

North Carolina Literary Notes

by E. T. Malone, Jr.

Manly Wade Wellman, who died on April 5 at the age of 82 in Chapel Hill, was considered by some people to be the only man in North Carolina who really earned his living through writing. He could write long, short, or in between, and plenty of it. During his lifetime, Wellman estimated that he had written 83 books and over 500 articles and short stories.

I have been reading the lengthy obituaries and numerous editorials that appeared in newspapers around the state in the days following his death, trying to find some common themes.

It would be a state that would beget envy in the heart of many a struggling writer, but it appears that Wellman wrote so many books over the years that those who keep track of such things gradually lost count. His friends, such as Sam Ragan at "The Pilot" in Southern Pines, tended to credit him with the higher number, 83. Ragan said that Wellman confided to him several years ago that he wanted to publish a number of books equal to his age, and Ragan maintains that Wellman was working on a new book at the time of his death. He did, in fact, reach his goal, says Ragan.

The obituary of Wellman in the Raleigh "News and Observer" mentioned 70 books, as does the most recent article on Wellman in the 1986 edition of "Contemporary Authors." Richard Walser, in a lengthy discussion of Wellman's mystery and science fiction works, avoids making an estimate. In his revised edition of the standard reference "Literary North Carolina," due for publication later this year, Walser mentions Wellman as a writer, also, of numbers of historical volumes and books for children, but, interestingly, Walser mentions four new books by Wellman published after what some newspaper obits declared was his last book.

The point is that the man was prolific. He found out early what he wanted to do, and he did it. Although Wellman considered himself a North Carolina writer and a Southern writer, he was born in Kamundongo, in the country of Angola in Africa,

Littleton Girl On Team

Valerie Parham of Littleton is among the members of a team from the N.C. School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM) who placed first in the North Carolina Science Olympiad, held recently at Catawba College in Salisbury. The win reserves a place in the national competition for the 15

where his American parents were living. He attended what is now Wichita State University, graduating in 1926, and moved to North Carolina in 1947, where he became town clerk of Pine Bluff in Moore County. Except for one early volume of science fiction, "The Invading Asteroid" (1932), most of Wellman's writing was done in North Carolina.

Later in life he returned strongly to the science fiction and fantasy arena, which he had never completely abandoned anyway. Between 1973 and his death, he churned out ten such books, drawing to himself numbers of younger disciples during the years when there was a revival of interest in that particular field.

Yet Wellman was so versatile. Eight or so years ago my wife's parents in Virginia were preparing to move to a new home. In their basement was a box of old paperback books, including a number of whodunits left over from her father's military service in the 1940's. There, with a black-gloved hand pointing an automatic pistol at a woman in a red dress on the cover, was "Find My Killer," a Manly Wellman thriller dating from 1947.

Juvenile books were a strong interest of Wellman's. "The Last Mammoth" (1953) was reviewed several months ago in this column, but between 1947 and 1971 he authored 34 books for children and young people, including titles ranging from "Fast Break Five" (1971) to "Jamestown Adventure" (1967).

He wrote histories of Moore, Gaston, Warren, and Madison counties and of the city of Winston-Salem, as well as a biography of Confederate Gen. Wade Hampton of South Carolina.

Some stuffy academic types probably dismissed Wellman as a hack writer. He was, for example, not even mentioned in a 515-page 1979 biographical dictionary of Southern writers published by Louisiana State University Press and edited by three professors from North Carolina. If anyone is embarrassed by that omission it should be the editors—not Manly Wellman. He didn't really need the publicity.

students from the residential public high school in Durham.

NCSSM students accounted for eight medals, with first place in the science bowl and password competitions, as well as four second- and two third-place finishes.

