

Printed Word Rolls In Madison County

By KARL FLEMING
Citizen-Times Staff Writer

When the horn sounded, a little gray haired woman peered from the door of a small clapboard house that hung on the side of a steep hill in this section of Mountainous, rugged Madison County.

Then she emerged, carrying a bulging pillow case, and descended the hill, gingerly lifting first one foot and then the other out of the mud. When she drew near, she waved a bare hand in the hold, wintry air and smiled a greeting.

In the pillow case, it turned out, she was carrying 16 books, ranging from a Zane Grey Western to a "whodunit" called "The Case of the Terrified Typist."

Her destination with the books: the Madison County bookmobile, one of 105 mobile libraries that ply 800,000 miles a year through the back reaches of 94 counties in North Carolina, delivering enlightenment and entertainment on wheels to rural citizens.

Last year's circulation of books through bookmobiles is almost half of the total 10 1/2 million books circulated through public library services.

Madison County has had bookmobile service for 2 1/2 years. Its bookmobiles, typical of those that operate throughout most of the state, serve a population of about 26,000 persons, some of whom had until recent years probed no further into literature than the Bible, farm journal and the mail order catalogue.

2,000 Customers

Since its first jaunt into the county, the Madison County bookmobile — traveling three days a week, 12 months a year — has developed a clientele of 2,000 regular customers who are now withdrawing 2,000 books a month from their library on wheels.

Mrs. Peggy Dotterer of Hot Springs, a former school teacher, drives the bookmobile 1,000 miles a month over some of the roughest terrain in North Carolina.

Her stopping places are country stores, appointed private homes and rural churches.

Her "customers" are mainly rural housewives and children, some of whom walk a distance of two miles to meet the bookmobile, their homes being inaccessible to vehicles.

Entertaining

Her books are, in the main, entertaining rather than educational. The bulk of them run from Westerns and light romances to



COMING TO MEET the Madison County bookmobile at Price's Chapel Church in rural Madison County are a group of the bookmobile's regular "customers," some of whom have walked from two miles across the hills to get

books. Sometimes inclement weather prevents the Madison bookmobile from reaching remote parts of the county like this. Note the arms-full of books the women are carrying.

—Cut courtesy Asheville Citizen-Times

religious works.

But Mrs. Dotterer, a literary missionary who beats the hills in dungarees and high-topped men's work shoes, enthusiastically asserts the quality is rapidly improving. Sinclair Lewis is now fairly popular. Church weddings are not uncommon in the rural mountains anymore, so books on etiquette have found wide use.

At least one woman in Mrs. Dotterer's domain has learned to read by withdrawing children's books from the mobile unit and having her son, a grammar school student, instruct her.

Until the bookmobile began operating, Madison County had no library service at all. Home Demonstration Clubs staged a drive to raise \$3,000 necessary to qualify the county for state aid with a bookmobile program. Under this arrangement, the state provides a basic appropriation of \$4,000 a year, which must be matched by a local appropriation of \$3,600 minimum. Federal funds also are available for extending the bookmobile service into new rural areas.

North Carolina has more bookmobiles than any state in the na-

tion and qualifies for the third largest federal aid grant.

Statewide, operation of the 105 bookmobiles cost the North Carolina taxpayer an estimated 61 cents a year.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hughey of Raleigh, state librarian, hails the growth of bookmobile service as "a most effective means of providing people with books and information they otherwise could not get."

The service undoubtedly is proving more beneficial in Madison County than in most areas, owing to the county's geographical remoteness. It took 32 years for the bookmobile service to get here, the first one in the state ran in Durham County in 1923, but once here, books have been joyously embraced by the rural people in this area.

This week, as Mrs. Dotterer was making her monthly run through this region, which passes over the French Broad River, thence into the high hills, she stopped her new bookmobile at a tiny rural church.

The door opened and 16 people popped out, their arms full of books. They hurried to meet the

library on wheels. Of the approximately 1,500 volumes lining the shelves on the truck, they checked out 73 books, then went off on foot in all directions back to the hills, carrying with them something of a novelty in some parts of this remote country until comparatively recently — the printed word.

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Mars Hill News

MRS. J. W. HUFF, Correspondent

Dr. Bruce Sams, who had been confined to his home for more than a month with broken foot and leg bones suffered from a fall on an icy sidewalk, is now able to be in his office for awhile each day.

