

# The \$50 hit man, or the cheap gunman

Dum-Do-Dum-Dum . . .  
 The following story is true. Only the facts have been changed to protect me.  
 The sun was shining brightly as the gentle waves lapped against the grassy lake shore. Birds twittered gaily in the trees. Then the peace was shattered by the sound of gunfire.  
 Four reports in all and a man lay bleeding on the ground.  
 Dum-De-Dum-Dum . . .  
 The \$50 Hit Man, or The Cheap Gunman, has struck.  
 Wwwwhhheeeeeeeeeeeeeee!  
 Police siren wailed, then died away under tires crunching the gravel.  
 "Looks like someone's been shot," said the big detective.  
 "Shrewd observation," retorted the little detective.  
 "Just for that crack, smartmouth, you have to carry the 387 magnum," said the big detective as he shoved the cannon into the little detective's shoulder holster. Then the big detective began looking for clues. The little detective, a little stooped over now, followed dutifully taking notes.  
 "Hmmm," hummed the big detective. "This guy's been shot four times."  
 "Mmmmmmm," mumbled the man who had been shot four times.  
 "Hey," the big detective shouted. "This guy ain't dead."  
 "Another shrewd observation," cracked the little detective.  
 "Still making wisecracks, eh, pal?" sneered the big detective. "Just for that, now I put bullets in the 387 magnum." Which he did at once. The little detective, straining to remain on his feet, stuffed a handkerchief in

his mouth so he couldn't make any further wisecracks.  
 "Don't sweat it, pal," the big detective told the man who had been shot four times. "We'll get you to the hospital. Call the rescue squad." He said that to the little detective, who unstuffed his mouth, then yelled as loud as he could . . .  
 "HEY! RESCUE SQUAD!"  
 "On the car radio, dummy! On the car radio," said the big detective.  
 Later in the hospital the man who had been shot four times gave the detectives enough information about the shooting to launch an investigation.  
 The investigation quickly led to the arrest of two former friends of the wounded man. They had to be former friends because friends don't put four bullets into you.  
 "I can't stand the bright lights! I can't stand the bright lights! Please don't beat me with a rubber hose!" cried the first former friend.  
 "What's the matter with you, pal?" asked the big detective. "We're still standing in your living room."  
 "Oh," said the former friend, grinning sheepishly.  
 Later in the back room at the police station after the former friend had been beaten with a rubber hose and treated to a dose of bright lights he confessed all.  
 "I did it! I did it!" he cried.  
 "You shot your former friend?" asked the big detective.  
 "No! I paid to have him shot."  
 "Hired a hit man, eh?"  
 "Yeah."  
 "Why?"



TOM MCINTYRE

## Even rural areas feel car thefts

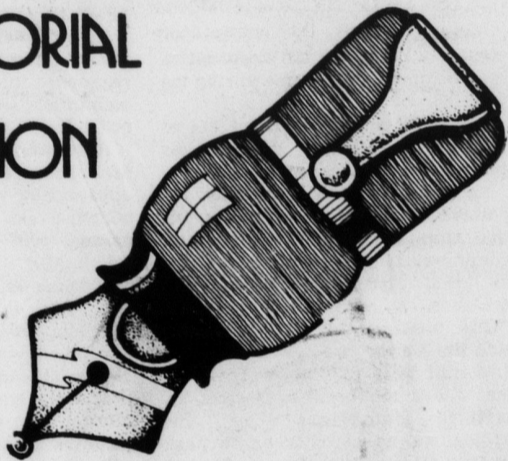
An 11 percent increase in motor vehicle thefts for small Southern communities shows that rural North Carolinians must be just as vigilant as their big city neighbors.  
 A spokesman for the National Automobile Theft Bureau notes suburban and rural areas experienced a 14 percent increase nationwide. Cities under 50,000 population reported an 11 per cent increase nationwide, and Southern states a five percent increase.  
 The above figures were included in the FBI'S Uniform Crime Reports released in mid-December. The report compares the January to September 1977 period to the same period of 1976.  
 In North Carolina, only Durham paralleled a three percent decrease in motor vehicle thefts for cities over 25,000 population nationwide. Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem reported an auto theft increase for the first nine months of 1977. A total of 2,108 vehicles were stolen from these five cities through September of last year, compared to 1,975 for the like period of 1976. During 1976, North Carolina law enforcement agencies reported 9,750 motor vehicle thefts.  
 The National Automobile Theft Bureau urges all North Carolinians to take special precautions during 1978 to avoid being included in this year's

