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If Uncle Sam's Postmaster General ever runs out of folks to put on his postage stamps, he can always fall back on Trotting Jim.

No other man in the history of the nation's mail service compares with this amazing ex-slave, who liked to impersonate a horse while footing hundreds of miles a week.

Fair weather or foul, he covered his difficult coastal route on schedule. It was Jim's job to get the mail pouches to Swansboro and back, thence to Beaufort, and back by way of Harlowe to his starting point at Newport.

It was a superhuman assignment, but Trotting Jim was a superhuman. He got his job in the first place because horse-drawn vehicles were unable to overcome such obstacles as high tides and washed out bridges.

Since this 35 year old Negro had proven himself capable of running 50-mile errands, he was a logical choice to tackle the problem at hand. For 20 years the six-foot, 170-pound marvel proved faithful to the finest traditions of the mail service, and quit only when improved rail connections made his marathon jaunts unnecessary.

More than a half century has passed, but to this day he remains the most legendary figure in the history of the coast country. After giving up his mail toting, the human horse continued to serve hardy, weather beaten residents in Newport area.

When a doctor was needed, you could count on Jim to get word to him. He would help the sleepy-eyed physician hitch up his buggy, but politely refused to ride back with him to the scene of distress.

"Don't fret about me," the old colored man would say, "I'll get there all right." And he always did.

Trotting Jim's real name was Louis Wiggins. His son, Louis Jr., lived in New Bern for years, serving as a guide for hunters. The last time we saw him he was nigh onto 70, but could still do acrobatics.

More unbelievable than Trotting Jim's remarkable durability was his yen to play horse. Armed with a stout switch, he would beat himself on the shanks whenever he was ready to take off down the road.

During his long service as a transporter of mail, Jim usually strapped the pouch to his back. However, he had a cart to use when the mail was particularly heavy.

With deadly seriousness he would hitch himself to the traces, and take the bridle in his mouth. Then with a cluck and a tap of the switch, he started on his appointed rounds.

As far as this lithe, cat-like Negro was concerned, shoes were an evil designed primarily for church going. He always wore his to services at the Jones Chapel Methodist church, but didn't care to be handicapped with them when he was at work.

He was never known to drink, smoke or indulge in other forms of dissipation. Though it wasn't deliberate on his part, he kept perfect training, and was a past

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SUCH IS THE KINGDOM—All the world loves a clown, but no one else appreciates them like a child. This scene at the New Bern Shrine Club is typical of the annual Christmas parties staged by Sudan Temple units for crippled children who reside in

eastern North Carolina. This little girl appears fascinated by the special attention she is receiving, but the snoozing boy in back of the clown has already called it a night.



HONORED GUESTS—These youngsters, and others with a physical handicap, not only are remembered during the Yuletide but have an opportunity for expert care at the 19 hospitals owned and operated by the Shrine of North America. New Bern's Sudan

Temple in the year 1966 raised \$102,000.00 for Shriners hospitals. This year, with the November 25th All-Star Game at Raleigh's Carter Stadium adding revenue, is bound to be a big one too.