

XLI

AMONG THE PROUD, BLUE BLOODS OF VIRGINIA

XI

Toward the end of the ^{year} ~~it~~ was 1934 [✓] Colonel Sam Slover, who lived in Norfolk, ^{Virginia} ~~Va.~~, and owned the Richmond Times-Dispatch and the Norfolk and Petersburg papers, ~~came to Washington and~~ offered Mark the job of general manager of the Times-Dispatch with the distinct possibility of becoming publisher within a few months. ^{Colonel Slover} He ~~said he~~ had checked with ~~Mr.~~ W.T. Anderson, ^{who} and ~~Mr. W.T.~~ had said if Mark ^{understood} ~~knew about~~ money, he'd be swell. Colonel Slover ~~said he~~ was willing to take a chance on the money part because he believed in taking chances. So Mark accepted his offer.

see same phrasing 21, p. 145

see p. 127 21?

see p. 127 21?

Knowing of Virginia's worshipful admiration for ancestors, Mark shouldn't have been surprised that ~~the story in the~~ Times-Dispatch, ^{announcement of} ~~announcing~~ his appointment to the general managership, traced his Ethridge forefathers back to their arrival in America; nevertheless, he was. In a sly way the article seemed to be apologizing for the fact that he had been born in Mississippi. It said: "Mr. Ethridge is a native of Mississippi, though his family had its roots in Princess Anne County, ⁹ ~~V.A.~~, and in Currituck County, N.C., where his ancestors

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Not approved



were established in Colonial times. His interests and his point of view have been those of a Southerner."

To ^{my} ~~my~~ chagrin, I, having not one root in Virginia, was dismissed by the Times-Dispatch with three words:

"He," referring, of course, to Mark, "is married"; then hurriedly, ^(addition, perhaps) to make matters as palatable as possible to its readers, ~~added~~, "and expects shortly to establish his residence in Richmond with whose traditions he is entirely familiar ~~and whose history~~ is part of the history of his own country." ^{Mark}

~~didn't understand then what that last historical flourish meant, and still doesn't.~~

~~Shortly before he arrived in Richmond to take over the paper, it had a long strike and the publisher had resigned, so he had a chaotic job at first. Fairly quickly, however, ~~it~~ settled down.~~

The Dispatch had stiff competition in the afternoon paper, the News Leader, owned by John Stewart Bryan, known as the "Duke of Richmond" and the father of the present owner and publisher, Tenant Bryan, ~~and had as~~ its editor ^{was} Douglas Southall Freeman, author of the distinguished biographies of Robert E. Lee and George Washington. ^{Dr. Hovnan} Mark was in great awe of ~~him~~ until he so he told me, ^{commented}, "Mr. ~~Lee~~ realized ~~so he~~ ^{commented} Freeman's mind boggled at everything that had happened since the Civil War."

perhaps this type of ref. used pretty frequently

I think that re-Mark is perfect Virginia. I'd like to keep it.

there are others

Hovnan

A ~~good~~^{good} example of ~~his~~^{Freeman's} mental processes on the problems of the thirties, Mark ~~is~~^{was} fond of citing, ~~was~~ a speech he and I heard him make in New York during the summer of 1935. Practically all the publishers of Virginia newspapers, ~~with~~^{and} their wives, editors, and star reporters, ~~had gone~~^{came from Norfolk} to New York on a chartered ship from Norfolk to woo ~~their~~^{the} New York advertisers to increase their ~~advertising~~ space in the Virginia papers. ~~They threw~~^{They} a fancy lunch ~~at some fancy place~~ to which they invited all the newspaper advertising representatives and all the advertisers themselves. ~~The publishers~~^{had} brought with them ~~Rush~~ the headwaiter of the Commonwealth Club, the finest club in Virginia, ~~who was~~^{Although Rush was} renowned for his mint juleps, ~~However~~, his greatest claim to fame was his ability to recite word for word General Robert E. Lee's farewell address to the Confederate army at Appomattox. When he did this for the familiars of the Commonwealth, they frequently ~~broke down and~~ wept. ~~They didn't~~^{There was no} plan for Rush to give the farewell address in New York; they ~~brought~~^{publishers} him to make mint juleps and add an Old-South-plantation air to the occasion. They also brought mint from Virginia gardens and old Smithfield hams and heaven knows what else.

