LEGENDS
of
BAPTIST HOLLOW
Tales of Wake Forest College

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and
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INTRODUCTION

Here is a series of vignettes out of Wake Forest history—prepared by a couple of newshawks who, by past performance, have already won the accolade of students and faculty alike. Walt Friedenberg and Bill McIlwain are unusually gifted narrators, and each has the genuine, true and ancient variety of the Wake Forest spirit. In these stories even the most indifferent alumnus will find a spark to rekindle his loyalty, while men and women who really love the old College will rejoice as they read the vivid and graphic portrayals of events and personalities of the past—recent and remote.

HUBERT M. POTEAT,
Wake Forest College, '06.
PREFACE

The idea of writing down some of the old Wake Forest College legends belongs to Harold T. P. Hayes, editor of the 1948-49 The Student. Last summer he decided to run, in each issue of the magazine, a story traditional to the College.

Shorty Joyner, who’s seen generation after generation of Wake Forest students while peering over a hot dog counter, was the man we turned to for information. Between gulps of his muddy coffee we’d ask him, “Shorty, how ’bout the time . . .” and between puffs on his always stumpy cigar he’d say, “Well, it seems like. . . .” And nothing ever has happened in this town that he didn’t know something about.

Partly because Shorty didn’t always remember the exact facts, and partly because we were a bit imaginative in filling in the gaps, some of the stories might have got out of hand as far as the truth is concerned. But as Livy says, as long as the spirit is there, who cares about the details?

We started work on this book at midnight, Monday, February 21, 1949, and finished it at four o’clock in the morning, Monday,
February 28, the same year—six hours before it was scheduled to go on the presses. In the intervening time, we attended very few classes and what few hours we spent outside our room were either at a restaurant trying to hold body, soul and typewriter together, or at the College infirmary, getting pills, shots and whatever they had for eye-strain, fatigue, and general aching all over.

Besides Shorty, there were many other people who helped us along with this, our first book—typists, who cleaned up many dirty pages of copy; our professors, who were very considerate of our cutting their classes; and Eugene I. Olive, Director of Public Relations and Alumni Activities, who helped us reach Wake Forest graduates. We thank those and the many other persons who were so kind to us.

WALT FRIEDENBERG,
BILL McILWAIN.

Wake Forest, N. C.
February 28, 1949
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Additional copies of Legends of Baptist Hollow may be secured from Delta Publishing Company, Wake Forest, North Carolina. The price is $1.00.
Fires in the Forest
ROME fire—a fiddling fool, Nero.

Chicago fire—Mrs. O’Leary’s lantern-kicking heifer, Bess.

Wake Forest Fires—???

That’s the way it goes—a cow and an emperor get fat names off a couple fires, but the guy who did the fanciest fire-making in Wake Forest history isn’t even known. Maybe someday he’ll step forward, stick out his vest buttons and say proudly, “You know them fires at Wake in ’33 and ’34? I done ’em ... done ’em all by myself.” But today, fifteen years after someone almost burned Baptist Hollow to the ground, folks still are wondering who kindled the blazes and why.

It all started May 5, 1933, one of those lean years when a boy was lucky to have a nickle to jingle with the dime he had in his overalls pocket. Old Wait Hall, a 98-year-old building that was where its young offspring is now, turned out to be the first victim. Sometime between two and three in the morning the old-timer started smoking. Firemen from Raleigh, Louisburg, Henderson, Franklin, and even Wake Forest fell all over
each other trying to soak up the flames, but all the water in the golf course pond couldn’t put out the fire. After almost a century of bucking the ravages of nature and the kicks and jeers of disgruntled students, the four-story veteran went down.

When the sun came up, the whole town flocked around to see what was left. About all that was left were a few sizzling timbers and four walls, creaking and swaying like the Alumni Building does now. So Doctor Bryan roped Hobo Daniel, stoutbacked footballer, to the walls, hollered “go”! then beat it out of the way while Hobo yanked them down.

Students were living in Wait Hall in those days, and two of them just missed a scorching by sliding down a rope from the top floor. They were still feeling pretty good about their daring doings until a real smart freshman asked, “S’pose the rope caught on fire on your way down?” The freshman was sent home and the rope-sliders were sent home for sending him home.

After the Wait Hall fire folks shrugged their shoulders and said, “Probably defective wiring.” (They always say that.) And then some—the deep thinkers—thought maybe somebody was way behind on quality
points and wanted to get a fresh start on the record books. Nobody thought much about a fire bug.

A couple of weeks later the Wake Forest High School burned down, lock, stock, and blackboards. Still no thoughts of a fire bug. A redheaded kid named Johnny had missed getting upped to the ninth grade for the fourth straight year, so folks thought maybe he was sick of the whole rotten, unfair mess.

Well, the boys went home that June for the summer and returned for a cool, fireless fall. It wasn’t until Saint Valentine’s Day, 1934, that “Fires in the Forest” became a red hot story again. That night Wingate Memorial Hall (stood where the Music-Religion Building is now) got burned down all except for the nails. That made three times in ten months that some kind of a school building inside the town limits was roasted, but people just couldn’t believe anyone was firing those buildings on purpose—of course, Wingate had housed the physics department, a mighty tough place and all that, but.

“Probably a cigarette,” people said, shaking their heads. (They always say that when they don’t say “defective wiring.”)

“Right many fires firing up around here,”
the editor of the *Old Gold and Black*, puffing on his pipe, observed thoughtfully to his underlings. Soooo, the OG&B began editorializing, making as much noise as a four-page paper can—not about fire bugs, but about better fire protection.

But the way things happened after that it wasn’t long before people were sure that a fire-bug—pyromaniac, professors and a few students called him—was operating in the village. Not a small time bug, but a sure ’nuff, honest-to-goodness, fire-starting fool. Inside of a week a garage, a gas station, a fraternity house, and Hunter Dormitory caught fire. Students in Hunter had been hounding Mr. Holliday for more heat, so the fire there was understandable. But those others . . .

“This is the work of a fire-loving fiend,” local citizens said, indignantly shaking their fingers this time. Burning paper stuffed under the floor at Hunter proved that the fires weren’t just happening. But at least they were drawing the crowds. Each night special buses poured into town from Louisburg, Henderson, Franklinton, and all the other places, carrying signs saying: “See The Biggest and Best In Fires—The Warming In Wake—The Fires In The Forest—Get
'Em While They're Hot.” Lots of boys got rich selling programs, guide books, and souvenirs to the visitors.

When you come right down to it, everybody around here figured this thing was getting serious. An armed guard of students was called into action (everybody had a shot-gun or a pistol back then), and they patrolled the campus from 12:30 at night until dawn, taking pot-shots, once in a while, at some pretty scared lightning bugs.

