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SEWERAGE COMPANY CAN'T BLUFF GAITHER

Mayor Gaither and Aldermen Not Scared by Cry of Bankruptcy From Sewerage Co.—Municipal Ownership Issue Suddenly Revived

Elizabeth City does not admit the right of the Elizabeth City Sewerage Co. to suddenly abandon its service and leave the city without sewerage facilities. Elizabeth City will not be forced into the purchase of the sewerage system and this administration will, if necessary, expropriate the property of the Elizabeth City Sewerage Co. and operate the system for the people. Such briefly is the attitude of the city administration in regard to the recent move of the Elizabeth City Sewerage Co., as expressed in an interview granted this newspaper by Mayor Gaither this week.

After playing with the Elizabeth City public for years and making many promises which were never fulfilled and probably were not intended to be fulfilled, the Elizabeth City Sewerage Co. announced last Saturday that it would discontinue its service after March 1, 1921 and expressed the hope that the city would take the sewerage system off the company's hands on some "fair and reasonable basis." The announcement was made over the name of the president of the company. His name is Crook.

The company admits that it is insolvent and can not undertake the necessary improvements to put its business on a paying basis and render the service called for by its franchise from the city. The company claims to have done a business of only about \$3,200 last year on an operating expense of about \$4,500. And there is very little operating expense attached to the sewerage system as it is. Only two small pumping stations operated by electric motors are required to keep the system going, and these stations require no other attention than occasional inspection.

Except for infrequent periods of extreme dry weather no other water is required for flushing these sewers than the water that is flushed into the sewers by water consumers. The sewers are in bad shape and utterly inadequate for the city's requirements.

The admission of insolvency by the company will enable the city to call for a receivership for the company and operate the system under a receivership until some other arrangement for sewerage can be made. The city has employed Hon. J. C. B. Ehringhaus to assist City Attorney W. L. Colohan in dealing with the situation.

The action of the Sewerage Co. has aroused the Elizabeth City public to the question of municipal ownership of its public utilities and the Board of Aldermen are about convinced that the city's only way out is to build its own electric light, water and sewerage systems. Such a venture in municipal ownership will cost the city a half million dollars, which looks like a big undertaking on top of a bond issue of \$400,000 for schools. But Mayor Gaither, himself a banker and financier of no mean ability, has been doing some tall figuring and it is his confident opinion that for half million dollar bond issue for light, power, water and sewerage would make no increase in the city's tax rate, since the very money now paid by the city for electric light and water would pay the interest on the bonds. Instead of calling for more revenue, these utilities properly conducted would net the city a revenue and pay for themselves in a comparatively few years.

It is the opinion of Mayor Gaither and his legal advisers that authority for the issuance of such bonds is found in the Municipal Finance Act of the 1917 General Assembly and no special legislative act is required to enable the city to proceed to acquire its own public utilities. The city already has preliminary plans in hand covering its light, water and sewerage problems.

BOLD BURGLARS AT WORK IN THIS CITY

It's a Good Plan to Keep Latch Strings Hanging Inside

Elizabeth City people will do well to keep their doors locked in view of bold burglaries pulled off in this city within the past week. Several such robberies have been reported to the police. The boldest and biggest occurred Monday night when a thief slipped into the hall of A. R. Nicholson's residence on Burgess St. during the supper hour and made off with an overcoat in the pockets of which Mr. Nicholson was collecting money for his boat line and for the Chamber of Commerce and finished his work after banking hours. About \$300 of the money in his pockets was in cash and probably will never be recovered.

Mr. Nicholson's empty pocket book and the fragments of his checks and other papers were found in a woodshed by one of his neighbors. The thief had torn the checks to bits and scattered them about; but he didn't scatter the money about. The police have a clue to the culprit.

SAVINGS BANK TO PUSH PLANS

Restored Building May Also Furnish New Home For Masons

The work of clearing away the fire in the Savings Bank & Trust Company's new building, corner of Main and Poindexter streets is under way this week and carpenters and roofers will begin at once to restore the roof and remodel the building. Contract for the work has been let to J. P. Kramer. As soon as the roof is on the work of completing the quarters for the bank on the first floor will be rushed to completion and the bank expects to get into its new home not later than July first.

As previously reported in this paper, the fire of Jan. 23 which practically wiped out the stock of the S. R. Siff Co. tenants of the building, enabled the bank to change its plans and take over the entire first floor of the building for banking quarters.

The new plans call for the second floor to be remodeled for offices. Plans for the third floor have not yet been announced, but it is believed that this floor will be offered to the Masonic fraternities of this city. It is certain that something is in the wind, since the bank has no statement to make in regard to its plans for the third floor of the building.

In meantime the recently organized Carolina Banking & Trust Co. is getting busy with its quarters in the Hinton Building, having let a \$22,000 contract for furniture and fixtures to the American Furniture & Fixture Co. of Richmond this week. This contract does not include the vault and safe to cost around \$10,000. The new bank expects to begin business in June.

