

Harlowe Men Make Livelihood by Trapping

Having Trouble Selecting A Christmas Dinner Menu?

By Randolph S. Hancock

The northwest wind blew its chilling breath across the bog lands of eastern North Carolina. The otter, curled in its warm den a few feet under a creek's bank, stretched to his full four-foot length, and yawned.

Tree branches snapped and cracked under the weight of sleet. The shadows of the trees grew long and slim like giant fingers. The otter eased his intelligent-looking head from the entrance to his den. He sniffed the sharp December air for danger signals.

Then his sleek brown body slid into the icy waters without the slightest sound. Only the ripples on the surface could testify that he had been there. He was off on his nightly prow for a bass, a perch or a jack.

Trapper Discovers Slide

Late that afternoon, a trapper, one of hundreds who work traplines throughout the winter months in eastern North Carolina, had come across the animal's slide.

The slide was a dead give-away to this man of the swamp. The trapper knew that the otter had its den in the immediate vicinity. The four-foot wide slippery path down the stream's bank told him so.

Moreover, the trapper knew that when the otter had satisfied its hunger that night, it would return for a gambol on the slide.

Here, then, his years of experience told him would be the place to make his set to catch the otter when the animal came to play.

That, of course, is a hypothetical case. But it could be a true one, in variation, of what happens many times during the open season to this animal each year.

While the volume of fur business in North Carolina is not what it is in the Alaskan wilds, it does give hundreds of persons in the area a fairly nice income from December to March each year.

The present season has started off much the same as last year with bad weather, but the trappers are looking forward to better prices this year than they received last year.

Rains Handicap

Handicapped last year by heavy rains, snows and sleet, the trappers also experienced price drops—all pelts from the time the season opened until it closed in March.

Raw fur buyers were at a loss to explain last year's economic quirk. They readily admitted that the old basic law of supply and demand did not function according to textbook pattern.

"But we are looking for a better deal this year," one fur buyer said. "Last year the fur market opened rather strong at the first of the season, but gradually declined as the winter wore on."

This happened, he said, despite the fact that the pelts developed more fur as the cold deepened.

And, curiously enough, the price drop in raw furs was reflected in the price that Milady had to pay for that coat, neckpiece, or what-have-you.

Right now the trappers are stringing out their traps through the vast swamps of the state, along streams, and in the dank marshes of the creeks.

The trappers in North Carolina, and in the wastelands of the far north, begin preparations for the season early in the fall.

Preparation Important

Two such trappers, who probably operate the most extensive traplines in eastern North Carolina—Clyde Taylor and Journey Connor—point out that preparation for the season is one of the most important jobs the trapper has.

Both Taylor and Connor live in the Harlowe section of Carteret county. In late October and November they begin to "case" their territory, looking for animal signs.

"Then, when the season opens," they said, "we know where to start operations. It's just like any other business. Laying the ground for the year's work is important to our success. Then, too, traps have to be tested, and oiled. A weak trap can cost you a valuable raccoon or



Carteret county industry — There hasn't been much publicity about Carteret county's little-known fur industry. Trapping is taken for granted by most folk, but it offers a nice livelihood during the winter months for many rural residents. Pictured above, left, is Clyde Taylor, and right, Journey Connor, of the Harlowe section, with a night's catch of raccoons. The fur of this animal is the all-important ingredient of the prized raccoon coat. (Photo by Randolph S. Hancock)

mink skin, the price of two or three traps."

The trappers pointed out that new traps are boiled in water, then greased, to destroy the metal odor—an odor that makes an animal wary.

"An old raccoon or an old fox," Taylor said, "can smell a new trap further than a man can a woman with perfume on. That new metal odor is a dead give-away and you won't catch many raccoons or foxes or any other animal until it has worn away."

Both Taylor and Connor run long trap lines for this part of this country—approximately 200 traps. In the far north the trappers think nothing of stringing out 500.

"It takes practically all of our time," they said, "looking after 200 traps. They must be visited each day to take out any animal that is caught during the night or else you run the risk of some other animal—such as a wild cat—coming along and eating the trapped one."

Otter Is A Sly One

Both Taylor and Connor readily admitted that the otter was the most difficult animal to trap.