But you can see how much good it did because eleven days later the College golf house burned to the ground, leaving seven baked Spalding twenty-five cent-ers and the charred remains of a few of those extra long tees Dr. Hubert had for playing the ball out of a trap. Some pretty sorry rounds had been shot on the course that week, so every golfer was under heavy suspicion. It was two o’clock in the morning when the golf house burned, but College officials went into a huddle and agreed that they were pretty sick of all this pyromaniacy. And they called it some other bad words, too.

“We’ll put a stop to this once and for all,” they said, squatting over the embers. “Yes, sir,” they said, and North Carolina’s blood-houndingest bloodhounds were brought in
from Enfield to track the bug down. The hounds took a sniff at what was left of the golf house, lit out up the Durham Road in a dead heat, almost knocked Dr. Paschal off his lawn, yelped across the campus and bounded right up to the third floor of Hunter Dorm. The whole bunch of them—throwing feet, heads, and bodies against a boy's door, making more noise than the 4 a.m. freight. When the hound master caught up with the pack and shoved open the door, the dogs charged in, and one of them flung himself into the top sack of a double-decker bunk.

"The hounds do not lie," the hound master barked, pointing a long finger at a sleepy-eyed student peering out from under the hound.

But the student said hounds do so lie and they also smell a lot like hounds and that he didn't want no hound coming jumping in his sack and also what did a guy mean coming in his room talking about hounds don't lie and pointing a finger at him.

 Patrols, editorials, and confusion continued, but the bug struck twice more—a barn and a Negro schoolhouse. All the fires—that makes ten so far—had been between two and five o'clock in the morning. Then ten minutes before midnight on April 26
a fire broke out in a closet in the Alumni Building. They caught it in time, and all that happened was that a feather duster got singed and a broom handle scorched, but the thing was, it showed the bug knew patrols didn't start until 12:30. Folks were getting pretty jittery. This boy knew too much for them. The armed guard would work from dusk 'til dawn, the College administration said. Patrols would continue until commencement, even if it meant that final grades might be based on a quality point for every hour a student stood guard.

After the Alumni Building fire one of the nation's leading fire bug baggers was imported.

"I'll git 'im," he said, clapping his jaws.

He asked a lot of people why they thought the bug would want to be burning buildings down, and they said it could be any number of things:

(1) Grudge against the College, (2) Gets warmth out of firing up things, (3) Mistaking buildings for tobacco barns; (4) After revenge on The Student, the magazine, for printing a cartoon showing a fire bug not being able to do anything to a fire-proof building.
The specialist asked everybody all kinds of questions and every day he promised he'd "git 'im." And each issue of the OG&B ran big headlines, predicting a victory in the Battle of the Bug:

**COMPLETE INVESTIGATION OF FIRES MADE; WILL HAVE MAN WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS**

**WANTS EVERY MAN TO WATCH ACTION OF ABNORMAL STUDENTS**

**DETECTIVE WILL BAG BUG BY SUNDOWN TONIGHT**

**SLEUTH MAKING CLOSE STUDY OF MATERIAL GATHERED**

**INVESTIGATOR ASKS FOR "ONE MORE DAY"**

Well, the investigator got his one more day . . . then another . . . then just one more. In fact he's had almost 6,000 days by now. Folks say they still see him around the campus—a bent old man, with eyes like a bloodhound, beating his dogs in behind Bostwick, muttering, "One more day . . . one more day."
The Man Who Ate Fried Cat
SOMEWHERE in the state of North Carolina—right this very minute—there walks a lawyer (got his training right at Wake Forest) who'll eat meat baked, broiled, barbecued, or even burned. But he'll eat it raw before he'll eat it fried.

His aversion to a frying pan dates back, oh, twenty years now, the year of the Big Crash, and the night Tommy Carroll fell off Uncle John Fort's back porch from eating brandied peaches, sometimes known as the night of the Little Crash.

It was a wild Bacchanalian orgy that took place that night at the rambling old dairy outside of town.

Tommy Carroll wasn't alone. In fact, twenty rabbit hunters had gone to Uncle John's that night after an all-day hunt. Now you won't believe this, but those boys had captured, shot or clubbed five hundred and seventy-nine rabbits during the course of the day, and Uncle John had turned his place into an assembly line for rabbit stew.

There's an awful lot of work to skinning and stewing five hundred and seventy-nine
rabbits, but Uncle John and his guests were doing their best. Grab 'em by the back of the neck, cut a little hole, pull the hide right off, pop 'em in the pot. It takes a right long while for five hundred and seventy-nine rabbits to stew into stew, so Uncle John, seeing that the boys were real tired after a whole day of rabbit-hunting, and being a real good host, said why don’t the boys tide themselves over on some brandied peaches that he’d brandied with brandy. Back in those days Uncle John was known as a peach brandier of the first water—or brandy, depending on what kind of recipe you use. Some folks brandy peaches, and by the time they’re fit for eating, all the brandy is dried up and it’s just like eating regular peaches. But when Uncle John brandied peaches, he wanted them brandied good. He was heavy-handed with the brandy. Some people say Uncle John used a pint per peach in his famous brandying process.

Well, the boys were hoisting rabbits into the stew pot (one of Uncle John’s biggest wash tubs) with one hand, and elevating brandied peaches with the other hand. Hoist a rabbit, elevate a peach. Hoist a rabbit, elevate a peach. Like that.

Tommy Carroll had just tossed the four
hundred and twenty-first rabbit into the wash tub when the peaches gave out. So for the remaining hundred and fifty or so rabbits there was nothing to do but drink some of the left-over brandying fluid that Uncle John had on hand.

That’s exactly what the boys did, and on the five hundred and seventy-sixth rabbit Tommy Carroll fell off Uncle John’s back porch. Tommy’s falling off Uncle John’s back porch has more to do with the story than merely showing that skinning and stewing five hundred and seventy-nine rabbits is hard work. You’ll see later.

After a while, Uncle John—a connoisseur of rabbit stew as well as brandied peaches—pronounced the stew stewed. The boys reeled out in the back yard, grabbed up Uncle John’s longest and widest picnic table, shouldered it, stepped over Tommy Carroll (who was still lying on the ground at the foot of the steps), turned the table sideways to get it through the door, carried it through the kitchen and set it up in the dining room, which Uncle John had cleared of everything except an old oil lamp. It wouldn’t make much difference if they broke that.

From the stove to the table Uncle John
and his twenty guests transported the washtub full of simmering rabbit stew.

Now, scientists, physicists—or whoever does that kind of work—will tell you that the scent of rabbit stew rises at around two thousand, three hundred and one rabbit heads per second, which is pretty rapid rising anyway you look at it. Well, it stands to reason that the scent of a five hundred and seventy-nine jewelled rabbit stew will do some powerful rising.

And it did.

And this is where the man who ate fried cat enters the story.

Directly over the room that housed the rabbit stew was a small room that housed a Wake Forest law student. (He’s a pretty big lawyer now, so it’s likely that he’d rather be called “Cats” or something instead of the name his mama gave him. We’ll call him “Cats.”)