"My former friend was fooling around."  
 "With your wife?"  
 "Make that my former wife."  
 "How much did you pay to have your former friend hit for playing around with your former wife?"  
 "Fifty big ones."  
 "\$50,000?"  
 "Heavens, no. \$50."  
 "You know a \$50 hit man?"  
 "Yeah."  
 "This is unbelievable," said the big detective. "There's a guy running around here killing people for \$50."

The former friend of the man shot four times raised his hand and was recognized.  
 "But you said my former friend is still alive."  
 "He is. You and your \$50 hit man are very lucky," the big detective said.  
 "Lemme ask you something," said the former friend of the man shot four times. "If my former friend is still alive, do you think I got legal grounds to get my \$50 back?"  
 "You don't stand a chance," piped the little detective.  
 "How come?" inquired the former friend of the man who was shot four times.  
 "Cause the \$50 hit man never guarantees his work."  
 So, the big detective went out and bought a second 387 magnum, loaded it and made the little detective carry it around as well.  
 "Sarcastic just cozes outta you, don't it, boy?"  
 The scene shifts now to the local newspaper office. The phone rings.

"Local newspaper office," answers the local newspaper editor.  
 "This is your local government department head," says the guy on the other end of the phone. "We want to place a help wanted ad."  
 "Why can't you guys keep any help?"  
 "Ya see," the department head began, "we're losing these three former friends. Seems one hired another one as a \$50 hit man to rub out this third one . . . anyway, I don't know if they'll be coming back to work anytime soon . . ."

## EDITORIAL OPINION



## Something to act upon

At a third meeting in the organization of the Kings Mountain Development Corporation tonight at 7:30, the newly appointed, on a temporary basis, officers and directors are expected to begin formulating policy.  
 The corporation is being developed to take advantage of recently approved Urban Development Action Grants, a federal program that guarantees up to 25 percent funding of approved projects. Also to build a fire under the sagging commercial development in the city.  
 Since the initial information concerning the project was dispensed there have been many questions asked by local citizens.  
 As simple as possible, the UDAG program:  
 (1) Has \$100-million to spread over 944 small communities across the United States;  
 (2) Kings Mountain has been ruled eligible to apply for UDAG funding;  
 (3) UDAG is basically a \$1 for \$3 funding program;  
 (4) UDAG covers residential, industrial and commercial development where such development is depressed creating economic stress and unemployment;  
 (5) The program encourages local citizens to lead the planning and execution of projects to upgrade the areas of the community affected;  
 (6) In Kings Mountain the local business community has been selected as the focus of the program;  
 (7) The Kings Mountain Development Corporation will be the planning organization to create one major upgrading program for the business community, raising local financing and earning letters of credit from lending institutions to give the corporation at least 75 percent funding for the project;  
 (8) The other 25 percent, if the project is approved, will come from the UDAG program. This guaranteed funding can serve as the basis for the corporation to receive low interest loans from lending institutions before the fact to ensure a successful program locally.  
 But this is only a part of the story. The real measure of success will come from local citizens involvement in the program.  
 The question, "Why should I invest in this corporation when I can't see the profit for me?" has been asked.  
 The only way we know how to answer this question is it will benefit these persons as a part of the citizenry as a whole rather than as individuals. It is really a test of the citizen to determine just how strong his or her feelings are for this community.  
 And this, we feel, is going to be the toughest part of the entire project — selling Kings Mountain to Kings Mountians.  
 We have mentioned this before and it can stand mentioning again. A community can be compared to the by-gone wagon train. Residents are members of that wagon train. And in crossing the vast unknown prairies of day to day living it requires the efforts of every member of the wagon train to make sure they survive the crossing. If a handful of the members lay down on the job, then the safety of the remainder is in jeopardy.  
 We feel Kings Mountain has too much potential to be an all-round community to be allowed to turn into merely a space for sleeping with all energies and monies being expended elsewhere.  
 There will be those who will become involved purely from selfish motivation. This is a fact of life. Why? Because the majority of us have always harbored the feeling that we should let others do whatever has to be done. For the most part the great opportunity frontiers were conquered before we ever came along. This is a brand new frontier and now the newcomers have an opportunity to participate.  
 It's something to think about.  
 And it's something to act upon.

