The Story of WVOT

Wilson's Voice of Tobacco Land

Color Control Patches © The Tiffen Company, 2007

Probably every radio station employee has, at some time, dreamed of owning his own station. The owners of WVOT, Wilson, N.C. are four young men who made that dream come true. After years of separate experiences at many stations, Tommy Williams, Ted Leeper, Joel Lawhon and Nick Pieler met in 1942 as employees of WPTF, 50,000-watt NBC outlet in Raleigh, N.C. in these positions: Williams- staff announcer; Leeper- Farm Director and announcer; Lawhon- staff announcer, later continuity supervisor; Pieler - engineer.

In May 1947, their similarity of ambition brought them together and they began to plan for a station of their own. The first problem was the selection of a town. They desired to remain within the area in which they were well known for their broadcasts: Southern Virginia, North Carolina, northern South Carolina.

The next month was spent in studying the towns and cities in this area, to select the one which would be best for the opening of a new station. In June the town of Wilson was chosen for its rich trade area and its lack of radio coverage.

Realizing the need for association with an outstanding local business man, the group visited Wilson and asked a local banker to recommend such a person. H. W. Anderson was recommended, and they approached with the idea of forming a partnership.

This partnership was formed on July 3, 1947 and application made to the F. C. C. the same day. This application was granted four months later, on November 13, 1947, and as soon as the weather cleared and snow cleared the next spring, construction was begun on studios and transmitter. And finally, on June 3, 1948, WVOT began its broadcasting activities!

The dream had materialized ———...



Planning



We attend the Tobacco Festival of 1947...





Arriving by plane...



in WILSON...



The City of beautiful trees...





AND—

The worlds' largest tobacco market.





Wilson Warehouse District.

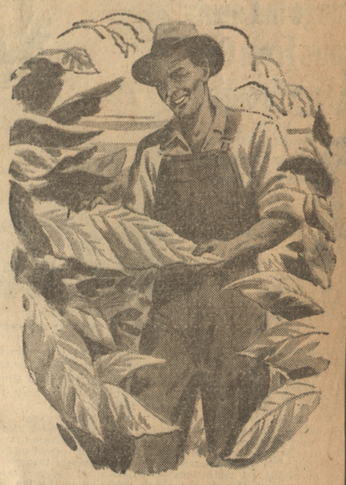


Down Town.



WILSON

"WORLD'S LARGEST BRIGHT LEAF TOBACCO MARKET"



1948 SEASON OPENS THURSDAY, AUG. 19

To All Tobacco Growers From Wherever Tobacco Is Grown . . .

★ Sell Your 1948 Crop Of TOBACCO On The MARKET That LEADS ★

ALL MARKETS IN POUNDS SOLD AND MONEY PAID OUT AND WHERE EVERY PILE IN EACH GRADE

BRINGS the TOP PRICE Every Sales Day During Season

START THE SEASON RIGHT, AND HAVE MORE MONEY FOR YOUR CROP, BY SELLING ON THE WILSON MARKET . . . .

25 HOURS SELLING TIME EACH SALES DAY 25

18 LARGE AND MODERN WAREHOUSES With 36 acres Floor Space Capacity To Handle 12 Million Pounds.

5 FIVE SETS OF **BUYERS** Representing Every Tobacco Manufacturing Company In The World.

11 LARGE and MODERN FACTORIES and REDRYING PLANTS Equipped To Handle All Daily Sales.

THE BEST WAREHOUSEMEN AND BUYERS IN THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

WITH CAPABLE AND EFFICIENT MEN ON ALL JOBS TO RENDER THE FARMERS REAL SERVICE

There's No Guess Work When You Sell Your TOBACCO In

WILSON

A SALE FOR EACH FIRM EVERY DAY

A SALE FOR EACH FIRM EVERY DAY





"ASK THE MAN WHO SELLS TOBACCO HERE"

TUNE IN OVER RADIO STATION W V O T DAILY 7:15 - 7:20 AND 12:30 - 12:35 FOR MARKET REPORTS AND FARM NEWS!
OVER W G T M DAILY 12:50 - 12:55 AND 6:50 - 6:55 PM FOR MARKET PRICES AND AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE.

