

# IT'S IN THE FAT: HE LOSES WEIGHT BUT GETS BIGGER



FAT BILL WETZEL, photographed by friend John Wheatley, his personal photographer.



IT TAKES FIVE GIRLS to wear the pants in 627-pound Bill Wetzel's home.

By ROBERT A. BARNES  
AP-Newsfeatures

CLAYTON N. M. Bill Wetzel says he's the world's fattest man, and there's plenty of weight behind his argument. His belt—fit by one—would be longer than most men are tall. And he hasn't been able to bend over and put on his own shoes for 14 years.

He's 6 feet 8 inches around the waist and 5 feet 10 1/2 inches tall. And his weight? Just 627 pounds at last count.

A few years back Bill had hopes of topping the 700-pound mark. In 1941 he tipped the scales at 627. For seven years he didn't weigh. Last year he found to his surprise—and disappointment—that he had lost 48 pounds, although he was bigger than ever. He decided some muscle turned to fat, which weighs less.

During World War I the Army drafted Bill but discharged him after 17 days for obesity. He claims a note is attached to his honorable discharge which calls him "too large for a man, too small for a horse." He just weighed 280 then.

Bill doesn't claim to be the heaviest man in the world, just the fattest. But he ridicules some of the tales making the rounds on how much he eats. "Had a pound of bacon? Three loaves of bread at a sitting? A pound of hard-boiled eggs?"

"Preposterous," he complains. He says he usually eats about three-fourths of a loaf of bread a day. In his stronger days, he 56 now, he ate more than a loaf a day.

Anxious to support himself, he has recently overcome his dread of being stared at and appeared at

several public functions billed as "The World's Fattest Man." Bill is the oldest of nine children and the youngest of 16. His brother, top 200 pounds, as does his mother. An aunt weighs more than 400 pounds.

It takes a lot of sleep to keep Bill going. He gets eight to 12 hours a night and a nap in the afternoon.

## Brevard Man Killed In Hunting Mishap

Swain County Coroner H. H. Welch reported that a 51-year-old Brevard merchant was killed yesterday morning near Sylva in a hunting accident.

The coroner said Fred Monteith was shot through the neck by the victim's brother-in-law, Doc Gibby of Brevard City.

The official quoted Gibby as saying he fired when he saw something moving in the bushes, thinking it was a bear.

Monteith and his two sons were hunting with Gibby when the tragedy occurred.

A coroner's jury returned a verdict of "unavoidable accident" in Monteith's death.

## No Bookmobile Service Friday

There will be no Bookmobile service tomorrow, according to an announcement from the Haywood County Library. The Bookmobile was scheduled to visit Cruso and

## MORE ABOUT Sidelights

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fire was built and arrangements were made for supper.

### An Unexpected Guest

After the meal Mr. Peden suggested that they all go to the spring, a short distance away, and get some water. When they returned to their tent they were startled to observe a visitor. Perhaps we shouldn't say they were "startled"; "Scared stiff" would be a better way to express it, because there was a big bear at the camp, busily engaged in eating everything in sight.

Mrs. Peden screamed. The children let out a roar of mixed fear and delight. Mr. Peden suddenly realized that all he had in the way of a defensive weapon was a small jack-knife.

He said "Shoo" to the bear. This probably hurt the bear's feelings, because he glared at Jim and took a step in his direction.

Jim took several hurried steps in the opposite direction. He went to the car, opened the trunk compartment and brought forth a large jack, which he rattled at the bear. It didn't take much effort on Jim's part to make it rattle; it seemed to do so of its own accord.

The bear looked at the jack, then grabbed up a large pear out of a fruit-bowl and devoured it at one bite.

Jim approached slowly, the jack held out before him. Having read somewhere that the human eye has a powerful influence upon wild beasts, he assumed a haughty and venomous expression as he moved

## Miss Underwood Re-Appointed To Textbook Agency

Miss Jinsie Underwood has been reappointed to the State Textbook Commission for her second term.

She will serve on the Commission's committee for the selection of high school texts.

Her first term on the Commission was served during Governor Cherry's administration.

Miss Underwood is head of the history department of Gastonia High School.

toward. The bear staved back for a moment and then backed off into the bushes.

The Peden family breathed a sigh of relief and prepared to get ready to retire for the night. Mrs. Peden was opposed to it. She was in favor of taking down the tent and getting away from there, but the rest of the family persuaded her to change her mind. They pointed out that all bears up there were tame and never bothered anybody, and she finally allowed herself to be persuaded.