Mr. I. N. Allman, who spent most of last week in St. Joseph's Hospital, was able to come home last Saturday and is thought to be getting along nicely.

Mr. Arliss Edwards was taken here to the Aston Park Hospital last Thursday night and is expected to be a patient there for some time.

Mr. Ellis Reese is a patient at the Mercy Hospital, Charlotte.

And Mrs. Carrie Sprinkle is at the Campbell Clinic, Baptist Hospital, Memphis.

Mr. Johnny Anderson is at the Veterans Hospital, Johnson City, Tenn.

Mrs. Alvin Ponder is at the Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem. And Mr. James Kennedy is at Moore General Hospital Swannanoa.

Little Mikey English, son of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver English, recently underwent a tonsillectomy and last week suffered from a "strep" throat, but is improved now and expects to be out soon.

Mr. O. E. Roberts underwent an operation for acute appendicitis last Sunday night at Memorial Mission Hospital. Mrs. Roberts came back to the campus Tuesday morning and reports that his condition seems to be satisfactory. Holiday visitors here whom we

missed reporting include: the Joe Stines family, of Camden, S. C., and Dr. and Mrs. Ernest Stines Jr. and little son of Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, who visited Mrs. J. H. Stines and Mr. and Mrs. Joe Marshbanks of Detroit and their son, Mr. W. C. Marshbanks, and family of Georgia who met here at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jason Briggs.

And a recent week-end visitor here to Dr. and Mrs. Seymour was Mrs. Seymour's sister, Mrs. Frederick Knodd, of New York, who has the stage-name Ann Hillary, and appears frequently on TV programs.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Rice, Friday, Jan. 10, at Memorial Mission Hospital, a son.

Born to Dr. and Mrs. Ellison Jenkins, Friday, Jan. 10, at St. Joseph's Hospital, a daughter.

Mrs. Andrew Chandler, 61, Dies Monday; Rites Tues.

Mrs. Andrew Chandler, 61, of Walnut RFD 1, died at 12:15 a. m., Monday, January 13, 1958, in an Asheville hospital after a long illness.

Funeral services were held Tuesday at 2:30 p. m., in Walnut Free Will Baptist Church. The Rev. R. H. Ballard and the Rev. Robert Bullman officiated. Burial was in Walnut Cemetery.

Surviving are the husband, Andrew Chandler of Walnut; four stepsons, Ed Chandler of Alexander, Shuford of Asheville and Bill and Gene Chandler of Walnut; two stepdaughters, Mrs. Jack Blackwell of Walnut and Mrs. Ralph Fisher of Marshall, four sisters, Mrs. Doreas Black of Candler, Mrs. Swann Frisby of Marshall, Mrs. Lillie Davis of Marshall and Mrs. Mannie Melton of Chester, S. C.

Arrangements were under the direction of Bowman-Rector Funeral Home.



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NEW CHEVROLET TASK-FORCE 58

Mrs. H. H. Carson Passes Friday; Funeral Sunday

Funeral services for Mrs. H. H. Carson, 93, who died Friday, January 10, 1958 in an Asheville nursing home, were conducted Sunday in Beech Green Baptist Church.

The Revs. Eddie McPeters and R. L. Williams officiated and burial was in DeWeese Cemetery. Pallbearers were Clyde DeWeese, Vaughn Robinson, Tom Brigman, Carroll Radford, Frank Briggs and Marion Ramsey.

Mrs. Carson, a former resident of Madison County, had been making her home at Oteen in Buncombe County recently. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. H. H. Mitchell and Mrs. L. A. Pope, both of Oteen; and six grandchildren.

Holcombe Funeral Home was in charge.

It is easy to see through the man who is always making a spectacle of himself.

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RADIO ANNOUNCEMENTS and posted bulletins like this one let the people of rural Madison County know when the bookmobile will arrive. Mrs. Peggy Dotterer is shown posting a notice in a rural store at Barnard. She drives about 1,000 miles a month over the rough terrain of Madison County.

FLAG FOR BABY

West Campbell, Ky. — A tiny flag was recently seen waving from a car under a no-charge sign at the corner of...

WOMEN'S POKER GAME RAIDED

Cleveland — Police recently raided an all women poker game and took in for questioning ten women they found gathered around a table in a smoke-filled basement. Police Chief Edward...