



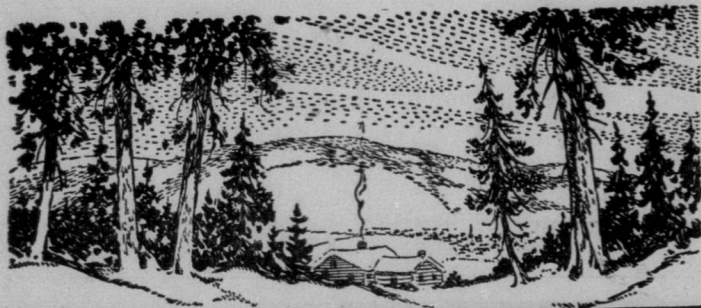
Around the corner of the street
Who can say what waits for us?
—James Whitcomb Riley.

And who can say what the New Year 1946 will bring? All we can do, of course, is hope for the best, and our hopes are for you, dear people of this community. It is in full appreciation of all the fine things you have done for us that we send you these Happy New Year greetings.

THE NORTHWESTERN BANK

MEMBER F. D. I. C.

Black Mountain, N. C.



1946 WELCOME

NEW YEAR'S IS MORE THAN A DAY!

It is the spirit of men and women who throw off the impediments of yesterday and determine to make a better start for today.

As we enter the year 1946 we raise a toast to our many good friends, with the hope that each succeeding day may bring you nearer to coveted goals.

Happy New Year to you!

BLACK MOUNTAIN GROCERY CO.

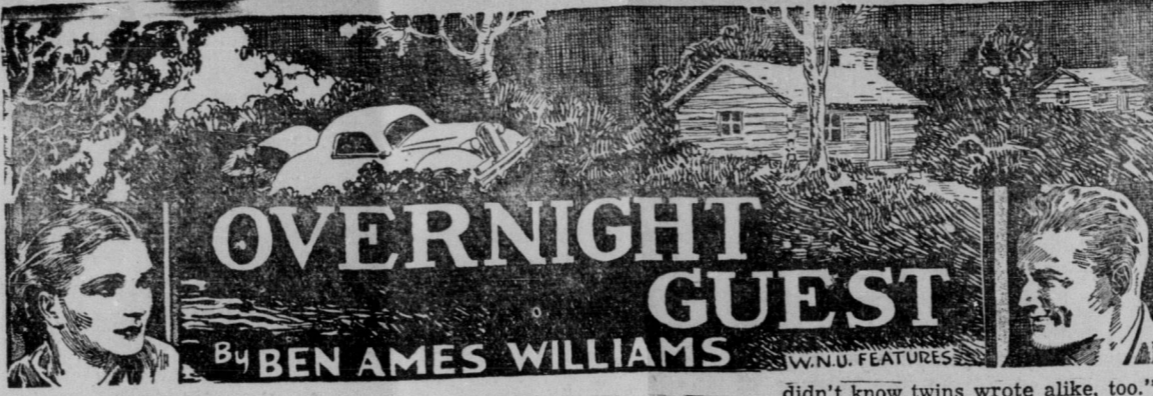


To Wish you
Health and
Happiness

WE'VE SEEN a great many changes in our day... changes in styles, changes in customs, and changes in transportation. But one thing has remained unchanged during all these years—our determination to lead the way at all times in value-giving. We enter 1946 fully pledged to stand by our time-honored custom.

Happy New Year, friends!

ANN'S LUNCHEONETTE



OVERNIGHT GUEST

By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

CHAPTER IV

Cumberland nodded. "How long's he been dead, Doc?"

Doctor Medford had already made some examination. "Twenty-four hours, anyway," he said. "Probably more." He stripped off those bands of black tape that half-concealed the dead man's countenance. "Anybody know who he is?" he asked.

They came to look; they saw an old small man, with eyes twisted slightly upward at the corners, a nose thick at the bridge and narrowing to a point which drooped above the upper lid. Chin small, retiring; a mouth framed in deep-lined lines; gray, sparse, wiry hair; a gray stubble on cheek and chin. They looked, but no one spoke.

Then Cumberland said wistfully: "I kind of wish Joe was here; but Quill said you didn't want anyone else to know about this right away, Inspector." And he asked: "What's your idea?"

