

# Miss Shirley Wilds' State-Winning Essay Draws Top Praise

## High School Contest Sponsored By N. C. Medical Society

Miss Wilds Is Honor Student At Mars Hill High School

Below is published the essay, "The Advantages Of Private Medical Care," written by Miss Shirley Wilds, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Wilds, of Mars Hill. The essay won top honors in the state in the recent high school contest sponsored by the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina through its committee on Public Relations.

The essay follows:

### The Advantages Of Private Medical Care

"The prime object of the medical profession is to render service to humanity; reward or financial gain is a subordinate consideration." In my opinion, this statement taken from the *Principles of Medical Ethics* is a good basis for the arguments of private medicine.

Under our system of private medical care, much advancement has been made and those connected with the science of medicine are still progressing in the medical field. Never have so many people had such good medical care as Americans enjoy today. To render service to humanity much medical research is being done "to promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of the public health." This nation's medical progress over the past half century has given the United States the world's highest standards of health and medical care and has made it the world center of medical education and research. Medicine, under the warmth of freedom, has made great advances in the prevention and control of diseases. During the past half century, twenty years have been added to the span of human life. Since 1900 the number of persons sixty-five years of age or older has more than quadrupled. One reason for this shows up in the change in the leading causes of death. In 1900, infectious diseases were the greatest killers. Pneumonia and influenza ranked first, with tuberculosis a close second. These infectious conditions alone accounted for thirty-three per cent of all deaths at that time and they were fatal to many children and young adults. Today these diseases toll a mere seven per cent of all deaths. Acute infections, suffered by the younger age group, have been greatly reduced. Heartening advances have been made in the battle against infantile paralysis. Another amazing event revealing the life-saving power of American medicine is that during our working years — twenty to sixty-five — fatal accidents destroy more lives than heart disease, cancer, or any illness. This remarkable health progress has been due to many factors — public health education, better sanitation and living conditions, and scientific advances in the fields of chemistry and physics — but one thing is certain: such progress wouldn't have been possible without the skill of highly trained doctors. Although more and better doctors are being graduated, it is not so much the number of doctors that is important, as the total amount of good medical care available.

When the American Medical Association was organized in 1847, the preamble of its Constitution stated its purpose to be, to cultivate and advance medical knowledge, to elevate the standards of medical education to promote the usefulness, honor and interest of the medical profession, and to enlighten and direct public opinion in regard to the duties, responsibilities and requirements of medical men. America has more practicing physicians than any country except Israel. Expansion of medical schools and facilities and the development of new medical schools are being encouraged. For more than twenty years the supply of doctors has been increasing at a faster rate than the general population. We have more dentists, nurses, diagnostic facilities, and hospital accommodations than any other nation in the world. It is also estimated that the efficiency of the average physician has increased about thirty per cent in the past fifteen years, because of modern equipment and improved techniques. Modern medicine has at hand an array of techniques which reveal to the doctor in almost a moment virtually every

More life-saving science has been discovered in the past thirty years than in all previous medical history. And a vast amount of this science is now being used by family doctors. Family doctors have banded together into the rapidly growing American Academy of General Practice, an organization that helps them get practical knowledge on new discoveries.

In order to make available the best of medical care to all citizens, regardless of economic status, and to alleviate the financial burden imposed by long term malady, voluntary hospital and medical-care insurance plans are being offered. At the present time about seventy-two percent of the insurable population carries some form of insurance against the cost of hospital care. Such plans as Blue Cross and Blue Shield have already encouraged millions and enlightened problems of finance in time of illness. New techniques and new drugs enable physicians to shorten length of illness and reduce hospital stays as well as wage loss. As a result, the total medical bill for many illnesses actually is less than it was fifteen years ago. Doctors these days have achieved such good results so often that many patients expect a perfect solution to their medical problems, and immediately blame the doctor if the outcome is not entirely what they expected. Grievance committees are being set up in many places to investigate patients' complaints and to decide if patients are being overcharged. The Alameda County Association in Cal-



MISS SHIRLEY WILDS

ifornia guarantees medical care to all people in the county, regardless of ability to pay. Also being introduced by the California Physicians' Service is a catastrophe coverage, giving full medical care up to five thousand dollars for two years of polio, cancer, and twenty-one other diseases. To attract doctors to rural areas, communities are being encouraged to build hospitals and clinics. And where a community has facilities such as the doctor had during training, it gets the doctors.