### The First Interruption

The cots were arranged around the walls of the tent. Half an hour after the family had retired, Mrs. Peden gave a sudden yell.

"What's the matter?" bellowed Jim.

"The bear!" he shrieked.

"What about the bear?"

"He's pushing at me through the wall of the tent!"

Jim grabbed his flashlight and the jack, opened up the tent-flap and peered out cautiously. He was just in time to see a huge, black shape moving off into the bushes.

"It was only your imagination," he told his wife as he closed the flap and fell back onto his cot again.

About that time a couple of howls started booming. There also would be an occasional sound of breaking twigs and a rumbling noise. Jim lay there, wide awake and ready for any emergency. Then the voice of little Johnnie:

"Daddy!"

"What's that?"

"I want a drink of water."

Mr. Peden was prompt and emphatic in his reply. "I love you, son," he said, "but you'd have to be peering out of that before I'd go outside and get you a drink of water now. Go to sleep."

Johnnie grumbled somewhat over this decision but evidently decided not to press the point, because nothing further was heard from him.

### A Restless Night

A couple of hours passed. Everything was quiet except for the howls and other strange noises outside. Mr. Peden had fallen into a fitful slumber. Suddenly he was brought to a sitting posture by a terrified scream from his wife.

"What's the matter?" he shouted again.

"The bear! He's choking Johnnie!"

Jim listened. Sure enough, Johnnie was making peculiar noises in his throat. Jim turned on his flashlight and directed the beam to where Johnnie's cot was located. There was no bear in sight.

"What's ailing you, son?" he demanded.

"My throat hurts," said Johnnie. "I think it must be because I need some water."

"Go to sleep. You'll get some water first thing in the morning."

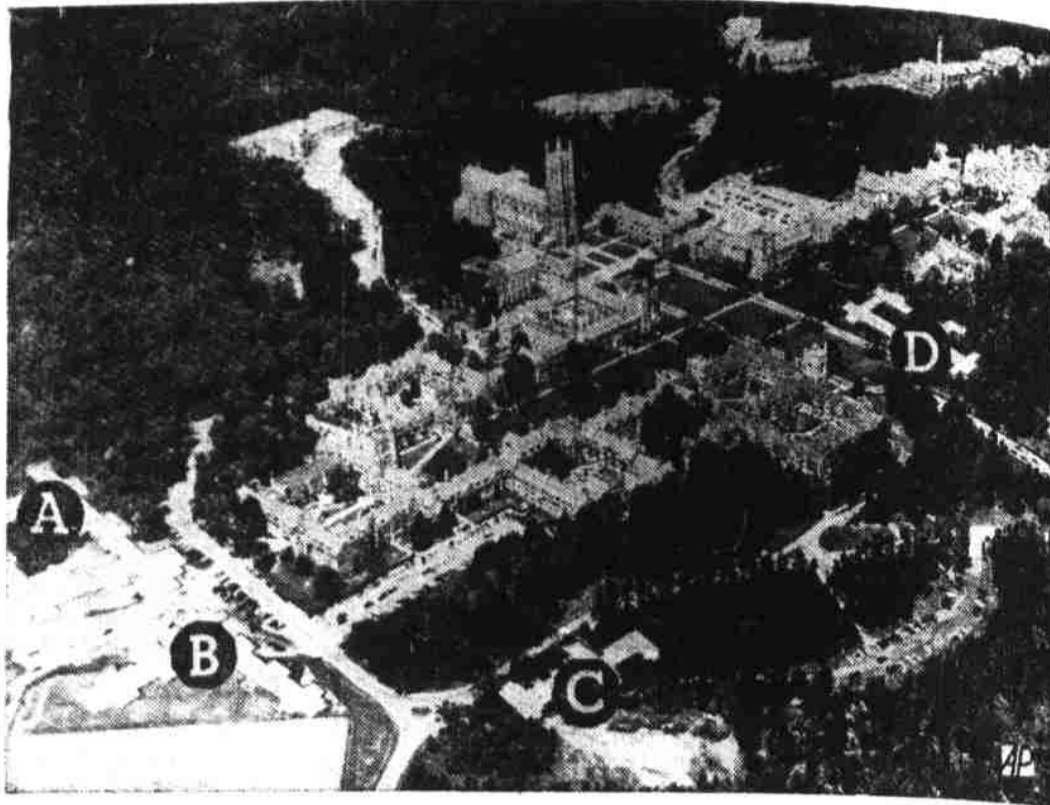
The rest of the night was uneventful, although Jim says he didn't get more than an hour or two of sleep. When they got up the following morning, he called a family council and stated that the remaining nights on their mountain trip would be spent in hotel rooms or at tourist camps. There wasn't much argument in connection with his decision, and that was the end of their camping experience.