"Well, Mat, maybe you'd better send for Joe."

Cumberland wiped his mouth with his hand. "I don't know as Joe could outdo you, on a thing like this," he admitted.

"He's welcome to try," Tope insisted cheerfully. "But here's the way I see it: We can't trail all the folks that might have done this; but whoever put him here is waiting, somewhere, for the excitement to start. They're in the dark."

"Well, so are we!"

"But we're this much ahead of them," Tope argued. "We know the body's been found, and they don't. Mat, if it was me, I'd keep the whole thing quiet, long as I could."

"That'd be hard, to keep this quiet. Some one's bound to find out."

Young Adam spoke. "I think you'd do well to let Tope run this, Mat," he urged. "Of course, I've no standing unless it turns out this was an inter-state job; but if I had any say, I'd want Tope in it." And he added: "As for keeping it quiet, Amasa Dewain doesn't talk much; and his housekeeper's away. We can carry the body up there tonight, let Doctor Medford do the autopsy up there. Then tomorrow night we can move it to town."

Cumberland nodded. "We could do it that way," he agreed. "Tope, what do you say? Will you take it on?"

The Inspector looked toward Mrs. Tope, standing by the fire. "We're on a sort of honeymoon," he reflected. "But I don't know. I don't get stirred up often, but I'm kind of mad tonight. This looks to me like a sneaking, cruel business. I'd like to nail the man that did it."

"I know," Cumberland assented heavily. "It hits me that way too." And he reflected: "Joe won't like your being in it; but he'll have to stand it. If you'll take it, you can boss the whole job."

So Tope agreed and made his dispositions. He sent Quill to awaken Amasa Dewain and enlist his cooperation. Adam and Doctor Medford improvised a stretcher for the removal of the body. Mat Cumberland asked:

"Anything I can be doing tonight?"

Tope shook his head. "Have Quill stay at Amasa's and keep his eyes open," he decided. "Adam will come back and spend the night here in case anyone comes around. Doctor Medford can do the autopsy at the farm tomorrow morning. You and I will get a good night's sleep, and I'll meet you there around nine o'clock. That's about all."

And a little later, the Inspector and Mrs. Tope said good night. But once they were out of doors, she grasped his arm with fingers like steel. She whispered:

"I know him."

He stared at her. "Know who? The dead man?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you say so? Who is he?"

"I wasn't sure you'd want to tell them, yet. It's Mr. Ledford."

The name for a moment woke no memory in him. "Ledford?" he repeated blankly.

"Yes, the head of New England utilities," she insisted. "I saw him once at a stockholders' meeting when I worked on Wall Street. That's he, dead back there."

Mrs. Tope's identification of the dead man as Ledford seemed at first to Tope impossible of belief. "It can't be," he protested. "Or there'd have been a noise about it before now."

"Not necessarily!" she insisted. "If he was kidnaped, his family may have been warned to keep quiet; or perhaps his business associates are planning how to support his stocks when the news comes out. But it is certainly Mr. Ledford. Aren't you going to tell Mr. Cumberland?"

"Not tonight," Tope decided, boldly. "Even if it's true, I want a chance to think, before this hullabaloo starts."

"Will you tell Adam?"

"Adam's got a secret of his own," the old man replied. "I'll keep this to trade with him, by and by."

Tope that night lay not long awake; but he roused at dawn, and he began to wonder by what route the dead man had been brought to

Faraway. He got up and dressed with quiet haste, and left Mrs. Tope asleep, and walked up the brookside toward Faraway, where Adam Bruce was still asleep; but he did not disturb the young man. Yonder on the knoll, half concealed by intervening shrubbery, one of the other cabins was visible. It seemed the nearest to Faraway; and assuming for the moment that those who brought the dead man here had lodged in that cabin, Tope began to search the ground between.

He found two things. He found, on a slanting ledge, a scratch which might have been made by a nail in someone's heel; but the scratch was broader than the nail would readily have made, and Tope reflected that some men have set into the heels of their shoes a small triangular plate to retard the wear. Such a plate might have made that scratch.

