

Valuable "Dollar"

By NANCY ALEXANDER

There's a dollar so valuable to a couple in Hudson no amount of gold or silver could purchase it. The treasure is one-week-old Richard Dollar, Jr.

His father is so proud of the sturdy six-pound-four ounce infant he declares, "I could stand up on the housetop and shout the news to everybody." The baby's mother cried for joy when he arrived safely.

In many places babies are a dime a dozen. They're born every minute of every day; and to most couples they're an accepted fact; but the reason for the special happiness of the Dollars is there was grave doubt that the baby's mother could have a child normally, for she is a paraplegic, paralyzed from the shoulders downward.

The staff at Dula Hospital in Lenoir, where the baby arrived March 21, was as joyous as the parents when the carrot-topped infant arrived in the usual manner, without any difficulty and in excellent condition. Doctors there say they haven't previously delivered a mother with such extensive paralysis as has Mrs. Dollar. Many of her pelvic and stomach muscles have atrophied.

Mrs. Dollar, the former Carlene Hicks, became a victim of the disease during the severe polio epidemic that overshadowed the Catawba-Caldwell area in 1952, when she was 16 years old. Her home was in Vilas in Watauga County. Her attack followed the visit of a small Caldwell cousin who became ill with the disease soon afterward. The cousin overcame the effects.

Carlene was taken to the Central Convalescent Hospital in Greensboro, where she spent 11 months. After improving enough to leave the iron lung and rocking bed, she spent as much time as possible working with younger patients, who quickly recognized her great love and understanding for them. In the Greensboro hospital she completed her senior year of high school studies, but came home to graduate with her class at Cove Creek High School in the spring.

Afterward she attended Woodrow Wilson School in Fishersville, Va., where she spent 12 months taking a business course. Living in the rehabilitation area, she enjoyed the association of other students. Upon returning to Vilas, Carlene was unable to get a job, for offices were not arranged for easy maneuverability of a wheel chair, which she uses. She did, however, frequently assist a lawyer, who had lost his eyesight, by typing correspondence and other data for him.

Two years ago she and Richard, who also lived at Vilas, were married. They slipped off to South Carolina for the nup-

tials, for, though the families weren't opposed to their choice of mates, there was concern about Carlene's being able to assume the responsibilities of a housewife.

She has proven any pessimists wrong about the marriage. The couple moved to Hudson so Richard could be near his job at Lenoir Mirror Company. There she keeps a neat, ground-floor apartment at the home of her sister Phyllis (Mrs. Charles) Booth, cleaning it immaculately, cooking and doing other work.

"Richard helps me with things I can't do, but most of them I can," explained Carlene, an attractive redhead, confidently.

Richard, Jr., a strapping, sturdy baby, has a lusty pair of lungs. His mother says, "He has day and night turned around, sleeps all day and yells about every hour during the night." But the cries are sweet music to the Dollars.

Carlene's mother, Mrs. Cluster Hicks, who is near Vilas, says, "Carlene has always loved children. Phyllis' three—a boy and twins (a boy and a girl)—all worship her. She spoils them terribly. No one could have wanted a baby more than Carlene and Richard. I'm so glad they have one—and such a fine boy, too. I believe in handicapped people living life as fully and as normally as they can."

Mrs. Hicks, who is visiting the Dollars until Carlene is better, is no novice with infants, having reared six of her own and assisted with 18 grandchildren.

Blowing Rock Glee Club To Stage Comedy

The Blowing Rock High School Band, Glee Club and Dramatics Club will present a comedy of Minnie Pearl's "Hit-chin'" at the Blowing Rock High School Auditorium Friday, April 5, at 7:30 p. m. Admission will be 25c and 50c.

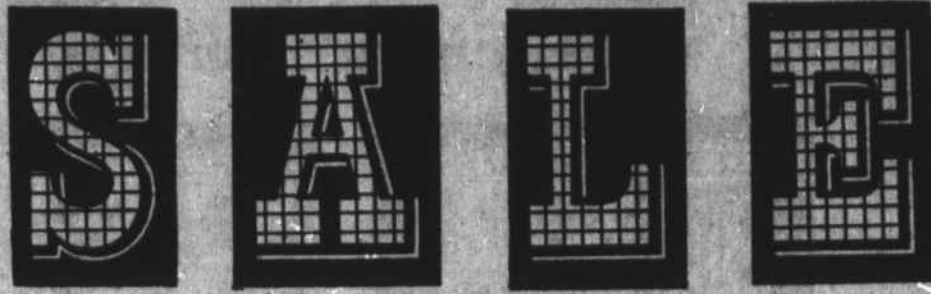
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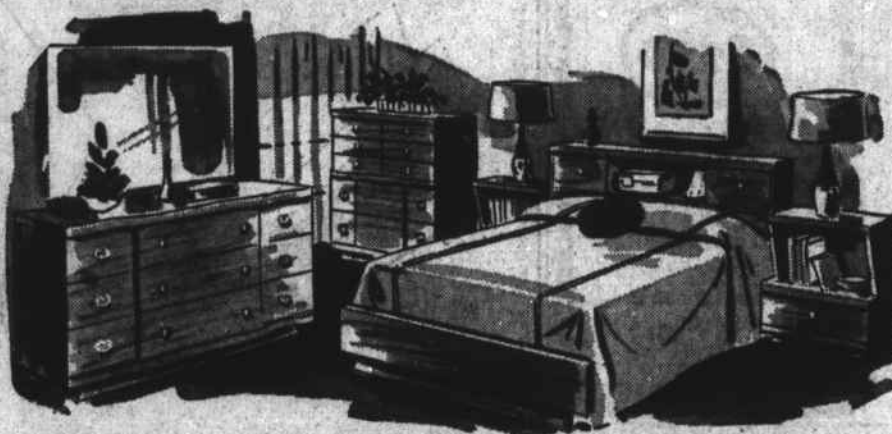
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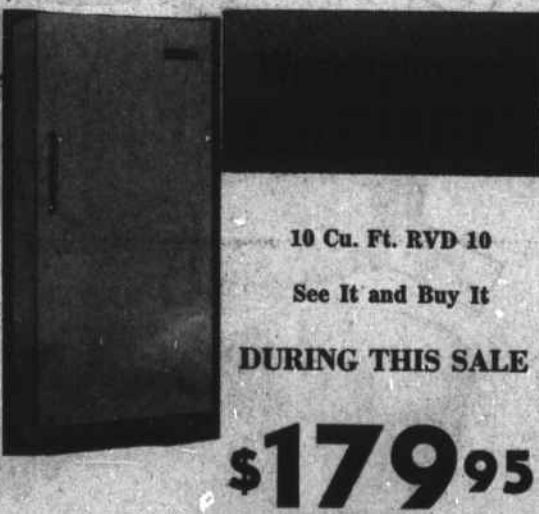
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