Scene On Wilson Tobacco Market



The above picture showing the opening of the Wilson tobacco market in 1947, is typical of the scenes expected in the various warehouses of Wilson when they open their doors Thursday morning on the 1948 selling season. Wilson now has 18 mammouth warehouses in which tobacco is auctioned. Wilson, the world's largest tobacco market, has five full sets of golden weed buyers.

A Recent Picture Of Beautiful Nash Street



Nash Street was rated fifth in a survey made by National Geographic of the most beautiful streets in the United States.

Chamber Of Commerce Increases Membership 112 During Past Year

President



H. W. ANDERSON

Manager



JOHN G. THOMAS
Manager Chamber of Commerce

Many Outstanding Projects To Improve Community Fostered

With a membership that continued to grow during the past year as it has the last three the Wilson Chamber of Commerce continued to work toward the betterment of Wilson during the last year.

In the last twelve months since the 1947 Daily Times Tobacco edition was published the Chamber's membership has jumped from 530 in 1947 to 642 in 1948.

Headed by tobacco warehouseman Hobb W. Anderson this year as its president the Wilson Chamber of Commerce has continued to step up its operations to the point where the organization and its membership are continually on the job working toward helping to make Wilson better and to grow.

Farm Program

Probably the most outstanding project of the Chamber instigated in the past 12 months is the program directed at a better balanced farming program in the county. Offering $2,100 in sayings bonds and cash in cooperation with other civic groups in town the Chamber has set up a program directed at corn, cotton, canning, pastures, county and town gardens, hogs and cattle. It is the first time that such a program has been offered in the state. Dr. George W. Mitchell, Chairman of the Chamber's agricultural committee, headed by the project.

During the past year also the Chamber has instigated two other programs directed at benefitting Wilson. They are:

1.—A program directed at curbing the ever increasing number of drives for funds in town and attempting to cut down on the quotas of those drives that the town might feel are "legitimate" from the standpoint of worth.

Under this program the Chamber has set up a committee that will begin to function shortly that, with the cooperation of the Wilson Community Budget, will approve or disapprove all drives for funds either on a local, state or national level. This committee will not act as a "policing" agency but will simply be a policy and publicity group that will take their case to the people through the press and radio.

Advertising Program

2.— A12 months advertising program that will take the place of the old tobacco festival. This advertising program will begin officially December 1, 1948, the beginning of the next fiscal year, but work was being done on it this year under the present administration which approval the ideal the program has the backing of the membership of the Chamber, Retail Merchants and Wilson's tobacco industry. It is set up on the theory that it is more beneficial to Wilson to advertise the town for 12 months in the year than it is to advertise it for just the three days of the festival.

The Chamber, however, sponsored the North Carolina Tobacco Exposition and Festival in 1947 and received much nationally publicity from the event.

In December 1947 the Chamber assisted in publicizing the National Family Basketball Tourney, sponsored each year by the Junior Chamber of Commerce, and saw its efforts rewarded by three pages of reading matter and photographs in Life magazine.

(Continued on Page Three)

Tobacco Trail Office Is Here

The Tobacco Trail Association, promotional group for U. S. Highway 301, has its headquarters here at the Chamber of Commerce office at the Cherry Hotel.

A Wilsonian, Arthur A. Ruffin, is president of the association while John G. Thomas, Manager of the Chamber of Commerce here, is secretary treasurer of the association.

Now running all the way from Baltimore, Md., to Tampa, Fla., U. S. 301 keeps the organization busy with promotional work.

National advertising program and various other means of advertising are carried out by the association.

In the past year some 125,000 strip maps of 301 were distributed by the association while some 5,300 letters were answered personally inquiring about the route from the local office.

The association serves towns in Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida and the secretary and the president continually travel along the route in the interests of more tourist business on this highway.

Wilson, North Carolina

ECONOMIC SURVEY

PREPARED BY
WILSON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Box 979
WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA

this ain't hay!

Fields like this —

bring prices like this —

WILSON MAINTAINS HIGH RECORD AS WORLD'S BEST BRIGHT MARKET

Wilson is known the universe over as the world's largest bright leaf tobacco market and maintains the distinction of having sold more pounds of tobacco in one season than any other market in the bright belt.

