

Around Our TOWN Shelby SIDELIGHTS

By RENN DRUM.

IT HAS been more than a decade since "Wild John" Starnes, the hermit of the Dravo section just south of Cleveland county, was gathered to his fathers, yet it is likely that no large number of Shelby and Cleveland county people recall the incidents in his unusual life marred by a tragic romance.

"Wild John" was born approximately three-quarters of a century ago when men and women took their love affairs more seriously than they do in this modern day of a new love song and a new lover every fortnight—or more frequently. Such sentimental ditties as "Carolina Moon," "Blue Ridge Sweetheart," and the soft caressing crooning of Rudy Vallees were unknown then. That was the day when love songs—such as "And Twas from Aunt Dinah's quilling party I was seeing Nellie home"—were sung to the accompaniment of the thumping of banjo strings, the strumming of guitars, and the melodious rolling strains of the fiddle. Troths were not plighted in those days by radio or in rumble seats, and betrothals were far more serious matters than they are now.

Since sojourning in Shelby this colyum has upon several occasions heard references to the odd "Wild John" Starnes, but his complete story was not known until recently when related by W. J. Hogue in the shade of the big trees which cover the lawn of his country home south of town. Mr. Hogue was one of the few intimate friends of the eccentric Starnes.

When John Starnes, not then known as "Wild John," was a happy farm lad 18 years there was a

neighboring girl—a beautiful girl, as the old-timers recall it by hearsay from their elders, with shiny brown eyes and auburn hair—whom he loved. He was loved in turn by the girl. All indications were that it would be one of those happy-ending romances out of the book of life, of which there are hundreds in actuality for every one related in fiction. Some day they hoped to be married. John worked hard in anticipation and it was already decided which strip of land he would get from his father when married. The girl, likewise, planned for the approaching event.

These things took place about the time many families from North and South Carolina migrated to Georgia. Those far along on the shady side of life will remember that migration period. The girl's family was one of those which decided to seek greener pastures and more fertile farm land farther to the south. Howbeit it was decided that the girl and John would be married before her family left and she would remain with her husband here. About the time the girl's family got ready for the long trip to Georgia in a day when travel was a slow, tedious task, John Starnes became seriously ill with typhoid fever. For days and days he lingered between life and death. For a week or more his girl's father postponed his trip to Georgia to see if Starnes would recover. One morning early a passerby dropped in at the home to inform

that Starnes had passed out during the night. Believing the report to be true as the sick man had seemed to have little chance to recover, the girl's father finished bundling the family belongings in the wagons and started on the trip to Georgia. As the wagons crawled out of sight into the distance, bound for what was then a faraway spot, a sorrowing girl, her brown eyes filled with tears, looked for the last time upon her native home where she had learned to love the boy she believed dead. The wagon trundled onward. Tomorrow, she perhaps thought, they'll bury him. No longer was there anything for her to remain for, her John was dead, and she travelled into Georgia with her family—and into oblivion insofar as the Dravo section was concerned.

The wagons bound Georgia-ward could not have been so many miles away when John Starnes came out of the coma which those about his bedside had first believed to be the final sleep. Day by day he gradually recovered his strength. Soon he was able to sit up and notice the moves of life about him. Then it was he inquired about his brown-eyed sweetheart. To him was gently related the story of her departure. Whether he thought she had been fickle, or why she left, he never discussed thereafter with anyone. But from that day on John Starnes, the happy farm boy, became "Wild John" Starnes, the red-faced hermit.

When his strength had fully returned he left his father's home for the tract of wooded land upon which he and his bride had planned to live. There he tugged a dry goods box. About the box he built a crude shelter of limbs, logs and scuntlings. Near the entrance he made an open hearth of rocks. And there he lived until they moved him to the Cherokee county home at Gaffney to die.

Thirty-five to 40 years the eccentric man lived alone in his shelter in the woods. As the buds burst in the springtime and the leaves browned and fluttered to the ground in the fall, marking the passing of

years, his youth gave way to middle-age, and then to old age. For many years, visitors, curious people, made trips to the little lean-to in the woods to see the mysterious man who would never live again with humans because he could not live with his brown-eyed love. As the years rolled by visitors were less numerous. The little den of the hermit was not so much of a freak as it once was. A few men such as Bill Hogue, who find much in out-of-the-way spots on the byroads of life to interest them, continued to call and chat with the aging "Wild John" and to wonder at the far-away look in his eyes.

