

**Why the Destruction of Edgefield Trees?**

For generations Edgefield has been proud of her beautiful trees and shady streets, and although we are an old town and not specially favored with wealth; and few, if any pretentious homes or imposing public buildings, we have been told by outsiders that our town is considered one of the most picturesque in the state, beautiful for situation and remarkably adapted to scenic and landscape effects. Such improvements are very tedious and expensive. In the past Edgefield had a Civic club which did a great deal of work along the lines of beautifying the school grounds and planting trees. All of this has been destroyed.

I was saying very recently to a lady who lives in another town to whom I was a guest, that the Edgefield trees were being mutilated, and she with others in the company said, "We are very sorry, as that has been one of the chief attractions of Edgefield."

As a town grows and begins to add to its interests and to its community assets, new problems arise which should be very wisely dealt with and the proper balance kept. If we do not, we will find ourselves in a predicament which will forever hinder our growth and contentment. We should not act like a parvenue recently fallen heir to a fortune, and buying a large red limousine, drive frantically down the street beyond the speed limit, over running the poor neighbors and the children and believing that because we are occupying a position of financial superiority that we can therefore lord it over the whole community.

We should be well poised and receive our new attainments or requirements with equilibrium and acquinity, not forsaking the old for the new, but giving to them their rightful place and their position of honor among us. The associations and traditions of a place are as valuable and should be as carefully protected and guarded as the modern interests which make for the comfort and welfare of the people.

In Cambridge, Massachusetts, the seat of Harvard university, stands the "Washington Elm," which hundreds of tourists visit the town to see, around which is an iron railing and on whose bosom are many scars. No Harvard student or other citizen of Cambridge would dare or want to touch that tree, for around it are clustered the associations of more than a hundred years, and under it stood George Washington, the Father of His Country, and there with his companions planned some of the struggles which brought victory to the American army.

Plymouth, Massachusetts, has as among the most cherished memorials, trees standing here, there and everywhere on whose breasts are marked the name of the old patriarch who planted them. These things are of exceeding interest, and recently this town was the Mecca for thousands of visitors who went there to see the place where the footsteps of the Pilgrim fathers were first planted on New England soil.

If all the ancient landmarks of Plymouth had been removed; if all the towering oaks had been cut and the original Plymouth Rock had been thrown into the sea; if there were no Mayflower Inn and museum to exhibit reminders of the past; if no visible mementoes of the memories which clustered around the past had been preserved; if every commercial interest had had right of way to destroy these hallowed associations and the town had become a replica of its newly established neighbors; if the citizens of that town had so far forgotten the heritage of the past as to have forgotten for a moment to preserve its hallowed memorials, it would not today be the beautiful Mecca for modern pilgrims of every class who hourly make Plymouth a rendezvous, and from whose picturesque hills these pilgrims look out on the beautiful Atlantic on whose bosom the makers of America had sailed into port.

Edgefield has a wonderful history and heritage. Let us not forget in our haste for material improvements, though they do minister to our comfort and advantage, that there are other things which are necessary to the happiness of our community. There are other debts we owe the past and these obligations can only be paid by the finer instincts of reverence and gratitude.

There are those, I am told, who gather around them a coterie of their satellites, and laugh at the protests of those in our community who from time to time have expressed themselves at a sense of injustice. It would be well for them to remember

the old adage that, "He laughs best who laughs last."

Tree culture and forestry are subjects of national interest and no greater memorial is being found today to honor the heroes of the World War than the living memorials of trees planted on the streets and avenues of our towns and cities and on our highways.

Recently in the organ of the American Legion I was reading some very interesting articles on the planting of such memorials, some of them being miles of highways bordered by memorial trees. This is being done in the most progressive sections of our country and even among the colder climates. If these can have the overhanging trees and the shady lanes, surely our sunny South should be allowed to have that privilege.

Recently at Greenwood, memorial trees were planted in honor of the Greenwood soldiers of the World War, an account of which will be found in another column.