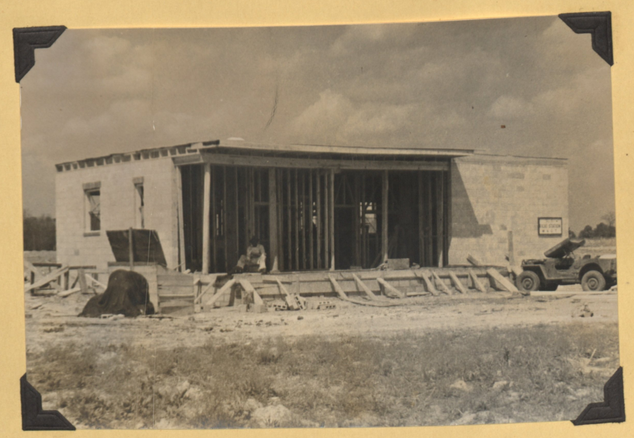
Below is given the table showing sales, gross receipts and average price paid for tobacco here since 1902:

1902	22,296,077	$ 2,430,272.39	$10.90
1903	22,201,771	1,507,500.25	6.79
1904	14,806,479	1,465,481.42	9.90
1905	15,319,469	1,329,899.20	8.42
1906	14,245,566	1,525,378.82	10.71
1907	15,509,720	1,702,967.25	10.98
1908	18,782,857	1,845,222.09	9.84
1909	17,071,092	1,449,813.56	8.49
1910	10,836,123	1,167,121.33	10.77
1911	8,818,181	1,318,998.91	14.79
1912	16,381,076	3,225,561.88	19.88
1913	20,819,160	3,961,886.15	19.03
1914	29,889,568	3,999,224.26	13.38
1915	34,170,720	4,155,159.64	12.16
1916	28,454,333	5,753,466.13	20.22
1917	35,244,378	10,362,539.49	30.87
1918	37,815,279	13,624,844.66	36.08
1919	42,330,569	22,720,280.44	53.67
1920	62,204,930	13,446,382.91	21.61
1921	42,864,162	12,169,100.75	28.38
1922	42,342,360	12,679,644.28	29.94
1923	71,517,350	15,856,541.43	22.18
1924	52,931,467	14,125,168.21	26.68
1925	76,666,277	20,514,758.23	26.75
1926	69,662,228	18,712,054.71	26.86
1927	76,563,264	17,609,225.08	23.00
1928	84,247,626	17,202,236.39	20.43
1929	82,820,692	16,830,792.68	20.32
1930	86,096,010	11,897,669.55	13.82
1931	66,362,724	5,992,660.77	9.03
1932	37,709,530	4,654,830.35	12.34
1933	70,552,142	18,668,702.74	16.82
1934	52,447,572	15,572,423.53	29.69
1935	72,038,434	15,464,116.86	21.46
1936	52,132,796	12,104,503.59	23.21
1937	72,848,534	18,721,543.15	25.69
1938	63,140,268	15,184,151.79	24.05
1939	91,007,768	15,039,003.40	16.53
1940	64,140,898	11,830,881.24	18.45
1941	50,752,936	15,296,263.46	30.15
1942	60,358,918	23,697,483.69	39.26
1943	54,621,410	21,975,720.48	40.25
1944	71,422,590	30,646,453.23	42.92
1945	68,331,654	30,217,345.70	44.23
1946	89,650,346	46,066,887.01	51.39
1947	88,412,550	38,908,236.34	44.00





Construction.



LOOK WHAT'S GOING ON IN WILSON

A Brand New Radio Station

Today at 5 O'clock

WVOT

1,000 Watts 1420 on your dial



Ted Leeper
FARM DIRECTOR



Joel Lawhon
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



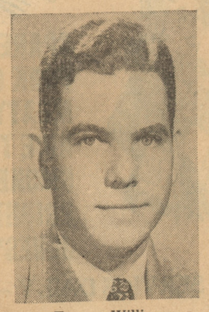
N. V. Pieler
CHIEF ENGINEER



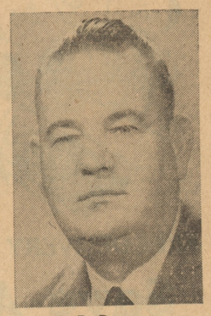
Hobb W. Anderson
BUSINESS MANAGER

1420

ON YOUR DIAL



Tommy Williams
GENERAL MANAGER



R. R. Brunson
COMMERCIAL MANAGER



Gene Sink
SPORTS DIRECTOR

★ WILSON'S VOICE OF TOBACCO-LAND ★

Station WVOT Goes On Air At Five Today

New Radio Voice Aimed At Coverage Of Wilson County

Wilson county's radio listeners were greeted with a new voice tonight from Wilson's newest radio station, WVOT, Wilson's Voice of Tobaccoland.