Their best bait, though, was the luncheon speaker, ~~He was~~ none other than Dr. Freeman, ~~himself~~, whose

~~Why not name it or #1~~

~~wrote out for similar expression significant see p. 95~~

sun at the time was riding high in the literary heavens. He would bring the advertisers in, the publishers figured; everybody would want to hear him. ^{William Jennings} ~~Mr.~~ Bryan, with his great charm, was to be master of ceremonies, and the mayor of New York, Fiorello LaGuardia, "the Little Flower^u", was to make the welcoming address.

They ^{publishers} were right about ~~the~~ agency people and ~~the~~ advertisers taking the bait; they all came. Everything went according to plan until the time for the welcoming address, ^{when} ~~and~~ there was no Mayor LaGuardia. ^{had} ~~However,~~ He ^(and said) sent word to Mr. Bryan that he would be late^d to go ahead with the program, ^{and} he would come when he could. So Mr. Bryan ^{and} ~~in the~~ most gracious ^{and} ~~words,~~ introduced Dr. Freeman. ^{Right} ~~here~~ I'd like to draw a veil to cover the next forty-five minutes. ^g ~~Thought~~ the Depression was still serious, Dr. Freeman painted such a glowing picture of Virginia, you would have thought everything was roses below the Mason-Dixon line. He stressed the proud, blue Anglo-Saxon blood that coursed through the veins of Virginians. They were not mongrels, begging for handouts from the United States govern^ement. Virginia had accepted no help from the so-called New Deal and never would. Virginia had with^estood the deprivations and hardships at Jamestown;

W.E. Williams
Linnings?
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p. 24

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p. 47

stat. repetition, deliberate for effect
1. e. Civil War

she had withstood the deprivations and hardships of the Revolution, ^{and} ~~she had withstood the deprivations and hardships~~ of the Confederate War, and she would continue, alone and uncomplaining, to withstand the deprivations and hardships of the present Depression. Many times the feet of Virginians had been bloody, but their heads had never been bowed.

At about the middle of this paean to Virginia, Mark, sitting at the speakers' table, saw the Mayor come ^{through} ~~in~~ a door at the rear of the dining room and stand motionless against the wall. After a few minutes Mr. Bryan saw him too. He waited until ^{there} ~~their~~ was a break in Dr. Freeman's ^{discourse and} ~~flow;~~ then, apologizing ^{to him} ~~profusely to Dr. Freeman~~ for the interruption, announced ~~that~~ ^{and} the distinguished mayor of New York has arrived. Realizing how ^{his honor was} ~~he is~~ extremely busy ^{he is} ~~he is~~, I'm asking Dr. Freeman to allow the mayor to make his talk now." Then he called out, ~~Mr. Mayor, please come forward, sir, and give us your long-anticipated words of greeting.~~ ^{to Mr. La Guardia to} ~~come forward, sir, and give us your long-anticipated words of greeting.~~

The mayor, ^{no taller} ~~was~~ ^{no taller} ~~than a corner mail~~ ^{box} ~~politely refused.~~ ^{He was explained} ~~He was explained~~ ^{he} ~~most interested~~ ^{and wanted him} ~~in what Dr. Freeman had to say~~ ^{and wanted him} ~~to say~~ ^{was} ~~and wanted him~~ ^{was}

~~to~~
~~he~~ continue."

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The mayor did come forward, though, ^{took} ~~take~~ his seat at the speakers' table, and when Dr. Freeman resumed, scratch ^{ed} furiously on a little pad he dug from his pocket. Mark, a seat away, kept his ^g excited eyes on the fast-moving pen, ~~he~~ already suspected ^{ing that} the mayor wouldn't make a perfunctory address of welcome.

For a few [#] minutes, unfuffled, Dr. Freeman continued in the same vein as before, paying further tribute to the independent spirit of Virginia, ~~then~~ ⁱⁿ conclusion, he caustically criticized the reckless relief program stemming from Washington.

