 were members of the newly-formed Republican Party, however, and regarded by many other Tar Heels as collaborators with the hated Reconstruction Congress.

## EDITORIAL OPINION



### Accelerating taxes

Tax collections by the federal government have been accelerating at a progressive rate for more than a decade, draining earnings from individuals and businesses alike at a record clip. The transfer of wealth from the private sector is proving costly in the dearth of adequate funds for badly needed capital expansion.

As the federal government flirts with a \$500 billion budget for the next fiscal year (out of balance by about \$50 billion), the states are not far behind in the tax collection business. The U. S. Department of Commerce reports for the last fiscal year ending in September, the 50 states collected more than \$100 billion in taxes for the first time.

The \$101 billion state tax take last year was an increase of 13.2 percent over collections the previous year. State sales and gross receipts taxes provided slightly more than half total state revenues, but some of the other tax categories are growing faster.

Individual income taxes to the states went up almost 19 percent in 1977 over 1976. Corporate net income taxes were up 26 percent.

If that one-year growth rate represented profits or increases in the gross national product or in family incomes it would be a healthy sign for the economy. But to experience such growth in one year in one level of taxation is unconscionable.

### Franklin failed, too

There was nothing about Benjamin Franklin's birth, on Jan. 17, 1706, to foretell the beginning of one of the most productive lives in history. In the popular idiom of this generation, he should have been a failure for he was born into a large family suffering from privations.

That he failed in many of his endeavors is a matter of record. But his genius in such diverse fields as invention, publishing, electricity, politics, statesmanship and diplomacy carried him to the heights.

A chronicle of his 84 years must include high praise for his talents as a philosopher and revolutionary, and his strong scrawl can be found in many of the nation's most priceless documents. He was an active participant in many of the Republic's founding institutions and an able representative in foreign capitals, much of that work accomplished in his 70s.

Franklin was a nonconformist by choice, and a tenacious fighter for his beliefs. His was a life for the restless spirit to emulate, for those with sufficient courage to try.

### If you don't want to go to court....

When the Chief District Court Judges got their heads together in conference last Dec. 2 they decided on a few traffic offenses, effective Jan. 1, 1978, where the accused may waive court appearances. Likewise, they drew up a list of cases or offenses where a court appearance is mandatory.

The no-show waiver will be executed only if it is in writing and the citizen charged with the offense pleads guilty.

Speeding violations covered under the waiver rule include offenses of speeding five, 10 and 15 miles per hour above the speed limit. The tab for speeding is set at \$27 in costs plus a fine of \$5 for six to 10 miles per hour; and \$10 for 11 to 15 miles per hour above the speed limit.

Other violations and court costs and fines under the no-appearance policy include:

Driving without, or with expired operator's or chauffeur's license (except when revoked or suspended), or operating motorcycle without proper license endorsement, or knowingly

permitting an owned vehicle to be so operated — \$25 and costs;

Driving the wrong way on a dual-lane highway — \$25 and costs;

Improper passing — \$10 and costs;

Failure to dim lights — \$10 and costs;

Height and width violations — \$10 and costs;

Illegal transport of one quart or less tax paid alcoholic beverage with seal broken in passenger area of vehicle — \$10 and costs; driving too slowly — \$5 and costs.

A number of other offenses in which court appearance may be waived carry no fines, but court costs include parking violations; vehicle inspection law violations; exceeding a safe speed; following too closely; failure to stop for a red light or stop sign or flashing red light; failure to yield right of way; improper turn and/or signal; driving wrong way on one-way city street; improper vehicle equipment; failure to reduce speed to avoid accident.

The traffic offenses in which court appearance is mandatory include all

Little did the guy who called me about a picture know that he was the catalyst that saved a couple of pigeons from an icy death.

"The weather picture of the year is waiting for you to snap it at the water tank at Margrace Mill," the caller said. "There are icicles hanging down off the tank like you've never seen."

Then the caller hung up before I could thank him or make sure I had his name.

Gary Stewart, our sports writer-photographer, wasn't doing anything in particular at the moment, so I passed along the info to him.

Later, Gary said, "I'll bet you didn't know you were sending me on a mission of mercy, did you?" "How so?"

Gary explained that he drove to the Margrace Mill, where he met Jimmy Dickey, and together they went out to view the "weather picture of the year."

"I had the 135 lens on the camera and through the lens I could see the ground beneath the water tank just like it was inches from my nose. That's when I saw the pigeon," Gary said.