The new station located at 1420 on the radio dial has the daytime strength of 1,000 watts and covers all of Wilson county, it was announced.

Carries Local Programs

Carrying all local programs, Hobb W. Anderson, business manager of the station, said today that the object of the new outlet will be to give Wilson people Wilson news as well as that of national importance, to cover Wilson's trading area, and to provide local listeners with the type of local talent that will prove to be the most enjoyment to all.

Pointing out that the staff at WVOT was formulated with these objects in mind Mr. Anderson announced them today. Tommy Williams, an outstanding radio announcer in the Carolinas for years and local and regional news commentator for Raleigh's 50,000 watt station for sometime, will be general manager of the new local station.

Commercial Manager

Along with Mr. Williams at the station will be Robert R. Brunson of Wilson, commercial manager of WVOT. Mr. Brunson has been familiar to local radio people for a number of years having been connected with the other station here until recently.

Joel Lawhon, former announcer for WPTW in Raleigh, will be the new program director of the station. Mr. Lawhon promises to bring to Wilson the type of programs that will interest the listeners of this area.

Leeper Joins Staff

One of the most important persons at the new station will be Ted Leeper, former farm director of WPTF. Mr. Leeper will attempt to give the farmers of this area up to the minute news on agriculture and agricultural developments.

N. V. Peiler, former engineer with WPTF, will serve as chief engineer of WVOT.

Sink Gains Recognition

The sports department of the station will be headed by Gene Sink, who comes here from Winston-Salem's station, where he gained much recognition as one of the outstanding sports announcers of the two Carolinas.

The station itself, along with its transmitter, is located on Highway 301 two miles north of Wilson. Going on the air this afternoon at 5:00 o'clock the station presented a dedicatory program which will run until 7:30 o'clock tonight.

Having full Associated Press news coverage the new station will be able to provide up to the minute news from today on.

Miss Jacqueline Daniel of Wilson, will handle the front office of the new station serving as secretary and receptionist.

Congratulations TO WVOT

Electric Supply Co.

113 S. Douglas St. Wilson

Congratulations

WVOT

Our best wishes for your success!

Barrett's Printing House

130 N. Goldsboro St.

CONGRATULATIONS!

WVOT

1420 KC on Your Dial

We are proud to have a part in your Public Service Program to Wilson and Eastern North Carolina.

Listen to "THE SWAP SHOP" Daily except Sunday 12:10 P. M.

POWELL SUPPLY COMPANY, INC.

Rear of Planters No. 1 Warehouse
TELEPHONE 4366 BOX 42
WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA

"Better Equipment for Better Farming"

To Wilson's New Radio Station

WVOT

OUR BEST WISHES FOR YOUR SUCCESS!

WILLIAMS LUMBER COMPANY

S. SPRING STREET DIAL 2222

OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO

WVOT

On the opening of a fine new RADIO STATION

DICK'S ELECTRICAL CO.

307 E. Nash St.

CONGRATULATIONS to WVOT

We are happy to have made the Neon Sign for your New Home.

FAULKNER NEON CO.

531 E. Barnes Street Wilson, N. C.

CONGRATULATIONS

WVOT

On the opening of your NEW HOME

We are proud to have laid your Armstrong Asphalt Tile Flooring

Our Best Wishes For Your Success

ASPHALT TILE • INLAID LINOLEUM • RUBBER TILE

WILSON FLOORING CO.

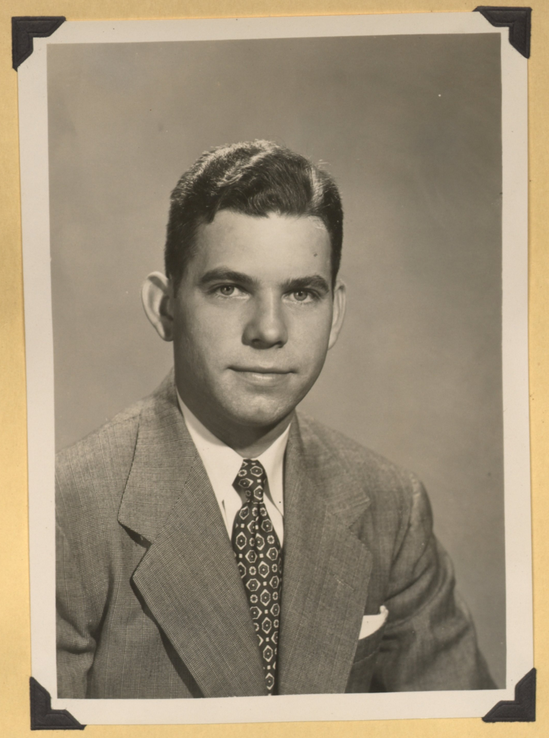
James B. (Jimmie) Batts, Jr.