Well, Cats was sitting on his bed, scratching his head and giving the text-books a swirl, when the scent of rabbit stew began seeping into his room. The scent squeezed up through the cracks in the floor, crept up the stairs and slipped under his door, and some of it even drifted off Uncle John’s table, sneaked out in the front yard, turned
around, and flew right through Cats’ window.

Cats put his books aside.

“That smells an awful lot like rabbit stew to me,” Cats said seriously. Cats was a serious boy and spoke seriously even when he was talking to himself.

Cats liked rabbit stew. He liked rabbit stew an awful lot. And his stomach reminded him just then that he hadn’t eaten for something like maybe eight hours.

“I’d admire to have some of that rabbit stew,” Cats said seriously.

Cats hustled right downstairs, and since five hundred and seventy-nine rabbits made enough stew to feed the whole Class of ’29 (and there’d still be enough left over for a hundred medium-sized freshmen) Uncle John said sure thing, sit right down and help yourself. So Cats sat right down, helped himself, and was gnawing away on a hind leg, when Tommy Carroll wobbled into the room.

“Got another rabbit here, Uncle John—one we forgot to put in the stew,” Tommy shouted, holding forward a right hand full of squirming fur.

“‘Tain’t no rabbit, Tommy boy, hit’s a cat. That’s my Lottie you got in your hand.
Put 'er down and have some more stew,” Uncle John answered.

“I don’t imagine there’s a whole lot of difference between a cat and a rabbit,” Cats observed, spitting a piece of fur on the floor.

“So, huh?” several eaters said all together.

“Naw. I wouldn’t think so,” Cats said real calm.

“Wouldn’t, huh?”

“No, I wouldn’t.”

“No? Well, s’pose you try eatin’ some cat like you’re eatin’ that rabbit. How’d you like to do that, huh?”

“Well. . . . Well I don’t know about that,” Cats fumbled.

“Thought you knew about it . . . thought you said weren’t much difference ’tween a cat and a rabbit . . . thought you said that . . . smart college boy!”

“Well, yes, I did say that,” Cats answered. Cats wished he hadn’t said that.

The boys dug into their pockets and dragged out small pieces of change. Tommy Carroll counted up all the money.

“Here’s two dollars and three cents,” he shouted, waving a fistful of money under Cat’s nose. “Two dollars and three cents—
you hear? Two dollars and three cents says you won’t eat no cat!"

Cats wished even more now he’d just kept on eating rabbit stew and hadn’t even opened his mouth about cat. But there was no backing down. Cats was proud of his name as a man who stuck by what he said.

Cats wiped off his mouth on his shirt sleeve and turned around. “Hand me that cat, Tommy.”

“Hold on there, boys,” Uncle John started yelling. “Hold on there. Not ol’ Lottie. If you gotta do it, go find No Name.”

Uncle John had fifteen cats around his dairy and all of them had a name except one—a newcomer that Uncle John called No Name. (Well, you’d really have to say that cat had a name too, wouldn’t you? Even if it was No Name.)

Cats got up from the table and went out in the back yard and found No Name.

And just like Tommy Carroll will tell you even today:

“He caught ‘im. He kilt ‘im. He skint ‘im. He fried ‘m. He eat ‘im.”

But today, just twenty years since that night at Uncle John’s, you won’t find anything that looks like a frying pan in that lawyer’s home.
A Thousand Jars Out
Yonder
BACK in the days of Prohibition, there were some folks in the town of Wake Forest who didn’t think drinking drinking-likker was wrong.

Now that’s important, because these folks were the main characters in a gripping and moving story. They gripped and moved more half-gallon jars of white whiskey in one night than most folks could in one month.

You can start this story almost anywhere you like, but the best place to start it is about a quarter of a mile south of that old resting place called Forest Heights, where some boys go to relieve the strain of studying with a tall, cool bottle drink. (In fact, a lot of spirited stories start out that way.)

Well, a College boy named Al and a bunch of friends with other names were chugging back to Wake Forest from Raleigh around eleven o’clock one night in December, after visiting out on Hillsboro Street to see if the girls at Meredith could come out and play. Everything was going all right until they met a car on the curve about six-beer-bottle throws south of the Heights. In fact, they
met the car radiator to radiator and bowled it over in the middle of U.S. 1.

The driver of the bowled-over car hardly waited for the machine to stop rolling before he long-legged it across a field and into some woods nearby. There was a law student in Al's car who thought that if he remembered right what Professor Timberlake said about crime, something criminal must be involved to make a guy run away and leave his new Model T groaning in the middle of the highway. So they began poking around in the up-turned car and found that it was packed from floor to roof with white whiskey on top of white whiskey.

"Can't see why no fool would run off and leave all this good drinking-likker," Al said. His friends couldn't see why either, and they began to wonder what should be done. They reckoned the only thing to do would be to get the liquor out of the road right then and leave the car until morning for somebody else to move.

The boys were stepping about real gingerly with the half-gallon jars, when sort of a Christmas spirit struck them. (It was almost time for the students to be going home for the holidays.) The boys got to thinking that it just wouldn't be quite fair to the
other boys back in Wake Forest for them to hog all those jars for themselves. Al’s car wouldn’t run after bumping heads with that Model T, so he sent a boy named Freddie on the run to town to tell everybody what a wonderful thing had happened out on the highway.

Freddie grabbed two jars up—partly to use as evidence when he reached town, and partly to sort of keep his feet from getting sore on the way in—and set off like a Derby winner on a dry track, swinging a half-gallon jar in each hand to get more speed. Freddie made fine time into town. In fact, Coach Phil Utley, who’s clocked a lot of track stars in his day, says it’s the greatest run in Wake Forest history. Well, Freddie came pounding into town, circled the block a couple of times to cut down his speed, and finally came to a stop in Shorty Joyner’s hot-dog house.

Without stopping to get his breath, he gulped down the quarter of a jar that was left, pointed to it, and licked his upper lip, saying something about “There’s more just like this, thousands more, out yonder.”

Things began to happen. A student running for a big political office on the campus hit off for the College to tell his friends and other potential voters about the “thousand
jars out yonder." One boy, sleeping on a pool table in the back room, jumped up when he heard the noise, slipped on the eight-ball, caught his foot in the side pocket, and landed up on top of a stack of milk bottle cases. A boy wearing a neck-tie turned around, gave Freddie a dirty look, said "Huh!" licked a speck of mustard off his sleeve, and stuffed his hot dog back in his mouth. By that time Shorty had thrown off his apron and he slapped a steaming cheese and egg sandwich into his hat to fight off the cold, and set off for "out yonder." His brother Worth, who was too young to make the trip at the time, says Shorty didn't open up shop again for four days.

It was a little after midnight by then, but the College bell in Wait Tower was clanging like a fire truck and students were piling out of their rooms to find out why. The story of the "thousand jars out yonder" was making the rounds, and quite a few upperclassmen thought they'd make the two-mile trip in the interest of chemistry, history, mathematics, and a few other subjects:

Chemistry (What are the chemical properties of the contents of the jars?)
Mathematics (How long does it take a
man to run two miles if he leaves at eleven-twenty and doesn’t stop along the way?