The women of Edgefield would be glad to pay a tribute like this to their soldier sons, but they have no assurance that these living memorials will be treated with consideration. I have no authority to speak for the present Civic League of Edgefield, but I am sure this organization stands for the preservation of trees. In some sections of our country I am told that whenever any question arises in regard to a tree, there is an official called a tree warden to whom the case is referred, and who understands how to adjust the situation for the best interests of the community as a whole.

Not long ago, the town ordinance forbade a person hitching to a tree on the square, and this was right. I for one was glad to obey the law, and did do it, although at times, it gave me considerable inconvenience but although the people were forbidden even to hitch to a tree, when the town authorities decided they wanted them cut down they were cut, and the people wonder today why it was that a tree so valuable that it must not be used as a hitching post became so valueless that it was utterly destroyed.

In Edgefield we have had many memorial trees. Many of these are now unsightly stumps of no value for shade or beauty.

Dr. Luther Gwaltney was a minister in Edgefield for many years, a high type of public spirited citizen. He planted the cedar trees on "Lovers' Lane" and the elms and water oaks in front of his home in Buncombe. This row of trees in front of his home, he said he hoped would shade the little children as they went to and fro on their way to school and church and would be his memorial after he had gone. These trees were just beginning to serve the purpose for which they were planted—to shade and beautify. No man or set of men had a right to cut or mutilate these trees. No private citizen would have dared to do it and if it had seemed necessary for the town council to disobey an ordinance there should have been community consultation. The roads were bad because of the installation of water works, but the roads would have been good now with the trees still standing and the outlook infinitely more inviting, as it is today with the trees gone forever. Those who loved and honored the name of Dr. Luther Gwaltney for these many years feel that an incalculable and irreparable injustice has been done to the memory of this good man and the citizens of Edgefield who loved him, and most of all, to our people who have been deprived of the benefits of his labors.

The trees on "Lovers' Lane" made it one of the beauty spots of Edgefield. The road was bad because of the waterworks, and as a matter of fact and personal observation, had been neglected more than any other place in similar condition, but the mutilation of the trees was not the remedy. They are now eye sores to the people who face the street. Complaints were made about the conditions of the street but the cutting of the trees was not the desired remedy.

If as much good work had been done on the roads before the trees were cut as has been done since there would have been no necessity to cut them. I have lived on that lane all my life, and the road was as good there as elsewhere in the town under ordinary circumstances.

Mr. Billie Burnett was a public spirited citizen who loved Edgefield and he, too, said that he believed in shade trees, and at his own expense planted many trees which had become "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." One generation plants for another. The fact that it takes a tree so long to grow and develop makes it the more valuable and the more im-

portant that they should be wisely dealt with.

Many of these trees are mutilated and one whole side of them cut, so that they look like a new variety of tree with only one side. Not only are the trees on the sidewalk mutilated, but those growing in the yards of the people.

Miss Mary Fair planted memorial trees on the lane leading up to the home of her uncle, Mr. N. L. Brunson, and said she felt the need of shade so much as she walked each day back and forth to her work. At her expense she had this done and said she wanted them to be a memorial to her after she had passed away. These have also been badly disfigured.

There is a superstitious idea that in certain seasons shade trees should be trimmed. This is not the case. Shade trees should never be trimmed according to tree connoisseurs for the sake of the tree. I heard Prof. Moore, of Columbia, professor in the South Carolina University, say that every time a tree was trimmed, there was a place made for decay which would finally reach the heart of the tree. A tree on a sidewalk of course, should not have limbs obstructing the passage of pedestrians, or dead limbs which might fall, and there might be the necessity for some concession for telephones and electric lights, but there should be a distinct limit to the wanton vandalism which is being perpetrated on our trees.

All the trees on our park were cut. That may or may not have been a wise step, but I believe that when anything so drastic is contemplated that there should be a mass meeting of citizens called, and reasons stated for the move.

Ordinarily people trust the affairs of the city to be administered wisely by those whom they have elected to office, but there are two sides to a question. The officials are the servants and not the masters of the people. This is a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and as a true Democrat I believe we should have the power of protest and the right to be heard. There should be an open administration of affairs and confidence and mutual understanding, or there will be distrust, and suspicion and a feeling of injustice.