224 S. Tarboro St. Wilson Telephone 2775

(ASK TO SEE ARMSTRONG'S "VEOS" WALL TILE)



Nick Pieler



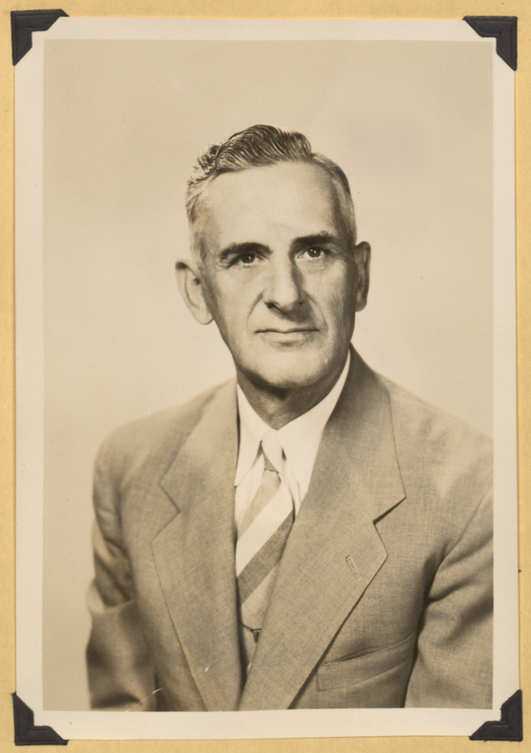
Tommy Williams



Ted Leeper



Joel Lawhon



Durham Moore



Bob Brunsore



Gene Sirk



Tommie Williams
Manager



Al Harrington
Traffic



Jackie Daniel
Secretary



Dan Williams
Engineer

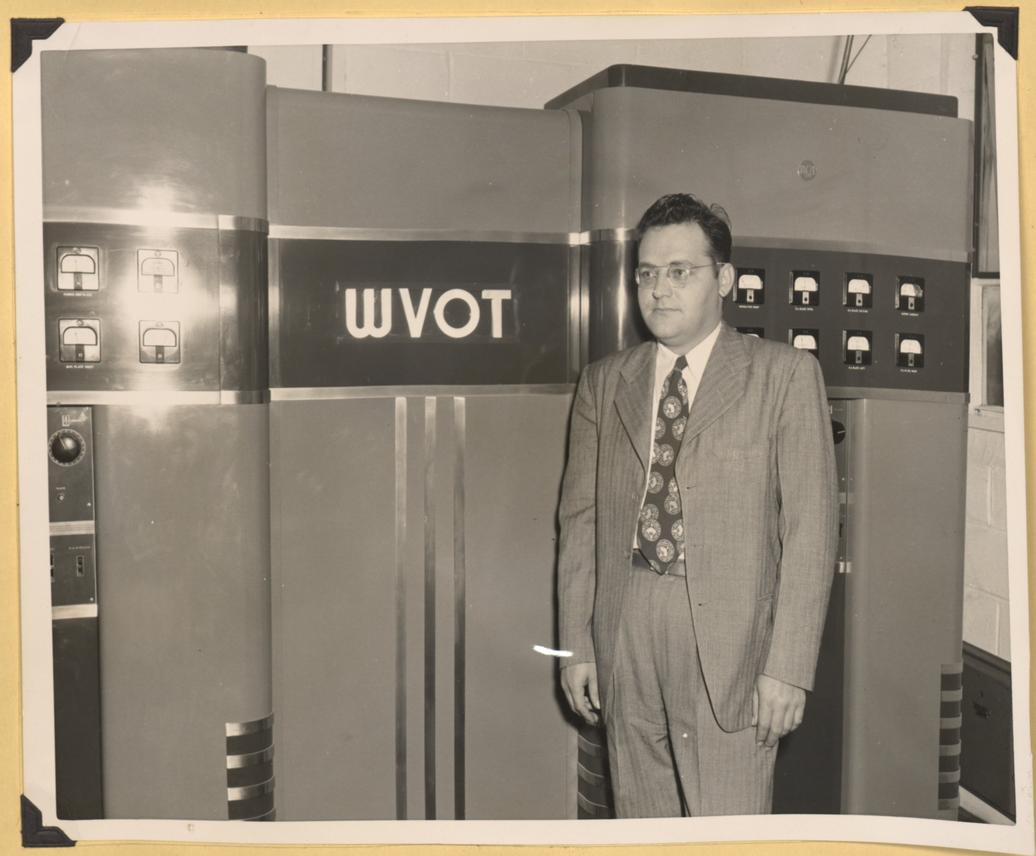
Staff Photographers.



