

Mooresville Tribune

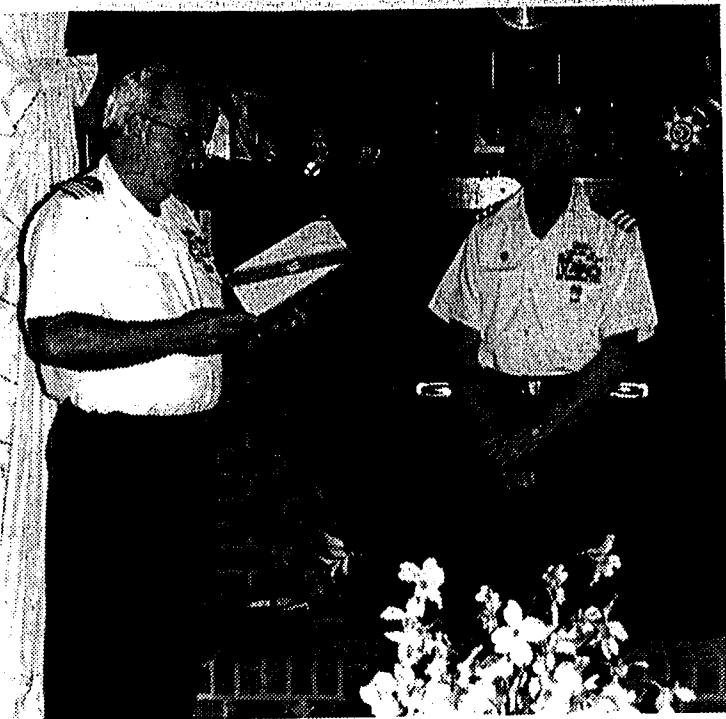
VOL. LVII

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"Although I Disagree With Everything You Say

I Will Defend Unto Death Your Right To Say It"

25¢ Mooresville, N.C. (28115) Wednesday, May 1, 1991



Horton, right, and Walker during presentations

Horton Commended For Lake-Safety Work

Elmer Horton of Mooresville has been recognized for outstanding service to the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadron.

Horton recently retired from active duty with both organizations. He held leadership positions in both for some 15 years.

Joint ceremonies honoring

Horton were held during a late-April picnic at the Lake Norman home of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Van Rees, who are members of Lake Norman Flotilla 17-08 of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He received the Coast Guard Award of Merit presented by Robert Walker, division captain of USCG Auxiliary. A certificate of appreciation was presented by the Power Squadron.

Horton was commended especially for his boating safety work on Lake Norman, and for his leadership in establishing last year an Auxiliary search and rescue detachment, complete with two-day radio communication, on the lake at N.C. 150.

The citation noted that Horton has cooperated with all area law enforcement agencies and with the Lake Norman Marine Commission in his ongoing efforts to promote safe use of the lake.

Horton, 57, and his wife, Reoma, live on Lake Norman on Honeysuckle Lane in the Brawley-Mayhew community. He is a member of The Charlotte Observer's photography staff.

Missionary Methodist Revival

Missionary Methodist Church, 307 Clover Street, will be having special revival services.

The services will be held May 1-5, beginning at 7:00 each evening, and at 11 a.m. Sunday.

The Rev. Howard Hardin of Mooresboro will be the featured speaker.

On Friday and Saturday evenings, the Kingdom Heirs Singers of Charlotte will also be present to share in song.

There will be a covered dish luncheon in the church fellowship hall following the 11 a.m. worship service on Sunday.

The Rev. Wayne Beck and the congregation cordially invites the public to attend these services.

Harry P. Deaton: Enterprise Publisher

By EVERETTE JONES

Several weeks ago, on a Wednesday afternoon, Martha Nesbit, office retiree of the Mooresville Plant of Burlington Industries, stopped by the office of the Mooresville Tribune to purchase a just-off-the-press copy of her favorite newspaper.

She paused for a minute to pass the time of day, and, in the course of the chat, she asked: "Why don't you write a personality piece about Harry P. Deaton?"

Now, Mr. Deaton was editor/publisher of the Mooresville Enterprise for almost 50 years, prior to his death in October 1945.