I have recently visited several towns, some larger, some smaller than Edgefield. They have more indication of progress in some of them, but trees overhang the streets and in some places large oaks stand in the center of the sidewalks. They are preserved on account of their age and beauty.

When every tree was cut on the sidewalk from the home of Miss Ella Bates down to the bridge, I protested to a member of the council and he said it was because the sidewalk was wet and if it was paved the trees could be left. I have noticed in other towns that the trees stand untouched on the sidewalks, paved or unpaved. The same trees which were said to make a wet sidewalk, were the trees which in summer protected the pedestrians and gave them shade. The sidewalk has been as wet since as it was before the trees were cut.

If no protest had been made I would think that the vandalism was only thoughtlessness, but many of our intelligent citizens have protested and their protests have been met with sarcasm and a threat to continue the injustice. These replies to the protest of our citizens have not been calculated to make good feeling in our community.

I sometimes feel as if I were living in the days of the Spanish Inquisition when helpless women and children were guillotined without mercy and without appeal. Every tree on the sidewalk in front of my home has been cut from "Lovers' Lane" to the hill. We want shade on the Buncombe streets the same as other parts of our town have.

I write this because I must express myself. The people of Buncombe, many of them are protesting. It is too late for us to say anything for the landmarks have been destroyed; but I love the whole town and hope that other sections of our beloved city will not be the victims of the axe.

Must Edgefield still submit to the destruction of her landmarks? Rather let us spend the money paid to the employees, in planting shade trees along our streets for the comfort of future generations. It is no use to cry, "Peace, peace when there is no peace," for "no question is ever settled until it is settled right." Henry Ford says:

"The principal cause of our political mistakes is our failure to ask questions and our lack of power to compel answers. We assume that official action is always wise. We as-

sume that frequent precedent is a sufficient safeguard. We assume that civic responsibility can be satisfied by the phrase, 'It's what they all do.' What is needed is a citizenship that will ask questions and not be bluffed into a confused state of mind by the contempt with which questions will at first be received. If every township had a Socrates, a questioner, more light in government would come."

Mrs. J. L. MIMS.

**Mrs. Adam Moss and Mrs. J. M. Patterson Guests of Federated Clubs.**

Continued from page four.)

ed by Mrs. Tillman and spoke on the undertakings of the Federation and of the disappointment that Edgefield was not recently represented at the district meeting at Fairfax; of her taking the place last year of vice president when Mrs. Tillman declined to serve. She said there was a need for more clubs and more women that they hear and see the ideals of the Federation, what women have striven for through the years what they have worked and prayed for, when they had no voice in the affairs of state. Now, she said, we have this added power and another lever with which to reach our standards.

Mrs. Patterson spoke of the National Educational work and of the immediate call to plant memorial trees, and of great and immediate object in view, the honoring of our soldiers whom we promised to hold in eternal memory. Avenues and streets are everywhere being planted as memorials.

**Mrs. Ada Moss.**

Mrs. Tillman introduced Mrs. Moss, who in her opening remarks said she felt at the time she laid her hand on Mrs. He... on sitting near her, whom she referred to as "Sheppie" and said they had been college friends at Converse.

Mrs. Moss gave a running account of some of the remarkable achievements of the Federation among them the Boys' Reformatory in Florence, the Reformatory for Girls in Columbia, the School for the Feeble Minded in Clinton, the establishment of the Educational Commission and many other splendid forward movements, which she said they had secured through their influence without the ballot, and rejoiced in more glorious achievements with the ballot. She urged the women to register and vote and to use their influence to secure other votes.

One special appeal was for the Home Demonstration work, and Mrs. Moss seemed surprised and lifted her pretty eyebrows when they told her Edgefield was without what she said was the most constructive agency in the program of the county. She urged the planting of memorial trees and the multiplying of clubs. She also welcomed the male members of the club. Rev. P. P. Blalock was present as a member of the Music club and so pleased was he with the addresses of these two honor guests, as well, no doubt, as the others who presided and took part, that he said he was thinking all the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and was beginning to see how Eve could have charmed him into partaking. The persuasiveness and charm of these were irresistible to him, and indeed, to all of us.

