

## Milton, and Other Places

**Comparatively few folks ever have heard of Milton, and even fewer have been there. And yet, it is a most interesting place, and so are some of these other places mentioned in this article.**

**By CARL GOERCH**

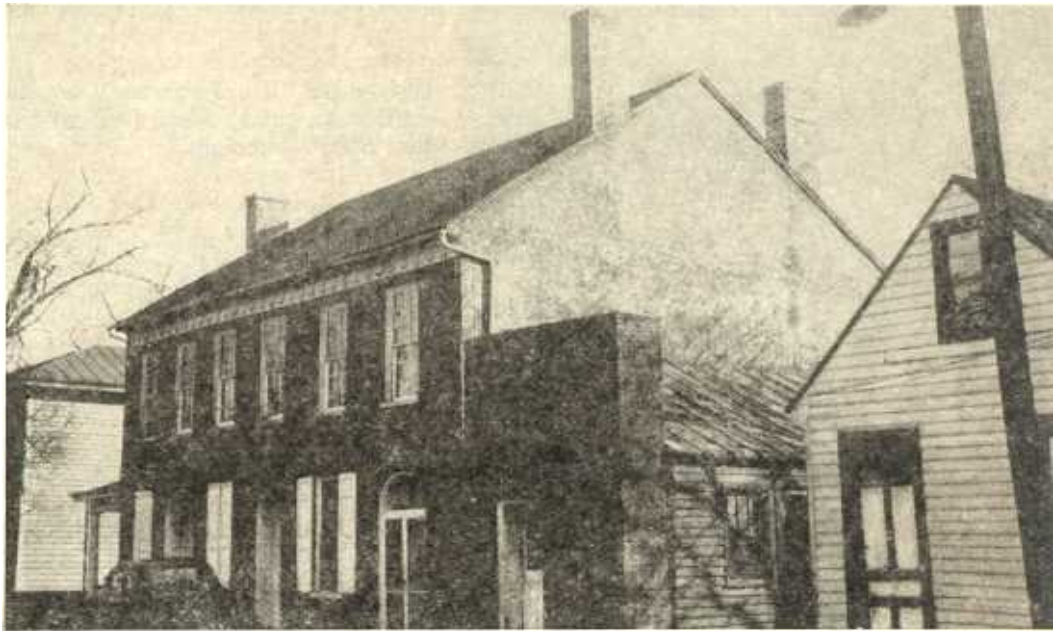
**T**HE State Highway Department deserves the highest praise for its efficiency in marking the roads in various sections of the State, but there's a slight slip-up in the markings at Roxboro.

Usually, when you see highway-direction signs in a town, the signboards contain the route number and also the name of the next town and the mileage thereto. But in Roxboro, the signs merely show the route numbers, and unless you are acquainted with these, you're liable to get into trouble.

That's exactly what happened to us last week. We were in Roxboro and wanted to drive over to Yanceyville. After having visited the office of the *Roxboro Courier* and chatted with F. O. Carver and D. R. Taylor for a few minutes (Old Man J. W. Noell was out to lunch) we headed back toward the main street and observed the highway signs. U. S. No. 501 was straight ahead, so we took that but soon realized that we were heading in the wrong direction. We turned around, went back to our original starting point and took N. C. 144 and 57.

And that's how we happened to get to Milton.

We want to tell you something



This is the old house in Milton in which Mr. Newman told us that eight Presidents have been domiciled over night. We had some difficulty, however, in ascertaining the names of the eight.

about Milton, because nine-tenths of the population of North Carolina probably never have heard about the place.

When we left Roxboro, instead of going due west to Yanceyville, we swung to the north, and that's how we arrived at Milton. It is right jamb-up against the Virginia line, 17 miles northwest of Roxboro. First off, when we saw the town in the distance, we thought we were arriving at Yanceyville, but the sign at the edge of town told us different.

It's an old looking town: old store-buildings, ancient houses, and an air of established permanency about it. A restful, quiet atmosphere, entirely different from the hustle and bustle of so many other North Carolina towns.

There were a few people on the street and they didn't seem to be doing anything in particular. We stopped in front of the village drug store and went inside. There was a man behind the soda fountain and three other men were sitting down and talking.