During my early newspaper reporting days, he was my boss from mid-May, 1938, until Dec. 31, 1945, and, without a moment's hesitation, I thought Martha's suggestion was an excellent one.

However, although I immediately recalled numerous fond memories of Mr. Deaton, I was at a loss when it came to biographical information about Mr. Deaton.

But, believe it or not, three days later Corinne Major of 658 Cabarrus Avenue, Mooresville, came by the office with an interesting and information article about Mr. Deaton.

The article, written by Mrs. J.A. Yarbrough, appeared in The Charlotte Observer in mid-June, 1940, under the heading of "Interesting Carolina People."

Here's Mrs. Yarbrough's story:

Harry P. Deaton, who for forty years has been the owner and editor of the Mooresville Enterprise, springs from families that have their roots deep in Mecklenburg soil.

He is a direct descendant of one of the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. His mother, Mary Grissian Alexander, was the great-granddaughter of Matthew McClure whose signature was affixed to that historic document. Through the marriage of his great grandmother, Melinda McClure, to Charles Alexander he is a member of the well known Alexander family which was among the first in Mecklenburg county to adopt strenuous measures for American independence.

James Deaton, the grandfather of Mr. Deaton, was born and reared on the Thomas Deaton place near Mooresville, a grant issued by Governor Granville to Mr. Deaton's great great-grandfather. Regarded as a great personage and living to be ninety-nine years of age, he reared a family of three daughters and eleven sons, nine of whom served in some capacity in the Confederate army.

The parents of Mr. Deaton, Pinkney Stuart Deaton and his wife, Mary, moved to Concord and there on February 22nd, 1872, their son was born.

"I grew up in the Allison grove, the community play ground which adjoined our home on Spring street," said Mr. Deaton. "My education was received from four teachers who stand out in my memory, Miss Annie Carr, Rev. R. S. Arrowood, Dr. H. A. Bickle and James R. Ervin. When I was 13 I worked in a printing office after school hours and on Saturday. My first work was on an advertising sheet for Gibson, Henderson & Co. Under John Marion Cross, an old time journeyman printer, I served my first few years.

"Major W. J. Yates, publisher of The Charlotte Democrat and a friend of my father, asked me to come to Charlotte and work for him. I came here a boy in short pants and after working about a year, purchased my first long pair at the store of Thomas L. Seigle in the first block of East Trade street. He came from Mooresville, so of course I had full confidence

in him regarding such an important deal. Charlotte was just a village then with horse drawn cars. Trade street started at Cedar and ended at McDowell.

"After working for Major Yates I went with the Charlotte Chronicle, when Robert Hayden was the editor, later going to Concord to work for Mr. James P. Cook. He had established the Concord Daily Standard, the first daily newspaper of the place and the only daily newspaper in North Carolina that was published in as small a town as Concord at that time. After a year or two I decided I wanted to see some of the large papers in the big cities. I made the rounds of Washington, Richmond, Charleston, Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis, working on the papers in each of these places. I had a right good time, never hoboed and was never broke for I did not drink.

"I came back to Concord in 1894 and went to work for Mr. Cook. On my second day he wrote me a note and asked me to get up the paper. Soon afterward he received a good offer from an educational publishing company to travel, which he accepted, and asked me to stay on and do the best I could with his white elephant. And so I was editor, paymaster and general factotum until he sold out his interests in 1897.

"I continued with the new owner until the Spanish-American war came on. I was a member of the Concord Military company and when the call came for volunteers in 1898, I enlisted in Company Eight, First North Carolina Regiment, under Captain Edward Hill.

"Until I was stricken with fever at Jacksonville I held the rank of company quartermaster. I returned from a furlough in December, joined the troops at Savannah and went to Cuba. Complications following fever developed which caused deafness. On account of this disability and lack of facilities in the army for treating abscesses of the ear I was discharged at Havana in February and sent home, where I spent several months recuperating."

The year 1899 marks a mile stone in the life of Mr. Deaton for on the 8th day of September the first issue of the Mooresville Enterprise appeared. The new paper was confronted with many difficulties. The equipment consisted of a hand-press and a small amount of body and display type which had been leased on trial. Encouraged by the backing of several citizens prominent in town, county and state affairs, Mr. Deaton later purchased machinery and equipment sufficient to carry on.