The bird was frozen in the ice that had formed from spillage beneath the tank, so Gary went slipping and sliding across the ice to rescue the pigeon. The pigeon's wings and tailfeathers were frozen stiff, so flying was out of the question.

"After I got off the ice with the pigeon without busting my pride," Gary continued, "Jimmy and I started back to the mill. We found another pigeon in the same predicament as the first. So we took both birds into the mill and found a box to put them in."

Gary said he then took the pigeons down to his father's barn and stashed the pigeons in the hayloft so they could keep warm and dry out.

Saturday morning Gary's pop went to feed his calf and when he opened the barn door, out flew one of the pigeons, flapping its way into the wild blue yonder. Later in the day Gary went to check on the birds and the last one flew away.

The Stewart cat just watched, sighed and curled up for another nap.

So, not only did we get a pretty good picture or so, but Gary got a chance to play the good samaritan. Maybe the Pigeon Fanciers of America oughta be told about this. Could be a medal in it for the sports editor.

Some of you have probably been wondering where Lib Stewart has been for the past week.

No, she isn't off attending another American Legion Auxiliary convention. She wishes that's all

# A mission of mercy



TOM  
McINTYRE

it was.

Lib is a victim of the flu bug. I think she has what they call the old-fashioned type of influenza. Whatever it is, Miss Elizabeth has been knocked for a loop.

It's Darrell Austin's fault.

He had it and wouldn't stay at home. But in all fairness, somebody else must've given it to Darrell, because he would never catch it on his own.

Ya' see, Darrell is the type of fellow that wears a sweater over a short-sleeve shirt when the snow is knee-deep. He's also the type of feller who comes into the office and shuts off the heat leaving the rest of us to freeze.

"I know what I'm doing," Darrell said. "They can't cure the flu, so I was trying to get pneumonia. That, they can cure."

Anyhow, Elizabeth Stewart is home in bed taking the medicine and resting. She'll be back to the grind when she is well. Meantime, your's truly is the "woman's editor" so let's show a little respect out there.

And speaking of rescues...

The Kings Mountain Rescue Squad initiated one out at Moss Lake last Thursday. It was a beagle stranded in the icy waters about 100 yards offshore. The rescue was perfected by breaking the ice and using Dr. Jim Burris' boat to reach the animal.

It is a longer story, but Roy Hammett and Mike McDaniel have already given it to the Shelby

DailyStar and for that I am going to get those guys.



Poet's  
Corner

MAKE IT THROUGH THE WINTER  
(c) 1978

Blue skies may be overcast  
The sun has a hiding place,  
Remember the summer roses  
Let the sunshine fall into space.

Trees have undressed for the winter sleep  
One must be brave to look,  
Bare limbs are fully showing  
Speechless is the babbling brook.

Birds are not stingy and flighty  
Winter wind whips up a gale,  
Snowflakes have the fear of falling  
Ice shivers the water pail

Gardens are taking their beauty nap  
Bulbs cannot sprout in the sleep,  
Leaves are mulching on top of them.  
A wind blown and ragged heap.

Blue skies may be overcast  
Hiding the beauty of the sun  
Just remember the summer roses  
And the gold that summer spun.

VIVIAN STEWART BILTCLIFFE

### Where's my big dividends?

To the editor,

It is very obvious that you are a master of the English language and the printed word, but I feel that I must question your mathematical calculations.

From the above mentioned editorial I quote, "Duke stockholders reap dividend rewards in large amounts."

I happen to own a few shares of Duke stock, and I have yet to reap any of these large dividend rewards.

I paid \$27 for some of this stock, it is now fluctuating between \$20 and \$22. At the time of purchase the dividend rate was \$1.40. This dividend rate has been increased three times over the past few years. Beginning in the last quarter of 1977 it is now paying \$1.72.

With a simple calculation you can see that this is a return of only 6.37 percent on money invested. Any of your local Savings and Loan Associations will pay a higher rate of return than this.

So, I ask you, where are those "dividend rewards in large amounts?"

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**KINGS MOUNTAIN  
MIRROR-HERALD**

PUBLISHED EACH  
TUESDAY AND THURSDAY

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The Mirror-Herald is published by General Publishing Company, P. O. Drawer 752, Kings Mountain, N. C. 28086. Business and editorial offices are located at 204 South Piedmont Ave. Phone: 739-7496. Second Class postage paid at Kings Mountain, N. C. Single copy 15 cents. Subscription rates: \$8.50 yearly in-state, \$4.25 six months; \$9.50 yearly out-of-state, \$5 six months; Student rate for nine months \$6.24