MAY KEEP SALT OUT OF CURRITUCK SOUND

Bureau of Fisheries Urges Restoration of Tidal Locks in A. & C. Canal

The U. S. Bureau of Fisheries in a voluminous report just issued sustains the contention of the fisherman that salt water coming down from Hampton Roads through the government owned A. & C. Canal is ruinous to the fresh water fishing industry of Currituck. There has been much salt water in Currituck Sound since the tidal lock in the canal was removed.

During the enlargement of this canal, this tidal lock was removed and from this removal results the "fish story." The Virginia cut of the Albemarle and Chesapeake canal intersects the North landing river which flows into Currituck Sound. As is well known, the waters of Currituck and most of Albemarle sound are fresh, while the water in Hampton Roads and Elizabeth river is salt. There is another physical phenomenon in that the same wind will make a high tide in Currituck Sound and a low tide in Hampton Roads, and vice versa.

For instance, a northwest wind creates a high tide in Hampton Roads and a low tide in Currituck Sound. Since the removal of this tidal lock, the salt water flows in large volume through the Virginia cut into Currituck sound, and the fishermen in the latter claimed that it was destroying their fresh water fish, an important food supply.

At the request of Representative Small, more than a year ago the United States Bureau of Fisheries instituted an investigation of this condition and has just submitted a voluminous report sustaining the contention of the fishermen in Currituck Sound and contiguous waters, and recommended that the tidal lock be replaced in the Virginia cut of the Albemarle and Chesapeake canal.

Mr. Small has brought this matter to the attention of the chief of engineers, who has promised to take the matter up and the result will probably be the reconstruction of the tidal lock.

LOUIS SELIG TO CELEBRATE 39TH BUSINESS ANNIVERSARY

Louis Selig, Elizabeth City's oldest est jeweler celebrates the 39th anniversary of his business on Monday, Feb. 21. Mr. Selig started in business here in 1882 and his business will be 39 years old next Monday. He celebrates this anniversary with a 20 per cent reduction on prices in his store for all of next week. He tells about it in his ad in this paper to-day.

HERBERT R. LEARY
Attorney and Counselor at Law
Edenton, N. C.

Feb. 11, 1921

W. O. Saunders, Editor,
The Independent,
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Saunders:
I am attaching my check in the amount of \$1.00 to cover subscription price for first edition of your proposed book of editorial writings.

Few of your subscribers have read with more eagerness and interest your editorials. My appreciation at times has prompted me to save them to read to certain of my friends who also seem appreciative of their David Harum quality of sound common sense, the fearlessness of tone, as well as the happy faculty of expression and clearness of phrase of the writer. I shall look forward with interest to the publication of this volume.

With regards and good wishes, I remain,
Sincerely yours,
H. R. LEARY

KING'S MEDALS FOR RODANTHE COAST GUARDS

King of England Honors North Carolina Coast Guard Crew For Mirlo Rescue

The following interesting news item was taken from a cable from the London bureau of the New York Herald to that paper under date of Feb. 12:

Great Britain has extended an extraordinary honor to North Carolina coast guards for their "gallantry and humanity" in saving the lives of many British seamen during the war. At the recommendation of the King the Board of Trade awarded a gold medal to John A. Midgett, keeper of the coast guard station; Zions Midgett, LeRoy S. Midgett and Arthur V. Midgett, surfmen of Rodanthe, N. C. The Board of Trade gave a piece of silver plate to the keeper in recognition of his able leadership.

On August 16, 1918, the oil laden steamer Mirlo was torpedoed off the coast and immediately became enveloped in flames. After several explosions the crew abandoned her. There was a strong sea running, and nine men were drowned when a boat capsized.

The Mirlo was surrounded by a mass of burning wreckage and flaming sea caused by the oil cargo. The Midgetts saw the fire and set out to the rescue in a motor launch. They picked up the master and sixteen men from one boat and then heading through the sheet of flames rescued six others clinging to a capsized boat. After a search they found still another boat with nineteen men hopelessly adrift in it. Two boats containing forty-six men were taken in tow. The Midgetts provided medical attention and otherwise cared for those they rescued.

The King in his recommendation said: "The danger from the burning oil, the difficulties arising from the heavy seas, the cool, efficient way in which the operation was carried out rendered services which are most praiseworthy."

The Rodanthe men are well known in Elizabeth City and throughout the local coast guard district.

RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER AFTER LAPSE OF 64 YRS.

Judge Culpepper 78 and Wm. Mardre 77 See Each Other First Time Since 1857

Two boys who attended school together 65 years ago and who had not seen each other since met on a street corner in Elizabeth City Wednesday morning and each recognized the other without outside introduction. The two men were Justice of the Peace M. B. Culpepper of this city and Wm. Mardre, a retired merchant of Hertford. They were school mates in the old Perquimans Academy more than three score years ago and left that school in the year 1857.