Socialized medicine is a government-financed system of medical services supplied to all without charge by physicians employed on a full-time salaried basis by the government. The federal government would institute compulsory health insurance under which all wage earners, employers and the self-employed would be forced to pay in to a vast payroll tax. Nobody knows how much such a program would

cost. The doctors would be assured of an income, but with respect to political leaders, compulsory health insurance would prevent them from delivering their best medical care. Quoting Dr. James L. Doenges, speaking for the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons before the Eighty-third Congress: "We ask no special favors. We ask no Federal funds. We ask merely that you refuse to take from us certain of our rights as citizens, our right to plan our own futures, and that you do not extend the questionable benefits of a Federal dole to this minority, the members of which do not desire to become wards of the Government."

Also the doctors would have many calls from many people who did not need care, which would take time needed to diagnose and treat those who were really ill. Non-medical boards and committees in Washington would tell them how to treat their patients. Any system which attempts to remove responsibility from the individual is immoral and dishonest. Dorothy Thompson, who has lived under compulsory health systems in England, Austria, and Germany, states: "They cost the people far too much. They provide inferior services at a high price. They are incapable of dealing with really serious and complicated cases. They result in two sorts of medicine — good medicine for the well-to-do; and bad medicine for the masses at high cost to those who can least afford it. And they build up a vested interest of physicians and bureaucrats which the people will never get rid of."

Under compulsory health insurance plans hospital care is limited to sixty days in any benefit year, whereas many Blue Cross and commercial insurance plans now offer hospital services from ninety to one hundred and twenty days in any one year. Hospitalization for mental disease

or tuberculosis is not covered by the proposed compulsory health insurance. These would still have to be handled by state and private institutions as they are now. Socialized medicine could offer to the people no more facilities than are presently available, and these facilities would undoubtedly not be used as efficiently as they are now under private management. Also under this system, there is no mention of the patient's right to free choice of physician and hospital, or of the physician's right to practice where he chooses. From these factors we realize that medical research and medical training must remain free from ideological or political control. The practice of medicine must not be brought under government or corporate control. The individual's sense of responsibility for his own health must not be dulled or de-

## Ball Cemetery To Be Cleaned Off May 23

All who have friends and relatives buried there, please bring tools and help clean off the Ball Cemetery on Wednesday, May 23 — all day. This work is badly needed to be done.

Decoration date will be published in a later issue. Martin Ball, Walter Ball, Mitch Freeman, Committee.

stroyed. The physician's sense of personal and moral responsibility to his patient as an individual must be preserved. And these can only be preserved by the continuation of private medical care with its many advantages under the warmth of freedom.

## EXTRA SERVICE

In addition to offering the best in DRY CLEANING SERVICE

We Can  
**CLEAN & RE-BLOCK HATS — HAVE YOUR RUGS CLEANED — SHOWER PROOF ALMOST ANYTHING — MOTH PROOF — LAUNDRY YOUR QUILTS AND BLANKETS — CLEAN SLIP COVERS AND DRAPES — CLEAN TIES — PUT IN NEW POCKETS, NEW ZIPPERS — MEND AND DO MOST ANY ALTERATION**  
**WE WILL BE HAPPY TO SERVE YOU FOR PICK-UP AND DELIVERY**

FOR PICKUP AND DELIVERY DIAL 2461

DIAL: 2461

**Edwards Cleaners**

MARSHALL, N. C.

SERVICE IN HOT SPRINGS TO TENN. STATE LINE  
 MONDAY — THURSDAY — SATURDAY

# Don't let anything stop you from hearing our special offer!



## ONE WEEK ONLY!

We've worked up a deal so hot, we must ask you to get the details in person. Just stop in at our showroom. Let us appraise your present car. Then hear our special bonus offer. We've never made it easier for you to say "yes."

Come in today!

See why your big buy is — **THE BIG MERCURY**

**SERVICE MOTOR SALES, INC.**

BIG BEAUTIFUL MERCURY MONTCLAIR HARDTOP with distinctive low profile and Flo-Tone color styling

### EVERYTHING IS BIG BUT THE PRICE

**BIG in looks**—The longest, lowest looking Mercury ever. New Flo-Tone color styling accents its youthful grace.

**BIG in power**—The highest horsepower in Mercury history. All models have new 312-cubic-inch SAFETY-SURGE V-8 engine.

**BIG in performance**—New reflex action. Responds instantly to your every command. And adjusts instantly to ruts, bumps and curves—thanks to ball-joint front suspension.

**BIG in value**—Low starting price, low upkeep and operating costs, plus record-famous resale value.