

Fieldcrest

MILL WHISTLE

Issued Every Two Weeks By and For
the Employees of Fieldcrest Mills, Inc.
Spray, North Carolina

Copyright, 1954, Fieldcrest Mills, Inc.

OTIS MARLOWE Editor

Vol. XIII Monday, July 19, 1954 No. 1

Homespun Coverlet Is Family Treasure

A homespun coverlet, made by his great-grandmother more than 100 years ago, is a treasured possession of Avery A. Walker, retired Blanket Mill employee. Mr. Walker's mother gave each of her seven children two of the coverlets together with other homespun material which was handed down for several generations in the family.

Mr. Walker's forebears raised the sheep, sheared them, scoured, carded, and spun the yarn and then wove the material on a hand loom. Dyes were obtained from native barks and roots and have not faded in more than a century.

Small Boys Helped

Home spinning and weaving were practiced likewise by his grandmother and his mother and as a small boy, Mr. Walker helped in shearing by holding down the sheep's head, the feet being tied. He also helped to wash the wool which was placed in wooden tubs and the boys, barefoot, tramped it for long periods and assisted with the frequent rinsings. He helped in the weaving process by sitting under the loom and keeping threaded the harness and sley. The harness, too, was home-made of twisted flax.

Mr. Walker recalls that the loom was set up in the "big room" of the mountain home, the counterpart of today's living room. His grandmother had the only loom in the immediate neighborhood, he said, and kinfolk and friends living nearby brought in their yarn, spun at home, and took turns in weaving it into cloth for clothing or bed covers. Mr. Walker said the loom was sometimes kept busy day and night in winter months. As one neighbor completed her piece another put on her yarn and started weaving another piece of material.

Complicated Pattern

The coverlet Mr. Walker holds in the accompanying picture has a figured effect and required the use of several treadles to manipulate the loom for the relatively complicated pattern. Mr. Walker has other pieces, including some heavy wool homespun, also over 100 years old.

Mr. Walker, who lives near the old Rhoulac Place just off the Spray-Draper road, retired under the pension plan in December, 1951. He had over 28 years of continuous service and worked all



OBSERVERS—Members of the Junior "Y" Astronomer's Club study the heavens through the club's 25-power telescope at a vantage point atop the Y.M.

C.A. building. Left to right: Jean Murphy, Billy Almond, J. W. Wall and George D. Fawcett, club advisor.

of that time as a finisher tender in the Wool Carding Department at the Blanket Mill. He was born in Wilkes county and was a construction foreman for some years before joining Fieldcrest in 1923.

Since his retirement he says he "has managed to keep pretty busy" in various activities in which he is interested. He has operated a farm for several years but says that this year he is "just helping out" his son-in-law, Early Wyatt, who is doing the farming.



A. A. WALKER
... Century-Old Coverlet ...

Astronomers' Club At Central Y.M.C.A. To Build Telescope

Members of the Astronomer's club at consolidated Central Y.M.C.A., have undertaken to build their own 6-inch telescope, with purchased materials, and at its completion will be able to observe the craters on the moon, the rings around Saturn and the polar caps of Mars.

The clubs recently set up their present 25-power telescope at Bouldin Motor Co. in Leaksville to enable interested persons to obtain a look at a full moon through a telescope. Contributions were taken up for the building of a larger telescope.

The Junior "Y" Astronomers' club consists of 28 boys and girls from the Tri-Cities, meets monthly, under the direction of the advisor George D. Fawcett, for movies, talks and discussions as well as observations of the moon through the telescope. Officers of the club are: president, Jerry Dunn; vice president, Henry Christley; secretary, Linda Campbell; and treasurer, James Hall.

The Senior Club consists of 11 men and women from the Tri-Cities who meet monthly with Joe Barham as advisor. Officers will be elected after the club has grown to a larger number.

Don't marry for money—you can borrow it cheaper.

FIELDCREST MILL WHISTLE