



THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

FINAL

Established Dec. 8, 1888.

Largest Evening Newspaper in The Two Carolinas
Charlotte, North Carolina, Wednesday, April 25, 1956

40 Pages—Price Five Cents

Land Becoming Too Expensive

Mecklenburg Losing Its Farms

By JULIAN SCHER
Charlotte News Staff Writer
There is another side of Mecklenburg.
It isn't smoke stacks and parking garages, warehouses and trucks, guided missiles and textiles.
It isn't talked at Rotary or Kiwanis, but it is the topic of conversation at 4-H and Farm Bureau.
It is found, not near The Square in Charlotte, but at a crossroad at Lemley Township or Crab Orchard, Long Creek and Dewese, Steele Creek and lower Providence Township.

Here you find the uneasy roll of rural Mecklenburg, a brown and gray and slightly red earth covered with clover and corn, some cotton, and cattle.
SLOWLY DYING
But this side of Mecklenburg is dying.
It is a slow — but steady death.
It is not a passing, always greeted with dirges or weeping, for the farmer who watches the death isn't always sorry.
Fred Devoin is making the most of it. George Hoover has not control over it. Arnold

Thompson is fighting it.
Lean on a fence post in Hickory Grove and watch a man detour a barn — hear his hammer beat a rhythmic tattoo with a builder's hammer across the way on a new house.
Listen to county agent George Henson as he reflects on the picture.
"We'll farm about 7,000 acres of cotton this year," he says. "Thirty years ago — well, we farmed about 65,000 acres. About 20 years ago we farmed about 40,000 acres of cotton."
"Cotton typical?"
"No, not exactly. We've di-

versified with dairying and poultry, but farming of crops," he adds, "in Mecklenburg is vanishing."
The decrease is steady. It has dropped between 4,000 and 5,000 acres annually in the past few years.
Four years ago there were 232,000 acres in farm land here.
Today, the figure is just over 200,000 acres.
In 1949 we ranked 32nd in the number of farms as compared with the state's other 100 counties. Last year we were down to 44th.

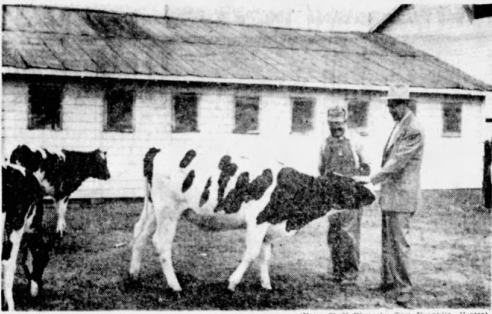
However, over the same period of time our rank in land value jumped from 5th to 1st. Land value is the key to the Mecklenburg story.
"We're selling," says Hobson, "the goose that laid the golden egg."
It is simple: The land is getting too valuable to farm. Take Fred Devoin of Hickory Grove.
He's developing home sites where he once milked a nice herd of 30 cows. Today he is a realtor. Yesterday he was a farmer.
See MECKLENBURG on Page 2-A



The Mecklenburg Story: An Empty Milk Can



Yesterday a Farm; Today a Street Corner



Farm Talk: Hobson with Farmer Thompson

In Boone Murder Case

FBI Statement Declares Accused Confessed Crime

By ALVIN ADKINS
BOONE — An FBI agent testified today that Leonard W. LaFond signed a statement saying that his girl friend suggested killing an elderly Chicago chemist and that he helped her stab him to death.
Herbert P. Gresham, the FBI agent, said LaFond made the 11-page statement to him and other officers in Las Cruces, N.M., last Aug. 29.
LaFond was quoted as saying that they pitched their camp in a park in North Carolina. Jo Anne said to him as they lay in their tent, "Let's bump him off." At the time, LaFond said, Finn was outside the tent sleeping.
WOULD FINISH IT
"I told her I would not stab LaFond first but that after she stabbed I would finish it," LaFond was quoted, adding that the girl then talked with Finn. LaFond was quoted as saying the girl planned to "make out like she wanted him to make love."
The statement asserted that the

girl and the older man talked together in the darkness and that LaFond heard Finn scream: "Oh, my God."
"I turned the flashlight on," the statement continued, "I could see Lew on his side with the knife in his back below the left shoulder. I became excited and hit him in the jaw with my fist and stabbed him in the chest with my knife. Joe Anne stabbed him again by the heart in the front of the chest."
The statement added that they then drove through the Southwest in New Mexico. LaFond traded Finn's car in Truth or Consequences, N.M. LaFond was arrested when he attempted to cash a check which he received for a car he had acquired in El Paso.
Richard F. Finn of Denver, Colo., brother of the slain man, and the state's first witness, said he last saw the chemist alive in West Palm Beach, Fla., on July 17, shortly before the elderly man left to drive to Chicago.
A park caretaker, the second witness, testified he had seen LaFond and the girl together in a state park near Blowing Rock, in the Blue Ridge mountains nine miles south of here, along with Finn.
The state contends that he was killed fatally in Cone National Park near the resort town of

