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Freeze Makes Towering Icicle

The last week of sub-freezing temperatures allowed icicles to reach towering dimensions in many sunless roadcuts in the Mayland area. Storytelling Photo by Brian Westveer

Folk-Ways and Folk-Speech
of SOUTHERN APPALACHIA
with Rogers Whitener

The recent cold spell in Appalachia which caused thermometers to dip below the zero mark in a number of areas brought memories of frigid winters past to many old timers.

A number of Boone residents recalled the mercury's dropping to eighteen below in the early sixties, with twenty below cited for certain outlying low mountain pockets. But a bit of reminiscing by Edwin Judkins of Bristol, Virginia reveals a record-breaking frigidty of thirty-one below in East Tennessee in 1918, followed by floods.

As Mr. Judkins tells it, "A few years ago several old timers were discussing the record-breaking cold and floods of 1918. It was their opinion that the unusual dry fall and early winter of 1917 was a contributing factor. When the big snows and bitter cold hit early in 1918 the small amount of water in the streams froze into blocks of ice, and the dry ground retained the snow. It made them think of the old time winters when horses and loaded wagons could be driven across the rivers without breaking the ice."

"About the same time as the foregoing I became acquainted with Mr. Sherman Jarrett, a carpenter from North Carolina who was working on an addition to the alkali plant at Saltville, Va. Mr. Jarrett stated that when he and two other employees left their boarding house the third Sunday in January, 1918 for the plant, the thermometer was registering 28 degrees below zero. A short time later a Johnson City paper, in reply to an inquiry, said that the coldest day ever recorded in Tennessee was at Mountain City 31 degrees below the same date as Mr. Jarrett's coldest day."

Mr. Judkins also has fond memories of the warmth and comfort of the traditional feather bed of that day—with innovations: "I was living at that time only four miles from Mr. Jarrett. I was occupying an unfinished house that I was having built, and that had no heat. I slept between two feather beds—one on the bottom and one on top, snug

as a bug in a rug.

"I remember small country stores without insulation where everything froze solid bursting tin cans of vegetables and milk.

"As to the high water mark on Holston River: the water rose 18 feet on the abutment of the Cedar Branch bridge. This was in February 1918 and I suppose was caused by the melting snow and ice of the extraordinary cold winter."

**

A note from Mr. Phil Mast, a transplanted mountain man now residing in Burlington, calls our attention to a folk expression new to him but apparently common to an accident witness in a recent newspaper story. He writes:

"Reading an article a few days ago, a man was badly beaten up and left in a patch of woods near a farmhouse. The farmer found the man the next day and called the Sheriff's office, who rushed him to the hospital.

"In describing the incident the farmer used an expression I had never heard and think it very expressive—they sure laid a hurten' to him!"

Mr. Mast also poses a question which a number of other readers have asked: Are you going to come up with a Folk-Ways book? I'll simply say that I've been pondering the idea, but it hasn't got far beyond that stage. Hope, to, however.

Readers are invited to send folk material to: Rogers Whitener, Folk-Ways and Folk-Speech, Box 376, Boone, N.C. 28608.

BOOK CORNER

By Gladys Coletta

TENDER LOVING GREED
by Mary Adelaide Mendelson
1974. Pp. 245. Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, N.Y.

Tender Loving Greed, by Mary Adelaide Mendelson, is an expose of the nursing home scandal in America. With facts in mind and pen in hand, the author indicts us all, from those who profit unreasonably from the abominable conditions, to those in government who fail to regulate the industry, and finally, the rest of us who, by our silence, give consent.

Miss Mendelson has spent ten years of intensive research concerning this problem, having visited over two hundred homes in various parts of the country. On the basis of her visits she has come across scant evidence of truly excellent conditions. In fact, she was so appalled by the exact opposite of the picture that she determined to write this book, hoping to arouse public opinion into forceful action.

Actually, some action has been taken by the government, but to no avail. State and federal governments have elaborate regulations governing nursing homes, but these regulations remain unenforced at all levels of government, and for good reason: there is no will to enforce, and a lot of money to be made by nonenforcement. In effect, the sponsors of legislation are saying: "Let us give you the money, and we won't look too closely at how it's spent."