Economics (If one jar sold for a dollar, how much would a thousand jars sell for?)

History (How long ago was this batch made?)

The boys flocked out onto Number One. One was carrying a blanket so if he got more than he could carry he could sleep with it. Another was atop Miss Janie’s best Guernsey, flogging the old animal with an algebra book to get greater speed. Another flopped along in bed-room slippers, holding up his torn pajama pants with one hand. One boy, who heard the good news while he was in the shower, started out with a towel around him, but turned back to get a bathrobe before starting out again.

On foot, on cow, on car, on top of each other, students and townspeople jockeyed for position on Number One, fighting for the lead in the Thousand Jar Handicap. Some were battered to the pavement, destined to lie there until a friend passed back by hours later with reviving spirits.

The flood of human flesh poured past Forestville, past where the Heights now stands, headed for the curve that was covered with a thousand jars. The mob thundered
in—the front-runners covering the last two hundred yards in 17.3 seconds—to find that Al and the boys had been hot at work. By then there weren't quite a thousand jars left, but at least there were more than a few.

Al and his boys had built a house sort of like an igloo with some of the jars and were sitting inside singing something about, "How come something like this ain't happening to us every day?" The new-comers didn't fool with Al's structure for a while. They set to emptying the turned-over car, packing armloads of jars up to their chins. Shouts of "That one's mine!" "Get your own!" and "Load me up! Load me up, will ya?" were all you could hear.

Finally, the road was all cleaned up, except for the car, and Al's house had to come down. When the mob pulled the roof down on him and his friends, Al got real mad and fired three jars at the first wave of attackers, hollering all the while, "Would any of these good things happen if I'd been able to drive a lick?"

Nobody was taking much time out to toss down any great quantity from the jars. They wanted to gather the woods while they could. They were real philosophical about it, that's
it. "Man," said one jar collector, "I got days to load my belly with it, if I can just load my arms with it now."

But there wasn't a set of arms in the crowd that could hold all each man wanted. So the folks were hiding it. Get a jar, hide it, go get another one. The jar-gathering began to look like a large-scale, after-dark Easter egg hunt. Everybody was looking for, finding, and rehiding everybody else's jars. A lot of good jars went to waste when angry gatherers found strangers bending over their hiding places with guilty looks on their faces.

There wasn't a night police force at the time. The night officer they have nowadays—Otis Nuckles—was somewhat of a youngsters at the time, running a hot-dog stand. He was on the scene, selling hot-dogs like mad to folk hungry from hunting, carrying, hiding, swiping, and dodging jars. But finally the day police force, W. R. (Bob) Timberlake, appeared. He needed evidence and managed to recapture several cases from the more timid, law-respecting gatherers. But the bolder ones were all for recapturing the cases he'd recaptured. And he had to warn them:

"Now, boys, please leave it alone. I gotta
have evidence. Aw, come on, please, boys.

You got to say that some folks were pretty respectful of the law. They didn’t bother the jars he had, some gave up a few of their own, and some even agreed to help him carry them to the jail. The ones who agreed to do this are still described by others as double-dealers who carried the jars in the front door of the jail and right out the back.

Finally the night was spent. The day broke clear and bright and the sun cast its rays on:

Students scattered along the highway from the curve to the campus, their heads propped up on half-gallon jars, preparing for eight o’clock classes . . . Miss Janie’s Guernsey staked to the ground with thirty-one jars strapped on her back . . . Al and his boys sitting amongst the ruins of their once-fine jar house. . . . The overturned automobile, its wheels pointing skyward, resting on its back directly on Thousand Jar Curve.
The Good Doctor, Granny Maude, and the One-Eyed Goat
EVERY so often Harold Hayes, the spoon-chested boy who runs The Student magazine this year, has attacks, literary attacks. Somebody reads him a few lines of Sophocles, Shakespeare, or Eddie Guest, and he gets dissatisfied with the people who work for him . . . says they're not writers but a bunch of clowns . . . says he doesn't want and will not accept any more trash like they've been writing for him.

"Give to me," he says, tossing the current issue aside and staring out the window, "living word pictures distilled from life about us. . . . Bring to me descriptions of country that I can recognize. . . . Create for me living, breathing men who . . . ah, whom I can watch squirm in the clasp of my hand. Go! Go forth and write!"

Well, the boys never give to him, bring to him, or create for him any thing like that, so no harm is done. And he's almost always all right the next day. But these spells are going to get him in trouble yet, just like they did another guy here one time.

It was only a few years ago—back in '41—when a boy we'll call Peel, a big shot on The Student at the time, decided to write
some of this living, breathing, distilled-from-life stuff. There wasn't anything especially living or breathing on the campus right at the moment, but there were plenty of distilleries in the country nearby. So Peel figured he'd write about that section a few miles on the other side of the golf course where the kids play tag with hoe handles. And he did.

The Student came out all living and breathing with Peel's story, "Land of Paradox," saying that folks out that way aren't as bright as most folks, but are a heap tougher. And it said some other things about how they don't fool much with running water, electric lights, sporty clothes and paved roads.

Well, Peel took one look at his story, lying there breathing so good, and decided to let a magazine in Raleigh publish it. And that's exactly what he did.

That story hit that wild country with all the kick of atomic energy, a Missouri mule, and straight Bourbon. And this is the way it happened:

The R.F.D. mail carrier comes bouncing along the road in a government jalopie, whistling, feeling pretty good until he gets to the edge of the "Land of Paradox." He
straightens up and says to himself sort of solemn like, “I ain’t going no further.” He says that to himself every day and he means it. So he throws a bunch of mail for the “Land of Paradox” folks into a field and gets on his way. A kid, half riding, half carrying, half pushing a goat, comes along and grabs that stack of mail. He takes it to a store where folks can come and get it. But there’s a skinny girl named Rosy there who can do right smart of reading, and right off she’s reading the old folks stuff from here and there.

The old folks, patting Rosy on the head and sort of liking the way she can read and all, crowd around to hear what the kid’s saying. When she comes across Peel’s story in the magazine she finds it hard pushing through those college words. But the more she reads, the more you see big men in dirty overalls pushing closer, and the more you hear them shouting—shouting loud—“Who writ that? Who done this to us?”

And pretty soon all you can hear is, “Who done this to us?”

“Granny Maude ought to see this,” the biggest man—must be six-seven—shouts, and they’re all off for Granny Maude’s house. Granny Maude, a woman maybe seventy,
maybe a hundred years old, is sitting on a rock in her yard, trying to hit a hog with a hickory nut. Granny Maude hears Rosy read a little from the magazine and she knows right off that the guy who wrote this stuff is going to be in a lot worse shape than the hog she’s popping with those hickory nuts. This “Land of Paradox” stuff in the book looks bad to her. Ain’t no telling what he might be calling her land.

