The sign on the Blacksburg bypass reads this way:
Virginia Tech 2
Pearsburg 29

A friend dropped in to see Charlie Coffey the other day and greeted the harassed football coach with a cheery "I didn’t know you played Pearsburg.
Mr. Coffey tells that one on himself. He also smiles and makes small talk with sports writers whose appraisal of Coffey’s program at Virginia Tech has been less than totally complimentary.

Charlie Coffey went 2-9 this fall and he dies a little every time he thinks about it—which is every waking minute. But he hasn’t surrendered and he joined three other college coaches at the Norfolk Sports Club meeting and fought the good recruiting fight along with the rest of them.

The subject was keeping Tidewater athletes in Virginia and Coffey, a Tennessean who is a graduate of the University of Knoxville, made perhaps the most telling point of all.

"I’ve coached in a number of states and in a couple of them I went to banks and tried to borrow money without collateral. I was turned down.

"I tried again when I got back to Tennessee where they knew me and I got the money just like that."

"And what was the name of that bank again?"

Frank Jones of Richmond wanted to know.

The luncheon format called for one coach to speak on the topic of the day for 10 minutes and then introduce the next one.

Even here fate conspired against Coffey. He was followed by Bob Thalman, whose VMI team put the final nail in the Virginia Tech coffin.

"I have to introduce Bob Thalman," Coffey said to his audience. Then turning to Thalman, he said "I’d like to do you proud, buddy. But I just can’t do it."

Thalman’s response was a light "it’s good to see Charlie relaxed again. The last time I saw him he was biting the bullet. I know just how he feels."

Thalman, in turn, introduced Frank Jones “and as a Richmond alumnus I’m proud of what Coach Jones has accomplished.”

Jones declared that it was time everyone started talking Virginia football. Which may have been a Freudian slip. Jones is among those being considered for the coaching vacancy in Charlottesville.

Jones said he hoped—to visit Virginia Tech “to learn how to grow grass on a practice field.” Coffey and Jim Root of William and Mary confided that they planned to enroll in Jones' coaching clinic and study his formidable defense.

Jim West, the principal recruiter at Virginia, represented his school as “the entire coaching staff at the university just now.

"I don’t know who the new coach will be or when he’ll be named. Frank Jones probably knows more than I do about it. I just wish they’d hurry up and name one. I usually do the recruiting during the season and then get to stay home. But I’ve stayed on the road for the last two weeks."

Everyone said it wouldn’t be a good thing for everyone if the qualified student-athlete in the state remained home. Root went so far as to suggest it would conserve parental gasoline. West talked about the per capita income rise in Virginia.

Jones, a Georgian who went to college in Chapel Hill, N.C., added the final recruiting pearl—a Peaheade Walkter story.

It seems that Peahead had this splendid Yankee prospect for his Wake Forest team one year before the war and he feared that the old Deacon campus would be a drawback.

So Peahead showed off the gahle Duke grounds—and got his man.

Then when he picked the fellow up in Durham and drove him to Wake Forest he explained, "You move to that other campus when you're a junior."