One winter the cold of the semi-open shelter was too much for the hermit of Dravo. He contracted pneumonia and became seriously ill. Many of those who had been boyhood friends in his early days had died, and sympathetic hands removed him from his back-to-nature home in the woods to the county home, the "poor house," at Gaffney. There the romantic soul, stricken in its first love, did not linger long.

Where he is buried this colyum does not know, but upon his gravestone should be written the line "He loved but once."

"What manner of man was he?" Mr. Hogue was asked. "A fairly good-looking man in his younger days, and never anybody's fool," was the reply.

Then—"Wait, I'll show you." And a few minutes later he exhibited one of those old-time enlarged photographs of the Dravo hermit and his home in the woods. The photograph, it was explained, was made one day by persuading the hermit that the camera was only a surveyor's photograph when he learned how he had been tricked.

What became of the girl? Did she ever know what her lover lived two score years alone after she departed?

No living person seems to know. Old-timers recall that nothing was ever heard of her family, and none

of them ever returned to their native section. John Starnes' brown-eyed girl may have loved again and married in Georgia without ever knowing that her first lover loved on until death.

Perhaps it was best that it was so, for had she learned in the late years of life that a lonely man had secluded himself in the solitude of woods to grieve his heart away over her another life would have been marred.

It is a true story. One of those romances of life which did not end with the phrase, "And they lived happily thereafter." Anywhere about the Dravo section one can hear of unusual incidents in the hermit's life, yet no one, as best we could discover, could remember the name of the brown-eyed girl. Yet this is the story of Starnes and his love—not of her.

Mrs. W. C. Sarratt Of Earl Very Sick

(Special to The Star.)
Earl, Sept. 17.—Mr. and Mrs. J. Mark Hayes and family of Chesnee, S. C. were the guests Sunday afternoon of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Haus.

Miss Rebecca Austell left Monday for Asheville where she will resume her studies at the Asheville Normal. Mr. Paul Camp and little daughter, Louise, of Charlotte were callers in the village Sunday.

We are sorry to report the illness of Mrs. W. C. Sarratt. Rev. and Mrs. J. L. Jenkins and family of Bolling Springs were dinner guests Sunday of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. T. Betchler.

Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Jones and Mesdames Ben Davis and Odell Sebaugh motored to Golden Valley Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Callahan and children of Spartanburg, S. C. spent the week-end with Mrs. Callahan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Wylie.

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Hamrick of Lattimore spent Sunday with home folks.

COOTER HUNTERS GET CATCH OF 193

Largest One Weighed 14 Pounds. College Students Leave No Cotton By Christmas.

(Special to The Star.)
Toloca, Sept. 18.—Cotton is opening fast now and picks easily as compared with last year. If the weather continues so, cotton will all be open in a month or so. There will be no Christmas cotton this year.

Misses Sadie, Mill, Helen and Martha Falls and Lucy Yelton, Messrs Fletcher Sain and Ralph Falls, attended a party Saturday night given at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Falls of near Lattimore, by Miss Willie and Mr. Robert Falls. Catch 193 Cooters.

Mrs. M. S. Boyles visited her parents Mr. and Mrs. D. L. Davis of Rockdale last Tuesday. Her brother Mr. Blanche Davis and a party had just returned from a big cooter hunt in Tennessee. They made a catch of 193. The largest one weighing 14 pounds.

Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Carpenter, Mr.

and Mrs. Thomas Vickers and light son Jacob motored to the home of Mrs. Carpenter's brother, Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Sain of Hickory and spent the day last Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Sain and sons Fletcher and Thaxter, were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Falls on last Sunday.

Misses Mary and Joyce Ledford spent last Saturday night at the home of their aunt, Mrs. Gertie Proctor of Burke county.

Master Edwin Hoyte spent last Saturday night with Master Charlie Wade Carpenter.

Mr. Fletcher Sain and Miss Lucy Yelton were supper guests at the home of Miss Yelton's sister, Mr. and Mrs. Grady Mauney of Shelby last Wednesday.

Miss Nora Costner spent last Wednesday with Miss Mary Ledford.

Miss Nora Costner spent last Wednesday with Miss Mary Ledford. Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Boyles have as their guests their uncle, Mr. Deck Lutz of Bessemer City.

College Students Off

Several more college students left last Monday Miss Sadie Mull for N. C. C. W., Greensboro, Mr. Fletcher Sain for the University of N. C., Mr. H. D. Boyles for Boone.