And he found a woman's footprint! The small French heel had sunk to a depth of a quarter-inch or so, leaving its imprint plain. Tope stopped to look more closely; and then Adam Bruce came up the slope to join him. It was still early; but the sun had risen and now laid level lances through the trees. Adam lifted his hand in silent greeting.

"Found anything?"

"I found this," Tope pointed to the footprint. "I judge whoever brought him here lodged in this cabin."

"This is named 'Little Bear,' Adam told him. "If they did, Bee will remember them."

Tope hesitated. "Well, later," he decided. "You keep out of sight for now, go up to Dewain's farm, wait there. Doctor Medford will be doing the autopsy there this morning. We'll come up." He added: "Now, let's go up on the knoll and see if there are tire tracks in the drive."

But as they came around to the drive in front of Little Bear, Tope forgot his present search. Whitlock and Beal had been put, the night before, in the cabin toward the road. Tope saw that their car was gone; and he strode that way, Adam upon

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didn't know twins wrote alike, too."

"Yes, they do," Mrs. Murrell insisted. "I asked a doctor once, and he told me—"

But Bee interrupted her. People were apt to interrupt Mrs. Murrell. "Mr. Tope, Earl Priddy tells me your friend Adam Bruce came back last night."

"So?" Tope echoed. "Why, he told us in Middleford that he was taking the midnight train. Must've changed his mind."

Bee laughed. "Adam's always an uncertain quantity. He must be sleeping late. I'll have Mrs. Priddy keep some coffee hot for him!"

After breakfast, Tope and Mrs. Tope returned to Cascade. Tope rummaged boots and fishing gear out of the rumble of the car and put them on. "We'll make fishing an excuse," he explained. "We'll drive away out of sight, and get to Amasa Dewain's without the folks here knowing."

She nodded, and presently they came out to the car, Tope brave in rubber boots and an old felt hat adorned with flies stuck in the band and crown. Earl Priddy, passing by along the drive, paused to ask in an interested tone: "Goin' fishin'?" Tope admitted this. "Git you any worms?" Tope shook his head. "I'll dig you some, fust chance I git," Priddy promised. "Fellow come through here last summer, hired me to take him fishing. Englishman, he was. And a great one for flies! Man, he could handle 'em, too."

Tope was always willing to listen. He had heard, sometimes, surprisingly useful things. "Don't see many Englishmen here, I expect," he suggested at random.

"Well, some!" Priddy declared.

"Fellow come here Friday night late—I guess he was English by the way he talked. Had that kind of a deaf man's voice that they have. I can tell 'em fur as I can hear 'em. He had a woman with him! Miss Dewain wouldn't have took 'em in, if she'd been up, case they wa'n't respectable; but she'd gone to bed, and I ain't so particular. I put 'em in Little Bear. They lit out before I was up in the morning."

Tope nodded indifferently, and he got into the car. When they approached Amasa Dewain's farmhouse, they saw Adam on the porch. "Cumberland and the doctor are inside," he reported. "Want to go in?"

Tope said: "I'm wondering how long that man has been dead. Earl Priddy just told me that a man and a woman came late Friday night and stayed in Little Bear, and left early in the morning."

Bruce's eyes lighted, but before he could speak, Mat Cumberland came out of the house; and when he saw Tope, he drew from his pocket something wrapped in a handkerchief.

"You'll want to see these things, Inspector," he suggested. "They were in the pocket of those overalls. Ever see a knife like that before?"

The knife was of a peculiar design. It bore on one side a graduated scale marked off not only in inches but in centimeters. Tope opened the blade to see the maker's name—a Sheffield firm. "English," he remarked thoughtfully; and he picked up the other article, a thing like a little metal fan, with leaves of differing lengths and thicknesses.

"What's that?" Cumberland asked.

"That's a gauge to test valve clearances. Mechanics use them, on cars and airplanes."

A car came toward them along the road from the highway. Bee Dewain whirled into the yard and alighted, full of surprised questions.

"What's happened?" she demanded. "What are you all doing here?" No one spoke; and she turned to Adam. "Earl told me you came back last night. Why?"

Adam said laughingly: "Couldn't bear to go away without seeing you again."

She colored angrily. "Don't treat me like a child! Why doesn't some one say something?"