Never Trust Skinny Cook

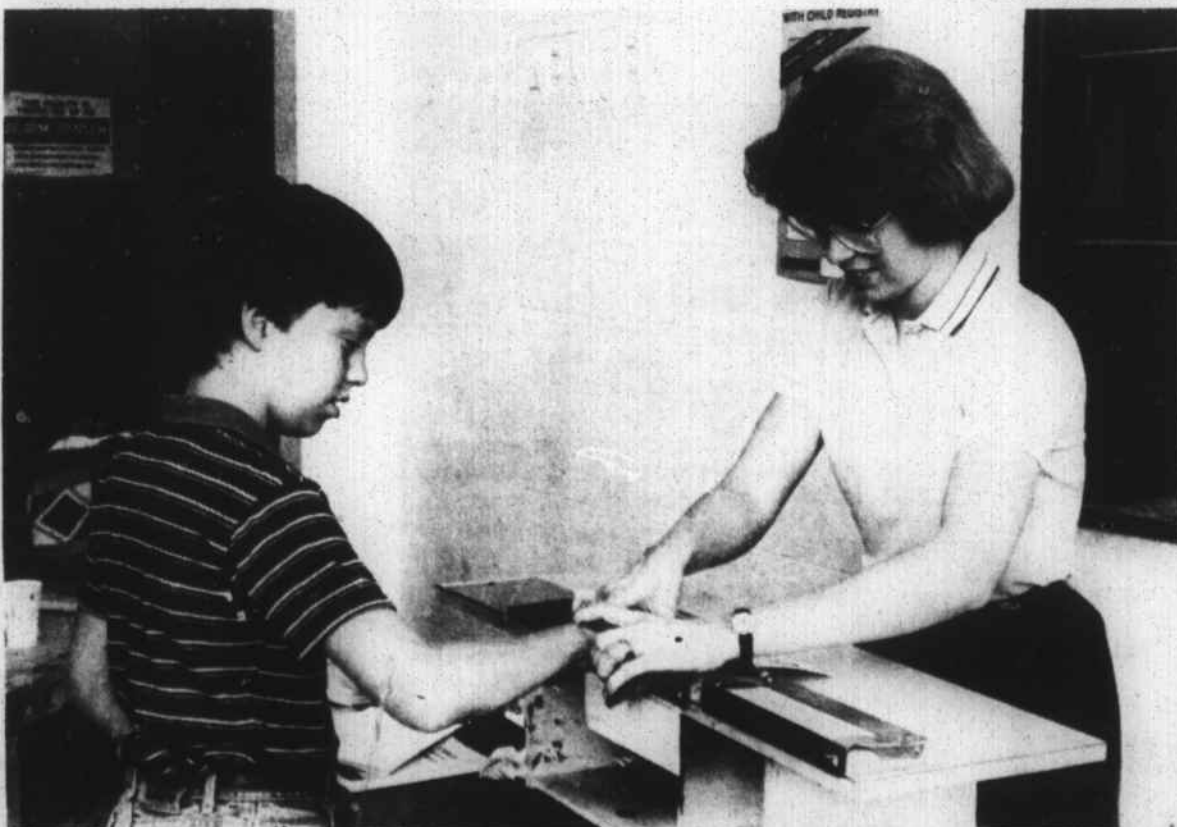
(Continued from page 2)

The story notes, by the way, the motto of Jim Quessenberry, "Never trust a skinny chef."

The fallacy is that we may imply on the other hand that cooks not so skinny can be trusted. I don't know about that.

I do know that before I put my feet under the table of Jim Quessenberry or anybody else, I want to know that he has been stuffed on something besides rattlesnake and whole hogs. I want to know also that he doesn't plan to stuff me on that fare.

I'll be glad to try his Chicken Oregono!



Craig Seaman is shown above being fingerprinted Saturday by Karen Henry with the Macon Volunteer Fire Department's Ladies Auxiliary. The auxiliary fingerprinted youth as a public service

at the Warren County Craft Fair held at the National Guard Armory. The prints were then given to parents for safekeeping. (Staff Photo by Dianne T. Rodwell)

King And Queen Contest Held At Learning Center

The First Annual King and Queen Contest sponsored by the Board of Directors of the Creative Learning Center of Warren County was held recently at Northside Elementary School in Norlina.

The winners were Tonya Jones, who was crowned queen, and Shawn P. Williams, who captured the king's crown.

Contestants competed for top honors by raising funds through private donations.

Also crowned were Brian Hayes, prince, and Shaunita Mason, princess.

Other members of the court included Kimberlye Worth, Tennyson Kirk, Ahmani Owens and Jarred Williams.

Winners in the contest were awarded United States Savings Bonds. All funds raised from the event will benefit the Creative Learning Center, with a major portion of the funds going toward the purchase of physical education equipment.

The Creative Learning Center is a non-profit, Montessori instructional program located in Soul City. The school operates from the Green-Duke House, an 18th-century mansion that was recently restored through a grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

Center director is Sandra King.

Letters To Editor Attend Meet

To The Editor:

The time has come when all citizens of Warren County should know what goes on behind closed doors at the meeting of instructions to the registrars, judges and other employees of the Board of Elections.

Members of the board are using this opportunity to invite all citizens of Warren County to the instructional meeting on Saturday, May 3, at 10 a.m. at the Warren County Courthouse.

JOHN J. HAWKINS
Chairman
Warren County
Board of Elections
Warrenton

Thanks Public

To The Editor:

Thank you for helping to bring attention to the recent Fundraising Drive for Multiple Sclerosis in Norlina.

Our goal was \$275, and we raised \$305.65 in a door-to-door campaign that was led by the Youth of Norlina United Methodist Church.

The community rallied together to help in Christ's ministry of healing the sick. Truly, this was a witness of the love of God among the people of Norlina.

On behalf of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the half million victims of Multiple Sclerosis, and myself, thank you Norlina and surrounding community for your gifts of love.

A. GENE COBB, JR.
Coordinator
1986 Norlina MS Drive




Winners in the First Annual King and Queen Contest held recently for the Creative Learning Center are shown above: (left to right, front row) Queen Tonya Jones and King Shawn Williams; (second row) Princess Shaunita Mason and Prince Brian Hayes; and (third row) Members of the Court Ahmani Owens, Kimberlye Worth, Jared Wilkins, and Tennyson Kirk.

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

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