"We don't get one often," they said. "But when we do, he is well worth all the trouble it has cost us. An otter's skin, you know, brings about \$25 to \$30."

However, the otter's wariness has not saved it from almost total extinction. The very fact that it is one of the country's most valuable fur-bearing animals has put the price on its head, which has caused the commercial trapper to go after it with unrelenting determination.

Man is not the otter's only enemy. There are many others—the wildcat, fox, owl and eagle find the cubs easy prey. These predatory animals take a heavy toll each year, the trappers said.

Taylor and Connor said that next to the otter, the mink rated second as the most valuable fur-bearing animal. "And the mink is just about as crafty as the otter," they agreed. "You don't get a mink every time you set a trap," they smiled.

According to fur buyers, it takes about 75 mink skins to make a woman's fur coat. And mink skins, they said, bring \$20 to \$25 each, raw! "Is it any wonder," they asked, "that a mink fur coat is so expensive?"

Otter Trims Uniforms

The fur buyers said, however, that coats seldom, if ever, are made of otter skins. These pelts, they explained, are shipped to Ar-

Santo Claus Visits Belgian Boys and Girls First, Dec. 6

By William Anderson

BRUSSELS — Belgian children, unlike their counterparts the world over, are not awaiting the coming of Santa Claus. They already welcomed him on Dec. 6.

This date is the name day of St. Nicholas, patron saint of children, from whose name the Anglo-Saxon words "Santa Claus" are derived. The 6th, in Belgium, is purely for children. Adults have little to do except finance the good man.

In Belgium, the shops start very early with decorations and other signs of the times. From the beginning of November, the big chain stores devote most of their window-space to the legendary figure in his bishop's hat, staff and long flowing red cloak.

"Every shop pays tribute to the 'bonhomme' according to its class

gentina where they are used to trim officers' uniforms.

They said that Japan once was a big buyer of otter pelts to be used for the trimming of officers' uniforms. There are other countries, too, which import the pelts of this animal for coat trimmings.

The trappers also take a rich stake in opossums and foxes. While their pelts do not bring in the rich reward of the mink and otter they are valuable in the trade. Then, there's also the muskrat, a fast breeding animal of the marshlands. Their pelts bring about \$2.75 each, but most trappers take a half dozen or more each night, and they are easily "skinned."

Muskrat skins, the fur buyers said, are turned into Hudson seal coats.

"There's money in trapping," Taylor and Connor said, "but the sport isn't for the novice. It's skilled work just like most other jobs. We've been at this business now since we were boys with a rabbit gum in the back of the field!"

(The writer of this story, who has kin in the Harlowe section, is a well-known newspaper man, editor of the Daily Independent at Kannapolis.)

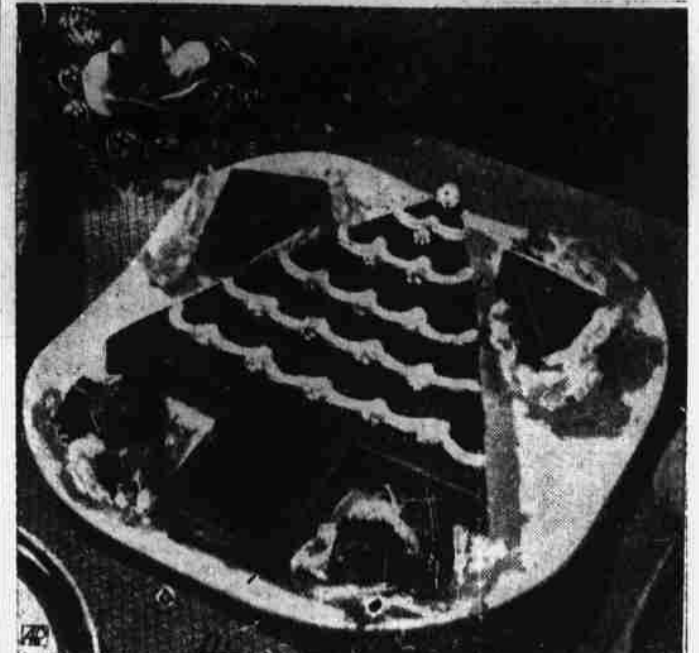
of business. Pastry shops are full of traditional sugar pigs, chocolate santas and chocolate donkeys carrying sacks of sweets. One department store this year devoted much of its window-space to a panorama of the "Enchanted Forest" where good, represented by St. Nicholas, fights evil, represented by a witch. The "good" part of the forest was full of dancing fairies and frolic mechanical animals. The witch's domain featured such necties as children-eating trees, dragons, and a most life-like snake.