He sat down amid mild applause ^{and} Mark reported afterward ^{that} it scarcely reached the speakers' table. He was sure even the most insensitive Virginian realized at that point, if he ^{hadn't} ~~hadn't~~ before, that there ^{were very few} ~~was scarcely a~~ "proud, blue-blooded Anglo-Saxon" among the guests.

But matters ^{just became} ~~got~~ more embarrassing ^{for} ~~from the~~ visitors from the Commonwealth. When Mayor LaGuardia ^{in this fashion:} rose to speak, he began "I never expected a little Italian mayor ^{of New York} to be in the position ^{I am in} I find myself at this moment ^{defending} the great Democratic President of the United States from an eminent editor from the sovereign state of Virginia."

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¶ Then he blasted away, ^{saying} ~~He said~~ he ^{had arrived} was late for the luncheon because he had been delayed in Harlem, where there were thousands of Negro refugees from Virginia who ^{had come} ~~had come~~ during the Depression to New York City, seeking help. He declared ^{that} there were more blacks on the city's relief rolls from Virginia than from any ^{other state} ~~state~~ in the Union. He cited figures; described touching examples of actual cases, ^{and} then concluded, ^{by} suggesting to the Virgians ~~that if they didn't need help from the United States government~~ ~~from the United States government~~, ~~I would greatly~~ ^{they} ~~he~~ appreciate it if you would take ^{their} ~~your~~ Negroes back. And ^{their} ~~your~~ poor whites, too.

"Goddamn, it was the best defense of the New Deal humanitarian program I ever listened to," Mark ^{ad} ~~crowd~~ every time he ^{told} ~~told~~ of the affair.

WFF He wasn't one whit sorry for Dr. Freeman; he felt he had it coming to him. He was sorry, though, for Mr. Bryan, who was ~~such~~ a perfect gentleman of the old school.

WFF And a perfect Virginian, too. ¶ On one occasion at a large social affair at his home, ^{Mr. Bryan had} ~~he~~ introduced Mark and me as coming from three different states. Sometimes he'd say, "North Carolina," sometimes, "Alabama," and still other times, "South Carolina."

¶ Finally Mark said ~~to him~~ apologetically, "Mr. Bryan,

can omit this anecdote?
↓
I do of this anecdote

~~possibly omit~~

neither Willie nor I is from any of those states you've been mentioning. Willie is from Georgia and I'm from Mississippi." ^{Mr. Bryan} Smiling and slightly shrugging his shoulders, ~~he~~ answered, "Dear Mr. Ethridge, what difference can it possibly make? I know it's one of those states south of Virginia."

possibly
It's such a typical Virginia rural. He'll like to leave it here

#11
to look there?

~~But back to Mark's job.~~ ^{had} On hiring ^{Mark} ~~him~~, Colonel Slover assured him he could operate the Times-Dispatch his way, so, with the full support of the staff, he began with improvements in the news and editorial contents, at the same time reducing circulation and promotion expenses. Mark ~~has~~ never contended there ~~is~~ ^{was} a given way to sell newspapers. Methods must vary with conditions of competition and local situations,

"Nor would I be so dogmatic ^{as} to say that old-fashioned circulation methods, tied in with premiums to the customer, and even insurance, have not in some instances been successful in selling newspapers and making money," he conceded once, discussing his moves in Richmond ^{to a newspaper group}. "But what I believed then, and still believe, is that if publishers realized it, they could make more money and build sounder foundations by publishing better newspapers. And to publish a good newspaper, you must have good

apparently this little "trick" of expression (used so often throughout) has been borrowed from Mark!

are all the following part of this "discussion"

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reporters, and to have good reporters you must pay them decent wages. With every year it is more difficult to be a successful newspaper reporter. No longer is it sufficient to be a good ambulance chaser or a good police reporter, able to fraternize with police in a friendly way. ^{A reporter} He can no longer be ignorant of the forces that move about him. If he aspires to anything more than leg work, he needs to have a broad understanding of world affairs. He needs to know as well as the editor the significance of an election in Britain, or a decree in China, or a military move in Ethiopia. He must have some understanding of economics and of social measures if he is to give the readers an intelligent cross-section of the day's news; he must know something about the stock market if he is to fit the day's rise or decline into its proper place. He must know something about the elements of science if he is to give the proper play to stories of scientific advance and discovery. So/ practically the first move I made in Richmond was to see that more money went into the reporters' pay checks.

