

Death Of A Friend—

# When Man Loses A Dog After 12 Years

By EUGENE FALLON

If you are the sort of person who doesn't like dogs, it will pay you to stop reading right here.

A mongrel dog called "Dempsey" was put to death a few hours ago. A form of execution. And Dempsey was not a criminal type dog. Not at all. On the contrary he was gentle and very, very forgiving. And he was one of the family. Literally, I mean. He slept in the house; ate from his own china plate in the kitchen; ate what we ate—or rather the remnants of what we fared on. He grew up with the youngest boy. Only a few months separated them. They are almost twelve. Half of them, I should say. It is very hard to think that a certain has fallen between them . . . I try not to remember that.

I got Dempsey as a gift. One of the best I ever received in my life. Got him from a Negro man who lived almost at the water's edge at Beaufort.

There were six or seven brothers and sisters, all cuddled together under the man's house. "Take your pick," he said to me. I picked wisely. The puppy was perhaps two-weeks old. Couldn't walk without falling down. And, you know, life is a cycle? The poor thing couldn't walk for a couple of days before the end. What is the difference between dogs and humans? Well, they say an animal has no soul. I say they lie. Dempsey was all heart and soul.

I brought the newest member of the family home to Goldsboro in a cardboard box. My oldest boy was about eight. He was delighted. And we named the robust brown ball of fur after the Manasas Mauler. The warm milk seemed to go to his ears for

these developed amazingly, proving he was at least half-hound. What the other half was, God only knows. I know this much, it was a fine dog strain.

During his early years poor Dempsey took quite a bit of pulling and mauling. You know how real small children are—hardly able to keep their hands off something as cute as a puppy. But Dempsey took it like an adult gentleman. Twist his tail, drop him, throw him, step on him, and he never so much as bared a tiny fang.

And the years went on and the infant dog and child grew up. Dempsey of course, grew faster. He had to. Dogs have such little time. Our dog was no coward. He would challenge every new dog that dove to view. He fought, as all dogs must. And he won most fights. But he never bit a person, adult or child. If a burglar were to break in the house in the night, I doubt seriously if Dempsey would have bitten him.

We were safe enough, insofar as his welfare was concerned. But I feel a bit guilty now, as if I had robbed him of something. You see, the hound in our dog loved the woods and the fields.

On very rare occasions, the boys and myself would bundle him into the car, pick up a rifle and go out in the woods for target practice. Dempsey would run a hundred miles on those outings; sniffing and then taking off, untrained as a teddy bear, on some spoor or other. But he would always circle back to us. And he would turn silently. No baying or barking. His senses reeling with the intoxication of it all, he had no time for noise-making. All we would have to do was pick a rifle or a gun from the wall-rack and he'd grow terribly excited. Most of this I know now, was extreme cruelty. Only humans know how to be cruel, really cruel. But he loved us. This I am sure of.

Dempsey spent his days about evenly divided between North and South Carolina. If we four humans cheated him of his heritage, he clung to us regardless. Every living thing needs something to cling to.

I was not present when he left the world. I learned over the phone that he was doomed. My wife wept telling it. The boys, she said, were inconsolable, especially the little one. He could hardly feature a world without Dempsey. They had learned things together. Lying in the large world of a yard, they had pulled grass together; one by hand, the other by mouth; had dug little holes together, to see what was under the velvet greenness. And now it was time to part suddenly.

My wife said Dempsey sickened almost overnight. Went two days without eating or drinking a thing. Wanted to lie outside on the damp ground. The great and searing sadness of it! Sickened unto death, our dog wanted to drink his fill, wanted to feel the

# Southport Native Retires From Service With Power Firm

Kenneth B. Swain, Carolina Power & Light Company substation operator at Wilmington, traveled over much of the globe during his early life. He expects his retirement March 1 to allow him more traveling time.



KENNETH B. SWAIN

Swain ends the job with CP&L after 37 years in electric utilities. He grew up in Southport and shortly after leaving high school joined companions and hopped a cattle boat to England. World War I was underway and the youngsters had the romantic notion of joining the Scot Army. "Then I got cold feet," he recalls, "and I decided if I was going to fight, I wanted it to be for the good old U. S. A."

He is the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Swain of Southport and has one brother, Johnnie Swain, who is a resident of this city.

He returned to the States and a Navy assignment aboard an ammunition supply transport. This job took him to England, France, Scotland, Ireland, Bulgaria, Turkey and Egypt.