“He’ll eat it! He’ll eat it like a goat!” That’s the first thing Granny Maude says. And that’s enough for the yardful of men, women, kids, hogs, and dogs.

“Yes sir, he’ll eat it, he’ll eat it all like a goat,” everybody but the hogs and the dogs start shouting. They all know Granny Maude is fixing to take them to town to see the man who wrote bad about ‘em. One sissy boy runs back to the house to put shoes on.

“Can’t but so many go,” Granny Maude tells the mob. But they all scramble for Granny Maude’s open-bodied Ford truck. (It didn’t use to be open-bodied but Granny Maude never was much good at parking it in the shed.)

“Down from that truck, down from that truck! I’ll pick ye!” she shouts, hitting two youngsters in the head with hickory nuts
and rapping an elderly gentleman across the nose with a plow point.

Everybody wants to go. Everybody wants to square up with the man that wrote bad about 'em. But it's like Granny Maude says, can't but so many go, and she's taking only enough to do the job. Aboard the truck are: Granny Maude, behind the wheel, sticking her head out the window to see the road because the windshield's so muddy; Big Bess, a hundred and eighty-five pound redhead woman who can whip most men in that section; around a dozen big men; and a one-eyed goat Granny Maude calls old Single Sight. She's taking Single Sight to town 'cause she's meaning to be sure that fellow Peel eats his story just like a goat.

Granny Maude can make the old Ford do tricks, and she's pushing it hard for town with Big Bess and Single Sight crowded in the cab with her. She's got them up front with her because they're important. Big Bess will get Granny Maude's job some day, and she's got to be learning how to do. And Single Sight, well, Granny Maude wants to be sure nothing happens to that goat. She'll need him bad when she finds the college boy. The dozen men in dirty overalls in the back, hanging on to keep from bouncing off
in a field, are ready like they always are. Granny Maude's not worried about them. . . . Watched 'em come up from babies . . . whapped 'em when they needed it.

Granny Maude is jamming that old Ford hard down the stadium road and she's getting to town quick. Around the corner, around another corner, and up the driveway in front of Wait Hall. Granny Maude spins the truck around the circle a couple of times and stops it by ramming Dr. Pearson's parked car. She's coming to this building because she knows somebody here will know where the guy is she's come to get.

They tromp into the registrar's office, Granny Maude, Big Bess, Single Sight and the men. Everybody. Big Bess boosts Granny Maude on top of Mister Patterson's counter so she can talk loud and clear and everybody will know what she's saying. And there're enough big men in dirty overalls behind her to make sure nobody stops her.

Three times Granny Maude slams the magazine against the office girls' faces, shouting, "I want 'im! I come to git 'im! I come to git the man who writ this! He'll eat it, he'll eat it like a goat!" Big Bess is about to hand Granny Maude the goat to slam
against some faces when the registrar folks figure they better tell her where Peel is.

Peel happens to be in The Good Doctor’s short story class just then, and Granny Maude, Big Bess, Single-Sight and the dozen big men bang off on foot for the Alumni Building.

Down the brick wall they pour, Granny Maude out front. Students want to see, but they don’t want in the way. Nobody wants in the way. Big Bess has to knock old Single Sight kicking and throw him over her shoulder when he tries to run in the Religion Building.

In front of the Alumni Building they stop. The men are shoving and kicking for a spot near the door. Single Sight is getting his senses back so Big Bess sets him on the ground. Nobody says anything. They’re all waiting for Granny Maude. She’ll know the right thing to say.

“We’re wanting this Peel boy!”

That’s all Granny Maude shouts. But she says it just right. It’s so you can tell she’s not there just fooling around. Professor’s heads pop out of windows, but they pop right back when Granny Maude hollers, “If ye ain’t Peel, git your head back indoors.”
And again she shouts, “We’re wanting this Peel boy!”

Peel, who’s upstairs in The Good Doctor’s room, hears Granny Maude, likes to hear somebody calling his name out so clear, wants to get outside to see who it is. But The Good Doctor, who’s more familiar with folks’ voices, says, “Sit tight, son.” That’s all he says, just “Sit tight, son.” But Peel knows he knows something.

The dead-game Doctor, a man who’ll fight for freedom of the press anytime, hits off from the third floor, heading groundward, covering the last seven steps flat on his back.

The Good Doctor sees her, sees Granny Maude. And he sees Big Bess, Single Sight, and the dozen men in dirty overalls. He’s hurting where he’s been sliding on the steps, but he’s not thinking about that now.

“Come to git ’im. We come to git ’im. He wrote bad about us and we come to git ’im.” Granny Maude is telling The Good Doctor that, and he knows it’s so, too. He knows, too, that he’d better tell a little white fib—or even a big black lie if necessary. He knows he’s got to tell her something.

“Ma’am, I’m terribly sorry, but Peel has stepped out of my class for the moment. Could I have him meet you somewhere
"later?" He's surprised when Granny Maude says he can. He's surprised when she doesn't lead her gang up the stairs. Instead she says Peel can meet her in front of the courthouse at eleven o'clock, and that's all The Good Doctor wants to hear.

"And say, Slim, ye didn't have nothin' to do with puttin' 'im up to it, did ye?" Granny Maude calls to The Good Doctor. But he doesn't hear her; he's headed back upstairs to lay plans.

"Get over to 'Fessor Carroll's class quick," he tells a youngster, "and borrow some football players—better make 'em tackles and guards."

At three minutes to eleven the college folks pour around the corner in front of the courthouse. The Good Doctor is out front, waving them on. Peel is surrounded by seventeen big football players—Peahead's biggest.

The Good Doctor's troops reach the edge of the street. They stop.

Granny Maude's crowd is already on the other side.

The battle lines are drawn. Do things get underway? They certainly do—with a mass flogging of everybody by everybody. There's beating, bumping, cursing, clawing, kicking,
stomping, and throwing mud for maybe fifteen minutes, maybe more. Night Officer Nuckles, blinded by the sunlight, is in the middle, blowing his whistle, swinging his stick.

The ball players got the number on their side, got the upperhand. Five of them pin Big Bess to the courthouse wall where she can't move. The others keep flailing away at Granny Maude's men in dirty overalls. A cafe man captures Single Sight. Officer Nuckles, seeing pretty good now, gets Granny Maude cornered in a door, cooling her down so she'll talk to The Good Doctor.

Granny Maude looks out in the street, sees her men getting flogged. The Good Doctor looks out in the street, sees his men getting flogged. They both know this is bringing no good. So they hit on a peace:

Peel won't have to eat the whole story. Just the title and the by-line. Also, he'll have to write another story telling about the nice part of the "Land of Paradox." Peel, who's been hiding under a parked car, comes out, and says he'll do it. He doesn't know anything nice about that country right now, but he knows he'll find lots of nice things, just so he doesn't have to eat that whole six-page spread.
And that’s almost exactly how it goes:

Single Sight, hurried off down the road to the barbecue pit by the cafe man, isn’t there to show Peel how, but he eats the title and by-line anyway . . . Nuckles says he won’t have anymore going on like this in town . . . Granny Maude loads her men in dirty overalls and Big Bess back in the old Ford and heads home. . . . The Good Doctor gathers his forces and starts back for the Holy Quarter-Hundred Acres.