"Coca-Cola," we told the clerk-proprietor.

He served it.

"We've travelled all over North Carolina," we told the owner of the store, "but this is the first time we've ever been to Milton."

One of the other men looked up: "You ain't missed much," he said, laconically.

"You got no business saying that, Jim," reproved the man behind the



There's no need to explain what this place is, because the historical marker on the left does so very nicely. The house is located near the outskirts of Milton, up in Caswell County.

counter. "Let me tell you something, Stranger; this here town was incorporated the same year that Baltimore was incorporated — back in 1791."

"Yeah," said Jim, "and look at Baltimore now and then look at us."

"Don't mind him," said our informant, whose name, we found out a few minutes later, was Newman. "Don't mind him: he's just an old pessimist."

"Give me a Coca-Cola," said Jim.

#### A Question of Temperature

Mr. Newman groped around in the container. "I don't know whether it's very cold or not," he told Jim.

"Mine is very nice," I offered.

"Hell!" said Jim, "Yours has probably been in that box ever since the town was incorporated. He don't sell more than two or three a week."

"That's a lie!" said Mr. Newman.

Jim just sniffed.

"Yes, sir," went on Mr. Newman. "This is a sure-nuff old town. See that place across the street? . . . That old brick building with the white shutters? . . . Eight presidents of the United States spent the night in that house. It used to be the hotel here."

"Who were the eight presidents?" I inquired.

"Well, let's see. . . . Darned if I can remember. . . . Jim, who were the eight presidents that stayed at the old hotel?"

Jim put down his Coca-Cola bottle and proceeded to think. "Seems like I've heard that Ben Franklin was one of them," he offered.

Mr. Newman snorted in disgust. "Franklin was never a president," he told Jim. And then, turning to me,

he added: "I've forgotten who the eight were, but I've heard all my life that there were eight."

#### Hard to Leave

We had a very interesting conversation for ten or fifteen minutes and we really hated to leave Mr. Newman, Jim and the rest of the crowd. In the past, we've made the statement several times that when we got tired of working, we intended moving down to Southport and spending the rest of our lives there. But after having visited Milton, we're going to put that community as a close second on our list. We can't imagine anything finer than going into Mr. Newman's drug store every day and listening to him and Jim quarreling. The other folks said that they do it all the time.

You see, comparatively few people ever get to Milton, due to the fact that it is off the main line of travel. But the next time you're up that way, by all means visit the place, because it is entirely different from most other towns in the State.

Leaving Milton, we turn to the left and go in a southerly direction toward Yanceyville, twelve miles away. Half a mile beyond the limits of Milton we come to a large house on the right of the road. It is the home of Romulus M. Saunders, one of the most distinguished citizens this State ever has had. He was ambassador to Spain from 1845 to 1849, also a member of the State Legislature, a representative in Congress and held a number of other important positions. Many people place him very close to the top in the list of prominent North Carolinians from the Colonial period to modern times.

On toward Yanceyville. Just before

we hit the main highway, we see a palatial country home on the right. A passing Negro informs us that it belongs to Mr. Stephens.

"Farmer?" we asked.

"No, suh: saw-mill," he replies.

Yanceyville certainly has built up since the last time we were there, about six or seven months ago. A number of new homes have been built on the eastern edge of town, and many other improvements are to be observed.

We run into Doc Gwyn, Clyde Cole and Lawyer Horton in front of the bank building. Sam Bason isn't in the bank. Old Doc Malloy is also missing—he's out on a call, Clyde tells us.

#### Signs of Progress

"Yes, sir," says Dr. Gwyn, who is just fixing to go bird hunting, "this old town is moving right along. Look over there, in front of the courthouse: that's our Community Christmas tree. First public Christmas tree ever to have been put up in Caswell County. On Christmas Eve we're going to have a big sing, with choirs in their vestments, and we're going to give away a lot of presents.

"Look over there. That's the 'Sportsman' and it's just as fine a pool hall as you've got in Raleigh. And over there, on that other corner, is our moving picture show. Then back over in that direction—you can't see it from here—is where they're building the new hosiery mill. That's going to be another big asset in the progress of our town. There have been a number of new homes built recently and I really believe that we've moved ahead faster in the last two years than we did in ten years before then."