## Challenges Russia



YUGOSLAV Minister of Foreign Affairs, Edward Kardelj, speaks strongly against Russia's attitude toward his country as he addresses the United Nations General Assembly at Flushing Meadows, N. Y. Kardelj challenged the Kremlin to prove to Marshal Tito and the whole world that Moscow is actually seeking peace. (International)

## \$12,000,000 Expansion Planned At Duke University



A \$12,000,000 expansion program is planned on Duke University's Gothic campus (above). New units planned are: (A) and (B), dormitories; (C), student and alumni center; (D), law school administration building. A campaign for raising funds from alumni and friends of the university will be headed by Benjamin F. Few of New York, vice president of Liggett and Myers Tobacco Co. He is a Duke alumnus. (AP Photo.)

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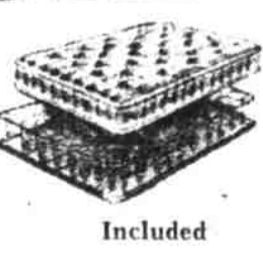
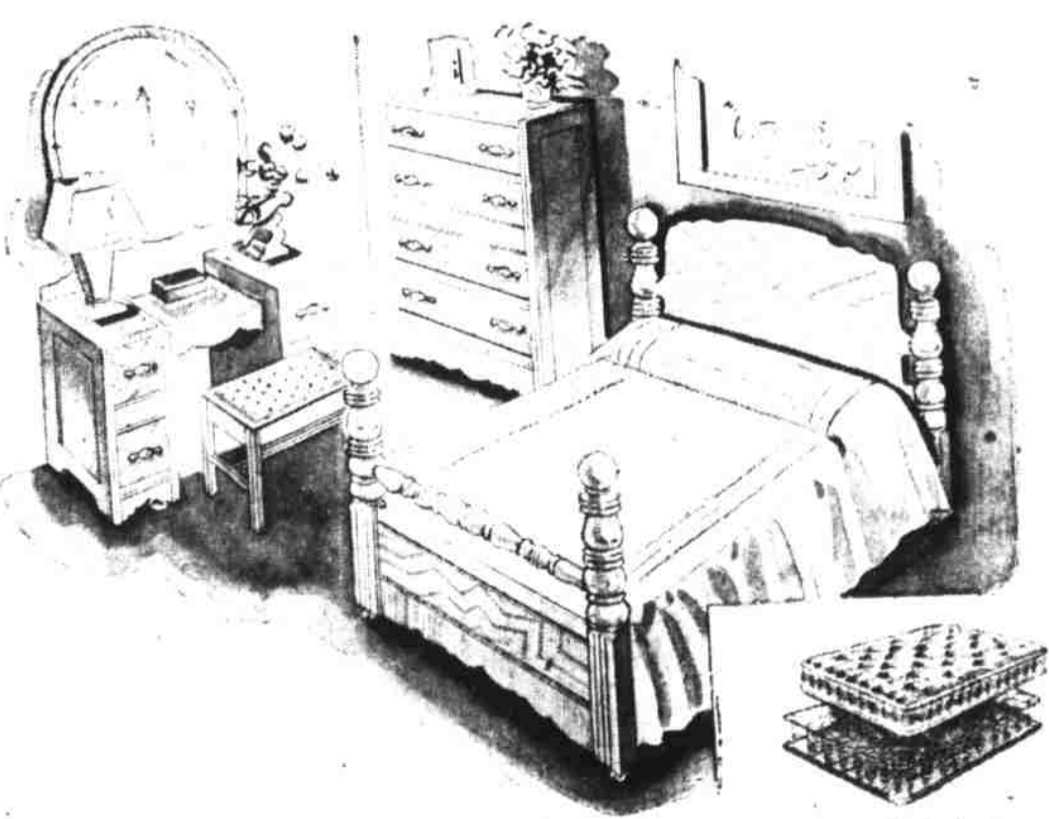
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