There, you see, is the danger of getting too literary—trying to write that living, breathing, distilled-from-life stuff. We hope that won’t happen to Harold Hayes.
It’s Been a Long Time Since A Circus Stopped Here
UNLESS he's cashed in his peanuts and gone on to the Great Burial Ground, there's a circus elephant touring this country who's got a lot less left ear than most elephants his age.

And if he's got the memory folks say elephants have, he'll remember that he lost that hunk of hearing device—but won the name "Notch Ear"—right here in Wake Forest twenty-odd years ago.

Couple of people say they saw an elephant with a shot-up ear not long ago—one said in Durham last fall, one said in Wilmington some time back. Maybe it was old Notch Ear, maybe it was another elephant. But one thing's for sure: Old Notch Ear hasn't been in Wake Forest since that wild, ear-losing night in the early twenties. In fact, there hasn't been a single circus elephant or a single circus that's stopped off here since that night. Some folks say there's a town law that won't let them cart even a toothless old lion into Wake Forest, and that may be so. But it doesn't really matter much whether there's a law or not—circus folks don't care much about doing business here.
You're wondering if maybe the tent-and-tiger crowd don't like the cultural atmosphere here, can't find any College boys with any money to spend, find the ground too hard to drive stakes in, or can't find enough hay around here for their animals. Well, it's nothing like that. They just haven't forgotten the night old Notch Ear lost that piece of ear here. And a lot of other things happened that night—things that made the circus folks so they'd rather pitch tent on the side of a glacier than in Wake Forest.

We might as well start right in at first, telling you how it all happened. Wasn't much more anybody's fault than anybody else's. It was just one of those things that happen when you get steam calliopes, elephants, gamblers, shot guns, town folks, circus folk, and college folk all together in an old ball park.

It was sort of a warmish fall day around five o'clock in the afternoon. The circus—Sparks Brothers or Marks Brothers or something—had been in town a couple of days and was catching a lot of the local gold... had its big tent and a couple of skinny ones thrown up on the old ball diamond on the end of Faculty Avenue, right up there behind Professor White's house... animals
were getting along fine, eating a little grass and whatever the better-off college students would bring them . . . the popcorn, made fresh the day the circus got in town, was getting staler . . . Queen Luikului and Her Court of Waikiki Beach Princesses were drawing quite a bit of the upperclassmen trade . . . the rickety Feriss wheel hadn’t fallen down yet . . . the barkers were still hitting the “step” in “Hall right, step right up!” at high C . . . the lion tamers were defleaing their stock . . . and all the circus hands had a little change rattling in their pockets and were getting on good, sitting in on “Slick” Sledd’s Shakespeare class before show time, and stopping in at Shorty’s when the night’s business was done.

Well, that’s the way everything was going until a boy who lived in town here name of Geech got to wondering how come two little white dice always rolled better for the circus man with the sleeve garters and Derby hat than they did for him. He’d bang his good, hard half-a-dollars down on the counter, give the dice a good shaking, and let them fly. And they’d sit on two’s and three’s. But for “Palms,” the circus man, they’d roll out just as pretty and settle all gentle like on seven’s and elevens.
Geech kept at it a right good while—about thirty dollars worth—before he got to wondering if he and “Palms” were chunking out the same cubes. The more he’d throw, the more he’d lose. And the more he’d lose, the more he’d wonder. Finally, he sort of asked “Palms,” “Look, buddy, are you sure you’re not using a friendly little set of your own?”

Palms got real indignant and said a man can’t even make an honest living and he didn’t care much about that kind of talk and what did anybody mean coming to him talking about using a friendly little set of his own and also he was going to have to get a pistol or a stick or something in behind him if he didn’t just go on off quiet like.

So Geech got real mad too, and said he wasn’t going anywhere, quiet like or any other way.

Well, to get right to the point, Palms finally had to get something in behind Geech to get him away. A stick wouldn’t do, so he got out a pistol. Soon as he saw it, Geech figured it was getting to be supper-time anyway and he might as well be running along home. But he didn’t want to make it look like he was scared, so just as he was turning to go, he looked Palms right in the
eye and said, "I dare ya! I dare ya!" And you can imagine how surprised he was when he heard a loud explosion and felt a sharp sting in the seat of his pants.

"Yowee!" hollered Geech, slapping his backsides. "Why you... ." Well, nobody remembers his exact words anymore, but the general idea was that he didn't like the way Palms creased him up and he'd be back and when he came back he'd have a right good number of friends with him and also Palms would have done better to jump in a lion's cage with nothing better than a switch. And it wasn't until Geech was through with his little speech and was out of the ball park that the cloud of smoke blew away.

And right about this time was when the college boys got mixed up in the whole thing. It was about sundown, and just about the whole student body was flocking down Faculty Avenue, after a hard day of conjugating the verb *avoir* for Doctor Gorrell and writing Doctor Billy Speas a few words on Newton's Third Law of Gravity. They were headed for the circus for some honest-to-goodness, boyish, innocent fun. They hadn't heard about the trouble between Geech and
Palms. All they were doing was going to the circus.

Well, at the time it was quite the college-like thing to sing "We'll ride old—(something)—on a rail"—to the tune of "Old Golden Wedding." The boys were always singing "We'll ride old freshman on a rail," or "We'll ride State Cow itch on a rail." They'd sing about how they'd ride most anything on a rail. . . . Right then, it was just natural to be singing "We'll ride old circus on a rail."

Meanwhile, the circus people were getting a big kick out of Palm's story of how he and Geech had had a misunderstanding and how Geech was going to get all his friends and get even. And when they heard a noise and looked out on Faculty Avenue and saw all those boys coming they figured they were Geech's friends coming to square up. And when they heard them singing "We'll ride old circus on a rail" they were mighty sure that gang was getting ready to treat them pretty rough.

The circus folks had heard something about how the guy who hesitates gets lost, so when they saw the mob of boys coming their way they didn't wait around to find out what they had on their mind. To the
tune of “In the Gloaming, Oh, My Darling,”
that was blaring out on the steam calliope,
they started grabbing up sledge hammers,
tent stakes, and anything else they could get
ahold of. And of course Palms still had his
pistol.

A sophomore named George, singing out
in a good brisk tenor about riding “old circus
on a rail,” was the first to set foot in the
circus lot. He was just digging around in
his pocket for a dime to get in with, when
right off, Mamie, The Bearded Fat Lady,
swinging a sledge hammer like it was a prize
cane, smacked him across the arm.

“You mean a dime ain’t enough?” George
asked, not knowing what to make of it.

Mamie swung again. “G’wan,” she said,
“g’wan.”

George jumped back this time, but he
figured that was a right unkind thing for a
lady to do. After all.