We leave Yanceyville and head south, stopping at Prospect Hill for a moment to see Dr. Warren. He's a typical country doctor and he doesn't put on any airs or frills, but we've heard other members of the medical profession classify him as one of the most capable doctors in the entire state. He cusses very much like Old Doctor Dave used to do down in Washington.

Doc also is fixing to go bird-hunting. He's stepping into his car and already has his dogs in the rear compartment.

"What the hell are you doing here?" he inquires politely.

We explain that we're just passing through and stopped by to see him for a moment or two.

"How many you got in your family?"

"Four," we tell him. "What do

you want to know for?"

"Got some birds in the house. Wait a minute and I'll get you some."

"Hold on. When I said four, I meant my wife, my father, my mother and myself. I didn't count the children. We've got six children, which makes a total of. . ."

"You're a liar!" says Doc calmly, as he enters the house and comes out directly with a package containing the birds.

After a few minutes' conversation we part. He goes to where he thinks there's some good shooting, and we continue our way to Hillsboro.

### Historical Markers

Hillsboro probably has more historical markers to the square foot than any town in North Carolina. There are three on one block. The town has its Christmas lights up and there are a lot of people moving about.

We turn to the right after crossing the Eno River and take the road to Chapel Hill. A few miles away we come to a marker on the left of the highway. It consists of a bronze tablet set into a stone that stands better than six feet high. You can't read from the road what it says on the tablet, so we get out for a closer view.

It was erected in memory of Thomas Lloyd, and it seems that he lived from 1736 to 1792. He was a Major-General during the Revolutionary War and also held several high political positions.

You'll have to do a lot of traveling before you find any more artistic Christmas decorations than those in Chapel Hill. Instead of being strung straight across the street, the lights come to a high point in the center. From this point are suspended stars, wreaths and Christmas bells. On either side of the street are ropes of laurel leaves, and the entire effect is most pleasing to the eye.

A visit to Daughter, who is planning to come home the next day and who has one more examination to take. Then we head for home, and at the edge of Chapel Hill we see an elderly gentleman and a young lady standing beside the curb. They look like nice folks so we pause and ask them if they want a ride.

"No, thank you," says the gentleman, "we're waiting for the bus."

He looks a little closer and recognizes us. "If you're going to Raleigh, perhaps you wouldn't mind taking Miss Jones with you," he suggests. "She's my niece."

We assure him that we would be delighted to take Miss Jones along,

and we're glad we did, because she is a most interesting talker. It develops that she teaches English at St. Mary's school in Raleigh and she gives us a lot of inside information about Emily Carter Warren, Tay Fowle, Lucretia Hill, Mary Helen Rodman and other girls we know at St. Mary's.

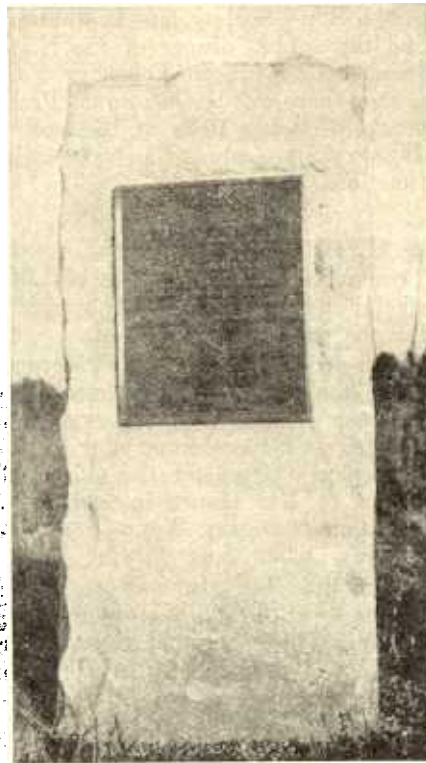
### Good Christmas Business

All of the towns we visited are doing a big Christmas business. Leaving Raleigh we passed through Wake Forest, which has a very Christmasy atmosphere about it. They've put up a big tree near the underpass, where you come out at the college campus.