Another large store devoted itself to the "Nursery of 2000 A.D." In this piece of mechanical ingenuity, one nurse, herself a robot, operates a switch panel which controls the washing, feeding, spanking, teaching and even "diapering" of dozens of little dolls.

Every store has a Santa Claus. Some indeed have several. Each store employs different means of proclaiming the arrival of its santa. Bang up to date was the much-publicized arrival in Brussels of one chain store santa. He came down from heaven—where the Belgian santa lives—with the help of the Belgian Airways and a Dakota. On arriving at the airways terminal, he stepped into an old mail-coach, decorated for the occasion and to fanfares from accompanying trumpeters, toured the streets of Brussels. Hundreds of children attended this particular arrival.

In the schools, teachers are telling and retelling the story of Saint Nicholas. The children learn how the bad butcher captured the three little boys and turned them into bacon. How the all-knowing saint got to know of it, and pretending to be a customer visited the butcher. The latter, the story goes on, realized who his customer was and prayed for forgiveness. Santa forgave him saying his conscience would punish him enough. All over Belgium little faces light up when by a miracle the good man restores the three boys to life and happiness, thus proving that good will always triumph over evil.

However, the big night for grown-ups in Belgium is still New Year. Greeting cards and presents



By Cecily Brownstone Associated Press Food Editor

Many good cooks, I've noticed, seem to have an awful time trying to decide what's to go on the menu along with the main course and dessert for a big holiday dinner. They find it easy enough to choose the meat—whether it's turkey, chicken, duck or ham—and the dessert, usually pie, pudding or ice cream. But when it comes to the first course, the vegetables, and the salad, they're in a quandary. Here are some suggestions.

This year, in our family, we've been combining the main course before a big dinner with the salad. That gives us a lot of latitude. We borrow the idea of serving Matjes herring from a Scandinavian Smorgasbord—but lots of other kinds of fish will do: tuna, sardines, anchovies. Stuffed eggs with a wonderful homemade mayonnaise and maybe liver pate we take from the French; tissue-thin slices of ham or spicy salami from the Italians. And of course lots of greens go along—romaine and watercress are especially appropriate, if you can get them. Olives, sticks of fennel and carrot, radishes, tomato wedges, strips of green pepper are all good to choose.

I recently acquired one of the convenient and beautiful glass bottles, marked to hold just the right proportion of oil and vinegar, so now we fill it and pass it with this combination first-course salad. If you keep your oil and vinegar in separate table bottles just pass those, of course.

Another way with a first-course salad is to couple fruit and vegetables and serve with a good French dressing. If you can get persimmons you'll find they are delicious with crisp celery and lettuce. If you've always teamed avocado with orange or grapefruit try it sometimes with diced red apple—leaving the apple skins on. In each of these suggestions, you'll notice, bland soft texture is used with something crisp and crunchy. And all benefit!

When it comes to vegetables we departed from tradition this year and served braised celery in place of the usual creamed onions. And was it good! It was my sister Rowena's inspiration and she cut each celery head in about six lengthwise pieces, carefully cutting through and preserving a piece of the heart along with each cluster of stalks. Then she simmered the celery in rich home-made beef broth, and finally doused it in a

are exchanged and everyone is on holiday. After a meal which may last for hours, Belgians get down to their traditional beer-drinking which they intersperse with dancing, singing and parlour games till the morning.

dressing of olive oil, herb vinegar, salt and finely crushed garlic. Even the custom-bound male members of our family loved it!

When it comes to a menu for the inevitable supper of cold left-over ham or turkey we like nothing better than plain fluffy mashed potatoes, green peas maybe, and a molded salad. Plenty good enough for company, this menu, especially if you make the salad picture. Here's the recipe.

JELLIED CHRISTMAS TREE SALAD

Ingredients: 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin, 1 cup cold water, 1 1/2 cups hot water, 1 can jellied cranberry sauce, 3 tablespoons lemon juice, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1 cup finely chopped cabbage, 1/2 cup diced celery.