Blowing Rock, nine miles south of Boone.
It took all of yesterday to select 12 jurors and an alternate. They are all white, all men. Most of them are or have been farmers in this rugged Blue Ridge Mountain county.
Finn's body was discovered in Mammoth Cave National Park, Ky., last Sept. 1. The FBI, charging the couple with taking Finn's stolen car across state lines, said they told officers where the body could be found.
The grisly discovery, in a honey-suckle thicket on the large park reservation, ended a long search for Finn. He left Palm Beach, Fla., on July 20 bound for Yuma, Ariz. to visit a brother. Relatives had heard nothing from him after that.
LaFond and Miss Severson were arrested in August, he in Truth or Consequences, N.M., and she in San Antonio, Tex. They waived extradition to North Carolina on federal charges of automobile theft. After indictment by a federal grand jury at Salisbury, the state indicted them in January for murder.

Our Weather

Partly cloudy today and tonight. Tomorrow increasing cloudiness and a little warmer with occasional light rain in the afternoon.
Low this morning 47
Low tomorrow morning 47
High yesterday 70
High today 68
High tomorrow 70
Sunrise 5:30 a.m.; sunset 7:03 p.m.
More Weather Data on Page 3-A

How's Your Memory?

How many M's would you say there are in the word "Accommodate," "recommended," "Turn to Sigmond Blomberg's," "Improve Your Memory" column on Page 1-B and learn the "easy" way to spell these words.

Psychologist, Home

City Begins Fight On Delinquency

By DICK YOUNG
Charlotte News Staff Writer
Impetus to an outlined program for coordination of agencies concerned with juvenile delinquency was given by the City Council today.
And immediate employment of a psychologist on the Juvenile Court staff was informally approved.
Overall plans for establishment of a detention home for juveniles also received Council's approving nod.
Favorable reaction greeted the report from Mayor Van Every on a series of conferences recently held by officials of public and private agencies interested in the juvenile delinquency problem.
FIVE POINTS
From these conferences came yesterday a report containing five recommendations for meeting the ever-increasing problem of juvenile delinquency in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.
Initiation of three of these recommendations, the mayor said, can come immediately.
He listed these as the transmittal of copies of Juvenile Court judgments to the Police Dept., holding of regularly scheduled meetings of the department heads concerned with the juvenile delinquency situation, and the employment of a Juvenile Court staff psychologist.
ONLY EXPENSE
Only the employment of the psychologist involves the expenditure of money. Council members suggested an immediate joint session with County Commissioners for discussion of this employment and financial arrangements.
Under the existing situation the cost of the Juvenile Court is jointly shared by the city and county governments on a 50-50 basis.
Since the salary of the psychologist would be an expense of the Juvenile Court, it appears that the 50-50 arrangement would be worked out in sharing this additional cost.
LENGTHY TALKS
And councilmen in their informal discussion dealt at length with the possible use of the state's responsibility in providing such institution was raised but it was pointed out that such a detention home would be a local responsibility while training schools would be the responsibility of the state.
The possible use of the Mecklenburg Sanatorium, if abandoned as a tubercular treatment center, was mentioned as the state's first detention home might be established.
An election has been called May 26 for a referendum on the extension of the continued operation of the sanatorium as such.
It was explained that a

Philadelphia Blaze Fatal To 9 Persons

PHILADELPHIA — Nine persons died in a fire that wrecked two North Philadelphia dwellings shortly after dawn today. Four persons were reported injured.
The dead, most of them burned beyond recognition, included three women and six children. All the children were under 14 years of age, said a spokesman at St. Joseph's Hospital where the bodies were taken by firemen.
One of the injured, a man, was reported in serious condition at the hospital.
Two persons were unaccounted for.
The bodies, taken to St. Joseph's Hospital, were burned virtually beyond recognition and immediate identification was not possible.
Firemen said the flames mushroomed with such speed that the victims had little chance to flee the blazing death trap.
One man was hurt leaving to safety after smashing through the glass of a closed window. He was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital.
Three others were treated at St. Joseph's Hospital for severe bruises.

Visit With Reason

PARIS — President Giovanni Gronchi of Italy arrived today for a four-day state visit aimed at improving relations between his nation and France.

Evening Prayer

Lord God, who in the man Jesus did stretch out Thy arms of love on a cross that sinners might be gathered home to Thy heart; unite us with Thy Spirit that we may stretch out our hands of understanding and Christian love toward all men, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

RALEIGH, WINSTON-SALEM, LUMBERTON, WHITEVILLE . . .