Charlie Raines



Guy Cox



N. V. Pieler. chief engineer





H. W. Anderson

Partner and Business Manager.



talks with CBS's Arthur Godfrey——
in foreground Mrs. Anderson.



Tommy Williams interriewed the staff of the new SEARS ROEBUCK Catalogue order office.

WYOY WAS THERE!

An opening broadcast from the new ARMY-NAVY STORE.

WYOY WAS THERE!



Hobb Anderson and Joel Lawhon pack the last piece of equipment, preparatory to take-off for the trip from Wilson, N. C. to Valdosta, Georgia, a 400-mile trip. From Valdosta, WVOT broadcast the opening sales of the 1948 tobacco selling season. A WVOT Exclusive!

Housewives, drinking Coca-Cola from baby-bottles, compete for the big basket of groceries on the Super Food Quiz. Gene Link waits to congratulate the winner.





Two more bicycle winners on the Mello Ice Cream Birthday Party Contest.

WYOT - the only station in its area with an hour-a-day program for Negros. Winner of a SEPIA SERENADE contest waits for her prize, a long-distance talk with Nellie Lutcher in California. TED LEEPER placed the call.





Officials are interviewed on broadcast of Hackney Wiggins new Studebaker Plant.

Housewife wins or orchid on the "Washerette Quiz".





"Report From The Warehouse Floor"

Presents Interviews with Farmers.



And actual sales of Tobacco—



Gene Sink broadcasts opening of Poland of the Firestone Store.

Joel Lawhon conducts an unusual show, Broadcasting right from the homes of Wilson, by tape recording.

"Man-At The Door"





Joel Lawhorn at the control board.



Gene Sink in Studio "A".



"SEPIA SERENADE"

Ted Leeper interviews Lonnie Johnson.





Winners of the "Man-At The Door" Contest receives certificates for furniture from sponsor.



Two more winners on the Mello Ice Cream Birthday Party.

"Your Talkin' Friend"

Ted Leeper, WVOT Farm Director, Interviews J. O. Anthony, Wilson County Farm Agent.





WVOT's Joel Lawhon acts as MC for Wilson's Nationally-Famous "Tobacco Tamasha," portions of which were broadcast by CBS, NBC, and MBS.

Here the Hog Calling Contest. ——



Bicydes are awarded winners of the Mello Ice Cream Birthday Party Contest.



Wilson is Growing.

Broadcast of the opening of the new Studebaker plant of Hackney-Wiggins Motor Company.

WVOI was there!



The battle of quartets on Sepia Serenade's quartet contest.



Cotton !

Quartet.





WVOT Hillbilly Stars.

"The Carolina Partners."



Welcoming the Officials of the French Gratitude Train



Wilson extended an official welcome to the representatives of the Gratitude train that were in Wilson Tuesday on their way from Raleigh to Charleston, South Carolina. The ceremonies were held on the court house steps. Reading from left to right are Countess de Fels, chairman of the Paris committee which organized the French Gratitude train, General John V. B. Metts, North Carolina National Guard, Garland Bobbitt, of the Raleigh American Legion, Joe Marlowe, J. L. Hales, mayor of Wilson, who arranged the program and welcomed the guests, W. A. Lucas, prominent attorney, who spoke of the friendly relationships between the two countries and Jean Siaus, consular agent in Washington. S. J. Hazard, who was also on the program is not shown in the picture.