Mr. Mardre was in the city Wednesday and was standing on the corner of Main & Poindexter streets. Mr. Culpepper stopped on the same corner. The two men looked at each other. "I know you," said Mr. Culpepper to Mr. Mardre. "And I know you, too," Mr. Mardre replied. They fell upon each other's necks. Neither had seen the other since they were boys 64 years ago. Mr. Culpepper is 78 years old; Mr. Mardre is 77; and both are holding their own with all their years. Neither knows of any other survivor of those old school days in Hertford.

A BARGAIN IN ROPE

We have Sisal Rope in sizes 1-4 to 9-16, in coils weighing 35 to 55 pounds. To be sold at 12 1-2 cents a pound, less than half the manufacturer's prices. C. H. ROBINSON CO., Elizabeth City, N. C. c-F18-4t

Here's Youth and Beauty Too



MISS MILDRED NIXON
THIS bewitching Elizabeth City beauty was recently voted the prettiest girl in the Senior Class of the Elizabeth City High School. She is the sixteen year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. S. Nixon, West Burgess St., this city.

LOWERED WAGES BRINGS MORE SHIPS TO REPAIR

Local Shipyards Can Now Compete With Norfolk For Much Work

Recent reductions in wages at Elizabeth City shipyards and machine shops have permitted these businesses to compete with the shipyards of Norfolk and other cities, and local business seems to be on the mend. The Elizabeth City Shipyards, after several months of comparative inactivity, started working last week with about 35 men on its payroll.

New contracts calling for repairs in the neighborhood of \$50,000 have landed, and the shipyard expects to increase its working force as soon as the work arrives, some of which is now on the way, and one job is already nearing completion. The yards have several tugs, barges and steamers in line for repairs, three steamers in the lot belonging to one firm.

Due to recent wage reductions of 20 per cent on skilled labor, the yards expect to land larger contracts in future as operating expenses are much lower and they can bill their work accordingly. Cuts in wages in the Elizabeth City Shipyards and machine shops have not been as drastic as those in many other places, even the textile mills of this city which have made reductions of 40 to 50 per cent. Both machinists and carpenters here are being paid less, reductions in some plants taking effect this week, following the lead taken by the yards and shops of Norfolk, and other cities.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO TAKE OFF TRAINS 5 AND 6

Has Not Abandoned Purpose to Curtail Local Train Service

Reports that Norfolk Southern R. R. officials had abandoned their avowed purpose to curtail their service on this division by taking off trains Nos. 5 and 6 are denied by an official of the road who granted an interview with this newspaper by long distance telephone.

According to this official trains 5 and 6 operating between Belhaven and Norfolk via Elizabeth City will be discontinued February 20th. There will be no change in the schedule of trains Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

Train No. 4 will leave Elizabeth City at 7:27 a. m., instead of 6:30 a. m. as at present.

Fishermen particularly will deplore the taking off of the trains in question, but Norfolk Southern officials seem to think they can handle the fish business satisfactorily with train No. 4. This train will carry buffet service.

Hathaway Says

If you wear glasses, have your eyes and glasses both examined from time to time, and go to the place where you can afford to pay a reasonable price for real professional work. Remember your eyes are your bread-winners. Take care of them.

You have your teeth examined twice a year. Why not your eyes? They are more important.

Dr. J. D. Hathaway
Optometrist
Phone 999 Bradford Bldg.

MORRISSETTE AND COOKE ARE AT LOGGERHEADS

Morrisette Breaks With Pasquotank Man on Bridge Legislation and Would Have Camden Build Its Own Bridge

VANDALISM IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Superintendent Sheep Seems To Have Lost His Grip On Wild Youth

The eternal ebullition of youth overflows in many forms at the Elizabeth City High School. It breaks out here and there in unexpected variety. Its ubiquity is a constant source of vexation to apprehensive teachers, manifesting itself in many stunts calculated to annoy—sometimes fulsome and banal, or ingenious, adroit and daring.

Since school were begun, it has been the custom and delight of pupils to play pranks on teachers. Those who stand greatest in disfavor are usually the greatest victims and the most harrising schemes are plotted against them. The perpetual energy of youth must have an outlet and lacking intelligent direction from older heads, it usually finds a safety valve in devising and performing tricks calculated to arouse greatest consternation among the objects of their disapproval. And so, at the Elizabeth City high school, youth and humor overflows, surreptitiously spending its energy in the performance of juvenescent plots of revolt and revenge.

But adolescence seeking an outlet is not always content to spend itself in the pursuit of harmless pranks. Some more bold than the rest, enlarge the extent of their capers and many deeds designed purely for the fun they afford the perpetrators, culminate in repulsive forms of destruction and vandalism.