His ship was in dry dock at Glasgow, Scotland, when the armistice was signed. Several jobs later, he joined CP&L in 1925 as electrician's helper in substation construction at Raleigh. The following year he married Donnie Brinkley of Raleigh.

"I moved around too much for my job to be dull," Swain remembers. As relief substation operator, he toured virtually every community in CP&L's two-state service area. He was promoted to substation superintendent at Sanford in 1937 and four years later moved to the company's Cape Fear plant at Moncure.

In 1941, he resigned the CP&L job and returned "home" to Wilmington and a job at Tide Water Power Company's Castle Street plant.

One of his associates remarked several years later, "Old K. B. quit CP&L and went to work for Tide Water, and CP&L had to buy Tide Water out to get him back." Swain became a CP&L employee again in 1952 when Tide Water was merged with CP&L. Since that time he has been substation operator, overseeing the

earth under him, pulsing, cool, steady and consoling. But they carried him inside, hoping it was only a cold, a slight distemper. The next step was a vet. He told them the truth. The dog, he said, suffered with uremic poisoning, and also had heart worms. A matter of a couple of days, the vet said. The dog's years were against him. He is an old-man dog, he pointed out kindly. And did they want him put to sleep?

Do you help something you love to die? It was a bitter choice. And they shook their heads, one after the other, and picked up the dying dog and brought him home again. And then came the crusher. My wife, in South Carolina, asked for my advice. "What shall we do", she wanted to know? I was licked. It was a terrible choice. I compromised, hedged, you might say. Wait until tomorrow afternoon, I suggested. See if he improves a little. But he was suffering, she said. Heaving all through his frame, unable to get up, unable to walk. And I then talked to the older boy, practically a man now. He poured fresh horrors in my ear. Dempsey lurched sideways, his head shook, tremors seized him. "Daddy," said my son, "I'm going to tell Mama to take him back tonight. I can't stand to see him like that . . ."

I acknowledge him freely. Only a dog? More than that he was. He was a good and blameless thing who loved the sun and the rain and the woods and even that scanty few feet of grass behind the house where he had spent half his days. He was grateful for favors. His eyes were brown and calm. But comes an end to mummy and dogs and humans and birds and plans and happiness. What can one do about it? Who, I ask you honestly, can fight death?

important facilities at Eagle Island, East Wilmington, Delco and Holly Ridge.

One of his most prized possessions is a pin denoting 34 years of service without a lost-time accident.

Swain is an avid gardner and will spend much of his retirement time so occupied. He also plans to do some more traveling when he has the time and will continue work in Temple Baptist Church. He is also active in the American Legion and Forty and Eight Society which recognized him for bringing 50 new members into the local club.

Retirement also will give him and his wife more time with the children: Mary Ellen, married to Dr. Jack Riley of Tarboro; and Kenneth, Jr., of Wilmington. Three grandchildren will share their attention.

## Carolyn Johnson Is Miss Sencland

Carolyn Johnson of the Lebanon-Mill Creek community was selected as Miss SENCLAND of Brunswick County at a meeting held last Friday night in the county agriculture building in Supply. There were three judges. Competing with the winner were Sharon Eaddon of Bolivia and Marilyn Stanland of the Caw Caw community.

Miss SENCLAND for Brunswick County will ride the SENCLAND development association float in the Azalea festival parade to be held at Wilmington April 7. County SENCLAND winners from Columbus, Duplin, Pender, Bladen and New Hanover counties will ride the float along with Miss Johnson.

## Lunchroom Menu For Southport

Following is the lunchroom menu for Southport High School cafeteria for the coming week:

**Thursday**  
Baked turkey, rice and gravy, dressing, cranberry sauce, garden peas, hot rolls and butter, grapefruit, milk.

**Friday**  
Fish sticks, candied yams, turnip greens, pickled beets, corn bread and butter, milk.

**Monday**  
Hamburgers, cole slaw, sliced onions, baked beans, apple sauce, milk.

**Tuesday**  
Meat loaf, rice and gravy, stewed tomatoes, raisin carrot salad, hot biscuits and butter, milk.

## Mrs. Sermons Is Honored By Club

The Supply Home Demonstration club met last week at the County Agriculture building and elected Mrs. Vara Sermons as its clubwoman of the year. Mrs. Sermons won the honor for her outstanding work in 4-H, church, and other community efforts.

Mrs. Nellie Clemmons gave a demonstration on arts and crafts and exhibited several pairs of shoes made by her. Refreshments were served the gathering.