Mrs. Tope spoke. "I'll tell you, Miss Dewain." And she made the matter briefly clear. She turned pale, but her head did not droop.

"I see," she said through stiff lips. "That's terrible, isn't it?" She caught Adam's eye. "This was why you came back?" she guessed. "I suppose Mr. Tope telephoned you?"

"Yes."

"But why didn't some one tell me last night?"

Adam reminded her: "You were off gadding with Joe Daniel!"

She looked at him in quick attention. "Joe brought me home late," she remembered. "Why didn't you tell him? Murders are his business. I'll bet that was your doing, Adam. Keeping Joe out of it! Oh, you make me so mad!"

Tope said quickly: "No, ma'am, it was me. I thought we'd keep the whole thing quiet for a while."

Bee looked at Tope in sudden curiosity. "This sort of thing is Adam's job!" she remembered. "But why are you—Of course you found the dead man—"

It was again Mrs. Tope who explained. "My husband used to be a police inspector in Boston, Miss Dewain. He has had a lot of experience in—murder cases. Mr. Cumberland asked him to help out."

Bee's face widened, but then Doc-

tor Medford opened the kitchen door and came out on the porch. That stocky man was in his shirt-sleeves, with an apron tied about his waist. He spoke to the District Attorney. "Mat, this is a queer one," he reported. He hesitated, as though doubtful of the wisdom of saying more. "Suppose you all look at him, see if you know him, ever saw him before."

Tope glanced warningly toward Mrs. Tope. "Miss Dewain is the only one who hasn't seen him," he reminded them. They followed Bee into the kitchen, where the dead man lay on the long table, covered from head to foot; Doctor Medford turned back the sheet so that the face was revealed for her to see.

The girl stared, shuddering; then suddenly she leaned forward, over the dead man, bravely looking at them all with wide eyes.

Doctor Medford spoke. "Know him, Miss Dewain?"

"No. No, but—"

"But what?"

"He has something on his hair," said Bee. "Some sort of musky-smelling stuff. I've smelled it before." And she cried suddenly: "I remember!"

"Where?" Tope asked sharply.

"Friday night. Or rather, Saturday morning," she answered. "Some people stayed Friday night in Little Bear, and left before daylight."

(Continued next week)

A new kind of cane for the blind has a wheel that acts like an eye and enables the blind to feel the difference between grass, sidewalk or other surfaces.

The China-Burma-India pipeline, longest in the world, is about one fourth longer than the United States Big Inch line.

Recipe or A Good Christian

- 4 cups common sense,
- 2 cups prayer,
- 1½ cups sympathy,
- 1 cup charity,
- ½ cup good will,
- 2 teaspoons patience,
- 1 tablespoon faith,
- 6 cups love.

Method: Sift together common sense and prayer, rub in sympathy, add charity and good will; mix to a soft dough with patience and faith. Bake in loaf pan of love, in a moderate oven of peace. Time for baking: The rest of your life.

Mat. 5:13: Ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt have lost its strength wherewith shall it be salted.

(So it is with Christian that hasn't been well seasoned. We nas't Christians are the salt of the earth, but if we become involved in earthly things such as hypocrisy gossip, envy and hate, we have lost our savour, (strength). Let us use this recipe and stay well seasoned. That is let our light shine, that others may see our good works and follow.

Yours for a better world,
Grace C. Stepp, (colored)

Mushrooms contain 90 percent water.

The combined cost of the two government-sponsored pipelines, the Big Inch and the Little Big Inch, was about \$145,000,000.



A good beginning for the New Year, we believe, is a good wish—and a good resolution.

Our good wish is for you—more health, more happiness and prosperity!

And our resolution—resolved to give you still better service in

1946

WOODCOCK MOTOR CO.



Spirit of 1946

HAPPY NEW YEAR

THE spirit of 1946 is Progress. So let us all determine right now to do everything a little bit better than last year, to take advantage of every available opportunity for improvement, and in this way assure for ourselves a happier community of happier homes.

As for ourselves, we will leave no stone unturned to give you still better values and a still higher grade of service in the year to come.

And so, wishing you all a very Happy New Year, we join with you in giving a royal welcome to 1946.

BLACK MOUNTAIN HARDWARE COMPANY BLACK MOUNTAIN, N. C.