In 1906 he sold the business and went to Concord where he was associated with J.F. Hurley and Frank Brumley in publishing the Concord Tribune. A few years later he repurchased the Enterprise and ran it alone until 1922 when he sold a fifty-fifty in-

terest to Frank B. Freeze, a Mooresville boy who began working for him at the age of eleven.

Forty years is a long time for any concern to live, especially a newspaper. During the days of struggle there were varying experiences that alternately lifted up or cast down the heart — dark hours as well as those which brought great joy. Yet with all adversities, there was a reward in the fact that friends were steadfast and true. With gratitude for the things of which there was published record, there is even greater gratitude for the unwritten record of the unswerving loyalty of the paper's readers and supporters.

Mr. Deaton's aim has been to give Iredell county the best weekly paper in that section of North Carolina and to the best of his ability he has lived up to that purpose in his management. Through its columns he has fought for the right of the entire citizenry, for the upbuilding of the community, for every progressive movement that has made Mooresville a wholesome place in which to live.

It is his belief that the duty of a newspaper is not only to inform the public quickly and accurately but to help the people of its particular area in every good and worthy aspiration and work toward higher levels. He conscientiously champions those things he feels are for the common good and condemns those things he believes are bad for his section. Because he has made his paper an effective force to that high purpose, has kept its pages free for true journalistic effort and has never in any way sought self-advancement, he has held the friendship and goodwill of its readers and attained well merited success.

Among the things he has advocated in these forty years are the establishment of a bank, a building and loan association, graded schools, city water works, good roads and a creamery. He was a member of the board of town commissioners when the streets were paved and sewage and water systems installed. At present he is a member of the board, not from choice but because citizens in his ward won from him a reluctant consent to allow his name to be presented.

He is a member of the Rotary Club, Masonic Lodge, Presbyterian church, and a charter member of the Mooresville Junior Order lodge. He was an active K.P. until increasing deafness forced his resignation. He was secretary of the first highway organization in the state, when the Salisbury to Asheville highway was built.

In 1894 he joined the North Carolina Press association when the group attended the Cotton States Exposition at Atlanta. He attends the annual meetings regularly and is one of the two oldest living members, the other being Mr. John W. Noel of Roxboro. The late Wade H. Harris

asked him to serve as correspondent for The Charlotte Observer but he found it impracticable and Mr. Harris made the same request of Mrs. Deaton who served in that capacity for twenty-five years.

On April 8th, 1902, Mr. Deaton was married to Miss Minna Blanch McNeely and for 38 years a singularly happy companionship existed until Mrs. Deaton's passing on June 2, 1940. Similar ideas and tastes resulted in a satisfactory and enjoyable life far beyond the average. Both were interested in Confederate veterans, Mrs. Deaton a United Daughter of the Confederacy, and Mr. Deaton a Son of the Confederacy. Together they attended numerous re-unions, state and general, frequently carrying veterans with them.

A collection of scrapbooks, containing clippings from leading papers all over the country, shows how truly their minds blended. Long winter evenings were spent in this way — reading, clipping, pasting. In the spacious home are objects of interest and beauty, found during their travels, also heirlooms one of rare beauty being an inlaid walnut table made by Mr. Deaton's father.

Mr. and Mrs. Deaton had two daughters, Catherine, the elder, is the wife of Victor Meekins, editor and owner of the Dare County Times. Mary Moore Deaton is a graduate of the Woman's College University of North Carolina, and has spent several years teaching in New York State.

Roger, ten-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Meekins, is the world's youngest editor. In a corner of his father's shop he writes, sets the type and prints on a seven by eleven Pearl press, The Sunnyside News, which carries the name Roger P. Meekins, Editor, Publisher, Printer. The little paper is four and one-half by seven with two six-inch columns to the page and has observed its first birthday. In 1933, when the North Carolina Press Association met at Manteo, Roger was given a life membership in the organization.

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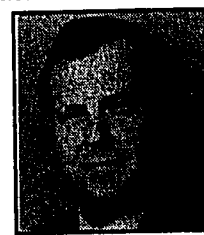
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