But by then there were more of his boys
on the lot, and all of them were also being
treated very unfriendly by the circus peo-
ple, getting sledges, sticks, tent stakes, and
water buckets against arms, heads, legs, and
turned backs. They all knew right off they
weren’t going to stand here and let any gang
of men with big noses and fat ladies club
them to death with a bunch of circus tools. So they dropped back, figuring to organize and pick up a few weapons of their own.

Just when a big senior called Johnny, who sort of unofficially had got command of the college boys, and getting his ranks armed with sticks and getting whipped into shape for an attack, Geech and all his friends came pouring and screeching up to the edge of the lot in cars—ready to get revenge. Geech, leading the band, could see that the college boys weren’t feeling so friendly toward the circus folks either, and he figured he’d found some allies. So he bounced along over to Johnny.

“What’s a matter?” Geech said. “Looks like them circus folks been whupping you and your boys up a little bit. How ’bout throwin’ your gang in with mine and really givin’ ’em a beatin’ that’ll make ’em know how folks in this town is?”

Johnny could see that Geech’s crowd was pretty well fixed for fighting equipment and could do a good job on the circus folks. So just like that, Johnny and Geech shook hands, joined forces, and led their boys onto the lot. When they saw the college boys and the town boys coming toward them, the circus folks could see they were going to
have their hands, arms, and everything else full. They put Palms and his pistol up front so’s he could really do the business. But his pistol wasn’t as important as they thought. One of Geech’s boys had brought along a mighty long double-barrelled twelve-gauge, and when Palms fired the shot heard ’round the ball park—setting off the fray and also winging one of the town boys—Geech’s man let the old twelve-gauge roar, throwing buck shot all over the lot.

And how the barkers and clowns and wheel-spinners scrambled behind animal cages, into tents, under dice counters, everywhere—anywhere that would keep the buck shot off of them. The ones that lagged behind were either trying to give up, or trying to hold off the foe with prize canes and dishes. Because by this time the college boys, feeling better about having the twelve-gauge on their side, were attacking. They’d broken off branches, collected soda bottles, and even picked up some of the tent stakes the circus folks had left behind when they started retreating. And they were using them.

BONG! Palms misses his target and hits the gong of the weight-lifting machine . . . WHACK! A sophomore bangs a lion-tamer
in the behind with a bag of peanuts . . .
SWISH! Mamie, the fat lady, flings a kewpie
doll past a freshman's ear . . . USSSH! Some­body pushes her face down in the mud . . .
UHHH! Ajax, the strong man, grunts and
groans under a pile of football players . . .
PFFFFF! The elephant gets into the pink lemonade tank and start squirting the acro­
bats . . . UM-PA-PA UM-PA-PA all the time the merry-go-round is spinning away . . .

And all the time Geech's man had his old twelve-gauger booming away. He'd lay
down a sort of creeping artillery fire so the college and town boys could advance. And they finally made their way to the Big Top, and sent a wiry freshman clean up to the top of the main pole to cut the canvas loose. And down it came real slow, catching the Indian Rubber Man crawling around on the floor like a mole, trying to find out where the entrance was.

That's the way it went. Everybody clout­
ing and clobbering and whacking away at everybody else, and, of course, all those pistol balls and all that buck shot flying every which way. Wasn't anybody safe—well, nobody but a couple of sort of knotty­
kneed Waikiki Beach Princesses who were huddled behind a costume box. The college
boys probably didn’t see them, or maybe they saw them and figured they’d let them off light just for now. Of course, some old-timers say Johnny had to jerk two of his boys away who were talking friendly like with the girls. They say Johnny had to tell them there was a war on and to get on back out there and start flogging.

Two big things happened during all this battling. The boss of the circus snatched up the cash box, legged it off up the railroad track, and hid in the woods for two days. And the mayor of Wake Forest heard about the fuss, hurried up to the lot, took one look around, and hurried back up town.

The war lasted until around midnight. Could have been any number of things why it broke up. Johnny and his boys and Geech and his boys might have figured they’d squared things up with the circus crowd. Or maybe the college boys wanted to get back to the dorm and get in a few licks on the next day’s lessons. And then it could have been because somebody shouted out toward the end of the scrap that the tiger had busted out. Nobody felt like they wanted to fool around with a tiger, even if he was an old fleay tiger, and even if they did have the twelve-gauge on their side.
Anyway, the battle broke up, leaving quite a scene on the old ball diamond:
The big circus tent laying flat on the ground like a busted penny balloon. . . . The penny-pitching table on top of the barker’s stand in front of the girly show. . . . The door of the cage standing open and folks wondering where the tiger was . . . Palms, wrapped in an Indian blanket, barely sticking his head out from under the cotton candy machine . . . Mamie, the fat lady, still floundering around in the mud, trying to wipe the mud out her beard . . . and the elephant (now called Notch Ear) standing all sad like with a square inch of hole in his left ear where the old twelve-gauge got him.
That’s the way it looked. A pretty sad sight. The circus had two more days to play in this town, but they wouldn’t have stuck around another day if you’d given them Wait Hall. They packed up old Notch Ear and a few of his scared friends, threw their busted-up equipment in busted-up boxes, forgot all about the missing tiger, and got out of town.

And there hasn’t been a circus in Wake Forest since. Some folks say they won’t even pass through here on a train.
"Doctor" Tom
“Doctor” Tom Jeffries came to Wake Forest College in 1884 “to insist my colleague Dr. (Charles E.) Taylor in changin’ Wake Fores’ from a stock pastur’ to a college by takin’ de stock off de campus and sottin’ out different mareties of scrubbery.”

But before death took him from the College in 1927, Wake Forest’s most famous and best loved servant had done far more than “furnish de work while my colleague Dr. Taylor furnished de artery and de skil­lery in beautifiling de campus.” He had done his “mostest to gain frien’s stid of foes by tendin’ to my own business.” He had “trusted in de Lord and hadn’t never put nothin’ befo’ Him.” He had “used all my exertions to make people like me so dat when dey leaves and meets me later on, dey looks as if dey is glad to see me and greets me as if I was de President of Wake Fores’ College.”

“Doctor” Tom had become as much a part of the College as the stone wall he built around it.

The man “born in Bluestone Township in de state of Ferginia fo’ de war” (Civil) isn’t
remembered because of a single outstanding quality or deed. He's remembered as the man who for forty-three years saw to it that the class rooms had "de proper evangela­tion"; made speeches "in appriety to Wake Fores'"; set out magnolias "under the cor­rection of Dr. Taylor"; wanted to "insult with Mr. Holliday befo' I begins work on the new projection"; passed out "big hono­ments" to a person who had done a job well; and who was always willing "to 'propriate my time" toward doing anything that would help the College, whether it was "cleanerat­ing de buildings," tecliding where some new scrubbery" should be set out, or "ringin' de bell."