Mr. L. M. Williams of Catawba

county was a dinner guest of Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Boyles last Tuesday. Miss Pauline Davis spent last Wednesday night with her uncle and aunt Mr. and Mrs. M. S. Boyles.

Mr. Walter Boyles was a visitor in Newton last Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. John Sain of the North Brook section were dinner guests of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Sain, Sunday.

Misses Mittie and Zennie Sain, Messrs. A. C. Costner and Raymond Lackey, motored to Linville City last Sunday.

Mrs. Everett Downs and children of Baltimore, Md., are spending this week with her sister, Mrs. A. B. Boyles.

Rev. J. M. Morgan and daughter of Fallston, were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Young last Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Burt Sain visited their grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Ambrose Peeler of Belwood last Saturday night.

Miss Clara Williams of Fallston spent last Tuesday night with Miss Minnie Mull.

Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Boyles motored to Statesville last Sunday to the home of their uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Dixon Borgs.

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will always
stand out!

KEEPING UP THE PACE... never letting down... that's what wins on the track—and in a cigarette, too.

Chesterfield smokers stick to Chesterfield, because here they find those essentials of true smoking enjoyment which never tire, never vary:

MILDNESS—the wholly natural mildness of tobaccos that are without harshness or bitterness.

BETTER TASTE—such as only a cigarette of wholesome purity and better tobaccos can have.



THE favorite—whose flashing hoofs have brought him in ahead so many times! Again he shows his mettle! Again he leads the field.

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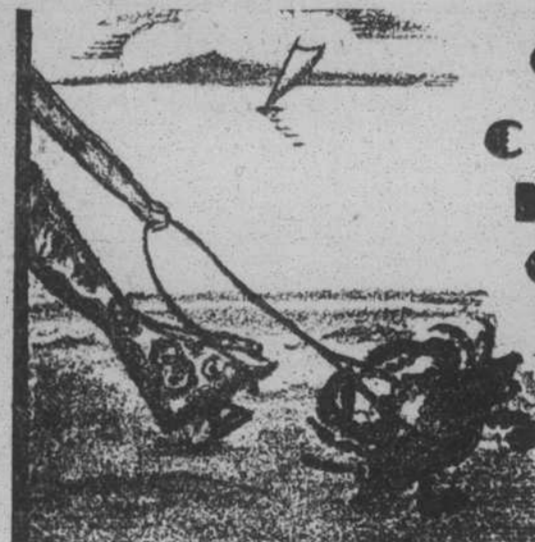
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LIGGETT & MYERS TOBACCO CO.

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don't be a crab

Consider the crab! He goes through life in a perpetual state of indecision. Always taking the most roundabout way to get things done... always backing up... and forever in an irritated frame of mind!

Don't be a crab! Let a Quality-Service Store shoulder the task of supplying your table with palatable foods. He has at his command the world's markets... and he is as near you as your telephone!

MORTON'S IODIZED SALT, Per Package

9c

BEE BRAND SPICES — 3 For

25c

DUKE'S HOME MADE MAYONNAISE — 8-oz. Jar

23c

FRENCH'S MUSTARD — Jar

14c

BECKER'S BAMBY BREAD Full 21 Ounce Loaf

10c

OCTAGON SOAP POWDER 6 For

25c

QUEEN CHARLOTTE PEANUT BUTTER — lb. Jar Highest Quality

29c

FFV WINONA SANDWICH

An unusual delight for tempting Cake — lb.

34c

WHITE HOUSE COFFEE — lb.

42c

BLUE KROSS PAPER CLOTH — 3 Rolls

25c

IVORY SOAP — 6 Bars

25c

OCTAGON LAUNDRY SOAP 6 For

25c

SUPER SUDS — Package

9c

OLD MANSION COFFEE — LB.

42c

STANBACK HEADACHE POWDER — 3 For

25c

SAUER'S EXTRACT — Large Bottles

25c

PILLSBURY'S PANCAKE FLOUR — Package

14c

CHIPSO — Large Package

23c

BOST'S CAKES — Pound

24c

STALEY'S BLUE LABEL SYRUP, 5 Pound Bucket

39c

GILL'S FULL DRESSED BEST BLUE ROSE RICE — Large

25c

MILK — BORDEN'S — Small Can

5c

MILK — BORDEN'S — Large

10c

SUNSHINE SALTINES — 2-lb. Package

35c

CAROLINA MADE PLAIN FLOUR — 24-lbs.

90c

ISAAC SHELBY SELF RISING FLOUR — 24-lbs.

90c

ARMOUR'S BANNER SAUSAGE Can

29c

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