When the program was over, Mrs. Hugh Mitchell and Mrs. Walter McDonald conducted the guests into the dining room where at the door they were welcomed by Mrs. J. S. Byrd and Mrs. J. H. Cantelou.

In the dining room, Mrs. P. M. Feltham and Mrs. Helen Nicholson were seated at the table, the color scheme being white and yellow, with a center decoration of chrysanthemums. They cut the cream and cake which was also in white and yellow. This was served by Misses Janie Edwards and Mary Cantelou, who also passed mints.

The parlor was rich in arrangements of red chrysanthemums.

Among the sweetest though the smallest who greeted the guests as she passed down the receiving line with her mother was little Mary Norris Wright who knows already how to be gracious and smiling.

**Successful Box Party.**

The box party of the Waycross school was a pronounced success, the sum of \$45.50 being realized from the sale of the boxes, which will be used in purchasing additional equipment for the school. The box of the teacher, Miss Lucile Brunson, was knocked down at the handsome sum of \$6.50. The Advertiser congratulates Miss Brunson, the trustees and patrons upon their splendid success.

**Program of Minstrel to Be Given in Opera House Friday Night by Baraca Class.**

**PART ONE:**

Plantation Scene ----- Entire Company  
"Dear Old Pal" ----- Mr. Takis  
"Good-Bye." Tosti ----- Mr. Contopidis

**PART TWO:**

Grand Opening Choruses:  
"Just Keep Smiling," "Hot Lips," "Swanee River Blues"  
"That's How I Believe in You" ----- J. I. Padgett  
"If I Was What I Aint Instead of What I Is" ----- R. M. Scurry  
"Oh, How I Wish I Knew" ----- Mrs. W. C. Lyon  
"All the World Will be Jealous of Me" ----- Mrs. Rudisill  
"Where Did Robinson Crusoe Go With Friday on Saturday Night?" ----- J. H. Tompkins  
"Sweetheart of Sigma Chi" ----- John Mims  
"Here Comes Dinah, Belle of the Ball" ----- Scurry and Tompkins

**PART THREE:**

"At Dawning" ----- Mr. Takis  
"Last Hope" ----- Servetas Brothers  
Quartette ----- Messrs. Takis, Contopidis, Servetas Brothers  
"Won't You be My Honey" ----- Marjorie Mitchell  
"Elegie" ----- Mr. Takis  
Duet ----- Servetas Brothers  
Quartette ----- Messrs. Takis, Contopidis, Servetas Brothers  
"Susan Jane" ----- Marjorie Mitchell  
"Who Knows" ----- Mr. Takis  
"Dark Town Strutters' Ball" ----- Annie Sue Miller

**PART FOUR: CAST OF CHARACTERS:**

Judge Luke Warm ----- J. H. Tompkins  
Sergeant Much Worn ----- J. I. Padgett  
Officer Cornfed ----- W. O. Posey  
Tar Heel Bilkins ----- R. M. Scurry  
Peter Pineapple ----- J. G. Alford  
Zeke Whitehead ----- Hoyle Miller  
Come On Wherewith ----- W. M. Harling  
Alabama Screwluce ----- Ed Whatley  
Percy Pinfeather ----- Dozier Tompkins  
Lilly White ----- Sara Lyon  
Samantha Primrose ----- Mrs. W. C. Lyon  
Other Members of Minstrel Company: John Mims, Mr. Rudisill, Rhae Timmerman, Mr. Mobley, Mrs. R. M. Scurry, Sadie Mims, Flora Bethea, Mary Davis, Mrs. Rudisill, Marjorie Mitchell, Annie Sue Miller.  
Members of Orchestra: Miss Ruth Lyon, Pianist; Mrs. Walter Cantelou, Mrs. Leon Warren, W. C. Lyon, George F. Mims.

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