

## 1930: The Way We Were

By the spring of 1930, the nation was beginning to feel the downward spiral of the economy following the 1929 stock market crash. Few could imagine how deep the depression would go and fewer still had no idea it would drag on for some many years. For the time being, however, resident of York County were living life as it came.

On May 01, hail fell on the Bethesda community causing heavy damage to early crops. Hail stones the size of partridge eggs fell for about thirty minutes, between three and four in the afternoon. Farmers estimated half of the fruit crop had been knocked from the trees. Luckily, young corn was only slightly damaged and there was a good chance it would recover, and little of the main cash crop -- cotton -- escaped damage since most was not yet out of the ground.

On the same afternoon of the hail, Colonel Arthur L. Gaston, a Chester attorney and veteran of the Civil War, spoke to the Ann White Chapter of the Untied Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) during a Memorial Day celebration. To the audience assembled at Ebenezer, the colonel expressed his view on the cause of the war, believing it was not slavery, but over "tariff and tyranny." He was of the opinion that the South would have eventually freed the slaves, had they been given time. The outcome of the war, that is, the South losing, he believed, was God's plan in order that the nation might stand "united for safety and right for all."

In Rock Hill, at 1718 Main Street, the Southern Stores Company was offering what they described as "dependable" furniture. Front room (living room) suites were "unusual values," complimentary to any income level. A three-piece Jacquard suite could be had for \$85. On the other end of the scale, \$195 would get you a mohair upholstered suite -- marked down from \$235. Customers could even trade in their old furniture and get \$25 applied to their purchases -- and pick up and delivery was only \$5.

In York, more than two hundred people gathered in front of the county court house to witness the unveiling of a plaque honoring the late Judge Isaac Dommon Witherspoon (1833-1901). Mrs. R. M. Bratton, Regent of the Kings Mountain D.A.R, called the ceremony to order. In her remarks she pointed out that the first meeting of the chapter met at Judge Witherspoon's home, and through his work the chapter had become custodians of the Kings Mountain battleground. She went on to remind the crowd that, "The occasion is not one of sadness, but rather it is a triumphant one to honor a man who still lives in our memory." Mrs. Bratton then asked Rev. Dr. W. W. Harris of the First Presbyterian Church to read a passage

form the Bible and ask for a blessing on the event. Various speakers were introduced, among them were: Governor M. F. Ansel, Colonel W. G. Wardlaw, and attorney Thomas M. McDow -- all personal friends and admirers of Judge Witherspoon.

Governor Ansel told that he first met Judge Witherspoon soon after Ansel had been elected solicitor of the Eighth Circuit Court in 1889. "I loved him and admired him for his great kindness of heart and his abilities as a judge. I consider it an honor to have been numbered among his friends and the many kind words he spoke to me will ever linger in my mind." The governor went on to say that Judge Witherspoon was "a great exponent of the law and a just judge. He was a great lawyer and an indefinable worker, always on time in the heading of his court and always courteous to members of the bar. He was a Christian gentleman, which is the noblest work of God. He stood four square to all the world and performed every duty laid on him with honor and fidelity."

Earlier in the month, President Herbert Hoover was a happy recipient of a large basket of fruits and vegetables from South Carolina. The assortment had been collected by the South Carolina Natural Resources Commission from all over the state, and was presented by a contingent of teachers and students.

The descendants of the Thomas Jones gathered at a church in Western York County for their annual reunion in August. The dinner table was piled high from one end to the others, and the ubiquitous Western York County hash appeared amid smiles and yums. After dinner, J. W. Jones shared some of the family history to his cousins saying that Thomas Jones was born in England about 1805 and at the age of ten his father bound him to a ship to become a sailor. He followed that profession for ten years and disembarked for good at New Orleans. He made his way to Chester County where he married Jane Jonsey and produced four boys and four girls.

Across the nation and around the world the media reported two day of bloody fighting in China between the forces of Chaing Kai-shek, President of the Nationalistic government, and Marshall Feng Yu-hsiang and Governor Yen His-shan -- both who had seceded from the Nationalistic party and swore they would bring an end to the dictatorship of Chaing....Texas Governor Dan Moody was preparing to declare Martial Law in the town of Sherman where rioting was occurring following an attack on a white woman by a black man. The court house and three blocks of dwellings were burned....The General Conference of Southern Methodist were meeting in Dallas and took notice of the riots with a "sense of

horror and deep regret” and adopted a resolution affirming “lasting opposition to all mob violence.”.....In Washington, the Senate was questioning the nomination of Owen J. Roberts of Pennsylvania to the Supreme Court. Texas Senator Sheppard (D) was fuming over a report that Roberts had denounced the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment in a speech in 1923. Roberts denied that he as against prohibition and of the senate were optimistic about his confirmation.

On the lighter side, the US Bureau of Standards announced to the Acoustical Society that modern women’s clothing was far noisier than their grandmother’s. To make the issue a bit sillier, Colgate University reported that loud noises partially paralyzed the stomach for at least ten minutes. Four researchers came to that conclusion after swallowing inflated balloons to measure the expansion and contraction of the stomach. The bureau reported that clothing twenty years earlier which were most wool and heavier material absorbed 4.7 units of sound while the 1930 then, silky creations absorbed only 2.2. This fact was noted while testing sound absorption for engineers who were seeking to build theaters and auditoriums with better acoustics and enhance hearing. And that’s the way we were in 1930.