Finally, we suffer from the delusion that we can train people to be better human beings in the treatment of their fellowman. The nursing home inspectors do not need any more training to recognize the sight of filth or the marks of a beating, or the difference between slop and food. What inspectors do need is what no training can give them: they need to care enough about nursing home patients to put the patients' interests above their own. Until this is accomplished, when the inspector truly becomes his brother's keeper, more money and more regulations will be in vain.

Jones Wins Sanford Scholarship In Music

Amos Jones of Burnsville was one of four winners of the 1976 Sanford Scholarships to the North Carolina School of the Arts who were presented with awards and congratulatory letters on Monday, January 19. Chairman of the Board Dr. James H. Semans presented the letters from Terry Sanford.

The recipients of the full scholarships to the School of the Arts in Winston Salem also included Kimberly Ingle of Raleigh, in dance; Mickey Henderson of Matthews, in drama; and Robert T. Smith of Mountain Home, in visual arts. Amos' scholarship was in music.

The winners were among 82 North Carolina students from 49 cities who competed for the second annual Sanford Scholarships in auditions at the arts school campus.

Mr. Jones, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Jones of Burnsville, will major in violin. He is 14 and attended South Toe Elementary School.

The scholarships, open to North Carolina residents enrolled in the seventh through the twelfth grades and awarded on the basis of potential talent demonstrated, were named in honor of former Governor Terry Sanford for his role in founding the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Veterans Seeking Jobs

The Employment Security Commission has two local veterans seeking employment. One is a high school graduate seeking work as an Electronic Technician with 23 years Navy training and

experience in this field of work. The other veteran is a high school graduate seeking work as a maintenance mechanic. He has had 21 years Army training and experience in this type work.

For further information contact the Veterans Employment Representative at the Courthouse in Burnsville on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday at 682-6618.

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HEALTH NEWS
from Pollard Drug

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REPORT FROM U.S. Senator JESSE ★★ HELMS

WASHINGTON—The latest scandal involving the federal food stamp program surely will be enough to persuade Congress to open its eyes to the widespread abuses of this particular welfare program. If the mail I have been receiving, over a period of years, is any indication, the taxpayers of America have known for a long time what was going on. They see it every time they go to the grocery store.

Some of us have been repeatedly warning that the program is a disaster. But the Congress is controlled by specialists in the art of federal give-aways. Several of my amendments have been defeated by the "liberal" majority in the Senate—amendments which would have long ago tightened up the program to eliminate the freeloaders, and confine it to the truly needy.

For example, I can see no earthly reason why strikers should receive food stamps. In my judgment, people who deliberately walk off their jobs ought not to be supported by taxpayers who stay on the job.

DEBATE—There was quite a debate on my amendment to ban food stamps for strikers. The lobbyists for the giant labor unions showed up by the scores to pressure Senators into voting against my amendment. Several Senators from states which are heavily unionized told me privately that they agreed with my amendment, but that they had been threatened with defeat in the next election if they voted to support my efforts to forbid food stamps for strikers.

This, of course, is only one of the many abuses of the food stamp program. During the recent holidays, I received letters from several young housewives who told of their experiences when they went grocery shopping. While they were pinching pennies, trying to stretch their own family food budgets, they saw food stamp recipients go down the check-out line at the supermarket with baskets piled high with expensive steaks, etc.

Some of my "liberal" colleagues in the Senate claim that this doesn't happen. But I am convinced that the young ladies who are writing to me are not manufacturing their stories. It's a matter of their knowing what's going on—while my Senate colleagues have blindly continued to permit the abuses of the program to occur.

TRULY NEEDY—No one begrudges help for the truly needy of our society—the elderly, the blind, the crippled, who cannot look after themselves. The tragic irony is that the truly needy are the very ones who are being short-changed. The food stamp program this year will cost the taxpayers at least six billion dollars, and probably more than that.

Immediately upon my return to Washington, I once again introduced legislation to crack down on abuses and fraud in the food stamp program. Hearings were scheduled on the latest food stamp scandal. By the time this report is published, those hearings probably will be underway.

Maybe now, as I say, the Congress will finally take a look at the monstrosity that it has created, and allowed to flourish. The facts are too obvious and too ugly to be ignored further.