"Next, I tried to find out the interests of the people in our circulation area. By the middle thirties newspapers were no longer daily bulletins of the news and editorials as when I first started out.

They had become daily magazines, full of a wide variety of features. I remember that when the Yellow Kid first made its debut in the old New York World and was followed by such [#]strips as Jiggs and Maggie, the Captain and the Kid, Nemo, the Dream Walker, [#]old timers among newspapermen considered them merely a flash in the pan, a sensation scheme devised under the terrific competition of Hearst and Pulitzer. But soon they had become an interesting and significant part ^{look} in American life; indeed, they had become a phenomenon comparable to chewing gum and jazz music. When someone decried the taste and said such things were for morons only, I was comforted by a quatrain I had heard:

See the pretty moron,
 She does not give a damn,
 I wish I were a moron,
 By God, perhaps I am!

"But features weren't confined by any means to that strip field. ^{Mark went on} They covered innumerable subjects and I felt it was absolutely necessary for a publisher to ascertain through questionnaires and polls what features the readers preferred. A publisher could no longer ignore the fundamental and special interests and quirks of human nature in his readers. If he did, he was a little less than dumb or he had to want to restrict

~~quotation
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etc.~~

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etc.~~

(X)

~~quotation
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his circulation for some special reason. There was, however, the possibility of the greatest waste in feature buying. If a publisher didn't make a study of what his readers wanted in the way of features but allowed his editors to make blanket contracts for bales of feature stuff, some of it good, some dull and meritless ^{and dull} as dishwater, he could suffer from that decision as great a loss as anywhere on the paper.

"If publishers must put out daily magazines and that is exactly what we were doing, we needed to have ~~the~~ ^{the} business acumen, if not the intelligence, to exercise the degree of selectivity that would insure enjoyable features, a range of interest, and the greatest measure of pulling power. A little research, a little time, and a little money could determine the readers' taste.

"So on the Richmond Times-Dispatch we took two polls a year.

"Those polls revealed an interesting and significant fact, the amazing change that had been brought about in newspapers by visualization. They showed that out of the 15 leading features we carried, 13 of them had visual rather than type appeal. For instance, the cartoons rated first;

Handwritten initials

Handwritten mark

Handwritten notes

the picture page, second; a small cartoon of the
 not type, third. Also on the list were three
 oddity-type features and eight comics, among them
 Popeye, which at the time was the most popular
 comic in the country. The fourth feature if
 they can be classified a feature in popularity
 was the editorials, despite their lack of visual
 appeal.

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"Back then the women who were polled admitted
 their interests were different from men's. While
 men were concerned primarily with political news
 and comment, with market reports and sports, women
 said they liked to read, in this order, about these things:
 health; good taste and etiquette; food news and
 recipes; society news; fashions and love" as con-
 tained in the advice to those who had tangled lives.
 (Dorothy Dix was the outstanding columnist on that
 subject at this time). Oddly enough, children
 came in just ahead of gardens, while beauty was a
 bad field horse.

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"There were, of course, other general features
 that ranked high. To mention a few: radio programs
 (my stay in Richmond was before television), voice of
 the people that is, letters to the editor, questions
 and answers, gossip columns, and movie news. And

there was a multitude of limited-interest columns, such as those ^{book} which reviewed ^S books and ^{and those about} ~~deaths~~ with hobbies, especially antiques and stamps.

"I go so fully into these details about features because their development and wide scope marked a significant and lasting change in newspapers."

Putting the money with which Mark had to operate into news, features, ^{(the} and editorial content of the paper instead of into circulation gimmicks paid off. At the end of the first full year, the net earnings had increased, and midway ⁱⁿ of the second year ~~The~~ Dispatch had overhauled and passed in circulation the News Leader for the first time in ^{its} existence. ~~And~~ ^{And} the net earnings for the second year were even ^{greater} ~~bigger~~ ^{and} Mark was delighted. He felt ~~that~~ these results showed ~~that~~ his theory ^{about} of publishing a newspaper had proven itself beyond a doubt.