## A brief, but very historic battle



ED SMITH

The shooting lasted less than two minutes. Casualties suffered — perhaps 50 to 75 men killed — represented less than two percent of the 3,500 men involved. Yet the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge on February 27, 1776, had a significant effect upon the course of the American Revolution in North Carolina.  
 It was the first battle of the war in this state. Its site Pender County some 17 miles from Wilmington — is now a National Military Park.  
 The near-total defeat of the Tories at Moore's Creek put an end to Royal Governor Josiah Martin's hopes for keeping North Carolina loyal to the King. He fled the state shortly thereafter, ending Royal rule here. For nearly five years thereafter, the new "state" would see no British soldiers.  
 The battle, fought at dawn, occurred when 2,000 Whig troops under Colonels Alexander Lillington and Richard Caswell blocked the bridge to prevent the crossing of some 1,500 Tories under General Donald McDonald.  
 The Tories — mostly Highland Scots recently arrived in this country — were marching to Wilmington to receive training and military supplies. They were scheduled to join forces with an expected British invasion fleet.  
 The Whigs had removed the planks from the bridge and greased the remaining log stringers, but the killed Scots — armed mostly with broadswords and courage — attempted to cross under fire. A one-sided slaughter ensued, ending in the capture of most of the Tories and the collapse of British hopes in North Carolina.  
 As a coincidence, Flora McDonald, the patron saint of these Highland Scots, also died during this week in history, March 1790, in her native Scotland, 14 years after the Moore's Creek Battle.  
 Flora, her husband, Allen and five of their seven children had joined the flood of Scottish immigrants to America in 1774, settling on a plantation near Cross Creek (Fayetteville).

Ironically, most of these Scots were themselves survivors of an unsuccessful rebellion against British rule. They had been pardoned and allowed to emigrate to America after taking Oaths of Allegiance to the Crown. When the Revolution began here, most felt obligated to side with the King. Before they marched off to join the British forces, Flora MacDonald delivered a rousing speech in Gaelic, dressed in her tartan, with a fiery cross burning in the background. Her husband and oldest son would be captured at Moore's Creek.

Flora had become famous for arranging the escape of Scottish Prince Charles after the collapse of her rebellion in 1746. Her funeral in 1790 was attended by thousands of admiring countrymen.

In late February, and early March of 1826, the aged Marquis de Lafayette toured North Carolina on his return visit to the United States. On March 4th and 5th he stopped in Fayetteville (named in his honor in 1783), staying overnight at the home of Duncan McRae on the site of the present courthouse.

On Mar. 1, 1662, one George Durant purchased land (thenceforth to be known as Durant's Neck) from the Indians. This is the oldest known recorded deed in the state's history.



## Poet's Corner

### WINTER'S PASSION (c) 1978

I wait for winter to pass on by  
 I watch her on the run,  
 Teasing every tree and shrub  
 And blotting out the sun.

Sharp, cold, cruel winter  
 Weather without concern,  
 For man, beast or butterfly  
 In a cocoon and cannot turn.

I stand at attention and try  
 To make the sun shine where I am,  
 Until Winter's passion passes by  
 I make do with the sham.

I find my place beside the kitten  
 And watch the winter's fire burn,  
 Until there is nothing left but ashes  
 Among the lace of fancy fern.

I wait for another golden sun  
 When Winter's passion has passed,  
 Allowing spring flowers to blossom again  
 When the fields and meadows are grassed.

VIVIAN STEWART BILTCLIFFE

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