Not content with the mere annoying things that lose their glamour under the careful application of a spring of elder or an effective yardstick, many pupils vent their spite in acts which eventually require unnecessary work and expense in repairs to damaged property. The scope of mischief has enlarged in the Elizabeth City schools until vandalism is rampant.

No matter how unpopular Professor Sheep may be among his pupils and regardless of the extent which he has fallen in their disfavor, it affords no justifying factor on which to base an excuse for some of the things that are done as an expression of defiance to his authority. Suppose he did say to their faces that he wished some of them a Merry Christmas and others a residence in a warmer clime, as the pupils retort, is it not enough to call him by the venomous names with which he is characterized in their minds.

Anxious to escape the watchful eyes of Professor Sheep as he eagerly observes his charges, some of them not long ago painted their class room doors. The janitor scrubbed the paint away, to find it replaced the next morning. One morning the door to the Professor's office had been removed and it was later found in the garret. Considerable time has been spent in replacing doors, which are repeatedly removed, or covered with boards.

Professor Sheep says nothing is safe in the high school. Articles in charge of teachers or left in the drawers of desks are confiscated readily. The most flagrant offense of borrowing occurred last Monday night when the building was entered and nine dollars were taken from a teacher's desk. The teacher had collected some money for school photographs made by a local photographer. It was up to the teacher to make it good. Nothing was left but suspicions which could not convict the robbers.

How to stop it is a simple problem. The fostering of the destructive spirit is a harmful factor among the future citizens of this community. It is something inevitable where there is no vestige of constructive influences to develop the leisure hours of youth. With no playgrounds, no gymnasiums and nowhere to go except to movies of fascinating bandits creeping cautiously forward with knives in their teeth; it is no wonder that youth runs wild. Supplement such an attraction with the healthy, constructive force of an organization like community service and the youth of Elizabeth City will find a more serviceable method of spending its spare time.

Edison Marshall's thrilling story, The Voice of the Pack, begins in this issue of THE INDEPENDENT. If you like gripping, red-blooded, wholesome American fiction begin with the first chapter. Then you'll watch eagerly for the chapters to follow.

WANTED:—A boat 30 to 35 feet long to put 18 H. P. Engine in for towing. C. WOODHOUSE, R. 1, Wekesville, N. C. p-F18-1t

Representative Cooke's bill providing for the acquisition by purchase or the building of a bridge across Pasquotank River at Elizabeth City to provide free ferry for the counties of Pasquotank and Camden was reported unfavorably by the House Committee yesterday and that probably ends it. A bill introduced by Representative Morrisette of Camden authorizing and directing Camden county to build or acquire such a bridge got a favorable report from the Committee and probably will be enacted into law this week. Under the Morrisette bill Camden county would issue bonds not to exceed one hundred thousand dollars and build or acquire a bridge across the Pasquotank river at some point to be selected by the State Highway Commission. This bridge would be free of tolls to residents of Camden but all others using the bridge would pay tolls to Camden. The Morrisette bill is a result of the inability of Cooke and Morrisette to reach an agreement on a bill by which the two counties would jointly build the bridge. It was known that Morrisette was favorable to the Robinson Ferry route and wanted a bill providing for the purchase of this property. Cooke objected and it was agreed to leave the selection of a location to the State Highway Commission.

This agreement having been reached a bill was so drafted and it was understood that the bill was to have been introduced last Saturday and the bill was left in Cooke's hands. Cooke and Morrisette came home for the week end, Morrisette having been led to believe that Cooke had provided for the introduction of the bill. But the bill was not introduced and Cooke now says he didn't make Morrisette any promise. "Cooke is a damned liar, and I'll step on his toes and tell his so to his teeth," says Morrisette.

The discussion of the bridge bills in the Committee Wednesday night was hot and hilarious. Cooke gave a graphic history of the Cooke family and extolled at length the virtues of his brother Jim of Camden. It seemed that his chief interest in bridge legislation was to get that brother Jim on the Bridge Commission. Camden couldn't get along without brother Jim. In the course of his remarks before the Committee Cooke stated that Col. I. M. Meekins had said that he used to control Morrisette when he had a mortgage on him but had lost control of the Camden man since the mortgage had been satisfied. Col. Meekins was present and said that that statement was as false as the oath of Annanias before St. Peter. Mr. Cooke apologized.

Mr. Cooke's conduct in the General Assembly has won no applause for him to date. He seems to have become involved in an embarrassing effort to please E. F. Aydtlett in all of his legislative acts and has lost the confidence of his fellow legislators. His dream was to build a monument for himself out of his legislative career and the upshot will be that he will be recorded as the most ignominious legislative failure ever sent to the capital from Pasquotank county or this newspaper misses a guess.

The State-wide Stock Law bill which passed the Senate last (Concluded on Page 4)