~~mentioned?
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why?
etc facts~~

— ~~Once again he repeated,~~ "Money plowed into the news and editorial end of the paper pays big dividends, ^(he insisted) ~~provided,~~ of course, ^f the publisher knows how to allocate it."

The only real trouble he had in Virginia was brought about by the late Senator Harry Byrd, the father of the present ^{to} senator Harry Byrd, ~~whom~~ ^{whom} Mark always referred ^{to} as "Yong Harry."

9 Senator Byrd was against the AAA (the Agricultural Adjustment Administration) and all the other financial reforms of President Roosevelt, which the Times-Dispatch was strongly in favor of. Mark considered Senator Byrd "a first-class reactionary."

(Later, ^{the senator} he even opposed Roosevelt for a second term, and

He was so angry with the policies of the paper and with Mark as its publisher, ^{that} he tried to ruin the Dispatch paper financially. Mark considered Byrd a first-class ^{reactionary}.

One day Mr. Rhodes, the president of Miller & Rhodes department store, the paper's biggest advertiser, ~~called Mark to come to see him.~~ He told Mark ^{that} Senator Byrd was doing everything he could to force ~~Mark to~~ ^a change ⁱⁿ the paper's editorial policies. He said, ^{the} Senator ~~Byrd~~ thought a boycott was the best way, ^{and} he wanted Miller & Rhodes to withdraw ^{its} advertising. Mr. Rhodes said to Mark, "Son, if you yield to that kind of pressure, I won't have any respect for you." Mark assured him he wouldn't yield.

Senator Byrd also tried to ^{exert} ~~bring~~ ^a financial pressure through a bank to which he thought the paper owed money, but instead of ~~the paper~~ owing the bank money, ^{the paper} ~~it~~ had a sizable balance in its favor.

9 ^{The} ~~Senator~~ ^{The Senator} Byrd finally contacted Colonel Slover in Norfolk and arranged a breakfast meeting with him

at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond. ^{The} Colonel ~~Slover~~
 called Mark and told him Senator Byrd was complaining
 about the editorials against him ^{and he}. Colonel
 Slover, wanted Mark to ^{meet him at} ~~come to~~ the Jefferson the
 night before his breakfast engagement ~~to have dinner~~
~~with him.~~ [#] Mark went and as he and ^{the} Colonel ~~Slover~~
 were having dinner, Senator Byrd came in and, ~~and~~
 seeing them, came over to their table and began
 low-rating Mark. After some minutes Mark got tired
 of it, ~~he~~ ^{and} told the Senator he had been humored by
 the Virginia press much too long; that ~~he~~ ^{the Dispatch} didn't
 regard him in the sacred light the ^{rest of the} Virginia press
 did, ~~that he regarded him~~ ^{but rather} as an ordinary politician;
 that if Colonel Slover bowed to him and let him
 dictate the policies of the Times-Dispatch, ~~he~~ ^{he, Mark Ethridge,} ~~the present manager~~
 wouldn't be there to implement those policies.
 Mark ^{then} ~~said~~ [#] goodnight and, still furious, ^{headed} ~~arrived~~
 home. He felt this was a showdown, ^{and} ~~he~~ told me I had
 better start packing, ~~in the morning~~; we most likely
 would be leaving Richmond shortly. ^{SOM.}

However, early next morning, Colonel Slover
^{phoned} ~~called~~ him and said he had broken his breakfast date
 with Senator Byrd and wanted Mark to ~~come down and~~
 have breakfast with him instead. At breakfast ~~he~~ ^{he} assured
 Mark that he was running the Dispatch superbly.
 In the next election Colonel Slover supported
 a candidate from his district who was against the

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Byrd machine and he was elected. Mark, was exceed-
 ingly ~~well~~ pleased, both with Colonel Slover and
 with the candidate.

4
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note - (?)
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Tennis -
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