Method: Soften gelatin in the 1 cup cold water. Add hot water, stir until gelatin is dissolved. Crush cranberry sauce, lemon juice and salt; beat with a rotary egg beater until smooth. Chill until mixture is the consistency of unbeaten egg whites. Turn half of mixture into 9x9-inch or 8x8-inch pan. Chill until almost firm. To remainder, fold in cabbage and celery; cover first layer of clear gelatin. To serve, unmold on platter. Cut paper pattern of Christmas tree; place on gelatin; cut around pattern with knife. Remove gelatin that has been cut away from tree design. Then cut this gelatin into pieces and pile into lettuce cups to serve as salads around tree. Soften one-half of a three-ounce package of cream cheese with one teaspoon milk put through pastry tube in five rows of scallops on tree to represent garlands. Serve with mayonnaise dressing. Makes 10 servings.

OTWAY

Dec. 13.—Elder T. H. Edwards

of Jackson, and Elder Zena Rhine, of Winston-Salem, held service at the P. B. church Saturday.

Miss Lucille Gillikin, of Portsmouth spent several days this week with her folks.

Mr. Bryant Gillikin called to see Mr. B. B. Lawrence a while Friday.

Mr. S. W. Lawrence went to Beaufort Friday on business.

Mrs. Blondell Lawrence spent Wednesday with her sister, Mrs. Augustus Lawrence.

Mrs. B. B. Lawrence, we are sorry to say, has been very ill and had to call Dr. Fulcher to treat her for gall trouble.

Mrs. Teaney Lawrence spent Sunday with her brother and family, Mr. Bedford B. Lawrence.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Gillikin carried their little son to the hospital at Morehead City for treatment. Everyone is glad to know he is much improved.

Mr. James L. Lawrence who has been transferred from Morehead City hospital to Duke hospital, Durham. Everybody hopes for him a speedy recovery.

We are sorry to say the little son of Mr. and Mrs. Tilton Law-

rence, Robert Wynne, is ill and had to be carried to the doctor for treatment this week. We will be glad to see him well again.

Mr. and Mrs. Elroy Bundy, of Norfolk spent last week with her mother, Mrs. Jammie Gillikin.

Mr. and Mrs. Archie Bundy of Norfolk motored here last week to visit her folks.

Mrs. Richard Lawrence and son left for Norfolk the weekend to visit her parents.

Mr. Julian Brown of Marshallberg attended service here Saturday at the P. B. Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Hancock and children will move into their new home Christmas week.

Mrs. Roland Lawrence, mother and sister, Mrs. Sadie Trott and Mrs. Wardell Gillikin, went to Beaufort Wednesday shopping.

Mrs. Lena Lewis went to Beaufort Thursday shopping.

The PTA will hold its regular meeting Tuesday 21.

Nutritionists estimate that nine-tenths of the human race lives and dies in food poverty.

Until the 19th Century, more out of 10 persons in America spent all their working lives producing and marketing food.

SINCERE
Christmas Greetings

Two of the best joys of Christmas are having good friends and wishing them a great deal of happiness.

Potter Tire Co.
T. T. "Tom" Potter
Phone M 3751
MOREHEAD CITY

Nice for a change....

It's nice for a change, when the family gathers around the fireplace these holiday evenings, to tell stories, to toast marshmallows—or maybe just to sit and visit among the flickering shadows. Precious few of us, however, would like to go back to the days when there were no electric lights—to have to do without the convenience and work-saving that today's appliances provide. By bringing you the electricity and gas you need, all 360 of us here at Tide Water like to think that we are, in some real measure, contributing to the comfort, health and happiness of your family and your friends and neighbors.

At this holiday season we of Tide Water wish to extend the very best wishes for the merriest Christmas ever—and the very finest of New Years, too! Our promise to you is that we will continue to do everything we can to make it so!

TIDE WATER POWER COMPANY

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Christmas Greetings

LEONARD'S

SAM ADLER, Mgr. MOREHEAD CITY

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

To everyone whom we are privileged to call "friend and neighbor" go our heartfelt expressions of the Season's joyous sentiments.

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