The watery-eyed, white-haired man could do many kinds of work well. He could lay a stone wall "dat would hol' up redefinitely"; he knew how to install heating systems "so dey wouldn't smoke things up indiscrimi­torily"; and he could arrange plants in such a way as to "jest nacherly beautifile every­thing around'."

Because of his industry and frugality in private affairs "Doctor" Tom was able to live comfortably, spending the last twenty-five of his seventy-seven years in a neat seven­room house near the heating plant, and not
owing any man "de leastest cent." And although "Doctor" Tom lived his private life without aid from outsiders, students twice flocked to his house to serenade him and his new bride. (He married three times, outliving two of his wives.) The students, looking upon each marriage as a gala occasion, loaded "Doctor" Tom's hat with money and passed it back to him with cheers and congratulations.

"Doctor" Tom is remembered best, perhaps, for his ability to take the English language, flavor it with many "Doctor Tomisms" and then deliver it in a manner that made it perfectly clear what he wished to say. The size of his audience mattered little to him. Speaking to Dr. William Louis Poteat of his intended resignation, he said, "Doctor, I hears that you intends to make your assignment this year." He was equally at ease when speaking before large gatherings such as pep rallies or chapel programs. And he was never without praise for the College, saying "Wake Fores' is de greatest institutionary in de skillery of education in de worl' and has never succeeded in turnin' out a man we's 'shamed of."

Whenever there was any College function at which speeches were made, "Doctor" Tom,
all dressed up in his cutaway, was almost sure to be on the program. He was always the first person to arrive and the last one to leave. Once at a watermelon cutting during summer school, "Doctor" Tom was telling some young lady guests from Meredith and Saint Mary's about the fine qualities of Wake Forest boys. "I jus' wan' to admin' de young ladies here dat any of you dat gets a Wake Fores' boy sho' will get a prolific enterprise."

"Doctor" Tom was never unkind or offensive, but he often had a well-turned phrase to cool the heels of a conceited freshman. Once a brand-new freshman was poking fun at "Doctor" Tom because he was raking leaves when it would have been much easier to burn them. "Doctor" Tom listened for a while, looked at a group of upperclassmen nearby, and then said, "Well, Mister, I don't knows you, but I judges by your remarks that you is a newish." He repeated the word "newish" several times before the freshman was able to outdistance the peels of laughter from the upperclassmen.

On another occasion while "Doctor" Tom was burning some grass, a freshman remarked, "It's almost as black as you are, Tom." "Doctor" Tom replied, "Yassir, yassir,
and next spring it'll be mos ez green ez you is."

Despite his ability to reason swiftly, "Doctor" Tom once was trapped into somewhat of a confession by Dr. Taylor. "Tom, did you make that wine yourself that you gave the young men, or did you buy it?" "Yassir, Dr. Taylor, yassir, I made it myself, sir, I made it myself, sir." Dr. Taylor then would be able to tell the surprised students exactly where they'd got their wine when he had them up before him.

A typical never-to-be-forgotten speech of "Doctor" Tom's was made on the occasion of the annual "Marshal setup," just before final exams. It was one of his most "magnolius" talks, and according to the Old Gold and Black for March 6, 1916, it went something like this:

"I am befo' yo'-all agin on a very serious an' honorable occasion, an' I am very glad to see we are on the great an' noble Marshal's set-up once mo'. I seems to be mo' proud fo' to be on our present occasion. We has mo' men here than any other institootion in the skillery of education in de worl'. . . . That shows jus' how our recklessness and resignation am growin'. We have some very extinguished perfessors, but not takin' part
in dis occasion until tonight, an’ there is some points I desires to dispose an’ talk on makin’ preparation and preparedness an’ all to prepare fo’ great things in dis worl’. I am glad that I has the priviledge of address. I desire to pre-establish to yo’-all dat Wake Fores’ has de refutation of preparin’ dem selves an’ de other people. We has mo’ men of ingeniosity dan any other college in de worl’. We has never been successful to turn out any men dat we is ashamed of. Dat shows de good of an institoot so beautiful an’ so great an’ so noble.

“You feel proud of yo’ perfessors an’ so do I, fer dey is so beautiful fo’ intelligence an’ o’standin’ in any part of crikum. We should love an’ cherish our leaders an’ we can purchase some love an’ resignation in ’em.

“I mus’ say dat we should feel proud of de larges’ graduatin’ class in de worl’ an we are invancin’ in de d’scovery of education, an’ dat’s why we should prepare ourselves an’ feel proud of dis occasion. We are losin’ de larges’ graduatin’ class in de worl’, but we kin get two fo’ to tek de places. So we don’t miss ’em, fo’ dey go to envelop de worl’.

“You mus’ remember dat we have not loss
some of our professors, but not without dat we kin git some mo'! Other men will subside in dey places an' be gemmens of honor an' declarity.

“You see, gemmens, in accordance with my prayers we is de champions of North Carolina an' all de various places in de worl'. We should feel proud an' submissive on all occasions an' de loss fo' de one is de gain of another. Do not be discouragious, fo' Wake Fores' is de champions in skillery of education in de worl', which is de ingredients of life, an' you should feel praise to God.

“Gemmens, I mus' say dis am an honorable an' glorious occasion. You gemmens will go up to yo' homes and I goes to 'Lantic City an' Philadelphia at de close of de session. At dis time I hope to say dat we will have a gran' an noble session nex' year. I has a fine, noble audience tonight. Don't you see dat we is spreadin' out an' makin' success? As de ol' sayin' is, I preserve to be a Wake Fores' man an' I like to see all things growin' fo' perfection in Wake Fores'. I was once a citizen of Ferginia an' now I am a North Carolinaman.

“De Ferginnians come to North Carolina fo' de skillery of education. I did not 'spect to make such a long an' noble export on dis
occasion an' already Doctor Sledd has 'dressed yo' very fine an' maliciously on dis occasion.

"Gemmens, to young men who is graduatin', I say that I am in sympathy with dem. We sot dem, dey done hotched. When I trabel in all de parts of de worl' an' meet a Wake Fores' man, my lovin' zeal runs out because dey been educated at de greates' skillery of education an' within dese walls.

"My nex' point is as I remember dat I wants to warn you boys dat you is enterin' an examination classes. I am wid de boys an' de perfessors. We want to see you make nobel marks. I wants to test what you have been doin'!

"I hope dat you will be successful, fo' I know you won't pass wit'out yo' has shoes on yo' feet. If yo' will put Shakespeare in front of you, you will shore you is right an' den go ahead. I thanks yo' fo' yo' unseperated an' honorable attention."

On July 4, 1927, forty-three years after he came to Wake Forest for "de skillery of education," "Doctor" Tom died in his home after an illness of four weeks. His funeral was held in the College chapel, with the members of the College faculty acting as honorary pall-bearers.
A bronze plaque, unveiled at a memorial service on May 31, 1933—and now fixed in the wall of the campus he helped to build—honors the memory of "Doctor" Tom Jeffries—campus philosopher, wit and servant.