RALEIGH — A busy schedule was on tap today for Gov. Hodges.
First off, he met at 9:30 a.m. with the Council of State. This was followed by a brief ceremony in which he delivered the first check for the Business Development Corp.
Then he boarded an Air National Guard plane at the Raleigh-Durham airport for Winston-Salem, where he was to address at 12:30 a meeting of civic clubs in recognition of the 10th anniversary of Western Electric's operations in Winston-Salem.
Franklin, the governor will fly to Lumberton and then to Whiteville for a late afternoon reception. At 7 o'clock, he is scheduled to speak in Tabor City at a meeting of civic clubs. Following this he will drive back to Raleigh.

Philadelphia Blaze Fatal To 9 Persons



THE WHEEL (foreground) ran off the truck and the truck jack-knifed and turned over. It happened about 10 a.m. today on Highways 28-N, just 200 feet south of Mallard Creek, and bales of great moss, bays of onion sets and grass seed lined the highway. But driver Charles Johnson, 34, of 309 S. Myers St., who was pinned in the cab until released by a passing motorist, had no minor body bruises and a left eye, according to Good Samaritan Hospital officials. State Highway Patrolman B. L. Bishop took the injured man to the hospital.

Actions Rile Van Every

Candidate 'Tossed Out' Of Council Meeting

By HARRY SHUFORD
Charlotte News Staff Writer
A candidate for the State House of Representatives was almost forcibly ejected from the City Council meeting at City Hall today.
Mayor Phil Van Every warned A. G. Brown of Thomasboro, after repeated interruptions.
"Mr. Brown, if you don't sit down and be quiet, I'll direct a police officer sitting by you, to remove you from this chamber," Mr. Brown snapped back.
"I'll go if you ask me," Mr. Brown declared.
"Then, get going," ordered the mayor.
"Then, I'm gone, I like to please," Mr. Brown said, springing from his seat, grabbing his hat and briefcase.
"At the reached the door, Mr. Brown flung back, "But I'm going to Raleigh. I'm going to rest this whole thing up; you just wait my dust."
"The 'thing' Mr. Brown declared he will 'tear up' is the new perimeter zoning ordinance.
At the conclusion of the outburst, the Council ordered City Attorney John Shaw to take proper legal steps in Mr. Brown's case. Mr. Shaw had informed the Council that Mr. Brown is erecting business buildings in a Residence 2 zone.
The outburst was preceded by

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Go First to FIELDS — Sterling FRIENDSHIP RINGS 81. (Adv.)

President Not Given Final Word

President Not Given Final Word

WASHINGTON — President Eisenhower said today Vice President Nixon has not yet definitely whether he wants to be the President's running mate again this fall.
Eisenhower was reminded of his statement some weeks ago that he had invited Nixon to chart his own course politically and report his decision back to the President. Has Nixon done so? Eisenhower was asked.
"Well, the President replied, "I haven't reported back in the terms he — Eisenhower — used on that previous occasion."
Then Eisenhower was asked if Nixon has replied in any manner that would give the impression that he would like to be re-nominated.
With a chuckle, Eisenhower said he hesitated to answer that because impressions can be misleading. Some people even may have the impression that he is very grateful.
Then turning serious, he told newsmen Nixon hasn't given him any answer — is very considerate and definite.
Eisenhower also told a news conference, on other political topics.
"He thinks the Democrats are right in making him, rather than his administration generally, a chief target of criticism. After all, the President said, he is the head of the administration."
He commented that he has been shot at before.
"VERY GRATEFUL"
"As for yesterday's primary elections in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, where he ran far ahead of Democrat Adlai Stevenson in popularity voting, Eisenhower said with a grin he is still astonished anytime anyone votes for him — is very grateful."
3. He refuses to endorse charges by some Capitol Hill Republicans that the present Democratic-controlled session is a "do-nothing Congress." Eisenhower said he never has indulged in that kind of talk and added he doesn't make it a practice to challenge other people's motives.

Firm To Back Drivers Allowing Integration

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — A bus company official promised today to back up any driver arrested for permitting racial integration on a bus in Montgomery.
The statement from B. W. Franklin, vice president of National City Lines Inc. of Chicago came at a news conference. Montgomery City Lines Inc., which operates the city's only bus service, is a subsidiary of the Chicago firm.
There was still no indication of actual integration on the buses despite the company's order to its drivers to stop enforcing segregation. Reporters who watched the buses for the second day said the Negroes they saw rode in the rear where they always have.
Franklin, with an attorney at his side, made his statement in answer to a threat from police Commissioner Clyde Sellers to arrest any driver who permits mixing of passengers and any passenger who violates city and state segregation laws.

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