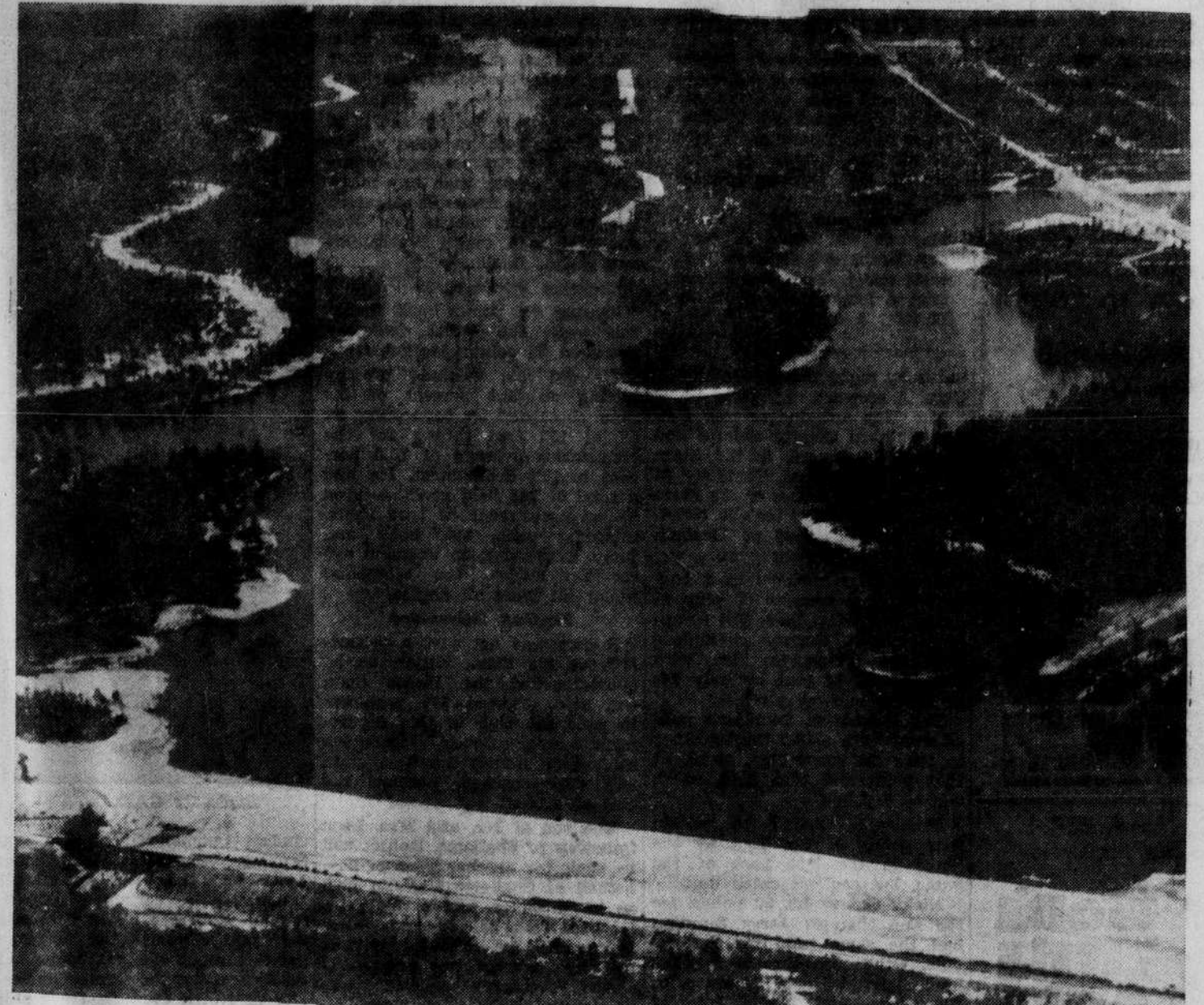
# For County Commissioner

I am a candidate for the Democratic Nomination for Member of the Board of County Commissioners from Waccamaw Township, subject to the will of the voters in the May Primary.

I was a candidate for this nomination two years ago, and although it was my first race for public office, I was very much encouraged by the support that I received from every part of Brunswick County. I will appreciate your continued vote and support.

**Parley P. Formy Duval**

# Lakeshore Drive At— Boiling Spring Lakes



We think that one of the most beautiful scenic attractions in Brunswick County is the drive around Boiling Spring Lake. We are happy to say that we are winning hundreds of converts to this way of thinking during these pretty, Spring days, for more and more people are driving out to see what is going on at this big, new residential development. This weekend, we invite you to drive out to see us.

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