Youngsville, where we stop for a moment at the Youngsville Filling Station and converse with Mr. Croom and some other gentlemen. Mr. Croom says he likes our magazine fine but he doesn't like our politics worth a cent. There's more to Youngsville, incidentally, than you gather from just driving along the highway. The business section of the town is to the right, and they've got a number of good stores there.

Franklinton is all lighted up too. The folks up there are as cordial as you'll find anywhere. The town has had considerable new building in it lately.

Between Franklinton and Hender-



The marker on the road between Hillsboro and Chapel Hill, erected in memory of Thomas Lloyd, patriot of the Revolutionary War. It stands well over six feet in height.



We doubt whether you can find another barn like this one anywhere in the State. It is located on Highway No. 1, between Franklinton and Henderson.

son, over on the left side of the road, is a barn that has always intrigued us. Every time we've passed there we've slowed down so we could admire its architectural beauty more in detail. We're running a picture of it along with this article so that you, too, may admire it.

Henderson has lights across the street, ropes of laurel leaves and banners swung from the lights in the middle of the street. We go in to call on W. A. Hunt, at the bank, but he's ill. Henry Dennis, editor of the *Henderson Dispatch*, is all wrought up about a letter he has just received from Coleman Roberts of the Carolina Motor Club.

"He wants to pass a bill in the legislature which would put a license tax on bicycles and compel every bicycle to be licensed, just like an automobile. I don't think the idea is worth a rap."

There's a crowd around the courthouse, so we go in to see if court's

(Continued on page eighteen)



# To Our Many Thousands of Customers

SCATTERED THROUGHOUT NORTH CAROLINA we wish to extend best wishes for a joyous and happy Christmas season, and also for a prosperous year to come.

The service rendered by the Duke Power Company has seen a considerable expansion during 1938. More and more, the people of North Carolina are realizing that from the standpoint of dependability and economy, nothing can take the place of electricity. Every place of business is rendered more efficient and every home is made more comfortable through the use of electric power.

## DUKE POWER COMPANY

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



### MILTON, AND OTHER PLACES

(Continued from page three)

in session and, sure enough, it is. Judge Hunt Parker is presiding, but there's a brief recess, so he and Ernest Tyler and A. W. Gholson, Jr., and a number of others are in the smoking room, chatting. Judge Parker probably knows as much North Carolina as anyone else in the State, and he can talk about it most interestingly.

Downstairs we see Mr. Faulkner, clerk of the court, and also his assistant, Miss Helen Royster. Miss Helen, it seems, has just had a birthday. Forty-sixth, we believe it was, although we're not exactly sure about it.

Outside we see Police Chief J. H. Langston leaning up against a telephone post, so we chat with him a little while. He was one of our witnesses in that dog case, which was tried several months ago.

### Oxford Decorated

The drive to Oxford is a short one: only ten or eleven miles. Oxford has its Christmas lights up and they've made a big Christmas tree out of the Confederate monument in the center of the business district. The monument itself is almost completely concealed. We look for Ben Lassiter and Ben Parham, but neither of them is around. Tom Etheridge has sold out his interest in the drug store and is now doing some kind of work with Mr. Beverly. The Oxford Orphanage is one of the grandest institutions we have in the State, and Creasy Proctor is one of the most valuable citizens we have.

Roxboro has Christmas decorations up around the courthouse and also lights across its principal business streets. We visit the *Courier* office to see—but wait a minute: that's where we started on this trip, so there's no need to go into all that again. Just the same, we're sorry we missed Mr. Noell, because we would have liked to have wished him a Merry Christmas.

He's a grand gentleman

### Answers to "Do You Know Your Counties?"

1—Pitt. 2—Robeson. 3—Northampton. 4—Beaufort. 5—Scotland. 6—Moore. 7—Duplin. 8—Guilford. 9—Rowan and Davidson. 10—Johnston. 11—Chowan. 12—Robeson. 13—Third. 14—Thirty-eighth. 15—Guilford. 16—Hyde. 17—Property tax. 18—Dare. 19—Apple. 20—Avery. 21—Lee. 22—Lincoln. 23—Alexander. 24—New Hanover. 25—Haywood.